

EVIL DEAD

**SAM RAINI
INTERVIEW**

DARKMAN



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Hard-core horror fans know how Sam Raimi, as a young talent from Detroit formed Renaissance Pictures with his pals to create the cult masterpiece *EVIL DEAD*. It really knocked out the audience in 1982 and at 22 years old, Sam became a directorial sensation. Renaissance Pictures is still alive with offices at Universal Studios in Hollywood. After success with *CRIMEWAVE* and *EVIL DEAD 2* and before he started *EVIL DEAD 3*, Sam directed his biggest budgeted film yet, *DARKMAN!* On the following pages, you will learn more about *DARKMAN*, *EVIL DEAD 3*, Sam's love of baseball, gardening and sushi as well as his personal war against an army of termites!



DARKMAN RISING!

An Interview with SAM RAIMI

Exclusive *MONSTER ATTACK!* Interview by QUELOU PARENTE

MA!: What Kind of film is *DARKMAN*?

SAM: It's a comic book-style thriller. It's also a kind of love story, a version of the tale *Beauty and the Beast*. It's a very different than my other movies, more out of the horror kind of film. I hope the public will like it!

MA!: What's the concept behind it?

SAM: I thought it would be interesting to change into anyone you wanted to be or look like. I've had this in mind for a long time, the idea of a man that could change his face and become anyone he wants. That man became the Darkman!

MA!: What's the story like?

SAM: It has elements of *The Phantom of the Opera* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. It's a monster that you care about, hopefully. It's not a monster that you're afraid of. It's a story of vengeance and lost love. It's a different thing for me, but there is also a lot of humor in this picture. It's not to be taken completely seriously. It's like a comic book.

MA!: For the first time actor Bruce Campbell doesn't star in your movie. Why?

SAM: I knew that I'd be working with Bruce again on *Evil Dead 3* and I had just worked with him on *Evil Dead 2*, so I wanted to work with somebody different. I thought the change was good. Liam Neeson, who plays the role of Dr. Payton Westlake, also known as the Darkman, was a pleasure to work with. He starred in *Suspect*, *The Dead Pool* and has some minor roles in *Excalibur* and *The Bounty*. He had the charm to believe he's a likable handsome scientist, but he was also able to drop to a darker side when he became the Darkman. It was rough for him because he had to be in this makeup with 5 or 6 hours of preparation every day. It was very difficult.

MA!: Will *DARKMAN* be very colorful, like *CRIMEWAVE*?

SAM: The movie starts in a world of light and brightness when the characters are happy and together until ruthless forces separate them. That's when the principal character becomes the lonely Darkman

and at that point, the look of the picture changes and it becomes much darker!

MA!: Are you doing a lot of camera movements as usual?

SAM: No. I did have to change my style of shooting. I tried to keep my camera straight in *Darkman*, so the audience wouldn't admire the shots but rather the characters.

MA!: How many cameras did you use?

SAM: For most of the scenes, we're just shooting with one camera, but when we're filming a stunt scene or something that cannot be repeated again, we're using two or three cameras. There's a big stunt scene in which we used eight cameras, when the Darkman is dangling from a helicopter and the criminals are trying to shake him off.

MA!: Did you work with a storyboard?

SAM: Yes, I did work with a storyboard that guided the entire action. Sometimes I followed it and sometimes I didn't.

QUELOU PARENTE is our globetrotting foreign correspondent. She has interviewed many of the horror film industry's titans for the French magazine BEWARE! She can often be found on movie locations during filming and was last seen attending a screening of GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE with her date, the TOXIC AVENGER at the Cannes Film Festival.

MA!: Did you shoot all the movie in Los Angeles?

SAM: Yes, Darkman was all shot on location in L.A.

MA!: You worked with a non-union crew. Is that common in Hollywood?

SAM: Yes, it is common to shoot with a non-union crew in Hollywood. Sometimes the unions stop your production, but this time they didn't! I worked with a good crew.

Creator confers with creation: Writer/director **Sam Raimi** (left) raps with Darkman (**Liam Neeson**).



SAM RAIMI ON **DARKMAN!**

Darkman is the story of a young scientist, played by Liam Neeson, and his love, a young attorney played by Frances McDormand. He is a scientist working on a liquid skin; a process to cure victims of burns and disfigurements. Criminals break into his laboratory trying to find documents that would incriminate them, left there by the scientist's girlfriend. They steal the documents and burn down the lab, mutilating the scientist and leaving him for dead.

His girlfriend mourns for him, but he isn't dead, he's alive in a hospital. He's been badly burned and has no identification. Because he would be in so much pain from the terrible burns, an operation is performed on him. The hospital has cut his spinal thalamic nerve and now he can no longer feel pain. He breaks out of the hospital and races back to the woman he loves. She believes he's dead and when she sees this hideous thing come at her she doesn't even recognize him and shuns him.

