

**THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY
BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE
U.S. MILITARY THAT HAVE FOUGHT
AND CONTINUE TO FIGHT THE
GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR IN IRAQ,
AFGHANISTAN AND THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
AS WELL AS THE OTHER DARK AND
UNFAMILIAR CORNERS OF THE EARTH.**

In this world, I am no more.

I am a decadent monument of
humanity.

I must strive for survival
alone, afraid and vulnerable.

They are a cold, recalcitrant
and lethal, but I am alive.

---unknown survivor

In the Beginning...

January 1st

0358 hrs

Happy New Year to me. After a drunken night of fun, I sobered up and headed back home. I am so tired and bored of being home on vacation. I'm thankful for the break in training but Arkansas gets old quick. All my good friends are still drinking the same beer and doing the same thing. I will be extremely happy to get back home to San Antonio. New Year's resolution: start keeping a journal.

January 2nd

1100 hrs

My hangover is finally gone. I like to watch the news when I am near a television, but out here at my parent's house it seems that all they get are the local channels. I'm not going to attempt to try the dial up connection, as it will only frustrate me to the point of madness. I guess I will just check my e-mail when I get home. It seems that something is going on in China; the local news reported some type of influenza virus sweeping them over there. The flu season was bad here this year. I received my flu shot on base, avoiding the shortages of vaccine. I'm glad I get to go home tomorrow and get re-connected with my nice high speed Internet connection and digital cable.

My damn cell phone doesn't even work in this desolate place. The worst thing about being here is knowing I'm going to have to do a lot of flying to get back up to speed. When I signed up for naval aviation I didn't think it was going to involve constant work and studying just to stay competent.

January 3rd

0609 hrs

My grandmother called this morning to tell mom that we were going to war with China and to try to talk me into going to Canada to desert the military. I honestly think my grandmother has lost it. I turned on the news half expecting to see some kind of bullshit trade embargo deal with China. The news went on to say that President Bush has agreed to send medical military personnel over to China for consultation purposes only.

Makes me wonder, what do we have in America that a big bad country like China would need? They have all the natural resources anyone would want. I keep thinking I may have kept a light on in my house back in San Antonio. I have two small solar cell panels on my roof but I am wired to the electric grid. I just use the panels to sell electricity back to the utility company when I'm away on deployment. They have already paid for themselves.

January 5th

2004 hrs

After a nice ten-hour drive from NW Arkansas, I made it home yesterday. I received a satellite radio for Christmas and activated it for my trip home. I listened to BUZZ, or FOX all the way home with some music from my MP3 player thrown in every now and then. Wish I would have thought to hook the satellite radio up at my parent's house because I am almost certain that it would have worked out there even though it's in the middle of nowhere.

This China situation is starting to heat up. The news reports that we have lost over ten medical personnel to this China "bug." The other "military consultants" that are still in China are going to have to be quarantined prior to getting back to the United States. Talk about a pain in the ass. You go over there to help someone out and all you get in return is a prison sentence.

Today was not a bad Monday. Had to go fly a few sorties for training. The EP-3 is basically a C-130 with a lot of antennas. It's somewhat non-maneuverable, but it can receive some valuable data from 20,000 feet.

My friend in Groton, CT called today. Bryce is a Navy submarine officer. He really helped me out on a great deal on salvage parts off the old diesel boats when I was installing those panels in my house a few years back. He said that he was finally getting a divorce, she admitted to cheating on him. I kind of had a feeling about this girl, but I never said anything. Don't think it would have mattered if I did. We talked about this China thing for a long time and he seems to think it's some bad flu bug. I kind of think the same thing.

January 9th
1623 hrs

TGIF.

My mother called today on my cell worried asking me if I knew anything about what's going on overseas. I had to once again explain to my mother that just because I'm an officer in the Navy does not mean that I know who killed JFK or what happened in Roswell, NM. I love my mom, she just drives me nuts. I comforted her the best I could but something just isn't right. This nonsense is getting too much coverage in the news. I know the reporters smell a rat by the questions that they are asking FEMA and the Whitehouse and Homeland Defense.

The President made a speech (only available on AM band radio, probably to avoid too much publicity) and told the people that there is nothing to worry about and that the Army/Navy medical team in China had to send one of our doctors home because he was too ill to be left with the inadequate care/facilities in the location he was in. Another strange thing is that my squadron was scheduled to go to Atsugi, Japan next month for training in the Pacific and it was cancelled.

I asked my skipper (commanding officer) about it, he just told me that they were trying not to take any chances with anything, and that there were rumors of "sick persons" in Honshu, Japan area. He gave me the nod and told me not to worry. Something doesn't sound right about this whole thing and it's starting to mess with my mind. I have a feeling I might want to go to the store and get some bottled water and things of that nature.

January 10th

0700 hrs

Not much sleep for me last night. I kept the news on all night just in case I missed anything. "I can assure the American people that we are taking every effort to contain this epidemic within the borders of China." Go ahead; say it in your best southern accent. I went to Wal-Mart today and bought a few things just in case I had to stay indoors to avoid getting sick. I bought some bottled water, canned beef stew and went by the base to chat with my supply friend at the warehouse. He told me that he could part with a few cases of MREs for a new nomex flight suit. Didn't bother me, I have a couple dozen of them. I picked out one of my lesser-worn flight suits and brought it to him. At least I will have a little variety in my diet if I need to stay home despite the fact that MREs are not an optimum bug out food because of how much they weigh and the excess space taken up by the packaging.

Vance (my supply connection) informed me he saw on an online government invoice, that a few thousand cases of MRE food were shipped to NORAD and a few other locations in the northwest. I asked him if it were normal, and he told me that these facilities haven't requested this much of a food supply since the Cuban missile crisis. I am thinking that if this is serious enough for the big wigs to want to lock themselves up for a few months it is more serious than I thought.

