



UNIVERSE

91

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BATMAN

GUEST-STARRING

**HARLEY
Quinn**

AGAINST THE
THREAT
OF A
**JOKERIZED
GCPD!**

TYNION IV
JIMENEZ
ALBUQUERQUE
PAGULAYAN
MIKI
MOREY

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AND THE FOURTH CROOK WAS A JESTER.

AND SEE...HE'D BEEN LAUGHING ALL THIS TIME... BECAUSE HE AND HE ALONE UNDERSTOOD THE DEVIL'S GAME.

WITH NO WISE, POWERFUL, OR WEALTHY MEN LEFT TO STOP HIM...THE CITY WOULDN'T BELONG TO THE THREE CROOKS AT ALL. IT WOULD BELONG TO THE DEVIL HIMSELF.

IN TIME, IT WAS THE JESTER'S TURN, AND THE DEVIL ASKED WHAT HE WANTED MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD.

AND THE JESTER SAID TO HIM...I WANT TO BE THE DEVIL.

AND THEN HE KILLED HIM.



I'VE BEEN AT
THIS GAME FOR
A LONG, LONG
TIME.

TRUTHFULLY, I DON'T KNOW
THAT I REMEMBER A TIME
BEFORE IT. I REMEMBER
PICTURES, FLEETING FEELINGS...

BUT THE WAR
HAS BEEN MY LIFE
SINCE I'VE COME
OF AGE, AND I'VE
DEDICATED EVERY
CORNER OF MY
MIND TO FIGHTING
IT WELL.

I KNOW THE SHAPE OF
EACH OF THE TURNS.

I KNOW WHAT
ROLE I'M MEANT
TO PLAY.



THERE'S A
KIND OF...
MUSIC TO
IT.

THIS HAS
TO BE GETTING
EXPENSIVE. EVEN
FOR YOU,
BATMAN!



STRIPPED
DOWN FROM THE
CHORDS AND
MELODIES I
LEARNED FROM
ALL MY TEACHERS.

THIS **DESIGNER**, HE KNOWS
THE MUSIC, TOO. HE'S
PLAYING IT LOUD AND FAST
TO OVERWHELM MY SENSES.

KEEP ME FROM
SEEING WHERE
THE NOTES WILL
TAKE US.

HEY, MY
CONTROLLER
DOESN'T WORK
ANYMORE!

THIS
GAME
SUCKS!

WHAM

YOU'RE
HERE, AREN'T
YOU?

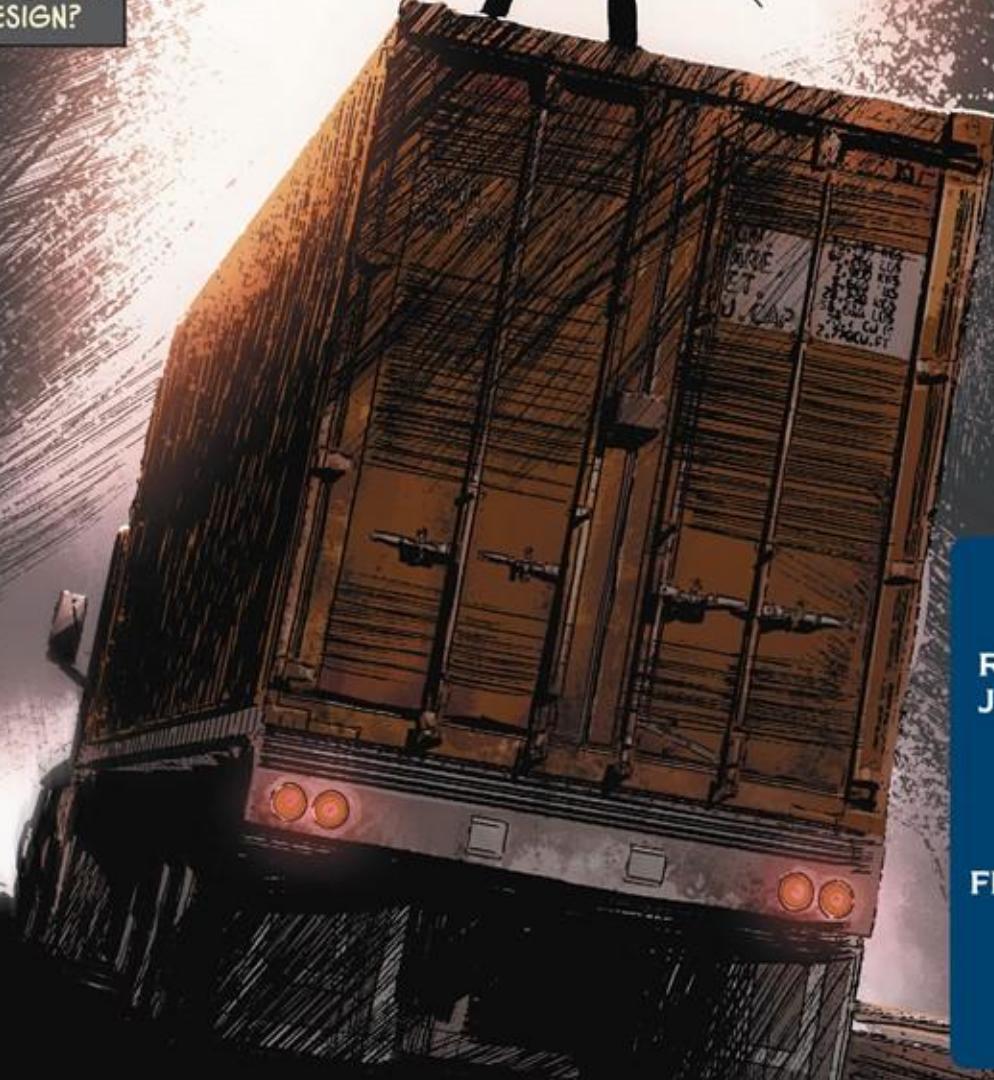
YES,
SLADE. THIS IS
MY CITY.



