

# "THE LIVING CORPSE"

## Re-animation in animation

If you're a fan of brain-sucking/flesheat-ing-zombie movies and think you've seen every rotted incarnation of these soulless creatures imaginable, you haven't met *The Living Corpse* yet. A decomposed mass of bone and tissue, this monster is different from your typical skull-cruncher. Sure, he enjoys blood, brains and guts like any good citizen of the walking-dead club. But this old boy actually remembers his past life, has a soul and endeavors to protect the living from the likes of its own kind.

Corpse is a contentious, imposing character with a chip on his shoulder, a penchant for one-liners and the innate ability to kick serious ass. And that's really where the pleasantries end; Corpse is all ghoul, and can be the meanest SOB this side of the ethereal plane when he wants to be.

Lucky for us, he's on our side—or at least he tries to be.

Debuting as a comic book from creators Ken Haeser and Buz Hasson in 2005 through Zenoscope Entertainment, *The Living Corpse* is now making his way to the screen as a 3D animated feature film from Shoreline Entertainment. At the helm is *Katiebird*\**Certifiable Crazy Person's* Justin Paul Ritter, who also produces with Morris Ruskin and co-wrote the screenplay with Ryan Plato.

Ruskin, the CEO of Shoreline and a veteran producer, says he was initially drawn to the project because he "loved the idea of a kick-ass zombie hero protecting the Earth from other zombie uprisings. I was also attracted to the attitude of the book, which comes across in all the characters, style, humor and art."

The movie remains loyal to the source material in tone and imagery, and also holds

fast to what makes *Corpse* so unique in the first place: his memory and love for his son, whom he cherished while he was in the land of the living. "This isn't your typical zombie

Its hero's animated status isn't the only thing that sets *The Living Corpse* apart from typical ghoul fare.



gorefest," Ritter says. "*The Living Corpse* is definitely filled with action, fantasy, horror and even a touch of humor. But it also has a heart wrapped up in the tangled relationship between Corpse and his son. Their newly defined [kinship] is doomed from the start, but Corpse is not willing to give up on it."

Complicating that relationship is the fact that Corpse's son is the only survivor of a zombie attack that was led by his father. The questions loom ever-present: if Corpse finds

and Worthless Murk, a humble toady with a warm spot in his decaying heart for Corpse. Together, the three of them work to uncover the true meaning of Corpse's resurrection and set him on the path that will become the future we see outlined in the comic-book series. All the while, Corpse is searching for his son and trying to rebuild the family that he left behind when he traded everything in for a cold, dark grave years earlier."

While the movie has dark overtones, the art is inspired by something a little more benevolent. Hasson says of the original comic, "We took horror, Saturday-morning cartoon style and dark humor, and mashed it all together," and the film version is being produced with the involvement of artists in 10 different countries, rendered with cutting-edge RealD 3D technology. "We started production two and a half years ago," Ruskin says. "Every day there is something [new] to be excited about. This is my first animated film, and the process has been fantastic. We are all kids at heart, and we just want to see and make cool stuff."

With more comic adventures for our putrid hero being published by Dynamite Entertainment (*The Living Corpse: Exhumed* arrives this August), and hopes for a Halloween release of the movie, Haeser says, "2011 may very well be the year of *The Living Corpse!*"

—Gabriel Campisi

Corpse encounters creatures great and small in his quest for his son.



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