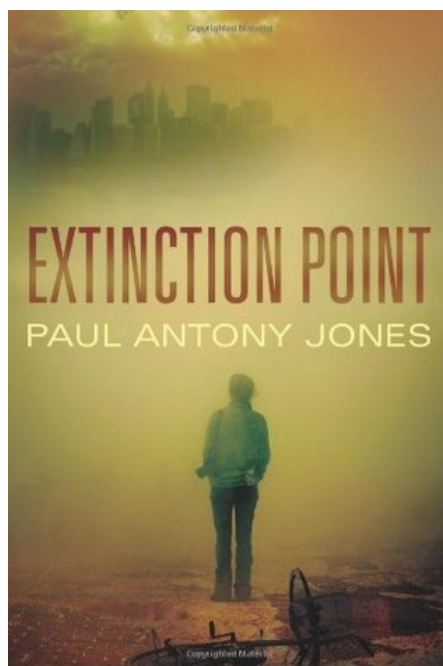




Extinction Point

Paul Antony Jones

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Reporter Emily Baxter has a great job, an apartment in Manhattan, and a boyfriend she loves. All that changes the day the red rain falls from a cloudless sky. Just hours after the first reports from Europe, humanity is on the brink of extinction, wiped from the face of the earth in a few bloody moments, leaving Emily alone in an empty city. As she struggles to grasp the magnitude of her situation, Emily becomes the final witness to the end of our world... and the birth of a terrifying new one.

The world she knew and loved is dead and gone. Now Emily must try to find a way out of New York as the truth behind the red rain is revealed: the earth no longer belongs to humanity.

Extinction Point Details

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From Reader Review Extinction Point for online ebook

Erin (PT) says

When I read the first/sample chapter of Extinction Point on my Kindle, I thought that a) here was a book in that narrow crevice of intersecting interests that I and my husband could read together and b) here was a story that had an interesting premise. As far as it goes, both those things were right.

I still maintain that Extinction Point has an interesting premise...but the author does nothing interesting *with* it. There are many problems here.

And I have to confess, I felt overwhelmed when I sat down to write this because there's so much wrong at pretty much *every level*; at a certain point, I could only report in aggregate, because to go into sufficient detail would be to write a novel myself.

I've compared Extinction Point to friends as a NaNoWriMo project, I've compared it to a season of Dragonball Z. If neither of those metaphors mean anything to you, let me break it down like this: everything that happens in the book is really only the first few chapters of an actual story; it's just that everything is inflated and bloated and stretched out by page after page of the author describing everything in excruciating and unnecessary (and *boring*) detail.

The premise behind Extinction Point is that our heroine, Emily Baxter, is a newspaper journalist in New York City and, on the day our story begins, a mysterious red rain falls across the globe, killing pretty much the entire population of the planet (including animal and insect life) except our girl, Emily, who is somehow immune. This set up gives us many questions and a wonderful mystery: What's happening? Who is responsible? Is Emily really the last person on Earth? What now?

Unfortunately, the author—and by extension, Emily—doesn't seem all that interested in what's going on or why. And I can't really talk about that without going into massive spoilers, because the problems permeate EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS. So.

(view spoiler)

Andre says

NOTE: Whenever passages from the book are quoted, all emphases are mine.

This review is full of spoilers. I can't even begin to describe how incomplete, how uninspiring, how *nothing* this book was without spoiling it. Besides, you really don't want to read it. Trust me on this.

I read *Extinction Point* because my wife downloaded a free sample on her Kindle, read it, and thought the book might be something we'd enjoy reading together. Boy, was she wrong. That I promised to read the book to completion is the only reason that I didn't dump it a third of the way through it. Yes, *Extinction Point* was that bad, bad enough to stand as the single worst post-apocalyptic book I've ever read. It offended me on an intellectual level.

The idea, the concept behind the novel, was something that could be worked and developed into something great, but my overall impression is that *Extinction Point* was not well thought out. The execution and details were major failures.

Before I discuss them, let me give you a brief overview of the book: Emily Baxter is a reporter for New York City daily newspaper. Emily grew up on a farm in Iowa, did not leave the state until she was in her twenties, and yet, never learned how to drive. As the novel opens, she lives in Manhattan on the seventeenth floor of a higher end apartment building. One day, a mysterious red rain falls on Europe and then, hours later, the United States. Within eight hours after the fall of the red rain, seemingly all animal life dies except Emily. A couple of days later, Emily posts her cell phone number on every social media site she can think of. A day or so later, she receives a phone call from a research center in Alaska where a team—supposedly; we never hear from or of anyone other than a man named Jacob—of scientists survived. They suggest Emily come to them.

(view spoiler)

He just loved contradicting himself throughout the book. **“She was glad she had brought the flashlight with her, as the interior of the store gradually became darker the farther back she walked.** She fished the flashlight out of her backpack switched it on, and twisted the beam adjuster until it gave off a wide angle of light that pushed back the remaining darkness. **There was almost enough light to see by without the flashlight...**” Another: “Emily didn't think there would be any kind of threat in the store; **Mike was too smart to have stayed. He would have gone home and died** with his family just like millions of other Americans probably had.”

Many of the protagonist's thought processes failed to make any sense. Everyone around Emily is dead, but when she saw a body under a blanket on the sidewalk, she calls out to it and runs up to it with the full expectation that it's a living person who's sleeping on the street. Why would she expect this man to be alive? If he was alive, why, considering that everyone else is dead, would he still be sleeping on the street.

That's but one example of Emily proving to be the dumbest ELE survivor in literary history. There are scores of others. She was worried about drinking tap water after everyone died, but she was comfortable taking a long bubble bath. She was worried about what was going on in the city, but she took a sleeping pill. She stayed in her seventeenth-floor apartment. She holed up in her apartment for days, but did not leave her computer on so she could research as much as she could—Emily was a reporter, remember. She was a reporter who neither reported nor recorded anything that was going on. She didn't right anything down. She

didn't type anything. She didn't take a single photograph with her cell phone. Nothing.

