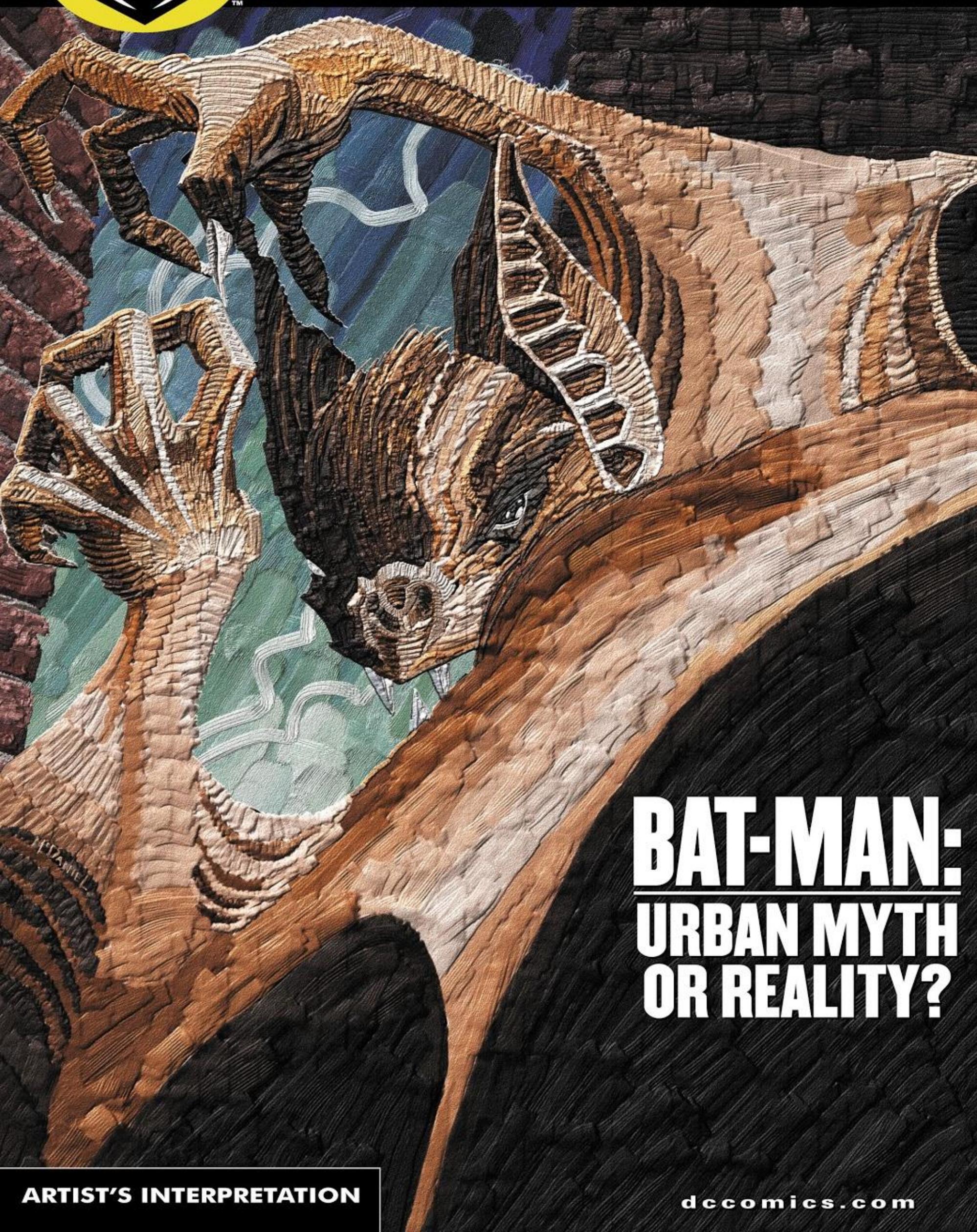


BATMAN

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BRUBAKER • McDANIEL • STORY



**BAT-MAN:
URBAN MYTH
OR REALITY?**

Gotham. Some call it the
crueler city on the eastern seaboard.
And there is certainly enough evidence
to prove it: murder, drugs, prostitution.



