



Darkness Falling

Peter Crowther

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Zombie monsters struck from the mold of countless drive-in B movies supply mayhem and gore in Darkness Falling. Their onslaught is heralded one day by a predawn flash of unearthly light that cuts off middle-American everyville Jesman's Bend from communication with the outside world. When four employees of local radio station KMRT investigate, they find the town mysteriously depopulated, apparently in the middle of regular routines. Familiar folk reappear shortly afterward, all wearing concealing sunglasses and gloves and driven by malignant alien motives revealed when they descend en masse upon the terrified foursome . . .

File Under: Science Fiction [Zombie Apocalypse | Bodysnatchers | They Return]

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Darkness Falling Details

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From Reader Review Darkness Falling for online ebook

Kristen says

Review reprinted from <http://seriestracker.wordpress.com/20...>

Darkness Fallen, the first in the Forever Twilight series, by Peter Crowther is the first in a new series. But it felt like it should have been the first few chapters in one book, not the first book in a series.

I made the mistake of reading a review by someone else of this book. Now I can't find anything original to say. But I guess that's fitting since the book too wasn't very original. At least not to someone who has read Steven King's various versions of the end of humanity as we know it (or has seen the TV versions of the same. Or really, has seen any number of flicks on the SciFi network (and yes, totally off on a tangent, I refuse to use the rebrand of that network since since then, it totally sucks!)). Not to mention the repetitive nature of the book itself. The narrative style, where we get the events from different characters, in this case made for a very repetitive book since we got the aftermath of the flash from everyone, we got the sense of desertion after the flash from everyone, we got the realization that everyone else for some reason disappeared when the flash happened – after the flash – from everyone.... See how that gets annoying?

The plot looks like this: there's a bright all consuming flash of light and most of the world disappears in that instant. Except for the few who don't disappear. And, with the first character we meet there's an airplane involved ("The Stand" sound familiar?). We don't know why they aren't "taken" but each of them comes to realize that there is something going on and they don't know what. Then, 24 hours after the first flash, wham! There's another flash and everyone (although I am not sure it is everyone, but it doesn't really matter, at least not yet) is back. But they are different. They are all zombie like. And, the individuals and small groups of those who weren't taken the first night slowly come together. And they slowly discover some weird things about those who have returned (in my head, I dubbed them the "originals" and the "remakes" as far as groups go. Because remakes are never as good as the originals).

When the book ends, the story is really just beginning. And after 416 pages, that's sort of an accomplishment itself. See, as I see it there are two different types of serials: those with an overall story arc, but individual stories which are concluded in some way in each book (think Harry Potter) and those which simply march towards the conclusion of the overall story arc (think... Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel). I prefer series in the former category, but can enjoy a well written series that fits in the later category (hence the reference to the outstanding Flamel series). Problem is, so many series in the latter category are not well written.

When the character development is all there is and there is no plot, I can't enjoy it. There needs to be both. The plot that existed in this book could be summed up in 3, maybe 4, sentences. Despite the nature of this type of serial, there needs to be more to the story arc than that. I can sum it up this way: there's a bright light, most people disappear, then they come back zombielike. I need more! I need more to make me feel invested in the story so that I come back for the next installment. Often, character development can make up for the lack of plot development, by having great characters that a reader gets attached to. Then, I can get pulled into something even if the plot isn't sufficient. But here...

...the character development should have been better given how much time we get with each of the few "main" characters. Ronnie, for instance, is likable, but that is all. He's one of the originals. His inner dialogue was awful, his development started out promising but as soon as the light happened, his development hit a wall. Then, when we see the other characters, their stories, while different hit the same wall (and some of them never really had much development before that) when the light happened. And after

the light, well, their experiences were just too similar. It felt very repetitive. Even the quiriness of some of the originals – the little girl who is psychic, the resident serial killer, and the multiple personality Sally – were really not all that interesting, nor did they add to the story. At least not yet. And since this was really all set up and no plot, no teasers of what is to come, it is hard to look forward to seeing if anything will come of those folks and their uniqueness.

I felt more like I was reading the script for a movie – since so many of the details would be background and all scenery and therefore the 400 pages would be the first 30 minutes of a movie. But when I pick up 400 pages, I want a story, not a tiny tiny little portion of the beginning of it.

