

MERCY

WRITTEN BY PROCTOR & HARRELL
PENCILS BY LALIT SHARMA
INKS BY JAGDISH KUMAR
COLORS BY BETH SOTELO

PATEROS, WASHINGTON.

TARGET
IN SIGHT.
PERMISSION
TO FIRE?

ONLY IF IT'S
A CLEAN SHOT.
DON'T DAMAGE THE
MAINFRAME.

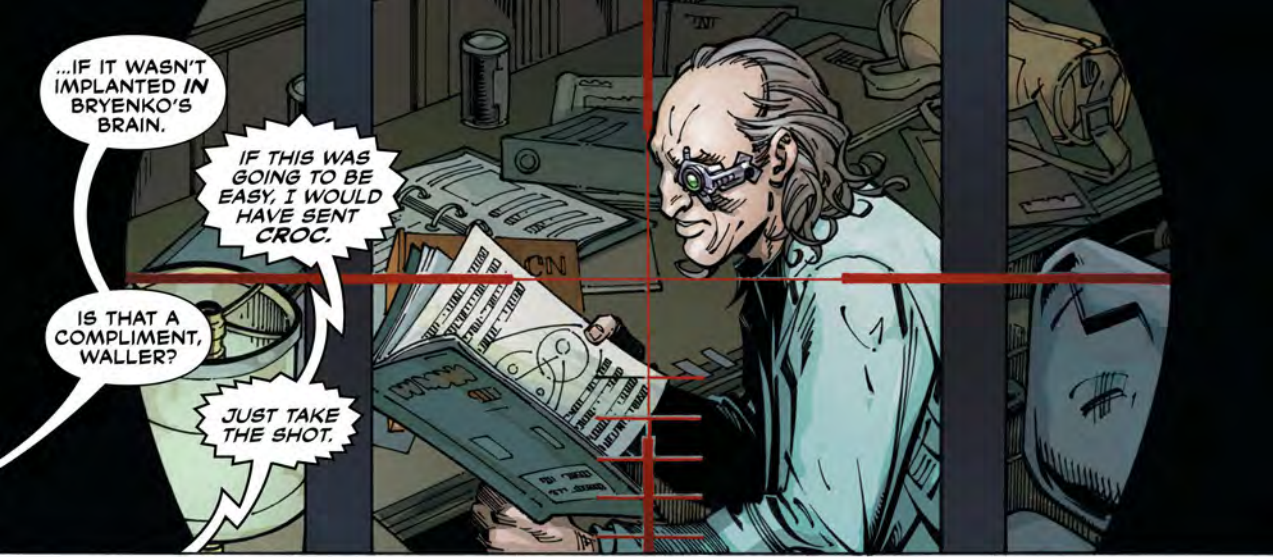
I WON'T
HURT YOUR
PRECIOUS
TECH,
WALLER.

THAT TECH
BELONGS TO THE
U.S. GOVERNMENT,
DEADSHOT. IF YOU
DON'T KILL DR.
BRYENKO BEFORE
HE SELLS IT TO
THE RUSSIANS--

MY BRAINS
WILL BE SPLATTERED
IN EVERY DIRECTION.
YEAH, I KNOW HOW
OUR ARRANGEMENT
WORKS.

BUT GETTING
THIS MAINFRAME
WOULD BE A LOT
EASIER...