But there is also
evidence of some-
thing else in Gotham
... something urban
legend says fights
to keep these wolves
at bay.

To keep Gotham
safe until the
morning comes.

The first headlines
appeared twelve years
ago; however, reports
were always filled
with speculation and
innuendo.

Gazet
CRIME-WAY
CRASHES IN
ALLEGED
CRIMEFIGHT

IS BATMAN
REAL?

Was there really
a Batman? And if
so, was he simply
a vigilante, or was
he some other kind
of creature of the
night?



ARTIST'S
INTERPRETATION

Finding reliable
witnesses has also
been difficult...

LIKE A GHOST, OR
SOMETHIN'... JUST
APPEARS THERE. I'M
ON MY WAY DOWN THE
FIRE ESCAPE, AN'THEN
HE'S JUST THERE. NO
MAN MOVES THAT
FAST. NO WAY. 'LESS
HE'S A GHOST.

MANNY PEREZ
CONVICTED BURGLAR

So we have come to the
gritty streets of Gotham, to
seek out the true truth behind
the legends. To separate
fact from fiction.

To find
the Bat-man
in the dark
night.

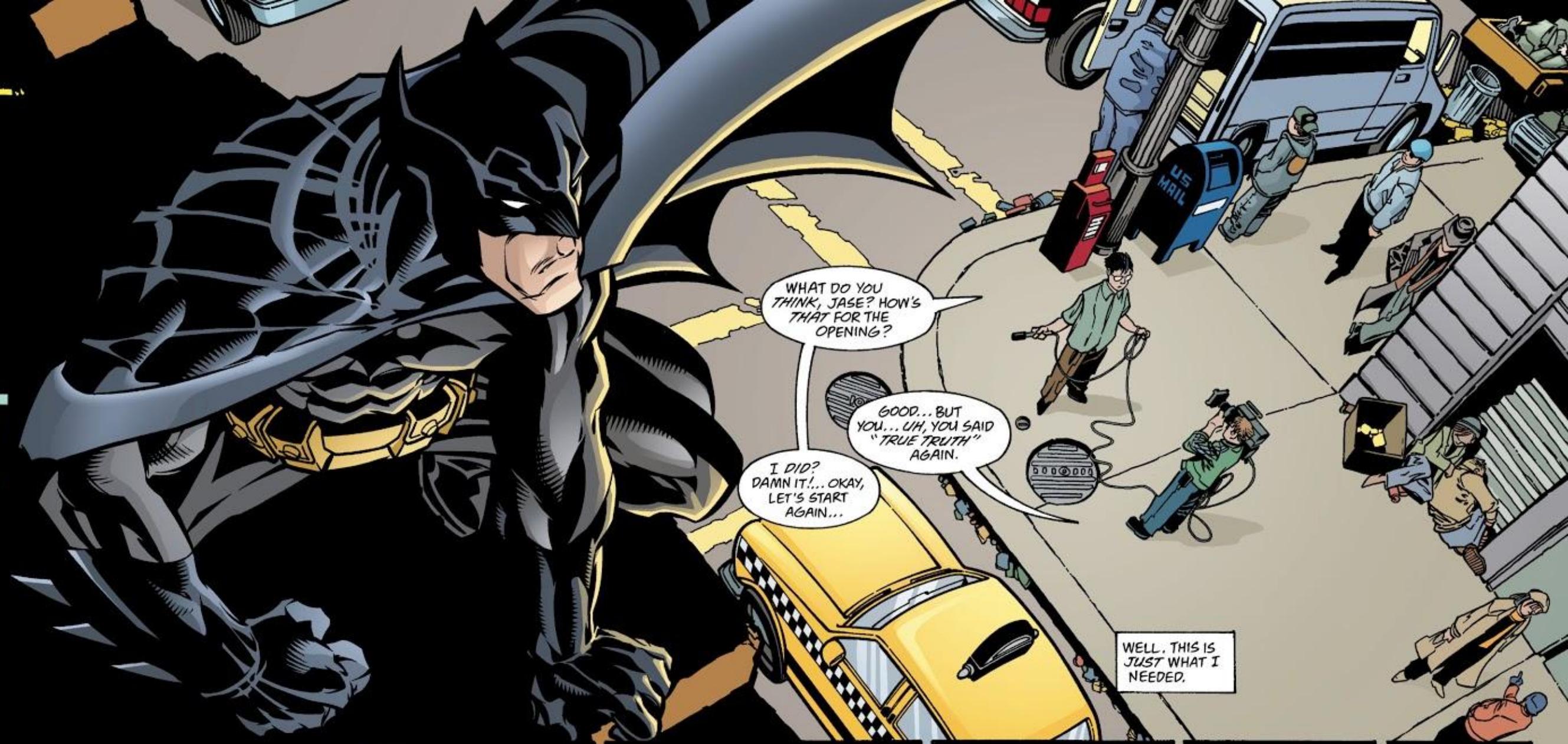




The DARK KNIGHT Project

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BATMAN
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BOB KANE



I'VE BEEN AVOIDING THESE KIDS FOR DAYS NOW, AND HERE THEY ARE, RIGHT ON THE CORNER WHERE THE PENGUIN'S MONEY-LAUDEMNG DROP IS ABOUT TO GO DOWN.





-- OH, MY
GOD! ARE
YOU GETTING
THIS?

I AM
NOW.



THAT'S IT... RUN TO
THE SCENE OF THE
ACCIDENT. LEAVE
ME A CLEAR PATH.





YOU
SMELL LIKE
A SEWER.

THAT'S BECAUSE I
HAD TO GO INTO THE
