

Fear the Walking Dead: Meet the mysterious Daniel Salazar

Actor Ruben Blades has become an early fan favourite in the smash hit series from AMC.



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At the climax of the penultimate episode of the first series of Fear the Walking Dead, Ruben Blades's character Daniel Salazar found himself confronted by an arena filled with hungry walkers trying to bust their way out. What happens next has had TV fans on the edge of their seat all week.

Salazar has been one of the most intriguing characters in the early episodes, proving to be a fan-favourite as a brooding and dangerous barber with dark secrets.

Blades's still and powerful performance as the El Salvadorian refugee, willing to do anything to protect his family, has earned him critical praise and provided a complex moral centrepiece to the series.

Speaking at San Diego's Comic-Con at the launch of the series, Blades confessed that there were nerves about making a companion series to AMC's global phenomenon The Walking Dead.

"Imagine being Lionel Messi's son," he laughed.

"You show up, you played soccer right? Because your dad played soccer. Nah, not necessarily. I like ping pong."

The Panamanian singer and actor has usually worked on films in the past, but Fear tempted him back to the world of TV.

"One of the things that I find satisfying about this is that they included Latinos in the mix. Usually you don't find us represented anywhere," said Blades.

"It's very unusual to have a show as diverse as this one. The main characters, two of the principles are from different backgrounds... but it's not played like I am from this side.

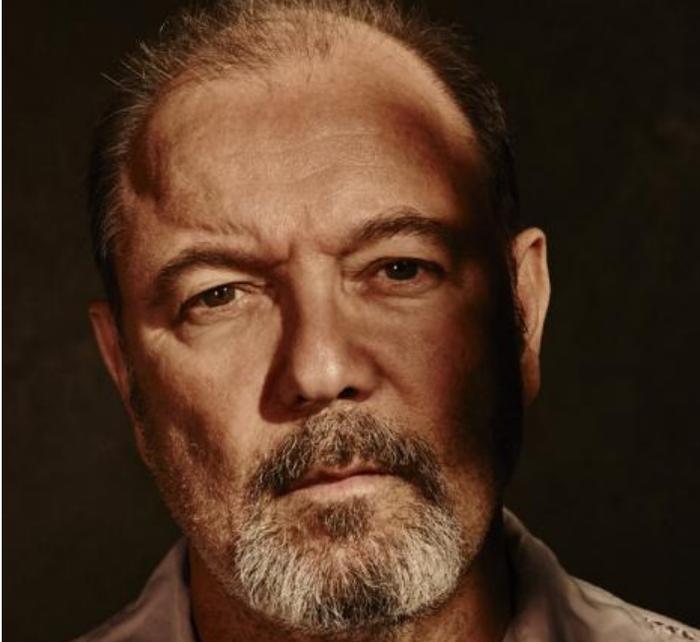
"It just happens, which is really interesting. I'm very happy about that."

The murky shades of grey around the characters, including his own, were also a big draw.

"I wasn't sure about taking a television show because of the commitment. You know, I've got other things that I want to do. So, for me the question was about the characters complexity. Because I want to play someone, I

don't want to play a one-dimensional character because that's very boring.

"But they don't tell you anything. They can't really go into your character... I think they are discovering it also as they see you interact. The complexity of the character is what got me."



Daniel Salazar was introduced to the show in episode two alongside his daughter Ofelia (Mercedes Mason) and wife Griselda (Patricia Reyes Spindola). The trio arrived in Los Angeles to start a new life, but their dark past has slowly been unravelled under the strain of the outbreak.

"It's interesting because as the story develops, his background ends up being helpful. It's interesting, it's just everyone has a secret. We all do, all of us. And under certain conditions these things can end up being interpreted differently."

The surprise factor in Fear the Walking Dead for many fans has been that it isn't a show about zombies.

"It's really about people," said Blades.

"How do we react? What do we do? How do we act in the face of the collapse of everything that we've known and has sort of held us together. So that's a really interesting question.

"There are going to be moral judgements. It's going to be very, very, very interesting to see what your reactions will be. Because, nothing is what it seems to be."

The actor has as many questions as the show's fans, pondering: "With the collapse of every system as we understand it, does morality disappear or is there a new moral?"

One question that Blades does know the answer to is his future on the show. Just like in The Walking Dead, nobody is safe in this show.

"You think, well, I'm a main character. No. Snip. Not anymore," he laughs.

"I mean somebody bites your ass and you're dead. I don't care if you're Meryl Streep, you're going. You know they'll kill you."