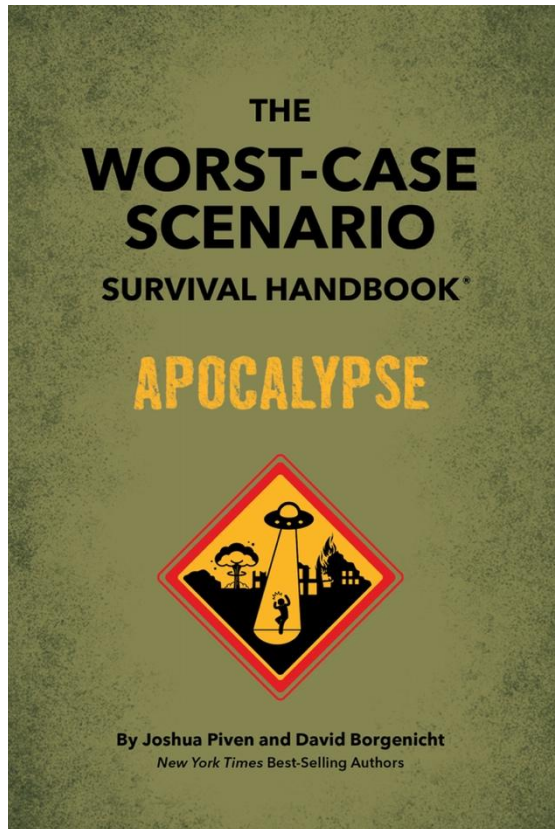


# NEWS FROM QUIRK

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## *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Apocalypse*

**By Joshua Piven and David Borgenicht**

The newest installment in the world's best-selling survival manual series!

"A comprehensive guide to dealing with our most pressing dilemmas."

—*Budget Travel* on *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook*

### *It's the apocalypse. Now what?*

Since 1999, *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook* has been an essential guide to navigating some of life's most unexpected situations. It's sold over ten million copies, been translated into more than two dozen languages, and inspired tabletop games and a museum exhibit. But what about the ultimate worst-case scenario: the apocalypse? In *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Apocalypse* (Quirk Books; On sale: October 31, 2023; \$18.99, Hardcover), practical survival tips meet hilarious what-if scenarios to provide tools that let you

keep your cool during any situation. Dozens of survival experts provided their know-how so that readers will be able to:

- Apocalypse-proof their finances
- Pack a go-bag in thirty minutes
- Make an emergency gas mask or air filter
- Defeat a robot army, outwit a zombie horde, fend off rival clans, and more tongue-in-cheek scenarios that help keep things light

At a time when doomscrolling is second nature, *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Apocalypse* empowers readers to feel prepared for the worst and alleviate their anxieties, with levity and humor that assure us there's no need to panic—it's just the end of the world.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Joshua Piven** has been chased by knife-wielding motorcycle bandits (he escaped); stranded on a chairlift during a howling blizzard (he was rescued); and torn both his rotator cuffs (he had surgery). He lives in Philadelphia.

**Dave Borgenicht** has been surrounded by alligators, encountered bears, mountain lions, and more, and lived to tell the tale. He currently lives in Philadelphia, but his go bag is stocked and ready.

#### **ABOUT THE BOOK**

*The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Apocalypse*

By Joshua Piven and David Borgenicht

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**A Conversation with Joshua Piven and David Borgenicht,  
authors of *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Apocalypse***

**Quirk Books (QB):** *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook* has been the essential guide for dealing with some of the most unexpected situations life can throw at you for more than twenty years. How did this incredibly popular book come to be, and what inspired you to create the new apocalyptic edition?

**Joshua Piven (JP):** Well, I would say the inspiration for the new book is “current events”! We’d been talking about doing a Worst-Case book that at least was partially focused on climate change, and *Apocalypse* is an outgrowth/extension of that idea: there are a lot of climate related survival situations in the book, but it’s all that, plus . . . everything else. In terms of the origin story of the series, essentially we both watched way too much *A-Team*, *MacGyver*, Bond movies, et cetera, and the jams our heroes always seemed to get into (and out of) inspired these worst-case situations. Except we wanted to know how it was really done, not just the fake TV version.

**David Borgenicht (DB):** I definitely started thinking about an apocalypse edition during the COVID-19 pandemic—and in the years since. I think at various points over the past three years we’ve all watched the news and thought to ourselves, “Hmmm, isn’t this how *28 Days Later/Dawn of the Dead/The Hunger Games* started?” We wanted to do a book that offered a mix of practical solutions and entertainment, to help us all feel as if we can survive.

