

**Vampire City and
Tales from the
Shadows**

By Matthew Bellingham

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First Edition.

**This is a special preview of
my book containing
excerpts from all four
stories. Enjoy...**

Matthew

Vampire City

Part One

My head ached; I heard urgent voices as they came at me from all directions, a confused cacophony of noise that was impossible to decipher. I heard a distant ringing, a shrill reverberating tone that seemed to bore directly into my skull, grating along my nerves like a razorblade. I felt the adrenaline tearing around my body and my heart was pounding in my ears like a bass drum.

The pistol was heavy in my hands; solid, cumbersome - with the potential of altering the outcome of my mission with a single tug on the trigger. The kidnapper stood opposite me; the young woman held tightly in his arms with a pistol pressed against her head.

“Drop the gun,” I said, “now!”

“No chance!” the crook replied,

“Drop it NOW!”

I aimed the Beretta directly at his face. The model I held in my sweaty palms had been modified; it now held ten tranquilliser darts instead of the standard 9mm ammo. ‘More humane’ my bosses had said.

Damn Political Correctness Brigade I thought bitterly, wishing more than anything to have sixteen hollow-point slugs nestling in the clip.

The crook pushed the hostage to the ground and swung his gun towards me. I pulled on the trigger and heard the click as the dart jammed in the chamber.

“Die!” screamed the man.

Running on pure instinct, I dived behind the couch, hearing his bullets tear into the fabric. I didn’t stop to think; I just reacted. Dropping the faulty pistol, I snatched my other handgun from its holster; no pansy darts in this, but instead fifteen steel tipped babies of death. I nearly dropped it as I fumbled with the safety, aimed then fired.

The bullet caught the crook in the chest, he seemed to freeze in mid air before he was knocked backwards in a ferocious spray of blood. I heard that distant ringing tone

again, but I ignored it and continued to stare at the motionless crook, then the world around me seemed to dissolve away.

The phone's incessant ringing brought me out of a heavy sleep. I sat up slowly, my thoughts on the nightmare; it was in the past now, why couldn't I just forget it? I glanced at my bedside clock and saw it was 2:00 a.m. *Who could be ringing at this god-forsaken hour?* I picked up the receiver.

"Hello?" the tiredness was clear in my voice,

"Is that you Jason?" a familiar voice asked.

"Yes...Simon?"

"Yeah, I'm sorry for calling you this late."

"Nah," I lay back on the bed, "don't worry about it. I haven't heard from you in awhile. How're things?"

"I need your help..."

"My help? What are you talking about?"

"You must come and see me! Someone is trying to kill me!"

I sat up, incredulous, "Don't joke, that's serious..."

"I *am* serious!" he sounded scared.

"Okay. I'll be there as soon as I can."

"Hurry!"

“I will, I promise, I’ll catch the next available flight.”

I put the receiver down and frowned, Simon was my old friend who had moved to America because of a job opportunity. I found the call disturbing in the extreme. Simon was not one to crack at shadows... as I packed my suitcase I wondered what could have happened to make him that nervous. I was in a rush so I just chucked in a few clothes.

Then I went to my wardrobe and grabbed a pair of jeans and a black T-shirt. Finally, I went under my bed and pulled out a grey case. I opened it and took out the contents. I put one item in the secret compartment of my suitcase and slipped the other into my pocket. I called the airport and booked myself on the earliest flight, which was 6:00 a.m. I got a taxi to the airport terminal.

Approaching Customs I pulled out the card from my pocket. The official, who was performing the bag checks, looked at my card carefully, before nodding and waving me through. I sighed and went through to the plane and took my seat quietly. Putting my suitcase in the overhead carrier, I looked at the card more closely. It had my photo on it and the title: British Special Police. I joined the Special Police unit shortly after turning twenty, and looking back at it now I am

honestly puzzled at why I was recruited in the first place. I looked like a punk! There I stood 5'8", average but athletic build. I had the coolest deep blue eyes, and with spikes in my dark blonde hair, I looked as if I'd come straight from a rock concert.

However, last year I was dropped from the team, after I'd killed a suspect in a hostage crisis. I saved the hostage but that didn't matter to my superiors. I was out of the unit, though they hadn't gotten round to collecting my I.D. which I was now grateful for. My flight was quiet and no one bothered me.

