

PREVIOUSLY IN THE STAND...

The deadly flu-like virus "Captain Trips" has killed off 99% of the country's population.

The thus-far-uninfected include:

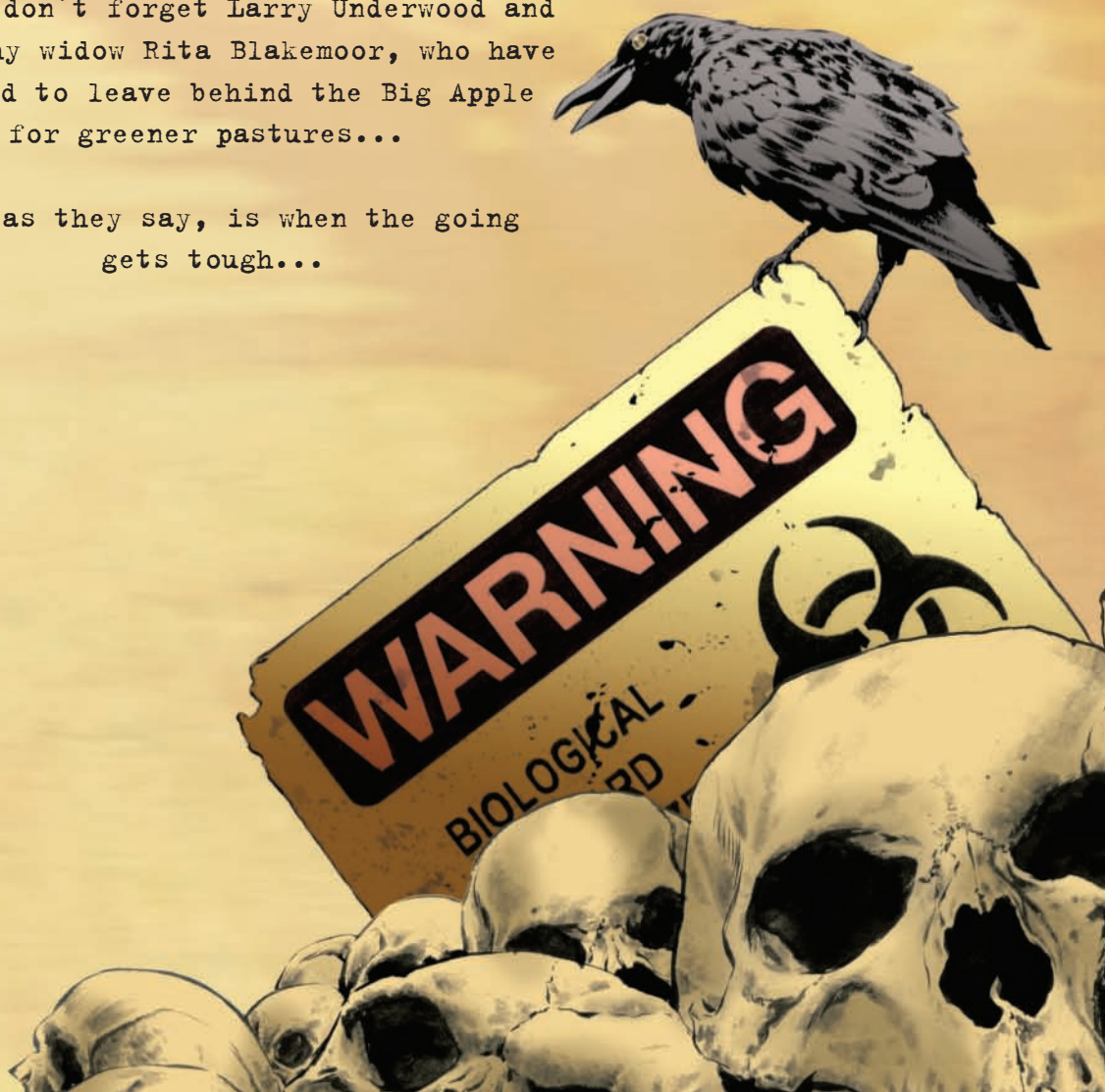
Nick Andros, the deaf-mute deputy of Shoyo, Arkansas, and Lloyd Henreid, a death-row-bound killer wasting away in his cell, each one awaiting a greater force to liberate them from their prisons, physical and otherwise...

