

THE BATMAN

By

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Based on the Character Published in
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INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Blood covers a room lit only by moonlight.

Near the doorway, a man's body hangs from a WIRE. A tipped over STEEL BOX lies in front of him.

A breeze from the room's only window sways the hanging wire a bit.

A city skyline can be seen outside.

A woman's body lies in the middle of the room. Behind her sits a STEEL BOX illuminated with a bright green question mark.

A silhouette of a MAN writes on the room's wall with a gloved finger: "THE MAN...". He writes with blood.

The man continues to write on the room's wall: "...WHO WANTED IT...".

Blood DRIPS to the floor.

The man finishes his writing with a large "?".

EXT. CITY STREETS- NIGHT

TWO THUGS sprint across a street, make a turn into an-

ALLEYWAY

THUG 1 SHOOTS at the rooftops.

The other man leads a dash through a door. It SLAMS shut.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Thug 1 stands gasping, back against the door. Thug 2 listens.

THUG 1
Did we lose him?

THUG 2
Dunno.

Suddenly - they hear a THUD behind them. Thug 1 turns and FIRES his gun until it CLICKS.

THUG 1
Shit!

He throws the gun to the floor.

Thug 2 continues to stare at the back of the warehouse, terrified.

THUG 1 (CONT'D)
What you doin'?

THUG 2
Maybe if I don't shoot, he won't
kill me.

Thug 1 grabs Thug 2. Pulls a GUN out of his jacket.

Thug 1, clutching the gun, cautiously looks around the warehouse.

A dark figure grasps and lifts Thug 1 from above. Thug 2 SCREAMS and sprints away.

Thug 2 finds the warehouse entrance. Locked.

Thug 2 turns to run, but immediately bumps into the dark figure. The figure wears a cape, cowl, and black body armor.

BATMAN.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

A black sedan approaches the warehouse from the second scene. YELLOW TAPE surrounds the warehouse.

An attractive, olive-skinned woman stands in front of the warehouse. Arms crossed. DETECTIVE RENEE MONTOYA.

The sedan screeches to halt in front of Montoya. DETECTIVE HARVEY BULLOCK, an overweight rugged man, steps out of the sedan. He smokes a CIGAR.

BULLOCK
(to himself)
Figured the lieutenant would call
me in on my day off.

Bullock coolly strides past Montoya, completely ignoring her.

MONTOYA
Count your blessings. Back in
Metropolis we were on call 24 hours
a day.

Bullock halts, turns, and eyes Montoya in disbelief.

BULLOCK
Don't tell me. You're the new
partner?

MONTOYA
Renee Montoya.

Montoya reaches her hand out. Bullock doesn't shake it.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)
Disappointed?

He shrugs.

BULLOCK
Just don't tell me you actually
wanna be here.

MONTOYA
Duty calls. I like to be where I'm
needed.

Bullock SNORTS.

BULLOCK
Cute. You put that on your resume?

MONTOYA
No, but I'm starting to wonder what
you put on yours.

BULLOCK
Oh don't worry about me, partner.
I'm a ten year man.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The detectives enter the warehouse to approach the crime
scene.

Police officers and crime scene investigators surround a
severely beaten man, Thug 2, tied down to a metal pillar.

Montoya and Bullock flash their BADGES to a POLICE OFFICER approaching them.

MONTOYA
Detectives Montoya and Bullock.
What happened?

POLICE OFFICER
Just some Batman aftermath,
detective. We'll clean it up.

MONTOYA
So what happened?

The police officer looks quizzically at the two detectives for a moment.

Bullock gestures at Montoya.

BULLOCK
New girl.

POLICE OFFICER
Our buddy here robbed a convenience
store, shot the store clerk, and
ran off. Got this far until Batman
did our job for us.

BULLOCK
Looks like he had a good time doin'
it too.

POLICE OFFICER
There's another guy in the back.
Hanging upside down from the
ceiling. 127 dollars in his jacket.
No gun on him though.

BULLOCK
Big game robbery, huh?

MONTOYA
The store clerk... is he dead?

POLICE OFFICER
Fatal gun wound to the head.

Montoya's eyes open in shock, then looks at the officer's face in dismay.

Bullock glances at Montoya and smirks.

BULLOCK
(to officer)
New girl.

MONTOYA
If you don't mind, officer, we'll
take a look around.

POLICE OFFICER
Be my guest, detectives.

The detectives approach the man tied to the metal pillar,
still unconscious. Montoya reaches and touches the CABLES
around him.

MONTOYA
So you say the Batman did this?

BULLOCK
Makes sense. He's the
commissioner's golden boy.

MONTOYA
He's a vigilante.

Bullock gives her a blank look.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)
He should be arrested.

BULLOCK
Christ. Are we gonna check out the
asshole in the back or what?

WAREHOUSE - BACK - MOMENTS LATER

THUG 1 hangs upside down by a CABLE. Conscious but clearly
rattled.

THUG 1
Lemme down!

BULLOCK
You're not exactly in a position to
be givin' orders, little guy.

MONTOYA
Who did this to you?

THUG 1

The Batman! I saw him. I shot
him... I shot him three times! How
ain't he dead?

Bullock shakes his head, smiling.

BULLOCK

Kids.

MONTOYA

(shouting to the other
officers)

Someone cut this man down and cuff
him!

INT. WAYNE MANOR FOYER - DAY

Alfred holds a BREAKFAST TRAY and walks into the enormous
Foyer of Wayne Manor. It too is lit by a chandelier, and a
large WATER FOUNTAIN sits in the middle of it.

Alfred approaches a large rectangular MIRROR.

ALFRED

Mirror.

The Mirror SLIDES left revealing an elevator shaft.

INT. BATCAVE - FLOURESCENT LIGHTING IN DARK - DAY

Batman, unmasked as Bruce Wayne, sits in front of a large
bank of COMPUTER MONITORS. His butler, Alfred, approaches
him, holding a BREAKFAST TRAY.

ALFRED

Breakfast, Master Bruce.

Bruce ignores him, eyes still locked on the screen in front
of him.

Alfred places the breakfast tray at the edge of the computer
desk.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Your latest escapade didn't escape
the morning news.

BRUCE

I saw.

ALFRED

Sir, if you don't mind me asking,
was the brutal beat-down necessary?
The boy couldn't have weighed more
than 130 pounds.

BRUCE

He killed an unarmed citizen,
Alfred.

ALFRED

And you thought beating him near to
death to be a proper punishment?

BRUCE

The mob still runs the courts in
Gotham. This man could go free
after a slap on the wrist. It's my
job to strike fear in the corrupt.

ALFRED

I just don't want to see you become
what you've been fighting.

BRUCE

I haven't been corrupted yet,
Alfred.

Bruce takes the tray of food and starts to eat, eyes once
again locked on the screen in front of him.

The screen displays a newspaper headline reading, "MOTHER AND
SON FOUND MURDERED IN THE NARROWS."

ALFRED

Apparently, there were more urgent
matters going on last night.

BRUCE

I can't be everywhere at once,
Alfred.

Bruce brings up another article on the screen.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

This is the second time this
madman's killed a mother and son.

ALFRED

How do you know it's the same man?

BRUCE

He left another riddle.

Bruce brings up a photo of a riddle written in blood on an apartment's wall.

ALFRED
You were there?

BRUCE
Gordon gave me a look at its
aftermath.

Alfred examines the riddle and reads it aloud.

ALFRED
"The man who made it didn't want
it. The man who wanted it didn't
need it. The man who needed it
never knew it. What is it?"
(beat)
Any notion as to what the answer
is, sir?

BRUCE
A coffin.

ALFRED
Do you think he's trying to tell us
something?

BRUCE
That's what I intend to find out.

Alfred continues studying the photo on the computer screen.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
The woman's body was found next to
her son's hanging corpse. Legless.
Must have bled to death.

ALFRED
He cut off her legs?

BRUCE
Not exactly. The killer trapped her
legs in a box with two holes at the
top of it. The box was linked to a
cryptographic sequencing code.
Razors lined its inside. The code
was set to a timer. If she couldn't
solve the code in time, the razors
would chop up whatever was in that
box.

ALFRED

And to complicate matters, her dead son was hanging before her eyes?

BRUCE

The son was standing on a steel box electronically connected to the box that trapped his mother. A noose was fixed around his neck. When the timer went off, the box tipped and his body dropped.

Alfred briefly looks over to the screen with the recent article on it.

ALFRED

Sir, the article says the victims are the wife and son of crime lord Roman Sionis. Perhaps this was mob related.

BRUCE

Mobsters don't usually kill their victims in such creative ways. This was the work of a lone psychopath.

Both men look at the picture of a riddle written in blood.

EXT. CEMETERY- EVENING

A large group of people dressed in black surround the graves of the diseased.

A PRIEST finishes a prayer, and people start to leave the graveyard.

A few people walk to a man in a black suit to shake his hand and offer their apologies. Tall, broad-shouldered, and graying black hair that is slicked back. ROMAN SIONIS.

A skinny man in GLASSES approaches Roman Sionis.

ALBERTO SIONIS

I'm sorry, brother.

Roman Sionis continues to stare at the GRAVESTONES.

He takes a step toward his son's grave.

ALBERTO SIONIS (CONT'D)

Roman?

Roman Sionis raises his head and blankly looks at Alberto.

ROMAN SIONIS
 Alberto, who was at the mansion the
 night my wife and son were
 murdered?

ALBERTO SIONIS
 (brief pause as he thinks
 it over.)
 Vincent and Francesco I think.

ROMAN SIONIS
 I want 'em both dead.

ALBERTO SIONIS
 But I don't-

ROMAN SIONIS
 Don't question me, Berto.

Alberto Sionis looks back at VINCENT CONCOTTI who walks to
 his Mercedes-Benz with his family.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
 We must find who did this.

ALBERTO SIONIS
 You think Falcone had anything to
 do with it?

ROMAN SIONIS
 Falcone's stupid, but not that
 stupid.

ALBERTO SIONIS
 Maybe we should keep an eye on him
 just in case.

ROMAN SIONIS
 I always got men keeping an eye on
 him.

Both men look at the gravestones in silence for a moment.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
 Get me Bullock. I wanna know
 everything the cops know.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The BAT SIGNAL shines brightly next to the moon in the night
 sky.

EXT. ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

COMMISSIONER GORDON stands next to the BAT SIGNAL'S SOURCE, hands in coat pockets. A man well into his fifties, wrinkles line his face and shades of gray streak his hair and mustache.

A shadowed figure approaches.

BATMAN
Commissioner.

Gordon, caught by surprise, swiftly turns around to see Batman.

GORDON
Coffin. That's the answer to the riddle. A coffin.

BATMAN
I know.

GORDON
You knew? For how long?

BATMAN
A while.

GORDON
You should have told me.

Batman looks at him, saying nothing.

GORDON (CONT'D)
You think it means anything?

BATMAN
A pig was the answer to his first riddle. We assumed it referred to his victims being family of a corrupt cop.

GORDON
Yeah, Detective Michaels.

BATMAN
We were wrong.

Gordon gives him a perplexed look.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

It wasn't a reference to his last victims. It was to his next ones. Louisa and Johnny Sionis.

GORDON

How?

BATMAN

"Pig" is the nickname of Johnny Sionis. Detective Michaels was working on the Sionis case at the time of the first murder.

(beat)

This time we know what to look for.

GORDON

There's no mobster nicknamed "Coffin" that I can think of.

BATMAN

Johnny and Louisa Sionis were buried this evening. My guess is there's something in those coffins the killer wants us to see.

GORDON

Yeah, right. Getting a warrant for that would take weeks.

BATMAN

I don't need a warrant.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIONIS PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

A tall building with Roman shaped architecture.

INT. SIONIS PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Roman Sionis sits at a DESK in an extravagant-looking room.

The GOTHAM TIMES article on the murder of his wife and son lies on his desk.

A half empty BOTTLE OF SCOTCH sits next to the article. He POURS himself a glass, and downs it.

Detective Bullock approaches the desk, carelessly finishing a DONUT.

BULLOCK

I gotta say, Mr. Sionis, the ads were right. These shoes are comfortable.

ROMAN SIONIS

I didn't call you here to discuss my company's shoes, Bullock. I called you for information.

BULLOCK

Right, the Batman. You wouldn't believe-

ROMAN SIONIS

Not Batman, you mook. Information on who killed my family.

BULLOCK

The Riddler?

ROMAN SIONIS

Who?

BULLOCK

Riddler. The boys at the office call him that 'cause he leaves lil' riddles after his murders.

ROMAN SIONIS

You meaning to tell me my son was killed by a serial killer?

BULLOCK

Well, I only know about one other case of him killing anybody. And get this, they were a wife and son too. Of Detective Michaels actually.

ROMAN SIONIS

The detective I have in my pocket.

BULLOCK

Guess so.

Roman Sionis takes a few moments to absorb all of this new information.

ROMAN SIONIS

What was the riddle?

Bullock looks through his WALLET and takes out two PHOTOS.

BULLOCK
Which one?

ROMAN SIONIS
The one he left after killing my
family.

Bullock hands Sionis one of the photos. He pockets the other.

ROMAN SIONIS
"The man who made it didn't want
it. The man who wanted it didn't
need it. The man who needed it
never knew it. What is it?"

Sionis looks up at Bullock.

ROMAN SIONIS
Well?

BULLOCK
What?

ROMAN SIONIS
What's the answer?

BULLOCK
How the hell should I know?

Sionis whips a .22 CALIBER PISTOL from out of his desk.

Bullock's calm expression morphs into a look of shock.

ROMAN SIONIS
Because that's why I'm paying you,
Bullock. Maybe I should be spending
my money elsewhere.

BULLOCK
Calm down, man. I'll find out the
answer... just gimme a little time.

Roman Sionis puts away the pistol.

ROMAN SIONIS
Just making sure we're on the same
page, Bullock.

BULLOCK
Right. I'll head down to the
station now if you want.

Sionis brusquely motions at the door.

