



THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS



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BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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EDARK KNIGHT RETURNS

FRANK MILLER
WITH KLAUS JANSON
AND LYNN VARLEY

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DARK KNIGHT DAYS

BY FRANK MILLER

1963. (OR IS IT '64? THE EXACT YEAR IS UNCERTAIN. BUT THE MEMORY IS VIVID.)

A department store in Vermont. I'm 6 (or 7) years old. I come across an 80-page Giant comic starring Batman. I open it, I look it over: I fall in.

I wish I'd kept a diary. But who could've known? Nobody, that's who.

Well, maybe Dick Giordano. Maybe Dick had some idea where all this might take us. He was editor-in-chief of DC Comics at the time, and he'd been pushing this Batman thing for many a month. Whether Dick saw what might come of it or not, he was relentless. He was fixated.

1984. In any number of restaurants and hotel bars. Many times. Dick Giordano says sure. Batman's sales are flat. But look at what happens any time somebody conducts one of those reader surveys in the fanzines. Batman's just about everybody's favorite character. The time is more than ripe for a high-profile, all-out relaunch of the old war horse.

But that was just it. That was exactly what came to bother me about Batman. He wasn't old, damn him. Despite nearly fifty years of continuous publication, there he was, unwrinkled, handsome, perpetually twenty-nine. Never a kink in that tree-trunk neck. Never a moment fretting the possibility that his athletic prowess would ever fade. Perpetually young, younger than Magic Johnson or Michael Jordan. Impervious to time itself.

1985. My apartment in New York City, A sudden realization, and not a pleasant one. My thirtieth birthday is right around the corner. I'm poised to turn one year older than Batman.

I've come to accept, in recent years, that Spider-Man is younger than my little brother, but Batman? Batman? My favorite childhood hero? That lantern-jawed, everwise father figure? I'm actually gonna be older than Batman?

This was intolerable. Something had to be done.

Later that same year. On board an airplane headed for Texas. Dick Giordano and I sip white wine and talk. Enthusiastically, if clumsily, I lay out to him the collection of ideas I've got for this Batman thing he's wanted me to do. The central notion is to simply move Batman through time, and chronicle his last case. Move him through time, and, just by happenstance, make him once again much older than I am.

I fire a barrage of scenes at Dick. He urges me on. It's a raw, rambling narrative I hit him with, not yet a story at all, a mixed bag of cool things Batman will do and say that winds up with an ending that could never work — and even, should it work, is one DC would never publish.

At this stage, THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS is, to use the technical term, a mess. But it's a very enthusiastic mess. I'm red-hot to get started. And a good editor knows

when to let the process begin. Dick gives it a thumbs-up, no doubt praying he'll be able to keep me from doing too much damage.

Putting the team together was the easiest part, Your basic no-brainer. A piece of cake. When it came to working with other artists, I'd already been lucky as a fool, twice over.

My longtime partner Klaus Janson had brought a crackling energy and verve to my pencil art on Marvel Comics' Daredevil. By the time wed finished our Daredevil run, Klaus had taken on the lion's share of the drawing, so much so that he took over as sole artist when 1 left the title. The question was whether he'd want to collaborate again. More luck: he did.

After leaving Daredevil, I went to work on my first comics novel, RONIN, published by DC Comics. Painter, Lynn Varley joined me, and, chapter by chapter, set a brand-new standard of excellence in comic-book color. Lynn actually redefined the very role of color on the comic-book page, bringing such mood and temperature and draftsmanship to my linework that the black-and-white was plainly incomplete without her artistry. Even the story itself was a colder, unfinished thing before she took her brush to it. For color artists to come, Lynn raised the bar to the stratosphere.

A less visible member of the RONIN team was Bob Rozakis, DC production boss, who stayed up as late as we did during grueling press checks and solved countless unforeseen problems. This was an ambitious project and a wildly transitional time, and new challenges hit almost hourly. Bob's contribution was quiet, but crucial. With him on the job, we knew we could set our sights high.

Also crucial to the final look and feel of any book is the expertise of the art director. From the late Neal Pozner to Richard Bruning and onward. DCs made sure to have somebody awfully good in that position. As this edition should demonstrate, that's a practice DC continues to this day.

1977. DC President Jenette Kahn's apartment. A party. Curious to look over Jenette's collection of mystery novels. I run into an affable, witty fellow, writer Mike W. Barr. Almost instantly, a friendship begins. It doesn't take long before we find ourselves talking about Batman. Ideas fly back and forth. They will continue to fly just about every time Mike and I chat, for all the years to come.

1979. The editorial offices of Marvel Comics. "That's a Batman idea," says writer and then-editor Jo Duffy, responding to a scene I want to write into Daredevil. It's hardly the first time she's had to say that. Ever encouraging and expert in her suggestions. Jo se editor, colleague, consultant and friend. Of course, over the years to come, she has a lot to say about Batman.

Nothing is created in a vacuum, and brother! is that true when you're messing with a character who's loved by generations. Ideas flutter like muses through party chatter and dinner conversations and breaks in dime-ante poker games.

Leave us say if I were to try to list every other writer out there who had something to offer about Batman, there wouldn't be room in this volume for the story you're about to read.

It was a roller coaster ride, making DARK KNIGHT was, with lurching ups and downs, countless regrettable arguments and welcome surprises. Sometimes pulling it all together, I felt less like an author than a circus ringmaster. There was so much in the air, so many of those fluttering muses.

And there was Batman himself. He was the real boss. As he was quick to assert, Batman has a personality and purpose all his own, a definable core. He's neither petty nor petulant. He's no whiner; there's not a trace of self-pity in his soul. He's smart. He's noble. And most important, he's big. His passions are grand. Even his unhappiness is not depressing, but a brooding, Wagnerian torment. And his triumphs are Olympian.

He insists.

Then, paradoxically, all the goofy stuff, the on-the-face-of-it preposterous stuff, nudges its way back in. The Batcave just isn't complete without that fifty-foot penny. When Commissioner Gordon wants to summon his favorite outlaw, he doesn't do it discreetly. Like anybody with a lick of sense would, Nah. He lights up the whole sky with the Bat Signal. Given a hundred more pages of DARK KNIGHT to write and draw, I might well have brought glant typewriters and the Bat-Mite into the mix.

I'd never intended to use Robin. But then, one day, I pictured a little bundle of bright colors leaping over buildings, dwarfed by a gray-and-black giant...and there she was Robin.

Not that my version sprang into my head full-blown,

1985, At 30,000 feet. I talk to cartoonist John Byrne about Batman. John talks to me about Robin. "Robin must be a girl." he says. He mentions a drawing by Love & Rockets artist Jaime Hernandez of a female Robin. To prove his point, John provides me with a pencil sketch of his own.

But it took Lynn Varley to give Carrie Keane Kelley her true voice. It's no exaggeration at all to say that Lyrin edited and co-wrote Robin's, and the other youngsters, dialogue. This is only one paltry example of what Lyrin brought to DARK KNIGHT, even beyond her palette and brush. As much as this book is mine, it is hers.

Colleagues, friends, and those fluttering muses. They were all quite generous.

I got to scratch a whopper of an itch. With one hell of a lot of help, I got to send a gift back in time to that kid in Vermont who opened a Batman comic and fell in, never entirely to emerge.



BOOK ONE



THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS

I'VE GOT THE HOME STRETCH ALL TO MYSELF WHEN THE READINGS STOP MAKING SENSE. I SWITCH TO MANUAL-



HEN THE FRONT END LURCHES, ALL WRONG, I KNOW WHAT'S



-- BUT THE COMPUTER

CROSSES ITS OWN CIRCUITS AND REPUSES TO LET GO. I

I'VE GOT JUST UNDER TWO SECONDS TO SHUT THIS MESS DOWN AND FORFEIT THE RACE



THE ENGINE, ANGRY, ARGUES THE POINT WITH ME. THE FINISH LINE /S CLOSE, /T



HE LEFT FRONT THE DECIDES TO TURN ALL ON ITS OWN, I LAUGH AT IT AND JERK THE STEERING WHEEL TO THE RIGHT.





THE NOSE DIGS UP A CHUNK OF MACADAM, I LOOK AT IT--



-- THEN STRAIGHT INTO THE









OR SO EVERYONE THOUGHT. TURNS OUT THE MILLIOWAIRE BAILED OUT SUFFERED ONLY SUPERFICIAL BURNS, LOLA?



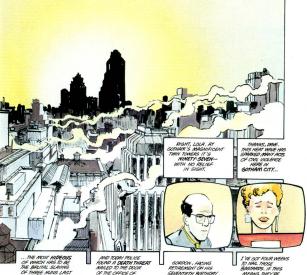
THANKS, BILL. I'M SURPRISED ANYONE CAN EVEN THINK OF SPORTS IN THIS WEATHER . RIGHT, DAVE ?











OF THREE NUINS LAST WEEK BY THE GANG KNOWN AS THE MUTANTS.

OF THE OFFICE OF POLICE COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON.

NEXT MONTH, SPOKE TO A NEWS TWO REPORTER ...

MEANS THEY'RE WILLING TO TAKE ME ON, I'M DELIGHTED.



IRONICALLY, TODAY ALSO MARKS THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAST RECORDED SIGHTING OF THE BATMAN. DEAD OR RETIRED, HIS FATE REMAINS LINKNOWN,



OUR YOUNGER VIEWERS WILL NOT REMEMBER THE BATMAN, A RECENT SURVEY SHOWS THAT MOST HIGH SCHOOLERS CONSIDER HIM A MYTH.



BUT REAL HE WAS . EVEN TODAY, DEBATE CONTINUES ON THE RIGHT AND WRONG OF HIS ONE-MAN WAR ON CRIME.



THIS REPORTER THIS REPORTER
WOULD LIKE TO THINK
THAT HE'S ALIVE AND
WELL, ENJOYING A
CELEBRATORY DRINK IN THE COMPANY OF





















NOW--WELL



TO JASON





AS WE PART, JIM SQUEEZES MY SHOULDER AND GRINS. "YOU JUST NEED A WOMAN," HE SAYS.

...WHILE IN MY GUT THE CREATURE WRITHES AND SNARLS AND TELLS ME WHAT I NEED ...

I LEAVE MY CAR IN THE LOT. I CAN'T STAND TO BE INSIDE ANYTHING RIGHT NOW. I WALK THE STREETS OF THIS CITY I'M LEARNING TO HATE, THE CITY THAT'S GIVEN UP LIKE THE WHOLE WORLD SEEMS TO

I'M A ZOMBIE. A FLYING DUTCHMAN. A DEAD MAN, TEN YEARS DEAD ... I'LL FEEL BETTER IN THE MORNING. AT LEAST, I'LL FEEL IT LESS...



IT'S THE NIGHT-WHEN THE CITY'S SMELLS CALL OUT TO HIM, THOUSH I LE BETWEEN SILK SHEETS IN A MILLION-DOLLAR MANSON MILES AWAY...



