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BATMAN

EXIT

EXIT

NOTHING
QUITE LIKE A
KNIGHT
AT THE THEATER!



AGES 13+
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TYNION IV
MARCH
FERNANDEZ
MOREY
BARON

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WAYNE
ENTERPRISES.
TRICORNER YARDS.

TELL ME
HOW IT WAS
SUPPOSED
TO GO.

IF IT
HAD HAPPENED
ALL THOSE YEARS
AGO. SHOW ME THE
FULL PICTURE.
THE *GRAND
DESIGN*.

YOU
WANT ME
TO CONFIRM
WHAT YOU HAVE
ALREADY
DEDUCED?

NO. HOW
ABOUT YOU
TELL ME,
BATMAN?

DC COMICS
proudly
presents

THEIR DARK DESIGNS

PART 8

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"FIVE OF THE HIGHEST-PAID ASSASSINS IN THE WORLD COME TO GOTHAM CITY."

"AT THAT POINT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN DEATHSTROKE. DEADSHOT. SHIVA. KGBEAST. AND MERLYN..."

"THEY ELIMINATE THE MAYOR OF GOTHAM. THE DEPUTY MAYOR. THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE. THE CITY COMPTROLLER, AND THE MAJORITY LEADER OF THE CITY COUNCIL."

"THEY MAKE THE KILLS SIMULTANEOUSLY AND IMMEDIATELY LEAVE GOTHAM. I AM NOT AWARE OF THE PLAN UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE."

"THIS PUTS FIGURES PLANTED BY PENGUIN IN THE APPARATUS OF POWER. OVERNIGHT, HE RUNS CITY POLITICS IN GOTHAM. HE OWNS EVERYONE."

"HE IS, EFFECTIVELY, THE **MAYOR** OF GOTHAM CITY."

"VERY GOOD. AND THEN? HOW ABOUT POOR EDWARD?"

"THE RIDDLER CRIPPLES THE CITY. HIS PUZZLE LOCKS DOWN EVERY BLOCK, BUT SERVES ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE IN ISOLATING THE DIFFERENT POLICE PRECINCTS AND HUMILIATING HIS TARGET."

"COMMISSIONER JIM GORDON."

"THE REAL ANSWER TO THE PUZZLE WAS ALWAYS LETTING RIDDLER WIN. THE COPS SMART ENOUGH TO AGREE TO WORK FOR HIM ARE ALLOWED TO PASS AND SAVE THE CITY."

"PENGUIN'S MAYOR APPOINTS A RIDDLER LOYALIST TO THE POLICE COMMISSIONER'S AND DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICES."

"THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS THE NEW ORDER, HAVING SURVIVED THE CHAOS THAT CAME BEFORE. AND THE GCPD NOW EFFECTIVELY WORKS FOR THE RIDDLER."



"AND WHAT WOULD MY LITTLE KITTY CAT BE UP TO IN ALL THIS MAYHEM?"

"SHE'D BE HACKING HER WAY INTO THE ACCOUNTS OF THE WEALTHIEST MAN IN GOTHAM CITY."

"SHE WOULD HAVE LEARNED THAT THE WAYNE FOUNDATION IS FUNDED BY OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS."

"WITH THE ACCOUNT NUMBERS IN HAND, SHE IS ABLE TO DRAIN THEIR FULL ASSETS, AND REDISTRIBUTE THEM AS SHE SEES FIT."



"SHE BECOMES THE RICHEST WOMAN IN GOTHAM OVERNIGHT, AND BECOMES THE CENTRAL BANK FOR THE GROWING CRIMINAL EMPIRE IN GOTHAM."



"ANY PERCEIVED FRAUD WOULD BE BACKED BY PENGUIN'S POLITICAL MACHINE."



"AND THE
JOKER?"

"THE JOKER
KILLS BATMAN
AND ROBIN."

"AND, WITH THE
UNDERWORLD UNITED..."

THE DESIGNER'S FINAL ACT IS ESTABLISHING THE GREATEST CRIMINAL EMPIRE OF THE NEXT GENERATION. AN UNSTOPPABLE MACHINE.

YOUR LEGACY IS SECURED, AND YOUR STORY CAN COME TO AN END.

