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# THE BEDLAM FILES

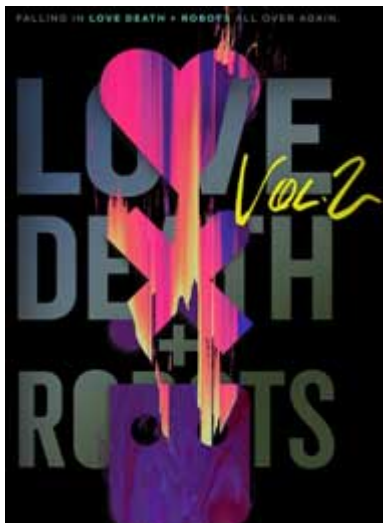
*With Adam Groves*

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“I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure, which is: Try to please everybody.”

— **Herbert Swope**

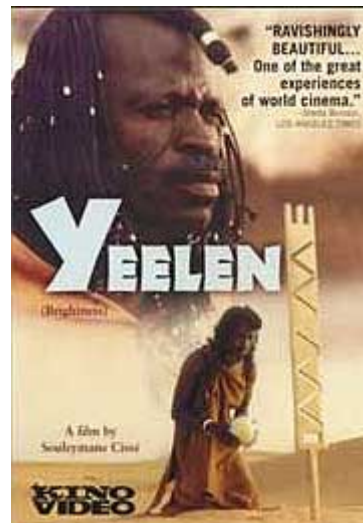
## Streaming Now



### 1. **LOVE, DEATH & ROBOTS**

The second season of this HEAVY METAL inspired animated SF anthology series contains full-bodied adaptations of stories by **Harlan Ellison**, John Scalzi, Joe Lansdale and others, with the standout being the J.G. Ballard adapted “Drowned Giant” (about just what the title promises).  
Nifty!  
NETFLIX

## Adam's Picks



### 1. **YEELLEN**

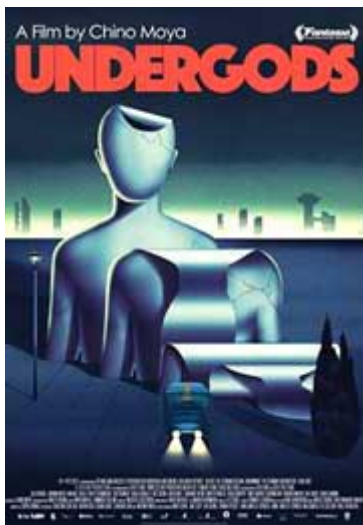
A definite rarity: an Africa-set movie made by and starring Africans! Released in 1987, it's a rich and esoteric drama with a frank acceptance of supernatural phenomena in a culturally specific framework that writer-director Souleymane Cisse never attempts to justify or explain to non-African audiences.  
FILM



**2. THE AMUSEMENT PARK**  
 No, this rediscovered **George Romero** mini-feature is not the “masterpiece” many have been saying it is, but neither is it the “nothing” movie Romero allegedly proclaimed it. Rather, it’s a partially satisfying evocation of the rigors of old age, set in a surreal amusement park whose every element appears to be arrayed against the elderly protagonist.  
 SHUDDER



**2. GHOSTLY TALES OF ROUTE 66: ARKANSAS TO ARIZONA by CONNIE CONCORAN WILSON**  
 Author Connie Wilson now does political commentary, but for a time she was one of the quirkiest scare scribes on the scene. In this 2011 anthology she presents a collection of fact-based ghost stories from various parts of America’s legendary Route 66, done up in her signature reportorial style, with historical fact mixed with personal anecdotes.  
 BOOK



**3. UNDERGODS**  
 British science fiction whose defining trait is bleakness, which is definitely the word for the film’s creepily underpopulated industrial dystopia. Here several unfortunate people attempt to salvage doomed relationships, languish, go crazy and get killed.  
 AMAZON