That's not to say I wouldn't read this. It's just that I would personally prefer to wait until all the installments are published (since this seems to be one of those series that should have just been one long book, but the publishers don't make enough money (however, not every story should be a serial, no matter how much the publishers may want it to be) that way and since serials seem to be more popular then ever I don't think we will be seeing an end to them) so I could read them all at once. There were a few starts to interesting ideas here (the alien influence, the little centipede creatures, the flying cars, and the notion that there might be another light and more changes in the future), so it wasn't a total waste. But again, I would wait for other installments and read it all at once. The cover promises that this is book 1 in the Forever Twilight series. I don't know out of how many, but I will wait to read 2 (and any subsequents) until we get the final book in the Forever Twilight series.

Jason Pettus says

(Reprinted from the Chicago Center for Literature and Photography [cclapcenter.com:]. I am the original author of this essay, as well as the owner of CCLaP; it is not being reprinted here illegally.)

Regular readers know that in the last year, I've ended up becoming a pretty big fan of PS Publishing, a British small press headed up by Peter Crowther and specializing in challenging New Weird literature. And so that's why I was so excited to recently receive the first two volumes of Crowther's own "Forever Twilight" series of novellas (put out not by PS itself, but by Drugstore Indian Press and Subterranean Press respectively); because if Crowther can bring that strikingly original an eye to literature as an editor, I thought, he's bound to do the same as an author himself, as I settled back and prepared myself for something along the lines of the exquisitely strange Robert Freeman Wexler or Sebastien Doubinsky. But alas, after getting through these two short books, I was reminded of a realization I've been making more and more since opening CCLaP (and especially since participating in Nanowrimo this year and writing my own first creative project in over half a decade), which is that the creative side of the arts and the administrative side require two almost completely different sets of skills, and that excellence in one does not automatically mean excellence in the other.

Although to be clear, let me emphasize right away that these books aren't actually bad -- they're solid little thrillers, in fact, that fit right in the middle of the quality scale when it comes to the horror genre -- which ironically is my main complaint, that for a guy who specializes in putting out utterly original work by others, his own stories are only middling ones that touch on just about every stereotype the genre even has. It's essentially an ongoing single narrative about a series of strange events that befall the planet over the course of a couple of random nights, where during one blinding flash the vast majority of the human population suddenly disappears, and then a day later some of them just as suddenly reappear, but now with all of them wearing aviator sunglasses and exhibiting zombielike behavior and converting their cars into futuristic hovercrafts and able to kill just through touch alone; the first two books so far in the series, then, take place in and around the Denver area, telling the stories of a handful of people who end up not affected by either of

these events (including a sassy radio DJ, a psychotic serial killer, an adorable seven-year-old girl who just happens to be psychic, and more), with the explanation for what has happened apparently being saved for future volumes in the series.

Yeah, starting to sound an awful lot like an amalgamation of Stephen King novels? That's what I thought too, part of the reason I ended up kind of disappointed by these books; and in fact the similarities don't stop there, with Crowther's books also sharing the same frequent dips into immature personal styles, a penchant for too many minor pop-culture references, and even

don't say it Jason don't you dare say it or the creepy crawlies will come after you they'll come and they'll eat you all up

crappily-written inner-brain monologues. And again, this is not necessarily too terribly bad a thing, especially if you're already a fan of Stephen King (which I admittedly am not), just that it's disappointing from the aspect of them being nothing special, pretty much the same kind of so-so mass-alien-abduction tale that genre fans have already read a hundred times.

But my biggest complaint, though, is in the serial nature of these books' overall storyline; that since the entire eventual series is quite obviously going to follow only one giant narrative plotline, it means that these first two volumes are all set-up and with no payoff on their own. And this is something that really irks me about modern serial-publishing experiments, and is the main difference between them and the Victorian masters they are emulating; because older serial authors like Charles Dickens and the like knew how to make each part of their projects a satisfying tale unto itself, almost more like a series of self-contained stories that only then added up to a giant uber-narrative by the end, while modern serial tales tend to simply be one big traditional novel only doled out to the audience a little at a time, almost like taking the audience members hostage for daring to read the first volume to begin with, forcing them to have to continue buying future installments in order to get any pleasure whatsoever out of all those Act One volumes they slogged their way through at the beginning. And if that's the case, I don't see much of a point in publishing the tale serially in the first place, and would prefer that the author just save it all up and put it out as one uninterrupted 800-page novel or whatever.