SEWER TONIGHT,
JIM.

WE'VE GOT TO
DO SOMETHING
ABOUT THAT
FILM CREW.

WHAT DO YOU
WANT ME TO DO
ABOUT THEM,
EXACTLY? THEY HAVE
ALL THE PROPER
PERMITS AND
PAPERWORK...

I DON'T KNOW...
ARREST THEM AT
SUNDOWN EVERY
NIGHT.

ANY OTHER
SUGGESTIONS?

NO.

LISTEN, I DON'T WANT
THEM AROUND, EITHER. I
THOUGHT WE HAD GOTTEN
RID OF THEM WHEN THE
WAYNE FOUNDATION
PULLED THEIR FUNDING.

HEH... I DOUBT
WAYNE'LL LIKE HOW HE
COMES OFF IN THEIR
MOVIE, NOW THAT
DAVENPORT'S
FINANCING IT.

Mr. Wayne,
can I ask you
why you cut
funding for our
documentary?

WHAT?
ARE YOU
FROM THAT
"BAT-MAN"
THING?

That's right
Man and Batman.
so why did you
revoke our
grant.

BECAUSE I DON'T WASTE
MONEY ON WILD-GOOSE
CHASES. BATMAN DOESN'T
EXIST. HE'S JUST A
BOGEYMAN FOR A
NEW GENERATION
OF CRIMINALS.

END OF
INTERVIEW.

BRUCE WAYNE
BILLIONAIRE
INDUSTRIALIST

THOUGH I DOUBT
I CAME OFF MUCH BETTER
THAN HIM. THEY REALLY
GRILLED ME ABOUT THIS
THING...

IF there's no Batman,
why do you have a big
bat-shaped light on
the roof of the police
station?

OH, THAT... WELL,
THAT WAS HARVEY
DENT'S IDEA, BACK WHEN
HE WAS THE D.A.

SEE, HE AND I BOTH KNEW
THERE WAS NO BATMAN, BUT
AN AWFUL LOT OF PEOPLE
OUT THERE ON THE STREETS,
THEY DIDN'T KNOW THAT.

SO WHY NOT
GIVE THEM A REASON
FOR THEIR IRRATIONAL
FEAR?

SO, the
bat-light
is a lie?

IF THERE IS NO BATMAN,
THEN OBVIOUSLY, IT GOES OFF
DURING THE NIGHT AT RANDOM
INTERVALS, TO KEEP THE
CRIMINAL ELEMENT ON
THEIR TOES.