Bullock gets up and heads out.

ROMAN SIONIS
Oh, and Bullock?

BULLOCK
Yeah?

ROMAN SIONIS
Don't ever bring your fuckin' food
in here again.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

A FEW SUITED MEN walk around the graves of Louisa and Johnny Sionis. One of these men carries a MINI-UZI. The man beside him holds a .45 CALIBER PISTOL.

SIONIS THUG 1
I still don't know what we're doin'
here.

SIONIS THUG 2
Some guy tipped off Don Sionis.
Said the Batman was gonna be here
tonight.

SIONIS THUG 1
Who tipped him off?

SIONIS THUG 2
Dunno. Not even sure if the guy
gave a name.

SIONIS THUG 1
Then I call bullshit.

The thugs wait in the dark night for a few seconds in silence.

SIONIS THUG 1 (CONT'D)
You really think he's gonna show?

SIONIS THUG 2
We'll find out.

On a tall crypt, sits a SNIPER. He looks through his SCOPE and spots a dark object moving towards the cemetery.

It is the BATMOBILE.

The sniper speaks into a HEADSET.

SNIPER
He's here. Comin' in from the
northeast corner.

The sniper FIRES at the Batmobile, but the bullets do nothing.

The Batmobile bulldozes through the fence of the cemetery. The thugs rapidly FIRE at it.

A GRAPPLE latches onto the sniper. Batman tackles him from behind.

The other thugs continue firing at the Batmobile.

The Batmobile shoots a few a FLASH GRENADES towards the thugs.

The grenades BURST, emitting intense flashes of light. The thugs are blinded.

Batman swoops down from above and tackles the thug with the MINI-UZI.

Sionis thug 2, nearby, hears the noise and haphazardly shoots his gun in every direction.

One of the bullets hits SIONIS THUG 3. He falls to the ground, dead.

Batman uses a BATARANG to disarm Sionis thug 2. He then latches his grapple onto him and forces him straight into a punch, rendering him unconscious.

Thug 4 runs from the chaos, sprinting for dear life.

Batman tackles him from midair, and with a quick jab knocks him out cold.

Batman takes out a small, high-tech REMOTE and signals the Batmobile to move towards him.

He enters the Batmobile.

INT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

SWITCHES and LIGHTS line the interior of the Batmobile.

Batman drives it forward, closer to the grave site.

Batman hits a switch which activates a POWER SHOVEL to emerge from inside the base of the Batmobile to the hood of its exterior.

EXT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

The shovel digs up both of the graves in one hefty swoop.

Four thin, red beams of light are emitted from the Batmobile'S front. The beams cut into the two COFFINS.

The Batmobile then latches GRAPPLING HOOKS on each of the coffins to pry them open.

INT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

Batman views the coffins' insides through a night vision screen. A corpse lies in each. Besides that, they appear empty.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Batman leaves the Batmobile and enters the grave.

Both bodies are wrapped in burial cloths.

Batman unwraps JOHNNY SIONIS' body.

A greenish glow gradually gets brighter as he unwraps it.

"196" glows in bright green on his chest.

Batman then quickly unwraps the body of LOUISA Sionis.

"89" glows on her chest. "101" on her stomach.

INT. GOTHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Gordon approaches the outside of the holding cell in the police department. Detective Montoya stands outside of the cell.

A YOUNG MAN with dark hair sits in the cell. He wears a white t-shirt and tattoos cover his arms.

GORDON
Detective Montoya, isn't it?

MONTOYA
Commissioner.

GORDON
I'm surprised you're still here.
Most detectives get out of here by
six.

MONTOYA
So much going on lately, I thought
I'd stick around.

GORDON
I'm impressed.

Montoya nods and looks back at the young man in the holding
cell.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Who's the kid?

MONTOYA
Name's Jason Todd. He was busted in
possession of crack cocaine two
days ago. Over an ounce. Probably
with intent to distribute.

GORDON
How old is he?

MONTOYA
19.

GORDON
They just keep getting younger.

A phone's RINGTONE goes off.

GORDON (CONT'D)
One moment.

Gordon takes a PHONE out of his pocket.

He looks at the caller ID. "UNKNOWN CALLER".

GORDON (CONT'D)
This is Commissioner Gordon.

INT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

Batman sits in the driver's seat. He is talking through a mic.

BATMAN
196 89th Street. Apartment 101.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

GORDON
Batman?

Montoya looks up at Gordon with sudden interest.

BATMAN (V.O.)
The killer's next target is at that address.

GORDON
You sure?

BATMAN (V.O.)
196 89th Street. Be there.

The line goes dead.

GORDON
Damn it.

Gordon walks briskly towards Montoya.

GORDON (CONT'D)
We've gotta go.

Gordon takes out his PORTABLE RADIO and talks into it.

GORDON (CONT'D)
This is Commissioner Gordon. I need all available units at 196 89th Street immediately. I repeat, 196 89th Street.

MONTOYA
89th Street. Doesn't that run right by here?

GORDON
Yeah, let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Batmobile races across a highway.

INT. BATMOBILE

Surrounding screens display Batman's location and destination.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Destination approaching in: 28
miles.

EXT. FIVE POINTS APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Police cars surround the apartment complex.

A black sedan pulls up at the apartment complex, and stops.

Gordon steps out of the car. He approaches LT. ALLEN, a black cop wearing a bulletproof vest.

GORDON
What've we got?

LT. ALLEN
Two teams responded. Nine officers
total.

GORDON
That's it?

LT. ALLEN
SWAT's supposed to be here in about
ten minutes.

GORDON
No time.
(to the officers)
I want two lines in Y formation.
Apartment 101 is the objective.

LT. ALLEN
With all due respect, Commissioner,
what exactly are we expecting in
there?

GORDON
Hopefully, no dead bodies.

INT. FIVE POINTS APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The nine officers go through the apartment's bottom floor in Y formation. The apartment building's interior is luxurious with marble flooring and crystal chandeliers.

A young female RECEPTIONIST stands at the front desk, taken by surprise as the cops storm the building.

They race up a flight of stairs. Gordon and Montoya trail behind.

They get to apartment 101.

SQUAD LEADER
Gotham PD. Open up!

No response. Gordon takes out his GLOCK PISTOL.

GORDON
Bust it open.

SQUAD LEADER
You got a warrant for this, right?

Gordon brushes past the SQUAD LEADER and kicks the door open with force.

Gordon runs through the doorway, and the other officers swiftly follow.

INT. APARTMENT 101 - CONTINUOUS

The room they run into is unfurnished and empty, with white walls and hard wood floors.

The officers storm the apartment, move through its three rooms, but it appears completely vacant.

INT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

The Batmobile's MONITORS flash through photos taken of the grave site.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Destination approaching in: 10
miles.

Batman's eyes suddenly focus on one of the monitors. He presses a BUTTON, and monitor stops on a photo.

The photo displays a different angle of the grave. From this angle the numbers on the two bodies read "961", "68", and "101".

Batman presses a few buttons. "CALLING... JAMES GORDON" is displayed on a monitor.

Gordon's voice can be heard through the sound system.

GORDON (V.O.)
Yeah?

BATMAN
Jim, did you get to the apartment?

GORDON (V.O.)
Nothing's in here. It's vacant.

Batman makes a sharp turn on the wheel.

BATMAN
Read the numbers upside down.

GORDON (V.O.)
What? Why?

BATMAN
That's the address we're looking for.

EXT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

The Batmobile speeds across a nearly empty road.

The slums of the Narrows can be seen in the distance.

EXT. NARROWS PROJECTS BUILDING - NIGHT

A run-down building stands among two others. The Batmobile pulls up.

DRUG DEALERS and HOODLUMS surround the building. Some of them notice the Batmobile and quickly head inside.

A large, green question mark glows on a boarded-up window.

Batman grapples to the building's fire escape, and kicks the marked window open.

INT. NARROWS PROJECTS APT 101 - NIGHT

The breaking of the window sets off a timed BOMB taped to middle of the ceiling of the one-room apartment.

35 seconds left on the clock.

Countless thin wires are spread across the room.

A woman and a teenaged boy sit face to face in chairs below the timed bomb. Both are tied down to the chairs, wearing BLINDFOLDS and their mouths are GAGGED.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
I'm getting you out of here. Don't
move.

No response.

Batman still sits in the window sill, looking for a place to stand, but a wire cuts through nearly every inch of the room.

Latched on to the ends of the wires are slings with RAZORS.

Batman throws a BATARANG at a wire, but it prove too strong. The batarang bounces to the floor.

He quickly grabs a LASER SHOOTER from his belt.

He cuts through one of the wires, sending a RAZOR across the room, missing Batman's face by inches.

23 seconds.

Batman rapidly cuts through the wires, and steps and ducks under those he can.

Each cut wire sends a razor slashing across the room.

A razor impales Batman's shoulder. He grimaces and pulls it out of his flesh.

16 seconds.

Two wires now separate Batman from the bomb.

He cuts through the first. A razor misses his face by inches.

He cuts the last wire, sending two razors soaring across the room from both sides. The razors strike one another and land at Batman's feet.

Batman reaches the bomb. Nine seconds left.

He quickly grabs a CARBON MULTIPURPOSE KNIFE from his belt. Opens the bomb.

Three wires; yellow, green and red; extend across the bomb's inside.

A wire cutter slides out of his knife.

Four seconds.

Batman quickly cuts the yellow and red wires. The bomb's clock stops at two seconds.

Batman cuts the woman from the chair. Her limp body sags forward.

He then removes her blindfold, and looks at her face. Two lifeless eyes stare back at him.

EXT. NARROWS PROJECTS - NIGHT

A police car, siren BLARING, speeds across 68th Street.

It pulls up to the Project Building addressed 961.

INT. NARROWS PROJECT APT. 101 - NIGHT

Batman holds the body and checks for a pulse.

He then turns to the body of the teenaged boy. He removes his blindfold and mouth gag, and cuts him from the chair.

He notices a green text slightly illuminated in the darkness under the boy's chair. "WHAT IS IN MY POCKET?"

Batman then searches through the pockets of the dead teenaged boy. He finds a wallet.

He scrounges through the wallet, only to find a driver's license and a small white note card.

The license reads ROBERT H. TODD.

He then looks at the white note card. A sentence is scribbled on it in black pen. "I CONTINUE TO IMMERSE YOU, YET LESS YOU SEE."

Batman flips the note card over.

It appears blank, but Batman takes a closer look and realizes a small, light smudge.

Batman grabs a UV FLASHLIGHT off of his utility belt and shines it around the wallet. It reveals a clear fingerprint in gray powder.

Suddenly - the front door BANGS open.

SQUAD LEADER

Freeze!

Batman swiftly turns around to see FOUR COPS standing outside the room.

SQUAD LEADER (CONT'D)

Step away from the bodies, and put your hands on your head.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Gordon shoves his way through the officers.

GORDON

Hold your fire! Put your guns down, he's with me.

They lower their weapons. Gordon surveys the room, looks at Batman, then the bodies.

GORDON (CONT'D)

They're dead, aren't they?

BATMAN

They've been dead for some time.

Gordon nods. He looks at the wires spread all across the room.

GORDON

How the hell did you get in there?

BATMAN

He attached slings and razors to the ends of the wires. Be careful cutting your way through.

Gordon looks back at the officers.

GORDON
Someone get me a wire cutter and a
ballistic shield.

SQUAD LEADER
Yes, sir.

Squad leader and a few other officers leave.

GORDON
So how did you get through the
wires?

Batman studies the note card in his hand. "I CONTINUE TO
IMMERSE YOU, YET LESS YOU SEE."

BATMAN
(whispering to himself)
Darkness.

Batman throws a BATARANG at the room's only light bulb. The
room becomes pitch black.

A few of the cops in the hallway shout out in surprise.

Glowing, green text is spread across the room's walls.

Gordon pulls out a flashlight and shines it into the room.
The cops around him follow suit.

Batman is no longer there.

EXT. NARROWS PROJECTS BUILDING - NIGHT

A black sedan pulls up among the police cars lined up in
front of the building.

Detective Montoya steps out of the car.

INT. NARROWS PROJECTS BUILDING HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Montoya steps out of a freight elevator, slides its door
shut, and confronts a STOCKY OFFICER standing in the middle
of the hallway.

Montoya quickly flashes her badge to the officer and strides
past him.

Two officers stand outside APT 101. Montoya approaches them.

MONTOYA
 Detective Montoya. Major Crimes
 Unit. Commissioner Gordon wanted
 me.

PVT. DICKSON
 No can do, detective. We're under
 strict orders not to let anyone in
 this room.

MONTOYA
 And I was under strict orders to
 come here. I'm handling the Riddler
 case.

Gordon's head pops out of the doorway, behind the two police
 officers.

GORDON
 Montoya?

MONTOYA
 Yes, sir.

GORDON
 Get in here.

Montoya brushes past the officers and into the room.

INT. APT 101 - NIGHT

The wires have been cut and are now situated across the
 room's floor. A FLUORESCENT LAMP lights the room.

A FORENSIC ANALYSIST dusts the room for fingerprints.

Gordon and Montoya approach the dead bodies.

MONTOYA
 We know the identities of the
 bodies?

GORDON
 Catherine Todd and Robert Todd.
 Another mother and son.

MONTOYA
 How'd he kill them?

GORDON
 Don't know yet. No wounds or any
 signs of a struggle.

(MORE)

GORDON (CONT'D)

Their temperatures suggest that they've been dead for a while.

Montoya looks at the bodies, examining them.

MONTROYA

Could be a poisoning.

GORDON

Where's your partner? Bullock?

MONTROYA

At home, probably. Seems you assigned me with a guy who enjoys his days off.

Gordon looks down, slightly embarrassed.

GORDON

You see that a lot around here. Actually it's more than laziness. Corruption has been an issue in the force for decades.

MONTROYA

With all due respect, sir, couldn't you do something about that? Dump the dirty ones?

GORDON

In a town like this? I need all the help I can get.

