



COURTESY

Tom Welling stars with Selma Blair and Maggie Grace in "The Fog," an eerie horror movie that scares but won't become a classic.

Cheesy graphics and premise are overcome by old-fashioned creepiness

BY CHRISTY LEMIRE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Some movies are so atrocious that the studios keep critics from seeing them before opening day, hoping and praying for one decent weekend at the box office before being done in by word of mouth.

"The Fog" didn't need to be one of them.

Yes, the fog itself looks pretty cheesy, as do the zombie-like mariners who inhabit it in their century-old quest for revenge.

And the script from Cooper Layne contains your typical horror-flick lines that overstate the obvious, like, "That guy gives me the creeps," in response to seeing an obviously creepy fisherman, and, "Nick, ever since I came home, horrible things have been happening." These are necessary evils of the genre. You need something to laugh at before you get scared again.

But director Rupert Wainwright —

whose previous movies include "Stigmata" starring Patricia Arquette and "Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em: The Movie" starring, um, Hammer — manages to create some genuine intensity and suspense.

He does the basic horror-movie stuff right, with lighting and shadows and things that go bump in the night, though he's overly fond of the kind of loud, false scares intended to make you jump. And he's got some actors people have heard of, instead of a bunch of generically good-looking no-names. Well, he's at least got three: Tom Welling, Selma Blair and Maggie Grace (from "Lost").

Like most remakes, "The Fog" is pretty unnecessary. John Carpenter's original from 1980 is considered a solid effort from the horror veteran, though perhaps not a complete classic like his "Halloween." It featured the first on-screen pairing of Jamie Lee Curtis and her mother, Janet Lee Curtis and her mother, Janet

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