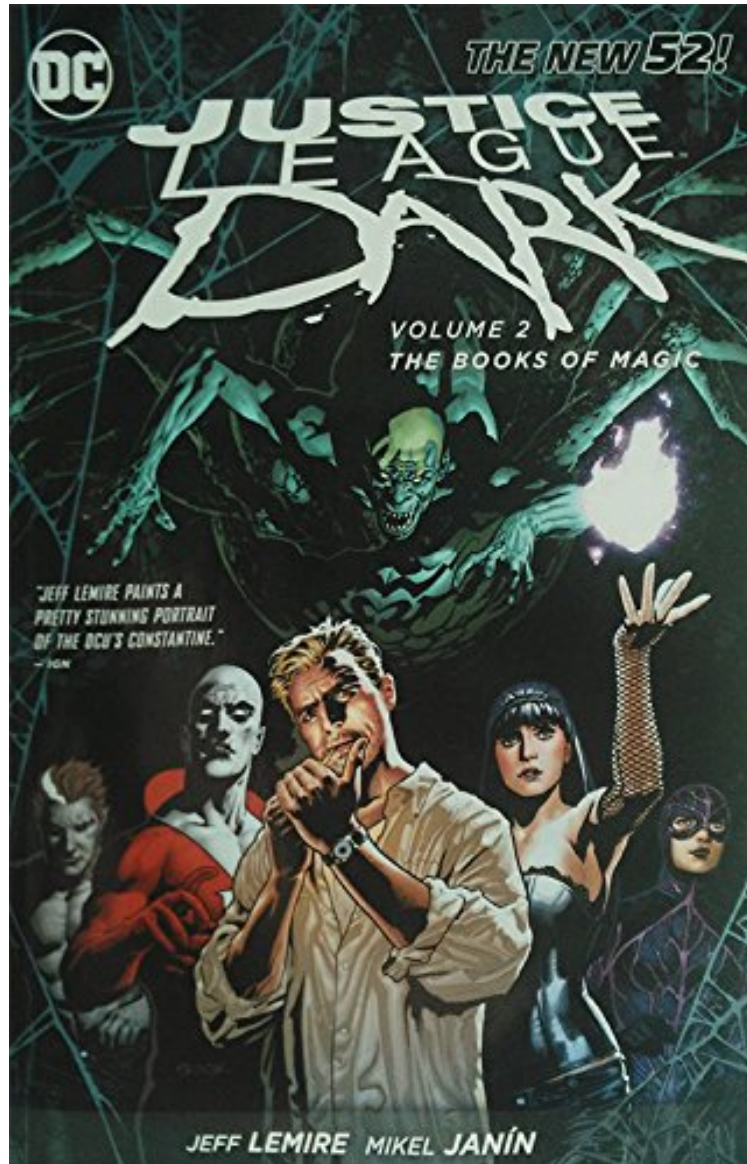


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## Justice League Dark, Vol. 2: The Books of Magic, No. 1

Jeff Lemire

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#100225 in Books DC Comics 2013-07-16 2013-07-16 Original language: English PDF # 1 10.20 x .40 x 6.60l, .87 #File Name: 1401240240224 pages Justice League Dark Vol 2 | File size: 49.Mb

**Jeff Lemire : Justice League Dark, Vol. 2: The Books of Magic, No. 1** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Justice League Dark, Vol. 2: The Books of Magic, No. 1:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Sparkling Tribute to Neil Gaiman By DaveWire The second volume of Justice League Dark, Jeff Lemire takes the reigns from incumbent John Constantine writer, Peter Milligan. Justice League Dark is very much a John Constantine book with the wayward con man magician headlining the story.

