



DC
COMICS™

24

SCOTT
SNYDER
GREG
CAPULLO
DANNY
MIKI

ZERO YEAR

BATMAN

THE NEW 52!



DEC 2013

RATED T TEEN

DCCOMICS.COM



"...THE KIND THIS CITY REWARDS."

WELCOME TO
GOTHAM, GREATEST
CITY IN THE
COUNTRY!

COME ON,
TAKE THE
DAMN THING
ALREADY.

I'M GETTING OLD WAITING
ON YOU.

SLOW DOWN,
WILL YOU? IT'S
PRESSURIZED GAS.
YOU BANG IT AROUND
LIKE THAT AND THE
COOLING DISK WILL
FALL OFF AND--

AND WHAT? IT'S
OXYGEN. WE'LL ALL
BREATHE A LITTLE
CLEANER IS ALL.

STOP
IT!

HEH.
I'M JUST
KIDDING. WHAT
ARE YOU,
ANYWAY, A
CHEMIST?

CLANG
CLANG

AS A MATTER OF
FACT, I AM. SO
YOU KNOW, I'M
A HIGH SCHOOL
CHEMISTRY
TEACHER IN THE
NARROWS
AND--

WHOA! WHOA!
I DON'T WANT TO
KNOW, MAN. WHAT
THE HELL'S
WRONG WITH
YOU? YOU KNOW
THE RULES.

I'M SORRY.
I'M JUST...LET'S
JUST GET THIS
OVER WITH. THE
POLICE HAVE AN
EASY VIEW OF US
UP HERE.

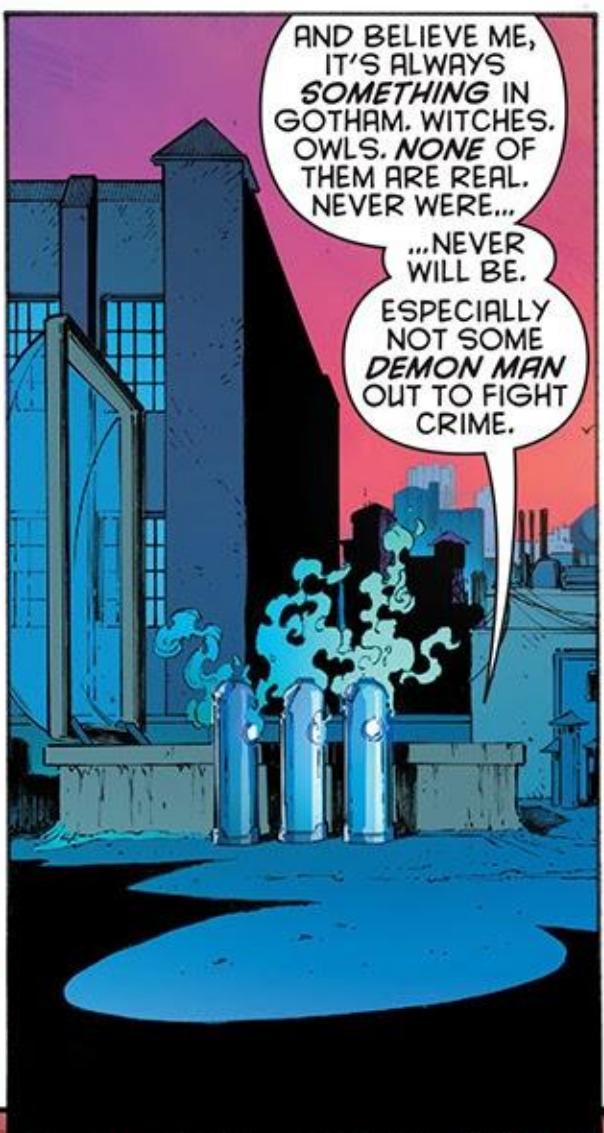
POLICE, EH? I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE
SCARED OF. HE'S COMING TO GET
YOU, SCHOOLTEACHER! COMING
TO GET US ALL!

LOOK, I HEARD
HE TOOK SEVEN OF
US DOWN LAST NIGHT.
I HAVE A FAMILY...I WAS
BLACKMAILED INTO
THIS, MAN. MY IDENTITY
GETS OUT THERE, AND
I CAN'T--

THE COPS
MADE HIM UP.
OR THE FALCONES
AS A HAIL MARY.
GET OVER IT.

BELIEVE ME,
THERE'S NOTHING
LURKING IN THE
SHADOWS.





...SIXTY-SEVEN? WHERE'D YOU...

...GO?





Paid for by People to elect Sebastian Hady for mayor.

GUYS?

PSST. HEY,
YOU...

NATIVE
ROOTS. COME
CLOSER...

...MY BAT...
IT STILL NEEDS
A HEAD.



ZERO YEAR

DARK CITY PART ONE

SCOTT SNYDER
WRITER

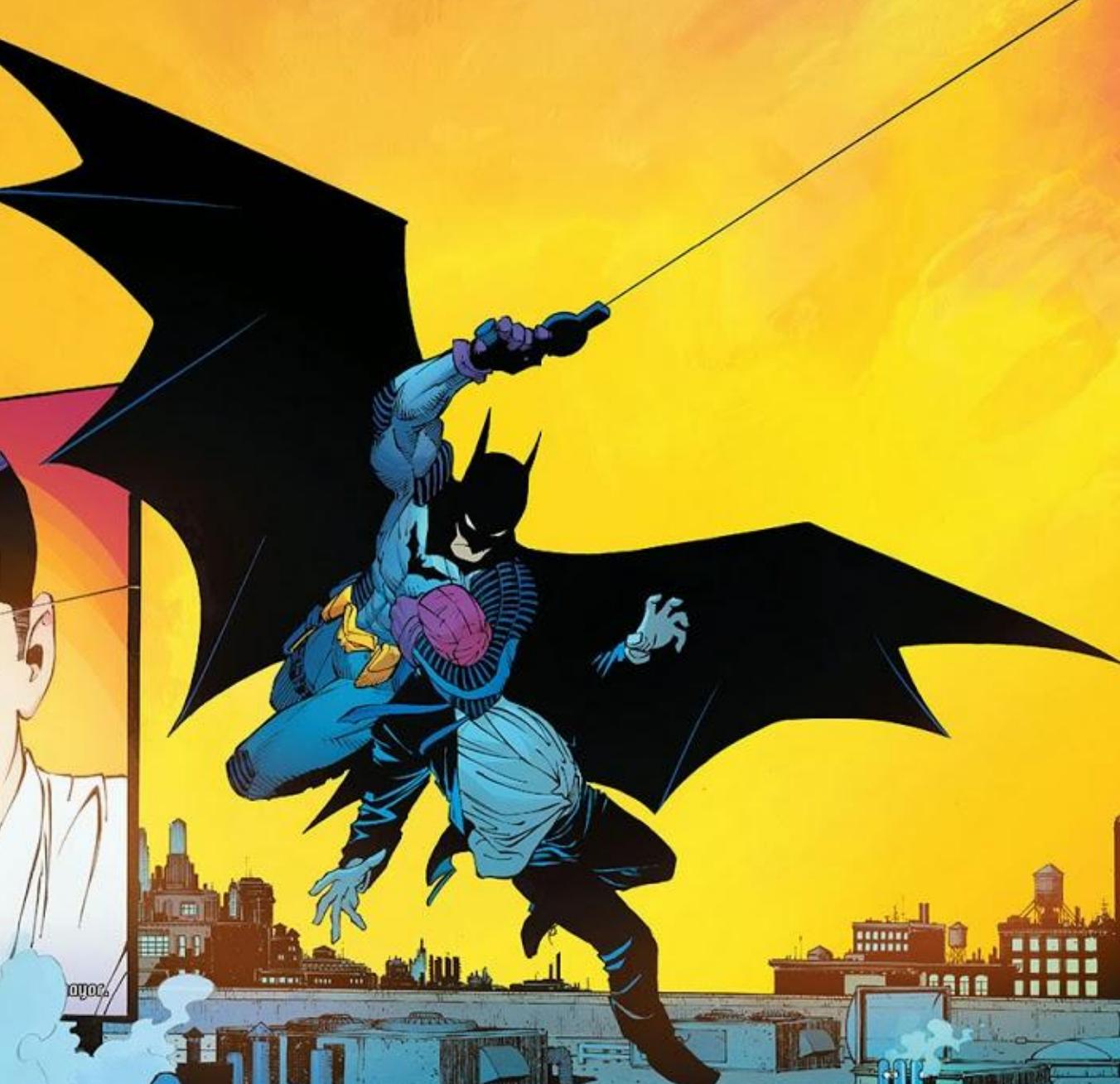
GREG CAPULLO
PENCILLER

DANNY MIKI - INKER

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CAPULLO & PLASCENCIA - COVER • GUILLEM MARCH - VARIANT COVER
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BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

