DEATHLIFE

by

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(WEBISODE PILOT)
FADE IN:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Sunrise finds an abandoned farm. Weeds everywhere. Weathered clapboards. Roof unfit for rain. Closer...

Every tightly shut window crawling with buzzing flies.

AN UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

Flies cover the outside of the window. A solitary fly bumps against the inside pane looking for a way out.

SOL BASS, 30s, Iraq war vet, lies unmoving on a bare mattress, assault rifle in easy reach. His eyes are open and glazed over, his skin gray and decayed like a month old corpse.

Sol bolts upright, senses on high alert. He sees the fly on the windowpane. He leaps off the mattress --

-- and swats it dead. Sol stares at his forearm --

Small bumps under the skin. Fly eggs.

Sol quickly grabs his hunting knife. Gouges the eggs out. Rubs the skin smooth.

DINING ROOM

Sol comes downstairs toting his rifle. A vagabond group of deathlifer men, women, children and teenagers sit conversing at a long table. Most of them tote assault rifles. Everyone is decomposing to some degree.

KITCHEN

Sol's zombie girlfriend KATE, 30s, former grade school English teacher, fries up a four burner stovetop breakfast with the help of another ZOMBIE WOMAN.

Sol steps up to Kate. Kisses her on the neck. She welcomes his affection.

    KATE
    How was night watch?

    SOL
    Quiet as death. I felt right at home.
KATE
You're witty today. Hungry?

SOL
You know it. Venison again?

Kate smiles. She stirs the pans, full of deer brains.

DINING ROOM
The zombies chow down. They wash down their breakfast with mugs of formaldehyde poured from a large lab bottle.

A young girl spoons feeds old HANK. He's just a head and part of a torso. His exposed spine wriggles while he complains.

HANK
Isn't there ever gonna be anything else to eat around here?

LUCIUS, 30s, muscled-up African-American, turns to him. A former auto mechanic wearing a sleeveless denim shirt.

LUCIUS
You miss your Denny's, don't you Hank.

HANK
You're darn right! What I wouldn't give for a Grand Slam right now! And a decent cup of coffee!

LUCIUS
Wouldn't we all.

Sol eats next to Kate. He finishes quickly and stands.

At the other end of the table TOBY, 15, stares intensely at Sol.

Sol notices the stare. He ignores it.

SOL
Volunteers! Anybody?

Kate and Lucius finish eating and step up, along with former biologist MALCOLM, 40s, SAM, BILLY AND ED. Toby approaches.

SOL
No Toby. I need you on guard duty.
TOBY
It's always guard duty.

SOL
Let's shoot for sixteen, guy.

TOBY
But I'm ready now. I know I can do it.

SOL
I said no. Not this time. Too dangerous.

TOBY
It's not Iraq. You can't order me around!

Toby snatches up his assault rifle angrily.

Sol comes over to Toby. Grasps his shoulder.

SOL
Tell you what. I'll put you in charge today. Whatever you say goes.


TOBY
Okay.

The volunteers gather and weapon up. Malcolm shoves his medical bag under one arm. Checks his Glock's ammo clip.

KATE
(to Sol)
Think we'll ever find his parents?

SOL
They're warmbloods, according to him. They already rejected him once. Why bother?

KATE
Because true love never dies. Just like us.

SOL
Spare me. We've got work to do.
Sol heads out the door leading the squad. Kate stares at him a little annoyed. She shakes her head. Follows them.

EXT. FOREST – DAY

The squad stealths from tree to tree, rifles ready, on the lookout for hunting parties of warmbloods -- humans immune to zombie plague. They hunch down at the edge of a field and scope out their target:

EXT. MANSION

A well-appointed mansion surrounded by immaculate grounds. An SUV approaches. The gates open. The SUV drives through. Pulls up to the front door.

Three armed warmblood SECURITY GUARDS emerge from the SUV. One of them drags an attractive wristbound WOMAN, 30s, out of the back seat. Healthy skin. She is clearly alive.

She struggles. A guard draws his handgun. Presses it to her cheek. They force her inside the mansion.

SOL
Jamey was right. Somebody's kidnapping warmbloods and bringing them here.

LUCIUS
No grid and the place is lit up like Christmas. Gotta be on generator.

MALCOLM
Let's get on with it. I need my sample, and you need your daily dose of mission accomplished.

SECURITY ROOM

The guards drag the woman into the security room. They bind her ankles. Shove her onto a cot.

A security monitor displays the squad climbing the fence.

KITCHEN

Gourmet to the max. A pair of well-preserved zombie hands prepare a generous warmblood meal on a tray. Expensive rings adorn a few fingers. The owner of the hands hums to himself.
OUTSIDE THE MANSION LIBRARY

Sol and his squad move up close to a window. He studies it.

    SOL
    It’s alarmed.

    KATE
    Seize the moment, love.

Sol breaks the window with his rifle, tripping the alarm.

IN THE LIBRARY

The squad quickly climbs inside. The alarm fills the house.

    LUCIUS
    Damn. Cold as hell in here!

