

X (2007)

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Zombies, rooftop, survival. What'd you expect? I wrote it over two years ago.

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Overview

The gunfire rained down from above, mutilation was a thing of the present, and nothing, or no one could survive the hellfire. The shooters pumped round after round into the dead or living, both of whom were treated the same. Gore and mayhem spread through the streets, decapitated bodies thrown through shop windows, the bloody heads used to break open driver seat windows of cars. Above, the rooftops were covered in bullet shells and ammo-less weapons dropped without second thoughts. Pandemonium shrieked at the bodies in the street, dull flames brightening with the encouragement of gasoline and car engines.

The people down below- if youâd even dare call them people- were gnawing on each other, turning others down the path theyâve been forced down. Meat and blood smeared the faces of what could have been called children, but more recently were known as evil little creatures.

The shootout was focused mainly on a main street, such as 6th Street at the cross section with Lamar Blvd, in the old capitol of Texas. Though the true location of the bloodbath was hardly anywhere near the location, there might actually be another fight right on 6th Street, although no one would be sure of it.

The shooters were the true survivors, all pity given to the killed down below on the streets should be completely forgotten. The shooters were doing Godâs work, destroying monsters that kill and eat, destroy the lives of all whom thought they had something to live for. For the ones below are what a horror film fanatic would call zombies.

The number of undead on the streets has more than doubled; the opposite of what the gunmen had wanted. They had all been drawn from ruins to the site by gunfire and explosions. The possibility of escape has slimmed considerably, and the only thing left to do is to shoot and try not to be turned into one of them.

Rowdy

To the leader of the group, Rowdy, there was still a fighting chance; all that had to be done was to start dropping grenades. But as it turns out, run down gun shops donât carry in the specifications of explosives, but the grocery stores have enough lighter fluid and gasoline to light the street for about ten minutes or so. And so he did.

Rowdy ran across the roof to the other side, where he had stashed about five or six dozen 32 oz bottles of Grill Time charcoal lighter. He first began by taping ten bottles together, and then another ten, and so on. In the end he had six ten bottle bundles and a six bottle bundle. He scooped up all seven of the bundles and brought them back to where he was stationed, ten yards away. He hurried over there and began setting them down, when one of them had climbed up the fire escape and managed to get up to where he was. At the moment, only he, Mr. Nantucket and Marty Nelson were out on shift, while the others were trying to get some shut-eye. The zombie had somehow climbed the ladder and found Rowdyâs shoulder, while he was setting down the explosives. It locked down on his shoulder and dug in deep. Rowdy shrieked in pain and started whacking the zombie's head with his lucky gun, which he had holstered in the back of his pants. The other two on guard ran up to him and pulled the zombie off of him and blew its head apart. For a second its body just clung onto the ladder, until Marty hit it with the butt of his rifle and it released its grip and fell the sixty feet to the ground.

Rowdy's shoulder was gushing blood at an alarming rate, the others just stared, flabbergasted at what events occurred in front of their eyes. He grabbed the roll of duct tape that he had used to stick the charcoal lighter bottles together, and ripped off a strip. Rowdy placed it over the wound like a bandage; he then pulled off a longer strip and wrapped it around his shoulder and armpit.

He looked into Mr. Nantucket's eyes and asked him: "How long was it that you said it took for a person to get turned into one of those flesh eaters?" Rowdy was in sheer pain, but had managed to hide it from Nantucket and Marty.

"Something around five minutes," Mr. Nantucket said slowly.

"Well, that gives me just enough time to blow these *things* to hell and drag myself along for the ride," Rowdy said, reaching for the tape again. "Do you mind helping me strap these on?" The two stared dumbfounded for a second, and then had began helping Rowdy.

Mr. Nantucket

"Are you sure you're thinking straight, Rowdy?" Mr. Nantucket asked hastily. Rowdy glanced in his general direction and shook his head slowly.

"Not at all, but that's the fun of it! Who cares if I'm in my right mind, one of these monsters just bit half-way through my shoulder?" Rowdy half-shouted half-cackled. "You know what guys, this has been a pretty great thirty five years of life that I've had on it, besides the last couple. And you know what? I've always thought this place kind of sucked. So when I go to Heaven, I'll relish the fact that I did a good job."

Mr. Nantucket, a thirty seven year old man who had not once in his life been scared, now had a big gaping hole of fear in the pit of his stomach. His fear for Rowdy's life was immense and wholesome.

