

DEEP RED

A · L · E · R · T

NUMBER 1

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4.95

The Return of
LUCIO FULCI

Finally...
THE FEEBLES

The Gutting of
LEATHERFACE

**All
New!**

**SKINNY
PUPPY**

PIECE O'MIND

Jim Van Bebber

CHARLIE'S FAMILY

HAND IT TO REMO

What Do You Say To A One-Armed Executioner ?

by Shane Dallman



In case any of you got the wrong idea from my initial installment, I do *not* intend to subject you to column after column of nothing but cinematic hand removals. That doesn't carry a stand-up act on its own, and there's plenty more I feel the need to deal with, anyway. Nevertheless, in the spirit of a good dessert, I'll make a point of wrapping up with a small gourmet selection of choice de-handings in every case.

This time around, I'd like to provide a service and answer some of the questions that have no doubt occurred to everyone who's rented *The Gates of Hell* on Paragon Video and actually watched all the trailers at the beginning of the tape. You probably already know what I'm talking about—it's that trailer for *The One-Armed Executioner*. As with all of Paragon's previews, this features several

glimpses of the actual title card of the film. But just a minute here—what *is* that hazy image lurking behind the title? I know we're communicating here, and I know that you, just as I, have put that sucker on freeze-frame and stared at it for minutes (hours?) on end, trying to divine the truth of what's on the screen.

Stare as long as you want. The trailer is not about to give up its secrets. It's designed to make you rent the movie, after all. But it's not as if that particular title will pop up anywhere you want it to, is it? The search can be utterly maddening, in fact. Yet the tape *does* exist—I finally found it—and I will now relieve the tormented minds of any of you who haven't.

In order to rent this tape, I had to actually leave the horror section of my store and check some of the other shelves. The horrified clerks, knowing me only too well, were convinced that I had finally "lost it," and fell all over themselves trying to help me through my "attack." No gentle ex-



planation that it wasn't a horror movie could loosen my grip on the cassette once I seized on it, and the final desperate assurance that if I "didn't like it," I "didn't have to pay for it" drew only a distant nod. The answer was in my grasp. And the mystery image behind the opening title of *The One Armed Executioner* is . . .

. . . a midget drowning in a phone booth. Yep, that's it. He's one of the "good guys," and before the titles start he's in a phone booth making a report on the "bad guys." But the phone booth is inconveniently located on a pier, and when the bad guys catch up with the midget, they jam a broomstick through the door handles and, oblivious to the midget's cry of "Hey, I want out of here!," push the booth into the water. Roll credits.

So what does the One-Armed Executioner have to do with his? He's in the police station when the news concerning the fate of the midget comes through. His chief announces, "I want to know what he's been doing the last few days." (I thought, "That's easy—he was going 'glub-blub-blub-glub!'") Given the assignment while both of his arms are still intact, our hero runs afoul of the villains, who attempt to discourage him from the case by wiping out his family and removing his left arm—the character's a "lefty," so the actor can still use his right arm in the rest of the movie. This sets the stage for what has to be the most single most sensitive line I've ever heard. As

our one-armed hero lies in his hospital bed, having been removed from the force his former chief lets him know that while he feels sorry for him, the case is still police business, wrapping up his speech with "... so if you have any ideas about personal revenge, just remember . . . *hands off!*"

