

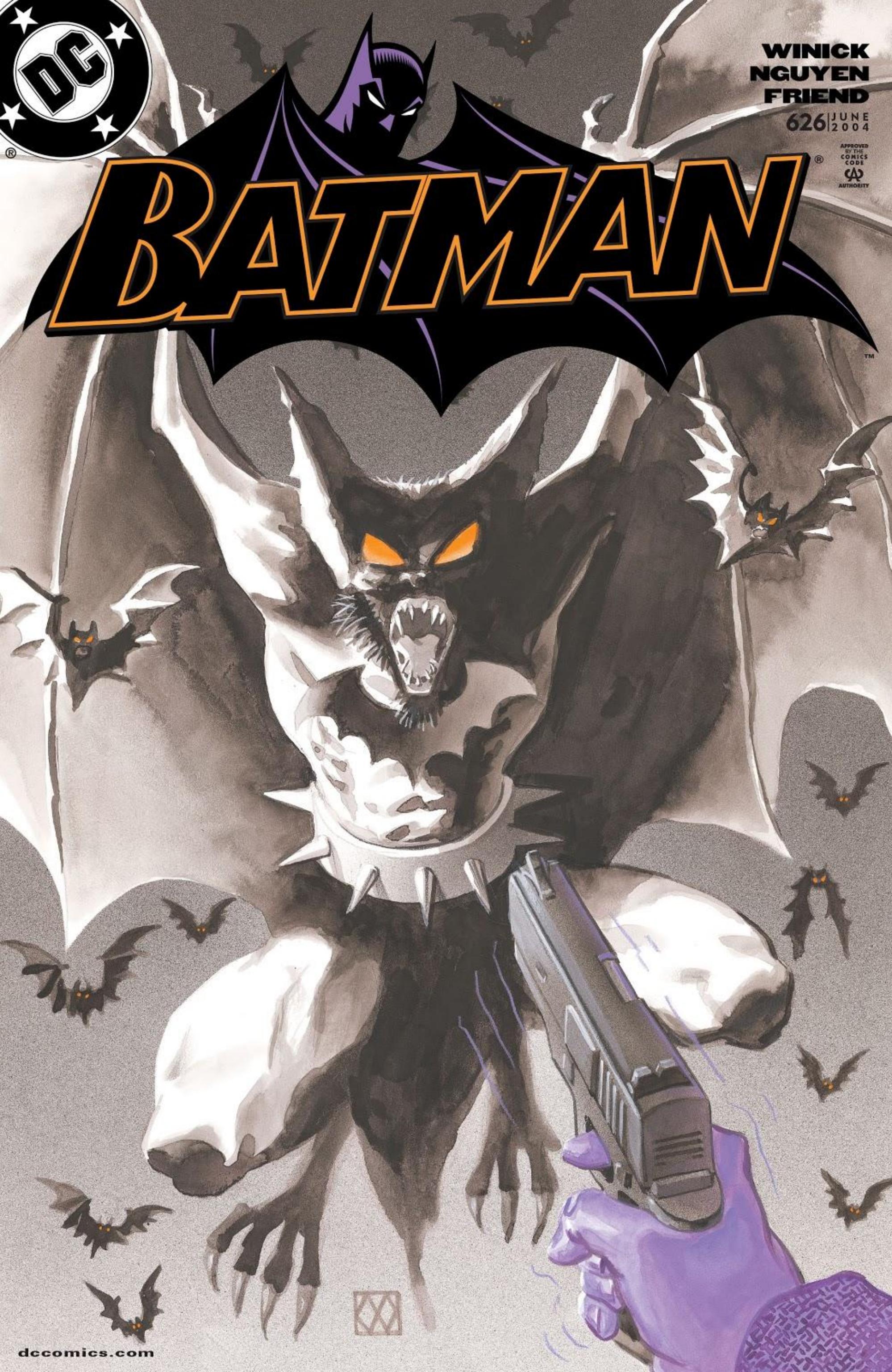


WINICK
NGUYEN
FRIEND

626 JUNE 2004

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS CODE
AD
AUTHORITY

BATMAN



THOMAS
ALLIAOTTO.

