

741.5

BLACK POWERS

STATIC * ICON & ROCKET * HARDWARE

* THE RIGHTEOUS RETURN OF *

MILESTONE COMICS

NOVEMBER 2022 NO. 84

PLUS...HEAD CASES



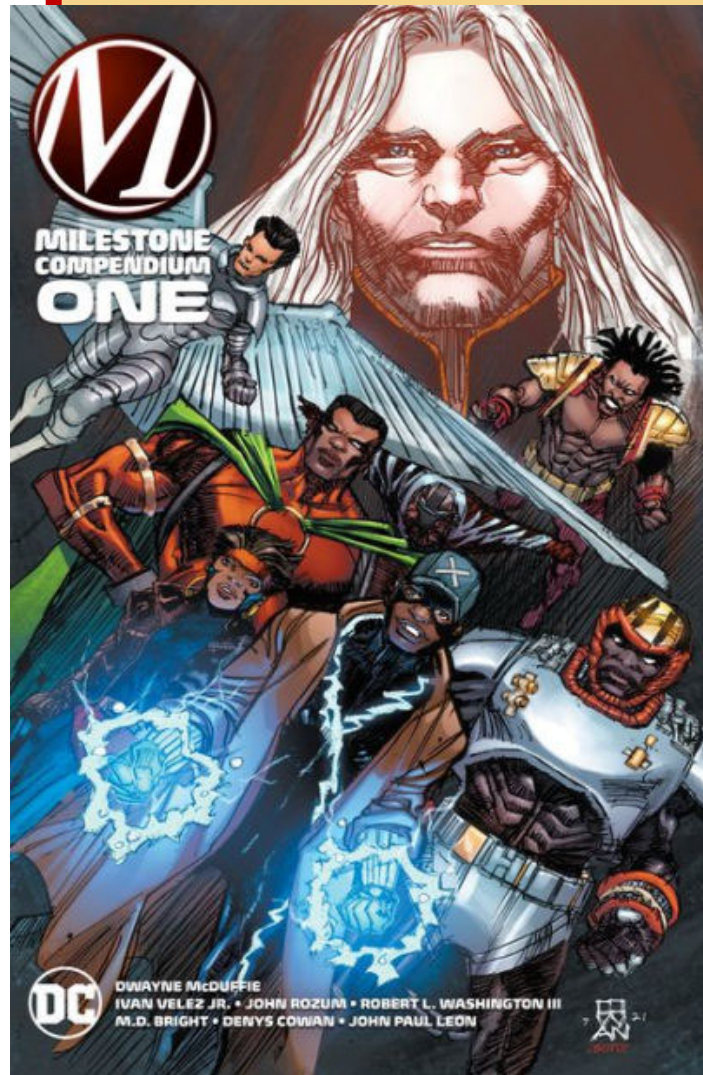
The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of



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Reading Is Just the Beginning!

After treading water for much of the 1980s, mainstream comics began to shake off the creative doldrums in the Nineties. Especially DC— many of its biggest hits during the Reagan Era had been offbeat work like *Ronin* and *Watchmen*. Reacting to new cultural trends and the new audiences they brought to the comic shop, DC diversified. One example was the fabled Vertigo line. Another was Milestone Comics. A group of creators of color with a background of commercial success in the comics industry banded together to make comics starring creations of color. Heavyweights like Denys Cowan and Dwayne

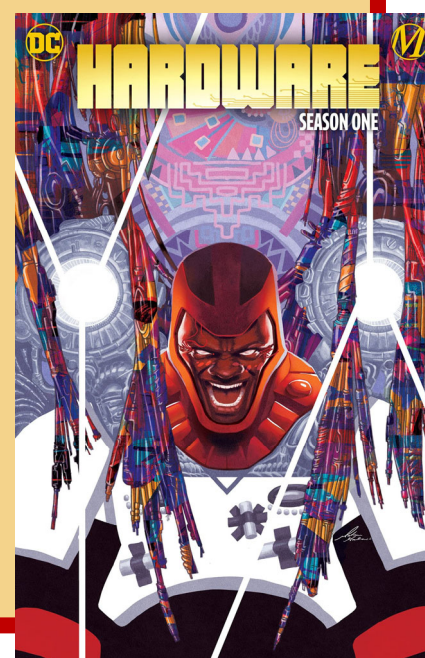


Mcduffie cut a deal with DC that gave Milestone unprecedented independence. Titles like *Icon*, *Hardware*, *Static* and the horror hero *Xombi* looked different, due to the staff experimenting with new color technologies. They read different, too; the potent racial politics at the forefront of every series gave the Milestone books a punch of relevance missing from most superhero books since the 70s. They are of their time, though. The over-wrought artwork, the complicated costumes, *Static's* trenchcoat...it's back to the Age of EXTREME!!! in the first colossal MILESTONE COMPENDIUM available at Northside!

