



Plague Zone

David Wellington

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Welcome to the Plague Zone...

PLAGUE ZONE is a serial novel by David Wellington. It was originally published online, starting with chapter one on April 23rd, 2007, also known as International Pixel-Stained Techno-Peasant Day (and the author's birthday, for that matter). For five months chapters were posted every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The book is now complete, and can be read in its entirety at this site. To get started, please go to Chapter One, and meet Tim Kempfer, the toughest librarian in post-apocalypse Seattle.

Plague Zone Details

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Author : David Wellington

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From Reader Review Plague Zone for online ebook

All Things Urban Fantasy says

Review courtesy of All Things Urban Fantasy

I read this book so quickly, I could barely believe it. The main character's drive consumed me the way the zombies in the book consume the living.

Tim Kempfer is not a warrior. He's a librarian on a very simple mission: kill the zombie that murdered his wife and son, and if needed, end them as well. How does he know which zombie he needs to kill in a post-apocalyptic, quarantined Seattle? Easy: his wife's death was on the news, and it was so graphic and iconic of the disaster that the broadcasts have been playing it on a loop. Since the beginning of the outbreak, he has been watching his wife die over and over again. The zombie (they call them droolers) who did it was Phil Nero, who did some yard work for them.

If he needed any confirmation he got it in the expanded footage. Whereas before the camera had cut away after showing Nero walking down an unidentifiable street, now it followed him farther. It pulled back to get a wide shot showing a pair of cars that had collided in a wide intersection. One was a red Nissan Sentra that Tim recognized immediately. He could almost read the license plate, and what he couldn't make out he could fill in from memory.

The door of the Nissan swung open hard and a woman in a long skirt spilled out onto the pavement. She looked horrified. She had a claw hammer in her hand and as Nero approached she raised it as if she would hit him right in the face with it.

Nero just grabbed her arm and held it there. The woman was screaming by that point. She didn't stop as Nero bit deep into her arm with a mouth full of white teeth. She didn't stop until he'd torn a long strip of flesh out of her arm, until blood fountained across the street.

"Karen," Tim wheezed. His wife's name came from deep inside of him. He stared at the car, then, tried to force the image to gain resolution by pure willpower. There was a shadow in the backseat. A shadow the size of a ten year-old boy.

"Jake," he said.

Unfortunately for him, every highway has turned into a one way street, and no one is going his way, so he has to walk. He's been walking for weeks. He's been dodging zombies and bullets from terrified survivors, and he's not even made it to Seattle yet. Things get significantly worse for him when he gets to Seattle.

David Wellington started writing serial novels, putting a short chapter online every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the duration of the novels, which are typically 60 chapters long. The short chapters add a sense of urgency to the story, keeping you guessing and your heart racing.

There is such an amazing plot twist at some point that I am terrified to ruin it if this review gets any longer. Because the whole book is available to read on David Wellington's website, I recommend simply jumping in and giving it a go. It's an easy way to discover a new author if you've not read any of his later work, and a

treat if you've read his other books, Positive, the Monster Island trilogy, or Frostbite, which is about werewolves and is also heart-wrenching.

Sharon says

I read this online, and it was a pretty good zombie story. It helped that the chapter setup online really let you feel the fact that it had been written as a serial. I can't pinpoint why that made a difference, but I think it did--the chapter breaks were fairly significant.

Some elements of the driving force of the story seemed kind of contrived to me--the main character's big objective is to kill the specific zombie that killed his wife, which doesn't quite make sense, but okay. He's mourning. But all these other characters seem to understand and even go out of their way to help him on this bizarre and not-very-sensible quest.

Aside from this premise issue, and the fact that one of the scenes near the end felt like a kick in the gut to me (I don't think it was worse than other scenes, it just pressed my personal creep-out buttons), this was an action-packed zombie adventure, and if that's what you look for, read this. Heck, you don't even have to go to the library--it's online.

David says

For the past month I have been reading zombie novels, and I've been really surprised and satisfied with the results. A genre I thought would be stale, overdone and unoriginal, has impressed me.

This book, not so much. It isn't bad, it's a decent enough book. If you read only one zombie novel, this free kindle one isn't going to ruin zombies for you. It's just pretty bland, pretty vanilla stuff.

People in reviews have been crapping on the premise, a guy is on a mission to kill the zombie that ate his family. It's a bit silly, but it could have been epic, The Odyssey with zombies, instead we get something that is just totally, unmistakably average. Nothing to get mad about, it just doesn't hold up to the glut of other zombie tales out there

Rustin Petrae says

I got Plague Zone free on Amazon because zombies are so in right now. Seriously though, I do love a good zombie story and this one felt like it would be a great read. While the premise of the book had an awesome hook, I thought it was, as a whole, not all that good. Here are my thoughts:

The things that I liked:

The hook. That's what drew me in. I totally wanted to read about a guy that was willing to enter a zombie infested city so he could track down the exact zombie that killed his wife and boy. That was, in my opinion, pure genius. The lead character, Ted, had really good structure. He was a well-thought out character that had a really believable personality. The other thing that I liked was his willingness to kill the zombies without hesitation or remorse. That is what you should do when faced with zombies. Kill them before they kill you or turn you into one of them. The story itself however, could've been better.

