



Blue Beetle #2
Chris Paugh

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Blue Beetle

Issue 2 of 4: "Time Is On My Side"

Written by Chris Paugh

Cover by Chris Paugh and ArtTeach

Edited by David Charlton

The Timestream...

A plethora of bright colors stretch as far as the eye can see. A floating control tower moves about in the distance. Several monitors surround the room and the sound of whirring and buzzing fills the air. This is the time stream. The room is the work place of the Linear Men. They live beyond time so that it remains unharmed. Right now, they are hard at work reviewing where they have gone wrong with their last attempt to fix a crisis in time.

"Chronos escaped us and returned to his time." Waverider reports grimly. He has just arrived from a battle with Chronos, with Dan Garret in tow.

Rip Hunter speaks: "The temporal storms are getting worse by the moment. Chronos may already have the worlogog."

Dan Garret speaks for the first time since he has been here. "Send me back. I'll stop him."

Waverider answers, "With these storms we can not be sure if we are sending you back at the right moment. In order to stop him you would have to return to your own time before he gains control."

Dan looks down at the floor and then looks up at the men. "I have an idea."

Egypt, 5th Dynasty (circa 2490 BC)...

The sun shone so bright that the yellow sand was hot to the touch. Three villagers walked across the street leading to the temple of Khamiji. Above them appeared a white hot light flashing in the sky. From the center of it came a man in yellow and black with fire for hair. The other wore blue. The villagers took one look at the man in blue and dropped to the ground with arms outstretched in worship.

"Who is it you believe this man to be?"

"He is the spirit Khamiji returned to us as was foretold after his assassination five years ago. He inspired our people to overthrow the tyrant Nubwia."

Waverider looked up at the villagers.

"You will be safe here. These men will take care of you."

"This is where the scarab comes from that gives me my powers." Dan told Waverider. "Do not worry I will make preparations for the day Chronos tries to find it again. Do not come back for me I will live the rest of my days here."

"These people seem to believe you, to be a god."

"I will set them straight and live among them."

"Very well. I will continue to try and make it to your time to help your friend. I hope you are right about this Ted Kord."

"I am. Don't worry." Dan said with a nod.

Waverider walked away a few steps and disappeared into the same hot light he came from only moments before.

Dan Garret looked up at the villagers and spoke a magic word. "Khamiji."

Today...

I sit holding the scarab Dan left behind. I've been reading everything I can on ancient Egypt and their scarabs. It just won't work for me. Dan said as much in the scroll he left for me in the cave. I just wish... ah well I can do this. I have any tech I want. Whatever I don't have I can invent.

I am getting very tired. Little sleep since my fight with the Madmen. I can still hear their laughter ringing in my ears.

When I fall asleep, I dream about my life. I see myself leaving home at sixteen. I had already graduated high school early by that point. Having just sold my first invention to the government, I had a pocket full of cash and a heart full of hope. My parents were so proud of me. I know it broke my Mother's heart to see me leave so young, but I guess that's what sons are for. My Father felt the same way, but I know he would never show it. I can hardly believe it was ten years ago. After traveling the world for a while, I ended up back in the States where I belong. That's around the time I enrolled at the university Dan was teaching at. The dig was on hiatus for a while. I told Dan then that I would give him the money for the dig to start up again as soon as I got my company rolling. We really hit it off. Eventually, we would become good enough friends for him to trust me with his secret. I remember thinking it was the coolest thing I had ever heard. Me, Ted Kord, friends with a superhero.

He told me that when he found the scarab and when he picked it up for the first time that it just felt right. That it was somehow meant for him. Fate brought it to him he believed. Holding it, he said it was as if the wind had whispered the right word in his ear. That was when he first spoke it. Khamiji. Then he felt it. The power that it gave him and he knew he should keep it to help people.

There is no greater responsibility than to help he would always say.

I wake from my dream and arrive in a nightmare. My whole body aches from that fight. I have to find out what those guys are. But I have bigger fish to fry first. Chronos, is out there. So is that worlogog thing. Doc Henlein said it was a map of space and time. Henlein, that name.

Wait.

I run to the book shelf in my private library and grab a book on pocket watch collectibles. I read for a second and the blood rushes to my face.

I was right there.

I saw him.

Henlein, Peter Henlein, one of the first inventors to make a mobile watch with a minute hand. He even showed me the damn watch. Henlein is Chronos. It should have been so obvious. Genius inventor indeed.

I gather my Beetle suit and head for the bug. I also bring the gun I used on the madmen. I have added a new feature to it. In addition to the electric shock and wind currents it also causes a blinding flash of light. My goggles protect me from it but, anyone else around will be blinded for long enough to give me the upper hand. I named it the Beetle gun.

