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#**1**

THE NEW 52!

BATGIRL™



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SAMPERE

DEC 2012

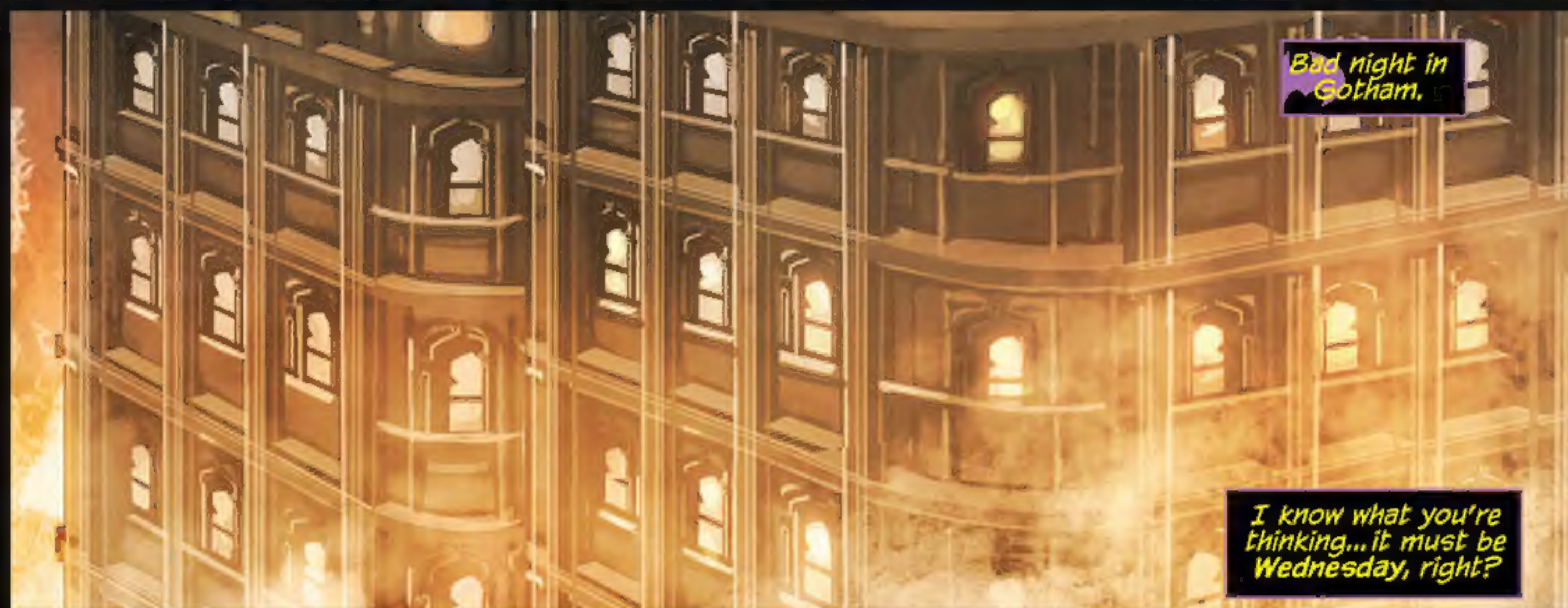
RATED T TEEN

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**THE BAT, THE CAT,
AND THE OWL!**



THE SLUMS OF GOTHAM CITY...



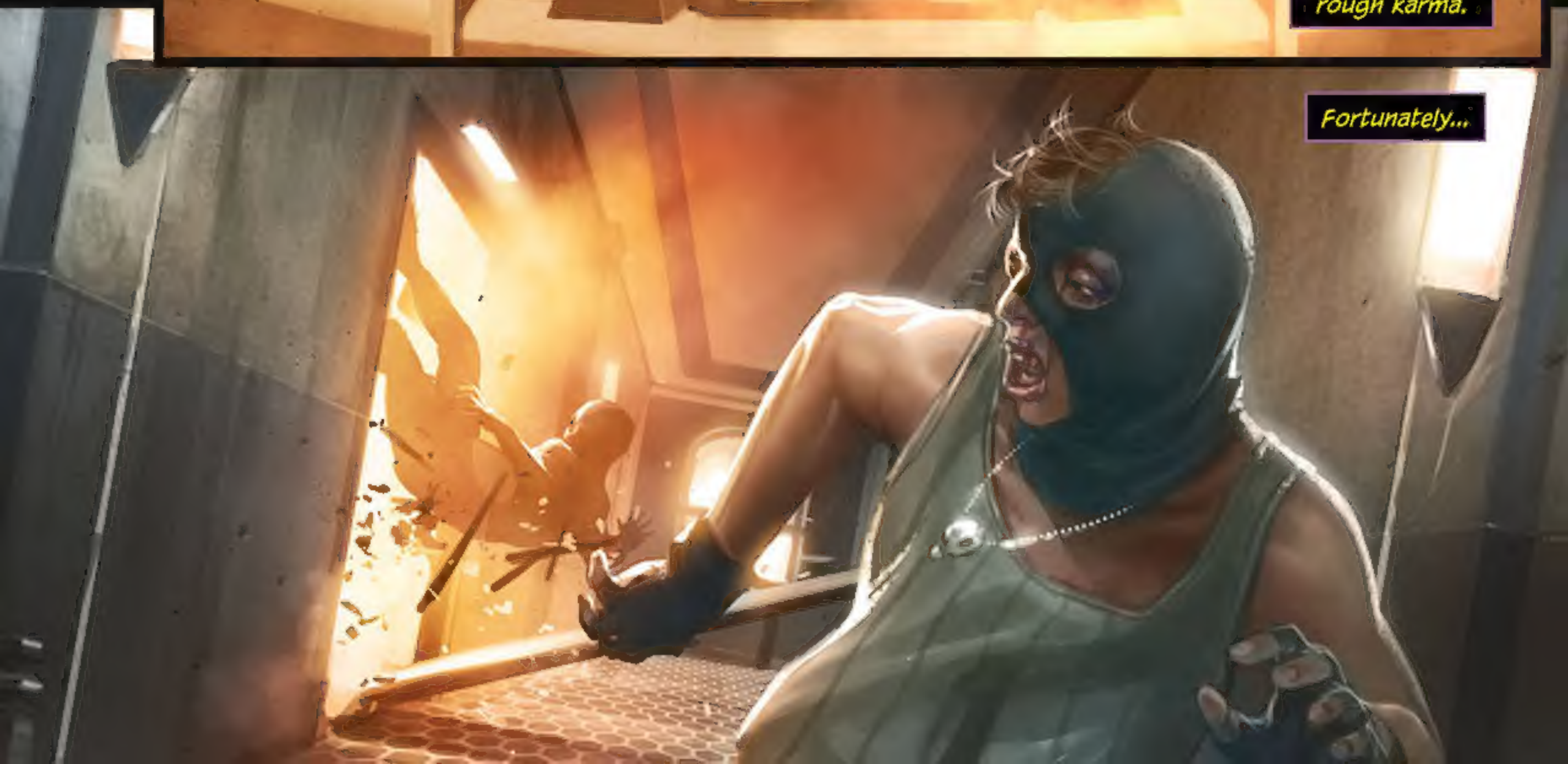
Bad night in
Gotham.

I know what you're
thinking... it must be
Wednesday, right?



But by my
reckoning, we have at
least six deliberate
fires in occupied
buildings, plus two
blackouts.

Even for
Gotham, that's
rough karma.



Fortunately...

...I am familiar enough
with that concept to
deal a little out myself,
from time to time.

THE BLOOD THAT MOVES US

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BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

The thing
is...

...none of these
crimes are being
committed by
actual criminals.

These aren't
arsonists.

They're
homeless
people.

I thought I'd seen some
low things in this city, but
using people who have
nothing to hurt other
people who have nothing...

...it's
infuriating.

Someone's
behind this.
Someone who
makes them
afraid.

Afraid
enough to
face the
fire.



Afraid enough to face me.

WAAHHA

Tonight, I find out who "someone" is.

And tonight...

... someone pays.



WAAH

ALL RIGHT.



STOP. JUST STOP.

WAAHHA



ENOUGH.

WAAHHA



WAAHHA

THERE'S A BABY CRYING. YOU HEAR THAT?

THAT MEANS YOU GUYS AREN'T A PRIORITY.

CAN YOU GET OUT OF HERE ALIVE?

YEAH. YEAH, I THINK SO.

THEN DO IT. NOW. AND LISTEN, WHEN I GET A FREE MINUTE?





DON'T BOTHER HIDING.

WAAHHH



Oh, thank God. Still alive.

HELP HER... HELP MY BABY.

DON'T LET HER DIE.

WAAH... WAAH...

My respirator... built into my gauntlets, gotta give it to the mother.



THE MASK WILL NOT FIT HER MOUTH. YOU MUST TAKE IT!

NO. NO. SAVE HER. MY CHILD.

Oh, man.

What do I...



OKAY. YOU HOLD HER, AND I HOLD YOU. DO YOU UNDERSTAND? HOLD HER TIGHT.

I... UNDERSTAND.



WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

LALENA. MY NAME IS LALENA.



Please, God.

Let this work.

GOOD TO KNOW YOU, LALENA.

From the first moment I saw Batgirl...

POW!

...I didn't like her at all.

HMM.

SHOW-OFF.

...NOT THAT WE
AREN'T REAL GLAD
TO *SEE* YOU HERE,
COMMISSIONER
GORDON, I MEAN, IT'S
NOT THAT AT ALL. IT'S
TOTALLY AN
HONOR.

IT'S JUST
THAT, WELL,
YOU KNOW,
A LITTLE
NOTICE
NEXT TIME,
MAYBE?

KIND OF DEFEATS
THE PURPOSE OF A
SURPRISE *VISIT*,
SERGEANT REEVES.

YOU KEEP HER
IN THE *MEN'S*
WARD?

OH, WELL, IN PUNK CITY,
YEAH. PROTECTIVE
CUSTODY.

WHEN WE FIRST
FOUND HER, WOUNDED
BY THE SIDE OF THE
ROAD, WE TRIED HER
IN GENERAL
LOCK UP.

SHE
PUT EIGHT
PRISONERS
IN THE
INFIRMARY.

WE GOT ONE FURNISHED
CELL IN I.S.O., FOR, WHAT,
CELEBRITY GUESTS?

POLITICIANS
AND THE LIKE.
SHE'S IN
THERE.

I TAKE
CARE OF HER
PERSONALLY.

COMMISSIONER...
HOLD UP.

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU EXPECT,
HERE.

SHE CAN'T
ANSWER NO
QUESTIONS, YOU
KNOW THAT,
RIGHT?

SHE'S A
DUMMY, YOU
KNOW? SHE'S
A *MUTE.*

SERGEANT,

I DON'T
WANT TO HEAR
YOU REFER TO
ANYONE THAT
WAY AGAIN,
ARE WE
CLEAR?

YOU
DON'T WORK
FOR ME.

BUT
I WOULDN'T
ADVISE MAKING ME
ANGRY, EITHER.





→KOFF←

I KNOW
YOU CAN'T
SPEAK.

I BROUGHT
YOU SOMETHING.



I THOUGHT,
MAYBE YOU
COULD WRITE
WHAT YOU
KNOW?

OR, MAYBE
YOU COULD SKETCH
SOMETHING...
LOCATIONS,
FACES?



WE ASSUME THEY
TOOK YOU WHEN
YOU WERE
YOUNG.

I'D LIKE
TO HELP
YOU, IF I
CAN.



NOW *LISTEN*,
GIRLY.
YOU WILL
RESPECT THE
COMMISSIONER,
YOU *HEAR* ME?

NEVER MIND,
SERGEANT.

THE OTHERS LIKE
HER, THEY'RE ALL IN
CRYO-SLEEP.

MAYBE
THAT'S THE
KINDEST THING,
AFTER ALL.



IT WAS A
LONG SHOT. I
KNEW THAT
COMING IN.

WE'LL SEND
AN ESCORT TO
TAKE HER TO
BLACKGATE IN
THE MORNING.

