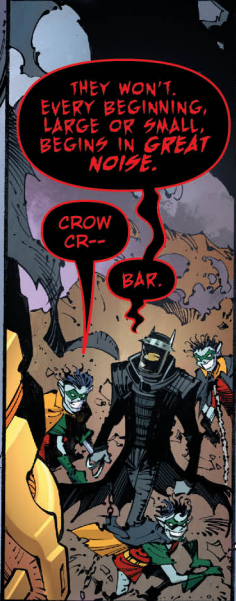


NOW.
GOTHAM CITY.

IS IT THAT
TIME, MY
KNIGHT?



YET THE
SINKING HAS
STOPPED.
SUPERMAN ESCAPED
THE BATTERY. IF THE
HEROES FIND THE
METAL THEY SEEK...



THEY WON'T.
EVERY BEGINNING,
LARGE OR SMALL,
BEGINS IN GREAT
NOISE.

CROW
CR--
BAR.



BIG BANGS.
SCREAMS.
IN
MY CASE,
BOTH.



BUT YOUR VOICE...
IT'S THE DARK CHORD THAT
WILL SHAKE THE STRINGS
OF THE MULTIVERSE!

ANTI-MUSIC TO
BRING THE HORDES OF
THE DARK HERE!

IT IS,
MY LORD.
TIME...TO
WAIL.



THAAAAT'S
RIGHT...OPEN UP
AND CALL THE
DARK ARMY!



WAIL, MY
LORD! WAIL!
LET'S BLOW THE
DAMN WALLS
OFF...



...ONCE
AND FOR
ALL!

FORGE OF WORLDS.

BATMAN...
I HEAR...A
HORRIBLE
NOISE...

FOCUS,
SUPERMAN!

CARTER
HALL, LISTEN
TO ME!

ALL ROADS
LEAD BACK
TO HIM...



...TO
DARKNESS!

WATCH
OUT!



CRIME
ALLEY...?

BRUCE, HALL
IS GONE, TURNED
INTO SOME DEMON
OF BARBATOS. AND
THE FORGE--

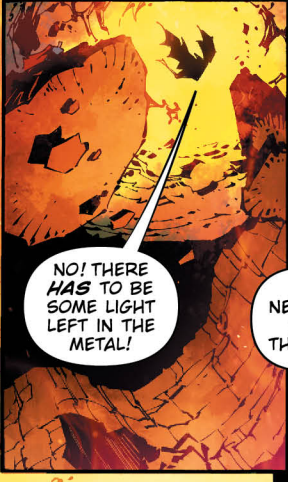
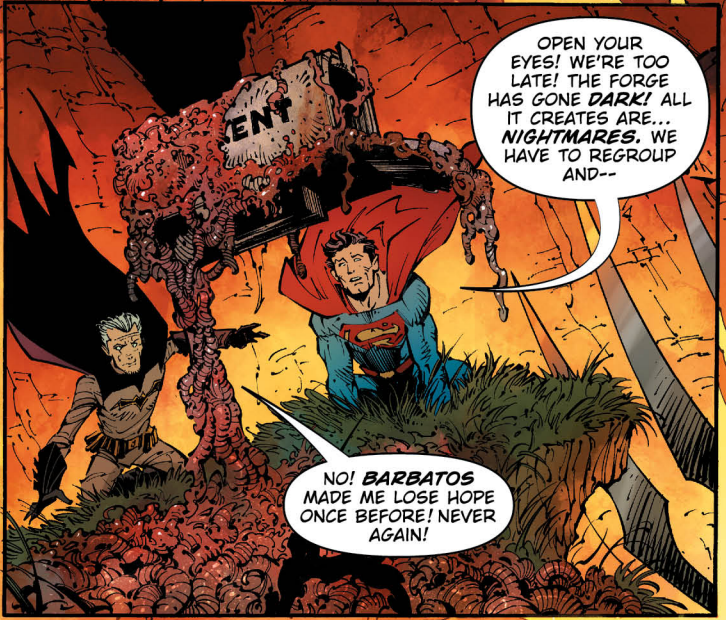
DON'T
YOU SAY IT,
CLARK--



HAIL
BARBATOS!

BATS!
THE BAD NEWS
->WAUGH- IS
HARVEY HERE
SAWED YOUR KIDS
IN HALF.

NO! NO, I
WON'T FALL
FOR IT THIS
TIME!



"...WE NEED TO GET DOWN TO THE BOTTOM!"