**3. LUMINOUS MOSS**  
 Not a particularly great example of 90s J-horror, but one that’s eminently worthy of a cult rediscovery. The subject is cannibalism amid the survivors of a WWII-era plane crash, presented in a manner that’s both graphic *and* restrained by director Kei Kumai.  
 FILM



#### 4. **CALL MY AGENT!**

It's admittedly taken me a while to catch up with this 2015 French program, whose subject matter could *never* have been, and probably never will be, seen in Hollywood. It's about talent agents, presented in a humorous yet extremely frank and naturalistic manner that's never less than entirely convincing (the one and only American made movie about agents, 2000's *IVANSXTC*, was quite consciously discarded by the industry). Not a perfect show, but a vital one for anyone desiring an especially revealing peek behind the moviemaking curtain.

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#### 5. **LISEY'S STORY**

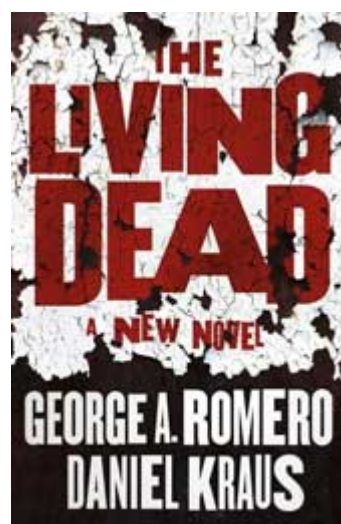
Arty Stephen King adaptations are always a dicey proposition, especially when the source material, in this case the 2006 novel *LISEY'S STORY*, is underwhelming. Yet Chilean filmmaker Pablo Larrain has emerged with a miniseries that can be ranked



#### 4. **THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES... THE TRUTH HAS SET ME FREE!** by BRICE TAYLOR

When I reviewed this book a decade ago it seemed the most unspeakably outrageous thing in existence. Yet in today's conspiracy-addled world its nutty claims, by a woman who alleges she was made a sex slave by Bob Hope, and further abused by a retinue of famous folk that included Henry Kissinger, Walt Disney, Frank Sinatra, George Bush, Sylvester Stallone and Lady Di, are borderline-mainstream. The book is, at least, a definite grabber.

BOOK



#### 5. **THE LIVING DEAD** by GEORGE A. ROMERO & DANIEL KRAUS

While on the subject of newly minted George Romero media, here's a 2020 novel that Romero left unfinished at the time of his death (with author Daniel Kraus stepping in to complete it). I say it's pretty poor overall, being a vastly overstuffed hodgepodge of



as a conditional success, with a great cast that includes Julianne Moore, **Jennifer Jason Leigh** and Clive Owen, and wizardly visuals that admittedly far outdo the story in interest and invention.

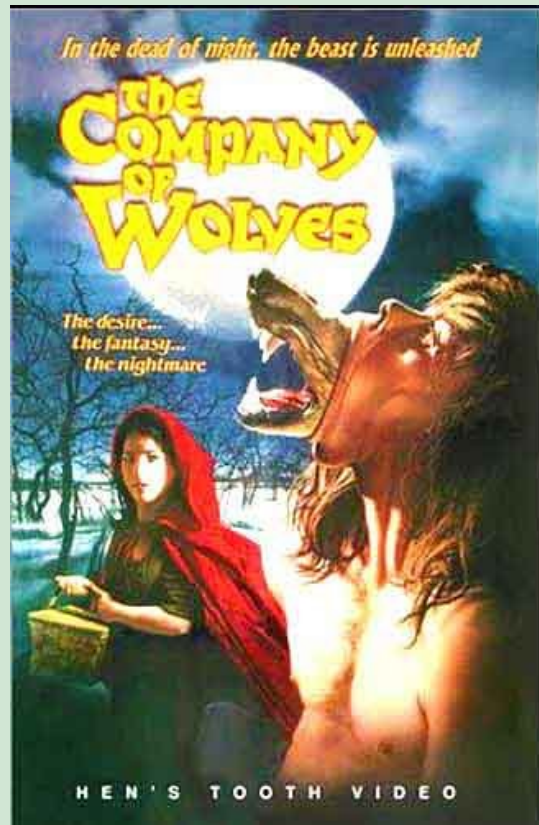
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zombie clichés, but others claim it's a genre landmark. What say you?

