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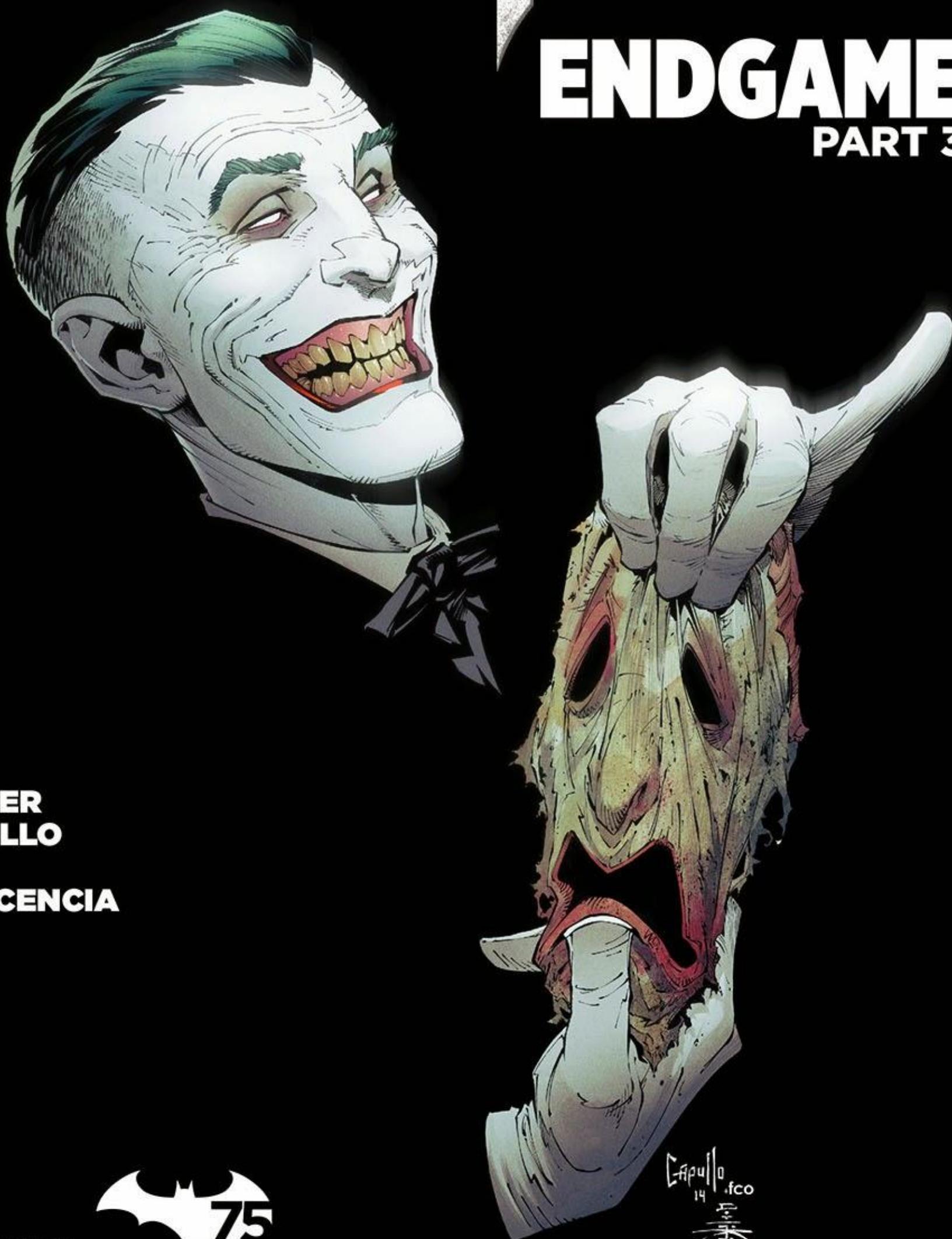
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THE NEW 52!

BATMAN

ENDGAME

PART 3



**SNYDER
CAPULLO
MIKI
PLASCENCIA**

FEB 2015

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Stare back
at him.

Stare back and tell
yourself you're more than
a man. You're better than
this. You're not thirty-two
and strapped to a chair.

Poisoned.
Paralyzed...

He's just another
criminal, and this is
just another case.

You know it. So see it. See
it with no optical screens,
no cowl. Stare. You can feel
the pupils constricting in
hatred, but fight it. Don't
let it show, even now. Even
as the grin spreads...



