

MOONLIGHT: PART TWO

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Season 35 ▪ Story 10M

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After a sharp opening segment *Moonlight Part Two* sees the gloves well and truly come off as Silver returns to Earth minus the Doctor, and faces a worldwide horror in the shape of a full-fledged Therianthrope invasion. Of course, no invasion would be complete without its crowning glory, and in this case it is the imminent release of the near legendary Therianthrope, Lucius. This ancient wolf lies imprisoned inside the Earth, with his escape thwarted by the ever present light of the humble moon. However, with the moon now encased inside a metal shell – courtesy of Lucius’ lupine followers – the aforementioned wolves are just hours away from freeing their demigod. Oh, and in the meantime they are at almost complete liberty to ravage humanity.

Picking up from where its predecessor left off, *Moonlight Part Two* delves further into the background of Silver and Seth, both of whom discover startling facts about themselves which will change their lives forever. In the case of Silver, her superhuman ability to literally burn Therianthropes on skin contact transforms the fire-brand teenager into a deadly weapon (cue various battle sequences involving Silver’s new found power). Seth, on the other hand, presents an even more remarkable aspect as it is revealed that his troubled childhood is the result of him being more than just an ordinary human. In point of fact he is the latest in a long line of powerful guardians, set to watch the murderous Lucius should he ever evade his prison. As Seth becomes increasingly aware of his true identity the tension rockets as Lucius is released from his centre-of-the-Earth prison, courtesy of the dagger-key locked away inside the mysterious casket. Naturally enough all seems lost until, that is, Seth finally realises his potential as the mysterious Guardian, and is transformed into Lucius’ nemesis.

Where this concluding part manages to gain a slight edge over its opening episode is in the way in which it mixes liberal quantities of action alongside well crafted character development. Siren et al. are the archetypal bad guys, richly fed by dint of the Therianthropes having already cut their teeth, if you’ll excuse the pun, in Duncan Johnson’s *The End*. And, aside from providing ample opportunity for action sequences, the addition of Lucius to their mythology is a nice fillip. Seth, however, does need special attention and gets exactly what the reader ordered by slowly coming to terms



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with his real self. Finally, it is Silver who receives the lion’s share of the limelight as it is she who narrates the tale, and in a style not unlike that of Rose Tyler in the televised adventures ‘Army of Ghosts’ and ‘Doomsday’. In fact, the manner in which Silver opens the beginning of *Moonlight Part Two* is highly reminiscent of Rose’s monologue at the start of her final two episodes as the Doctor’s incumbent companion. This choice of narrative device could be sheer coincidence, but if is deliberately borrowed it makes for a very good choice, and gives Silver yet more mileage to her character which, insofar as at least one TDWP fan is concerned, is always a positive thing.

The Doctor takes something of a backseat role for much of this story, which is no bad thing when considering how the occasional companion-centered story adds variety to a set of otherwise Doctor-driven narratives. Plus, for those readers struggling to cope without the ever present Time Lord maverick, there is always the feeling that he is lurking somewhere in the background. Intriguingly, his final conversation in the Astral Plane with one of the wolves seems to allude to future encounters with the Therianthropes, and if this proves to be the case *TDWP* may well have struck upon an all new breed of recurring monster for the Doctor to do battle against.

In terms of how this adventure stands up as a whole, *Moonlight* is a solid helping of *Who* which mixes high octane action with well realized character develop-

ment – a recipe which requires no small degree of craft on the part of the author. More, Jack Rees' writing has really come on since his last effort, *Caged Angel*, and along with Samantha Warner he deserves much praise for delivering a fine opening tale to Season 35. Setting the standard for any set of stories is crucial, and *Moonlight* accomplishes this goal with verve.

Rating: 8.5/10