



## After Twilight: Walking with the Dead

*Travis Adkins*

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## **After Twilight: Walking with the Dead** Travis Adkins

At the start of the apocalypse, a small resort town on the coast of Rhode Island fortified itself to withstand the millions of flesh-eating zombies conquering the world. With its high walls and self-contained power plant, Eastpointe was a safe haven for the lucky few who managed to arrive. Trained specifically to outmaneuver the undead, Black Berets performed scavenging missions in outlying towns in order to stock Eastpointe with materials vital for long-term survival. But the town leaders took the Black Berets for granted, on a whim sending them out into the cannibalistic wilderness. Most did not survive. Now the most cunning, most brutal, most efficient Black Beret will return to Eastpointe after narrowly surviving the doomed mission and unleash his anger upon the town in one bloody night of retribution. After twilight, when the morning comes and the sun rises, will anyone be left alive?

## **After Twilight: Walking with the Dead Details**

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Author : Travis Adkins

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## Dreadlocksmile says

First published in 2008, Travis Adkins's post-apocalyptic zombie novel 'After Twilight: Walking with the Dead' formed the sequel to his 2004 zombie extravaganza 'Twilight of the Dead'. Now with a small but relatively dedicated fanbase ready to lap up this quietly anticipated sequel, Adkins has the chance to take the 'Twilight' novels on to further and hopefully more unexplored grounds.

The book begins with a short four page introduction from the self proclaimed bizarre author, Andre Duza. Duza is already well accustomed to the post-apocalyptic zombie subgenre, having a number of published titles under his own belt within this hugely popular field. Straight after Duza's flattering although slightly surreal introduction is another new two page map of the Eastpointe grounds. This gives the reader the opportunity to easily get to grips with the enclosure and the various principal locations within its walls.

The novel begins in Eastpointe where questions are beginning to be asked as to why the Black Beret's had not yet returned from their mission to collect the supposed anti-virus that the mysterious new arrival, Dr Aaron Dane, was to escort them to. The facility, now being run exclusively by Odd Fellows members, has been quietly monitoring the airwaves, listening to the different surviving communities that are broadcasting around the country. The Odd Fellows decide to withhold this information from their community as well as not announcing their existence to the other surviving communities. The only exception they make to this is with Vaughn Winters who they need to keep the others away from the trading paths of these other communities.

Meanwhile, Leon Wolfe (now fully recovered from the zombie bite thanks to the anti-virus) and Courtney Colvin are still trapped on the roof of a block of apartments, with the undead surrounding the premises at ground level (as per the ending of 'Twilight of the Dead'). Whilst Colvin rests after her tiring ordeal from confronting and killing Dr Dane, Wolfe explores the lower levels and rooms of the building. Upon making an apartment safe from the threat of any wandering zombies, Wolfe brings Colvin down into the safety of the apartment to rest up some more.

However, their fellow Black Beret, Vaughn Winters (previously somewhat of a 'hard rock' star) has found himself remarkably still alive after suffering some very serious wounds at the hands of Dr Dane and his 'modified' zombies. Winters awakens on top of a cold steel table with his previously slashed throat now crudely held together with industrial strength staples. Winters manages to escape from the Atlantic Princess which saw the slaughter of so many of his fellow comrades. Upon leaving the vessel with only a fireman axe as protection, Winters emerges on to solid land where hordes of the undead are surrounding the apartment block where unbeknown to him Colvin and Wolfe are held up inside.

Winters slaughters a huge number of the undead in a frenzy of adrenaline fuelled aggression, until utterly weakened by his efforts, he drags his exhausted body off in the direction of Eastpointe. Keeping up with the painful pace of Winters, are literally thousands of the undead, each and every one of them craving for his flesh.

When Winters finally arrives at the gates of Eastpointe with an army of zombies in tow, he collapses and is dragged in to the complex by the facilities law enforcement officers Marshal Tyrell Young and his deputy Creyton. The gates are shut and the alarm disabled as the zombies slowly pile up against Eastpointe's

protective fencing.

