



The Dead

Charlie Higson

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The Dead is the second book in Charlie Higson's jaw-dropping zombie horror series for teens.

Everyone over the age of fourteen has succumbed to a deadly zombie virus and now the kids must keep themselves alive. A terrible disease is striking everyone over the age of fourteen. Death walks the streets. Nowhere is safe.

Maxie, Blue and the rest of the Holloway crew aren't the only kids trying to escape the ferocious adults who prey on them. Jack and Ed are best friends, but their battle to stay alive tests their friendship to the limit as they go on the run with a mismatched group of other kids - nerds, fighters, misfits. And one adult, Greg, a butcher, who claims he's immune to the disease. They must work together if they want to make it in this terrifying new world.

But when fresh disaster threatens to overwhelm London, they realize they won't all survive...

'Lord of the Flies with zombies...tons of nail-biting action' Rick Riordan, creator of Percy Jackson

'Higson has got the balance of blood and gore just right' Daily Mirror

Charlie Higson is the author of the bestselling Young Bond series of novels for young readers, including Silverfin and Double or Die, and the spine tingling, teen zombie-horror series The Enemy. Can't wait for the next instalment?

This edition contains the first chapter of the thrilling third book in the series The Fear. Check out www.the-enemy.co.uk for more blood, more zombies and more terror.

The Dead Details

Date : Published May 20th 2014 by Disney-Hyperion (first published September 1st 2010)

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Author : Charlie Higson

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From Reader Review The Dead for online ebook

Hamelynn Harzman says

This book was absolutely terrifying and that's why I loved it. The zombies were described so vividly, I had to check behind me- just in case. The characters were extremely lovable, which ended up being a problem for me. I got attached to them, and of course the nice children get killed off but the religious maniac stays. Sometimes the deaths happened so fast it took me a bit to register why a character was crying, then I realized, "Oh. His best friend just died."

This was a nonstop adrenaline rollercoaster. I have a bad habit of reading fast, almost to the point where I'm skimming the page, when things get exciting. I'm a sucker for a good fight scene. Of course, people die in the process, but sometimes I'm relieved they're gone if they were annoying characters. At one point in the story, the author specifically wrote that a zombie was stalking the children, but the attack was placed in just the right moment and struck when I had just let my guard down. Usually when I read fast, I miss some things and I have to go back and reread which kills the moment for me. This isn't the book's fault, it's more of a "Me Thing" than anything else.

But the ending was really something. It was beautiful and connected with the ending of the previous book. In the previous book, two characters got rescued, and that first book was about the children who got rescued. This book was about the rescuers' background. I felt like crying at the end since everything now made so much sense, but I figured it wasn't something to cry over and decided against it. I wanted to though, since it all came together in the most heart-wrenching and beautiful way. I instead just sat and stared into space for what seemed like forever until I had time to fully register everything.

If I could rate this book more than 5 stars, I would without hesitation. However I'm limited, but I suppose it's for the best since Goodreads would have some problems to fix because of how many stars I would rate books.

Erin says

"Don't talk to the driver when the bus is in motion, or the driver will shoot you. Got that?"

GAH.

I am experiencing a real problem right about now, because there are SO MANY THINGS I would like to convo about regarding this book, but guess how many of my friends (real-life or on GR) have read this? You guessed it: zero.

I repeat, GAH.

So, anyway. This is the sequel/prequel to The Enemy, but it follows a (mostly) different set of characters. This frustrated me for a good bit of the book, but I did grow to care for them just as much as I did for the original cast. (I still want more Achilleus in my life, though.)

