



Justice League #15
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Justice League

Issue #15: "Lead Us Not Into Desecration, Part 1 (of 3)"

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High noon: that fabled time of day that bespoke of swift justice and swifter death. The two heroes stood shoulder-to-shoulder under the hot Arizona sun, staring down the length of the deserted main street and waiting for their opponents to show themselves. On either side of them, the sagging, sandblasted buildings bore mute witness to the ratcheting tension as the seconds ticked by. Then the wind picked up, stirring the dust in the street even as it cooled the sweat beading on the heroes' brows, and from out of a nearby alley came... a tumbleweed.

"For the love of God," Hawkgirl groaned. "Could this whole thing possibly get any more cliché?"

"I don't know, I kind of like this." Ralph Dibny, the world-famous Elongated Man, smiled and rocked back on his heels. "A change of scenery never hurts."

She groaned once more and leaned against the pike she'd brought along. "It's silly. I feel like I'm indulging somebody's immature male fantasy here."

He considered pointing out that her body-hugging, midriff-baring costume was much more indulging for many men, but he didn't want to get the sharp end of that pike shoved in his eye. Instead, he said, "Well, look at it this way: in a place like this, nobody's gonna care if we knock down any buildings. I'm surprised we don't get sued for all the property damage we... "

As if on cue, a massive, green, troll-like creature bashed its way out of one of the nearby buildings. It snarled in an alien language, then leveled

a gun the size of a tree trunk at them. “Now *this* is more like it!” Hawkgirl said as she spread her wings and took flight to avoid the oncoming laser fire. She tried to lunge at the creature with her weapon, but it let off a salvo of blasts to keep her at bay. “A little help here, Stretch!”

Elongated Man knelt down in the street and flattened himself out, snaking the upper half of his body towards the creature, then wrapping his arms around its legs and yanking it off its feet. The creature grunted, then pointed the gun barrel at Ralph and let loose, but he was already retracting his pliable body to a safe distance. “Missed me!” he taunted, bending himself out of the way of the blasts with ease. “Missed again! Geez, are you even trying anymore?”

As the creature continued its unsuccessful assault, Hawkgirl swooped around behind it and made ready to slash its back wide open with the beak-like hook on her pike. Before she could deliver the blow, however, a flurry of debris from the wrecked building suddenly flew up into her face, courtesy of a miniature tornado — a thick piece of timber cracked her between the eyes, and she began to fall like a rock. The sight of his companion being struck down momentarily distracted Elongated Man, and he took his eyes off their foe long enough for the creature to draw a bead on him and cut him down. The hero soon crumpled in the middle of the street, his limbs too numb (not to mention slack) to support him.

The creature spared a glance at Hawkgirl laying behind it, then stalked up to Elongated Man, its gun trained directly at his head. It leaned over him, then said in a decidedly non-alien voice, “Game over, Ralphie boy.”

“If I could make a fist, I’d slug you,” Ralph replied.

The creature laughed, then it began to dissolve, its fearsome visage and awesome weaponry becoming nothing more than sparks of light radiating from Green Lantern’s ring. “Don’t worry, the stun bolts will wear off in a few minutes,” Hal said as he knelt down beside Ralph. “That was a nice move, by the way. I honestly didn’t realize what you were doing until I was on my butt. All my attention was on Kendra.”

“And all *her* attention was on *you*... which made my job way too easy.” The Flash stopped vibrating at super-speed so that his fellow Justice Leaguers could see him, then zipped over to Hawkgirl’s side and offered

her a hand. “You going to be okay?” he asked as he helped the young lady to her feet.

“Did you have to smack me in the face like that?” She removed her mask and gingerly probed the bright-red spot forming just above her eyes, saying, “For a second there, I thought you broke my nose.”

“Sorry, that one kind of got away from me. Besides, you *knew* there were two of us — you should’ve kept an eye out for my attack.”

“I *was* keeping an eye out.”

“Then how did I manage to tag you so easily?” He gestured to the knot on her forehead. “I think you were too busy thinking about skewering Hal in the back. You’ve got to stay aware of your surroundings, even when you’re in the middle of attacking the opponent right in front of you.”

“Maybe if the surroundings were a little more... I don’t know, *modern*...”

“What was that?”

“You heard me.” She brushed her short auburn hair back with a sweep of her hand, then put her mask back in place. “When you guys first invited me to join in on this training session, I was under the impression that we’d be practicing our tactics in a realistic environment, not a deleted scene from *3:10 to Yuma*.”

