World War Z

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF MAX BROOKS

Max Brooks is the son of filmmaker Mel Brooks and actress Anne Bancroft. As a child, he struggled with dyslexia, and Bancroft shelved her acting career in order to advocate for and support him. When he was 12, Brooks was so focused as he worked on a short story that his mother predicted that he would become a writer. After getting an undergraduate degree in history and then attending film school, Brooks worked as a writer for *Saturday Night Live*. He didn't enjoy his job much because he found it hard to work in a collaborative environment, and in 2003, his contract wasn't renewed. However, by then, he'd sold his first book, *The Zombie Survival Guide*. He went on to write *World War Z*, which was published in 2006. Paramount Pictures acquired the movie rights to the book and Brad Pitt starred in and produced the film, which was released in 2013. In 2019, the book was also made into a videogame. Brooks has said that he suffers from anxiety and his own meticulous research into disaster preparedness percolates into his fiction. His research is so thorough that he has been invited to prepare in an Army Weapons of Mass Destruction preparedness exercise, and has also served as a fellow at West Point's Modern War Institute. After *World War Z*, Brooks has written several other books, including *Minecraft: The Island*, a novel based on the popular videogame, and *Devolution: A Firsthand Account of the Rainer Sasquatch Massacre*, which is about Bigfoot.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Brooks has admitted to struggling with anxiety that is exacerbated by just living in today's disaster-a-minute world. He says there is some really "scary stuff" that's happening, including wars, illnesses, natural disasters, and global warming. His father, Mel Brooks, fought the Nazis in World War II and is also Jewish, and Max Brooks says that he heard stories of the war while growing up. As a child of the 80s, Max Brooks became a teenager at just around the same time as the AIDS virus claimed many lives, and he felt the government wasn't doing as much as it should to help the situation. He also says he is anxious about the idea of nuclear warfare that could decimate the world at any moment. Brooks channels these anxieties into his work, which he says focuses on "characters having to adapt to external changes that they did not choose and do not want."

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Brooks has stated that he loved Tom Clancy's *The Hunt for Red October* as a child. He says that he always appreciated books that he could learn something from. *The Hunt for Red October* tells the story of a Soviet submarine that defects to the United States during the Cold War. The book is labeled a "techno-thriller" since it gives a large amount of technical information about weapons and military vehicles, something that Brooks does in his fiction, as well. *World War Z* is chock-full of information, and Brooks, too, aims to educate as well as entertain—on not just the armed forces' gadgets but also on how to best prepare for a disaster and what kinds of skills might be required to survive when society's support system crumbles. Brooks has also mentioned admiring Studs Terkel's *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*, a nonfiction book that consists of interviews with people over the world who lived through World War II. Brooks borrowed the template of the collected interviews for his own book, and also used a very similar subtitle for novel. He has said that he admired the structure of Terkel's book and wanted to use it because "an oral history is a great way to bring in so many voices, literally, from all around the world." *World War Z* is a future history in the same vein as sci-fi books that document the fate of mankind in an imagined future while maintaining the illusion of being a real history book by using devices like footnotes and timelines. One of the books that paved the way for this genre is H.G. Wells' *The Shape of Things to Come*. More recent books that fall under this genre include Lois Lowry's *The Giver* and Theodore Judson's *Fitzpatrick's War*.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War*
- **Where Written:** USA
- **When Published:** 2006
- **Literary Period:** Contemporary Fiction
- **Genre:** Apocalyptic Horror Fiction
- **Setting:** Various places in the world where the narrator travels to interview people associated with the global zombie war.
- **Climax:** Battle of Hope, New Mexico
- **Antagonist:** Zombies
- **Point of View:** The novel is presented as an "oral history" consisting of a collection of transcribed first-person interviews.

EXTRA CREDIT

Meticulous Research. For this novel, Brooks' research on disaster preparedness was so thorough that *World War Z* was

featured on a reading list put together by a former president of the U.S. Naval War College, and also earned Brooks a fellowship at West Point's Modern War Institute.

Truly Presidential. Brooks drops hints that the much-admired US President in the novel is Colin Powell—like the president in the novel, Powell is of Jamaican descent and is renowned for his calm manner of speaking. The US Vice-President, "the Whacko," is probably Howard Dean, who is also from Vermont and is infamous for his yell.

PLOT SUMMARY

World War Z, subtitled "An Oral History of the Zombie War," consists of various interviews from people around the world who were involved in the war in some way, all collected into a book by the narrator who wants to preserve these memories to try to prevent a crisis like this from ever recurring. After the war ends, the narrator works for the U.N. to write up a postwar report, and travels the world conducting interviews for it. However, after the report is published, he is disappointed to see that it has been heavily edited and much of the information that he had included has been left out. When he speaks to the chairperson of the Postwar Commission Report about this, she explains that his version had too many "emotions" and "opinions," and they had wanted the report to be solely a record of facts. The narrator disagrees with her, insisting that "the human factor" is what connects people to the past, and without it, the report would be meaningless. The chairperson asks him to write his own book about the war if he believes this, which is exactly what the narrator ends up doing. *World War Z* is that book. The narrator notes that this "book of memories" tells the stories of the people he interviewed, and his presence in it is minimal.

In the first chapter, titled "Warnings," the narrator meets an old Chinese doctor named Kwang Jing-shu, who tells him about his encounter with "Patient Zero," a 12-year-old boy in a small village who had been infected with the virus and had reanimated into a **zombie**. The doctor was shocked to see his strange symptoms. The villagers told Kwang that the boy had gone diving into the waters of a dam and had resurfaced with a bite on his foot, suggesting that there were already other undocumented cases of the virus. When Kwang called his friend Gu who worked at the Institute of Infectious Diseases to tell him about Patient Zero, Gu immediately sounded worried, implying that he was not unfamiliar with this virus. Soon after, men in hazmat suits arrived and picked up Patient Zero and the other villagers he'd bitten, and imprisoned Kwang.

In the next sections, the narrator shows that the Chinese government's punitive measures against the infected caused panic among its populace, leading many to escape from China and carry the virus all over the world. Refugees from China took the virus into Kyrgyzstan, where the Canadian armed forces encountered zombies. When they reported this to their superiors, they were told they were suffering from PTSD. Many people in power refused to acknowledge reports of zombies, and this led to the virus spreading rapidly. The first big attack by a group of zombies occurred outside Cape Town, South Africa, and because the doctors didn't know what to make of it, they assumed it was a type of rabies, and the virus got its nickname, "African rabies."

The first nation that gave serious attention to reports of the virus was Israel. One of its intelligence agents, Jurgen Warmbrunn, tells the narrator that this was probably because they have a "fear of extinction" and are always on guard. Warmbrunn and his American friend Knight wrote a report about the impending threat of the zombies and sent it to governments around the world—this came to be known as the Warmbrunn-Knight Report. Warmbrunn says that if more nations had paid attention to the report, they might have been able to avoid the crisis. To keep its people safe, Israel went into "voluntary quarantine," a decision that the rest of the world mocked.

In the next chapter, titled "Blame," the narrator includes interviews that try to answer the question of how the problem got so out of hand, especially in America. Bob Archer, director of the CIA, explains that they were working in a highly politicized climate in those years and that the government of the time used the CIA as political pawns, which made many talented agents quit in anger. His superiors didn't want to hear about any problems, and when Archer had tried to discuss the issue of the zombies, he had been transferred to Buenos Aires as a punishment. In the next section, General D'Ambrosia explains that it wasn't just the government that was against waging an all-out attack on the zombies—the American people, too, were wary of wars and would have never supported the idea of it. As Americans began to be more fearful of getting infected by the virus, Breckenridge Scott saw a business opportunity and began marketing a rabies vaccine as a preventative. He was helped along by a government that was desperate to calm its populace, and made millions in the process.

The next chapter, titled "The Great Panic," focuses on the years of fear and desperation when large numbers of zombies began to attack people and wreak havoc in countries all over the world. Gavin Blaire, who used to pilot a blimp in the U.S., describes the heartbreaking scenes he saw from the air—of traffic jams on interstates and stalled cars, and hordes of zombies making their way through them. They attacked and ate everyone they came across, and after these people died, they reanimated and became zombies, too. Many people tried to escape on ships, not knowing that zombies could survive underwater. In desperation, some parents tried to murder their children so they wouldn't be reanimated into zombies. The

sheer number of refugees from various nations caused political problems, and led to a nuclear war between Iran and Pakistan. The U.S. Army tried to fight the zombies at the Battle of Yonkers, but were shocked to discover that their bombs and missiles didn't have much of an impact on the zombies. While some of them were destroyed in the blasts, most of them kept coming through the fires. The soldiers knew that the only way to destroy them was to shoot them in their heads, but they were too frightened to calmly aim at the thousands of zombies that kept coming at them. Many soldiers were killed, and the rest were forced to retreat.

The following chapter is called "Turning the Tide," and details the small successes that humans had against the zombies. The key to people's success was the Redeker Plan, named after the South African who came up with the idea of creating a safe zone in each nation that would be inaccessible to the zombies. The government would retreat to the safe zone with some citizens. Many people were left outside the safe zones as "bait," and also because the safe zones weren't big enough for everyone. The plan was criticized for its cruelty because it abandoned large swathes of people, but it was the only solution in those desperate times. Philip Adler, a German soldier, was so angry when he was ordered to carry out this plan and abandon civilians that he wanted to murder the general who gave the order. However, by the time he reached the general, he discovered that the general had committed suicide out of guilt. Kondratiuk, a Ukrainian soldier, describes how their forces used nerve gas to identify infected people. The zombies reanimated and were easily shot—but, tragically, all the uninfected people died.

Next up is "Home Front USA," which describes the American offensive against the zombies. Sinclair, who was director of the Department of Strategic Resources, describes how they provided job training in useful wartime skills to the refugees in the safe zone, and recycled old goods to make tools and weapons. Neighborhood Security Teams that were made up of volunteers helped ensure that no zombies made it into the safe zones. The famous director Roy Elliot made optimistic documentaries to boost public morale and give people hope that they would win against the zombies.

The next chapter, "Around the World, and Above," focuses on the struggle outside the U.S. David Allen Forbes, a British artist, describes how ancient castles provided protection from the zombies to many people in the Continent. Barati Palshigar worked for **Radio Free Earth**, a multilingual, multinational radio station that broadcasted survival tips and information to countries around the world. In Japan, Sensei Ijiro killed thousands of zombies in hand-to-hand combat. A faction of the Chinese navy disagreed with its army's ineffective strategies and formed a rebel force. They used a nuclear warhead to blast the politburo's bunkers and then began to enact the Redeker Plan to save the country. The astronauts on the International Space Station, too, joined the war effort by maintaining and repairing satellites. The section ends with the U.N. passing a resolution to go on an offensive against the zombies and destroy them completely.

The following chapter, "Total War," describes the all-out war against the zombies. Todd Wainio, an American soldier, describes the victorious Battle of Hope. The U.S. Army scored a huge victory against the zombies, which made them feel optimistic about the war. The American Navy also sent divers in special suits underwater to destroy the zombies on the ocean floors. In Russia, the army wasn't as organized, and many soldiers were bitten in each attack, after which they had to be shot before they reanimated. In Paris, too, thousands of soldiers died while clearing the underground tunnels under the city. Todd Wainio tells the narrator that even though the U.S. didn't suffer as many losses as some other countries, they, too, lost a lot in the war.

The final chapter, "Good-Byes," has some people expressing optimism at the end of the war. Kwang Jing-shu tells the narrator he appreciates the fact that children who were born after the war are not afraid all the time. He is confident that China and the world will recover quickly. Sinclair, who has a new job now as chairman of the SEC, is also optimistic that the economy will soon be in good shape. However, other characters do not feel quite as good about the future. Jesika Hendricks, whose parents died in the outbreak, feels like she will always be bitter and angry about these events. Philip Adler is still upset at having to abandon civilians to the zombies and says that by doing this, humanity lost its integrity and honor. Todd Wainio tells the narrator that he still has stress-related episodes. By the end of the war, he'd been fighting for so long that he'd forgotten what "peace" meant.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Narrator – After the **zombie** war ended, the narrator traveled the world interviewing many people who had a role to play in the war, and then collected and organized the interviews into this book. In the introduction, he explains that he was initially hired by the U.N.'s Postwar Commission Report to conduct these interviews and write the report. When it was published, he was disappointed to see that it had been heavily edited from the version he'd written. He spoke to the chairperson about this, and she explained that his version had been too full of his interviewees' "opinions" and had "too many feelings." The U.N., by contrast, wanted "clear facts and figures." The narrator believes that without this "human factor," future generations who read the report will have no connection with the events of the war and might even repeat the mistakes that the world made while dealing with this crisis. So, he decides to write this

book using his old interviews and to also include the "human factor" which the U.N. had excluded in their report. The narrator states that emotions and opinions are what separates human beings from the zombies, which is why he values them. At the end of the introduction, the narrator says that this "book of memories" consists solely of the voices of his interviewees, and that he has tried to maintain an invisible presence in it. He states that he has "attempted to reserve judgment, or commentary of any kind." While the narrator does have a minimal presence in the book—his words appear solely in the introduction and very minimally in the interviews—he does manage to convey his opinions about his interviewees through the manner in which he describes them or poses his questions to them. For instance, when he interviews Grover Carlson, the narrator asks him if he really believed the crisis he was being warned about was nothing serious, despite receiving many "warnings to the contrary," implying that Carlson certainly mismanaged the U.S. response to the zombie outbreak. At times like these, the narrator shows his own deep personal connection to the events of the zombie war, which helps the information he presents to resonate with his readers.

Todd Wainio – Wainio, a soldier in the U.S. Army, discusses the soldier's perspective of the war against the **zombies**. The narrator clearly believes that this is an important perspective since he includes four of Wainio's interviews in the book. In his first interview, Wainio describes the fiasco that was the Battle of Yonkers. It was the first time the U.S. Army was engaging the zombies in a fight, and they were so confident in their technical prowess and strategies that they hadn't planned the attack carefully. Wainio and the soldiers were terrified to see the unending stream of zombies headed their way and began to panic. The zombies, on the other hand, felt no fear or concern for their safety, which gave them the upper hand in the battle. Wainio describes the Battle of Hope in his second interview, which was different from the Battle of Yonkers in every way. This time around, the army had studied the enemy and knew that the best way to kill them was to shoot them in the head. Wainio and the other soldiers ended up killing thousands of zombies at that battle, and felt victorious and hopeful at the end of it. In his third interview, Wainio describes his experience of traveling slowly across America on foot, killing all the zombies they found, and liberating towns and cities. In his final section, Wainio talks about the cost of the war. He acknowledges that the U.S. Army lost fewer soldiers than other armies around the world did, but that their losses were nonetheless considerable. Many soldiers died, like the woman whom Wainio had been in love with, while others, like Wainio, still suffer from the psychological effects of the war. Wainio's perspective highlights the struggles that soldiers face even outside of the pages of the novel, as they grapple with death, fear, loss, and hopelessness. At the end of the long war, Wainio seems tired and lost, rather than victorious and validated.

Maria Zhuganova – Zhuganova was a soldier with the Russian army in the days when the virus was just beginning to spread in Russia, and most people didn't know about it, including Zhuganova and her fellow soldiers. She was posted in a remote area, and one day, their supervisors cut off their access to the outside world by forbidding the use of radios and cellphones. The soldiers were told to search the villagers for signs of being bitten or attacked, but they didn't know what exactly they were supposed to look for, or why. One day, a soldier named Arkady discovered an old woman who'd been infected and had turned into a zombie, and he dragged her to their barracks and showed her to the other soldiers, saying that this is what their superiors were keeping from them. He demanded that they be allowed to go home to check on their families. Suddenly, the Spetnatz commandoes appeared, shot Arkady, and re-established order by beating and shackling everyone else. Zhuganova's superiors put the soldiers into groups of 10 and ordered each group to vote on choosing one person to kill. The soldiers carried out this cruel punishment—which was called the Decimation—and from then on, were very obedient and carried out all their orders. Zhuganova's story shows how the Russian army shut down any sign of rebellion by breaking their soldiers' spirits and inspiring fear in them. Ultimately, the novel shows that a broken, frightened army is not very effective in a war. Russia's fight against the zombies is long, messy, and disorganized, and leads to the loss of many lives. In contrast, the American army, which in the novel is built on respect and concern for soldiers, is much more successful in their campaign against the zombies. Zhuganova's experience as a Russian soldier is contrasted with Todd Wainio's experience as an American soldier during the zombie war—while he, too, suffers in battle and experiences the consequences of policy mistakes, he is respected and valued as a soldier. In Zhuganova's second interview, she is in some sort of government-run birthing farm in which young, healthy women like her are made to have babies to increase Russia's population. Zhuganova denies having any qualms about this, though the narrator reveals that she says this hesitantly. Her horrific fate—in both the army and the birthing farm—show that the lack of freedom in a nation has disastrous effects on people and policies.

Paul Redeker / Xolelwa Azania – Paul Redeker is the famous South African who came up with the Redeker Plan to help in the fight against the **zombies**. He had first attracted the attention of the South African government in the apartheid years because he had come up with a plan to deal with that crisis, as well. When the outbreak takes place, the father of the nation (perhaps Nelson Mandela, though he isn't named) sends for Redeker to help the government. Sure enough, Redeker has a plan ready for dealing with the zombies and saving people, but it is so startlingly cruel that the government officials balk at adopting it. Redeker states that it is impossible to save all people, so the government must retire behind a safe zone along with some of the populace who can help with reconstruction

efforts. Other people must be left outside the safe zone since their resources would not be able to provide for so many. He says that these people can be used as bait to lure the zombies away from the safe zones. However, the father of the nation stands up for Redeker's ideas and sees it as a solution to the crisis. He even gives Redeker a warm hug. Redeker has always prided himself on being a completely rational person who derides emotions, but that hug seems to call up his repressed emotions and triggers a breakdown. After this, he goes by the name of Xolelwa Azania and does not realize that he is Redeker. His story seems to be proof that all human beings have emotions, whether they acknowledge them or not. Either because Redeker suddenly recognizes his own or because he knows that his plan will cause the death of many, he cannot bear to be himself and takes on a new identity.

General Raj-Singh – One of the much-admired heroes of the novel. He is famous among armies all over the world for coming up with the square formation to fight the **zombies** so soldiers could face the enemy on every side. At one battle, his crew ran out of ammunition and knew they would all die—and yet, Raj-Singh refused to leave his men and planned to fight with them till the end. Finally, one of his soldiers hit him in the face with his rifle, and when Raj-Singh fainted from the pain, they carried him away to safety. This incident highlights Raj-Singh's sense of fairness, as well as his soldiers' deep admiration for him. They knew he would be useful in war and wanted to save his life. Raj-Singh makes his final appearance on a mountain pass by the Himalayas where Sergeant Mukherjee is struggling with the responsibility of having to blow up the pass to prevent the zombies from getting into India's safe zone. However, there are many people on the bridge who will be blown up, too, so Raj-Singh says he will press the detonator and take on the responsibility of their deaths. When the bombs don't detonate, Raj-Singh rushes into the crowd to fix it and succeeds in blowing up the bridge. In the process, he dies along with the other people on the bridge, but he succeeds in sealing off the safe zone from zombies. His action is similar to Captain Chen's, who takes on the responsibility of killing people in order to save others. Raj-Singh is also a foil to General Lang, who took the easy way out by committing suicide when he was burdened with guilt.

Captain Chen – The captain of the submarine that defects from China during the war. His story is narrated by Admiral Xu Zhicai, who clearly admires Chen's principles and leadership skills. When Captain Chen saw that China was led by an ineffective army that was rapidly losing against the zombies, he believed the nation wouldn't survive the war. So, he planned on escaping into the sea in a submarine, with his crew, in order to protect a tiny part of their nation. He did his best to smuggle his crew's families on board, too—a kind gesture that Xu admires. At one point, their submarine was attacked by a Chinese loyalist submarine and Captain Chen thought that his beloved son, Commander Chen, was leading the attack. He fired at the other submarine and destroyed it in order to protect his crew, even though it broke his heart to kill his son. However, he later found out that his son had joined the rebellion against China's politburo, and, he, too, joined the rebels. Captain Chen decided to fire a nuclear warhead on the politburo's bunker, and took on full responsibility for the action. He wanted to spare everyone else the weight and guilt of firing on their countrymen. He thought this was the only way forward for China, which went on to implement their version of the Redeker plan under the rebels and finally won the war against the zombies. The novel emphasizes that Captain Chen was a true leader whose patriotism didn't blind him to the faults of his nation's leaders, and he took every step he could to save his nation.

Breckinridge "Breck" Scott – Scott developed a fake vaccine called Phalanx during the **zombie** outbreak and falsely marketed it as a cure for the zombie virus. He understood that the American people were terrified of this disease and exploited their fear to make millions. He was aided by the shortsighted administration of the time, which was desperate for a way to calm people down and grabbed at Scott's solution. Scott was also helped along by a web of corruption that included doctors who earned money from prescribing the vaccine and the inefficient FDA. The narrator is clearly upset with Scott when he interviews him, but Scott refuses to take any blame for his actions, saying that he "technically" didn't lie since he was selling an anti-rabies vaccine and the disease was called "African rabies." He defends his actions and says that the gullible public should have researched the vaccine rather than buying into its claims so naively. In his interview, Scott comes across as a despicable person who has no conscience. Out of pure greed, he put the lives of many Americans in danger and has no qualms about it.

Mary Jo Miller – Miller was a suburbanite who was preoccupied with day-to-day worries and didn't pay much attention to the zombie crisis on the news until the night when **zombies** burst into her house and attacked her family. She represents the typical, privileged American who focuses on her little problems—like her investment portfolio and the crack in the pool—and ignores the larger, important issues until they directly affect her life. She says she'd known her husband, Tim Miller, was having an affair, but when the zombies attacked, the "lies fell away" and he stepped in to protect his family. After the zombie war, Miller designs zombie-proof homes, suggesting that she, too, has been shaken out of her petty concerns and has found a valuable purpose in life. In her second interview, she takes full responsibility for the zombie crisis getting out of hand in America. She tells the narrator that people like her caused the crisis, because in a democracy, a government can and must be held accountable by its people. Self-involved citizens like her didn't take the steps they should have to get the government to react to the crisis in the proper way.

Jurgen Warmbrunn – Warmbrunn, an Israeli agent, was among the first to pay close attention to early reports of **zombies** from around the world, and to caution his government against the imminent threat. He says that, as a nation, the Israelis are generally wary about danger because they had already come close to extinction before and are determined to never let this happen again. Warmbrunn got in touch with his ex-CIA friend, Paul Knight, who was also collecting evidence of zombie outbreaks. The two of them wrote the Warmbrunn-Knight Report, with inputs from several researchers and agents around the world, and they sent off copies of this report to several nations to tell them how to protect themselves from a zombie outbreak. However, this report was ignored by all nations except Israel, which declared a voluntary quarantine to protect itself from the virus. Warmbrunn expresses regret that the zombie war could have been prevented if the report was read and acted upon. At the conclusion of the novel, the narrator includes a short second interview of Warmbrunn in which he states that the zombie war had a huge cost and that no one in the world can escape its effects.

Travis D'Ambrosia – General D'Ambrosia, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, explains that while the U.S. Army certainly didn't do their job and protect the people of America like they should have, they had to answer to both the government and the public. While the administration at the time was not sympathetic to a war effort, neither was the American public. They were weary from all the wars America had been fighting and would certainly not support another, either financially or by signing up to fight. Later in the novel, the narrator includes a second interview in which D'Ambrosia says that when the president decided to go on the offensive against the **zombies**, D'Ambrosia was concerned about his soldiers. He wasn't excited to go into battle, as many readers might have expected. D'Ambrosia comes across as a thoughtful and considerate leader, which explains why the U.S. Army was better prepared to wage war against the zombies and was very organized when compared to other armies around the world that suffered drastic losses and were forced to fight in difficult conditions.

Fernando Oliveira – Oliveira was a Brazilian doctor who used to perform illegal organ transplants before the **zombie** outbreak. His patients were often from privileged nations from Europe and North America, and he got most of his organs from China. Oliveira and his cardiologist accomplice Dr. Silva conducted a heart transplant on Herr Muller, a patient from Austria. At the time, the world still didn't know about the zombie virus, and they didn't realize that they'd put an infected heart in Muller, who died right after and then reanimated as a zombie. Muller killed and fed on Dr. Silva, and Oliveira, who was terrified, put a bullet through his brain and killed him. The corrupt Brazilian cops whom Oliveira paid off helped him cover up the incident. Oliveira says that his patients, many of them Americans, asked no questions about the source of their organs and went right back to their privileged, happy lives after their operations—neither he nor they initially realized that many of them must have been infected with the virus since most of the organs came from China. His account shows that the illegal organ trade was also a way by which the virus spread around the world, and that this was helped along not just by crime but by the apathy that comes from privilege.

Jacob Nyathi – Nyathi witnessed the first big **zombie** attack on people which captured the world's attention. This occurred early one morning in a small township outside of Cape Town, South Africa, among the huts and shanties in a poor neighborhood. Nyathi was returning from work when he saw people screaming and running, and heard gunshots. Soon, he encountered a horde of zombies but managed to escape. The South African police shot him, mistaking him for a zombie, and when he was recovering in a hospital, he heard everyone talking about the incident and the disease they had named "African rabies." Nyathi's account shows the first time that the zombies attacked en masse and caused enough destruction and death that they could no longer be ignored. However, people's understanding of the virus was poor in those early days, and misclassifying it as a type of rabies would end up confusing people later (especially in America when Breckinridge Scott would falsely market a rabies vaccine as a preventative against the zombie virus).

Kondo Tatsumi – In Japan, the narrator meets Tatsumi, a warrior monk who has fought **zombies** in hand-to-hand combat. He tells the narrator that he used to be a socially awkward teenager who spent all his time online. When the zombies attacked his city, he was taken completely by surprise because he hadn't even looked outside his windows. He was so lost in his online world that he hadn't noticed that his parents had been missing for days. When faced with the zombies that attacked him, Tatsumi decided that if he survived, he would change his ways and fully engage with the world. He managed to survive and met Ijiro, who fought and killed zombies in hand-to-hand combat in the remote mountains of Japan. He asked Tatsumi to join him, and Tatsumi agreed. In his second interview, Tatsumi confesses to the narrator that he doesn't believe in Ijiro's spiritual teachings. He does, however, believe that Japan must be a strong and independent nation, and that Ijiro's teachings seem to be the path to achieving this. Tatsumi's transforms himself from an isolated, unfeeling teenager to an adult who cares about the future of his nation and its people.

Tomonaga Ijiro – Ijiro founded Japan's Tatenokai, or Shield Society, and teaches hand-to-hand combat. He lost his eyesight when he watched the nuclear bomb go off when he was a young boy, and is considered *hibakusha*, or "survivor of the bomb." After his injury, he hated feeling like a burden on people, so he left his old life and became a gardener far from his old home. When he heard of an imminent zombie invasion, he didn't want to be burden on the people around him who might

have to look after him when the crisis came, so he went to live by himself up in the mountains. Here, he finally found his purpose—he believed it was to rid the earth of zombies and to keep Japan beautiful for when its people returned. His blindness proved to be an asset when he fought the zombies armed with his *ikupasuy*, a tool that looked like a long spade. He could hear them and smell them, and destroyed every zombie he came across. Eventually, he met Tatsumi, and asked him to join his mission, too. Ijiro's has lived his entire life selflessly and is anchored by a strong sense of morality.

Jesika Hendricks – Hendricks was part of the American population that wasn't in the safe zone. She was a young teenager at the time of the outbreak, and her family decided to head north, to the snowy regions of Canada, because they knew that **zombies** would freeze in the snow. However, her family and many like them weren't prepared to spend months in the freezing cold with hardly any food. Many died, including her parents, and Hendricks implies that the others resorted to cannibalism to survive since there was absolutely no other food for them there. Hendricks says that she understands that the government couldn't take everyone to the safe zone, but that they could have done more to give them information that would help them survive. At the conclusion of the novel, she admits in a second interview that she will always be bitter about the fact that her parents died while others who don't deserve to be alive survived the war. Hendricks' interview highlights the inefficacy of government policy during those early years of the crisis, as well as the traumatic cost of the war.

Terry Knox – Knox was commander of the International Space Station during the **zombie** war. He and his crew decided to stay in space to man the satellites that might help the war effort, despite knowing that they'd be stuck there with no way of getting back to earth. Knox was also deeply appreciative of the time, money, and effort that nations around the world had spent to build the Space Station, and knew it was unlikely or impossible that this could ever happen again. So, he thought it was worth saving even though that might mean sacrificing his own life to do so. Knox describes how the war looked from space—the fires, the nuclear bombs, huge hordes of zombies moving together across Central Asia, the cloud of ashes that covered the earth and made it look like an alien planet. Knox and his crew were finally rescued after the war ended, but by then, they had all been exposed to fatal amount of radiation and were too sick to survive. Knox, too, dies a few days after his interview. The narrator admires his brave and generous sacrifice.

Stanley MacDonald – MacDonald is a Canadian army veteran, and is among the first who saw **zombies** outside of China. He and his team were investigating the drug trade in Kyrgyzstan when they found chewed up human remains outside a cave. Inside, MacDonald saw a zombie, which had been severed at the torso, but was still moving and trying to bite him. No one had heard about the zombie virus at the time, and MacDonald was completely unnerved by these events. However, back in Canada, his report was dismissed as PTSD. MacDonald's account describes the complete terror of first encountering a zombie since its behavior is so foreign to anything people are familiar with or expect. Also, it shows that armies and governments around the world carelessly ignored early reports, which led to the problem eventually becoming unmanageable.

Kwang Jingshu – A conscientious Chinese doctor who is involved in postwar reconstruction efforts despite his age and injuries. He is one of the first to have documented the effects of the **virus** after encountering the infection in Patient Zero years before, when the infection was still unheard of. Kwang's interview shows that the virus was truly terrifying, even to a seasoned doctor like him. It also shows that the virus turned into an outbreak through government mismanagement. In his second interview towards the conclusion of the novel, Kwang says that he believes the war was necessary despite all the destruction it caused because it will allow children to live their lives free of fear. He also remains optimistic about humanity's survival.

Saladin Kader – A young Palestinian who used to harbor great anger against the Israelis and refused to go to Israel when they offered refuge to Palestinians during their voluntary quarantine. Kader's father, who was a janitor in a hospital in Kuwait, had heard of some cases of the **zombie** virus, and insisted that Kader accompany the family to Israel. On entering Israel, Kader saw the beginning of the Israeli Civil War, which was fought because some Israelis didn't agree with their government's idea of opening their country to Palestinians. An Israeli soldier died protecting Kader's family, and Kader realized that he'd hated these people his whole life but didn't really know anything about them. He also saw zombies for the first time, and recognized that they were extremely dangerous. He was flabbergasted that the rest of the world was not listening to Israel and following their example, too.

The American President – The President of the United States at the time of the war is described as a soft-spoken but steely leader. The Whacko says he was a man of principles who insisted on holding elections even in those difficult times since he believed in the power of democracy. He came up with creative ideas to solve problems within the safe zones—for instance, he instituted public flogging to punish crimes rather than wasting resources on creating and maintaining prisons. Later, he convinced the U.N. to begin an attack against the **zombies** to retake land from them and eliminate them. Though many countries were hesitant to do this, the President convinced them that this was the only possible step to ensure mankind's survival and dignity. However, all the years of stress finally ended up taking a huge toll on him. He died of sorrow during the years of the war, heartbroken by the level of

destruction everywhere. The America President is an example of an honorable leader who is motivated by a desire to do right by his people.

Father Sergei Ryzhkov – Ryzhkov used to be a chaplain in the Russian Army and volunteered to take on the responsibility of shooting soldiers who got bitten by **zombies** since this was an unpleasant task that no one else wanted to do. He tells the narrator that this was the beginning of Russia's religious conversion—many other religious heads took on the same task, and Russians were pulled back to the comforts of God and the Church. After the war, the country became "The Holy Russian Empire." Ryzhkov seems proud of this, but the narrator notes that he now works in a poor shantytown. The narrator asks him if it is true that the Russian President only used the religious conversion as an excuse to take on more power and use priests to kill his opponents by wrongly claiming they were infected. Ryzhkov evades these questions, suggesting that he is either a liar or is unwilling to face the truth. Ryzhkov's narrative demonstrates the cruel and canny way in which Russia's president grabbed power during the zombie crisis, portraying him as a foil to the American president.

Roy Elliot – A famous filmmaker before the outbreak, Elliot makes movies during the war that aim to make American citizens feel hopeful again. He primarily intends to combat a psychological syndrome called ADS (Apocalyptic Despair Syndrome or Asymptomatic Demise Syndrome) that affected a large number of people during the war. Victims of this syndrome experienced such extreme hopelessness that they died in their sleep even though they weren't physically ill. Elliot tells the narrator that he knew how they felt because he felt hopeless, too—he'd gone from being a hotshot director before the war to an unskilled laborer inside the safe zone. Elliot ends up making a huge difference in the lives of many Americans with his movies that show people fighting back and winning against the **zombies**, and also showcase the army's slew of impressive weapons. These movies give hope to many, and the number of ADS cases drop. Elliot's interview shows the importance of art and storytelling even in a time of crisis. He empathized with people and was therefore able to tap into their emotions and improve their lives. The presence of ADS during the war also highlights the importance of people's emotions to their well-being and health.

Christina Eliopolis – Eliopolis, a tough air force pilot and colonel, worked to transport goods and supplies to remote army and civilian outposts during the war. On one such trip, her plane exploded in the air and she parachuted to the **zombie**-infested swamplands below. She was the only survivor from her crew, and even though she was brave and capable, she was filled with fear. Luckily, her radio buzzed to life and a Skywatcher who called herself "Mets" said that she saw Eliopolis' plane crash and would help guide her to a safe place from where she could picked up by a rescue plane. Eliopolis managed to make it out safe and credits Mets with saving her life. However, the narrator has read the psychiatrist's report that says Mets doesn't exist—Eliopolis' radio had broken, and no one had found a Skywatcher named Mets. Eliopolis, however, insists that Mets wasn't a figment of her imagination. Her interview suggests that she invented another person to help her through this extremely stressful time since she didn't think she would be able to make it by herself. As a woman in a male-dominated field, Eliopolis felt additional pressure to prove herself, and the air force psychiatrist concluded that Mets was a sort of mother-figure to her.