... WHEN A POLICE SIREN WAKES ME, AND, FOR A MOMENT, I FORGET THAT IT'S ALL OVER...



BUT BATMAN WAS A YOUNG MAN. IF IT WAS REVENGE HE WAS AFTER, HE'S TAKEN IT. IT'S BEEN FORTY YEARS SINCE HE WAS BORN...



...BORN HERE.

ONCE AGAIN,
HE'S BROUGHT
ME BACK-TO SHOW
ME HOW
LITTLE IT
HAS CHANGED,
IT'S CLIPER,
DIRTIER,
BUT--

-- IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED YESTERDAY.

IT COULD BE HAPPENING RIGHT NOW.

THEY
COULD BE
LYING AT
YOUR FEET,
TWITCHING;
BLEEDING...



...AND THE MAN WHO STOLE ALL SENSE FROM YOUR LIFE, WE COULD BE STANDING



US-

GET AROUND BEHIND HIM-

RIGHT OVER THERE ...



SO MANY LOVELY WAYS





NOT HIM. HE FLINCHED WHEN HE PULLED THE TRIGGER. HE WAS SICK AND GUILTY OVER WHAT HE DID.



... BUTCHERY OF EVERY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY, THE MUTANT ORSANIZATION IS

BELIEVED TO HAVE COMMITTED THIS ATROCITY FOR MONEY THE FAMILY HAD ...

ALL HE WANTED WAS MONEY. I WAS NAME ENOUGH TO THINK HIM THE LOWEST SORT OF MAN.



SOMETHING UNDER TWELVE DOLLARS . THIS IS CONSIDERED A DRUG-RELATED CRIME AT PRESENT, BUT SURELY THIS NEAT WAVE IS A FACTOR. RIGHT,

THESE -- THESE ARE HIS CHILDREN, A PURER BREED...



ABSOLUTELY, BILL. ROUGH MONTH IN THE BIG TOWN, RIGHT NOW THE MERCURY IS CLIMBING TO AN UNSERSONAL ONE HUNDRED AND THREE AND THIS WORLD IS THEIRS.



AND IT LOOKS LIKE ITS GOING TO GET WORSE BEFORE ! GETS BETTER ...















CONDITIONER BLOWS

VIDITURS













WILLING

-- BUT I CONCUR







MEET HARVEY DENT.

MAYRE

GORDON

YOU, DR. WOLPER, AND NOW,

HARVEY DENT







... ONE SIDE OF WHICH WAS DEFACED, TO REPRESENT

THE WARRING SIDES OF

HIS SPLIT-PERSONALITY

DEATH FOR HIS VICTIMS.

A FUP OF THE COIN

COULD MEAN LIFE OR

... THANK YOU, TOM. A NEW LIFE BEGINS TODAY FOR HARVEY DENT.

DENT, A FORMER DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BECAME OBSESSED WITH THE NUMBER TWO WHEN HALF HIS FACE WAS SCARRED BY ACID.

DENT BELIEVED HIS DISAGURATION REVEALED A HIDDEN, EVIL SIDE TO HIS NATURE. HE ADOPTED AS HIS PERSONAL SYMBOL A DOLLAR COIN...



DENT'S CRIMES WERE BRILLIANTLY PATHOLOGICAL, THE MOST HORRENDOUS OF WHICH WAS HIS LAST --



--THE KIDNAPPING AND RANSOMING OF SIAMESE TWINS, ONE OF WHOM HE ATTEMPTED TO MURDER EVEN AFTER THE RANSOM WAS PAID.



HE WAS APPREHENDED IN THE ACT BY GOTHAM'S FAMOUS VIGILANTE, THE BATMAN, AND COMMITTED TO ARKHAM ASTUM TWEIVE YEARS ASO.



FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS DENT HAS BEEN TREATED BY DR.BARTHOLOMEW WOLPER FOR HIS PSYCHOSIS...



... WHILE NOBEL PRIZE-WINNING PLASTIC SURGEON DR. HEBBERT WILLING DEDICATED HIMSELF TO RESTORING THE FACE OF HARVEY DEGUT



SPEAKING TODAY, BOTH DOCTORS WERE JUBILANT.



HARVEY'S READY TO LOOK AT THE WORLD AND SAY, "HEY--I'M OKAY,"



AND HE LOOKS GREAT.



DENT READ A BRIEF STATEMENT TO THE MEDIA...



I DO NOT ASK GOTHAM CITY TO FORGIVE MY CRIMES, I MUST EARN THAT, BY DEDICATING MISSELF TO PUBLIC SERVICE.



FOR ME, THIS IS THE END OF A LONG NIGHT-MARE... AND THE FIRST STEP ON THE LONG ROAD TO ABSOLUTION.









NEXT, DENT DREW FOND APPLAUSE BY PRODUCING A NEWLY-MINTED DOLLAR COIN.

IT WAS, OF COURSE UNMARRED. BUT POLICE COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON'S REACTION TO DENT'S RELEASE WAS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ...

NO, I AM NOT SATISFIED, DR. WOLPER'S REPORT SEEMS OVERLY OPTIMISTIC -- NOT TO MENTION SLOPPY.



WHILE MILLIONAIRE BRUCE WAYNE, WHO SPONSORED DENTS TREATMENT, HAD THIS TO SAY...



SEEM OVERLY PESSIMISTIC --NOT TO MENTION RUDE,



THE COMMISSIONER IS AN EXCELLENT COP-BUT, I THINK, A POOR JUDGE OF CHARACTER, WE MUST BELIEVE IN HARVEY DENT



WE MUST BELIEVE THAT OUR PRIVATE DEMONS CAN BE DEFEATED ...













COOK AT THAT











BRUCE-- WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH IT WHEN YOU









GLARING, HATING ...



BREATH HOT WITH THE TASTE OF FALLEN FOES... THE STENCH OF DEAD THINGS. DAMNED THINGS.



SURELY THE FIERCEST SURVIVOR-- THE PUREST WARRIOR...



CLAIMING ME AS HIS OWN.



...HUGE, EMPTY, SILENT AS A CHURCH, WAITING, AS THE BAT WAS WAITING.

AND NOW THE AND NOW THE COBWEBS GROW AND THE DUST THICKENS IN HERE AS IT DOES IN ME--

-- AND HE LAUGHS AT ME, CURSES ME. CALLS ME A FOOL. HE FILLS MY SLEEP, HE FILLS MY SLEEP, HE TRICKS ME. BRINGS ME HERE WHEN THE NIGHT IS LONG AND MY WILL IS WEAK, HE STRUGGLES RELENTLESSLY, HATEFULLY, TO BE FREE --

I WILL NOT LETHIM. I GAVE MY WORD.

FOR JASON.

NEVER. NEVER AGAIN.



















FOR ME, THIS IS THE END OF A LONG NIGHT-MARE...AND THE FIRST STEP ON THE LONG ROAD TO ABSOLUTION,

WORDS SPOKEN IN PUBLIC BY HARVEY DENT BEFORE HIS DISAPPEARANCE THIS MORNING.

WHILE POLICE COMMISSIONER GARDON ISSUED AN ALL POINTS BULLETIN FOR DENT, ONE VOICE WAS RAISED IN PROTEST...

DR. BARTHOLOMEW
WOLPER, DENT'S
PSYCHIATRIST...











-- AND I

THINK HE

SHOULD SEE

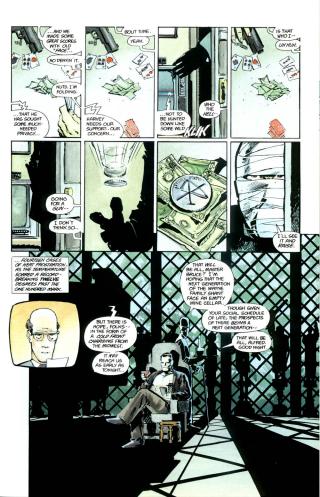
OR FOLD.





SENSITIVE MAN ...































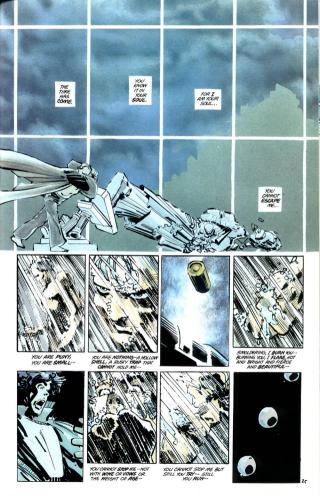














RRRRMMMBBBLLLL



LIKE THE VRATH OF GOD IT'S HEADED FOR GOTHAM...































... BREAKTHROUGH IN HAIR REPLACEMENT TECHNIQUES, AND THAT'S THE--EXCUSE ME...

I'VE JUST BEEN
HANDED THIS BULLETIN-A LARGE, **BAT-LIKE**CREATURE HAS BEEN
SIGHTED ON GOTHAM'S
SOUTH SIDE.



IT IS SAID TO HAVE ATTACKED AND SERIOUSLY INJURED THREE CAT-BURGLARS WHO HAVE PLAGUED THAT NEISHBORHOOD

YOU DON'T SUPPOSE...











THIS JUST IN--TWO YOUNG CHILDREN WHO DISAPPEARED THIS MORNING HAVE BEEN FOUND UNHARMED IN A RIVERSIDE WAREHOUSF

AN ANONYMOUS TIP
LED ROLICE TO THE
WAREHOUSE, WHERE THEY
FOUND THE CHILDREN
WITH SIX MEMBERS
OF THE MUTANT
SING.

ALL SIX ARE SUFFERING FROM MULTIPLE CUTS, CONTUSIONS, AND BROKEN BOWES. THEY WERE RUSHED TO GOTHAM GENERAL MOSPITAL.

THE CHILDREN
DESCRIBED AN ATTACK
ON THE GANG MEMBERS
BY A HUSE MAN
DRESSED LIKE
DRACULA...











POLICE PHONE LINES ARE JAMMED WITH CITIZENS PESCRIBING WHAT SEEMS TO BE A SIEGE ON GOTHAM'S UNDERWORLD ...

QV TUE BATMAN

ALTHOUGH SEVERAL RESCUED VICTIMS -TO - BE HAVE DESCRIBED THE VIGILANTE TO NEWS TWELVE REPORTERS..

... COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON HAS DECLINED TO COMMENT ON WHETHER OR NOT THIS MIGHT MEAN THE RETURN OF THE BATMAN



















AIN'T THE



... MOST DESCRIPTIONS SEEM TO MATCH THE METHOD AND APPEARANCE OF THE BATMAN --OR AT LEAST THE IMPRESSION HE WAS KNOWN TO MAKE...





WITNESSES' DESCRIPTIONS ARE CONFUSED AND CONFLICTING ...



