The things that I didn't like:

While the story did have its good points with a lot of action and such, I still felt that it didn't work for me. There were a lot of typos and errors that really got in the way of my reading. I found myself stumbling through paragraphs because of them. The plot was ok but really got worse at the end. I felt like it was sort of thrown together and it made me feel like the author rushed it so he could just get it over with. I didn't like the ending at all. I understand where the author was trying to go with it but I didn't think it worked. It had no real antagonist. The only one that came close died super easily. The other characters weren't all that compelling and the only one I ended up liking at all was the main character. There wasn't a whole lot that really made me think that this was an awesome book but there were some good bits in there.

Overall, someone might like this book, I just didn't. I still maintain, though, that the Ted Kempfer really was a tough sob. He really stuck to his mission and I did like that.

Trevor says

A disease that causes people's brains to decay within their skulls has turned areas of the US into "plague zones." The infected remain alive only to feed, transmitting the infection onto those that get bit. Seattle, WA is the site of patient zero, and the largest PZ in the nation. Reference librarian, Tim Kempfer, watched the plague sweep through Seattle on CNN while attending the ALA Chicago conference. He watched his wife get bitten, and assumed that his young son, strapped to a car seat in the backseat, was a goner as well. Hw knows the name of the drooler who took his family from him: Phil Nero. Tim's mission is clear: walk right into the massive plague zone, find Phil, and kill him. And we all know it's not going to be that easy, since if it were, it wouldn't be worth writing about!

Chavala Trigg says

Wow, I am colossally disappointed. I have read several other stories by David Wellington and have always come away from them satisfied. The best quality in Wellington's other work is his ability to work within genres that have been beaten to death and somehow find something new and original to share with the reader. Plague Zone had so much potential, but failed to deliver. Also disappointing was the embarassingly terrible dialogue combined with a cast of both cliché and under-developed characters. Additionally, the pinnacle of failure is the lack of any coherent motive driving the "hero" of the story. It was ridiculous and made no sense; totally unbelievable even for someone who has nothing left to lose, has hit rock bottom and/or who is batshit crazy- none of which can truly be said for our hero. This story needed a rewrite and some fleshing-out or further development for some of the subplots and most crucially needed to be longer. The story felt so rushed; as a result, quality was sacrificed. I really cringed at the prospect of writing a review that is so negative toward anything created by Wellington, but I couldn't help myself- this was a real disappointment.

Mike says

This was free and I got what I paid for so I can't complain. I read this because the author had gotten good reviews for some of his other stuff. Well, the story was okay enough but nothing to write home about.(Although, I guess I am writing about it now.) This is pretty standard zombie fare, you will find much

better storytelling on TV right now. (See The Walking Dead.) Reading this felt like I was reading my high school student's papers. It was someone trying too hard to be an "author" instead of just writing naturally. In a side note, there were a lot grammatical and spelling mistakes in this version leading me to believe it was published hurriedly. In his defense it was entertaining enough that I will read more of his stuff if they are free.

Brenda H says

I am a big fan of David Wellington. Thoroughly enjoyed his Overwinter series and the Monster Island series as well as having more on my TBR. However, this was a disappointment.

The main character, Tim, is a librarian from Seattle. He was in Chicago attending a conference and about to get it on with another librarian when he sees a news report of a plague outbreak in Seattle. This plague turns the infected into zombie and one of the zombies (a repairman named Phil that Tim knows) is shown on the newscast attacking and killing Tim's family. This starts Tim on his path for revenge with the intent of killing the zombie that killed his family.

The plot is absurd and the characters are over-the-top (especially the gang Tim meets). Adding to the misery is the bad editing of the ebook I read. I didn't hate the book so it didn't get only 1 star but it was not good enough to be considered ok and get a 2-star rating.

Rating: 1.5 stars

T.W. Brown says

I am a huge fan of David Wellington. I fell in love with his Monster Island, Nation, and Planet books. Then...he decided to explore other elements. I am not against a horror writer in the zombie genre toying with other ideas, but I also think "you dance with the girl what brung ya" and this story just felt like it was thrown together to shut up his zombie fans. His heart just didn't seem to be in this. His story telling was mediocre and he gave us characters that were flat, unlikable, and uninspiring.

I am not against his 13 Bullets story or anything else, but when he does throw his zombie fans a bone, I would hope that he put more into it. I will wait eagerly for the next one, and I will get it with the hope that the Wellington I am a huge fan of will return.

