



# **The Batman Who Laughs, Part 6**

# GOTHAM CITY. NOW.

BUT MAYBE IT'S SIMPLE! MAYBE HAPPINESS IS JUST LAUGHTER? HEH. MAYBE THAT'S ALL.

SOME ANTHROPOLOGISTS, THEY THINK LAUGHTER DEVELOPED AS A COURTING CALL.

OTHERS SAY IT EVOLVED AS A REACTION TO INCONGRUITY. THE BODY'S GAG REFLEX TO LIFE. HEH.

THE THING IS, SCIENCE DOESN'T KNOW A LOT ABOUT LAUGHTER. ITS NATURE.

BUT MOST THINK LAUGHTER STARTED AS A GROUP SIGNAL TO LET THE TRIBE KNOW EVERYTHING IS OKAY.

THAT'S WHAT LAUGHTER IS FOR ME. IT MEANS I DID MY JOB. PEOPLE FEEL SAFE. LIKE WHEN I WAS A BOY... RUNNING IN THE YARD. RUNNING...HEH.

LAST LAUGH WAS SUPPOSED TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL SAFE. IT TOOK TWO HOURS TO GO INTO EFFECT... SEALING OFF ENTRY-POINTS...PROTECTING THE SKIES.

BUT THE CITY ISN'T WHAT I THOUGHT IT WASSSSS.

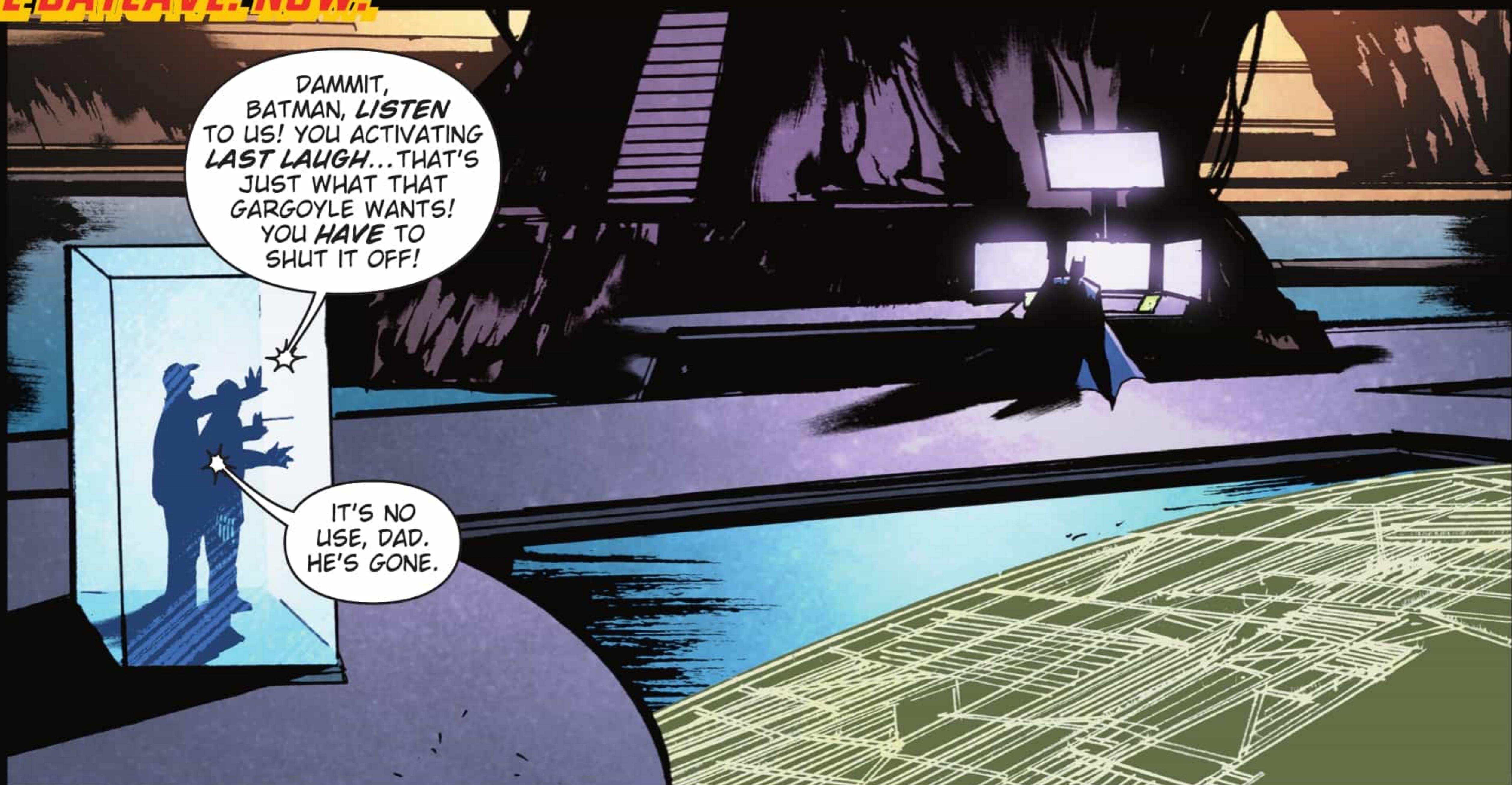
RIGHT NOW, NO ONE IS LAUGHING OUT THERE...

