

# RICK GRIMES VS MARVEL ZOMBIES



#1

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*The evening is quiet and uneventful, just how Rick Grimes likes it. As he finishes his nightly patrol of the community, his thoughts go through their usual patrol as well. Keeping the town secure. Protecting his friends. Being a father to Carl in this broken world. He sighs and hopes that “quiet and uneventful” can last until he goes to bed. He won’t be so lucky.*





*As he turns the last corner towards home, Rick sees an intense pulsating light coming from the windows of the tool shed. Who could be in there at this time of night? And what is making that sound? To Rick, it sounds like the falling sparks of a firework, except if the sparks never stopped falling. He knocks, but no one answers. He draws his revolver and reaches for the door handle.*





*The light that pours out of the open door is the brightest that he has ever seen. He tries to ask if anyone is there, but his words seem to get lost in the light itself. As he moves forward, he starts to feel wind blowing on his face from deeper inside the shed. He swallows his fear, as he has done countless times before, and moves further in.*





*After a few careful steps into the light, Rick is no longer in the tool shed, or even in the community. He is in the middle of the street in a crumbling city. He quickly turns around, but there is no sign of where he came from. The sound of falling sparks is gone. He instinctively scans for walkers - he can see, hear, and smell them better than anyone he knows - and decides there are none in the immediate area. He is alone. For now.*





*After taking a few steps down this cracked road, a ghostly man appears in front of him. In less than a second, Rick has drawn his magnum and aimed it at the stranger's translucent head. Rick knows he isn't dreaming - his dreams are never this vivid and tangible. Is he hallucinating again - like he did for a time after Lori died? His thoughts are interrupted when the ghost begins to speak.*





*"Hello Rick. I am Doctor Strange. You are not dreaming or hallucinating - I am here in my astral form. I brought you to this dimension because I need a warrior to fight the undead. This world is stricken with an infection similar to the one where you come from. I need your help, Rick. I have been bitten, and I am slowly turning into one of them."*





*Rick knows that his bullets would go right through this apparition, but he keeps his gun raised anyways, and says, "Send me back. Now. My town and my son need me. And I hate to be the one to tell you this, but it's too late for you. If you don't sever the infected area right after being bit, you're dead already." Dr. Strange leans forward and seems to glow even brighter as he says, "Except that in this world, we have the cure."*





*"Our cure cannot save someone after they have become what you would call a walker. That transformation is permanent. But it can cure someone who has been bitten. If you bring me the cure and save me, I will send it with you on your journey back home. I can't promise the cure will work on your world's infection, but I have a feeling that it will. There is a sort of harmony between our two universes - a shared energy. And I believe this is worth a try."*





*Rick thinks about Carl, and agrees to the Doctor's terms. Strange warns him that the zombies in this world are very powerful. He starts to elaborate, but then suddenly cries out in pain. His entire astral form turns bright red and begins to flicker. He turns to Rick and chokes out the words, "My physical body is under attack. I must return. Head for the crashed space ship ahead. The cure lies within." His ghostly form flickers out of sight, and Rick is alone again.*





*The area is so desolate that Rick isn't even sure what city he is in. He is surprised at the lack of walkers - in his world the cities are still full of the undead. Actually, he is trying not to even think of this as a different world or dimension. He lets himself go into "supply run" mode, and focuses only on the task at hand. This mindset has kept him alive many times before, and he is relying on it again now.*





*He hears a sound from behind the wall on his right - one that he has heard a thousand times before - the low guttural sound of a walker. What he doesn't hear is the shuffling sound of their staggered walk. Is it stuck somewhere? Or do these walkers move differently?*





*The attack comes from above, and much quicker than any walker that he has fought before. The first hit knocks the gun from his hand, and the second knocks him off his feet. Rick is used to these creatures clawing and biting, but this one seems to be using martial arts of some kind. And as he hits the ground, Rick notices the walker's costume. Definitely a different world.*





*To Rick's amazement, this walker can speak - especially considering the hole through his chest. "Hey Matt, I've got a live one here!" Daredevil joins Iron Fist, as quietly as Rick has ever seen a walker move, and says, "Thank god - I'm starving." They start to move towards Rick. He can see the desperate hunger in their eyes, and he knows that he is about two seconds away from being their lunch.*





*These zombies might be able to talk, but they are still walkers to Rick, and no one knows walkers like he does. For example, he knows that their fragile bodies are weakest where bones are connected by ligaments. These two might be trained fighters, but they were not expecting a double kick to their knees. Their legs snap, and as they fall, Rick dives for his gun.*





*With a speed and accuracy that would rival the Punisher, he turns and shoots each zombie directly through the frontal lobe. Before the outbreak, these two heroes would have avoided this fate, but the infection slowed their reflexes and filled their minds with insatiable hunger.*





*In Rick's world, a headshot stops a walker every time. But in this universe it isn't enough. Daredevil and Iron Fist lurch forward with an even greater appetite than before.*





*Rick knows that he is no match for the fighting skills of these two. They attack him from both sides, and despite their decaying muscles, each hit lands with incredible intensity. If he gets knocked down again, he is done for. He starts to lose hope when he sees Iron Fist's hand glowing bright orange.*





*He leaps to the side just as Iron Fist throws his fiery uppercut. It hits Daredevil perfectly under the chin, and with a wet ripping sound, it knocks his head completely off.*





*Even though the hunger has taken over his mind, Danny Rand is still shocked by what he just did to his friend. Rick takes advantage of this momentary pause, and pulls a large hunting knife from a sheath inside his jacket. He knows that a stab to the head won't be sufficient. He swings the knife with all his might, making sure to aim the blade so it removes the head completely.*





