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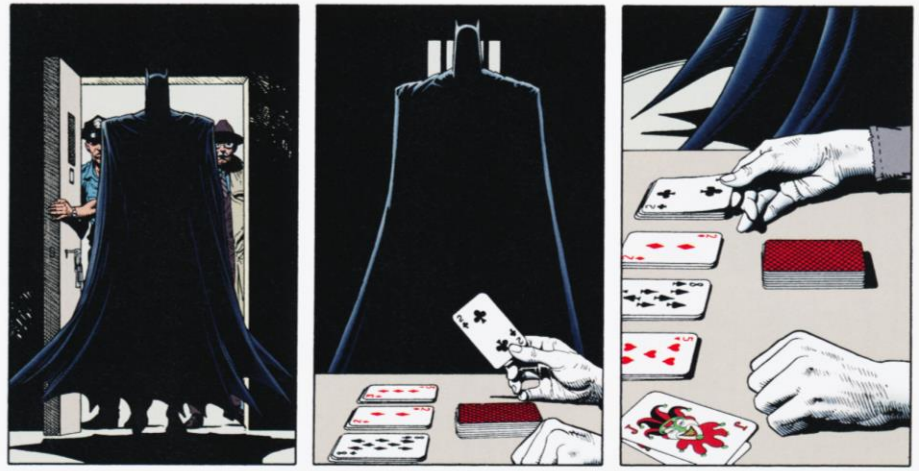
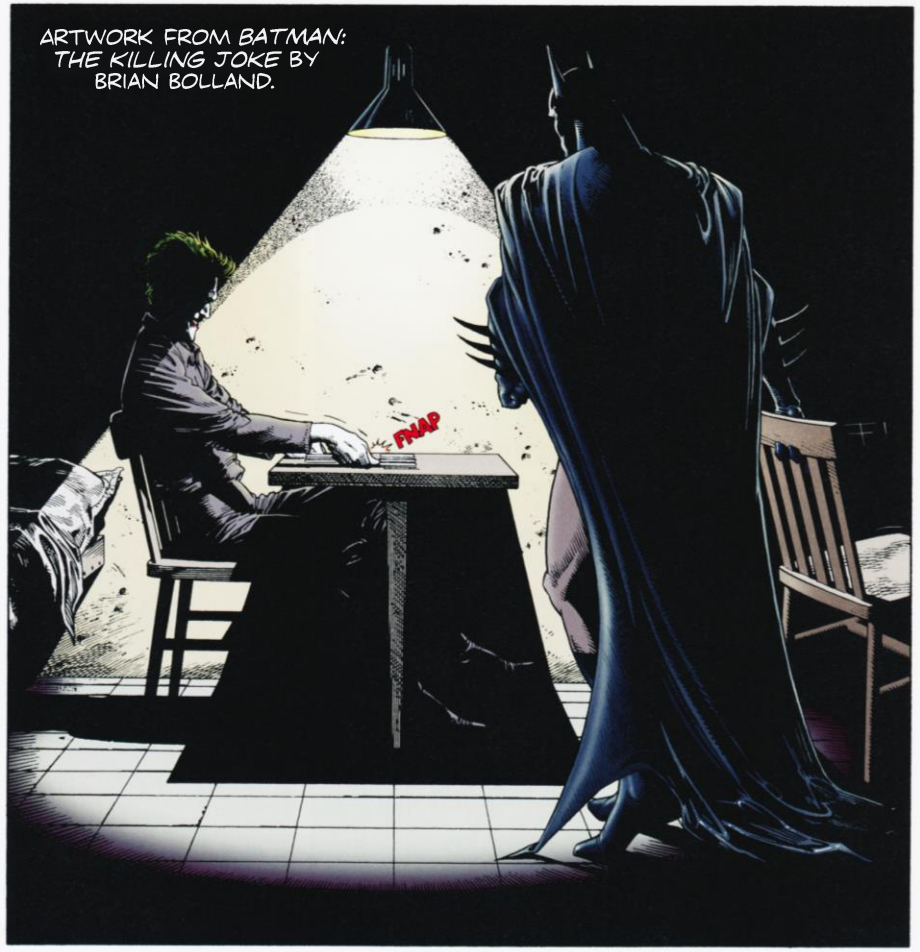
Music from the motion pictures *Batman Begins* (2005), *The Dark Knight* (2008), and *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012) composed and conducted by Hans Zimmer and James Newton Howard.

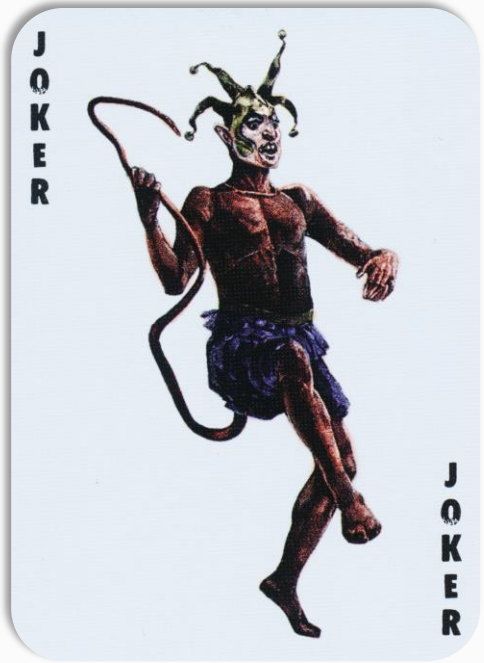
Completing the Picture

We all perceive the world as a whole through the experience of our senses. Yet, our senses can only reveal a world that is fragmented and incomplete. Even the most widely traveled mind can only see so much of the world in the course of a life. Our perception of "reality" is an act of faith, based on mere fragments. This phenomenon of observing the parts but perceiving the whole has a name. It is called closure. In our daily lives, we often commit closure, mentally completing that which is incomplete based on past experience. Some forms of closure are deliberate inventions of storytellers or magicians to produce suspense or to challenge audiences.





In electronic media, like television, closure is constant, even overpowering. In film, closure takes place continuously—24 frames per second in fact—as our minds, aided by the persistence of vision, transform a series of still pictures into a story of continuous motion. Between such automatic electronic closure and the simpler closure of everyday life, there lies a medium of communication and expression which uses closure like no other, a medium where the audience is a willing and conscious collaborator and closure is the agent of change, time, and motion. But, before we take a closer look at exactly how graphic novels use closure in such a unique way, we should review how electronic media uses this concept: first in an interactive card trick and then in two scenes from the film, *The Dark Knight* (2008).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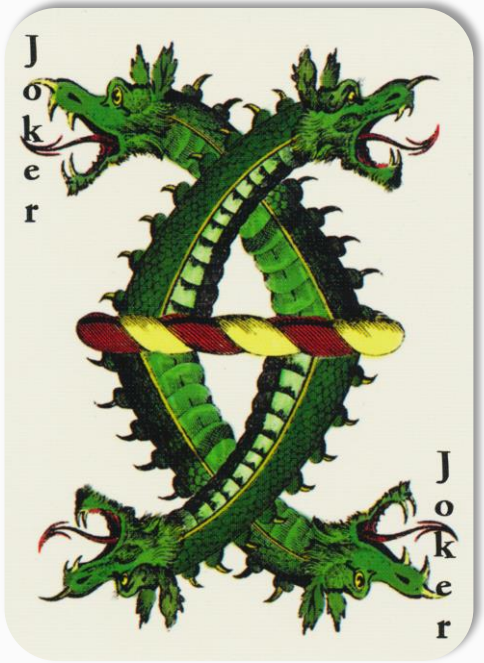
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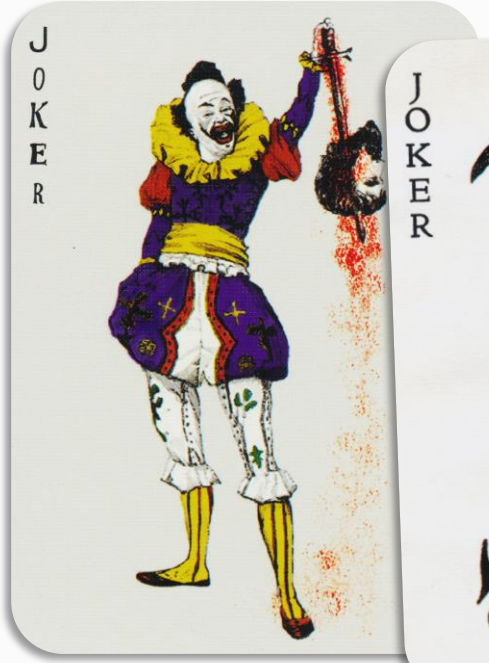
JOKER

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Joker
Joker

Step 1: Memorize one card fast.

Step 2: Click on one card to throw it away.

Step 3: Is your card still there?