I CAN
SEE MYSELF
OUT.



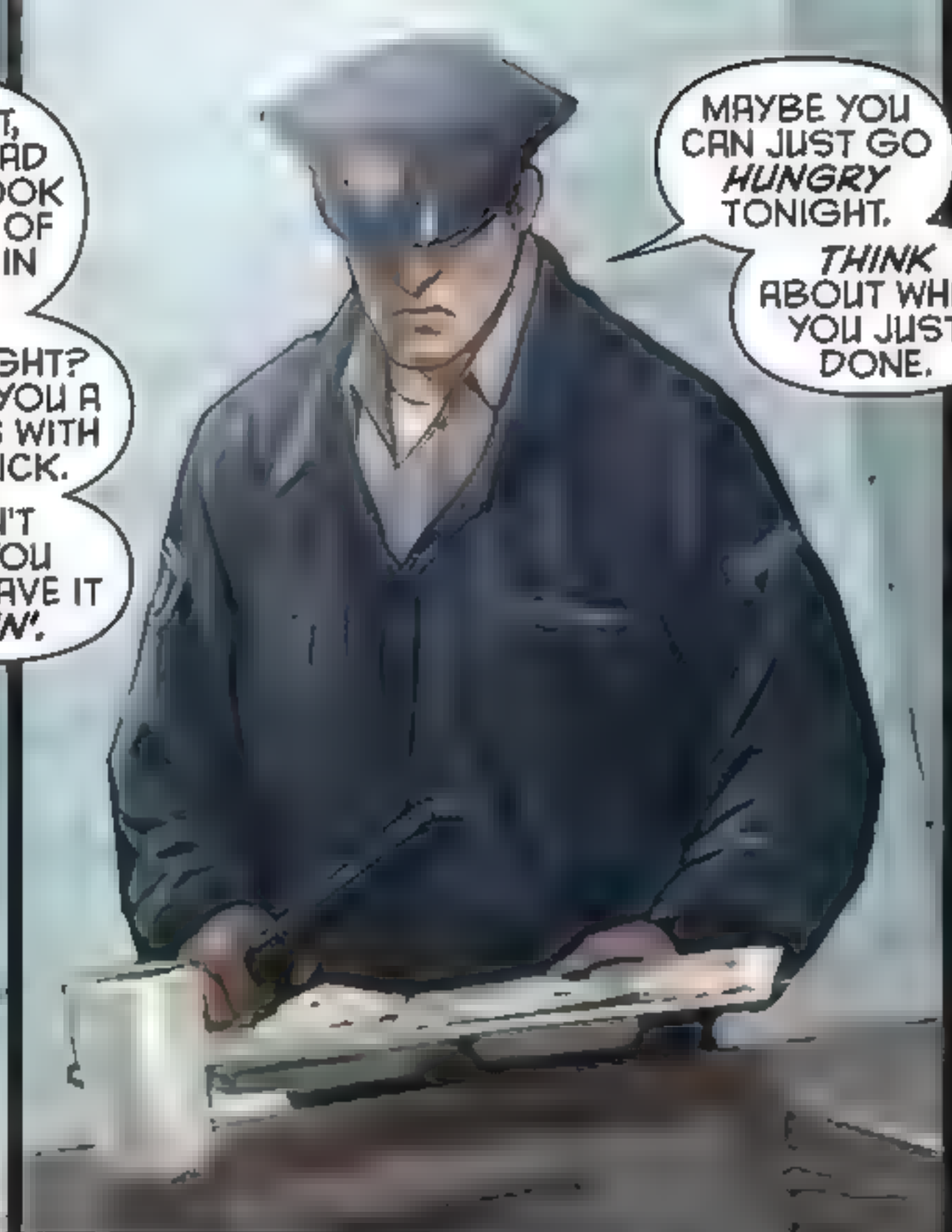
BE RIGHT
WITH YOU,
COMMISSIONER.



HAD TO DO IT,
DIDN'T YOU? HAD
TO MAKE ME LOOK
BAD IN FRONT OF
THE TOP COP IN
 Gotham.

REVENGE, RIGHT?
SO I TAPPED YOU A
COUPLE TIMES WITH
MY NIGHTSTICK.

IT AIN'T
LIKE YOU
DIDN'T HAVE IT
 COMIN'.

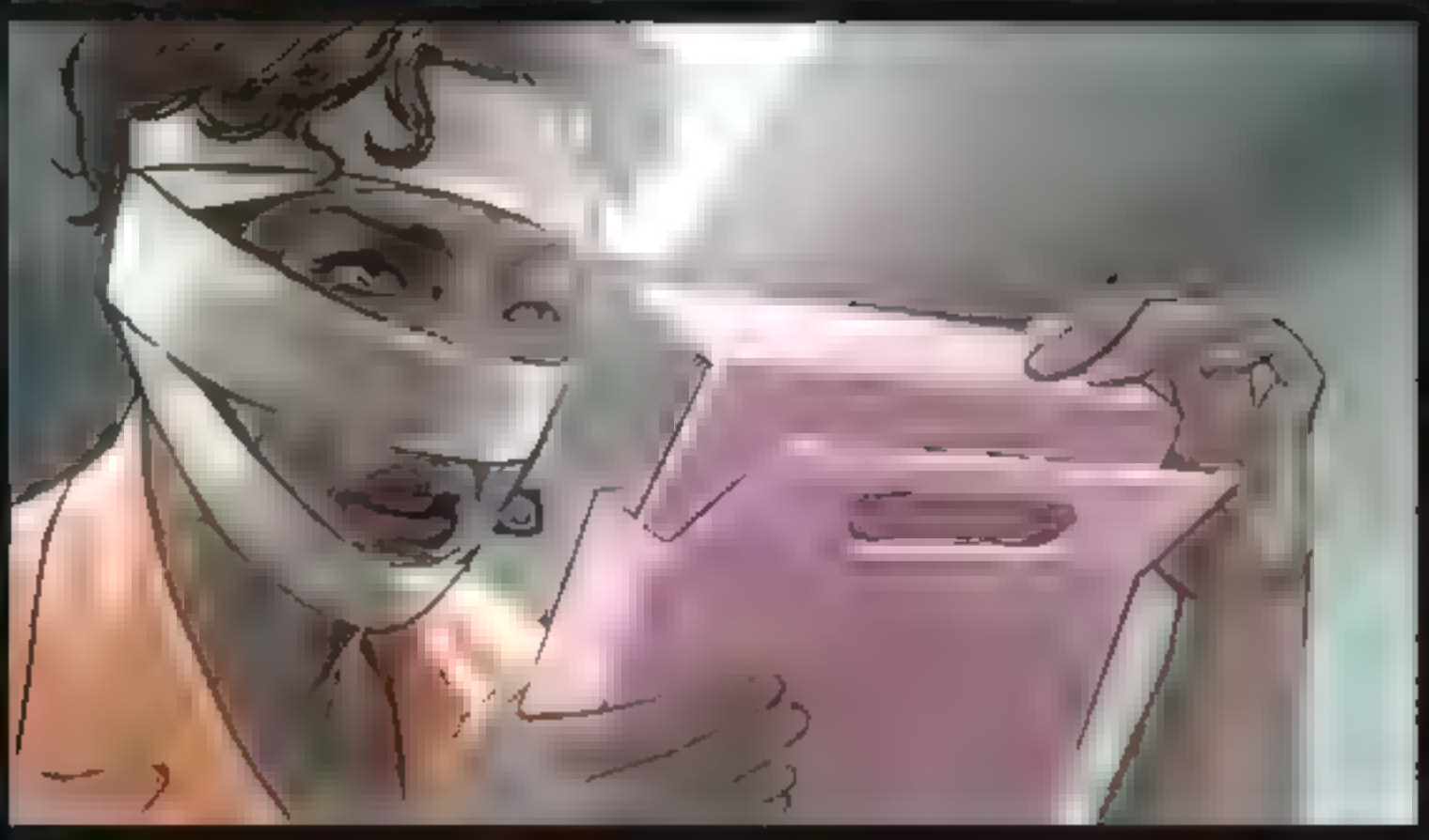
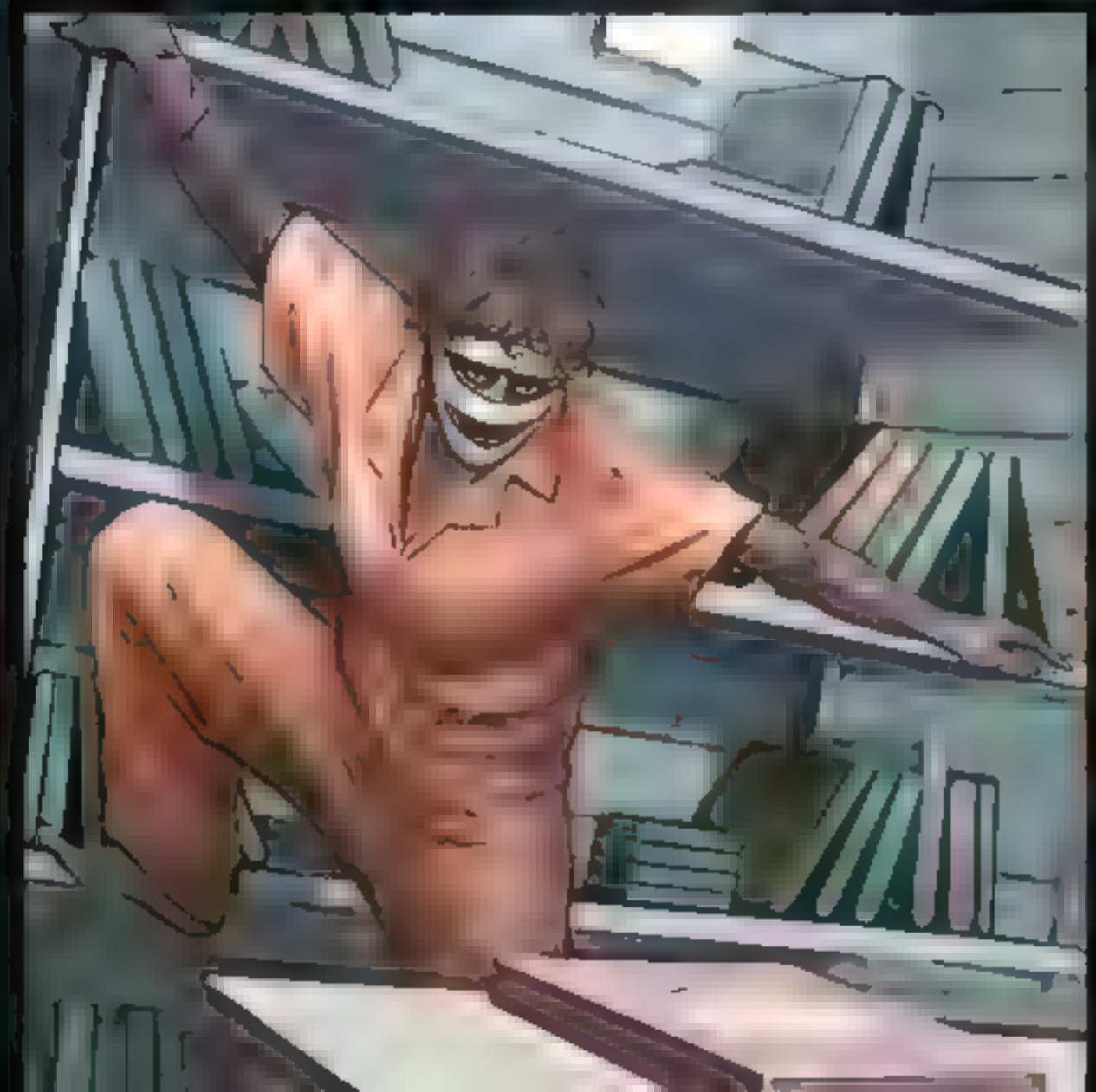


MAYBE YOU
CAN JUST GO
 HUNGRY
TONIGHT.
 THINK
ABOUT WHAT
YOU JUST
DONE.



