

H CIRCLE BOOKS



UNVERSE A SEQUEL WITH BITE OBSOLETE OBSERVATIONS

outline of some neat stuff she noticed while watching TV, than a solid scholarly inquiry. Likewise, Todd Parks' piece connecting Angel's fears of contamination and HIV/AIDS doesn't really add anything new to the existing body of work analysing the vampire myth, other than noting that such fears also occur in the Whedonverse.

What is interesting is seeing Whedon's other shows considered by scholars; Catherine Coker's essay "Exploitation of Bodies and Minds in Season One of Dollhouse" investigates issues of exploitativeness and exploitation within the show, and confronts the marketing campaign used by the networks to promote it. But it's a rare example of engagement with the outside world that's otherwise missing from the proceedings. And when so little effort is made to explain why the subject of these essays is even worth the reader's attention, the question is raised that no academic wants to hear: "So what?"

JUSTINE WARWICK

DOG BLOOD

David Moody
Thomas Dunne

Every unpublished writer had reason to hate David Moody in 2006, when his novel *Hater* managed to score a movie deal with producer Guillermo del Toro and director J.A. Bayona (*The Orphanage*) before it even found a publisher. Yet that hate was tempered by the fact that *Hater* was a thrilling, high-octane exercise in brutality, which found ordinary people afflicted with the impulse to kill anyone in their paths. It success-

fully twisted the conventions of the genre by making its hero, Danny McCoyne, become a "Hater" and having him discover that he likes it a whole lot better. When the story ended on a cliffhanger, many feared its follow-up would fall victim to the sophomore slump; time was ticking on whether Moody was a bold new voice or simply a one-hit wonder.

Well, Moody is the real deal and *Dog Blood* is more ferocious than the blood-saturated pages of *Hater* could have prepared us for. If the theme of the first book was no hope, then *Dog Blood*'s is no future, as Haters and the uninfected (dubbed "Unchanged") alike are resorting to increasingly desperate tactics to survive.

The last of humanity has crowded into overpopulated ghettos, where they battle with each other over the dwindling supply of food and water. Meanwhile, the Haters have begun to organize and find that with substantial control, they're able to keep the hate in check and infiltrate Unchanged settlements to unleash those buried impulses to brutal effect. Danny is recruited to become one such "suicide hater," but he has motives of his own: his five-year-old daughter Ellis has also been turned and is being held captive in one of these ghettos by her mother. Now, Danny will stop at nothing to be reunited with her.

So, yes, it's a touching father and daughter story, with eviscerated bellies and defenestrated corpses aplenty. Moody maintains the same brisk pace as in his previous book, deftly intercutting between Danny's perspective and that of a huddled group of Unchanged, who are unaware they're on a collision course with our

anti-hero. And while *Dog Blood* also ends on a grim cliffhanger, it's a dead certainty that, unlike last time, we'll be looking forward to the next installment's caustic conclusion with anticipation.

BRAD ABRAHAM