

**741.5**

# **POWER GIRL**

**SASS AND THE SINGLE SUPERWOMAN**

**PLUS...DAUGHTERS OF  
SNOW & SPACE**

**JULY 2023 NO. 99**



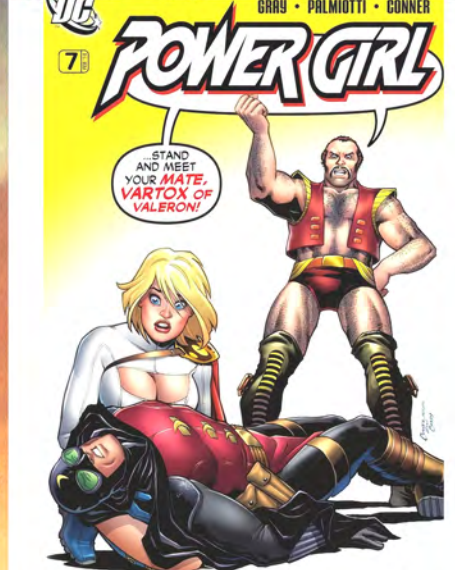
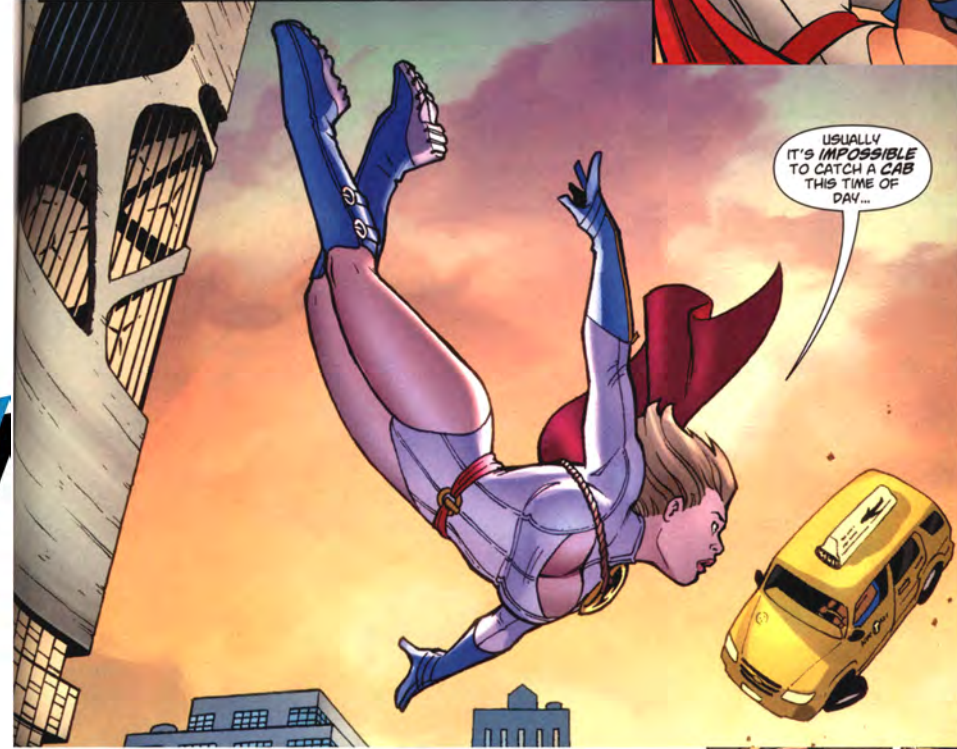
**The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of**



**Lexington Public Library**  
*Reading Is Just the Beginning!*



Introduced in the series which brought comics' first super-team, the Justice Society of America, into the modern age, Power Girl has been intrinsically linked to the JSA and its history. She was originally the Supergirl of Earth-2. But that changed after the *Crisis On Infinite Earths* collapsed all the various DC Earths into one. *Power Trip* opens with the four-issue arc of *JSA Classified* which finally fixed Kara's backstory. Hounded by longtime JSA villain, the Psycho Pirate (right), Power Girl confronts her tangled memories and comes out stronger in the end.



