



Blue Beetle Vol. 2 #3
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Published: 2009

Categorie(s): Fiction, Fan Fiction

Tag(s): Comics DC2 Peacemaker "Blue Beetle" "Nuclear Family" Paco Jaime

Blue Beetle

Issue #3: "Rebirth"

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"Your Mother and I are so proud of you Arnold. I have to admit, we didn't think this museum job was going to lead anywhere but this is just..." Arnold Beck Sr. embraced his son and then gestured to the grand opening sign hanging in front of the freshly built Midway City Museum. "It's amazing son."

"It really is." Mrs. Beck reaffirmed her husband's words as she took her turn sharing affections with her gangly son Arnold. After she released him she pulled her sleeve up to show Arnold her watch. "Can you believe that your frugal father got me this? Those are real diamonds and that one is your birth stone."

"Wow, Dad, that must have set you back. It's beautiful." He responded admiring his Mother's watch.

"You have no idea." His father replied smiling.

"I'm so glad you could both make it. Let's go ahead inside. We ordered a whole spread for the employee lounge today. Plus I can show you some of the exhibits before there's a crowd." Arnold said warmly to his parents and ushered them into the museum which would be opened for the first time in a few short hours later.

Once inside the museum Arnold's parents looked around in wide eyed amazement. Their son had put together a very nice museum in a very short amount of time. They bickered on the plane ride into Midway City over whether they felt safe with their son working for Ted Kord after seeing his dramatic unmasking on the *Gary Bing Live* show. Mr. Beck felt it was not an issue. Mrs. Beck worried that the museums would attract some bizarre super villains who were out to get Ted Kord. She agreed to let it go for the time being to prevent ruining their son's day. As they

walked through the exhibits, the large Blue Beetle exhibit centered on a garish sarcophagus made it apparent that the subject was unavoidable.

“Arnold, this boss of yours...” Mr. Beck started.

“Mr. Kord is a very nice guy Dad. And yes I did see the Gary Bing show. I have to be honest; I am not all that surprised now that I’ve heard it. He was very particular about this Blue Beetle exhibit. But I know what you two are thinking and you shouldn’t worry. Mr. Kord owns many buildings and businesses around the country I hardly think that a few museums will become a target because the owner (who rarely shows his face) has a penchant for wearing a mask and helping old ladies cross the street.” Arnold had practiced this little speech. He knew they would be concerned and he couldn’t blame them. He was also not about to give up this job to appease their concerns.

“You see there Momma Beck nothing to worry about? Arnold’s got it all thought out.”

Mr. Beck said to his wife who jokingly feigned annoyance then followed with a smile.

“Can’t a mother worry about her son without getting grief?” She asked putting her arm around Arnold’s father.

“I’ll be fine Mom. No worr...” Arnold was cut off by a loud crashing noise and a slight vibration beneath his feet. “An earthquake?! Today...” Arnold was clearly more upset in the moment that his grand opening may have to go on hold. This feeling didn’t last long as seconds later a loud crashing came from the ceiling.

BA-DOOM!!!

The ceiling opened, giving way to a flurry of debris falling to the museum floor all around Arnold. A blue and black armored figure floated into the opening, behind him floated several devices that Arnold recognized as scarabs from the fake one in the Blue Beetle exhibit. His eyes were fixed. It took what felt like forever before he could break his gaze. He looked around to see if his parents were okay. They were not.

“Aw, Mom...” Arnold’s eyes swelled up as he looked at the horror in front of him. The skylight was lying on the ground where his parents had stood only moments before. A single arm stuck out from beneath it. Wrapped around the wrist of the arm was a shiny new watch with diamonds and a ruby birth stone.

“This was clearly a mistake. Did you even bandage him up right?” Jaime complained. He was sitting back in the pilot’s chair looking over the myriad of buttons, switches and levers on the console of Ted Kord’s ship known simply as The Bug.

“Would you stop whining?! Of course I bandaged him up right. I’ve spent plenty of time hanging around you and your mom at the hospital. I think I know how to bandage up an arm. It looks like he’s going to be fine. The bleeding stopped...I think.” On the surface Paco’s level of excitement had been pretty consistent.

“You think?” Jaime was out right irritated with the whole situation. He made his way over to check on Ted. “Yeah, it stopped.” He said slowly after a quick look. He gave a sideways glance over to Paco who was getting dangerously close to pushing buttons on the console of the Bug.

“What do you think this one does?” He asked pointing to a button in a grouping that looked to be only partially installed.

“Unless it you think it’s a speed dial for the Justice League please, don’t touch it.”

Jaime answered nervously.

“How’s he doing?” Paco asked gesturing towards Ted.

“I’m...I’m fine.” Ted came-to and tried to sit up.

