

NIGHTWING BLUDHAVEN

Written by

WILLIAM B SUTTON

Based on characters from DC Comics

OVER BLACK - OPENING CREDITS

Faint **voices**, different **conversations**, different **sounds**,
different **memories**.

MR. HALEY V.O.

And now, I present to you the greatest
acrobats in the world! The Flying
Graysons!

A distant crowd cheers. Cheers turn to roars. Roars turns to
static.

The sound of a taught rope snaps louder than a twig in a
quiet forest.

The cheerful static, turns to gasps and screams. HER SCREAM.

MARY (V.O.)

RICHARD!

Falling.

The sound of their bodies booms across the void.

Silence.

A memory fades in. A *warm*, hopeful memory.

BATMAN V.O.

You're sure you want to be a part of
this world?

DICK (CHILD) V.O.

More than anything.

BATMAN V.O.

And you're sure?

DICK (CHILD) V.O.

Yes.

FADE FROM BLACK

A MASK lowers over a child's eyes, then-

INT. FAMILY TRAILER - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The circus trailer is cramped, creaking gently. It smells like popcorn and sawdust- feels like home.

A kettle whistles quietly on a dented stovetop.

JOHN GRAYSON (40), kind eyes, leans over it adjusting the heat. He's still in his stage boots, untied and loose,

MARY GRAYSON (35), radiant, walks into the room wearing a bathrobe. She sits on a built-in bench patting her hair dry with a towel.

DICK GRAYSON (7), bounces from end to end of the trailer. Sweat stained trapeze costume, sticky with sugar and triumph.

MARY

Dick, sweetie- why don't you get changed before you melt into that costume?

DICK

I can't, I'm still flying!

He SOARS off the chair armrest, falling into a somersault.

Perfect form.

John watches over his shoulder, smirking.

JOHN

At least go wash your face, pal.
You're wearing half the ring.

Dick smudges some of the dirt onto his sleeve.

He ponders before disappearing into a small bathroom cubby.

John lifts the kettle, pouring tea into three unique cups, each with their own chips and scratches.

Dick comes bolting back into the room, his face still dripping.

DICK
(Peering over the countertop into
his mug)
You made the cinnamon one?

JOHN
The very last of it.

John passes it down. Dick holds it reverently, breathing it in like it's sacred.

John takes his and Mary's cup to the bench.

Setting down her towel, she takes her mug.

MARY
I miss when we'd have champagne after
a show.

She snuggles up to John suggestively.

DICK
That's gross.

JOHN
That's what I said.

He rolls his eyes at his son, sharing a look with Mary.

Before the two can share a kiss, Dick climbs between them.

There's a comfort being on a bench that's too small- like the way people fit together when they've lived close for a long time.

MARY
You made them cheer tonight, did you
hear it?

DICK
(smiling through his mug)
All of them.

JOHN
'Course they did. You stuck the
landing like a pro.

DICK

I almost slipped on the third swing.
My fingers were so sweaty.

JOHN

You didn't slip, and that's what
they'll remember.

MARY

It's not always about perfection,
baby. Sometimes it's just about the
try.

The family take the beat.

JOHN

Alright team. Finish up. We've got a
busy day tomorrow. We all need the
rest.

Dick gulps the rest of his tea down.

Once again he's darting – to the sink then the back rooms.

INT. FAMILY TRAILER BUNK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dick leaps into his top bunk.

He peers out the small window to the circus tent outside.

Lights sweep the sky.

he can still hear the crowd.

Hoops and hollers.

Whistles.

Cheers.

CUT TO BLACK

Then again, HER SCREAM.

FADES FROM BLACK

*"Why does tragedy exist? Because you are full of rage. Why
are you full of rage? Because you are full of grief."*

- Anne Carson.

FADE TO BLACK

CUT TO-

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - MIDDAY

DICK GRAYSON (23), snaps awake.

A nightmare. Or a distant memory?

Sunlight creeps in.

A police scanner scrambles quietly in the room.

Dick sits up looking to his alarm clock, 2:30.

He HAULs himself out of bed. It hurts to move.

We see bruises and scars all across his back. He has bandages around his knee.

Once on his feet – he DROPS to the floor. PUSHUPS. It's routine.

As he begins his workout, we scan around the room, seeing Easter eggs and trinkets.

His apartment is small.

Clothes scattered cross the floor.

Moving boxes crowd any space.

Tucked away is a large poster reading **"HALEY'S CIRCUS PRESENTS: THE FLYING GRAYSONS"**

A Laptop and Tools cover the desk area.

Photos of a younger Dick Grayson, surrounded by friends.

On the nightstand sits BADGE with a yellow **"R"**.
Unidentified gear and armor scatter the rest of the room.
Newspapers clippings of an older **DUO**.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

His hair is wet, with a towel draped around his waist.

He bends down to pick up a shirt.

We hear voices from outside the building.

Looking out the window, Dick sees a VAN parked outside the
COMMUNITY CENTER across the street. Volunteers carry boxed
meals into the center.

SHAWN TSANG (21) stands beside the van with a clipboard.
Asian heritage. **Blue strands** in her hair.

He's locked on her before one of the other workers asks for
her assistance.

She disappears into the building.

Dick snaps out of his spell, and sniffs the shirt he chose.

Gross.

INT. BUILDING 1013 (HALLWAY)- MINUTES LATER

Dick steps into the hallway locking his apartment door behind
him.

He carries a hamper.

He also carries a BOOK, used.

BRIDGET (28) meets him down the narrow hallway. A chipper Irish woman with Asian heritage. Wearing stained clothes and carrying cans of paint.

BRIDGET
Hiya Mr. Grayson!

She tip-toes around him, careful not to stain him as well.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Careful, paint's still wet.
(She chuckles)
Late start today?

DICK
Yeah. Just trying to get laundry done.

BRIDGET
And some light read'n I'd wager.

DICK
Uh, Yeah.

BRIDGET
Right, well if ya ever got the time, I could use an extra set of hands with this renovatin' an all In room 412.

DICK
Yeah, I'll take a look at what i got coming up.

BRIDGET
Sounds good! I'll see ya in a few Mr. Grayson!

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

Stepping outside BUILDING 1013, The door is propped open.

There sits Mr LAW, watching children play in the street.

Dick looks to the center across the street, but THE VAN IS gone.

Dick looks to Mr Law, nods, then heads down the street.

We're introduced to the city itself.

The streets are cracked.

A stray animals run free.

A drunken man walks home with a presumptuous woman.

A STORE OWNER is HURLED from his building into the street before Dick.

Dick kneels down to help the man up.

DETECTIVE DUDLEY SOAMES (35) exits the complex. Blonde hair, and a menacing grin. A BADGE hangs around his neck. Openly counting a wad of cash.

Dick stares intently.

SOAMES

Easy, guy. Police business.

He cracks himself up.

Soames gets into a **GREEN CAR** parked nearby.

In the passenger seat sits DETECTIVE ELISE SVOBODA (35). A **sullen** woman. A BADGE around her neck.

They drive away.

DICK

(To the store owner)

You alright?

STORE OWNER

Yeah, I'm alright. Get off me, will ya? Bad enough the guy comes and goes as he pleases. Don't need him thinking I need protect'n.

The owner hobbles up the stairs, disappearing back into his store.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER

Dick sits, listening to the tumble of laundry

He reads the book. It's spine seems ready to fall apart.

MARTIE (50) is the only other soul in the establishment.

The door chimes, in walks SHAWN.

She securely holds a box full of leftover meals.

SHAWN

You hungry, Martie?

MARTIE

Shawn! You shouldn't have.

She passes him a plate through the window. Her smile is contagious.

SHAWN

How's Hunter?

MARTIE

Hunter, he's good. Yeah. He just made the JV team. Quarterback! Can ya believe it?

SHAWN

You must be proud!

Dick can't help but keep his eyes on her.

His machine BUZZES.

He jumps up.

Without thinking he pulls the machine door wide open-

SPLASH

Water spills all over the floor.

MARTIE

No! Not again!

DICK

I am so sorry. I-

MARTIE

That was the dryer buzzer! THE DRYER.

DICK

I get that.

Shawn watches from the door. She can't help but find it a little amusing.

SHAWN

I'll see you next time, Martie!

MARTIE

(To Shawn)

Yeah! Okay, Shawn. Take care.

Before she disappears her and Dick exchange eyes and smiles across the room.

She backs out of the door.

Martie hands Dick a mop.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Dick enters the apartment, sitting his hamper on the bed.

The scanner's buzz continues.

Back to *his* reality.

On his desk he stares down at some FILES.

On one of the pages is a MUGSHOT.

The name?

TONY ZUCCO.

He turns the volume up on the scanner.

He grabs aa piece of armor from the floor and starts adjustments at his desk.

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

Just outside his window we see an OWL perched and watching him through the window.

The owl flies away, taking us on a tour of the city.

We then cut to the street view of Parkthorne Ave. (The street Dick lives on).

The scanner fades into the background, interchanging with local news broadcasts.

Cars on the highway.

Rodents in the trash.

The docks by the river.

The subway running across the tracks.

The door opening on a corner store.

Glass breaking and a car horn echoes.

We see the city. The city without influence.

As it is.

INT. INDUSTRIAL BLUDHAVEN - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

We end our tour in the industrial part of the city.

Baron. Rundown. Isolated.

Outside a warehouse sits THE GREEN CAR idling.

Elise and Soames sit in the car.

Elise smokes.

Soames in the driver seat.

SOAMES
Shouldn't be much longer now.

ELISE
You said it was a drive-by.

SOAMES
Plans change.

ELISE
(Slowly nodding)
Right.

SOAMES

You eat yet?

ELISE

I'm fine.

SOAMES

There's a new place off Old Harbor.
Stays open pretty late. Won't have to
watch what you order there. You'd like
it. Ask me, Life's too short for women
who disappear when they turn sideways.

Elise doesn't look at him. Doing so would certainly give him
satisfaction.

Soames grins anyway.

Headlights bloom at the far end of the road.

One black van.

Then another.

Then another.

Soames reaches for the radio.

SOAMES

(Into the radio)

Yeah. Three just came in. Black vans.
ETA two minutes.

Soames nods, satisfied. He starts the car.

ELISE

That's it?

SOAMES

Uh-huh.

ELISE

Those were Gotham tags.

SOAMES

And they'll be somebody else's
problem.

As they pull away-

Elise's eye drift upward.

Rooftops.

A shadow, moving clean and silent above the warehouses.

Her breath catches slightly.

She doesn't say anything.

INT. UNDISCLOSED WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A small gang of armed men await a meeting.

They wear average streetwear.

The BLACK VANS arrive to the scene pulling to a stop.

MEN WEARING TACTICAL GEAR and CREATURE MASKS file out.

One wears a white suit...

And a BLACK MASK.

BLACK MASK

Where is he?

He paces quickly toward one of the opposition.

BLACK MASK CONT'D

Where the **HELL** is he?

He punches one of the goons in the gut. He collapses to the
ground.

The others raise their weapons.

BLACK MASK CONT'D

I pay all of this damn money. Make the risks to come out to this hell hole and the **bastard** can't even show up?

SULIEMAN (35) steps from the streetwear gang. He's calm, in control. Just another day in the office.

SULIEMAN

Don't get your panties in a twist. He didn't stand you up on prom night, okay?

BLACK MASK

Ahhh, so- you must be the one I'm supposed to talk to. Sulieman, right?

Black Mask raises his gun.

BLACK MASK (CONT'D)

WHERE THE **FUCK** IS MY SHIT?

Sulieman motions for his side to stand down.

SULIEMAN

We told you. It's on the way.

BLACK MASK

I gave you a deadline. Not a suggestion.

SULIEMAN

The chem heads figured the formula needed more testing before we're ready to distribute.

BLACK MASK

Bullshit.

SULIEMAN

If it gets out as is we're gonna lose a lot of customers. That's something Desmond doesn't want happening. You understand?

BLACK MASK

What makes you think i give a **damn** about my buyer, huh? I just want him off my ass!

SULIEMAN
(Teasing)
What's the matter Mask?

The two stare down.

SULIEMAN (CONT'D)
Tired of being the "middleman"?

Silence falls over the building as Black Mask's frustration boils over. He walks slowly toward Sulieman.

SULIEMAN CONT'D
Careful there Mask. Don't do anything
that's gonna make your boss upset.

Sulieman turns his back to Black Mask, he motions for his team to head out.

Black Mask now overcome with rage raises his gun again. Just before he fires the lights shut off.

BLACK MASK
Shit.
(Impulse.)

Wingdings start whistling through the air. They're targeting the vehicle's tires.

BLACK MASK CONT'D
SHIT.
(Realization.)

Black Mask SPRINTS to his car.

His men FALL BACK.

Sulieman's side SWARM.

Black Mask's convoy PEELS OUT - gone.

Silence settles.

In the darkness, a SHADOW moves- deliberate.

Predatory.

A GUNSHOT.

A man goes down.

Muffled SHOUTS.

PANICED FIRE in the dark.

Bodies DROP - one by one.

Sulieyman spins, firing blindly.

Too late.

The SHADOW hits him hard-

Sulieyman CRASHES into a stack of boards.

When he looks up-

Nothing.

Only his men, scattered across the floor.

And the SHADOW-

Already on top of him again.

CRACK.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. UNDISCLOSED WAREHOUSE - LATER

Silence spans the warehouse. Now we see Sulieyman, tied upside-down hanging in the middle of the room unconscious.

He comes to.

SULIEMAN

Ugh- Hey... HEY!

He SQUIRMS to try and get free.

SULIEMAN CONT'D

What the fuck?

His shouts ECHO.

VOICE (OFF SCREEN)

It's convenient for guys like you,
isn't it? Places like these where
nobody can bother you...

NIGHTWING steps out from the shadows.

NIGHTWING CONT'D

...or hear you shouting when something
doesn't go as planned.

Sulieaman thinks he's young- inexperienced.

SULIEMAN

Ah, I was wondering when the 'Haven
was getting it's own cape.