Upon waking from their much needed slumber, Wolfe and Colvin are able to finally leave the apartment complex where they thought they would die within from the zombie siege and they make their way back to Eastpointe within one of the two abandoned Humvees from outside.

Upon arriving back at the relative secure sanctuary of Eastpointe, Wolfe finds himself confronted by his one time comrade Vaughn Winters. After taking exception to the secretive oppression of the Odd Fellows members that are running the complex, the ex-Black Beret finally loses his mind and begins a murderous rampage in an effort to kill every citizen of Eastpointe.

With the Fourth of July celebrations in full swing, a crazed Black Beret on a mission to kill everyone and hordes of the undead on the very doorstep of Eastpointe; Tyrell, Creyton, Leon and Courtney are soon to become up against their biggest and most terrifying challenge yet...

With 'After Twilight: Walking with the Dead', Adkins continues from exactly where the first novel concluded with its uber-frustrating cliff hanger. Adkins inserts a number of subtle reminders of where the last novel finished up so as to help the reader recall the events that preceded the sequel.

The remarkable survival of Vaughn Winters, is somewhat hazily glossed over, with no real explanations given. Was Winters also subjected to the anti-virus which kept him alive after he was inflicted with such severe and potentially life threatening wounds? This question is frustratingly never answered? But throughout the novel (especially after Winters goes on his maniacal rampage) the reader is constantly questioning what happened to the Black Beret whilst he was unconscious and at the hands of the sadist Dr Aaron Dane. Alas, Adkins never reveals if there is indeed something more to Winter's survival and subsequent killing spree.

Adkins inserts a subtle little homage to all the zombie enthusiasts with almost a word for word rendition of the WGON broadcast from Dawn of the Dead stating "Any dead body that is not exterminated becomes one of them! It gets up and kills! The people it kills, get up and kill".

The majority of the novel seems to flow along with very little in the way of a solid storyline seeming to be present. Adkins flutters backwards to the pre-apocalyptic life of Vaughn Winters, where he was an up and coming 'hard rock star'. This does help to flesh out these newly acquired principle role for the character a little more, however the back story does seem to take up too much of the novel. The inclusion of six of the pages from Winters's lyric notebook is however utterly cringe worthy if nothing else. Adkins should certainly steer clear of such lyrical efforts in future, for want of avoiding the levels of cheese that was scribbled within this 'lyrical notebook'.

Although the first half of the novel seems to simply run its course without any real direction towards the principal storyline becoming apparent, Adkins does still manage to maintain a thoroughly enjoyable read that just flows with a great ease.

Courtney Colvin takes somewhat of a back seat within this sequel, instead giving over the principal character role equally to both Leon Wolfe and Tyrell Young (as well as the changing role of Vaughn Winters). Although they come across as quite clichéd cardboard cut-out characters throughout, Adkins successfully substitutes the need for more realistic characters by instead injecting a thick array of interweaving subplots that seems to replace the need for the character depth.

Adkins certainly picks up the pace of the novel once Vaughn's back history has been covered and his

subsequent escape from the Atlantic Princess is underway. From here on, the novel builds up with its heart-racing action, delivering a number of scenes of zombie carnage. The grande finale of the novel is not only dramatic and pure edge of the seat material; but it also delivers numerous miniature finales, that barrage the reader with an all round epic concluding few chapters.

With 'After Twilight: Walking with the Dead', it feels like you have read two novels. Not due to the length of the novel (which is of a normal novel length), but due to the nature and pace of the storyline that seems to be broken into two distinctive sections. The first section is a slower more meandering story, with little to no zombie action. The second section is a monstrously paced action filled storyline crammed to the rafters with zombie carnage and blood spill. The veritable tsunami of an ending leaves the reader gasping for air; already setting up the score for the following instalment 'Twilight of the Dead: Exodus'.

