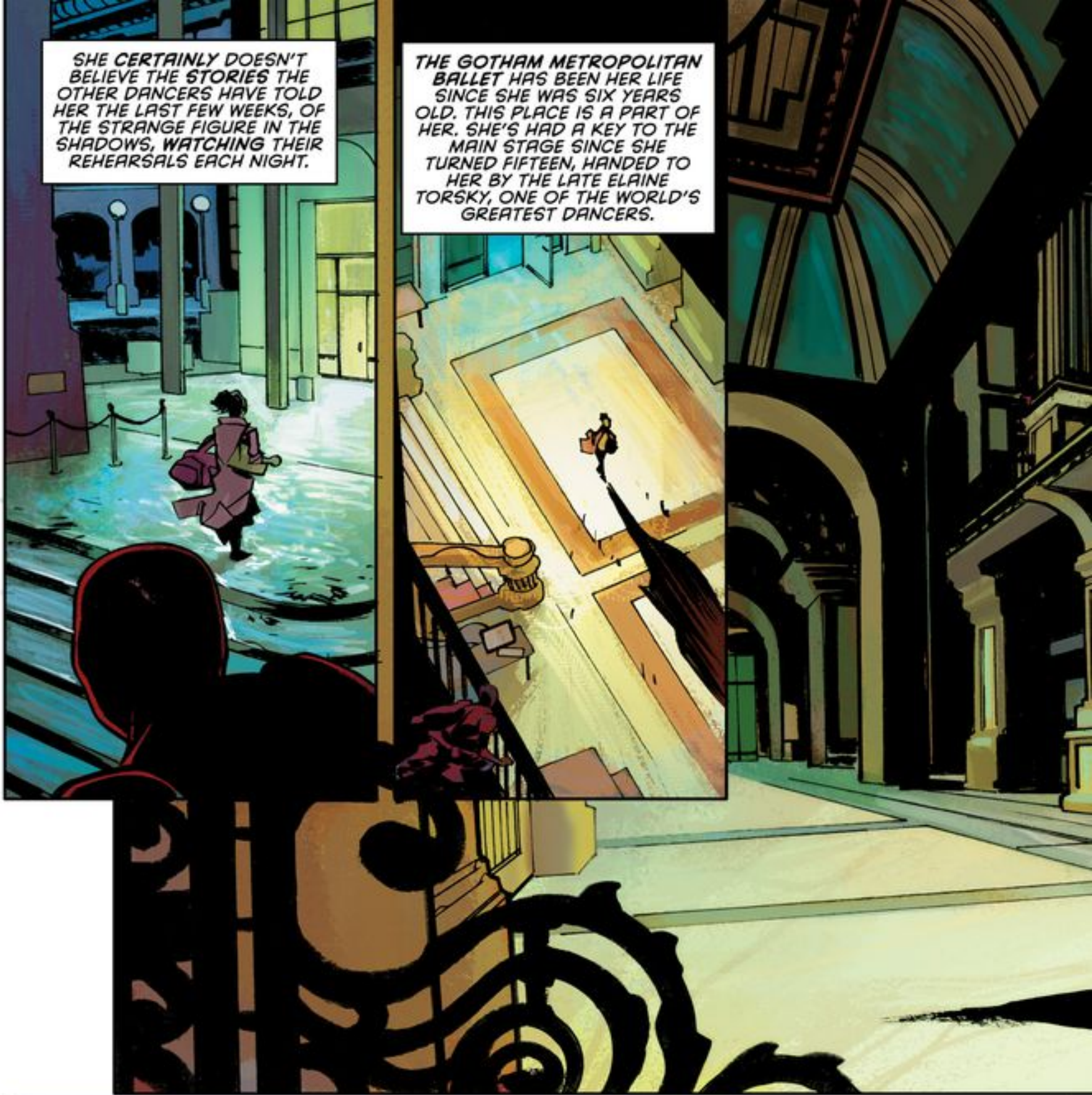




CHRISTINE
MONTCLAIR
DOESN'T BELIEVE
IN GHOSTS.

