

World's Collider: A Shared-World Anthology

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The Collision is the worst disaster in human history. So far...

In the near future, an experiment at the Large Hadron Collider causes an enormous explosion, known as the Collision. The blast flattens a huge chunk of central Europe and punches a massive hole in the Earth's surface. Over the next decade, unspeakable horrors pour from the rift: vicious creatures with a taste for human flesh, a terrible scream that drives all who hear it insane, a phantom entity that feeds on fear and paranoia, and a nightmare train from the pits of hell, to name but a few. This onslaught of terror causes the collapse of civilization and threatens to wipe humanity from the planet.

World's Collider is a unique concept in short fiction, where all eighteen original stories are part of a common narrative, recounting the disaster and its aftermath. A true novel by many voices, including Steven Savile, James Moran, Aaron Rosenberg, Trent Zelazny, Jonathan Green, Simon Kurt Unsworth, Kelly Hale, Richard Wright and a host of new talent.

Fifty million people died in the Collision. They were the lucky ones...

"Each component cranks up the tension and the disparate tales combine in mosaic-fashion to deliver a truly gripping narrative." - **Ian Whates, author of The Noise Within**

World's Collider: A Shared-World Anthology Details

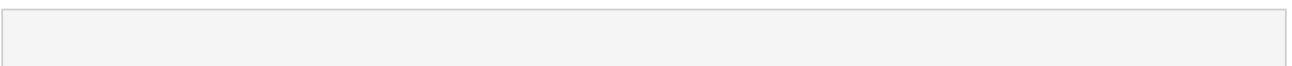
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From Reader Review World's Collider: A Shared-World Anthology for online ebook

Matt Schiariti says

And now for something completely different...

The worst disaster in human history is only the beginning. An experiment involving the Large Hadron Collider goes horribly awry, causing what will be known for the next ten years as 'The Collision'. A hole is punched in the earth, allowing unspeakable horrors to cross over into our universe. Flesh eating creatures, screams that drive people insane, a being that takes over human hosts and feeds on their fear and pain, a train made of bone, flesh and sinew... And that's not even the half of it. Humanity is on the brink of extinction and what's left of our planet may not even be worth inhabiting.

World's Collider is something completely different. It's an anthology...but it's also a novel. Huh? How can that be? Usually, anthologies have a common theme but that's where the similarities end. Not so with World's Collider. There is not only a central theme to this large collection of short stories, but there is also a central 'plot' to the whole thing, involving recurring places and characters, as well as a primary 'main' character and central 'villain'. Each story builds upon the center line of the collection and builds upon it, telling different tales of destruction, aftermath, and the fight for survival in the wake of the Collision. It's something entirely unique, at least it is to me.

I admit to not knowing the lion's share of the people featured in this book other than Richard Wright (I love his work) and Steven Savile but the talent pool pulled together for this collection is nothing short of fantastic. The stories are varied and well told and have differing perspectives of how the varying cast, both common to the overall plot and unique to each story, deal with what's thrown in front of them. Every story is a winner and the new talent hangs right in with the seasoned veterans.

I think the most impressive aspect of this anthology, however, is the editing. That's not to downplay how good the writing is because it's all fantastic, but I can't imagine what a task it was to assemble this many different writers, give them a central theme and story line and let them have at it, giving them free rein to tell their stories but also maintaining a sense of cohesiveness between the lot. My hat is off to Richard Salter for taking on such an ambitious project and turning it into a reality. Some of the stories are told in the third person, some are first person, and a few are even told in the form of social media updates, yet everything just...fits. You would think that so many authors with different takes, styles and point of view preferences would derail a centrally-themed collection like this but that just doesn't happen here and that's due in large part to fantastic editing, without a doubt. I'm sure many sleepless nights were involved in putting this whole thing together.

If I do have one complaint, it would be the ending: there really isn't one. Considering there's a shared plot line running throughout the entire collection, I was hoping for an ending that was a little more...definitive. Still, it's left open to interpretation and perhaps a follow up? If so, consider me there.

World's Collider is something fresh in the world of sci-fi, horror, and post apocalyptic fiction. Different, unique, well written, and fantastically edited.

