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Ashes Rain Down: A Story Cycle

William Luvaas

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The ten linked stories in Ashes Rain Down explore what life might be like after several decades of environmental and social apocalypse. This story cycle is set in two isolated California communities where ordinary people struggle to survive and maintain some semblance of order and meaning in lives stressed by environmental and social apocalypse in a future that seems like a return to the past. The shared crises of global warming, extreme weather events, epidemics, and collapse of the world economy and social order create a tissue of interconnection as characters hang on by a thread while the world comes undone. Despite the sense of impending doom, there is also dark humor spiced with grotesque realism embedded in the overarching theme: that people do carry on.

"The people who populate this book are singular, hilarious, melancholy, but always compelling and always right on target. The voices are enjoyable and Mr. Luvaas knows them so well."
Susan Straight, award-winning author of *Between Heaven and Here*

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"'Ashes Rain Down' is one of the best contemporary stories I have ever read. The voice is extraordinary....The plot is complex and evocative. The tone frequently shifts from the truly comic to the hauntingly serious. Few authors can do that. There are echoes of Faulkner here, but the story maintains its literary independence. What a joy to read a story that is such a fresh and inventive use of the form."
Stephen Minot, author of *Three Genres: The Writing of Poetry, Fiction and Drama*

"Bill Luvaas' story *Family Life*, which won the Ledge 2010 Fiction Award, examines the family dynamic (and all its dysfunction) in remarkably fresh and original fashion with unflinching honesty and brutal detail....[It is] a story rich with futuristic undertones and an almost post-apocalyptic landscape.
Tim Monaghan, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, *The Ledge Magazine*

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PRIZES:

- Huffington Post Book of the Year
- Finalist for Next Generation Indie Book Awards (short story)
- Finalist for Eric Hoffer Award's Montaigne Medal
- Three stories in the collection won prizes: "Ashes Rain Down" won Glimmer Train's Fiction Open Award (winter '07-08), "Out There" won honorable mention in Carpe Articulum's International Short Fiction Award Series, "Family Life" won first place in The Ledge Magazine's Fiction Awards Competition, "Heat Wave" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

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From reader reviews:

James Collis:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with close friends is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not experience tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition details. Even you love Ashes Rain Down: A Story Cycle, you could enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still desire to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout folks. What? Still don't understand it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

Dwight Richardson:

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