ARKHAM ASYLUM:
A SERIOUS HOUSE ON SERIOUS EARTH

Adapted to script by

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FADE IN:

TEXT:

‘But I don’t want to go among mad people’, Alice remarked. ‘Oh, you can’t help that,’ said the Cat, ‘We’re all mad here. I’m mad. You’re mad.’
‘How do you know I’m mad?’, Said Alice. ‘You must be’, said the Cat, ‘or you wouldn’t have come here.’

Lewis Carroll

“Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”

Like a ghostly apparition, the TEXT withers away.

FADE IN:

EXT. ARKHAM HOUSE - ROOFTOP - 1901

We open with a shot of the moon, caught in between two back lit statues of ANUBIS. It’s stormy. The sky’s stressed. The puddles on the roof reflect a semi-circular window. Mirroring the moon.

EXT. ARKHAM HOUSE - ESTABLISHING

The mansion broods in Gothic silence. It’s uninviting.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
From the journals of Amadeus Arkham.

We experience a long CROSS-FADE:

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - CORRIDOR

A young BOY, Amadeus ARKHAM, walks through a large corridor carrying a tray of tea and food. He’s dwarfed by his shadow.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
In the years following my Father’s death, I think it’s true to say that the house became my whole world.

He walks up the stairs.
ARKHAM (V.O.)
During the long period of mother’s illness, the house often seemed so vast, so confidently real, that by comparison, I felt little more than a ghost, haunting its corridors scarcely aware that anything could exist beyond those melancholy walls.

ARKHAM turns right into a hall and spots a round convex mirror. His reflection deforms into a elongated FRIGHT.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Until that night in 1901, when I first caught a glimpse of that other world. The world on the dark side.

We pull in TOWARDS the FRIGHT’S soul-less eyes.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - MOTHER’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS
ARKHAM opens the door into his mother’s room.

YOUNG ARKHAM
Mother?

Sitting up in bed is MOTHER ARKHAM. She holds a jar. Not enough light to see.

YOUNG ARKHAM (CONT’D)
Mother? It’s me. I brought you something to eat.

ARKHAM closes in. Tension builds. His mother chillingly smiles.

TWO IRISH WOLFHOUNDS sit at either side of her.

MOTHER ARKHAM
...mfff...eaten...

As she mutters, BEETLES fall out of her mouth. She looks like a guilty child holding a jar of beetles.

MOTHER ARKHAM (CONT’D)
I’ve eaten...I’ve eaten...

Tears spill from her eyes. Helpless. She stuffs the escaping beetles back into her mouth.
ARKHAM (V.O.)
That was the moment when I first
felt truly alone.

Shocked, YOUNG ARKHAM drops the tray. It’s contents fall in SLOW MOTION.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Many years later, when I became
aware of the significance of the
beetle as a symbol of rebirth, I
realized that she was simply trying
to protect herself from something,
in the only way that made sense to
her.

CLOSE IN on ARKHAM’s face. On the edge of tears. His eyes disappear. Followed by his face. A no faced child.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
But even then, I think I understood
that mother had been born again,
into that other world. A world of
fathomless signs and portents of
magic and terror.

MOTHER ARKHAM mimes a bat sign with her hands. They glow white, lighting up her face as well as projecting a giant shadow of a bat on the wall behind her.

The two DOGS sit on either side. Adding more symbolism.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And mysterious symbols.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY SKYLINE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING - PRESENT

(GOTHAM is presented in black and white pencil styled shading and impressionist shadows)

The towering buildings amidst the heavy fog and brewing storms. The night is heavy and dissipates when a powerful beam of light projects itself into the sky.

THE BAT SIGNAL.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY POLICE HEADQUARTERS - ROOF

COMMISSIONER GORDON, looking like he experienced hell, waits impatiently on the roof. Two other cops wait with him.
DEEP VOICE
Sorry I’m late.

BATMAN (represented as mostly shadow and silhouette) stands on the ledge.

BATMAN
Problems out of town. What’s up?

GORDON
What’s up? A riot at Arkham Asylum. That’s what’s up?

GORDON leads BATMAN through the door-

INT. GOTHAM CITY POLICE HEADQUARTERS - STAIRS - CONTINUOUS -down the stairs.

GORDON
The inmates seized control of the building early this morning. We don’t know how it happened.

GORDON pushes open the glass door to his office.

INT. GORDON’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Several worried POLICE OFFICERS stand in anticipation. Somewhat relieved from BATMAN’s appearance.

GORDON
They’re holding the Asylum staff hostage, making all kinds of crazy demands.

CLOSE UP: GORDON

GORDON (CONT’D)
We’ve had to send in furniture, store dummies, food, clothing and certain illegal narcotics...

BATMAN
And...

GORDON
They say there’s only one final demand. Thank God.

GORDON stops by a PHONE. The calender next to it reads “APRIL 1st”.


GORDON (CONT’D)
They’ve been waiting to talk to you personally.

C.U: (COLOR) ESTABLISHING SHOT OF ARKHAM ASYLUM.

BATMAN
I see.

C.U: THE NAMEPLATE ON THE HOUSE. “ARKHAM ASYLUM”.

GORDON
It’s The Joker...

BATMAN, always postured straight and stiff, moves closer to the phone.

BATMAN
Joker! Are you there? What do you want?

The speaker phone crackles.

THE JOKER
Well hello, big boy! How’s it hanging?

BATMAN
Don’t waste my time, Joker. Just tell me what it is you want.

THE JOKER
Oh, I think you can guess. We want you. In here. With us. In the madhouse. Where you belong.

BATMAN draws back slightly. There’s brief apprehension on his movements.

BATMAN
And...and what if I say no?

C.U: ARKHAM ASYLUM. THE WALLS.

A SKRITCHING sound comes from the phone.

THE JOKER
Well...we have so many friends here, sweetheart.

CLOSE IN on the PHONE.
THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Say hello to Pearl...

PEARL (O.S.)
Oh Buh-bat-bat-bat-ohhhhh...

THE JOKER
Such a crybaby isn’t she?

More SKRITCHING from the phone.

GORDON
What’s that noise? What’s he doing?

THE JOKER
Pearl is nineteen years old She just started work in the kitchens here to earn some extra money.

MOVE IN CLOSE to the PHONE.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Pearl wants to be an artist, don’t you Pearl, darling?

More SKRITS and SCRATCHING.

PEARL (O.S.)
Uhhh...

BATMAN’s eyes widen in realization.

C.U: BATMAN’S SHADOW. RUNNING.

THE JOKER
She just drew me a beautiful house. She drew it with this pencil.

CLOSE UP: PHONE.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
The one I’ve just sharpened. Open your eyes wide, Pearl! Beautiful! Blue! OH!

BATMAN
JESUS! NO!

PEARL screams crackle through the phone.
C.U: BATMAN RUNS TOWARDS THE ENTRANCE TO ARKHAM.

BATMAN shakes in anger.

    THE JOKER
    You have half an hour. And bring a
    white stick.

    BATMAN
    (under his breath)
    No...

BATMAN SCREAMS in murderous but impotent RAGE.

    BATMAN (CONT’D)
    NO!

THE JOKER LAUGHS rip through the phone in a horrifying echo.

C.U: SALT SURROUNDS ARKHAM.

GORDON tentatively approaches BATMAN. The other cops are
sweating. BATMAN is a ticking time bomb.

    GORDON
    Oh jesus. That poor girl.
    Batman...I...

    BATMAN
    I’m going in there.

BATMAN turns. Monolithic. GORDON is a mere human compared to
him.

    BATMAN (CONT’D)
    Jim, can we talk?

BATMAN walks away before he can answer. GORDON follows.

C.U: BATMAN TOUCHES THE SALT AND RUBS IT ON HIS FINGERS.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY POLICE HEADQUARTERS - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS
(back in color)

BATMAN and GORDON exit to the top where the BAT SIGNAL
projects into the sky. Feverish heat clouds brood over the
skyline. The City Lights are over exposed.
GORDON
You okay? You know you don’t have to go in there. Let me organize a SWAT team or something.

BATMAN
No. This is something I have to do. It’s just...

GORDON
Listen, I can understand it if even you’re afraid. I mean, Arkham has a reputation.

BATMAN
Afraid? Batman’s not afraid of anything.

BATMAN stands on the edge of the roof as a ragged silhouette. Dwarfed by the BAT SIGNAL behind him.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
He’s too big to be afraid. It’s me...I’m afraid. I’m afraid that The Joker may be right about me. Sometimes I...question the rationality of my actions.

GORDON lights his pipe. His spectacles are WHITE.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
And I’m afraid that when I walk through those asylum gates....when I walk into Arkham and the doors close behind me...It’ll be just like coming home.

EXT. ARKHAM HOUSE - NIGHT - 1920

AMADEUS ARKHAM, now in his 30’s, walks towards the entrance of his house with his suitcase.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I return to my family home on a cool spring morning in 1920, shortly after mother’s funeral. She opened her own throat with a pearl-handled razor. In the end, perhaps, it was for the best. I have to believe that.
INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

ARKHAM stands as a silhouette by the door frame. The hallway is dark and objects appear as barely suggested shapes in the gloom. It’s like Arkham stirred up something in the house and set it free.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
As the only child, I am to inherit the house and the acre of land upon which it stands.

ARKHAM gazes up at his newly claimed house.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Alone in a gloom that smells of lost childhood, I dedicate myself to the prevention of such suffering as my poor mother knew. And I begin to make my plans.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - ROOM - LATER

ARKHAM lays in bed, wide-eyed and flanked by high windows. The moon shines on him through the murky blue night fog.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
For the first time in twelve years I spend the night in my old room. I do not sleep well. My dreams are haunted by beating wings.

C.U: FLAPPING WINGS OF A BAT. SEVERAL CUTS. SPLIT SECONDS.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And outside, far off, a dog barks. On and on through the whole restless night.

EXT. METROPOLIS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The open and spacious buildings of the mega city Metropolis.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Next day, I return to Metropolis, where my family and I have been living for some time. I’m working at the state psychiatric hospital and one of my patients today has been referred to me from Metropolis Penitentiary.
INT. METROPOLIS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM

CLOSE UP: ‘MAD DOG’ MARTIN HAWKINS. A degenerate, gray, scarred and brutally cropped hair. He grins unpleasantly like a vicious child about to squish a bug.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
His name is Martin Hawkins. “Mad Dog” Hawkins.

