

SEVERAL DECADES FROM NOW.

My friend, Dana Tan, is being held by the Jokerz.

I don't know the exact circumstances-- but it can't be good.

ANSWER MY QUESTION.

WHO IS GOTHAM'S MOST INFLUENTIAL CITIZEN EVER?

ESCAPING THE GRAVE

DAN JURGENS writer BERNARD CHANG artist MARCELO MAIOLO colorist
TRAVIS LANHAM letters SUSIE ESPARZA assistant editor JIM CHADWICK editor
BATMAN created by BOB KANE with BILL FINGER

THAT'S EASY, CARTER. IT'S--

BATMAN?

WRONG, DANA. AND I TOLD YOU TO CALL ME TERMINAL!

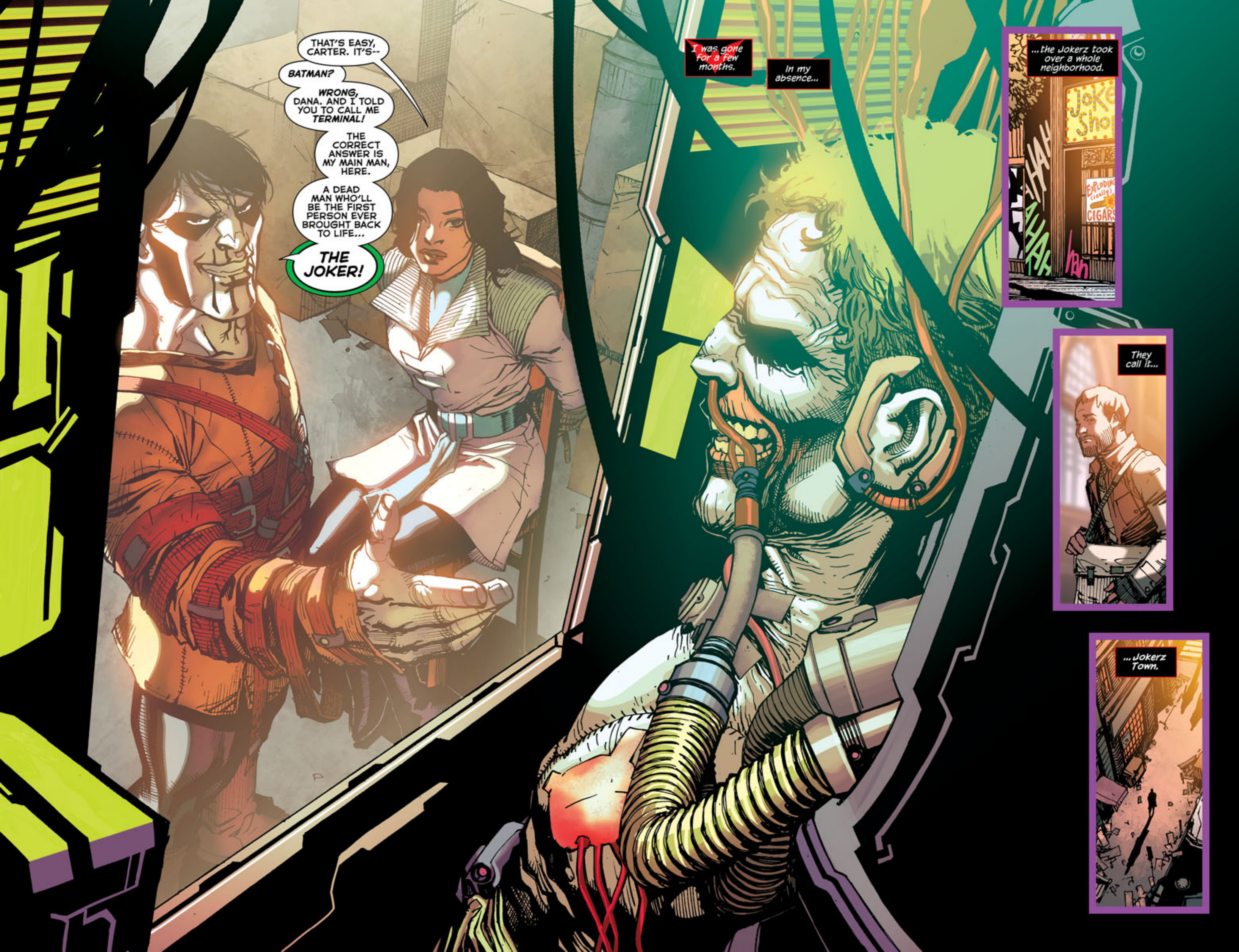
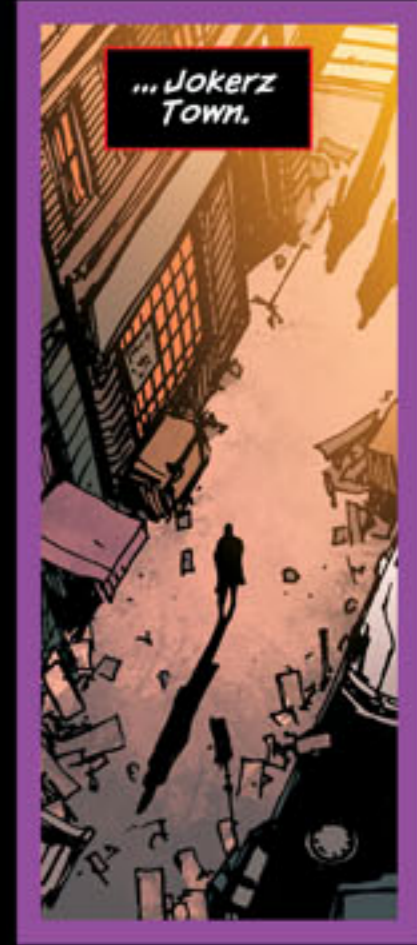
THE CORRECT ANSWER IS MY MAIN MAN, HERE.

