



The Island: Part 1

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The Fever struck hard and fast, rising out of the slums and claiming victim after victim. At first, reports trickled across the wire in small segments relegated to the final seconds of the broadcast news. Lost among stories of failing economies and political bickering, few noticed what proved to be the birth pangs of a monster. Within months, the disease dominated the news as thousands died and infection rates soared.

William Hill knew his chances of avoiding the virus sat squarely between slim and none. With experts predicting a global pandemic, his choices boiled down to not if, but where he would die. While the rest of the world built barricades and set up distribution points for food, he chose a simpler end. The island had been one of the last and best times with his father. He couldn't think of a better place to spend his final days.

He wanted sun and sand, fresh fish on the grill and cool nights by the campfire. He wanted feel-good days filled with oldies on the radio, days when he could hoist the sails and run before the wind. He didn't set out to make enemies, but he did. He didn't plan on becoming humanity's last hope for survival, or watching over an old woman and an eerie little boy either.

To William Hill, the island seemed as good a place as any to die.

He just didn't realize how good.

The Island: Part 1 Details

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From Reader Review The Island: Part 1 for online ebook

Mr A J Facey says

Just finished the first part. Although not a lot really happens, I found the style of writing flowed very well and I really enjoyed the story so far. The story just hooks you in and takes you for a ride. Quite where it will end up I have no idea. Download part 2 and started reading

Randy Harmelink says

Not a fan.

For me, reading this book was like a long drive through Montana or Nebraska. Just a constant flow of the same scenery, over and over. When something of note does finally happen, you almost miss it.

The pace was slow. Too many descriptions were, as another reviewer noted, almost painfully detailed. And at times, the story seemed to veer off into some tangential thought of the main character, until it finally winds back to the story that was being told. I was almost scanning the pages to get back to the story.

Dale Rosso says

Interesting read, starts out making the reader think it is going to be the basic disease ravishes world, everyone is turned into zombies and all types of mayhem happens because of it. However, this is not your standard zombie story, there are a lot of twists and turns and although the dead rise, they may not be what you guess they are. Give this one a chance, you may not be sorry.

Jarek says

It's OK, although it's definitely not a novel on its own, it's just the first couple of chapters and it ends before any action actually starts.

Patricia Kaniasty says

In for a long haul with this story. This is only part 1 and it is really good. This book gets into a lot of detail so if you don't like detail, don't bother. I really like the characters so far.

Tammy K. says

I struggled with how I would review this book. In the end I decided there was no way that I could write a

review of this book without using spoilers so be advised this review has SPOILERS.

I had thought the book would be more like its' description of an action adventure zombie apocalyptic storyline that somehow included dragons, after all that is what the synopsis promises it would be, however the book that I just read was not that.

While I was puzzling what to write in the review, the quote "As you know, you go to war with the army you have, not the army you might want or wish to have at a later time." came to my mind, so with that I am writing this review off the story that is, not the story that should be, might be, or could be.

I give this novella 2.5 out of 5 stars, but since that isn't an option I am pushing this up to three stars.

There are some typos/grammar issues with this story but not so much as to be too distracting.

The characters: As they currently stand, Most all of the characters are standard 'stock' characters of the genre (the sheriff, the shy mysterious youth, the grandmother who seems to be hiding things). The only exception being the protagonist, William whose back-story is painfully detailed.

The pace (flow) of the plot is slow and steady.

(view spoiler)

If the future episodes are to be judged based on this novella, then the book as a whole does not look promising. The pace is too slow, the action in non-existence, the details are way more then needed, the characters are both too shallow and too detailed.

This is only the second time that I have said this to an author, but this story is a case of 'too much talking and not enough action' and way too much information.

(view spoiler)

The trouble with over thinking your characters and their crisis is the same as over parenting, you have to let them fail for them to grow. You have to let them be inexperienced and make really stupid mistakes for the to be an emotional/physical crisis for your character to experience and grow. After all it is through the characters failures that we (the reader) bond to the characters.

Example:

If the ugly duckling did not experience his embarrassment and shame of not looking like a duck, then the fable would have taught nothing and it would be just a story of a swan, who looks like other swans his age, and grows up to be like every other swan.

Personal faults, moral failures, and character crisis are the glue of the storyline, without them (or without enough of them) the story becomes trivial and pointless.

Ok I have probably over hammered those points.

This story is flawed, but there is a story in here somewhere.

One last recommendation to the author (and I have already hit on that once but here it is again) unless something directly affects the plot execution there is no need to go into a lengthy description of it. Allow

your readers to fill in the details on the nonessential elements, otherwise your story is too wordy.

