

# THE STANDARD



DIGITAL  
DELUXE



#1 of

LEES • RECTOR • DILLON • JAMES • NUTTALL





# "HOW DOES IT FEEL BEING THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPERHERO?"

Over 40 years ago, mild-mannered scientist Gilbert Graham was given incredible powers when a meteorite crashed into his laboratory. Hoping to amaze and inspire, Gilbert became The Standard, the world's first real life superhero. For decades, The Standard – and later, his trusty child sidekick, Fabu-Lad – protected their home, Sky City, from masked criminals and evil-doers, and together strove to make the world a better place.

Today, Gilbert Graham is long retired. Alex Thomas, formerly known as Fabu-Lad, took on the mantle of The Standard in his place. But Alex Thomas is not Gilbert Graham. Before long, Alex publicly unmasked, revealing his true identity to the world. Since then, The Standard has gone from superhero to celebrity, complete with sponsorship deals and even his own reality TV show. But somewhere amidst all the fame and fortune, Alex lost sight of what The Standard was supposed to represent when Gilbert Graham thought him up all those years ago.

Now, a young girl is missing, and The Standard has promised to find her. Can Alex Thomas become a hero once more? Or does fate have other plans for The Standard?



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## www.thestandardcomic.com

THIS IS THE STORY  
OF A HERO...



...AND THE BOY WHO  
WOULD BECOME ONE.



ORDINARY  
PEOPLE, JUST  
LIKE US.

ORDINARY  
PEOPLE WHO LIVE  
EXTRAORDINARY  
LIVES.



FOR LET IT BE KNOWN, BOLD  
READER, THAT THE GREAT DO NOT  
ALWAYS CHOOSE GREATNESS.





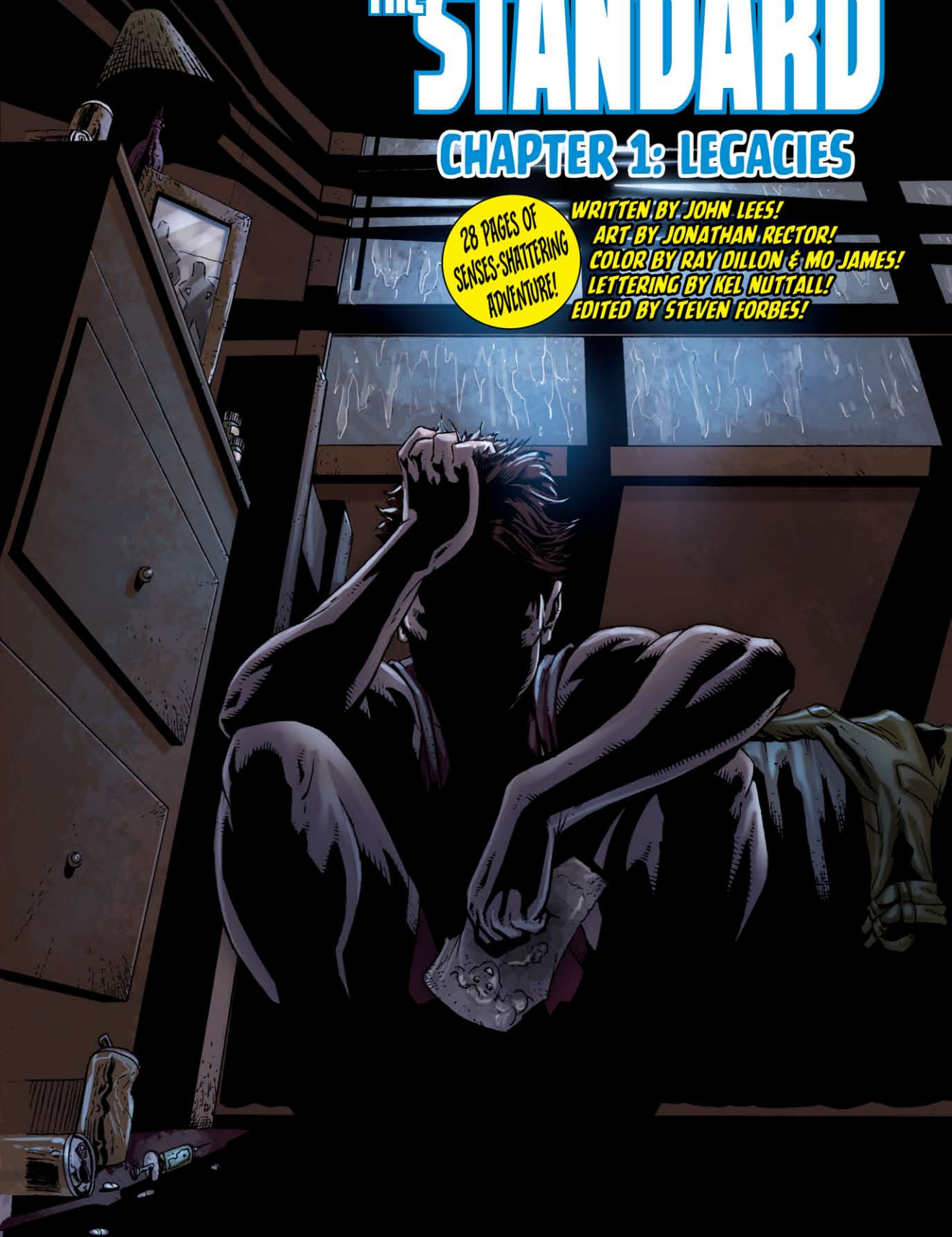
SOMETIMES, GREATNESS IS  
SIMPLY THRUST UPON THEM.

# THE STANDARD

## CHAPTER 1: LEGACIES

28 PAGES OF  
SENSES-SHATTERING  
ADVENTURE!

WRITTEN BY JOHN LEES!  
ART BY JONATHAN RECTOR!  
COLOR BY RAY DILLON & MO JAMES!  
LETTERING BY KEL NUTTALL!  
EDITED BY STEVEN FORBES!