"BIG TOMMY A."

HE'S BEEN A FIXTURE
IN GOTHAM CITY'S
ORGANIZED CRIME
SCENE FOR DECADES.

HE WAS
DOING HITS
FOR THREE
HUNDRED
DOLLARS A
POP WHEN
HE WAS
SIXTEEN.

HE WAS KNOWN MORE FOR
HIS SADISTIC NATURE
THAN HIS EFFICIENCY.

HE'S NOT PATIENT
EITHER. WHEN HE FELT HE
WAS GETTING PASSED
OVER FOR LEADERSHIP,
HE KILLED TWO CAPOS.

FEARING
RETRIBUTION,
HE KILLED
MOST OF
THEIR CREWS.

HE EVEN KILLED
THEIR SONS.
ONE WAS STILL
IN HIGH
SCHOOL.

BIG TOMMY A
IS NOT A MAN
WHO LETS HIS
CONSCIENCE
GET IN HIS WAY.

AS THE CROW FLIES

PART ONE: *Visions*

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BOB SCHRECK, EDITOR BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

MIXED IN WITH THE DEMONS AND MONSTERS OF THE UNDERWORLD ARE ALL THE DEAD MEN HE'S MURDERED.

THE SMELL HIT HIM FIRST. A PUTRID, ROTTING, BURNING ODOR. SULFUR AND FLESH.

WHEN HE CAUGHT SIGHT OF THEM, HE LOST CONTROL OF HIS BLADDER AND BOWELS.

HE HASN'T STOPPED SHOOTING SINCE.



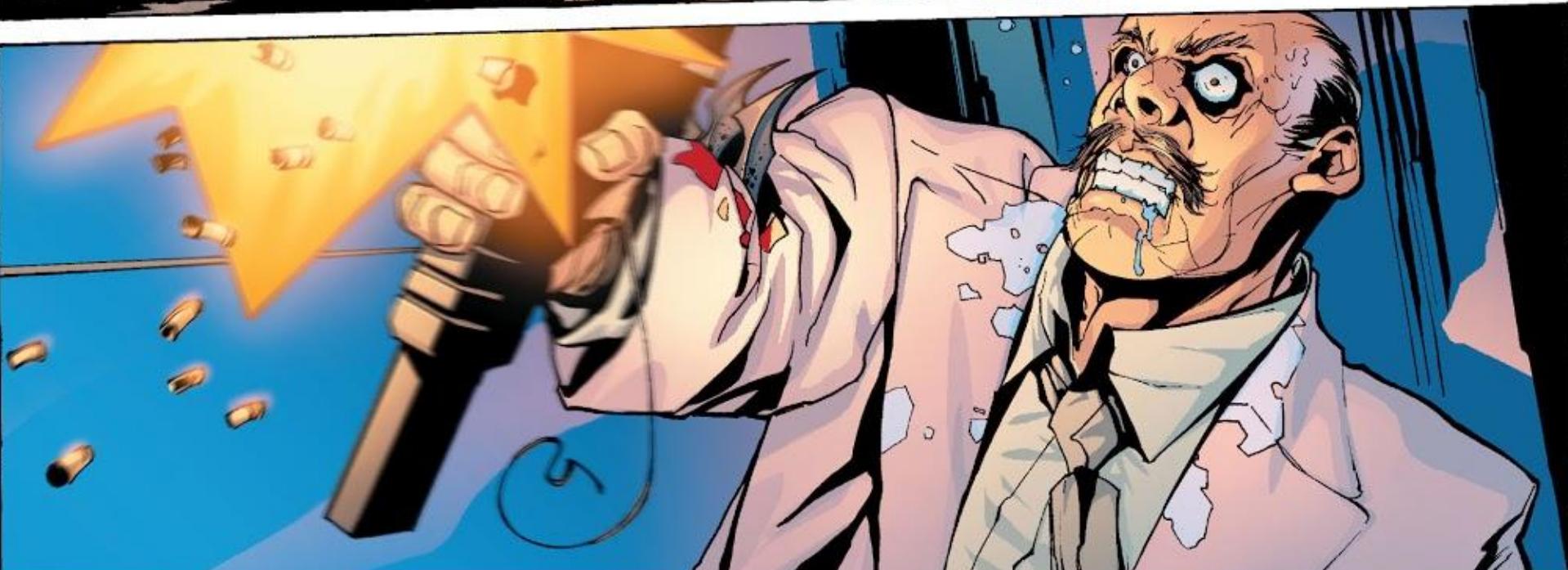
AND RIDING A WAVE.

