Attack of the Living Dead Virus: The Metaphor of Contagious Disease in Zombie Movies

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SO MUCH HAS CHANGED SINCE GEORGE ROMERO'S *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* and his subsequent films *Dawn of the Dead* and *Day of the Dead*. The *Dead* trilogy depicts a nightmarish scenario of zombies devastating a corrupt America and bringing about the end of the world. These movies have been so deeply ingrained in our culture that they have lost their initial shock value on today's generation, for gone is the revulsion despite the graphic, slow devouring of human flesh. Even the word "zombie" seems as harmless as Halloween. It is often associated with suffering from lack of sleep or conveys a state of mind devoid of any emotion or feeling. However, recent horror flicks such as Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later* and Zack Snyder's remake of *Dawn of the Dead* are different not just because they revisit the gore of cannibalism, but because they emphasize epidemics, especially those spread by viruses. In our post 9/11 world, still skittish after recent Amber Alerts, fears of contagious disease such as AIDS still linger, but threats of bioterrorism loom large. In addition, the lethal Ebola virus and a deadly strain of bird flu are threatening to wreak havoc on the world population. Viruses epitomize our fear of the end because they signify disaster as unpredictable and uncontrollable as the flesh hungry zombies that reduce the world's population to a handful of bedraggled survivors.

Filmmakers have often used contagious disease as a metaphor. From the obesity epidemic to the ever persistent virulent strain of teenage apathy, it is the subtext of our culture's demise. The spoof *Shaun of the Dead* (Edgar Wright) uses the metaphor to comment on the "zombie culture" as a recent epidemic of kids desensitized and super-sized into apathetic video-game-playing lumps of flesh. Although disease is not as ubiquitous in Romero's movies as it is in the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*, there are indications in the original that it is caused by a mysterious virus. Gregory Waller, in *The Living and the Undead*, explains that a virus does offer a plausible explanation of the zombie:

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"They are a contagion that spreads faster than any epidemic—killing, feeding off, and transforming the living into the undead" (280). However, Romero uses the metaphorical meaning of plague for consumerism gone awry, such as the significance of the mall and the wasteful spending on the latest gadgets and gear.

But the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* and the movie *28 Days Later* show how, similar to viruses, zombies mutate as they evolve through various sequels, spin-offs, and remakes, adapting easily to a fresh, younger generation of horror movie fans, infecting them with a new sense of dread. In the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*, the lighting effects cast a sickly green pall over the actors and set in the early scenes, suggesting that the world is already infected by some unnamed malady, a hideous sentence waiting to be carried out. In *28 Days Later* the skies over desolate London are toned with a toxic yellow hue. And in one particularly poignant scene, as the survivors search for a human voice amid the static of a radio, the weak lighting renders them deathly pale despite their healthy determination to survive. Both films convey how viruses are frightening because of how quickly they spread. Not just by being contagious as airborne emissions or by bodily fluids, disease, or rather the horror of disease, is spread through the media.

Most of what we know about viruses is media-induced anxiety. Historically, epidemics have shaped civilization and formed our perceptions of disease. After the polio epidemic, our fears of contagious disease had dwindled, only to return with a vengeance during the eighties and nineties with AIDS. Now over five years into the new millennium, it is difficult not to be aware of some out-of-control disease as it burns a swath through third world countries, decimating populations, and causing us to wonder if it will reach our shores. The painful lessons Hurricane Katrina has taught us in disaster planning cost lives, causing us to wonder if our nation is prepared for a pandemic. It seems that much of the fear is based on the notion that America is overdue for such an event, the last one being the Hong Kong flu outbreak of 1968. In addition, for every named virus, there are thousands of unknown or undocumented viruses that still lurk in the brush and are quite capable of global disaster. Anne Platt, in her study "Infecting Ourselves: How Environmental and Social Disruptions Trigger Disease," warns, "The cumulative effects of human interference with ecosystems allow infections to spread far faster than anyone has been able to disseminate the means of preventing and treating them" (9).

