

"THE DEATH COUNT"

By  
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Story by  
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Final Print Draft  
HEADSHOT PRODUCTIONS  
FADE IN:

The HEADSHOT PRODUCTIONS logo scratches across the screen

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

The DC COMICS logo scratches across the screen

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

# ACT I - SCENE 1

EXT. - BLUDHAVEN - NIGHT

Bludhaven. Gotham's bastard sister city; dirtier, in more ways than one.

TYPE IN: TEXT -- BLUDHAVEN

CUT TO:

EXT. - BLUDHAVEN POLICE STATION

A sign, carved into the face of the building. "PRECINCT SIX." A police siren cries in the distance. Suddenly, a convertible crawls to a stop outside the station. COUNCILMAN CARLSON crawls out from the passengers' side. Adjusting his coat and tie, he makes his way hastily towards the precinct. Meeting the Councilman halfway, an OFFICER opens the front door for him. Without a word, Carlson nonchalantly slaps the officer a folded twenty as he enters.

CUT TO:

INT. - BLUDHAVEN POLICE STATION

The Councilman makes his way through the precinct towards the back wall. Sitting at his desk before the Interrogation rooms is POLICE CHIEF REDHORN. Despite the mound of unknown paperwork, Redhorn turns his attention to Carlson. We acknowledge the presence of a pair of scissors on Redhorn's desk.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Where is he?

CUT TO:

INT. - INTERROGATION ROOM

The Councilman's son, SIMON CARLSON, sits in waiting; as if he were day dreaming, or in a sense that he's not all there mentally. A bracelet rests around his wrist bearing his name.

CHIEF REDHORN (O.S. DISTANT):

The Commissioner didn't want visitors...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON (O.S. DISTANT):

Put it on my tab, Redhorn. You owe me...

CHIEF REDHORN (O.S. DISTANT):

I know he's your son, Bill, but...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON (O.S. DISTANT):

He IS my son, and I want to see him, NOW.

Eventually, the Councilman walks into the Interrogation Room. Refusing to be on an equal playing field with his son, The Councilman circles Simon. After a moment of silence...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

We all loved you...How could you...

Simon doesn't answer; he feigns the slightest smirk.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

This tour is vital to my re-election...you know that...

Simon still doesn't answer. Carlson slams his fist on the table as he screams into Simon's ear.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

(angrily)

Do you have ANY idea how much this could've cost me!?

Simon doesn't flinch.

BEAT

Carlson stands, walking around and collecting his thoughts.

BEAT

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

You're just damn lucky the press didn't get wind of this, Simon.

SIMON CARLSON:

I told you before...

BEAT

SIMON CARLSON:

My name is Victor.

The Councilman backhands his son across the face.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Jesus.

Simon licks the blood from the corner of his lip in silence.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

We're flying back home, tonight...

In anger, the Councilman has an officer escort Simon out of the Interrogation Room to go acquire his belongings to get ready to fly back to Gotham City.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Take him to the car...

As Simon is escorted out, the Councilman sits in the Interrogation Room for a moment, letting it sink in. After a moment, something stirs in the station that causes the Councilman to bolt from the Interrogation Room.

CUT TO:

INT. - BLUDHAVEN POLICE STATION

The Councilman arrives just in time to witness the dying breath of the escort officer after having scissors shoved down his throat as Simon makes his escape. An OFFICER pulls his firearm and takes aim, squeezing off a few shots as Simon bolts out the door. Before the Officer can move to apprehend Simon, the Councilman stops him.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Have the press here in twenty minutes...

CUT TO:

BEAT

ACT I -SCENE 2

EXT. - BLUDHAVEN

Simon eventually stops short in an alley to catch his breath. He collapses into the side of a building, bracing himself up. We see that he is holding his side. He pulls his hand away to reveal that he's shot and bleeding badly. He musters the strength to keep walking and makes it for a while.

SIMON CARLSON:

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...

His strength leaving him he collapses into a water-filled pothole in the street.

SIMON CARLSON:

(Coughing)

I will fear...no...evil...

He looks up from the hole in the street to find the face of Christ staring back at him. He realizes that he's collapsed in front of a crucifix upon the wall.

SIMON CARLSON:  
For you are with me.

SIMON CARLSON loses consciousness. The puddle he lies in quickly turns red. Christ watches over him. Church bells ring in the night echoing over the next scene.

FADE TO BLACK:

BEAT

In the darkness, we hear the faint sound of a dog barking; it sharpens.

DAVID (O.S. DISTANT)  
Samson hush...he's waking up...

FADE IN:

EXT: - BLUDHAVEN ALLEY

SIMON POV

A young man, DAVID, stands with his dog, SAMSON, looking over Simon.

DAVID:  
Whew...You gave me quite a scare, fella.

CUT TO:

Samson, bored with the scenario, scampers off as David takes a seat beside Simon; David picks up a small pocket knife and a piece of wood, wheedling it to pass the time. Simon lies in the same spot, now facing up and slightly covered with a dirty

sheet. He sees that his gunshot wound has been tended to, albeit in a makeshift way.

SIMON CARLSON:  
What...what happened...

DAVID:  
You literally fell on my doorstep.

Simon looks around; the crucifix on the wall above a dingy box. Small trinkets dot the surrounding pavement, along with a dirty discarded chair on the other side of the alley.

DAVID:  
Dad always said to follow the good lord's example.

DAVID:  
That bullet was a tough nut to crack. But you're gonna make it, Simon.

Simon glares at David as if he were an alien.

BEAT

DAVID:  
The, um...That's the name on your, a...

Simon looks down and spots the bracelet on his wrist.

BEAT

Simon looks to the crucifix on the wall. David glances up at it to.

DAVID:  
He's your light to, huh...

Simon starts to pick himself up onto his feet.

SIMON CARLSON:  
More or less...

CUT TO:

DAVID:

Yeah the big man's got a way with people. My Dad told me to always seek out who a person is on the inside...their...their true selves, y'know...

Simon slowly walks over to the crucifix, looking at it.

DAVID:

Look for the good in people.

Simon caresses the crucifix.

SIMON CARLSON:

The good in people...Your Father told you that...

DAVID:

Yep.

Simon looks on at the crucifix.

BEAT

Simon smirks and slowly, hauntingly, he begins to chuckle.

DAVID:

What's so funny?

BEAT

SIMON CARLSON:

...Your Father lied...

Simon grabs the crucifix and attacks David, bludgeoning him. Eventually he stops. David looks up at Simon, blood splashed upon his face.

DAVID:

You freaking PSYCHOPATH!

Simon has his realization. He looks into David's eyes; his empty eyes.



SIMON CARLSON:  
That's it...That's it...