MAD DOG
sits in a chair by a table. The room has a strange gray tone of fog and abstract space.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I listen as he tells me how he was beaten and sexually abused by his father. I ask him why he chose to destroy the faces and sexual organs of his victims.

MAD DOG
It was the virgin mary’s idea. She says it’s the best way to stop the dirty sluts spreading their disease.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And I ask him why he cuts his arms with a razor.

MAD DOG
Just to feel. Just to feel something.

INT. METROPOLIS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - HALL - LATER

ARKHAM watches two PRISON OFFICERS leading MAD DOG out of the office. He turns his face and grins at ARKHAM.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
How many more like him must there be? Men whose only real crime is mental illness, trapped in the penal system with no hope of treatment. My course is clear.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Happy, ARKHAM holds his daughter HARRIET (blonde, 9 years old) in his arms. She hugs him, smiling. His wife, CONSTANCE, also smiling, watches.
The scene is warm. As are the colors.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I tell my dear Constance and little Harriet that we will shortly be returning to my family home in Gotham City. And to begin the conversion into a facility for the mentally ill.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

ARKHAM lies next to CONSTANCE. His eyes are closed but his brow is furrowed and his hands clutch a pillow.

The MOON SUPER IMPOSES over him.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
That night I dream I am a child again.

INT. FUN HOUSE - NIGHTMARE

YOUNG ARKHAM, stands in a hall of mirrors that loom over him. In each one, his image is subject to fierce distortion. Like evil doppelgängers surrounding him.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Lost in a fun house, I find myself in the hall of mirrors. There are strangers in the mirrors and I freeze, not daring to go any further.

In front of him rests two RED GLOWING CURTAINS covered in hair. Above is a sign.

TUNNEL OF LOVE

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Not through that door.

The CURTAINS look soiled. A MAN’s hand grabs his SON.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
At last, my father comes looking for me. I beg him not to take me into the Tunnel of love, so we return by the way we entered.

ARKHAM’S FATHER has no face. Completely scratched out.
EXT. ARKHAM HOUSE - ARKHAM'S ROOM

YOUNG ARKHAM writhes in bed.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
That night I dream that the mirror people have escaped from the glass and come looking for me.

The MIRROR PEOPLE float above YOUNG ARKHAM. DISTORTED FACES and terrible WAILS.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - ROOM

ADULT ARKHAM wakes up in a pool of sweat and gasping for air.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I wake, sweating and adult. And for a moment. Just a moment. I feel as though I’m back. Where I belong.

EXT. ARKHAM HOUSE - ESTABLISHING

The House as it was in 1920.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Back in the old house.

CROSS-FADE:

EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - ESTABLISHING

BATMAN stands in front of the entrance. Examining the salt.

THE JOKER (O.S.)
It’s salt.

BATMAN looks up.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Why don’t you sprinkle some on me, honey?

THE JOKER, looking as mad as ever, smiles for him at the entrance.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Aren’t I just good enough to eat?
Several HOSTAGES stand next to THE JOKER.

CLOSE-UP: BATMAN’S MOUTH TWISTS INTO A GRIMACE OF DISGUST.

BATMAN
I’m here, Joker. Release the hostages.

THE JOKER
You heard him folks! Hit the trail!

The HOSTAGES including DOCTORS, PSYCHIATRISTS, KITCHEN STAFF and MORE begin to flee.

THE JOKER caresses the hair of a girl hiding in a handkerchief. PEARL.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Bye Pearl. Let’s do it again sometime.

PEARL walks away. She shoots BATMAN a shy gaze. Both eyes intact. BATMAN becomes stoked in rage.

BATMAN
But what about her eyes!? You said!

THE JOKER lights up with manic glee. His grin widens into a hideous predatory leer. The light on his face overexposes itself like flash photography as he hysterically shouts.

THE JOKER
APRIL FOOL! HAHAHAHAHAHA!

BATMAN crosses the threshold into the asylum. THE JOKER stands aside to let him past. BATMAN walks in between two STONE STATUES OF ANUBIS that flank the doorway. Entering the trial of his judgement.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Cheer up Honey Pie.

The doors to ARKHAM ASYLUM shut.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM – RECEPTION HALL

We are now outside logic. The recognizable BATMAN world of Gotham is behind us now. We have come to the Heart of Darkness.
The Asylum is an abstract mess of blacks, blues and grays. A murky fog permanently exists within the walls.

BATMAN walks towards the door to the DINING HALL.

THE JOKER
Listen; How many brittle bone babies does it take to-

BATMAN
- Shut up.

THE JOKER exaggerates the pain and holds his chest. Mocking him.

THE JOKER
OOOOH! At home to Mr. Tetchy, are we? Loosen up, tight ass.

Suddenly, THE JOKER swings his arm down and squeezes BATMAN’s rear. BATMAN jumps as if bitten.

Profoundly shocked.

BATMAN
Take you FILTHY HANDS OFF OF ME!

THE JOKER breezes past him, grinning wickedly.

THE JOKER
What’s the matter? Have I touched a nerve? Hey, how is the boy wonder? Started shaving yet?

BATMAN
Filthy degenerate!

THE JOKER leers at us (breaking the fourth wall).

THE JOKER
Flattery will get you nowhere. You’re in the real world now and the lunatics have taken over the asylum.

THE JOKER pushes open the DINING ROOM DOOR. WHITE LIGHT floods us.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
“April, sweet is coming in.”
INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS

A ghastly party is in full swing here with flashing lights, ancient geometry, balloons, streamers, blood, gore and body parts. The INMATES and the lunatic feast of pure madness on the edge of the rational world.

THE JOKER

LET THE FEAST OF FOOLS BEGIN!

We hear distinct voices coming from the INMATES.

VOICES

Millions of Robins!

VOICES (CONT’D)

No Room! No Room!

VOICES (CONT’D)

Father dear, father I have to confess.

VOICES (CONT’D)

Einstein was wrong!

VOICES (CONT’D)

Charlotte Corday. Charlotte Corday.

VOICES (CONT’D)

I’m the speed of LIGHT cracking through shivery atoms and God, the sky whirls and withers like a melting RAINBOW!

A NURSE, burned to char, hangs by one ankle from the ceiling (hanging like the Hanged Man Tarot Card). Blood pours from her throat and splattering over a wedding cake. A LUNATIC feasts his face into it.

VOICES (CONT’D)

Who killed Bambi!

VOICES (CONT’D)

Oh, daddy, make him stop! He’s hurting me! The dog’s hurting me!

A SECURITY GUARDS stands frozen in total shock. Tears running down his face.

VOICES (CONT’D)

Blood and-
VOICES (CONT’D)
Dictator of the Rats!

In the corner watching the action is THE GREAT WHITE SHARK. He smiles with his sharp teeth.

VOICES (CONT’D)
Oranges?

POISON IVY watches from the distance. Hiding in the shadows.

VOICES (CONT’D)
I believe god is a man.

VOICES (CONT’D)
Well a boy’s best friend is his mother.

ARNOLD WESKER (THE VENTRILOQUIST) with the dummy SCARFACE watches TV.

VICTOR ZSAZ sits nearby.

ZSAZ
Who killed bambi!

VOICES
Some say God is an insect.

DOLLMAKER (wearing dead skin as a mask) holds his flesh made doll.

VOICES (CONT’D)
Dirt everywhere! Christ look at it! Dirt Dirt!

VOICES (CONT’D)
Now it’s time to join the club that’s made for you and me.

Several INMATES are duking it out. THE PENGUIN LAUGHS as he watches.

VOICES (CONT’D)
M-I-C-K-E-Y.

VOICES (CONT’D)
Dead in a bath.

THE JOKER guides BATMAN to another room.
INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM

The murky fog surrounds the room. Seated nearby is ARKHAM ADMINISTRATOR Charles CAVENDISH (wearing smeared clown paint and dripping wet) and pacing nearby is Psychotherapist Dr. Ruth ADAMS. She paces over Rorschach blot test cards.

THE JOKER ENTERS with BATMAN. CAVENDISH immediately jolts up.

CAVENDISH
Joker! I’ve had enough of this madness!

THE JOKER reaches out and pinches CAVENDISH’s cheek.

THE JOKER
Enough madness? Enough? And how do you measure madness? Not with rods and wheels and clocks surely? You know, you look so pretty when you are mad?

CAVENDISH tries to pull away but THE JOKER pulls CAVENDISH’s face into his chest.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Kiss me, Charlie! Ravish me! But no tongues, Y’hear? Not on our first date.

CAVENDISH jerks away.

CAVENDISH
I’m warning you!

THE JOKER violently shoves CAVENDISH into his seat. He faces him nose to nose.

THE JOKER
You’re in no position to issue warnings, Charlie. Not with your guilty secret. Now sit down and stay down before I think of something funny to do with you.

BATMAN
Enough, Joker. Who are these people? You told me you’d release all the hostages.

ADAMS lights another cigarette.
ADAMS
Well...we insisted on staying, Batman.

BATMAN turns slightly in acknowledgement.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
I’m Ruth Adams. I’m a psychotherapist here.

THE JOKER leans over CAVENDISH’s head, playing with his hair.

THE JOKER
And this is dear old Doc Cavendish, our current administrator. A man who just loves to Administer current to exceptional patients! Watching the place for dear young Jeremiah. Eh, Charlie!

CAVENDISH
I have a duty to the state. I will not leave this asylum in the hands of...of madmen!

Losing interest, THE JOKER looks down to his shoes and mockingly holds his nose.

THE JOKER
And while we’re discussing duty, it looks like someone’s done theirs on the floor.

THE JOKER leans over a table. TWO-FACE sits on the floor, disconsolate and confused holding Tarot cards that are spread across him. The typical TWO-FACE has been replaced with a feeble, pitiful man with existential issues.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Oh jesus, Harvey! Is it you again? You trying to ruin my shoes?

TWO-FACE
I’m sorry...I couldn’t help it...it Takes so long to decide...so many options. I’m really sorry. I think.