I'M
ALWAYS
HERE.

I SAY WORDS, AND WONDER
IF THEY WERE WRITTEN IN ONE
OF HIS NOTEBOOKS, LONG
AGO. I WONDER IF HE KNEW
PRECISELY WHEN CATWOMAN
WOULD TELL ME THE TRUTH.

HOW MUCH
OF THIS WAS
PART OF HIS
DESIGN?



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THE DARK DESIGNS

PART 6

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I FEEL TRAPPED IN MY HABITS, IN MY USUAL MODES OF THINKING. I KNOW HOW TO KEEP IN HARMONY WITH EVERY NOTE HE THROWS MY WAY.



BUT I NEED TO BREAK FREE OF THE PATTERN. OF THE DESIGN.



FORCE HIM TO STEP FURTHER THAN HE'S READY TO, BEFORE HE'S READY FOR IT.



I NEED DISCORD.
I NEED DISSONANCE.



I NEED TO
CHANGE
DIRECTION.



HUH, REALLY?
AND HERE I
THOUGHT IT WAS
A WHOLE KINKY
THING.

KEEP THE
MASKS ON. STAR-
CROSSED LOVERS,
EACH NEVER TO LEARN
THAT BY DAY BATMAN IS
A REALLY BORING GUY
WHO EATS TACOS, AND
CATWOMAN IS A
VERY MEAN
LIBRARIAN.

