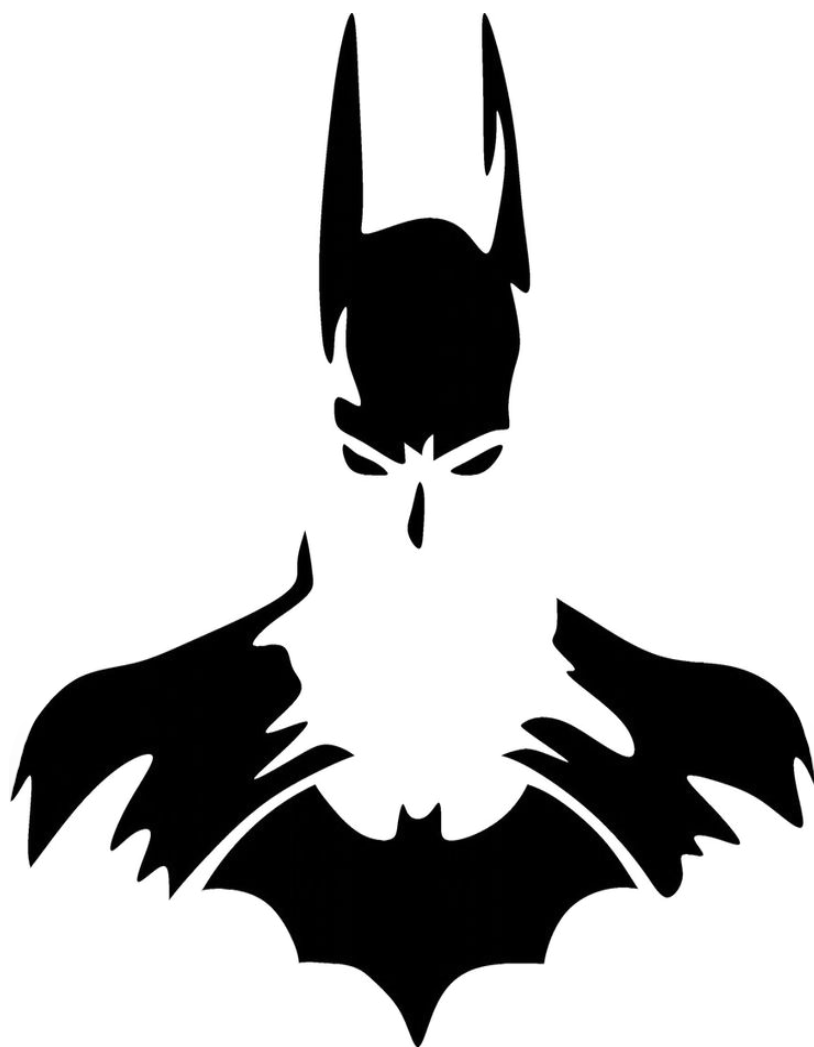




BATMAN: CREATURE OF GOTHAM

"The Caped Crusader"

Written by:
Kevin Georges

"THE CAPED CRUSADER"

ACT ONE:

FADE IN:

EXT. GOTHAM CITY - NIGHT

Camera pans over the crime-ridden cesspool of Gotham City. Rain pours over the city. A chilling urban nightmare, art deco towers piercing storm clouds, neon signs flickering in the darkness, steam rising from subway grates. GOTHIC. OPPRESSIVE. ALIVE.

A GCPD POLICE CRUISER bursts through the narrow streets.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
(filtered, over the radio)
All units, we have a 10-34 at the
old Falcone Warehouse. Hostage
situation. Multiple armed suspects.
Sources say its the Penguin.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The cruiser speeds past:

- HOMELESS PEOPLE huddled around a burning barrel
- A PROSTITUTE arguing with an older, abusive client
- GANG TAGS spray-painted on brick walls, referencing old and new gangs and crime bosses that have rotted Gotham throughout its history.

Gotham is a city that never sleeps. It festers. Rots. Feeds off of crime, chaos, and anarchy.

The cruiser's SIREN WAILS as it turns a corner, reaching the abandoned Falcone Warehouse.

EXT. FALCONE WAREHOUSE - INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - NIGHT

An abandoned warehouse of the former mob boss CARMINE FALCONE, who was murdered years ago by a serial killer. Its bricks are crumbling, windows shattered, and old posters nearly scraped off. The warehouse is now surrounded by GCPD CRUISERS - lights flashing, officers jump out of the vehicle and take cover, with weapons drawn.

COMMISSIONER GORDON (50s, grey hair, trench coat, glasses) steps out of his cruiser, MEGAPHONE in hand. DETECTIVE HARVEY BULLOCK (40s, rumpled suit, perpetual scowl, top hat) stands beside him. DETECTIVE RENEE MONTTOYA (30s, sharp, focused) crouches nearby, pistol ready. About 8 other cops are alongside them.

