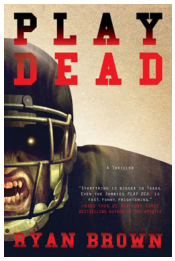
The gridiron gets gory in PLAY DEAD, a new novel by Ryan Brown that’s also being brought to the screen by Backseat Conceptions. Fango got some exclusive behind-the-scenes video (see it below) along with details on the project—including one facet that’s already been controversial.




Brown’s book, which hits shelves today from Simon & Schuster, details the rivalry between two small-town football teams: The Killington Jackrabbits and the Elmwood Heights Badgers. The latter have been taking their campaign off the field in violent ways—including an assault on Jackrabbits quarterback Cole Logan and sabotaging the team’s bus. When the latter leads to a worse-than-intended accident that kills the entire squad save Cole, he enlists the help of a local witch to raise his teammates from the dead. But there’s a catch: The zombie Jackrabbits must defeat their living teammates in the championship game, or they’ll all go to hell. (Click here for more on the novel, and see Fango #294, on sale later this month, for a review.)

“Backseat Conceptions was hired by Simon & Schuster to create a viral campaign for PLAY DEAD,” the company’s Doug Sakmann tells us. “They had contacted us through our NYC Zombie Crawl and I’m a huge undead enthusiast, so I was immediately drawn to the project. I decided the best way to go about it was to approach it as if we were making a movie, so I turned sections of the book into scripts. Over two days, we shot 12 key scenes to piece together a trailer, and came away with enough footage to make a short film. For the time being, we’ll be releasing the original trailer as well as a red-band version with more gore to promote the book, as well as behind-the-scenes clips. Down the line, we’ll release the short film, and we hope to work toward getting a proper budget to make the full feature version!”

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