

SHADOW OF THE BAT

I: CAPES

101 - "The Bite Marked Heart, pt. I"

Batman and related characters were created by Bob Kane & Bill Finger and are owned by DC Comics and Warner Brothers. This is a work of transformative fiction... aren't they all?

FADE FROM BLACK:

EXT. GOTHAM CITY PIERS - NIGHT

Establishing shot. Blinding, dazzling lights illuminate an enormous red and yellow circus tent erected near the water.

EXT. HALY'S INTERNATIONAL CIRCUS - CONTINUOUS

Walking through the sea of attendees is BRUCE WAYNE and his gorgeous blond date VICKI VALE. They continue with the crowd past a stout CARNIVAL BARKER.

Bruce, dressed in a black tuxedo, helps Vicki through the crowd with a steady hand on the small of her back. Vicki, wearing a backless red dress, looks to her date and smiles.

VICKI

So this is your idea of a date,
huh? I've heard of eccentric
billionaires, but-

Bruce seemingly disregards her comment. His expression becomes serious as his head turns, following a shady individual (TONY ZUCCO) in a ragged suit and cabbie cap who emerges from inside the large tent through a side entrance flap.

The individual disappears into the crowd as he pops his collar and looks left to right before he's gone.

Vicki follows Bruce's eyeline, seeing the man.

VICKI (CONT'D)

Was that Tony Zucco?

Bruce snaps back to the situation at hand, donning his devil-may-care affectation.

BRUCE

Who? Oh, Vicki, not one of your
atrocious mobsters, I thought you
were leaving your press pass at
home?

They reach the ticket booth.

TICKET TAKER

Tickets please.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Asking me to stop being a
journalist is like asking you to
stop- What is it that you do?

INT. HALY'S CIRCUS, MAIN CIRCUS TENT - LATER

Bruce and Vicki sit in the middle of the audience with a perfect view of the show. As Vicki and the crowd gaze in wonder, Bruce slides his smart phone out of his pocket and glances at it.

In the main ring, two muscular brothers perform their balance-based acrobatics, one lifting the other above his head.

Vicki's attention switches from the performance to Bruce, who seems uninterested.

VICKI

Do you even like the
circus? You've been texting all
night.

Bruce looks up at Vicki then back at his phone one last time.

The text is **superimposed on the screen.**

SI: ALFRED: Everything's fine Bruce. Police scanner shows a quiet night.

Bruce pockets his phone.

BRUCE

I love the circus. The spectacle,
the...

The act ends.

The audience applauds.

VICKI

The what?

Bruce claps.

Vicki begins to golf clap as the applause dies down.

BRUCE

The smell...

(CONTINUED)

The lights go down. A hush falls over the crowd as ringmaster JACK HALY steps into the spotlight down below.

HALY

Ladies and gentlemen! Over one hundred feet above me you will see the world's most death defying family getting into position. Below them you will notice no net; on their persons, no harnesses. It is for this reason I must ask that you be completely silent and try to hold your applause until the act has come to a close.

The crowd murmurs.

HALY (CONT'D)

So, without further ado, the pride of Haly's circus, Gotham City, I give you: The Flying Graysons!

The crowd roars as the lights focus on the family high on their platforms.

MARY GRAYSON stands on her platform waving, while across on the other, JOHN GRAYSON and his 14 year old son, DICK, do the same. A dark-haired family, they are all wearing matching red and green leotards.

John and Mary get into position, trapeze bars in hand, as a hush falls over the crowd.

The parent acrobats both swing out over the circus. Mary lets go and executes a flip toward John, who is swinging toward her.

Dick readies himself on his platform.

Mary completes her flip, but her hands connect with John's, the trapeze wire suddenly SNAPS.

The crowd reacts in HORROR when John grabs what remains of the sabotaged line.

On the way down, Mary manages to grab John's ankle, but the force and extra weight cause John to slip even further.

Bruce, already several seats away from Vicki, is trying to get to the ring, but the whole crowd stands in a FRENZY, blocking his path.

John slips further yet.

(CONTINUED)

Dick's cry ECHOES throughout the tent as a silence falls over the audience.

DICK

Mom!