I arrived at my destination in the States at 1:30 p.m. I flagged a taxi, sincerely hoping jet lag would give me a miss. I handed the driver a note, upon which I had scribbled Simon's address. The journey took roughly two hours.

His house was simply amazing...it was huge. It looked like a mansion with a long driveway, large wooden doors and expensive-looking curtains. I strolled up to the house noticing two cars parked out front on the gravel and knocked on the door. I expected to see my friend open it, but instead I was surprised to see a young woman standing there.

I asked her if Simon lived here and she nodded, showing me to the study where he was anxiously pacing the floor. His mood lifted when he saw me however, and he asked if the flight had been okay. He introduced the woman who opened his door as his 'beautiful' wife Susan.

She was about 5'4" with short hair and brown eyes. She wasn't what I'd call beautiful, but she did have something distinctly alluring about her that I couldn't quite put my finger on. She was dressed very simply in a pair of jeans and a dark turtleneck sweater. More surprisingly to me was that she was a brunette, which wasn't usually Simon's type, but she seemed friendly enough, and she obviously adored Simon, so that was good enough for me.

I looked around the room and was immediately impressed with what I saw. It was a lot more lavish than his old flat in England. A large oak table in the centre dominated the room and several shelves crammed with old books, covering a broad range of subjects, surrounded it. I smiled, thinking of how rubbish my flat back in London was compared to this.

I looked at Simon; he hadn't changed much in the five years since he'd moved. He was about 6'0", with cropped brown hair, and thoughtful hazel eyes. As usual, Simon was

wearing a pair of denims and a Knight Rider t-shirt. I asked him what had freaked him out so badly, but he just offered me a drink and said it wasn't the right time to explain. I said I understood, and he seemed glad that I did.

He glanced at his wife, who seemed to understand the subtle gesture, and disappeared into another room. We sat down for an age reminiscing about the good old days and what has happened in his life since he had moved on. Susan returned with tea and biscuits. I thought about asking him how he had met her, but paused as I noticed him staring towards the house across the road. At first, I thought it was idle curiosity on his part but I had a gut feeling that it was more than that.

My friend turned to face me and said that he would fill me in tomorrow and suggested I stay and get a good night's sleep rather than try to find a room at a crappy motel. He then picked up my suitcase and led me to their guest room. As I was in a hurry to come to my friend's aid, I had only thrown a few things into my case, so I didn't bother to unpack. I made sure the door was closed before opening the secret compartment and removing the hidden item. The light glinted slightly off the shiny metal. I ejected the clip,

checking it was fully loaded. Satisfied I put my gun back and retired for the day.

The next morning I was woken by a knock at the door. It was Susan. She entered the room and told me that Simon had popped out and had asked her to wake me before he returned. I thanked her and she left me to get dressed. I sat quietly in the study with a hot mug of coffee to wake me properly. On the desk, there was a note and a set of keys. The note explained they were the spare house keys and the keys for his BMW, which was at my disposal.

Putting the keys in my pocket, I waited for my friend's return. Simon showed up an hour later and apologized before he sat down and told me the full story. I listened intently as he talked about the young woman across the road saying that she was a vampire. At first, I laughed. *Vampires?* I thought my friend was kidding.

He then cleared the large desk in the middle of the room and laid out the blueprints of the so-called vampire's house, then told me his plan. He said we would wait until dark, then sneak into the house, and kill the vampire. It was at this point I realised he was being serious. I tried to argue that it was a stupid idea, and that we would be committing murder, but he was having none of this. He stormed off

grumbling about how I was supposed to be his friend and how I should believe him. I went back to my room, dropping the set of keys on the side-table on the way, to fetch my case. I did not want to cause any more trouble.

As I went to leave, Simon burst into the room, screaming that the vampire had taken Susan! I dumped the suitcase on the bed and retrieved my magnum, then hurried down the stairs. I got to the hallway just to see Simon leave the house carrying a khaki duffel bag. I rushed outside and saw my friend enter the vampire's house. I quickly followed him inside...

