



This Week: Return of the Night of The Living Dead Left Overs Part IV

Well, kiddies, the idiocy is ba-ack! After a long absence necromancing the stone, I've decided to resurrect the leftover scraps of my brain and give you some grue and a few bad reviews. And lousy poetry to boot.

It's Halloween. I like Halloween. I like horror movies. Only at Halloween can one view them without guilt. But I like literary ones. Good ones. Ones that don't have three letter roman numerals after the title. The ones that actually scare you. Or at least amuse you. Here's three neat ones that will do both.

Carrie: Carrie White is a social pariah. Not only does she lack almost all social skills, she's also the daughter of the local religious crazy. Needless to say, she gets picked on a lot. Then three things happen. One of the popular girls takes pity on her and rigs the prom so Carrie'll be named queen. One of the other popular girls hates her so much she rigs the prom to dump blood all over her. And Carrie learns that she can move things by the power of her brain.

Then Carrie blows everybody up.

Creepy. It's like going through high school all over again, but with better pyrotechnics. Adapted to the screen by Brian De Palma, one-time horror wunderkind, from Stephen King's first novel.

Demon Knight: Tales From the Crypt goes feature length! Yes, the Cryptkeeper (everyone's favourite wise-cracking corpse) has been hard at work, and the result is this fun schlock-fest.

Brayker (Will Sadler) has a key -- a key to Hell. And Hell wants it back so the denizens can open the gates and swarm the earth like East Berliners after the wall came down (I assume, however, that the demons will be doing more than buying blue jeans). The Collector (Billy Zane) and his Zombie Horde (tm) appear on the scene. Brayker and seven assorted nutcases are held under siege in an old motel. Only a lot of luck and Brayker's skill as a Demon Knight can help them survive the demon's night.

Very silly horror movie. It was meant to be. I mean, the heroes find hand grenades and machine guns in the apartment of the recently dismembered postal worker! There are a few good scares (I love the Collector's temptation scenes) and a lot of gross-outs, but no real food for fright. You'll sleep well afterwards (alas!). The Collector's a great villain and the Cryptkeeper does bookending scenes... how can you not like that laugh?

Lastly, the obligatory werewolf movie: *An American Werewolf in London*. David Naughton stars as David, a college boy who's hiking across Europe with his friend Jack. Well, long story short: They get attacked on the moors of England by a beastie, Jack gets killed, David gets bitten. And David starts having weird dreams about running in the forest buck naked and killing deer. He keeps waking up in strange places, like the wolf enclosure at the London Zoo. Then his friend Jack comes back as rotting ghost to tell Dave that he's a werewolf and has to kill himself. And sure enough, there's this mysterious critter killing people...

I really don't know what to say. It's a good werewolf movie, but it can't make up its mind if it's a comedy or a horror. Jack keeps coming back, more decayed than before, and keeps making wisecracks. David has to make it across London stark naked after his nightly rampage. A man gets stalked through the tube (London's subway) by something he can't quite see.... I give up. Great performance by Naughton who somehow manages to revel in his new sensations (did you know being a werewolf increases your sexual prowess? Bonus, huh?!) and tremble in fear of them simultaneously... and a terrific (and painful) transformation sequence by special F/X mogul Rick Baker.

That's it for now. These flicks are as common as dirt and available at any good video store. Be here next time when, if I get around to it, I'll review a macabre comedy classic: Alfred Hitchcock's *The Trouble With Harry*.



This Week: Corpses, corpses, everywhere

Arsenic and Old Lace

Starring Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Peter Lorre, Raymond Massey
Directed by Frank Capra
1944, 114 minutes, black and white

With this being Halloween, it's time for a appropriate movie. If you want to watch a flick related to the season, but not something filled with terror, *Arsenic and Old Lace* fits the bill perfectly. It's set on Halloween, in a house beside a graveyard.

Cary Grant plays Mortimer Brewster, a dramatic critic and avowed bachelor. He secretly marries Elaine Harper (Priscilla Lane), the daughter of a neighbour who dislikes Mortimer. When the couple returns to their respective homes to pack for their honeymoon, Mortimer discovers a body in the window seat.

His brother Theodore is mentally unbalanced (he thinks he's President Theodore Roosevelt), so Mortimer assumes the brother has finally snapped and killed someone. But no, his aunts, who are "The dearest, sweetest, kindest old ladies that ever walked the earth" inform him that Teddy is not involved. They have taken it upon themselves to rid the world of lonely old men. The body in the window seat is not the first -- eleven corpses are buried in the cellar.

Flabbergasted, Mortimer is in no condition to pack for the honeymoon in Niagara Falls. Elaine tries to drag him out to the waiting cab, but he ignores her. She thinks the marriage is on the rocks before the first day is over.

As if things were not bad enough, Johnny Brewster (Massey) comes home. Bearing a certain resemblance to Frankenstein's Monster, Johnny is the black sheep of the family. In fact, he has a hot stiff in the rumble seat of his car. He needs a place to hide for the night. He also plans to kill Mortimer. The plot only thickens from here on in, and the last twenty minutes are a merry and hilarious romp.

Acting: Superb. Cary Grant is great, as always. Massey plays a convincing villain, and Peter Lorre is perfect as his reluctant henchman. The other characters are fine. A thorough look over the cast reveals a surprising amount of talent in minor roles. James Gleason as the crusty police Lieutenant is especially worth note.

Best Lines: There are many. Peter Lorre's best is "We can't leave a body in the rumble seat." Cary Grant has heaps of good ones, such as "It's not only against the law -- it's wrong!" Probably the best line in the entire movie is "I'm not a Brewster -- I'm the son of a sea cook!"

Best Scene: A tough call. The fight sequence near the end is probably the best, although some short clips are also great.

Things to Look For: Lots of little things. The caddy is hilarious, especially when he hails down another taxi. "President" Teddy thinks the stairs are San Juan hills, so every time he goes upstairs he yells "Charge!" Details like the graveyard also add ambience.

The Bottom Line: Fun, hilarious, and about as subtle as a freight train. It's worth renting anytime of the year, but especially around Halloween. A word of warning, though -- if death and the macabre bother you to any extent, avoid this movie.

Availability: You shouldn't have much trouble finding *Arsenic and Old Lace*. In a pinch, Sherwood Video and Off the Wall definitely have copies.

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