

BATMAN

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BRUBAKER • McDANIEL • STORY



FREE-FALLING FROM 30 STORIES UP DOESN'T LEAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR YOUR LIFE TO FLASH BEFORE YOUR EYES.

JUST ENOUGH TO REFLECT ON THE IMMEDIATE EVENTS...

IN THIS CASE, I WAS TRYING TO STOP AN ASSASSIN FROM KILLING A MAN NAMED LEW MOXON, WHO WAS ONCE A PROMINENT MOBSTER IN GOTHAM.

AND WHOSE DAUGHTER, MALLORY, THREW ME FOR A LOOP BY BRINGING BACK MEMORIES OF THE HAPPY LIFE I ONCE LED... BEFORE MY PARENTS DIED.

SO, THEN WHAT DID I DO? I DIVED OUT THE WINDOW AT ONE OF THE FINEST MARKSMEN ON THE PLANET.

BRILLIANT.

SHOT THROUGH THE HEART

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BATMAN
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BOB KANE

DAMN...NEED
TO GET A GRIP,
SLOW MY
DESCENT...

NOT AN EASY
THING TO DO.

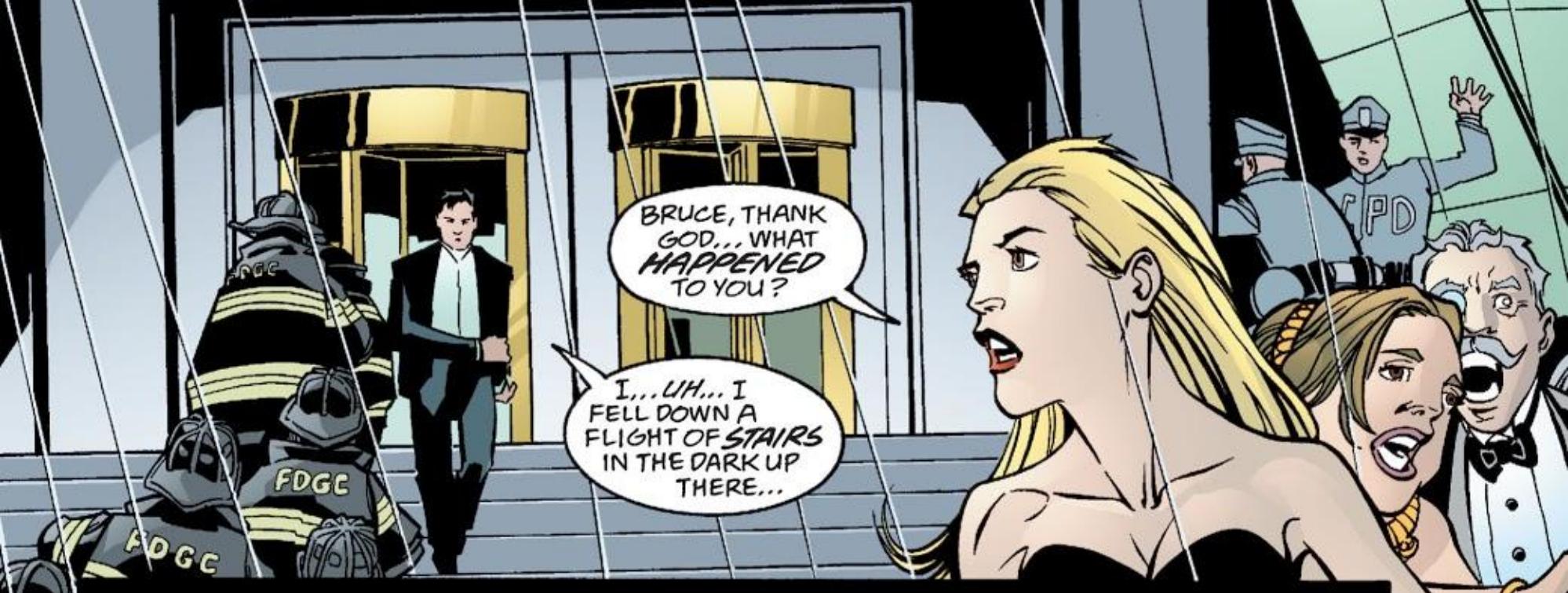


OKAY... LET'S TRY
SOMETHING ELSE...
HAVE TO TIME THIS
JUST RIGHT...