But isn't that like
posting signs that say
"SPEED CHECKED BY
RADAR" with no actual
radar around?

WELL,
WE DO THAT,
TOO, DON'T
WE?

Comm. James Gordon

POLICE COMMISSIONER
JAMES GORDON

Comm. James Gordon

Comm. James Gordon

NO, I'M AFRAID THESE
KIDS ARE GOING TO BE A PAIN
FOR A WHILE. THE MAYOR
GAVE THEM PERMISSION TO
INTERVIEW A LOT OF OTHER
OFFICERS, TOO.

WONDERFUL.

HEY, YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO WANTS TO BE AN "URBAN
LEGEND." YOU NEVER HEAR
ABOUT SUPERMAN HIDING
FROM A BUNCH OF FILM
STUDENTS.

TRUE, BUT WHEN
YOU'RE JUST A MAN
THERE'S MORE POWER
IN RUMORS AND
FEAR THAN IN
PUBLICITY.

I'LL
SEE YOU
LATER.

The official word from the Gotham Police is that there is no Batman... But would a police department really continue to support a myth, just to keep criminals in the dark?

Or is this just another screen of subterfuge?

WHATTA YOU WANT ME TO SAY? THE WORD I HEARD, AND IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME STORY, IS THAT DENT COOKED UP THE BATMAN, WAY BACK IN THE BAD OLD DAYS...

NOW, IS THAT TRUE? I HAVE NO IDEA. ALL I KNOW IS, BATMAN WASN'T HARDLY EVER HEARD OF BEFORE TWO-FACE CAME AROUND.

GOTHAM POLICE
LIEUTENANT H. BULLOCK and DETECTIVE R. MONTOYA

WHAT DO I THINK? I THINK IT'S PROBABLY NOT SUCH A HOT IDEA TO BE POKING AROUND THE STREETS OF GOTHAM ASKING A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING, ESPECIALLY BATMAN.

SO are you saying that Batman is REAL, detective Montoya?

I'M JUST SAYING IF YOU'RE IN A CITY THAT BELIEVES IN A COSTUMED VIGILANTE WHO PROWLS THE NIGHT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO WATCH YOUR STEP, WHETHER HE'S REAL OR NOT.

If the police weren't going to give straight answers, we thought maybe the citizens would...

HELL YES, BATMAN IS REAL. I SEEN HIM MYSELF DURIN' THE NO MAN'S LAND. HE HELD THIS CITY TOGETHER. WOULDN'T WANNA CROSS HIM, I CAN TELL YOU THAT.

But we found the locals to be divided, and fairly sharply...

THE O.G.'S ARE CRAZY. THEY'RE FROM THE SAME GUTTERS THAT YOUR BATMAN LEGEND CAME FROM. THEY DIDN'T EVEN HAVE ENOUGH SENSE TO EVACUATE DURING NO MAN'S LAND, I MEAN REALLY...

SO, then you don't think Batman exists?

OF COURSE NOT. IF THERE WERE A SUPERHERO IN GOTHAM, HE WOULDN'T HIDE. HE'D BE LIKE SUPERMAN OR THE FLASH, OUT IN THE OPEN.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF HELPING PEOPLE IF THEY DON'T KNOW YOU'RE DOING IT?

SOMETIMES I WONDER ABOUT THAT MYSELF.

HEY, THANKS A LOT, THAT'S A GREAT SOUND-BITE. IF WE CAN JUST GET YOU TO SIGN A RELEASE...

BUT I GUESS THE OBVIOUS ANSWER IS THAT I'M NOT DOING IT FOR THEM.

YES, YES...
GET TO THE
SMALL PRINT.

WELL, THE...
UH... THE SMALL
PRINT IS THAT
YOU'VE BEEN
EVICTED.

WHAT!?! BUT
I'VE GOT A TEN-YEAR
LEASE! WHAT DID
YOU DO WRONG,
LASKY?

