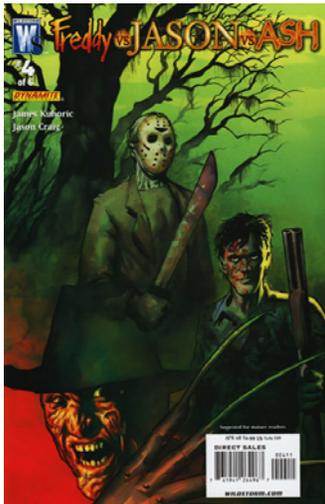


FREDDY vs. JASON vs. ASH #4 COMMENTARY



Prepared by James Kuhoric

Participants:

Jason Craig (JC)
Jeff Katz (JK)
James Kuhoric (JAK)
Thomas Mason (TM)
Scott Peterson (SP)
Joe Rybandt (JPR)

It's a bloody New Year for all the slacking kiddies of Crystal Lake and Springwood and the violent cacophony of boomstick blasts, blood curling screams, and revved chainsaws is in the air! Instead of watching the ball drop they'll be seeing heads roll in the latest installment of the Freddy vs. Jason vs. Ash "directors' commentary" continues. When last we saw our boy, Ash, he was reliving his own personal nightmare. Having "awakened" in the old cabin he finds that his severed hand has been restored, but only momentarily. With Freddy overseeing yet another possession of his bad hand, our Chosen One seems about to relive one of his worst Deadite nightmares.

Our cast of contributors has returned once again to give you even more behind the scenes insight into the Freddy vs. Jason vs. Ash original movie pitch, the comic book, and the upcoming trade paperback collection. Join Jason Craig (artist), Thomas Mason (colorist), James Kuhoric (writer), Scott Peterson (executive editor / Wildstorm), Joe Rybandt (executive editor / Dynamite Ent), and Jeff Katz (Original FvJvA writer and Fox VP) as they share their personal thoughts about every aspect of the comic book and how it would have translated into movie format. This "directors' commentary" is a way for all the creators involved with the collaboration to talk directly with the readers about our opinions of the story and what led us to this point.

Grab a copy of the Freddy vs. Jason vs. Ash #4 comic and join our bloody book club as the creators take you page by page through the rising body count and fill in the blanks on how this mega event became a reality.

Page 1
Panel 1

JAK: Poor, poor Ash. Looks like fate dealt him yet another “bad hand.” This time he’s looking an organic Krueger claw instead of chittering Deadite possessed digits (better make sure there aren’t any plates around to smash over his head this time). I love how Jason Craig made this “effect” look so much like an authentic Wes Craven Nightmare image. See how the blades rip up through the fingernails. That is goretastically classic. The “Farewell to Arms” reference is a nod to the classic ED2 dismembering scene.

Panels 2-4

JAK: “Get to the tool shed...” Love the ED imagery here. Ash rushes to the tool shed to find...ah yes, the handy chainsaw. Anyone want to guess what is coming next? Inside the shed we see the signature Rami light bulb casting its harsh glow on the set. In our movie it would be swinging just a bit from the rush of Ash barreling into the building and providing that surreal element to dream sequences that Jason talked about last issue. The great worm’s eye view from the ground where the saw rests looking up at Ash perfectly frames our sequence in classic AOD style.

JC: I really wanted to get in your face with the detail, and I really pushed myself to try and nail the back side of the actual cabin and tool shed from the movie. I really was happy with the end result after Sir Thomas hit it with his amazing colors.

Page 2
Panels 1-3

JAK: Sweet! The bad hand dismembering scene nails Ash’s extreme expressions and pours on the AOD blood. This isn’t just a cut, baby. This is a blood gusher. I love the splattering effect on Ash’s face as he starts to lose it.

JC: This was another page that was important to nail the staging and detail to truly page homage to the windmill scene in Army of Darkness.

JPR: Much like being attacked and killed by a shark, I have to image cutting off your own hand, not once, but TWICE – with a freakin’ CHAINSAW – has to be one of these things one hopes to never experience in life.

Panels 4-8

JAK: You have to give Jason Craig all the credit for directing a near perfect scene on these first two pages. If you are a fan of the ED / AOD trilogy, you can’t help but be impressed here. The mood, the angles, and the extreme horror are dead on! Sam Rami would be proud of the way this scene plays out.