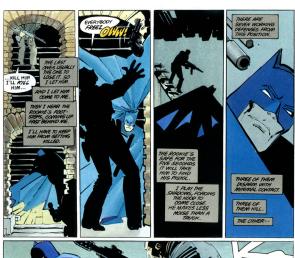










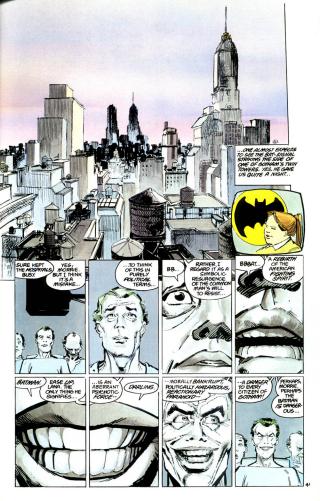












... BUT HE'S HARDLY AS PANGEROUS AS HIS ENEMIES, IS HE? TAKE HARVEY DENT, JUST TO PICK A NAME

THAT'S CUTE, LANA, BUT HARDLY APROPOS. AND HARDLY FAIR TO AS TROUBLED A SOUL AS HARVEY DENT'S.

HE CERTAINLY IS TROUBLE FOR HIS VICTIMS. WAS, LANA. WAS, IF HARVEY
PENT IS RETURNING TO
CRIME -- AND PLEASE NOTE
THAT I SAID IF--IT GOES
WITHOUT SAYING THAT HE'S
NOT IN CONTROL OF
HIMSELF.







AND BATMAN IS?

CERTAINLY, HE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT HE'S DOING. HIS KIND OF SOCIAL FASCIST ALWAYS DOES.

THEN WHY DO YOU CALL HIM PSYCHOTIC! BECAUSE YOU LIKE TO USE THAT WARD FOR ANY MOTIVE THAT'S TOO BIG FOR YOUR LITTLE MIND? BECAUSE HE FIGHTS CRIME INSTEAD OF PERPETRATING IT?

YOU DON'T CALL EXCESSIVE FORCE A CRIME? HOW ABOUT ASSAULT, AFT LADY? OR BREAKING AND ENTERING? HUN? TRY RECKLESS EN









SONRY, MORRIE, BUT WE'RE OUT OF TIME - THOUGH I'M SURE THIS DEGREE IS FAR FROM OHER FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO CAME IN LATE, TOAN'S POINT VERSUS POINT...

LAST NIGHT'S ATTACK ON DOZENS OF INDVIDUALS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN CRIMINALS BY A PARTY OR PARTIES WHO MAY HAVE BEEN THE BATMAN.

ALSO OF CONCERN IS THIS THOMPOWING S ANNOUNCEMENT BY POLICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIRECTOR LOUIS GALLAGHER THAT A PEFACED POLLAR COIN, WAS FOUND ON OWE OF THE SUSPECTS...

...IN LAST NIGHT'S
PAYROLL ROBBERY.
THOSE WHO REMEMBER
THE CRIMES OF
HARVEY DENT WILL
RECOGNIZE THIS AS
HIS TRADEMARK.





















WE WILL KILL THE OLD MAN BORDON. HIS WOMEN WILL WEED FOR HIM. WE WILL CHOP HIM. WE WILL GRIND HIM. WE WILL BATHE IN HIS BLOOD. I MYSELF WILL KILL THE FOOL BATMAN, I WILL RIP THE MEAT FROM HIS BONES AND SUCK THEM DRY, I WILL EAT HIS HEART AND DOAG HIS BODY THROUGH THE STREET

PON'T CALL US A GANG, DON'T CALL US CRIMINALS, WE ARE THE LAW, WE ARE THE FLITCHE. GOTHAM CITY BELONGS TO THE MUTANTS, SOON THE WORLD WILL BE OURS, WITH THAT VIDEOTAPED
MESSASE, THE MUTANT
LEAPER -- WHOSE NAME AND
FACE REMAIN A SECRET-HAS DECLARED WAR ON
THE OITY OF SOTHAM...
AND ON ITS MOST FAMOUS
CHAMPION...







































BATMAN? YEAM, I THINK HE'S A-OKRI, HE'S KICKING JUST THE RIGHT BUTTS - BUTTS THE COPS AIN'T KICKING, THAT'S FOR SURE. HOPE HE GHES AFTER THE HOMOS NEXT.

YOUR ARM









ES ME SICK, WE MUST



















YES, MERV. I AM CONVINCED OF HARVEY'S INNOCENCE HARVEY S'INNOCENCE. ABSOLUTELY. HOWEVER, I WON'T GO SO FAR AS TO SAY I'M SURE HE HASN'T RETURNED TO CRIME. I KNOW THAT SOUNDS CONFUSING, THESE THINGS OFFEN DO TO THE LEMMA BUT I'LL TO FERAIN WITHOUT GETTING OVERLY TECHNICAL. YOU SEE, IT ALL GETS DOWN TO THIS BATMAN FELLOW.

BATMAN'S PSYCHOTIC BATIONAN TO STOROTTO:
SUBLIMATIVE! PSYCHOEROTIC BEHAVIOR PATTERN
IS LIKE A NET. WEAK- EGOED
NEUROTICS, LIKE HARVEY,
ARE DRAWN INTO CORRESEDINGING INTERSTICING PATTERNS.

YOU MIGHT SAY BATMAN YOU MIGHT SAY BAIMAN COMMITS THE CRIMES... USING HIS SO-CALLED VILLAINS AS NARCISSIS-TIC PROXIES...









































I'M NOT UP

DIGITAL JOBS

PUSASIS



I STAND HERE ATOP GOTHAM'S BEAUTIFUL TWIN TOWERS, WITH TWO BOMBS CAPABLE OF MAKING THEM RUBBLE. YOU HAVE TWENTY MINUTES





RIGHT--



PLEASURE. THIS IS HARVEY DENT SPEAKING.



THE PRICE IS FIVE MILLION DOLLARS, I WOULD HAVE MADE IT TWO--BUT I'VE GOT BILLS TO PAY...





HE'S TAPPED INTO THE TV ANTENNA-- NO

DOUBT RANSOMING THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS--WHILE THE

TIMER HE
TIMER HE
DOESN'T KNOW
ABOUT IS
MOMENTS AWAY
FROM TAKING
IT ALL OUT OF IT ALL OUT OF
MIS HANDS.
HARVEY, IF IT
NS YOU--YOU'VE
HAD EVERY
CHANCE
THERE IS.



S E



HE'S GOT YOUR STYLE, HARVEY, AND YOUR GUTS.



UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM, HE'S GOT NO MORE SENSE OF SELF-PRESERVATION THAN YOU DID...



... AND INSPIRES THE SAME LEVEL OF LOYALTY FROM HIS MEN.





IT TAKES NEARLY A MINUTE TO FALL FROM THIS HEISHT. AND DESPITE WHAT YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, YOU'RE LIKELY TO STAY CONSCIOUS ALL THE WAY DOWN.









































B O O K T W O



PROBLEM WITH CRIME IS MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE NERVOUS IT MAKES YOU!



I PASS A LIQUOR STORE 1 MASS M L**IGULK STORE,** RAMIN EPS OVER THE RIGID FEATURES OF THE HUNK OF METAL THAT USED TO BE A PRIENDLY **MERCHANT.**



ME, I CAN'T LOOK AT THAT

DOORWAY OVER THERE WITHOUT THINKING OF THE SEVENTY-TWO CORPSES I'VE

FOUND IN SPOTS LIKE THAT.

HE'S HAD TO KILL, JUST TO STAY IN BUSINESS

THEN MY CIGAR DOES ITS USUAL AND I COUGH UP A LOAD OF THE BROWN STUFF.





SHOT OR STABBED OR

JUST BEATEN TO DEATH

I SEE A HIGH-PRICED CAR, GLEAMING LIKE NEW IN THE STREETLIGHT, ONCE A SYMBOL OF WEALTH AND POWER, NOW JUST ANOTHER TARGET IN A CITY OF

VICTIMS.



100 STUPID, OR 100 CIVILIZED. ONE'S THE SAME AS THE OTHER IN GOTHAM CITY.



A YOUNG BOY DASHES PAST ME, HEALTHY, DIRTY, AND BEAUTIFUL



I CURSE **SARAH**, NOT MEANING IT, FOR HER HIPPIE VEGETARIAN RECIPES AND THE BEAN SPROUTS SHE FORGOT TO PICK UP,



NG NEVER SEEMED AL TO ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG ..



FOR SOME REASON I WANT TO SEE BRUCE - NOT TO TALK... I MEAN SURE, TO TALK, AND MAYBE TO PRINK, EVEN THOUGH HE SEEMS TO HAVE GIVEN



I'M AMAZED-AS MY HEAD GOES LIGHT AND THE SPOTS DANCE IN FRONT OF ME-THAT SHE CONVINCED ME



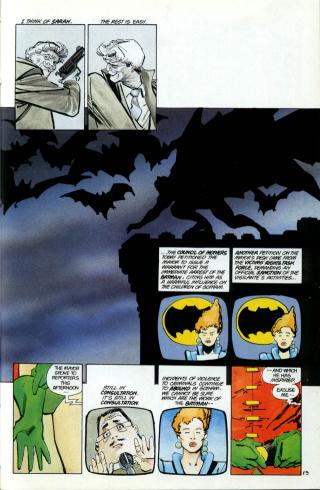
SUPPENLY THE HAIR BRISTLES ON THE BACK OF MY NECK



I HEAR A GIRLISH **GIGGLE** AND THE COLD, OILED SOUND OF A **GUN** BEING COCKED BEHIND ME.



I SEE THE FACE OF A KILLER WHO ISN'T YET OLD ENOUGH TO SHAVE.







COMMISSIONER --YOU JUST SHOT A BOY, HOW DOES THAT FEEL? COMMISSIONER?...



THANK YOU, HERNANDO, THIS IS THE THIRD ATTEMPT ON GORDON'S LIFE IN THE THREE WEEKS SINCE THE LEADER OF THE MUTANT ORGANIZATION MADE HIS VIDEOTAPED DEATH TREAT...



WE WILL KILL THE OLD MAN SORDON. HIS WOMEN WILL WEEP FOR HIM. WE WILL CHOP HIM. WE WILL GRIND HIM. WE WILL BATHE IN HIS BLOOD.



I MISELF WILL KILL THE FOOL BATMAN. I WILL RIP THE MEAT FROM HIS BONES AND SUCK THEM DRY, I WILL EAT HIS HEART AND DRAS HIS BOOY THROUGH THE



POW'T CALL US A GANG.
DON'T CALL US CRIMINALS.
WE ARE THE LAIN, WE ARE
THE FUTURE, GOTHAM CITY
BELONGS TO THE MUTIANTS.
SOON THE WORLD WILL
BE CURS.



CORDON, FACING MANDATORY RETIREMENT LATER THE WEEK, MAS OFFERED TO STAY AT THE JOB UNTIL THE MUTANT CRISIS HAS BEEN RESOLVED, POLICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIRECTOR LOUIS GALLAGHER HAD THIS TO SAY...



