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# ROALD DAHL



## Fantastic Mr Fox

Illustrated by  
**QUENTIN BLAKE**



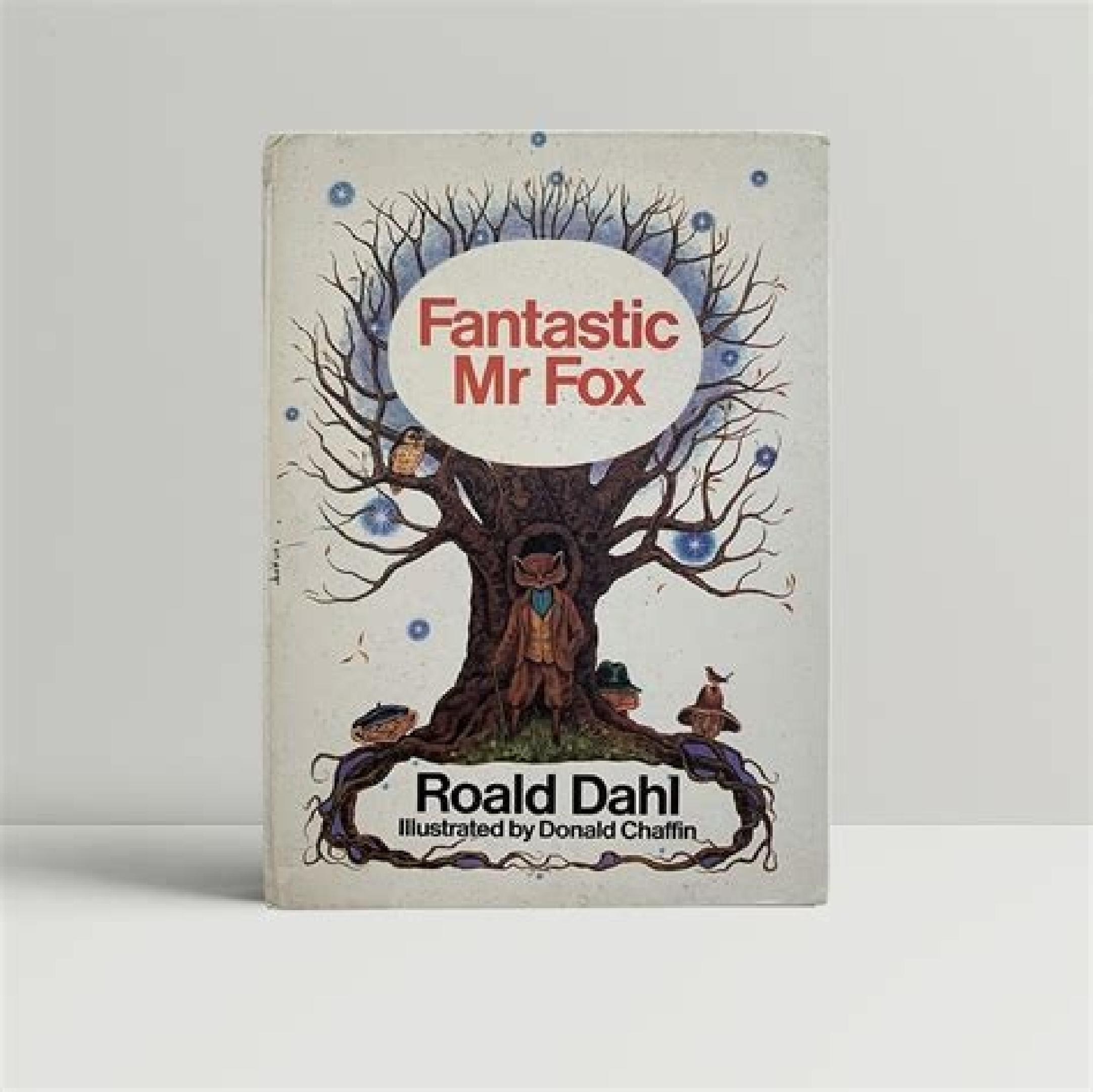
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## Fantastic Mr Fox

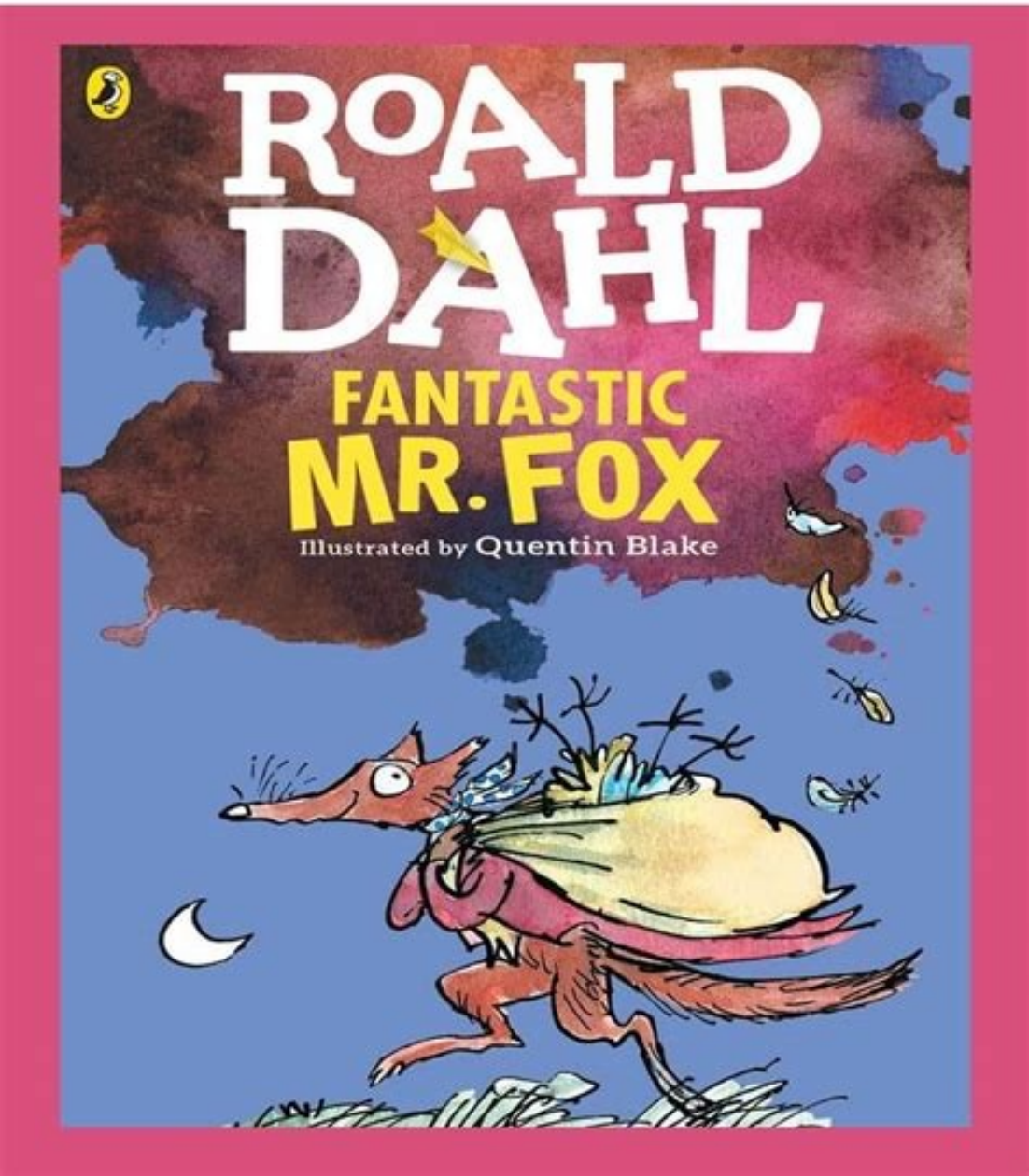
Roald Dahl







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Say what you may about Tim Story's earlier cinematic adaptations, but as generic and middling as they were, they were at the very least entertaining. Unfortunately, the same cannot even be said of Josh Trank's back-to-basics origin story, which plays like a humourless retread of his debut film 'Chronicle' but on a bigger budget - and lest there be any doubt, it is far, far from fantastic.Not that it doesn't demonstrate such promise; the first act which establishes the friendship between the visionary Reed Richards (Miles Teller) and his tough-guy longtime best pal Ben Grimm (Jamie Bell) as well as the team dynamics between Reed and the other members of his research team - the equally brilliant Sue (Kate Mara), her hot-headed younger brother Johnny (Michael B. Jordan), and malcontent genius Victor Von Doom (Toby Kibbell) - capably lay the foundation for what could have been a character-driven drama based on their clashing personalities. Indeed, after the boys sans Sue decide on a whim following a night of intoxication to put their teleporting machine to the test, how they respond to their newfound super-powers individually and as a team should be an organic evolution from how they were before.Asas, Trank, who co-wrote the screenplay with 'X-Men' veteran Simon Kinberg and Jeremy Slater, doesn't quite know where to go from there. Rather than setting them on a course that would follow the perennial 'X-Men' theme of inclusiveness versus insularity against the rest of society, our teenage super-heroes are pretty much seen only in an isolated military facility where they are trained and from which they are deployed on covert operations overseas. While Johnny relishes the opportunity to be different, powerful and useful for once in his life, Sue and Ben are not quite so sanguine and participate insofar as there remains a possibility that the Government's research on them would yield some way of reversing their abnormalities. In the meantime, Reed has vanished off the grid, while Victor is presumed dead on the planet they had landed up on in the other dimension.One senses a conscious decision on the part of Trank to eschew the usual superheroics seen in the recent profusion of Marvel and to a lesser extent DC comic book adaptations, but the middle act drags precisely because Trank never quite finds a compelling substitute. Johnny's potential conflict with Sue and Ben over the Government's exploitation of their super-powers never amounts to anything more than a playground squabble. The estrangement between Johnny and his father (Reg E. Cathey), whose Baxter Institute had overseen the ill-fated project, is under-cooked. And last but not least, Reed's guilt over his teammates' fates as well as his strained friendship with Ben seem to vanish as quickly as he is apprehended and brought back to the facility to aid them in version 2.0 of the same project.Trank's intention of emphasising the tension within the quartet is evident and admirable, but is ultimately undone by a script that doesn't develop it in any substantive manner. Worse still, it leaves an audience looking for visual spectacle severely wanting, that not even a very busy third act manages to salvage. Doom makes an unsurprising return here as their common enemy, driven by a fusion of body and alien matter to cause global destruction and around whose defeat to ensure the survival of planet Earth