

Recap: "THE WALKING DEAD 303, Walk With Me"

Written by Dave Pace

Monday, 29 October 2012 10:44



Everybody was psyched up to see what happens next at the prison, especially more of Rick's continued slide down a dangerous slope. Instead, they pulled the rug out from under us and gave us an episode which focused entirely on Andrea and Michonne.

So the lovely ladies of the post-apocalypse and their awesome pack mule zombies investigate a plume of black smoke and discover a helicopter crash site. It isn't long before another pack of survivors show up as well though, in numbers and much better armed. Andrea and Michonne get caught by an old friend and brought back to Woodbury, kind of like Mayberry but with heavily armed militia-types, where The Governor is introduced and is certain to be the *Big Deal* this season. Of course Woodbury is very nice, but like a David Lynch town, it has dark secrets; secrets the townsfolk may be aware of, but they keep neatly tucked away under the idyllic façade of an all-American small town.

One of the highlights was obviously the return of Merle (Michael Rooker) and his new prosthetic arm/harpoon, something straight out of EVIL DEAD. I picture him cutting his hand off and then going "Workshed!" and rushing off to fashion this thing. I look forward to seeing the other attachments he has for it besides the bayonet. If his nickname isn't Swiss Army by the end of the season, I will be sad.



The other main attraction was the reveal of The Governor (David Morrissey) and Woodbury itself. I've not read the comics so I have no idea what the Governor is supposed to be like, but I

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get this distinctly right-wing survivalist vibe from him. Before the walkers, was he was doing a podcast featuring long tirades against the federal government from his mountain compound and chasing off Census workers with assault weapons. There is a vibe about him and about the aesthetics of Woodbury—small town America, an idealized past—that are pretty consistent with the hardcore libertarian types. It also explains why he guns down the soldiers they find at the end of the episode, instead of rescuing them. He doesn't want the armed forces coming in and trying to take away the new world he's building.

So is The Governor a radical who took the apocalypse as his chance to build the world he always wanted from the ashes of America? What explains the fish tanks full of heads at the end though? I have no idea really. I think it might be guilt. He's a fundamentally decent man, like Rick Grimes, and like Rick he needs to torture himself over the appalling decisions he has to make in order for his vision of survival to carry on.

The unexpected focus shift to Andrea and Michonne really paid off. It sets the stage for what will certainly be the central conflict of the season and the contrast between Woodbury and the prison really shows us how seductive The Governor will be able to be. I'm sure many people would be fine with all kinds of barbarism as long as it's out of sight and they get to enjoy a little slice of civilization and comfort. That's what men like The Governor have counted on in human nature for millennia.