The warehouse's main entrance: BARRICADED. Shadows move inside.

GORDON
(into megaphone)
This is Commissioner Gordon! We
have the building surrounded!
Release the hostages and come out
with your hands up!

Silence.

PENGUIN (O.S.)
(from inside, muffled)
Commissioner! How LOVELY to hear
from you!

PENGUIN'S VOICE echoes from inside-theatrical, mocking,
British.

PENGUIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm afraid I can't do that. Unless
you give me some respect! Ten
MILLION dollars transferred to an
offshore account within an hour. Or
my GUESTS start checking out.
Permanently.

BULLOCK
What does a rich guy like Cobblepot
need with ten million?

MONTTOYA
(to Gordon)
We have SWAT standing by. Say the
word.

BULLOCK
We should move NOW. Before it gets
ugly.

Gordon stays quiet, simply staring at the warehouse.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)
(frustrated)
Jim, what the hell are you lookin'
at?

GORDON
(quiet, certain)
We wait.

BULLOCK
For what?!

Gordon glances up at the rooftops.

GORDON
For someone.

Bullock follows his gaze, seeing the Bat-signal shine in the city skies in between the shadows and rain.

BULLOCK
(muttering)
Unbelievable.

INT. FALCONE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Dim. Dusty. Flickering lights. Boxes and crates scattered. Industrial pillars.

SIX HOSTAGES-bound, gagged, terrified-sit on the floor.

PENGUIN (mid-40s, short, plump, tuxedo and top hat) paces in front of them, UMBRELLA in hand. FOUR ARMED THUGS stand guard-each carrying MILITARY-GRADE ASSAULT RIFLES. Weapons that don't belong in Gotham.

PENGUIN
(to hostages, cheerful)
Now, now. No need to fear. This is merely a BUSINESS deal. Once the good ol' Commissioner pays up, you'll all be free.

He taps his umbrella on the floor. One of the THUGS checks his watch, anxious.

THUG #1
Cops are everywhere, boss. We should-

PENGUIN
(snapping)
Quiet! Gordon's men are toothless! They'll pay. Just wait it out.

THUG #1
What if Batman shows up?

PENGUIN
(chuckles)
BATMAN?! We have this building
secured! Get back to work!

Penguin walks to a dirty window. Looks through a crack in the boards.

He SMIRKS.

PENGUIN (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Any minute now...

Suddenly, THE LIGHTS GO OUT. Total darkness. Penguin looks around.

THUG #2
(panicking)
What the hell was that?

PENGUIN
Flashlights! NOW!

The thugs scramble, flashlights clicking on. Beams cut through the darkness.

Thug #1 sweeps his flashlight across the ceiling, yet sees nothing. He lowers his flashlight.

Before he can turn around, he is swept from above, dropping his flashlight to the floor.

THUG #3
(shaking)
Boss, I think someone's-

A bo staff is thrown straight at Thug #3's head, knocking him unconscious and breaking his flashlight.

Penguin roams around, carrying a military-grade assault rifle, scared to death. He wanders around the dark in fear, until he hears a noise, which immediately motivates him to fire. Nothing happens.

A MYSTERIOUS FIGURE drops behind him, and Penguin hears a swish. He turns-BATMAN (30s, black batsuit, glowing white eyes, menacing) stands behind him. Before Penguin can fire his rifle, Batman snatches it from him and lands a knockout punch in his face, sending Penguin unconscious.

The remaining two thugs hear the knockout, but their flashlights keep flickering, preventing them from seeing anything.

THUG #2
(panicking)
What the hell was that?!

THUG #4
You think that was Batman?

THUG #2
Don't say that man!

BATMAN (O.S.)
You thought right.

Batman throws a SMOKE PELLETT to the ground. Thick white smoke fills the warehouse.

The two thugs start coughing and panic hearing the sound of Batman's voice, making them OPEN FIRE. MUZZLE FLASHES light up the warehouse.

Batman emerges from the smoke like a GHOST, firing two BATARANGS at once which take out both of their firearms and drop their flashlights to the ground.

ROBIN (20s, red and black suit, domino mask, bo staff) swings through on a grappling line and lands on a crouch, right next to Batman.

ROBIN
(grinning)
Need a hand?

BATMAN
Take the left.

Robin SPINS his bo staff. Charges to Thug #2. Batman charges to Thug #4. Both thugs unarmed and frightened.

Robin's staff SWEEPS the thug's legs out from under him, sending him to the ground HARD and Robin finishes it off with a strike to the chest.

Batman delivers a BRUTAL uppercut to the jaw. He strikes with precision, and BRUTALLY gives him a knee strike to the chest. The thug is KNOCKED, bleeding from the jaw.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
(commanding)
Go free the hostages. I'll deal with Cobblepot.

ROBIN

Got it.

Batman walks towards Penguin, who is tied up to a chair with duct tape covering his mouth. Robin frees the hostages in the background.