(Sarcastic)

You're lost kid. Just cut me down and
we can chalk this up to negligence,
okay?

NIGHTWING

Negligence, that your word of the day?
There's not too many of you guys with
a decent vocabulary. And as for the
"cutting you down" part, that's gonna
be a no can do. That's synthetically
constructed rope of high molecular
weight and polyethylene with Kevlar
heatshield and UV resistant coating.
Between you and I if you were able to
cut through it in your position, I'd
be impressed. But you're buying it at
a buck and sixty two cents foot.

He's rehearsed that part.

NIGHTWING (CONT'D)

Just answer a few questions and I'll untie you. I need TONY ZUCCO.

Beat.

SULIEMAN

... Who?

NIGHTWING

Used to run with the Maroni's before your business partner, Black Mask, took over.

SULIEMAN

And what? You think one of his guys jumped ship and came to work for us? You're friggin *batshit* if you think we'd take somebody from that lunatic's crew.

NIGHTWING

He never worked for Sionis. But I know he's in Bludhaven. And if you can't help me then I guess I got too good at tying those knots in boy scouts. Looks like you're stuck there until somebody else comes along.

SULIEMAN

Ha. You think you're a cheeky son of a bitch. Come'n into this city, messin shit up? You have no idea what this place can do to people. What we can do to you. Let me tell ya something you need to know. You're fucking with the wrong crowd.

Nightwing takes a beat.

NIGHTWING

You know, inversion therapy has it's health benefits? It can stretch out your spine, and relieve back pain. Fix your posture. Even increase flexibility. Really good practice for active people like myself, athletes, even the "blue collar working man". However, there's a *flip* side. See Your

blood starts to flow to your head and builds up behind your eyes. Some vessels might rupture, blood pools in the brain and causes a hemorrhage.

SULIEMAN

Please. You're gonna wanna get in line. You're the fourth guy that's tried to kill me this week.

NIGHTWING

No, dying from a thing like this is incredibly rare. But if you don't tell me exactly what I wanna know, you're gonna be in for one crazy headache. And I don't see that pairing too well with your broken nose.

SULIEMAN

Broken nose? I don't have a broke-

WHACK

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE FROM BLACK.

"Nightwing Bludhaven: Part One"

FADE TO BLACK

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S - NIGHT

Florescent lights hum.

Medical equipment beeps.

Stained glass windows.

The room seems hollow.

An armed guard stands at the door.

JOYCE DESMOND (70) lies in a hospital bed. She's frail but has a glowing smile.

She sits up in her bed singing a hymn while crocheting.

MARK DESMOND (45), her eldest son, sits bedside. His hands are clasped, posture is slouched. He wears a LAB COAT stained with DUST, his eyes red from sleepless nights.

ROLAND DESMOND (40), Joyce's youngest, stands across the room. Distanced. He leans against the windowsill, staring out the stained glass and lingering rain. He's sharply dressed. He's out of place.

His reflection stares back in fractured colors.

MARK DESMOND

(Softly humming a long to his
mothers tune.)

You used to sing that when you put
Roland to bed.

JOYCE DESMOND

Blessed Assurance- I sang it to you
before.

MARK DESMOND

I wonder... did you get the words
wrong then too?

The two share a soft melancholic chuckle.

JOYCE DESMOND

I might've but you boys still went to
sleep every time, didn't you?

As she continues, her hands SHAKE, unable to continue her activity.

Mark leans forward, cupping her hands in his.

JOYCE DESMOND CONT'D

Oh, Mark. You always had such kind
hands. Of course they're rougher than
before, but still kind. We used to
stuff your mittens because they were
too sensitive to the cold. And you
used to draw little birds on the
walls.

MARK DESMOND
That was Roland, Ma. I did the stars.

JOYCE DESMOND
Oh, I suppose it was. Wasn't it?

Her smile FADES.

Suddenly she stares past everything-

-before returning to her activity and beginning another tune.

MARK DESMOND
I remember that one too.

Her eyes meet Mark again, this time confused and scared.

JOYCE DESMOND
Michael? Where've you been?

MARK DESMOND
No, ma. It's Mark.

JOYCE DESMOND
Not Michael?

MARK DESMOND
No, ma.

JOYCE DESMOND
Well someone's got to get the boys set
for bed.

She moves to stand from her bed.

MARK DESMOND
No. No. No. It's okay. They're okay.
They're already asleep.

JOYCE DESMOND
They're okay?

MARK DESMOND
Yeah, ma. They're okay.

She FADES once again. Mark reaches for her hand once more
before he's NUDGED by Roland behind him.

ROLAND
Alright. Let's go.

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S HALLWAY- NIGHT

The two brothers walk down the hallway surrounded by their entourage.

MARK DESMOND
You didn't even speak to her.

ROLAND
I didn't have to.

MARK DESMOND
What's that supposed to mean?

ROLAND
It means I've made my peace with her a long time ago.

MARK DESMOND
You say that like she's already dead. Roland, she needs this. She needs human interaction, She needs us to be here.

ROLAND
No. What she needs is quiet. After everything we've been through the least we can do for her is to stop reminding her that she's slipping away.

MARK DESMOND
So this is how you pay your penance?

ROLAND
Penance for what? We've ensured that nobody in this city can touch our family.

MARK DESMOND
Do you think she'd be happy knowing how we got it all?

ROLAND
Doesn't matter. For once in her life she's comfortable.

MARK DESMOND
That's not comfort, Roland.

RFOLAND
It's best we let her rest then.

Roland continues out the door, leaving his brother behind.

MARK DESMOND
You mean best to let her forget.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - MIDDAY

Dick awakens.

It's now around **2:00** the next day.

He sits up, stretching.

Another day SORE.

INT. BUILDING 1013 FRONT OFFICE- MIDDAY

Dick steps into the office.

Behind the desk is Bridget RUMMAGING around the floor.

DICK
Um... Bridget?

BRIDGET
Ah! Mister Grayson! How ya doin this
afternoon?

DICK
Please, call me Dick.

BRIDGET
Sure thing! What can I do ya for?

DICK
Any chance you've got spare bulbs in
the utility closet? I've got a light
out in the bathroom.

BRIDGET

Uhhh. Come ta think of it, I don't think so. We've got a light or two out in the basement. Say, ya up to anything in particular today?

DICK

Well, not exactly but I-

BRIDGET

Fantastic! Why don't ya head on down to Gwen's shop, and pick up a case for us? I've got a list of other things we could use, there ya go. Been tryin to get down there myself, but been stuck doin those renovations for Mr Law.

She turns away to continue rummaging, as Dick reads through the list.

DICK

Um, Bridget... I'm not sure I have the cash on me to take care of all of this.

BRIDGET

Oh, don't worry about that. Just tell Mrs Gwen to add it to my tab. She'll take care of ya.

Bridget notices BLOOD on his knuckles.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You okay there, Mr Grayson?

DICK

Hm?

She points.

DICK (CONT'D)

No, I mean yeah. I'm okay. I'll take care of this.

He exits.

INT. GWEN'S GENERAL STORE- MIDDAY

Now with his hand BANDAGED, Dick makes his way through the isles picking out BULBS, VENT FILTERS, CLEANERS, etc.

He passes by another isle- from the corner of his eye he sees BLUE HAIR.

SHAWN.

He carries on before she takes notice of him.

Dick makes his way to the register.

MRS. GWEN

That'll be sixty-three forty-seven.

DICK

Oh um, Bridget Clancy asked me to pick these up. She said she had a tab.

MRS. GWEN

A tab? Ha! Oh please! I lend that broad a broom and now she think's this place is Hogan's! Sixty-three forty-seven.

SHAWN pushes past Dick.

SHAWN

It's okay, Gwen. You can put it with mine.

She came to his rescue.

DICK

No, it's okay. You don't have to. I'll just-

SHAWN

It's no problem. It's for Bridget right? She's a friend.

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVE. (STREET)- MINUTES LATER

The pair walks SIDE by SIDE. Both carrying their purchases in brown paper bags.

THE CAMERA SHOULD BE DISTANCED, ALMOST LIKE WE'RE PEERING INTO STRANGER'S LIVES. WE'RE WITNESSING OUR COUPLE INTERACT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

SHAWN

He told me you just stood there watching the water spread everywhere.

DICK

I was assessing.

SHAWN

You flooded a laundromat.

DICK

It was a *hoes* issue.

SHAWN

More like a *you* issue. I saw you open the door.

DICK

Alright, you got me.

SHAWN

He made you clean it up, didn't he?

DICK

Yup.

She laughs at his embarrassment.

DICK (CONT'D)

So you work at the center?

SHAWN

Yeah, almost two years now.

DICK

What's that like?

SHAWN

Well, we house homeless families. as many as we can. We have focus groups. Offer a soup kitchen every weekday at one o'clock. Every once in a while we'll hold special events. Like today, we packaged meals and delivered them to all the businesses on Parkthorne.

DICK

That explains why you seem to know everyone.

SHAWN

So what's it like working for Bridget?

DICK

uh. I don't- My bulb was out so i just went to-

SHAWN

I'm kidding. I know, you just live in her building. You liking Bludhaven?

DICK

It's an adjustment, but it's not so bad.

SHAWN

Oh yea? What's "*not so bad*" about Bludhaven?

DICK

It's quiet, for the most part. Aside from downtown of course. Parkthorne just seems so...

SHAWN

Empty.

DICK

Yeah. I guess it's not such a good thing when you put it like that.

Beat.

SHAWN

What happened to your hand?

DICK

Oh. Just moving furniture. Got caught between the coffee table and the wall.

SHAWN

Must have been some coffee table. Or you're just really bad at moving furniture. Either way, you should probably ice that.

(Beat)

We have plenty of first aid at the center if you wanna come by.

DICK
No, it's okay. Thank you.

SHAWN
Well whenever you stop pretending
you're fine, the door's always open.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS COVERSATION WE CUT TO ANOTHER SHOT

They come upon a CROSSWALK.

Shawn turns to look both ways before crossing the street.
Dick hesitates..

DICK
You always this generous to guys with
bad excuses?

SHAWN
No. Just the ones who seem like
they're looking for something.

DICK
It's Shawn, right?

SHAWN
Tsang. You?

DICK
Dick Grayson.

SHAWN
Welcome to Bludhaven, Dick Grayson.
Until next time.

She offers a nod, maybe a half smile before turning to cross
the street. No other glance.

Dick takes a beat.

Looks down to his bandaged hand.

Exhales, then shoves his hand into his pocket and continues
his walk.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT (BATHROOM) - EVENING

We see Dick twist the bulb into place, the bathroom is brought to light.

He tapes a BAG OF ICE around his hand.

Then crashes on his bed.

INT. HOGAN'S ALLEY - NIGHT

We cut to a neon lit bar.

Stereotypical.

Music booms.

Continuous chatter.

Pool Tables.

Signage.

A handful of tables and booths.

Behind the bar, Dick wipes down the counter.

THE CAMERA SCANS ACROSS THE BAR

Tucked in a corner booth sits Shawn and Bridget as a guy tries to buy them a drink.

Shawn watches Dick from a distance.

INT. HOGAN'S ALLEY - HOURS LATER

The bar is empty.

Music faintly echoes around the room.

HOGAN (50), the bar owner, counts his register.

Dick mops the floors.

Hogan tosses a stack of bills in Dick's direction,

HOGAN
There ya go, kid.

DICK
Thanks Mr. Hogan. Really appreciate
it.

HOGAN
(Hogan glances at Dick's hand.)
Just be careful out there, son.

DICK
See you next weekend?

HOGAN
Of course.

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVE. (STREET)- MINUTES LATER

Dick walks down an EMPTY street.

No cars.

Everyone on Parkthorne is tucked away in their homes.

City ambience takes over.

As he walks, Dick counts his pay.

He splits the bills into separate folds before putting them in his pocket.

INT. BUILDING 1013 FRONT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dick enters the front office of the apartment building.

The office is empty now too.

Moonlight creeps in.

Dick leans over the register to grab an ENVELOPE and PEN.

Inside the envelope he puts one of the folds of bills.

Then writes his name, along with the dates "11/1/26 - 11/30/26".

He places his payment on the desk behind the counter.

Then exits upstairs.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - NOON (NEXT DAY)

Knock Knock Knock

The door swings open to reveal Bridget.

Dick shirtless, eyes lazy and sensitive.

DICK
Morning.

BRIDGET
Late start again Mr. Grayson?

DICK
Um-

BRIDGET
It's a little past noon by now.

DICK
I got out of Hogan's pretty late.

BRIDGET

I see.

(Holds up the envelope Dick left
on her desk.)

You're already four months ahead on
rent.

DICK

I know. I just wanted to be ahead.

BRIDGET

Well ya don't have to be. Ya know
that, right? I mean bein' ahead on
payment isn't very common here.

Dick nods in understanding,

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I'm not just gonna put ya out on the
street, lord knows too many are there
in this town. You're a good lad, Mr.
Grayson. I can see it. Honorable. You
can unpack those boxes; make yourself
at home.

(Beat)

Look, I'll hold onto this one. But if
you don't keep your money until
October at least, it'll be sliding
right back under this door. Alright?

DICK

Yeah.

BRIDGET

Alright, hope ya have a nice
afternoon, Mr. Grayson.

Bridget turns down the hallway.

DICK

Please, call me Dick.

Bridget signs the "okay" as she continues down the hall.

The door shuts.

INT. PRIVATE BACK ROOM - AFTERNOON

Stale air.

Soft jazz from somewhere else.

Roland sits alone at a long wooden table, untouched bourbon in front of him.

A cigar between his fingers. He stares out the window - the city washed in golden hour hues.

Doors open.

Roland doesn't turn.

Sulieyman is led in, NOSE HEAVILY BANDAGED.

SULIEMAN

Thirty Nine hours. That's unlike you.

RFOLAND

Well my top guy got thrown in the can, that's unlike you. They book you?

SULIEMAN

No. Just the holding. No prints. No charge.

RFOLAND

Good. Who made the arrest?

SULIEMAN

Nobody. Some vigilante busted us up then delivered me right to their doorstep.