BATMAN: ENDGAME PART THREE

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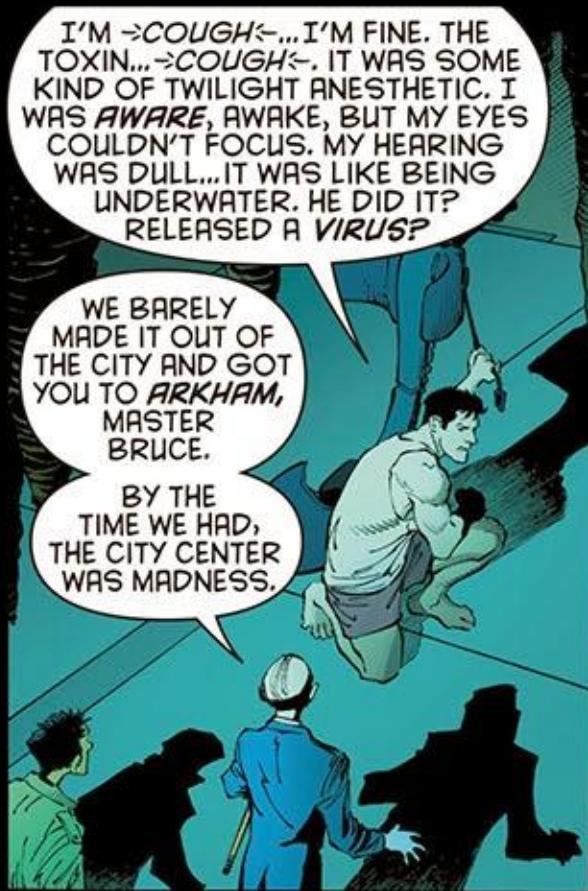
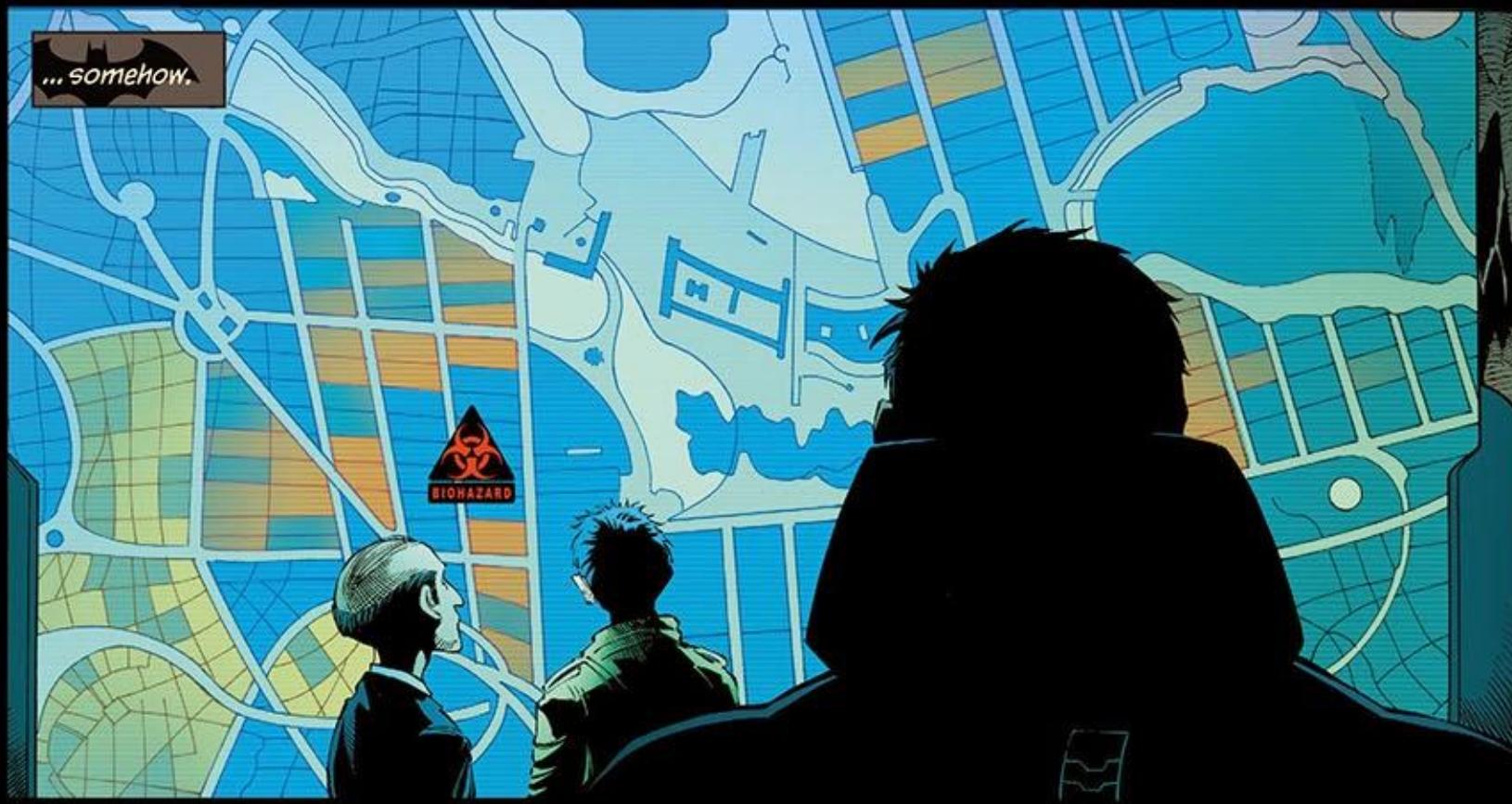
EDITOR MARK DOYLE

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

You're bigger than
your feelings.

Bigger than your
body. Your heart,
your eyes...

...you're Batman.
And you're going to
stop him. Just like
you always do. You're
going to stop it all...



THE CDC TOOK BLOOD SAMPLES. BEFORE EVERYTHING COMPLETELY COLLAPSED. THEY'RE THERE.

AIRBORNE?