The hallway seemed empty so I entered the nearest doorway; it led into a large room, which looked like the lounge. The room was empty apart from a television in the corner and a settee against the wall. I saw Simon standing still, a stunned look on his face. It was then I saw his wife, Susan spread-eagled on the floor, with vacant eyes and a bloodied throat. She was as still as a statue. Standing over her was the young woman my friend had thought was a vampire. The woman looked to be in her mid-twenties. She wore a pair of blue jeans, and a tight red t-shirt. She looked beautiful as well as innocent. I found it hard to take my eyes

off her. Only Susan's blood dripping from her lips revealed the danger we were in.

Simon ran at the vampire in a rage, swinging his fist at her but she easily dodged the blow bringing her knee up. It smacked into his groin dropping Simon to his knees, as he fell she sank her fangs into his neck. He slumped to the floor, his blood coursing down his neck. The vampire spun around, looking me in the eye, and then slowly walked towards me. I tried to fire at her but couldn't raise my gun, my hand shaking crazily as I was too mesmerized by her beauty. She had almost reached me when I finally managed to shoot.

The bullet caught her in the stomach, the force of the .50 caliber round tearing through her stomach sent the girl flying backwards, hitting the ground in a heap. *So much for her being a vampire* I thought, as I went to check on my friend. Simon was in a bad state, breathing shallowly. I went to ring an ambulance when I heard someone clear their throat. I turned round and saw the young girl standing where she had fallen.

Her fingers were caressing her stomach; the fist-sized hole caused by my gunshot had completely vanished. I ran to where Simon had dropped his bag, ripping it open, and

found a stake, a knife and a machete. I grabbed the stake and started to approach the vampire. She saw the stake and started to back off. I took a step towards her but lost my balance.

I glanced back to see my friend had grabbed my ankle. Confused, I struggled from his grasp but Susan then grabbed me from behind and Simon had gotten up and got a firmer grip on me. I managed to break free and stared at my friend and his wife. I could see something in their eyes and I just knew they were different. I plunged the stake into Susan's chest. She screamed and collapsed.

I spun around and threw a punch at my friend but I hit thin air. His fist however connected with my stomach and I keeled over and coughed up blood. I could feel the warm metallic taste in my mouth; I looked around quickly for the vampire. I spotted her by my friend's duffel bag, picking up the knife.

Simon pulled me to the floor and managed to get an iron grip on me, which this time I couldn't break. The vampire smiled at me before lifting up my shirt and drawing the knife's tip sharply across my stomach. A small gash appeared, blood oozed out. Simon held me down as the vampire started licking the cut. I somehow managed to lash

out with my foot catching the girl in her chin she stumbled backwards. I used the confusion to escape from Simon's grasp.

I searched round and found the magnum. I aimed it at my friend. He stared at me with a lustful look in his eyes. He charged at me, the intent to kill clear in his eyes. I instinctively pulled the trigger; the bullet went flying into Simon's face causing the round to splatter his brain all over the place. I retrieved the knife before plunging it into the vampire's chest and she fell back. I was about to leave when I noticed that she was still breathing.

Surprisingly, the knife had not killed her. I looked into the duffel bag to see what could finish the job but it was then I heard the sirens. I knew I couldn't figure out how to kill her and escape in time so I retreated to the house grabbing the bag on the way out. I made a makeshift bandage for myself out of an old shirt that was on the side table.

However, the bleeding was getting worse. I would need some medical attention, as the gash seemed quite nasty. First, I watched the house closely the pain from my wound increasing with every movement. I wondered when or even if I would hear the first scream.

Holocaust of the Dead

10th October 2004,

Dr Alison Tailor sat quietly at her desk writing a medical paper, when there was a sudden knock on her door. She got up and strolled to the door. A nurse stood outside she said;

“Doctor, come quickly we’ve got an emergency.”

Alison nodded and followed; she was led to an operating theatre. A young man lay on the table covered with wounds. Dr Tailor pulled on a gown and gloves and went to help.

“Tell me what happened quickly,” she spoke authoritatively.

“The guy’s name is Damien Steele, he was attacked by two dogs while he crossed a field, he was found by a passer-by and brought here.” replied a nurse.

