

Sometimes you just get the sense of being caught in a nightmare and unable to wake up. That is the situation the various members of the Bat Family find themselves in as *Batman Eternal* #48 unfolds. Hush, escaped from his cell in the Bat Cave, decides to make use of the available computer systems to inflict pain on the various vigilantes as they continue the individual battles they began in the previous issue. So far, so good. But from there, things become fairly ludicrous fairly quickly. It is one thing to send feedback into Batgirl's earpiece, distracting her as she fights Joker's Daughter at the scene of *The Killing Joke*, or the New 52 version of it. Similarly, it makes sense that Batwing's armor might possess circuitry capable of being overridden from Batman's headquarters. Batman provided him with the equipment, after all. But why would Tim Drake, who has been shown to possess cybertechnology skills superior to those of Bruce Wayne, have an override in the wings of his suit, an override keyed to the Bat Cave computers? Bluebird recently joined the fight, and her equipment is entirely homemade. How then, can Hush use the Bat Cave's technology to interfere with her? And, most ridiculous of all, how can the Bat Cave's computer cause Jason Todd's guns to explode? Has Bruce been enhancing his wayward protégé's equipment without the Red Hood's knowledge? That should make for some sharp comments at the dinner table. Fernando Blanco's art, with its somewhat rough lines and relative lack of detail, enhances the sense of a dream, or perhaps a paranoid fantasy. Marcelo Maiolo's basic colors likewise gives a feel of raw power at the expense of subtlety, or even plausibility. Luckily, the other storylines that fill this issue proceed more smoothly. A repentant Jason Bard discovers that he has set events in motion that cannot easily be reversed. Why is he repentant? That plot point has gotten obscured in the mass of events that have cluttered the book over the last few installments. Similarly, we had nearly forgotten completely about Stephanie Brown's father, making his appearance here an effective surprise. Most interesting are the developments at Blackgate Prison, where the mysterious puppeteer behind Gotham's agony reaches out to the last of the major Bat Villains to be readily available. Penguin has a new mission, and it involves the assassination of Jim Gordon under cover of a prison riot. Why now? Like so much else in this issue, that is a question perhaps best not asked. The post *Batman Eternal* #48 appeared first on *Weekly Comic Book Review*.

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