

# BATMAN

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COMIC BOOK  
COUNCIL  
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## BRUCE WAYNE: FUGITIVE™

PART THREE  
BRUBAKER  
McDANIEL  
OWENS



Gotham City  
**FUGITIVE BRUCE WAYNE  
SPOTTED IN SWITZERLAND**

"A LONG TIME AGO, IN GOTHAM CITY, THERE WAS A LITTLE BOY... AND HE AND HIS MOTHER AND FATHER LOVED THEIR CITY."

"THEY THOUGHT IT WAS THE BEST CITY IN THE WORLD, WITH ITS MOVIE THEATERS AND RESTAURANTS AND ITS BRIGHT LIGHTS."

"BUT THEN HIS PARENTS WERE KILLED. THEY WERE GOOD PEOPLE, AND THEY WERE TAKEN OUT AND SHOT..."

"AND AFTER THAT, THINGS WERE NEVER THE SAME FOR THE BOY."

"HE TRIED TO KEEP LOVING HIS CITY, BUT AT EVERY TURN IT LET HIM DOWN. WHENEVER IT COULD CAUSE HIM PAIN, OR TAKE SOMETHING AWAY FROM HIM, IT DID..."

"AND FOR A LONG TIME, THE BOY TOOK IT PERSONALLY..."

"BUT ONE DAY SOMETHING HAPPENED THAT HELPED HIM SEE THE CITY THROUGH NEW EYES. TO TRULY SEE THE STREETS AROUND HIM, THE EVIL FLOWING INTO ITS GUTTERS."

"THAT WAS WHEN HE UNDERSTOOD THE TRUTH ABOUT GOTHAM."

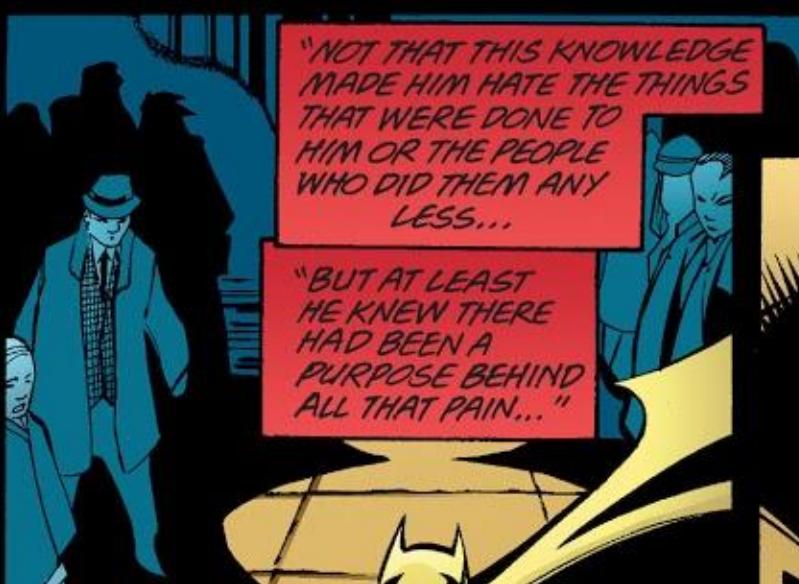
"THIS CITY IS A PLACE OF EVIL, AND IT CRUSHES OUT THE GOOD NOT BECAUSE IT HATES THEM, BUT BECAUSE THAT IS SIMPLY ITS NATURE."

"AND ONCE THE BOY UNDERSTOOD THAT, HE KNEW WHY THE BAD THINGS HAD HAPPENED TO HIM..."

"IT WAS SO HE WOULD UNDERSTAND HIS MISSION."

"NOT THAT THIS KNOWLEDGE MADE HIM HATE THE THINGS THAT WERE DONE TO HIM OR THE PEOPLE WHO DID THEM ANY LESS..."

"BUT AT LEAST HE KNEW THERE HAD BEEN A PURPOSE BEHIND ALL THAT PAIN..."



... I TELL YOU THIS SO YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY THESE THINGS ARE HAPPENING TO YOU...

# TURNING THE TOWN RED

Part One  
of Two

AND SO THAT  
YOU'LL KNOW THAT  
YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND,  
DON'T HAVE THE COMFORT  
OF THINKING THERE WAS  
A PURPOSE BEHIND  
YOUR PAIN...

