



# World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War

*Max Brooks*

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The Zombie War came unthinkableably close to eradicating humanity. Max Brooks, driven by the urgency of preserving the acid-etched first-hand experiences of the survivors from those apocalyptic years, traveled across the United States of America and throughout the world, from decimated cities that once teemed with upwards of thirty million souls to the most remote and inhospitable areas of the planet. He recorded the testimony of men, women, and sometimes children who came face-to-face with the living, or at least the undead, hell of that dreadful time. *World War Z* is the result. Never before have we had access to a document that so powerfully conveys the depth of fear and horror, and also the ineradicable spirit of resistance, that gripped human society through the plague years.

Ranging from the now infamous village of New Dachang in the United Federation of China, where the epidemiological trail began with the twelve-year-old Patient Zero, to the unnamed northern forests where untold numbers sought a terrible and temporary refuge in the cold, to the United States of Southern Africa, where the Redeker Plan provided hope for humanity at an unspeakable price, to the west-of-the-Rockies redoubt where the North American tide finally started to turn, this invaluable chronicle reflects the full scope and duration of the Zombie War.

Most of all, the book captures with haunting immediacy the human dimension of this epochal event. Facing the often raw and vivid nature of these personal accounts requires a degree of courage on the part of the reader, but the effort is invaluable because, as Mr. Brooks says in his introduction, “By excluding the human factor, aren’t we risking the kind of personal detachment from history that may, heaven forbid, lead us one day to repeat it? And in the end, isn’t the human factor the only true difference between us and the enemy we now refer to as ‘the living dead’?”

Note: Some of the numerical and factual material contained in this edition was previously published under the auspices of the United Nations Postwar Commission.

Eyewitness reports from the first truly global war

“I found ‘Patient Zero’ behind the locked door of an abandoned apartment across town. . . . His wrists and feet were bound with plastic packing twine. Although he’d rubbed off the skin around his bonds, there was no blood. There was also no blood on his other wounds. . . . He was writhing like an animal; a gag muffled his growls. At first the villagers tried to hold me back. They warned me not to touch him, that he was ‘cursed.’ I shrugged them off and reached for my mask and gloves. The boy’s skin was . . . cold and gray . . . I could find neither his heartbeat nor his pulse.” —Dr. Kwang Jingshu, Greater Chongqing, United Federation of China

“‘Shock and Awe’? Perfect name. . . . But what if the enemy can’t be shocked and awed? Not just won’t, but biologically can’t! That’s what happened that day outside New York City, that’s the failure that almost lost us the whole damn war. The fact that we couldn’t shock and awe Zack boomeranged right back in our faces

and actually allowed Zack to shock and awe us! They're not afraid! No matter what we do, no matter how many we kill, they will never, ever be afraid!" —Todd Wainio, former U.S. Army infantryman and veteran of the Battle of Yonkers

"Two hundred million zombies. Who can even visualize that type of number, let alone combat it? . . . For the first time in history, we faced an enemy that was actively waging total war. They had no limits of endurance. They would never negotiate, never surrender. They would fight until the very end because, unlike us, every single one of them, every second of every day, was devoted to consuming all life on Earth." —General Travis D'Ambrosia, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

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