

There's an art to balancing a story's short-term satisfaction and its long-term payoff. Ideally, you want to keep the audience entertained in the present, all the while building towards something bigger and more important down the line, but if you have the former, you can take as much time as you need to deliver on the latter. It's the stories that struggle to keep you in the moment that need to worry. They can't afford to string you along before unveiling their overarching plans. That's why this issue of Grayson feels kind of perplexing. Seely-King have done a good job setting the title up as a series of one-shot adventures (with the exception of the disappointing two-parter with Midnigher). Along the way, they made Mr. Minos a compelling antagonist, a man of many mysteries which Seely-King convinced you were worth uncovering over time. You would've been happy settling in for a long ride under these circumstances, so why the rush to not only upend the status quo, but rid the title of one of its strongest features? Admittedly, we don't know a lot of hard facts about Minos, other than the vague reference to past tragedy. But we've been treated to his whimsical yet highly competent personality, and that's enough to make his sudden loss worth regretting. He's especially appealing in this issue, undercutting his preppy looks with some ballsy moves and maybe even ballsier lines ("God is just another man with a secret."). The man's got to have guts to not only spring a surprise attack on Helena and Agent 1, but to turn a trick on Spyral as well. True, in some ways he does fit the description of the loud, plan-explaining villain that Dick used to fight on a monthly basis, but there was clearly potential for a lot more than that. Given time, Seely-King could've easily molded Minos into something memorable, but as is, we have literally nothing to remember him by. Before he can get in some last words on who he is and what he was really fighting for, he's gone, and as if to put a pin on the matter, his dispatcher comments, "Honestly, Mister...whatever...do you really think I care?" With that, Seely-King replace one mysterious antagonist with another, and lucky for them, Agent Zero is nearly as intriguing as Minos had been. Her appearance suggests Kathy Kane, and Minos calls her the "spider in the web," which supports recent continuity of Kathy being a founder of Spyral. But if she is, then what are we to make of the tri-part entity revealed as Spyral in #6? All this, apparently, to bring Dick into Spyral, meaning he's got something pretty special they want. We know why he's special, but the question is what Spyral would consider valuable. I have a feeling we're only scratching the surface if we talk about the way he uses his inside knowledge of the League to defeat Paragon, which turns out to be merely an Amazo-type robot—a decent fate for the otherwise boring plotline about the Paragon organs. It's an impressive display, especially since it one-ups Agent 1, who proves to be as badass as reputed, but it's not the only reason Spyral wants Dick. I also have a feeling it's not his ass that Spyral wants, although the obsessive admiration of our quartet of hot-and-bothered gals from St. Hadrian's might make you think otherwise. There's still not much individuality coming from them, but the collective personality adds a spicy flavor to Grayson, and I use that word judiciously and accurately. The girls' teenage crush may have sealed the victory against Paragon and Minos, but it's their filthy thoughts about Dick that are invaluable to this title. Undeterred by rumor of his homosexuality, one of them remarks, "Paris is gay...that doesn't stop me from wanting to climb up on its Eiffel Tower." Janín's mostly on point this issue, although his action sequences again are a bit of a mixed bag. There's a two-page sequence of Agent 1 and Dick fighting Paragon that's panel-less, which is always an ambitious risk and which doesn't quite work. The flow of the action gets a bit lost behind the tangle of bodies and word balloons, and although everybody looks good doing what they're doing, what they're doing looks stiff and play-acted. That posed quality makes for excellent dramatic scenes, however, as if each movement is a play in a

psychological chess game.- Some Musings:* Would you say that's the most graphic metaphor we've seen in a mainstream DC comic? I kind of feel like it is, in which case, congratulations to Seely-King.- Dick does look badass wielding that smoking gun, even if that's not the Batman way.The post Grayson #8 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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