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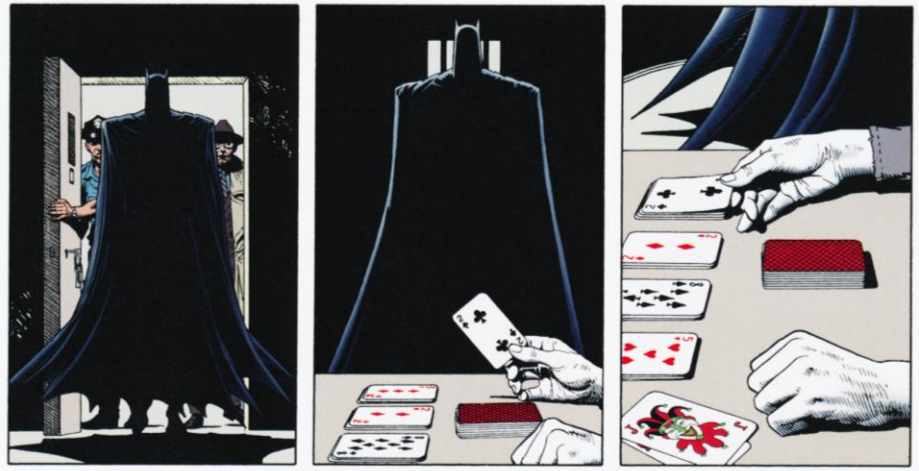

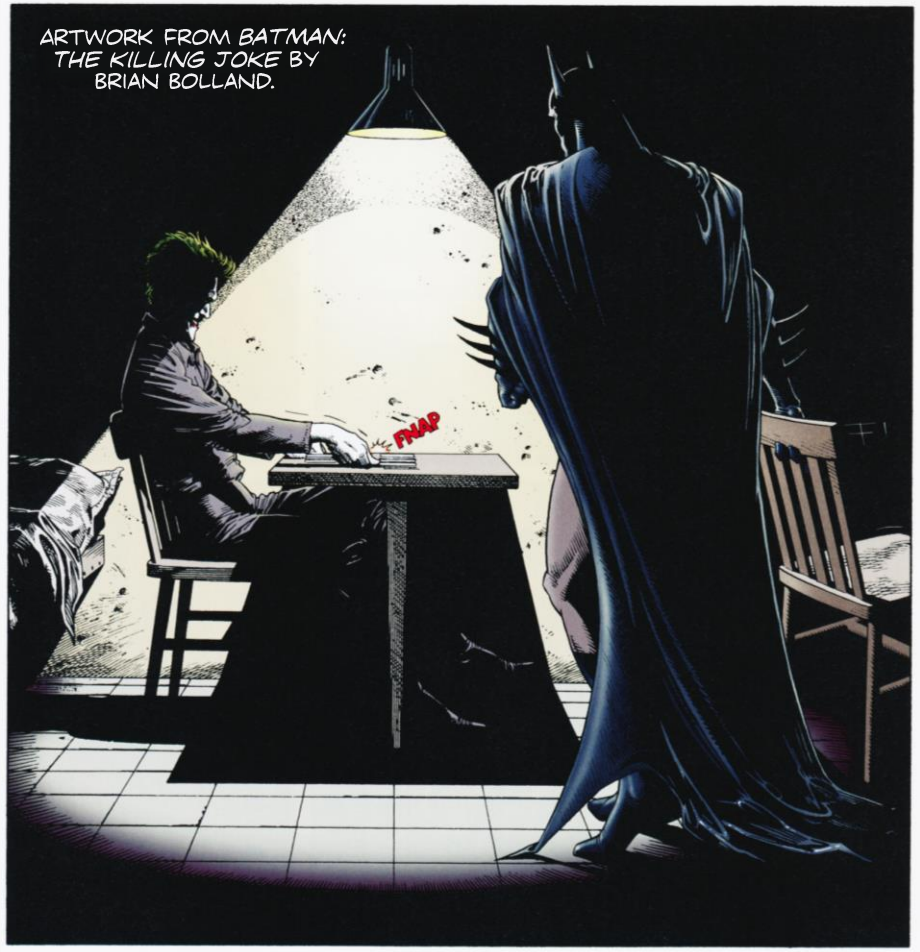

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SCENES FROM THE DARK KNIGHT | ARTWORK BY FRANK MILLER.

Between the Acts

Participation is a powerful force in any medium. Filmmakers like Christopher Nolan have long since realized the importance of allowing viewers to use their imaginations. Choose one of the following two film clips from The Dark Knight (2008) and write a detailed paragraph describing what happens in the scene that Nolan leaves to our imagination. What happens after the Joker drops the broken pool cue? How does the Joker manage to take the officer as a hostage? Be as graphic as you like in your response.

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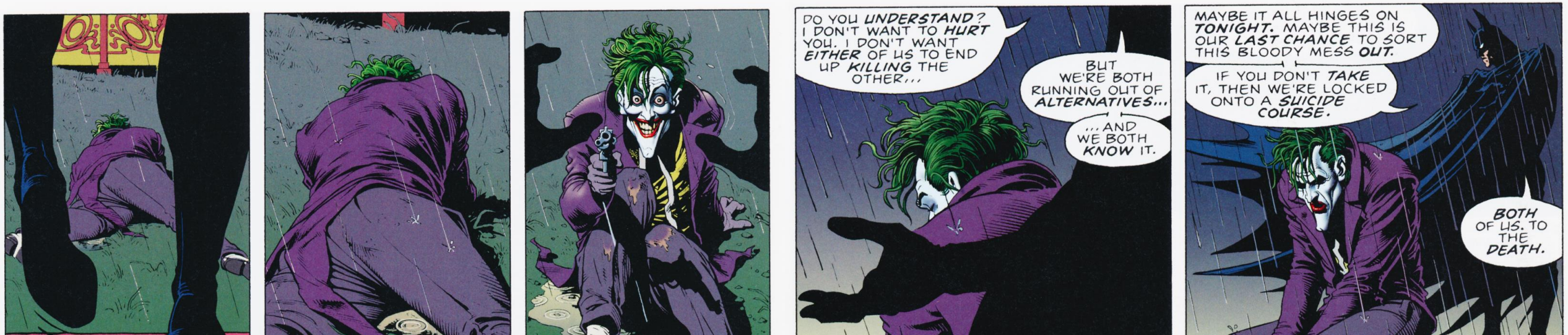
THE KILLING JOKE

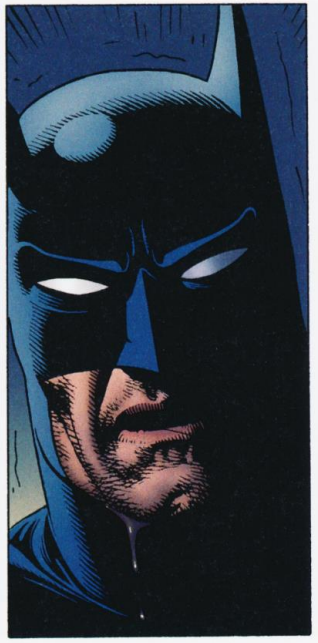
The closure in film and television is continuous, largely involuntary, and virtually imperceptible. But closure in graphic novels is far from continuous and anything but involuntary. Every act committed to paper by the comics artist is aided and abetted by a silent accomplice, an equal partner in crime known as the reader. Brian Bolland may have illustrated *The Killing Joke*, but he's not the one to decide whether or not the Joker lives or dies. In a way, all of you will participate in the murder or salvation of the character, and to kill a man between panels is to condemn him to a thousand deaths. *The Killing Joke* (1988) by Alan Moore and Brian Bolland is considered by many critics to be the definitive Joker story and one of the best Batman stories ever published. The plot revolves around the Joker's attempt to drive Gotham

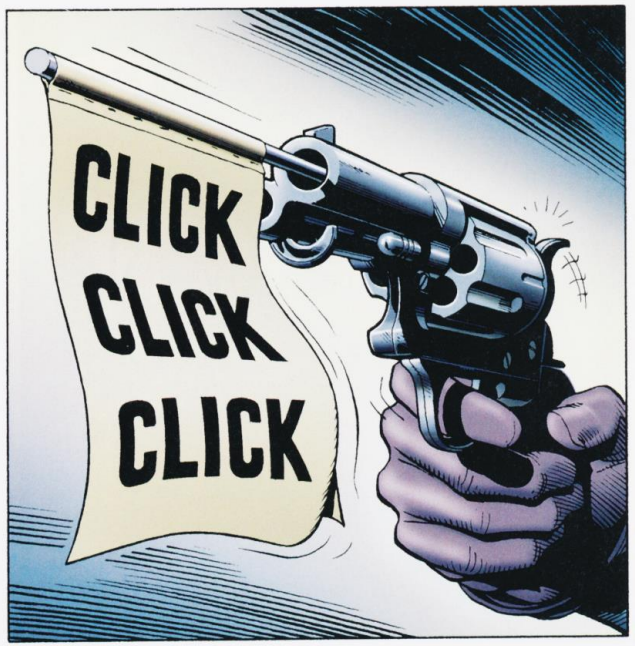
"*The Killing Joke* was the graphic novel that Christopher Nolan handed to me… I think it's going to be the beginning of the Joker."