Bruce is still desperately trying to get through the crowd, pushing and shoving, but it is no use.

The crowd SCREAMS as the couple fall to their death.

OPENING TITLE CARD: SHADOW OF THE BAT

ACT ONE:

EXT/INT. WAYNE MANOR GROUNDS/ALFRED'S ROLLS ROYCE - SUNRISE

SI: "The Bite Marked Heart, Part I"

Dick Grayson sits in the passenger seat of a vintage Rolls Royce, driven by ALFRED PENNYWORTH, Bruce's longtime butler. He stares blankly out the window at his new home.

EXT. WAYNE MANOR GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

The automobile pulls through the looming gate and up the path to the estate. The rising sun glints dully off the windows of the gigantic, gothic mansion.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Bruce, in black slacks and a tucked in black dress shirt, is speaking on an antique, rotary telephone. He stands at his desk, staring out the large window before him, watching Alfred remove Dick's bag from the trunk.

GORDON (ON PHONE)

Really Mr. Wayne, what you did for that kid, well, let's just say I didn't think you had it in you.

Bruce is using his posh affectation.

BRUCE

Thank you, I suppose. Any word on the investigation, Commissioner?

GORDON (ON PHONE)

Forensics went over their wire. I don't want to bother you with the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GORDON (ON PHONE) (cont'd)
details, Mr. Wayne, but it was
definitely tampered with.

BRUCE
So you're approaching this as a
homicide?

GORDON (ON PHONE)
I'm afraid so... I'd wait to tell
the boy.

The sound of a massive door opening creaks through the
halls. Alfred shouts from elsewhere in the house, his
upperclass English accent piercing through the cold air.

ALFRED (O.S.)
Master Bruce?

BRUCE
Thank you, Commissioner.

Bruce hangs up the phone.

Alfred enters the room carrying a green and crimson
army-bag. Dick enters behind him.

ALFRED
Your ward, sir. Master Richard
Grayson.

Dick enters, wearing black slacks, a black dress shirt and a
black vest, dead behind the eyes.

Bruce speaks in his actual voice; quiet but full, confident
but vulnerable.

BRUCE
Hello Dick. Welcome to Wayne
Manor.

Dick glances at Bruce, then up at the large painting of
Thomas and Martha Wayne above the opulent fireplace. His
eyes fall to the floor once more.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
You must be exhausted. You should
get a few hours rest before
breakfast. Mr. Pennyworth will
show you to your room.

Alfred leads Dick out of the study.

ALFRED
You may call me Alfred if you wish.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

Alfred stands at the sink, jacket off, sleeves rolled, washing dishes. Bruce leans against the island, checking his pocket watch.

BRUCE
How long has he been in there?

ALFRED
A little over five hours. I went to rouse him for lunch, to which he responded he was not hungry.

BRUCE
He speaks.

ALFRED
Occasionally.

BRUCE
How'd you do it?

ALFRED
Do what?

BRUCE
... Deal with me? Back then?

ALFRED
It was not easy to bring you back from that dark place, but it was not hard to love you like my own child... I feel love can heal all wounds.

BRUCE
Then I'm not sure I can help him.

Alfred's hands stop scrubbing. He looks over at Bruce.

ALFRED
Well, Bruce, I'm hoping you surprise the both of us.

INT. GCPD, GORDON'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Commissioner Gordon's office is a large square room containing a desk, computer, two chairs, a set of filing cabinets, a coat rack by the door, and a small window opposite it. All the furnishings are modern, by the standards of a decade one or two previous to this one.

Vicki Vale sits alone, across from the commissioner's desk, checking her make-up in her compact mirror. Here she is dressed slightly more professionally than at the circus; her skirt suit is a more muted pastel red, and the slit doesn't cut nearly as far up her pencil skirt.

Commissioner JIM GORDON enters his office in a hurry, as if late, with a stack of files and folders.

GORDON

Sorry I'm late, Miss Vale. I thought being Captain had me running ragged.

Gordon takes off his overcoat.

VICKI

How are you adjusting to the new position, Commissioner Gordon?

Gordon stops as he hangs his coat on the rack.

GORDON

Is this on the record?

VICKI

I'm never off the record.

