The same dream. Always the same. Tommy rushing down the stairs, hearing his sister’s screams, his head cool from the newly exposed scalp, descending and catching sight of Trish struggling and fighting like a hellcat under a dark shape. It must be him. It must be him. Mouth full of cotton, hard to speak, must form the word…must get his attention… He’s killing her, killing Trish! “JASON!”

Oh God, he heard! He’s standing up. He’s still growing, bigger, and bigger…why doesn’t he stop? God…he’s a giant. His eyes…looking at him. “Jason…Remember Jason?” He’s coming closer. Reaching out. Tommy can smell the metallic odor of blood all over him. He’s closer now. Too close. Suddenly Jason whirls around and from behind Tommy can see the straps of his mask come undone and fly away. The mask arches in the sky and falls to the ground. Trish had tried to attack him from behind with the machete, but only succeeded in cutting off the hockey goalie mask. Tommy sees just the side of Jason’s exposed face before the monster turns to face Trish again. Trish screams uncontrollably—a sound that betrays the horror that she must see before her, and Tommy hears the sound of the machete dropping out of her hand. He’s going to kill Trish! Tommy jumps down, grabs the machete and swings with all his might just as Jason whirls around again. It feels like cutting into hard clay. Only Jason’s scream of pain betrays his mortal agony. In those last moments, Tommy sees the face fully…the face that haunts him. The face that will never leave him alone. Why did this happen to him? He was a normal kid with a mom and a great sister. Why did this happen? Tommy cannot think any more; he can only see flashes, feel the handle of the machete in his hand, and his own voice growing louder and louder like thunder… DIE! DIE!!! DIE!!!!!!

Suddenly, Tommy finds himself at the grave of Jason Voorhees. It’s pouring rain. The sky is filled with lightning and the thunder is still his own voice. The rain is making it impossible to see, as his glasses are drenched. The lightning strikes again. THAT’S WHEN JASON CLAWS HIS WAY OUT OF HIS GRAVE TO SHOW TOMMY HIS FACE ONCE MORE. Then Tommy begins to scream.

He wakes up.

Jason Voorhees dies at the end of FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE FINAL CHAPTER (covered in Unlucky Days, Part Three here). His head is brutally split on the left side with a machete and his body hacked in various places. Paramount must've realized their mistake while counting the receipts from Part IV.

"Wait a minute? Who's gonna be the killer in Part V?"

Answer: an ambulance driver named Roy Burns (Dick Wieand).

FRIDAY THE 13TH: A NEW BEGINNING finds the now teenaged Tommy Jarvis (John Shepherd) at a summer camp for troubled teens. Seems he's haunted by horrible dreams and is having a hard time mentally coping with his experience of killing Jason Voorhees. Oh, and his mother's death at Jason's hand must be hard to deal with as well. Yet for some reason, he has kept Jason's original hockey mask, ax gouge and all, like some sort of macabre trophy. Hmmmmm.

Tommy's having violent thoughts and is a potential danger to himself and others. That's why it comes as no surprise when one of the troubled teens at the camp is brutally hacked to pieces with an ax! What is a surprise is that Jarvis had nothing to do with it. The boy, Joey (Dominick Brascia), is killed by another of the troubled kids. The problem is, Joey's father (Roy Burns) is a tad bit off his rocker like his son and takes it upon himself to don a reasonable facsimile of Jason's look (he wears blue Michael Myers-style mechanics' coveralls, and his hockey mask has blue arrows not red like the real Jason) and proceeds to murder the rest of the "troubled" kids. It's a nice return to the motivation of the original film, substituting a father's bloodlust for a mother's crazed revenge.

The violence in NEW BEGINNING would have probably ranked as the most brutal of the series

(the leather strap over the eyes is a particularly gruesome death), but we are not allowed to see most of it. The MPAA had their concerns with the film before it made it to theaters, so the studio trimmed all the “excessive” gore to secure an R rating. 1985 gave horror fans something to cheer about with special FX splatter-fests like RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD (“Brains!”) and the unrated RE-ANIMATOR (“Who’s going to believe a talking head? Get a job at a sideshow”). However, FRIDAY THE 13TH fans were presented with this fairly graphic but mostly bloodless entry in our favorite slasher cycle.

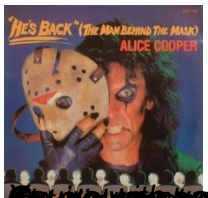
What’s worse is that Jason Voorhees himself doesn’t make an appearance at all other than as a nightmare and in several hallucinations seen only by Tommy Jarvis. Well, how could he? He’s dead, remember?

In the end, mad Roy is impaled on spikes and Tommy is even crazier. It seemed that the next film was going to be Tommy’s first all-out psycho slashfest. It seemed that the FRIDAY THE 13TH series would feature a killer named Tommy Jarvis from now on. It seemed that the series was going to live up to the promise of A NEW BEGINNING, and it was gonna suck. It all seemed hopeless.

I recall leaving the theater along with other loyal FRIDAY THE 13TH fans after watching FRIDAY THE 13TH: A NEW BEGINNING. We all had the same confused look on our faces and an overwhelming feeling of, “WHAT?” To be fair, the film is actually well made, with brutal deaths and some good creepy scares, but something was missing. Yeah. It was the J-Man. At the time that Freddy Krueger (Jason’s arch rival) was ruling at the box office with A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET, PART 2: FREDDY’S REVENGE, Paramount made the mistake of pissing off loyal fans with this pseudo-Jason.

But then something wonderful happened. Storm clouds gathered around a grave and a bolt of lightning was about to give horror buffs the return of the great one. Stand back, Freddy. Look out, Leatherface. Piss off, Pinhead. He’s back. JASON LIVES.

The return of the Sultan of Slaughter was heralded at movie theaters by a collectable giveaway 45 record (I still have mine) that featured the one and only Alice Cooper crooning a catchy little ditty called “He’s Back (The Man Behind the Mask).” The song itself has such hilarious lyrics and random threats that it deserves repeating here in full.



[illegible] *just a dream?*

[illegible] *hole!*

[illegible]