



699  
JUL  
2010

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AUTHORITY

TONY DANIEL  
SANDU FLOREA

# BATMAN



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Tony Daniel  
2010

GOTHAM HOSPITAL.

It wasn't the real Joker toxin.  
Just a cheap imitation.

The doctors say Riddler's  
lucky to be alive.

GOTHAM HOSPITAL

I never cared much for  
Edward Nigma, but "lucky"  
is a matter of opinion.

They're working on ridding his body  
of the toxins. Even though his  
blood cells show improvement--

--he's as much in the  
same catatonic state  
as I found him in.

What was he doing  
there? How did he  
know where Blackspell  
would be?

That wasn't  
"luck", either.

Hee hee  
hee

Hee hee  
hee

Hehehehe...

Seeing him drooling  
and giggling  
under his breath,  
"lucky" is the last  
word I'd use to  
describe Nigma.

-PFFT-  
he-he-heee--



Dr. Arkham never liked  
having Batman nose  
around his patients...

...and the  
"new management"  
likes it even less.

# RIDDLE ME THIS

PART TWO

## A MEANS TO AN END

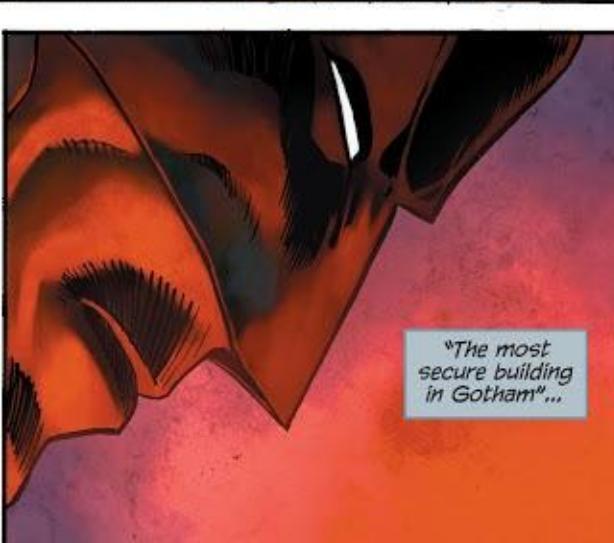
written by **TONY S. DANIEL** art by **GUILLEM MARCH**  
colors by **TOMEU MOREY** letters by **JARED K. FLETCHER**  
assistant editor **JANELLE SIEGEL** editor **MIKE MARTS**  
BATMAN created by **BOB KANE**



But for what I want to do, it's  
best they not be around, anyway.

"The most  
secure building  
in Gotham"...

...my royal behind.  
doop doop beep





I'M CUTTING  
YOU LOOSE.  
NO STRINGS  
ATTACHED.  
JUST GO.

YOU'RE  
CRAZY! I'M NOT  
LEAVING HERE!  
HE'LL, HE'LL--

KILL YOU  
NEXT? MAYBE.  
MAYBE NOT.

BUT I BELIEVE  
IN SECOND  
CHANCES.  
LET'S MOVE.

YOU'RE  
BLUFFING!

YOU LOSE, EITHER  
WAY. SEBASTIAN  
BLACKSPELL WILL GET  
YOU EVENTUALLY.

UNLESS  
I STOP  
HIM.

THIS STAYS  
BETWEEN US.  
GOT IT?

AND IT WAS YEARS AGO,  
PAST ANY STATUTES OF  
LIMITATIONS--ALL RIGHT,  
TOUGH GUY?

BUT THAT'S  
WHEN IT  
STARTED...

"...SOME JERK SHOVED AN ENVELOPE UNDER MY DOOR."



"I DIDN'T CATCH A GOOD ENOUGH LOOK, AND I WAS IN NO MOOD TO BE *CHASIN'* ANYONE."

"ANYWAY, THE ENVELOPE WAS LIGHT. SEEMED HARMLESS ENOUGH, RIGHT?"



"LO AND BEHOLD, I SEE PHOTOS OF MY PAL LENNY. DEAD AS A DOORNAIL."



"FUNNY THING WAS, HE WAS CHILLIN' IN MY KITCHEN WITH SOME COKE-HEAD TRAMP FRIEND OF HIS."



"WE HAD A GOOD CHUCKLE. FIGURED SOMEONE PLAYIN' PRANKS WITH THEIR COMPUTER OR WHATEVER. WHOEVER DID IT WAS *DAMN GOOD*, THOUGH."

"LENNY BLAMED HIS EX. ALL HIS TROUBLES WERE THE FAULT OF HIS EX."



"TWO DAYS PASS AND I GET A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. THE HARD KIND THE FUZZ USES TO SCARE YOU.

"AND GUESS WHAT? THEY WANTED TO KNOW WHEN I'D LAST SEEN LENNY.