So, not exactly an official pass on the "Forever Twilight" series today, but not exactly a big recommendation either; if anything I would call them for hardcore horror fans only, although those of you who *are* hardcore horror fans will find these perfectly delightful. Although as an editor his books are not to be missed, as an author these two novellas can unfortunately be skipped over by most who are only casual fans of this particular genre.

Out of 10: **7.2**, or **8.2** for horror fans

Silver Thistle {adores JAFF & TEOTWAWKI. Oh, and acronyms :P} says

Hoo boy! This is a good one! Haven't read anything similar in years! I'm not talking about subject matter though, I'm talking about writing style. LOVED it. I've never read anything by Peter Crowther before and if I'm honest I've never even heard of him before this book caught my attention but right from the very first page of the prologue I felt like I was meeting an old friend after a long absence.

Why? How? Because it's like this guy is channeling my coming of age book hero, Stephen 'The Man' King! It's uncanny!

They both have this 'way' of writing. It's like the books are written in a first person POV but with a third person narrative. I can't explain it, I'm positive there must be a term to describe that writing style but I just don't know what it is. There are a lot of inner monologues where someone will be describing how they're feeling or what they're thinking but they use words like 'he' or 'she' to describe themselves instead of 'I'.

Ack! I just can't put it into words...all I know is that I associate it with King and I like it.

So anyway, the book...

Darkness Falling is the first part of the Forever Twilight trilogy. I think it's considered to be Science Fiction but it's also probably easily slotted into the Horror genre. Maybe Apocalyptic fiction too. To keep with the King connection I'd compare it to having a bit of 'The Langoliers', 'The Stand', 'The Tommy Knockers'..actually, I could probably find a lot of bits from a lot of novels to compare this to. It's quite hard to pigeon hole. Invasion of the body snatchers with zombie aliens is kinda close.

It's very character driven and the whole story is told via multiple 'survivors' and while I love all that, it was a bit frustrating to get caught up in one person's story only to have the chapter end and have to remind myself of a new person's story-to-date and catch up with their portion again for the new chapter. I'll admit to enjoying the story of some characters more than others too, which made things all the more frustrating when a really good bit ended and I had to get through a character I wasn't enjoying as much to get back to the good stuff. It's all good, I just really wasn't that 'connected' to the radio station guys (and gal), which is a pity because they're sort of central.

There a LOT of name dropping scattered throughout. Pop culture, movie references, actors, etc and it's not that it bothered me exactly it just got tedious after a while. There's a section where one of the characters 'Ronnie' tells the character 'Karl' that he looks like the actor Paul Giamatti. Now, while that would have been great for me to get a visual of how Karl looks, I actually have no clue who Mr Giamatti is. Fail!

It felt like lazy writing. There's that mantra for writers that I've seen mentioned here and there, "Don't *tell* me, *show* me", but here 'showing' me involved a side-step to Google images to find out what Karl looked like. In case anyone is as un-savvy as I am, Giamatti the one who played the Ourangatang in Planet of the Apes.... I think.

Did I mention how scary it is yet? No? Well, it's scary. I had to stop reading it at night and lay it aside to finish during daylight hours. I'm not a huge devourer of the horror genre any more and don't claim to be an authority on what constitutes a successful scare but all I know is that when reading certain bits my brain was saying "No no no no no...omgomgomgomg". I think I'm probably quite wimpy as far as 'easily spooked' goes but to coin a Disney rating, it's worse than "mild peril".

I won't spoil anything by going into a deep analysis of the story line. I'll just end by saying - I LIKED IT!

Cpuryear says

This was another book on CD that kept me entertained on my long work commute. Unabridged! The narrator did a great job with the character's voices. This is so not my typical genre, just a thrift store buy. I really liked it! I do wonder where the author is from. I mean, who calls the overhead bins on an airplane lockers? Or bathroom stalls cubicles? He also likes the word "myriad", but kudos for using it correctly. If you are an

alien zombie thriller reader, this is for you.

Stephen Theaker says

"At a little after 3.15, the whole world had turned white, just for an instant, and then everything had gone back to normal." But of course it didn't. Everyone has gone, zapped out of existence in the middle of the night, and the four people left at KMRT are all that's left. Till the light flashes again, the next night, and then things get really strange.