becomes a rallying call for the team to unite despite their differences. It is one of the dulllest and most unexciting finales we've seen in a Marvel movie, not least for the fact that it doesn't know how to collectively bring together their superpowers except in a tag-team fashion to distract their opponent. It is also on the whole one of the ugliest comic book movies we've ever seen. The planet from which the quartet gain their powers is a barren rocky wasteland that has no character or distinction whatsoever, shrouded perpetually with thick grey clouds and given the even more nondescript name of 'Zero'. The energy that gives them their abilities appears as some slimy green goo that belongs entirely in a C-grade Syfy TV movie, while their powers - whether Reed's rubber limbs or Sue's telekinesis or Johnny's pyrotechnics or Ben's rock-covered body - look equally cheesy. It is no wonder too that the eventual showdown, which takes place almost entirely on the planet surface of 'Zero', doesn't play out any much better against such a bland setting, coming off even worse than any of the action scenes in its predecessors.And certainly, this reboot is in no way better than Tim Story's earlier adaptations, no matter of its ambition of being a darker and more character-driven superhero piece. 'Chronicle' may have been a perfect calling card for Trank, but 'Fantastic Four' shows a young, inexperienced director completely out of his depth, absolutely justifying the advance bad buzz it had spent months battling. It is utterly embarrassing that a film about Marvel's most enduring creations is no better than a live-action 'Power Rangers' movie, but that's exactly the ignominy that this misconceived and badly executed excuse of a superhero movie has wrought.As is typical with such origin stories, this one ends with the quartet 'stumbling' on their title as they admire their new home in Central City and reflecting on how far they have come. Ben aka the Thing describes their journey as "fantastic"; we're not entirely sure anyone of their audience shares the same sentiment.See detailed box office info on IMDbProSuggest an edit or add missing contentYou have no recently viewed pages Elle Nicoll is a British author, and ex long-haul flight attendant, who spent years travelling the world and dreaming up stories whilst trying to stay awake on night flights.She writes calculated77top reviews from the United StatesMike S Reviewed in the United States on March 22, 2022A great first seasonVerified purchaseFringe was a very unique series that ran from 2008 to 2013. It was part police procedural and part supernatural thriller that involved a division of the FBI headed by Lance Reddick's character Phillip Broyles that investigated a series of strange phenomena that would come to be called "The Pattern". Anna Torv played FBI agent Olivia Dunham who investigated Pattern incidents with the help of a scientist who had been in a mental hospital for years named Walter Bishop (played by John Noble) who had studied similar incidents before he went crazy, and his son Peter (played by Joshua Jackson of Dawson's Creek fame) who was basically Walter's babysitter after he was checked out of the hospital. Of course, there was much more to the plot as the series unfolded with a lot of twists and turns. It was created by JJ Abrams, so it has a somewhat similar feel to the series Lost, although in a totally different context. If you take Lost and mix in a bit of X-files and even some Twin Peaks, that is kind of what Fringe gives you. That said, it is definitely its own show and was not derivative of anything else at the time. It is a cross between a case-of-the-week procedural series and a serial series with a long arc that stretches