**QB:** One of the things that makes this handbook so unique and valuable is that real-life experts provide their insight on each scenario. How do you find and work with these experts?

**JP:** It’s kind of a triangulation process, first figuring out the key survival points, then determining who the expert in the field is, then approaching them and convincing them to lend us their time (it was mostly Zoom during the pandemic). It was definitely harder in 1999 in the early days of the web—I think a lot of people thought I was a kid writing a book report! Then of course as the books became more well-known many people would say “Oh I love those books!” Often we need to get multiple experts for one scenario. For example, we needed to get an expert on building a bunker, but then we also needed an interior designer for how to make it feel like a home. For making water drinkable, I think we had like five different experts in various fields.

**DB:** Josh is really the expert on finding experts—sometimes we have to get really creative, though! I remember for our *Dating and Sex* book back in the day he reached out to a former spy for info about disguising yourself quickly to escape from a bad date. He got great advice: slip into the bathroom, change your hair (slick it back), put on or remove an article of clothing, change your gait, and walk out.

**QB:** What is your biggest apocalyptic fear that was included the book? And what did you learn from experts while exploring the topic?

**JP:** Well, certainly another pandemic—but, you know, worse, or with higher morbidity—would be pretty bad. I’m also not really excited for the aliens to pay us a visit, though if you believe the

news, they may have already been here. Though, somehow I doubt the government would manage to keep that a secret for decades. Fungal zombies would be pretty bad. Possibly I've been watching too much *The Last of Us* . . .

**DB:** Right now I'm having a bit of a freakout about AI—I feel like we're not that far away from having AI that's smarter than we are, and from just wanting to plug into the matrix to escape reality, so I hope we figure out how to pull the plug on AI before it's able to convince us all to plug in and tune out.

**QB:** In *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Apocalypse*, you not only present plausible scenarios but also explore some (hopefully) fictional ones, like zombies and killer robots. How did you go about providing realistic advice for these fantasy situations?

**JP:** Honestly, there are lots of scientists and researchers who both design and study robots, not to mention their potential uses and impacts on society. So that one was pretty easy in terms of figuring out how robots might behave. For zombies, we spoke to various people who have studied or contributed to zombie literature, to understand how they might behave, plus experts in viral transmission. We did not interview an actual zombie. Because: language barrier.

**DB:** While it's unlikely that we will encounter zombies that have “risen from the dead,” it's plausible that a virus could alter our behavior so greatly that we become cannibalistic and rabid and mob-like. So as always, we try to talk to any experts who might have knowledge—for zombies, it's really an amalgamation of lore and expert advice on dealing with a mob.

**QB:** Has a fan ever written to you to let you know that they used your Worst-Case instructions? Do you have any favorite stories?

**JP:** Yes, we've gotten lots of fan emails and letters, often from young readers, but not only from them. Not too long ago we heard about a woman in New Zealand who credited the book's advice with helping her save her husband who was choking. She performed an emergency cricothyroidotomy. Amazing. And there are lots of stories in the reviews section of Amazon, so those bots have also survived. Of course, we don't hear from the people who didn't survive...

**QB:** What do you think is the most useful item to have on you at all times in the event that an apocalyptic event might occur?

**JP:** The book. Plus some duct tape.

**DB:** Honestly, I'd say it's a multi-tool. You can use it to hunt, clean and skin animals, pry open cans, pick locks. But you'd be amazed at what you can do with found objects if you are clever enough. Even aluminum cans can be cut apart and fashioned into everything from drinking cups to cooking pans to signal mirrors to arrowheads! MacGyver was right—everything has an alternate use.

**QB: We're all a little prone to doomscrolling these days, which can make people feel helpless in the face of everything going on. How do you think being prepared can help with this anxiety?**

**JP:** One of the three principles of survival is “be prepared.” So I think as long as you have some knowledge/forethought about how difficult situations might play out, you're less likely to panic and act rashly.

**DB:** Honestly, I think it's just helpful to know that no matter how dire the situation, there's always a way out! That fact alone should help you stay calm and find a way to survive.

**QB: What's something you hope readers walk away with from reading the book?**

**JP:** I hope they will have fun while learning something. I also hope they will walk away from the zombies. Because if you run, they will be more likely to spot you.

**DB:** I hope they walk away with the feeling that their fears are survivable—even the worst ones! And I hope they walk away with the book after reading it in the bookstore (and buying it, of course).