

Final Draft 7 Demo

Retrospect

by

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PAGE 1

PANEL 1

EXT. Night. Wide establishing shot. A run-down tenement apartment with a light on in one of the windows, the silhouette of someone on the phone. It's a rough neighbourhood - litter, winos, broken street lamp etc fills the FG.

PANEL 2

INT. apartment. Close up of hand putting down a phone handset. Nearby on the table, there is a photo of a young girl with her father. He is FLOYD LAWTON, though we do not realise this yet.

PANEL 3

Medium shot. Lawton's apartment is only marginally better than the outside. In FG, the coffee table is covered in unpaid bills, pizza boxes and general litter. The decor has seen better days. In BG, we see Lawton reaching up to the top of a high cupboard and pulling down a dusty black briefcase. Lighting is dim from a single table lamp and shadows are cast all around.

PANEL 4

Close shot. Lawton opens the case but we don't see inside. He's visibly pleased at what he sees, but not wildly excited. We see mainly the expression in his eyes. The contents bring back good memories for him.

PAGE 2

PANEL 1

Full page splash. Night. Summer. EXT. Gotham City. Batman swings to the ground across the usual cityscape backdrop. In BG, we see plenty of skyscrapers, many of which are in darkness. A power drain means that almost all of the city's lights are off. Moonlight mainly illuminates this scene.

CAPTION (BATMAN'S HANDWRITING)

July. Sweltering. The Oppressive heat continues, night after sultry night.

CAPTION (BATMAN'S HANDWRITING)

With Gotham Electric running on empty, a second power cut in as many nights.

In FG, we see darkened neon lights, shop fronts, billboards etc. Steam from manholes. Nobody around. Gotham looks deserted.

We use these FG elements to display the credits and the title:
"Retrospect"

PAGE 3

PANEL 1

INT. Dimly-lit room. ORACLE sits at her computer with a map of Gotham on screen. She's using emergency lighting and a battery-powered laptop, whilst talking to Batman over their intercom.

ORACLE

Can't pinpoint exactly BM, but something in the old industrial district seems unusually active.

PANEL 2

EXT. Medium shot. Rooftop. We see the building in question over Batman's shoulder in FG. An abandoned pumping station, with large arched windows. The scene is mostly darkness apart from a glimmer of ELECTRIC BLUE CRACKLE lighting up the distant equipment and some dim electrical interior illumination, meters, buttons etc. All of which give just a vague suggestion of complex machinery inside. Sundry anonymous trucks are parked outside, under a darkened street lamp. Chimney stacks and a crane in BG.

CAPTION (BATMAN'S HANDWRITING)

Curiouser and curiouser.

CAPTION (BATMAN'S HANDWRITING)

The weak, the old and the infirm would suffer from a total blackout, causing them more harm than an army of malevolent mooks ever could.

ORACLE (OVER INTERCOM)

That place hasn't been used since WW2, when it was seized by the state for unpaid taxes from, get this, one Luigi Maroni.

PANEL 3

Through BAT BINOCULARS we see the inside of the warehouse, through a window, all in green. Two goons carry between them JACK, another goon. Jack's legs are limp, so they carry him by one arm each.

Jack looks dazed and bruised as if some 'procedure' has been an exhausting experience.

The building itself looks like an old water pumping station, full of machinery such as pipes, tanks, turbines etc but also now with newly-added computers, large Tesla coils, oscilloscopes etc. The electric blue crackle has now gone, so the street lamp outside has returned to normal brightness, as do any other building lights in BG.

A brunette woman stands with her back to us, wearing a white scientist's coat and holding a clipboard. She is TALIA AL GHUL but we don't necessarily recognise her just yet.

ORACLE (OVER INTERCOM)

Power's back to normal.

CAPTION (BATMAN'S HANDWRITING)

(Top right) Maroni. Doesn't seem like Sal's style.

BATMAN (INTO INTERCOM)

I'll investigate.

PAGE 4

PANEL 1

Int. Arkham Asylum library, where HUGO STRANGE works as a trustee. Medium shot. He sits at a table in BG, surrounded by racks of books. A bored warden walks past in FG. Strange's table is laden with several large leatherbound tomes, one of which he is studying closely. We may recognise strange by his customary beard, glasses and inmate's uniform.

CAPTION

Some weeks earlier.

