

**zombie
kisses
#1**



Zombie Kisses

I started ZK back in 1998. At that time zombies were not a popular thing. I've debated if I should make it available again as the zombie genre has exploded over the past ten years or so or just leave it in the past. New fans of my writing have asked about it, so here it is with only minor edits. Cover art by Kimberlee Traub.

hrt

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Brothers

Since our family died we joined the militia. There's really not much else to do. You can either join the militia or get shipped off to an allegedly safer city or try to make it on your own until you starve to death or slip up & get eaten alive.

I don't know how my brother's deals with things. I don't really even understand how I'm dealing with it, but at least I was pretty much use to not having anyone too close to me. He had a wife & a kid.

It's been hard enough for me that our parents & sister & other brother died. I hope he didn't have to shoot his wife & baby in the head. It's kind of one of those things you figure you really shouldn't talk about. There's just too much potential for bringing up things that need to be suppressed & forgotten.

There are about a hundred of us in our militia unit. We all live in a three-story hotel that we've adjusted to be safer. Sheets of plywood screwed in to the exterior frames cover all the windows. All but the main

entrance are sealed shut. So first the zombies would have to get in the building & then they'd need to break into your individual room. There are three generators in the storage room, two to power the place & one spare. Still having electricity & running water (we have a well) almost makes it feel like a really horrible vacation instead of the end of the world. A lot of guys just watch a lot of movies & play video games (we took the inventory of almost every video store in town). I guess the same things young

americans have done to avoid reality for years. No one ever talks about the past or the future. The only talk is about “job” (for lack of a better word) stories & the video games & movies. Kind of like college without classes or girls. Sometimes I wish I had better social skills so I could fit in with the guys better. But I guess I don't really care too much since I just drink & sleep instead of being with them....

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The militia's leaving here. They've given up the city as lost. I know it is & everything, but it has too much sentimental value; so me & my brother are staying. I'm kind of surprised no one else is going to stay. Maybe they're just more realistic. There started out being over a hundred of us here & now there's about thirty. It's really disturbing when you see a zombie wearing a militia jumpsuit. You need to shoot the thing in the head before you get a chance to recognize it.

Since there's going to be all this space (actually there really already is), we're going to try to get any of the survivors in the city to move here. Not necessarily because this place is so much more secure than any place else as much as because there is safety in numbers & with the militia gone, marauders will be more likely to try to take this place. Maybe the marauders are the smart ones, creating new tribal cultures instead of trying to preserve the old way of life. But I hear the stories about them

beheading the recent dead & cooking & eating them & that's something I know I can't bring myself to do. That's probably why so many of them are going crazy; they're probably catching some weird disease from eating bodies that have been dead too long.

* * *

I think one of them broke my arm today. I don't know why, but sometimes some of them are a lot smarter than others. The one that broke my arm jumped me from a second story roof. I'm lucky that a broken arm is all I could have. I'm lucky he didn't land on me with his teeth. I saw him falling towards me out of the corner of my eye & I raised my right arm to try to block him, but he still knocked me down & landed with his stomach smothering my face & his chest pinning my right

arm. I had to pull my pistol with my left hand & shoot him in the hip just to roll him off me. When I tried to get up, I put some weight on my right arm & it hurt so bad it took two shots to hit him in the head even though he was only a foot away. So now my brother & I decided it's really been too dangerous all along for us to be searching for supplies alone. I know it probably wouldn't have made a difference with what happened today, but eventually a group of marauders will probably come here & that'll be a lot

harder to deal with than the smartest-fastest zombie. I need to find out if my arm's really broken or not. I need to find out if I need to put a cast on it & how long it will take to heal. I think it's six weeks; I really can't afford that.

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It's a nice slow day & I'm washing our jumpsuits. We wash them in degerm. We got about 100,000 packets of it from a cleaning service's supply room. It smells clean in that weird bad way, but you get use to it. It doesn't really wash the bloodstains out as much as dye them over with blue. I'm pretty confident that it kills whatever it is in the zombies' blood that could infect us. After all, we're not infected yet.

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We're in the city for supplies & I see a pack of zombies circled around something. I didn't think there was anyone or thing left alive here for them to attack. But I guess the responsible thing to do is find out. "Barry, look. You think they're still alive?" I say to my brother pointing at where they're gathered in the middle of the street.

"I guess we should check," he says pulling up his rifle & shooting one in the head. It doesn't effect the rest of them, so something must still be

alive. We run the two hundred yards, my brother switching his rifle out for a handgun while I pull out my prybar. I start knocking my way to the center as my brother shoots them in the head. In the center there's a girl in her early twenties in fetal position hiding under two dead bodies that haven't re-animated yet. I shove the prybar through the head of each of the bodies & pick up the girl. My brother's on his third gun when he kills the last one. Sometimes it scares me that we trust each other enough to do things as

stupid as this. I don't think I could ever trust anyone else this much & I don't think I could've ever trusted him this much if things hadn't happened how they have. When we get back to the car, I lay the girl down on the backseat. She's covered in blood, but none of it seems to be hers, so I guess she's all right. She's shaking & hyperventilating & curls herself back into a ball when I let go of her.

* * *

I was looking at my driver's license today. There's no reason for me still to have it or anything, but I was looking at it & realizing how young I looked then. People would always tell me I looked older than I was, but I looked like a baby then. I looked twenty pounds heavier then than now, but I've gained thirty pounds of muscle since then. Mostly just because of how physically laborious staying alive is these days & that there isn't any place to get ice cream.

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My brother's trying to keep me alive. I can't walk. I can only hop because I can't feel my right leg below the knee because I was bitten in the leg by a crawler. He's holding me up & at times dragging me to run away as I try to keep stepping in time with my good leg. I half want him to leave me here to die because I'll just be a burden to him until I die. I tell him, "You can just leave me here. I won't be able to do anything useful anymore. I'll just be something to be concerned about. An expensive annoying pet."

“Shut up.” He stops for a second & slings me over his shoulder & it hurts my stomach for a second when he starts running again. & then we’re at the car & he lies me down on the asphalt & unlocks the car & starts it.

He’s looking down at me & he says, “I’m sorry. I’ll do it as fast as I can.” He takes his rifle & lies it down so the butt’s in my mouth to bite on. He opens the back door & pulls a first aid kit out from under the front seat. He makes a tourniquet from the rifle’s gun strap & puts it just above

my knee. He takes his shotgun & shoots through my leg at the joint just below the knee severing it & he wraps the remains in gauze & I hear him say, “Fuck!” & he pulls his rifle out of my mouth & slides me into the back seat lying down & slams the door & I hear him shoot five times before he climbs in the car & drives us away.

**to be
continued**







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