Once, inside I place the scarab in a hidden compartment. I'll further analyze it later.

I arrive at the old church with the clock on top of it. It looks even stranger than before, now that I know who he is.

I walk up those concrete steps again, this time with a clear purpose. When I reach the door it is open just as before. I reach out and push it open further. Looking inside I see the old man. He spots me and walks toward the door where I am.

"Blue Beetle, right? What brings you back?" He says and I feel a twinge of anger at his cockiness. I don't want him to know that I am on onto him right away so I do what I do best. Deflect.

"Hey Doc! I was just in the neighbor hood and thought I'd stop in."

I see some other people inside and get a bad feeling. Our eyes meet and we both know what happens next won't be good.

"Well Doc if you have company I can just come back later. I don't want

to impose.”

I turn to walk away. That’s when it all goes south. The others in the building come rushing out the door and knock me to the ground. I look up to find myself surrounded by the Doc and three others. The others all have the same white masks and hourglass symbols on their chest. The old man steps forward with them. His coat falls open revealing the same hourglass. Time doubles I presume? I try to get up, but one of them raises his arms high and then brings them down on top my head.

Then... *darkness*.

I come to and find myself in a cliché from those old superhero shows. I am tied up in the basement of Chronos’ church building. As soon as I open my eyes I come face to face with him yet again.

“Welcome back Beetle.” He says, his awful breathe hitting my nose like a ton of bricks.

“Were you jogging behind a manure truck with your mouth open?” I ask him with a grin.

“You always were funny.” He says as though he’s known me for a long time. He then continues, “I knew you’d figure it out. You’re no idiot I’ll give you that. Do you know what a bother you’ve become for me? Ahh, so many battles, you and I. You defeat me, I defeat you. The whole thing gets really old, trust me. I’m doing us both a favor. I came back to kill you. Along the way I learned of the worlogog.”

I have no idea what he is talking about, but I know it sounds bad.

“And the time duplicates?” I ask. “You knew you couldn’t handle me alone, huh?”

“Well, you know what they say, if you want something done right...” He says waving his hands towards the others.

He backs away a bit and they start to talk to each other. I try to keep the

conversation going til I find a way out.

“Oh, great. It’s ugly in stereo. You guys all shop at the same store. Stupid theme-villains- R-us?” Just as I get out the last words he hits me in the stomach. I cough up blood.

“No one likes a smart mouth Ted.” He says using my real name again. I assume he learns it some time in the future. I’ll have to watch for that.

“If you’re here to kill me, why wait? You could have done it by now. You can’t. You need me to find the worlogog.”

“You figured it all out. Garret found it. But then I went to take it, and something happened, something changed I altered my past. All the sudden you were the Blue Beetle and I had to start all over again. He disappeared and left it for you to find. But don’t worry, I got nothing but time.” He says and smiles.

This time travel stuff makes my head hurt.

I look around the room at the others and they all laugh. What a bunch of nimrods he is.

“When I get out of this, you’re all going into time-out.” I laugh out loud as I say it. Proud of my little quip, I brace for the next punch to the gut. It doesn’t come. Instead it lands on my forehead and I feel the bump rise.

“Ouch! Stop that! You’re going to give me a complex.” It really does hurt, but I try to keep up the act for a moment longer. I’ve almost get the ropes lose and I can nearly reach my Beetle gun in the back of my suit.

“After all the years, Beetle, killing you won’t be enough. You need to suffer. You need to be broken. You need to feel the failure that you have forced on me.”

“Well, I’m not in to that kind of thing, Chrony, but I could give you a number to this girl who—”

He cuts me off, with a slap across the face. I respond with another joke.

“What did I just say about that? Now you’ve gone and lowered my self esteem. Just when I was feeling good too.”

“ Does anything SHUT YOU UP?!”

“Nope.” I say my hands are now free and I grasp the Beetle gun.

I quickly pull it out and fire. The light fills the room and the air current knocks two of them down. My hands are free and I leap toward a third. Grab him and sling him on the old one on the floor making it take longer for him to get up.

“Don’t break a hip there.” I say while I push myself back wards with all my force and land a solid elbow shot to the face of the fourth. All four of them on the ground now I make for an exit. I’ll come back with help... who though? No. I can’t leave. I’m a superhero now. I can do this. I can win. For Dan.

I come back in swinging. All of them are on their feet now. I swing at the closest one and connect squarely with his nose. The white mask turns dark red. He doubles over in pain holding his face while I jump up and grab a dusty rafter of the old basement. I swing both feet out in front of me and kick another. His head snaps back and bounces forward like he’s been in a car wreck. Two down and two to go.