Yet this fear mongering does have its limitations. Most of the media, such as the widely circulated *Time* and *Newsweek* as well as *National Geographic*, have depicted such scenarios of a pandemic, but there is so much about viruses we *still* don't know. The fragmented news montage in the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* conveys our distorted knowledge of disease. This is a commentary on CNN, MSNBC, and other cable news channels that show disease segments as

fearful reports of impending doom. There is a sense that our limited knowledge of viruses actually hinders our understanding of disease. Waller points out that it is the authority figures' incompetence to accurately explain the zombie phenomenon that contributes to the disintegration of America (274). For example, in the film, interjected between opening credits and against Johnny Cash's chilling song "When the Man Comes Around," are jumbled newscasts attempting to explain the outbreak. In one, an official responds to a reporter's question regarding a virus with "We don't know." The horror of the epidemic is bad enough, but the terror of being a victim of some nameless disease is worse. When a policeman is interviewed, however, his suggestion as to how to kill the zombie by shooting it in the head is applauded because his response does not concern why these zombies walk the Earth but *how* to kill them. This is an attempt to make sense of chaos, but actually it leads to more chaos.

Viruses are parasites; they must depend on other organisms to function. They are frightening because of their self-replicating invasive abilities despite their miniscule size. Colonel Sam Daniels, in the thriller *Outbreak* (based on the book *The Hot Zone*) that depicts an epidemic overtaking a small community, succinctly puts it thus: "It's one billionth our size and it's beating us." In addition, viruses are capable of some ghastly feats worthy of Romero's proclivity for creating fear. Luis P. Villarreal, Director for the Center for Virus Research, argues that since a "living entity is in a state bounded by birth and death," viruses have both living and nonliving characteristics (102). To further illustrate, Richard Preston, in his chilling book about the spread of the Ebola virus, *The Hot Zone*, explains, "Viruses may seem alive when they multiply, but in another sense they are obviously dead, are only machines, subtle ones to be sure, but strictly mechanical, no more than a jackhammer" (85). So zombies can be compared to viruses because zombies are not quite alive, nor are they dead, and they depend on us. They are automatons: mindless, numb, and totally devoid of emotion and quite capable of chaos.

Typically, horror movies portray the zombie as an automaton. Perhaps this inspired Romero to spoof his own nightmarish zombies in *Dawn of the Dead* as bumbling, inept creatures. All foolishness aside, these creatures, although technically dead, still seem quite alive. Like viruses, these creatures exist only for the purpose of feeding off the living and of proliferating. Furthermore, zombies represent a grotesque parody of a virus's evolution and survival. Romero's zombie shuffles along, slow and easily outmaneuvered. The infected in *28 Days Later* and the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* are classified as zombies because they are as mindless as Romero's, but the zombies of *28 Days Later* are not only very much alive but also quick as they sprint after their prey like athletes. Even the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* shows zombies more agile than their predecessors. The zombie has evolved into a quicker and even craftier zombie.

The infected in *28 Days Later* resemble Ebola victims: vomiting blood,

peering through blood red eyes, and suffering from fits of rage. And like the origins of Ebola, the virus in *28 Days Later* has its origins in monkeys. A symbiosis exists between virus and primate as it has for over a million years. The ability to evolve from primates to humans is another terrifying if not interesting perspective of viruses, for the Ebola virus does not differentiate between the two. How this happens is still somewhat of a mystery. Virologists are aware of the patterns, but there are so many unanswered questions. Viruses are not entirely conscious of their proliferation, yet they seem to use various effective methods of infection. Preston illustrates this by describing an Ebola victim. In the throes of death, the victim has essentially been drowning in his own blood. Blood is leaking out of every orifice, and his internal organs have all but dissolved. He undergoes several epileptic seizures while his blood splatters onto those around him. "Possibly this epileptic splashing of blood is one of Ebola's strategies for success—it makes the victim go into a flurry of seizures as he dies, spreading blood all over the place, thus giving the virus a chance to jump to a new host" (108). Similarly, the infected in *28 Days Later* seem conscious of the transmission. The violence by the infected begets violence by the survivors, thus allowing the spread.

In the beginning of the movie, animal activists break into the lab that contains infected monkeys. However, after they try to free them, the monkeys attack, and thus the infection spreads. The title refers to the final stage of an epidemic. Twenty-eight days after an outbreak, the once bustling metropolis of London is reduced to a post epidemic wasteland. A bicycle courier named Jim wakes from an unrelated coma and finds the hospital as well as the city completely empty. In a nightmarish scene as Jim is pursued by zombies, he is rushed into to the worst-case scenario of an epidemic. A virus, explained by one survivor, Selena, as "something in the blood," is turning everyday decent citizens into raging lunatics.