1042 hrs

I unloaded my "meals ready to eat" and noticed that one of the packages was busted. The smell of "Case A" MRE filled the air and reminded me of all of them that I had eaten when on station in the Arabian Gulf area on a ridiculous ground assignment. I hated it over there. It was so damn hot all the time, and when I had to embark on the ship it didn't make it any better. I checked my battery bank and all six batteries were in the green. Made me think of Bryce, and the "steal" I got on those old submarine batteries.

Back when submarines were diesel and not nuclear, they ran on batteries when under the water and when they surfaced they charged the batteries with a diesel generator. Some countries still use the

old diesel boats. I thought this was a good idea, however, charging them with solar panels takes considerably longer, ten hours instead of three but the sun is free.

I miss my sisters, Jenny and Mandy. I haven't seen much of them since I have been in the service; they have sort of grown up on me. I called my dad's house and spoke to Jenny, the youngest. She was still half asleep when I called. I used to pick on her badly when she was little. Oh well, I love the little shit, and it builds character. Mandy is living back home, until she can get back on her feet again. Mandy has never been one to open up and talk to me about anything. I wish things would have been different, or that we would have been closer in our childhood.

I really need to clean my guns. Especially my CAR-15, she is really dirty. Might as well clean my pistols while I'm at it. While I'm on the subject, a few hundred rounds for the carbine is not a bad idea since it's so cheap. I don't exactly like looters, and if any of this quarantine shit comes this way, I want to be on the ball.

1436 hrs

Ok, I'm starting to worry, the Atlanta Center for Disease Control has reported a case of this "disease" at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland. Since there are no communists here to hush the news, the report got out. Apparently this disease causes the victim to lose some motor function, and also makes the victim seem to act erratic. I called in to the squadron to ask some questions. They told me that it's possible we might get Monday off so the Department of Defense can assess the threat to Armed forces personnel inside the United States.

My mother also called about the news report and told me that the Bethesda Naval Hospital was the same hospital that they took Kennedy to when he was shot. I laughed at my mom's conspiracy theory attitude and told her to look after her husband (my stepfather) and try to avoid town if they already have enough supplies to stay put. I'm off to the local H.E.B. grocery store to get some stores, oh yeah, bought a thousand rounds for the carbine. Had to go to a few different stores to get them all. No one wanted to sell me that much all at once. It was probably some kind of liberal law that I didn't know about causing the red tape, or it could be a worried gun shop

owner conserving some for himself and trying to keep his customers happy at the same time.

Almost out the door when I got the call to get in uniform and report to squadron H.Q. More to come.

1912 hrs

Just got back from my meeting at my squadron on base. I'm a little troubled. We got word that we have an important mission to fly tomorrow, on a Sunday. Apparently we are to fly recon over Atlanta, actually Decatur, Georgia. We are to focus on a specific area, namely the area around the CDC in Atlanta. It's nothing serious, we are just ordered to be a check and balance for the "G-men" in Washington, to make sure the CDC isn't hiding anything. It is just a photo recon, and signal recon mission.

Reminds me of the time I listened to my ex-girlfriend's phone conversation when I was flying training missions around the San Antonio area. I love the signals intelligence (SIGINT) equipment as it saved me a lot of money and time with that woman. Also in the news, one of the reporters was really punking out the Bethesda public affairs officer for not allowing press passage into the hospital to ask the medical personnel questions. O'rielly was asking..."What are you people hiding?" The young officer held her ground and insisted that it was just for the protection of the press corps that no extra personnel be admitted to the hospital, and besides it was not public property, it was a U.S. Government military hospital. Sort of odd that such a low ranking officer would be giving this type of interview.

January 11th

1944 hrs

I don't know what to think now. We were on station, sent to spy on our own government (CDC) at 0816 this morning. We started tuning our equipment to intercept any cell phone/land line/data transfer in or out of the CDC. I almost couldn't believe some of the things that were being said. There was an FBI agent on board, which is very unusual. During the brief prior to flight he stated it is technically illegal under Posse Comitatus for the military to be deployed inside the United States for official missions.

The agent was to be the official mission commander of the aircraft as to circumvent the military from being implicated for breaking any laws by operating inside the US. We were getting broken transmissions between the different CDC compounds about the virus being difficult to contain, and how the director of the CDC doesn't wish to look bad or in a bad light in front of the President. They were being as confidential as possible about this problem. They were using Secure Telephone Units (STU phones), but we had a little help from the National Security Agency so breaking the code was as easy as hitting decrypt on our proprietary software.

They went on to say that one of the infected males that they had quarantined had bitten a nurse in a fit of rage when she was trying to feed him. They had strapped him to his bed and put a mouthpiece in his mouth to avoid any further problems. The nurse wasn't doing so well and he had started to run a fever over the last few hours. The CDC voice also said, "Jim, (person on the other end) you wont believe the vital signs we are getting from the male." Jim said, "What do you mean, can you give me specifics?" CDC voice, "no, no specifics over the phone."

That is enough to start worrying for me. After we landed, I was forced to sign a non-disclosure agreement then I promptly broke it. I called my parents and told them what I thought they should do, then I started my own preparations. I found out we were not coming in tomorrow and that we were only required to call in by 0800 hrs.

I already cleaned up my rifle, so it was time to take care of the pistols. That brings my weapon number up to four firearms and a good knife. Went up on the roof to clean my solar cells, they were dingy and dusty. I also pulled up my notes on switching power from the power grid to submarine batteries, as it might prove useful in the future. I loaded all my magazines (10) for a total of 290 rounds. I never like to load the full thirty per magazine, as this could cause an inadvertent weapon jam.

My bottom floor windows are only double pane, so I went to the local super hardware store to purchase some DIY window bars for the two windows I have that are chest level. All others are too high to effectively reach without a ladder. I am going to install them now.

