

INNOCENT BLOOD



Jeepers creepers, where'd you get those peepers? Anne Parillaud plays a sweet, vulnerable vampire in this darkly humorous horror film.

A worldwide hit thriller called *La Femme Nikita* introduced audiences to a sleek French actress named Anne Parillaud. In the role of a government-programmed hit woman, she created a striking image — soft, feminine, and lethal.

In *Innocent Blood*, as a vampire with a conscience, Parillaud creates yet another beautiful, confused killing machine, this one with teeth.

Written by novelist Michael Wolk (*The Big Picture*), *Innocent Blood* tells the story of Marie, a conscience-stricken vampire who (shades of *Batman*) slakes her thirst on the blood of the criminal element in Pittsburgh. Thus freed from guilt by a moral loophole, Marie is able to look at her face in the mirror without shame (if indeed she can see herself in the mirror).

All in all, an ideal arrangement. That is, until she preys on the crime chief of Pittsburgh. Sal Macelli (Robert Loggia), and is interrupted before she can finish

him off. His death incomplete, Sal awakes as one of the Undead, a vicious bloodsucker with extra criminal instincts, and none of Marie's moral qualms. Now the hunted, Marie has to turn to one of the living for help, an undercover cop named Joe Gennaro (Anthony LaPaglia), who is in danger himself after his cover is blown.

For fans of the horror genre, *Innocent Blood* marks the welcome return of director John Landis. Though he's better known for mega-hits like *Animal House*, *Trading Places* and *Coming to America*, Landis rose to cult fame as the director of an early '70s horror spoof called *Schlock*.

"I have been totally in love since I was eight, when I saw Ray Harryhausen's *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*," Landis says of his love of monsters. "I went berserko — it was a total suspension of my disbelief. I went home and asked my mother, 'Who makes the movie?' And she said, 'The director.' Luckily for me."

— Jim Slotek



UNDER SIEGE

Fade in on the USS Missouri, an awesome 900-foot battleship setting sail on its final voyage before being mothballed. Now cut to a band of ruthless and maniacal terrorists. They are plotting to hijack the ship and blackmail the world with its arsenal of nuclear missiles.

Enter Steven Seagal, an absolute whiz at martial arts, as he's so deftly demonstrated in his four movies to date — *Above the Law*, *Hard to Kill*, *Marked for Death* and *Out for Justice*.

In *Under Siege*, Seagal plays Casey Ryback, the Missouri's cook, once a full-fledged hero who now downplays his glorious and medal-bedecked military career. Facing him are two very nasty types indeed — Tommy Lee Jones as a deranged ex-Special Forces leader and Gary Busey as the Missouri's traitorous second-in-command.

Seagal's rise to his present status as actor, writer, producer and

all-round movie mogul has been well documented. He discovered karate at the age of seven and moved to Tokyo as a teenager. Over the next 15 years he honed his skills and set up Japan's first "dojo" (martial-arts academy) to be run by a non-Asian.

Eventually, Seagal forayed into choreographing fight scenes in kung-fu movies and instructed the likes of James Mason and Sean Connery. It was Mason who actually sparked his interest in acting, explaining that "The secret is not to act but to be" — a Zen-like philosophy that particularly appealed to Seagal. He returned to L.A. and set up another dojo before his debut in 1988's *Above the Law*.

In recent interviews, Seagal has admitted his desire to take on more "serious" dramatic roles. But until that time, it seems audiences are happy to have him as a red-blooded action hero, dishing out high-powered thrills and edge-of-your-seat suspense.

— Richard Judge



Steven Seagal stars as a hero-turned-cook who's forced to turn hero again when terrorists target the battleship he works on.