"So how are you going to do this?" Marty asked in a flat voice. "Are you just gonna light yourself up and take a dive? Or are you going to climb down and light a match in the middle of a big group of them?" As he said this, he stood staring down at the monsters, and all the while tightening his grip on his rifle.

"I think I have a different plan," Rowdy coughed up blood, and continued: "I'm going to climb down! Which of you has a better aim?" He looked at the two of them, and then they looked at each other confused.

"Uh! I think I am sir," Marty said uncertainly. He looked at Nantucket to make sure that he was correct. He nodded.

"Yeah, good, okay then! I'm going to climb down and un-cap each of the bottles, and then I'm gonna run into the middle of a crowd. I'm gonna wave my arms, and then you, Marty are going to shoot one of the bottles on my stomach. And if my plan is correct, the bullet is going to go through the bottle, ignite, and then set the other bottles aflame and then explode. Thus killing all the zombies in a five or ten foot radius; but then again, I don't know anything about this stuff. You know, besides that it'll explode, and burn."

Marty closed his eyes and inhaled slowly; he opened his eyes and exhaled. "That plan sounds like a bigger load of crap than anything I ever heard before. It would make more sense to throw half a dozen flaming kangaroos at those things down there." He said jerking his thumb towards the undead.

"Well, Marty, you do have a point, but the thing is we've got about a minute or two before I'm ripping your face off with my teeth and Nantucket here is blowing my brains out with his ever-so-special .357 that he has hidden in an ankle holster, on his left boot." Rowdy said, tapping Mr. Nantucket's left boot with his forefinger. "So, can we get this over with? I'd like to die without eating someone."

Marty

Marty and Mr. Nantucket stood high, and Rowdy headed down the fire escape. Marty stood ready with his rifle, knowing for sure that this plan would explode in their faces, and not just Rowdy would turn into a zombie.

"Even though I've killed hundreds of these things, this is the first time I'd seen a person turn into one of them." Marty said, focusing his rifle on a herd of monsters that had began grouping around the fire escape. "When was the first time you saw a person turn?" He turned towards Nantucket, looking up into his dark eyes.

Nantucket scratched his chin and spoke softly: "Three years ago, on the fifth of October, when this hell started. My brother Leroy and I were going for a walk, he was telling me about his life, family, kids, job, et cetera. We haven't talked for twenty years, you see, so we took a walk to catch up. When we were about twenty yards away from my condo he stopped and took a deep breath. We were almost there and a woman from the other side of the street crossed to our side. As she walked across, a red minivan came and ran her over. We hurried across to see if she was alive or dead, she of course, was dead. Leroy went to check her pulse; she opened her eyes and looked directly at me and into my eyes. It was like she was putting me into a trance; her eyes were completely dark, without life. Just so cold, her eyes were so cold and lifeless. I was frozen, watching her tilt her head like she was so poor and dying, and then she bit deep into his throat."

Mr. Nantucket wiped a single tear from his eye and pointed down at Rowdy, whom had reached the ground and was waving. "Come on, shoot already!" Rowdy screamed from below. "I got only a couple of seconds left!" He looked up and stared into Nantucket's eyes.

"Do it now, he's one of them now!"

"I got it." Marty said. He focused his sights on Rowdy's chest and fired. The bullet went straight through the bottles without as much as a spark. The bottles leaked, but that was it.

"Well, we're screwed. We lost our leader, and his plan completely failed." Mr. Nantucket said gloomily.

"Not exactly, you got a match?" Marty pulled out a pack of Pall Mall Blues from his back pocket. Nantucket pulled out a book of matches and lit one; Marty took it and lit his cigarette. He took a long drag and looked down at the small puddle of lighter fluid that Rowdy was standing in and dropped the match.

The match missed the puddle by a measly inch. "Shit." Marty whispered. He took another drag and pitched the cigarette. This time the puddle lit, running up Rowdy's lighter fluid soaked jeans, and into

the bottles with bullet holes. The one main bottle that had the bullet hole exploded, pulling the other bottles into its fiery grasp. The rest of the bottles exploded, the fire reaching out to spread its warmth amongst the undead. And just as Rowdy had predicted, the fire took hold of every zombie in a ten foot radius.

Marty looked at Nantucket and clamped his thumb and forefinger on his nostrils. "The smell is horrible; it's like whenever you accidentally burn your hand on a grill, just awful." Smoke began to rise from the corpses and move towards the rooftops.

"I didn't know you smoked." Mr. Nantucket said smoothly.