"I SAY, WHY? AND HE SAYS 'CAUSE HE'S DEAD.



"THEY TRIED TO PIN IT ON ME FOR A WHILE...BUT I HAD AN IRONCLAD ALIBI--I'D SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE DRUNK TANK DOWN AT COUNTY.

"LATER THAT NIGHT, JUST AS I'M ABOUT TO FADE OUT, ANOTHER DAMN ENVELOPE SLIPS UNDER MY DOOR.





"AN HOUR LATER, I FOUND THE CREEP ON THE OTHER END OF THE PHONE... HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS "BLACKSPELL, THE MAGICIAN."



"HE WANTED A MEET AND GREET... SAID THERE'D BE OTHERS JOINING ME.



"EACH OF US A PEG, A COG... WORKING TOGETHER TO SIPHON HARD CASH FROM THE KINGPINS.

"MONEYS THAT WOULD GO UNNOTICED WITH ALL OF US WORKING TOGETHER.

"RIDDLE'S TALENT FOR LIES, HALF TRUTHS AND DOUBLE-SPEAK CAME IN HANDY. MY TALENTS WERE HANDY ONLY WHEN EXAMPLES NEEDED TO BE MADE.

"SOON ENOUGH, THINGS WERE RUNNING SMOOTHLY AND WE WERE IN THE MONEY.

"BUT AFTER A FEW YEARS OF SKIMMING MILLIONS, A COG SNAPPED. THE RIDDLE LOST HIS MIND. OUR SECRET CLUB WAS FINISHED.

"RIDDLE BECAME A PRIVATE EYE AND FOLLOWED CLUES OF HIS PAST CRIMES THAT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE.

"SOMETHING LED HIM TO BLACKSPELL."





OUTSIDE SEBASTIAN  
BLACKSPELL'S PENTHOUSE...





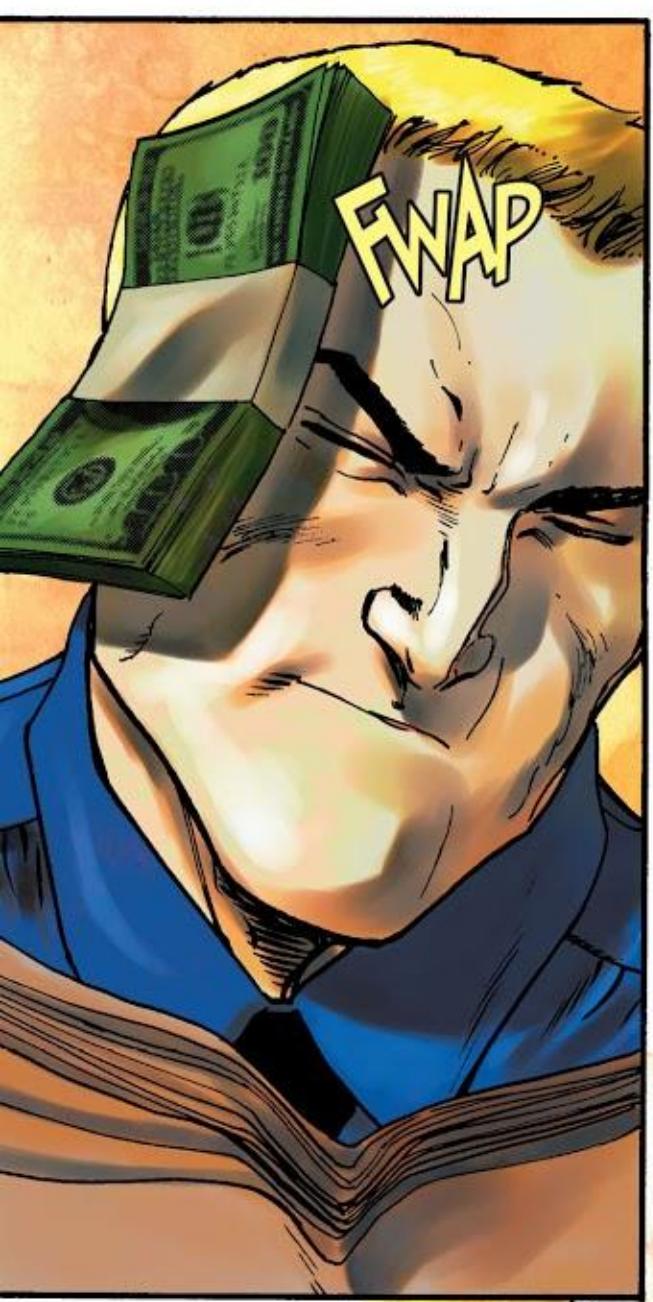
While other crime scenes are devoid of his presence...