HOLY...WHERE IN THE HELL DID YOUR CHUM-HOLE TAKE US, AQUAMAN?

CENTER OF THE EARTH.

THE SOFTNESS OF THE ROCK...IT APPEARS WE'RE...AT THE **PLANET'S CORE**. TOO DEEP TO CONTACT THE REST OF THE LEAGUE.

GODS...THAT MAGMA EXTRACT, THOUGH...IT'S ENCASED IN SOME FORM OF **ATLANTEAN TECHNOLOGY**... PROTECTING US FROM THE HEAT...

LOOKS LIKE WHOEVER KILLED YOUR GUARDS HAS BEEN HERE, TOO. WHAT WAS THIS PLACE FOR?

OUR HISTORY SAYS THAT KING ARION SAVED ATLANTIS THROUGH **ANCIENT MAGIC** SPUN AT THE CORE OF THE EARTH. BUT THIS, DEATHSTROKE...

...THIS TECHNOLOGY...IT'S NOT JUST ATLANTEAN. IT'S SOME KIND OF HYBRID...?

LOOK, I CAN SENSE **NTH METAL** IN THAT ORB. CAN YOU OPERATE THIS THING?

IT'S A MIX OF ANCIENT TECHNOLOGIES, BUT THE FOUNDATION IS ATLANTEAN. SO, YES.

WELL, ALL RIGHT THEN...

"...WHERE'S THE DAMN ON SWITCH?"

LOCK...
PIT.

LOCK...
PICKET
FENCE.

LOCK...
PIC...KLE...

DAMMIT. EVERY TIME I TRY TO MAKE A **CONSTRUCT**, MY TRAIN OF THOUGHT DERAILS. WE **NEED** TO REACH WONDER WOMAN OR CYBORG.

STARRO IS JAMMING YOU, GREEN LANTERN. WE HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER WAY OUT! IF THEY GET CONTROL OF **PLASTIC MAN**...

PLASTIC MAN? WE CAME HERE FOR NTH METAL, MR. TERRIFIC. WHAT'S SO DAMN **SPECIAL** ABOUT THIS GUY ANYWAY?

EEL O'BRIEN **WASN'T** SPECIAL. HE WAS JUST A **THIEF**.

ONE NIGHT, HE FELL INTO A VAT OF CHEMICALS. MY BEST GUESS, SOME ATTEMPT BY THE **OWLS** OR **S.T.A.R. LABS** TO APPROXIMATE COSMIC METALS.

NOW HIS MOLECULAR STRUCTURE CHANGES WITH HIS DESIRES. HIS BODY IS A **SUPER-CONDUCTOR** FOR COSMIC ENERGIES, WHICH IS WHY THEY'RE AFTER HIM.

SINCE DARK ENERGY STARTED RISING, THE **NIGHTMARES** OF EVERY LIVING THING RUN THROUGH HIS HEAD, TRYING TO PULL HIM TOWARD EVIL.

BUT HE KEPT HELPING ME. WHEN THE THOUGHTS FINALLY BECAME TOO MUCH, HE RETRACTED INTO THAT EGG. HE'S FIGHTING OFF MILLIONS OF **DARK IMPULSES** EVERY SECOND. HE'S A HERO, AND...MY FRIEND... IF THEY--

THEY WON'T, MICHAEL. BUT IN HERE WE'RE **HELPLESS**.

NOT QUITE.

AND JUST WHO ARE YOU, BIRDIE?

FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK...

I'M AN
OLD FRIEND,
HAL.

**MARTIAN
MANHUNTER...?**

J'ONN, IS IT
REALLY YOU?
WHERE THE
HELL--

I'VE BEEN
HERE ON **THANAGAR
PRIME**, EXPLORING THE
VERY QUESTIONS YOU'VE
BEEN ASKING, YOURSELF.
WHY THIS PLACE AND
OTHERS WERE KEPT
SECRET... BUT THERE'S
NO TIME NOW!

**WE MUST GET
PLASTIC MAN. I HAVE
YOUR SPHERES, DR. HOLT.
AND I CAN BLOCK STARRO.
BUT ARE YOU WELL
ENOUGH TO--**

TAKE
US TO THE
EGG...

...I'M GOING
TO **KICK**
THAT SPACE
STARFISH'S
ASS.
(TECHNICALLY,
HE DOESN'T
HAVE AN
ASS.)

OH,
BELIEVE
ME...