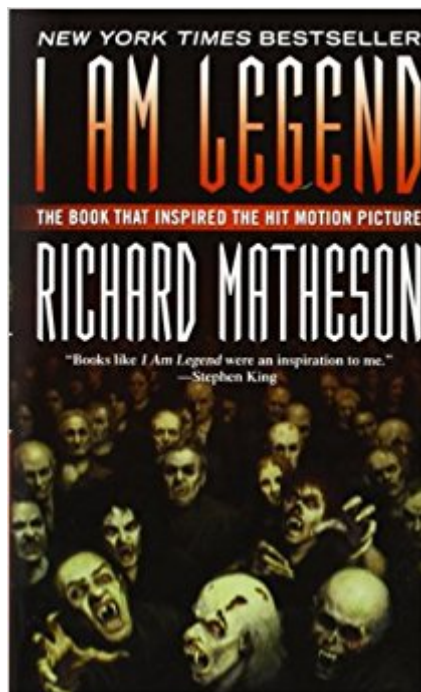


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I Am Legend



Synopsis

Robert Neville may well be the last living man on Earth . . . but he is not alone. An incurable plague has mutated every other man, woman, and child into bloodthirsty, nocturnal creatures who are determined to destroy him. By day, he is a hunter, stalking the infected monstrosities through the abandoned ruins of civilization. By night, he barricades himself in his home and prays for dawn....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the most influential vampire novels of the 20th century, *I Am Legend* regularly appears on the "10 Best" lists of numerous critical studies of the horror genre. As Richard Matheson's third novel, it was first marketed as science fiction (for although written in 1954, the story takes place in a future 1976). A terrible plague has decimated the world, and those who were unfortunate enough to survive have been transformed into blood-thirsty creatures of the night. Except, that is, for Robert Neville. He alone appears to be immune to this disease, but the grim irony is that now he is the outsider. He is the legendary monster who must be destroyed because he is different from everyone else. Employing a stark, almost documentary style, Richard Matheson was one of the first writers to convince us that the undead can lurk in a local supermarket freezer as well as a remote Gothic castle. His influence on a generation of bestselling authors--including Stephen King and Dean Koontz--who first read him in their youth is, well, legendary. --Stanley Wiater --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

Starred Review. Robert Neville has witnessed the end of the world. The world's population has been obliterated by a vampire virus, though Neville has somehow survived. As he toils to make sense of it all and protect himself against the hounding vampires who seek out his life force, Neville embarks on a series of projects to discover the source of the plague and hopefully put an end to the vampires. In a tale that plays with the slippery slope of sanity, Dean makes the perfect choice for a narrator. His powerful performance proves chilling and haunting. As Neville teeters on the edge of sanity, Dean manipulates his tone, speed, emphasis and projection accordingly, making listeners tremble with his narration. While some might rebuke his narration for being too dramatic or providing too much interpretation, Dean's intensity adds to the book in a way that benefits listeners over readers. The visceral nature of his performance evokes the image of a foamy-mouthed Dean growling at a microphone with spittle flying. A Tor paperback. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

I Am Legend has been on my list for years. I am not sure why I let it go for as long as I have. I enjoyed both films greatly, although I hold a particular fondness for Omega Man (1971) with Heston. I feel it holds a bit truer to the actual book, but there are a few more adaptations in existence (so I am told). I Am Legend follows protagonist Robert Neville after a plague has swept through, claiming the entirety of mankind and leaving nothing but vampiric beings in its wake. It is the end of times. Yet somehow, Neville remains. Alone and outnumbered, he must fight for survival and try to establish a life of solitude. I want to note that for a brief portion of this story I actually listened to the audio book narrated by Robertson Dean. I can safely recommend it, as I found the narrator's tone to be reminiscent of the actual film, Omega Man. It was nostalgic. So if you are in search of a shorter audio book, this might be an ideal option. You could certainly knock this one off of your TBR in a matter of hours. Where to start? This is a brilliant read! Cleverly disguised as your run-of-the-mill science fiction, I Am Legend delivers a reading experience that goes well beyond the expected. This is not just a mere story of a virus and mankind's end. This is a keen observation of humanity through the eyes of one desperate and desolate human being. "He stood there for a moment looking around the silent room, shaking his head slowly. All these books, he thought, the residue of a planet's intellect, the scrapings of futile minds, the leftovers, the potpourri of artifacts that had no power to save men from perishing. Our main character is everything you would come to expect him to be. He is angry. He is despairing. And he is forever

