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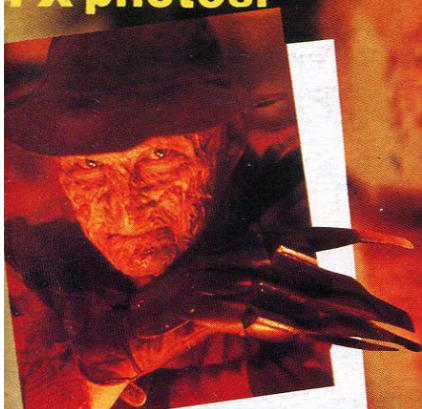
Supermarket massacre

INTRUDER

A cut above
the rest!

The bloody
creature of
DEEP STAR SIX

Exclusive
FX photos!



Will TV kill
**Freddy
Krueger?**

Tasteless gore and more
in brutal **TROMA'S WAR**

Caroline Munro
goes skinless
in **FACELESS**



BONUS! FOUR GIANT
BLOODY POSTERS

Video
Watchdog tips:
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PROFILE

This Spiegel guy knows what he wants and he knows how to get it.

THOU SHALT KILL . . . Period

By CHAS. BALUN

"I tried to make [Intruder] different. I mean, a guy's head gets crushed in a trash compactor. Pretty grim, man."

Actor, writer, producer, director. Fake Shemp, practical joker, devoted horror fan, and close personal friend to both Sam Raimi and Bruce Campbell—known 'em both since junior high school, as a matter of fact. His previous film credits include *Evil Dead II* (as co-writer and actor), *Thou Shalt Not Kill . . . Except* (co-writer, producer) and *The Dead Next Door* (actor). He's currently in postproduction on *Intruder*, his feature film directorial debut that co-stars old chums Sam and Ted Raimi and Bruce Campbell; it sports the FX talents of Greg Nicotero, Howard Berger and Bob Kurtzman (Savini's crew on *Day of the Dead*).

"I'm certainly the happiest guy on the block," he gushes. "I've dreamed of this since I was a kid." Meet 29-year-old Scott Spiegel, a rabidly enthusiastic,

multitalented fan with an encyclopedic knowledge of genre minutiae and an undisguised love for monsters, zombies and things that go splat in the night. In other words, he's exactly the kind of guy who *should* be directing horror films. He never apologizes and doesn't refer to his films as "suspense thrillers," "shock melodramas with a dark side," or "action with horror overtones." Nope, he's proud of the fact that his films go for the jugular. Spiegel's bubbling, infectious spirit and unabashed devotion to his work is indeed a welcome respite from the traitorous whinings of recent genre poseurs who've gone on record as somehow ashamed, embarrassed or downright apologetic about their work in horror films.

"I love 'em, I grew up with 'em and I want to keep making 'em," beams Spiegel. "All kinds: sci-fi aliens from outer space,

psycho trips like *Halloween*, H.P. Lovecraft demon stuff, the disgusting putrescent things from out of the ground—you know, the gore the merrier." Spiegel pauses for a quick breath during his rapid-fire response and then says simply, "You put your heart into it. If not, *why* are you doing the job?"

Despite the fact that *Intruder* (formerly *Night Crew: The Final Checkout*) is Spiegel's feature film debut as a director, he's been a filmmaker since he was 10 years old, working mostly in Super 8 and employing local talent like the Raimi brothers, Campbell and himself. (Vigilant, obsessive genre connoisseurs will remember that a 30-minute Super 8 opus titled *Within the Woods* was the precursor to Raimi's original *Evil Dead*.) "We couldn't get anybody else in our movies, so we did it and we ended up liking it," Spiegel explains. "Sam and I have always used Teddy [Raimi] in our films. I mean, he was 5 years old when he started. We did a couple of horror mixes, but we made mostly comedies in school. I did a really early one called *Night in a Sanitarium*, which had Dracula and the Wolf Man. I spliced in footage of Christopher Lee from *Taste the Blood of Dracula*. It worked really good.