The biggest example of Emily's—and, by extension, the book's—stupidity is that she thought riding her bicycle from Manhattan to Alaska (heading due north before heading west, too) was a smarter decision than teaching herself how to drive there. My favorite, though, was that after making contact via telephone with a research team in Alaska, Emily rejected the idea of getting out of New York: "What? I'm not planning on leaving my apartment, let alone New York. **Why would I need to get out of New York?**"

Another one of the things that really bothered me was that Emily's building had one elevator. It is a high end building with at least twenty floors of apartments and forty units per floor. One elevator? Nah, son. But the story required there to be only one elevator, which the author made undesirable to his heroine, because he needed her to trudge up and down sixteen flights of stairs every time she traveled to and from her apartment.

The dumbest thing about the novel that wasn't related to Emily's thought processes was the woman's last night in her apartment, a day after the power had gone out. One of the creatures chewed threw the floor above Emily's apartment, fell into her bedroom, and knocked over a lit candle. Emily didn't notice the fire right away; she only did so when standing by her apartment's front door. The smoke traveled from the bedroom to the front door, but not into the exposed apartment above her? If it was strong enough to make it to the front of the apartment, would her unit's fire alarm not have gone off? Fire alarms do have batteries, right? Like I said, the author did not think his story through to completion. After letting the creature out through her front door (yes, she let it out, mainly because she—the author, really—forgot that Emily had a shotgun at her disposal), Emily looks through the peephole into the unlit hallway and saw creatures there. Because this was the world's most magical peephole, Emily was able to see creatures in the hallway even after backing away from the door. The next day, when she was leaving, she was able to see and avoid falling through holes that had been chewed through the floor. We know she didn't use the flashlight to see them because we read that she didn't turn it on until she reached the stairwell. Emily Baxter, our heroine. Maybe she was immune to the red rain because she has built-in SONAR.

I don't know whether or not the author ever lived in New York or visited the city, but his writing demonstrates very little knowledge of the city. Emily's boyfriend, Nathan, was a New York City police officer. He was described as tolerant of Emily's "ability to swear like a proverbial sailor." You see, "Dating was hard enough in this town; finding someone to put up with her inordinate knowledge of cuss words was even harder." What New York City is this guy talking about? Speaking of Nathan, a New York City cop would never say "I couldn't even get within ten miles of the precinct." First of all, New Yorkers—city dwellers, period—don't think in terms of miles. Second, and more importantly, Manhattan is only 13 miles long and a couple of miles wide. If the officer was stationed in that borough, then he would have spoken in blocks or given a specific street. If he needed to report to a different borough, then he would have said that he couldn't get anywhere near it. What good do "miles" do anyone here? Also, what New Yorker thinks of the state? Every New Yorker I know thinks of the city. The state is just...a place. "Is that just here or throughout the state?" is only asked by a New Yorker in fiction.

The geography of the story frustrated me often. Emily's apartment is described "handy for the Sixty-Sixth Street and Lincoln Center subway station." Later we read that she leaves her apartment on her bicycle, heads southwest on Amsterdam until she turns left onto Eighty-Sixth. This places her apartment at least twenty blocks north of Lincoln Center Plaza. Umm... When Emily finally decides to leave New York, she planned heading directly North. "If she did that she would be out of the city I a day at most." How big does he think New York is?

Extinction Point also lacked completeness. There was a beginning—really, it was just the beginning of a beginning—but no middle, and certainly no end. Instead of a novel or the opening of a series, this was more like the opening installment of a serial that would have shown up in the Saturday Evening Post a century ago.

Extinction Point is a novel that lacked continuity. It is a post-apocalyptic tale that lacks desperation. It is a story of science fiction that is less scientific than an episode of *Looney Toons*. After the red rain falls, Emily decided that people got sick and died due to a virus. She did not think it; she did not hypothesize it. No, Emily knew it. Later in the novel, she decided the red rain was alien. No scientific clues, no evidence, no actual thought behind it. As the entire novel is spent inside of the woman's head going through every inane thought, I find it reasonable to expect that we would have read Emily's decision process on the cause of the apocalyptic event if she actually had one. Figuring out the cause is only the single most important plot point this book would have been able to offer.

But Emily never seemed to grasp the gravity of her situation. The further removed I am from finishing the book, I actually grow convinced that the author was more concerned with showing how talented a wordsmith he can be than he was with staying true to the story. How else to explain the inclusion of the following prose as Emily leaves her apartment for the last time:

Leaving it behind was going to be painful not only because of her deep emotional investment but because, when she stepped outside that door for the final time, she was also stepping away from the last remnants of her old life and all the security that came with it.

Emily Baxter, a shotgun in one hand and all that was left of her worldly possessions strapped to her back, opened the door to her apartment, stepped outside, and closed the door on her old life as she began a new journey out into the unknown.

What? Everyone she's ever known has been dead nearly a week, her adopted hometown has been taken over by what she believes are aliens, and the author treats it as if she's leaving home for a job in the big city.

~~Despite everything I've written so far, *Extinction Point*'s biggest failing is its absurdity.~~ Actually, its biggest failing is the writing itself. There were some funny moments and some good turns of phrase. They were, unfortunately, few, far between, and lacked any cohesiveness. I really don't know what the author was thinking. I do know he was in love with his words. "It was like watching some strange migration." No, it was not like watching some strange migration. It was watching a strange migration. "She knew, with a concrete certainty that sank deep to the bottom of her stomach, the world would remember this day, and those that followed it, for as long as there was still a human race." Gee, you think?

Whenever he tried to put together a poignant or emphatic moment, it fell flat. Usually, it was because he couldn't leave a sentence alone and, instead, had to stamp it with Emily's feeling about it. Emily is an idiot, so this never helps. "This sickness, this red plague, did not seem to discriminate between species, and Emily was pretty sure that was a very bad thing." Also, "Now that she had seen what had crawled out of one of those cocoons with her own eyes, there was little doubt left that what she had witnessed over the past few days was connected, part of some unfathomable plan."

Oh, Emily. How stupid can a protagonist be? When it comes to her and her trip, the answer is immensely. Many reviews about *Extinction Point* go on and on about how stupid it was that Emily decided to ride instead of drive to Alaska, but that decision was just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to dumb decisions. Emily packed a tiny apartment onto her bike. Multiple wool sweaters, multiple parkas, multiple pairs of shoes, multiple gallons of water, multiple pairs of socks, multiple T-shirts, multiple multiples of multiples, as if she wouldn't come across a store or home during the 4,400+ mile trip to Alaska. In total, it had to be a couple hundred pounds of stuff.

