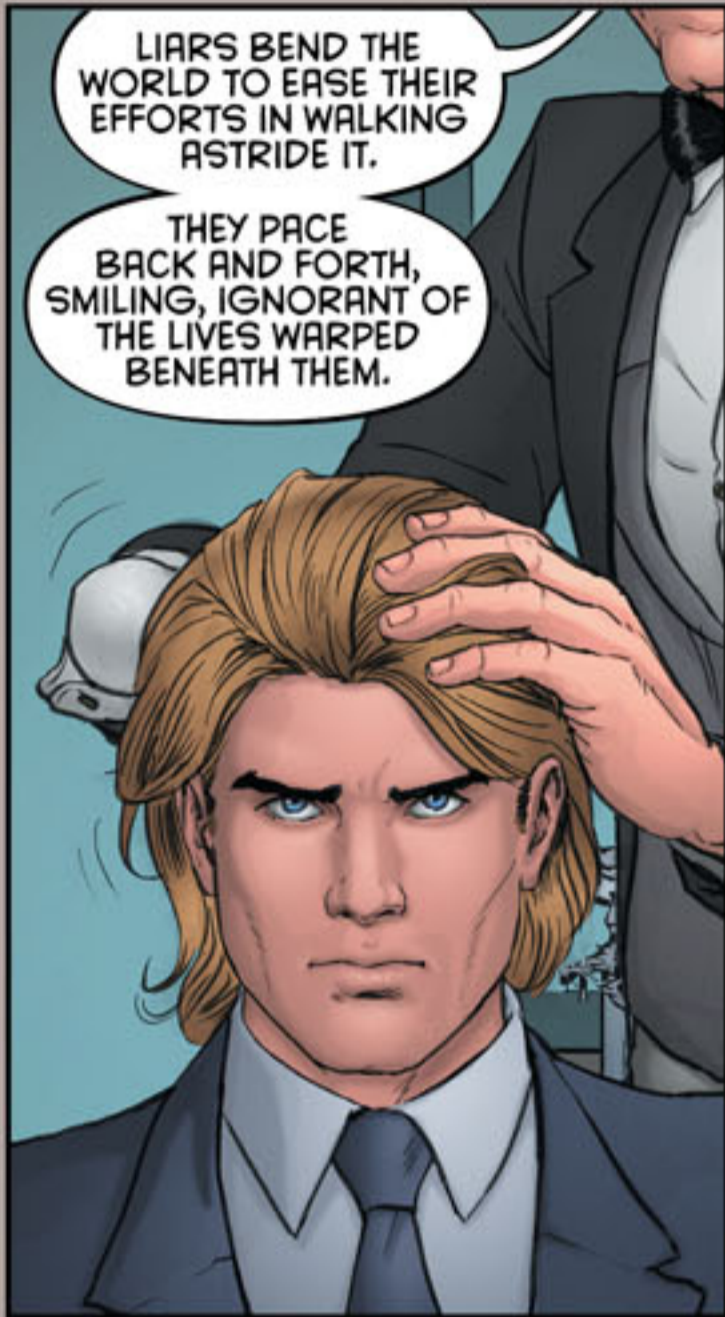
