



The Batman Who Laughs, Part 4

There's a saying here in Gotham...it was adopted from the **Miagani Tribe** who lived here long ago...

...before they were all murder **ED**.

It goes...
Happiness is seeing the world through the **eyes of children**.

There's even a Latin version on our subway token. "Through new eyes..."

There's truth in it, though.

I've never told anyone this, but whenever I have a **BAD NIGHT**...whenever I doubt myself, or my mission as Batman (like now... **HEH**)...I try to see things through my children's eyes.

Dick was the first Robin. He had the happiest eyes. Circus eyes. Weightless. Leaping, never falling.

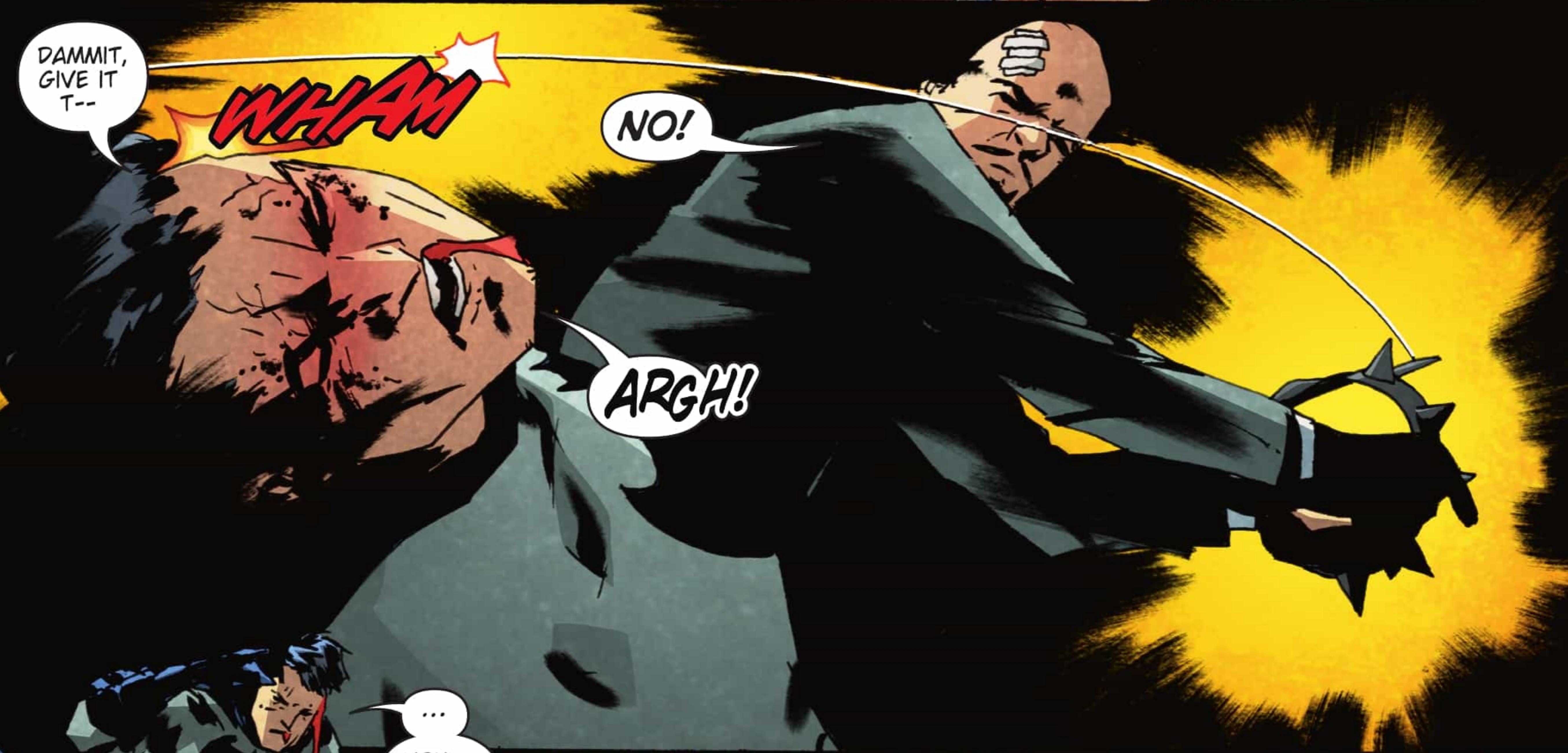
But it's true of all of them.

So remind yourself, Bruce. Now. Quickly...