TM: Freddy’s the man! This was a fun scene to do. What better way for Freddy to mess with Ash’s mind then to give him his hand back and then have Freddy’s blades pop out of his fingers! The homage to the Evil Dead movies where Ash cuts off his hand here is priceless. I think Jason nailed these pages.

JC: Awww, thanks boys....I’m a huge fan of Sam, and the greatest achievement I feel any of us would appreciate would be to deliver a product that both the respected film creators and fans appreciate.

Page 3
Panels 1-5

JAK: This scene was just plain fun. Ash is still in the nightmare world and we needed a fun and clever way to introduce Freddy. Since Freddy is in Ash’s head, his past history is fair game. Freddy loves taunting his victims with their deepest fears and horrors. In this case he plucked the AOD “mini-Ashes”

from Ash's subconscious and twisted them to his own purpose. The little Freddy jingle made me chuckle out loud the first time I imagined Robert Englund singing it. "Nine, Ten...Freddy's whole again."

JC: I heard...I'm baaack!!!

TM: Little "dancing" Freddy's... how cool is that?!

JPR: How many lil' Freddy's does it take a big Freddy... let's see, a-one, a-two, a-three...

Panel 2

JAK: And oh yeah, "if this little trip down memory lane with you and your right hand got you all weepy-eyed for those quiet special nights, just wait'll you see this one..." Heh...that's classic Krueger, baby. Guess this director's commentary is picking up where the last dirty one left off.

JK: I had nothing to do with it!

JC: I cherish those special quiet nights...especially on the long grueling schedule this book has put us all on...

JAK: Gives a whole new meaning to "grueling horror," doesn't it?

Page 4 Panels 1-2

JAK: Perfect Freddy posture once again! Jason has a way of nailing that special dance-like charismatic quality Robert Englund oozes in his role on film. I loved the line about the dueling banjos and mother fantasies he lived through in Jason's mind. And people thought Robert was cute as Willie on V. Freddy is a whole other type of lizard in disguise.

JC: In this part of the country dueling banjos I believe to be the local school theme song, and "squeal like a pig" is their motto...(I live close enough to Kentucky to shop there, and far enough away to 'poke' fun). Don't get me started on Tom living in 'toofless' country.

Panels 2-5

JAK: Freddy is a master at this kind of mind-screw. Picking up Ash's severed blade-hand; he brings it to life and uses it to skewer the Chosen One. Kind of a new angle on "fingering" someone, huh?

JC: I was leaning towards a hand job joke

JK: I'm not touching that one.

JAK: Hey! Get your minds out of the gutter...that's not what I meant!

Page 5 Panels 1-3

JAK: Yeah, see Freddy, this ain't some goofy teenaged victim you got here. It's Ashley J. Williams, the ass-kicking, Deadite dismembering, Elvis impersonating, Housewares clerk. He doesn't play by Freddy's rules or anyone's rules but his own and he doesn't take any crap from charbroiled assholes in ratty holiday sweaters. You got that?!

JPR: Nice shot all around here in panel 1: It's hard to convey such motion in one single panel, but Jason and Tom did it here and nailed it...

Panels 4-5

JAK: Good old Freddie. Just when you think you have him where you want him, he pulls out the ace out of his sleeve. Tough guy can stop one bad hand...how's about you try fifty? Not so tough now are ya, Ash?

JC: I remember thinking, drawing umpteen Freddy's was a nightmare on page 2, no pun intended, now I get to draw umpteen Ash clawed hands. I was visually happy with how both came out though.

Page 6 Panels 1-3

JAK: Lucky for our boy, Ash, he's used to thinking on his feet. Hey – it's nice to know all those concussive blows to the head haven't slowed him down. Using the hot barrels of the boom-stick, he wakes himself from the nightmare and realizes that what happens in there follows you to the real world.

JPR: Nice stump detail, lookit the bones man!

Panels 4-5

JAK: Oh, no...Davy won't wake up. That's right, boy-o...Freddy's got'cha!

Page 7 Panels 1-5

JAK: Jeff's original treatment actually called for a vicious Freddy kill here – something along the lines of the marionette kill or the cockroach scene from the Nightmare flicks. The comic scene started out that way too...but we went with a slightly different direction to help fill in Dave's personality. See from the start Davy was supposed to be the "good kid" from high school. You know, the one that stays out of trouble and follows the hot chick around with puppy dog eyes for his four hell years of education (not that I'd know anything about that personally...er-hrmm). Since our time with the S-Mart kids is pretty limited through the book due to space constraints, we decided to give our boy one last chance to let his personality through. Freddy built this little nightmare ditty on Dave's own insecurities in "Testosterone High."