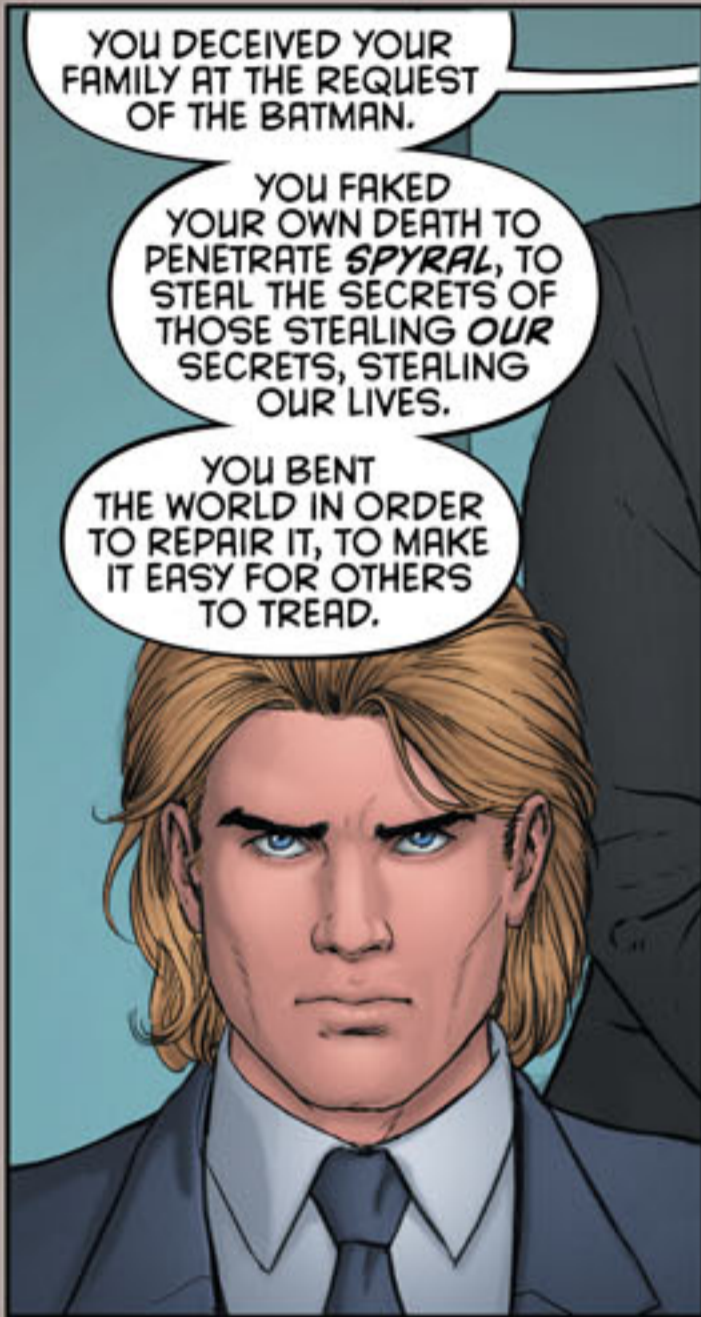