through the season. Events in one episode most definitely impact other episodes down the line, so you really have to watch it from the start to get what is going on. The season ends on a pretty big cliffhanger and teases the introduction of a character that is played by a Sci-Fi icon.For those who get the Blu-Ray set, the show looks and sounds great in HD. It definitely had, and made use of, a health special effects budget, and it is definitely worth watching in the high-definition format. The extras include commentary tracks on select episodes, several making-of and behind-the-scenes featurettes, and deleted scenes for many of the episodes. About an hour and a half plus of material (not including the commentaries).While I cannot say the series will appeal to everyone, if you are a fan of the sci-fi/fantasy genre, chances are you will like it. It is a unique series in that not everything is made up. It actually does include some actual scientific concepts and then mixes them with totally made-up sci-fi stuff. It does have some violence and some gross visuals, but not much in the way of sexual content. It is very well written and acted, and definitely worth checking out.4 people found this helpfulRobert W. MooreReviewed in the United States on May 13, 2009Starts slowly but builds up to a brilliant second half with enormous potentialVerified purchaseI have dual suggestions for anyone thinking of trying FRINGE. First, definitely watch it. Second, be very, very patient. The show eventually gets very, very good, but it takes a very long time to get there. I have a theory as to why that is. FOX has a tendency to micro manage many of its shows. DOLHOUSE is an example. After Joss Whedon brought them his initial pilot, they nixed it and asked for a new one, and then dictated that the first several episodes be standalone episodes. And guess what. In the sixth episode DOLHOUSE became one of the best shows on TV, with multiple delicious plot twists. The weakest part of the series? The first five stand alone episodes. I have not heard similar things about FRINGE, but given that the first half of the season tends to be almost all stand alone episodes and that they are far and away the weakest part of the show, I suspect more FOX interference. FRINGE has been compared to THE X-FILES in many ways, but one way that they are dissimilar is that THE X-FILES standalone episodes were far superior to FRINGE's standalone episodes. So the viewer has to be patient for the payoff for watching the show to come to fruition. But the payoff does finally come. About halfway through the series a "mythology" arc emerges in a most satisfying way, resulting in a string of deeply satisfying and exciting episodes in the second half of the season. At the end of the first year, it hasn't yet quite become a great show, but it shows all the potential of becoming one. But perhaps only if FOX will get out of the way and let them get on with the story.The show also suffered from internal problems, the main one being casting. I came to like Anna Torv in the lead role of Agent Olivia Dunham, but she remained in many ways the show's weak link. Many fans noted that her American accent (Torv is Australian) often faded and especially early in the show her Aussie accent would briefly creep in. She isn't a bad actress, but neither is she - comparing the show once again to THE X-FILES - Gillian Anderson, who was by any accounting a brilliant actress. When I watch FRINGE, I often wonder just what the show would be like with a stronger actress in the lead role. I also have not yet become sold on Joshua Jackson as Peter Bishop, but this may be far more of a problem with the writers fully integrating him into the show. (Though the season ends