

comparison, everything else is kids' stuff.

Like to many prostitutes whose bodies are found buried in shallow graves or discarded by the side of a country road, Bunny makes the mistake of trusting one trick too many. Because there isn't much she wouldn't do for a bindle of blow, she willingly climbs into the cab of a semi with a driver who resembles half of the wrestlers on the WWE dance card. Contrary to genre tradition, the protagonist never is given an opportunity to escape the clutches of the fiend, let alone avenge his brutality, or rescue other poor souls being held captive in his dungeon. Instead, after getting high and going down on him, Hog (Jeff Renfro) puts her in a choke hold that knocks her unconscious. My initial thought was that he snapped her neck and was going to spend a few hours playing with her corpse before heading off into the desert and finding another victim. Instead, Hog parks his rig in automobile graveyard off the Interstate, sniffs some glue or ether, and chains her up in the empty trailer. He begins torturing her even before she's awakened from her stupor and doesn't let up for what seems like an eternity. As if that weren't sufficient inducement for nausea, Rehmeier intersperses these scenes with those of another woman being tortured, this time in the basement of his home. Because "The Bunny Game" was shot in black-and-white, its impact is that of a tape put into evidence in the trial of a sexual deviant or serial rapist. Without any actual story to relieve our horror, we're pretty much left to wonder how much of this stuff she/we can take.

If the movie weren't frightening enough, the making-of featurette proved to be the icing on the cake for me. Apparently, "The Bunny Game" was largely inspired by things that happened to Getsie in real life, including being abducted. Likewise, Renfro is an actual over-the-road trucker, who very much looks the part of a guy who could go coast-to-coast nourished only by coffee, crystal meth and the occasional convenience-store hotdog. In his interview, Renfro says that he's met a lot of pretty strange people on the road and nothing in the movie surprised him. For additional verisimilitude, Rehmeier shot in some of the grimmer streets and alleys of the City of Angels, including one that stunk of excrement and a hotel room with blood on the ceiling from a recent suicide. He dispensed with even the semblance of skeleton crew early on, so as to navigate in tight spaces with maximum flexibility. But it's Getsie's performance – scratch that, ordeal – that has to be seen to be believed. My advice for those new to torture-porn and modern horror, if you couldn't make it through "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer," there's no chance in hell you'll sit through "The Bunny Game." *Caveat emptor*, applies. – Gary Dretzka

Steve Niles' Remains: Blu-ray

Zombie Undead

If there's anything to be learned from these two movies, it's that a zombie apocalypse can be triggered by nuclear bombs. I wasn't aware that this was possible, but, apparently, it is. Otherwise, there's very little difference between the undead, as portrayed in a hundred other zombie flicks, and the ones who shuffle their way through "Remains" and "Zombie Undead." Based on the IDW Publishing graphic novel written by Steve Niles ("30 Days of Night"), "Remains" is by far the more entertaining movie. Although the thriller doesn't break any new ground – what could? – it's often quite funny and director Colin Theys' team did a nice job turning a Connecticut hotel into a passable Reno casino. The idea here, of course, is that the radioactivity from a nearby nuclear accident has instantly transformed almost everyone in town into a zombie. The only exceptions are a handful of people who managed to be in an underground storage locker or similarly isolated location at the time of ignition. One old lady remains in front of the same slot machine she was at before the blast, and she's only stopped from biting the same cocktail waitress who served her a drink earlier when someone impales her on the leg of her walker. It's that kind of movie. "Remains" stars Grant Bowler ("True Blood"), Lance Reddick ("The Wire"), Tawny Cypress ("Heroes") and Evalena Marie ("Exhumed").

