

RASPBERRY RIPLEY

Raspberry Martini

Arriving only a decade after the first Moon landing, *Alien* radically depicted space travel as a working-class profession: an evolution of industrial haulage populated with grumbling, underpaid employees, rather than intrepid test pilots. It's notable that when we first meet the crew of the *Nostramo*, blearily stirring from their hyper-sleep, they're in their underwear: by making its characters ordinary, it leaves them unprotected.

Out of a cast of character actors emerged one of the great heroes of her era: Ellen Ripley (Sigourney Weaver). Audiences cared for her not because of her iconic enemies, but due to her intelligence, cunning and compassion: even with a limited understanding of the impending threat, Ripley is wise enough to decide that the *Nostramo* should follow quarantine protocols and not let John Hurt's compromised Kane back on the ship.

For her climatic battle against the Xenomorph, Ripley is again undressed. In any other horror movie where a "final girl" faces the killer eliminating her companions, this would seem exploitative, but the impression here is of her significant vulnerability. In the corresponding fight in the film's expansive sequel *Aliens*, Ripley would have an exoskeleton and badass, righteous determination: here, she just has her wits and her tenacity.

If Ripley was to ever get some blessed downtime, or at least an evening without being hunted by an endoparasitic creature with acid blood and a bad attitude, then perhaps she'd enjoy this drink named in her honor.

½ oz. simple syrup

12 raspberries

½ oz. Chambord

4 oz. vodka

- 1 Add the simple syrup and 10 raspberries to a cocktail shaker and muddle the raspberries until they're pulpy.
- 2 Fill the shaker with ice.
- 3 Add the Chambord and vodka and shake.
- 4 Strain into a martini glass.
- 5 Add a couple of raspberries to the rim or skewer them on a toothpick and serve on top.



DRACULA'S KISS

Vampiro

As the son of a countess and a lieutenant colonel, Christopher Lee was always at his most effective playing characters from aristocratic or privileged backgrounds, whose corruption and malign intent are obscured by their status. In *Lord of the Rings*, Saruman's descent into evil is unthinkable to his fellow wizards; while as Lord Summerisle, the "hiding-in-plain-sight" antagonist of *The Wicker Man*, he is deceptively jovial in a yellow turtleneck and tweeds. His Lordship's refined upbringing convinces you that he must have your best interests at heart, but—in fiction as in real life—this is rarely the case.

Lee remains the definitive Count Dracula because he plays him both as an erotic figure and a slightly melancholy one. Recognizable for his operatic bass voice, imposing stature and menacing, sunken features, the secret of his appeal was his ability to charm audiences as he simultaneously scared them, making darkness and the occult seem oddly seductive, even if it was also deadly. The poster for the first of his seven Dracula pictures for Hammer Films describes him as "the terrifying lover who died—yet lived!" as he leans over a racy victim, his mouth approaching her neck. She seems rapturous at the prospect.

Over his centuries of unliving, Count Dracula narrowed his taste in beverages to just one. If he'd made it as far as South America, however, perhaps he would have discovered the Bloody Maria-adjacent Vampiro. Much-loved in Mexico, it's often sold there at stalls in plastic bags, its bright red liquid sloshing around diabolically.

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|------------------------|---|
| 2 oz. tequila | 1 Add all ingredients except the lime wedge into a cocktail shaker filled with ice. |
| 1 oz. tomato juice | 2 Shake well. |
| 1 oz. orange juice | 3 Strain into a highball glass filled with ice (or use a plastic bag). |
| ½ oz. lime juice | 4 Garnish with the lime wedge. |
| ½ oz. grenadine | |
| 7 drops of Tabasco | |
| pinch of salt | |
| grind of black pepper | |
| lime wedge, to garnish | |



SCREAM DE MENTHE

Stinger

The world was ready for *Scream*. Slasher films became so popular during the 1980s that they'd crowded out most other horror, but the formula was exhausted by endless sequels. In a genre that thrives on the element of surprise, it's difficult to scare an audience when they can anticipate everything that will happen. The time—specifically, the verbose, irony-embracing 1990s—was ripe for a slasher movie that puckishly explored its own conventions.

Scream takes place in a world where all the other horror films exist, and, pivotally, its characters have seen them all. This allowed writer Kevin Williamson to state the genre's rules and then play with them, ensuring a spark of energy whether he subverted them or followed through with them precisely.

