

WATCHTOWER

5.04 | "Court"

Written by
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Based on the character of 'Chloe Sullivan,'
created by Al Gough and Miles Millar

Based on characters from
DC Comics

CREATED BY
Jack D. Malone

PRODUCED BY
TheVPN (www.vpn-tv.proboards.com)

MAIN CAST

CHLOE SULLIVAN	Allison Mack
BRUCE WAYNE / BATMAN	Christian Bale
HELENA BERTINELLI / HUNTRESS	Kayla Ewell
JAMES GORDON	Dylan Walsh
KATE KANE / BATWOMAN	Deborah Ann Woll
LUCIUS FOX / BATWING	Charles Michael Davis
RENEE MONTOYA	Stephanie Beatriz
ARCHER SULLIVAN-QUEEN	Jace Norman
OLIVER QUEEN / GREEN ARROW	Justin Hartley

GUEST CAST

CROWLEY HAWKER	Donal Logue
DICK GRAYSON	Patrick J. Adams
JASON TODD	Rhys Matthew Bond
JULIE MADISON	Darby Stanchfield
SARAH ESSEN	Vera Farmiga
VERONICA VALE	Jeri Ryan

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, WEAPONS DIVISION - DAY

A deceased JULIE lies under a blanket on a slab of a desk stained with her own blood. Hands fix the blanket around her, and pull it up - she's covered.

CRANE UP to find a composed VERONICA fixing the blanket.

CHLOE (O.S.)
I don't understand.

Veronica turns to face CHLOE - she's in a state of shock, eyes fixed on the lifeless body covered up on the desk.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
She was so happy and hopeful and alive just a few hours ago and now she - she's just... gone.

VERONICA
Yes. Life can be... so cruel.

Veronica looks back to the body -- void of emotion.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I've come to see death as anything but predictable.

Veronica looks to the remains of THE TALON - he's sprawled across the floor in a pool of his own blood.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
And it always comes when we least expect it. When it can somehow hurt us the most.

Veronica snaps out of her grief, then returns to Chloe.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I had an uncle that passed away after suffering from a terrible disease for almost his entire life. But it wasn't the disease that killed him, no. It was the flu. Because that's the thing. The thing that plagues us--

CHLOE
(remembering)
-is rarely the thing that kills us.

Veronica shifts, almost as if she's been exposed.

(CONTINUED)

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CHLOE (CONT'D)

Where have I heard that before?

Chloe's lost in her memory - it feels important... a hand clenches her arm and steers her back to a concerned Veronica.

VERONICA

We should go.

CHLOE

Right.

A nod shared between the two women. And they part.

DRIFT AWAY from the fleeing women as we descend into the ground, under a THICK BLACK that consumes everything--

INT. TUNNELS - DAY

OUT OF THE BLACK and down into the tight space -- Chloe guides Veronica through the specially designed tunnel system.

VERONICA

So what brought you back to Gotham?

CHLOE

Bruce. I came to say goodbye.

VERONICA

You know, I'm shocked. For a man that bypasses a panic room to install his own tunnel system underneath a company building - it doesn't really make sense how that Anarky kid was able to get to him.

CHLOE

It's like you said - death is unpredictable.

Chloe wriggles with the lie, then halts.

VERONICA

What is it? What's wrong?

CHLOE

This tunnel. It's not just a safe route out of here - it leads somewhere. Somewhere that's going to open your eyes to a world you may not be ready to know.

VERONICA

Bruce was the most powerful man in the city with his own underground tunnel system.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VERONICA (CONT'D)

It wouldn't make sense for him to
not carry a lot of secrets.

Chloe becomes acutely aware of her surroundings.

CHLOE

Noted.

Chloe and Veronica continue through the tunnel...

DESCEND into the ground -- into BLACK.

INT. BATCAVE - DAY

OUT OF THE BLACK where a large cave wall parts to welcome
Chloe and Veronica. While Chloe darts forward, Veronica
gravitates back - a look of bewilderment across her face.

VERONICA

Wow.

Chloe scales a set of steps, then turns into--

CHLOE

Gordon?!

The name strikes a chord with Veronica. She tenses.

SWISH PAN to find a bound GORDON, tied to a chair with his
head slung down in grief and shame.

Chloe drops to his aid.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

What's going on?

Chloe rips at the ropes.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Where's Bruce? Lucius? Who did
this to you?

A wave of revelation hits Chloe and she stops. Her hands
pull away from the ropes...

CHLOE (CONT'D)

(realising)

The thing that plagues us...

Chloe looks up - her eyes lock with Gordon's.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Veronica.

Chloe rises, then turns into-- *THWACK!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A PISTOL cracks against Chloe's head and she slumps to the ground. Unconscious.

CRANE UP to find Veronica, standing over her with a gun.

Gordon locks eyes with Veronica and a wave of fear washes over him. He wrestles the rest of the ropes off his hands, then moves to run.

Veronica simply aims the gun down at him. He halts.

VERONICA

I would think very carefully about
what you do next.

ON Gordon - contemplating his next move with a gun aimed straight for his head...

Veronica shifts the gun towards an unconscious Chloe.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Or do you want more blood on your
hands? Because that could
definitely be arranged.

Gordon JOLTS up in dispute.

GORDON

Enough.

Veronica steadies the gun back onto Gordon.

GORDON (CONT'D)

I'll do whatever you want.

VERONICA

Good. Come with me.

Veronica gestures for Gordon to step around her and he complies. She guides him back towards the tunnels with the gun pressed against his back. Her prisoner.

PULL BACK to the empty chair with loose ropes at its side, and an unconscious CHLOE on the ground nearby.

BRUCE (O.S.)

Chloe?

From behind - a startled BRUCE races over while LUCIUS stumbles into the Batcave in the BG.

Bruce drops to Chloe's aid. He shakes her awake.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Chloe, what happened?

Chloe jolts up. Shaken.

(CONTINUED)

WATCHTOWER, 'Court'
CONTINUED: (2)

5.

CHLOE
Veronica, she -- it was Veronica.

Lucius creeps in. Confused.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
I think she's working with the
Court of Owls.

Bruce looks back to Lucius, just as confused--

LUCIUS
That's - that's impossible.

Chloe clings to Bruce. Desperate.

CHLOE
Bruce. I think she killed Julie.

OFF the shock building across Bruce's expression...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A towering courthouse cranes up to the sky.

JULIE (PRELAP)
A fish rots from the head down,
ladies and gentlemen.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A packed courtroom. A line of twelve jurors sit on the right side of the room, with a JUDGE (60s) at the forefront. Two tables, divided by party, with opposing sides reflected in the aisles of seats behind them. A high-profile trial.

JULIE has the floor. She addresses the jurors.

JULIE
So let this be a message to the
most rotten of them all.

The accused - LOUIE LARK (30s, shaggy) - shifts in his seat, eyeing his lawyer, then throwing a gnarly look Julie's way.

JULIE (CONT'D)
A message that brings order back to
chaos, that brings law back to the
corrupt.

The jurors plug in to Julie's sentiment. She fixes on them.

JULIE (CONT'D)
If you find this man guilty of the
crimes that have been charged
against him and laid out in
extensive detail throughout this
trial, believe that it will clear a
path for us to bring justice to the
head of this criminal underbelly
found deep in the fabric of our
great city and Gotham can finally
be free of the corruption that
plagues us.

The jurors grow inspired.

Julie turns back to leave but locks eyes with a man in the visitor's seats - it's CROWLEY HAWKER (40s, rough). He's glued to her every movement. It rattles her for a moment, but she continues back to her seat. Strong.

CRANE BACK and into the crowd of visitors to find... BRUCE, watching on with a growing smile.

INT. BATCAVE - DAY

BRUCE sits at the large computer system. He studies a map on a monitor that highlights a series of tunnels heading into a building marked 'Wayne Enterprises.'

