

DC
TM

BATMAN®

REBIRTH™

687
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APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AD
AUTHORITY

BATMAN



YEARS AGO...

Only in retrospect
could they be deemed
"Simpler times."

YOU TOLD THEM
I WAS OFF THE
COAST OF BRAZIL?
AND WHAT AM I
SUPPOSED TO BE
DOING THERE?

I LEFT THAT UP
TO THE MEDIA
TO DEDUCE,
MASTER BRUCE.

BUT ACCORDING TO THEM
YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING
VERY CLOSE COMPANY
WITH A FASHION MODEL
FROM THAT REGION.

But they
were simpler...

...simpler and
happier times.

YOU
GAVE THEM
THAT?

ODDLY ENOUGH, NO. THEY CAME
TO THAT CONCLUSION ON THEIR
OWN. IT'S A MONSTER THAT
NEEDS VERY LITTLE
FEEDING, SIR.

SOMETHING
WRONG, SIR?

YOU HEAR
THAT? SOUNDED
LIKE A POWER--

--SURGE.

MY
WORD.

GET
DOWN.

WELL, GOOD.
WITH RIDDLE
STIRRING UP
THIS MUCH
TROUBLE, I...

GAS!
HANG
ON!

TSSSSST

STAY LOW!
GET TO THE
ARSENAL!

Odorless.
Odd for a
frontal attack.

And the excretion
stream that slows on
contact. Ineffective.

Projectiles? Numbers like
this, you'd have to set
them in advance. How--?

Wait--the spikes
are quick, but
weak on impact.



Okay, I see.
Game's over.

An impressive display,
and that's all.

UNF!

But I suppose
that was the point...

...an impressive
display.

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?



"...AND IT'LL BE ME IN
THE CAPE AND COWL!"

TODAY.

JUDD WINICK WRITER
ED BENES PENCILS
ROB HUNTER INKS
IAN HANNIN & JD SMITH COLORS
JARED K. FLETCHER LETTERS
JANELLE SIEGEL ASST. EDITOR
MIKE MARTS EDITOR

A BATTLE WITHIN

an epilogue to

BATTL^E FOR THE COWL

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

The dynamics of a Family
are always difficult.
All triumphs and tragedies
are fraught with emotion.

The successes are
that much sweeter.



...a death in the family.

--A HALF BLOCK OFF ROBINSON PARK! PERPS ARE ON FOOT HEADING EAST!

THEY WERE TAKING THE WATERTON BANK, BUT THEIR GETAWAY TOOK FIRE FROM--

TAKE 'EM OUT! HOW THE HELL DID THEY GET FOURTEEN BLOCKS ON FOOT?!

THEY'VE GOT BODY ARMOR AND ENOUGH AMMO TO INVADE A COUNTRY! WE CAN'T GET CLOSE TO PHYSICALLY ENGAGE!

AND THEY'RE SHOOTING LEAD THAT'S CUTTING THROUGH THE KEVLAR--

WE'VE GOT EIGHT OFFICERS DOWN!

PULL BACK! DON'T RETURN FIRE--LET THEM RUN! WE'VE GOT THREE COPTERS EN ROUTE WHO WILL TRACK THEM BY AIR!

WE SEE 'EM! BUT THEY'RE COMING IN TOO DAMN LOW!