2354 hrs

I installed the bars using a tape measure, pencil, 5/32 drill bit, and a square head screwdriver (proprietary screwdriver that came with the bars and it's supposed to be difficult to get the screws out without using a drill.) If a looter is good enough to drill out my bars and take my shit while I'm still sleeping, I'll fucking load it on his truck for him.

While doing a quick walk around my yard perimeter, I have decided that my rock wall is not nearly high enough. Any able-bodied man could easily jump it. I had the wall built with the house. I have broken some bottles that I had in the spare room and I used some bonding cement to glue the shards around the top of my wall perimeter every foot or so. At least it might slow someone down. I was listening to my headset radio while I worked and now that I am more informed, I can only see the situation getting worse.

The radio says that the president is issuing a statement in the morning at 0900 EST. Down the street in the distance I can see a family packing up the SUV and leaving. No one takes vacations this time of year so I can only infer that they are bugging out. I'm going to get more supplies tomorrow after I listen to the president's speech and call in to my squadron to check in.

January 12th

0934 hrs

All I can say is, wow. The President pretty much said that the disease is highly contagious and there is no cure at this time. He said that Americans are encouraged to stay indoors and to report anyone with "suspicious symptoms" to the authorities at once. One of the press cronies managed to get a question in and asked, "Mr. President! Mr. President! Could you please elaborate on suspicious symptoms?" The President replied that we should be on the look out for person or persons acting wildly and looking ill.

He also said, "It is extremely important that if any of our family members have these symptoms it is paramount that you give them no special treatment, turn them in just as you would a stranger with the same symptoms."

A 1-800 number flashed on the screen and he then said:

“I urge you to call this number in the event that there are any outbreak symptoms in your community. We have specially trained men and women to handle the situation, we will take your loved ones to a suitable medical facility for treatment.”

The President also said that he is ordering a full withdrawal of American military and civilians in China and Iraq. He commented that he was considering withdrawing troops from the DMZ in South Korea. A video clip played in the background showing the U.S. Embassy in China being evacuated under the close supervision of heavily armed U.S. Marines. One of the clips showed three Marines taking down the American flag to signify that the embassy was officially decommissioned. A scene not unlike the fall of Saigon flashed on to the screen. There were mobs of U.S. citizens being evacuated via helicopter from a random rooftop in Beijing. There were sounds of automatic weapons in the background but the people on the roof didn't seem concerned, they just wanted out. I'm off to get supplies.

1522 hrs

It was a total mad house. I got into an accident in the parking lot at the hardware store, and some lady almost fought me for the (4) five gallon barrels of water that I bought at Wal-Mart. I also bought some more 9mm rounds while I was there. I am happy that I have a few cases of MREs and enough water to sustain me in case this gets worse. I also bought some cheap throwaway facemask to wear in case there are any outbreaks at my location. I bought what was left on the shelf in the canned goods section. I purchased fifty cans of different soups. I can't believe this. I haven't felt this surreal since 9/11.

My parents are safe out in the hills of Arkansas, I advised them to stay home and don't go into town for anything. They always have a freshly stocked freezer, and water is not an issue since they use well water. They have a small generator for electricity in the winter when the power lines freeze and break.

I bought some hardware at one of the major hardware chains; some boards for general purpose and some heavy steel brackets and bolts to install a primitive barricade on my front and back doors. It

was just a simple 4x4 board sliding into a rest on the inside of my door to keep anyone from smashing their way in. I think that if I ration myself to one liter per day and 1000-1500 calorie diet, I could last for at least five months on my current supply of food.

I also turned on the citizen band radio today to see who was on. I selected channel nineteen to hear what the truckers had to say about all this. They were generally angry about all the roadblocks and cargo searches they were experiencing. Apparently the CDC and INS were concerned about semi trucks carrying a truckload of illegal immigrants in the trailer over the border. Something about it not being safe and that they had an incident of a case of this bug when an INS agent opened gate to the back of another trucker's trailer.

According to what I was hearing, they had to quarantine the whole truck and the agent on duty because every damn person in the back was infected and one of the infected immigrants attacked the agent, probably scared of going back to Mexico. I'm going to call one of my Marine buddies out in San Diego to see what he is doing about all this.

1854 hrs

I just got off the phone with my buddy Shep in the Marines. He said that there were armed National Guardsmen on the street corners in San Diego and that he was being called in to be a part of his base's security team. He told me that he was told to move his wife on base to the cold war shelter that was being reopened and that they were going to close the gates and quarantine the base in the event that there was an outbreak in that area. The sun is down now. I have motion sensor lights on my house around the perimeter. In the event a looter sneaks over and tries to steal anything, at least the light will go on. When I go to sleep tonight, I will sleep with the Glock under my pillow and the CAR-15 next to my bed.

The news is going on about reports of strange phenomenon reported in the major cities, apparently some cases of cannibalism have been reported. That is America for you. The shit hits the fan and everyone goes crazy. Since I happen to live in the outskirts of the eighth largest city in the nation, this news isn't good news. I hear police and ambulance sirens going up and down the street outside my wall. I'm hungry but I have already had too much to eat today. Celery fits the bill I suppose.

2113 hrs

CNN is reporting with a web camera in Times Square. Apparently they own it and the feds haven't thought to have it shut down. They are panning it around and the grainy images are showing armed military troops shooting civilians. Damn, there are going to be some lawsuits over this one.

The image was quickly cut-off by the emergency broadcast system. After a few minutes the picture came in as the Secretary of Homeland Defense stepped up to a podium marked with the seal of the President.

“America, I’m sorry to report that despite our best efforts, this disease has broken the bonds of our containment measures. It is no longer safe to inhabit larger cities. Safe zones are being set up on the outskirts of high population areas and will be open to those not infected with this disease. Please try to remain calm, as what I’m about to say will sound quite abominable. This disease is reportedly transmitted by the bite from one of the infected. We are not sure if this is linked to saliva, blood or both. The infected soon succumb to their wound and expire, only to rise within the hour and seek out living humans. It is not known why those who die of natural causes are returning; however this is also the case. I apologize that the President could not be here, as he is being transferred to a secure location. May God be with us all in this trying time. I now turn you over to General Meyers.”

