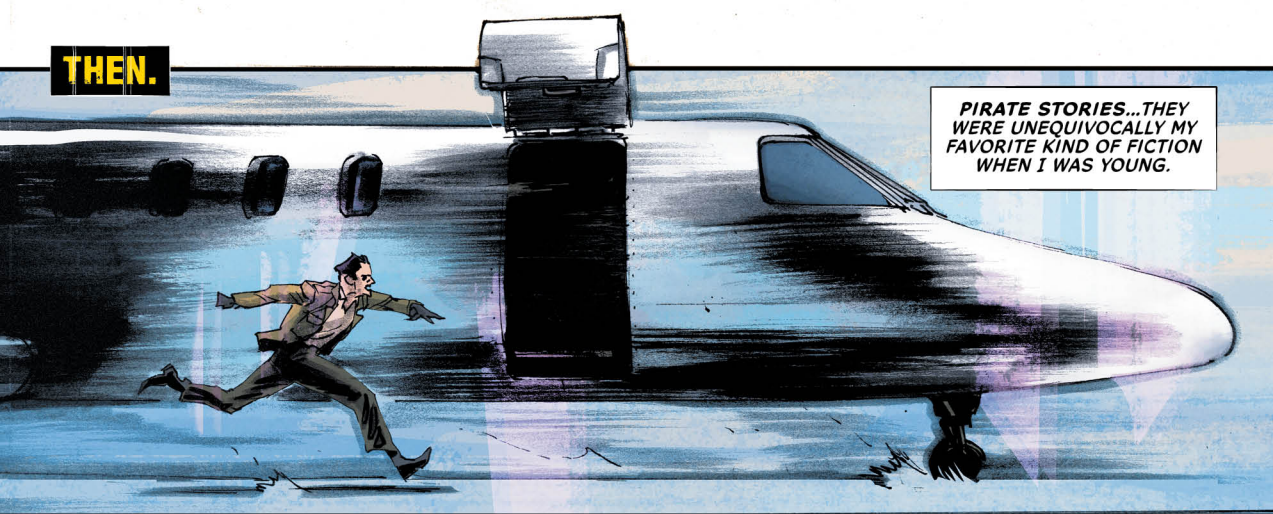


THEN.



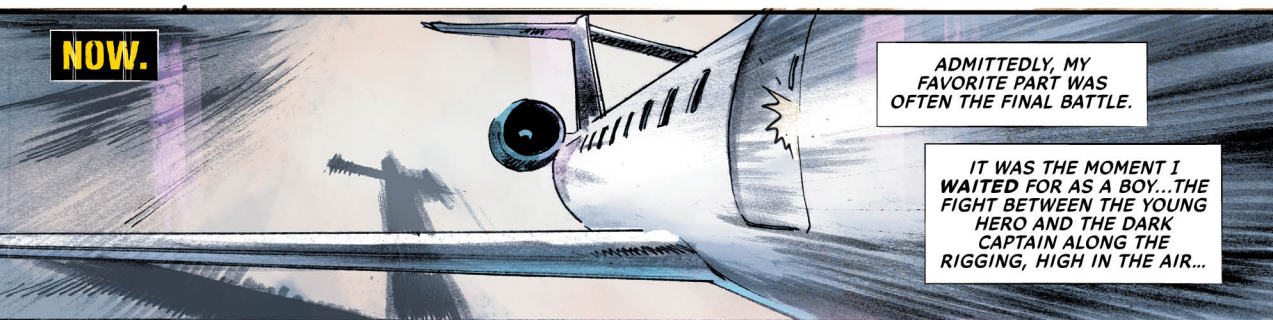
PIRATE STORIES...THEY WERE UNEQUIVOCALLY MY FAVORITE KIND OF FICTION WHEN I WAS YOUNG.



I CHASED DOWN EVERY ONE I COULD FIND. READ THEM OVER AND OVER UNTIL THE PAGES FELL OUT BENEATH MY FINGERS.

