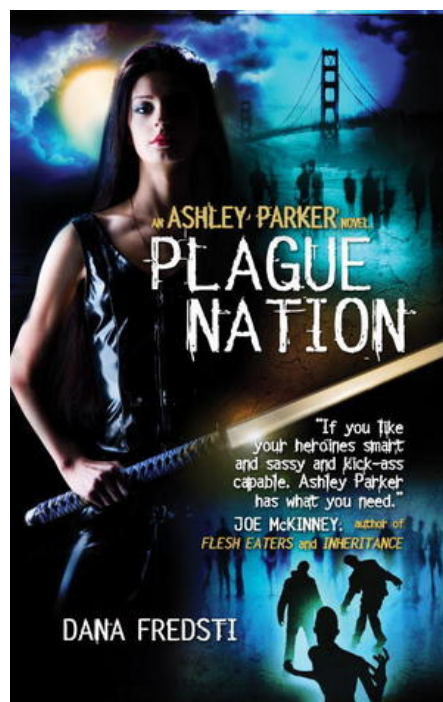




Plague Nation

Dana Fredsti

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Ashley Parker was a ordinary woman who was also a “wild card,” immune to the emerging zombie plague, drawn unwillingly into a shadowy paramilitary organization. Having been ambushed in San Francisco, which is now fully engulfed in the zombie plague, Ashley and the wild cards must pursue the enemy to San Diego. There they will discover adark organization which seeks to weaponize the plague. But that isn't the worst news. The plague itself has gone airborne, making it transferable without physical contact. It cannot be controlled by *anyone*, so reports of the zombie swarm are coming in from across the United States - and across the world.

Plague Nation Details

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From Reader Review Plague Nation for online ebook

Aaron says

I read other reviews before buying my copy, but I had every intention of picking this one up regardless of what others thought of it. Dana Fredsti is one of my favorite online friends, and I thoroughly enjoyed the first of her Ashley Parker novels, Plague Town. There, full disclosure out of the way, onward!

Other reviews say that Plague Nation feels like the second part of a trilogy, and I'll agree...in the sense that The Empire Strikes Back feels like the second part of a trilogy.

Dana takes the crew of wild cards, those immune to the zombie virus, and flings them into the rotten meat grinder with gusto here. With all of the catchy and humorous references to geek culture that you'd expect (if you read Plague Town), the story of Plague Nation ratchets up the action, tension, suspense, and drama between the cast members. And Dana doesn't miss a single chance to give the reader one more thing to worry about happening to these characters, all of whom are very easy to identify with and care about.

I loved the book cover to cover and look forward to seeing how Dana wraps it all up with Plague World.

Lori says

Picking up where the first book left off, Dana Fredsti continues to build her unique world of wild cards and zombies and expands her multiple storylines to pen another page-turning thriller. The author organically transforms Ashley and Gabriel's relationship from the constant sniping and bickering in the first novel to a more mature relationship, while maintaining the sexual tension between them. A secondary romance between Simone and Nathan deepens the overarching storyline. The author skillfully develops of the wild cards' camaraderie, which is tested when they lose some of their own during the zombie battles. Fredsti seamlessly adds an intriguing subplot when Ashley and the wild cards discover there is a traitor in their midst.

Fully drawn into the author's world again, I was completely caught up in multiple story arcs right up to the final stunning cliffhanger that left me anxiously awaiting the next novel.

I was provided a copy of the book by BTS eMag for purpose of an honest review. I was not compensated for this review – all conclusions are my own responsibility.

Stephanie G says

2.5 stars

Ashley became a 'Wild Card' when she was bitten by a zombie. Wild Cards react differently to the virus.

Instead of becoming the next walking dead, they become stronger. Ashley is a part of a team that is looking for a cure, and killing a lot of zombies in the process. The sickness spreads into larger and uncontrollable numbers, and it's up to Ashley and her companions to get the doctor—who happens to be partly responsible for the crap hitting the fan—to the secret lab.

Plague Nation is the second book in Fredsti's Ashley Parker series. The story is told through Ashley's first person perspective with cuts to other characters around the USA turning into zombies. While these cuts were interesting in the previous novel Plague Town, they grow too repetitive in Nation. There is also another character in these cuts that becomes important later on in the story.