Gordon finishes depositing his coat, then walks to his desk, sitting down as he speaks.

GORDON

I'll remember that... Truthfully it's mostly goddamn paperwork. My hand cramps up from all the signatures it's got me writing. But, I have a feeling this interview isn't about me.

VICKI

You're right, it isn't. I assume you've heard the rumors of some sort of... lizard-man living in the sewers.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON
I don't conduct investigations
based on Grimm's Fairytales, ma'am.

Vicki flips open a notepad and fingers through the pages.

VICKI
Well, when I spoke to Detective
Bullock, he said he was taking the
rumors very seriously.

GORDON
Harold Bullock does not speak for
the Gotham City Police Department,
Ms. Vale. The idea of a lizard-man
roaming the streets is asinine.

VICKI
(condescendingly)
Why? We've already got a Bat-Man.

Gordon's brow furrows as he pushes his glasses back up his
nose.

VICKI (CONT'D)
Are you saying you've completely
ruled out the so called Killer
Crocodile in the cannibal
investigation?

GORDON
Yes. It was never a question. The
murder is nothing more than an
isolated incident.

Vicki's smart phone rings.

VICKI
Excuse me just one second
Commissioner.

She answers it.

VICKI (CONT'D)
Hello?

Gordon's desk phone rings. He answers it.

GORDON
Gordon.

For a silent moment they are both listening to their phones. Suddenly, they both hang up and rise to their feet. Vicki snatches up her purse; Gordon strides toward his tan overcoat.

GORDON
I have to go.

VICKI
I have to go.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, DICK'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

Dick sleeps in the darkness. Thick curtains take up most of one wall, drawn over a humongous window. Only small slivers of light escape from around the edges of the fabric.

Alfred enters the dark room and continues to the window, opening the curtains. The orange/red sunset streaks in, shining across Dick in his large bed.

ALFRED
Master Grayson, I must insist that you eat some form of breakfast, or at this point, more properly, supper.

DICK
I'm not hungry.

ALFRED
And though I believe you, nonetheless you are in need of sustenance.

DICK
What's the use.

ALFRED
Yes, it is hard to imagine a boy of your age enduring such loss and still making a life for himself, isn't it?

There is a moment of silence as Alfred sits at the foot of Dick's bed. He stares wistfully out the window.

ALFRED
Come to think of it, I know of one such person. A boy not much younger than yourself. He lost his parents, but a kindly gentleman took him under his wing and treated him as his own.

(CONTINUED)

DICK

Is there a moral to this story?

ALFRED

That boy grew into a fine, healthy man. A man who sees in you, what I saw in him all those years ago.

DICK

... Mr. Wayne?

ALFRED

Yes, though he rarely speaks of it... Supper is ready when you are, Master Grayson.

Alfred stands and takes a step toward the door. Dick finally rises and turns, now sitting at the edge of the bed.

Alfred produces a pair of slippers as he turns back to face him. He leans down slightly and places them next to Dick's feet.

ALFRED

Kind of you to join us.

EXT. CRIME ALLEY - SUNDOWN

Open on a poorly lit street sign as the lights of police cruisers approach. When the cruisers pull up, the lights illuminate the street sign. It reads "**PARK ROW**".

Gordon exits his squad car and approaches the police line. A few beat cops, including Latina uniformed officer RENEE MONTOYA, hold the perimeter and tape off the alley.

At the same time, Vicki pulls up in her red sports car. She gets out and moves toward Gordon and the cordoned-off crime scene.

VICKI

Commissioner.

GORDON

I'd watch those wheels in this part of town if I were you.

Montoya holds up the yellow tape for Gordon, who ducks deftly under it. As Vicki tries to follow, Montoya drops the tape and puts her hand up to Vicki's chest.

(CONTINUED)

MONTOYA

Sorry ma'am, no press past this line.

Gordon is still walking. Vicki yells after him.

VICKI

I'll reschedule the rest of our interview, Commissioner. We obviously have a lot to talk about!

Gordon reaches a badly mutilated body lying back-first on the ground. His chest cavity has seemingly been eaten through. Standing next to the body is HAROLD BULLOCK, a large (some might say fat), Caucasian plainclothes detective in a fedora and trenchcoat who looks like he hasn't shaved (or showered) in a few days.