Dropping the crucifix, Simon grabs David's discarded pocket knife and kills him. Standing, Simon looks at the blood on his hands. He moves and makes a cut on his own forearm.

CUT TO BLACK:

CUT TO:

#### MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE

As the Main Titles scratch across the screen, we experience the growing reputation of Simon's new identity; VICTOR ZSASZ, as he maims and butchers countless victims. He performs his self mutilation as a sick ritual. We follow LIEUTENANT JAMES GORDON as he works through a police report for a case involving the recently apprehended JOKER, wading his way through paperwork and taking sips from a flask. We eventually come upon BATMAN, operating on his own personal file for the Joker in the Cave; off to the side monitors we see security surveillance of the PENGUIN and Arkham. We fall upon the Batsuit as the title is revealed.

FADE IN:

#### ACT I - SCENE 3

EXT. - GOTHAMCITY - NIGHT

GothamCity; crime capital of the world. The buildings scream to the sky with an almost unholy appearance, as if hell itself had grown through the cracks of the foundations. A fat moon hangs overhead ready to burst.

TYPE IN: TEXT -- GOTHAMCITY - THREE YEARS LATER

CUT TO:

EXT. - EMBASSY HOTEL

The Embassy Hotel, sitting within the heart of Lower Midtown.

CUT TO:

INT. - EMBASSY HOTEL

A murder has taken place in room 209 of the hotel, and the police are already on the scene. A FORENSICS team works like hell. A BELLHOP is being questioned by a DETECTIVE. COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON arrives, holding a pipe in his hand as he makes his way to the scene. It's gruesome; a man, RODNEY COLLINS, and a PROSTITUTE. Their corpses are positioned to mimic sexual intercourse on the bed in some way. A stereo is playing cheesy and tacky love-making music.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

Anybody think to do something about that music?

FORENSICS COP 1:

Well, Commissioner, we normally don't wish to contaminate...

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

NOW!

Eventually, Gordon ushers the police from the scene.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

Everybody out...

And acknowledges the presence of BATMAN.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

Doesn't look too good, what do you think?

Batman doesn't respond as he begins his own investigation.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

Why do I ask?

Batman notices the blood on the floor.

BATMAN:  
Blood...

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
That much we know; Forensics should have something by...

BATMAN:  
No.

Batman caresses a pair of fingers upon the blood stains and takes a single breath.

BATMAN:  
Ammonia...Whatever samples you collected are useless.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
Be sure to wash your hands.

Batman turns to Gordon as he continues about his own business. We hint at Batman taking photos of the scene.

BATMAN:  
Entry?

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
Not sure, but we know he escaped through the window.

BATMAN:  
Wait...

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
What?

Batman acknowledges the broken window; the blood on the drapes and the glass on the floor of the room.

BATMAN:  
The glass...

BEAT

BATMAN:  
He came in through here.

BATMAN:  
You should've had your men check the perimeter.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
Fair enough; then how did he get out of the building?

Batman doesn't answer. Gordon acknowledges him, but finds himself alone. One of the Forensics Cops cautiously enters the room.

FORENSICS COP 1:  
Commissioner, something's not right about this sample.

Gordon looks on at Collins' tortured face.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
Is that so...

In silence, Gordon notices a blood stain on the bedside table. He discovers the tattered bible in the dresser.

CUT TO:

EXT. - EMBASSY HOTEL

In the alleyway behind the hotel, Batman continues his investigation in silence. Using both his instincts and the capabilities of the lenses in his cowl, Batman discovers a trail of footprints through infrared as well as the bottle of ammonia discarded near the garbage cans.

CUT TO:

ACT I - SCENE 4

INT. - HALLWAY

In a seedier part of Gotham, a meeting is taking place between sleazy mob tycoon DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS and OSWALD COBBLEPOT;

THE PENGUIN. Van Williams BODYGUARDS finally give acknowledgement to Cobblepot.

BODYGUARD 1:

Mr. Van Williams will see you now...  
Penguin limps forward, using his umbrella as a cane of sorts.

BODYGUARD 2:

Your...umbrella please.

PENGUIN:

My posture is not what it used to be, mind you. Perhaps you'd like to...cart me in...

Hesitant at first, the Bodyguards finally agree and let Penguin pass, he takes his time to go into the office.

CUT TO:

INT. - VAN WILLIAM'S OFFICE

Dominique nonchalantly acknowledges Penguin's presence; obviously he isn't too terribly concerned with the meeting. He's eating a turkey dinner with wine and trimmings. His taste is expensive and the food is too, but his manner is cheap and common as he gorges on the bird, a stained napkin tucked into his collar.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

Penguin...nice a ya to drop by...

PENGUIN:

Cobblepot...and the pleasure is mutual.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

I understand you're interested in...expansion was it?

PENGUIN:

Yes, that's correct.

Dominique takes a drumstick in hand; sophistication escapes him and Penguin realizes that obviously.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:  
Hope I'm not offending you.

The tension builds as the audience expects an outraged Penguin to lash out...However, Cobblepot remains composed and sits down with Dominique. He carves himself a small portion. Being much more refined in etiquette.

PENGUIN:  
Amusing. Though for my pallet I would prefer Hungarian Game Hen with Honey Herb Mushrooms and Red Capers.

Dominique is taken aback by the comment.

BEAT

Oswald gives acknowledgement and Dominique comes to his senses.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:  
Oh, yeah...of course...Now, about the um...the...

Penguin goes on about his business.

PENGUIN:  
Expansion...word has surfaced of your, say...pharmaceutical operations through the Gotham Zoo.

Dominique is clearly confused; Penguin sighs.

PENGUIN:  
The drug ring, Dominique...

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:  
Ah...Let me guess...a little birdy told you.

Penguin brushes off the comment and continues.

PENGUIN:  
I'm very interested in taking part. I've currently 3 million, off shore, waiting to be wired into any account of your choosing should we come to an agreement.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

Well as you may or may not have heard, the drug rings are based off of certain influences of the Zoo's board of directors. I keep certain bird's hands greased; they keep the cops off our back. Wuhl brings the goods to Owens, Owens hands em out after hours. It's a tight operation. Simple. Birds of a feather you see? So what makes you think I'm gonna cut you in? What do ya got to offer?

PENGUIN:

An astute question.

PENGUIN:

We're both businessmen, Van Williams. What's good for business is good for you. There's a new bill on the table in city hall. Carlson is lobbying to stop the trafficking of drugs on Gotham's waterways. Making things much more difficult for...Owens did you say?

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS

Big deal, it's all routine now...I'll buy him off. Cut him in.

PENGUIN:

That won't work.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

Oh I see; One of those hero types.

PENGUIN:

Hardly. With two children dead and one in rehab? No. The problem is someone's already bought him out.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

Who? We'll whack him.

