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Zombie Apocalypse Survivor

Days Notice
We have truly had many days to fix things up before the zombie plague hit us. It's been all over the news. It started overseas and then hit the West Coast. The military and police were all mobilized to stop it, but the plague keeps moving west. The White House claims that their efforts are slowing it down, but I personally don't think it would have made a difference. If anything, all those people manning barricades and the kill squads running around probably helped draw the zombies west.

I went early to stock up on supplies at the stores and I'm glad I did. It seems like everyone had the same idea and was grabbing anything and everything that they could. It was a very hectic experience, but I heard later that shopping became real nasty as the zombies got nearer. There were fights and a few murders. There was extreme price gouging. There were limits placed on how much food someone could buy. Towards the end there was just no food. There are quite a few people that aren't doing anything to prepare for the zombies. They are just waiting for the government to come along, to bring them their zombie food pensions and personal National Guard protection squad.

Even more people have already fled for the mountains. My neighborhood is super quiet now, since it seems like well over half of my neighbors have left. It makes me laugh to think of what it might be like in the mountains right now; Jim Bob with his 4 ton Chevy 10 cylinder power stroke diesel and 40 foot camper parked right next to Bill Bob in his 3 ton Ford 8 cylinder turbo charged truck and his 34 foot trailer, right next to 15 other rednecks in a campground designed for a compact car and a tent. Maybe they've each staked out a mountain top and built a sandbagged bunker with their high powered 30-06 rifle ready to fend off zombies and raiders alike.

Personally, I'm going to sit tight and see how things go. I've boarded up the windows. I built a frame of 2×4’s and 3/4 inch plywood that I screwed into the window frames from inside the house. I didn't want the outside of the house to look like a fortress. I wanted to avoid drawing attention from the living.

I'm all set and ready to go, sitting up in my attic, over the garage. I've set up a comfortable living pad. It used to get extremely hot, but I increased the ventilation and put up insulation to keep the heat at bay. I'm still able to watch the news coverage over the air and read it from the Internet. Hopefully power, telephone and Internet won't be affected.

I'm quite happy with myself, quite glad that I had time to prepare. I couldn't imagine being caught off guard like they were on the East Coast.

First Contact
It's 3 am and I have heard the zombies for the first time. I was having a dream about them, zombies, when they opened their mouths in my dream and screamed. The screaming continued as I made that awkward transition from being asleep to being awake. I slowly realized that someone was screaming from outside of my home.

My next door neighbors hadn't left. They were trusting in the police, the
military or angels to keep them safe. It sounded like Carla, my neighbor's wife. A door slammed shut and Carla's screaming stopped. That's when I heard them, the zombies, for the first time. It was a low bellowing moan. It was followed immediately by more moans from further off. Then came the noise of breaking glass, more moans, and more screams.

I smelled them shortly after, the putrid meat smell. I've smelled a dead man before and I almost puked that time. I had to get in close to that dead man, to dig a key out of his pocket. He was already bloated and had only been dead a few hours. It was nasty. Thankfully the smell of death isn't too strong up here in the attic.

The screaming from next door has stopped and so has the moaning.

I can't sleep so I checked the on-line news. They report that the zombie plague has already spread all the way to the West coast, hundreds of miles past my location in the attic.

More of the first night

I still haven't slept much. It has started to get light outside, but I can't see anything that is happening outside since I have no windows, either in the attic or in the house. I guess that's one drawback to boarding up all of the windows. All night long it was crazy. I heard moans, screams, cars screeching and honking, pounding, glass breaking, and gun shots. I don't remember hearing any sirens.

Earplugs

I managed to get some sleep as the morning wore on. I put in earplugs. It is quiet outside now, though I still catch the smell of rotting flesh every few minutes.

The major news outlets are reporting hordes of undead have massed outside of their studios, or to be clearer, the stations still transmitting are reporting that. One station still transmitting isn't reporting anything. They have a life feed from inside their studio. Everyone is dead and stumbling about on the set.

Many of the bloggers are still going strong with their postings. Someone with a remote wireless hook-up in the mountains has posted that the situation in there has become scary. This person says the zombies can travel freely through the mountains and that the pickup trucks and camp-trailers don't make a good defense against a zombie attack. It also sounds like there are too many people trying to hide out from the zombies in the mountains. There is also a lot of rifle fire to draw the zombies in and a lot of stray rounds.

I have nothing better to do than to keep quiet. I wish I could see what's going on outside.

The neighbor kids and missing work.