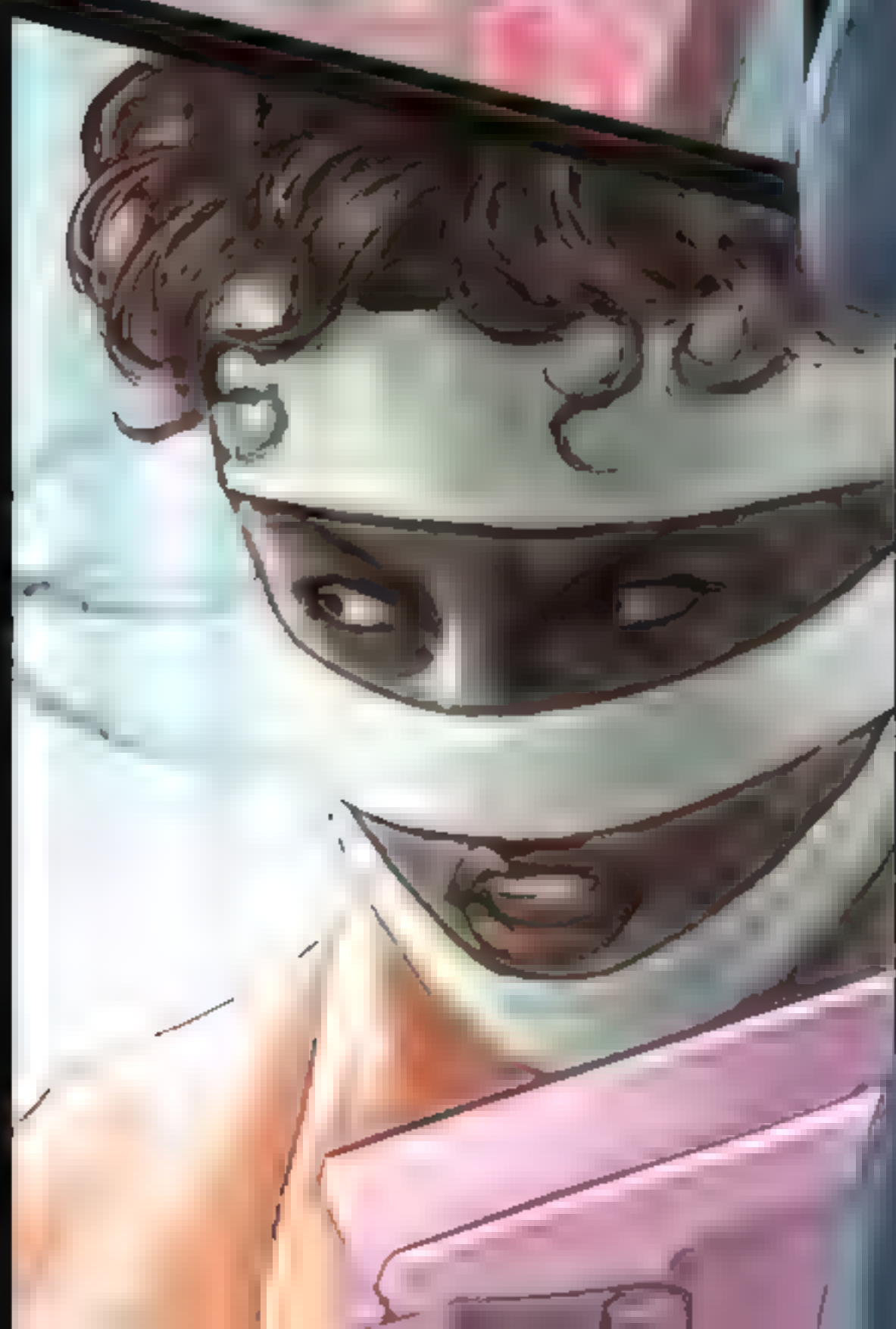
YOU'LL GET WHAT'S
COMING TO YR. *THAT IS*
FOR *DAMN* SURE.

DUMMY.





YOU KNOW,
IT'S A FUNNY THING
ABOUT WHEN THE
COMMISSIONER
DRIVES UP IN HIS
BIG DOMESTIC
CAR.



THEY NEVER,
EVER CHECK
THE TRUNK.

I'VE BEEN
HIRED TO
SPRING YOU,
KIDDO.

NAME'S

CATWOMAN!!

LATER, IN THE GOTHAM SLUMS...

COME ON,
COME ON.



RICKY.



WE GOTTA DO
THIS. QUICK, ALL
RIGHT?

MY BROTHER'S
STILL IN THE LIFE,
AN' IF HE *SEES* ME
OUT HERE WITH
YOU...

HOW'S
THE LEG,
RICKY?



WHICH? OH,
YOU MEAN
THIS.

S'POZEDA GET
AN ARTIFICIAL ONE.
WENT FOR A
FITTING TODAY.

WEIRD, NOT
BEING ABLE
TO...YOU
KNOW. THE
USUAL
STUFF.

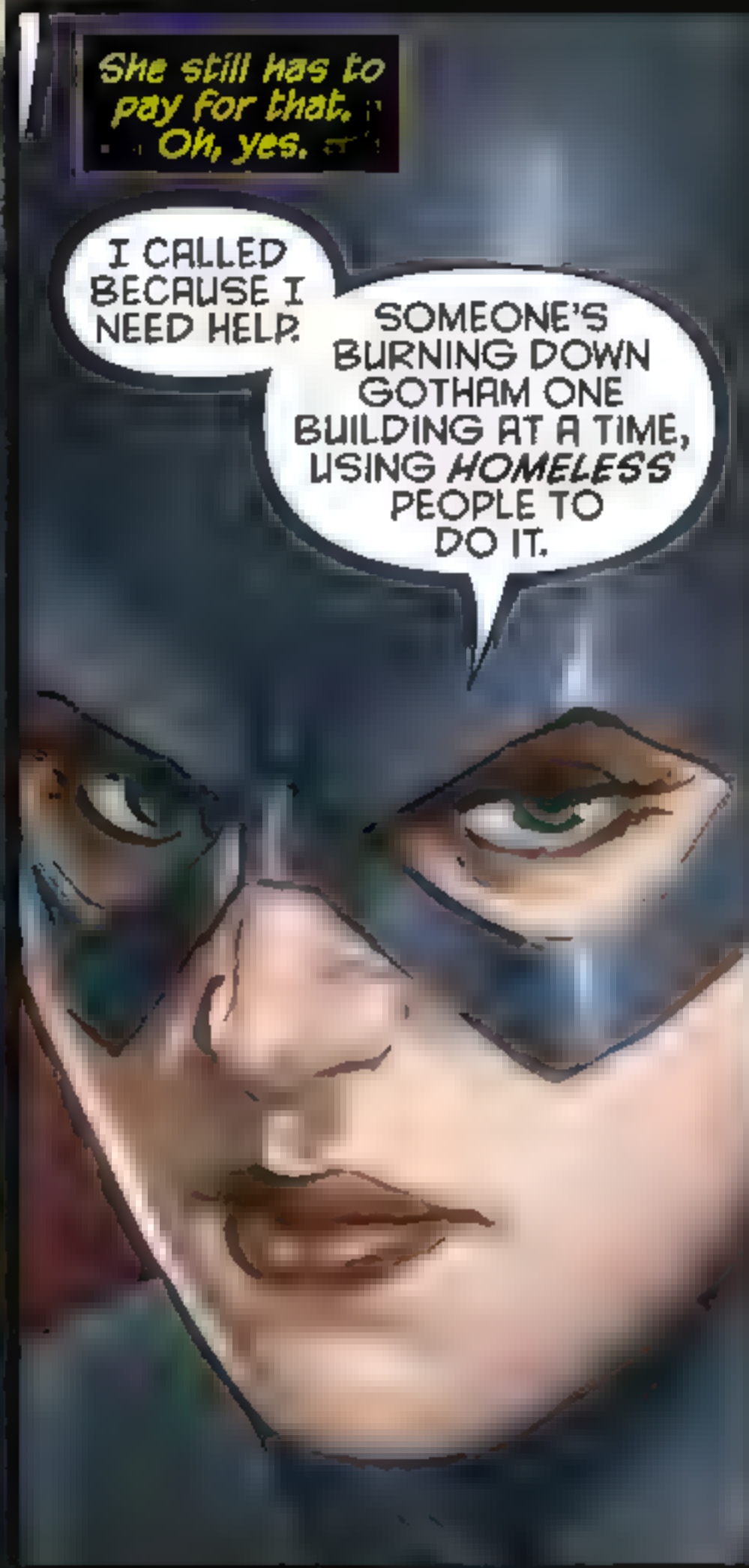
I DO
KNOW, IN
FACT.



*She still has to
pay for that.
Oh, yes.*

I CALLED
BECAUSE I
NEED HELP.

SOMEONE'S
BURNING DOWN
GOTHAM ONE
BUILDING AT A TIME,
USING *HOMELESS*
PEOPLE TO
DO IT.



*This poor
Rickey, got
nightfall's
bag, side, ended
up with one shoe
too many a few
weeks back.*



HUH.

SOUNDS
LIKE A LOT OF
NONE OF MY
BUSINESS.



RICKY.

I KNOW YOU
VOLUNTEER WITH
THE INDIGENT IN
CHERRY HILL.
PEOPLE ARE
DYING, HERE.



PEOPLE
ARE ALWAYS
DYING.

I DON'T
REALLY WANT
TO *BE* ONE OF
THEM, BATGIRL.

SO I HAVE
NOTHING TO SAY,
UNDERSTAND?



NOT A WORD
FROM ME.



Oh, man.

*OF all the things
I did not want
to know.*



I GOT
NOTHING TO
SAY, RED.

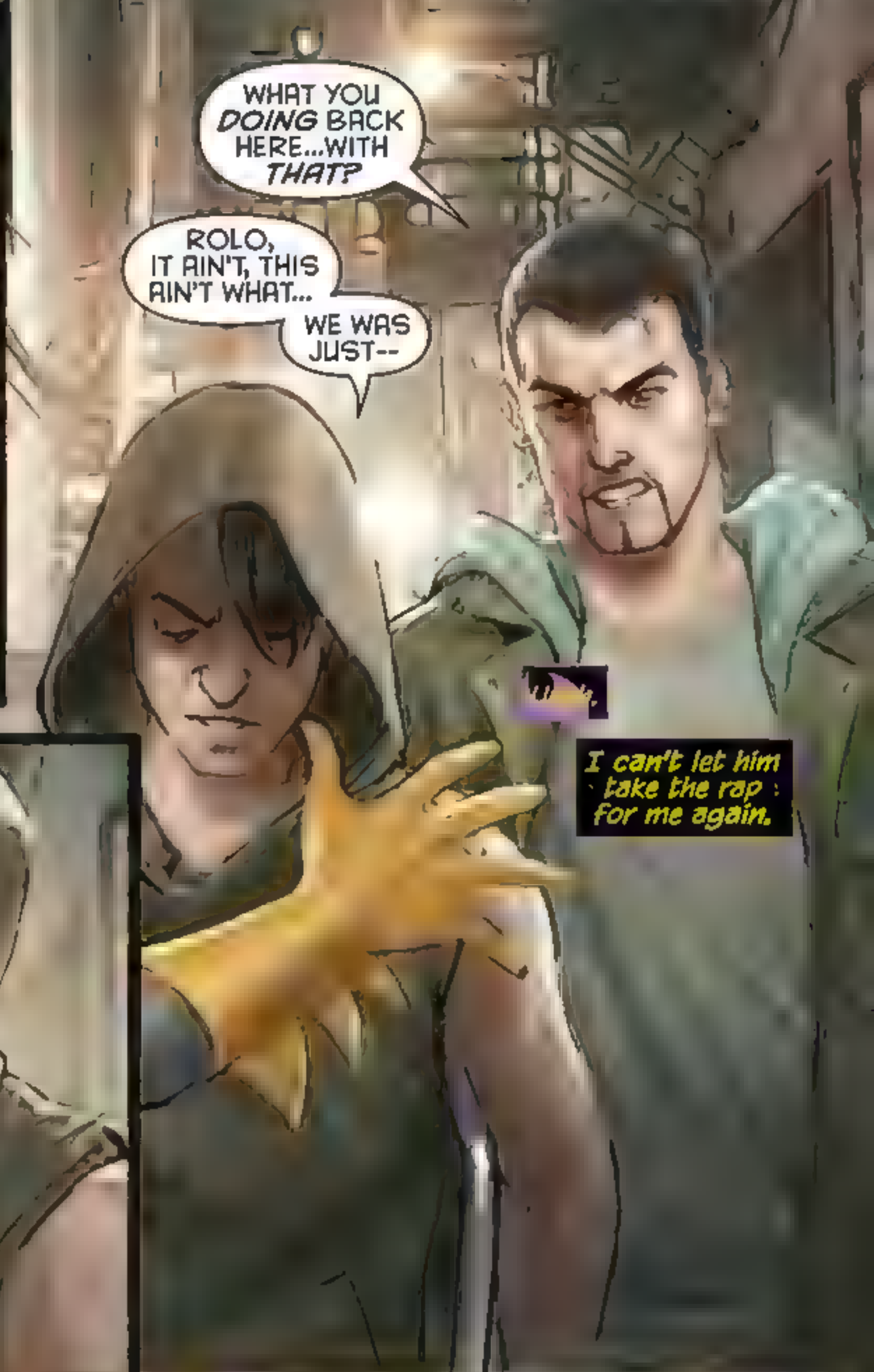
YOU BEST
GO BACK
TO...