MAGNIFICENT, ISN'T IT?

AT THAT POINT, YOU HAD BARELY MOVED PAST FIGHTING MOBSTERS. YOU WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN WHAT HIT YOU.

YOUR OFFICE HERE IN THE TRICORNER YARDS...YOU MADE IT LOOK LIKE YOUR STUDY BACK IN THE MANOR. I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHY.

WHAT IDEAS DO YOU WAIT TO COME TO YOU HERE...
AND TELL ME, BATMAN... ARE THEY ENOUGH TO SAVE YOU?

I'M NOT THE MAN I WAS THEN. I'VE EVOLVED. I'VE CAUGHT UP TO YOUR DESIGN.

I AM EQUAL TO IT.

SO YOU SAY.
LET'S FIND OUT, SHALL WE?

EN
GARDE!

"SO...THIS IS
WHAT JOKER'S
AFTER."



HE KNEW
THE GAME, AND
HE WANTED TO BEAT
EVERYONE TO THE
FINISH LINE.

THE YOUNG
LADY FIGHTING
MS. QUINN OUTSIDE
SAID THE SAME
THING.



EXCEPT SHE SAID
PUNCHLINE, NOT
FINISH LINE,
DIDN'T SHE?

YES,
SHE
DID.

EVERYONE LOVES
THEIR LITTLE NAMES
WHEN THEY'VE JUST
GOTTEN STARTED,
DON'T THEY?

I'M SURE
YOU FOUND
ABOUT A DOZEN
WAYS TO END A
SENTENCE WITH
"THE UNDER-
BROKER."

I FOUND
A BUSINESS CARD
USUALLY DID THE TRICK.



MS. KYLE. I'M GOING TO HAVE
TO TELL YOU WHAT I TOLD
THE YOUNG LADY OUT THERE,
AND WHAT I ASKED HER
TO TELL HER BOSS.

THE
UNDERBROKERAGE
DOES NOT SPECIALIZE
IN THEFT. WE TAKE CRIMINAL
ASSETS AND HIDE THEM IN
HEDGE FUNDS ALONGSIDE
THE WORLD'S **ELITE**, TO ALLOW
THEM TO GROW ALONGSIDE
THE REST OF THE WORLD'S
LEAST-REGULATED
MONEY.

YOU CAN'T
JUST TAKE MONEY
FROM A LEGITIMATE
ACCOUNT AND PUT IT
INTO THE JOKER'S
BANK ACCOUNT.

YOU CAN IF
IT'S **NOT** A LEGITIMATE
ACCOUNT.

THE WAYNE FOUNDATION IS A FRONT.

IT HOLDS THE WAYNE FORTUNE OUTSIDE OF ALL REGULATORY BODIES IN A CONSTELLATION OF UNTRACEABLE SHELL COMPANIES.

WHICH, IN TURN, OWN AND OPERATE WAYNE ENTERPRISES.

BRUCE WAYNE, THE PERSON, DOESN'T OWN MUCH OF ANYTHING. I DON'T THINK HE EVEN OWNS THE MANOR.

BRUCE WAYNE, THE SHADOWY CONFIGURATION OF SHELL CORPORATIONS, IS ONE OF THE RICHEST PEOPLE ON THE PLANET.

NOBODY WITH THAT KIND OF MONEY WANTS THE WORLD TO KNOW HOW THEY SPEND IT.

SOMEbody DOESN'T WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW HOW HE SPENDS HIS MONEY.

BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. IF THIS MONEY CHANGED HANDS, HE WOULD NEED TO SHOW IT ALL TO THE AUTHORITIES TO PROVE IT'S BEEN TAKEN FROM HIM ILLEGALLY.

WHICH MEANS TELLING THE WORLD WHAT HE CAN'T. AND THAT PROBABLY MEANS ALL THAT MONEY FALLING INTO THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDS...

STILL... A PERSON WOULD NEED TO KNOW WHERE EACH OF THOSE ACCOUNTS WAS IN ORDER TO DRAIN THEM OF THEIR CONTENTS.

I KNOW THEM ALL. I MEMORIZED THEM MONTHS AGO. JUST IN CASE.

IN CASE?

