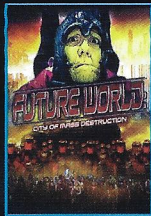




## OVERLOOKED, FORGOTTEN AND DISMISSED

### THIS ISSUE: LANCE ARMS HIMSELF FOR THE APOCALYPSE

#### ISN'T EASY BEING GREEN SCREEN



#### FUTUREWORLD: CITY OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Chemical Burn Entertainment

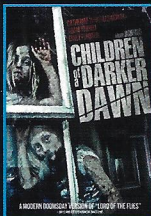
The apocalypse is coming! It might be a nuke, a bird flu or zombie, but whatever it is, it'll surely be something you won't want to miss! Also known as *G.R. 30K*, this film portrays life in the year 30,000, after Earth has survived four atomic wars and a second ice age. Now populated by hot barbarian chicks, mutilated mongrels and cyber-enhanced humans, there's a battle brewing between the industrial conglomerates that fuel Earth's last remaining city with food and consumer goods.

Made with green screens and computer filters, which give it a comic book appearance, this sprawling mess is hard to watch, harder to follow and, at over two hours, even harder to finish. Weep for the future!

**BODY COUNT:** 130

**BEST DEATH:** Invalid shot in the face 56 times

#### SISTERS ARE DOIN' IT FOR THEMSELVES



#### CHILDREN OF A DARKER DAWN

MVD Visual

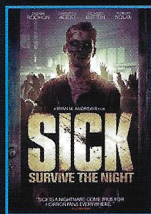
The kiddie trauma apocalypse begins when a flu-like epidemic kills off the world's adults, leaving the children to fend for themselves. Also known as *Railway Children*, *Children of a Darker Dawn* follows Evie and Fran, Irish sisters who flee to the countryside in search of shelter and food. They eventually come across another group of kids, but instead of banding together the girls find themselves fearing for their lives. Playing out like a modern-day *Lord of the Flies*, this is a bleak, austere film that makes *The Road* look like a comedy. Plagued by uneven acting and kills

that are mostly off-screen, not even the hints at cannibalism can buoy this sucker. If there's one thing that the apocalypse shouldn't be it's boring!

**BODY COUNT:** 4

**BEST DEATH:** Infected father slices his own throat

#### ZOMBIES ATE MY NEIGHBOURS



#### SICK: SURVIVE THE NIGHT

Midnight Releasing

Set two years after a zombie outbreak, *Sick: Survive the Night* follows a team of military scientists living in a secret underground laboratory who are trying to develop a cure, and a band of survivors on the outside struggling to stay alive in the ruins of the world. After a brutal undead attack decimates their group, two of the survivalists meet up with a scientist who has escaped the lab. The three of them decide to hide out in a house while they plot their next move. Despite some decent-looking zombies and a couple good kills, this Canadian production ultimately falls flat due to its mindless, meandering plot and unlikable douchebag characters. Not even a cool cameo by scream queen Debbie Rochon can cure this one.

**BODY COUNT:** 17

**BEST DEATH:** Zombie chick decapitated with a shovel

LAST CHANCE LANCE

angle. "Get to the kills!" I can hear the moneymen scream.

Yes, there is a fun plot twist in the tail end of the film, but by then all that is left of *Stung* is the pain of mediocrity.

SEAN PLUMMER

## FRANKIE JR.

### CLOSER TO GOD

Starring Jeremy Childs, Shelean Newman and Shannon Hoppe  
Written and directed by Billy Senese  
Uncork'd Entertainment

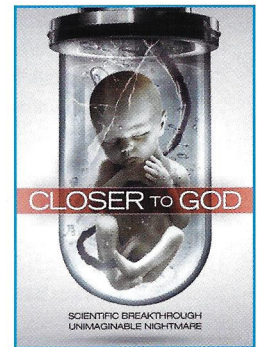
*Closer to God* is not the first sci-fi/horror film to splice the Frankenstein story with modern-day genetics. *Embryo* (1976) and 2010's *Splice* also come to mind, but while there is little new here, *Closer to God* creates something surprisingly moving, thanks to strong performances and heartbreaking imagery.

Dr. Victor Reid (no, not Frankenstein) is an ambitious geneticist working to create the first human clone. When news leaks of his success, public reaction to "Baby Elizabeth" is divisive: is she the herald of a new, disease-free dawn or, like the protesters outside Reid's lab think, a soulless affront to God?

Soon we discover that Elizabeth was not Victor's first attempt at cloning and that the result of that failed experiment has been locked away from prying eyes. Some of what happens next is predictable. For instance, yes, Victor's experiment will come back to haunt him. But writer/director Billy Senese circumvents predictability with an ending that rips out hearts (figuratively, not literally).

As Victor, Jeremy Childs imbues his far-from-mad scientist with a coldness that allows him to ignore the wails of his infant experiment; Victor is not evil but blind to the pain and agony that are the side effects to his probing into God's territory. But it is Shelean Newman as Victor's housekeeper (and the person in charge of his failed experiment) with whom we most empathize, trapped as she is in a house with her employer's bad science locked upstairs. Her sadness and frustration is evident every time we see her onscreen.

*Closer to God* draws attention away from its low budget by eschewing fancy sets and CGI in favour of performance, dialogue and mood. Indeed, this is primarily a drama until its genre dictates come to a head in the last half hour. That's when the monster, such as it is, appears, obscured by shadows or doorways. Senese makes its reveal not a moment of horror but of pathos and tragedy, making *Closer to God* close to both Mary Shelley's and James Whale's *Frankenstein*.



SEAN PLUMMER