

foreword

About ten or more years ago I met Ben for the first time. I was shy, having been just introduced to him as well as a number of other people. He seemed so “normal” to me. I was having a hard time finding a common ground, something to talk about. That is, until he started talking about *Return of the Living Dead!* I remember the first thing that came flying out of my mouth was: “Oh I love the half dogs!”—that’s not a statement that would normally endear you to a new group of people, but it did. It forged a spookirific friendship with a person I admire not only for his wit & writing talents, but for his vast knowledge on all things horror and ZOMBIES!

So much for Ben being “normal.”

Ben looks like the sweet boy next door . . . (and in some respects he is) but his brain is bursting with more zombie facts than anyone I know (and that’s saying something, if you consider the crowd I run around with). I know Ben wrote *One of the Living* in a *dark phase* of his life, there is a lot of emphasis on survival . . . and that may seem like a very basic thing to focus on in a zombie game—but I think it goes deeper than that. As Ben so eloquently mentions, zombies are a metaphor for our fears, our nightmares, and a venue to bring our inner & social struggles to light . . . and hey, on a lighter note, they’re just plain fun to kill!

I think you’ll enjoy what Ben has to say on the subject of zombies, I know I always do . . . and if you want to survive a zombie invasion, keep reading . . . you’ll be happy you did.

—Serena Valentino

Creator & writer for *Nightmares & Fairy Tales* and *GloomCookie*

Published by Slave Labor Graphics

CHAPTER ONE

I.

Jack sat on the hood of the jeep, staring out into the night. It was one of those indigo night skies, the kind seen in old Technicolor films. Speckled with glittering stars winking back at him, there was something about the vastness of the sky that soothed him. Time was, this close to the city, he'd never been able to see the sky like this. He'd have to take a telescope way up the mountain, away from the light pollution, to get a clear view. But now, with no power across the countryside, he could sit in the old parking lot and see the night sky as if he were the only person on Earth.

He took a sip of the acidic homebrew and passed it to the girl sitting next to him. "I've had enough," she whispered. "Thanks, though."

She was pretty, in a hard-bitten sort of way. Just into her twenties, she'd seen enough to drive a lot of people mad. She brushed a few strands of her short-cropped, black hair behind her ear and gazed out into the night.

He shrugged and took another sip.

"Gonna be a cold night," he said. "Getting on winter."

"Has it been another year, then?" Marian asked. He nodded, thoughtfully, scratching the stubble on his chin. He still preferred to go clean-shaven, but water was valuable these days, so he rarely got to use it for shaving.

"Crops are good though. Should last us till spring, if we can keep scavenging."

"We can," she replied. "But we're going to have to try and cast our net a bit wider."

Jack hated this small talk, but there was nothing else to do on watch. They had their post, and had to keep it until dawn. They'd once tried to be something more than just a watch-team to each other, but the stress of the world was too much, and Marian and Jack were both just too closed up for their own good.

In the distance, they heard a soft rustle in the trees. Jack's hand went to the stock of the rifle at his side. Marian strained to see into the night. She raised a pair of binoculars, scanned for a few seconds, then lowered them.

"Just a rabbit," she said, then silently put out her hand. Jack put the flask into her night-chilled fingers. Taking a sip, she muttered, "we haven't seen anything in a week. I wonder if they're even still out there."

INTRODUCTION

“They are . . . I don’t think there’s many of them left, but until we’re sure we gotta keep watching.”

“I suppose,” she muttered. She stood, took small, tentative steps away from him. Gravel crunched under her worn boot soles as she paced a tight, aimless circle. “Can I ask you something?”

“Sure. I got nothing to hide.”

“You’ve never told me . . . where were you when it happened?” She looked up at him, flicking back a long strand of hair and meeting his eyes.

“You never asked, did you?” he replied, then took another pull of the rotgut. He lowered the flask from his lips, watching the light of the moon reflecting on the tarnished silver case. “You know . . . every generation has one of those questions. My grandpa’s was ‘where were you when you heard about Pearl Harbor?’ My dad’s was ‘where were you when Kennedy was shot?’ First mine was ‘where were you when you heard Lennon died?’ then ‘when the Twin Towers fell . . .’ and now ‘when Hell sent back the dead?’”

“Yeah . . . I was at school,” she said. “I didn’t know what I’d do . . .” Her eyes focused back on the night. It would almost be a beautiful night. Quiet, cool air breezing across her face. But then she became aware of the telltale glimmer of barbed wire encircling the makeshift compound. She tried to tell herself the tattered flapping strips hanging from the metal hooks were just cloth, or leaves. Anything but what she knew they really were. “I don’t know what we’re doing now, really. Why we even bother sometimes.”

He took one last drag on his flask. “I tell you what you did . . . what we’re doing . . . same thing my gramps and my dad did. We’re looking at the world, staring it right in the eye, and surviving.”