...WHATEVER
PEOPLE YOU
DO.



RICKY. WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOIN'?

OH, DAMMIT. IT'S MY BROTHER. I'M SCREWED.



WHAT YOU DOING BACK HERE...WITH THAT?

ROLO, IT AIN'T, THIS AIN'T WHAT...

WE WAS JUST--

I can't let him take the rap for me again.



Well, here goes nothing.

Most action I've seen in months and it has to be a Hail Mary desperation play.

I might need to look at my priorities.



GOTTA GO, BABY.

SEE YOU SOON, YEAH?

UH. ABSOLUTELY.



BRO. TELL ME YOU'RE HITTING THAT.

IT'S...

IT'S LIKE ROMEO AND JULIET, ROLO.

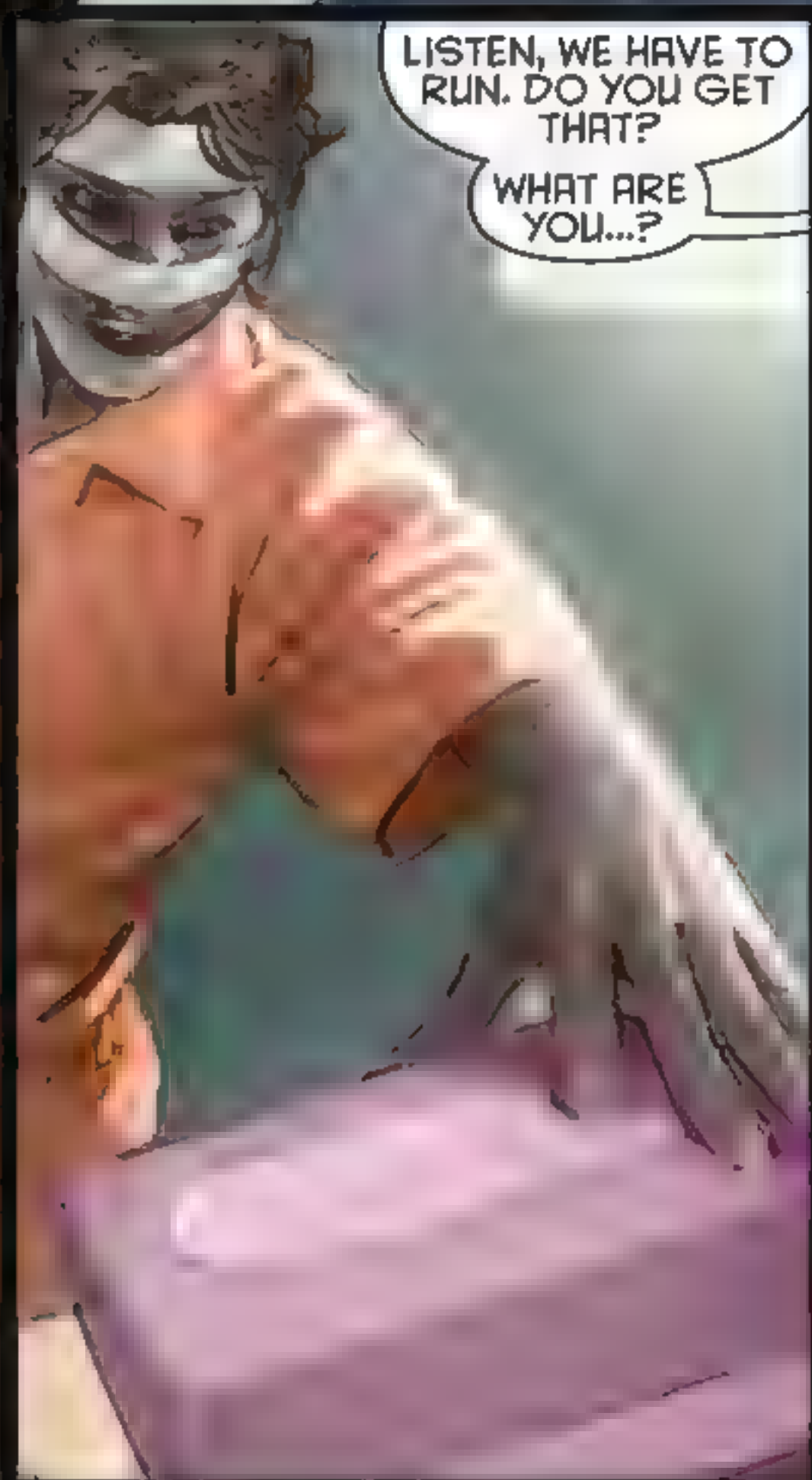
YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.



THE GUY
PAYING ME MUST BE
AWFUL BAD, IF THE
COMMISSIONER
WON'T EVEN **NAME**
HIM INSIDE THIS
PRISON.
COME ON,
WE DON'T HAVE
MUCH--



WHAT?



LISTEN, WE HAVE TO
RUN. DO YOU GET
THAT?
WHAT ARE
YOU...?



OKAY.
ALL
SQUARED
AWAY
NOW?

MAY WE
PROCEED?

HEY.

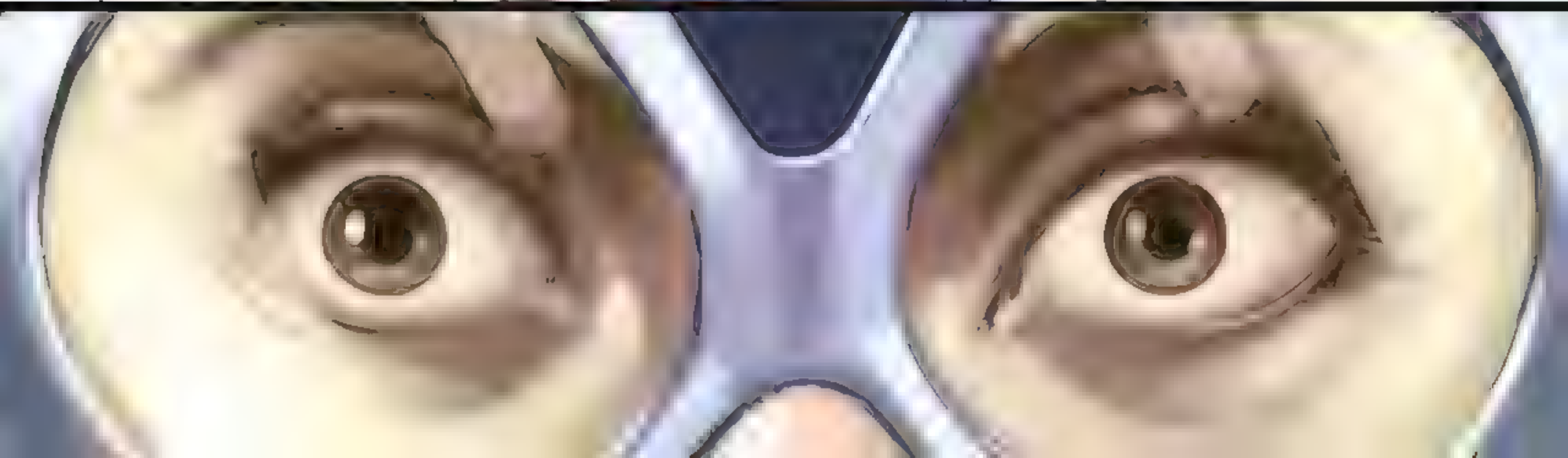


WHAT
THE **HELL** IS
GOING ON
IN HERE?
CATWOMAN?!



SWELL.

LOOK, JUST TURN
AROUND AND
WALK AWAY, ALL
RIGHT?
WE
DON'T WANT
ANY...







KIDDO.
WE HAVE
TO GO.

I OPENED
THE DOOR
FOR YOU,
RIGHT?
LET HIM
LIVE.

I'VE ARRANGED
AN EXPLOSIVE
DIVERSION FOR
THE GUARDS, BUT
THEY HEARD THE
SHOTS.
THEY'RE
ALREADY ON
THEIR WAY.

OH. I...

...DON'T
YOU WANT
OUT?
I KNOW
YOU COULD
KILL ME
RIGHT NOW.
BUT...

...DON'T YOU
WANT TO SEE
YOUR PEOPLE
AGAIN?
YOU MUST
HAVE FAMILY,
RIGHT?



OKAY. OKAY,
GOOD.

ONE MORE GUARD IN
UNIFORM AND WE WALK
RIGHT OUT THE
FRONT DOOR

Not my
rite part
of the job...

...but it's time
to bat up.

The Court of Owls has been
running Gotham for at least
a century, maybe lots, lots
longer, using the Talons as
their assassins.*

I thought all of the
surviving Talons were
imprisoned in
Blackgate.

*CHECKOUT BATMAN
#8 AND THE NIGHT
OF THE OWLS!--B.C.



Now all I have to go on is
a four-letter word scrawled
in chalk on a dumpster.

On scrawled word against
most dangerous cabal
Gotham history.

...I've lost the
stomach for trying to
scare these people.

WHAT DO
YOU...WHAT IS IT
YOU WANT?

How do I tell Batman
that the Court may still
be pulling strings?

And yet another
problem...

They're more
afraid of the
person pushing
them to arson
than they are of
me, anyway.

I make pretty
much the worst
dark avenger
ever sometimes,
I swear.

NOTHING.

LOOK, I HAVE
SOME CASH. IT'S
NOT A LOT.

GET
SOMEWHERE
SAFE TONIGHT,
OKAY?

MISS.
MISS BAT.

DON'T YOU HAVE ANY
BETTER SENSE THAN THAT,
BOTHERIN' THESE POOR
PEOPLE?

I'M...
SORRY.
I WAS
ASKING--

I KNOW
WHAT YOU WERE
ASKING.

AND I KNOW WHO IT IS
YOU'RE LOOKIN'
FOR.

HARROWOOD STATE PENITENTIARY...

COME ON. WE
HAVE MAYBE FIVE
MINUTES BEFORE
THEY SEND
CHOPPERS.