...HOPE I SLOWED
DOWN ENOUGH THAT
THIS DOESN'T HURT
TOO BADLY.

DISLOCATED SHOULDER, DAMN...
AND DEADSHOT COULD BE
ANYWHERE NOW.

WELL, BETTER GET
MOVING, DON'T
WANT TOO MANY
QUESTIONS...



ARE YOU
SURE YOU'RE
OKAY, BRUCE?

REALLY, IT'S NO BIG DEAL
AT ALL. I DON'T EVEN NEED
THE SLING, BUT SASHA, MY
BODYGUARD, INSISTED...

WELL, A MAN NEEDS A
WOMAN LOOKING AFTER
HIM, WAYNE, EVEN IF
HE HAS TO PAY HER
SOMETIMES...

DADDY,
PLEASE.
DON'T BE
VULGAR.

AH, I'M JUST
KIDDING
AROUND...

ANYWAY, BACK TO
WHAT I WAS SAYING
BEFORE -- THIS NEW
GOTHAM HAS ONE
THING OVER THE
OLD ONE...
OPPORTUNITY.

YOU'RE A BUSINESSMAN,
YOU MUST KNOW WHAT
I MEAN...

I'M NOT SURE
I DO, MR. MOXON...
I USUALLY LET
LUCIUS FOX TAKE
CARE OF THE
BUSINESS END
OF THINGS.

NO, THAT'S A MISTAKE...
YOU'VE GOTTA BE HANDS-ON
IF YOU WANNA SURVIVE
IN THIS WORLD...

IN THE OLD DAYS,
YOU COULD TRUST
PEOPLE... BUT TODAY
IT'S DIFFERENT.

PEOPLE DON'T HAVE THE
SAME RESPECT FOR THINGS
THAT THEY USED TO... IT'S
DOG-EAT-DOG.

OR MORE LIKE, DOG-
HACKS-INTO-OTHER-
DOG'S COMPUTER-
AND-CRASHES-
THEIR-SYSTEM.



AND WHERE IS YOUR BODYGUARD TONIGHT, BRUCE?

WHAT...? OH, SASHA'S IN THE CAR, WITH THE DRIVER... SHE DIDN'T LIKE IT, BUT SHE AGREED THE SECURITY IN YOUR BUILDING LOOKED PRETTY TIGHT, SO...

ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME, MALLORY?

OH... I'M REALLY SORRY. I GUESS I'M JUST A LITTLE OVERWHELMED. YOU JUST TURNED OUT SO MUCH DIFFERENT THAN I THOUGHT YOU WOULD.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU JUST SEEM SO... WELL-ADJUSTED. I MEAN, AFTER THAT LAST SUMMER, I THOUGHT--

LAST SUMMER?

YEAH, AFTER YOUR PARENTS, WELL... WHEN IT WAS JUST YOU AND ALFRED...

...YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER?

