

# FIFTEEN WAYS TO STAY ALIVE

by *Daphne Gottlieb*

1. Offer the wolves your arm only from the elbow down. Leave tourniquet space. Do not offer them your calves. Do not offer them your side. Do not let them near your femoral artery, your jugular. Give them only your arm.
2. Wear chapstick when kissing the bomb.
3. Pretend you don't know English.
4. Pretend you never met her.
5. Offer the bomb to the wolves. Offer the wolves to the zombies.
6. Only insert a clean knife into your chest. Rusty ones will cause tetanus. Or infection.
7. Don't inhale.
8. Realize that this love was not your trainwreck, was not the truck that flattened you, was not your Waterloo, did not cause massive hemorrhaging from a rusty knife. That love is still to come.
9. Use a rusty knife to cut through most of the noose in a strategic place so that it breaks when your weight is on it.
10. Practice desperate pleas for attention, louder calls for help. Learn them in English, French, Spanish: May Day, Aidez-Moi, Ayúdeme.
11. Don't kiss trainwrecks. Don't kiss knives. Don't kiss.
12. Pretend you made up the zombies, and only superheroes exist.
13. Pretend there is no kryptonite.

14. Pretend there was no love so sweet that you would have died for it, pretend that it does not belong to someone else now, pretend like your heart depends on it because it does. Pretend there is no wreck—you watched the train go by and felt the air brush your face and that was it. Another train passing. You do not need trains. You can fly. You are a superhero. And there is no kryptonite.
15. Forget her name.

# GIFTS FOR THE DEAD AT CHRISTMAS

*by Andy Buell*

blankets  
worm repellent  
a haircut  
a manicure  
a new suit to wear  
pictures of who I grew into  
letters to reintroduce myself

Apologies for not shedding tears when I heard the news. I promise you it was only because I didn't understand, years later it was the fermented spirits that held them back.

Tape recordings of my voice,  
telling you how the bath felt  
in the tub I still don't fit into,  
I watched reflections of a savior  
circle the drain for hours.

Reminders that you will never  
have to deal with traffic again.

Finally waving goodbye  
with my eyes open.

# LEAVING ASHLEE

*by John Andrews*

in another life  
your stomach hangs  
with weight from our children  
we are slow dancing  
the kitchen is on fire  
we don't turn  
our heads  
watch it burn  
in this one  
your stomach hangs  
the weight of what could have been  
I left you  
on the front porch  
shackled to a column  
legs folded underneath  
blood flowering out  
your mouth  
a hunger I could  
never feed

CITIZENSHIP TEST FOR THE UUSA  
(UNITED UNDEAD STATES OF AMERICA)  
*(data compiled by Rachelanne Williams)*

Before continuing to the knowledge test, please fill out these identification questions. (We will not share any of your information with outside parties)

FULL NAME:★ \_\_\_\_\_

\*If you cannot remember your full name due to the passage of time and deterioration of the brain, please make one up and carve it somewhere on your existing flesh so that you might remember it. Should you be accepted as a citizen, dog tags will be made for you.

SEX (circle one):            Male                    Female                    Other★

\*Chose this option only if you have been dead too long to remember, and your private areas have rotted away, or if is possible you have missing ribs.

In what time period was your death?

- A) Within the past 5 years
- B) Between 5 and 10 years ago
- C) Between 10 and 50 years ago
- D) Between 50 and 100 years ago
- E) More than 100 years ago★

\*If you selected answer E please note the historical time period of your first life (Ex: French Revolution, Colonial America, Ancient Egyptian, Etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Please choose the following that best describes you:

- A) I have retained nearly all of my flesh (no visible bone structure)
- B) My body consists of most of my original flesh (very little exposed bone)
- C) My body consists of some flesh (rotted flesh clinging to bone)
- D) I am a skeleton.