PENGUIN:

Please. This isn't about vendettas; it's business. And clearly someone thinks your business is too successful. They want to cut the serpent at the head.

Dominique slurps his wine, breaking Penguin's train of thought.

PENGUIN:

I have a number of politicians in my pocket. One phone call and  
I can lay this bill to rest.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

(With food in his mouth)

Bullshit.

PENGUIN:

I beg your pardon.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

I may not have gone to college but I know bullshit when I smell  
it PENGUIN.

PENGUIN:

It's COBBLEPOT you-

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

Here's how it is...You come waltz'n into my joint saying you got  
three million and a fist full of suits and all you want is a cut  
of my business? I PISS three million; and this piece a shit  
Councilman? Somebody buys him off, we buy  
him back!

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

What do you take me for? I got guys, I got insiders, and I know  
exactly who bought off Carlson.

Penguin stands staunch, keeping silent.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

I shoulda off'd you when I had the chance. You wanna talk about  
Expansion? Let me tell you about expansion. You're a fat bird in  
a little cage PENGUIN. Everyone knows you're a double-crosser  
with too much money to be allowed to live. I thought I'd have to  
pull one of your moves, and then you come waddling right into my  
arms. Crooks like you are endangered PENGUIN. Now how do ya feel  
about being extinct?



Penguin is like a rock; having never been so offended.

DOMINIQUE VAN WILLIAMS:

Whats the matter, bird? Cat got your tongue?

The tension is obliterated by the sound of a gunshot. Dominique and Penguin stare at each other. There seems to be no gunman in sight. Then Dominique collapses into his dinner. Penguin pulls his umbrella out from underneath the table; smoke billows from the barrel at the end. He calmly sets down his utensils and fluffs his napkin, laying it upon the table. He picks up the wine bottle, examining it.

PENGUIN:

Mouton Rothschild, Pauillac...1945...at least he had taste...

Penguin pulls a cell from his inner coat pocket. We return to the table; blood soaking the white table cloth. We hear Penguin talking on the phone.

PENGUIN (O.S.)

Lucas? Please see to the gentlemen outside.

Close up on a wine glass. Red wine, like so much blood, fills the glass.

PENGUIN (O.S.)

That's quite alright...the Thompson will do just fine.

Penguin oxidizes the wine, and places his large Roman nose into the glass, admiring the aroma. Outside we hear tires screeching...Men yelling. Then the firing of Tommy guns and civilians screaming. Penguin sips the wine delicately, savoring the flavor.

PENGUIN:

\*sigh\*...Nothing like free enterprise.

CUT TO:

ACT I - SCENE 5

INT. - BATCAVE

The Batcave, a dark and unclear atmosphere. We can't see much, save for a few computer monitors blinking off in the distance. Calmly, Batman makes his way towards a makeshift table with a television set sitting beside it. Batman acknowledges a postcard from Alfred, who's currently visiting England.

CUT TO:

Batman begins working on a case file for the Embassy Hotel murder, jotting down his thoughts on the case in a notebook. Batman pulls off his cowl and such, revealing his identity; BRUCE WAYNE. His skills are methodical and evident. He downloads the photos into the Bat-Computer, as well as the tangible samples taken from the hotel room.

BRUCE WAYNE:

Bat Computer on. Command System Protocol...Code: Zorro. New Case File...33...

BRUCE WAYNE:

Cross reference sample input with Gotham Medical Records.

"INSUFFICIENT DATA"

BRUCE WAYNE:

Close Tab...Enhance Photos 3 through 6.

Eventually, Bruce turns on the TV just in time for the late newscast.

MALE ANCHOR:

Good Evening; this is Channel 8 News... Our Top Story comes from Midtown, where a bizarre murder scene was discovered by police. With lack of public support and costumed criminals becoming more prolific on our streets, have the boys in blue become a city liability? That subject tops tonight's "Point vs. Point."

Turning off the news in disgust, Bruce leans back in his seat, lost in thought.

BEAT

BRUCE WAYNE:  
Close Case File 33...Computer, Sleep Mode.

Bruce turns his attention to his collection of city maps. Through further investigation, he stumbles upon the locales around the hotel. Picking up the previously discarded parts of the Batsuit, Bruce goes off into the night once more.

CUT TO:

# ACT I - SCENE 6

EXT. - BAR

A non-descript watering hole in a Gotham Slum.

CUT TO:

INT. - BAR

A normal bar scene, PATRONS conversing and whatnot; a burly DOORMAN sits upon a stool beside the door reading through a skin mag. A key hangs off a chain around his neck. Suddenly, there's a sharp knock on the door.

DOORMAN:  
Yeah, yeah, hold on...

The doorman slides open the view slot on the door, and realizes who it is.

DOORMAN:  
Oh shit.

Before he can blink, Batman lashes out a leg, kicking in the door and sending the man flying onto the ground. The people

inside the bar all acknowledge Batman as he calmly strides over the unconscious doorman.

BATMAN:

The Embassy...A murder took place there last night...

Before Batman can continue, he's rushed by two STRONG MEN; one with a broken beer bottle. Batman easily dispatches the first man, while wrapping the chain around the throat of the second and keeping him in a choke hold; Batman glairs at the bar once more.

BATMAN:

I'll only ask once...

SNITCH:

I saw something...

The SNITCH, a lanky almost rodent-looking individual stands up from his seat with some sort of confidence to Batman. Batman discards the Strong Man.

CUT TO:

EXT. - BAR ALLEYWAY

The Snitch is shoved out the back door of the bar into the alley.

SNITCH:

Hey, easy...

BATMAN:

Get on with it.

SNITCH:

A couple a guys, one chasin' the other...ran outta that hotel you mentioned...Uptown about five blocks maybe...

Unseen by the snitch, Batman handcuffs him in his place.  
Obviously he's some sort of criminal that Batman was aware of.  
Batman departs in an inhuman manner into the sky.

SNITCH:  
Hey! What the hell?

SNITCH:  
Come back here ASSHOLE! HEY!

CUT TO:

EXT. - ALLEYWAY

Yet another alleyway; eventually, Batman descends and begins investigating the area in silence. He comes across the discarded clothes of the Male Embassy murder victim, also contaminated with Ammonia, and a corpse; a burly THUG of some sort. Upon further investigation, Batman discovers a VIP card for the ICEBERG LOUNGE in the man's wallet.

CUT TO:

## ACT II - SCENE 1

EXT. - ICEBERG LOUNGE

The ICEBERG LOUNGE; A trendy nightspot in the Entertainment District, obviously more upscale than any previous locations about the city.

CUT TO:

INT. - ICEBERG LOUNGE FOYER

At the main entrance to the Lounge, the Penguin stands as he greets arriving GUESTS.

PENGUIN:  
Hello, so good of you to come!