As soon as the Homeland Defense Secretary began to close his folder, he was bombarded with questions from the press corps below the stage. It was more like Wall Street trading than a press conference. Even though you couldn't see the crowd of press in front of the podium, you could feel them there by the ambient noise, camera flashes, and garbled voices. One of the particularly alarming question and answer included one of the reporters asking how the Secretary knew the creatures were dead or if they were merely infected with a disease. The Secretary replied by saying, “Living humans don't have ambient body temperatures that match the ambient air temperature. This morning we locked one of the

creatures in a lab reefer. We have recorded a sustained body temperature at 40 degrees Fahrenheit for over twelve hours and counting.”

The crowd gasped at this in disbelief and more questions poured toward the podium. “What are the chances of being infected by a bite?” The secretary took a deep breath and said, “So far the communicability of this disease is one hundred percent post-attack if the skin is broken by a bite.” I can’t fucking believe this is happening. I am calling my family.

2200 hrs

After trying to call for over thirty minutes, I realized that that’s exactly what everyone else in the United States is doing. The phone lines can’t handle that kind of usage. I tried my mobile phone. Same results. “Network busy.” I also listened to what the General had to say during my redial attempts.

“The best defense in this situation is to remain in your home and await the evacuation teams. Avoid infected personnel at all costs. If you are forced into an altercation with one of these individuals, the only thing that will have effect is trauma to the cranium. If you are unfortunate enough to be forced to defend yourself from a loved one, do so with same vigilance you would a stranger, as that is what he or she is. Try your best to avoid getting bitten as there is no way to avoid infection by these means.

The reports coming in from our troops returning from China indicate that the creatures are primarily attracted to loud noises. It seems they use this as a primary method for finding prey. I must stress that it is in your best interest to remain indoors and to remain quiet and calm. Our best guess from our CIA human intelligence (HUMINT) operators on the ground in China is that the disease has been rampant in China for more than three weeks and they are in a state of disaster. If we don’t do things differently than the Chinese did we could be doomed to the same fate.”

The General was then ushered off the podium and given a stern glance by one of the civilian government officials. What followed next was an attempt by one of the speakers to apply a calm tone to what the General had relayed.

I'm scared...I really don't know what else to do other than turn the lights out sit here and write...my rifle is slung over my shoulder even as I sit here...There is a knock at the door. Back soon...

2350 hrs

One of my fellow officers from the squadron came over to tell me about the rumors he had heard from Jake, our mutual friend when Jake had returned from a mission over one of the outbreak areas in Atlanta, GA. During the mission Jake said that he had seen numerous infected corpses walking the streets in the south part of town. He said he could see the stray dogs barking at them in the streets and watched as the infected tried to lunge at the dogs. He was using the camera pod to digitally zoom in. To him it seemed like some of the younger gang members were trying to take law into their own hands by shooting the infected corpses.

From what my friend said, Jake was as white as a ghost when he landed, not believing what his eyes had transmitted to his brain. Chris, my midnight visitor was scared from what Jake had told him, I could see it in his eyes. He asked if I wanted to come with him and stay on the base in the shelter that they had organized. I knew what he was talking about. On the base there are numerous cold war bomb shelters still active and mostly being used to store civil defense food and water and various medical supplies. I looked at Chris and told him that he would be ok, just keep a level head and watch his back.

I told him that I was going to stay here alone and try to keep out of view of anybody and anything. He asked me if I was sure, I told him yes. He left and I'm tired. Going to lock it up and watch some news then TRY to get some sleep. I still can't believe this. Part of me wants to see for myself, part of me wants to just hide under the table with my guns and shiver.

January 13th

1143 hrs

No sleep came for me last night. I kept hearing police and ambulance sirens and fire trucks. Very disturbing. Thought I could hear gunshots in the distance, but it could have been vehicle backfire. Got out of bed at 0500 hrs. Went to the garage to get the florescent bulbs for perimeter and inside lights. I normally use regular bulbs because they are a little brighter, but given my situation, I may have to temporarily live off solar/battery power if any fires knock out the transformers or power grid.

The news is only portraying death doom and destruction. The news is now saying that every major city is reporting cases of the dead walking. This morning I began boarding up all my windows, even the ones that are not on ground level. I also boarded up the two vulnerable windows that I recently installed bars on, just in case. I feel pretty safe about the windows. I put the efficient bulbs on my perimeter lights.

Disadvantage: It takes them a couple of seconds to come on when the motion sensor trips.

Advantage: Will not drain my deep-cycle batteries as quickly.

I'm concerned about my safety, but I am taking every precaution to ensure that I am doing ok. I'm making a new section for supplies so that I can keep track of the amount of water and food I am consuming. I also checked the acid level of my batteries. They are good to go. Should last through this, unless...well I don't want to go there in my mind right now.

1555 hrs

I finally got through to my Mother and Stepfather (Dad). Mom was hysterical. I had to talk to dad to get any words in. He told me that things were fine and that they were as safe as possible. They hadn't seen any signs of the disease, but told me that there were reports in town of possible outbreak (10 miles away).

They had the guns and dogs ready for looters if the situation should arise. I asked dad what his plans were if things got too bad at home. He said that he and mom and the dogs would probably head out to Fincher cave if things got too bad. It is just a small cave that I

used to play in when I was young. Old man Fincher used to threaten to shoot me with his rock salt loaded twelve gauge if I kept trespassing in his cave without my parents. That seems like ages ago. I was only twelve then. I told them that I would stay in touch as long as the lines were up. It was no use with the cell phone as it was already dead. The high maintenance services would be the first to go.