This morning I woke up to scraping noises just outside of the house. The scraping just continued and continued without pause. Finally I decided to figure out what the noise was. It was a real pain in the butt, since I had to belly crawl to the very edge of the roof line and shove my face down onto flattened cardboard boxes laid down over the insulation so I could peer down at the side of my house.

There below me, looking like any other kid was my next door neighbor's daughter, little Suzy. She was sitting in the dirt and overgrown grass right next to
my house. Her pretty brown hair was done up in pig tails. It was quite a contrast from her bloated purple skin. The ends of her fingers were now bare bone from scraping against the siding of my house. She just kept scraping and scraping. I really don't know what will give out first, the vinyl siding or her delicate little bones.

I've been coming down from the attic a bit. It's dark in the main part of the house, but I need to stretch my legs and take care of my bodily functions. I'm glad the toilets still flush. I've also gotten some good exercise on the stationary bike, without the distraction of having to go to work.

What about work? It seems weird to me that I just stopped going, but I don't feel a bit guilty about it. Even the few days before zombies were roaming my neighborhood streets, I wasn't feeling the list bit bad about quitting. It was nice not having to worry or think, "Oh no, I'm late and going to get fired." I especially don't miss having to pretend that I care about the customers. That's one of people's biggest flaws. Always wanting things their way, especially us Americans, pampered and self-centered. Every one of us has at least one car, a television, a music player, a roof over our head and food in our belly…and we tell ourselves that we're poor and neglected.

Nope, I don't miss it and I hope when the zeds clear out, that we, the survivors, have a lot more common sense. I hope. Too bad we're a flawed species and won't ever have common sense.

I'm sure I'll miss the company and challenges of interacting with living people, but for right now, I'm going to enjoy my break.

**Flu**

I've been sick for the last couple of days. Puking up my guts in a darkened house all alone is really miserable. I don't how I got sick, but I hope that it wasn't from a bad can of food. I'm feeling a little better now, just a little weak.

The few bloggers that remain, report that the mountains have become a nightmare. My joke about 'mountain top forts' seems to be the one example of a safe place in the mountains. The valleys were over-run as the ranks of zombies swelled with the bodies of freshly killed. Some of those were killed by the undead and some were killed by overzealous survivors shooting indiscriminately at anything that moved. They are also saying that food and water is becoming an issue, since the zombies have scared off all of the game animals and it has too dangerous to descend into the valleys for water.

In the cities, people are becoming more isolated, but it's not too hard to find survivors on the Internet. Of course, only survivors would be active on the Internet. All in all, most of the remaining survivors are doing well. A few, that didn't prepare, are starting to run low and food. I'm not sure what they're going to do.

The survivors using the Internet, myself included, are beginning to coalesce around a few stable message boards. It's easier to stay in touch and pass information.

On a side note, I think I've watched every single zombie movie I own again, several times.

**Utilities**

The flipping water went out today. I'm grateful that I got in a last flush from my morning business, but I'm going to have to figure out what to do. It will
probably be no problem to build a deep cat hole in the crawl space beneath the house. It will smell pretty bad, but it will be cleaner and more sanitary than doing my business in the corner of the living room.

I'm more worried about my water though. With the fifty or so gallons in the water heater and all of the jugs and bottles I filled up when I was first preparing for the zombie invasion, I probably have enough water to last for a while, probably several weeks worth. I'm hoping that in several weeks that the situation will change.

The news on-line is that there is no government left. There are a few military bases that are still holding out, but they seem to be the exception to the rule and even then it's just the extremely remote posts. Typically the Air Forces bases located in the northern plain states like North Dakota.

Other survivors are also beginning to take over some of the larger commercial retail stores. Grocery stores, hardware stores and the large general merchandise stores seem to be favorites. Unfortunately, the living and the dead continue to try and get in, making their survival prospects tenuous. So far, none of the malls have withstood the zombie masses.

Not so comfortable

I'm starting to become concerned. Little Suzy has managed to scrape through the vinyl covering on the side of the house and is now scraping into the plywood sheets. Most of her fingers are gone and she's using bare knuckle bones to continue scraping. She smells and looks hideous now. Worse than that, more zombies have come to join her. None of them have moaned to bring in more, but there are about five standing along the side of the house with little Suzy. All of them are just slowly scraping away. I'm guessing that they probably smell me or sense me in some way.