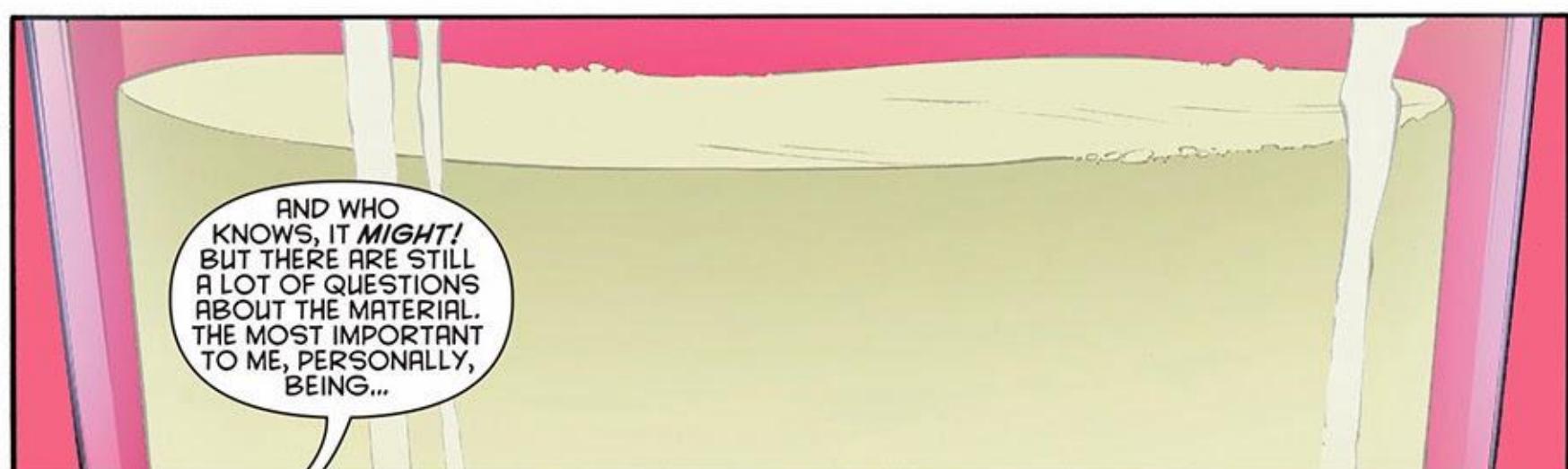
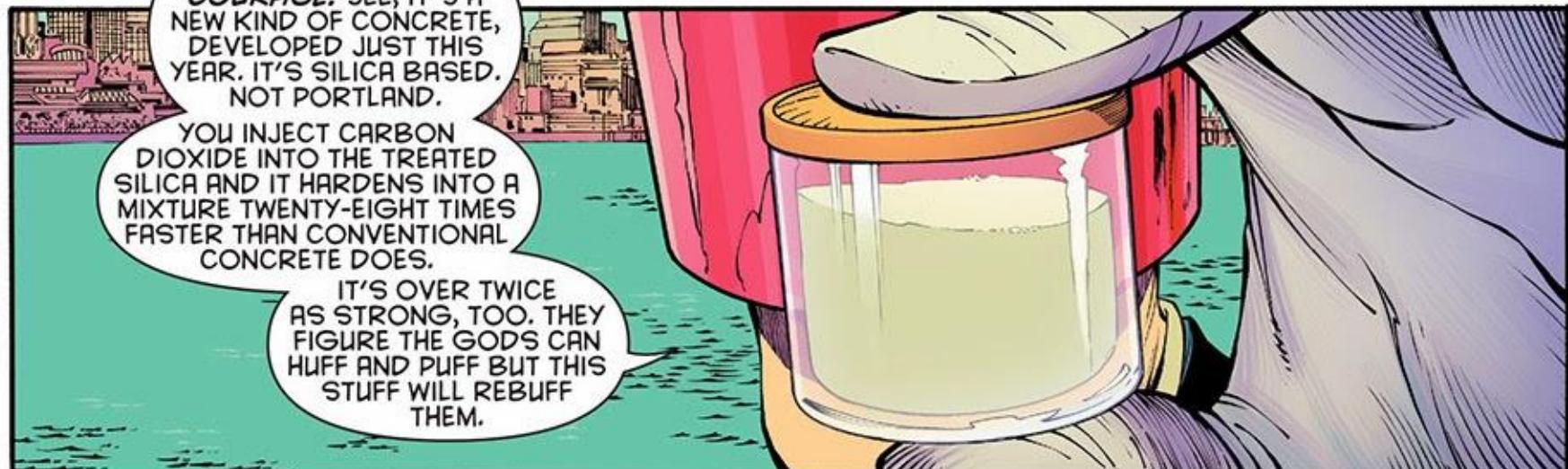
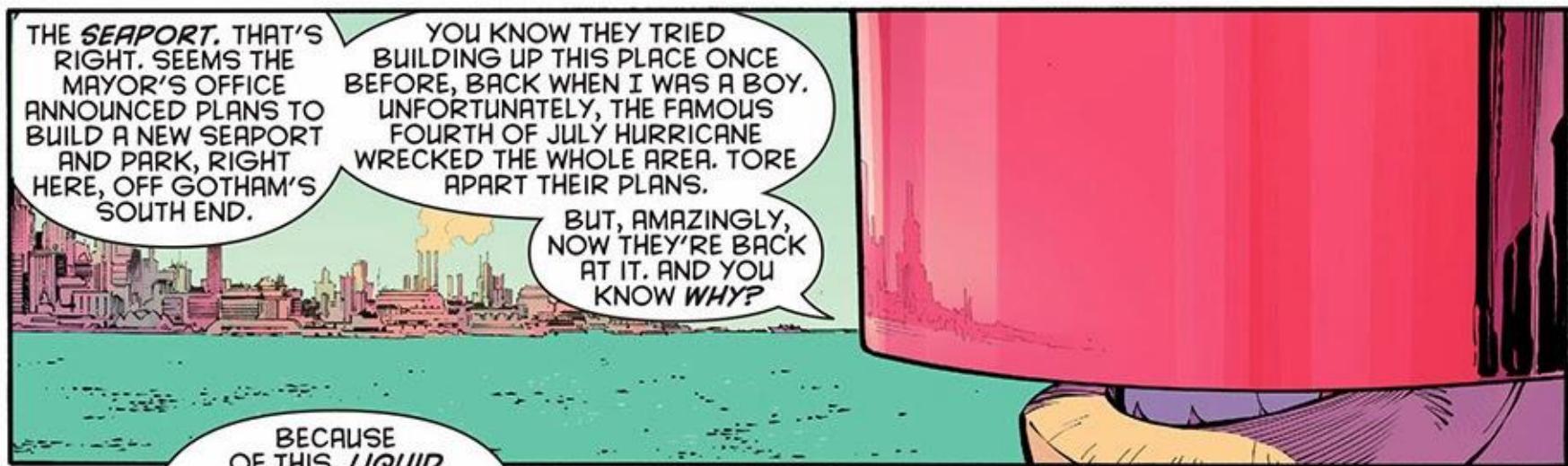
WELCOME TO
THE COUNTRY!

Paid for by People to elect Sebas...



PAGES 44-54
SCOTT SNYDER & JAMES TYNION - STORY
RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE - ART
DAVE McCAGI - COLORIST • TAYLOR ESPOSITO - LETTERER

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH THIS CITY, BATMAN?!





"THEY'RE PLANNING SOMETHING, ALFRED. HE IS."

"YOU SEE A PATTERN?"

"YES..."

"...NO..."

"...I SEE THE MAKINGS OF ONE."

"THEIR BIGGEST CREWS ARE STEALING CHEMICALS. A STORE OF SULFURIC ACID. A TRUCK FILLED WITH ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL-BASED CLEANER."

"BUT THE SMALLER CREWS ARE TAKING THINGS RIGHT AND LEFT. THEY'RE STEPPING UP RAPIDLY, BUT TAKING MATERIAL THAT'S USELESS, NONSENICAL. PAINT. ICE CREAM POWDER."

"IT SOUNDS VERY RANDOM, SIR."

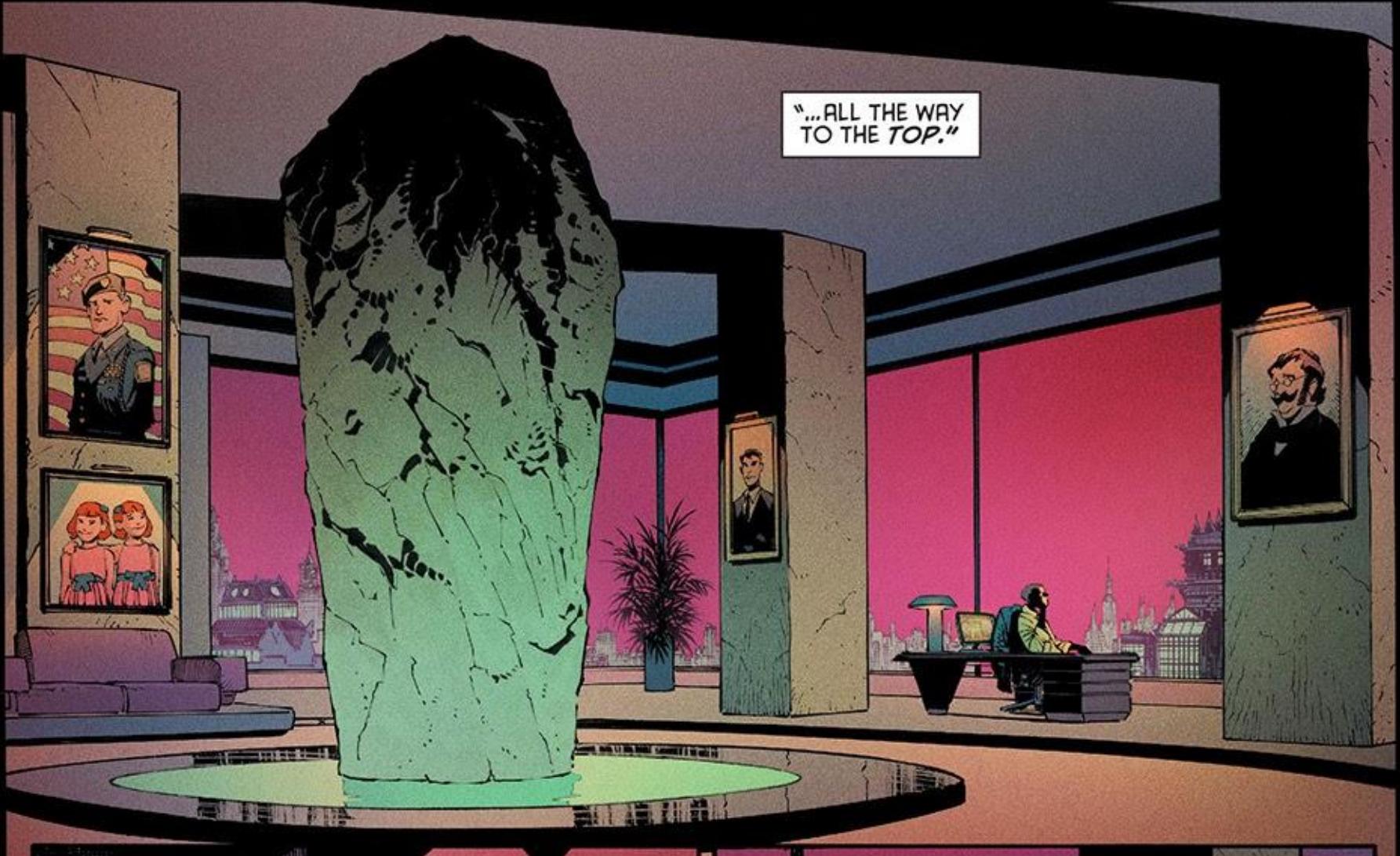
"TOO RANDOM. THEY'RE TRYING TO COVER THE CHEMICAL THEFTS WITH THESE OTHER ONES. DROWN THEM OUT."