EXACTLY. MICRO DROPS OF PATHOGEN COATED IN RESISTANT MUCUS DISSEMINATED INTO THE AIR EVERY TIME AN INFECTED PERSON COUGHS OR SPITS OR...

...LAUGHS. OF COURSE

A LAUGH IS JUST A SERIES OF DIAPHRAGMATIC SPASMS--COUGHS IN RAPID FIRE.

A VIRUS THAT SPREADS LIKE LAUGHTER.

DAMN.



AND THEY JUST... KEEP LAUGHING, BRUCE.

YOU FOLLOWED MY PROTOCOL?

"OF COURSE, SIR. WE RAN SIMULATIONS WITH ANTITOXIN, BUT..."

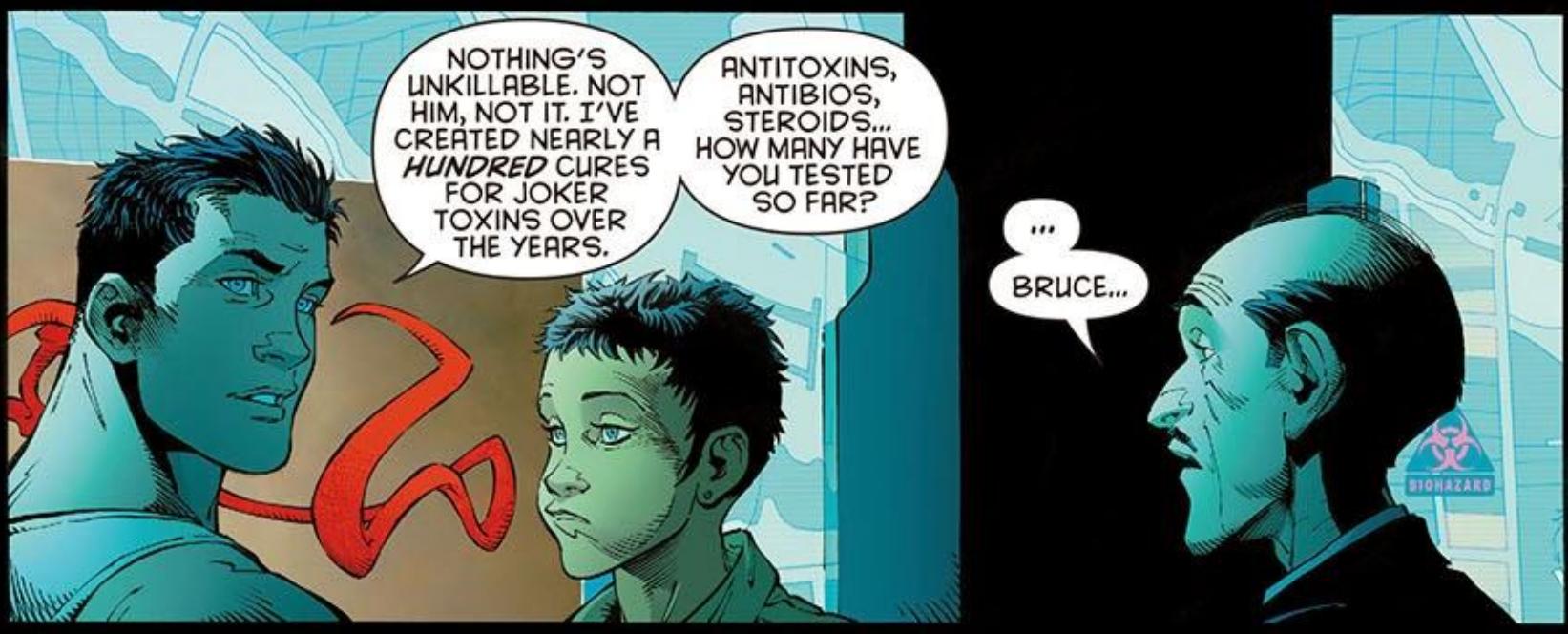
"BUT WHAT, ALFRED?"

"WELL, IT SEEMED TO BE WORKING, BUT THEN..."

"...BUT THEN THE VIRUS RESISTED."

"THERE'S SOMETHING NEW IN THIS STRAIN HE'S CREATED, SIR. SOMETHING RESILIENT IN A WAY... WELL, IN A WAY THAT SEEMS ALMOST..."

"... UNNATURAL. IT'S VIRULENT, FAST ACTING, AND SEEMINGLY UNKILLABLE. I'M AFRAID IT'S HIS MASTERPIECE, SIR."

