

Book Review Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse

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Title: Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse

Author: Lee Herrmann

Genre: YA Horror / Dystopian

Pages: 180 pages

Publication Date: August 2014

ISBN Number: 978-0-620615-92-1

Rating: 8/10

Buy: [Amazon](#)

I'm a fan of zombies, and the Walking Dead kind of zombie in particular, which means no meaningless hack and slash, but a story with characters you actually care about, and focused more on their survival than on anything else, but also with interesting character dynamics running in the background.

Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse provides just that. The focus is on Kon and his family as they embark on a journey to a new home. They find a few fellow survivors who join their group as they travel across the country, fleeing from the zombie horde. In this new world, with danger lurking around the corner, they learn more about themselves than they ever thought possible.

Heavily character driven, and set in South Africa, this is an unique and entertaining books, and I'd highly recommend it to all zombie fans.



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South Africa has been infected. The army and police failed. Government fell. And now the dead roam the streets.

Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse is a post-apocalyptic story set in South Africa, 2 years after a mysterious outbreak has ravaged the country. No one seems to know how it started, but the reality is that most of the rainbow nation is mindless, walking zombies and it's survive or be eaten.

After their supplies run out, 16 year old Kon, his brother and father leave their Pretoria home and embark on a journey for a new home. They Come across Kat and Dirk, two fellow survivors on a mission to reach Robben Island, a reputed safe haven. Together they embark on an epic journey across the country. Along the way they befriend other survivors, and face an unrecognizable new world filled with new, unpredictable dangers.

Oh, and there's lots and lots of zombies.

Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse is a coming of age story in a very different South Africa, and chronicles one family's fight for survival against the walking dead.

Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse tells the story of one family who tries to survive in the middle of a zombie apocalypse. It's set in South Africa – I've never been there, so I enjoyed the setting, background, and the stories about the countries' history. The main character is sixteen-year-old Kon, who lives with his brother and father. They leave their Pretoria home to travel to a new home, to safety, away from the zombies. They meet several other travellers along the way, among them Kat and Dirk, two fellow survivors also trying to reach Robben Island, a reputed safe haven.

Instead of going totally over the top with gore and blood, the book focuses on a handful of characters, on their emotions, their development, how they chance throughout the book, and grow. It focuses on the human side of the zombie apocalypse instead of trying to be spectacular.

That's not to say it's not quite spectacular in its own right. The book is quite amazing, a solid mix of character development and plot. The writing is solid too, and overall, a very enjoyable experience, recommended to fans of *The Walking Dead* and other zombie series.

Nauseating tale redeemed

JOURNAL OF A SOUTH AFRICAN ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

by Lee Herrmann (Tall Tales)

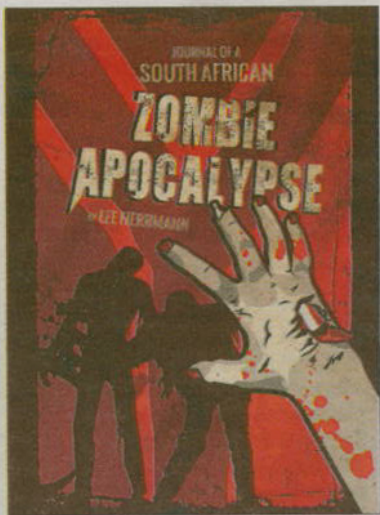
Pat Schwartz

The cover is horrible and my initial response to the hideous imagery and the graphic, nausea-inducing descriptions of violence and horror in the early chapters made me want to get rid of this book as fast as I could.

But, persisting, as a reviewer must, I recognised that, at another level, it is a story of courage, devotion and self-sacrifice, which holds some lessons for the teenagers who might be attracted initially by just those elements I found most distasteful.

It is billed as a coming-of-age story in a South Africa in which a mysterious virus has killed millions, turning them into zombies who roam the streets attacking the few survivors. As though that isn't enough, some of those survivors have become Raiders, stealing and murdering at will.

Sixteen-year-old Kon, his father



and younger brother have survived for two years, barricaded in their Pretoria home, but, running out of food and threatened by Raiders, they resolve to escape and make their way (on foot) to the only reputed safe haven in the country ... Robben Island. As they travel others join their pilgrimage. Friendships are made, difficulties are encountered and sometimes overcome and, in the end, the surviving members of the small band reach their destination. It is a well-told tale.

Zombie fiction with SA context

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LEE Herrmann is the author of *Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse*, a book about a zombie invasion that hits South Africa.

Herrmann and his publisher, Steven Lewis, who lives in Sandton, want to give South African book lovers local fictional content to enjoy. The self-published book was distributed late last year. "We did not have the patience to go through the mainstream publishing channels," said Herrmann. The book has since attracted a number of zombie fanatics living in the country.


Herrmann loves comic books and movies and wants to see something more become of his book. "I'm thinking a TV show, something like *The Walking Dead*," he explained. *Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse* is Herrmann's second book, his first is titled *The Manservant Mysteries* which was released in 2010. "I found out that people want local content and not detectives in England," said Herrmann. "So I have given people what they want with this book."

Herrmann has always been into zombies. "Watching zombie movies, I realised that they are less about the zombies and more about the survivors." He said, like in the movies, his zombie book is more about survival than anything else and it is modelled around the South African context.

Herrmann has come across a reader's market of zombie fanatics in South Africa, however, they do not have material to engage with. One of the reasons he is interested in the concept of zombies is that when he watches a zombie movie, he finds that there is a certain curiosity that makes the audience question and think about how they would get out of a similar situation. This is what the book explores, how a 16-year-old boy and his family fight for survival against the undead.

In the book, a mysterious virus breaks out in South Africa and suddenly turns ordinary people into flesh-eating zombies. The police and army are powerless to stop its spread and soon the entire country is consumed.

Details: www.SAZA.co.za

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Zombie invasion... Author Lee Herrmann talks about his book, *Journal of a South African Zombie Apocalypse*.

Sunday Times

Journal of a South African

Zombie Apocalypse ★★☆☆☆

Lee Herrmann (Tall Tales, R120)

BOOK *monster*



Herrmann has ticked all the right boxes in this local treatment of the zombie phenomenon. Road story? Check. Roving groups of savage humans? Check. Noble sacrifices so others can survive? Check. First love? Check. Kon, his dad and his brother leave their Pretoria house and race through zombie-infested South Africa to Robben Island, which is, they are told, a safe haven. It may be formulaic, but the SA setting makes all the difference. — *Aubrey Paton*