The final 20% of *Extinction Point* must be treated as an entity unto itself. Even though I had considered the first 80% to be the dumbest book I'd ever read, I now refer to that final fifth as "the dumb part". It was...special. Emily brought an entire Wal-Mart with her on her bike, but she didn't think to bring a map or a pair of sunglasses. Of course, that means she had trouble with morning sun and she got lost. Yes, she did

have a GPS with her, but she had an “innate stubbornness to refuse to rely on technology unless she absolutely had to. The GPS and sat-phone were not going to work forever, so the sooner she learned to get by without them the quicker she would become self-sufficient.” Where I come from, using the tools that are available to you is the definition of self-sufficiency. Why did she even bring the GPS?

The most ridiculous thing Emily failed to bring with her was a tent. You’re probably thinking that she could just sleep in people’s houses, in their beds. Emily, darling little saint that she is, has a moral objection to doing that. Even though she’s the last known survivor of the lower forty-eight, Emily has a moral objection to sleeping in others’ beds. She’ll break into houses and scavenge for food, but she can’t sleep in a bed. I know, I know; I don’t get it either.

The most important thing she forgot to bring with her was a contingency plan. Jones’ text explicitly states so.

After a fire forces Emily into a panicked detour, she comes across a “forest unlike any that had ever existed on Earth before,” a forest of alien trees. After a week of cowering and refusing to act like the only reporter on the ground in the face of the story of all-time, she decides to stop riding her bike and stick her hands into the alien goo. Instead of trying to ride her bike around the forest or find another way, Emily decided that the safest and smartest way to run away from the aliens was to WALK HER BICYCLE THROUGH THE ALIEN FOREST. She was already nursing a pretty bad shoulder injury. I will never understand how this was a healthier or safer option than riding her bike around the forest. Of course she was attacked by monsters and of course she forgot she had the shotgun and of course she was rescued BY THE LAST LIVING DOG ON EARTH, a dog from Valhalla, New York named—yes, you guessed it—Thor. Prior to that climactic scene, the creatures had shown exactly zero interest in Emily. What’s one more contradiction?

A reader is left with no conclusion but to believe that the only reason for the fire, the fire, and the monsters was to have Thor save Emily. Why didn’t the author just give Emily a dog at the beginning of the book? Did he not realize that many apartments in New York City are pet-friendly.

(hide spoiler)]I joked with my wife that the author must not use UPS—he can’t make logistics work for him. (Thank you! Thank you! I’ll be here all week.) *Extinction Point* was a logistical nightmare. Practicality, geography, science, societal understanding, and common sense are but a sample of the ideals that never made an appearance in a novel whose protagonist, who also served as the only POV character—and, for a good 80% of the novel, its only character at all—is a veteran newspaper reporter. Some stories are plot driven. Some are character driven. *Extinction Point* is deus ex machina driven. There is no reason, no logic, behind the action. I can only go through so much of it here, but nearly every page contained something frustrating enough to make me laugh.

Carol. says

Some books are made for procrastination reads, and this is one of them. Bought and read in a single summery afternoon, it was the perfect excuse to sit outside in the first 80 degree day with the new Kindle.

It begins with Emily, a mid-twenty-something reporter who is waiting for an appointment to interview a doctor. As far as introductions go, it's a mediocre one, showcasing Emily as somewhat of a judgmental snot-- Jones should have skipped it and went straight to the biography info-dump when she's grabbing a sandwich and checking the news in an internet cafe. The press is reporting a mysterious red rain that has been falling over Europe causing alarm and confusion. Just as she packs up to leave the cafe, it starts falling in New York City as well.

I admit, I'm a sucker for apocalypse survival stories, and in that aspect, Extinction Point delivers. Unfortunately, almost everything else about the story needs work, including characterization and writing style. Take Emily, a native Iowan who grew up in "a small backwater farm town" with a mere six years under her belt in the Big Apple. I'm a midwestern girl, born and raised, and have witnessed two of my best friends head to the big city. So believe me when I say that I did not find the lead character believable that I'm coming from personal experience. Almost nothing about her as a composite made sense to me; in bits in pieces, it was fine, but when you put it together, it didn't jibe. An Iowan who longs to escape but doesn't drive? Mr. Jones, most rural kids learn to drive long *before* legal age, *especially* if they want to get off the farm. He states she doesn't drive because she could "bike everywhere in ten minutes." Have you ever *been* through a midwestern winter? You don't bike *anywhere* in an average low temp of 14 to 18 Farenheit. That is *not* normal teen behavior. New Yorkers not driving, I get, as NYC has one of the best mass transit systems in the country. I know two New Yorkers that never learned to drive until they hit college. But rural kids? Nope. Rural kids that end up being lead reporters for the local paper? Double nope.

Then there was this little oddity: "he had no problem with her use of 'language,' as her mother would call Emily's ability to swear like a proverbial sailor. Dating was hard enough in this town; finding someone to put up with her inordinate knowledge of cuss words was even harder." Mr. Jones--have you *been* to America in the last decade and talked to anyone under thirty? I'm pretty sure "cussing," as you so archaically phrase it, isn't a problem in dating.

Then there were the New York details themselves. "The owner of the building was big on security, so every apartment was equipped with a peephole that gave the occupant a fish-eye view of the corridor directly aside." That's not "big on security." That's *New York*. Heck, that's *America*. Why even describe the reason for the peephole anyway? She has to look out it; that's its only significance. Don't waste time on something that doesn't matter and will only point out you don't know what you are writing about. Likewise, the description of office blocks, with "here and there was the occasional small store. Within walking distance, a hungry office worker could find a coffee shop and a florist, and just across the street from her place, a small corner convenience store that kept a stock of canned goods, newspapers, and candy." They're called *bodegas* (or more racially, 'Korean groceries') in New York, so every time they were referred to as "the convenience store," or "the little store" it felt overly explanatory, and again, ignorant.

But that was just the beginning. I didn't believe Emily had the drive or hustle it takes to be a junior reporter at a major city paper--when deciding between work and a sandwich, she chose the sandwich--and she had to *remind* herself to photograph the red rain. I really, really didn't believe her reaction to (view spoiler). She was able to move on within a day (including (view spoiler)), and her grief was limited, especially for a violent death. Granted, she may have been in shock. Except she frequently wasn't. I saw someone I didn't know die in a way that was strikingly similar, and I was traumatized for a week--and I've been in the medical field for *years*.