THE JOKER turns and raises his hand like a school kid. The WHITE on his face overexposed.

THE JOKER
Please Miss! Two-Face has pissed himself again!
BATMAN looks over to TWO-FACE.

BATMAN

Two-Face?

ADAMS

Excuse me, Batman, but we’d really prefer it if you call the inmates by their real name. Harvey Dent is his.

TWO-FACE picks up the Tarot card “The Lovers” (glyph of duality according to Crowley). He looks heartbroken. BATMAN watches him. Though he’s mostly shadow, his body language indicates sympathy.

BATMAN

What have you done to him?

ADAMS

Done? He’s being cured. This place is a hospital, Batman, and we’re here to treat people, in case you’d forgotten.

ADAMS holds up TWO-FACE’s scarred SILVER DOLLAR. She blows smoke in BATMAN’s direction.

ADAMS (CONT’D)

As a matter of fact, we’ve successfully tackled Harvey’s obsession with duality. I’m sure you’re familiar with this silver dollar – scarred on one side, unmarked on the other. He used to make all his decisions with this, as though it somehow represented the contradictory halves of his personality.

CLOSE UP: ADAMS

ADAMS (CONT’D)

What we did was wean him off the coin and onto a die. That gave him six decision options instead of the former two.

We see HARVEY DENT staring directly at us. LAYERED over the shot are different MONTAGES of SYMBOLS, COINS, TUMBLING DIE, TAROT CARDS, I-CHING HEXAGRAMS.
ADAMS (CONT’D)
He did so well with the die that we’ve been able to move him onto a pack of tarot cards. That’s seventy-eight options open to him now, Batman. Next, we plan to introduce him to the I-Ching. Soon he’ll have completely functional judgemental facility that doesn’t rely so much on black and white absolutes.

TWO-FACE laboriously places the Tarot Card “The Fool” onto a half-way finished house of cards.

BATMAN
But right now, he can’t even make a simple decision, like going to the bathroom, without consulting the cards. Seems to me you’ve effectively destroyed the man’s personality, Doctor.

CLOSE UP: TWO-FACE has a look of misery on his good said.

He places “The Tower” Tarot card down.

ADAMS
Sometime’s we have to pull down in order to rebuild, Batman.
Psychiatry’s like that.

BATMAN turns and stares directly at ADAMS.

BATMAN
You must admit it’s hard to imagine this place being conducive to anyone’s mental health.

ADAMS smiles a little.

ADAMS
You’re going to hit me with all the local folklore now, right? Secret passages, the ghost of mad Amadeus Arkham, the wall that’s supposed to bleed. Gothic crap.

BATMAN
Well, you’ll pardon me for saying, but your techniques don’t seem to have had much effect on The Joker.

ADAMS ashes her cigarette.
ADAMS
The Joker’s a special case. Some of us feel he may be beyond treatment. In fact, we’re not even sure if he can be properly defined as insane.

ADAMS grinds our her cigarette in an ashtray on the table.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
His latest claim is that’s he’s possessed by Baron Ghede, the voodoo Loa.

CLOSE UP: ADAMS.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
We’re beginning to think it may be neurological disordering similar to tourette’s syndrome.

She looks down at her bare foot standing of the Rorschach test cards.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
It’s quite possible we may actually be looking at some kind of super sanity here. A brilliant new modification of human perception. More suited to urban life at the end of the twentieth century.

ADAMS crouches down and begins to gather the scattered Rorschach cards. BATMAN towers above her in SHADOW.

BATMAN
Tell that to his victims.

ADAMS
Unlike you and I, The Joker seems to have no control over the sensory information he’s receiving from the outside world.

She stands up with the cards in her arms.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
He can only cope with that chaotic barrage of input by going with the flow.

ADAM turns and fixes her confident gaze to BATMAN.
ADAMS (CONT’D)
That’s why some days he’s a mischievous clown, others a psychopathic killer. He has no real personality.

THE JOKER hand slowly reaches out to her. BATMAN notices but says nothing.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
He creates himself each day. He sees himself as the lord of misrule and the world as a theatre of the absurd.

THE JOKER grabs ADAMS. Scaring her. He snatches a card out of her hand.

THE JOKER
Card games, Dr. Ruth? You know me, I just adore card games!

THE JOKER flips the card over and stares at it.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
I see two angels screwing in the stratosphere, a constellation of black holes, a biological process beyond the conception of man, a ventriloquist act locked in the trunk of a red Chevrolet...what about you Batman?

THE JOKER holds up the card to BATMAN.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
What do you see?

C.U: A GIANT BAT FLIES TOWARDS US

BATMAN
Nothing. I don’t see anything.

JOKER looks at the card for himself.

THE JOKER
Not even a cute little long-legged boy in swimming trunks?

TWEEDLE DUM & TWEEDLE DEE enter through the fog. They are connected by wires on their head like electronic Siamese twins.
TWEEDLE DUM
Stop wasting time, ya ugly, prancing bastard.

TWEEDLE DEE
He is ours too, ya know?

BLACK MASK reveals himself.

BLACK MASK
I say we take off his mask. I want to see his real face.

THE JOKERS turns on him, hissing irritably.

THE JOKER
Don’t be so predictable, for christ’s sake. That is his real face.

THE JOKER rubs his chin in thought. Smiling wide.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
And I want to go much deeper than that. I want him to know what it’s like to have sticky fingers pick through the dirty corners of his mind.

THE JOKER dashes behind ADAMS and grips her shoulders like a claw. ADAMS shoots him an apprehensive, sidelong glance.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
So let’s start with a word association test, shall we? Ruthie?

ADAMS looks at BATMAN.

ADAMS
I don’t really want to do this...

BATMAN
Go ahead, Dr. Adams. I’m not afraid. It’s just words.

CLOSE UP: THE LIGHTING IS COMPLETELY OVER EXPOSED ON JOKER.

HE LAUGHS.

THE JOKER
That’s the spirt, Batsy.

CLOSE IN towards JOKER.
THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Sticks and stones.

STOP on his red eye. Glowing.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
I like a man who can take the pressure!

EXT. ARKHAM HOUSE - 1920

We see a black sky. White lines moves across in a circle. Another moves next to it forming a VESCICA PISCIS.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.

AMADEUS squints with his eyes blocking a giant light. His eyes are expressing awe. A SHADOW falls over ARKHAM.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and satan, which deceives the whole world.

ARKHAM stands before a winged shadow.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Just as the archangel subdued the old dragon, so shall I bend this house to my will. I will bring light to those dismal corridors of my childhood, I will open up the locked doors and fill the empty rooms.

A LARGE STATUE of MICHAEL is being pulled by workers. The STATUE stands over a serpent and holds a giant spear.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And set above it all an image of the triumph of reason over the irrational.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - HARRIET’S ROOM

ARKHAM sits by his daughter’s bed. “Alice in Wonderland” rests by her side. A NIGHT LIGHT burns. All else is dark.
ARKHAM (V.O.)

Harriet is plagued by nightmares.

ARKHAM examines HARRIET’s drawings left on the floor leading towards her BIG DOLL HOUSE. They are childish renditions of monsters – a two-headed man and a man with a dog’s head.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

I blame Lewis Carroll, but she will insist on reading and rereading the books. Perhaps things will settle when the work on the house is finished.

ARKHAM opens the door to leave.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

Perhaps.

ARKHAM catches something on the floor. He reaches down to pick up a PLAYING CARD. A JOKER CARD. ARKHAM doesn’t understand.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

One of the workmen must have dropped it.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM – RECEPTION ROOM – PRESENT

ADAMS and BATMAN sit across from each other. An over head light swings above them yet BATMAN manages to remain a shadow.

ADAMS

Mother.

FLASH MONTAGE: MARTHA WAYNE’S PHOTOGRAPH. GUNSHOT. VIRGIN MARY. PEARLS.

BATMAN

Ah. Pearl.

ADAMS

Handle.

FLASH MONTAGE: REVOLVER. THE BARREL. PEARLS.

BATMAN

Revolver.

ADAMS continues with curiosity. She knows he can break him.
ADAMS
Gun.

FLASH MONTAGE: A CHILD DRAWING OF A STICK FIGURE. TATTERED. IT FLIES OVER A BLURRED SEPIA PHOTO OF THOMAS WAYNE.

We see BATMAN’s eyes painfully speak.

BATMAN
Father.

ADAMS looks surprised.

ADAMS
Father?

FLASH CUT: A TINY PIECE OF A WEDDING DRESS FLOATS OVER SCATTERED PICTURES OF THE AUTOPSY PHOTOS OF HIS PARENTS.

We concentrate on the left eye of BATMAN.

BATMAN
(pained)
Death.

ADAMS
End.

BATMAN grinds his teeth.

BATMAN
Stop.

He lowers his head and loosens his posture. Admitting defeat.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
Stop...

THE JOKER explodes into a HYSTERICAL, MALICIOUS LAUGH that echoes throughout.

ADAMS takes a drag off the cigarette and shoots BATMAN an apologetic glance.

As JOKER LAUGHS. The screen vibrates intensely. The light is over exposed into it covers the screen.

We still hear his LAUGH.
I/E. EUROPE - MONTAGE - 1920

We experience a series of LAYERED SHOTS.

A MAP of EUROPE. TEXT. SYMBOLS. BOOKS. A PORTRAIT OF CARL JUNG. AN OIL PAINTING OF ALEISTER CROWLEY. TAROT CARDS.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
In the fall of 1920, I am invited to Europe. I finally meet professor Jung in Switzerland. And in England, I am introduced to the so-called ‘wickedest man on earth’ - Aleister Crowley.

We experience more LAYERED SHOTS.

TEXT from CROWLEY’s BOOKS. An EYE OF HORUS. HIEROGLYPHICS. THE GOD ANUBIS. THOTH. CIRCLES. CHESS BOARDS. A BLACK KNIGHT and BLACK ROOK. TAROT CARDS.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I find him charming and highly educated. We discuss the symbolism of the Egyptian Tarot and he beats me in chess.

QUICK LAYERED MONTAGE: HANDS MOVING CHESS PIECES. ROOK TAKES KNIGHT.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Twice.

