




I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED RIGHT NOW.

YOU DON'T NEED TO PRETEND, I CAN SEE YOU TREMBLING. YOU DON'T KNOW WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE, BUT YOU KNOW THE ANSWER CAN'T BE GOOD.

AND YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S NOT.



YOU REALLY THOUGHT YOU HAD IT ALL FIGURED OUT, THAT YOU KNEW EVERY COMBINATION IN THE DECK.

AND IT WOULD THRILL YOU EVERY TIME YOU WERE RIGHT, WHEN THE HAND CAME DOWN IN A FAMILIAR PATTERN. A FAMILIAR STORY...




ABOUT AN OUTSIDER WHO CAN SEE THE GOOD IN ALL OF US.



ABOUT HOW WE ALL HAVE THE POWER TO FIGHT FOR WHAT IS RIGHT.



OR HOW WE CAN EACH OVERCOME OUR DARKEST MOMENTS.




BUT THIS ISN'T ANY OF THOSE STORIES. THERE ARE FAMILIAR PARTS, BUT THEY'RE ALL IN THE WRONG PLACES.

AND THERE'S NOTHING MORE FRIGHTENING THAN WHEN ALL THE CARDS LAY OUT ON THE TABLE JUST RIGHT...



BUT THEN ANOTHER CARD COMES AND CHANGES THE MEANING OF THE ENTIRE HAND...



AND THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT.

EARTH -22.
GOTHAM CITY.
MANY YEARS AGO.

THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS

JAMES TYNION IV WRITER RILEY ROSSMO ARTIST
IVAN PLASCENCIA COLORS TOM NAPOLITANO LETTERS
JASON FABOK & BRAD ANDERSON COVER
DAVE WIELGOSZ ASSISTANT EDITOR
REBECCA TAYLOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR
EDDIE BERGANZA EDITOR

WHICH ONE WAS THAT, BATSSS? MERCY HOSPITA? OR MAYBE GOTHAM GENERAL...IT'S HARD TO KEEP THE CHAOS STRAIGHT THIS LATE IN THE GAME.

-HUFF HUFF-

AW, COME ON! YOU HAVE TO GET INTO THE SPIRIT OF THIS THING TO MAKE IT RIGHT! THE DRUGS ARE ONLY INTERFERING WITH YOUR BODY, AFTER ALL, NOT YOUR MIND. I MADE SURE OF THAT.

MMFFF! MMMFF!!!

HEEE... THERRRR WE GO!

LOOK, I KNOW THIS MUST BE VERY HARD ON YOU. IT'S HARD ON BOTH OF US. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY CHARTS YOU NEED TO COORDINATE THE SYSTEMATIC KILLING OF AN ENTIRE CITY?

I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T, BECAUSE THAT'S YOUR ONE LINE, ISN'T IT? KILLING.

YOU AND YOUR PALS. SIGH LIKE GOOD OLD JIM GORDON. RIGHT TO THE END, I HEARD HIM SHOUT AND OVER... BY THE BOOK. BRING HIM IN BY THE BOOK.

HEH... BUT WHEN I FINALLY GOT TO HIM... HE UNDERSTOOD. I SAW IT IN HIS FACE. IN HIS EYES.

RIGHT BEFORE I DISSOLVED THEM, I MEAN.

HE CALLED FOR HIS GIRL LAST, YOU KNOW. HARD TO HEAR, AS HIS JAW WAS MELTING. "BUH, BUH, BUH..." I SAVED THE PIPE FOR YOU THOUGH! STILL WARM...

SEE, OUT OF TIME, YOU AND ME. WE NEED TO EVOLVE, AND FAST, OR WE'LL MISS OUR CHANCE. THERE IS NO "BY THE BOOK" ANYMORE. I THREW THE DAMN THING OUT. BURNED IT.

EVERY STORY, EVERY CHARACTER, ONE BY ONE... ALL THE COPS, ALL THE VILLAINS... LOOKING FOR THAT BREAKING POINT.

THE JOKE TOO FAR.

WELL, TONIGHT I'M GOING TO TELL IT!

I'LL SHOUT IT FROM THE DAMN ROOFTOPS. CAN YOU HEAR ME, BATMAN?! CAN YOU?!

IT HAS TO EXIST, BRUCE. I KNOW IT DOES.

UNNFFF!!!

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER.
SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER.
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY.

**DNNNT!
NNNN!!!**

**OH, I
KNOW WHAT
HAPPENS
NEXT.**

**OH
DEAR. WHAT'S
THIS NOW? A LOVELY
YOUNG FAMILY, HEADING
BACK FROM THE
THEATER...**



**I...
HEH...
I...**

HAHAHAHAHA!

**NOW!
BRING ON THE
NEXT FAMILY, AND
THE NEXT!**

**AND
KEEP THEM
COMING! OUR
LINE FOR HIS
LINE!**

**HEE
HEHEHE
HEHEHE
HEEE**

**NNNNNN!
NN!!!**

**BLAM
BLAM**

DON'T BE AFRAID. YOU DON'T NEED YOUR MOMMY AND DADDY ANYMORE.

YOU'RE THE FIRST CITIZEN OF A BRAND NEW GOTHAM. ONE MADE FROM THE BEST OF HIM AND THE BEST OF ME.

DOESN'T THAT SOUND WONDERFUL?

AAHHHHH!!!

NN...

MMPH.

JKRRRR...

BLAM
BLAM

