



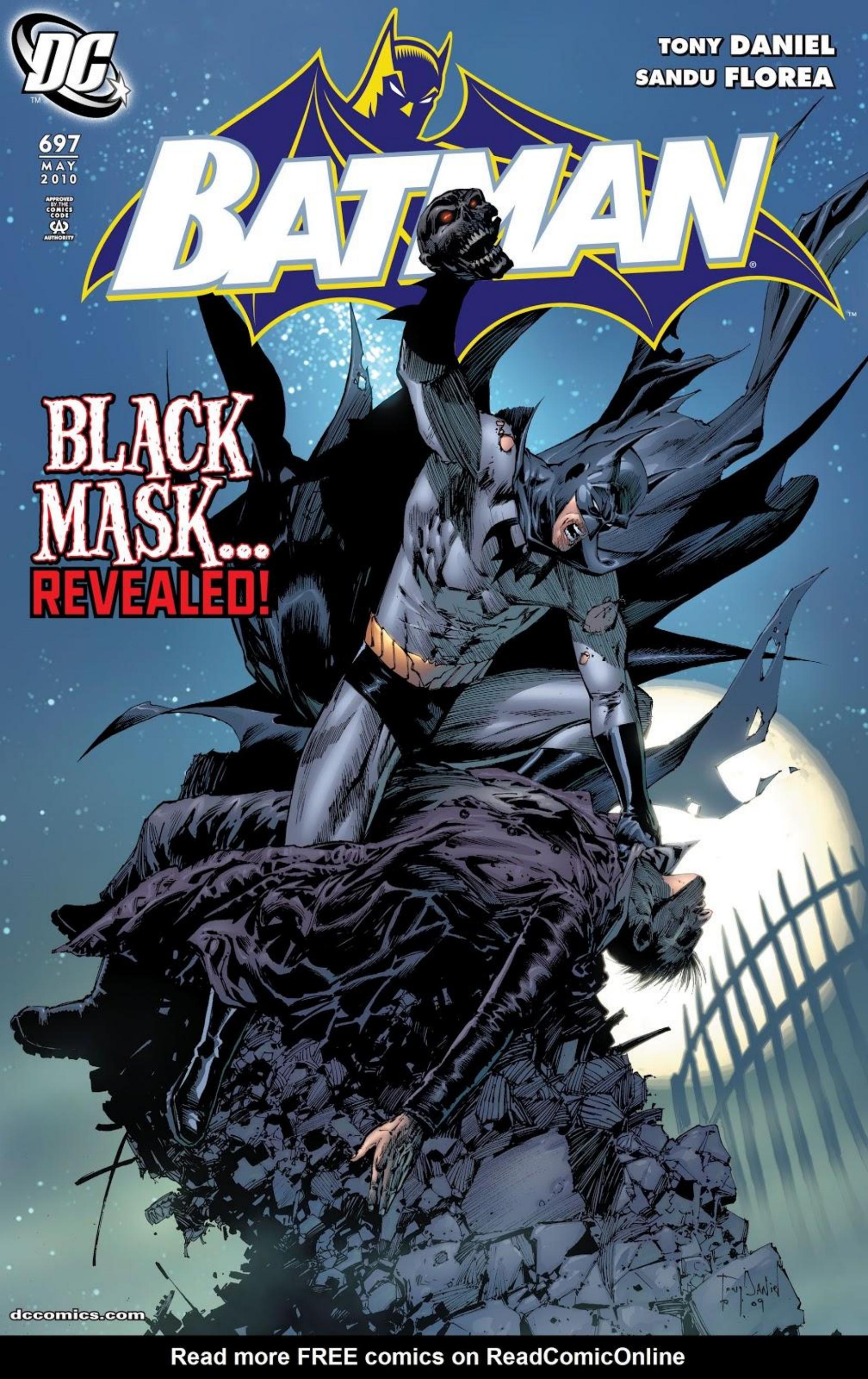
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CODE  
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TONY DANIEL  
SANDU FLOREA

# BATMAN

BLACK  
MASK...  
REVEALED!