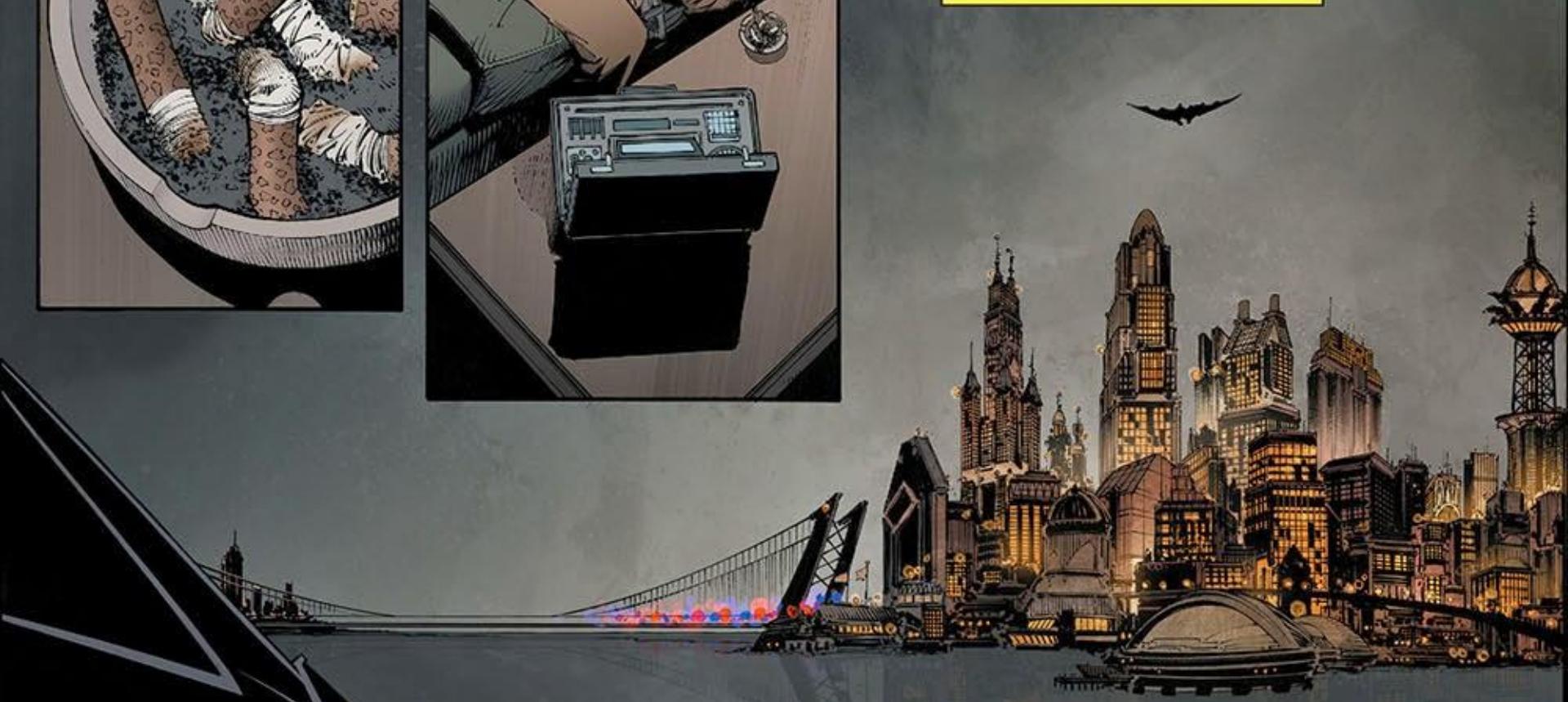


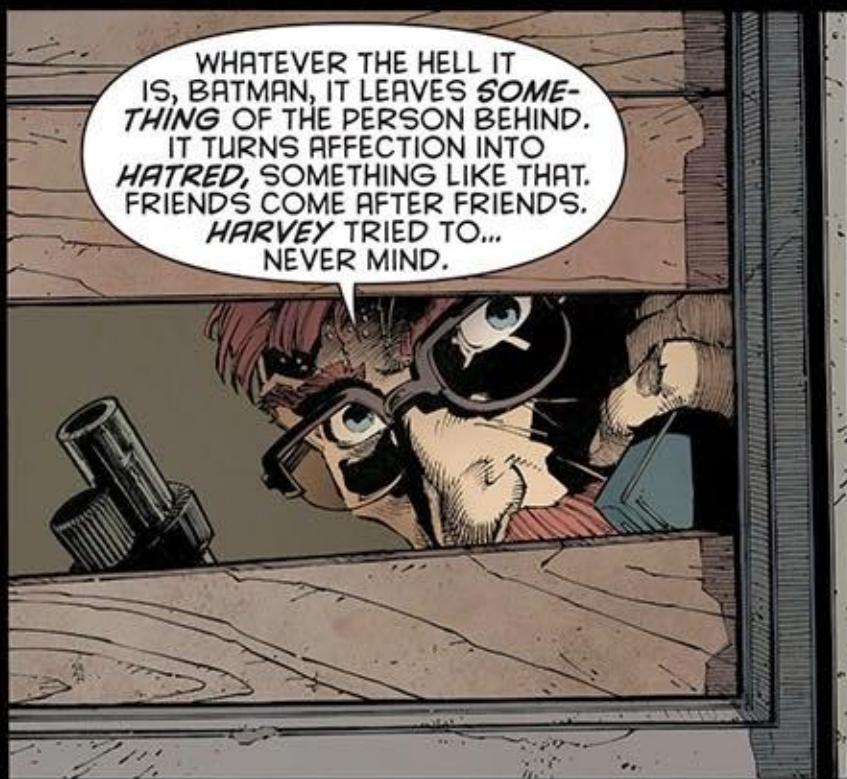


"“NOW” IS MUSIC TO MY EARS. IT'S GOING TO HELL HERE, BATMAN. AND FAST. THE MILITARY IS ABOUT TO LOCK US DOWN. THIS VIRUS IS SPREADING FASTER THAN THEY CAN CONTAIN."