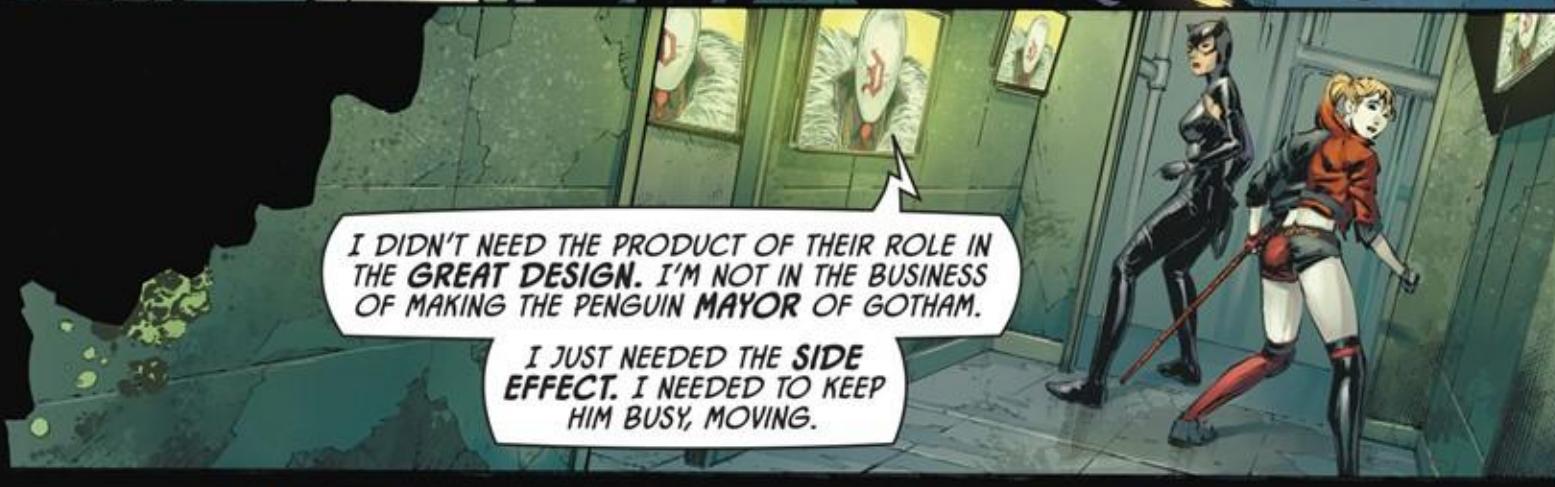
WHY A
LIBRARIAN?





OH, I'VE
TAKEN THEM
OFF THE
BOARD.

DESIGNER.



I DIDN'T NEED THE PRODUCT OF THEIR ROLE IN
THE GREAT DESIGN. I'M NOT IN THE BUSINESS
OF MAKING THE PENGUIN MAYOR OF GOTHAM.

I JUST NEEDED THE SIDE
EFFECT. I NEEDED TO KEEP
HIM BUSY, MOVING.



AND
NOW, THE
GAMES
BEGIN.



HE KNOWS
MY PART IN ALL
OF THIS. HE KNOWS
WHAT YOU'RE GOING
TO TRY TO TAKE
FROM HIM.



YES, MY DEAR KITTY CAT. YOU
PLAYED YOUR PART PERFECTLY.

NOW HE'S RIPPING HIS
MIND APART TRYING TO
OUTTHINK ME.

"RIGHT AS I MOVE ALL THE GAME PIECES INTO THEIR FINAL POSITIONS."





THERE ARE AROUND **NINE MILLION** PEOPLE LIVING IN GOTHAM. INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO HAVE SPENT THE LAST FEW YEARS LIVING IN A KIND OF CONSTANT ROLLING HELL.

IT'S A CITY WHERE FAITH IN GOVERNMENT WENT **UP** WHEN BANE TOOK CONTROL.

THEY'RE SCARED LIKE THEY'VE NEVER BEEN BEFORE, AND ALL I AM TRYING TO DO IS GIVE THEM SOME KIND OF **PEACE...**



I'VE SPENT MY CAREER USING MY WEALTH AND POWER TO FIGHT COSTUMED MADMEN, AND THEY KEEP COMING BACK, OVER AND OVER!

I KEEP NEEDING TO MAKE **BIGGER** AND MORE **FRIGHTENING** WEAPONS JUST TO KEEP YOU PEOPLE DOWN!

YOU KNOW
WHO I AM. YOU
KNOW HOW IT STARTED...
IN AN ALLEY WITH A
MUGGER AND A REVOLVER...
AND I CHANGED TO
STOP THAT...AND THE
MUGGERS CHANGED
TOO...

YOU
ALWAYS COME
BACK WITH A
BIGGER
GUN.

YOU
ESCALATED
FIRST. DON'T
PRETEND THAT YOUR
HAND WAS
FORCED.

I'M TRYING...
I'M TRYING TO
CHANGE THAT. I'M TRYING
TO MAKE IT BETTER, MAKE
IT RIGHT. I'M TRYING
TO DO EVERYTHING I
PROMISED TO DO
THAT I NEVER DID
BEFORE.

BUT YOU
PEOPLE JUST
NEED TO STOP
AND LET ME
SAVE THEM.

NO.



Y'KNOW.
I'M STARTING
TO FEEL A LITTLE
USED OVER
HERE.

YOU'RE NOT GOING
TO FIND SOME OFF
BUTTON IN THAT
SYSTEM, KITTY CAT.

YES,
I AM.