BRUCE

Veronica is taking Gordon back through the tunnels you accessed to get here. Once she's inside Wayne Enterprise, I can initiate the lockdown protocol to keep them there. Then I'll pay her a visit.

Behind Bruce stands a confused Chloe - she seems more focused on *him* than their mission. Bruce notices the silence.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Everything alright?

CHLOE

I was about to ask you that.

BRUCE

Well, the answer is no.

Bruce returns his focus to the computer.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Veronica Vale, a higher up for the Court of Owls, has taken Gordon, who now knows I'm alive which means the Court now knows I'm alive, and everything I had planned to help save this city has perished.

CHLOE

I'm not - I'm not talking about that, I'm talking about... Julie.

BRUCE

Oh.

CHLOE

You haven't said anything about--

BRUCE

This is a war we're fighting. And you don't win wars unscathed. There will always be casualties.

Chloe looks to Bruce - *how can he say that?*

An oblivious LUCIUS enters beside them. He waves a phone towards Bruce - an indication of activity...

(CONTINUED)

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LUCIUS

Just got a hit someone's entered
Wayne Enterprise. I'll give you
two guesses on who you think it is.

BRUCE

You're sure they're in?

LUCIUS

Positive.

BRUCE

Then let's shut it down.

Bruce returns to the computer. He proceeds to type on the
keyboard - the MAP on screen BLINKS RED then text erupts
reading 'Lockdown.'

CHLOE

What's the plan here exactly?
You're just going to go in there
and grab her?

BRUCE

I'm not.

Bruce hits another key on the keyboard.

A GLASS CAPSULE rises from the ground - it contains an
upgraded black and grey BATMAN SUIT (ala 'The Dark Knight
Returns'). Bruce approaches it with determination.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

He is.

Chloe looks to Lucius, who appears inspired. They both watch
as Bruce reunites with his destiny... THE BATMAN.

CRANE BACK to the computer monitor where security footage
shows a startled VERONICA and GORDON in Wayne Enterprises -
they appear to be looking around a hallway in confusion...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HALLWAY - DAY

Lights on an elevator control panel dim to nothing.

Veronica turns from the interface to confront the target
she's holding at gun-point... Gordon. He's emotionless.

VERONICA

We're going to have to find another
way out of here.

GORDON

How about through a window?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VERONICA

Come on!

Veronica nudges Gordon forward, down the hall. She follows him with the gun fixed on his back.

GORDON

I don't really care what you do with me.

VERONICA

It's pathetic. You lose your wife and all value of your life ceases to exist.

They reach the head office door, and proceed through it--

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HEAD OFFICE - DAY

Veronica closes the door behind her, then navigates the large office space where the windows are blocked over by large protective steel walls. A beat, and she returns to Gordon.

VERONICA

I didn't want this. For you, or for me.

Lost in the moment, Veronica lowers her gun.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I know there were times when we plucked at the strings Sarah had held on you by being the woman you loved. But we wouldn't have hurt her - or you, for that matter.

Gordon notices the gun is no longer on him. He meets Veronica's eyes - *he's listening...*

VERONICA (CONT'D)

The truth is -- Bruce was your real enemy all along. He used you and your family until it no longer served him. And now your wife is dead because of it.

Gordon almost *twitches* at the realisation...

VERONICA (CONT'D)

If anything, this should have made you realise the one thing I've been trying to tell you since our paths crossed all those years ago.

Veronica closes the gap between her and Gordon - feeding these words deep into his mind...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Every single moment of your life
has lead you to your true calling.
And that calling is to the Court of
Owls. It's time to honour that.

Gordon *shifts* at the declaration.

GORDON

No.

VERONICA

Excuse me?

GORDON

The only calling I've ever had is
to my family.

A beat, and he realises--

GORDON (CONT'D)

And you're all in the way of that.

Gordon rushes Veronica into the wall. His hands twist around hers and he wrestles the gun up to her neck. She becomes submissive - faced with her mortality...

The fear in Veronica's eyes triggers Gordon. He hesitates.

GORDON (CONT'D)

The only thing stopping me from
pulling this trigger... is Vicki.

Gordon rips back from Veronica - the gun now in his hands.

VERONICA

You've just dug your own grave.

GORDON

Open your damn eyes, Veronica.
This story... it ends the same for
all of us.

Veronica senses his vulnerabilities resurfacing. She steps forward - as if to prey on them...

VERONICA

(soft)

But *this* story doesn't have to--

Gordon SWINGS back around with the gun, and CLOCKS her across the face. She slumps to the ground. Unconscious.

OFF the floor, craning to--

INT. BULLOCK LAWYERS, HALLWAY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A SET OF HEELS clap against the floor...

CRANE UP to find JULIE in fast approach of her office. She carries with her a set of files pressed hard to her chest that she shimmies to the side to reach for the door.

INT. BULLOCK LAWYERS, JULIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The door opens, and Julie enters. She immediately gasps, and drops the files in her hands. They scatter.

Sitting at her desk is CROWLEY (the man from court).

CROWLEY

Hello, Julie.

Julie backs up -- *into* a set of hands.

TWO MEN appear behind Julie and guide her back into the room.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

Here, you can have your seat back.
I was just keeping it warm for you.

Crowley rises from the seat, and offers it to Julie. She shakes her head, resistant. The men behind her usher her forward with force. A beat, and she complies.

A slight chuckle, and Crowley moves around the desk. He now stands opposite Julie. A confrontation.

JULIE

You're making a mistake, Crowley.

CROWLEY

I haven't done anything... yet.

JULIE

If you want to stay out of trouble,
then you might just want to keep it
that way.

Crowley leans in. Amused.

CROWLEY

And why's that?

JULIE

If anything happens to me during
this trial, there will be severe
consequences - not just *for you* but
for your boss... and anyone else
associated with him.

Crowley moves around the table to stand beside Julie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CROWLEY

Oh, that's so... cute. There's very few people left in this city who are so beautifully naive and filled with blind hope.

Julie twitches with discomfort and fear.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

The judge has been bought and paid for by my "boss." Tomorrow will see a not-guilty verdict read, and the trial will be over.

A beat. Crowley leans in, close to Julie...

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

(sharp whisper)

And they're not even going to be able to identify your body until months after that.

Julie JOLTS up in resistance, then-- *CLICK!*

A CUFF restrains Julie to the chair. She wriggles, but feels its restraint. She's trapped.

The two men reel GAS CANS out and pour GASOLINE over Julie.

Crowley steps back amidst the screams. He withdraws a small box of matches and motions to ignite a match.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

Step away, boys.

The two men part from Julie -- she's trembling with fear, and left in a pool of gasoline. Drenched.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

It's about to get very hot in here.

Crowley SCRAPES the match -- it IGNITES.

FOLLOW THE MATCH as it flicks out of Crowley's hand and onto the desk... evolving into a WILDFIRE.

The force propels Crowley and his men back a step.

Fire wraps around a mortified Julie and narrows in on her, wrestling her arm against the chair until--

CRASH!

A LINE fires through the window and wraps around Julie and the chair -- she's PULLED back, and out of the window.

EXT. BULLOCK LAWYERS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Out of the window -- Julie, cuffed to a chair, is reeled into a descending BATMAN by a line that CUTS. He pulls her around, into his chest, then severs the cuffs binding her to the chair. Disconnected, they freefall. Together.

ON THE GROUND where the chair SHATTERS - a CAPE soon whips up, then gently lowers. It's Batman, landing with a safe Julie. He pulls his GRAPPLE GUN back in.

A startled Julie recoils from Batman. Shaken.

BATMAN

Whoa, whoa. I've got you. You're safe. *You're safe.*

Julie eases into Batman's touch, then relaxes. Safe.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

I'm not going to let them hurt you.

