



BLACKEST NIGHT

1
FIRST
ISSUE
OF THREE
OCT '09

BATMAN



PETER J.
TOMASI
ARDIAN
SYAF
JOHN
DELL
VICENTE
CIFUENTES

Andy
Huber
SINC



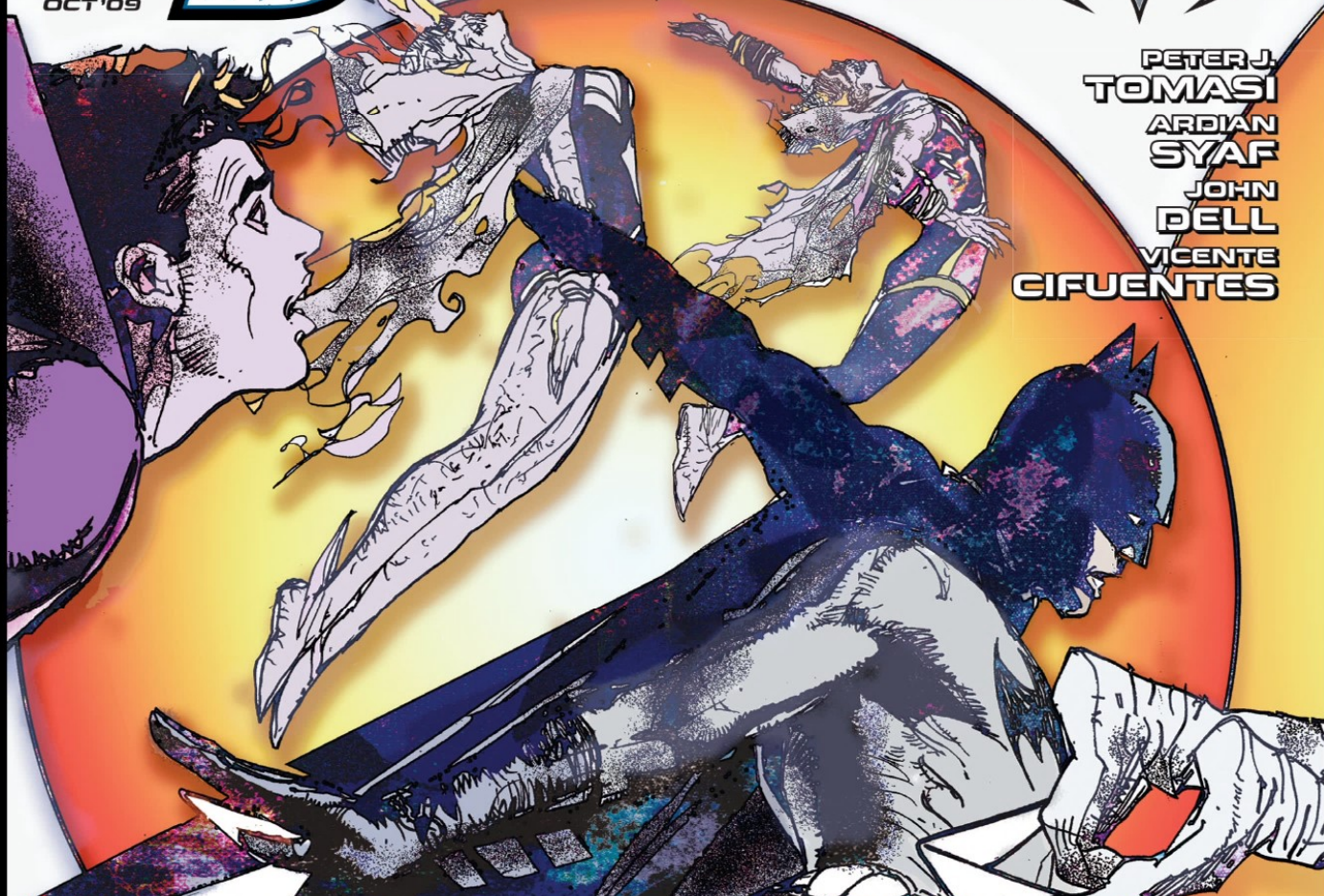
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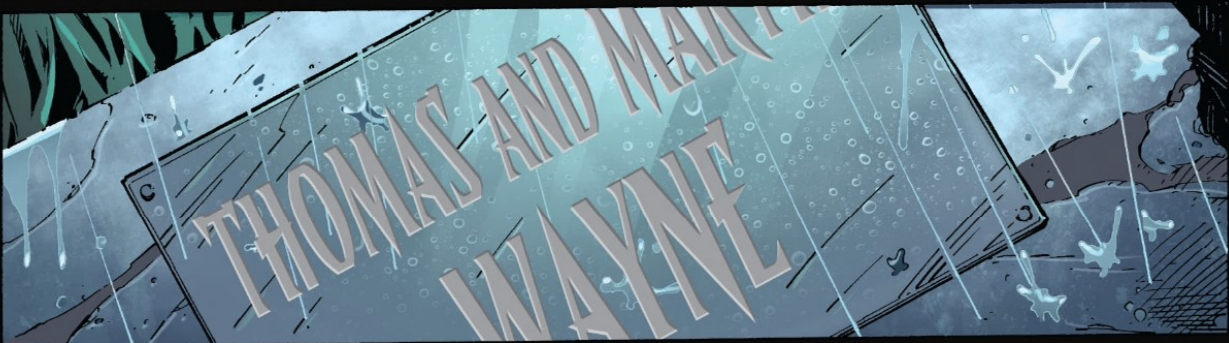