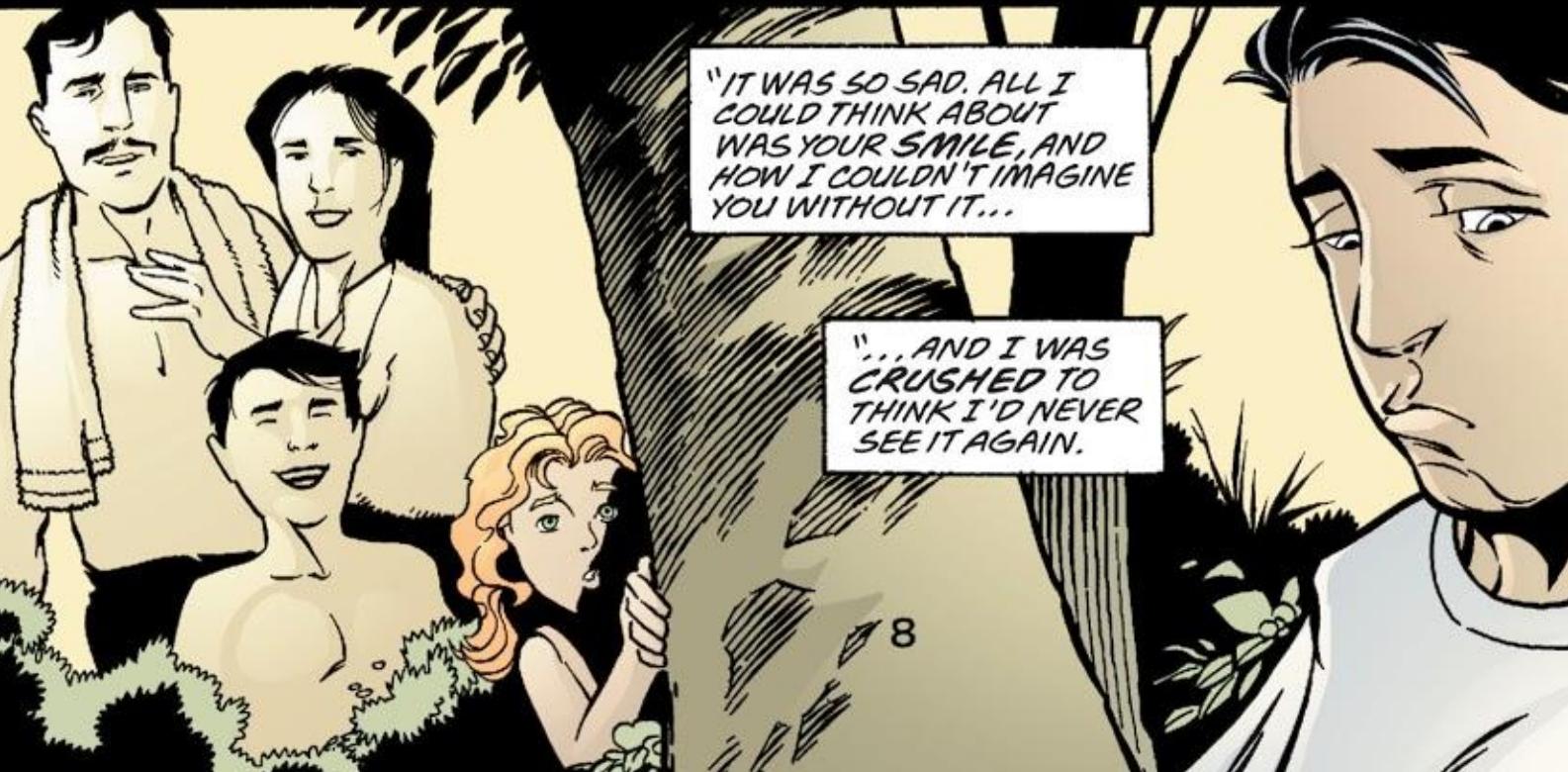
NO... I... I GUESS I BLOCKED OUT A LOT OF THINGS FROM THAT TIME...

BUT PLEASE, REMIND ME...

"WELL, I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE YOU THERE THE NEXT YEAR. WE HAD HEARD ABOUT YOUR PARENTS AND ALL... BUT THERE YOU WERE..."

BRUCE!!





"THEN, ON OUR LAST NIGHT THERE, YOU JUST SORT OF APPEARED IN MY ROOM, AND WOKE ME UP..."

BRUCE...?
WHAT-HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?

UM... A LITTLE WHILE...

WELL... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I GUESS I WANTED TO TALK... TO SAY I'M SORRY...

I KNOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO HELP, REALLY... IT'S JUST... NOTHING CAN HELP.

WHAT HAPPENED, TO MOM AND DAD... IT CAN'T BE... IT CAN'T...

I'M SORRY, BRUCE... I'M REALLY, REALLY SORRY. I KNOW IT MUST HURT A LOT, BUT DON'T YOU EVER THINK YOU'LL BE HAPPY AGAIN?

DON'T YOU WANT TO HAVE FUN AGAIN?

I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE. YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, YOU STILL THINK YOU'RE SAFE...

I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU...

...THAT I MISSED YOU.

WAIT! BRUCE!

"BUT YOU JUST DISAPPEARED INTO THE DARKNESS... AND THEN I WENT BACK TO BED AND CRIED MYSELF TO SLEEP..."



AND IT WAS A LONG TIME BEFORE I COULD THINK ABOUT YOU WITHOUT CRYING-- FOR YOUR PARENTS, AND FOR THAT LITTLE YOU WHO GOT LOST SOMEWHERE...