GORDON

Jesus.

BULLOCK

Yeah, from what I can tell, no sign of struggle, just like the last one. Forensics ain't been down here yet, but it's pretty clear this is the same guy as before. The heart-eater.

GORDON

Hard to argue.

BULLOCK

Let me take a few guys down in the sewers, Commish, bust up that freak's scaly head.

Gordon looks at Bullock with disdain.

GORDON

We're going to focus on facts here, Detective. I will not send department resources chasing down a phantom.

BULLOCK

Commissioner Loeb woulda-

GORDON

(interrupting, frustrated)
And we see what that got him. Loeb isn't the Commissioner anymore, I am. Now go call forensics and ask what's taking so damn long.

(CONTINUED)

BULLOCK
(thinly veiled rancor)
Sure thing, Commish.

Bullock pulls out his cell phone as he walks away. Gordon squats down next to the body and takes a closer look, letting out a sigh.

Focus on torn guts/viscera.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, DINING HALL - NIGHT

Open Focus on a platter of fresh bacon. Alfred uses tongs to grab a few strips and places them on Dick's plate.

After serving Dick and Bruce, Alfred serves himself. They are all sitting clustered at one end of the elongated dinner table, Alfred at the head.

BRUCE
Extraordinary as always, Alfred.

ALFRED
Thank you, Bruce.

BRUCE
(to Dick)
Don't you think so?

DICK
Sure.

There is a beeping sound. Bruce takes a beeper off his belt and looks at it, turning off the sound.

DICK (CONT'D)
What is that?

Bruce looks up from the beeper to Alfred.

BRUCE
It's a beeper.

There is a moment of silence as Alfred wipes his mouth and stands.

DICK
What's a beeper?

EXT. GCPD ROOF - NIGHT

Gordon stands in front of the cityscape, cold, hands in his pockets. He draws from a lit cigarette gnashed between his teeth. The sounds of traffic and sirens blares from the streets below.

Batman appears from the shadows behind him.

BATMAN

You rang?

Gordon turns around.

GORDON

You know the cannibal victim from a few days ago?

There is a beat of silence.

GORDON (CONT'D)

There was another a few hours ago. It'll be front page news tomorrow morning. Some of the more enterprising rags in this city might even try to pin it on a human crocodile, if you can believe it.

BATMAN

I might. There is someone in the sewers.

GORDON

I thought that was a rumor.

BATMAN

I was a rumor.

GORDON

So everyone keeps reminding me.

Gordon throws down his cigarette steps on it with the sole of his dress-shoe.

BATMAN

I'll look into it.

Gordon looks up.

GORDON

If you-

Batman is gone.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

A hulking shadow of a man roots around in a dumpster deep in a dark alleyway. The headlights of a turning car illuminates him for a woman passing by on the cross-street.

As he is revealed to the woman, she SHRIEKS, but we do not see him clearly.

The figure is startled and disappears down an open manhole in the alley as the woman flees down the main street.

FADE TO BLACK:

ACT TWO:

FADE FROM BLACK:

EXT. WAYNE MANOR GROUNDS, BACK LOT - MORNING

Bruce and Dick walk down the large stone back steps and out to the enormous wooded back plot, each in sweat-pants and hoodies. Bruce's navy blue hoodie says "GSU" in yellow lettering; Dick's deep green hoodie says "WayneTech" in white lettering.

DICK

It's cold.

BRUCE

You'll warm up.

They walk by a willow tree, under which Bruce's parents are buried. Bruce walks by without even glancing it at. Dick is unable to avoid looking closer at the headstone, turning his head to read the names as they pass it.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Exercise is good for the heart.

They walk a little farther and come upon a large obstacle course in a clearing.

Bruce stops walking and so does Dick. Bruce looms over his ward, arms crossed.

DICK

I don't really-

BRUCE

(interrupting)

It's a two stage course.

(CONTINUED)

DICK

But-

BRUCE

(interrupting)

Begin.

Dick stands still, stalling for a moment, then, with a deep breath, he takes off at a sprint.