Batman RIPS the duct tape from Penguin's mouth, making him squeal. He GRABS Penguin by the collar, lifting him slightly.

BATMAN

(fierce)

Those weapons are not from Gotham.
Where, or who did you get them
from?

PENGUIN

I don't answer to vigilantes.

Batman's grip TIGHTENS, forcing Penguin to speak.

BATMAN

(low, dangerous)

Wrong answer!

PENGUIN

(stuttering)

I-I bought them! A supplier! I
don't know his name!

BATMAN

Liar.

After freeing the hostages, Robin is examining one of the weapons, studying the markings.

ROBIN

Batman. These weapons... I have never
seen this model before. Military
grade. This goes beyond anything
Gotham has to offer. I'll take a
closer look in the Batcave.

Batman grabs the chair holding the Penguin and carries it towards the broken window, flipping him upside down and dangling him down in an intense interrogation technique. Penguin starts to panic.

BATMAN

You wanna tell me now?!

PENGUIN

Okay, okay! They were sent to me at
my front door. I never saw a name!

(MORE)

PENGUIN (CONT'D)

It could've been anyone. Joker,
Dent, Scarecrow, I don't bloody
know!

BATMAN

(brooding)

Those weapons are not from Gotham.

PENGUIN

Then I can't help you with that!
Now PUT ME DOWN!

The warehouse doors BURST OPEN.

Five GCPD officers barge into the warehouse, Commissioner
Gordon at the front, carrying a pistol. Bullock and Montoya
behind him holding flashlights.

GORDON

(loud and clear)

Stay where you are! This is the
Gotham City Police Department!

Batman puts the Penguin down near the window.

BATMAN

He's all yours, Commissioner.
(to Penguin)
But we'll be talking again soon.

PENGUIN

(to Gordon, indignant)

Commissioner! I demand a lawyer! My
men and I are being brutalized!

BULLOCK

(grabbing Penguin)

Quiet, fat boy.

PENGUIN

Who are you calling fat?!

Gordon walks up to Batman, putting his pistol away in his
coat pocket. They stand face-to-face.

GORDON

The hostages?

BATMAN

Freed. Inside.

GORDON

Good work, gentlemen. I guess your
work here is done.

BATMAN

Not quite. Cobblepot and his men held military surplus weapons. Not of Gotham's kind. We're going to search for a supplier.

Gordon looks down, taking his sight off of Batman.

GORDON

Interesting. Your help would be much appreciated-

Gordon notices both Batman and Robin gone. Vanished as they usually do in front of him. Camera emphasizes the empty space.

Bullock walks towards Gordon.

BULLOCK

I still don't know why you trust that freak.

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

THE BATCAVE, located beneath Wayne Manor, is a chilling, dark cavernous space illuminated by a glowing blue central computer console, THE BATCOMPUTER. It features a massive underground river, a rotating turntable for the BATMOBILE, and a detailed trophy room holding numerous artifacts over the course of Batman's history, including a giant dinosaur and a large coin.

BRUCE WAYNE (30s, calm) stands in front of the Batcomputer, still in his BATSUIT but unmasked. TIM DRAKE (20s, intelligent), stands near him, discussing the Penguin's scandal. On the Batcomputer screen is ORACLE, also known as BARBARA GORDON, (30s, red hair, messy ponytail, glasses, tech-savvy) sitting in her specialized wheelchair, providing the BATFAMILY with information.

ORACLE

(focused)

I can confirm that The Penguin has been taken into Blackgate Prison.

BRUCE

Good news, Oracle. But we still don't know who supplied him those weapons...

ORACLE

I've run a scan on the weapons Tim sent me.

(MORE)

ORACLE (CONT'D)

They have been commonly used by terrorist groups, many of which include H.I.V.E, Kobra, and the League of Assassins.

TIM

The League... you think they've been sending weapons to the Penguin?

BRUCE

You never know with them... take note of that, Barbara.

Approaching them is the loyal butler ALFRED PENNYWORTH (70s, suit, elegant, British), carrying a heavy mahogany tray. On it sits a porcelain tea service: a teapot, two cups, a small creamer, and a bowl of sugar cubes with silver tongs.

ALFRED

I took the liberty of brewing a pot of Earl Grey, sir. Just as you asked.

BRUCE

Thanks, Alfred.

Alfred lifts the teapot, streaming the amber liquid into the cup with zero splashing. Perfectly served.

ALFRED

Master Bruce, I must remind you that your fundraising event begins in an hour. I have taken the liberty of preparing each and every room in the Manor.

BRUCE

(cheeky)

What would I do without you, Alfred?

A slight grin emerges from Alfred's normally frowning face.

INT. WAYNE MANOR - BALLROOM - NIGHT

Opulent. Gleaming marble floors. Crystal chandeliers casting warm light across the room. A LIVE STRING QUARTET plays classical music. SERVERS in crisp uniforms carry trays of champagne and hors d'euvres.

