

With Batman: Zero Point, Fortnite's lore makes a lot more sense

Comics have never been bigger: with Marvel TV shows, DC movies, and indie adaptations growing by the day, comic books have never been more prominent in pop culture. This biweekly Verge column recommends comic series new and old, whether you're a longtime fan or a newcomer.

I've played a lot of *Fortnite* over the years, but I've never really thought about the internal lives of the many characters that inhabit the battle royale island. I was always too busy seeking shelter and supplies or exploring whatever big event was happening at the time. But now that I've read *Zero Point*, a crossover between Batman and *Fortnite*, I can't stop thinking about what's actually happening to them as they fight to the death over and over again.

What is it? *Zero Point* is a new six-issue series – the first is available now – that attempts to make sense of the convoluted world of *Fortnite*. At the outset, a mysterious crack appears in Gotham's skies, and Batman heads out to investigate. He spots Harley Quinn by the disturbance and is eventually pulled into it against his will. As you can probably guess, on the other side of the rift is the *Fortnite* island.

Batman immediately notices some strange things about this unknown place. He seems to be suffering from some form of amnesia; aside from some muscle memory – i.e., the ability to fight and use gadgets – he can't remember anything about who he is. He also can't talk, and for some reason, everyone is

trying to kill each other. At one point, he posits a possible explanation: "I've gone mad." It isn't until he sees Catwoman that his memory is jostled just a little bit.

The issue ends without much resolution, but it poses a lot of questions I've never really considered much before. Why *can't* the characters talk? And is there a reason everyone is actually trying to kill each other? The developers at Epic Games have steadily been building out the lore of *Fortnite* through in-game events and other means, even tying in some of the many licensed characters that have been added. But the comic goes in a different direction. Reading it is like seeing what goes through Batman's head in the middle of a battle royale match.

It's completely weird and utterly fascinating – and I'm very curious where it's headed.

Who's it by? *Zero Point* is written by Christos Gage, with art by Nelson Faro DeCastro, Reilly Brown, and John Kalisz. Donald Mustard – the chief creative officer at Epic – is listed as a story consultant. (He also apparently made a variant cover for the second issue.)

Where can I read it? *Zero Point* is available both in physical and digital forms, but there are some small complications. If you grab either a physical issue or read through DC Universe Infinite, you'll get some bonus in-game items via a code; for issue one, that means a Harley Quinn *Fortnite* character. However, if you pick up an issue via Comixology, you won't get a code, just the book. Issue 1 is available now, with subsequent issues coming on May 4th, May 18th, June 1st, June 15th, and July 6th.

<https://www.theverge.com/2021/4/25/22399355/batman-fortnite-zero-point-comic-book>