



Echo, Volume 1: Moon Lake

Terry Moore

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Julie Martin is in the wrong place at the wrong time when she finds herself under a strange explosion in the desert sky. The resulting fallout covers her in a mysterious silver metal that brings her more trouble than she can ever imagine, and a friend to die for. Collects issues #1-#5. Bonus pages include development sketches and design notes.

Echo, Volume 1: Moon Lake Details

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Author : Terry Moore

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From Reader Review Echo, Volume 1: Moon Lake for online ebook

Nigel says

The military decide to test an experiment to destruction, not incidentally murdering the person running the experiment, and in the resulting explosion debris rains down on Julie Martin out by herself in the middle of nowhere. The debris turn into a weird metal breastplate, causing understandable upset and trauma for Julie, but she can't get anyone to believe that it's not some kind of trick, and the military are hunting her.

So, it's an irresponsible military experiment gone awry and bonded with an innocent bystander so we'd better hunt her down before she finds out what it's capable of story, but Terry Moore is a fantastic artist and storyteller, so it goes down easy, and his proven skill with interpersonal relationships and great characters is what you come to a Terry Moore comic for as much as for the on-the-run-from-the-military-industrial-complex. Good stuff.

Zedsdead says

A woman wearing an experimental liquid-plutonium bodysuit is shot down by an off-the-books government agency over the California desert, and the suit rains down on an unsuspecting photographer (as well as a deranged homeless man). Now the agency is hunting the photographer, who wants nothing more than to fix her shattered marriage, help her sick sister, and play with her dog.

So far so awesome. Solid characters, gripping plot, plenty of tension, good dialogue. I admit to being a little disappointed at the unexpected hints of supernatural (a possibly prophetic sister, the murdered woman appearing to reside in the suit after she dies). Seems out of place. But it's early yet, I'm inclined to withhold judgment.

Moore is a genius with body language, the guy does amazing things with black lines and white paper. It's weird how, just, *normal* all the characters look. Realistic. I'm used to at least a few impossibly muscled steroid junkies in graphic novels.

Ian Wood says

This is the complete review as it appears at my blog dedicated to reading, writing (no 'rithmatic!), movies, & TV. Blog reviews often contain links which are not reproduced here, nor will updates or modifications to the blog review be replicated here. Graphic and children's reviews on the blog typically feature two or three images from the book's interior, which are not reproduced here.

Note that I don't really do stars. To me a book is either worth reading or it isn't. I can't rate it three-fifths worth reading! The only reason I've relented and started putting stars up there is to credit the good ones, which were being unfairly uncredited. So, all you'll ever see from me is a five-star or a one-star (since no stars isn't a rating, unfortunately).

WARNING: Unhidden spoilers may be in this review!

I found this in the library and liked the first volume so much that I went right back and got the next three, which is all the library had. Bless that library! I was hoping that this is the whole set because this was initially issued as a relatively short run of individual (and indie published) comics, and later collected into sets, but it turns out there are six of them, each containing five of the original issues: Moon Lake, Atomic Dreams, Desert Run, Collider, Black Hole, The Last Day. How he got it to be exactly 30- issues is a bit of a poser - that's like writing a novel and deciding it's going to be exactly three hundred pages long regardless of how you tell the story and whether it naturally ends on page three hundred! However, as I write this I'm half way through and I can't fault it for being too fast or too drawn-out.

The art work is excellent, but note that it's black and white line drawings, no coloring involved. Once in a while the text is too small, which is a pet peeve of mine, but other than that, I can't fault this at all, so it all came down to the usual test, for me: whether the story was any good, of course. For me the story is the most important thing, with art being secondary, and this story did not fail me.

The main character is Julie Martin, typically curvaceous as comic book females are, but not improbably so. I liked her sister better - she was drawn more realistically and looked pretty damned good, especially since her personality was adorable. And in the end that's what overcame the skin-deep appearance of these female characters - they were realistic, all three of the main ones.

Julie is a down-and-out photographer whose husband has ditched her for reasons which were not exactly clear to me. She's not happy with this, but she's just about dealing with it, and trying to work on her photography portfolio. Evidently her starboard-folio is already completed....

This is how she happens to be in the desert in the south-west (note that North America sports many Moon Lakes!) when a new flying suit is tested - one that bonds to the skin. It's being tested by a woman Named Annie, and the air-force considers the test to be a success and orders the destruction of the suit, with Annie still in it. This causes a literal rain of particles which come down rather like hailstones, but which are soft, like they're made from modeling clay. They cover Julie and stick to her skin, and to her truck.

She evacuates the area quickly, but soon discovers these hailstones are, in a way, alive. They begin to flatten out and stretch, and cover her skin, eventually forming a breast plate - literally. It covers her neck, upper chest, and breasts rather provocatively, like a prototype designer swimsuit top. It's not like a piece of metal armor - it's more like a thin coat of chrome. The doctor who Julie visits cannot remove it, and actually is injured by it. Julie is tossed out of the ER as a prankster.

