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# BATMAN





# LIFE AFTER DEATH PART 5 MIND GAMES



NINE HOURS EARLIER.

OUTSIDE THE  
MAYOR'S OFFICE.

ONE  
WHO KNOWS  
HOW TO WORK  
WITH THOSE  
TYPES--

WHAT THE  
HELL?!

...I'M  
TELLIN' YA,  
THEM FALCONES  
ARE JUST THE  
FIRST.

MY MONEY'S  
ON THE MARONI  
FAMILY COMING  
BACK NEXT.

GOTTA  
ADMIT, BAD  
AS THINGS WERE  
BACK THEN, IT  
SURE BEAT WHAT'S  
HAPPENIN'  
TODAY.

"THE MAYOR'S  
GUARDS ARE  
SITTING DUCKS.

"CROOKED COPS,  
ALL OF THEM.

IT'S  
GOOD WE  
GOT US A  
STRONG-  
MINDED  
MAYOR.

"TYPICALLY, MY  
KIND OF OFFICERS.  
JUST NOT TONIGHT.

CRACK

BLAM  
BLAM

"LEAVE NO ONE  
STANDING. I'M SURE  
THEY DESERVE IT.

"RIGHT,  
BATMAN?  
HWAK HWAK  
HWAK!"

KUNK



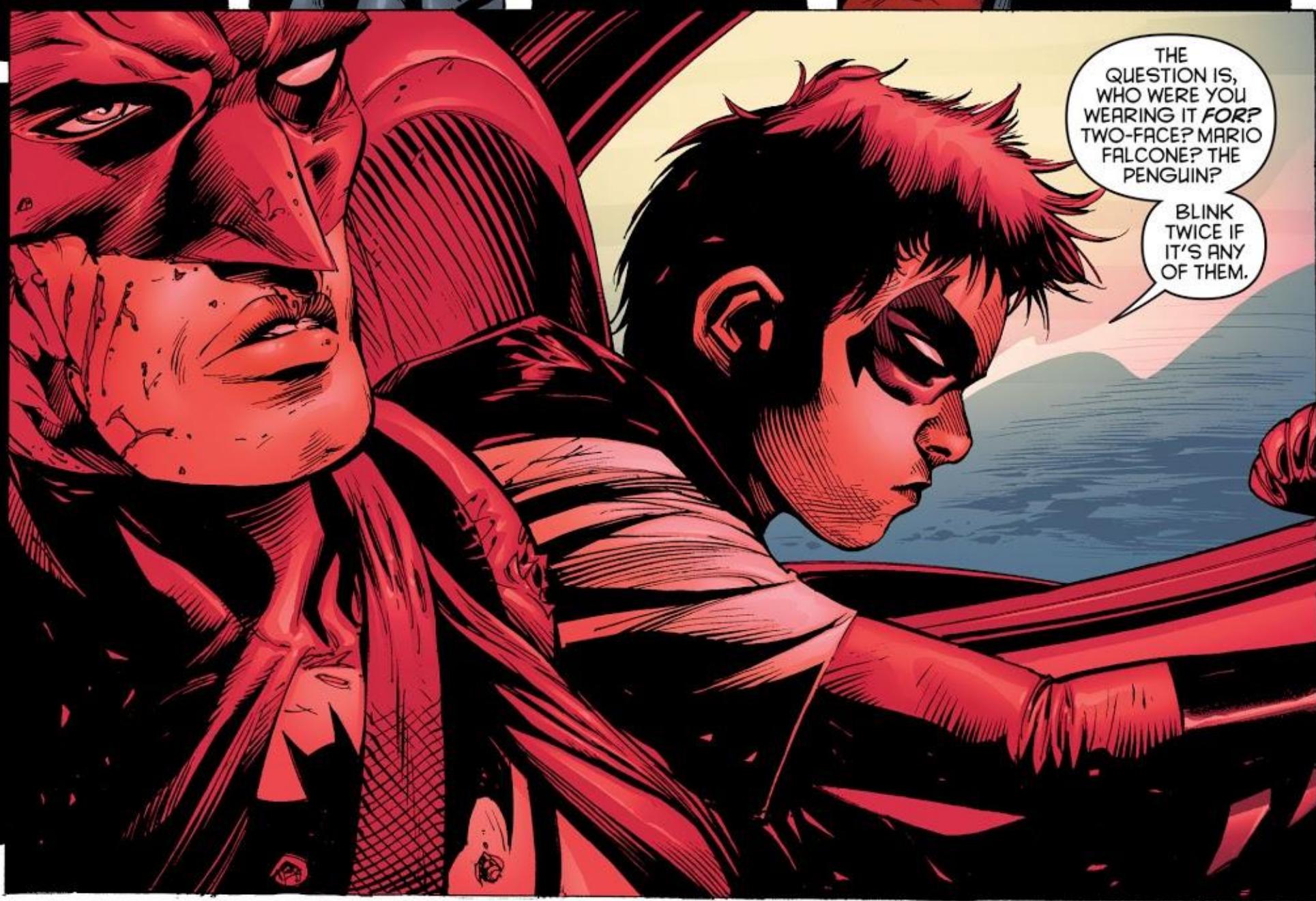
COMMISSIONER GORDON SAYS YOU CONTACTED HIM LAST NIGHT.