NICE OF JIM TO CFFER, BUT I THINK WE ALL KNOW THINKS 'LL COOL OUT CNCE HE STEPS DOWN, THE MUTANTS HAVE A THING ABOUT HIM...NO, I THINK IT'S TIME FOR NEW BLOCA..



STRANSELY, THAT "NEW BLOOD" HAS YET TO BE OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED. WHILE INSPECTOR JOHN DALE SEEMS TO BE THE OBLIOUS CHOICE, THE MANDER HAS VET TO COMMITT HUMSELF...



I'M STILL POOLING OPINIONS, I'M STILL POOLING OPINIONS,



WITH A SCANT SIX HOURS
REMAINING, THE QUESTIONS
HANS IN THE AIR -- WHO
WILL REPURCE SIM GORDON?
AND WHAT WILL BECOME
THE CAFFOLD ON
THE BATMAN? TOM?



GOOD QUESTION, LOLA, MRS, JOYCE RIDLEY WAS AOMITTED TO A PRIVATE HOSPITAL UPSTATE FOR PSYCHIATRIC OBSERVATION FOLLOWING HER COLLAPSE THIS MORNING.



HER TEN-MONTH BABY, KEVIN, HEIR TO THE RIOLEY CHEWING GLIM FORTUNE, IS STILL MISSING, ANYONE WITH INFORMATION IS URGED TO CALL THE CRISIS & HOTLINE...

















YOU







... A RUTHLESS, MONSTROU VIGILANTE, STRIKING AT THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR
DEMOCRACY- MALICIAUSLY
OPPOSED TO THE PRINCIPLES
THAT MAKE OURS THE MOST
NOBLE WATHON IN THE WORLD
AND THE KINDEST...





THESE -- AND MANY, MANY OTHERS -- ARE CONSCIOUSNESS. FROM METROPOLIS -- WE HAVE LANA LANG, MANAGING EDITOR OF THE DAILY THE REACTIONS TO A PHENOMENON THAT HAS STRUCK A NERVE CENTER PLANET ...



GOTHAM CITY-- DR. GOTHAM CITY-VR. BARTHOLEMEW WOLPER, POPULAR PSYCHOLOGIST AND SOCIAL SCIENTST, AUTHOR OF THE BEST-SELLING "HEY -- I'M OKAY" ...



WITH US TONIGHT FROM HIS OFFICE IN WASHINGTON--PRESIDENTIAL MEDIA ADVISOR CHUCK BRICK.



DR. WOLPER-YOU HAVE CLAIMED THAT THE BATMAN IS HIMSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CRIMES HE FIRSHS. STILL I CRIME RATES HAVE SHOWN A STEADY DROP IN THE WEEKS SINCE HIS RETURN. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS?



I'M GLAD YOU ASKED ME THAT QUESTION, TED. IT IS TRUE THAT THIS BATMAN HAS TERRORIZED THE ECONOMICALLY DIS-ADVANTAGED AND SOCIALLY MISALIGNED -- BUT HIS EFFECTS ARE FAR FROM POSITIVE



PICTURE THE PUBLIC PSYCHE AS A VAST, MOIST MEMBRANE

-THROUSH THE MEPIA,
BATMAN HAS STRUCK THIS
MEMBRANE A VICTOUS BLOW,
AND IT HAS RECOILED, HENCE YOUR MISLEADING STATISTICS



BUT YOU SEE, TED, THE MEMBRANE IS FLEXIBLE--AND PERMEABLE, HERE HIND PERMEABLE, HERE THE MORE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE BLOW BECOME CALCULABLE, EVEN PREDICTABLE, TO WIT --









EVERY ANTI-SOCIAL ACT CAN BE TRACED TO IRRESPONSIBLE MEDIA INPUT, EVEN THIS, THE PRESENCE OF SUCH AN ABERRANT, VIOLENT FORCE IN THE MEDIA CAN CAY LEAD TO ANTI-SOCIAL LEAD TO ANTI-SOCIAL JUST AS HARVY DENT -WHO'S RECOVERING STEADLY,
THANKS FOR ASKING -ASSUMED THE ROLE OF
IDEOLÓGICAL DOPPELGANGER
TO THE BAIMAN, SO A WHOLE
NEW GENERATION, CONTISED
AND ANSIY-

-- WILL BE BENT TO THE MATRIX OF BATMAN'S PATHOLOGICA BATMAN IS, IN THIS CONTEST--AND PARDON THE TERM:-A SOCIAL DISEASE... THAT'S THE DUMBEST LOAD OF... LANA--PLEASE--THE NETWORK--















THE MODEL - THE SUCH THAS REMAINED SILENT ON THIS ISSUE. DON'T ICU-AND HE-FEEL THAT THE BATTMAN WARRANTS, IF NOT ACTION, A STATEMENT OF POSITION, A STATEMENT OF POSITION?



...ITS NOISY, ALL RIGHT. THAT BIG CAPE AND POINTY EARS - IT'S GREAT SHOW BIZ. AND YOU KNOW THE PRESIDENT KNOWS HIS SHOW BIZ. YOU JUST KEEP YOUR SHOKES ON, TED...











I MEAN, BATBOY'D BE PUSHING SIRTY BY NOW--IF HE EVER WIPS REAL. FUNNY NOBODY'S EVER TAKEN A PUCTURE OF HIM. MIGHTY FUNNY, I SAY...

MISS LANG, YOU ARE THE BATMAN'S MOST VOCAL SUPPORTER HOW CAN YOU CONDONE BEHAVIOR THAT'S SO BLATHNILY ILLEGAL? WHAT ABOUT DUE PROCESS - CWIL RIGHTS?

WE LIVE IN THE SHADOW OF CRIME, TED, WITH THE LINSPOKEN UNDERSTANDING THAT WE ARE VICTURS - OF FEAR, OF VIOLENCE, OF SOCIAL IMPOTENCE.

















ALMOST NOBODY TIPS ANYMORE. BUT AN UPTOWN DRUNK LEFT TEN DOLLARS UNUME LEFT PEN POLLTIKS

THE TABLE TOWIGHT. WHAT

WITH THE TURN-OFF NOTICE

IT WAS WRONG TO SPEND THE

TIP ON THE PAIN.



BUT YOUNG ROBERT'S ART TEACHER SAYS HE HAS TALENT...



SURGERY WITH NO INSURANCE AND TWO PAYMENTS LEFT ON

SHE PICTURES ROBERT'S HIS EAGER SMILE,



SHE FEELS THE METAL

SQUARE INSIDE HER PURSE



STOMACH AS THE TRAIN



RUMBLES TO A STOP. SHE



SHE LANDS HARD ON THE CEMENT, BUT IT ONLY HURTS.







WOMAN EXPLODES IN SUBWAY STATION ---FILM AT ELEVEN.













THE GUARD
AT GATE
THEELE IS
NODONS OFF
WHEN'T FIND
THE TRUCKS.
THEY AREN'T
EVEN LOCKED.
YOU COULD
OVER THROW
A SMALL

DU COULD VERTHROW A SMALL OVERNMENT VITH THIS MUCH FIREPOWER.

MR new Wort rate of the mass.

... JOHOUS REUNION OF THE RICLEY FAMILY, AND NOW, A SAD WITE - FOLDS SIPA GENERAL WATHAN BRIGGS IS DEAD, AN APPARENT SUICIDE, RELATIVES SAY BRIGGS HAD BEEN WIDLENTLY DEPRESSED...

AND HE'S BLACK ...







..., POLICE MEDIA DIRECTOR
LOUIS GALLASHER HAS
PROMISED AN ANSWER
SOON ID THE QUESTON THAT'S
ON EVERYONE'S MIND - WHO
WILL BE THE MEN POLICE
COMMISSIONER OF GOTHAM
CITY?...





ELECTION.





ELITRAL ON THE BATMAN ING. AND YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR OWN NEUTRALITY YOU ...

WHO SAYS I'M NEUTRAL? CONFLICTED

1 1111 SEEMS TO ME DECISIONS YOUR BIG YOU'D THINK CHANCE, YOUR HONOR - TO SHOW WHAT

A LEADER

TO MAKE A

ABOUT BATMAN

YOU ARE

ALL THERE IS TO RUNNING A CITY IS MAKING DECISIONS. BOLD DECISION

WELL, ALL RIGHT, GALLAGHER-WELL, ALL ABAY, CALLABACK
I'LL MAKE A BECISION. I'LL
SHOW THEM WHO'S BOSS.
ON MY OWN PRIVATE
AUTHORITY-- -- I ASSIGN YOU THE

TASK OF FINDING ME A POLICE COMMISSIONER

I ALREAD!

BRUCE

WHO ELSE,

OF COURSE SIR. IT'S JUST ENDI IS MINIS FROM INSIDE THE-

THAT'S RIGHT ALFRED I'M TAKING HER OUT.

I HIT THE ENGINE SHE RESPONDS LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY. YESTERDAY.

I AM EXCITED-NO; THRILLED-CAN'T YOU TELL I'M THRILLED?-- TO GIVE YOU THE NEXT POLICE COMMISSIONER OF GOTHAM CITY...

ELLEN

THE YOUNGEST EVER TO HOLD THE OFFICE -- AND, OF COURSE, THE FIRST WOMAN-ELLEN YINDE BOINGS WITH HER AN ASSONISHING ARREST RELORD FROM CHICAGO, SHE WAS QUICK TO ANSWER ON THE SUBJECT OF BATMAN...



I'M SURPRISED THERE IS A CONTROVERSY. HIS ACTIONS ARE CATEGORICALLY CRIMINAL. I WILL HAVE HIM BROUGHT TO TRIAL EXCUSE ME ?...



..YES. I'LL BE SPECIFIC . MY FIRST ACT AS POLICE THES FOIL AS POLICE COMMISSIONER WILL BE TO ISSUE AN ARREST WARPONT FOR THE BATMAN OW CHARGES OF ASSAULT, BREAKING AND ENTERING, CREATING A PUBLIC HAZARD.



LITTLE MORE
THAN HALF
THE AGE OF
THE MAN SHE'S REPLACING ELLEN YIND 15-





THE DUMP STRETCHES OUT OF SIGHT FROM THE FAR BANK RIVER. I'M TOLD IT ENDS BEFORE THE FARMLANDS.

IT SMELLS OF ROT AND RUST--IT'S A BREEDING GROUND FOR INSECTS AND RODENTS.

I CUT THE ENSINE AND USTEN TO ONE OF THE ROPENTS.

TAKE THE GUNS. TAKE THE BOMBS. STORM POLICE

HEAD -QUARTERS



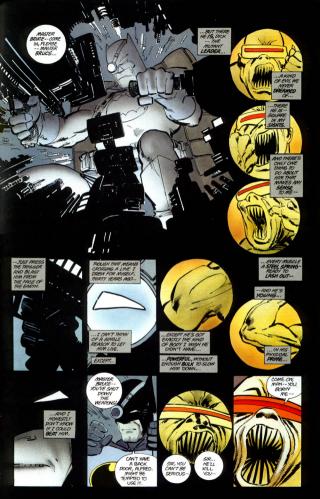
























































PORN STAR HOT GATES
TODAY SIGNED A TWELVEMULLON-DOLLAR CONTRACT
WITH LANDMARK FILMS
TO STAR IN A SCREEN
VERSION OF SHOW WHITE,
"I'M DOING IT POR THE
KIDS," SAIS GATES...