**44 YEARS AGO.**

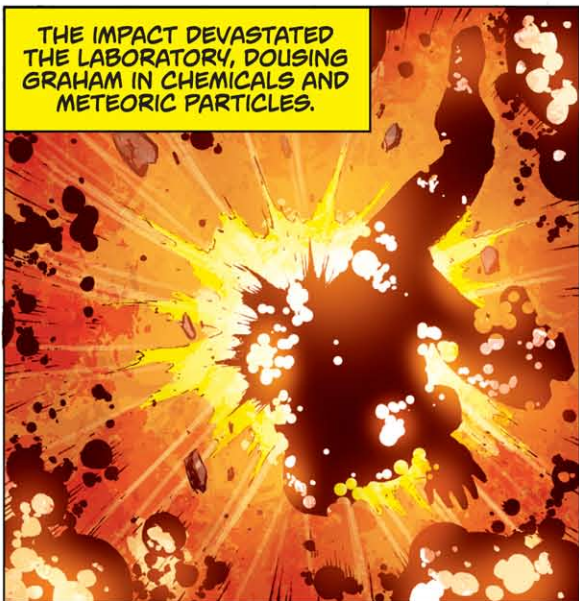
**SUCH WAS THE CASE FOR  
YOUNG SCIENTIST GILBERT  
GRAHAM, WORKING LATE IN  
HIS LAB ONE NIGHT...**



**...UNAWARE OF  
THE METEOR  
THAT HAD MADE  
ITS WAY INTO OUR  
ATMOSPHERE!**



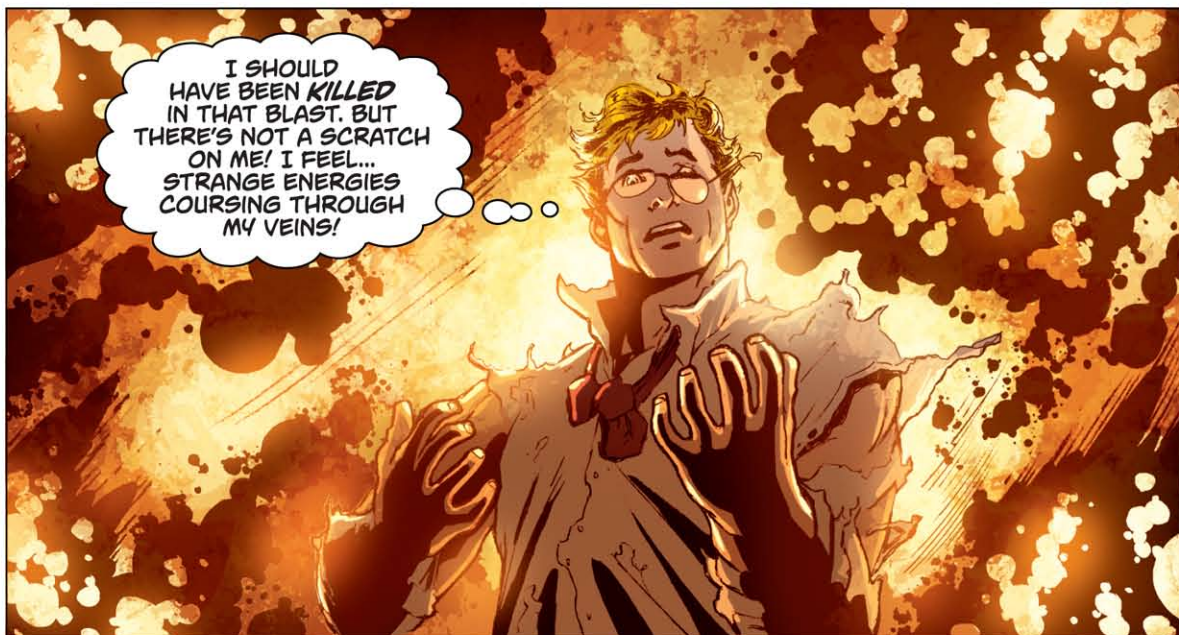
**THE IMPACT DEVASTATED  
THE LABORATORY, DOUSING  
GRAHAM IN CHEMICALS AND  
METEORIC PARTICLES.**



**BUT FROM THE ASHES...  
A HERO EMERGED!**



**I SHOULD  
HAVE BEEN KILLED  
IN THAT BLAST. BUT  
THERE'S NOT A SCRATCH  
ON ME! I FEEL...  
STRANGE ENERGIES  
COURSING THROUGH  
MY VEINS!**





ELSEWHERE, BEAUTIFUL  
SOCIALITE CAROLINE COLE  
AWAITS HER BEAU!

GILBERT'S  
LEFT ME HIGH  
AND DRY  
AGAIN!



HE'LL BE  
STUCK IN THAT LAB  
OF HIS, WORKING ON  
SOME BORING  
EXPERIMENT!



FAR FROM BORING,  
BOLD READER...

CRIPES!  
NOW I HAVE  
THE STRENGTH  
OF A HUNDRED  
MEN!





THE NEXT DAY

DR. GRAHAM HAD GAINED  
INCREDIBLE POWERS.



WITH PRACTICE, HE  
LEARNED HOW TO  
CONTROL THEM.



THE CHEMICALS THAT DOUSED ME  
DURING THE EXPLOSION MUST HAVE REACTED  
WITH PARTICLES OF THE METEOR AND FUSED  
THEMSELVES TO MY BLOODSTREAM.

MY BODY  
HAS CHANGED  
ON A CHEMICAL,  
NO... A  
STRUCTURAL  
LEVEL!