GOTHAM'S ELITE mingle. Expensive suits, designer gowns, fake smiles. About FIFTY GUESTS.

A BANNER hangs above the room: "WAYNE FOUNDATION CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER"

BRUCE WAYNE (30s, impeccable tuxedo, effortless charm) runs the room: shaking hands, smiling, waving. The perfect host. He is surrounded by admirers.

VICKI VALE (30s, blonde, sharp journalist) approaches with a notepad, alongside a CAMERAMAN, carrying a large camera aimed at Bruce.

VICKI

Mr. Wayne! Vicki Vale from the Gotham Gazette. Could I get a word about tonight's fundraiser?

BRUCE

(charming)

A word? How about "rich guy throws party, but don't worry, he's not compensating for anything. Just ask the ladies."

Vicki LAUGHS. Bruce grins.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

But on a real note-the children need help. Gotham's kids deserve better than rampant crime mixed with poor healthcare. If my money can help, then why not?

VICKI

That sounds noble. But you've been throwing a lot of these lately. Some say you're trying to rehab your image after years of... let's call it "youthful indiscretion".

BRUCE

(playful)

Vicki, I'm insulted. I'm STILL indiscreet. Just better at hiding it.

She smiles. Writes something down in her notepad.

VICKI

One more question-any truth to rumors you're dating someone?

BRUCE
 (deflecting smoothly)
 If I was, would I tell Gotham's
 most relentless reporter?

VICKI
 (jots down notes)
 Fair point.

She walks away. Bruce exhales slightly-maintaining the act
 can be exhausting at times.

VERONICA VREELAND (20s, wealthy socialite, dripping in
 jewelry) swoops in, champagne glass in hand.

VREELAND
 Bruce. O-M-Gosh. This party is
 DIVINE. Though I must say, the wine
 here could use some work.

BRUCE
 (sarcastic)
 Well, Veronica. I'll have my
 sommelier fired immediately.

VREELAND
 (chuckles)
 You're a funny man, Bruce.

She glides away. Bruce shakes his head, amused.

Across the room, COMMISSIONER GORDON (50s, suit instead of
 trench coat, uncomfortable in formal wear) stands near the
 bar with DETECTIVE HARVEY BULLOCK (suit, nursing a whiskey)
 and DETECTIVE RENEE MONTOYA (elegant dress, scanning the room
 like a cop)

MAYOR HAMILTON HILL (50s, slick politician, expensive suit)
 offers an IMPROMPTU SPEECH near the fireplace, microphone in
 hand.

MAYOR HILL
 ...and thanks to Bruce Wayne's
 incredible efforts, Gotham's
 children have a better chance of
 accessing the finest medical care
 in the country!

APPLAUSE. Hill grins. Bruce raises his champagne glass
 modestly from across the room.

MAYOR HILL (CONT'D)
 Gotham's future is bright, ladies
 and gentlemen.
 (MORE)

MAYOR HILL (CONT'D)
Crime is down and spirits are up.
And with continued humanitarian
support from citizens like Mr.
Wayne, we'll build a city we can
all be proud of. Together.

More APPLAUSE follows. Gordon claps politely, but he keeps a neutral tone. He knows Hill is lying about the low crime rates for political gain.

Bruce approaches the bar. Gordon notices.

BRUCE
Commissioner. Detectives. Glad you
could all make it.

GORDON
Wouldn't miss it, Bruce. You're one
of the few good men left in this
city.

BRUCE
You and me both, Jim.

Gordon nods his head as a sign of appreciation.

BULLOCK
(raising his glass)
Nice booze, Wayne. It's actually
drinkable.

BRUCE
(grinning)
That's not what Vreeland said. But
high praise from you, Detective.

MONTOYA
How much are you raising tonight?

BRUCE
Just over two million. Every dollar
goes to the Gotham City Hospital.

MONTOYA
Your efforts are much appreciated,
Bruce.

BRUCE
Just doing what I can, ma'am.

Bruce hears a buzz in his earpiece, a likely call.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
(to the GCPD members,
smooth)
Excuse me. I need to take a call.
Foundation business.

Bruce slips away through the crowd, exiting the ballroom.

Bullock watches him go, suspicious.

BULLOCK
(to Gordon, quietly,
drinking wine)
He's got a thing for disappearing,
you know.

GORDON
(noncommittal)
You think?

BULLOCK
Oh, come on, Jim. I can't be the
only one that notices it.

Gordon doesn't respond. Just sips his drink.

INT. WAYNE MANOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Bruce walks briskly down an empty corridor, away from the party. The classical music FADES.

He taps his EARPIECE.

ORACLE (V.O.)
(filtered)
Bruce, there's a robbery in
progress. Diamond District. Four
armed suspects.

BRUCE
I'm on my way. Keep me updated.

ORACLE (V.O.)
They've got hostages. Similar
weapons to Penguin's crew.