At the time, this self-conscious, self-referential attitude was invigorating, and never more so than during its 12-minute opening scene—a deadly phone call which lasts just long enough to convince you that the film's biggest star, Drew Barrymore, is also the protagonist. It retained some of this power for the sequel, rushed out the following year, but by *Scream 3* it was already dated, as much of a formula as the very films it had been exposing.

The series' most successful tweak turned out to be reframing the slasher movie as a whodunnit: the killer, no matter their identity or preposterous reasons for turning to mass slaughter, wasn't a supernatural brute but an acquaintance hiding behind a cheap Halloween mask. This made them more human, and therefore more horrifying.

2 ½ oz. Cognac

1 oz. white crème de menthe

1 mint leaf, to garnish

- 1 Add the Cognac and crème de menthe to a cocktail shaker.
- 2 Shake vigorously.
- 3 Strain into a chilled martini glass (although this drink can also be served over ice in an old-fashioned glass).
- 4 Garnish with the mint leaf.



THE KARLOFF

Old-Fashioned

There aren't enough question marks in modern cinema. The glyph has a long history in gimmick-driven credits, from movies finishing with "The End?" to the first appearance of Bond villain, Blofeld in *From Russia with Love*, being credited to "?". But the best-known example comes from James Whale's 1931 version of *Frankenstein*, where the Monster was credited simply as "?".

Following this idea through to its glorious conclusion, it suggests the filmmakers honestly didn't know who played the Monster, and that some undead creature just stumbled onto the set one day. Unamused by this was the actor in question, Boris Karloff, who became a worldwide star in the film's wake. Perhaps in reaction to his early snubbing, by the time he made the sequel *Bride of Frankenstein*, his credit simply read: "KARLOFF."

Of course, dozens of actors have portrayed Mary Shelley's wretched creature, but the definitive image remains that of Boris Karloff: the ragged suit, square forehead, heavily lidded eyes, and bolt through the neck; Frankenstein's power comes from the sympathy Karloff generated for him as a misunderstood figure oddly vulnerable despite his strength, and only driven to anger out of confusion and fear.

Karloff, who played another of Universal's iconic monsters, the Mummy, was one of horror's biggest stars and while the genre's appeal waned as the world grappled with larger horrors, his popularity endured.

1 sugar cube

2 dashes of Angostura Bitters

2 dashes of water or club soda

1 ½ oz. Bourbon

maraschino cherry, to garnish

orange peel, to garnish

1 Place sugar cube in an old-fashioned glass.

2 Add a few dashes of the bitters.

3 Add a few dashes of water or club soda.

4 Muddle until the sugar has dissolved.

5 Add a few ice cubes.

6 Add the Bourbon and gently stir.

7 Garnish with a cherry and a twist of orange peel.



PARANORMAL ECCTIVITY

Deviled Eggs

Space operas and fantasy epics benefit from huge budgets, which allow them the special effects and set design needed to portray elaborate environments. Horror works in reverse: it's rare to find a big-budget horror movie that's actually any good. The genre is intrinsically transgressive, trafficking in violence and the grotesque. It thrives in the unpolished, the dirty and the cheap, which might fool you for a moment into thinking you're watching real-life and not a film: the expensive computer-generated ghosts of 1999's *The Haunting*, for example, can't hope to compete with the scene in *Paranormal Activity* where a woman wakes up suddenly.

Paranormal Activity tests this thesis to the limit. Its budget was only \$15,000, which might be just about enough for a new compact car. They don't even spring for a second location, with the film shot entirely in director Oren Peli's actual suburban home. And yet *Paranormal Activity* is effective because the filmmaker had to approach these limitations creatively, creating a sense of dread to make otherwise-mundane things scary.

Nothing happens most of the time, purposefully. It's the anticipation that gets you, the waiting and waiting as Katie (Katie Featherston) and Micah (Micah Sloat) are progressively tormented by an unseen supernatural presence. By returning to the same austere setup—a bed and an open door—again and again, the audience becomes uneasy at its every appearance, and primed to react to its smallest changes. The film understands that the creepiest thing in the world can be an unexpected noise in the middle of the night, or the abrupt, unexplained slam of a door.

