

= Devil 's Trap =

" Devil 's Trap " is the twenty @-@ second episode of the paranormal drama television series Supernatural 's first season . It is the season finale , and was first broadcast on The WB on May 4 , 2006 . The narrative follows series protagonists Sam ( Jared Padalecki ) and Dean Winchester ( Jensen Ackles ) as they search for their missing father ( Jeffrey Dean Morgan ) , who has been kidnapped by demons .

Written by series creator Eric Kripke and directed by Kim Manners , the episode featured Nicki Aycox 's final portrayal of recurring villain Meg Masters , and also introduced Jim Beaver as hunter and Winchester @-@ ally Bobby Singer . Morgan 's busy schedule affected the episode 's storyline , and the final scene involved one of the toughest special effects sequences of the series .

Giving generally positive reviews , critics praised the actors ' performances and the twist ending , though some had minor issues with the plot .

= = Plot = =

Trying to locate his father , Dean calls John Winchester 's phone . The demonically @-@ possessed Meg Masters ( Aycox ) answers it instead , and taunts him that his father has been captured . To determine a plan of action , Dean and his brother Sam ( Padalecki ) go to family friend and fellow hunter Bobby Singer ( Beaver ) for help . However , Meg tracks them down and attacks , but is quickly caught underneath a mystical symbol known as a " devil 's trap " that the Winchesters and Bobby had painted on the ceiling ; it renders demons immobile and powerless . Bobby informs the Winchesters that Meg is actually an innocent girl being possessed by a demon , so they begin to perform an exorcism . Dean promises to stop if she reveals the location of their father , and she relents , claiming he is being held in Jefferson City . Despite Bobby 's warning that Meg will die from previously sustained injuries if the demon is exorcised , Dean insists that they go through with it , as it would be better than allowing the demon to continue to use her as a host . After the demon is sent to Hell , a dying Meg thanks them for freeing her . With her remaining strength , she warns them that the demons are setting a trap for them , and says , " By the river . Sunrise , " before she dies .

This leads the brothers to the riverside Sunrise Apartments in Jefferson City , Missouri . The boys manage to overpower the demons guarding John , and rescue him . However , they are attacked by Meg 's demonic brother Tom , and Dean is forced to kill him with one of the three remaining bullets of the Colt ? a mystical gun capable of killing anything . When the Winchesters later find refuge in a secluded cabin , Azazel reveals himself to be possessing John . Dean , while being tortured by the demon , begs his father to break free and save him . John is able to temporarily gain control , and then begs Sam to use the Colt to kill Azazel . Unable to bring himself to kill his father , Sam instead shoots him in the leg , causing Azazel to flee to safety . The Winchesters rush towards the hospital , but their car is rammed into by a semi @-@ trailer truck being driven by a demonically @-@ possessed truck driver .

= = Production = =

= = = Guest stars = = =

Actor Jeffrey Dean Morgan portrayed dual roles for the episode . He returned as Winchester patriarch John , and was also the first to play the on @-@ screen physical manifestation of the demon Azazel ? the character had been only depicted in silhouette . Morgan was given free rein over the latter 's traits , only being directed to " be different from John " . He changed his voice and modeled Azazel 's speech pattern after Jack Nicholson 's scenes in The Shining in which he " gets all freaky " . This " Nicholson @-@ esque quality " continues in later depictions of the demon .

Hunter and Winchester @-@ ally Bobby Singer makes his debut , and is played by Jim Beaver . Beaver had worked with executive producer Robert Singer on the television series Reasonable

Doubts , and Singer gave him the part without viewing his audition tape . The episode also features the final appearance of the demonically @-@ possessed Meg Masters as played by Nicki Aycox . Director Kim Manners was sorry to see her go , as he felt Meg had the potential to become a " great nemesis " for the Winchesters .

= = = Writing = = =

The staff struggled throughout the writing process to decide which Winchester would be kidnapped and possessed , and were forced to revise the script multiple times to reflect the latest choice . Because of Jeffrey Dean Morgan 's recurring role on Grey 's Anatomy , however , the writers realized that he would not be available long enough to be a main focus of the episode . They thus decided late into production for John to be the one who is captured . With this finalized , Kripke found it rather easy to write the episode ; he already knew that the key elements of the episode would be the exorcism of the demon possessing Meg , the death of the real Meg , and the apparent rescue of John Winchester . Kripke felt that it had to be John who was possessed by Azazel , as it united and completed the two main storylines of the season ? finding their father and tracking down the demon ? and it did so by finding both characters in one body . He found it a " happy accident " to be able to present the brothers with the opportunity to finally kill the demon , but at the cost of their father 's life .

The writers believed John 's separation from his sons throughout the season " split the show " by having him away " doing more interesting things than the boys are doing " , with Kripke likewise feeling that John was keeping Sam and Dean away from the " front lines " . His death would allow the brothers to " explore , investigate and confront the yellow @-@ eyed demon directly " . The writers originally intended for John to die at the episode 's end , with Sam and Dean surviving the crash but John dying in their arms . His death , however , was pushed back into the second season premiere because the writers deemed it too dark to kill John after everything else the brothers had gone through in " Devil 's Trap " .