The Doctor’s hands went over his body, her eyes examining the wounds. The injured man was wearing a blue

tracksuit and a white T-shirt, they were torn in several places revealing cuts and bites mainly on his arms. He was breathing weakly; three gouges ran across his chest blood oozed from the cuts. She knew he was finished no matter what they did as Damien's throat was mainly blood and gristle. He convulsed violently before dying.

"Damn we had no chance of saving him, put him in a body bag and send it to the morgue. I want an autopsy carried out. Something is wrong about his death, but I'm not sure what," Alison spoke to the others.

...Keith Matthews washed the blood from his hands before pulling the sheet over the body of a young girl he had just examined.

The young girl had died from taking drugs; the autopsy results showed it was ecstasy. He shook his head a waste of life; drugs were becoming an annoyance, more and more people were being killed by them everyday. He turned as he heard the morgue doors being opened two technicians pushed a trolley with a new corpse on it.

"Here's a new cadaver for you Sir, attacked by some dogs this morning," said one,

"OK, place it on the table."

They did as he asked and left. He approached and picked up a scalpel, then turned on the video camera, which recorded every autopsy for hospital records. The body was a young man; he had been stripped and washed. Now he was naked the wounds clearly visible. He had started to make a cut in his sternum as the phone rang; he put the scalpel on the trolley next to the body. Then went to the phone picking up the receiver.

“Hello?” he queried.

“Good Afternoon, I would like to speak to a Mr. Matthews,” said a firm voice.

“Speaking, how may I be of assistance?”

“Hello my name is Edward West, and I’m a...friend. I’ve been asked to offer you some money for the corpse that just came in, my employers has let’s say a vested interest in it,” replied the man.

“Well Mr. West thanks for the offer but I’ll have to decline,” Keith heard something behind him, “...now if you’ll excuse me someone is here.”

“Wait you don’t understand you’re in...” West was cut off as the phone was put down.

Keith turned round but couldn’t believe what he saw. The young man was staggering towards him; the thought

suddenly occurred they made a mistake, he quickly ran to help the obviously hurting man as he moaned.

“Hold on sir I’ll help...Ahhhh!”

The young man grabbed the coroner tightly. Keith struggled trying to push the man away. Despite the wounds all over his body the young man was surprisingly strong and the doctor couldn’t prevent him sinking teeth into his neck and tearing a strip of flesh off chewing it eagerly. Dr Matthews fell back against the wall his hand reaching up to stem the flow of blood. The man approached again but the Coroner didn’t feel anything he already passed out.

One of the technicians saw it all, the poor teenager had came back to tell the coroner something. He quickly ran to get help. He bumped into someone he looked up and saw a tall well built man in a suit.

“Where is the morgue Lad?” he spoke quickly,

The boy pointed a shaky finger in the direction he came. West nodded and ran to the morgue stopping briefly outside; he pulled out an old service revolver. He flipped open the chambers checking the bullets; he had loaded it with .357 rounds. He clutched the colt and stepped into the room. Slowly he stepped towards the corner; he heard a

tearing sound. Eventually he came to the Dr; the zombie was eating him. Keith was dead; his stomach had become the creature's dinner. Thomas West raised his gun and pulled the trigger, the round catching the zombie in the back of the head, blowing a hole in it. It collapsed unmoving, he disposed of the bodies of the zombie and Doctor before grabbing the phone to call his employers. They weren't going to be happy.

Mars 2050

Twenty years.

Twenty years since the meteor.

Since the Earth was completely annihilated by the meteor. Luckily, ninety percent of the human population survived. Thanks to a mass exodus in giant spaceships. While the populous lived in these floating cities, smaller research vessels ventured out to the neighbouring planets, their objective to terra-form them into new 'Earths'.

Out of all the potential targets only the vessel sent to the planet Mars had any success. In just ten short years they had managed to build a complete working research facility that was successfully converting the planet to living condition.

Thanks to the fusion reactor created by Dr Danielle Stevens, the terra-forming process was moving forward at a massive speed. Early estimates suggested the process would be completed in just forty years. As well as terra-forming the planet, the research teams were tasked with documenting and studying any life-forms found.