TOLD HIM SOMETHING ABOUT ASSASSINATING BLACK MASK.

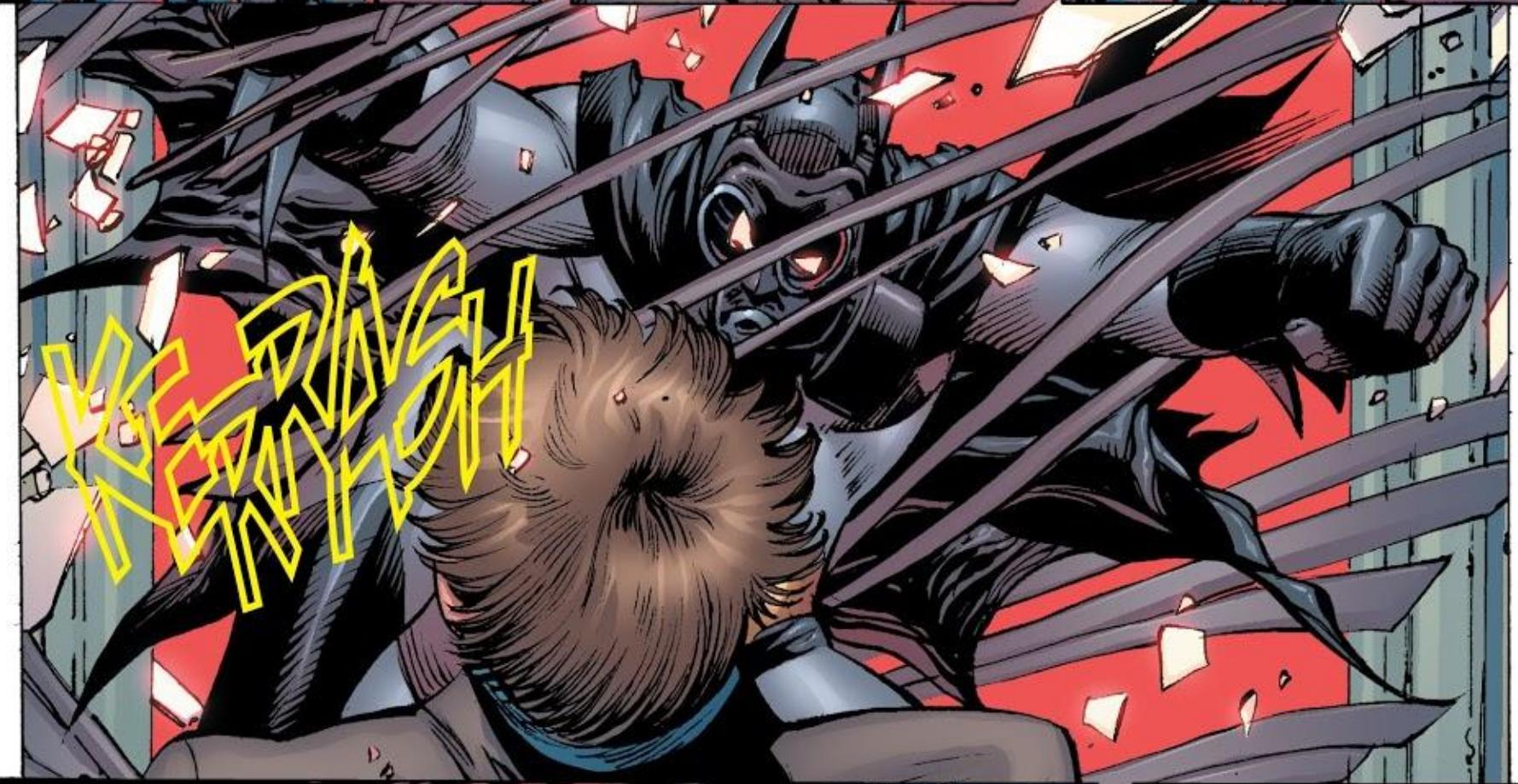