"THIS MAN, RED HOOD ONE. HE HAS SOME ENDGAME IN MIND. I KNOW HE DOES. AND MY FEAR IS THAT BATMAN HAS SPED IT UP."

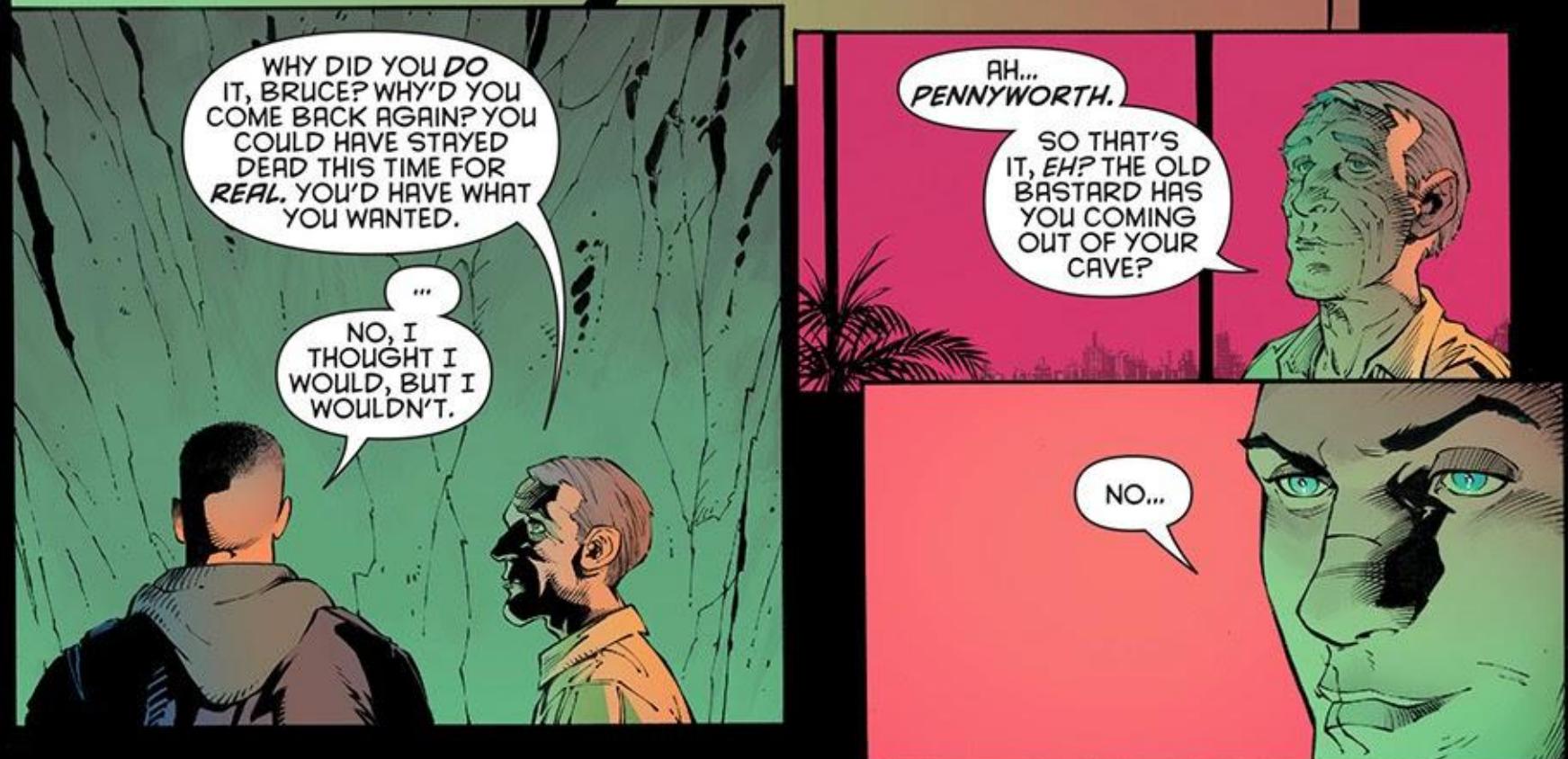
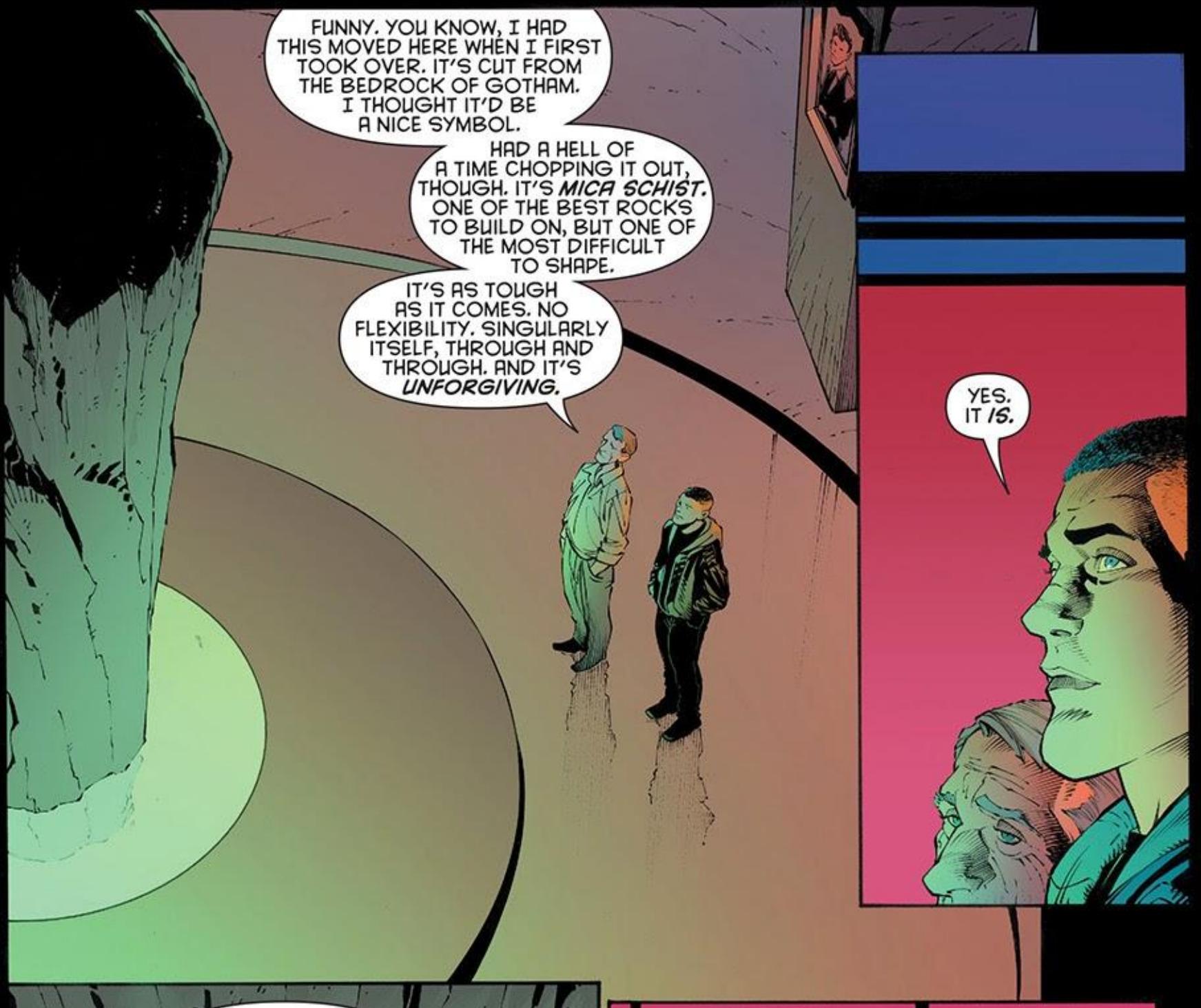
"I CAN'T SEE IT, THOUGH, ALFRED. I CAN'T GET PURCHASE ON IT FROM HERE."

"YOU'LL JUST NEED TO GO HIGHER, SIR..."

“...ALL THE WAY
TO THE TOP.”







"...I WOULDN'T GO
QUITE THAT FAR."

WATCH YOUR
STEP, ALFRED, THE
RUNGS ARE
SLIPPERY.

SO LONG
AS YOU DON'T
INSTALL A FIRE
POLE, I'LL
MANAGE, SIR.



THE CAVE ROOF,
OVER THERE--IT'S NEARLY
AT SURFACE. WITH A LITTLE
WORK, WE'LL CREATE AN
ENTRANCE FROM INSIDE
THE STUDY.

A CAVE HOLE
IN THE STUDY.
LOVELY. WHAT HAVE
YOU FOUND?

HERE, THE RED
HOOD GANG HAS BEEN
RAIDING BASICALLY
EVERY WAYNE DEPOT IN
THE CITY. THERE'S
BARELY ANYTHING THEY
HAVEN'T HIT.

BARELY?

YES. AND
THAT'S THE
THING. THIS
FACILITY HERE...