BRUCE
Interesting...

Bruce's expression hardens. He pushes open a hidden panel in the wall... revealing a SECRET STAIRCASE descending into darkness.

ACT TWO:

EXT. DIAMOND DISTRICT - JEWELRY STORE - NIGHT

Upscale shopping district. Sleek storefronts. Expensive cars parked along the street.

The ALARM BLARS. Glass shatters.

FOUR THUGS in tactical gear exit the jewelry store, carrying DUFFEL BAGS stuffed with jewels and cash. Armed with the same MILITARY-GRADE ASSAULT RIFLES from the Penguin fight.

Two GCPD CRUISERS screech to a halt. OFFICERS take cover behind their cars, weapons drawn.

GCPD OFFICER #1
This is the Gotham City Police
Department! Drop your weapons!

The thugs OPEN FIRE. Officers duck behind cover.

Suddenly, a BATARANG SLICES through the air, knocking the rifle from THUG #1's hands.

BATMAN drops from above, landing between them and the officers. Cape billows.

THUG #2
(panicking)
It's the freakin' bat!

Batman swiftly moves like a predator, DODGING gunfire, weaving, throwing a SMOKE PELLET.

Thugs fire blindly, shivering down their spines.

Batman eerily emerges from the smoke. Thug #2 is DISARMED with a wrist lock. The rifle DROPS to the ground.

He SWEEPS Thug #3's legs, hitting him to the ground HARD.

Thug #4 tries to run...but Batman fires his GRAPPLING HOOK around the thug's ankle. Batman YANKS, crashing the thug's face onto the concrete.

In quick succession, all four thugs are subdued. Unconscious and groaning.

The GCPD officers emerge, relieved.

GCPD OFFICER #1
(relieved)
Thanks, Batman.

Batman GRABS a nearby thug by the collar, interrogating him.

BATMAN
(menacing)
The weapons! Who was the supplier?

THUG #1
I ain't tellin' you nothin'!

Batman tightens his grip on the thug, cracking a few bones.

BATMAN
Don't try me...

THUG #1
(panicking)
I-I have no idea, I swear! I saw no names! I think they're keepin' a low profile! Don't hurt me, please!

BATMAN
(brooding)
Thank you.

Batman sends the thug unconscious with a knockout punch, dropping the thug to the ground.

Batman then shifts his focus to a nearby rifle, examining it. He takes out a shell casing and places it in his utility belt. He then presses his suit's built-in earpiece to call Oracle.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
(into comms)
Oracle. These weapons match the ones from Penguin's crew. Run a trace.

ORACLE (V.O.)
On it.

Batman scans the area for more clues, his eyes narrowing.

On a ROOFTOP across the street, he notices a SLEEK SILHOUETTE. A familiar face. Lurking in the distance.

CATWOMAN (30s, black latex catsuit, playful).

She sees him looking. BLOWS A KISS.

Then she RUNS.

EXT. GOTHAM ROOFTOPS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Batman FIRES his grappling hook. He ascends rapidly, LANDING on the rooftop.

He scans the skyline... Catwoman is already TWO ROOFTOPS ahead, leaping gracefully between buildings. Batman pursues.

DYNAMIC ROOFTOP CHASE SEQUENCE:

- Catwoman BACKFLIPS over an air vent
- Batman VAULTS over the same obstacle
- She slides under a hanging billboard
- He follows, cape flowing behind him
- Rain pours. Neon signs flicker below.
- She's fast. He's relentless.

They chase each other until Catwoman stops on the edge of a CATHEDRAL ROOFTOP. Gothic spires. Gargoyles.

She turns to face him as he lands opposite her.

They stand ten feet apart. Rain pouring between them.

CATWOMAN
(playful, breathless)
Miss me, Dark Knight?

BATMAN
(flat)
Selina.

CATWOMAN
Oh, we're using names now? You
never did tell me yours.

She takes a step closer. He doesn't move.

BATMAN
What do you want?

CATWOMAN
Just getting a taste of that
midnight breeze.

BATMAN
I don't believe you.

CATWOMAN
(eyeroll)
You never trust anyone, do you?

BATMAN
Why were you at the robbery?

CATWOMAN
(smirking)
I wasn't robbing it, if that's what you think. I was observing it.

BATMAN
Observing what?

CATWOMAN
Same thing you are. Those weapons flooding Gotham. I saw some of Rupert Thorne's men walk out his penthouse carrying them.

Batman's eyes narrow.

BATMAN
What could you know about Thorne?

Catwoman steps closer. Circling him slightly.

CATWOMAN
I know he's been busy. Moving cargo and all. And I know he's got something I want.

BATMAN
Which is?

CATWOMAN
(hesitates, then:)
A necklace. Family heirloom. He stole it from me shortly after I left for Rome.

BATMAN
That was years ago. You expect me to believe that?