PANEL 2

Close up shot of this book's pages. Strange is reading a copy of the Gotham Gazette from 1940. The headline reads "Maroni Freed" with a prominent photo of LUIGI 'BIG LOU' MARONI on Gotham's Courthouse steps, surrounded by press photographers. Strange is pulling at this page, tearing it from the book.

PANEL 3

Medium shot. Strange replaces the book on the shelf. As he does so, we see this torn-out page inside his prison overalls, just under his lapel. The casual warden has his back to us in BG.

STRANGE

I've finished arranging the books now, Officer.
All done.

PAGE 5

PANEL 1

INT. Warehouse. Wide shot. TALIA to our right welcomes in Floyd Lawton to our left, carrying with him the briefcase we saw earlier. There is some dim interior lighting, but mainly we see moonlight illuminating vast window-shaped areas of the floor. The place looks large, gloomy and foreboding. Any machinery and goons present are hardly visible in this panel. If possible we can just make out Batman's outline looking on through binoculars from the nearby rooftop.

LAWTON

Talia. We meet at last. Enchante'.

PANEL 2

Close on Talia, who is explaining to Lawton the general gist of the plan.

TALIA

Thank you for accepting, Mr. Lawton. As you know, you are a vital part of the plan.

TALIA

You will be paid handsomely on completion of your mission.

PANEL 3

Medium on Lawton, who is getting dressed in 1930s style clothes - a trenchcoat and hat. Talia explains further (out of shot).

TALIA

Testing of the excavator succeeded beyond our expectations.

PANEL 4

Closer on Lawton, now dressed, smirking, lighting up a cigarette.

TALIA

It will be ready for your trip in a few moments.
We have no time to lose.

LAWTON (WHISPER)

I thought we had all the time in the world, Babe.

PANEL 5

Wide panel, made up of several frames. White BG. We see Lawton, again with his briefcase in FG. A wormhole opens up in front of him, small at first, growing in size until it is about 4ft in diameter. It is surrounded by the same ELECTRIC BLUE CRACKLES we saw earlier. By the last frame, we can see daylight from a world beyond, including sky, 1930s cars, buildings and rain.

SOUND FX

PYEEEEEOOOOOWWWWWW

PAGE 6

PANEL 1

Large panel. Medium shot. Batman swings in through window. Glass shatters everywhere. Goons look stunned around the edge of FG. Talia nearby, cries out:

TALIA

Noooo!

PANEL 2 (INSET ON PANEL 1)

Small panel. Lawton steps through the wormhole into the beyond.

PANEL 3 (INSET ON PANEL 1)

Small panel. Close on Talia. She clings onto Batman's arm in FG as if to hold him back. He brushes her aside.

PAGE 7

PANELS 1,2,3 MERGED

Batman struggles towards the wormhole before it closes. White background. Various goons fight with Batman using various

industrial weapons. Batman receives a crack on the head from a large wrench. In the distance, small, we see Talia fretting.

TALIA

I'm doing this for you, Beloved! For us!

BATMAN

?

SOUND FX

CLONK (over Batman's head)

PANEL 4

Batman careens backward, and falls into the wormhole. We see some of his leg and cape still in the present, the rest of him having gone through already. The wormhole very nearly closes. Goons run towards the wormhole hurriedly, but are too late.

PANEL 5

Oracle again from her desk, struggling to hear, hands over her headphones.

ORACLE

Batman? Are you ok? You're breaking up.

PAGE 8, 9

PANEL 1 ACROSS BOTH PAGES

Large establishing shot, taking up both pages completely, acting as a backdrop. Three small panels are superimposed over this large panel. Very wide shot, zoomed out from a three-quarter aerial angle.

Gotham City, 1940. Day. Raining heavily. We see the courthouse prominently, busy traffic, 1930s cars all around with running boards and spare wheels on the sides. To our right, less prominently in FG, stands the Moldoff Hotel which features later. Across the road, there are several small stores, including a cafe bar where gangsters hang out. Let's call it "Carmine's".

Lawton, dressed in his 1930s attire with briefcase, darts between the traffic towards Carmine's in the middle distance.

Batman stunned, stands central at the bottom of the scene, attracting a few strange looks from drivers.