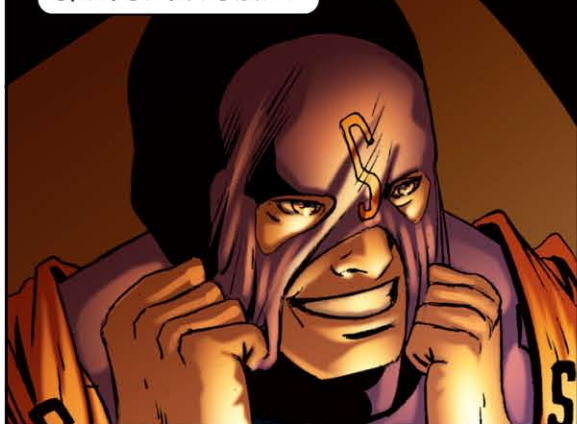


I HAVE  
ATTAINED A NEW  
PINNACLE OF HUMAN  
EVOLUTION, AND SO I  
MUST GIVE MY FELLOW  
MAN SOMETHING TO  
ASPIRE TO...



"...I SHALL BECOME A  
PROTECTOR OF THE INNOCENT,  
AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS..."

"...I WILL SET A NEW  
BAR FOR HEROISM..."



"...A NEW STANDARD!"







SPOTTED IN SKY CITY!

NEW HEROES!  
NEW MASKED  
MEN EMERGE!

WHO IS THE MYSTERIOUS MASKED CRIME-FIGHTER?

THE STANDARD INVITED TO THE WHITE HOUSE

THE STANDARD! THE WORLD'S FIRST SUPERHERO!

ZARTHOS SCHE THWARTED THE STANDARD

THE STANDARD SAVES CRIME BARONS AND JUSTICE

THE STANDARD SAVED THE WORLD

STANDARD WOOS CAROLINE COLE?

YOUNG JUSTICE: THE STANDARD'S NEW SIDEKICK



**SKY CITY**

**30 YEARS AGO**



ALL WILL  
BOW BEFORE  
ME! FIRST SKY  
CITY, THEN...  
**THE  
WORLD!**



I HAVE BEEN MOCKED AND  
IMPRISONED FOR THE LAST  
TIME. HERE BEGINS THE  
ULTIMATE CONQUEST OF  
**ZACHARY ZARTHOS!**

**OH, HELP!  
SOMEBODY  
SAVE ME!**

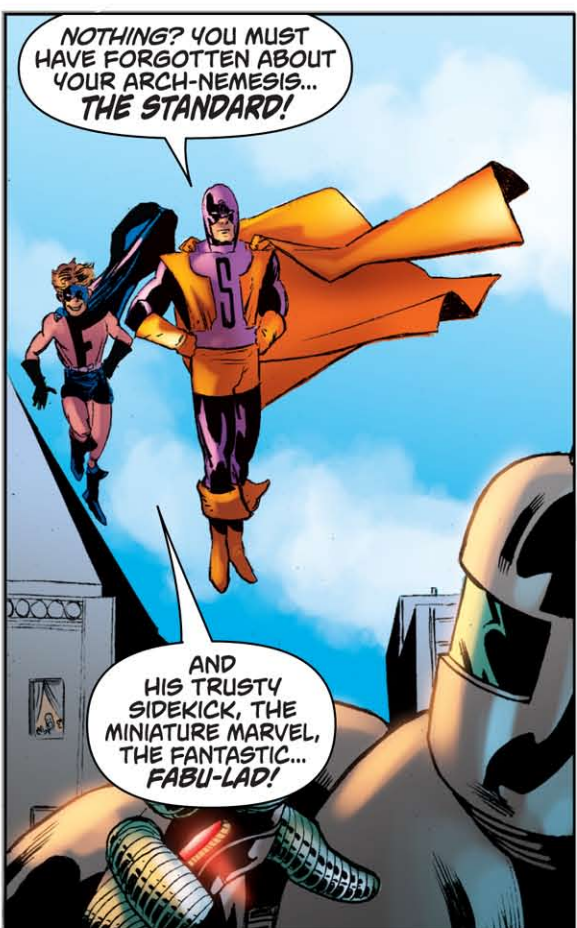
ARMED WITH MY  
DESTRUCTO-BOT,  
NOTHING CAN STOP ME!

**HE-HEE!  
HE-HEE!**

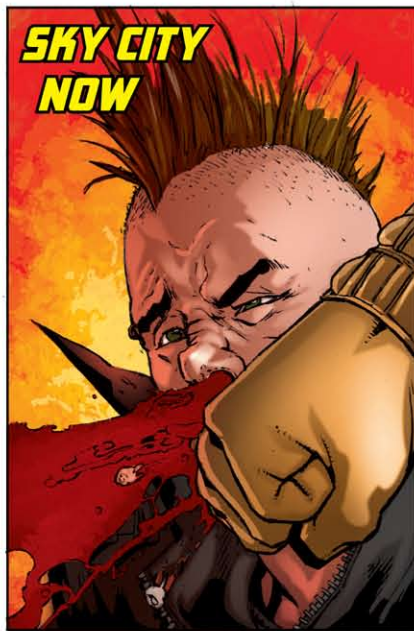


NOTHING? YOU MUST  
HAVE FORGOTTEN ABOUT  
YOUR ARCH-NEMESIS...  
**THE STANDARD!**

AND  
HIS TRUSTY  
SIDEKICK, THE  
MINIATURE MARVEL,  
THE FANTASTIC...  
**FABU-LAD!**





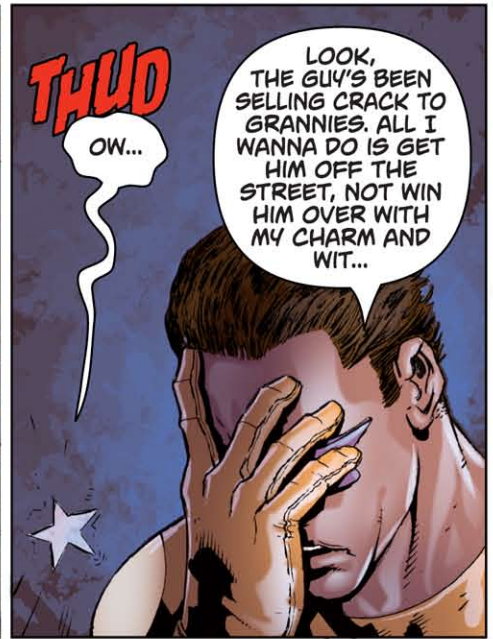






HUH?