Why You Should Add This Series to Your Pile

1. The action scenes, a.k.a. zombie munching, are described in just the right amount of gruesome detail, and are expertly peppered throughout the book so that it's nearly impossible to tell when yet ANOTHER beloved character is gonna get chomped. For real. I even read a spoiler on accident so I knew a specific kid would die, and the author straight up told us a zombie was stalking them, but when the attack came it was RIGHT at the moment that I had let my guard down. Sigh.
2. Ed, the protag, is so good. He struggles with himself so much. Ed is just a wonderfully decent kid in a world where decency is a liability. His friendship with Jack is tested in so many ways during the story, and I don't say that in a "heartwarming" sense. Their relationship was realistic and stressful.
3. I think the author's sense of humor is perfection. It adds just the right amount of levity to the otherwise hardcore story. I was in love with the fact that the group of little kids who were nerdy and curious referred to themselves as the Brain Trust ("If we don't even know what [brain trust] means," said Arthur, "I can't see us being the finest minds in the world.") and, more than that, that they continued to be referred to as the Brain Trust by the author throughout the rest of the story. Yay.
4. A significant theme carrying over from the first book is **violence** and how participating in it, even in matters of life and death, can change a person. This theme was central to Ed's development as a character.
5. Mr. Higson is a great plotter. There were at least two moments in this book where I had that overwhelming feeling of "DUH", also known as "I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS COMING". Everything just clicked into place so well. (view spoiler)

Bottom line? You should read this. If for no other reason (maybe my list wasn't as persuasive as I hoped), then read it because I said so. Evil governments/teen romance are over-rated, people. Give zombie survival another try! <3

P.S. There was no seamless way to work this in... I love Jordan Hordern so much. What a BAMF.

?Lynn? says

Second read 4.5 stars

This was so much better the second time around! I couldn't put it down!!