Michael Choi – Choi is the Master Chief Petty Officer of the U.S. Navy. He is stationed in Hawaii, where he conducts diving missions to kill the underwater **zombies** that survive on the ocean floor. The narrator interviews him more than a decade after the war has ended, and yet, there are still zombies lurking and the armed forces are still working on stamping them out. The zombies pose risks when they wash up on beaches and when people are out at sea. Choi describes the heavy diving suit that he and his colleagues wear to conduct their operations, which protect them from zombie bites. He is now involved in studying the movements of these underwater zombies so they can figure out more efficient ways to destroy them. When the narrator asks him if they might use robots to do this kind of work in the future, Choi says that would be impossible because they would lack the "instinct" and the "heart" to be successful at it. Choi's account reveals the superiority of human beings in the fight against the zombies, saying that their special human qualities—not just "intelligence"—give people an edge over zombies.

T. Sean Collins – Collins worked in private security before the war and was hired by a millionaire during the outbreak to guard him and his friends in his secure mansion. One night, other people who were terrified of the zombies tried to break into his house, believing they would be safe there. The millionaire asked Collins and the other security guards to kill these people, but Collins refused and walked out. His interview shows the callous nature of his wealthy boss, and, in general, wealthy people's lack of empathy for those who have less. In his second interview, Collins reveals to the narrator that killing **zombies** gives him a big rush, and when he tried to stop doing it, he worried that he might end up killing people instead—just to feel that thrill. So, he ended up joining a private group of zombie hunters. He hopes he will be able to stop killing soon and retire peacefully. But if he is unable to do that, he says he will kill himself after killing the last zombie. Collins says his plight is one shared by many veterans who cannot bring themselves to relax after the constant stress of war, and it shows one of the psychological costs of war.

Patient Zero – The first documented case of the **zombie** virus. Kwang Jingshu is called in to a remote village where he encounters this 12-year-old boy who had been bitten in the

foot while swimming in the waters of a dam. The boy displays symptoms that frighten Jingshu, like the lack of a heartbeat or pulse, and extreme hostility. He asks two villagers to hold the boy down so he can get a blood sample, and as the boy struggles, his arm snaps off. However, the boy doesn't even notice it and is focused only on attacking Jingshu. Jinsghu immediately knows he is out of his element and calls his friend Dr. Gu Wen Kei for help. Dr. Gu sends in the Chinese authorities, who end up killing the boy. Patient Zero illustrates the strange and terrifying nature of the virus.

Philip Adler – Adler, a German soldier who was fighting **zombies** in Hamburg, was furious when General Lang ordered him to abandon civilians to the zombies and head elsewhere with his troops. Adler is a principled and conscientious man, and thinking back on how his grandfather's generation blindly obeyed orders and hurt so many during World War II, he refused to follow Lang's orders until Lang threatened him and his men with treason. Adler understood more about the Redeker plan later, but didn't change his mind about it. At the conclusion of the novel, the narrator includes a line from Adler in which he says that they lost "a lot more than just people" in the war, implying that humanity had lost its morality and its honor.

Gavin Blaire – A blimp pilot, Blaire describes the scenes of panic and chaos that he witnessed as he flew over American freeways. People were desperate to get away from infested places and had packed their families and belongings into cars and started driving away, only to get stuck in traffic jams as **zombie** hordes made their way down the stalled cars. Blaire says that in their terror, these people hadn't realized that there was nowhere to run to—they were headed from one infested zone to another, and probably would have been safer had they stayed in their houses. Blaire's account shows that the crisis in America had become very serious, and that desperate citizens suffered tragically.

Ajay Shah – Shah describes his attempt to escape the infestation in India by trying to get on a ship and head out to sea. At the shipyard, he witnessed the best and worst of humanity. Panicked and desperate people thronged the beach, and some boat owners asked them for large sums of money or sexual favors to row them to the few ships that were docked out at sea. Some other boat owners put their own lives at risk to return repeatedly to help these stranded people. Shah realized that the seas weren't safe either, as some people who tried to swim out to the ships were dragged down and bitten by **zombies** that were underwater.

Sharon – Sharon is now an adult but is in a rehabilitation facility for feral children—young children who grew up without their parents during the outbreak and do not have any social or language skills. The narrator says that she "has the mind of a four-year-old," so Sharon also suffers from developmental issues. She describes how she and her mother had taken safety in a church with some other people, including Mrs. Randolph who cried when Sharon asked her where her daughter Ashley was. A horde of **zombies** stormed the church, and the pastor's wife began killing the little children to save them from being bitten and infected. Sharon's mother, too, tried to choke her to death, but Mrs. Randolph saved her life. Sharon's stark account highlights the fear and desperation of those times.

Bob Archer – Archer is the post-war director of the CIA, and tells the narrator that the administration that was in charge during the early days of the outbreak used the CIA to further their politics but didn't want to hear about anything that might weaken their position in the public eye. The CIA became a weak and ineffective organization under them. When Archer tried to bring up the issue of the **zombies** with his boss, he was transferred to Buenos Aires as a punishment. Archer's account shows that the administration behaved irresponsibly, which worsened the zombie crisis in the nation.

Nury Televaldi – Televaldi smuggled people out of China during the outbreak. He says that many Chinese citizens were desperate to leave because the virus was rapidly spreading inside the nation, and they were also terrified at the cruel and secretive way in which their government was dealing with the infected. Some of these people were already infected, and they carried the virus to different parts of the world. Televaldi's interview shows how crime and corruption led to the worldwide zombie crisis. It also demonstrates that the Chinese government's repressive measures backfired and suggests that frightening people will surely lead to disorder.

Bohdan Taras Kondratiuk – Kondratiuk describes how Ukraine enacted the Redeker Plan. In order to separate the infected and destroy them, they bombed part of the population with nerve gas. Everyone who wasn't infected died, and when the infected ones reanimated, it was easy for the soldiers to pick them out and kill them. In this excessively cruel way, Ukraine made it easier for the army to kill the zombies and stop the creation of more zombies, but at a massive human cost.

"The Whacko" – The Vice President of the United States during the years when the crisis was at its worst. He and the American President formed a great team that took effective steps to address and, finally, solve the **zombie** crisis. The Vice President is called "the Whacko" by everyone because, in his words, he said what he thought. He and the president complemented each other very well since the President was "the light" while the Vice President was "the heat."

Arthur Sinclair – Sinclair was director of the newly formed American governmental agency called the Department of Strategic Resources, or DeStRes. His job was to fix the problems of "starvation, disease, [and] homelessness" in the safe zone in the Rockies. Sinclair is very smart and adapts his ideas excellently to the new and strange problems that the country faces. He comes up with programs to train people in

useful skills and to recycle unusable amenities—like cars—into tools and weapons.

Grover Carlson – Carlson was the White House chief-of-staff during the early days of the outbreak. Rather than taking any steps to solve the **zombie** crisis, Carlson was only focused on staying in power. As a result, the crisis worsened in America while Carlson kept saying it wasn't very serious, or that it was a problem like poverty that couldn't be solved. Carlson's account shows that government bureaucracy and petty politicking contributed to the spread of the virus.

Ahmed Farahnakian – Farahnakian used to be an army general in Iran, and explains how Iran and Pakistan ended up in a nuclear war fueled by the refugee crisis during the **zombie** outbreak. There was a breakdown in the diplomatic apparatus, and since there was no means for them to talk and resolve their disagreements, it turned into a war that surprised everyone, including Iran.

Darnell Hackworth – Runs a canine retirement center for dogs that fought in the war against the **zombies**. He tells the narrator how the dogs played a big part in the war by being able to sniff out and distract zombies. Hackworth is very attached to the dogs, as are most soldiers who had canine partners, which shows the human capacity for kindness and love even in difficult and dangerous times.

Joe Muhammad – Muhammad volunteered to be part of the Neighborhood Security Team during the outbreak. He is disabled and is on a wheelchair, but he doesn't let that stop him from volunteering to help when help is needed. He is an admirable individual who does a lot to keep his neighborhood safe from **zombies**.

Barati Palshigar – A woman who worked on Radio Free Earth during the war. Along with her hard-working team, Palshigar broadcasted useful information in different languages to people all over the world. Radio Free Earth aimed to provide information that would help people survive, like the ways to purify water, and also combatted misinformation, like the notion that **zombies** had feelings.

David Allen Forbes – A British writer who describes how some people across the Continent took shelter in ancient castles. The castles' high walls and other fortifications, which had been built for protection against invaders in medieval times, proved to be excellent protection against the **zombies** since they could not climb. Forbes himself took shelter in Windsor Castle, which the Queen had opened up to the public. Forbes speaks reverently of the Queen's decision to stay in Windsor Castle and serve her people.

Sardar Khan – Sardar Khan was a road engineer who got pulled into the struggle to destroy a mountain pass that would block the **zombies** from entering India's safe zone in the Himalayas. Sergeant Mukherjee needed someone to drive him so he could see to this, and he decided Khan could do it. Khan's interview describes the difficulty of carrying out the Redeker Plan in India, where many people kept hurrying across the pass even though the army was trying to clear it so they could blow it up.

Sergeant Mukherjee – Sergeant Mukherjee is an Indian army sergeant who is tasked with the job of blowing up a mountain pass to prevent zombies from accessing India's safe zone in the Himalayas. However, he finds many people on the pass and does not want to kill them all by detonating the bomb. General Raj-Singh offers to do it. Mukherjee's plight highlights the difficult decisions that had to be made during the war. Many, like Mukherjee and General Lang, found themselves unequal to the task.

Mets – A Skywatcher who talks to Christina Eliopolis on her radio and helps her escape **zombie**-infested territory. The narrator discovers that air force psychiatrists believe that Mets is a figment of Eliopolis' imagination, even though Eliopolis insists she is real. If the psychiatrists are to be believed, then Mets symbolizes how fear and stress can unhinge an otherwise capable person.

Hyungchol Choi – Deputy director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. He discusses the mystery of what have happened in North Korea during the **zombie** crisis. The entire population of the country seems to have disappeared, and Choi guesses that they either survived the crisis in underground bunkers or that the entire population became infected when they were hiding underground.

General Lang – Philip Adler's general who ordered him to follow orders to abandon civilians, and threatened him and his men with treason when he refused to do so. General Lang ended up committing suicide after carrying out just the first step of the Redeker Plan since he was unable to bear the guilt of having so many deaths on his head.

Dr. Gu Wen Kuei – Kwang Jingshu's old army friend who now works at the Institute of Infectious Diseases. Jingshu calls him when he encounters Patient Zero and is confounded by his symptoms, and Gu immediately turns serious, implying that he knows of other cases. He indirectly warns Jingshu that this is a dangerous situation—he probably cannot warn him outright since their conversation is being surveilled by the Chinese government.

The Queen – The Queen of England who stayed back in Windsor Castle to serve the people during the war. She is an example of an honorable leader who is worthy of respect, and is a foil to the Chinese politburo that hid safely in bunkers while sending untrained troops to fight the zombies.

Chairperson – The chairperson of the United Nation's Postwar Commission Report. She believes that the report should be objective and fact-based rather than based on "the human factor." When the narrator protests, she tells him to write a book using the interviews and to write it in the way that he would like.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Paul Knight – A former CIA agent and Jurgen Warmbrunn's friend. Like Warmbrunn, he, too, tracked the **zombie** virus around the world, and compiled the Warmbrunn-Knight Report with Warmbrunn. Knight hand-delivered a copy to the CIA, which was ignored.

Commander Chen – Captain Chen's son who has joined the rebel forces against the politburo and comes to take his father's submarine home. Commander Chen is a patriot, like his father—and, like him, realizes that the only way to preserve China's future is to rebel against the ineffective, corrupt politburo.

Ernesto Olguin – A merchant ship's master, he attended the U.N.'s Honolulu Conference where the American president convinced other world leaders that it was time for them to attack the **zombies** and reclaim their countries.

Seryosha Garcia Alvarez – Alvarez explains how Cuba "won" the **zombie** war and turned into a bustling economic center. Cuba carefully controlled the influx of refugees, and then used their labor and ideas of democracy and enterprise to develop the nation into an international air hub and a thriving economy.

Admiral Xu Zhicai – Xu was part of the naval crew that defected from China under Captain Chen. He is extremely loyal to Captain Chen and speaks of him with admiration.

Rat Face – A man in civilian clothes who suddenly appeared among Maria Zhuganova's troops one day. He was most likely a government agent who had been sent to keep an eye on the spread of the **virus** in that region of Russia.

Arkady – The machine gunner in Maria Zhuganova's barracks who discovered a **zombie** and figured out that this was the secret their superiors had been keeping from them. He demanded to go home and check on his family and was shot down by the Spetznatz commandos.

Herr Muller – Fernando Oliveira's Austrian patient who got infected with the virus when he had an illegal heart transplant. His new heart came from an infected host.

Dr. Silva – A cardiologist who helped Fernando Oliveira perform a heart transplant on Herr Muller. When Muller turned into a zombie, he killed and ate Dr. Silva.

Mrs. Randolph – A woman who was taking shelter against the zombies in the same church as Sharon. She cried when Sharon asked her where her daughter Ashley was, suggesting that Ashley had died in the outbreak.

Andre Renard – A French soldier who worked on clearing the zombies out of the underground tunnels of Paris.

Ashley – Mrs. Randolph's dead daughter.

Tim Miller – Mary Jo Miller's husband.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

HUMANITY VS. MONSTROSITY

World War Z is about a zombie crisis during which millions of people all over the world are killed and entire nations are ravaged by hordes of attacking **zombies**. After the zombies are contained, the narrator, who works for the U.N., travels the world to collect the stories of some of the major players in this worldwide battle. The many narratives in this novel are united by the question of what it means to be human and how to retain that humanity when confronted with adversity—particularly when up against something monstrous like a zombie. Brooks suggests that the main difference between zombies and human beings is the ability to empathize with and care for other people. Those who are willing to stand up for others and even sacrifice their lives for them represent the heights that humanity can reach, while other people who are mindlessly acquisitive and unfeeling are depicted as being just as monstrous as the zombie hordes—perhaps even more so.

In the novel, emotions and empathy are portrayed as the very essence of humanity. When the U.N. publishes the narrator's report on the zombie war, he finds that much of what he'd included has been edited out. The chairperson explains that this is because the initial version had "too many feelings," and they needed "clear facts and figures, unclouded by the human factor." The narrator disagrees with this manner of thinking, saying that it is the "human factor that connects us so deeply to the past." He decides to write a book that will include all the "feelings" that the U.N. had found too messy and unnecessary for its report. He is convinced that it is important to preserve stories that are full of emotion and human experience, since these would help future generations to truly connect with the stories of the war rather than seeing them as just a collection of facts. The narrator says that the human factor is "the only true difference between us and the enemy we now refer to as 'the living dead.'" Similarly, Travis D'Ambrosia, an army general, tells the narrator that "[e]ach zombie is its own, self-contained, automated unit," and that this separates them from people who form deep connections with each other.

To further emphasize this distinction, the characters in the novel who allow themselves to be guided by empathy and affection for humanity are depicted as heroes. David Allen Forbes, a British author, reverently describes how the Queen opened up Windsor Castle to the public during the zombie

attacks since a castle offers more protection than an ordinary building. Forbes says that he tried to convince her to leave London and head to a safer place, but that she refused because "the highest of distinctions is service to others"—this is an idea that many of the honorable characters in the book believe in. Another oft-mentioned hero in the book is General Raj-Singh of the Indian Army who helps fight a surge of zombies who are making their way across a bridge. When the bomb on the bridge doesn't detonate, Raj-Singh manages to set it off manually, which most likely kills him since he is never seen again. His sacrifice helps create a "safe zone" away from the zombies for the government and people of the Indian subcontinent.

In contrast to these characters who embody humanity's potential for heroism, there are others in the novel who lack any sense of empathy or conscience. Brooks suggests that these are the true monsters of the book. Unlike the zombies, who are incapable of higher feelings, these human beings are presented a choice and choose cruelty and harm. One of the most despicable characters in the book is Breckenridge "Breck" Scott, who made a fortune selling Phalanx, an anti-rabies vaccine that he falsely marketed as being a cure for the zombie virus. He refuses to take responsibility for lying to the vulnerable public at the time of the crisis. Safe in his bunker in Antarctica, Scott tells the narrator that he feels no guilt and claims that the "the sheep who forked over their greenbacks without bothering to do a little extra research" must be held responsible for their own foolishness. He is completely untroubled that he made his millions off of a terrified, desperate populace.

While the zombie crisis could have been effectively controlled at the initial stages, it spiraled out of control due to inept leadership and government bureaucracy. Grover Carlson, the former White House chief of staff, exemplifies the callousness demonstrated by some of the politicians in power. He decides to play down the dangers of the zombie plague and even encourages people to embrace false cures like Phalanx because it will calm them down. Carlson ignores outbreaks that are not in his party zones and even denies law enforcement in these areas any additional support to contain the zombie outbreak. Despite all this, Carlson has no qualms about his behavior when the narrator interviews him, justifying his cruelty as just being smart politics. While the zombies wreak havoc on humanity, they cause harm unwittingly while people like Scott and Carlson choose to do so. Like the zombies, people who are extremely selfish are immune to the suffering of their fellow humans. The novel repeatedly shows that those who are incapable of empathy are not only dishonorable, but also monstrous in that they exhibit the very antithesis of what it means to be a human being.

FEAR

The war between humans and **zombies** in the novel is a drawn-out one with several losses incurred by people against an enemy—the zombie horde—that only seems to grow in size. As a result, people not only struggle with death and destruction but also suffer from hopelessness and low morale. Many of the narrator's interviewees point out that human beings feel fear, which is one of the chief differences between them and the hungry automatons that are attacking them. As this sense of fear proves to be a significant weakness, *World War Z* suggests that fear is the biggest disadvantage that people face while at war, and that it can be even more dangerous and claim more victims than a tangible enemy.

The overwhelming emotion that people all over the world feel during the outbreak is fear, and it causes them to become unfocused and vulnerable. This leaves them open to exploitation and attack. For instance, at the Battle of Yonkers, the U.S. Army is prepared for their fight against the zombies with every weapon in their arsenal and expect certain victory. However, the zombies keep coming, unafraid of the onslaught and the gadgetry, because they are not capable of feeling fear. One of the soldiers, Todd Wainio, tells the narrator that "real fighting isn't about killing or even hurting the other guy, it's about scaring him enough to call it a day." Since zombies are biologically incapable of fear, they prove to be formidable opponents. The people who are fighting them become even more terrified when they realize that their enemy is completely fearless and will never give up.

Fear also weakens people and is exploited by unethical characters like Breckinridge Scott, the maker of Phalanx—a fake vaccine that he claims will be protection against a zombie bite. Scott tells the narrator that he understood early on that "fear is the most basic emotion we have." He realizes that "Fear sells," which is why he markets the vaccine at a time when the population is at its most fearful. He knows that at such a time, people will grab at solutions no matter how dubious they are. He becomes a millionaire by exploiting fear.

Some of the interviews in the novel show that fear can be so consuming that it is even more dangerous to a person's well-being than imminent physical danger. During the war, suicide rates are very high since people are too afraid to face the future. At a castle in Holland where some are sheltering against the zombies, pneumonia breaks out and those inside feel so hopeless that they go "mad with desperation" and leap to their deaths from the windows, falling into moats that are crawling with zombies. Even though they might have survived if they'd carried on, they are too overwhelmed by fear. Also, many people succumb to a new mental illness during the war that the U.S. names Asymptomatic Demise Syndrome or Apocalyptic Despair Syndrome (ADS). Victims are physically healthy or have only minor illnesses or wounds, and they end up dying in

their sleep without any other symptoms. They fear the future, so their bodies just seem to give up. ADS ends up "kill[ing] as many people in [the war's] early stalemate months as hunger, disease, interhuman violence, or the living dead."

Fear also affects people by causing them to behave uncharacteristically and lose their grip on reality. The narrator interviews Colonel Christina Eliopolis, who has an "outstanding war record" and a reputation for being capable and tough. She tells him about the time her plane blew up and she was stranded in an unknown area and surrounded by zombies. She made contact on her radio with a skywatcher named Mets, who guided her to safety. After Eliopolis was rescued, the authorities discovered that her radio had broken during her fall, and that there was no skywatcher named Mets. Eliopolis insists they are mistaken, but the narrator implies that Mets is a figment of her imagination. She had found herself in a lonely and horrific situation, and had invented a narrative that would help her survive it. Even after all this time, she is unwilling to confront reality.

Another way in which some people cope with their fear of zombies is by convincing themselves that they, too, are zombies. They wander around moaning like the monsters and attacking people by biting and trying to eat them. Security forces call them "quislings" and one of the security men says that some people "just can't deal with a fight-or-die situation" and "are drawn to what they are afraid of. Instead of resisting it, they want to please it, join it, try to be like it." These people lack the mental strength to push through these overwhelmingly difficult times and seem to have snapped. Through these examples, the novel suggests that fear is an integral part of human nature, and it is what weakens people most in times of crisis. By contrast, the zombies' lack of fear is their biggest strength.

THE FRAGILITY OF PRIVILEGE AND MODERN LIFE

Through numerous interviews, the narrator collects oral histories narrated by principal players in the war against the **zombies**. Some of these interviews describe the pre-war lives of people in privileged nations as being soft and shallow, which is why they were not equipped to deal with difficulties of any sort. While the citizens and armed forces of these nations believed their wealth and fancy technology gave them strength and superiority, the zombie war proved them horribly wrong. Through this, the novel criticizes the bloated and ridiculous lifestyles that most people take for granted in these countries, and points out that their position of power is extremely fragile.

The zombie invasion serves as a wake-up call to those who lack self-awareness and are stuck in the rut of their privileged lives. Mary Jo Miller is one of these people. She is introduced as a developer who designs and builds zombie-proof houses. Before the outbreak, her worries centered around concerns like "car payments and [...] that widening crack in the pool," and these run-of-the-mill worries prevented her from paying attention to the news stories about zombies. However, after coming face to face with a group of attacking zombies, she changes the course of her life and works actively to provide an effective, inventive solution to help people. Miller's husband, who'd been having an affair before the invasion, placed himself between the attacking zombies and his family and sacrificed his life to save them. Miller says, "In a split second, it was like all the lies fell away." This holds true not only for her husband, but for herself as well—her previously small concerns have now expanded, as has her role in society.

During the outbreak, T. Sean Collins worked as a security guard at a millionaire's mansion, protecting his boss' celebrity guests from possible zombie attacks. The house is "a survivalists' wet dream," with a huge stock of dehydrated food and a desalinizer for water. However, they come under one night, and Collins is at first surprised that the zombies are so intelligently scaling the high walls. He then realizes that the attackers are not zombies at all—they are just people from the outside trying to get inside the safe mansion, "carrying ladders, guns, babies." The attackers go on a rampage, and Miller's boss asks him and the other guards to fire at the raiders, displaying the callousness of the privileged. However, Miller disobeys and leaves, refusing to hurt "not-so-rich people who just want [...] a safe place to hide." The zombie war not only precipitates the anger of the middle class against millionaires and celebrities who can afford safety, but also inspires Miller to walk out on his "master."

Before the zombie war, many people in privileged societies led idyllic lives, but Brooks highlights the fact that this was far from universal. The war forces the previously privileged to take stock of the injustices that propped up their comfortable positions. Brooks shows that many people who lived in developed nations selfishly encouraged lawlessness and a bad quality of life in poorer nations as long as it brought them comforts and goods. For instance, when the narrator meets Fernando Oliveira, a doctor in Brazil who performed illegal organ transplants, Oliveira says that "few [...] Yankees asked where [their] new kidney or pancreas was coming from, be it a slum kid from the City of God or some unlucky student in a Chinese political prison. [They] didn't know, [they] didn't care." Since these illegal organ transplants were a way in which the zombie virus spread into the U.S., the populace is now forced to reckon with the repercussions of their actions.

Before the zombie war, the wealthy in America held white-collar jobs and considered themselves superior to manual laborers who were paid much less. However, the war upturned previously held notions of prestige and power, and people who could build with their hands were now considered the most

skilled workers. Sinclair, the head of the U.S. government's Department of Strategic Resources, tells the narrator that these changes were "scarier than the living dead" for some people who struggled with their racist and classist ideas and their own lowered statuses.

Additionally, in privileged nations that were very proud of their high technological prowess, these gadgets proved to be useless in fighting the zombies, prompting a return to old-fashioned, simple methods of warfare. At the Battle at Yonkers, the U.S. Army was prepared to fight the zombies with fancy tanks and guns. Despite this, the army was forced to retreat by the hordes of zombies coming at them since they were impervious to missiles and fire. Later, the army learned from their mistakes at Yonkers and re-engaged with the zombies at Hope, New Mexico. This time, their new battle doctrine was to go "back into the past," and simply form a row of soldiers who fire at the zombies with rifles. This battle, a return to old-fashioned warfare, turns out to be "the beginning of the end" and the strategy that ultimately wins the war.

In Japan, too, a young man named Kondo Tatsumi realizes that old-fashioned hand-to-hand combat is most effective at taking out the zombies. He spent the initial months of the zombie war holed up in his room, sharing information about the zombies over the internet. However, he lost electricity and his connection to the internet, and realized that his internet research and the communities he has formed online are useless to him. He manages to escape the city and bumps into Sensei Tomonaga Ijiro, a blind man who has been fighting zombies by himself in the mountains, armed with nothing but his *ikupasuy*, a kind of shovel. Ijiro and Tatsumi team up and fight together, and they go on to found a society of warriors and train them in combat. Once again, simplicity is shown to be more effective than technology.

Overall, Brooks suggests that modern lifestyles in developed nations lack depth and integrity, and that the zombie war forces people to realize this. In order to emerge stronger in order to fight the growing menace, people must embrace simplicity and turn away from meaningless markers of power.

THE COST OF WAR

The novel focuses on the events that led up to the fight against the **zombies** in various parts of the world, and it describes the various strategies that helped humans win the war. While the war was undoubtedly necessary for preserving the human species, it resulted in so much large-scale destruction and so many losses that humankind's success against the zombies is a muted one. Through his portrayal of the myriad defeats and losses that the humans endured, Brooks suggests that even the winners of a war inevitably end up losing in many ways—even if the conflict is worth it in the end. As such, the novel emphasizes the importance of hearing and validating people's individual experiences of war in order to understand its true cost.

Since the narrator pieces together interviews from various people around the world who are involved in the conflict, the novel details individual suffering and shows that the victory against the zombies was much-awaited but also tinged with sorrow and loss. Jesika Hendricks, who works on cleaning up and restoring Canada's wilderness, tells the narrator that even though she tries not to be "bitter at the unfairness of it all," she cannot understand why her parents died in the outbreak while some small-minded people survived. She is angry about the entire experience, and will probably continue to be so for the rest of her life. Similarly, Todd Wainio, a soldier in the U.S. Army, describes liberating some settlements from zombies where someone might yell, "My husband died two weeks ago!" or "My mother died waiting for you!" These memories still unsettle him. The scars of war do not vanish with the end of the fighting, and while the end of the war is worth celebrating, it is too late for too many. The narrator thinks it is important to focus on these individual stories, and on the "emotions and feelings" they are told with, rather on just the facts and figures that his boss at the UN wants him to write about. He believes that these personal losses and hardships are what will make the zombie wars relatable to future generations since people are linked through their sorrows.

While the individual losses that people suffered are tragic in themselves, humanity's losses as a whole are devastating, too. The sheer number of people who died in the war is staggering. For instance, at the very beginning of the novel when describing the area of Greater Chongqing, China, the narrator states that the region once had a population of over 35 million and now has only around 50,000. This situation is similar in most other regions of the world, with many millions killed in the war. Also, the planet is in shambles. Terry Knox, who was an astronaut on the International Space Station at the time of the war, describes seeing Earth from space and says that it was "like looking down on an alien planet, or on Earth during the last great mass extinction." There were fires burning everywhere and the atmosphere was covered in ash. The ecological disaster caused by the war will take a long time to heal from.

The zombie war left behind a broken world with emotionally broken people—but the novel suggests that sometimes war is undoubtedly necessary despite its costs, if it means accomplishing its purpose. Kwang Jing-shu, the Chinese doctor whose interview begins the novel, is one of the most optimistic at the conclusion of the war. He has suffered great personal loss, but marvels at the fact that people have "managed to pull themselves together, to rebuild and renew" their countries. Jingshu is confident that humanity will always succeed in doing this, and is proud that the newest generation doesn't "know to be afraid" since the zombie danger has passed. He concludes his interview by saying that he is certain that "everything's going to be all right." Jingshu is optimistic not only about the

efforts at reconstruction but about the resilience and positivity of human nature. The many interviews in this book prove that Jingshu's view of human nature is indeed merited since the people within its pages—not only members of the armed forces, but civilians, too—have sacrificed a lot and taken unbelievably brave risks for the sake of their fellow human beings. Despite the in-fighting and destruction, the corruption and inefficiency, Brooks suggests that, on the whole, humanity is worth saving.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

ZOMBIES

In *World War Z*, the zombies symbolize change—upsetting, terrifying, destabilizing change that completely transforms people and the world. Before the outbreak, many of the characters are settled in their ways, and one of the hardest things for them to process after the zombies appear is that everything must now be different. Their understanding of their lives and selves no longer makes sense because the contexts from which people derive meaning and value have been upended. All the characters in the novel struggle with this, like Kwang Jing-shu, who finds his lengthy career as a doctor to be inadequate when confronted with this new disease; or wealthy white-collar executives who find that their skills are unusable in a post-zombie world; or Christina Eliopolis, who discovers that her formidable talent as a fighter pilot is useless in the war against the zombies. Since people are lost and confused and tend to fear the unknown, the zombies become a source of terror.

To win against the zombies, people must accept that everything is now different and lower their resistance to new solutions. Israel models this with its "voluntary quarantine" that ends up saving the nation, though this idea is initially mocked by the rest of the world because it is strange and new. The U.S. Army also learns this lesson at the Battle of Yonkers when they fight the zombies using the same methods they'd used in previous wars and are completely overpowered.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Three Rivers edition of *World War Z* published in 2006.

Introduction Quotes

The official report was a collection of cold, hard data, an objective "after-action report" that would allow future generations to study the events of that apocalyptic decade without being influenced by "the human factor." But isn't the human factor what connects us so deeply to our past? Will future generations care as much for chronologies and casualty statistics as they would for the personal accounts of individuals not so different from themselves? By excluding the human factor, aren't we risking the kind of personal detachment from a history that may, heaven forbid, lead us one day to repeat it? And in the end, isn't the human factor the only true difference between us and the enemy we now refer to as "the living dead"?

Related Characters: Narrator (speaker), Roy Elliot, Todd Wainio, Breckinridge "Breck" Scott, Kwang Jingshu, Chairperson

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 1

Explanation and Analysis

In the introduction to the novel, the narrator makes his case for why he believes it is important for his book to be written and read. He was hired by the U.N.'s Postwar Commission Report to write a report on the war but was ultimately unhappy with the published version, which had been stripped of the emotions and experiences of his interviewees, leaving only "cold, hard data." The narrator insists on the importance of the "human factor" in a record of the zombie war. According to him, "personal accounts" will generate feelings of empathy and connection with future generations and make them truly care about the events of the past.

The narrator claims that he will try and reserve all judgment and maintain an invisible presence in the book, which will only focus on the personal stories of his interviewees. Yet, despite his minimal presence in the book's pages, the narrator's "human factor" comes through—he is clearly an ethical person who cares deeply for humankind. His admiration for his interviewees is obvious, as when he describes Kwang Jingshu by saying that "despite his advanced age and wartime injuries, [he] still manages to make house calls to all his patients." At other times, as when he interviews Breckinridge Scott, he is clearly angry, like when he demands if Scott takes no personal responsibility at all for the spread of the virus. The narrator's "human factor," too, makes his accounts relatable and interesting.

Importantly, the narrator also believes that "the human factor [is] the only true difference between us and the enemy we now refer to as 'the living dead.'" There are several characters in the novel who strive to behave honorably and do their duty despite the frightening chaos of those war times. Despite their own fear and hopelessness, many people worked to bring hope and comfort to others. They wouldn't be as heroic if they weren't vulnerable—and readers wouldn't recognize them as heroes if they didn't see their vulnerability. If people had no emotions, like the zombies, readers wouldn't care about their losses and struggles. The narrator chooses to call the zombies the "living dead" in this passage, implying that the "human factor" is what makes people truly alive.

Chapter 1: Warnings Quotes

❝ At first the villagers tried to hold me back. They warned me not to touch him, that he was "cursed." I shrugged them off and reached for my mask and gloves. The boy's skin was as cold and gray as the cement on which he lay. I could find neither his heartbeat nor his pulse. His eyes were wild, wide and sunken back in their sockets. They remained locked on me like a predatory beast. Throughout the examination he was inexplicably hostile, reaching for me with his bound hands and snapping at me through his gag. […]

I instinctively retreated several paces […]. I am embarrassed to admit this; I have been a doctor for most of my adult life. […] I've treated more than my share of combat injuries, faced my own death on more than one occasion, and now I was scared, truly scared, of this frail child.

Related Characters: Kwang Jingshu (speaker), Patient Zero

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 7

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Kwang Jingshu describes his first encounter with Patient Zero. He initially thinks that the peasants of the small village he'd been called to are ignorant and superstitious when they warn him not to touch the sick boy, and Jingshu is frustrated with their backward ways. Confident in the power of modern medicine—and in his own experience and expertise as a doctor—he shrugs them off. He dons his "mask and gloves," which have always been sufficient protection against the infections he is familiar with, and enters the boy's room.

Instantly, he is aware that the old rules no longer hold. The boy's symptoms are so strange and unfamiliar—cold, gray skin, and no heartbeat—that they leave Jingshu floundering. He is terrified, yet he doesn't seem to be solely concerned with his own safety. Jingshu says he has seen other grisly injuries in his lifetime, and that he has even come close to death himself several times. So, these don't seem to be the only reasons for his fear. Rather, the extreme strangeness of the boy's symptoms seems to suggest to Jingshu that the old, familiar rules of science and medicine no longer apply—because here is a boy who by all medical rules should be dead, and yet isn't. The world as Jingshu understands it no longer makes any sense to him, which is what terrifies him the most.