... THAT YOU  
BROUGHT IT ALL ON  
YOURSELF.

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BATMAN created by BOB KANE





MAYBE THEY'VE HEARD  
THAT BATMAN IS BACK  
WITH A VENGEANCE  
LATELY.



NOT THAT I MIND... I  
SUPPOSE I DESERVE  
SOME LUCK ABOUT NOW.

At THIS point, doubt has long since ceased to be a useful PRACTICE, and his supporters often doubt too much.



At THIS point, he must make his decisions not BECAUSE of his SUPPORTERS but in SPITE of them. He alone knows what lengths are too far to go to protect his mission.

...WHERE WAS THAT PART...?

Batman knows that he is more than just a man in a MASK-- He has become a LEGEND, a SYMBOL, a FORCE of NATURE without equal.

THERE.  
SO ODD...A DOUBLE-DASH INSTEAD OF A SEMICOLON... THAT HARDLY SEEMS LIKE--

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

OH, MASTER BRUCE...

NO, NOT MASTER BRUCE... NOW ANSWER THE QUESTION.

WELL... I'M AFRAID I'VE BEEN READING YOUR JOURNALS, AS IT WERE... I FOUND THEM AT THE CAVE, IN THE SHREDDER, AND--

WHY?

FRANKLY, SIR, BECAUSE I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU, AND I WAS HOPING TO FIND SOMETHING THAT MIGHT SHED SOME LIGHT ON YOUR RECENT DECISIONS...

...TO ESCAPE FROM PRISON, TO RELINQUISH YOUR IDENTITY.

AND?



I'M AFRAID THAT AFTER WHAT I'VE READ, I'M MORE WORRIED THAN EVER.

DON'T BE.



I CAN'T HELP IT, IT'S CLEAR THAT FOR MONTHS NOW, YOU'VE BEEN MOVING FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY FROM ALL OF US--

STOP. THOSE WERE BRUCE WAYNE'S JOURNALS, NOT MINE... I WON'T DISCUSS THEM.



I'M AFRAID THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH. YOU MAY NOT WANT TO CLEAR HIS NAME, BUT SOME OF US CARE ABOUT HIM A GREAT DEAL.



THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE, TOO. SOME OF THESE WRITINGS, IF YOU DID INDEED AUTHOR THEM ARE... WELL, THEY'RE NOT RIGHT.

LOOK AT THIS--



ENTRY NO. 027

OH, BLOODY HELL... HE DID IT TO ME.



NO  
OFFENSE,  
BUT YOU LOOK  
BEAT...



WHAT DO YOU NEED,  
COMMISSIONER  
AKINS?

YES, WELL...  
UM... I THINK I'VE  
GOT ONE THAT  
MIGHT BE UP YOUR  
ALLEY...



IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS  
GOTHAM HAS HAD A SMALL STRING  
OF MURDERS THAT WE NOW  
BELIEVE ARE  
RELATED--

TWO RETIRED  
POLICE OFFICERS,  
A DOCTOR, AND  
LAST NIGHT, A  
PSYCHIATRIST...



WHAT'S THE  
CONNECTION?

WELL, THERE ARE A  
NUMBER OF THEM. ALL  
THE VICTIMS WERE  
ABDUCTED FROM THEIR HOMES  
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT,  
AND HE KEEPS THEM FOR  
A DAY.

IT'S NOT PRETTY, WHAT  
HE DOES TO THEM DURING  
THAT DAY. THEN THEY'RE  
BURNED ALIVE...

WHAT ELSE?

WELL, HERE'S WHERE IT GETS TRICKY... WE'VE BEEN DIGGING, AND IT SEEMS ALL THE VICTIMS HAVE CRIMINAL CONNECTIONS.

EXPLAIN.

THE TWO COPS, BLAYLOCK AND SIMON, RETIRED TEN YEARS AGO WHILE UNDER INVESTIGATION FROM INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THE DOCTOR, KELSO, WAS UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR WORKING OFF THE BOOKS FOR THE MOB.

THE SHRINK KILLED LAST NIGHT, BUCKLEY, IS A PROFESSIONAL EXPERT WITNESS, WHO WORKS EXCLUSIVELY FOR CRIMINAL DEFENDANTS.