seeking answers and solutions. It is through Neville that we exposed to the horrors of what it is to be the last surviving human. The psychological ramifications are endless, and I feel that the 3rd person narration seen through Neville's eyes conveys this appropriately with well-timed emotional responses and outburst. The sense of desperation is forever present in his relentless studies and efforts to find a cure, a solution. The loneliness is experienced through his need to reside within his own memories of his wife and a life that was. The added element of his alcoholism and sporadic actions expose his weakness and ineffective coping, reminding us once again that this is more than a science fiction story. The writing is very impressive when you take into account that *I Am Legend* was originally published in 1954 and set with a futuristic Los Angeles during 1976. While the pace is somewhat slow, it is consistent and aids well in setting the atmosphere. I feel that it was a brazen decision on the author's part to create a single character and leave him to his own devices while providing the reader with limited insight through the chosen narration. It is easy to see why this book has influenced multiple films. By the time you have completed Neville's journey, *I Am Legend* will evoke a different type of fear that is very human and very real. "Full circle. A new terror born in death, a new superstition entering the unassailable fortress of forever. I am legend." This is an ideal read for fans of the films, post apocalyptic settings and titles that take an abstract approach to exploring humanity. I found this to be a very solid first encounter with Matheson's work, and it will certainly not be the end of the line in this new relationship. I walked away from *I Am Legend* with a real sense of why he is such a prolific name in science fiction.

4.5 Stars! Extremely enjoyable peek into the psyche of a man struggling to survive in a world filled with vampires. The vampires take a backseat as this story focused on the mind of a man who believe he might be the last man alive on earth. We follow him as he struggles the understand the new world order around him, the memories of loved ones long gone, and the natural "urges" of a man who has been alone too long. The book is emotionally gripping and make you feel everything that Robert Neville experiences. Intense and emotional. Everyone should read this! If you saw the movie first (like I did), know that the two do not resemble each other in any way.

I read this entire book in one sitting and could not put it down. Although it poses a great many questions that are never completely answered, it makes the point that not only do diseases mutate...societies do as well. Would an average person from 500 years ago recognize us? Would they think we were some new form of human? Or witches? The characterisation was chilling and just

as fascinating as the rest of the story. I think the lack of much of the back story heightens the suspense, but I still wish I knew more. Just in case you are wondering, this book bears only a passing resemblance to the movie of the same name.

This is a fantastic novella from a brilliant writer. It was way ahead of its time and Matheson inspired so many giants in the horror field, including Stephen King. This book in particular is one of the main contributing forces that gave rise to the zombie genre. I wouldn't say this is a literary masterpiece so much as an amazing story that is solidly written. The premise is dazzling and it kept me turning the pages. I will refrain from giving it the fifth star because some of Neville's thinking got a touch repetitive for me and I was actually a little confused about what constituted a (WARNING, mild spoiler) vampire or another kind of undead type of vampire being that isn't quite a vampire. I honestly can't spoil it too bad because I don't clearly understand that part. One of the things I really enjoyed about this book was that I have seen two film versions of I Am Legend and this still felt original. I think it's because the main character is a truly human character. We get a front row seat to those flaws in the book and we get to do it as he battles vampires from a last man on earth perspective. It was a fun read. I will try more of Matheson's written work. (He also wrote many screenplays.)

Good story- but there isn't a mention on the book cover or on this page, at least at a quick glance, that mentions only half this book is the actual 'I Am Legend' story. I mean I saw a table of contents but I just assumed that they were the chapter titles or something and just passed over it. It's around 170 pages long.. which is very disappointing because right when the action starts to pick up 'midway' in the book (which I thought was the entire story), it's over. Now the actual story itself is great, but man it really would've been a whole lot better had it been fleshed out to a longer book. Just when you are getting attached to the character, setting, and his cause, it's all over :(Probably would've rated it higher had I known it included the short stories along with IAL

Ok. Let's set the Will Smith version aside. I mention it because that's why I bought the book. Anyway...I didn't like it. It read too slowly. It literally took me 8 months to finish. I just couldn't connect with Robert or his troubles. And just when I thought something GOOD was going to happen, the last 4 chapters seemed rushed and forced. I would not recommend this book.

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