I've come to the conclusion that I need to find some place more secure. I'm sure that they couldn't get to me in the attic even if they did manage to scrape their way into the house, but I would eventually just die of dehydration, or starvation. There's no point in being a zombie apocalypse survivor if you're dead.

I'm fixing up my car to make a break out of here. I'm building some crude protection onto it that should keep me safe. Basically, I'm going to bolt whatever I can find over the windows to keep them from getting in. I plan on putting plywood over the side and back windows, and wire shelving over the front windshield, so I can see out. All I've got are 2 inch wood screws bolt my 'armor', into the sheet metal of the car, but it should work.

It's about time to go

They know I'm here now, without a doubt. I think they might have heard me when I was applying the armor to my car. They're bellowing just outside, non-stop. I think their numbers have also grown significantly, not just double or triple, but at least ten to twenty times more than there were. They're no longer just scraping on the side of the house, but pounding on all of the walls. A lot of their effort seems to be concentrated on the front door. They've also broken out each of the windows, leaving the sturdy wooden window barricades to bear the brunt of their assault. They, the barricades, seem to be holding up well. Still, I don't know how long the plywood will last with the constant pounding.

I've loaded up the car with all of the supplies and tools I'll need and anything else that will fit. Yes, that includes plenty of guns and plenty of ammo. I
hadn't mentioned weapons before because some things just don't need to be advertised. I suppose it doesn't matter now.

What matters is that I still have electricity to run the electric garage door opener and that the zombies outside aren't interested in banging on the garage right now. They must remember that you have to go to the front door when you're visiting someone for dinner. Ha ha.

I'll post more when I find someplace more secure. It might only be with a 56k modem, but I don't suppose anyone is still playing high bandwidth video games right now.

Wish me luck.

A few blocks

I've found some place quiet for now. There are zeds wandering like crazy outside, but they haven't got a fix on my hiding spot.

I only made it a few blocks away from my home. As soon as I started the car engine and opened the garage door, all hell broke loose. I am really fortunate to still be alive. As soon as I opened the garage door, they swarmed the car. They grabbed onto anything that their rotten hands could grasp and I lost the plywood sheet over my driver's side window before I was even out of the drive-way.

I kept my foot pressed down hard on the gas pedal. They came from everywhere as I pulled onto the street! They were in the street in front of me, coming at me from the sides, and three were being dragged along.

I've scoffed at some pre-infection zombie-fiction writers for their woefully fragile cars, but after slamming into countless zombies I am giving them a bit more credit. None of my tires were punctured by zombie bones, but somehow their gore and bones managed to get into the engine compartment and punctured the car's radiator. The check engine light was glowing red before I was even out of the neighborhood. Still, I never took my foot of the gas. I sped as fast as I could away from my neighborhood and the horde of zombies that it contained.

Then I smelled hot rubber and saw a great cloud of steam burst from under the engine's hood. The car died right after that and I slipped into neutral to keep coasting forward.

I was looking desperately for a safe and secure place to stop and hide. It was fortunate that the engine had died and I was coasting silently. I slipped quickly past a large apartment complex without drawing the attention of the living dead inhabitants.

I had slowed down considerably when I saw an auto repair shop. It was nothing more than a large steel framed building. I turned in and let the car drift all the way up to the work bay doors.

As soon as I stopped, two zombies that had been holding on to the front and top of the car, dropped free and rose from the ground towards my open window. I grabbed the pistol that I had set on the passenger seat and shot them both through the head, dropping them back to the ground. I didn't waste any time marveling at the success of my first zombie kills, but headed straight for the front door of the auto shop. Holding the pistol at the ready, I tried the front door. It opened.

I quickly entered and locked the door behind myself. The shades were pulled over the front window and the lights were on. I made my way into the work
area of the garage. There were two cars already in the work bays, but there
would be enough room for me to push my car in with all its supplies.

Checking first to make sure no zombies were visible outside, I rolled up
the garage door and quickly pushed my car into the open space between the
work bays. I quickly lowered the door after it was in. I looked back out through
the small garage windows and still didn't see any zombies coming in the area.

Feeling secure for the moment, I check the rest of the building. Aside
from the garage doors, there were only two ways in and out of the building. One
was a windowless door that led to a fenced-in storage lot behind the shop and
the other was the front office door through which he had first entered. The
windows of the front office were small on covered by blinds.

Then I took an inventory of the shops supplies. There were several five
gallon bottles of water for a water cooler in the corner of the front office, a cheap
snack machine loaded full of junk food, a cabinet full of hard alcohol and an
entire automobile shop with supplies.