PANEL 2 (TOP LEFT)

Small, overlaid, medium shot. Batman falls awkwardly out of the wormhole into a grimy alley. We just see the wormhole fizzle away. Rubbish bins, litter, puddles all around, a fire escape with a bedraggled wino sitting under it nursing a bottle. Batman is a little dazed.

PANEL 3 (MIDDLE LEFT)

Small panel, overlaid. Close on Lawton's feet, hurrying between the traffic. Puddles splash about. The briefcase should be visible. Cars beep their horns at him.

SOUND FX

HONK

PANEL 4 (BOTTOM LEFT)

Small, overlaid. Medium shot. Batman rises to his feet, rubbing his head. Wino in BG looks at his bottle, bemused.

PAGE 10

PANEL 1 Final Draft 7 Demo

INT. Darkened room, rather like an office. Medium shot. Blinds are drawn at the window for privacy, so the room is lit only by shafts of rather dull daylight from outside.

LEW MOXON sits on a leather couch, with a typical 1930s MOLL trying to get his attention. She leans all over him. He doesn't seem especially interested.

MOLL (WHISPER)

Whass troublin' ya, Pumpkin?

PANEL 2

Same room, slightly wider view. A HOOD pokes his head around the door. The moll sits up straight and Moxon ignores her from now on.

HOOD

Mr. Moxon, Sir. I heard from on'a the boys that there's this new dude in town. Been askin' around, lookin' for a mutual friend a' ours. Snoopin'.

PANEL 3

Closer on Lew. We see his face, but it's mostly hidden by shadows and cigar smoke.

MOXON

This bein' the same mutual friend who's testifyin' in the mornin'? It'd be an awful shame if he was to be in some way impeded from doin' his rightful.

PANEL 4

Aerial shot of the same room. The hood has entered fully now, but is still by the door.

HOOD

That's what we figure. This new dude is kinda strange. From outta town some place.

HOOD (CONT'D)

If Jimmy the Weasel says he's strange, he's strange. Weasel's keepin' an eye on our friend.

PANEL 5

Close on Moxon's hand, stubbing out a cigar in an ashtray full of old cigar butts.

MOXON

Good. Since I got out of the pen, I ain't certain who's doin' what nowadays.

MOXON (CONT'D)

But let's make sure our friend's lookin' fresh as a daisy when he sees the judge tomorra. Like a real pillar of the community, unnerstand?

PAGE 11

PANEL 1

Page-wide panel. Wide shot. Horizontal view of a busy Gotham street. A scruffy mugger runs towards our left, clutching a handbag he's just stolen from a fat wealthy-looking woman to our right. She's remonstrating and calling out. Between the two are lots of pedestrians, some of which are also remonstrating as they've been barged out of the way by the mugger.

The mugger is JOSEPH CHILTON, better known to Batman readers as JOE CHILL. His appearance is in keeping with the Joe Chill we all know, but this is not made clear yet.

Overhanging the pavement above the mugger's victim is a cinema canopy, now showing "Bat People". Depending on space, it might be a nice touch to add "Coming soon: The Mark of Zorro" to allude to the readers the eventual denouement of this story.

CAPTION

That same day.

PANEL 2

Medium shot. Chill large in FG, turns the corner into a dark alley. There's a classy car parked there, with 5 hoods inside. We can see them only partially in silhouette. Chill looks frantic. He's scruffy, ugly and instantly disagreeable to the reader.

PANEL 3

Small panel. Close shot. Chill sits on trashcans, checking out his swag in FG. In BG, we see the classy car's doors open. Some hoods emerge and walk towards Chill, again, mostly in silhouette. They should look threatening. There are MARONI'S HOODS, not Moxon's.

PANEL 4

Small panel. Very close on Chill. We see Chill's face, looking terrified, leaning backwards. We see a part of a well-dressed hood's elbow around Chill's neck. Chill is being dragged off towards the car.

PANEL 5

Largest panel on this page. We see Chill being dragged backwards in the middle distance. In close FG, we see the tops of some trashcans, a cat, some baubles Chill has left behind. In distant BG we see the car.

CHILL (STRUGGLING)

Hey guys, mebbe we can talk...

PAGE 12

PANEL 1

Wide panel, wide shot. Car interior looking forwards. We are looking outwards from Moxon's hoods' car, towards the same alleyway we just saw Chill enter. This car contains five of Moxon's henchmen and is mounting the pavement to block the other classy car in. A few pedestrians scatter. One of them points where

to go. He is Jimmy the Weasel, having alerted Moxon's hoods to come to Chill's rescue.