DEVIL'S SQUARE.

"YOU HAVE ME  
RUNNING, DOCTOR.  
RUNNING FOR MY LIFE."

"SURELY, THE MURDER OF  
THOUSANDS IS...SHAMEFUL,  
TO SAY THE LEAST...BUT  
NECESSARY TO TEACH MY  
FOES A VALUABLE LESSON--

--THAT I AM NOT TO  
BE TRIFLED WITH!"

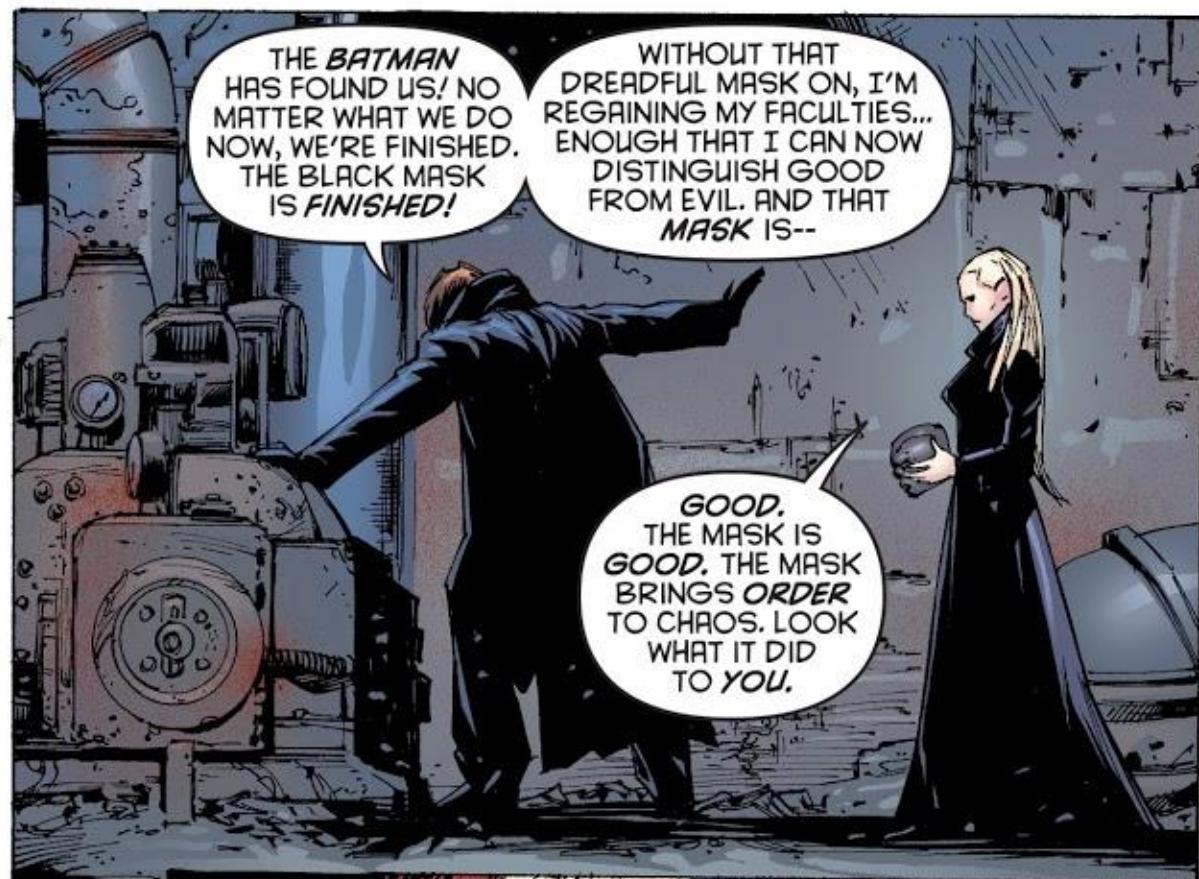
"BUT--THOUSANDS  
OF PEOPLE?  
INNOCENT LIVES...  
MEN, WOMEN AND  
CHILDREN...THIS  
WAS NOT OUR DEAL,  
MASK! YOU'VE  
BETRAYED ME!"