A review by me of this book is a bit redundant, given the glittering literary stars lined up on its first few pages to praise it! Ramsey Campbell says it's "as intensely menacing and gruesome as any George Romero film", while Tim Lebbon calls it "a masterpiece of suspense and dread". Michael Marsall Smith, Paul McAuley, Stephen Baxter and Sarah Pinborough are among the others lavishing praise.

For me Ian Watson nails it when he says it "reminds me ... of Stephen King's novella 'The Mist'". This could easily be read as a very well done pastiche of Stephen King. The small group isolated at a radio station is reminiscent of *The Fog*, while the mysterious disappearance of the rest of the world and the tension between safe-in-here and dangerous-out-there reminded me of *The Mist*. Add a dash of 1950s sf cinema (think *Invaders from Mars*) and you have a tasty concoction.

At one point I began to wonder whether the book was set in the fifties (the CDs would say not) - a hysterical woman gets slapped across the face, not once but twice, by two different male characters (Johnny on p. 87 and Rick on p. 117). Not something you see in books so often nowadays. And the first occasion comes just after Johnny lets her open the door to danger – just because he doesn't want to worry her.

The plot is the story's main weakness. It relies upon the survivors spending the daytime (very sensibly) turning the station into a secure little fort, and then (unbelievably stupidly) going out for a walk in the pitch black night at 3.11 am, and coming a cropper. Why didn't they wait till morning before investigating? Geoff said, "My view is that two of us walk down into town, while it's dark. That way, maybe we can find out some more." Johnny, "verbalizing everyone's thoughts", asked who should go. You'd have thought at least one person would be thinking, a four mile walk in the middle of the night during a worldwide catastrophe is a stupid, stupid idea!

But if the plot is flawed, the ideas, atmosphere and action are terrific. And it is as scary as the luminaries above say; it gave me nightmares for two consecutive nights. The sequence with the telephone is the most frightening thing I've read since the railway scenes in *The Witnesses Are Gone*, from the same publisher. The desperate struggle to survive at the end was thrilling, and left me eager to read the sequels from Subterranean Press.

I reviewed this from a pdf ARC, so I wouldn't normally point out mistakes; there was one that could be confusing to readers if it makes it through to the final version, though. In one key passage I think the wrong brother's name is given (p. 75, fourth para, Geoff for Rick), which had me puzzling for ages about what was going on.

James Garman says

Sometimes blind luck brings one a book that turns out more enjoyable than I ever expect. Such was the case

when I went to the library in a down time between books that I needed to read and found Darkness Falling. I basically just saw it and decided based on what little I could read on the cover decided i would give it a go.

I didn't even realize it was about zombies, or zombie like beings till I got home and logged it into Goodreads to add to my books for the year. If I had known that it was about zombies I probably wouldn't have gotten it in the first place but then I would have missed out.

The book is interesting and very entertaining despite some mishaps that even I, who normally don't notice "the little things" caught. For one thing there were words missing here and there. Secondly, there is an event early in the book that is described in detail. Toward the end, it is brought up as a memory, and told exactly verbatim without any acknowledgement that we already know the information.

After reading it, I found a statement that the book started out as three novellas (it is only 394 pages now so the shorter works would have had to have been novellas) which explains a lot of that.

So despite some glitches, I still think this is a great book, and the zombie presentation is unique enough to be more interesting than I would have ever thought possible.

Mark says

What I thought was a book about zombies, turned out to be about aliens. Either way, not my cup of tea. I didn't even like the way Book 1 ended. Maybe someone who is into Sci-Fi will like it better. Great story, I just didn't care for it.

Jen Davis says

DNF. Life is too short to force yourself to keep reading.

I requested *Darkness Falling* from NetGalley because I liked the premise: Four people inside a radio station find they may be the only normal people left alive after a strange bright light turns the rest of the town in pod-people zombies. I like zombies. But well-over 100 pages in, imagine my surprise when I have yet to see the walking undead. What I did see was nothing like the blurb... except the white light.

