



Written by [Eric Egan](#) on September 13, 2010

## “Resident Evil” and Its 3D “Afterlife”

Through some voice-over and flashbacks, *Afterlife* reminds us that Alice used to work for Umbrella and that Umbrella caused zombieism through the development of a certain “T” virus. Anyone who has not seen the first three movies is brought up to speed on the aforementioned information — but don’t expect anything else to be explained. For instance, don’t expect to be told why hundreds of clones of Alice are attacking Umbrella headquarters in the beginning of the film or why hundreds of clones of Alice exist in the first place. Or, for instance, why she is trying to kill an agent that looks suspiciously similar to Agent Smith from *The Matrix*, complete with black suit and dark sunglasses (I kept waiting for him to quip, “Mister Anderson,” in Hugo Weaving’s timelessly taunting voice).



I’m guessing all of this was revealed in the first three movies, all of which I saw. I think. I can’t exactly remember which movies in the series I have seen because they are all, more or less, the same — A girl named Alice fights an evil corporation. She pulls out her twin samurai swords, draws her guns, flings her ninja stars, tosses her grenades, and uses whatever other weapon she has at her disposal and kills zombies. Some of these zombies are your average mindless sort of chaps who wander about while craving human brains. Other zombies are ten-foot-tall, ax wielding executioner types with oversized battle axes and blood-soaked burlap sacks covering their faces that are frighteningly spry for their size. Unfortunately, variances in zombie demographics aside, there is very little variance in the *Resident Evil* plots and *Afterlife* being the last makes it the worst offender.

Any plot points are really just an excuse to showcase Milla Jovovich’s adept skill at executing graphically enhanced, faux Martial Arts or, more likely, her adept skill at looking good while executing faux Martial Arts. Take your pick. It doesn’t matter, because neither is substantial enough to hang a film on. The problem is that these special effects have been regurgitated over and over again since *The Matrix* introduced them over 10 years ago. If imitation is flattery, then *The Matrix* should feel very, very flattered. Bullet time is cool and all, but isn’t it time to stop exhibiting it like it’s still as mind blowing as the first time we saw it?

Enter 3D — the technology that renders otherwise tired gimmicks as newly marketable. You’ve seen bullet time before — but have you seen it in 3D? The technology renders tired plots newly marketable, as well. You’ve seen Alice shoot zombies, but have you seen her do it in 3D? Never mind the fact that even the best 3D technology comes with some sacrifice of color, contrast, and brightness, all of which carry more information than a little added depth perception. And never mind the fact that it inflates ticket prices. “To 3D or not to 3D?” is Hollywood’s existential question of the hour and, unfortunately, it appears as though 3D will be shoved down viewers’ throats — or eye sockets, as the case may be —



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more often. *Resident Evil: Afterlife* did well at the box office its opening weekend, pulling down a modest but respectable \$27.7 million. The continued success of the 3D format is good if you are a fan. I, however, am not.

In short, the only reason that this *Resident Evil* found an afterlife is because of 3D. In actuality, *Afterlife* is more a theme park ride based on the franchise than a stand-alone film, and it's not even a good one of those. If you like your films with little depth and enjoy watching what is essentially a violent video game for an hour and a half, head to the theatre and check it out. Otherwise, I suggest you let *Afterlife* rest in peace. *Resident Evil: Afterlife* is rated R for sequences of strong violence and language.



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