“You haven’t answered by question,” she said.

Jack stared out into the night, as the memories flooded over him. “I was on a bus . . . going who cares where . . .”

II.

It’d been a long, boring semester at college, getting a degree in something he was sure would promise him a bright and comfortable future. He’d scraped up just enough money working odd jobs over the year to afford this bus ticket. Nothing fancy for a vacation, just a trip to visit some friends he hadn’t seen in a couple of years. He was going to spend the summer with them at their family cabin on Nantucket. Just soak in the sun, clear his head, drink and get laid. All to excess if possible. It seemed like a fine plan to him.

His head was nodding, tugging him to sleep. The bus was passing through one of those dreadfully hot, dusty regions in the middle of the country. He’d lost track of his exact location at least a day or so back. Hot summer air blew in through a few open windows, which was better than the bus’s lack of air conditioning. His eyes kept drooping, tired of staring at the same rows of cornfields, alfalfa fields, or whatever else they happened to be passing by.

But when the bus slammed to a quick, skidding halt, he snapped awake with the rest of the startled passengers.

As the other transients gathered their spilled belongings off the floor, Jack stood. He’d been sitting right behind the driver and could look out the bug-splattered window.

“Holy crap,” gasped the grotesquely corpulent, sweating bus driver.

Jack saw half a dozen cars smashed together into a tangled mass of glass and steel ahead of them. Blood seeped from them, forming a scarlet smear across the highway. As he watched, a lone figure crawled out of the mangled vehicle closest to them. Arm outstretched, mouth opening and closing, maybe trying to form words, it forced itself toward them.

Someone screamed behind him. Jack turned to see what was happening. An older woman had her hands clapped to the sides of her face and shrieked as she gawked out the window. He followed her eyes and saw at least a dozen blood-smeared, tattered, burned figures stumbling toward the bus. Their eyes were dead, wild, unfocused, as they rushed the side of the bus.

He heard a crash and glass shards struck his skin. Torn bloody hands punched right through the side window, grabbing the shrieking, fat driver and pulling him out of the bus. Jack watched as a charred, blistered face rose up to meet the driver and then split open, white teeth flashing across charcoal black, and coming down on the driver's jowls. Blood sprayed the bus window crimson.

The bus began rocking as the figures slammed into it again and again. It started to topple, and Jack was thrown onto his back. The bus slammed into the ground, crushing both the shrieking driver and his blackened attacker.

Chaos all around him. Jack had no sense of direction or action. All he remembered afterwards was throwing his body against the front window with all his might. The pane held once, twice, then shattered as his shoulder hit it one last time. Jagged, dagger-sharp spikes of glass tore his clothing, shredded his skin. Hands burning as he hit the scalding asphalt, gravel, grit and glass shoved deep into his now bleeding palms.

All around him, he saw the maniacs, flesh and blood-soaked cloth hanging from their masticating jaws. Ahead of him, he saw the figure still crawling towards him from the ruins of the car. But now he realized it was only half a person. Just a head, a torso, and arms, and a white, bony tail, leaking spinal fluid like a snail's trail back to its own legs, still in the car.

Jack ran. He ran without direction, without thought, without hope. The primal nugget of his lizard-brain kicked in, filling his blood with adrenaline and just telling him to get the hell out of there.

It could have been hours, days, or weeks later when he finally came to, face down in a stream, hands scabbed over, still stiff.

And alone . . .

III.

"So," he whispered, hands shaking. "That's where I was when it happened."

"I'm sorry," she said. "So sorry." She put her hand on his, and for a moment the touch eased his pain.

Their eyes met, and a tear began to form in the corner of his eye. "I just left them all," he whispered flatly.

"We've all left people behind," she said. "We've all lost people." She brushed a stray strand of his hair from forehead. "And found people."

He looked off into the distance. Far, far away, the horizon was split by a razor-thin orange gash. They'd survived another night. That was something to be grateful for.



Because you're one of the living,
and if we can't stick together
who's gonna make it tonight?

—Tina Turner, *One of the Living*

Can you see that sliver in the distance? That thin red band against the corpse-black sky? It's the dawn. Rosy-fingered and here to welcome in a new day. For most people, it's just the start of another 24 hours of working, sleeping, eating . . . living. But take away the comforts we've all grown used to, the cars, electricity, fresh food, and things start to change.

Just for the hell of it, let's throw in some zombies.

For the heroes in an *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* chronicle, seeing the rising sun at dawn means they've survived another night. They've fought back death once more, and can continue on, trying to carve a meaningful life for themselves out of the carcass of the old world. They've raged against the dying of the light with chainsaw and shotgun, and walked endlessly

through the valley of death. That's what this book is about—survival after society collapses under the weight of the walking dead.