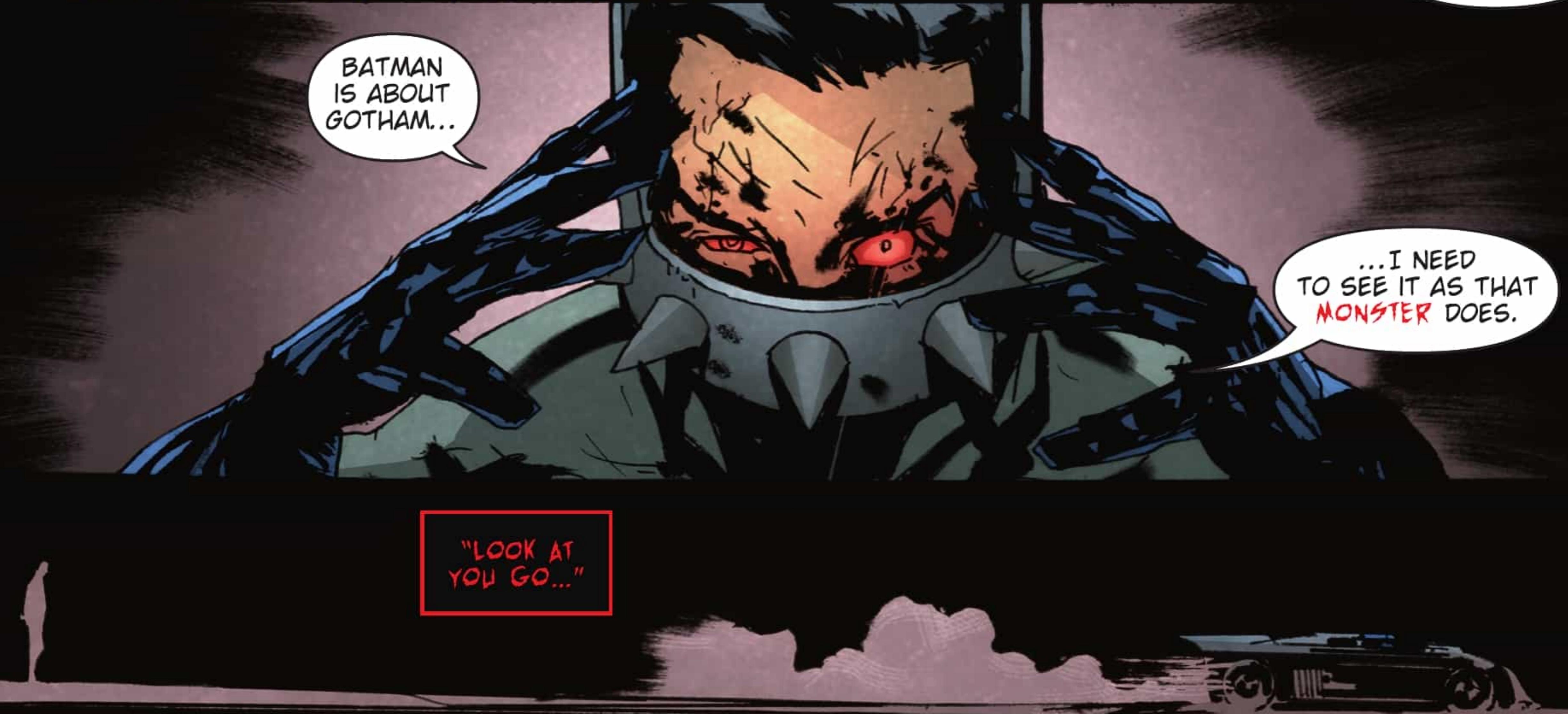
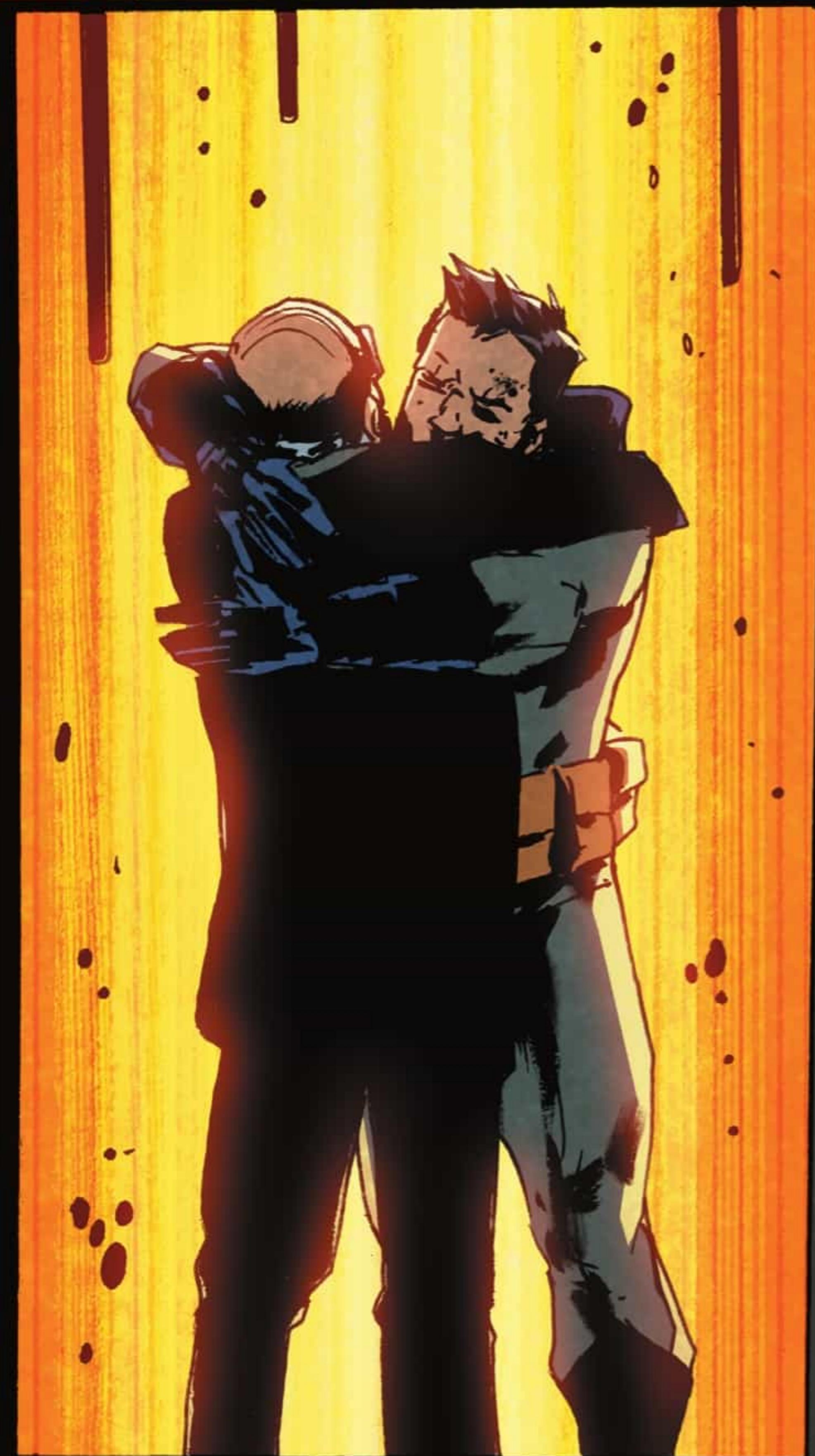
...feel it. The joy, the **PEACE** it brings...