Dr Stevens was in charge of the Mars Research Complex or the MRC as it was more fondly known. In the ten years of habitation of the planet, researchers had only discovered one species of creature, which was sentient and called themselves Zorcs. Though the lone creature had been discovered, the natives spoke of their God, which lived beneath the very surface of the planet, though MRC researchers have recorded no sign of the 'god'.

The Mars Research Complex was roughly the size of a factory split up into living quarters, feeding areas, medical bays, Research labs and finally a dock for any visiting ships. Separate from the main complex was the power station that provided all of the machines with electricity.

Today however, the facility was experiencing some electrical troubles, and the generators were threatening to go kaput. Whilst people were busying checking for any

security breeches, the facility's security force was at the power station trying to fix the problem.

The security team consisted of Commanding Officer Paul Jackson, Sergeant Carlos Emanuel and Private Billy Wesson. Bill being the tech-guy, had the honour of messing with the generator. Watching them impartially in the corner was a security camera, but as there was no power light, the device was not recording.

Paul Jackson stood at an impressive 6'4" with short black hair and brown eyes. He wore green army fatigues and army boots as well as a Kevlar vest. Carlos Emmanuel was 5'11 with shoulder length red hair and green eyes. He wore the same uniform as Paul but he had added a rose emblem on the right shoulder of his top.

Billy Wesson was out of uniform because he was off duty when the power went out. So he was in casual clothes, denim jeans and a plain white t-shirt. At 5'6, he was much smaller than the other two but he had a big personality, which more than made up for it. He had blonde hair styled in curtains and blue eyes.

Paul could see it was useless, as the generator's power unit was ripped to shreds but the private looked like he was trying his best.

“I think I’ve done it!” exclaimed Billy.

The sudden explosion took the private completely by surprise and he was thrown against the wall, the machine was shattered. Paul and Carlos ran to their fallen comrade, Billy was slumped against the wall; blood was seeping through his white shirt. On closer inspection, Paul noticed a shard of metal embedded in his shoulder. They helped the private up and assisted him to the med-lab.

They entered the med-lab and called out for assistance; there was no response. This was weird because Doctor Jane Flow would never go out without first locking the doors.

“What now?” asked Carlos.

“We should probably check her quarters,” replied Paul.

“Okay, let’s go.”

Nodding they headed to the doctor’s apartment. Paul knocked on the door and was surprised when it opened, revealing an apparently empty room. They entered slowly and Paul looked around. Jane’s quarters reflected her personality. She hated mess and therefore the room was spotless. They slowly lowered Billy onto the couch, which was in a corner next to a bookshelf. They looked around more carefully; but there was no sign of anything out of the ordinary.

“Where is she? And why has she left her door open?” queried Paul.

“We’ll find out later, we should try and get something to help Billy,” said Carlos.

They entered the kitchen looking for any medical supplies, Paul spotted Jane’s key card lying on the table, they both span around as they heard the noise. It was a quiet scratching sound coming from the next room.

They slowly approached the door; Paul grabbed the handle and cautiously turned it to open the door. He paused for a brief moment and then entered.

Paul stumbled back suddenly; as something jumped at him.

“Ginger!” Paul sounded shocked.

“Who’s Ginger?” asked Carlos.

“Jane Flow’s cat,” replied Paul.

Five minutes later, they had searched the entire place but found no sign of Dr Flow.

“We better find her Billy needs better medical attention,” said Carlos.

“What about Colin Flanders, the trainee doctor,” Billy replied weakly.

Of course, Paul thought, suddenly feeling stupid that he had forgotten about Colin. He was still training but Jane said he had some promise.

They went back to Billy, but he had fallen asleep so they left him to get the trainee. On the way out Carlos noticed that a vent cover was not fully closed, but was too tired to register it as important. They walked towards where Colin lived.

They entered the corridor, which led into apartment A2 the corridor was empty and very quiet. Both were surprised to see the door was shut, only then did they notice the soldier. Paul and Carlos walked towards him but he banged on the door controls and when they failed to work he forced them open and ran through. Paul glanced inside but could see nothing as most of the lights were out.