    SOL
    Heads up. We got company.

The three guards storm in, handguns drawn. The squad takes cover behind furniture as the guards fire.

Bullets destroy books over Kate's head. One of them falls to the floor next to her, ruined. She stares at the cover.

Dickens. An old, beautifully-bound copy.

    KATE
    Idiots.

Kate pops up. Fires her handgun twice. Nails guard #1 in the head, finishing him. She drops down next to Malcolm.

    MALCOLM
    Nice!

    KATE
    Great Expectations. My favorite.

Sam rises up firing his automatic rifle wildly. Guard #2 fires, nailing him above the heart. Not a problem. Sam peeks at the wound. Looks up. Grins.

Guard #3 emerges from behind a corner. Takes aim...

Sol sees this. Pivots toward Sam.
SOL
Sam! Get down!

Too late. Guard #3 fires three times, popping poor Sam's skull apart. Sam collapses, deader than dead.

Sol jumps up firing furiously. Both guards dodge his bullets. The guards flee the library.

SOL
Move! Move!

LIVING ROOM

The squad rushes into the lavish living room.

The guards return armed with Uzis. They open fire.

Kate catches a bullet in her leg and falls. Sol grabs her.

The squad drops behind a sofa. Sol pops up. Fires back.

The guards drop behind another sofa. Sol's bullets strafe the cushions there.

Sol leans on the sofa back, rifle poised and ready.

Guard #2 edges his head out from the end of the other sofa.

Sol swings his rifle muzzle over. Lets off a single shot.

Guard #2 recoils with an exploded face.

LUCIUS
Allow me.

Lucius charges the sofa firing and hollering. Guard #3 panics and bolts.

Lucius aims for Guard #3's legs. Riddles them with so many bullets they can no longer hold him up. Guard #3 grimaces in pain. He rolls over firing at Lucius.

Uzi bullets pummel Lucius' chest to no effect. Lucius fires a volley of bullets into the guard's chest, finishing him.

Lucius kicks the corpse over and over as Sol and the others run up to him. Sol yanks him away. The alarm stops.

SOL
It's over. Save your goddamn ammo.
LUCIUS
Scum of the earth.

SOL
They were paid guards doing their job. But soldiers just the same. Grant them their honor.

LUCIUS
Sure, vet-man. They teach you that in the marines?

SOL
They never stopped. Rules apply in any war. Now let's find the owner.

ENTRANCE HALL

The squad enters warily. Sol notices a wall console. The thermostat reads 40. Kate and Malcolm see it too.

SOL
Sweet.

MALCOLM
Somebody's gonna be around a long time.

KATE
Where do they get --

CALHOUN (O.S.)
The fuel? That's your guess and my secret, miss.

All rifles swing to the top of the grand stairway.

Mansion owner CALHOUN, 50s, stands there. Finely dressed. Remarkably intact for a zombie. He wears the same fancy rings on his fingers.

Calhoun starts to descend, arms raised in surrender.

CALHOUN
I'm unarmed, as you can see. May I have the pleasure of knowing my guests?

LUCIUS
None of your friggin' business.
SOL
(eyes on Calhoun)
I'll handle this, Lucius. Finish walking. Hands where we can see 'em.

CALHOUN
I carry no weapons. I leave that task to my guards. And where might they be? Oh dear. All of them? They were my best.

SOL
What are you running here?

CALHOUN

SOL
I'm sure your latest guest thinks otherwise. Where is she?

CALHOUN
Resting comfortably. They all come around. Eventually.

KATE
All? How many do you have?

CALHOUN
It varies. I get easily bored.

SOL
Don't make me puke. Tie him up!

Billy and Ed lash Calhoun to a chair with ductape. Billy goes to cover Calhoun's mouth with another length of it.

SOL
Hold up, Billy. I need answers.

CALHOUN
And you can try to obtain them. Ductape over the mouth only works in the movies, by the way.

SOL
You're a movie. Where is she?
CALHOUN
I already told you. Growing quite hungry by now I'm sure. Her food's gone cold thanks to you.

SOL
I think she's lost her appetite. What do you do with the ones you tire of?

CALHOUN
Oh, I -- release them.

SOL
Somehow I'm not believing you.

CALHOUN
Have you seen my kitchen? It's gourmet. And very well-equipped. I use the term 'release' rather loosely...

SOL
Murderer.

CALHOUN
Technically that's not accurate, is it now?

Sol cuffs Calhoun across the face. Lucius grapples Calhoun.

LUCIUS
In five minutes your brains will be on that table, and I'll be eating them right in front of you!

CALHOUN
(laughs)
The Godfather, 1972. Excellent reference, sir! Pacino to Keaton, the wedding scene.

Lucius shoves Calhoun away in disgust.

LUCIUS
You're sick, man.

CALHOUN
Aren't we all.

Lucius doubles back to strike Calhoun. Sol restrains him.
SOL
Leave him. He can't do any harm.
We'll find her ourselves.

HOME THEATER
The squad searches a luxurious home theater. Empty.

