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Die-hard fans of any multi-installment storyline always want their favorite characters to meet and clash while faced with a transportation problem, new flock of enemies, appropriate barbecue attire…what have you. Just imagine Mace Windu and Lando Calrissian teaming up against the Empire—an unmatched display of smooth-talking, profanity-spewing bad-assery. Such a fate has befallen our favorite four-man teams of zombie hunters, thanks to the fan-friendly folks at Valve Software.

The first downloadable mission for LEFT 4 DEAD 2, aptly titled “The Passing,” has the former ghoulbusting squad from the game’s initial installment crossing paths down Georgia way with the colorfully chattering team from the sequel. Taking place between the “Dead Center” and “Dark Carnival” campaigns, this adventure has the remaining three original survivors (that’s right; as the tagline indicates, “Nobody Survives Forever”) appear just in time to help the new batch through a rough pit stop in their trip from the mall to the carnival. Though the initial survivors are not playable characters, their trigger-happy sharpshooting abilities add a new level of combat to confrontations with the Horde in the mission’s final stage.

Along with the mission pack, players receive a bevy of additional elements, such as new melee weapons (golf club, baseball bat), an M60 machine gun and new maps for the Survival and Scavenge modes of gameplay. Gamers will also encounter new infected folks dressed as wedding guests and Midnight Riders fans, as well as a bridal witch and the long-awaited infected survivors. The latter appear as part of the Horde’s rush, but carry health kits, explosives and weapons for players to obtain upon dispatching them. Another new feature is the “Weekly Mutation,” in which players go through a round of survival based on some modification only available that week. This type of rotating feature should add heavily to the already strong replay element.

“The Passing” re-establishes the pure-fun play factor provided by the LEFT 4 DEAD series.

From the hilarious banter between Ellis and Francis pondering the existence of vampires, to the rush of tuxedo-clad zombies under a wedding-decorated gazebo, to the back room of the pool hall covered in graffiti-scrawled nods to the pantheon of zombie lore (look for remarks attributed to characters from DEAD RISING, 28 DAYS LATER, DAWN OF THE DEAD and SHAUN OF THE DEAD, to name a few), this DLC will only leave fans salivating for more blood-splattering, skull-bashing, wisecracking action. Just make sure you take a date to the wedding. “The Passing” is available for 560 Microsoft Points on Xbox 360, free for Windows PC.