...WHO BECAME SO TOUGH, SO YOUNG.



WHICH IS WHY I WAS SO GLAD TO SEE YOU LOOKING LIKE YOU DO-- HAPPY, SUCCESSFUL...IT'S NICE THAT YOU DIDN'T HOLD ONTO THAT RAGE YOUR WHOLE LIFE.

YEAH, WELL... I HAD A FEW ROUGH YEARS, BUT...



EXCUSE ME, MS. MOXON, YOUR FATHER ASKED ME TO SEE IF MR. WAYNE COULD SPARE YOU FOR A MOMENT.

OH, UH, DO YOU MIND, BRUCE?

NOT AT ALL.



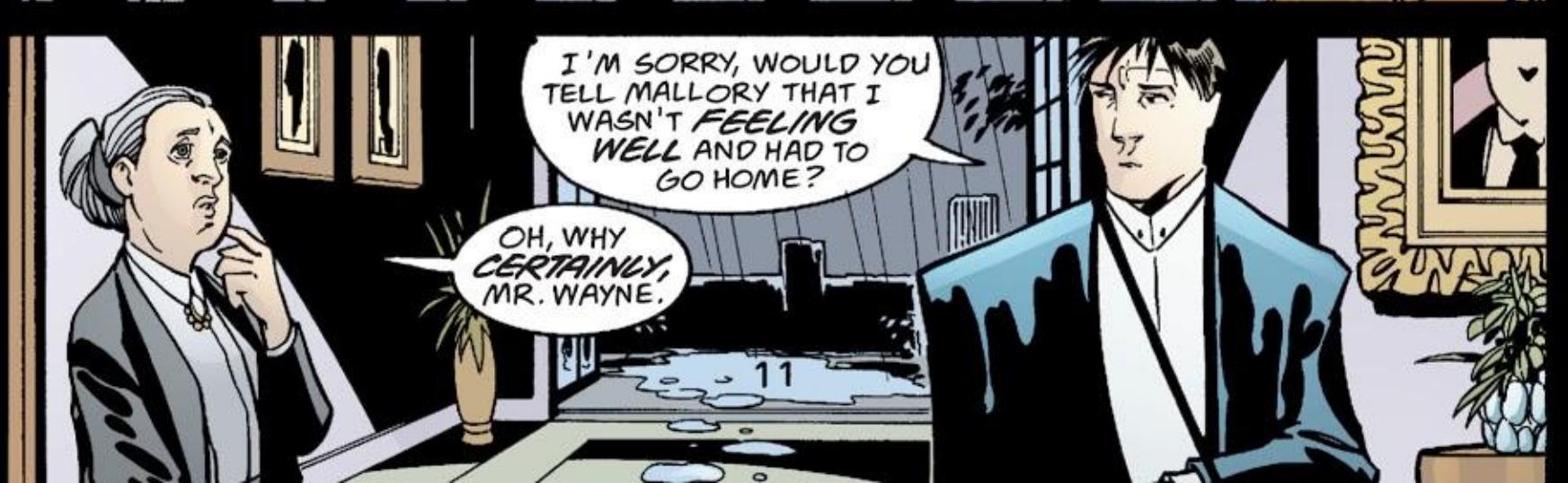
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK...

TAKE YOUR TIME.



MALLORY'S STORY IS DISTRACTING, BECAUSE I TRULY HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OF IT, AND YET I KNOW SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH. I DON'T LIKE TO BE REMINDED OF THOSE YEARS... AND I'M HERE TO DO A JOB.

DEADSHOT IS OUT THERE SOMEWHERE, I CAN FEEL IT.



IT'S TRUE, MALLORY MOXON IS THE VICE PRESIDENT OF MOXON GLOBAL ENTERPRISES...

