

LIVING CORPSE

Girl With Gun (2006)

Directed by Russ Emanuel

Written by Emile Haris

Starring: Tracy O'Connor, Michelle Martin, Erick Holloway, Michelle Lee, Matteo Ribaldo, David Neff, Dina Kriger, and Scott St. Blaze

Genre: Action / Kung-Fu / Short | **Rated:** NR | **Runtime:** 14 min.

Online References: [Official Website](#) / [IMDb](#)

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One of the more interesting things about doing movie reviews is the wide variety of things submitted by aspiring filmmakers, especially genre filmmakers with postage money to spare. You drop the dime, we do the review, and you get publicity. Good, bad, or indifferent, there is no such thing as bad publicity, and generally the reviewers at Living Corpse will watch anything.

Because we'll watch things most won't, we get a lot of short films. While it makes our work more difficult (you try squeezing out 500-1000 words on 14 minutes of celluloid), it's also generally very rewarding because short films are like a good hot dog. There's all meat, no filler. And if you think I'm writing this on an empty stomach, you're dead right, mister.

Gwen Hunter (Tracy O'Connor) is your typical all-American girl. She's pretty, blonde, and... oh yeah, she's also a crime-fighting assassin, codenamed Nightingale, who struggles to make time with her prospective boyfriend Dan (Erick Holloway) when she's not busy rushing off to attempt to kill a mob boss (David Neff) while pretending to be on a bathroom break. No doubt Dan must be thinking Gwen has some sort of medical condition, like a bladder the size of a pecan.

Of course, things are never this easy in the world of crime fighting, so no one should be too surprised with the mob boss, supposedly an easy mark, has his own personal assault weapon in the form of Ninja Girl (Michelle Lee). Lo, and God looked down from the heavens, seeing two furious female assassins squaring off. He clapped His mighty hands and commanded in a booming voice, "Let there be Fu!" He smiled, and it was good.

Very good, in fact. The fight choreography is excellent, as is the wire-work performed by the lead kunoichi (female ninja, or alternately, a ninjette). The cinematography emphasizes the action of the combat and covers up the lack of Hong Kong level fistic prowess nicely. Not only do the ladies look good, they look good fighting, which is a tough see-saw to balance.

Technically, the film is flawless. The acting is above average, if a bit strained at times, and while the film itself is entertaining, the contrast between the two tones (action movie badass and romantic-comedy-style good-hearted heroine) is a bit tough to balance at times. Sometimes it works, and sometimes it begs for a little more of a bridge between the two worlds. The lack of length the film offers both heightens dissonance between Gwen's two worlds and gives it a bit of a claustrophobic, rushed feel, generally making the whole comic-book world



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the story takes place in feel off balance.

Despite my criticisms, that doesn't make it a bad film in the slightest, simply uneven, which causes it to struggle when compared with Alex Ferrari's masterful "**Broken**." You try making an action movie and a romantic comedy in less time than your average sitcom while making your film look good. I bet you can't do it. If you do, though, let me know and I'll be the first one to get in line to rip you a new corn chute. It's not new territory, but it is familiar territory done well, with style and a nice comedic touch.



- RON HOGAN | 07-06-2006

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