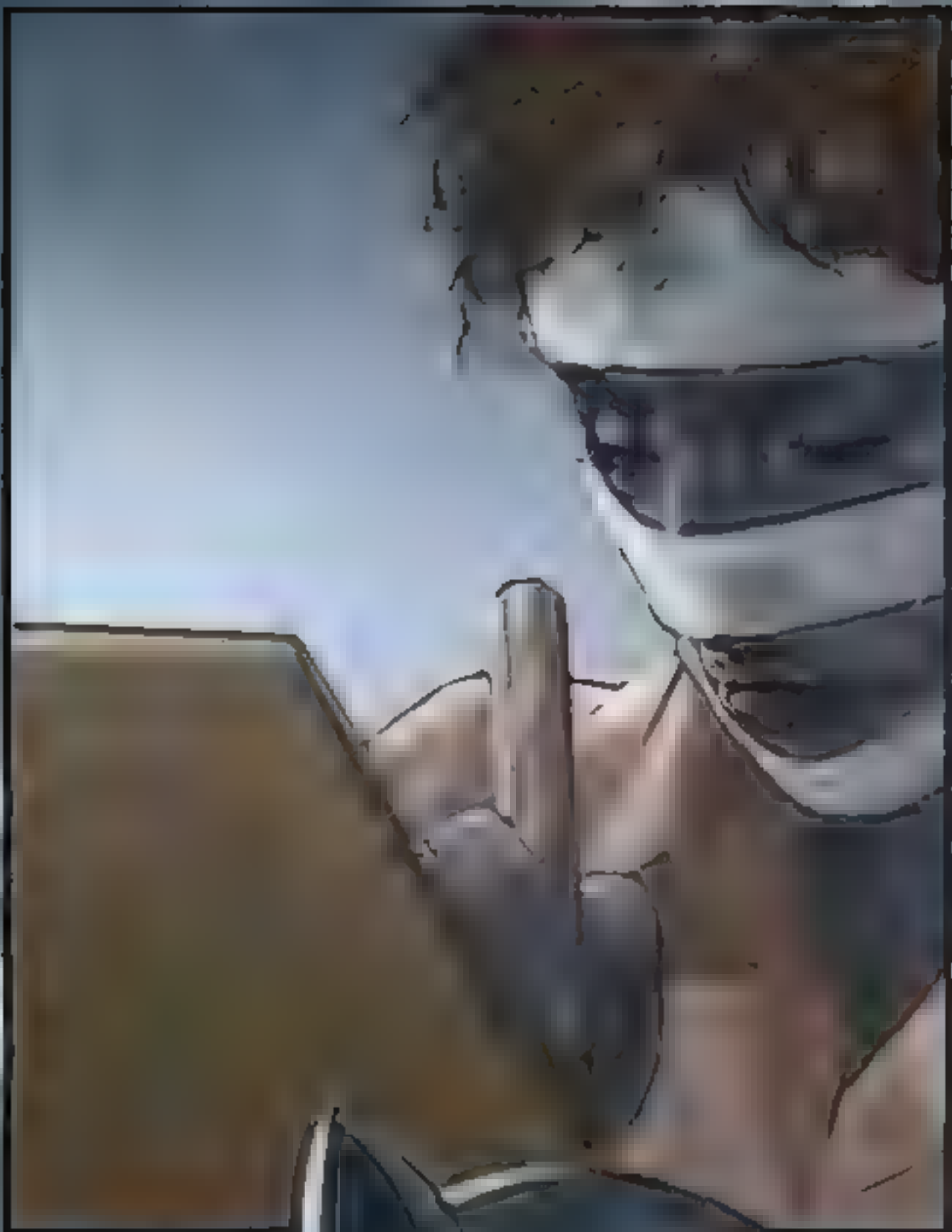
HEY, NO SENSE IN
GIVING UP STYLE, AM
I RIGHT?

I HAVE YOUR
GEAR HERE, THEN WE
GET YOU BACK TO
YOUR FAMILY, HOW
DOES THAT
SOUND?

Family
Ded

SWEETHEART...
I'M SORRY TO
HEAR THAT.

WHAT ABOUT
FRIENDS, SOMEONE
WHO CARES ABOUT
YOU?



Someone
did this
girl over
something
fierce.

I can't
take it.

I
KNOW THAT
FEELING.
OKAY, PUT
YOUR HAND UP,
MAKE A FIST.



THAT'S
RIGHT. THEN WE
LINK THE LITTLE
FINGERS.



PLINK

WHERE I
COME FROM, THIS
IS A SACRED
BOND.

NOW YOU
HAVE ONE
FRIEND.



NOW PLEASE,
FOR THE LOVE
OF ALL THINGS
FURRY, GET IN
THE CAR.

SOON...

Okay, here's
the old
said to
look...

Little-known Gotham
fact: this city sells
more rooftop motion
detectors than any
three other cities
combined.

One installation
company even calls
it "batproofing."

Bad invest-
ment, really.

And not coincidentally,
every single building around the
perimeter of this particular
office is loaded with them.

An office belonging
to the same guy my
homeless-hero in the
park says is scaring
the destitute into
committing arson.

I don't think
you're a good guy,
Mr. Parsons.

And it comes
in over the
scanner that an
Owl Assassin
was busted out
of jail tonight
by a "female
accomplice."

I'm in no
hurry to face
her again.

When I first
encountered this
Talon, I did some
research. Her family
was killed by a
balloon bomb during
World War II. No
names recorded.

She was brutally
scarred...got a job
at Haly's Circus.

We think she was
recruited to be a Talon
for the Court of Owls
there. She couldn't have
been more than ten.*

YOU'RE TO
COME WITH ME.
YOU'LL HAVE A
HOME, A NEST OF
YOUR OWN.

AND
IMPORTANT,
MEANINGFUL
WORK.

*SEE BATGIRL #9.--B.C.



And when she was corrected with the bird cryogenic stuff the Court pulled, she was only seventeen years old, seventy years later.

Spry enough to kick my ass and blow up half the city.

I beat her, but barely.

HERE SHE IS, MR. PARSONS--
READY TO GO.

MY DEAR GIRLS.
MY DEAR GIRLS.
SO LOVELY TO SEE YOU.
PLEASE FOLLOW ME.

Speak of the devil,
And her female accomplice.
Catwoman!



I LIKE TO PUTTER
IN MY GARDENS IN
THE EVENING,
YOU SEE.

I KNOW
WHO YOU WORK
FOR, MR.
PARSONS.

AND I KNOW
YOU'RE HIDING FROM
THE BAT. THAT'S WHY
YOU'RE NOT WEARING
YOUR LITTLE MASK,
RIGHT?

THEY SAID
YOU WERE
CLEVER.



BUT...WHY
THE ARSON?
I KNOW YOU
HIRED THOSE
HOMELESS
MEN.

YOU ARE
A SNOOPY FELINE,
AREN'T YOU?

IT'S
BRUCE WAYNE,
CATWOMAN. ALL THE
BUILDINGS HE WANTS
TO BUY AND
DEMOLISH FOR HIS
"REBUILDING OF
GOTHAM."

WE'VE
CREATED A RATHER
CONVINCING PAPER
TRAIL LEADING
DIRECTLY TO HIM--
INCRIMINATING HIM
FOR MURDER AND
RACKETEERING.



THAT'S...
NO ONE WILL
BELIEVE
THAT.

NOT AT
FIRST.

BUT
IMAGINE IF
THERE'S A MUCH
HIGHER BODY
COUNT AND
IRREFUTABLE
EVIDENCE?

IMAGINE IF
WE BURN DOWN
A HUNDRED
OCCUPIED
BUILDINGS?

I don't know
which side of the
Catwoman's
playing, currently.

I don't think
she knows.

But she can't
be okay with
this.

Can she?

OKAY. I
DON'T CARE
WHAT YOU
PAY ME.

I'M
OUT.
WE'RE
DONE.
I
DIDN'T SIGN
UP TO KILL
INNOCENTS.

PITY.
TALON.
SHE'S BEEN
SENTENCED.
KILL HER.

Oh, man.



Batgirl!

Okay, maybe I'm a little impressed.

TELL ME YOU HEARD ME TELL THAT GUY TO GO SCREW HIMSELF.

I DID.
CAN YOU FIGHT?

VERY MUCH, YES.

WHEN CALLED UPON.

DID YOU REALLY THINK I WOULD BRING A COMMON THIEF HERE UNGUARDED?

I ASSURE YOU, I WOULD NOT.



CATWOMAN--
THE COURT
OF OWLS HAS
SENTENCED
YOU TO DIE!

WE WILL
TAKE NO
PLEASURE IN
THIS, I
PROMISE
YOU.



TALONS?! BUT I
THOUGHT THEY
WERE ALL SECURED
IN BLACKGATE?

RUNNING.
WHAT ABOUT
RUNNING?

IF WE TURN
OUR BACKS,
THEY'LL KILL
US WHERE WE
STAND.

FIGURED.

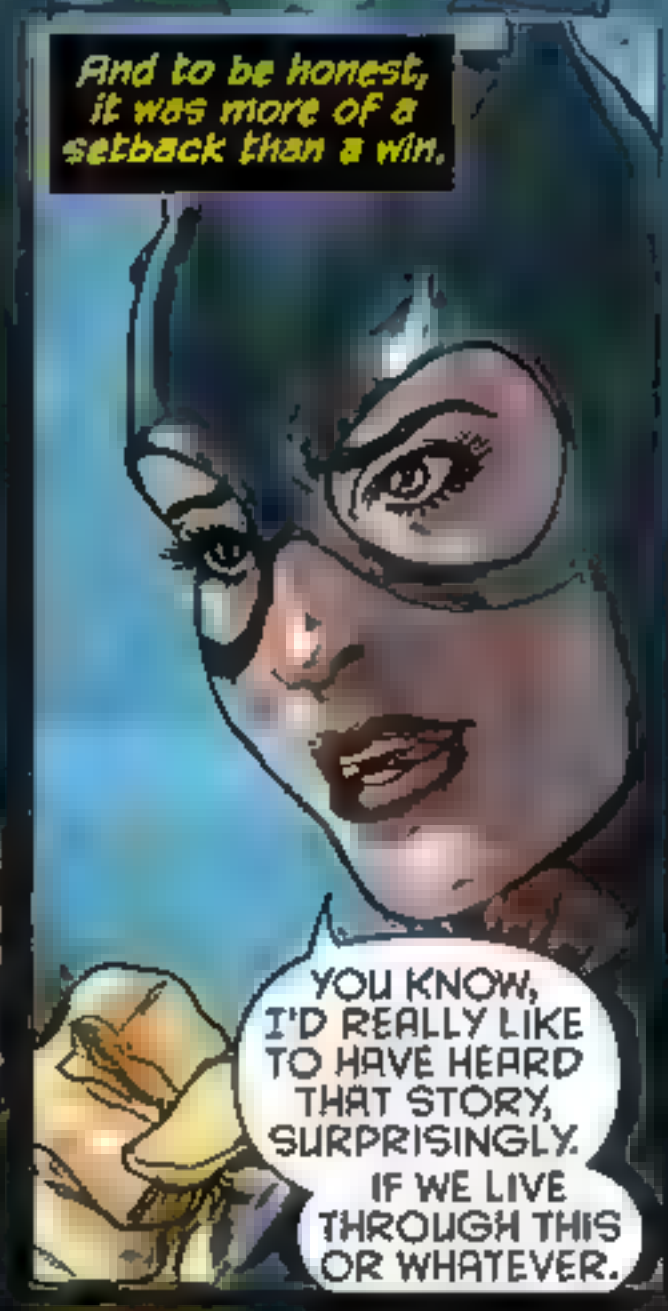


S'IT TRUE
ABOUT YOU AND
GREEN ARROW...?

A LADY
NEVER
TELLS.