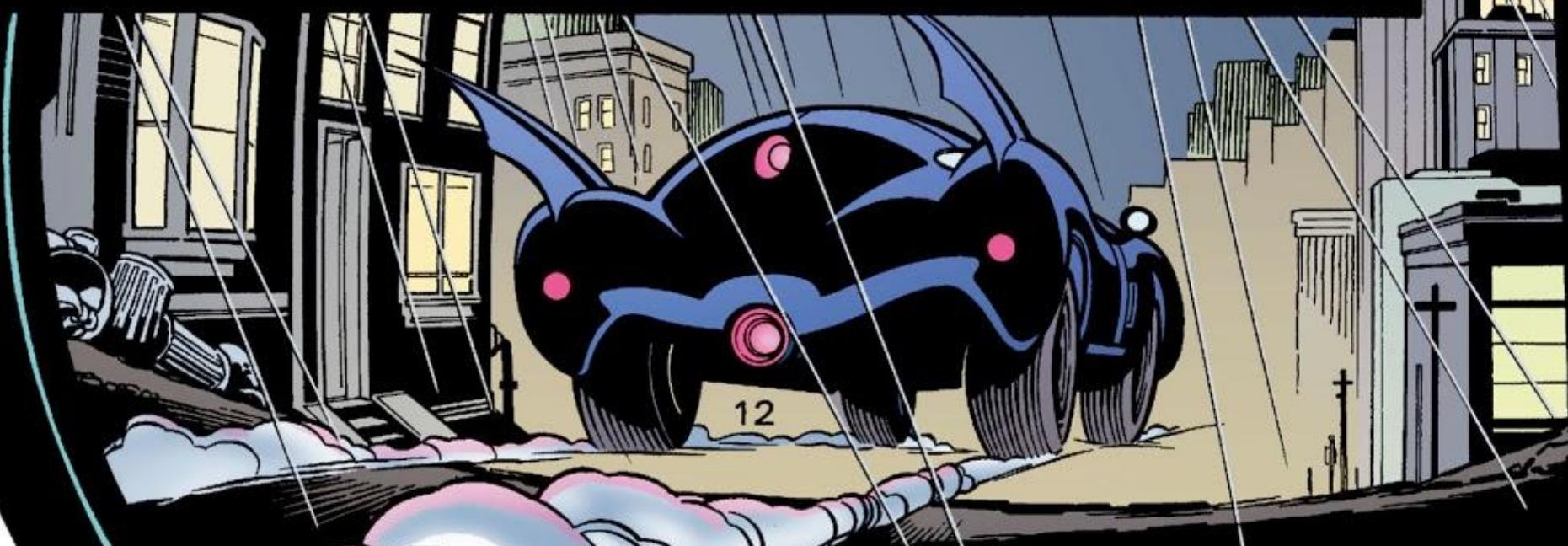
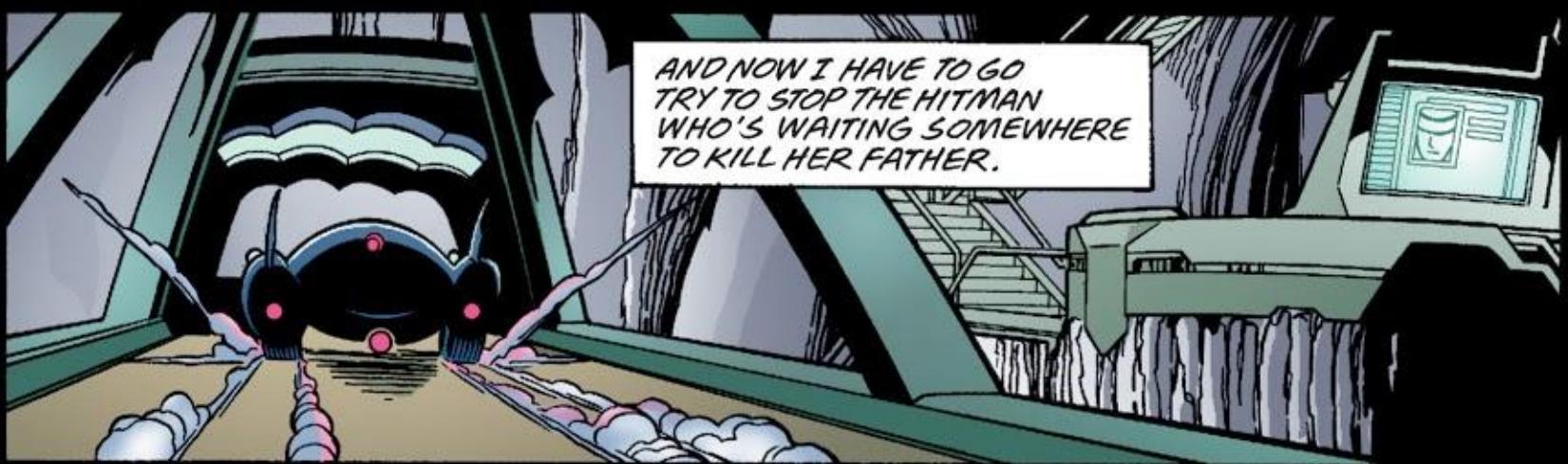
WHICH APPEARS TO BE AN INCREDIBLY WELL-DISGUISED MONEY-LAUNDERING OPERATION, FRONTING AS A TRANSGLOBAL TECHNOLOGY FIRM, IT'S EVEN PUBLICLY-HELD.