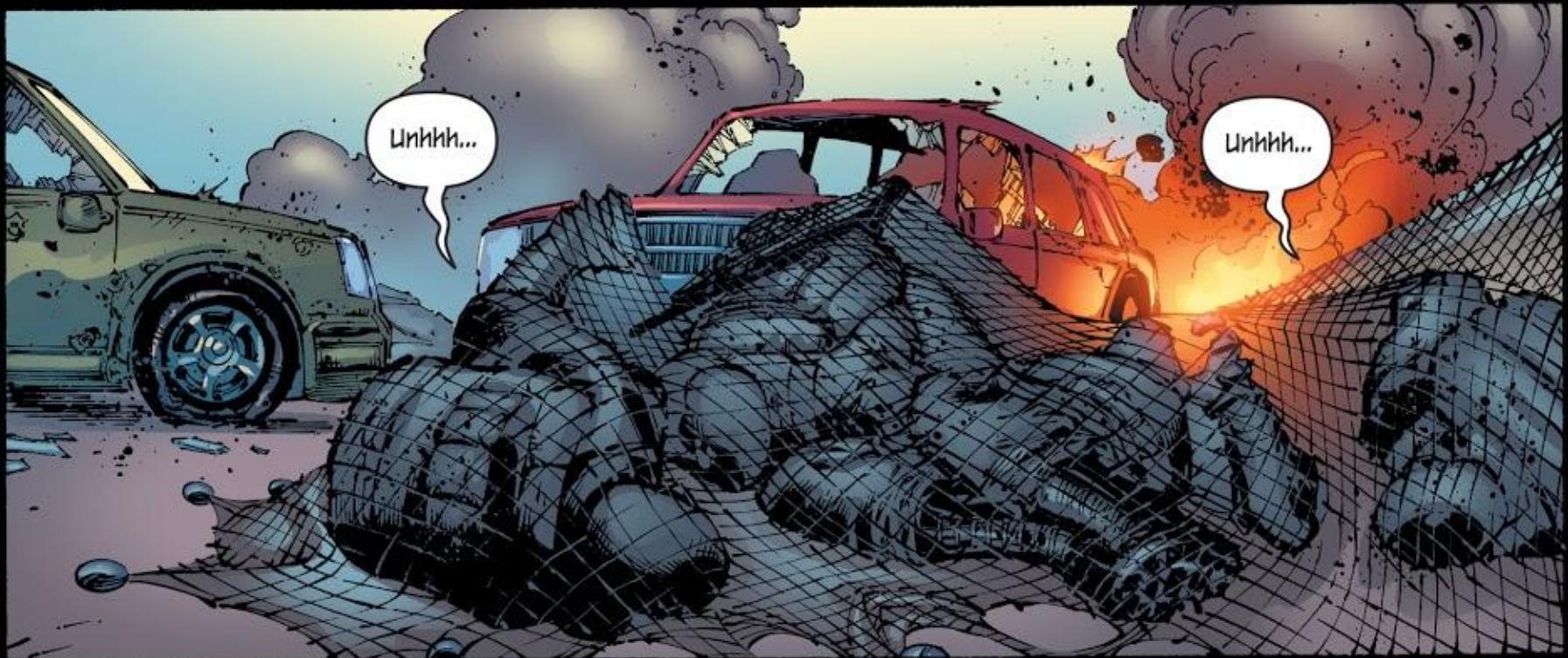
THEY'RE GONNA GET CLIPPED!

THIS IS AIR CENTRAL! PULL UP! YOU'RE DRAWING FIRE! PULL UP!

I'M LOSING EVERYONE ON COMMS! WE CAN'T HEAR--IS THAT AN EXPLOSION?!

NO.





LUCKY
HE WAS IN
TOWN...

SIR?

YES.

THAT WAS VERY
WELL DONE. THE
PUBLIC DISPLAYS
OF HEROICS ARE
ALWAYS THE *MOST*
CHALLENGING.