❝ When I think about how many transplants I performed, all those patients from Europe, the Arab world, even the self-righteous United States. Few of you Yankees asked where your new kidney or pancreas was coming from, be it a slum kid from the City of God or some unlucky student in a Chinese political prison. You didn't know, you didn't care. You just signed your traveler's checks, went under the knife, then went home to Miami or New York or wherever.

Related Characters: Fernando Oliveira (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 27-28

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Fernando Oliveira is talking about how he performed numerous illegal organ transplants, and thinks that many of the organs might have come from donors infected with the virus. This would have resulted in his patients getting infected, too, and carrying the virus into their home countries of "Europe, the Arab world, even the self-righteous United States." He seems especially critical of his American patients, perhaps because he knows the narrator is American, too, and because the United States took the lead in the war against the zombies. Oliveira implies that lawbreakers like him from developing nations are often implicated in the spread of the virus around the world, and he wants to clarify that American citizens, too, are to blame.

He tells the narrator that the majority of his American patients didn't even care to know where the organs were coming from, probably because they selfishly only cared

about receiving the organ, not the other human being it came from, or perhaps because they suspected that their sources would be extremely unethical. Oliveira confirms that this was certainly the case, mentioning the heart-wrenching examples of "a slum kid from the City of God" and the "unlucky student in a Chinese political prison." In both cases, he implies that the hosts were probably murdered for their organs—they were both disenfranchised individuals who didn't have the power to protest against such horrific crimes. His American patients knew they wouldn't have liked these stories, so they willfully turned a blind eye to them, focusing solely on their own health and comforts, and returned to their privileged lives after their surgeries. However, Oliveira says that these actions weren't without consequence since many of them became infected with the virus and must have also infected other Americans.

> Our report was just under a hundred pages long. It was concise, it was fully comprehensive, it was everything we thought we needed to make sure this outbreak never reached epidemic proportions. I know a lot of credit has been heaped upon the South African war plan, and deservedly so, but if more people had read our report and worked to make its recommendations a reality, then that plan would have never needed to exist.

Related Characters: Jurgen Warmbrunn (speaker), Paul Knight

Related Themes:

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

Jurgen Warmbrunn, an Israeli agent, describes the Warmbrunn-Knight report that he wrote with his ex-CIA friend, Paul Knight. Like him, Knight tracked early incidents of zombie attacks and developed a plan to contain them. While writing their report, they received help and inputs from several experts around the world, making the Warmbrunn-Knight Report a truly international endeavor that represented the talents and foresight of some of the world's smartest. They sent it to nations around the world to warn them of the coming crisis and to equip them with the steps they would need to take. And yet, the report was completely ignored by most governments. Some nations, like China, were bent on preserving secrecy about the outbreak, and others, like America, were more concerned with playing politics than with the safety of its people.

These nations paid a high price for disregarding the report. Warmbrunn concedes that the "South African war plan," or the Redeker plan, deserves the credit it gets for saving the world from the brink of extinction, but even before it had been implemented, a lot of lives had already been lost. Moreover, the Redeker plan was logical to the point of cruelty, insisting that only some people in a nation could be saved while others had to be used as zombie bait to draw the zombies away from the safe zones. By the time the Redeker plan was implemented, the situation around the world was so bad that this was the only solution. However, the Warmbrunn-Knight report outlined methods to deal with the problem before it was out of control and it could have saved many lives.

> I realized I practically didn't know anything about these people I'd hated my entire life. Everything I thought was true went up in smoke that day, supplanted by the face of our real enemy.

Related Characters: Saladin Kader (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 44

Explanation and Analysis

Saladin Kader, a Palestinian who used to hate and mistrust all Israelis, describes the moment when he enters Israel for the first time as a refugee during the zombie crisis. He witnesses the beginning of the Israeli Civil War (which was fought between the government and citizens who did not support the government's decision to grant refuge to Palestinians) and suddenly sees that people and politics in Israel are not monolithic—in this way, he realizes, Israel is like any other place in the world. An Israeli soldier gives up his life to protect Kader's family from their civilian attackers, putting Kader in the debt of a man he had believed to symbolize everything he detested about Israel. This instance of an Israeli laying his life down for Palestinians, as well as Israel's gesture to give refuge to the Palestinians, highlight the idea brought up often in this novel that the human bond transcends nations and politics. Especially when faced with the zombie horde, many people realize—just as Kader does here—that other human beings are not the enemy. Kader sees zombies for the first time and realizes that these are the "real enemy." He realizes that his old ideas no longer hold true and that he must change his

thinking to match his new reality.

Chapter 2: Blame Quotes

❝ The only rule that ever made sense to me I learned from a history, not an economics, professor at Wharton. "Fear," he used to say, "fear is the most valuable commodity in the universe." That blew me away. "Turn on the TV," he'd say. "What are you seeing? People selling their products? No. People selling the fear of you having to live without their products." Fuckin' A, was he right. Fear of aging, fear of loneliness, fear of poverty, fear of failure. Fear is the most basic emotion we have. Fear is primal. Fear sells. That was my mantra. "Fear sells."

Related Characters: Breckinridge "Breck" Scott (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 55

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Breckinridge Scott, one of the most despicable characters in the novel, is explaining to the narrator how he hit upon the idea of selling Phalanx to the American public when they were beginning to panic about the virus outbreak within their nation. Scott's mantra, "Fear sells," definitely worked for him and made him a millionaire many times over. However, by exploiting people's desperation and fear at this time of crisis, Scott reveals himself to be completely unprincipled and cruel. The narrator believes that it is the ability to connect with other people's emotions and experiences that makes us human. However, Scott is completely immune to people's pain and sorrows. He only sees these as emotions he can exploit in order to line his pockets, but feels no connection to or empathy for his victims. The novel implies that this makes him monstrous—perhaps even more monstrous than the zombies since they are fundamentally incapable of emotion while he, as a human being, *can* feel and has just chosen not to because it would be inconvenient on his path to wealth. In the process, he cruelly gives people the false hope that they are immune to the virus after they are vaccinated with Phalanx.

Scott says that fear is "the most basic emotion" that people have, and the novel proves him right. On encountering the zombies, people are paralyzed by fear and, as a result, often end up putting themselves in positions of danger. Even in this instance, the citizens' unquestioning adoption of Phalanx suggests that they were terrified and desperate for a solution. When Scott claimed he had one, they were too relieved to be discerning.

❝ Oh yeah, I was worried, I was worried about my car payments and Tim's business loan. I was worried about that widening crack in the pool and the new nonchlorinated filter that still left an algae film. I was worried about our portfolio, even though my e-broker assured me this was just first-time investor jitters and that it was much more profitable than a standard 401(k). […] These were just some of my worries. I had more than enough to keep me busy.

Did you watch the news?

Yeah, for about five minutes every day: local headlines, sports, celebrity gossip. Why would I want to get depressed by watching TV? I could do that just by stepping on the scale every morning.

Related Characters: Mary Jo Miller (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 64

Explanation and Analysis

Mary Jo Miller, who used to be a San Diego suburbanite before the zombie crisis, describes to the narrator what her life was like. Her tone is tongue-in-cheek as she describes her problems of those days, which must seem ridiculously trivial to her after surviving the war. She includes the typical things that most Americans worry about, like finances. She also includes details about the "widening crack in the pool" which had a "nonchlorinated filter," implying that she was the kind of person who strove to cut out chemicals from her life and spent time worrying about the pool's algae build-up—all of which seems laughably privileged after the zombie crisis. Miller says that the she was so preoccupied with these little worries that she didn't pay much attention to the developing zombie crisis. In other words, she was so self-involved that she ignored the looming, important issues. This seems to be the novel's commentary on the way many people live their lives—they are so steeped in their daily, petty worries that they pay no attention to other, big problems, like international politics and wars, or global warming. It is only when the problems come crashing through their doors—like the zombies do at the Miller residence—that people sit up and take notice.

Also, the narrator seems to include Miller's interview to point out to the American public that they, too, are to blame for the outbreak getting so out of hand. While the government had a big part to play in it, public apathy also

caused the zombie crisis.

Chapter 3: The Great Panic Quotes

> The swarm continued among the cars, literally eating its way up the stalled lines, all those poor bastards just trying to get away. And that's what haunts me most about it, they weren't headed anywhere. This was the I-80, a strip of highway between Lincoln and North Platte. Both places were heavily infested, as well as all those little towns in between. What did they think they were doing? Who organized this exodus? Did anyone? Did people see a line of cars and join them without asking? I tried to imagine what it must have been like, stuck bumper to bumper, crying kids, barking dog, knowing what was coming just a few miles back, and hoping, praying that someone up ahead knows where he's going.

Related Characters: Gavin Blaire (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 69

Explanation and Analysis

Gavin Blaire, who used to pilot a blimp before the war, describes the scenes of panic that he witnessed from the sky as people fled from their homes, fearing hordes of attacking zombies. The scene that he describes is powerful because it is familiar, reminding readers of the times when Americans tried to escape from approaching natural disasters, like Hurricane Katrina. The traffic jam on the freeway, cars that have run out of gas and have stalled, the crying babies and barking dogs—these are all familiar scenes from the news. Even though the zombie crisis seems like an impossible premise, the familiarity of people's reaction to this crisis makes it more frightening. Readers are reminded that normalcy is actually incredibly precarious, and can be toppled at any moment.

The people described, too, are terrified, and because of their extreme fear, they are not making logical decisions. Blaire says they are trying to flee one infected zone, but are headed towards another. And, meanwhile, he sees a horde of zombies moving through the jam, "eating its way up." Blaire sees no sense in people's instinct to escape in their cars, which puts them in immediate danger while they might have been safer in their houses. And yet, he is able to empathize with them, "to imagine what it must have been like," prompting the reader to do the same and feel the fear of the people in the scene.

> So when I saw the searing, bright green signatures of several hundred runners, my throat tightened. Those weren't living dead.
>
> "There it is!" I heard them shout. "That's the house on the news!" They were carrying ladders, guns, babies. A couple of them had these heavy satchels strapped to their backs. They were booking it for the front gate, big tough steel that was supposed to stop a thousand ghouls. The explosion tore them right off their hinges, sent them flipping into the house like giant ninja stars. "Fire!" the boss was screaming into the radio. "Knock 'em down! Kill 'em! Shootshootshoot!"

Related Characters: T. Sean Collins (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 87

Explanation and Analysis

T. Sean Collins, who worked as a private security guard to a millionaire, describes an attack in his employer's mansion. When the security alarms initially went off, he assumed they were being attacked by zombies, but after looking through his weapon's sight, he realizes that their attackers are human beings. While Collins' employer could afford to fortify his mansion and stock enough food and water to survive the zombie crisis, most Americans didn't have these luxuries. They had seen his house "on the news," and had decided that if they managed to take it over, they, too, might be safe. These people are clearly terrified and are attacking the mansion out of desperation. Collins notices that some of them are carrying babies, which is a heartbreaking detail. Collins' experience highlights income disparities in America. In normal times, there is brewing resentment about this, but in times of crisis, people's rage against it bursts forth.

Collins' account also notes the extreme callousness of his rich employer, whose first reaction when he sees the approaching crowds is to yell "Kill 'em!" and "Shootshootshoot!" He has absolutely no sympathy for these people. His motivation doesn't just seem to be just self-preservation but righteous anger that his property is his own and no one else should dare infringe. He feels no connection towards these people who are desperate for their lives.

Dude, we had everything: tanks, Bradleys, Humvees armed with everything from fifty cals to these new Vasilek heavy mortars. […] We even had a whole FOL, Family of Latrines, just plopped right there in the middle of everything. Why, when the water pressure was still on and toilets were still flushing in every building and house in the neighborhood? So much we didn't need! So much shit that only blocked traffic and looked pretty, and that's what I think they were really there for, just to look pretty.

For the press.

Hell yeah, there must have been at least one reporter for every two or three uniforms!

Related Characters: Todd Wainio (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 94-95

Explanation and Analysis

Todd Wainio, who was a soldier during the Battle of Yonkers, describes the pointless preparation his army superiors had organized for what they hoped would be a definitive first battle against the zombies. He tells the narrator they had "everything," a whole lot of high-tech weapons and vehicles. Clearly, the assumed that the zombies would stand no chance against all this technology, but they would be proven terribly wrong. At this battle, the army is over-confident about its technical prowess and fights using methods that have worked against their human enemies—they haven't realized that these old methods will not work against the zombies.

Wainio says that they had "so much [they] didn't need," and includes the ridiculous example of the portable latrines they'd lugged over, which were completely unnecessary. Rather than focusing on planning for their soldiers' safety, the army superiors had planned the campaign solely to impress the press, who were in full attendance. This mismanagement not only led to a seriously botched-up campaign but also led to many soldiers losing their lives.

Sure, we were unprepared, our tools, our training, everything I just talked about, all one class-A, gold-standard clusterfuck, but the weapon that really failed wasn't something that rolled off an assembly line. It's as old as…I don't know, I guess as old as war. It's fear, dude, just fear and you don't have to be Sun freakin Tzu to know that real fighting isn't about killing or even hurting the other guy, it's about scaring him enough to call it a day. Break their spirit, that's what every successful army goes for, from tribal face paint to the "blitzkrieg." […] But what if the enemy can't be shocked and awed? Not just won't, but biologically can't! That's what happened that day outside New York City, that's the failure that almost lost us the whole damn war.

Related Characters: Todd Wainio (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 103-104

Explanation and Analysis

Todd Wainio explains to the narrator that the real reason the Battle of Yonkers was such a colossal failure was because the zombies felt no fear. He tells the narrator that armies have always worked on frightening their enemies. He refers to Sun Tzu's famous book, *The Art of War*, saying that one need not know all the techniques Sun Tzu spoke of in order to understand this basic fact. In the past, armies have successfully scared enemies by using techniques like "face paint" to made them look more threatening, or by overwhelming them with a multi-pronged attack in the case of blitzkriegs technique. Once armies unsettled their enemies and made them afraid, they knew they would win.

However, this rule no longer applied while fighting the zombies, who were "biologically" incapable of feeling fear. All the impressive technology that the army was using against them at the Battle of Yonkers did nothing to frighten them, and they kept coming at the soldiers. They weren't concerned about their personal safety—all they wanted to do was feed on people. When faced with this new kind of enemy, the U.S. Army was stumped. Their soldiers ended up feeling afraid and hopeless because their previous techniques and experience in war was useless against the zombies.

Chapter 4: Turning the Tide Quotes

❝ I know that the majority of psychobiographers continue to paint this man without a soul. That is the generally accepted notion. Paul Redeker: no feelings, no compassion, no heart. However, one of our most revered authors [...] postulates that Redeker was actually a deeply sensitive man, too sensitive, in fact, for life in apartheid South Africa. He insists that Redeker's lifelong jihad against emotion was the only way to protect his sanity from the hatred and brutality he witnessed on a daily basis. [...] Those who knew him from work were hard-pressed to remember witnessing any social interaction or even any physical act of warmth. The embrace by our nation's father, this genuine emotion piercing his impenetrable shell...

[...] I can tell you that that was the last day anyone ever saw Paul Redeker. Even now, no one knows what really happened to him.

Related Characters: Paul Redeker / Xolelwa Azania (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 110-111

Explanation and Analysis

Xolelwa Azania, a South African author, is discussing Paul Redeker, the architect of the Redeker Plan that helped many nations survive the zombie outbreak. Redeker's plan was effective but also logical to the point of cruelty, since he recommended that the government not even try to save everyone, since it was impossible to, and that some people be left outside established safe zones as zombie bait. Azania notes that Redeker is generally considered to be an unfeeling person to have come up with such a plan. However, he postulates that Redeker might have in fact been a "deeply sensitive" person who just repressed his emotions because it caused him too much pain to acknowledge them. All this is especially significant when the narrator later reveals that Xolelwa Azania is, in fact, Paul Redeker, and is in a mental institution when the narrator interviews him. He seems to have suffered some sort of psychological breakdown after he was hugged by the "nation's father," and now believes himself to be another person. Azania says the warmth of the hug had pierced Redeker's "impenetrable shell," and this seems to have brought all his repressed emotions to the fore and triggered his breakdown.

The narrator believes that people's emotions and experiences connect humanity, and Redeker's life corroborates this. People believed that he had no feelings, but as an ethical person who looked for solutions to human problems, Redeker in fact felt injustices and suffering too deeply. He loses his sanity when the warm hug he receives brings his emotions to the fore. He disassociates himself from his old self and takes on a new identity, probably because he doesn't want to be responsible for causing the extinction of millions during the zombie war. It is too heavy a weight for him to bear.

❝ Now, I am a good soldier, but I am also a West German. [...] We were taught since birth to bear the burden of our grandfathers' shame. We were taught that, even if we wore a uniform, that our first sworn duty was to our conscience, no matter what the consequences. That is how I was raised, that is how I responded. I told Lang that I could not, in good conscience, obey this order, that I could not leave these people without protection. At this, he exploded.

Related Characters: Philip Adler (speaker), General Lang

Related Themes:  

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 113

Explanation and Analysis

Philip Adler describes his reaction when General Lang calls him up to tell him to abandon the civilians he and his troop were protecting against the zombies. The Redeker Plan is being implemented all over the world, and this passage shows how it impacted the armed forces who were ordered to carry it out. It was a difficult plan—though necessary—and claimed many victims. Several people were abandoned outside the safe zones, and were left to fend for themselves. Most of them died. Many members of the armed forces, like Adler, were extremely reluctant to abandon civilians, and suffered this guilt for the rest of their lives. Adler later mentions that General Lang committed suicide out of guilt. The Redeker Plan certainly had a high cost.

Adler, a West German, tells the narrator that he at first refused his orders because he was so opposed to acting against his conscience. He refers to World War II, when the Nazis had unquestioningly obeyed Hitler and caused the death of many. This is his "grandfather's shame," which is why he refused orders that seemed cruel. Adler's stance was honorable, but ultimately, honor and principles had to be compromised in the war against the zombies.

Chapter 5: Home Front USA Quotes

❝ Yes, there was racism, but there was also classism. You're a high-powered corporate attorney. You've spent most of your life reviewing contracts, brokering deals, talking on the phone. That's what you're good at, that's what made you rich and what allowed you to hire a plumber to fix your toilet, which allowed you to keep talking on the phone. The more work you do, the more money you make, the more peons you hire to free you up to make more money. That's the way the world works. But one day it doesn't. No one needs a contract reviewed or a deal brokered. What it does need is toilets fixed. And suddenly that peon is your teacher, maybe even your boss. For some, this was scarier than the living dead.

Related Characters: Arthur Sinclair (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 140

Explanation and Analysis

Arthur Sinclair was head of the Department of Strategic Resources during the war, which was set up to establish a workable system for living within the safe zones. He describes one of the main problems he faced in this job—having people adapt to the new reality they now lived in. Their lives of privilege had passed, but many held on to their old attitudes.

Previously, those with white collar jobs felt superior to people who worked with their hands and built and fixed things—this was because white collar employees generally made more money. In the process, they had come to internalize the idea that this made them altogether better than blue-collar workers. But, during the war, civilians who knew how to work with their hands were much more valuable since Sinclair had to set up a working system that would keep his charges within the safe zone fed and warm. The skills that the white-collar employees possessed were no longer valuable. This made them question their own self-worth and also resent the new cadre of valuable workers. The emotional stress of these changes, Sinclair says, was sometimes "scarier than the living dead" to people who'd built their sense of self from their work and their money.

❝ Yes, they were lies and sometimes that's not a bad thing. Lies are neither bad nor good. Like a fire they can either keep you warm or burn you to death, depending on how they're used. The lies our government told us before the war, the ones that were supposed to keep us happy and blind, those were the ones that burned, because they prevented us from doing what had to be done. However, by the time I made *Avalon*, everyone was already doing everything they could possibly do to survive. The lies of the past were long gone and now the truth was everywhere, shambling down their streets, crashing through their doors, clawing at their throats. [...] The truth was that we were standing at what might be the twilight of our species and that truth was freezing a hundred people to death every night.

Related Characters: Roy Elliot (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 166-167

Explanation and Analysis

Roy Elliot, who used to be a famous movie director, takes to making inspirational movies during the war to help combat depression and ADS, a syndrome caused by extreme fear and hopelessness in which victims died in their sleep though they had no other illnesses. Many of Elliot's movies focused on the high-tech weapons that the U.S. army had, though Elliot admits to the narrator that most of these were useless against zombies. When the narrator wonders if that wasn't a lie—to inspire hope among civilians by building hype around weapons that would be ineffective—Elliot admits it was. However, it was necessary to lie about causes for hope because, in those days, the reality was that there was no good news in the fight against the zombies.

Humanity seemed to be on the brink of extinction, and this truth was "freezing a hundred people to death every night." Fear among the populace was so high that they died of it, and Elliot's movies, with their message of hope, helped combat this fear and reduce the number of ADS deaths. Elliot empathizes with the people who suffer from ADS because he used to be a renowned director before the war but, inside the safe zone, he was considered to be a person with no useful skills. This filled him with hopelessness, as well, which he combatted in a creative way that brought hope to many and made him feel useful. Elliot's interview highlights the importance of art and storytelling in bringing hope to people at a bleak time in history.

Chapter 6: Around the World, and Above Quotes

❝ She…she wouldn't leave, you see. She insisted, over the objections of Parliament, to remain at Windsor, as she put it, "for the duration." I thought maybe it was misguided nobility, or maybe fear-based paralysis. I tried to make her see reason, begged her almost on my knees.

What did she say?

"The highest of distinctions is service to others." […] Their task, their mandate, is to personify all that is great in our national spirit. They must forever be an example to the rest of us, the strongest, and bravest, and absolute best of us.

Related Characters: Narrator, David Allen Forbes (speaker), T. Sean Collins, Captain Chen, General Raj-Singh, The Queen

Related Themes:

Page Number: 193-194

Explanation and Analysis

David Allen Forbes, a British author, describes how Windsor Castle offered excellent protection to many civilians behind its fortified walls. He also speaks admiringly of the Queen's decision to stay with her people at the castle rather than evacuating to a safer place. The Queen's decision comes from the idea that the "highest of distinctions is service to others," an idea that many of the other heroes within the book's pages—like General Raj-Singh, and Captain Chen—also believe in. They, like the Queen, represent the "absolute best of us" in the sense that they are the epitome of humanity and are true leaders. In contrast to the Queen's service and generosity, the novel shows characters who have money and power but turn away from helping people. T. Sean Collins' unnamed millionaire boss is one of these. While the Queen opened up her private residence to regular civilians, Collins' boss ordered his security guards to shoot at people desperate to get inside the safety of his mansion. The Chinese politburo, too, had no qualms about sending thousands of untrained soldiers to their deaths against the zombie hordes while they remained safe in their bunkers. Their actions seem monstrous and cruel, perhaps even more so than the zombies'.

❝ The data we were broadcasting […] came from all around the world, from experts and think tanks in various government safe zones. They would transmit their findings to our IR operators who, in turn, would pass it along to us. Much of this data was transmitted to us over conventional, open, civilian bands, and many of these bands were crammed with ordinary people's cries for help. There were millions of wretched souls scattered throughout our planet, all screaming into their private radio sets as their children starved or their temporary fortress burned, or the living dead overran their defenses. Even if you didn't understand the language, as many of the operators didn't, there was no mistaking the human voice of anguish. […] I don't want to know what that was like for the IR operators. […] Not one of them is alive today.

Related Characters: Barati Palshigar (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 198-199

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Barati Palshigar discusses one of the most challenging aspects of working for Radio Free Earth, an international radio station that transmitted helpful information to people all over the world. While scanning the airwaves for transmissions from their sources, the IR operators often chanced upon strangers' desperate cries for help as they searched the airwaves for anyone who might be listening and might be able to come to their aid. The zombies clearly wreaked havoc all over the world. Even though the IR operators often didn't understand the languages that these people's appeals were in, they nevertheless understood their pain since, as Palshigar says, "there was no mistaking the human voice of anguish." The operators felt a bond with these people that transcended language and nationality, and yet, they could do nothing to help them—and this troubled them deeply. The IR operators felt such empathy for these people and so helpless that they couldn't do anything for them that, shockingly, all of them killed themselves after the war was over. This not only highlights the stress and mental trauma that survivors of a war must deal with but also the deep connection that is often forged by empathizing with people's stories of pain.

Every day, every night, it seemed like the whole planet was burning. We couldn't even begin to calculate the ash count but we guesstimated it was equivalent to a low-grade nuclear exchange between the United States and former Soviet Union, and that's not including the actual nuclear exchange between Iran and Pakistan. We watched and recorded those as well, the flashes and fires that gave me eye spots for days. Nuclear autumn was already beginning to set in, the gray-brown shroud thickening each day.

It was like looking down on an alien planet, or on Earth during the last great mass extinction. Eventually conventional optics became useless in the shroud, leaving us with only thermal or radar sensors.

Related Characters: Terry Knox (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 260

Explanation and Analysis

Terry Knox, who was the commander of the International Space Station at the time of the zombie war, describes looking down at the Earth from space during the war. The whole planet has been devastated by the war, which might not be a consequence that most readers would expect, since the zombies use no guns or bombs. However, much of this destruction seems to have been brought on by the people themselves. Many people, in desperate attempts to survive cold weather, took to burning anything they could find—another character describes in another interview that soon, there were no trees left at all in the mountains. Also, without electricity or batteries, people around the world took to burning things for light and heat, which generated a lot of smoke. As a complication of the refugee crisis, nuclear war broke out between Iran and Pakistan, which resulted in "nuclear autumn" or a cooling of the earth's temperature caused by the soot from these weapons blocking off the sun's rays. The extreme destruction of the planet during the zombie war suggests that people can easily destroy the delicate balance that sustains life on Earth, and that this destruction will take many years of work to reverse.

Knox describes the Earth as looking so different that it seemed like "an alien planet"—the world certainly was changed by the war. By also saying that he thought it looked like the planet "during the last great mass extinction," Knox implies that he had no hope that humanity would ever survive the calamity of the zombie war.

Chapter 7: Total War Quotes

They let us sleep as late as we wanted the next day. That was pretty sweet. Eventually the voices woke me up; everyone jawing, laughing, telling stories. It was a different vibe, one-eighty from two days ago. I couldn't really put a finger on what I was feeling, maybe it was what the president said about "reclaiming our future." I just knew I felt good, better than I had the entire war. I knew it was gonna be a real, long-ass road. I knew our campaign across America was just beginning, but, hey, as the prez said later that first night, it was finally the beginning of the end.

Related Characters: Todd Wainio (speaker), The American President

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 282

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Todd Wainio, an American soldier, describes the army's optimism after they killed a large number of zombies at the Battle of Hope. This is the first battle they fought after the American President announced that they would go on the offensive against the zombies and take back their lands and reclaim "[their] future." The Battle of Hope was very different from the army's previous attempt at fighting the zombies at the Battle of Yonkers. While they had relied on technical gadgetry and showmanship in that battle, this time around, the higher ups had studied their enemy and evolved a careful plan to defeat them. Their soldiers had been practicing their new battle techniques and shooting skills so they could aim for the zombies' heads, and there was even a psychiatrist on the battlefield to ensure that every soldier got breaks when they needed them so they could stay sharp and strong. With great planning and management, the U.S. Army succeeded in this battle.

This was a morale booster for the soldiers, and began to turn the tide against the zombies. After killing thousands of zombies and seeing the huge pile of their bodies, the soldiers no longer feared them or considered them invincible. Wainio says that he felt "better than [he] had the entire war," even though he understood that the fight was only beginning and that there was much more to go. Yet, Wainio and the others seem to have felt that they could replicate this success. Since they now knew which techniques would work in the fight, they were no longer

floundering against the zombies. The Battle of Hope had successfully rekindled their hope for victory.

Fifteen thousand dead or missing. […] "Go! Go! Fight! Fight!" It didn't have to be that way. How long did it take the English to clear all of London? Five years, three years after the war was officially over? They went slow and safe, one section at a time, low speed, low intensity, low casualty rate. […] That English general, what he said about "Enough dead heroes for the end of time…"

"Heroes," that's what we were, that's what our leaders wanted, that's what our people felt they needed. After all that has happened, not just in this war, but in so many wars before: Algeria, Indochina, the Nazis…you understand what I am saying…you see the sorrow and pity? We understood what the American president said about "reclaiming our confidence"; we understood it more than most. We needed heroes, new names and places to restore our pride.

Related Characters: Andre Renard (speaker), The American President

Related Themes:

Page Number: 314

Explanation and Analysis

Andre Renard was a French soldier who worked on clearing the underground tunnels under Paris of zombies. Here, he discusses the reasons that he is critical of the way the French government handled the war against the zombies. Unlike the English government (and the American government as well), who planned their strategy in the interests of their civilians *and* their soldiers, Renard says that the French government put their armed forces in grave danger. They were in a huge hurry to reclaim their territories from the zombies. While clearing out the underground tunnels under Paris, Renard's teammates had an extremely high casualty rate—"Fifteen thousand dead or missing"—that he believes was completely unnecessary.

Renard declares that the reason the government pressured the soldiers to accomplish this challenging task in such a short time without sufficient resources was because they were desperate for "heroes" and heroics. The French had lost many wars in the past, which they felt bad about, and wanted to prove to themselves that they, too, could be heroes. In order to do this, they sacrificed the lives of many of their best and bravest. Renard is very bitter about this, so he chooses to live outside of France after the war.

Maybe not all the time but there'd be this one person, this angry face in the crowd screaming shit at you. "What the fuck took you so long?" "My husband died two weeks ago!" "My mother died waiting for you!" "We lost half our people last summer!" "Where were you when we needed you?" People holding up photos, faces. When we marched into Janesville, Wisconsin, someone was holding up a sign with a picture of a smiling little girl. The words above it read "Better late than never?" He got beat down by his own people; they shouldn't have done that. That's the kind of shit we saw, shit that keeps you awake when you haven't slept in five nights.

Related Characters: Todd Wainio (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 322

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Todd Wainio describes the experience of marching across the U.S. and liberating the isolated settlements that were outside the safe zones. While people were usually happy to see the army, sometimes, they faced a lot of anger from those who had lost someone who was important to them. Wainio remembers people screaming heartbreaking messages at the army, like, "My husband died two weeks ago!" For this person, the army has arrived just a little too late, which must be extremely frustrating and heart breaking. He remembers a little girl's father criticizing the army with a sign that said they were too late to save his daughter, and that he was beaten by his own people. Clearly, the majority appreciated the armed forces' arrival and wanted to celebrate the end of the zombie terrors—and yet, the army was too late to help many.

Hearing about the people they didn't succeed in helping take a toll on the soldiers, as well. Wainio says that these memories keep him awake even when he "[hasn't] slept in five nights." They, too, have faced many difficulties in the war against the zombies, all because they believe in helping and saving the people of America. When they see that they are too late to save so many, they must find it demotivating.

Chapter 8: Good-Byes Quotes

It's comforting to see children again, I mean those who were born after the war, real children who know nothing but a world that includes the living dead. They know not to play near water, not to go out alone or after dark in the spring or summer. They don't know to be afraid, and that is the greatest gift, the only gift we can leave to them.

[...] [I am] an old man who's seen his country torn to shreds many times over. And yet, every time, we've managed to pull ourselves together, to rebuild and renew our nation. And so we will again—China, and the world.

Related Characters: Kwang Jingshu (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 335

Explanation and Analysis

Towards the novel's conclusion, the narrator includes interviews in which interviewees express various opinions about the aftermath of the zombie war. Kwang Jingshu's is one of the most optimistic ones. He tells the narrator he is comforted by the sight of young children. The newest generation is proof that life does go on, even in the aftermath of a huge calamity. While some characters whom the narrator interviews in the concluding section question the success of the war because so much was lost, Jingshu is certain that the war was a righteous and successful one. He says that the newest generation of little ones doesn't "know to be afraid," while for so long people lived in constant fear of zombies and the fear that the human race would be annihilated. He says that this is the "greatest gift" that they can leave to their children, but also concedes that it is the "only gift" since the war caused so much destruction that these children will know only a destroyed world.

However, in Jingshu's opinion, China and the world will "rebuild and renew" themselves. Jingshu is old and has witnessed the many dramatic changes that China has gone through over the years, from communism to the technological revolution, then the outbreak of the zombie virus, followed by the rebellion against the politburo. He says that China has survived all these changes, and can certainly also survive the aftermath of the war.

We lost a hell of a lot more than just people when we abandoned them to the dead. That's all I'm going to say.

Related Characters: Philip Adler (speaker), Kwang Jingshu

Related Themes:

Page Number: 339

Explanation and Analysis

Philip Adler says just these two lines at the conclusion of the novel, and they resonate powerfully to deny the idea that the zombie war was worth it. Adler's opinion contradicts Jingshu's notion at the conclusion that the world is optimistically moving forward, and that humanity has made the world a better place for its future generations by freeing them of fear. To Adler, the price exacted by the Redeker plan is too high. In order to save humanity's future, people abandoned their integrity and honor, which, in Adler's point of view, lessens humanity's worth. He is still angry that he was ordered to abandon civilians to the zombies, and is burdened by guilt. There must certainly be others like him who are angry about the Redeker Plan—perhaps many among those who were abandoned outside the safe zone and survived anyway.

In the introduction to the novel, the narrator states that it has only been 10 years since the official end of the war and that perhaps deeper insights regarding the war might evolve over time. The public's reaction to the Redeker Plan might definitely be one of these areas. Before the war, people of most nations believed that they equally deserved their governments' aid in the event of a crisis or disaster, but the Redeker Plan upturned these ideas by demonstrating that some people were more equal than others. Politically and socially, it overturned the idea of equality and justice, which nations—and people like Adler—would have to struggle with for a long time.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

INTRODUCTION

The narrator says the event he speaks of goes by many names, but that he prefers to call it "The **Zombie** War." He concedes that while the term "zombie" might not be scientifically accurate, there is no other word that universally describes the creatures that almost caused mankind's extinction. He also says that it is a powerful word that conjures up the "memories, and emotions, that are the subject of this book."