Now alone, his laboratory destroyed and looking like a freak, he vows vengeance against those that wrecked his life! In an old abandoned soap factory, he recreates his laboratory. With the use of his liquid skin he recreates his face and wears it like a mask. This way, he is able to carry on his relationship with his attorney lover. At first, she's shocked to see him back

MA!: You were working with a large budget. Were you free to do what you wanted or did you encounter more pressure because of the bigger budget?

SAM: There is more financial pressure but also more technical possibilities to explore with a larger budget than with my previous movies.

MA!: Do you have problems in creating original scripts for Hollywood?

SAM: Yes, because what the studio wants

is a picture that will make money. What you want is to make the best picture possible and sometimes that's not at all the same thing. There are problems, but in the end I think we can have a happy marriage.

MA!: Are you afraid of the same 'final cut' problems you had with **CRIMEWAVE?**

SAM: Yes, I am afraid of that. But this is a different company I'm working with. They haven't seen the movie yet (April 1990). We'll see what happens when they see it.

MA!: What is your deal with Universal?

SAM: I have an arrangement with them for the next three years. Anything that I write or want to produce, I have to offer them first. They have priority, but if they don't want to make it, I'm free to make it elsewhere.

MA!: What is Darkman Productions?

SAM: It's just a part of Renaissance Pictures.

MA!: What have you been doing between **EVIL DEAD 2** and **DARKMAN?**

SAM: I've been mostly writing the script for **Darkman**. That took quite a long time. I wrote eleven drafts! I've been doing that and I've been writing with my brother Ivan on a robot story. My brother is also a screenwriter. He worked on **Darkman**. Also in the time between **Evil Dead 2** and **Darkman**, I wrote a draft for **Evil Dead 3**. That's what I'm working at now.

MA!: You also directed a video for **Iggy Pop**. How did you like it?

SAM: I did two rock videos. One of the was **Cold Metal** with **Iggy Pop**. It is a very Gangster boss **Larry Drake** (from L.A. Law) tortures and mutilates Dr. Payton Westlake (**Liam Neeson**) transforming him into **Darkman!**



from the dead and is terrified, but he lies and says he just knocked unconscious by the explosion and didn't know where he was. He doesn't tell her he is badly scarred or that hideous thing before was him! His meetings with her are short as the liquid skin mask is only good for 99 minutes and after that it begins to deteriorate, revealing the terrible visage of the **Darkman** beneath!

He uses his power of creating these faces to impersonate members of the evil mob, infiltrating their ranks disguised as different gangsters and dismantling them from within. They find out who he's disguised as and blow his brains out...but he has already switched to another identity! There's a lot of switcheroos like that in the story.

The picture ends with **Darkman** destroying the criminal mob and the girl finally realizes he's this hideous creature. She tells him that she can still love him for the man that he is inside, not for what he looks like. At this point, the **Darkman** sees that he is no longer the same man he was inside. He had changed internally as he started to enjoy his killing, so he must bid her farewell. They go their separate ways. She chases him, but he's already put on another mask. The last scene is her looking for him among the crowd, knowing that somewhere, the **Darkman** walks...



A climactic explosion from **DARKMAN**.

simple video, but it was very interesting. Iggy Pop is a very dynamic personality and there was a happy marriage between the way I like to make films and his performing style. He gives everything to the camera. I just wanted to try my hand on rock videos. I jumped back into the movies!

MA: You're credited as Executive Producer of a female biker's movie, **EASY WHEELS**.

SAM: Originally my brother wrote a script called **Women on Wheels** and I helped him. The film company actually rewrote it so many times that I removed my name 'cause it no longer represented what I'd been working on. I really have nothing to do with that picture, but they sold it with my name to raise money.

MA: You acted in a Scott Spiegel movie **THE INTRUDER**. He also did **THOU SHALL NOT KILL**.

SAM: Yep. Scott is my friend!

MA: Scott Spiegel and Robert Dyke (who did **MOONTRAP** with Bruce Campbell and Walter **STAR TREK** Koenig) are also from Detroit. Will there be a new wave of filmmakers from the Detroit scene?

SAM: I think so. Now I don't really know 'cause I've not been living there for the last three years. I do have contact with people from Detroit but I don't know people there as much as I used to. But I'm sure there will be more young filmmakers coming from Detroit!

MA: Do you often go to the movies?

SAM: I haven't seen a lot of movies in the last year, but I love movies. I just haven't enough time to, but when there's a movie I really want to see, I make time to see it. I love going to the movies, I don't really like them on video. Now low-budget movies are going directly to video and I

miss the old, cheap horror movies that played in theatres. I really do miss them.

MA: Who are your favorite directors?

SAM: Martin Scorsese, Joel and Ethan Coan (their new film is **Miller's Crossing** and they did **Raising Arizona** and **Blood Simple**), Alfred Hitchcock and I'm a big fan of Fritz Lang who did **Metropolis**...a great picture! They are not particularly the type of pictures that I make, but they are my favorite directors.

MA: What's the last great movie you saw?

SAM: **Eyes Without A Face**. It's a French picture and I wanna get the French version.

MA: What's a typical day for you?

