

We have a strong prejudice for beginnings and endings, especially for endings. A happy ending will wipe away an entire story worth of pain and disaster. A strong conclusion will atone for a great deal of stumbling and faltering on the way. Still, a good ending is not all-powerful. Not all sins can be forgiven by a powerful finish. Some flaws remain glaring even in the light of a well-crafted resolution. Batman Eternal #52 is, considered as a single issue, a good comic. It is also a relatively strong conclusion to the year-long story that has comprised this weekly. Still, it can't be said to redeem the series in its entirety. Just, for that matter, as the victory of the Bats cannot be said to redeem Gotham of all its manifold sins and wickedness. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this issue is that it is actually not about Batman at all. In that the issue has a central character, or perhaps one should say a pivotal character, it is the newly freed Jim Gordon, who decides to use the power of Batman as a symbol to call upon the people of Gotham to rise and take matters, at least to a degree, into their own hands. Is this what is meant by Batman being eternal? That although the man is mortal, the symbol is forever? So it would appear. Unfortunately, this theme could have been clearly explored in a series half the length of Batman Eternal. There is, in fact, no event in this issue that could not have occurred in October. Many of the plot twists, blind alleys, and story diversions to which readers have been subjected over the last year turn out to have little bearing at all on the conclusion of the tale. This book is an interesting last-minute celebration, a kind of family reunion, of Gotham's defenders, as some quite unlikely characters come crawling out of the woodwork to join in the fun. Talon for instance, hero of James Tynion IV's eponymous series, makes an appearance, as do Katana and Black Canary. And both Selina Kyle and Killer Crook have interesting if subsidiary roles to play in the drama. Even the Court of Owls strikes an ironic blow for the good of the city. The celebration of characters is matched by a celebration of creators, as writers Tim Seeley and Ray Fawkes join some of the series' more prominent artists to give the story a fitting visual farewell. The post Batman Eternal #52 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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