Montoya notices a BATARANG on the floor of the room.

MONTROYA

Is that why you've looked outside the parameters of the law for help?

GORDON

Excuse me?

MONTROYA

It seems you might have teamed yourself with a vigilante.

Gordon eyes Montoya.

MONTROYA (CONT'D)

The Batman.

GORDON
 As a I said before... I need all
 the help I can get. He may have an
 answer to this...

Gordon shuts off the fluorescent lamp to reveal the glow-in-the-dark print on the wall.

One wall reads: "Feed me and I will grow stronger, but give me water and I will be no longer." The opposite wall reads: "What am I?".

MONTOYA
 (whispering)
 Give me water I will be no
 longer...
 (aloud)
 The answer is fire.

Gordon looks at the walls.

GORDON
 Nice work, Detective.

He turns the lamp back on.

MONTOYA
 I wanna meet him.

GORDON
 Who?

MONTOYA
 The Batman.

GORDON
 Reading vigilantes their Miranda
 rights isn't exactly what I had in
 mind for you, Montoya.

MONTOYA
 It's my job to gather any evidence
 I think pertains to the case. I
 think this Batman may have some.

Beat.

GORDON
 I'll see what I can do.

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

Bruce Wayne sits in front of a large bank of computer monitors. He wears a white t-shirt. One of his shoulders is heavily bandaged.

"MATCHING FINGERPRINTS" on the middle monitor.

The monitor is hooked up to a DEVICE with the note card on it.

Alfred walks toward Bruce.

BRUCE WAYNE
(without turning)
What is it, Alfred?

ALFRED
Just checking on you, sir. It doesn't take years of kinship for me to know that something is bothering you.

BRUCE WAYNE
I was too late.

ALFRED
Sir?

BRUCE WAYNE
He did it again, Alfred. He killed another mother and son.

ALFRED
It's not your fault-

BRUCE WAYNE
I was too god damned late!

Bruce POUNDS his fist on the DESK in front of him, making the whole monitor bank shake.

ALFRED
You had no control over what that madman would do. You still have the power to catch him, to stop him.

Bruce looks up at Alfred, and composes himself.

BRUCE WAYNE
The victim's address was written on the bodies of Johnny and Louis Sionis.

ALFRED

Written on their bodies? With what?

BRUCE

Some kind of Bioluminescent.

ALFRED

So you think the killer tampered with the bodies after they went to the morgue?

BRUCE

Or maybe at the morgue.

Bruce brings up a photo of Renee Montoya on the monitor.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Detective Renee Montoya saw the bodies.

ALFRED

I must admit, I'm not familiar with the name.

BRUCE

She's new to the force. Came in from the Metropolis Police Department. Upstanding record. Earned a medal of merit.

ALFRED

But you don't trust her?

BRUCE

History like that makes you wonder why she'd leave Metropolis for Gotham.

Alfred looks skeptical.

ALFRED

Did you find anything at the crime scene?

BRUCE WAYNE

He left a wallet in the pocket of the boy. A note card was in the wallet. The killer deliberately left a fingerprint on the note card.

Bruce points at the computer screen.

BRUCE WAYNE (CONT'D)
I'm trying to find a match for it
now.

ALFRED
And, I'm assuming he left another
riddle?

Bruce nods, and brings the riddle up on another screen on the
bank of computer monitors.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
"Feed me and I will grow stronger,
but give me water and I will be no
longer. What am I?"

Alfred looks at Bruce.

BRUCE WAYNE
Fire.

ALFRED
Ah. Not much help, is it?

BRUCE WAYNE
Not yet, anyway. My guess would be
his next death-trap will involve
fire in some way.

ALFRED
Shall I ready the thermal suit,
then?

BRUCE WAYNE
Might as well.

Bruce takes the driver's license left at the crime out of his
pocket.

BRUCE WAYNE (CONT'D)
He left a driver's license in the
wallet of the young man. He wanted
me to know the identity of the
diseased. Robert H. Todd.

Bruce brings up a crime record on one of the monitors. The
crime record displays a photo of Jason Todd.

BRUCE WAYNE (CONT'D)
 Robert Todd has a brother who was arrested for the possession of crack cocaine a few days ago. I want to talk to him.

ALFRED
 Why?

BRUCE WAYNE
 So far, I've been following the trails that this killer has set up. It's about time I change that.

Bruce pulls up another crime record on the monitor, displaying the photo of a man in his forties.

BRUCE WAYNE (CONT'D)
 Robert Todd had another relative with a crime record, but this one was murdered nearly a decade ago. His father.

ALFRED
 So, that would make Jason Todd an orphan.

BRUCE WAYNE
 His family was taken from him. Just like mine, Alfred.

CUT TO:

INT. GOTHAM CENTRAL, CUSTODY - DAY

Jason Todd lies on the bed in his holding cell. The bed has no sheets and its mattress is heavily stained.

A police officer with a name-tag reading "TYSON" walks over to the cell and thrashes its bars with his NIGHTSTICK. Another OFFICER stands behind him.

OFFICER TYSON
 Get up, junkie. It's your lucky day.

Jason rolls over a bit and looks up as Officer Tyson opens the cell door.

OFFICER TYSON (CONT'D)
 You made bail.

Jason slowly stands up.

JASON TODD
What? How?

OFFICER TYSON
Ask Bruce Wayne.

INT. GOTHAM CENTRAL PD, RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Bruce Wayne sits in the lobby, reading the latest issue of PEOPLE magazine, featuring his own face on the cover. The title reads "BRUCE WAYNE- BILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY IN SECLUSION?"

An attractive blonde secretary, BECKY, sits at the counter.

BECKY
Mr. Wayne?

He looks up from the magazine.

BECKY (CONT'D)
We just need you to sign these forms, then you'll be good to go.

Bruce gets up and heads toward the counter.

BRUCE
And the kid will too, right?

BECKY
Right.

Bruce smiles at her and signs the FORMS.

BRUCE
Just making sure I'm getting my money's worth here...

He reads her name-tag.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Becky.

Bruce Wayne hands the forms back to Becky.

BECKY
Alrighty. An officer will be out with him shortly.

BRUCE
Great. Could I ask you a quick question though? Before I go.

BECKY
Yeah?

BRUCE
How often does this happen?

BECKY
I'm sorry?

BRUCE
How often is a billionaire standing
in front of this desk?

She blushes.

BECKY
Uh... well...

BRUCE
Here's a better one. How about
lunch?

BECKY
Sorry. I don't get off until 5:00.

BRUCE
Great. I'll pick you up at 5:00 for
dinner, then?

BECKY
Uh... Okay?

BRUCE
Terrific.

Bruce Wayne punches the time into his PHONE'S calendar.

BRUCE(CONT'D)
And look who it is, right on time.

Officer Tyson walks out with a handcuffed Jason Todd. He
looks to Becky.

BECKY
He filled out all the paperwork.

Officer Tyson un-cuffs Jason Todd.

OFFICER TYSON
See you in court, kid.

Bruce Wayne heads toward the door and holds it open for Jason.

Jason exits the building looking slightly confused. Bruce Wayne follows.

EXT. GOTHAM CENTRAL PD - CONTINUOUS

A black stretch limousine is parked in front of the police station. Alfred stands outside of the limo, holding one of its back doors open.

Jason Todd looks back at Bruce.

BRUCE
The limo. Up ahead.

Jason Todd walks up to the limo and sees Alfred. Alfred nods at him approvingly. He hesitantly steps into the limo.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

The interior of the limo is luxurious, with leather seating, a mini-bar, and two small TELEVISIONS.

Jason sits in the very back of the limo. Bruce Wayne sits at the side seating, five feet away.

Bruce takes a BOTTLE of champagne from the bar, and pours himself a GLASS. Jason eyes him suspiciously.

BRUCE
You comfortable enough? I could have Alfred turn on the A/C if you'd like.

JASON
What the hell is this?

BRUCE
Excuse me?

JASON
You don't know me. Why'd you bail me out?

Bruce puts down his champagne glass.

BRUCE

We'll get to that. Right now all you need to know is that we're going to my place. Wayne Manor. You can stay there until your hearing.

JASON

Why? Why are you doing this for me?

Bruce looks down, solemnly contemplating a response.

BRUCE

I'll explain more when we get there. I promise.

EXT. LUCKY'S BAR - DAY

Detective Bullock casually walks past TWO BOUNCERS into the bar.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR - DAY

Roman Sionis sits at a small table. A GLASS of whiskey sits on the table, and he holds the GOTHAM TIMES in front of him.

Bullock approaches the table.

A bodyguard stops Bullock and roughly frisks him. He confiscates Bullock's GLOCK.

Roman Sionis takes his eyes off the paper and looks at Bullock.

ROMAN SIONIS

Sit down.

Bullock takes the seat opposite Sionis.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)

I'm reading the paper, Mr. Bullock, and what do I see?

BULLOCK

Another Riddler murder?

ROMAN SIONIS

Correct.

Roman Sionis tosses the newspaper on the table. Its front page reads "MOTHER AND SON MURDERED IN NARROWS PROJECTS - RIDDLES HAVE POLICE DUBBING THE KILLER 'THE RIDDLER'".

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
The press knows about the riddles now.

BULLOCK
Took 'em long enough.

ROMAN SIONIS
Why do they know the riddle before I do?

BULLOCK
They don't know the exact riddle he left.

ROMAN SIONIS
Maybe you should get your eyes checked.

Roman Sionis holds up the article and points his finger at the riddle printed in bold.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
And maybe I should get some better men on the inside. Last time I met with you, you said you would find the answer to his last riddle. You failed to deliver on your promise.

BULLOCK
Answer's a-

ROMAN SIONIS
Coffin. I know. Luckily, you're not my only source for information.

Bullock nervously takes a CIGAR out of his jacket pocket.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
That's how the Batman got the address of last night's murder. It was written on my wife and son's bodies.

Bullock lights up his cigar.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
You listenin' to me, Bullock?

BULLOCK
Yeah, I'm listenin'.

ROMAN SIONIS
Good. So, what I wanna know is, how
did the Riddler get that written on
my family's corpses?

BULLOCK
How you gonna find that out?

Roman Sionis smiles.

ROMAN SIONIS
That's where you come in. Go to the
morgue.

INT. WAYNE MANOR DINING HALL - DAY

Jason Todd sits at a long table. He sits alone.

Alfred approaches him, carrying a DINNER PLATTER. Bruce Wayne
strides beside Alfred.

Alfred places the platter on the table in front of Jason.

He takes the top off of the platter to reveal a large dinner
consisting of steak, roasted potatoes, and a garden salad.
The food is laid out on the plate in a decorative fashion.

ALFRED
Good evening, Master Jason. I'm
Alfred.

JASON
What's up?

BRUCE
If you ever need anything, ask
Alfred. He's the butler around
here.

JASON
All right. How about a beer?

Alfred looks to Bruce. Bruce nods. Alfred leaves the dining
hall.

JASON (CONT'D)
Thanks.

BRUCE
We found a room for you upstairs.

JASON
Look... Bruce. I appreciate whatever it is you're doing, but I'm not staying. I'll stay for dinner, but after that, I'm outta here. Okay?

BRUCE
Not okay. I bailed you out of jail, remember? Consider this a luxurious prison cell. You're here to stay until the trial.

JASON
You serious?

BRUCE
Very.

JASON
I don't even know what I'm doing here. I've got a family to support.

BRUCE
Actually, that's what this is about.

JASON
What?

Alfred enters the dining hall, with a CAN OF HEINEKEN and a GLASS.

Alfred places the glass in front of Jason Todd and opens the beer can. Jason doesn't notice.

JASON (CONT'D)
What the hell is that supposed to mean?

BRUCE
Do you know anything about the Riddler murders?

JASON
No.

BRUCE
Well, this is going to be difficult to hear, son.

(MORE)

BRUCE (CONT'D)

For the past week, Gotham City has seen a series of murders. The killer has been using death-traps to kill his victims. Police are calling him "the Riddler". I'm afraid your mother and brother were his latest victims.

Jason Todd says nothing. He just stares at Bruce, with a blank look transfixed on his face.

JASON

When?

BRUCE

Police found their bodies yesterday.

Suddenly, Jason Todd gets out his chair, grabs at his hair, and turns away from Bruce.

He paces a few steps away from the table, and buries his face in his hands for a second, only to remove them quickly.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry.

JASON

(still turned away)

Don't be. I'm gonna kill him.

BRUCE

Nobody knows who he is.

JASON

Sionis. Gotta be. He's the only one who wants me dead.

BRUCE

No, Roman Sionis's wife and son were two of the Riddler's victims.

Jason Todd vehemently turns around to face Bruce. His face is red with anger, and his eyes are misty.

JASON

You think killing family is beyond that monster?

BRUCE

Maybe not. But putting them in a complex death-trap is. When Sionis wants someone dead, he puts a bullet in them.

JASON

Whatever. I'm gonna find Sionis,
and I'm gonna kill him.

BRUCE

Let's think this through. What did
you do to Sionis that makes him
want you and your family dead,
anyway?

JASON

What do you care?

BRUCE

Same reason I took you in. I know
what it's like to have your family
taken from you.

JASON

Is that what this is about? A pity
trip?

BRUCE

What?

JASON

Was the foundation for
underprivileged orphans not
accepting donations this year or
something?

BRUCE

You and I have more in common than
you-

JASON

Yeah, there's a lot of orphans out
there, Bruce. And most of them
aren't drug dealers. I don't need
your pity and I don't need your
charity.

BRUCE

If you don't need my charity, why
were you in a jail cell when I
found you?

JASON

Sionis. That's why. And don't
worry, I'll kill him.

BRUCE

How? My mansion's doors are locked
on both sides. You're here to stay.

Jason Todd POUNDS his fist against the wall in front of him.

JASON TODD
You can't do this to me.

Bruce Wayne leaves his seat and walks toward the exit of the dining hall.

BRUCE
You want to follow me to your room,
or do you plan to stay the night in
here?