THE BATCAVE. NOW.

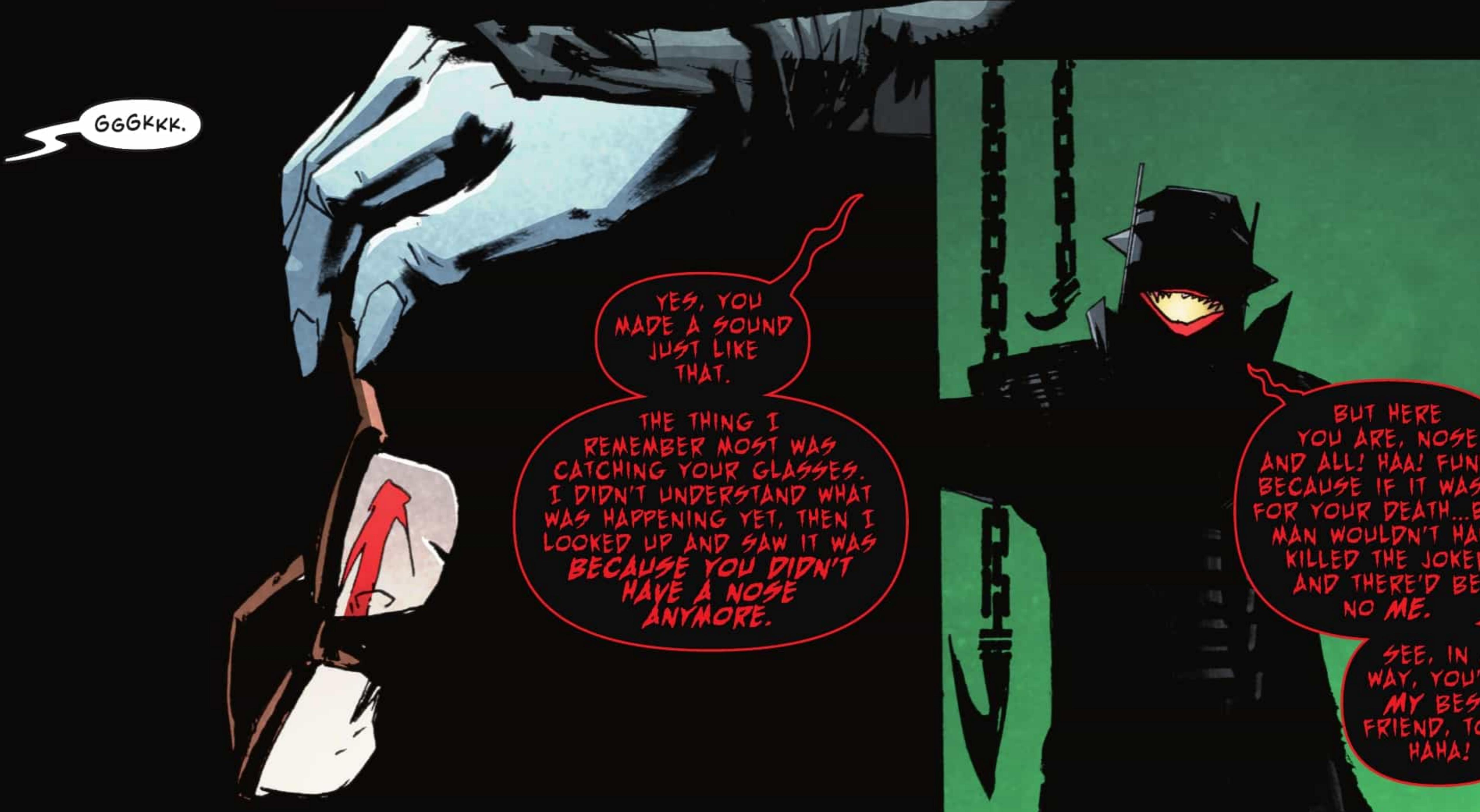








...STRUGGLING
AND FIGHTING EVEN
THOUGH THERE'S
NOWHERE
TO RUN.



SO WELCOME, BEST FRIEND, TO MY HOME BENEATH GOTHAM CITY!

I THINK YOU'LL FIND IT PLEASANT ENOUGH, IF YOU BEHAVE BY MY BOOK.

ON THE OTHER HAND, IF YOU MISBEHAVE...

WELL, YOU AND THE GRIM KNIGHT, YOU'RE DECIDEDLY NOT FRIENDS. ON HIS WORLD...

PLEASE MISBEHAVE, JIM.

MMFFF!

DON'T WORRY, YOU WON'T BE HERE LONG! WE'RE ALMOST DONE, JIM. SEE THEREZ ON THAT TABLE?

I ALREADY HAVE FOUR CANISTERS...AND SIX WILL BE JUST ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE WHOLE CITY.

YOU GET TO SEE IT THIS TIME, JIM.

HEY, WITH A LITTLE SERUM, MAYBE YOU AND I CAN EVEN BE PARTNERS HERE, TOO.

=GASP= HE MAY THINK YOU'RE SOME FINAL ENEMY, SOME ENDGAME, BUT YOU'RE JUST ONE MORE #\$%&@ RIDICULOUS COSTUME IN THE ARKHAM INTAKE BIN! ONE MORE ORANGE JUMPSUIT.

THAT'S RIGHT! I SEE YOU FOR WHAT YOU--

--ARE.

I'M SURE YOU DO, JIM.