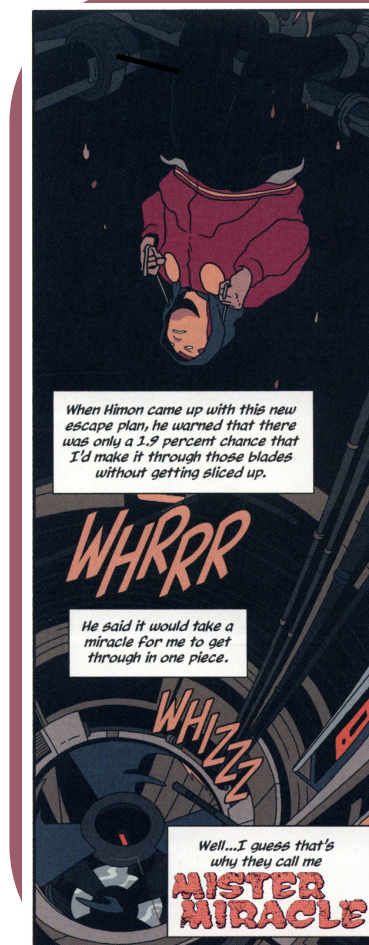


price determined by the unjust! Meanwhile, corporate diversity poster boy Curtis Metcalf gets the blame for the "Big Bang." Luckily, he always knew better than to trust his boss, so Metcalf has a back-up plan: **HARDWARE**. The man in the mobile war-suit will be showing up on LPL shelves soon, along with **BLOOD SYNDICATE** in 2023. Find these exciting new contemporary superhero comics at Eastside, Northside and Tates Creek!

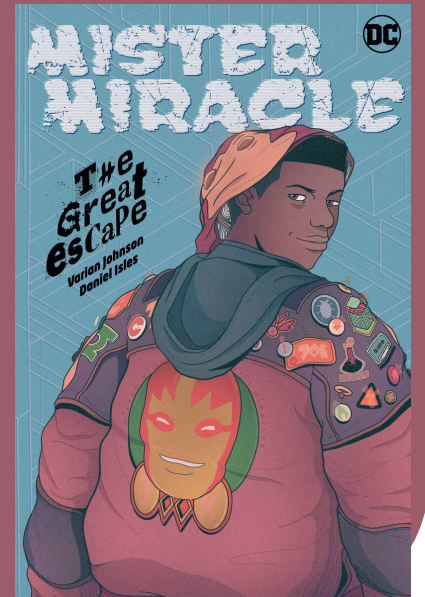
Milestone returned as both concept and company in 2018, although the pandemic kept the work off the stands until 2020. The original showrunners teamed up with new creators to re-imagine the Milestone books for a new generation. *Milestone Returns* #0 supplied each compilation with its first chapter, telling how an untested nerve gas from Alva Industries is used on teenagers at a BLM march when things go sideways. Some of the kids die. The rest begin to wish they had. Now known as the "Big Bang," the experience has left scores of kids with superpowers, everything from vomiting acid to controlling the elements. Such as electricity: high school nerd Virgil Hawkins becomes the hero **STATIC** even as his bully becomes a firestarter fink for the Man. Meanwhile, the original black superhero emerges from his self-imposed exile when a bright but troubled young woman decides what the world needs now is the return of **ICON** with a new partner, **ROCKET!** As the newest dynamic duo up-end the global drug trade, they learn justice comes at a

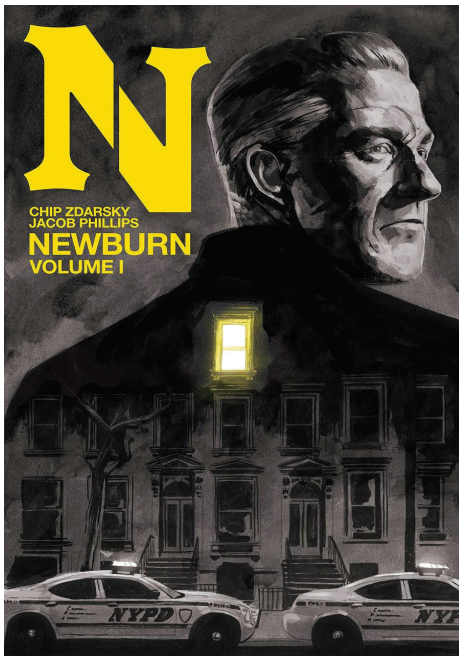


With the recent opening of *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, it's once again time for **PANTHERMANIA!** Go read 741.5 #14 (Feb 2018) @ lex-publib.org for more details. Or you can check out the new volume of *Mighty Marvel Masterworks* devoted to the earliest appearances of the African Avenger. Thrill to T'Challa's intro in *Fantastic Four*, his rumble with Captain America and the beginning of his long career with the Avengers in this snazzy little number available in **TEEN!**