—**Heath Ledger**

New York City 2007



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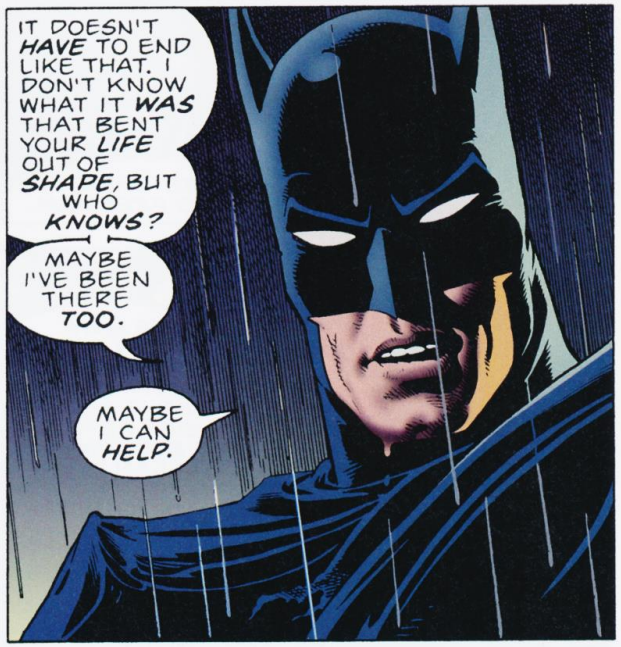
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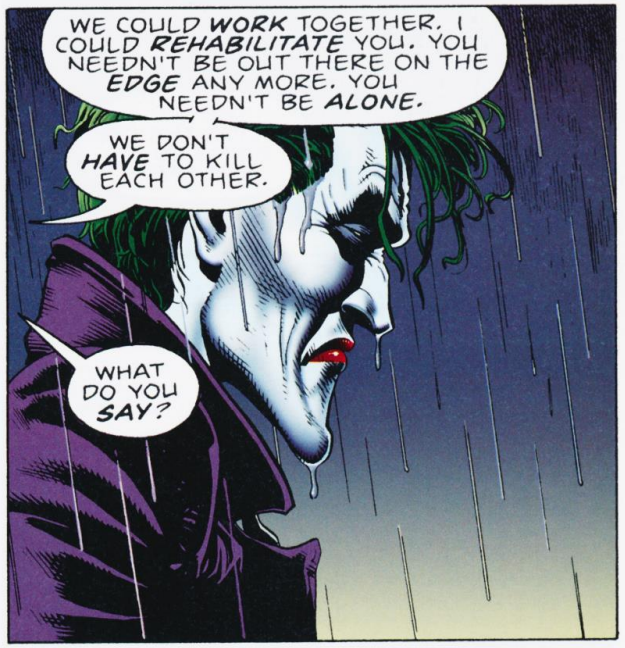
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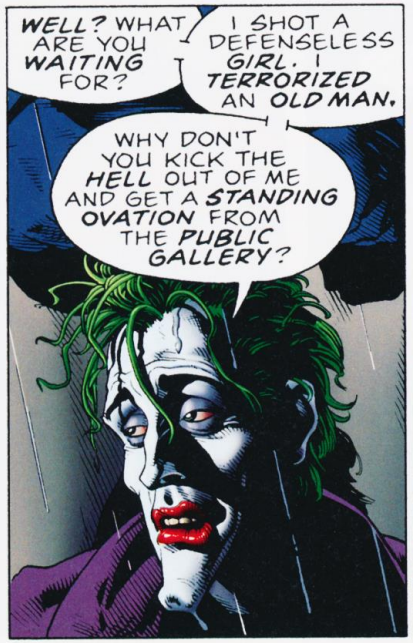
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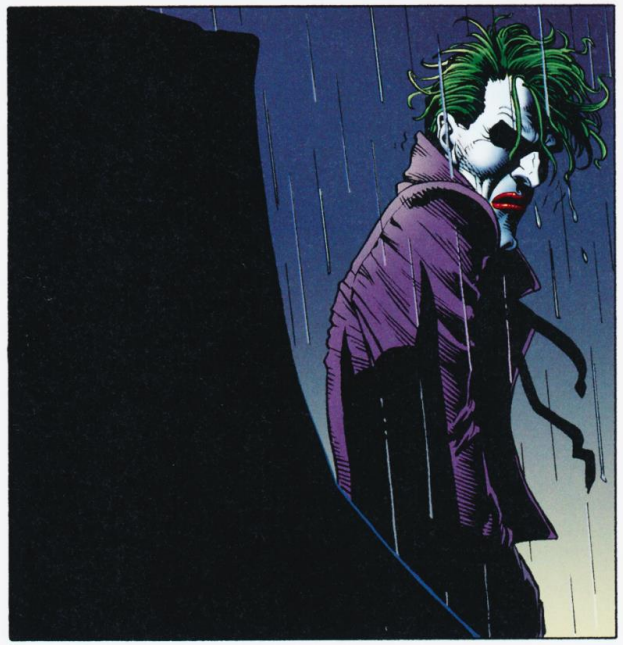

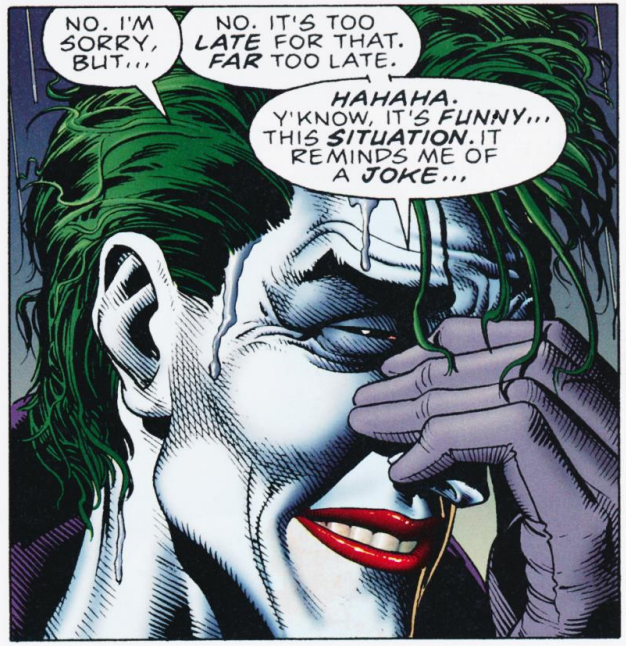
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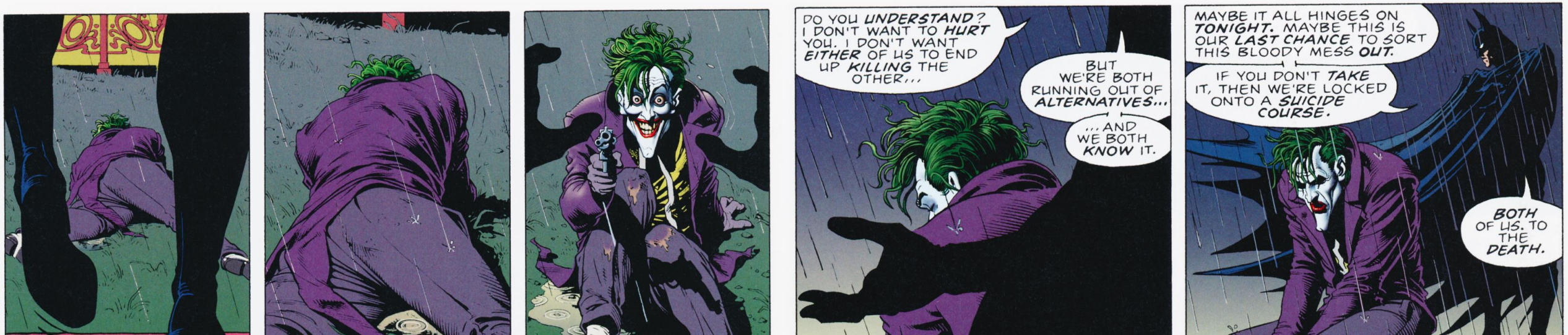

