

WES CRAVEN'S

THE
HIS
HAVE
EYES
part 2

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CAST

Robert Houston Bobby
John Bloom The Reaper
Tamara Stafford Cass
Kevin Spirtas (as Kevin Blair) Roy
John Laughlin Hulk
Willard E. Pugh Foster
Peter Frechette Harry
Colleen Riley Jane
Penny Johnson Jerald Sue
Janus Blythe Rachel/Ruby
Edith Fellows Mrs. Wilson
Michael Berryman Pluto
David Nichols The Psychiatrist

CREW

Written and Directed by **Wes Craven**
Produced by **Barry Cahn, Peter Locke**
Associate Producer **Jonathan Debin**
Edited by **Richard Bracken**
Director of Photography **David Lewis**
Music by **Harry Manfredini**
Production Designer **Dominick Bruno**
Unit Production Manager **John Callas**
Costume Designer **Taryn De Chellis**





THE HILLS HAVE HEART

by Amanda Reyes

In an interview with Wes Craven for *Film Quarterly*, journalist Christopher Sharrett described Craven as part of the “New Wave” of horror filmmakers who took over theaters and drive-ins in the 1970s. It’s an incredible list that includes George Romero, David Cronenberg, Brian De Palma, Tobe Hooper, and of course, John Carpenter. These filmmakers were providing social commentary along with brutal horrors that are often viewed in a cold and harsh daylight, and which are unflinching depictions of life as it was perhaps metaphorically felt during this era. Sharrett, and many others, saw Craven as someone who redefined horror on film. The filmmaker’s gritty *The Last House on the Left* (1972) and his brutal follow-up, *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), were explorations of the disruption of the family unit that was changing its face in this decade, as well as depictions of the violent uprising of the lower classes as they sought to take from those living in the higher echelons of society. His films from this era are remarkable. They’re uniquely traumatizing, but also incredibly thoughtful. Not surprising, considering that Craven holds a master’s degree in philosophy and was a professor working in the Humanities before he went into filmmaking.

But that was the 1970s, when horror was responding to the tumult of Vietnam and the chaos that surrounded life after the war, among other things. It hadn’t necessarily predicted the Reagan eighties, where our very virtue and innocence were at stake, and if teenagers didn’t comply with idealistic social norms that were more rooted in the 1950s, off with their heads (literally!). The 1980s welcomed these warped morality tales with open arms. And yet again, Craven responded.

He redefined the genre with his 1984 masterpiece, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, which came out at a time when everyone thought everything about the slasher film had been said and done. He gave us broken families, worthless parents, and yeah, a virginal heroine, but one who saves herself (and in true Craven fashion, while also metaphorically and literally destroying the domestic space along the way).

In 1996 Craven unleashed the self-aware *Scream*, which was released when everyone was positive there was nothing left to do with the slasher film. It follows the same blueprint in some ways as *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, minus the supernatural angle and with a heavier emphasis on independent teens, and it is loved by millions.

These are the movies fans are likely to remember and embrace. And rightly so, as each one is a sort of cultural artefact, surveying the landscape of our times. Craven wasn't afraid to step outside of the norm and comment on the many different issues we felt as a country growing apart, and going cynical.

Did all of his films reach those massive heights of horror and philosophy? Not so much. But, even many of his hiccups could be really entertaining. Sure, there was the occasional *My Soul to Take* (2010), but for that we also got ourselves a *Red Eye* (2005). And there are a lot of these imperfect gems. *Swamp Thing* (1982) and *Deadly Friend* (1986), for instance, are diverting and entertaining popcorn fare. *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* (1984) sits much closer to something like the enjoyably daffy *Deadly Blessing* (1981) than, say, *Cursed* (2005), yet it is treated like Craven's Freddy Krueger, a bastard to be cornered in the basement and set ablaze. To this day, it is still met with much derision. Yeah, *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* ain't gonna win any awards, but it is a cracking little film that might not be slasher gold, but it's certainly not sitting amongst the dregs of the genre either. Not by a long shot.

Don't get me wrong, *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* is hinky filmmaking. No one is denying that. The two most egregious "plot points" revolve around everyone forgetting daylight saving time, and the discovery that Papa Jupe's brother, The Reaper, somehow hears about his kin's massacre and basically moves in to help out the survivors. Are we to assume there is some type of mail service in those desolate desert hills, and what exactly would that mailman look like? And, does that mean there is yet *another* cannibal family living nearby (*Hills Have Eyes Part III*, anyone)? There are also a few head scratching moments to be had as well. In the middle of the chaos, a woman takes a shower (well, it *is* a slasher film after all), and the audience is left wondering what exactly became of Ruby... I mean, *that can't be it*, can it?