= = = Filming = = =

Principal filming took place in Vancouver , British Columbia , with the crash scene being filmed on an old airport space with flat roads . However , other key sequences occurred in the studio . Because the fight scene between the Winchesters and Azazel at the climax was meant to take place in a secluded , forest @-@ enclosed cabin , production built the set on a sound stage . Production designer Jerry Wanek felt the set was extremely important , as viewers would become uninterested if the forest looked fake . With Morgan rendered blind by the yellow contact lenses required to depict his character 's demonic possession , the production crew placed sandbags on the floor to help the actor locate his marks .

According to Aycox , the exorcism of the demon from Meg Masters took two days to shoot ; the first day of filming lasted 13 hours , while the second lasted for " about a half a day " . Director Kim Manners used 360 @-@ degree shots and close @-@ ups to make the sequence exciting . In the scene following the exorcism , in which Bobby is bent over a dying Meg , Aycox and Ackles read their lines off @-@ screen so that Beaver 's reaction could be shot . However , the two were " so slap @-@ happy " to be almost done that they could not stop laughing ; to everyone 's surprise , Beaver was able to keep a straight face . The set ? Bobby Singer 's home ? was filled with waist @-@ high stacks of six thousand books .

= = = Effects = = =

The semi @-@ trailer truck crashing into the Impala at the episode 's end was deemed by special effects supervisor Randy Shymkiw to be , as of the third season 's production , " probably the toughest ' gag ' [ he has ] done " . Many aspects went into creating the crash scene , with filming taking place both in the studio and on location .

For the interior scenes used to depict the first moments of the Impala being hit , the actors were required to sit in the car in front of a blue screen ; this allowed for the truck 's headlights to later be added in with visual effects . The car itself was attached to a separate rig that was built to replicate the impact of the crash . As the scene was shot , the rig flipped the car onto its side . The passenger @-@ side window was then shattered , though the actors were protected by a sheet of Lexan that had been placed very close to the window ; at the same time , cannons beneath the frame blew out pieces of rubber glass to give the appearance that the window had exploded onto them .

For the filming of the actual crash , the car and truck were cabled together by a winch and driven toward one another . The intention was for a cannon to launch the Impala into the air at the collision point , causing the car to barrel roll as the truck drives away . However , the car became stuck in the truck 's bumper , forcing the cannon to fail and the truck to go out of control . The truck began to jackknife , but the stuntman driving it saved it from flipping . The mistake ended up being beneficial for the scene , as Kripke and director Manners found it to look " pretty real " .

= = Reception = =

On its initial broadcast , the episode was watched by 3 @.@ 99 million viewers . It received generally positive reviews from critics . Karla Peterson of The San Diego Union @-@ Tribune gave the episode an " A " , deeming it " everything the season @-@ closer needed to be " . She noted that episode reveals why Azazel killed Jessica and Mary Winchester , and enjoyed the " creative way " Meg Masters was killed off , feeling the exorcism to be " amazing " . Peterson also praised the cliffhanger ending , believing it to be " capable of pulling your eyeballs right out of your head " . The acting was also praised , with Jensen Ackles being able to " wring every ounce of blood , sweat and torment out of Dean 's photogenically haunted psyche " , Jared Padalecki making Sam " real and conflicted " , and Jeffrey Dean Morgan giving " his best and most believable performance of the season " . Maureen Ryan of the Chicago Tribune collectively referred to " Devil 's Trap " and its two preceding episodes as a " really strong trilogy " of " must @-@ see episodes " . She found the possessed John to be " Morgan 's finest work on the show to date " , believing that he " was really on fire in that scene " and " brought a whole new intensity to his performance " . She also thought that Bobby Singer 's introduction and Meg Masters ' exorcism were " well done " .

Diana Steenbergen of IGN also praised " Devil 's Trap " , deeming it to be the episode that " moved Supernatural from the list of television shows that [ she ] liked to the ' must @-@ see ' list " . Like Peterson , she cheered the twist ending , and was " completely taken by surprise " . Steenbergen also felt that Jim Beaver as hunter Bobby Singer was " an excellent addition to the cast " , and applauded Ackles , Padalecki , and Morgan for their performances in the episode 's climactic confrontation between Azazel and the brothers . She found the possessed Morgan to be " menacing " , and enjoyed his sadistic sense of humor ; Padalecki to have done a " good job embodying the newfound strength " Sam develops in defying his father 's order to kill him in order to stop the demon ; and Ackles ' defenselessness to be " affecting " . However , she believed that Azazel 's reference to having a family " [ didn 't ] quite make sense " , and noted that it seemed implausible for Sam and Dean ? having been raised as hunters ? to not have known that Meg was a demonically @-@ possessed girl . Brian Tallerico of UGO also had issues with the plot , though mainly with the episode 's outcome . He felt that the writers should have followed Buffy the Vampire Slayer 's pattern of killing off the season 's foe , as " fans don 't like villains to be strung out for too long " . He also would have liked for John Winchester to have died in order to " free the brothers up for a little second season revenge and a little less family angst " .