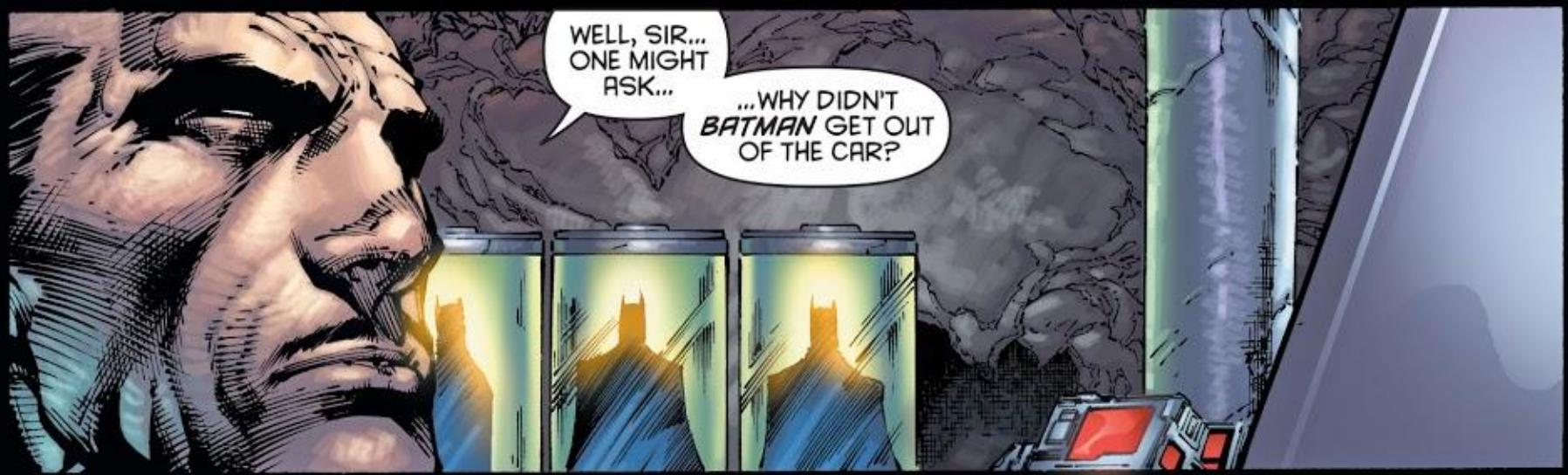
ONE MUST TERMINATE
THE THREAT, BUT ALSO
SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY
TO INSTILL SHOCK
AND AWE.

ALFRED,
PLEASE DON'T
PLACATE ME.

IT WAS *STUPID*.
DRIVE-BY CRIME
FIGHTING DOESN'T
INSTILL ANYTHING IN
ANYONE EXCEPT, I
DON'T KNOW, CAR
MANUFACTURERS.

HE WOULD
HAVE GOTTEN
OUT OF THE
CAR.





FOUR WEEKS AGO...

...IT'S THE ONE
HE WAS WEARING
WHEN IT HAPPENED...
IT GOT LOST IN ALL
THE...WELL, I
RECOVERED IT.

WE
THOUGHT IT
SHOULD BE
HERE.

WITH
YOU.

AND...
I'M SORRY
IF THIS SEEMS
ABRUPT, BUT WE
ALSO WANTED TO
ADDRESS HIS
*CONTINGENCY
PLAN*.

SORRY?

HE NEVER DOES
ANYTHING WITHOUT...
HE NEVER DID ANY-
THING WITHOUT A
BACKUP PLAN.
ANOTHER ROUTE.
ANOTHER TEN
SCENARIOS.

A BLUEPRINT
TO STOP ANY OF US
IF WE WENT BAD. A PLAN
IF THE WHITE MARTIANS
RETURNED. A PLAN IF THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
STATES WAS ABDUCTED
TO ANOTHER DIMENSION.

WHAT...WHAT
WAS HIS PLAN
IF HE DIED?

I...
WELL,
I--

MAYBE YOU
SHOULDN'T BE
ASKING US.

SIRS.
MADAME.

I BROUGHT YOUR
USUAL REFRESHMENTS.
BUT SHOULD YOU
DESIRE, I CAN PROVIDE
SOMETHING MORE
SUBSTANTIAL.

OH, ALFRED,
YOU DIDN'T HAVE
TO GO TO ALL
THIS TROUBLE.
NOT NOW.

THIS MUST
BE SO
HARD.

ARE
YOU ALL
RIGHT?

AM I "ALL
RIGHT"?

NO, SIR.
I AM NOT.