PANEL 2

Wide panel, close shot. Maroni's guys realise it's an ambush and drop Chill to the ground. Chill fills the frame, while Maroni's guys run to our right in BG and FG. Chill remains central, sitting in puddles and grime. Puddles splash as bullets strafe the area.

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PANEL 3

Close on Chill. He screws himself up into a ball as gunfire rains all around.

SOUND FX (LARGE)

RATATATATATATATATAT

PANEL 4

Close on Chill. Maroni's guys have gone. Chill gingerly rises to his feet, all wet and muddy.

PANEL 5

Medium on Chill. We see just the arms of the hood we saw earlier speaking with Moxon. Hood picks up Chill by the lapels. Chill smiles the slimiest of smiles, realising he just got lucky.

HOOD

Look at the state a'ya, ya sleaze. Yer comin' with us.

PAGE 13

PANEL 1

INT. Courtroom. Wide shot from on high, behind JUDGE's head, facing LUIGI 'BIG LOU' MARONI and his defence team.

CAPTION

Next day.

JUDGE

...I have no option but to pass the maximum sentence allowed by law...

PANEL 2

Closer on Maroni, who is acting angrily towards those who have just given evidence against him, including Chill. His lawyers restrain him, but Maroni fills the frame.

PANEL 3

Wide shot. EXT. Gotham Courthouse - a large white neo-classical building, atop a large case of steps. This view is very zoomed out, as if viewed from the top of a building opposite.

To the bottom left of the steps, we see some cops, reporters and photographers huddled around some cars parked there. Their flashguns flash as Maroni's lawyers and colleagues head towards them without Maroni. This would have been the photo on the newspaper that Strange had earlier, had Maroni been freed, but the course of history has changed.

Many other people leave the courtroom in the other direction, to our right. One of these is Chill, but we can't tell that yet at this distance.

REPORTERS

What is your reaction to the sentence?

REPORTERS

Are you going to appeal?

PAGE 14

PANEL 1

Medium-sized, round panel. We see Chill from the same angle as the last panel, only this time with extreme magnification, through the crosshairs of a sniper's rifle. There is a red dot on Chill's chest from a laser sight. Chill looks up slightly towards us. The speech bubble tails off to the bottom of this panel.

LAWTON (WHISPER)

Nothing personal, JC.

PANEL 2

Same as the last panel, only this time with Batman's gloved hand looming large in the sight, reaching for the gun.

PANEL 3

Large panel, half the page or more. INT. Moldoff Hotel, top floor. The room is rather run down as if not used for years. Dusty pictures and cobwebs adorn the walls. The window facing the courthouse is central to the scene. The rifle is poking through the open window, ready to fall out.

Batman to our right kicks Lawton backwards to our left, whose trenchcoat opens and hat falls off revealing him to be DEADSHOT, dressed in his usual outfit.

PAGE 15 Final Draft 7 Demo

PANEL 1

First of 6 small irregular-shaped chaotic panels, 2 rows of 3. Close on Deadshot recovering. He points his wrist guns at Batman. We see Batman in the reflection in Deadshot's red glass eyepiece.

PANEL 2

Batman takes cover behind a concrete support pillar, grimacing as bullets rain all around. Some bullets rip through his cape.

SOUND FX (JOINING PANELS 1 & 2)
RATATATATATATATATAT

PANEL 3

Close on Chill's feet, running through puddles.

PANEL 4

Close on Batman's utility belt, removing a capsule.

PANEL 5

Largest panel. Deadshot succumbs to the yellow knockout gas that begins to envelop him. His last words before passing out are:

DEADSHOT (WHISPER)
What's the...big deal...about a lowlife... like
Chill... anyways, Bats?

PANEL 6

Close on group of photographers. They look upwards, cameras

flashing, mouths open.

PANEL 7

Large panel. From the courthouse steps we see over the heads of the photographers. Batman crashes through the window of the Moldoff Hotel, wings open, glass falling. Some yellow gas follows him out. Batman looks very dramatic and demonic.

N.B. This same scene is to be reproduced later as a photo in the Gotham Gazette.

PAGE 16

PANEL 1

Batman's POV, high up, gliding down. Chill scurries away to our right in the distance and looks like prey. Photographers and courthouse to our left.