NO-NOTHING... IT'S
NOT ANY KIND OF ERROR,
REALLY. THE BUILDING
HAS BEEN PURCHASED
AND THE NEW OWNER
IS GOING TO TEAR
IT DOWN.

TEAR IT DOWN? WE
JUST BARELY FINISHED
REDOING THE FOUNDA-
TION AFTER THE 'QUAKE!

WHY WOULD
ANYONE WANT TO
DEMOLISH
THE PLACE?

I CAN THINK OF ONE
REASON... IT'S AN EASY
WAY TO BREAK YOUR
LEASE, SIR. BUT YOU'LL
REALLY HAVE TO ASK
THE NEW OWNER...

... WAYNE
INDUSTRIES.

OF COURSE... WAYNE.
I SHOULD'VE KNOWN
THAT JOB WAS GOING
TO BE MORE TROUBLE
THAN IT WAS
WORTH.

I REALLY DON'T
NEED THIS. NOT
WITH THE BAT
CRACKING DOWN
ON ME LIKE HE
IS LATELY, TOO.

I SHOULD'VE
JUST LEFT WELL
ENOUGH ALONE...
DAMN.



THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU? WHO WAS THIS OLD FRIEND YOU HAD TO DO A FAVOR FOR?

RIGHT! LIKE I'M GONNA TELL YOU!

LASKY, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE MY LAWYER DOESN'T MEAN I TRUST YOU! I OWED ONE TO SOMEBODY, AND THEY CASHED IN THEIR MARKER--END OF STORY.

NOW GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE AND DO YOUR JOB! FIND A WAY TO STOP THIS EVICTION!

I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO, BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO START LOOKING FOR A NEW BUILDING.

JUST DO YOUR JOB, SHYSTER!

SURROUNDED BY INCOMPETENTS AND FOOLS... WHERE'S THE JUSTICE IN THIS WORLD?

BZZT! BZZT! MISTER COBBLEPOT, YOUR THREE O'CLOCK APPOINTMENT IS HERE.

WHAT APPOINTMENT?

THE STUDENTS MAKING THE DOCUMENTARY, REMEMBER? THEY CALLED LAST WEEK... THE FILM ABOUT BATMAN.

HOW APPROPRIATE. EVERYTHING COMES BACK TO BATMAN LATELY, DOESN'T IT? WELL, MAYBE I CAN USE THIS TO MY ADVANTAGE...

SHOW THEM IN.

He's known by two names: First, he is Oswald Cobblepot, a successful Gotham businessman, and second, the Penguin, an alleged crimelord.

But what is the truth about this man and his run-ins with the Batman?

DO I LOOK LIKE A DANGEROUS MAN TO YOU? PLEASE... I'M A LEGITIMATE BUSINESSMAN.

OKAY, MAYBE I CUT SOME CORNERS ON MY TAXES IN THE PAST, BUT WHAT BUSINESSMAN HASN'T?

DOES THAT MAKE ME A SUPER-VILLAIN? I DON'T THINK SO.

IT WAS ALL A SMEAR CAMPAIGN, FOSTERED BY THE LOCAL PRESS. A FAIRLY INSENSITIVE ONE, TOO.

IF I WAS FAT INSTEAD OF SHORT, WOULD THEY HAVE CALLED ME "THE WHALE"? OR WHAT IF I'D BEEN BLACK? I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT...

So are you saying that Batman is someone like yourself?

SURE. MAYBE HE'S JUST SOME COP WHO'S MOONLIGHTING. I REALLY WOULDN'T KNOW. I'VE NEVER MET THE MAN.

BUT, I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING... THERE'S ONE PERSON WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT BATMAN...

...AND ONE PERSON ONLY.

Oswald "Penguin" Los face racketeering charg

"Penguin" brought down in FBI stin

Cob
470
age:
height:
wei





ME? ALL I'VE
DONE IS HELP OUT SOME
CHARMING YOUNG MEN
WHO ARE TRYING TO
MAKE A MOVIE.

THEN WHY AM I HEARING
ALL OVER GOTHAM THAT
YOU SET THEM UP TO BE
KILLED?