CATWOMAN
(defensive, genuine)
Believe what you want, Bats. It's the truth. That necklace is all I have left of my mother.

Batman studies her, looking for deception. He finds sincerity, which is a rare sighting for her.

CATWOMAN (CONT'D)
How about this? You help me get it back, and I'll share everything I know about Thorne's little operation.

BATMAN
You know I don't trust you, Selina.

She walks even closer to him. They're inches apart now. Looking up into his white lenses.

CATWOMAN
Think again, Bats. We work well together. I think of us everyday.

BATMAN
There is no "us," Selina.

CATWOMAN
(smirking, hurt beneath)
Keep telling yourself that.

BATMAN
How do I know you're telling the truth?

CATWOMAN
(playful)
You won't.

She touches his chest briefly, a fleeting gesture. Then steps back.

CATWOMAN (CONT'D)
Thorne's estate. Tonight. Don't keep me waiting... partner.

She KISSES him deeply. Lips locked. She then BACKFLIPS off the cathedral roof-disappearing into the rain and shadows.

Batman stands alone, contemplating his decision to work with Catwoman.

He then stares at the city below-GOTHAM, alive with crime and chaos.

BATMAN
(into comms, quiet)
Oracle. Run a full background check on Rupert Thorne.
(MORE)

BATMAN (CONT'D)
I want financials, associates,
shipping records. Everything.

ORACLE (V.O.)
I got you covered, Bruce. You think
you'll work with Catwoman again?

BATMAN
She claims to have information
about Thorne. But I'll take it with
a grain of salt.

ORACLE (V.O.)
Be careful, you never know when
she's lying.

BATMAN
I know.

He fires his grappling hook. Swings into the night.

EXT. THORNE'S ESTATE - GOTHAM OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

A sprawling mansion on the edge of Gotham. High walls.
Security cameras. Spotlights scanning the the grounds.

Batman and Catwoman crouch on a nearby rooftop, surveying the
estate.

CATWOMAN
(whispering)
East wing. Third floor. That's
where Thorne's office is.

BATMAN
(whispering)
How do you know that?

CATWOMAN
I've had a couple heists there.

Batman studies the patrol patterns. Four GUARDS with rifles
circling the perimeter.

BATMAN
Same weapons Penguin had.

CATWOMAN
Don't let me say I told you so.

Batman glances at her. His expression unreadable.

BATMAN

Follow me.

He fires his GRAPPLING HOOK toward the mansion.

Catwoman follows, using her WHIP to swing across.

EXT. THORNE'S ESTATE - ROOFTOP - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

They land silently on the mansion's slate roof.

Catwoman moves like a shadow, graceful and practiced. Batman follows, cape blending into the darkness.

They reach a SKYLIGHT overlooking Thorne's office.

Catwoman uses her NAILS to cut a clean circle. She grins, removing the glass. They drop through.

INT. THORNE'S ESTATE - OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Luxurious. Mahogany desk. Expensive art. Floor-to-ceiling bookshelves.

In the corner stands a large CHINESE DRAGON STATUE. Gold. Ornate.

Batman covers himself using his cape, his eyes lingering on the statue briefly.

Catwoman moves to Thorne's DESK. She begins to rifle through drawers.

Batman checks the WALL SAFE behind a painting.

CATWOMAN

(finding files)

Shipping manifests, cargo logs...
Thorne's moving a lot of freight
through Gotham Harbor.

Batman joins her, scanning the documents.

BATMAN

No supplier names. Just coded
transactions.

CATWOMAN

He's gotta be hiding something.

BATMAN

Or he's being used.

Catwoman opens another drawer, finding a VELVET BOX.

Inside is her MOTHER'S NECKLACE. Simple, silver, a small pendant.

Her expression softens.

CATWOMAN
(quietly)
There you are.

She carefully places it inside her suit.

Batman notices it without saying anything.

Suddenly, FOOTSTEPS are heard in the hallway. Batman and Catwoman freeze.

The office door SWINGS OPEN.

RUPERT THORNE (50s, expensive suit, cold eyes) enters abruptly with SIX ARMED GUARDS each carrying the same military rifles.

THORNE
(calm, unsurprised)
What do we have here? The Bat and the Cat. In MY home.

BATMAN
Thorne. We need to talk about your weapons shipments.

THORNE
(smirking)
I don't do business with rodents.
(to guards)
Kill them.

The guards raise their rifles.

Batman THROWS a smoke pellet. White smoke floods the room. MUZZLE FLASHES.

Batman and Catwoman MOVE through the smoke, disarming guards with brutal efficiency.

Batman DISARMS Guard #1 with a wrist lock. His rifle clatters. He then SWEEPS Guard #2's legs, knocked down.

Catwoman WHIPS Guard #3's rifle from his hands. Kicks him in the chest. Flying him backward into a bookshelf.

Guard #4 aims at her, but Batman TACKLES him from behind.
Knockout punch.