I unloaded the supplies I brought with me from out of the car and pushed
it back outside. It was absolutely covered in zombie gore. There was absolutely
no way that I was going to stick my hand through the filth and gore coating the
front end in order to attempt any repairs. There are two others cars in the garage
that I'll see what I can do with.

There was a telephone in the garage's office that I could have hooked to
my laptop's modem, but I found an unsecured Wi-Fi connection instead.

I think this shop might make a safe home for now, while I figure out my
next move.

Auto bodies

I tried to make a run to the convenience store today. It was only a few
blocks away. I'm getting short on food and figure I only have a day or two left.
I'm OK on water, though.

There is a large 4x4 pickup truck in the shop getting some dents pulled
out from the side panels. I decided I would beef it up with some zombie-proof
armor and take it on a supply run. I welded sheet metal over the windows, over
the front grill to protect the radiator and under the body to protect the rest of the
engine from damage.

In theory, it seemed like a simple enough plan; Drive to the store, hop out
with my pistol, run into the store, fill up some bags and boxes of food, run back to
the truck and happily drive back to the shop.

So I left here in the big 4x4 armored pickup truck. The zombies don't
seem to be interested in the repair shop and they weren't any around when I
pulled out of the shop. Unfortunately though, as I got nearer and nearer to the
convenience store, the zombies started streaming towards me and the truck from
every direction. When I got to the store, I was completely surrounded by them.
They were clawing and scratching and banging at the truck. The armor held up
to their assault, but I couldn't get out to raid the store.

The front of the convenience store was just one big piece of glass and I
thought about just driving through. I knew that wouldn't work, though, because
once I was in the zombies would also be in with me. I would have to rethink my
approach and try again.

I backed the truck out of the parking lot, the over sized tires easily
crushing the bloated corpses of the surrounding zombies. I drove away from the
convenience store, taking a long roundabout path back to the garage in order to lose the pack of zombies I had acquired at the convenience store and to avoid drawing others to the store when I stopped. It was still quiet here at the as I pulled in and secured the garage doors behind me.

As it is right now, I know that I can travel where I want to go, but I can't get the supplies I need. The truck seems kind of large and not so good for the maneuvering I will have to do if I want to get right up and close to the store fronts. I need to think on my approach to the problem some more.

Success!
I just got back from the convenience store and I am restocked with food and water

This time I used the car that was parked in the shop's other work bay, a small sub-compact car. It looked like whatever was wrong had already been repaired and it was just waiting for the mechanic to put the tires back on and the hood down. “No problem,” I thought. After putting the tires back on I welded armor over the car in the same way as I did with the truck. This time I left some openings in the armor of the side window so I'd have a good idea of how many zombies were massed next to the car when I reached the store. I would also be able to blast away at them with my pistol for some breathing room

The initial part of my second trip to the convenience store was the same as it had been with the truck. By the time I arrived I was completed surrounded by the undead. This time, however, I was able to slip into the store through its double doors thanks to the diminutive size of the sub-compact. It was the perfect situation because only the car would fit into the gap. Any zombies that had grabbed onto the side of the car were scraped off as I drove through.

After pushing all the way in, I backed the car up so that the rear bumper pushed the doors closed, preventing the zombies from pressing into the interior of the store. After setting the emergency brake and turning off the car's engine to avoid breathing exhaust fumes, I stepped out of the car and methodically shot the three zombies that were tenaciously clinging to the front of the car.

Looking back, I saw that the store's windows were holding back the horde of undead press against the glass. I shuddered as I thought about their numbers and the how truly thin the store windows were. I quickly assessed that there weren't any people in the store, alive or dead, and quickly went to work. I was shocked to discover that the store appeared to have escaped the shelf baring raids by survival minded shoppers in the days preceding the zombie plague. There was still a wide assortment of canned food and dried goods, as well as a vast assortment of drinks. There was more in the store room at the back of the store, more than I could fit in the little car. The car, in fact, was so full that its rear end was sagging dramatically.

Satisfied, I got in my car to leave, but pulling back out proved to be a little trickier than my entrance. I shattered one of the doors backing out. The stress of my rear bumper pushing against the press of the undead outside the door was more than the glass door could bear, causing it to warp and snap. I continued slowly past the door, bumping and gently nudging the zombies as I went. Memories of my first escape by car, which I had destroyed by car ramming into the zombie hordes, were still fresh in my mind. It was better to be safe than sorry.

