

Futures End was supposed to be about sacrifice, and so it was. Unfortunately, the sacrifice it entailed was not the efficacious kind. This was not about heroes paying a cost to defeat Brother Eye and prevent the terrible cyborg future first seen on Free Comic Book Day 2014. That would have been expected and, from a literary point of view, welcome. No, this was about the sacrifice of story for publishing strategy, and that was a tragedy. The purpose of this weekly was not to end a disastrous future, but to create a profitable one. First of all, that was to happen by selling almost a year's worth of issues. But it was also to occur by setting up other books. Most obviously, the storyline concerning Terry McGinnis and Tim Drake was a prelude to the new Batman Beyond series, whereas the plotline with Braniac fed into the Convergence event. It's true that those were probably the strongest narrative lines in Futures End, likely because they served such a clear purpose, but the fact that so much of the energy and intent of the weekly went into laying the foundation for other books speaks to the consuming weakness at the heart of the project. Simply put, the book was never concerned with telling a good story, and so it didn't. The authors, Jeff Lemire, Dan Jurgens, Brian Azzarello, and Keith Giffen, turned in bits and pieces of an epic that never cohered into a whole. Even those portions that served immediate strategic ends were not fully realized, but floated in disconnected narrative space, having no firm connections to other story elements or to even their own backgrounds. What, for instance, was the cause of the bitterness between Tim Drake and Bruce Wayne? What was the great betrayal wrought by Batman on Superman? The series was pregnant with such mysteries, and most of them were stillborn. Worse yet, in the end the conclusion served to launch a series, the new Batman Beyond, resting on a foundation that makes not sense. The original timeline has been destroyed, yet the Brother Eye future still comes about. How is that possible. Worse yet, we are told that this is the official future of the DC Universe. That that mean that Tim and Bruce are fated to fall into acrimony, even though the war that led to that argument now cannot occur? And what of the other storylines in Futures End? What of Frankenstein and Fifty Sue? Are they meant to play roles in Batman Beyond? And if they are, how can that be, if their timeline no longer exists? The post Futures End: Less Than Meets The Eye appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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