Jason Stewart says

In Nightscape Press' anthology collection *World's Collider*, edited by Richard Salter, the world ends not with a bang or a whimper, but in a collision. In Salter's shared world tome, humanity is brought to its knees by a sinister accident caused by the CERN Super Collider in Switzerland. This accident of cosmic proportions opens up a rift that connects Earth to multiple realities filled with some not so nice characters. Let's just say, in this world, if the folks at CERN have found the "God Particle" then God is H.P. Lovecraft.

The chaos that is unfolds upon the world in the 21 short stories that make up this book are fraught with the gritty drama of ordinary people who are forced to confront an increasing horrible world. A world without the signposts of civility or sanity. A world where taking the tube could make you into Heath Ledger's twin, where man-eating piranhas don't necessarily stick to the water and where some of the worst monsters are human.

Overall, *World's Collider* has some excellent moments of creep and horror, with perhaps a slight touch of fluff on the edges. But if watching the world burn down slowly is your idea of fun, you'll find many reasons to pick this anthology up.

Kim Sofia says

I've just read this, and consider re-reading it again in about a month. I feel having read it as pieces, I'd like to now enjoy it as a whole story. Each story, all different authors, wove a complete fabric, with main characters drawing everything together...This was absolutely fantastic, quite needed since I've been reading zombie horror and that starts to wear a bit...something completely different, unpredictable, and wonderful! Please read this book!!!

Wayne says

When it comes to apocalyptic tales, I figured I had read just about every version of the concept possible. This collection, however, offered a fresh approach in both story and presentation. Every story, written by various authors, told the full tale, and the differences in the style of each story is what made the book really interesting. The fact that disparate writers could come together to build a unified narrative with its own style and feel is pretty incredible, and well worth reading for those who don't mind their horror on the intense side. For the record, however, while the supercollider accident theory works here, I scoff at the idea that the collider is a thing to be feared. The pursuit of scientific knowledge is a noble goal, and I hope the device will one day be in full operation. If it turns out I am wrong and we do get blasted into another dimension, you can feel free to tell me "I told you so..."

Robert Smith? says

I wanted to like this a lot more than I did. The first half was fantastic (the Kelly Hale story aside) and the spliced chapters by David Smith and Violet Addison were incredible. Building a narrative through multiple voices is an awesome idea and the slow burn as the world dissolved worked very well.

Sadly, the second half seemed to lost the plot, quite literally: every chapter seemed to be the same. For a book that prides itself on its connectivity, this was a shame. Easily a third of this book could have been deleted with no pain whatsoever. There's a final chapter that wheels out some vaguely similar versions of previous characters to make cameos before dying, but that really doesn't do the overall story any justice. We really needed more character, to make us feel what as going on, and less sci-fi technobabble that simply told us.

Overall, a mixed bag. I'm glad this experiment was tried, I just wish it had been more successful.

Keith says

I borrowed this book for free from Amazon from the sci-fi anthology category. Calling it sci-fi is valid, but it's not particularly tech or science heavy. It does a good job at its blurb, which is a shared story written by a collection of authors, although its ending leaves a bit to be desired.

Hilary (HilyBee) says

Absolutely phenomenal. I couldn't stop reading this anthology! The group of authors created the best anthology I have ever read. Each chapter is one or part 2, etc. of a story for a small number of characters. The characters and stories flow so effortless it doesn't even feel as if this is multiple authors. Some novels written by just one author don't flow this much! I was impressed by how the individual stories came together to form a cohesive world. I will be thinking about these stories for the rest of the week.

The stories are all centered around the major event that occurred, their perspective of life right now, and how they are trying to get back to normal. There are also mini-events that occur because of the hole that was created, such as monsters arising and rumors of "zombies".

Basically with all the different crazy stories going on you have a question mark and "What's going to happen next!?" stuck in your mind the entire time. I absolutely loved it! I can't say too much without spoiling the fun. Just go read this one for yourselves. I bet you will love it just as much as I do! (I'm not the only one who loved it. I've talked with others who love it too!) This anthology is definitely going on my list of recommendations, favorites and re-reads.

~HilyBee from Novel d'Tales

Katherine says

I usually approach anthologies of short stories as that book I have ongoing... Always available to pick up and read a bit here and there as the need or spirit arises. This collection though? This is a shared world collection that weaves together the vision of a group of authors so effectively that I was glued to the stories page after page...