"Yeah, since I was thirteen, a few days before you went on that walk with your brother. Yep, I stole a pack of Marlboro Reds from my dad's bedroom while he was at work. Want one?" Marty said offering the pack to Nantucket. He shook his head and Marty pocketed them.

The two of them looked up to see the sun rise.

Jack and Samantha Silverman

By the time that Jack had woken up his young wife, dawn had passed and so had the cool morning air. When he opened the tent that he and his wife were using, the new light momentarily blinded him. When his eyes adjusted and the blinding light subsided, he stepped out.

Jack had expected a sweet grassy smell to confront him; instead he was met by the awful smell of burnt flesh. He saw Mr. Nantucket and Marty eating by a diminishing fire, and walked over to join them.

Samantha followed her husband in morning daze.

"Where's Rowdy?" Jack asked, sitting down. He looked up and Marty pointed over the edge with his index finger.

"You mean he's down there?" Samantha asked quietly.

"Yep, got bit while you guys were sleeping; around four or five AM. He kind of went nuts and strapped a few dozen bottles of lighter fluid to his chest and had me shoot it, in hope of it exploding. It didn't explode, so I dropped a match. The match didn't do it either, so pitched my cigarette. That time he and a couple dozen zombies went up in flames." He reached into his pocket and pulled out a Pall Mall and used the fire to light it. Marty took a deep drag and blew the smoke over the edge slowly.

He took a couple more drags and pitched it into the fire. The fire swallowed it with delight, encouraged to grow. Jack stared into the heart of the fire, watching it grow and crawl upwards into the sky.

Samantha opened a Power Bar and began sucking on the tip. "It's a bit hard to chew." She said when the others looked at her strangely. They all looked away from her slowly.

"Okay, so that leaves six of us left. Where are, Meg and Dick?" Jack asked worryingly. He looked around to make sure that they weren't just sitting in the shadows, even though at this hour the sun was right above them and there were no shadows except for inside the tents.

“You guys stay here. I’m gonna go check in on them.” Jack said, as he stood up and sauntered over to the sleeping area. Mr. Dick Grattan’s tent was the farthest away from the where the others were eating, so he went there first, figuring that he’d check in on Meg on his way back.

Dick was sixty three years old, widowed, and had heart problems. Some of the others thought that it was a bad idea to have him along; he couldn’t contribute to killing these damned things or help get supplies. Dick Grattan was a waste of space.

Dick’s tent was bright blue and had a large hole ripped through the side. Jack walked up to it and called in a soft voice: “Dick, you awake in there?” No answer. He flicked the tent’s zipper door and called again, from inside came a throaty groan. Jack unzipped the door and peeked in. Dick was in the far corner lying on his side, facing away from the entrance. On the floor huddled in the opposite corner was a zombie with its head down by its feet.

Jack took his pistol from its holster and cocked it. Dick immediately looked up. What Mr. Nantucket saw in Rowdy’s eyes last night was now in Dick’s, dark cold death.

“Oh damn it, not you too.” Jack whispered. He fired off three shots, one into Dick’s temple, and two through his right eye. He fell over dead. Jack fell down to the ground and shed a single tear. “Why did it have to get you; an old man that can’t even do anything for himself, but urinate? God Damn It! Not another.” Jack dropped his head and stared at the pool of blood drifting towards his boots. He scooted away from the blood and out the door.

He jumped up and sprinted to Meg’s tent, the single tear hanging onto his nose. Sweet fifteen year old Meg, how Jack wished that she was still alive, he wished deep through his heart that no one else of their group had died.

When he reached Meg’s tent, he ripped the flap open in one swift movement and stuck his head inside.

Meg

The hovering light was what woke Meg, not Jack bursting through her tent. She looked at Jack and read the horror off of his face. Meg shrunk back away from him like a rodent backs away from a cat.

“Are you alright?” Jack asked her.

“Yeah, I’m fine. What’s wrong?” She replied swiftly. Jack was frozen with fear and looked like he’d gone mad. “Are you okay?” She asked him. He just stared motionless. “Hey, you’re scaring me. Just sit down, take a deep breath, and get control over yourself.”

Slowly Jack hunkered down next to her staring at the wall. He took a deep breath and let the air out slowly. Jack softly spoke: “Two of us are dead; Rowdy last night and Dick Grattan just a little while ago. I just can’t stand it. Those things killed two of our friends, and there’s pretty much nothing that we can do.” He let out another tear, which dripped down his nose and onto his thigh.