Page 8 Panel 1

JAK: Freddy's coach personality is based on that same dick-wad coach every non-jock kid had to deal with in high school. This one's for you Mr. Monaco. Bite me.

Panels 2-5

JAK: In the movie version of FvJvA, we'd see poor Davy's dodge or die sequence in modified bullet time. It would really build the surrealistic quality of the scene and I can see how the balls would shatter the walls and floor sending up a spray of debris into a halo effect around Dave just as the first cannonball hits him shattering his ribcage. Not as brutal as some of the other kills, but a really colorful way for Davy to bite it.

JPR: In panels 3, 4, and 5, we have another great use of motion and energy to sell this scene. And from the twisted minds at the writer's helm, we have what must again, be one of the very worst ways to die. "My son, see, he was killed by (sob) BALLS!"

Page 9
Panels 1-3

JAK: Feeling helpless yet? The S-Mart crew watches their friend Davy as his body is inexplicably broken and shattered in the real world. I like how the school jocks transform into the demons they hide just under their perfect skin. Tell me that isn't the truest part of the whole sequence.

Panel 4

JAK: Urk...poor Davy. I like what Jason did here, but in the movie version we'd have a lot more blood. I'm talking ED / AOD amounts of blood. You know...teenage Johnny Depp napping on Elm Street geysers of blood

Page 10
Panels 1-4

JAK: Freddy is back and loving it. This scene is a perfect little Freddy and Jason interlude before the shit hits the fan. Panel 4 is as creepy as it is effective. Freddy's hoarse whisper into Jason's ear foreshadows the action to come. By "heavy reading" he has a certain leather faced book in mind. Better break out the blackened flesh bookmarks for that damned text, old boy.

JC: This was another proud moment for me in the Freddy Lore, because I remember calling James and saying 'Ok, we have seen Freddy pulled out of dreams a good number of times, but to be killed. We have yet to see him in the real world, and still able to move in and out of dreams. How did you have in mind this would work?' After a lengthy conversation, I told James I had this idea, kind of like the movie Stargate, where he's walking through the reality planes or dimensions, passing from dream to reality like walking through ripples in time. James was sold, and I was really pleased with the end result Thomas delivered, and again, happy that we was able to again give the fans something new in the Nightmare on Elm Street lore.

Page 11
Panels 1-5

JAK: OK...Davy's dead and Ash is determined to take out both Jason and Freddy before they can do any more damage. Back at S-Mart the gang breaks into the store to get restocked before going after the Necronomicon. Time to get some S-Mart Price Slasher savings!

JK: I'm a sucker for sequences where your heroes get their supplies in order. Love shots of weapons being picked, stowed, etc., all usually in montage. They're a hallmark of the 80's and not done nearly enough anymore. This feels totally "of the genre" and gives me a nice warm nostalgic feeling.



JPR: This would have made an awesome “montage” in the film... lots of time getting the gear together, but what music would it have been set to? I see Ash as an “Eye of the Tiger” man...

Page 12
Panels 1-5

JAK: Jason busted up Ash’s last chainsaw arm back at the S-Mart, so he’s taking a few minutes to upgrade to Chain Lighting! Yeah, the goofy display back in issue #2 did more than just give us a couple laughs, it inspired Ash’s new diamond tipped, steel bladed baby. Now that he’s got the explosives set and the new weapons on hand, he takes a minute to enjoy the finer things in life. Nothing beats a little sugar, baby.

JC: Another cool part like on page 10 giving a new Freddy moment or scene, this was the same, getting to give Ash a new saw that has a sleeker, meaner look.

JPR: So shiny!

Page 13
Panels 1-3

JAK: I called this little sequence, “Ash’s public service announcement.” Lol. Remember kids, only you can prevent forest fires. Now go do your part and don’t get killed. I find that if you read this sequence and imagine Red Forman from That 70’s Show, you’ll get a real chuckle (though you have to add “dumbasses” to the end of the line to get the full effect). If they make the movie, Kurtwood Smith should definitely get a role. Heh!

JK: He’ll always be Clarence Boddicker to me. Freddy vs. Jason vs. Ash vs. Clarence Boddicker? I’m there! “Bitches, leave!”

JAK: You know it... “I work for Dick Jones, Dick Jones!”