WHAT
DID YOU
DO?!

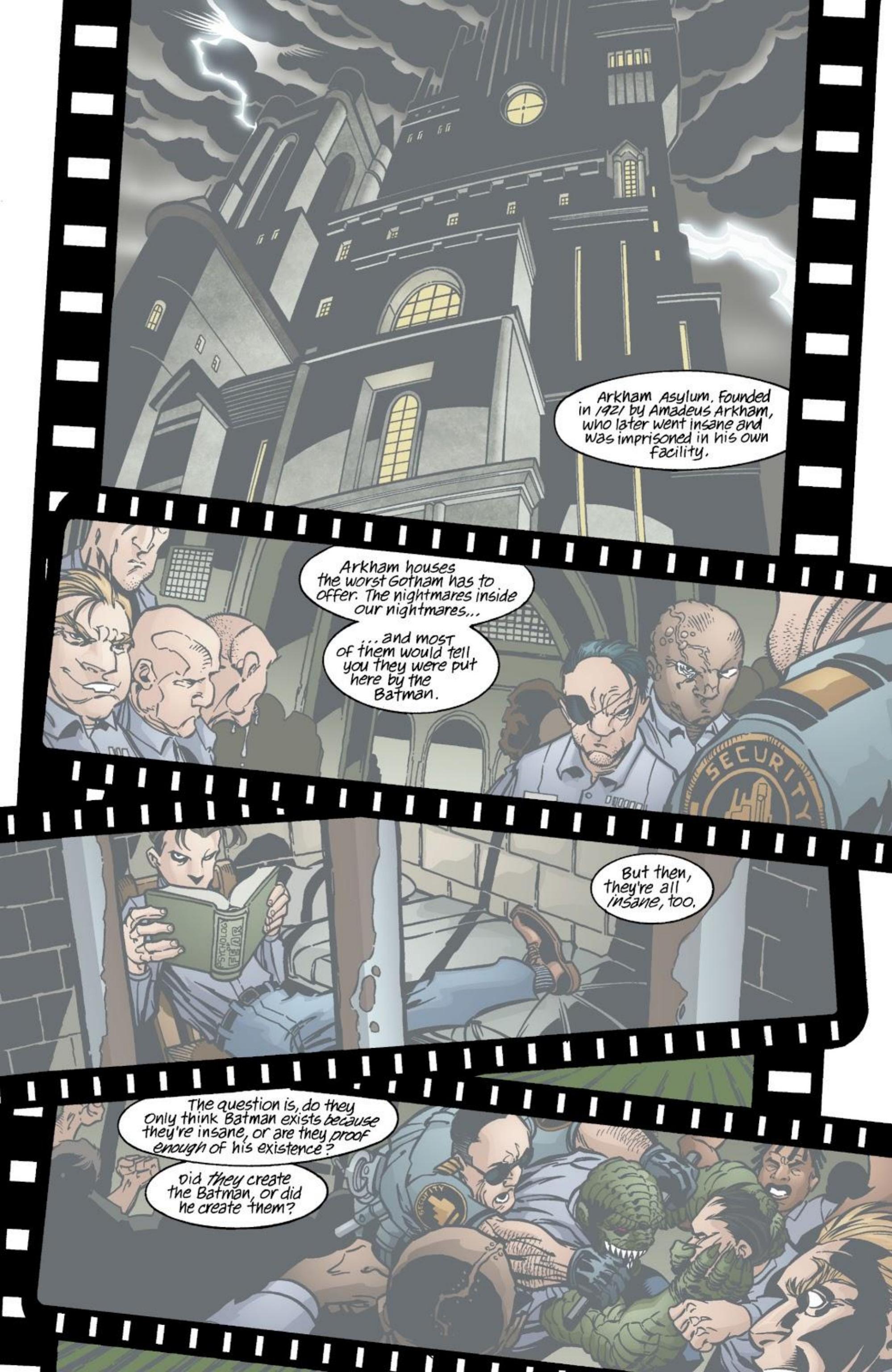
I JUST SENT THEM TO A
REPUTABLE SOURCE ON BATMAN...
IF THEY GET INTO TROUBLE
BECAUSE OF THAT, IT'S
CERTAINLY NO FAULT OF
MINE.