THIS ISN'T A FRIEND TALK. I'VE GIVEN YOU WHAT YOU NEED. YOU HAVE MY ACCOUNT FROM THE OLD DAYS.

NOW MAKE ME A BILLIONAIRE, BEFORE THOSE CLOWNS TAKE HARLEY DOWN.

SHEESH,
YOU'RE
PRETTY QUICK
WITH THOSE,
HUH?

IT HELPS
WHEN I'VE GOT
A GRUDGE.

WHAT DID I
EVER DO TO
YOU?

YOU
DIDN'T
DO IT TO ME.
YOU DID IT TO
ALL OF
US!

YOU GOT
CLOSER TO HIM
THAN ANYONE.
ANYONE BUT
THE BAT...

AND YOU WANTED TO
FIX HIM? MAKE HIM
BETTER?

YOU WANTED TO WATER
HIM DOWN INTO
NOTHING?!

THAT'S
WHY I HAVE A
GRUDGE, HARLEY. YOU
HELD HIM BACK TOO
LONG. I DON'T WANT HIM
TO CHANGE. I WANT
HIM JUST THE WAY
HE IS.







"FOLLOW
ME."

YOU
DO HAVE
AN INCREDIBLE
MIND, BATMAN. I
SEE THAT. I HOPE
YOU DO,
TOO.

BUT YOU'RE
STILL MISSING
A PIECE.

NO, I'M
NOT.

I PUT IT
TOGETHER ON THE
WAY HERE. WHILE I WAS
SOLVING RIDDLER'S
CROSSWORD.

"I SAW THE ONE
GAME PIECE OUT OF
CONFIGURATION.
NOT PART OF THE
ORIGINAL DESIGN.
YOU HAD YOUR
MAN HACK INTO
THE WAYNE
ENTERPRISES
COMPUTER.

"IT SEEMED
LIKE YOU WERE
REPLACING
BLUEPRINTS
FOR TRICORNER
YARDS. BUT YOU
WERE TAKING
SOMETHING,
TRYING TO KEEP
IT **HIDDEN**.

YOU WANTED TO SEE HOW I WAS
FUNDING THE **WAYNE REBUILD**. THE
ACCOUNTS I WAS USING TO BUY UP
THE DIFFERENT CONSTRUCTION
COMPANIES NOW AT WORK
IN GOTHAM.

YOU DON'T
CARE ABOUT THE
DESIGN. THAT VISION
OF AN UNDERWORLD
UNITE. IT'S **NEVER**
BEEN WHAT YOU'VE
WANTED.

THE DESIGNER
UNDERESTIMATED
GOTHAM CITY.

AND
UNDERESTIMATED
THE **CLOWN** MOST
OF ALL.



HE THOUGHT
JOKER WAS A
GARDEN VARIETY SERIAL
KILLER--THAT HE COULD
BE BENT INTO SHAPE...

BUT THE
JOKER DIDN'T
WANT TO KILL
BATMAN, DID
HE?



NO MATTER
HOW FAR THE
DESIGNER PUSHED
HIM, HE WANTED TO
KILL ANYBODY AND
EVERYBODY **BUT**
BATMAN.

AND THE
DESIGNER'S PLAN
FOR THE CITY COULD
NEVER WORK WITH ME OUT
THERE. NONE OF THE
DESIGNS COULD WORK.



THE
DESIGNER
COULDN'T
UNDERSTAND WHAT
THE JOKER
WAS.

HE
GAZED
INTO THE ABYSS,
AND IT STARED
BACK AT
HIM.



AND
CONSUMED
HIM.



YOU
AREN'T THE
DESIGNER.

YOU'RE HIS
CORPSE. THE
SHAMBLING SHELL OF
THE GREATEST VILLAIN OF
AN OLDER GENERATION
CUT DOWN BY HIS
REPLACEMENT.

THIS IS
AN ACT OF
HUMILIATION,
TO MASK WHAT
YOU'RE REALLY
AFTER.



JOKER.

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?
WHY ATTACK ME
LIKE THIS? WHAT ARE
YOU TRYING TO
PROVE?





SORRY,
BATMAN.
BUT
YOU AND
YOUR WHOLE
FAMILY? YOU'VE
EARNED
THIS.









NEXT: JOKER'S BILLIONS!