

## Miller Time: Editing "HELL COMES TO HOLLYWOOD", Part Two

Written by Vivienne Vaughn  
Monday, 17 September 2012 07:06

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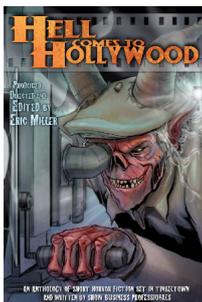


Fango continues its chat (begun [here](#)) with screenwriter-turned-anthology-editor Eric Miller, whose HELL COMES TO HOLLYWOOD (out now from [Big Time Books](#)) is an omnibus collecting tales of terror from Tinseltown veterans.

**FANGORIA:** How was it working with such a large array of writers?

**ERIC MILLER:** It was tough sometimes because I was also working in production while editing the book, so it was a juggling act to be sure. Making a book is a ton of work, just like making a movie. But thankfully, I am used to handling multiple units and managing large crews on sets, so my moviemaking experience helped make the movie book happen. And in the end, I got lots of help from the writers themselves, my cover designer, interior formatter, and my wife Wendy, the “typo queen.” I couldn’t have asked for a more accommodating bunch of professionals to help me bring the book home. I’m very happy with how it turned out.

**FANG:** Surpassing the disenchantment for the film industry prevails a love of horror, which is inspiring. Can you tell us a bit about the authors and their own involvement in the horror industry?



**MILLER:** There’s a wide array of talents and every one of them is enthusiastically into horror. C. Courtney Joyner, who wrote “One Night in the Valley” for the book, has over 25 produced films as a screenwriter, starting with THE OFFSPRING with Vincent Price, the PUPPET MASTER movies and so on; he also directed LURKING FEAR. “Trash Day” writer William Paquet is a sculptor who makes amazing limited edition statues at Quarantine Studio. Travis Baker and Richard Tanne started out working for me as interns at Raw Nerve and went on to write scripts for Eli Roth and Wes Craven, and Rich also stars in “Swamp Shark” and gets eaten alive on screen by a mutant fish. Travis just wrote and directed a very cool new slasher

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film called MISCHIEF NIGHT. Brian Muir created and wrote one of my favorite films of all time, CRITTERS, and though he passed away before the book was published, I'm sure he would have been as proud to be included in the book as I was honored to have him in it. So it's a wide variety of horror experience represented.

**FANG:** Disdain for LA/Hollywood is one theme in particular that recurs throughout many of the stories. Was this intentional?

**MILLER:** Not intentional at all. Well, maybe subconsciously.... We're all lucky to be working in showbiz, and busted our collective asses to get where we are, but it is a love/hate relationship with a very tough industry. And while the bulk of the people in Hollywood are nice, creative, professional people, we have all worked with asshole agents, self-serving directors, screeching diva actors and arrogant producers (and yes, whiny writers). But those types of people make for the best stories, which is why they made it into the book. A good example from HELL is Jeffrey Seeman's "The Cutting Room"; it takes gleeful, homicidal aim at mindless executives and annoying screenwriters. I've read the story more than a dozen times and still laugh out loud amidst the gore. I think anyone who has been on either side of the development desk, as executive or writer, will relate to it, and readers from outside the biz will see just how ridiculous some pitch meetings are - in ways it's not that far from some real meetings.

**FANG:** Was it planned for some of the stories to reflect similar themes or were the authors given complete freedom over their works and then all the stories assembled together later?

**MILLER:** I gave the writers total freedom other than the "this has to take place in Hollywood" theme. I let their imaginations run. Honestly, I expected to get 10 to 15 zombie stories and a like number of vampire stories, and that didn't happen. I love them zombies and bloodsuckers as much as the next geek, but I am happy to say the stories in the book went places I never could have imagined.

**FANG:** The style of a number of these stories is very visual; they almost read like screenplays. Do you foresee any of these being made into films at some point?

**MILLER:** The visual style comes from the writers' backgrounds as filmmakers. We work in a visual medium where our scripts are blueprints to be transformed into another form so we are

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trained to think in pictures (which is what all good writing should do anyway). A couple of these stories started out as short film screenplays, and one was a stage play, but most were created from whole cloth specifically for the book. And at the core, they are all good stories with a beginning, middle and end, which is important whether it is a script, novel, short story, film or TV show. As for making the book into a movie or series, of course the thought has crossed my mind, but I really wanted to celebrate the written word with this. But obviously it is a natural collection of stories that would make a great anthology horror film, or TV series, and given my movie production background, it could very well happen. Stay tuned, as they say...

**FANG:** Can we expect more genre books from you in the future?

**MILLER:** Absolutely. That was the plan all along for Big Time Books. And since Hollywood loves nothing more than a sequel, HELL 2 is looking more and more like it's going to happen, and I have many other ideas for books too. I am a big horror fan and love sci-fi and crime fiction as well. Just like B-movies, genre fiction is something I love. I like gritty, dark, hard stories, blood and guts and sweat and tears and no apologies for big characters living bigger lives in books and films. And I want to take advantage of the incredible talent roaming the streets of Los Angeles; the nature of Hollywood is that for every script sold, each writer probably has 10 completed scripts on the shelf and 20 story treatments. I want to mine that load of unproduced stories and find some bloody gems for readers. And I want to stretch outside of Hollywood writers eventually as well, but for now I am staying close to my literary home.

**FANG:** Would you collaborate with the same writers again?

**MILLER:** In a heartbeat. I am working on some side projects with some already, and would love to have stories or scripts or anything else from them in the future. I am trying hard to promote each one, because being a writer is a hard, lonely life, especially in Hollywood where the directors and actors get the glory most of the time. But in Hollywood, writers are king.