...SOON, THOUGH...THE LAUGHTER WILL COME...

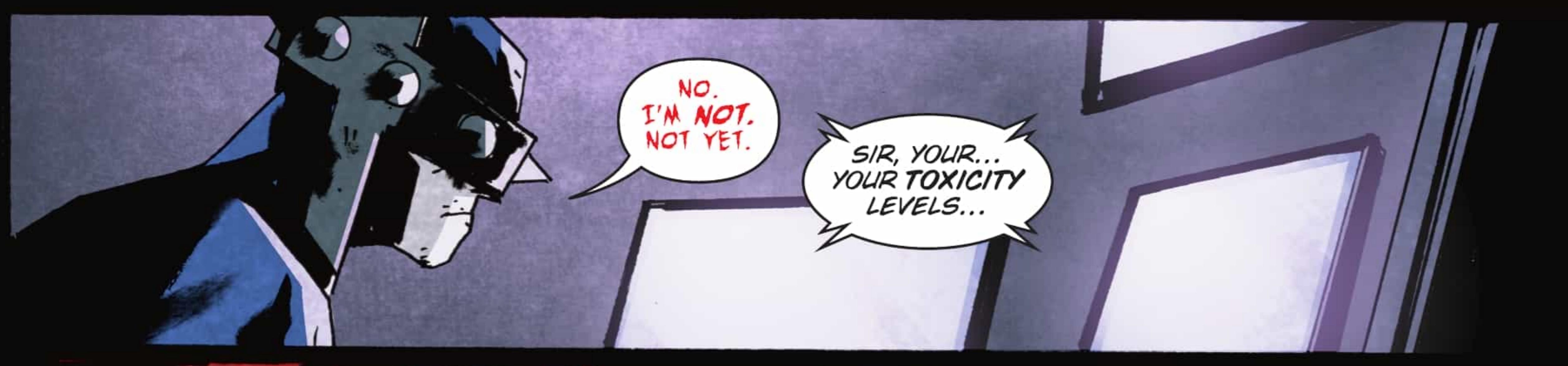
SSHUUUUH. LISTEN.

ANY MOMENT WE'LL HEAR THE SOUND.

# THE BATCAVE. NOW.



IT'S NO USE, DAD. HE'S GONE.



...I SEE MAYBE TEN PERCENT HEALTHY BLOOD CELLS LEFT. THE SLIGHTEST RISE IN ACTIVITY AND YOU'LL CROSS THE THRESHOLD.



THEN WHY, BATMAN?! WHY DID YOU SET OFF THE PROTOCOL?

BECAUSE, JIM, IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE.

LAST LAUGH CO-OPTS THE CITY'S POWER GRID. THE GRIM KNIGHT WILL LIKELY BE ABLE TO HACK INTO IT IN A MATTER OF HOURS, TAKE IT OVER... BUT UNTIL THEN, WE CONTROL IT.

WE CONTROL THE CITY'S POWER.





"...SO I KNOW  
HIS ONE  
WEAKNESS."

COME  
ON...COME GET  
IT...YOUR LITTLE  
AWARD...

...THAAAAT'S  
RIGHT...YOU  
KNOW YOU  
WANT IT...

AND  
AS WAYNE  
FOUNDATION HEAD,  
IT IS MY PRIVILEGE  
TO PRESENT THIS  
AWARD TO THE  
ONE AND  
ONLY...

...BRUCE  
WAYNE.