“What she means is: she’s got a teeny problem with this ghost town you picked out, Barry,” Elongated Man said as he stood up, brushing dirt off his costume.

Flash frowned at her. “You are aware that we can’t safely practice battle tactics in a populated area, right?”

“Already tried that excuse,” Elongated Man said.

“Zip it for a sec, Ralph.” The speedster focused all his attention on Hawkgirl. “You should also be aware that we rarely ever get a choice in

just where a battle is taking place, which means you've got to be ready to adapt to whatever environment you happen to find yourself in. Sure, the chances of us actually fighting someone in a place exactly like this are slim to none, but it does have a lot in common with a modern locale: narrow streets, easily-damaged structures, and dozens of potential hiding spots, the latter two of which Hal demonstrated very well when he busted out of the old saloon right in front of you."

"Actually, I was surprised you two didn't see me before that," the Green Lantern added. "I figured the light coming off the construct I made would be a dead giveaway."

"Never noticed it," Kendra muttered, then said in a more audible tone, "Okay, I admit it: I let my first impressions of this place blind me a little. But come on... an Old West ghost town? Are you going to tell me that you couldn't find any place better to practice besides this?"

"What are you getting at?" Flash asked.

"Just that I think you guys are still holding onto some childish desire to be cowboys. You know, riding horses and spitting tobacco and twirling pistols... what's the matter, the superhero life isn't exciting enough for you?"

"*Childish?* You think we're being *childish?*" Ralph suddenly clutched at his chest as if he'd been shot, then fell into Hal's arms and cried out in a fake Southern accent, "She got me square, pardner! That lil' filly done cut me down in my prime!" He lolled his head so far over on his rubbery neck that he was looking at Kendra upside-down, then stuck his tongue out the side of his mouth and crossed his eyes.

"You're not exactly helping our case here, 'pardner'," Hal said.

Ralph ignored him and croaked, "Bury my heart at Wounded Knee... "

Barry shook his head. "If you're done playing, how about we get back to practicing, hmm? I'll join Kendra on the defense end this time, so you two go and..." Just then, the comlink built into his mask started beeping, and he turned away from the group slightly. "Flash here. What's up, Diana?"

"Sorry to interrupt you," Wonder Woman replied, "but the satellite monitors are picking up some odd readings not far from your location. I thought you and the others could take a break and check it out."

He gestured to the others to tune in on their own comlinks, then asked, "What sort of readings?"

"I'm not sure. They just came out of nowhere about ten minutes ago — no build-up beforehand, and they've been strong and steady since then. It looks like a massive power surge of some kind, but it's coming from the Grand Canyon."

"Maybe it's one of the tourist resorts near there," Elongated Man said, his joking nature put aside for the moment. "A hotel generator overloading or something."

"Already checked that, and there's nothing of the sort nearby. It seems to be centered on a remote overlook called Tuweep: no major roads leading to it, no electricity lines, high elevation... "

"In other words, no reason for that much power to be in that place," Flash finished for her. "You got a visual on the area?"

"Negative, the satellites can't get a good fix. The signal cuts out every time."

"Somebody's hiding something," Hawkgirl said. "Something really big."

"On the edge of a major tourist attraction? Pretty stupid place to be hiding." Green Lantern called up a map of the area with his ring. "Tuweep's about seventy miles due north of here, on the far end of the canyon... shouldn't take long for us to fly out there. Care to scout ahead, Barry?"

"No problem. Meet you there." A cloud of dust trailed behind the speedster as he departed.

Hawkgirl walked over to where she'd dropped her weapon when she fell. The pike had embedded itself in a piece of the debris from the building Green Lantern had burst through — she looked down at it as she pulled her weapon free, then said, "What sort of person names a place 'Desecration'?"

The other two heroes came up beside her to see what she was talking about. Laying at her feet was a sun-bleached wooden sign, the raised letters still legible despite its age and the damage done to it: *DESECRATION SALOON*.

“Well, if you can have a town in Arizona called ‘Tombstone’, then why not one called ‘Desecration’?” Hal offered, then produced a large green bubble with his ring, enclosing Elongated Man and himself. “And for the record, Kendra, I never played cowboy when I was a kid... I was too busy pretending to be a jet pilot.”

The bubble began to ascend, heading north, and Hawkgirl spread her wings and followed after them.