A DEAD MAN WHO'LL BE THE FIRST PERSON EVER BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE...

THE JOKER!

I was gone for a few months.

In my absence...



RIDICULOUS.

IF NOT FOR **BATMAN**, WHO'S STILL HERE...

...GOTHAM WOULD HAVE DISINTEGRATED YEARS AGO.



YO, YO, YO.



WE THE TOLL BOOTH.

AN' YOU DIDN'T PAY.

DON'T OVERLOOK THE OBVIOUS.

WHO INSPIRED A LEGION OF FOLLOWERS?

WHO DOES EVERYONE REALLY WANT TO BE?

THE JOKER.



SO YOU PAY NOW.

WHO WE REALLY WISH TO BE WHEN WE WANT TO KILL OUR BOSS...

...SPOUSE...

...NEIGHBOR...

...OR THE EVIL LIBRARIAN THAT HIT US WITH AN OVERDUE FINE?

WHY, THE JOKER, OF COURSE.

WITH YOUR LIFE.

SO--HE MUST LIVE AGAIN.

PEOPLE THINK THEY SHOULD BE BATMAN--DOING THE RIGHT THING AND SUFFERING FOR IT...

...WHEN IT'S THE JOKER THAT TRULY INHABITS OUR SOULS.



YOU'RE CRAZY TO THINK YOU CAN REVIVE HIM!

MY DEAR MS. TAN, WE ARE ALL ABOUT CRAZY.

WHAT BETTER JOKE COULD BE PLAYED ON GOTHAM THAN REVIVING THE JOKER?!

Dana's plight wasn't the only thing on my mind.

My kid brother, Matt, was breaking protocol in a big way.



THIS WAY, MAX!

YOU'RE FREAKING ME OUT, MATT. WHERE ARE WE?

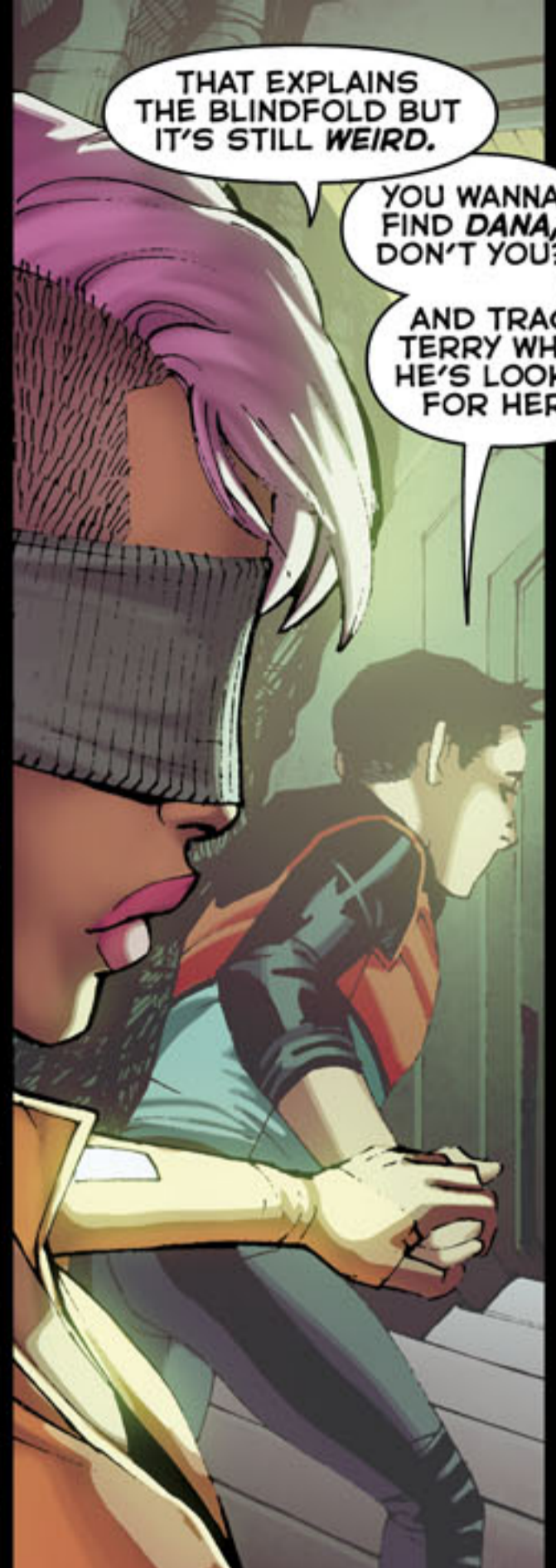


I WAS SWORN TO SECRECY SO WE HAVE TO DO THIS MY WAY, OKAY?

THAT EXPLAINS THE BLINDFOLD BUT IT'S STILL WEIRD.

YOU WANNA FIND DANA, DON'T YOU?

AND TRACK TERRY WHILE HE'S LOOKIN' FOR HER?



NONE OF WHICH EXPLAINS THE FREAKY BLINDFOLD.

WE'RE ALMOST THERE.



SEE?



YEAH.

I DO.