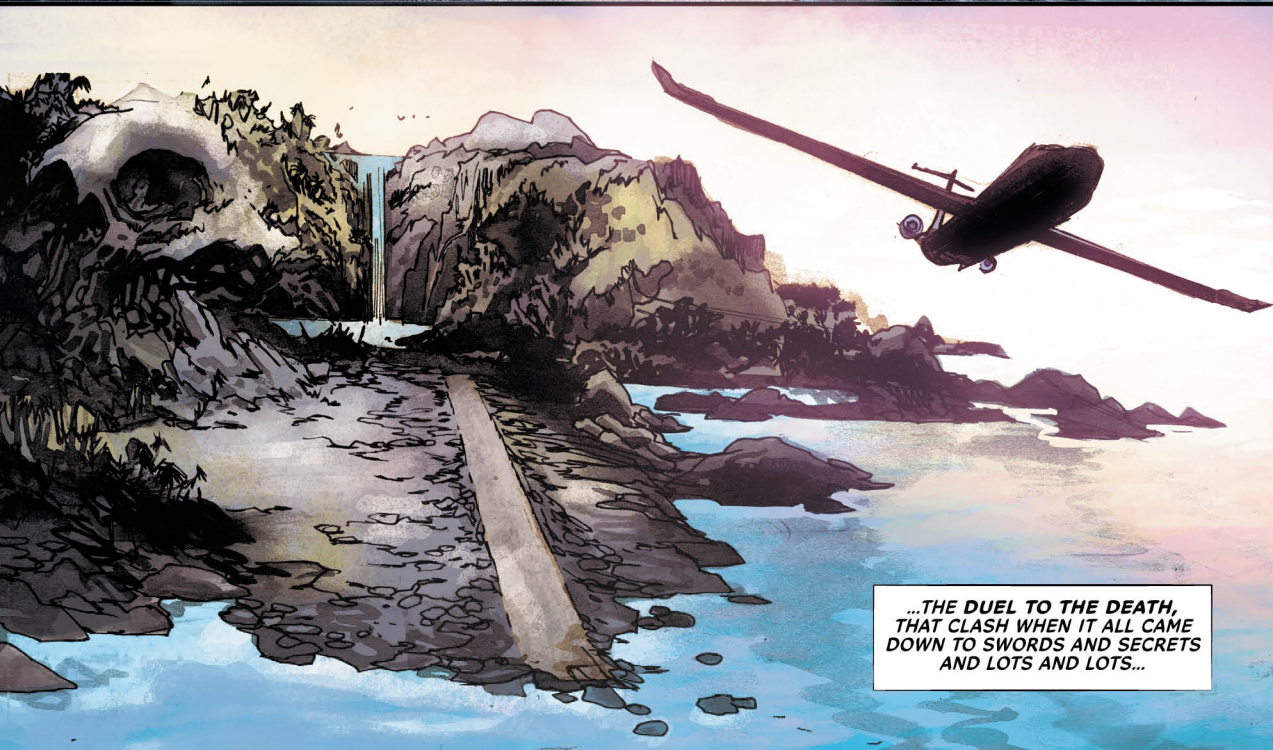
BRIAR, WAIT, DAMMIT! BRIAR!

NOW.



ADMITTEDLY, MY FAVORITE PART WAS OFTEN THE FINAL BATTLE.

IT WAS THE MOMENT I WAITED FOR AS A BOY...THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE YOUNG HERO AND THE DARK CAPTAIN ALONG THE RIGGING, HIGH IN THE AIR...



...THE DUEL TO THE DEATH, THAT CLASH WHEN IT ALL CAME DOWN TO SWORDS AND SECRETS AND LOTS AND LOTS...

...OF BLOOD.

LOOK. HE'S TRYING TO FIND THE MICRO-PICKS HIDDEN IN THE FLESH OF HIS CHEEK, BRIAR. THE ONES WE ALREADY REMOVED.