"YOU'VE TAKEN  
ADVANTAGE OF MY...  
VULNERABILITIES."

YOU MAY HAVE  
DESTROYED MY  
LIFE--BUT I'LL SEE  
TO IT THAT YOUR  
DESTRUCTION  
ENDS WITH ME!

FOOL! YOU  
SPEAK AS IF YOU  
ACTUALLY HAVE A  
CHOICE!





The fires tearing through entire city blocks of Devil's Square were all that was needed to prompt military action.

In other words, exactly what the Black Mask had hoped for.



The only hope for the Devil's Square citizens trapped inside was an excuse not to invade.

And that excuse fell right into the President's lap.

The media were bombarded with intel that the Black Mask was setting a trap.



Young soldiers as well as the civilians were all at risk of being exposed to Black Mask's toxins, formulated into lethal doses--

--and dispersed as an airborne pathogen. Even with the antidote now in government hands, it would be too late to save anyone.



THEY'RE BACKING OFF, BATMAN. AT LEAST FOR NOW.

WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT YOU, BABES?

YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.



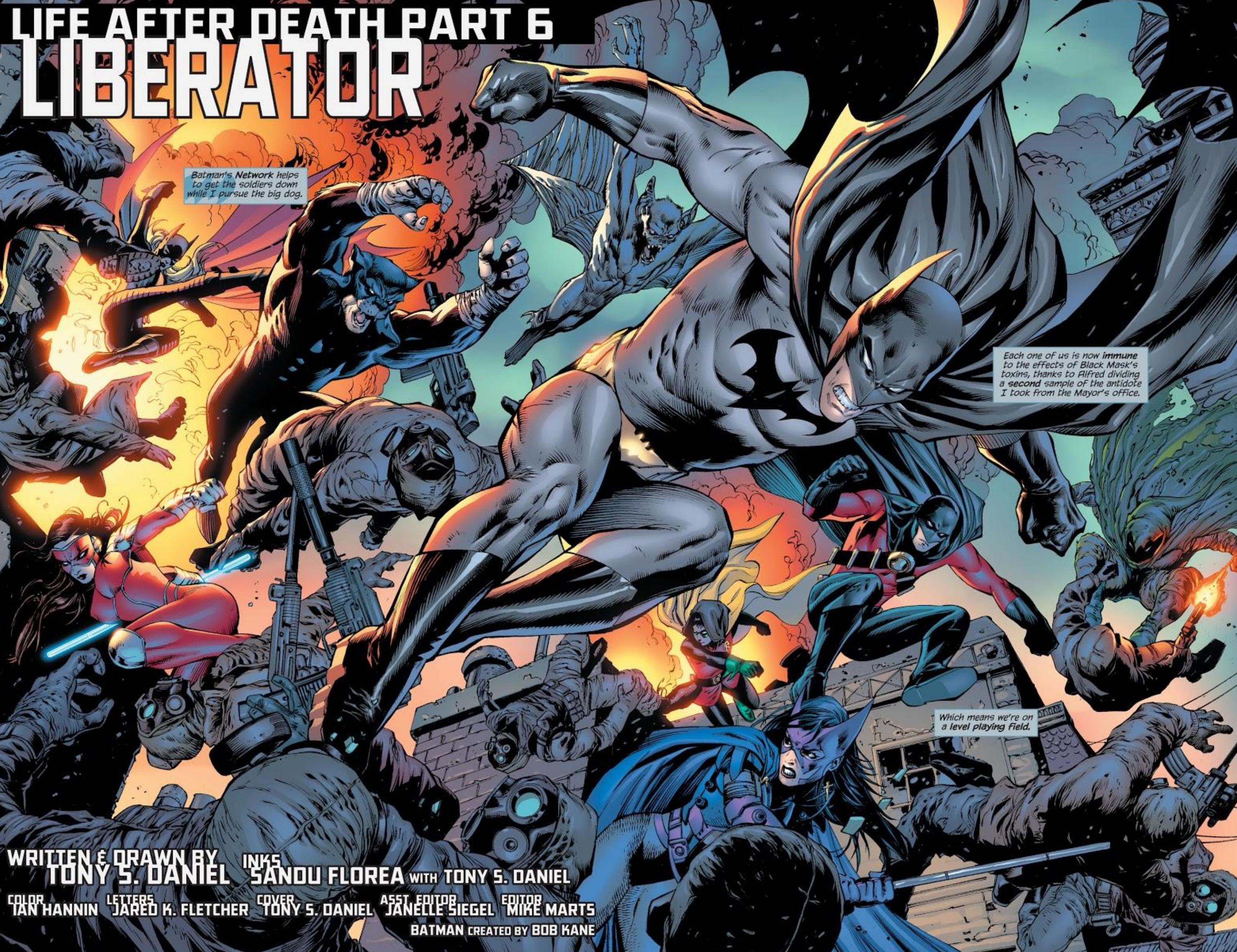
# LIFE AFTER DEATH PART 6

# LIBERATOR

Batman's Network helps to get the soldiers down while I pursue the big dog.

Each one of us is now immune to the effects of Black Mask's toxins, thanks to Alfred dividing a second sample of the antidote I took from the Mayor's office.

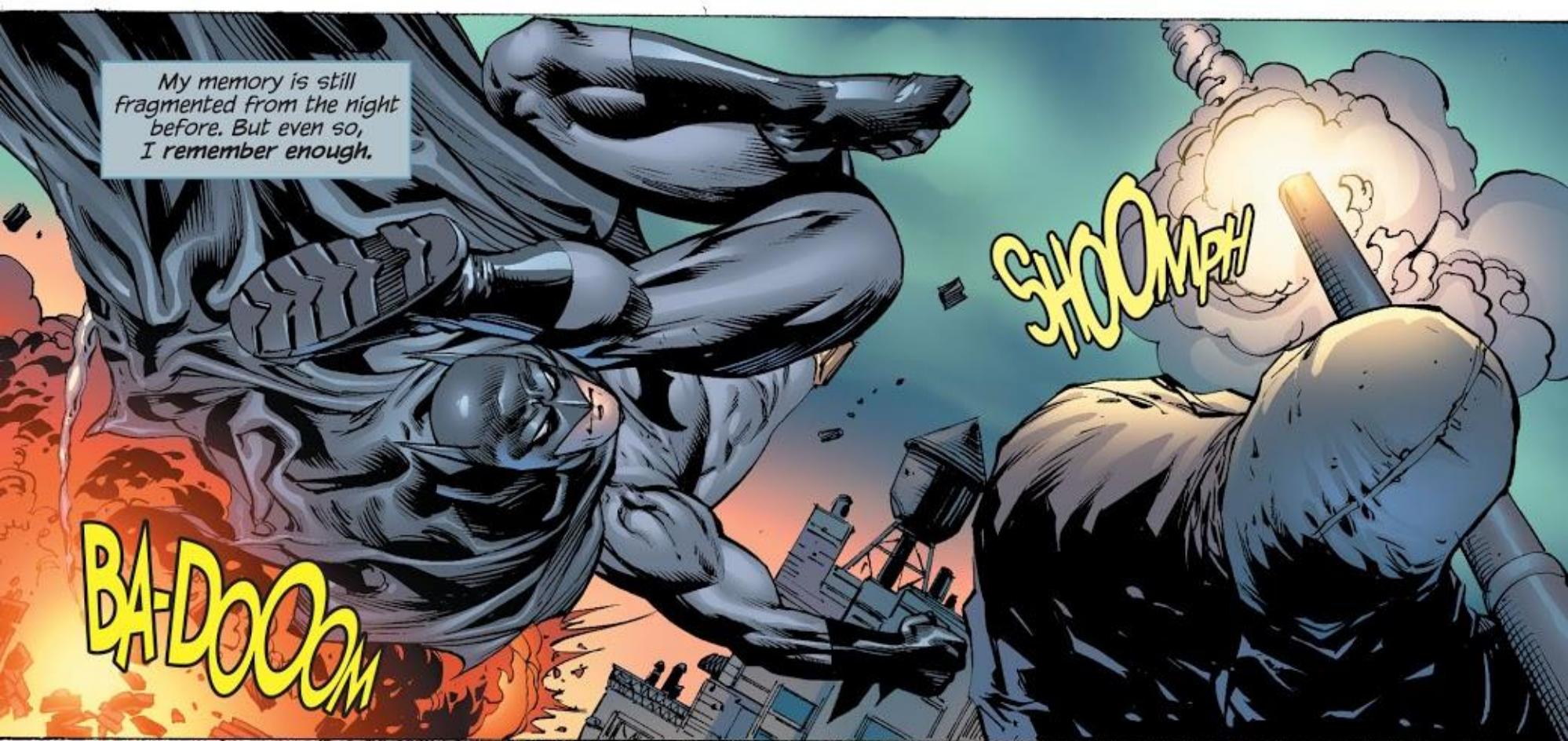
Which means we're on a level playing field.