PANEL 2

Batman lands on the pavement and does a forward roll.

PANEL 3

Close on Batman's hand holding a glinting Batarang. It's one of the modern, sharp, throwing-star kind of Batarangs, not a 1930s one.

PANEL 4

Close on Joe Chill, looking over his shoulder towards us as he runs, visibly terrified.

PANEL 5

Large panel. Black BG. A montage of different scenes - portraying a train of thought. Batman realises what it might mean if he catches Joe Chill. If he prevents the murder of his own parents and in turn the creation of Batman himself.

Central to this picture, large, we see just Bruce Wayne's face, no body, wearing a patchy, translucent Batman mask.

Around this, we see several vignettes, including Joe Chill again, looking similar to the previous panel but in the familiar 'murder of the Waynes' scenario and surroundings.

Pearls running through blood. Young Bruce crying, looking up at

the gunman. The gun barrel. The roses laid on the pavement. A vampire bat's face. Perhaps also a "Here lies Jason Todd" windswept gravestone.

This whole panel should be dark in mood, sorrowful and silent.

PAGE 17

PANEL 1 Final Draft 7 Demo

Large panel. Now we see the same, only opposite. Central to the picture, large, we see Bruce Wayne's face, patchy and ghostly, wearing the Batman mask which now appears opaque and bold.

Around the borders, we see more vignettes depicting the good Batman has done for Gotham. The Batsignal over a Gotham skyline. Joker behind bars. Muggers hanging upside-down from a streetlamp. Ra's Al Ghul's face. Batman carrying someone out of a burning building. A gun. A syringe. Batman pulling Alfred out of the collapsed Wayne Manor during the earthquake.

This panel should be opposite in mood, more upbeat and signify Bruce's determination to continue as Batman. His reasons to go on.

PANEL 2 Final Draft 7 Demo

The Batarang embeds itself into a telegraph pole, symbolic of Batman's conscious or subconscious decision to miss, and allow Chill's escape.

PAGE 18

PANEL 1

This part should be in a muted palette to represent a dream sequence, perhaps black & white for Deadshot's dream. All three panels could merge into one another.

In this panel, Deadshot is on the ground aiming one wrist gun upwards at Batman leaping down from a building at him, wings spread.

PANEL 2

Lawton stands alongside 'Roman' Falcone, Zeiss and various other career criminals and henchmen near a parked helicopter.

PANEL 3

Lastly, we see Lawton, lazing in a large swimming pool, sipping pina coladas. In BG, we see a large swish house. He has obviously done well for himself without Batman's constant intervention.

PANEL 4

Suddenly, between panel 3 and 4, we see "SLAP SLAP SLAP" and the in panel 4 we return to the current scenario, with Deadshot sitting dazed in the Moldoff Hotel room, wearing Batcuffs, no mask, smiling. Batman is slapping him to wake him from the gas used earlier. We return to the normal palette.

BATMAN

Get up! We're leaving.

PAGE 19

PANEL 1

EXT. The alley we saw earlier where Batman arrived in 1940. Batman walks Deadshot along to where the wormhole was. Small panel.

PANEL 2

The wormhole fizzles open. Batman manhandles Deadshot right up to the blue sparkling circle as it approaches 2ft in diameter. We begin to see the pumping station and Talia's henchmen inside. Small panel.

PANEL 3

Wormhole opens fully. Batman steps in. Deadshot struggles and hits Batman with a double-handed punch (still cuffed). Small panel.

PANEL 4

Batman falls half through. Deadshot runs off, towards the busy traffic. Small panel.

PANEL 5

Medium size. Deadshot jumps onto the side of a passing truck.

DEADSHOT

So long, Bats! See you around some day.

PANEL 6

The wormhole closes and Batman in through, back in the present. Deadshot is left in 1940. Batman is still dazed. He collapses on the warehouse floor. Small panel.

PANEL 7

INT. warehouse. Largest panel. Batman lays face down with a goon from earlier standing astride over him, pointing an Uzi at his head. Talia in distance looks horrified and is running towards us.

PAGE 20

PANEL 1

Wide panel. All the goons, the modern wormhole excavator machinery, everything begins to vanish. Time has been altered and they all disappear to just a ghostly outline. This will be explained later. Talia looks around shocked at this. Batman remains on the floor in FG.