The novel starts out with the Wild Card group clearing out what's left of the town from Plague Town. Things between Ashley and her love interest Gabriel have cooled down. In fact he doesn't seem into her as much anymore. His dark secret from the last novel is making things even more difficult for him in this one. The characters start to fool around while dispatching zombies. This leads to someone getting hurt. It takes up a nice chunk of the first part of the book. While it serves as character development, and a wakeup call to some of the characters, it does little else as a whole.

The story doesn't amp up until someone or a group of people sabotage the team. Someone sets their lab (the lab that is working on a cure) on fire. They are forced to move into another lab in the center of a large zombie outbreak. Getting to the lab becomes the goal, but they have to fight through a ton of zombies to do it. It introduces a couple new characters to the group in the midst of chaos.

Plague Nation wasn't as engaging for me as Plague Town. Ashley and other team members constantly crack pop culture jokes, but these tended to take me out of the story. There is a lot of hacking and slashing going on, and very little character bonding between Ashley and the reader. There are those moments of internal monologue, but I felt as if they were hitting the basic points and moving on. While it's good Ashley isn't dense or a downer, she has a bad habit of seeing something terrible, saying it's awful, and then cracking a joke. These things make it so when Ashley does partly break down emotionally, I am already at a distance.

There is some character development between two other characters, but because this is going on outside of Ashley's POV it lacks tension. She constantly comments on the other characters. This isn't really fair to them as a whole. She doesn't know what is going on inside of her companion's heads, she isn't telepathic, but she seems to think so on occasion, which is a pet peeve of mine.

Despite heavy moments of blood and gore, the story lacked tension. I felt like it was hitting the zombie stereotypes and moving on, which slowed the book to a crawl. I still feel at a distance with the characters, despite the great gore of some scenes. This wasn't the strongest book in the series, and I hope they develop more as time goes on.

- Beth

gillian (Tattooed Book Review) says

What?! It's done?! But... What about...?!

The second book in the Ashley Parker series could be read as a stand-alone, but the first book is too good to miss!

As a zombie outbreak worsens and threatens the entire country, Ashley and a band of misfit "Wild Cards" must face more zombie mayhem in this gory, action-packed and entertaining thrill-ride. As the situation

becomes dire, the mood becomes darker and bleaker. Even Ash's constant, witty pop-culture references have a dark tinge. As we become more attached to the characters, their mortality is brought to the forefront, and we must watch sadly as their strength and bravado deteriorates, along with the civilized world.

Questions are answered but more are raised and a dramatic cliffhanger left me desperate for more of this clever and addicting horror series.

*I was provided a copy of the book by BTS eMag for purpose of an honest review. I was not compensated for this review – all conclusions are my own responsibility.

Loren says

Now I sort of wish I hadn't given Plague Town 5 stars because I didn't leave myself anywhere to go with this one, which is even better than the first!

Plague Town was an enjoyable page-turner, entirely fun and fast-paced. Plague Nation adds emotional depth to those attributes, which elevates it above almost every other zombie book I've ever read. Ashley is a normal person thrown into a highly abnormal circumstance -- and while her immunity to the zombie virus might have enhanced her ass-kicking skills, she is still a young woman who desperately wants to help everyone who crosses her path. There are moments in this book where she is forced to realize she **can't** save everyone. I've never cried over a zombie book before, which says loads about the normal lack of compassion or genuine emotion in the vast majority.

If you like realistic strong heroines, fast-paced adventure, public health conspiracies, and/or the San Francisco Bay Area, you have to check this book out.

Lucy says

Ohhh Ashley! She is not only a sword carrying badass zombie hunter, she is intelligent and funny. Kudos for a great female character!

Zombies are turning up all over and more and more are getting the virus. Ashley is immune so of course that means she has to fight. There is also angst in the form of her (former) love, Gabriel, who has some serious problems of his own and I could sympathize with how hard it all was to deal with. Even if sometimes it did seem like it was taking it out on Ashley. To which she carefully asks what put the "very large stick that is currently up your ass". She's nobody's "slave girl", that's for sure. I do love, however, that she was bitten by a zombie and stayed human, she regularly kills zombies (and usually dreadfully), she can handle herself with Gabriel, soldiers, everyone and yet what makes her sick? The Tea Cup ride at Disney. Awesome.

Let's mention there are some gross descriptions of zombie killing so if you are weak stomached, be ready. The best thing for me with this, however, is that despite the dark theme the author manages to put enough humor in to make it less of a downward plunge.