(Artist Amanda Connor's as adept at beefcake as she is at cheesecake, as shown above.)

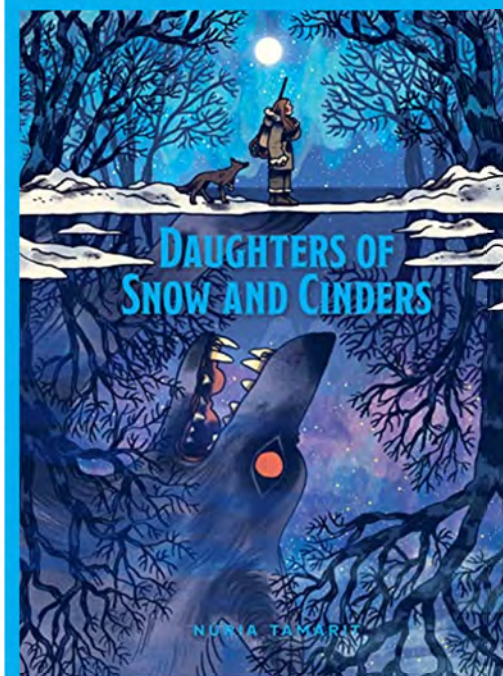
Literally: once again the cousin of Superman, hence a Kryptonian, Power Girl has all his powers. Including super-strength. Precious few superheroines are hands on the way Power Girl is, and one of the simple joys of *Power Trip* is watching KZ just haul off and beat ass. Whether it's head-butting sea monsters, throwing fists with tiger women and space chicks, or giving recurring JSA headache the Ultra-Humanite what for (bottom right), Power Girl lives up to her name. Classic superheroics take place against a background as real as it gets in a world of macho aliens and Manhawks. Kara lives in New York City, has a day job as owner of the computer firm Starrware, with friends and co-workers and a cat named Stinky. This combination of whimsy and wonder is typical of that dynamic dyad, writer Jimmy Palmiotti and artist Amanda Connor. Aided by the exuberant colors of Paul Mounts, Connor's comedic realism is lovely to behold. Go on a *Power Trip* at [lexpublib.org!](http://lexpublib.org/)



Fleeing the ashes of her happy youth, Joana travels to the very New World in search of gold. She finds little welcome among the rough company of men also seeking their fortunes in the frozen fields and forests of the Great White North. Abandoned but on their trail, she rescues an injured dog from his monstrous keeper. "Peg" becomes her boon companion on her quest. Joana eventually makes common cause with the native women, Tala and Opa (below), who have had their own misadventures with the selfish louts led by the monomaniacal Matwei. Meanwhile, the true Queen of the Wild stalks them all (above). A saga of struggle against the indifference of nature and the cruelty of men, *Daughters of Snow and Cinders* is a fiercely feminist fable set in the primordial frontier of America. Spaniard Nuria Tamarit draws exquisitely. Several full and double-page spreads showcase the natural wonders of both the harsh snowbound present and Joana's bright Edenic past. Get your copy from the locations right.

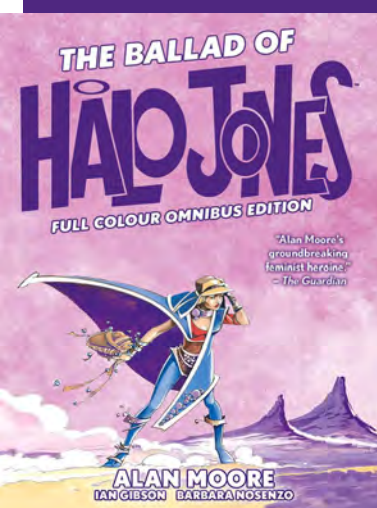


BY NURIA TAMARIT (FANTAGRAPHICS)