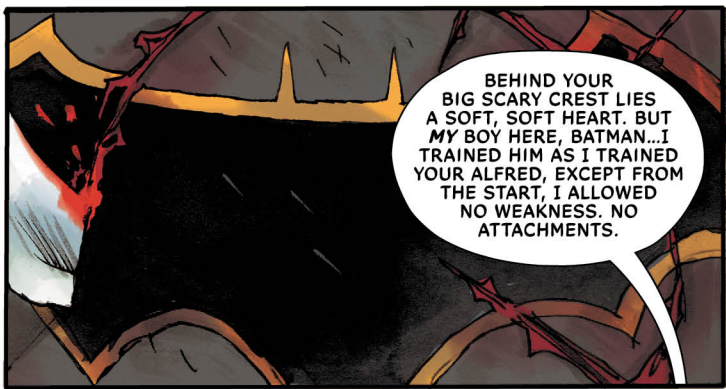
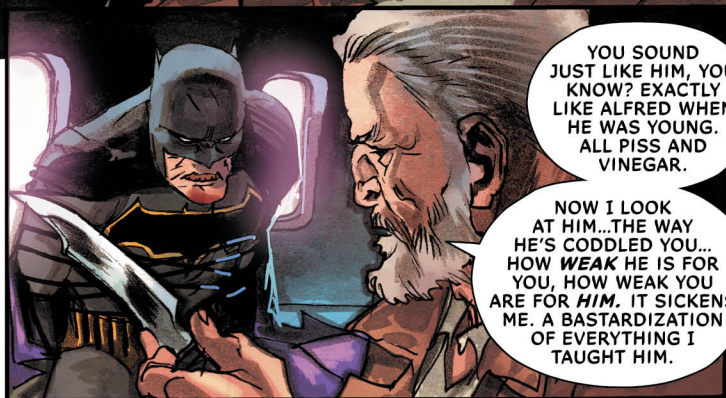
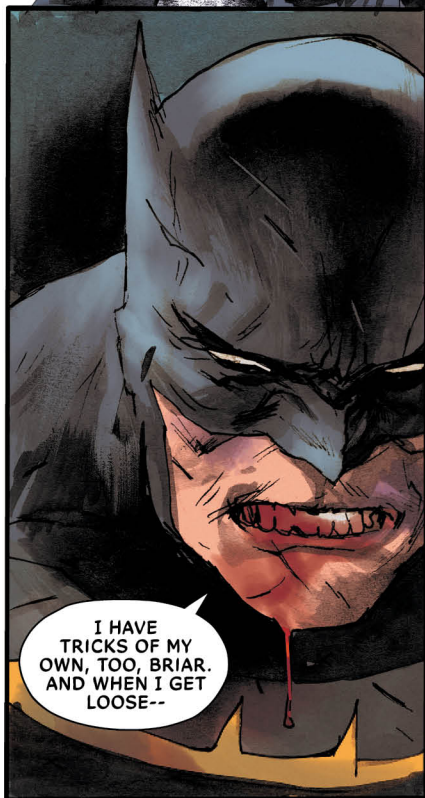
THAT OLD ONE, EH? STOP STRUGGLING, BATMAN. ANY TRICK PENNYWORTH TAUGHT YOU, I TAUGHT HIM, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL RELAX AND ENJOY THE VOYAGE.

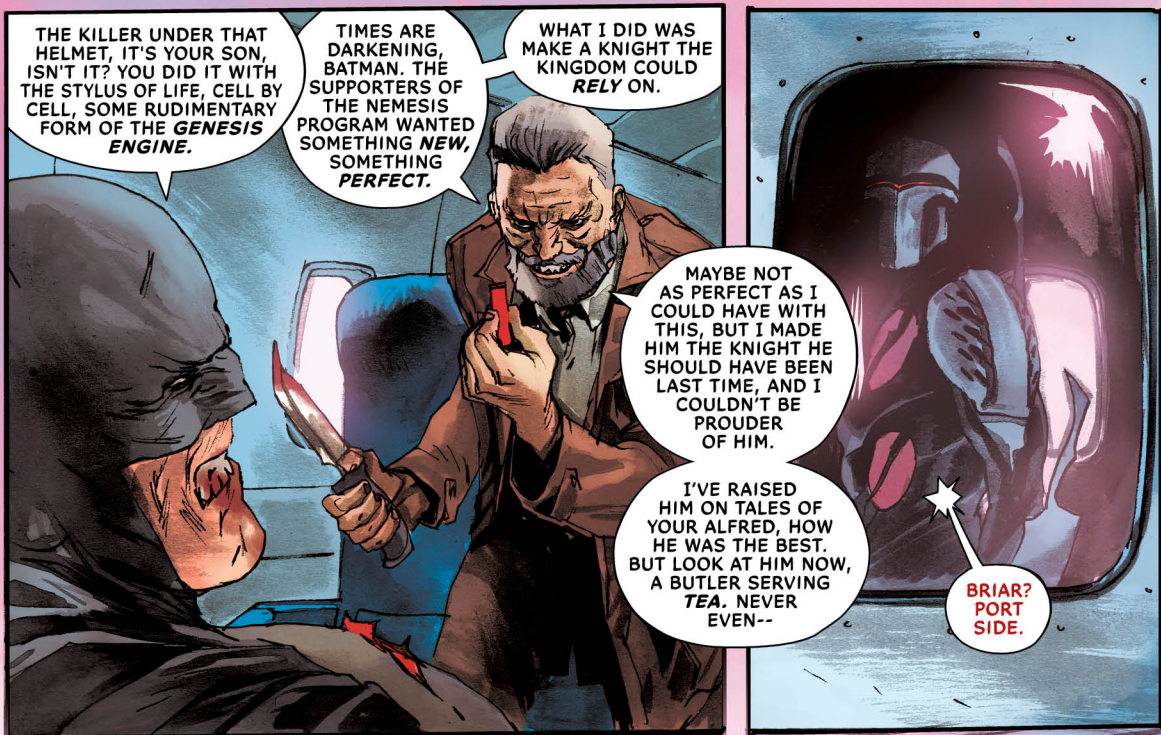
THE FIRST ALLY FINALE

SCOTT SNYDER SCRIPT
RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
PENCILS, INKS, COVER
& VARIANT COVER

JORDIE BELLAIRE COLORS
STEVE WANDS LETTERS
SEBASTIAN FIUMARA VARIANT COVER
DAVE WIELGOSZ ASSISTANT EDITOR
REBECCA TAYLOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR
MARK DOYLE EDITOR

