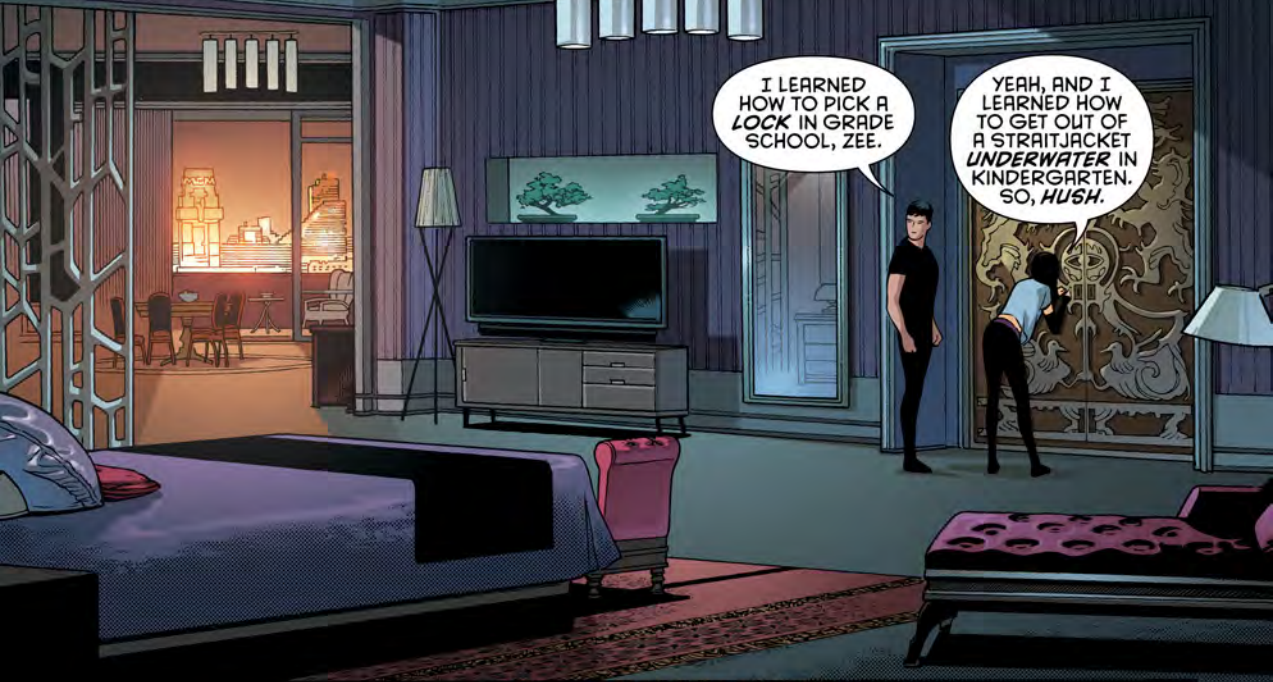


# LAS VEGAS. YEARS AGO.

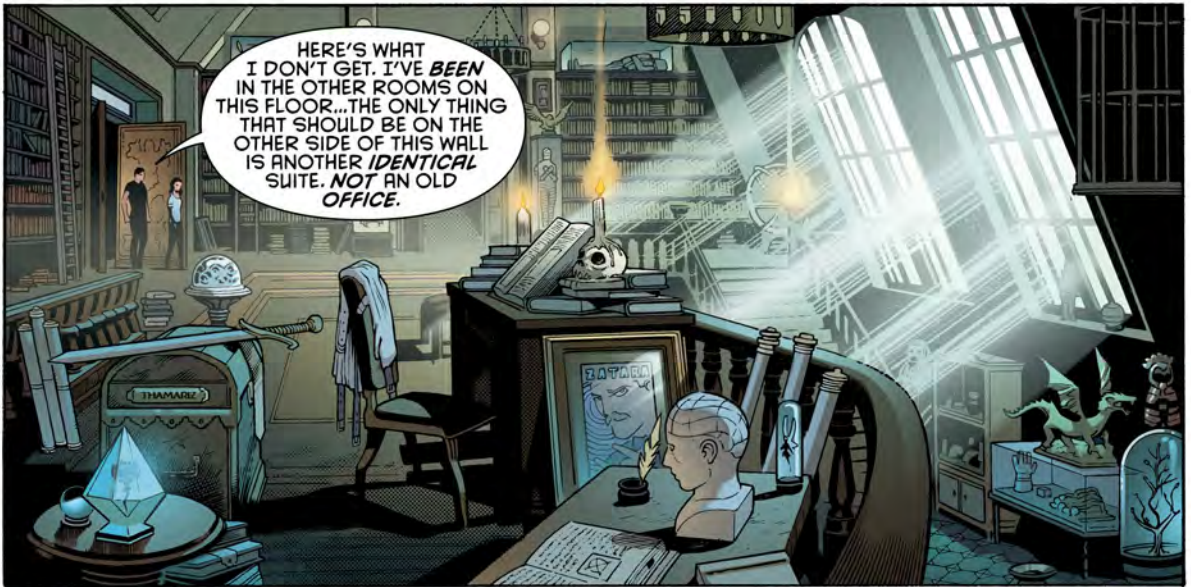


I LEARNED HOW TO PICK A LOCK IN GRADE SCHOOL, ZEE.

