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On a Friday afternoon before Labor Day, Americans are getting ready for the holiday weekend, completely unaware of a long-planned terrorist plot about to be launched against the country. Kyle Tait is settling in for his flight home to Montana when a single nuclear bomb is detonated 300 miles above the heart of America. The blast, an Electro-Magnetic Pulse (EMP), destroys every electrical device in the country, and results in the crippling of the power grid, the shutting down of modern communications, and bringing to a halt most forms of transportation.

Kyle narrowly escapes when his airplane crashes on take-off, only to find himself stranded 2,000 miles from home in a country that has been forced, from a technological standpoint, back to the 19th Century. Confused, hurt, scared, and alone, Kyle must make his way across a hostile continent to a family he's not even sure has survived the effects of the attack. As Kyle forges his way home, his frightened family faces their own struggles for survival in a community trying to halt its slow spiral into chaos and anarchy.

77 Days in September follows Kyle and his wife, Jennifer, as they are stretched past their breaking point, but find in their devotion to each other the strength to persevere.

77 Days in September Details

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From Reader Review 77 Days in September for online ebook

Emily says

I read this book as Apocalypse Whenever's April 2013 selection, and I have to admit that it makes me wish that there were half star ratings. Although I rated all 3 books as a 2, I feel that *The Stand* was better than *77 Days in September*, which was better than *Eden*. I suppose that could be 2.5 rounded down, 2, and 1.5 rounded up, because who wants to give an indie author his first 1-star review? To wind up this meandering point, I didn't like the book, and I have whole list of reasons why, but let us start with the good. The author has a fairly good handle on dialogue. There were only a couple of places where a line snagged my attention because it sounded unnatural, and it's something that can be hard to have an "ear" for, so kudos to Mr. Gorham for that.

As to the complaints.... (some broad spoilers, giving content not specifics)

First the author was entirely invested in pushing his agenda and wearing his politics on his sleeve. I'm sure that's not bothersome if you agree with him, if you don't, it's like nails on a chalkboard. Not to get too far into politics here, but how do you expect the U.S. to pay "billions" for EMP defense, when we can't even agree on the funds for collapsing infrastructure. Also there's that old conflict between insisting that the government take care of us, while simultaneously insisting that self-sufficiency is the American way. I wouldn't be harping on this point, except that I read a lot of PA, and it's not often that I feel this kind of direct conflict with the author's point of view. It's probably because he chose to emphasize it directly rather than putting it through the filter of a character.

Then there was this: "In three or four months, maybe not until spring time, we'll be faced with large-scale anarchy as those who do have food and weapons try to piece together some semblance of tribal order."

It's not like destroying 50 years of technology will destroy thousands of years of civilization. Tribal order! Good grief. A decade of rebuilding things sure, but it's not like knowledge is lost, and we're suddenly cavemen. Speaking of that, holy hell, could we please have a lady plot that doesn't involve rape? Please? Really you can do all kinds of things with women in a story that doesn't have them getting raped. It's true.

Kyle doesn't make great decisions. (view spoiler) Much of what happens in the plot happens because Kyle is tired, or isn't thinking, or is struggling with his humanity, etc. Oh, there's also a part where he debates extensively whether or not to cheat on his wife. What on earth?

My biggest complaint, however, is that for what is essentially prepper fiction, this book is incredibly scant on details. Don't tell me that Jennifer has an adjusted daily routine, tell me *what* she's doing in her day to day life. Where are they getting water and how are they storing it? How are they managing waste? What are they eating? Show David at the farm, etc. My favorite books in this genre blend in real details, so that I'm suddenly thinking, "Oh wow, I didn't know that!" or "I wish I'd thought of that!" I have a feeling that this is another area where the importance of "the message" to the author overshadowed his actual knowledge of self-sufficient living. Bleh.

Not recommended, y'all.

Jill Merrall says

If I wanted a lecture about everything from premarital sex to the dangers of doubting God...I would have went to church...Can't believe this predictable, boring, non-eventful apocalyptic sermon has such a high rating (which was the only reason I read it).

Bonnie Calhoun says

Well that's a full day that I'll never get back! I hate to have to give bad reviews but this is one of those books that made my eyes bleed. I literally read it in one day because I wound up skimming a lot of the back story here he just droned on about nothing.