MATT HAGAN arrives with an attractive FEMALE ESCORT.

PENGUIN:

Mr. Hagan! Excellent work on your latest action picture!

MATT HAGAN:

I try, Cobblepot.

As Hagan is being seated, Penguin turns to his Maitre'D.

PENGUIN:

Lousy freeloading celebrities...I pity the poor saps whose only purpose is to suck up to them.

MAITRE'D:

Yes sir.

Arriving is a well known debutant and actress, LYDIA GRANGER; dressed in a fashionable and elegant evening gown. Penguin charms her exclusively.

PENGUIN:

Auer Chuan Tier, Miss Granger! You grace us with your presence.

LYDIA GRANGER:

Oh, Oswald.

Penguin acknowledges the MAITRE'DI and a WAITER.

PENGUIN:

Gentlemen...The House's best table for our welcome guest...

Suddenly, Penguin's head goon, FREDERICKS moves up to Cobblepot's side.

FREDERICKS:

Excuse me, sir, but you have a phone call.

PENGUIN:

Why thank you, Fredericks.

Penguin turns back to Lydia.

PENGUIN:

Please pardon the absence my dear; no rest for the wicked.

LYDIA GRANGER:

Don't keep me waiting too long.

CUT TO:

INT. - PENGUIN'S OFFICE

Penguin walks into his empty office, taking up the phone to his ear.

PENGUIN:

Oswald Cobblepot speaking...

PENGUIN:

Hello? Hello?

The Phone hangs up. Penguin realizes the broken window lock. He knows he's not alone. He acknowledges the shadows of the office.

PENGUIN:

I suppose asking for payment to repair the window would be too much.

Batman doesn't respond.

PENGUIN:

To what do I owe the unwelcome intrusion?

BATMAN (O.S.):

Someone has it out for you.

Penguin turns to another patch of shadow entirely.

PENGUIN:

Line ends down the street.

Batman finally steps from the shadows, making his presence known.

BATMAN:

One of your muscles is cooling in a dumpster; might be connected to another murder.

PENGUIN:

The Embassy; I'm quite aware.

Batman doesn't respond. Penguin gives a small chuckle-sigh.

PENGUIN:

And...You think I'm involved...

Batman doesn't respond.

PENGUIN:

Well, as much as I relish in our encounters, it seems you've yet again made assumptions without all the facts.

As Penguin speaks, he reaches underneath the desk for a spare .45.

PENGUIN:

I'm afraid you'll have to play detective somewhere else...

Batman doesn't respond as the Penguin reaches for the firearm; he realizes the gun has no ammunition. Without missing a beat, Batman drops the magazine clip onto the desk. Penguin takes his hand off the gun.

PENGUIN:

Your thoroughness is...an admirable quality.

Penguin eyeballs his umbrella, resting on the desk, as Batman moves smoothly towards the open window of which he had previously entered.

BATMAN:

It won't be long before I know enough to come after you...



Batman looks at Penguin.

BATMAN:  
Penguin...

Furious, Penguin grabs for his umbrella. He turns and aims his weapon.

PENGUIN:  
The name is Cobblepot!

Batman is gone. After a moment...

PENGUIN:  
Wretched, self righteous charlatan.  
Fredericks bursts into the office.

FREDERICKS:  
Boss!

BEAT

FREDERICKS:  
I heard yelling. Are you alright?

Penguin takes his seat again.

PENGUIN:  
I will be...with a drink...

Fredericks nods as he pours whiskey, unaware that he's pouring it into the wrong glass. Disgusted, Penguin fixes the problem as he talks with Fredericks.

PENGUIN:  
That costumed man hunter may just have a point...

PENGUIN:  
Especially with Mr. Collins' disappearance...

PENGUIN:  
We step up the time table...now.

FREDERICKS:

Yes, Pen...

Fredericks hesitates as Penguin raises an eyebrow.

FREDERICKS:

I mean Mr. Cobblepot...

Fredericks exits. Penguin stands in his office alone as he takes his drink.

CUT TO:

## ACT II - SCENE 2

INT - CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW CLASSROOM

A NUN is in a small Sunday school class with 5 CHILDREN. Slowly a man, ZSASZ, sulks up into the doorway; he wears a trenchcoat (maybe a hat of some sort?). The Nun stands and moves up to Zsasz.

NUN:

Yes?

VICTOR ZSASZ:

I understand this is a house of God...to repent one of their sins...

NUN:

Certainly...and all of God's children are welcome. Now...

The Nun grabs Zsasz' shoulders, as if to comfort him.

NUN:

How can I help you my son?

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
Forgive me, Sister...

A knife slips slowly from Zsasz' sleeve into his hand, unseen by the Nun.

VICTOR ZSASZ (O.S.):  
For I have sinned...

CUT TO:

ACT II - SCENE 3

INT. - GORDON'S OFFICE

Gordon stands with a cup of coffee, looking out a window into the Gotham Night. After a moment, he turns his attention to his desk, picking up a framed photograph of he and his wife, BARBARA. Gordon savors a warm smile before the mood is interrupted with the entrance of HAMILTON.

HAMILTON:  
We need to talk...  
COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
Nice to see you to, Hamilton.

HAMILTON:  
It's bad enough out there...without you entrusting the streets to a vigilante.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
Unless you'd like to discuss a new budget for the Police Force...

HAMILTON:  
I'm here...to talk some sense into you.

HAMILTON:

Jim I wish there was some other alternative, I really do. But the facts are undeniable. This "Bat-Man" operates outside proper jurisdiction. No badge, no authority save his own judgment...

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

He does what needs to be done. Those he captures get their due process. And as far as I'm concerned, he's an invaluable asset.

HAMILTON:

You're not holding a strong hand anyway, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

What are you suggesting?

HAMILTON:

The department wants you to bring him in...Look, the fact that he's upheld order up until now is mute. What happens when one day he snaps?

Hamilton moves to the door of the office. Gordon doesn't answer; Hamilton doesn't let him as he turns back.

HAMILTON:

Unless he takes the stand to account for his actions...when that day comes, it'll be on your head...

BEAT

As Hamilton departs, Gordon takes a moment to let the discussion sink in, giving thought to what has been asked of him.

CUT TO:

#### ACT II - SCENE 4

INT. - GCPD CENTRAL PRESINCT

As Hamilton leaves Gordon's Office, he walks past a door; a sign on the door reads "EVIDENCE LOCKERS 7-12"

POLICE OFFICERS (COLLECTIVELY/O.S.):

Keep moving!

Initial investigating officer?  
You have Tuesday's police reports?  
Phone!