“Whoa. Take it easy, Mr. Kord.” Jaime said still seated next to Ted on the floor.

“It’s okay.” Ted pulled himself and made his way to the driver’s seat of the bug. “Please, call me Ted. What are your names?” He asked.

“Paco.”

“Jaime.”

Beetle looked around the ship and took a deep breathe once he had his bearings. “I appreciate you kids helping me out back there, but I didn’t intend on you climbing aboard.”

Paco sensed that this was the part where Ted would turn around and make them go home and promptly interrupted before it could said aloud. “What was that thing you were chasing?”

“Let’s just say it was a super-hero team up gone awry.” Ted looked up at the tracking screen to see where Peacemaker was going. He had managed to put a tracker on him before he was thrown to the ground back at S.T.A.R. Labs. “The museum... I need to get you kids home.” Paco started to protest but Ted’s phone rang before he had the chance. “Hello?”

“Mr. Kord, this is Midway City P.D there’s been an incident at your museum. We’re going to need you to come down here so we can ask you some questions and get you to sign some papers.”

“What sort of incident?” Ted asked but he already knew he wouldn’t like the answer.

“Mr. Kord, you should really just get down here to the museum. Now.” The officer answered and hung up.

“Where do you two live?” Ted asked.

As Jaime started to answer the trio was again interrupted.

“ALERT: INCOMING” The voice cam from one of the many screens.

“Now what?” Ted exclaimed. He looked up at another one of the many screens that filled the Bug. “Oh...That’s what.”

It was Mother of the Nuclear Family. She was sporting a scarab on her back and she was covered in blue and black. Ted turned his head

towards the front window of the Bug just in time to see her bring her metallic robot fist down on the front end.

The Bug spiraled across the night sky. Blue Beetle frantically tried to regain control. He yanked on the steering column and pushed buttons in a flurry. The descent started to pick up speed, but Ted pulled them back from the brink after barely dodging a cell phone tower that seemed to come from nowhere.

Ted pulled back on the steering column and started gaining some altitude, then accelerated and pushed the Bug to its maximum speed.

"Are we doing okay, kids?" Ted asked taking just a second to look back at the pair of boys.

Jaime was in a seat clutching the seatbelt so hard his knuckles were white. Paco was in a corner losing his lunch.

"No worries. I've been in worse situations." Ted said as he continued to fly the ship and anxiously push buttons. He looked to his rear view cameras and could see Mother coming back for more with Brother and Sister in tow. All three of them had scarabs bulging from their backs.

"Jaime, I need you to move to this seat up here." Ted said pointing to the seat next to him. "Have you played the new Star Wars games yet?"

"Yeah, last weekend." Jaime answered.

"Okay, grab that thing in front of you that looks like a Play Station controller and flip on the monitor in front of you. You're going to help me shoot these kooky robots down."

Jaime followed Ted's instructions. When the monitor came on he could see the trio of robots flying hot on their tail. "Mr. Kord...Ted, I don't know if I can..."

Ted interrupted him. "Sure you can. It's just like the Star Wars game. Line up the cross hairs on the screen and..." Ted paused as he concentrated on his screen. The crosshairs on his screen were lined up and Ted hit a red button on the console. On the view screen Jaime watched as a

missile shot from the rear of the Bug and hit its target. "...Bam." Ted said as the missile exploded on impact with Brother. Robotic appendages briefly littered the sky before gravity took over, pulling them to earth. Only Mother and Sister were left.

Jaime lined up his cross hairs and hit the red button on the controller in his hand. He froze, not even breathing as he waited to see what would happen.

Mother dodged the second missile and shot one of her own. "Damn. I was afraid of that." Ted complained and gripped the steering column tighter. He took the bug downward into a nose dive and pulled it back up quickly. The return missile barely missed.

Ted fired another missile. This one was on target, but instead of exploding on impact it exploded two feet before hitting Mother. When it exploded a large net made of metal spread open and snared Mother and Sister in it then began to contract. Ted pressed another button and the net crackled with energy. Mother and Sister shut down and fell to the ground below exploding on impact.

Ted reset the autopilot and leaned back in his chair and pulled his mask off. "Well, that was easy enough." His eyes darted around the ship and finally landed on Paco who was sitting in the corner with his arms wrapped around his knees.

"There's a bag of sawdust underneath that cabinet to your left. Don't feel too bad this is actually not the first time someone has vomited in the Bug." Ted smiled as Paco opened the cabinet.

"What just happened here?" Jaime asked.

"That was part of the Nuclear Family. A family of robots created during the Cold War, believe it or not, to preserve the ideal of the American family. Someone has taken control of them, but they were pretty whacked out even before that." Ted answered.

"I'm sorry I missed." Jaime said, "I wasn't very good at that Star Wars game."