I COULDN'T COUNT THE NUMBER OF SLEAZE-BAGS HE'S HELPED PUT BACK ON THESE STREETS...

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A VIGILANTE ... OF A SORT.

YEAH, THE SORT THAT'S ACTUALLY A SERIAL KILLER.

AND IT GETS WORSE...

REPORTED MISSING THIS MORNING -- TWO CITY COUNCILMEN...

ALL SIGNS AGAIN POINT TO OUR MYSTERY KILLER.

JACK MCKENNA,  
YOU KNOW, OF COURSE.  
HE'S BEEN AROUND  
GOTHAM POLITICS FOR  
OVER 20 YEARS, ONE  
OF THE FEW OLD-  
TIMERS LEFT.

THOMAS HART,  
ON THE OTHER HAND,  
WAS JUST ELECTED  
LAST YEAR, AFTER  
THE CITY WAS  
REOPENED...



OF COURSE, IN THAT YEAR  
HE'S DEVELOPED QUITE A  
REPUTATION FOR BEING ABLE  
TO SWIM WITH THE  
SHARKS.

RIGHT...  
SHARKS LIKE  
MCKENNA.

TO NAME  
ONE, YES...

LOOK, I DON'T CARE  
IF THESE MEN ARE CORRUPT.  
IF TWO GOTHAM CITY  
COUNCILMEN END UP  
DEAD, ON TOP OF THIS  
WHOLE BRUCE  
WAYNE MESS... WELL,  
THE PRESS WILL RIP  
THIS TOWN APART...

AND WE'VE GOT  
ONE NIGHT TO STOP  
THAT FROM HAPPENING.

THEN  
I'LL  
FIND  
THEM.



FOUR PEOPLE, ABDUCTED AND MURDERED IN A WEEK. TWO MORE ABDUCTED LAST NIGHT.

WHOEVER'S DOING THIS IS GOOD, OBVIOUSLY... BUT TO CAPTURE AND HOLD SOMEONE EFFECTIVELY IS USUALLY MORE THAN ONE PERSON CAN HANDLE.



SO HE MUST HAVE SOME BACKUP--A DRIVER, AT THE VERY LEAST.

I'LL START THERE.



I SWEAR-- I AIN'T SEEN 'IM IN... WEEKS...

YOU'RE LYING, SKINK... LET'S SEE IF A BROKEN ARM HELPS YOU TELL THE TRUTH.

NO!

YOUR CHOICE... TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND STUMP OR I KEEP TWISTING.

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT!



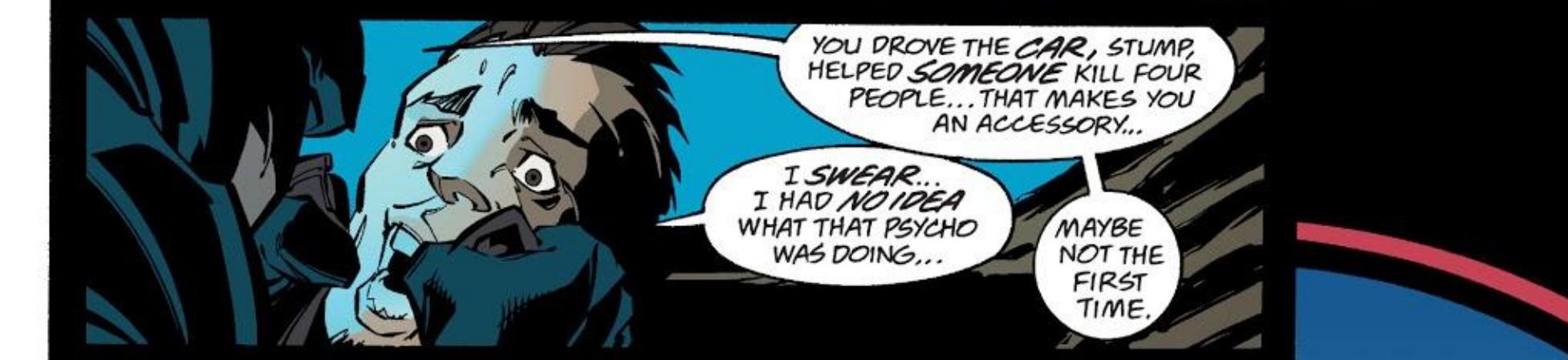
HE'S GONE, OKAY? GUY HE WAS WORKIN' FOR PAID HIM OFF BIG TIME AND HE HIT THE ROAD... DROVE OFF ABOUT AN HOUR AGO...