INT. - GCPD EVIDENCE LOCKER

As the police go on about their typical business, Batman sneaks into the Police Evidence Locker looking for the case file on the Embassy Murders. Eventually, Batman finds the file just as a cop walks into the Records room, as if he heard something. There's nothing; the cop departs back into the station. Batman kneels outside of the closed window of the precinct, holding what he grabbed from the file, the main police report. He notices a note on the report stating a particular section of a bible missing, determined by page number alone and not by the book itself. Batman disappears into the night.

CUT TO:

ACT II - SCENE 5

EXT. - CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW

Batman arrives at the Church of St. Matthew, and makes his way inside.

CUT TO:

INT. - CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW

After some silent searching, Batman stumbles upon a new murder scene in the Sanctuary. The NUN'S corpse, bound in barb wire, lies in the aisle between the pews. Sitting in the pews are the 5 CHURCH CHILDREN from the class, both boys and girls. They're positioned to mimic prayer. Batman lifts up a little girl's limp head to see that her eyes are sewn shut.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Then he touched there eyes and said "According to your faith  
will it be done to you..."

Batman acknowledges the presence of VICTOR ZSASZ in the pulpit.  
He looks back at the little girl.

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
And there sight was restored.

Gently resting the girl's head back into place, Batman advances  
towards Zsasz.

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
A man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to  
Jesus...

BATMAN:  
Matthew 9:32.

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
The rumors are true...I knew you wouldn't disappoint me.

CUT TO:

EXT. - CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW

The Police arrive on the scene of the church, and take there  
positions; as if they're waiting for something.

COP 1:  
What're we waiting for?

COP 2:  
Sit tight, rookie. Batman'll be here anytime now, right  
Commissioner?

Gordon pulls his firearm as he takes authority.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:  
We're not waiting for him...We move NOW.

CUT TO:

INT. - CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW

Batman tries to apprehend Zsasz, but fails as Zsasz makes his escape.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons.

Batman gives chase to Zsasz, disappearing into the Church. Simultaneously, the police arrive in the sanctuary. Something tips off Gordon that he just missed Zsasz.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

Goddamn it...

Gordon realizes...

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

The back...OUT THE BACK!

CUT TO:

EXT. - GOTHAM CITY

Batman gives chase to Zsasz through the alleyways, eventually catching up to him. The two fight to a degree, but eventually Batman overpowers him. Batman discovers the man's numerous scars.

BATMAN:

Who are you?

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Zsasz...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Victor Zsasz.

Zsasz stabs Batman in his side. Batman backfists him but goes down as well.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not turn back till they were destroyed.

Zsasz kicks Batman around as he speaks.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

I crushed them so that they could not rise; they fell beneath my feet.

Struggling to his feet, Batman gives chase once more. Batman chases Zsasz through a crowd of citizens.

BATMAN:

ZSASZ!

Finally catching up to Zsasz, Batman tackles him to the ground, and beats the utter shit out of him. After several moments, he realizes that he's beating upon an INNOCENT!

GOTHAM CITIZENS (COLLECTIVELY/O.S.):

Oh my god!

He's gone nuts!

Call the cops! Somebody CALL THE COPS!

Holy Christ!

Completely taken aback, Batman backs off in distress. Hearing the approaching sirens, Batman tries to make his escape, only to be faced with Gordon. Gordon advances upon the twitching INNOCENT.

VICTIM:

Zsasz...

VICTIM:

He called me Zsasz...

Gordon shakes his head in disbelief.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

What have you done?



As Gordon asks his question, he turns but finds that Batman has fled. Off in the distance, Zsasz stands atop a fire escape, looking down upon the police and the victim.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

You have trusted in your wickedness and have said "No one sees me." Your wisdom and knowledge...mislead you...

CUT TO:

## ACT II - SCENE 6

INT. - BATCAVE

Batman returns to the Batcave, almost staggering in disbelief of his own actions. He's emotionally broken to a degree. Batman pulls off his cowl and looks at it in utter disgust as he hurls it to the floor. Eventually, he staggers and stops. Bruce falls to his knees with a scream, causing a cluster of bats to fly off in the distance.

CUT TO:

## ACT II - SCENE 7

INT. - PENGUIN'S OFFICE

MALE ANCHOR:

Earlier this evening, police made the grisly discovery of multiple bodies in the Church of St. Matthew. According to speculation, the incident ended with an innocent bystander attacked by the urban vigilante Batman. On tonight's "Point vs. Point," leading criminal psychologist Dr. Bartholomew Wol...

Penguin turns off the TV and swivels in his seat at the sound of the speaker phone turning on.

FREDERICKS:

Mr. Cobblepot, the Councilman is here.

PENGUIN:

Send him in.

Councilman Carlson walks into Penguin's office!

PENGUIN:  
Carlson; punctual as always.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
Your call sounded urgent.  
Carlson takes his seat.

PENGUIN:  
You've heard the news...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
No, what?

Nonchalantly, Penguin opens up a file on his desk and reads from it.

PENGUIN:  
Simon Carlson, age 19, diagnosed with acute schizophrenia.  
Believed himself to be a separate persona...Victor Zsasz...

Penguin looks back up at Carlson.

PENGUIN:  
Correct me if I'm wrong, but you told the press he died in  
Bludhaven three years ago...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
Where did you get hold of that?

PENGUIN:  
That's irrelevant.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
Mr. Cobblepot. I don't know who's telling you these outlandish  
lies, but...

PENGUIN:  
Don't try it, William.

Carlson bites his tongue.

PENGUIN:

We're buying out the land now...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

What?

PENGUIN:

You heard me...Collins is missing and Batman's as vigilant as ever.

PENGUIN:

20 Million. That's what this deal will bring to Gotham, to us.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

But how can you be sure? The United States and Corto Maltese have never been on the friendliest of terms, legal or not.

PENGUIN:

Friends in high places, my dear boy. Collins provided us with the financial wherewithal. Drug trafficking is a profitable market...Corto Maltese, Kaznia. Add to that the operations left in Van William's wake...

PENGUIN:

Of course, with this murderer's identity revealed perhaps I'm not taking the appropriate action...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Wait...wait you think that I...

PENGUIN:

You had your own son declared dead for the votes it gained. Who knows what you'd be willing to do...

Carlson stands up to his feet, becoming defensive.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

I'd have the City Council on you so fast, they'd...

PENGUIN:

They'd what? I'm sure they'd find your connections to me much more interesting...

PENGUIN:

Simon...Zsasz, I don't care...

PENGUIN:

You find a way to take care of this, Carlson...Or I might just take my business, and your re-election, with me.

With a defeated nod, Carlson exits. Penguin turns the news back on.

DR. BARTHOLOMEW WOLPER:

...olice Commissioner James Gordon is out of the pan and into the fire, I say. Lord knows Arkham's had a padded cell with Batman's name on it for some time...