with a great, great twist involving Peter that explains a lot of the background on Walter's story.) Other than being Walter's son, his role in the greater scheme of things hasn't really become clear, though perhaps the writers envision a more crucial role in Season Two. Lance Reddick is a powerful physical presence, but is another actor who has perhaps been under utilized at this point.Which leaves John Noble as Walter Bishop. Is there a more delightful supporting character on TV? He steals just about every scene he is in as the delightfully idiosyncratic and marvelously insane genius Walter Bishop. Walter is both a wonderfully written character and brilliantly portrayed by Noble. Sci-fi series do not as a rule get much recognition by the Emmys, but I would love to see Noble get a nomination for Best Supporting Actor in a Drama. Many of the great moments of the show's first season revolve around Walter. And there are so many fine Walter moments that some go unnoticed. Among my favorites was in the show's penultimate episode where the crew is assembled in Walter's Harvard lab and someone says they need to turn the lights out. Walter gleefully tells them all to hold on and he claps his hands, demonstrating that he has "the Clapper" installed in the lab. But what makes the scene so funny is a very subtle bit of business. Walter has been passing out cookies and has one of his own. To be able to clap, he has set his own cookie down on the derrière of the corpse he has been examining and that is laying



better as it went along. This is a great sign for Season Two, I blame FOX for the slow first half of the season. Maybe I'm wrong in doing that, but we know for a fact that FOX messed up the first half of DOLLHOUSE, and they've been known to interfere with the development of other shows. The fact is this: executive producers and their writers know more about how to do a great show than network executives do. Maybe they feel that they need to earn their salaries by "crafting" the new series, but generally what they do is mess things up. You hire someone like J. J. Abrams or Joss Whedon to do a series, just get out of the way and let them do what they inevitably do better than you do. So definitely watch this show. Be patient. It starts off OK, but about halfway through the season it will really start to kick tail. I think there is some core weakness in the cast, but not to the degree that it cripples the show. Best of all, this show really feels like it is going somewhere special. Make sure you are along for the ride.152 people found this helpfuljill d doyleReviewed in the United States on September 5, 2022The disks all played fineVerified purchaseTodd SmithReviewed in the United States on March 1, 2014The Ultimate Movie Review! - (...) - @tss5078Verified purchaseIt's rare for me to give a television show a perfect rating, but I will say, without hesitation, that Fringe is the best original Science Fiction show to come along in thirty years. When J.J Abrams started working on his follow up to Lost, he wanted to create a show that touched on everything that had been done before it. Fringe takes elements of Star Trek, The X-Files, The Twilight Zone, and others, and incorporates them all into his story. It was a show that was truly ahead of it's time and initially had a lot of network support.The premier episode on FOX is the most expensive pilot episode ever made and the fans love it. The first two seasons of Fringe were highly rated, but not in the top ten. Not realizing what they had or the cult following it had behind it, FOX started moving the show around, eventually putting in on Friday nights, where it died after just 100 episodes. Today, the show is carried on in books and several of the cast