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, WEAPONS DIVISION - NIGHT

A wall opens to reveal BATMAN, bearing ten more years of pain and grief in his eyes. He catches glimpse of something to his left and is struck still.

A path awaits him towards an elevator at the end of the room, but a deceased Julie on a slab to his left haunts him.

Batman proceeds through the room, eyes forward, determined to keep his mind focused on the mission. He reaches the elevator, activates it, then steps in upon the parting doors.

OFF Batman, swallowing his grief as the doors close...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Elevator doors open on a composed Batman. He steps forward, out of the elevator -- *into* GORDON, holding him at gunpoint.

GORDON

Don't even think about it.

OFF their confrontation...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gordon confronts Batman at gunpoint.

GORDON

I've often wondered how this was going to end for us. All those years by your side -- watching people you loved be sucked into the hurricane of your grief and anger, trying so desperately to ground you, only to be violently ripped out in the process. And lost. Lost forever. Because of you.

Batman twitches with new pangs of grief - *for Julie...*

GORDON (CONT'D)

I don't know why I thought I'd be any different. I don't know why I thought the fate of my family around you would be different.

BATMAN

I can explain everything to you if you just listened--

Gordon tightens his aim on Batman.

GORDON

I'm done listening to you - to anyone. Truth is, as much as I want to blame you - or *the Court of Owls* - it's my fault for being swept up in this mess. And you were right. I can be free of that now. Starting with you.

Gordon inches closer, then pulls on the trigger--

A quick SWIPE from Batman, and he knocks Gordon's aim to the side before-- *BANG!*

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HEAD OFFICE - NIGHT

The gunshot echoes. A floored Veronica JOLTS up, out of her slumber, then remembers -- *she's in danger*. She rises, then frantically looks around the room for a means of escape.

FOLLOW a panicked Veronica around the room, swiping at windows to see if they open...

A SHADOW rushes past her.

(CONTINUED)

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Veronica turns around in a gasp to find... BATMAN.

Batman dismantles a gun in his hand, then tosses the weapon aside. He straightens - a stoic figure of judgement in front of his enemy.

BATMAN
Hello, Veronica.

OFF Veronica, backing into the wall in fear...

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

Chloe leans against a cave wall, head down in thought. A shadow washes over her and she looks up to find Lucius, stood in front of her with a sense of affection.

LUCIUS
How are you holding up?

CHLOE
Is that a serious question?

LUCIUS
I guess I can read between the lines for that answer.

A moment of levity between old friends. Chloe notes the openness, then closes in on Lucius.

CHLOE
You've been here, right - since I left? You've... been by his side through all of it?

LUCIUS
Yes.

CHLOE
What happened to him?

LUCIUS
You've missed a lot, Chloe.

CHLOE
Well give me the cliff notes version of events, then - because I don't recognise that man anymore. I don't know *this* Bruce. At all.

LUCIUS
I don't know what to tell you.

CHLOE
Tell me why he is the way that he is... tell me what happened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCIUS

Bruce is the way he is because it keeps us alive.

CHLOE

Yeah. Tell that to Julie.

The reminder cuts Lucius deep. He withdraws.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Oh, Lucius. I'm sorry - I didn't even... I'm just - I'm *scared*.

Chloe closes the gap between her and Lucius.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

I didn't ask to come back here - away from my family. I'm terrified of what my son must be going through - not knowing if I'm alive or dead. And I want to believe that death isn't going to be the outcome for me here, for all of us here, but I don't have anyone around me that I can trust with my life -- *other than you*.

Chloe reaches for Lucius but he pulls away. Hurt.

LUCIUS

You're the one that left *us*, alright. You turned the lights out at Watchtower and left us and this city behind. Forever. The only reason why you don't recognise Bruce is because a *lot can happen in twelve years*. And if you want the cliff notes version of events - if you want to understand why Bruce is the way he is - then think about how you would be if you didn't leave Gotham. Think about how you would be if you stayed.

Lucius leaves Chloe with that thought - and it dawns on her how much this city can change someone...

Chloe's line of vision gravitates towards the ROBIN suit held in a glass capsule - as though it were a symbol of an entire unfamiliar life lived. *What happened here?*

And then Chloe finds her way back to the bat-computer, inspired to find those answers for herself...

OFF the BAT-SYMBOL on the computer...

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

FROM A BAT-SYMBOL - draw out to reveal BATMAN on a rooftop opposite a dishevelled JULIE (she wears the scorch marks of her survival). She's clearly still processing.

BATMAN

I'm sorry I didn't get to you sooner. I anticipated the confrontation in your office was going to be a scare tactic, not an attempt on your life.

Julie is pulled out of her own inner bubble and locks eyes with Batman - *listening...*

JULIE

You knew they were coming for me?

Batman simply nods.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You should have contacted the police -- given them a tip. A move like the one they just made would have been enough evidence to build a stronger bridge to Cobblepot. It could have won us the case.

BATMAN

You've already lost the case.

Julie sinks back - her worst fears *confirmed*.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Since the trial began, I learned the judge had been bought and paid for - that's why I've been watching over you. The truth is, I'm surprised they've left it this late to try something.

JULIE

And the jury?

BATMAN

I'm sure they'll find Lark guilty, but it won't matter.

JULIE

(realising)
Verdict notwithstanding.

Julie pulls away - furious at this outcome.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (CONT'D)

I'm so stupid for thinking I was *this close* to taking down the biggest crime lord in Gotham. I should have known it wouldn't have been easy. I should have--

Julie stops in her tracks. Revelation hits her.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Wait.

Julie turns to face Batman - *he's still here.*

JULIE (CONT'D)

You're The Batman.

BATMAN

Are you just now noticing that?

Julie confronts him.

JULIE

You're The Batman and you're just as hellbent on taking down *The Penguin* as anyone else in this city, if not more. Despite the whole heroism aspect to your very dark, very broody persona - which involved saving my ass in that office - you'd usually sweep up the criminal culprits and leave me in the wind to collect my things and go but you didn't. You stayed... with me. Which means--

BATMAN

I need your help.

Julie shifts at the admission - *what can she do?*

BATMAN (CONT'D)

I need to know if you're willing to align yourself with a vigilante.

JULIE

You catch 'em, I cook 'em?

BATMAN

Precisely.

JULIE

I like the sound of that.

OFF the two solidifying a partnership...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HEAD OFFICE - NIGHT

A menacing Batman, filled with a violent rage, narrows in on Veronica, who backs away from him in total fear. She stumbles into the desk then raises her hands in mercy.

VERONICA

You're not going to hurt me, Bruce.

Batman KICKS Veronica back -- she's propelled over the table, and hits the ground in a huff. Winded.

BATMAN

You're right.

Batman latches onto the table, and violently THROWS it aside to clear a path to Veronica. She panics, crawling back until she reaches the wall - a ball of fear...

BATMAN (CONT'D)

I'm going to do so much worse.

Batman LIFTS Veronica back up and pins her against the wall with one hand, then detaches a GAUNTLET with the other.

ON THE SHARP GAUNTLET now pressed against Veronica's throat.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Do you know what happened to the last person that took someone I loved away from me?

VERONICA

You killed him.

Batman presses the gauntlet in - a LINE OF BLOOD draws from Veronica's throat and she hisses with pain.

BATMAN

Do you want to share his fate?

Batman withdraws. A relieved Veronica sinks down.

Veronica swipes the blood from her neck and examines it across her fingertips - a *reminder of her mortality*. She soon shifts back into her cunning composure...

VERONICA

Pretty sure you snapped his neck, not slit it.

Batman pushes Veronica back into the wall.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You don't scare me, *Bruce*. You never have and you never will.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VERONICA (CONT'D)

When it comes to taking on me, you've been a neutered shell of a man since you *failed to save my niece*. And while I may not be as pure as *the Victoria Vale*, I share a resemblance that always seems to cripple you and I am willing to bet everything I have that it's the one superpower in my arsenal that will keep me alive.