WE ARE NOT LIARS, MASTER RICHARD.



LIARS BEND THE WORLD TO EASE THEIR EFFORTS IN WALKING ASTRIDE IT.
THEY PACE BACK AND FORTH, SMILING, IGNORANT OF THE LIVES WARPED BENEATH THEM.



YOU DECEIVED YOUR FAMILY AT THE REQUEST OF THE BATMAN.
YOU FAKED YOUR OWN DEATH TO PENETRATE *SPYRAL*, TO STEAL THE SECRETS OF THOSE STEALING *OUR* SECRETS, STEALING *OUR* LIVES.
YOU BENT THE WORLD IN ORDER TO REPAIR IT, TO MAKE IT EASY FOR OTHERS TO TREAD.



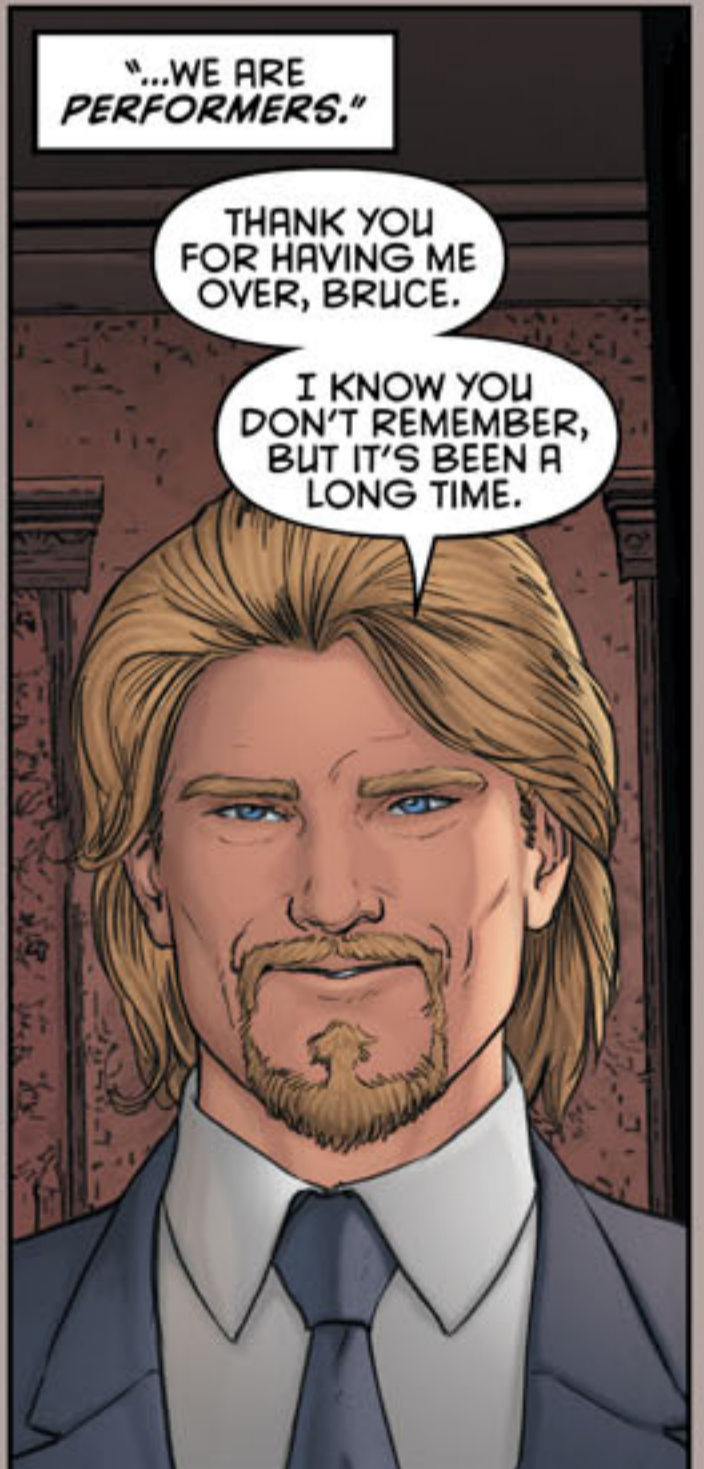
AFTER HE LOST HIS MEMORY, I TOLD BRUCE WAYNE THAT HE WAS BRUCE WAYNE.
AND *NOTHING MORE.*



HE SPENT HIS LIFE WALKING UPHILL, ALWAYS FIGHTING HIS OWN PAIN.
I, TOO, BENT THE WORLD. AND NOW BRUCE CAN FINALLY WALK EASY.



I'D BEEN USING THOSE *HYPNOS* AS A CRUTCH, THE WAY *SPYRAL* WANTED ME TO, SO THEY COULD CONTROL ME.
I FORGOT WHERE I WAS FROM, *ALFRED*. I FORGOT WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH A LITTLE GREASEPAINT.
YES, YOU SEE, MASTER RICHARD, WE ARE NOT LIARS...



"...WE ARE PERFORMERS."
THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME OVER, BRUCE.
I KNOW YOU DON'T REMEMBER, BUT IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

ROBIN, YOU GO AFTER THE MAN ON THE ROOF-- I'LL TAKE THE GONDOLA!

YOU CAN TELL HIS WIDOW... HIS ORPHANS... JUST EXACTLY HOW GREAT I AM!

I'M NOT ESCAPING! BACK UP. YOU MIGHT AS WELL MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL.

EARN THE NIGHT.

CARE FOR SOME LEMONADE?

YOUR FIRST DUTY IS TO YOURSELF. BE RESPONSIBLE TO YOURSELF, DICK--AND ALL THE REST WILL FOLLOW.

READY FOR A ROUGH CLIMB, ROBIN?

YOU'RE RIGHT...IT IS NONE OF YOUR DAMN BUSINESS.

FEEL LIKE BLOWING THIS SHINDIG AND GOING ON PATROL?

IN WHAT I DO, THERE'S NO PLACE FOR A CHILD.

I CAN'T LET YOU GO OUT THERE UNTRAINED. ALL YOU'LL DO IS GET HURT. OR WORSE.