Here is the clinching craziness: at a newspaper meeting, the newspaper manager states: "The paper is officially closed until this all blows over. I'll see you all then." *Hello?* Have you *seen* the media in America? *Close down?* Not bloody likely.

Writing was overly bogged down by details, particularly in the beginning. I understand that part of survivalist stories is that the reader is hoping for a survival blueprint, but this was too much detail even before the event. For instance, Jacobs lists four other stories (and their implication) that Emily reads before getting to reports on the red rain. When her boyfriend wants to know what food is in the house, Emily *actually lists it*.

Then there is the plot point of when her reaction to the disaster included calling the White House and the FBI. I stopped a minute in shock. I worked in emergency services for a decade, and I'm pretty sure calling either of those agencies never, *ever* comes up as part of problem-solving on the individual level. It was an

oddity that made more sense when I found out the author was not American. Believe me, Jones, the only reason Americans call the White House is to voice opinions on the social policy of their choice, not because they expect solutions. Just a little incongruity that stuck out.

Language itself needs some work. There was genuinely odd imagery: "trying to ignore the cramps in her legs that felt like a dog nipping at her ass."

Now that I'm writing it all down, I realize there was quite a bit that bothered me. I haven't read a lot of indie fiction, but I'd guess it was middling for the type--could have benefited from a few more readers and re-writes, but there are some interesting bones here. Jacobs does develop an ominous tension and his attention to detail makes coping with the fallout intriguing.

Ultimately, I read this in the best possible environment for this type a book--a warm, sunny day after a long winter that put me in the best possible mood, and led me to forgive many character and writing faults in favor of a moderately interesting plot. Quite honestly, I suppose it was a two stars read. Not terrible enough to quit, but not awesome enough that I didn't wrinkle my forehead a few times, or turn the pages rather fast so I could finish and get inside. Besides, I was getting sunstroke.

Cross posted at: <http://clsiewert.wordpress.com/2013/0...>

Amy says

After reading a glowing review of this book from a GoodReads friend and finding that it was available for a mere \$2.99 on Kindle, I had to snatch it up. Then, on a sleepless night when I was sick of the never-ending book I was reading, I decided to give this one a try. Oh, sweet popcorn! I was soon devouring this book with eyes flying over the pages at record speeds.

Reports of red rain come to New York from Europe shortly before all contact with Europe ceases. So when red rain begins to fall in New York, everyone either panics or goes home to be with loved ones. After the rains, Emily cannot seem to find signs of anyone alive in New York. Even the internet seems to show no signs of life anywhere. Is she the only person left alive? And why did the residue of the rain seem to show signs of intelligence? Was this a terrestrial biological attack or could it have perhaps come from an extraterrestrial source?

This book excelled spectacularly as a horror read. I paused from my reading last night while at my favorite coffee shop, went to the restroom, and was startled by a misplaced garbage can. I also found myself double-checking the restroom ceiling. What was I looking for? I'll not give away anything except to say that I definitely was NOT looking for zombies.

With many questions left still unanswered at the end of the book, I'm definitely looking forward to the sequel coming in the summer of 2012. This one gets 4.5 stars from me.

11811 (Eleven) says

This sucked so bad I DNF'd at around 10% and regret every second of my time wasted. It was free and I still want my money back. The writing was horribad. May God have mercy on us all.

Experiment BL626 says

CAUTION: Long Review, Slight Spoilers

I hesitated reading *Extinction Point* (EP) because I did not care for the author's other Apocalyptic book, *Towards Yesterday*. However, when the author offered me a free copy I took the opportunity. At most I would have wasted my time and be placed in an awkward situation of low-star rating the book. Yes, it's that same kind of awkwardness when Grandma gives you a present... and it's an ugly sweater. Fortunately, I found the book thoroughly enjoyable.

EP starts off with Emily Baxter on a reporting gig. I instantly like Emily the first time I read her internal monologue about weird magazines found in waiting areas. My affection for her increased when Emily refused to accept any nonsense from the hooky-playing receptionist, barring Emily from her appointment. All that happened in the first scene, a short scene. A definite strong start the book have. Already I was rooting for Emily and salivating to read more of her. The book did not disappoint.

Exclusively told from Emily Baxter's side in 3rd PoV, the story is about Emily trying to survive the Apocalypse alone. Not that she had any choice since everyone else was dead. By luck or genetic Emily managed to survive the plague brought on a mysterious weather phenomenon dubbed as "Blood Rain." The book pulled no punches, the first time Emily saw herself truly alone was after witnessing her boyfriend's spontaneous gory death. Later on she tried calling her parents in Florida. No one answered. Ever. Emily then walked to her neighbor's place where a mother and a father and their little boy were dead. From the blood spill and stain, they too must have suffered a spontaneous gory death. Dead person here, dead person there, dead people everywhere. Blood all around. Emily go crazy?

The Character(s?)

+++ Emily

No, Emily did not go crazy. She did screamed some when she saw her boyfriend dying in front of her. But that was it. The story could have made Emily go bat-shit crazy at the blood bodies surrounding her, but it didn't.

Death was coming for her, she knew and waited. It was just a matter of seconds before she joined Nathan and the millions of victims across the world who had already succumbed to this violent, insidious red-plague. What was strange though was with the inevitability of her death came a serenity of sorts, a calmness within her mind as everything complicated in her life ceased to matter. Her only responsibility now was to wait.

The cold honesty of her situation, the simplicity of it all, was a welcome relief.

So, she waited.

I tearless wept for Emily when I read that passage. I was delighted when she managed to pull herself together quickly after. However, I soon noticed this "cold honesty of her situation" became somewhat of a repeated occurrence. I was happy to see Emily being well aware of the danger she placed herself in, even when was she weaponless. I was not happy how that same "cold honesty of her situation" made her quickly resign to death when face with danger and seemingly no chance of escape. Many times when I wanted to scream "Don't give up!" at her. Nevertheless, as far as character flaws goes, this "cold honesty of her situation" was

very low on my irritation scale. I hardly ever thought she was annoying because of it, I thought the flaw made her more real as a person.

