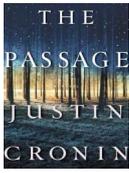


The Passage by Justin Cronin



In *The Passage*, author Justin Cronin, shows us a world in which humans struggle to survive in a bleak future overrun by horrific vampires. The only hope for humanity is a mysterious young girl.

When the military attempts to use a virus to create the next race of super-soldiers a bloodthirsty horde is released upon the world, knocking the human race down a step in the food chain. Cronin, admittedly, takes us where many, many authors have taken us before. However, few authors have done so with the style that one expects from Cronin, a former Hemingway/PEN award winner.

If you like your vampires to wait politely for a invitation to enter while oozing charm and sex appeal then you might want to look elsewhere. However, if you are looking for a thoughtful horror in which the vampire horde is hungry mass in which all members have had their humanity wrenched from them in a bloody fight that they had no chance of winning then this book might be for you.

For those readers that enjoyed Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, then *The Passage* might also be enjoyable. Both novels tell of small groups trying to hold it together while eking out a living under the most impossible of circumstances. Travel in an incredibly hostile world is featured prominently in both stories. *The Passage* is, believe or not, similarly reminiscent of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. While obviously belonging to different genres both stories tell of a group of unlikely heroes coming together to navigate a dangerous and uncertain path towards an ambiguous goal that lies in a mountain deep in the heart of enemy territory.

If *The Passage* is checked out, or you're looking for something else, Guillermo del Toro's *The Strain* might be worth a look. Both novels are horrors that involve vampiric viral outbreaks. Also, Max Brooks' *World War Z* depicts a future in which humanity is prey. In this case, however, human beings must defend themselves from zombies rather than vampires.

The Passage is in the process of being adapted for the big screen and Cronin's second installment, entitled *The Twelve*, is slated for release in May of 2012.

Readers should note that violence is prevalent throughout *The Passage*. Also the characters frequently use strong language and there are moments of sexuality.

Posted by sbowman on October 11, 2011

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