I really love reading this genre and I'm pretty lenient as long as the story is a good page turner. This one lacked even that. It started out great with him pulling another passenger out of the crashed and burning plane and then helping get a man's family reunited. But then it all went downhill. He basically WALKS about 1500 miles home, runs into little resistance, sees little savagery, helps a REALLY old lady who has been laying in a hot ditch for a week with no water, and has survived...his form of life after an EMP is not all that bad. I mean really...1500 miles, apparently no problems finding water or food, and he couldn't find at least a bicycle to ride *sigh*

And it needs major editing like grammar and punctuation, POV changes (head-hopping) not only in a single scene but in a single paragraph, and page after page of rambling back story in the middle of a scene all worked together to make me skim...A LOT.

I would not recommend this book. I'd say try One Second After or Lights Out.

Bob Milne says

I've always been a huge fan of end-of-the-world, apocalyptic thrillers. I'd like to say that Stephen King's The Stand is responsible, but it's actually Isaac Asimov's The Last Man on Earth anthology that sticks in my head as my first exposure to the subject. In fact, I still have the tattered old paperback sitting on my shelf today!

Anyway, I've read a lot of apocalyptic tales over the years, some of which I've quite enjoyed, and others which have fallen flat. Generally, I find that I tend to be drawn more to the 'epic' stories, the massive doorstoppers that explore every aspect of the disaster. However, the stories that often work the best, the ones that resonate the strongest and stick with me the longest, are the more intimate tales.

That the niche into which Ray Gorham's 77 Days in September falls. It starts with an 'epic' feel, bouncing around between characters and settings, but only to establish the facts of what's happening . . . and to remove all doubt as to the scope of what's happened. The story really gets going with a plane crash that rivals just about anything on screen in terms of excitement and drama. It's set up nicely, making us care about the characters involved, and then is played out extremely well.

Once we get beyond the plane crash, however, our scope slowly begins to narrow until we really get to the heart of the novel - Kyle's long walk home (across a hostile, desolate America) and his wife's struggle to

believe in his return (in a small town with its own hostilities). It's a story telling device that works particularly well, allowing us to follow that most intimate of tales, the struggle for one man's survival against the most overwhelming odds, while at the same time granting us some perspective on the overall situation, through a small-town microcosm of America.

Kyle and Jennifer are both well-developed characters, loving spouses who are suddenly confronted with a physical separation that mirrors their emotional distance of the last few years. Neither knows whether the other is truly alive, and both are faced with temptations throughout their ordeal. Even if Kyle does reveal a few personality flaws along the way, it's entirely unrealistic to expect anybody to be a candidate for sainthood after having spent months walking across the country. The subplot of Jennifer's stalker is, perhaps, a bit too typical of the genre, but it's handled well . . . and sets up a final resolution that really puts the emotional cap on the story.

If I had one complaint about the novel, it's the way in which the political sub-plot seems to just fade away. There's a significant focus early on around one US Senator that seemed to have some potential, but just when I thought she was being left behind like the other victims, she resurfaces for an oddly-placed scene, only to be forgotten again - this time for good. I would have liked to see more of her story, or else not go back to her at all that last time, but it's my only real quibble.

This was an exciting, fast-paced, nicely detailed story. Gorham never goes over-the-top in his descriptions of the horrors and the gore, which makes the darker elements all the more effective. He balances the emotions of the situation well, contrasting fear with courage, despair with hope, and animal lust with human love. The few human interactions Kyle encounters on his journey are nicely balanced as well, driving home the fact that the odds are truly against him, but also recognizing the fact that there are good people in any situation.

Definitely recommended.

Originally reviewed at Beauty in Ruins

Todd says

The author lost me when he revealed his thoughts about evolution and science in general — namely that we don't "[come from] monkeys" and "the scientists" aren't as smart as they think they are.

All that aside, the ideas presented in the book were interesting, but the characters weren't compelling, and the writing was mediocre. I was somewhat relieved when the "scientists" diatribe began, because it gave me a good excuse to abandon reading it.

Rob Twinem says

The kindle...ah the good old kindle all those authors self publishing and hoping to be the next Stephen King...if only...in your dreams Mr Gorham and all those 5 star reviews where have they all come from? If the author had been at school and written this tedious ponderous story his teacher would probably have said....could do better..so what do we have here? There has been an electro magnetic incident and all communication/electrical systems no longer operate and this includes everything from the humble toaster to the micro chip. Nothing functions and our hero Kyle is on a flight home to Montana when the EMT incident