There's an old Buddhist saying, "When you wake up in the morning, carry water, chop wood. Before going to bed at night, carry water, chop wood." You've got to do what you need to do to survive. Daily. On a basic level, we're talking water to drink and fire to keep warm. But there's more to surviving than just that. Eventually you need food, of course, but how long can you live on your own? And we're not just talking about the basic human needs for companionship. In your standard Deadworld, having someone (or even better, a community) to watch your back is essential.

And this brings us to the big secret. There's lots of people out there who have taken a look at *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* and just said "oh, you get to kill zombies . . . well that'll be fun for one game, but then it'll get old." But we know better. You see, what they don't get is that the zombies are just a *metaphor*. Sure, on the one hand, a movie like *Night of the Living Dead* is about zombies that eat people and it's all super scary and bloody. But look at the time the film was made. You think that was just a film about zombies? A film made in the height of the Civil Rights movement? Not likely. It was a film about societies and how they can either survive or fail, utterly based on the choices of the individuals. Those folks trapped in that creepy old farmhouse were a slice of the American Pie. There were a pretty decent mix of socio-economic classes there and they had a choice. They either worked together, against the "enemy" (in this case, the zombies) or they splintered apart and failed.

We all know how that one turned out.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten is a game about survival. Sure, we've chosen to use zombies as the metaphor for that enemy. But it could just as well be rampaging orcs, savage barbarians, Evil Empires, or anything else. *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* is, like the movies that inspired it, deeper than it looks on first glance. It's not just about survival. It's about forming a tiny sliver of society in the form of the "adventuring party" and then working together to survive. It's about re-forging the world however you want it to be. The old world is dead, nothing but ashes and corruption (and zombies). Here's your chance to write your name in the dust and say, "I was here. I fought to survive."

This book will help you do that. We've stuffed this supplement full of new crunchy bits to spice up your games, and tons of resources for playing long-term chronicles in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. You've survived the *Night of the Living Dead*. Let's see what you do with the days that follow.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One: Introduction is what you're reading now, knucklehead. Pay more attention or you're zombie chow.

Chapter Two: Prey No More gives you all sorts of good junk to complicate your characters with. There are a slew of new skills, Qualities, and Drawbacks for you. These will hopefully give Cast Members the edge they need to survive a long-term chronicle. Next, a bunch of new Gifts are offered up for the more metaphysical characters, as well as a bunch of ideas for Zombie Masters on how to choose an appropriate level of Metaphysics for their game. A couple of new archetypes are presented which use all of this new stuff, so you can start playing right away.

Chapter Three: Making It Up As You Go tells everything you ever wanted to know about jury-rigging equipment in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. You may have seen some of this material before in our *Pulp Zombies* supplement, but the rules here are significantly changed. *Pulp Zombies* was super-science, *Flash Gordon*. This is more like the *Road Warrior* or "I scrounged up a box of junk at the bombed out hardware store . . . I wonder if I can build a flamethrower with it". Good luck on that one by the way—you're still going to have to scrounge up some gasoline.

Chapter Four: More Implements of Destruction is what some of you have been screaming for. You didn't think we were going to force you to survive a world gone to Hell without some new guns and other ways to de-animate the zombies, did you? We've got you covered.

Chapter Five: Envy the Dead illustrates the effects of living in a world full of the walking dead. Not just the psychological collapse Cast Members may feel over time, but how the world changes over the years as technology and society begins to crumble. Guidelines are given to aid the Zombie Master in organizing his own Deadworld for long-term campaigning. For ZMs looking to design a long-term chronicle, this is the place to start.

Chapter Six: Blowin' Up Dead Guys a wealth of information on rotting and includes optional rules for handling decomposition. Oh, and just to be fair, we've thrown in a bunch of new, cool zombie Aspects. Who says the living get to have all the fun?

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Chapter Seven: Sunset Falls gives you the chance to take all the new stuff in this book and put it to work for you. Sunset Falls is a tiny community of survivors who have holed up in a remote, abandoned prison. Zombie Masters can drop it into their chronicles as a place for the Cast Members to find peace for a while, or have them start their zombie fighting careers here.

Chapter Eight: The Future's So Dark caps off the whole thing. Here are six new Deadworlds for the ZM's use in kicking off a new campaign, this time set many years after The Rise (whatever it might be). Additionally, we've presented Cast Member Archetypes for each new Deadworld—guys who you might find roaming the highways five or ten years after The Rise.

Appendix A: Surviving A Zombie Attack includes an in-depth discussion about surviving the coming zombie outbreak. It covers everything from selecting a good place to convert into a stronghold to tricks for making zombies even deader than they already are.

Appendix B: The Government Handout gives the Zombie Master a fun way to provide Cast Members with critical information about the zombie outbreak affecting them. Your government has worked hard to draft these informational pamphlets telling you what to look for, and what to do.