ROLAND

Vigilante?

SULIEMAN

Yeah. Mask. Body armor. Moved like a ghost.

ROLAND

The Bat from Gotham?

SULIEMAN

Nah. No ears, no cape. This guy's younger. Talks a lot too.

ROLAND

You're sure?

SULIEMAN

Positive.

ROLAND.

I don't think it's coincidence he shows up to make our meeting with Sionis sour.

SULIEMAN

You think it's the Bat's lackey?

ROLAND

Could be. Rumors are his new bird is an entirely different kid. Maybe the old one decided to spread his wings.

SULIEMAN

What if it's just some guy?

ROLAND

Then our Gotham expansion will be secured. And he'll be easy to kill. Go to Redhorn. Let him know about our issue.

Sulieman turns out the way he came.

Before exiting he turns back.

SULIEMAN

The vigilante, he asked about a name.
Tony Zucco.

ROLAND

Never heard of him.

Sulieman nods in understanding then exits with his entourage.

INT. SECONDHAND SHOP - AFTERNOON

Wind Rattles the windows.

The bell over the door jingles.

Dick steps inside. Hood up. Jacket zipped halfway.

The shop is a mashup of old books, magazines and records.
Some percaline figures.

Smells like paper and rusted hinges.

The CLERK (40) sits asleep at the register.

Dick moves through the isles slowly. Not looking for anything
in particular.

Just killing time.

He stops at a shelf. Rows of paperbacks. Broken spines.

He pulls one out at random.

-*"The Getaway Man" by Andrew Vachss.*

He flips through the pages until something falls out.

A photograph.

It's faded.

A man smiling along with a woman and a young boy- The edges
are worn. Folded multiple times. Written on the back it says
"Happy Birthday Ezra".

Dick studies it a little long.

Not because he recognizes the faces.

But because he recognizes the feeling.

He tucks the photo back in. Puts the book away.

He reaches the back of the store, where a few CDs sit in boxes labeled \$1 each.

He crouches, starts flipping through- Bowie, Motown...

He pauses on one: *Gregory Alan Isakov- "Songs for October"*

The track list shows

"black and blue"

"garden"

"august clown"

Dick stands still looking at the album.

The CLERK stands behind him.

SHOP CLERK

That one's tough to find.

DICK

Yeah?

SHOP CLERK

That was back before any labels picked him up. Entirely self promoted. People forget how good some of the quieter ones can be.

DICK

People don't forget. They just don't don't know. They don't care to know.

Dick sets the Album back in the box, and leaves the store.

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVENUE- CONTINUOUS

Dick steps out into the city wind.

The city's golden glow turns to hues of violet.

Across the street, the door to an ART STUDIO opens.

SHAWN comes out.

Dick stops.

He watches her stand under the awning - checking her phone.

Traffic passes between them.

After a beat she looks up.

They lock eyes.

She shares a smirk before crossing to him.

SHAWN
You stalking me now?

DICK
(he raises an eyebrow)
I was here first.

She shakes her head playfully, before realizing the store behind him.

SHAWN
You into hand-me-downs?

DICK
Only if they've got something worth
carrying.

She tilts her head weighing that.

He gestures back to the studio.

DICK
You into art?

SHAWN
I take a class. Helps pass the time.

A silence settle, Not awkward, just honest.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Well since it looks like you're
sticking around town, might as well
learn where the decent food is. And
where it's not.

DICK
You offering a tour?

SHAWN
No. I'm saying don't eat at Rico's
unless you want food poisoning and a
sermon.

DICK
Noted.

Another pause. A beat where they could say something, but
neither does.

SHAWN
Yeah. Okay.
(She nods to herself)

She steps off the curb.

DICK
What?

She turns over her shoulder, casual but her voice is softer
now.

SHAWN
Yes, we can hangout later. Four
o'clock tomorrow. You know where I'll
be.
(She nods he head in the direction
of the center.)

She's moving before he can answer.

A light rain begins to fall.

Dick watches her leave.

For a moment he's lighter.

The GREEN CAR cruises down the street.

Catches his attention.

The moment is gone.

The GREEN CAR turns down an alleyway.

Dick crosses the street.

He peers around the corner.

The car parks behind a MOVING TURCK as SOAMES and SULIEMAN step out, and disappear inside a building.

Dick is gone.

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S HALLWAY- NIGHT

Mark sits alone on a bench, his DUSTY LAB COAT folded beside him.

Through the cracked nursery door, his mother sleeps.

The hallway door creaks open.

Roland steps in. Coat on his arm. No guards.

Mark doesn't look up.

ROLAND

You weren't picking up.

MARK DESMOND

Didn't feel like picking up. But you knew right where I was.

ROLAND

I always know where you are.

(Beat)

Mark, I'm sorry about earlier. I don't want to fight with you. And I know I've been off lately. This expansion is...

(sigh of exhaustion.)

I just don't like seeing her like that.

MARK DESMOND

You think I do?

(Beat)

So i guess that means you don't intend on seeing her tonight.

ROLAND

(Shakes his head regrettably)

I don't have time tonight. Something... unexpected came up. Sulieman got grabbed a few nights ago. Hero type. Turned a meeting with Sionis stale.

MARK DESMOND

You think he's from Gotham.

ROLAND

Hard to tell.

Mark turns his head back toward his mother's room.

Her breathing is heavy.

Roland sits beside his brother, rests his arm on the back of the bench.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

You remember that summer Ma broke her leg? We were staying at her deadbeat boyfriend's place.

MARK DESMOND

Jacob Quincey. You were what? Six?

ROLAND

That asshole wouldn't even make us breakfast. So here you are, dragging a chair over to the stove. Burned the eggs.

MARK DESMOND

(Beginning to chuckle)

Damn near burned the kitchen down.
Quincey was pissed.

ROLAND

By far the worst breakfast I ever had.

The two laugh together.

MARK DESMOND

You and ma ate it like it was gourmet.

ROLAND

We were starving, ya jerk! And because
it came from you.

(Beat)

We didn't have mush then, but we
stepped up for one another. Didn't
ask. Didn't wait. Just did what needed
doing. We did it for ourselves. We did
it for Ma.

Roland lets that sit with mark for a moment.

MARK DESMOND

So what now?

Roland stands and begins to put his coat back on.

ROLAND

Business as usual. We just need to
play things closer to our chest. Maybe
postpone our expansion. Watch who's in
our circle. Can't let someone else get
grabbed and start talking. At least
until this guy is deep in the bay.

Mark gives a single nob.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

The name *Tony Zucco*, ring any bells to
you?

MARK DESMOND

No.

ROLAND

The vigilante interrogated Sulieman about him. We've got Redhorn on it, but there's no telling who this guy is and what role he's playing.

There's a uncertain silence that falls as Roland makes his way to the exit.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I love ya, brother.

MARK DESMOND

Love you too...

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVE. (ALLEY)- NIGHT

Back in the alleyway..

The GREEN CAR and MOVING TRUCK sit where they were left.

Under the truck, Nightwing clings to the undercarriage.

Sulieman and Soames step out of the building, now with an entourage.

Engines turn over.

The GREEN CAR pulls out first. The MOVING TRUCK follows close behind.

The city streaks past Nightwing in neon-lit upside down blurs.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - MINUTES LATER

The vehicles turn into a fenced, decaying lot. Broken streetlamps flicker.

They stop at a warehouse. HEAVY STEEL DOORS.

Beat.

The doors slid open. And the Truck rolls inside.

INT. WAREHOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Dark.

From beneath the truck, Nightwing watches boots hit concrete-
two goons step out.

They head back toward the door, Nightwing drops and rolls
clear, vanishing behind crates.

The goons talk low. Most pile into THE GREEN CAR and pull
away.

One remains.

In the dark, a DUSTY LAB COAT catches light.

MARK DESMOND.

The heavy doors slide shut.

Footsteps are slow. Deliberate.

Nightwing watches as Mark disappears into a GLASSED-IN OFFICE
tucked against the far wall.

Nightwing shifts, careful not to be seen.

The warehouse opens up around him-vast, skeletal. Moonlight
slips through the broken roof, stripping rows to tables
below. Equipment sits sealed and silent. Tanks hum faintly.
Pipes drip.

Mark reappears into the office window, a desk lamp flicking
on.

Nightwing studies the space.

One table stands apart: **A half-written formula. Chemical symbols. Dosage estimates. Bloodwork notes.**

He commits as much as he can to memory.

His gaze lifts to the OFFICE again— Mark's silhouette framed behind cracked glass.

Still.

Working.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

Mark sits hunched at his desk as Nightwing slips through the door.

Mark stares through a scope.

MARK DESMOND

I was told you might turn up.

He doesn't look up. His tone is unreadable.

MARK DESMOND (CONT'D)

If you're here to wreck the place...
go for the cooling tanks first. Less
chance of a fire starting.

NIGHTWING

I'm not here to make a mess.

He continues his scans. Glancing at scattered documents. In bold letters he reads **"BLOCKBUSTER"**.

NIGHTWING CONT'D

Not yet.

(Beat)

You must be a mad scientist?

MARK DESMOND

I was a scientist of promise. Now I
fear as though I'm nothing more than a
tool.

NIGHTWING

(To himself)

A tool. Who's doing the building?

(To Mark)

You work here alone?

MARK DESMOND

I have my associates.

NIGHTWING

Well, the city seems quiet enough, I guess it would start attracting the more ambitious types. You trust everyone who walks through those doors?

MARK DESMOND

Half the city here is desperate, The other half disposable. You'd be surprised where loyalties lie after they've crawled through the mud- just looking for a hand up.

NIGHTWING

I wonder if those loyalties are returned...

Mark slams his hands against his station, as he spins his chair around to face his intruder.

MARK DESMOND

Why the interest in my colleagues? You have me here, the evidence scattered about.

Nightwing clocks his NAME TAG.

MARK DESMOND (CONT'D)

You're not here for me. Are you? No. You're not interested in all of this. You're after **Tony Zucco**, right?

Nightwing's eyes narrow. His fists clench.

MARK DESMOND (CONT'D)

(Sighs as he turns his back to his work)

I'd point you to his direction if I could. But unfortunately not even

those aforementioned associates are knowing of your mystery man.

Nightwing's grip loosens. He's telling the truth.

There's a beat between them.

Nightwing picks up a vile of untested chemicals.

NIGHTWING

Your compound, it's a performance enhancer?

MARK DESMOND

Blockbuster. It's a cellular amplifier. Strength and stamina are boosted with an acting analgesic. Not our usual M.O. but we had a buyer.

NIGHTWING

Roman Sionis?

Mark gives a slight nod as he continues his work.

NIGHTWING (CONT'D)

What would *Black Mask* want with such a thing?

MARK DESMOND

The rumor is it's not even his deal. But it doesn't matter to us so long as the deal gets done.

NIGHTWING

He said you missed a deadline.

MARK DESMOND

In our initial presentation it proved well. But upon further trials we found the formula to be unstable. We began with a subject's DNA as a template, as the compound is designed to bind at a cellular level. See- when used on a separate subject the enhancement it...

Dick looks on the wall to see photos and x-rays of DEFORMED BODIES.

MARK DESMOND (CONT'D)

...over shoots.

NIGHTWING
The original subject?

MARK DESMOND
Deemed a loose end by circumstance.

Nightwing shoves some papers to the side to reveal a map of **GOTHAM**.

Highlighted routs and stickers to mark territory.

His eyes narrow again.

NIGHTWING
And in return Roman is giving you real estate in Gotham.
(His tone turns sharper)
How long until you've steaked your claim?

MARK DESMOND
(Over his shoulder)
You think I asked for this?

NIGHTWING
I think you've made piece with it.

MARK DESMOND
Peace doesn't always come in the form of a *choice*.

Mark's brow sweats. His hands shake, fidgeting with tools on his desk.

MARK DESMOND (CONT'D)
When the road beneath you has already been paved, all that's left to do is to walk it. Sometimes the hand that helps you out of the mud...

Mark turns back to Nightwing revealing a syringe, as he injects it into his arm.

MARK DESMOND (CONT'D)
...never really lets go.

NIGHTWING
No. Don't-

INT. WAREHOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Silence. Just the hum of machinery.

A shadow crosses the office lights-

CRASH

Nightwing sails through the glass, slamming into a worktable.

There goes a rib.

Nightwing rolls, gasping.

His eyes snap up.

He drags himself upright against the overturned table—one hand clamped to his ribs.

He staggers forward.

Each step a negotiation between pain and purpose.

Mark lies near the back wall.

Pale. Half-lidded.

Nightwing takes another step-

Mark's left arm **twisted**. **Shedded skin** exposes **tendons**. **Muscle ripped** open, bursting from within. **Blood** pooling *rapidly*.

No sign of life left in his body.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - MORNING (HOURS LATER)

The warehouse stands quiet.

Crime tape flutters in the wind. The GREEN CAR sits beside a PATROL CAR.

Elise leans against the GREEN CAR, cigarette lit. Watching. Apart from the others.

CHIEF REDHORN (60) stands with Soames, and Sulieman.

Soames holds a folded newspaper. He reads aloud with dry sarcasm.

SOAMES

"...witnesses say the figure dropped from a rooftop moments before a deal went sideways in Burnley. A blue shadow bathed in moonlight. Gotham crime lord Roman Sionis was seen fleeing the scene. His whereabouts are presently unknown. Three men were hospitalized, one was reported to have been delivered to County. Though Chief Redhorn refuses to divulge in whether or not the suspect was charged, or if he'd seen the vigilante himself."

(beat, glancing up)

They're calling this guy *Nightwing*.

SULIEMAN

The hell is a *Nightwing*?

REDHORN

Doesn't matter. Let the press name him what they want. Keeps them entertained. If anything it gives them a bedtime story to help sleep through the gunshots.

(Beat)

How's the big guy?

SULIEMAN

As good as he can be, all things considered.

SOAMES

That bad, huh?

(He lets out a half sigh, half groan)

Whelp. guess that's the expansion down the drain. Nobody to make the drugs, no more drugs, no more deal. You see what's left of Mark's arm? No way they're having an open casket.