IT WOULD ALMOST BE FUNNY IF IT WEREN'T SO SICK.

I FIND THE LAST REMNANT OF A LIFE I HAD NEARLY FORGOTTEN, AND IT'S JUST AS CORRUPTED AS EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS WORLD.

AND NOW I HAVE TO GO TRY TO STOP THE HITMAN WHO'S WAITING SOMEWHERE TO KILL HER FATHER.





LOOK. REGARDLESS OF HOW MUCH I'D LIKE TO GET INTO THIS WITH YOU, SOMEONE IS TRYING TO KILL YOUR BOSS, AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET THAT HAPPEN.

YOU JUST LET ME WORRY ABOUT MY JOB, ALL RIGHT?

NOW, YOU'RE TRESPASSING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY, SO BE SMART AND DON'T FORCE ME TO BECOME UNPROFESSIONAL.

SO YOU'RE ALL BUSINESS NOW, ARE YOU? AND LAST TIME, WAS THAT JUST BUSINESS, TOO?

MIXED WITH A LITTLE PLEASURE, I'M NOT ASHAMED TO ADMIT. IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO FACE A NEW CHALLENGE... THOUGH I HAD EXPECTED MORE FROM YOU...

BUT LEGENDS OFTEN EXCEED REALITY...

AND JEREMY SAMUELS WAS JUST A PAWN, THEN?

NO... HE WAS A WAY TO GET TWO BIRDS AT ONCE. YOU AND BRUCE WAYNE.

WAYNE? WHAT COULD MOXON POSSIBLY HAVE AGAINST BRUCE WAYNE?

NOTHING... BUT YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, THE SINS OF THE FATHER ARE VISITED UPON THE SON.

DON'T YOU TALK TO ME LIKE THAT, WAYNE!



I KNOW THIS ISN'T
WHAT I'M HERE FOR.
HE'S JUST SO DAMN
SMUG ABOUT SO
MUCH DEATH.



SUCKER
PUNCH...
ONCE
AGAIN, I
EXPECTED
MORE
FROM
YOU.

YOU'RE A
MURDERER,
I'M NOT WORRIED
ABOUT YOUR OPINION
OF ME.



"PERFECT,
JUST WHAT I
WAS WAITING
FOR..."



WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?
YOU CAN'T
BEAT ME.

I CAN
ANTICIPATE
YOUR EVERY
MOVE.

SO I'VE
HEARD.



...AND I REMEMBER MY
TRAIN OF THOUGHT ABOUT
DEADSHOT INFILTRATING
SECURITY.

PLEASE
MA'AM, WE
NEED TO GET
IN THERE.
NOW.

DAMN IT.
HAVE TO END
THIS FAST.

YOU'RE GETTING
DESPERATE NOW...
RUNNING OUT OF
GADGETS?