...IT'S FULL
OF MATERIAL YOU'D
THINK THE GANG WOULD
WANT, BUT THEY HAVEN'T
TOUCHED IT. IT'S BASICALLY
THE ONLY WAYNE SITE
LEFT ALONE.

WHY
WOULD
THEY...

...OH,
NO.



BUT WITH
ACCESS
TO--

I KNOW, ALFRED.
PLUS, GIVEN WHAT
THEY'VE STOLEN SO
FAR... I JUST REALIZED
IT MOMENTS AGO,
TOO.

I KNOW WHAT
THEY'RE PLANNING.
AND WHEN THEY'RE
GOING TO DO IT. I
JUST DON'T KNOW
HOW TO STOP IT.

YOU MUST, SIR. THE
FACILITY IS HEAVILY
GUARDED, BUT PERHAPS
IF YOU... I DON'T KNOW,
IF BATMAN--

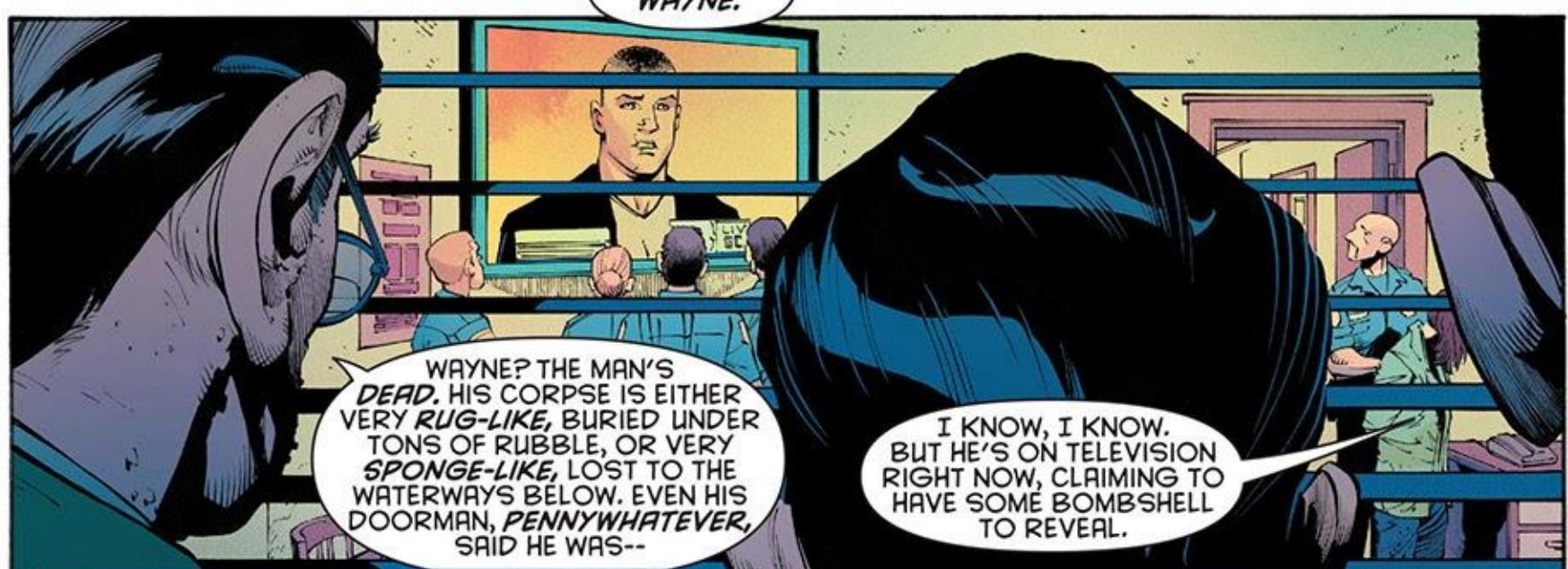
I DON'T THINK
BATMAN CAN
HANDLE THIS ONE,
ALFRED.

I DON'T
THINK HE
SHOULD,
EITHER.

BUT,
SIR--

I THINK THIS IS A
JOB FOR SOMEONE
ELSE.

"SIR, YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO BELIEVE
THIS ONE..."





Bruce Wayne ALIVE?

GNN

DANGER

ALA

GNBC

BREAKING NEWS

"...THE TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD BILLIONAIRE WAS DECLARED LEGALLY DEAD YEARS AGO, AFTER LEAVING GOTHAM, BUT NOW IT SEEMS..."

"...HE'S ALIVE AND WELL, DESPITE RECENT REPORTS THAT HE'D BEEN KILLED IN AN EXPLOSION IN CRIME ALLEY, WHERE HE'D BEEN SAID TO HAVE TAKEN UP RESIDENCE..."

"...NOW, MR. WAYNE IS BACK, IT SEEMS. THE BIG QUESTION ON EVERYONE'S MIND IS: WHAT DOES HE HAVE TO SAY?"

MR. WAYNE!

WHY DID YOU STAY AWAY FROM GOTHAM FOR SO LONG? DID YOU LEAVE A FAMILY BEHIND IN--

IS IT TRUE YOUR PARENTS LEFT YOU IN EXCESS OF--

ELECTRIC FENCE
KEEP OFF-KEE

HELLO.

A LOT OF YOU DON'T KNOW ME.

BUT MY NAME...MY NAME IS **BRUCE WAYNE**, AND I'M HERE TODAY TO ASK YOU SOMETHING. JUST ONE THING. AND IT'S THIS...

...WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT GOTHAM CITY?

DANGER

KEEP OFF

NO, I MEAN IT. YOU OUT THERE. EVERYONE LOOKING AT THIS BROADCAST. WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT THIS CITY?

I MEAN, IT'S AN AWFUL PLACE TO LIVE.

HEH, YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.

DANGER

ELECTRIC FENCE

KEEP OFF

RIGHT? I MEAN, IT'S TERRIBLE. IT'S UNAFFORDABLE, DANGEROUS AND FULL OF RAIN. IT'S A MONSTER.

SO WHY?
WHY DO YOU LOVE IT?

E
L
F
O

KEEP OFF



THE TRUTH IS, ONLY
YOU KNOW WHY YOU *STAY*
HERE. WHY YOU *PUT UP WITH*
THIS PLACE.

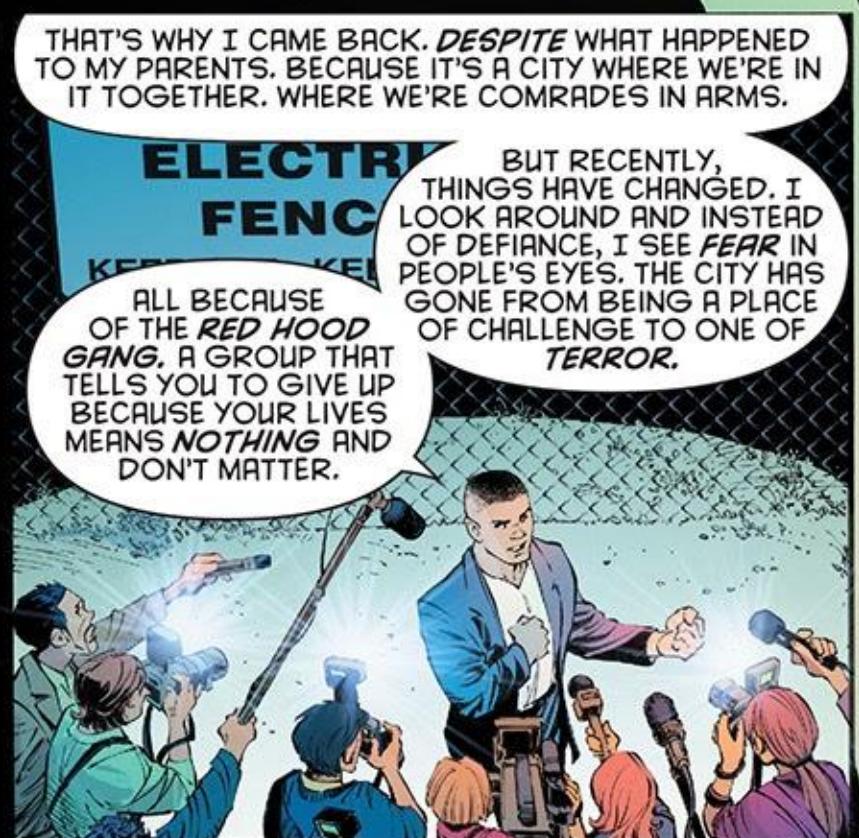
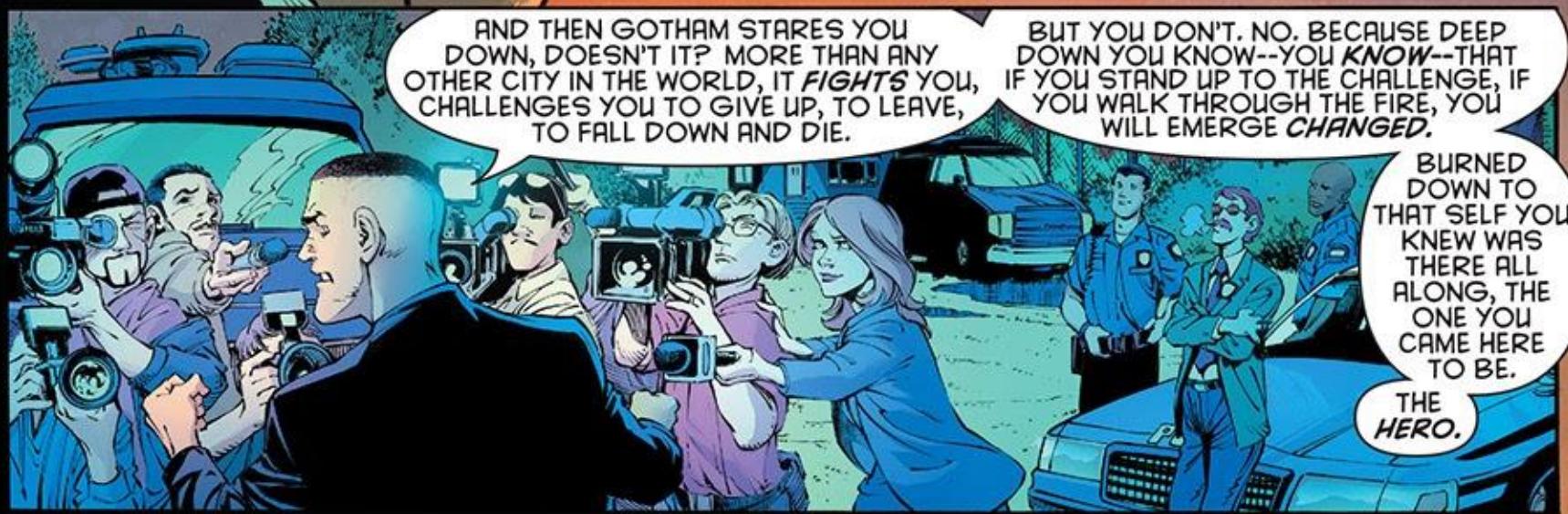
OR MAYBE YOU DON'T
KNOW. I DIDN'T KNOW WHY
I CAME BACK UNTIL JUST A
LITTLE WHILE AGO.