Perhaps this viral behavior can explain another zombie imponderable: since zombies in *28 Days Later* are so mindless, why don't they kill each other? Similar to how viruses are considered dead until they come into contact with a living cell and then are resurrected for the purpose of replicating, zombies need their victims alive so that the disease can spread. Because most pathogens die out when we die, our microscopic nemesis has a vested interest in our survival. As Dr. Joshua Lederberg, in his study "Infectious Disease as an Example of Evolution," points out, "The bug that lets its host live for another day also survives another day, allowing its own propagation and its own spread to new hosts as well" (14). Preston adds, "A virus does not 'want' to kill its host. That is not in the best interest of the virus, because then the virus may also die" (84).Viruses need people to survive. Zombies share this need to propagate by aggressively attacking their prey by biting. Therefore, as it is a virus, a zombie's survival depends on us.

The spread of the mysterious virus in *28 Days Later* is through blood, and the spread is through contact, typically from a bite from a zombie, and the only means is to aggressively attack its prey, hence the aggressive behavior of the infected. Not unlike that in the case of the rabies virus, the aggressive behavior of the zombie is how the virus propagates. The rabies virus affects the limbic system, which is the part of the brain that controls emotions (Shope 86).[1] Perhaps this is how the zombie is also infected. After all, isn't shooting the zombie in the head the only method to kill it? The way rabies spreads is by biting, as any dog owner can painfully relate. The biting behavior is an adaptation that serves the virus's purpose by spreading the disease from one victim to another (Lederburg 17). Zombies are reduced to animal-like behavior as they snarl, growl, and fend each other off like a pack of starved dogs.

Similarly, some of the zombies in *28 Days Later* seem to select whom they want to infect. For example, when Jim and Selena meet other survivors, cab driver Frank and his daughter Hannah, they set out to find an answer to the infection. They arrive at an old English manor turned military compound by soldiers holed up for the sake of salvaging civilization. Only when Jim and Selena realize the soldiers' horrible plans for procreation do we see the newly evolved zombie's behavior.[2] Jim encounters the soldier Mailer who is infected and chained by his neck outside the house. Sympathetic to his suffering, Jim not only helps Mailer to escape so that he may seek revenge on the soldiers, but Jim also helps spread the infection. By vomiting blood onto the faces of his intended, Mailer, now loose and infected, chooses those who seem fit to infect others, but kills those who are not, signifying the conscious contagion.

The soldiers' self containment and Mailer's imprisonment suggest the archetypical Pandora's box. The soldiers try to reestablish civilization in the confines of a temporary sanctuary. Major Henry West isolates Mailer so that he can observe the duration of infection. Similarly, in the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*, the survivors isolate themselves in a mall, and the infected are kept isolated as well, or worse, executed. During past outbreaks in the nineteenth century, most fled as the infection raged within a city, but those trapped must isolate themselves or who ever is infected. While this allows the survivors temporary protection, the chaos that rages outside cannot be kept out.

To illustrate, in the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*, the early focus is on Ana, a frazzled nurse, as she leads the audience through occasional radio and TV reports of sporadic violence to believe that there is something amiss in her idyllic neighborhood of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After a decent night's sleep, she wakes to one horrific dawn of the dead as her husband and a neighborhood child attack her before she flees to the symbolic mall with a group of other unfortunates; among them are Michael, Andre, and his very pregnant wife, Luda. The place seems safe enough; the parking lots are bereft of cars or individuals, living or undead. The mall then becomes both candy store and prison,

as it is in the original, while the people within try to keep a futile sense of community.

Perhaps this is why in the original and the remake the characters pursue various leisure activities; they while away the days looting clothing stores, playing basketball, and engaging in a name-the-celebrities game by matching a zombie's likeness to that of a celebrity and then blowing its brains out. While this allows a temporary state of "normalcy," it is an attempt to ignore the chaos that rages outside. But the chaos can no longer be kept at bay. Those inside the mall soon realize that they are no longer in control. The zombies that surround the mall increase in number. Apparently they ignore the moral implication of Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death"—that what is kept outside will eventually get in—and it does not take long for the characters to engage in some human folly that causes the zombies' invasion.