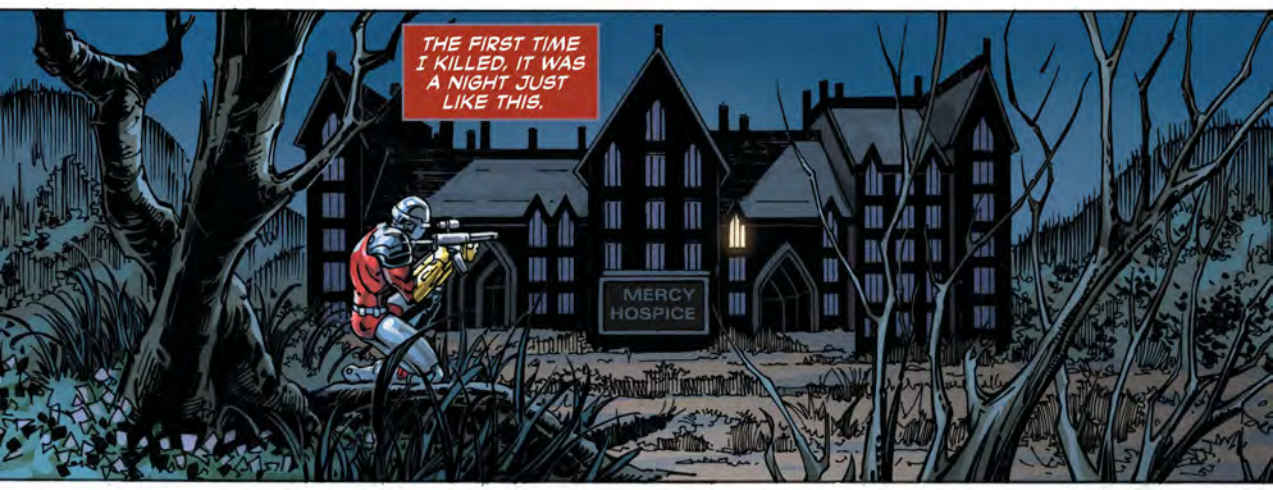


...IF IT WASN'T IMPLANTED IN BRYENKO'S BRAIN.

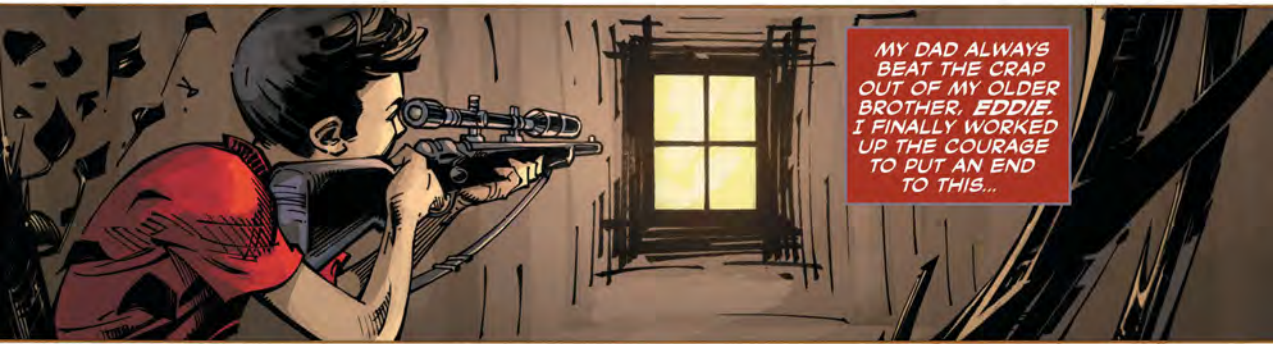
IF THIS WAS GOING TO BE EASY, I WOULD HAVE SENT CROC.

IS THAT A COMPLIMENT, WALLER?

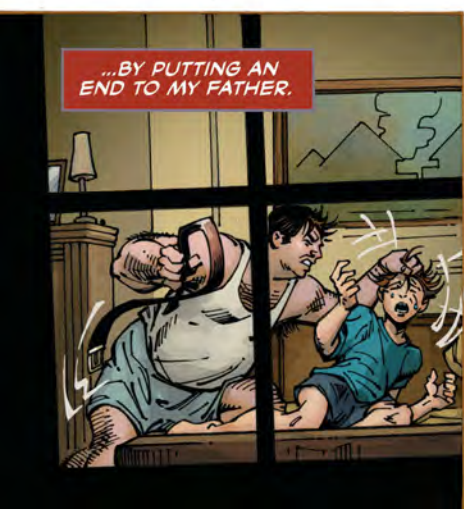
JUST TAKE THE SHOT.



THE FIRST TIME I KILLED, IT WAS A NIGHT JUST LIKE THIS.



MY DAD ALWAYS BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF MY OLDER BROTHER, EDDIE. I FINALLY WORKED UP THE COURAGE TO PUT AN END TO THIS...



...BY PUTTING AN END TO MY FATHER.



BUT I KILLED EDDIE INSTEAD.

I'VE NEVER FORGIVEN MYSELF.

WHAT THE HELL?

E. LAWTON

RECEIVED BY
MAY 11 10:45 AM '04
DIXIE

LAWTON?
REPORT.

LOST THE
TARGET. I'M
GOING IN.

LAWTON,
THIS WAS NOT
PART OF THE
PLAN!