IN OTHER NEWS, GALAXY
BROADCASTING PRESIDENT
SAMES CLSEN ASSURED
VIEWERS THAT THE TELEVISION
WOTHERS STRIKE, NOW IN ITS
FOURTH YEAR, WILL NOT
AFFECT THE YEAR'S
PROSEQUIMINS...





...THE POUTICAL PERRAMANCE COMMISSION HAS AWARDED THE PRESIDENT AN UNIPRESENTED FINE OPENBULTY POWNS FOR HIS HANDLING OF PUBLIC PERCEPTION DURING THE ECONOMIC CROSS...

... THIS JUST IN-EYEWITNESSES REPORT EXPLOSIONS REPOINS ARKESS THE **SOTHAM DUM!** A NEWS FOUR **HELICOPTER** IS ON ITS WAY, FOLKS...









BATMAN IS A COWARD. I BROKE HIS BONES. I CONQUERED THE ROOL. I MADE HIM BEG FOR MERCY. ONLY BY CHEATING DID HE ESCAPE ALIVE. LET HIM GO TO HIS WOMEN, LET HIM LICK HIS WOUNDS. HIS DAY IS DONE, GOTHAM CITY BELONGS TO THE MUTANTS.



















SPEAK-





SCHWIN HADD WILL STORM GOTHAM CITY, SOON THE HEAD OF GORDON WILL BE CARRIED TROUGH THE STREETS, THEN I WILL HUNT YOUR NEW COP--YOUR WOMAN COP-- AND I WILL \$



THE REST OF THE MUTANT LEADER'S STATEMENT IS UNFIT FOR BROADCAST.



WHAT YOU'RE SUGGESTING. PUBLICITY. DR. WOLPER AND THIS ONE. T KNOW GLEN. I KNOW-

TROUBLED

T DON'T

REALIZE

THINK YOU

OKAY, ALL RIGHT.

MINUTES

BUT I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT HARVEY DENT DIDN'T EXACILY WILL BE A BRING US POSITIVE FOR HIM

A RELEASE, THIS ENVIRONMENT AND IT WOULD BE 90 GOOD DR.GLEN F

HIM I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT.

CHIEF ADM

PUSH

COME NOW, GLEN! HE'S BEEN NEARLY COMPTOSE FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, II YOU'D JUST FOR FIVE MINUTES

KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING .. WELL... SOMETHING SUPERNATURAL ABOUT THAT ONE

I DON'T



























WE WILL COME FOR OUR LEADER. WE WILL RAPE GOTHAM. WE WILL RAPE GOTHAM. WE WILL TASTE



NOT AT ALL , BILL . FRANKLY NOT AT ALL, BILL. HANNEY I EXPECT THE MAYOR'S CREDIBILITY RATING TO GO THROUGH THE ROOF, ESPECIALLY IF HE'S SUCCESSFUL IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.







ON HEARING THIS MESSAGE FROM THE MUTANTS, COMMISSIONER SOCION PUT HIMSELF AND HIS MEN ON TWENTY-FOUR HOUR ALERT--WHILE THE MAYOR WAS QUICK TO SPEAK OUT ...



THIS WHOLE SITUATION IS THE RESULT OF GORDON'S INCOMPETENCE: AND OF THE TERRORIST ACTIONS OF THE BATMAN, I WISH TO SIT DOWN WITH THE MUTANT LEADER...TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT.



WHAT DO YOU THINK , TRISH? HIS HONOR GONE **NUTS**?



THIS, COMBINED WITH HIS STRONG STAND ON BATMAN --AND MAKING A WOMAN THE NEXT POLICE THE MENT POUNCE -- WELL, I THINK WE'VE SOT A WHOLE NEW **MAYOR** ON OUR HANDS --



-- PUBLIC PERCEPTION-WISE,









ARNOLD CRIMP FINGERS THE COLD STEEL THING IN HIS POCKET AND STARES AT THE MOVIE MARQUEE AND DOES NOT THROW UP



HE THINKS ABOUT LED ZEPPELIN HE HAD NOT TO KILL HIM

KNOWN ABOUT LEO TEPPELIN UNTIL FATHER DON ON THE HAD EXPLAINED IT I ACT NIGHT

FATHER DON SAID THAT LED ZEPPELIN HID A

SATAN IN THEIR SONS "STOLDING TO HEAVEN. THEY HID IT VERY WELL THEY RECORDED

IT BACKWARDS

DANN O COIMO THE ALBUM FROM THE RECORD STORE WHERE HE WORKED UNTIL THEY FIRED HIM THIS AFTERNOON AND TRANSFERRED



BUT THE YOUNG GIRL WHO WAS PAINTED LIKE A WHORE DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM.



THAT WAS THIS AFTERNOON, IN

THEN HE PLAYED THE TAPE BACKWARDS.

HE PLAYED IT FOOTY-CEVEN TIMES LINTIL HE WAS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT FATHER DON WAS RIGHT.



THAT WAS THIS AFTERNOON, IN THE STORE

EVERY MORNING AND EVENING

HE LOST HIS TEMPER AND BROKE THE RECORD INTO FOUR PIECES THAT WERE EXACTLY THE SAME SIZE



THE YOUNG GIRL WHO WAS PAINTED JUST LIKE A WHORE SCREAMED FOR THE MANAGER AND THE MANAGER WALKED OUT FROM THE BACK ROOM AND WOULDN'T FVEN LISTEN AND FIRED ARNOLD CRIMP.



UNTIL TONIGHT OF COURSE HE HAD WALKED SIX BLOCKS OUT OF HIS WAY TO AVOID THIS NEIGHBORHOOD



ROW ON ROW ON ROW ON ROW OF PICTURES OF WOMEN AND WORDS AND WORDS AND WORDS. HE STOPPED AT THIS ONE THE ONE HE IS IN RIGHT NOW AND READ THE TITLE THAT DID NOT MAKE HIM THROW UP.







IS DOING SOMETHING AND

THREE SLAIN IN BATMAN-INSPIRED PORN THEATER SHOOTOUT DETAILS TO FOLLOW.





THEN BIGGERS PUT HIS FAT ARM AROUND IRON MAN'S SHOULDER AND TOLD HIM THE ONLY WAY HE COULD MAKE MONEY NOW.



HE PUSHES THROUGH THE

SUDDENLY HIS EYES STING AND IRON MAN HURTS ALL OVER AND REALIZES HE'S READING ABOUT A MAN





A MAN WHO DRESSES UP LIKE A MONSTER AND MAKES THINGS RIGHT.



BATMAN--



CRAZED WOULD-BE KILLER DRESSES AS

AFTER THIS ...





ENEXT TIME IRON MAN

RESTAURANT WITH SOMETHING

HAND

ON HIS FACE AND A GUN IN HIS

HE HEARS A TRUCK BACKFIRE-

VASQUEZ FEELS SOMETHING, HE'S STANDING IN A

> INSTEAD HE'S LOOKING AT THE ALARM SYSTEM THAT COST HIM TWO MONTHS' PROFITS AND THE IROW BARS OVER HIS WINDOWS THAT MAKE HIS BEAUTIFUL SHOP LOOK LIKE A PRISON...



HE CAN FEEL HIS PULSE, JUST BELOW HIS EARS. HE KNOWS HE'S GONE CARTY. BUT THE MUSGER IS RUNNING, AFRAID. HURT BADLY ENOUGH FOR THIS TO MAN THE NEWS

AN UPDATE -- THE MAYOR IS THIS MINUTE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MUTANT LEADER WITH THE MUTANT LEADER, WHO HAS AGREED TO MEET, HIM ALONE. MEAWWHILE, THE MAYOR'S LEADERSHIP QUOTIENT HAS SOARED-EXCUSE ME...



I'D EXPECTED THEM TO BE SCREAMING AND FIGHTING. SCREAMING AND FIGHTING BUT THEY STAND LIKE A CAPTIVE ARMY, I'D LIKE TO THINK THEY 'RE CRALY--BUT HERE I







THE CELL DOOR **OPENS** THE AIR GOES **THICK.** I FEEL THE MAYOR SHUDDER, IN TIME

ASK HIM ONE MORE TIME IF HE IS SURE HE WANTS TO GO IT ALONE. HE GURGLES, AND MODE

I DON'T KNOW IF I'D CALL IT **COURAGE**.







I HEAR A NERVOUS GIGGLE AND AN ANIMAL GROWL. I HEAR HANDCUFF LINKS SNAP



THE MAYOR 15 DEAD.

THE MUTANT LEADER RIPPED THE MAYOR'S RIPPED THE MINIOR'S THROAT OUT WITH HIS TEETH, THE MUTANT HAS BEEN RETURNED TO HIS CELL, MORE ON THIS AS WE GET IT.















SOVIET DESTROYERS HAVE BEEN SIGHTED IN THE WATERS OFF CORTO MALTESE... AND, IN GOTHAM CITY, IT ALSO LOOKS LIKE

AND, IN **GOTHAM CITY,**IT **ALSO** LOOKS LIKE
IMPENDING WAR-- AS
THE CITY **GIRDS** ITSELF
FOR THE MUTANT **ATTACK**...



HEY, MEET MIZE
PIRES
OF TRINS
F YOU

TO THIS
F YOU

TO THE TRINS
F



A FRIGHTENED SILENCE HAS FALLEN OVER GOTHAM. SILENCE BROKEN ONLY BY THE URSENT WORDS OF DEPUTY MADOR - EXCUSE ME - MATOR STEVENSON...

IF THERE ARE ANY
MEMBERS OF THE MUTANT
CASANIZATION LISTENING,
PLEASE -- PLEASE -- WE
ARE STILL OPEN TO
NEGOTIATION...

YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH
QUITE A LOT, MASTER
BRUCE. IT FOLLOWS
THAT YOUR JUDGMENT
MAY BE IMPAIRED.
WHA



WITH HER, I

YOU SEE, IT ALL GETS DOWN





SHE'S YOUNG. MIGHT BE ABLE SHE'S SMART, TO END THIS SHE'S BRAVE. MUTANT NONSENGE CNCE AND FOR ALL.

YOU SEE, IT ALL GETS DOWN TO THEIR LEADER. THEY WORSHIP HIM... SHE'S A SWEET YOUNG CHILD,



















































POISONED THEM WITH AN INSIDIOUS EXCUSE FOR THE MOST VIOLENTLY ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

HE WILL BE ARRAIGNED --TO SEE IF HE IS FIT TO STAND TRIAL, OR THE VICTIM OF MENTAL ILLNESS. LET THINGS STOP HIM OR WAY US HUMANS DO. WE COUNT TOO.