I make my move for the third and I am too late. He gets a punch in that knocks me to the ground. Before I know it they all four dog pile on top of me. This is not what I had in mind. I buck around like a crazed animal trying to escape slaughter. To tell the truth I geuss that’s not all that far off. They all grab a limb each and hold me down. I can tell deflecting will no longer help the situation.

“THE WORLOGOG!! KORD, WHERE IS IT?” The old one screams with veins bulging and spittle flying from his lips.

I have just enough saliva left to spit in his face. He gets even more angry, if that’s possible.

“Go to Hell.” I say to him, not believing the words coming from my own mouth. “I don’t know what it is exactly, but you’ll never get it as long as

I'm alive."

"I thought you'd say that." He looks me over as he wipes my bloody spit from his brow.

He walks over to the corner and picks up a suitcase. He sits it on a nearby table and pulls out a drill. Walking over towards me he begins to laugh. I look at the time duplicates and they look as shocked as I am.

"Wow, you believe how crazy you become?" I say grasping at straws that they may turn on each other. The old man is standing right over me revving his drill. Suddenly another bright light appears in the room. It's brighter than before and this time it's not my gun. A portal appears near a wall. A gust of wind blows through the basement scattering dust and dirt. Three men appear in the portal. The first one is wearing yellow and black. The other two move quickly and grab a Chronos each. Kicking and screaming they are dragged in through the portal.

The first one speaks. "Theodore Kord, I am Waverider and we are the Linear Men. We have been trying to reach your time period. Chronos has been very troublesome for the timestream. His duplicates have been causing anomalies leading to temporal storms. Daniel Garret was enlisted to help us, because of his history with Chronos. That history will now never come to pass. Daniel gave his life to give us a chance. That chance was you."

He then goes on to explain to me that Dan lived out his life in the fifth dynasty. In the scroll he left he says he died happy. That's all I need to know. After that Waverider takes one more Chronos in the timestream with him. It's the old one, I blow him a kiss on the way out. Just before they are completely gone I remember.

"Wait! The worlogog; should I look for it?"

Waverider turns, never losing his grip on Chronos, "No Theodore, you have done enough. The worlogog will be returned by us to its rightful place in the universe."

"Good. I hate the desert." I say smiling. In a flash they are all gone and I am left with the last Chronos. It's the one with the busted nose. He is still

dumbfounded by all that just happened. Before he gets a chance to do anything I throw all my weight into a knockout punch. It lands on his forehead and he goes down. I leave the old dusty church building with a new perspective.

. Not bad for my first week as a superhero. Though, technically I didn't do much, besides get beat up. I head home and get cleaned up. I sit soaking in Epson salts in my bathroom. I turn on my radio and the first song I hear is The Rolling Stones' "Time Is On My Side."

I sit back and laugh.

Later I decide to go down to the museum where I had Dan's artifacts stored from the dig. I look through all the priceless things that were found there. While I am there the sarcophagus with Dan's body in it is delivered.

"Where do you want it Mr. Kord?" asks a bulky deliver guy.

"You can just leave it over there." I answer pointing to one corner.

"All right over here in this corner." He relays to his crew.

"I just need you to sign this Mr. Kord."

"Yes of course, no problem." I reply though my head is a million miles away. I finish signing my name and tip the guy a couple of hundred dollar bills. My old friend Josiah would cringe if he saw it.

"Thanks Mr. Kord you're all right."

"You're welcome and next time, please call me Ted."

"Okay." He says and heads out.

I stand there for awhile looking at the sarcophagus, trying to decide what to do with it. Finally I decide to have a memorial service for Dan.

One week later...

I have no idea how I managed to put this whole thing together, but most of the other heroes are here.

Once I managed to invite Superman the word spread. All I had to do was hover above Metropolis in the bug for five minutes and he was tapping on my window wanting know my life story. When I told him what happened to Dan he said he wouldn't miss it for the world. He had met Dan once a few years back. I remember Dan telling me the story about how he and Big Blue defeated some villain whose name escapes me.

After Superman I went to invite Wonder Woman. Holy crap is she hot. Again hover in a superhero's city long enough and they will show. Especially one who lives in an embassy house. Even the Teen Titans are here. I don't see the mysterious Batman, but I hear this isn't exactly his kind of thing. Dan also said once, that he had met Batman. Apparently, Batman sought out Dan when some Egyptian themed villain made some trouble down in Gotham. I think he called himself King Tut or something like that.

I hold the funeral here in Central City where Dan and I both live.

I can feel them all eyeing me up. Deciding whether or not I should be the Blue Beetle. I try to keep my head high and my chest out. Wonder Woman is the first to come over and speak to me. She has on a robe over her uniform that I assume is some kind of Amazonian funeral garb.