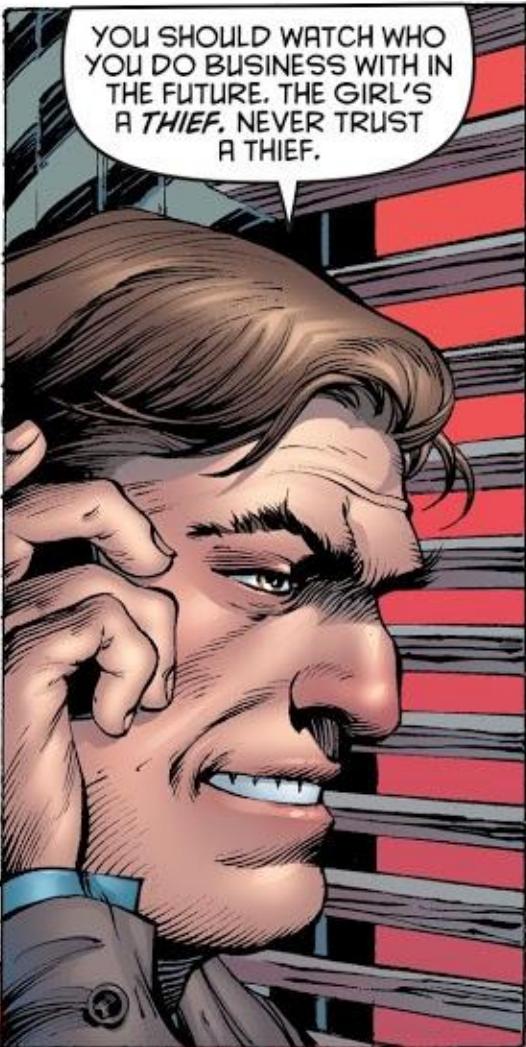
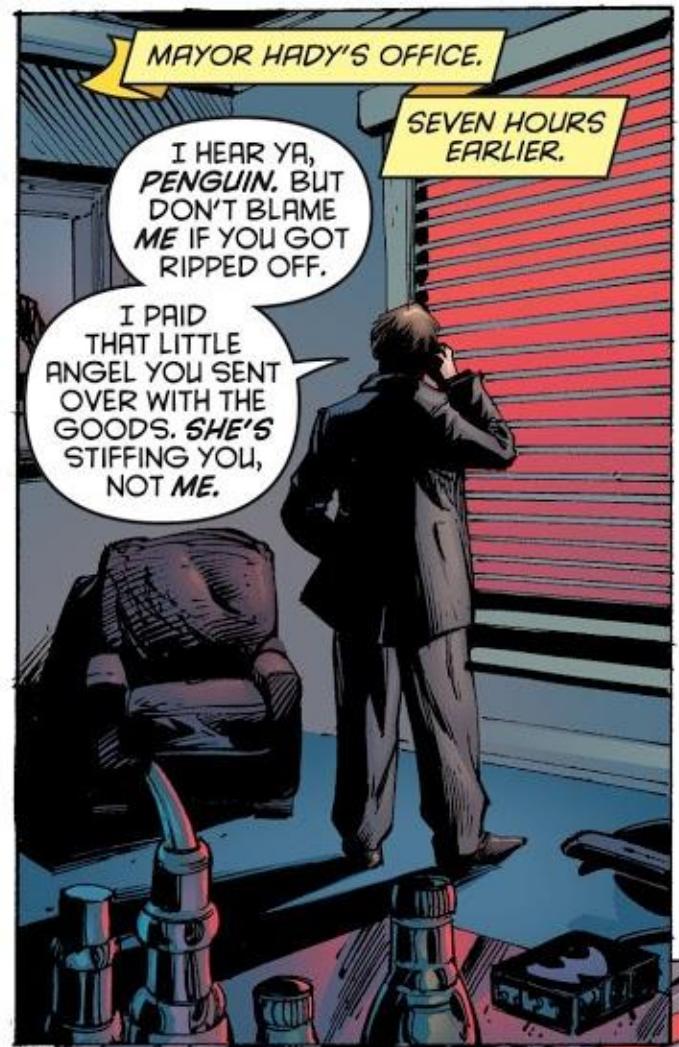
WELL? DID YOU?

YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T EVEN REMEMBER IF YOU DID.

NOT WITH YOU WEARING THAT MIND-CONTROL GAS MASK.



FORGET IT.



"MAYOR HADY IS INCREDIBLY THICK-SKULLED. YOU CAN TRY ASKING HIM NICELY..."



"HE'LL TALK,  
BATMAN.  
EVENTUALLY."

URRGHNN

"I COULDN'T LET BLACK MASK  
DESTROY THE ONLY THING  
THAT WOULD END HIS HOLD  
ON DEVIL'S SQUARE--

--THE ANTIDOTE  
TO HIS MIND-  
CONTROL TOXIN."

BATMAN!  
WHAT IN  
GOD'S NAME  
HAVE YOU  
DONE  
TONIGHT?

HEY,  
COMMISSIONER--  
LOOK!

BATMAN?

NOW.

DAMIAN?

GORDON  
HAS IT...  
I LEFT...  
THERE...



"...GRAYSON'S STARTING TO REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED."

SIX HOURS EARLIER...

WHEN I HADN'T HEARD FROM YOU, I STARTED TO THINK YOU BAILED OUT ON OUR PARTNERSHIP, KITRINA.

I GOT HUNG UP, TRACY. GOT THE CAMERA WITH THE DIGITAL PROGRAM?

YOU MEAN THE ONE THAT LINES UP YOUR MAPS WITH THE DIGITAL OVERLAYS YOU MADE?

THE ONE YOU HAD ME HOLD ON TO WHILE YOU PARTIED WITH GOTHAM'S SLIMIEST?

THAT BE IT, BABY.

HANG THEM UP STRAIGHT FOR ME WHILE I SET THIS UP.

de-boop

LOOKS PERFECT. BLACK MASK IS ALMOST GUARANTEED TO BE IN HIS BUNKER.

READY TO DIVIDE UP AND CASH A BIG FAT GOVERNMENT CHECK?

READY TO CASH, YES. THE DIVIDE PART--NOT SO MUCH.

click

THWACK

OPH!





NOW.

...FROM WHAT WE'VE BEEN TOLD, BOTH THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THE MARINES ARE POISED TO ENTER GOTHAM'S SO-CALLED "DEVIL'S SQUARE"...

...WHERE IT IS BELIEVED THE SUSPECTED TERRORIST KNOWN ONLY AS THE BLACK MASK HAS SCORES OF CIVILIANS TRAPPED...

...AND JUST OVERHEAD WE CAN SEE APACHE HELICOPTERS HEADING...

...BUILDINGS ARE ON FIRE IN DEVIL'S SQUARE AND THERE'S NO ONE TO EXTINGUISH THEM. WHO IGNITED THIS TINDERBOX? THERE'S GROWING SPECULATION THAT...

...PROTESTORS MARCH OUTSIDE OF CITY HALL, DEMANDING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE BLACK MASK STANDOFF...

ORACLE...?

...BATMAN WAS SEEN FLEEING THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR YESTERDAY EVENING, BUT POLICE COMMISSIONER GORDON REFUSES TO RELEASE A STATEMENT ON WHY...

...ALL I CAN SAY IS BLACK MASK IS PLAYING A DEADLY GAME OF CHICKEN WITH THE U.S. MILITARY AT THIS HOUR...