Suddenly the silence was shattered and the corridor lit up as a pistol was fired. The shots hit the soldier first in his shoulder, which knocked him backwards, then in his gut punching a hole in his stomach. The final bullet hit the poor guy just below his neck punching a neat hole in his chest. He was dead before he hit the floor. His own blood stained his clothes. The killer walked through the door; Paul and Carlos pointed their assault rifles at him. Paul was surprised, as he

was looking at the team's back-up robot B.U.U, (Back up Unit). He ordered it to drop the gun it was holding, it did instantly, the pistol hitting the floor with a clunk.

“B.U.U explain your actions,” ordered Paul,

“Sorry I thought he was a killer,” answered B.U.U.

It took five minutes to explain the reason, it appeared that Colin Flanders had disappeared and it had found blood on the floor, and the only movement he could detect was that man so its program stated that it must assume that he was the killer.

“What's going on?” asked Carlos worried.

“I don't know, perhaps we should get a tracker and find out,” replied Paul.

Paul and Carlos walked to the storeroom and collected the equipment they thought they would need. Paul took a short wave radio and handed Carlos another.

He then picked up a side mounted mini rocket launcher and attached it to his rifle. He also collected from his locker a box of bullets for his special addition Army Colt with a 9 inch custom barrel. Carlos, however, left his rifle, picking up instead a sawn off shotgun and a box of shells. Then on the way out, they each picked up a motion tracker and left.

“Okay we’re ready. I’ll check Jane’s apartment more closely and you explore the Cargo bay,” Paul said.

Carlos didn’t reply he just nodded and disappeared around the corner. Paul was worried. He had known Carlos since they were kids. It seemed like he had other things on his mind. It’s probably nothing; maybe he is just scared like you, Paul thought. He just shrugged and headed back to Dr Flow’s room.

Carlos had stopped outside Colin Flanders quarters again. The room was perfectly normal, he was just about to leave when he spotted the blood on the floor. It was dripping from the vent duct in the ceiling, which he had noticed was slightly open, he thought he had seen the same thing at Jane Flow’s place but he’d have to recheck. He tried to hail Paul on the radio but couldn’t reach him.

“Damn, why doesn’t this work? What is it with the electrical equipment, first the main equipment and now the mini ones.”

Carlos cursed because he remembered what Billy had said earlier, that if the main unit lost power all smaller units would lose power after around ten minutes. The silence was shattered by a beep, Carlos reached for the radio, but he

realized it was his tracker. The motion tracker had picked up a single object moving down the corridor he was in, and it was travelling at a fast speed. He quickly pointed his shotgun down the corridor and waited.

Project Z

The jungle surrounding the complex was peacefully quiet, the scientists inside the building were working on biological super warriors, and they planned to create the perfect soldier. The silence was soon shattered by a strange noise coming from the sky, and then the transporter hovered into view.

It was a standard spaceship, often used to travel long distances. This particular model was a modified LX-1200 Carrier ship, powered by twin engines, with room inside for thirty people and a storeroom near the back for equipment, which was standard. However, this ship had been modified. A third engine had been added, which increased its speed. It also had two plasma blasters and an electromagnetic shield for protection on top of a hull that was thicker than normal.

The ship landed with a dull thud, five yards from the research station. The side doors slid open and the twenty soldiers who formed the mercenary unit (Code-name Razor) leapt out and got into formation.

The squad's Commander was Craig Hawking; he was tall and like the others was in the squad uniform, which was black with grey patches, and an armour chest plate. Craig's hazel eyes swept over the other members of the unit: Sergeant Darren Smyth, Corporal Charlotte Jenkins, and Privates Leon Martinez, Marvin Dawson, Brian Pippin, Christopher Weaver, Nicole Trent, Patrick Williams, Alan Peters, Maria Pedro, Kristine Clayton, Neil Lewis, Peter Samson, Richard Hayes, Thomas Butler, Shawn Gray, Mikhail Francis, Matthew Black, and Jamie Cross.

All were battle-hardened marines skilled in various versions of combat. The squad respected Commander Hawking because they knew he would die for each of them, as they would die for him.

The squad carried the Modified M-28 machine guns, (it used armour-piercing bullets in clips of fifty and it also used shotgun shells that fired from the pump-action shotgun underneath the barrel; it also had a scope).

However, Pippin, Weaver and Trent also carried a three litre, compact flame-thrower, and Clarkson preferred the Desert Eagle .50AE Magnum, (it used clips of six .50 calibre rounds).

