



Gray: Part III

Lou Cadle

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Welcome to Idaho City

The sign was metal, the words still visible through scorching that had happened during The Event's long fire.

The words spoke of the old days, seven months ago, when civilization was intact and the world robustly populated. The sign looked normal--or would have, had it not been for the pair of human feet attached over the first two words. The feet had been severed from their owner, and hex bolts were jammed between the metatarsals.

Coral and Benjamin are starving as they flee from this sight. When they encounter scavengers a few days later, have they found food and salvation? Or is it the deadliest trap of them all?

Gray Part III concludes the tale of post-apocalyptic survival. The series should be read in order.

Gray: Part III Details

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Author : Lou Cadle

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From Reader Review Gray: Part III for online ebook

Victoria Zigler says

I had trouble picking a rating for this book. I found it to be well-written, and I liked it better than part two, but not as much as part one. I also found some parts of it hard to read. There were parts of the story I loved. But there were also parts I had issues with. Plus, I still have some questions. Why was almost everyone who survived crazy, apart from the two main characters? Also, did Coral's family survive? It would have been nice to find out what happened in the community after they left it, and get some hint as to the potential chances of the survival of the human race as a whole too.

Jena says

This series kept up the suspense throughout, with a fantastic ending. It's rare to read one these days that is so consistently awesome. The action was nonstop, and the plot was not at all predictable. So glad I got this one!

Shirley says

Life goes on

After narrowly escaping death in another community in Boise Coral and Benjamin survive the cold winter for another year and one day the sun returned and they knew life would return.
Great ending to the series.

Joe Ricca says

Lou Cadle wrapped this series up nicely. Not as dark as the first book suggested but what is a world without hope right?

Pam Shelton-Anderson says

The third book was a good ending to a very good series. This tale of unremitting cold, hunger and grayness continues with another settlement. I sure wish they could find a group that didn't have some kind of dysfunction going. I was surprised by a shocking discovery (as were the characters). I was a little bothered that Benjamin kind of faded to the background in this book whereas, in the first two he was far more of an equal (or more than equal partner). Here he was more or less someone on which Coral could focus. It ends somewhat quickly and rather quietly but with some hope as well. Good job.

Toni Boughton says

I have read all 3 of the Gray books - they are fantastic. This is pure TEOTWAKI. You won't find any prepper fantasy nonsense here - this is genuine day-to-day survival here. The characters are so interesting, and I loved seeing them develop and change as they go through the changed world. Coral, especially, was so intriguing. The person she became was not always easy to like - but that's exactly what made her great. The experiences she goes through, the hard and bitter life of finding enough food to make it just one more day, shape her into a person as tough and dangerous as the land itself.

Lou Cadle is going on my 'automatic buy' list.

Karen's Library says

This final book in the Gray collection was a decent ending to this apocalyptic world. If not for Coral and Benjamin and how much I liked these characters, this book was full of despair. I'm not sure I could be tough enough to survive in a world such as this.

I really had hope for Coral and Benjamin when they came upon a settlement of survivors. Except for the leader, Levi, everyone else seemed like good decent people.

I'm glad things turned around for them and was really happy with the epilogue.

If you like apocalyptic stories, this one is a good one!

Peggy Pancherz says

Good book

Read all of the books in order to really enjoy. Characters are realistic and get better and better. Storyline continues to grow and develop.

Lucas Hamasaki says

This was bad??? I'm surprised cause I was enjoying the series, but... wow.

So. First, it had been established they were friends. He was too old for her. No attraction. Suddenly, it changed. It felt forced and awkward. They had a older brother - little sister dynamic and I was a bit weirded out by them hooking up.

Then, we spent the whole book getting to know other people, nice people, we learnt to cars about them. Then. Bye. Who cares? So long!

I don't get this book. It was a huge waste. No goal. No purpose. Nothing.

Rachel the Book Harlot says

"How long before all this was gone? Twenty-five years? A hundred? How long before every building and the asphalt below them crumbled into dust? Would the buildings outlast people? Was there anything that anyone could do to keep humanity alive that long?"

Gray: Part III is a wonderful end to a great trilogy. The end matched the tone and spirit of the story perfectly.

One of the most compelling aspects of this story, and what makes it truly shine, is its portrayal of human struggle and human nature. The character arcs of the leads were done so well – who they become over the course of the journey into the end of the world is very realistic. I also loved the look into how some people are followers while others are leaders. And is who we become during dire circumstances something already innate within us or do circumstances make us who we are? I walked away each time wondering who I would be faced with similar circumstances. I love thought-provoking reads like this.

My only criticism, or really wish, is that the trilogy had received the spit-shine polish of professional editing. The storytelling and character studies are so good that a treatment by a pro editor would have elevated the entire thing to a 5 star read. Don't get me wrong, it wasn't riddled with errors, but a good editor would have smoothed out some of the edges.

In any case, despite that minor criticism, I loved the *Gray* trilogy. I look forward to reading more by this author.

Final rating: 4 stars

Anne says

Wow! This three book series was amazing! I loved the characters, and the secondary characters were well done, also! It was just an awesome series, and I loved the ending too!

SheLove2Read says

A thrill ride from start to finish. If you've ever truly wondered how you might fare in a real apocalyptic world, this trilogy not only knocks some sense into you, but makes you pray we never have to find out. An excellent end to the series.

Kevin says

So I'll be honest here. I listened to this one from Audible as an omnibus edition, so there was no break between the parts. I had previously said that I probably wouldn't finish this trilogy, but since I was otherwise occupied when part 2 ended and part 3 spun up automagically, I let it ride.