“You did fine. Crisis averted, but we did take some damage.” Ted replied as he looked over the ship’s analysis. “We can make it to the museum, but I’ll have to do some repairs before I can get you two back to Texas. Mind tagging along back to Midway?”

“Not at all.” Paco answered. He had just finished cleaning up his mess and the color had returned to his cheeks.

“Dude, you totally hurled at the first sight of trouble.” Jaime laughed as Paco took the seat next to him.

“Shut up, Jaime. Just shut up.” Paco retorted.

The giant hole in the ceiling of the museum was an immediate indicator that something terrible had happened. Ted landed the Bug and got out some civilian clothes. He didn’t take the time to change; instead he just pulled them over his Blue Beetle uniform. Paco and Jaime followed him out of the bug and across the street to the museum. The police had the whole building taped off. Ted approached the police who were waiting near the door.

“Excuse me. I own the museum, I’m Ted Kord.” He said showing them his identification.

“Right this way. Who’re the kids?” The officer asked.

“Interns.” Ted responded and the officer let them through.

“My God.” Ted said as he entered the museum. He looked around and the first thing he noticed was Arnold Beck. Beck was wrapped in a police blanket. His eyes were red and he looked generally like hell.

An officer approached Ted as he stared in Arnold’s general direction. Arnold looked up and turned even redder when he saw Ted. He didn’t say a word, he just stared. His look went from an almost pathetically sad whimpering to one of anger. For the briefest moment they were locked in eye contact until the officer interrupted.

“Mr. Kord, I’m Officer Montag.” He said extending his hand towards Ted’s.

“What happened here?” Ted asked right away. He was still distracted by the look Arnold had given him only seconds before.

“According to witnesses, something broke through the ceiling up there. The debris landed on the parents of your curator. They were both DOA. I’m sorry to inform you.” The officer said. He seemed to be studying Ted’s reaction the entire time he spoke.

“Arnold’s....” Ted’s heart sank. He immediately looked back to the where Arnold was sitting; only Arnold was no longer sitting there. Ted looked around and couldn’t spot him anywhere.

“There’s more Mr. Kord. Whatever it was that attacked here took something.” Montag continued. Ted knew what it was before he even said the words. “Witnesses saw it fly away with a sarcophagus. Nothing else seems to be missing. Do you have any idea what that could be about?”

Ted paused before saying anything. Either this cop was playing dumb or he was. It was only two nights ago that he’d outed himself as the Blue Beetle on television. Ted motioned towards his office. “I think you’ll want to sit down for this.”

Ted had spent half an hour in his office with Officer Montag trying to explain things the best he could. What made that task so difficult was that Ted wasn’t exactly sure himself. He ran over the facts and events in his head as he worked on the damage Mother had caused to the Bug. He had brought the Bug back to the rooftop of his penthouse to do the repairs.

Beetle shut the hood of the Bug and got inside. The last thing he had to work on was the tracking monitor that had also taken some damage. He needed to find Peacemaker and soon. He thought back to S.T.A.R. Labs. Obviously, Peacemaker had been connected with the other half of the scarab. It couldn’t be the one from Sparky, so it had to be one of the new

ones. Which meant Sparky was still out there somewhere. He dreaded the answer to another obvious question. What did they need Dan's body for?

Ted picked up a laptop and headed inside to the kitchen where Paco and Jaime had been waiting patiently.

"What did you guys find to eat?" Ted asked as he pulled up a stool and sat at the counter next to them.

"You had a bag full of cheese steak sandwiches in the fridge." Jaime answered and slid a plate over to Ted.

"Nice." Ted replied and took a bite. He opened the laptop and began typing as he ate. "Sorry, it's taking so long. I couldn't get the tracking signal to pick up from the Bug because of the damage and I hadn't set it up for this computer yet." He typed some more and sat back after pressing the enter button with one grandiose stroke.

"No problem, Ted. I called my Mom and said I was staying at Paco's house all night." Jaime replied.

"Same." Paco said. "My folks think I'm at Jaime's."

Ted stared at the computer screen as though he hadn't heard them. The boys noticed that he abruptly stopped chewing his food.

"Is something wrong, Mr. Kord?" Paco asked.

Ted said nothing as he slowly stood up and pulled his mask over his face. His eyes were fixed on the computer screen the whole time. Finally he spoke. "I want you guys to do me a favor and get away from this big window here. Then head towards the back of the house and stay there."

"What's wrong?" Jaime asked looking at the screen trying to understand what was happening.

"Do it." Ted stated firmly. He did not yell but the boys could tell he was serious.

Ted took one more bite of his sandwich and slowly backed away from the computer as he pulled his gloves tight and readied his Blue Beetle Gun. The boys did as they were told and headed for the back rooms of the penthouse.