JUST KEEP
FIGHTING
THEM OFF.

EDDIE MIGHT
NOT HAVE RIGGED
THIS GAME BOARD BEFORE
YOU KIDNAPPED HIM, BUT I
JUST DID. THIS ENTIRE BASE
IS WIRED TO EXPLODE, IF
PEOPLE STEP ON THE
WRONG TILES.

HOW MUCH YOU
WANT TO BET YOUR
PUPPETS ARE STANDING
ON THE WRONG
TILES?

IS THIS
ONE OF THOSE
THINGS WHERE YOU
HAVE A SUPER-COOL
HOVERCAR OR SOMETHING
WAITING JUST OVER
THE EDGE?!

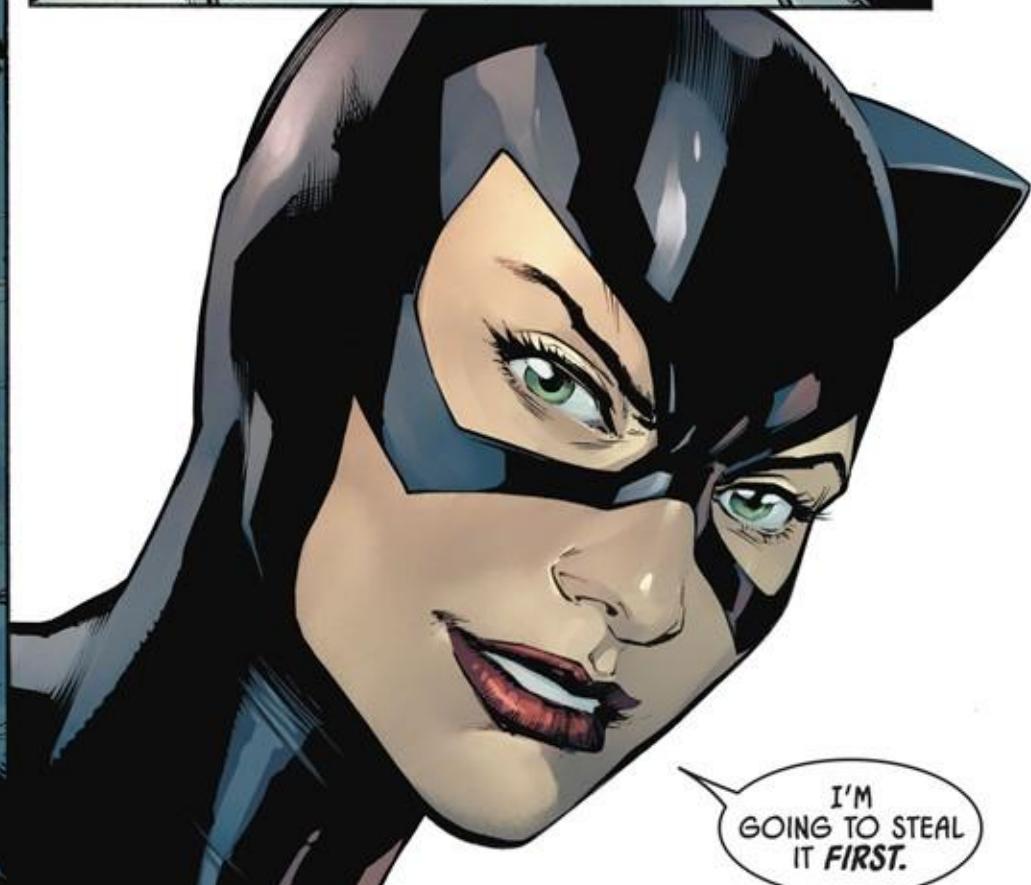
NO.

HA! WELL
PLAYED! THERE
MAY BE HOPE
FOR YOU YET!

HARLEY,
FOLLOW
ME!

AW,
NERTS.

KABOOM!