While the squad covered him, Sergeant Smyth started to hack into the security lock by the door. A minute later, there was a beep and the green light came on, the bay doors slowly raised. The Razors charged inside screaming for revenge, but stopped dead in their tracks by the massacre they rushed into. The squad stared in disbelief, finding it hard to accept so much blood, and the place was drenched in it.

The room they had entered was the reception area; bodies laid where they had fallen, all showed signs of being torn, stabbed and worse. There were eight corpses in all, five scientists and three guards;

“It looks like they were having a meeting and were attacked, it seems like they weren't expecting one either, as there are no weapons nearby,” the Commander said,

“Forget that, what did this, what the hell have they been doing here?” asked Private Cross,

“We’ve been informed that they were doing extremely classified research on a new type of weapon, as to what that

is we haven't been told but were assured that it wasn't hazardous to us,” answered Charlotte Jenkins,

“Really? Tell that to those dead people, they were killed by a 'harmless' weapon,” Private Black's voice dripped with sarcasm,

“Stop arguing, we need to search for survivors we'll split up. Right these are your orders; Trent, Hans and Williams you go left, while Francis and Gray you search the rooms to the right.

“Pedro, Clayton and Butler secure this area, the rest of us will continue forward. This is the plan. If you find any survivors bring them here, if you encounter anything hostile, kill it. Let's go!” finishing his orders, Commander Hawking nodded.

The Soldiers followed orders perfectly, splitting up, and continued exploring.

When the others had left, Pedro, Clayton and Butler continued to examine the reception area in more detail. The actual room was quite large, with a desk stretching from wall to wall.

The only way through was a small door, the chair behind the desk was occupied by a female soldier; her nametag said 'Sarah Taylor'.

She was slumped in the chair her arms draped over the armrests. The cause of Sarah's death was easy enough to spot there was a deep gash from her left shoulder to her right hip. The pool of blood at her feet had long since dried up. In front of her was a transistor radio that had bloodied fingerprints on it unfortunately the battery had run out.

The next corpse was missing its head; the cut was clean, which was strange. The next two were scientists; a man and a woman who had both been gutted. Maria found another almost hidden under the desk; the man's back cut to the spine.

Thomas discovered that two other bodies had their throats torn out almost completely. Kristine found the worst one in the corner, a female scientist her body torn in two, her arms and legs were bloody stumps the disfigured limbs lay a few yards from the body.

“God, what could be doing this?” Maria asked,

“A dead thing that’s what, I'm going to blow their heads off,” replied Kristine.

“Calm down. We need to stay focused, remember we don't know what this weapon is; it could cut through walls for all we know. Besides it may not even have a head,” Thomas' voice was shaky.

So they waited.

The main door opened up into a large bowl shaped chamber. It was split into two distinct areas, separated by seven foot high steel fencing. To their left was a desert styled area, rocks littered the ground. In front of them were open grasslands but the grass had been left to grow tall; it came up to the waist. Then to their right was an area that resembled a city block: a couple of streets, buildings and a car or two.

The soldiers' eyes swept over the new surroundings; on further looking two doors were noticed, one straight ahead and a large cargo door to the left with a security panel. Taking in their surroundings, the squad paused for a moment. They looked towards the commander and waited for his next order.

“Right we’ll split up again. Corporal you take Samson, Lewis and Peters and explore the area beyond the north door, I think it should be the control room so secure it and radio H.Q to tell them we’re here. While you do this we will check what's behind those cargo doors. We will then return to pick up the others and meet you in control,” ordered Hawking.

“Yes Sir, we'll have complete control by the time you return,” replied Jenkins.

She took the guys towards the north door.

“Now Black, Cross you two should explore the area to the right see if you can find anything,” the Commander said.

The two soldiers nodded and marched off down the nearest street. Meanwhile the others approached the cargo doors and Sergeant Smyth instantly went to the control panel and began hacking into the system.

“Hey Nicole what do you think?”

“You got me Patrick, let's continue checking.”

Private Trent clutched her flame-thrower as she surveyed her surroundings; the room they had entered was an office with chairs, computers and tables. It seemed safe and quiet.