"WE DON'T FIND A CURE IN THE NEXT FEW HOURS, THEY'LL QUARANTINE THE CITY. THEY'RE BRINGING IN WALLS."

"ACTUAL TOWERING WALLS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF MEDIEVAL TIMES. SO: PLAN?"







BATMAN...?

Stare back. It's a virus. It's curable.

BATMAN?

I'M HERE. I'M APPROACHING THE HOSPITAL NOW.

I'M GOING TO GET WHAT I NEED FOR A CURE. SEE IF YOU CAN FIND ANYTHING SIGNIFICANT ABOUT GOTHAM PRES.

WELL OFF OF THE TOP OF MY HEAD, IT'S THE OLDEST HOSPITAL IN THE CITY.

WAYNE-FUNDED... HAD A HISTORY OF TRAGEDIES EARLY ON, BUT SURVIVED. MY KIDS BOTH HAD THEIR TONSILS OUT THE DAY BEFORE THAT ROOF COLLAPSE...

PEOPLE SAY IT'S HAUNTED. A SPOOKY PLACE. IT'S ACCIDENT PRONE.

STAY SAFE.

-Unh- WILL DO.

HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
HAHA

THAT WAS A JOKE.

WELL, THEY FIND IT FUNNY.

BATMAN OUT.

THAT WAS A JOKE.

WELL, THEY FIND IT FUNNY.

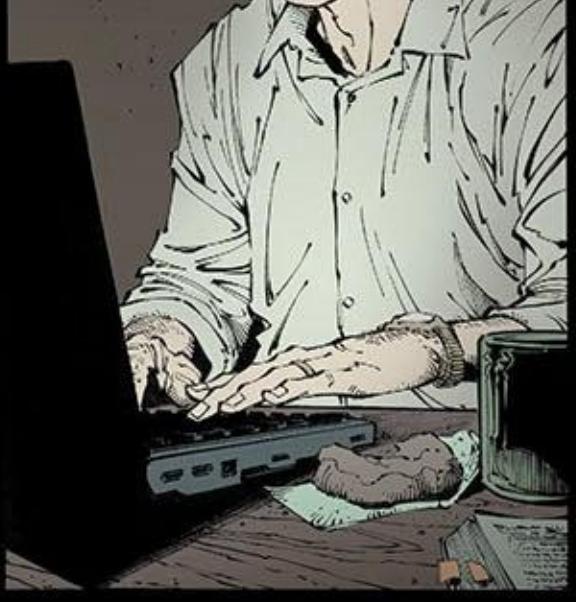
BATMAN OUT.



"...DUE TO ITS HISTORY OF UNEXPLAINED TRAGEDIES, THAT HOSPITAL IS LISTED AS ONE OF THE MOST HAUNTED PLACES IN THE CITY."

"JUST BEHIND WILLOWWOOD CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL."

"STARTING WITH THE FIRE OF 1910, WHICH RESULTED IN THE DEATHS OF NEARLY FIFTY PATIENTS, FOLKTALES CIRCULATED THAT THE DEVIL HIMSELF SOMETIMES VISITED THE HALLS..."







WHOEVER
YOU ARE, I
CAN HEAR YOU IN
THERE! YOU HAVE
THREE SECONDS TO
HIT THE FLOOR
AND--



WHO'S THERE?

I CAN'T TELL YET. BUT I CAN SEE HIM. THE WARD SEEMS INTACT.

SEND ME THE CODE, PENNY-TWO.

I CHANGED IT TO "BAT-CURE." WHAT, TOO CHEEKY?

YOU'RE YOUR FATHER'S DAUGHTER--

BATMANNNN...

IT CAN'T BE...

WHO, BRUCE? BRUCE, WHO IS IT?

Joe Chill.

The man who killed your parents, Bruce...

Crime Alley.

He knows...

ZORRO

HELP.

SOMEONE,
PLEASE...

IT'S
GOING
TO BE OKAY,
DUKE. IT
WILL...

NNNOOOO!

"NOT LIKE THIS!"

YOU GET
THE HELL OUT OF
HERE! YOU'RE
NOT... YOU'RE
NOT--

AW,
COME ON NOW,
JIMBO...

...I'VE GOT
SO MUCH NEW
MATERIAL TO
TEST OUT!

HA HA HA HA!

NEW GAGS, NEW
SLEIGHTSSSSSS...
WATCH THIS!

SEE?! LITTLE
GASOLINE, FLINTS
IN THE SHOES
AND...

...I'VE GOT
A WHOLE NEW
ROUTINE!

"WHO ARE
YOU?"



MOVE AND I'LL CUT YOU DOWN,
JOKER!

NO MORE
PARLOR TRICKS, NO
MORE DOCTORED
PHOTOS OR
GAGS!

PRETENDING,
WHAT? YOU'RE
SOMETHING
SPECIAL? YOU'RE
DONE!



YOU KNOW, MAYBE
YOU'RE RIGHT,
COMMISSSSHHH.