He plants his hand on the first barrier and does a barrel-roll style reverse-vault, runs up the second barrier and gainers off the top, catching the swinging bar suspended from the framework above.

He swings only once, immediately executing a quadruple mid-air somersault before un-tucking feet first into a medium-sized hoop set up at a forty-five degree angle. As he hits the ground he immediately shoulder-rolls to further minimize the impact.

He stops. Standing before him is a fifteen foot curved wall.

As he breathes, vapor emits from his mouth.

He runs up the wall and jumps at the last second, grabbing the lip of the wall with just his right hand. He doesn't grab with his left as well; instead he opts to use the right to pull himself up into a one-handed handstand on the lip, like a "gymnast plant" in skateboarding. He does a capoeira twirl and lands on his feet.

Hanging in the air in front of him, seemingly too far to jump to, is a rope. Below the rope is Bruce.

BRUCE

(aside)

Leap of faith.

Dick leaps from the edge of the platform, grabbing the rope with almost impossible ease. He swings back and lands next to Bruce.

DICK

So what's stage two?

BRUCE

Take me down.

DICK

You're kidding.

Bruce smiles.

(CONTINUED)

BRUCE
Don't think you can?

Dick puts his hands up in a defensive position and gets light on his feet, a basic and untrained fighting stance.

DICK
Come at me, playboy.

Bruce half-heartedly goes for a single-leg pick, Dick sprawls and then hand-springs over Bruce's back, landing in a spinning leg-sweep that Bruce jumps over. Dick starts to right himself after his own spin.

In one fluid motion, Bruce hooks the top of his foot behind Dick's knee and pulls through, sweeping Dick's leg out from under him. Dick tips back and lands on the ground with a thud.

Dick kips up to his feet angrily.

DICK
You're too big. I have to be able to strike.

BRUCE
Fair enough.

Dick feints a couple kicks with the same leg, then slides feet first between Bruce's wicket. Standing up, he thrust kicks the back of Bruce's leg, taking him down to his knee.

Dick comes from behind with an attempted knee to the back of Bruce's head, but Bruce ducks it and grabs Dick's other leg, bringing his forward momentum to a halt. With one foot under Bruce's control, Dick lands on his attacking foot and immediately tries to back kick Bruce's face with that same foot.

Bruce uses his other hand to catch the sole-kick and tosses both of Dick's feet, flipping him through a back roll.

They both stand up.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Alright.

Bruce grabs two bo staves hidden in the structure of the warped wall. He tosses one of the staves to Dick.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Three stages.

They have a quick exchange, wood hitting wood several times.

(CONTINUED)

They back up from each other, circling.

Dick stops and breaks the staff over his knee into two equal pieces.

He now holds one in each hand.

Dick comes in striking overhand several times with alternating hands, Bruce blocking them all.

Bruce slides both hands to one end of his staff and baseball-swings at Dick's legs.

Dick vaults all the way over Bruce and lands behind him, then uses his sticks to sweep Bruce's legs, taking him all the way down to the ground.

From Bruce's POV, Dick stands over him, breathing heavily.

He takes off his hoodie and tosses it to the side, revealing a white ribbed tank-top. Steam rises from his shoulders.

Dick extends his hand and helps Bruce up.

INT. GCPD, PRECINCT HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The open and brightly lit precinct house takes up most of a floor in the short but impressive skyscraper. Dozens of GCPD employees bustle around scores of desks; phones ring and keyboards clack. Gordon enters briskly through a pair of glass double doors. He continues through the room, turning briefly to grab a stack of manila folders from officer MERKEL.

GORDON

Thank you Merkel.

When he turns around to continue to his office he almost barrels over Vicki Vale.

VICKI

Did you read the Gazette,
Commissioner?

GORDON

I prefer the Globe.

Gordon pushes past her and continues through the large room. Vale follows.

(CONTINUED)

VICKI

Then you didn't see my article?

GORDON

I was briefed on it. You're very resourceful, Miss Vale. I'd love to know where you get your information.

VICKI

A good reporter never reveals her sources, Commissioner. Care to comment?

GORDON

On what?

VICKI

My article.

Gordon turns around, stopping next to an empty desk. Vale almost barrels into him, but stops in time.