BOOK

## Also NEW on the Site!

- **The Company of Wolves**
- **Harry Stephen Keeler in the Ramble House**
- **Mr. Know-It-All: The Tarnished Wisdom of a Filth Elder**
- **The Day the Gods Died**
- **The Criminals Series**
- *And Much More!*



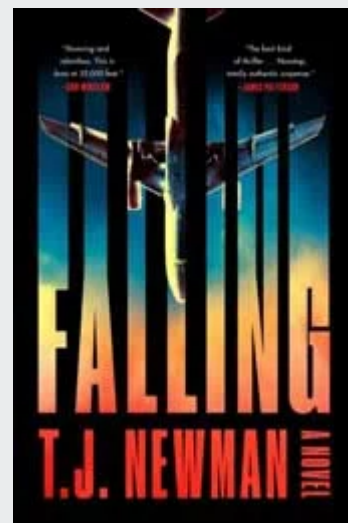
## The Latest Books

*Given that last year was a boom time for book sales, it makes sense that publishers would do everything they possibly could to maintain momentum. Over the past few months I've been deluged with advance copies of upcoming books, and while I haven't been able to read all of them, I have sampled quite a few. Here are six of my findings...*

### **FALLING by T.J. NEWMAN**

*July 6*

A no-frills beach read, and a fun throwback to the airplane-set disaster dramas of old. Written by an on-the-job flight attendant, it's about a terrorist who takes an airline pilot's wife and young



child hostage, and threatens to kill them both if said pilot doesn't crash his current flight.

### **CHASING THE BOOGEYMAN by RICHARD CHIZMAR**

*August 17*

A most unique and enjoyable concoction. Written by the editor of *Cemetery Dance* magazine, CHASING THE BOOGEYMAN combines a fictionalized serial killer drama with the author's own nostalgic memories of growing up in a small Midwestern town. The latter element is allowed to overtake the former, but the book is still an irresistible page-turner.

### **SLEWFOOT: A TALE OF BEWITCHERY by BROM**

*September 14*

The latest book from the famed illustrator-novelist Brom, who relates a period-specific tale of witchery in Salem, MA in a lively and unpretentious manner from the witch's point of view. My major complaint? That Brom's promised illustrations, which are always among the high points of his books, weren't included in the digital ARC I was given.

### **THE LAST HOUSE ON NEEDLESS STREET by CATRIONA WARD**

*September 28*

This one has been vastly over-hyped (with one burb proclaiming it--no joke--"the best horror novel I've ever read"), but it is a strong concoction. About a VERY eccentric family with some unsavory secrets, it reads like a combination of WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE and Michael McDowell's TOPLIN. I haven't gotten to the end yet, but I understand there's a potent twist coming up.

### **NOTHING BUT BLACKENED TEETH by CASSANDRA KHAW**

*October 19*

A stunning disappointment! As with the previous entry, this novella has been insanely overrated; why I have no idea. About a gaggle of annoying hipsters staying in a house where a woman's unquiet spirit holds sway, the book's primary concern appears to be with vastly overdone, self-conscious prose that by the midway point (when the scary business gets going) nearly strangles on its own cleverness.

### **FLOWERS FOR THE SEA by ZON E. ROCKLYN**

*October 19*

An apocalyptic **ROSEMARY'S BABY**, with a pregnant woman on a nightmarish sea trip in a violent dystopia. At around 60 pages

it's a bit scat, feeling more like a summary than a proper narrative, but as such it's not bad at all.

[I'm done reading. To the website!](#)

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