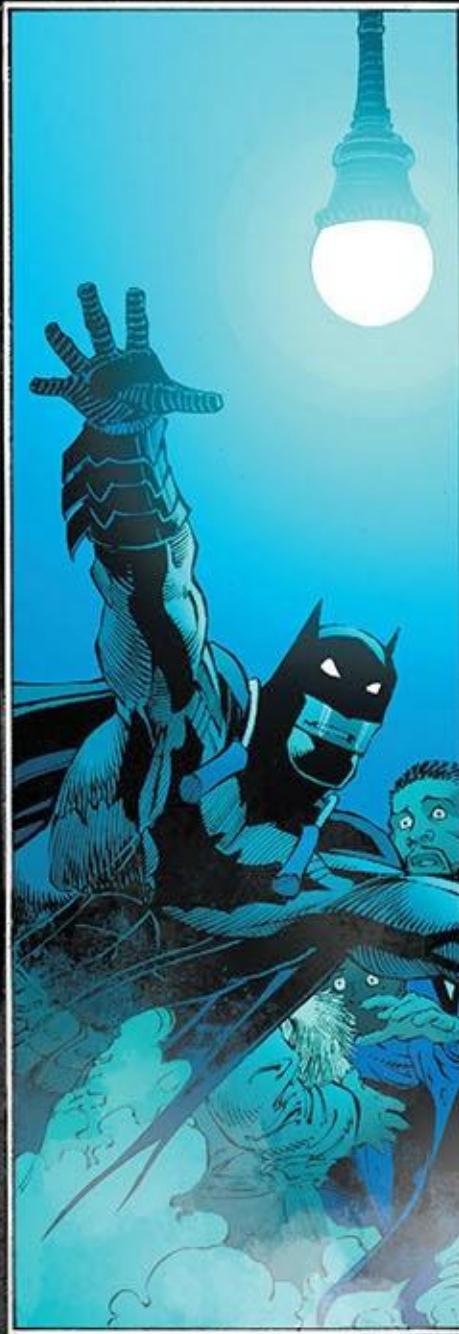
MAYBE THIS
OOOONE TIME,
IT'S NOT A JOKE
AT ALL.

STOP RIGHT
THERE!

181935

Hi.



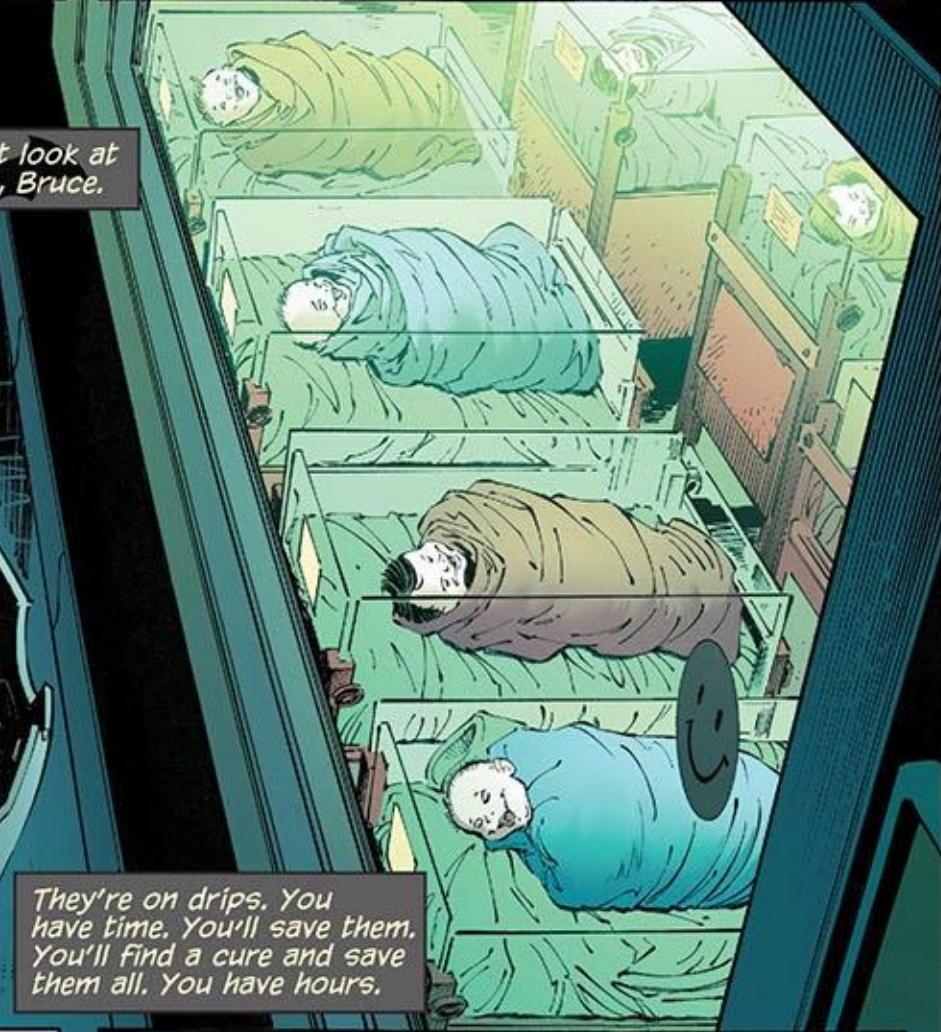


SEE,
DUKE? IT'S
ALL RIGHT.
BAT--

LOOK!