As the narrator begins his account of the zombie war, he stresses the value of human emotion. Even in his use of the word "zombie," he chooses emotion over science. Clearly, for him, "memories, and emotions" hold a lot of power.

The narrator explains that this book, the "record of the greatest conflict in human history," was written because of a disagreement he had with the chairperson of the United Nation's Postwar Commission Report. The narrator had worked diligently on his report for the Commission, and was disappointed when he discovered that the final version had been heavily edited. The chairperson explained that this was because his version was "too intimate," with "Too many opinions, too many feelings," and that the Commission had needed "clear facts and figures."

When explaining the origins of this novel, the narrator reiterates the value he places on human emotion. While the chairperson found his report to be unnecessarily full of "opinions" and "feelings" and thus chose to edit them out, the narrator clearly disagrees with her.

The final report excluded "the human factor," and the narrator argued that without this, future generations might feel detached from the events being described and might even repeat the mistakes of the past. The chairperson told him that if he felt so strongly about it, he should write a book that included the things the Commission hadn't considered important.

The narrator makes his case that emotions connect people. He decides to write a book that includes the opinions and feelings that the U.N. deemed unnecessary for their report—to him, these are as important as facts, if not more so.

The narrator says that some might say it is too soon for a "personal history book"—it has been only 12 years since "VA Day was declared in the continental United States" and 10 years since "Victory in China Day," which many consider to be the official end of the war. He admits that while future years might bring wisdom and hindsight, many of his interviewees are infirm and might not live for much longer, which is why it is important for him to capture their memories now. The world has changed, and life expectancy is much reduced. He says that this is a "book of memories," and the stories he presents are those of his interviewees.

The world still seems to be struggling to recover after the long and horrific war, which highlights the extent of the devastation it wrought. The narrator points out that he will be presenting his interviewees' experiences in this "book of memories." It seems to be important to the narrator to preserve their subjective, emotional experiences to get a layered—and thus truer—account of the war rather than one presented in a single, dominant voice that might gloss over other points of view.

CHAPTER 1: WARNINGS

Greater Chongqing, The United Federation of China. The Greater Chongqing area had a pre-war population of over 35 million, but there are now barely 50,000 survivors. Reconstruction efforts by the government have been slow in this part of the nation, but the local security council, chaired by Kwang Jing-shu, has managed to prevent any further outbreaks.

The war has caused a staggering number of deaths and has left a broken world. It has also left a changed world, with China now called the "United Federation."

Kwang, an elderly doctor, describes the first outbreak that he saw. It was in a remote village that didn't even have an official name. It was nicknamed "New Dachang" since the inhabitants had been forced to relocate from their village called "Old Dachang," which had been flooded after the construction of the Three Gorges Dam. Kwang had a hard time finding the place, and when he finally reached the village, he knew that something was seriously wrong. He found seven sick villagers in cots in the cold, damp community hall, which had been locked from the outside because, the villagers said, "it wasn't 'safe.'" Kwang felt upset at the peasants' ignorance at a time when China was "the world's richest and most dynamic superpower, masters of everything from outer space to cyber space."

The peasants whom Kwang meets were forced to abandon their old home and relocate to a village that the authorities haven't even bothered to name. They are some of the victims of pre-war China's push for progress and modernity, since their old village was flooded after the Three Gorges Dam was constructed. Later in the novel, the collapse of this dam, which was improperly planned and maintained, will cause much tragedy and the loss of many lives. Progress wasn't even, and peasants like these bore the cost of China's desire to become "the world's richest and most dynamic superpower."

The first patient Kwang examined was a woman who had a high fever and was shivering, and he noticed a bite mark on her arm. The other six patients had similar symptoms, and all had bite marks, too. Kwang asked who had bitten them and the villagers took him to a 12-year-old boy they kept tied, gagged, and locked in an abandoned house. Kwang tells the narrator that this was "Patient Zero." The villagers tried to hold Kwang back and warned him not to get close to the boy, but Kwang did not listen. He found the boy had cold, gray skin, no blood at the sites of his many wounds, and no pulse. The boy was "inexplicably hostile" and tried to bite Kwang as he examined him, so Kwang ordered two strong villagers to help him hold the boy down.

While Kwang initially found the villagers to be cruel and ignorant in their treatment of the patients, he soon came to find that their fear was justified. He encounters "Patient Zero," who Kwang assumes is the source of the infection since he was the one who had bitten the others. The boy's strange symptoms all suggest that he is dead, and yet, he seems to be alive. Kwang finds his symptoms as well as his behavior to be "inexplicable"—all his years of medical experience seem to be useless when faced with this new disease.

When Kwang tried to get a blood sample, Patient Zero struggled so violently that his arm broke off from his body, and yet he didn't even seem to notice. Kwang's two assistants were frightened and ran away, and Kwang, too, was so unnerved by the **sick child** that he hurried out and locked the door behind him.

Kwang is completely unnerved when the boy's arm breaks away from his body and he doesn't seem to even realize it—the boy's lack of a reaction to pain is unlike anything Kwang has known in all his years of being a doctor. Kwang is terrified, not only because the boy's symptoms are so strange but also because Kwang feels completely bewildered and powerless.

The villagers were reluctant to disclose how the boy got sick, and finally, a woman told Kwang that the boy and his father had gone diving in the reservoir to try and find something valuable from the villages that had been submerged by the waters of the dam. This was an illegal activity, and Kwang promised he wouldn't inform the police. The boy's father never reappeared, while the boy had resurfaced, crying, with a bite mark on his foot.

Despite the strange and dangerous events that the peasants are living through, they are also terrified that the police will punish them for allowing the boy to swim in the waters of the dam, which is against the law. This points to the repressive laws they lived under—they live in constant fear of the government. The boy was bitten on his foot and this seems to have been the source of his infection. This suggests that there were other infected zombies before "Patient Zero."

Kwang called his old friend, Dr. Gu Wen Kuei, who worked at the Institute of Infectious Diseases. As soon as Kwang showed him the infected patients, Gu turned serious and asked Kwang to vacate the room and secure the doors, promising to send "support." In less than an hour, 50 men in hazmat suits arrived in helicopters, claiming to be from the Ministry of Health. Kwang suspected they were instead from the Ministry of State Security. As the patients were carried out and taken away, an old woman screamed at them, saying this was their punishment for destroying Fengdu, an ancient city of temples and shrines, which had also been drowned by the waters of the dam.

Gu's quick reaction corroborates Kwang's suspicion that this is not the first case of the virus. The government seems to be already aware of it and takes quick—and ominous—steps to deal with it. The old peasant woman who screams at the security officials seems to suggest that this has been caused by unchecked progress with no respect for old traditions. Kwang seems to be affected by her proclamation, suggesting that he might agree with it.

Gu had subtly warned Kwang before the army men had arrived that this was something very serious, giving him enough time to call his daughter and warn her to leave the country. The section ends with the narrator noting that Kwang Jingshu was arrested by the MSS and imprisoned without any formal charges. By the time he escaped, the outbreak had spread outside of China.

Gu could not warn Kwang outright about the dangerous situation he was in because he likely knew he was being surveilled. Sure enough, Kwang is imprisoned because of the Chinese government's desperate attempts to keep the virus a secret. Rather than attempting to solve the problem, the government seems focused on secrecy in order to deny that it has any problems and to maintain the illusion of unassailable power. Its method of dealing with the crisis is not only inhumane but also proves to be ineffective since the virus ends up spreading all over the world.

Lhasa, The People's Republic of Tibet. Lhasa is the "world's most populous city" and is celebrating the results of its most recent elections, in which the Social Democrats overthrew the Llamist Party. The narrator meets Nury Televaldi here, and says that they have to shout to be heard over the revelers.

The war has wrought many changes in the world's political landscape. The mountainous city of Lhasa has survived it well and must have received an influx of refugees that has turned it into a big, busy city. However, if Lhasa is now the "world's most populous city," clearly the other big cities of the past—Paris, London, Tokyo, to name a few—must have suffered a staggering loss of lives.

Televaldi says that before the outbreak, overland smuggling was neither popular nor profitable, so he'd been an importer of illegal goods and people. But after the illness broke out, people were desperate to get out and he arranged for them to do so. While the government pretended to come down hard on smugglers like him—or *shetou*, as they were called—Televaldi claims that he could bribe his way through quite easily. He says that he did most of his smuggling over land to places like Kashi, and only dabbled in air travel to Kazakhstan or Russia. On the east coast of China, however, clients paid more and managed to get to cities like London and San Francisco. While *shetous* tried to make sure their clients were not infected, some just didn't have visible bites and escaped detection.

In the interest of making a quick profit, human smugglers like Televaldi exploited people's fear and enabled the virus to spread globally. Throughout the novel, illegal activity fueled by greed—be it illegal organ trafficking or police officers paid off to look the other way—is consistently responsible for the spread of the virus across the globe.

Many of these refugees had hoped there might be a cure for the infection in the West, but were also afraid to see a doctor when they got there because they worried they might be sent back to China. Televaldi says these refugees were desperate, "trapped between their infections and being rounded up and 'treated' by their own government." Many refugees disappeared into the big cities. Some lived with family or friends, but most "simply melted into the host country's underbelly." Televaldi surmises that this is why so many outbreaks started in "First World ghettos."

People in China were terrified of the infection, knowing that they'd be treated horribly if their government got a hold of them. Fear made them desperate to escape their country, despite suspecting there was no cure for them anywhere. With this, the novel begins to build out the idea that fear itself is dangerous, because it makes people vulnerable and leaves them open to being exploited by people like Televaldi, who simply want to make money.

Televaldi smuggled most of his clients into central Asia, into countries so poor and where the officials were so corrupt that they welcomed his business. The narrator asks him if he saw many infected people, and Televaldi says that he didn't in the beginning, because the infected were spotted on the road and taken away by the police. However, later, the number of infestations multiplied and the police were unable to keep up, and he began seeing many. They were rarely dangerous since their families would have them tied up, and some were even kept in crates with airholes.

While the zombie problem seemed small initially—and might have been easy to control with better policies—it soon started becoming unwieldy. In charting the way that the virus snowballs out of control in China and then around the world, the novel makes the case that shortsighted government policies can cause devastating levels of harm.

Televaldi considers himself lucky because he wasn't involved in sea smuggling, which was much more dangerous since infected clients could infect everyone on board. Some captains tossed out the infected onto the first deserted coast they came across, while others threw them into the sea. While he didn't have to encounter anything quite as terrifying, he did have an experience that convinced him it was time to quit smuggling. One of his clients was a wealthy investment banker from Xi'an who was escaping into Kyrgyzstan with a locked trailer full of **infected family members**. Looking at this wealthy man, scratched and desperate, Televaldi was convinced that soon, money wasn't going to be worth very much.

Acting on fear, sea smugglers tossed their infected cargo in the sea or on land, not even considering that they were causing the virus to spread by releasing zombies everywhere. Televaldi finally decides to quit smuggling because he recognizes that wealth is useless against the virus. The pre-zombie world in which money meant comfort and safety now no longer exists.

Meteora, Greece. The monasteries at Meteora were built into rocks as a refuge from the Ottoman Turks, and they also proved to be effective against the zombies. This has made Meteora popular with pilgrims and tourists. Stanley MacDonald, a Canadian veteran, has traveled here to seek peace. He first encountered the **zombies** while on an anti-drug operation in Kyrgyzstan. His team discovered a caravan that had been attacked and was surrounded by blood and rotting flesh, but they found no corpses other than those of the mules. The opium hadn't been touched, which puzzled Macdonald and his men. They followed the trail of blood to a cave.

MacDonald must be still disturbed by the things he has seen and experienced, which is why he has come to faraway Greece on his quest for peace. In the previous section, Televaldi's smuggling operations got Chinese refugees out of China and into surrounding countries like Kazakhstan. In this section, the zombies have wandered into Kazakhstan's neighbor, Kyrgyzstan, showing how they slowly spread over the whole continent due to government negligence and poor policy.

Inside, they found human remains. The intact bodies had been killed by shots to the head, and they had chewed up meat in their throats and stomachs. The rest were just pieces of bodies. The innermost room of the cave had collapsed from a detonated booby trap, and there was a moving hand sticking out through the rubble. MacDonald instinctively grabbed it, and it immediately latched onto his, crushing his fingers and not letting go even when he dug his heels in and tried to pull away. A **zombie**'s torso emerged as MacDonald pulled, and tore away from the lower half of its body which was still stuck under the rocks. It was clawing at MacDonald, trying to chomp at his arm. MacDonald shot its head off.

Here, MacDonald describes the horror of encountering several dead zombies as well as a live one. What is most chilling about the live zombie—besides its nauseating cannibalism—is its seeming invincibility. Despite being buried beneath the rubble and then torn in half, the zombie refuses to be stopped. The only thing that does *stop the zombie is shooting it in the head—which, given how rapidly the virus is spreading, is bound to be a slow and dangerous way to fight the zombies.*

After sharing their discoveries back in Edmonton, MacDonald and his team were told they'd been exposed to "unknown chemical agents" or were having an adverse reaction to their prophylactic medication. They were also told they must be suffering from PTSD and needed to be evaluated. MacDonald concludes the interview by saying he was a good soldier and thought he "was ready for anything," but nothing could have prepared him for the **zombies**.

The Canadian government dealt with the information provided by these soldiers in an irresponsible manner, choosing denial over action. The information that MacDonald and the other soldiers brought back must have seemed so ridiculous that the government's immediate reaction was to try and explain it away. They had no inkling that life as they knew it was about to be undergo a complete transformation. The cost of ignoring these early danger signs will be huge for Canada and other nations around the world.

The Amazon Rain Forest, Brazil. The narrator goes to the settlement of the Yanomami or the "Fierce People" to speak with Fernando Oliveira, a drug-addled white man. Oliveira says that before the outbreak, he made a lot of money by performing illegal organ transplants. Many of his clients were North American. One Austrian patient, Herr Muller, needed a new heart and it arrived in a plastic picnic cooler from the airport, most likely from China. Oliveira assisted Dr. Silva, a cardiologist, to perform the heart transplant.

The spread of the virus across the world was helped along by crime and corruption. People like Televaldi and Oliveira were so focused on getting rich that they ignored the dark side of their business operations until the zombies were literally at their doors.

Herr Muller never woke up from the anesthesia. His symptoms—"temperature, pulse rate, oxygen saturation"—started right after they sewed him closed. Dr. Silva put it down to a reaction to the medication or just the trauma of such a big procedure, and he told Oliveira to go relax and that he would watch Muller. While Oliveira was out on the town, his receptionist called him in a panic to tell him that Muller had slipped into a coma. Oliveira rushed back to the clinic to find the receptionist consoling one of the nurses, who was crying. The nurse said that Muller had flatlined unexpectedly, and while Dr. Silva was trying to revive him, he'd woken up and bitten him. The nurse had run out and locked the door behind her.

These characters' first encounter with a zombie is horrific and shocking. The nurse cannot fathom how a dead man could wake up and then attack the doctor by biting him. In her fear, she has run out and left the doctor at the mercy of the zombie. She probably couldn't call anyone else other than Oliveira for help because their entire business is an illegal one, and she must have worried that they'd be arrested. In previous instances, too, fear has resulted in the spread of the zombie virus—Patient Zero had been illegally swimming in a dam when he was bitten, which was why the peasants hadn't called in the doctor until he had bitten six more people, and Chinese citizens were hiding their bites and infections and escaping from their country because they were scared of the strict government policies they'd have to endure if they stayed back home.

Oliveira got his gun from his car, and then knocked on Muller's door. Receiving no response, he entered to find blood covering the floor and Silva lying in a corner, with Muller feeding on him. Muller turned towards Oliveira and started walking towards him. Oliveira shot him, blowing his head off. He then called the police, whom he usually paid off to look the other way when he performed his illegal surgeries. They covered up the incident by claiming that a murderer had broken in and killed Silva and Muller.

What this attack has in common with previous ones that the narrator has recounted thus far is government officials' willingness to look the other way (e.g., the Canadian government telling its soldiers that they were merely suffering from PTSD) and greed-fueled illegal activity (e.g., human traffickers smuggling goods and people into other countries). These conditions create the perfect storm for the virus to spread rapidly across the globe.

Oliveira says that Muller's wife was lucky because he had reanimated immediately rather than carrying the virus back home. Muller immediately showed symptoms because he got an infected heart which had direct access to the circulatory system, but that symptoms would be slow to show up if other body parts were transplanted, like a liver or a skin graft. He says that many organs came from China, and that thousands of people got illegal organ transplants before the Great War broke out. He is sure that some of them were infected, which is one of the ways the virus made its way into developed nations.

That there were thousands of illegal organ transplants administered before the war again emphasizes how illegal activity rooted in greed and cloaked in secrecy is the perfect breeding ground for the virus to spread. The people harvesting the organs are presumably only in it for the money—not to help people who desperately need an organ transplant—and thus don't care where the organ comes from and whether or not the person was infected with the virus.

Oliveira says that none of his clients, even those from the "self-righteous United States," cared where the organs came from, though they were often procured cruelly and unethically. The narrator asks him if he ever tried to warn clients after their surgeries that they might have been infected, and Oliveira says that by the time he realized how serious the situation was, it was too late.

Oliveira claims that Americans didn't care about ethics when they wanted something desperately enough, and this greed and shortsightedness is in part what fueled the spread of the virus. With this, the novel begins to develop the theme of the fragility of privilege, as money can't fix everything and is useless once a person is infected.

Bridgetown Harbor, Barbados, West Indies Federation. Jacob Nyathi, a sea captain in the West Indies, says that he was born in South Africa. Nyathi grew up in extreme poverty in a township outside Cape Town. One day, while returning from work at 5 a.m., he heard gunfire coming from the shanties his home was in. People began to run, screaming, "They're coming!" Nyathi's family lived in the direction the crowd was running from, so he tried to make his way against the crowd but was knocked into a collapsing shanty. When he managed to get up, he saw the **zombies**, "slouching steadily towards [him] with their arms raised."

The zombies are so strange and frightening that people's first reaction to them is extreme fear. In previous interviews, the zombies have only appeared singly, as in the case of Patient Zero, Herr Muller, and the zombie that MacDonald sees in the cave in Kyrgyzstan. Here, Nyathi describes the first time that a group of zombies turns on people, and the result is pure terror.

A **zombie** attacked Nyathi from behind, and he saw that it had a knife sticking out of its chest and that "black fluid" ran from the wound. Nyathi escaped by slamming a cooking pot against its skull until "the bone split open and the brains spilled out." He ran out and saw a woman hiding with two children huddled against her. Nyathi tried to get them to go with him, but the woman was so afraid and confused that she stabbed him. Nyathi left them and ran, but still thinks about them.

Nyathi was unnerved to see the zombie unaffected by the knife in its chest. This again highlights how the zombies are so different from any creature that people have encountered before, and their strange and extreme difference is what makes them so scary. Zombies also seem to be unstoppable, which makes them doubly frightening. The woman Nyathi tries to help is so frightened by all the bizarre events of the night that she attacks the one person who might have helped her, showing that fear causes people to behave irrationally.

Nyathi ran into blinding headlights and felt something hid his shoulder right before he passed out. He woke up in Groote Schuur Hospital and discovered that he'd been shot by the police. He overheard people talking about an outbreak of "rabies," and that there were 15 cases in the hospital and probably many more out in the city.

In the initial stages of the outbreak, the zombie virus was misclassified as a type of rabies, suggesting that the authorities didn't take it seriously enough to properly study it. Like the Canadian army, the South African authorities, too, were irresponsible in the way they dealt with the virus. If they had understood the immense danger it presented, they might have been able to prevent the global disaster which it ends up causing.

Tel Aviv, Israel. The narrator meets Jurgen Warmbrunn, an Israeli intelligence agent, at an Ethiopian restaurant. Warmbrunn says that most people "don't believe something can happen until it already has." But he was "born into a group of people who live in constant fear of extinction," and they are always wary.

According to Warmbrunn, the Jewish people "live in constant fear of extinction" because of the violence they faced during the Holocaust. Rather than let this fear cloud their judgment, as many people do in this novel, they use it constructively to stay open to signs of danger and to come up with novel solutions to problems.

The first warning Warmbrunn had that something was amiss was from friends and customers in Taiwan who complained about the new software decryption program that was either failing to decode some emails from China or decoding them poorly. When he took a look at these emails, he saw that they were about "a new viral outbreak that first eliminated its victim, then reanimated his corpse into some kind of homicidal berzerker." He didn't believe these messages were literal—he suspected it was a code within a code—and yet felt uneasy about them.

Warmbrunn's statement provides a look into pre-war politics—nations feared one another, and had formed allegiances to spy on each another. This divided world, with its environment of fear and mistrust, enabled the outbreak. By this time, China's government clearly knew about the nature and dangers of the virus, but is irresponsibly bent upon keeping it a secret from the rest of the world.

Sometime later, Warmbrunn spoke to a professor from Hebrew University who told him about his cousin in South Africa who'd spoken about golems and "reanimating human bodies." Warmbrunn got in touch with the cousin, who told him about the stories he'd heard from the hospital staff at Groote Schuur. After the Arab attack of 1973, intelligence analysts in Israel were wary and investigated everything. Warmbrunn uncovered cases of "rabies" like at Cape Town, psychological evaluations of the Canadian troops who had returned from Kyrgyzstan, and blog records of a Brazilian nurse who spoke of the murder of a heart surgeon. He came to believe in the existence of this new threat, and also discovered that they could be destroyed by destroying their brains.

Warmbrunn channels his fears in a positive way and becomes the first to sniff out and connect all the strange events around the world that relate to the zombie threat. He also, admirably, deduces from these reports that the only way to destroy the zombies is to destroy their brains. Warmbrunn is an embodiment of caution, intelligence, and responsibility, and demonstrates how the threat could have been dealt with in an ideal world.

Warmbrunn reached out to his friend Paul Knight, a former CIA agent who now worked in private security. Knight, too, had been working on the same project in his own time, and the two of them combined all the information they had in a report that came to be called the Warmbrunn-Knight report, even though it contained inputs from various experts from around the world. Warmbrunn says that if the report had been taken seriously, the outbreak would never have reached epic proportions. He says that the South African war plan deservedly gets a lot of credit, but that it would have been unnecessary if more people had read and followed this report. His own government, too, barely followed it, and there was a high price to be paid.

Knight, like Warmbrunn, seems to be a highly intelligent individual who is tuned in to the pulse of world events, and it is telling that he is "former" CIA—implying that his values didn't align with the CIA's, which was probably not as thorough and efficient. The Warmbrunn-Knight report might have nipped the zombie menace in the bud, but, tragically, it wasn't taken seriously by any governments other than Israel's. Once again, this shows that government apathy exacerbated the zombie problem. Warmbrunn notes that Israel, too, "barely" followed the plan, and that it suffered because of it—he is alluding to the Israeli Civil War, which will be mentioned in the next interview. He also mentions "the South African war plan" as "deservedly" getting credit in the war. He is talking about the Redeker Plan, which will be discussed in more detail later in the book. While it did help to control the zombie crisis, it was also a cruel plan that led to many civilians' deaths. The Warmbrunn-Knight would have been a much better and more humane alternative.

Bethlehem, Palestine. Saladin Kader is professor of urban planning at Khalil Gibran University in Bethlehem, which is "one of the Middle East's most affluent cities." He says that he was raised in Kuwait City, where he worked after school at a Starbuck's. This was where he watched the Al Jazeera broadcast in which the Israeli ambassador announced to the UN General Assembly that their country would be entering "voluntary quarantine." Kader had joined the other customers in their jeers and catcalls, disbelieving the story about the **zombies**, especially since it came from his "most hated enemy."

In this section, the narrator shows how Israel acted on the recommendations of the Knight-Warmbrunn report by declaring "voluntary quarantine." Kader, a Palestinian, hated the Israelis and immediately disbelieved their claims. Again, the narrator shows that the pre-war divided world facilitated the outbreak since nations feared and did not trust each other.

Kader's father, who was a janitor at a hospital, had been on duty on a night when there had been an African rabies outbreak, and had decided it was too dangerous to stay in Kuwait. Since Israel had offered asylum to all Palestinians who had once lived within its borders, Kader's father wanted to return, which made Kader furious. His father tried to convince him that he had no loyalty to the Israelis, but only wanted to go there since they seemed to be the only country preparing for the calamity at hand. Kader planned to stay behind and join a terrorist organization in Kuwait, and he called his father a disbeliever for choosing to return. His father, who was neither a large nor violent man, slapped Kader and shouted at him—and finally, Kader was cowed into obeying.

Here, the narrator illustrates two contrasting ways in which fear affects people. Kader's fear of Israeli domination clouds his judgment, while his father's fear for his family's safety of his family makes him grasp at the practical solution at hand, shelving his personal feelings about Israel in order to get his family to safety. In general, the book suggests that people who can adapt to a changing world are more adept at finding solutions, while those, like Kader, who are stuck in old ways of thinking end up putting themselves in danger.

When the asylum-seekers approached the border of Israel, Kader saw the Wall for the first time. It surrounded the entire border of Israel. They were made to walk slowly past large dogs in cages. The dogs barked furiously at an old man who walked just ahead of Kader, and he was immediately taken to a black unmarked van. Kader thought the Israelis were separating the infirm and old who might be of no use to them in internment camps. Then, a loud, well-dressed American behind him also set off the dogs and was escorted out, which puzzled Kader. He thought the dogs might be screening for rabies, which is what he believed the entire time he was in the resettlement and quarantine camp.

The Israelis had taken smart precautions to separate infected refugees from the rest—probably acting on a suggestion from the Knight-Warmbrunn Report. Again, the narrator shows that they took practical steps against the virus while still maintaining their humanity and admitting refugees, which is admirable. In contrast, China's repressive measures against its own citizens were causing them to flee in fear, spreading the virus around the world.

Kader and his family felt like prisoners at the overcrowded camp with its barbed wire and guards. After three weeks, his family cleared their medical examinations and were put on a bus for Tel Aviv. However, as their bus entered the city, they were shot at by civilian Jews, and an Israeli soldier sacrificed his life to protect them. This was the beginning of the Israeli Civil War, which was fought because many Israelis were unhappy with their government's decision to repatriate Palestinians and pull out of the West Bank.

Warmbrunn had mentioned in the previous section that even Israel paid a high price—and what he was referring to was the Israeli Civil War, in which many civilians and soldiers lost their lives even though the nation was protected by zombies. Kader previously believed that all Jews were evil, but his ideas were immediately upturned when he entered Israel and an Israeli soldier gave his life to protect him—this showed him that Israel and the world was more complex and layered than he'd previously assumed.

Just then, one of the unmarked vans drove by and was hit by a handheld rocket. It burst into flames and **figures** started to crawl out of it, through the fire. The soldiers started shooting at them, but these figures kept moving until they were shot in the head. Kader says he suddenly understood "what the Israelis had been trying to warn the rest of the world about" and couldn't understand why they wouldn't listen.

On first seeing the zombies, Kader immediately recognizes the danger they pose and snaps out of his angry, closed point of view about Israel. As soon as he understands how dangerous the situation is, he cannot fathom how other nations could ignore Israel's warnings or any evidence of this danger. This is a question that the narrator attempts to answer in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: BLAME

Langley, Virginia, USA. The narrator meets with Bob Archer, director of the CIA. Archer says that before the war, most people thought that the CIA was omniscient and all-powerful, which were myths that the CIA was happy to encourage. In reality, they didn't have that kind of power or funding. He says that China knew they were being surveilled by the CIA and would never be able to hide their "Health and Safety" sweeps, so they just lied that they were sweeping for dissidents after the Taiwan Strait incident. It worked, and the CIA focused all their energy on the Taiwan Strait, even ignoring **zombie** outbreaks in other parts of the world.

China's government was so bent upon hiding its zombie outbreak from the rest of the world that they caused a political crisis in Taiwan and used it to distract the CIA. This seems like so much wasted energy on its part, especially since its hostility to the rest of the world also led to a growing crisis within its own borders. The fact that China's sleight of hand actually worked in throwing the CIA off its scent also shows that the CIA wasn't very efficient.

Archer says that one reason for the CIA's inefficacy were the "reforms" pushed on the agency by the administration. The agency had been ordered "to justify a political agenda," but had been blamed for their actions "when that agenda became a political liability." As a result, most of their best agents had quit. Archer confesses that he'd had suspicions about the outbreak, but had been warned that if he brought it up, there'd be trouble for him. And sure enough, he'd spoken about it to a superior, and had immediately been transferred to Buenos Aires. Right after, Israel had announced its plans for "Voluntary Quarantine."

The CIA—and, by extension, American citizens—had been victims of the U.S. government's politicking. The work environment under that administration had been so frustrating that many of the CIA's best agents had quit, which might explain why Paul Knight, too, was "former" CIA. Archer recognized the zombie problem to be a real crisis but had been punished for bringing it up. This shows that the administration was shortsighted, and selfishly, much like China, wanted to deny a problem that might make it seem weak.

The narrator asks Archer if he'd heard of the Warmbrunn-Knight report, and Archer says he knows of it now, but that the original copy that Knight had personally delivered to the director had been found in a clerk's desk in the San Antonio FBI office, years after the Great Panic.

The higher-ups had not only ignored the Warmbrunn-Knight report but had buried it in some obscure location to ensure that no one read it or paid it any attention. It seems like such a tragedy in hindsight since it might have averted the crisis and the war.

Vaalajarvi, Finland. It is spring, and the **zombies** who had frozen in winter begin to reanimate. The UN's Northern Force performs their annual "Sweep and Clear" under Travis D'Ambrosia.

Even years after the end of the war, zombies are still thawing and reanimating, so the danger hasn't completely passed. However, now, the U.N. and the rest of the world seems to be on top of the problem.

The narrator says that the general sounds sad as he says that they certainly let the American people down, and he wants them to understand why it happened. He says the chairman of the Joint Chiefs wanted to know how to proceed if the Israelis were indeed right, and all the military professionals present had volunteered their ideas. D'Ambrosia read the Warmbrunn-Knight Report much later, two years after the Great Panic, and found that its ideas were very similar to the ones the Joint Chiefs had proposed to the White House. Phase One of the plan was to place Alpha Teams into infested areas, so they could investigate and eliminate any threats, and the White House loved this idea.

Interestingly, the Joint Chiefs had proposed ideas that were very similar to the Warmbrunn-Knight Report as soon as the Israelis announced their quarantine. This shows that they were taking the threat seriously and had strong ideas to combat it. The White House approved of "Phase One" of their suggestions, probably because it was simple to carry out this step.

However, Phase Two of the plan was never enacted because it required money and public support. The people of America were tired of fighting, having just emerged from a bloody conflict, and there was a shortage of people volunteering to fight. D'Ambrosia says that the country was "too weak and vulnerable" to stop the **zombies**. He adds that the American system is "the best in the world," but that "it must be protected, and defended, and it must never again be so abused."

D'Ambrosia brings up the point that in order to enact measures to keep the public safe, the government and the army needed public support as well. They were sure they wouldn't get this as the populace was suffering from war fatigue. Clearly, they hadn't realized how serious the zombie menace would be and therefore didn't press the points with their electorate. And yet, America is a democracy and its people are partly to blame to for the problem getting out of hand.

Vostok Station: Antarctica. Breckenridge "Breck" Scott has leased this remote outpost from the Russian government. It takes a month to reach it over land, and it is also extremely cold, which is why Scott likes it. The narrator meets him in "The Dome," a reinforced, geodesic greenhouse that is one of the many changes that Scott has made to the outpost.

Scott clearly has enough money to set up a comfortable abode for himself in Antarctica, which begins to point to the way that he selfishly profited off of the zombie crisis.

Scott tells the narrator that the only valid rule about economics is that "fear is the most valuable commodity in the universe." He believes that "Fear sells," since it is the most primal of human emotions and people buy products to assuage their fears of aging, loneliness, poverty, and so on. He says that when he first heard of the outbreaks, it was still being called African rabies, and he immediately saw a business opportunity. He came up with the idea of marketing a vaccine for rabies that one could take as a preventative. He had a lot of contacts in the biomed industry and in Congress, which helped him to push forward with this idea quickly.

Scott's first thought at the zombie outbreak was that he could exploit it as a business opportunity by preying on people's fears. He latched onto a technicality—the fact that the disease was called "African rabies"—and used this to run with his idea to falsely advertise a rabies vaccine as a cure for the zombie virus, fully knowing that it wasn't. He was abetted by his "contacts," other immoral people like him who used their position and power to con the American people.


The narrator wonders how Scott made it past the FDA, and Scott says the FDA used to be a joke. Also, he says the administration at the time was very friendly to businesses, and the president hurried Scott's plan along because they were desperate for something to calm a panicking nation. The president's approval ratings were very high after he championed Scott's vaccine that he said would be "big protection" for the people.

The U.S president in the early years of the zombie crisis seems to have been more concerned about his approval ratings than about solving the very real problem his nation was facing. Like Scott, he, too, seems inhumanly selfish.


The narrator asks Scott if he knew that the vaccine wouldn't work, and Scott says he knew it would work against rabies, and everyone was calling the illness "African rabies." The narrator wants to know if the vaccine was ever tested on a victim, and Scott said it didn't need to be, just as the flu shot wasn't tested to see if it was effective against a particular strain. The narrator protests about the damage caused by this virus, and Scott says that no one expected it to be as bad as it was. He says that "Technically, [they] never lied. Technically, [they] never did anything wrong."

When the narrator asks Scott pointblank if he was aware the vaccine was a hoax, Scott's answers are cunning and evasive. He insists that he "technically" didn't lie—implying that he was well aware of their lies and carefully packaged the vaccine to con a terrified populace.


The narrator says that if someone discovered that it wasn't rabies, Scott would have gotten in trouble. But Scott says the doctors, the FDA, and the Congress were all in on it and stood to gain a lot from it. After his vaccine, Phalanx, hit the market, Scott's company made more money from selling other stuff like air purifiers, even though the virus wasn't airborne.

While Scott was the mastermind behind Phalanx, he was aided by a nexus of people in power who also stood to profit from this vaccine hoax. This is why he was confident that he wouldn't be outed and punished—too many powerful heads would roll if he got in trouble, so he knew they'd make sure he was safe.