BATMAN

You're disgusting.

VERONICA

I am what the Court needs me to be.

BATMAN

Why? What do they have on you?

VERONICA

It's not about blackmail. They're on the right side here. They've done more for this city than you ever have or ever will. And it's a shame you'll never know the true extent of what the Court of Owls has done for Gotham.

BATMAN

No. The true shame here is your unfortunate inability to recognise the full extent of what *I'm* willing to do for this city.

Batman types on an interface that appears on his forearm and suddenly the STEEL WALLS covering the windows open up.

The view of the city is *horrifying*. It's dark, depleted, drained of any sign of life. Smoke fills the streets. Sporadic fires pepper throughout. *Chaos*.

Batman stumbles back, in awe of what's left of the city.

Veronica notices his reaction, then follows his line of vision to see the city for herself. She grows smug.

VERONICA

And you have done *so much* for it.

A defeated Batman looks back to Veronica.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I guess not much has changed after all these years. What makes you think you can save a city when you can't even save someone you love?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ON BATMAN - his sadness shifts to pure rage - a *demonic growl of anger* emits from his lungs and he GRAPPLES for Veronica's throat in one fowl swoop. *SWISH PAN* away--

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

SWISH PAN to find Chloe sat in front of the large bat-computer. An array of information floods the monitors in front of her and she watches intently.

ON THE MONITORS-

A newspaper article reads 'A Broken Bat' paired with an image of Batman paralysed in front of a victorious BANE.

Batman narrowly avoids each attack by a violent DOOMSDAY.

Footage plays of a news report with SUMMER GLEESON front and center beside a chyron that reads 'Wayne Lovechild Rumors Ignite After Sighting With Unidentified Boy.' Three images appear beside the red-head of Bruce with a dark-haired boy.

Footage shows news sightings of the BAT-FAMILY (suited heroes resembling BATWOMAN, NIGHTWING, RED ROBIN, ROBIN, BLACK BAT, and BATWING).

Batman cradles a bloodied Robin in his hands. SHAKY-CAM to--

Another news segment depicts an orphanage surrounded by GCPD. A chyron reads 'Orphanage Held Hostage by The Joker.'

SARAH (O.S.)

That wasn't exactly a fun time.

Chloe hastily shuts down the monitor, then snaps around to the familiar voice to find... SARAH (a little hazy but otherwise alive and well).

CHLOE

Sarah?

OFF the shocking reveal...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

At the bat-computer, Chloe awkwardly stands to meet Sarah.

CHLOE

You're up.

SARAH

I am. Was I not supposed to be?

CHLOE

Bruce said the dosage was big enough to keep you down for most of the day. How are you feeling?

SARAH

Exhausted. But alive, thank god.

Sarah examines the emptiness of the cave.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Where's Jim?

Chloe recoils into herself - hesitant.

SARAH (CONT'D)

You're unusually quiet.

CHLOE

There's something you need to--

LUCIUS bursts into the room in a panic.

LUCIUS

Bruce is in trouble.

CHLOE

What's going on?

LUCIUS

Lockdown protocol on the Wayne Enterprise building was reversed and the cameras have been shut down. We've lost eyes on Bruce.

Chloe spins back around to access the computer.

ON THE MONITOR - *the security cameras are filled with static.*

CHLOE

Damn it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCIUS

You thought I was joking?

CHLOE

Just trying to help.

Sarah tugs at Lucius' arm.

SARAH

Lucius -- where is my husband?

LUCIUS

Gordon's inside... with Bruce.

SARAH

He knows I'm alive, right? Tell me
Bruce's little charade worked, and
he's helping him take down the
Court of Owls.

Lucius refuses to answer. Sarah directs her focus on Chloe,
who rises to deliver the truth.

CHLOE

Veronica took Gordon before we
could tell him what *really*
happened. If he crosses paths with
Bruce, it's not to help him - it's
to kill him.

Sarah SLAMS her hands against Lucius' chest - *pleading...*

SARAH

You let him do this!

LUCIUS

I couldn't have known that--

SARAH

No.

Sarah pushes Lucius back in his step. He straightens,
wearing the guilt of his actions and sensing the hurt
motivating Sarah's.

SARAH (CONT'D)

You might be okay with severing
your marriage for the greater good,
but I'm not. So you get your ass
back in that suit and you bring my
husband home. Now.

Lucius backs off, then looks to Chloe for reassurance but she
only offers a look of uncertainty. *This is his decision.*

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HALLWAY - NIGHT

A struggling Gordon writhes out of slumber on the floor, and winces at the pain brought upon by his movement.

GLASS SHATTERS O.S.

Gordon springs up off the ground - he's suddenly aware of his situation and surroundings. He darts his eyes down the hall, in the direction of the action ahead...

GORDON
(furious)
Bruce.

Gordon rushes down the hall, in approach of the head office.

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HEAD OFFICE - NIGHT

Gordon erupts into the room, then immediately settles back at the sight in front of him -- Veronica stands in front of a window that is completely ripped apart. She backs away from an angry Batman, his eyes fixed only on her.

GORDON
What the *hell* are you doing?!

BATMAN
Stay back, Jim.

Gordon's eyes dart around the room, then land on... A HANDGUN rests on the floor (from earlier). Gordon rushes for it, then swipes it up into his possession. He aims for Batman.

GORDON
Don't you dare.

Batman shifts - eyes barely looking over his shoulder to find his old partner aiming a gun for him.

GORDON (CONT'D)
You don't get to kill my wife out of some attempt to gut me for information on the Court of Owls, only to kill the single most valuable source of information you have on the organisation.

BATMAN
That was before I saw the state of my city - what's *left* of it.

GORDON
It doesn't change anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BATMAN
(erupting)
It changes everything!

A heated Batman glares at his prey - a frightened Veronica...

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Julie spent the past ten years
working to take down The Penguin.
He's the one seeking to destroy
Gotham, and if he succeeds then it
would have all been for nothing. I
refuse to let that happen. So as
much as I would love to figure out
the Court's role in all of this,
and to take you down, too--

Batman presses forward. Veronica gasps, almost slipping.

GORDON
The virus!

Batman peels back, then looks to Gordon.

GORDON (CONT'D)
The Clench. The Court's in
possession of it - *I've seen it.*

BATMAN
Good. Then you can be the one to
take me to it.

Batman gently PUSHES Veronica back, then--

SLOW-MO

Batman withdraws a BAT-A-RANG and spins around to launch it at Gordon -- it flips and flips through the wind until it collides with Gordon's hand to disarm him. On his return to the window, Batman watches a panicked Veronica stagger back and out of the window - a descent towards her death.

OFF Batman, staring down at his enemy descent...

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

DRIFT from a looming Batman, staring down from a nearby rooftop at the large parking lot drenched in the shadows where the JUDGE hurries through, shuffling for his keys in approach of his vehicle. He opens the door.

ON THE CAR WINDOW - a striking reflection of JULIE emerges behind the Judge. He SNAPS around in shock.

JUDGE
Ms. Madison? What are you--

(CONTINUED)

JULIE
We need to talk.

The judge shifts upon Julie's proposition.

JUDGE
This is highly inappropriate. I could have you disbarred -- it is unacceptable to approach a judge out of office hours on an ongoing case we are both involved in.

Julie reels a FOLDER out of her coat. The judge immediately grows silent, then blindly accepts it from Julie.

JUDGE (CONT'D)
What is this?

The judge flips through the folder.

JULIE
This is evidence that you might not exactly be the best *judge* to define "unacceptable" behaviour.

The judge turns pale at the documents inside the folder.

JUDGE
How - how did you get these?

JULIE
Is that what's important here?

The judge narrows in on Julie - *a threatening show of intimidation he quickly hesitates out of fulfilling.*

Julie nestles back into her nurturing persona.