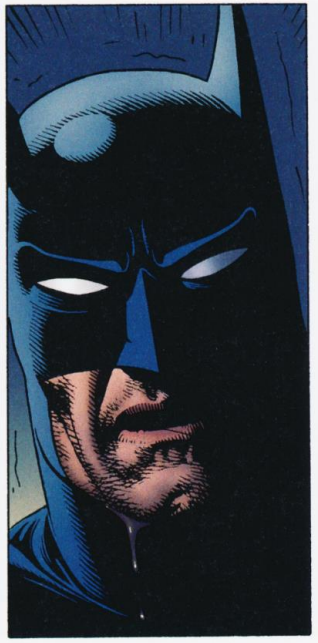

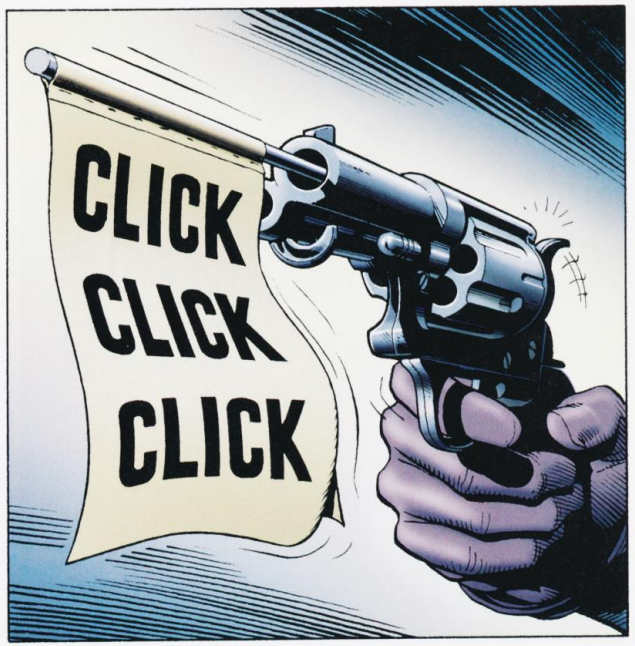
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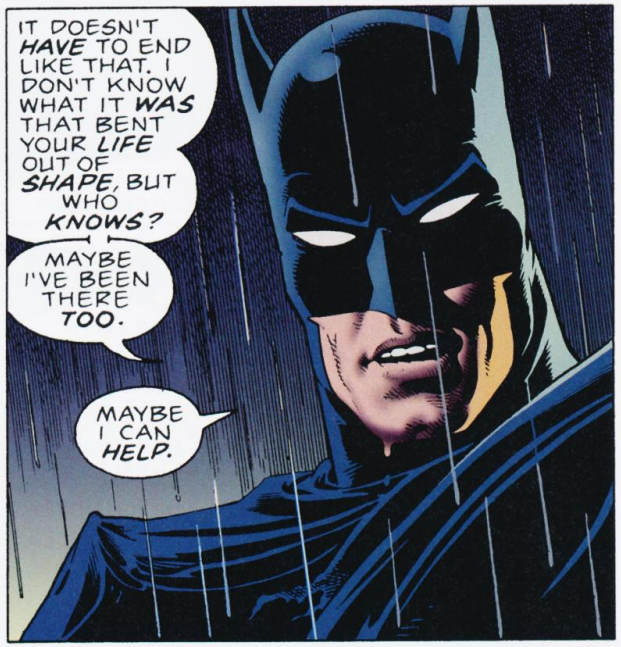
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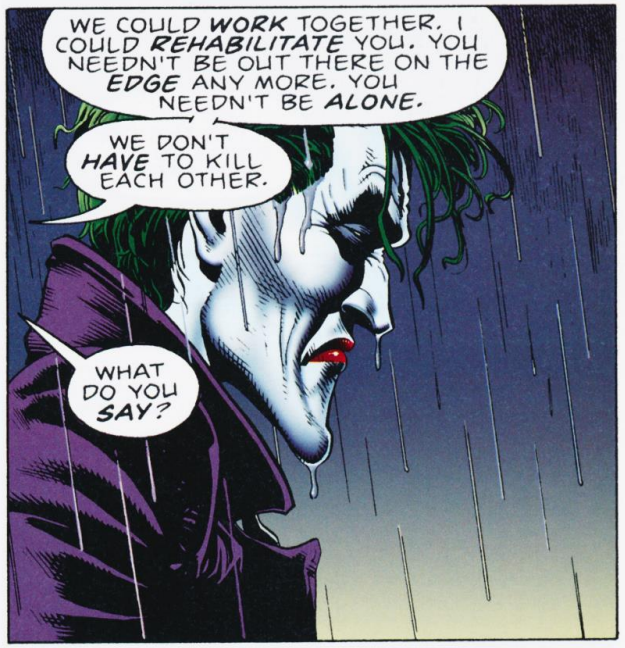
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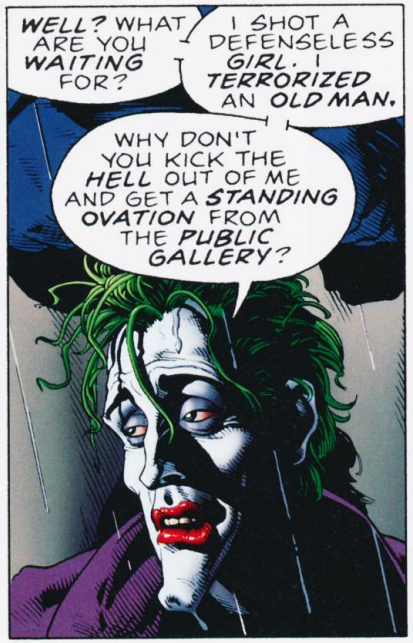
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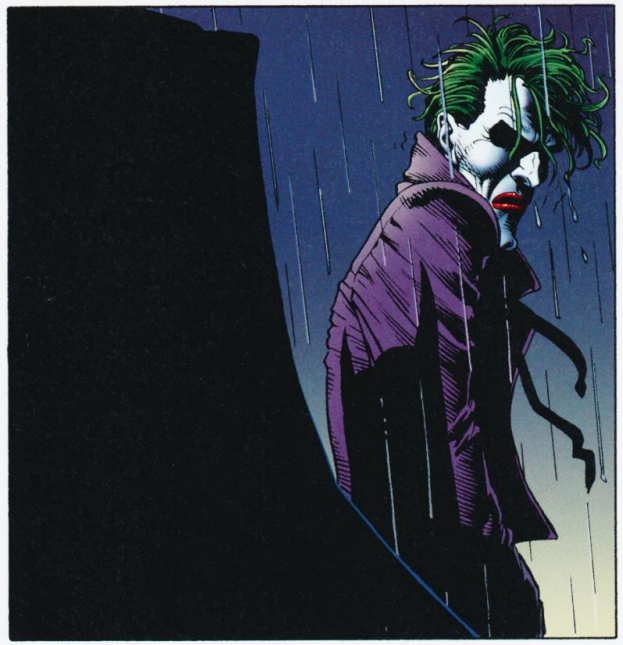

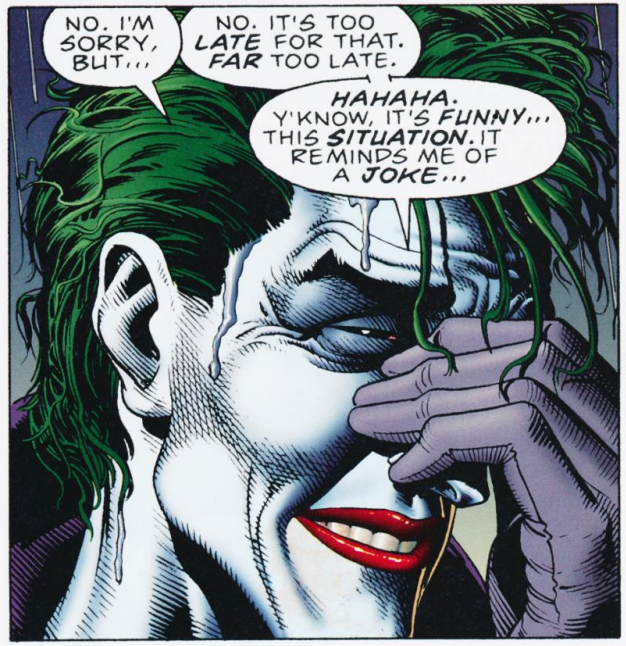
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"People seemed to find the last page of the story ambiguous, so remind me to reveal what actually happened… As our protagonists stood there in the rain laughing at the final joke, the police lights reflecting in the pools of filthy water underfoot, the Batman's hand reached out and……"

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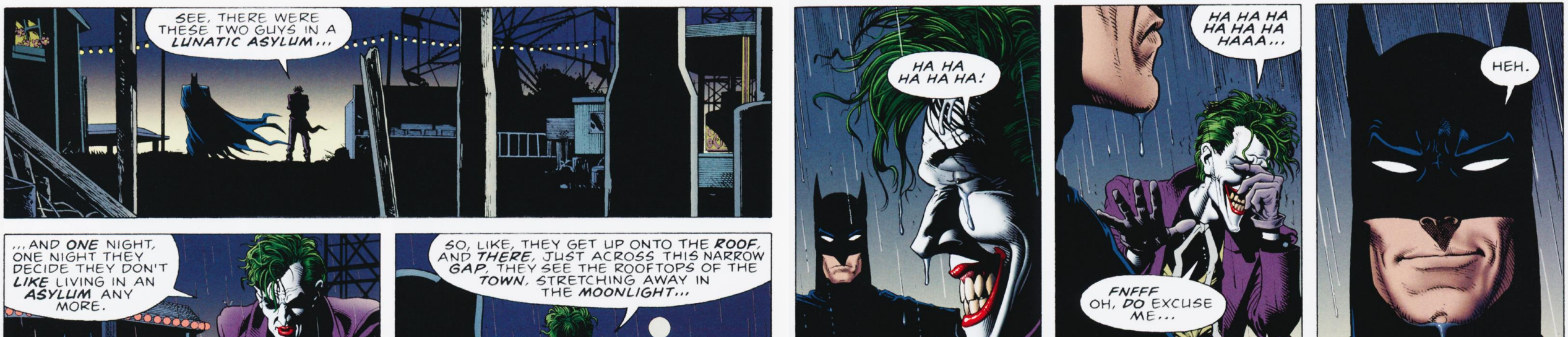
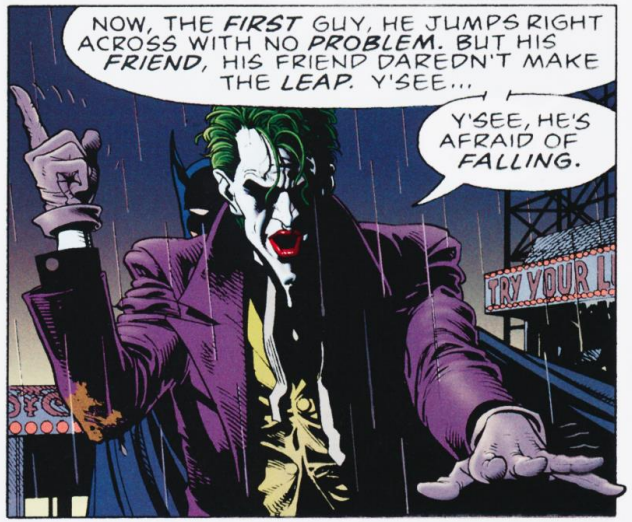
Cambridge, UK 2008



THEY DECIDE THEY'RE GOING TO ESCAPE!

