

True Strength

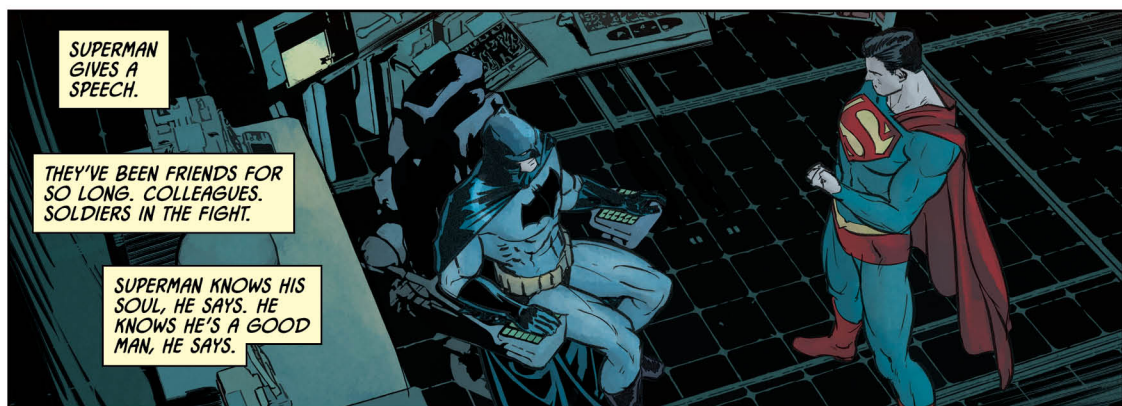
TOM KING WRITER
MIKEL JANIN ARTIST
JORDIE BELLAIRE COLORIST
CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER
MIKEL JANIN COVER
BRITTANY HOLZHERR ASSOC. EDITOR
JAMIE S. RICH EDITOR

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER
SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER.
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY.

HIS KNUCKLES ACHES
WITH EACH BLOW, BONE
GRINDING INTO BONE.

THE CRIMINALS
SHOUT WHAT THEY
ALWAYS SHOUT.

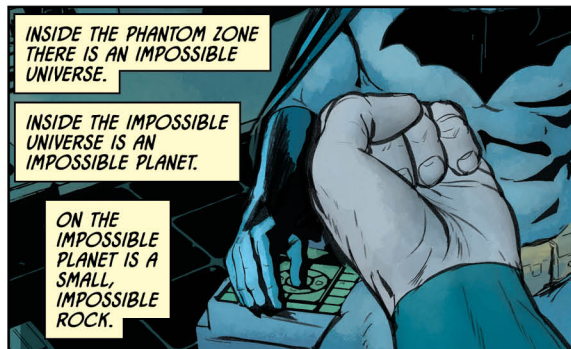
AND SUPERMAN COMES
FROM ABOVE.



SUPERMAN
GIVES A
SPEECH.

THEY'VE BEEN FRIENDS FOR
SO LONG. COLLEAGUES.
SOLDIERS IN THE FIGHT.

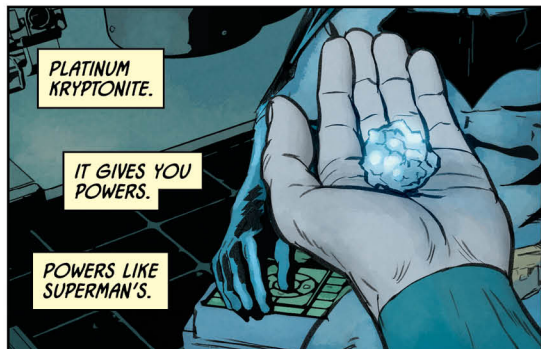
SUPERMAN KNOWS HIS
SOUL, HE SAYS. HE
KNOWS HE'S A GOOD
MAN, HE SAYS.



INSIDE THE PHANTOM ZONE
THERE IS AN IMPOSSIBLE
UNIVERSE.

INSIDE THE IMPOSSIBLE
UNIVERSE IS AN
IMPOSSIBLE PLANET.

