

= Bela Talbot =

Bela Talbot is a fictional character on The CW Television Network 's drama / horror television series *Supernatural* , portrayed by Lauren Cohan . Appearing only in the third season , she uses knowledge of the supernatural world to her advantage rather than to help those in need . Self @-@ centered and a thorn in the side of the series ' protagonists , Bela makes her living by stealing occult objects and selling them to wealthy clients . Critical reaction to the character was mixed , with negative responses from fans ultimately leading to her departure at the end of the season .

= = Plot = =

In her first appearance , " *Bad Day at Black Rock* " , Bela Talbot hires two crooks to steal a cursed rabbit 's foot from a storage container owned by the deceased John Winchester , a hunter of supernatural creatures . Anyone who touches the foot is granted good luck , but will die within a week if the foot is lost . She intends to sell it and shows no concern for the fate of the thieves . John 's sons , series protagonists Sam and Dean , retrieve the foot but are cursed by it . Bela interferes when they attempt to destroy it , and shoots Sam in the shoulder . Dean , however , tricks her into touching it . She gives the foot up for destruction to save herself , but manages to steal \$ 46 @,@ 000 in winning lottery tickets from Dean that he had purchased using the foot 's granted luck .

She next appears in " *Red Sky at Morning* " , an episode in which the Winchesters track down a ghost ship responsible for local deaths . Bela fools them into helping her again , with the three of them working together to steal the precious and magical Hand of Glory . The Winchesters plan to destroy the artifact to end the curse , but Bela steals it from them to sell to a client . However , Bela then witnesses the ghost ship , which only appears to those who have spilled the blood of a family member . Condemned to death , she turns to the Winchesters for help . Dean is prepared to leave her behind to die , but Sam comes up with a plan to save Bela 's life . This time , Bela gives them \$ 10 @,@ 000 as a " thank you " before she leaves because she does not like being indebted to others .

In " *Fresh Blood* " , hunter and recently escaped felon Gordon Walker tracks Bela down and threatens to kill her unless she reveals the location of the Winchesters , as he plans to kill Sam . Bela agrees to find out their location in exchange for his priceless mojo bag , and has an unsuspecting Dean disclose their whereabouts to her . After Dean threatens to kill her , she uses a Ouija board to placate him by obtaining information on Gordon 's location so the Winchesters can neutralize the other hunter first .

In " *Dream a Little Dream of Me* " , Bela returns when the Winchesters contact her for help in saving fellow hunter and family friend Bobby Singer after he falls into a mystical coma . They need dream root to enter Bobby 's dreams and find out what is keeping him asleep . She claims nothing from them in compensation , explaining she is helping them in order to repay a debt to Bobby . However , the Winchesters discover after Bobby awakens that she was lying , having helped them to gain access to the Colt , a mystical gun capable of killing any being . Enraged at the theft , Dean and Sam attempt to track her down in " *Jus in Bello* " , but instead are led into a trap she has set up ; police arrest the Winchesters and place them in jail . Though the demonic overlord Lilith sends her forces , Sam and Dean eventually make their escape .

In " *Time Is On My Side* " , Dean discovers Bela no longer has the Colt . He later gets her criminal record from England and learns her true name is Abbie . Almost ten years prior , when she was 14 , she had her parents killed in exchange for her soul as part of a ten @-@ year deal made with a Crossroads Demon ; though Dean believes that she killed them to inherit their fortune and Bela supports this story , the audience is shown a flashback that suggests that she had actually agreed to the deal to escape abuse from her father . Now desperate because her time is running out , Bela tries to kill the Winchesters , but they anticipate her and escape ahead of time . Dean then calls her a few minutes before her deal is up and she confesses to him she tried to get out of the deal with the Crossroads Demon by trading the Colt . Once she gave it up , however , the deal changed so she had to kill Sam as well . Though Dean refuses her pleas for help , she reveals to him the demon

Lilith holds all the contracts brokered by Crossroads Demons , including his own . Bela 's death ? and her soul 's resulting descent into Hell ? is inevitable , but not shown .

= = Characterization = =

Described by her actress , Lauren Cohan , as " a female Humphrey Bogart " , Bela is " a little bit manipulative " and she " always wants to be in control " . According to series creator Eric Kripke , the writers conceptualized the character as " someone [the Winchesters have] really never come across before " because , though she moves throughout the supernatural world , Bela has no interest in the " altruistic or obsessed or revenge @-@ minded motives of hunting " . Writer and producer Sera Gamble summarized the writing team 's characterization of Bela as a greedy " mercenary that [sic] just [doesn 't] give a shit about the cause " . Gamble believed that Bela " finds it quite amusing " that the Winchesters use their knowledge of the supernatural to help people . On this aspect , Gamble added , " I always suspect when someone is that blasé that there 's something underneath , and we 're finally getting into that " .