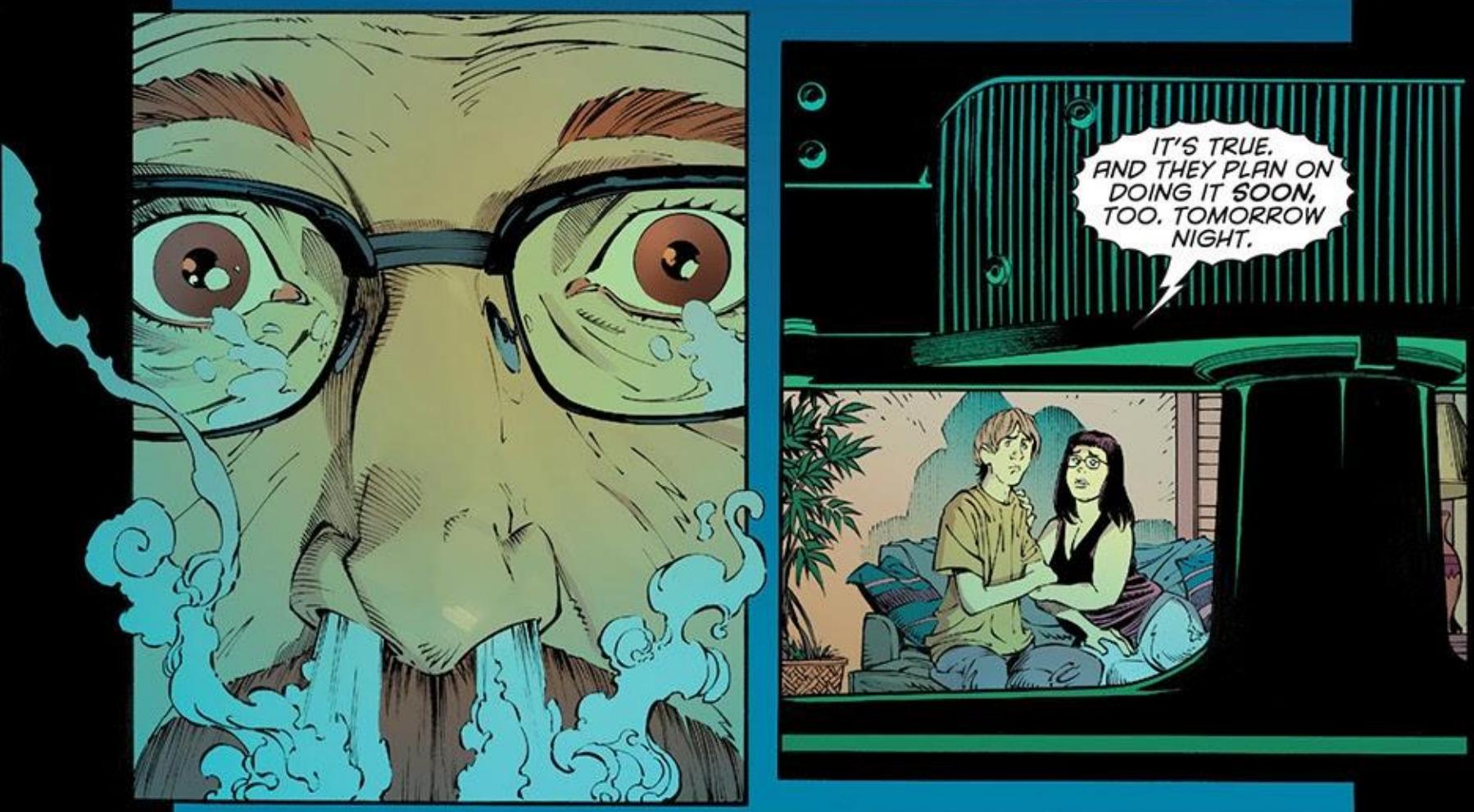
BUT STANDING HERE
TODAY, RIGHT NOW, I *CAN*
TELL YOU WHY I LOVE IT. I
LOVE IT BECAUSE IT'S A CITY
PEOPLE COME TO BECAUSE
THEY WANT TO BECOME
SOMETHING *MORE* THAN
WHAT THEY ARE.

I USED TO COME HERE
AFTER SCHOOL AND IMAGINE
THIS GREAT PERSON I MIGHT
ONE DAY BECOME.

AND WHAT
I'M SAYING IS,
MAYBE THAT'S THE
THING. MAYBE
THAT'S WHY.

WE COME HERE, TO
GOTHAM, BECAUSE IT'S
TRANSFORMATIVE, THIS PLACE. WE
COME HERE WITH OUR DREAMS AND
THE CITY, IT LOOKS AT US WITH ITS
UNBLINKING STONE EYE--AN EYE THAT
SEES ALL OUR FAULTS, EVERYTHING
WE'RE AFRAID IS TRUE ABOUT
OURSELVES--AND IT SAYS:
"TRY. I DARE YOU."









"...THE PLACE IS A
GIANT DAMNED
DIRTY BOMB!"

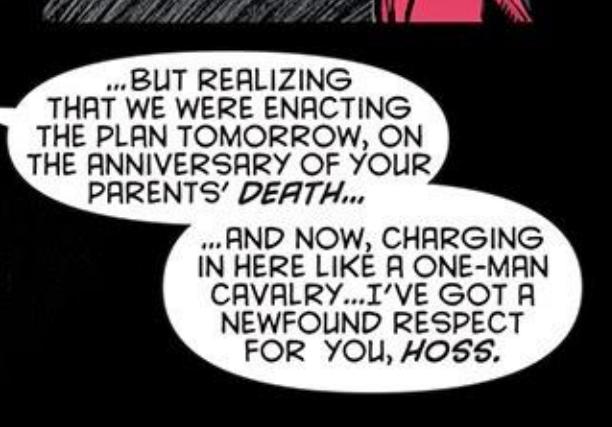
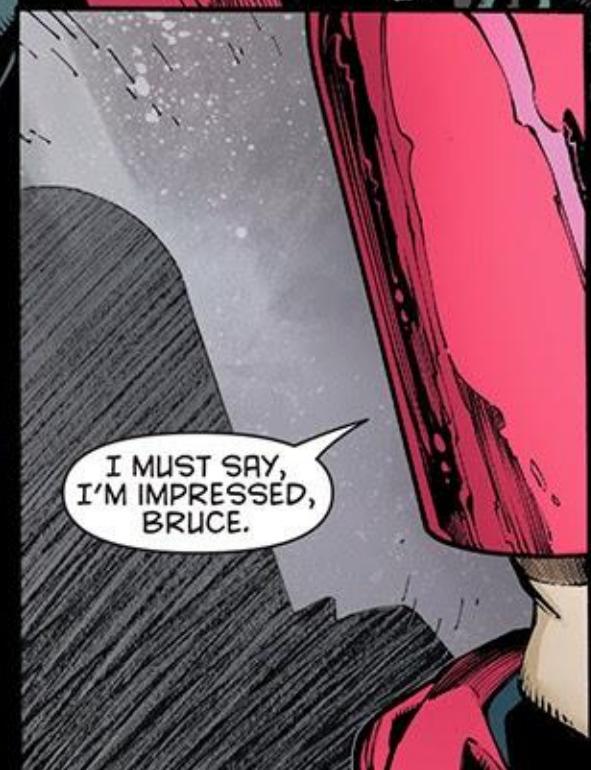
"...ALFRED, IT'S
WORSE THAN I
IMAGINED.

YEP. IT IS.

HOW SWEET OF YOU, BRUCE. WE THREW YOU A PARTY AT YOUR PLACE ON YOUR BIG NIGHT, SO YOU DECIDED TO THROW US ONE ON OURS. VERY THOUGHTFUL.

LET'S JUST MAKE IT A LITTLE MORE EXCLUSIVE, SHALL WE?

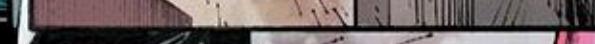
SHUT THE DOORS!



"...RIGHT NOW, WE'RE LOADING WHAT WE CAN OF OUR 'COCKTAIL,' AS YOU CALLED IT, ONTO TRUCKS..."

"...IT'S NOT QUITE READY YET, STILL BUBBLING, TOILING AND TROUBLING, BUT SO BE IT. THOSE TRUCKS WILL EXIT THIS PLACE THROUGH THE BACK TUNNELS WHERE THERE WILL BE NO RESISTANCE, SEEING AS NO ONE'S HAD TIME TO SET ANY UP...."

"...ONCE THE TRUCKS LEAVE, WE WILL, TOO. AND YOUR FRIENDS, THE GOOD OLD G.C.P.D., WILL RUSH IN..."



AND HONESTLY, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE TO SEE THIS, AT THE END. THE CIRCLE OPENED FIFTEEN YEARS AGO WITH YOUR PARENTS' DEATHS, AND NOW IT CLOSES WITH YOURS, HERE, TONIGHT.