BIP

CRIME ALLEY

CRIME ALLEY

zzzz

CRIME ALLEY

CRIME ALLEY

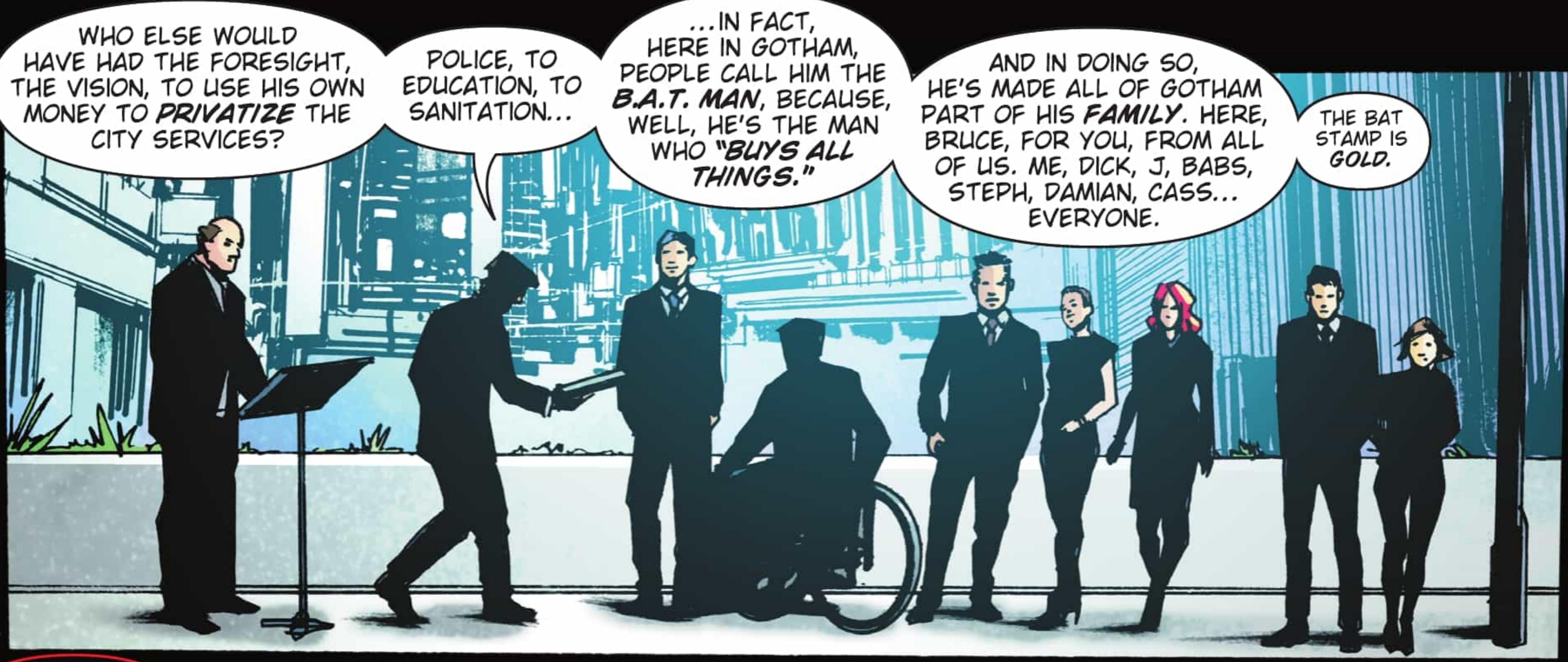
WHO ELSE WOULD HAVE HAD THE FORESIGHT, THE VISION, TO USE HIS OWN MONEY TO **PRIVATIZE** THE CITY SERVICES?

POLICE, TO EDUCATION, TO SANITATION...

...IN FACT, HERE IN GOTHAM, PEOPLE CALL HIM THE **B.A.T. MAN**, BECAUSE, WELL, HE'S THE MAN WHO "**BUYS ALL THINGS.**"

AND IN DOING SO, HE'S MADE ALL OF GOTHAM PART OF HIS **FAMILY**. HERE, BRUCE, FOR YOU, FROM ALL OF US. ME, DICK, J, BABS, STEPH, DAMIAN, CASS... EVERYONE.

THE BAT STAMP IS GOLD.



PFFT.  
GOLD FLAKE.  
CHEAP-ASS  
KIDS.

AWW,  
IT'S THE  
THOUGHT THAT  
COUNTS.

BRUCE?  
IS THAT  
YOU?

IT IS,  
MONSTER. NOW  
WATCH YOUR  
TARGET CLOSELY...