HE'S GOT ENOUGH
TRANQS IN HIM TO
BRING DOWN SOMEONE
TWICE HIS SIZE.

AND HE'S WAY
TOO STRONG.

METH. P.C.P.
MAYBE L.S.D.

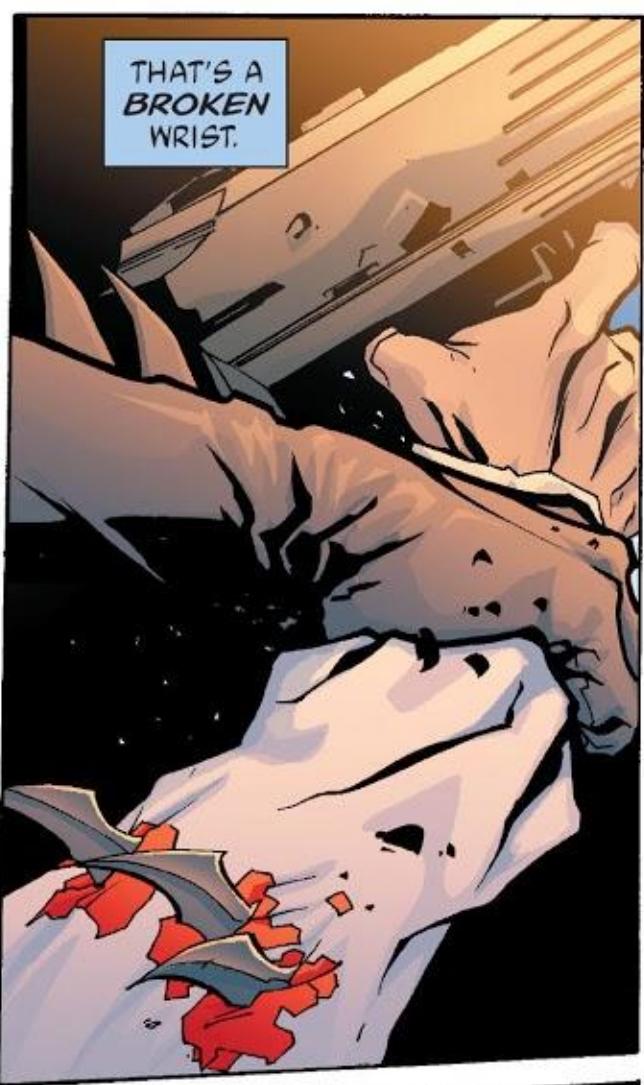
HE'S RIDING
SOMETHING.



GOT TO GET
IN CLOSE.



THAT'S A
BROKEN
WRIST.



AND I FELT
THAT THROUGH
THE SUIT.





HE'S STILL
HOLDING
THE GUN.



CARELESS.
STUPID AND
CARELESS.



END THIS BEFORE
IT GETS ANY MORE
OUT OF CONTROL.



CAN'T WORK
THE BODY. GO
FOR THE GUN.

KREEK KREEK
VAM KEEK
DAMN. TOO FAST. HE'S
DOING A HUNDRED METERS IN
UNDER ELEVEN SECONDS.

I THROW THE CABLE, KNOWING I'LL BE TOO LATE.



SOMETIMES I GET LUCKY.



NOT FOR ME OR TOMMY.

TOMMY RAN DRUGS AND HE SAMPLED HIS OWN PRODUCT. BUT AT LEAST UP TO NOW, NOTHING WOULD DO THIS.

NOT TONIGHT.



A FALL FROM THIS HEIGHT, THERE WON'T BE A LOT LEFT FOR AN AUTOPSY.