I was still backing up when a hand shot into the visions slits I'd cut out of
window armor. The hand was well rotted and the ragged fingers busily searched for my face. I immediately leaned hard to my right side and away from the hand. I wasn't going to take a chance of catching the infection by trying to remove it with my bare hands and I didn't know what part of the arm was best to shoot with the pistol. The hand and arm kept flailing in the window slit trying to reach me and left chunks of flesh and gore on the rough edges of the metal. After a few more heart pounding seconds of backing the car up, I cleared the back edge of the zombie horde. I flipped the car into a quick turn and the pulled away from the store as quick as I could. I was heading back to the garage on my roundabout route with a zombie arm still flailing inside my little car.

As I picked up speed, the arm was pulled to the rear of the vision slot as the attached body was dragged along the pavement outside. Soon the zombie outside was no longer running but had fallen; the weight of its body forced its arm up into the ceiling of the car. Not slowing down at all, I drifted the car to the left side of the road with the intent on scraping the zombie off on a telephone pole. I picked a pole and aimed the car to pass it within inches. The zombie outside smacked against it with a loud 'thwock' and a 'BANG'. I was finally free of the arm, but I was also missing a whole section of sheet metal that I'd welded over the window.

I continued driving and noted that the quiet engine of the little car did not drawing attention from random zombies as I cruised back to the shop.

So I am well stocked now, for a little while. I've got time to think about how I'm going to resupply again at the convenience store since I've broken the doors. With the door broken, they can get into the store. There is still a lot of food left and I will need to get to it again.

The Kitchen Sink
The Internet had been down after the power flickered several days ago. It's back up now. Some server probably just needed to reset themselves somewhere.

I've been busy though. I was cleaning up the front office when I had a breakthrough idea. I was pulling some of the previous owners junk off of the desk and sweeping it into the drawers. Then the idea hit me like a ton of bricks! I won't have to get out of my car if I can sweep supplies into a drawer fastened to the car.

So what I did, in a nutshell, is took the big, ugly, gray, metal desk that I had just been throwing junk into and I welded it to the side of the little car. What I really did was cut off each of the draw sections from the sides of the desk and I fitted them into both doors of the car, right and left. They take up space pretty far into the seats, so I've rigged a third seat in the middle. I'm going to have to drive like a rural delivery postman, with my feet stretched to work the pedals and using my left arm only to steer.

I have also replaced the sheet metal armor over the windows. This time I skipped the big slits I'd cut in last time and just drilled small holes for vision that the zombies can't thrust their hands into. To sweep in the supplies when I return to the store, I have an L-shaped pole that I push out through a small hole in the window armor. With the drawers welded to the doors, I will have to do my entering and exiting of the vehicle through the back hatch now.

I've been back to the convenience store now, twice. The zombie hordes
were substantially on these last trips. It's probably because they have wandered out from the population rich neighborhoods and now roam freely.

The drawer concept has worked awesome. I just pull the car into the store next to a shelf, pushed out a drawer, and then dragged supplies into the open drawer. I pull it in, stash the supplies somewhere in the car and then move on to the next shelf.

I will keep working to upgrade the car.
I've also got more and more zombies starting to wander and roam in the area around the shop. I have to wait until the coast is clear for supply runs, but those opportunities a becoming more infrequent.

Someone else
I rescued another survivor today. I was trolling through the area looking for a new store to raid when a rock slammed into the top of the car. It scared the living daylights out of me. Then it pissed me off. “Who the hell is chucking boulders at my car?” I thought. I stopped the car and started scanning outside through my little vision holes.

The zombies were starting to swarm the car when I finally saw him. He was standing slightly back in the window of a nearby two story house. I couldn't rescue him with a horde surrounding me though, so I honked twice and started nudging the car through the building horde. There was no place for them to grab hold anymore, but they still beat on the top and sides of the car with their swollen and plague ridden flesh.

When I was clear of the horde, I continue forward at a slightly quicker pace. I honked the horn as I went to attract them. I pulled them with me for nearly a mile before stomping on the accelerator and looping back to the survivor's house. The zombies were clear of the area, so I back the car up to his front door, popped the rear hatch back open and knocked loudly.

Immediately the door opened and I saw a portly middle aged man holding a formidable looking table leg. Inside his house I could see where he had gutted and removed his stairwell to create a second floor safe zone if the zombies ever broke in. He asked me, “You got a safe place?”

Kneeling awkwardly in the back of the car while I held up the hatch, I answered, “yeah.”