CENTRAL — EASTSIDE TATES CREEK

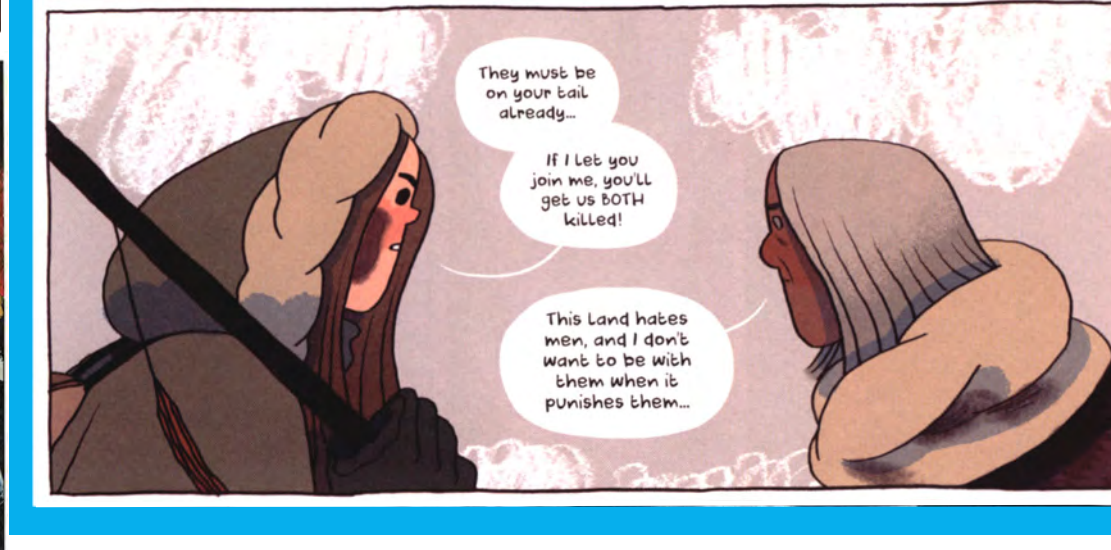
COMICS CODE OF 1971 GENERAL STANDARDS PART A: COSTUME  
2) Females shall be drawn realistically without undue emphasis on any physical quality.  
Five years later, Kara Zor-L, alias POWER GIRL, debuted in *All-Star Comics* #58 and ripped that rule to shreds. She's remained one of DC's most popular and most controversial characters. The highlight of her career remains the series collected in *Power Trip* (above).



British comics are hard to promote, especially those produced in the classic format of comic papers. Larger in size but smaller in page count than American comic books, British comics ran several series per issue. The artwork tended to be highly detailed and the stories episodic and compressed. So snipping stand-alone examples of words and pix (right) from those crowded pages can be tough. Sci-fi trend-setter *2000 AD* was no different, amplified by the intense world-building behind the likes of Judge Dredd, Nemesis the Warlock and *The Ballad of Halo Jones*.



Written by Alan Moore, many consider *Halo Jones* the best of his 2000 AD strips. Moore wanted to undercut the "Boy's Own" machismo of the paper with a feminist epic starring a futuristic everywoman whose motto was "Anyone could have done it.". Ian Gibson's deranged deco take on the slums and starships of Halo's war-torn workaday world puts you right in the action, and, as Moore noted, he does draw cute girls. Though derailed by Moore's success Stateside, *The Ballad of Halo Jones* remains a highlight of his early career, available at [Tates Creek](http://Tates Creek).