THOUGH SURROUNDED BY SINFULNESS AND TERROR WE MUST NOT BECOME SO EMBITTERED THAT WE TAKE SATAN'S METHODS AS OUR OWN.



DO NOT EXPECT ANY FURTHER STATEMENTS, THE SONS OF THE BATMAN DO NOT TALK. WE ACT. LET GOTHAM'S CRIMINALS BEWARE, THEY ARE ABOUT TO ENTER HELL.



SO A BUNCH OF SO A BUNCH OF PSYCHOPATHS TURN ON CRIMINALS, INSTEAD OF INNOCENTS. FOR THIS YOU WANT TO BLAME BATMAN



THE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED, YOU CAN BANK ON THAT, PAL BUT DON'T EXPECT HIM TO 60 JUMPING IN ON GOTHAM'S OWN FINE MAYOR AND GOVERNOR, NO, SIR, THIS IS AMERICA.



I SAID NO COMMENT











LET ME TELL YOU MY SECRET. ... THEY TELL ME I'M HANDLING IT WELL -- MY RETIREMENT THAT IS -- THEY SMILE AND STARE AT ME, A LITTLE TOO OBVIOUS ABOUT HOW CURIOUS



THEY WONDER HOW I CAN LEAVE IT BEHIND WITHOUT AT LEAST A MONTH OR TWO OF



FIFTY YEARS OF THIS AND THEY WONDER



LIFE WILL BE EASIER NOW. I WON'T FEEL LIKE DAD TO AN ENTIRE CITY OF SOULS. I WON'T BLEED WITH EVERY SINGLE ONE OF MY CHILDREN.



... WHEN I THINK OF BRUCE-THEN, I WISH THEY HADN'T RETIRED ME. HE'S FINISHED. AND THERE'S NO WAY TO TELL HIM THAT.

I WON'T BE SEEING HIM AGAIN. I MEAN, SURE, I'LL SEE HIM--HE'S THAT CLOSE TO POLITE, BUT I'M OUT OF THE PICTURE NOW, OUT OF HIS PICTURE.









SECRET. THE ONE I'LL TELL NOBODY AT THE BANQUET --



























BONS, BOYS, BOXS ... ONE AT A TIME NOW ... NOW HOW ABOUT THAT SMARTLY DRESSED YOUNGSTER IN THE FRONT ROW THERE ...

MR. PRESIDENT -- WE'RE ALL ANXIOUS TO HEAR YOUR PLANS FOR THE CORTO MALTESE CRISIS, BUT FIRST, AWOTHER QUESTION MUCH ON THE MINDS OF AMERICA. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON THE BATMAN CONTROVERSY?



WELL, I DON'T THINK THAT'S MY BULL TO -- MY ROW TO HOE, BOKS...HEH ... YOU SEE. THAT'S A RIGHT BIG STATE, ALL ITS OWN... AND IT'S GOT ITS OWN SOLID, CLEAR-HEADED BOVERNOR, YES, IT DOES...

SORRY, GUYS. I'M THE GOVERNOR. GOT A WHOLE STATE TO LOOK AFTER. I TRUST THE JUDGMENT OF THE MAYOR OF GOTHAM

LET HER SEE YOU

DUTY TO ADMINISTRATE
NOT TO RENDER MORAL JUDGMENTS. DON'T ASK ME TO INTERFERE WITH THE DECISION-MAKING POWER OF OUR NEW POLICE COMMISSIONER

AND SO THE BATMAN BUCK IS PASSED -- TO ELLEN YINDEL, WHO REPLACES JAMES GORDON AS POLICE COMMISSIONER TONIGHT WILL SHE FULFILL HER PROMIS TO ISSUE AN ARREST WARRANT FOR THE BATMAN?



YINDEL -- A GRACEFUL GESTURE,

CONSIDERING THEIR

DIFFERENCES. WE MAY SEE SOME SPARKS FLY. TOM?

THAT WE MAY, LOLA. WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK, AS JULIE PARKS BRINGS US A STORY WE DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO CLASSIFY AS AN ATMO-SPHERE ANOMALY -- OR A UFO SIGHTING.



























ANOTHER BYZARRE
INCIDENT -- THIS ONE IN THE
SOUTH STREET SUBWAY
STATION. ADVERTISING AGENT
BYRON BRASSBALLS TOLD
REPORTERS...

1 DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WROUGS, I WAS USET TRYING TO PROPERTY MISSELF. THE SUBWARS ARE DAWGEROUS. YOU DON'T NEED ME TO TELL YOU THAT, SO THERE I WANT THAT IN S'BEGGAR'-1 WANT THAT IN GUETES.





-WHAT?...HOW WAS I TO KNOW HE DIDN'T HAVE A GLIN? THEY NEVER SHOW YOU THAT UNTIL THEY 'SE READY TO KALL YOU-WAY?'? C. CH, SURE. THE CRUTCHES. A LOT OF THEM USE GRUTCHES. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEM.





HEY-ME STARTED IT, AND IT
WAS HIS ORDITOHES THAT
TELPRED HIM OUP, BASE-WHATE, NOW BET HE VELLED.
WHATED HE D JUMP DOWN AND
DIE WITH HIM, OF COURSE I RAN.
WHO WOULDON'T HON SOWETHINGS HIT HE HARD-IN THE
CHEST--



























SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES STORMED OUT OF THE HALL REPEATING THIS LATE . BREAKING STORY-U.S. / SOVIET TALKS ON THE CORTO MALTESE CRISIS HAVE BROKEN DOWN.

TERMING U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT OF THE REGIME OF GENERAL MONTALBAN AS FRSCIST ABBRESSION," THE SOVIETS PLEASED A "TOTAL MILITARY COMMITMENT. THIS HAS BEEN A NEWS SIX SPECIAL praner

. BODIES OF A PUSHER AND JUNKIE FOUND HACKED TO PIECES IN A WEST END TENEMENT, MEMBERS OF THE DISBANDED MUTANT GANG ARE CARRYING OUT THEIR THREAT TO GOTHAM'S UNDERWORLD.

THE MUTANTS ARE **DEAD** THE MUTANTS ARE **HISTORY, THIS** IS THE MARK OF THE **FUTURE**. GOTHAM CITY BELONGS TO THE BATMAN.





DO NOT EXPECT ANY FURTHER STATEMENTS, THE SONS OF THE BATMAN DO NOT TALK. WE ACT. LET GOTHAM'S CRIMINALS BEWARE. THEY ARE ABOUT TO ENTER HELL.

BATMAN'S CULPABILITY FOR THIS ATROCITY IS OUR SUBJECT TONIGHT, WITH US IS THE WORLD'S LEADING EXPERT ON THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE BATMAN-DR. BARTHOLOMEW WOLPER.

BATMAN ISA MENACE SOCIETY.

NOW, I KNOW THAT'S SOMETHING OF AN OUTDATED TERM. SURE SOUNDS STRANGE, COMING OUT OF MY MOUTH, NONETHELESS, IT APPLIES DESPITE MY ALERTING THE CITY TO THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES --









-- NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE TO STOP THIS PSYCHOSOCIAL INFECTION. BATMAN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERY HUMAN BEING MURDERED BY THIS GANG.













THE HALL IS SILENT. AS THE MAN WHO HAS BEEN POLICE COMMISSIONER OF GOTHAM CITY FOR TWENTY-SIX YEARS STEPS TO THE PODIUM ...



NICE WATCH DRAWS A FOND CHUCKLE FROM THE AUDIENCE ... INTRODUCE YOU TO YOUR NEW POLICE COMMISSIONER. I DO NOT ENVY HER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THE JOB HAS FEW REWARDS

IS THAT WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED WITH IT, THINGS AREN'T AS LOUSY AS THEY WOULD'VE BEEN WITHOUT YOU. ELLEN YINDEL IS EMINENTLY QUALIFIED FOR THIS JOB.



TO ATTEMPT TO QUOTE HER OUTSTANDING RECORD IN THE MINUTES I'M ALLOWED WOULD BE A DISSERVICE TO HER. RATHER, I OFFER MY SYMPATHY, IN THE KNOWLEDGE











TO THE ONLY SOLID LEAD I'VE GOT LEFT, ROBIN A MAN ABNER

HOPE. SHE FACES LIFE-AND-DEATH DECISIONS, EVERY HOUR TO COME, SOME WILL TORTURE HER

SHE FACES A CITY OF THIEVES AND MURDERIERS AND HOWEST PEOPLE TOO FRIGHTENED TO











PATIENCE, ROBIN, IT'LL KEEP YOU ALIVE. ABNER IGN'T HOME





... AND YES -- A STANDING OVATION FOR POLICE COMMISSIONER YINDEL!

THANK YOU...I AM HOWORED TO SHARE THE STAGE WITH JAMES GARDON, HE SPOKE OF DECISIONS , NOW I MUST MAKE MY OWN .













DESPITE GOTHAM'S PLAGUE OF CRIME, I BELIEVE OUR ONLY RECOURSE IS LAW ENFORCEMENT I WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ACTIVITIES OF A VIGILANTE. THEREFORE, AS YOUR POLICE COMMISSIONER --

-I ISSUE THIS ARREST -- I ISSUE THIS ARREST ORDER FOR THE BATMAN ON CHARGES OF BREAKING AND ENTERMS, ASSAULT AND BATTERY, CREATING A PUBLIC MENACE --















.. FOLLOWING HER ARREST ORDER FOR THE BATMAN, COMMISSIONER YINDEL FILED A FORMAL PROTEST WITH THE MEDIA COUNCIL AGAINST THE JOKER'S APPEARANCE ON THE DAVID ENDOCHRINE SHOW ...



FISTFUL OF ENTERTHINMENT ASTAUL OF ENTEKHINMENT TOMORROW NIGHT, WITH AR, RUTH WEISENHEIMER, THE WET HAMBURSER BUN CONTEST, AND A MAN WHO'S BROUGHT A LOT OF SMILES TO THE WORLD, GO TO BED.



THE COUNCIL DENIED HER PROTEST... THE BODY OF THREE-TIME LOSER HECTOR MENDEZ WAS FOUND IN AN EAST SIDE ALLEY. HE HAD BEEN LITERALLY SKINNED



...THE AMERICAN HOSTAGES GUILD HAS DECLARED A GENERAL STRIKE, IN RESPONSE 10 TREATMENT OF THEIR MEMBERS IN THE RECENT LIBYAN INCIDENT ...











































HE'S JUST.,
AH...
TRYING TO
BREAK
THE
TENSION.,



YES. YES, MY
PATIENT IS
A VICTIM OF
BATMAN'S
PSYCHOSIS,

UND WHAT
12 ZE
NATURE UF
BATMAN'S
PZYCHOSIS?

WHY, SEXUAL REPRESSION, OF COURSE. ZEXUAL REPRESSION -- ZIS IS A TERRIBLE ZINO...