YOU SAID TO
KILL BRYENKO AND
GET THE TECH. YOU
DIDN'T SAY HOW. IN
FACT, THERE'S A
LOT YOU DON'T
SAY.

I'M NOT IN
THE MOOD
FOR GAMES,
LAWTON.

NEITHER
AM I.

ESPECIALLY IF
I'M THE PAWN.

WHAT DO
THESE ALIEN
GOGGLES DO,
ANYWAY?

ACCORDING
TO MY FILES,
THEY ACT AS
SORT OF A...
HIVE MIND.

SO OUR
GOVERNMENT
PAID BRYENKO TO
EXPERIMENT ON
THE DISABLED. NOW
WE'RE UPSET
HE'S BETRAYED
US?

AHHH!!

SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

YOU WERE JUST A BOY WHEN AN ANCIENT WIZARD SHOWED YOU THE UNSEEN COLORS OF THE WORLD.

YOU TOOK THAT ARCAINE POWER, THOSE ELEMENTAL TOOLS OF YOUR OFFICE-- THE HELM, THE CLOAK, THE AMULET--AND FASHIONED YOURSELF A HERO.

HEEL, FOUL CREATURE! I'LL BANISH YOU BACK TO WHATEVER HELL DIMENSION SPAWNED YOU!

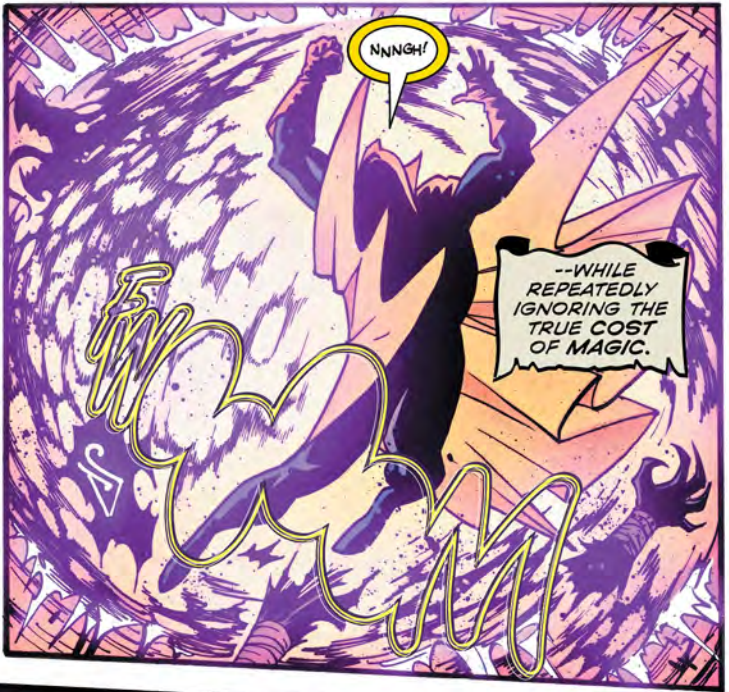
AND PERHAPS YOU ARE.

THE COST OF MAGIC

WRITTEN BY DAVID ACCAMPO
ILLUSTRATED BY SAM LOTI
COLORS BY JOHN RAUCH



BUT YOU WIELD THIS POWER AS A CHILD MIGHT MAKE A WISH--



NNNGH!

--WHILE REPEATEDLY IGNORING THE TRUE COST OF MAGIC.



THIS IS THE RIDDLE OF THE UNSEEN WORLD, AND YOUR HUMANITY IS A SKIN YOU MUST EVENTUALLY SHED.

...URRRGH



UH, GUY...ARE YOU...?

THIS IS WHAT KEEPS YOU APART FROM THEM.

DO YOU THINK IT'S CONTAGIOUS?



SILENT SCREAMS

Writer: OWL GOINERBACK Artist: MATT MENHOFF
Colorist: DAVE McCALP

Someplace in rural Georgia

THEY CALL ME. I HEAR THEIR VOICES DEEP INSIDE MY HEAD.





LATE AT NIGHT, I HEAR THEIR SILENT SCREAMS. I FEEL THEIR PAIN.



BABY GIRL, I TRIED TO FIND YOU IN TIME, BUT I WAS TOO LATE.