The only reason why this isn't getting a full 5 stars from me is because I miss my Holloway kids too much

~~~~~

3.5 stars

This one was just too slow for me.

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### **Giselle says**

His descriptions are so gory and detailed. The bubbling puss-filled sores ARE SO REAL! More please!!

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### **Stephanie says**

"The Dead" takes place one year prior to the previous book, "The Enemy". It starts with a group of boys in a boarding school trying to survive attacks from their former teachers who are now zombies. The boys hold off the teachers for as long as they can but soon become overwhelmed and decide to search for a safer place. They can't decide which is the safer choice, heading for London or heading for the countryside, and end up splitting into two groups. One group, lead by Ed, heads to the countryside, while the other group, lead by Jack, marches off toward the city.

A series of events lead up to Ed's group getting rescued by a crazy bus driver, Greg. Greg is an adult but seems to be unaffected by the disease that causes everyone over the age of 16 to become zombies. Greg and his son Liam have taken a bus and are headed to London and collected a few children along the way. They are cruising along with Ed and remainder of his group when they come across Jack his band of travelers. All end up on the bus to London with Greg. And it is a nightmare trip!

They eventually make it to London but now they have to find a new shelter and food and weapons. And Jack still has it in his head that he will make it back to his own home and make that a safe place for himself. There are "sickos" all over London and all the good hiding places are all ready occupied. So Ed and Jack and the other kids from the bus have to figure out survival in the city.

Enjoyed it very much. It sets up some of the stage for the people and events in the first book. Can't wait to see what is next!

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### **Angela says**

Thoroughly enjoyable sequel to Higson's The Enemy. This time the story is told from the perspective of a different set of surviving kids (who were also featured in the first book, albeit briefly) and set a year before the events in the first book, so technically this is a prequel.

If I'm honest, I think I preferred this book to the first one. The characters were all great and the world-building was fun to read, and rather terrifying in parts. I abhorred Greg from the instant he appeared and I was pleasantly surprised to find out who he becomes.

The one thing that does annoy me about Higson however is that he writes about certain characters in-depth and as a reader you really start to emphasise with them and then BAM! they're killed off! I really should have learned my lesson about this from the first book but I didn't. It's a good technique to use as it really makes you wonder who will survive and who won't; there is no set protagonist or 'hero' so makes it all the more interesting to read.

Excellent sequel/prequel and after checking the library catalogue I am very happy to discover the rest of the series is available so that has made me happy.

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## Laura says

Charlie Higson! Where-oh-where have you been all my life?

Mr. Higson amps up the action, shock, suspense, and disgust levels to all new glorious, gory heights! The Dead, a sequel-prequel to The Enemy, plays a bit with the timeline by jumping back to the beginning of “the disaster” that made every grown-up into flesh craving zombie like creatures hunting and killing kids all over London. If you thought The Enemy had it going on, daaamn...this is a non-stop, full tilt, running, panting, fighting, bloody, slaughter-like ride! Hold on to something....

Readers are introduced to a whole new set of kids, dangers, and emotions a couple of weeks into the disaster. These kids are not the hardened fighters or leaders we found in the first book. We meet Jack, Ed, Bam, Fred, and so many more who *just* lost their families, friends, and whole way of life. Everything changed. The shock and confusion are still right there on the surface. Some kids stick together trying to learn how to fight and scavenge as a team. While others cling to their old lives for safety and just want to go home.

**”Memories. You had to hang on to your memories somehow. That’s why he wanted to get home—to try to grab a corner of the past and hang on to it.”**

So many different voices, styles, and personalities come into play here on the page. But the amazing thing—the dazzling thing about it all--was that I never confused characters or lost track of anyone! Mr. Higson introduces each new character and detail in such a way that makes them stand out and create one hell of a first impression. Like DogNut--listen to the way he is described here: “fidgety, animated, like a pot of boiling water”. I could feel and see him move on the page so clearly after that description. I can see them all! Bam though...haha...I adored him! His humor, one liners, and attitude made me laugh out loud more than once. Laughter was still in the air and their hearts just a few weeks into the disaster. But what will these kids feel in a year or two? Years filled with constant death and fear. Will they feel anything at all?