PANEL 2

Large panel. Only Talia and Batman remain, in the pumping station which now looks just as it would have been until recently. There are some old pipes, wheels, taps etc. The room is darker now. We only see Talia and Batman clearly in FG.

Talia turns Batman's head towards her and crouches to the left of shot. She has pulled off his mask. (She knows he's Bruce Wayne anyway.) This should be a tender moment, perhaps with a tear running down her cheek.

PANEL 3

Talia dreams. We see her face, as she is at present, small, to the left of this panel. The rest of the panel is her dream sequence in muted tones, perhaps red & white, showing what a world without a Batman means to her. This consists of 3 images.

The first is Talia & Bruce at a glitzy Gotham event, together with champagne, and various other socialites simpering towards them.

The second is Talia marrying Bruce Wayne. We see them in profile at the altar. Talia in FG, Bruce just behind.

The third is the couple walking arm in arm outside Wayne Manor, looking slightly older. Alfred polished the Bentley in BG. Her dream is interrupted by...

ORACLE (OVER INTERCOM)

Batman, are you ok? It's been five minutes of radio silence.

PAGE 21

PANEL 1

Bruce stirs. Talia still caresses him. His mask lies on the floor beside them, from which we can hear...

ORACLE (OVER INTERCOM)

Batman?

PANEL 2

Bruce stands and puts his mask back on while Talia talks, still crying slightly.

TALIA

I did this for us, Bruce. So you could be happy. We could be happy. If only we had some time together.

PANEL 3

Close on Talia. Her eyes and cheeks are wet. Bruce wipes them with his gloved thumb.

PANEL 4

Batman sits on the windowsill of the large window he smashed earlier. It's still night. Moonlight. In chiaroscuro. Talia in FG with her back to us, looks up at him.

BATMAN

Never in a million years.

PANEL 5

Same as panel 3, only Batman's gone now. Talia's head droops.

PAGE 22

PANEL 1

Muted palette again for another dream sequence, perhaps blue & white for Hugo Strange. This panel is made of several scenes which merge into one another.

In one, Strange appears on a chat show, a respected professor.

In another, he is standing at a rostrum, ranting, surrounded by soldiers with large robots behind. The crowd wave flags in frantic approval. It appears as if he's running for President.

In the third, he stands in front of a giant statue of himself, unveiled in Washington. His megalomania is running away with him, but this panel breaks up when...

PANEL 2

Batman arrives. Wide shot. Normal palette again. Strange, close in FG, is in his cell in Arkham. It's quite a comfortable low-security cell - a desk, some pens, papers everywhere and the mannequin's head he talks to resting on some books.

Strange is really aghast to see see Batman, who arrives outside the bars in BG.

BATMAN

You didn't expect to see me again.

PANEL 3

Close on Strange, snapping his fingers with a maniacal smile. Batman's shadow cast on his face.

STRANGE

HOW? You should've been blissfully unaware all along. Suddenly...

STRANGE (CONT'D)

...no more Batman and the world's a better place. But you're here? Now?

PANEL 4

Close on Batman, in profile facing left. Bottom half of face only.

BATMAN

Large as life.

PANEL 5

Medium shot. Strange's cell. Strange wanders around with his back to us, working things out, explaining his plan.

STRANGE

Evidently. Let's assume that you adopted this affinity for night mammals, this one man war on crime, as a concerted response to some life-changing event from your childhood.

STRANGE

Let's say, the sudden cold-blooded murder of a loved one, or perhaps your parents.

PANEL 6

Medium shot, Strange faces us now, pensively waving his finger.

BATMAN (OVER)

My parents live in Paraguay.

STRANGE

Hmmm. So I've heard. But if said hypothetical event was avoided in some way, would it be true to assume you may never have worn this garb? Never concocted this darker alter ego?

PAGE 23

PANEL 1

Small panel. Close on Batman's mouth in profile again, facing left.

BATMAN

Hypothetically, maybe.

PANEL 2

Closer on Strange. Large panel, head only, black BG.

STRANGE

Much as you may deny it, I know you to be Bruce Wayne under that ridiculous getup. I also know that Martha and Thomas Wayne were shot outside a cinema by one Joseph Chilton.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

During one of the many long days here, it occurred to me that if Joe Chill was somehow waylaid that night, somehow prevented from ever committing that murder, perhaps, just perhaps, you may have grown up normal.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

More importantly, my own scientific career may never have been troubled by your unwelcome interventions. But how could I do anything about it? It's all in the past. I'm locked away.