CUT TO:

## ACT II - SCENE 8

INT: LESLIE THOMPkins OFFICE

Bruce hunches in his seat as he sits before the desk of DR. LESLIE THOMPkins, a prestigious medical doctor, therapist and friend of the Wayne Family.

BRUCE WAYNE:

I had nowhere else to turn, especially with Alfred out of town...

LESLIE THOMPkins:

Given a non P.C. occupation such as yours, Bruce, I fully understand. Now...what seems to be troubling you?

Bruce stands and moves to the window, looking out upon Gotham in silence for a moment.

BEAT

BRUCE WAYNE:

Every night I'm out there...fighting for this city...for my parents; thinking my promise to avenge their deaths was not in vain...that my goal is in sight. And someone comes along to shatter that vision.

LESLIE THOMPkins:

From an outsider's point of view, I sense an immense feeling of guilt. One thing I can say is that these costumed individuals must take responsibility for their own actions...you can't do it for them and, by extension; you can't blame yourself for their poor decisions.

BRUCE WAYNE:

But I can't help but feel that I'm the reason for their presence here, Leslie. Except...this latest one...

LESLIE THOMPkins:

Zsasz...

BRUCE WAYNE:

There's something about this one...I don't know what to make of it, it's...it's as if there's something missing. No conscience or reasoning...But it's not a matter of sanity...It's almost as if he IS in control. It's as if he's this way...by choice.

BRUCE WAYNE:

At least The Joker has motives, as perverted as they may seem...but this is a different sort of evil...more unsettling, more ugly...more terrifying than I could've hope to face.

LESLIE THOMPkins:

BRUCE WAYNE:

I've never met a man with such disdain for humanity...not since the age of nine...and that disdain threw me; angered me. All of my anger inflicted upon an innocent man.

LESLIE THOMPkins:

Bruce...

BRUCE WAYNE:

I trained myself, Leslie. Trained myself to keep my emotions in check. But this Zsasz brought out something in me I never wanted to see...And I don't know what I'll do if I have to face him again.

LESLIE THOMPkins:

The fact that you can even acknowledge this dilemma proves you're on the path of redemption, Bruce. Everyone makes mistakes, yes...even Batman. It's now a matter of taking from your experiences and growing from them...

BRUCE WAYNE:

But Leslie...How can a man escape anger...when all he sees is tragedy?

With that, Bruce departs in silence. Leslie makes no move to stop him.

CUT TO:

### ACT III - SCENE 1

#### CHARACTER PARALLEL - CLEANSING

Zsasz, Gordon, and Batman all take part in their own sense of cleansing. Zsasz does so by sitting in a bath tub and allowing the water to purify his scars. Gordon does so by taking a shower, rubbing his temples in an effort to drown out the problems in his own life. And Batman does so by kneeling on a ledge in the rain, hoping to wash away his depression over his mistake. After a moment, his attention is caught...

THUG:

Gimme the purse bitch; DO IT NOW!

Batman notices what he believes to be a no-name mugger robbing a young woman. Batman goes about his business dispatching the goon.

BATMAN:  
You...

Batman remembers: the mugger is the bellhop from the Embassy hotel that was being questioned.

BATMAN:  
You were at the Embassy that night...

THUG:  
What the hell are you talking about?

Batman brutally interrogates the mugger.

BATMAN:  
Room 209...the murders...WHO WAS IN THAT ROOM?

The mugger doesn't respond at first.

BATMAN:  
WHO!?

Slowly but surely the man breaks.

THUG:  
OKAY, OKAY! Umm...Uh...Oh COLLINS! RODNEY COLLINS, his name was  
Rodney Collins...  
Now with new information in tow, Batman departs, leaving the  
thug crying for mercy despite Batman already having left.

CUT TO:

## ACT III - SCENE 2

INT. - WAYNE ENTERPRISES LOBBY

EMPLOYEES of Wayne Enterprises go about there business. Sitting at a desk is a SECRETARY, Jeni.

SECRETARY:

Mr. Wayne's office this is Jeni speaking...No he's currently out to lunch, can I take a message?

SECRETARY:

Yes...okay...thank you, have a nice day...

Bruce walks up to Jeni.

BRUCE WAYNE:

Jeni...

SECRETARY:

Oh...good afternoon, Mr. Wayne.

Bruce leans on the desk, almost in a flirtatious manner.

BRUCE WAYNE:

Listen, I need to pull some records and I seem to have misplaced my...

Without hesitation, Jeni hands over her Bruce Wayne's ID card to him.

BRUCE WAYNE:

Thank you...

Bruce departs. He turns back to Jeni.

BRUCE WAYNE:

Jeni...

SECRETARY:

Yes, Mr. Wayne?

BRUCE WAYNE:

Forward my calls to Mr. Fox for the time being.

SECRETARY:

Yes sir.

BRUCE WAYNE:



And Jeni?

BRUCE WAYNE:  
Nice blouse...

Bruce smirks as he walks down the hallway. Jeni smiles to herself as she gets back to work.

CUT TO:

INT. - WAYNE ENTERPRISES RECORDS

Swiping the ID Card through the Card Lock, Bruce makes his way into the Records room. Through investigation, he finds the file for Rodney Collins; a freelance accountant with connections to William Carlson's early Political career and an involvement with the Wayne Housing Development project. Investigating further, he finds the files on the land development to be missing from Records. Bruce knows that it's Carlson that he's after.

CUT TO:

ACT III - SCENE 3

INT. - CARLSON PENTHOUSE

The Councilman sits alone in his penthouse in Gotham speaking on the phone with his wife.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
And the campaign managers say it's a straight shot to the polls.  
Things seem to finally be looking up for us.

MRS. CARLSON (O.S. PHONE):  
Oh Honey, that's wonderful...I wish I was back home with you. I miss you so much.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
I miss you to, sweetheart. This campaign has been really frustrating.

BEAT

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

It still makes me think about Simon...I have no idea where I  
went wrong...

Carlson turns a picks up a framed photograph of Simon and  
Alexis.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

I guess...I just miss him to...

MRS CARLSON (O.S. PHONE):

I know...We both do. Oh, they're calling me onto the stage now.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Give them one hell of a speech, darling.

The Councilman and his wife say their loving goodbyes before  
hanging up. Setting down the phone, Carlson goes back to  
flipping through the newspaper along with a glass of wine. After  
several moments...

BEAT

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Long ago I ordained it...

The Councilman stops and waits in silence.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Simon?

Without warning, Zsasz pops out of nowhere, frightening the  
Councilman, who desperately tries to escape. He fails and is  
caught by Zsasz.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

In days of old I planned it...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:

Simon, listen to me...listen to me...we can help you. Let me help you, son...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Now I have brought it to pass.

