



Titans #2
Boris Mihajlovic

Published: 2008

Categorie(s): Fiction, Fan Fiction

Tag(s): Comics DC3 Titans Nightwing Cyborg Flamebird Hotspot Argent Jericho Ravager

The Titans

Issue #2: "Dark Days Ahead"

Written by: Brian Burchette

Story & Cover by: Boris Mihajlovic

Edited by Samantha Chapman

Roll Call

Nightwing: Richard Grayson, former first sidekick of Batman, grown up to be the born leader

Cyborg: Victor Stone, half man, half machine with a heart of gold

Flamebird: Elisabeth "Bette" Logan, detective, athlete, motherfigure

Beast: Garfield "Gar" Logan, animal shapeshifter

Argent: Antonia Monetti-Crockett, can create any weapon she wants with her silver plasma energy.

Jericho: Joseph Wilson, can possess a person after making eye contact with them.

Ravager: Rose Wilson has the precognitive ability to see a few seconds into the future, combined with her martial artistic abilities she's a fighter who searches the likes of her

Former members

Hotspot: Isaiah Crockett, controls heat thanks to being half an alien.

CONTACT

One glance between Damien Darhk and Joseph Slade was all it took before Darhk's body was no longer his own... and Jericho's world was turned upside down.

Through all the years that he had used his mutant powers to help others, to try and make the world a better place, Jericho had kept one secret from everyone. His powers came with a side-effect. When he entered a body, he was able to read that person, and not just their surface thoughts. He knew who they were, how they grew up. He knew their fears and their heartaches. Very few people had ever been able to keep him out of that part of their mind.

Darhk was one of those people. Although Joseph had control of the man's body, he had just a small glimpse of the man's history. What he did see, however, rocked his foundation.

He saw the man's mother, lying on a gurney with tubes imbedded in her arms, carrying her blood away from her and into Damien's body. He saw it as plain as day. Damien had used his mother. Acquired her blood... it was part of him now... part of what kept him alive.

Then, before Joseph could gleam anymore, he was shut out.

"Get. Out. Of. Me!" Damien screamed as he clutched his head, fighting the control that Jericho was desperately trying to hold onto.

"Now!" Nightwing shouted at Ravager and the two of them sprung into action, first knocking out the guards closest to them.

Rose could see her sword on a table at the far end of the room, along with Dick's belt. Unfortunately, there were dozens of H.I.V.E. drones between her and the items. She broke into the wicked smile that signaled the fun she was about to have. These were the kind of odds that she loved. The kind of odds that her old man had trained her for. Now it was time to prove just how well that old bastard had done.

Meanwhile, Damien Darhk continued his internal battle. He felt his arm

reaching to strike the nearest guard, but he fought the motion. He could feel the one called Jericho, could feel the boy's raw shock as he was not able to accomplish his task.

"You cannot control me, you pathetic little creature. I am more than you could ever imagine! My powers dwarf your tiny little mutant ability. Now get—"

It was still Damien's voice, but no longer his words. "Nightwing, I can't control him! He's fighting me, I've never felt such willpower before. I won't be able to hold out much longer!"

"Then get out, Jericho, you did what you had to do, you bought us the time we needed."

Just as quickly as he had leapt in, Joseph was out, staggering at the weight of the internal struggle that he had been battling. He turned back to Darhk, the pictures of the man's mother still engrained in his mind. *This* was how the villain had been rumored to live so long. He had stolen his mother's blood; incorporated into his own. He had stolen longevity from another so that he could cheat the natural order of death.

Jericho ducked as a guard swung at him and struck the man with his shoulder, sending him back into another guard. He searched for eyes, anyone's eyes, but at the moment, all guards were helmeted, and the drones were useless. He needed in! He needed to go after Dahrk!

Nightwing somersaulted off of the back of a guard, grabbing the helmet and tearing it off as he did so. As he landed on his feet, he smashed it into the side of two drones, knocking them out.

Nightwing looked at Jericho and nodded, and the young man disappeared into the safety of his teammate's mind. He was about to turn his attention to Ravager, to lend her a hand, when the sudden arrival of more Titans was announced with a large BOOOOM.

Dick couldn't help but grin as Cyborg leapt out of the end of the tube. Without missing a beat, he hit a switch on his arm, causing an invisible barrier to go up around the other two Titans.