EXT. SEA - SUNRISE

An impressionistic styled shot of the sea and the sun rising above it. The warmest shot of the film.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I run out of french cigarettes in the mid-atlantic.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - NIGHT

We’re looking through ARKHAM’s RED WINDOW and diamond tiles. We slowly push in.

ARKHAM’s SHADOW sits down. CONSTANCE’s SHADOW crouches down and hugs him from behind.
ARKHAM (V.O.)
I arrive home in time for Christmas and find the conversion of the house to be well under way. Constance surprises me with a wonderful addition to my aquarium.

CLOSE-UP: CLOWN FISH SWIMMING IN A FISH BOWL.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Japanese clown fish are a fascinating species. When a dominant female dies, one of the males in her entourage will actually change sex and assume her former role.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP: THE COLORS OF THE FISH. ORANGE, RED, WHITE.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
From some reason, I am reminded of the French name for the victim of an April fool prank. Poisson D’Avril. April Fish. I experience an inexplicable amount of Deja Vu.

The TELEPHONE rings. The 1920’s, turn dialed ones.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And then the phone rings.

ARKHAM answers the phone in annoyance.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
It transpires that Martin Hawkins has escaped from the penitentiary and the police would like my considered opinion as to his state of mind. I tell them he may be highly dangerous and I leave them to it.

CONSTANCE walks in with a worried look. ARKHAM shrugs it off.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
It’s not my problem. Not Tonight.

CONSTANCE
Is something wrong?

ARKHAM smirks at her. He’s at peace. Truly happy.
A FRAGMENTED BLACK AND WHITE DRAWING OF HARRIET FLOATS IN BLACK SPACE. A CUT OUT CUCKOO CLOCK LANDS ONTOP.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Harriet is enchanted by the cuckoo clock I have brought here from Switzerland. I pray it might take her mind from the bad dreams.

FULL SURREAL DRAWING OF ARKHAM, CONSTANCE AND HARRIET WITH THE CUCKOO CLOCK AND A SUN SHINING BEHIND THEM.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Then I remind myself that all intelligent children suffer bad dreams.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP: HANDS ON THE CUCKOO CLOCK. HALF PAST NINE.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And she is very intelligent and perfectly beautiful. I almost wish that she need never grow up.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM - PRESENT

The CLOCK stands HALF PAST NINE.

THE JOKER
It’s getting late.

BATMAN stands with his cape wrapped around him and back turned to THE JOKER.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Time to begin the evening’s entertainment, I think. If you’re feeling up to it.

BATMAN
Up to what?

JOKER leans over BATMAN’s shoulder with a diabolical smirk.

THE JOKER
A nice little game of hide and seek. You have one hour, sweetheart and there’s no way out of the building. One hour before all your friends come looking for you.
THE JOKER circles around BATMAN.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
There’s the Scarecrow and Clayface and a little Poison Ivy walking around. Great White Sharks and wooden dummies. Oh, and Doctor Destiny of course.

C.U: DOCTOR DESTINY, A PRAIL, WEAK MAN IN A WHEEL CHAIR.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
He seemed so frail in that wheelchair but all he has to do is look at you and you stop being real.

DOCTOR DESTINY turns and stares at us. His eyes glow white.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
He does so want to look at you, darling.

THE JOKER stops in front of BATMAN. His cold dead eyes stare intensely at him. The screen vibrates.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Oh, and don’t forget about Croc. He came up out of that damp, dark cellar this morning, dragging his chains behind him. They all want to see you. So why don’t you just run along now?

BATMAN
I don’t take orders from you.

THE JOKER’s hand reaches down to take a pistol from the table.

THE JOKER
Well...this guy goes into a hospital, okay? His wife’s just had a baby and he can’t wait to see them both.

THE JOKER examines the gun.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
So he meets the Doctor and he says, ‘Oh, Doc, I’ve been so worried. How are they?”
THE JOKER waves the gun around theatrically.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
And the Doctor smiles and says, “They’re both fine. Just fine. Your wife’s delivered a healthy baby boy and they’re both in tip-top form. You’re one lucky guy.”

THE JOKER prances to a SECURITY GUARD (the one frozen in fear earlier). He has tears in his eyes. THE JOKER looks over his shoulder.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
So the guy rushes into the maternity ward with his flowers. But it’s empty. His wife’s bed is empty.

THE JOKER holds the gun to the GUARD’s FACE.

BATMAN doesn’t even budge.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
‘Doc’ He says and turns around and the Doctor and all the nurses wave their arms and scream in his face. APRIL FOOL! YOUR WIFE’S DEAD AND THE BABY’S A SPASTIC!!

BANG!

THE JOKER fires the gun into the GUARD’s face.

SMOKE rises from the GUARD’s head and blood is splattered everywhere.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Get it?

THE JOKER claps a hand to his face as if distressed.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Oh what a senseless waste of human life!

THE JOKER turns his head back to BATMAN. His left eye gleams with insanity.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Now, Batman.
THE JOKER points the gun to DR. ADAM’s temple. She stiffens.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Run.

BATMAN grits his teeth and flees the scene. The INMATES cheer.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
The game ends at midnight! Run!
Run!

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS
The SHADOW of BATMAN runs through the barely lit, fog filled, black asylum corridors.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - FLASHBACK
MARTHA WAYNE drags a YOUNG CRYING BRUCE WAYNE out of the movie theater. THOMAS WAYNE walks nearby but distanced. The billboard says “BAMBI”.

MARTHA WAYNE
How dare you embarrass me that way
Bruce! It’s only a movie for God’s sake. It’s not real.

YOUNG BRUCE
But Bambi!

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS
BATMAN continues running from his traumatic memories.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - FLASHBACK
MARTHA WAYNE wags her finger at BRUCE’s face. The apparition of BAMBI floats above him.

MARTHA WAYNE
Bruce, I’m warning you! If you don’t stop crying and act like a grown-up, I’m leaving you right here.
INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN falters to the floor, clinching his head. Above him is the CONVEX MIRROR from the first scene. His reflection distorts into a frightful scare.

MARTHA WAYNE (O.S.)
Understand?

BATMAN stares directly into his distorted reflection.

MARTHA WAYNE (O.S.) (CONT’D)
I’m leaving you right here.

The IMAGE morphs into a BLACK AND WHITE PENCIL SHADE. Replacing BATMAN is YOUNG BRUCE but still staring at the same distorted reflection of BATMAN and we realize that the DISTORTED BATMAN FRIGHT is the same reflection seen by ARKHAM.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - FLASHBACK - LATER

That fateful night. BRUCE MIMES a sword fight. MARTHA and THOMAS walk next to each other. The BILLBOARD reads ZORRO.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN angrily punches the reflection and smashes the convex mirror.

MARTHA WAYNE (O.S)
Leaving you...

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - FLASHBACK

JOE CHILL steps from the foggy shadows and shoots THOMAS WAYNE. BRUCE and his MOTHER SCREAM and shrink back. MARTHA puts BRUCE behind her.

JOE CHILL holds the gun down to his side.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN holds a shard of glass. He holds out his palm.

MARTHA WAYNE (O.S.)
Right here...
EXT. MOVIE THEATER - FLASHBACK

JOE CHILL presses his gun to her throat. The PEARLS are tangled around CHILL's hand. He tears it lose and FIRES.

    MARTHA WAYNE (O.S.)
    Right here...

CLOSE-UP: BRUCE'S EYES.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Angrily and desperately, BATMAN presses the GLASS SHARD into the center of his left palm. He grits his teeth and uses all his strength.

    MARTHA WAYNE (O.S.)
    Don't embarrass me, Bruce.

BATMAN shoves the SHARD through his hand.

    BATMAN
    JESUS!

A drop of blood falls from the GLASS SHARD.

SLOW MOTION: THE BLOOD SLOWLY SPLATTERS ON THE FLOOR.

BATMAN grits his teeth in pain.

    BATMAN (CONT'D)
    Mommy...

SMASH CUT TO:

TV: A STATIC IMAGE OF YOUNG BRUCE. HIS TEETH REPLACED WITH ADULT TEETH. HE STARES CREEPILY AT US.

    YOUNG BRUCE
    Mother! Oh, God! MOTHER!

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM

PROFESSOR MILO watches the TV. He's quite possible the most sane person here.
YOUNG BRUCE (O.S.)

BLOOD! BLOOD!

The other VILLAINS lounge around impatiently. CAVENDISH grabs ADAMS shoulder and they exchange glances. Perhaps a bid to escape.

THE JOKER stares out of the window. The moon has caught his attention.

BLACK MASK
I say we go after him now!

THE JOKER
Listen, we promised him an hour!
He’s only been gone ten minutes!

PROFESSOR MILO
This is ridiculous!

MILO rests next to the JOKER. Beside him, TWO-FACE stares out of the window. His handsome side lit perfectly by the moon.

PROFESSOR MILO (CONT’D)
What d’you think, Dent?

CAVENDISH and ADAMS slowly make their way out of the room.

TWO-FACE
The moon is so beautiful...

The HANDSOME SIDE’s eye pours out a gentle tear.

PROFESSOR MILO
What?

MILO looks bad tempered. Annoyed that he doesn’t belong.

CLOSE-UP: THE MOON

TWO-FACE
It’s a big silver dollar, flipped by God.

We see TWO-FACE’s hideous side.

TWO-FACE (CONT’D)
And it landed scarred side up, see?
So he made the world.

MILO throws his arms up in despair, walking away in annoyance. The HOUSE OF CARDS rests next to them.
PROFESSOR MILO
Jesus Christ! Can’t I get a decent conversation in this place. You’re all insane!

ADAMS and CAVENDISH make their escape.

BLACK MASK
We’re getting bored, Joker.

THE JOKER
Oh, all right then!

THE JOKER turns to us. CLOSE UP. He grins with malicious insanity.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Let’s just pretend it’s been an hour.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - NIGHT - 1921

ARKHAM walks through the open door.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Spring is a deceitful season and April 1st, 1921 is cold. Mercilessly cold.

ARKHAM walks up the stairs apprehensively. He walks towards the open door of his DAUGHTER’S ROOM. His steps are hesitant. He pushes open the door.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - DAUGHTER’S ROOM

ARKHAM freezes in the background. In the foreground, we see the HAIR of CONSTANCE.

