It isn't an easy thing to end a world. Maybe the difficulty inherent in the task explains why it takes a weekly series, equivalent to four monthlies, to do it. At present all of the DC weeklies are, in some sense, chronicling the Apocalypse. Earth 2: World's End is telling the story of the literal destruction of that alternate Earth. Batman Eternal is dealing with destruction on a more intimate scale, as the world of Batman and his allies shatters around them. The New 52: Futures End has a more complicated task than the other two weeklies. It is much broader in scope than Eternal, but not as literally apocalyptic as World's End, with which it is linked at the hip. In this series, set five years in the future of the DCU from present continuity, a huge cast of mostly B-list heroes attempts to stave off a dark future set thirty years further on, a future in which the tyrannical artificial intelligence Brother Eye (yes, the brother eye of OMAC and Infinite Crisis, or rather a version thereof) has taken over the world and replaced humanity, including metahumanity, with cyborgs. The storylines of Futures End are sprawling and, if not as disconnected as those currently on display in Worlds End, nevertheless not particularly coherent. In this issue, Lois Lane, fresh from Cadmus Island, reveals that the evil company and its government allies had been experimenting on the heroes from the destroyed Earth 2 in an environment that harkens back to such science fiction programs as The Prisoner and such real atrocities as Nazi medical projects. As she does so, Green Arrow, who had been behind the revelation but is now believed to be dead and who is actually living in retirement, shares his pleasant island with Buddy Baker AKA Animal Man and the Baker Family, this undoubtedly a call-out to the relationship between the two in Jeff Lemire's Justice League United. Superman and John Constantine, meanwhile, travel to Siberia to confront a bear that turns out to be an avatar of Braniac, who is fast approaching the Earth and whose relationship to Brother Eye has not yet been revealed. And finally Madison Payne and Ronnie Raymond explore their newfound relationship as Firestorm in the wake of Jason Rusch's death. The last plotline has the complication that Madison is the girlfriend of the believed-to-be-dead Tim Drake, who has been living as a bartender ever since the death of the Teen Titans. Madison takes the rather bizarre step of not revealing her survival to Tim, despite the fact that she had argued vociferously about Tim's own lies concerning his life and death. Faking deaths seems to be quite the trope at DC these days. Madison, Tim, and Oliver Queen of Prime Earth are all doing that in Futures End, while in current continuity Dick Grayson continues to live as a dead man in Grayson. It is, to use a bad pun, extreme overkill, especially as none of the deaths and their effects have been well-thought-out by characters or well-realized by writers. The use of mysterious, deadly cosmic entities hurtling toward the Earth is likewise a wearying trope, whether it be Braniac, Apokalips, or both. The post The New 52: Futures End #31 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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