...the building I found Riddler's body in suspiciously burns down an hour after I leave.

I show the fire inspector a ground fault interrupter that's been rewired--connected to a switch on a light timer.

He confirms the tampering...







It doesn't take long for the doctors to discover the unconscious policeman outside of Nigma's room...

...and the disappearing act from his bed.



Alfred tells me of the Commissioner's findings...



...in particular, a parking ticket used to access a storage facility on Gotham's outskirts.



An overt invitation.



One that I'll gladly accept.

URRGHN...  
DON'T DO IT,  
SEBASTIAN.  
PLEASE...

KILLING YOU IS  
TOO KIND, RIDDLER.  
YOU DESERVE NOTHING  
LESS THAN TO SUFFER!  
TO WITHER AWAY LIKE  
A DYING TREE!



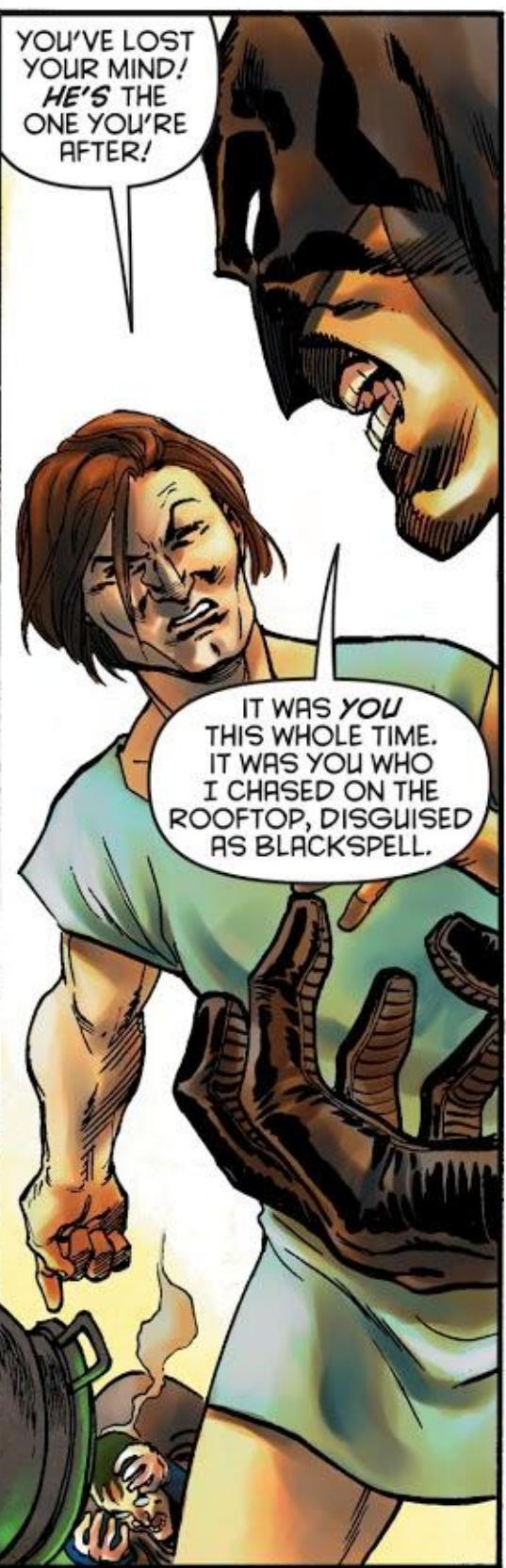
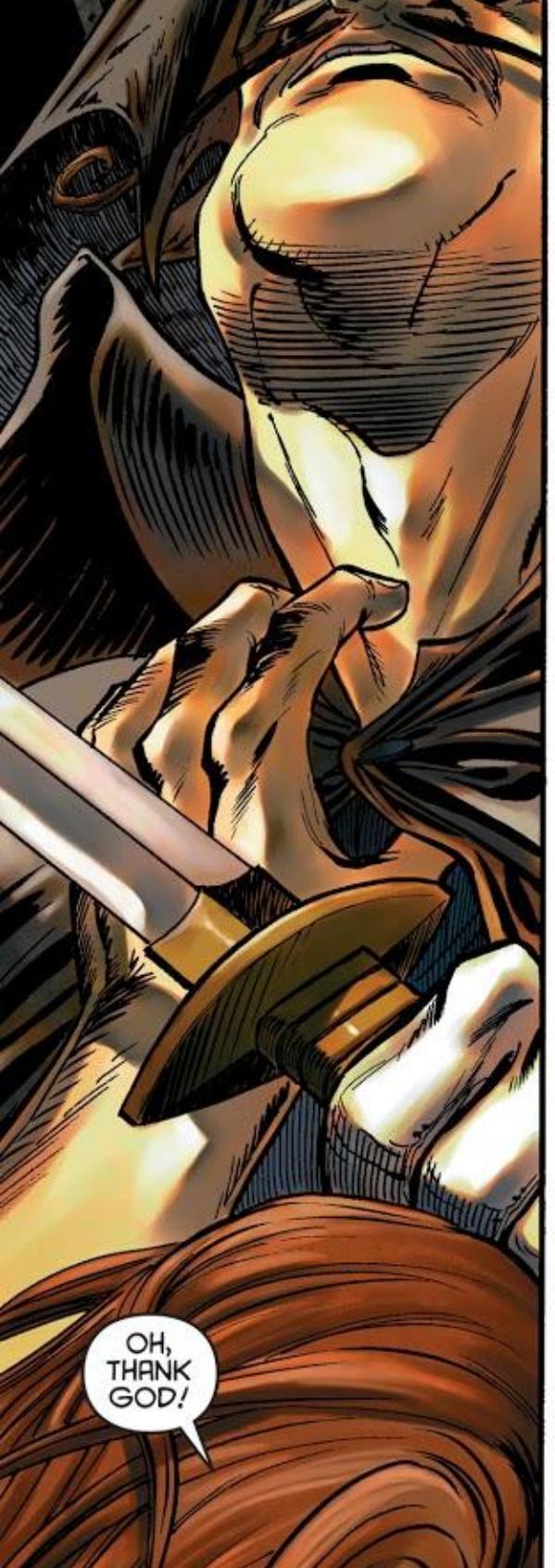
ONE THAT  
CLINGS TO  
ITS MISERABLE  
FADING LIFE  
LONG AFTER ITS  
DISEASED LIMBS  
HAVE BEEN  
SEVERED!