JULIE (CONT'D)
I'm not trying to blackmail you.
I'm here to help you.

JUDGE
By calling the case in your favour?

JULIE
By letting you do your damn job - the way you're *supposed* to do it.
(beat)
One last time.

The judge shifts at the implication - *is that a threat?*

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIE (CONT'D)

Surely you must know that if someone like me is able to trace the money you received back to Cobblepot for this case, then any investigator would be able to find the same skeletons in your closet.

And the judge reaches the same conclusion - *it's over*.

JULIE (CONT'D)

This is your chance to end your career the way it started - noble, just, fair. It's your chance to preserve your otherwise *stellar* legacy and allow this last case to be one that matters.

JUDGE

He'll kill me.

JULIE

I can offer you protection.

Julie subtly looks over her shoulder.

Batman remains on the rooftop, watching over the confrontation. A guardian angel.

The judge squirms with hesitancy.

JUDGE

I don't - I don't know.

JULIE

When this case is over, the national push for the Penguin to be taken down is going to be ignited and you do not want to be one of the stories dug up out of the dark. Get ahead of this early - enter some sort of plea agreement that allows you to turn over this information - and you'll retain the legacy you've built for yourself without any of the stains that marked it's final chapter.

The judge shifts back - the words seem to be sinking in. He looks away and contemplates for a beat, then offers Julie a simple nod. *He's made a decision*.

OFF Batman, watching from afar with hope all is well...

EXT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES - NIGHT

A hopeless Batman stands at the edge of the broken window, staring down at his actions.

DRIFT DOWN towards a horrified Veronica, violently descending the length of the building. The wind rips at her, and she twirls in every direction, howling with expected defeat.

A BLUE LIGHT zips past and collides into Veronica - it sweeps her up, and carries her into ascension.

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HEAD OFFICE - NIGHT

From the shattered window, BATWING bursts through carrying a traumatised Veronica. They land. Veronica pushes back against her saviour, and shakily moves out of his hold and into... BATMAN. He latches onto the shaken Vale.

Under Batman's hold, Veronica dissolves into desperation.

VERONICA

No, no, no, no - stop! I'll tell you. I'll tell you everything.

Batman's eyes trail the room - a shared look of relief between Batwing, then Gordon. He looks back to Veronica with a nod, and releases his hold of her.

OFF Veronica, sinking into her own relief...

SARAH (PRELAP)

Where do I even start?

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

CHLOE and SARAH sit opposite each other in the cave. Chloe reaches forward and clings to Sarah. Desperate.

CHLOE

Anywhere. Just - *somewhere*, please. What happened to Bruce?

Sarah eases into Chloe's plea - a maternal connection.

SARAH

He had a family. Not the typical family. Dysfunctional. Broken. But his. And he lost it. Or, I guess, it was taken from him.

(beat)

Could you imagine watching your family perish? Or having to give them up?

The question looms on Chloe. It strikes her heart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SARAH (CONT'D)

That's what happened to Bruce.

CHLOE

I didn't - I didn't know...

SARAH

A lot can happen in twelve years.

Chloe shifts, uncertain of her intent behind the reminder.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm not trying to hurt you. I don't blame you for leaving Gotham behind. I was going to risk everything to save my son.

(sincere)

You made the right choice, Chloe.

CHLOE

Thank you.

(guilt-ridden)

But something tells me you won't think the same of my next choice.

Sarah grows puzzled.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

I don't know what I'd become if I lost my family, but I do know that I refuse to find out. And I also know that I'm not willing to work alongside someone as dangerous as Bruce in that kind of mindset.

(beat)

Grief has a way of clouding everything. If he's lost his family, then the only thing he cares about just as much and wants to protect above all else is this city. *His* city. No matter what happens to the rest of us.

SARAH

Yeah. Well, I'm beginning to see that now.

Sarah rises from her seat - a moment to step out of the direction of this conversation. She ponders.

CHLOE

He's been using us like we were weapons in his arsenal. Not to help save any of us, but to save his city. It's all he has left.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sarah fixates on the array of BAT-SUITS lined up in glass capsules - a symbol of the family Bruce no longer has...

SARAH

Look, I'm with you on this. If there was a way out of this nightmare, I'd take it at first glance. But there's not.

CHLOE

What if I've already found one?

Sarah SNAPS around - a glimmer of hope directed at Chloe.

Chloe accesses the computer -- the MONITOR displays security footage of the outskirts where an ARGUS AIRCRAFT remains on land. A passage of escape.

SARAH

Chloe, I--

The sound of a metal door opening echoes in.

Chloe immediately closes the footage, then rises beside Sarah. They look out at epicenter of the cave where four outlines of shadowed figures seep into clarity.

It's BRUCE, GORDON and LUCIUS surrounding a defeated VERONICA, their prisoner. Gordon catches eyes with Sarah.

GORDON

(relieved)

Sarah.

Gordon and Sarah race into each other's arms. Reunited.

OFF Chloe, completely detached from everything...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

ON BLACK.

The sound of people shuffling back to their seats...

JUDGE (PRELAP)
Have the jurors reached a verdict?

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A packed courtroom. The JURY FOREMAN looks down at the pieces of paper in his hands, then returns his focus to the Judge that eagerly awaits a response.

JURY FOREMAN
We have, your honour.

The GUARD takes the paper from the foreman and brings them to the Judge - he's almost hesitant to see the verdict.

A beat. The judge looks up - to face his moment of truth...

JUDGE
On the two counts of Conspiracy,
the jury finds the defendant...
(long pause)
Guilty.

LOUIE (the defendant) sinks back in disbelief.

Opposite him, at her table, JULIE fills with abundant relief, then looks over into the crowd where BRUCE sits. Victorious.

JUDGE (CONT'D)
On the charge of--

BANG! BLOOD spurts across the wall behind the Judge, and he collapses over the gaping BULLET WOUND in his chest.

SWISH PAN around to the GUARD who carries a smoking gun - he turns in to the approaching SECURITY GUARDS that swarm him and opens fire. **BANG! BANG! BANG!**

The jury scatter out of their boxes. The visitors flee the room. Bruce fights through the crowd to get to Julie.

Bodies collapse around the lone guard. He faces Louie.

ON a shaken Julie - she *studies* the shared look between the guard and Louie. *They know each other*.

Louie and his LAWYER cut free and escape.

Suddenly, the guard is looking at Julie. She staggers back, then holds her ground. Defiant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUCE erupts through the last surge of the crowd and charges for Julie. He shields her with his back, then pulls Julie down to the ground for cover.

BANG! The guard misses his shot, then readjusts.

A swarm of security guards enter the room and bury the lone guard under their collective force.

Julie cranes up and out from under Bruce's protection.

JULIE

Where's Lark? *Where is he?!*

INT. COURT HOUSE, ENTRANCE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A panicked LOUIE LARK and his LAWYER bolt down the hall in pursuit of the entrance doors. A gunshot rings and the lawyer immediately collapses behind Lark.

Louie simply continues forward and BURSTS THROUGH THE DOORS--

EXT. COURT HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The doors erupt open and Louie charges out of the court house, and - *THUMP!* He bounces off a teenager-- A HAND SWIPES his arm and connects a device-- then Louie descends the stands, and disappears to freedom.

The teenager (17) turns into view: he has jet black hair, and a cheeky grin stitched from ear to ear. This is JASON TODD.

Jason adjusts his earpiece.

JASON

Tracker's planted.

ON THE EARPIECE - Jason removes his hand and the ROBIN SYMBOL is revealed (a metallic yellow 'R').

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

DRIFT from the same ROBIN SYMBOL that's engraved in the glass capsule of the suit and into the cave where Bruce and Chloe watch the wall seal in front of an imprisoned Veronica.

BRUCE

That's better.