WHO

WHO?

BURNS





BLACKEST NIGHT

PETER J. TOMASI
story and words

ARDIAN SYAF
penciller

BATMAN

WHO BURNS WHO PART ONE

JOHN OELL and VICENTE CIFUENTES inkers
NEI RUFFINO colorist JOHN J. HILL letterer
ANOY KUBERT and ALEX SINCLAIR cover
BILL SIENKIEWICZ variant cover
AOAM SCHLAGMAN and
EODIE BERGANZA editors

BATMAN created by
BOB KANE

THIS PLACE
LOOKS LIKE A DAMN
BATTLEFIELD...





THEY TORE UP HIS GRAVE AND DESECRATED IT.

IT'S LIKE ALFRED SAID...
...SOMEONE TOOK HIS DAMN SKULL...



SO MUCH FOR FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ROBIN?

I'M SURE A LOTTA KIDS GET TO MEET AND GREET THEIR GRANDPARENTS THIS WAY.



WE'RE BRINGING BACK THEIR BONES.

BRINGING THEM WHERE?

BACK TO THE BUNKER, UNDER WAYNE TOWER, WHERE THEY'LL BE SAFE...



...FOR NOW.
WRAP YOUR CAPE AROUND BRUCE WHILE I GET THOMAS WAYNE OUT OF--

I...



IT'S DIFFERENT WHEN IT'S ONE OF YOUR OWN.

WHEN IT'S SOMEONE CLOSE.

GIVE ME YOUR CAPE.

GO GET THE BATMOBILE, I'LL HANDLE THE REST.



THEN WE FIND OUT JUST WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON AND WHO GREEN LANTERN AND FLASH WERE UP AGAINST OUT HERE.



THE HIMALAYAS.

I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING.

I'VE BEEN EVERYWHERE.

I THOUGHT THE TOP OF THE WORLD WAS THE LAST ANSWER...

...THE LAST REFUGE.

IT'S NOT.

NOT BY A LONG SHOT.



WHISPERING.

IT WON'T STOP.

WORDS SURROUND ME.

WORDS THAT AREN'T WORDS.

EVERY SECOND.

OF EVERY DAY.



FROM THE DEAD.

TO A DEAD MAN.

I'M PULLED TO HIM.

PULLED TO ME.

TO A DEAD MAN WHO'S HERE BELOW MY FEET.

THE FINAL RESTING PLACE...

...OF A GHOST WHO CAN NEVER REST.



MY BONES CRY FOR HELP.

HELP FROM BEING DESECRATED.

FROM BEING ABUSED.

AND THEN I HEAR IT.

ONE WORD.

AS LOUD AND CLEAR AS THE GUNSHOT THAT STOLE MY LIFE UNDER THE BIG TOP.



FLESH.



BUT I'M POWERLESS TO STOP IT.



BOSTON BRAND OF EARTH.



RISE.

AND THEN I DO WHAT I ALWAYS DO.

LEAP BEFORE I LOOK.

IF ANYONE CAN SAVE ME, IT'S ME.

D SO I MERGE WITH MY BAG OF BONES AND TRY TO TAKE CONTROL.

PUT MYSELF BACK IN THE DARK.

BACK IN THE DIRT WHERE I BELONG.

BUT IT SEEMS THAT MY BONES HAVE OTHER IDEAS.

I GET A GLIMPSE OF EVERYTHING THAT MADE ME WHO I AM...

...OF ALL THE HORROR AND LOSS THAT CAME BEFORE...

...AND ALL THE HORROR AND LOSS THAT IS SURE TO COME.





AND AS FAST AS I LEAPT IN I HAVE TO LEAP OUT.

THE PAIN'S TOO MUCH TO BEAR.