INTER-CUT: FLASHES OF BLOOD.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I see my wife first, my dear Constance.

ARKHAM’s bag slips from his fingers. The nursery is an appalling carnage. Blood splashed everywhere. Slashed toy animals. Smashed BLACK rocking horse.

CONSTANCE lies dead and naked on the bed. We cannot see her face only the back which has “MAD DOG” carved on it.
ARKHAM (V.O.)
Her body in pieces.

ARKHAM is completely horrified.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Harriet lies nearby...violated.

The light and color on ARKHAM's face is drained until he resembles a ghost.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Almost idly, I wonder where her head is. And then I look at the doll house.

THE DOLL HOUSE has been streaked with blood. Something in the window catches our eye. A set of eyes stare at us.

We see a WALL OF POURING BLOOD.

7 SHARDS OF SHOTS SMASH ONTO THE SHOT LIKE A COMIC BOOK.

1. THE DOLL HOUSE: HARRIET'S HEAD STARES AT US.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    And the dolls house.

2. ARKHAM'S EYE: EXTREME CLOSE UP. SHOCKED.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Looks.

3. THE DOLL HOUSE: CLOSE UP

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    At.

4. THE CUCKOO CLOCK. MATCH CUT THE PREVIOUS.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Me.

5. ARKHAM'S EYE: MATCH CUT PREVIOUS.

6. THE CUCKOO CLOCK GOES OFF.
7. THE DOLL HOUSE: HARRIET’S DEAD EYES.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - DAUGHTER’S ROOM - DAWN

We see MOTHER ARKHAM’s white cloak. BLOOD slowly covers the entire cloth until it’s RED.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Slowly, methodically, I put on my Mother’s wedding dress and I kneel down in that nursery abattoir.

ARKHAM, wearing the blood stained cloak of his mother, kneels in the midst of the carnage. A WINDOW shines the morning light.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
It all seems perfectly rational.

ARKHAM grabs the remains of his WIFE. The meaty mess slips out of his fingers but he lifts the remainder up towards his face.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Did not tribal shamans dress in women’s clothing to make contact with the spirit world?

ARKHAM opens his mouth and eats the remains.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Perfectly rational.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

ARKHAM kneels and VOMITS into the toilet. His shoulders heave, wracked with sobs.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Later, in the lavatory, choking and sobbing, I bring up the half digested remains of my family. Is this what it all comes down to - all our dreams and hopes and aspirations?

Reflected in the MIRROR above the sink, we see the top of ARKHAM’s head as he pulls himself up laboriously.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Nothing but vomit? Oh God, I’m afraid. I’m so afraid.
ARKHAM stares at his own reflection. Unable to recognise himself. His mouth is covered with blood, saliva and vomit.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    I think I may be ill.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - PRESENT

Wandering the dark, misty, dirty halls is CLAYFACE. He resembles an AIDS patient. Sickly, feeble, malnourished. His entire skin is a greenish color.

    CLAYFACE
    Sick...

He trails his fingers across the walls. As he does, the paint on the walls bubble as if infected. Every step he takes gives us the same result.

    CLAYFACE (CONT’D)
    Sick...

He can barely walk. Using the wall for leverage.

    CLAYFACE (CONT’D)
    Sick...

We reveal that he’s walking towards a frozen stiff BATMAN.

    CLAYFACE (CONT’D)
    My skin is sick, Batman. It’s rotten and seeping.

CLAYFACE looks up at him.

    CLAYFACE (CONT’D)
    Only you can help me.

BATMAN attempts to shrink into the shadows. CLAYFACE still sees him. His eyes light up.

    CLAYFACE (CONT’D)
    Batman...

CLAYFACE reaches for him.

    BATMAN
    Don’t touch me.

    CLAYFACE
    I just want to share my disease.

He licks his ruined lips.
BATMAN

Don’t.

CLAYFACE’s arm stretches out towards BATMAN. It’s doubled its size.

CLAYFACE

Ohhh...

BATMAN backs into a wall. No where to go. He actually looks disgusted and panicked. CLAYFACE’s hand is an inch from his face.

BATMAN

DON’T TOUCH ME!

BATMAN kicks CLAYFACE’s feeble ankle. It smashes.

CLAYFACE SCREAMS IN AGONY and falls to the floor.

CLAYFACE

My leg! Oh jesus christ.

BATMAN, like the swift predator, stalks him.

CLAYFACE (CONT’D)

I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to.

BATMAN kicks him the face then flees like a child. A swirl of cruel and ragged shadows.

We are left with CLAYFACE in the darkness. He cries from the pain.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - INMATES ROOM

DOCTOR DESTINY buzzes his electric wheelchair into the room.

DOCTOR DESTINY

Clayface? Where are you?

DESTINY moves further into the dark room. We see dozens of store dummies, posed in lingerie. BATMAN’s SHADOW can be seen.

DOCTOR DESTINY (CONT’D)

Don’t answer then, you dirty rotting bastard! I don’t need you!

DESTINY moves back towards the door.
DOCTOR DESTINY (CONT’D)
No one ever looks at me but you did! I have no effect on you!
You’re my only friend but I don’t need your pathetic sickness keeping me down!

BATMAN stalks behind him like a serial killer.

DOCTOR DESTINY (CONT’D)
I can easily find someone else to push-

BATMAN violently kicks DESTINY’s chair. He’s wheelchair speeds ahead and straight down a flight of stairs.

DOCTOR DESTINY (CONT’D)
NO!

His wheelchair tumbles down the stairs. He falls over to the floor. Knocked out. Dead. Who knows.

His wheelchair continues spinning.

BATMAN is a grim silhouette at the top of the stairs, looking down. This is not the BATMAN we know.

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS

A PITCHFORK drags across the floor. It’s holder is THE SCARECROW. He looks much like the ARKHAM KNIGHT version.

BATMAN looks over his shoulder and he immediately darts away.

SCARECROW
Scare...crow...

SCARECROW passes a cell door that is slightly ajar.

BATMAN hides through the crack of the room.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CELL ROOM

BATMAN looks down and his runs his fingers across the floor as if reading braille.

He flicks on the light switch. BATMAN still manages to be a shadow.
BATMAN

My god...

The entire floor is covered in etched words. Millions of them. Like a book covered into a floor.

BATMAN attempts to read the writing but senses something behind him. He turns completely around and IMMEDIATELY SCARECROW SPRAYS HIS FEAR TOXIN INTO HIS FACE!

BATMAN rubs his eyes and panics.

SCARECROW


Batman.

BATMAN POVs: SCARECROW MORPHS INTO A DISTORTED DEMON DROOLING BLACK BLOOD.

SCARECROW (CONT’D)


BATMAN

No.

BATMAN turns to the walls. They start to melt.

SCARECROW

We. Made. You.

BATMAN manages to reach his feet. Shaking off the toxin.

SCARECROW (CONT’D)


BATMAN sees the light of the doorway and dashes out the door.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS

BATMAN runs through the winding corridors. The size of the halls morph into big and small. The confusion stumbles BATMAN to the floor. He holds his eyes and yells in frustration.

YOUNG BRUCE WAYNE stands in front of him. Crying.

SNIPER POVs: A TARGET HAS BATMAN IN PERFECT SIGHT.

The holder, DEADSHOT, contemplates his next move. His RED EYE glows. After much deliberation, he drops his gun. Not worth it. He moves back into the shadows.
BATMAN slams his injured hand into the ground.

        ANARKY (O.S.)
        I thought you wanted to make a
difference.

A hooded figure reveals himself as **ANARKY** the soft spoken political fighter wearing a **WHITE** face mask.

        ANARKY (CONT’D)
        You caused more damage. Created
more of us. I looked up to
you...but you should never meet
your heroes.

ANARKY kneels to BATMAN.

        ANARKY (CONT’D)
        I won’t punish you. We are still on
the same side. I just wanted a
minute to tell you a story. About
crime and violence. Greed and
vengeance. But it’s also about

BATMAN clenches his fists.

        BATMAN
        Quiet...

        ANARKY
        Gotham is the prison and the police
its wardens. This asylum is but a
womb where we are reborn again.
Join the fight Batman. You have the
power of change.

        BATMAN
        Quiet...

        ANARKY
        Arkham is not the problem. Gotham
isn’t either, Batman. It’s the
world. The world needs to change.
This city needs to burn.

        BATMAN
        ...no...

        ANARKY
        You think you’re a hero, but you’re
really just a symbol of how low
this city has fallen.
BATMAN suddenly SLAMS HIS FIST into ANARKY’s face.

BATMAN
QUIET!

BATMAN dashes away into the shadows.

ANARKY
I ask for discourse and you respond with violence. We should be above this! You should be above us all! Not a sense of entitlement but a sense of justice! JUSTICE!

EXT. ARKHAM GATES - DAY - 1921

The BLACK GATES of GOTHAM. Fog covers the area.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
In spite of everything. The Elizabeth Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane opens its doors officially on schedule, in November 1921.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE UP of the grey MAD DOG HAWKINS. He smiles like a child.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
One of my first patients is Martin Hawkins.

ARKHAM blows out smoke by the over exposed light coming from the window. MAD DOG sits by a table.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Mad Dog. He delights in recounting to me every detail of the atrocities he inflicted upon Constance and Harriet.

MAD DOG’S face is ghastly, demonic and gleeful.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
He giggles and drools and tells me they begged him to abuse them.

MAD DOG
That little whore especially. Kept asking for more. More please.
(MORE)
Please daddy, give me more. Hurt me more daddy. Harder. HARDER.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And I listen...

ARKHAM stares blankly out the window.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I treat him for six months. I’m praised for my courage and compassion.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - ECT ROOM

MAD DOG lies strapped to a slanted gurney. Electric wires are attached to his head. He looks calm. Apathetic.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And on April 1st, 1922 - one year to the day - I strap him into the electroshock couch.

BUZZ

MAD DOG turns blue from the electric volts entering his body. He vibrates violently and SCREAMS. His eyes turn white.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And I burn the filthy bastard.

ARKHAM’s face is lit up from the electricity. He has a terrible satisfaction on his face.

