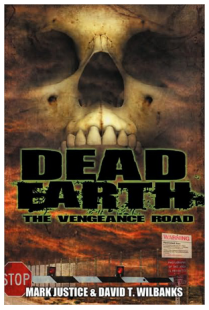
DEAD EARTH: THE VENGEANCE ROAD (Permuted Press), Mark Justice and David T. Wilbanks’ thrilling sequel to the novella DEAD EARTH: GREEN DAWN, packs in a heavy dose of blazing shoot-’em-up action and intense scares. In their invasion of Earth, aliens have used demonic technology to wipe out mankind, and an army of the living dead now stands in the way of humanity’s ultimate survival.

After civilized society completely collapses, drug dealers, sociopaths and ex-cons violently take over the wastelands. In this new world order, the worst of humanity is led by fanatical religious zealot Luther Kemp, who believes he is meant for a higher purpose, as the tyrannical extraterrestrials have chosen him to be their prominent destructor.



Meanwhile, Sheriff Jubal Slate travels with his beaten-down team of survivors across the hot Nevada desert. With his home town gone and everyone he has ever loved now dead, there is nothing left for Jubal, and his heart is consumed with unforgiving vengeance. Low on food and ammunition, he will still stop at nothing to end the reign of terror that has overtaken the globe.

With the zombie army at his command, Kemp can rule over his followers however he pleases. To demonstrate his power of authority, Kemp throws a traitor into a pit of the undead; while listening to the man’s screams, Luther enjoys the fear in his terrified advocates’ eyes. If Jubal wants to save the world, he’ll have to defeat Luther, who’s growing stronger by the minute. Their paths eventually cross in the desert, as both nomadic tribes end up at the alien-guarded Area 51.

Because the narrative is told from different viewpoints, the plot moves at a quick pace, and each character gets a chance to speak through their distinctive voices. The action-packed finale at Area 51 is highlighted by a well-delineated car chase that’s a must-read; a large amount of thought and creative effort were clearly put into this sequence. Justice and Wilbanks also offer a different take on the zombie apocalypse scenario by including aliens in the mix, and the buildup to the showdown between Jubal and Kemp will keep readers enticed until the final page. For one of these men, it’s all about fulfilling his destiny; for the other, it’s about payback.

Though this is the turning point of Justice and Wilbanks’ epic tale, readers are given sufficient information about what happened previously in GREEN DAWN, and can easily jump into the sequel, where most of the battle takes place. The story ends on a satisfactory note—though one that might make one wonder if the authors are intending a trilogy. To order both DEAD EARTH titles, go to Permuted’s official website. http://www.permutedpress.com

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