The narrator asks Scott if he takes no responsibility for what transpired, and Scott insists on his innocence. He says that if the narrator is looking for someone to blame, he should blame the person who first called it "rabies," or the naïve public who chose to buy Phalanx. Scott concludes by admitting that he might meet some of these "dumb shits" in hell, and hopes they won't ask him for a refund.

Scott shows absolutely no remorse for his actions, even after witnessing the level of death and destruction caused by the zombie crisis and war. He easily shifts blame for the crisis onto those who named the virus, and even onto those who purchased it out of fear and desperation. He knows that many of these ended up getting infected—despite being vaccinated with Phalanx—and he mocks them for their gullibility in trusting the vaccine. The narrator portrays Scott as one of the most despicable characters in the novel.

Amarillo, Texas, USA. Grover Carlson collects dung to fuel his town's bioconversion plant. He used to be the former White House chief of staff. He tells the narrator that he had of course seen the "Knight-WarnJews report" and had read it three months before Israel had announced their quarantine. He had personally briefed the President about it, but every administration got alarming reports each week and couldn't afford to pay them much attention.

Immediately, Carlson defends his decision to ignore the Warmbrunn-Knight Report (derogatorily calling it the WarnJews report, revealing himself to be a racist). In hindsight, it is tragic to note that the U.S. government was in possession of the report so early in the crisis—three months before Israel announced their quarantine—and that the entire problem could have been a relatively simple one if handled responsibly then.

The national security adviser didn't think the threat was at all important, so they had agreed on some solutions, like the Alpha teams. Carlson also says that they had pushed Phalanx through the FDA. The narrator points out that Phalanx didn't work, and Carlson says they were grateful for a placebo that would calm people down since a real cure would have taken time and resources they didn't possess. Carlson says that conceding the danger of the situation would have been bad politics, especially since it was an election year.

Carlson implies that he understood the danger of the situation, but he also knew that worrying people might cost him votes. So, he gave them the Alpha teams, which seemed like a good solution to him because it was simple and not because he believed it would fix the problem, and lied to them about Phalanx. He focused only on placating his electorate and retaining their votes—even at the cost of their lives.

The narrator asks if they ever tried to "solve the problem," and Carlson says that most problems—like poverty and crime—cannot be solved and that one can only make them manageable. He says that he wanted his potential voters to be happy, and the narrator points out that those who didn't vote for him were neglected and outbreaks in their areas were ignored. The narrator asks if he wasn't nervous that he'd be outed by the media, and Carlson says that networks were owned by corporations that would lose a lot if the market collapsed again. He says that "real Americans" paid no attention to alternative media outlets like the "PBS-NPR fringe minority."

Carlson gives the narrator evasive, philosophical answers when asked if he ever tried to solve the problem. Clearly, people did "solve the problem" of the zombies later, even after it had grown into a much more unwieldy one than what Carlson's government had initially faced. Carlson's villainy was such that he ignored outbreaks that were outside his voters' areas—he had no problem sacrificing the people who didn't vote for him. All through this, he was confident that the media would be too cowardly to out him and suffer the market collapse that would have inevitably followed. Motivated by greed and a hankering for power, people like Carlson caused the zombie crisis to get out of hand.

The narrator asks whether the administration's position on the matter was that they "gave this problem the amount of attention […] it deserved," and Carlson agrees. The narrator wants to know if the government thought the Alpha teams were enough to manage the problem even though they'd been warned that it was "a global catastrophe in the making." Carlson heaps dung into his cart as he angrily tells the narrator to "Grow up."

While the narrator had stated in the introduction that he would be a minimal and nonjudgmental presence in the book, it is clear from his questions that Carlson's villainy upsets him. The narrator tries to get him to admit that he made a huge and cruel mistake. Carlson gets angry at this line of questioning, but refuses to admit any wrongdoing, showing that he still has no regrets about his mistakes that cost millions of lives.

Troy, Montana, USA. The narrator says that according to the brochure, this neighborhood is the "New Community" for the "New America." Based on the Israeli model, the houses rest on stilts and are accessed by retractable staircases, and have other safety features like thick steel gates. Troy's developer and mayor is Mary Jo Miller, who tells the narrator that before the **zombies**, she was worried about things like car payments and the crack in her swimming pool. Her life was busy with these everyday concerns. She says she barely watched the news.

While the two previous interviews revealed how people in power exploited the American people at a time of crisis, this interview shows that the American public was so self-involved and focused on petty concerns that they, too, must be held responsible for the crisis getting out of hand. While Miller admits to being so preoccupied with her shallow concerns that she paid no attention to news about the outbreak, the narrator describes her as being an important contributor in post-war America. It seems like she has been very changed by her experiences.

One night, Miller was loading the dishwasher when a **zombie** broke a sliding glass door and walked into their house in San Diego. She remembers that it smelled like the beach. Miller knew that her husband Tim was having an affair, but at that moment, the "lies fell away" and he placed himself between the zombie and his family. She heard her daughter scream and ran to her room to see that a second zombie had grabbed her by her hair. Miller can no longer remember exactly what she did, but the kids say she tore its head off. Right after, Tim appeared and threw her the keys to the car, asking her to get the kids out. He disappeared into the backyard and she could hear him shoot at something as she drove away.

When the zombies attacked the Miller family, the parents comprehended the level of danger they were facing and went on the offensive to save the kids. The worries and concerns they had before that moment melted away as they immediately understood that everything had changed, and that they, too, must change to survive their new reality. Miller tore a zombie's head off, while Tim sacrificed his life to save his family—their actions were a huge shift from the comfort of their self-absorbed suburban lives, and once again highlights the novel's idea that people who adapt to change are better-equipped at handling this crisis (and, perhaps, crises in general.) Miller recalls that the zombie smelled like the beach, which suggests that it probably walked out of the sea and into their neighborhood, bringing to mind Televaldi's interview in which he mentioned that some smugglers dumped their infected cargo into the ocean, unaware or unconcerned of the danger it would present in other parts of the world.

CHAPTER 3: THE GREAT PANIC

Parnell Air National Guard Base: Memphis, Tennessee, USA. Gavin Blaire used to pilot a Fujifilm blimp as a civilian, but now pilots a D-17 combat dirigible. He describes the traffic jam that "stretched to the horizon" as people desperately tried to get out. All kinds of belongings lined the road—suitcases, furniture, a grand piano—and some people were on foot. Some miles along, he saw that "those **creatures** were swarming among cars" attacking people. Blaire says that this traffic jam was on the I-80 between Lincoln and North Platte, which were both heavily infested, so these people had nowhere to escape to. He wonders what they had planned on doing, and how they had hoped they might escape what was coming.

Blaire's example reveals that in the war against the zombies, even civilians took on combat roles—probably due to the large number of deaths among the armed forces. From his blimp, he had a bird's eye view of the "panic" on the ground below. His descriptions highlight the tragedy and hopelessness of the people below who had nowhere safe to escape to but tried anyway. Again, this detail calls up the novel's theme of fear hampering people's judgments. The familiarity of the descriptions calls up national reactions to other crises—like Hurricane Katrina, for example—which makes the scene even more chilling since it seems more plausible, and, other than the detail about the zombies, closely aligned to reality.

Alang, India. The narrator stands on the beach with Ajay Shah, surrounded by rusty ships that are like "silent memorials to the carnage this beach once witnessed." Shah tells the narrator that he knows his experiences are not very different from those of many others around the world who tried to escape to sea. He used to be an office manager in a city nearby, and had never even been to Alang before. He headed there to try and escape on a ship, without knowing that it wasn't a shipyard—it was a place that bought old ships and turned them to scrap iron. He didn't find any functional ships, just "naked hulks lining up to die."

Shah was a clueless urbanite before the zombie crisis. In his attempt to escape the zombies, he makes his way to a scrapyard instead of a shipyard. Shah's previously comfortable life had left him unprepared for the crisis, and in great fear, he rushed to escape from a beach that had no functioning ships. Again, the narrator shows that fear causes people to make rash and unhelpful decisions.

Shah spotted a few new arrivals anchored offshore that looked like they had skeleton crews, and one of them was trying to pull a beached ship out to sea. The beached ship broke apart and sank, and Shah saw that it had been packed with at least a 1,000 people. He says that the beach was filled with frantic people that night, some of whom were trying to swim to the offshore ships. Small boats offered to ferry people over for huge sums of money, and some ships only took young women, while others wanted only members of the higher castes.

Shah was not the only person who'd decided to make his escape at Alang—the beach was filled with other fearful, clueless people like him as well as canny individuals who were out to take advantage of them as they offered to transport them to the ships anchored offshore. Shah witnessed a tragedy, with more than 1,000 people falling into the ocean as their ship broke apart. Even among this heartbreaking scene, some people didn't recognize the seriousness of the situation, reveling in this opportunity to make a quick buck without realizing that soon, money wouldn't count for anything. Others were foolishly focused on saving only "the higher castes" who were part of a community that was considered superior to others by some people in India, seemingly unconcerned that they were leaving other people to die.

Shah admits that there were many "good and decent people," too, who could have easily escaped and yet returned on their small boats to help the people on shore. There was also the danger of "underwater ghouls" since many infected refugees had drowned and then reanimated. Shah swam to a ship, but after he reached it, he could see no way up and was too exhausted to stay afloat. Just as he went under, he was rescued by a crew member of an ex-Canadian Coast Guard ship. As they passed other ships, Shah could see that some of them were "floating slaughterhouses" with infected refugees on board who had begun to attack the others on board.

At Alang, Shah witnesses not only despicable human behavior but also kindness and generosity. His account suggests that while many people exploited other people's fears in those stressful times, there were also others who proved that humanity was worth fighting for and saving. Shah mentions the "underwater ghouls" who were reanimated refugees, showing that human tragedy led to an increase in the zombie forces. The sight of the "floating slaughterhouses" is also made more terrifying by the fact that the number of zombies is steadily rising.

Topeka, Kansas, USA. The narrator is at the Rothman Rehabilitation Home for Feral Children, where he is meeting with Sharon, a beautiful young woman who was found in the ruins of Wichita. The narrator says she "has the mind of a four-year-old." Sharon describes taking shelter with her mother and others in a church. There were other children there, and also Mrs. Randolph who cried when Sharon asked her where her daughter Ashley was. The pastor was trying to calm everyone down but it wasn't working.

Sharon was a feral child, which implies that she lost her parents in the outbreak and grew up without adult supervision or care. The event she is describing to the narrator must have occurred when she was the same age as her mental age of four—she was not old enough to understand that Ashley was probably dead and to know exactly what the adults were worrying about.

Then somebody yelled "Here they come!" and Sharon's mother came and picked her up. People tried to hold the doors closed, but they could hear the moans of the **zombies**. Sharon's mother told her that she won't let them hurt her. As the zombies broke down the door, the pastor's wife screamed that they had to save the children and picked up one little girl who was crying loudly and swung her hard against the wall until she was quiet. Sharon mimicked how her mother had then tried to strangle her. Mrs. Randolph shot her mother and rescued Sharon, and had then taken her out into the parking lot and asked her to run without stopping.

Sharon's narrates a horrific account of how people killed children to save them from being bitten and turned into zombies. This shows the extent to which fear and desperation can push people into behavior that is staggeringly cruel. Sharon's account is doubly chilling because it occurs in a church and it seems like parents (including Sharon's mother) followed the example of a pastor's wife who kills a little girl by smashing her head in. A place of worship and comfort was transformed into a place of shocking brutality.

Khuzhir, Olkhon Island, Lake Baikal, The Holy Russian Empire. The narrator meets Maria Zhuganova alone in a small, bare room, but is certain that they are being watched through one-way glass. She tells him that she and her troop of soldiers used to work in a remote southern republic, and their superiors cited "state security" as the reason for suddenly cutting off their access to TVs, radios, and cell phones. A plain-clothed civilian with a mean face showed up out of nowhere—the soldiers nicknamed him "Rat Face." Right after, they were placed on full combat alert. They were told to question the villagers to see if anyone had gone missing or been bitten by a rabid animal or person.

Russia attempted to control the zombie problem without giving its soldiers clear instructions on what they were fighting. Like the Chinese and U.S. governments, Russia, too, withheld information about the zombies from its own people. The government likely assumed soldiers would want to return home if they understood the nature of the danger while the government wanted them to stay and work. Meanwhile, China wanted to maintain the illusion of its superiority and control, while America's administration didn't want to upset its electorate. The countries had different reasons to downplay the danger of the outbreak, but they all contributed to its spread.

After Rat Face spoke to the village elders, they looked scared. Zhuganova and the other soldiers were confused and angry since they weren't given any information. One day, at a tiny town they were searching, a little girl came running and pointed to a figure across a field—another little girl was staggering towards them. Rat Face looked at her through his binoculars and ordered the platoon sharpshooter to shoot her. When he refused to shoot the child, Rat Face pulled out a pistol and finished the job.

While Rat Face didn't think it important to inform the soldiers about what was going on, he did speak to the village elders about it. Perhaps he expected full revolt if the soldiers knew the extent of the menace. Zhuganova thinks he is a civilian, but he seems to be a government agent who has been sent to Zhuganova's outpost to monitor the spread of the virus in that area.

The next day, Arkady, the heavy machine gunner, held an old **zombie** woman by her throat and showed her to the other soldiers, telling them that he had discovered the real reason they were there. The old woman managed to bite his hand. Arkady kicked her head in, and then demanded that he wanted to go home to protect his family, and the other soldiers joined him in this demand. Suddenly, Arkady was shot in the face, and Zhuganova could smell tear gas. The Spetznaz commandoes had appeared, and were beating and shackling the soldiers.

When one of the soldiers discovers the zombie woman, the soldiers immediately realize the danger this outbreak poses and their first reaction is to return home to protect their loved ones against this threat. The revolt that the soldiers' superiors were wary of comes to pass, and they take swift and heartless measures against their own soldiers.

That was the start of the Decimation. Zhuganova says that theirs was not the first army unit to rebel, and the "government had decided how to restore order." She explains that to "decimate" means to "kill by a percentage of ten, one out of every ten must die," which is what happened to them. The Spetznaz grouped them in tens and had them vote on which one of them would die, and made the other nine kill that soldier. After this, the soldiers "relinquished their freedom" and followed orders.

The Russian Decimations become well-known all over the world for their cruelty. The soldiers are broken-spirited after this and obey all orders. They end up fearing the authorities as much as they fear the zombies. The narrator shows through Zhuganova's interview that ruling over people by fear is highly unethical, likening the Russian government to the monstrous zombies who also inspire terror.

Bridgetown, Barbados, West Indies Federation. The narrator meets T. Sean Collins at a raucous bar. He tells the narrator that there is no name for what his previous job used to be, and that the closest title that would apply would be "mercenary." He was a vet and used his training to make money by guarding "some fat CEO or worthless, dumb celebrity." The client he worked for right before the panic hit had a safe, well-stocked house by the beach—"a survivalists' wet dream"—and had decided to use it to provide safety to some actors, rappers, and other celebrity friends. Each of them brought along a host of stylists and personal assistants. A webcast went out from each room of the house at all times, since Collins' client wanted to become famous for saving his famous friends.

The wealthy led a luxurious life in pre-war America and could afford the means to safety. Collins talks of them derisively—in his opinion, they seem to be shallow and unworthy of their good fortune. Notably, his wealthy employer hadn't invited his other famous friends to his house to ensure that they'd be safe through the crisis—he'd done it only so he'd become famous himself for doing so, showing the level of his pettiness and hankering for fame at a time of crisis.

One night, they heard the alarms go off. Their sensors had detected hundreds of bodies moving towards the house. The lookout warned that the attackers were running, which made Collins nervous since **zombies** usually didn't run. When he looked at them through the sight of his weapon which had thermal imaging, he saw that they were warm bodies—not zombies. The people who were approaching "were carrying guns, ladders, babies." Collins' client ordered him and the other security to shoot at these people who were desperate for a safe haven, and they shot back.

While the extremely wealthy could afford safety, most people couldn't, and were desperate to save themselves and their children. They'd seen the webcasts from this celebrity safe house and had decided to storm it in a desperate attempt to keep themselves safe. Many of them had heartbreakingly brought their babies along. Collins' client displays extreme cruelty when he orders his guards to shoot at these frightened people. He doesn't just want them gone—he wants them dead for daring to invade his safe haven.

Collins says complete confusion ensued, and that it looked like "the end of the world" with fire and blood and bodies everywhere. He refused to fire at the people because he had been paid to fight **zombies**, not humans. He walked out to the beach and paddled out onto the water on a surfboard. He wonders why the rich people couldn't just go to a safe, isolated place like Antarctica or Greenland, since they could afford to, rather than stay in the public eye.

Collins displays integrity by refusing to follow his client's orders and walking out on his job. He cannot understand why the people he worked for hankered after fame even at a serious time like this. This interview shows that many wealthy people were not only shallow but were very confident that their money would protect them from all danger, which the zombie crisis quickly proved was incorrect.

Ice City, Greenland. The narrator meets Ahmed Farahnakian here. He used to be a major in the Iranian Revolution Guards. Farahnakian says that the world expected the next nuclear war to break out between Indian and Pakistan, which was why it didn't happen—everyone was prepared to stop it. But no one could predict the events that actually transpired.

Farahnakian makes an excellent point about how tragedy can be averted if one is prepared for it. While he is speaking of nuclear war, this same idea can also be applied to the zombie war. The reason the situation got so out of hand was because no one was prepared for it and didn't react to the danger signs quickly enough.

Farahnakian says that Iran was relatively unaffected by the outbreak since their land was mountainous and their population was small. Their biggest threat was the hordes of infected refugees coming in from Baluchistan, which overwhelmed the army. Most of the refugees were from India and passed through Pakistan while looking for a safe place. Pakistan was happy to pass on the problem of the refugees to another country rather than deal with it themselves. Iran offered to send some troops to Pakistan to help them keep the refugees out of their country, but the offer was seen as a threat and refused.

Again, this example shows that tensions between nations exacerbated the zombie problem around the world. Pakistan was happy to pass on the problem of the refugees to Iran rather than dealing with it ethically.

Desperate to keep the infected refugees out, Iran decided to bomb a bridge that led from Pakistan into Iran. Farahnakian led the mission himself, and hoped that Pakistan would not retaliate. But right after, Pakistan attacked the Iranian border station. The president and Ayatollah were willing to let it go, but Pakistan would not relent and continued its attacks. Their diplomatic channels had been destroyed, and the conflict escalated and turned nuclear. Farahnakian says that no one could have expected this, since Pakistan had even helped Iran build their nuclear program.

Fear and suspicion led to a nuclear war between Iran and Pakistan. Since Pakistan was being irrationally hostile, Iran didn't expect the problem and therefore couldn't resolve it quickly. Once again, fear causes great destruction and a breakdown of carefully cultivated relationships, making it almost as destructive and dangerous as the zombies themselves.

Denver, Colorado, USA. The narrator and Todd Wainio shake hands under the train station's mural of *Victory*, one of the most recognizable images from the war. It depicts soldiers standing on the New Jersey side of the Hudson and watching the sun rise over Manhattan. Wainio, who used to be a U.S. Army infantryman, looks prematurely old, like many men of his generation.

According to the narrator, Wainio and others of his generation have aged prematurely because of the stress they went through during the war years.

Wainio says that he, like most people, had never heard of Yonkers before, but that it was now as famous as Pearl Harbor and Little Bighorn. The events there took place around three months after the Great Panic, in which terrified people "shooting everything that moved" and traffic accidents "killed more people at first than Zack." The "powers that be" thought it would be a good idea to have one big battle against the **zombies** to show the public they were still in charge so they could begin to calm down.

During the Great Panic, the biggest problem the government had to deal with was people's fear. In sheer terror, people were attacking and killing each other in larger numbers than the zombies. The government knew that people believed that they no longer had any control over the situation, so they decided to show the people that they were still in charge by going on the offensive against the zombies.

Wainio wonders why the soldiers weren't placed on the flat roofs of the buildings at Yonkers, from where they could have seen the approaching **zombies** and been safe from them. Instead, they were placed on the ground, behind sandbags or in holes for "cover and concealment." He rails against this plan, saying it was "backasswards" and must have been thought up by some old Cold War general.

The higher-ups who planned the attack at Yonkers hadn't realized that their old strategies would not be effective against this new enemy. They had sent their soldiers into danger without much thought.

They had a lot of high-tech arms, like tanks and "electronic warfare vehicles all crammed with radar and jamming gear," and oddly, even portable latrines for the soldiers to use though they were right in the middle of a city. Wainio stresses that they had many things that were unnecessary and were probably there "just to look pretty" for the press, who were there in full force. They even had the soldiers dressed in Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP 4), which were bulky suits and masks designed to protect them from radioactive or biochem exposure—neither of which were present. The suits were cumbersome and uncomfortable in the heat. The soldiers were also virtually connected via the Land Warrior combat integration system so they could easily share information.

The campaign at Yonkers seems to have been planned solely to impress the press. There was a lot of high-tech gadgetry that looked good but would be useless against the zombies. The higher-ups hadn't considered the soldiers' safety or comfort in their desperate bid to please the press, and by extension, calm down the people of America. The government, too, seems to have been motivated by fear and desperation in their desire to cram all their high-tech gadgets into this battle, without really giving much thought to evolving a strategy that would be effective against this strange new enemy.

The **zombies** started trickling into the choke point. The soldiers fired rockets, which destroyed three-quarters of them, and there was much cheering. But the rest kept coming, even though their bodies had been torn apart by the blasts. Soon, more zombies began appearing, and the second round of rockets didn't do much to stop them, and neither did the bombs. The soldiers fired at them with heavy arms and missiles and grenades from the Humvees. Wainio is angry that their superiors hadn't realized that none of their high-tech arms were of any use against "a group of walking corpses." As the soldiers saw thousands of zombies still approaching through the fires, they began to feel fear. Wainio shot one in the chest and saw it get up again, which filled him with terror.

Wainio is angry that the campaign at Yonkers had been so irresponsibly planned. The army higher-ups had great faith in their technological prowess because this had worked well for them in other battles against human enemies—they were astounded that this had no effect on the zombies. The rules of warfare had changed, but the army was unprepared. The soldiers on the battlefield were gripped by fear when they saw that the zombies were unaffected by the bombs and gunfire, since they, too, had never faced an enemy like this one before. The U.S. Army wasn't used to feeling this powerless.

Wainio says that many arm-chair theorists cannot understand why the soldiers couldn't just shoot the **zombies** in the head. But he says that all their life they had been trained to shoot in the torso, and it was hard to suddenly change what they were used to. Their uncomfortable suits made it harder for them to reload their guns. Though they were trying to stay calm, they'd lived through three months of the Panic and had just seen that the zombies were undeterred by even missiles. Yet, they'd stayed and fought and killed many zombies.

Wainio seems justified in his defense of the soldiers who fought valiantly despite their frayed nerves, They had endured months of stress even before the Battle of Yonkers. When faced with the zombie horde that kept coming at them, they were terrified, but they powered through their fear and stayed and fought.

Land Warrior showed them just how large the horde of **zombies** was. They could see thousands, but behind them were millions. Land Warrior also transmitted the soldiers' frightened exclamations, and when one soldier said that the zombies didn't even die when they were shot in the head, it caused widespread panic among them. Then, through their eyepieces, they could see a soldier getting bitten by a zombie family, and the terror on his face when they tore off his mask and attacked him. An older soldier ordered them to stay off Land Warrior, and then the connection went dead.

While their superiors thought it would be a great idea to have all the soldiers connected virtually on Land Warrior, this plan backfired and only served to feed their fear. When they realized that they were being attacked by millions of zombies, they lost all hope for victory and were gripped by fear when they saw the zombies attacking other soldiers.

Then, an airstrike began and Wainio took shelter in his hole. A burned **zombie** head struck him in his back, and it was still trying to bite. After the last of the missiles fell, he came out of his hole and saw that more zombies were still coming through the fire and smoke. In the all-out panic that followed, soldiers and reporters tried to flee, and there was random shooting. Wainio was shot in his sternum. He felt hands reaching for him and fought back until he realized they were his friends rescuing him.

The Battle of Yonkers devolved into confusion and chaos. The higher ups had planned for the airstrike to be the final measure of defense, but this, too, proved to be ineffective against the zombies who walked through fire and didn't mind losing a few body parts. The zombies had won this round.

Wainio says that historians talk about Yonkers as representing a "catastrophic failure of the modern military apparatus," and he concedes that there were many mistakes made. Still, he believes that the main reason that Yonkers turned into a disaster was because the army was confronted with an enemy that felt no fear. Real fighting "isn't about killing or even hurting the other guy, it's about scaring him enough to call it a day." He says that Yonkers destroyed all hope that they'd be able to win against the **zombies**, and if it weren't for the South African plan, he is sure that everyone in America would have turned into zombies.

Wainio stresses the importance of fear in a war—the victorious side is the one that can successfully frighten and intimidate its enemy. However, the zombies feel neither awe nor intimidation by the army's weapons. Unlike people, they have nothing to lose. Also, they are incapable of feeling anything, including fear. This proves to be their biggest strength in battle.

CHAPTER 4: TURNING THE TIDE

Robben Island, Cape Town Province, United States of Southern Africa. The narrator meets Xolelwa Azania at his writing desk where he is working on his book *Rainbow Fist: South Africa at War*. The book is about the turning point in the war against the living dead. Azania talks about Paul Redeker, one of history's most controversial figures, and describes him as being very dispassionate. Redeker believed that "humanity's one fundamental flaw was emotion." He wrote many papers as a student that gave alternate, rational solutions to historical and societal problems, which first brought him to the attention of the apartheid government. He believed "both love and hate to be irrelevant," and the South African government considered him to be "an invaluable source of liberated intellect" and used his plan to negotiate the apartheid crisis.

Redeker believed that emotions are a human "flaw," in contrast to the narrator's claim in the introduction, in which he speaks of the value of feelings and emotions—to him, they are what connects human beings to one another. Redeker, however, valued only logic and rationality, suggesting that the Redeker Plan would be built on a foundation of pure logic rather than emotion.

During the Great Panic, agents of the National Intelligence Agency found Redeker and asked him for his help to solve the crisis. He already had a plan for dealing with the undead. First, he believed there was no way to save everyone, and that the armed forces would need to be retreat to "safe zones" that would have some sort of natural barrier against the zombies like mountains and rivers. Second, only a small percentage of civilians could be moved within these zones, and they would provide the government with a labor force and also grant legitimacy to the government. Other people were to be herded into isolated zones where they would serve as "human bait" to lure the undead away from safe zones. He said these people should be kept alive by the government in order to ensure that the zombies left the safe zones alone.

Redeker's plan, while efficient, was also rational to the point of cruelty. He seemed to have viewed people as either a labor force or zombie food—unlike the narrator in the introduction to this novel, Redeker doesn't at all take into consideration people's feelings, opinions, or relationships. However, the problem had already gotten so out of hand that more humane solutions would have been ineffective.

When Redeker read his report to the president's cabinet, it was greeted with outrage. One person, however, stood up for him—an "elder statesman, the father of [their] new democracy." He greeted Redeker warmly and told the room that Redeker's plan would save the nation. He hugged Redeker, and the emotion of the embrace broke something inside Redeker. He was never seen or heard from again. Azania says that this might be because Redeker had tried to suppress his emotions all his life since this was "the only way to protect his sanity from the hatred and brutality he witnessed on a daily basis."

A respected "elder statesman" had the foresight to see that Redeker's plan was the only way forward and stood up for Redeker's ideas. (This is probably a reference to Nelson Mandela, the respected South African statesman who is known for his warm hugs.) When this man hugged Redeker, Redeker had some kind of emotional breakdown and disappeared from public life. Azania guesses that this might have happened because Redeker had suppressed his emotions all his life since he couldn't bear the harshness of daily living, and the statesman's acceptance and warmth had called up his emotions. This episode suggests that emotions are such an integral part of human nature than it is impossible to deny and repress them.

Azania says he stepped in after Redeker disappeared and helped to implement the plan. He says he pities Redeker and hopes he is at peace. The narrator leaves Azania and takes a ferry back to the mainland. He has been at the Robben Island Psychiatric Institution, and has visited a patient named Paul Redeker.

The narrator reveals that Azania is in fact Redeker. He has had a mental breakdown and has taken on a new identity, probably because he couldn't bear the thought of being the one who came up with the plan that would cause the deaths of huge swathes of civilians. While Redeker was often considered to be completely emotionless, his breakdown suggests that he, too, suffered the weight of the Redeker Plan. The narrator's theory that the "human factor" connects all people seems to be right.

Armagh, Ireland. The narrator bumps into Philip Adler at the Pope's wartime refuge. It is Adler's first time traveling outside of Germany after the war ended. He tells the narrator that Hamburg was crawling with **zombies** and refugees, and he was put in charge of his sector after the commanding officer was infected. He set up headquarters at the Renaissance Hotel and advocated sequestering civilians while they waited for help to arrive. His sector was low on ammunition and they were looking for improvised weapons when they got the order to retreat. The orders also specified that they were not to move the civilians or inform them that they were leaving. Adler asked for confirmation that he was understanding the message correctly, and he got it.

The previous section showed that the Redeker Plan was so harsh that it triggered a breakdown in its creator. In this section, the narrator shows how difficult it was for the German armed forces to execute it. Soldiers like Adler took their duties very seriously. It was so hard for him to grasp that he was to abandon the civilians that he believed he must protect.

When Adler asked for confirmation again, he found himself speaking to General Lang, commander of the entire Northern Front. In a shaking voice, Lang told him that the orders were not a mistake. Adler felt terrible about "following orders that would indirectly cause a mass murder." As a West German, he keenly felt "the responsibility of the past" and was raised to obey his conscience. He told Lang he could not obey the order. Lang told him that if he didn't, he and his men would be charged with treason and prosecuted. Adler felt his men deserved better, so he gave the order to withdraw.

Adler tells the narrator that his heritage as a "West German" made him put his conscience first, reminding him that the cruelties of the Holocaust were only possible because the Germans of the previous generation had unquestioningly obeyed orders. However, he was forced to obey these new, cruel orders when his general threatened not only Adler but also his men. Adler noticed that General Lang's voice was "shaking" as he gave the orders, suggesting that, he, too, was struggling with them.

As the troops left Hamburg, the civilians shouted angrily at them, calling them liars and cowards. They threw furniture and lamps down on them. Adler fought tears and vowed to kill General Lang when they got out. However, Lang had committed suicide before Adler got to him. Adler says that he now understands the plan and why they had been ordered to do what they did. He says this makes him hate Lang more, since Lang had known about the plan and understood that the road ahead was a difficult one in which men like him would be necessary—and yet, he'd chosen the easy path of death, like a coward.

Adler was devastated and ashamed as he led his troops out of Hamburg. He believes that General Lang took the easy way out by killing himself since implementing the Redeker Plan only got harder. The narrator seems to agree with Adler—General Lang's cowardly step can be contrasted with the actions other army superiors in the novel, like General Raj-Singh and Captain Chen, who took the weight of difficult actions onto themselves in order to spare their soldiers.

Yevchenko Veterans' Sanatorium, Odessa, Ukraine. The narrator describes the room he is in as being windowless and dimly lit. The patients suffer mostly from respiratory disorders and do not have any usable medication. There are no doctors, and they are cared for by overworked nurses and orderlies. Bohdan Taras Kondratiuk is a war hero, and speaks to the narrator between bouts of coughing.

These sick veterans are being housed in terrible conditions—it is tragic that this is what a "war hero" must endure. The war has certainly left a destroyed world.

Kondratiuk says that he and his men were exhausted after four brutal engagements. They were looking forward to some rest at Kiev, but as soon as they got there, it was being evacuated, and they had to oversee the escape route at Patona Bridge. The bridge was crowded and chaotic, and their orders were to check if any of the evacuees were infected. This was an impossible task without dogs, and Kondratiuk's men were attacked—some even killed—by the angry evacuees who refused to comply. Kondratiuk was radioing for help that was promised but never arrived.

Kondratiuk's account highlights the hardships of the war. The Ukrainian soldiers were overworked and exhausted, and civilians were terrified and angry and turned on them. The Ukrainian government seems to have demanded a lot of its armed forces without providing them with adequate resources, like dogs to sniff out infected humans.

Kondratiuk heard the moan of approaching **zombies**, and at the same time saw four jets approaching the bridge. He suddenly realized that they were about to bomb the bridge, and yelled for people to run. There was immediate panic, and some even dove into the water. Kondratiuk saw the parachutes released by the jets and recognized the RVX. He dove into a tank to take shelter, ensuring that its seal was tight, and huddled with a few frightened soldiers. He saw the evacuees outside immediately dying as the nerve agent did its job, and wondered why the army decided to use it because it would be useless against the undead.

While terrified civilians ran and even jumped into the river at the sight of the jets, Kondratiuk realized that this would be of no use since the planes were dropping nerve agents, not bombs. From inside his tank, Kondratiuk witnessed the horrific sight of people falling dead as the nerve agent took effect. Importantly, the army didn't seem to think even its soldiers—like Kondratiuk—deserved to be warned about its decision, and Kondratiuk, too, never stops to question this, suggesting that the Ukrainian army didn't value its soldiers very much. Kondratiuk does wonder about the army's decision to take this step since the nerve agent would kill people, not zombies.

Then, Kondratiuk saw that those who had been bitten and had tried to conceal it were now reanimating, and he realized that the bomb was a way to identify the infected. He ordered the gunner in the tank to take them out. Other tanks around them followed suit, and he could see more jets flying to other bridges, and even to the city center. He then ordered his company to withdraw and they headed southwest, the bodies around them popping as the tank ran over them.

Kondratiuk made the chilling realization that the army had dropped the nerve agent only to identify the infected—even though that meant they'd be killing civilians in the process. Unlike Adler, who was so angry at the idea of putting civilians in danger that he refuses orders, Kondratiuk doesn't seem particularly stunned or angry at this hideous strategy, at least not for long. He quickly recovers and orders that the reanimating zombies be shot. He recalls that the bodies around them "popped" as his tank ran over them, a gruesome image that must haunt him though he doesn't admit it. This interview once again highlights the drastic steps that governments had to take to curb the zombie menace.