Then, of course, there is the most infamous scene in the movie: Yes, Beast the dog has a flashback. That's become a major sticking point for most of the naysayers. But, where's the protest for the canine's equally ridiculous flashback in *Zoltan: Hound of Dracula* (a.k.a. *Dracula's Dog*, 1979)? Are we going to start flipping out over the dog flashback in the 1946 Russian produced adaptation of Jack London's *White Fang*? And, do we disown the adorable Benji for his flashback in his 1974 film? Yeah, I didn't think so.

Yes, it's goofy. Yes, it's strange and everyone knows what filler looks like, but (to quote Sheryl Crow) if it makes you happy, it can't be that bad.

One of the highlights of *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* is that despite his throw-in-everything-including-the-kitchen-sink approach Craven manages to craft an entertaining thriller revolving around a group of genuinely likable characters. OK, that tall-drink-of-water Hulk





(John Laughlin, my favorite actor in the film) only gets about three lines total. And yes, Harry (Peter Frechette) takes audiences right up the edge of annoying, but he's fun and harmless. Often, slasher film victims are given fairly broad characterizations that work in binaries (virgin/slut; bully/nerd, etc.), and all too often because of those disparities they just don't feel like friends. The motley crew assembled in this sequel share a real chemistry. You can easily picture them entering into this type of adventure together, which raises their fodder status slightly. No one is claiming you'll be shedding tears when one of them is dispatched, but you'll notice they are missing from the canvas once they leave. And I'd be up for getting a beer with any of them, the true mark of a decent horror movie character.

Also, Craven is doing something rather interesting with his Final Girl, Cass (Tamara Stafford). She's not the first blind heroine to defeat the odds. Audrey Hepburn did it in *Wait Until Dark* (1967) and Mia Farrow did it in *See No Evil* (1971), way before Cass was a thought in Craven's beautifully warped mind. But in an era where the disabled were just expendable matter for a cold-blooded killer (i.e. Mark in *Friday the 13th Part 2* [1981] and Will in the Craven produced *Nightmare on Elm Street* sequel *The Dream Warriors* [1987]), Cass is something special. And it's not just that she overcomes great odds, it's that cultural film theorist Carol J. Clover never analyzed her when she coined the phrase Final Girl for her seminal book *Men, Women and Chainsaws* (1992). Unlike the introverted, pragmatic virgins Clover wrote about, Cass is an extroverted, possibly psychic and sexually active young woman. Take away the ESP and she starts to resemble Sidney in *Scream*. Already empowered, and ready to take a few names along the way.

Shot in California in 1983, Craven was just on the cusp of introducing *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and Freddy Krueger to unsuspecting moviegoers. He was also working a little in TV (something he would do more readily and to great effect as the eighties wore on), making an audacious commentary on *Keeping Up with the Joneses* (1972) in the supernatural yarn *Invitation to Hell* (1984), which features Susan Lucci as Satan (and which, like *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* is just as much goofball fun). Some have stated that Craven was burning the candles at both ends, and perhaps he was, and perhaps some mistakes were made (OK, some mistakes *were* made). Lord knows, whoever added Harry Manfredini's clanging score did the film no favors (sorry Harry, I still love you tons). One could argue that all of this mayhem and potential neglect, and Craven's own disowning of the film, makes it not necessarily a Craven joint at all, but in many ways the signature marks are there: class system tension (just work with me), swift pacing, that affable cast of characters, and of course, an appearance by the great Michael Berryman who worked with Craven on four different occasions (the original *Hills Have Eyes*, *Deadly Blessing*, *Invitation to Hell* and this film). I'm beginning to feel the love, aren't you?



Riding on the heels of the gritty original, *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* was slated for a worldwide theatrical release when it went into production in mid-1983. The slasher boom had passed just a year or so before, and the more discombobulated genre releases of that year included *Curtains* and *A Night to Dismember* (it may be worth noting that both of those films had their own production woes as well). And talk about flashbacks! Craven need not worry about reusing too much footage, as *Boogeyman II* wins the prize for adding the most padding into a horror film that year. If there was a slasher classic released in 1983, it was *The House on Sorority Row*, which also plays it by the numbers, but in lush and meticulously paced ways. Horror was simply looking a bit different that year, and the great films belonged to *Psycho II* and Cronenberg's *Videodrome*. So, Craven was already fighting an uphill battle.