4

1910 hrs

The lights were flickering today. Not a normal occurrence here. I was cleaning my rifle when it happened. I thought they were going to go out, but they held. Sirens and gunshots can be heard in the wind. That sums most of the sounds I heard today. After I got of the phone with my family (decided to call my Dad, no answer), I also started preparations to keep my house from looking too inhabited.

I took the staple gun and some extra blankets and gunned them over my re-enforced windows to make sure no ambient light gets out when I check the TV for news or turn on a light, or use my computer. I have a couple old batteries left over from my last laptop. Not the same model as my Apple, but I could get it to work with some electrical wire if I had to. I'm just thinking worse case. I used some duct tape and wired my web cam to overlook my front yard so instead of opening curtains to look outside, I could just look in my screen.

When my computer is in sleep mode (clamshell closed), I can't even see the needles move on my drain gauge of my battery bank. I had to use my extra USB cable from my printer, but who really cares about printing anything at a time like this. It's not like I'm going to be printing pizza coupons. I sent out some e-mails but got them all back. There were numerous error messages stating that server (insert random IP) was down. It's dark here now. I would get my camera out and take a picture outside my upstairs window. I'm just too scared.

2319 hrs

I woke up to the sounds of gunshots nearer this time and turned the cam on. Looks like a green Army transport truck parked under a street light on the corner in front of my house. There are soldiers loading a body in the back of the truck. I have to sleep tonight. Perimeter is secure...I just took the risk of taking an off-the-shelf sleep aid (just 1/2 dose) to try to cut the edge off. The news says that martial law is in effect in the inner city. I'm on the outskirts. It could be put into effect here too if these Army guys keep showing up. Oh yeah, I got a call from the squadron today, I didn't answer. It was my Executive Officer telling me I had to report to the shelter and to call him immediately upon receipt of his message. Yeah right, fuck you sir...feeling the effects of sleepiness...

January 14th

0815 hrs

I fell asleep to the sound of ocean tides on my mp3 player. I turned it up to drown out some of the noise. Woke up around 0300 to take a piss. I actually forgot what was going on. It reminded me of my childhood and early adulthood when something bad would happen, like a death in the family. There were brief moments of levity where my mind would forget the tragedy and then the cold hard facts would hit me. The second my hand reached out to turn on the television the tragedy returned to my conscious thought. I watched as endless talking heads were giving their theory on the cause and effect. The stock market is to the point of non-recovery.

The Coast Guard's helicopter fleet has been reassigned inland to aid law enforcement and military personnel evacuate some of the harder hit areas. A news clip that really got to me in particular, showed a group of survivors on a rooftop in San Diego. The helicopter was circling the roof of the building and I could see the wind from the helicopter rotors blowing the people's hair and clothes around. The people were trapped on top of a large air conditioning unit; apparently they had climbed up there to escape their pursuers (a dozen walking corpses). A particular shocking image was that of a mother and her daughter. The mother had her daughter's mouth

taped over and her hands and feet bound. She wasn't one of us anymore. The daughter was dead. The mother just couldn't let go. The poor ignorant woman.

I don't know how to react to seeing the world crumble. There are countless cities scrolling by on the news tickers. Even my own city made its way across the bottom of the screen. There are no commercials on the television, only the talking heads.

Reporter: “The following scenes display material that is not suitable for young children.”

The scene showed a group of reporters in their news van driving through downtown Chicago. The camera was pointing to the driver and you could see that he was visibly shaken and trying his best to keep the van on the road. The camera then panned to a frontal view. There are seas of figures in front and on the sides of the van. I could tell the van was moving as quickly as it could. You could hear a male voice crying from the back of the van. The driver did his best to weave in and out, but there were just too many bodies walking into the van to avoid. The camera panned back to the rear seat to get a shot of the female reporter.

She said, “As you can see, it would be SUICIDE to enter the city of Chicago, may god help us all.”

She then made a “cut-throat” gesture and the camera cut out. The screen went back to the reporter. He made a half-hearted statement about hoping they would return safely, all the while trying to keep up a fake smile. I turned off the TV and made my own assessment outside my house.

0900 hrs

- Perimeter wall: solid
- Street view: Emergency vehicles only. I see some human figures, but can't tell friend or foe.
- Threats: I see a fire burning in the distance about a mile up the road. I can tell by direction of smoke that it's blowing away from me.

2212 hrs

I came across a post on a survivalist forum online. I guess the news isn't reporting the whole truth. A sailor holding out on a U.S. Naval warship posted today. Apparently he is living off fish and seagulls. I hope he makes it. This just reassures my thought that the government is and will continue to hide the facts. This brings up a question. What government? I haven't seen any representatives of the White House on the TV in over 24 hours.

I spent the rest of the morning and afternoon prepping my backpack with a "bug-out" kit, in the event I have to get the fuck out of Dodge, and also filling up the bathtubs in my house. The water hasn't shut off yet so I'm going to start drinking out of the tub to conserve my bottled water. I began rationing food today. Only had a can of stew and a banana. Might as well eat all the fruit now because it will be useless within a week (sans the apples). I checked the perimeter again, and decided that I will keep my flight suit on at all times and remain as camouflaged as possible when I go out.

I have a nomex mask and gloves and ten nomex flight suits. I think it's a good idea to wear the flight suit because:

- ① They are fireproof, and
- ② They are one piece and no hassle, which means less to get snagged on shit if I have to get on the run. The only bad thing is that I need to be in a very safe place if I need to use the head.

I fashioned a pretty good washboard from the grill part of my propane grill. Had to wire brush it clean, but it will serve a good purpose in keeping my clothes clean and giving me less of a chance of catching disease or rash. I'm going to shave every other day to save on razors.