KLIK

...AS I MAKE  
HIM DISAPPEAR  
BEFORE YOUR VERY  
EYESSSSS.

2  
BLAM

TIM,  
THANK YOU  
SO MU--

BLIP

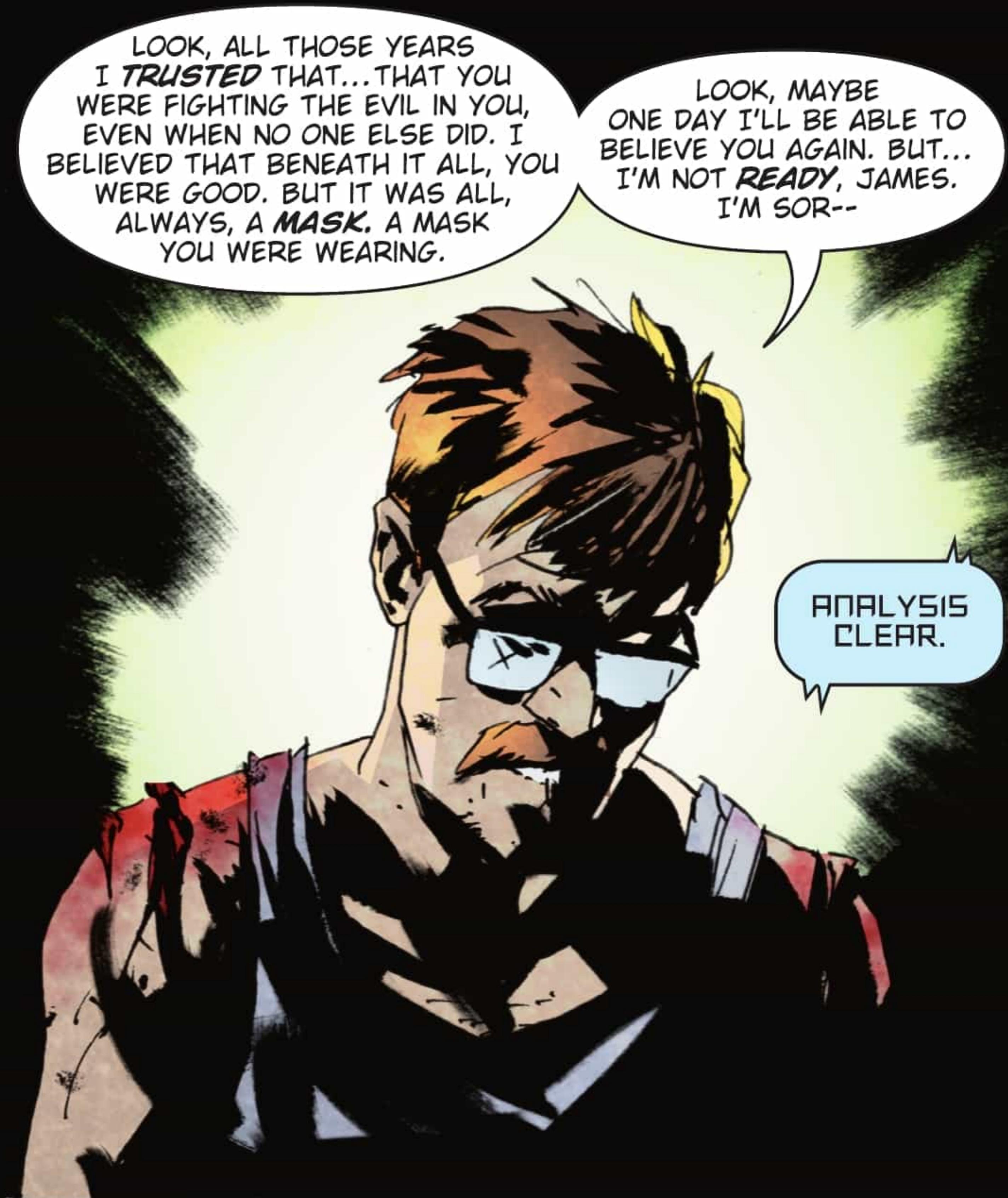
HA. OH,  
I'M ENJOYING  
IT PLENTY...

WELL, WELL...  
AND HERE I THOUGHT WE  
WERE ON THE SAME SIDE,  
BRUCE. STILL FIGHTING THE  
CHANGE, THOUGH, EH? I  
GIVE YOU, OH, ANOTHER  
HOUR, MAYBE LESS. SO  
ENJOY IT WHILE  
IT LASTS.