TOMORROW, IT WILL OPEN AGAIN WITH A NEW GOTHAM. A GOTHAM AWAKE TO THE TRUTH OF THINGS--THE UGLY, WONDERFUL TRUTH.

YOU DON'T STAND FOR ANY TRUTH AT THE HEART OF ANYTHING.

YOU PRETEND YOU DO, TALKING ABOUT THE RANDOMNESS OF LIFE, THE MEANINGLESSNESS, BUT IT'S ALL A SHAM.

MY PARENTS' DEATH MIGHT HAVE BEEN MEANINGLESS, BUT THEIR LIVES WERE ANYTHING BUT. AND YES, IT ALL MIGHT END AT ANY MOMENT FOR ANY OF US, IN VIOLENCE OR NOT, BUT WHAT MATTERS IS WHAT WE DO BEFORE THAT.

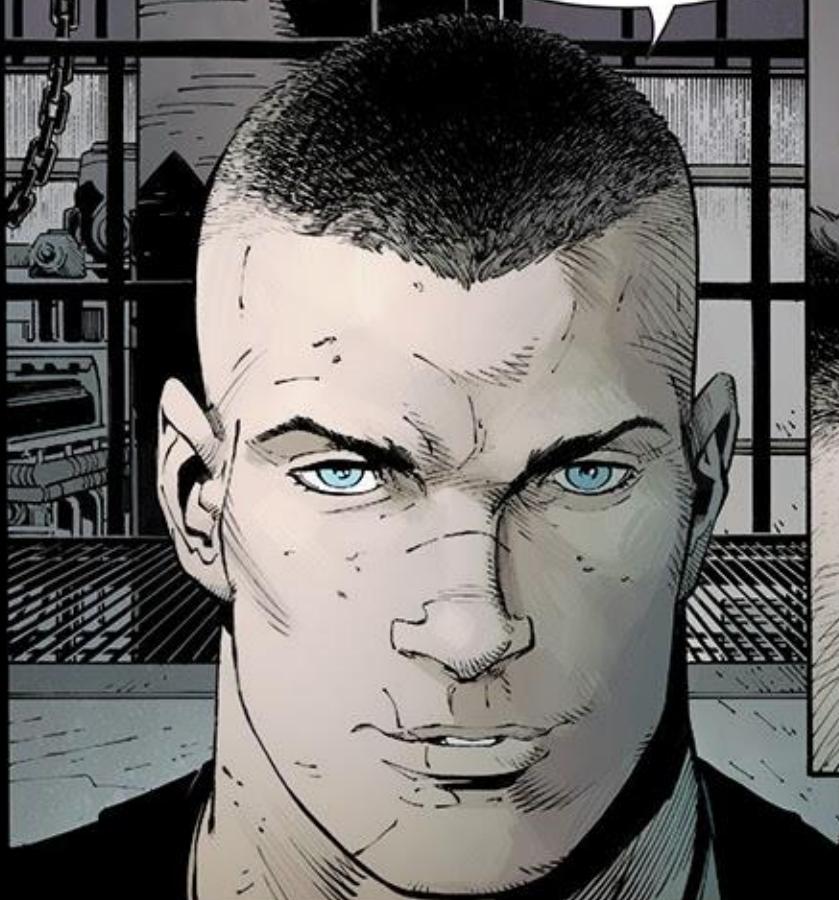
THE LIVES WE LEAD. AND YOURS IS AN ABOMINATION. YOU'RE JUST AN EVIL MAN, PRETENDING TO HAVE A CAUSE.

YOU'RE SO FULL OF #\$%.

IS THAT SO?

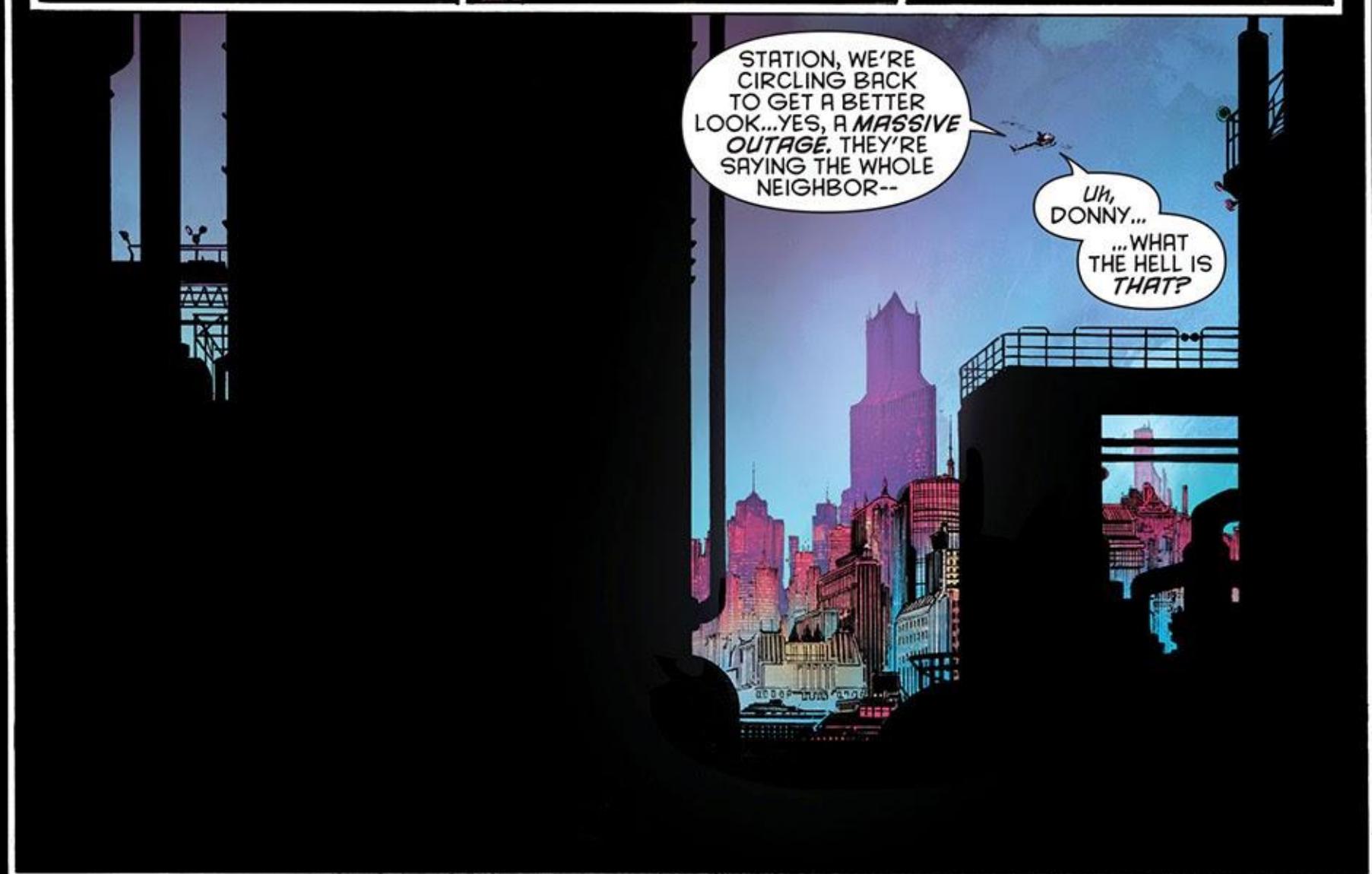
MAYBE THERE'S NO NEED TO KEEP YOU AROUND, BRUCE. I MEAN, YOU KNOW HOW ALL OF THIS IS GOING TO END.

AND SO, MAYBE IT'S BEST FOR THE CIRCLE TO...



CLK

...CLOSE?







ALL RIGHT,
BRUCE, WHERE'D
YOU RUN OFF
TO?

AH... HE'S THERE,
ON THE CATWALK.
GET HIM.



zzzt

AAAGH!

MY EYES!







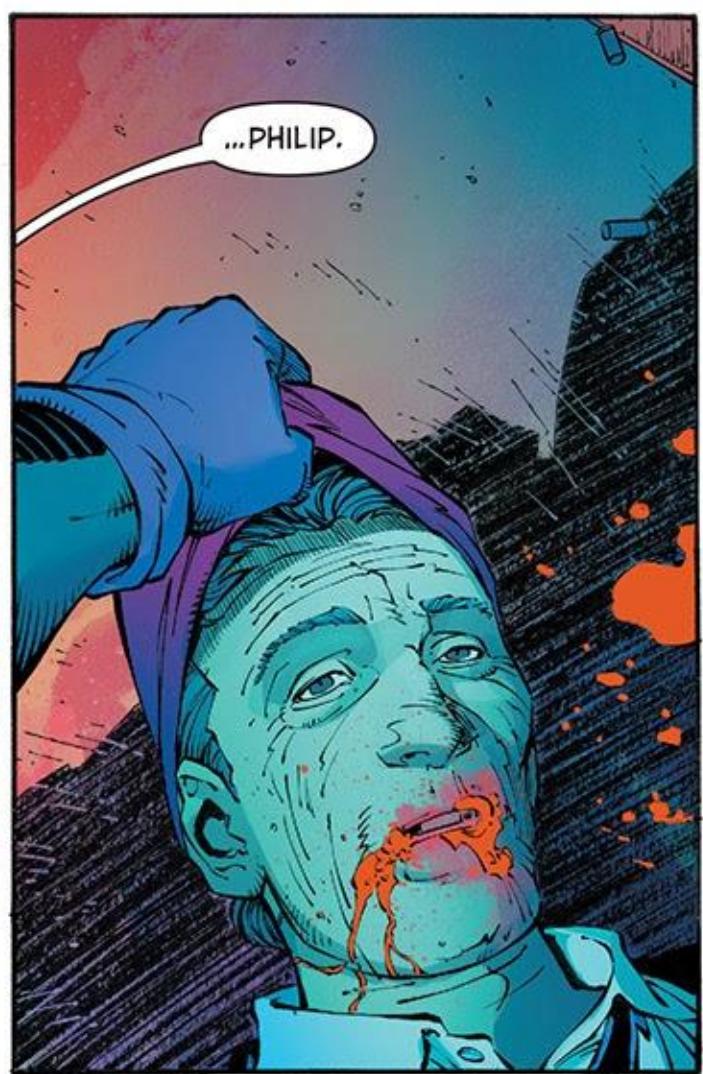
BACK
TO WORK,
THEN.