WRITTEN & DRAWN BY **TONY S. DANIEL** INKS **SANDU FLOREA** WITH **TONY S. DANIEL**

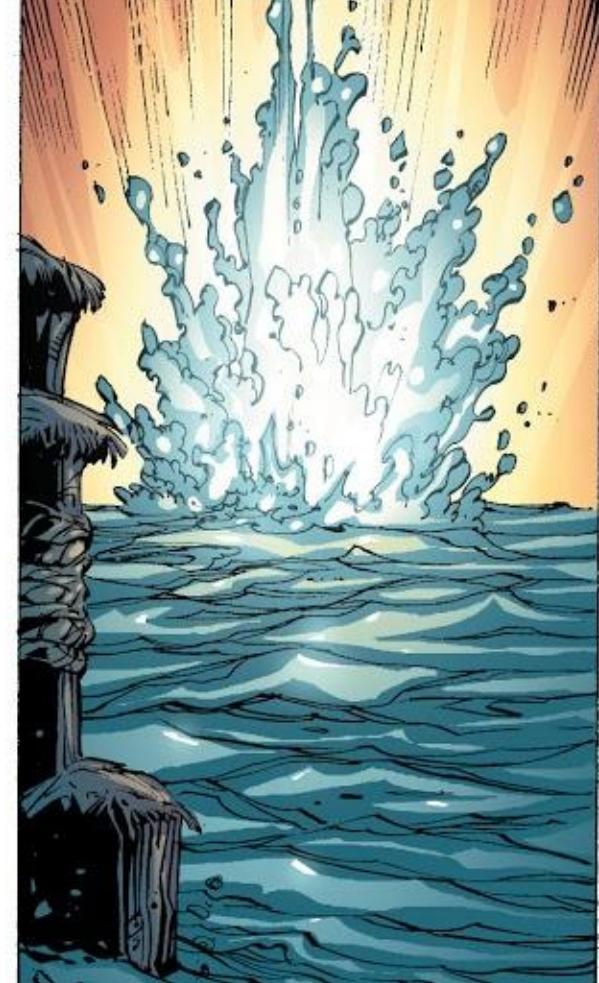
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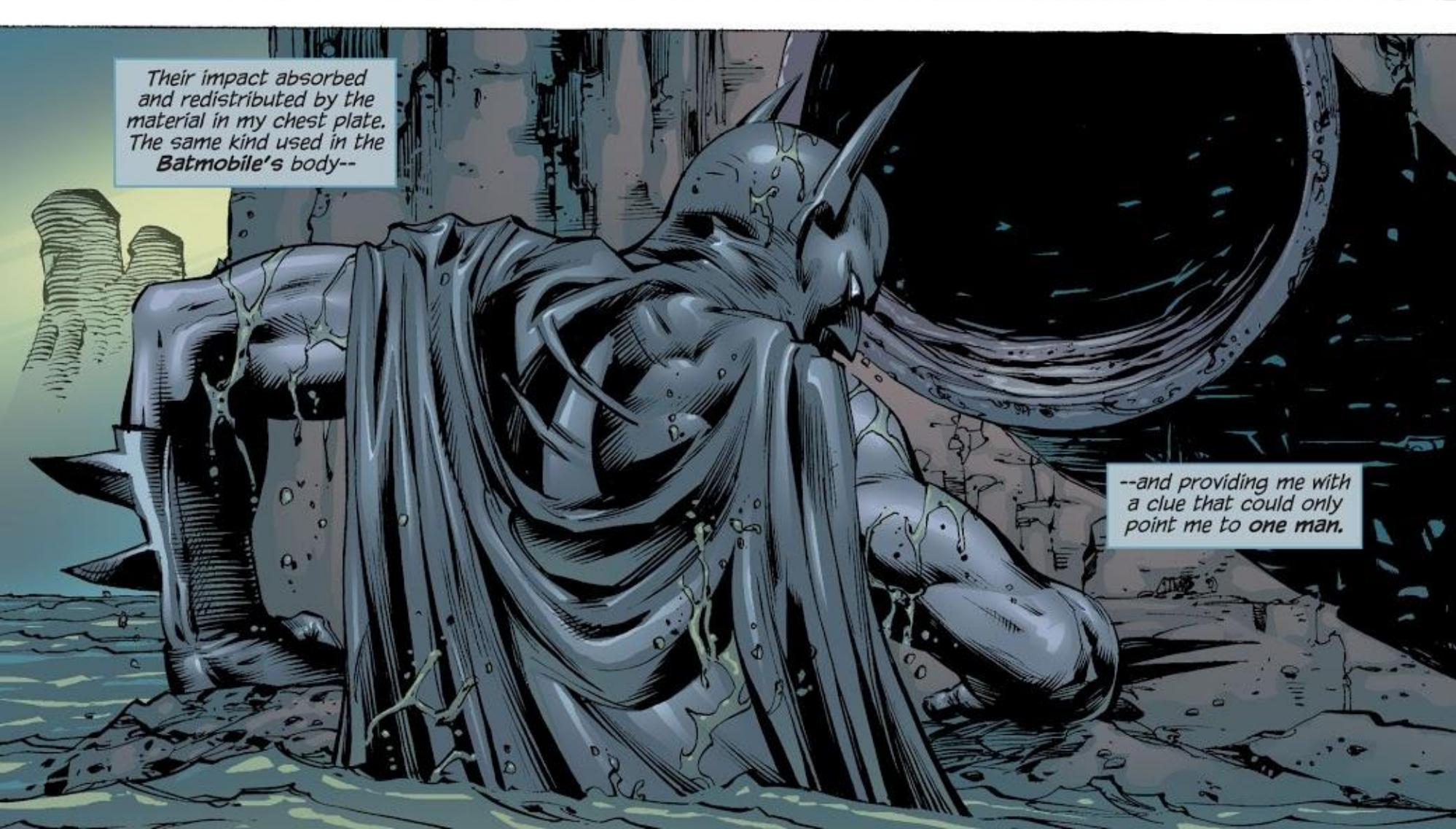
I remember how the Black Mask blasted me out of his hideout.



I remember hitting the hard, cold water of Gotham's polluted river.



And most important, I remember the slugs Black Mask pumped into me. Specialized rubber slugs.



Their impact absorbed and redistributed by the material in my chest plate. The same kind used in the Batmobile's body--

--and providing me with a clue that could only point me to one man.

IT WILL TAKE  
YEARS TO BUILD  
BACK YOUR  
ARMY.

MY ARMY  
IS CHAOS!  
HERE IN GOTHAM,  
THERE WILL BE NO  
SHORTAGE  
OF THAT.