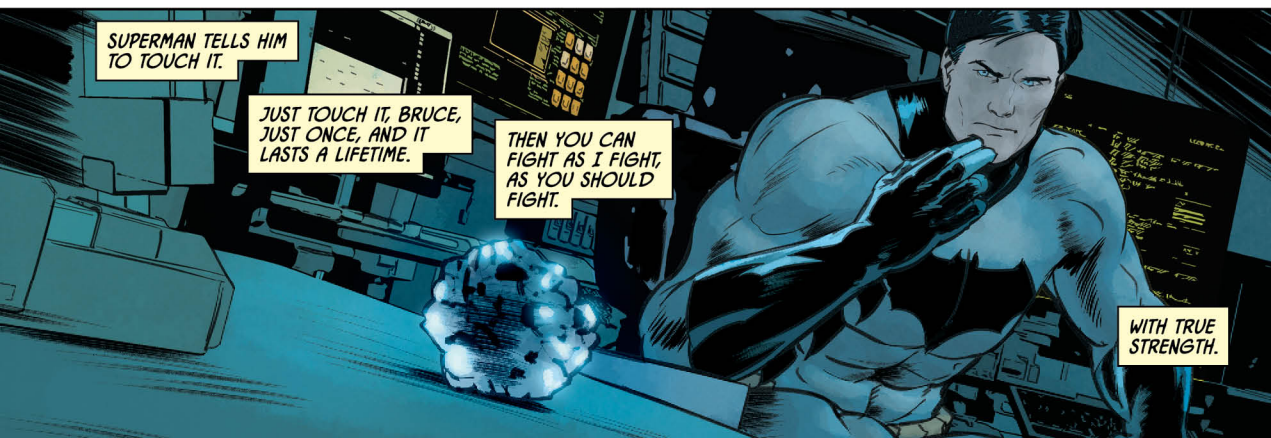
ON THE
IMPOSSIBLE
PLANET IS A
SMALL,
IMPOSSIBLE
ROCK.



PLATINUM
KRYPTONITE.

IT GIVES YOU
POWERS.

POWERS LIKE
SUPERMAN'S.



SUPERMAN TELLS HIM
TO TOUCH IT.

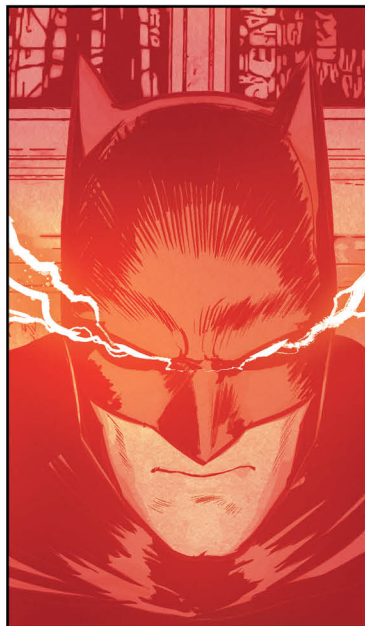
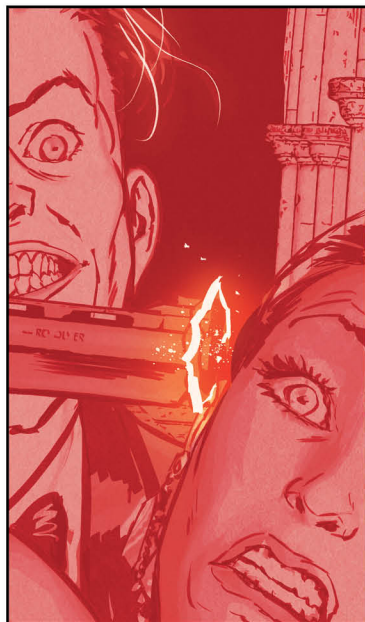
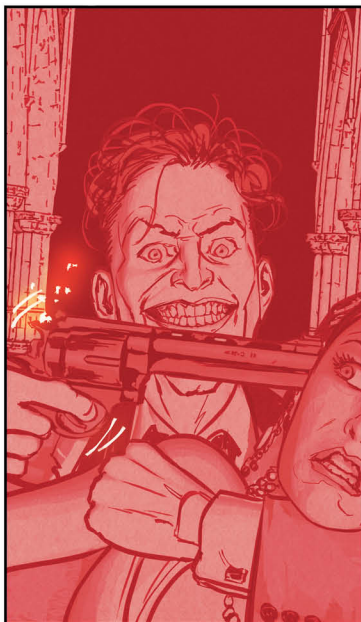
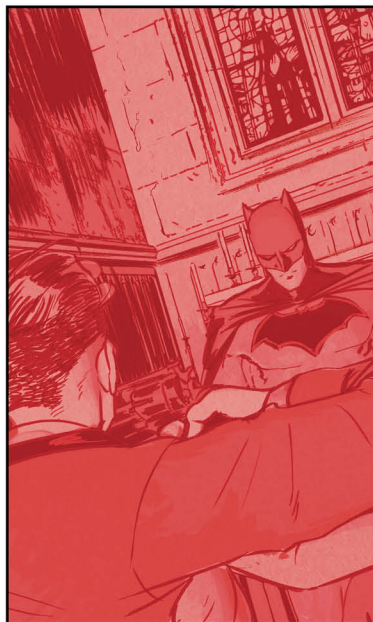
JUST TOUCH IT, BRUCE,
JUST ONCE, AND IT
LASTS A LIFETIME.

THEN YOU CAN
FIGHT AS I FIGHT,
AS YOU SHOULD
FIGHT.

WITH TRUE
STRENGTH.

A SMILE. A WHOOSH.
SUPERMAN LEAVES.