The laptop began to vibrate and wires started to work their way through the keyboard. The outer casing convulsed and contorted and began to take the shape of a scarab. Within seconds it had transformed. Ted stared at it as the vibrating became louder and it began to emit a high pitched squeal.

The large kitchen window burst sending glass and mortar flying inward. Ted braced himself and let his suit protect him from the glass shards. Peacemaker was floating just outside the window with a canon protruding from each shoulder. He was still in the black and blue armor, but was he was not alone. Several scarabs were circling him and there was another figure next to him in similar armor minus the helmet.

Ted recognized the face, but could not believe his eyes.

"Dan...?"

To Be Concluded!

If you enjoyed this story, you can find more tales of your favorite DC heroes at DC2 Universe.

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Blue Beetle #1 (2006)

Blue Beetle, Issue 1 (of 4): Lessons of the Past.

When archaeologist Daniel Garrett disappears in a recently discovered ancient city, it's up to his former student and friend Ted Kord to find him. But before he can begin his search he makes a shocking discovery! Don't miss this 4-part mini-series starring the newest hero of the DC2!

Blue Beetle #2 (2006)

Blue Beetle, Issue 2 (of 4): Time Is On My Side.

Ted takes the fight to Chronos' door step In the second installment of the DC2 debut of The Blue Beetle! Plus, Dan Garret is laid to rest, but what familiar faces show up at the funeral?

Blue Beetle #3 (2006)

Blue Beetle, Issue 3 (of 4): The Evolution of Madness.

Now that Dan Garret has been laid to rest, it's time for Ted's world to turn upside down. The Madmen attack and Ted finds that being a superhero comes with some major pitfalls. Don't miss the debut of the Praying Mantis --- and how is he connected to the Madmen?

Blue Beetle #4 (2006)

Blue Beetle, Issue 4 (of 4): The End of the Beginning.

The Blue Beetle mini concludes but Ted is just getting started. Read the final chapter in his first adventures as a superhero to see what's next for Blue Beetle!

Gotham: City of the Dead #1 (2006)

Gotham: City of the Dead, Part 1 (of 4).

The weekly event kicks off as the son of the Governor is kidnapped. Batman runs down the clues and all roads lead to Arkham. Batman confronts Professor Crane, who makes a surprising request from the Dark Knight. And why have Ted Kord's laboratories been getting robbed? Blue Beetle is in Gotham to find out!

Gotham: City of the Dead #2 (2006)

Gotham: City of the Dead, Part 2 (of 4).

Blue Beetle races to the aid of the Dark Knight as Batman's life literally flashes before his eyes! What keeps the bogeyman up at night? Plus, the dead are walking the streets of Gotham City. How can this be?

Gotham: City of the Dead #3 (2006)

Gotham: City of the Dead, Part 3 (of 4).

The undead march on in part three of *Gotham: City of the Dead*. Scarecrow and Dr. Dee see their evil plans come to fruition but why undead? President Maxwell Lord has a plan and an end game in sight. How far will one man go to protect an old friend? Also, more guests arrive in Gotham to pitch in. And oh yeah, Batman is there too!

Gotham: City of the Dead #4 (2006)

Gotham: City of the Dead, Part 4 (of 4).

Gotham: City of the Dead comes to an explosive conclusion in part four of four *The Devil's Last Dance and Other Neat Things*. Betrayals, Malicious intent and more Zombies! Scarecrow is going down, but who's taking him there? Find out this and more in this final chapter!

Powers, Inc. #5 (2006)

Powers, Inc.: Blue and Gold.

The team is separated and in the fight of their lives. Follow Blue Beetle, Booster Gold and Looker as they battle to save San Francisco from certain doom. What does Booster know about this crisis? The trio turns to an unlikely source. Booster Gold is banned from an unlikely place and has Looker been holding out on the team?

Blue Beetle Vol. 2 #1 (2009)

Blue Beetle: Interview With a Superhero.

It's a fresh start for the Blue Beetle as he takes leave from Powers, Inc. and moves to Midway City. Ted's got his inventor's cap firmly in place to kick off a new business venture, but not everyone is happy about his relocation.

Plus, what's been keeping Ted Kord up at night? What is STAR Labs not hiding anymore? Friends and enemies emerge and a nuclear attack is imminent.

Blue Beetle Vol. 2 #2 (2009)

Blue Beetle: Secret Origins

Mysteries unravel and ravel back up in the second installment of the ongoing series starring Ted Kord. A destroyed S.T.A.R. Labs facility, replicating scarabs and two familiar faces you may know join the fray as Ted tries to find the answers to a few urgent questions.

Blue Beetle Vol. 2 #4 (2010)

Blue Beetle: The End Is Nigh...Again.



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