I'VE GIVEN  
DR. DEATH ORDERS  
TO RELEASE THE TOXINS  
AT ONCE. THAT WILL KEEP  
BATMAN AND HIS CRONIES  
ENTERTAINED FOR  
A WHILE...

...BUT SURELY  
THE DARK KNIGHT  
WILL BE HUNTING YOU  
AGAIN FIRST CHANCE  
HE GETS.

I WILL BE  
READY  
FOR HIM.

THE CHEMICAL LAB,  
UNDER DEVIL'S SQUARE.

THE TOXIN  
HOUSING CHAMBERS  
WON'T OPEN.  
THE NETWORK SEEMS  
TO HAVE CRASHED,  
PROFESSOR  
STRANGE!

WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN?

I MEAN  
WE'VE BEEN  
SABOTAGED.  
THE COMPUTER  
SYSTEM IS  
CRIPPLED!

THEN I BID  
YOU FAREWELL  
WHILE YOU  
FIGURE OUT A  
SOLUTION,  
DR. DEATH.

TAK TAK TAK  
TAK TAK

JUST  
SPLENDID.  
NOW THE  
POWER IS  
OU--

KRAK

THE  
BATMAN!

YOU  
GUESSED  
RIGHT.

YOU WIN  
A PRIZE!

SHKKK

GAAR!

YOU  
REALLY OUGHT  
TO TRY LASIK,  
HUGO.

YOU'RE  
BOUND  
TO LOSE  
AN EYE--

CRASH

--OR  
TWO.

BASH



*The noise of the beatdown muffled his sound.*

But he's here.



I hit him with Batarangs--ones that have been coated in the antidote.

Not enough to bring him out of his programmed influence...

...but enough to make his brain cross wires. Maybe even enough to get him to think on his own for a minute.

MY FACE... IT'S ROTTING AWAY! WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO ME?

THEY USED YOU. MADE YOU THEIR PERSONAL ERRAND BOY.

YOU'RE PROBABLY JUST A PROTOTYPE FOR BLACK MASK'S BIGGER PLANS.

YOU'RE DISINTEGRATING, DR. GRUENER...

YOU WEREN'T BUILT TO LAST, JUST TO FOLLOW ORDERS. THE GENTLEMEN BEHIND YOU MIGHT WANT TO EXPLAIN THEMSELVES.

I tell Dr. Gruener that he shouldn't kill the only people who can still help him.

I hope he understood that much.

Black Mask has a good lead on me. But thanks to Kitrina's maps, I know exactly where he's headed.

The tunnel leads me out of Devil's Square and into pockets of Gotham's earthquake-ravaged infrastructure.

The bridge before me detonates.

**SKABOOM!**

Which doesn't impede me so much as it guarantees the fact that he's been here.

And I'm gaining.

A woman's body. Another trap?

No. Her skin is pale with the color of death.

Damn it. Did her nostrils just flare?

**HAAAHH**

Linda Fritawa. Fright.

Her toxins... I should have some immunity, but...

HOW DO YOU FEEL, BATMAN? YOUR HEART RACING? EARS FEEL LIKE THEY'RE ABOUT TO IMplode INTO YOUR BRAIN?

THERE'S THREE OF YOU NOW—AND I THOUGHT JUST LOOKING AT ONE OF YOU WAS BAD.

NOTHING A .50 CALIBER BULLET IN YOUR FACE CAN'T CURE.

ENTER THE THREE STOOGES.

I WON THIS LITTLE GAME OF CHESS. I GET TO TAKE THE KING'S CROWN.

REAL BULLETS THIS TIME, MASK? YOU'RE A QUICK STUDY.

POOM

AEEEEE!



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BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

Something flammable erupts behind me. I won't let him go out that easily.

I smother his flaming body with my cape.

And I'm rewarded in turn.