Then he asked, a hopeful look in his eyes, “You got food and water?”

I answered, “Yeah.” again.

He stepped forward and said, “I ain't got jack here. Let's go if you don't mind my company?”

I moved back and he climbed into the car. We secured the hatch and headed back to the shop.

His name is Eric. He used to be a grocery store manager. He had a family, but they'd gone out to get more supplies on the day the plague had swept through the area. They never returned home. He blamed himself for not going with them and protecting them, even though he had tried to talk them out of it.

Castles
Eric and I have been reinforcing the garage. I've been lucky over the last couple of weeks that the zombies haven't taken notice of the garage and taken an interest. It's a bit darker inside now that we've covered over and fortified the windows. On the plus side, we have gotten comfortable opening the rear door
and letting in fresh air. The back of the lot holds several cars in various states of disrepair, two large storage sheds and a strong fence probably put up to keep out vandals. On the other side of the fence is a large canal with a good flow of water that we like to call the mote. Right now we are comfortable that no zombies are going to get in through there, but we still shut the door at night so we can sleep comfortably.

We've really got more time on our hands than we know what to do with. We keep busy by modding a small army jeep that is parked in the shop's back lot. The subcompact that I've been using for supply runs is pretty tight with the two of us, so we're going to work on a new chassis that will comfortably fit both of us and hold whatever supplies we think we should need on the road.

The jeep wasn't in very good shape when we started. The engine has been pulled out and there wasn't any top at all. Of course that left us free to fix it up the right way. There was enough sheet metal, body parts and automotive scrap lying around the back lot that we welded together a really sound passenger compartment. We even managed to improvise some really good doors for the roof top, but there aren't any side doors since we decided to keep the catch-drawer system for scavenging supplies.

While fixing up the interior, Eric made a startling discover, cars get hot in the sun. He insulated the interior with some sheets of insulation that he found in one of the sheds and painted the exterior of the jeep a glaring white. We added some racks inside to hold a basic supply of food and water, as well as some storage bins to hold our loot when we go out raiding the stores.

When finished, it was an ugly garishly white bastard of a vehicle that somehow looked right to us. We found a small V6 engine that would couple with the transmission and mounted without trouble in the engine compartment. It started up fine but we didn't test it for too long to avoid making too much noise.

On our next run, we'd give the jeep its chance to prove itself.

Smokers
With the convenience store picked clean, Eric and I chose the next nearest store to scavenge from. It was a moderately large sized drug store that looked like it still had a good load of loot. The doors and windows were already busted out, but the shelves inside were still visibly stocked when we viewed them from outside. A few zombies were wandering inside, but we would be able to bring the jeep inside and employ the salvage drawer catch system.

We idled the jeep into the store and started scavenging a wide assortment of items. Drug stores are a great site to get a wide variety of items, from canned foods, health and beauty products, electronics and the what-not. We had also decided earlier that we were going to hit the pharmacy and load up on some of the medications which, in our limited medical knowledge, would be beneficial. We were going to load up on antibiotics, basic narcotics and heart burn medicine.

As I slowly brought the jeep around the isles of the store, making our way to the pharmacy, I noted a small group of zombies had gathered themselves at the pharmacy counter. They didn't seem to notice us as we crept up, V6 engine idling, in the jeep.

It was not until we backed the jeep up to the pharmacy door that they noticed us and began pounding on the outside of the jeep. From behind me in the back of the jeep, Eric told me to shut down the engine because the exhaust
fumes were getting bad while we idled in one spot. After I shut down the engine, he opened the back door of the jeep, which was now flush against the walls and pharmacy door. He cursed aloud as he realized it was locked and said he was gonna shoot out the window.

Then he screamed like a girl and jumped from the back of the jeep all the way to the front where I was sitting. Looking back at the window of the pharmacy door I saw two faces looking out at us. Then shouted, “help us,” through the glass.

Trapped in the pharmacy office were two young pharmacy technicians. Eric went back to the window and smashed it with our L-shaped salvaging pole. The women tried immediately to force their way into the jeep, but Eric explained that we were trying to stock up on medications. They disappeared for several minutes and then came back with several boxes. It was obvious that they had a greatly expanded knowledge of medicine, since we were clueless about everything that was in those boxes. After passing the boxes to us, our newest guests, Michelle and Sarah, weaseled through the broken pharmacy window and into the back of the jeep. Eric resealed the back door and let me know that we were ready to go. I started up the jeep and we headed back out of the store. Before leaving we stopped first at the women's hygiene section for our new guest on the way.