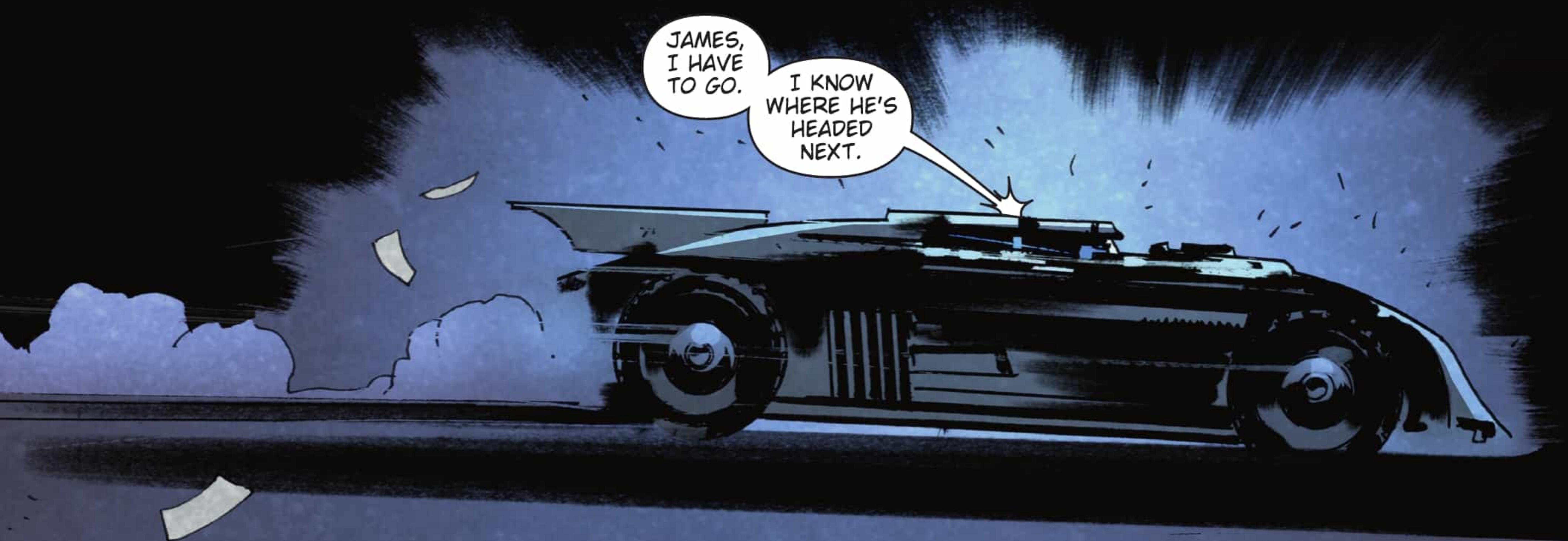
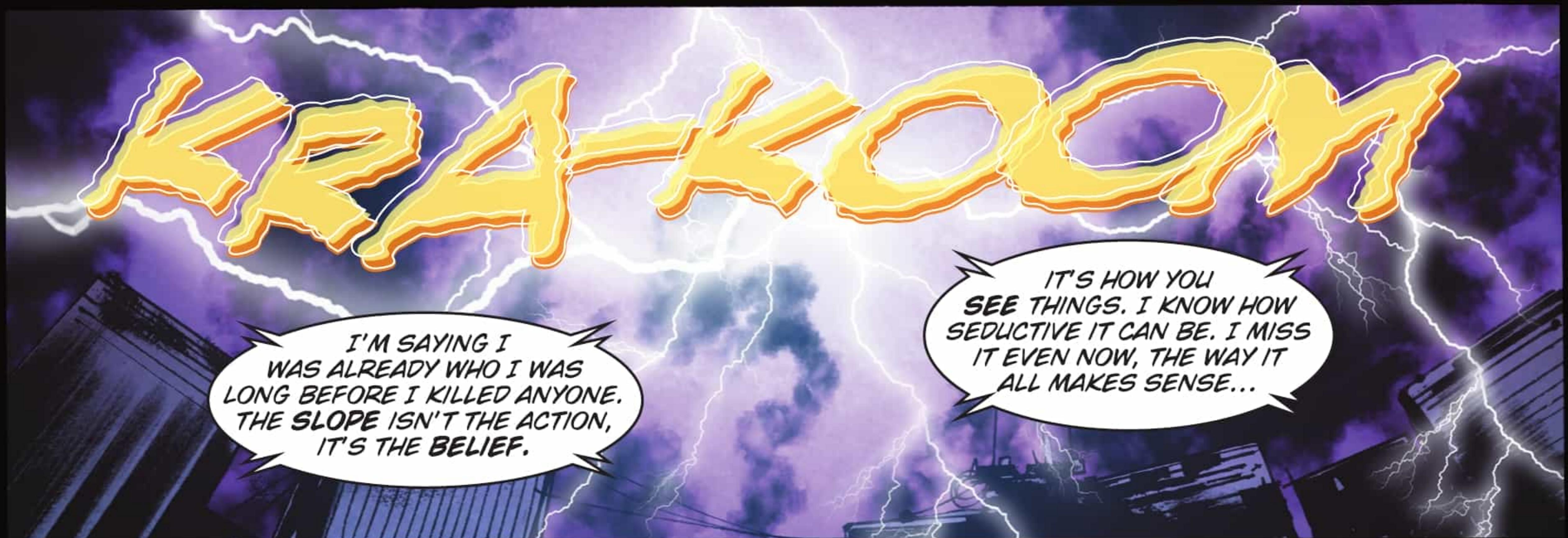
HERE. DON'T FORGET THESE.

