Lisa Wilcox of *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master* vs. Kimberly Beck of *Friday the 13th: The Final Chapter.* With quite possibly our best voter turnout so far in the competition, we have a very clear winner. It’s a landslide! Ms. Wilcox was the hands-down favorite, and will move into the semi-final rounds! As for Kimberly Beck (it was a tough call, but I personally cast my vote for her), she will go down as a feisty go-getter in the face of danger (both against Jason himself, and in this battle – against a worthy foe in the form of The Dream Master). Final tally? For Wilcox: **104** For Beck:  **24**

We’ll miss you Trish Jarvis, but Alice Johnson? We’ll see you soon! Get those martial arts back in order!

We now excitedly move into the next round – beginning our downhill slope toward the semi-finals and your top 16 ladies. But there are still many more of your favorites to be revealed!

I don’t know what kind of a household you grew up in, but it can’t be anywhere as bad as the environment of the Cotton home. That venomous relationship between Kirsty Cotton and her absolutely wicked stepmother, Julia will be “legendary – even in hell.” Am I right?

It’s a battle I like to call, “*It’s (Sort of) a Family Affair!*” as the two leading ladies of Clive Barker’s 1987 classic, *Hellraiser*, take the ring!

Clare Higgins as Julia Cotton is up first. She’s clearly an accomplished actress, and the places you’ll go when visiting her in the original film -- boy, howdy! By the time she’s reborn from that nasty mattress in the sequel (*Hellbound: Hellraiser II*), she’s a full blown villain – complete with no remorse, no humanity and indeed no soul.

In the first film, she’s a *horrible* human being, but *still* a human being. She’ll do anything to feel Frank’s caress one more time, including multiple homicide and disposing of the evidence (she’s not terribly good at that, as Kirsty will learn when she visits an upstairs bedroom). As the murders continue, in order to bring her lover back to full, throbbing life, she gets better at it, and what’s creepy -- more comfortable with it.

Higgins does the unthinkable in her role as Julia. She makes us understand her moral shortcomings and although perverse – her reasons for doing what she does. And she is definitely the character in the film with an actual journey. Sure, it’s a journey to “the dark side”, but she is the only person who really changes throughout. Everyone else simply reacts to the shit-storm around them.

She’s got a huge, diverse menu of fabulous acting moments, but other than sitting down and watching the film together (who’s up for a screening?), we’ll have to pick out the best and my personal favorites.

Without a doubt, the scene I adore the most, follows Julia’s first kill. She’s not good at it yet, and so she’s clumsy and caked in blood. She rushes into the bathroom as Frank does what he needs to do, and looks at herself in the mirror, soaking her bloody hands in the sink. Her chest is heaving, she’s trembling uncontrollably – with fear and adrenaline -- and you can see what’s inside her head, “What did I just do?” But watch this moment (illustrated in the chosen pic for Higgins) again and you’ll see that silent, brief and so-telling final look of accomplishment and pleasure. It’s a gem. We get more of these little satisfactory smiles as the picture goes on. With Higgins’ performance, we see the actual birth of a true villain in Julia. What a ride!

There’s also Julia’s final moment with Frank, as he inadvertently stabs her. Realizing his mistake, he just follows through and sucks the blood from her as well. It’s all edited so quickly, you may miss some things, but Higgins’ few reactionary moments in this scene, perfectly display Julia’s horror as she is betrayed and tossed aside – after all she’s done. Of course, in the sequel, we know that Julia gives Frank what’s coming to him – so deliciously. The thing is, as we see Julia get what’s coming to her… and yet, it’s weird, but there’s some sympathy there. Seriously? Yup.