Page 14
Panels 1-5

JAK: Jason Craig really understood this “Scooby Doo” sequence. Here we have Raoul and Jarvis traipsing through the woods trying to lure Jason back to the house to blow him to pieces. These two goofs are scared shitless and are still trying to keep up their macho personas. They’re passing all these dead trees while they banter back and forth until Raoul bends over to check something out. Then the moment – ch-ch-ch-ah-ah-ah! That’s not a tree, its Jason effing Voorhees! There is a real jump out of your seat element to this reveal and its one that has us pulling for the kids. Zoiks, run Shaggy, run!

JPR: Definitely not looking too good for the boys there in panel 1... shk-shk-shk, ch-ch-ch, and ah-ah-ah indeed!

JC: This whole sequence between the last of page 13 and all of page 14 really paid off from start to finish, I really caught the vibe James had written, I pushed the Scooby Doo living bait moment, and Thomas carried it out seeing this sequence almost perfectly through between what the three of us envisioned

Page 15
Panels 1-5

JAK: Quick – plant the bait and hide boys. Jason’s so stupid; he’ll take it hook-line-and-sinker. Or not...

Page 16
Panels 1-3

JAK: Why isn't he taking the bait...he can't know...can he? You can just feel the tension as Caroline watches in horror wondering why Jason isn't wondering into the house with the explosives. And then, one of my favorite panels in the book. Turning to where he knows the kids are hiding, Jason shakes his finger at them in a "naughty-naughty" motion. It seems that Jason has started learning. I guess the Necronomicon and Freddy kept their promises. Mrs. Voorhees little boy is back and he's pissed.

JPR: this whole page is right out of the movie they never made, it's perfect!

JK: This is a major payoff and an idea that I think had to be tried just once, given the context. The idea of a "smart" Jason, if even only for a moment, is a really interesting angle to approach the Friday the 13th world from. And it makes sense in the limited psychology of Jason, as the mentally disabled kid always trying to do good for mommy. It always seemed like an interesting left turn that raises the stakes for everyone involved, while particularly making Ash's job as the hero that much tougher. Jason's a bad mother when he's dense, what happens when his brain starts working a bit?

Panels 4-5

JAK: This sequence would be a real shocker in the film version. For the first time ever, an intelligent Jason Voorhees comes after his victims with two machetes. Jeff was very explicit about this part in the movie outline. It's a real "two fisted" shocker. Now run, Caroline, run! Wait...shouldn't she loose her shirt right about here? Come on, Jason, you're losing your touch. Lol.

JC: I have to admit this was one of my favorite pages as well. I really loved the camera shift with her ducking in Panel 1 and 2. I loved that moment when Jason shakes his finger, it's truly that moment in the film when you in the audience goes, 'oh sh#t' and then cheers. The payoff to that scene was seeing Jason pull out another machete so he's now got a sadistic hillbilly samurai look.

Page 17
Panels 1-5

JAK: Where, oh where, is the Necronomicon? Oh where, oh where can it be? Hey, here it is...right by this old fedora. Damn, Ash...you must be the only one in the entire comic reading world who didn't see this coming. Pick up the book – get skewered by Freddy. When I wrote this sequence, I originally thought we'd just see one or two of Freddy's blades poking through Ash's shoulder. Jason Craig upped the ante significantly by actually ripping through his shoulder with Freddy's entire glove! Holy, crap, that's gonna leave a mark!

JPR: Yeah, Ash's not the brightest bulb... second he set foot on that first step he shoulda known that his luck with dank, creepy basements is not running all that hot.

JC: I went for visually cool, but realized way after the fact that Ash basically had his heart shredded in that shot, but for the Hollywood moment, well say Freddy managed to harpoon Ash slightly above his heart luckily only ripping out his collar bone making the following scene even more painful when he has to start his chainsaw....lol

TM: Get him Freddy..."YOU CAN DO IT!" Sorry guys... that was lame wasn't it? LOL!



Page 18
Panels 3-6

JAK: Ash puts two and two together, albeit a bit slower than the rest of us, and brings the fight to Freddy. Hey, you gotta love a guy who has the balls to call Freddy "shredded beef." Pulling the ignition cord he revs up Chain Lighting and gets ready to take Krueger down. He's the Chosen One after all. Who better to stop Freddy before he can read the Necronomicon...?

JPR: Hmmm, shredded beef.

Page 19
Panel 1

JAK: Oh...and there's the kicker. It's too late! Freddy already read the book. Man, this has to be one of the biggest moments of the entire series. Jason Craig really drove this scene home as Freddy unleashes his newfound power over the waking world. Thanks to the Necronomicon, he can now bend the very fabric of reality to his will. The waves of foul demonic energy blast outward knocking Ash backward and reaching Jason in front of the house.