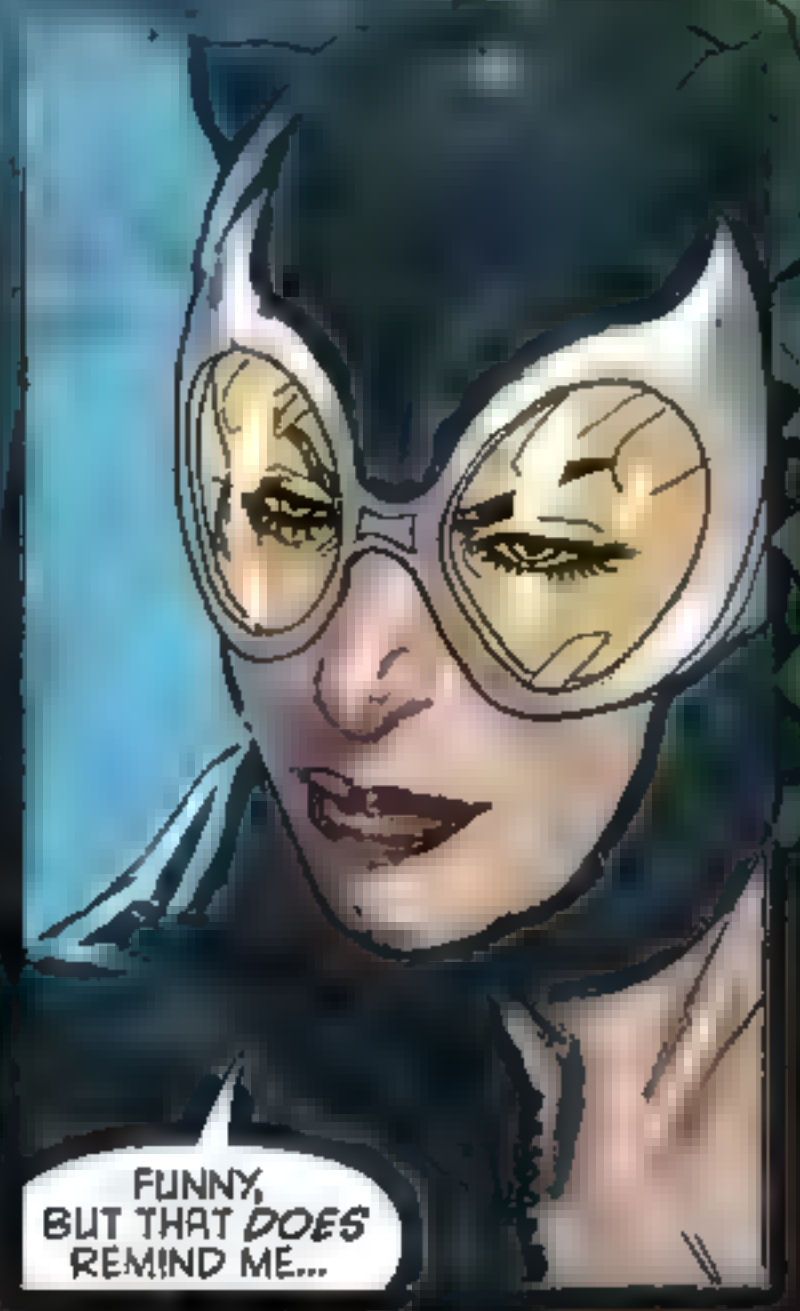
SO,
ABSOLUTELY
IT'S TRUE.

*only beat
if these things
through sheer luck.*



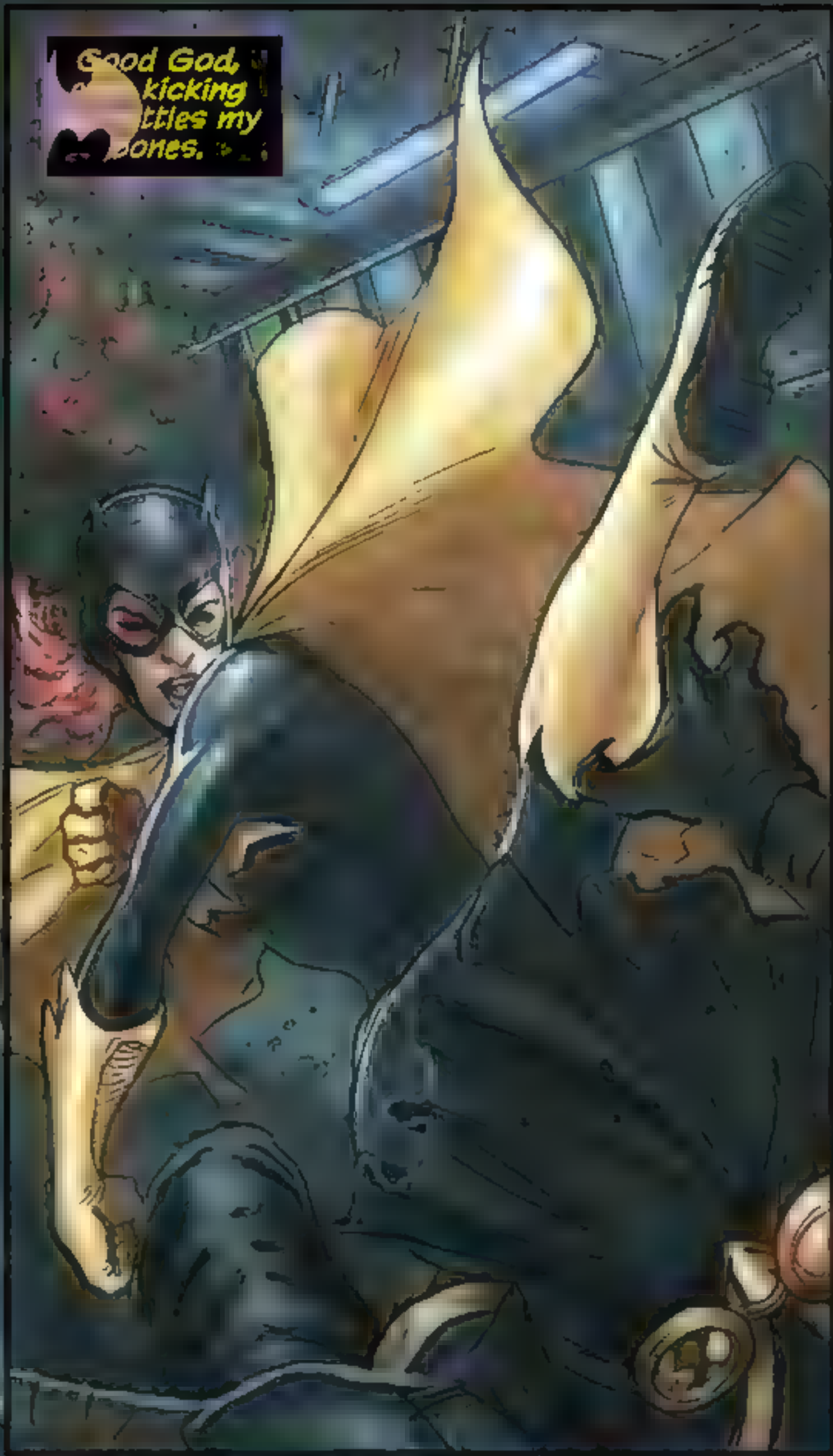
*And to be honest,
it was more of a
setback than a win.*

YOU KNOW,
I'D REALLY LIKE
TO HAVE HEARD
THAT STORY,
SURPRISINGLY.
IF WE LIVE
THROUGH THIS
OR WHATEVER.



FUNNY,
BUT THAT **DOES**
REMINDE ME...



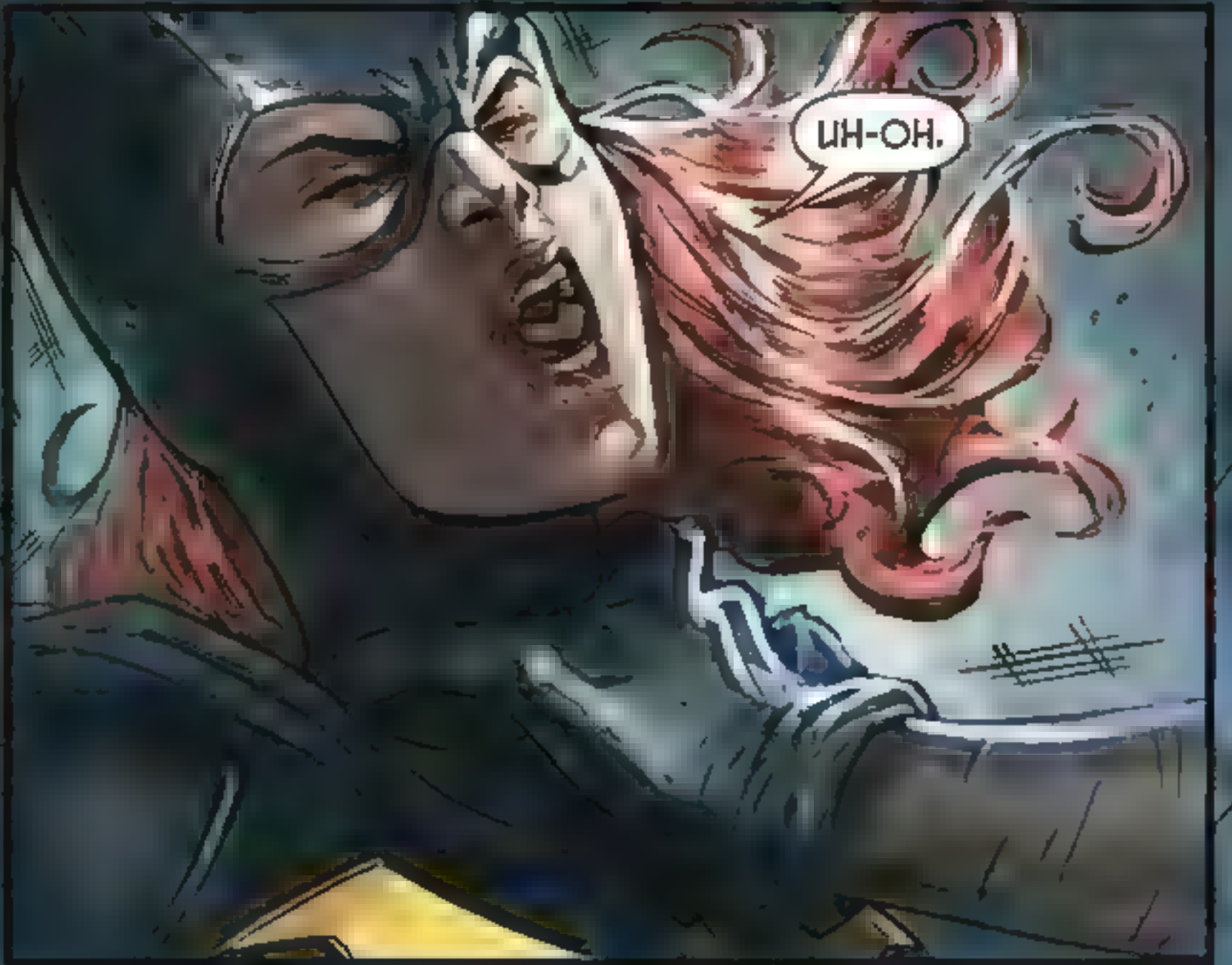


Good God,
kicking
tattles my
bones.



I can't...