have talked about the possibility of having it turned into a film franchise.The story of Fringe began in 2008, when an airplane with 250 passengers on board, landed itself in Boston, without any survivors. All the agencies show up, including the FBI, who send their liaison officer, Olivia Dunham (Anna Torv). Dunham and her partner/lover are sent to do the dirty work, but stumble upon something unexpected, which puts them at the head of the investigation team. Not believing what she saw, Dunham goes in search of help, and finds a brilliant scientist, who used to do classified experiments for the U.S. Government. There is a problem of course, as the scientist, Dr. Walter Bishop (John Noble), has been in a mental institution for 17 years. In order to get him out, Dunham must track down and recruit the help of Bishop's son, Peter (Joshua Jackson), who is a con-man, working out of Iraq. With the team in place, they work to solve the impossible case and are asked by Col. Peter Broyles (Lance Reddick), to become part of a classified team of FBI members, who are assigned to work on the strange and unexplainable.From parallel universes to time travel to human experimentation and even monsters, Fringe really incorporated everything they could into the story, in one way or another. Anna Torv stars as Agent Olivia Dunham and what a star she is. How J.J. Abrams found her is nothing short of amazing in and of itself. Torv hadn't been in very many things, but had an impressive background, that includes her being a martial arts expert, who speaks multiple languages. They put her talents to use and make her the new head investigator of the Fringe division. Torv was the action star of the show, who turned out to be even more, when the cast met their duplicates from the alternate universe in season 3. I really can not express in words how terrific this woman was and how important her character was to every fascist of the story.As for the other main character of the story, that's Dr. Walter Bishop played by John Noble. Noble is one of those guys, you've seen in movies and on television all the time, but also the kind of guy whose name you probably didn't know. With Dr. Walter Bishop, John Noble established himself as a Sci-Fi legend. Much in the way his former partner William Bell, played by Leonard Nimoy, is associated with Spock, Noble and Bishop will be forever linked. Not only does his character bring a brilliant mind to the cast, but also brings humor to the show. After being locked in a mental hospital for 17 years, there isn't much Walter won't say or do. He loves to eat, do LSD, and tell people exactly what he thinks, leading to some of the best one-liners I have ever heard in a Science Fiction series.Fringe isn't all about the strange and unusual, it's also about family, action, love, and humor. I can tell you that it is the single most addictive show I've seen in my entire life. I wound up watching all 100 episodes in under 3 months, and now that it's over, I find myself missing it and thinking about it often. Even though I'm a Netflix member with a large collection, for almost 2 weeks now, I have been sampling other series, looking for something to fill the void. I'm finding myself having trouble even getting into similar shows, the way I got into Fringe. It is one of the best television shows I have ever seen. If you're into Science Fiction this show is an absolute must see. If you're not into Science Fiction, there is still a ton of stuff here for you as well. Do yourselves a favor and treat yourself to this remarkable show while it is still streaming on Netflix.6 people found this helpfulPatrick CorreaReviewed in the United States on October 17, 2013One of the best shows I have ever seen.Verified