Bruce motions to leave. Chloe turns to follow - confused.

CHLOE

So I guess we're not interrogating her tonight, then?

BRUCE

No, not tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chloe follows after Bruce.

CHLOE
What about Julie?

BRUCE
What *about* Julie?

Chloe clings to Bruce and ropes him back around to face her.

CHLOE
You just left her there? I thought
you'd at least bring her back to--

BRUCE
To what? Stink up the cave?

Chloe pushes back from Bruce - *she's disgusted.*

CHLOE
What the hell is wrong with you?

Bruce turns his back, but Chloe continues after him.

CHLOE (CONT'D)
You knew Julie for a whole decade.
I knew her for barely a day, and
somehow her death has affected me a
hell of a lot more than it has you.
(beat)
You know, maybe you became this -
this *version* of yourself that shuts
everything off when it comes to
being a functional human being
because you thought it's the best
way to protect the people that you
love, but it's clearly not working
because Julie is dead.

Bruce stops in his tracks, and so does Chloe. A revelation
dawns on Chloe - a painful truth striking hard...

CHLOE (CONT'D)
My god. That's it - you didn't
bring me back here to save this
city... you - you had a plan up
your sleeve this whole time.

Bruce slowly turns to confront Chloe, figuring it out...

CHLOE (CONT'D)
No. No, you brought me back here
to save your soul.

And Bruce meets eyes with Chloe - *exposed.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Well, I'm sorry, Bruce. There isn't a soul to save.

The words cut a now vulnerable Bruce where it hurts.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

I don't know when, and I don't know how, but somewhere along the way you lost the part of you that made you human - that made you more than some *vengeful child that lost his parents and wanted to make the criminals of the world hurt just as much as he did.*

BRUCE

Shut up.

Chloe bites back--

CHLOE

No, you brought me here - you took me away from my family, and you have made my son suffer the same fate as you.

BRUCE

I said enough!

Chloe bridges the gap between her and Bruce.

CHLOE

No. I will *not* let you drag me back into the shadows with you when *none of us* have a light with us anymore.

Chloe almost whimpers - a sharp pang of emotion cutting her off. Bruce studies her for a beat.

BRUCE

What are you talking about?

Chloe fights back her tears.

CHLOE

I lost my soul, too. When I killed Maxwell Lord's mother in cold blood. I lost my soul. And I never got it back.

(cold)

I'm not a light in the shadows anymore. I am the shadows. I am the dark. And we're going to lose. We're going to die and it's going to mean nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A chilling silence rests between them. Chloe grows sincere.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

When I came back here... when I saw you... I realised you were gone. The Bruce I knew was gone. And the closest thing you had to being the Bruce that I remembered - the light that went out somewhere along the way... it was her. It was Julie.

(beat)

She was the last glimmer of hope you had. Now she's gone, too. And you couldn't give a damn.

Bruce ignites with rage.

BRUCE

Unlike you, I don't have the luxury of throwing a hissy fit and screaming my feelings out until I feel better. If I did, I'd have a hell of a lot more to say to you.

CHLOE

Oh, if only Vicki could see you now-

BRUCE

Well, she can't.

(beat)

Maybe she could have if you had given us a heads up.

CHLOE

The hell is that supposed to mean?

BRUCE

You knew what was going to happen and you said *nothing*.

CHLOE

I didn't know it would be her.

BRUCE

No, you just knew it wasn't you. And that's all that mattered.

CHLOE

You have no right to--

LUCIUS (O.S.)

Hey, that's enough!

Lucius steps in between the squabbling heroes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LUCIUS (CONT'D)

I know you both have a lot of catching up to do - hell, I think we all do - but Bruce is right. We don't have time to go through the motions. We need to find the Court of Owls, get this virus out of their hands, and end this war now.

CHLOE

Fight your own damn war.

Chloe turns off and heads towards the stairs.

Lucius looks to Bruce, but he also heads off - on a path out of the cave. Lucius stands alone, isolated.

INT. WAYNE MANSION, GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

The moonlight fills the small gap between a reunited Gordon and Sarah - stood by the large guest room window.

SARAH

I'm sorry I went with Bruce on this one. I was just worried about you.

GORDON

It's fine, I - I don't care as long as you're here.

Gordon holds Sarah's hand - bewildered by his love for her. But all Sarah feels is shame. She pulls away.

SARAH

It's not fine.

GORDON

Sarah, I needed this. I needed something to wake me up.

SARAH

From the Court?

GORDON

No. From me. From my life.

Sarah returns to Gordon. Puzzled.

GORDON (CONT'D)

For too long, I've surrounded myself with people who are forced to make choices that we all have to live with and it's allowed me to direct the blame whenever it feels like it will help.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GORDON (CONT'D)

It's time I became responsible for me and my life - for the consequences that befall *my* actions. I can't let that fall on anyone else anymore.

Gordon looks out the window. He seems to sink into himself at the sight of darkness. Sarah joins his side again.

SARAH

What are you thinking? What's tumbling around in that head of yours right now?

GORDON

I'm thinking... that I want to get the hell out of this city.

A guilt-ridden Gordon looks to his wife... for approval?

GORDON (CONT'D)

Does that make me a monster?

SARAH

No. Makes you the man I married.

The two share a kiss - captured by the moonlight. They pull away from their intimate moment, yet still hold each other close in their arms.

SARAH (CONT'D)

What if I told you there was a way out? That leaving all of this behind wasn't just a pipe dream?

GORDON

I'd say you're crazy.

The two share a laugh. Sarah nudges him.

SARAH

I'm serious.

(long pause)

Let this be our first choice we have to live with - do we stay... or do we go?

Gordon ponders - *it dawns on him how crucial this choice will be.* He can't seem to find an answer.

The sound of a DOOR BANGING on a loop echoes (O.S.)

Sarah cranes around in confusion.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Chloe?

INT. WAYNE MANSION, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sarah steps out of the guest room and into the hallway. The path ahead leads her towards a stair case.

SARAH

Chloe?

Sarah descends the stairs...

INT. WAYNE MANSION, ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Sarah climbs down the stairs in a hurry, then proceeds towards the front door -- *it's wide open*. The wind sways it back and forth into the wall.

SARAH

No.

Footsteps screech to a halt behind Sarah. It's Gordon.

GORDON

What is it? What's wrong?

SARAH

It's Chloe.

Sarah looks back to Gordon in defeat.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY - NIGHT

Chloe emerges from behind a building, looking out into the heart of the city that's been torn apart.

SARAH (V.O.)

She's gone.

OFF Chloe, prepared to embark on this journey home...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A news report plays on a large monitor. It shows SHAKY-CAM footage of BATMAN and ROBIN apprehending a group of criminals in pursuit of LOUIE LARK. The chyron scrolling across frame simply reads *'Batman and Robin save the day.'*

JULIE watches with a smile she can't seem to hide. She notices a presence behind her, and turns to find Batman.

BATMAN

This was only the beginning.

Julie and Batman face the TV together. Watching.

The footage shows Batman and Robin offering Louie to approaching GCPD OFFICERS.

JULIE

This isn't going to be easy, is it?

BATMAN

No.

Batman faces Julie.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Which is why I understand if you don't want to participate from this point on.

Julie closes the gap between her and Batman.

JULIE

No, no - I'm... I'm in. *All in.*

BATMAN

Good.

They share a smile - a sense of purpose intertwining them in this moment. But Batman grows hesitant.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Although, if you don't mind me asking... *why?* Why is this so important to you? Why do I get the feeling this case in that courtroom wasn't just another case to you?

A beat. Julie withdraws, reflecting...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

When I was a little girl, my father was framed for murder. Everyone turned on him. He spent years behind bars and I never understood it. It's hard to see your father here one day and then ripped from your life the next.

ON Batman - he feels the words, knows her pain...

