

Long Live the New Flesh: Bandito Video, Thou Art Avenged

Written by David Pace

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On a cold day in March 1314 in front of the Notre Dame Cathedral, Templar Grand Master Jacques De Molay was slowly burned alive at the behest of the Holy Mother Church under pressure from King Philippe IV. He refused to confess to any crime or heresy, even to spare his own life. It is said that as the flames engulfed his body, he laid a curse upon the family of King Philippe IV. He swore the king would be called to stand before God before the year was out, and so it was that Philippe died within that same year.

In the 16th century, the Valois dynasty of France, descendants of Philippe, were nearly completely wiped from history over the course of 30 years by a series of mysterious deaths, murders and assassinations. Many remembered the legend of De Molay and his curse. Centuries later in 1789, Louis XVI—the last living descendent of Philippe—was put to the guillotine. Just as the blade fell and parted the disgraced monarch's head from his body, it is said a strange man leapt upon the scaffold, swept up a handful of the king's blood and flung it upon the crowd. As he did so, he is said to have announced: "Jacques De Molay, thou art avenged!"

This is what the history books tell us. Or at least the kind of history books that people who consider Dan Brown nonfiction might read.

So too has the vengeance of Bandito Video come to the Blockbuster dynasty.

In September 2011, Blockbuster Canada shut its doors for the last time. The once-mighty

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empire that ground all in its path under its marching jackboots fell to the poison pill all those it conquered had planted inside it. Consumers thought they wanted all that convenience, but just like the Templars, there was a cabal of consumers who would reject the Blockbuster model and drive the market in the direction that would inevitably lead to the collapse of the giant. People who wanted what they had before the homogeny of the Blockbuster experience.

So permit me to officially scatter some popcorn at the assembled virtual crowd and shout, "Bandito Video, thou art avenged!"

Video store of my coming of age, video store that made me love movies (see my previous blog [here](#))...your enemy is finally put to the sword.

The *Toronto Star* did a wonderful photo essay on the end of Blockbuster, which you can see here. <http://photogallery.thestar.com/1058698> I said I wouldn't celebrate, and I won't, but I can't suppress a sense of satisfaction on behalf of Bandito and a thousand other video outlets, on behalf of the dreams of the people who owned them. The bastards got a taste of their own for once. Thou art avenged.

To celebrate apocalyptic endings and the growth of new beginnings this week, I'd like to present New Zealand filmmaker Rowan Strang's THE END. I love the TWILIGHT ZONE vibe of this one. I think it sums up my feelings on the death of Blockbuster very nicely: Out of death can come new life. From the corpse of the media giant, the New Flesh is nourished.

{youtube}U0w8fi8K7wM{/youtube}