NOT JUST PSYCHIC PAIN BUT PHYSICAL PAIN.

AND I DON'T REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I FELT REAL PAIN.

SO I THROW USELESS PUNCHES THINKING I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

...THAT I CAN STOP THIS ABOMINABLE THING THAT USED TO BE ME FROM HEADING OUTTA HERE.



BUT I'M INVISIBLE TO IT.

I DON'T EVEN GET A SECOND LOOK.



I NEED TO FIND HELP.

SOMEONE I TRUST.



SOMEONE I'VE BEEN IN BEFORE.

25,000 FEET IN THE SKIES ABOVE GOTHAM.

IS THIS THE LAST OF 'EM?

YEAH. FROM GOTHAM.

TOMORROW WE PICK UP A BUNCH FROM OPAL.

FEDS AREN'T SCREWING AROUND. GUESS THEY WANT THESE BAD GUYS UNDER THE JLA'S NOSES SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

YEAH, KEEP YOUR FRIENDS CLOSE, YOUR ENEMIES CLOSER.

HOW LONG BEFORE WE TOUCH DOWN IN WASHINGTON?

ABOUT 45 MINUTES.

CAPTAIN, I'M PICKING SOMETHING UP AT 12 O'CLOCK AND IT'S MOVING DAMN FAST.

HOW FAST?

THAT FAST!

EVASIVE

MANEUVA **ARRGHH**

FLESH.

FLESH.

FLESH.

FLESH.

FLESH.





RISE



IT SUCKS!



WHAT "SUCKS"?

IT JUST STARTED TO MAKE SENSE--



--ALL STARTED TO FIT TOGETHER LIKE IT WAS SUPPOSED TO, LIKE MY MOTHER SAID IT WOULD...

... THAT I FINALLY KNEW WHO MY FATHER WAS-- THAT I WOULD TAKE MY RIGHTFUL PLACE ALONGSIDE HIM...



... THEN BOOM, JUST LIKE THAT, BRUCE IS GONE-- JUST BONES IN THE GROUND THAT I COULDN'T EVEN--

DAMIAN.

YES?





ARE YOU AFRAID OF IT?

DEATH.

AND WHY'S THAT?

OF WHAT?

NO, ACTUALLY, I'M NOT.



NOT SURE. MAYBE IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH BEING IN THE BIG TOP WHEN I WAS A KID-- SWINGING WITH MY PARENTS UP ON THE HIGH WIRES, PUTTING OUR LIVES AT RISK ON A DAILY BASIS.



MAYBE THAT'S WHY IT WAS SO EASY FOR ME TO STEP INTO THIS LIFE.

IN A WEIRD WAY THERE WASN'T A TRANSITION AT ALL, JUST A NEW COSTUME AND...



AND A NEW FAMILY?

YES, BUT IT'S SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING SIMPLE.

WHAT?

NO ONE'S IMMUNE TO IT.



DEATH COMES TO EVERYONE--AT ANY TIME--AND AT ANY PLACE.

AS AN OLD SONG GOES: "NO ONE GETS OUT OF HERE--"



-ALIVE!







HEY, DICK, GOOD TO SEE YA.

DAMIAN?

DAMIAN'S NOT HERE RIGHT NOW.



DEADMAN?

YEP, IN THE FLESH-- WELL, NOT EXACTLY-- BUT YOU GET MY DRIFT.

HOW DID WE END UP DOWN HERE?



AH, YOUTH IS WASTED ON THE YOUNG.

AND WE'RE DOWN HERE 'CAUSE THE COMBINATION OF DRIVING 80 MILES AN HOUR AND YOUR SIDEKICK HITTING YA WITH A RIGHT HOOK EQUALS OFF-ROAD FUN.