YOU'RE RIGHT, WE MUST NOT RESTRAIN OURSELVES.











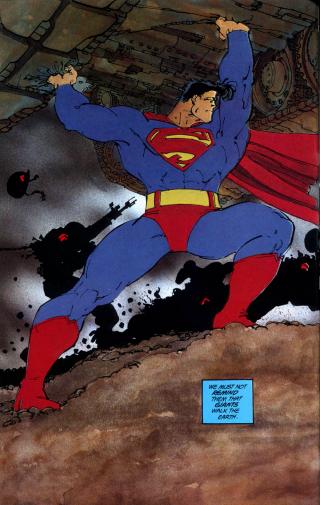












ING THE PUBLIC NOT TO RY, THE PRESIDENT HAS IACED STRATEGIC AIR OMMANDS ON RED ALERT COMMANDS ON RED ALERT.

"WE WON'T MAKE THE FREST MOVE", SAID THE PRESIDENT, "BUT WE'RE READY TO MAKE THE LAST."

AT THE CHURCH'S STAND THAT THE CHURCHS STAND
ON CONTRACEPTION WILL
NOT CHANGE, DESPITE
YESTERDAY'S FIREBOMBING
OF ST. PETER'S SQUARE...
AND, IN LOCAL NEWS... MY HEAD GOES LIGHT AND THE SMOKE COATS THE INSIDE OF MY MOUTH AND LEAVES A PARCH OF RED-HOT GRAVEL AT THE

BASE OF MY THROAT. I STOPPED DOWNS THIS TO







ED AND SIX

WERE SLAIN DURING THE TOKER'S ESCAPE FROM THE

JOINER'S ESCHIE FALM THE DAVID ENDOCHRINE SHOW INCLUDING HOST ENDOCHRINE AND DR. BARTHOLOMEW

WOLFER

THE JOKER REPORTEDLY USED HIS DEADLY SMILE GAS HIS DEADLY SMILLE CAIS
ON THE CROWD. COMMISSIONER
YIMPEL RERUSED TO COMMENT
ON THIS, OR ON THE ESCAPE
OF THE BATTMAN, WHICH LEFT
TWELVE POLICE OFFICERS
HOSPITALIZED...



A ROOKIE









HAVE COME BACK BRUCE



THEY'VE CHANGED.

YOU DON'T KNOW





THE YEARS THE HELL HAVE NOT BEEN ar of Mil KIND, SELINA.





GRATEFUL I CHANGED MY



















SOMETHING IN SCHOOL













THERE'S SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO BO FOR ME, CONGRESSMAN, LISTEN CLOSELY











--HE'S STILL UP THERE , LOLA --DRESSED IN NOTHING BUT AN AMERICAN FLAG CONGRESSMAN NOCHES, PLEADING FOR A FULL NUCLEAR STRIKE ON CORTO MALTESE --









GET THIS CLOWN OUT OF HERE.





ON THE SCENE -- LET'S SEE IF WE CAN GET HER TO SAY A FEW WORDS...



























































































































--AND BATMAN HAS BEEN SEEN--HE AND THE SCHERE EXCHANGED GUNFIRE IN A CROWD--HEY--WHAT--LOCA--THEY'RE EMACUATING THE COUNTY FAIR--

















-- GOT THE OTHER END SEALED --NO WAY THEY'LL GET PAST US -- YOU LINE THAT BITCH, DON'T YOU MERKEL?

--WITNESSES SAY THEY BOTH GOT GUNS--

-- KEEP AN

INTEL UF ... SHAMOOMM AT THE DOWNY FAIR, WHERE THE DOWNY FAIR, WHERE THE DOWNS IS SAID TO HAME MINOSEED AT LEAST THEORY SICHTED WAS THE SHAMON OF THE DOWNS.



...LED BY COMMISSIONER YMMEL, POLICE WERE LAST SEEN COWERSING ON THE TUMMEL OF LOVE, WITH ARREST COCKERS FOR BOTH THE JOMER-- AND FOR GOTHAM'S WELLAWTE...





































HE'S YOUNG -- CAN'T BE OLDER THAN THIRTEEN -- HE'S RIDING THE ROLLER COASTER -- HE'S WAIT -- HE'S --



























JUST ENOUGH TIME TO --

























GOTHAM CITY WILL NO LONGER TOLEGATE THIS PLASONY VIOLATION OF THE LAW-THIS VIOLENT ASSAULT ON THE VERY UNBEROWNIASS OF OUR SOCIETY...



BY ATTACKING GOTHAM'S POLICE, BATMAN HAS REVEALED HIMSELF RS AN UNIQUALIFED MEMBELF, I HAVE INSTRUCTED THE ATTOMISY GENERAL, TO RUCKE THE STATE POLICE AT GOTHAM'S DISPOSAL...



...THE JOKER'S BODY FOUND MUTILATED AND BURNED...MURDER IS ADDED TO THE CHARGES ABAINST THE BATMAN...









YOU CAN SAY WHAT YOU WANT, YOU CAN CALL HIM WHAT YOU WANT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK DOWN AVENUE D AT NIGHT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO HEAR THE SUCKIME SOUNDS THEY MAKE EVERY TIME YOU WALK BY, THIS ONE, HE'D BEEN WORKING THE NERVE UP FOR WEEKS BEFORE HE WAS HORNY ENOUGH.





...NO, HORNY HE WARSY'T.
HE WAS JUST LOCKING.
TO HURT SOMEBODY
AND HE'S THE KIND WHO
HURTS WOMEN. WISH
THEY WERE RARE. HE
GAVE HIMSELF AN

































DO NOT EXPECT ANY FURTHER STATEMENTS, THE SONS OF THE BATMAN DO NOT TALK, WE ACT, LET GOTHAM'S CRIMINALS BEMARE, THEY ARE ABOUT TO ENTER HELL.

THE MUTANTS ARE **DEAD** THE MUTANTS ARE **HISTORY. THIS** IS THE MARK OF THE **FUTURE** GOTHAM CITY BELONGS TO THE **BATTMAN**. ... THE SUMS OF THE BATTMAN HAVE STRUCK ASAIN, JEFT STROOGEN WAS CLOSING UP THE SUITH STREET 7-11 WHEN HE BECAME BOTH MITTHESS--AND VICTUM... THEY'RE YOUNGER THAN YOU'D THINK--THIS OWE WAS, ANYWAY. COULDN'T HAVE BEEN OLDER THAN SIXTEEN... THAT'S RIGHT, THERE WAS JUST OWE OF THEM.



















I COULD BE SITTING AT HOME CATCHING UP ON INT ABRADNS -- YES, SOME OF US STILL ABRADNING THE OWE MADE THINKS SHE AWAIS NEEDS FROM THE BROCKRY STORE.

THIS TIME IT'S BEAMS.
VESETARIAN BEAMS, DOOK
ME TEN MINUTES TO FIGURE
OUT THAT IT ISN'T IN THE
MENUTH POOD SECTION. IT'S
JUST BEAMS WITHOUT MEAT.







CAREFUL-BE CAREFUL HOW YOU PUT THINGS, LOLA, THIS IS ONE MISSILE--THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT THIS IS PART OF A FULL-SCALE ATTACK...







HOLD IT... WE'VE JUST SOTTEN WORD THAT IT'S NOT A CONVENTIONAL NUCLEAR WARNEAD - WE SWITCH DUD NOW TO JAN MUSK', ABOARD THE NEWS TWO SHOTTLE. WHAT'S THE WORD, DAN ? STILL COLLATING, LOLA-BUT IT'S A BUS ONE-MEAVY MESATOWASE-WITH LINUSUAL COMPUTER
ACTIVITY--WE CAN'T BE
CERTAIN OF ITS CAPABIL(TIES...

...AT THE VERY LEAST, CARTO WILL BE LEVELD--THE FIRES MIGHT SPREAD TO MAINLAND SALTY AMERICA--SHOULD TO SENERTE A SUFFICIENT MASKETIC PULSE, THERE MIGHT-- THANKS FOR THE DATA, DAN, BUT WE'LL ALL KNOW SOON ENOUGH WHAT IT CAN DO. RIGHT NOW, WE'VE GOT AUTHOR HARVAY ELLISON IN THE STUDIO...











LUCIUS



CAN DO

IF WE DON'T-











YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST --THE WARTEND HAS
SOMEROW BEEN
DWERTED-- IT WILL
EXPLODE HARMLESSLY
IN-- WHAT'S THE NAME
OF THAT DESERT?...















MAYBE DURING A BREAM BETWEEN POLICE ACTIONS, ONE OF YOUR MILITARY FRIENDS TOLD YOU WHAT AN ELECTROMASHETIC PULSE IS, AND MYSE YOU LISTENED, CLARK.

ALL YOU NEED TO BENERATE THE PULSE IS THE ORGANIZED DETONATION OF A FEN DOZEN NUCLEAR WARHEADS

THAT, OR A SPECIA KIND OF NUKE TH BOTH SIDES HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DEVELOP.

sweetheart, the last of the readings gave a hint of what would happen.



failed. I knew for sure

Failed, I knew for sure. There's no control to experime it to two crew. We're all the crew. We're all dead anyway — as dead as this shuttle. you'll never get

to read the

you'll never get to read this letter. it'll burn up with me when our orbit deteriorates still, my last thoughts will be a proyer for you, for humanity...



and for planet Earth.

Nothing could stop the Russians from emptying their silos at us now. Wed have no defense, no way to retaliate.



The one hope we have is that the decision to murder billions has to be made by a human being.

SINCE MY OWN ATOMS REN'T BOUNCING AROUND THE STRATOSPHERE--





- SINCE WAYNE MANOR'S

EMERSENCY GENERATOR HASN'T KICKED IN-AND ROBIN'S WATCH HAS STOPPED-





























A HARDHAT GRABS A LUSURENCH FROM THE BACK OF HIS DEAD TRUCK AND SMASHES OPEN A FIRE NYDRANT.











"HARMLESSLY..."

THE WOMAN...
ON TELEVISION...
SHE SAID THE
BOMB WOULD
DETONATE...
HARMLESSLY...





THERE WERE BIRDS, MEDIS, WEST, WITH MEDIS AND AND AND FAMILIES ASSOCIATION CHIEF WITH TO THERE TO THERE CHIEFFER,











THEY CAN SPUT THE VERY FABRIC OF REALITY... BLAST A HUNDRED THOUSAND INTO THE SAY...

> ... BLOTTING OUT THE SOURCE OF ALL MY POWER. THE MOPE FOR SCREAMING MILLIANS...

MAGNETIC STORM
...YOU HAVE
EVERY REASON
TO BE CUTRASED,
MOTHER EARTH...
YOU HAVE GIVEN
THEM...
EVERYTHIMS...

THEY ARE TIMY AND STUPID AND VICTOUS ... BUT PLEASE... LISTEN TO THEM...

> PLEASE...I AM SLOW AND DYING...





