BUT THERE'LL BE ENOUGH.

GOTHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL.

I'M SORRY, ARE YOU NEW?

SORRY?

I DON'T RECOGNIZE YOU. ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE DOWN HERE IN PATHOLOGY?

YEAH, I JUST STARTED MY PATHOLOGY ROTATION. I'M CAROLINE HILL. I'M A FIRST YEAR.

ERWIN TAN...

HEY, I THOUGHT THE ROTATION STARTED TWO WEEKS AGO.

YEAH. I DID TWO WEEKS ON RADILOGY FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THE CORE.

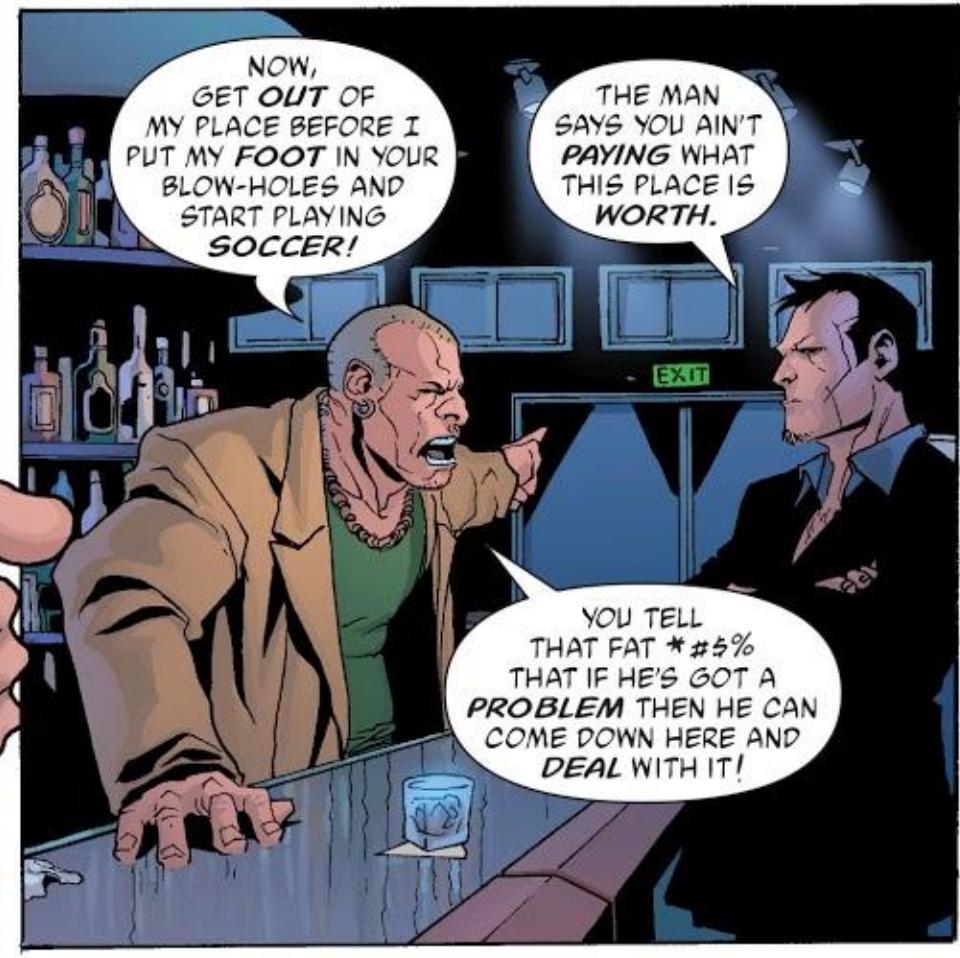
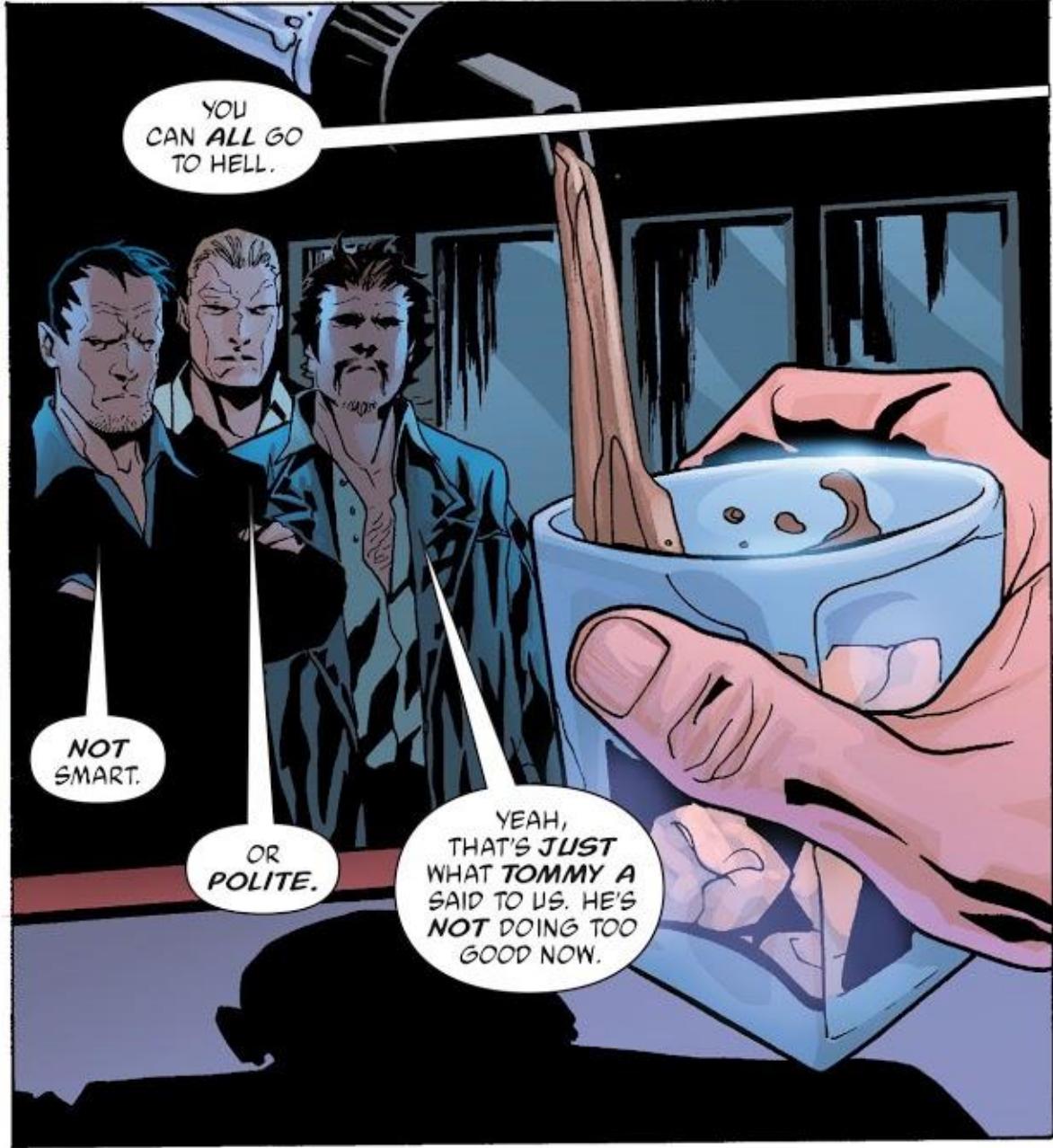
OKAY... COOL...

SAY... IF YOU'RE FREE MAYBE WE COULD GRAB A BITE.

OH, I'M SWAMPED. AND I'M ON CALL TONIGHT.







SITTING
UP THERE LIKE
HE'S ZUKE ON
OLYMPUS!

ZEUS.