WAS WEIRD, TOO... I'VE KNOWN STUMPY A LOTTA YEARS, HE'S THE BEST WHEELMAN YOU CAN FIND 'ROUND HERE...







"...THIS GUY, HE'S NOT NORMAL... HE'S-- HE'S EVEN SCARIER THAN YOU..."

IT WON'T BE LONG NOW, MCKENNA... THE OPENING ACT IS ALMOST THROUGH...



...YOUR PAIN WILL HAVE AN END AT LEAST.

IN A WAY, THAT MAKES YOU LUCKY, DOESN'T IT? OH, I THINK SO...

IN THE END, PEOPLE WILL COME TO SEE THAT I DID THE RIGHT THING, KILLING YOU... AND AT LEAST YOU'LL KNOW HOW MUCH YOU HELPED ME...



...MAYBE THAT WILL COMFORT YOU IN THE LAKE OF FIRE.

AND, MAYBE NOT.



AHH...THE **BATMAN**. I KNEW WE'D MEET EVENTUALLY... I HOPED IT WOULDN'T BE QUITE THIS SOON, THOUGH.



WHERE'S THE OTHER ONE?



OH, HE'S AROUND... I CAN ONLY HANDLE ONE AT A TIME, IF I WANT TO GIVE MY FULL ATTENTION.

I WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING RASH, THOUGH, BATMAN... THE ENTIRE HOUSE HAS BEEN DOUSED IN ACCELERANTS...



BETTER FIND ANOTHER **BLUFF** TO PLAY... IT'S ALL OVER YOU, TOO. I CAN SMELL IT.

YOU'LL GO UP JUST AS QUICKLY AS EVERYTHING ELSE...

THAT'S NOT  
SOMETHING I  
WOULD WORRY  
TOO MUCH  
ABOUT...



DON'T  
FORGET  
ABOUT YOUR  
FRIEND...

MAAAHHHHH!

DAMN IT. NO.  
SPREADING  
TOO QUICKLY...



COMPRESSED CO<sub>2</sub>  
AND SODIUM  
BICARBONATE. SHOULD  
PUT OUT THE FLAMES.



OF COURSE,  
HE'S GONE...  
NO SURPRISE  
THERE.

BUT AT LEAST MCKENNA  
SHOULD SURVIVE... NOW  
WHERE'S THOMAS HART?





COMPUTER--  
CHECK MEDICAL RECORDS,  
CITY COUNCILMAN JACK C.  
MCKENNA... CHECK FOR  
HEART CONDITIONS.

McKenna, Jack C.-- four open heart surgeries in last three years. Most recent surgery, approximately eight weeks previous.

SO ALL THE KILLER HAD TO DO WAS  
KEEP HIM AWAY FROM HIS MEDICATION  
FOR A DAY AND TERRORIZE HIM...  
PRACTICALLY GUARANTEEING A  
TERMINAL HEART ATTACK.

THIS GUY IS SMART,  
AND DANGEROUS... SO,  
WHO THE HELL IS HE,  
AND WHAT DOES HE  
WANT?

--WGLX LATE NIGHT NEWS  
TEAM WITH BREAKING NEWS--  
COUNCILMAN JACK  
MCKENNA IS TONIGHT THE  
MOST RECENT VICTIM OF A  
SERIAL KILLER WHO IS  
STALKING THE STREETS  
OF GOTHAM...

AND WHILE POLICE CURRENTLY HAVE NO COMMENT ON THIS MATTER, WGLX HAS RECEIVED AVIDEOTAPERE FROM THE MURDERER HIMSELF...

...LISTEN NOW TO HIS CHILLING WORDS.

... MY NAME IS NICODEMUS, AND I'VE COME TO ISSUE YOU A WARNING...

THIS CITY IS A PLACE OF EVIL, AND IT WILL BE DESTROYED... BURNED FROM THE EARTH AS IF IT NEVER EXISTED.

THOSE WHO WISH TO SURVIVE SHOULD RUN FOR THEIR LIVES...

... THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO STAY SHOULD CONSIDER THEMSELVES DEAD ALREADY.

TO BE CONTINUED...