Without warning, Batman interferes before Zsasz can do anything. Zsasz takes his father at knifepoint.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

He soared on the wings of the wind. He made the darkness his covering, his canopy around him...

BATMAN:

That's enough Simon...I know the truth now...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

And the truth shall set you free...

Without warning, a spotlight ignites on the scene from outside the window. The sound of helicopter blades slicing the air can be heard. Batman turns his head to the light, shielding his eyes.

GCPD OFFICER (O.S. MEGAPHONE):

BATMAN, THIS IS THE POLICE! YOU ARE TO BE ESCORTED TO GCPD  
PRECINCT OCT65! LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND SURRENDER!

Batman turns just as Zsasz hurls his knife. Batman dodges out of the way but in return throws a bat-shaped homing device, catching onto the back of Zsasz' leg as Zsasz escapes with the Councilman.

GCPD OFFICER (O.S. MEGAPHONE):

THIS IS YOUR FINAL WARNING! THE BUILDING HAS BEEN SURROUNDED AND  
USE OF FORCE WILL BE AUTHORIZED! LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND  
SURRENDER!

Batman immediately departs back into the building.

GCPD OFFICER (O.S. MEGAPHONE):  
SUBJECT IS ON THE MOVE, REPEAT, SUBJECT IS ON THE MOVE! SWAT  
TEAMS BETA AND DELTA CONVERGE ON PREMESIS!

CUT TO:

The BETA SWAT TEAM bursts through the doors of the Building,  
making their way through the stairways.

CUT TO:

EXT: - GOTHAM ALLEY

As a squad car streaks past, sirens blazing, we pan over into an  
alleyway.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT: - BATMOBILE

Sitting in the cockpit of the Batmobile, Batman tunes in to the  
Police Ban Radio.

GCPD OFFICER 1 (O.S. RADIO):  
...peat, I repeat, Subject is not on premises.

GCPD OFFICER 2 (O.S. RADIO):  
There are only 3 exit routes from the building he could've  
taken. He most likely took the highway north towards the  
financial district.

GCPD OFFICER 1 (O.S. RADIO):  
Alright, I want all units to divide and take each exit route. I  
want a clean sweep of the financial and meat packing districts  
and check points along the coast south of the Battery...

Turning off the radio, Batman flicks on a 2<sup>nd</sup> screen, showing the  
tracer he had put on Zsasz. With a smirk, Batman fires up the  
Batmobile and peels out onto the street.

CUT TO:

BATMOBILE MONTAGE:

The Batmobile streaks through the streets of Gotham at blazing speeds, finally making it to the outskirts of the city.

CUT TO:

EXT: - ZSASZ' LAIR

The Batmobile crawls to a stop on a rural road; a giant vertical open manhole sits off to the side. As the Batmobile canopy slides open, Batman stands looking on.

CUT TO:

The screen on the Batmobile, pinpointing Zsasz' location. Suddenly, the signal goes dead. Hopping out of the car, Batman makes his way through the manhole.

CUT TO:

#### ACT III - SCENE 4

INT. - ZSASZ' LAIR

Batman arrives into the almost subterranean stronghold where Zsasz has remained hidden. Batman searches for several minutes, stumbling upon more corpses from Zsasz' doing. Finally he confronts Zsasz, alone. The Councilman is nowhere to be found.

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
Amusing toy...

Zsasz drops the broken pieces of the tracer to the ground.

BATMAN:  
Where's the Councilman?

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
The Virgin Daughter of Zion despises and mocks you...

BATMAN:

What happened, Simon?

Zsasz doesn't respond.

BATMAN:  
What happened...to Alexis?

Silence for a moment.

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
The Daughter of Jerusalem tosses her head as you flee.

FADE IN:

ACT III - SCENE 5

INT. - BLUDHAVEN HOSPITAL

A hospital somewhere in Bludhaven; Simon is lying in bed. We notice that his wrists are bandaged up and he's hooked up to an IV. His sister, ALEXIS CARLSON, is walking around at his side talking on a cell phone. She's a girly girl, and obviously could think of better things to be doing with her time.

ALEXIS CARLSON:  
Everything's fine, mom...

ALEXIS CARLSON:  
Little weirdo slit his wrists. I got him to the hospital in time, he's asleep now...

Simon tries to get out of bed, but Alexis calmly stops him.

ALEXIS CARLSON:  
No, No...Simon stay down, you need your rest...It's just Simon...

Simon stops trying to get out of bed, looking around.

ALEXIS CARLSON:  
He's probably having a reaction to the meds or something...

ALEXIS CARLSON:

Yes mom...no, the doctor said it'd be an hour or so...uh huh...

Simon spots a syringe punctured into a bottle of some sort of medication. Slowly, Simon pulls himself out of bed and grabs the syringe, filling it with the medication.

ALEXIS CARLSON:

Stay? I've got a date with Bobby. He flew all the way out to this dump, I can't...

ALEXIS CARLSON:

Alright, alright I'll stay with him...

ALEXIS CARLSON:

Alright...yeah, I love you to...

Simon stands behind his sister.

SIMON CARLSON:

Alexis...you were always so beautiful...

Simon stabs Alexis with the syringe somewhere in her head/face.

CUT TO:

### ACT III - SCENE 6

INT. - ZSASZ' LAIR

Batman and Zsasz stand facing each other in silence for a moment.

BATMAN:

I'm...I'm sorry...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

I'm not.

Zsasz charges Batman; the two fight in a very primal form. Eventually, Zsasz flees further into the sewers. Batman recoils for a moment to tend to his wounds.

CUT TO:

ACT III - SCENE 7

Alone in an outcrop of the sewer, the Councilman eventually comes to and finds himself bound by ropes to the wall. Suddenly, Zsasz confronts him.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
Simon...Victor, please don't...

VICTOR ZSASZ:  
Father...

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
Don't worry, son...we can get you more help...I can get you the best psychiatrists. We can find a way back...

Zsasz doesn't respond.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
Come back to me, Simon...please...

Zsasz raises his hands, as if to embrace his father. Instead, he reveals a pair of rusty stakes. Without warning, he crucifies his own father!

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
YOU SON OF A BITCH! FILTHY SON OF A BITCH!

Zsasz relishes in his father's pain, almost on a sexual level of some sort.

COUNCILMAN CARLSON:  
I'LL KILL YOU! I'LL KILL YOU...

Zsasz shuts up the Councilman by slitting his throat. Gagging on his own blood, the Councilman dies slowly. Batman arrives just in time to watch the Councilman take his final breath. After a moment of silence...

BATMAN:



Why? He was your father...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

He was nothing...a mindless shell...just like the rest of them...

BATMAN:

And his dealings with the Penguin had nothing to do with it?  
There plan with Corto Maltese to...