The shining star of this show though was the writing. Higson swept me off my feet with powerful, gory, brutal, realistic emotion and action. The way each piece seemed to fit together and develop into a bigger picture connecting the two books was staggering, stunning, and bloody beautiful! What left me in gaping-wide-mouthed-awe and stunned-to-the-core though was Mr. Higson’s depiction of the fighting, suspense, and violence. These are not glossed over pretty images with big dramatic hero moments. Non stop, blink of an eye, messy, fast gut punches of loss, pain, and death fill every corner of this world. Alive one minute dead the next. Ugly, bloody, disgusting, sad, so-not-fair moments that will tear your heart out. To top it all off, the battles for survival are swimming in gore! These pages and scenes ooze, drool, burst, bleed, and pop!

\*willies just ran down my spine\* :D

Words and descriptions that left me admiring the action and suspense, but also pondering quiet messages along the way. The messages are there if you want to listen, but Higson in no way hits you over the head with them. I respect that. The battles speak for themselves showing teamwork, courage, responsibility, and leadership--but death, cowardice, and fear as well.

**”He was a different person now, and not a better one. Oh, he could fight, he could swat sickos like flies; he was a bloody hero, wasn’t he? He was Death himself. Riding a bike. But in the end, all he was**

**doing was adding to the score of the dead.**

**Was that all a hero was, then? A killing machine without a heart?"**

Okay, Okay I will shut up now. Just know I am strongly considering getting a Higson t-shirt to go with my Patrick Ness one. ;) The Dead is one hell of a read with everything but the kitchen sink! Everything—filth, smells, puke, maggots, rotten flesh, snot, sores, boils, blood and cascades of dead bodies! Cascades, people! Haha....Come on...how can you pass all that up?

Two of my favorite bits & pieces:

Just when I forget these kids are actually kids under the age of 16 (and believe me you will forget with all they have to face and decide)—Higson will remind me with a classic line like this one:

(view spoiler)

My favorite Bam line:

Listen to this bloody brilliant description thrown out while the boys were talking and poking fun at each other about girls.

“Look. She’s all right. I like her. Okay? She’s nice-looking. A bit thin perhaps...

Thin? Bam snorted. **She’s skinny as six o’clock.”**

LOL. 6 o’clock! Brilliant! Very impressive trash talking, Bam. :)

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**Clair says**

Charlie Higson is a pretty amazing writer, you guys. He may be writing for teenage boys who love computer games and want constant action in their books, but man, do I love his writing. It's so wonderfully short and snappy, and... oh, man. He's really good at characterisation too and had me damn near on the verge of tears or gasping at my copy at certain parts. Excuse me for a moment while I go flap my hands and squee.

I'll try my best to review without getting too excited, but basically, the ending of this book made me go just as loopy with fangirl fervour as when I finished *Monsters of Men*. (Minus the flood of tears, though.) And that's a very high compliment.

*The Dead* is the second book in Charlie Higson's *The Enemy* series, about kids and teenagers trying to survive in a post-apocalyptic London, with every adult or older teen having been turned into a zombie. Not green, wide-eyed infected people who shuffle around the city going: “Braiiiiins.”

No, think the zombies from *Left 4 Dead*. If you accidentally bump into a car and set off its alarm, you are

going to get killed in a matter of moments, my friend. The zombies in *The Enemy* are actually, as it is revealed in this book, super-efficient hunters. The disease itself (shown to us by one of the more likeable older kids actually succumbing to the sickness, sob sob) makes it painful for the zombies to be out in daylight, and makes them gradually lose every memory and every bit of individuality until they are just working off their instincts, hunting, trapping, and killing their prey. Their symptoms, however seem to recede when they eat the flesh of the uninfected, in this case, the children who are desperately trying to survive.

The book begins at an all-boys boarding school, in which the teachers have become infected and are trying to pick off the students. Some of the boys are swept up in a religious fervour, believing that the disease is an act of God, and creating their own little cult, refusing to be swayed by logic and demanding to be taken to the places promised to them by 'the Lamb'.

The majority of the boys, however, think it would be much more sensible to go out into the countryside and establish a farming commune. Unfortunately, they are told by an uninfected coach driver that *everyone* tried to do that when the virus hit.

*"Everyone's had the same idea as you - go back to nature, live off the land. They've watched too many Bear Grylls programmes on telly. And what happens? They've all wound up in the great outdoors with everyone else. City types. Useless. Didn't know one end of a cow from another. It's all right one bloke and his dog living off the land - not millions of blokes, and their wives and kids and hamsters."*

Unfortunately, all adults eventually get infected by this illness, and... oh man, there is no creepier scene than when Greg, the coach driver, hugs his son close to him at night as the sickness is starting to really get to him, and kills Liam by constricting his breathing.

