

what are we watching on dvd?



ELFEN LIED: VOLUME 1

3 Episodes viewed, 75 minutes, Rating TV MA VSL (ADV Films)

I have never recalled watching an anime that made me almost sick to my stomach and yet, love it at the same time.

I have never seen an anime that utilizes the cuteness of a character (that reminds me a lot like Super-catgirl Nuku Nuku) and characters that almost remind me of something that came out of "Ah! My Goddess" and throw in a twist that makes this anime that could have been like other anime's, so unique.

Confused? Let me explain.

In some facility is where this bio-engineered girl named Lucy is held captive.

She is a diclonius. A mutated human but has horns which extrude from her cranium and has the power of vectors (invisible arms that destroy everything it comes in contact with).

The first five or ten minutes of episode 1 features Lucy literally decapitating and tearing up the security guards sent in to stop her. She's invincible it seems.

Interesting enough, the anime throws in a cute girl who is trying not to be clumsy and someone you may expect to be a major character in the story... that is until Lucy decapitates

her and uses her body as a shield.

Needless to say, Lucy escapes from the facility but the facility with one powerful shot to her cranium (instead of killing her) sends her onto the ocean.

That is where we are introduced to childhood friends Kohta and Yuka. Yuka has feelings for Kohta but he's completely oblivious to it.

One day at the beach and they find a naked girl who just says "Nyu". She doesn't seem to know much words and she's has a brain of a toddler it seems but with a hot body.

After taking her in to Kohta's place, you get to learn about Kohta and Yuki and this sets up things for episode 2.

In episode 2, A special assault team is sent to kill Lucy/Nyu but Kohta who feels compassion for Nyu decides to help her.

Has Lucy/Nyu lost her murderous manners? Episode 2 shows us the power of Lucy and perhaps that shot to her head may have given her a split personality of a caring, cute girl and when pissed off, to a murderous diclonius.

With all the attention that Kohta is giving Lucy, Yuka becomes jealous and a love triangle is obviously being

added to this storyline.

In episode 3, another diclonius named Nana is sent to find Lucy and to eliminate/retrieve her.

Just watching these three episodes, I was a bit surprised by the enormous violence in this anime.

Granted, I watch quite a bit of this kind of anime but "Fist of the North Star" and "GANTZ" which has quite a bit of violence has no comparison to the level that is shown in the first and second episodes of "ELFEN LIED".

Since this was shown on television, I'm not sure to what extent it was censored but this anime is unique.

It takes the elements of what you would find in your typical cute girl anime, romantic comedy anime and throws in this twist with the cute and beautiful girl with dual personalities going on murderous rampages.

The truth is that Lucy is possibly the person who can end all humanity, yet the anime makes you feel supportive of her because she has that dual personality of being a cute, caring girl.

Throw into the mix that when Nyu goes into Lucy mode, she had chances to murder Kohta but something prevents her from doing so.

As for the DVD, there were no special reviews for the DVD I reviewed but I can tell you that the animation is well done.

The character designs almost reminded me of "Ah! My Goddess" and the voice acting, since I only watched it dubbed is not bad.

As for the audio, I was impressed by the digital 5.1 surround sound at parts of the anime where you can hear footsteps and door creaking coming from the rear speakers.

All in all, I highly recommend "ELFEN LIED" because it's unique and it combines the type of anime that I enjoy.

At the same time, if you can't stomach excessive violence or blood in your animation, you may want to pass.

"ELFEN LIED" is an anime that literally has won me over despite the excessive violence. It's that good!

— DENNIS A. AMITH