In the redundantly titled "Zombie Undead," a terrorist detonates a dirty bomb in the heart of London, resulting in everyone turning into a flesh eater. It must have happened after the Opening Ceremony of the Olympics, because NBC has yet to show the results of the 10,000-meter shuffle or synchronized chewing competition. Most of the action takes place in a hospital that doubles as a fallout shelter, but quickly is being taken over by zombies. Again, it becomes incumbent on a handful of survivors to battle the horde of deformed freaks, while also looking for relatives that were stashed there before the blast. The facility is too large to induce claustrophobia in viewers and a shift to the rural countryside seems as unlikely as the change of scenery is welcome. The appeal here is largely to zombie completists. – Gary Dretzka

The Hunt

The only thing I know about "The Hunt" is what I saw on the small screen and read on the box. It begs the question, "If you can't find a movie on IMDB.com, does it really exist?" At first, second and third glance, Thomas Szczepanski's survival thriller appears to be a composite of several manhunt and bow-and-arrow movies, including "Hunger Games," "Battle Royale," "The Condemned" and "Robin Hood." This means that the game that's afoot in "The Hunt" is of the human variety. Perfect strangers are abducted from the streets of a French city (I think) and taken to a villa in the middle of the woods, not unlike the one in "Eyes Wide Shut." Before being pursued by rich people in ninja outfits, the targets of the hunt have their tongues spliced, presumably so they can't talk their way out of being murdered. While following a lead in a completely different investigation, a reporter for a salacious tabloid magazine steals an invitation to the hunt and buy-in money needed to participate. Completely ignorant of what's expected of him, the reporter quickly figures out that he has to kill innocent human prey or become a target, himself. An S&M mistress figures in the narrative, but mostly to add some eye candy to the proceedings. Because the hunters remain anonymous, it's difficult to focus on any character except the reporter, and he's a dope. – Gary Dretzka

Ladda Land

Every so often, a movie from Thailand finds its way to the beaches of Cannes or shores of the U.S., garnering praise among arthouse and horror-genre buffs for its raw energy and sheer audacity, but not much in the way of box-office revenues. More often than not, a ghost is involved. Sapon Sukdapisit's "Ladda Land" plays very close to western genre conventions, while also remaining demonstrably pan-Asian. Because the unobtrusive dubbing allows viewers to focus on the action, instead of the subtitles, no one can complain about the extra work. Thee is a salesman for an expanding Thai pharmaceutical firm and, as such, is hailed as a model employee and example for other employees. The boss seems especially impressed by the fact that Thee had decided to mortgage himself up the wazoo to afford a townhouse in an upscale suburban development. So, too, are his wife, Pam, and their young son. A daughter has reached the age where Thee would have to bring Justin Bieber home for dinner to impress her. Still, everything seems pretty idyllic in Ladda Land.

The first sign of trouble comes when word spreads through the community of the murder of Burmese maid in the home of an absentee owner. The second sign is when a neighbor's black cat drops a welcome-home gift on Thee's driveway and he steps in it on his way to work. The neighbor apologizes profusely, then orders his wife to scrap every bit of poop off the driveway and Thee's shoe. Clearly, there's trouble in paradise. Before long, the daughter makes friends with kids who enjoy staying up late and creeping through unoccupied houses. Naturally, the teens encounter evil spirits in the house where the murder occurred. At least one of them follows her home, where it does its best to unhinge the entire family. Further compounding Thee's agony is a mother-in-law who despises him and receiving clear indications that the business was built on a foundation of playing cards. Part of the horror that informs "Ladda Land" is observing how much interplay there is between the business and spirit worlds. Watching Thee's life collapse around him is as sad and frightening as anything the ghosts can dish out. In an American movie, we'd probably be informed somewhere down the road that the subdivision was built on an ancient graveyard or portal to hell. Here, though, other devils are at play. The only problem I can see with "Ladda Land" is that, at 123 minutes, it feels a quarter-hour too long. Otherwise, genre enthusiasts should get a kick out of it. – Gary Dretzka

High Fidelity/Gross Pointe Blank: Blu-ray

Romy & Michele's High School Reunion: 15th Anniversary Edition: Blu-ray

The Preacher's Wife: Blu-ray

Adventures in Babysitting: 25th Anniversary Edition: Blu-ray