GORDON

You want a journalistic critique?

VICKI

I want what you want, Commissioner; what's best for the people of Gotham City.

GORDON

Then you'll let me do my job.

Gordon turns and walks toward his office, leaving Vale there.

VICKI

The people have a right to know.

Gordon, speaking as he walks, does not even turn around.

GORDON

If they do I'll call a press conference.

Gordon walks into his office, the door swings closed behind him.

Vicki scans the precinct house until she finds Montoya. Montoya looks up and there is a moment of eye contact, but Vicki quickly walks away back toward the elevator. Montoya goes back to her paperwork.

(CONTINUED)

Focus on Montoya's paperwork. A cheesesteak sandwich with unwrapped butcher paper beneath lands on the paperwork.

Bullock picks up the sandwich and takes a bite.

MONTOYA

Do you mind?

Food particles cascade from Bullock's mouth as he speaks.

BULLOCK

(mouth full)

I'm on a tight schedule, Montoya.
So's I have to stuff my face during
business, what's it to ya?

Montoya looks up, interested.

MONTOYA

Then it is business?

Bullock swallows.

BULLOCK

(knowingly)

You and I both know it could never
be pleasure between us, Montoya.

He takes another huge bite from his sloppy sandwich.

Vale hides awkwardly behind a potted plant some ways away, listening. The cops don't notice her eavesdropping.

MONTOYA

What business?

BULLOCK

The Killer Crocodile.

Montoya returns her attention to her paperwork.

MONTOYA

I don't know what you're talking
about.

BULLOCK

C'mon, Monty. I know you wanna be
detective someday.

MONTOYA

Your point?

BULLOCK

You like to go through the interesting cases in your off-time. You got delusions of grandeur. So I know that you know I'm talkin' about the Cannibal Homicides.

MONTOYA

Those files are classified.

BULLOCK

I know, and me? I like initiative. But higher-ups frown on that sorta thing.

Montoya puts down her pen and raises her steely gaze to Bullock.

MONTOYA

Are you threatening me?

Bullock crumples his sandwich wrapper into a ball as he speaks.

BULLOCK

I'm just saying I could use someone with initiative on my side... Think about it.

Bullock drops the remains of the wrapper on Montoya's desk as he stands. He walks toward the elevator, passing Vicki, who stands up and nods to him, trying to look as inconspicuous as possible.

Bullock gets in the elevator; the doors close behind him.

Vicki turns around to look back at Montoya. She hesitates for a moment, looking side to side. Satisfied she isn't being watched, she unbuttons two extra buttons on her blouse, revealing her cleavage. She hikes up her skirt, stands, readies herself, then walks sultrily to Montoya's desk.

Montoya is cleaning up Bullock's mess. Vicki's chest lowers into frame on the other side of the desk.

Vicki is leaning over it, showing herself off.

MONTOYA

(frustrated/offended)

Can I help you?

(CONTINUED)

VICKI
Hi, Vicki Vale.

Vicki extends her hand limply. Montoya does not take it.

VICKI (CONT'D)
And you are?

MONTOYA
Officer Renee Montoya,
ma'am. Goodbye.

She looks back at her paperwork.

VICKI
Well... I was hoping that-

Montoya doesn't even look up, continuing to write as she answers.

MONTOYA
I'm very busy ma'am. You'll have
to find your gossip elsewhere.

Vicki stands up, a confused look on her face that quickly turns to frustration.

She walks to the elevator and pushes the down button. As she waits, she pulls the hem of her skirt back down to its regular position.

The elevator doors open; Merkel is already inside. She enters the elevator and turns to face out, standing next to Merkel.

Merkel glances down at Vicki's cleavage.

Vicki re-buttons her blouse, exasperated, as the elevator doors close.

INT. THE CAVE, CAPERY -

Batman, suited up but sans cape, scrolls through a rotating garment rack with dozens of black capes that pass by as the mechanism whirs.

His gloved hand picks one off and wraps it around his neck, fastening it to his tunic.

Alfred walks up from behind.

(CONTINUED)

ALFRED
Sewers again?

BATMAN
That's right.

ALFRED
Then I needn't have cleaned the
washing machines. I can't imagine
what that car of yours smells like.