Sand Lakes Provincial Wilderness Park, Manitoba, Canada. Jesika Hendricks is part of the Wilderness Restoration Project and has volunteered in this sub-arctic region every summer after the war ended. She tells the narrator that she doesn't really blame the government for diverting some refugees north since she understands that they couldn't shelter everyone west behind the Rocky Mountains. Yet, she cannot forgive them for doing this in an irresponsible way and for withholding information that could have helped many of the refugees survive.

Hendricks' anger against the government seems very justified. She understands that not everyone would have fit in the safe zone, but wonders why the government couldn't have at least given the others tips on how to survive. Radio Free Earth was one such initiative by a group of concerned people who recognized this lack of information and tried to fill it, but it was probably started after the time that Hendricks describes. She is certainly right that the government totally abandoned people like her, without protection and without information.

Two weeks after Yonkers, three days after the government retreated west, six **zombies** were spotted in Hendricks' neighborhood. Her father decided they would leave and "go north" since the living dead would freeze solid in the cold and the news channels spoke of it as the only hope for survival. They packed what seemed like enough food for a couple of years, but finished half of it on their way up.

Hendricks' father was taken in by the media's fear mongering because they had no other source they could get helpful, accurate information from. He led his family into the cold with little food and inadequate preparation since most Americans were used to lives of comfort and were unequipped to survive harsh conditions.

They set up camp around a lake, close to friendly people, and it initially felt like a party. Back then, Hendricks says, there were still trees. Later, after the second and third waves started showing up, people burned whatever they could for warmth—leaves and stumps, and then plastic and rubber. By then, the fish in the lake were all gone, and there were no animals left to hunt. Still, people were hopeful because the cold would freeze the undead. They didn't worry about how they would survive the winter. Hendricks says the majority of the people were very unprepared for the cold, and many got sick. When food started running out, the camp began to get dangerous and unruly.

Hendricks' account shows that the people who went north were initially optimistic but didn't realize that the weather would prove to be as dangerous as the zombies. While the extreme cold froze the zombies and spared the humans that danger, they hadn't planned for their resources to last the long, foodless winter months. When the cold arrived, they understood how difficult survival would be and their optimism was replaced by fear and hostility. Hendricks notes that they also caused ecological devastation on a large scale, burning everything in sight until there were no trees left and hunting all the animals of the region.

Hendricks had been a heavy kid when they arrived at the lake in August, and by November, she and her parents looked like skeletons. Around Thanksgiving, she was too weak to get out of her sleeping bag and could smell the neighbors cooking something delicious, some kind of meat. She heard her parents arguing—her mother wanted to get some for Jesika while her father said they couldn't stoop to that level. Finally, he traded their radio in for a bucket of stew. Jesika was so happy to eat it. In a few months, both her parents would get sick and she'd be taking care of them. She says that by December, they were overwhelmed by the cold and the camp was quiet. By Christmas, they had "plenty of food."

Hendricks' account shows that when faced with desperate situations, people will do anything to survive—even resort to cannibalism. While gruesome, it was the only way for Hendricks and others to survive the crisis. In this way, it seems similar to the Redeker Plan and shows that survival in those dark years came at a very high price.

Hendricks says that 11 million refugees died that winter, just in North America. By mid-July, the snow melted and the living dead arrived. The narrator watches as she uses a crowbar to crush the skull of a reanimating **zombie** near them.

A shocking number of people died in just that one winter, and summer brought its own terrors—thawing zombies. Having survived those hard times, Hendricks seems to be hardened as she casually kills zombies while chatting with the narrator. The war not only caused massive destruction but also forced individuals to change in order to survive the hard times.

Udaipur Lake Palace, Lake Pichola, Rajasthan, India. This palace is being fixed up by Project Manager Sardar Khan, who says he remembers the monkeys that were fleeing from the **zombies**, even climbing over people's heads as the refugees made their way up a narrow Himalayan path. People fell off the path, and Khan even saw a bus go over the edge. A woman with a bundle in her arms was trying to get out when the bus fell, and none of the people attempted to help her. He says that they seemed no different than the monkeys.

Khan describes refugees hurrying to get into the Indian subcontinent's safe zone in the Himalayas. He says that their fear made them behave like animals—they lost their empathy and cared only about their own safety.

Khan was just a road engineer who happened to be around when Sergeant Mukherjee needed a driver. Khan tried to explain that he wasn't qualified for the job, but Mukherjee paid no attention to him. Into his radio, he spoke about the charges to blow the pass already being in place. When they arrived at the pass, Mukherjee was furious to find that it was still full of refugees when it should have been clear of people. When he questioned a soldier who was in charge of keeping the pass clear, the soldier angrily responded that Mukherjee could shoot his grandmother if he wanted to but that he wouldn't do it. Meanwhile, another officer radioed in to say that they would blow the pass even if there were people on it.

The Indian army's plan was to blow up the pass to prevent the zombies from being able to access the safe zone. However, there was an unending stream of refugees desperate to enter the safe zone and the soldiers in charge refused to shoot at them, just as Adler has refused his orders to abandon the civilians. Once again, this interview shows how hard the Redeker Plan was to implement.

Mukherjee responded that he would never murder these people, and that he would blow the bridge only when the **zombies** got there—not before. Just then, General Raj-Singh arrived on the scene. Khan says that people don't believe him when he tells them that he met him. He appeared to be larger than life to him, despite his torn and bloody clothes. The General calmly explained that the road had to be destroyed immediately. He told them that if they were unable or unwilling to do so, the air force had its orders to use thermonuclear weapons to blow up the passes. That would destroy half the mountain and make the safe zone accessible to the undead.

While the armed forces all over the world struggled with the orders they got to abandon or kill civilians, ultimately this seemed to be their only choice if they wanted to save at least a few people in their countries. Wise leaders like General Raj-Singh understood this, which is why they insisted that the high cost had to be borne.

General Raj-Singh held out his hand for the detonator, willing to take on the responsibility of the refugees' deaths because he could see that Mukherjee was unwilling to do so. But the detonator didn't work when he pressed it—something had gone wrong with the charges on the pass. General Raj-Singh told Khan and Mukherjee to save themselves, and then plunged into the crowds. Khan and Mukherjee decided to follow and help him, but were overwhelmed by the crowd. Khan saw Mukherjee falling off the edge of the mountain, wrestling with a refugee who wanted his gun. Suddenly, Khan could smell and hear the dead approaching. He climbed on top of an abandoned bus and could see them devouring refugees.

General Raj-Singh is a foil to Germany's General Lang who committed suicide when faced with the challenges of the Redeker Plan. Raj-Singh was heroically willing to detonate the bombs that would have killed the civilians on the pass because no one else wanted to do it. He generously told Khan and Mukherjee to escape before trying to fix the detonators when they didn't go off. The novel celebrates Raj-Singh as a truly responsible leader, even despite his killing of civilians.

Khan fell off the bus and was trampled by panicking people, and then managed to hide under the bus. He was hurt and couldn't move, and tried to bash his own skull in to escape being bitten by the approaching **zombies**. Suddenly, he heard the roar of a bomb and was thrown up against the bus and lost consciousness. When he came to, he was alone on the mountain path, with a charred cliff wall ahead. The living dead were still trying to get Khan, and were falling off the edge of the blown pass, onto the valley floor below. He guessed that General Raj-Singh had set off the bomb by hand. All the passes had been secured.

Khan was so afraid and desperate to escape the zombies that he tried to kill himself by bashing his own head in—a disturbing image that shows the lengths to which people went in their fear of the zombies. Luckily, General Raj-Singh managed to set off the bomb and secure the pass, and also probably sacrificed his life doing so. In the short appearance Raj-Singh makes in this interview, he proves himself to be kind, practical, and a valiant leader who sacrificed himself to save his country, justifying the admiration he inspires in many characters .

CHAPTER 5: HOME FRONT USA

Taos, New Mexico. The narrator is speaking to Arthur Sinclair, Junior, who was director of the U.S. government's Department of Strategic Resources or DeStRes. Sinclair says that DeStRes sounds a lot like "distress," which was very appropriate since the safe zone behind the Rockies faced the problems of "starvation, disease, [and] homelessness." In addition to this, the living dead kept attacking the Rocky Line and were also present within it. He had to do "a lot of on-the-job training" to get these refugees on their feet, and to do this, he had to read and learn a lot, too. Like his father, who had been a New Dealer with communist leanings, he tried to "find and harvest the right tools and talent."

Sinclair's interview describes how life in America's safe zone behind the Rockies was also fraught with challenges, reminding readers that the war years were not easy on anyone. People's lives before the war had been very different—and much easier—so Sinclair had to train people with the skills to survive their new reality. To do this, Sinclair, too, had to learn and adapt to the demands of his new job. Sinclair comes across as a very intelligent and adaptable person who did a lot to improve the quality of life in the safe zones. The novel makes the case that those who can adapt to meet new challenges are generally more successful in hard times, and Sinclair is one of these people.

Sinclair admits that their pool of talent was very low as most of the refugees had held white-collar office positions, and what they needed now were people who could build and make things, like carpenters and machinists. All those with no skills became F6 or "unskilled labor" and were given grunt work like "clearing rubble, harvesting crops, digging graves." Those with "war-appropriate skills" became part of the Community Self-Sufficiency Program (CSSP), and also trained the "cubicle mice" to do useful jobs. This program, which became known as the National Reeducation Act (NRA), was an instant success and the refugees began claiming less government aid.

In these new circumstances, many Americans had to be "reeducated" since their old skills were useless in this new world. People who'd held formerly prestigious desk jobs were now classified as "unskilled labor" since they didn't know how to build or make things with their hands—these were the necessary skills in these changed times. Through these details, the author seems to be critiquing the nature of the jobs that most people consider "important" in society—like those of the highly-paid "cubicle mice"—by showing that their skills aren't useful at all in the business of daily living.

One of the biggest challenges Sinclair faced was trying "to change the way people thought"—racism and classism were ingrained into America's prewar segregated workforce. Most of the members of the CSSP and the instructors in the NRA were first-generation immigrants and blue-collar workers, and the formerly wealthy found it hard to stomach this. However, with time, many of them came to enjoy their new work more than they had ever liked their old, pre-war jobs.

Americans had to adjust to this new reality, and those who'd enjoyed wealth and power in pre-war America struggled with their lost prestige. However, most seemed to have made this transition with time, finding joy in their new work, perhaps because it was more meaningful and useful to their community than their old jobs were. Here, too, the author continues his critique of the high-paying, meaningless jobs that American executives work on.

Sinclair says they began recycling and reusing their old goods, and took apart cars for parts and tools. It was easy for them to find the materials since, before the war, even "those considered middle class enjoyed, or took for granted, a level of material comfort unheard of by any other nation at any other time in human history." The army was resistant to the DeStRes taking apart their bombers and tanks, but Sinclair got his way because they no longer had any fuel to make their technology work.

This section highlights America's embarrassing, excessive prewar materialism, which is one of the reasons that the people in the safe zones struggled so much with their changed circumstances. Their previous comforts had made them soft.

Sinclair says he was willing to fight the military for the DeStRes, but was glad he didn't have to, especially after Travis D'Ambrosia became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Sinclair trusted his advice. Also, soldiers began to adapt to the program, too, and began seeing the value of reusing and adapting to their changed circumstances. He points proudly to a tool that hangs on his wall, a steel rod that ends in a fusion between a shovel and a battle-axe. It is called the "Lobotimizer" or the "Lobo," and Sinclair proudly tells the narrator that they manufactured 23 million of these weapons during the war, using steel from recycled cars.

Sinclair is clearly a resourceful person and did a great job of leading the safe zones into becoming independent at producing and manufacturing useful goods. While most of the military's technology was ineffective against the zombies, like at the Battle of Yonkers, people returned to old-fashioned hand-to-hand combat with weapons like the Lobo. Sinclair's section highlights the importance of adaptability for survival. People were forced to change the way they thought of their lives and even their methods of warfare.

Burlington, Vermont. The narrator is interviewing the former vice-president who insists on calling himself "the Whacko" because everyone else calls him that. He says that unlike most politicians, he said what he felt, which made him perfect to be the president's copilot. He says that the president was "the light" while he was "the heat." They had different personalities and different skin colors, and he knows this was one of the reasons he was chosen since America didn't want "another one of 'those people'" to be leading the country. He says this was "stupid, ignorant, and infuriatingly Neolithic," and yet, he wasn't surprised by it.

"The Whacko" and the American president were an excellent, complementary team who came into power at a difficult time in history. The Whacko doesn't his mince words and says he knows that one of the reasons America had chosen him to be vice-president was because he was a white man while the president wasn't. In his words, this was "stupid" but unsurprising—this detail shows the American public's racism even at a moment of crisis. It highlights people's petty nature, like at Alang in India where Shah saw some boats offering rides only to the higher castes.

Even in the chaos of those times, the president had insisted on elections, which had surprised the Whacko. The president had said calmly that it was a "time for high ideals because those ideals [were] all that [they had]." He had said that America "only existed because people believed in it," and it couldn't have a future if they lost their freedom. The Whacko tells the narrator that he saw "a lot of weakness, a lot of filth" among people in those times, but that the president "was a great man" and they were lucky to have him.

The president during the zombie war was a huge contrast to the leadership that was in charge during the initial stages of the outbreak. This president seems to have been a wise and honorable man. Despite living in fearful times, he did not allow the circumstances to hurt his ideals and integrity and was determined to protect the freedom of democracy. He is a huge contrast to other world leaders like the Russian president who used the crisis as an excuse to murder his opposition and grab more power.

Many of the president's ideas seemed "crazy at first glance," but were all very logical. For instance, he said that as punishment for crimes, people should be put in stocks and whipped in public, and while this sounded barbaric, there was no infrastructure to maintain prisons and people who were locked away couldn't contribute in any way to society. The public humiliation of this punishment ended up serving as an effective deterrent.

The president, like Redeker, came up with practical solutions to address the complexity of those times. But unlike Redeker, he seemed to value people's emotions and cleverly used them to generate solutions.

Some of the problems the government faced from their own people were from the Fundies or religious fundamentalists who believed they were acting against god's will. One of them tried to murder the president. There were also the Greenies, ecoterrorists who tried to protect trees from being cut down. The most dangerous were the Rebs, armed political secessionists, who existed within the safe zone. The president was most worried about the Rebs. In public he said they were just another "issue" like the shortage of food, but in private, he said that they must be "eliminated swiftly."

The president was also careful about not inciting more fear among an already terrified populace. He reserved his worries for private meetings, and practically tried to "eliminate" any groups that were dangerous to his people.

However, there were some secessionists east of the Rockies and the government didn't know what to do with them since they had abandoned those people. They couldn't blame them for not wanting anything to do with the government. Later, when they began reclaiming these territories, they gave these secessionists the opportunity to reintegrate. However, there ended up being a lot of violence, and the Whacko admits he still has nightmares thinking about it. This ultimately destroyed the president's spirit and killed him.

Those troubled times didn't have perfect solutions, and the president was very troubled by the violence that took place later in the war. While the Whacko still has nightmares about them, the president lost his will to live. This section implies that he died out of sorrow. Though this was a necessary war, it clearly caused much destruction and claimed many lives, highlighting the fact that survival came at a very high price.

Wenatchee, Washington. Joe Muhammad is most famous for the bronze statue he made for the Neighborhood Security Memorial, which shows "two standing citizens, and one seated in a wheelchair." The narrator notes that Muhammad is disabled. Muhammad tells the narrator that when he went to volunteer for the Neighborhood Security Team, the recruiter was nervous and didn't know how to tell him he might not be a suitable candidate because he was in a wheelchair. He laughed at her because he knew all that would be expected of him and knew that he could do them all. He yelled at her to call her CO, and he immediately was recruited and got his orange vest.

The Neighborhood Security Teams consisted of volunteer civilians who helped to keep zombies out of the safe zone. Muhammad comes across as a responsible man who wants to make a difference in his community. He is shocked by people's bullheadedness in the way they perceive disabilities, showing, once again, that human beings are often disappointing. The fact that people are organizing themselves into groups for their own protection shows that they have come a long way since the Great Panic, during which they were running helter-skelter and shooting one another. They are now no longer as afraid—especially since they are in the safe zone—and this helps them to plan and organize clearheadedly.

Neighborhood Security was a quasi-military outfit and its members attended lectures and training. They had mostly hand-to-hand weapons like hatchets and crowbars, but no Lobos yet. Three people in each team had to carry guns, and Muhammad was one of those on his team. The night shift was difficult, and they patrolled with flashlights, checking in at each house. With the resettlement program from the camps, people were assigned new housemates all the time. Muhammad says that he hadn't realized how much space and comfort they'd had before the war. Now, he had to share his house with a family of six. He got used to it pretty quickly, however. One of the new rules was that each house had to have one night watchman, and having more people in the house made this easier.

While the members of the Neighborhood Security Teams were all civilian volunteers, their job was still fraught with danger, showing that many people like Muhammad admirably stepped up to the challenges of those times. It seems like the residents, too, didn't object to the changes in their lifestyles or the compromises they had to make since they understood that safety was paramount. The mindless panic of the early outbreak had been replaced with logic and composure.

That first year, when there were a lot of deserted houses, Neighborhood Security put police tape across the windows and doors. If it snapped, it could mean there was a **zombie** in the house, which had happened a few times. One time, Muhammad almost got bitten by a zombie when his team was inside checking out an abandoned house, and his wheelchair had helped him escape it. The only time he'd got hurt was when a looter had shot at him, and it was the only time Muhammad had killed anyone. There were also ferals sometimes, homeless kids who had lost their parents, who'd often run away when they were discovered.

The Neighborhood Security watch had a dangerous job to do, and they did it well. Muhammad talks about the only time he'd got hurt on the job being when a looter shot at him, reminding the narrator that human beings were often as challenging during the crisis as the zombies themselves.

Muhammad says that the biggest problem they faced were the quislings—people who went crazy and started acting like **zombies**. He says that some people are drawn to the things they are afraid of, and instead "of resisting it, they want to please it, join it, try to be like it." The quislings not only acted like the zombies, they also began attacking and trying to eat other people. Some people thought they were immune because they'd been bitten by quislings, not zombies, and others even thought that Phalanx worked. Quislings were in some way more dangerous than zombies because they didn't freeze and became stronger from eating people. Oddly, they didn't seem to feel pain even when shot at because they had convinced themselves they were zombies.

This passage builds on the idea that people posed as much of a challenge in those years as the zombies themselves. The phenomenon of the "quislings" is a strange reaction to extreme fear, with people taking on the identities of the thing they are afraid of since they want to appease it. This is one of the ways in which fear causes characters in the novel to behave oddly or uncharacteristically, and it is definitely the most striking example. According to Muhammad, the quislings were in some ways even more dangerous than zombies since they broke the rules of zombie behavior that people were just about getting used to.

Malibu, California. The narrator meets the famous director Roy Elliot for coffee in Malibu. Elliot tells him that he tried to combat ADS, which stood for Asymptomatic Demise Syndrome or Apocalyptic Despair Syndrome, depending on whom one spoke to. He says that "in those early stalemate months," ADS killed as many people "as hunger, disease, interhuman violence, or the living dead." They had plenty of people commit suicide, but this was different. People with ADS simply went to sleep one night and wouldn't wake up in the morning. They felt helpless and were filled with despair, and just lost the will to live. Elliot says that he understood that feeling of helplessness because he'd been hailed as a genius director all his life, and he was now suddenly designated as F6 or unskilled labor.

Elliot's sympathy for the victims of ADS stemmed from his own feelings of helplessness and worthlessness in those war years. While he'd been a famous and admired director in pre-war America, he was classified as "unskilled labor" by the DeStRes. In the introduction, the narrator insists that it is "feelings" and "emotions" that connect people, and here is a concrete example of this. Elliot wanted to help victims of ADS because he understood how they felt.

Elliot went to the government with a proposal to make movies to fight ADS, and he was immediately turned down. He told the DeStRes rep that he would use his own camera and resources. All they would have to do was give him access to the military so he could show people what they were doing to stop the **zombies** and give them something to believe in. He was refused again because they said the military had no time to pose for the camera. So, Elliot took a DV camera and his son as his assistant, and they traveled on bikes looking for stories.

Elliot was determined to make a difference and didn't let the DeStRes' refusals stop him. In Sinclair's section, the DeStRes comes across as a practical organization that was exactly what was needed in those times, but Elliot's interview shows that there were also downsides to sheer practicality.

Elliot found his first story quickly. Just outside LA, 300 students from five colleges had turned the Women's College at Scripps into a fortified settlement. They had garden tools and ROTC rifles, and had planted gardens and dug wells. They had managed to hold off 10,000 **zombies**, and Elliot got there just in time to capture the victorious final battle on film, before the area was declared a safe zone. He quickly took the footage home and edited it, with his wife doing the narration. He named the movie *Victory at Avalon: The Battle of the Five Colleges*, and screened it at camps and shelters over LA. He initially thought it was a flop because the viewers didn't react to it.

Elliot found a moving and motivating story in the college students who had worked together to build a settlement and fight off hordes of zombies. Since ADS was a syndrome born out of extreme hopelessness, Elliot hoped that this story of hope would make a difference in viewers' lives. However, at first, it didn't seem to make any difference at all.

Two weeks later, a psychiatrist visited Elliot and told him they'd seen an instant drop in ADS cases after the movie screening. He wanted copies of the film so he could screen it. None of the government authorities had bothered to inform Elliot about it, although they were continuing to screen it, too. Elliot was happy that it had worked, and immediately gathered volunteers to make more films. They made hundreds of films and screened them wherever possible. Soon, they saw a 10% drop in ADS in the entire western safe zone.

Elliot found a way to bring hope and make life more bearable for the inhabitants of the safe zones and achieved his aim of lowering the prevalence of ADS. The government was dealing with so many challenges in those times that they probably didn't have time to focus on the difference that Elliot's movie had made to the morale inside the safe zone—though this does seem like a big oversight since the mental health of civilians was vital for continuing with their rebuilding efforts.

Soon, ADS was down by 23%, and the government finally became interested in what Elliot was doing. He then made *Fire of the Gods*, a movie about the military's sophisticated laser weapons. The movie was a huge hit, and people lined up to watch it every night. The movie saved the laser programs, which DeStRes had deemed to be "a gross waste of resources." Elliot admits that this was true as they were not the most effective weapons against **zombies**. Still, Elliot knew these weapons would dazzle Americans since they "worship technology," which is why he focused his movie on them. The movie was such a hit that Elliot made a whole series on the military's technology, called "Wonder Weapons." None of these weapons made any difference in the war against the zombies, but they "were psychological war winners."

The impact of Elliot's movies was so huge that the government could no longer ignore it. While the army had initially refused to cooperate in his projects, they, too, lowered their guard when they saw that his films were making such a difference. Elliot concedes that the movies he made about military weapons featured technology that was ineffective against the zombies, and yet they worked to increase optimism since Americans had great faith in technology. This detail shows that the American public still had their prewar faith in technology even though they had seen how it had been completely ineffective—for the army, and for themselves—in this crisis.

The narrator asks Elliot if that wasn't a lie, and Elliot says it was. He says it was the kind of lie that kept people warm when the cold truth of the **zombies** froze them. He says the "word for that kind of lie" is "Hope."

Elliot admits that in order to bring hope to people, it was necessary to twist the truth a little during those dark times. Basically, there was nothing to be truly hopeful about.

Parnell Air National Guard Base, Tennessee. Gavin Blaire takes the narrator to meet his squadron commander, Colonel Christina Eliopolis, who has a reputation for being very tough. She tells the narrator that she was extremely skilled at flying a Raptor, but that in this **zombie** war, that meant nothing. The DeStRes had said that the air force's RKR (resource to kill ratio) was among the worst, which was very frustrating for pilots like her. Rather than being a fighter pilot, her job became "Continental Airlift"—she carried supplies to the small military and civilian outposts that remained outside the safe zones. It was the "largest undertaking in air force history" since they had to stay in touch with all these little islands and procure and prioritize all their demands.

Eliopolis was a skilled fighter pilot but her skills were of no use in fighting the zombies. The air force couldn't hurt very many of the lumbering land creatures, and their bombs were ineffective against them. Eliopolis, like Elliot, was frustrated that her pre-war fighting skills were no longer valuable. Yet, the job she ended up with also seemed to be an important and necessary one though it might not have been quite as exciting as being a fighter pilot.

Eliopolis' team sometimes dropped food and medicine, but Sinclair asked them to prioritize delivery of tools and spare parts that would help these little islands become self-sufficient. Sometimes, they dropped specialists like engineers and doctors into Blue (civilian) Zones when they needed special help. Eliopolis says that the specialists they dropped in were very brave since they knew they wouldn't be picked up—they would be stuck there until the war ended. They went anyway. The narrator says the pilots were also very brave, and Eliopolis agrees, saying they had to fly over hundreds or thousands of miles of infested territory.

Under Sinclair's clear-sighted command, the DeStRes focused on encouraging self-sufficiency in these outposts so they would be less of a burden on government resources. While the war caused death and destruction, it also brought human bravery and kindness to the fore. So many men and women worked to help others, even though they were putting their own lives in danger to do so.

On one such mission, the plane that Eliopolis was on crashed, and she still doesn't understand what exactly happened. They were headed from Phoenix to a Blue Zone outside Tallahassee. It was October and already winter, and the government wanted to squeeze in as many drops as possible before the weather got worse. Eliopolis' team was exhausted. They were all on stims or "tweeks" that kept them going. This made Eliopolis want to urinate frequently, and her other team members (who were all men) teased her about having to pee frequently like a girl. When she took a bathroom break, the plane suddenly exploded. She opened her chute as she fell out and tried to contact her crew on her radio but got no response. On her way down, she saw that only one other chute was making its way down from the plane.

Eliopolis mentions that winter came early, in October, hinting at the change in weather that comes after nuclear warfare. The clouds of smoke that surrounded the Earth after the war between Iran and Pakistan had changed weather patterns. Eliopolis was the only woman on her team, and likely was one of the few women fighter pilots around, which is why she probably had cultivated a tough exterior. Even though her teammates seemed to have teased her frequent urination in light spirits, Eliopolis nevertheless seems to have been sensitive about being teased for being a woman.

Eliopolis guessed she was somewhere over swampy Louisiana, but she found it hard to think straight. She checked to see that she was unhurt and had her essential supplies and gun. The narrator asks if the air force had trained them for situations like these, and she says they did have a survival program which even included real **zombies**. Eliopolis had never been worried about "being alone in hostile territory," and says she even survived her four years at Colorado Springs. The narrator asks her if there weren't any other women, and Eliopolis says there were only "other competitors who happen[ed] to have the same genitalia." She had always been "self-reliant" and "unquestionably self-assured."

Eliopolis implies that surviving by herself in this unknown swampy area was not as challenging for her as her air force training had been. The narrator immediately assumes that this is because she had no women classmates, but Eliopolis corrects him, telling him it was because she had a lot of competition and the gender of her competitors was irrelevant. She seems to be opposed to admitting that her gender caused her any challenges—and, in general, is reluctant to admit that she ever felt helpless. Despite declaring that she was always "unquestionably self-assured," Eliopolis did seem to be scared and disoriented by her fall, though she doesn't admit it.

When Eliopolis landed, she went looking for the other chute through the cold swamp. A couple hours later, she discovered the chute tangled in tree branches and her co-pilot being devoured by Zack. She was so angry that she shot them all, which was a mistake since she had wasted her ammunition. She says she was blinded by "self-hate" since she thought she was to blame for the plane blowing up. She had stepped away when it had happened, "squatting over a bucket like a goddamn girl," instead of doing her job and flying the plane.

When Eliopolis saw the zombies eating her co-pilot, she was overwhelmed by her emotions and acted unwisely by wasting her ammunition. At that moment, Eliopolis must have realized that she would have to navigate the swamp by herself, which must have terrified her. While she doesn't admit this, she does say that she was angry at herself for taking a bathroom break "like a goddamn girl" when she should have been flying the plane, stating that she blames herself—and her gender—for the crash.

Just then, Eliopolis' radio came on and a civilian voice asked if anyone had survived the wreck. Eliopolis answered immediately, and the voice on the radio said she was a skywatcher and her handle was "Mets." The Skywatch system consisted of ham operators who reported on downed aircraft and tried to help their crews. Mets told her that she was about a day's walk from Eliopolis, but that her cabin was heavily surrounded. Eliopolis should instead head for open ground where she could be picked up. Mets said she had already reported her position to search and rescue.

At this moment of heightened emotion, when Eliopolis was angry with herself and had just witnessed the terrifying sight of zombies feeding on her copilot, Mets' voice broke the silence and brought her great comfort. Eliopolis was no longer alone in the zombie-infested swamp—she now had Mets, who already had a plan that would help her get out. When Eliopolis seemed incapable of figuring out a solution for herself, Mets did it for her.

Eliopolis felt lost, but with Mets' help, she began to figure out where she was and how she could make her way to the I-10 freeway where she could be picked up. Mets told her she would take a day or two to make it there, if she hurried. Right before she left, Mets asked her if there was something she'd forgotten to do, and Eliopolis turned to see that her co-pilot was reanimating. She put a bullet through his head. Mets told her not to blame herself, but to do her job and stay alive. She also signed off, asking Eliopolis not to waste her radio battery.

While Eliopolis was too shaken by her experiences to orient herself or to remember to shoot her co-pilot, Mets stepped in and helped her. She didn't give Eliopolis new information, but only reminded her about things she already knew—for instance, she didn't tell her to shoot her copilot, but gently asked her what she'd forgotten to do. Though Eliopolis felt helpless at that time, she is clearly a very capable individual.

Eliopolis felt determined and focused as she made her way north, and all her training came back to her. Then she came across an SUV half-submerged in the swamp, and Mets warned her to stay away from it. Still, Eliopolis decided to inspect it and found survival gear in the backseat. The driver had blown his brains out and was decomposing. She felt sad thinking about how he had all the gear he needed in order to survive, but had given up. Mets insisted she keep moving, but Eliopolis felt drained of energy and rested against the SUV for a second. Suddenly, Mets asked her what that sound was and Eliopolis immediately heard a moan nearby. She saw about 20 Gs headed toward her. Mets told her not to run, but to stay calm and fight back.

The man in the SUV had killed himself despite having equipment that would have helped him survive, and Eliopolis felt sad on seeing him because his situation resonated with her own. She, too, had her emergency supplies and could potentially make it, but she was finding it hard to fight the feelings of hopeless that were overwhelming her. When she felt too hopeless to pay attention to her environment, it was Mets who warned her about the presence of zombies, since she supposedly heard their moans through the radio. Again, when Eliopolis seemed ready to give up, it was Mets who kept her going.

Eliopolis climbed to the top of the SUV and started taking them down one by one. She shot 61 of them in 10 minutes, though it felt like 10 hours to her. Mets asked her to make a plan to spend the night somewhere safe since it was too late for her to get to the freeway before nightfall. Eliopolis walked away from the SUV and when it started to get dark, she hung her microfiber hammock up in a tree. She took some pills to help her sleep.

When faced with the terrifying situation of 61 zombies attacking her, Eliopolis managed to stay calm and kill them all, demonstrating her admirable survival and fighting skills. When she realized she was too anxious to sleep, she very practically took sleep aids, knowing that she needed to rest. In the extremely stressful situation she was in—hanging in a hammock in a zombie-infested swamp—Eliopolis was profoundly calm and collected.

Eliopolis woke up to hear Zack's moans and saw at least a hundred of them on the ground below, climbing over each other and trying to get her. She didn't have enough ammo to take down this many of them, so she knew she had to escape. At training, she had been taught that in situations like this, she'd have to find a good spot to jump and land in, and then run as fast as she could. The freeway was pretty close, and she thought she could make it. However, when she jumped, she broke her ankle on a submerged rock. Mets screamed for her to get up and run, and Eliopolis started limping away.

When Eliopolis woke up surrounded by zombies, she didn't let fear overwhelm her. She recollected her training and did the right things. However, the situation took an unfortunate turn when she broke her ankle, and she might have given up if Mets hadn't yelled for her to keep going.

Eliopolis made it to the freeway, but her injury prevented her from climbing it easily. As she got on the on ramp, the undead inside the cars on the roads started moaning and reaching for her. Mets kept screaming at her to keep going, and Eliopolis says that she might have lost her will to keep going if not for Mets. As soon as she got on the freeway, she saw a helicopter headed her way and signaled to it with her flare. It turned out to be a civilian chopper, not government Search and Rescue. When Eliopolis was safely on board, she thanked Mets but didn't get a response.

Mets kept pushing Eliopolis to keep running until she finally made it to safety. A detail worthy of note is that she ended up being rescued by a civilian helicopter rather than Search and Rescue, which Mets had told her she had already alerted. Also, as soon as she was safely aboard, Mets suddenly stopped responding to her on the radio.

Eliopolis tells the narrator that Mets wasn't just a civilian—she must have been a pilot, too. She says that perhaps she found herself in a situation just like Eliopolis'—perhaps she, too, had lost her crew and blamed it on herself. Then she had managed to find that cabin and spent the war as a first-rate Skywalker. The narrator says that her theory makes sense, and then there is an awkward silence. Eliopolis admits that no one found Mets, or her cabin. The narrator says he knows that even the government had no record of a Skywalker named Mets. Eliopolis says that the psych evaluation they gave her when she returned wasn't true. It didn't matter that they said her radio hadn't been functional the entire time. She says that Mets was there when she needed her, and that she'll always be with her.

Eliopolis insists that Mets is real, and that she'd helped her that day. However, the narrator seems to know that this isn't true. He is aware that Mets was never found. Eliopolis' interview details her interesting reaction to her fear and hopelessness—while she felt too tired to keep going, she externalized her training and determination to survive onto an imaginary person who she believes was a woman pilot just like herself. Though she denies feeling lonely as a woman in the air force, she felt an immediate and deep connection with Mets, proving that the narrator was probably correct in assuming that her life as a woman in the air force was filled with challenges.