The remake of *Dawn of the Dead* provides stark visual representation that conveys a plague of epic proportions. In both films, there is a sense of how quickly an epidemic can occur and its devastating effects on civilization. *28 Days Later* offers us an early glimpse of the epidemic in the grim headlines Jim reads in newspapers he has found scattered about on the empty streets. We can only guess about the chaos that first overran London. In the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*, one chilling scene shows how global the threat is as the camera slowly pans across the terrified faces of the survivors as they watch TV news reports of zombies attacking in places as far away as Moscow and Tokyo. This is now a pandemic, showing just how quickly viruses spread and cross the globe because of our fast-expanding ways of travel. To illustrate, Tim Appenzeller, in his article "Tracking the Next Killer Flu," depicts a very real doomsday scenario of the avian flu, H5N1, which can spread from birds to humans. He explains that we are overdue for such a pandemic, for the last one was the Hong Kong flu in 1968 which had originated in birds. H5N1 can become a global pandemic because viruses spread faster than previous outbreaks. And the prediction for the next disaster is much worse: "Estimated deaths in such a pandemic range from 7.4 million to an apocalyptic 180 million to 360 million" (25). So the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* and *28 Days Later* shows how the threat of a viral outbreak is very real.

In most apocalyptically-themed literature and movies, survivors must move through a dead civilization without becoming "dead" themselves. As *28 Days Later* and the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* suggest, the survivors become so desensitized and demoralized that they are shadows of their former selves. Every violent change they must endure means more suffering, more death. Is it possible to hope? Elana Gomel, in "The Plague of Utopias: Pestilence and the Apocalyptic Body," explains that "Any apocalypse strikes the body politic like a disease, progressing from the first symptoms of a large-scale disaster through the crisis of the tribulation to the recovery of the millennium" (1 of

22). Surviving means a certain hope for the future, but the future means change, often violent. Michael A. Arnzen studies how horror movies embody the violence of our culture and the violent changes that can rock an already unsteady world. He explains, "The fragmentation and gore inherent in our films and culture reassure us merely with a fearsome grin, whispering, 'Be ready for anything—because the sawblade of change knows no bounds'" (6 of 10). We face the fact that the world does not make sense in any simple way.

Unlike the original *Dawn of the Dead* and its optimistic ending with the surviving couple, Fran and Peter, and their helicopter ride into the hopeful dawn, the remake's cynical ending suggests that there will always a threat. For example, during a last ditch effort to escape the ensuing plague, the survivors flee by sailboat to an island in Lake Michigan, only to find that the seemingly isolated island is also besieged by the cannibalistic undead. The concluding footage presents a jostling *The Blair Witch Project* effect as one of the characters videotapes the ordeal with a pilfered handheld camera. The fragmented montage conveys the chaos. As they disembark and cautiously move along the pier, the survivors scream as the undead run towards them. The final frame suddenly fills with the rotting face of a zombie shot dead while we hear sounds of gunfire and mad scrambling in the background. The movie suggests that there is no escape from our fear. Viruses are everywhere. And sooner or later, they will infect us. "Even if this community dwindles to a bare minimum, there is still the possibility of its survival—and by the same token, the possibility of yet another flare-up of the disease" (Gomel 5 of 22).

Because of our perceptions of disease, both historically and culturally, our reactions to infectious disease might explain what is represented in these horror movies. Much of our fear lies within the nature of disease itself. Disease, ugly as death, has its association with evil stemming back to the Black Plague. Pestilence is described in Revelation: "Foul and evil sores came upon the men who bore the mark of the beast" (16.2). Preston describes such a hellish scene in a Sudanese hospital during the outbreak of Ebola. The patients were stricken with a zombielike dementia. Some had managed to escape and wandered the streets. Naked and oozing blood, they were completely oblivious to their state, trying to get as far away from the hospital as possible. Preston speculates that perhaps because these patients had witnessed neighbors, relations, and friends dissolving into a bloody mess on the hospital beds around them, they became frightened that they too would become as hideous as the others were (98). While the remake of *Dawn of the Dead* and *28 Days Later* show the zombies as gore-covered creatures, Romero's original trilogy depicts the distorted zombie's ash-green features as if caught in the grip of a painful struggle with death. In addition, because of the medieval attitudes of punishment and sin, the diseased were deemed as punished by God and shunned to prevent further spread so that their disfigurements would not contaminate others.