Zsasz charges Batman, interrupting him. Zsasz takes his blows to Batman as he speaks.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

35 For Manson  
13 For Sutcliffe  
65 For Xinhai  
26 For Holiday

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Petoit, Bundy, Gein, Mullin, Ridgeway, Dahmer, Shipman.

Batman and Zsasz cease combat, circling each other.

BATMAN:

Why bother keeping score?

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Forever reminders of the work to be done.

Zsasz and Batman continue their battle, both of hands and of words.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

This world has fallen prey to hypocrisy.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Sanctimonies feelings rule with a tyrannical fist. All of us walking around like blind puppets...sacks of meat. Refusing the truth...living under false hopes and false idols.

BATMAN:

And you're the answer to the world's prayers...

The fight is broken off.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

A conduit, shedding the façade and allowing sweet release. But even this divinity is not without consequence. So I part my flesh as a testimony...a scar for every act of salvation. All in the name of Zsasz.

The fight continues for several moments.

BATMAN:

You fail to see the contradiction.

Batman and Zsasz find themselves in a physical stalemate.

BATMAN:

This isn't about some global crusade...this is about you.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

That's not true. My personal obligations do not factor into the message.

BATMAN:

Because they're the only factor...aren't they Simon?

VICTOR ZSASZ:

That is not my name.

BATMAN:

This was always about you...About the hypocrisy in yourself.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

I'm merely a vessel.

BATMAN:

Who were you to say that Alexis would die by your hand?

VICTOR ZSASZ:

The Virgin Daughter of...

BATMAN:

How can you accuse the world of sanctimony while ignoring your own?

Blinded by rage, Zsasz shoves Batman into the wall. They fight once more as Zsasz screams. The Battle has become both more primal and personal.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Who am I to pass judgment? What about YOU!?

VICTOR ZSASZ:

You see pass the deceit of this society as much as I do. We're predators, cloaking ourselves as we seek to grant repentance to God's forgotten children; the meat puppets.

BATMAN:

Neither you nor I are above the law...It's not our place to decide who lives and who dies.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

You're wrong. You could see it in those eyes of his as you soaked your hands with his blood...and you enjoyed it...didn't you? The rush of power as you brought that Zombie into consciousness.

BATMAN:

No...I didn't...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Admit it...You felt alive...You felt the touch of god as I did...And you'd give anything to do the same to me...

BATMAN:

You're wrong...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Friend...do what you came for...

Batman throws a Batarang, taking out Zsasz' knife. Unfortunately it doesn't work, as Zsasz wields the Batarang as an edged

weapon! They fight once more, and Zsasz is eventually defeated. Batman holds him by the throat.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

You surprise me, Batman...We ARE like brothers...two sides of a coin, giving purpose to one another...

Batman, though furious, holds his ground.

BATMAN:

No...

VICTOR ZSASZ:

Complete the circle...kill me...see the truth before your eyes and carry on my work.

Batman shakes his head as he slowly tightens his grip on Zsasz' neck.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

KILL ME!

Batman stops himself and slowly releases Zsasz as he falls unconscious with a smile.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

You won't...be able to run...forever...

Batman slowly stands before Zsasz in silence; the Councilman sits dead on the wall.

CUT TO:

### ACT III - SCENE 8

INT. - PENGUIN'S OFFICE

MALE ANCHOR:

Good evening...this is Channel 8 News...Topping today's headlines is the shocking murder of Gotham City Councilman

William Carlson. Anonymous tip led police into the sewers early this morning, where Carlson's body was found crucified beside his unconscious son, Simon; who is now believed to be the proclaimed Victor Zsasz from the St. Matthew's incident last week...

As the News continues, Penguin silently lights a fire in his trash can and burns the Wayne Enterprises documents; he's given up his schemes...for now.

MALE ANCHOR:

Further investigation led to Carlson's personal files, which in turn revealed a plan to take part in the operations of a giant narcotics lab using litigations provided by the late Rodney Collins, a former associate and Wayne Enterprises accountant. Meanwhile, Zsasz has since been incarcerated in Arkham Asylum for his vigilante tactics pending a hearing next year. Coming up on tonight's "Point vs. Point," Are Zsasz' methods just what Gotham needs?

Penguin watches the fire burn alone for a moment.

CUT TO:

### ACT III - SCENE 9

EXT. - GCPD CENTRAL ROOFTOP

Standing on the roof of GCPD headquarters, Gordon lights up his Pipe; smoke billowing from his lips.

BATMAN (O.S.):

They want you to bring me in...

BATMAN:

Don't they...

Batman steps from the shadows to Gordon.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

After all this mess with Carlson, the big shots are holding their silence for now. Damage control and all that.

BATMAN:

Jim...about what happened the other night...with the...

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

If there's anything the law has taught me...it's that only  
Guilty Men run.

Batman almost winces at Gordon's words.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

But I know the one giving you the hardest time about the other  
night is yourself.

The men stand silent for a moment. Batman slowly passes Gordon,  
stepping towards the edge of the roof. After a moment, Batman  
breaks the silence.

BATMAN:

Where do we go from here?

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

I may not know your name...but I know you're no madman.

Batman stands still; he doesn't respond.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

My trust is something not to be taken lightly. Gotham DOES need  
you, whether I'm always willing to admit it or not.

Gordon turns away from Batman.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

But I took an oath to uphold law and order. And while those laws  
can be bent to accommodate your efforts, I will not allow you to  
break them.

Batman stands, looking on in silence as he reflects on Gordon's  
words.

COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON:

As long as that is maintained...you have my support...Batman...

Gordon turns back, but Batman is gone. Gordon isn't surprised one bit.

BEAT  
CUT TO:

ACT III - SCENE 10

EXT. - ARKHAM ASYLUM

The Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane.

CUT TO:

INT. - ARKHAM ASYLUM

Within the decrepit hallways of Arkham Asylum, we hear the hollow rumblings of the inmates and general atmosphere. Eventually, we come to Zsasz, sitting in his old, rotting cell, carving something into the floor with a small knife.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

If your brother sins against you...go and show him his fault...

What Zsasz is carving is revealed to be the bat symbol.

VICTOR ZSASZ:

I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven...

FADE TO:

EXT. - GOTHAM CITY

We pan over various aspects of Gotham during Zsasz' voice over.

VICTOR ZSASZ (V.O.):

Praise...for he has come and has redeemed his people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us. Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us...

We eventually fall upon Batman, crouched atop a rooftop. He looks upon the city in defeated silence.

VICTOR ZSASZ (V.O.):  
To remember his holy covenant...

Slowly, Batman stands.

VICTOR ZSASZ (V.O.):  
And the oath that he swore...to guide our feet into the path for  
peace...

Opening up his cape, Batman descends upon Gotham City in silence once more.

END

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