The novel runs for a total of 267 pages and is published by the zombie/post-apocalyptic obsessed Permuted Press.

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### **Lindsey Stock says**

*After Twilight* starts off right where *Twilight of the Dead* ended, and wastes no time getting into the action. The little sanctuary that our characters inhabit is threatened, and irritating dirty politics are exposed. Also there is a mad scientist. The Twilight series is exciting and well written, even though it doesn't really do anything other zombie stories haven't already done before. I would not recommend this book, however, because it ends on somewhat of a cliffhanger, with the promise of a third book which, to the best of my knowledge, has not even begun to be written. I'm assuming that since this book came out years ago and that there has been absolutely no progress on the third book in the series, the author has abandoned the project and there will be no conclusion to this series, which is a shame because it had such good potential.

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### **Bowie V. says**

Yet another fantastic addition to the zombieverse. An open tribute to Romero, Monroeville, and zombie fans throughout the world. But it's also a story with a great new angle on the zombie outbreak. A fine story.

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### **Cj says**

Very good read, well ( spoiler stop reading ) until the end. Vaughn I want to, you &\*(&^\*

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### **John Cheeseman says**

This is an absolutely terrible book in every way and I don't understand the good ratings or the market it's aimed at. In a way it's quite healthy to read a book this bad every now and again as it makes you realise how good other authors are.

The whole premise and execution of the book are ridiculously bad, from the terrible dialogue, nonsensical actions and storyline, the mad scientist, armoured zombies, pathetic unrequited love story, mixed metaphors,

lack of synonyms in the same sentence, basically everything about this book is bad.

I'm not sure if the book is aimed at teenagers and was trying to cash in on the Twilight Vampire stories by calling it After Twilight and the only people I can see that might possibly like it are teenagers as anyone with slightly more maturity or reading experience would realise how truly terrible this book is.

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### **Andy Phillips says**

This is a sequel to Twilight of the Dead and I would recommend reading that book first as the story carries on directly. I quite enjoyed the first book but I thought this one was pretty average. There's nothing really terrible about it, but it's nothing original and the writing feels a bit clumsy at times. It features the fortified town of Eastpointe and some of the characters from the original story with a number of storylines that come together towards the end of the book. I won't spoil the details, but you can more or less guess what happens if you have ever read any zombie books.

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### **Chris Cagle says**

Oh boy. Where do I begin? The first book, Twilight of the Dead was pretty good, even though there were radio controlled zombies being run by a "smart zombie". Unfortunately one of the characters from the first book is infected with the smart zombie virus and loses his mind and builds an army to attack the compound where survivors are staying. It's an OK story, but once again, I just can't get past the whole idea of smart zombies so it's hard for me to rate this book very high.

I'm assuming that there will be a third book because the story ends on somewhat of a cliff hanger.

Is it worth reading?? I suppose.

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### **Patrick D'Orazio says**

Travis Adkins continues the saga of the Black Berets that inhabit Eastpointe, one of the last human outposts in America after the undead apocalypse of five years previous. The story carries forward from where it left off, with Courtney and Leon stuck on top of a building in a town nearby after dealing with Dr. Aaron Dane, who had created a group of uber zombies encased in armor. With most of their fellow Black Berets dead back on the cruise ship that Dr. Dane had been floating around on and creating his army of super zombies, they need to return to Eastpointe. They do not realize that another one of the Berets, Vaughn Winters, the most instable of the lot, has also survived, and has returned to Eastpointe, dragging an entire city of the dead behind him as he escapes.

The plot here is pretty straight forward: we discover that Vaughn has been working for the Odd Fellows, the group of old men in Eastpointe who run things behind the scenes. They have worked hard to insure that no one knows of the other human settlements still out there, believing that the populous will be more manageable if they believe they are the last living souls on the planet. Vaughn, who was unstable to begin with, becomes unhinged after facing off against Dr. Dane and his metal misfits and when he returns to Eastpointe and deals with the obsessive Odd Fellows, who crave control over the cure Dr. Dane claims he had in his possession on the ship, quickly unravels and decides that Eastpointe and everyone who has lived in relative comfort for five years needs to suffer and die. With thousands of zombies now scratching at the

walls, he has the tools he needs to cause their destruction.

