

# FEAR THE WALKING DEAD



Cast and Producers Q&A:

## **RUBEN BLADES, “Daniel Salazar”**

**Who is Daniel Salazar? What is his story previous to the point that we meet him in *Fear*?**

Daniel Salazar is a native of a Central American country who has arrived to the United States as a consequence of the war that raged there during the late ‘70s/early ‘80s. He has come to the U.S. with his

wife Griselda and daughter Ofelia, and he's established himself in Los Angeles where there are a lot of people like himself. He's opened a barbershop and that's how he is known in the area, as the barber.

I think that if you really examine people, you're going to find many surprises in terms of what your opinion of the person was versus what is reality. We're all very complex individuals. We tend to categorize and stereotype and form opinions based on appearances, when in fact we are very complex. So what you see is not necessarily what is. In this particular case, because of the conditions in which we are introduced to my character, there is really nothing that would indicate anything out of the ordinary with his family.

## **What intrigued you about the role of Daniel Salazar?**

I like the fact that Salazar was complex. When I was being recruited for this project that was one of the things that I was told and that immediately made me interested. I've done a lot of roles in my life, and some of them won't be considered important because they didn't have extensive participation in the project. But every role has the possibility of potential. In this particular case, the arc of Daniel Salazar is going to be really satisfying for me as an actor. But like anything, this was an act of faith. I believed in the writer and the way he presented his position. He was smart enough within the things that he was able to say (without revealing too much); he was clear enough to stir my curiosity, and I'm glad I took the role.

## **What does the backdrop of LA lend to the story?**

Any city that has a population that exceeds the millions is the perfect place to hide in plain sight. That's one aspect of it. The other is that in the United States people tend to leave you alone. There is more respect and understanding about privacy so you can begin a new life with no one the wiser.



## **What is intriguing about the premise of *Fear*?**

At the beginning, I thought it was an escapist's show and we need that. This particular show, the premise is very interesting in many ways, because basically what is presented to us is the consideration of what the world would be without law, without order, without codes of conduct, and how and if it would be possible to survive under those conditions.

It is a very valid question because it's interesting that emergencies seem to bring out the best or the worst in us. Some people won't help others in normal conditions, but yet when we find ourselves facing

cataclysmic circumstances, then you have people coming forward and helping strangers sometimes at the expense of their own lives and safety. And that's a great quality, that humans have the capacity to be unselfish and then help others. The question in this show is can that be maintained through a total collapse of society – and will the best angels of our characters prevail, or will we revert to being animals. The situation forces you to consider these things.

## **How is this different from *The Walking Dead*?**

There are immediate differences. This is the beginning of the comprehension of the problem. No one is sure what is. We're not certain what is happening; we don't know if it's reversible, which creates a lot of moral questions and problems in terms of reactions.

Second, the connections between individuals are based upon a different reality than in the other show where the situation is permanent and you already know what is happening. So the development of the attitude that ultimately is going to mature in the other show is very interesting to witness as this situation is beginning to be understood by people.

And I'm a musician – you never have the same audience. So that means that the characters, although facing similar situations, are not going to be carbon copies of the other show, so there's always an element of surprise and of invention of something new so you cannot really compare the shows. This is a different audience; it's a different show.

## **Describe for us Daniel's relationship with his wife, Griselda.**

Griselda to Daniel is stability, a constant reminder that kindness and love exist, that security exists. In Daniel's world, that is ephemeral. Daniel is not a trusting person by nature, but Griselda is the solid rock in his life, and he can always find the same affection, love and understanding. She also has a way of thinking that is more objective, less anger-driven and all around more rational. So Daniel can always go there.



## **How do Daniel and Travis differ in their dealings with the apocalypse?**

Travis is a good person. His problems and past have not led him, nor Madison, to reach that place where Daniel has lived in and knows very well exists. So all of Travis' reactions are going to be conditioned by that innocence as it were. But it is innocence based on ignorance. I wrote a song a long time ago with Lou Reed called "The Calm Before the Storm," and there was a line in it that said, "There was a time when ignorance made our innocence strong." And I remember Lou said "No, no... there was a time that

*innocence* made our *ignorance* strong.” And either way that line applies in this case. Travis is a product of the world that was; Daniel is the result of the breaking down of that world previously. That world forced him to leave, come to the USA, and find the repetition again to do away with moral consideration, which ultimately is the most difficult thing for him. He would rather live in Griselda’s world, and now he must do what has to be done even though it means fragmenting his family in order to protect them.