AND IF THAT DISTRACTS YOU
FROM MY BUSINESS DEALINGS
FOR ONE NIGHT, THEN IT'S
ALL THE BETTER.

I WON'T ASK
AGAIN! WHERE
DID YOU SEND
THEM?!

VERY WELL, IF YOU
MUST KNOW, I'LL TELL
YOU. BUT I'M SURE
YOU'RE FAR TOO LATE
ANYWAY...

...I HEAR THERE
MAY BE A BREAK-
OUT THERE
TONIGHT.



Arkham Asylum. Founded in 1921 by Amadeus Arkham, who later went insane and was imprisoned in his own facility.

Arkham houses the worst Gotham has to offer. The nightmares inside our nightmares...

...and most of them would tell you they were put here by the Batman.

But then, they're all insane, too.

The question is, do they only think Batman exists because they're insane, or are they proof enough of his existence?

Did they create the Batman, or did he create them?

We came to Arkham, through no minor hassle, to find the answer to this question, from the ONE MAN who might know it...



IT'S A REAL CHICKEN AND EGG SITUATION, ISN'T IT?

WOULD ANY OF THESE GUYS BE HERE, IF NOT FOR THE BAT? WOULD I?

SO Batman is real?

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE ISN'T? IS THERE SOME EVIDENCE OF HIS NON-EXISTENCE?

Well, the police told us you made up the whole thing back when you were a D.A... before you...uh...

THERE IS NO BEFORE, KID. I WAS ALWAYS HERE, THE WORLD CAN JUST SEE ME BETTER NOW.

SO, IF THE BATMAN ISN'T JUST SOME URBAN MYTH, WHY DOES HE HIDE HIS EXISTENCE? AND WHY DO THE POLICE COLLUDE WITH HIM?

WHAT CITY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE IN? LOOK AROUND YOU, KID. AT THE PEOPLE BOUNCING OFF THE WALLS OF THIS PLACE.

THIS CITY GREW THEM ALL, CULTIVATED THEM EASILY. WE SPROUTED FROM THE SHADOWS LIKE WEEDS.

YOU REALLY THINK I CAME UP WITH BATMAN AS SOME KIND OF HOAX? WELL, MAYBE I DID AND MAYBE I DIDN'T.

ONE THING'S FOR SURE, THOUGH. IF HE ISN'T REAL, GOTHAM WOULD HAVE HAD TO CREATE HIM. WHETHER IT USED ME FOR THAT PURPOSE OR NOT.

SORRY, FOLKS,
WE'VE GOT SOME
TROUBLE. LET'S GO,
DENT, GOTTA GET
YOU BACK IN
LOCKUP.

I TOLD
YOU THIS WAS
A BAD IDEA,
DAVID.