ELSEWHERE...









THREE HOURS PRIOR. BENEATH GOTHAM.
LAST LAUGH RESOURCE COMPOUND.

COMPUTER,
TEST WATER FOR
CONTAMINANTS.

FULL CLEAN.

TEST
AGAIN.

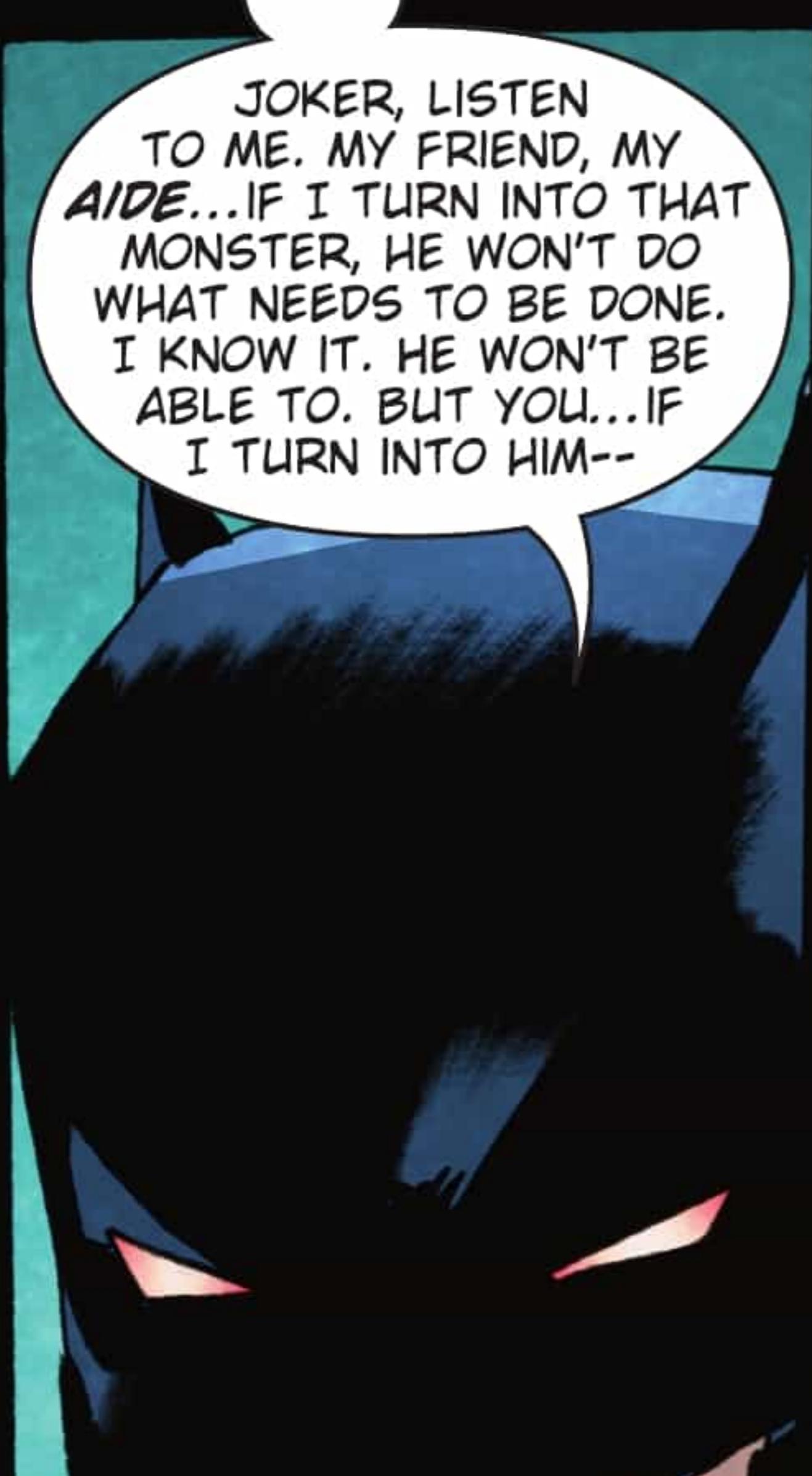
Good
for you,
Batsss...