2350 hrs

I heard movement outside my gates and disabled the motion sensor lights while putting on my mask and gloves. I grabbed my rifle and went outside to investigate the area. I saw a strange man in civilian clothes stumbling up the street bumping into my rock wall at random intervals. Looked a lot like those corpses on the TV (the way he walked). I'm not taking any chances, nor am I going to get "commando" fever. I shall remain silent too avoid being seen or heard by anything alive or dead. Besides, it was too dark to tell whether or not he was alive or dead. I feel like a fucking idiot for not stealing some NVGs from the squadron when I had the chance. They would be handy in this situation. Good night journal.

January 15th

2237 hrs

I spent the whole day monitoring the situation outside my home. I saw some of the poor bastards shuffling up the street around 1045 this morning. I used my binoculars to get a decent view. Some of the ashen bodies looked normal, some of them not so normal. One of them had its throat torn out. Very unsettling. My phone rang today around noon (it was out momentarily earlier). I had set it to quiet mode a couple days ago. I was sitting next to it, so I decided to pick it up, half expecting it to be one of my superiors wondering why I'm not on the base in the shelter. It was one of my squadron buddies, Jake. We went through Officer Candidate School together.

Surprisingly enough, we both picked the same profession, and ended up the same places. He was telling me the situation on base, and I can say that I made a good decision by staying here. He told me that he was sent to pick up some blankets from the base storage units near the west gate. When he arrived he said that the military police were constantly shooting over the fence at the creatures in an effort to weed out some of the mass before it was too much for the gate to handle. A Humvee with a .50 cal was dispatched to deal with the crowd but they had to retreat when the gunner almost got pulled off the vehicle.

He said he didn't know how long the gates would hold, but he was sure that they couldn't get by the concrete bomb shelter. I asked him from where he was calling. He told me that he was calling the base's DSN lines (lines strictly for DOD use). He said that the officers were all heavily armed in the bunker and that he thought they had enough food for at least a few weeks. I told him not to worry about me, and that no one knows I'm even here. Instant Karma was playing in the background. That is all for today, journal.

January 16th

2200 hrs

The phones are dead again. At least the broadband is still working. All the news websites have stopped putting up the nice colorful flash images and are just sticking to basic tickers. I suppose they don't have time to be fancy. I spent the day preparing, loading up some bottled water and one case of MREs to the attic just in case. I also took some plywood from the garage and made a temporary floor up there big enough to sleep on. No emergency vehicles today. The air was thick with smoke from fires in the city. I can see the fires outside now even through the rain. All the lights are off in my house. The electricity kept flickering again today. If the electricity goes out all together, it will take me at least twenty minutes to set up for solar/battery power "off grid."

The news isn't even broadcasting live anymore on TV. It's obvious they are controlling the broadcast remotely because all you see are street corner cameras that are only connected to the world through the WWW. Oh, and the tickers on the screen keep rolling by showing government shelter centers. Half of it is misspelled and hastily typed, not unlike this journal. One camera of particular interest was a traffic camera pointing at a random interstate in California. It showed those dead bastards trapped in their vehicles with their seat belts still on trying to scratch and moan their way out. From the looks of it, they died in an accident and came back only to be stuck in a car with no motor skills to unfasten the seatbelt. That makes me feel better, because if they can't un-click the belt, they can't turn the doorknob.

Theory: Phones down, Internet up...why? I think it's because most of the lines dealing with the Internet are buried or satellite. Most of the phone lines are above ground and susceptible to fire and weather.

January 17th

1424 hrs

The sun is out. It is getting hot indoors. I don't want to run the air conditioner out of fear of the noise it will make. Electricity is intermittent. Water pressure is failing. I'm keeping the tubs filled up as I drink water. I'm not risking a shower or bath because I will have to drain the water to do this and I might lose total pressure. Using a bucket and sponge to take a bath. Trying to shave every other day to keep my morale up. The same news keeps flashing on the screen. No reporters in two days. I'm trying to establish a routine as to maintain sanity. In the early AM I am walking the perimeter before the sun rises as to avoid attention from those things. Later in the AM I intend to work out by doing basic calisthenics.

I had a real scare this morning. A cat had jumped my fence in order to avoid being killed by one of those things. I didn't think much of it until the cat had ran off and jumped the fence opposite the side it came in on. That's when the thing that was pursuing it decided it wanted to keep up the chase. I could only see its hands as it groped over the fence feeling for the cat. It just kept cutting itself on the broken glass that I had glued there a few days earlier. I guess these things have no fear of pain.

I think it got angry because it started beating on my wall. I could hear the thuds from the other side. Let it thud away I suppose it's going to take a lot more than that to tear down my rock wall. There are four or five of them in that area now. They are shambling around. I get a feeling they sense I'm here, but I cannot be sure. If it gets too bad, I will have to deal with them. I was thinking I might get my stepladder and some of my reserve kerosene and put it in my pesticide sprayer. I will climb the ladder and spray them down then light a match and burn them to death, again. It's much quieter than shooting them I suppose. At least this way I will be able to get a good look at one of them. I'm off to make preparations for this.

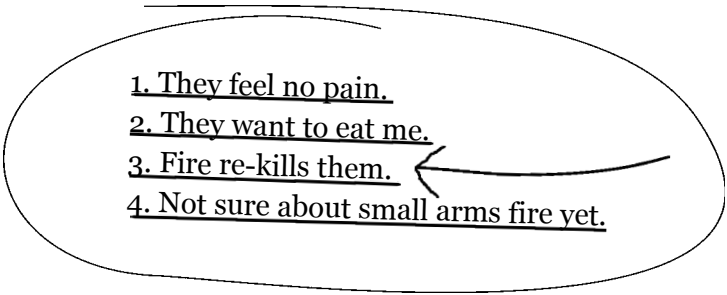
1600 hrs

I cannot begin to describe how disgusting these things look. I am a believer now. They are certainly dead and certainly want me to be dead with them. I quietly went to the garage to get my kerosene, ladder and sprayer. I set the ladder up first. Went over to the section that I thought they were near. I could hear footsteps where I placed the ladder.