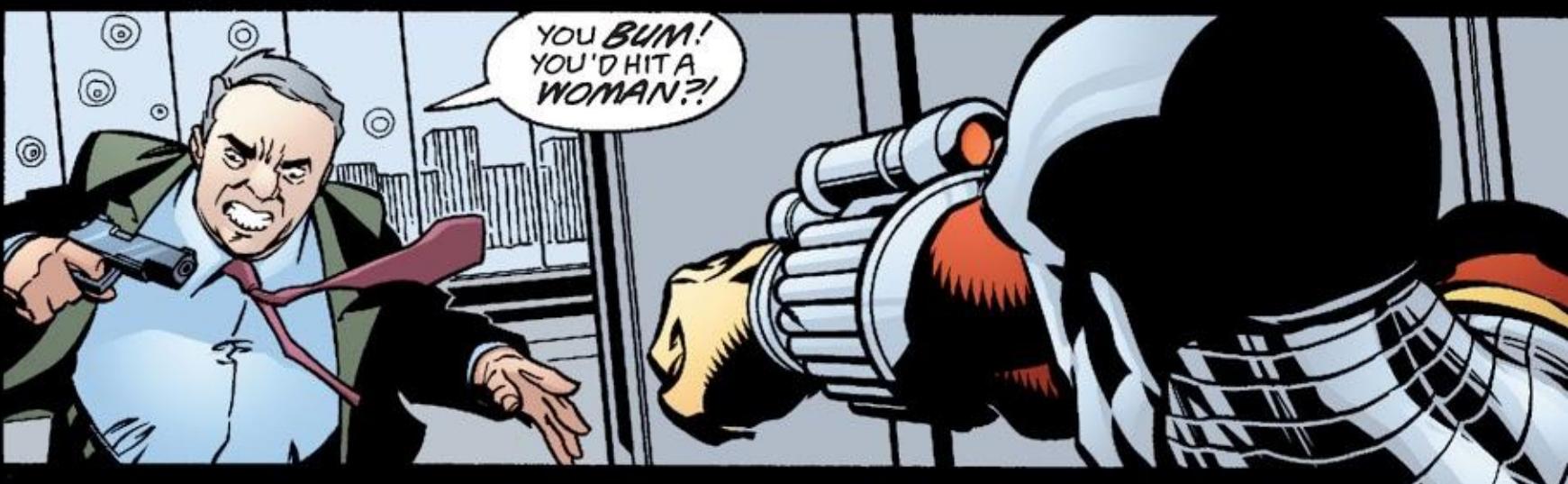
I LEARNED A
LONG TIME AGO NOT
TO RELY TOO HEAVILY
ON GIMMICKS AND
EQUIPMENT.

MAYBE
THAT'S A
LESSON YOU
SHOULD
FOLLOW...

Nooo!

THANKS
A LOT,
LADY...