Stephanie says

If I'm honest, this book was a surprise. I am familiar with Nightscape Press and have yet to be disappointed, but a “shared world anthology” with twenty-three contributors? I was sure it would be a confusing, jumbled mess. I started reading without much hope for cohesion and figuring that each story would just be different character, different place.

I was so very wrong.

First, it's not just little stories in a shared reality. It's a fully-developed novel with chapters and characters that are carried throughout its entirety.

Second, cohesion needn't have been a concern. Even with the amount of contributors' voices, everything is written in such a way that all transitions are smooth. Without the bylines, I honestly would have believed that this whole book was written by maybe two or three people –I only say that because there was a distinct style or two that flowed smoothly with the rest, but differently.

Third, I should never have doubted Nightscape Press. I know their standards to be high and I was a fool for thinking they'd release anything that was less than pure genius.

Whilst reading, I kept thinking, “Lost!” Usually, when my brain keeps screaming that, it means going back to reread because I am lost. With this book, that was not the case at all: I was reminded of the show “Lost.” It doesn't move around as much and the whole story is completely different, but the mystery, the view of each character, and the drawing together of everything really gave it a similar feeling. (Or, I just “binge-watched” that show too soon before reading the book...)

The writing is truly wonderful. I cannot stress enough how surprised I was by the cohesiveness of the book as a whole, but the story itself is just as amazing! I was blown away by the 'glimpses' all being tied together –and how it happens! For me, this wasn't a “can't put it down” book from the beginning, but once I realized how it was written, what to expect ... THEN, I was glued to it.

I really don't know what else to say. I truly loved reading this as well as the whole idea of it. It screams “creativity” and is remarkably imaginative.

...And it doesn't end like 'Lost'. :-D (Though I do want more! The ending is satisfying and no loose ends are left hanging, but I wasn't quite ready for it to end.)

Mark Nuhfer says

Things I LIKED about this book:

- It was a crazy mashed up wild read.
- Just in the first few pages I wondered if I was reading sci-fi, apocalypse, zombies, horror or something else.
- It had what might be my all-time favorite line in a book: "Lots of people were killed by falling chunks of

France."

- I think I got it for free.
- It kind of reminded me a little bit of Stephen King's "The Stand."
- It was an interesting concept, combining short stories by multiple authors into a single coherent novel, that mostly worked for me.
- Many of the writers also wrote for various Dr. Who projects.
- I found the first 2/3 of the book pretty entertaining and much better than I expected it would be.

Things I DIDN'T LIKE about this book:

- It was hard to keep up with who some of the characters were between the stories.
- Not very much character development.
- All the stories combined doesn't quite work as a novel.
- It's not strictly a linear story. There are odd jumps between the chapters that left me disoriented.
- I got kind of worn out by the last 1/3 of the book, almost put it aside, and was kind of glad it was over by the end.
- I didn't really understand the ending.

Bottom Line- I recommend it as an interesting kind of book and overall pretty entertaining. Approach it less as a novel and more as connected short stories and you might appreciate it even more.

Tim says

The editor and show runner of World's Collider is an old school friend, and Richard Salter is understandably proud of his first book with his own name on the front. World's Collider is a shared world anthology of short horror stories which come together to form a novel. The collection contains all human, and inhuman, suffering from the mild to the gory and violent, peppered with a little pathos and hope seasoning.

The premise is that the Large Hadron Collider, the 17 mile long circular particle accelerator near Geneva, has actually punched a hole in the space/time continuum. The resulting explosion takes out a large part of central Europe and kills 50 million people - the lucky ones. For the survivors the apocalypse is a living hell.

The first of the twenty one stories in the anthology takes the reader right to the start of the incident in the near future when the scientists notice a strange light and weird gravitational readings emanating from the collider. Wraith Lights by Jonathan Green gets the book off to a suitably creepy start.

Unsurprisingly Keep Calm and Carry On (by David N. Smith & Violet Addison) is the title of one of the stories, written as blogs of a British hospital nurse and his blog friends caught up in the world events. Keep Calm is split into four parts spread through the book. At first the style and "voice" annoyed me, but it provided a sense of the Everyman experience and "authenticity".