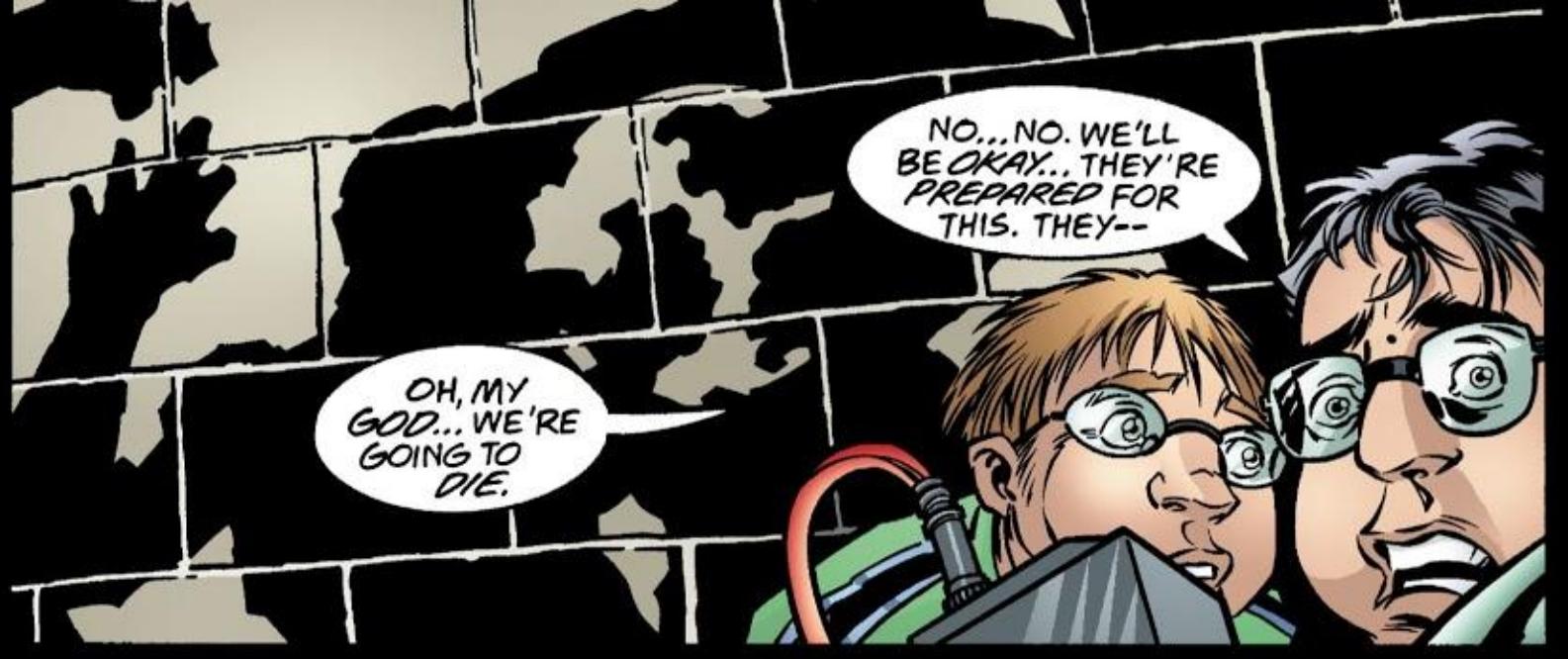
TROUBLE?
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN? I--

NOT
TONIGHT,
I THINK!

NO, IT LOOKS
LIKE WE'VE GOT A
COUPLE HOURS OF
FUN IN STORE
TONIGHT.

MAYBE YOU KIDS'LL
GET YOUR SOLUTION
AFTER ALL.

ME, I'M OFF TO
JOIN THE PARTY...
FEEL FREE TO SHOW
YOURSSELVES OUT.





I WANT YOU TO
STOP MAKING THAT
FILM. GET OUT OF
GOTHAM AND FORGET
WHAT YOU'VE SEEN
HERE.

WHAT?
BUT YOU CAN'T--
YOU--

--ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU'VE GOT A KNIFE
IN YOUR SIDE.

SO I DO.
LOOKS LIKE A
SHARPENED
SPOON.
LOVELY.

OKAY... TELL ME
WHY, AND MAYBE
WE'LL QUIT. WHY DO
YOU NEED TO BE A
SECRET, A LEGEND?

WOULD I HAVE
BEEN HALF AS
FRIGHTENING TO YOU
IF YOU KNEW FOR
SURE I WAS REALLY
OUT THERE?

BUT, I DON'T GET IT...
WHY HELP PEOPLE IN SECRET
LIKE THIS? WHAT ABOUT
ALL THE PEOPLE WHO
DON'T KNOW YOU'RE
REAL?

EVERYONE WHO
NEEDS TO KNOW I'M
REAL DOES... AND THE
REST, AREN'T I HELPING
THEM ANYWAY?
WHETHER THEY
KNOW IT OR NOT?

YEAH, I GUESS
SO... WHAT DO
YOU THINK,
JASON?

I STOPPED
FILMING ALREADY.
LIKE I'M GONNA
SAY NO TO
BATMAN?