SULIEMAN

Jesus, Soames.

SOAMES

Never thought Mark would've joined his lab rats in getting torn in half.

SULIEMAN

Do you ever shut up?

REDHORN

Can it, Soames. Give him the damn file.

Soames grabs a folder sitting behind him and passes it to Sulieman.

"ZUCCO, TONY" labeled across the folder.

SULIEMAN

You found him?

SOAMES

Pulled some favors over at Gotham's MCU.

Sulieman begins flipping through.

REDHORN

The guy doesn't even go by *Zucco* anymore. Took a plea- whiteness protection. Goddamn rat.

SOAMES

New Name. New city. New life. But the past doesn't forget that easy.

SULIEMAN

No it doesn't.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Dick lays halfway into bed among sweat soaked sheets.

Beside him, a laptop sits—tabs stacked. "MARK DESMOND" plastered across article titles.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

He stirs awake.

Sharp breaths as he tries to roll upright. His ribs now wrapped.

KNOCK KNOCK

DICK
(To himself)
Damn it.
(To the door)
I'm coming.

He glances at the laptop. The name on-screen lingers before shutting it abruptly.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

He grabs a nearby shirt.

He shuffles barefoot through the room.

Swings the door wide open—

DICK
What?

His tone immediately turnspale

SHAWN, her hands in he denim jacket pockets. Bright-eyed.
Casual.

SHAWN
I figured you'd still be asleep.

DICK
Why?

SHAWN
Because you're late.

DICK
Late?

SHAWN
I said four o'clock. Remember? Or did
you stand me up on purpose?

DICK
It's um-

He rubs his eye trying to think.

SHAWN
Almost Five.

Dick takes a beat.

DICK
How did you know which apartment was
mine?

SHAWN
Bridget told me. She said to knock on
the door that smells like guilt.

DICK
(Laughing to himself)
Right.

SHAWN
Come on. Take a shower, get ready.
I'll be downstairs. We'll grab coffee
on the way.

She turns down the hallway.

Dick watches her, weighing the pain he's in and her warmth.

DICK
On the way to where?

SHAWN
(over her shoulder)
It's a surprise.

EXT. RIVERFRONT WALKWAY - EARLY EVENING

Footsteps on damp stone.

The river churns beneath rusted bridges. The sky fades in lavender.

Dick and Shawn walk side by side. Coffee in hand.

On one side—old brick factories. Faded signs.

Across the water—**Gotham City**.

SHAWN
I used to think cities had personalities.

DICK
"Used to", meaning past tense?

SHAWN
Well you move around enough, you realize it's just the people you meet.

DICK
I wouldn't be so sure. Places keep their scars. I mean look around. The river's doing the same thing it's always done. The factories showed up later. You can tell what mattered back then by what they built closest to the water.

SHAWN
You mean by the things they left out to rot?

DICK

Exactly. See, people think cities change—that they adapt. But the habits stay the same. Everything they left to rot lost its value.

SHAWN

Maybe you're right. When you put it that way, Bludhaven feels like a scruffy-looking guy with an inferiority complex.

She flashes him a smile.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

I like this time of day. Life seems to move slower.

They walk.

Dick watches the water.

Shawn waits a beat.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

How's the coffee?

DICK

Hm? Oh, it's good.

SHAWN

Mine is terrible.

DICK

Yeah, gotta be honest. I've never been much into coffee.

SHAWN

What?

DICK

I can't do it.

SHAWN

So you pretend to be a coffee person, and for what? I waste money, and you get brownie points?

DICK

You wanted coffee, I didn't say no.

SHAWN
You lied to me.

DICK
Would you have gotten coffee if I told
you sooner?

SHAWN
Probably not...
(beat)
I guess it is kinda sweet of you to
pretend. Just remind me not to get a
cardamom again.

DICK
Noted.

The pair stop at a railing. For a moment they look over the
edge. Dick's eyes are far off toward Gotham.

Shawn feels it.

SHAWN
You okay?

There's a beat where he lets the atmosphere speak for him.

DICK
Yeah. It's just... Gotham doesn't seem
so bad from over here.

SHAWN
You're from Gotham?

DICK
Not originally. My folks were circus
acrobats.

SHAWN
Bullshit. You're kidding.

DICK
(shaking his head)
"The Flying Graysons: Greatest in the
world". We'd travel through Gotham
every year.

SHAWN

That's insane. Did you ever do it with them?

DICK

(Nodding and smiling)
Tights and all.

SHAWN

No way.

DICK

We specialized in trapeze. My mom used to say "*the trick isn't making them clap, it's making them care.*" Different cities had different shows. The bigger the crowd, more dangerous the stunts.

(His tone gets softer)

Gotham always drew the biggest crowds.

SHAWN

Maybe I can see them someday. Are they still performing?

Beat.

His eyes stay on Gotham.

DICK

No. They're... gone.

SHAWN

Oh... Dick, I'm so sorry. I didn't realize-

DICK

No, it's okay. I don't get much chance to talk about them, so... *Thank you.*

She grabs his bandaged hand.

The river fills the space.

DICK (CONT'D)

Sometimes it feels like that's the only thing that's real. Everything else either fades or goes away entirely. We're left building museums

in our heads to walk the halls and rearrange the exhibits just to figure out what went wrong.

SHAWN

I think some would prefer to just burn the museum down. Start over.

Dick looks at her, waiting for something to surface.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Okay, too grim. I'm pulling us out before we spiral. You know Mr. Law, in your building?

DICK

Yeah.

SHAWN

He showed Bridget and I photos of a tv show he worked on back in the 60's. He said it was called *The Tarantula*. We went down the rabbit hole and found a clip online. It's so bad. He fought with a lasso made of fishing wire.

She starts laughing hysterically.

Dick watches amused, trying not to laugh too hard from the needle to his ribs.

DICK

Wait he was the Tarantula?

She nods unable to bring herself to words.

DICK (CONT'D)

Honestly that's a little impressive.

SHAWN

The villain was a guy with dwarfism carrying a flamethrower.

DICK

Wow.

SHAWN

Mr. Law said they paid him seventy bucks a week and all the tuna

sandwiches he could stomach. He called it the "good years".

They laugh together.

Dick tries to keep it light-fails.

Shawn doesn't notice.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
He's a national treasure.

DICK
He's defiantly something.

SHAWN
Oh, just wait until I tell you about all the costars he slept with.

DICK
I'm not sure I'm brave enough for that one.

SHAWN
Fair. It's a lot.
(Beat)
You hungry?

DICK
I could eat.

SHAWN
What're you thinking?

DICK
(Ponders momentarily)
Rico's?

INT. RICO'S DINER- NIGHT

A small, late-night diner. Warm light. Old booths.

RICO (50), apron dusted with flour, stands over their booth. He passionately delivers a monologue.

RICO

- and what'd I say? Don't trust a man who can't name his favorite soup. It's basic human decency. If he can't commit to a minestrone, what's he gonna do when it really counts, huh?

Dick is fighting to keep a straight face.

Shawn hides her smirk behind a napkin.

RICO CONT'D

You laugh, but this city's gone soft on standards. Soup's just the beginning. Anyway. How's your meal? Food's good right?

SHAWN

It's perfect, Rico.

DICK

Really good.

RICO

Very nice. You kids hang around as long as ya like. Better tip ya waitress good too, she's got knives in her purse. Ahaha!

He slaps the table grinning. Then walks off.

SHAWN

Thank you, Rico!

DICK

When you said sermon, I thought you meant like a-

SHAWN

Last time it was some parable about lentil stew and the wrath of god.

(She begins laughing)

I though he was trying to convert me.

DICK

Clearly he wasn't.

SHAWN

No. I guess he really just thinks Esau got a raw deal.

DICK

That's a bold culinary take.

SHAWN

You should've seen him. He was parading around calling it the greatest betrayal in food history.

Dick turns in his booth looking over his shoulder. Watching Rico ramble to another table.

DICK

That's nuts.

SHAWN

Okay, time for the nitty gritty.

Dick turns back in his seat.

SHAWN CONT'D

How many hearts have you shattered, Grayson?

DICK

(rolling his eyes)

Oh, we're doing this now.

SHAWN

Come on. Every girl's gotta know what kind of trouble they're getting into.

DICK

That's easy. It's less of a trail and more of a series of... controlled demolitions.

He takes a sip from his drink. It's dry.

SHAWN

That's not ominous at all.

DICK

Not much else to say.

SHAWN

That's fair. But you can't drop
"controlled demolitions" and expect
the subject to change.

DICK

Okay. Well, I've gotten good at being
on my own.

SHAWN

Really? Sorry in advance- I ruin
solitude.

DICK

I've noticed.

He takes another sip.

SHAWN

I mean, you've been in love before,
haven't you?

Dick's drink goes down the wrong pipe.

DICK

You're not letting this go, are you?

SHAWN

Curiosity isn't a crime.

DICK

That depends on who you ask.
(Sighs, almost groans)
Let's just say it's complicated. I've
got scars to prove it.

SHAWN

(Playfully)
So... Not a first timer, but maybe a
little rusty?

It takes a beat for her insinuation to settle in.

DICK

No.

SHAWN

(Clearly ruffling his feathers)
No, what?

DICK
No, I'm not rusty.

SHAWN
Right. Right. Maybe just... out of
practice.

DICK
I don't need practice.

SHAWN
Everyone needs practice.

DICK
I DON'T NEED-
(He catches his composure)
You're trying to rile me up.

SHAWN
No. No. Just taking notes.

DICK
I'm sure you're getting plenty.

SHAWN
You have no idea.

Dick goes quiet.

Shawn watches, amused with herself.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Okay.

She slides out of the booth, moves around.

DICK
Where are you-
Sits beside him. Too close.
She studies his face.

SHAWN
Do it.

DICK
Do what?

SHAWN
Kiss me.

DICK
No.

SHAWN
(Backing off)
Wow. Tragic. Big words and no follow
through.

She reaches across the table for her drink.

DICK
I said no.

SHAWN
Mhm. I heard you.

Dick sits, pondering what she could be trying to prove.

DICK
You're exhausting.

SHAWN
You know what i think?

DICK
I'm sure you're about to tell me.

SHAWN
I think you're scared.

DICK
Scared?

SHAWN
Mhm.

DICK
Scared of what?

SHAWN
That you'll be embarrassed.

DICK
I won't be.

SHAWN
Okay

DICK

Okay?

SHAWN

Fine.

She sips from her drink, breaking her gaze.

Dick shakes his head in disbelief.

He exhales—slow. Almost a smile.

DICK

(changing his tone)

Fine.

SHAWN

(Turning back towards him)

Hm?

DICK

Fine.

SHAWN

Fine, what?

DICK

(Laughing to himself)

You're impossible.

SHAWN

And you're stalling.

Dick gives in.

He slips his arm around her, pulling her in.

They meet halfway.

A brief *kiss*.

Nothing dramatic.

Just enough.

SHAWN

Hm. Mhm.

She glances up. Tasting her lips. Weighting her next words.

DICK

What?

SHAWN

Nothing.

DICK

No, what is it?

SHAWN

It's just... I can tell it's been a while.

DICK

(embarrassed)

Okay.

(To the counter)

Check please.

SHAWN

(Teasing)

Dick, I'm just teasing.

DICK

Yeah, that's enough for one night.

EXT. PARKTHORNE AVENUE- NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

Dick and Shawn walk side by side.

The edge from dinner has faded. What's left is easy. Quiet.

Neither is in a hurry.

Shawn looks up at him, smiling.

DICK

What?

SHAWN

Do you always get that flustered?

Dick sighs once again and hangs his head.

She bumps his shoulder-light, playful.

He can't help but smile.

DICK
(Smirking)
You're not what I expected.

SHAWN
Is that good or bad?

DICK
Still trying to figure that out.

They arrive to the center, Shawn stops, facing Dick on the steps.

SHAWN
Well, thanks for tonight. Even if I
had to drag you out of your cave.

DICK
Glad you did.

She starts up the steps slowly before tuning over her shoulder.

SHAWN
Should I invite you in or is this
where you make an excuse to bolt?

DICK
Not bolting. Just don't want to rush
anything.

SHAWN
Traditional. You're not what I
expected either.

She continues her way up before turning once more.

SHAWN CONT'D
Oh. We're throwing a party for Thomas.
It's a milestone thing. Bridget is
gonna be there, and if you wouldn't
mind i could use a hand with the
decorations.

He nods with a smile.

She glows.

Shawn disappears behind the doors, Dick is left smiling to himself. Finally a little lighter.

INT. ST. ANTHONY'S - NIGHT

The room is still.

Roland stands at his window. Head bowed. Forearms braced against the sill.

Behind him, Joyce sits in bed, crocheting.

The soft hums of medical monitors fill the silence.

Beat.

JOYCE DESMOND

Do you remember that old yellow house
on Ingram street?

Roland doesn't answer.

JOYCE DESMOND CONT'D

Your room faced the backyard. You had
a little desk under the window... What
was it you used to draw? All those
robots and monsters. God, you were
always scribbling. I'd find pen marks
on the bedsheets.

ROLAND

That wasn't my room.

JOYCE DESMOND

Hmm?

ROLAND

Mine was in the front. Next to the
dryer. The sound used to help me
sleep.

Joyce goes quiet, confused. She blinks, trying to replay the memory.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

It was Mark's... the one you remember.

JOYCE DESMOND

Oh... right. That's right. Say, where is Mark? He's usually here at this time. Hope nothing's holding him up.

ROLAND

It's always Mark you remember. Never me.

A silence returns to the air. It's suffocating now.

Roland turns toward his mother.

ROLAND CONT'D

You probably think he's the one who put you up in this place, right?

She stares blankly.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

You always thought Mark did it, even when he didn't. Of course you did. Mark, who could do no wrong. Mark, your "sweet boy", right? The one who'd make a name for himself and get us out of the never ending rut you put us in.

