



Counter-Zombie Warfare

Jason A Beauchemin

Jason A. Beauchemin (Jun 25, 2016)

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Counter-Zombie Warfare enlivens the undead genre by focusing on the elite squad tasked with squashing the zombie outbreak before it begins.

Jason A. Beauchemin's *Counter-Zombie Warfare* is an all-too-realistic take on the zombie apocalypse. It features vivid characters, explosive action, and heart-wrenching emotional fallout.

A zombie outbreak is on the precipice of becoming a full-blown apocalypse. A secret division of the US military continually deploys to eradicate any sign of zombies. Their operations are always successful, just managing to fight back the tide of the undead without throwing the world into panic. The walking cannibal corpses aren't the only threat these troops face, though; they are also plagued by the strain of battle, the loss of squad-mates, and the unrelenting job of stopping an unstoppable force.

Counter-Zombie Warfare takes a refreshingly novel approach to the zombie genre, pitting the undead against a highly-trained division of soldiers who constantly fight so that civilians, instead of being used as zombie fodder, never suffer here.

Characterization shines. Each member of the main group of soldiers is shown forging relationships, snapping at each other, surviving battle after battle, and facing down the undead. When one of them falls, it's meaningful, even to their more immature and annoying teammates. Some of the soldiers transfer out, some disappear, some fulfill their contracts and go home, and some fold under the strain of fighting.

The book's prose is strong. Dialogue is marked by jocular dark humor and ribald banter that keeps the story from becoming too depressing. Characters whip out funny parody songs while en route to the next killing ground. Pop-culture references establish unique character tics while grounding the story. The narration reads like that of an eyewitness documentarian following the intrepid warriors on and off the battlefield.

Military realism steals the show. Soldiers behave and speak suitably even when lumbering zombies swarm. Details of weaponry and tactics fill the pages. The narration places interesting focus on the mental well-being of the soldiers, showing how they cope.

There is a lack of outside perspectives, though. The zombie outbreak is explained without sufficient detail; no one questions what caused the outbreak or wonders how to prevent it from spreading. It is not clear how the undead remain hidden from the larger civilian world, especially in consideration of the large-scale battles taking place.

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JOHN M. MURRAY (February 26, 2018)

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