Rose let out a scream of frustration and kicked at it.

"Down girl," Vic said. "You'll have plenty of time to fight."

"What do you have?" Nightwing asked as he walked up to one of his oldest friends.

"This Darhk guy, he's the leader of H.I.V.E. He took it from—"

"—Adeline Kane when he killed her," Nightwing finished. "Then he drained her blood and mixed it with his, giving him the same immortality that Adeline had."

"How did you know that?" Cyborg asked, stunned.

Dick grinned, "Jericho told me."

"Wait a minute," Ravager said. "If Adeline was immortal, how did he kill her?"

Cyborg shrugged and looked at Nightwing for the answer. Dick raised his hands in frustration. "Didn't get that out of him; I do know that Joey and I are going to have a very long talk when this is all over."

"Whatever," Ravager said. "Drop the damn force field."

"Nope, we're getting out of here," Dick commanded. "We're outnumbered and outgunned. We need to bring in more Titans. Vic, drop the field and you and Rose get through the tube."

"What about you?" Vic asked.

"I'll be right behind you."

"This is bull—!" Ravager started to shout in frustration.

"That is an *order*!" Nightwing shouted back, cutting her off.

She glared at him through her one good eye, but did as she was told. Vic dropped the shield and both leapt back through the boomtube.

Nightwing gave one last look around, saw the guard he was looking for, and after a moment's gaze, turned and leapt into the tube himself. It closed behind him, leaving H.I.V.E far behind.

Ravager and Cyborg watched as Nightwing, torn costume and all, stepped out of the transport device, then Vic closed it up behind him.

"Wait, where's Joseph?" Rose asked.

Nightwing said nothing as he passed by her and headed towards the meeting room.

"Where's Joseph!" She demanded to know.

"Where I placed him," He said, wheeling around. "I gave him orders while he was in my head.. *You* will know more when I'm ready to tell you." With that he walked out of the room.

"That son of a bitch," Rose growled.

Vic stared at the door for a moment. "Wow, for a second, he sounded just like the one man he said he would never become." He took the drone that he had snagged and placed it under his arm.

Even Rose stopped her cussing at that comment. "He hasn't been himself for a while, I guess. What's going on, Vic? You've known him longer than anyone else. What's eating at him?"

"If I had to take a guess... Argent."

Bette Logan put a wet cloth on Toni's forehead as she watched the young woman begin to sob, again. It was heart-wrenching to watch, but she stuck it out. The two of them had been friends for a while now... they had gone through those dark days of the Titans, together. She wasn't about to abandon her now.

"You need to eat something," Bette said.

Toni shook her head, "I can't. Ever since Isaiah left, I've been so upset I've been constantly sick to my stomach. Food doesn't even sound good. Oh, God, Bette, what did I do? He was my whole life."

"Shhh, you need to worry about yourself right now. Making yourself physically sick about this is not going to help you at all."

A green bird flew through the door and landed on the bedpost before transforming into Gar Logan. Although still green, and youthful looking, the lines beginning to form in around his eyes were a hint that age was catching up to him.

"The others are back, babe. They want us to join them in the meeting room."

Bette looked down at Toni. "Do you think you can...?"

Argent nodded her head, gingerly. "Of course, I'm fine."

The three of them proceeded into the meeting room, where they found Nightwing and Ravager waiting for them.

"Where are Vic and Joey?" Flamebird asked.

"Vic is in the lab, examining one of H.I.V.E's droids. Jericho still has work back there. We needed to find out more information, and he was our best chance."

Gar took a seat next to Dick and looked at his torn outfit. "New digs?"

"It's a fashion statement." Dick quipped. After all the years with the Titans, Gar was the only one who could still bring out that *Boy Wonder* in him.

"Oh yeah, it screams Captain Kirk," Gar replied with an arched eyebrow.

"What did you find out?" Argent asked.

It did not go unnoticed by anyone that Dick refused to look at Toni through the meeting, although he did not ignore the question.

“Damien Darhk is now in charge of H.I.V.E, but his connections run much deeper than that. He’s got his hands in Washington as well as Wall Street. Not only that, but there’s some kind of organization called Tartarus that he’s heavily involved with. I’m going to see what I can dig up on them. But what is really chilling is what Rose overheard.”