JOYCE DESMOND

I don't know what this is-

ROLAND

No. You don't know. You never knew. If only you did. The things we've done so you can be safe. You're safe. You're cared for. You can make your scarves and play in your garden. No one is going to put you on the streets ever again. All it cost was my brother.

JOYCE DESMOND

Mark?

Roland now loses a tear down his cheek.

ROLAND

(Shaking his head)

Gone.

JOYCE DESMOND
No... He'll be along soon I'm sure.

ROLAND
Your son is dead.

JOYCE DESMOND
No. No, the boys are okay. They're in
bed.

Joyce blinks slow. Certain.

Roland turns away again before he breaks further.

The monitors hum.

Beat.

JOYCE DESMOND (CONT'D)
Mark? When did you get in?

Roland stiffens.

He doesn't turn.

ROLAND
It's Roland.

JOYCE DESMOND
Oh. Roland. Yes. Mark will be here
soon. It's been getting dark so early
these days. You boys shouldn't keep
going out when it does. The city isn't
so safe anymore.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - (THE NEXT MORNIG)

Dick wakes.

Quiet. No alarm. No knock.

He checks the clock.

9:17am

He eases out of bed, careful.

At his desk- scattered files. One name surfaces again:

"TONY ZUCCO"

And the *MUGSHOT*.

He looks out the window to the center.

His look lingers as bodies pass in and out the front doors.

He closes the file.

INT. 'HAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER - MINUTES LATER

Dick steps inside.

Laughter echoes off cinderblock walls. Kids weave between folding tables, paper crowns slipping over their eyes. Crayons scrape as superheroes take shape.

At the far end, volunteers move behind a serving counter. Stew and fresh bread hang in the air.

Coats draped, faces worn. Quiet conversations.

A boy darts past.

DICK
Careful, speedster.

The boy grins, then disappears into the noise.

Dick takes it in.

Warm.

Alive.

Safe.

He turns down the hall. The noise falls away.

A door stands ajar, voices spill out.

MAN O.S.

... got out, thought I'd changed. But I
was still me. Still unsure. Still
angry. Every little thing set me off.

Inside, a small circle sit in folding chairs. SHAWN among
them. Listening. Present.

SHAWN

That's what we try to make ourselves
believe - That change is instant. It's
not. It's a fight, and some days you
lose. But losing doesn't make you a
lost cause.

She looks around the circle. Making sure that lands.

Her eyes find Dick in the doorway.

SHAWN CONT'D

Whatever happened- whatever we've
done- we have to believe it's not the
sum of us. We each are more than the
worst thing we've been. You've already
taken the first step- you came here.
And the rest we'll face together.

Sick stays, watching.

INT. 'HAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER - MINUTES LATER

Dick sits lost in thought.

The focus group files out- quiet, lighter. They thank Shawn
on the way out.

Dick stands.

Their eyes meet.

The hall empties.

But Shawn lets a smile through.

SHAWN

You actually came. And on time. You feeling okay?

DICK

You know, I was asking myself the same thing on the way here.

Beat.

SHAWN

You listened to all of that?

DICK

Um, yeah. Some of it. I didn't want to interrupt. You guys get deep into it. Seems intense.

They turn and begin walking toward the main hall.

SHAWN

Yeah, they've all been through hell. The world is quick to slam doors on you when you screw up. I'm just trying my best to keep one open.

DICK

So Thomas... He was a part of your group?

SHAWN

Thomas spent 17 years in prison. Got out and paid for his mistakes on the street for six years after that. If he didn't seek help when he did he probably would've fallen right back into the cycle. Sometimes they reach the point where they no longer need us. Call it a graduation. Of course they're welcome back anytime they need a hand, but he did the work. He's got

a nice job. And apartment. For the first time since... Thomas has a life. That's cause for celebration.

DICK

Fair enough. What other programs are you running here?

SHAWN

Well I also teach an art class with the kids. Aside from that we have other volunteer lead programs and a few lead by some of the children. There's a kid named Chester, Damn good at chess.

DICK

Really?

SHAWN

I swear. The school cut funds for the chess club. He came here and wagered against me for the center to start a new one.

DICK

And you lost?

SHAWN

If it was checkers, he would've been done for.

DICK

I'm sure.

The front door bursts open. Bridget stands there buried behind the boxes she carries.

BRIDGET

Hey! How about a little help here before I Thomas's entire party on the floor?

Dick steps forward to take a few from Bridget.

SHAWN

Bridget, what's all this?

BRIDGET

Ya know. Plates, decorations, cake,
probably some mystery Tupperware I'm
afraid to open.

The trio get to work.

Bridget hands off boxes.

Shawn strings a banner- crooked.

Dick sets up chairs.

They decorate.

CUT TO

INT. 'HAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER - LATER

The community room is transformed.

Streamers hang, tables are topped with pizza, soda, and cake.

Kids laugh.

THOMAS (50) wears a sash. He beams.

Dick plays a boardgame with the kids.

Across the room, Shawn watches him. His guard is down.

A shadow crosses her-

MAN

Well, if it isn't Shawn Tsang.

She turns, startled.

SHAWN

Billy?!

She hugs him, laughing.

We don't see his face, only his back.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

I can't believe you made it!

Talking over each other, he passes Shawn a foil-wrapped pan.

Across the room, Dick straightens from his game.

His eyes search of Shawn. He finds her-
with a man...

His smile fades quickly.

Dick watches a beat too long.

Dick freezes.

Sound drops out.

He knows that build.

Dick moves.

Step by step-

Pieces click.

The recognition hits as Billy's face is revealed. The MUGSHOT
flashes in Dick's mind.

It's **HIM**.

Everything narrows.

Breath held.

Jaw locked.

Billy speaks, but the words are lost.

Shawn nudges Dick.

SHAWN

Dick, this is *Billy Maron*.

BILLY MARON (45). His hand extends, polite.

Dick looks to his hand.

Then to the face.

Back to the hand.

He takes it.

DICK

Hi.

SHAWN

Billy here was one of the first to graduate our program.

BILLY MARON

What was it, about a year now?

SHAWN

A lot has changed.

BILLY MARON

Yeah, Shawn makes magic happen. My family and I owe her a lot. this place even- wouldn't be what it is without her.

SHAWN

You owe yourself. You did the work.

BILLY MARON

Maybe. But I surely wouldn't be where I am now without your help.

Dick forces a half smile, his eyes never leaving Billy's face.

DICK
And where would that be?

BILLY
Auto shop down on Jefferson.

SHAWN
The owner keeps trying to make him
manager.

BILLY MARON
I like to keep my hands busy, don't
want to be cooped up in the office.

Shawn's attention is called by Bridget waving her hand behind
the serving table.

SHAWN
Oh, duty calls. Billy, don't
disappear.

BILLY MARON
You know, I've actually gotta head
out. I took a lunch to deliver the
cobbler.

SHAWN
Awe man. Well stop by again soon.

Shawn hugs her old friend once again.

BILLY MARON
I will.
(To Dick)
It was good to meet you, Dick.

Dick forces a half-smile and a nod.

Billy melds into the crowd.

Shawn squeezes Dick's arm as she passes.

Dick looks down at the spot.

Then back up,

The door closes behind Billy.

Across the room-

Bridget cuts the cake.

Shawn prepares the cobbler.

Shawn glances back to Dick.

He hasn't moved. His eyes locked on the door.

Shawn's smile fades. Something is wrong.

Dick hesitates-

then moves.

Out the door.

Shawn watches him go, holding it together.

A polite smile for the next guest.

But her eyes drift back-

to the empty doorway.

EXT. JEFFERSON ST. - NIGHT

Rain slicks the street.

Thunder rolls.

Neon bleeds across puddles.

Gasoline hangs in the air.

A flickering sign: **"BRAKE BROTHERS AUTO REPAIR"**

Pedestrians rush past- umbrellas up.

BILLY MARON pulls a metal gate down.

Two employees joke behind him.

Above-

NIGHTWING crouches on a rooftop edge. Still.

The men split up. Billy steps off the curb.

Nightwing's grip on the ledge tightens. His eyes lock on target.

He moves.

Billy weaves through foot traffic.

Too many bodies.

Nightwing follows across rooftops. Vault. Leap. Flowing- no missed step.

His shadow skims rooflines.

His silhouette clears gaps in front of neon signs.

The street narrows.

Pacing Billy- Nightwing slows.

Billy pulls his keys, and slips under an awning.

Nightwing slips to the roof' edge.

Across the street- third floor. Yellow light. Billy steps inside.

A woman, NANCY (40), meets him. She pulls him into a hug.

Nightwing's jaw sets.

Billy says something-half smile.

He hangs his coat by the door.

Nightwing shifts, rising.

He balances across a power line.

Then-

A leap.

He catches a fire escape, climbing to the third floor.

Moves laterally- window to window.

Billy's apartment:

Lights are off in the next room.

Old lock-clicks- the window slides open.

Nightwing slips inside-

INT. BILLY MARON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Nightwing lands. Silent.

Warped floorboards. No sound.

Ahead- A door cracked open.

Warm light spills through.

He stops short of the gap.

The hallway stretches beyond.

Through the opening- Billy. Just the back of his head.

Voices drift. Low. Domestic.

Nightwing doesn't move. One hallway between the two of them.

He exhales.

His foot steps through, into the hall.

A creak.

Behind him.

He melts back into the dark.

Another door opens.

A young boy, BRIAN (8), shuffles past. Down the hall- into his father's arms.

BRIAN

Dad...

Billy drops to a knee, scooping him up with ease.

BILLY MARON

Hey, buddy. Bad dream?

Brian nods, his face pressed into Billy's shoulder.

From the crack- Nightwing's breath stutters.

Loud. Tight.

He turns away- Images in his head collide out of order.

Chest tight. Vision narrowing.

The dark presses into him.

This man- **Him**- Just a father.

A family.

That doesn't fit.

Hands shake, clenched in fists

He squeezes his eyes shut.

His body folds inward, sinking to the floor.

What he came for is right there-

And he can't move.

CUT TO

INT. BILLY MARON'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

He sits with his face buried in his arms, toppled by doubt.
The heat of the moment passed.

Down the hall in Brian's bedroom, Nightwing hears Billy- soft
and patient.

BRIAN

Dad, can you tell me the story about
the fox?

BILLY MARON

You really like that one, huh?

BRIAN

It's my favorite.

BILLY MARON

Alright... There once was a little fox.
He lived in a den deep in the forest
Along with his mom and his dad. Their
den was nice, and every night they'd
curl up together to keep warm.

Brian snuggles closer to his father.

BILLY MARON

But one day the fox's parents had to
go out and didn't come back. The
little fox waited... and waited... until
he realized they were gone for good.

BRIAN

That's sad.

BILLY MARON

Yeah... it was. The little fox didn't
know what to do. He felt... small.
Alone. But one morning, an old badger
came by. Gave him food. And showed him
where to find water. And little by
little the fox learned how to take
care of himself.

BRIAN

And he never forgot his mom and dad,
did he?

BILLY MARON

No. He remembered them every day. But
he also learned something important...
When you lose someone, you don't stop
loving them. You just... carry them with
you.

Billy stands, tucking his son into bed.

BILLY MARON (CONT'D)

And that's how the fox grew strong
enough to have a family of his own
someday.

BRIAN

Just like you.

BILLY MARON

Yeah. Like me.

Billy kisses Brian's forehead. Turns off the lamp.

Down the hall, Nightwing remains still. His breath shallow.

He rises. Moves to the window. Hand in frame. Then-

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

The sound is heavy.

Nightwing freezes.

In the main room-

BILLY MARON

One second!

Billy crosses the apartment.

Opens the door-

BILLY MARON (CONT'D)

Evening, officer-

SOAMES pushes past, THREE ARMED OFFICERS follow.

The door shuts. Locks.

OFFICER 1 slams Billy to the floor. Hands pinned. Knee on his back.

BILLY MARON CONT'D

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? This is my home-

SOAMES

Drop the act, Zucco.

Billy freezes.

OFFICER 2 drags NANCY from the kitchen.

NANCY

Billy- what's Happening?

BILLY MARON

Nancy- it's okay. It's-

SOAMES

Sit her down, keep her quiet.

OFFICER 2 kicks her knee. She hits the floor.

BILLY MARON

Don't touch my wife!

A fist cracks into the back of Billy's head. His face smashes down.

Soames crouches into view- smiling.

SOAMES

Tony Zucco... Gotham boy. Ran errands for the Maroni family, right? Seems you've been a popular guy, my friend.

Billy's eyes rise to Soames.

SOAMES CONT'D

Couple bad jobs and you disappear, right? Conveniently the Maroni's couldn't pursue their runaway due to getting bagged and tagged by Gotham's finest. Lucky bastard. Or... maybe a dirty rat?

BILLY MARON

Please. Not Here... I'm just trying to-

SOAMES

Run away? See, that's the problem. Somebody out there tracked you across the river... To the 'Haven. Word is you've attracted the attention of that Nightwing freak. He's been sniffing around for your name.

BILLY MARON

The vigilante from the papers? I don't know what-

SOAMES

Weather you know or not, the last thing *my* boss needs is a Gotham grudge making it's way here.

The bedroom door down the hall CREEKS open down the hall.

OFFICER 3 turns- Sees Brian pulling the door shut.

OFFICER 3 moves in, pushing through the room.

His flashlight sweeps the room.

OFFICER 3 crouches

Scans under the bed-

BRIAN, wide-eyed, shaking.

OFFICER 3

Gotcha, kid.

A SHADOW moves behind him.

A gloved hand snaps his wrist- The gun wrenched away.

OFFICER 3 is pulled back, locked into a choke.

Then back in the main room- Soames freezes mid sentence. OFFICER 1 and OFFICER 2 exchange looks.

SOAMES
What the hell...

GUNS up. They move down the hall. Soames shoves the others ahead.

Entering the bedroom- A corner of shadow. Empty. Curtains billow in the wind.

OFFICER 2 sweeps the room.

SOAMES and OFFICER 1 hold the hall.

From the DARK ROOM- The door busts open.

NIGHTWING explodes from the shadows.