The story actually follows about nine or 10 people, scattered in or around Denver. Three are in a plane when the rest of the crew and passengers disappear. My mind went straight to *The Langoliers* and never left. There is the obvious dismay and confusion that follows, then more of the same once they get the plane to the ground. At the same time, we see the event from the perspective of a serial killer, a schizophrenic and the promised radio station crowd, respectively. It is incredibly drawn out. We get a lot of characterization, which can be a good thing, but it was just too much.

I was most annoyed by the exact same revelations over and over again, such as "Why would people close the doors behind them?" when everyone is trying to figure out where the town went. You know what? I would never ask that question, yet the folks in the book did, over and over and over. Another annoyance: a movie or literary reference every five seconds. One or twice could create some common ground between the characters and the audience, but we're talking like 50 different references.

So, back to the zombie thing... I'm more than a 1/3 of the way into the book and I start questioning myself

about whether this was really a zombie book after all. So I go to Goodreads and discover two things: 1) While the zombies do eventually make an appearance, the book is basically the set up installment for the series, with no resolution; and 2) It was originally released in 2002... part 2 didn't come out until six years later and there is still no word on number 3. So I sat there thinking to myself, why on earth would I keep reading this book? Then I turned off my nook. Like I said, life is too short, even if giving up on a book makes me feel like a failure.

*After posting this review, a reader shared the following information with me: *"Parts 1 and 2 that you mention were originally published as limited edition novellas, and they are included as *part* of Darkness Falling. Darkness Falling is essentially novellas 1 and 2 rewritten with additional material. The second novel in the trilogy is due in September 2012, and the third volume a year later."* Thank you, Stevie J, for correcting my error.

**ARC Provided by NetGalley

Bethica says

First of all, I gotta say I got this book free from goodreads and was really really stoked about it. I waited and waited day after day for the mailman to deliver this puppy into my paws so I could sink my teeth into a post-apocalyptic book with zombies in it. What better way to spend hours and hours of usually droll time. Then I actually started to read...

First of all, the writing is horrible. The first few chapters make you scratch your head and re-read the same sentence four or five times just to try to follow through with what he's talking about. It's literally like trying to look to the bottom of a lake, through all the mud and particulates. He has this tendency of veering off in the middle of a sentence to something that has absolutely nothing to do with what's on hand, only to return in mid thought to the beginning of the sentence.

Second, if you're overseas, and you want to write a book based in America to appease to American readers, have an American company edit it. Trying to continue reading through all the British english really interrupts the story. Time here is told with a colon. It's not 3.30, it's 3:30. It's not a foot locker unless you're in the millitary. It's not a boot, it's a trunk. And what the hell is a cement apron??? This doesn't even begin to cover all the stuff that takes away from the reading.

Thirdly, this man has a serious focus on a certain member of male anatomy and just loves to make all the men in the story out to be chauvanists and the women out to be dainty little things that couldn't make it through life without someone holding their hand. Maybe that's how things are in his head but it's sickening to read.

I stuck through the book and the writing does get better as it goes. He does do some good character development and it seems to be maybe something you could actually enjoy. Sadly, no. I was a few pages short of half way through the book before the zombie/alien whatever's finally shower up. Without giving away the entire story, I'm going to say, these creatures do not even begin to leave you satisfied and the ending is left totally open.

I give it one and a half stars. The half is just because I did finish it. This is supposed to be book one of a 3

part series. I most definitely won't be looking for the sequels to this one and will most likely pass by his name in the future.

Trish Lockhart says

Okay first I will tell you I listened to this story, unabridged, during a road trip, so that may have clouded this story for me.

This story actually pissed me off, not from stuff that happened in the book but by how utterly stupid things were.

Firstly, the author is obsessed with bodily functions. At least half of the characters either shit on themselves or pee their pants, not exaggerating. Sometimes it happens more than once. No one dies with dignity, except maybe Jim, there is always the stench of their bowels relaxing as they die or a loud fart. Even the zombie aliens pee themselves.

All of his female characters are completely worthless and mostly stupid. One character can see that zombie aliens are slamming their heads into the door to get in and still tries to let them in because they look like neighbors. The wife, Melanie, I think, just snivels the whole time.

There is no way this author has fired a gun. Hand guns almost knock people over and they fire shotguns with ease. They are also shooting them in the direction of little kids, amateurs who've never fired one before. In real life those kids would be dead. They also would have all been deaf after unloading so many rounds inside a house. Authors, it's called research.

Horrible over summarizing, every character has to give witness to events so things move at a snail pace, even more so considering they are complete idiots. and it also felt like if this was a movie, it would be playing in slow motion.

Almost none of the characters act in any way that makes sense and I am taking into account that half of them are certifiably crazy, which I assume will be explained in the sequel (God help us).

The only thing worse than getting through this story was realizing it doesn't end at the end of the book, it's even a complete book within the series. The only resolution at the end of the book is that they didn't die and they still know nothing.

And why the hell would they take the keys out of the ignition of the get away vehicle?

This author needs a better editor, and to meet real women.

Ben Babcock says

Darkness Falling chronicles the struggle of several survivors as they realize they probably should have paid attention to that last zombie movie. It's the end of the world as we know it, and genre savviness is nowhere

to be found.

I checked out about halfway through the first act. I love reading on my tablet, but it's so easy to get into the rhythm of tapping to turn the page, skimming through each page as you slowly realize that no, it doesn't get better. I hoped, in vain, that something would magically change about this book—that an actual, complex character would show up, or that we would get any kind of explanation for what was happening. Instead, it was more random running, and yelling, and conversation, and things that might zombies or aliens or zombie-aliens. And I just didn't care.

I will hand it to Peter Crowther: he has tried not to retread any single path. At the beginning, when Ronnie's wife and others disappear from the plane in a flash of light, I nodded and said, "Rapture. This must be a Rapture story!" Later, as the disappeared began returning and acting on autopilot, I said, "Ah-hah! This is a *zombie* Rapture story! Now we're talking!" Matters just got more confusing from there, though. So, while *Darkness Falling* combines several well-used tropes to create an interesting new mixture of problems for its protagonists, it doesn't quite make the combination work. Crowther is a good author who manages to create tension and suspense as his different groups awaken to the new reality of their situation and desperately struggle for survival.

A great author, however, would be able to do this while simultaneously dropping clues about the story behind the crisis. I'm not even asking for a full explanation by the end of the book—it's OK to keep the reader in the dark, as long as one leaves enough hints that an invested reader could start making educated guesses. (Observe, for instance, the level of speculation surrounding the various mysteries in *A Song of Ice and Fire*. It is practically an entire academic sub-field now; soon enough universities will be able to issue degrees in Westerology.) Crowther neglects this side of the writing for the pulse-pounding, heart-thumping thriller aspects. And I can grok the need for thrilling speed, but I still need that deeper mystery.

I also need characters who mean something to me. Despite its thrilling second and third acts, *Darkness Falling* builds with all the speed of a sloth stuck in molasses. Crowther alternates among three or four different groups of protagonists, such as Ronnie and Angela (soon to be joined by Karl) on the plane; Virgil and his victims; Rick and Geoff; and so on. As the event—whatever it is—happens, each of these groups discovers how alone they are and struggles to survive, finally meeting up towards the end of the book. Until then, however, there is a lot of duplication of information and dialogue, as various characters in each group go through the same, "Oh shit" moments of introspection. If Crowther had made his groups more diverse, included a wider variety of people from different countries, genders, and backgrounds, then this might have been more enlightening. Since most of the characters are from the same general socioeconomic background, their reactions and personalities are just so similar that it gets repetitive.

Overall, I struggled with an oppressive sense of *ennui* as I read *Darkness Falling*. I'm getting rather bored with the zombie apocalypse. I'm certainly done with reading about tough-as-nails small-town Americans banding together to survive disaster. There is just nothing, nothing at all about this book that stands out, grabs me, and urges me to keep reading. It's either so bland and standard as to be uninteresting or so broad and uninvestigated as to be unintriguing. Why should I want to learn anything more about this darkness phenomenon if it means I have to wait until the next book? I'll go read a book about zombies exploring space, thank you very much. (Is there such a book? Call me!)

I read several reviews that compare this book to a Stephen King novel. I can see why, and an unexpected consequence of this experience is that I now have more respect for King's writing. I didn't love *Under the Dome*; its characterization was weak and stereotypical, and the book was far too long. Regardless, King still knows how to *write* at a level that, at least in this book, has eluded Crowther. I didn't necessarily like his characters or even find them that convincing, but I still remembered most of their names. And his story, even if not awesome, still made a kind of twisted sense. I can't say as much for *Darkness Falling*.

Oh, and I'm not crazy about books whose titles are *X Falling*, where *X* is anything from "darkness" to "mutant bear politicians". The only thing worse is *X Rising*. (I groaned when I turned the last page of this ebook and saw that the sequel was called *Darkness Rising*. I see now that the title is instead *Windows to the Soul*. Thank goodness for small favours.) I'm not sure who started this awful trend, but if I find out, I will ... write a sternly worded letter of some kind.

This has been a somewhat scattered review because, to be honest, not enough of the contents of *Darkness Falling* have stuck with me in the less-than-24-hours since I finished reading it. This isn't the kind of bad book where I become so furious that I begin taking notes and bookmarking quotations to use later on in an excoriating review. No, I'm afraid this is the other, less enjoyable kind of bad book that is merely bland and just not for me. Would it be for you? I'm not sure, but even if zombie-alien-Rapture-small-town-apocalypses *are* on your to-read list, there is probably a better example somewhere out there.

Donna says

DNF.

I didn't want to stop reading it in the sense that I didn't want another horror novel to fail but I really just couldn't take it anymore. That blurb? It's misleading. Up to the point where I stopped reading, somewhere between a quarter and a third of the way through, not only was it from the POV of the radio people, but there was also some guy on a plane, a crazy old lady that talked to voices in her head and a serial killer. And they were all interpreting the same thing for far too long.

I was kind of wondering where the story was going right from the beginning when it started rambling on about this guy's wife and how he hated her and she was causing problems for him on the plane. This was one hell of a tangent that went on for far longer than it should have before the creepy element happened that zapped everyone away. Then that same zap moment was replayed from the POV of the crazy lady with an equally long tangent of backstory, the serial killer and all of his gross idiosyncrasies and the radio station people with more of the same. It's like I was stuck in the Twilight Zone, reliving the same damn moment over and over and over again. Or is that Groundhog's Day? Probably both.

The plot just stalled out for me and when actions actually started to get repeated amongst the characters (like serial killer and the radio people busting into people's empty houses) I just put it down. The characters were unnecessarily effed in the head, I felt like a hamster in a wheel reading and, personally, I could tell that it was someone only familiar with the stereotypes of Southern accents creating the accents in the story. I was right in assuming that since the author is British. Very cliché, podunk accents that one thinks of when they think of a Southerner, not necessarily what it really is.

Plus the author had a heinous habit of name dropping like crazy. I couldn't go a chapter without multiple references to books, authors, musicians, movies, actors and whatever else you could think of. And then he referenced Kent State, and needlessly mentioned the riots that happened there seemingly just to prove that the author himself knew about them, because it was irrelevant to anything that was going on. That just hammered the nail into the forceful coffin for me. I was done. I couldn't be bothered to make my way to the end if I had to slog through endless repetition and constant pop culture references.

This one had some great potential but it was far too scattered and directionless for my tastes. It breaks my heart when horror novels turn out to be turds but I'll carry on.

Jackie Miller says

Darkness Falling is the first book in the Forever Twilight series. It starts off as just an average day, and then there is a blinding, white light. Afterwards, there are only a few people left. Everyone else is just gone. As the survivors are trying to figure out what happened and come to terms with the fact that the people around them have disappeared, there is another flash of light. This time all those people are back, but they aren't what they appear to be.

I knew that I would probably like this book before I even read it. The premise is something that really appeals to me. It has a cool story and some very interesting characters. It starts out introducing you to some of the key players. All of them have a defining flaw or issue, and some of them are just plain crazy. Then they are thrown into this life-altering situation and it was really cool to see some of them rise to the occasion. Virgil really stood out to me as one of my favorite characters to read. I would definitely describe him as a 'creeper', but knowing the reason for why he's so screwed up made me feel sympathetic towards him. I was really rooting for him and look forward to seeing more of him in the next book.

Now, this book does have some gore in it. Well, there's no 'some' about it. While I wouldn't say that's normally my cup of tea, it actually added to the whole feel of the book for me. During those parts I kind of shook my finger in mock scolding, but I was secretly really enjoying it. I could picture the action and shoot-em-up parts in movie form, especially the climax at the very end.

One other thing that I think this author did a superbly good job of was a feeling of building suspense. Darkness Falling builds momentum as it goes, and I ended up really liking it.