"...WE HAVE A WAR TO PREPARE FOR."

SIR, PLEASE!  
YOU'RE DOWN TO LESS THAN FIVE PERCENT HEALTHY BLOOD CELLS!

YOU DO THIS, YOU FIGHT HIM, YOU EXERT YOURSELF IN ANY WAY THAT GETS YOUR BLOOD PUMPING AND YOU'LL BE LOST! YOU NEED TO...TO DO SOMETHING.

I AM DOING SOMETHING. JUST PROMISE ME THAT YOU'LL STICK TO THE PLAN, ALFRED. AND WHEN THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS GETS HERE... YOU'LL STAY AWAY.

I...I DON'T WANT YOU FACING THAT DEMON ALONE.

ALFRED. I MEANT STAY AWAY FROM ME.

IT ALL COMES DOWN TO THIS.

EVERYTHING A THOUSAND VERSIONS OF MYSELF, AT WAR WITH ME, ALL LED BY ONE CREATURE.

THIS IS THE FINAL BATTLEFIELD. I FEEL IT.

THERE'S A MOMENT  
RIGHT BEFORE A  
LAUGH WHEN THE BODY  
LOCKS UP. TENSES.



The DIAPHRAGM  
HARDENS, THE LARYNX  
CLOSES...EVERYTHING  
COILS AND TIGHTENS.

THAT'S HOW IT FEELS JUST  
NOW. LIKE THE WHOLE CITY  
IS ABOUT TO LET OUT A LAUGH...  
A LAUGH IT'S HELD IN FOR  
FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

CAN THEY FEEL IT, TOO, ACROSS  
THE WATER IN ARKHAM?

SCALPSSSS TINGLING...  
FEEL IT ROARING UP  
FROM THE BEDROCK?

CAN THEY FEEL IT? THE LAST  
LAUGH OF GOTHAM CITY?



THE ONLY QUESTION IS...

...WILL GOTHAM  
LAUGH WITH ME...



...OR HIM?

I KNEW YOU WOULD.

WELL... I  
CAME.

HA! OF  
COURSE YOU  
DID... HEH. I CAN  
SMELL YOUR BLOOD,  
BRUCE. SO CLOSE!  
IT'S LIKE LOOKING  
INTO A MIRROR!  
HAHAHA!

I'LL  
NEVER BE  
YOU.



AW, THAT'S WHAT I SAID WHEN I WAS WHERE YOU ARE IN MY TRANSFORMATION. I EVEN CALLED THE FAMILY OVER TO LET THEM KNOW IT'D ALL BE OKAY.

WHILE I WAS WAITING FOR THEM, I GOT A PITCHER OF WATER FOR THE TABLE. THAT'S ALL THE EXERTION IT TOOK.

AND WHEN THE FAMILY ARRIVED, I KILLED THEM ALL.

THEN I DRANK A COOL GLASS OF WATER.

I'LL ADMIT, I DON'T SEE YOUR PLAN HERE.

I MEAN, YOU FIGHT ME, YOU'LL CHANGE IN NO TIME.

BUT DO NOTHING, AND I GET WHATEVER BRUCE YOU'RE PULLING THROUGH YOUR PORTAL. SO WHAT'S YOUR ANGLE?

COME CLOSER. I'LL SHOW YOU.

HA! I LIKE YOU, BRUCE. YOU KNOW WHAT...?

...YOU MAY BE THE WORST BATMAN...

...BUT YOU'LL MAKE A DAMN GOOD ME

CRACK

CLINK





NOW  
I'M AT THE  
WATERING  
HOLE.

STANDING  
RIGHT ABOVE  
THE DROP.



I DON'T  
KNOW THAT I'D  
CALL US OFFICIAL  
BATS, BUT  
HEY...

...WE'RE  
OUT FOR  
YOUR BLOOD  
AND WE HAVE  
REALLY BAD  
EYESIGHT.  
SO...HERE'S  
HOPING WE  
QUALIFY.

HEH. YOU  
THINK THOSE SUITS  
WILL PROTECT  
YOU.

WOW.  
SCARY.

BLT SEE, I'VE  
STUDIED YOUR BATMAN'S  
ARMORY. EVEN HIS MOST  
ADVANCED TECH ISN'T  
BEYOND ME.

THAT'S THE  
IDEA, GENIUS.  
THEY'RE BULLETPROOF  
CHAIN MAIL...AND IF YOU  
TOUCH US, THEY'LL DELIVER  
A CHARGE THAT'LL  
SEND YOU THROUGH  
THE CAVE WALL.