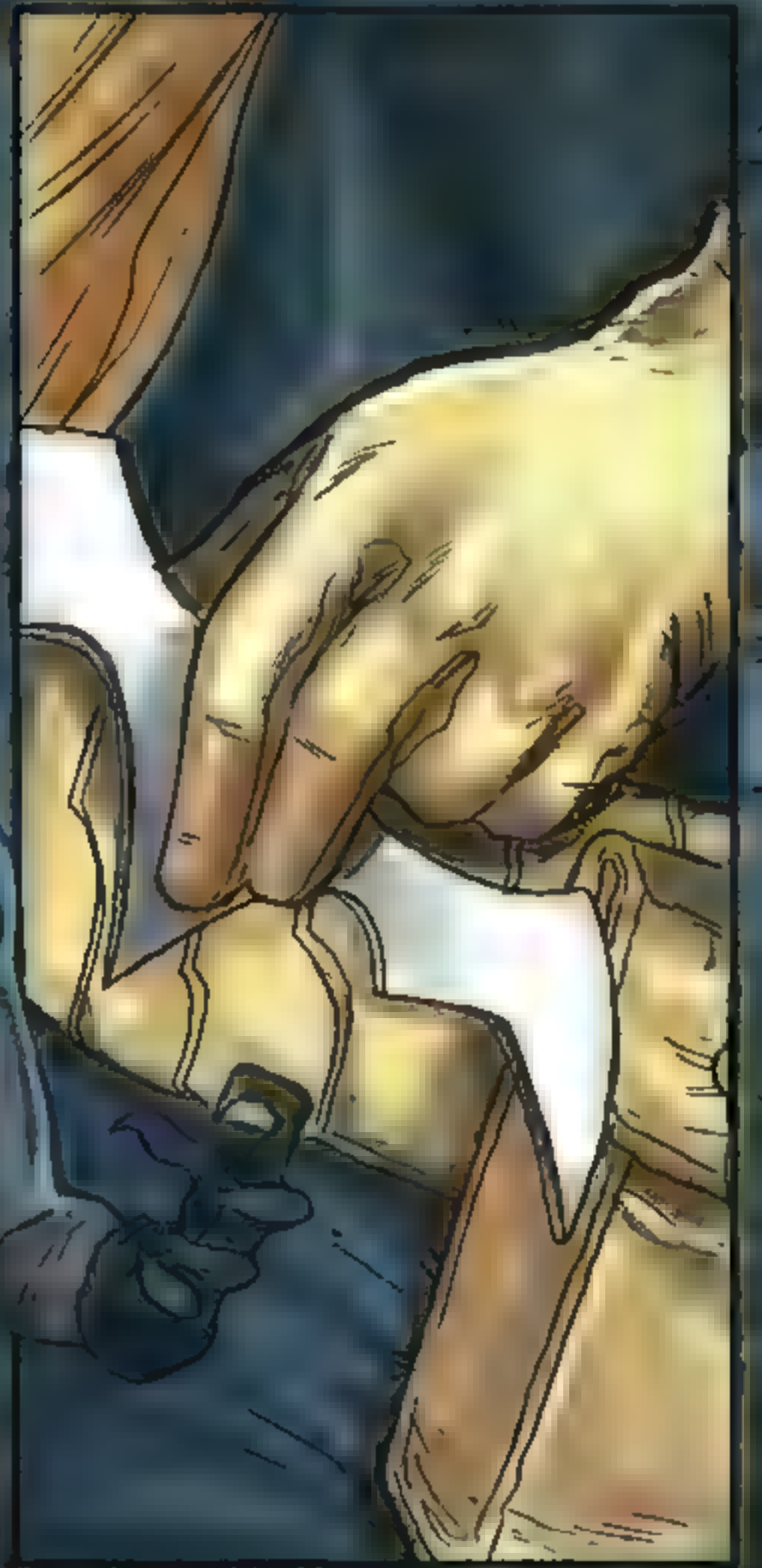
...can't even
get her to
breathe heavy.

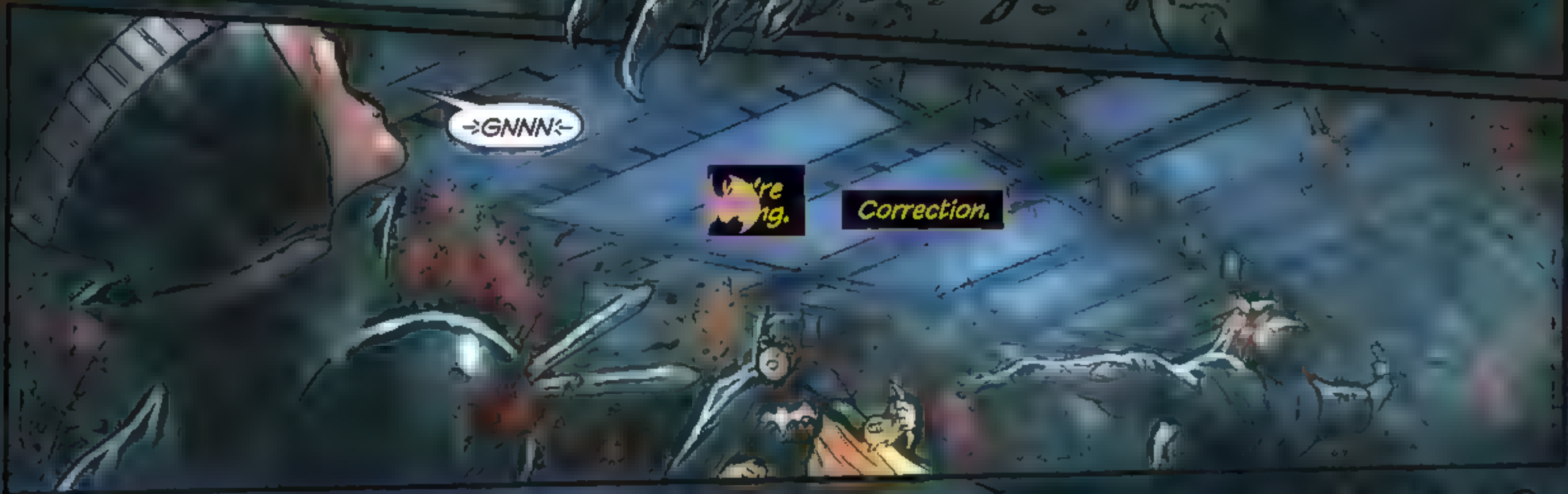
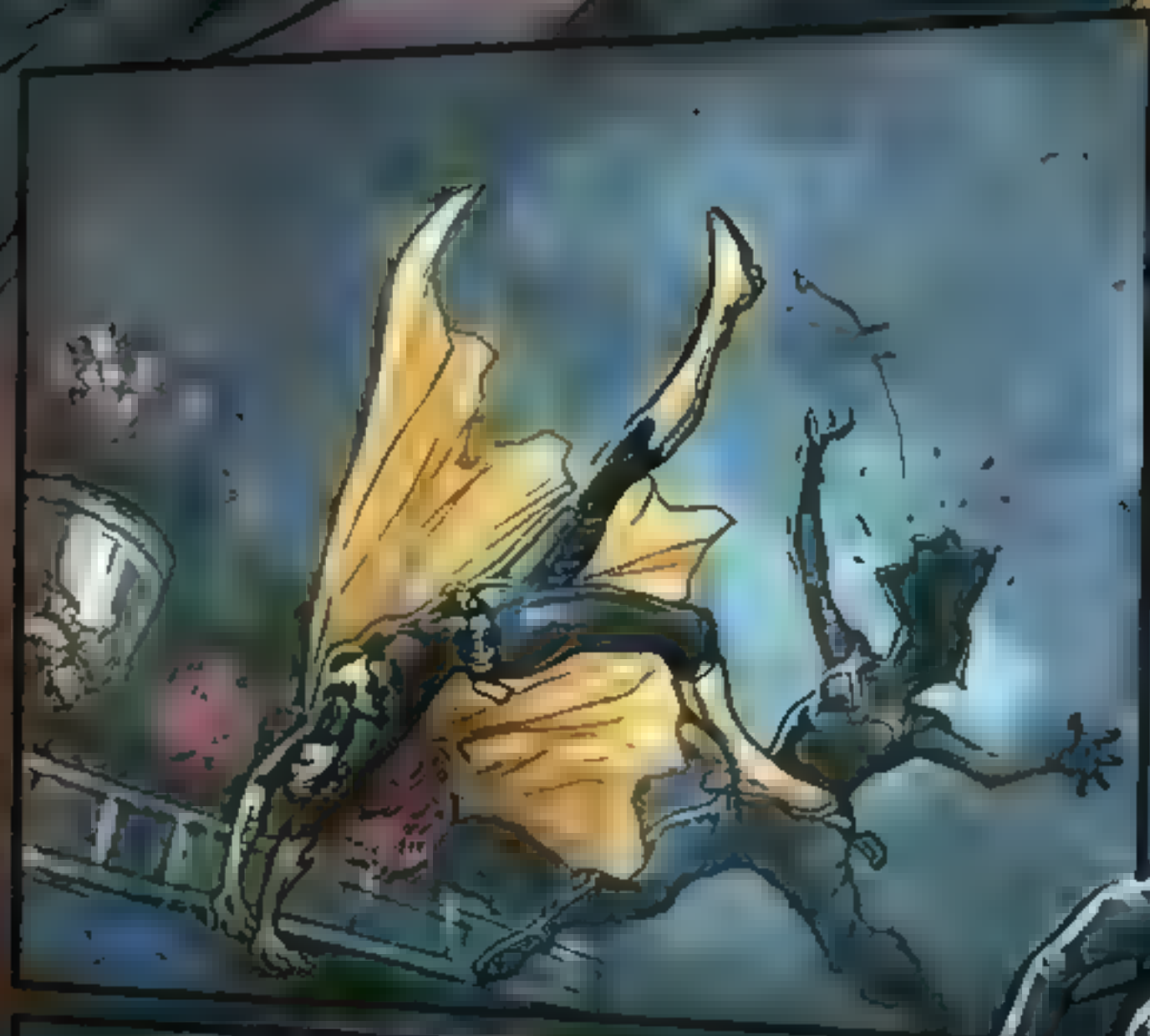


UH-OH.



KK. KL.







She could
have run. She's
a woman, for
Pete's sake.

But she
didn't.

I wish I
could tell
Batman
that.



That in our last
moments...she
stood tall.

SLIT
HER THROAT,
PLEASE. AND
BE QUICK
ABOUT IT.
I'VE
GARDENING
TO DO.



We can't,
can't go out
this way.

TALON.
PLEASE,
LISTEN TO
ME.

Oh, man—
please let my
research be right
on this one.



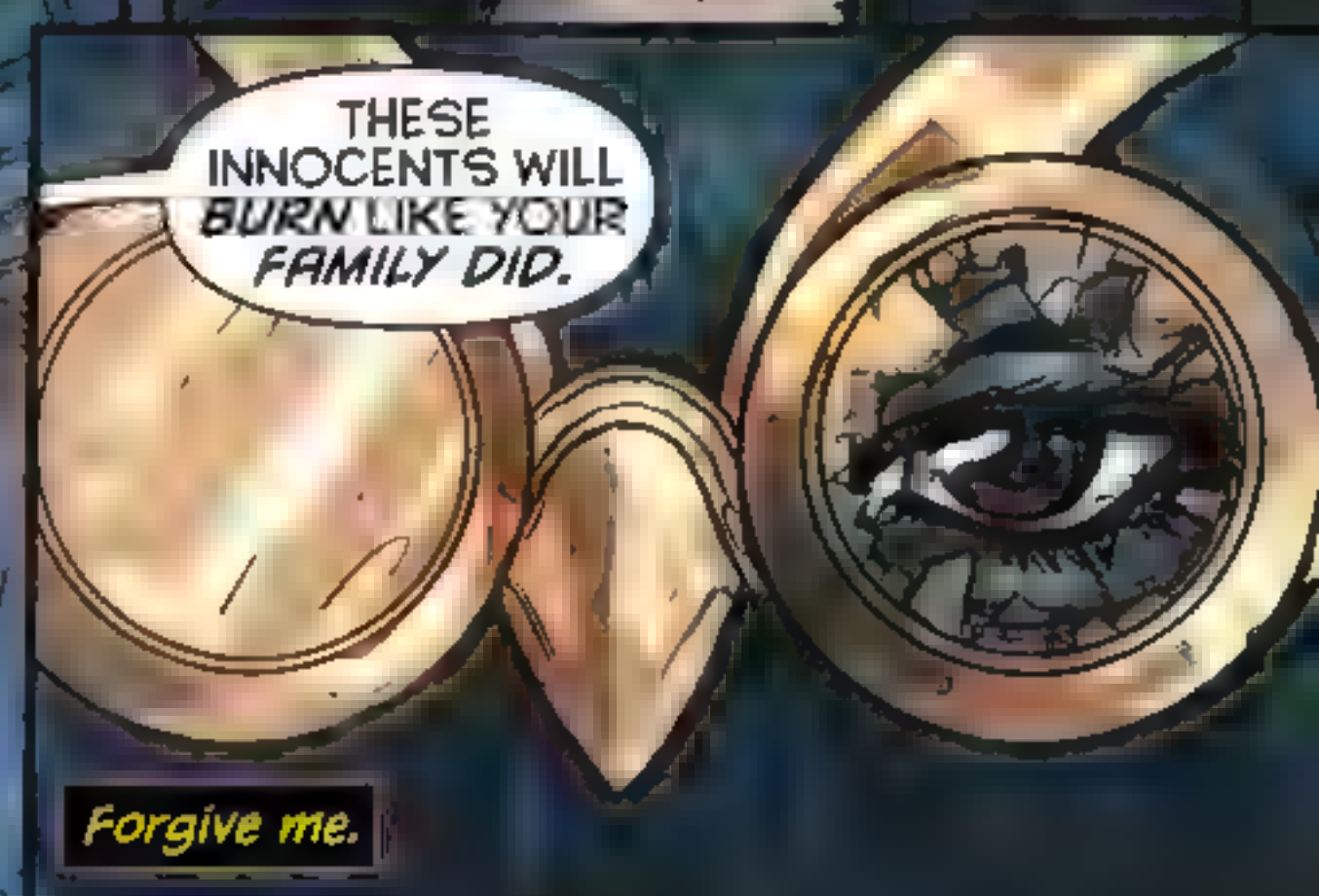
TALON. I
KNOW ABOUT
YOU. I KNOW
WHAT HAPPENED
TO YOUR
FAMILY.
THEY WERE
INNOCENTS.
BLOWN
UP, BURNED
ALIVE IN THE
WAR.