CHAPTER 6: AROUND THE WORLD, AND ABOVE

Province of Bohemia, The European Union. David Allen Forbes is a British artist working on his second book, called *Castles of the Zombie War: The* Continent. He tells the narrator that North America doesn't have "fixed fortifications" like the Continent does. The United States and Canada are young countries and do not have a "history of institutional anarchy" like Europe. He says that castles seem unimportant in the war effort but that they saved his life.

While North America's fancy technology proved useless against the zombies, ancient castles were more successful. Forbes' account talks about how these old buildings played an important role in saving many lives on the Continent, including his own. The novel suggests that technologically advanced gadgets were not always the best solutions against the zombies. Old traditions like hand-to-hand combat and castles proved valuable, suggesting that traditions are nothing to scoff at, and that the trappings of the modern world can be stripped away in an instant.

Forbes adds that castles had many dangers within them, like pneumonia at Muiderslot in Holland. People were so ill and desperate that they jumped into the moat filled with **zombies**. But there were also many success stories, and people managed to survive for years behind their high walls. Survivors in castles, like at Chenonceau in France, simply waited for snowfall to come out and restock supplies before heading back inside the castle walls for the warmer months. He recommends that the narrator read the book *Camelot Mine*, in which the author describes how he singlehandedly restored the castle of Caerphilly in Wales after it had been abandoned as a ruin. It ended up being a refuge for hundreds of survivors.

Forbes concedes that there were some horrific stories associated with the castles, too. In the castle in Holland, people got ill and were so afraid of what would come that they jumped out of the castle in desperation, once again showing that fear caused people to behave irrationally—in many cases throughout the novel, fear is a far more destructive force than the zombies themselves. However, other castles sheltered hundreds from the zombies and saved many lives.

Forbes himself took shelter in Windsor Castle. He says that it was, "from a defensive standpoint, as close as one could come to perfection." It was the largest inhabited castle in Europe, and it had its own well and also enough storage space for decades of rations. Fires and terrorist threats had led to a strengthening of its security features, like reinforced walls and retractable bars. The best part was that they could siphon crude oil and natural gas from a deposit under its grounds. Forbes himself was grateful for the warm rooms and hot food, as well as "the Molotovs and flaming ditch." They even had a lot of medieval hand weapons from museums and collections, which many people took to carrying around again.

Again, Forbes points out that the zombie threat seemed to have returned people to an earlier time when people took shelter in castles and fought with hand weapons—the modern world was dismantled with terrifying ease. His description of Windsor Castle suggests that it was equipped to be ready for a crisis at all times. Max Brooks, who suffers from anxiety and admits to preparing for unforeseeable disasters, shows that this kind of preparedness is the best way to survive a crisis.

Forbes also discloses that "she" wouldn't leave Windsor Castle, even though the Parliament objected to her decision. When Forbes begged her to leave, she had said, "The highest of distinctions is service to others." Her father had said that, too, and had refused to take refuge in Canada during World War II, which is why, Forbes says, they "remain a United *Kingdom*." They "must forever be an example" to the people, and "personify all that is great in [their] national spirit." Forbes says that they were viewed in the same way the castles were, "as crumbling, obsolete relics," but when their services were required, they "reawoke to the meaning of their existence."

Forbes speaks reverently of the Queen's decision not to leave her people, likening her to the tough old castles that had come through to protect the people. The Queen—like Raj-Singh and the American President—seems more concerned for the welfare of her people rather than her own safety, and thus becomes a symbol of "all that is great" in the human spirit. In the novel, unselfishness and self-sacrifice are held up as high virtues.

Ulithi Atoll, Federated States of Micronesia. This coral atoll provided shelter to American naval vessels and civilian ships during the war, including the *UNS Ural*, which was the first broadcast hub of Radio Free Earth. Barati Palshigar worked on this project. She tells the narrator that "Ignorance was the enemy. Lies and superstition, misinformation, disinformation. […] Ignorance killed billions of people. Ignorance caused the **Zombie** War." She says that facts were the weapons people needed.

Palshigar makes an excellent point when she says that ignorance caused the zombie war. If the zombie menace had been contained early and people knew what precautions to take to prevent the spread of the virus, there would have been no zombie war. In her interview, Jesika Hendricks, too, blames the lack of information for causing much suffering during the zombie crisis, since she and her family tried to survive a snowy winter without adequate preparation.


Palshigar says that Radio Free Earth was the "first real international venture," and it came into being a few months after the South African Plan. It grew from Radio Ubunye, which was the South African government's regular, multilingual informational broadcasts to its isolated citizens. They offered survival skills and also combatted misinformation. Radio Free Earth used this template and adapted it for the global community.

Radio Free Earth was a project born out of the desire to help people survive the war. Palshigar points out that it was an "international venture," showing that despite the devastation the war caused, it also did result in global unification, with many nations coming together to work on useful projects like Radio Free Earth, which made such a huge impact all over the world.

Palshigar specializes in languages of the Indian Subcontinent, and she covered the information that would be conveyed to about a billion people. She and her colleagues worked 20 hours a day, conveying information like how to purify water or process mold spore for Penicillin. They also combatted misinformation like **zombies** having intelligence or feelings.

Radio Free Earth clearly made a huge impact on listeners' lives by giving them information about useful survival skills that they otherwise had no access to. Palshigar and her colleagues worked tirelessly to do this, probably aware that they were saving lives all around the world with their transmissions.

Palshigar says the hardest job was that of the Information Reception or IR Department, which received the data from all over the world that Radio Free Earth rebroadcasted. Very often, their signals would be mixed up with civilian radio bands in which people from all over the world would be screaming for help. There was no time for the IR operators to even answer these people, but after hearing so much suffering, all the IR operators ended up killing themselves after the war's end because they couldn't shake off the despair and trauma.

Though Radio Free Earth was doing a lot to help many people, Palshigar's colleagues were unable to forget the pain they'd encountered on the airwaves—and shockingly, all of them committed suicide after the war ended. The emotions that they'd heard in the strangers' voices desperately asking for help affected them so deeply that they couldn't escape or heal from their trauma. This tragic example supports the point that the narrator makes in the introduction that people's emotions link them to one another.

The Demilitarized Zone: South Korea. Hyungchol Choi, deputy director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, speaks to the narrator about North Korea. He says that no one knows what happened. North Korea's boundary was heavily fortified, it was on mountainous terrain that could be easily defended, and was surrounded by the ocean, all of which made it perfect to repel a **zombie** invasion. A large part of their citizenry was in the armed forces while almost everyone had undergone military training. They also had a "superhuman degree of national discipline." In contrast, South Korea was made of "individualists," and "were such a free and fractured society that [they] barely managed to implement the Chang Doctrine," which was their version of the Redeker Plan.

North Korea seemed to be perfectly equipped to fight the zombie war, especially when compared to South Korea, Chang says, where they had the freedom to dissent and many chose to exercise it. Even in the U.S., D'Ambrosia explains in an earlier section, the citizenry would have been opposed to spending more on soldiers and war, which was a reason why the Joint Chiefs didn't consider it at the time. The situation in North Korea raises an interesting question: if the citizens of a nation had no freedom, would that nation have a thorough and carefully planned reaction to a crisis, or would it lead to a situation of complete chaos?

Hyungchol Choi says that even before the first outbreaks in South Korea, "the North suddenly, and inexplicably, severed all diplomatic relations." The rail line that linked the two countries was shut down. Even the guards at the border disappeared. Choi saw no signs of them preparing to wage war, though some feared this might be the case. Even spies from the North stopped showing up. The South's electronic surveillance of the North went dark, and their spies all disappeared. Satellite pictures showed fewer farmers and fewer laborers working, until finally, there was absolutely no activity or movement in the whole nation.

North Korea could also easily cut itself off from the rest of the world, which would have helped it during the zombie crisis. However, total isolation might also mean absolute danger and no means of escape if the virus had already reached the country.

This happened when South Korea was facing its own overwhelming problems with the outbreaks. The worries about the North suddenly launching an attack complicated the situation. Now that the **zombies** are taken care of, Hyungchol Choi wants to go investigate how the entire population of the North just quietly disappeared, but his superiors say that there is still too much work to be done at home. They also worry that he might trigger a nuclear booby trap, or open the gates to 23 million zombies emerging from underground tunnels in the North.

Ultimately, the narrator doesn't uncover what exactly happened in North Korea. Choi, too, doesn't know and wants to figure it out—but it does seem ominous for the entire population of a nation to quietly go missing, and his superiors' theory that they might all have been infected underground seems likely.

Kyoto, Japan. While the old photograph of Kondo Tatsumi shows a skinny teenager with bleached blond hair, he is now a toned warrior monk with a shaved head. He tells the narrator that he used to be an "otaku" or "outsider" before the war. Japanese culture considered individuality to be "a ribbon of shame," and while others easily conformed to expectations, Tatsumi chose to exile himself in cyber space. He felt powerful and safe in this world where his appearance and grades didn't matter, and he was a respected hacker. When the crisis reached Japan, Tatsumi and his online group became obsessed with finding out all they could about the living dead. When school was canceled, he spent all day online.

Tatsumi used to be considered an outsider because he chose to exercise his individuality in what he later admits was a very American way that was out-of-place in his culture. He felt completely disconnected from Japanese culture and society. The zombie crisis was interesting to Tatsumi because he wanted to find out all he could about the zombies to impress his online community—but he was so shallow and disconnected from people that it didn't mean more to him than that.

The narrator asks Tatsumi if he'd been afraid for his personal safety, and Tatsumi says he hadn't been—he lived in the cyber world, not in Japan. To him, the *siafu* or **zombies** "weren't something to be feared, they were something to be studied." He tells the narrator he was completely disconnected from reality. Though he shared the apartment with his parents, he never spoke to them. His mother would leave a breakfast tray outside his door in the morning, and a dinner tray at night. The first day she missed doing this, he didn't think much of it. He called for her, and receiving no response, ended up eating some raw ramen from the kitchen. He did the same thing the next day, upset that this wasted his precious time online, but not worried about his mother at all.

The narrator believes strongly in the connections people form through sharing emotions and feelings. Tatsumi's life shows that he had no feelings for anyone—when his parents went missing, he didn't even notice. He dealt purely in information and facts, and lacked emotional connections with other people.


When other *otaku* began disappearing, too, Tatsumi felt only annoyance rather than worry for their well-being. One morning, he woke up and his screen was blank. He realized that he had lost power and his internet connection. He saw that his parents still weren't home and when he tried calling them, he realized that the phones weren't working. He tells the narrator that he still has no idea what happened to his parents, and has been trying to find out.

Again, this information highlights Tatsumi's disconnected lifestyle. While he spent all his time online, even the relationships he had there were strangely impersonal. His reaction to the other otaku *disappearing highlights his extreme selfishness since he only felt annoyed at their disappearance rather than any concern for them. Only his personal discomfort—the lack of the internet—affects him.*


In a panic, and lost without the internet, Tatsumi made his way out the front door. Making his way down the dark hallway, he slipped on something cold and slimy, and realized that the whole place stank. He then saw a **zombie** make its way towards him and jumped back inside his apartment and locked his door. He looked outside the windows and realized there was chaos outside. The *siafu* were everywhere, invading apartments and devouring people on street corners, and the city was burning and destroyed.

Tatsumi had been so lost in his online world that he hadn't even looked outside his window. This highlights his self-involvement and selfishness. When he finally looked, he realized that there was destruction and chaos right outside his door.

Then, the *siafu* in the hallway pounded at Tatsumi's door, and he could hear more moans outside as well as the sounds of his neighbors pleading and struggling with the *siafu*. He tried to move the couch against the door, but it was useless as the door began to break. He decided to escape out his window onto the balcony of the apartment below, using bed linen to lower himself. His muscles cramped as he did this, and he was knocked about by the wind, but he made it. The *siafu* that had been after him saw him and jumped at him, and fell onto the sidewalk below.

When Tatsumi looked outside and started registering other people's suffering, he started to even hear his neighbors struggling with the zombies. Before, he'd been uninterested and had shut it all out. Instead of giving up, Tatsumi displayed resourcefulness as he made his escape. This hints at his undeveloped potential for courage that he will use as he grows into a warrior monk.

At the apartment Tatsumi was now at, the front door was barricaded from the inside. He found the previous tenant dead in her bathtub—she had slit her wrists. He took some of her sheets to make more rope to lower himself and get out of the building. The narrator asks if wouldn't have been more dangerous on the streets, and Tatsumi says he had learnt online that the *siafu* were slow and could be outrun.

Even in this extremely stressful situation, Tatsumi managed to master his fear and make a plan to escape. As Palshigar had pointed out in the section about Radio Free Earth, information was essential while fighting the zombies, and Tatsumi remembered and used the information he had from his online forums.

By the third day of doing this, Tatsumi had made it to a fourth-floor balcony. He reached for the sliding door, and stared right at a *siafu* on the other side. Tatsumi leapt back on his rope and tried to climb up, but he was too tired. Meanwhile, the *siafu* broke the glass door, and Tatsumi fell onto the balcony below. He stumbled into that apartment, looking for *siafu*, and didn't find any.

Tatsumi persevered with his plan and slowly made his way down the apartment building using sheets. He displayed great resourcefulness and calmness in the face of all the chaos. When the zombie attacked him, he wasn't too afraid to think—he was just too tired to.

An old man had lived in the apartment, and there were photographs of him everywhere, visiting places all over the world and spending time with family and friends. Tatsumi decided that if he managed to survive the crisis, he would live a full life just like that old man. There was a Shinto shrine in the room, and as Tatsumi looked at it, he saw a reflection of a *siafu* in the mirror of the shrine. It grabbed Tatsumi by the hair, but Tatsumi managed to shove it over the balcony. But more *siafu* began pounding on the door. Tatsumi rushed to the bedroom to get sheets to make a rope, and on the wall he saw a photograph of the old man holding a traditional Japanese sword. He looked for the sword and found it in a chest.

Though Tatsumi had been so consumed by the internet, he was now looking out into the world and taking interest in all that it offered. When confronted with death, Tatsumi fought it with all he had since he had just made up his mind to start living. He had the good fortune to find a sword that would help him survive. The sword is an old, traditional Japanese sword, once again suggesting that modern technology like the internet was useless in battling zombies but a return to old traditions was effective against them.

Kyoto, Japan. Sensei Tomonaga Ijiro founded Japan's Tatenokai or "Shield Society," and has been blind since he was a teenager. Kondo Tatsumi is Ijiro's second in command. Ijiro tells the narrator that he is *hibakusha*, which means "survivors of the bomb." He lost his sight when he watched the bomb go off. Though *hibakusha* were treated with sympathy and kindness, they were also in a way, outcasts, as their blood was considered unclean and no one would marry them. Ijiro also felt like a burden because of his blindness, and frustrated because he couldn't contribute to the nation's rebuilding efforts after World War II.

Ijiro is living out the disastrous effects of an earlier war—the nuclear bombs of World War II. By pointing out that the effects of that war still linger, and that though it was considered a just war, its effects were disastrous to many, the narrator draws a parallel between World War II and the zombie war. Both conflicts were worth it in the end, but their effects are widespread and long-lasting.

Ijiro tried to find some employment but was politely rejected every time. His brother invited him to stay with him, but Ijiro didn't want to impose on him. Ijiro tried to commit suicide many times, but felt too cowardly to go through with it. He took off without telling anyone where he was headed, traveling and begging, until he settled in Sapporo. There, he met an old gardener who belonged to the Ainu group, which was very low on the Japanese social ladder. Ijiro says that perhaps the gardener took pity on another social outcast, which is why he hired him and taught him all he knew. Together, they worked on the garden of a luxury hotel called the Akaze, and after the old gardener died, Ijiro continued working there.

Ijiro suffered greatly as a result of World War II, feeling like his injury made him an outcast. He had a strong sense of pride and justice, and loathed feeling like a burden. This selflessness is a quality he shares with other positive characters in the novel, like the Queen and Captain Chen.

While trimming the bushes by the hotel, Ijiro heard people talking about the first domestic outbreak, in which a man had killed his wife and proceeded to eat her. Soon, there was news of more outbreaks of "African rabies." Ijiro was convinced the situation was dangerous when the hotel's manager held a meeting to convince his employees there was nothing to worry about and Ijiro detected fear in his voice. So, Ijiro decided to leave. He wasn't afraid of death, but he didn't want to become a burden to those around him when the crisis came. He took his *ikupasuy*, a shovel that doubled as his walking stick, and hitchhiked south. Along the way, all the people he spoke to were worried about the crisis but had faith that the authorities would know what to do about it.

Though Ijiro was blind, he was very attuned to the world around him and could even detect the tiny giveaway of danger like the barely noticeable note of fear in the hotel manager's voice. This skill will prove to be very useful to him later, as he attempts to survive by himself in the wilderness. Since he was very selfless, he loathed the idea of being a burden to those around him or causing them pain in any way, which is why he decided to leave.

Ijiro hiked into the Hiddaka Mountains, away from all civilization. His gardener friend had taken him there frequently, and Ijiro knew his way around. Sometimes, he could hear the sound of helicopters and fighter planes, but had no idea what was going on in the country. He even thought that perhaps the authorities had won, and soon he'd encounter park rangers.

Ijiro went about his days calmly and capably. The threat of the zombies didn't affect him, and neither did being all alone in the mountains. While the nation panicked around him, he seemed to be a center of calmness.

One morning, Ijiro sensed a big bear nearby and thought it was his fate to die, and that this was what the *kami*, or the spirits, had ordained for him. He waited for a blow that never came. Instead he heard the bear whining and running away. Ijiro then heard a low moan behind him and could hear the air bubbling from a gaping wound in the creature's chest. He struck it with his *ikupasuy*, and as it collapsed, he understood that the bear had been sent to warn him, not eat him. He understood that the gods wanted him to survive for some reason, and this is what it was.

Ijiro was unruffled when he thought the bear would kill him and was ready to surrender his life to it. Even when confronted by his first zombie, Ijiro stayed calm and killed it with a single blow. After he'd lost his sight, he'd always felt like a burden to others, but finally believed that he had found his true calling—destroying the undead that polluted the land.

Ijiro says that losing his sight had made him adept at survival. He didn't take his safety for granted and was always vigilant. He knew to listen carefully, and to smell the wind, and was never caught off-guard. The animals, too, always warned of the approaching creatures. Ijiro would sense them approaching from a distance, and then "patiently prepare [...] for the attack" by stretching and meditating. He always killed them on first strike, aiming between the forehead and nose. When they attacked in hordes, the initial battles were "untidy," but Ijiro soon learnt to lead them to an outcropping of rocks from where he could neatly destroy them one at a time. He also made sure to retrieve and bury all the bodies and burn the heads.

Ijiro lost his eyesight and thus depended on his other senses—his hearing, and his sense of smell—to compensate. These proved to be great assets as he fought the zombies. Also, just like the zombies, he felt no fear when he confronted them, which automatically gave him a great advantage over most people who fought the zombies. He was not only efficient at killing them, but was also calm and methodical in his methods, striving to destroy them "neatly."

On Ijiro's second winter in the mountains, he had just settled to sleep when he heard human footsteps. He hid and waited atop a tree. Tatsumi then says that Ijiro had leapt on him and held him down. Tatsumi said he was friendly and just wanted to pass. Ijiro asked him where he was going, and Tatsumi said he was headed to a port where there might still be a boat to take him to Kamchatka. Tatsumi explained that Japan had been completely abandoned, and Ijiro says that at that moment, he understood that the gods wanted him to care for and preserve Japan, and "annihilate the walking blight that infested and defiled her." He told Tatsumi that they would restore Japan's beauty for when the people would return.

Ijiro and Tatsumi were so unlike each other—Ijiro was a selfless and spiritual older man while Tatsumi was a self-centered teenager. His previous life had been devoid of meaning or purpose and he'd wanted to make a change, which was probably why Ijiro's plan appealed to him. Ijiro believed that he was chosen by the gods to preserve Japan's beauty, and welcomed any company he could get to accomplish his mission. These two unlikely companions began working to achieve a common purpose, symbolizing the unification of Japan's old traditions with its young generation, showing that this would have a positive impact on both.

Cienfuegos, Cuba. The narrator meets Seryosha Garcia Alvarez at his office on the 69th floor. The view is spectacular at this energy-independent building with its photovoltaic windows. Alvarez tells the narrator that Cuba won the **zombie** war, and that it put them in a much better position that where they were twenty years before. Their "existence was one of constant deprivation," and America's economic blockade prevented any economic growth and also kept Fidel in power.

From the narrator's descriptions, it seems like Cuba has done very well for itself after the zombie war. According to Alvarez, they "won" the zombie war. In contrast, many prewar developed nations, like America, seem to have "lost" the war.

Then, the dead began to rise. Cases in Cuba were very few—mostly Chinese refugees and European businessmen—and were quickly contained. The repressive nature of their society ensured that the infection didn't spread. The doctors in Cuba figured out the nature of the disease and their leader was in possession of all the information. By the time the Great Panic hit the rest of the world, Cuba had prepared itself for war.

Cuba's repressive government had effectively contained the outbreak within its borders while the rest of the world panicked. While American citizens had the freedom to disagree with the government and its policies, the lack of freedom in Cuba had proved to be a positive for it in this case. Cuba was a repressive regime, like China, but its strategies for containing the virus were based on information rather than secrecy.

Many refugees came to Cuba from the sea, bringing the threat of infection as well as believing in the notion that they could "rul[e] their new homes as modern-day conquistadors." The Cubans decided to set their own terms—they did not want to be overrun by refugees like Iceland, which quickly became one of the most infested countries in the world. While they had a few refugees from other nations like Spain, the majority—almost five million—came from the U.S. All refugees were placed in the government's "Quarantine Resettlement Program," where their lives were quite hard. They were put to work as field hands and the guards threatened to throw them into pits filled with **zombies** if they complained.

The Cubans were wary that refugees would throw their weight around in their adopted country. So the refugees were mistreated and threatened with punishments to ensure that they understood their place. Cuba's policies seem cruel but are also rooted in a real threat of the millions of refugees overrunning their host nation, especially since most of their refugees came from developed nations like the U.S. and would have most likely carried their sense of superiority with them.

Since there wasn't enough manpower to manage the Resettlement Program as well as guard the shores, they released 10 percent of the detainees to work outside the camps doing the jobs Cubanos didn't want to, like manual labor and cleaning the street, and told them they would be awarded points for their work which they could use "to buy the freedom of other detainees." Alvarez says it was "an ingenious idea" and "the camps were drained in six months." The "Nortecubanos," as the refugees came to be called, integrated themselves into Cuban society within a year.

The refugees had to perform jobs no one wanted in order to earn their freedom from the Resettlement Program, and in the process learned that they had no power in this country. The "Nortecubanos," when they managed to earn their release, ended up integrating well into Cuban society.

In the years that followed, Cuban people and the Nortecubanos felt bold to disagree with Fidel's ideas. Private businesses and newspapers were started. When the world waged war against the **zombies**, Cuba became an air hub for the Americas, and the center of "a thriving, capitalist economy that needed the refined skills and practical experience of the Nortecubanos." Alvarez says that while the Cubans saved them, the Nortecubanos showed them the meaning of democracy and freedom. Fidel knew the tide had turned and "not only embrace[d] the country's new democracy, but [...] actually [took] credit for it."

The Nortecubanos ended up influencing the politics of their adopted country. They brought democracy and enterprise to Cuba, which helped it flourish. Cuba is an example of a country that weathered the zombie crisis with no damage since it spotted the signs of the outbreak early and took the appropriate precautions. It was able to flourish because many wealthier nations hadn't taken the initial steps to contain the virus and consequently collapsed in the war that followed.

Patriot's Memorial, The Forbidden City, Beijing, China. Admiral Xu Zhicai begins by saying that he and his crew were not traitors. They loved their country and people, and were loyal to their leaders. They would have never dreamed of doing what they did if the situation hadn't been so desperate. He says that the army kept insisting that they had the situation under control, but they were just a bunch of poorly-trained soldiers in matching clothes. The navy, however, was more pragmatic, and couldn't understand why the army had rejected the Redeker Plan without even considering it.

Xu seems insecure at the beginning of the interview, and fearful that the narrator might accuse him of being a traitor—suggesting that he is still a little guilty about his actions. He implies that China's leaders had not responsibly thought their plans through. It was clear to him—and the rest of the navy—that the army was losing to the zombies.

Xu says that the army generals believed they had a "bottomless well" of manpower, and sat safely in their bunkers and ordered "wave after wave of conscripted teenagers into battle." They didn't seem to realize that "every dead soldier was now a live **zombie**." Captain Chen was furious at this, and believed that if they continued in this vein, "soon there would be no more Chinese people, and perhaps, eventually, no more people anywhere." So, he made a plan to escape in their advanced nuclear submarine in order to preserve something of their civilization.

The army generals were safe in their bunkers and had no qualms about sending "conscripted teenagers" to battle the zombie hordes. This was not only cruel but also impractical as the number of zombies kept growing. The generals didn't seem to care about any of this because they believed the Chinese population was large enough to keep up an endless supply of soldiers, but Captain Chen worried that the whole of China would soon be destroyed, showing him to be a wise and considerate leader in contrast to the army generals.

Xu didn't initially agree, but Chen convinced him that it was the only way forward. They prepared for the departure for three months, and smuggled emergency supplies and family members on board. Finding and bringing their family members from various parts of the nation was hard—they sent them coded messages because no one could know what they were planning. The narrator asks if Chen's son came with them, and Xu evades the question. He tells the narrator that even the family members had no idea what the plan was. They had to leave as per plan not to raise any suspicions, even though some family members hadn't made it.

Chen seems to have been a brave visionary to come up with this plan to escape. He was also kind enough to ensure that his crew's families could come along, too. When the narrator asks if Chen's son came along with them, Xu is evasive, implying that he didn't.

The narrator asks Xu where they were headed, and he says that they didn't have a destination since "the blight had spread to every corner of the planet." They had "no home, no friends, no safe harbor" except for their submarine, the *Admiral Zheng He*. Since missile subs were designed to hide, they hid in deep water. In the first months, they all appreciated being away from the danger of the **zombies**. They didn't immediately have any way of monitoring what the situation was on land.

Initially, the crew and their families appreciate the safety in the submarine. It must have been a relief to be safe from the zombies after years of constant danger.

After three months at sea, they began to try to get information from the outside through passive surveillance. They sent periscopes out, and on their video monitors, they were shocked to see "tankers, freighters, cruise ships"—it "was as if humanity was putting everything they had to sea." The also saw a lot of military vessels, who would have been able to track their submarine, but they didn't seem interested. Many ships had tent cities and makeshift apartments on their decks, and a lot of ships were drifting without fuel. They pitied these people and their "hopeless fate." They were "prey to hunger, thirst, sunstroke, or the sea herself." The narrator asks Xu if they didn't help any of them, and Xu says they couldn't risk detection or infection.

Many people from around the world had escaped into the sea while fleeing the zombies on land. This information hearkens back to Shah's interview about Alang, in which the narrator first includes information about humanity's exodus into the ocean since it seemed to be safer than land. However, many of these people weren't prepared for such a long time at sea—just like the people Jesika Hendricks talks about who escaped into the cold and weren't prepared for it—and Xu and his crew could see that they were doomed. People's lack of preparation to weather the crisis proved to be as dangerous as the zombies themselves.

They monitored the news from around the world and knew how bad the situation was getting. Their food was beginning to run out, and they were already out of medicines. It was too dangerous to fish or raid other ships because there were zombies everywhere.

Even though they had prepared for months to survive in their submarine, they couldn't survive forever without restocking their supplies. However, underwater zombies were everywhere, which made it very dangerous for them to even open their hatch to try to catch fish.

The solution finally came from one of the civilians on board—that of growing food on board. They had no soil, however, and planned to go onshore to get some. When they saw a deserted coastline, Xu offered to lead a party ashore. Chen, however, was hesitant, and ordered them to blow the foghorn. This immediately brought forth a horde of **zombies**. This happened to them every time they tried to go ashore. They finally decided to head back to the Pacific, even though that would bring them too close to China. They didn't know if the navy was hunting them for desertion, but they needed supplies and longed to see other people.

The zombie infestation had gotten so bad that there was nowhere Xu's crew could go, even to quickly get some soil.

Xu describes the island of Manihi, which had become a new nation of "refugees from all over the world uniting under the common flag of survival." The lagoon "was crowded with hundreds of small, private boats," and there were tents and huts on the island itself. Their submarine integrated itself in this island through trade. They supplied electricity from their reactor, which was very valuable. They immediately managed to procure sufficient food, medicine, and spare parts. They set up a greenhouse. Every night, **zombies** would try to make their way into the community and had to be fought off by the island's security.

Manihi is a great example of global cooperation and enterprise. Its inhabitants managed to stay safe and comfortable by working together.

They stayed in Manihi for several months, which was a happy time for them. One night, when Xu was on patrol duty, he was distracted while listening to a radio broadcast about a natural disaster in China when one of the ships around the island suddenly exploded. Another Chinese submarine had fired a missile at it. Captain Chen realized that by staying there, they were putting the island's civilians in danger, so they immediately cast off. When they were in deep water, their sonar caught the sounds of another Chinese submarine following them.

Xu and his crew were not only fighting the zombies but were also evading being destroyed by their home country, which seems pointless and cruel. As soon as they realized they were being followed and attacked, Captain Chen decided to immediately leave Manihi to spare the islanders any danger, showing that he was a kind and considerate leader.

Initially, Captain Chen refused to fight. They bottomed the boat to the deepest level it could go to, and the other submarine was unable to trace them. They then heard a puzzling sound from their sonar shacks, "a scraping noise, like scratching rats." When they looked through their scope, they saw hundreds of **zombies** swarming on their hull, with more arriving every second. They knew the zombies couldn't make it inside, but they had blocked the reactor's intake, causing its temperature to rise. They had to move. As they rose up, the other submarine detected them. Both submarines fired at each other, and while the *Admiral Zheng He* managed to dodge the torpedo, the other submarine was hit. They hoped its crew would die painlessly.

Xu's crew had a tough night. They successfully hid at the bottom of the ocean to avoid detection, but zombies covered their submarine, forcing them to rise. This shows how the number of zombies had gotten frighteningly out of control, with hundreds of them swarming the ocean floor even in a location where there was nothing for them to feed on. Captain Chen was reluctant to torpedo the other submarine, but was forced to in order to protect the life of his crew.

Xu explains to the narrator that Captain Chen suspected that his only son was the captain of that submarine, which was why he'd tried to avoid engaging with it. Chen had raised his son alone, and had taught him "to be a good sailor, to love and serve the state, to never question orders." After this incident, Captain Chen was a broken man. Xu tells the narrator that the "monsters that rose from the dead, they are nothing compared to the ones we carry in our hearts."

Xu reveals the reason why Captain Chen was so reluctant to fire on the other submarine—he was worried that his son was its captain. Despite this, he'd fired on it to protect his crew, once again proving himself to be an honorable person and leader.

They headed to the arctic ice, as far as they could from the outside world. One day, they detected another submarine headed their way and prepared for attack. There was a signal on their underwater telephone, and it turned out to be Captain Chen's son, Commander Chen, who was the captain of the approaching submarine. He proclaimed his intentions were peaceful, and that he had come to escort them home. There was much rejoicing. He told them that Three Gorges dam had collapsed, killing thousands and leading to a civil war. Commander Chen had joined the rebellion to overthrow the government.

The Three Gorges Dam is the same dam mentioned in the first chapter of the novel. It was for this dam that the government had evacuated Old Dachang. The authorities had irresponsibly constructed this dam which had flooded the homes of many peasants, and clearly, had been sloppy about its upkeep, too, which had led to its collapse and many deaths. The people of China had had enough of this government and decided to rebel. Commander Chen had joined the rebellion—so he hadn't been killed when they'd bombed the other Chinese submarine.

Captain Chen made the decision to fire a warhead on the politburo who were holed up in their bunkers and took full responsibility for the decision. After, Commander Chen informed them that the rebels were now in charge and were fighting the real enemy—the undead. They put their own version of the Redeker Plan in action. The next morning, Captain Chen died.

Chen decided that the army chiefs in their bunkers had to be eradicated in order for China to move forward. Knowing that his crew would be reluctant to fire on their own countrymen, Captain Chen takes full responsibility for this decision, in an attempt to make their lives easier. In this way, he is a contrast to Germany's General Lang who committed suicide when he had to give difficult orders—Captain Chen, on the other hand, displays great strength of character. Despite this, Xu seems to still feel guilty about this action, which was what made him insist on his patriotism at the beginning of the interview.

Sydney, Australia. Terry Knox was the only Australian commander of the International Space Station. Now, he is frail and is in a luxurious hospital room. He tells the narrator that he and his crew had a great view of what was going on, and weren't surprised at all when they were ordered to evacuate. Knox ordered all nonessential personnel to leave, and gave the others the option to leave, too. They knew that with the reentry spaceship gone, they'd be stuck in the Space Station. However, they also knew there was a lot at stake, and so chose to stay. The International Space Station had been built by 16 countries over 10 years, and another one could never be built.

In order to save the International Space Station, Knox and some astronauts decided to stay back on it, knowing fully well that they might be stuck on it forever. Their sacrifice was a huge one, and as a result, Knox seems to be very ill. Knox and the other astronauts believed that the International Space Station, which was a product of human intelligence and international cooperation, was important enough to merit such a sacrifice.

The other important job Knox's crew did was to ensure that Earth's satellite network was preserved. There were more than 3,000 satellites in orbit, and they knew saving all of them was impossible. Still, they wanted to at least focus on the ones that would be useful in the war effort. Their worry, then, wasn't about coming back to Earth but about how they'd stay alive in the Space Station. They only had enough food for 27 months, and that included the test animals in their labs.

The crew contributed to the war effort by maintaining the satellites that would be useful during the war. The extent of their sacrifice is staggering—their primary worry was that they had to stay alive to help during the war, and were willing to resort to eating their lab animals in order to be useful to Earth.

Knox and his crew had advanced technologies and robots to help them with their work, and Knox says that he sometimes wished these things hadn't been so efficient because they freed up some time for them. They ended up watching the destruction on earth at this time through the American military's "spy birds," and the images were so clear they "could show muscles tear and bones snap." Knox hadn't heard from his family or anyone else in Australia after the government had moved to Tasmania. He wanted to believe they were all right, but after watching everything that was going on, he was losing hope. Their own observation gear wasn't as clear as the military's spy birds, but they used it to spot the huge hordes of **zombies** moving across central Asia and the American plains.