"I am sorry for the loss of your friend. Superman filled me in on the details. I commend you for your bravery."

I hold back the nervous vomit boiling up in my stomach long enough to thank her for her kind words. I then politely excuse myself and make for the restroom.

Moments later I am rinsing out my mouth in the sink. Behind me at one of the urinals is some guy in a blue and gold costume. He whistles as he stands at the urinal. Then he starts talking.

"You the new guy?" He asks still at the urinal.

"Yeah I am." I answer back trying to not sound interested in any conversation. He walks over and starts washing his hands in the sink right next to me. There are a total of ten sinks not currently being used.

"Yeah I remember when I was the new guy." He says all matter-of-factly. "It was Booster do this, and Booster do that. Then I joined a team, and between me and you I'm kind of the leader."

As he talks he looks in the mirror and checks his teeth. Then his hair, then his teeth and finally his hair one last time.

"Yep, now it's all Booster you're the greatest, and please father my baby. Y'know that sort of thing. Wonder Woman has even checked me out twice since I've been here."

"Listen, um, Booster is it?"

"Yeah Booster Gold to be exact."

"Right I seriously doubt Won—"

"I'm going to stop you right there. Doubt is negativity's ugly cousin. You got a name?"

"What... I ...that doesn't make sense. My name is Blue Beetle."

"Oh yeah," he says thoughtfully then starts talking very fast again. "Just like the dead guy out there. So you're like, his replacement. Taking up the mantle and all that. I got you, baby. Were you like his sidekick or something?"

"Nope." I answer.

"Son?"

"Nope."

"Brother?"

“Nope.”

“Life mate?” He asks with one eyebrow cocked.

“Nope. Wait... WHAT?”

“Hey, hey relax its cool. I’m not here to judge. I understand he was an older guy you were vuln—”

“What? Shut up. He was a friend and a professor. “

“Okay, yeah. That’s fine. Sorry.”

“If you didn’t know him how did you get invited anyways?”

“All right I’ll be honest. I am...The caterer.” He says unsure of his answer.

“Seriously.” I say demanding a new one.

“Fine I saw it in the Daily Planet and thought I’d crash in and hand out some cards.”

He pulls out a stack of business cards and hands me one.

“Powers, Inc.” I read the card out loud. “The Earth’s mightiest heroes. Pretty bold statement don’t you think?”

“Not when you got the walk to back up the talk, baby. Look you take that and think about it. I can tell you got the stuff man.”

“And what stuff is that?”

“You know, the stuff, the style, the panache—”

“A bit redundant don’t you think?” I say and he gets a little flustered.

“Look all I am saying is there are many benefits to being on the coolest super team out there.”

I don't know why, but I actually kind of like this bone head for some reason. I put the card in a pocket on my belt.

"All right I'll think about."

"That's the spirit. Now where is the mini bar?"

"Ahh this is a funeral."

"Oh right."

We leave the bathroom and rejoin the rest of the service.

The memorial goes off beautifully. Superman gets up and says a few words about the fighting spirit and how Dan exemplified that in his time as the Blue Beetle.

When it's my turn to go up and speak. I nearly become petrified with fear. I look out over the crowd of gathered heroes. All at once the fear gives way to inspiration and the words finally come to me.

"We are all here today to honor a man of great deeds. He was a superhero to many, a teacher to some and a friend to a few. To me he was all three. I have learned a great deal through my recent experience. Most of all I have learned that true power doesn't come from a yellow sun, a green ring, or a blue scarab. It comes from within one's self. I ask all of you gathered here today that when future battles arise, and the challenge seems too great that you do one thing. Remember Daniel Garret a.k.a the Blue Beetle a.k.a my friend... Thank you for coming."

Epilogue...

Hours later and all the heroes have gone already. Duty calls. The service is officially over til tomorrow when he is buried. I decide to take a walk around the city. It's been a big day and I need to clear my head. I try to stick to back alleys because I'm still in uniform. My first mistake: back alleys are just an invitation for trouble. My second mistake: the kind of

people who you run into in back alleys, probably don't care much anyone in a uniform.

I turn a corner and I can feel my heart nearly jump out of my chest. Looking around I can count nearly twenty Madmen. All at once they leap and I prepare for a fight.

To be continued!

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

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From the same author on Feedbooks

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 #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 #3 (2009)

Blue Beetle: Rebirth.

With Peacemaker taken over by a scarab and the Nuclear Family still on the warpath, two El Paso teens come to Ted Kord's rescue as the secret history of the Blue Beetle continues to unravel, with a shocking cliffhanger that changes everything!

Blue Beetle Vol. 2 #4 (2010)

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



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