TWO ORDERLIES run into the room. MAD DOG is a smouldering corpse.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
It is treated as an accident. These things happen. There is ozone and the smell of burned skin in my nostrils.

CLOSE-UP: ARKHAM’s unrepentant face.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
But I feel nothing.
INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - 1921

ARKHAM walks the corridors towards us. Its murky and gloomy. The walls have cracks.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   I take to patrolling the corridors between the hours of three and four in the morning. I visit the secret room often, in order that I might keep my journal up to date. Routine is important, I think. A good routine diverts the mind from morbid imaginings.

ARKHAM shifts his eyes back in forth like a paranoid nut.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   Sometimes I am sure I hear hysterical laughter from a cell I know to be empty.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - STUDY

ARKHAM methodically covers the surface of a mirror with heavy duty tape. Covering his reflection. The lighting produces a washed out orange.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   I tape over the mirror in my study. The laughter ceases.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

ARKHAM walks through the twisting. A pale moonlight shines through the tall windows. SKINLESS SNAKES are layered over the scene.

As ARKHAM walks, we FADE IN ARKHAM walking over and over again in a TIME LAPSE.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   And I return to my ritual perambulations. My movements through the house have become as formalized as ballet and I feel that I have become an essential part of some incomprehensible biological process.

   (MORE)
The house is an organism, hungry for madness. It is the maze that dreams and I am lost.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - MAXIE ZEUS’ CELL

We move towards a door. The outer walls resembles a face. There’s greek lettering above the door.

In the room, there’s a couch and a water tank. We hear ELECTRIC SHOCKS. A NAKED MAN with a cop hat on SHAKES VIOLENTLY.

From the top down, we see the water tank and it’s occupant.

MAXIE ZEUS, looking like the greek god (but naked and blue), attached to wires. He turns and looks at us.

MAXIE ZEUS

Ah. A pilgrim.

BATMAN stands in the doorway.

MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)

Come into my presence, Pilgrim.

Gaze upon the lord thy God.

THE NAKED GUARD lifts up his head.

GUARD

More...please...do it again.

MAXIE ZEUS messes with some buttons in the tank. The GUARD is electrocuted again.

MAXIE ZEUS


MAXIE pulls a small lidded oak barrel towards himself. He pulls off the lid but we cannot see the contents. Flies surround it.

MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)

I’ve saved it all. There’s power in it, you see. Electricity.
MAXIE’s face vibrates from electric shock.

BATMAN just watches.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    Fertile.

MAXIE smells the barrel. Like perfume.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    It shall transform the dry lands of
    Africa into the perfumed orchards
    of paradise and men will worship me
    anew.

ZEUS looks directly at us.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    For I am Zeus. Lord of E.C.T. God
    of electric retribution.

He plunges his hand into the barrel.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    I give, so that thou shouldst give.
    Here. My gift to you.

MAXIE’s face vibrates.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    Do you want power. I can give you
    power.

BATMAN turns to leave. MAXIE holds up his hands and he resembles CHRIST surrounded by a BLUE atmospheric abyss.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    Eat. Drink. This is my body. This
    is my blood.

BATMAN continues to leave the bizarre encounter.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    The AC/DC altar awaits! Let me know
    you in the form of a shower of
    sparks!

BATMAN gives one last look.

    MAXIE ZEUS (CONT’D)
    WAIT!
MAXIE VIBRATES INTENSELY. Even we feel it.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN moves quietly through the halls. We hear VOICES ahead.

    BLACK MASK (O.S.)
    He has to be around here. I heard that punk Anarky spouting his mouth.

BATMAN hides in the shadows. BLACK MASK and his goons walk by.

    BLACK MASK (CONT’D)
    We find him. We unmask him.

CLOSE-UP: BATMAN’S EYES.

    BLACK MASK (CONT’D)
    I want to know who he is.

BATMAN sneaks past them down another hallway.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CELL BLOCKS

BATMAN walks through a hall of cell blocks. ARMS stick out like infested zombies. BATMAN dodges hands from grabbing his face and he fights them off.

BATMAN turns a corridor and finds a tiny hallway with VARIOUS CLOWNS standing on both sides of the walls. Little room to walk. All are still.

BATMAN slowly makes his way through the hall. The CLOWNS are like statues.

Then...

ONE TACKLES him. The rest converge creating a massive pile of CLOWNS.

BATMAN narrowly escapes and runs away but suddenly falls straight down. Tumbling into a CELL PIT.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CELL PIT

BATMAN laboriously makes it to his feet. The area has no depth of field. Just a sea of dark fog.
FIREFLY (O.S.)
Aww, look at that. Poor little bat
got his wings clipped...

BATMAN looks straight ahead at a figure chained to the wall.
A horribly burned man from head to toe. **FIREFLY.**

FIREFLY (CONT’D)
Here in the dark abyss, fire
becomes the truest God.

BATMAN looks around for a way out.

FIREFLY (CONT’D)
The fire never hurts. These burns
are gifts. Gifts are supposed to be
given, Batman. There is no
screaming from the fire. The
children are laughing. Dancing.
Rejoicing in my fires. They will be
reborn again as indigo children.
Lead us to a better future. What do
you do but turn good men into
demons.

BATMAN marches over to FIREFLY and GRABS his arm. SQUEEZING
it. FIREFLY YELLS from the pain but his eyes show awe.
Pleasure. Ecstasy.

FIREFLY (CONT’D)
Yessssss...the euphoria...

BATMAN punches FIREFLY in the face.

FIREFLY (CONT’D)
You can’t hurt me Batman! Only
provide love.

BATMAN
Shut up!

BATMAN beats FIREFLY senseless in the face.

ANNE CARVER (O.S.)

BATMAN!

BATMAN looks up at a WOMAN opening the door.

She has wavy black hair and a white jacket on. She’s **DR. ANNE CARVER.**

ANNE CARVER (CONT’D)
Hurry up Batman.
She guides BATMAN into an empty cell.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - EMPTY CELL

On instinct, BATMAN walks to the corner of the room.

ANNE CARVER
Why are you wandering around? Are you lost?

BATMAN
Are you a hostage?

ANNE CARVER
Psychiatrist. Dr. Anne Carver.

BATMAN
I have to escape. You have to help me.

ANNE CARVER
I can’t help you, I’m afraid.

BATMAN
Certainly you can leave when you want.

ANNE CARVER
Why are you here?

BATMAN
To save hostages like you.

ANNE CARVER
You chose to be here, Batman. Unlike the inmates, you choose to hide behind the mask. Do you even want to know who you are?

BATMAN
Doesn’t matter.

BATMAN starts to walk out but notices something under the bed. He grabs a duffel bag.

ANNE CARVER
Wait...no.

BATMAN opens the bag to find a disembodied hand. An eyeball and a tape recorder. BATMAN presses play on the recorder.
ANNE CARVER (O.S.) (CONT’D)
(static)
Hi, my name is Dr. Anne Carver.
I’ll be working with you, Jane. We
were just wrapping up with your
files...but tomorrow we’ll begin
the heavy stuff. How does that
sound?

JANE DOE (O.S.)
I wish only to observe.

BATMAN looks up at ANNE who IMMEDIATELY stabs BATMAN with a
knife in the side. BATMAN throws ANNE into the wall and pulls
the knife out with great pain.

CARVER laughs as she stands. Her cheek skin is peeled off. Something’s not right.

ANNE CARVER
So close to freedom...

CARVER rips off the skin on her face like a mask revealing a
completely skinless woman.

JANE DOE.

JANE DOE
We all have masks, Batman...

BATMAN smashes her face into the wall.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS

BATMAN rests against a wall. He holds his wounded side.
There’s a trail of SNOW that leads into a room. BATMAN holds
his wound and stumbles towards the room.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - FROZEN CELL

BATMAN enters the cell. Snow falls down from the ceiling.
There’s a magical, fantasy quality to it all. BATMAN grabs
the snow and cleans his wound. It stings him.

MR. FREEZE (O.S.)
Your blood runs cold as ice,
Batman. No use to clean it.

BATMAN turns and spots VICTOR FRIES (MR. FREEZE) - out of his
suit - staring at his dear NORA floating unconscious in her
cryogenic tank.
MR. FREEZE
It’s simple. My dear, Nora.

FREEZE places his hand on the cold tank. He gazes affectionately at NORA. It’s tragic.

MR. FREEZE (CONT’D)
Do you have any idea the guilt of causing your dearest loved one to suffer?

BATMAN
I do.

MR. FREEZE
Of course you do, Batman. Your heart has no warmth. It is but a lock holding back a cold, deathly rush of ice. It’s a cage that refuses to let even the smallest ray of heat touch it. But not Nora.

FREEZE walks around her.

MR. FREEZE (CONT’D)
She wants to live a long life in the warmth of the sun, her hand in mine. Because of you, she’ll only feel the icy touch of a man whose emotions run as cold as the blood in his veins. I shouldn’t be here but you decided otherwise.

FREEZE sits in a chair. Snow falling on him.

MR. FREEZE (CONT’D)
I have no will to destroy your spirit, Batman. That’s your job. Please leave. But ask yourself...what’s justice if an innocent can never see the sun again?

FREEZE stares at NORA. The quiet beauty. BATMAN remains quiet and leaves.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - HALL OF MIRRORS

BATMAN stalks the halls where the doors are large mirrors in a quickened pace.
His reflections distort into hideous demonic forms of BATMAN. Only one of his reflections is the normal BATMAN, so he pushes open the mirror into a SMOKE filled room.

THE MAD HATTER (O.S.)
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat...

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - MAD HATTER’S TEA PARTY

THE MAD HATTER sits on a giant amanita mushroom smoking a giant hookah. The background is a mystical world of green smoke, checkered floor, Chess pieces and psychedelic other worldlyness.

THE MAD HATTER
How I wonder what you’re at.

The acid casualty pedophile/pathological criminal has a druggy gaze to him.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
I’m so glad you could make it. I have so many things to tell you.

BATMAN stands at a loss. One of the few times we see him as more than a shadow. Next to him rests a giant, dark red knight chess piece. Cracked on the head.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
You must be feeling quite fragile by now, I expect. This house, it...does things to the mind.

