SCREAM 4’s troubled road to theaters has been well-documented, making it difficult for fans to keep the faith that it will be a worthy addition to the series. But no matter what we eventually think of Wes Craven’s return to Woodsboro, horror has seen its share of disastrous fourth entries, and here are five that we can almost positively say SCREAM 4 will be better than:

THE FINAL DESTINATION (2010)

Until this insipid, tired sequel, the FINAL DESTINATIONs were always a good bit of fun. The first and third were silly and amusing; and the second, *oh the second*. Nothing topped the lunacy of David R. Ellis’ FINAL DESTINATION 2 and its most notable and winning plate-glass smash and showstopping highway pile-up. Thus, there was reason to be relatively excited when Ellis returned to helm THE FINAL DESTINATION, in 3D no less. There’d be no talk of enriching the story, or using the 3D for depth; it was to be pure trash. Then again, Ellis had just come off of the turd that was SNAKES ON A PLANE, which delivered on none of the promise of its premise and star Samuel L. Jackson.

Largely following the formula of young protagonists, premonition, thwarted deaths and “the pattern,” the biggest problem with THE FINAL DESTINATION is it just feels lifeless and uninspired. In a series that celebrates the most minuscule of details leading to the deepest pools of blood, the setpieces were only shades of what they could’ve been, the most saddening being the car-wash demise—a concept I’d been dying to see since simultaneously loving and being terrified of ride-in washes as a child. Add on the typically surface-level teen characterizations and lack of Tony Todd, and all you’re able to praise is the opening credits that remind you of glorious deaths’ past.

{youtube}Cfb5oUxMxCA{/youtube}

JAWS: THE REVENGE (1987)

JAWS 3-D is one of the best bad movies ever made; even after countless viewings, it’s hard to

grow tired of that phony *Carcharodon carcharias* crashing through the glass of the underwater control room. But JAWS: THE REVENGE is a bad bad movie. It is a very silly, absurdly stupid film. "This time it's personal" is the tagline, and if you believe Ellen Brody (Lorraine Gary), the great white in this movie wants vengeance (hence the title) on her entire family after gobbling up her son Sean in Martha's Vineyard. I didn't know that sharks hold grudges, but that's not even close to being the most moronic aspect of this fourquel. Get a load of this:

The shark follows the Brody family from Massachusetts to the Bahamas! In a couple of days!!! Ellen has a double "It's only a dream" nightmare about the shark attacking her. She also has recurring flashbacks to events where she wasn't even present. And that ending. That preposterous, poorly edited and shot ending with the great white doing an Air Jaws and finding itself on the wrong end of a broken bowsprit—and somehow blowing up! Still, it's not much worse than the film's original conclusion (see below). JAWS: THE REVENGE is an asinine, screwy flick. And the shark looks faker than Tara Reid's tatas.

{youtube}YqiWWmAEfTA{/youtube}

LEPRECHAUN 4: IN SPACE (1997)

The title of this entry in the saga of the evil Irish imp is almost a redundancy, since for some reason, shooting horror heroes into space seems to be the twist of choice when it comes to fourquels. It's a silly idea in almost any case, and the makers of this one don't even try to justify it; little Lep (once again played by Warwick Davis) just happens to be hanging out on a distant planet, minding his own business and trying to woo an alien princess, when the courtship is interrupted by a squad of space soldiers. Quicker than you can say "ALIENS knockoff #314," both the princess and the Leprechaun are aboard their ship, and the latter is stirring up a pot-o'-gold-full of trouble.

Actually, Lep's eternal quest for "me gold" is abandoned here, nor does he do any wish-granting as in previous entries. He winds up being almost a supporting character in his own movie, vying for attention with a half-cyborg scientist who later becomes a half-arachnid monster (don't ask) and the princess, whose inevitable baring of her boobs occasions the immortal line, "On the planet Dominia, when a woman of royal blood shows you her breasts, it's a death sentence." As ridiculous as this all is, transporting the murderous little green man into the stars at least isn't as ridiculous an idea as sending Pinhead there…which brings us to:

{youtube}T87XAihvd-I{/youtube}

HELLRAISER: BLOODLINE (1996)

This one is just sad. Originally intended as makeup FX master Kevin Yagher’s feature directorial debut, it endured the typical meddling by Dimension Films, which bounced Yagher from the helm and assigned reshoots to Joe Chappelle (whose own HALLOWEEN: THE CURSE OF MICHAEL MYERS had a similarly tortured history). The result wound up credited to “Alan Smithee” and is a mixed-up mess, an anthology of connected stories taking place in 18th-century France, 20th-century LA and a 22nd-century space station. It attempts to further explore the origins and secrets of Pinhead (Doug Bradley) and the Lament Configuration, introducing its inventor, Phillip Lemarchand (Bruce Ramsay, who also plays Lemarchand’s descendants), a sexy Cenobite (Valentina Vargas) and a new Configuration with the power to cancel out the puzzlebox’s powers. It would all be intriguing if it made a lick of sense, but the badly compromised storytelling and murky visuals result in a headache as bad as Captain Elliot Spencer got when those pins were driven into his skull.

{youtube}yLfpZMAJW3k{/youtube}

CRITTERS 4 (1992)

The galactic setting at least makes sense here, since the Critters themselves are aliens. Wait, did someone say ALIENS? Yep, it’s yet *another* knockoff of the James Cameron hit and Ridley Scott’s predecessor, with a starship crew getting into all kinds of trouble when it takes a cache of Critter eggs aboard. There are some good actors among this gang, including bad-ass Angela Bassett and weird-ass Brad Dourif, plus the inevitable teen hero (Paul Whitthorne, following in the footsteps of the first two CRITTERS’ Scott Grimes and the third’s Leonardo DiCaprio). They’re all given a lot more to do than the Critters, who don’t have nearly the amount of screen time they did in the previous films, as if all the budget went to the sci-fi hardware instead of the minimonsters that are this franchise raison d’etre. Unfortunately, the humans don’t have much of interest to do to distract from the lack of creature mayhem, and CRITTERS 4 ends up as just another trip to an already drained well.

{youtube}Lrps80sPSRM{/youtube}