...AND ALL WE CAN DO IS PRAY FOR THE CIVILIANS STUCK IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS CONFLICT...

ORACLE...

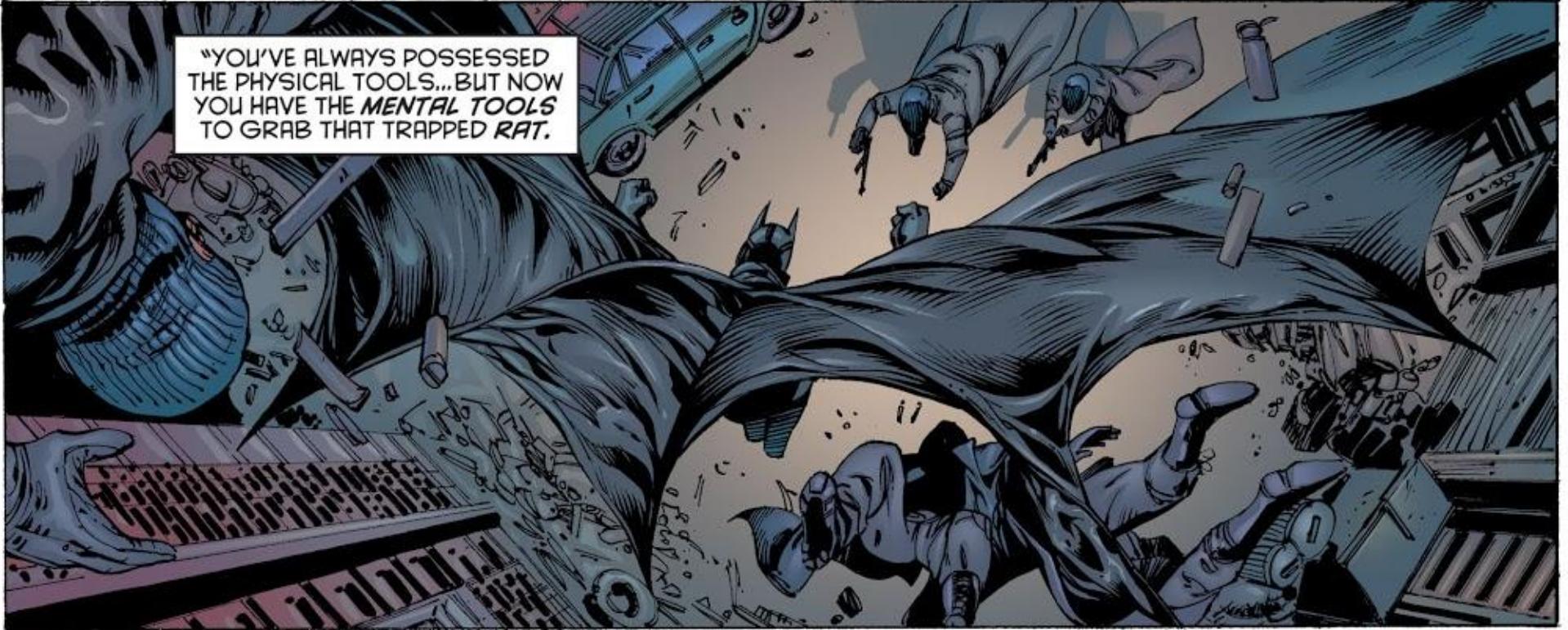
...WHAT HAVE I DONE?

FIVE HOURS EARLIER...

"DEVIL'S SQUARE ISN'T  
READY FOR WHAT YOU  
WILL DO, BATMAN."

"OR SHOULD I SAY--  
WHAT WE WILL DO."

"YOU'VE ALWAYS POSSESSED THE PHYSICAL TOOLS... BUT NOW YOU HAVE THE MENTAL TOOLS TO GRAB THAT TRAPPED RAT."



"YOU'LL BE FACING HIS LOYAL WARRIOR'S NEXT."



"YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL ANY REMORSE FOR WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO SURVIVE HERE."



"AFTER ALL, THIS ISN'T NEW TO YOU."



"AND IF THERE IS ANYTHING NEW--DON'T WORRY. WE'LL BE HERE TO GUIDE YOU..."