purchaseI got this to try the show because, aside from being willing to try any Sci-Fi series that doesn't have a lot of sex in it, the comparisons to X-Files made this a must-see. And boy, am I glad I got it. I started watching it by myself, then my aunt started watching them with me, then my whole family became hooked on it. It's great to have such a wonderful series to share with them. Here's a graded review of the episodes, with synopsisizes from the booklet.1. Pilot: No living passengers. No living crew. A plane full of skeletal remains sparks an interagency investigation. A2. The Same Old Story: A baby is born - and dies of old age half an hour later. The bizarre event may be related to one of Olivia and John's unsolved cases. A3. The Ghost Network: A troubled man foresees a bus crash that leaves its victims "like mosquitoes trapped in amber." A4. The Arrival: An explosion destroys everything at a New York City construction site - everything except a mysterious cylinder made of solid iridium. A5. Power Hungry: A delivery guy is his own power grid, Olivia suffers an emotional shock and Walter takes on some birdbrained assistants. B+6. The Cure: Diner patrons get a surprise when they interact with a disoriented woman; their brains boil inside their skull. B+7. In Which We Meet Mr. Jones: Olivia flies to Frankfurt to confront a scientist who may be the creator of a giant, genetically altered parasite. B8. The Equation: To find clues to the whereabouts of an abducted boy, Walter returns to St. Claire's... and may never get out again. B+9. The Dreamscape: Brief encounters: Olivia with John, Peter with a woman from his past and a Massive Dynamic analyst with killer butterflies. A10. Safe: Three men rob a bank vault, two escape. The third is left behind, embedded in the seemingly impenetrable vault wall. B11. Bound: Olivia flees her captors only to confront an old foe - and parasitic slugs that kill their human hosts. B-12. The No-Brainer: The team discovers a computer pop-up that liquefies human brains. B13. Transformation: Victims of an airplane crash include a bizarre, spike covered creature with a glass disc implanted in his hand. A+14. Ability: No eyes. No mouth. No nose. Soon after Jones mysteriously escapes his prison cell, a normal man turns into a faceless corpse. A+15. Inner Child: In a tunnel that's been sealed for 70 years, workers discover a feral boy who has a strange, intuitive connection to a killer. A16. Unleashed: In a research lab, animal rights activists free chimps, dogs... and a bio-engineered beast that attacks Charlie. A+17. Bad Dreams: Is Olivia part of the pattern? Her terrifying dreams about suicide and murder mirror simultaneous, real-life events. A+18. Midnight: On the hunt for a killer with a taste for spinal fluid, the team discovers that the shocking deaths may be related to ZFT terrorists. A+19. The Road Not Taken: What appears to be spontaneous human combustion is investigated. And Olivia learns more about the mysterious Cortexiphan drug trials. A-20. There's More Than One of Everything: Walter's Gone Missing! Meanwhile, Olivia tracks down the man who shot Nina Sharp and holds the key to finding the enigmatic William Bell. A+I must admit that while I prefer X-Files overall, the myth arc here is constantly engaging as opposed to the mixed bag the conspiracy arc in X-Files has been for me. Here's hoping that season 2 (which I already have, thank God) doesn't disappoint.CthulhuReviewed in the United States on June 8, 2011FINXFIN (Fringe is NOT X-Files, it's not)Verified purchaseAha! An X-Files ripoff! I said to myself after watching the first few episodes. But it's more than that. Add a little bit of 'Heroes', stir well or not so well and, depending on which episode you're watching you may find traces of 'Silence of the Lambs', Stephen King's 'Dark Tower', Men in Black, Ringo, FearDotCom, a lot of '24' and who knows what else? Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and if the maker's claims of extraordinary insights and originality can be ignored, watching FRINGE can be quite entertaining, most of the time. For as long as you don't mind the "we are the government and we are here to help you and shoot a lot of people in the process" not so subtle subtext plus the "be VERY afraid of hostile and dangerous people hiding under your bed" subliminal message. And the implicit and sometimes open praise of the great and resourceful militaristic-surveillance-police state. And if some of the 'science' doesn't make you laugh rather than scare you or 'wow' you.Soo... the plot. Of course I'm not going to discuss details but we are talking one nice lady FBI agent and her partner who is not FBI but some civilian contractor (see? why claim it's an X-Files ripoff?) investigating all kinds of strange and bizarre occurrences. And their program is NOT called the X-Files, it's called FRINGE. And, yes, she does have to live with the consequences of some 'treatment' she was subjected to... but I will not go any further. Watch and learn or rather be amused. Add a recovering but still seriously troubled scientific genius who loves making incisions or sticking long needles in live bodies and chopping corpses so that the viewer appetite for 'gross' and 'shocking' is fully satisfied and... FRINGE is not that bad. In other words it's generally watchable, unlike most of the more recent TV series.The technical merit is so-so. Probably half of the action is shot either at the FBI site (office floor) or the mad scientist's lab complete with live cow and cute assistant - indoor scenes. Not too many special effects other than some cheap CGI - man turns into giant porcupine or man's face melts. The sound track on the Blu version is only a modest Dolby 5.1 and the picture quality on Blu is not much better than a DVD's. The extras are mostly about 'how and why did we do this' plus some scientists uncritically praising whatever 'ideas' and extraordinary insights could be derived from some of the episodes. I also didn't like the menu system much - on my PS3 it starts playing as soon as you put the disc in and it's harder to make the player do what I want than in most other movies on Blu discs - Season Two has addressed the problem which is a good thing.All the TV series that I watch I buy because I don't watch TV, having a strong allergy to commercials and in the case of FRINGE I bought the first 2 seasons. Now, after watching Season One and a couple of episodes from Season Two I'm not sure that I'll go for subsequent seasons. It's likely that I might if the price is in the 20's because they are cheap and, in spite of everything that I wrote so far possibly giving the impression of 'bad', there is SOME entertainment value in the series. It's just not as 'brilliant' or 'breakthrough' as its makers and promoters would want you to believe it is.For the time being, it's a 3-star (it's Okay) because I did watch it from beginning to end and stayed (technically) awake while watching it. It's not awesome or 'thought provoking' but it can be funny in some peculiar way. Sadly, it's not likely that I'll be watching FRINGE for a second or a third or n-th time the way I am watching the first 4.5 seasons of LOST (is there a way to erase seasons 5 and 6 from memory?). The Sopranos, Rome or the first couple of seasons of Heroes or Prison Break or... the X-Files. Hopefully, 'Season Two' gets better.-->> Brush your teeth, it's the law!

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