JC: This was a page that I wanted to contribute my two cents to the film lore. I thought, "OK, Freddy has basically been the prisoner of the dream demons since day one. Kind of on Work release so to speak." So I thought, if he has all this great power now, he controls everything, Dream Demons included. This book to me has been our chance to show the film as we would want to see it, with an unlimited budget. In issue #1 Thomas added that great glow to the eyes and mouth of the Necronomicon. In issue #2 he carried that further with the Dream sequence where we see the demons flying from the fire as Freddy reads to young Jason, and with all that in mind, I told Tom, I said I really want to push this moment. I really want to have that in your face moment, and in the last panel, I call this my homage to Raiders of the Lost Ark. Jason has the ghosts whipping around him like we saw the Nazi's had at the end of Raiders.

TM: I think the demons were a cool touch. People probably don't realize how much arguing goes on behind the scenes in order to bring these books to life. Jason has a vision for what each page should look like and he doesn't take no for an answer...LOL! He often says he can hear me sigh all the way from Arkansas. This is one of those pages Jason really wanted to stand out. We argue and argue over how things should look but in the end he offers me "special" favors from Rex Stabbs and all is good!

Page 20
Panels 1-5

JAK: Ash runs for his life as Freddy takes another stab at offing the Chosen One. And what do you know...the bad



hands are back, but in the real world this time. But even a wisecracking Chosen One can't stop dozens of undead blade hands intent on pinning him to the wall like a life sized party favor.

JC: This is the book of homages: Scooby Doo, Raiders of the Lost Ark, and now.....ALIEN.....when I read all these hands chased Ash, I thought, face huggers from Alien. Can't miss my small nod to The Matrix, and Bad Boys with Ash's falling jump while shooting his Shotgun at the quickly approaching hands.

Page 21 Panels 1-2

JAK: And heeeeeerrree's Freddy! Notice the transformation the Necronomicon power has brought out in him. The demonic look comes from the FvJ sequence at the lake when he leaps out of the water to kill Laurie and Will. This is the "primal" Freddy we saw there: full of rage, anger, and violence.

JK: This was a very cool nod to the FvJ continuity. James and Jason have been real sticklers to give this a sense of connection to the respective film series and it shows in little touches like this.

Panel 3

JAK: Eh, tu, Jason? It seems that our smarter Jason realizes that Freddy loose with all that power is a very very bad thing and he comes barreling through the wall to confront his former partner in crime. Wait...is Jason a good guy? Sure...keep telling yourself that and you'll find yourself pinned to a wall with a fireplace poker somewhere at Camp Crystal Lake.

JPR: Note to Krueger, after seeing the Dermatologist, go see a dentist, STAT!

Page 22 Panels 2-5

JAK: This scene was simply brilliant. Jeff ties FvJvA to the past F13 films by having Freddy raise Jason's zombified victims of previous films to get their revenge on the creature that sent them to their graves. Watch closely, because you'll be able to pick out the most popular kills here and maybe a surprise or two as well.

JC: I really loved the ending to this book from conception to final execution and colors. As an artist I wanted to end with a bang of course. I really pushed for shots that I personally find more difficult, like over head shots, Jason crashing through the door in his pure Friday the 13th glory (Jason doesn't kick doors down, he walks through them face first), and when I saw what Thomas did with the colors, all I could do was smile.

JK: This was very high on the list of fan-centric moments I wanted to feature when writing the treatment. I'm a total sucker for cinematic continuity and I think horror fans have a unique appreciation for it that Hollywood may not understand as well as it claims. These franchises have had their continuity messed with or disregarded so many times ("Jason's a little boy left in the sewers of Manhattan? Genius!") that even the little things – those tiny nods of respect to what's come before - become strongly appreciated. I think you have to really be a fan and speak that language to get it. There are people that are really invested in these worlds and moments like this are the little things that keep them going. These "easter eggs" are a chance to remember what made you fall in love with these movies and characters in the first place.

TM: This was another fun scene to do with F13 past victims making their way out to attack Jason. On another note...I'd like to give props to Rex Stabbs for his invaluable help on this series. His name may not appear in the credits but he is every bit as valuable! Without his help, this book probably wouldn't have made it out on time. We love ya Sexy Remy!

We'll see you in thirty dreadful days when the FvJvA horror marathon continues.