Missing a release in 1983, *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* played a couple of festivals in 1984, and screened at the American Film Market on March 14th. Eventually, it enjoyed a spate of modest, regional theatrical showings in 1985, premiering in Florida on August 30th. The newspaper ads bragged:

**Wes Craven scared you to death with
Last House on the Left
The Hills Have Eyes
A Nightmare on Elm Street
and now...
The Hills Have Eyes Part II**

There's truth in advertising, right? Well, at least a little. Craven really was knocking it out of the park back then. With only a few releases under his belt, he was a certified master of the genre. His name was as well-known as his terrifying releases, and using both in the advertising helped *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* bring in a respectable \$115,000 on 19 screens over a two-week period. Of course, it was hated among critics. Although it opened without advance screenings, there are a couple of reviews. *Variety* predictably called it "dull" noting that Craven had gone on to bigger and better things since production earnestly began about two years earlier. Terry Lawson, who wrote for the *Dayton Daily News* quipped, "We truly have no cause to fear The Reaper." Ha!

The Hills Have Eyes Part II hit home video in March of 1986, just when there seemed to be a little bump in interest in slashers. Other releases from that year include *April Fool's Day*, *Friday the 13th Part VI* and *Psycho III*. But it is fair to say that these types of films in the theater were mostly long gone, having moved into the direct to video output instead. Quite honestly, this film shares more of a kinship with its DTV brethren than any theatrical release of that era. That's no criticism either. The video market of the mid-eighties was vast and enjoyable.

It just wasn't necessarily interested in breaking new ground. In fact, *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* makes for a fine double bill with something like *Evil Laugh* (also 1986, and which is said to have been one of Kevin Williamson's inspirations for *Scream*) or *Killer Workout* (1987).

Even if it had been made with the purest of intentions, it still had to traverse three years of horror movie ups and downs, and it's easy to see how misguided *The Hills Have Eyes Part II* became as it struggled from production to its belated release. But so what? If you find yourself smiling when Berryman scoots around on that motorbike, you are enjoying the ride. And that's all any film could ask for. Mission accomplished.

Amanda Reyes is a film historian, an academic and the editor and co-author of Are You in the House Alone? A TV Movie Compendium: 1964-1999









ON THE SET: THE HILLS HAVE EYES II

This article was written by reporter Johnny Legend and was originally published in *Fangoria* issue #37, July 1984

In 1977, the same year that *Star Wars* was released, fans who yearned for more earthbound thrills were treated to *The Hills Have Eyes*, Wes Craven's visceral adventure tale pitting a typical "white bread" suburban family against a hill-bred tribe of Savages.

Since that time, *Star Wars* has had two sequels, while *Hills* fans have had to cool their heels, awaiting the further adventures of America's favorite cannibal family. Now, after seven years, that long wait is at last coming to an end; *Hills Have Eyes II* is now in production, with myself, your Fango correspondent, reporting from this very significant sequel's desert location.

In *Hills II*, several sinister survivors of the original's anthropophagous clan return, wreaking horror and havoc on a brand-new generation of misplaced city slickers. The vacationing family of middle-class squares, however, has been replaced by a super-hip boogie-busload of boppin' teens-in-distress; and the picture's main heroine, Cass, in not only blind, but clairvoyant to boot (students of Greek mythology will note the significance in her name).

In the intervening years between original and sequel, pioneering figures such as Papa Jupe (James Whitworth) and Mama Jupe have apparently passed on or migrated elsewhere, while young upstarts like the irresponsible Pluto (the *Great* Michael Berryman) and various in-laws still populate the hills. Sister Ruby (Janus Blythe), meanwhile, has completely suppressed her cannibal roots, changed her name to Rachel, married original victim-to-be Bobby (Bob "B-B-Beauty's dead!" Houston).

Another significant returnee is – the Beast! While less scrupulous producers might have settled for any random mutt on the block, the makers of this sequel have demonstrated their integrity by sparing no expense in securing one of the original canine stars to repeat his role. In addition to the expected star treatment (stunt-creatures, full-time staff, no fillers or meat by-products in the chow), this time out Beast will assay a much meatier role than in the original, possibly including the first dog-memory flashback in the history of cinema. and if *you* think it's been a long time between sequels, just ask Lorne Greene how long it would be in dog years!



Early in the film, Bobby, reluctant to return to the desert, elects to remain behind, managing the couple's Yamaha dealership, while Rachel/Ruby agrees to accompany the busful of cannibal fodder as they trek across the desert, their destination a racetrack where Bobby's revolutionary new formula for a supercharged motorbike racing fuel will be put to the test. When the bus-bound bikers stray into Papa Jupe's old stomping ground, however, Rachel begins to experience "Ruby-esque" flashbacks, setting the stage for a bloody, explosive reunion.