A boot to SOAMES- He's sent crashing into the main room.

NIGHTWING rolls trough OFFICER 1. Down.

OFFICER 2 pivots- gun up from Brian's doorway.

NIGHTWING whips a WINGDING through, striking the weapon.
OFFICER 2's shot never comes.

SOAMES from the main room fires a shot.

NIGHTWING jerks- Hit behind the shulder.

Another shot- Misses.

NIGHTWING spins- An escrima streaks toward SOAMES. **CRACK**

OFFICER 1 kicks NIGHTWING back into the wall.

NIGHTWING manages. Pins OFFICER 1 back down before-

WHAM

OFFICER 2 blindsides him. Elbow. Shoulder.

NIGHTWING stumbles- then hurls him into-

The BATHROOM

OFFICER 1 surges back- Shoves NIGHTWING in after him.

Too tight. Too close.

NIGHTWING hits the sink- **CRACK**

Tile splits.

Porcelain breaks.

Glass shatters.

OFFICER 2 flashes a KNIFE.

NIGHTWING twists- the blade skims his side.

A knee drives into NIGHTWING- His ribs. He doesn't scream.

NIGHTWING snags the knee- they spill into the tub.

The curtain tears- the plastic wraps all three.

SOAMES crashes back in- Gun up.

NIGHTWING ducks- The tile behind him EXPLODES.

Too tight.

Bodies crash in.

Steel flashes.

An arm wraps around his throat.

Dark edges creep in.

NIGHTWING snaps his head back- **CRUNCH** The grip breaks.

The knife comes again-

He takes it. Forearm first.

The blade punches through- weight driving it deeper.

SOAMES steadies his aim.

NIGHTWING shifts- Agonizing.

OFFICER 2 between them.

No shot. Just the trembling pressure on the trigger.

NIGHTWING rocks- Taunting the shot.

Closer.

Closer.

NIGHTWING braces off OFFICER 2- Runs the wall-

DOUBLE KICK-

SOAMES is launched from the room.

NIGHTWING drops with the momentum- OFFICER 2 over him.

UP KICK

OFFICER 2 slams into the ceiling light- glass and sparks.

NIGHTWING rises.

In the hall-

SOAMES stares.

NIGHTWING rips the knife free.

Blood. No reaction.

He steps forward.

SOAMES scrambles back-

SOAMES
Who the hell are you-

BILLY crashes in- SOAMES goes down.

Everything settles.

A small recognition between NIGHTWING and BILLY

Billy turns into Brian's room.

Nightwing stays where he is.

NANCY
(to Nightwing)
I'm not sure why you're here, but
thank you.

Nightwing turns. NANCY holds her bruised eye.

NANCY (CONT'D)
I don't know what would've happened if
you hadn't been here.

NIGHTWING
I didn't-

SIRENS. Close.

NIGHTWING moves to the window. Flashing lights coming fast.

Behind him- Billy returns with Brian.

BILLY MARON

What were they doing here?

NIGHTWING

Doesn't matter right now. There's more coming.

BILLY MARON

They came into my home-

NIGHTWING

And more are on the way. Use the stairs. Get out the back. Stay off the streets. Don't stop until you're outside the city limits.

BILLY MARON

And what about you, then?

NIGHTWING

I'll draw their attention. Make them look the other way.

NANCY

You can barely walk.

Billy studies Nightwing. Beat. He understands enough.

BILLY MARON

Nancy, he's right. We've got to go.

Nancy pulls Brian close.

Billy grabs essentials- Keys. Cash. A photo.

Shoves them into a bag.

Sirens wail louder.

NIGHTWING opens the window- Red and blue light wash in.

Billy ushers Brian and Nancy out the door.

Nightwing steps back from the window.

Unclips the grapple hook from his belt.

A deep breath.

He turns, leaping out the window-

EXT. JEFFERSON ST. - CONTINUOUS

Nightwing spins midair- tosses his hook through the rain.

The line snaps tight just before impact. He swings past the cops emerging from their cruisers. ELISE SVOBODA among them.

Cops duck. Hands to radios.

ELISE watches.

Nightwing catches a fire escape, he clings and waits-

Long enough.

COP 1

Dispatch we've got eyes on the
Vigilante! Moving eastbound On
rooftops along Jefferson.

Nightwing smiles. Like the old days. Even if he's the prey,
he likes a good chase.

Sirens surge again. Squad cars peel off.

Elise stays put.

NIGHTWING looks back once- Then climbs to the roof.

NIGHTWING sprints across rooftop ledges- Leap. Vault.
Recover.

He stays visible. Just enough.

If they lose him, they go back to BILLY.

A ventilation unit- He clears it- rolls -back into a sprint.

Pain flares, He ignores it.

More squad cars flood the street below, forming a river of
flashing lights beneath him. His silhouette dances above it
all.

A jump to a balcony- his foot slips. Railing smack into his
ribs.

He moves atop a gargoyled ledge- clutches the stone- drags in
air.

Below, the city pulses. Block after block.

Then-

WHITE LIGHT

A spotlight drops from above, pinning him in place.

DISPATCH V.O.

All units, eyes on target. Aerial
support engaged.

NIGHTWING squints into the glare. A breath- almost a laugh.

NIGHTWING

That's more like it-

BANG

A bullet cuts through the cone of light-
stone cracks behind him.

Looks to the point of impact.

Then back up-

NIGHTWING

Shit.

Another shot wizzes past-

He drops.

Vanishing beneath the gargoyle. The light lags- then snaps.

Too late.

He lands hard- shoulder first- and rolls.

The light sweeps.

But finds him again.

Gunfire follows.

The helicopter banks wide.

Nightwing cuts behind a water tower-

He's caught on the other side.

Nightwing drops into the alley- The helicopter tilts,
engulfing the alley with light.

Another shot fired-

Nightwing vaults a windowsill-

A second shot-

Glass explodes near his face-

A third-

He jumps- **IMPACT.**

He grabs his thigh- Momentum betrays him.

He slams- scrapes- catches a sagging laundry line-

He swings- unable to brace himself- **CRASH**

He *falls.*

He lands into a mound of loose garbage piled along the alley
wall.

Trash rustles- pain sears through him as he scrambles for
cover.

He drags himself behind a rusty dumpster.

The helicopter roars overhead-
Sirens draw closer.

He pulls himself upright-

A sewer lid lies at his feet.

CUT TO

INT. BLUDHAVEN SEWER SYSTEM - CONTINUOUS

Dark. Wet. Echoing.

A shaft of light spills down-

NIGHTWING drops.

Great.

INT. SHAWN'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

A modest, warm apartment above the community center.

SHAWN moves through the room barefoot, hair loose. A mug of coffee. An old t-shirt. Habitual motions.

She pauses at the window- City lights blinking back.

A flicker of concern crosses her face, then-

Gone.

She turns away, taking her mug to the sink.

She clicks the lamp off.

Down the hall, another switch. The apartment recedes into darkness as she enters her bedroom.

Silence.

Just the room's ambience.

Then-

A faint scrape.

The kitchen window slides open.

Curtains stir.

A SILHOUETTE tumbles through- slips-
CRASHES hard to the floor.

SHAWN peers from her bedroom.

Steps into the hall.

She hugs the wall as the SILHOUETTE regains footing, back turned, closing the window.

Shawn grabs the nearest heavy object.

SHAWN
(Under her breath)
Not tonight.

She swings.

The object smashes into the SILHOUETTE's head

SILHOUETTE
(Groaning)

Ow...

It collapses against the counter.

Shawn lunges to the couch- yanks a blanket- throws it over the SILHOUETTE- she pulls it taught over it's head.

It scrambles for air.

Shawn gives up, shoving it to the floor.

She moves fast.

Her hand finds the sink- a FRYING PAN

She raises it-

CLANG CLANG

SILHOUETTE
OW-! Shawn stop!

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

SILHOUETTE
It's Me!

The silhouette grabs the pan-

She kicks it *LOW*.

The SILHOUETTE folds to the floor.

She snaps a light on.

The SILHOUETTE brushes the blanket off.

SILHOUETTE

(Whimpering)

It's me...

A MASK.

She swings- **Clang!** Uppercut.

He drops.

He rips the MASK from his eyes as a last ditch effort.

DICK

SHAWN, IT'S ME!

Her back swing freezes.

The pan slips, clattering to the floor.

SHAWN

Oh my god. OH MY GOD-

She drops to her knees beside him, voice breaking, both horrified and apologetic.

INT. SHAWN'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

DICK leans forward on the couch. Blood-stained bandages wrap his ribs. Fresh ones wrap his newer wounds.

SHAWN sits behind him on the backrest, stitching with steady-if trembling -hands.

SHAWN

...can't believe you walked here like this.

DICK

(Half grin)

Didn't exactly walk.

SHAWN

You think this is funny? You're lucky I don't put another hole in you for scaring me like that.

Dick chuckles to himself.

Beat.

SHAWN CONT'D
So... this is you, isn't it? *Nightwing*.

DICK
I didn't pick the name.

SHAWN
I like it.

Shawn pulls the needle through, finishing her stitch.

She's not looking at her hands anymore. Just *him*.

Dick leans back enough for their eyes to meet.

There's a beat of uncertainty, then-

SHAWN (CONT'D)
I never know what to think when you
look at me like that.

DICK
Like what?

SHAWN
Like you're searching for something.

He doesn't answer, just holds her gaze.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
(Leaning closer)
What are you looking for?

Dick breaks away.

DICK
I guess the name could've been worse.
Could've been "Bluebird" but that
doesn't exactly inspire fear, does it?

It wasn't as funny out loud.

Another beat.

She ties the thread. Clean. Final.

SHAWN

You've been doing this all by
yourself. All this time.

DICK

Not always... just recently.

SHAWN

So then why?

DICK

That's the job.

SHAWN

It's what's killing you.

Shawn gives up.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

The shower's down the hall. I'll go
downstairs and grab you something
clean.

Shawn leaves the room.

Dick stays seated. Doesn't move.

A beat.

INT. SHAWN'S APARTMENT BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Dick stands above the sink.

He works a washcloth across his skin. Under the bandages
covering his ribs.

He winces to every movement.

He drops the rag into the sink.

He leans in, hands braced on the counter.

The mirror stares back.

A bruised face. Split lip. Bandages holding him together.

Knuckles swollen. Raw. Blood. Grime.

He exhales, reaching for the edge of the bandage. Peels it back.

It reveals swells of black and blue across his midsection.

He takes a look at the half-mummy he's become.

Knock. Knock.

SHAWN

(Behind the door)

I found something that should fit.

I'll leave it here by the door.

Beat.

DICK

Thank you.

Another look.

CUT TO

INT. SHAWN'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Dick steps out of the bathroom.

Faint music filters through a cracked door down the hall.
Shawn hums along.

He slows as he passes, with a glimpse to her inside, changing
into something fresher.

He looks away . Respectful. Deliberate.

His gaze drift-then lands on another open door.

THE PAINTING ROOM.

He steps inside.

Canvas after canvas line the walls. Some finished, some
abandoned. Color everywhere- raw, alive.

For a moment Dick forgets the night.

Shawn steps in behind him, unsure if she should interrupt.
She doesn't

Dick turns, meets her eyes.

DICK

This is you...

His eyes settle on a half finished painting on the easel.

DICK (CONT'D)

What's this one gonna be?

SHAWN

That one is gonna be for Gwen's
daughter. She likes flowers.

Dick turns, studying another piece on the wall.

DICK

This one?

SHAWN

I did that one years ago. Won third place in a contest.

DICK

(to himself)

Third place?

(back to Shawn)

What about this one?

Dick picks up a canvas tucked away in the corner.

Pink and violet twist through a painted skyline. Below-blackened towers. One window glows.

SHAWN

That one's is for my mom.

DICK

Where is she?

Beat.

SHAWN

Back in Gotham... I think.

DICK

You don't see her often?

Shawn shakes her head. Just enough to notice.

Silence settles- heavy and familiar.

SHAWN

When my dad died... my mom did everything she could. Worked nonstop. Drove me to school. Took me to a gallery once a month-some place downtown. She still showed up to everything. But eventually she remarried. David. He was good to us. Just... not my dad. I thought I could handle it on my own, so I left. It took me a long time to realize she was hurting too. I couldn't be what she

needed. David could. I don't know how to face that. I don't know how to go home.

Dick looks back to the painting-the single lit window.

DICK

Home...

Such a foreign word to him now.

DICK (CONT'D)

Twelve years ago I lost my parents. They were killed by a man named *Tony Zucco*. I came to Bludhaven to find him. To make him pay. I'm not even sure I know what that means. I don't know what would be... *enough*.

SHAWN

Dick...

She steps in. He lets her. They hold each other.

DICK

I messed up. Someone's been watching... He's after me... after Nightwing.

SHAWN

Then stop. You can't take any more of this.

He pulls back enough to look at her.

DICK

I can't people got hurt because of me. They went looking for Zucco... trying to get him before I did.

(Beat)

That led them to *Billy*.

The name lands. Heavy.

SHAWN
Billy- *Billy Maron*?

Another beat.

DICK
He's *Tony Zucco*. And now his family..
they're at risk because of me. I have
to fix this.

She absorbs it.

Unsaid things between them.

Then she decides-

SHAWN
Okay..

DICK
Okay?

SHAWN
Okay.. but not tonight. Tonight you
stay.

A beat. He takes in her face.

DICK
Okay.

She pulls him in. He meets her. Then-

Their first *real* kiss.

Not rushed. When they part-

SHAWN

Better.

The night settles.

INT. SHAWN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Sunlight slips through the curtains, as Dick wakes.

He shifts carefully-everything hurts. But the bed is warm. Soft. Safe.

He turns. The other side is empty.

On the nightstand: A small bottle of painkillers, a cup of tea, and a written message on a folded napkin- "*Since you don't like coffee.*"

Dick exhales. A faint smile.

INT. 'HAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER - MINUTES LATER

Dick descends the stairwell carefully. Rounding the corner, he's met with laughter.

Kids rush past him.