Capturing the mood of the fashion world's loss of Milan and much of Paris is The Rise and Fall of the House of Ricky by Kelly Hale. Ricky is a designer who narrowly escapes the destruction in Europe and has a new material for the clothes of his top flight customers in America. It is so exciting the wearers give a little "oohh" every time they put them on. Another nice touch is a later reference in the novel to Ricky knock-off clothes.

Displacement by Aaron Rosenberg is a good plot advancing story - not just evil critters can come through the nexus of dimensions.

The Coming Scream by Simon Kurt Unsworth is one of my favourite stories in the collection. This is messy horror with exploding eye balls. Can anyone or anything stop the all pervasive background noise in your head?

Doors by Paul Pearson envelops the reader in an isolated, suffocating, sealed small farm house. Don't let 'them' in!

Closure by Pete Kempshall has a hint of a suggestion that maybe the rift could be closed. Even such a faint glimmer of hope is drowned in the everyday reality of survival.

Black Whispers by Trent Zelazny is nothing to do with a high cocoa chocolate bar, and everything to do with chiggers who lay their eggs beneath the host's skin, causing painful sores. Did I mention this was a horror story?

Collisions by Dave Hoskin is all about the nasty getting nastier. Knowing that all matter is made up of tiny sub-atomic particles with giant gaps between them can be useful.

What Little Boys Are Made Of by Nicholas Blake is a child's eye view of the apocalypse. By far my least favourite chapter of the book. I found the un-knowing innocence of the first-person perspective well written but very irritating.

Beyond The Sea by Dave Hutchinson puts the plot back on track, but I expected more.

Caught by Elise Hattersley is a must for arachnophiles. Is it too late to warn arachnophobes to look away now? I enjoyed the thoughtful slow pace.

Lead Us Not by Meg Moore is a welcome injection of hope and faith. Most people will have lost whatever faith they had in a god or even humanity by this stage of the apocalypse, so when one man says he knows the way to the promised land should we listen? Of course not! This is a horror story.

The Last CEO by Jordan Ellinger gives a grim view of a large city in northern America controlled by the eponymous Chief Executive as local warlord and baron who isn't frightened of the floating jellyfish-cum-dirigibles. There is a sting in the tale.

There is something very British about bird watches, and Twitchers by Richard Wright finds a group of British ex-pats living in south-west France who have extended their hobby to include the new wild life emanating from the rift.

Basher by Jonathan Templar, and Lost Souls by Steven Savile & Steve Lockley feature the Nightmare Express, an other worldly, beyond the grave, train service running on rails made of polish bone. All aboard!

Mieneke says

World's Collider is an interesting experiment in which eighteen short stories tell one continuous story. It's a

largely successful experiment too. While the narrative is formed from a host of disparate voices, it creates an intricate whole and Salter's made sure that the main characters' personalities don't shift too much between the stories and that there aren't too many inconsistencies. The premise of the story – what if we discover what in essence are wormholes using the Hadron Collider in Geneva – is interesting and the vision of the slow apocalypse that follows is quite frightening, showing both the best and worst mankind has to offer.

The stories are told in different formats, via blog posts and comments, in journal format, as flashes of vision, in first person and third. This creates a dynamic feeling and also allows for the different writing styles to blend, so the narrative doesn't feel too choppy. The characters are quite interesting too; the different authors capture the different ways humans cope with disaster quite well. There are several main returning characters, that of Scott Fletcher, Natalie Murphy and Joseph Tern. If Scott and Natalie are on the side of the angels – not literally, though some would have you believe differently – then Joseph Tern is the devil incarnate. He's a full-blown psychopath, who kills people for pleasure and forms a conduit for something that is even less pleasant. Their development across the stories is not as completely as one might like, but it went further than I had expected. I would have liked to have seen more of how the years after the Collision had affected Scott and where Natalie came from before she became the hardened soldier we meet in *The Coming Scream*. Scattered about the narrative are several returning characters with larger or smaller parts and it's fun to spot the connections.

