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THE **LAZARUS**
PLAGUE

BOOK 1

PALE HARVEST



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The Lazarus Plague: Book One Pale Harvest

Chapter 1: The Day the World Died

In a bunker that stank of bleach and ambition, a handful of Al-Qaeda scientists thought they'd outgrown bombs and box cutters. War, they decided, needed evolution. They weren't after spectacle anymore. They wanted something that breathed on its own.

A virus. Airborne. Relentless. One that liquefied lungs and shut down organs in hours.

But nature isn't a dog you teach tricks. The strain twisted too fast, mutating faster than they could track. Test subjects bled, raved, fought—and refused to stay dead. The scientists ignored it. Called it “an anomaly.” Dismissed it as noise in the data.

By the time they realized their mistake, the virus had turned them into its first feast.

It traveled hidden in a shipment meant for America. A plague gift-wrapped for millions. Nobody understood the horror they were about to unleash.

It didn't start in New York or L.A. It began in a forgotten Mississippi town—a greasy spoon off the highway.

I was there. Paramedic call. Thought it was food poisoning. Walked into a diner and straight into hell.

The silence was wrong. Customers pinned against the wall, pale and shaking. A trucker sprawled in the middle of the room. Mid-fifties, gut like a keg. He wasn't breathing.

I knelt to check for a pulse. His eyes snapped open—wrong eyes. Clouded, milky, hungry.

He lunged. Teeth snapped shut where my wrist had been. His skin was corpse-gray, his movements jerky and too fast.

Screams tore the silence.

He clamped down on a waitress's shoulder. Denise, her nametag read. Blood sprayed across the tiles as she went down. A man in a denim jacket tried to pry him off—got his throat opened for the effort. Collapsed, gasping through the hole in his neck.

More figures shambled through the diner door. One without half a face. Another dragging its guts like a leash.

Chaos. Tables crashing, people running, tripping. A woman hit the floor near the counter; one of them was on her in seconds, tearing her open.

And then—Denim Jacket’s hand latched on to my ankle. His chest wasn’t moving, but his fingers tightened. His eyes fluttered open. Dead. Milky. Starving.

I kicked free. Ran. Didn’t stop. Didn’t help anyone. Didn’t look back.

The news dripped out in pieces after that. “Bird flu,” they called it. Then “bioweapon.” Terror groups bragged, naming it Allah’s Cleansing Fire.

Didn’t matter. The virus didn’t just kill—it raised the dead.

Mississippi burned first. Towns turned into funeral pyres. Highways jammed with rusting cars and bloated corpses. Gunfire echoing in the distance, drowned out by the guttural wails of the reanimated.

By the time we hit the state line, Mississippi was gone. What was left wasn’t a state—it was a grave that wouldn’t stay filled.

We holed up in a collapsing gas station in Texas. The dead pressed against the barricades at night, shadows moving in restless waves. Supplies ran thin. Hope thinner.

But I’d seen something worse than the dead.

People bitten... who didn’t fall. Who stayed on their feet. Stronger. Meaner. Hungry.

And I feel it now, in me. Crawling under my skin. Whispering in my blood.

The world didn’t end in fire. It bled out in silence.