"Then I did a black-and-white Hitler spoof called *I'll Never Heil Again*," Spiegel continues. "I wrote a story around all this stock footage from everywhere—*War of the Worlds*, anything. It blew everybody away in its time." Other Super 8 titles in the Spiegel oeuvre include *James Bombed*, *Attack of the Helping Hand*, *The Jimmy Hoffa Story*, *Cleveland Smith: Bounty Hunter* and *Toro, Toro, Toro!* (The latter two shorts can be seen in the compilation video feature, *Film House Fever*.)

After a solid apprenticeship served in and around the Detroit area, Spiegel served notice that he was a cult filmmaker to be reckoned with when *Thou Shalt Not Kill . . . Except* (1985) opened to enthusiastic reviews from cult fans and genre critics alike. Shot over a grueling 4-month period for less than \$300,000, the film followed a long, rocky road on its way to an eventual theatrical release by Film World Distributors in 1987. "Vestron had originally expressed interest, but after a 'film package' deal fell through, they decided they were not going to release it. Then Troma came in. Finally, our agent said to forget it," Spiegel remembers.

Reaction to the film wasn't helped by the fact that numerous potential distributors walked out on the film during a particularly twisted barf gag. "At screenings, it always got the biggest reaction," Spiegel admits. "A bunch of people got up

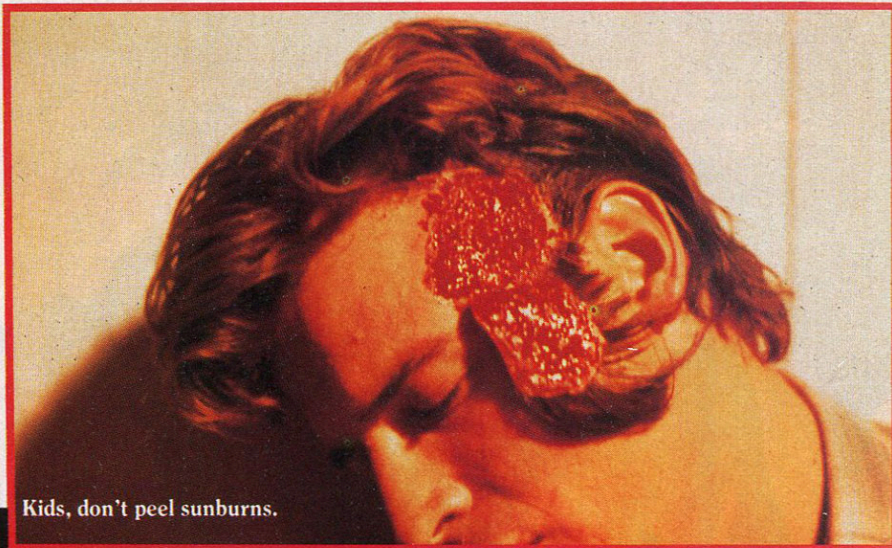
and walked out. 'It's too offensive.' Sam and Bruce and I said, 'No! Keep it in.' The Detroit Gang lost this round, though; the director's parents were executive producers and they didn't like it either, so gone is the splendiferous sight of two quarts of chunky barfola cascading down a biker's face after he puts on his just-puked-in helmet.

Thou Shalt Not Kill... *Except* is a frequently exhilarating, gory little mother catalyzed by a quirky, over-the-top performance from Sam Raimi as the Cult Leader. When a crazed Manson-like family attacks, kidnaps and tortures some decent folks (even stooping so low as to barbecue a pet dog on a stick), well, you know it's time for the flick's ad copy to kick in: "When violence demands revenge." The mutant family is cleaned up by a crew of Vietnam vets who don't take prisoners. It's a bloodbath reminiscent of Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*.