“You better come and see this, I've found someone.”

Patrick Williams' voice broke as he called. Nicole ran to her friend but stopped a few yards from the place he was crouched.

“Jesus,” Trent gasped.

She took one look at the bloodied mess in the corner before spinning on her heels and completely emptying her

stomach into a nearby waste paper bin. Private Williams shook his head before glancing back to check on Nicole.

He then re-examined the corpse. It was a scientist. Though there was a gaping hole where the face should be and the tattered remains of the upper torso disguised the fact of whether it was male or female the once white lab coat caked in blood.

On closer inspection, he noticed that the sternum was sliced in two, suggesting that someone had slashed right through the chest, cutting the vital organs. The body's insides were dry so they died a while ago. He stood up and approached Nicole before placing a reassuring hand on her shoulder she smiled,

“Are you okay?” he asked,

“Yeah I'll be fine. I saw two doors opposite the door we came in. Let's look in there,” she replied.

Privates Francis and Gray, however had found nothing, their door led to a dinning room and a trashed up medical bay. But they kept looking and came across a locked door with a wrecked control panel.

“It looks like it's been shot, can you still get it open?” queried Mikhail,

“Not sure. I'll try though,” replied Gray, shouldering his rifle.

Shawn approached the door and began to examine the panel. Neither noticed the bloodied hand print on the wall or the dead body lying on the floor still clutching a rifle.

There was a beep as Darren Smyth finally opened the cargo door, it slowly rose, Private Leon Martin was the first to look inside the room, but he quickly backed off saying,

“Now would be a good time to leave!”

“Smyth have a look and see what he's mumbling about,” ordered Hawking.

The Sergeant got to the door with his gun raised at exactly the same time a shadow seemed to engulf him. Darren just caught a glimpse of his attacker; blood red eyes, razor sharp teeth, scythe like claws, dull grey skin and about twenty-nine others behind it.

“Oh God No!” screamed Smyth.

The soldier fell back, repeatedly firing, the team could only watch as the rounds thudded into the creatures dull skin, with no apparent effect, an empty clip hit the floor followed by an ear-piercing shriek as the monster brought it's claws crashing down on the Sergeant.

The next sound came from Private Martinez's rifle as he fired the shotgun round; the effect up close was devastating. The animal's head literally disappeared in an explosion of brains and blood.

Matt and Jamie slowly walked through the deserted streets, sweeping their guns left and right. The area was quiet they couldn't see anything. The buildings were empty with no signs of life visible. It was a ghost town.

In the background, they heard the bay doors opening, followed by gunfire and screams. They turned back and ran to the others.

Commander Hawking fell back against the fence, his left arm limply hanging by his side. In his right he clutched a Beretta. Private Paxton stood by him repeatedly firing at the oncoming horde.

The commander still couldn't believe what had happened: shortly after the door opened a vicious creature had attacked Sergeant Smyth who fired his rifle, the bullets seemed to have no effect and the monster brought its claws crashing down the scythe like weapons almost splitting him in two.

Then Martinez blew the monster's head off, only to be gutted by its brother coming from behind it. As he collapsed his gun went off, the bullets hit mostly his killer. But one stray round hit the canister of Weaver's flame-thrower. The result was immediate; the explosion got all three in a giant ball of flame. Dawson fell next as one of the creatures leapt right next to him before taking his head clean off with a swing of its claws; another monster slashed through the commander's arm.

Brian's scream brought Craig back to the present, but he could only watch as the nearest monster plunged its claw into the private's chest. Paxton's blood gushed onto the ground; his murderer turned only to have his head shot into pulp as the Beretta repeatedly fired at close range. The commander heard voices and looked to the right to see the two soldiers come out of the city.

“Get out of here! You have to tell Charlotte to...ugh.”

His speech was cut short by a sharp pain in his belly; he looked down to see a claw sticking out of it the remains of his intestines wrapped around it.

The weapon was withdrawn as Craig fell to his knees, his hand covering the ragged hole in his stomach, trying to stem the flow of blood. As he collapsed, the last thing he heard

was a loud gunshot and something heavy hit the floor. Cross slowly lowered his magnum, as Black opened fire at the other monsters. They turned and quickly ran after the Corporal.



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