Mike Kazmierczak says

I really enjoy Wellington's writing and his books. His earlier books (**MONSTER ISLAND** and the other Monster books) were delivered as part of a regular blog. A chapter a week type of thing. It kept the chapters pretty short and centered on one piece of action. PLAGUE ZONE keeps that same pattern of short chapters focused on a small piece of the story. For me, it made it hard to stop: five chapters of "Just one more chapter."

For this story, Wellington goes back to zombies but a different zombie than the Monster books. Tim Kempfer was on a business trip to Chicago when the outbreak of Russian Flu first hit the U.S., specifically

Tim's hometown of Seattle. The early news reports and videos that came out showed not just his hometown but his neighborhood. In fact, it showed Tim's neighbor attacking Tim's wife and son. With that, Tim started his mission to get back.

As I mentioned earlier, the short chapters make it very easy to become absorbed into the story. In reality though, it's the characters that drive that absorption, that fascination with what are they going to experience next. Is that drive going to lead to success? Does success matter if Tim loses his humanity in the process? These type of questions about decisions made and motivations make the story interesting. There were a couple of events near the end that I didn't like and seemed like easy outs by Wellington. But then another five pages later, I looked back and thought "Oh, that didn't turn out like I thought it would." and I realized it wasn't an easy out. In all, a solidly entertaining book and one that makes me look forward to reading more of his books.

Clark Hallman says

Plague Zone, by David Wellington, begins with Tim, a librarian, at an American Library Association annual conference in Chicago. During the conference an extraordinarily virulent plague that turns people into flesh-eating zombies began spreading throughout the country. Despite the efforts of the military and other authorities to evacuate people from infected areas, only a small portion of the people in infected areas can be saved. Tim happens to see a TV news report about Seattle, his home town, which was ground zero for the plague. Incredibly, in the report he sees a video of his wife and his young son being attacked by a zombie who Tim recognizes as a former person from his neighborhood. Of course Tim is overwhelmed with grief, but he also becomes obsessed with vengeance and manages to make his way back to Seattle to seek revenge on the former person who killed his family. Now ... as a retired librarian who worked in academic libraries for over 33 years, I know that librarians tend to be knowledgeable and resourceful about a lot of things. I also know that librarians tend to be very strong and assertive people, although most people probably don't realize that. However, the protagonist of this zombie-apocalypse novel is a badass, tenacious, vengeance-seeker that should illicit both admiration and revulsion from all librarians and everyone else. Tim battles with totally dysfunctional infrastructures, the US Military, and hoards of ruthless zombies to get back to his neighborhood in Seattle, where he gets some help from a renegade gang to try to pursue his vendetta. Wellington is an accomplished writer in the horror genre and has published more than 15 novels. His zombie series, (Monster Island, Monster Nation, and Monster Planet) and his vampire series (13 Bullets, 99 Coffins, Vampire Zero and 32 Fangs) are exceedingly popular. Plague Zone provides lots of frantic action, suspense, and savage attacks by hoards of ruthless zombies. In addition, it also provides an interesting protagonist who is driven by revenge. It's a fun read for those of us who can suspend logic and realism to appreciate that tragic and bizarre events bring desperate people to extreme behaviors.

Randy Harmelink says

I wanted to like this book. But the driving force of the main character is just so ridiculous, I ending up not caring if he lived or died. Otherwise, I did like the apocalypse-related part of the story and the action scenes. But without a character to care about, it's just wasted.

Kate says

This was a two star book until the last ten chapters, then it just went beyond absurd. The best way I can describe this book is 'American'. The everyone and everything is absorbed, illogical and self righteous.

Tim, a librarian (who was off having an affair at a conference) walks across the country after he sees his wife and son attacked on TV during the zompocalypse with the intention of killing the offending zombie for JUSTICE AND THE AMERICAN WAY. In his travels he lies, betrays, manipulates and kills anyone who gets in his path but that's okay because he's seeking JUSTICE.

His co-stars are a reporter who threw himself into the epicentre of the disaster to get a good story, university academics who refused to evacuate citing a government conspiracy and a bunch of thugs who used the apocalypse to acquire as many DVD players and guns as possible.

The only character I sympathise with is Colonel Horne, charged with saving these deluded morons from themselves.

Brandon says

I liked the non-supernatural aspect of this one. There is a tendency to make zombies all spookyooky, but I like it best when they are explained by "science".

Elly Helcl says

I was so close to four staring this book. So close...

And then, I read the ending.

Yep, you can lose a star for an ending.

First of all, I get that zombies aren't all that realistic. But, how much more realistic is it to have a 6 year old be able to survive for MONTHS in a CAR all alone? Yeah, yeah...his mom had just packed the car with all the supplies in the world...enough to last a six year old for months?

I call bull on this authors ending and boo him. How can you write such a great story and then just flop like this at the end???

Sigh...

It was so totally worth the read. The book was interesting, the characters were believable, and it keep you interested from the word go...

Just...Don't expect a whole lot out of the ending.