Eric and I definitely appreciate having new friends, the presence of Michelle and Sarah changes the atmosphere and temper of our group, although the jeep is really too small for the four of us. It may be wise to have two people remain in the garage while the other two go out to forage.

Elbow Grease
We took the jeep back to the drug store to finish gathering the food still on the shelves. Eric tried the hand crank to see how well it would work. It worked great and we were able to breathe easier as we went about collection supplies. It helped that the air was clear, since moving the jeep via the hand crank was very slow. We spent a long time creeping through the aisles

On the way back to the garage, Eric had me stop at a thrift store. He dashed out from the back of the jeep and dragged several bicycles back. As soon as we were back at the shop, he went to work fiddling with the bicycles and the hand crank that he had previously installed in the jeep. Several hours later he showed us the improvements he'd made. Sitting crosswise in the back of the jeep, he had set up a pedaling station. Someone could comfortably sit down at the station and use their legs to power the crank. HE EXPLAINED how the bicycle gears would make pedaling a breeze compared to the back breaking work needed to turn the hand crank. In addition, he had installed a small fan to keep us cool and had added more water containers in the back.

Public Transport
After seeing how cramped the jeep had become with storage racks, the drawer catch system and Eric's pedaling station, the girls pointed out that it was even more cramp than when we had rescued them. We suggested that they could use the compact car if the need ever arose. They made a stink about it.
and pointed out that the welded on armor was badly damaged from the zombies beating on it and that the suspension totally shot from the extra weight and abuse I'd given it. The little sub-compact car was sorry sight and looked did look hideous. The girls suggested that we focus on fixing up the big 4x4 pick-up truck that I had made my first failed supply run.

Their suggestion made sense, since the truck would hold everyone and had room for a great deal of supplies. We took several days fixing it up to our latest zombie-proof standards. We added an up-armored a camper shell for the back and Eric installed two pedal stations in the back. “Just in case the need ever arises,” he said. We also added a tow mount to the front of the jeep in case we ever wanted to tow it behind the truck.

Finally, we stocked it with the basic essentials of food and water, and called it good.

**Attack**

I'm typing from inside the armored jeep right now. Sarah sits next to me. Eric and Michelle didn't make it.

They, the zombies, attacked in the middle of the day. I'm not sure what brought them to the shop after so many weeks of peaceful existence. They could have smelled us. They could have heard us. They could have seen us when we worked in the back lot of the garage. When the moaning started, we quickly locked up the garage and double checked all of the barricades. For hours they attacked and we waited in fear. It was hours of moaning and pounding of flesh on the outside of the building. Their stench was different now. It had taken on a milder sweet scent. I think the flesh had quit putrefying and had dried out substantially. They really were beginning to look like big pieces of walking beef jerky. On the streets they were walking with a stiffer gate. They also seemed tougher.

They started to break through after several hours. Truthfully, we were going crazy waiting for the inevitability of the breach. When the boards over the office windows began to break, it finally gave us something to do. I used up all of my bullets in an effort to stop them, but with each zombie KILLED; a new one would pull the dead one out-of-the-way and try again. After I was out of ammunition I used a heavy wrench to bash in their skulls. That lasted for nearly an hour before they broke in through the back door.

We sprinted out of the front office. Eric and Michelle were ahead of me and Sarah. They rushed to the back door. I think they were going to try and force it closed but they were surrounded so fast that they vanished just 5 feet in front of me. Sarah and I dove into the jeep and slammed the vehicle's door. Looking through the vehicle's vision slits, we could see that the zombies were still being drawn to the spot where Eric and Michelle had been. We sat quietly inside the jeep for several minutes while the zombies milled around the shop. The Sarah shouted, “OH MY GOD! MICHELLE!” Rising from where they had fallen, Michelle and Eric stood up. The flesh all over their bodies had been ripped to shreds, blood soaking every square inch of their corpses. Their eyes were cloudy white as they turned towards Sarah's scream.

As the undead began thudding their fists against the armored jeeps I jumped into the front seat and started the engine. I set the transmission into gear and slowly began pushing the jeep forward into the closed garage doors. The jeep firmly pressed its mass into the door until the garage door guide wheels
popped loose from their tracks and the door collapsed.

I continued moving the jeep slowly through the newly created opening and into a swarm of zombies at least ten deep. I left the jeep in low gear and just slowly powered through the mob. When a clear space opened up to the front, I stomped on the gas and shot away as quickly as I could. I had to keep the speed down in order to dodge the heavy volumes of undead that were making their way through the streets in the direction of the shop.