Travis Adkins has produced a solid follow up to his first book, *Twilight of the Dead*. The writing style is even and he does a good job of describing the gore and violence that we zombie fans crave. While this story does not really spend much time with our main character of the first book, Courtney, it does develop a good deal more depth with the characters Leon and Tyrell, both introduced but not detailed extensively in the first book. The pace of the action is quick here, with the story covering a little over a day. We are given a few flashbacks to provide us with a background on Vaughn, the disgruntled and disturbed Black Beret who wants to see the whole world burn and eaten.

Overall, the story is entertaining but our villain lacks quite a bit in my humble estimation. It is only my opinion and perhaps others will feel differently but I felt that Vaughn was not too impressive as the bad guy. His efforts at smug superiority to everyone around him comes off as trite and insignificant. He is a wanna be metal head who was on track to becoming the next big thing in music when the apocalypse hit. He lost his sister, who he has, shall we say, a very personal relationship with, and has felt like he has been walking with the dead ever since. When he fails to outwit or outsmart someone he instead tries to menace and threaten them but he comes off as just a self absorbed goth with a chip on his shoulder.

Somehow, he is the one Black Beret who the Odd Fellows, the secretive leaders of Eastpointe, choose to be their primary connection amongst those that go out and procure needed supplies. So when they go out on procurement runs, he secretly collects things for them and more importantly, keeps other things hidden that they do not want the community to find. It just struck me as odd that he would be the choice of such a group of old men-the "devil worshipping" rocker with the vampiric complexion and long black hair with the worst attitude of anyone in Eastpointe. To me it felt like a stretch that they would trust someone like that with anything, let alone all their closely held secrets.

But enough of my criticism of Vaughn. While I did not buy into the menace and smug superiority of this bad guy, I could appreciate the development of the rest of the characters here. Vaughn's descent into darkness moves the plot along, carrying things forward and getting us to the meat of the story, with the undead once again clashing with the living as more and more of the human race is diminished and devoured.

I do enjoy the writing style that Travis Adkins has and though I might feel that his villains in both his previous book (*Dr. Dane*) and in this novel lacked something, I think he has done a solid job with these two novels. If you enjoy zombie fiction then this is certainly one to take a look at, along with its predecessor. I look forward to the third installment, *Exodus*, when it comes out next. Courtney, Leon, and Tyrell are characters I have grown interested in and I am curious where their journey will take them next.

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## **Trevor says**

Even though it's "officially" out in December, Permuted Press has already released this book on Amazon and B&N! So, buy it now - it's as much fun as *Twilight of the Dead* and it makes me look forward to a third book, *"Twilight: Exodus"*.

I prefer my "Twilight" books to have zombies in them =P

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### **Suge says**

This wasn't by far the best zombie book I ever read. It had a lovely amount of gore and the character development was pretty good. I couldn't help, as I was reading, that I had been plopped right in the middle of a story that had already started. Which is exactly what happened. Apparently I started reading part two of a zombie trilogy. With that said, I think the story will make more sense once I complete the first book. Otherwise, I did enjoy some of this book, it wasn't too bad and it had it's interesting points. I'm more so interested in reading the first one to see how it all started.

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### **Val Nwosu says**

This book picks up exactly where the last one left off. I really liked this because I did NOT want those two characters to die! I thought the book would expand more on the incestuous relationship that the main antagonist had with his sister but I guess I was being set-up to be dissappointed. The book had a very satisfying ending for two of it's antagonists and I really liked the speech given to the last person to die in the book. I can't wait for the next one!

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### **Tammy says**

Love it! If you like the Walking Dead you will love it to!

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