

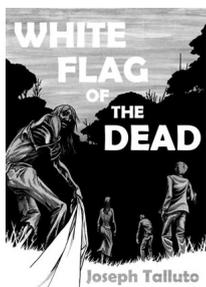
“WHITE FLAG OF THE DEAD” (Book Review)

Written by Rich Mallery

Saturday, 29 January 2011 09:56



In the hands of a capable author, survival horror novels are often the most gripping and engaging works in the horror genre. But when tackled by uninspired writers, these novels can be excruciatingly boring. Unfortunately, *WHITE FLAG OF THE DEAD* (Severed Press) by Joseph Talluto (pictured) falls into the latter category and is a book most readers will leave behind before reaching the halfway point.



Rehashing the zombie takeover scenario (a virus turns people into zombies, zombies attack, etc.), *WHITE FLAG OF THE DEAD* is nothing audiences haven't seen before. Focusing on one man's storyline, author Talluto fails to inject anything new into the genre. The hero/narrator, John Tallon, is a typical, annoying alpha male—the Neanderthal jock who never matured—and the survivors he meets are equally as stereotypical.

Besides that, while this novel has its share of action, the pages are filled with so much minutia that even blazing shootouts seem tired. Editing is severely lacking as *WHITE FLAG* is 200-plus pages of “I did this, than I did that.” Example: “I made him a bottle and a small bowl of oatmeal cereal. The doctor has said he could start it so we got some and he really seemed to enjoy it. I tasted it once and it reminded me strongly of glue.” Since this is Talutto's first novel, it's possible he didn't understand that readers don't need to know every time the narrator feeds his kid or changes his diaper.

If that wasn't enough, the author constantly repeats himself, both with actions and word choice. There are only so many times someone will read “I was lost in my reverie” before slamming the book closed. Perhaps if Talutto got to the point instead of wasting time with insignificant details and clichés, and if the characters were somewhat interesting, than this reviewer could recommend sticking around till the end. But tough guys wear thin fast, much like this novel.

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A sequel for WHITE FLAG is already in the works. Hopefully this first effort was a learning experience for Talluto and his next work will be stronger.



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