WHATEVER! I
PAY PLENTY. I PAY
MORE THAN ANY-
BODY! SO TELL HIM
HE CAN GO--

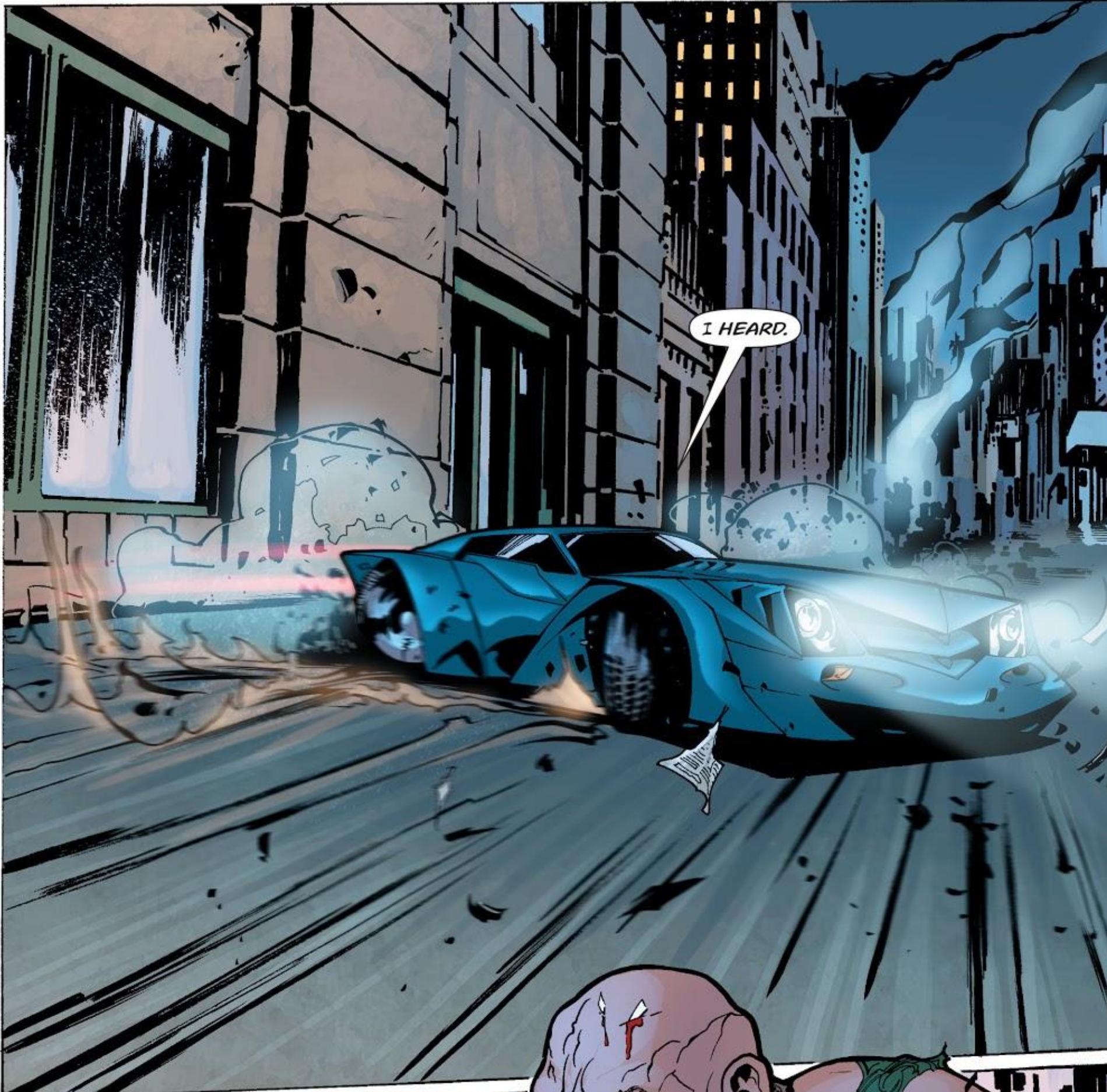
MAYBE
YOU DIDN'T
HEAR ME?

HE WANTS
MORE.

OR THERE'LL
BE TROUBLE.

YOU UNDERSTAND...
TROUBLE?

SIR, HAVE YOU
HEARD THE 911 CALL?
IT'S NOT FAR FROM--



I HEARD.