MY SON
HAS DIED.



"YOU PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THIS DAY... WELL, *PREPARE* IS THE WRONG WORD..."





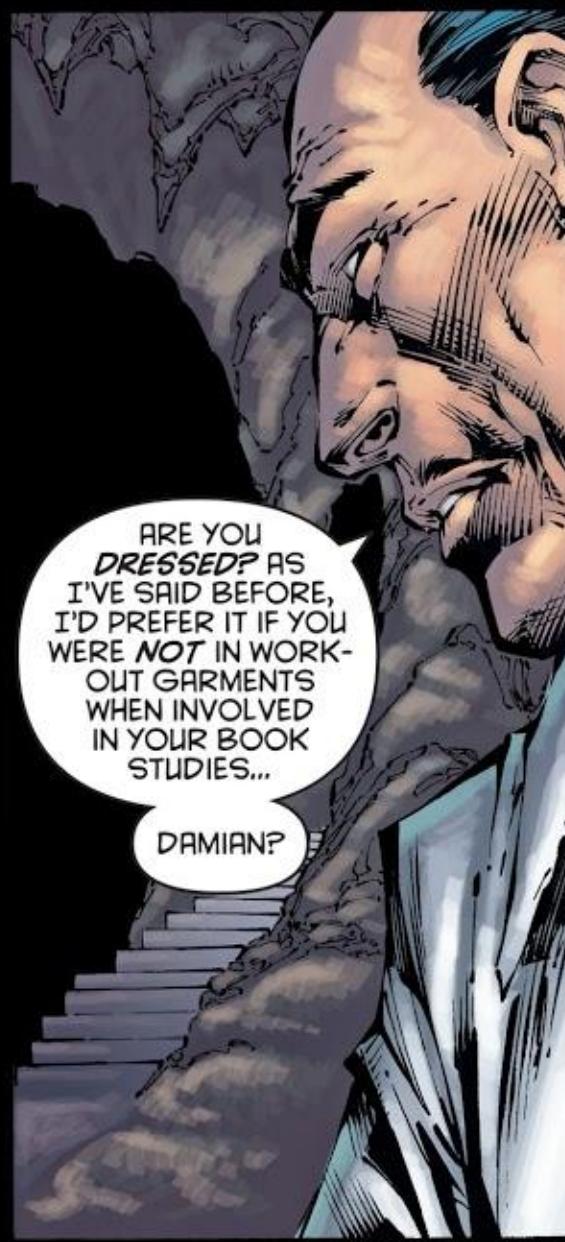


BATMAN
IS NOT
DEAD.