WHAT--



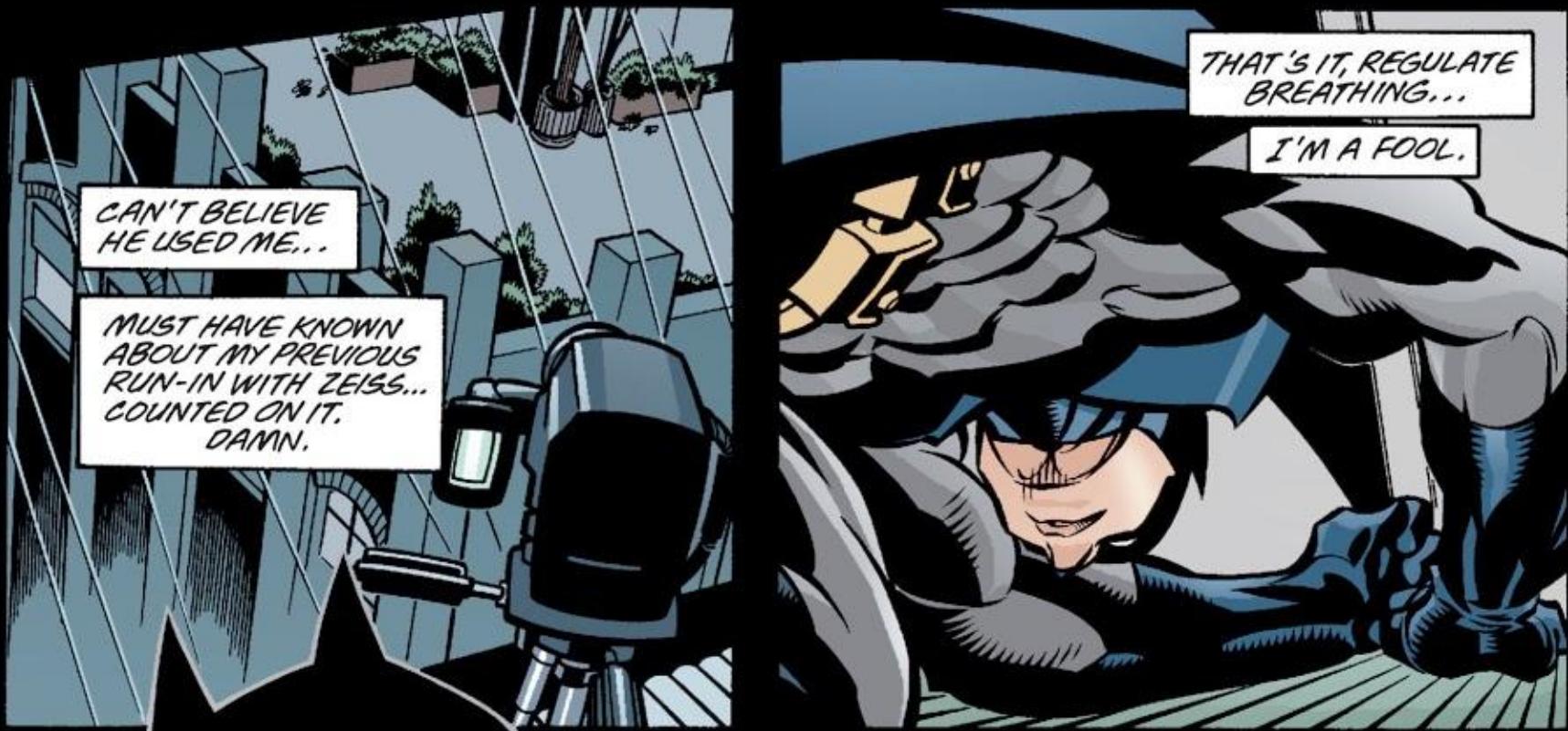


...BUT IT
SHOULD TAKE
CARE OF THE NEXT
FEW MINUTES
OF YOUR TIME,
AT LEAST.

THIS
WON'T
KILL
YOU...

HOLLOW POINT .455
BURSTING ACROSS RIBS
AND DISLOCATED
SHOULDER. NO TIME TO
DODGE.

NO... USED ME.



MS. MOXON...?
ARE YOU MALLORY
MOXON?

YES, I'M MALLORY...
HOW IS MY FATHER?
IS HE--

I'M AFRAID IT'S
NOT GOOD NEWS, MA'AM...
YOUR FATHER'S ALIVE,
BUT JUST BARELY, AND
OUR BEST PROGNOSIS
AT THIS TIME IS THAT
HE'LL BE COMPLETELY
PARALYZED...

CAN HE--
WILL HE BE
ABLE TO
TALK?

IT'S TOO EARLY
TO SAY... IF SO, IT
WOULDN'T BE MUCH
MORE THAN A
WHISPER,
I'M AFRAID.

I WISH
I HAD BETTER
NEWS.

WHAT ARE YOU
GOING TO DO, MALLORY?
WHAT WOULD YOU
HAVE US DO?

I...I DON'T
KNOW...

NO, I DO... I WANT YOU TO
FIND THE MEN WHO PAID FOR
MY FATHER'S ASSASSINATION,
AND BRING THEM TO ME.

AND WHAT
OF BATMAN,
AND YOUR FATHER'S
BODYGUARD?

ZEISS WILL TURN
UP, AND WHEN HE DOES...
HE AND I WILL TAKE
CARE OF BATMAN
PERSONALLY.

I REALLY SCREWED UP TONIGHT...

I LET MYSELF GET OFF-BALANCE, AND IT WAS USED TO MY DISADVANTAGE...LET MY ANGER RUN AWAY WITH ME.

I KNOW ENOUGH TO KNOW BETTER THAN THAT, AND STILL I DID IT ANYWAY.

TOOK A BAD SITUATION AND MADE IT WORSE, PROBABLY MADE MYSELF A DANGEROUS ENEMY IN THE PROCESS, TOO.

WHY DOES IT SEEM LIKE SOME WOUNDS JUST NEVER GO AWAY...? DO YOU EVER THINK ABOUT THAT?

I GUESS I JUST WANTED TO TALK TO SOMEONE, A FRIEND ABOUT IT...BUT, IF YOU WERE HERE YOU'D PROBABLY JUST GIVE ME A LECTURE ANYWAY.

SO MAYBE I'LL JUST SIT HERE FOR A WHILE, JIM.

the End