...THANKS TO MY OLD FRIEND JERVIS TETCH--THE MAD HATTER, WE'LL BE WITH YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

REMOTE INFLUENCING HAS LONG BEEN THE DREAM OF MANY A GOVERNMENT, BATMAN.

TRUE, TRUE, THE BLACK MASK'S TOXIN DID MAKE YOUR MIND MORE MALLEABLE TO MY RADIO-WAVE TECHNOLOGY. BUT HE WON'T BE RECEIVING ANY OF THE CREDIT.

OF COURSE NOT, JERVIS. BECAUSE THE BLACK MASK WILL SOON BE DEAD.

"BUT AT LEAST FOR TONIGHT WE'LL BE ACTING AS ONE, BATMAN."

I ONLY WISH I COULD FEEL YOU PLUNGING THE KNIFE INTO HIS HEART. YOU'LL NEED TO WORK ON THAT FOR NEXT TIME, JERVIS. HWAK HWAK!

"TONIGHT WE'LL PUT THINGS IN GOTHAM CITY RIGHT..."

"...EVEN IF THAT MEANS TURNING DEVIL'S SQUARE INTO HELL ON EARTH!"

MY GOD...

PSST!  
LET'S GO.  
WE'RE JUST  
A COUPLE  
BLOCKS  
DOWN.

I CAN'T WAIT  
TO SEE THE LOOK  
ON BLACK MASK'S  
FACE WHEN HE SEES  
YOUR MUG. I'LL HAVE  
MY CAMERA READY  
SO I CAN PUT IT UP  
ON U-VIEW.

NO!  
WAIT!

SO IT LOOKS LIKE  
THE PENGUIN FINALLY GOT  
TO YOU. NEVER SAW THAT  
COMING, BUT STRANGER  
THINGS HAVE HAPPENED,  
I GUESS.

YOU WOULD  
HAVE BEEN NEXT  
ON MY LIST TO  
FIND FOR HIM.

HERE WE  
ARE. LET ME  
FIGURE OUT  
HOW TO GET  
US IN.

DICK? WHAT  
IS IT? CAN  
YOU TELL ME  
ANYTHING?

HE MADE  
ME...HE...

WHAT,  
DICK?  
NO, COME  
BACK!



LOOK AT HIM--COWERING ON THE FLOOR, SHIVERING LIKE A COLD, WET LAMB WHO'S LOST HIS WAY. AND HE'S WEARING ONE OF YOUR MASKS, LOVE.

THEY MADE HIM A FALSE FACE.

A GIFT FROM THE PENGUIN, NO DOUBT. BUT NONE OF MY FALSE FACES MANAGED TO OBEY MORE THAN ONE ORDER.

WHAT KIND OF EVIL HAS BROUGHT THIS LOWLY SPECIMEN TO MY DOOR-STEP?

IT REEKS OF NO ONE BUT THE MAD HATTER.





AND BY THEN  
I'LL BE BACK IN MY  
OFFICE, WATCHING THE  
HORROR UNFOLD  
ON THE NEWS.

YOU'RE  
MAD. MAD  
AS HELL...

"NO GREAT GENIUS  
HAS EVER EXISTED  
WITHOUT SOME  
TOUCH OF  
MADNESS."

A QUOTE  
FROM ARISTOTLE.  
I--I GET IT...

HUSH UP.  
WHY IS HE  
TALKING? FALSE  
FACES DON'T  
TALK.

THAT'S  
RIGHT, MASK.  
WHY AM I  
TALKING?

I'M NOT  
SUPPOSED  
TO...AM I?

IT'S MUCH TOO LATE  
FOR THAT. EVERYONE  
WILL BE DEAD SOON!

I DISCOVERED  
HOW THE TOXINS IN  
YOUR MASKS WORK...  
ALL IT TOOK WAS A  
HEAVY DOSE OF  
BENZTROPINE...

...TO ENABLE  
ME *SOME*  
FREE WILL.

...ENOUGH FOR ME  
TO TAKE A COUPLE  
OF DOSES OF  
YOUR ANTIDOTE  
WITH ME...

THEN WHAT  
THE HELL DO  
YOU CALL--

JAB  
AND THERE'S  
NOTHING YOU CAN  
DO TO STOP ME!







**novus**  
Distributions