Flash paced along the lip of the Grand Canyon across from Tuweep, unsure of what to do next. He’d checked over every square inch of land in the area, even the Colorado River running through the canyon itself a mile below him, but nothing looked out of place. *There’s definitely something going on here, though*, he said to himself as he tried to raise Wonder Woman back at the Hall of Justice once more, only to be greeted by the pop and hiss of static. That only lasted so long as he was within a half-mile of the area, however: step outside that unseen border, and the signal came back clear as day. He was considering doing just that when he saw his three friends flying in from the south.

“So, what’s the word?” Green Lantern asked as they touched down beside Barry.

“It’s a definite head-scratcher,” he replied, then laid out all the information — or rather, *lack* of information — he’d gathered so far. “Are you guys having the same trouble with your comlinks?”

Hawkgirl nodded. “We checked in with Wonder Woman before we entered this dead area, and she said she’s still picking up our locator beacons. So even though we can’t communicate with her, she can keep tabs on us.”

Approaching the canyon's edge, Elongated Man stretched out his neck and shaded his eyes with his hand, staring across the open expanse. "So that's Tuweep over there? Doesn't seem any different from the rest of the place."

"I wouldn't bet on that." Hal had called up a map of the area again. "According to the scans my ring's doing, there's a mass of energy about fifty feet in diameter sitting right where you're looking. Matter of fact, it almost appears to have a consistent outline, like it's radiating off a solid object, possibly manmade."

"If that's the case, why can't we see anything?" Ralph asked.

"Must be out of phase with us," Hal said, then turned to Barry. "You went over that whole ridge there and nothing happened?"

"Not a thing," he replied. "Maybe whoever's over there can't see us, either."

"Or maybe they're waiting for us to go away." Kendra walked up beside Ralph, looking hard at where the unknown object was supposed to be. "Not that I think we *should*..."

"Well, we're definitely not going to learn anything by standing around here and talking." Training his ring on the ground, Green Lantern directed the emerald energy to make a wide platform beneath all four heroes. "What say we go over there and roll out the welcome wagon for our unseen visitors?" The platform then began to raise off the ground, carrying them over to the northern end of the canyon with ease. Hal steered the platform above the spot where his ring claimed the object sat, and everyone peered down at what appeared to be nothing but an empty plateau.

"This can't be right," Flash said, "I went over this whole area already... see?" He pointed down at his own footprints imprinted in the fine red dust covering the rocky terrain. "If your ring's correct, Lantern, I was standing in the middle of where this energy source is, and I didn't notice a thing. Now I know you said this is out of phase with us, but how are we supposed to find out what's going on if we can't interact with it?"

"I haven't figured that part out yet," Hal muttered, and moved the platform towards another section of the plateau. "I'm going to set us down. Maybe if we confront whatever — or whoever — this is directly instead of dancing around it, we can get some answers." While the platform was still descending, however, he heard a strange noise, and turned his head to see a bulge forming in the air, as if something was pushing its way through reality itself. Then the bulge ripped open, and a gunmetal-gray sphere about the size of a basketball emerged. Out of instinct, Hal made the edges of the platform curve up so as to enclose himself and his friends in a sphere of their own, but before he could complete it, the object floating in front of them split open and revealed a row of circular depressions around its middle, all of them emitting a high-pitched whine. Within seconds, all four of the heroes were clutching their heads as an intense wave of pain suddenly ripped through their skulls — the ring-construct beneath them disintegrated as Green Lantern lost his concentration, and they began to plummet the remaining twenty feet to the plateau. Hawkgirl managed to keep some altitude with her wings and threw her pike at the object in an attempt to skewer it, but the sphere merely bobbed out of the way, and Kendra soon dropped like her friends.

Flash struggled to prop himself up on his hands and knees, trying his best to move at super-speed and get clear of whatever influence the object was exerting over them, but he just couldn't focus enough to do it. He turned his head slowly and saw Elongated Man reaching out towards the sphere, his face contorting as he attempted to stretch his arm across the distance, but he couldn't even manage an inch. Hawkgirl's wings twitched spasmodically in an effort to become airborne once more, and Green Lantern had squeezed his eyes shut as he tried to call forth his ring's power, but it was all for naught.