I arrived at the desert location during an all-night shooting, just in time to catch some key action sequences. The first involved the violent, long-awaited confrontation between brother Pluto and sister Rachel/Ruby. After Mike and Janus had been effectively captured in medium and close combat angles, their respective stunt-persons were brought in and left to punt, rip and drop-kick their way into cinematic history. The highly respected Beast was then brought in to perform a similar series of attack scenes with Berryman. The cagey canine was also afforded the luxury of having a stunt-creature on hand to handle the down 'n' dirty work in longer angles. In the first *Hills*, Michael, Janus and the Beast were all required to perform their own stunts.

When the shooting paused for a festive midnight taco "lunch", I spoke briefly with Michael (see Berryman interview Fango #34), Janus, and some of the others. Janus Blythe, who has long remained a humble, unheralded queen of contemporary horror, returns in *Hills II*, in the pivotal role of sister Ruby, a much more complex role the second time around. In the eight years since the original, Ruby has not only brushed her teeth and married Bobby, but has also become quite domestic and has disavowed her "colorful" past.

JANUS: "Acting has always been a burning desire – I've been dancing since I was three. I would drag my mother to anything that had to do with performing – a fashion show, a tap dance or whatever. I finally met a producer who told me I had a 'certain quality' and convinced me to join his small acting class on Sunset and that was it, I've been acting steadily for 10 years now."

Janus' first film appearance was as a waitress in *The First Time* [1969] which got her into the union. From there on, lots of episodic television and 12 national TV commercials, eventually leading to featured roles in *The Incredible Melting Man* [1977], Tobe Hooper's *Eaten Alive* [1976], *Black Oak Conspiracy* [1977], *Phantom of the Paradise* [1974], *Drive-In Massacre* [1976] and of course, the career-topping *Hills Have Eyes* Films.





"I like doing exploitation films because it gives me the chance to act, rather than just 'bounce around.' After *Hills* and *Hills II*, my next favorite is *The Incredible Melting Man* because I've got to go from 'happy-go-lucky' through every conceivable emotion including chopping off the monster's hand and freaking out. I also enjoyed being chased through the woods by Neville Brand in *Eaten Alive* when he was trying to kill me with a scythe."

I asked Janus about the cumulative effect of appearing in films like this over so many years: "I've done so many of these things now that I'm very jumpy – I hear noises and look around corners. But I'm going to hang on. I'm going to be the next Jamie Lee Curtis, if I'm not already!"

Polishing off the remains of my taco, I left Blythe to attack her own, and approached one of the most prominent members of the all-star cast. The formidable John Bloom comes from a quite versatile background; but in 1971, he was just another 7'2" Southern California dockworker, laboring on the piers of San Pedro. One day a fellow dockworker named Albert Cole mentioned that he was up for one of the title roles in the movie called *The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant* [1971]; he wondered if John might be interested in trying out for the part of the other head. "I figured, what the hell?" John tells us, and so a film career was born; that night, when both men visited the home of producer John Lawrence, Bloom was given the role on the spot.

With Cole and Bloom as a psycho-killer and a mental midget forced to share a single hulking body, and with their performances reinforced by the solid acting talents of Casey "America's Top Ten" Kasem, *The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant* made a small fortune for AIP and inspired an awesome follow-up, *The Thing With Two Heads* [1972], featuring Ray Milland and Rosey Grier. Bloom himself went on to star in no less than three Al Adamson classics: *Brain of Blood* [1971], *Creature's Revenge* [1971] and, with Zandor Vorkov as the challenger, in *Dracula VS. Frankenstein* [1971], which – despite the implications of the title – featured no wrestling. Bloom also played a wolf-like alien capable of shooting death-rays from his eyeballs in the 1977 non-hit *The Dark*.

Even with his impressive track record as a master of menace, Bloom has also found the time to dabble in photography, supervise tour security for such top rock acts as the Eagles, study screenwriting under Stanley Myron Handelman at UCLA, and he also likes to golf. As a non-horror actor, Bloom has recently worked on TV's *Fame* [1982 – 1987], the short-lived *Boone* [1983-1984] series, the current feature *Bachelor Party* [1984] and *Rainy Day Friends* [1985], a sensitive film dealing with cancer, with Carrie Snodgrass and Janice Rule.