... AND THAT
BOY- HE SEEMED
TO KEEP PACE
WITH ME
PELIBERATELY,
TAKING THE JOY
FROM MY
EVENING WALK...

... WITH HIS
HORRIBLY
LOUD PADID...
WHEN IT SHRIEKED,
I BLAMED THE BOY.
TRUTH TO TELL, I
TURNED TO
COWARDNYT HIM...



...THEN I NOTICED HIS

COMP CONFUSION -- AND
THE DARKNESS THAT
SEEMED TO FALL ACROSS
THE ENTIRE CITY.

I HEARD



XES, I WAS SHEUTIMS, WHAT DO NOU EXPECT? I HAPPENED TO BE UP AGAINST A BITCH OF A PEADUME. WHAT?... YES, OF OUNGE! I'D HEARD ABOUT THE BAMB. BUT I'VE GOT PROBLEMS OF MY OWN.



I'M NOT CRAZY ABOUT GETTING OUT OF MY CAR--NOT IN THAT NEIGHBORHOOD





SO I'M BARELY STANDING UP WHEN THERE'S THIS EXPLOSION KNOCKS ME FLAT-

MY ANKLE
FEELS LIKE IT'S
BROKEN-SOMEBODY IS
GOING TO GET
SUED--



I DON'T LIKE BEING TOUCHED --AND LIKE I SAID, I'VE GOT MY OWN PROBLEMS --



GUESS I JUST LOST HAVING NIGHTMARES AROUT THE ROMB READ UP ON IT A LOT

... AND WHEN THE



...WELL . I KNEW IT HAD TO BE THE ELECTROMAGNETIC PUISE... AND ALL THE ONLY HAPPEN DURING



... I MEAN , LATER I 747, CRASHING INTO THE BRASHAM BUILDING...

I GUESS WE WERE COCKY IT WAS THE ONLY PLANE TO FALL ON GOTHAM

.. BUT JUST THEN, I ... I MEAN NOT KNOWNS... BUT...IT WAS DUMB, BUT WHEN I HEARD THE EXPLOSION, I THOUGHT.

AND WHEN THE CARS STARTED





NOBODY TOLD ME ABOUT ANY AIRPLANE. THE CARS WERE POPPING OFF LIKE FIRECRACKERS --EVERYBODY SCREAMING

- IT WAS EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF



OH, RIGHT. THE COP. LISTEN, I'VE NEVER BROKEN THE LAW-- NOT IN ANY WAY THAT COUNTS.

AND IT WASN'T ME WHO TOLD HIM TO TRY TO HELP THAT JAP BITCH OUT OF HER





GROW UP, SOMEBODY WAS GOING TO GET HIS HAVE ANY USE FOR IT.

THAT ARIEST, HE DIDN'T SEE IT MY WAY.





HE WOULDN'T LET GO. WOULDN'T LISTEN TO REASON. I'VE BEEN TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY SINCE I WAS A KID. BUT WHEN PUSH COMES







HEY-- YOU WEREN'T THERE. COULD BARELY SEE THROUGH ALL THE SMOKE WAS SURE I HEARD

SHELLING. IT WAS THE END OF THE WARLD -- AND



THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR WHAT WE DID. WE WEREN'T CRAZY. WE WERE JUST AN UGLY BUNCH OF STUPID SELFISH BASTARDS.

THERE WAS THE PRIEST, A BLOODY MESS, I DIDN'T CARE...



WOULDN'T TAKE A

WORTH A DAWN WAS

SENIUS TO REALIZE THAT THE ONLY OTHER THING

...NO EXCUSE... I WAS IN WITH THE REST OF THEM, SHOVING, YELLING ABOUT FOOD AND GUNS...



THERE WAS NO PLAN,



WHEN WE RAN INTO ANOTHER CROWD THAT'D GOTTEN THE SAME /254.



HAD OURSELVES TO LOOK WE WERE HEADING EAST ON CHELSEA HIT THE GRAND UNION PARKING LOT

ARE FOR THE

PIRE DEPARTMENT. THAT'S WHY I PAY MY TAXES. WE



ONE OF THEM MADE A ONE OF THEM MADE A MOVE FOR THE SUM. HE WAS BLACK - I'M NO RACIST, BUT I THOUGHT HE MIGHT HAVE A KWIFE.







I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT GOT AS BAD AS IT DID. YOU'D NEVER HAVE KNOWN THAT JUST A FEW MINUTES EARLISE WE'D BEEN I WAS STRANGLING SOMEBODY WHEN I























THIS BRACE ISN'T FOR

WHEN HE TALKED --BATMAW, I MEAN -- IT WAS... IT'S HARD TO DESCRIBE... THERE WAS SOMETHING IN HIS VOICE.

ANYWAY, HE TOLD US WE COULD SPEND THE NIGHT TIED UP -- OR HELP FIGHT THE FIRE ..





IT'S ONLY ONCE.. IN THE WHOLE NIGHT... THAT IT SHOWS ...

> HE'S GIVEN ORDERS AND OKVERS AND ALL THE MUTANTS AND S.O.B.S AND EVERYBODY ARE GOVE FOR A MINUTE...



... HE JUST SAGS LIKE AN OLD MAN ...





... I WAS BARELY CONSCIOUS...IF NOT FOR THE BOY, I...











THAT'S RIGHT. THE BOY WITH THE *RADIO*. HE WITH THE ABOND. HE
PULLED ME CLEAR. SAVED
MY LIFE. WHEN BATMAN
DROPPED OFF THE MEDICAL
SUPPLIES, THE BOY PASSED THEM AROUND.



Ш

BUT, OF COURSE, THERE WASN'T



...ONE WEEK LATER, IT'S STILL DARK AT HIGH NOON IN GOTHAM CITY. NOON IN GOTHAM CITY. IT'S STILL WINTER IN AUGUST, HERE'S CARLA SHRIEK TO EXPLAIN...



THE SOVIET COLDBRINGER WAS DESIGNED TO INDUCE DESIGNED TO MUDGE
THE ENVIRONMENTAL
EFFECTS OF FULL-SCALE
NUCLEAR WAR. FIRST,
IT GENERATED THE PULSE
THAT BLACKED OUT--

ON THAT PULSE -- DON'T MISS OUR SPECIAL MISS CUR SPECIAL TONIGHT -- YOUR FAVORITE STARS ARE ASKED " MMERE WERE YOU WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT OUT?" CARLA?

LOLA, THE PULSE WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING. WEATHER PATTERNS ACROSS THE HEMISPHERE HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY DISRUPTED --

THEY SURE HAVE, THEY SURE HAVE, CARLA, AND SO HAS MY WARDROBE. THIS IS THE COLDEST DAY OF THE YEAR. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO WEAR THESE DAYS...



CIVII

WEST







STARVING RIOTS CUBANS MEDIA PUSH WON'T WAR IN THE MID CREDIBILIT

NO, MR PRESIDENT. I'M AFRAID HE'LL NEVER LET ME BRING HIM IN ALIVE.

THE COLDEST, LOLA --LINTIL TOMORROW. THE BOMB'S BLAST THRUST HUMPAGES OF MILLIONS OF TOMS OF SOUT INTO THE STRATOSTHERE --

CLOUD THAT COVERS THE AMERICAS, BLOTTING OUT THE SUN-DEPRIVING US OF LIGHT





TO DEATH BY THE THOUSANDS ... THE DAMAGE TO CROPS COULD WELL BRING ON A FAMINE...













COMPUTER FAILURE WAS ... COMPUTER FAILUR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SINKING OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR SUBMARINE VALIANT, PENTAGON SOURCES DISCLOSED TODAY... NO HANDS WERE LOST ...















...I WANT A PIECE OF HIM. A SMALL PIECE WILL DO, FOR OLD TIMES SAKE, YOU KNOW...



... NOTHING WE CAN'T HANDLE, FOLKS. WE'RE STILL AMERICA:-AND I'M STILL PRESIDENT.



wwo wise to the Used To Floht TALKS UNE TALKS UNE COMMENT

...THE PRESIDENT HAS
PRESED LIMITED MARTIAL
LAW, THESEN PERJOINS
MULTARY AID TO LAWENFORCEMENT ASENCIES
ROAINST OUTSREAKS OF
WOLLING AND LOOTING...



RIGHT THERE -- IN THAT SADDLE -- IS ALL THE REASON I NEED...





... NEW YORK, CHICASO, MEROPOLIS -- EVERY CITY IN AMERICA IS CAUGHT IN THE GRIP OF A NATIONAL PAWE -- WITH ONE EXCEPTION.
RIGHT, TOM ?...











...THAT'S RIGHT, LOLA. THANKS TO THE BATTMAN AND HIS VIGILANT'S GAMS, GOTHAM'S STREETS ARE SAFE -- UNLESS YOU TRY TO COMMIT A CRIME...









9LONG



NO...IT WAS... TWO YEARS LATER...WHEN HER NECKLAGE CAUGHT ON HIS WRIST...









TRICK.

...ARMY TROOPS HAVE EVACUATED THE SLUM KNOWN AS CRIME ALLEY--NO EXPLANATION IS GIVEN--NEWS COVERAGE HAS BEEN

































Strange to think of that particular evening, more than FORTY YEARS past.

Master Bruce was but NINE years old, and RESTLESS, as he always was, at





Still he sat, politely enough, on his bed, as Alfred read to him.

"The Purloined Letter "Yes, that was the story...

.. he listened, in silence, as, finishing the tale, Alfred explained the importance of mr. Poes controller into detective fiction.

Then, with a voice























WHEN I

HIT HIM WITH THE





















































The world turns ruby RED. The manor roof RISES, modily, into the SKY, riding a pillar of FLAME.

A jolt travels the length of Alfred's spine. Of course, he thinks, as his head goes light.

















... CLOUD HAS ALMOST COMPLETELY CLEARED IN THE PAST SEVENTY - TWO HOURS, THE PRESIDENT HAS DECLARED A STATE OF STABILIZED EMERGENCY ...

REPEATING THE WEEK'S
TOP STORIES -- THE
SPECTACULAR CAREER
OF THE BATTIAN
CAME TO A TRABIC
CONCLUSION...

... AS THE CRIMEFIGHTER SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK WHILE BATTLING GOVERNMENT TROOPS.

HE HAS BEEN HE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS FIFTY FIVE YEAR OLD BILLIONAIRE BRUCE WAYNE -- AND HIS DEATH HAS PROVEN AS MYSTERIOUS AS







SON OF A

BITCH -- I KNOW WHO KILLED

HIM-



SELINA-

THIS IS NO GOOD.











INTERNAL REVENUE
AGENTS INVESTIGATED
WAYNE'S RECORDS,
FINDING HIS EVERY
BANK ACCOUNT
EMPTY, EVERY STOCK
SOLD...







... WHERE THE MONEY
WENT IS OVE MORE
SECRET WAYNE HAS
TAKEN TO HIS GRAVE...
HIS BODY WAS CLAMED
BY HIS ONLY LIVING
RELATIVE, A DISTANT
COUSTY...





