Even if *World's Collider* is one narrative, as with any anthology there are bound to be stories that click better with each individual reader than others. In my case, my favourite stories were *Keep Calm and Carry On Parts I-IV*, *The Rise and Fall of the House of Ricky*, *What Little Boys Are Made Of*, and *Caught*. The *Keep Calm and Carry On* sequence was a great look at how social media, in this case blogs, might function in an apocalypse, but also how tenuous a link it is to the outside world—once WiFi and electricity goes, you're lost. I also liked how it gave us snap shots of the same people not at the heart of the narrative, at different points of the apocalypse. *The Rise and Fall of the House of Ricky* was just very fun, as I love Project Runway – yes, I watch horrible reality TV shows to turn my brain off – and I can so see this happening, a fashionista giving up their soul for fashion. It's a creepy story, but despite that fun! *What Little Boys Are Made Of* broke my heart. Not just the fact that these two small children were left alone, but the way the eldest tried her best to care for her little brother knowing full well that it was almost beyond hope. One might say it was an easy play on sentimentality, but I found it well-written and I loved the voice of this little, six-year-old boy. *Caught* was a mixture of dread and paranoia shaken with a good bit of suicide mission and served on ice-cold cubes of creepy. I'm quite afraid of spiders and the fact that the 'enemy' here had taken the form of a spider gave me chills, but despite this I liked the way the relationships and interactions between the characters were drawn.

The ending of the narrative is nebulous. While it might be the happy ending humanity hoped for, it never explicitly says so and there are some loose ends which make me wonder about a possible sequel. Because if they are not there to serve as plot hooks for a further novel, they are just very glaring loose ends. Still, as it stands *World's Collider* is an engaging read, which is both scary and encouraging; humanity sinks deeply, but also shows its resilience and rises above itself. The book might not work for everyone, as it is not quite fish nor fowl due to its experimental nature, but I appreciated the concept and its execution, even if it wasn't completely flawless. If you're a fan of anthologies and would like to see what the form can stretch to, *World's Collider* is well worth a read.

This book was provided for review by the publisher.

G. Munson says

Brilliantly put together. This book is HUGE and an incredible collection of short stories all following a central plot. I can't imagine the difficulty making all this happen, so many kudos to the authors and editor for making everything flow together.

The book follows an explosion at the Hadron Collider that allows things to pass through into our world. The stories follow the many people that are affected (which is basically everyone). All the stories work together to tell the tale, and it's a hell of a story to tell. For me, just about all the stories flowed nicely, with only a couple that for me seemed a bit off from the others. They weren't bad stories (I don't think there was a bad story in it), but I did scratch my head a couple times. This was the only downside, other than it being so massive a book. It took me a very long time to finish, and I think it's because there are so many characters and so much going on that I had to take breaks to read other books.

I do that anyway with short story collections, so it's not saying anything bad about the book. World's Collider is a solid read, and there are some really awesome stories in there that tell a hell of a tale about the end of the world. More than anything else, it's like nothing I've read before.

Jackie Blewett says

This was a great idea and it worked. Each chapter is a story or part of a story (which is continued later in the book) of different characters within the main story of 'The Collision'. It is fortunate that this book is hard to put down as the approach - jumping around from story to story within a bigger story - can be confusing and requires some concentration. As a skim reader I suffered a little. Also as a kindle reader, I couldn't flick back to check things that I couldn't remember fully or didn't understand. These two things didn't help. Obviously with an anthology, you are going to prefer some styles of writing over others and this was the case here.

However I would have to say that overall the standard was very high and the only issue I had was that I wasn't convinced by some of the 'monsters'. I'm usually pretty good at suspending belief too. That said, it was a very entertaining read which kept me guessing to the end. Oh and Joseph Tern is truly terrifying. Don't read chapters in which he appears, before bedtime.

Arcadia May says

Excellent book. Short stories by different authors yet all in the same universe telling a coherent and compelling story. I had thought it was going to be sci-fi because of the Hadron Collider element, but it's actually horror/monster/apocalypse genre and an excellent example of it. Suspense and tension build up steadily. The short story format means that action flows steadily; there are no dragging bits and I was always interested to find out the next bit of the story. The short stories also provide great opportunity for expansive world-building. I thoroughly recommend this book; if I could give it more stars I would.