From then on, it's the kids trying to get to safety, or talking about how they're going to survive, and... oh God, man. Charlie Higson is *so* good at making you care for these kids. They're funny, a little bit naïve, and most of all, everyone is really likeable. Even when they do make stupid mistakes, they are just kids, so you can't really blame them too much for not thinking beyond the simplest option to a dilemma. Still, it works really well for those nail-biting moments. I almost dropped my iPad on the bus floor at one particularly shocking revelation, so yeah. It's *that* good.

Another thing Charlie Higson is really good at? Grossing you out. I think the man should take up a side job as a dietitian or something. Normally, I read with something to eat by my side. I can't do that with these books. My stomach just churns too much. And this coming from a girl who's normally quite non-plussed by gore!

*Greg belched, causing a big brown bubble to form between his lips. It burst, filling the coach with a foul stench. He wiped his mouth and then spat a goblet of rubbery mucus against a window, where it slowly crawled down like a fat yellow slug.* (40%)

*He rubbed his neck. It was ringed with boils, like a horrible shiny yellow scarf.* (59%)

*...A cascade of dead bodies tumbled down from one of the piles directly into their path.*

*They had no choice. They would have to climb over them.*

*They tried, but it was like wading through deep mud. The bodies were so soft they gave way beneath their*

*feet and the boys found themselves treading in shredded skin and innards. (64%)*

*His body felt hot and damp. His breath came straight from an abattoir. He was breathing through his mouth, and pink-flecked saliva foamed at his lips. (72%)*

This book was absolutely excellent. Paced perfectly, with wonderful characters who will have you screaming: "IT'S A TRAP!" like Admiral Ackbar, virtually no slowing-down of the plot, and some great psychological questions to ponder over, *The Dead* deserves nothing less than 5/5 stars.

(This review is also available on my blog: <http://book-wyrm.blogspot.co.uk/2013/...>)

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### **Tori Roudebush says**

The book I read is *The Dead* by Charlie Higson. In this book it begins one year earlier than the first book. A disease has struck every one of the age of sixteen. The adults are either decomposing or dead zombie like creatures. In the beginning it starts in a boarding school, where all of the teachers have gotten infected. They then decide they need to leave if they're going to survive any longer. A few kids survive and travel by bus into the city. The bus driver Greg is an adult who has no gotten the disease yet. However after a few days on the bus he begins to show the signs of the disease. The kids decide they need to escape the bus, and they end up at the Imperial War Museum. A huge fire in South London Force them out, and they end up in The Tower of London.

In this book I liked the author's writing style. Higson lets you see the perspective of every character. He usually changes the characters every chapter. It is very easy to understand. At the end of the book he is very good at leaving cliff hangers. He also doesn't over do the description, and I really like that because just reading the description of a character gets very boring.

This book reminds me of the T.V. show "The Walking Dead" because they are trying to survive a zombie apocalypse. Yet there are many differenced such as in the book all of the people sixteen and up get sick, and in the show people of any age can get sick.

Overall I find this series very interesting. I never thought I would read anything like this, but once I picked up the first book I couldn't put it down. I liked this book because when I was reading I felt as if I could step out of reality, and when I put it down it was back to normal. Higson really knows how to suck a reader into the world of his books. I would recommend this book to really anyone because it's suitable for anyone.

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### **Kahleia Corpuz says**

Okay, wow. I did not expect for this book to hit me so hard in the feels. This book talks about the concept of death as if it were nothing which makes it more heartbreaking. It's so mind-blowing how this whole thing "started." The ending was the part that messed me up the most. The moment where the two books connected was when I was almost to tears. Props to Charlie Higson.

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### **Shannon says**

The first book, *The Enemy*, was amazing. This book I originally was extremely disappointed with, until I got

to the last 150 pages or so.

I found the beginning very dull, so dull I stopped reading it for a few months, which is extremely rare for me. It just wasn't as action filled as the first as I had hoped.

But in the end, I was proved wrong. Once The boys had set off to Jack's house, and the stadium collapsed on top of them, I was drawn right back in. From his death, to bam's and then right to Fred's sickness, I couldn't put it down. And from then on it continued to fulfill me with the exhilaration I crave when reading a book.

Even though I do not like it, for I so easily attach to character, I do admire the author's fearlessness to kill off many characters in a book that would reach a young age group. I found myself being heartbroken, time after time, from this zombie, post apocalyptic book, not an emotion you would usually expect.

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### **Darren Hagan says**

\*No spoilers\*

Any book that can make me almost cry deserves no less than 5 stars, as I'm usually made of stone inside. This book was such a step up from the first in my opinion, mainly because most of the issues I had with The Enemy were rectified in The Dead.