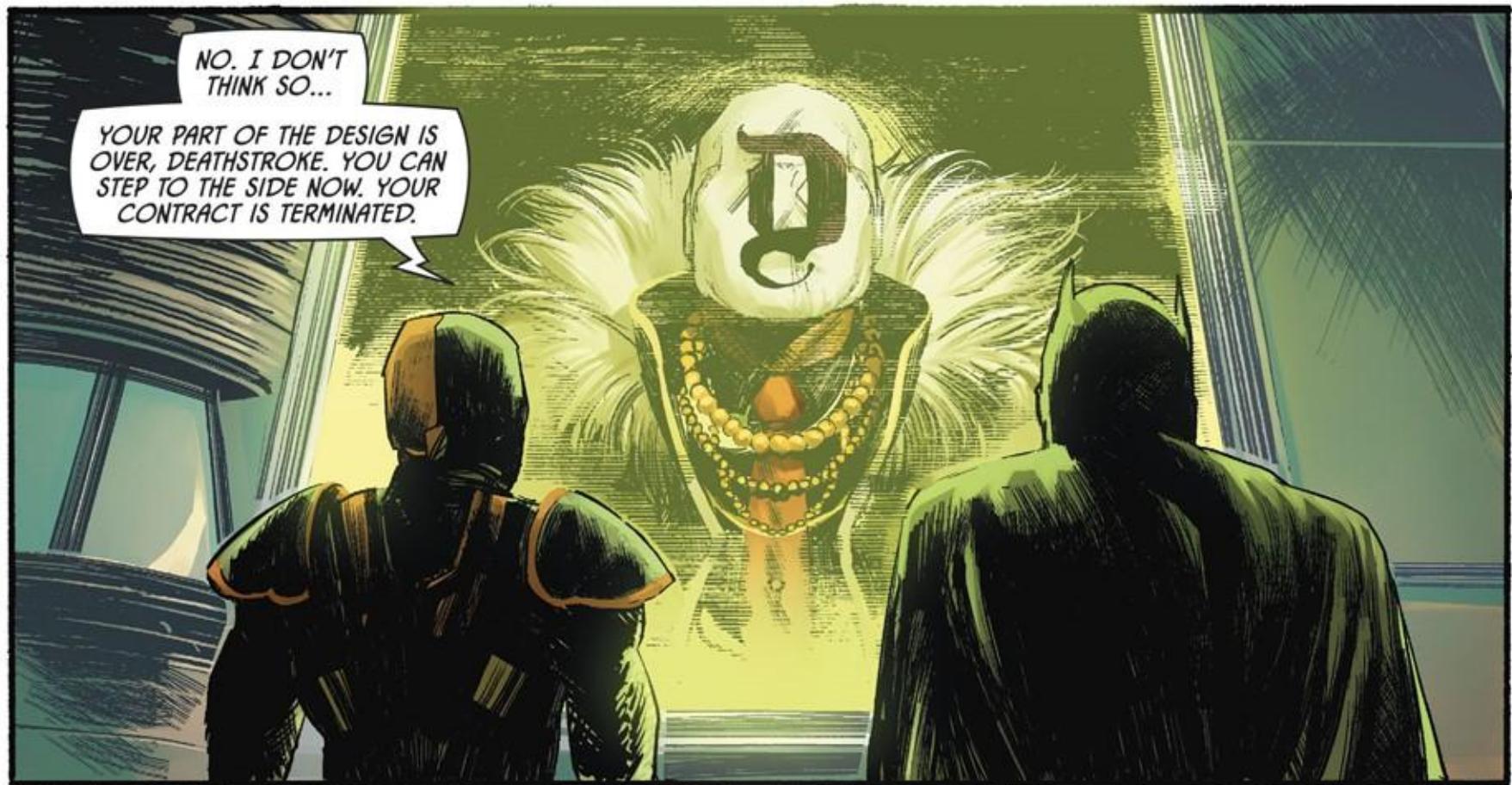


HH.

I DON'T
KNOW WHERE
HE IS. I MADE
SURE I WOULDN'T
KNOW, SO I
COULDN'T
TELL YOU.

NOW STOP
PRETENDING YOU'RE
NOT GOING TO PULL A
GRAPPLING GUN OUT FROM
UNDER YOUR CAPE AND SAVE US.

OKAY. NOW LET'S WRAP
THIS UP, TWO FEET ON
THE GROUND THIS
TIME.



HOW ARE
YOU FEELING,
BATMAN? ARE YOU
UP FOR ANOTHER
GAME? YOU MUST BE
GETTING TIRED NOW.
I KNOW I AM...

D

THEN END
THIS, DESIGNER!
FACE ME!

NOW, THAT
WOULDN'T BE
FAIR...



I HAVEN'T
HAD MY TURN
TO PLAY.

NEXT: THE MAZE MASTER!