We see him seriously take over the team, referring to them as "his" Justice League and tasking them with missions that follow Constantine's usual MO of doing terrible deeds that work toward a greater good while also gaining him quick short-term benefits at the expense of others. This book also spotlights Constantine and Zatanna's first look back into their shared past and origins within the New 52 as threats present themselves from a shadowy figure who seeks to destroy the pair. This culminates in the Zero Month issue, reprinted in the graphic novel, that builds on John and Zatanna's relationship and introduces several of DC's magician folk who will come to play a larger, antagonistic role to Constantine in his own series (see Constantine, Vol. 1: The Spark and the Flame). Jeff Lemire creates a wonderful story that spans the globe from the jungles of South America to the mountains of Nanda Parbat; one that will leave keen observers and Vertigo fans to go absolutely giddy over the sheer amount of tributes and references to the works of Neil Gaiman. Firstly you will notice that this volume is called "The Books of Magic", a title created by Gaiman for DC/Vertigo and this story features both the titular books and "The Books of Magic" protagonist Tim Hunter (in his New 52 debut). This story also sees the New 52 introductions of both the Black Orchid, Gaiman's first work for DC, and the Houses of Mystery and Secrets, which Sandman fans will recall as the homes of Cain and Abel, regular cast members of what is perhaps Neil Gaiman's most widely recognizable work in the world of comic books (and perhaps literature as whole). All in all, this story was exactly what I had hoped to see when I picked up Justice League Dark, full of magical wonder, classic comic book hero team action, dramatic suspense, a powerful climax, and shining tributes to the great Vertigo comics of yore.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lemire Really Explodes Into Action

By Mel Odom

Justice League Dark: The Books Magic is a mixed bag. Peter Milligan, the author of the first graphic novel, has a two-issue story in this one that doesn't quite feel finished, but maybe that's because it's tied into the I, Vampire title as well. Maybe after I read that one I'll feel like it's more complete. After that, Jeff Lemire takes over for the rest of the graphic novel, which is really long, and for the bonus price of \$3.99 (at this writing) is an amazing bargain. Lemire spins a different take on the Justice League Dark, which never seemed to quite gel in the first volume of this title. The characters just didn't balance, although Milligan had some excellent twists in that graphic novel, as noted in the review for that title. John Constantine takes front and center in Lemire's run, and the action starts off with a bang. Almost too fast, in fact, after the weird ending of the previous tale. I just wasn't prepared for the change in venue (from an urban area to a jungle) or for the shift from Madame Xanadu as point person to Constantine. So it took me a minute to settle in, which Lemire graciously provides by backtracking on his tale. I hadn't really realized how many characters of a magic nature DC Comics has in its arsenal until this graphic novel. Lemire has obviously boned up on his superhero lore and chose wisely from amid the various characters and scenarios. I would never have guessed that the House of Mystery and the House of Secrets could be used as transport devices, or existed on such a metaphysical scale, but in Lemire's hands it all seems to make sense. I also enjoyed the addition of Black Orchid, who still seems as mysterious as she did in her original three-issue run in Adventure Comics back in the 1970s. Neil Gaiman's additions are still there, but Lemire has made her a part of his mystical worlds as well. Her true character and nature hasn't manifested yet, and I don't know that it will, but I'm enjoying her repartee with Deadman and Constantine, and she adds a great visual element to the stories. She's in costume, like Deadman, and tends to shine in the panels where she's shown in action. The reinvention of Felix Faust and Nick Necro are really cool too. The backstory that reveals the relationship between Necro, Constantine, and Zatanna is great, packed with lots of emotions and more magical background. Speaking of Zatanna, she continues to be an interesting part of this world, but she's not quite evened out. Her magic is constantly rebuffed, even though she's supposed to be pretty powerful, so I'm not convinced that Lemire has a true concept of what he wants her to be as a factor, but she's a strong character with lots of history. I was surprised to see the Books of Magic brought back into the storyline, and it was pretty cool to see Timothy Hunter (although revamped as well) involved in the overall plot. Even with the graphic novel's expanded length, the whole story doesn't quite get resolved. But once Steve Trevor and ARGUS were thrown in, as well as Frankenstein, Agent of S.H.A.D.E., and a certain surprising princess, the ride is worth it because Lemire has a lot of things to show you. So I'm hanging out, waiting for the release of the third volume, looking forward to how things wrap up and how this new team shakes out. Mikel Janin's art is just stupendous. I don't know how he handles all the rich dialogue Lemire pens for all of those characters and plot lines, but he does, and he manages it in such a way that the pages are still constructed with an eye toward art and immersion. The work he does on the troll in Slaughter Swamp and the wood creature in the forest that confronts Deadman is great, but what he does with the House of Mystery and the House of Secrets is nothing short of amazing.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Good Second Volume, but Far Too Much Constantine, and Far Too Little Zatanna or Xanadu