Frannie Goldsmith and her newly minted best friend Harold Lauder, who are currently planning their grand flight from Ogunquit, Maine...

Stu Redman, who has found some kind of freedom in the wild, after escaping from the CDC...

And don't forget Larry Underwood and wealthy widow Rita Blakemoor, who have decided to leave behind the Big Apple for greener pastures...

This, as they say, is when the going gets tough...



NEW YORK CITY.

AAAAHHHGGHHH!

**RITA BLAKEMOOR AND
LARRY UNDERWOOD.**

The "monster-shouter"
they'd both heard the
day they met.

So monsters were
stalking the streets.

Human ones, from
the look of those
stab wounds.



We--we stick to the plan, Rita.
We get to the Lincoln Tunnel,
cross into Jersey, take 495 to
Passaic. Then head northeast
to New England. Make kind
of a buttonhook.

Reach Maine,
find a house
on the ocean,
remember?

Y-yes, Larry.
I-I'm sorry I
screamed like
that...



The way
leads ever
on...



What,
Rita?



Oh, it's a
line from Tolkien.
*The Lord of the
Rings.*

"The way
leads ever
on."

I always think
of it at the beginning
of a journey. As a sort
of gateway to adven--



--oh, my
Lord.

Oh,
Larry...





Not for the first time that day, Larry was grateful he'd thought to pick up a rifle at the Manhattan Sporting Goods store.



At Fifth and East Thirty-ninth, a man offered Larry a million dollars "for the use of his woman."

Back.
The hell.
Off.

Easy, man.
Can't blame a
guy for trying, can
you? Have a nice
day. Hang
loose.

At the intersection of Eleventh
Avenue and Thirty-ninth,
Larry heard a muffled cry of
pain from--

Rita?

I...

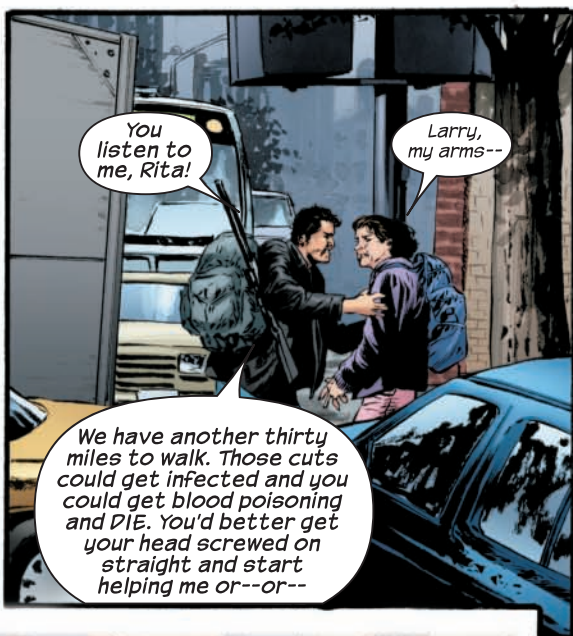
Larry,
I'm sor--

Rita, my God,
what's wrong
with you?

Were you thinking
you could cab back to
your apartment if your
feet got tired? You're
BLEEDING! How long
have your feet been
hurting?

Since...
since about
Fifth and
Forty-ninth,
I guess.

**TWENTY
BLOCKS?!**
And you didn't
say anything?





Rita,
please. I said
I was--

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

Fifteen seconds later:

Do that again
and I really *will*
leave you.



All right.

Have a
good time
getting
raped and
murdered.



When he looked back, expecting
to see her standing with her arms
crossed, accusing him with
her eyes, she was gone.

Fine, he thought, I
tried to apologize.