All eyes turned to the white haired woman. “I think they’ve got some kind of cloning process going on. I heard a few of the higher ups talking about cloning someone pretty damn important, but I didn’t hear them give a name.”

“Logical guess would be the President or Vice President,” Dick mused with his fingers entwined. “Or somebody more in the background in the White House. Somebody with a lot of control.”

“That’s easy,” Gar said. “The Secretary of Defense. I mean, if anyone has power in that place, it’s that woman. Even Russian women fear her.”

Before anything else could be said, an alarm went off in the Ark.

“Unauthorized battle in Laboratory One.” The Ark announced in a booming base voice that always reminded Beast Boy of James Earl Jones. (He had begged Vic for years to let him program the Ark to say. *Obi Wan never told you what happened to your father.*, but Vic seemed adamant against it.)

“Heads up, people!” Nightwing shouted as they took off down the corridor, the alarm sounding and the voice reiterating its warning.

When the door to Vic’s lab opened, they found him in the clutches of a huge mechanical robot that only vaguely resembled the drone they had brought back.

Beast Boy immediately turned into a gorilla and leapt to the aid of his friend, trying to pull him out of the claws that had trapped him.

“Argent, flank to the rear, Rose to the right and Flamebird to the left! I’m not sure what’s going on, but we’ve got to take this thing down quick!”

They all responded to Nightwing’s command, going into action as they had been trained to do.

Realizing that the gorilla wasn’t working, Beast Boy altered his form again, morphing into a beetle. “Can’t you find any nice robots to play with, tin man,” He said to his best friend.

“Just shut up and get me out of there, will ya? The damn thing morphed on me before I realized it. Must have some kind of failsafe device set up. My arms are pinned and I can’t reach anything!”

The green beetle crawled inside the clawed arm, changing form suddenly as soon as he had vanished and re-appearing as a hippopotamus. The claw shattered, and both he and Cyborg fell to the metal floor.

“Once again I have to pull your fat out of the fire,” Gar sighed.

Vic rolled over onto his stomach, moaning. “I’m getting to old for this crap.”

“Titans!” Flamebird shouted out.

They all turned to see that a small metallic tube had extended from the main body of the machine and had plugged itself into the computer console. Their system began to flash with images of past adventures, as well as the stats of their hovering base.

“That’s not good,” Gar whispered.

Argent hit it with her blasts, but they seemed to bounce right off of it. “My powers don’t seem to affect it!” She shouted.

Cyborg had leapt to his feet and was trying desperately to pull the extension out of the computer system, but an electrical jolt sent him flying backward, and he smashed through one of his lab tables.

“I can’t do anything to it either!” Flamebird cried out in frustration.

“Wait a minute, where did Ravager go?” Gar asked, looking around.

On cue, Rose appeared at the door, a new sword in hand. As Nightwing rolled underneath the belly of the beast, looking for any kind of access panel, Ravager let out a battle cry and flew through the air, landing at the computer console. She drove her sword right into it, severing the connection between robot and computer. The feedback sent thousands of volts of electrical current back into the giant machine, which shook hard, before falling to the ground.

Dick was barely able to roll out from underneath it so as not to be crushed.

Argent had made her way to Cyborg to help him up, while Flamebird flew down to an unconscious Ravager. The sword was nothing more than a slag of metal and her gloves had been burned off, revealing the severe burns that now covered her hands.

“Oh God, she’s not breathing!” Bette shouted.

Dick pushed her aside and began to administer CPR. For several seconds he worked, pumping Rose’s chest, counting, and giving her mouth to mouth while the other Titans looked on. Gar put his arm around his wife, and Bette responded in kind. Vic and Argent moved closer, grabbing each others hands as they held their breath.

“Come on, damn it! Come on!” Dick screamed, pounding on her chest. “Do NOT die on me! I will not lose another one. Do you hear me?”

Vic was just about to try and pull him away when there was a gasp of air from Ravager and she coughed several times. Relief flooded the destroyed laboratory.

“Thank you, thank you,” Dick said as he looked up at the ceiling.

“Now *that* was fun,” Ravager laughed as her eyes fluttered open, and she winced as she tried to clench her hands.

“Bette, Gar, get her to the infirm—”

Suddenly, another computer screen on the other side of the room came to life. A shadowed, blurred figure stood in the center.