Makes 12 deviled eggs

6 eggs

1 oz. mayonnaise

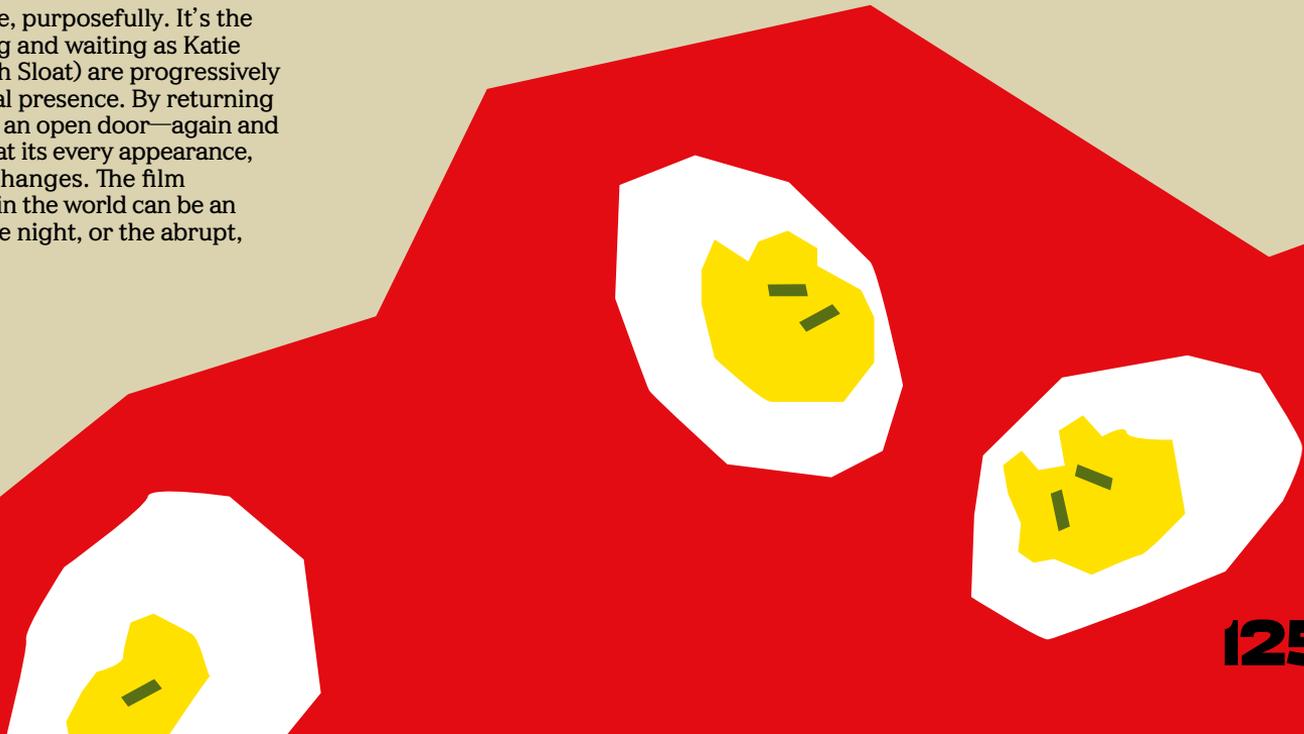
1 tsp. Dijon mustard

salt and pepper

paprika

chives, chopped

- 1 Hard-boil the eggs in a saucepan.
- 2 Peel the eggs and cut them in half lengthwise.
- 3 Remove the yolks with a spoon and place in a bowl, setting aside the egg whites.
- 4 Mix the yolks, mayonnaise, and mustard with a pinch of salt, pepper, and paprika.
- 5 Spoon the yolk mixture back into the egg whites.
- 6 Sprinkle with paprika before topping with chopped chives.



A LITERAL BIRD BOX

Katsu chicken skewers

What infinitesimal convulsions of the universe must occur to produce two volcano-themed disaster movies in the same year? How did we end up with competing films about neurotic ants, Truman Capote, and asteroids heading for Earth?

Perhaps it's coincidence, or perhaps it's as simple as two studios owning the rights to similar projects, and news of one imminent production prompting the other to race to beat them to market. But ideas tend to emerge organically from different places at the same time, so maybe—like the contested invention of the telephone—it just so happened that in 2011 there were two completely unrelated romantic comedies about friends hooking up.