Throughout the story, Emily was smart and resourceful. She achieved a good balance between her paranoia that was brought on by the Apocalypse and her inquisitiveness that made her a talented reporter. I did have moments where I didn't know what she was doing or why she was doing it, but I didn't doubt her action. I was confident knowing whatever Emily did she did it for a good reason.

Emily Baxter was a kick-ass heroine in the fact that she did things and got things done. She may have been weak in front of the WTFkery mutants the Apocalypse birthed — what average person wouldn't, but when she had an opportunity to overcome them she instantly took it. When she got hurt, she didn't shrug it like it's nothing. She said ouch, disinfect it, and then let it rest like a reasonable person.

Bonus part was her morbid humor. That was icing on the character cake.

Some messages explained their authors were hunkering down and hoping to ride out the storm, there were even one or two that dismissed the threat as nothing more than mass hysteria.

How'd that work out for you? Emily wondered.

LOL. Absolutely hilarious. Too bad no one was there to appreciate this irony or to tell “I told you so”... 'cause, you know, they're all dead.

+++ Thor

He's a dog, specifically an Alaskan Malamute. He saved Emily from the WTFkery mutant. He's trained, so trained that despite starvation he won't eat until Emily had to give the Eat command. Nothing more to say except I love him. I kinda wish he showed up earlier in the story, but then it might have lessen the impact of his arrival. The story really want to pull the point across that Emily Baxter was alone.

+++ WTFkery mutants

The dead bodies didn't stay dead for long... No, they didn't became zombies. This is what made EP distinctive from the common Apocalyptic books. Instead, the mysterious red thing from the "Blood Rain" molded the various body parts into some sort of creatures I don't know what it is but I personally nicknamed them as WTFkery mutants. As the story described these, um, things were about grotesque as a leaf-nosed bat — I dare you to google that — or the human centipede from that...well, The Human Centipede films.

More than the WTFkery mutants, what made EP scary-good was well how it build up the suspense of Emily meeting a WTFkery mutant for the first time. Second was the fact that some of them were not aggressive. You read right. Some. Not all. *Some*.

How ironic was it, she thought, that in every alien invasion movie she had ever seen, every sci-fi book she had ever read, the aliens were always either intent on eating us or just misunderstood. No one ever seemed to consider the possibility they might just ignore us completely; that the survivors of the human race might be so very inconsequential to their plan.

No kidding. How dare some of these WTFkery mutants ignore Emily. All of them should be trying to chase and devour her. Get with the Apocalyptic act, would you? /sarcasm. LOL.

Addressing the Apocalyptic Issue

+++ cause of apocalypse

The story addressed all the finer points of the Apocalypse very well. The events leading up and after "Blood Rain" were well built. The red thing that made everyone died and change into WTFkery mutants were well developed — I was pleasantly surprised at how scientific Emily was in her examination of the Apocalyptic red thingy. There many theories Emily played around; the one seem best to me was that it was some sort of an alien virus. EP never outright said what it is, thus the answers — including the one why the Apocalypse happened — lies in future books which I eagerly look forward to.

+++ get your weapon

EP seem to accurately describe what an Apocalyptic survivor would have to do to keep on surviving. One thing that slightly irked me what that I wished Emily would have got her hand on a weapon as soon as possible. It's always smart to run away and hide, but there are times when that isn't feasible. I hope in future books, Emily would always have a weapon at hand. Like Gin Blanco from my favorite Urban Fantasy series, the Elemental Assassin. That kick-ass heroine never walk anywhere without her silver knives.

+++ travel by... bike?

The biggest issue — of the very few issues — I had with EP was the bike. Um... Is Emily going to travel to Alaska by bike? Not that it's impossible, but it doesn't seem very practical. Or fast. If Emily can't travel by car because of all the abandoned cars blocking the roads, why not a motorcycle? It's almost as slim as a bike that she can move through tight passages. I hope this issue is quickly addressed and resolved in the sequel.

+++ travel by... bike? [ETA]

I finally figured out why Emily would pick a bike. The answer was there right all along, it just took a while for me to get it through my head. Anyway, the reason is because if it's anything is broken, she can fix the bike. Yet...

I guess it's because I'm mostly focusing how the book is set up. The book is divided into seven parts, each part is a day. Each day consist of multiple chapters. If the next book is going to be the same, divided into days, then I wonder how many days it would take for Emily to bike from NYC to Alaska.

A few reasons why I find a motorcycle more practical is because what if a WTFkery mutant start chasing her? It's easier to make a quick getaway on a motorcycle than on a bike. A bike would require exercise on her part, while with motorcycle all she needs is gasoline. What happens if she's injured or too tired to ride a bike and then a WTFkery mutant or a bunch appear? A bike won't help. And there's only so many she can shoot, assuming if she's an accurate shooter, assuming if the mutants can die with bullet wounds, assuming if the mutants can even be pierced with bullets.

The book always made me aware of the time. Emily riding a bike doesn't really push the point of how urgent it was that she need to escape the city full of WTFkery mutants and reach the haven in Alaska.

If riding a motorcycle is simply too scary for her, there's always the scooter.

The Editing

For a self-published book, EP was well edited. Nonetheless there were some mistakes, mostly of the rogue punctuation kinds. I believe I only noticed them because I literally read EP word for word. That's how good the book was; I didn't skim anything. The followings are mistakes I found:

[Her stomach gave an anticipatory grumble. .] Kindle Location 182. There's an extra period.

[As Emily 's eyes roamed the buildings,] Kindle Location 590. There's an extra space in the possessive noun.

[Obviously, the power was still on because her alarm clock was still working,.] Kindle Location 1688. There's a rogue comma before the period.

[intent on insinuating themselves into every nook and crevice of the apartment and the city. .] Kindle Location 1925. There's an extra period.

[Waggghhhrrrrgh!] Kindle Location 2065. This needs to be italicized like the other onomatopoeia.

[She took the bergen and left it near the front door while she grabbed her jacket .] Kindle Location 2415. There's a space before the period.

[was loose enough she wouldn't end up accidentally stabbing herself .] Kindle Location 2420. There's a space before the period.

[She began to breathe a little easier ,] Kindle Location 2920. There's a space before the comma.