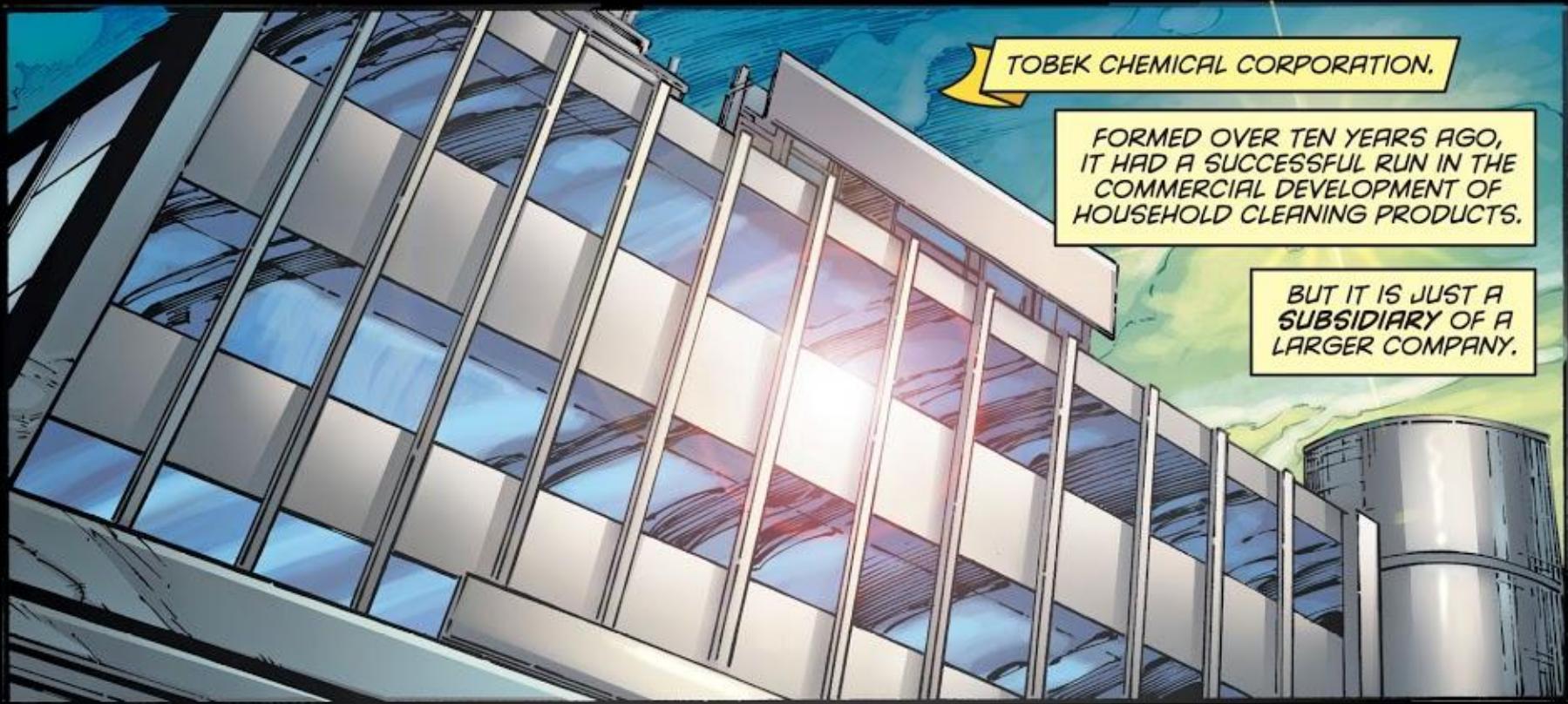


TODAY...

"ALWAYS."



DAMN IT.
NOT AGAIN.



DOCTOR PHOSPHORUS BEING
ONE OF ITS HARSHEST CRITICS.

NOW, LET'S
SEE WHO'S
HOME...

I WOULDN'T
DO THAT.

THE
HELL--?

NOT IF
YOU DON'T
WANT TO GET
HURT.

YOU... I HEARD
YOU WERE LYING
LOW. BUT GOOD!
I'D LOVE A CRACK
AT YA! C'MON, BATS.
SHOW ME WHAT
YOU GOT!









I DON'T KNOW, I'VE GOT A FEW CONCRETE BARRICADES IN HERE THAT AN ARMY OF SHRINKS WOULD NEED A HALF TON OF C-4 TO--



I CAN TALK TO YOU, RICHARD. AND I KNOW YOU WILL HEAR ME.