SHE CERTAINLY DOESN'T BELIEVE THE STORIES THE OTHER DANCERS HAVE TOLD HER THE LAST FEW WEEKS, OF THE STRANGE FIGURE IN THE SHADOWS, WATCHING THEIR REHEARSALS EACH NIGHT.

THE GOTHAM METROPOLITAN BALLET HAS BEEN HER LIFE SINCE SHE WAS SIX YEARS OLD. THIS PLACE IS A PART OF HER. SHE'S HAD A KEY TO THE MAIN STAGE SINCE SHE TURNED FIFTEEN, HANDED TO HER BY THE LATE ELAINE TORSKY, ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST DANCERS.





ONE DAY, WHEN THE SAME CAN BE SAID OF HER, SHE DREAMS OF HANDING THAT KEY TO ANOTHER YOUNG GIRL, SOMEONE WITH THAT SAME FIRE IN HER EYES.

SOMEONE WHO KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT SHE WANTS TO BECOME.

THERE ARE NO GHOSTS HERE, SHE TELLS HERSELF. ONLY HER AND THE NIGHT WATCHMAN SLEEPING AT THE SECURITY DESK OUT FRONT.



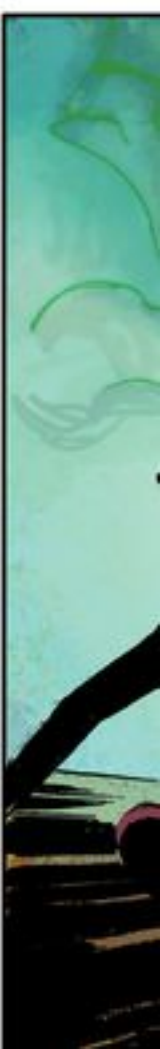
IT'S 4:30 IN THE MORNING. THE OTHER DANCERS WON'T ARRIVE UNTIL SIX, BUT BY THEN SHE'LL HAVE PERFECTED THE INTRICATE FOOTWORK THAT WAS CHOREOGRAPHED THE PREVIOUS DAY.



THE MUSIC STARTS TO PLAY, AND CHRISTINE GOES TO WORK.



AT FIRST, SHE DOESN'T REALIZE THE SHADOWS DANCE WITH HER.





AHHHHH!

NO!



WHAT ARE YOU?!



FWASH



ONCE AGAIN, CHRISTINE MONTCLAIR TELLS HERSELF SHE DOESN'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS.

THE GIRL IN
BLACK KNOWS
BETTER.

SHE IS
CASSANDRA CAIN.
SHE IS ORPHAN.

AND SHE KNOWS
THAT GHOSTS
ARE VERY REAL.



LEAGUE OF SHADOWS

PROLOGUE: SHADOW OF A TEAR

JAMES TYNION IV Writer MARCIO TAKARA Artist DEAN WHITE Colors MARILYN PATRIZIO Letters
EDDY BARROWS, EBER FERREIRA & ADRIANO LUCAS Cover RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE Variant Cover
DAVE WIELGOSZ Asst. Editor CHRIS CONROY Editor MARK DOYLE Group Editor
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER



CASS...
IS THAT
YOU?



IT'S *STUPID* LATE.
THE NINE TRAIN IS
DOWN FOR THE
NEXT MONTH, SO IT
TAKES ME TWICE AS
LONG TO GET TO
DR. THOMPKINS'
CLINIC IN THE
MORNINGS.

YOU CAN
TAKE THE BED.
I NEED TO GET
UP IN AN HOUR
ANYWAYS.



NO.



WHAT'S
WRONG?

SAW
ME.

WHO SAW
YOU?

HIGHER POWERS

JAMES TYNION IV Writer

ALVARO MARTINEZ Pencils

RAUL FERNANDEZ Inks

BRAD ANDERSON Colors

MARILYN PATRIZIO Letters



GOD OF
POWER AND MERCY,
MAKER OF LOVE AND
PEACE, TO KNOW YOU
IS TO LIVE, AND TO
SERVE YOU IS
TO REIGN.