This book is set a year before the events in The Enemy with a different set of characters, and I appreciated that because the whole zombie situation hadn't been happening as long. There are even a couple of people who hadn't yet turned. While it still hasn't explained what caused it, it was nice to have a bit of insight into the earlier days.

The pacing was still fast and furious (no, not a film about cars) but rather than the POV constantly changing without a warning, there were little breaks between paragraphs if it changed making it much easier to keep track. It also wasn't told from too many perspectives - mainly just the two friends Jack and Ed, with the occasional other character thrown in. The thing that I realised though, is that these minor characters will probably return in other books. I'm basing that hypothesis solely on the appearance of some characters from The Enemy in this book.

The thing that almost broke me was when someone was dying...the way it was written was beautiful and it felt way too real like I was there in the room. There was more character growth in this book too, mainly Ed who goes on one hell of a journey.

I feel like this review is so unorganised and makes no sense whatsoever, but basically I loved this book so so much. It is tense and addictive and gripping and surprising and so many more positive words. Cheers Charlie ;)

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### **Laura says**

Dystopian fiction seems to be the new craze in YA literature, and I couldn't be happier! I've come across some astoundingly good stories in the last few months. This week I'm looking at one of the most brutal: The

Dead, by Charlie Higson.

The basic premise of the book is that only children under the age of fourteen survive a disease which turns everyone else into flesh-hungry maniacs who would be best described as Zombies, although they aren't dead.

It is left to the children to survive and try to rebuild as much as they can. The book follows a group of young boys at a school where their teachers have turned on them. It is interesting to follow their struggle and I found myself feeling all of their pent-up, edgy frustrations with their broken world. We journey with them as they escape their school into the nightmarish streets of London, where all hell awaits them.

I don't want to give away too much of the plot but I'll say it's gripping stuff! What is so spectacular about this book is how very grim it is. Higson pulls no punches with his writing and I love that he respects the YA audience enough to be honestly dark with them

In the book, fathers kill sons, parents eat the flesh of their children, the "Sickos" gnaw at their own flesh in efforts to get to the more tasty treat of young human flesh. Beyond the sickness, we see the fragile line of sanity which the boys walk as they are forced to kill, cheat, confront the seemingly insane ravings of a boy "prophet" and make terrible decisions, all in order to survive.

The story...the sickness... begins with a video posted on youtube. The video of "The Scared Kid".

I thoroughly recommend this book, which is also, by the way, the prequel to *The Enemy*, another amazing read!

Lx

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### **Jo says**

Right, so I'm not entirely sure what to do with this review. Writing reviews for series kind of makes me anxious because on one hand I want to talk about it and entice you and hypnotise you with my words to make you want to read this book. Because you should read it as it's fantastic.

But on the other hand I am very aware that the majority of the people who will be reading this review won't have read *The Enemy* (my review), the first book in this series. Now, I'm not saying this is because I am unique and original and like to read against the grain (can even you do that?). But, I have snooped on Goodreads and in blog land and, in comparison to other YA books, there are so few reviews for this series! Which is sad for two reasons: One, this is a series and an author that deserves your time. I'm talking to you, dear reader, who grumbles that all YA books are getting samey and boring and there all safe and blaaaah. And also two, I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ALL ABOUT IT.

Of course, there *are* people who have read this book and they will be who I choose to be in my team first in the inevitable YA Readers vs Zombies that will happen... eventually. Especially Erin who got me involved in this series.

So I have to kind of make you *want* to read this book (but first *The Enemy*) at the same time as telling you absolutely zilch about it.

This is why I usually write letters or poems about series. I take the easy way out. But not with this book because there's something about Mr Higson's books that makes me want to be *brave* and *fearless* and...

um... *other things*. And seeing as I'm not going to daub myself in blood and launch myself into a gaggle\* of zombies armed only with a cricket bat and a Cornetto, you're getting a review.

\*cracks knuckles\*

Let's do this.

I liked this book and I liked it a lot. I am very aware that in my review of *The Enemy* I used the other 'I' word. I *did* love *The Enemy* and I liked this one. The story is just as great; fast-paced, exciting and full of twists and turns that genuinely surprised me.