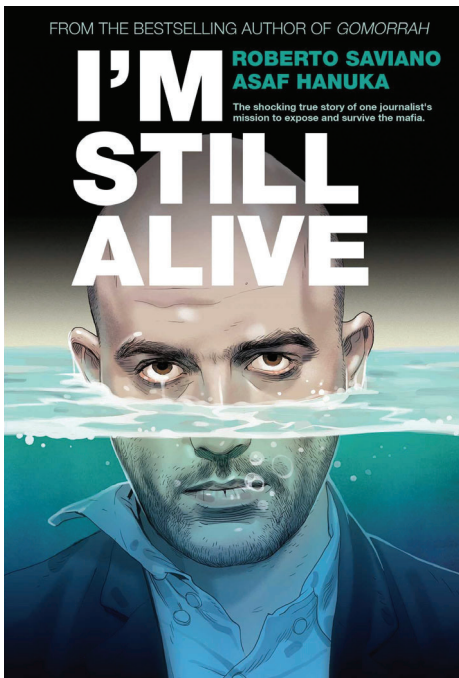


The most human of Jack Kirby's **NEW GODS** gets the DC YA treatment in *Mister Miracle: The Great Escape*. Scott Free is determined to escape Granny Goodness and her hellish Academy. Romance blooms as threats intensify in this racially reconfigured riff on the 1970s classic available in **LPL TEEN!**



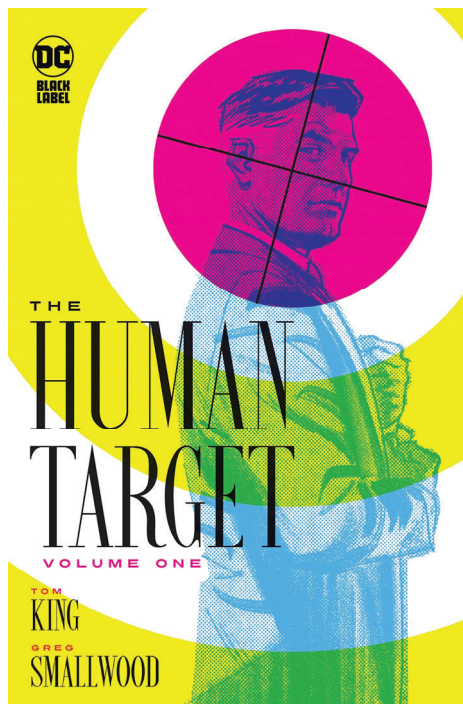


Having toiled among the costumes for the past few years, **Chip (Daredevil) Zdarsky** returns to his criminal roots with the Image series *Newburn*. Volume 1 introduces the character and his world with the slow-burning coolth of a Scandinavian police procedural. Easton Newburn is an ex-cop who woke up one day and saw how the world really works. So he quit the force and became a private investigator with a very specific clientele: gangsters. He serves as troubleshooter and peacemaker for New York City's organized crime families. His new assistant Emily provides a perspective on the mysterious man who maintains the fragile balance between crime and chaos. Artist **Jacob Phillips** does his old man proud, combining his usual shadowy *noir* cartooning with bright and expressive colors that make his pages a joy to read. Fans of intense crime dramas should find *Newburn* at all LPL locations. *Newburn* describes a world in which gangsters are an invisible government, a shadow state existing alongside the