By MereChristian

While I greatly enjoyed the second volume of Justice League Dark, I do have some bones to pick. First for the description of the comic. The first issue or two have to do with our titular team in a cross-over event with the Bat books and the (now defunct) I, Vampire series. This was, obviously, important to the overall story-line of said cross-over, but wasn't that interesting unless you cared to read the rest of it, which I wasn't. The rest of the issues collected concern the event for which this second volume is named, The Books of Magic. Or, more accurately, the war to gain control of them. British con-man and magic-user John Constantine is approached by the agents of ARGUS (a US government paranormal agency that protects the US and her allies from supernatural nasties) with the goal of bringing together his fellow magic-users from the previous crises with the

Enchantress and the vampires, to go on a covert mission. One thing leads to another, and eventually the JL Dark is tasked by the US government stop a madman from obtaining control of the Book of Magic. The government liaison, Colonel Steve Trevor, informs the con-man that this group he is in has been labeled by ARGUS, much to his displeasure since he doesn't want to be a hero, the "Justice League Dark". But it turns out that the bad guys are aided by an old rival of Constantine and Zatanna, one who wants revenge on them as well as the dangerous artifacts everyone is seeking. Madame Xanadu identifies one hope, a young boy who is destined for great things. But this child doesn't want to become involved. This was a very fast-paced and tightly plotted work. There is no meandering with pointless wangst, as in the previous volume, and the dark and edgy stuff was actually toned down and kept plot-relevant. The atmosphere, despite the darker plot points at times, was actually quite hopeful and (dare I say it) fun. I only have two main criticisms of this one. First off, while I don't hate the character of Constantine, neither do I super-care about him. It was a tad annoying to read what one friend a while back called "the John Constantine show". If you dislike him, or your enjoyment hinges on seeing more of other characters, this could be a problem for you. The other problem is that I really like both Zatanna, and Madame Xanadu is starting to grow on me. While Xanadu had some story time, it wasn't enough, and goodness Zatanna had hardly any other than playing second-fiddle to Constantine. For that matter, her magic hardly ever works. Look, I'm okay with re-imagining some characters, but to change Zatanna from one of the most powerful characters of the entire DC Universe to a very weak character and damsel in distress really, really aggravates me as a Zatanna fan. The end of the volume gives me hope they'll do more with her in the future. As it is, this was an excellent story, but suffered due to the over-use of Constantine, and under-use of other characters, particularly Zatanna and Xanadu. Here's hoping they do better in the coming issues.

New York Times best selling author Jeff Lemire takes over Justice League Dark and just when you thought it couldn't get darker... Vampires across the world have gone berserk, attacking anything with a pulse. Fearing her apocalyptic vision of the future has come to pass, Madame Xanadu mobilizes the team to intervene. But everything the Justice League Dark members know about how to slay a vampire is useless, for the world has changed.

"Worthy of the adjective, but in a good way." *The New York Times* "There are some threats that are too much for even Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman to handle... That's when you call the people who make magic their method." *CraveOnline* "Damn cool." *iFanboy* "Solid art and good story." *ComicVine* Award-winning Canadian cartoonist Jeff Lemire is the creator of the acclaimed monthly comic book series SWEET TOOTH published by DC/Vertigo and the award winning graphic novel ESSEX COUNTY published by Top Shelf. He also writes ANIMAL MAN, FRANKENSTEIN AGENT OF S.H.A.D.E. and SUPERBOY for DC Comics. In 2008 Jeff won the Schuster Award for Best Canadian Cartoonist, and The Doug Wright Award for Best Emerging Talent. He also won the American Library Association's prestigious Alex Award, recognizing books for adults with specific teen appeal. In 2010 Essex County was named as one of the five Essential Canadian Novels of the Decade! Recently named one of *Wizard* magazines 25 "rising stars", Jeff has also written a new graphic novel for Top Shelf called THE UNDERWATER WELDER. He currently lives and works in Toronto with his wife and son.