AGH!

NO MORE  
GADGETS AND  
TRICKS, JIM. THIS  
IS YOU AND ME,  
STANDING ON THE  
ROOF IN THE  
RAIN...

...ONE LAST TIME!



"UNDERNEATH THAT MASK IS A MONSTER."

HA! NO MORE ILLUSIONS, BRUCE!

YOU'RE BECOMING ME NOW, SO I'LL LET YOU IN ON THE KEY TO IT ALL.

WHAT IS A BAT, BRUCE?

I ASKED YOU A QUESTION! WHAT IS A BA--

SHUT UP!

SIR, THE ENERGY HAS PEAKED!

OUR BRUCE WAYNE IS ABOUT TO COME THROUGH THE PORTAL! BUT YOUR CELLS--

STICK TO THE PLAN!

BUT, SIR, YOU'RE DOWN TO ONE PERCENT...

...YOU'RE  
ALMOST ALL  
HIM!

A BAT IS  
THE ONLY MAMMAL  
ON THE PLANET  
THAT CAN FLY.

IT LEARNED TO  
RISE ABOVE ALL OTHER  
CREATURES LIKE IT BY EMBRACING  
ITS STRENGTHS, ITS TRUE NATURE,  
ITS URGES. THE BAT SHOWS US  
HOW TO EVOLVE, BRUCE.  
HOW TO WIN!

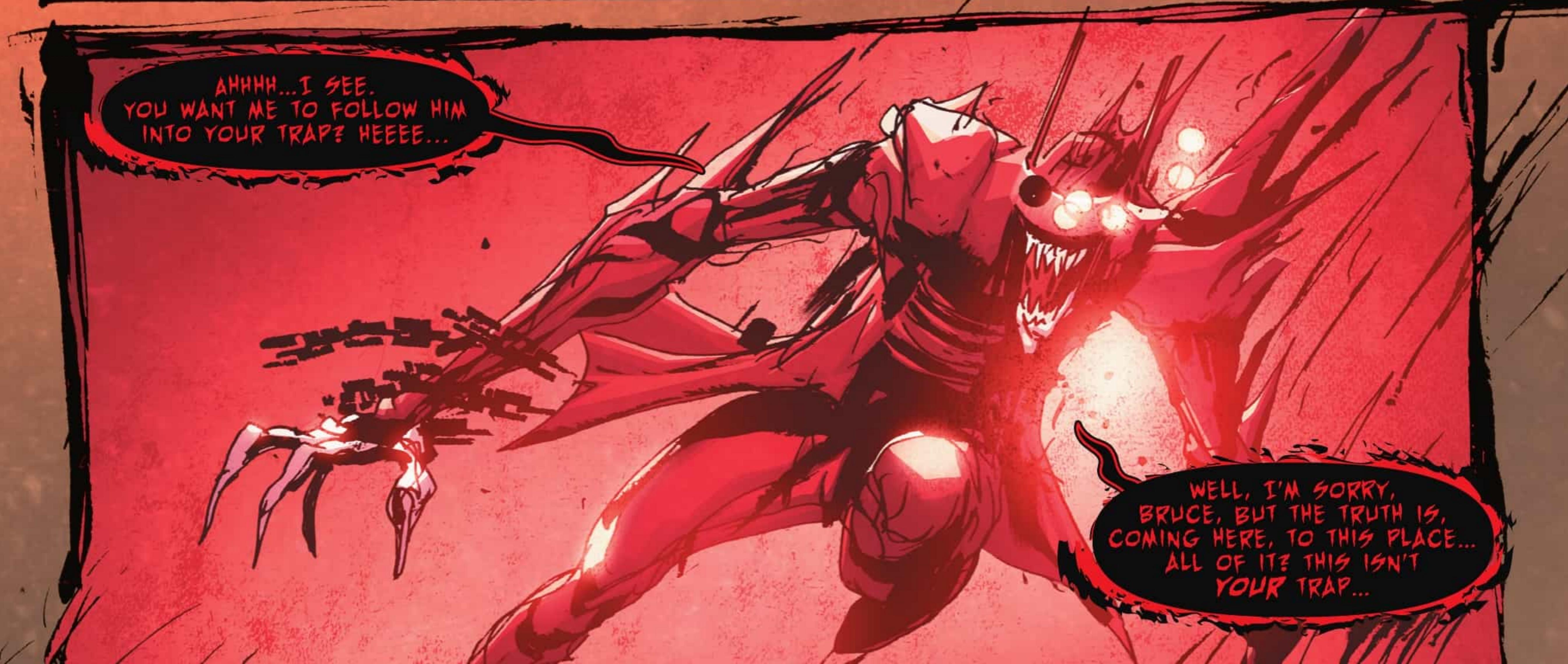
SEE, EVERY  
SINGLE VERSION OF US I  
PULLED THROUGH, THE HAPPIEST  
VERSIONS, THEY'RE ALL SELFISH.  
THEY GAVE UP ON IDEALS TO  
COMPROMISE... TO WIN.  
THEY ARE BATS!

