

"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world," or so said William Butler Yeats in 1919. Yeats died the year Batman was born, and he was reflecting on the carnage and hypocrisy of World War One, not the adventures chronicled in four-color comics. Nevertheless, readers of Convergence might well feel some sympathy with the Irish poet this week. In Convergence #4, the weekly series finally seemed to find its rhythm, particularly in terms of characterization. In Convergence #5, the story breaks apart and appears to lose all momentum. Appearances, however, are deceiving. To misquote Yeats, the "centre" actually does hold in Convergence #5. The center involves the personalities and motivations of the main characters of this series, the Earth 2 survivors, of which Dick Grayson is rapidly becoming the dominant figure. Last issue, we saw Grayson finally begin to display his traditional attributes, particularly the mixture of determination, decency, and empathy that have made him one of the most beloved of Gotham's children. This continues this week as Grayson's sympathy and understanding for Telos deepen, as does the characterization of that villainous entity, who is rapidly becoming central to the story in surprising ways. Likewise, the portrayals of the other Earth 2 heroes have solidified, placing them well on the path of recovery from the mismanagement they suffered during Earth 2: World's End and the later stages of Earth 2. The pencils by Andy Kubert feature blocky forms limned in relatively light shadows by Sandra Hope. His layouts unfold in pages that use minimal numbers of panels with tight, crowded layouts. At the worst this is claustrophobic and frustrating, but at the best gives a sense of coiled, gathered power and grinding, opposed forces. The techniques work well in the outdoor spaces of Skartaris, where the natural menace and majesty of the prehistoric realms and its dinosaur fauna come through clearly. Unfortunately, Brad Anderson's colors are pale and slightly washed out, sometimes almost weary. Where this world should be vibrant and rich, it looks drained. The major failure of this issue lies in the plotline. This is that most deadly of installments, one that consists of largely of people standing around and talking. Worse, it consists of introducing two major characters, Braniac the world collector and Travis Morgan the Warlord, only to dismiss them summarily. We are now on our third major villain in five issues, and it is getting very annoying. On the other hand, two major plot twists are likely to prove more enduring. The first involves the back story of Telos. The nature of this being is likely to shape the destiny of Earth 2: Society, or at the very least the outcome of Convergence. Suffice to say he is not an intelligent planet after all, but something less, or possibly more. The second is the decision of Dick Grayson to embrace a destiny which will surprise very few, but likely satisfy most. The post Convergence #5 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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