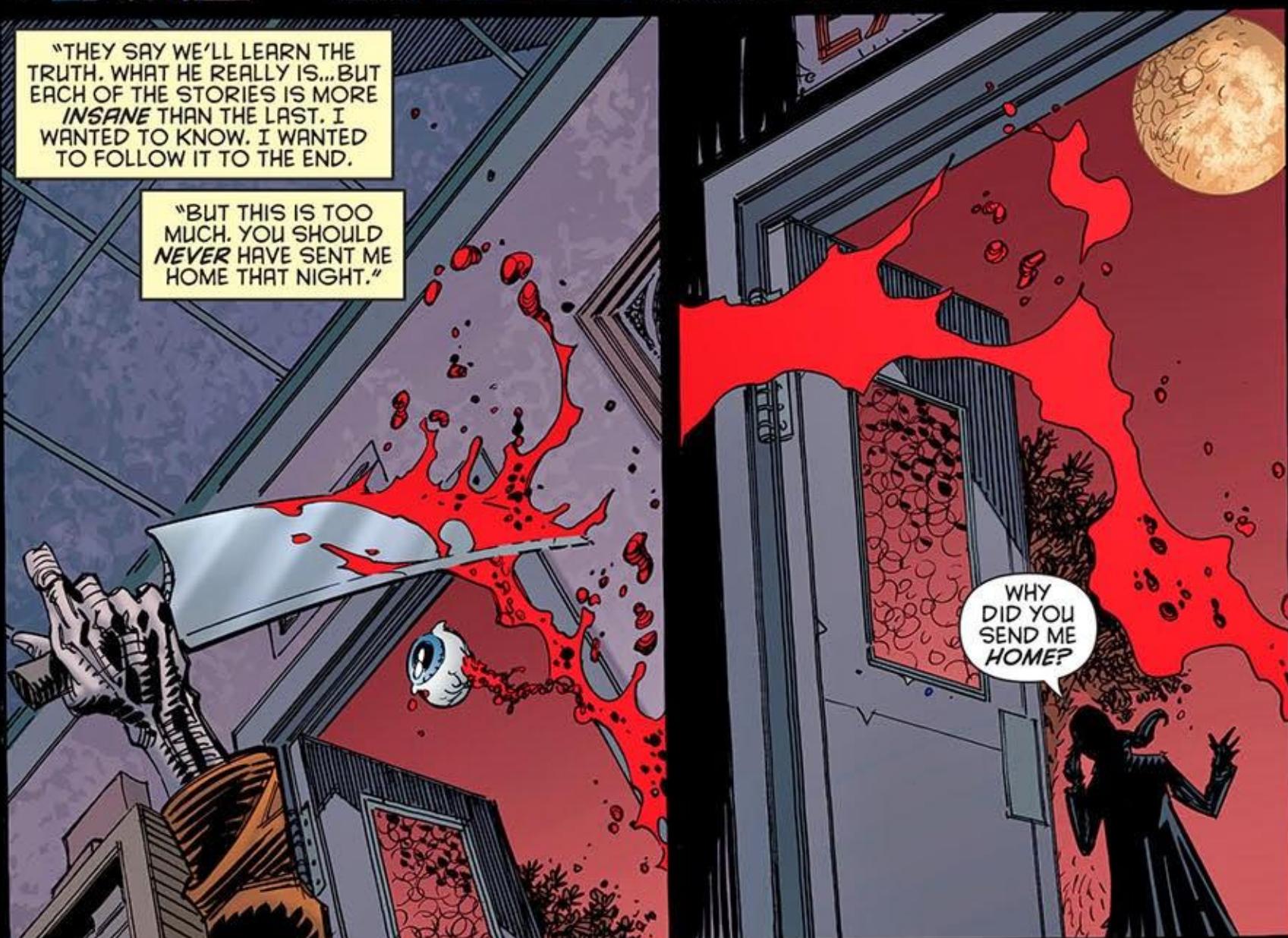
JIM!

BATMAN!
HE'S GONE!





TO BE CONTINUED!



GULP

MORTON,
PLEASE...

YOU CAN
FEEL IT, CAN'T
YOU... THE WAY IT
RUMBLES AROUND
IN YOUR HEAD... THE
LAUGHTER. IT'S
BAD. IT'S A BAD,
BAD THING FOR
GOTHAM.

LET ME GO, AND
I CAN GET US
ALL HELP.

NO, I
NEED TO
KNOW.

NEED TO
KNOW THAT MAMA
WAS WRONG. LIKE
THE DOCTORS SAID
SHE WAS. BUT SHE
CAN'T BE... THE SIGN.
HE TOLD ME TO LOOK
FOR THE **SIGN**.

MORTON?

IT'S
YOUR EYES, DR.
ZAHEER. THE MAKE-
UP DRIPPING
DOWN... THE SAD
CLOWN.

OH GOD,
IT'S JUST
LIKE HE
SAID...

...CAN'T
BE TRUE...
CAN'T BE
TRUE...

WHAT
CAN'T BE
TRUE?

I USED TO BE A **GOOF**, THAT'S
WHAT MAMA SAID. A BIG OLE GOOF.
ALWAYS MAKING JOKES, MAKING
FUN. I WASN'T REAL GOOD AT
SCHOOL, BUT I LIKED HEARING
IT WHEN THEY LAUGHED.