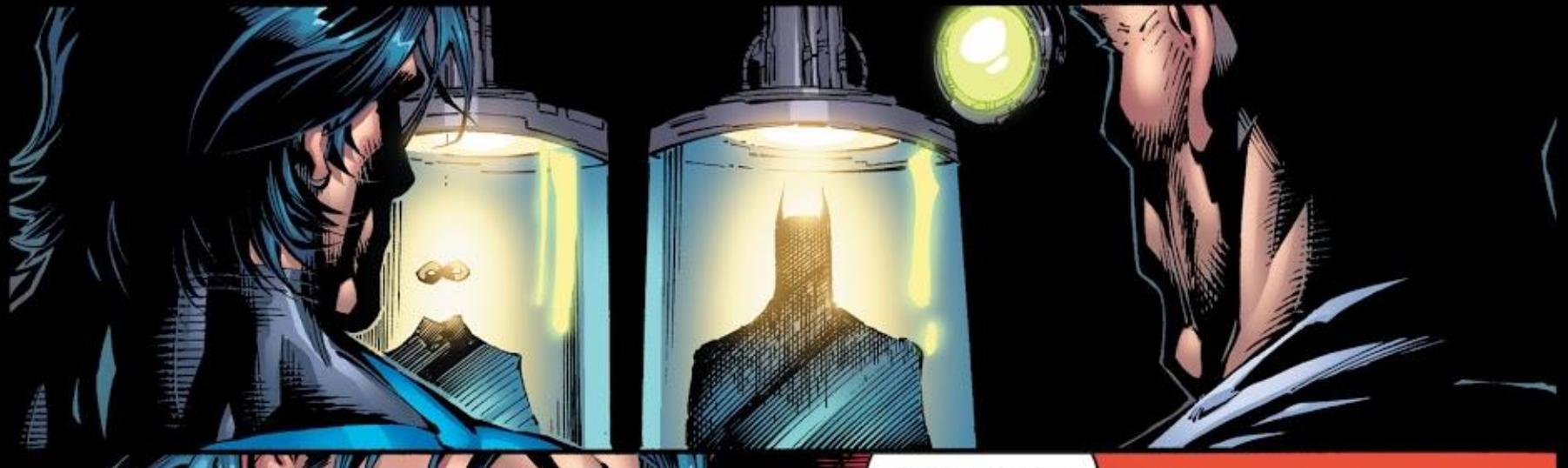
WITH ARKHAM ASYLUM IN RUINS AND MADMEN TAKING TO THE STREETS, YOU'VE SPENT WEEKS LURKING IN THE SHADOWS, BATTLING BACK ALL MANNER OF WRONGDOING IN GOTHAM--

JUST LIKE HE DID.



NO. HE LET THEM KNOW HE WAS THERE. JUST ENOUGH.

YOU'RE HIDING. THAT CAN ONLY LAST SO LONG.



EVERYTHING I AM IS BECAUSE OF HIM.

I'M JUST NOT SURE I CAN BE HIM.



OR THAT I WANT TO.



THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING.

"THE CAVE WITH ITS HISTORY...IS BATMAN."

THE PENTHOUSE.

"WHO HE WAS. WHAT HE WAS...IS EMBODIED IN IT."

THAT
WAS
HIM.

THE BUNKER.

THIS
WILL BE
ME.

WE'LL
BUILD IT
HERE.

click

YOU DO UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHANGE IN VENUE IS MORE THAN A SYMBOLIC GESTURE, RIGHT?

IF I'M GOING TO BE BATMAN... IT HAS TO BE ME IN THERE. NOT ME JUST PLAYING THE PART. I CAN'T REPLACE HIM. I WON'T.

I HAVE TO HONOR THE ROLE, BUT... IT HAS TO BE MINE.

BUT IT WON'T BE EASY. I'LL NEED HELP. YOU AND DAMIAN.

SIR, YOU HAVE MY ALLEGIANCE AND SERVICE TO THE VERY END.

AND AS TO DAMIAN, THERE'S NOTHING THAT WOULD PLEASE THE BOY MORE. HE MAY EVEN SMILE.

EVEN STILL... I'M NOT QUITE ON SOLID GROUND YET. DAMIAN CAN'T SEE ME SECOND-GUESS MYSELF.

THERE'LL BE TIMES WHEN I'LL NEED TO GO IT ALONE.

JUST AS MASTER BRUCE DID.

WELL... I'D SAY WE HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO. WHERE SHALL WE START?

I DON'T KNOW.

THAT'S UP TO THEM.



TWO WEEKS LATER.

GOTHAM BAY BRIDGE.

HOW THE HELL DID HE DO THIS SO QUICKLY?

