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# Rot & Ruin



## Synopsis

In the zombie-infested, post-apocalyptic America where Benny Imura lives, every teenager must find a job by the time they turn fifteen or get their rations cut in half. Benny doesn't want to apprentice as a zombie hunter with his boring older brother Tom, but he has no choice. He expects a tedious job whacking zoms for cash, but what he gets is a vocation that will teach him what it means to be human.

## Book Information

Series: Rot & Ruin (Book 1)

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Best Sellers Rank: #56,161 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 inÂ Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Horror > Zombies #71 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Death & Dying #123 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Death & Dying

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Upâ "At first glance, this appears to be a retelling of Carrie Ryan's The Forest of Hands and Teeth (Delacorte, 2009) but with a male protagonist. But Maberry's vision of a zombie-infested future has more action, more violence, and more emotional depth. Benny Imura was a baby when the zombie apocalypse happened. His first memory is of his mother handing him to his older half brother as she is being dragged down by his zombie-fied father. He resents Tom for leaving his mother, for running away. To Benny, Tom is a coward. To everyone else in their fenced-in town, Tom is the toughest, bravest zombie killer in California. As Benny approaches his 15th birthday, he must find a job or forfeit half of his food rations. After losing half a dozen jobs, he reluctantly agrees to work as Tom's apprentice in the â œFamily Business.â • When they travel out into the Rot and

Ruin, he witnesses things that change his opinion of his brother and forever alter his perception of the world. He also learns that flesh-eating zombies aren't the scariest or most dangerous monsters around. As with all zombie stories, this one requires a fairly large suspension of disbelief, but once the brothers enter the Rot and Ruin, readers become too wrapped up in the plot to dwell on some lapses of logic. The relationship between Benny and Tom becomes surprisingly complex and satisfying, as does the romantic subplot between Benny and his friend Nix. The length of the book may intimidate some reluctant readers but the striking cover, compelling action, and brutal violence will draw them in and keep them reading.â Anthony C. Doyle, Livingston High School, CA (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Itâ™s been 14 years since First Night, when the dead came back to life. Six billion people have died (and reanimated) since then, and America has collapsed into isolated communities living within the great âœRot and Ruin.â • Benny is 15, which means itâ™s time to get a job or face cut rations, but his general laziness leaves him with only one employment option: join his stuffy, sword-swinging, Japanese half-brother, Tom, as an apprentice bounty hunter. This means heading beyond the gates to slice and dice âœzoms,â • but Benny quickly begins to see the undead in a new lightâ™as well as realizing that Tom is much more than he ever let on. The plot is driven by an evil bounty-hunter rival and the cruel games he plays, but Maberry has more than gore on his mind. The chief emotion here is sadness, and the book plays out like an extended elegy for a lost world. Tomâ™s a bit too perfect and his pontification too extended, but this is nevertheless an impressive mix of meaning and mayhem. Grades 9-12. --Daniel Kraus --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a must read. Character development is excellent, envisioned world has some fresh ideas. Dialog is pretty good (for a zombie book). Overall just well executed. I have read a LOT of semi pro zombie series that have thousands of very high ratings that are incredibly marginal books. This is not one of those. The character's emotions and actions are believable. No crazy coincidences, stupid luck etc to get people in or out of trouble. An example of a series with a large popular following is zombie fallout. I gave up reading zombie fallout to book 4. That series was absolutely horrible (unless you like juvenile comedy fart jokes which many do - like deadpool). This series is a serious book, well written, with characters that are consistent and have a good backstory. There is even some moderately sophisticated philosophy going on as well. I would put it in the same league as

books like the dust/wool series, day by day armageddon, forest of teeth and hands and the remaining as far as being engaging and enjoyable to read.

"It's just that I'm fifteen, and I have this crazy idea I might actually have a life in front of me. I don't see how it's going to do me much good to believe that the world is over and this is just an epilogue." In a zombie apocalypse book I never expected to feel sorry for the zombies but it seems that is the case here. In most zombie books they are the enemy (brains.....brains....brains...). It is run away from them to survive and I don't suggest you hug one in this book either, but did you every stop to think, who are the zombies? They are your family and friends and neighbors. Everyone has lost someone in the Rot and Ruin. Benny and Tom are brothers who escaped on first night zombies came into the world and found refuge in a small walled town. Benny was so young when it happened but he still has a few memories from that time and blames Tom for running away and not helping their parents. They have an estranged relationship, but that all starts to change when Benny teams up with Tom and learns the brother he thought he knew his whole life is not at all what or who Benny thought he was. This is a story of friendship and loyalties. You don't have to be a zombie to be bad, there are plenty of people who are as evil as they come and Benny learns that the hard way as he explores outside of the fenced town he grew up in. More than just that town survived and Benny comes to realize that living in a gated town isn't the only way to go. Some people have survived out in the wilderness and he is inexplicably drawn to a lost and wild girl named Lilah, who has lived in the wild practically all her life. There are some great side characters in Benny's friends that will probably come into more play later in the series but Jix was by far my favorite with her quick tongue and sharp humor. "Benny Imura," she said with a rare flicker of a smile on her mouth, "if you are going to say something like 'I love you' and you choose here, in a way station out in the Rot and Ruin to do it, so help me, I will kick your ass." Benny has to decide how much he will risk to save Jix and ultimately choose between the friend he had all his life and the strange lost girl on a trading card he feels drawn to. This book had plenty of action and adventure along the journey to introduce this world. There are a few disturbing scenes of cruelty to zombies. It was a fun and fast read and great if you or your kids like zombies or dystopias

I have had this book on my Kindle shelf for over a year and have tried twice to read it. Then I heard so much about it that I stayed with it until past the first 50 pages and I was hooked. I just love Benny and Tom Imura!! Benny and Tom live in a community that has a law that when you turn 15 you have a short time to get a job or your rations will be cut. So Benny tried many jobs and quits or gets fired

from them all. He really has had a protected life inside the walled in community and he would rather just hang out with his friends. But finally he has to do what he has resisted and he goes to his older brother Tom and asks him if he will take him on as an apprentice in his job. Benny believes Tom is a Bounty Hunter who kills "zoms" and who ran away taking baby Benny with him on First Night when the zoms attacked their mom and dad. He believes Tom is a coward and has no respect for him. But when Tom takes him out beyond the walls into the rot and ruin and shows Benny what he does, Benny realizes things are not as he thought. Nor are they as easy as he thought. In fact the very men he looked up to and thought were brave zombie killers were really the evil ones. This is a story of a boy, Benny Imura, who grows up very quickly while with his older brother Tom out in the rot and ruin. His whole world changes as it does when we grow up and lose our innocence. He loses his very quickly and shockingly as he finds a world very different from the one he has believed existed all his life. I am so glad I stuck with this story this time and have already begun Dust and Decay. The good news is all the books in this series are completed and ready to immerse yourself in. As I have.

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