Jason Todd shakes his head and follows Bruce out of the dining hall.

EXT. ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

Commissioner Gordon stands in front of the Bat Signal.
Detective Montoya stands nearby, arms folded.

She glances at her watch.

MONTOYA
It's 1:00 in the morning,
Commissioner. I'll give him another
ten minutes, then I'm calling it a
night.

GORDON
Your loss, Detective.

MONTOYA
Does your friend usually show up
this late?

GORDON
Not always. But considering the
circumstances, he's-

BATMAN (O.S.)
Gentlemen.

Montoya and Gordon both rapidly turn around to see Batman facing them in the darkness.

GORDON
Right on time.

BATMAN
(motioning towards
Montoya)
Who is this?

GORDON
Batman, I'd like you to meet
Detective Renee Montoya.

Montoya nods at Batman.

BATMAN
Can I trust her?

GORDON
Wouldn't have brought her up here
if I didn't trust her.

MONTOYA
So, you're the famed Batman? For a
guy who makes a living at striking
fear in the fearless, I was
expecting a creepier outfit.

BATMAN
Criminals are far from fearless,
Detective.

GORDON
We identified the bodies. Catherine
and Robert Todd.

BATMAN
Have you determined a cause of
death yet?

MONTOYA
Poisoning. The mortician found
lethal amounts of Arsenic in both
victims' bloodstreams.

GORDON
And bruises along the arms of the
victims indicate the poisoning was
done through injection. Bruises and
needle holes were found on the
upper arm of the mother and the
shoulder of the son. He injected
them both with a shot of Arsenic.

BATMAN
Or they injected themselves with
it.

GORDON

What makes you say that?

BATMAN

You say there were bruises on the victims' upper arms and shoulders. Anyone who knew what they were doing would inject a drug in the arteries along the forearm. To make it enter the bloodstream more quickly and more efficiently.

GORDON

Why would they want to poison themselves?

BATMAN

Maybe he didn't tell them it was poison. Maybe he told them they had already been poisoned with Arsenic. And what was in front of them was the antidote.

MONTOYA

Well, he does like to play mind games.

BATMAN

Exactly. Every murder so far has been a test of intellect in some way. They could have outwitted him if they had simply known the symptoms of Arsenic poisoning. Realized they weren't experiencing any of them.

MONTOYA

Interesting theory.

GORDON

You solve the riddle yet? Answer's fire.

BATMAN

He left us more than a riddle this time.

GORDON

What do you mean?

BATMAN

He left a note card with a fingerprint placed on it. Deliberately with a gray powder.

Montoya raises her eyebrow.

GORDON
Why weren't we aware of this?

BATMAN
I've got it. Searching the FBI
database for a match as we speak.

GORDON
All right, but notify me when- if
you find a match.

MONTOYA
All right?

Gordon glances at Montoya, slightly irritated.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)
With all due respect, sir, he took
a piece of police evidence.

GORDON
It's fine, Montoya. He's taking
care of it.

MONTOYA
Let the police take care of it.

BATMAN
This is between me and the
commissioner. You're just here to
help.

MONTOYA
You've got it twisted, buddy.
You're the one who's here to help.
Finding the Riddler is my duty. So,
either you follow police procedure,
our rules, or stay out of it.

Batman looks at Gordon.

GORDON
Sorry, but she's right. You have to
get that fingerprint back to us as
soon as possible. We'll find the
match.

BATMAN
You don't want my help... fair
enough. But I'm not going to
constrain myself to your rules.

Detective Montoya slowly steps toward Batman, and takes out HANDCUFFS.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
I'm working on this case
independently.

MONTOYA
Then you're under arrest. You have-

GORDON
That's enough, Montoya!

Montoya stops and gives Gordon an agitated look.

BATMAN
Good luck.

Batman walks to the ledge of the building and leaps off.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Detective Harvey Bullock opens a steel double-door and walks into the refrigerated operating room of the morgue.

A PATHOLOGIST, an Indian man in his late forties, is making an incision into a CORPSE on the steel OPERATING TABLE in front of him. He doesn't notice Bullock enter the room.

HEADPHONES are in the pathologist's ears and he is rocking his head back in forth to music.

Bullock approaches the patholgist.

He reaches the operating table where the pathologist is now finishing a "Y cut" into torso of the corpse. He still doesn't notice Bullock. Bullock reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out a few PHOTOGRAPHS.

Bullock drops the photographs onto the corpse.

The pathologist drops his SCALPEL and pulls the headphones out his ears.

PATHOLOGIST
Godammit!

The pathologist looks up at Bullock.

PATHOLOGIST (CONT'D)
Who the hell are you? You can't be
in here.

BULLOCK
Relax, Doc.

Bullock reaches into his jacket pocket, and pulls out his
BADGE.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)
Gotham PD. I just gotta ask you
some questions regarding a couple
bodies, okay?

PATHOLOGIST
No. No. This is not okay. Your
department needs to notify me
before you come barging in here,
throwing...
(reaching for the
photographs on the
bodies)
Pictures on my bodies!

BULLOCK
Deep breaths, Doc. I just need some
questions answered. That's all.

PATHOLOGIST
What questions?

BULLOCK
Why don't you take a look at those?

The pathologist looks at one of the photographs scattered
across the body. He picks it up.

The photo displays the carcass of Louisa Sionis. The number
"101" is on her torso, in the bright green ink.

The pathologist shrugs.

PATHOLOGIST
Looks like the body of Mrs. Sionis.
What about it?

BULLOCK
See any of your handiwork?

PATHOLOGIST
The body came here, and I
determined the cause of death.
That's it.

BULLOCK
What's written on it, dipshit?

PATHOLOGIST
I didn't do that.

BULLOCK
Really? Cause there aren't many
places that body's been. Morgue's
one of the few. You're at the top
of a very narrow list of suspects.

PATHOLOGIST
Look, I had these bodies for less
than a day. I sent both bodies to a
mortician to be embalmed almost
immediately. Why don't you check
there?

BULLOCK
That mortician works for Roman
Sionis, asshole.

PATHOLOGIST
What makes you trust him?

Bullock pulls his GLOCK out its holster, and presses it
against the pathologist's cheek.

The pathologist freezes in fear.

BULLOCK
You better come up with some
answers.

PATHOLOGIST
(panicked)
I'm telling the truth!

BULLOCK
Sure about that?

Bullock presses the gun a little more firmly to the pathologist's cheek. He squirms.

PATHOLOGIST

I didn't put anything on those bodies. The only people who saw the bodies after I was done with them were cops.

BULLOCK

Oh yeah? What cops?

PATHOLOGIST

I dunno... The detective assigned to the case. Hispanic woman.

BULLOCK

I know my partner saw them, but she's a fuckin' crusader. Who else saw the body?

PATHOLOGIST

Nobody. Just her. That's it.

Bullock eases the gun from the cheek of the pathologist, and puts it back in its holster.

BULLOCK

Thanks for your compliance. You've been zero help to me.

PATHOLOGIST

You're dirty. All of you are.

BULLOCK

Keep the photos. See if any of 'em can jog your memory.

Bullock walks to the door of the refrigerated room.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

These are dangerous times, Doc. Better be careful.

EXT. WAYNE MANOR - NIGHT

Wayne Manor is lit by the starry night sky.

INT. WAYNE MANOR STUDY- NIGHT

Alfred sits in an armchair with a LAMP illuminating him.

He reads Saul Bellow's "THE ADVENTURES OF AUGIE MARCH".

Bruce approaches him.

BRUCE

How's Jason doing? Has he gotten any sleep?

Alfred delicately puts the book down.

ALFRED

I'm afraid not. He's been keeping true to his "Mad Max" routine. Pleading with me to let him go for the past hour.

Bruce SIGHS.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Give the boy some time. He's expressing common emotions for someone in his situation.

BRUCE

All he can talk about is killing.

ALFRED

I knew a young man who had similar thoughts on his mind once.

BRUCE

But I never went through with them.

ALFRED

Not quite. Though I would hardly say you abandoned your quest for vengeance completely.

BRUCE

It's not about revenge. Batman isn't about revenge.

ALFRED

What is it, then?

BRUCE

It's about making sure the same thing that happened to me as a child doesn't happen to others.

(MORE)

BRUCE (CONT'D)

It's about making Gotham City a safer place to live in. You know that.

ALFRED

Do I?

BRUCE

What are trying to get at, Alfred?

ALFRED

Simply that I see in this boy the same vengeance that drove you once. Perhaps your motives have evolved a bit over the course of time, but who is to say the same won't happen with him?

BRUCE

Well, I'm not going to let him go on some murderous rampage in the meantime. And he's not my primary concern right now. The man who murdered his family is still at large.

ALFRED

Indeed he is, sir.

Alfred picks up the newspaper lying on the table next to him. "MOTHER AND SON MURDERED IN NARROWS PROJECTS - RIDDLES HAVE POLICE DUBBING THE KILLER 'THE RIDDLER'".

ALFRED (CONT'D)

And it seems the papers caught on with his riddle-gimmick.

BRUCE

That's not good.

ALFRED

Why's that?

BRUCE

Fame and recognition seem to be exactly what this maniac is after. Why do you think he kills his victims in such complex ways? Leaves clues after every one? He's telling everyone that he is better than them. That he's the one who's in control.

ALFRED
I suppose you have a point.

BRUCE
Maybe I've finally got a match on
that fingerprint he left.

Alfred gets up.

ALFRED
To the Batcave, then?

Bruce nods. He heads over to a bookshelf in the back corner of the study.

Bruce pulls a BOOK entitled "BATS OF THE WORLD" slightly off the bookshelf, and the bookshelf opens like an automatic door to reveal a dark staircase.

Bruce walks through the entrance, and into the staircase. Alfred follows him.

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

The words "POSITIVE MATCH" flash on the main screen in the bank of computer monitors. An image of a green fingerprint sits on top of a blue one, as if it is a matching puzzle piece.

Bruce sprints to the computer screen.

He CLICKS it which pulls up a CIVIL FINGERPRINT RECORD.

ON THE MONITOR: A PHOTO of "JANICE PORTER", "AGE: 42", "MAYOR OF THE CITY OF GOTHAM".

Alfred approaches Bruce from the distance.

ALFRED
Judging from that little scamper, I
presume you've found a match.

BRUCE
Not a criminal record. Not what I
was expecting.

Alfred walks up to the monitor.

ALFRED
Mayor Janice Porter?

Bruce sits down.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
Why would the Riddler leave you the
mayor's fingerprint?

BRUCE
Don't call him that.

ALFRED
What?

BRUCE
The Riddler. Giving him some slick
nickname is exactly what he wants.
Let's not give this mad dog a bone.

ALFRED
The nickname already exists. What's
done is done, Master Bruce.

BRUCE
Doesn't mean I have to approve by
playing along.

ALFRED
Very well. Why do you presume that
the killer is a he? Wouldn't Ms.
Porter's print indicate otherwise?

BRUCE
The print was deliberately placed
there. I don't think he's willing
to give away his identity just yet.

ALFRED
Fair intuition, but why "he"?

BRUCE
Over ninety percent of all serial
killers are male. Female ones are
rare, and they tend to only kill
men... men that they are
emotionally close to in some way.
In this case, women have been
killed. Until proven otherwise,
I'll refer to the killer as a he.

ALFRED
I see you've been doing some
research.

BRUCE

You want to be good at what you do,
you've got to be a student of the
game.

ALFRED

And to think I assumed you were
just being misogynistic.

BRUCE

Since when was being a serial
killer a good thing?

Bruce brings up an INTERACTIVE MAP of Gotham City on one of
the monitors.

ON THE MONITOR: Bruce types in the name "Janice Porter". The
map zooms in on a point in the middle of Gotham City. "465 E.
98th Street".

ALFRED

So, why the Mayor's fingerprint?

BRUCE

My guess would be he's telling me
his next victim.

ALFRED

So, you intend on visiting...
(he reads the address on
the monitor)
465 E. 98th Street, I presume?

BRUCE

So far, each victim has been found
in their own home. Figured I'd go
to the Mayor's home address.

Bruce gets up.

ALFRED

Seeing as the answer to the last
riddle was "fire", you told me to
ready the thermal suit.

BRUCE

Did you?

ALFRED

Indeed I did, sir. But may I remind
you, you haven't tested it yet.

BRUCE

Tonight's a good night.

INT. BATMOBILE - NIGHT

Batman sits in front of the steering wheel. His suit is black, but it has an unusual shininess to it.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Arriving at destination.

EXT. MAYOR'S MANSION - NIGHT

The Batmobile RAMS through the GATE of the mayor's mansion.

The mayor's manion is eerily deserted in Gotham City. It is a large country house that overlooks a bend in the East River. Its beige-painted wooden exterior looks old-fashioned, but as good as new.

A pathway cuts through the front lawn in front of the mansion.

The Batmobile pulls up on the pathway.

Batman steps out of the Batmobile. He walks up to the front door.

The house's curtains are all drawn.

Batman knocks the door open.

EXT./INT. MAYOR'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Darkness. A vague outline of a small foyer.

Batman steps inside.

INT. MAYOR'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Batman presses a small BLUE BUTTON on his suit's forearm. The button lights up and WHITE LENSES cover his eyes.

BATMAN'S POV - FOYER

Everything in the room can be seen clearly in NIGHT VISION.

It is a small foyer. A CHANDELIER hangs above the otherwise empty room.

Batman flips a switch to turn on the chandelier, but it does nothing. The house's power is dead.

A SPIRAL STAIRCASE leads upstairs in the corner of the room.

Suddenly a loud RUNNING MOTOR emanates from above.

Batman hurries up the winding stairs.

BATMAN'S POV - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Five closed doors line the hallway.

The sound seems to be coming from the door on the far left end. The furthest door.

Batman sprints to the door. Locked.

He kicks the door down. It SLAMS to floor.

BATMAN'S POV - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The motor sound comes from an ELECTRICAL GENERATOR. A STATIONARY FLAME THROWER is attached to the generator.