STRETCHING AWAY TO FREEDOM.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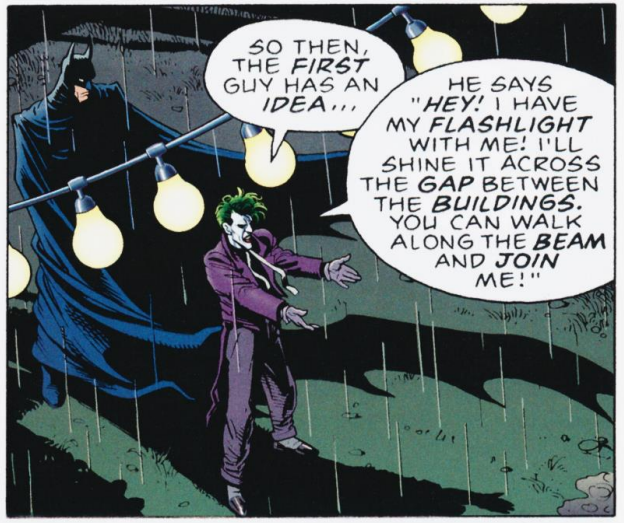
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B-BUT THE SECOND GUY JUST SHAKES HIS HEAD.
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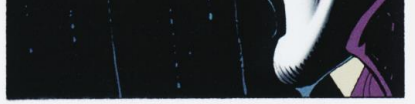
"YOU'D TURN IT OFF WHEN I WAS HALF WAY ACROSS!"



HA HA HA HA HA HA!

HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE
HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH
VWWWWWEEE

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
EEEEEEEEEEEEEE

HA HA HA HA
EEEEEEEEEEEEEE

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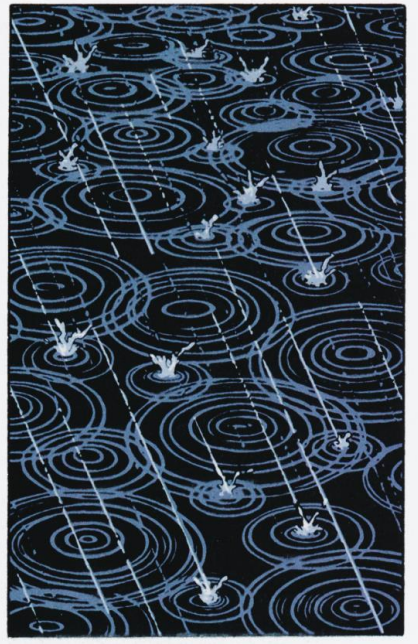

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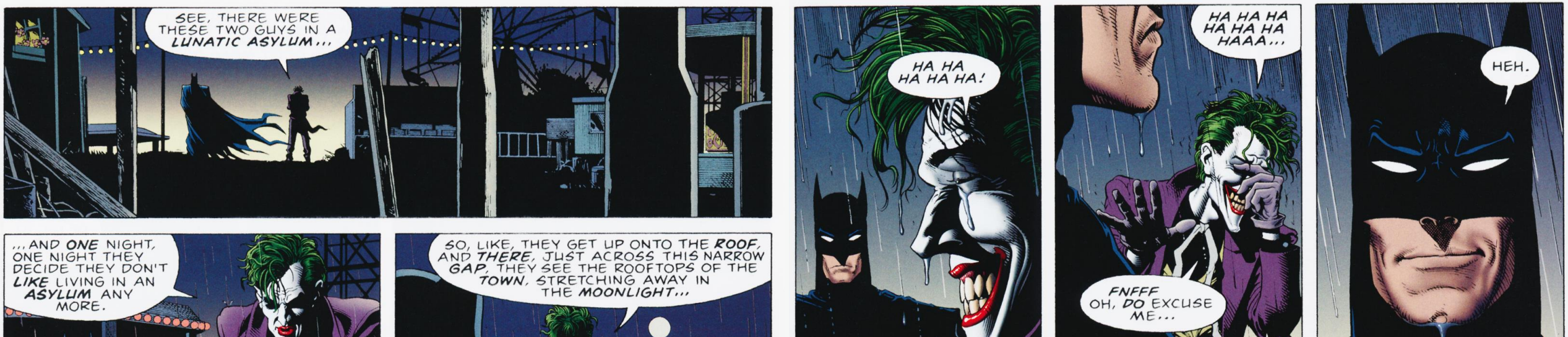

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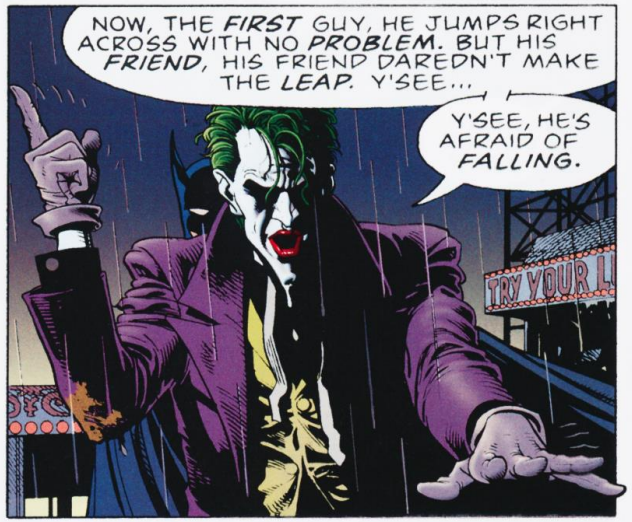
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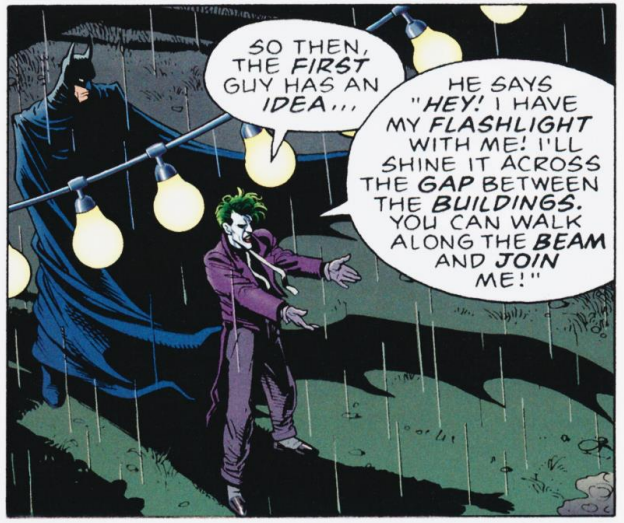
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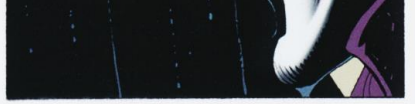


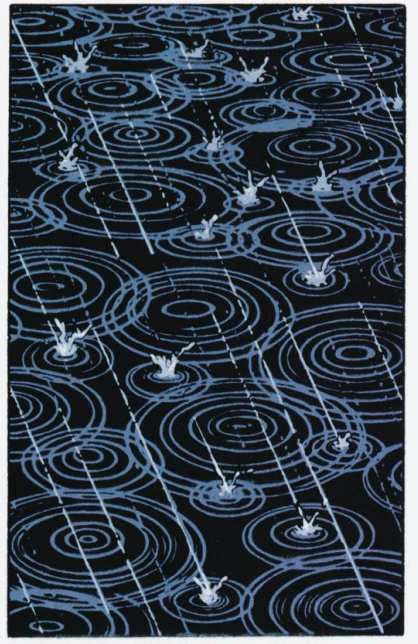
HA HA HA HA HA HA!

HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE
HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH
VWWWWWEEE

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
EEEEEEEEEEEEEE

HA HA HA HA
EEEEEEEEEEEEEE

EEEEEEEEEEEEEE



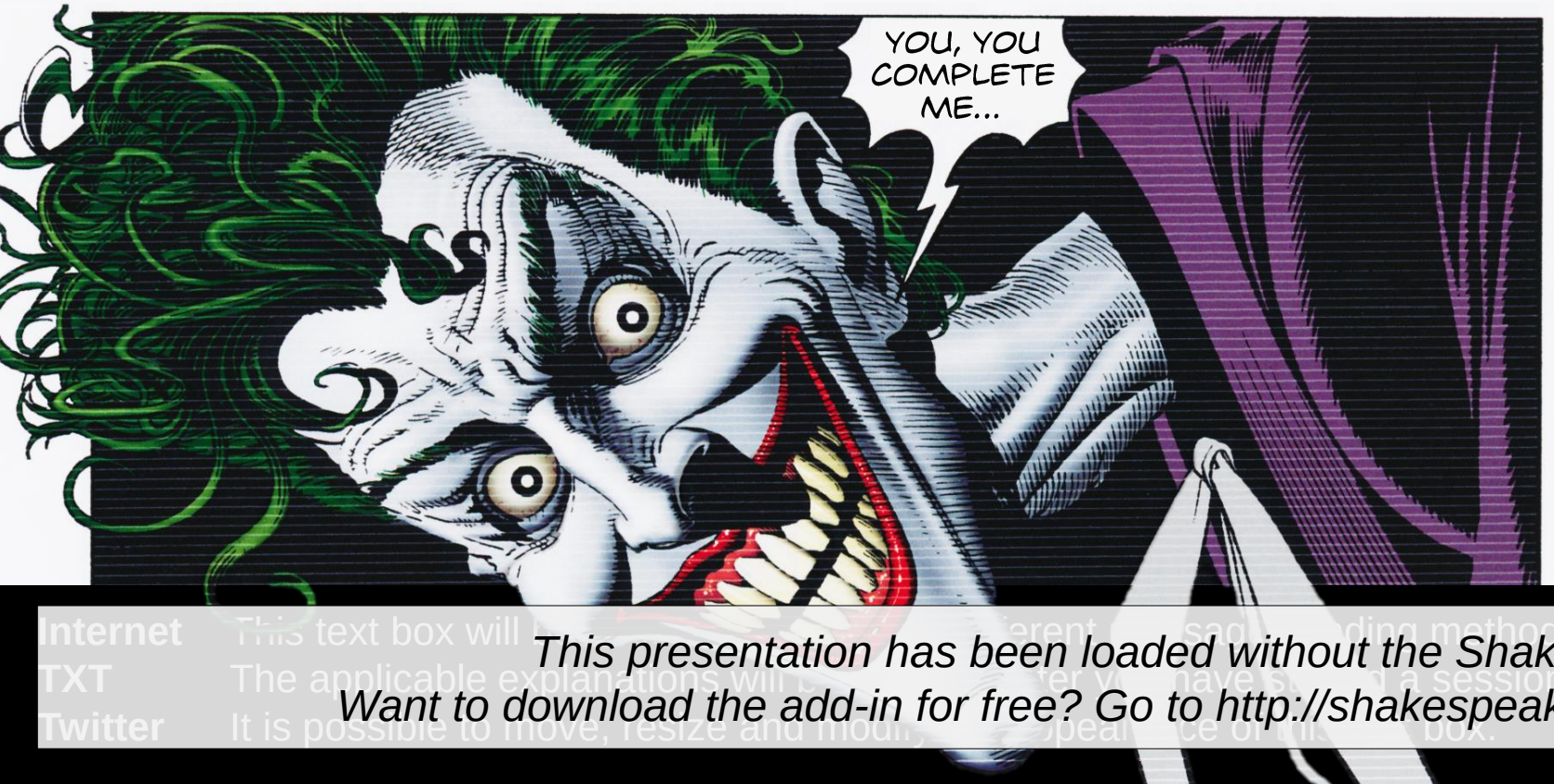
a. Batman chokes the Joker to death as he laughs maniacally. The Gotham Police arrive in time to arrest Batman.

b. Batman reaches out to embrace the Joker as they share a laugh. The Joker is taken back to Arkham Asylum by the Gotham Police and Batman disappears into the night.

c. The ending is intentionally ambiguous and there is not enough text or art on these pages for me to reach a conclusion.

d. Something else… I can explain during our discussion.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF *The Killing Joke?*



The question will open when you start your session and slideshow.

votes: 0 | Closed

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This presentation has been loaded without the Shakespeak add-in.
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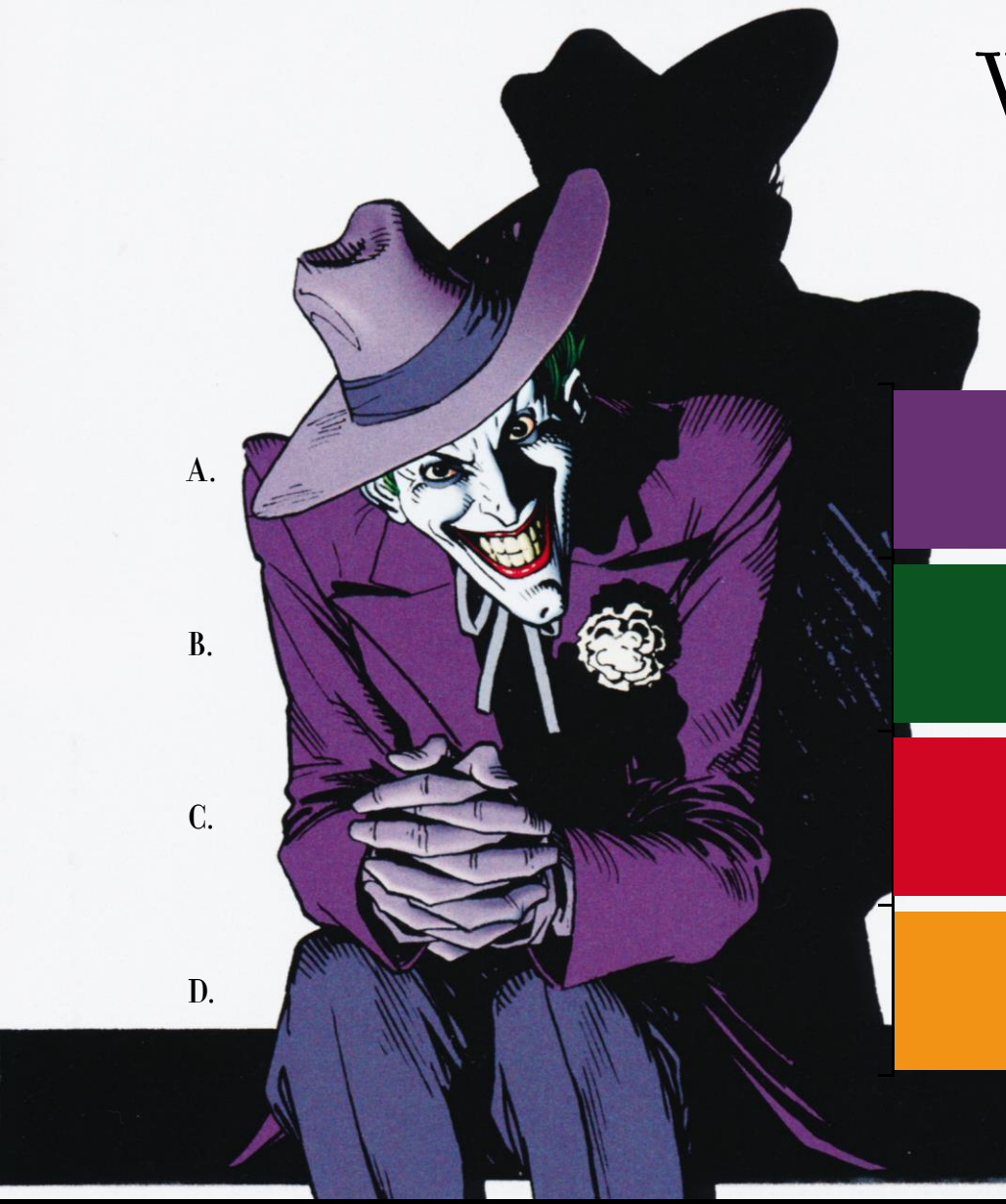
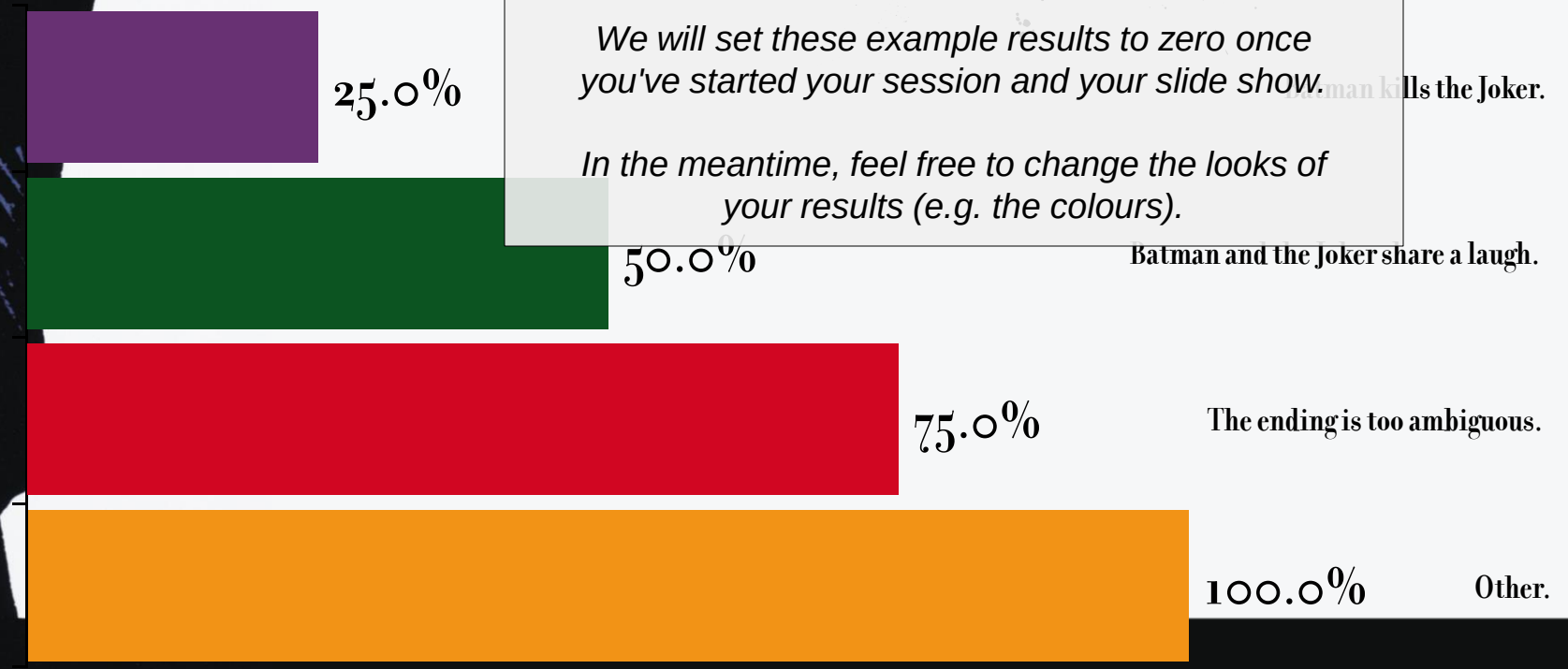