DON'T  
DO IT...

THAT'S  
ENOUGH,  
BLACKSPELL.

HUH?







Noooo!

I'M...  
TURNING INTO  
A DAMN TREE!  
NIGMA!

THIS  
WAS SAVED  
ESPECIALLY FOR  
YOU! BUT I HAVE  
MAGIC ON MY  
SIDE...

ER, BATMAN?  
BETTER LOOK  
AT THIS...







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ARKHAM ASYLUM.



EDWARD NIGMA'S OFFICE.

Oracle informed me of a cash-out from one of Sebastian Blackspell's dummy accounts.

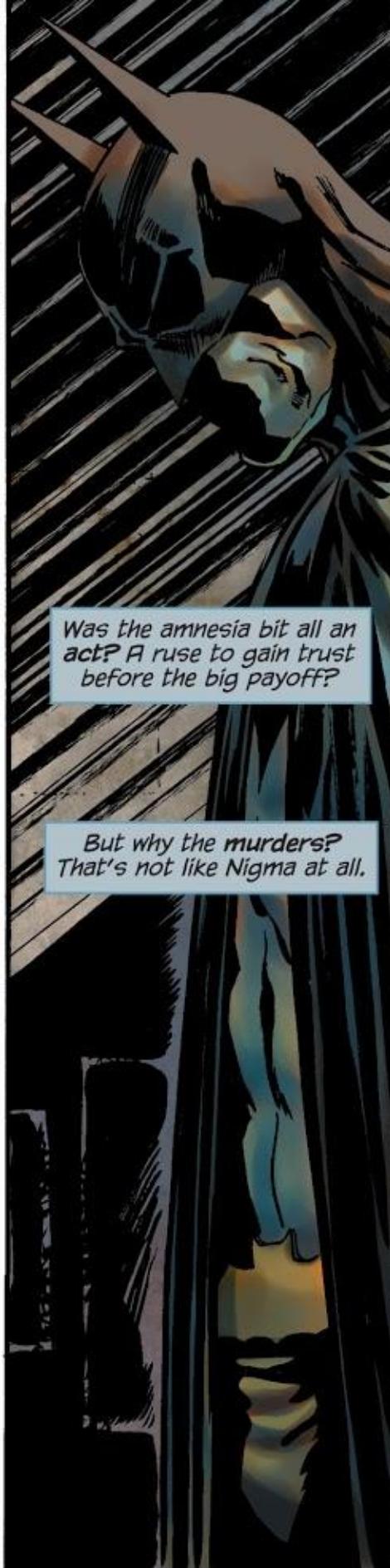
Ten million dollars in cash delivered by armored truck to an abandoned apartment complex on the East Side.

Nigma's disappeared. Likely the recipient of that cash if I was a betting man.

EDWARD NIGMA

Was the amnesia bit all an act? A ruse to gain trust before the big payoff?

But why the murders? That's not like Nigma at all.



Riddler has much to answer for.

And when I find him, I promise--  
I'll be the interrogator.

END

MARCH  
4/10  
TOMORROW



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