KITCHEN
The squad checks out the gourmet kitchen. Deserted. The meal Calhoun prepared, still on the counter.

SECURITY ROOM
The squad finds the woman sprawled on the cot. Her eyes widen. Her screams are muffled by the cloth gagging her.

Kate yanks it out. Sol quickly unties her. She recoils.

WOMAN
Stay away from me!

KATE
We're not going to hurt you.

WOMAN
Oh God you stink! Listen -- I have some money stashed. It's yours. You can buy preservatives with it or whatever you get for yourselves -- just let me live!

SOL
We're going to let you go. We just need something from you first.

WOMAN
What? What do you need? No -- not that!

SOL
Ma'am, you're getting it all wrong. Malcolm just wants a blood sample, that's all. He's a biologist, and he's working on a cure for us.

WOMAN
There's a cure for dead and rotting?
LUCIUS
We certainly hope so, lady. Please help us.

WOMAN
Are you gonna wear gloves at least?

MALCOLM
Thank you. Dear God thank you. Yes.

Malcolm and Kate pull on latex gloves. Kate ties a rubber tourniquet around the woman's arm. Malcolm readies a syringe.

Sol turns to Lucius.

SOL
Watch over them. The rest of us are gonna look upstairs.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Sol exits a guest bedroom. Billy and Ed join him.

BILLY
Nothing yet.

SOL
Let's split up. Check out the third floor.

The others do so. Sol approaches a closed door at the end of the hall. He opens it slowly.

MASTER BEDROOM

Sumptuous. Sol glances at a wall thermostat. 72.

Sol checks under the bed. Behind the drapes.

He approaches a walk-in closet, rifle poised.

Sol opens it. Quickly steps aside. Empty.

He heads for the bathroom. A thump from the closet.

Sol swings back. Calhoun's warmblood MISTRESS, 30s, emerges from the closet clad in a black bikini. Victoria's Secret body under it. She holds a handgun in front of her with both hands. Fires twice at Sol.
The bullets catch Sol in the chest and shoulder. He rushes in to grab her gun.

She snaps the muzzle up. Fires once at his head.

Sol dodges. Yanks the gun away.

MISTRESS
Get out!

SOL
I thought you'd be glad to see me.

MISTRESS
What are you gonna do? Eat me?

SOL
No, Ma'am. But your host, he's another story.

MISTRESS
What are you talking about? Mr. Calhoun treats me like a queen here! I've never lived better!

SOL
Until he tires of you. Ever heard of necrophilia?

MISTRESS
What's that?

SOL
Didn't think so. This is necrophilia in reverse. This so-called life you lead - it's just as perverted.

MISTRESS
I got no complaints!

SOL
How the hell do you - do it, anyway?

She smiles and calms.

MISTRESS
Mr. Calhoun is more preserved than you think. Let me check you out, soldier.
She steps up to him sexily. Pushes her body against him. Reaches for his crotch.

MISTRESS
Anything left, big guy?

Sol stands helpless. She unclips her bikini top. Presses her breasts against Sol's chest. Blows on his neck.

Sol feels her racing heartbeat through his chest. Its pulsations fill the room. He's repulsed, overwhelmed...


MISTRESS
Damn!

UPSTAIRS HALL

Billy and Ed join Sol. They rush downstairs.

ENTRANCE HALL

Kate, Malcolm and Lucius are crouched under the front windows, ducking the bullets shattering the panes.

Sol, Billy and Ed drop low and join them.

SOL
Where's the woman?

KATE
We set her free.

Sol inches up the sill. Sneaks a look outside.

WHAT SOL SEES

A gang of warmbloods aiming and firing assault rifles into the entrance hall.

ENTRANCE HALL

Lucius swings his gaze over to --

-- the wall console.

LUCIUS
Voice activated phone. We shoulda gagged the bastard!
Malcolm reaches frantically into his medical bag. Grabs the blood sample he's just taken.

Goes to slip the precious vial into his pocket...

Bullets rip right through the wall, shattering the vial.

Malcolm stares in shock at the splattered blood and glass shards covering his hand.

Malcolm goes berserk. Jumps up screaming. Fires his rifle insanely through a jagged gap in the window.

A warmblood's bullet strikes Malcolm in the side of the head.

He collapses. Kate rushes over. Shakes him frantically.

    KATE
    Malcolm! Malcolm!

IN FRONT OF THE MANSION

More pickup trucks and SUVs pull up to the mansion. Heavily armed warmbloods climb out and join the rest.

ENTRANCE HALL

Sol watches this at the edge of the front window. He goes tight-lipped. Mouths a curse.

    CALHOUN (O.S.)
    You're gonna need a bigger boat.

The final straw. Sol snaps around. Fires a single shot at Calhoun.

Sol's bullet punches through smirking Calhoun's forehead, killing him. The smirk remains there, as preserved as he is.

Kate and Lucius crouch tending to Malcolm. They look up. Stare at Sol for a solution.

Billy and Ed edge up to the windows, rifles poised. Sol turns away from Kate and Lucius. Stares grimly out the window...

FADE OUT.