BATMAN
Get Dick to bed early
tonight. He's got a big day ahead
of him.

EXT. A SIDE ALLEY - NIGHT

The sun has finished setting as the light diminishes through
the alleyways.

Batman enters the frame, walking deliberately down the
alley. He stops at a manhole, bends down, takes the cover
off, and slides it to the side. He begins his descent into
the sewer, pulling the cover back into position from inside.

INT. SEWERS - CONTINUOUS

Batman retrieves the night vision goggles hanging from his
utility belt and puts them on. He taps a button on the
temple of the goggles and the lenses glow a soft green when
the night vision calibrates.

He takes several steps into the darkness of the sewers. A
large shape with glowing eyes appears behind him.

FADE TO BLACK:

ACT THREE:

FADE FROM BLACK:

INT. SEWERS - CONTINUOUS

Batman takes a few more steps.

Focus on Batman's cowl as he taps the goggles, switching
modes.

The soft green glow of his lenses turns red.

(CONTINUED)

With whip-like rapidity and accuracy Batman tosses a flashbang grenade over his shoulder. It goes off almost instantly, illuminating a huge, dark, muscular man seemingly covered in scales; WAYLON JONES.

Blinded by the bomb Waylon swings his humongous arms wildly, knocking Batman into the curved wall which cracks beneath the blow.

Waylon's POV: Fading in from white, with sunspots scattered throughout. As the smoke clears he sees Batman, lenses once again glowing soft green, pouncing on him with a Muay Boran elbow.

Waylon staggers back. He growls a murderous exclamation and then lunges at Batman, spearing him. They tumble through the sewer's waters.

INT. GCPD, GORDON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gordon stands talking on his cell phone, smoking a cigarette at the open window.

GORDON

Because it's a very good school,
honey.

He takes a drag and blows the smoke out the window.

GORDON (CONT'D)

The uniform is the price you pay
for a better education. You still
want to go to Cornell, don't you?

There is a knock at the door.

GORDON (CONT'D)

(aside)

Shit.

He tosses his cigarette out the window.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Nothing, honey. I've got to
go. Alright. Love you too. Bye.

Gordon hangs up the cell phone and puts it in his pocket.

He waves his arms at the window a few times, attempting to clear the smoke. He closes first the window, and then the distance to his desk chair, sitting down as he calls out.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON (CONT'D)

Come in!

Montoya opens the door and pokes her head in.

MONTOYA

Sir, if you have a moment.

GORDON

Of course.

Montoya enters the office fully and closes the door behind her.

MONTOYA

Well sir, I've-

Montoya stops dead in her tracks. She coughs.

GORDON

Is there a problem, Officer Montoya?

MONTOYA

No sir.

Montoya takes a seat across from Gordon's desk.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)

First of all, I want you to understand what this means, me coming here.... I've seen a few regime changes here and never trusted the brass. Until now.

GORDON

Thank you, Montoya.

MONTOYA

Having said that, are you sure you've finished the work? Of cleaning up the force?

GORDON

It's a process, I don't expect-

MONTOYA

(interrupting)

Because I have suspicions that Detective Bullock might be a straggler. Someone left over from Loeb's regime.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

Those are some pretty serious accusations Officer. Do you have anything to back them up?

MONTOYA

I don't, sir. But he came to me today, very cloak and dagger, and suggested that he needed people like me for "his side."

GORDON

And do you know what he meant by that?

MONTOYA

No sir, I do not. It's just... It's a hunch. Bullock's hiding something.

GORDON

I can't bring Internal Affairs in over a hunch. Bullock's rubbed half the force the wrong way at one point or another-

MONTOYA

(interrupting)

The female half?

GORDON

(ignoring)

But he's a good cop. If anything else comes up you come to me, but until then, Officer, leave Detective Bullock alone.

Montoya stands up.

MONTOYA

Yes sir.

Montoya opens the door and leaves.

Gordon grabs a pen from his desk and sticks the cap end in his mouth.

INT. SEWERS, MAIN CAUSEWAY INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Establishing shot of a cavernous room that looks like an M.C. Escher print. Batman and Waylon battle high above raging waters.

Cut close to them.

Batman throws elbows and hammerfists at Waylon. Waylon takes the first two but catches the third, Judo throwing Batman. Batman over-rotates, landing on his feet.

Waylon charges at Batman for another spear, but Batman hops over him.

Waylon turns around and Batman is not there. Waylon looks around, back and forth, confused.

Batman is hanging from the ceiling above Waylon.

Batman comes crashing down on Waylon with both feet, forcing Waylon to smash face first into the concrete.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, DICK'S BEDROOM -NIGHT

Dick lays in bed staring at the high ceiling.

There is a knock on the door. Dick does not move.

There is another, louder knock.

DICK

Come in.

Alfred enters with a black garment bag on a hanger.

ALFRED

Your uniform, Master Grayson.

DICK

Uniform?

Alfred unzips the garment bag, revealing a burgundy school uniform.

ALFRED

School is back in tomorrow. Winter break only lasts so long.

DICK

I have to go to school?

Alfred sets the garment bag down across a chair.

(CONTINUED)

ALFRED
You thought otherwise?

DICK
I've never been to school in my
life. We had a tutor on the road.

ALFRED
Remedial education is as much for
the development of social skills as
mental ones.

DICK
Meaning?

ALFRED
Perhaps you will make friends.

Alfred leaves and closes the door gently behind him.

Dick crashes back on the bed.

DICK
(sarcastically)
Great.

INT. SEWERS, MAIN CAUSEWAY INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Waylon swings wildly at Batman. Batman slides between
Waylon's wicket. He stands up and thrust kicks the back of
Waylon's leg, taking him down to his knee.

Batman barely smirks.

Waylon reaches over behind his head and grabs Batman by the
neck, tossing him over the ledge.

Batman catches himself, gripping the ledge with the
fingertips of his left hand.

As Waylon runs up to him, Batman extends the
batarang-grapnel combination from his belt with his right
hand, readying himself for a drop and throw.

Batman lets go of the ledge.

After falling only an inch or two, Batman is caught at the
forearm by Waylon's massive hand.

Waylon pulls Batman up to the platform with ease. Waylon
speaks with a deep, gravelly, southern voice.

(CONTINUED)

WAYLON
Easy there, buddy.

Waylon keeps hold of him, dangling him inches above the ground.

WAYLON (CONT'D)
We done scrappin'?

Batman considers a moment.

BATMAN
Yes.

Waylon lowers his arm slightly and Batman takes to his feet.

The two look at each other a moment.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Why?

WAYLON
Why did I save yer life? Ain't no
use havin' a death on my
conscience. Even yours.

BATMAN
Who are you?

WAYLON
Name's Waylon. But you can call me
Croc.

BATMAN
On the surface the papers are
blaming you for a series of
cannibalistic murders.

WAYLON
(hearty laugh)
If I did eat a human it'd be my
biggest meal in months. They don't
make rats big enough, I say.

Batman looks at Waylon long and hard, head tilting slightly to the side. After only a moment, he is satisfied with what he sees.

BATMAN
You don't have to live down here
just because you have Epidermolytic
Hyperkeratosis. I can get you
treatment. In time you could-

(CONTINUED)

WAYLON
(interrupting)
You don't get it, do ya? I'm
Croc. It's who I am. You folk
can't accept it up there.

BATMAN
When you're ready, I can.

Batman extends his hand for a shake.

Waylon hesitates.

Batman's hand remains as offered, unwavering.

Waylon accepts the shake.

WAYLON
I hope you find your cannibal.

Waylon turns and walks away, disappearing behind a waterfall.

Having watched the mysterious man from the sewer disappear into his labyrinthine habitat, Batman is left alone.

INT. SEWERS - CONTINUOUS

Following Waylon, he walks down the tunnel until he comes to a dry nook, a room almost, with trash all around, a bench press and weights, a garbage can, and a stack of books.

Waylon takes a small box of matches from the top of the books and lights one. He tosses it into the garbage can, starting a small warming fire.

Waylon cracks his back, then sits against the wall next to his books.

He takes the one off the top, opens it to the bookmark, and begins to read.

SI: To Be Continued...

FADE OUT: