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Ellen Connor

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When five strangers appear, desperate to escape the bloodthirsty packs, Jenna defies her protector and rescues them. As technology fails and the old world falls away, Jenna changes too, forever altered by supernatural forces. To fight for their future, she and Mason must learn to trust their instinctive passion-a flame that will see them through the bitter winter, the endless nights, and the violence of a new Dark Age.

Nightfall Details

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Author : Ellen Connor

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Genre : Romance, Paranormal Romance, Fantasy, Paranormal, Apocalyptic, Post Apocalyptic, Urban Fantasy, Science Fiction, Dystopia

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From Reader Review Nightfall for online ebook

Jesslyn says

I tried. I really did. I wanted to like this way more than I did because I loved the premise.

The urban fantasy storyline worked for me. A changing world with failure of tech and the beginning rise of magic, a group of people trying to survive in the new world--all good. What didn't work for me was the romance angle.

Let me comment on Mason first. I really don't care for the tortured hero love interest--ugh. It just seems dated; that is my bias so I tried to look past that to the elements of the relationship as far as romance. We never see any real reason why these two cared about each other. There is no real dialogue or getting to know each other nor is there a significant passage of time to account for it.

Because of this I spent way too much time rolling my eyes (one fell out, lol) or yelling "give or a break" or the ever popular "Really?" You can check out my Kindle highlight/outbursts comment here: <https://kindle.amazon.com/profile/Jes....>

Another issue with the romance was that it seemed like the romance was forced in. The story would be rolling along and then the characters would engage in some badly timed kissing or sex. I'm assuming this was to illustrate how great their passion for each other was, but it didn't work for me.

NON PLOT SPOILER

I shit you not, at one point, they were trekking through the woods filled with zombie wolves and stopped to have a passionate argument followed by some kissing. If it had been a book instead of my Kindle, book would have met wall.

This book was a collaboration between Ann Aguirre and Carrie Lofty which I found out after I finished, and it felt like it. I don't know how they divided the work, but it felt like one did the PNR and one the UF.

Despite that rant, there were elements that I liked and I will probably get the upcoming books in this series (AFTER I Kindle sample them). I LOVED the fact that this was a complete story with no cliffhanger ending. I am also intrigued enough by the magic aspects and how it will develop in the future books with the passage of time.

The next book is three years after the event in Nightfall and the third book takes place twelve years later. That is absolutely brilliant thinking and give the writers huge leeway in world building.

I would recommend this book to PNR fans and give it a solid C.

Melindeeloo says

Forget the zombies, here's the werewolf apocalypse...

The Eastern United States and parts of the world have fallen to a failure of technology and the rise of some

nasty magic, but in the West the people have lived in semi-blissful denial despite shortages in fuel and such. But that is about to change and a Warrior has a promise to keep, even though Mason's methods are going to seem extreme to Jenna, the woman he's pledged to save, and his motivation for kidnapping her are going to sound insane - as insane to Jenna as the father who abandoned her and who is the man to whom Mason made his pledge.

I liked the rough around the edges Mason who is a warrior to the core and needs the heroine Jenna because he's all about protection and battle but lacks the flexibility in a time when that may be the key to survival. Both the Jenna and Mason are damaged and seeking acceptance in the midst of the turmoil which surrounds the end of civilization, so they have a fair number of rough spots until they finally trust each other enough to get what they need (and to give the other what he/she needs). But when they do come together it is with a forever kind of intensity and they make a great team.

The final ending which had the survivors of our cast settling into a 'new' normality felt kind of anticlimactic after the action packed emotional roller coaster ride, but I can't imagine any type of happy ending that could have lived up to all that went before - and this was a romance, so a happy ending was a must. But that didn't dim my enjoyment of Nightfall as a whole. Really my only nit was a language one that will seem trivial to most people but jarred me out of the scene.

So I really liked Nightfall a great deal - which had great action, a fair amount of steamy stuff and some pretty intense emotional moments for our starring pair. Nightfall is the first in an 'apocalyptic romance' trilogy. Next up is Midnight starring Dr Chris Welch who goes through a rough time in this book and the final book Daybreak star the kids from this one: Penny and Tru later after they are all grown up.

I just discovered the Ellen Connor is a pseudonym for the author pair Ann Aguirre and Carrie Lofty - I've never read anything by Lofty, but I like Aguirre who also writes scifi and urban fantasy under her own name and romance as Ava Gray.

Mandi Schreiner says

Favorite Quote: "If survival means kissing somebody who smells like you, I want no part of it."

The world is coming to an end. Changing in ways people can not comprehend – and that is if you can live to see tomorrow. Technology is failing. Cars won't start. And maybe the scariest, there are what people refer to as demon dogs - hunting, eating, and devastating the human population. It started in eastern Europe and has slowly made its way west. Because there is no communication, and worse, not many people left who have survived this apocalypse, the people in the western United States do not know what is headed for them. Except Mason. Mason met up with a man named Mitch Barclay when he was young. Mitch was crazy to most people, spouting off crazy theories about the world ending. But Mason listened, and then watched as a demon dog killed him. The last thing Mitch asks of Mason is to save his daughter when the time comes.

That is how Mason ends up kidnapping the unknowing Jenna one night in Oregon. Jenna knows the world isn't exactly a safe place, but she never thought danger lurked out by her mailbox. Mason ties her up, and takes her to a secluded cabin in the woods. It is here where she first is angry and upset that she has been kidnapped. But it is also here where she witnesses the demon dogs up close. Sees what they can actually do to a human. She learns of Mitch and Mason's relationship, and they bunker down for a long cold winter.

But they aren't going to be alone for long. A group of five strangers show up at their cabin door, pleading for a safe place to stay. Low on food already and patience Mason wants nothing to do with them but Jenna's heart is too big to turn them away. Together, this misfit group must face a new world.

Nightfall is the first book in the Dark Age of Dawning series by Ellen Connor (aka the writing team of Ann Aguirre and Carrie Loft). Dark, intense, and downright scary, this book is pretty full of awesome. The world they have created just might give you nightmares, but I also bet you won't be able to put this book down. The fear that comes off these characters, as they try to outwit these viscous beings can be felt off the pages. These demon dogs were actually once human. Some even shift to somewhat of a human if killed. But there is no humanity in these dogs. They need to eat, and they have ways of communicating with each other. Towns, cities, even states have been wiped out. Mason, an ex-marine becomes this little group's leader. Having knowledge and warnings from Jenna's father years ago, he is somewhat prepared to lead this group. Jenna is more the heart. She is strong, and level headed, but she also is kind and is the glue that holds these strangers together.

We also meet Tru, a teenager who is quick to throw an insult, but deep down is just as unsure about himself than every other teenager. He is good with a gun and becomes Mason's second. We also have the 44 year old Angela, with her young daughter, Penelope who never speaks, but eerie things happen with her as the book progresses.

There are some gruesome scenes in this book, where my eyes went very wide (I may never look at a spider the same way again). When a demon dog bites you, you don't necessarily turn into one of them but you turn into...something. As Jenna and Mason run through a town, they see dead half-human half-other animal people everywhere. At the core of this book is a story of survival. And accepting the fact that life will never go back to "normal." Throughout their struggle, Mason and Jenna have this very intense romance. Mason likes to be in charge, and likes everything to go his way. Even though their attraction is very evident between them, Jenna refuses to proceed with it until Mason gives her something back. And boy is he stubborn. However, I love that the romance is just as hard and even dark like the book is.

There are some crazy twists in this one, especially towards the end. For as much action and suspense we get in this book, I kind of wish it was a little longer. Or the ramifications that happen to certain characters were explored more. I love this book, but I wanted a little more at the end. I kind of expected this to be more of an urban fantasy series, but instead, the next book is about a supporting character. I don't want to be done with Jenna and Mason yet. There is still so much to explore.

That being said, I'm very excited to see where Ellen Connor takes us in this world. There is much to be explored and the last two books of this trilogy feature characters you meet here.

Rating: B+

Vanessa theJeepDiva says

I love the self-torture of reading post-apocalyptic books. I typically start making out a supply list while reading them. The main aspect that draws me to this type of book is the how. There are so many different ways an author can bring on an apocalypse. Ann Aguirre and Carrie Loft give the reader a very original take on how it will happen, Dark Magic. This Dark Magic does not only affect people, but it has a major impact on technology. I loved the originality of this book. I have been impatiently anticipating getting this

book in my hands. When a friend won an ARC of it on Twitter I think I was more excited about it than she. Readers are given a different take on an apocalypse, a diverse cast of characters, and a sexy romance with an intriguing story. This book is all around greatness.

Jenna Barclay has listened to the crazy prophecies of what her father Mitch believes will happen her entire life. She has grown up watching her father come in and out of her mother's life with no care that his life in the woods with his cult is breaking her mother's heart. Needless to say when she is stuffed into the trunk of her own car by someone who claims to be following her father's orders, she is not shocked by the craziness of it. She just adjusts and immediately plans for escape. John Mason, who respected Mitch Barclay as a father figure has no problems about successfully carrying out the man's dying wish, protect his daughter when the Dark Age comes. He has spent many years preparing for this event. What he did not plan for is the wild card that he stuffed into a trunk.

Everyone's main goal is to stay alive. Humans are changing in various ways. Some have become mutant animal like creatures. Jenna and Mason both have pasts that affect how they look at the world and the people in it. Mason planned to protect Jenna and him. He is not prepared when Jenna insists on helping a small group that is in the woods near his cabin. As the group comes together Jenna quickly realizes that it is just how her father predicted. Her father predicted this, the number of people and the roles that they will play in the coming events. She is watching it all unfold around her.

My only complaint about the book is that I have to wait until September and then December to get more of this incredible series.

Shawna says

4 ½-5 stars – Post-Apocalyptic/Paranormal Romance

Emmy says

I went through phases with this book. At first I almost abandoned it, then got really into it, and then skimmed through the last part. So I wasn't sure how to rate this. I had been looking for something post-apocalyptic, with a Mad Max feel. This was more about the demon dogs and shifting so it wasn't *quite* what I had been looking for and definitely not my usual fare, but there were still some good parts, so I'm just going to rate this middle of the road.

SheLove2Read says

Imagine living in a post-apocalyptic world. Europe and the Far East haven't been heard from in years. The United States is split between the decimation of the East Coast and the "survivors" living on the West Coast. They still have technology but it's controlled and limited, almost like living in a modern day dictatorship with no one single leader. Scary stuff. Now imagine being kidnapped by a strange man who wants to "save" you from the coming prophesied change of the "The Dark Age" - a prophecy foretold by your own dead father.

When the prophecy comes true and ushers in a new reality, one of bloodthirsty zombie-like half man/half animal shifters, magic and the complete collapse of society and technology, Jenna and her rescuer/kidnapper Mason, face unforeseen challenges, vicious attacks... and an all consuming passion neither was prepared for.

I don't know what I was expecting, but wow - I was blown away! This is a thrill a minute, brutal, bloody and can't-put-downable read. Jenna and Mason are "frenemies" who become more than lovers but it's a hard, dark road and it totally works. The side characters are flawed, bold, scared, whiny, flat out freaky, but interesting in a way that keeps you reading well into the night. It's a dark, violent and bloody world they now find themselves living in and the author portrays that - sometimes almost too vividly.

Non-stop action along with heart wrenching emotions makes this one of my best reads so far in 2012. I can't wait to read the rest of this series. 5 stars/A+

Sans says

Waffling between 3 and 3.5 stars. I think having two writers who write in very different genres is forcing me down to the 3.

Interesting concept, the story definitely held my attention, and I was invested in the characters, but I felt like I could clearly see when one author would leave off and the other would pick up the story. It went from an apocalyptic sci-fi to extreme PNR and swung back around a few times. Kinda gave me motion sickness. I didn't feel like the stories wove together very well.

However. I found myself reading this compulsively, sneaking in pages when the bosses were in meetings and staying up late to read just a little more. I think this was a good start to the series and I'm excited to read the next book.

Elise ✕ a.k.a Ryder's Pet ✕ says

Re-read: 23.10.2016

I still like this book. A lot. No, I don't *love* it, but I *like* it, very much. There's action, there's tension, there's love, there is friendship, there is death and there is life. This book does pretty much have it all. Even reading this the second time around, I still enjoyed it. I adore *John Mason* (29?) and *Jenna Barclay* (24/25?). Apart they are strong, together they are a force to be reckoned with. I like how their romance is build up, and how the people come together for survival. I love seeing the characters develop, how much stronger, wiser, tougher. I like the pace of the book. It's not too fast, nor too slow. And I like that something happens often so that you don't get bored. Overall, it's easy to tell I like this book. Even the second time around.

“If survival means kissing somebody who smells like you, I want no part of it.”

Quick basic facts:

Genre: - (Adult) Paranormal Romance/Post-Apocalyptic

Series: - Trilogy, Book One
Love triangle? - (view spoiler)
Cheating? - (view spoiler)
HEA? - (view spoiler)
Favorite character? - John Mason
Would I read more by this author/or of series? - Probably...
Would I recommend this book/series? - Yes.
Will I read this again in the future? - Who knows?
Rating - 3.5/4 stars.

Ashley Daviau says

I absolutely adored this book! I had no idea what to expect when I picked it up and I was pleasantly surprised. I always enjoy anything to do with the apocalypse and anything remotely zombie like and this was no different. It was a unique take on zombie like creatures and I loved it! And the book was so action packed, I couldn't stop turning the pages because I just needed to know what happened! The only thing I could have done without was the romance aspect but even then it wasn't over the top and it barely affected my enjoyment of the story. All in all I thoroughly enjoyed this book and I can't wait to get started on book two!

Lisa Kay says

★★★★½ ☆ This is the best ★★★★★ star book I've read this year, and for that I have to give it another ½ star. I really liked this book, when I wanted to love it. It is like one of those B movies – you know, the classic kind that turn into a blockbuster. There are so many neat things in it. However, there is something off about it too. When I found out it was a collaboration of two authors, this made total sense to me. Still, I would recommend it to anyone looking for an apocalyptic sci-fi romance or a book with zombies for a challenge – it is a hoot.

I especially enjoyed doing it as a “buddy read” in the Nothing But Reading Challenges Group – ladies you saw where this was going long before I did. It was so compelling, nobody in the group stayed on track – we all read ahead.

I've set up the next book in the *Dark Age Dawning* series – and joining in a “buddy read” again.

Yvonne says

Wow, never in a million years would I have imagined I'd love a book this dark and scary. This was unlike anything I have ever read before in the romance genre. Nightfall had two incredible leads and wonderful secondary characters that I'm looking forward to reading more about in books 2 & 3. This was just off the charts scary and thrilling and steamy as hell. Thanks for the recommendation Shawna!

Weird Factor - off the charts insane! LOL

Ana says

First in a stunning new post-apocalyptic paranormal romance trilogy.

Growing up with an unstable, often absent father who preached about the end of the world, Jenna never thought in her wildest nightmares that his predictions would come true. Or that he would have a plan in place to save her-one that includes the strong, stoic man who kidnaps and takes her to a remote cabin in the Pacific Northwest.

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An unusual choice of reading material for me - I'm not a fan of post-apocalyptic themes, something about them is simply not attractive at all. But I'm glad I made an exception this time.

Mason is wonderful - a total alpha male, with communication issues. He doesn't want to get involved, but resisting Jenna is hard, and since he made a promise to her father he can't leave either. He is ready for the Dark Age, after all he spent most of his life preparing for this - but now he has 7 other people depending on him, and he isn't happy at all.

Jenna's life had definitely turned upside down - well, hers and those of the rest of humanity. Luckily for her, she has a hero who will protect her with his life - but she isn't sure she wants him.

I like both Jenna and Mason, but there a tiny thing that bothered me. (view spoiler)

I can see the things about post-apocalyptic novels that attract people. But I have to admit that the thought of the entire civilization gone scares me and makes me uncomfortable.

The ending itself is perfect IMO. (view spoiler)

Rating:

4.5 stars

Regina says

I attempted to read this book several months ago. Ultimately, this book was not for me despite the fact that I love Ann Aguirre as an author, I love post-apoc books and I had marked this as highly anticipated almost a year before its release. I ended up not finishing this book and abandoning it after about 20%.

There are some things I did like about the book. I liked the idea of it, I liked a few parts but other parts just did not work -- to me this may have been as a result of the collaborative effort between two writers. But I could be wrong. The set-up is perfect for so many of us that love survivalist based books -- the world is failing, technology and science are collapsing and a magic world is on the rise. With this shift, comes zombie like creatures that are terrifying and on the hunt. A group of survivors is thrown together, some have military training and others do not. Together they work together to survive. Okay, that is where I stopped liking this book.

The story did not adequately develop the characters and the relationships, in my opinion. Things seemed to happen only because perhaps in a movie or this type of book they might be expected to happen, but there was absolutely no backbone to the development of these things. For example, there are female bonding scenes that come out of nowhere and sexual relationships that just seem to happen with no connection or development. There are cliched character types (dark brooding sarcastic teen male, etc.) and cliched relationships (two females get drunk, talk about sex even though there is absolutely no lead up to their friendship).

In the end though, I know there are many readers who loved this book and I am disappointed that I was not one of them.

Catherine says

3.5 Stars

The absolute best thing about this book was the world. I have never read a Romance like it and it rocked my world. It felt so fresh and different from the usual Paranormal Romances. There weren't any zombies in it (although they sure seemed zombie-like), but it read just like a zombie movie. It had all the tension and excitement inherent to those movies. Because the dawning of the Dark Age was occurring as we were reading the book, we (the reader) faced the same uncertainty and nerves that the characters did. It was a very effective way of sucking me in.

I know I just mentioned it, but I want to stress how much I loved the way the book unfolded. The Dark Age didn't happen at the same time for everyone. It didn't start in the United States at all. So rumors and fear are widespread, even though some people don't believe it will spread. It settled in the East when it finally hit the U.S. The West side split from them and lived in their comfortable world of denial. They didn't believe the rumors of what was really going on out there in the world. Because of their denial we get to discover the truth right alongside Jenna, our heroine from the West. We don't know quite what is going on, we just know they need to hide. Electronics stop working, cars won't start. And the demon dogs are the stuff of nightmares.

I loved the way the author setup the early interactions between Jenna and Mason. He doesn't come up to her and try to explain and rationalize what is going to happen. He knows time is running out so he does the most expedient thing—he kidnaps her. Honest to God *kidnaps her*. She's terrified and she doesn't trust him, even when he starts to explain. It's not until undeniable proof is presented later that she really believes. I loved that this wasn't sugarcoated, because I wouldn't have believed it if it had been. But with the way it was written I could understand Jenna's emotions, just like I could understand her slow softening toward him after she learned the truth.

Although from the subject matter you would think this would be a book filled with nonstop action, it wasn't. Don't get me wrong, there was action and horror, that's just not all there was. The author included slower, tension filled sections that gave us a good idea of how scary (and boring) the waiting can be. And when Jenna extends their safety to a group of strangers we get to see that being a Good Samaritan is not always a good idea when food is in short supply.

I loved that we got to see a wide range of characters. They were true strangers and each had a very different personality. I really, really loved getting to see how each person reacted differently to the situation. I find myself curious about Penny, but Tru is the secondary character that I liked the most. I liked watching him grow from being a punk kid who hasn't seen an eyeliner he doesn't like (kidding!) to being an integral part of their survival team. I guess the apocalypse was the making of him.

I found Mason and Jenna's relationship by turns compelling and disturbing. Mason was focused on keeping them alive and rarely gave in to softer emotions. I can understand his hyper vigilance even though Jenna had an issue with it. Jenna's emotions rocked back and forth between angry and thankful. I could understand her out of kilter emotions to a degree (the world is going to hell, after all), but it was taken to the extreme a little too much. I actually came to intensely dislike Jenna. By the end of the book I was mostly fond of her again, but it was a close thing there for a while.

Jenna would push Mason for caring and affection and then become intensely angry when he shook her off. But half the time they were in a very dangerous situation. I cheered Mason on for brushing her off when she wanted to hold his hand for comfort. He needs to be at the ready to fight because he was really the only thing keeping them from dying. That's what made me so angry at her. I am tired of people who bitch and moan about the person who is keeping their ass alive. They're in every movie or book where characters are forced to survive in a world gone mad, and I'm sick of those people criticizing the very skills that are saving them. Personally, I *want* that tough as nails person with me when the end comes.

Now, don't get me wrong, I understand that Mason did need to learn how to relax and allow intimacy during the down times. I'm not saying he didn't need to work on it, I'm just saying that I was tired of Jenna picking the worst moment for affection and then taking it so personally when he didn't cooperate. And the fact that Jenna thought it was okay to punish him by being a tease? Very, very unattractive in my eyes. No wonder he was afraid to try to get close after that.

Because Jenna's emotions were all over the place I never knew quite how she would react to anything. It was like being around someone with a short fuse. You constantly wondered when they were going to snap this time around. The emotions were portrayed well and it all felt intense, but they kind of made me uncomfortable. They were even physically fighting with each other at one point. And they both tended to link anger with arousal. It was intense, sure, but it just wasn't for me.

When Mason and Jenna finally got together in the end it didn't feel quite right to me. At times I really wondered if the author kept changing her mind while writing about how she wanted to portray Jenna because

she felt a little bipolar. Because she was so all over the place with her emotions I didn't think her quick switch to love and devoted caring for Mason felt authentic. I needed a more gradual change for a girl that could be so whacked out.

Although I had issues with the romance I still plan to rush out and buy the second book whenever it came out. The book was gritty and dark and the author was not afraid to throw in an unexpected twist or two. I had a hard time accepting the hero and heroine's ability to communicate and work through their issues, but I had no doubts about the sexual tension. That sucker popped. So if you're in the mood for something different, I recommend giving this a whirl.

Favorite Quote:

"If survival means kissing somebody who smells like you, I want no part of it."

Review originally posted on Fiction Vixen.