The story is by director Josh Becker, Sheldon Lettich and Bruce Campbell. (Lettich, incidentally, is a Vietnam vet whose documentary short, *Fire Fight*, was used in the film's prologue. Lettich shared a writer's credit with Sylvester Stallone on *Rambo III*.) Spiegel co-wrote the screenplay with Becker and produced the film during the time he was also writing *Evil Dead II* with Sam Raimi. Despite delivering the goods for horror/action/splatter fans, Spiegel feels the film "suffers from 'whatisitness.' It's too broad in scope," he says, "with a bad title. We should've stuck with *Stryker's War*. Then it would've said just what it is." Spiegel cites source material like, "*The Hills Have Eyes*, absolutely. *Helter Skelter*, too; that Steve Railsback was a scary sonofabitch."

Spiegel recalls the actual production time in an anxious, unsettled tone. "Having to go out on location everyday was a nightmare, a numbing experience," he says. "When you're on a low, low budget with a neophyte crew, you forget things. We had to send somebody clear across town because we were so far out of it. We overextended ourselves, it was real tough. Keep low-budget films in one location, like *Evil Dead*."

As mentioned before, Spiegel was busy producing *Thou Shalt Not Kill* during the time he and Raimi were becoming involved with the script for *Evil Dead II*. "We spent a lot of time with *Evil Dead II* trying to get it as wild and wacky as possible. That's the way Sam and I write," grins Spiegel. "It takes a long, long time. I've got a focus my time now. I had trouble with *Evil Dead II* because of *Thou Shalt Not Kill*. I like to give 100 percent to each and every project."



Kids, don't peel sunburns.



Intruder clues us in on one of Sam Raimi's hangups.

Photo: Copyright KNB EFX Group

Thou Shalt Not Kill... *Except* left some questions unanswered, like: Is this guy really dead?

Photo: The Darkroom





Owwwww! These FX shots are painful. This one gives even us editors trouble sleeping.

Spiegel was on the set for about a week, playing one of the by-now famous Fake Shemps as well as one of the knights in shiny plastic and foam armor. "At the end, I'm the guy right next to Sam when he raises his visor. It was so hot in those suits! We were in a quarry, it was 105 degrees. It was a horrifying experience," Spiegel recalls, though he knows there are roughly 115,000 readers out there who would've gladly traded places with him.

Also included in this sequence is the spectacular gag involving Bruce Campbell and a falling car, both tumbling to earth after spinning through a time warp. "We had a giant rig, and we timed it so the car and Bruce would hit at the same time. It was very scary and everybody was nervous. It was an incredibly dangerous stunt," Spiegel shudders. "In order to release the car, they stuck some M-80s or half a stick of dynamite in there and it went off. *Blam!* Everybody freaked out; nobody knew what was going on. We thought it was a mistake. We should've been warned about the noise." The on-set mayhem and crew confusion led to the necessity of a second take, though this time the car looked like it had already been dropped from a skyscraper. "The car was smashed up," sighs Spiegel, "but I guess you can't see it 'cause it's moving so fast."

We now leave the cozy environs of demonically possessed forest cottages and broiling rock quarries to the



Welcome to the deli counter. Today's special is head cheese, \$1.50 a pound.

Spiegel earned his first screen credit co-writing the *Evil Dead II* script with buddy Sam Raimi.

relative normality of a suburban Southern California supermarket preparing for a going-out-of-business sale. Spiegel has moved out west and brought with him Sam, Ted and Bruce from the old neighborhood to co-star in *Intruder*, a slasher film with a vengeance currently undergoing its final postproduction touches. In addition to directing, Spiegel co-wrote the original story with producer Lawrence Bender and penned the screenplay.

"Sam's part of the night crew, and so is Teddy," Spiegel begins eagerly. "Sam's role is not as pivotal as it was in *Thou Shalt Not Kill*, though. Here he's gotta play a character, not a caricature. Bruce comes in at the end as a cop and saves the day," Spiegel reveals, though not before an impressive body count has been racked up. An ex-boyfriend (David Burns) comes to the store the night they're preparing for a big closeout sale and confronts his girl. He's just been released from prison for killing a guy in a bar fight, so he's not exactly in a playful mood when she tells him to get lost. A fight ensues, and the night crew kicks his ass, and that's that. Well...no, not really. Someone starts picking off the crew, one by one, using an assortment of nasty gadgets including trash compactors and a butcher's band saw. "Some of the scenes are excessive in an *Evil Dead* kind of over-the-top way,"

Spiegel gleefully admits. "There's funny little touches. It's so weird, man, you can saw up a cow or a person and the residue—the blood and stuff—looks the same. You can't tell the difference."