CATWOMAN
(flirtatious)
My hero.

The remaining two guards panic.

Guard #5 swings his rifle like a club, but Catwoman SLIDES under the swing, TRIPPING him with her leg. He CRASHES into Guard #6. Both knocked down in a heap.

Thorne backs towards the door, but Batman THROWS a bola at him, TANGING Thorne up, making him SLAM against the wall.

Batman approaches him. GRABBING him by the collar.

BATMAN
(low, dangerous)
Where did you get those weapons?

THORNE
(struggling)
I didn't-I don't-

Batman TIGHTENS his grip.

BATMAN
Wrong answer.

THORNE
Penguin! Penguin called ME! Said he needed men to test new gear! I was just helping an old friend! That's ALL!

BATMAN
Who's the supplier?

THORNE
(panicked)
I don't KNOW! Penguin handled everything! I swear!

Batman searches for deception but ultimately realizes he's telling the truth. He drops him to the ground, Thorne gasping.

THORNE (CONT'D)
(catching breath)
Someone's using my shipping company without my knowledge. That's all I know.

(MORE)

THORNE (CONT'D)
 Just don't let anybody else know I
 dealt with the Penguin, especially
 that pathetic excuse for a Mayor.

Batman exchanges a glance with Catwoman. She shrugs.

BATMAN
 (to Thorne)
 If you're lying, I'll be back. You
 hear me?

THORNE
 (rubbing neck)
 Fine. But please untie me!

Batman turns toward the skylight. FIRING his grappling hook
 upward.

Catwoman follows, WHIPPING upwards.

Both gone.

THORNE (CONT'D)
 (yelling)
 HEY! I SAID UNTIE ME, YOU SON OF A-

ACT THREE:

EXT. GOTHAM ROOFTOPS - CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Batman and Catwoman land on the same cathedral rooftop from
 earlier.

Rain still falls. Gothic spires looming.

Batman turns to face her.

BATMAN
 You said you had information about
 Thorne's operation.

CATWOMAN
 (hesitates)
 I did.

BATMAN
 (flat)
 No. You didn't.

A beat. Catwoman SIGHS, dropping the act.

CATWOMAN
(slightly defensive)
Okay, fine. I lied. I just needed
your help getting the necklace
back.

BATMAN
I know, Selina. You don't do
anything without a reason.

She stares at him. Caught off-guard by his read on her.

CATWOMAN
(smirking, impressed)
You're smarter than you look.

BATMAN
And you're exactly who I thought
you were.

A beat. Rain falls between them.

CATWOMAN
(softer, genuine)
For what it's worth, I have you to
thank. And I did help you deduce
Thorne's involvement in the
Penguin's case.
(stepping closer,
flirtatious)
And you have to admit... we make a
good team.

BATMAN
You helped. I won't forget that.

She leans in close. Eyes locked on his white lenses. She
kisses his cheek. Lingers for a moment.

She then steps back.

CATWOMAN
See you around, Dark Knight.

She BACKFLIPS off the cathedral roof. Vanishes into the rain.

Batman stands alone. Watching the city below.

BATMAN
(into comms)
Oracle. Thorne's not the supplier.
Someone's using him.

ORACLE (V.O.)
Then who could it be?

BATMAN
We have to keep searching.

He FIRES his grappling hook, swinging away.

INT. SELINA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A small but stylish. Exposed brick. Minimal furniture. A large window overlooking Gotham.

SELINA KYLE, Catwoman's alter ego, enters, opening the window. She pulls off her mask.

Her cat-ISIS (sleek, black)-meows and rubs against her legs.

SELINA
(smiling, to Isis)
Hey, baby. Miss me?

She walks to her kitchen counter. Unzips her suit, digging through it.

She pulls out the NECKLACE... and DOZENS of stolen items from Thorne's estate.

Diamonds. Jewels. Gold watches. Expensive trinkets.

She puts on a BUNCH of necklaces and bracelets.

Selina then picks up a DIAMOND. Holds it to the light. It SPARKLES. She licks her lips.

SELINA (CONT'D)
(to Isis, grinning)
Thorne won't miss these.

She walks to her couch. Isis jumps into her lap. Selina strokes her fur.

SELINA (CONT'D)
(smirking)
And Batman doesn't have a clue...

Selina stares out the window at Gotham's skyline.

Rain. Neon. Chaos.

This is her home.

INT. AMUSEMENT MILE - ABANDONED FUNHOUSE - NIGHT

Decrepit. Peeling paint. Broken carnival rides. Flickering neon signs casting eerie shadows.

A TV mounted on the wall plays GOTHAM INSIDER, a major news station in Gotham City. SUMMER GLEESON (30s, reddish-blonde ponytail, blazer, sharp) reports the latest news.

SUMMER (ON TV)

... and tomorrow night, Gotham City celebrates the re-election of Mayor Hill at City Hall. Big names such as Bruce Wayne, Veronica Vreeland, and more of Gotham's elite will be in attendance...

JOKER (40s, pale skin, green hair, permanent grin, purple suit) sits in a WORN ARMCHAIR, feet propped up on a crate. He watches the TV with manic intensity.

Beside him sits HARLEY QUINN (20s, pigtails, red and black outfit, mallet resting against her shoulder). She paints her nails, half-listening.

Two HYENAS-BUD AND LOU-gnaw on bones in the corner.

FOUR THUGS stand nearby, nervous, armed with pistols.

Joker's eyes LOCK on the screen. Not one blink.

SUMMER (ON TV) (CONT'D)

The mayor promises a night of celebration, calling it a "symbol of Gotham's bright future."

Joker TILTS his head. Staring at the footage of CITY HALL on screen.

Then he GRINS wider.

JOKER

(to Harley, sing-song)
Harley-girl. Do you hear that?

HARLEY

(blowing on her nails)
Hear what, puddin'?

JOKER

(eyes still on TV)
A party tomorrow for Mayor Hill's re-election.

(MORE)

JOKER (CONT'D)
What will they be celebrating?
Crime? Corruption? Lies?

He stands abruptly, pacing like a caged animal.

JOKER (CONT'D)
And they're throwing a PARTY. With
champagne and speeches and all the
fat cats in ONE PLACE.

He SPINS to face Harley, eyes wild.

JOKER (CONT'D)
It's PERFECT!

Harley GRINS. She knows what's up.

HARLEY
You thinkin' what I'm thinkin', Mr.
J?

JOKER
(theatrical)
Oh, Harley. I'm thinking we give
Hill a night he'll NEVER forget.

He LAUGHS, short and sharp bursts.

Suddenly-KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Joker's laughter stops. His head SNAPS toward the door.
Silence.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(to thugs, cheerful)
Well? Don't just stand there. Open
it!

THUG #1 nervously approaches the door, cautiously opening it.

No one is there.

But on the ground lays THREE LARGE WOODEN CRATES.

THUG #1
(confused)
Boss... there's boxes out here.

JOKER
(intrigued)
Then bring 'em in!

Two thugs drag the crates inside. Heavy. Solid wood.

Joker circles them like a predator. Eyes gleaming.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(to crates, playful)
What do we have here? A gift? For
ME?

He PRIES open the first crate with a CROWBAR.

The lid POPS out.

Inside presents rows of MILITARY GRADE ASSAULT RIFLES.
Pristine. Deadly.

Joker's eyes WIDEN. He pulls one out. Examines it like a
child on Christmas Day.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(delighted)
Very nice...

He SPINS, aiming the rifle at a wall. Makes SHOOTING NOISES
with his mouth.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Boom-boom-boom! Pew-pew-pew!

Harley opens the second crate. More weapons. GRENADES.
AMMUNITION.

She picks up a grenade. Turns it over in her hands.

HARLEY
Puddin', who sent these?

Joker checks the crates. No label. No return address either.
Just a small NOTE taped inside the lid.

He RIPS it off. Reads it aloud.

JOKER
(reading, theatrical)
A gift from...Batman?

HARLEY
(gasping)
Batman? Really?

Joker pauses.

JOKER
(sarcastic)
No.

Joker then starts laughing out of his mind.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(chuckling)
You really thought BATMAN would
send us a bunch of guns?! You are
one gullible little clown, Harley.

HARLEY
(curious)
So what does the note really say?

JOKER
(reading, serious)
It says... "A gift for Gotham's
favorite clown. Use them well."

He crumples the note. Tosses it aside.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(grinning)
It's anonymous. How I love a good
mystery!

HARLEY
(suspicious)
You think it's a trap?

Joker shrugs. He doesn't care.

JOKER
Pffft. Who cares? We got GUNS,
baby?

He dances around the crates. Manic energy.

JOKER (CONT'D)
And tomorrow night, Gotham's elite
will be celebrating. The mayor...
the Commissioner... all those smug,
self-righteous hypocrites in their
fancy suits and ties will be
drinking wine and making love in
the afterparty.

He STOPS. Turns to Harley. Eyes wild.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(dead serious)
But we're going to have some fun
for ourselves.

Harley SQUEALS with delight. Claps her hands.

Joker walks to a wall. Pulls down a CRUMPLED POSTER advertising MAYOR HILL's political campaign, reading "RE-ELECT HAMILTON HILL FOR MAYOR".

He PINS it to a dartboard. Throws a KNIFE at it. Right through the Mayor's face.

He pulls back. LAUGHS-loud, manic, unhinged.

Harley joins in. The hyenas HOWL.

The laughter ECHOES through the funhouse.

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Joker's face: eyes wide, grin stretching impossibly.

JOKER (CONT'D)
(shouting over laughter)
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

The laughter continue as we-

SMASH CUT TO BLACK,

END OF EPISODE.