I'M TIRED OF TALKING! YOU READY, ROBIN?

WELL, IT'S A-- I MEAN I'M SURE IT HAS. PLEASE, PLEASE, SIT DOWN.

CAN I GET YOU SOMETHING? A DRINK? I HAVE A BUTLER. HE CAN GET YOU SOMETHING.

ANYTHING YOU LIKE.

DON'T YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T KILL BATMAN AND NIGHTWING?!

GET SET FOR SOME ACTION, ROBIN!

TOO MANY PEOPLE WANT ME DEAD. I CAN'T DO IT ALONE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I GUESS THE LIFE OF BRUCE WAYNE DOES DEPEND QUITE A BIT ON THE EXISTENCE OF THE BATMAN!

CAREFUL, DICK! THIS GIANT LINCOLN HEAD PENNY IS ONE OF OUR PRIZE TROPHIES! LET'S NOT SMASH IT ON OUR FIRST DAY BACK HOME!

I DON'T NEED A PARTNER. I NEVER SHOULD HAVE HAD ONE. AND I NEVER WILL AGAIN.

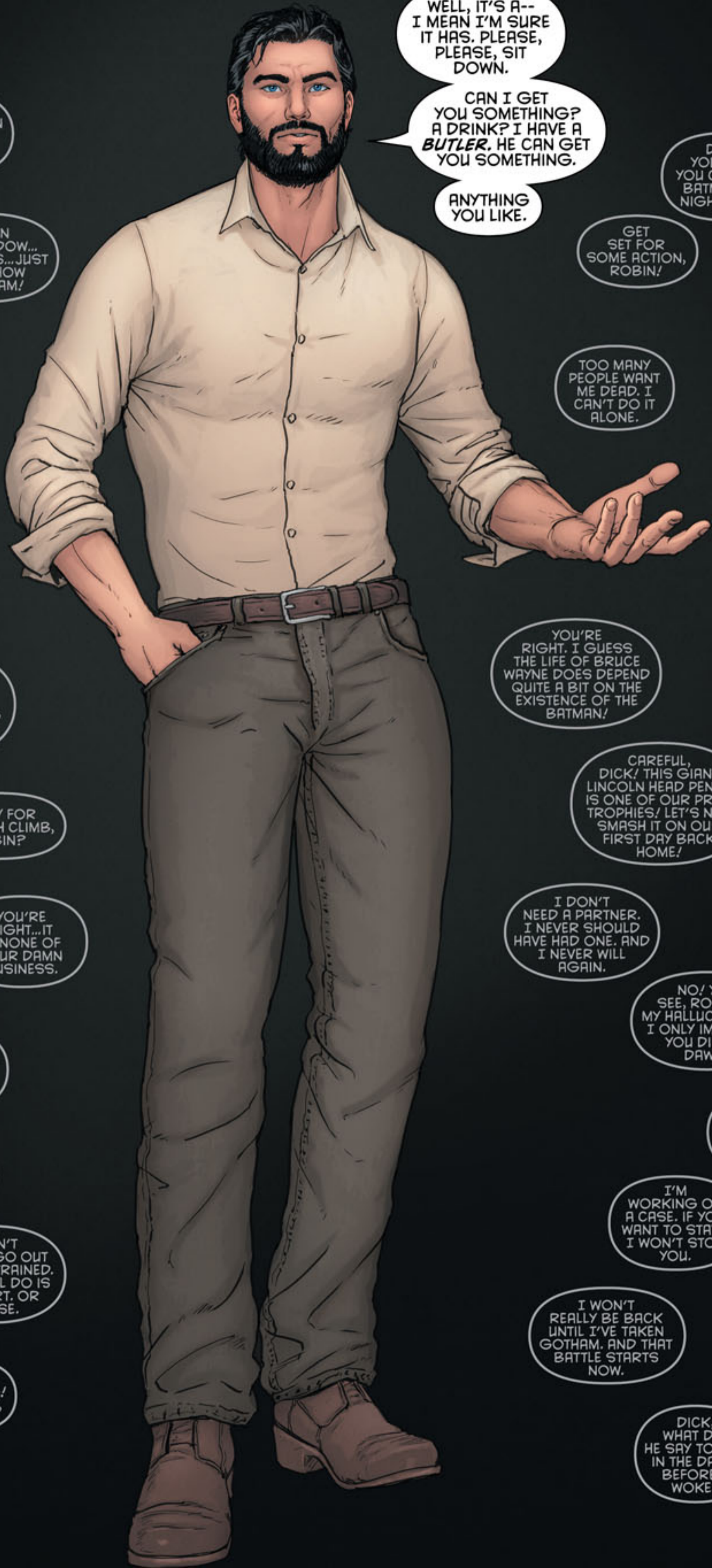
NO! YOU SEE, ROBIN, IN MY HALLUCINATION, I ONLY IMAGINED YOU DIED AT DAWN!