I wanted so bad to see, but I was scared to look. I went back to the garage, and picked up the rest of my death squad gear. I could have easily shot them, but I don't want to make the noise, or waste the ammunition. I filled the sprayer up and climbed the ladder. First rung...I could see the tops of three of their heads...second rung, they noticed my presence and this awful gurgling moaning sound erupted from one of them. Sounded like, well I don't know what it sounded like. I got to the top of the ladder and there were six of them gathered around my position on the opposite side of the wall.

I pumped the canister to get pressure to the sprayer and doused the bastards with kerosene. They were fucking pissed, or hungry, or both, I don't know. I lit a match and threw it at the closest one, no dice, didn't ignite. I repeated this three more times as these vicious things kept clawing at the wall trying to get to me. Finally on the fourth attempt one of them caught fire. I knew I had to stay there on the ladder so I could make them bump into each other and spread the fire.

Finally when they were all up in flames, I stepped down from the ladder and put away my gear. I could hear the popping sound of burning fat for the next two hours. I'm glad it had rained for the past few days, or I wouldn't have even thought about doing this. I really have to start making a back up plan in the event I get SNAFU'ed here at my house.

- 
1. They feel no pain.
 2. They want to eat me.
 3. Fire re-kills them.
 4. Not sure about small arms fire yet.

1815 hrs

The sun is quickly going down. From my laptop web cam, I can see numerous figures up the street gathering around another house. I wonder if someone is alive in there? I hear birds going crazy in that direction. Not sure what the deal is. I hope if someone is alive in there, they have the common sense to stay quiet, because I really don't want to find out how gunfire affects them just yet. I don't want to be a hero today. I miss the world already. I miss flying. I miss being a Naval officer. I guess I still am, but I'm not sure if there is even a government around to recognize my commission. I sharpened my knife to a honed perfection today. It was sort of a relaxation technique. Also cleaned my carbine, although she didn't need it. A visual inspection was made of all weapons.

The solar panels are running efficiently. I dread going on the roof to clean them, because I'm sure I will be spotted. I should do it at night. That's a ways off. I heard the sound of a helicopter today, didn't take the chance to go outside and look even though those things can't spot me from ground level. Maybe they can smell me. It makes me wonder what senses they lost or gained from dying and coming back. I think it probably took longer than normal for the ones that I burned to die, as compared to a normal human.

I saw the caps of the flames from my house over the wall stumbling around for at least three minutes. The average human would collapse from pain in less than thirty seconds, I would guess. When it gets dark, I am going to use the LASER sight on my pistol to try to signal the house up the street. At least that way the creatures will not see the signal, only the recipient will if they exist or are even alive.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



John

2251 hrs

Using my pistol LASER sight, I made the attempt at signaling the house that the creatures were gathering around. At first I just aimed the “dot” at every window and shook it around. After about five minutes of this, I saw the faint glow of a flashlight in the upstairs window. Whomever it was started flashing the light. “Dit-dit-dit-da-da-da-dit-dit-dit.” It was SOS in Morse code. I learned Morse code a few years back at a military radioman school I attended and was pretty good at visually interpreting and pretty shitty at interpreting it through audio means.

This time I was in luck. I grabbed a pencil and some scratch paper (bills that I will never pay) and gave the signal that I was ready to copy. The things weren’t reacting to the other person’s flashlight, so I decided to use my L.E.D. light because of the 25 hours of battery life, unlike my pistol laser sight. I started to copy the Morse. At first it was slow going because I had to signal him/her to repeat the signal. I got into the groove after a couple of sentences.

O...K...(break)
H...E...R...E...(break)...N...A...M...E...(break)
...J...O...H...N...(break)...
Y...O...U...?(interrogative)

I told him my name and that I was OK also. I also told him to be quiet, the things like sound. He understood. Not bad communication for being a hundred yards away. He signaled and said that his house was secure and that he had a plan to make communication faster, but it would wait until tomorrow. I asked him what the plan involved his reply was:

R...U...B...B...E...R...B...A...N...D...(break)
...W...A...L...K...I...E...T...A...L...K...I...E...(break)
...S...L...I...N...G...S...H...O...T.

Uh...

I told John that I sort of understood. He signaled that it was time for him to get some rest. I let him go after that. That was over an hour ago and I still cannot fathom what he intends to do with a rubber band, a small radio and a slingshot. I can't think of a sling shot big enough to propel a hand held walk & talk one hundred yards to my house and even if it could, it would break into a million pieces if it did make it over here. I guess at least I have something to look forward to for tomorrow.

January 18th

1012 hrs

I woke up at 0605 and went to look out the upstairs window. Sat there for a minute with my light and then began to try and hail John. I kept flashing my light at the window. No answer. I started thinking the worst. I just sat there for a few minutes feeling sad, knowing that in half an hour it wouldn't matter anyway because the sun would be too bright for us to see each others flashing signal. That was when I saw him. I saw movement on the roof, the silhouette of a middle-aged man in a plaid button up red and black shirt and jeans. I grabbed my binoculars ran back and started flashing my light.

The sun was starting to shine so I was not sure if he could see the light trying to compete with the sun's brightness. He looked my direction and waved. Then he held up this long green elastic looking thing and what looked like a short stubby metal coffee thermos.

He then proceeded to wrap one end of the green band around the chimney and the other around his exterior attic fan, forming a primitive sling. He put the thermos in the sling and started walking down the other side of his roof, out of my sight stretching the green looking band. It seemed like a long time. Finally, I saw the band snap upwards, then less than a second later, when the sound caught up, I heard the snap.

The thermos that John had cradled into the band was shooting at a trajectory that would put it roughly somewhere in my yard. The ten or fifteen undead that were shambling around John's house took no notice as John's package sailed to its target.

