

## *DECEMBER THE 22<sup>nd</sup>*

I was sitting in my living room reading a Stephen King book – “Duma Key.” The doorbell rang. I grabbed my gun and walked over to it. I looked out the peep hole as a zombie shambled down off the porch. There were four of them out there. All zombied up, rotting, bloody, fresh from the grave, and they were all dressed like carolers and holding caroling books. One had it upside down, two had theirs sideways, and the smart one, who rang the doorbell, had his right side up.

I didn't put up anything with lights in it or on it. There were no lights around the house. I had muted decorations so they wouldn't attract attention. I don't know why or how the carolers found me, but they did.

I began to smile as they grunted out Jingle Bells. I didn't know if I should shoot them or let them be. I stood there a moment and thought about it, listening to the comical tune coming from the mouths of those zombies. I went over to the window and looked out onto the lawn. Their singing was attracting other zombies, so I knew I had to take them out, funny as it was. I put on my cold weather gear and ventured upstairs. I went into the master bedroom and walked over to the balcony doors. I stepped outside and into the cold grey light of dusk.

I checked my decorations to see if they were intact, my Santa Claus and reindeer, the cross on my front lawn, the elves and Santa's work shop, the nativity scene, and various candy canes I had spread throughout the yard. They were all safe.

Now, I know, most people would say, why? It made me feel good inside. That is why I did it. It might be a zombie filled world, but I was still going to try and enjoy it as a human being. Also, I did it for those few survivors in my neighborhood and those who wandered in. I hoped a lawn full of Christmas would bring them some kind of cheer in this dreary holiday season. It was the first Christmas since the zombie invasion. It was the least I could do.

I looked down at the four caroling zombies as they went into a rendition of Frosty the Snowman, the year's first snow only a couple of inches underneath their feet and melting fast. The group, of course, was led by that one smart zombie. He seemed to remember quite a bit of whatever he did as a human. He was leading them and pointing to their books even though none of them turned a single page. He was the one that started grunting out the tune to Frosty just like Jingle Bells before. They just sort of followed after him.

I aimed my gun at them, but had to stop because I couldn't aim. My smile had turned into full fledge laughter. I let it pass, wiped the tears from my eyes, and then did my business. By the time I was done, fifteen zombies lay littered across my lawn, bleeding red into the snow, the four carolers included.

I went back inside. I didn't feel up to the clean up just yet. I turned on the Christmas tree and watched the white and colored lights dance a blinking happy tune across the walls and ceiling of my room. I stoked the fire with some more wood, turned on some Christmas music, sat back in my chair, and closed my eyes. The last image I saw (which was on purpose mind you) was of the picture on my mantel. I fell asleep with that image in my head.