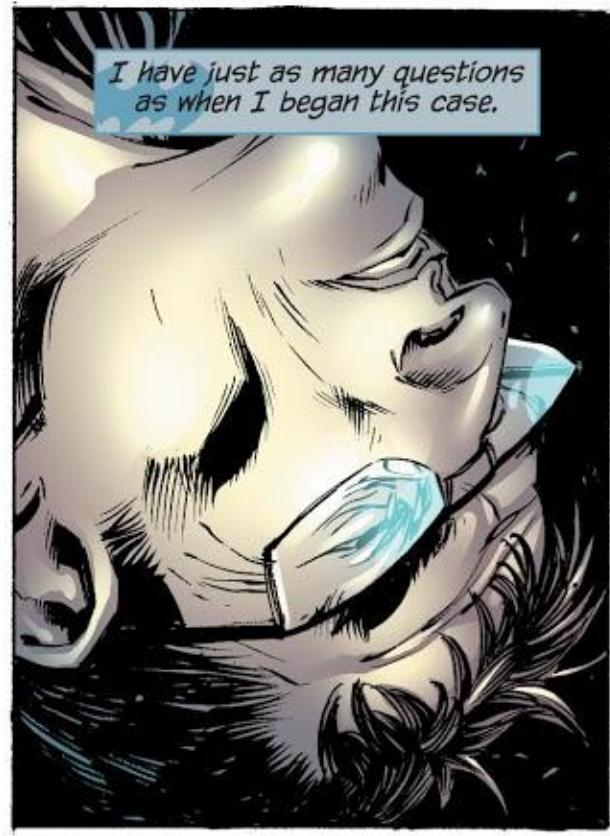
KILL ME, BATMAN-- PLEASE--

KILL ME, DAMN YOU!

AND PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY? WHY WOULD I DO THAT...?

BASH

**DR. JEREMIAH  
ARKHAM.**





A man living two lives. One life tries in earnest to help people.

The other, intent on using those lives to further selfish ambitions.

But what were those ambitions? Control of Gotham City?



Both good and evil men have tried in vain to control Gotham. No one has succeeded. Yet.



Gotham's underworld reconstitutes like a multi-headed beast nipping away at its many throats.



And when one of the heads is devoured by the others...



...a new one is already growing in its place.

I'LL FORGIVE YOU FOR THE PILEDRIVE INTO THE CHURCH PEWS, BATMAN. YOU WEREN'T IN YOUR RIGHT MIND, AS YOU SAY.

Catwoman calls a meeting to clear the air. But it sounds more like a preemptive strike to me.

BUT I WON'T FORGIVE ANY OF YOUR SUSPICIONS OF WRONGDOING ON MY PART.

I ONLY HAVE FRAGMENTS TO WORK WITH, SELINA. I MAY NEVER TOTALLY RECALL ALL OF THE THINGS I DID WHILE UNDER PENGUIN'S CONTROL.

KITRINA FALCONE ESCAPED FROM MY ROPES, I DIDN'T LIE TO YOU.

WE NEED TO TRUST EACH OTHER, DICK. ESPECIALLY IN THESE TIMES.

"Trust" is a fluid word when it comes to Catwoman. In the end it comes down to do I trust her enough to help me?

Even Bruce didn't trust her fully. I'd be a fool to try.

Especially when I can see the lie staring me right in the eye.

Or in this case, in the reflection I  
catch out of the corner of my eye--

--the swift and agile movement in the  
reflection of the windows across the street.



HE'S GONE,  
**CATGIRL.**

I WANT TO  
FOLLOW HIM.  
I BET HE HAS  
A COOL  
HIDEOUT.

NO. YOU  
HAVE MUCH  
TO LEARN...  
AND LESSON  
ONE **STARTS**  
TONIGHT.





I am not Bruce Wayne.



But when lives were lost...and  
the entire city was at stake...



...I did what  
Batman had to do.



I acted as the  
Dark Knight.



To the best of my  
abilities--I became him.



And I succeeded.  
Not as Dick Grayson.



And not as Bruce Wayne.

*But as Batman.*



END



**novus**  
Distributions