

SPECULATIVE FICTION REVIEW by Stephanie Young

TITLE            *Live Without A Net*  
EDITOR         Lou Anders  
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What would life be without the Internet or even computers? That's the premise the stories in this anthology address. While all of them fit the premise, most of them are not all that interesting. I was a bit surprised by that, considering the authors included: Stephen Baxter, David Brin, Charles Stross, S.M. Stirling Michael Swanwick and Mike Resnick. The rest of the authors are names I am not familiar with.

My favorite story is *O One* by Chris Roberson. It tell of a society where all necessary mathematics are done on abacuses and the post of Chief Computator is one of the most respected in the land, until a man shows up with a machine that calculates by itself. The ending was really a surprise.

None of the others stories are bad, which is unusual since I usually detest at least one story in every anthology I have ever read, but none stand out, maybe that's why the bargain book store had so many copies.

I can't recommend a whole book for one story, so look elsewhere and you will find much more worthwhile collections, unless you are really interested in the premise.

I give it 1.5 rings of Saturn.