HATTER takes a puff of his pipe. We stay with his close up. Showing every nuance and change of his facial expressions.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
Now, where was I?

HATTER blissfully strokes his face like smoothing ointment on the skin.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
Where am I? Where will I be?

His lights up with inspiration.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
Ah yes. The apparent disorder of the universe is simply a higher order, an implicate order beyond our comprehension.
He picks up a LITTLE GIRL DOLL. Dressed in Alice in Wonderland fashion but also headless. THE HATTER lasciviously smiles as he pulls back the skirt.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
That’s why children...interest me.
They’re all mad, you see. But in each of them is an implicate adult.
Order out of chaos. Or is it the other way around?

THE HATTER fondles the doll.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
To know them is to know myself.
Little girls, especially.

He clasps the doll to his face, rubbing it against his skin. He squeezes his eyes shut in anguish. Tear flow.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
Little blonde girls. Little shameless bitches! Oh God. God help us all. Sometimes...sometimes I think the asylum is a head.

LAYER OVER A DIAGRAM: THE SECTIONS OF THE BRAIN.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
We’re inside a huge head that dreams us all into being.

A RED KING piece looms over BATMAN.

THE MAD HATTER (CONT’D)
Perhaps it’s your head, Batman.
Please, discover for yourself.

A MISTY SMOKE fades to reveal a TABLE.

Dirty, ugly versions of THE MAD HATTER’S COURT sits. A Decrepid WHITE RABBIT. STD infected BROWN RABBIT. Spoiled, rotten HUMPTY DUMPTY. Puss filled DOOR MOUSE.

Also there is POISON IVY. Not the overtly sexual, nature goddess she’s normally depicted as but as a NEW AGE, green skin, hemp dress with matching top, burnt orange vines for dreadlocks and crystal necklaces.

She leers at BATMAN.
POISON IVY
Dimethyltryptamine is but one of many powerful hallucinogenic properties that’s 100% man made straight from the pineal gland. There’s a seed that grows in each and every one of us, Batman. Mother nature’s endless supply of plant medicines have healed civilizations for years and years. Our society hates these medicines. Condemns the natural world. Anything they can’t control. You hate things you can’t control, don’t you?

BATMAN walks closer to the table.

POISON IVY (CONT’D)
Don’t you wanna just let go?

BATMAM stares at a cup of tea.

POISON IVY (CONT’D)
Amanita is but one of many powerful natural plants. Mother Ayahuasca would love to talk...Father Iboga has hard learned lessons but today, the menu brings us something of my own doing...give it a try.

Apprehensive, BATMAN backs down.

POISON IVY (CONT’D)
Batman is a symbol, is he not? One that shows no fear.

POISON IVY blows a kiss to BATMAN. Pink aromas seep out and surrounded BATMAN. He’s no longer apprehensive but luring towards IVY.

POISON IVY (CONT’D)
What about the man under? The man hiding behind a mask. The mask becomes the face of being and you are but a puppet to it.

BATMAN reaches forward to grab the tea. His body language shows resistance but he cannot stop himself.

POISON IVY (CONT’D)
Just know...you won’t like what you see. But it’s perfectly okay, love. Everything is always just fine...
BATMAN lifts up the cups to his lips and drinks the brew.

The room, mystical enough already, compresses and we lose all sense of depth. No edges of walls or indentions. Just an infinite plans of black and white tiles. BATMAN’s eyes open wide in shock.

POISON IVY morphs into an alien looking being. Distorting and melting in front of us.

MAD HATTER smiles as he slowly morphs away like the Chesire Cat.

BATMAN

What is this!

The ROOM suddenly shatters into a mess and BATMAN falls straight down into an abyss.

We enter the psychedelic sequence.

I/E. BATMAN’S SUBCONSCIOUS - PSYCHEDELIC TRIP

The entire trip contains hidden silent voices and sounds that are indecipherable.

BATMAN falls into the black abyss. BATS fly towards him and he hits a colorful kaleidoscope that morphs into-

GOTHAM CITY

BATMAN flies over the city. Gracefully, until his cap melts and he free falls to the streets.

STREETS

It’s raining pearls. A YOUNG BRUCE WAYNE stands there crying.

We REPLAY the murder of BATMAN’s parents. BATS fly in and attack the corpses. BATMAN runs away. GOTHAM CITY melts like acid and THREE HEADED SNAKES slither ontop of him.

They cover his entire body. He struggles to fight them off.

ALFRED (O.S.)

Don’t be afraid...

WAREHOUSE

BATMAN jolts awake. He’s trapped in a room with a one way mirror. On the other side walks JASON TODD aka The Second ROBIN.
BATMAN runs to the glass and attempts to break it. ROBIN walks, clueless to THE JOKER sneaking behind him. ROBIN turns around and THE JOKER beats him with a crow bar. Over and Over. Bloody and beaten.

THE JOKER stares at BATMAN then presses a button from a remote.

EXPLOSION

We see an explosion of colors that transitions into kaleidoscope effects and geometry.

THE JOKER
There’s more, Sweetheart.

BARBARA GORDON’s HOUSE.

BATMAN wakes up tied up to a chair. BARBARA GORDON (BATGIRL) sits on the floor. Staring at BATMAN. The door bell rings and she answers it.

BATMAN
DON’T!

BANG

THE JOKER shoots BARBARA in the stomach.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
NO!

BATMAN’S HEAD
- rests in a non-existent dimension of space. Every NATION’s FLAG from around the globe is SUPER IMPOSED on him. His head then catches on fire and burns to a char.

JOKER’S HOUSE OF FUN

BATMAN yells in the horror. Still strapped to the chair.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
Leave her alone!

THE JOKER lays on top of the frightened BARBARA. He laughs as he takes pictures.

THE JOKER
She’s paralyzed down there, Batsy. She feels nothing! HAHAHAH!

BATMAN
Don’t touch her! You’re sick!
THE JOKER
You’re a voyeur. Now watch my fingers.

BATMAN
NO!

BATMAN’s HEAD
-the charred remains blows away with the wind.

MONEY PIT
MONEY rains over BRUCE WAYNE in a small room. It begins to drown him. The money then melts into ACID. BRUCE WAYNE screams in agony from the burns and drowns.

Seconds later, his hand rises like Frankenstein and he pulls himself out as BATMAN. His face is white and he has a clown smile like THE JOKER. BAT-JOKER LAUGHS. Loudly in insanity.

THE JOKER
All it takes...is a push...

GLOBE
The WORLD spins on its axis. BATS flutter over it. Covering it in mass darkness.

WAYNE MANOR
BRUCE WAYNE wakes up in his bed. A horrible nightmare. He sweats profusely and breathes hard.

ALFRED
It’s just a dream, Bruce.

WAYNE turns and spots ALFRED standing there.

ALFRED (CONT’D)
Must have been horrible.

BRUCE WAYNE
Alfred...I...

ALFRED
No need to explain. The Bruce Wayne character needs to stay out late and get drunk. Get washed up. I made a delicate breakfast and you will actually eat it for once.

RESTROOM
BRUCE washes his face and looks into the mirror. He’s horrified. The water was actually acid and his face is melting off. There’s a black substance underneath his face. He starts to panic but it’s too late.

His skin has completely melted off to reveal BATMAN underneath.

BATMAN turns around to spot ALFRED.

ALFRED (CONT’D)

Why do we-

ALFRED MORPHS INTO A DEMON. His head reaches gigantic size. His eyes are kaleidoscopes.

ALFRED (CONT’D)

-FALL!

BATMAN falls straight down into another dark abyss. His bones begin to break from his feet up to his neck. He feels everything before exploding into hundreds of BATS.

HALLWAY

Full of mannequins. Above THE BATS fly around. It’s terrifying.

THE BATS melt into BLACK INK and pours over the mannequins. Each of the mannequins transforms into a popular BATMAN VILLAIN.

So we have JOKER, TWO-FACE, RIDDLER, MR. FREEZE, HARLEY QUINN and more. ALL MANNEQUINS.

GOTHAM CITY

We rise above GOTHAM.

OUTER SPACE

Rise away from EARTH. Past the Milky Way. Past the farthest point of light measurable. All the galaxies look like blood cells and organs.

Pull farther back and we are now outside of BATMAN’s head. It’s seamless. Pull farther back and we see BATMAN running an infinity shaped road next to green grass on a hill. In constant motion.

Pull farther back and we see total strangers running the same infinite road. Farther back and we see an infinite amount of strangers running their own infinite road of consciousness.
HATTER’S CELL

YOUNG BRUCE WAYNE wakes up with a shriek. Crying his eyes out. His FATHER and MOTHER stand behind him. FACELESS.

THE HATTER reappears in a psychedelic realm of madness.

THE MAD HATTER
You are but a mere boy, aren’t you.

BATMAN
Stop this...

BATMAN replaces YOUNG BRUCE. He begins to move towards HATTER but his image begins to fade. Replaced by BATMAN’s reflection.

THE MAD HATTER
See Batman...Arkham is but a looking glass.

HATTER is gone. BATMAN gazes at his own reflection. He touches the mirror.

THE MAD HATTER (O.S) (CONT’D)
And we are you...

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS

BATMAN wakes up in a flash. The worst nightmare for him. He holds his hands to head in complete exhaustion. He then feels breathing. Something large is behind him. It reveals itself within the shadows.

KILLER CROC, the bulk of a reptilian beast, immediately tosses BATMAN into a wall and smashes his face into it. He grabs his throat and chokes him.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - STUDY - 1923

CLOSE-UP: PSilocybin MUSHROOMS

ARKHAM clutches his head impatiently. He closes his eyes. Behind him rests an AQUARIUM that fills the entire background. Among the clown fish, the anemones and the ferns is an ornamental ruined castle.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Shocked by my “ill health”, some friends take me to the opera. Wagner’s Parsifal.

(MORE)
ARKHAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Don’t they understand? Can’t they
I’m breaking in a thousand places?
Time. Time becomes strange.

ARKHAM looks around his study.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Forty minutes have passed now since
I ingest three portions of
psilocybin mushrooms and the
amanita. SO far, no effect.