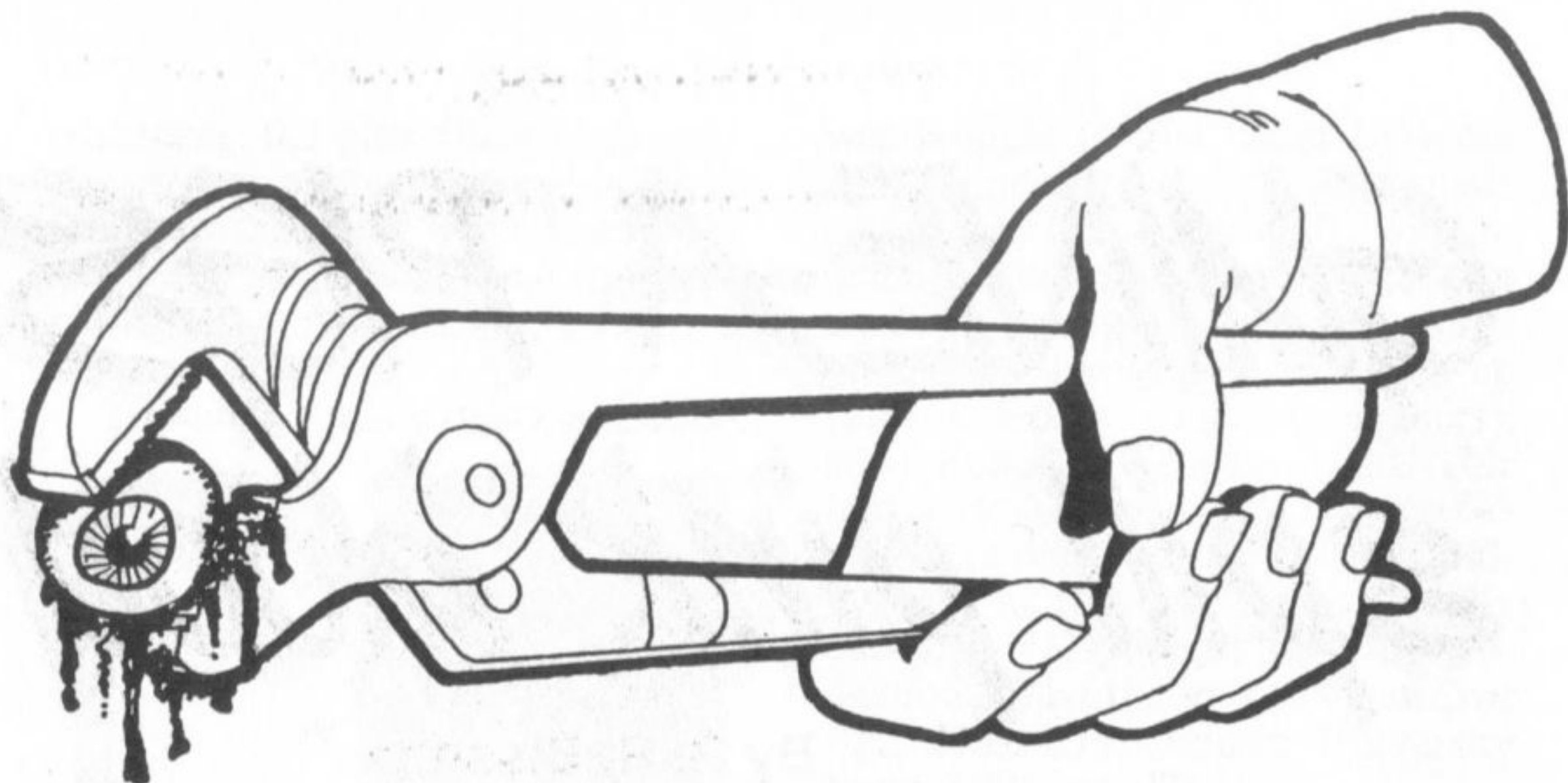
Speaking of which . . .

HANDS OFF

This issue's selections include an acknowledgement of both *Evil Dead* films. Number One, of course, features the classic (reportedly improvised) moment in which one of the ghouls has her hand almost but not quite severed by a sword, which remains stuck in her wrist. Recalling many frontiersmen's stories of wild animals caught in traps, she proceeds to gnaw her own hand off at the wrist, effectively freeing himself with only a slight diminishment of her destructive potential. Bravo!

The follow-up film features Bruce Campbell removing his own possessed hand with a chainsaw, true, but this scene (though I loved the movie) doesn't quite make it. Seems Sam Raimi and company were originally in the position of having to shoot for an





“R” rating; and while this ultimately changed, this is one of the few scenes to suffer from the original arrangement—hence, the actual moment of removal takes place offscreen. C’est la vie.

Juan Piquer Simon’s *Slugs* (1987) caught my attention with a bit in which a fellow decides to do some work in his greenhouse. Trouble is, the title creatures have taken up residence there, and a few of them have found their way into one of his work gloves. Unable to remove the slugs (or the glove, for that matter), the pain-crazed gardener resorts to some impromptu self-surgery, fully *on* screen this time around.

A similar sequence takes place in the 1988 remake of *The Blob*. The old hobo who has the misfortune to become the monster’s discoverer and first victim is encountered by the protagonists on a lonely road. His hand has been engulfed by the hungry protoplasm, and he’s trying to get ahead of it with a hatchet! He, however, unlike Bruce Campbell and *Slug*’s gardener, is not successful, as the Blob slides up to seal the cut before the hobo can deepen it. Points for trying though, guy, points for trying.

That’s all for now, but there’s always more where that came from—and remember, I *do* take requests, and I’ll do it all . . . single handedly!



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NEXT
ISSUE:

REMO D. MEETS
THE CHLOROPHYLL
MAN!