One of the main criticisms of popular culture, and comic books in particular, is that it glorifies violence. Any honest observer of the comics medium must admit there are grounds for such a complaint. From superhero punch-em-ups and horror chop-em-ups to the shoot-em-ups of crime, western and war comics, funnybooks trade in menace and mayhem. Heck, even funny animal comics involve a lot of beatin' and bangin', as my pal Wes's dad puts it. Long a target of said criticism, and for good reason, **Frank Miller** decided to address his detractors by being everything they said he was and so bloody much

In contrast to the brightly-lit, full-throated, overwrought work discussed above, this trio of graphic novels lurks in the shadows, hides within the brush and leaves, moves through lives as murky as they are mundane. **Deborah Lee** has the blues. She has them so bad, they color the entirety of *In Limbo* (First Second). **Lee's** graphic autobiography of her troubled teenage years is rendered in ink and wash, but printed in cloudy tones of deep blue-green. That gives her quotidian tale a dream-like quality that reflects its protagonist's feeling of floating through her life, buffeted by the emotions and actions of her mother, her friends,



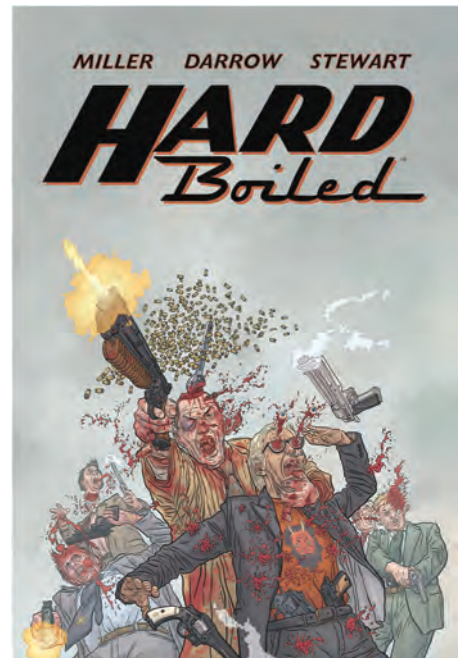
more. The result was his collaboration with artist **Geoff Darrow**. Known for his own series *ShaoLin Cowboy* (available at [lexpublib.org](http://lexpublib.org)), **Darrow's** the wellspring for the contemporary school of hyper-realist cartooning. His pages and panels are overwhelming in their detail, especially his crowd scenes. Each is a mosh pit where medical and technical illustration meet **Will Elder**, **Mickey Spillane** and Bugs Bunny cartoons. **Darrow** draws the nuts'n'bolts'n'blood'n'guts of buildings, machines, monsters and people against a background cluttered with trash and eyeball kicks and bulldogs. Lots of bulldogs. A touchstone of the Age of Extreme, 1990's gun-crazy *Hard Boiled* was followed



## MEANWHILE



her own self-loathing self. Meanwhile, *Ephemera* (Fantagraphics) is "A Memoir" colored in the shades of nature. Greens, browns, reds are barely contained by the thin, simple inks of author **Briana Loewinsohn**. Memories of her loveless mother flower and wither alongside the garden left to **Loewinsohn's** attentions. Oddly reminiscent of **Al Columbia** and **Henry Darger**, *Ephemera* has a look both modern



by *The Big Guy and Rusty the Robot*, a satire of *mecha* and *kaiju* tropes that's just as grisly. The influence of these titles extends beyond comics. Their ultraviolent combo of grotesque and burlesque informs the work of director **James Gunn**. Now head honcho of the DCU, **Gunn** brought his trademark mixture of tongue-in-cheek and fist-in-face to the *Suicide Squad* spin-off, *Peacemaker*. **John Cena** does an amazing job as the well-meaning maniac who "loves peace so much, he kills for it." Chockfull of sex and violence, *Peacemaker* is a fierce and funny takedown of America's letch for goons with guns.

and archaic. All the world is ancient in the latest from **Chris W. Kim**. Alongside her fellow villagers, **Em** scratches out a living from the detritus left by the inexplicable collapse of civilization. A cache of journals found in an abandoned cabin leads **Em** to follow their author out into the greater world. Her path is littered, literally, with the trash of the past, and wends through a landscape of isolated shantytowns and crumbling cities emptied of people. In *Adherent* (Conundrum Press), **Kim** has achieved total mastery of his style, as a loose, wispy line combines with naturalistic detail to bring the mystery to life.

