

Presented for your consideration: a question. How can there be action outside of time, outside of space? How can there even be thought under those conditions? After all, action supposes movement through space over time. Thought supposes a set of mental states following one another from moment to moment. Yet, the story of Convergence takes place on Telos, a living planet outside of space and time. I raise this not to be difficult or precious. After all, the idea of a location removed from our ordinary four dimensions arises very regularly in science fiction. But given that this is the conceit of Convergence, we should be fully aware that we are dealing with a premise that is fundamentally impossible, or perhaps it would be better to say is fundamentally more a subject for theology than for literary analysis. This is just one of those stories where you accept the fun and revel in it, without asking yourself how it is supposed to work, even within the context of the fictional universe. And this story is quite a bit of fun. It picks up at the end of Superman: Doomed #2, where the Man of Steel disappears into a black hole with Vril Dox, the incarnation of Brainiac who has unleashed the doomsday virus on Metropolis. He arrives at Telos, there to discover the ultimate Brainiac, who uses his headquarters outside of the Multiverse and Hypertime to monitor the various universes and timelines, sending avatars into strategic points to gather cities from timelines about to crumble. Telos, the living planet, evidently once had a life of its own, but was taken over by Brainiac and turned into a caretaker for the cities Brainiac gathers. Brainiac, as it happens, has a fascination for Superman. In every timeline in which one of his avatars encounters the Kryptonian, Brainiac goes down in defeat, only for Superman to offer his life in the defense of others. Brainiac captures Superman and examines him in the infinite now of Telos, we know not how "long" as he erases Clark's memories as he goes along. Eventually, he departs to gather a sample of Clark's timeline, and that is where things go askew. Superman manages to escape from his chains to discover his captor missing. Telos informs him that Brainiac has not returned from his latest expedition. Readers of The New 52: Futures End know that is because Brainiac is defeated when attempting to gather the New York of that timeline. Now, Telos must decide what to do in the absence of his master. The word "telos" means "end" or "purpose" in Greek, and Telos is a planet where we find timelines that have met their end. But can some of them now have beginnings? Telos' first action is to erase Superman's memories again and hurl the Man of Steel back to his native timeline. Then he decides the time has come to open the domes containing the captive cities. He will determine which of his guests are worthy of survival, and which are worthy of oblivion. Ethan Van Sciver's art emphasizes mostly naturalistic forms combined with fanciful, often dizzying perspectives. The sense of disorientation emphasizes Superman's own confusion, and presages the chaos to come as the citizens of the different realities encounter one another. Marcelo Maiolo's bright, clear colors imbue the panels with an energy that charges the confusion, making the action seem to crackle with anxiety. Sciver's usual naturalism especially sets off the grotesque alien form of the ultimate Brainiac, a looming god of eldritch technology and inscrutable menace. The post Convergence #0 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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