AND I'M GUESSIN' SINCE YOUR HEAD'S POUNDING, IT MEANS NOT ONLY AM I UP TO SPEED ON YOUR CRAZY LIFE, BUT THAT--

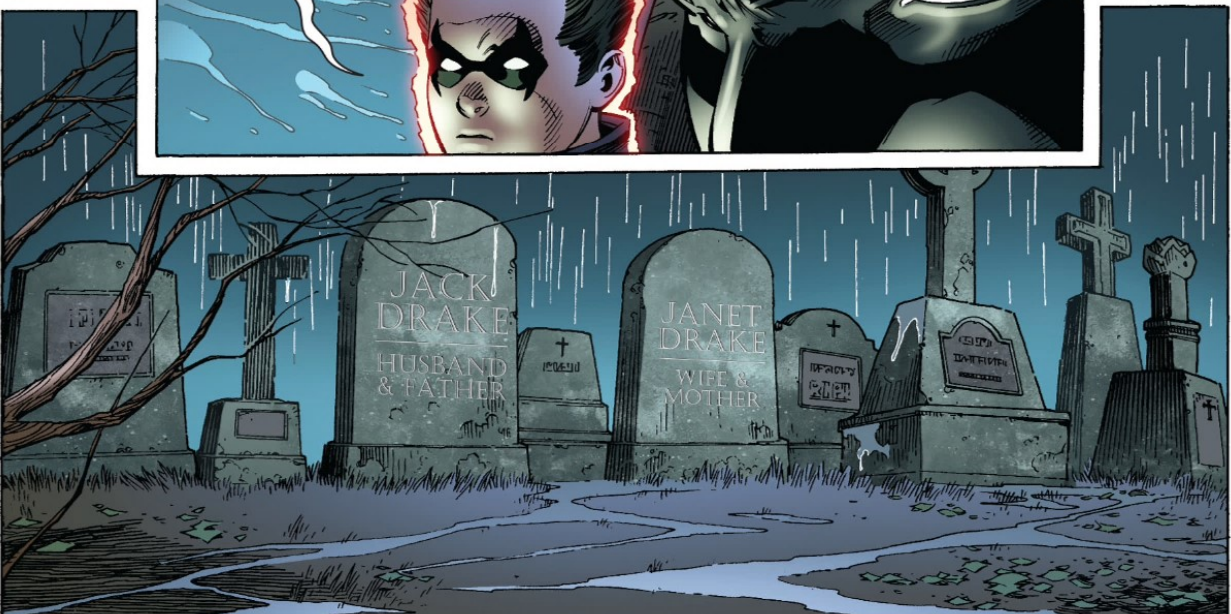
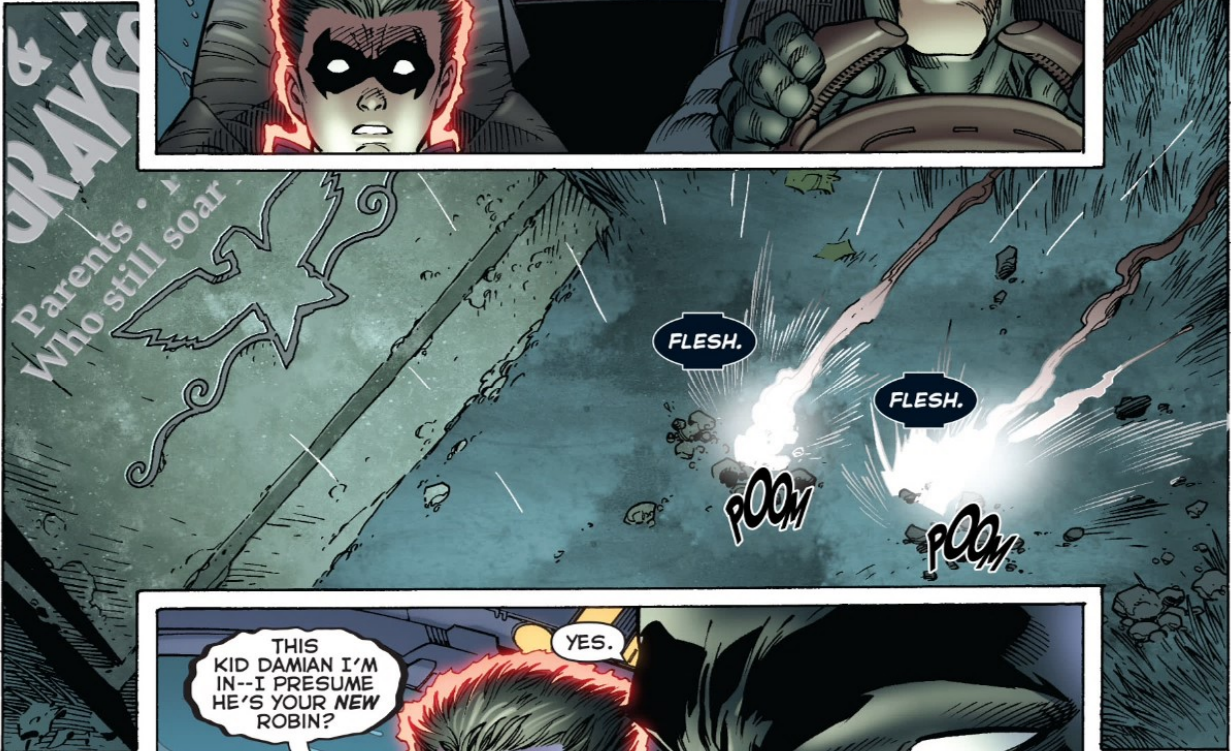
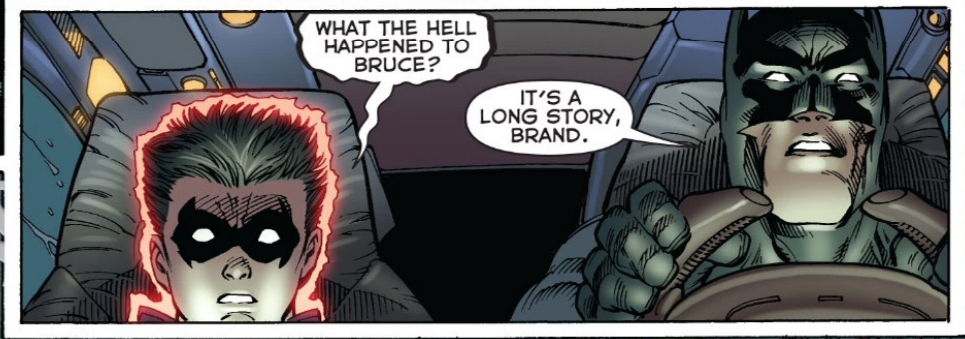
I'M UP TO SPEED ON YOURS-- WHICH MEANS THESE BLACK POWER RINGS ARE GOING FOR THE DEAD--