PANEL 3

Medium shot, inside the cell facing outwards. Batman outside, is barely visible in the shadows. The back of Strange's head in FG.

BATMAN

Go on. I'm intrigued.

STRANGE

Before I came to this esteemed rehabilitation institute, I was working on a device that could change the world as we know it.

PANEL 4

A muted palette again. We see Strange working on some mystery machinery that bears a resemblance to that we saw Talia using earlier. Strange continues in caption.

STRANGE (CAPTION)

"A wormhole excavator. Not a time machine in the truest sense of the term, but to the layman, that may be an adequate description."

PANEL 5

Normal palette. A time travel diagram, showing two different planes of the multiverse with a wormhole between them.

STRANGE (CAPTION)

"The excavator permits travel through a momentary, temporary wormhole from one plane to another in the multiverse..."

STRANGE (CAPTION)

"...but the electrical power required for this excavation is too great for all but the shortest of jaunts between place-time configurations."

PANEL 6

Wide shot. Close on Strange's glasses with Batman's reflection in them.

STRANGE

One of these place-time combinations included present day Gotham, but inconveniently not Gotham at the exact moment necessary to prevent Joe Chill from committing his heinous act.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Alas, I knew of no other contemporary documentation detailing Chill's whereabouts.

PAGE 24

PANEL 1

Strange in profile facing right, mannequin's head in BG rests on some books.

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Imagine how pleased I was to find, in this very prison, the solution to my conundrum. Chill stood as a prosecution witness at the trial of my very own financial benefactor 'Big Lou' Maroni, whose evidence of course, led to Mr Maroni rightly being freed.

PANEL 2

Batman's mouth, close-up, in profile facing left. He grins slightly, as this plot is now making sense to him, and partly to the reader at this point.

STRANGE (OFF)

I gathered together a circle of other acquaintances to aid me in my 'prison break' who also had a vested interest in deleting Batman from history.

BATMAN

But here I am.

PANEL 3

Muted palette again - a flashback - showing what happened in 1940 that we didn't see earlier. The scene is the alleyway where Batman arrived in 1940. Batman in FG sees JACK exiting the door of Carmine's opposite in BG.

STRANGE (CAPTION)

"Indeed. Do enlighten me as to how."

BATMAN (CAPTION)

"I was lost. Confused. Lawton was gone. Stranded and alone in 1940, I had no way back and no equipment with me."

STRANGE

"A good start to the story."

PANEL 4

Muted palette still. Tall, long panel. Now we see Batman casually perched on a high window ledge. Jack dangles upside-down on a rope above the street below, looking terrified.

BATMAN

"It gets better. I found a goon I recognised from the warehouse and asked him how we might get back. He was a helpful chap."

PANEL 5

Muted palette still. The alleyway again, where we saw Batman & Deadshot earlier. Batman takes Jack there, who looks very much worse for wear and chucks him into the wormhole, so Jack goes back to the present, returning as we saw on Page 3 Panel 3.

BATMAN (CAPTION)

"We strolled together awhile and when Lawton didn't arrive for the return journey, I guessed he had other plans and decided to hang around."

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PANEL 1

Muted palette still. Wide shot. Rooftop of Moldoff Hotel. We see Batman large in FG, the courthouse opposite, parked cars, reporters in BG and downwards. Batman sees a rifle barrel poking out of a window below.

BATMAN (CAPTION)

"It didn't take long to find Lawton from what I'd learned. Usual M.O."

PANEL 2

Normal palette. Close on Strange, looking enraged.

STRANGE (SHOUTING)

FOOLS!

PANEL 3

Medium shot on Strange, now almost calmed.

STRANGE

By your very presence here, I take it that Lawton never killed or even injured Chill?

STRANGE

Ah! And you yourself could never apprehend Chill either, because in so doing you would cause a chronological paradox. A chicken and egg situation, so to speak.

PANEL 4

Batman, close up. Eyes only. Through the bars.

BATMAN

The one thing I don't yet understand is why the wormhole apparatus disappeared on my return?

PANEL 5

Strange looking puzzled, close up.

STRANGE

Disappeared?

STRANGE (CONT'D)

I first started research on that machine thirty years ago, when I first met Luigi Maroni. He paid for...