...YOU
never can
be too
careful.

YOU!?







BLACKGATE PRISON. NOW.

...I'd hear it as soon as I entered this **CELL** block.

This section of Blackgate used to be a transitional wing for inmates from Arkham. **CRIMINALS** who'd been treated at the asylum, found rational.

You'd think Arkham would be the **LAUGHING HOUSE**, but this wing...the joy the inmates felt having escaped Arkham...it was haunting.

Now it's barely used, which is why I am in no rush to strip the dark metal from the pilings in the **BASE**...

SIR,
THE ENERGY
READING IS
RISING.

IT'S OFF THE
CHARTS. THIS IS
THE PLACE.

MY GUESS IS
WHATEVER PORTAL
HE'S CREATING
WILL OPEN ANY
SECOND.

BE CAREFUL,
SIR. IF THE PORTAL
CAN BRING ANOTHER
BRUCE WAYNE HERE,
COULDN'T IT ALSO BRING
YOU TO WHATEVER
DIMENSION IS ON
THE OTHER S--

FREEZE!

I SAID,
FREEZE!

LISTEN TO
ME, SON--

SHUT UP!
YOU'RE...YOU'RE
HIM! YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO LAUGHS!

TAKE HIM
OUT! TAKE
HIS UNIFORM.

SHOOT!

I'LL
DO IT!

SHOOT!

DO IT!
HE'S YOUR
SIZE!

HURT HIM!
CRIPPLE HIM
BEFORE--

I'M NOT HIM. YOUR TAG--YOU'RE COMMANDING OFFICER DAVID HARPER. YOU'RE 29, YOU HAVE A WIFE NAMED CALLIE AND A DAUGHTER NAMED MADELINE. SHE'S TWO. YOU'RE A GOOD COP, AND I NEED YOUR HELP.

BUT HOW
DO I KNOW
YOU'RE THE
REAL--

MADELINE HAS A
STUFFED BATMAN SHE TAKES
EVERYWHERE. IT LAUGHS WHEN YOU
SQUEEZE IT. I AM NOT FOND OF IT.
BECAUSE I'M BATMAN.

O...OKAY.

I'M HERE
LOOKING FOR
SOMEONE, DAVID. AS A
COMMANDING OFFICER,
YOU CAN OPEN AND
CLOSE DOORS.

WHERE'S THE
PERSON YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR?

HE SHOULD
BE AROUND
HERE...

BLIP

...SOMEWHERE?

WHAT IN...?
PENNY-ONE.
COME IN.

PENNY-ONE!
THIS PLACE JUST
CHANGED.

I MUST HAVE
CROSSED THROUGH
WHATEVER PORTAL IS
OPEN...THIS BLACKGATE
IS **MASSIVE**...IT MUST
BE FOUR TIMES THE
SIZE OF--

SIX
TIMES THE SIZE,
ACTUALLY...