I guess the main 'problem' (and it wasn't even a problem) was the fact that I just didn't connect with the characters as much as I did with Maxie, Blue, Arran and the rest of the gang. I'm not sure whether it was because this book was more about the story and the physical journey as opposed to the connections and the relationships between the characters in the first book. I guess in that way, because I felt a little bit removed from the characters, I found this book a lot less creepy. The first book made me shiver at the thought of children running around London (and, presumably the rest of the country) trying to fight adults who want to eat their brains. Braaaains. I felt their hearts pound as they peered through the glum darkness after they heard a soft scuffle, I felt their helplessness when the truth that they were never going to see their parents again finally sunk in and I felt their horror when they saw their friends die in horrible, vile ways.

However, that's not to say that this book lacked emotion. One scene in particular (*Floppy Dog*) was so moving, I had to blink a bit fast because.... *Floppy Dog*. I just think it lacked the heart-wrenching 'oomph' the first book had.

And also, another tiny problem, seeing as I learnt pretty early on that Mr Higson likes to SLAUGHTER his character, I was kind of expecting it in this book. So when the characters that I had become attached to got cornered by a snarling pack of Mothers and Fathers or, actually, if they got a bit of a sniffle, it wasn't difficult to guess that their future wasn't bright... or long.

ALSO and this is a

**proper spoiler for *The Enemy* and *The Dead*:** (view spoiler)

ANYWAY.

I actually preferred the story to the *The Dead*, though. Maybe it's because I knew that this book was a prequel and I knew how it would end (SAM!) but I found that it had a lot more structure to it and you could actually see *why* they were going to these places as opposed to just accepting that they were.

A large part of that was because of the setting. You probably know I am a huge geek. I love museums and I love history. So throw in some zombies at the Tower of London and The Imperial War Museum and I am one happy lady. Also... GENIUS. In all these films where the characters fall over themselves to find the nearest shopping centre and supermarket but I want to be in the gang that goes to either a place that was built for keeping the enemy out (or... *in duh duh duhhh*) or a building full of weapons. Plus, there is bound to be a Pret a Manger or a Costa Coffee nearby that you could plunder.

There's one of those bad boys on every corner in London.

Also, a bit randomly, I have mentally cast Christopher Eccleston as Greg. Because I always seem to associate him with turning nasty when zombies are about.

I already have the third book, *The Fear*, lined up so I can read it before *The Sacrifice* comes out at the end of this month. And then, of course, the films.

OK, I'm joking, there aren't any films of this series. And that thought alone is making me as sad as *Floppy Dog*.

You can read this review and lots of other exciting things on my blog, Wear the Old Coat.

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### **Gav451 says**

Charlie Higson does it again.

It is slightly disconcerting to find that you are dealing with a completely new set of people at the start of this book. Suddenly you have to get to know a whole group of characters again and you are reintroduced to the world only from a different perspective.

Luckily Mr Higson is a FANTASTIC writer and it is not too long before you are rooting for an entirely new set of people and reading in fear and wonder at the tale which slowly reveals itself.

There is much to enjoy in these books. A darkness which really pushes at the boundaries of the age, sharply observed and well written characters with several narratives that slowly intertwine. The characters are rounded and it's odd that the zombies are not always without some sympathy.

There are a number of really awful moments in the book and at one stage the internal clock is pushed forward a lot further than I expected it to be but these are minor quibbles at best. Books these good for any reader so pick them to, immerse yourself in some genuinely horrific and scary literature and join the fun. You will not regret it.

Unless you are not a fan of horror, then do not, this book or series of books is not for you.

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### **Luke says**

Brilliant you need to read this book but read the 1st book first now I am on to the 3rd book in this series I can't wait

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### **Alex - coffeeloving\_bookoholic says**

The end was soooooo good! I still have goosebumps! :D It was a bit slow in the middle, but the second half was written so good, I couldn't put it down. I liked, that there were other kids and in the end we are back to the first book. I am really looking forward to more adventures!

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## **Kate says**

I read this ARC via Netgalley.

A year before the events of *The Enemy*, the grown-ups are just starting to get sick and turn into flesh-eating monsters. The first most people hear of this zombie plague is an online video that some believed at first to be a joke.

A band of students are holed up at their all-boys private school until it becomes clear that they are never going to be able to keep the infected teachers at bay. They plan to leave and find someplace safer, along the way rescuing the daughter of the French teacher, Frederique, and her cat. The group is getting picked off one by one and are nearly overwhelmed when a bus rolls up.