This is the second in the series, so there are some questions that remain unanswered and it does end sort of open but it was enough to make me think, where is the next one?? Without making me feel I was leaving everything up in the air. I myself am curious how the world can possibly be saved by book three.

Mark says

I am really looking forward to this book :-)

Just got an email saying it's out today in paperback, five minutes later had it reserved at Barnes and Noble to pick up later today :-)

Kristin (MyBookishWays Reviews) says

You may also read my review here:<http://www.mybookishways.com/2013/04/...>

Now that things in Redwood Grove have died down to a dull roar, Ashley Parker and the other wild cards are taking care of the stragglers, hoping to stop the terrifying virus that's been turning people into flesh eating shamblers. Ashley's also a bit confused about the treatment she's getting from Gabriel, who's giving her some pretty serious attitude. She thought they had something between them, and is determined to confront him as soon as she can get some downtime from zombie killin'. Unfortunately, reports are coming in from all over the country: the virus is spreading, and after a disaster nearly destroys the wild card's headquarters, it also compromises the research for the cure. The team must get to San Francisco if they have any hope of finding a cure, and this time, they have more than zombies to worry about. Sometimes, actually, the zombies are the least of your worries. Someone is determined to keep the team from getting to San Francisco, and they'll do anything to stop them.

Plague Town, the first Ashley Parker novel, was a delightful surprise, and I couldn't wait for Plague Nation. In it, we have a more sobered, matured Ashley, but she hasn't lost her sense of humor, or her fondness for movie quotes. Along with the other wild cards, Ashley is immune to the virus, and as a happy side effect, she has heightened senses that make her a pretty fierce fighter. Put a katana in her hand, and she's a fireball. While I love zombie novels, what makes these stand out is Fredsti delivers all the thrills that zombie aficionados look for, without ever resorting to cliché. In the wild cards, she's built a smart, cohesive team, and although the story is told from Ashley's view, each member of the team is given a history, and their own story. I also find her world, one in which the virus is just beginning to take hold and spread, fascinating. Ashley's world isn't post-apocalyptic...yet, and there's still a chance to stop it. Interwoven with Ashley's narrative are short vignettes that give us a glimpse into events in other parts of the country. They also give us a peek at a very human evil that doesn't think zombie apocalypse is a bad thing at all, and that's pretty terrifying.

Ashley Parker is sympathetic, smart, tough, and wickedly witty, and Plague Nation didn't suffer any of the sophomore slump that you sometimes see in a 2nd book. It really does focus on the emotional reality that comes along with events such as this. As they make their way to San Francisco (part of the way on foot), Ashley is very conflicted by the fact that she can't save everyone, and must watch as people, including families, are cut down in front of her. You'll also want to brace yourself for a few shocks in this one that I didn't see coming. One of them even had me exclaiming out loud. I like it when authors take risks, though, and frequently, they open doors to other, equally interesting storylines, so never fear, you won't be steered wrong, although you will be steered right into the action, so saddle up, because Ashley's zombie-infested, rapidly unraveling world is one you'll want to revisit, and if you think you know where this one is going, think again. If you love horror, zombies, a wise-cracking heroine, a hint of romance, and plenty of chills and thrills, topped off with assured writing, this series is for you! Good thing Plague World is in the works, huh?

Becky says

This series just gives getting better and better! This instalment is about the plague spreading across the USA.

One thing I like about this book is that the chapters are short and makes it easier to read the book. The writing style and the description makes it easier to imagine the scenes playing out in your head.

In the first book I did not like the main character but she grew on me in this book. She knew how to crack jokes at the right time and she took no shit from no one! She also cared a lot about the people around her which made her quite loveable.

I nearly cried in this book because my favourite character died in this book but never fear I have a new favourite character! JT! He is just so loveable but annoying loveable! Swoon!

One thing I like about this book is that there is a lot of characters so you get to find out a lot about different characters in this book and since they are wild cards I am always cheering them on! There is so much action in these books that you just need to turn the page to find some more.

I can't wait to read the last book but also sad it is the last book.

ParaYourNormal says

A virus. A mutation. A conspiracy.

I received Plague Nation, the sequel to Plague Town, from the publisher Monday afternoon. Bleary eyed and jittery, I finished it at midnight. And that night, I had zombie-fueled nightmares. Which pretty much tells you everything you need to know about Plague Nation: non-stop action, engaging characters, and zombies, zombies, zombies.

Ashley and her crew are doing zombie cleanup in the small northern California town of Redwood Grove, seeking out stray zombies before they can infect others. But outbreaks are popping up around the country, and it becomes apparent that there is a sinister hand at work, one which may have reached inside the zombie-hunting organization Ashley is a part of. Complicating matters, Ashley's teammate and on-again/off-again lover, is acting bizarrely.

The action eventually shifts to San Francisco and the scenes in Golden Gate Park are... amazing. The author lives in San Francisco, so she's nailed the feel of the place.

If you like action and thrillers, you'll like Plague Nation, though I would recommend reading Plague Town first because a) it's also a great read, and b) sometimes it's nice to read things in order.

Note: the reviewer received this book as a gift from the publisher.

Veronica says

The zombie plague, brought about by a mutated flu vaccine, is spreading. The DZN, an old, worldwide

organization that has been tracking zombie outbreaks for millenia is on the case but they've never seen an outbreak of this magnitude. Working with them are Ashley Parker and her fellow Wildcards, people that are immune to the zombie virus. But there is another faction out there that is working it's own agenda and finding a cure doesn't seem to be on it.

Plague Nation is another sometimes humorous, sometimes gory and disturbing outing into life after a zombie apocalypse. As with the first book, the main story - as told through Ashley's POV - is intercut with third person accounts of how and where the zombie virus is spreading, which helps to add a sense of dark inevitability. Needless to say, not everyone makes it to the end alive.

As with the first book, Plague Town, there is a small romantic element but it's not a mainstay of the book. Then again, you don't read a book about the zombie apocalypse for the romance, now do you? I don't, at least. I did think that the amount of pop cultural references this time around were a bit much. That aspect could've been toned down but it's a small nitpick. I believe this a planned trilogy so with one more book to go, I'm interested in seeing if there might be salvation at the end of the line for anyone.

Pamela says

Uber-engrossed in this story and finished Plague Nation in under 12 hours! WHEW!! Good good GOOD!!!! Bring on more plague!! I'm so nervous/excited for Plague World. There HAS to be a movie script in the works, too...Dana's research, story line and characters are too good to not infest our theaters.

Jenne says

4.5

Wow this was action packed! A nice follow up to the first book and it's set up nicely for the 3rd. Can't wait to see what happens to the gang! Ashley was super kick a\$\$ in this one and we met a new guy that I'm quite intrigued with. The whole conspiracy thing going is super interesting and I hope the third book is out soon!

K.A. Laity says

Plague Town trod a thin line between humour and horror, chock full of pop culture references and glorious mayhem. Fredsti's heroine Ashley Parker finds herself in an unexpected war with the undead — and sometimes her fellow teammates, the “wild cards” who are just as randomly selected by surviving the virus. It would seem hard to top the huge zombie swarm that they fight off at the end of the first book, but Plague Nation manages to be even more tautly intense than the first book, while continuing its development of normal people in extraordinary situations.

Ashley's humanity and stubbornness to let go of any of what makes her human forces her to make difficult choices and leaves her — and sometimes her friends — in dangerous situations. Not everyone makes it through book two (sob!) and the team reels from the blows. We get a little more back story on Simone and Nathan that sheds light on current events, find Gabriel's predicament is even more precarious, while new characters get introduced deftly and with such vividness that the quick pace never slows. Not only has the plague spread (fun and sort of eerie to see it near my hometown! Oh, Boarshead Theatre at the Ledges, you are missed) but it hasn't been entirely through ‘natural’ means — if you can use that term in a zompocalypse.

Conspiracy theorists will be unsurprised, but reasonable humans will find it all too plausible, too.

Great fun at breakneck speed with plenty of wincing grue: and seriously, we need geeks building a wiki of all the pop culture references or a prize for the person who can get the most subtle of them. I've seen reviews that sniff at the use of zombie, horror and SF riffs, but seriously — this is how we geeks talk.

Hail to the Queen, baby.

Jennifer says

The Good: Love. Love. Love. So much love for both Ashley Parker and Dana Fredsti. I love the way Ashley talks and thinks. Just love being in her head. I love how she interacts with the other characters and that the romantic aspects of the book are realistic to the situation instead of mushy. There were laughs and there was heartache, and everything was littered with zombie mayhem. This series is definitely a favorite of mine.

The Bad: Nothing. It was absolutely perfect. I wanted to lose myself in this novel forever.