Another bulge began to form in front of them, much larger than the one that preceded the sphere's entrance. It spread out over the area where the strange power surge was located, then ripped open to reveal what appeared to be a ship of sorts, but not like any ship that existed in the 21st Century: the glossy metallic surface bore neither steering vanes nor visible engines, and it had no landing struts, hovering instead a half-foot above the plateau by unseen means. Then a seam began to appear on the unblemished surface, peeling it away while a sheer plate of metal jutted out from the bottom, until they formed a doorway and gangplank. A

bearded figure stood in the doorway, dressed in clothes that suggested a military uniform, but not for any country in particular. "What a glorious sight," the figure said with a laugh as he walked down the gangplank, the blood-red cape he wore billowing out in the dry Arizona wind. "The vaunted Justice League groveling before me, just as you should have done from the beginning. I was hoping to ensnare more of you, but considering what's to come, the rest shall be in your position soon enough." He went over to where Flash lay and pressed his foot down on the speedster's neck. "At least I managed to capture you... I should make you lick my boots for the way you insulted me last time."

"Don't know... who... " he struggled to say.

"Of course you don't know who I am," the figure said. "You haven't even *met* me yet by this time. None of you have." He stepped back and gave them an elaborate bow. "Allow me to introduce myself: I am the Lord of Time, the greatest enemy of the Justice League, and the one who shall be responsible for your destruction."

"How's... that? By... talking us... to death?" Ralph replied.

"Elongated Man," the Lord of Time snorted. "How I shall enjoy never having to hear your insipid quips again. Why the League asked you to join their ranks is beyond me." The man shook his head, saying, "It makes no difference now. In a few minutes, the world as you know it will be at an end, as I am about to bring forth to your time a threat beyond your imagining." He began to circle about the prone heroes, gesturing to the sky as he talked. "One hundred thirty years ago, a large chunk of anti-matter passed very close to this planet. So close, in fact, that it would have only taken a small change in its course to cause it to fall into Earth's gravitational field and explode right above this very spot. I'm sure you're aware of what happens when matter and anti-matter come into contact."

Kendra lifted her head, stammering out, "You... what are you... "

"What am I going to do? Is that what you're asking?" The Lord of Time knelt down in front of Hawkgirl. "It's not so much what I'm *going* to do as what I've *done*. You see, I've studded the length of the canyon with chrono-stasis generators of my own design, all of them ready to receive

the anti-matter energy that will soon be funneling into them from the past. All I have to do now is go back in time, redirect the anti-matter to where I want it, and let the devices safely move all that power into your present." He ran a finger along the curve of Hawkgirl's jaw, saying, "And then, my dear, I will simply ask your government to declare me your ruler, or else I will unleash all that power through the Grand Canyon. Just think of it: an anti-matter explosion tearing through over 217 miles of solid rock... even if the shockwave doesn't manage to aggravate the fault lines over in California, I'm sure the loss of life in the immediate area will be devastating enough."

"Stop you... you won't..."

"How can you stop me? You can't even stand up, thanks to my psionic scrambler." He waved a hand to the sphere still hovering nearby. "Lovely device, isn't it? It disrupts the electrical impulses in the brain, causing anyone within a specified radius to experience severe pain and a marked loss of motor control — the only way to counter it is with special dampening headgear." He gestured to the helmet he was wearing. "They used it in the mid-22nd Century for crowd control, or at least they did until they found out that prolonged exposure can lead to permanent brain damage... but I do believe you're learning that as we speak, aren't you?" As he stood up, the Lord of Time began pressing buttons on the gauntlet wrapped around his left wrist — the whine coming from the sphere became even higher in frequency, and he laughed again as the Leaguers screamed in response. "That's the maximum setting," he told them, "with a radius of one mile. Should any of your friends come by to investigate, they'll find themselves just as helpless as you." With a sweep of his cape, he turned and walked back up the gangplank of his ship, pausing in the doorway long enough to tell them, "My only regret is that, once I have defeated you in this timeframe, all our future encounters will cease to exist... which means you'll never know how deep my need for revenge upon you runs."

As the ship began to seal up once more, the sphere continued to send out wave after wave of mind-crippling pulses. Flash, Hawkgirl, and Elongated Man began to slip into unconsciousness from the unending assault, but Green Lantern still struggled against it. While the Lord of Time had been talking, Hal had somehow managed to reestablish the mental connection with his ring — it was tenuous at best, but the ring had a mind of

its own in a way, one that was clutching just as tightly to Hal Jordan as he was to it. Though it took a supreme effort, Hal opened his eyes and focused on the sphere hovering just above them. “D-d-d... d-desss...” he stuttered, then gave up on speaking and thought as hard as he could, *Destroy it!*

A bolt of green energy leapt out of the ring, flying straight at the sphere. Just as when Hawkgirl attacked it earlier, the sphere began to move out of the way, but the energy-bolt homed in on it like a guided missile, changing course right along with the device. Seconds later, the sphere was soon nothing more than shattered metal raining down on the plateau as the energy-bolt connected with its target. *Gotcha, you bastard,* Green Lantern thought as he lay on his side, still unable to get up — though he’d destroyed the device, the pain it had caused hadn’t gone away. “Per’nent damage...” he slurred out, recalling what the Lord of Time had said earlier. “No... no, don’ let it be...”

A strange sound reached his ears, and Hal lifted his aching head to see the air around the ship beginning to bulge again. “Not leavin’...” Hal said through gritted teeth, engulfing the ship in an emerald bubble as it started to move through the tear it had made in space-time. Unfortunately, he couldn’t overpower the ship’s momentum and hold it still, but he refused to give up. Silently instructing the ring to make a second bubble around the unconscious Leaguers, he strengthened his hold on the ship and let it carry all four of them along in its wake, Hal swearing under his breath, “If you go, we follow... no matter what...” But as they passed through the tear and into the currents of Time itself, Hal could feel himself losing consciousness — his mind and body simply couldn’t handle all the pain that had been inflicted upon it, and the strain of what he was doing only hastened the inevitable. The ring continued to function even after Green Lantern passed out, however, carrying out the last orders from its master for as long as it was capable. It held onto both the ship and the heroes as they sped through spacetime, doing what it could to keep them safe, but soon, the forces within the timestream began to wear away at the green energy surrounding them, until it finally dissipated under the strain.

Helpless in their unconscious state, the four heroes drifted away from each other as the currents of Time took hold and dragged each of them under to fates unknown.

"This is Wonder Woman calling. Is anyone receiving me?" Diana stood at the main console in the monitor room, staring at the screens that lined the walls in front of her. Barely a minute before, the unexplained interference that had enveloped the area known as Tuweep had ceased, allowing the satellites to once again take clear pictures of the Grand Canyon, as well as letting her try to reopen a communications channel with Flash and the others. To her dismay, though, there didn't appear to be anyone there for her to talk to: the satellites showed no one in the vicinity, Justice Leaguer or otherwise, and the locator beacons for each of the Leaguers had winked out the moment the interference vanished. *Don't say "vanished",* Diana told herself. *This is just another form of interference, that's all. They didn't vanish.*

The evidence beaming in on the satellite feed was telling her different, though. From what she could see, the only things that proved someone had even been on Tuweep recently were some faint footprints on the plateau and a scattering of metallic debris... but what that was from, she had no clue. "This is Wonder Woman," she said into the comlink again. "If anyone... anybody at all... can hear my voice, please respond. Barry... Ralph... for Hera's sake, *somebody* please say *something*."

Silence. Not even a hiss of static, just dead air. *Don't say "dead",* she told herself, then sagged into the chair behind her, staring at the main console. Amongst all the buttons and switches, there was a single large button nestled in the upper-right corner — all she had to do was push it, and the comlinks of every Justice League member would receive an emergency alert signal, telling them to assemble at the Hall of Justice immediately. Diana's hand reached up and paused over the button, while her eyes went back to the monitor screens, which revealed nothing new to her.

One more try, she thought, then took a deep breath and said aloud, "This is Wonder Woman calling. Please... where is everybody?"

A dry riverbed cut its way through the hard Arizona desert. On the occasions when the rains came to this area, it would quickly fill with water from bank to bank, bringing temporary relief to the arid wastes before the ground sucked up every last bit of moisture again. But it had been weeks since this riverbed had seen so much as a single drop, which was unfortunate for the poor fellow laying at the bottom, caked in dust.

Hal Jordan had walked for miles in a daze, not knowing where he was headed, while the hot desert sun beat down on him, pulling sweat out of every pore on his body. The only thing that kept him going was sheer willpower, the one thing the Green Lantern possessed in abundance. It was that same willpower that helped him focus when he saw the riverbed, that gave him the strength to methodically move his exhausted legs in its direction, praying that he would find water there. That willpower finally gave out, along with his legs, not long after he reached it, though he did spend a few minutes digging at the earth in the vain hope that water lay just below the surface.