SAM: A typical day is get up at 8 o'clock, have coffee, read the paper. Right now, I'm in the editing process, so around 9 o'clock I drive to the office in Hollywood and there I work with my optical FX man. We look at optical effects, talk about how they can be better and then I meet with the editor. He shows me some cuts he made, I give him my notes then I go work with, let's say, the title designer. Then I might go get lunch and have a meeting with Universal about how they're going to market **Darkman**. After lunch, I go back to the editing room, work on a particular reel, then I might talk to the musician who is doing the score. Somehow the day ends and I go grab a bite with a friend or make something at home. Then I start writing on my computer or maybe go to the movie or read and that's usually it! I go to sleep early, around 10:30. I don't go out much 'cause I usually write or work, but I like to go out!

MA: Some people say you are what you eat. What do you eat?

SAM: I have coffee in the morning. Sometimes I don't have breakfast.

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Movies are often storyboarded to map out action. Here, artist Pete

Von Sholly illustrates Dr. Westlake's transformation.

Storyboards are kind of like comic stories. **ATTENTION**

MOVIE PRODUCERS: **MONSTERS ATTACK!** is just full of comic "storyboards"!

Everyday I do exercise, take a long walk or jog. For lunch I eat sushi, lots of sushi! I like sushi a lot and Thai food. Then for dinner, whatever... hamburgers, salad, wine...

MA!: What are your favorite activities outside of film?

SAM: I play baseball. I like baseball, it's a great game. I enjoy gardening. I like planting trees. I think it's good for the environment and it's good for me. I read popular novels by Stephen King, Tom Clancy and war novels. James M. Cain is a great writer and I like some autobiographies to add a little reality to my reading. I also like comic books. I used to collect Superman, Batman and all the Marvel comic books. I'm a big Spider-Man fan, too and one of my favorite comic books is the Shadow. Recently I've been getting some interesting French comic like Aqua Bleu, about a water planet. There's a comic book company called Dark Horse that's starting to print some of the French comics in America. Also I've been working on doing an *Evil Dead* comic book. We'll see how that goes.

MA!: Do you have any pets?

SAM: I have termites, but they're not really my pets. I'm at war with the termites! I like animals, but I travel so much I couldn't take care of them responsibly. I had some sea horses in my aquarium.

MA!: Now tell us about *EVIL DEAD 3*. Do you know what the budget will be?

SAM: Not yet, but it'll be somewhere between *Evil Dead 2* and *Darkman* (\$5 to \$10 million). Dino De Laurentis will produce it an individual and not for his company DEG.

MA!: What kind of person is Dino De Laurentis?

SAM: He is a great guy, you know. Dino De Laurentis is one of the last great individuals in the movie business. There's a lot of power and charm in his personality, a man of action! Unlike the studios, he can give you a solid yes or no about making a movie. That's something I appreciate.

MA!: "A man of courage is transported 700 years back into the past to battle an army of the dead!" Can you tell us more about the story of *EVIL DEAD 3*?

SAM: I'm rewriting it now, so I can't say, but basically it will star Bruce Campbell and again he will be battling for his life against the forces of the supernatural! Like



in the previous movies, the movements of the camera will simulate the wild forces of the supernatural!

MA!: You have problems before with people offended by *EVIL DEAD*. What's your position now concerning *EVIL DEAD 3*?

SAM: The truth is I like to shock people with horror movies. I think that's why they come to see him! I'd really like to shock the audience with *Evil Dead 3*! Sometimes films go too far. It's no longer shocking, just offensive. There's a thin line between being entertaining and not upsetting.

MA!: When do you start shooting *EVIL DEAD 3*?

SAM: We're trying to figure that out right now. I think we'll probably start pre-production in August and maybe start shooting in October 1990.

MA!: Where are you going to shoot?

SAM: We don't have the locations yet, but it sounds like we'll have to shoot in Europe for some castles, but I don't know where; France, Spain, maybe England!

MA!: Who will the Special Effects crew?

SAM: I don't know. I guess a lot of the people who worked on *Evil Dead 2*. I'll ask Mark Shostrom if he wants to be involved.

MA!: Do you think if you were 22 years old today, you'd do *EVIL DEAD* as you did eight years ago?

SAM: I'd probably make it for video if I were starting out. If I knew my movie wouldn't play in theatres, I'd probably make a different kind of picture.

MA!: What kinds of movies would you like to shoot in the future?

SAM: I think I'd like to shoot a movie in the Antarctic. I love Jack London's writing. It'd make a great movie! Definitely, I'd like to make a big adventure film, a movie on ice!

MA!: Any last things you'd like to say?

SAM: I want to tell young filmmakers to keep making pictures and keep reading to get a good background in literature, because it will help eventually. Anyone can make movies professionally. Just learn the craft, get out there and don't give up. I know there's an incredible amount of talented young filmmakers out there who are ready to burst on the scene. And to the people who are watching my movies, I hope they enjoy 'em and I hope they feel they get their money's worth. I did everything I could to entertain them and I've hoped I've succeeded! Thank you!