"IM THERE."

AAAARRGGGH!!!

RUBEN
DESOITO.
CONNECTED
CLUB OWNER.

THIS IS NO
COINCIDENCE.
TWO MOBBED-UP
EX-CONS BOTH
GOING RABID IN
THE COURSE OF
FOUR HOURS.

EXCEPT HE LOOKS
DIFFERENT THAN
ALLIAOTTO DID.

MORE RAGE
THAN FRIGHT.

UNFORTUNATELY,
RUBEN'S GOT
SIX INCHES
AND EIGHTY
POUNDS OF
MUSCLE ON
TOMMY.

HE'LL BE
EASIER
TO TAKE
DOWN WITH
THE CAR.

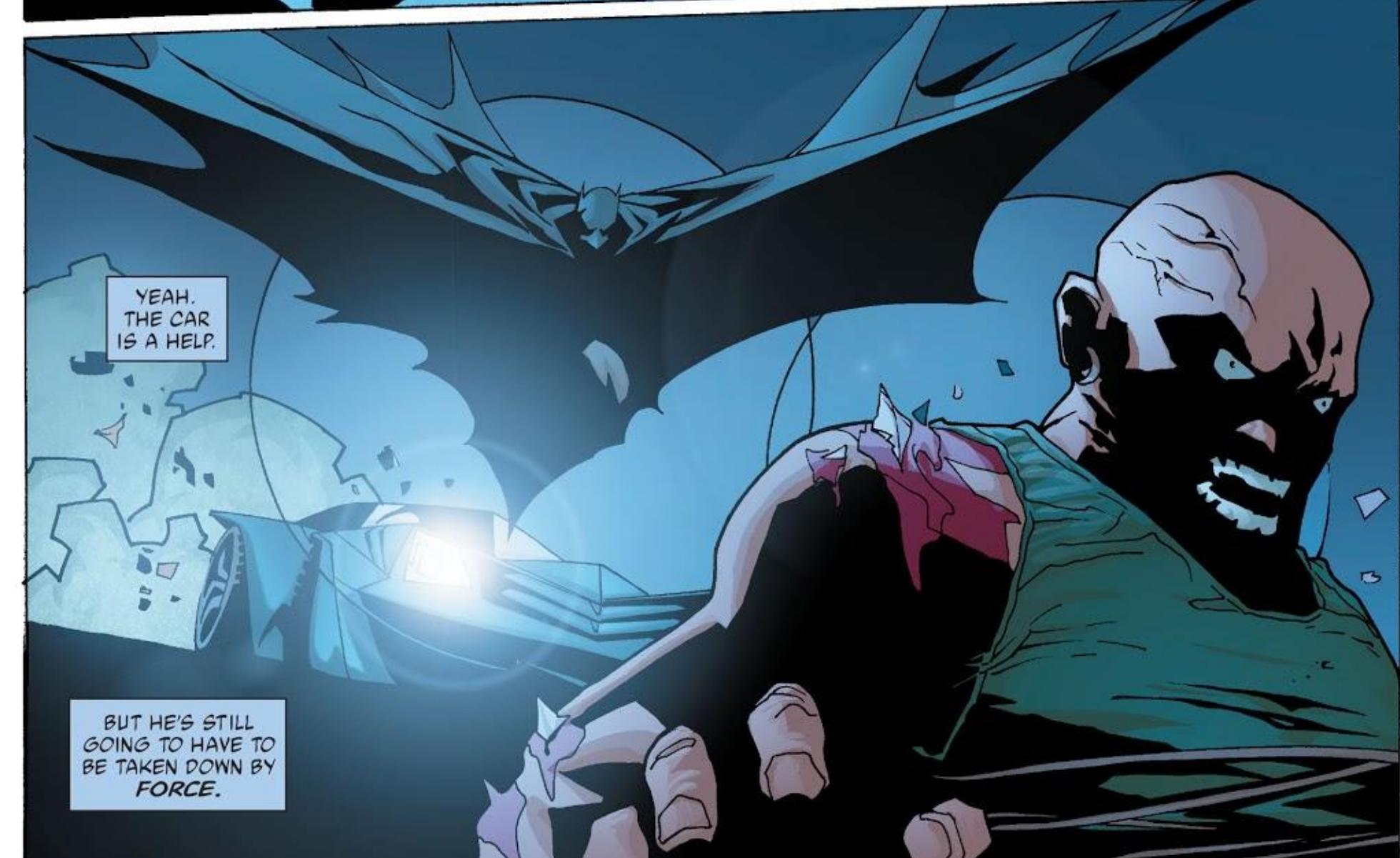
SHUNK





AAARGH!!