THROUGH THE
INTERCESSION OF
ST. MICHAEL
THE ARCHANGEL,
BE OUR PROTECTION
IN BATTLE AGAINST
ALL EVIL.

HELP ME TO
OVERCOME WAR
AND VIOLENCE
AND ESTABLISH
YOUR LAW OF LOVE
AND JUSTICE.



GRANT THIS
THROUGH CHRIST
OUR LORD.



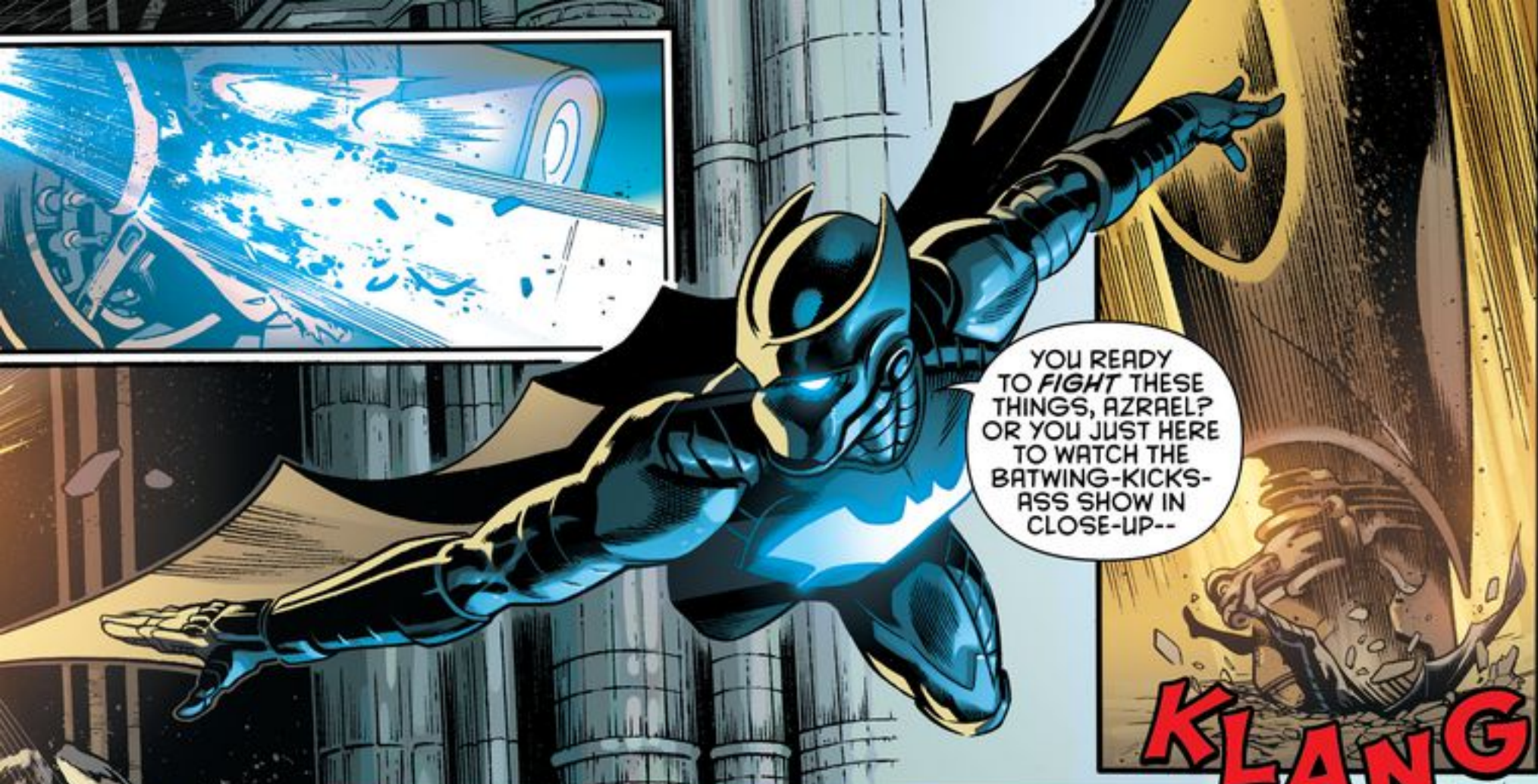
AMEN.