BATMAN
CREATED BY
BOB KANE
WITH
BILL FINGER





THE KILLER UNDER THAT
HELMET, IT'S YOUR SON,
ISN'T IT? YOU DID IT WITH
THE STYLUS OF LIFE, CELL BY
CELL, SOME RUDIMENTARY
FORM OF THE **GENESIS
ENGINE**.

TIMES ARE
DARKENING,
BATMAN. THE
SUPPORTERS OF
THE NEMESIS
PROGRAM WANTED
SOMETHING **NEW**,
SOMETHING
PERFECT.

WHAT I DID WAS
MAKE A KNIGHT THE
KINGDOM COULD
RELY ON.

MAYBE NOT
AS PERFECT AS I
COULD HAVE WITH
THIS, BUT I MADE
HIM THE KNIGHT HE
SHOULD HAVE BEEN
LAST TIME, AND I
COULDN'T BE
PROUDER
OF HIM.

I'VE RAISED
HIM ON TALES OF
YOUR ALFRED, HOW
HE WAS THE BEST.
BUT LOOK AT HIM NOW,
A BUTLER SERVING
TEA. NEVER
EVEN--

**BRIAR?
PORT
SIDE.**

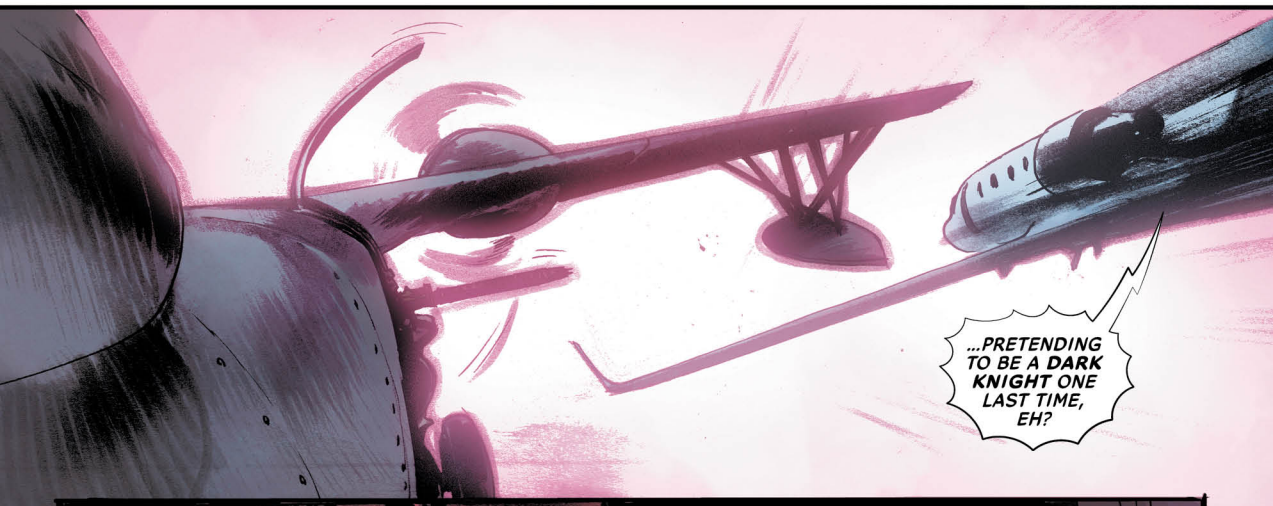


AHOY, @\$%!
I GOT YOUR TEA
RIGHT HERE!

BY
DECLARATION OF
THE GREAT PIRATE
FAMILIES OF
FLORIDA, LAND NOW,
OR PREPARE TO BE
BOARDED.

PENNYWORTH.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE
SOME NEW FRIENDS,
SON! SO WHAT IS
THIS THEN...





...PRETENDING
TO BE A **DARK**
KNIGHT ONE
LAST TIME,
EH?



WELL, THERE'S
A SAYING IN THIS
COUNTRY, BRIAR.
"ALWAYS BE YOURSELF.
UNLESS YOU CAN BE
BATMAN."

BUT
SADLY, I CAN
NEVER BE
BATMAN.



BECAUSE
BATMAN
DOESN'T USE
GUNS.