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### ***Remnant: An Anthology***

Roland Allnach

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Reviewed by Richard R. Blake for Reader Views (6/11)

Roland Allnach's "Remnant: An Anthology" consists of three stories within the science fiction genre. The stories are linked in theme by characters seeking self-truth and redemption through finding their true moral center.

The first of the three novellas, "All the Fallen Angels," is the story of Stohko, a convicted war criminal and his attempt to make peace with his past. He is filled with paranoia, guilt, confusion, self-deception, hostility and hate.

In the second novella, "Enemy, I Know You Not," a military officer, Lieutenant Hovland, is assigned a group of recruits for simulated training exercises. He is tortured with corruptive thoughts of rebellion, order, and the illusion of control while he tries to find his loyalty in paranoia of suspicion and mistrust.

The final novella, titled "Remnant," continues with the theme of behavioral research and centers around the conflicted emotions of Peter Lowry, the survivor of a global pandemic. Peter is confronted with the prospect of making peace with past memories when, Jim MacPherson and Emily Lewis, two other survivors attempt to bring him back from self-imposed isolation.

Influenced by the writing of mythology and classical literature, Allnach follows a pattern in his writing using character driven themes. Although he writes primarily in the Science Fiction genre he develops depth and substance to his characters in situations outside of the realm of our "common world."

Each of the three novellas in the anthology follows a pattern of a nightmare of "tangled, convoluted confusion." Stohko experienced Hermium euphoria, chaotic eruptions of jumbled moments in time in "All the Fallen Angels." He was plagued by a trance-like weaving in an out of a delirious dream moving from guilt of the past, the realities of the present, and the hopelessness of the future.

Lieutenant Hovland lost his sense of purpose in "Enemy, I Know You Not." When a malfunction at the simulator turned a training level exercise into an actual lethal fight for survival, Hovland found himself suspected of subversion. This created a feeling of paranoia, suspicion, exhaustion, futility, betrayal and retribution.

In “Remnant” Peter Lowry becomes a prime example of traumatic stress syndrome as he works through the negative characteristics of blind obsession, mistrust, suspicion, guilt, and the positive qualities of genuine empathy, concern, discipline and loyalty.

I especially appreciated Roland’s literary style:

- His vivid word pictures
- His insights demonstrated through character driven dialog
- His creative imagination
- His use of foreshadowing

Allnach’s writing in “Remnant: An Anthology” is haunting, begging for an interactive response from the reader in an honest self appraisal; asking the “what if” questions created by identifying with the protagonist in well written literature. Roland Allnach is destined to become recognized for his contributions in whatever genre of writing he may choose.