TEACHER
CALLED MA
ONE DAY AND
SHE WALED
ON ME PRETTY
GOOD. AND
SHE TOLD ME
A STORY.

"THE STORY OF
THE FIRST LAUGH
IN GOTHAM."

"IT WAS THE OLD DAYS,
THEN...AND THE CITY...IT
WAS A SAD, GRAY PLACE.
NOBODY SMILED. THEY
JUST WORKED IN THEIR
DIRTY DIRTY FactORIES,
AND WENT BACK TO THEIR
DIRTY DIRTY HOMES."

"BUT THAT'S HOW IT HAD
ALWAYS BEEN. GOTHAM
WAS MAKING THINGS.
MORE THINGS THAN EVER.
IT WAS A DARK PLACE, BUT
IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE."

"BUT THE BOSSSES, THEY FELT BAD FOR
THE WORKERS. THEY WERE GETTING
SICK SICK SICK. AND MORE OF THEM
WERE STARTING TO GET ANGRY."



"THEY KNEW THEY MIGHT
FIGHT BACK IF THEY
DIDN'T TRY ANYTHING.
THEY MIGHT REVOLT.
BUT THEY HAD NO IDEA
WHAT THEY COULD DO."



"AND THAT'S
WHEN HE
ARRIVED..."

"MAMA DIDN'T KNOW HIS
NAME. I DON'T THINK THE
MEN DID EITHER...BUT THE
CLOWN TOLD HIM HE COULD
DO THE IMPOSSIBLE."

"HE COULD MAKE
THEM ALL HAPPY.
HE COULD MAKE
THE CITY LAUGH."

"SO HE WENT
FACTORY TO
FACTORY...AND
HE PERFORMED. IT
STARTED WITH A
GIGGLE OR TWO
OR THREE...BUT IT
KEPT GETTING
WORSE...THEY JUST
KEPT ON LAUGHING."

"LAUGHING UNTIL THEY
WERE COUGHING UP
BLOOD. DOCTORS CAME
IN, BUT THEY'D NEVER SEEN
ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE."

"SIXTY PEOPLE
DIED THAT NIGHT."



"THEY TRIED TO STOP HIM, BUT HE KEPT GOING...FACTORY TO FACTORY. AND IT WAS ALL THE SAME, UNTIL THEY FOUND WHERE HE WAS HIDING, JUST OUTSIDE OF THE CITY."



"THE PEOPLE OF GOTHAM, THEY KNEW THEY HAD TO BURN IT TO THE GROUND."

"BUT THEN FROM INSIDE, THEY HEARD A GIGGLE, AND A SQUEAK...AND THE CLOWN CAME OUT TO GREET THEM."

"HE WAS BURNING, BUT HE WOULDN'T STOP. HE JUGGLED AND LAUGHED UNTIL HE WAS CINDERS."

"THEY TRIED TO HUSH IT UP, YOU KNOW? SOLD OFF THE LAND TO SOME CHEMICAL COMPANY."

"BUT THERE WAS A RULE IN GOTHAM. NOT IN THE LAWS. NOT EVER SAID ALOUD...BUT CLOWNS WEREN'T ALLOWED HERE."



LOOK
AT THEM... IT'S
HAPPENING ALL
OVER AGAIN...
EXCEPT NOW IT'S
EVERYONE.

JUST
LIKE HE SAID.
JUST LIKE HE
SAID WHEN
HE CAME.



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THEY'VE ALL
WONDERED WHO I AM
FOR SO LONG. THAT'S
WHAT THEY'VE ALL BEEN
SEARCHING FOR.



I'VE LINGERED
IN THE STREETS SINCE
THEY BURNED ME TO ASH
ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. EVERY
TIME THERE WAS A LAUGH, A
GIGGLE, A TITTER, I GOT
STRONGER...

BECAUSE I
WASN'T DONE WITH
GOTHAM, YOU SEE? I
CAME HERE TO MAKE THEM
ALL LAUGH. TO BRING
THEM ALL DOWN.

BUT NOT
YOU... IF YOU'D BEEN
OUT THERE, YOU WOULD
HAVE SEEN. YOU WOULD
HAVE KNOWN IN AN
INSTANT.

THERE AREN'T
MANY PEOPLE LEFT
WHO KNOW THE REAL
STORY. YOUR DEAR OLD
MUMSY WAS ONE OF
THE LAST.



I NEED TO KNOW THAT MAMA WAS *WRONG*. I NEED TO KNOW THAT WHEN I WAS A BOY, MAKING THEM LAUGH, THAT I DIDN'T MAKE HIM STRONGER.

ALL I WANT IS TO GO HOME... BACK TO MY CELL, WITH MY PILLOW. AND BILL THE GUARD, WHO SINGS TO ME WHEN NOBODY ELSE CAN HEAR.

BUT...I HAVE TO FIND OUT.

IT'S OKAY, MORTON...WE CAN FIGURE IT OUT TOGETHER. I CAN CALL MY FRIEND BACK...WE CAN GET BACKUP. SOMETHING TO KEEP US SAFE.

JUST LET'S DO IT BEFORE THE OTHERS...





TO BE CONTINUED

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