SHINK



TIME TO TRY
BETTER LIVING
THROUGH
CHEMISTRY.

WAYNE
INDUSTRIES
WILL BE ROLLING
OUT THIS FAST
HARDENING
FOAM AS SOON
AS THE PATENT
CLEAR'S.

ITS PRIMARY FUNCTION IS FOR
SEALING STRUCTURAL GAPS DURING
EARTHQUAKES. IT'S POROUS SO
AIR CAN TRAVEL THROUGH IT, BUT AS
STIFF AS CONCRETE.

BUT IT DOES
NEED A FULL
SIX SECONDS
TO OSSIFY.

WHICH APPARENTLY
I DON'T HAVE.



THIS IS BAD.

TO ALLOW FOR FULL ARTICULATION,
THE NECK SUPPORT
ON THE SUIT IS THIN.



HE'S GOING
TO CRUSH MY
TRACHEA.



JUST NEED A
SECOND--
SHIFT MY WEIGHT--
--GET TO
THE BELT--



YEAH.
THE CAR
IS A HELP.

SKREEEEEEE

NO TIME FOR NEATNESS.
HE'S DOWN AND HE NEEDS--

WAIT.

THAT'S NOT FROM
THE COLLISION.

HE TOOK A HIT TO THE
BACK, NOT THE CHEST.

DAMN IT.
HE'S GOING.

WHATEVER'S
IN HIM IS
RUNNING HIS
HEART OUT.

GOT TO GET
HIM STABLE.
IF I GET HIM--

NO...

THAT'S IT.

RUBEN, YOU
DESERVED
BETTER
THAN THIS.

BUT NOT
MUCH
BETTER.

STILL...IT'S
TIME TO FIND
OUT WHO PUT
YOU HERE.



DECEASED
ASSOCIATES OFTEN
HAVE A VERY DIFFICULT
TIME CONTINUING THE
NATURAL EBB AND FLOW
OF COMMERCE,
DON'T THEY?!

YOU WERE
SUPPOSED TO PUT A
SCARE INTO THEM! HOW HARD
IS THAT?! DIDN'T YOU HAVE
ENOUGH HELP IN THAT
DEPARTMENT?!

THAT'S
THE THING, BOSS,
WE DID IT JUST LIKE
WE WERE SUPPOSED
TO.

I PUT THE
RUBBER GLOVE ON
MY HAND, I STUCK IT IN THAT
POWDER HE GAVE US, AND I
TOUCHED THEM. I TOUCHED BIG
TOMMY ON HIS HAND AND
RUBEN ON HIS FACE.

THEN
THEY WENT
OFF TO THE
CIRCUS!

THAT WASN'T
OUR FAULT. IT...IT
LOOKS LIKE HIS
STUFF DOESN'T
WORK RIGHT.

DID YOU
WET THE GLOVE
FIRST?

HUH?

YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO WET THE
GLOVE, COAT IT IN THE POWDER, THEN
MAKE CONTACT WITH BARE SKIN.

YOU DIDN'T WET THE
GLOVE. YOU GAVE THEM
CONCENTRATED DOSES.
ENOUGH FOR FIFTY MEN.

NO WONDER
THEY WERE
FRIGHTENED OUT
OF THEIR MINDS,
SCARECROW.

YES. NOT
NECESSARILY A
BAD THING, THOUGH,
IS IT?

THAT
REMAINS TO
BE SEEN.

WE
SHALL DO
BETTER NEXT
TIME.

WE SHALL.

TO BE CONTINUED.