That was four hours ago, and he hadn't moved since, instead just laying there in a dehydrated stupor. So it was no one's fault but his own when the vultures came around. They merely circled above at first, then a couple got brave and swooped down, hopping over to the Lantern's prone body and taking experimental tugs at his skintight uniform. The motion was enough to rouse him, and he tried to push the birds off, croaking, "Go away." The vultures croaked back in response before resuming their work — one of them managed to tear a bit of his sleeve off, taking a nip of flesh in the process, and Hal cried out in pain. He balled his right hand into a fist and made to strike the animal. "I said... *go away!*" he yelled hoarsely, but instead of hitting it, an emerald shaft of light shot out of his ring, knocking the bird for a loop and stunning it.

Hal was pretty stunned himself. He stared at his hand, and the ring upon his finger, in wonder. *What did I just do?* he thought. *Better yet... how did I do it?* He strained to remember anything that occurred to him before he woke up in the desert, something that would give him a clue as to what this ring was... or these odd clothes he was wearing... or his own name. He could feel a wave of panic rising up in him at the last one: he had no idea who he was, or how he'd come to be in the middle of this

wasteland. There was a tiny glimmer of a memory in his mind, an echo of pain ripping through his head, but nothing more. *Was I ... fighting someone? It sounds right, but I just don't know for sure... and if I was fighting someone, where are they now?*

The vultures around him began squawking, then took off for the skies again. Hal couldn't figure out why at first, then he heard what sounded like hoofbeats along the riverbank. Panic taking hold of him again, the Green Lantern propped himself up on his left hand and pointed his ringed fist towards the figure on horseback just coming into view — he still wasn't sure how he made the light shoot out the first time, but he hoped he could somehow do it again. He thought of how much he'd wanted to smack that bird for nipping him, and tried to direct that feeling at whomever was approaching. Sure enough, the light shot out of the ring once again, barely missing the oncoming figure. Hal heard the horse whinny, followed by a string of curses. *It worked, thank God*, he thought, and began to slump — he still wasn't sure how he was doing it, but it felt like the act was draining what little strength remained in him.

After a moment, the figure became visible over the side of the bank once again, albeit at a slower pace. Spots were beginning to swim in Hal's vision, but he could make out the outline of the rider well enough. He could also see the massive ivory-handled revolver strapped to the man's right hip, as well as the other one tucked under his belt. The Green Lantern had no clue if this man was the reason for his current predicament, but he wasn't about to let him come any closer just the same. Concentrating as hard as he could, he managed to shoot out another blast of emerald energy, this time nearly knocking the wide-brimmed hat off the man's head. The horse danced a little again, and the cursing resumed. "Ease up, boy! Yuh tryin' tuh get a man killed?" the stranger called out in a heavy Southern accent.

"Move one inch closer, cowboy, and *dead* is just what you'll be!" Hal threw as much weight behind the statement as he could, but in reality, he wasn't sure if he could pull that neat little trick again: the spots were getting worse, and he was beginning to feel like he might pass out from all the exertion. He wasn't about to let the man know that, though, and tried to climb to his feet. It only took a few seconds for him to realize what a stupid move that was in his condition, and he immediately fell back to the ground. The whole time, the man on the horse didn't move a

muscle. *Fine, he can turn to stone for all I care*, Hal thought, *just so long as he keeps his distance*. Then he caught movement high above them, and craned his neck to see one of the birds circling overhead swoop down a little closer. Not taking his eyes off the sky, Hal asked, “Those vultures up there... what are they doing?”

“They’re waitin’ on y’all tuh die, stranger,” the man told him after a time. “Looks tuh me like they might not have long tuh wait, either.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about... ” the Green Lantern began to say, still trying to put up a brave front. A moment later, though, his own wasted body called his bluff: it felt like someone flipped a switch inside him, and he sprawled flat on the riverbed once more. He did his best to hold onto consciousness, but he just couldn’t get a good enough grip, and his mind began to slide down into cool, dark depths.

The last thing Hal heard before everything went black was the man saying with a chuckle, “Ah’ll bet yuh don’t.”

To be continued in WEIRD WESTERN QUARTERLY #10

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The Vigilante: A Lonely Soldier Away From Home

Weird Western Quarterly #7 (2007)

Bat Lash: In for a Penny, In for a Pounding

Weird Western Quarterly #8 (2007)

Windrunner: Inherit the Wind, Part 1 (of 2) - Secrets.

