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## Shatter Dead (SRS)

By

[Upchuck Undergrind](#)

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SHATTER DEAD is an underground classic of undead cinema, and even now, closing in on two decades since it was originally shot, Scooter McRae’s cult hit is an original film. It still possesses the power to shock and disturb and its subversive traits are even more relevant than ever. In THIS (semi) post apoc world, the dead are not shambling flesh eaters, they are intelligent people who have been yanked cruelly from comfy death to being “alive” again, though they don’t have to eat, sleep or shit (I’m envious). In this world where day-to-day life involves, besides the instability of a society whose structure has been at least partially crumbled, an uneasy coexistence between those who haven’t died and those who have returned, there is a girl cut from the same cloth as the “Alien” franchise’s Ripley. Her performance has a flat affect but it suits her quiet, on-edge nature. She’s the grounding for this story, which features the dead begging like homeless or teaming up against old humanity under the leadership of a lunatic zombie preacher, killing themselves to be able to enjoy immortality young and strong or whatnot. She cherishes her humanity and is fiercely distrustful of the undead. SHATTER DEAD, besides being a shocker of a horror film, with such highlights as a zombie baby – predating the “Dawn of the Dead” remake by a decade but post-dating the ripped-out fetus of “Anthropophagus” – is incredibly subversive. Its tagline, which also appears as a piece of dialogue, is “God Hates You.” It is sprinkled with fever dream images of a full-figured, big-breasted but androgynous-faced angel (the first one of which boasts the angel fucking a girl from behind) as well as a sex scene between a live girl and a dead guy (who, lacking pumped blood – or any, given how he died – cannot achieve an erection) accomplished by way of tying a real pistol to the guy’s crotch for use as a makeshift strap-on. That scene, with thin double exposing of barely make-out-able shots of a gun penetrating a vagina, is one of the real stand-outs in the mind once this blasphemous, pessimistic and subtextual erotic horror film has done its dirty work. It’s a bleak, grim film, unique and frightening in a stomach-tightening, blood-to-ice kind of way. But the fear isn’t from the undead, it is undeadness itself. The scary part of Scooter McRae’s vision is the terror of being alive forever.

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