

Comparing Gotham City to a cage comes pretty naturally to anyone who's been reading Batman comics for the past twenty years or so. The city seems a dark and desperate place filled with dark and desperate people trapped with each other in a cycle of violence and cruelty. The story that most exemplified that, the event that was the iconic representation of this view of Gotham, was 1999's No Man's Land, and the writer probably most associated with it was Greg Rucka. Rucka has had his troubles with DC since that time, but this issue of Convergence is a very interesting set of returns, as he takes up characters and themes familiar from seventeen years ago. Once again Rucka, the master of street-level psychology, examines trapped heroes and villains. Once again he sets his gaze on two of No Man's Land's most memorable protagonists, Harvey Dent and Renée Montoya, otherwise known as Two Face and The Question. The relationship between these two remains as complicated as ever, and as fraught with conflicting emotions and hints of violence. But now everything is frozen. The theme of this book is lack of freedom. Being in a cage is about being frozen. All choice is gone. Indeed, in the cage crafted by Telos, it seems like all chance is gone. In some ways, this would seem to be a relief. Renée is free of the Mark of Cain. Harvey finds that the coin that determines his morality always comes up heads. But perpetual relief is no relief. These two, and everyone else in Gotham, is well aware that their fate is held in a cruel and arbitrary hand, and this is proved correct as the dome crumbles and suddenly the fix reverses. A coin that is sure to come up tails is as worthless as a coin that is sure to come up heads, and even Harvey understands that. So what is the answer? Harvey believes it is in the deadly confrontation that Telos has decreed, confrontation leading to death and release. Renée still clings to hope of freedom, that is hope of true choice. As Harvey sets out to find his release, Renée turns to her friends, Helena Bertinelli and Kate Kane, forging a team to fight for true escape from the cage, for true life, even with all its pain and burdens. Cully Hamner has crafted a set of visuals that suggest desperation and weariness. His bodies are angular and his faces are gaunt. The spaces and panels he works with are cramped and tight, as if closing in to crush the inhabitants of this Gotham, or to choke off their air. Dave McCaig's dark palette contributes to the feeling of stifling, quiet despair, the feeling that everyone and everything is one half-inch away from total exhaustion and surrender. The post Convergence: The Question #1 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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