The flame thrower shoots fire onto a KING-SIZED BED.

A MAN and a LITTLE GIRL are CHAINED to the bed. The fire from the flame thrower is now at the foot of the bed, but it rapidly grows; creeping its way toward them.

The little girl SCREAMS.

MAN
Help! Help us!

Batman first sprints over the flame thrower and unplugs it from the generator.

The flame thrower quits spitting fire.

He then unhooks his CAPE from his cowl, and smothers the fire at the foot of the bed with the cape, putting it out.

Some fire made it up part of the man's leg. His flesh burns as he SCREAMS.

Batman quickly smothers the man's leg.

The man is grimacing in pain and GASPING. The girl is CRYING.

Batman attaches his cape back to his cowl. He examines the chains that tie them to the bed.

MAN (CONT'D)

Thank y-

The man is silenced, knocked unconscious somehow. The girl then falls silent too.

Batman realizes a DART has impaled his right shoulder.

Batman pulls the dart out of his shoulder.

The lights of the room turn on. The night vision is blinding. Everything blurs. Batman turns off the night vision.

MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Batman slowly turns around. SALIVA drips from his mouth.

BATMAN'S POV - MASTER BEDROOM

A green figure is approaches from the distance. Too blurry to make out details.

THE RIDDLER

I was afraid you'd never make it,
but now that you are here, I have a
riddle for you... Who is the
Batman?

The figure continues to grow closer.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Bruce is tied down to a chair in a dark room. A single light source illuminates him from above. The rest of the room remains blanketed in darkness.

He is unconscious. He wears his Batman armor, but the mask has been pulled off.

He slowly regains consciousness.

Bruce looks around. Darkness surrounds him.

His suit and face are covered in oil.

Bruce tries to wriggle out of the chair, but it is no use. Thick WIRES wrap his legs to the seat.

ROPE ties his hands behind his back.

Bruce tries to maneuver his hands from the rope. He finally manages to loosen the knot.

He immediately grabs at thick wire that binds him to the chair. It is too thick to tear.

Bruce reaches for his UTILITY BELT.

It has been stripped empty. None of his gadgets remain.

Bruce notices a small rectangular object in one of the belt's pouches. He pulls it out.

The object is a REMOTE. It is thin and black with a large green button and a black question mark in its center.

Bruce presses the green button.

Suddenly light engulfs the room, revealing its contents.

STEEL CAGES on opposite sides of the room. They contain the man and the daughter. Both unconscious. The little girl wears the Batman MASK.

Three stationary FLAME THROWERS are situated in the room. One faces the girl's cage, one faces the man's cage, and one in front of Bruce.

A voice sounds from the system above. Slightly high pitched for a man, but sophisticated sounding.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

200. Your weight and my IQ. Also the number of seconds it will take before every organism in that room enters their own personal Hell.

(beat)

Is that too esoteric? 200 seconds following this message, the timers on those flame throwers will stop ticking, and you three will be immersed in flames. Flesh will burn, skin will shed, until at last you'll all be dead.

The Riddler GIGGLES.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

As fun as that sounds, since you have been such a sport thus far, I suppose it's only fair to give the most enlightened monkey a fighting chance. However, this fight will not be used with the muscles you have worked so very hard to maintain. No. This is a fight to be used with your mind. So, riddle me this: You must say a statement. If the statement is true, you will all be burned alive. If the sentence is false, you will be burned alive, but the others will be spared. If you do not say anything, the young one burns. You have exactly 200 seconds to ponder.

Bruce takes a few moments to think it over. He then looks at the remote in his hand.

He presses the green button on the remote again.

The button turns red and sends a volt of electricity up Bruce's hand. Bruce convulses and drops the remote to the floor.

Bruce then violently grabs at the wire binding him to the chair. Veins in his neck bulge as he tugs at the wires.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

100 seconds.

Bruce quits tugging at the wires and regains his breath.

He looks at the flame thrower standing a few feet in front of him. A digital timer is TICKING on its side.

Bruce looks down, thinking.

BRUCE

You are not burning me alive.

The timer stops ticking.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

A paradox. Very clever, Mr. Wayne. You may have more potential than I thought.

The igniters of all three flame throwers automatically adjust, now facing downward.

The cage doors of the father and daughter open up, and the wire that binds Bruce to the chair unfastens.

Bruce immediately throws the wire to the side, and gets out the chair.

He hurries over to the little girl. He takes his mask, puts it back on his head, and throws the little girl over his shoulder.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

Then again...

The flame throwers turn back on, and face their forward positions. They each project a stream of flame, igniting everything in front of them.

The man in the other cage is set on fire.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

You did cheat.

Batman sets the little girl down on the floor, and sprints over to the cage of the burning father.

Clearly too late to save the man. His entire body has been completely engulfed in flames. His burning flesh CRACKLES.

Batman turns toward the flame thrower.

It appears to be wirelessly controlled. He takes a closer look. No off-switch. "WAYNE ENTERPRISES" is encoded on the side of the flame thrower.

Batman tries to pick up the flame thrower, but its steel base has been welded to the floor.

The fire in the room is building rapidly.

Batman turns back to the little girl, and throws her on his shoulder again. He makes his way to the door of the room.

Fire now completely engulfs the room. Batman has to dodge flames as he runs to the door.

He reaches the door. Locked.

He tries to kick it down, but it has been melded to the doorway.

Black smoke fills the room. Batman COUGHS.

He sees a glass window at the opposite side of the room. He takes the girl off of his shoulder and holds her tightly in his arms.

He presses a button on his forearm and his cape's shape-memory fibers align into a semi-rigid form resembling a bat's wings.

Batman makes a sprint for the window, running directly through the flames, shielding the girl from them with his arms.

He barges directly through the glass.

EXT. MAYOR'S MANSION - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

Batman is gliding through the air, still holding onto the little girl tightly.

They gently land on the lawn of the mansion.

The little girl's face is blackened. She is still unconscious.

Batman check's her pulse. His expression indicates that she is still breathing.

Batman looks back at the mansion. The entire building starts to catch fire.

The Batmobile still sits in front of the mansion, perfectly intact.

Batman rushes over to the Batmobile with the girl in his arms. She starts to cough.

Her eyes slowly open. She looks at Batman, petrified.

BATMAN
I'm getting you to a doctor, all
right?

The little girl continues to stare at Batman with fear.

INT. BATMOBILE - CONTINUOUS

Batman gently places the little girl in the passenger's seat.

He takes one last look the mansion, completely engulfed in flames now.

With a press of a BUTTON, Batman starts up the Batmobile.

A picture of a green question mark appears on the MAIN SCREEN.

Suddenly the Riddler's voice can be heard over the sound system.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)
I congratulate you on making it
this far, Dark Knight.

Batman takes a SMALL DISC out of from the compartment next to his seat. He inserts the disc into the Batmobile's computer system.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)
As a token for this petty
achievement, I offer you your next
riddle. You cut my life into twelve
pieces, and after the twelfth, you
replace me. But after four lives, I
will be rewarded for the troubles
in which you have forcibly encased
me. What am I?

Batman ejects the disc from the Batmobile's computer system, and puts it back in the compartment next to him.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)
For those of my ilk, this riddle is
mere child's play. However, I
suppose it will suffice for the
feeble-minded masses who-

Batman punches the main computer screen. It shatters to bits, and the Riddler's voice cuts off.

The little girl COUGHS. Batman looks at her.

BATMAN
Hold on.

INT. WAYNE MANOR - DAY

Jason Todd sits at the side of a fully made bed.

He holds a PHOTOGRAPH in front of him, and he stares at it reminiscently.

The photo displays a family of four. A father, mother, and two little boys.

Someone KNOCKS at the bedroom door and Jason quickly puts the photograph down on the bed.

JASON

Come in.

Alfred opens the door and enters the room. He holds a BREAKFAST TRAY in his left hand. A PLATE of BACON, EGGS, and TOAST and a GLASS of orange juice sit on the tray.

ALFRED

Good morning, Master Jason. I brought breakfast.

JASON

I'm not hungry.

ALFRED

I'll just set it here, then.

Alfred sets the tray on a small TABLE near the door.

Jason Todd's expression softens a bit.

JASON

Appreciate it though.

ALFRED

It is my pleasure, Master Jason.

Jason awkwardly looks around the room.

Alfred sees the photo next to Jason. He picks it up.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Is this your family?

JASON

Yeah.

(beat)

The man in that picture is my dad. He was killed a few weeks after it was taken.

Alfred hands the photo back to Jason.

ALFRED

I'm sorry to hear that. No child should have to lose a father.

JASON

Didn't lose him. He was taken from me.

ALFRED

What happened?

JASON

Not really sure. I was real young when he died. All I know is he was shot in the head. They never found out who did it.

ALFRED

That must have been quite difficult for you. I'm sorry.

Jason looks at the photo again. He strains his face, holding back tears.

JASON

Now they're all dead.

Alfred pats Jason on the shoulder.

ALFRED

I'll come back another time if you'd like.

Jason says nothing. Alfred turns to head for the door.

JASON

You know I can't stay here.

Alfred turns back toward Jason.

ALFRED

I'm sorry, lad, but Master Bruce's orders-

JASON

Yeah, I know what he says. Fuck him. You've gotta let me out of here. Even if it's only for a day.

ALFRED

I'm afraid it's not that simple.

JASON
Why not? Why isn't it that simple?

ALFRED
If I let you leave, you would be a danger to both yourself and others.

JASON
That's the point. Sionis has to pay for what he did.

ALFRED
What makes you so sure Roman Sionis is your mother's killer?

JASON
I just know.

ALFRED
Master Wayne doesn't.

JASON
That guy doesn't know anything about me, let alone who would want to kill my family.

ALFRED
Don't be so sure. He has more in common with you than you think.

JASON
He's got nothing in common with me. He's rich. When his parents died, everything was handed to him. I come from the gutter. My dad was a dope dealer. After he died, my family got nothing. We were forced out on the streets. Sleeping in cardboard. Eating out of fuckin' garbage cans. I had to find a way out to support us... and I did.

Alfred is silent.

JASON (CONT'D)
What does Bruce Wayne know about that?

ALFRED
Master Bruce may have not faced the difficulties you have, but I can assure you that he can sympathize with them. He is a compassionate man, Master Jason.

(MORE)

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Why do you think he would bring you here if he wasn't?

JASON

Fine. At least let me talk to him, then.

ALFRED

Very well. I shall let Mr. Wayne know you wish to speak with him?

JASON

Thanks.

Alfred heads for the door.

ALFRED

Until then, Master Jason.

JASON

Hey, Al?

Alfred turns around.

JASON (CONT'D)

It's just Jason. You don't have to call me master.

ALFRED

Very well... Jason.

Alfred exits the room.

Jason turns on the television.

ON THE SCREEN: A female reporter stands in front of the burned remains of the mayor's house.

REPORTER

A charred corpse in a steel cage has led local police to the conclusion that this was a homicide. And a small remote with a green question mark as its only switch, has authorities believing that the Riddler is the culprit. Rick.

RICK

Yeah, thanks Diana. Rick Harper here with Mayor Janice Porter.

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

Mayor Porter, I know this must be difficult for you, but do you have anything to say to the folks watching this at home?

Mayor Porter's face is wet with tears.

MAYOR PORTER

Only to the one who did this. Give me my little girl back, you monster. I want my little girl-

The screen goes black.

INT. REMAINS OF MAYOR MANSION - DAY

A group of police gather around the remains of the building.

Among the officers are Detectives Montoya and Bullock.

Montoya searches through the burned remains. Bullock watches her; smoking a cigar.

BULLOCK

Havin' fun?

Montoya continues digging through remains.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

So, partner, there's something I've been meaning to ask you.

She continues to ignore him.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

You saw the bodies of Johnny and Louisa Sionis at the morgue, right?

Montoya freezes and looks back at Bullock.

MONTOYA

Yeah. What about them?

BULLOCK

You notice anything funny?

MONTOYA
They were dismembered. Mutilated.
Nothing funny about that.

She continues to look through the charred remains.

BULLOCK
No, no. I mean on them. Anything
funny on them?

MONTOYA
I'm not following.

Bullock notices Commissioner Gordon approaching from the distance.

BULLOCK
Forget it.

GORDON
Any ideas where the girl is?

Bullock motions at the ashes on the ground.

BULLOCK
Gotta be scattered around here
somewhere.

Gordon ignores this grim remark, and looks at Montoya.

GORDON
What do you think?

Montoya's eyes are transfixed on a blackened object among the remains.

GORDON (CONT'D)
Montoya?

She glances back at Gordon.

MONTOYA
Commissioner, take a look at this.

Gordon steps forward, and inspects the blackened object: a flame thrower with the inscription "WAYNE ENTERPRISES".

EXT. WATERFALL ENTRANCE TO BATCAVE - DAY

The Batmobile jumps over a gap in the road that leads directly into the face of a waterfall.

The waterfall is in front of the an entry to a cave.

The Batmobile drives through the waterfall.

INT. BATMOBILE - CONTINUOUS

Batman is manning the wheel. The little girl still lies on the seat beside him.

GIRL
Wh-where are we going?

Batman looks at her and says nothing.

INT. BATCAVE - DAY

The cave is pitch black.

The interior of the entrance to the Batcave lights up as the Batmobile drives across it.

The Batmobile stops at a HYDRAULIC TURNTABLE elevated in the middle of the cave. The turntable is elevated over fifty feet above the cave's empty bottom.

The Batmobile parks.

The top of the Batmobile automatically slides back, and Batman hops out of it.

He walks to the opposite side of the vehicle, and picks up the girl.

GIRL
Where are we?

BATMAN
My place.

The girl looks scared, and does not question him further.

Batman walks, with the girl in his arms, across the elevated walkway of the Batcave.

Each section of the walkway lights up with every step Bruce makes.

The path he chooses leads to a small MEDICAL TABLE. The table stands next to a MEDICAL VENTILATOR, a HEART MONITORING SCREEN, and a few STEEL DRAWERS.

