

The Twelve (Book Two of The Passage Trilogy): A Novel

By Justin Cronin

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Look for a special preview of Justin Cronin's *The City of Mirrors* in the back of the book.

The end of the world was only the beginning.

In his internationally bestselling and critically acclaimed novel *The Passage*, Justin Cronin constructed an unforgettable world transformed by a government experiment gone horribly wrong. Now the scope widens and the intensity deepens as the epic story surges forward with . . .

THE TWELVE

In the present day, as the man-made apocalypse unfolds, three strangers navigate the chaos. Lila, a doctor and an expectant mother, is so shattered by the spread of violence and infection that she continues to plan for her child's arrival even as society dissolves around her. Kittridge, known to the world as "Last Stand in Denver," has been forced to flee his stronghold and is now on the road, dodging the infected, armed but alone and well aware that a tank of gas will get him only so far. April is a teenager fighting to guide her little brother safely through a landscape of death and ruin. These three will learn that they have not been fully abandoned—and that in connection lies hope, even on the darkest of nights.

One hundred years in the future, Amy and the others fight on for humankind's salvation . . . unaware that the rules have changed. The enemy has evolved, and a dark new order has arisen with a vision of the future infinitely more horrifying than man's extinction. If the Twelve are to fall, one of those united to vanquish them will have to pay the ultimate price.

A heart-stopping thriller rendered with masterful literary skill, *The Twelve* is a grand and gripping tale of sacrifice and survival.

Praise for *The Twelve*

"[A] literary superthriller."—*The New York Times Book Review*

“An undeniable and compelling epic . . . a complex narrative of flight and forgiveness, of great suffering and staggering loss, of terrible betrayals and incredible hope.”—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

“*The Twelve* is even better than *The Passage*.”—*The Plain Dealer*

“A compulsive read.”—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Gripping . . . Cronin [introduces] eerie new elements to his masterful mythology. . . . Enthralling, emotional and entertaining.”—*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

“Fine storytelling.”—Associated Press

“Cronin is one of those rare authors who works on two different levels, blending elegantly crafted literary fiction with cliff-hanging thrills.”—*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Exclusive Essay by Author Justin Cronin



Readers often ask where I get my ideas. The better question would be: Where don't I?

Many people know that *The Passage* was born from a challenge laid down by my eight-year-old daughter to write the story of “a girl who saves the world.” This wasn't exactly what I wanted to hear—it seemed a trifle ambitious—but a dare is a dare. For the next three months she joined me on my daily jog, following along on her bicycle, while the two of us hashed out the plot. As the weeks passed, I realized we were onto something much better than the book I was supposed to be writing. I put that book aside, wrote the first chapter of *The Passage*, and never looked back.

So don't ever think you shouldn't listen to your kids.

But my daughter's challenge wasn't the only inspiration. When I write a novel, my goal is to put absolutely everything I have into its pages, right down to the interesting thing that happened yesterday. I know I'm done when my mind feels as empty as a leaky bucket. So many influences, real and imagined, went into *The Passage* that I couldn't list them if I tried. But one memory that stands out is the night my family and I tried to flee Houston in advance of hurricane Rita. Apparently, about a million other people had the same idea. After five hours on the road, we'd made it all of sixty miles. The highways were clogged with cars that had long since run out of gas; every minimart and gas station had been picked clean. I jumped the median and made it home in a little under an hour, my gas gauge floating just above 'E'.

Rita missed Houston, slamming into a less-inhabited section of Texas and Louisiana coastline. But the experience of being in a large urban evacuation, with its feeling of barely-bottled panic, was one I'll never forget, and is everywhere in the pages of *The Passage*.

So where did *The Twelve* come from?

Again, many places. But if I had to pick one source, it would be the strong women in my life. No bones about it: Gentlemen, if you doubt for a second that women are tougher than we are, go watch one have a baby. So here you have Alicia, the woman warrior with her blades and crossbow; here you have Amy, the spiritual leader and visionary; here you have one of my favorite new characters, Lore DeVeer, whose mechanical savvy is matched only by her unbridled sensuality; here you have a fourth woman (sorry, can't tell you who) whose maternal strength is as powerful as any great spectacle of nature. As I wrote *The Twelve*, I came to understand that these powerful characters were the backbone of the tale. Even more, they are a tribute to all the amazing women I am privileged to know, befriend, and in one very lucky instance, marry.

Hope you enjoy *The Twelve*. All eyes.

Review

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From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

Justin Cronin is the author of *The Passage*, *Mary and O'Neil* (which won the PEN/Hemingway Award and the Stephen Crane Prize), and *The Summer Guest*. A Distinguished Faculty Fellow at Rice University, he divides his time between Houston, Texas, and Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

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