Such films become twins, forever linked in our imaginations due to their inadvertent proximity, with one deemed the unofficial winner by metrics that are fuzzy and emotional. In 2018, this fate befell *Bird Box* and *A Quiet Place*, two post-apocalyptic horror films about mysterious entities attacking people in a fashion that necessitates limiting a single sense to survive. The characters in *A Quiet Place* must remain unheard, while those in *Bird Box* mustn't look upon their foes, otherwise they'll go mad and take their own lives.

Posterity will decide the eventual “winner,” but no one can quite claim to have gotten there first: although *Bird Box* was released nine months later than *A Quiet Place*, it's an adaption of a 2014 novel, while *A Quiet Place* bears some resemblance to the 2015 novel *The Silence*; and the 2019 film adaptation of *The Silence* bears some resemblance to *A Quiet Place*.

All of them are pretty average.

Makes approximately 18 skewers

3 chicken breasts

3 tbsp. soy sauce

juice of 1 lime

3 tbsp. honey

1 tbsp. vegetable oil

1 onion, finely chopped

1 carrot, finely chopped

thumb-size piece of ginger,
peeled and grated

3 garlic cloves, crushed

1 tbsp. medium curry powder

½ tsp. ground turmeric

14 fl. oz. can of coconut milk

1 tbsp. all-purpose flour

wooden skewers, soaked in water

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 2 Slice the chicken into strips and marinate in the soy sauce, lime juice, and 2 tablespoons of honey. Refrigerate.
- 3 Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Sauté the onion and carrot until softened and starting to caramelize.
- 4 Add the ginger and garlic for 30 seconds then stir in the curry powder and turmeric.
- 5 Add the coconut milk, 3 ½ fl. oz. water and 1 tablespoon of honey.
- 6 Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 15–20 minutes until thickened, adding flour.
- 7 Remove from the heat and blitz the carrots and onions with a stick blender. Keep dip warm.
- 8 Skewer each chicken strip individually and place on a baking sheet.
- 9 Bake for 10–15 minutes until the chicken is cooked through.
- 10 Serve on a tray with the katsu dip.



AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MARINARA

Garlic Bread Sticks with Marinara dipping sauce

Reconciling someone's personal beliefs with their artistic output can be disorientating, but with H.P. Lovecraft it's impossible to parse the two: his tentacled monstrosities and rancid worldview are inseparable. On a fundamental level, all of his work was about a fear of "the Other." The palpable disgust that Lovecraft drew from to depict shoggoths, sentient mutagenic colors, and colossal worms worshiped by insane death cults is the same source as his racism, bigotry, and white supremacy.

Lovecraft's inexhaustible dedication to cosmic horror—his "Elder Things" aren't deities or supernatural monsters but extraterrestrials from the void; terrifying in their awesome scale and indifferent to us, and so incomprehensible that you lose your mind by looking upon them—was generally ignored during his lifetime, and direct adaptations of his key stories like *At the Mountains of Madness* have often struggled to reach the screen, but Lovecraft's work has profoundly influenced horror from Stephen King to John Carpenter, *Alien* to *Ghostbusters*.

While Lovecraft's racism has been examined critically since his death, writers and filmmakers have been content to pull inspiration from his Eldritch terrors without interrogating the slimy ideology beneath the slimy creatures. It took much longer, most notably in the Matt Ruff's 2016 book *Lovecraft Country* and Misha Green's subsequent television adaptation, for Lovecraft's racism to be properly reflected within Lovecraftian horror.

Makes 8–10 bread sticks

4 oz. extra-virgin olive oil

4 tbsp. unsalted butter

3 large garlic cloves, crushed

1 oz. flatleaf parsley, chopped

1 large baguette, split and halved

1 ½ oz. Pecorino Romano cheese, grated

marinara sauce, for serving

- 1 Preheat oven to 450°F.
- 2 In a medium skillet, add the olive oil and melt the butter.
- 3 Turn up the heat, add the garlic and cook for 1 minute.
- 4 Remove from the heat and add the parsley.
- 5 Place the bread on a baking sheet, face up.
- 6 Spoon the garlic butter on top.
- 7 Sprinkle with cheese.
- 8 Bake in the oven for 10 minutes.
- 9 Place bread under the grill for a minute, until just golden.
- 10 Cut into ½-inch "fries."
- 11 Serve in cups alongside a dipping bowl of marinara sauce.