[what he liked to call 'the best bargains on two wheels'.] Kindle Location 3116 The type of single quotation marks are not correct. It's supposed to be ' first, and ' second.

[It was intoxicating..] Kindle Location 3186. There's an extra period.

[911] Kindle Location 370, 457, and 585. These are supposed to be "9/11" to denote it as an event, not an emergency number.

These are the mistakes I found in my first reading the book. However, as I said before, I only noticed them because I literally read EP word for word. There was nothing I found boring about EP at all.

+++ The Editing [ETA]

They're fixed.

Conclusion

EP was great. I give it four-stars for I really liked it. It's been a while since I read a well developed science-fiction Apocalyptic book. I recommend this book for readers who looking something other than zombies, zombies, and more zombies. If readers like me who were not at all a fan of Towards Yesterday but still want to give the author a second chance, this is it right here.

I'm biased in favor for a single PoV, so I hope the future books will stick with Emily. EP is a strong start of a series. This is a bit frightening for me because I don't know how the next book will top this one.

Gertie says

4.5 Stars

Everyone has their own way of realizing to what degree they are enjoying a book they are reading. For me it comes down to a few things.

- 1.) I think about the story when I'm not reading it.
- 2.) I look forward to picking it back up again.
- 3.) I am disappointed when it is done.

If I don't look forward to reading a book, then it's just filler. When this book ended I was definitely irritated with myself for not taking longer to enjoy it. (I'll know better when the next one comes out!) Something kind of strange happened with this book too. When it was done, I had a very hard time picking up another book. Nothing looked good enough, when what I really wanted was to still be reading about Emily and her story.

This is not a story about constant action, fighting, or tons of witty dialog, although you do get the impression that our heroine, Emily, would be more than capable of exchanging witty repartee with a worthy companion, were she not the only living person within way-further-than-shouting-distance. This story is about character, perseverance, struggling to survive despite having no one to share that survival with, and more than a fair share (and that's a good thing) of "Eeeek!" creep factor.

Speaking of creep factor, that was one of my favorite things about this book. As Emily makes her way around, investigating what has happened and determining what to do next, she encounters frequent signs of the world's new boogeymen. I don't want to give away too much, but let's just say, there's more than one thing to fear in this new world she has been marooned in. I enjoy a good shiver or squeal of happy-disgust (if read much horror, you know what I'm talking about), so I definitely got a kick out of this book.

A couple of things led me towards calling this a 4.5 star book. One thing is that I kept noticing a certain remoteness/coldness in Emily. When some events happened I would expect a likable character to be very concerned about her family, friends, neighbors, boyfriend (and of course, for herself). She worried about #1 okay, but everyone else... not so much. I think that was intentional from the author, but as a woman myself, I expect a certain amount of caring from another woman's character.

DISCLAIMER:

I know the author, through Goodreads. If you've ever read a book by someone you know (and maybe even like), you'll notice there is a constant mental dialog occurring simultaneously with reading the book. First, you are looking at things that you can provide reader feedback on, and second, and this one is a doozy, you have to constantly ask yourself, "Did I *really*, like this, or is it just because I know the author?" Every laugh, smile, or nod of appreciation gets questioned, if you are conscientious enough to attempt to stay unbiased. And, it is always SUCH a relief when what you are reading turns out to be good. Sometimes even great. Fortunately, I really, genuinely enjoyed this book. I'd have liked it even if it was written by someone I thought was a total asshat, which really says something about the book itself. :-P

Tori says

There is so much I didn't like about this.

Emily as a leading character, wasn't a strong enough personality for one. Every now and then there may be a little "fun fact" about her slipped in between scenes but other than that the book is like a to-do list of her day.

Maybe the author wanted a very plain generic "everywoman" type of lead. But all this does is make me not care one way or the other about whatever happens to her.

Oh and do we know what happens to her!! We know every second of her freakin' life. I kept waiting for her

to say she needed to pee and then we would get a couple paragraphs of how she proceeds to relieve her bladder. God, how trivial. This could have actually been summed up into a short story.

Another thing that unnerved me. Girl doesn't have her license, so instead of just finding an abandoned car and keys, putting it in drive and pushing the gas peddle, she decides to bike her self to Alaska. From New York. To Alaska. No one else on the roads. No cops. But she wants to bike. Am I the only one scratching my head? Anyone over 16 knows the main points of driving a vehicle even if they've never tried. And would sure as hell try if they were trying to get across the country quickly.

And the ultimate mystery surrounding this "extinction", (sorry for all the quotes) was a major let down. I had expected something a little more creative. Something never been done before. But this has been done to death. The beginning of all the chaos is quite interesting and that's why I was so let down by the direction it eventually took. Red rain falling spontaneously from the sky all over Earth. That had my imagination running wild. Grrrrr. I was so let down :(

Yeah. This book made me type a sad face.

Anyways, to summarize:

It's too long. I skimmed all of the final chapters without feeling like I missed anything.

Emily is not a good enough leading character. No personality or qualities that made me care whether she survived or not.

And the main plot of the story, what the hell is going on, is not that fascinating or new.

I would not recommend it to anyone, and I definitely won't read the next book in the series.

Cassy says

So this story started out really well and then it just dragged on towards the end.

The premise of the story is awesome; young independent woman who is the sole survivor of a red rain plague that hits the whole world wiping out man and animal alike. The monsters that the people surrounding her turn into were well written and made me want to read the whole thing straight away but then I find myself really noticing that this book could have done with a general editing. On almost every page there is a hyphen mistake or two, place names are misspelled and the repetitions really killed it for me. It is one thing to mention that her shoulder hurts, but to repeat it again and again and again just makes for a very slow read. Plotwise forcing the heroine to bike instead of drive could have made for an interesting way of telling the story but add that she has no clue how to pack a bag (the amount of stuff she brings with her would require a small tank to carry) and the fact that all this added weight still does not hinder her from carrying her bike over fences, tree trunks etc she would have probably been better off just winging how to drive a car or at least find herself a motorbike. Never mind the fact that she is going to drive to Alaska on this bike, yeah that's right peddling through ice and snow.

