

SURVIVAL SCHOOL by Kurt Saxon copyright 1981

RATHER THAN WRITE TWO MORE EDITORIALS TO FINISH OFF THIS VOLUME(5) OF THE SURVIVOR, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE AMUSED BY THE TWO

MOVIE SCENARIOS I WROTE BUT NEVER SOLD. "WHAT WITH DISASTER AND HORROR FILMS ALL THE RAGE, SUCH A MOVIE MIGHT BE A BOX OFFICE SMASH. READ THEM FOR YOURSELF AND DECIDE.

The New Age Survival School is in Carson, California, just 10 miles from the Los Angeles Civic Center. It is in an old garage with about a half acre of floor space. Partitions separate the classrooms, except for a trailer home, padded inside and out and used as a muted firing range.

It is run by Captain Jack, a psychotic ex-Green Beret who wears a camouflage jacket and a Dodgers baseball cap. Captain Jack is a hand-to-hand combat expert and teaches all comers.

His partner, an ex-Holy Roller preacher, is Daniel Pomfritt, predicting Armageddon without the rapture. His course prepares the student survivalist to accept the coming chaos as God's plan to separate the wheat from the chaff. His ace in the hole is an ugly old gray school bus outfitted with extra fuel tanks and enough food and supplies to keep a dozen passengers fit for a month.

Wally Moon is the Survival Backpacking expert and also teaches first aid and bird watching.

"Gimpy" Terwilliger teaches firearms use and is a fast draw expert. He wears a wooden leg due to his gun often firing before it clears his holster.

Frank Drago is a defrocked high school chemistry fired for emptying the school during a noxious experiment. He teaches improvised weaponry and poisons for defense and protection.

Wanda Jordan is a loudmouthed ex-roller derby queen who teaches food preserving and knife fighting. She is also Captain Jack's mistress.

The students are a motley selection of ineffectual types, mainly white collar and a whole outlaw motorcycle gang of twelve who call themselves the Nordics. Daniel considers the Nordics as his twelve apostles, sent to him by Providence. The Nordics consider Daniel and the school a cover for their various criminal activities.

The school has been running fairly smoothly until the Survivalist's predictions of collapse have been coming true. The rising crime rate makes getting to survival school class a challenge in itself.

The overall plan of the school is to relocate the staff and its wealthier students to Oatman, Arizona, three miles across the California border. The Nordics are helpful in driving truckfuls of supplies from the school and local stores, burglarized after school hours.

As the national economy breaks down, Los Angeles county becomes a jungle. Utilities and services are spotty. Brownouts

occur daily as fuel runs low and terrorists destroy power facilities.

The poor protest budget cuts by ransacking welfare offices. From there they spread out to riot and loot until dispersed by increasingly violent clashes with police and National Guardsmen.

As downtown Los Angeles goes up in smoke the Survival School staff and students prepare frantically to make their move. They load the last of the supplies into the bus, assemble the Nordics and head down Del Amo to the Long Beach Freeway.

Several accidents have blocked the freeway onramp. As the bus slows down the owners of the jammed cars try to commandeer the bus. They are gunned down by the staff and the Nordics.

As the job of pushing the wrecks out of the way is completed, a Yellow Alert comes over the bus's radio. Missiles are heading north out of Russia.

When the way is cleared, the party surges onto the nearly deserted freeway. Aside from a few cars weaving around an occasional unreported wreck, the freeway is clear, due to the shortage of gas. Before many others who had also heard the alert can get to the freeway, the party is already on 91.

By the time they storm 605 the Red Alert comes in over the radio and a lone air raid siren sounds in the distance, four warheads hit--L.A. International Airport, the US Naval Station, Terminal Island and the Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

The four blasts shake the area and the freeway rocks twenty miles away. Four columns mushroom out over the stricken area, painting the night sky with a red pall of death.

Within minutes every freeway onramp is clogged with those doomed souls who have some gas in their tanks and try to leave the area. The biggest danger from the influx of more desperate drivers is their determination to hijack other vehicles before their own run out of gas.

At the sight of the church bus, several drivers try to commandeer it by running it onto the freeway shoulder. They are shot, but not before running over four of the Nordics.

The remaining Nordics move and take up the lead. To save ammunition, Frank activates a weedkiller's tank of cyanide and sprays its poison gas at cars approaching too close to the left side of the bus. Dozens of cars are strewn in their wake by the time they reach the desert past Yorba Linda.

No traffic comes toward Los Angeles. When drivers ahead see "JESUS LOVES YOU" painted across the front of the bus, they slow down. If they make a move to block the bus they are fired on by the Nordics. By the time they turn north on 15 three more Nordics are lost to would-be hijackers who fire back.

By the time they pass Cucamonga, the geiger counter in the bus is beginning to crackle as the blanket of creeping radiation rolls over the instant wasteland. The inversion layer claps a dead hand over the Los Angeles Basin.

When they come to the Barstow Freeway they see it is clogged

with refugees leaving San Bernardino. The bus shoots onto the freeway at the first fortunate gap. The four remaining Nordics are delayed until there is another gap in traffic.

As the crush of traffic threatens to swamp the bus, Frank consults with Captain Jack and they decide to block the highway. Frank and the rest begin throwing out cyanide smudge pots all over the road. Within seconds they are alone, except for the traffic ahead. The last four Nordics are sprawled just outside Victorville.

By the time they reach Daggett, traffic has thinned and it's full speed ahead. Then their motor conks out.

Now it's their turn to commandeer a vehicle. They position some out-of-gas vehicles so that other drivers getting through the jam behind have to slow down. They all stay out of sight until a beer hauling semi cruises up and, instead of slowing to weave through the roadblock, it stops. Two scrounges, who had probably stolen it, get out with guns and make as if to search the bus. Wanda shotguns them as they open the door.

It only takes fifteen minutes to attach the semi to the bus. Daniel gets behind the wheel and Wanda rides shotgun in the cab beside him.

When they finally pull into the little town of Oatman, they go to Captain Jack's refuge there. With a semi full of beer and half the stealable valuables from Carson, they are ready to weather the storm.