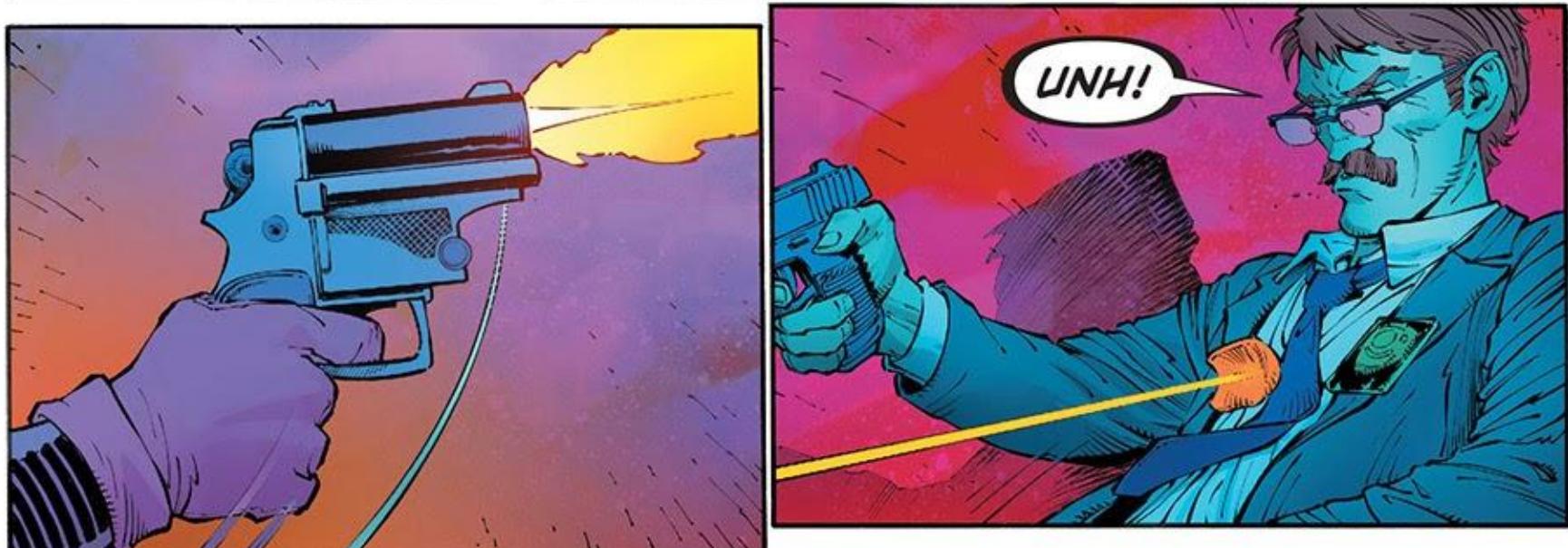












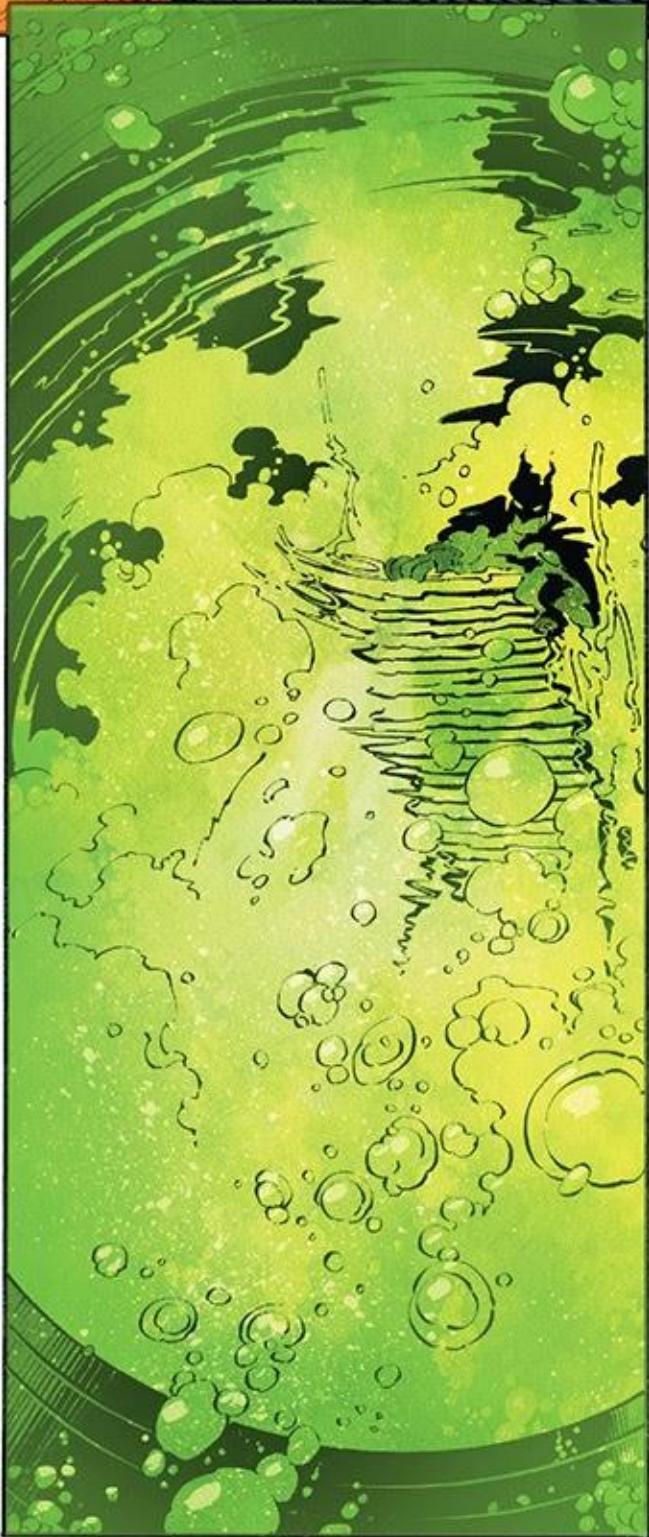
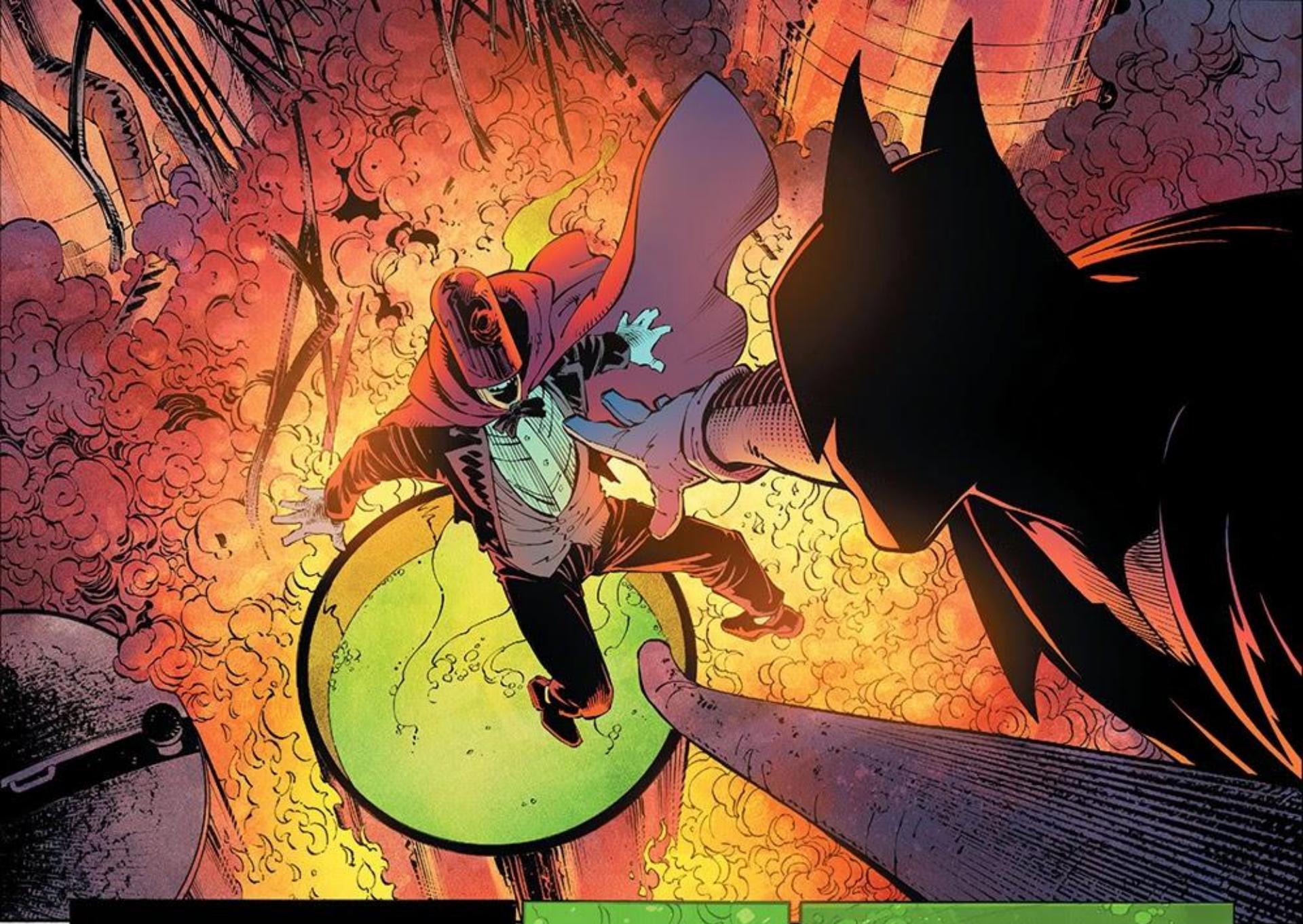




















"I'M SAYING THAT IT'S ALL A MYSTERY, ALFRED."