Despite Bloom's forbidding appearance, heightened at the moment by the costume and makeup for his *Hills II* role as Reaper, he cordially filled the gaps in my knowledge of his career between taco-bites, despite the questions that lesser stars might take as an interruption on their meal. Along the way, he offered an interesting analogy to illustrate his approach to monster acting. "When you're playing a monster," he says "you spend a huge amount of time in makeup, and then get a few minutes of screen-time. With a lot of these films, they hold back the monster, except for maybe a glimpse, until the last scene, so it's sort of like a strip-tease; once a dancer takes off the last bit of clothing, it's time for her to get off stage, unless she has something to *do*, and some real talent."

The character of Reaper offers Bloom quite a bit more to do than to just stand there and look good. Industry handicappers will no doubt keep a sharp eye on Bloom's *Hills II* performance as a good bet for most monstrous performance of 1984. With lunch concluded, I turned my attention to Ken Horn, creator of all of the original *Hills* makeup. (see interview, issue #27), now facing new challenges on the sequel. The first was to meet director Wes Craven's expectations for the John Bloom character, Reaper. "Wes didn't want gimmicky makeup requiring endless appliances, masks, etc.," says Horn. "He's had some problems in recent years with overdone makeups. Reaper had to be simple, believable, yet durable enough to move aggressively on the set and ride a motorbike. I managed to get by with one appliance, false teeth, some extra wig-hair, and standard makeup. the entire process required about two hours." Some of the seemingly simple effects on various victims, however, proved to be more tricky. "One male axe-victim had a very short afro haircut, and keeping the axe in his head was quite difficult. Axe victims are usually chosen on the basis of having long hair to help conceal the wires – in this case we had to get by with two fragile wires. In another instance, there was a last-minute decision to film an explicit throat-cutting scene with a female victim who had just smashed through a large glass window. We were on location, hours away from any effects or makeup houses, so I was back to the basic situation of having to shop at the local markets, drugstores, etc. for my materials. I ended up using Crazy Glue, derma wax, karo-syrup and food coloring (for blood), duct tape, fish tubing – just like old times. Nobody would sell me any syringes for blood spurts without a prescription. I finally talked a local veterinarian into letting me have a huge 60 cc syringe with a needle so ridiculously large that no one could conceivably use it on a human being."

The bane of makeup men everywhere, and the test of true inventive talent, is the last-minute revision. Horn had just negotiated one such pitfall prior to our talk. "They wanted to show a guy's severed arm hanging from a pole," he tells us, "and I didn't happen to have one on hand. So I took a cardboard cylinder, and fit it into an elbow shape, put it into a shirt sleeve, adding a glove at one end and some wadded, blood-soaked tissue paper on the other. I added a bone to that end and it looked *just* like an arm on that pole."

With barely the time to note how quickly time passes when in the company of such pleasant folks as the *Hills II* cast and crew, I found that the time allotted for Fango's set visit had come to an end. With a last glance towards the gaunt figure of Wes Craven – whom, I understand, will be interviewed by Uncle R.H himself for the next issue – I climbed back into my dune buggy, and set off across this glorious desert, headed for home.

Fangoria is an internationally published magazine focusing on horror and cult cinema and has been in publication since 1979.





ABOUT THE RESTORATION

The Hills Have Eyes Part II has been exclusively restored by Arrow Films and is presented in its original aspect ratio of 1.85:1 with mono audio.

An original 35mm dupe negative element was scanned in 2K resolution on a Scanity. The film was graded on Digital Vision's Nucoda Film Master and restored at R3Store Studios in London. The mono mix was remastered from the original magnetic reels at Pinewood Studios.

All materials for this restoration were made available by Screenbound Pictures and Euro London Films.

Restoration supervised by James White, Arrow Films

R3Store Studios:

Gerry Gedge, Jo Griffin, Rich Watson, Nathan Leaman-Hill, Emily Kemp

Pinewood Studios:

John Pegg, Rebecca Budds, Jason Stevens

Screenbound Pictures:

Alan Byron, Nicole Byron, Marcia Blagg

Euro London Films:

John Henderson



PRODUCTION CREDITS

Disc and Booklet Produced by **Ewan Cant**
Executive Producers **Kevin Lambert, Francesco Simeoni**
Technical Producer **James White**
QC **Nora Mehenni, Alan Simmons**
Production Assistant **Samuel Thiery**
Blu-ray Mastering & Subtitling **The Engine House Media Services**
Design **Obviously Creative**
Artwork by **Paul Shipper**

SPECIAL THANKS

Alex Agran, Michael Berryman, Janus Blythe, Dominick Bruno, Alan Byron,
John Callas, Peter Locke, Harry Manfredini and Amanda Reyes