Towards the end you find yourself wanting the plot to move on instead of detailing her every idea and meal. Of course to add on top of the cliché that they story turns out to be towards the end we also get the trusty dog added. Maybe this indicates that there will be more survivors, but how did the dog manage to survive without eating anything? And also, why does she not rummage through the house she stays at, stealing clothes and other supplies than just a couple of cans of things? How about looking in the trunks of some of these cars you keep passing, as the author keeps reminding us that our heroine was the only person not stupid enough to try and make a run for it with everything they own?

In the end the suspense of the first half can not really outweigh the dragging on of the plot in the second half. Lovely premises, poor execution.

Will M. says

One of the shortest yet most disappointing reads I've ever had. This had such an interesting premise, but the delivery was terrible. The writing felt like I was reading a YA novel. The main character was really annoying. Let me quote some annoying or contradicting or stupid things that happened.

"Okay, big boy," she said, when she was finished and confident that was the only wound the dog had received during the fight. "How about I fix us some dinner?"

The mention of food seemed to get Thor's attention

She didn't fucking mention the word food. All she said was dinner. The author could've said *"The mention of dinner seemed to get Thor's attention"* But no, the author seemingly concluded that dinner and food for dogs are the same thing.

"She picked up the bowl, opened a second can for the dog

She's probably the only one left in the place and the food in the grocery(even the canned goods) might get spoiled soon, but she fed her last few remaining food to the freakin' dog. Wait, there's fucking more.

Emily opened the final can of corned beef and fed it to Thor.

She fed her last fucking can of corned beef to the dog. Don't get me wrong, I love dogs, but this is not practical. You should consider your life first before the dog's.

A couple of energy bars satisfied her own hunger

There is no way that a couple of energy bars really satisfied her hunger. This book is full of lies.

Now let's talk about that terrible ending. He didn't explain what the freakin' red rain is. He just ended with Emily and the dog. Sure we get the new alien thing, but he didn't explain it well enough. The book is so short, that's quite good, but short enough to be inadequate. This novel is mediocre as hell, but I don't even know why I liked it. I guess I like post apocalyptic shit even though almost all are the same. 3 stars at most, and guess what, I'm planning to read the sequel soon. The author better explain the main premise or his next book's going to receive not more than 1 star from me.

Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

A Badass Hidden Gem...

<http://badassbookreviews.com/badass-h...>

Read my review at badassbookreviews.com

I admit it. I'm a fan of the series Domsday Preppers. I also have a major crush on Les Stroud of Survivorman. There is something about a guy that can survive with nothing but his common sense and his knowledge of the world around him! I will also admit to having an emergency backpack filled with stuff that I hope to never need. I'm not a fanatic in any way, shape or form. I'm semi-prepared for earthquakes, floods, fires, and other natural or man-made disasters. However, I am NOT prepared for...

BLOOD RAIN!

Holy red smoke! This book scared me. I like scary books but this book SCARED me. It makes you think, what would you do?

So, on that note, what would you do if red rain was falling? I'm not talking about rain with a mild tint but rain that *clung to the glass of the window like mud, or, more appropriately, like blood splatter at a murder scene*. That's right folks...

BLOOD RAIN!

Would you go out and stand in that rain and look up out of curiosity? Would you taste it? Yes, some people would. That little thought disturbed Emily greatly...

Why the hell would you stick that stuff in your mouth? Emily wondered. The level of some people's intelligence never failed to amaze her. Who knew where it came from?

Our poor, poor Emily. She has a problem, she lived. In fact, she may be the last person on earth. What did she survive? The beginning of Extinction Point deals with this little mystery.

Is it fallout from an experiment gone bad?

Is it some weird natural phenomenon like the bioluminescent dinoflagellates that make the oceans glow in neon lights?

Well, you'll have to read the book to find out what causes the *almost* extinction of the human race!

The story

The author came up with a clever survival story. Not only does Emily survive the blood rain but she also has to deal with her own extreme loneliness, the metamorphosis of the human carcasses to something else (can't say more, it's a spoiler), and how to survive when all Emily ever wanted was to report the news, not become the news.

Overall

The strength of this story is the details and the believability. The author makes the reader truly believe the

events in the book. I loved how every move Emily made was described and how the reader could go “NOOOO” when you watched Emily go somewhere where you knew trouble was waiting!

The weakness was the details. I know, that makes no sense since I just said it was a strength. However, after a while, I was tired of watching EVERYTHING Emily did. I was afraid I was going to read “Emily farted” next in the book. Thankfully, later in the book, we get to meet THOR. I have to capitalize THOR since he is larger than life and he is plain awesome. I’m not going to spoil THOR since he should be a surprise to all the readers. GO THOR!!!!

This was a great book 1 and a great start for a series.

Livvywivvy says

I really wanted to give this book a higher rating because I enjoyed the concept, the execution however, made it a frustrating read. The book desperately needs editing, simple actions like eating or dressing are written about in excruciating detail which detracts from a strong premise and slows the pace down to a limp. There are some major flaws in the plot, namely riding to Alaska on a bike (!) because Emily, the lead character, has never learned to drive. This was frankly infuriating and nonsensical. Automatic cars are not hard to drive, plus with no one else on the road, what does it matter if she's a bad driver? She won't get pulled over. Also she kept on going back and forth from her apartment and never seemed to be in a hurry to get away from the aliens. It made me less sympathetic towards her and her situation because it just seemed to highlight the lack of emotional depth that she showed throughout. The ending was disappointing as it felt like it was just an introduction to the next instalment. I think it should be the first half of a bigger novel with a lot of editing to quicken the pace and keep the action coming. Having said that, there were moments of real tension and the mystery of the premise kept me reading until the untimely end. I would probably read the next one because I want to know where the story goes, but I just hope it is more polished than this.

Rita Wiebner says

So I really liked the concept behind this book, a very interesting take on the apocalypse/post-apocalypse genre. The idea of the "red rain" was fascinating, however, there were some flaws with the book that prevented me from giving it a higher rating.

First, what I enjoyed. Like I said above, I really enjoyed the take on what has happened in this book. The "red rain" and the results of that, are fascinating so far, and I am very interested to see where it goes. Also, throwing in the aspect of not knowing where it came from - is it alien? or the world reinventing itself again? - really intrigued me. I enjoyed the main character Emily, but not until about half way through the book.