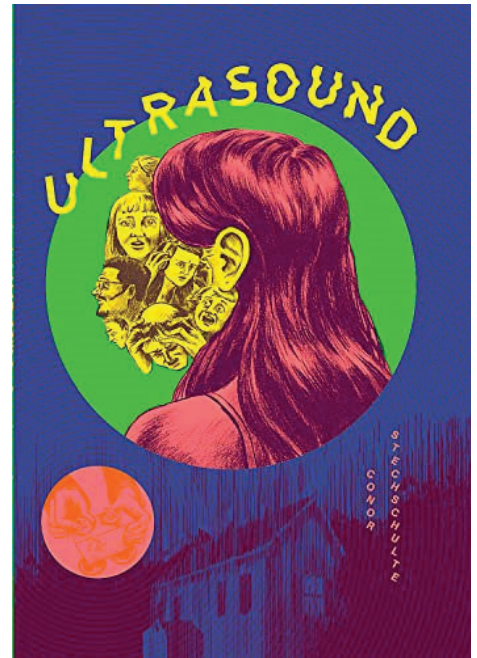


MEANWHILE

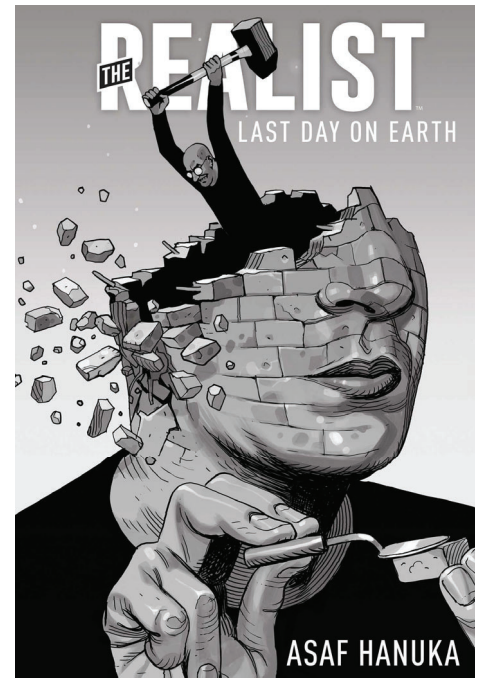
that based on law. "The Mafia is a dictatorship within a democracy" was a truth that got the man who told it killed. But it inspired a young Italian writer to bear witness to what he saw happening to his country. That writer was **Roberto Saviano**, and he wrote *Gomorra*. That non-fiction novel about the Neapolitan criminal clans collectively known as the Camorra became an international bestseller. And it put a target on **Saviano's** back. For more than fifteen years, he lived under protective custody, in constant fear for his life. Exquisitely rendered by **Asaf Hanuka**, **Saviano's** graphic memoir for Archaia is a sigh of loneliness, an grimace of courage and a shout of defiance against the forces of savagery growing bolder around the world as he proves through word and action *I'm Still Alive!* at all LPL locations. Meanwhile, the man who lives your life so you don't lose it is back. One big difference between Marvel and DC has been the



latter's large variety of non-costumed heroes like gumshoe Slam Bradley, superspy King Faraday, and hipster PI Jonny Double. Then there's Christopher Chance, alias *The Human Target*. Subject of not one, but two TV series (the first featuring pop star Rick Springfield!), the *Human Target* returns to the DC Universe in this twisty mystery written by **Tom (Strange Adventures) King**. Disguised as Lex Luthor, Chance takes a bullet for the bald guy. The real murder weapon was the cup of coffee Chance drank before getting shot. In a superheroic riff on the noir classic *D.O.A.*, Chance has twelve days to find out who poisoned him. Thing is, all the suspects used to belong to the Justice League International. Booster Gold, Blue Beetle, J'onn J'onz, even the Caped Crusader himself—all are in the hot seat while Chance makes time with Ice as the clock keeps ticking. **Greg Smallwood's** drop-dead-gorgeous art is a post-modern buzz of color and character in V1 of the DC Black Label hardback whodunit. All this, and that putz Guy Gardner finally gets what he has coming to him!



In comparison to the other artists on this page, **Conor Stechschulte's** work looks raw, even amateurish. But that very roughness is what gives *Ultrasound* the weight of reality. His characters, especially the hapless duo of Glen and Cyndi, look like regular people. The art is in monochrome pencil printed in a variety of hues. Its scratchy intensity gives the pages an engaging physicality that sucks the reader into the PK Dickian mind games of the plot. Find *Ultrasound* at Beaumont. It is indeed the *Last Day On Earth* for *The Realist*. Said autobiographical strip ran in the Israeli magazine *Calcalist* and won international awards for its creator, **Asaf Hanuka**. Yes, the same artist responsible for *I'm Still Alive*. A changing focus to longer works is one reason **Hanuka** ended *The Realist*. But he goes out with a bang and a guffaw as he turns his slick and satirical eye to family life, Middle Eastern tumult and, inevitably, the pandemic. A lovely swan song, *Last Day On Earth* is available at Beaumont, Central and Northside.



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