



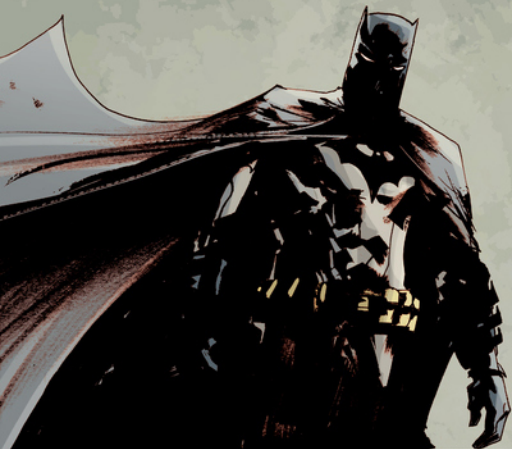
The body lies less than one foot from the old city limit.

A boy, not even sixteen years old. A kid.



A kid left for the crows.





Looking at the scene, one thought goes through his head:

He will catch someone for this.

He will punish the one who did it, and stop it from happening again.



I'M STILL HOLDING ON TO THIS HOPE...



...THAT YOU CALLED ME OUT HERE TO SHOW OFF THE BAT-SWAMP-BOAT.

WHAT DO WE HAVE?



PETER DUGGIO, FIFTEEN YEARS OLD, FROM THE NARROWS.

THE CORNER, MORE ACCURATELY. SHOT FOUR TIMES AND DUMPED HERE.

WHAT'S THE I.D.? HE HAVE A WALLET?

I CAN SEE HIS I.D.

"YOU'RE UPGRADING."

"YOU SAID HE'S FROM THE CORNER. THE **FOUR FIVES** HAVE BEEN AGGRESSIVE THERE LATELY. FEUDING WITH THE BIRD. COULD BE THEM."

I'D AGREE, IF THE **SHOTS** HAD KILLED HIM.

BUT I SCANNED HIM. HE DIED FROM A **FALL**. HE DROPPED HERE. FROM ABOUT A THOUSAND FEET UP.

KANE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN, AND ALL POLICE BLIMPS WERE DECOMMISSIONED WEEKS AGO. IT'S RAINCLOUDS AND GEESE.

NO ONE FLIES OVER THIS AREA.

SOMEONE DID.

ALL RIGHT. I'LL TRACK THE SHOTS. YOU HAVE LEADS?

BATMAN?

In the past few months, since he defeated the so-called Riddler, more and more enemies have risen. The city has barely recovered, and in some places, it hasn't recovered at all. Crime is at a peak. And now these "super-villains..."

Each has a vendetta with the city. And with each of them, he has tried to draw their fire, to become the target. Every day a new one. Every day the city in peril. He's almost used to it. A year in and it's a tale he knows by heart, one that ends with him.

~~MR. FREEZE~~

~~KILLER CROC~~

~~CLAYFACE~~

~~PENGUIN~~

Now, in his mind, he moves through the gallery of these enemies, until he lands on the one with a connection to the Corner. And things airborne...



RAHHHH!!

Oswald Cobblepot, Affiliate of the Red Hood Gang, now making a play of his own.



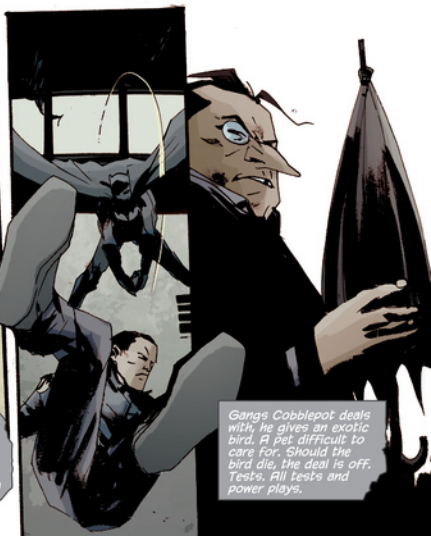
His game: smuggling contraband into the city by means of airships.




In the aftermath of the Zero Year attack, with the city in ruins, Cobblepot has begun to build an empire of his own.



Making deals with local gangs, not the Falcones or Maronis, but the younger gangs, street gangs. He's a modern gangster. Something wilder than before. Something to be made an example of.



Gangs Cobblepot deals with, he gives an exotic bird. A pet difficult to care for. Should the bird die, the deal is off. Tests. All tests and power plays.



THAT'S THE FUNNY THING ABOUT POWER, BATMAN. SOMETIMES THE KEY TO HAVING MORE IS GIVING A LITTLE BACK.

zzzt



FFZZAAKKK



ARRRGH!