During the late Middle Ages, lepers were branded and banished from society. In one study, "People With Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) During the Middle Ages," Herbert C. Covy quotes Saul Nathaniel Brody, a professor emeritus of English and comparative literature, from his text *The Disease of the Soul: Leprosy in Medieval Literature*: "A medieval diagnosis of leprosy was a prediction of disfigurement and death, and what is perhaps more terrifying, it separated a man from society because of the infection he carried outwardly and the moral corruption that lay within him"(1 of 6). To the other members of society, victims of leprosy were already dead. Peter Lewis Allen has studied how lepers became the living dead. They were forbidden to speak to others and their property and rights were taken away. Eventually, they were whisked away and quarantined, never to return. "The leper was now dead to the world" (37). When they died, they were buried at midnight away from the graves of the congregation "almost as if they had never really been alive" (37).

Recently, during the eighties and early nineties when the AIDS epidemic hit home for most people, AIDS victims were shunned. Most of what we knew about the spread of the virus was based on misconceptions, often resulting in suspicion. Religious conservatives, those who take the Bible literally because of a verse in Leviticus, had openly condemned gays as being the scourge of disease. Since AIDS was erroneously associated with homosexuality and drug addicts, it seemed a fitting punishment. But even for those who were not gay, the stigma still remained. AIDS is contagious; therefore, it is deemed that victims should be isolated and regarded as dangerous.

Furthermore, both the original and the remake *Dawn of the Dead* share a historical perspective on our reactions to disease. Throughout history, plagues have brought civilizations to ruin. The rationale of certain horror movies is that if zombies spread a disease that brings a living death, then death is chaos. This can be found in Revelation: "Men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death will fly from them" (9.6). The tagline for *Dawn of the Dead* warns, "When there's no room in hell, the dead will walk the Earth." It is the fear of death that consumes us as we voraciously consume these horror movies that depict zombies as a representation of this threat.

The blood-soaked theme in *28 Days Later* is a chilling commentary on our reaction to disease. Initially, Selena is regarded as a strong and resourceful survivor, consoling Jim and grudgingly leading the men through the mayhem. In one scene, after joining two other survivors, Selena and Mark, Jim tries to seek solace in his parents' house only to discover they have committed suicide.[3] When zombies attack, she hacks them to pieces with her machete. She turns to Mark who realizes he has been infected: one of the zombies scratched his arm deeply, thus allowing their blood to mingle. Although he pleads for his life, Selena works her machete on him until he is quite dead. Jim requires an explanation. "How did you know he was infected?" he asks. She answers, "The

blood." Then, somewhat unsure, she adds, "I didn't know.... I can see it in his face." She comforts him by saying, "If it happens to you, I'll do it in a heartbeat." Her brutal act epitomizes our suspicion and fear. We do not know if Mark was infected or not, but the threat remains. He may become infected, a zombie; he may not. Her suspicion that causes the savage extermination rather than the act of self preservation or the noble responsibility of killing the enemy reduces her from heroic status. She is no better than the zombies.

This is also evident in the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*. In one scene, a truckload of military shelter escapees has joined the group inside the mall; among them is a woman who has been bitten. After she succumbs to the virus, Ana asks, "Did anyone know her name?" To which, the reply is no. "Die without a name? Damn!" exclaims another. She is a nameless victim among the thousands who have already died. Shortly after, the woman rises as a zombie, but is shot dead. Since Ana is a nurse, she lends medical expertise to determine the cause of plague and thus realizes the connection in another victim, an injured man, who is also discovered bitten. They decide that he must be executed. "You're infected. You're going to become *one of them*!" exclaims Michael, aiming his gun at the cowering victim. He will become a zombie, an "Other," potentially as mindless and destructive as the zombie horde that stalks the mall. Already reduced to nothing, he becomes a zombie and is shot dead. Regarding how Ebola is still contagious even after death, Preston calls this phenomena "depersonalization." Although the person has already died, the body and the threat it contains continues to exist (19).