--OUR DEAD-- POWERED AND NON-POWERED!

THANKS FOR THE CLIFFS NOTES!

SKRBOOM





SAW OL' DAMIAN'S LIFE STORY WHEN I JUMPED HIM.

GOTTA SAY, GOOD LUCK WITH THIS KID. YOU'RE SURE AS HELL GONNA NEED IT.

DEADMAN. ENOUGH.



FLESH.

FLESH.

POOM
POOM



LOOKS TO ME LIKE THIS KID'S GOT A LOT OF ISSUES.

BRAND.

SHUT UP.



NOW THAT'S CHANNELING BRUCE.

WROOOM

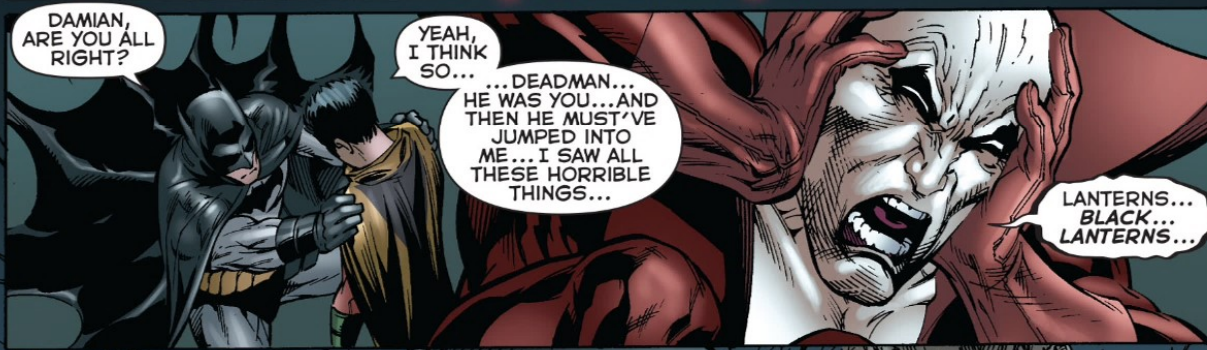






YOU'RE KILLING HIM, BRAND!
GET OUT! GET OUT NOW!

THEY NEED TO FEED!



DAMIAN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YEAH, I THINK SO...
...DEADMAN... HE WAS YOU... AND THEN HE MUST'VE JUMPED INTO ME... I SAW ALL THESE HORRIBLE THINGS...

LANTERNS... BLACK... LANTERNS...



C'MON!

WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?

THIS CEMETERY WAS CLOSER THAN MY PARENTS CEMETERY...

...AND IF WHAT I THINK IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING...



GOD... NO...

GOD'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.



TIM, IT'S DICK.

I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE.

YOU NEED TO GET BACK TO GOTHAM.

NOW.

PARIS, FRANCE.

I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF--

YOUR PARENTS. THEIR GRAVES ARE EMPTY, TIM, AND I'M BETTING MY FOLKS ARE GONE TOO.

ON MY WAY.



GOOD THING YOU MADE THAT CALL, BATMAN...



... 'CAUSE WE'RE PROBABLY GONNA NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.

GCPD

BLACKEST NIGHT
BATMAN
CONTINUES...