VIGILANTE
LOCATED

BLACK PROTOCOL
IN FULL EFFECT.

ELIMINATE.

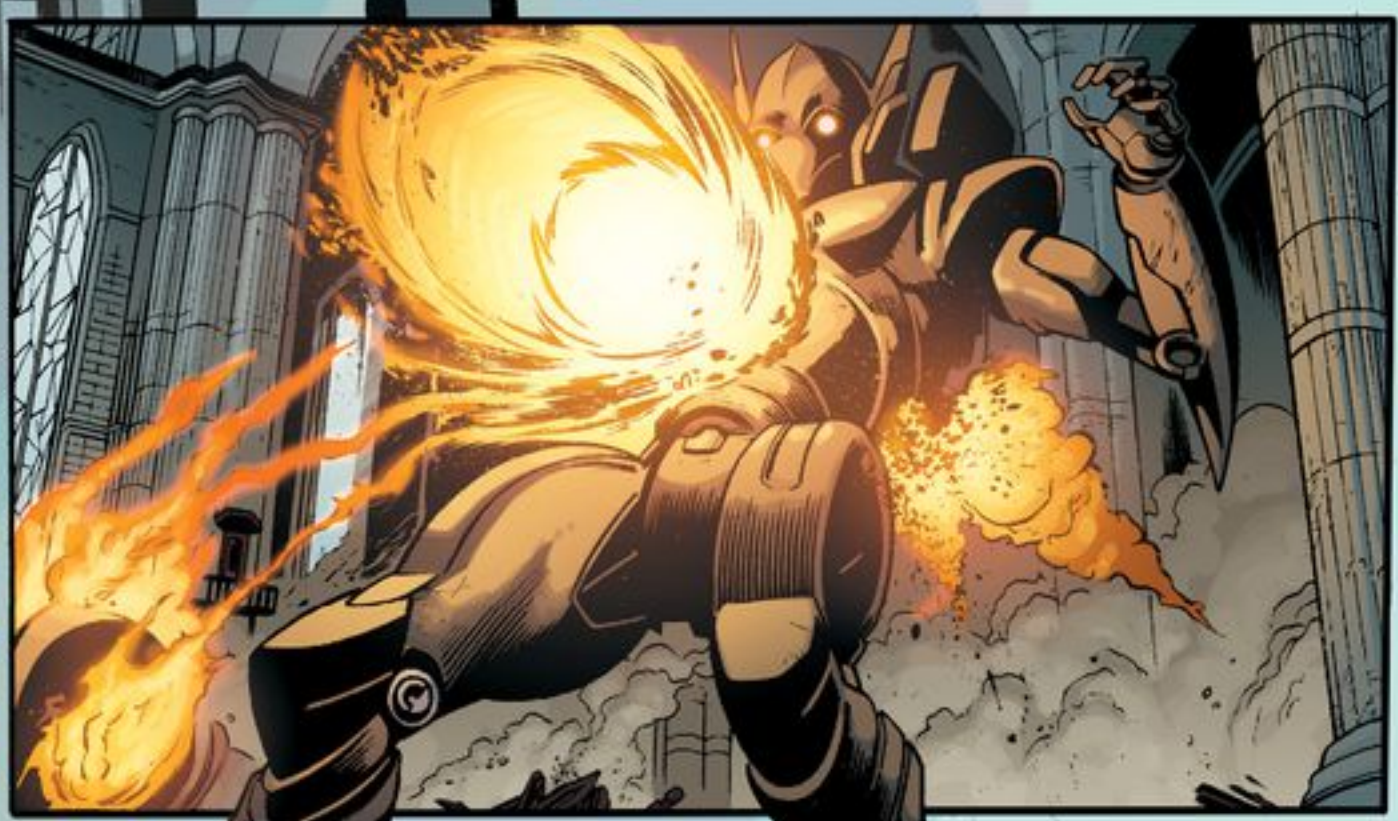




YOU READY TO FIGHT THESE THINGS, AZRAEL? OR YOU JUST HERE TO WATCH THE BATWING-KICKS-ASS SHOW IN CLOSE-UP--



KLANG





THOOM



GAUDI ONCE CALLED IT "AN ASSAULT ON THE SOUL." THAT TO STAND INSIDE WAS TO BE OPPRESSED BY A FRIGHTENING AND ALL-POWERFUL GOD.