Truthfully, Emily annoyed the crap out of me for the first part of the book. She seemed like a very typical New Yorker, which I am sure was what the author was trying to convey. She just didn't have much substance. She was very shallow, and as she became the supposed lone survivor in NYC (was she really? and how did she really know this in a city of millions of people? did she search every single building for survivors?) - her survival skills those first few days REALLY drove me crazy. She grew up in a little farm town in Iowa, and the author states she spent most of her time outside. She didn't learn anything in those days? Seriously? Her lack of concern about how to survive in those few days drove me nuts, and then when she did start manning up and realizing she needed to get out of there, the supplies she went for were not going to suffice. The camping store would have been the first place I would have gone, not the last. One

other thing about Emily that didn't sit well with me in the beginning was her lack of emotion over all of the dying people, especially her boyfriend. She had been with him 2 years, and apparently loved him, yet was totally unemotional about his death. I think that could have been written a little better.

Overall editing could have been much better. This book has a lot of potential, but just needs some tighter editing and revision. Missed and repeated words, grammar, punctuation, the usual things I have seen with self-published Kindle books. Some of the sentence repeating really bothered me, as in the author would describe something and then a paragraph or page later, would describe the exact same thing using the exact same words. Once could be overlooked, but I saw it multiple times throughout the book.

Like I said earlier, I would really have liked to give this book a higher rating. The concept is unique and intriguing, but Emily needed some more meat to her, and some better editing would have been definitely appreciated. I will read the next book, but I hope some of these things can be corrected until the next one comes out. Looking forward to it!

February Four says

Red rain good. Aliens good. (Awesome concept.) Biker who can't drive, good. Obstacles in her path, plausible. But seriously. Packing all those clothes, food, stores?

1. Yes, there is talk of scavenging along the way, explaining why she's not carrying too much food. There are bike stores in most major towns, but I can see packing lots of bike supplies because you don't want to get stuck between towns without bike-fixing gear. But seriously--limiting yourself to a liter of water a day? Can't you carry more than that and scavenge for bottled water when you scavenge for food? Water is important, especially with all that biking! Also, panniers, yes, but wouldn't pulling a little cart along behind you be a great way to carry things without weighing yourself down too much? People put children and pets in those little things you hitch to a bike, so why not food, water, bike-fixing gear, even those spare rims Emily wanted so much?

2. Packing all your clothes and worrying about clean underwear? Hello, Emily, there are department stores in pretty much every city. Also, I suppose I shouldn't expect a man to know about pantliners, but Jones wrote about tampons and pads, so do a bit more research or ask a woman!

3. Double-burner propane burner with tanks (plural) of propane? Again, what happened to scavenging? And seriously, a double-burner? You're eating for one!

4. That GPS for your bike, Emily, it needs batteries. So does your flashlight. Okay, maybe the GPS is pedal-powered, but the flashlight sure as heck isn't. But I don't see Emily packing batteries, rechargeable or otherwise. I don't see her packing up more solar panels connected to battery packs. I don't see her picking up portable battery packs (astronomy shops! camping supply place! She's a journalist, she should know these things.)

5. Oh, and considering she's WAAAAY overpacking, what was wrong with grabbing a can opener and not having to deal with looking for pop-top cans? Grocery stores sell those, you know. Can openers, I mean. You know, the manual kind you crank to open a can?

sighs I thought the aliens were great. But considering the level of detail Jones is lavishing on the way Emily is preparing for her trek north (spending the ENTIRE BOOK on it, in fact) you'd think he'd THINK about the preparations a little more!

Tim Bergmann says

Really kind of disappointed here

first the good: the premise, great idea. You're basically one of the last people on earth due to a kind of stealth alien invasion. Author looks like he set everything up well, planned out the way the alien takeover is happening and looks like he has a plan for the future.

the bad: the heroine. Doesn't drive at the beginning is really no big deal. That at age 30ish that she's never driven is a bit unrealistic, but okay, I can roll with that. However, if you are the only person left in the world and you are trying to go thousands of miles and you don't want to drive a car or learn is asinine, stupid, and just flat out dumb.

Maybe she's only riding a bike til she hooks up with predictable dog and book 2 she'll get over it. But then again, the dog addition was also predictable. Did I mention predictable.

Add that everything that she seems to be carrying seems too much for a bike. Again, she's one of the only people left in the world, there's a lot of stuff she probably doesn't have to worry about. She can basically go into any store and grab what she wants in terms of clothing as needed. She can go into anyone homes and probably get more than enough canned foods as she travels, etc... There's lots she doesn't have to worry about that she needlessly does.

The problem is that she's a reporter, and at the beginning seems to be the go-getter type, at least that's what the 1st few paragraphs shows us. But when it comes right down to it, she's not. Thus, the first few paragraphs that I think were designed to show us who she is, is pointless and meaningless. Also, as a reporter, the first thing she tries to do is call people to find out if anyone is alive and only as an afterthought does she check social media websites the next day? Really? Not remotely consistent with a reporter these days.

And that she's too afraid to even learn to drive a car? Really? No one else on the road. Grab a car and learn. You're an intelligent woman. You won't have to worry about running into someone. You won't get a ticket. If you get in an accident, get another car. They're free at this point.

What the book did was make me think about what I would do if I were in this situation:

- 1) obviously learn to drive. Why? More protection, and better able to carry needed things. Think a decently large car.
- 2) rob any grocery store of canned goods, water, etc... put in a said vehicle,
- 3) go to a hospital and get medical supplies
- 4) go to a library and find any books about survival
- 5) before the power goes out, download any books about survival, or even just for reading that you can, then go to an electronics store and grab tablets, usb drives, storage, etc, along with car chargers so that you can always keep up. Hell, grab a few cell phones while you are at it, if they are pre-paid and usable, just in case.
- 6) go to auto shops, get an extra spare tire, oil, tools, etc.. that you might need just in case.
- 7) hit up an rei for survival gear. hell, grab a bike rack and a bike if you think you'll need it. Grab a tent, lamps, warm clothing, etc...

To conclude: The only reason I gave it 2 stars was because it made me think about those 7 things and that for the most part, it was well written and easy to read. The obvious plot issues is why I ranked it down. Though, because of the premise and the hope of a little more intelligent 2nd book, there is a chance I might check out

book 2, but it would definitely have to be in a discounted bargain bin or a serious kindle sale for me to purchase it.