We will set these example results to zero once you've started your session and your slide show.

In the meantime, feel free to change the looks of your results (e.g. the colours).



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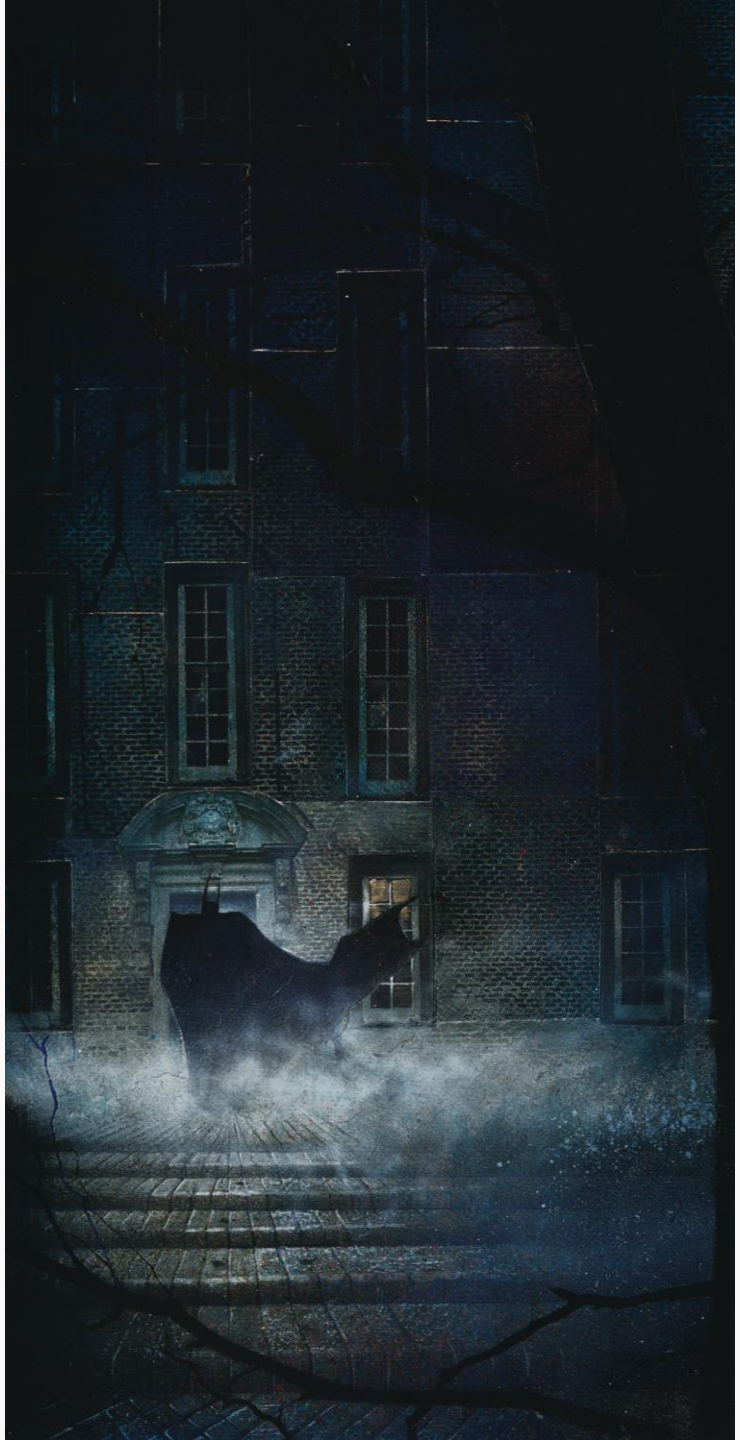
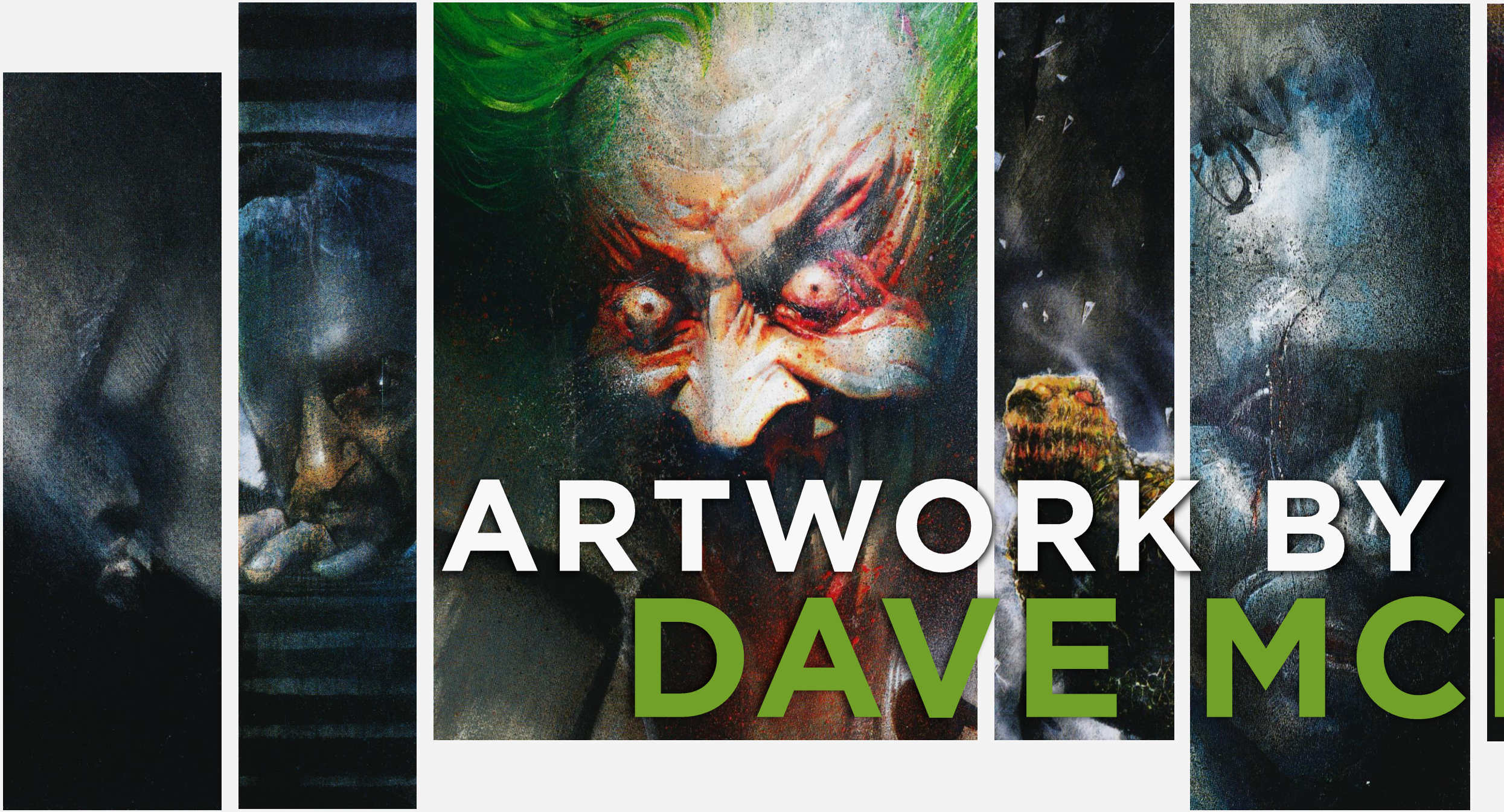
Internet This text box will be used to describe the different message sending methods.
TXT The applicable explanations will be inserted after you have started a session.
Twitter It is possible to move, resize and modify the appearance of this text box.