While the astronauts were happier when they stayed busy, they became distraught when they had the time to witness the great scale of the destruction on Earth. Knox admits that he hadn't heard from his own family, but still managed to put those anxieties aside and continued with his hard work in space. His point of view also highlights how bad the devastation of the war must have been. He mentions spotting hordes of zombies moving across central Asia—the size of the horde must have surely been immense for the astronauts to see them from space. The zombie crisis had reached epic proportions.


Knox says that despite all the gadgets they had, they were most disturbed when they saw the Earth through the naked eye. The many fires led to "massive ecological devastation" and they guessed that the amount of ash being generated was like that of a low-grade nuclear exchange. The Earth was unrecognizable from space, surrounded by a gray-brown shroud that thickened so much that eventually they couldn't see the planet at all and came to rely on thermal or radar sensors.

Knox paints a tragic picture of how the war has had a huge toll on the planet, making it unrecognizable from space. Not only had the war caused a large-scale destruction of human and animal life, it had also caused great ecological devastation.

They picked up the collapse of the Three Gorges Dam on these sensors and were appalled thinking of the people who couldn't escape the rising waters because **zombies** were outside their doors. The president of China had called it an "unavoidable accident" which angered Knox, since it had been built on a fault line and the government had been warned about its imminent collapse. He says he wasn't surprised at all that this was followed by a rebellion.

Knox is angry because he knows that the tragedy of the Three Gorges Dam could have been easily averted with better government policy. His point of view echoes that of Captain Chen, and further legitimizes the actions of the rebels who took over China.


Knox says that after the Chinese revolution started, the Chinese Space Station, the Yang Liwei, made contact. When Knox had contacted them earlier during the crisis, they had warned the International Space Station that they would use "deadly force" if they approached. He was surprised to hear the frightened, tired voice on the radio, and it got cut off after a few seconds.

The International Space Station had made overtures of friendship to the Chinese Space Station, but had been threatened in return. This was especially poor behavior at a time of global crisis and seems to be in line with pre-war Chinese policy. It seemed to isolate itself from the rest of the world and insist on its independence and superiority. The author implies that this was isolationist policy was a harmful one.

Knox went over to investigate and found that their escape pod was destroyed and an astronaut had been shot. He was also surprised to see that they had supplies that could last five years, but no scientific equipment. They had a lot of explosives on board that could destroy other orbiting platforms. Knox says that it seemed like China had sent these two astronauts into space only to exist. Also, it seemed to operate under the notion that "if we can't have it, neither can anyone else," which is why it had all the bombs on board. Knox guesses that the two astronauts had a fight relating to the rebellion in China. In any case, their supplies helped the crew on the International Space Station survive for three more years, until the war ended and their replacement crew arrived.

Knox is surprised to discover that the Chinese astronauts were doing nothing at all in space, other than just sitting there to mark their territory. They were also equipped with bombs to blow up other space vehicles. The previous Chinese government's confrontational and competitive nature seems petty and justifies the rebellion. Their actions were cloaked in secrecy and bent on insisting on Chinese superiority and power—this attitude backfired in the way they handled the zombie crisis, and also seems to have failed with regard to their space station.

Knox and his crew were all exposed to deadly levels of cosmic radiation during their years aboard the Space Station. However, they don't regret it at all. Despite being on his death bed, Knox is happy to think that he made a difference. The narrator notes that he died three days after the interview.

Knox and his crew endured so much to help humanity's safety and survival, and even gave their lives for it. Though this seems tragic, Knox regrets nothing. Their selflessness makes them heroic.


Ancud, Isla Grande de Chiloe, Chile. Ernesto Olguin, a merchant ship's master, talks about the U.N.'s Honolulu Conference where the attendees exchanged methods and tactics to fight the **zombies**. Olguin was there to help restart international trade by using Chile's navy for support. Then, the American ambassador suddenly declared that America planned to go on the offensive against the undead and "begin retaking infested territory." This caused immediate furor, with some attendees thinking that this was completely unnecessary and dangerous, and others agreeing that it was the inevitable next step.

At that point in the struggle, it seemed like things were getting slightly better—or at least the world had adapted to changes of the post-zombie world. The conference had many attendees and they were considering international trade again. This was probably why some nations thought that America's idea to go on the offensive was unnecessary, since it would restart large-scale conflict.

Then, the American president calmly began speaking, saying that the living dead had turned humanity into "a shaken, broken species, driven to the edge of extinction and grateful for a tomorrow with perhaps a little less suffering than today." He said it was time for them to "reclaim [the] planet" and "prove to [themselves] that [they] could *do* it, and leave that proof as this war's greatest monument." When they reconvened at dusk for a general vote on the president's proposal, it was passed by a small majority. The world had decided to attack.

The American president was tired of living in fear, and made a strong case for reclaiming human freedom and dignity. His calm manner of speaking combined with his moving speech succeeded in convincing the other attendees. The other nations ended up agreeing that war would be worth it, and they all decided to go on a global offensive against the zombies. This action shows humanity's aspiration and quest for dignity—the president's refusal to continue to live in fear is admirable.

CHAPTER 7: TOTAL WAR

Aboard the Mauro Altieri, Three Thousand Feet Above Vaalajarvi, Finland. The narrator is with General D'Ambrosia aboard the Combat Information Center (CIC), Europe's command and control dirigible. He tells the narrator he was shocked and reluctant to go to war against the **zombies**. He was afraid he'd be sending his soldiers to die since there were 200 million zombies for them to contend with. The prospects for victory were slim. Everything he knew about war had to be thrown out the window since this new enemy was unlike any that humanity had ever known—it didn't need to be "bred, fed, and led" like people, and "Zack operated [by] swelling his ranks by thinning [theirs]." This enemy would "never negotiate, never surrender."

D'Ambrosia was reluctant to lead his soldiers to what he considered would be certain defeat against their fearless, ever-multiplying enemy. He knew from the start that this war would be a very difficult one. D'Ambrosia seems to be a considerate leader who valued his soldiers' lives, unlike the Chinese politburo who had no problem with sending their huge armies to certain death, and unlike the Russian authorities who resorted to the Decimations to ensure that their soldiers followed orders.

Denver, Colorado, USA. The narrator has just finished dinner with Todd Wainio at his house. He tells the narrator that the "new army" was "like stepping back in time." While the army he'd fought with at Yonkers had been completely mechanized, this time the soldiers marched on foot carrying Lobos, using a few vehicles only to carry their ammo. Their BDUs (battle dress uniforms) were light and comfortable, and were interwoven with Kevlar, which were bite-proof threads. Their primary weapons were standard infantry rifles that were very basic but "super accurate." The rifles had a flip-out spike that was about eight inches long that they could use if they didn't have their Lobos handy.

The U.S. Army was much better prepared for their fight against the zombies this time around. They had learnt from their mistakes at Yonkers, and had kept things very simple, using only the most basic weapons that would be effective against the zombies. They had developed an impressive technology to keep their soldiers safe—their uniforms were made of "bite-proof" material. This time around, however, they used fancy technology for a reason, rather than having it be an end in itself or to only impress other people.

This time, it was very important for the soldiers to be able to have the endurance for long battles, and many otherwise good soldiers couldn't take the long hours and the strain. The new army was composed of many former civilians who could stay calm under pressure, and Wainio says that they were all "veteran[s] in some sense" since they had survived until that point. For instance, his battle buddy was a 52-year-old nun who'd protected her Sunday school students for nine days, armed with nothing but an iron candlestick.

The army had completely changed the way they thought about fighting, and had even changed their recruitment policies to include civilians who could endure a long battle and stay calm under pressure. This kind of adaptation seems smart and essential since they were fighting an enemy that was very different from others that they had fought before. Wainio mentions that life during the outbreak had been so hard on everyone that he considers anyone who had survived until that point to be a "veteran."

At around 1 p.m., they got ready for battle at Hope, New Mexico. The Canine Units were bringing the **zombies** in and the soldiers loaded their guns and waited. They could see "Gs on the horizon, hundreds," and Wainio began to shake. They called the dogs off and played loud Iron Maiden songs to entice the zombies, which also worked to "psych" the soldiers. Then the music faded and as the zombies crossed the markers on the ground, the front line was ordered to fire. The soldiers didn't miss a single shot. They had been training in this exact way for months, and it was almost instinct now. They had been trained to fire "one shot every full second. Slow, steady, mechanical-like." They were taught to pace themselves, and not hurry or panic. The Recharge Teams or "Sandlers" made sure their guns didn't run out of ammo.

At the Battle of Yonkers, the slapdash battle plan had proven to be ineffective. This time around, the higher-ups had understood their enemy better and had carefully and responsibly planned for the fight. They had even put careful thought into choosing the locale for this fight, choosing Hope, New Mexico, for the positive connotations of its name. Despite the intensive training and the careful preparation to "not hurry or panic," Wainio mentions that the sight of the zombies approaching was still a terrifying one.

The battle continued into the night, with swarms of Gs approaching nonstop. There was a pile of corpses and the soldiers kept shooting "every head that popped over the top." The **zombies** started approaching from all directions, and the soldiers were ordered to form a Reinforced Square, a technique they'd picked up from Raj-Singh. They kept their ammo and supplies in the center of the square. If the soldiers needed a short break, they had to just raise their guns and a Sandler would take their place. They also had Knock Out teams of "combat shrinks who were observing everyone's performance" and would identify who needed a rest even if they hadn't asked for one.

The army superiors had planned on the battle being a long one, and they were proved right as the zombies kept approaching the soldiers well into the night. However, the training and careful preparation seems to have paid off as the soldiers didn't miss a single zombie. The careful preparation for battle also included rest breaks for the soldiers with psychiatrists present to identify the soldiers who were getting tired—these steps were respectful and considerate of the soldiers.

At around 4 a.m., the number of **zombies** started reducing, and finally stopped. The officers began looking relieved. In the light of the day, they saw that they "were totally walled in [by corpses], all sides were piled at least twenty feet height and over a hundred feet deep." The next day, everyone felt optimistic after their first success.

The Battle of Hope was the turning point in America's war against the zombies. The soldiers felt victorious, and like they could take on the enemy and win. This battle brought hope to the American armed forces after years of believing that their enemy was invincible.

Ainsworth, Nebraska, USA. Darnell Hackworth and his wife run a canine retirement center for veterans of the army's K-9 Corps. He tells the narrator that the dogs don't get enough credit for all they did. Their first important job was triage, or to sniff out the infected. Later, they were trained to lure **zombies** towards the soldiers, like at the Battle of Hope, and also to work as decoys to keep them away if the soldiers weren't ready for them yet. They could also sniff out zombies from long distances and warn their handlers, and were also sent deep into infested territory wearing harnesses that had video cameras.

Hackworth details the ways in which Canine Units played their part in the war against the zombies. They were essential aids to soldiers, and their work helped save human lives.

Hackworth says that many dogs died in duty, and a large number of their handlers ended up committing suicide when their canine partners died. In fact, handlers were recruited for the ability to form deep bonds with the animals. Hackworth himself had been hired for this reason. He'd run from his house after the outbreak, and was sick and weak. Yet, when he'd seen two men mistreating a dog, he had fought them. The Guardsmen who broke up the fight had told him they had a job for him.

Hackworth describes how much soldiers loved their dogs, demonstrating the human capacity for kindness and attachment even at a time of crisis. Once again, the narrator emphasizes how feelings and emotions are what connect people (or in this case, dogs and people) to one another, and that's why they're so important to his narrative.

Siberia, The Holy Russian Empire. The narrator meets Father Sergei Ryzhkov, an old cleric, in a primitive shantytown. During the war, Ryzhkov served as chaplain at a Motor Rifle division. Unlike the Americans, they weren't organized and suffered "many needless deaths." When soldiers were bitten, their comrades did not want to kill them—it reminded them too much of the decimations. So, their leaders—officers and sergeants—were forced to do it, which was very damaging for them, and led to alcoholism and suicide. Another option was to let the bitten soldiers kill themselves, which was heartbreaking to witness.

The American troops seem to be famous all over the world for being organized and efficient. In contrast, Russian troops had too many casualties—too many of them were bitten by zombies and had to be killed. This seems evidence of their army's lack of organization and planning, and, by extension, a lack of concern about its soldiers it was carelessly sending into battle.

Ryzhkov says that he was a religious man in a country that had forgotten religion, so none of these soldiers turned to him for comfort. As a chaplain, his only duties were to collect letters that the soldiers wrote to the families, and to distribute vodka. After one attack, he was walking among the bitten soldiers when he decided that he would be the one to kill them and save their souls from Hell. He realized that only holy men "should bear the cross of releasing trapped souls from infected bodies." This message spread to every chaplain and civilian priest, and became known as the act of "Final Purification." It was the reason Russia "emerged from that war as a nation of faith"—its people realized they could turn to God for "direction, courage, hope."

Ryzhkov, as a religious man, believed that the soldiers' souls would go to Hell if they committed suicide, so he wanted to spare them this fate by killing them himself. He seems to have meant well. He says that many religious men around the country took on this duty, and claims that this is why Russia became a religious country during the war—people began to turn to God once more since religious men took on the difficult burden of killing the infected, which was something that no one else wanted to do. They began seeing religion as a source of comfort once again.

The narrator asks Ryzhkov if those ideas were "perverted for political reasons" since the president had declared himself head of the Church. He wants to know if it's true that priests were organized into "death squads" and assassinated people by falsely claiming they were infected. He asks Ryzhkov if that's the reason he was moved to this shantytown. Ryzhkov evades the questions.

The narrator's questions imply that Ryzhkov's idea was used and perverted for political purposes. The Russian president used the excuse of religion to murder dissenters and consolidate his power. Ryzhkov seems to have just been a pawn who had a convenient idea, and he has now been cast aside into obscurity. The Russian president's cruel actions can be contrasted with the American president's ideals of democracy and justice since he insisted on having elections despite the zombie crisis.


Aboard USS Holo Kai, Off the Coast of the Hawaiian Islands. The narrator speaks with Master Chief Petty Officer Michael Choi inside a minisub called the *Deep Glider 7*. The ship lowers them into the ocean as Choi tells the narrator that his war hasn't ended since millions of **zombies** are still being washed up on beaches everywhere. That's why he is diving now to see how "to find them, track them, and predict their movements."

Ten years after the war, American forces are still finding and disposing of zombies in the ocean. Even though the fighting has ended, the exhausting war against the zombies seems to be dragging on.

Choi wears an Atmospheric Diving Suit (ADS) when he works, which looks like "a space suit and a suit of armor all rolled into one." It protects his body from pressure even at great depths. While mesh suits are much more agile, they don't protect the wearer from **zombie** bites, which the ADS does. Also, ADS models have 48-hour life support, so divers can just wait for help to arrive if they get attacked by a zombie horde. Since it is impossible to fire a gun underwater, the weapon Choi uses is an M-11. It attaches to his forearm and fires four-inch-long steel rods. Initially, DeStRes thought they were too expensive but changed their minds after divers were attacked by a horde when they were trying to repair a natural gas platform.

Divers like Choi use new technologies and weapons that protect them from underwater zombies. While the U.S. seems to have recovered quite well from war, army spending still seems to be controlled by the DeStRes, suggesting that the coffers are no longer as full as they used to be.

The minisub reaches the ocean floor, and Choi spots some **zombies**. The narrator sees around 60 of them approaching. Choi begins to fire darts at their chests, and says it is hard for him not to kill them, although he knows it is important to study their movements to set up "an early warning network." Choi tells the narrator that soon, they'll be using Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) for recon dives. The narrator says that he knows there is a lot of controversy about using ROVs for battle. Choi says that will never happen because droids lack "heart, instinct, initiative, everything that makes us us." They might be cost-effective but can never replace ADS divers. He says that he'll quit the navy if the divers are ever replaced with machines.

The zombies are being studied and observed so that the navy can better understand their behavior and movements. People are no longer terrified at the prospect of zombies taking over the world, but are still working hard to eradicate them. Choi insists that the divers who perform this dangerous task could never be replaced by robots because human excellence and instinct could—and should—never be replaced.


Quebec, Canada. Andre Renard meets the narrator in his small farmhouse and asks that he keep his exact location a secret because he doesn't want to be found by people. He says that all the other countries had it easy compared to those like him who battled the **zombies** under Paris, which has several tunnels underground. A quarter million civilians tried to take shelter in these underground tunnels during the Great Panic, and they had become infected. Renard and his fellow soldiers had to fight them in the dark, dank tunnels, with just one pair of night vision goggles per platoon and not enough batteries for their flashlights. The filters in their gas masks had expired, and they had to use hardwired radios to keep in touch since airwave transmissions often didn't work underground.

Renard and his team undoubtedly had a difficult and frightening job in Paris during the war. They were also hampered by a severe lack of equipment, suggesting that the French government didn't give as much consideration to the safety of its troops as the American government did. The narrator hints that Renard is still resentful about this, which is why he is hiding away in an isolated farmhouse in Canada and doesn't want to be found by people.

It was easy to get lost in those tunnels, and the maps they had were outdated. Sometimes, they'd hear another squad being attacked underground but wouldn't be able to place their location because of the echoes. And other times, the screams would come from members of his platoon but it was hard to find them in the winding tunnels. They often reached them too late to save them and had to fight their reanimated friends.

Renard's descriptions of the horrors they faced in the underground tunnels are truly terrifying, and once again highlight their lack of resources as being a big problem in their underground battles.

They had to fight the **zombies** at very close range, just inches from them, because they couldn't use firearms underground since the air around them was too flammable. The only thing they had that was similar to a gun was a carbon dioxide pellet gun that had maybe six shots. They had to be careful while aiming their shots because if they struck the stone walls of the tunnels, they might have caused a spark and then a fire. The best way was hand-to-hand combat, but the narrow tunnels gave them no room to swing a weapon. Their weapon of choice was one consisting of steel spikes that Renard had designed. They put the spikes through the zombies' eyes or down on their heads.

Again, his descriptions highlight the difficult and dangerous—and logistically difficult—job that Renard and his colleagues had.

The men tried to cover themselves in armor of some kind—"chain mail or heavy leather" that ended up being "too heavy, too suffocating." Unlike the Americans, they didn't have bite-proof battle uniforms though they could have certainly used them. They had to wade around in water in the tunnels, and sometimes the **zombies** attacked them from under the water. At such times, they retreated and sent the Cousteaus in, "scuba divers trained to work and fight specifically in those flooded tunnels." They, too, didn't have the right safety gear to protect themselves and "had a one in twenty chance of survival."

These descriptions once again show how Renard and his team of brave French soldiers had to take on the zombies without any protective gear or special weapons, which made their already risky task even more dangerous. Since their government didn't provide them with enough resources, they tragically took to wearing armor that they had put together themselves, which hampered their movements. In comparison, the American soldiers seemed to be extremely well-equipped, probably due to the efforts of the DeStRes and because they had considerate leaders like the American president and D'Ambrosia in charge.

Renard is angry that their authorities had hurried them to go in and fight "at a time when the war was winding down all over the world." They lost 15,000 soldiers in just three months. In contrast, the English had taken five years to slowly and carefully clear the whole of London because their general had believed they had "enough dead heroes." France, however, wanted a lot of heroes since they had lost at other wars in Algeria, Indochina, and against the Nazis. Renard's brother, too, had died in the war while storming a hospital filled with hundreds of **zombies**.

According to Renard, the French government was in an unnecessary hurry to clear the zombies out of Paris. They acted without a plan and without resources, which led to too many soldiers dying. The government only wanted to make up for indignities of the past and wars they had lost, which is why they were in a huge hurry—they didn't care about the personal cost that this had on their soldiers.

Denver, Colorado. The narrator has accompanied Todd Wainio to a neighborhood picnic in Victory Park. There hasn't been a single **zombie** sighting all spring. Wainio says the entire campaign to eliminate the zombies in America took three years as the army advanced slowly across the country. They went on foot, and their orders were to advance slowly, making two thorough sweeps. Some of the older zombies, the ones who had been infected at the start of the war, were decomposing, and some couldn't even stand. Whenever they spotted zombies, a Force Appropriate Response (FAR) Unit would stop and take them down. The number of the zombies they found determined the size of the FAR.

Wainio describes the very organized and methodical campaign that the U.S. Army waged against the zombies. Unlike the French, the American troops didn't hurry through eliminating the zombies and made sure to do a thorough job while maintaining their own safety.

Wainio explains that they also made it a point to stop every night to rest and says that they also couldn't fight in heavy fog. Also, they had promised to help the armies in Canada and Mexico fight **zombies** after they had secured America, which extended the fighting, though Wainio was discharged before that. He also adds that one of the biggest things that slowed them down was "urban combat." Clearing suburbia was very time-consuming.

Wainio explains why the campaign took so long, and that it extended even past the three years because the U.S. Army helped Canada and Mexico, too. The soldiers weren't rushed, but their job was still difficult and tiring.

Wainio was in Army Group North, which he was initially happy about because he thought that meant he would encounter mostly frozen Gs in cold weather. However, he hadn't considered the problems of quislings and ferals. They eventually discovered that they could rehabilitate ferals but not quislings, but many soldiers were badly hurt while trying to capture them. There were also packs of F-hounds—feral dogs—and F-lions or huge, feral cats that attacked humans. There were some people the army nicknamed LaMOEs (Last Man of Earth) who had successfully fought off the **zombies** and didn't want the army to show up and change their lifestyles—and so attacked them, too. The cold also was a huge problem, with Gs getting buried and covered in the snow and reemerging as soon as it turned warm.

Wainio describes the difficulties he experienced while fighting the zombies in the cold. Interestingly, some of the army's biggest challenges didn't come from zombies but from human beings. They worked to rehabilitate ferals. After trying and failing to rehabilitate quislings, they gave up on them, but not before they managed to hurt many soldiers. Some civilians, too, were hostile to the army and tried to attack them. The zombies seem to have not only caused death and destruction but also changed the very fabric of society which made the army's work more challenging.

The narrator wants to know what it was like to liberate "the isolated zones" and Wainio says that each one was a struggle. One area was surrounded by a million **zombies**, and liberating it made the Battle of Hope seem small in comparison. Some of the military personnel in these zones were happy to be rescued, while others believed they needed no rescuing. Civilians, on the other hand, were usually happy to see the army and would greet them with cheers. Sometimes, though, a few of them would be angry that it took the army that long to get there, and that they'd lost their loved ones by then. Very rarely, they came across entire towns that were angry because they'd been abandoned by the army earlier.

The people who'd been abandoned outside the safe zone would have suffered the most during the zombie crisis, and they were sometimes angry that the army arrived too late to be of any help to them. This must have also been immensely difficult for soldiers like Wainio to hear since they'd been working so hard to help people like them. Even though the army had accomplished so much, they also had to face the fact that they had failed to save many.

The secessionists or Rebs took an even stronger stance against the army and shot at them as they approached. The army superiors sent special units to deal with the Rebs. Wainio once saw tanks headed their way and knew the Rebs had put themselves in a tough spot.

The Whacko had mentioned in his section that the president had believed that the Rebs were very dangerous and needed to be eliminated. Wainio's statements show that this is indeed what happened.

The narrator asks him if he'd heard about the questionable survival methods some people in isolated zones had used, and Wainio says that he didn't want to hear about them even when those people wanted to talk. He says he didn't want to bear more burdens. Wainio did talk to some of them later, and even read about the trials, but feels that he can't judge them since he wasn't there and didn't have to live through the things they did.

The narrator and Wainio do not mention any details about the "questionable survival methods" they discuss, but imply that it was some kind of criminal activity since there were "trials" later. Jesika Hendricks mentioned that people in cold places had resorted to cannibalism to survive, so it might be that. In any case, Wainio says he is in no position to judge people's actions since he wasn't there to know how bad they had it. Clearly, many people resorted to desperate—and probably illegal or horrifying—ways to survive.

While historians say that American casualties were way less than other countries, Wainio says they were still very high. Also, the statistics ignored deaths that were not caused by **zombies** and there were plenty of those. Many soldiers died of illnesses. Others died from LaMoEs attacking them, like one of Wainio's friends. Some died from decrepit buildings collapsing on them, which is what happened to another soldier he was in love with. There were also many psychological casualties. Wainio says that the president was one of these people.

Even though America fared better than most nations, it suffered many casualties, too. Wainio, too, suffered great personal loss as he admits that he'd been in love with one of the soldiers who had died. Others, like the American president, died of stress and heartbreak. The price for humanity's survival was a high one.

CHAPTER 8: GOOD-BYES

Burlington, Vermont. The Whacko tells the narrator that they'd decided to declare victory as soon as the continental U.S. was secured even though they knew the real war was far from over. They understood that the people were tired and needed to hear this news, and that they had to give their soldiers the option to return to their homes and stop fighting. The UN multinational task force was formed to help with the international missions, and many volunteers signed up. The Whacko says that he was criticized for not keeping this an all-American mission, but he believed that those who wanted to rest should have the opportunity to do so. As a result, perhaps the overseas campaigns were a little slower. In any case, not all the **zombies** have been purged yet, and the war is still on.

The Whacko and the president understood that both the civilians and the armed forces were tired of the war and were looking forward to good news, so they declared victory as soon as the zombies in America were eliminated. Some people believed that the American soldiers had to be sent into Canada and Mexico as well, but the Whacko insisted that those soldiers who wanted to return home should have the opportunity to do so—many soldiers (like Wainio) must have been grateful for this option. Again, the Whacko's statement shows that the government respected their soldiers and valued them more than their agenda (unlike, say, the French government who wanted a quick, impressive victory at any cost.)

Khuzhir, Olkhon Island, Lake Baikal, The Holy Russian Empire. Maria Zhuganova is four months pregnant with her eighth child. She says that she regrets that she couldn't continue to serve Russia after they had eliminated all the **zombies** in the country—she would have liked to help liberate their former territories of zombies, too. However, she was already busy with the important project of repopulating Russia since there are very few healthy young women left. There are many facilities like this throughout the nation and she is happy to be of service. She hesitates a little when she says that she doesn't care that she doesn't know the father of her children or the children themselves.

Zhuganova seems to be in sort of facility where she is having babies to build up Russia's population. She claims to be happy to serve her country in this way, but the narrator notes that she "hesitates" as she says this, implying that she has her qualms and can't voice them. Russia seems to have sacrificed its humanity in its desire to build its power. Zhuganova also mentions that Russia "helped liberate" its former territories of zombies, which probably means that Russia is probably invading these territories under the guise of helping them. Russia is using the zombie crisis as an excuse to colonize other nations.

Zhuganova wonders if the narrator is puzzled by ideas like this in a "fundamentalist state." She says that no one in Russia really believes in religion, except for Father Ryzhkov, who has been packed off into obscurity. She tells the narrator that he, too, is being used by the state to let the world know its true nature and to warn them to not mess with it. They revel in the fact that they are feared again, and are therefore safe. They are happy that they have "the protective fist of a Caesar."

Russia has grown into an aggressive and morally repugnant nation that is confident in its growing power. Zhuganova says the narrator, too, is being used by the state to flex its muscles to the world since Russia wants other nations to be wary of it. She declares that the people are happy that the nation is powerful again, saying their ruler is once again like a "Caesar" or a king.

Bridgetown, Barbados, West Indies Federation. The bar is closing down, but T. Sean Collins signals for another drink. He admits that he is addicted to murder, like some war vets, and gets a rush after he kills a **zombie**. When he stopped killing zombies, all he could think about when he met or spoke to any person was where and how he could hit them to kill them efficiently. He feared he would act on these thoughts, which is why he joined the Impisi, "a private outfit, no rules, no red tape," to kill more zombies. He fights with a Maori weapon called a *pouwhenua*, a type of "sharpened steel paddle," and derives the biggest thrills from hand-to-hand combat.

Collins has a problem that some veterans do after all the fighting is over—he misses the rush he gets from killing the enemy. He chooses to channel it positively, by killing more zombies, and is afraid that he might murder people instead if he does not do this. This, too, is a serious psychological effect of the war.

Collins has heard of other mercenaries who manage to quit killing and retire peacefully, and he hopes that will be him someday. And if not, he says that after the last **zombie** is killed, "the last skull [he'll] crack'll probably be [his] own."

Collins seems to be tragically doomed to keep fighting his whole life, and bleakly thinks he might have to kill himself after the last zombie is gone.

Sand Lakes Provincial Wilderness Park, Manitoba, Canada. Jesika Hendricks says that she met an ex-Iranian pilot who told her that "Americans are the only people he's ever met who just can't accept that bad things can happen to good people." She says he is right, and she still feels angry and bitter when she sees that some people who don't deserve to be alive survived and her parents died.

Hendricks still struggles with her parents' deaths and the consequences of the zombie years. She is now an adult, and seems way more hardened than the child she was at the start of the crisis. Yet, she still suffers the consequences of those times and probably always will, showing that the effects of war last longer than just the end of the fighting.

Troy, Montana, USA. Mrs. Miller says that she is the American system, and therefore she is to blame. She says that this is the price of living in a democracy, and she understands why other countries shy away from it. It is easy to be able to absolve oneself of blame, but she says that what happened is "the fault of everyone of [her] generation." She wonders what future generations will say about them. They cleaned up the **zombie** menace, but they are also the ones who allowed it to become such a problem.

Miller acknowledges that the people of America were as much to blame for the crisis getting out of hand as the government was. They were not the helpless victims they like to think of themselves as being because they live in a democracy. She worries whether future generations will blame them for this, even though they did get rid of the zombies, too. Her interview reminds people that their ignorance and apathy allows problems to get out of hand.

Chongqing, China. Kwang Jingshu says that he is happy to see children born after the end of the war since they "don't know to be afraid, and that is the greatest gift." He says he has lived through several upheavals in his lifetime, but that China has pulled through every time. He is optimistic that China—and the world—will continue to survive.

Kwang is optimistic about the future of China, and of the world more broadly, and is happy that children born after the war don't have to live in constant fear. To him, a life lived without fear is a "gift" since fear has such a negative impact on people.


Wenatchee, Washington, USA. Joe Muhammad says that a positive thing that came out of the war was that "it did bring people together." Pre-war American society was pretty segregated—Muhammad's parents were from Pakistan and never quite integrated—but now everyone in the world has a "powerful shared experience." He admits he might be overly optimistic and that once things return to "normal," people will "probably go right back to being [...] selfish and narrow minded"—but hopes it will be different.

Muhammad hopes that the war united people from all over and showed them that they had a shared experiences and emotions. This is the same idea the narrator states in the introduction—that people's emotions and experiences will connect them across time and place.

Taos, New Mexico, USA. Arthur Sinclair says he loves his job of being a "money cop" or SEC chairman. He suspects that, as with his DeStRes job, he only has this job because nobody else wants it. His job is to discover who really earned the money they hold and who looted it. This includes small-time thieves as well as "big fish" like Breckenridge Scott who will be brought home soon to face the IRS (and everyone else who can't wait to get their hands on him.) Sinclair says that everything is getting better, including the economy, since capitalism is based on confidence.

After successfully leading the DeStRes during the war, Sinclair has moved onto another challenging job—this time, he will help rebuild America's messy and challenging post-war economy. He insists that "everything is getting better" since people everywhere seem confident. This is what the American president wanted to achieve when he decided to wage war against the zombies, and it seems like his vision has come to pass. Sinclair also tells the narrator that Scott, the maker of Phalanx, will be brought home to face the music, and it seems fitting that justice will be served. Sinclair, like Kwang, seems hopeful about the future.


Kyoto, Japan. The Shield Society has been designated an independent branch of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. While watching Ijiro greeting guests, Tatsumi tells the narrator that he doesn't "really believe any of this spiritual 'BS.'" He thinks Ijiro is crazy, but knows he has "started something wonderful." He says that Ijiro's generation wanted to rule the world while Tatsumi's generation was happy to let the world (namely, America) rule them. Japan's future lies in taking the middle path, where people "take responsibility for [their] own protection, but not so much that it inspires hatred and anxiety among [...] fellow nations."

Tatsumi surprisingly confesses to the narrator that he believes in none of the spirituality that Ijiro preaches, but that he values his message of independence. Tatsumi wants to help Japan find its own self-sufficient identity rather than being taken over by American culture, as he was in his young days, or returning to imperialism, as it had been in the past. This new vision of independence, while relying on the traditions of the past, seems like the ideal way forward for the world in general.

Armagh, Ireland. Philip Adler says that they "lost a hell lot more than people when [they] abandoned them to the dead."

Adler is still angry about the cruelty of the Redeker Plan, implying that it made people lose their humanity.

Tel Aviv, Israel. Warmbrunn says that he's "heard it said that the Holocaust has no survivors." Even those who are "technically alive" are "irreparably damaged." He wants to believe that this is not true, but if it is, "then no one on Earth survived this war."

According to Warmbrunn, everyone in the world was irreparably traumatized by the zombie war. Though the war was won, the suffering will continue for many.

Aboard USS Tracy Bowden. Michael Choi says that the whales lost World War Z. There were too many hungry boat people and too many explosions on the ocean. He says one doesn't have to be "some patchouli stinking crunchhead" to know that this is a huge loss. His dad worked at an oceanographic institute and Choi came to love the ocean by watching whales. The gigantic creatures could have easily hurt people but didn't. Now, they are gone forever.

Choi believes that one of the biggest losses of the war was that it destroyed the planet and the environment, too. Animals like the whales were innocent and gentle victims of the crisis, and are now extinct. Through mourning these animals, Choi seems to also be mourning a completely transformed world.

Denver, Colorado, USA. Todd Wainio admits that he "lose[s] it sometimes" but that the army psychiatrist assures him that it is totally normal for this to happen since he's been through so much. He recalls the final day of the war, watching the sun rise over New York. The word "peace" had lost its meaning for him as he tried to wrap his head around what it might be like to stop "fighting, killing, and waiting to die." He thought it was a dream, and sometimes, it still feels like one to him.

Wainio has been psychologically affected by the stress of the war and has post-traumatic episodes. On the final day of the war, he couldn't even remember what life would be like with no fighting. Though the war had been fought, and won, Wainio felt no joy or triumph. Despite the battles they had won and the lives that had been saved, so much had been lost that Wainio feels unmoored by the entire experience.

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