BUT YOU... YOU  
HOLD PEOPLE'S FEET TO  
THE @#%&\*! DIRT.

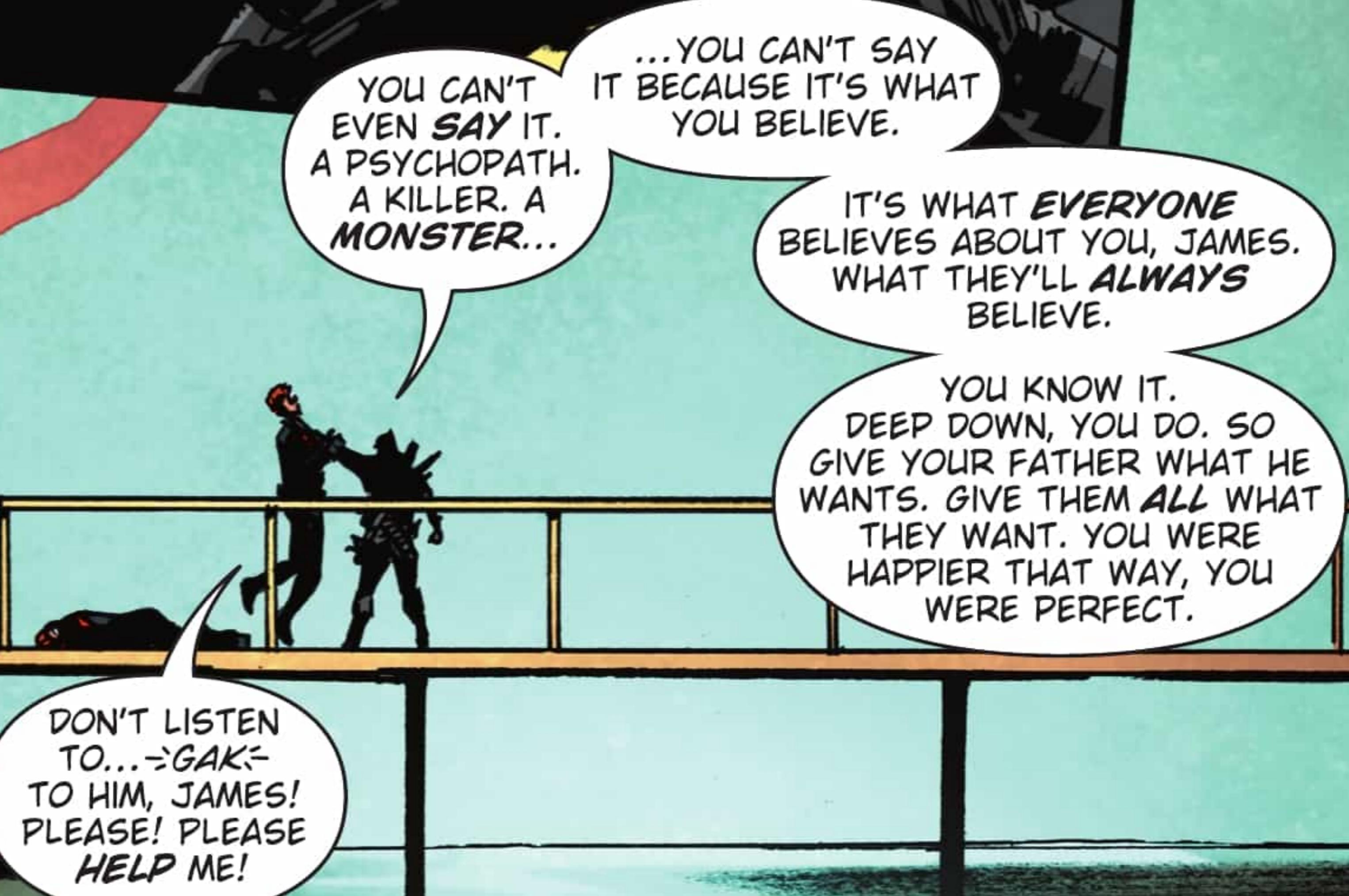
SO YOU CAN  
BRING FORTH WHATEVER  
VERSION OF US YOU  
CHOOSE.

