



Wicked Weeds: A Zombie Novel

Pedro Cabiya , Jessica Ernst Powell (Translation)

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Set at the contact zones between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, this is a polyphonic novel, an intense and sometimes funny pharmacopeia of love lost and humanity regained; a most original combination of Caribbean noir and science-fiction addressing issues of global relevance including novel takes on ecological/apocalyptic imbalance bound to make an impact.

A Caribbean zombie—smart, gentlemanly, financially independent, and a top executive at an important pharmaceutical company—becomes obsessed with finding the formula that would reverse his condition and allow him to become "a real person." In the process, three of his closest collaborators (cerebral and calculating Isadore, wide-eyed and sentimental Mathilde, and rambunctious Patricia), guide the reluctant and baffled scientist through the unpredictable intersections of love, passion, empathy, and humanity. But the playful maze of jealousy and amorous intrigue that a living being would find easy to negotiate represents an insurmountable tangle of dangerous ambiguities for our "undead" protagonist.

Wicked Weeds is put together from Isadore's scrapbook, where she has collected her boss' scientific goals and existential agony, as well as her own reflections about growing up as a Haitian descendant in the Dominican Republic and what it really means to be human. The end result is a precise combination of Caribbean noir and science-fiction, Latin American style.

Wicked Weeds, A Zombie Novel combines Cabiya's expertise in fiction, graphic novels and film to create a memorable literary zombie novel of a dead man's search for his lost humanity that can now take its place alongside other leading similar novels like Jonathan Mayberry's Patient Zero, S.G. Browne's Breathers: A Zombie's Lament, Daryl Gregory's Raising Sony Mayhall, World War Z by Max Brooks, and The Reapers Are The Angels by Alden Bell. As for the novel's immersion in orality and Caribbean folk traditions and noir it can very well align with Wade Davis' The Serpent and the Rainbow and Karen Russell's St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves.

Wicked Weeds: A Zombie Novel Details

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Author : Pedro Cabiya , Jessica Ernst Powell (Translation)

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From Reader Review Wicked Weeds: A Zombie Novel for online ebook

Anca says

This book sure delivered what it promised: Caribbean noir and science-fiction about what makes a zombie and how it can be cured. We get the modern science answer and the folktales answer as well.

The book is funny in places it could have been sad and entertaining in places it could have been boring (like the references to modern “zombie culture” in both books and movies).

There were two ways of reading the book - the traditional way, front to back or an alternate one, based on categories. I chose the first and now wonder if the experience would have been better or worse the other way around.

Danny R. says

ASjfadnkbadf, es todo lo que tengo para decir. No, mentira.

Wow, primera incursión con Cabiya y estoy gratamente sorprendida. Para empezar, la novela está estructurada de manera interesante, tipo Rayuela, y el lector tiene libertades para abordar la lectura aunque también hay un camino sugerido. El que yo tomé, de principio a fin y no desordenado (porque soy dispersa y me habría perdido).

La historia cuenta varias historias al mismo tiempo, aunque por supuesto estas tienen puntos y momentos en común. El tema central es el de los zombis, pero no tomado desde la perspectiva del muerto-vivo-caníbal estadounidense (hay referencias a él en todo caso), sino a una visión contemporánea del zombi caribeño, el que se cree desesperado por medio de un compuesto o hechicería.

El protagonista es un zombi (¿es un zombi?) que trata de buscar, por medio de su trabajo en una farmacéutica, una cura para este estado que aqueja a tantos individuos en secreto.

Y me gustó, las reflexiones de este zombi en torno a su propio estado, su incapacidad de empatía y de comprender lo que a él mismo le está ocurriendo, sobre todo en su interacción con otras personas, no zombis. La voz del personaje y la de un narrador más allá del relato de repente se confunden al hablar sobre lo que significa la zombificación en el mundo contemporáneo, para reflexionar en torno a la figura más divulgada de su contraparte caníbal; consumir y querer pertenecer pero no lograrlo jamás.

Alguien dijo que este tipo es como el Stephen King caribeño, pretendo averiguar si es verdad o no.

Lindsay says

This book was weird, but not in the way I usually like. More weird/puzzling. I feel like I totally missed something, but I don't know what. Even though I read it "out of order" using the table of contents as my compass (as indicated in the introduction), I found it - quite simply put - boring.

At least I'm able to check off another box on my reading challenge list..."read a book with a genre/sub-genre you've never heard of" (a hard one for me find, but I'd never heard of an ethnobotanist sub-genre, or noir fiction).

I. says

It had promise but unfortunately, it was written by a man.

camilla says

I actually liked this a bit by the end but it took me soooo long to get there. My real issue with this novel is the framework or organization. Despite the beginning of the book telling me not to read the book in a linear fashion, that's exactly what I did. BECAUSE IT'S A BOOK. Read front to back this book is a mess. I kept getting distracted and confused who was narrating and what we were talking about. And you know what? At the end I flipped back to that warning in the beginning and read some stuff in the order they suggested and I felt it gave away too much too early. The enjoyable stuff at the end came too quickly and missed the twist revelation it has reading the book linear. So, ha!

Tori-Lynn says

I wasn't sure what to expect when I picked up *Wicked Weeds*. Labelled as a novel caught in the crossroads of Caribbean noir and science-fiction, it promised to be something I've never experience before. I engulfed the novel in a single sitting, and when it was over I found myself in an absolute daze. This book packs a punch few novels on my bookshelves possess. There is not a single wasted page or stray paragraph.