SORRY I DIDN'T VISIT SOONER. I HAD TO GET AWAY OR I WOULD HAVE ENDED UP LIKE YOU AND THE OTHERS, SUCKED DRY BY--

NAHEMAH.



MA'AM, PLEASE, HOLD ON. WHAT WAS THAT YOU JUST SAID?



THE THING THAT TOOK YOUR LITTLE GIRL HAS A NAME: NAHEMAH, LAST OF THE LILITU, QUEEN OF THE SUCCUBI, DEMON VAMPIRE OF BABYLON.

NAHEMAH SUCKED THE LIFE ESSENCE FROM YOUR CHILD, AND ALL THE OTHERS.



ARE YOU GOING TO KILL IT?

YES.

FOR THE CHILDREN?

NO. I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE CHILDREN.



HARLEY WANTED TO FIGHT BY MY SIDE. THAT'S TRUE LOVE. BUT I TOLD HER THAT I MUST COME ALONE.

BECAUSE OF THE VOICES ONLY I CAN HEAR, BECAUSE OF THE PAIN ONLY I CAN FEEL.

I THINK I BROKE HER HEART.

I CAME
BECAUSE THEY
CALLED OUT
MY NAME:
POISON IVY.

NOT THE GHOSTS OF
CHILDREN. THEIR CRIES HAVE
LONG BEEN SILENCED.

IT IS THE KUDZU VINES
I HEAR SCREAMING,
BEGGING FOR MY HELP.

NAHEMAH TOOK THE
CHILDREN FIRST, DRAINING
THE VERY ESSENCE FROM THEM
LIKE A SPIDER SUCKS THE
JUICES FROM A FLY.

SHE THEN TOOK
THEIR PARENTS,
AND THEIR
GRANDPARENTS,
EVEN TOOK THEIR
PETS AND
LIVESTOCK.

AND WHEN
THERE WERE NO
MORE HUMANS
OR ANIMALS TO BE
HAD, SHE STARTED
SUCKING THE LIFE
FROM THE FOREST.

SHE IS A BLIGHT,
A THREAT TO ALL
LIVING THINGS.

THIS IS WHY I'M HERE.
NOT FOR THE CHILDREN,
BUT FOR THE PLANTS.

YES,
LITTLE
ONES. I'VE
COME TO
HELP
YOU.



INSIDE THE HUANGSHAN
MOUNTAINS, ANHUI, CHINA.

AGAINST MY
BETTER JUDGMENT, I
HAVE ANOTHER CHOPPER
HEADING YOUR WAY, BUT
YOU BETTER GET YOUR
SLINKY ASS THERE
NOW.