Before Barry Allen, before Jay Garrick, another man had been granted the power of the Speed Force. But who he was before he'd obtained those powers has always been a mystery...until now. A young man's quest for answers becomes entangled in magic and riddles in the first half of this 2-part tale!

Weird Western Quarterly #12 (2008)

It's the first annual Christmas issue of Weird Western Quarterly featuring a holiday tale with the Old West speedster, Windrunner as well as a Jonah Hex vignette, "Prelude to a Reckoning."

Weird Western Quarterly #9 (2008)

Windrunner: Inherit the Wind Part 2 (of 2) - Revelations.

Special extra-large issue! Torn between civilization and the wilderness, Chris Maxwell tries to find out where he fits...but when a strange old Indian shaman enters his life, he finds himself thrust into a power struggle beyond anything he can imagine, and a new legend of the West is born in a flash!

Weird Western Quarterly #10 (2008)

Lead Us Not Into Desecration, Part 2 (of 3).

It's 1878: Do you know where your heroes are? Lost in time, their memories gone, four members of the Justice League have been marked for death by the Lord of Time. And if they want to make it out of this one alive, they're gonna have to rely on the kindness of strangers...namely Jonah Hex, Scalphunter, Bat Lash, and making her DC2 debut, Cinnamon!

Justice League #16 (2008)

Lead Us Not Into Desecration, Part 3 (of 3).

It's past and present versus the future as the Justice League teams up with some of the greatest heroes of the Old West to take down the Lord of Time! Can they stop his scheme before it's too late, or will Arizona be blown right off the map?

Weird Western Quarterly #13 (2009)

Jonah Hex: Children of Heaven

When Jonah Hex gets caught up in a fight between Chinese railroad workers and their white bosses, he thinks it's a pretty straightforward affair. But after meeting a young Chinese woman named Mei Ling, his life gets more complicated than he likes.

Weird Western Quarterly #16 (2009)

Weird Western Quarterly: The Better Part of Valor.

Rogues Gallery #17 (2009)

Rogues Gallery: El Diablo.

Legends of the Old West still resonate even today. One of the most persistent legends is of El Diablo and Lazarus Lane.

Journey with us back in time to the yesteryear of the Old West... as Rogues Gallery continues to put its spotlight on our guest writers...

This time by the acclaimed Susan Hillwig.

Weird Western Quarterly #20 (2010)

Weird Western Quarterly: The Reckoning.

Driven to the brink by the events of the previous issue, Jonah Hex goes on the warpath...but at what cost?

Weird Western Quarterly #19 (2010)

Weird Western Quarterly: Domestic Disturbance.

Jonah Hex: Shades of Gray #1 (2010)

Jonah Hex: Shades of Gray: The First Day of the Rest of Your Life.

The Blackest Night is over, and the Brightest Day has begun for twelve newly-resurrected people...but unbeknownst to all, there's a thirteenth person that got brought back as well. A hero to some, a villain to others, Jonah Hex once again walks amongst the living, and Death itself is a closer companion than ever!

Jonah Hex: Shades of Gray #2 (2010)

Jonah Hex: Shades of Gray: Back In Black.

Wait a minute, how in blazes can we have a second issue if Hex was killed in the first? Well, y'see, that's the funny thing...

What, you think we're gonna spoil the surprise here? Go read the issue and find out for yourself!

Jonah Hex: Shades of Gray #3 (2010)

Jonah Hex: Shades of Gray.

What started out as a quiet visit to Paradise Corners has turned into a big mess, and now Jonah has to decide between running for his life or making up for past mistakes.

Weird Western Quarterly #21 (2011)

Weird Western Quarterly: Brothers in Arms.

In the midst of the Civil War, Scalphunter and Matt Savage try to help a mysterious black woman ferrying slaves out of the South, while circumstances beyond their control threaten to drive the brothers apart.

Weird Western Quarterly #22 (2011)

Weird Western Quarterly: How Can I Miss You If You Won't Go Away?

Bat Lash once again crosses paths with Penny "Dreadful" Dreasney. Has the gambler learned his lesson from their last encounter? Yeah, I don't think so either.

Weird Western Quarterly #23 (2012)

Weird Western Quarterly: At War With the Devil, Part One.

As the North and the South begin to clash, Windrunner finds himself on the front lines of a different, more personal war. When the smoke clears at the end of this issue, you'll know this is only the beginning of a battle that's been a long time coming.



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