How To Use One of the Living

One of the Living is intended for use by both players and Zombie Masters. Chapters One to Five and Appendix A are open to anyone who feels like reading them. Chapters Six, Seven, and Appendix B are mostly for the ZM's use, but it couldn't hurt to have the players take peeks at parts of them. Lastly, Chapter Eight is ZMs only. Players should not look at this chapter, or else they might spoil some of the fun of discovery that takes place in any good game.

Inspirational Material

Usually, this is the place in every *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* sourcebook where we tell you all about the great zombie movies or books that inspired it, right? Wrong. The way we see it, any Zombie Master worth his salt has seen enough of those by now to choke Cthulhu.

We've listed below some great books and movies about “survival,” about what happens when society breaks down, as well as giving some ideas of what the causes might be, whether that society is a handful of guys in an old farmhouse, or an entire culture. And there is some stuff about zombies too.

Film & Video

28 Days Later (2003)

Lifeboat (1944)

Outbreak (1995)

Mad Max (1979)

The Road Warrior (1981)

Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (1985)

Red Dawn (1984)

Reign of Fire (1984)

The Stand (1994)

Fiction

Earth Abides, George R. Stewart

The Drive In, Joe R. Landsdale

The Legacy of Heorot & Beowulf's Children, Niven, Barnes, Pournelle

The Stand, Stephen King

The Walking Dead, Image Comics

The Zombie Survival Guide, Max Brooks

Non-Fiction

The Hot Zone, Richard Preston

The Serpent and the Rainbow, Wade Davis

Conventions

As with every *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* sourcebook, *One of the Living* uses the following conventions:

Text Conventions

This book uses different graphic features to identify the type of information presented. This text is “standard text,” and it is used for general explanations.

Certain text is set off from the standard text in this manner. This is sidebar text and it contains additional, but tangential information, or supplemental charts and tables.

Other text is set apart in this way. It details Supporting Cast or Adversaries that may be used in Stories at the Zombie Master's discretion.

Dice Notations

This book uses several different dice notations. D10, D8, D6, and D4 mean a ten-sided die, an eight-sided die, a six-sided die, and a four-sided die, respectively. A number in parentheses after, or in the middle of, the notation is the average roll. This number is provided for those who want to avoid dice rolling and just use the result. So the notation D6 x 4(12) means that players who want to skip rolling just use the value 12. Some notations cannot provide a set number because their result depends on a variable factor. For example, D8(4) x Strength is used because the Strength value to be plugged into this notation varies depending on who is acting.

Gender

Every roleplaying game faces a decision about third person pronouns and possessives. While the male reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female, there is no question it is not entirely inclusive. On the other hand, the "he or she" structure is clumsy and unattractive. In an effort to "split the difference," this book uses male designations for even chapters, and female designations for odd chapters.

Measurements

This book uses U.S. measurements (feet, yards, miles, pounds, etc.). Metric system equivalents can be calculated by applying rough formulas. For example, miles can be multiplied by 1.5 to get kilometers (instead of 1.609), meters are equal to yards (instead of 1.094 yards), pounds can be halved to get kilograms (instead of multiplying by 0.4536), and so on. If a Zombie Master feels she needs more precision, she should take the U.S. measurements provided and apply more exact formulas.

About the Author

Ben Monroe has been a fly buzzing around the games industry for more years than he cares to admit. Previous publications include zombie-themed adventures for *Call of Cthulhu* as well as revising the magic system for fourth edition *Stormbringer* and the adventure "Coffee Break of the Living Dead" for *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*.

Ben lives in San Leandro, California where he is embroiled in the pursuit of trying to come up with screenplay ideas that are both worth writing, and saleable. If you know anyone who wants to buy a vampire-western script, let him know. When not day-dreaming about the impending zombie apocalypse, Ben spends time with his wife Beth, who is beautiful, brilliant and, above all, patient.

Special Thanks

Special mention must be made to the lunatics on the All Flesh Must Be Eaten message board. Pretty much the entirety of Chapter Four: More Implements of Destruction and Appendix A: The Post-Apocalypse Shopping List was generated by their fevered ramblings. Specific thanks to:

Stacey Blake, Chris Butler, Otto Cargill, Seth Danielson, Dan Davis, Chris Eldredge, Anthony Emmel, Andrew Ferguson, John McMullen, Thom Marrion, and Tom Redding. They are all clearly mad.

Also, thanks must go out to Jason Ryder. His insightful ideas, and the brainstorming we did together helped to solidify the way the madness rules came out. Matthew Widener also provided invaluable material that turned into the *Zombie Life Cycle* section of Chapter Six: *Blowin' Up Dead Guys*.

"Special Mega Ultra Thanks" must also go out to John McMullen. His article "Campaigns in All Flesh Must Be Eaten" was the prime inspiration for this book. If you like where this book went, thank him if you ever meet him.

— Ben Monroe