The air force is now trying to recover all the pieces from the explosion, but can find less than 30% of them. They discover that two people were in the area - a vagrant, and Julie. They just don't know the identity of these two people two begin with. A woman with the cool name of Ivy Raven, who is an expert at tracking down people and reading crime scenes - this woman is observant and sharp - is called in to find Julie, but she isn't told the whole story.

There are several interested parties, including a park ranger named Dillon Murphy who is the boyfriend of Annie, the original test pilot. He eventually encounters Julie when the army try to arrest her, and end up all knocked out due to some explosive power of Julie's breastplate which evidently triggers when she's stressed. Now she and Dillon are on the run with Ivy in hot pursuit.

I wasn't thrilled that Julie had to end up with Ranger Rick (or Dill) - yet another woman in distress who evidently can't make it without a guy to validate her, but the characters were written realistically (they even have realistic names! LOL!), and behaved appropriately, and there was no ridiculous love at first sight, so I

let that problem slide in this case. Plus, it's Julie who actually gets them out of various scrapes with her "super-power", so this balanced out. Overall, I rated this a worthy read and I was looking forward to volume two at the end of this one.

Malapata says

No ha llegado a engancharme aunque me ha tenido interesado. No voy a buscar la continuación, pero si algún día la veo rebajada posiblemente le de una oportunidad.

Amy says

This is the first Terry Moore comic I've read, and I have to admit that the many accolades he'd gotten from comic book fans had me nervous he wouldn't live up to the hype. But this comic really was fantastic. The art was beautiful and expressive, and Moore is not afraid to make his characters fully dimensional, giving them real flaws and real lives. And the plot was nothing to scoff at either. Will definitely be picking up the rest of this series.

Caroline says

Terry Moore is best known as the writer and artist of the long-running comic series 'Strangers in Paradise' -- which I haven't read that much of because, as noted, it's long running and all those volumes sitting on the bookstore shelves look intimidating.

But SiP ended, and I'd heard generally good things about Moore's followup project 'Echo'. I was avoiding any specifics because I figured I would want to read it eventually. That was a good move, because I had no idea what I was in for when I read the five issues collected in this trade paperback. I didn't even realize the art was black and white. I wouldn't have thought that would work with the subject matter, which is surprisingly action-oriented.

This is a really great example of what graphic literature (or can I just say comic books? please?) can be. Great characters, an action-and-mystery driven plot, and some big ideas thrown in to think about; using epigraphs by Einstein takes some cojones, but in this case they don't feel out of place.

Peacegal says

Detailed illustrations and an exciting storyline will appeal to even those who aren't big fans of superhero stories.

David says

I was a fan of Terry Moore's *Strangers in Paradise*, though that series went on way too long and began recycling storylines every volume. He writes real, human, messed-up but endearing characters, and then puts them in extreme situations. His stories are like taking the characters from one of the more intelligent rom-coms and suddenly sticking them in a gangster or sci-fi movie.

Also, his black and white art has a lush, hubba-hubba quality to it that's almost cheesecake (he likes decidedly "well-rounded" women) but manages not to be exploitative, nor does he portray anatomically improbable women in physically impossible poses with clothes that could not possibly stay on in said poses.

So, *Moon Lake* is the first volume in what's kinda sorta a superhero story. At least, it has the trappings of a "superhero origins" story - Julie Martin is a broke photographer who's clinging to denial while her husband pesters her to sign the divorce papers, when she happens to observe some sort of test going on above a desert Air Force base. While she's snapping pictures, the test pilot of an experimental super-suit gets blown out of the sky. By her own people. There are definitely government baddies here, though by the end of volume one we're still not sure which of the MIB are bad guys and which, if any, will turn out to be good guys.

The remains of the test pilot's supersuit rain down on the desert, and some of it attaches to Julie in molten metal droplets. They coalesce together in a silvery breastplate that attaches itself to her skin. She goes to a medical clinic to try to have it removed, with unpleasant results.

Meanwhile, of course, some other people saw the explosion, and a mentally-unbalanced vagrant also got some super-metal rained on him...

By the end of this volume, Julie is on the run from the MIB, with a park ranger who's the boyfriend of the woman who got blown up on page one.

Not a very original premise, if you've read a lot of superhero comics, but like I said, Moore's schtick is writing real characters and putting them in unreal situations, so Julie is acting like a normal person would act when suddenly finding herself on the run from government agents with some sort of super-science liquid metal attached to her chest - i.e., she's freaking out.

Good art and fun story, and I want to see what happens when they meet the lethally-smart special agent and the psycho homeless guy.

Vittorio Rainone says

Terry Moore ha un tratto semplice, pulito ed espressivo, sa rendere benissimo i corpi e gli stati d'animo, è meno efficace per le ambientazioni, per cui forse avrebbe giovato una copertura di colore, ma in generale la resa delle pagine è molto buona. Echo parla di una scoperta rivoluzionaria capitata nelle mani sbagliate, quelle degli uomini. E' la storia di come l'armatura composta di un materiale avveniristico capiti per caso in possesso di una ragazza qualsiasi, mettendo in moto una serie di eventi fortuiti che porteranno al salvataggio del genere umano. La storia è ben scritta, con i giusti ritmi e il giusto tasso di azione (e di violenza a la Akira). Gli antagonisti sono interessanti e c'è una buona evoluzione dei personaggi. Insomma, gran bel volume della Bao.