Spiegel has high praise for his entire crew and singles out the FX team of Kurtzman, Nicotero and Berger for providing some marvelously meaty moments of mayhem. "The butcher's saw sequence—man, my stomach was flipping. The script girl was crying up a storm," Spiegel exclaims, gesturing frantically. "The face is pointed up and the saw goes right through the ear, nose and teeth. The saw sucks in the flesh, lips, teeth and gums. The editor can't even look at it to edit it."

The director flashes a toothy grin and offers, "Hopefully, it's got some interesting directorial touches; I tried to make it different. I mean, a guy's head gets crushed in a trash compactor. Pretty grim, man." Spiegel promises "a lot of really cool gore for you folks out there. We're going to have that triple-X version for video release." Yum!

When asked if his film contains any of that cloying, limp-dick-in-cheek humor so popular these days, he declares adamantly, "I hate that. They're afraid to go all the way. *Intruder* is straightforward in a *Halloween* kind of way."

Originally, Spiegel had planned to use both Robert Bloch and Forrest J Ackerman in clever little cameos, but poor tim-

ing and a hurried production schedule derailed those noble intentions. "Bloch was going to be purchasing a shower curtain and a large butcher knife as Forry was buying a *Famous Monsters* magazine. Everything got screwed up. Man, I'm really bummed out. Mr. Ed has a cameo, though. We call him Mr. Dead; he's been stuffed."

Shot for just under \$500,000, *Intruder* will be released by Paramount Home Video this April. At presstime, several distributors are bidding for theatrical rights, and Spiegel will be entering production on *Witches*, a \$3 million horror tale he scripted with Sam Raimi (who will also produce) and Rhet (976-*EVIL*) Topham. Spiegel is currently writing *The Ungrateful Dead* with Bob Muraski, and all he will say about it is that "it takes place at a cemetery." And no, there won't be hippie zombies singing "Uncle John's Band," nor will Jerry Garcia appear in a cameo as a dead therapist at a detox center. Just rumors. Spiegel shrugs off all of these queries rather matter-of-factly. (No wonder, man, he was only 8 years old during the Summer of Love, shee-ish.) He may be returning to Akron, Ohio soon to loop some dialogue for the long-lost *The Dead Next Door* (Fango #62), a zombie splatfest in which he has a "pretty big" part. "They better hurry up and finish it," he muses. "It's the *Robojox* of the low-budget world. It's taking so-o-o long."