YEAH, AND I LEARNED HOW TO GET OUT OF A STRAITJACKET IN KINDERGARTEN. SO, HUSH.



TA-DA!



HERE'S WHAT I DON'T GET. I'VE BEEN IN THE OTHER ROOMS ON THIS FLOOR...THE ONLY THING THAT SHOULD BE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS WALL IS ANOTHER IDENTICAL SUITE. NOT AN OLD OFFICE.



AND LOOK AT THE DUST ON THESE BOOKS. I THOUGHT YOU ONLY GOT TO LAS VEGAS A COUPLE MONTHS AGO...



YOU SURE ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS, BRUCE.

YOU SURE EVADE A LOT OF QUESTIONS.



A MAGICIAN **NEVER** REVEALS HER TRICKS. I THOUGHT YOU WERE **LISTENING** TO DAD DURING HIS LESSONS.

THAT'S, LIKE, MAGIC 101. EVEN **KIDS** GET THAT.



THE NEXT THING YOU'LL BE TELLING ME IS THAT THIS IS **REAL** HONEST-TO-GOD MAGIC.



BRUCE...  
LOOK, THERE ARE **RULES**. REALLY STRICT RULES ABOUT THIS KIND OF THING. LETTING SOMEONE FROM THE OUTSIDE INTO **OUR** WORLD.

BUT I CARE A LOT ABOUT YOU.



ZEE...

AND I SEE THE **PAIN** IN YOUR EYES...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ZATANNA?

I'M TALKING ABOUT **KNOWING**. KNOWING FOR **SURE**, WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT, WHETHER OR NOT YOU'RE GOING TO SUCCEED.

YOU'RE SO AFRAID OF WHAT THE **FUTURE** MIGHT HOLD, BRUCE.

WHAT IF I SAID I COULD **SHOW** YOU?

# INTELLIGENCE

PART 3:  
SHORT  
CIRCUIT

I'M SORRY, BRUCE. I REALLY AM. BUT THE ANSWER IS STILL NO.

YOU WERE NEVER SUPPOSED TO REMEMBER IT EVEN EXISTED.

JAMES TYNION IV WRITER  
ALVARO MARTINEZ PENCILS  
RAUL FERNANDEZ INKS  
BRAD ANDERSON COLORS  
SAL GARRANO LETTERS  
YASMINE PUTRI COVER  
RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE VARIANT COVER  
DAVE KUIELGOSZ ASST. EDITOR  
CHRIS CONROY EDITOR  
MARK DOYLE GROUP EDITOR  
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE  
WITH BILL FINGER  
ZATANNA CREATED BY  
GARDNER FOH & MURPHY ANDERSON

## Gotham City. Now.

OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS, I'VE BRUSHED ACROSS THE EDGE OF A GREAT CONSPIRACY THREE TIMES. A SECRET WAR, WITH SOLDIERS AND ASSASSINS CLASHING IN THE SHADOWS OF OUR WORLD.

EACH TIME, MY MEMORY OF THE ENCOUNTER WAS TAKEN FROM ME. UNTIL A FEW WEEKS AGO, WHEN ONE OF MY GREATEST ADVERSARIES GAVE ME THOSE MEMORIES BACK...

AND WITH IT, THE EARLIEST MEMORY THAT HAD BEEN STRIPPED AWAY. THE ONE THAT HID THE WAY FOR ME TO SOLVE ALL OF THESE MYSTERIES IN AN INSTANT.


I'M NOT A STARRY-EYED SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD ANYMORE. I WAS TRYING TO IMPRESS YOU, SHOW YOU THAT I KNEW THIS ENTIRE HIDDEN WORLD BEHIND THE ONE YOU KNEW.

YOU KNOW THE COST OF KNOWING THINGS, BRUCE. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT MORE THAN MOST.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY I PERFORM AS A STAGE MAGICIAN? WHY MY FATHER DID BEFORE ME?


IT WAS TO HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT. A MAGICIAN'S TRICK. SLEIGHT OF HAND.

THAT WAS PART OF THE PERFORMANCE, TOO. A SILLY LINE TO DISTRACT PEOPLE FROM THE TRUTH.



HERE'S THE **REAL** TRICK, BRUCE. THE SECRET BEHIND IT ALL. THE MORE YOU LET MAGIC CONSUME YOUR LIFE, THE LESS **CONNECTED** TO THE REAL WORLD YOU BECOME. YOU BECOME A GHOST OF YOURSELF.

YOU BECOME LESS AND LESS OF A PERSON. IT JUST **EATS AWAY** AT YOU, BRUCE. EVERY DAY, THE KNOWLEDGE JUST **CONSUMES** YOU.



SUDDENLY, YOU KNOW THAT **NONE** OF THE LAWS OF NATURE REALLY MATTER. YOU CAN **CHANGE** ALL OF IT WITH A FEW BACKWARDS WORDS.



**YTIVARG ON EROM.**





THGIN  
SEMOCEB  
YAD.



NIAR  
SEMOCEB  
SREWOLF.



AND THEN  
YOU CAN  
PUT IT ALL  
RIGHT  
BACK.

KCAB OT  
LAMRON.