Batman sets the girl on the table. She grabs at her cut leg and grimaces in pain.

Batman enters a pass code on one of the TOUCHSCREENS in front of the steel drawers. The bottom compartment of one of the drawers opens up automatically.

He pulls a large SYRINGE and a small VIAL of clear liquid out from the bottom drawer. He loads the syringe with the liquid.

Batman then approaches the girl.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Hold out your arm.

The girl stares at Batman fearfully, but complies and holds her arm out.

Batman injects the liquid into the arm of the girl, and she slowly passes out.

Once she is unconscious, he hooks her up to the medical ventilator.

Batman takes off his mask.

He pulls a TINY PHONE out of his belt.

BRUCE
Alfred, I'm gonna need you down here.

INT. BATCAVE, CENTRAL COMPUTER - DAY

Bruce sits at the main computer, still wearing his batsuit. The main computer screen displays a sound frequency graph. Above the graph reads the words "VOICE RECOGNITION".

On the screen next to it is a page displaying a list of various Wayne Enterprises military technologies.

Alfred walks toward Bruce. He's holding a MEDICAL TRAY with bloody shards of GLASS on it.

ALFRED

I managed to stitch up just about all of the young girl's cuts, sir. Her breathing is finally starting to stabilize as well.

BRUCE

(unenthusiastically)

Good.

ALFRED

Should we really be keeping her here? I'm fairly certain the mayor will want her daughter back.

BRUCE

As long as it takes.

Alfred looks at the computer screens.

ALFRED

I'm assuming things didn't go as planned.

Bruce turns around to face Alfred.

BRUCE

Worse. He knows who I am, Alfred.

ALFRED

What? How?

BRUCE

He shot me with some kind of fast-acting tranquilizer. Caught me off guard. He keeps setting traps, and I can keep taking the bait.

ALFRED

Well, at least you're back in one piece, sir.

BRUCE

I'm lucky to be alive. Alfred... this was the closest I've ever felt to death.

ALFRED

Perhaps it's time for a change in strategy, then.

BRUCE

First things first, he knows who I am. The mansion isn't safe anymore.

(MORE)

BRUCE (CONT'D)

You should move into the Penthouse.
Take Jason with you.

ALFRED

Very well, sir.

BRUCE

Second, we need to warn all my
friends. Tell them they need to
leave the city.

ALFRED

That shouldn't be difficult, sir.

Bruce looks confused.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Well, with all due respect, sir...
You don't really have any.

BRUCE

Girlfriends, then. I'm still going
out with Julie Madison, right? At
least, publicly?

ALFRED

Unfortunately, Miss Madison left
you a break-up message over a week
ago. I would have informed you, but
you said you weren't interested.

BRUCE

But the tabloids still think we're
dating, right?

ALFRED

I suppose so. I can't be certain.
All that drivel gives me quite the
headache.

BRUCE

Then she's still in danger.

ALFRED

Shall I try arranging a date with
her?

BRUCE

Yeah, and make it today.

Bruce turns back to the main computer.

ALFRED

What exactly is that on the screen, sir?

BRUCE

Voice identification. Our killer left a message on the Batmobile's main computer. I'm trying to develop a voiceprint.

ALFRED

What was the message?

BRUCE

Another riddle.

Bruce plays the message through the computer's speakers.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)

As a token for this petty achievement, I offer you your next riddle. You cut my life into twelve pieces, and after the twelfth, you replace me. But after four lives, I will be rewarded for the troubles in which you have forcibly encased me. What am I?

Alfred contemplates the riddle for a few seconds.

ALFRED

A year?

BRUCE

A calendar.

ALFRED

Right. Why calendar?

Bruce brings up a criminal record on of the MONITORS in the computer bank.

The criminal record is of a "JULIAN DAY". The mugshot displays the face of a bald man in his late thirties. A tattoo reading "EBMARAPRMAY" wrapped around his forehead.

The man's face appears eerily calm for a mugshot, and he has abnormally high-arched eyebrows.

BRUCE

Remember Julian Day? The "Calendar Man"? Serial killer from years ago.

ALFRED

Unfortunately, that memory still dwells up here somewhere. Yes.

BRUCE

Similar victims. He wasn't afraid to go after politicians and mob families. Similar intellect. And a similar interest with outdoing me. Not to mention that they both have strange obsession-based M.O.'s. Julian Day was obsessed with coinciding his murders with specific dates on the calendar. This guy seems to be obsessed with giving us riddles.

ALFRED

There are parallels. But Day is still locked up in Arkham Asylum, yes?

BRUCE

He is.

ALFRED

So, he couldn't be the Riddler.

BRUCE

He could have crucial information though. He could know who this "Riddler" is.

ALFRED

So making a visit to Arkham is the plan, then?

BRUCE

Not yet. Like you said, I need a change in strategy. The killer expects me to go to Arkham. It's a game of cat and mouse, and he's the cat and I'm the mouse. We need to reverse that. I need to find this guy.

ALFRED

That's all well and good, sir, but how do you intend to do that? You don't seem to have any leads other than... "voice recognition".

BRUCE

Remember the "coffin" riddle? Sionis knew that I was going to show up at his family's grave site. He had four of his men waiting for me there, so, he must have known there was something in their graves worth looking for.

ALFRED

Then couldn't the young Master Jason be right? Couldn't Sionis very well be the Riddler?

BRUCE

It's worth digging into.

ALFRED

It would seem so, sir.

BRUCE

My chat with Sionis will have to wait until nightfall though. In the meantime, I think I'll pay Lucius Fox a visit. I need to ask him some questions about flame throwers.

ALFRED

Shall I call Miss Madison?

BRUCE

Yeah, and make the date for today. As soon as possible.

ALFRED

Very good, sir.

BRUCE

And see if you can find any matches on that voiceprint.

ALFRED

I'll see what I can do.

BRUCE

I've got a feeling something big's coming up, Alfred. And the clock's ticking.

Bruce strides through the walkway, towards the cave's FREIGHT ELEVATOR.

Alfred looks at the main computer screen. The screen displays the text "VOICEPRINT COMPLETE".

INT. WAYNE MANOR STUDY - DAY

A BOOKSHELF slides open like an automatic door, and Alfred steps through it, into the study.

Alfred talks on a PHONE.

ALFRED
Hello? Yes, Miss Madison? This is
Alfred. From Wayne Manor...

Alfred's VOICE trails off as he walks out of the study.

PAN LEFT:

Jason Todd crouches behind a couch. His face looks perplexed and puzzled as he peers at the bookshelf that Alfred just used as a door.

He looks back at the hallway to make sure Alfred is out of sight.

Alfred's voice fades in the distance.

Jason then approaches the bookshelf.

He stands directly in front of it. He looks around the bookshelf, but finds nothing abnormal.

He pulls a few books off its shelves. Nothing happens.

He continues to stare at the bookshelf. Confused.

JASON
Open sesame?

The bookshelf does nothing.

Jason shakes his head and walks away.

EXT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES - DAY

A tall skyscraper.

The top of the skyscraper has a large "W" on it, and below that reads "WAYNE ENTERPRISES".

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES - DAY

Bruce Wayne talks to a male SECRETARY sitting at the front desk.

BRUCE

You see, Jeff, one of the most important parts of owning a company is finding the right people to help run it with you. Once your company expands into something that hires some 170,000 employees across over a hundred countries, you know you'll need some help. That's why I have guys like Mr. Fox...

LUCIUS FOX steps out of his office.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Speak of the devil.

LUCIUS FOX

Mr. Wayne.

Detective Montoya enters behind Fox. She holds her badge.

MONTOYA

Bruce Wayne?

Lucius looks at Bruce, then holds his head in shame.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)

We need to talk.

INT. CEO'S OFFICE - DAY

Montoya takes a seat opposite of Bruce.

MONTOYA

This shouldn't take long, Mr. Wayne. I already talked to your CEO, but since you're here, I might as well fire some questions your way.

BRUCE

Absolutely. But I'd like to know what this about, Miss...?

MONTOYA

You can call me "Detective".

BRUCE

Sure, why not? I'll call you by your profession. So what is this about, Detective?

MONTOYA

Right. Are you at all familiar with the Riddler murders?

BRUCE

I do live in Gotham City.

MONTOYA

A piece of equipment was found at the latest crime scene. At the mayor's house.

BRUCE

Wasn't that place burned down?

MONTOYA

It was. By flame throwers. All inscribed with the words "Wayne Enterprises".

Bruce feigns surprise.

BRUCE

Oh wow.

MONTOYA

Wow is right. Your company's equipment didn't just burn the house down. They took the mayor's husband with it. And her daughter's still missing.

Bruce sits in silence for a moment.

BRUCE

That's a tragedy. But let's be sure we know who to blame here. I don't control what maniacs do with Wayne Enterprise's products.

MONTOYA

Never said you did. I just want information on the sales of that stationary flame thrower.

BRUCE

Lucius would have that sort of information.

MONTOYA

I already asked him.

BRUCE

What did he say?

MONTOYA

That it's still in the testing phase. Not on the market yet. No one could have purchased it legally.

Bruce shrugs.

BRUCE

Sounds like you already know a hell of lot more than I do.

MONTOYA

He also gave me the name of the head of your Applied Sciences division. Edward Nashton. Do you know him?

BRUCE

I'm not really involved in the hiring process around here.

MONTOYA

It doesn't seem like you're involved much at all around here, Mr. Wayne. What exactly is it you do?

BRUCE

Models and movie stars mostly.

MONTOYA

I beg your pardon?

BRUCE

But I'm not afraid to dabble in other areas. Occasionally, a cute civil servant comes my way.

MONTOYA

Wherever it is you're going with this, I suggest you stop.

BRUCE

Way to take a compliment.

MONTOYA

Is this amusing you? The mayor's husband is dead. Her daughter might be too. This isn't playtime.

BRUCE

I didn't mean to make light of it. Sorry.

Montoya gets out of her seat.

MONTOYA

Tread carefully, Mr. Wayne. As far as I'm concerned, you and everyone else here is a suspect.

She heads for the door.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)

We'll be in touch.

INT. WAYNE MANOR MAIN HALL - DAY

A BOOMING BASS echoes across the halls of Wayne Manor.

Alfred hurries toward the sound.

INT. WAYNE MANOR EXERCISE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The loud bass can be heard more clearly now as hip hop.

Jason Todd is exercising, but this is no ordinary work-out.

THREE PUNCHING BAGS dangle from the ceiling, circling around Jason.

Beads of SWEAT DRIP from his anguished face.

He lands a series of lightning quick chamber punches on the punching bag in front of him with precision, then immediately turns to give the bag behind him a roundhouse kick.

The kick is so powerful that it knocks the punching bag to the ground, ripping its CHAIN off the ceiling.

Jason ignores this, and immediately turns back around to land a few quick jabs on the bag in front of him before he notices Alfred standing in the doorway.

ALFRED
(shouting over the music)
Would you mind shutting that
rubbish off, sir?!

Jason heads over to the stereo and turns the music off.

JASON
Sorry about that.

ALFRED
My dear boy, don't apologize for
the music.

Alfred points at the punching bag on the floor.

JASON
Yeah, sorry... I'd normally say I'd
pay for it, but-

ALFRED
Ah, it's no matter. I do believe
it's been years since this room has
been used anyway.

Alfred walks toward the FREE WEIGHTS and wipes some dust from DUMBBELL.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
You probably noticed the dust.

JASON
Yeah, man. I mean that's kind of
weird.

ALFRED
What do you mean?

JASON
Because Bruce looks so... buff,
y'know?

Jason picks up a WATER BOTTLE, and squirts a stream of water into his mouth.

ALFRED
Yes, well, Master Bruce has his own
methods of staying fit.

JASON
What, you mean he's got his own
gym?

ALFRED
In his quarters, yes.

JASON
His quar- How big is this place?

ALFRED
Quite big. Quite big, indeed, sir.

Jason eyes Alfred suspiciously.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
So, what exactly was it you were
doing in here, sir?

JASON
Working out.

ALFRED
You didn't think a few push-ups
would suffice?

JASON
I've got my methods, too.

ALFRED
They certainly didn't seem
ordinary.

Alfred walks over to the knocked over punching bag, and looks down at it. An impression from the kick is imprinted on its front.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
Where did you learn to fight like
that?

JASON

When I was a kid, my dad signed me up for a bunch of martial arts classes. Taekwondo, karate, jujitsu. Thought it would help protect me from the Narrows. After he died, I just stuck with it. Took it even more seriously as I grew older actually. When you're a street kid, you've gotta find ways to protect yourself. Make yourself less vulnerable.

ALFRED

Did it?

JASON

Make me less vulnerable?

Alfred nods.

JASON (CONT'D)

Yeah. It saved my ass a bunch of times actually.

Jason points at one of the tatoos on his arm.

JASON (CONT'D)

See this?

ALFRED

It that a bird?

JASON

It's a robin. They get preyed on by every thing. Snakes, squirrels, possums, even other birds. But they're not endangered. They're vigilant. They watch for reactions to predators.

(beat)

Like me. In the Narrows, you've gotta be. My sister called me her hero.

Alfred points to a tatoos reading "THUG LIFE" on Jason's other arm.

ALFRED

What's that tatoos?

Jason hangs his head in shame.

JASON
Maybe I'm not exactly the hero she
thought I was.

An awkward silence.

JASON (CONT'D)
Did you talk to Bruce for me yet?

ALFRED
I asked him about a possible
meeting with you, and he
regretfully declined. He is quite
busy at the moment, sir.

JASON
Keep asking.

ALFRED
Very well, then.

Alfred makes his way back towards the door.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
You can continue with your workout.
I shall be back when it's time for
supper.

JASON
Thanks, Al.

ALFRED
Just, please... keep the music at a
reasonable volume.

Jason punches at the bag in front of him, and Alfred leaves
the room. Jason slows his punches as Alfred's FOOTSTEPS fade.