RO-- NIGHTWING! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I'M WORKING ON A CASE. IF YOU WANT TO STAY... I WON'T STOP YOU.

I WON'T REALLY BE BACK UNTIL I'VE TAKEN GOTHAM. AND THAT BATTLE STARTS NOW.

DICK, WHAT DID HE SAY TO YOU IN THE DARK, BEFORE I WOKE?





NO, NO
THANKS. I'M
FINE.

WELL, IF YOU
CHANGE YOUR
MIND.



I'M VERY SORRY, ALFRED
HAS BEEN RATHER *VAGUE*
ABOUT YOUR VISIT. I THINK
HE WORRIES ABOUT MY
FEELINGS OR ME GETTING
HURT OR SOME
SUCH.

HE TREATS
ME LIKE A CHILD.
HIS CHILD, WHICH I
APPRECIATE, BUT--
WELL I'M SORRY IT'S
BEEN SO LONG. DID
WE HAVE A *FIGHT*?
OR...



NO, NO IT WASN'T
A FIGHT. WE WERE
FRIENDS, GREAT
FRIENDS...

I HAD TO
GO AWAY. FOR
WORK. JUST
A LOT OF
WORK.

OH,
OH YES.



WELL, I'M SO
GLAD YOU CAME
BACK.

WORK
CAN BE SO
STRESSFUL.



THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE GOT...

I'VE GOT TO *ASK* YOU SOMETHING.



OH, OF COURSE. YES. WHAT IS IT?

YOU NEED *MONEY*? I DON'T HAVE WHAT I GUESS I ONCE HAD, BUT WHATEVER IT IS...



NO, IT'S NOT MONEY.

IT'S...I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY IT...

I--ARE YOU *HAPPY*? I MEAN, I GUESS THAT'S JUST IT. ARE YOU HAPPY NOW, BRUCE?



I DON'T... *HAPPY*?

YES, WELL. IT'S A CHALLENGE TO TELL THESE THINGS NOW. WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE EXACTLY. WHEN YOU'VE CHANGED AND YOU DON'T KNOW...YOU MIGHT CHANGE AGAIN.

IT'S A CHALLENGE. I DON'T KNOW IF ANYONE ELSE CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.



TRY ME.



I WILL SAY THIS. THERE ARE MOMENTS NOW, AT NIGHT USUALLY, WHERE EVERYTHING IS QUIET. JUST, THE CITY SEEMS TO GO AWAY. IT'S ALL STILL. AND I LISTEN. I CAN HEAR BIRDS AND WIND--THE TAPPING OF SOMETHING ON THE WINDOW, MAYBE.

WHEN IT'S QUIET LIKE THAT, AND I CAN...I FEEL...*JOY*. I SUPPOSE IT'S JOY, MAYBE. I DON'T KNOW. IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN.



IT SOUNDS NICE.

IT IS NICE.

OR, I GUESS, AT LEAST, IT WILL BE NICE AS LONG AS THE WINDOW HOLDS.



nnnnnggg.

WHAT--



YOU KNOW AGENT 37, AFTER WATCHING YOU FIGHT FOR MY SPYRAL ALL THIS TIME, THIS IS NOT AT ALL HOW I IMAGINED MEETING YOU.

I THINK I JUST ASSUMED YOU'D HAVE YOUR SHIRT OFF.

OH WELL, MY LOSS REALLY.