Cohan viewed Bela as " a young woman trying to make a living and find some kind of reason in her world " who was " a little damaged . " The actress shared Gamble 's opinion of Bela 's behavior being a façade , and incorporated into her performance the idea of Bela hiding her true self , with Cohan feeling that her character created a persona to shield her from " real strong connections " . This defensiveness prevented her from opening up to the Winchesters , with whom Cohan believed Bela " would have loved to be able to have a normal relationship " . Contrary to Kripke and Gamble 's assessment of Bela as amoral and uncaring , Cohan envisioned the character as having " fits of conscience " offscreen throughout the third season . In the actress 's opinion , Bela " would have loved to go around fighting evil with those boys . "

= = Development = =

Supernatural producers originally intended for Bela to be a recurring character . Having already created a new female lead in the form of the demon Ruby , they chose to upgrade Bela to series regular after Dawn Ostroff ? at the time , the CW President of Entertainment ? requested a second female lead for the season , because they " [loved Bela] " and already planned for her to return in future episodes . To avoid the " mistake " they had made in the previous season in introducing Jo Harvelle as a love interest , the writers planned to introduce Bela as " a character in [her] own right " who would act as an antagonist " with [her] own interests and [her] own motives " . They were , however , willing to add in a romantic involvement with Sam or Dean should they and the fans both want it . The writers also planned for Bela to be " very separate and very different " from Ruby , and for the characters to " [serve] very different storylines . "

Cohan auditioned for Ruby , but ultimately received the part of Bela . Upon learning of Cohan 's British accent , a " really psyched " Kripke reworked the character to be British . The actress herself later pictured Bela that way , feeling she " has some kind of cool shading and sneakiness , which fits the British accent " . At the time Cohan 's casting , however , she had been given little exposure to the character script @-@ wise , and was unaware she would play a " nasty person " . It was not until The CW up @-@ fronts that Kripke gave her a " good spiel " about Bela because she would be interviewed . The actress later turned down an offer from him to provide more of the character 's backstory , and instead opted to learn it as the episodes were filmed . In order to prepare for her role , Cohan received training in weaponry to be " well equipped with swords and a lot of instruments ? sharp instruments " , and in kickboxing alongside Ruby 's actress Katie Cassidy . Cohan and Cassidy also decided to catch up on Supernatural before filming for the third season began , by watching the first two seasons together .

Due to " protective and occasionally nervous " fans , Kripke meant for Bela to be introduced in " small doses " . He wanted fans to know the show would always be just about Sam and Dean Winchester , and stated , " [Ruby and Bela are] there for important plot elements , but it 's not the Ruby and Bela show , nor is it about the four of them cruising around in the Impala together . It 's

about the guys . " However , he felt the writers pushed it too far in the episode " Red Sky at Morning " , stating his opinion that it " was by far the least successful episode this year because it really kind of became the Bela show " . The writers also did not take the time to consider how to tie her into the Winchesters ' storylines . As Kripke pointed out , " It 's a road show and we 're in a different town every week , so if you 're going to run into the same character over and over again , you better have a damn good reason ... " They were eventually " crushed under the weight of the absurdity of it " because it became more difficult to justify her reappearances within the narrative . Another key problem stemmed from their conceptualization of her as an antagonistic character rather than a potential love interest for the brothers . The writers , " so taken with a woman who could screw the boys over at every turn " , ended up making Bela too antagonistic without establishing a balance . Any chance for a " funny effervescent episode where they all work together " was lost after the character attempts to have the Winchesters killed on multiple occasions . They eventually decided to drop the character from the series , opting to " send her off in an appropriate and dramatic way " which would " show a couple of cards [they have] been holding onto all season " by revealing her backstory " in a way that will surprise the audience and kind of tie her into the story . "

= = Reception = =

Critical response to the character has been mixed . BuddyTV staff columnist Don Williams deemed the addition of Bela a " cheap ploy " to attract teen male viewers , believing the character distracts viewers from the " brotherly bond that made the show so special in the first place " . As well , he felt her " sexy cat burglar act , coupled with her flirtation with one of our heroes , is cliched and has been seen a thousand times before " , and he likened her to a combination of Catwoman and " the equally annoying Electro @-@ Gwen from Angel " . However , he later admitted Bela was " a great comic foil " . Diana Steenbergen of IGN became " increasingly frustrated " with the " unlikable and manipulative " Bela throughout her appearances . She found the character 's tragic backstory to be " too little , too late " , but was surprised the writers were able to make her feel " even a tiny bit sorry for [Bela] " during her death scene . Writing that " Bela had a hint of vulnerability that would have been intriguing had we glimpsed it more than 30 seconds before she died " , Steenbergen wished the character had been written differently ? " not either annoying or downright contemptible " ? and deemed her " a wasted opportunity to give us an interesting female foil for the boys " . Karla Peterson of The San Diego Union @-@ Tribune expressed similar sentiments , voicing her belief in her review of the third season finale " No Rest For The Wicked " that Bela " got gone just as [she was] getting interesting " . In the same review , Peterson deemed the character to be a " decent traveling [companion] " . Although TV Guide 's Tina Charles was annoyed that Bela continuously steals from the Winchesters and makes them " look ridiculous " , she " really liked " the character . Overall , she felt Cohan " did one hell of a job " .

From the start , fans were very wary of bringing in female characters to the male @-@ dominated show ; they feared Bela was brought on to be " arm candy or [a sidekick] " . To make matters worse , when coming up with the scenes for the auditions for Bela , executive producer Robert Singer spent an hour writing a lackluster script not intended to be used in the show . Mere hours after the script was given to the casting director , the show 's fans had found them on casting websites and were " obsessively going over these scenes " . According to Kripke , the fan reaction was the characters " really look like they suck " . Bela 's overly @-@ antagonistic actions throughout the season did not calm the viewers ' fears . " [Bela screwed] over the boys so badly , " Kripke explained , " that she became unlikeable to the fans because she was irredeemable " . Kripke has confessed part of the decision to kill the character off was due to the negative reaction from the fans .