I FIND IT RATHER BEAUTIFUL, DON'T YOU?

I DON'T BUY IT. I DON'T THINK BATMAN HAS EVEN BEATEN THIS SCENARIO. LIKE, THIS IS ONE OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMS HE BUILT TO STUMP HIMSELF. YOU HAVE TO HAVE SOME KIND OF TRICK.





HOW DO YOU DO THAT? I'VE BEEN TRYING TO BEAT THIS PROGRAM FOR A MONTH, AND ALL YOU PUT IN WAS A CHANGE OF LOCATION.

THAT'S ALL YOU SEE HERE, LUCAS? A CHANGE OF LOCATION?



I MEAN, YEAH. NICE TOUCH. BIG CREEPY CATHEDRAL. A+ STUFF, BUT WHAT ADVANTAGE DID IT GIVE YOU?

YOU'RE OVERTHINKING, LUCAS. I SIMPLY WANTED TO PRAY BEFORE I FOUGHT. DID YOU KNOW ST. MICHAEL'S CATHEDRAL IS ONE OF THE OLDEST CHURCHES ON THE CONTINENT? IT'S WHAT THE REST OF THE CITY TAKES ITS GOTHIC INFLUENCE FROM.



LOOK, I'LL KEEP YOUR SECRET. JUST TELL ME OR I'LL DRIVE MYSELF CRAZY, AND YOU DON'T WANT THAT ON YOUR CONSCIENCE, DO YOU?

CERTAINLY NOT.



I ACCEPT A HIGHER POWER AND I HUMBLE MYSELF TO IT. THAT IS MY SECRET.

I'M JUST SUPPOSED TO ACCEPT THAT GOD IS TALKING TO YOU IN THERE?



I DIDN'T SAY THAT, DID I?

YOU SHOULD STOP ASSUMING THAT YOU'RE THREE STEPS AHEAD, LUCAS. THERE ARE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH BEYOND YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

MONTHS AGO.

THE BIG PICTURE
JAMES TYNION IV Writer
EDDY BARROWS Pencils
EBER FERREIRA Inks
ADRIANO LUCAS Colors
MARILYN PATRIZIO Letters

ALFRED, YOU WERE RIGHT. ITS **TEETH** WERE REINFORCED.

SEND THE CAR TO THE ALLEY BETWEEN 119 AND 120, ON AVE. R., TRICORNER.

I TOLD ALFRED HE COULD HEAD UP EARLY TONIGHT, ACTUALLY.

SCREEECH



WHOOPS...
LOOKS LIKE MY
REDBIRD DRIVING'S
GOTTEN A LITTLE
RUSTY.

RED
ROBIN?



YOU
AND I NEED
TO HAVE A
TALK.



TIM...
IS THERE
SOMETHING
WRONG AT THE
BELFRY?

OH, NO.
THINGS ARE
JUST PEACHY.
SEE FOR
YOURSELF.



"STEPH'S REALLY
COMING INTO HER
OWN, ISN'T SHE?
BATWOMAN'S
WORKING US TO
THE BONE, BUT
THAT'S NO
SURPRISE. STILL
NO WORD ON
OUR MILITARY
FRIENDS."



I DON'T EVEN
WANT TO KNOW
WHAT BIT YOU,
DO I?

I WAS JUST
STARTING TO
NETWORK THE
BELFRY INTO THE
BAT-COMPUTER
WHEN IT FINALLY HIT
ME. I HONESTLY FEEL
A LITTLE STUPID
THAT I DIDN'T SEE
IT BEFORE.

I THINK I
NEEDED TO SEE
IT FROM THE
TOP DOWN.



...
WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?