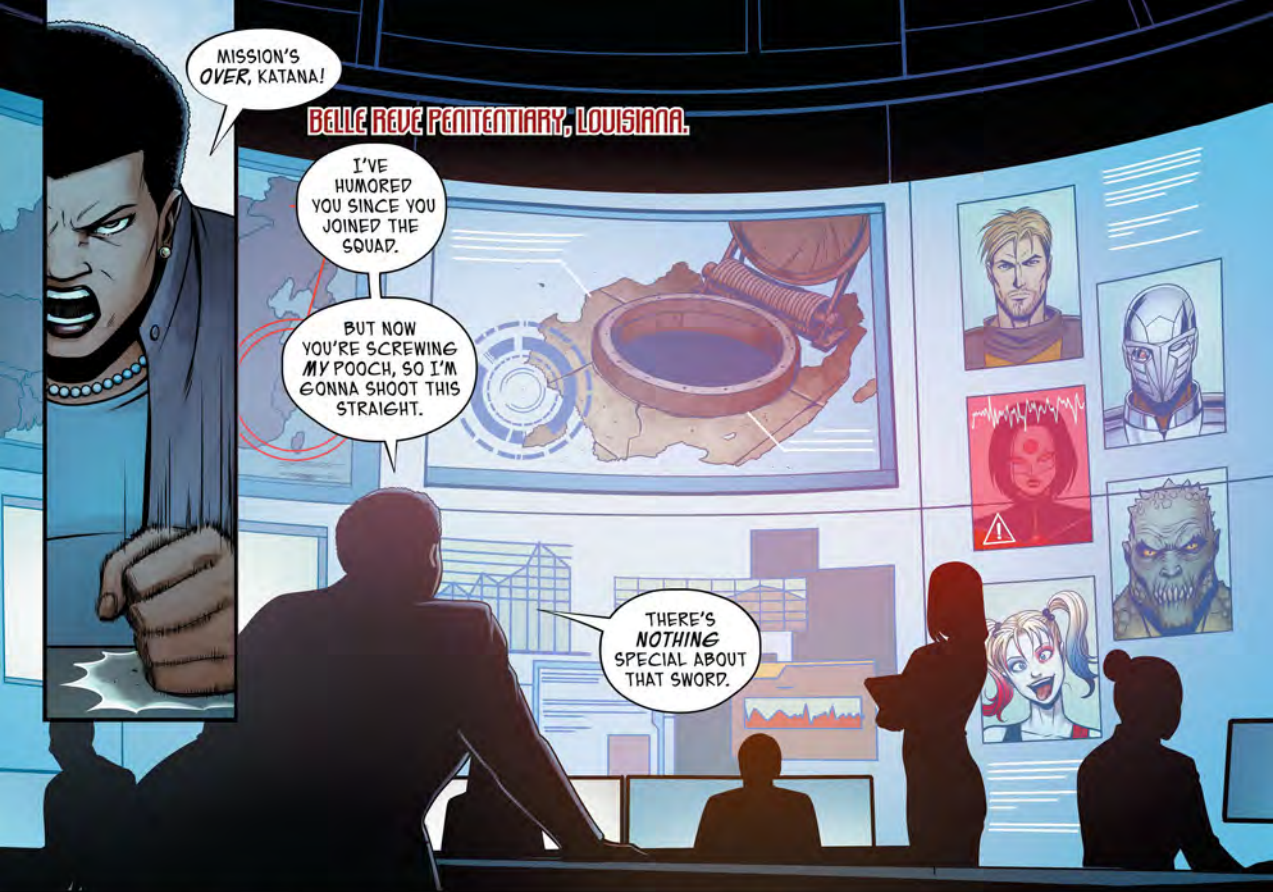
'CAUSE BY THE
LOOK OF YOUR
VITALS, YOU'LL BE
LUCKY TO
MAKE IT.

NOT WITHOUT
SOULTAKER.

NEVER
WITHOUT
MASED.

TO THE HILT

WRITTEN BY AARON GILLESPIE
ART BY LYNNE YOSHII
COLORS BY BETH SOTELO



MISSION'S OVER, KATANA!

BELLE REVE PENITENTIARY, LOUISIANA.

I'VE HUMORED YOU SINCE YOU JOINED THE SQUAD.

BUT NOW YOU'RE SCREWING MY POOCH, SO I'M GONNA SHOOT THIS STRAIGHT.

THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT THAT SWORD.



YOU'RE RISKING YOUR LIFE, NOT TO MENTION AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT, FOR A FAIRY TALE.

NOT A FAIRY TALE, WALLER. A TRAGEDY.

BUT REAL NONETHELESS.



KNOW WHAT? I CHANGED MY MIND. GO GET YOUR SWORD.

'CAUSE IF YOU MAKE IT BACK?



I'M A BREAK IT OVER MY DAMN KNEE.



NNS
KING
SNAKE!



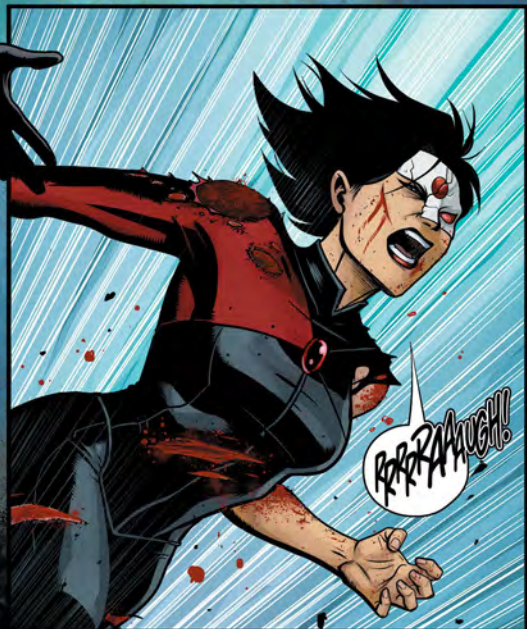
YOU HAVE...
STOLEN WHAT
IS MINE!
I WILL
HAVE IT
BACK!