Mira Domsky says

A secret government project tries to destroy evidence, creating an "incident" at Moon Lake. This is the beginning of the story of the three(4?) people who were unfortunate enough to be at Moon Lake that day, and people who were hired to shut them up.

The artwork is beautiful, and absolutely eloquent and poignant. A few frames of a comic book can say so much in such a small space. And like *Strangers in Paradise*, this comic features kick-ass women, and a strong but sensitive male character; basically everything I adore.

J.L. says

Seems like a lot of reviewers gushing over this graphic novel were coming to it after being fans of Moore's earlier work. Being unfamiliar with *Strangers in Paradise*, I read *Echo: Moon Lake* without any preconceptions.

Unfortunately, I don't think I'll be continuing on with the series unless my husband buys the next volume. Not sure I would even then. Two-dimensional characters thrown into conflict driven by a gaping plot hole is not my cup of tea.

However: the art is lovely (all pencil, no color or inks), and the characters (especially the women) are drawn refreshingly realistically.

Mike says

I'm re-reading the series now that I have the complete edition, and it starts off with a bang and some uncomfortable people interactions. Julie's apparently been no prize, and while doing nothing special her life crawls further in the toilet.

I like the writing - it's sparse but authentic, and the dialogue keeps the story moving without having to resort to narration or VoiceOver.

It's odd to read a well-done graphic novel that consists only of pencils - no colours or even inks. Harder to appreciate whether the art is great or merely good, but it services the story well - conveys emotion and keeps me engaged in the action, so that's what's important.

I've never read any other Moore, but I'm enjoying this story immensely and will see it through the Complete Edition.

Katy Vendetti says

I haven't read a lot of graphic novels recently, but I enjoyed the Marvel universe when I was a kid, as well as an adult with all of the movies that they put out now. So, when I was looking to begin really getting into the

graphic novel genre, I have a friend who is pretty well-versed in all things comics. He suggested this comic. Terry Moore's art is absolutely gorgeous. Each frame is detailed and visually beautiful. And the story is pretty interesting as well. It begins with a girl named Annie performing tests on a flying suit for a classified military contractor laboratory. And while doing the test, they shoot her out of the sky. Pieces of her suit fall from the sky over civilian territory, affecting a couple of people, though the one in particular that we follow through the book is Julie. The metal from the suit adheres to Julie's skin and chest, and the adventure goes from there.

There is some language throughout the book, and some adult themes, but nothing really too extreme. The metal does adhere to her chest, so there are a minimal amount of boob jokes, but overall, the book merely sets the stage for the rest of the series.

I hope to get the next one soon so I can find out what happens to Julie. It's definitely a great start to getting back into graphic n

Aaron says

A superb kickoff to what seems like it may be one of my favorite comics series in quite a while (fingers crossed). Terry Moore blends his indie, grounded, character-driven sensibility with the high-concept idea of a woman accidentally becoming the new owner of some sort of top-secret government supersuit. This is a series that places its character drama at the forefront, allowing the circumstances surrounding the suit and the mysteries around it to, rather than taking over the entire plot, drive the characters' decisions and emotional conflicts. It's really right up my alley, and I'm digging it so far.

This first volume jumps right into the story, revealing details about Julie and her past via her troubles with the sudden appearances of the liquid metal suit and its irreversible attachment to her. Nothing Moore does here is over the top or melodramatic. Julie is a fully realized, complex character right out of the gate, and as such we fully buy her journey.

Most of the focus stays on her for this volume, though we do get introduced to Dillon, a local park ranger who's being drawn into the mystery as well, and some of the government agents who are trying to track the suit down. It feels like these characters will likely get more fleshed out as the series continues, but I didn't feel hugely let down by their secondary nature in this book.

I will say, after the initial burst of narrative energy in the first issue of the comic, this volume slows down a fair amount. The mystery surrounding the suit is well-handled, but a little plodding. I honestly didn't care that much, though, since I felt so drawn to the characters.

Also, I love Moore's artwork. It's cartoonish without being ridiculous. Everyone looks like a real, believable person with clear reactions and emotions, and his attention to detail in his environments is remarkable for someone who is also putting in writing duties.

Very excited to keep going with this series!

Christina says

An excellent adult graphic novel: a woman just happens to be at Moon Lake when a special top secret flying

suit (think Iron Man, but with a woman inside) explodes in a radioactive cloud. She is showered with little metal pellets, that stick to her skin. And when she touches a big chunk of mysterious metal, all the little pellets flow to that metal and the whole thing bonds to her shoulders and chest in a kind of metal bra! Very weird. Even weirder? Anyone who touches the metal skin in a threatening way gets zapped! Like, really really powerfully--enough to kill them. I can't wait to read the next adventures of Julie; there's more to the powers of the suit than just the power thing, but I don't want to spoil it for you. Suffice to say she's on the run from the government with a cute park ranger guy helping her escape. Great illustrations and characters.