The driver is a grown-up, but he doesn't seem to be infected... at first. As the boys get to know Frederique and the three snotty girls in the back seat, the zombies keep coming and only courage and luck will keep them alive.

I liked the cast of characters and how this book follows one core group around rather than killing off who I thought was the main character halfway through (ahem, as in *The Enemy*). There's Jack, the leader; Ed, his somewhat cowardly right-hand man; Kwanele, the rich fashion-obsessed student; Chris, the bookworm; Wiki, the know-it-all. The threesome of Mean Girls added a strange level of irony to the situations (like Courtney, who always adds that every place anyone mentions is a "dump"). I liked seeing the precursor to the boys who hold down the Tower of London, and the other group that becomes the group of kids ruling at Buckingham Palace. I even enjoyed the glimpses into the minds of two of the "sickos" - the butcher, and the zombie they named "Pez." And of course the little glimpse of Sam!

This prequel was packed with action and a little more character development than *The Enemy* (see what happens when you keep some of those characters alive through the entire book?). I sometimes wished there was a bit LESS action and MORE character development. I also wanted more of the back stories of the characters from *The Enemy*, like Jester, or even David King.

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## **? jamieson ? says**

"He was a different person now, and not a better one, Oh, he could fight, he could swat sickos like flies; he was a bloody hero, wasn't he? He was Death himself. Riding a bike. But in the end, all he was doing was adding to the score of the dead. Was that all a hero was, then? A killing machine without a heart?"

## **WARNING ! ZOMBIE GIFS AHEAD**

This series literally has me shook I can't believe I read these when I was little they are so violent ??? like SO violent ?

It's basically the book version of The Walking Dead, except only adults become zombies. Which means the world is now run by 15 year olds who are trying not to get eaten by the adult zombies. Oh, also the zombies are smart, and they make traps and ambushes for the kids ,,, its fuckin intense and TRUST I would be dead in this world I would be so dead

(actually I'd be a zombie bc I'm over 15 but SHUT UP I would somehow not get the sickness ok I hate adult life)

**THE DEAD** offers a differing story of the events in **THE ENEMY**, explaining the story of the London Tower kids and how they established themselves following the apocalypse. and hoNESTLY the kids from the London Tower are sooo much more interesting then the Waitrose kids.

I like how **THE DEAD** starts to develop the storyline outside of just **ZOMBIES** and killing. The addition of Matt, Archie and The Acolytes was really interesting!! I remembered alot of this storyline from when I first read these books but I liked to explore that since I'm pretty sure it's going to become more important later.

I really enjoyed the characters in **THE DEAD** and thought they were more realistic and interesting. I liked Jack and Ed's dynamic and thought theirs was a pre realistic portrayal of things tbh. I liked that they weren't always the best of friends ahaha. And I also really liked the development of Justin and Jorden Horden

I JUST WISH THERE WERE MORE GIRLS !!!!!! plsss like Brooke was in it a bit but then she disappears and Frederique is just annoying and I'm like ?? where my girls at #yeah the girls **I WANT THEM**

Also, I wish the perspectives didn't just randomly change mid paragraph because *I CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THAT SHIT* its so confusing

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but like, overall these are pretty darn good. I mean, ok they're zombie books and I'm trash BUT THEY ARE PRETTY AMUSING OK

## **K. says**

22/4/2016

Things I expected rereading this: everyone dies, extreme amounts of grossness.

Things I did not expect: to tear up over one character's ending.

I feel like this is a series that very much benefits from being read back to back. Yes, this is a prequel. But it's a prequel that makes a hell of a lot more sense if you read it fairly soon after reading the first one so that all the little details connecting the two really stand out.

28/1/2015

I was a little bit terrified of reading this, because zombies are totally my squick and reading **The Enemy** gave me horrifying nightmares. I'm not sure if it's that I knew what to expect or if this was less gory/violent than **The Enemy**, but while I had occasional moments of "OH GOD WHY EW", there was never that gut-

wrenching sense of fear that came with the first book in the series.

This is, to all intents and purposes, a prequel. It features (as far as I remember) none of the characters that we met in the first book, and starts out a year before the events of The Enemy. I was quite surprised by how much I enjoyed this, and the sneaky little hints of plot points that link into the first book. The kids in this book were older than many of those in the first book, with many of them in their early teens. So that made a pleasant change from reading about nine year olds dying horrifically. But it also meant that the book reminded me a lot of Michael Grant's Gone series.

It's brutal and occasionally horrifying and if pus grosses you out, you really shouldn't read this book because there's a disturbing amount of pus involved.

And, just like I said last time, don't get attached to anyone. Ever. Because they will probably get eaten by zombies.

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