CALM
YOURSELF,
GIRL.
IF YOU'RE SO
EAGER FOR ME TO
FINISH WHAT I
STARTED...



I'LL
GLADLY
OBLIGE.



RRRRRAUGH!

SO, THE OTHER DAY,
GREEN ARROW CALLS
ME UP AND SAYS:

"YOU GOTTA HELP
ME. I NEED TO HIDE
THIS GUY AND HIS
FAMILY IN BLÜDHAVEN
FOR A BIT. NO ONE
WILL EVER KNOW."

THE SUBTEXT BEING, NO
ONE COMES TO BLÜDHAVEN...
UNTIL THEY DO.

AS ALWAYS, I HEARD
THE INNER BATMAN IN
MY HEAD SAYING:



LET HIM
BABY-SIT HIS OWN
DAMN PROBLEMS,
NIGHTWING.

BUT MY INNER BATMAN
IS A GRUMP. WHATEVER,
GREEN ARROW'S A
FRIEND OF A FRIEND OF
BABS. WHAT COULD
GO WRONG?



WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT **FAMILY**

WRITER: AL LETSON
ARTIST: SIYA OUM
COLORIST: CRIS PETER

AVALON APARTMENTS. BLÜDHAVEN.

YOU
ARE
HERE.

SO I ASKED GREEN
ARROW, "WHO ARE
WE HIDING? AND
WHO FROM?"

"A GUY NAMED
ABELARD, HIS
HUSBAND BILAL AND
THEIR BABY, KATYA.
ABELARD IS
COUNT VERTIGO'S
HALF-BROTHER."



"VERTIGO'S A REAL NUT JOB.
THE SO-CALLED KING OF
VLATAVA. WANTS TO BE SURE NO
ONE COMES FOR HIS THRONE, SO
HIS HALF-BROTHER'S A THREAT."

GO!
GO! GO!



WHAT HE DIDN'T TELL
ME, WAS THE NUT JOB HAS
A DAMN ARMY. THANKS,
ROBIN HOOD. THANKS.

FOCUS ON
THE TARGET,
I'LL HANDLE
BATMAN-
LITE.

BATMAN-
LITE? I'VE
NEVER HEARD
THAT ONE
BEFORE,
VERTIGO.

PRO TIP: THE
BAD GUYS WITH
BETTER PLANS
MAKE BETTER
PUNS.



YOU'RE IN A
CONFINED SPACE.
I'M JAMMING ALL
SIGNALS, NO
ONE'S COMING
TO SAVE YOU.

BESIDES, WHAT'S
YOUR BAT-FAMILY
AGAINST MY ARMY? NO,
THERE WILL BE NO...WHAT
DO YOU AMERICANS
CALL IT? A "RUMBLE"?
ONLY A WHIMPER.



AND I'D SAY MY **PLAN** IS PRETTY GOOD.

CONCENTRATE, NIGHTWING.

REMEMBER, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU FEEL THE SQUEEZE...

IT'S NOT THE **BODY** OF THE CONSTRUCTOR KILLING YOU...

YUUUUUU!!!

SNHOOP

...IT'S THE **HEAD.**



AT LEAST THE **FAMILY** GOT AWAY, FOR NOW.



GNAWWW!

KRAK

LUCKY **BREAK**, BUT I'LL TAKE IT.

ROLE CALL

WRITTEN BY TONY PATRICK PENCILS BY MINKYU JUNG
INKS BY KLAUS JANSON COLORS BY PETE PANTAZIS

QUESTION.

DIDN'T YOU
DIE ONCE
ALREADY?





YES.
ONCE.
BUT--



--HOW MANY
TIMES ARE
YOU
PLANNING
TO DIE,
DUKE?



YOUR MOUTH RUNS
FASTER THAN YOUR
RESPONSE TIME.



LESSON
NUMBER ONE:
QUIPS AND
RETOPS SHOULD
ONLY BE USED FOR
DISTRACTION.

"WE OPERATE
IN MILLISECDS,
NOT SECONDS WHEN
IT COMES TO OUR
ENEMIES IN AN
ENVIRONMENT
LIKE ARKHAM..."

...WORDS ARE
WEAPONS WHICH
ARE ONLY USEFUL
AT THE BEGINNING
OR ENDING
OF ANY FIGHT."



SO SAYS
YOUR BOSS--
BATMAN.



GOOD
ADVICE.