"The intention was to create something that was more like a piece of music or an experimental film than a typical adventure comic book. I wanted to approach Batman from the point of view of the dreamlike, emotional and irrational hemisphere, as a response to the very literal, "realistic" "left brain" treatment of superheroes which was in vogue at the time, in the wake of *The Dark Knight Returns*, *Watchmen*, and others.

—**Grant Morrison**
Glasgow, Scotland 2004



ARKHAM ASYLUM


ARTWORK BY
DAVE MC

"Dave's approach was anything but ordinary. His inventive storytelling aside, it was his expert mix of media—painting, photography, sculpture, assemblage of odd objects—that created such a resonant and powerful look to this haunting and horrific tale. Hard to believe this was done in the pre-computer age, of which Dave soon became one of the first artists to fully and quickly embrace."

—**Karen Berger**
Executive Editor, Vertigo

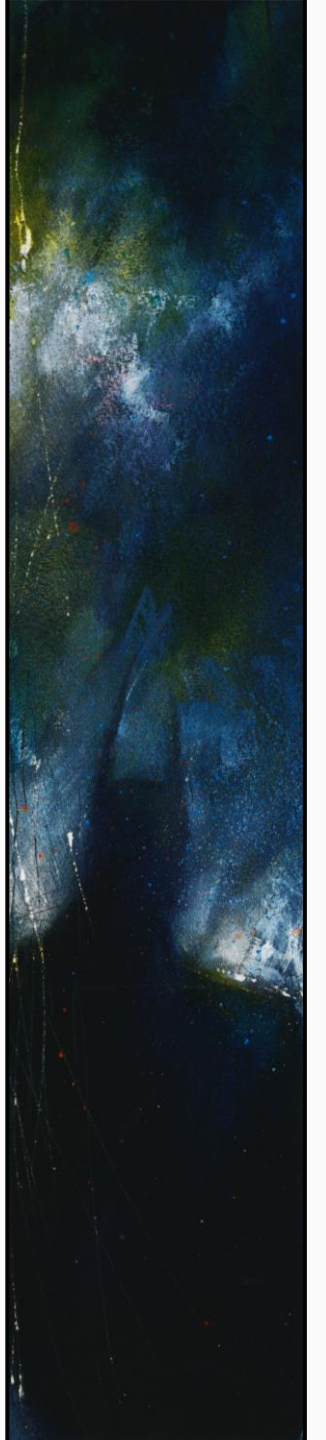
In the mid-sixties, Jack Kirby, along with Stan Lee, staked out a middle ground of iconic forms with a sense of realism about them. Today, many mainstream comics still follow Kirby's lead, but the desire for realistic art and more elaborate scripts has pushed the medium further. Artists such as Dave McKean are forever on the move, experimenting, taking chances, never satisfied. Storytellers in all media know that a sure indicator of audience involvement is the degree to which the audience identifies with a story's characters. When pictures are more abstracted from reality, they require greater levels of perception. Why would Morrison and McKean begin ARKHAM ASYLUM with a seemingly unrecognizable icon?

Icaronycteris is an extinct genus of bat that lived approximately 52 million years ago.

Icaronycteris [icon]

READING COMPREHENSION

Version 1 / pgs. 1-34



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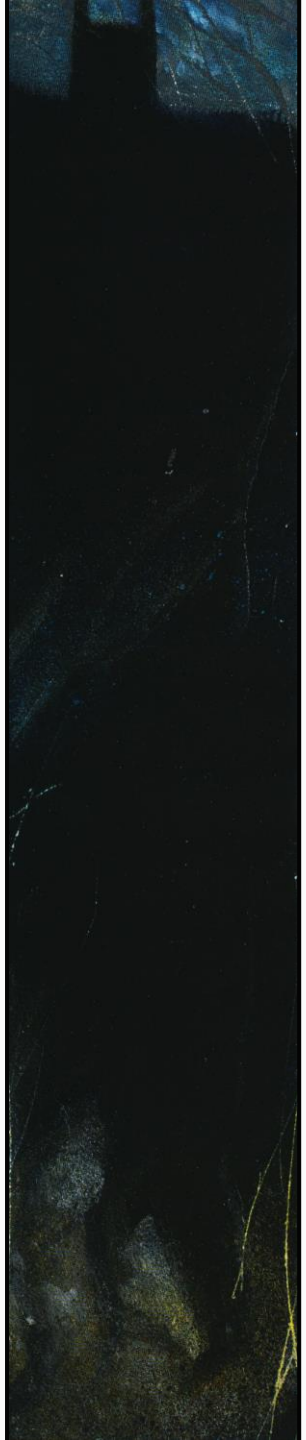
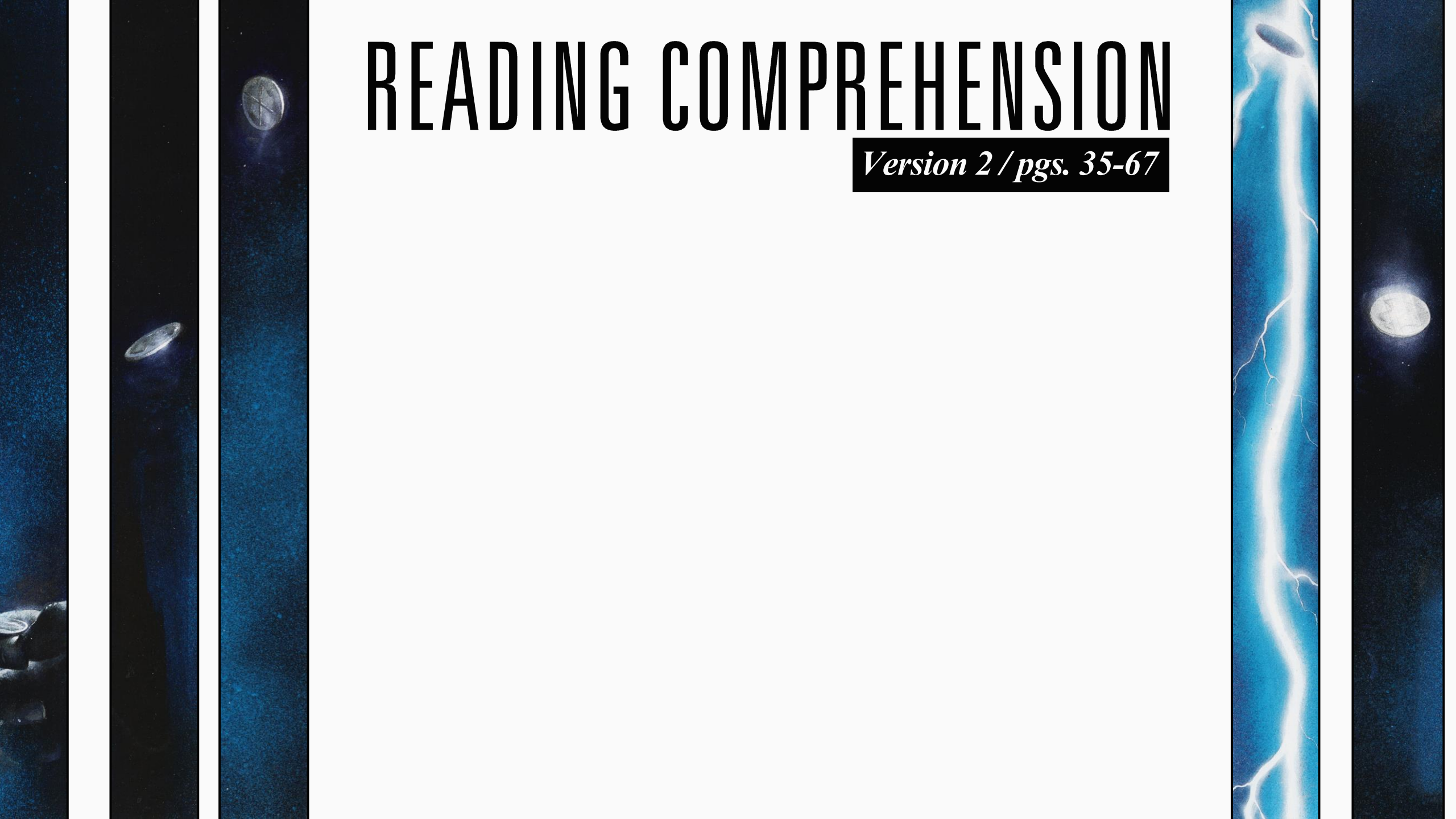
Version 2 / pgs. 1-34



READING COMPREHENSION

Version 1 / pgs. 35-67



READING COMPREHENSION

Version 2 / pgs. 35-67

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