"We have your location now, Titans, and it's finally time to bring you down, like the filthy dogs that you are. The H.I.V.E. is on its way. Prepare to be destroyed."

The room was silent for a long, uncomfortable moment, before Dick found his voice again. "Get Ravager to the infirmary!" he barked.

"I'm not going anywhere," She snapped back. "I'm fine. A little Neosporin and I'm good as new."

"Those are third degree burns," Bette said doubtfully as she examined the hands.

"Who was that?" Argent asked. "That didn't sound like Damien's voice."

"It wasn't," Dick said, "No idea who it was, but he sure did sound familiar."

"What now?" Cyborg asked.

"Can the Ark protect itself?" Dick asked Victor.

"I don't think any of his major systems have been damaged. He should be able to hold his own... if need be."

"Well let's make sure there isn't a need. Come on, we've got to go back to H.I.V.E., stop them before they take off," Dick ordered

"That's going to ruin your plans," Victor said, cautiously.

"I'll figure something else out. Let's go."

As they headed down the hall, Argent caught up with Nightwing.

"Dick, when this is over, I need to tell you something."

He didn't look at her when he replied. "Unless it has to do with this case, I don't want to hear it. You can go cry on someone else's shoulder."

Toni lost her step for a moment, shocked at his cold attitude, but Victor was right behind her and grabbed her arm, keeping her moving.

"I don't understand why he's taking this so personally," She moaned.

"Don't you? Think about it, Toni. Think about what you did and what it cost you. Then think about what Dick went through three years ago. You brought up some *very* painful memories for him. But he is right about one thing, this isn't the time or the place. Keep your mind on your work, the team needs you."

She nodded, understanding finally coming to her. She had opened old wounds, and now she felt even guiltier than she had before.

BOOOOM!

The Titans came out of the tube as one, bracing themselves for just about anything. Even so, what they found surprised them. There were no living human beings left in the base. The place was as silent as a mausoleum.

"This doesn't look good," Gar murmured.

"Break off into two teams: Ravager, take Cyborg and Argent and head to the lower levels. Beast Boy, you and Flamebird are with me," Dick quickly took charge

They separated at the end of the hall and Ravager's team took the elevator down, while Nightwing's group headed towards the main meeting room.

Gar, now a green fox, was patrolling ahead. "Anyone else get the feeling that this is going to turn out bad?"

"He said the same thing on our wedding night," Bette said as she rolled

her eyes.

“Stay focused people,” Nightwing cautioned.

The words were barely out of his mouth when several mechanical drones came hurtling around the corner, firing lasers and heading straight towards them.

“Told you so,” Beast Boy said as he took flight in falcon form, trying to get above the mechanical deathtraps.

Flamebird pulled out her weapon and began to blast them. “He said that, too.”

“I love the way you just want to share all our secrets,” Gar quipped as he flew behind the farthest one, weaving around the laser blasts and thudding to the ground as a dinosaur. He began to tear into them from behind.

Nightwing threw several explosives at the machines, striking each one and shredding them to pieces.

“This is a delay,” He murmured to himself. He had just finished the thought when he was struck from behind by a drone. He fell to the ground, stunned, but alive. Dick rolled to the side as another blast barely missed him. If it hadn’t been for the weaved armor in his new costume, he wouldn’t have been alive.

Before he could reach into his belt, the drone was struck down by an energy blast. As it fell to the ground, Dick turned to see a battered and slightly bleeding Jericho leaning against the wall, blaster in hand.

“Well if you aren’t a sight for sore eyes,” Dick said with a slight grin.

Jericho smiled back and his fingers quickly flew into a comment.

Dick laughed out loud. “Yeah, yeah, lavender wasn’t my color... I got it.” He got up to find that all the drones had been demolished, and Flamebird was checking on Jericho. He turned on his communicator.

"Nightwing to Cyborg, you there?"

Nothing came over the radio but dead air.

"Let's go," Dick said grimly, and the group followed him obediently to the elevator.

"How many of these things are there?" Ravager shouted as she sliced her way through three of the drones that had met them as they stepped off the lift.

"Looks like they're coming from both directions," Cyborg replied as he looked down both ends of the hallway. "And how the hell did Argent disappear on us so quickly?"

"Beats me. That broad hasn't been right in the head for months now."