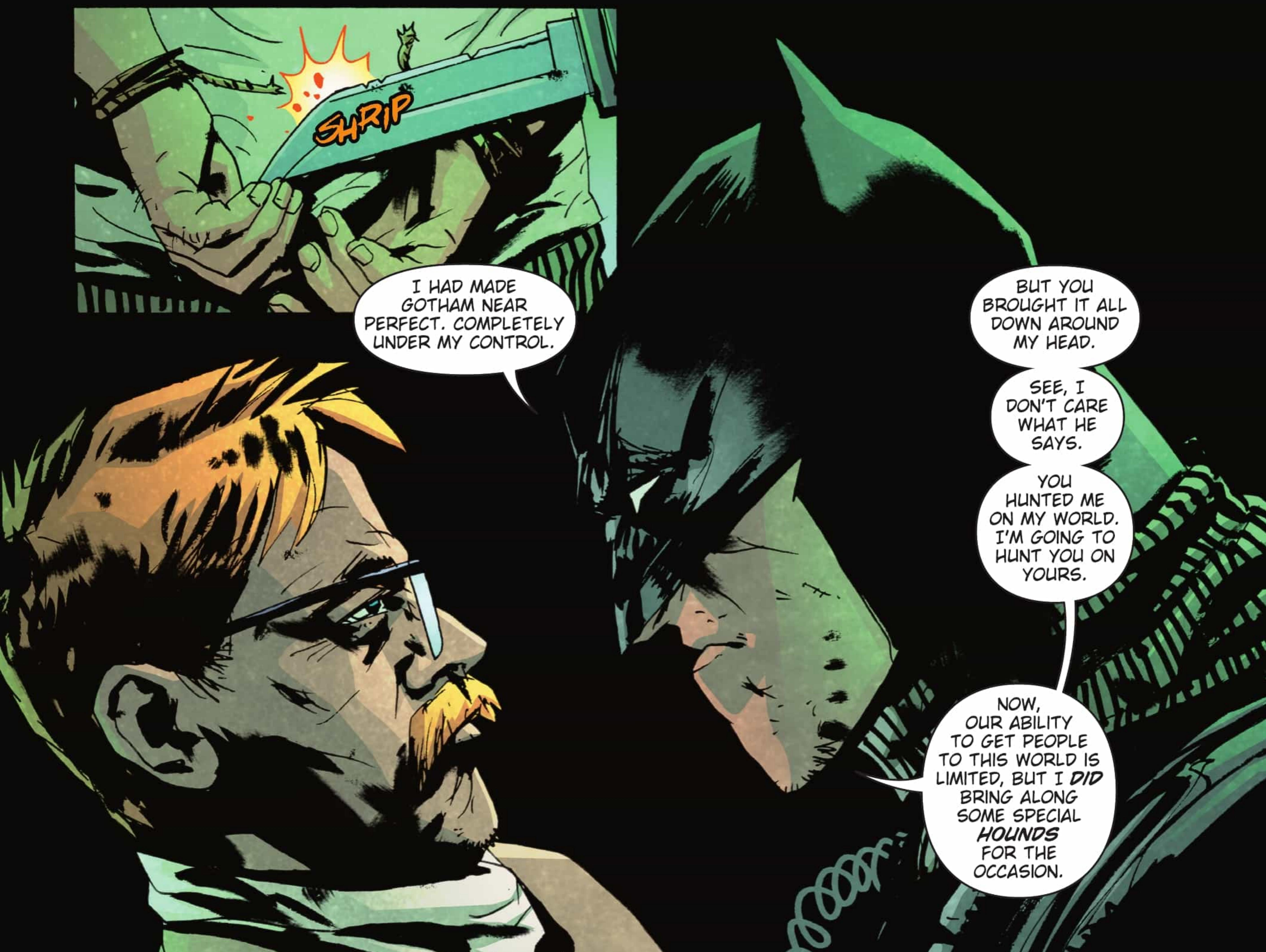
...IF YOU'RE
COMPARING IT TO
THE OLD BLACKGATE.
WE HAVE ANOTHER
ISLAND WHERE ARKHAM
USED TO BE,
TOO.

I'M BRUCE
WAYNE. I RUN
THIS PLACE.
WELCOME...

"...TO THE
END OF THE
LINE."

GET
UP.
NOW.

WHY?
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?





LOOKS
LIKE BACK ON MY
WORLD. COMPLETE
WITH SWINGING
DOORS AND
(HOPEFULLY)
WAYS OUT.



THE
BATMAN
WHO LAUGHS!
STOP HIM!





"...PAST THE DANGER.
THE TERROR..."



"...YOU'RE TRYING TO
SEE THINGS THROUGH
THE EYES OF YOUR
ROBINS, AREN'T YOU?"

NO! STAY
AWAY!

SCREEEEE!



"THROUGH THE EYES
OF YOUR SO-CALLED
CHILDREN..."

"...BUT THEY KNEW,
BATMAN. THE HOPE
YOU SAW IN PEOPLE, IT
WAS A LIE. THAT'S
WHY DICK, WHY ALL OF
THEM, STAYED HIGH
ABOVE."

"BUT I'M HERE
TO TELL YOU THE
TRUTH. I'LL EVEN
TAKE THE DIGITAL
MASK OFF SO
YOU CAN SEE."

"NONONO..."

"YES. THE HARD TRUTH IS,
YOU'RE FINALLY SEEING
THINGS CLEARLY..."

"...BECAUSE FOR THE
FIRST TIME EVER, YOU'RE
LOOKING AT GOTHAM
THROUGH THE EYES OF
YOUR REAL CHILD..."

"...YOUR
TRUEST
CHILD..."

"...THE
BATMAN
WHO
LAUGHS."

"IN OTHER
WORDS..."





YES,
SIR!

NO...
WAIT--

I tell myself to
see the best, the
good...but AS I
TURN...ALL I SEE...

...IS
RED.

OPEN
FIRE!