"ALL WE KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT AT SOME POINT IN THE PAST YEAR, SOMEONE MURDERED DISTAL, THE ORIGINAL RED HOOD LEADER, AND TOOK HIS PLACE."

"WHETHER THAT HAPPENED MONTHS AGO, WEEKS AGO, OR JUST DAYS AGO, WE CAN'T BE SURE."

"MEANING, FOR ALL I KNOW, THE MAN I'VE BEEN FACING DOWN THESE PAST FEW WEEKS WAS SWITCHED OUT FOR SOME PATSY READING HIS LINES THE DAY OF THE A.C.E. CHEM STANDOFF."

"OR, DISTAL COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED WEEKS AGO, AND THE MAN I'VE BEEN FACING IS THE SAME ONE WHO FELL INTO THAT VAT AT A.C.E.... THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING."

"HELL, THERE'S EVEN A CHANCE THE MAN I CHASED UP ON TO THE ROOF OF A.C.E. SWITCHED PLACES WITH AN IMPOSTER, SOME POOR FALL GUY, WHILE THE REAL RED HOOD LEADER, THE ONE WHO KILLED DISTAL, CLIMBED DOWN A FIRE ESCAPE AND FLED."

"NOW YOU'RE JUST PLAYING MULTIPLE CHOICE WITH POSSIBILITIES, SIR."

AND AFTER ALL, WHAT MATTERS IS THAT THE RED HOOD GANG IS FINISHED. CORRECT?

SIR?

YOU KNOW...

... THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER, ABOUT THE CITIZENS OF THIS CITY FIGURING OUT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BRUCE WAYNE AND BATMAN, I HAVE TO SAY, I'M NOT SO CERTAIN THEY WILL.

AND WHY IS THAT?

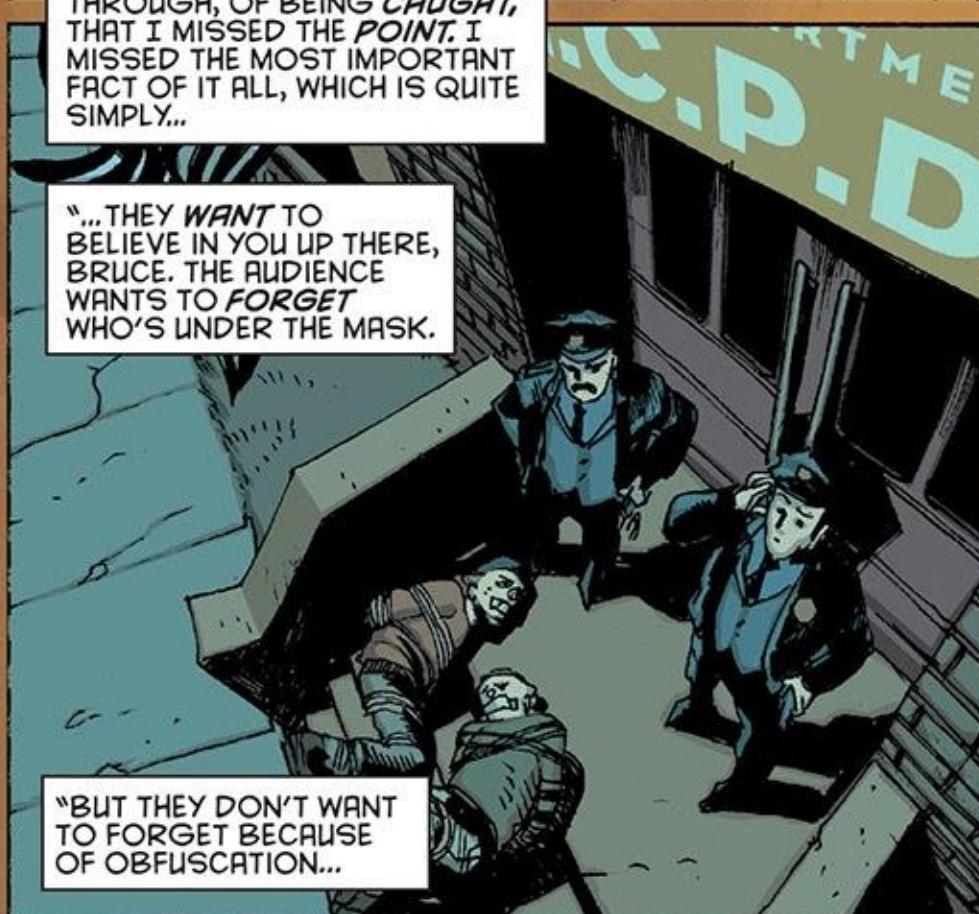
WELL, WHEN I BEGAN IN THEATER AS A YOUNG MAN, I REMEMBER BEING VERY CONCERNED WITH THE VERISIMILITUDE OF EVERY CHARACTER I PLAYED.

WAS I USING THE CORRECT DIALECT? WAS MY COSTUME ACCURATE? AND I REMEMBER GOING ON STAGE, SO PREOCCUPIED WITH THESE SORTS OF EFFORTS--EFFORTS TO OBSCURE THE FACT THAT IT WAS JUST ME, A YOUNG MAN FROM YORK THEY WERE WATCHING, THAT I KEPT FAILING UP THERE. FAILING MISERABLY, TOO.



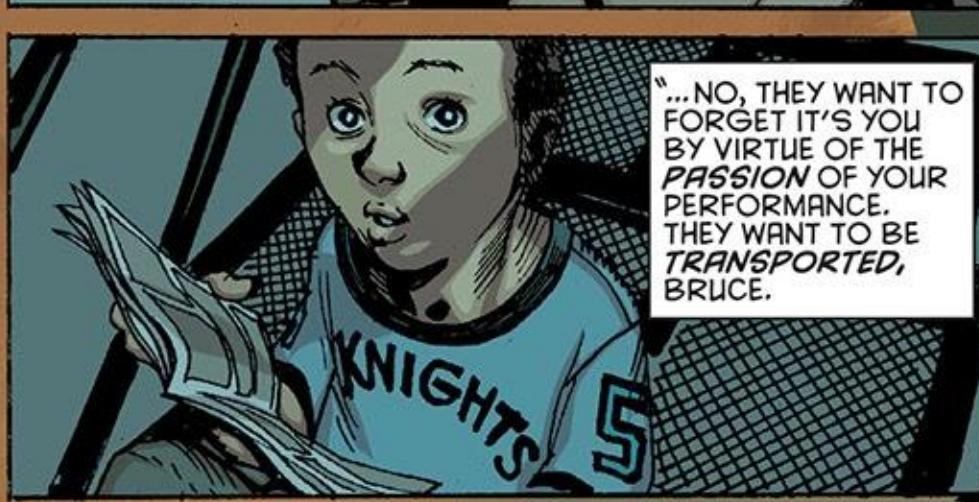
"I WAS JUST SO AFRAID, BRUCE.

"SO AFRAID OF BEING SEEN THROUGH, OF BEING CAUGHT, THAT I MISSED THE POINT. I MISSED THE MOST IMPORTANT FACT OF IT ALL, WHICH IS QUITE SIMPLY...



"...THEY WANT TO BELIEVE IN YOU UP THERE, BRUCE. THE AUDIENCE WANTS TO FORGET WHO'S UNDER THE MASK.

"BUT THEY DON'T WANT TO FORGET BECAUSE OF OBFUSCATION..."



"...NO, THEY WANT TO FORGET IT'S YOU BY VIRTUE OF THE PASSION OF YOUR PERFORMANCE. THEY WANT TO BE TRANSPORTED, BRUCE.



"TRANSPORTED TO A WORLD WHERE BIGGER TRUTHS ARE AT WORK, AND ANYTHING--ANYTHING--CAN HAPPEN. A WORLD WHERE THE IMPOSSIBLE IS POSSIBLE.



"BATMAN CAN BE SOMETHING LIKE THAT FOR THEM, BRUCE. SOMEONE TRANSPORTING.

"SOMEONE WHO DEFIES EVERY DAMN RULE OF LOGIC THAT GOVERNS THEIR LIVES."

WHAT I'M SAYING IS, IF YOU PLAY BATMAN RIGHT, THEY WON'T WANT TO FIGURE OUT WHO'S BEHIND THE COWL.

THAT'S THE KEY. AND YOU'RE DOING IT. YOU'RE PLAYING HIM BEAUTIFULLY, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF.

ALFRED. I...I NEVER SAID I'M SORRY.

NEITHER DID I. BUT LET ME SAY THAT I THINK...

...NO, I KNOW YOUR PARENTS WOULD BE PROUD OF YOU, BRUCE.

YOU'RE STILL SHARING THE JAIL CELL WITH ME.

AND THAT'S "MASTER BRUCE", ALFRED. SOME ETIQUETTE, PLEASE.

Heh. FORGIVE ME, SIR. I--

AHEM, AHEM! WELL HELLO, GOTHAM!

WHAT THE...?



...THE RIDDLE
OF THE SPHINX.
THE LESSER-
KNOWN SECOND
RIDDLE.

HERE'S
YOUR HINT.
ONE SISTER
SAYS...

I
AM THE
NIGHT.

...I
AM THE
DAY...

...AND
THE OTHER
SISTER
SAYS...

SOLVE
RIDD

SO
BRING ON
THE DARK, DARK
NIGHT!

GOTHAM CITY HOSPITAL



ALL RIGHT,
GOTHAM,
TIME TO GET
SMART!

YOU'RE
GOING TO HAVE
TO DO BETTER
THAN THAT...OR THE
CITY DIES FOR
REAL!

NOW...

...LET THE
GAMES
BEGIN!

NEXT

DARK CITY continues