NEAR AS WE CAN FIGURE, IT'S MILITARY TECH. DESIGNED TO BE DROPPED AND ACTIVATED IN AN URBAN WAR ZONE.

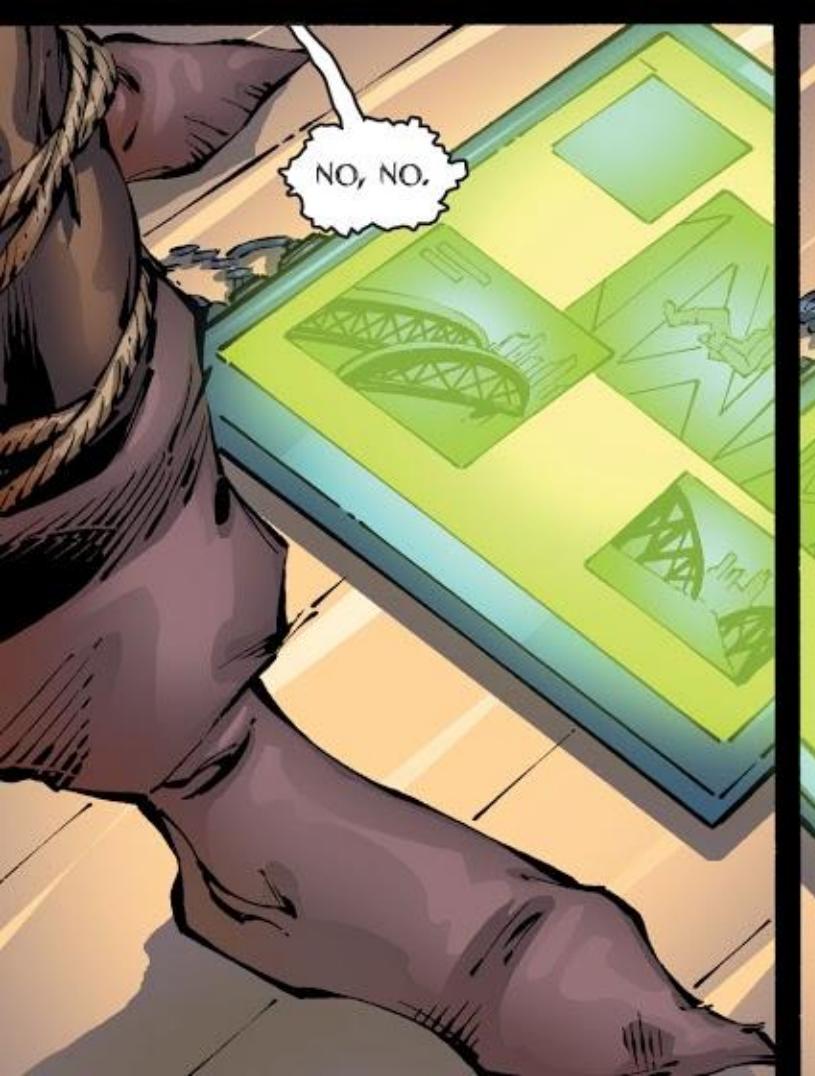
WHICH, I GOTTA SAY--

--IS EXACTLY WHAT SCARECROW HAS MADE GOTHAM BAY BRIDGE INTO.

"HE SAID HE'S GOING TO GAS EVERYONE ON THE BRIDGE. WE FIGURE IT'S NEARLY 3,000 PEOPLE."

"HE NAILED AT LEAST FIFTY CIVILIANS AS HE SHUT IT DOWN AND TRICKED OUT THE EXITS WITH MINES AND TRIP WIRE."

"WE'D TRY AND TAKE HIM OUT, BUT MY SHARPSHOOTERS HAVE SPOTTED ELECTRICAL LEADS ALL OVER HIM."



--SCARY."









THAT'S
WHY I'M
HERE.

JUST THE BEGINNING...



novus
Distributions