KID

Mr. Grayson! Come see what we built!

Before he can answer, two of them shove crooked LEGO towers to him.

DICK

Woah, that's very good guys. Watch where you leave them. I'd hate to step on those pieces.

The kids bolt off, laughing.

Dick smiles to himself.

The main room hums with life. Voices. Movement. The smell of lunch.

Mr. Law passes, a bowl of stew already in hand.

MR. LAW

Morning Grayson. You're walking like you lost a fight with the stairs.

DICK

(Laughing to himself)
Something like that.

MR. LAW

Stew's good. Sure it'd help with the pain too. Why don't you grab yourself a bowl and I'll tell you about the old days of Hollywood?

DICK

Might need a raincheck on that one, Mr. Law. Say, you haven't seen Shawn this morning, have you?

MR. LAW

I believe she's assisting the nurse in the med bay. Mr. Maron stopped by looking worse for ware, just as yourself.

Dick processes-

CUT TO

INT. 'HAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER INFIRMARY- MINUTES LATER

Dick slows at an open doorway.

Inside a NURSE tends to BILLY MARON. Face split. One eye swollen shut. Breathing shallow.

Shawn stands among them. Voice low.

BILLY looks up. His good eye finds Dick.

Dick stops cold. Like a deer in headlights.

SHAWN steps into frame, gently pulling the curtain between them.

She turns back to Dick.

SHAWN
He came in about an hour ago.

Dick nods, unable to meet her eyes.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
They found him. Dick, they took his
Family..

Dick stares at the curtain. A faint shadow of Billy behind it.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
They beat him. Told him if he finds
Nightwing they'll live.
(beat)
He didn't know where else to go.

There's a long beat.

Dick replays everything before looking into Shawn's eyes.

DICK
I have to go.

SHAWN
We can go to the police-

DICK
They're the one's who did this.

SHAWN
Not you. It can't be.

DICK
It has to be.

SHAWN
No. God knows what you'll be walking
into. And how will I know if-

DICK
I'll be okay.

SHAWN
But if you don't come back-

DICK
I will.

SHAWN
You can't promise that.

Dick turns toward the hall.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Dick-

He stops. Doesn't turn.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
Please.

Beat.

DICK
(low)
I can't let *them* die.

He goes.

SHAWN
Just- come back.

Gone.

INT. BPD PARKING GARAGE - EVENING

Rain drips through crack in the concrete ceiling. Empty.
Echoeing.

Detective Svoboda unlocks her car, arms full of case files.

A shadow moves-

NIGHTWING
Detective Elise Svoboda...

NIGHTWING steps into light.

ELISE
Jesus-

Her hand snaps to her gun.

NIGHTWING
Easy. I'm not here to fight-

ELISE
Then you picked the wrong garage.

NIGHTWING
I need you help.

ELISE
You shouldn't be *here*. There's a
warrant with your name on it.

NIGHTWING
For being a vigilante?

ELISE
For the murder of Mark Desmond.

NIGHTWING
I didn't murder anyone.

ELISE
But you were there, weren't you?

NIGHTWING
I wasn't there for him. I wasn't there
for any of it. Whatever Mark made-
whatever they're planning to do with
it, it scared him. I don't think he
attacked me out of fear of being
arrested. I think he was guilty. I
think he was grieving.

ELISE
You expect me to believe he killed
himself?

NIGHTWING
I expect you to consider the evidence.

Her aim holds still.

NIGHTWING (CONT'D)

A boy was taken, Detective. I know your partner, Soames, is doubling as Roland's errand boy. I know they're expanding their territory. And I know if they move shop into Gotham they'll be outside of your jurisdiction. You may not like me, but I can't imagine you like the Desmonds any better.

ELISE

How do you figure that?

NIGHTWING

Because if you were anything like Soames, you would've shot me by now.

She contemplates his point before lowering her aim.

ELISE

They're moving to Gotham?

Nightwing nods.

ELISE (CONT'D)

His name is Roland Desmond. It was his brother who died. They've been running the city's underground for years. If he has the kid, there's a chain. The Desmonds keep everything moving through fronts- construction sites, warehouses, shipping contracts. You're not going to find a paper trail easy.

NIGHTWING

This all coming from Soames?

ELISE

He talks. Makes it seem as if he's honest. Most everyone knows his source.

NIGHTWING

But they're probably in on it too.

ELISE

Nothing to do but listen to him brag.

NIGHTWING

Has he tried to get you in?

ELISE

Nothing more than riding along on his visits.

NIGHTWING

Tell him you want in.

ELISE

I can't do that.

NIGHTWING

He's gullible enough-

ELISE

If we take down Roland, we're taking down Soames, Redhorn- that's half the department with them. Majority of the force is on that payroll. If we leave just one, Roland will be back on the street quicker than we put him behind bars. It's too big for one night. It's too big for just the two of us.

NIGHTWING

Then we don't take them all down. Not tonight.

ELISE

You don't get it. You try to touch Desmond, they'll bury you!

NIGHTWING

This isn't about Desmond! This is about *Brian*.

That stops her. She studies him.

ELISE

You really think one life is worth all this?

NIGHTWING

He's my reasonability. One life is worth the chance, Detective.

Beat.

Elise exhales through her nose. Pulls out her phone.

ELISE

...shit.

She turns slightly away.

ELISE (CONT'D)

(On the phone)

Dudley. It's Elise.

Nightwing leans against her car, the tension drains.

INT. SOAM'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

The wipers beat steadily.

SOAMES drives-comfortable, smug. A man who believes he's ahead of the curve. ELISE rides shotgun. Calm. Taking in everything.

SOAMES

See, Roland's finally thinking bigger. He's not just moving pills anymore. Opening up to Gotham- new supply lines, new customers. Whatever this Blockbuster stuff is... It's the future.

ELISE

This has something to do with the Black Mask deal?

SOAMES

That was always the deal. Plan was the Desmonds lay low until we get everything over to the new lot. Then Blackmask shows up in town unannounced and that fuckin Nightwing follows behind him.

ELISE

You think Sionis lead the vigilante here on purpose?

SOAMES

Does it matter? Once we get this shipment out, Roland is untouchable. After tonight Bludhaven runs itself. And Gotham is next after that. Nightwing, Black Mask... they'll get theirs soon enough. The future's messy, uncertain, Elise. Might as well profit from it.

He steers the car down a narrow lane.

EXT. WOOLRICH STEEL - SHIPPING CENTER - NIGHT

Floodlights cut through the rain. Forklifts Weave between stacks of crates stamped: **BLOCKBUSTER.**

Men in heavy coats move with purpose.

Soames' Car rolls to a stop near the warehouse.

SOAMES CONT'D

Beautiful isn't it? Every piece in motion. Exactly the way it's supposed to.

Elise's eyes move- guards, trucks, exits. Then-

A SHADOW flickers beneath the floodlight above.

ELISE

Yeah. Beautiful.

FROM ABOVE - MEANWHILE

NIGHTWING crouches on a rooftop ledge.

Floodlights sweep- he's gone before they finish the arc.

His eyes map the yard. The trucks are idling. The drivers waiting.

This place is ready to vanish.

Below, SOAMES and ELISE step out of the car.

Soames gestures toward the warehouse like a proud host. They disappear inside.

NIGHTWING

Gotcha.

He drops from his vantage.

CUT TO

INT. SHIPPING OFFICE - MEANWHILE

Soames and Elise move through the control room.

Monitors line the walls-live feeds of the yard, the docks, the trucks. Everything in motion. Everything watched.

ROLAND stands at the back of the room, issuing quiet orders. Men move when he speaks.

BRIAN and NANCY sit cuffed near the far wall. Bruised. Silent.

Elise's eyes flick to them.

Roland clocks it.

SOAMES

(To Roland)

Redhorn's got the streets cleared for transport.

ROLAND

You're late, Soames.

SOAMES

Had to make an extra stop.

ROLAND

I didn't ask for excuses. Who the hell is she?

SOAMES

My partner. Elise. I've mentioned her before.

ROLAND

Have you?

He steps closer now.

ELISE

We've been partners for three years.
Dudley's been trying to recruit me for
most of that time.

ROLAND

Why the sudden interest?

SOAMES

She's good, Roland. I swea-

Roland pulls his gun at SOAMES. Not rushed. Just inevitable.

ROLAND

What'd you bring to my operation,
Soames?

Nobody speaks. Then-

SULIEMAN enters.

SULIEMAN

Boss. We've got a problem. Manifest is
off. Could be one of Tiger's boys
pulling something again.

ROLAND

(To Soames)

You keep an eye on her, Soames. Or
I'll wring that goddamn neck of yours.

Roland turns, follows Sulieman out.

SOAMES

(low, to himself)

That guy is gonna chew through his own
teeth one of these days.

BRIAN

You talk tough when he's not around.

Nancy grabs her son, pulling him back.

NANCY

Brian-

SOAMES

What? What'd he say?

NANCY

Please- he didn't mean anything by it.
He's just a boy.

SOAMES

Then let me teach him when to shut his
mouth.

NIGHTWING (O.S.)

Ironic coming from you, isn't it,
Dudley?

Soames turns-

A FIST slams into his jaw. He hits the floor hard.

SOAMES

(Crawling back)

Wha- How did you-

A BOOT cracks against his head. Lights out.

Nightwing moves immediately- a PICK from his belt. Brian and
Nancy's cuff fall away.

Brian breaks away from his mother and hugs Nightwing.

BRIAN

I knew you'd come.

Nightwing takes a beat- Then hugs back.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Is my dad oaky?

NIGHTWING

Yeah. Yeah he is. He actually- He sent
me to get you. Both of you.

BRIAN

(To Nancy)

See, mom? I told you.

Brian moves in. Nancy hugs him tight.

Nightwing looks away.

SVOBODA

(To Nancy)

Ma'am, we need to move. Now.

NIGHTWING

They'll be too noticeable going out the door.

SVOBODA

What do you suggest?

He thinks.

NIGHTWING

I'll make some noise. Load them into a truck.

SVOBODA

And what happens when you draw too much attention?

NIGHTWING

I'll manage.

A beat. Elise calculates. Then-

GUN FIRE RIPS through the wall.

Everyone hits the floor.

EXT. WOOLRICH STEEL - SHIPPING CENTER - CONTINUOUS

ROLAND stands tall, unmoving behind his men as they reload.

ROLAND

(To Sulieman)

Bring me his body.

SULIEMAN

Tiger- your boys with me.

The squad move toward the office.

INT. SHIPPING OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dust and debris settle.

BRIAN looks up.

NANCY was hit.

BRIAN

Mom? MOM!

She lies on the floor, stunned- blood blooming through her shirt.

ELISE scrambles by her side.

ELISE

Stay with me, ma'am.

She presses hard against the wound. Nancy gasp-

Outside- BOOTS pound closer.

Elise looks up- NIGHTWING is gone.

Floodlights flare through the window.

She scans the area. One door. No cover. No exit.

BRIAN

They're coming..

A beat of realization. Then-

Elise steadies her breath. Heard her weapon. And plants herself between them and the door.

The door is KICKED open.

Sulieaman's men flood in, rifles raised.

Elise doesn't flinch.

The men fan out- three men clearing corners, sweeping the room.

From behind the line, SULIEMAN approaches. Relaxed. Grinning.

SULIEMAN

Good to meet you, Elise.

CUT TO

EXT. WOOLRICH STEEL - SHIPPING CENTER - SECONDS LATER

Sulieman and his men drag Elise, Brian, and Nancy out into the open.

ROLAND stands above them, posted atop a shipping truck like a king on a throne of metal.

The last crate into place. The loading process halts.

Sulieman presents his hostages to everyone before turning back-

SULIEMAN

(To Elise)

Where is he?

ELISE

Who?

SULIEMAN

Night-Wing.

ELISE

Not here-

A BACK-HAND cuts her off.

SULIEMAN

C'mon, Elise. We both know he's the only chance to get them outta here.

ELISE

Don't pretend to know me.

SULIEMAN

Oh, I know you real well.

(He leans in.)

Every time Soames went collecting, every door he kicked in, who was waiting in the car? Silent. How many times have you sat back while he pillaged in Roland's name? You, dear Elise, look the other way. Like a good cop. What's one more time?

(He pulls back, announcing to his peers.)

Mark Desmond is dead because of that freak!

ELISE
Mark died because of his brother. You
keep working for him, you'll be next.

WHAM

Suliemman hits her again.

SULIEMAN
Careful, Elise.

ELISE
No. I'm tired of watching families
ruined at Roland's hands.

A beat.

SULIEMAN
I see.

Suliemman looks at Roland.

Roland nods.

Suliemman turns back- raising his gun to Elies' head.

SULIEMAN (CONT'D)
Last chance, Detective.

ELISE
You and your boss can go to hell.

SULIEMAN
Have it your way.

The hammer clicks- Everything goes still.

GOON (O.S.)
Incoming!

A beam of light swings across-

A SHIPPING TRUCK barrels through-

CRASH

Roland jumps just before impact.

One truck flips as the other in the air.

Men disperse-

Wreckage- crates go flying-

Elise jumps-rips Sulieman's gun away.

She grabs Brian and Nancy, shoving them toward cover.

MEANWHILE

Men panic. They scramble.

They search for a driver-

NIGHTWING drops from above- A hard takedown. Keeps moving.

He flips overhead- Straddles the shoulders- Flips backward-
Goons collide.

His ESCRIMA STICKS snap out.

Goons hesitate.

He hurls a stick- A firing arm is jerked away.

The stick rebounds back To his hand.

WHAM

Another goon drops.

Men flank.

NIGHTWING launches from piled scrap-

BAM

Another down.

Then-

Bullets rattle against the trailer behind him.

He rolls to evade.

As he flips around, **WINGDINGS** spread, ripping into his targets.

MEANWHILE

ROLAND stands to his feet.

Gunfire cracks behind him. Men shout.

He watches NIGHTWING move through the chaos with purpose. No hesitation. No wasted motion.

Efficient.

Roland's jaw tightens, witnessing a dismantling disguised as spectacle.

