If horror is your game, you really had only one solid choice for a good scare on the major networks in recent years: the effortlessly inventive SUPERNATURAL. After last season, however, we now have a very capable second hand in the war against bad reality programs and even worse scripted shows: NBC’s GRIMM.

A great police procedural series with a heavy dose of Gothic and old-lore horror, this is exactly the kind of show that usually ends up being cancelled before it has a chance to thrive and develop. Fortunately, the folks at NBC gave GRIMM a shot, and it has paid off in spades for them. The series has become one of the network’s staple shows, and they even jumped the gun by having the second season start this month, instead of in September. Horror fans will love this show, and even regular viewers will get plenty out of this very well-written, perfectly paced adventure. If you missed it, GRIMM’s first round of episodes is now out on DVD and Blu-ray from Universal Studios Home Entertainment, so grab your best friend the Blutbad and watch out for that wicked Hexenbiest, because the adventure is about to begin…

GRIMM tells the tale of Nick Burkhardt (David Giuntoli), a Portland detective who has a loving girlfriend and a reliable partner in Hank Griffin (Russell Hornsby). One day, however, his whole life comes crashing around him. After his aunt visits him and that night is brutally attacked in the middle of the street by some sort of “creature,” she reveals the truth about their family: Nick is the latest in a long line of monster hunters called Grimms. Only they can see the beasts for what they really are, while they appear normal to average citizens. Sometimes these creatures act out their natural instincts and disrupt the balance that has been achieved between themselves and humans; the Grimms’ job is to hunt down these supernatural misbehavers and

stop them, while keeping the human world oblivious to their presence. Nick didn’t ask for this gift and this mission, but if he wants to have peace in Portland and for the rest of society, he needs to fulfill his destiny and take on the mantle passed to him.

GRIMM’s first couple of episodes took a little getting used to, starting off a little slow and not progressing as quickly as one might hope. The supernatural element also seemed a little lacking at first, and it wasn’t clear if this show was truly committed to developing its premise to its full potential. After the aunt died in the hospital, however, GRIMM fully came into its element and never looked back. The inclusion of the usual suspects from Grimms’ fairy tales and critters from other literary sources is ingenious and always surprising, and they’re treated as more than just monsters, given compelling storylines with good actors bringing them to life. The prosthetic (see article here) and CG FX used to create them are impressive for television, and properly convey the feeling that should come across when you imagine what these literary beings might look like.

Giuntoli may come off as somewhat bland at first, but he finds his footing after a few episodes and makes the role his own. He gradually becomes more confident in his role as a Grimm, and Giuntoli finds that comfort level the character needs after he has completed various cases involving different creatures and alternative methods of defeating them. However, the character everyone will fall for, and rightfully so, is Monroe, the Blutbad (werewolf) who befriends Nick despite his monstrous identity to help him on these supernatural cases. Monroe is superbly played by Silas Wier Mitchell, who makes every episode better, bringing comic relief and a deft, relaxed presence to the proceedings.

Whether you’re just now jumping on the GRIMM bandwagon or you want to relive the first season, the Blu-ray is the best option. The 1.77:1 transfers are immaculate, the colors are sharp and the CGI creatures look great in glorious high definition. The Surround sound mix is also topnotch, and works well to help convey whatever action is taking place on screen. The special features, however, leave a little to be desired. There are no commentary tracks, which is a shame, since they’re pretty standard fare these days and it would have been cool to hear the cast and creators relive the making of their show. There are two behind-the-scenes features, one dealing with the general world of GRIMM and the other with the special FX. These are actually interesting to watch for die-hard fans, as they delve into the more intriguing aspects of the show (from the atmosphere to the monsters). Also included are the standard deleted scenes, which are nothing too special, and a gag reel, which has a few funny moments but comes off like space filler.

GRIMM was by far the best new show on TV last fall, and it was one I watched on a weekly

basis to make sure I didn’t fall behind—or have anything spoiled for me by friends and fellow viewers. The stories are genuinely fantastic but maintain a healthy real-world balance, and the actors flesh out the characters in interesting ways. There’s nothing grim about it (OK, bad pun…)—just watch this show!

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