

War of the Worlds

The Hollywood Invasion

By Reg Dare

“Keep the radio on,” the director asked the makeup crew. “Let us all know what happens.”

Hollywood is a crazy place at the best of times, but this was too strange even for an experienced director like himself. Earth was being invaded by aliens, for real. Here they were making “Invaders from Saturn” at the same time. But the order to evacuate Los Angeles hadn’t been given yet so work continued as best it could. The military had announced they were going to drop the A bomb on the aliens soon – everyone was hoping that would stop them.

He arrived at the set, made to look like a desert, and watched as the crew assembled the alien robot. Ed smiled, they’d get to blow it up soon.

Invaders from Saturn was different. It was being paid for by two scientists who had invented real life energy weapons! The plan was to use them in the movie, then after the movie got released the scientists would reveal the real thing to the world.

The crew finished with the robot, lights and camera were ready, the two lead actors were coming to the set. Blake Conway was a movie serial veteran, Chase Rens his younger co star. Both wore grey jumpsuits and boots, on their backs were silver backpacks with a thick cable running to the chunky energy guns they carried.

One of the scientists came over and pressed a button activating the backpacks, there was a whine as they powered up. Everyone was in place. One final check...

“Action” the director called. Chase moved to blast the robot, he triggered his gun, there was a loud click and his backpack powered down. “Cut!” Ed called. He smiled to himself, it wasn’t the first time this had happened, but he had seen these weapons work. It was a challenge to make the robots sturdy enough to do these weapons justice. He couldn’t wait until they got to use the heavy duty “tank” version – that would look great! Meanwhile the scientists rushed over to reset the backpack. Ray and Derek were both in their fifties, rarely seen out of their lab coats but they knew what they were doing.

Soon they were ready for another take, and this time Chase – with his multi coloured energy ray - blasted the robot to bits.

“I remember when we had to fake blowing stuff up,” Blake said as soon as “cut & print” was called. He slapped Chase on the shoulder, “this is much more fun!”

Then the makeup crew rushed on to the set. “The A bomb failed! They’ve given the order to evacuate!”

“Ok everyone, we have to go! Try to stay together!” Ed ordered. The entire crew left the studio, ran to their cars. They soon found they couldn’t drive out of the studio lot, in the rush to leave another crew had created a nasty auto pile up right near the exit, and had since fled on foot. They now had to do the same.

Outside it was horribly quiet, the evacuation seemed to have already happened!

“Look!” called Chase, pointing down the road and only slightly skyward. The invading aliens were right on top of them already! Three of the mantis shaped ships, with those eye stalks that shot those deadly red rays.

A block up the road they saw a lady and a young boy running around the corner, coming towards them, but they had no chance!

“Run!” yelled Blake, “Hurry!” as he ran up the road towards them, and aliens! A second later Chase joined him. “Let’s hope these things work this time!”

The red alien eye looked down towards them, back and forth between the actors and the lady with her son. It was about to open fire – but Blake beat them to it! His energy weapon blasted right through the alien crafts shield! His shot took out the red eye! Chase hit the ship with some shots to the body, blowing holes in it. The alien ship swayed and began to drop.

“Mum, look, they’re awesome!”

“They are!” she said. She was slightly overwhelmed, this nice spaceman and just saved her and her son Frank from invading aliens. This sort of thing didn’t happen to her that often.

There was a huge explosion at the studio gates, the auto tangle had been blasted! The scientists had got their tank going! The outer body of the tank may have just been a movie prop built on a car chassis but the energy cannon mounted on it was real. They turned out onto the road, Derek driving, Ray aiming the cannon - and took out the second alien ship with one shot! It exploded in mid air! The third alien ship tried to change course and flee but Blake and Chase shot it down.

Blake rushed over to the lady. “Are you and your son alright?”

“We’re ok.” She held out her hand. “My name’s Mildred, Mildred Lila.” She wanted to say more. She wanted to tell him how she’d lost her husband in the war and thought she’d never find another hero like him, until maybe right now. She was speechless, but her eyes said it all.

Epilogue

“Invaders from Saturn” was never completed. The government took a lot of interest in the energy weapons, the technology was purchased and sent to a government lab for further research. Strangely the inventors, Ray Fuller and Derek Swan, were not required for this further development. They were encouraged to retire as very rich men.

Ed, Chase, Blake Conway and his new bride Mildred Lila reunited for their next movie “Heroes of the Spaceways.” It was a massive hit.