"We don't have time for this!" Cyborg shouted. "Time to try something new. I just installed it this week, haven't had a chance to test it, yet."

"And you think now is the perfect time?"

"Ain't gonna hurt nothin' if it doesn't work," Vic mused. "Get behind me."

Ravager closed in, her back against his, her sword drawn. She heard the click from his arm and the hydraulic whine as it shifted into some kind of weapon. She took a quick peak to see that the end of his arm had become a massive circle; his hand had disappeared completely.

She waited for a blast, or a loud whistling sound, or something, but to her surprise, there was no sound at all. Just a flash of blue light, and then all the drones in the left corridor fell to the ground. He then swung around to the other side of the corridor and did the same thing. Again, the drones dropped suddenly.

"Now that's impressive. What the hell was it?" Rose asked.

"I discharged an EMP wave." He staggered a bit. "Problem is that it drains a helluva lot of power from me."

The elevator door opened and the other Titans came running out.

"Everyone okay?" Nightwing asked.

"We are, but no idea where Argent is. She slipped away from us just as the drones appeared," Rose explained.

Dick's face clouded with anger. "She's becoming a liability more and more."

"We need to find her," Vic said, giving the team leader a warning look. Nightwing caught it and turned away.

"Let's go."

Argent was making her way quietly down a passageway when she heard his voice behind her. Her blood ran cold and she turned to find herself face to face with Damien Darhk, the man that she had betrayed her husband for.

"It is good to see you again, Antonia. How have you been?"

"Go to hell," she replied with a clenched jaw. "You bastard, you were using me the whole time. It meant nothing to you!"

"Oh, you're so wrong, my precious. It meant a lot, and it still does. And for the record, I am still using you. So tell me, are you staying healthy? You're not putting yourself at any undo risk, are you? We wouldn't want that beautiful little baby of ours to be injured, would we?"

"It's not yours!" She screamed as she fired a blast at him. But the bolt went right through him, and Toni stared in shock.

"Silly woman, I'm far from here. We left right after you did. The base had been compromised. Did you really think we were going to stay?"

Until we meet again, my darling. Do take care of yourself, that *is* my heir that you are carrying."

As the holographic image disappeared, Argent released all of the rage that had been building and bubbling within her in one giant blast that shook the complex and brought steel and concrete flying everywhere. Toni became lost in the rubble.

"Whoa!" Gar said as the team felt the blast. "That's Toni, and it doesn't sound good." He took off in the form of a cheetah, racing ahead of the rest of them.

The others followed quickly to find Beast Boy and a giant pile of rubble beyond the next turn. Gar's new elephant trunk was digging through the dust to try and dig.

"There!" Ravager cried, pointing where she saw Argent's gloved arm sticking out of the rubble.

Cyborg joined in, lifting the heavy material around her, and freeing her from the wreckage. She seemed okay, if bruised, and she was conscious.

"What happened?" Nightwing demanded.

"I thought it was Darhk, but it was just a holographic image," Toni explained, rubbing her head.

"Uhh, guys, you're not going to believe this," Beast Boy called from the other side the new hole in the wall.

The Titans all stepped into the secret room, many of them gasping out loud at the sight before them.

The room was lined with large tubes on either side, tubes containing people that seemed to be floating in some kind of clear liquid, oxygen masks hooked up to their faces so that they could breathe. Above each man-sized container were various symbols... symbols that they all recognized.

“I don’t think they’re cloning government officials,” Bette whispered in awe as she touched the glass of one of them. She peered in to see the young man floating limply in the liquid. Above him was a diamond shape plaque with an S in the middle of it.

Dick’s blood ran cold. “Meta-humans. They’re cloning meta-humans.”

Gar stared up at the tubes, for once in his life speaking quietly. “Oh this isn’t good.”

To Be Continued!

If you enjoyed this story, you can find more alternate universe tales of your favorite DC heroes at [DC3 Multiverse](#).

All characters are (c) DC Comics and no infringement upon their copyrights is intended. Support DC Comics by buying their monthly comic books and graphic novels.

From the same author on Feedbooks

Titans #1 (2008)

Titans: Like an Onion.

Who are The Titans? Find out in this action packed first issue that starts with the infiltration of H.I.V.E. and leads the team to discoveries that will change not only their lives forever...!



www.feedbooks.com
Food for the mind