As for Higgins’ quieter moments, I’ll take us back to her discovery of the photograph of a smoldering Frank. She grabs the picture, retreats to that attic space which gives new meaning to the term, “multi-purpose room” and takes a nice trip down memory lane. What I find most remarkable about Higgins here, is that she’s remembering things that may or may not have already been filmed. But the fact is that she’s just acting, and indeed, acting the hell out of it. What Julia’s remembering is hot, tingly sex with Frank, and her almost orgasmic reactions as she stands in that bare, filthy attic, are award-worthy. And then when Larry comes in with his bloody, gouged hand, you can plainly see in Higgins’ face, Julia’s annoyance and disgust. “Dammit, Larry! You’ve ruined the mood, and I now have to touch you and pretend that I care. Ugh.” Such a tremendous performance.

Ashley Laurence is clearly Higgins’ competitor in this one. And it’ll be a downright bloody (“body parts hanging from ceiling chains” bloody) battle to find the winner. Kirsty Cotton is definitely our final girl, and for that, we love her and her plight is the hellbound heart of *Hellraiser* (ahem). She gets to be a damsel in distress, and she sells it.

But as we always do, let’s take a few moments to pick apart some of her more real moments, before that blasted box is reopened. Kirsty’s a pretty regular gal, and her tender moments with her pops (Andrew Robinson) are sweet and true, the best being her introduction. She’s genuinely thrilled to her see her dad and all is wonderful until that necessary mention of Julia’s whereabouts. It’s a perfect portrayal of a loving father/daughter relationship, much closer in light of the mother/spouse’s death. And now, to Kirsty’s horror, her new stepmother is a bitch. We get that all in Laurence’s first scene, nicely setting up that we’re going to like her.

And if I wanted to pick one fantastic reaction shot from Laurence? Pay close attention, as it slips by quickly – when she summons the Cenobites in her hospital room and the IV liquid turns to blood. Laurence has the best up-turned lip as she witnesses this weirdness. So fast. So effective. So, “what the hell is going on?”

Once she encounters Frank for the first time in the film, and everything falls apart for Kirsty, Laurence excels in her disgust and confusion. Picture, if you will, the moment when Frank finishes off Julia’s latest conquest – right in front of Kirsty. The line from Kirsty “This can’t be happening” is a gross understatement, but what makes this scene so fantastic (and perverse) is the idea that in their past dealings (when Frank was still a real man) there were apparently some molestation episodes. It’s never 100% confirmed, but certainly insinuated. So what Laurence has to do in these crazy moments before she throws the box out the window (“You want it? Fucking have it!”) – is 1) show us her horror at this skinless man before her, the fact that she just saw her stepmother bring a strange man into her father’s home, and now that poor schlub is a bloody, loose-skinned horror show – reaching to her for help…and 2) that her father’s brother who we can safely assume sexually abused her as a child, has her cornered in some dank, rat-infested attic. Laurence sells this scene beautifully, and then “guts” Frank. You go, girl!

And how about when Kirsty returns home to find (**SPOILER!)** Frank in her father’s skin? She’s moist-eyed, hysterical and so out of it, that she doesn’t notice all of the bloody edges of her father’s skin. Ick. This entire scene is a tour-de-force for Laurence, culminating in one of her best line deliveries, through tears and a crazy laugh-cry, “I don’t believe this. I don’t believe this.” It’s good stuff.

And finally, her “Oh my God” at the moment she realizes Frank is wearing her father’s shell – just before she scratches the hell out if his face – again, just more quality reactions from Laurence, and exactly what you’d expect from someone in that situation (at least that’s what I did when it happened to me). Ahem.

Laurence is our lovely and spunky ingénue, and Higgins is one of the best villainesses this side of – well, insert whatever awesome villainess would first pop into your head. Mine was The Borg Queen.

So as we keep it in the family for this latest battle, to whom are you gonna give your love? The innocent and pure Kirsty? Or the horny, evil Julia?

Vote right here on the website, on our Facebook page, or over on Twitter, with Ultimate Horror Lady, #ClareHiggins or #Ashley Laurence.

Have at it ladies, and we’ll see who takes that next Cenobite-inspired sprint into the semi-finals!