Y'KNOW, SOMETHING PITHY THE STUDIO CAN POP IN THE COMMERCIAL.

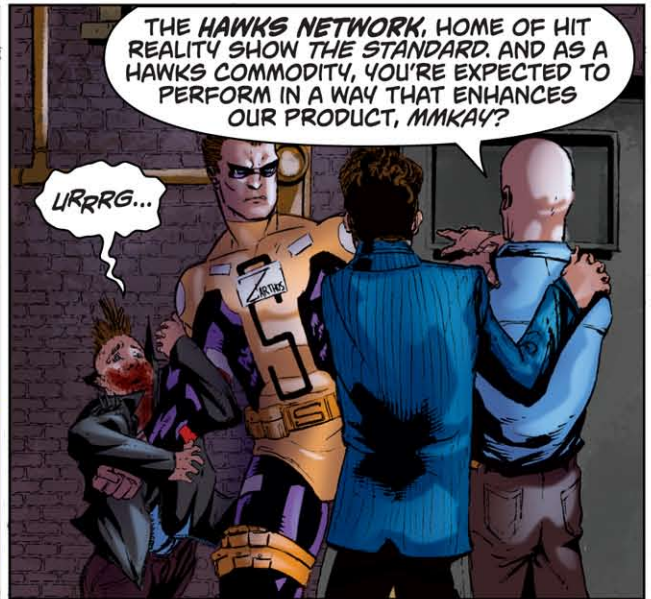


**THUD**  
OW...

LOOK, THE GUY'S BEEN SELLING CRACK TO GRANNIES. ALL I WANNA DO IS GET HIM OFF THE STREET, NOT WIN HIM OVER WITH MY CHARM AND WIT...



YEAH, YEAH, IF YOU WERE JUST DOING THIS OUT THE GOODNESS OF YOUR HEART YOU WOULDN'T HAVE US OUT FILMING IT. REMEMBER WHO'S PAYING YOUR BILLS.



URRG...

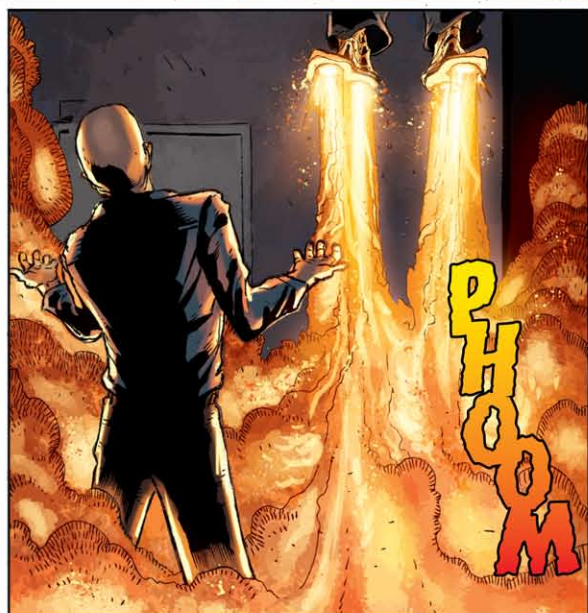
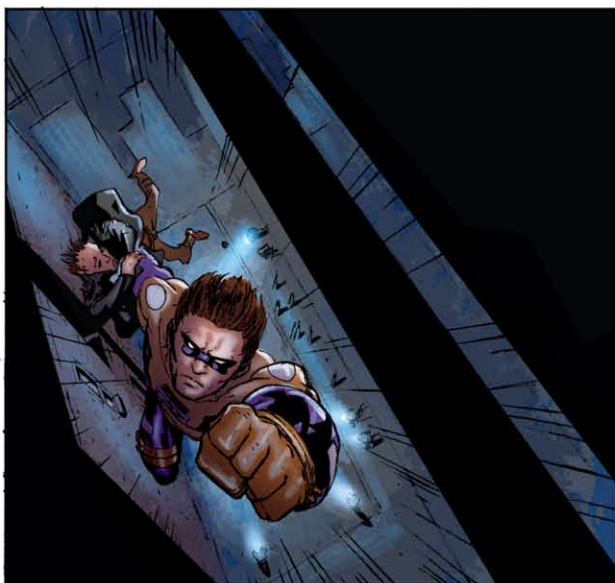
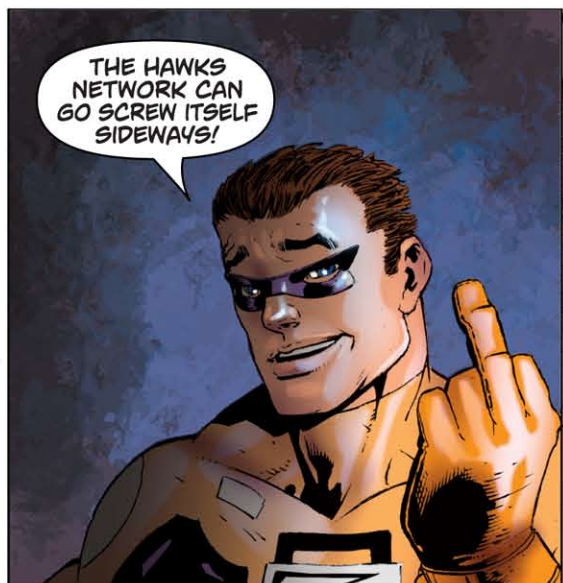
THE HAWKS NETWORK, HOME OF HIT REALITY SHOW THE STANDARD. AND AS A HAWKS COMMODITY, YOU'RE EXPECTED TO PERFORM IN A WAY THAT ENHANCES OUR PRODUCT, MMKAY?



I GOT A PUNCHLINE FOR YOU.

GREAT! LET'S GO... ACTION!

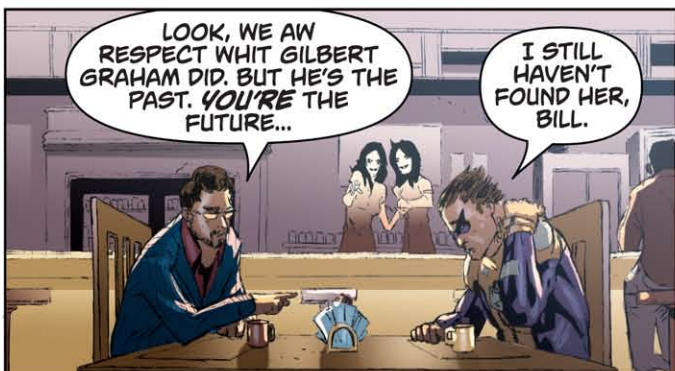
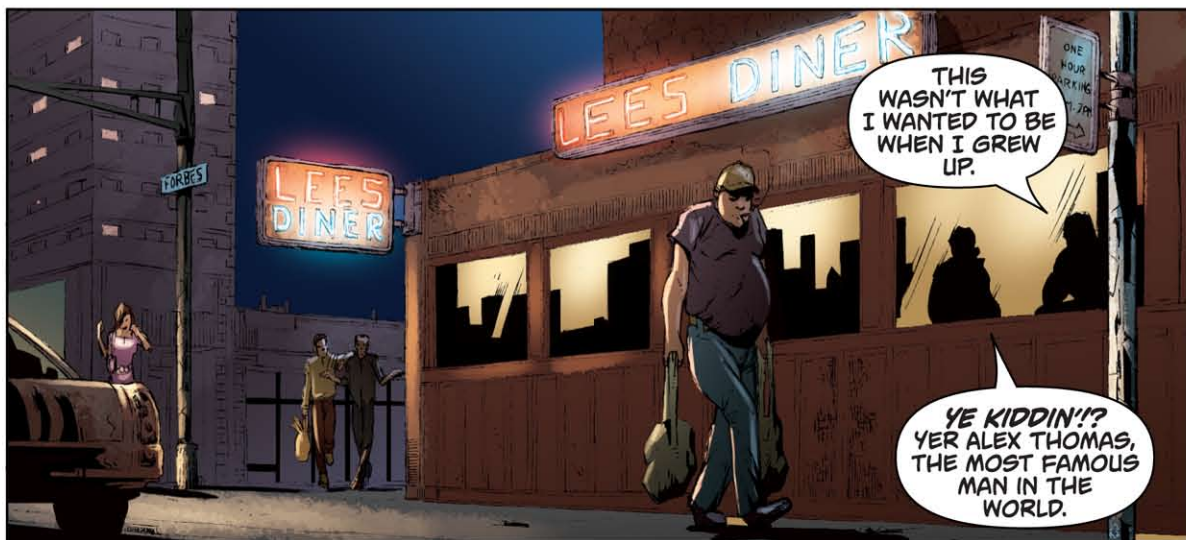
















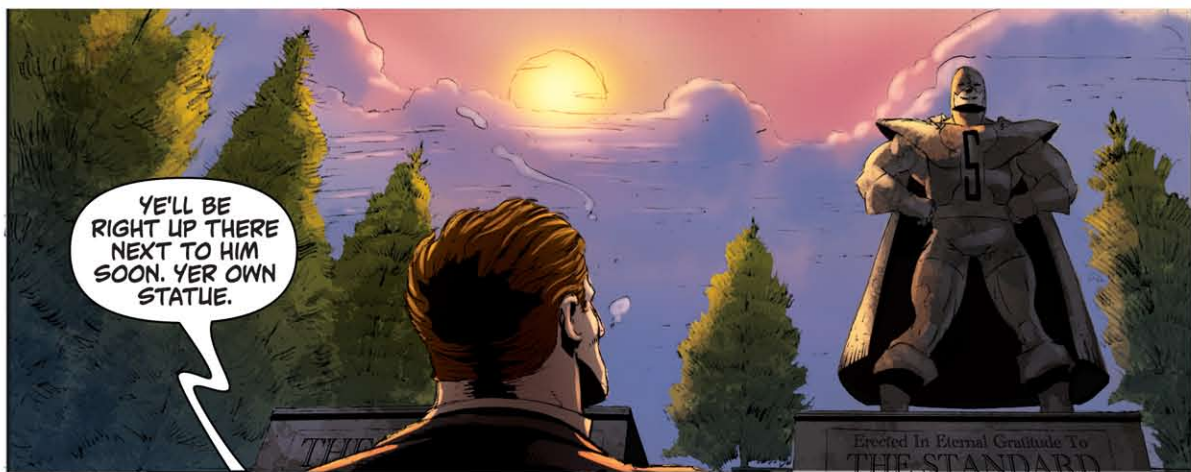




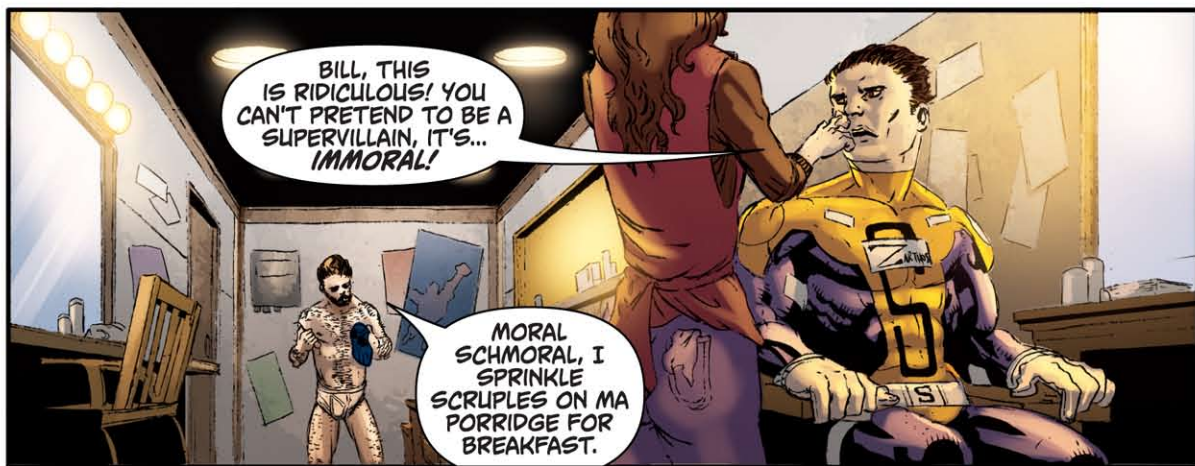




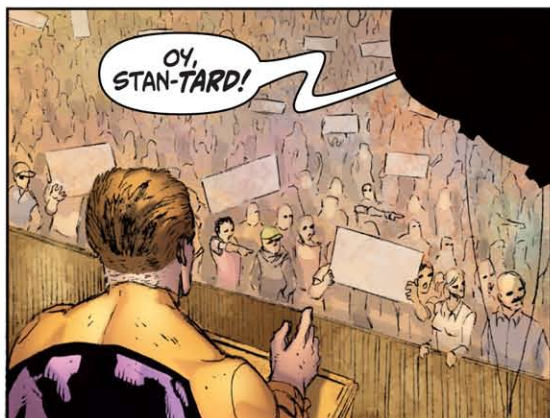
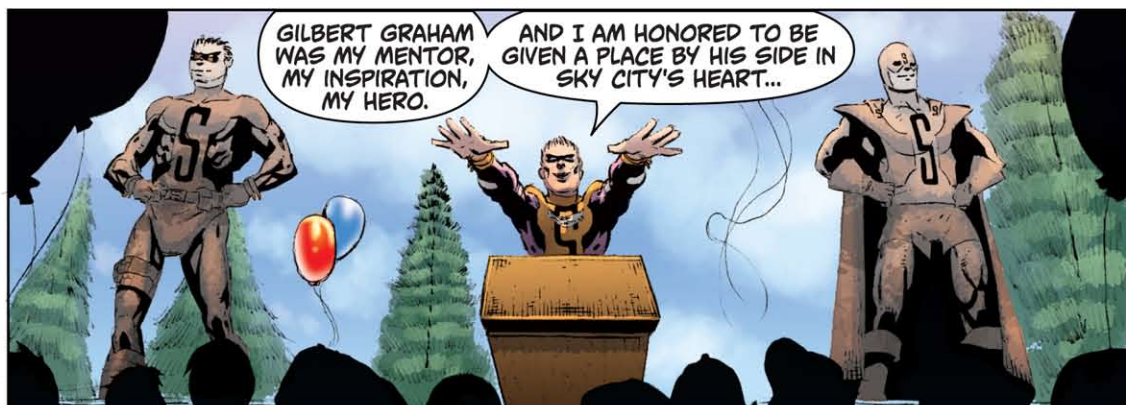








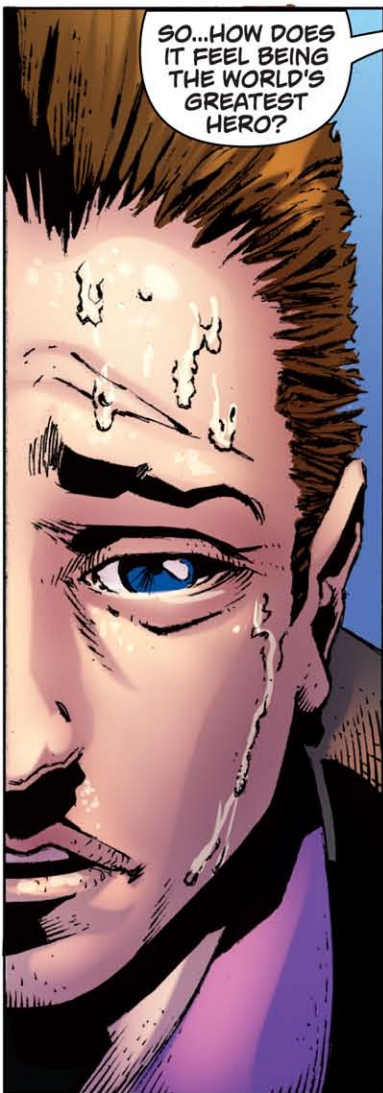












SO...HOW DOES IT FEEL BEING THE WORLD'S GREATEST HERO?



YOU SPENT YEARS AS THE SIDEKICK TO GILBERT GRAHAM, THE ORIGINAL STANDARD, AND WHEN HE RETIRED, YOU TOOK OVER.

BUT THE STANDARD'S IDENTITY HAD ALWAYS BEEN A SECRET. WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO COME OUT INTO THE OPEN AND UNMASK YOURSELF?

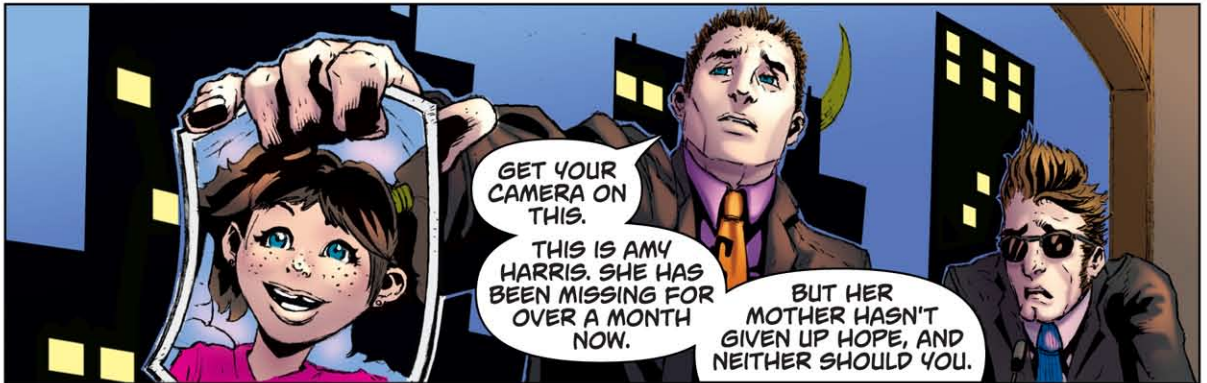


GILBERT WANTED TO INSPIRE THE WORLD THROUGH HIS GOOD DEEDS, AND THE ONLY WAY TO TAKE THAT DREAM TO THE NEXT LEVEL WAS TO STEP OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

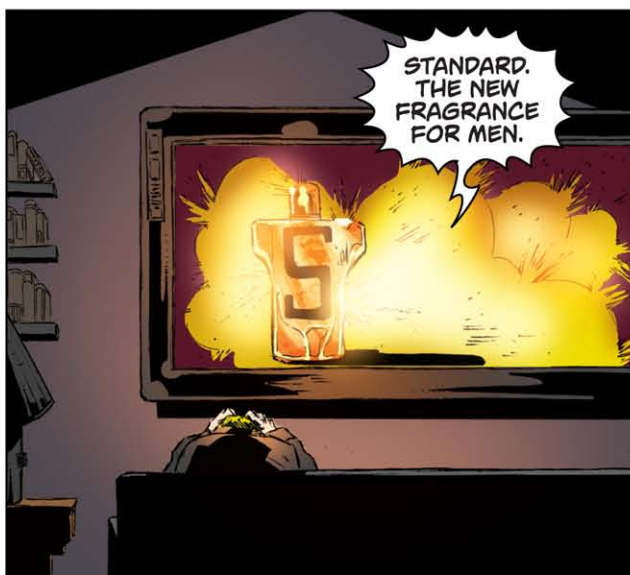


YOU'VE INSPIRED MILLIONS, YOU'RE LOVED ALL AROUND THE WORLD. SO IT SURE WORKED OUT WELL FOR YOU, DIDN'T IT?

























I'M STRONGER THAN YOU. FASTER THAN YOU. BETTER THAN YOU.

THAT'S WHAT I WAS DESIGNED TO BE.



THIS ISN'T PERSONAL. I'M JUST...PROVING A POINT.



I'M... SORRY...











BUT FEAR NOT,  
BOLD READER.



FOR WHEN EVIL AND  
INJUSTICE THREATEN THE  
WORLD ONCE MORE...



WHEN THE TIME  
IS RIGHT...



THE STANDARD  
WILL RETURN!

**NEXT:**  
**FUNERAL FOR**  
**A FRIEND**



# THE STANDARD

Story by John Lees  
Art by Jonathan Rector

The great do not always choose greatness...

Over 40 years ago, scientist Gilbert Graham became The Standard, the world's first superhero. When he retired, Alex Thomas – formerly his sidekick – took on the mantle in his place, transforming The Standard from superhero to celebrity. Now, a young girl is missing, and Alex has promised to find her. Can he become a hero once more? Or does fate have other plans for The Standard?

"THE STANDARD is the kind of rare gem comics readers are lucky to find..."

- Comics Bulletin

"An amazing and intriguing series..."

- Alex Widen, Examiner.com



thestandardcomic.com





# DESIGNING "THE STANDARD" SCRIBBLES WITH JONATHAN



**JOHN LEES:** Here's the original sketch of The Standard I drew for Tyler James' 30 Character Challenge back in 2009. My attempt at drawing demonstrates why I needed to hire an artist!

**JONATHAN RECTOR:** When John had sent me the script for Issue 1, I was very excited to start working right away. The concept he sent me sold me. Yeah, he needed to hire an artist, but the look on Gilbert's face basically sums up the dramatic good/evil throughout each script.

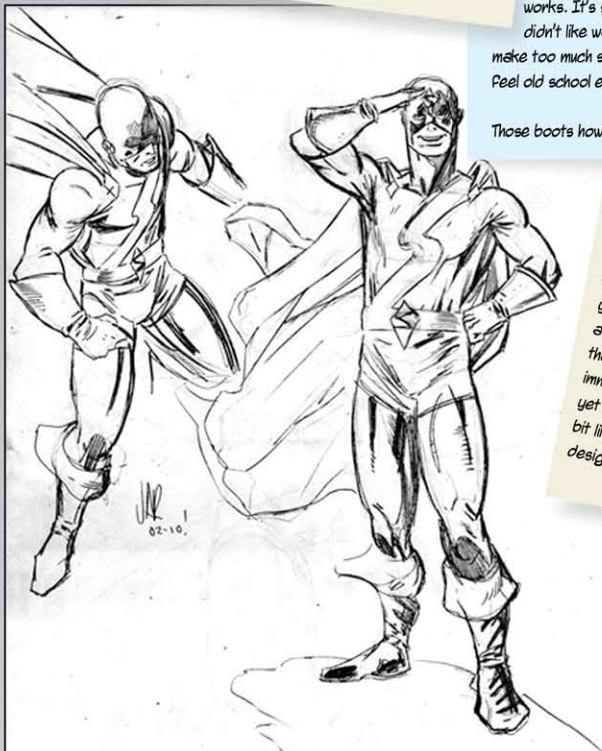
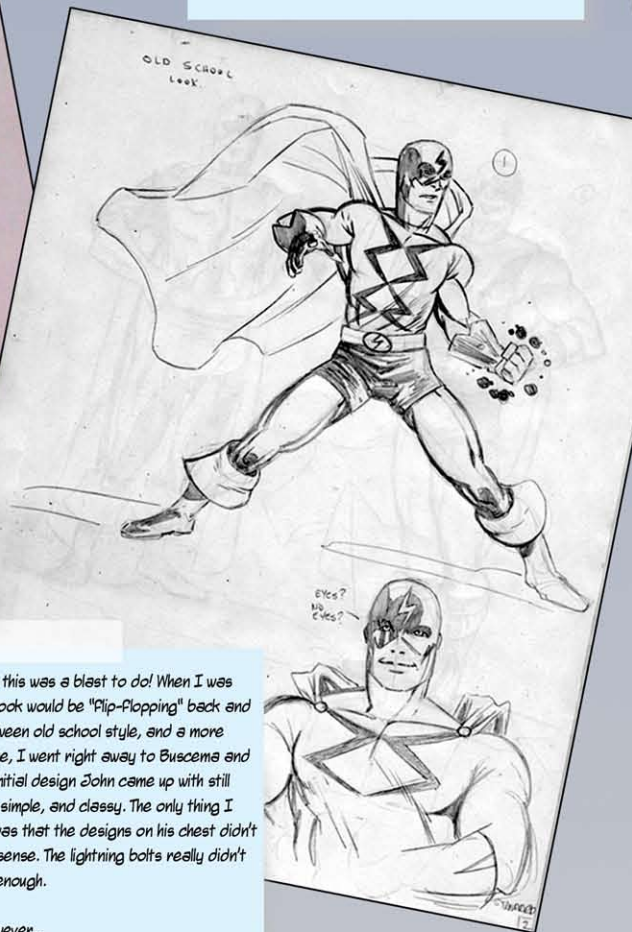
.....Loved it!

**JL:** Here is some early concept art by Jon, using the costume I'd designed and of course executing it much better. I still quite like this design, I must say. Also of note is, at this early stage, Jon was really working an old-school Curt Swan style for the Gilbert Graham Standard in his prime.

Love those Kirby Knuckles!

**JR:** Yeah this was a blast to do! When I was told the book would be "flip-flopping" back and forth between old school style, and a more modern one, I went right away to Buscema and Kirby. The initial design John came up with still works. It's simple, and classy. The only thing I didn't like was that the designs on his chest didn't make too much sense. The lightning bolts really didn't feel old school enough.

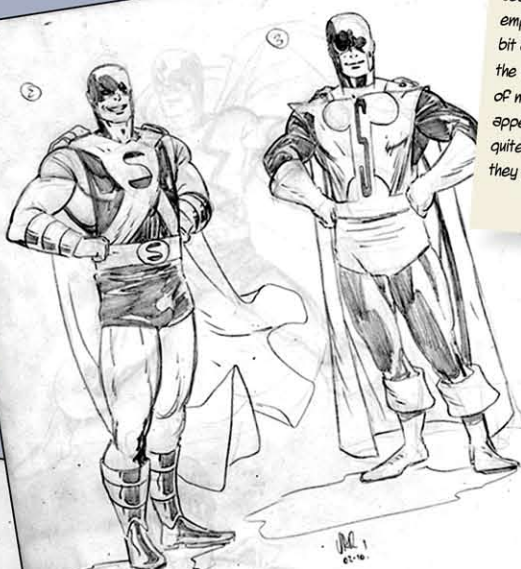
Those boots however...



**JL:** I was terrified of putting an S on his chest, given the shadow Superman casts, but ultimately I think it was unavoidable. What I like about the flowing S you've worked in here is that it suggests something that, though, this design to me seemed like you'd immersed yourself in the Golden Age style, but not yet brought your own touch to it. This design feels a bit like a blank slate, which you'd add to in later designs.

**JR:** Totally! The easiest things for designing super heroes in my opinion, is toss the first letter of their name, right on their chest! Superman is the first thing that pops in my head. It's been done to death, but the "time" the original Standard was alive lent itself to it. I still didn't have a clear indication of where I wanted to go.





JL: With these designs, things really started to click. It seemed you went in more of a sci-fi direction, emphasizing Gilbert's status as a scientist, and I got a bit of a Kirby New Gods vibe from them. The design on the right jumped out at me immediately. It was a case of me seeing it, and instantly imagining that costume appearing on covers and on the finished pages. So we quite quickly settled on that design, and the rest, as they say, is history!

JR: The design on the left was totally a space-man. I thought of playing around with the idea of Gilbert really accepting the source of his powers, and playing on that, but thankfully we skipped that design. It would have removed him from being relatable to the "humans" of the story. The design on the right just popped after I drew it. The "s" wasn't in your face, and the design around it sort of had a science vibe to it. The traditional boots and gloves just sealed the deal.



JL: With the costume decided, the next step was you drawing various studies on that costume, to get a feel for it, to refine any aspects of it into a final design, and to give me a sense of how the suit looked in action. This picture was my favourite. I loved this shot so much that I ended up working it into a scene in issue #2!

JR: Yeah, this was a blast! I can't remember exactly where this idea came from. I was probably watching some Dragon Ball Z! Ha, ha, ha!





"THE STANDARD is the kind of rare gem that comics readers are lucky to find..."

- Comics Bulletin



**COMIX TRIBES**

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