WAYNE MANOR MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Jason rushes over to the hallway. He can see Alfred in the
distance.

Alfred makes a right turn.

Jason hurriedly, but stealthily, follows him.

A door stands in front of Alfred. He opens it.

WAYNE MANOR FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Jason sees Alfred slowly walking in the middle of the foyer.

Alfred steps toward a MIRROR.

ALFRED

Mirror.

The mirror slides open and Alfred walks through it. The mirror closes.

Jason grins.

INT. ARCADIA - DAY

A WAITER wearing a button-down white shirt, and a black bow-tie walks through the well-decorated TABLES of a fancy restaurant. He collects a twenty dollar tip off of a dirty table.

Julie Madison sits alone at a TABLE for two. Her GLASS of water is half empty. Her face is marked with anger and frustration.

She looks at her GOLD-PLATED WRISTWATCH.

She looks up and notices Bruce Wayne.

He confidently strides towards the table with a pleasant look on his face.

BRUCE

Julie, Julie. I don't care what they say about you. You're okay.

JULIE

You're late.

BRUCE

Got caught up in some traffic. Some idiot-

JULIE

No, not just here. You've showed up late this entire relationship. It only makes sense that you didn't get the message that I broke up with you.

BRUCE

Now, hold on a second-

JULIE

But once you did hear about it, you couldn't even make the phone call. Nope. I had to accept a date proposed by your poor butler instead.

BRUCE

I wanted to-

JULIE

Just to be clear, this is not a date, Bruce. The only reason I'm here is to tell you, in person, that we're done. Through. Over with. So, you can take whatever fancy gift you were planning on giving me and shove it up your-

BRUCE

That's enough!

The pleasant look on Bruce's face has been replaced with intense frustration.

Julie Madison moves back a little, jarred.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Look, I know I haven't exactly been there for you. But you've got to trust me, Julie, I do care about you. About us.

Bruce's expression softens a bit.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

I want us to be together.

JULIE

Then why do you treat me like this? Like some superficial object that you can drag to the party, but ignore on the ride back. That you can love one day, but snub for the rest of the week.

BRUCE WAYNE

I'm busy.

JULIE

Doing what? You've got a board of directors running your company for you.

BRUCE

Julie, there are aspects about me that... well...

JULIE

What?

BRUCE

There aspects about me that... a lot of people may not understand. Sometimes I don't even understand them.

JULIE

Oh, God. You're gay.

BRUCE WAYNE

What? No, I'm not-

JULIE

It's okay if you're gay, Bruce.

BRUCE

Well I'm not. I wanted to see you today because I care about you. About us.

He takes a PLANE TICKET out of his pocket and holds it in the air.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

How does a trip to the Caribbean sound?

Julie studies him silently, trying to figure him out.

JULIE

Like I said, you can't just buy me back... But if you want us to just go together as friends, I suppose I could accept it.

BRUCE

It's a trip for one. I'm not going.

Julie LAUGHS, but abruptly stops when she sees Bruce's face.

JULIE
You're serious?

BRUCE
Yeah, I mean, I could get another
ticket for you. But I can't go.

Julie gets up out of her seat.

JULIE
You'll never understand, will you,
Bruce?

BRUCE
Julie, please-

JULIE
I'm done with you.

BRUCE
You've got to leave Gotham City.

JULIE
Goodbye, Bruce.

Julie Madison briskly walks to the exit of the restaurant.

INT. BATCAVE - EVENING

Bruce Wayne, still dressed in business attire, steps off the
Batcave's freight elevator.

He walks to the Hydraulic Turntable where the Batmobile
usually sits. It is empty.

Confusion lines Bruce's face.

He takes a TINY BLACK PHONE out of his pocket.

BRUCE
Alfred? Where's my car?

CUT TO:

EXT. GOTHAM STREETS - EVENING

The Batmobile recklessly side-swipes the cars it races by on
a busy street.

One disgruntled DRIVER angrily gets out of his CAR and SHOUTS something at the Batmobile, now far away in the distance.

INT. BATMOBILE - MOMENTS LATER

Jason Todd sits in front of the steering wheel of the car.

A look of bewildered excitement is plastered on his face.

He sees a RED BUTTON labeled "TURBO". He raises his eyebrow.

Jason presses the button. It lights up, and a sudden increase in velocity jolts him back against the seat.

EXT. BATMOBILE - SIMULTANEOUS

The Batmobile goes so fast that it can only be seen as a blur.

INT. BATMOBILE - CONTINUOUS

JASON TODD

Whooh!

Jason tightens his grip on the steering wheel.

Jason looks at gadgets in the seat next to him. A GRAPPLE GUN, TWO GAS PELLETS, and a BATARANG.

Jason's grip tightens even more as his facial expression becomes serious.

He grits his teeth and looks at the road in front of him.

EXT. SIONIS PENTHOUSE - EVENING

The sun sets behind the Sionis Penthouse.

INT. SIONIS PENTHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Roman Sionis sits at his desk. He talks on a PHONE.

ROMAN SIONIS

You listen to me, Bullock. Either you get me some god damned information, or you go back to the morgue and put that doctor's head on a plate. Or it'll be your head on it, understand?

Alberto awkwardly approaches Roman's desk.

ALBERTO

Roman...

Roman Sionis violently thrashes his arm at him, signalling for him to go away.

Alberto stands quietly at the front of the desk.

ROMAN SIONIS

You disappoint me one more time, and I swear on the souls of my wife and son, you'll be buried next.

Roman Sionis SLAMS the phone on the desk, and looks at Alberto.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)

What is it?

ALBERTO

Some men think the Batman's in the building.

ROMAN SIONIS

They think what?

ALBERTO

The Batmobile is parked behind the building, Roman.

ROMAN SIONIS

What?

EXT. SIONIS PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

THREE THUGS step outside, from the back door.

The Batmobile is parked ten feet away.

Jason Todd crouches beside a GREEN DUMPSTER around twenty feet to the left of the Batmobile, opposite the Penthouse.

The thugs hesitantly approach the Batmobile. All three hold HANDGUNS.

Tinted windows make it impossible to see the vehicle's interior.

MARV
Is anyone in there?

VITO
Can't tell.

As the three thugs inspect the Batmobile, Jason holds out a batarang.

He hurls the batarang toward the left side of the alley, opposite the thugs.

Only one thug, ANTOINE, hears the CLANK of the batarang. He looks to the alley.

He creeps toward the alley, gun in front of him.

Jason sees Antoine approaching. He remains still, behind the dumpster.

Antoine passes Jason.

Jason pounces on Antoine. He covers Antoine's mouth with his right hand and tries to gain control of the pistol with his left.

The gun FIRES as they struggle, alerting the other two thugs.

Jason gains control of the pistol, and holds Antoine hostage.

MARV
Let him go!

JASON TODD
Drop the guns.

Vito opens fire on Jason/Antoine, and Antoine's chest is riddled with bullets.

Jason SHOTS Vito with one quick shot to the head.

Marv tries to shoot, but his cartridge is stuck.

JASON TODD (CONT'D)
Having trouble?

Marv looks up.

JASON TODD (CONT'D)
How do I get in?

MARV
You're dead, kid. Any moment now
the crew will be coming out that
back door.

Jason SHOTS him the right kneecap. Marv CRIES OUT in pain
and falls to the ground, clutching his knee.

JASON TODD
Thanks.

Jason puts the pistol in his jeans, and pulls the two smoke
pellets out his pocket.

He throws them at the back door.

The pellets BURST, emitting a thick gray smoke. The smoke
fills the entire alley.

Jason picks up the grapple gun he had latched onto his belt
buckle, and fires the grapple gun at an open window. The
grapple hooks onto something.

Jason checks the stability of the LINE. A little wobbly.

The back door BANGS open. The sound of intense COUGHING
ensues.

Jason hits a SWITCH on the grapple gun. The switch sends him
flying upward, towards the open window.

INT. ROMAN PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jason tumbles into an empty room, face down.

His gun lies on the floor before him. He picks it up.

The grapple had latched onto one of the room's PIPE LINES.

Jason quickly makes his way towards the door of the room. He
presses his ear against the door.

He hears nothing. He swings the door open to enter-

HALLWAY

Jason moves swiftly, gun held in front.

He reaches a pair of elevators. Both occupied and headed up.

He sees a stairwell next to the elevators. Jason heads into the stairwell.

INT. SIONIS PENTHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Sionis sits at his desk. He holds a SILVER .45mm HANDGUN in front of him.

The room is dim. Only the LAMP on his desk is lit.

He hears FOOTSTEPS in the hallway. He cocks his gun.

Someone outside the doorway tries opening the door handle. It's locked.

The door handle gets BLOWN off the door, and the door slowly swings open.

Sionis furiously SHOOTS his gun at the doorway.

Nobody there.

Suddenly thick grey smoke starts to fill the room. Sionis COUGHS and SHOOTS his handgun again and again.

A CLICK signals it's empty.

The smoke begins to fade and a figure approaches.

ROMAN SIONIS
You're not the Batman.

JASON TODD
No.

The figure emerges from the smoke as Jason Todd.

ROMAN SIONIS
You? I thought you were taken care of.

Jason smiles and cocks his gun back.

He steps toward Sionis and places the gun right to his forehead.

JASON TODD
For all the pain you've caused me.

Suddenly - a BATARANG slices the wrist of Jason.

Jason drops his weapon, but it FIRES, barely missing the head of Sionis.

Jason turns around to face Batman.

JASON TODD (CONT'D)
Don't do-

Batman hits Jason with a powerful jab, rendering him unconscious.

Sionis reaches for the gun that Jason dropped. Batman lunges at Sionis, and grabs him by the neck.

Sionis CHOKES as Batman roughly smashes him against the window.

BATMAN
How did you know I was going to be at the grave site?!

Sionis continues to gag.

ROMAN SIONIS
I ca-can't...

Batman loosens his grip.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
I didn't know you were gonna be there.

BATMAN
Then why were your men there?

ROMAN SIONIS
They weren't.

Batman punches Sionis in the gut, and Sionis shouts in pain.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
(strained)
I never ordered them to be there.

BATMAN
Then why were they?

ROMAN SIONIS
I never heard anything like that
'til now.

Jason slowly begins to wake up.

Batman takes his GRAPPLE GUN out of his utility belt and shatters one of the windows with it.

He then picks up Sionis by the neck and holds him out over the ledge.

ROMAN SIONIS (CONT'D)
(muffled with choking)
What are doin'?!

BATMAN
Getting the truth out of you.

ROMAN SIONIS
I'm telling the-

A BULLET grazes the face of Sionis.

Batman quickly throws Sionis to the floor, and turns around.

Over ten of SIONIS' MEN face him on the opposite side of the room. All armed.

One of them is holding Jason hostage.

SIONIS THUG LEADER
What did he tell you?

Jason gives the thug holding him hostage a quick butt to the head, and skillfully yanks his GUN away from him.

The gun falls to the floor.

The other thugs all point their WEAPONS at Jason.

SIONIS THUG LEADER (CONT'D)
No! The Riddler wants them both
taken alive.

Suddenly thick grey smoke starts to fill the room.

RANDOM THUG
Shit!

COUGHING.

The smoke fades away. Both Jason and Batman are gone.

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

Jason Todd sits in a chair. Bruce stands a few in front of him. Alfred is about ten feet away from them, standing near the bank of computer monitors.

BRUCE
What the hell did you think you were doing?

JASON
You wouldn't let me out, so I decided I had to do it myself.

BRUCE
You almost got yourself killed.

JASON
Hey, I'm still alive, aren't I?

Bruce shakes his head.

BRUCE
It was a mistake taking you in.

Bruce looks at Alfred.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
You seem awful quite over there, Alfred. Mind explaining how he got into the Batcave?

ALFRED
He's a clever lad, sir. More clever than you give him credit for.

BRUCE
Thanks, Alfred. That's exactly what he needs right now. Encouragement.

Bruce looks back at Jason.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
You will stay here until your hearing, or I will send you back to jail. Understand?

JASON

I can help you. I want to get this guy too.

BRUCE

An hour ago you were about to kill Roman Sionis. You're reckless. I don't want or need your help.

JASON

How are you going to defeat this guy alone? He's got a gang of Sionis's men.

BRUCE

Don't worry, kid. I've been doing this for years. I excel at working alone.

Bruce walks back toward Alfred.

ALFRED

Perhaps the young master is right, sir. This Riddler killer has gotten the better of you before.

BRUCE

I really need you on my side here, Alfred.

Bruce looks at the main computer monitor. Its screen reads "SEARCHING FOR VOICEPRINT MATCH".

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Still nothing on the voiceprint?

ALFRED

What exactly were you expecting, sir?

Bruce SIGHS.

BRUCE

All of my leads have failed. The killer is still out there.

ALFRED

What's the plan, then?

BRUCE

It looks like I've run out of options. I have to follow the riddle. I have to go to Arkham.

EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - NIGHT

Overview of Arkham Asylum.

ZOOM along a dingy path in front of a foreboding structure titled 'INTENSIVE TREATMENT'.

CUT TO:

INT. ASYLUM CORRIDOR - UPPER FLOOR - NIGHT

A steel gate CLANGS shut behind Batman, the bolt shooting home. An attractive, blonde doctor walks ahead of him. Her tag reads: "Dr. Harley Quinn".

They pass the cells of generally calm-looking patients as they walk.

DR. QUINN
Recognize anyone yet?

Beat.

BATMAN
Is Day in this corridor?

DR. QUINN
Nah. This floor's for the lower-risk patients. Day's down in intensive treatment.

CUT TO:

INT. DIFFERENT CORRIDOR - LOWER FLOOR - NIGHT

A darker, even grimmer area. Heavy GRIDS cover the lights. Distant SCREAMING and faint, hoarse SHOUTS. Dr. Quinn picks up her pace, walking a little more briskly.

They reach a STEEL GATE.

Dr. Quinn turns and pushes a BUTTON. The steel door BUZZES open.