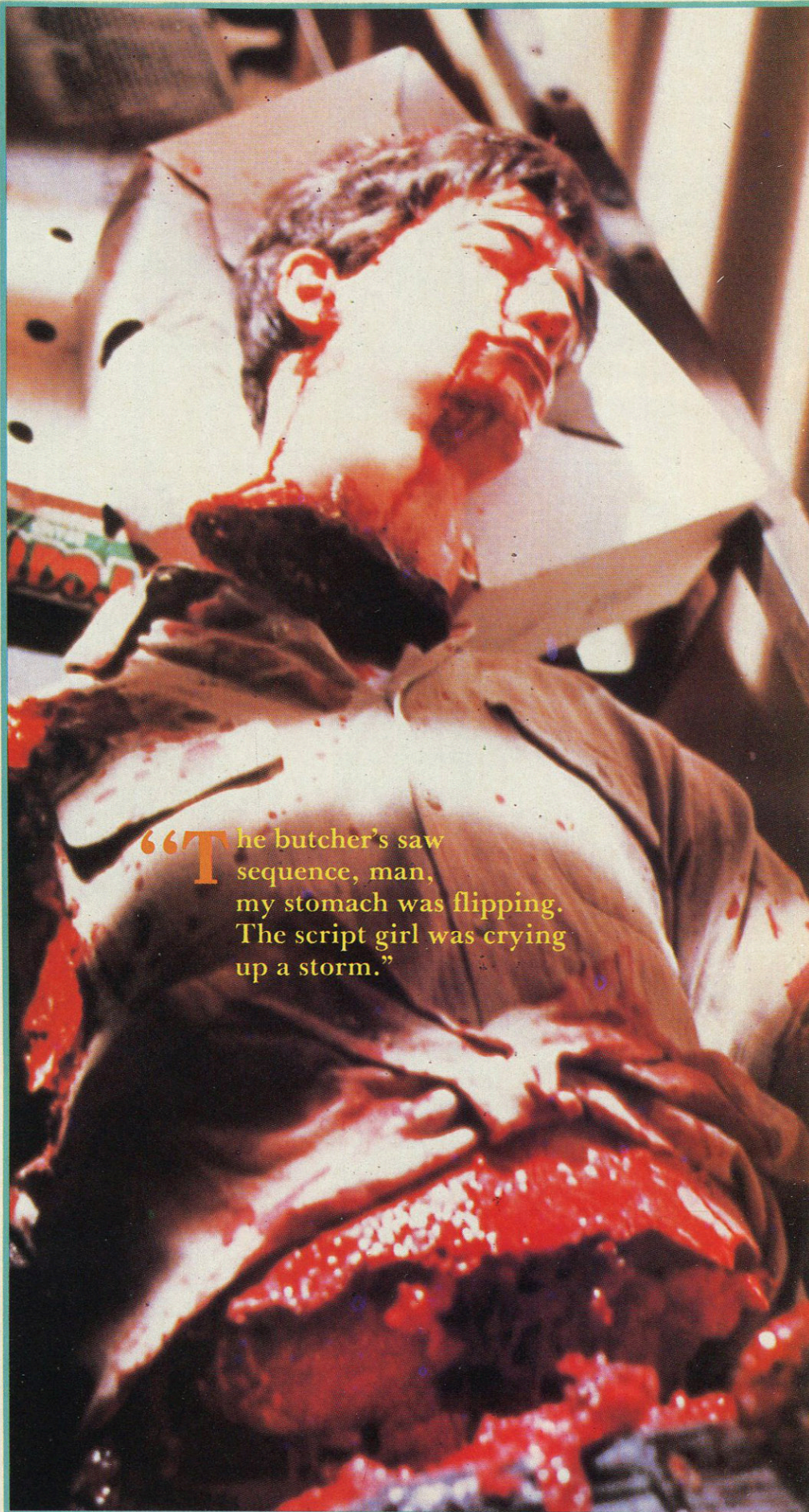
As for the possibilities of participation in another installment of what this reporter calls the Third Greatest Zombie Series ever (after Romero's *Dead* and Ossorio's *Blind Dead*, OK?) Spiegel waxes ambivalent about the proposed *Evil Dead III*. "Yeah, *Medieval Dead*," he chuckles. "There is something going on. I love *Evil Dead* movies, and I'd certainly like to co-write it, but . . ." His voice trails off slightly as he reassesses his current status as a filmmaker. "I want to write and direct at this point in my career. It was great writing *Evil Dead II* with Sam a few years back 'cause that was the job to have, but now I'm really a director and, hopefully, I'll be doing another picture by then."

Spiegel sees red, and lots of it, for the future. He's obviously having the time of his life, and he's certainly an exemplary case-in-point of a fan's boyhood dreams becoming a reality. Spiegel's a good kid. Trust him; he's one of us.

And when he promises *Intruder* will deliver the groceries along with "a bill that'll kill you," you know what? I believe him.

Ted Raimi, famed for his Henrietta performance in *Evil Dead II*, has a relatively easier task in *Intruder*.

Photos: Courtesy Scott Spiegel



"The butcher's saw sequence, man, my stomach was flipping. The script girl was crying up a storm."