

ARKHAM ASYLUM.




I KNOW
WHAT YOU WANT
TO SAY TO ME,
BATMAN.



YOU WANNA
TELL ME THAT THIS
MONSTER... THIS ISN'T
WHO I AM. NOT REALLY.
THAT THE **BIG BAD**
CLAYFACE, IT'S WHAT
WAS DONE TO ME,
NOT WHAT I AM AT
THE CORE.



BUT THAT'S
BEEN WRONG
FROM THE
BEGINNING.

A large panel showing Batman in his black suit and cowl, lunging forward with a determined expression. He is surrounded by a chaotic scene of destruction, with large chunks of concrete and debris flying through the air. In the background, a large, muscular man with a grotesque, scarred face (Bane) is visible, looking towards Batman. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the intensity of the moment.

THE WHOLE DAMN TIME THAT SAD SHELL OF A MAN WAS TALKING TO YOU, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE, RIGHT UNDER THE SURFACE.

HELD BACK BY ALL THAT MISERY AND SELF-LOATHING. ALL THAT PITIFUL SECOND-GUESSING. BUT STILL THERE, BARELY AN INCH DEEP.

YOU'VE JUST BEEN KEEPIN' ME SO DRUGGED UP I COULDN'T THINK CLEARLY.

I COULDN'T REMEMBER WHAT I WAS. REMEMBER HOW GOOD IT FEELS TO NOT GIVE A @*#\$ ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK OF ME.

A close-up panel of Bane's face. He has a menacing, almost psychotic expression, with his eyes wide and a slight, cruel smile. His skin is heavily scarred and textured. The lighting is focused on his face, making the details of his features and the damage to his skin very clear.

WHY THE HELL SHOULD I CARE WHAT A BUNCH OF GOODY-TWO-SHOES THINK MY POTENTIAL IS?

I'M A FREAKIN' BAD GUY, BATMAN. I HURT PEOPLE, AND I DON'T CARE.

YES. YOU DO.

A panel showing Bane from the chest up, shouting. His mouth is wide open, and his eyes are squeezed shut. The background is a blurred, dark environment, suggesting an indoor setting with some structural elements. The overall tone is one of intense anger and defiance.

SHUT UP!

NO, BASIL. THIS IS YOU OVERCOMPENSATING FOR HOW SAD AND ALONE YOU FEEL *RIGHT NOW*. YOU'RE NOT DOING THIS BECAUSE YOU WANT TO, YOU'RE DOING IT BECAUSE IT'S *EASIER* THAN *FACING* THAT SADNESS.

YOU *HURT* ONE OF YOUR BEST FRIENDS, AND YOU CAME HERE TO *HELP* HER. BECAUSE THAT GUILT HAD BEEN EATING AWAY AT YOU FOR *YEARS*.



YOU DON'T GET IT... YOU REALIZE ARKHAM'S A STRAIGHT SHOT TO THE BELFRY THROUGH THE SEWER LINES, DON'T YOU? HOW ABOUT I GO PAY MY OLD TEAMMATES A VISIT?

NOW THAT LITTLE TIMMY SURVIVED, I THINK YOU COULD USE A FEW MORE DEAD SIDEKICKS TO CRY OVER.



I DON'T BELIEVE THERE'S *ANY* PART OF YOU THAT WOULD ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN, BASIL. YOU'RE JUST *LASHING* OUT. LET ME *HELP* YOU.



I SAID SHUT THE @! UP!



YOU FIRST.



SHAZZT