I heard a loud KA-THUMP as the thermos hit one of the stepping-stones in my yard.

The package had made it over 100 yards inside the perimeter of my fence. Not without cost though. The sound was loud and two of the things turned from John's house, as if they heard it and started walking in my general direction. I wasted no time and immediately put my gloves and mask on and grabbed my pistol. I didn't feel it necessary to bring the rifle for a front yard expedition.

I made it to ground zero in less than fifteen seconds, picked up the dented thermos and ran back inside waving at John. He could see me and I could see him, but the things could see neither of us from our positions. When I got inside I opened John's package and found two packages of eight triple 'A' Duracell batteries, and the following two items: a note from John, and a two-way radio.



It also came stuffed with packing foam peanuts.

The corpses finally made it to my general area, but the sound of the impact was so brief they had no idea what specific area to go to. I loaded the batteries (takes 4 AAA) into the two-way radio and put the ear bud on. John was already trying to get me on channel seven. We talked for a great while. He told me that he used his wife's yoga resistance band to slingshot the thermos. We both laughed at that. I was afraid to ask him about his wife so instead I asked him if he had lost anyone in all this, he simply replied, "I think everyone has."

I didn't probe any further. I asked him what his plans were, and what his supplies looked like. He told me that he was still formulating a plan of survival and a backup of escape, and that he had plenty of food and water. He also told me that he had a semi-automatic .22 rifle and a couple bricks of ammunition. Hell, that's more ammo than I have.

I asked him why all of them were gathered around his house and he told me that it was because of his dog, she started barking at a group of them so he had to muzzle her. I asked what kind of dog he had, and he told me that he had an Italian greyhound (tiny version of regular greyhound) named Annabelle. I was jealous of the companionship he had. My busy Navy schedule kept me from getting a pet, because I would deploy at odd times. I told him that I had another friend named John back at the squadron. He said that we should conserve battery power and think of something useful to chat about in the evening and that he would be back on at 1800 sharp. I agreed and we both signed off.

① Supplies: status GOOD!

1950 hrs

John was on the air and ready at 1800 just like he said. We spoke about our current situation and came up with theories of how it began. I asked John if he knew if bullets could kill them, he was not sure. I told him about my little campfire yesterday and he told me he saw the fire after they had succumbed and wondered what happened. He finally broke the news to me about his wife. His son was away for college at Purdue when all of this hit. His wife was a victim of one of those things. It had attacked just before sunset days earlier as she walked out to the shed to get some nails for the boards

they were putting up. It was a bum that had died the night before after taking refuge in the backyard shed. By the time his wife called out, it was too late. When he arrived with a baseball bat she was gripping her bloody arm and running toward him with the creature behind her. He killed it with the bat.

He said that the bite on the arm immediately showed signs of infection and swelling. Black and red vein tracks were spreading toward her shoulder within an hour. He applied first aid and kept her comfortable, but there was nothing else he could do. He started to cry, (I could hear his tears through the tinny transmission of the 2-way) and I tried to change the subject, he said “I had to put her down, it hurt like hell, but I had to.” I told him not to think about this and try to keep his head in the game for the time being. He agreed and we kept talking.

I told him that I had seen numerous postings from survivors all over the United States on the Internet, but none from our allies overseas. He asked me to read them to him so I did. I told him that one survivor was in southeast Texas, so that means that he and I weren't the last survivors here. I read about the survivor from New York and John told me in a distant voice that he had family there. We both went off the air for a couple minutes to get our road atlases.

We got back on and started to discuss escape routes should this area become infested and uninhabitable. He suggested the Alamo because it's only a half a day's walk from here. I told him that I thought it would be suicide to enter the city now. I suggested that we “borrow” a sturdy vehicle and head east to the Gulf of Mexico and find an offshore oilrig.

John said that his power had been flickering on and off in the past few days and he wasn't sure how long it would hold. John had a Honda generator in his basement, but he told me he refused to use it unless he had to, because it might be audible outside. We decided not to waste too much battery power on these two-way radios. I only had three other sets of triple A's.

I tried the CB radio on every channel, only static.
I'm hungry.

Waste of time

Thought: I still have my XM satellite radio in my vehicle.

→ Satellite = no lines to catch on fire. If the uplink station is still operational someone could uplink from the WWW, and transmit. I will go out tonight and get the radio and UHF antenna.

2334 hrs

John and I decided that if we needed to talk to one another we would be at the window at the top of the hour to flash our lights. We decided to make a deal to go to the window and check on each other every hour, until we signaled it was time for bed (5) flashes. No light means there is no need to waste our two-way radio batteries. I checked my XM radio. It seems to work fine; unfortunately every station that is active is playing a constant loop. Some of the news channels are broadcasting stories and news from last week. Old news. I will continue to monitor when I can. I checked the CB radio again. I could have sworn that I heard the faint signal of a human voice. I called out and tried to get a response, no joy.

Looking out the window, I see at least a dozen fires in the distance, and every now and again, I think I hear gunfire. I imagined for a moment that it could be the last survivors in the big city. I bet it is a war zone there. I feel dirty, but I just don't want to waste the water. That reminded me to check the water pressure. Still some left. I haven't left the confines of my domicile for five days I think (sans the bonfire and slingshot incident). It feels like a month.

I wonder how other countries are holding up. I bet Eskimos and some of the small islands in the Philippines aren't really affected by this. Lucky bastards. I wonder if the walking dead are cold to the touch? That would lead me to believe that they don't generate body heat therefore they are much like a snake. I theorize that if it gets very cold, they may slow down. Tomorrow is Sunday. No church for me tomorrow. I guess he wasn't bullshitting about the Omega part in the book of Revelations. It's almost midnight, so I'm off to give my (5) flashes to John.

Survivor--

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--J.L. Bourne

