

The best setting for comedy, at least of the tongue-in-cheek kind, depends on the genre being mocked. For romance, small apartments and quirky restaurants fit the bill nicely. For caper comedies, mansions and casinos and institutions of financial responsibility provide the best backdrops. And Harley Quinn #12, a sci-fi sendup, could only take place in space. Harley and Kara AKA Power Girl reach outer space via a transporting ring wielded by Sportsmaster and Clock King. Timms and Hardin render the setting with appropriate grandeur. They make surprisingly little use of true splash pages, but rather adopt a regular six-panel format in which the smaller windows group around an extensive background shot. The comedic action and repartee playing through the smaller panels juxtaposed against the more operatic mirth of the larger shots gives a pleasing balance to the sometimes wearily frenetic shenanigans of Harley and friends. The appropriate expansiveness of the backgrounds reminds everyone this is science fiction, or at least fiction about science of a kind. Alex Sinclair's brilliant colors fit right into the general scheme of things, and we wouldn't be at all surprised to see a lurid red title bar proclaiming the Adventures of Harley Rogers and Kara Gordon in the 24th and Three Quarters Centuuuuryyyyy. The story, in that it's all that important, involves Harley and Kara attempting to find their way home from what is evidently another galaxy. Luckily Arthur, the giant pug dog who rules the planet on which they find themselves, is a friendly sort once they work through some problems involving Arthur gobbling down his annoying spouse and Harley blasting Arthur's accountant, an associate of Clock King's from Astoria, into dispersed atoms. The latter action provokes protest from Kara, allowing the authors a comic riff on the ever-popular, these-days-controversial subject of superheroes killing. It turns out that in order to return home Kara and Harley have to use the Infinity Rings, objects owned by the cosmic tyrant Manos. Manos looks very like a certain rhyming character in a certain Marvel movie dealing with the guardians of a big-ole-mess-of-sparkly-stars, and in his conversation he mentions not just the Infinity Rings (it's the pink one on his toe they have to use to get home, by the way) but the Cosmic Cubicle. He also has a brood of bored, spoiled children kind of like a Don in a comic Mafia movie, and plays a deadly organ with the gusto of Vincent Price in his most gleeful Dr. Phibes moments. After a few moments of daring-do, resulting in the destruction of both Manos and his organ, and an off-page detour that seems to involve weddings and alien kittens, the pair find their way back home for an issue-ending cliffhanger. The post Harley Quinn #12 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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