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LUNDGREN

INTERVIEW NICK DE SEMLYEN

Talk us through your fighting style.

I trained in traditional karate, kyokushinkai. But being a big guy, 6' 5", I rely on power. Not a lot of fast, kung fu-like movements. It's more like one punch or one kick.

Do you do your own stunts?

I won't do fire gags. I've done a couple of crazy things: a motorcycle-to-truck jump in *Red Scorpion*, which was idiotic, and a high-fall for *Masters Of The Universe*. It was a three-storey drop and as I went out I realised there were no crash boxes below. Someone had fallen asleep. *(Laughs)* The good old '80s.

When were you last in a real fight?

I've only knocked people out once or twice. In a drunken bar fight, people can throw 20 or 30 punches and nobody gets hurt. With people who know what they're doing, it's different.

You don't want to be involved, especially if you have a name.

What's your workout routine?

I tend to train early in the morning, like 4 am.

I used to do 1,000 pull-ups a day, 1,000 sit-ups a day, 1,000 front kicks a day. Now I don't really max out that much.

What did you do before you got into movies?

I worked as a doorman. When I think back, I didn't realise how well-trained I was — I could easily have killed somebody. I came close to it once or twice, but the cops were pretty cool. I studied Chemical Engineering in Sweden, America and then Australia. They had a karate club at the University Of Sydney and I ended up doing security for Grace Jones,

with whom I had a little affair. After a few months in New York I didn't feel much like going back and shaking test tubes.

How did you break into Hollywood?

Within eight months of studying acting I was in California training with Stallone for *Rocky IV*. I went from being this Swedish kid riding his bike to the gym to facing 200 journalists, being asked about Cold War policy. Then I wore a G-string for a year for *He-Man*, showing every molecule on my body.

What do you think is your best film?

One which is very underrated is *I Come In Peace*, about the crazy alien guy who comes down to collect endorphins from people's brains. And *Universal Soldier* was fun, 'cos it was all the big guys. I don't know what's going on — I keep exercising and the stars get smaller and smaller. The Rock's a big guy but... I guess we're just a dying breed.

Any regrets?

Probably a dozen. *(Laughs)* I see a movie and think, "Oh my God, this is shit. Can I pull a hit on the director?" Then after a while you go, "Ah, whatever, it was a payday. I learnt a lot." How did I get involved in *Fat Slags*? That's a good question. I'd ask that agent of mine, but he's sunk in the Thames River. *(Laughs)*

What's the best fight or stunt you've done?

Rocky comes to mind. It took us a whole five months to prepare, but most people agree it's one of the top ten movie fights ever.

What movies do you enjoy?

A lot of Westerns. *Man On Fire* was great. And I'm into '70s flicks like *Point Blank*.

What do you think of other action stars?

You know, I was thinking today, it would be great to make a movie with the '80s action 'rat pack': Jean-Claude and a few others. There are issues with schedules and age and so on, but maybe I'll be the one to make it happen. I was talking to Chuck Norris' people about doing something with him, maybe an action comedy...

What do you like to do outside of movies?

I'm a little bit of a car enthusiast, nothing too serious. Now I have a great family and feel very insulated from all the Hollywood BS.

Is there a Lundgren life philosophy?

You can't sum it up in one sentence, but I suppose that being fit and trying to take care of my body is a big part of it.

What ambitions do you have left?

To enjoy a normal life and have a career. I love the business but if you get too close to it, it can mess with your head. *(Laughs)* I haven't always concentrated 100 per cent on my job, put it that way.

STATS

BORN: November 3, 1957
in Stockholm, Sweden

FIRST SEEN IN: *A View To A Kill* (1985)

LAST SEEN IN: *The Mechanik* (2006)

AKA: Venz, Ivan Drago, Lance Rockford

KILLER ONE-LINER: "Fuck you, spaceman!" (*I Come In Peace*)

SAMPLE TAGLINE: "They think they control him. Think again..." (*Red Scorpion*)

DID YOU KNOW? Lundgren is a keen student of history. When in London, he often visits the Imperial War Museum.

"FOR HE-MAN I WORE A G-STRING FOR A YEAR."