Amanda Makepeace says

If you're looking for a horror novel, something to scare you in the wee hours of the night, this isn't the book. I'm not saying I disliked it, but it definitely was not as fulfilling as I would have liked. Darkness Falling reads much like a Stephen King novel, maybe too much but without the impact you get from a King story. It was enjoyable enough that I finished it, but it had zero "Wow" factor.

Also, the zombies of Darkness Falling are a little difficult to take seriously. Albeit, they aren't your typical zombie. I don't have a problem with that--new ideas are refreshing. But the sunglasses and gloves?

Kwesi ??? says

Peter Crowther currently looking in the window and everything outside are all things bright and beautiful. Well, everything seems fine, people are walking, cars are beeping and animals are buzzing like any ordinary days. Then, a beam of light appears. In a second everybody gone even animals that are busy doing their jobs, and the world is in chaos. Perfectly destroyed and only few are given the chance to survive.

Books lately are too prophetic, it seems that authors are trying to write something about the future or maybe they are trying to trend with readers. Trying to predict things that we thought won't happen in the

present, something gore and merciless. Readers are evolving so do the books that are published and soon the whole contemporary things will change into nightmares and ends.

I don't know where to start, this book is full of existing thoughts and I think the author is playing with the characters. Does anyone here have tried *Left 4 Dead*? Reading this was like playing that zombie game, well, the game is better and love the blood splat around the screen not like the book, which supposedly better than the game. The book is too confusing to read, had slow plot, too many boring conversations and characters are just appearing randomly.

As a reader, this book had the quality to become bestselling. No, I'm not here to make things good in the ear. The book had a promising plot and story but the book wrote in a crappy manner. Hey, have you kill the zombie yet? Ugh! And why does *Peter Crowther* have to name those zombies? I mean he is naming them and explaining their clothes although they are dead. I think that is his style, to make things detailed although the story doesn't need them and making it longer.

The *Darkness Falling* is the first book of *The Forever Twilight Series* and republished by *Angry Robot*. I can't wait to read the second and the rest of the book in the series. Hey, when are you planning to publish the second one? It seems that you write novels very slow and you write short stories like a running ostrich. I don't mean to rush you but do you think it is time for you to publish another book?

This book reminds me of *Gone*, reading thick books that only happened for days and it was like reading the first chapter or chunk of the whole book. Well, compare to any zombie novels (this is my first time and who the hell I speak with zombie novels), I mean post-apocalyptic book, this is better than any books that I read. Not because I hate apocalyptic or dystopian things but because the style manages to pop although not dark, the story telling won't put me to sleep, a page turner. Exactly.

So the book started with few characters in the plane to Denver and in few seconds something terrible happened and rays of light appeared and when the character woke up. Everything was gone and few left to survive. So these are the first group of characters to know more in the story. Second, a murder happened in a house by a teenage guy and when he came out to deal with the dead body everyone is gone. Yeah, so they bring a killer in their group without knowing it.

Third, a female schizo or maybe not, can hear voices and so on and calling her mama, soak in a rain and went to a place to sleep. That's all and she came by a theater and again met these creepy zombies with weird movement and met with the group. Fourth, a group of people investigating a town and a light appeared and people disappeared. So their journey continues. In lastly, in the near end of the book they'll meet two kids and no further details because they only appear like 5 to 10 chapters before ending. I told you, this book is written like the first 5 chapters of a whole book. Everyone appearing randomly.

I have also issues with the characters, they seem to have different personality which I appreciated but most of them have psychological problems. I don't know why he came up with those ideas and I love his zombie characters, they look cooler than the usual zombies we read with sun glasses and gloves. I like to recommend this book to those readers who likes to play zombie games, not only that, but also to those people who love reading zombies. I have few friends with zombie taste! When the world ends, nobody knows when or nobody knows who'll survive till the human race collapse.

This game is out of control! Everyone love this game and the gang can't stop playing Left 4 Dead 2 since a friend of mine introduce the game. Hey stop that, help! Gah, Spitter!

Thanks to *NetGalley* for sharing and accepting my request of this book as well as to *Angry Robot* who keep publishing weird books and never cared to be angry to me. I wish so.

Review posted on **Old-Fashioned Reader** .

Rating: *Darkness Falling* by Peter Crowther, **3 Sweets**

Challenges:

Book #236 for 2011