*He is amazed at the power of the infection in these walkers. Even with their heads removed, they continue to yell at Rick as he walks away, begging him for just one finger or toe to satisfy their immense hunger.*





*Dr. Strange told him to look for the wreckage of a spaceship further ahead in the city. After seeing an astral projection, flaming punches, and walkers that can talk after being beheaded, the thought of a crashed spaceship in the middle of a city doesn't phase Rick at all. Ahead of him, the city steadily rises up a hill. He should have a good view from the top.*





*After climbing the hill, he can clearly see the wreckage of the enormous ship, with Milano inscribed on one wing. He doesn't like charging in without a plan, but he knows that the Doctor doesn't have much time left, and he is Rick's only ticket home. He checks his pockets - plenty of ammo left, and one special surprise, just in case things get really bad. He takes a deep breath and starts heading towards the ship.*





*With a sudden flare of red light, Dr. Strange appears again. "Rick, the cure is a bright green liquid, inside of a glass canister, in the largest room in the Milano. But beware - Drax the Destroyer is inside, and he is one of the infected. After you have the cure, head for a plaza north of the ship." Before Rick can ask any questions, Strange disappears again.*





*The crash site is a mess, but he is able to make his way through it to the Milano's entrance ramp. The ship still has power, and is making a low humming noise. Otherwise, the Milano is quiet. Rick doesn't like it.*





*As soon as he enters the main area of the ship, Rick sees who he assumes is Drax the Destroyer. He is standing in one place, rocking back and forth and making a low growling noise. Rick has seen walkers do this before when no prey is around. Rick quietly pulls out his knife, and starts creeping up on Drax.*





*Dr. Strange warned Rick about Drax, but he didn't consider Star Lord a threat since he is skewered to his cockpit chair. However, the ship still has power, and Star Lord can monitor anything from the cockpit, including watching a human sneaking onto his ship. His stomach growls and he shouts down the corridor, "Drax, behind you! And this time save a piece for me!"*





*The undead Drax turns and throws a blind jab at Rick. It hits him like a steel pipe, instantly knocks him off his feet, and almost makes him black out. That was just a quick jab - Rick is pretty sure a right hook from Drax would kill him. He doesn't plan on testing that theory.*





*He draws his gun the second he hits the ground. He fires two rounds that tear into Drax's chest and head. Rick knows this won't stop Drax, but it will buy him a few precious seconds.*





*He races past Drax and heads into the next room. He immediately sees the cure, glowing bright green inside of a special container. Drax roars and crashes behind him. Rick grabs the cure and slips into a storage closet just out of sight of his lumbering attacker.*





*Star Lord's voice echoes through the ship again. "Drax, he's in the storage closet!" Rick knows that his gun won't be enough this time, and he lost his knife when Drax belted him. Only one thing left to try. He reaches into his pocket for his special surprise just as Drax forces the door open.*





*The surprise is a frag grenade leftover from his battle against the Governor. He pulls the pin, wraps his jacket sleeve around his hand, and jams the grenade into Drax's roaring mouth. The zombie's teeth can't pierce Rick's leather jacket, and the move takes Drax completely by surprise.*





*He dives behind a table as Drax the Destroyer explodes in a repulsive spray of dark blood and decaying flesh. Rick checks his pocket to make sure the cure container didn't break, but it seems really solid. Although his ears are ringing from the blast, he can hear Star Lord screaming obscenities from the cockpit. The screaming soon turns to begging, but Rick is done with the Milano.*





*He grabs his hat and leaves the wreckage of the Milano. He heads for the outdoor plaza that Strange mentioned. The closer he gets to the plaza, the more he starts to see signs of a large battle that took place here. He keeps his gun drawn and scans for walkers. He hopes that he can be finished with this mission soon. This world is even more screwed up than his, and it makes him thankful for Carl and for his little community.*





*The plaza seems to be vacant. There are chunks of debris and decaying body parts everywhere. Dr. Strange's astral form flickers in erratically. "Congratulations on finding the cure, Rick. Soon you will be able to bring it to me. But first you will need a few tools from this place. This battlefield is where Earth's mightiest heroes either perished, or became one of the undead."*





*From behind a pile of rubble, an undead Luke Cage rises and staggers towards Rick, completely taken over by the hunger. Rick draws his gun, but Strange floats in front of him and says, "Wait. I have something for you that has a little more kick than a magnum."*





*Dr. Strange says, "Rick, put your arm stump into the barrel in front of you. Quickly!" Rick makes a split second decision to trust Strange, even though the zombie Luke Cage is getting closer and closer to him. He jams his crippled right arm deep into the barrel. Something mechanical latches onto his arm. Rick flinches and tries to pull his arm out, but some kind of machinery is keeping it held in place. Rick looks up and sees Cage getting ready to attack.*





*Suddenly, he feels the incredible sensation of having a right hand again. He can't enjoy the feeling for long, as the undead Cage is almost on top of him. He hears Strange say, "Rick, raise your open palm at the zombie and command the Iron Man gauntlet to attack using your mind!" Rick has no idea how that could possibly work, but it does. The result is disgusting, but extremely effective.*





*Dr. Strange has him grab one last usable item from the rubble. Rick is surprised by how light the shield is, but it doesn't hold his interest as much as the Iron Man gauntlet. It feels great to have two working hands again, and Rick is planning on taking this gauntlet back to his world. Strange says, "Rick, it's time. I am going to open a portal to my location. But be warned - the undead are all around me, and they are very powerful."*



*TO BE CONTINUED IN ISSUE #2*