We continued driving for another twenty minutes before coming to a quiet stretch of road surrounded by overgrown fields. Sarah was quiet and distant as I stopped and shut off the engine. I grabbed some food and water from out supply stashed in the jeep and sat back to relax. I tried my laptop and found a good Wi-Fi signal, so, “here I am.”

Settling Down

Sarah and I have settled into a new home. It's been several months since the power went out and we are only now beginning to rebuild a communication network

After we lost the garage with Eric and Michelle, Sarah and I just trolled the streets and neighborhoods in the jeep. We would raid the convenience stores during the night for food and park somewhere under the shade during the day. We used the pedal station that Eric installed more and more. Gas was getting hard to find and the quiet nature of pedal system that helped us avoid drawing zombies made it ideal power source for moving the jeep.

We continued to scout for a new place to call home. The hardware and grocery stores had massive hordes of zombies massed around them. It was obvious that there were survivors inside, but with the zombies hordes and presumably strong barricades, we would never be able to make our way in. Along the way we did raid a small run down pawn shop, stocking up on ammo and an assortment of weapons and tools.

Eventually we spotted a potential new safe house, a farm supply store. Around the entire property was a strong metal fence with only one entrance. It happened to be locked with a simple padlock. The building itself was built out of cinder block and quite large. The main entrance was also barred with heavy gates. Along the side of the building there was a large roll up door. The property looked clear of undead.

We backed the jeep up to the gate and cut the lock with bolt cutters. Sarah opened the gate up wide enough for the jeep to back in then quietly hopped out, closed the gate and ‘locked' it back up with a roll of heavy gauge wire.

We drove around the building looking for a suitable entrance before we came back to the front doors. With both of us wrenching on heavy duty crow bars we managed to split the lock on the entrance gates. With the doors opened we immediately smelled a variety of scents; Grass seeds, chemicals, AND ANIMALS. We could also here scratching and rattling noises from inside the store.

We entered the store leaving the jeep in the entrance serving as a barrier in case any zombies tried to assault us from the rear. We both carried high caliber pistols. Cautiously we scouted the store, remaining together to provide mutual cover and to avoid shooting each other by mistake. We discovered the source of the scratching and rattling noises. There were cages of chickens,
rabbits, two goats and several young pigs. They were out of food and water. They were listless, but alive.

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The place is truly awesome. We've spent many weeks turning our farm store into an island amid a sea of death. We started first by putting up additional fencing on the exterior property fence to hide our activities inside from zombies wandering in the area. If we were seen and the zombie called out to draw more in, we would quickly take him out with a .22 rifle, and then lay low until any zombies drawn by the original call continued on.

Once the visual barrier was up, we braced the fences with the various earthen materials that were stored on the lot. Hopefully the mass of earth on our side of the fence would resist a mass of zombies pressing their rotted corpse against the fence. After that, we built the gardens. It was a pretty extensive garden set up actually. Not only did we have to feed ourselves, but the animals we'd found in the store as well.

Inside the store, we made ourselves as comfortable as we could. We found a surprising amount of items that didn't fit within the farm store category of goods. There was a comfortable display of furniture made from “rustic” wood. There were generators that we could have used for power, but we opted to rig up a series of solar panel kits to provide power for cooking, electronics and a dehumidifier that we used to generate clean drinking water.

Speaking of water, the store was even stocked with a well drilling kit. We used it to tap into the ground water beneath the store.

We're also building a methane generator, based on designs we found inside in the store's small book and magazine area.

The methane is necessary for our new vehicle. The store has a bucket loader that we've converter into a zombie elimination vehicle. Aside from the basic vehicle modifications that we've made in the past to keep us safe from the zombie hordes, we have also hooked up several farm cutting implements to the front loader's hydraulics. We take it out when the zombies are getting too thick and have begun to press against the fence. Once we get the rig out of the gate, we drive it around and chop off their heads with the farming attachments. After that, we move their corpses into piles to create barriers at key intersections.

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The other survivors in the area are networking with us, sending out contact teams to set up a new wireless Internet and to trade basic goods. Our seeds have gone a long way towards buying security and comfort. We've strengthened the outer fence and moved the animals outside to forage and fertilize the lot around the store. Inside, we've set up secure living areas for ourselves and for other survivors that find the way here and decide to stay.

I'll tell the story of our new guests at a later time.