STRANGE (CONT'D)

Oh no. But I have it right here in the Gotham Gazette...

PANEL 6

Strange unfolds the paper we saw him take earlier, only now it reads "Winged Freak Terrorizes Gotham" and the photo on the front is the same as we saw being taken earlier from the courthouse steps.

STRANGE (SHOUTS)

Arrrrrrrrrgh!

PANEL 7

Wide shot. Corridor between the cells. We see Batman in FG walking away from Strange's cell. Strange gesticulates between the bars in BG, and some orderlies push a trolley. One holds up a syringe, soon to be used in sedating Strange. Batman smiles very slightly.

PAGE 26

PANEL 1

Wide. Day. EXT. We see Lawton, large in FG, dressed in 1940s clothes, smoking, not dressed as Deadshot but still carrying the rifle we saw earlier. In distant BG, we see a white, wooden house with a tree outside.

CAPTION

Epilogue:

PANEL 2

Lawton lays on a grassy bank with the rifle aimed. We can't tell what he's aiming at.

PANEL 3

Through the crosshairs, glass now cracked, we see the child climbing up into the tree is himself holding a rifle. This is Floyd Lawton when he was younger, just before the scene where he shoots his brother by accident.

PANEL 4

Through the crosshairs, we now see the house window, with Lawton's father arguing with Lawton's brother. The crosshairs are perfectly aimed on the father's silhouette.

LAWTON (NO TAIL)

With no Batman to stop me.

CAPTION

End

[Explanatory Note: It may seem difficult to fully comprehend this script on one read-through, but the whole story is internally consistent, and as far as can be ascertained, consistent with the rest of the DC Universe and Batman titles.

Chronologically, the story plays like this: Strange invents the wormhole excavator. He gets captured for another crime, perhaps as depicted in Prey, and is sent to Arkham. He contacts Talia, who in turn contacts Deadshot in the first panel. All three have their own reasons for not wanting a Batman. Strange & Talia both already knew Batman is Bruce Wayne, but Lawton is not necessarily told.

Talia operates the machinery while Strange serves time in Arkham. She tests the machinery by sending Jack to 1940 before this story starts. We know this because Batman says "second" power cut when Jack returns, beaten up. Lawton arrives.

Lawton is sent back to 1940 to shoot Chill, thus preventing the Waynes' murder and a Batman from ever existing. As such Talia, Deadshot and Strange would all be happier. Strange would become free, having been apprehended by Batman. This was Strange's plan.

The plan goes awry when Lawton's intervention in 1940 provokes Moxon to protect Chill from Maroni, thus changing the course of history. Chill would've been threatened by Maroni's gang, given feeble evidence at the trial and Maroni would go free. Instead, Moxon protects Chill, Chill gives stronger evidence and Maroni goes to jail. As such Maroni doesn't become rich from organised crime, and in turn, cannot later become Strange's financial benefactor. Hence the wormhole machinery vanishes when Batman returns to the present, history having changed.

Moxon and Chill have now made some sort of acquaintance. The Waynes' murder is attributed to Moxon through Chill in the Untold Legend of the Batman, soon after Moxon was released from prison, as is mentioned here.

Batman, lost in 1940, questions Jack to find his way back to the present. Batman throws Jack through the wormhole and remains in 1940 having not found Deadshot. Peculiar as this twist may seem, it's a conceivable side effect of time travel. Batman could indeed throw Jack through the wormhole before having arrived there himself if the four wormholes used in this story crossed over!

Batman tracks down Lawton in 1940 using this info. Had Lawton shot Chill, then Batman would've vanished, but he didn't. Batman arrives just in time to prevent this. Batman himself could not catch Chill, because it would be a "chicken and egg" situation as

Strange rightly points out later.

Batman tries to bring Deadshot back to the present, but Lawton escapes. In the epilogue, Lawton could conceivably shoot his father rather than his brother, thus correcting the path his life has taken. We leave the reader wondering here whether he so chooses to do this, or achieves it.

The wormhole excavator and goons vanish because Maroni is no longer rich enough to sponsor its invention. As such, it cannot be used any more and Lawton is left in 1940. Strange also cannot use this equipment again, but it's conceivable he could build another one in future if need be, or if Lawton is needed back for plot reasons.]

Final Draft 7 Demo

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