occurs resulting in the plane crashing on take off. Our hero, for that he must surely be, decides to walk home to Montana pushing his little cart a mere 1500+ miles to see the beautiful and dutiful Jennifer and his 3 dotting kids. In the process he will encounter some not so savoury people and will be tempted by the luscious Rose..eager to bed the first man who appears on the horizon but our hero Kyle although tempted remains faithful to be beautiful Jennifer and continues on his way (writing a touching diary to his loved one in the process...just in case he does not make it) Meanwhile in the good old homestead of Montana Jennifer keeps the fires burning and fights of the advances of a rather sex starved sheriff called Doug...will she succeed? will our hero make it home? and will the world return to normality?...who knows and frankly who cares! What an utterly boring piece of writing, by someone who I presume had read The Road and thought he could write a similar masterpiece!! Well no Mr Gorman this is average in the extreme and possibly you should keep to your day job, I will certainly not be reading any of your future kindle publications and for all those who awarded 5 stars I can only presume you are either friends or family or have a limited reading taste.....

Bryan Raines says

I downloaded the sample of this book on my Kindle Fire and realized fairly quickly I was going to go ahead and come off my 1.99 for it.

Ray Gorham has a good knack for keeping a story going. This can be hard to accomplish when a book revolves around someone trying to get from point A to point B. I usually shy away from books that focus on the long road, but this book drew me in and never let me go.

Ray Gorham isn't a flourish writer. You aren't going to find large portions of text that describe a car, but his simplistic style allows you to view things the way you want to. I only found one obvious typo while reading and it wasn't catastrophic. His writing is very fluid (the first dialogue between ED and Kyle feels awkward, but it is suppose to because it is two dudes just making conversation on the plane. The rest of the book goes much smoother).

The author also does a great job of keeping you in the loop. People hate and love disasters at the same time. Everyone wants to watch things unfold on the news and they want to be the first one to tell their friends about the new information they have heard of. You feel like you are watching the events unfold while knowing something others don't.

I would have given the book 4 1/2 stars if I could... the only reason it didn't receive five stars is because a couple of the elements are pretty obvious. That aside, this book is outstanding! If you are looking for that book that you can't put down.. you know the one.. the one that you lie in bed saying "okay.. just one more chapter" than something happens and you are like "WTF??!!! okay.. one more chapter".... than pick this book up!

Nadir says

Entertaining. The flip side to "One Second After" in that it focuses on someone traveling a long way rather than a static community.

Susan Kiernan-Lewis says

I really enjoyed this book. I love apocalyptic fiction and this is one of the best in the genre I've read so far. The characters were likable, well drawn, and I really cared about them. There were surprises, too. I was turning the pages pretty fast. I thought Gorham was very skilled in the way he crafted the action and the conflict. I see this is an Indie book but it's so polished, it's hard to believe it is. No typos and no "fat." Just good old fashioned story-telling that has you racing to the end. Plus, I ended the book feeling a little hopeful about things which I don't always feel after some of the other end-of-the-world books (I still ended up hitting Costco for a couple hundred cans of tuna! LOL!) I also recommended this book to my 17-year old because it was fast-paced and exciting, educational about the EMPs, and had no gratuitous sex.

Kat says

I first read 77 Days in September in 2011 and I was incredibly impressed by the book - although it's PA, the focus is heavily on the emotions of the characters.

As a main character I found Kyle to be believable and likeable (although what's not to like about a guy that is prepared to walk thousands of miles to make it home to his family?!), and although conflicted by his need to get home as quickly as possible, didn't lose his humanity and compassion even when it was sorely tested. In particular I found his journal entries on his trip to be incredibly moving and real.

I also liked his wife, Jennifer, who works hard to do the right thing whilst protecting her children, coupled with her belief in and loyalty to Kyle, she is a strong but self-aware lady. Neither character is perfect, and as Kyle reflects on their past, he comes to realise just how lucky he really is.

The pacing of 77 Days in September is well maintained, and even when Kyle is not on the road, this is an unputdownable book. Well written, with good characterization, world-building and a healthy dose of realism, 77 Days in September was well worth re-reading, and I was just as immersed in the story the second time around.

Read more of my reviews at [The Aussie Zombie](#)

Catherine says

This is independent author Ray Gorham's first book. There's a good story here although not well served by the author's plodding and clunky writing. Still, it was readable and interesting enough to carry me through the book.

What I liked:

1. The premise: EMP wipes out pretty much everything electronic in the US. No superflu, no zombie virus, no meteor strike or alien invasion here! This is probably the most realistic premise for an apocalypse that I have encountered and for that reason, it's perhaps the scariest. As you read the book, you can't help but imagine yourself in Kyle Tait's shoes and wonder how you would fare.