Batman looks past the gate. Stairs lead downward.

DR. QUINN
Hope you get what you came here for.

INT. CALENDAR MAN'S CORRIDOR - NIGHT

MOVING SHOT - Batman walks casually, not fazed by the MOANS and MUTTERING echoing throughout the corridor.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS are on the wall high to his right.

CELLS are on the left. They are glass cells. Some are padded, with narrow observation slits.

SHADOWY OCCUPANTS pace in them.

Batman continues to walk through the corridor.

One occupant, VICTOR ZSASZ, sits on a filthy mattress as he rocks himself back and forth, shivering. He is shirtless and his body is covered in scars. The scars look like tally-marks.

ZSASZ

C-cut... c-cut...

A dark figure in the next-to-last cell hurtles towards BATMAN.

His face smashes grotesquely against the glass as he HISSES.

Batman ignore this and continues to walk past the cell.

A calm, smooth voice speaks from the last cell.

CALENDAR MAN (O.S.)

You cut my life into twelve pieces,
and after the twelfth, you replace
me. But after four lives, I will be
rewarded for the troubles in which
you have forcibly...

The voice pauses as Batman approaches and stops in front the cell. Batman looks at Calendar Man.

CALENDAR MAN (CONT'D)

Encased me.

Calendar Man sits on a CHAIR in the middle of his cell, as if he was expecting company. CALENDAR PAGES are spread all over the cell's walls and floor.

CALENDAR MAN (CONT'D)

That does sound familiar, yes?
After all, it must be what brings
you here before me.

BATMAN
Where did you hear that riddle?

CALENDAR MAN
The riddle that led you right to
me... And here you are. So
willingly obliging.

BATMAN
Where did you hear it?

CALENDAR MAN
So foolishly obliging.

Batman POUNDS his fist on the glass.

BATMAN
Where?!

CALENDAR MAN
So desperately obliging.

Batman grimaces.

CALENDAR MAN (CONT'D)
They don't leave me out of the loop
entirely.
(he chuckles)
I read the papers.

BATMAN
That riddle wasn't in the papers.

Calendar Man gives him a twisted smile.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
What do you know about the Riddler
murders?

Calendar Man gets up out of his seat. He paces towards the
back wall of his cell. He pulls one of the CALENDER PAGES off
of the wall.

CALENDAR MAN
The Calendar Man is being
forgotten. We both know I can't
have that.

BATMAN
You were forgotten years ago, Day.

CALENDAR MAN

Yes, well, perhaps current events are jogging a few memories.

BATMAN

How do you know the riddle?

Calendar Man folds the calendar page in his hands in half and walks back to the seat in the middle of the room.

He sits.

CALENDAR MAN

As you can imagine, it is difficult to make friends in this facility. It can get quite lonely. They sparingly let us out of our cells down here, but every once in a while... they do. For group therapy and the like. After all, social intervention is an essential part of the rehabilitation process. About five years ago, I met a peculiar man who, like me, had a severe case of obsessive compulsive disorder. His pathology involved the need to tell riddles-

BATMAN

Who was he?

CALENDAR MAN

No interruptions, please. As I was saying, his compulsion involved the need to tell riddles. This fascinated me. For one who is obsessed with riddles must be one who is obsessed with the intellectual capacities of the mind. I approached him one day and expressed to him my interest in his compulsion. Flattered, he wrote a riddle for me, tailored to suit my own fascinations. It was that riddle which brought you here today.

BATMAN

Who was this man? What happened to him?

CALENDAR MAN

He was released soon after I met him. And I assume you can infer what he's been doing lately.

BATMAN

Did he tell he was planning to do all this?

CALENDAR MAN

Perhaps.

BATMAN

What does he have planned next?

CALENDAR MAN

That is for him to know, and for you to find out.

Calendar Man gets out of his seat and slips the page of the calendar he has been holding through the slit in the glass.

The page falls to the floor.

Batman picks it up, and looks at it. Printed on the date of March 12th is "1235 Crescent Drive".

BATMAN

What is this?

CALENDAR MAN

An important address. That is all you need to know.

BATMAN

What can I expect to find there, Day? I want answers.

CALENDAR MAN

Something of significance.

BATMAN

(raising voice)

I said I want answers.

CALENDAR MAN

I have given you enough already. Rest assured, if you follow that address, you will find all the answers you seek.

BATMAN

Will I be running into a trap?

CALENDAR MAN

Not one that you couldn't find a way out of.

Batman turns to leave.

BATMAN

If this address leads me to a dead end, I'll be back here.

CALENDAR MAN

I can assure you it won't.

Batman walks away.

Calendar Man smiles.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

The Batmobile drives up to a GATE addressed 1235 Crescent Dr.

The gate automatically opens. The path within the gate is marked with large green question marks.

The Batmobile follows the path to a very old-fashioned looking mansion built of stone. GARGOYLES protrude from its rooftop.

Four armed THUGS stand outside the mansion.

Two of them stand outside the front door. The other two pace around the outskirts of the mansion.

INT. MANSION - SIMULTANEOUS (UNKNOWN POV)

The Batmobile is shown pulling up toward the mansion on a MONITOR.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

One of the thugs pacing around the building sucks on a LOLLIPOP. Batman silently takes him down.

He then grapples up to one of the mansion's gargoyles.

He waits for the other pacing thug to walk under the gargoyle, then drops on the thug, kicking him straight into the ground.

The thug falls unconscious.

He then glides from the gargoyle to thugs guarding the front door and kicks one of them to the ground.

This startles the fourth thug. He anxiously aims his MACHINE GUN at Batman, but Batman is too quick for him, grabs the gun, and slams it into the thug's face.

Batman then walks through the front doors and into the mansion.

INT. MANSION - CONTINUOUS

The interior of the mansion starkly contrasts the exterior. Its post-modern look is composed almost entirely of glass.

It is nearly empty, with no furnishings whatsoever.

A loud VOICE comes in from the INTERCOM above.

THE RIDDLER (V.O.)
Hello, Dark Knight. I'm glad you made it. I am disappointed though in your complete and utter foolishness. Once again you fall like a bug in the simplest of traps. Anaesthetic gas is already pouring in from the ventilation system below. You will fall unconscious in a matter of seconds.

Batman turns around. He stumbles toward the door through which he entered, but soon falls to the floor.

He slowly takes out the TINY PHONE from his utility belt. He punches something into it, then falls unconscious.

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

One of the computer monitors lights up. It reads "MESSAGE SENT FROM BRUCE - 1235 Crecent St".

Alfred looks at the screen with uncertainty. He then looks back at Jason Todd lying down on two side-by-side chairs.

INT. MANSION- UNKNOWN ROOM - NIGHT

Bruce wakes up in a dark room. He is wearing a white t-shirt.

MAN'S VOICE

Who is that? Who else is in here?

BRUCE

Bruce Wayne.

Right after Bruce says this, the lights turn on. Brightness engulfs the room.

Bruce winces. Four other men stand in the room.

In the middle of the room is a GLASS CASE holding an unconscious Julie Madison.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Julie...

The other four men look at the case encompassing Julie Madison with horror.

A large FLAT SCREEN on the back wall of the room lights up. A man with THIN-FRAMED GLASSES dressed in a dark green suit and a black tie with a green question mark on it appears on the screen. The Riddler.

THE RIDDLER

Hello and welcome. Considering you idiots must find yourselves in a rather confused and disoriented state at the moment, I will spend a few seconds to formally introduce myself. Most of you may know me by the name the media has chosen- The Riddler. However, my real name is Edward Nashton. One of you, Bruce Wayne, would recognize me as one of his employees had he chosen to spend one day working at his company in his overindulgent life. As a matter of fact, this is the reason you are all here today. Your greed. You are each a member of Gotham's elite. However, your status is not the only thing that binds you. The other is the woman before you.

A few of the men approach the glass case holding Julie. Bruce does not move. His eyes are fixed on Edward Nashton.

THE RIDDLER (CONT'D)

Yes, you all have been involved in a romantic relationship of sorts with her, have you not?

(MORE)

THE RIDDLER (CONT'D)

Some more than others, but you do have this in common. Indeed, you share many attributes. However, there remains one major difference in one of you imbeciles. A secret. A secret so dark that it would blacken the hearts of most men. One of you is... the Batman.

The men all look around at one another.

THE RIDDLER (CONT'D)

Scoff if you'd like. I know I would, but it is true. So, my riddle to you becomes this: Will you be able to find the Batman amongst yourselves and kill him?

A DIGITAL TIMER turns on above the glass case holding Julie Madison.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

THE RIDDLER

Or will his woman drown among the quarrels of the men who loved her?

A dark figure takes down a thug within the mansion on one of the MONITORS. The Riddler does not notice.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The glass case holding Julie Madison slowly begins to fill with water.

THE RIDDLER

You have four minutes. Show me the answer.

The SCREEN turns black. The timers starts TICKING.

One man, RICKY, runs to the steel double-door of the room.

It looks like an elevator door, with two panels that meet in the middle. They have no handles on them and appear to only be able to slide open automatically.

Ricky POUNDS on the doors.

SCOTT

No use in that.

SCOTT is a muscular man with a shaved head. He turns to look at the other men.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
All right. You heard the man. So,
who is it?

Beat.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
(raising his voice)
Which one of you is Batman?

No one answers.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Fine.

Scott rolls up his sleeves and turns to face ENRIQUE, the man standing beside him.

BRUCE
Hold on. There must be another way.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The Riddler watches with anticipation as the men argue with one another.

He GIGGLES.

A dark figure approaches from the doorway.

DARK FIGURE
Hey...

The Riddler swiftly turns around to face the figure.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scott turns and aggressively glares Bruce.

SCOTT
Yeah? How's this for a better way?
I kill you first, pretty boy.

Scott strides towards Bruce.

A tall, blond man, MICHAEL, tries to stand between them.

MICHAEL
Wait, man. He's right. Maybe
there's a plug or something.

SCOTT
Don't see a plug.

Two minutes, fifty seconds left on the clock now. Water at
Julie's waistline.

ENRIQUE
Who's Batman? She'll die if you
don't reveal yourself!

The fourth man, Ricky, still stands silently against the
double-door of the room.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The dark figure steps into the light of the room to reveal
himself to be Jason Todd.

Jason is wearing a black batsuit, only without the cape and
cowl. The bat on his chest is painted red, and he wears only
a little, black eye mask on his face.

JASON
Remember me?

THE RIDDLER
Ah, yes. The final piece to the
puzzle.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scott runs up to Michael and shoves him out of the way.

He then takes a punch at Bruce. Bruce dodges the punch, and
lands an uppercut to the jaw of Scott.

He then punches Scott hard in the gut, sending him to his
knees.

There is one minute, forty seconds left on the clock now.

MICHAEL
Those were some pretty fancy moves.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The Riddler pulls a LEVER.

A large square in the middle of the floor opens up. Jason jumps back, and barely makes it past the edge of the hole.

A pit of fire is beneath the floor.

JASON TODD
You didn't think I'd notice the
large square? Maybe you're not as
smart as you think you are.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The other three men are now closing in on Bruce as Scott grimaces in pain on the floor.

BRUCE
Let's think this over...

MICHAEL
No time to think.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jason takes a GRAPPLING GUN off of his utility belt and shoots it at the Riddler.

The grapple latches onto the riddler's TIE. The Riddler lets out a shrill SHOUT.

Jason then pulls on the grapple, and the Riddler flies toward him and towards the hole in the middle of the room.

The Riddler barely manages to grasp the floor, keeping him from falling into the pit of fire.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael lunges at Bruce. Bruce hits him with a powerful kick to the chest. This sends him to the floor.

Enrique, Ricky, and Scott surround Bruce from each side.

Thirty seconds left on the clock. The water is now midway up Julie Madison's neck.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Riddler is still holding onto the floor for dear life, but his grip is slipping. He looks down and screams.

Jason looks down at the Riddler. He seems to be hesitating.

He reaches his hand out to the Riddler.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The four men are on top of Bruce.

He is on the floor, trying to shake them off.

Scott bites Bruce's hand. Bruce SHOUTS, and delivers a hard elbow to Scott's head. Scott rolls off of Bruce.

Sixty seconds are left on the clock. Julie Madison's neck is now up in water.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The Riddler reaches up his hand for Jason Todd's, but, as he does this, he loses his grip and falls into the pit below.

The Riddler SCREAMS.

Jason looks down and grits his teeth.

He then looks up at the MONITORS. He takes a ZIP-LINE off of his utility belt and zips across the hole to the other side of the room.

There are only two buttons on the desk in front of the computer monitors. A GREEN BUTTON and a RED BUTTON. Both have question marks on them.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The four men continue to try to topple Bruce.

Forty seconds on the clock.

INT. RIDDLER ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Jason examines the buttons. The question mark on the green button is lit up.

He hits the red button. Its question mark lights up.

INT. UNKNOWN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The timer stops ticking at sixteen seconds, and the case opens up. Julie falls out of it, and water pours from it.

The four men notice this and stop fighting Bruce.

The room's door slides open.

Jason Todd enters the room.

SCOTT
Wait... Is that Batman?

JASON
Everything is fine, everyone. The Riddler situation is under control.

Jason nods at Bruce.

Bruce hurries toward Julie Madison. He holds her in his arms.

She COUGHS up water.

JULIE
Bruce?

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

Commissioner Gordon stands next to the BAT SIGNAL. It shines brightly in the sky.

Batman approaches Gordon.

BATMAN
Commissioner.

GORDON
So, the Riddler is finally gone.
Does this mean we can work together
again?

BATMAN
That's up to your department. Not
me.

GORDON
I don't see any reason why we
shouldn't work with the man who
defeated the threat that was
terrorizing our city for weeks.
Single-handedly.

BATMAN
Not single-handedly.

Jason approaches the Commissioner. Gordon looks back at him.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
I had a little help this time.

GORDON
Who is this?

Jason looks at Batman, then back at Gordon.

JASON
Robin.