JULIE (CONT'D)

Five years after his sentence, he finally got an appeal through and I watched his lawyers fight for him - fight hard. They used the law like a weapon and my father was eventually acquitted of all charges. The law saved him. The law brought him back to me. It brought me back to - to life.

Julie returns to Batman, more convinced than ever.

JULIE (CONT'D)

It was in that moment I knew I had to spend the rest of my life using the law to do for others what it did for me. For my father.

Julie gravitates back to Batman, inspired.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I want to save this city. But I can't do it alone.

BATMAN

You're not alone. I've got your back. I promise.

Julie nudges Batman with a playful smile.

JULIE

My hero.

OFF the vibrant Julie, ready for what awaits...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, WEAPONS DIVISION - NIGHT

A deceased JULIE lies on a slab which now represents nothing but a promise that couldn't be kept by the man standing over her... BRUCE (geared up, mask off), eyes raw with emotion.

BRUCE

I'm so sorry. I'm sorry I couldn't be the hero you wanted me to be. At least when it mattered.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

And I hope you knew - I always
thought you knew, but...

Bruce looks away for a moment - but his focus lingers on a
startling reflection on the computer monitors.

A body, on the ground behind him.

Bruce slowly turns around to find the remains of THE TALON.

VERONICA (PRELAP)

Where's Bruce?

INT. BATCAVE, CELL - NIGHT

Lucius sits opposite Veronica in the cell. She's chained to
her chair - a prisoner.

LUCIUS

Considering the very sight of you
makes him want to kill you, I
thought it was best I'd take over
from here.

VERONICA

Guess you're used to picking up
where Bruce left off.

Lucius scoffs, then takes a seat opposite Veronica. A moment
of silence rests between them - *figuring each other out...*

LUCIUS

You said you were going to tell us
everything. So talk.

VERONICA

Where do I start?

LUCIUS

From the beginning.

Veronica utters a slight chuckle, then sinks back into her
rising fear - *she knows this is serious.*

VERONICA

I wasn't there from the beginning.
(long pause)
But the Court of Owls were, and you
can bet they'll be here long after
we're gone.

LUCIUS

Who are they? What do they want?

VERONICA

They're the protectors of Gotham.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIUS
That's rich.

VERONICA
They want to save this city.

LUCIUS
By unleashing a virus that will
wipe us all out.

VERONICA
You don't understand--

LUCIUS
I understand that you're a part of
this - that you're in this Court of
Owls and that you killed a good
woman. An innocent woman. My
friend. And there is no way in
hell that she's a threat to this
city, no matter how much your brain-
washed mind might try to spin it.

VERONICA
What if I told you she was a
threat? What if I told you that
Bruce Wayne made her a threat to
this city when he recruited her a
decade ago in his crusade?

LUCIUS
I'd say you're crazy.

VERONICA
There is nothing we do without
purpose and there is nothing we do
that doesn't serve the best
interest of this city. One day
you'll understand why Julie had to
die - why anything in this city had
to happen, good or bad.

LUCIUS
You think you're some kind of God?

VERONICA
No, don't be stupid. God is a
belief. We simply are.

Lucius withdraws in a burst of rage.

LUCIUS
I can't believe you. Why? Why
would you do this? Why would you
choose to be a part of this - this
cult?!

VERONICA
Choose this?

Veronica violently rips at her chains - fuelled by just as much rage being projected back at her from Lucius.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(exploding)
This wasn't supposed to be my life!

Lucius is taken aback.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I didn't want this - I didn't want
any of this.
(long pause)
You don't choose the Court of Owls.

The revelation hits Lucius like a truck...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, WEAPONS DIVISION - NIGHT

Bruce crouches down by the Talon's side, and reaches for his mask. He gradually peels it back - a little hesitant.

VERONICA (V.O.)
They choose you.

The mask rips off to reveal DICK GRAYSON.

Bruce drops back in an immediate wave of grief. His entire demeanor collapses into one of pure agony.

BRUCE
Dick?

OFF a broken Bruce...

EXT. GOTHAM CITY, STREETS - NIGHT

CRANE DOWN from the sky, and into the street where Chloe carries a TABLET in her hands and navigates the abandoned street. A nearby streetlight flickers then shatters with one final spark of electricity. Darkness caves in around Chloe.

A sharp fearful breath, and Chloe tenses up. She takes the moment to collect herself, then eases into determination.

Chloe passes a series of destroyed shop-fronts, flaming vehicles, and deceased bodies that litter the roads, and arrives at an interchange. She examines her tablet.

ON THE TABLET - a map shows a blue dot (Chloe) and a line towards another dot (chopper) indicating a turn.

Chloe motions to turn down the street-- she SNAPS back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A small gathering of SIX HOODED THUGS can be seen in the street, looting a parked vehicle. Two stand aside, in mid-conversation (let's call them BERT and ERNIE). They carry weapons and survey the area - *luckily they've missed Chloe, skirting behind the corner of a building.*

BERT

Really think Cobblepot can pull this sort of thing off?

ERNIE

He's come this far, hasn't he?

BERT

Yeah, but that dome isn't going to activate itself now, is it?

ERNIE

Wayne's dead and buried. It'll be a piece of cake.

BERT

If you say so.

Ernie shifts with his weapon - he *spots* something...

ERNIE

Oi. We got company.

ON CHLOE - she ducks further behind the building with a deep panic setting in. *Did they see her?*

RATATATATAT! GUNFIRE rips through the street.

Chloe panics. She darts across the road and shields her head with the tablet. Chloe's heel clips the gutter, and she trips onto the pavement. She WHIPS over her shoulder to see--

The HOODED THUGS collapse under gunfire. A bullet rips through Bert, and he falls against Ernie in a gasp.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

No!

ON Chloe - *she realises she wasn't the target.* She cranes up, arching back to watch...

An array of ARGUS AGENTS appear in front of Ernie.

Chloe shuffles off the ground, and climbs back up to her feet. She ignites with hope.

Ernie cradles a dead Bert in his arms. He raises his bloodied hands in a show of mercy towards the ARGUS AGENTS in his path. They lower their weapons.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Please, please, please - I'll tell you everything I know. Everything about Cobblepot, about what he's doing, where he is, all of it, I--

BANG! A bullet EXPLODES through Ernie's chest and he falls back in a heave. Short, shallow breaths... it dawns on him what just unfolded. He eases into his death.

Chloe stumbles back-- her heel SHATTERS the tablet screen.

The CRACK appears to echo. ARGUS AGENTS look around to find the source of the noise--

Chloe is gone. The street remains empty.

The ARGUS AGENTS dismiss the noise, then continue down *their* street - an army passing like ships in the night.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Chloe is held with an arm around her chest and a hand over her mouth. Fear rests on her expression. The hold on her is released, and Chloe SNAPS around to see her "attacker."

A beat. Chloe registers the identity of the person in front of her - they're familiar. She eases back.

CHLOE

You're alive.

OFF the relief washing over Chloe...

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

A dishevelled Lucius emerges from the cell where a smug Veronica can be seen smiling behind him. He closes the cave wall over behind him, and moves for his belongings.

Hands load the BATWING SUIT into a DUFFEL BAG.

Lucius swings the duffel bag over his shoulder and rushes for the steps. A beat. He looks back over at the cave, as though he'd *never see it after this very moment...*

Lucius ascends the steps.

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, LIBRARY - NIGHT

The BOOKSHELVES part to welcome Lucius. He enters the library, and is immediately met by Gordon and Sarah.

SARAH

Lucius? Chloe's gone. We have to find her and bring her back. It's not safe out there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCIUS

It's not safe anywhere in this city, whether we're hiding in here or we're out there in the open.

Gordon notices the bag.

GORDON

Looks like Chloe's not the only one heading for the hills.

LUCIUS

I made a mistake.