HE LOOKS AT THE
GIFT. HIS MIND
WANDERS.



HE KEEPS HIS HANDS
AT HIS SIDE.

HIS KNUCKLES
ACHE.

AT LEAST TWO OF
THEM ARE BROKEN.



FOOTSTEPS
ECHOING DOWN
THE STAIRS.

THE SMELL OF
STIRRED MILK AND
WHITE SUGAR.

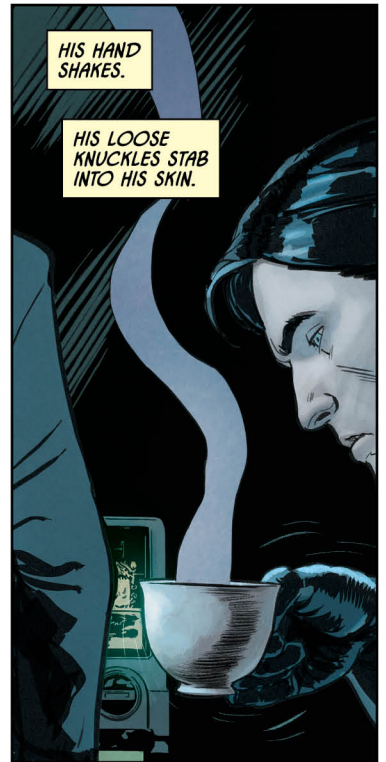
A POLITE CLEARING
OF THE THROAT.



ALFRED SAYS
NOTHING.

THEIR ROUTINES
ARE WELL
ESTABLISHED,
WORDS ARE
UNNECESSARY.

AND TYPICALLY, THE
CAVE IS RESERVED FOR
THE NECESSARY.

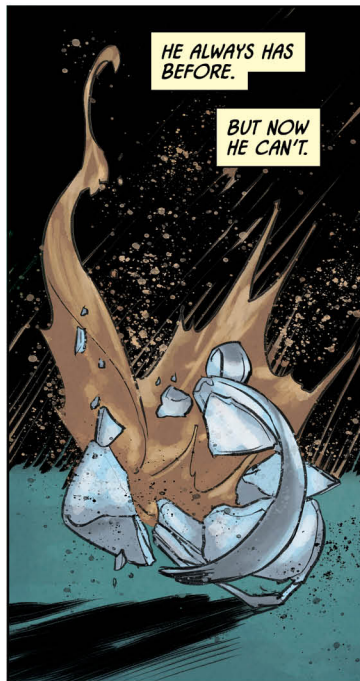


HIS HAND
SHAKES.

HIS LOOSE
KNUCKLES STAB
INTO HIS SKIN.



HE CAN'T HOLD ON.



HE ALWAYS HAS
BEFORE.

BUT NOW
HE CAN'T.

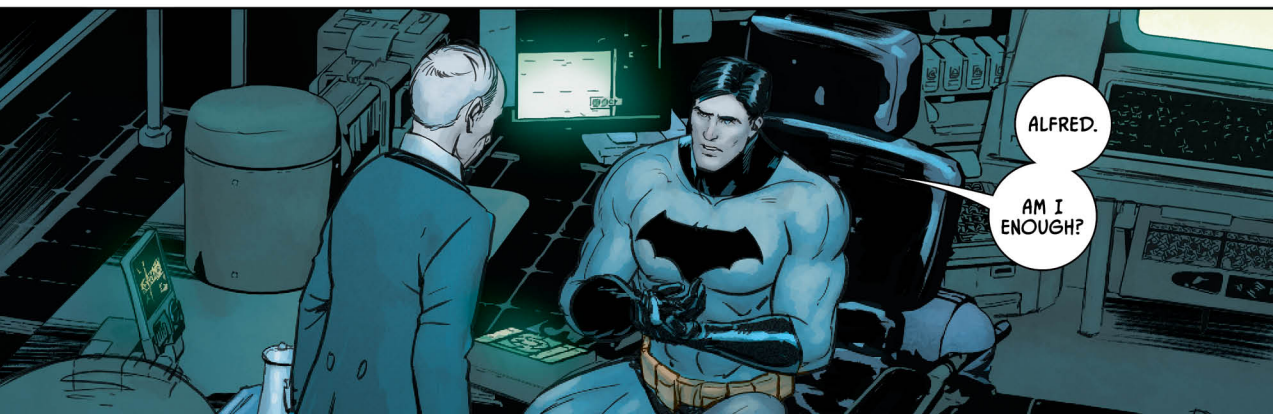


THE PAIN IS NOT
GREAT. NOT AS
GREAT AS IT
HAS BEEN.

NOT AS GREAT AS A
BULLET BURROWING,
OR A BACK BREAKING,
OR A KNIFE SINKING
INTO HIS THROAT.

THIS IS NOTHING.
BUT STILL.

HIS KNUCKLES
ACHE.



ALFRED.

AM I
ENOUGH?