THAT'S *JUST* WHAT
YOUR *BOSS*
WANTS TO DO TO
A *HUNDRED*
FAMILIES!

TTTTSS.

God help me for what
I am about to say.



THESE
INNOCENTS WILL
BURN LIKE YOUR
FAMILY DID.

Forgive me.

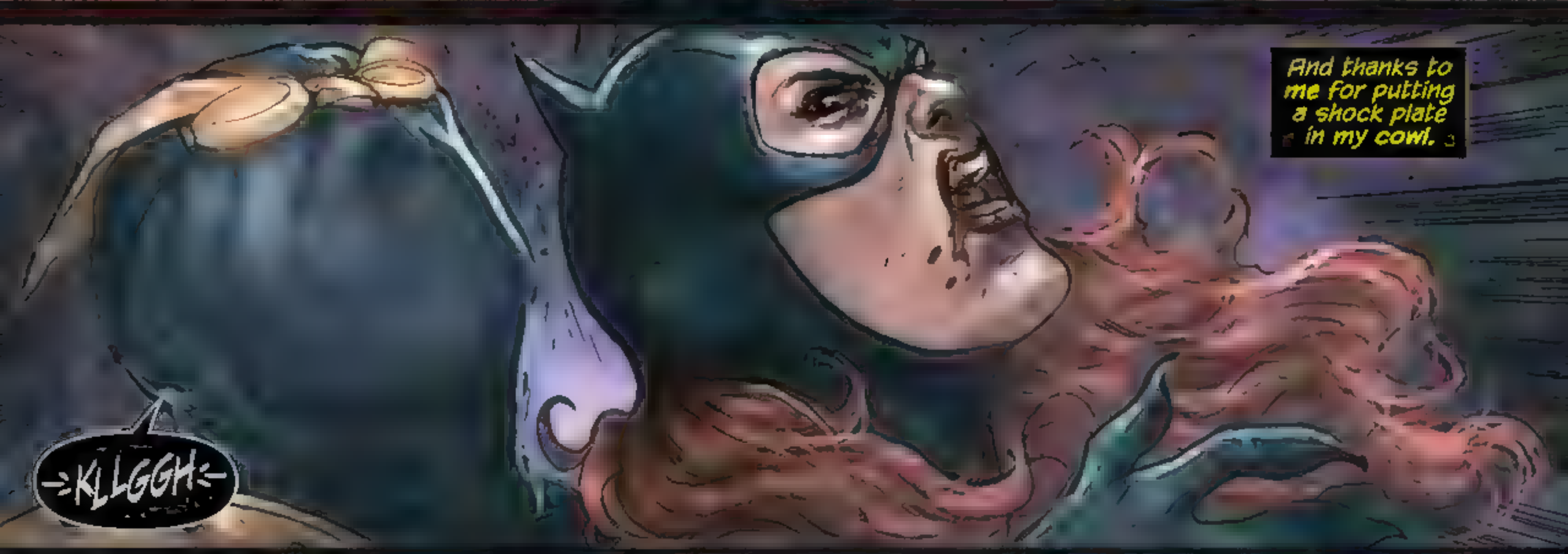


OH.

KKKKK



Thank you,
er is
ing.



And thanks to
me for putting
a shock plate
in my cowl.

KLLGGH



DID I SAY YOU
COULD TOUCH
ME?

And the Cat
seems to have
found her
balance again.

Do we
actually have
a chance
here?



I'm hurting,
we all are.

But surprisingly,
I'm not done yet.

BELIEVE
THAT,
KILLER?



I'M
NOT DONE
YET.



STOP.



I'LL SHOOT HER. THESE
BULLETS ARE FILLED WITH
LIQUID NITROGEN. SHE CAN'T
SURVIVE *THAT*, DESPITE HER
REGENERATIVE ABILITIES.

I CAN SHOOT
THE LITTLE TRAITOR
BEFORE YOU CAN
STOP ME.



OUR COURT
SELECTED YOU FROM
THE TRASH BIN,
TALON!
WE MADE
YOU FAMILY.



CAN'T BE HELPED.
LOOSE ENDS MUST
BE TIED OFF.



BZZZT
BZZZT
BZZZT

I'M SORRY.
I HAVE TO
TAKE THIS.



YES. I
HAVE HER
RIGHT--

YES, THE
POLICE ARE
COMING, I HEAR
THE SIRENS
ALREADY.

BUT
IT'S UNDER
CONTROL.

BUT I
WON'T BE A
"LIABILITY."
I--

*She's not even
trying to move
out of the way.*



*Like a part of
her wants this.*

--I SEE.
YES. THANK
YOU.

KICK

SEVENTY LONG
YEARS I PROTECTED
THE COURT.



BLAMM

No!



*And it stops
like that. The
Talons stare at
their boss in
silence.*



*And turn and
walk away, like he
never existed.*



AREN'T YOU GOING TO TRY TO, YOU KNOW, **STOP THEM?**

YOU'RE WELCOME TO TRY.



COPS ARE MAYBE A *MINUTE* AWAY. YOU GOTTA GO, CATWOMAN.

WELL, THAT'S...THAT'S DECENT OF YOU. HONEST.

BUT THERE'S A DEAD GUY ON THE FLOOR HERE, AND...



...WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO *DO* TO HER?

BLACKGATE HAS THE REST OF THE TALONS IN CRYO-SLEEP. TOO DANGEROUS, OTHERWISE.



I'M **TAKING** HER.

NO.

SHE SAVED OUR **LIVES**, DO YOU NOT **KNOW** THAT?



I DO. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, BE A ROOMMATE TO A GIRL WHO'S NEVER KNOWN **ANYTHING** BUT KILLING?

THERE HAS TO BE **SOMETHING**. SHE **SAVED** US.



I'M GOING OUT THERE. YOU GET HER AWAY FROM HERE WHILE THEY'RE DEALING WITH **ME**.

CATWOMAN...

PROMISE ME.



OKAY, KIDDO. YOU GO WITH BATGIRL, ALL RIGHT?

I...TRUST HER.

And that's how a bad woman, a thief, a criminal...

...did one of the most heroic things I've ever seen.

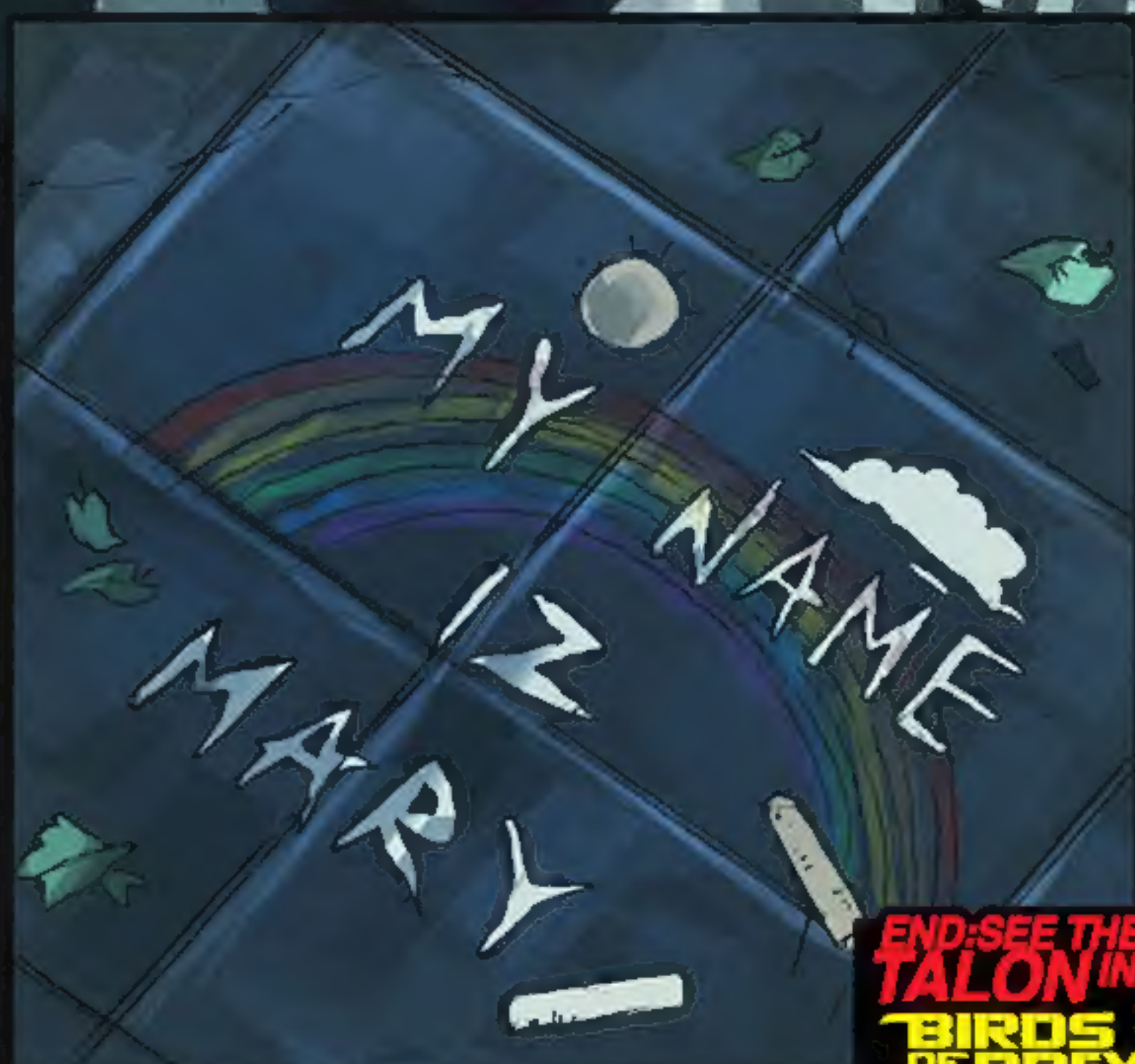
WELL? COME AND GET ME, DARLINGS!



COME ON, WE CAN STILL GET OUT THROUGH THE ROOF IF WE GO NOW...

...

I JUST REALIZED YOU ALMOST TOOK MY LIFE AND SAVED MY LIFE IN THE SAME NIGHT, AND I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT TO CALL YOU.



END: SEE THE TALON IN BIRDS OF PREY!