Angela says

This was ok but I was expecting more than a trip to the beach and descriptions of boats and sailing. The Fever was mentioned but never went into great detail and some of the more horrifying things (which I assume will be in the following parts to this story) were only ever hinted at.

The copy I read could have done with a really good editing process as the grammar used was just downright bizarre.

Was a decent enough story and despite the grammar Stark can write very good descriptions and scenes, but for me this was just lacking that essential backbone.

Steph says

I really liked this short story and am looking forward to the next in the series. I dont normally like apocalyptic stories but I really like the characters at this point. I know its a stretch to compare anyones writing with Stephen King, but his characters resonate similarly. By the way it was a free book on my nook, and I dont feel like my mind has been feeding off junk food!

Marcus says

I voluntarily reviewed an ARC of this book in exchange for an honest review

This is a novella about the end of the world. The writer doesn't write it the way you would think because instead of a hero, he has what can be considered an anti-hero. This anti-hero has already accepted his fate and just wants to die, until he decides that he doesn't want to die. The cause of death is a mysterious fever that no one knows where or what it is only that everybody dies. Nothing seems to stop it's advance and then things get worse. Entities are seen, and these are demons, dragons, and a couple of unknowns. The US government has issued a no travel ban and where ever you are, there you stay. Hence, the title of the story. The characters could be compared with Stephen King's The Stand. It is written in that vein

Kathy Gray says

Reading and reviewing books

Great teaser of a story. Now I really need to read some more by this author. I like where this is heading though. Out on an island with not a lot of people to worry about.

Guy says

I've started writing myself recently and am thoroughly enjoying it. I decided to download a few self published books as a yardstick, or to try to gauge the level of prose against professionally published works.

Despite the absolutely shocking cover art, I thoroughly enjoyed The Island. The funny thing was, I was bracing myself to not like it but was sucked in.

I can see what people mean about nothing really happening in the first book, but then it is only a fifth of the entire story, so I wasn't expecting too much in terms of action. I also agree that Stark can perhaps be slightly too descriptive for some people, but I wouldn't accuse him of rambling.

My only negative points would be the terrible cover art and font, which really give the book a 'self published' look, and the fact that it didn't have any page breaks between chapters, meaning that they spilled over. It wouldn't take much to overcome the low quality look that so many self published books suffer from; after all, starting a new book is a gamble. The risk is time wasted when you could be reading something better, and a professionally presented book alleviates some of that worry.

All in all, if they're my only criticisms (after all, I don't read books for the quality of the graphic design or layout) then I'd say that it was a massive thumbs up.

Emma J says

Only managed part 1 so far and to be honest I found it a bit...meh.

It started to gather momentum near the end, but even though it was only 90 pages it felt like a chore to read all of them.

Obviously I can't comment on the entire story yet, but part 1 is very much only ok.

Douglas says

This is only the first part of a book. It was mostly just setup for the rest of the book, but well written enough that I may check out the rest of the book.

T.W. Brown says

The Island by Michael Stark has the distinction of being able to lure the reader in with the first part being free. Stark has truly reaped the benefits from the "old way" that Amazon operated. He got his first part out and listed as free. That keeps a steady stream of people downloading it. Of those, if 10% actually read it (let's face it, a lot of people download plenty of freebies and then never read them, then the ones who enjoy it will move on and purchase future installments. I mention this only because Stark has managed to write an introductory piece that should lure in many more readers.

The story swirls around William Hill and begins just as a strange sickness is sweeping through the global population. He uses this first piece to lay the groundwork not only to his characters, but also the world they

live in. This is a compelling read and the characters all make you want to know just a little more about them (especially D. Little...read and you you will know what I am talking about).

Overall, this is a clean read. A few editing gaffs, but none that are distracting and glaring. The story is smooth and believable. Grab this for free and you will be back for the additional installments.

Cheryl M-M says

Well the first part managed to hook me enough to download the next few parts. It looks as if this author, who writes with a warm smooth flow, has a talent for spinning a yarn.

First though a few odds and ends. Why has the author chosen to split this into five different installments instead of just releasing the story as one novel? Yes the first three are free and that will entice readers to buy the last three, but I still think offering the full version would be a sound choice.

The other thing that bothered me was the fact the author chose the same cover picture for all six parts. The cover is lovely, don't get me wrong, but other than the title there is no indication that it is a different book to any of the other five with the same cover.

Aside from that this is a well written and interesting start to a story, which promises to be something of a mixture between apocalyptic disaster and fantastical strangeness. How do I know that already? Easy, somewhere in the midst of the foreboding mass virus induced deaths someone mentioned goblins.