YOU
SHOULD
TAKE IT.

SLIP

AND HE'S NOT
MY BOSS.
OR THE
TARGET OF
MY DADDY
ISSUES.



SAYS THE
KID WHO
USED TO
LIVE IN THE
MANSION
AND HAS A
BAT INSIGNIA
ON HIS CHEST.



TOE



THERE'S A
REASON THEY
CALL ME THE
RED HOOD.

WHAT DID
YOU THINK THE
HELMET WAS FOR?
DECORATION?



NARROWS, MEET
CRIME ALLEY. WE
DO THINGS
DIFFERENTLY.
FIND A FUNCTIONAL
OUTFIT.

HOLD ON...
HOW LONG HAVE
THE CELLS...

THE GRAND ARMORY OF
THEMYSIRA.
YEARS AGO.



DIANA!

THE
ARCHIVE

WRITTEN BY SCOTT SNYDER

ART BY IBRAHIM MOUSTAFA

COLORS BY ROMULO FAJARDO JR.





I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE, IF YOU WANT A *SWORD*, WE HAVE PLENTY.

BUT THESE ARE THE *TREASURES* OF OUR PEOPLE. THEY ARE NOT *TOYS*.



I *KNOW* THEY'RE NOT *TOYS*.

THEN YOU KNOW HOW *DANGEROUS* THEY CAN BE.



ESPECIALLY THAT ONE.



BUT WHY IS IT *DANGEROUS*?

MOTHER...

"...I JUST WANT TO KNOW."

WASHINGTON, D.C.
FIFTY FEET BELOW THE
SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTE.



WHY HAVE YOU NOT SHOWN ME THIS BEFORE, STEVE?

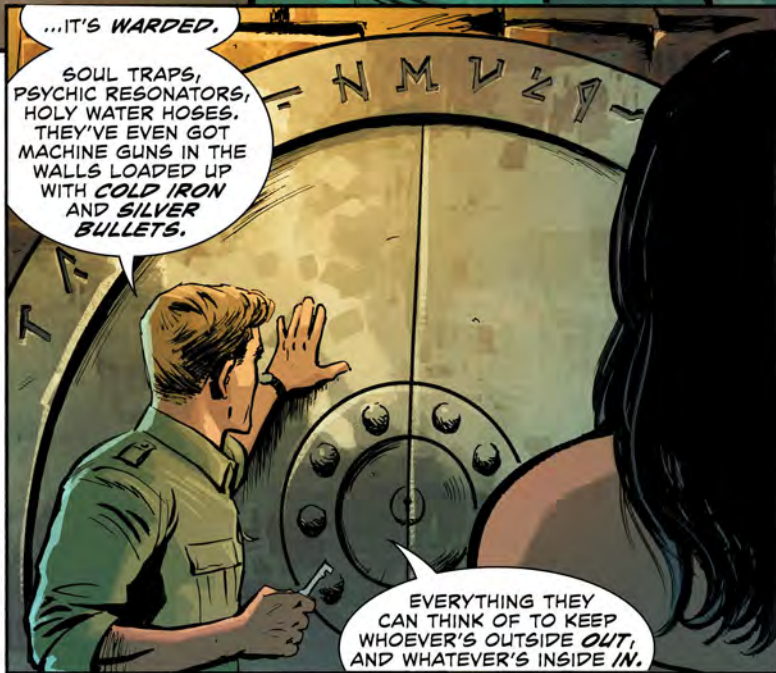


TO BE HONEST, I JUST FOUND OUT ABOUT IT MYSELF.



THEY ONLY TOLD ME SO THAT I COULD PASS IT ALONG TO YOU, AND EVEN THAT TOOK A LOT OF CONVINCING.

THIS PLACE ISN'T JUST CLASSIFIED...



...IT'S WARDED.

SOUL TRAPS, PSYCHIC RESONATORS, HOLY WATER HOSES. THEY'VE EVEN GOT MACHINE GUNS IN THE WALLS LOADED UP WITH COLD IRON AND SILVER BULLETS.

EVERYTHING THEY CAN THINK OF TO KEEP WHOEVER'S OUTSIDE OUT, AND WHATEVER'S INSIDE IN.



YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE THE AMOUNT OF TAXPAYER MONEY THEY'VE SPENT ON SORCERERS JUST TO KEEP THIS STUFF OFF THE MAP...