In another very disturbing scene, Luda, who has been bitten during an advanced stage of pregnancy, is about to give birth. Andre, in a bizarre attempt to preserve a sense of family, has known of his wife's condition and eventual demise, straps her spread eagled onto the bed and squelches her cries. Luda dies and becomes a zombie in this perversion of childbirth. Now a zombie, she lunges at him, grunting and hissing, but is unable to feast on her husband's flesh. Andre delivers the baby, but this horror is exacerbated when another survivor arrives to check on Luda's state and discovers not Luda, but a zombie. Andre, Luda, and the baby become victims of a gangland style shoot out. As the others, hearing the gunshots, come to the rescue, they find mother, father, and the baby dead. But the baby rises and also becomes *one of them*, a zombie. The child has no name, no identity, and no purpose other than to spread the infection. It is shot in the head. The dead not only have no identity; they are treated with no dignity, no respect. They are things to be destroyed. Our reaction to disease is that the only way to deal with it is to eradicate it—a shotgun blast to a zombie's head. When the threat is gone, our fear might go with it.

Zombies look like us. Yet we try to distinguish between the living and the dead. We tend to distance ourselves to keep the chaos at bay so that we sever

all emotional connections. In a scene deleted from *28 Days Later*, the infected have gained entry in the basement of the manor. Alex Garland, who wrote the screenplay, describes the scene of the zombies snarling and pushing at each other as a "vision of writhing Hell. They are a mass of faces and bodies" (108).[4] This is also evident in one scene in the remake of *Dawn of the Dead*: the survivors are fleeing from the mall on two shuttles fashioned into armored vehicles, but they are quickly surrounded by zombies. There are no distinguishing features of humanity, just snarling, grasping creatures devoid of any personality. The distinctive features of humankind cancel out to create one vast, faceless horde of the dead. Waller comments that Romero often used outdoor long shots of zombies to convey a lack of distinction among them. They are reduced to "nonhuman beings of no value...They are all part of one homogenous mass" (305). However, similar to what Preston witnessed during the Ebola outbreak, the dead *are* part of us. We just do not want to be any part of *them*, for they represent death, a threat to our existence. Gomel concludes: "The body of a plague victim is denuded of every vestige of difference. It is classless, raceless, and genderless. And yet in its very abstractness it becomes intensely physical: the body of mortality" (7 of 22).

These films suggest that humankind is responsible for such a calamity. We have been constantly reminded that over-using antibacterial cleaning products and over-prescribing antibiotics are causing an evolution of microbial resistance. Land clearing has also exposed us to new and more mysterious viruses. Preston comments, "Whether the human race can actually maintain a population of five billion or more without a crash remains an open question. Unanswered" (409). So what is the purpose of dieting and exercise when one virus will kill everybody on this planet anyway? Perhaps the doomsday scenario of a pandemic will motivate countries to be prepared and find vaccines to ward off such a calamity. Perhaps we should go to extremes to protect ourselves. However, isolating ourselves in a plastic bubble will not work, for there will *always* be infection. Viruses have been around longer than we have. These movies suggest that infection is part of us and it is inevitable so that we may fare no better than the ranks of mindless creatures that shamble across the screen.

Notes

[1] The rabies virus does not have the advantage that a cold virus has. It cannot be transmitted in the faint mist emitted from a cough or sneeze. It must find other ways of clever transmission (Shope 86). Dr. Robert E. Shope, who teaches at the University of Texas, maintains the World Reference Center for Arboviruses that include over 500 viruses.

[2] This devious plan is conceived by Major Henry West after seeing one of his men with a gun in his mouth. He explains his feelings to Jim, "We kill all the infected or wait until they starve to death. And then what? What do nine men do except wait to die themselves? I moved us from the blockade, I set the radio broadcasting, and I promised them women. Because women mean children" (Garland 85).

[3] Jim finds their suicide note: "Jim-with endless love, we left you sleeping. Now we're sleeping with you. Don't wake up" (Garland 20).

[4] The scene depicts Jim, Selena, and Hannah's escape from the mansion now besieged by zombies. One of the soldiers, Mitchell, holding Selena captive, opens the door to the basement and sees this hellish scene. Understandingly, he decides to go another route. Jim later saves her and Hannah.

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