Lucius pushes past Gordon and Sarah and heads through the doors. A beat. The couple share a look of confusion...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gordon and Sarah follow after Lucius.

SARAH

Where are you going?

LUCIUS

To find my husband.

GORDON

He's not here anymore.

LUCIUS

And that's exactly where I plan on being. Not here.

Lucius reaches the *front entrance* door. Gordon clings to his arm, and stops him for a beat.

GORDON

What did she say to you?

The question unnerves Lucius.

GORDON (CONT'D)

She got inside your head. She's an expert at that, Lucius. Trust me. But you can't listen to her.

LUCIUS

I'm not listening to her. I'm listening to myself for once.

Lucius' demeanor vanishes under a wave of emotion. He looks to both Gordon and Sarah - a couple united while he's alone.

LUCIUS (CONT'D)

I sent Karl away because I didn't want him caught up in this war.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCIUS (CONT'D)

I tricked him into thinking I was going to meet him somewhere outside this city just to make sure he'd leave. But I don't want to do the noble thing anymore. I want my husband back. So I have to go.

Gordon moves to press him but Sarah holds him back.

SARAH

Let him go.

A shared nod between Sarah and Lucius, and he leaves.

Sarah clings to Gordon, and pulls him in for an embrace. He holds her close, unified in their decision to stay.

Gordon guides Sarah back around, on their own journey...

INT. WAYNE ENTERPRISES, LIBRARY - NIGHT

Gordon and Sarah return to the library.

SARAH

I guess that means we're staying.

GORDON

Well, we did *both* take vows to protect this city, *Commissioner*.

SARAH

Yeah, yeah, *Mr. Mayor*.

They reach the bookshelves.

GORDON

Besides, I don't think Bruce can do this alone - nor do I think he *should* be alone. Not after everything he's been through.

SARAH

Couldn't agree more.

Sarah opens the bookshelf - it SLIDES to unveil the hidden passageway. A violent SCREAM erupts from the entrance.

A shared look of concern, and Gordon and Sarah rush into--

INT. BATCAVE - NIGHT

Gordon and Sarah descend the stairs into the batcave.

A terrified and scarred Veronica crawls back from an approaching Bruce (geared up, mask off).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VERONICA

No, no, no, no - please! I told
Lucius everything. I swear!

Bruce withdraws a HANDGUN. He simply aims for Veronica.

GORDON

Whoa, Bruce. Bruce, Bruce - wait!

Gordon rushes over to his old friend. He steps in between
Veronica and Bruce and raises his hands.

GORDON (CONT'D)

What are you doing? What happened?

Bruce gestures behind him.

BRUCE

See for yourself.

Gordon takes a hesitant pause, then steps around Bruce to see
TWO BODIES (covered by blankets) on a large SITE TROLLEY. He
slowly reaches for the sheet, then peels it up--

ON GORDON - his curiosity shifts into a *crippling fear*.

GORDON

Give me the gun.

Gordon SNAPS around to Bruce.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Give me the gun, Bruce. Now!

SARAH

Jim?

Gordon wrestles Bruce for the gun.

GORDON

You shouldn't have brought him
here. You have no idea what you've
done, damn it.

Gordon YANKS the gun out of Bruce's hand, then turns back
around, into-- DICK GRAYSON stands, alive and well, unmasked
in his TALON suit. He CLENCHES the gun in Gordon's hand, and
simply tugs Gordon forward, into a violent STRIKE.

Dick rips the gun out of Gordon's hand, then PISTOL WHIPS
Gordon across the face. He slumps.

SARAH

Jim!

Sarah darts forward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Veronica SWIPES a shard of glass off the ground, then jumps up to catch Sarah. She JAMS the glass into Sarah's side.

All the air seems to escape Sarah's mouth. She hunches.

VERONICA

Shh, shh. You have nothing to worry about, Sarah. This wound isn't fatal - as long as you can get some help removing this pesky little shard of glass.

Veronica pressures the glass. Sarah squirms in agony.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Unlike Julie, your death isn't necessary for the good of the city.

(whispers)

Unless you get in my way again.

Veronica steps back and lets Sarah slump to the floor. She turns to find Gordon, unconscious next to a HANDGUN. She reaches down and swipes the weapon up into her possession.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Oh, how quickly things can change.

Dick holds a traumatised Bruce in a headlock, and positions him out at Veronica - a lamb to the slaughter.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I know tonight was supposed to bring you answers, and yet all you have is more questions. But the only thing you need to know is that the Court of Owls is going to save this city.

BRUCE

I don't believe you.

VERONICA

I don't need you to believe me. I don't need anything from you anymore. You've served your purpose, and for a while there, your methods have proven rather successful. But there is a cancer infecting this city and while you've done a good job in minimizing it, the time has come to get rid of it.

Bruce struggles to break free from Dick's hold.

(CONTINUED)

DICK
I'm sorry, Bruce. But it's time
for you to stand down.

BRUCE
No.

BZKT! A TAZER sparks electricity through Bruce's entire body,
and he collapses from Dick's hold.

Veronica steps over Bruce, and joins Dick's side.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
I'm not... going--

Bruce struggles through the delayed taze. He fights the
paralysis on his body, and turns to face Dick and Veronica.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
--to give up... on this city.

Veronica and Dick stop in their tracks.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
If you don't like it, then I'm
afraid you'll have to kill me.

Bruce rises in opposition. Strong.

Veronica looks to Dick - as though she were asking his
approval. He simply nods. Veronica sighs with a hint of
disappointment, then turns to face Bruce.

VERONICA
When it comes to this city...

Veronica aims the gun, and fires- *BANG!*

Bruce DROPS to the floor. He heaves, then clutches the wound
to his abdomen. Blood pools out underneath him.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Bruce Wayne is already dead.

Veronica turns to leave. Dick stays a beat - one final
glimpse at his mentor, and he turns to follow Veronica.

OFF the image of a defeated Bruce, Sarah and Gordon...

WATCHTOWER

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FIVE

EPILOGUE

FADE IN:

INT. FOX RESIDENCE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

An OPEN SUITCASE rests on the bed. Lucius comes in and out of the closet to load items into it (a photo album, a wedding certificate, white and black tuxedos). Lastly, a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of Lucius and Karl rests atop the items.

Lucius leans back in nostalgia. The photograph ignites assurance in him - *he's doing the right thing.*

A loud THUD echoes (O.S.)

Lucius jolts back, out of his moment. He turns to face his door, and a deep fear nestles into his every core.

He reaches for the bedside drawer. Pulls out a GUN.

A prepared Lucius COCKS the weapon, and proceeds for the door. He disappears into the next room...

INT. FOX RESIDENCE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lucius braves the hallway with a gun held close by his side. He scans both directions before moving into--

INT. FOX RESIDENCE, LOUNGE ROOM - NIGHT

Lucius SWINGS the gun up from his side and into a focused aim on the SHADOWED FIGURE stood in the lounge room.

LUCIUS

You picked the wrong house.

The figure turns from the window and into the light to illuminate the WHITE OWL MASK donned on their face.

Lucius stumbles back with a deep realisation.

Out of every possible corner, members of the COURT OF OWLS surface around Lucius and surround him.

The OWL by the window approaches Lucius.

OWL

Lucius Luke Fox. You have ascended to a higher calling - a journey that began when your path crossed with Mr. Wayne's following your father's untimely demise.

Lucius shifts - angered by the memory.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OWL (CONT'D)

The bond you heroes shared has created a trust - a trust Wayne proved to be true when he left you in charge of Wayne Enterprises. As CEO of the company, you are on the verge of fulfilling your destiny and allowing the Court to fulfill it's own in saving Gotham City.

Lucius simply lowers his gun - *he doesn't feel endangered.*

OWL (CONT'D)

Everything in your life has lead you to this very moment. Are you ready to embrace your destiny?

OFF Lucius, left with a powerful question to answer...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE.