

How Lanterns fits into continuity of James Gunn’s Superman and Guy Gardner as Earth’s Green Lantern

Episode 6 of Lanterns brought a big screen cameo and some clarity to the new-look DC universe.

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The first season of HBO’s DC superhero series *Lanterns* has made for one of the best comic book shows of the past several years, slow-boiling the introduction of Hal Jordan, Earth’s first Green Lantern — and John Stewart, a future Green Lantern on his own messy journey to take up the ring.

The show is phenomenal, and now on the back end of its 8-episode run (episode six aired this past Sunday, with the penultimate episode coming this weekend). But it’s largely avoided much of the wider DC universe in telling its own self-contained story up to this point, helped along by the fact that much of the season *actually* took place back in 2016.

****Spoilers ahead for Lanterns Season 1, through Episode 6****

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But now the action has caught up to the present day in 2026, which means it has to contend with being set in the same universe of events as James Gunn’s recent *Superman* and films like *Supergirl* (plus *Peacemaker* Season 2 and the animated *Creature Commandos*). Episode 6 picks up with how John Stewart is doing a decade after the Rushville fiasco. Hal ended up going to jail (recently released, trying to make amends in Rushville), and John went off to start an architecture firm with one of his brothers.

Of course, as we learned in the pilot, Hal was soon murdered in Rushville after returning there (the show has jumped a bit between past and present putting all the pieces on the board).

As we learned last week, John took the ring off Hal’s finger — but instead of assuming the role of Earth’s Green Lantern — he turned the ring back into the Guardians and called it quits, after seeing how the power and responsibility of the ring tore Hal apart those last several years.

And here’s where we learn how the events of *Superman*, and Guy Gardner, fits into all this.

How Guy Gardner got his Green Lantern ring



After Hal’s death (and before it, for a brief encounter), John heads back to Rushville to try and figure out exactly what happened to the former galactic hero. While there, he uses a Batman-esque skylight that Guy had left there (mostly as part of a PR campaign to try and rebuild the image of the Green Lanterns) to summon Guy to Rushville.

Guy finally shows up, and we learn (mostly) what happened that led Guy to be the established Green Lantern of this DC universe during the events of *Superman*, with Guy already a member of the proto-superteam the Justice Gang* at that point. As suspected, after John turned Hal’s ring back over to the Guardians, the Guardians selected a new Green Lantern to fill the gap: Guy Gardner, who was serving as an athletic director (*not* gym teacher) at the time of his selection.

And one more key point, which explains why his ring looked different in *Superman* from Hal’s ring in *Lanterns*? John notes the Guardians forged a *new* ring for Guy, with Hal’s ring apparently “decommissioned” from use. So, John convinces Guy to bring the old ring to allow Hal to be buried with it, which he does, to repay his debt to John for opening the door for his own selection in the first place.

So John turning down the ring is what cleared the way for Guy to become the Green Lantern of this sector, setting up his role in *Superman*.

The end of *Lanterns*’ Episode 6 *also* gave us a hint as to how John will (presumably) finally become a Green Lantern himself (in the comics, he’s an established Green Lantern hero). After Hal is buried, John digs him up and takes the ring (since he’s already been established as a user for that ring, when he briefly shared it with Hal during his training). He doesn’t take it to assume the role of Green Lantern, but instead uses it to activate Hal’s hologram back-up version — bringing Hal himself back (in a sense) to help solve his own murder.

So does John end up keeping Hal’s ring, finding a way back into the Lanterns Corps.? We know Aaron Pierre is already set to reprise his role as John Stewart in Gunn’s *Superman* sequel *Man of Tomorrow*. But will be actually be a Lantern by then? Or still just John Stewart? So many questions left to be answered.

Those final two episode are going to be *wild*.

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