If you've suffered through my previous reviews you'll know that this one is a bit of a slog. Those first two parts are much the same with small tweaks between them for who the Big Bads are. The first is a small group of nutjobs, the second is a slightly larger small group of equally nutty preppers who are somewhat fundamental, but eschew an organized religion sounding somewhat Scientology-ish. It was a bit confusing in their reason for being ready for the still unexplained (near?) extinction event that befalls mankind.

Part three continues in the same vein, but this time they come across another armed group of scavengers who sequester our erstwhile heroes to Boise. It goes downhill from there as you would have already expected.

There are a couple of things that have bugged me a bit about this whole story. The main character Coral is a young female pre-med student who gets caught up in this slow ride to the dark gray side. The main issue with her is that the author is a dude, and sometimes they (dudes) get it right, other times not so much. While it's close here, it didn't really work for me.

I also get that in an apocalypse things go sideways in serious ways. However this sideways has some serious issues. The weather impact notwithstanding, almost to a tee almost every non-protagonist character they come across are seriously unhinged. I get that in serious stress situations, base animal-like behavior can come out. However it's unusual that EVERYONE (other than the two we're with) go that way. I found it very tiresome. (For an alternative view of the end-of-the-world with a very different direction see Brad Manuel's "The Last Tribe")

This whole series really deserves 2.5 stars, but it is pretty well written overall, so I'm rounding up because I am an optimist.

Unlike Lou Cadle. :P

Kathie says

Best of the three! It begins with Benjamin and Coral seeing the Welcome to Idaho City sign...with severed feet bolted to it. This is a sign of the book, of the world these characters live in. They continue as in book 2 to search for food and signs of normal life (before this catastrophic event). I won't say how but they do end up in a small community of survivors. For me this is a lull in the book because it is filled with trivial details of day to day living. Coral, the narrator, has trouble adjusting to living in a community because of everything that's happened and feels that something isn't quite right in the town. Benjamin and Coral stay despite their misgivings because of the harsh conditions out there on their own. I won't say what happens or if the town is a good or bad place to be but I will say that there is action that slowly builds to edge of your seat by the end. I really enjoyed it. However, I didn't give a glowing review (even though I couldn't put the series down) because of some fairly obvious flaws...not even going into the fact we never learn what the event was that caused this post apocalyptic world and no one seems to care but Coral. No one but Coral (and she only at first) cares about whether their family is ok. Putting that aside, here are what I see as flaws.

1. Corals age. As a 19 year old premed student she wouldn't have any more knowledge than a high school kid. The trilogy suggests knowledge and practicum experiences she wouldn't get as a freshman in college...really college would be her taking gen ed classes like history, English, math, chemistry, basic biology, etc. The author could have had her finish a year of nursing school where she would have less gen ed and more hands on info because of the difference in programs. But I think Coral should have just finished her first year of med school which is grad school and been in her early to mid 20s.

2. Women, young or old, would not venture off the grid alone. Women learn from an early age that bad things can happen if alone. Also, it's hard to believe a 19 yo girl would even want this type of vacation. Even if she did, I doubt she would head off during summer break in an RV to another state to fish, go mountain climbing, or caving alone. More likely she would take classes or work or head to a beach. But if she did take the summer to do these activities she would go with a friend, boyfriend or family member. It would've been more believable had she had a companion who dies just before, during or after the event.

3. Corals vacation destination. Corals permanent residence is in Ohio and she attends college in Michigan but drives her brothers RV to Idaho to get one with nature. Why not just travel to northern Michigan for that? If the author doesn't know that area then, have the reason for why Idaho would be on her radar.

4. Don't have too much time in the narrators head. As I mentioned in my review of the first book, it gets boring with a single character hanging out alone thinking! This was one of my problems with The Martian, even though there's a reason for him being alone. It would've made sense to have Coral and her older brother fishing and have him killed off trying to save her. It would not only make more sense and have dialogue before the event. Plus, it would explain her lack of searching for family. When she and Benjamin leave, they head west even though her family is east. Wouldn't they try to find her family, especially with her being just a teen?

5. No one has any canned goods. I mean even Ben lives in a remote cabin and had run out of food during the week she was in the cave. He seems solitary. He probably doesn't head to town daily so I'm thinking he'd have more food storage, most likely in the basement. I live within a mile of a massive grocery and have enough canned goods to last quite awhile... veggies, soups, canned meats. I would think if he lived in a remote cabin he would have stuff like that stored in the basement for winter months. And it suggests he's a hunter so he'd have a freezer full of meat. Granted the power goes out but it also starts snowing almost immediately so he'd store his meat and stuff outside. Along those lines it's hard to believe he hadn't been to town after the event to see if anyone survived or to scavenge food from houses and stores. Come on he would. His character is a pragmatic man in his 30s. Oh and I found it amusing he was described as middle aged. At least age him into his mid to upper 40s, especially for his attitude.

With that said I did enjoy the story. Plus in the final the authors tone is one of hope for Earth and its survivors which is a nice change from some of my reading from the post apocalyptic genre.

Sarah Crawford says

Coral and Benjamin have fled the UFO cultists but soon find out the meaning of the old phrase 'out of the frying pan into the fire.' They are snuck up on again (don't they ever look around?) and are captured (again.) They end up in a group of several hundred survivors who have food (for the moment) but could use a doctor (even though Coral points out she had only completed one year of pre-med before the disaster.)

So she ends up in charge of the clinic, a job which challenges her abilities quite a bit.

Their's food, there's shelter (even though it's freezing cold) and other people around. There's also an extremely dark and very, very ugly secret that they need to discover before it's Willie Nelson's 'On The Road Again.'

Whether or not the human race as a whole actually survives remains a major question. Still, a decent addition to the series.