Meg walked over to Jack and put her arm around his shoulder. “It’s going to be okay, its best if we go to the others. It is safer to be in a group right now.” Jack and Meg both stood up and walked outside and towards the group.

All

“Hey, what’s with the gunshots?” Marty asked, sipping from a bottle of water. The whole group minus two was here, sitting in a circle around the fire.

Jack looked down at his feet and Meg answered for him. “Mr. Grattan was bit and Jack killed him when he turned into a zombie.”

“Damn; two in one day, less than six hours apart.” Mr. Nantucket said, looking over the edge and at the parade of zombies bellow. “They’re getting smarter, or we’re losing our edge.”

“I vote for them getting smarter.” Samantha said. The others looked at her angrily and silently agreed with her.

“Hey, uh guys... Look at what they’re doing.” Marty said pointing down at the zombies surrounding the building. “Are they doing what I think they are doing?”

“If what you think they are doing is climbing up, then they’re doing exactly what you’re thinking.” Meg said horrified at the site below.

They all stood up as fast as their legs would let them, and they grabbed their guns. They all cocked their guns at the same time, as was choreographed.

Marty, Mr. Nantucket, Meg, Jack, and Samantha all waited with their guns in their hands. At long last *they* came up. As soon as one was up the sounds of gunfire was audible.

Blood and guts flood the ground as round after round shred through zombie after zombie. Marty wielded a SIG SG 550, Mr. Nantucket a SIG Sauer P226, Meg a Remington 870 pump-action, Jack an M240, and Samantha a FN P90. They all fired round after round until they were out. One reloaded after another, the others covering them. Empty shells crept up among the gore, dancing in the crimson.

Slowly they began running low on ammunition, and had to switch to a different gun. Marty dropped his gun and picked up a Beretta M9, Nantucket picked up a HK416 assault rifle, Meg picked up a pair of Beretta 93Rs, the others kept theirs.

Now the only guns left were the one that they were holding, only a magazine or two left per gun. The group continued to pour the lead into the zombies, splattering them across the rooftop.

Jack was first to run out of ammo completely, he didn’t know what to do next, so he ran towards the zombies and began swing his machine gun at them. He knocked one of them the ground and it bit a chunk out of his calf. Jack shrieked in pain and stomped the zombies head to a pulp. He knew then that he was going to turn into one of them. He charged at a bunch of zombies crowded at the edge and flung them over the edge, his self included in the carnage.

Samantha cried at the loss of her husband and plunged bullet after bullet into the zombies, this time, relishing the feel of the kill. She then ran out of ammo, and had then thrown the FN P90 at a zombie and followed in the same suit as her husband.

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The bodies were now stacking up in front of them; dozens of hundreds of zombies lie dead, knee high. The remaining three began to back up and run to the other side of the rooftop, where they had left an escape route.

When they were half way to the escape route, Marty noticed that there were about fifty or sixty zombies standing in the way of the exit. The other two noticed it just a second after he did, looking in front of them and behind.

“Damn it, we’re surrounded! Told you these things were getting smarter. It’s like they’re toying with us, slowly going in for the kill one at a time, just to make us trip up and fall into their hands. We never should have gone here. We should have gone around like I said, avoiding all cities or towns. Sticking to the back roads; but no, you guys wanted to get more supplies, when we already had enough for three days.”

Meg and Mr. Nantucket looked at Marty and back at the zombies. “Okay, tell me, do you want to die by getting ripped to shreds, or by your own gun? We already went all out and did our work, now it’s time for us to die.” Mr. Nantucket said sternly.

“I don’t want to live the way these things are,” Meg said. “I’d rather you blew my head off. At least that way it’d be quick and painless.”

Nantucket looked at Marty, “I’ll have the same as her.”

“Well okay then. Three quick trips to heaven it is.”

Mr. Nantucket took Meg’s Beretta 93R and put the barrel to her temple. “Ready?” She nodded, he fired. Nantucket turned to Marty and placed the barrel on the center of his forehead. “Ready?” He nodded, he fired. He put the gun down by his side and looked at the two teenagers that he’d just killed.

“Lord, thou in heaven, spare your mercy on my soul.” He the barrel to the side of his head and pulled the trigger twice.

Me

I woke up in cold sweat, breathing in deep. My room was bright, but it wasn’t day. The clock on my bedside table read: 4:37. I sat up and told myself: “It was only a dream, none of it happened.”

From under my pillow I pulled out a pack of my dad’s Marlboro Reds. I opened the window and lit my cigarette. The calendar on the wall next to my desk read: October 2nd, 2007.

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