He paces forward.

A goon stumbles by him, panicked. Roland snatches his rifle without breaking stride.

He chambers a round.

Then opens fire-

Nightwing dives for cover.

MEANWHILE

ELISE is pinned behind cover, with BRIAN and NANCY.

Gunfire chips concrete.

Elise ducks, slams in a fresh mag.

Brian struggles to hold his mother upright- her strength fading fast.

Behind them- SOAMES reappears through the carnage. He brushes through Brian.

BRIAN
(Falling over)
BEHIND YOU!

Elise turns-

A FLYING KNEE catches her flush. She hits the ground.

Soames is on to of her instantly- hands around her throat.

She claws at his grip as GOONS swarm Brian and Nancy. Hands yank them back.

Elise stretches for her gun- She **CRACKS** Soames in the temple with the handle.

He staggers.

Elise pops up- Fires-

A goon holding Nancy drops.

Brian scream being dragged further into the battlefield.

Before Elise can give chase- SOAMES pins her again, twisting her gun back on her.

Elise fades-

But then-

WHAM

NANCY slams the butt of a rifle into SOAMES. He drops.

Elise sucks air, grabs Nancy-

They RUN.

Too late.

A goon shoves Brian into the back of a van, the door slams shut.

SULIEMAN opens fire- forcing Elise and Nancy behind cover.

Sulieyman jumps behind the wheel.

Tires screech as they pull away.

MEANWHILE

ROLAND and his men slip through the wreckage.

NIGHTWING drops onto a stack of crates- grapple already swinging.

The hook snaps tight- yanks two goons off balance. Their shots go wild.

Nightwing pulls them together- They collapse.

Roland ducks under twisted steel.

Nightwing spots him- moves-

A car screeches between them.

From the sunroof- Bullets rain down.

Nightwing dives for cover.

Roland dives into the back seat, Brian sits beside him.

ROLAND

Let's get this shit out of here, boys!

GOONS pile into VANS- A SHIPPING TRUCK roars to life.

The convoy blasts out.

ELISE

Nightwing- They have the kid!

She carries Nancy up the rear.

Nightwing clocks the convoy- Roland pulls ahead. Three VANS, One TRUCK.

Nightwing cuts slips through a break in the fence. Into an alley-

He vaults, slides- through to the other side where-

EXT. BLUDHAVEN HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The convoy roars past.

Nightwing leaps- Landing onto the side of the truck.

He grips the metal, boots scraping as he climbs.

The passenger door flies open- Gunshots rip past his head, steel sparks off truckside.

Nightwing swings up- rolling onto the roof.

A goon scrambles up after him.

Nightwing vanishes.

The goon looks-

Nightwing from behind- he attacks the knee= the goon slides off the truck.

A van pulls up behind- the sunroof slides open.

More gunfire-

Nightwing vaults- catching the side of the truck again, barely hanging on as the truck speeds ahead.

Nightwing lunges for the cab.

The van closes in- Two goons leap across.

ROLAND leans out the lead van's window

He spots Nightwing- FIRES.

Nightwing drops, rolling under the truck.

WHIPS up the other side.

He catches the two goons by surprise.

The truck SLAMS breaks.

Everyone flies forward- Nightwing skids onto the hood.

The driver FIRES- Glass explodes.

Nightwing drops again- hangs from the bumper.

ROLAND lines up another shot.

BRIAN kicks him in the groin.

Roland recoils.

The truck driver floors it- Pulling closer to the lead van.

Nightwing rips an escrima free- HURLS it-

The driver ducks- Smashes the rest of the windshield.

Another shot. Nightwing rips the second, HURLS it-

It cracks into the driver, BULLSEYE.

The truck clips the Van behind.

Before the truck loses speed, Nightwing leaps-

Tosses his grapple through the back window of the next van.

The line TAUT- Nightwing hits the pavement- DRAGGED.

He hauls himself up the line- The van jerks hard-

Nightwing slams into parked cars- Glass explodes-

He HOLDS-

He plants his feet- Surfs the asphalt.

A THIRD VAN- tries running him down from behind.
Nightwing launches up- Drops the line-
Lands HARD atop the pursuing van.
The convoy rushes forward- GOTHAM BRIDGE looms ahead.
Time is running out.
The vans pull SIDE BY SIDE- Goons climb onto the roofs.
Nightwing drops low- Sweeps another leg.
The good crashes hood first.
Nightwing LEAPS to Roland's van, engages the last goon.
SULIEMAN jerks the wheel- The van fishtails-

CUT TO

INT. 'HAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER -MEANWHILE

SHAWN sits beside BILLY, bandaged and stable.

A NEWSCAST plays on the TV- Live footage of a high-speed chase heading toward GOTHAM BRIDGE.

Shawn clocks it instantly.

SHAWN

Billy- we need to go.

They grab their jackets and move-

EXT. BLUDHAVEN HIGHWAY - MEANWHILE

NIGHTWING loses balance, force to split his footing across each van.

From the hood- A goon pins Nightwing's foot.

Vans begin to drift apart.

EXT. GOTHAM BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Nightwing RIPS his foot free- momentum carried, he delivers a SPIN KICK to the knife wielding goon.

GUNFIRE ERUPTS from the roof of Roland's van.

Nightwing stumbles- catches himself last second, BRIDGES himself across both vans.

They pass a **"WELCOME TO GOTHAM"** sign.

Nightwing drops his footing- Lands on the door of the adjacent van-

He SMASHES through the window-

The driver goes limp.

Nightwing yanks the wheel-

AS the vans COLLIDE-

He springs up- DROP KICKS through the passenger window, sending SULIEMAN out the driver-side door.

Both vans lose control. They veer through oncoming traffic- Crash through the bridge railing- and PLUMMIT into the river below.

Sirens flood in from both ends of the bridge.

Everything settles.

CUT TO

EXT. RIVERFRONT DOCKS - SECONDS LATER

NIGHTWING hauls himself from the river, BRIAN in his arms.

He drags them onto the dock, dropping to his knees.

Brian limp. Not breathing.

Nightwing rolls him to his side, slaps his back.

Nothing.

Again.

Harder.

Nothing.

NIGHTWING

C'mon, kid.

He flips Brian flat.

Locking his hands together, he punches.

Once.

Twice.

Again.

He tilts Brian's head.

Water spills out.

Still nothing.

Nightwing shaking, begins to pump again. Arms burning, ribs screaming.

He doesn't stop.

NIGHTWING (CONT'D)

No-no-no.

Please-please-please.

Brian's body JERKS.

He coughs.

Then another-violently, water pouring from his lungs.

A gasp of air.

Nightwing freezes- then pulls him upright, holding him tight as Brian keeps coughing.

A gun clicks, breaking their embrace.

Roland stands a few yards away, soaked, wide-eyed. Gun leveled.

Nightwing angles himself, shielding Brian.

ROLAND

You... Do you have any idea what you just did?

NIGHTWING

Roland, it's over.

ROLAND

Over? For you maybe. For the boy-

NIGHTWING

This isn't about him. Not for you. This is about-

ROLAND

THIS CITY! It belonged to Mark and I.
It was nothing before us. Built on
false promises. A city of rebirth, a
new beginning. What a wonderful lie.
We bled for this place long before you
were here. Every corner, every deal...
we did that. Someone had to take
action. Someone had to make the calls.
I made the people listen. I made it
heel. I carried it all. And then you
showed up...

NIGHTWING

This city doesn't belong to anyone
like you.

ROLAND

Don't pretend like you care for the
city. You hide in the dark. Break
bones of men trying to earn a living.
Men no one else would take a chance
on. Then you just disappear. You tell
yourself a story afterward. And for
what? A man hunt? My brother died
believing in what we were doing.

NIGHTWING

Your brother died afraid.

ROLAND

Don't you dare.

NIGHTWING

He hated you. He hated what you made
him become.

ROLAND

You don't know a damn thing about him.

NIGHTWING

I know he went to MIT. He only dropped
out on account of your mother getting
sick.

ROLAND

Shut up.

NIGHTWING

A man that brilliant must have been the promise child, right? And when he couldn't get your family out, you stepped up. You stood behind him and called it a partnership. But Mark knew the difference between control and power. You think you're honoring him. But this - this is a pitiful attempt to prove you were never the weak brother. You don't want the city. You want to be feared by it. As long as they fear you they wouldn't dare compare you to Mark. True, I came here with a purpose. I made a mistake. But Bludhaven isn't yours to tame. It's not a throne either. It's home. And as long as I'm here - you don't get to hurt it anymore.

Roland chuckles to himself.

ROLAND

Suit yourself, Hero.

His grip tightens.

BANG

Roland's gun goes flying.

ELISE

It's done, Desmond.

Roland raises his hands.

ROLAND

Go ahead. Be a good cop.

ELISE

I'm not gonna shoot you.

ROLAND

You know you won't be able to keep me.

Elise lowers her gun.

ELISE

I know.

(beat)

We've got what we came for.

Another beat lingers.

ROLAND

I'll come after you too, detective.

ELISE

Then I guess I'll be seeing you.

ROLAND

(To Nightwing)

You don't belong here. Neither did Mark. The 'Haven eats The one's who stay. You'll see.

Roland turns, disappearing into one of the dock houses.

The second he's gone- Nightwing collapses.

Brian holds him up.

NIGHTWING

(To Elise)

Where's Nancy?

ELISE

She's on her way to the hospital.
She's gonna be okay.

EXT. GOTHAM BRIDGE - MEANWHILE

Flashing lights flood the bridge.

A taxi screeches to a stop.

SHAWN and BILLY emerge, rushing to the bridge rails.

In the distance Billy sees his son.

And Shawn sees Dick.

EXT. RIVERFRONT DOCKS - MEANWHILE

ELISE

They're going to ask me questions.

NIGHTWING

They always do.

ELISE

They're going to want my badge.

NIGHTWING

And they never deserved theirs. I've seen a lot of cops succumb to their desires. Others bend to pressure. Not many are exempt from suspicion. Not in a city like this. But you Had every opportunity to say the hell with the oath. I had a feeling you were just biding your time until something gave you hope.

Elise studies him for a moment.

Then smiles at his insinuation.

BILLY MARON (O.S.)

Brian!

Shawn and Billy enter the scene.

Brian stands frozen for half a second.

Then he runs. Billy barely has time to brace before they collide, arms wrapping tight.

Shawn sees Dick as relief breaks through her composure.

Dick hangs back.

He watches – a witness to something he never got back.

Shawn clocks this.

Sirens swell closer.

ELISE

You'd better get going, Nightwing.

NIGHTWING

Yeah.

ELISE

I'll watch after them.

NIGHTWING

Commissioner James Gordon in Gotham.
He's an ally.

ELISE

I'll get them to him. I promise.

Nightwing nods before turning away, limping.

Shawn watches as he disappears into the mouth of an alley.

She moves to follow.

She rounds the corner to see his knees give way, dropping
against a brick wall.

She crosses to him without a word.

Dick tries not to look at her.

Then it breaks – a sob he can no longer control.

Shawn kneels.

Pulls him into her arms.

A long beat.

Sirens continue to wail.

The city moves on.

They don't.

INT. DICK'S APARTMENT - DAYS LATER

An alarm goes off.

Dick wakes up, turns it off.

8:30 AM

He sits up with clean bandages.

His room is clean. No more moving boxes.

His Flying Graysons poster sits over his bed.

He stands, stretching.

Looks out the window To the center across the street.

Shawn checks items off her list as movers carry boxes inside.
He smiles.

He turns to notice a note by the door.

He reads:

"If you feel like talking-

Scrimshaw Park, 12:00.

-Billy"

CUT TO

EXT. SCRIMSHAW PARK - LATER

Billy sits on a bench. Tense. Rubbing his course hands.

Dick approaches - with Shawn, holding hands.

Billy clocks it, and smiles.

Shawn smiles and nods back.

She squeezes Dick's hand before-

SHAWN
I'll be over there.

DICK
Okay.

She kisses his cheek before leaving their meeting.

BILLY MARON
Shawn, she's a good kid.

Dick watches Shawn in the distance.

DICK
Yeah, she is.

Dick stands there for a moment.

BILLY MARON
I hope you don't mind, she gave me the
address for the message.
(Beat)
Please- sit with me.

It's difficult for Dick to keep eye contact.

But he sits.

BILLY MARON (CONT'D)
They're moving us to Chicago. Not that
you'd care... I just -
(beat)
I can't imagine this is easy for you;
sitting here with me now. I never
thought I'd have the chance to-
(another beat)
The way you looked at me at the center
when we first met, I knew who you were
then. I denied it at first. But when
someone looks at you like a... well like
a-

DICK
A monster?

BILLY MARON
Yeah- like a monster.
(beat)
I Keep replaying that night in my
head. I just can't imagine what you
went through. What I had caused. It
just won't stop. Nothing I can say or
do will ever change the fact that I
took your family away From you. I'm
sorry. Every good thing I have now -
my son, my wife - It sits on top of
that night.
(another beat)
I'm not religious or superstitious,
but there was something inside of me

that told me no matter how much I've changed Karma was just around the corner. And despite the pain I've caused you... you saved them. I can't thank you enough.

Dick pieces his words together carefully.

DICK

The papers said you'd died. I found some sort of closure in that. When I found out you were still alive, it all came back. Every bit of loneliness and hatred. It was like the most pivotal moment in my life never happened, and everyone expected me to just accept that. After all this time, I just... I was afraid I'd kill you myself. The more I held onto that, the more it asked of me. I isolated myself. I hurt friends. There was nothing to gain, I just wanted to hurt less. I can't keep living in spite of what's happened. I want to live for what I once had - what I can have.

Dick looks across the park to Shawn.

DICK (CONT'D)

If i carry anything forward... it can't be the night they died. Not anymore.

BILLY MARON

Well, you seem to have plenty to live for.

DICK

I'm finally letting myself see it.

The pair sit.

The park moves around them.

Two men bound by the same moment, finally letting it rest.

CUT TO BLACK

"NIGHTWING BLUDHAVEN"

THE END