HELL, YOU  
DON'T KNOW A SINGLE  
VERSION OF BRUCE  
WAYNE THAT WAS, IS, OR  
WILL EVER BE... TRULY  
HAPPY.

...  
I KNOW  
ONE.



"...IT'S  
MINE."



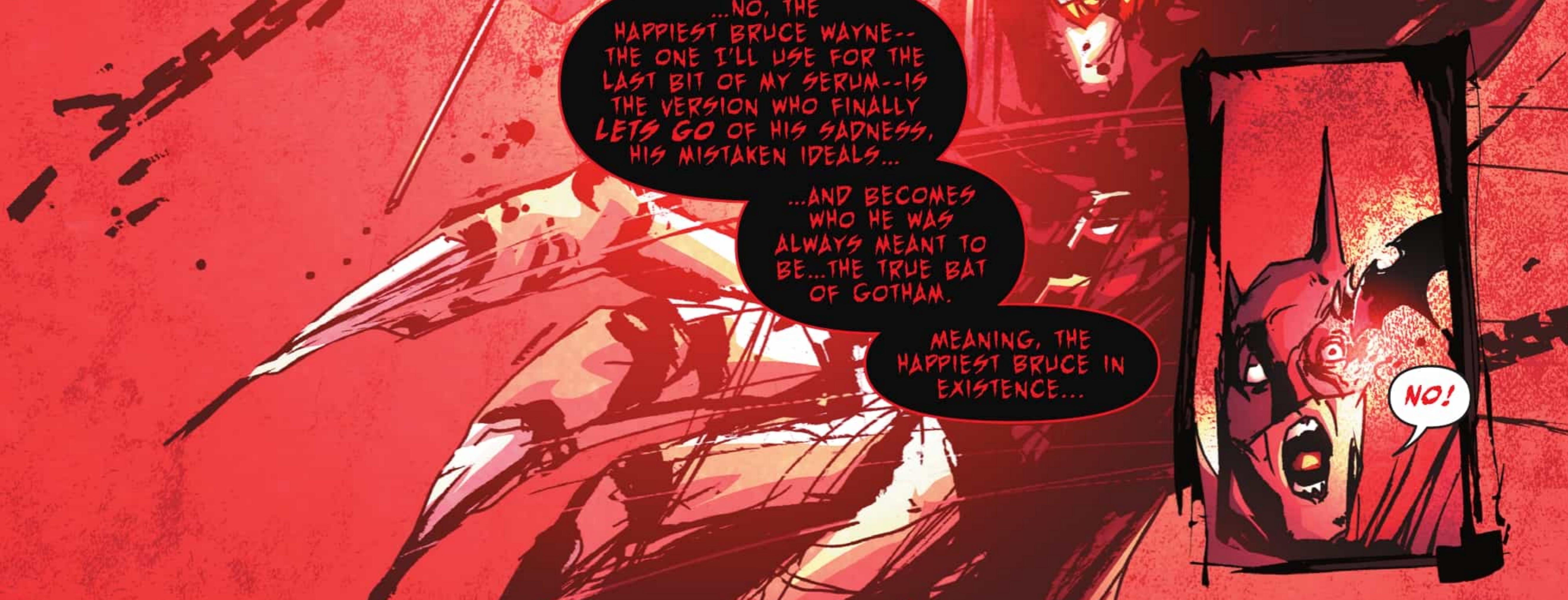
JAMES...  
-KOFF-  
PLEASE! I  
LOVE YOU! I  
-KOFF---

--JAMES!

OH NO...NO,  
JAMES -GAK-  
PLEASE! I WAS  
WRONG!

NO.  
YOU  
WEREN'T.

"YOU THOUGHT THE  
BOY WAS YOUR  
ACE, EH?"





...IS YOU,  
RIGHT AT  
THIS VERY  
MOMENT...

...RIGHT  
NOW. WHEN  
YOU BECOME...  
ME.

AND I HEAR  
IT THEN...THE  
TERRIBLE  
SOUND.

AS THE CITY  
LAUGHS...WITH  
BOTH OF  
USSSSSS.