Our "undead" protagonist is a curious man. Obsessed with finding a cure that would reverse his condition and allow him to become "a real person," we see him thrust into a strange tango with his three beautiful collaborators. Unlike his young colleges, our zombie no longer has the capacity for emotion. More than that, he can not longer ever recall what it was like to possess feelings of any kind. There is a physical barrier between him and the living world—one that encompasses taste and touch. This creates a humorous scenario that dominates most of the plot and spurs us through the majority of the book's pages.

The content of this novel was incredibly unique and fresh. I found myself engrossed by the science of our zombie character, intrigued by his inability to grasp the complexity of human emotions, and thrilled with the references to modern "zombie culture" in both books and movies. The details of Isadore's scrapbook had me believing ever word of it.

An element of *Wicked Weeds* that enthralled me was the format of its content. The table of contents offers an alternative reading of this book—one of categories. The novel is ordered in a articular way that offers the reader to chose between reading the novel as it is ordered, or skipping certain chapters and backtracking in order to read the contents in its respective categories. I chose the later option, and found the story much more engrossing to follow the guidelines set forth in the table of contents rather than read the book in the order it was printed. This creative element really set this book apart from the rest of its so called "zombie novel" genre, breathing new life within its cover. I'm so glad I decided to read such a unique and colorful story.

To read my other book reviews, please visit my website!

Soy Literatura... says

"Las tres Gracias", una de las últimas pinturas de Rubens nos dan un preludio de lo que sucede. El amor, la belleza, la sexualidad, la vida en lucha constante serán claves para estos personajes. Un ser, extraño e ignorante de la situaciones que le rodean, y los misteriosos pasados de cada personaje nos mantendrá super atentos hasta llegar al final. No te arrepentirás...

Nadine says

The book starts with a warning: if you read the pages in numerical order, "you will wind up in chaos"; if you follow the page order in the table of contents where chapters are grouped by category, you will be delivered to a "safe harbor", but "this convenience, however, could be lethal." I picked possible death over chaos and took the table of contents route, but I'd love to compare notes with someone who read the pages in order. I wonder if a page order reading would be more confusing at first, but would ultimately weave the chapter 'categories' together more elegantly. I think the publisher blurb does a great job describing the pleasures of the book without giving anything away, although I wouldn't call it science fiction by any stretch of the imagination. If you are looking for science fiction zombies you'll be disappointed, but like the blurb says, if you're looking for "...an intense and sometimes funny pharmacopeia of love lost and humanity regained" (not to mention a hysterically funny bit of zombie erotica) this is the place.

Brandon Prince says

Excellent genre novel that deserves comparison to Bioy Casares. Impressive multi-voiced blend of horror, Haitian folk culture, and phenomenology -- all couched within a comedy of workplace gender relations with a zombie twist. Also includes a 'Hopscotch'-style alternate chapter order.

Gina Franco says

Este libro es evidencia de que existe una levísima separación entre mundos... Muy recomendado.

Jillian says

The female characters were too "sexy lamp" for my taste...the book almost subverted that trope but didn't quite get there. But it was a fun read, and nice to have a zombie book that isn't horror.

❄️Elsa Frost❄️ says

I get it, but I don't get it. Does that make sense?

Sean Kottke says

A zombie novel with a difference, this one is structured in such a way as to afford different interpretations depending on the order in which one reads the chapters. I'm glad I opted to read this one in English, as there was enough ambiguity in the story that would have been doubly complicated by ambiguities of gender in Spanish verb endings (particular in third-person singular). If Garcia Marquez had taken a swing at telling a story like *Warm Bodies*, this is what might have resulted. The narrator's meta-awareness of zombie narratives is delightful. For all its literary aspirations and existential musings, it does also manage to convey some genuinely unnerving horror.

dianne says

This is not your little brother's zombie novel, it is an amazing, thoughtful, philosophical, playful story of great imagination.

“Our five senses are not portals through which we are conveyed to an external reality, but rather ports that receive stimuli utterly lacking in intrinsic qualities, that our brains adorn in accordance with evolutionary requirements in order to present them as Truth.”

So we are trained, according to current requirements, in just how the stimuli we receive are True.

This is like no other book i've read, no other story i've heard, no other trip i've taken. What if stimuli one has accepted, turn out to be in direct contradistinction to other - maybe more usual, or usually adorned, stimuli - then, what do our brains do? What is Real?

So when he bleeds - is it proof of delusion? or proof of laboratory success? or perhaps whatever came “alive” when something tactile transpired - the real relationships he had with the three? - the sweet soft emotions of M, the hard lust of P, and the authentic intellectual connection, perhaps from “before” with Isadore? Did they bring life with their ‘love’? Their friendship? Their competitive fascination? What our flotation device in this absolutely unique story is, is that we already know that the Real people, or the ones who think they are, know nothing. We are afloat because we've seen through the eyes that taught her eyes, and we know a little of what she knows. So the Real ain't Real. Thomas Szasz was right. Madness is a myth.

The plot, the stories behind the stories, the completely unexpected twists and *That Ending* are like nothing before - altogether a wild ride for every part of you, every single part.

Highly recommended for humans, zombies, and those that aren't sure.

Caroline says

Hmmm. Interesting.

I read the chapters in the order 'suggested' by the scrapbook contents page, in spite of the caution in the prefatory 'Warning' that this 'convenience' (grouping like things together) could be lethal. Unless I have unbeknownst to myself turned into a zombie, i survived the experience.