2. Kyle's journal entries. These were the most compelling part of the story to me. Gorham has an easier time writing in Kyle's inner voice than he does with any other part of the narrative. At times I wished the entire book had been written as a journal of Kyle's experiences.

What I didn't like:

1. The Deer Creek story line. The narrative flips back and forth between Kyle's journey and Jennifer Tait's experiences back in Deer Creek, which consist mainly of attending town meetings and fending off the grotesque attentions of smelly Doug, the town's appointed security officer. Jennifer refers to the daily grind of acquiring food, but what did that entail? Most of her food seems to come from her very generous neighbors and her son's job. Overall, both Jennifer and Deer Creek are uninteresting.

2. The author's asides. Every now and then, Gorham throws in a little information or backstory that is completely unnecessary and interrupts the flow of the story. For instance, during Kyle's encounter with a nameless thief, Gorham pauses – literally in the middle of a life-and-death struggle – to helpfully introduce Kyle's opponent as Stan, the former prison inmate. We are then given half a chapter on Stan's past, from his high school days to the present, before we are returned to the action. It serves no purpose at all – we already know Stan's a bad guy because he has a "wicked sneer" and acts like a psychopath – and really lets the air out of what has been, up until that point, a pretty intense episode.

3. The title. *77 Days in September*? I get that the EMP event happened in September, and it took Kyle 77 days to walk from Houston to Deer Creek, Montana, but why *77 Days in September*, when it was *77 Days Beginning in September and Continuing into Early November*? I kept expecting Kyle to make some comment that explained or referred to the odd title, but it never happened and now I'm left wondering if it was just an editing miss.

In general, I felt this was a good story with a few weaknesses. As this was Ray Gorham's first book, I expect his skills to improve with experience.

Sean Watson says

Surprisingly poor book given that some on Kindle had rated it up which is why I read it. Never again. This book is yet another in the apocalyptic genre, but without any tough decisions. Even when the protagonist killed someone, the author had to switch perspectives for three pages so that he could ensure his readers it was a really, really bad man, and the killing was justified. Very low reading level, weak vocabulary, unimaginative writing, predictable storyline. So tame that you could give it to a 7th grader to read. There's nothing controversial in it.

Louisa says

Really great, interesting book, really enjoyed it!

TJ says

I have been on a reading spree lately, and I have read several apocalyptic thrillers, including among others

One Second After, The Passage, Swan Song and Lucifer's Hammer, all outstanding reads. I was entertained by 77 Days in September, but I do feel the need to wield the critic's pen, at least a bit. (SPOILER ALERT) My biggest complaint is the lack of complexity. The story pulled me in, not just by Kyle's airport calamity, but by the terrorist characters, the military generals and the Senator. Unfortunately, their stories just died on the vine. Those side plots might have added much to the story. For instance, I wanted to know more about what effects the all but assured killing of 50 million people would have on the men who launched the attack. What might the Senator have done to help get the country going? How did the US military respond to the attack and how that would ultimately effect Kyle and his family, and the rest of the world. The story grabbed me in the beginning, but seemed to hit a peak too early followed by a long slow decline. I was never surprised by anything that came Kyle's way on the trip. The stories limited scope, and the lack of surprising plot twists, limited my enjoyment.

Judy Goodwin says

Everyone has a secret vice. Mine happens to be disaster movies; I eat them up eagerly, from asteroids hitting the earth to volcanoes in Los Angeles. I love stories that throw our modern world into chaos and force people to get back to the basis of survival.

I've found there is a whole new bunch of these kinds of stories out there in indie publishing, called the 'dystopian' genre. From economic collapse to the Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP) stories, There are a fair number of these stories which seem to be particularly tied to Preppers, those preparing for imminent disaster.

77 Days in September is one such novel, but I found it also appealed to a more general audience. It has a classic disaster movie type of beginning--the protagonist is on board a flight out of Dallas to return to Montana where his family lives. Terrorists shoot off a nuclear warhead high in the atmosphere over the U.S., sending out an electromagnetic wave that fries everything electrical, from cars to cell phones. The plane crashes, but our hero survives.

The rest of the story is his struggle to return to his family.

I could see some areas where the writing could have been a little stronger, but overall, this was a very good first novel, and I enjoyed it. The characters are believable and likeable, and Kyle's struggles are real. There was a moment or two where I wanted to shout at Kyle or his wife, "They're bad! Don't trust 'em!" But that's part of the fun of these types of stories.

The length of the novel was just right for me, and the suspense held right up until the end, which was very good.

I definitely recommend this.