ARKHAM abruptly stares at the fish.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Abruptly, I become convinced that
the house is trying to communicate
with me. A pressure at the back of
my head makes me turn.

TWO CLOWN FISH are swimming towards each other.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
In their tiny, contained universe,
two vast and shimmering clown fish
glide towards one another.

The TWO FISH pass each other, one over the other and are
captured in the sign of Pisces.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And makes the sign of Pisces!
Pisces! The astrological
attribution of the moon card in the
Tarot! The symbol of trial and
initiation. Death and rebirth.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS

CROC tosses BATMAN to the floor. He notices a trail of blood.
BATMAN crawls. Following the blood.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I have been shown the path. I must
follow where it leads.

BATMAN laboriously continues.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Like Parsifal, I must confront the
unreason that threatens me. I must
go alone into that dark tower,
without a backward glance.
BATMAN follows the blood leading to a wall. Nothing. BATMAN jerks around.

KILLER CROC waits patiently for him.

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        And face the dragon within.

BATMAN struggles to his feet. He closes his injured hand. CROC quickly grabs it and squeezes his hand. BATMAN yells in pain. Now with wrist control, CROC begins to pound BATMAN in the face.

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        I have only one fear.

CROC throws BATMAN into the wall.

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        What if I am not strong enough to defeat it?

CROC again, casually and nonchalant as possible, throws BATMAN into the wall. Then again. And again.

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        What then?

BATMAN drops to his knees. Spitting out blood. CROC seizes him.

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        The drug takes hold of me. I feel small and afraid. Perhaps I’ve done the wrong thing.

CROC lifts BATMAN over his head,

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        Somewhere, not far away, the dragon hauls its terrible weight through the corridors of the asylum.

CROC tosses BATMAN through a window.

        ARKHAM (V.O.)
        I am borne up on a wave of perfect terror.

EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - COURTYARD

BATMAN crashes through the window in a detonation of glass. It’s thundering.
ARKHAM (V.O.)
And then the world suddenly
shatters and flies into razor-edged
fragments.

BATMAN grabs a hold of a STATUE of ANUBIS.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
There is nothing to hold onto. No
anchor.

BATMAN hauls himself up. Lighting strikes in perfect timing. It’s epic.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Panic stricken, I flee. I run
blindly through the madhouse.

BATMAN spots something. The Statue of MICHAEL. Thunder cracks
behind it. It’s even more epic than before.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And I cannot even pray for I have
no God.

BATMAN grabs the rusty spear off MICHAEL. THUNDER cracks
behind it. This scene cannot be more epic.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS

CROC roams the halls next to large windows.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Doors open and close, applauding my
flight. Keyholes begin to
menstruate. A choir of sexually
maimed children sings my name over
and over again.

CLOSE-UP: CROCS REPTILIAN EYE.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Arkham.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP: CROCS EYE. THE PUPIL. WE SEE THE SHADOW OF
BATMAN.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Arkham.
INCREDBLY EXTREME CLOSE-UP: YEP ITS BATMAN

ARKHAM (V.O.)

Arkham.

BATMAN crashes through the window in typical form.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

I’m falling.

He lands on the back of CROC and attempts to choke the beast. Blocking his windpipe on his thick, almost nonexistent neck. CROC twists and roars. Half panic, half furious.

He hurls BATMAN off his back and straight into a wall. BATMAN lands heavily, losing his grip on the spear.

CROC bulks over him. Moving in for the kill. Desperate, BATMAN moves towards the spear. Reaching. Barely gripping it.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

Oh mother, what tree is this?

BATMAN grabs the spear and lunges towards CROC but he grabs it like nothing and tosses BATMAN away. BATMAN lands on the floor, gripping the spear when he notices the BROKEN CHAIN wrapped around CROC’s arm.

He snatches a hold of the chain with one hand, still gripping the gigantic spear in the other. CROC feels the tug of the chain and immediately pulls the chain and BATMAN toward him.

BATMAN lets go, grabs the spear with two hands and lets the momentum pull him towards CROC. He impales the spear into his chest.

CROC ROARS from the initial pain. BATMAN grimaces, trying to support the huge weight of the spear.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

What wounds are these?

CROC stares intensely into BATMAN’s eyes. He ROARS in ANGER, grabs the spear and attempts to pull it out. BATMAN uses all his strength in a tug o war battle.

CROC settles on pushes BATMAN into the wall. The blunt end of the spear stabs the injured wound on BATMAN’s side. It pushes inside the wound and eventually impales it further, causing much pain.

ARKHAM (V.O.)

CROC continues pushing. The blunt end of the spear goes straight through the muscle of BATMAN and strikes the side of the wall.

BATMAN grits his teeth. This is extreme pain.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Hung on the windy tree for nine whole nights wounded with the spear.

Vibrating with tension and little choice in the matter, BATMAN tries to force the spear back.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Dedicated to Odin.

CROC pulls BATMAN around. BATMAN has no choice but to follow. They turn in grotesque synchronisation, linked like Siamese twins.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Myself to myself. I must see my reflection, to prove I still exist.

BATMAN makes one final effort to pull the spear away. He’s in terrible pain.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Outside, I hear the dragon coming closer, closer. Desperately, I peel the tape from the mirror, breaking my fingers, strip by strip.

Weakened by rust and force, the SPEAR abruptly SNAPS. They both stumble back in opposite directions.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Until I stand revealed in the glass. And I stare into old familiar eyes.

CLOSE-UP: CROC’S EYES. BATMAN’S EYES.

CROC falls through the window. Shattering it. His arms are thrown wide in the crucifix pose. A serpent christ.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Mother!

SLOW MOTION: BROKEN GLASS FALLS. CROC’S BODY BLURS.
EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Glass shatters on the ground. CROC’s body hits hard.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   I must have fainted then, for it
   morning when next I open my eyes.

CROC’s body is still. His fingers are still moving. Showing
life.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   No longer able to tell where the
   dragon ended.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN staggers to the wall. He pulls the broken spear shaft
from his side. He grimaces his bleeding teeth. He limps away.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   And I begin.

BATMAN spots the blood trail again. Still leading into a
wall. This time. He spots blood pouring out of a crack in the
wall.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   Yet am I not the hero? The man of
   destiny? Have I not confronted the
   Great Dragon? Where then is my
   grail? My treasure horde?

BATMAN violently kicks the wall down. It splinters. A hidden
door.

   ARKHAM (V.O.)
   My final reward?

CAVENDISH (O.S.)
   Good evening, Batman.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - MOTHER’S ROOM

MOTHER ARKHAM’s room. Preserved exactly as it was in 1920.
DR. CAVENDISH sits on a chair by the bed wearing MOTHER
ARKHAM’s blood stained cloak. He holds an open pearl-handled
razor to RUTH ADAMS’ throat. She looks terribly frightened.

The bedside oil lamp is lit, lending the room an eerie,
shadowy glamor. Old blood stains the bedclothes and
pillowcase.
BATMAN’s shadow looms over them.

BATMAN
Dr. Cavendish.

ADAMS
Don’t come near him, Batman! He...cut me...just keep back.

BATMAN
Why Cavendish?

A JOURNAL lies in the foreground.

CAVENDISH
Now listen, I only did what had to be done. You read the book on the table beside you and you’ll see.

BATMAN slowly picks up a bound leather book from the table beside him, keeping an eye on CAVENDISH.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
Go on. It’s Amadeus Arkham’s journal. Go on. Read it. I’ve marked the place for you.

BATMAN opens the journal about a quarter of the way through.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
Read it. You’ll see.

CLOSE-UP: AMADEUS ARKHAM’S WRITINGS.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
And suddenly the longed for revelation comes in the form of a memory my mind had suppressed.

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - MOTHER’S ROOM - 1920

We see a RED PAINTING. GLOWING. It’s abstract but beautiful and hypnotic.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
It is 1920. Trees thrash in the dark under a restless sky. Rain rattles the windows. Why?

OVER-HEAD: MOTHER ARKHAM rolls around in her bed. Restless. The oil lamp lights the room.
ARKHAM sits near her. The two hounds are still around.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Why have I come here.

    MOTHER ARKHAM
    It’s here! It’s here!

    ARKHAM
    Mother, please, there’s nothing.

MOTHER ARKHAM jolts upright in bed, staring with terrified eyes OFF SCREEN. Her face vibrates and looks like a surreal, over exposed, blurred motion photograph.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    And why am I so afraid?

    MOTHER ARKHAM
    Every night! Every night!

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    Beneath the bed, great wings begin to beat.

She points OFF SCREEN. The light grows feverishly brighter.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    I’m not mad.

    MOTHER ARKHAM
    See? There? It’s come for me!

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    I am not mad.

ARKHAM’s eyes widen in awe and fear. MOTHER ARKHAM has an aura that glows gold.

On the wall is the giant SHADOW OF A BAT.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    But god help me, I see it. I see the things that has haunted and tormented my poor mother these long years.

ARKHAM stands in complete bewilderment.

    ARKHAM (V.O.)
    I see it.

The room disappears under the shadow of the bat. Becoming an dimensionless space.
ARKHAM (V.O.)
It is a bat. The blind death of folk tradition.

CLOSE-UP: ARKHAM’S EYE.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
A bat!

MOTHER ARKHAM SHRIEKS and flips out in terrible despair.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Oh, my poor mother.

MOTHER ARKHAM
Don’t let it take me! Please don’t!

A REDDISH GLOW permeates the room.

MOTHER ARKHAM (CONT’D)
PLEASE!

ARKHAM watches his mother in complete sadness. He opens up a pearl-handled razor.

ARKHAM
It won’t take you. I promise.

Tears flow from his eyes. Curtains blow behind him.

ARKHAM (CONT’D)
Don’t be afraid, Mother.

He holds the open blade.

ARKHAM (CONT’D)
I love you.

CLOSE-UP: AN ABSTRACT SPLATTER OF BLOOD DRIPS DOWN A WALL.

ARKHAM bends over the bed, clasping the hands of his dead mother almost like a prayer. He heaves with sobs. The curtains are still. No more chaos.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Madness is born in the blood. It is my birthright. My inheritance. My destiny.
CUT TO LATER: ARKHAM FINDS HIS MOTHER’S WEDDING DRESS.

He drapes it over his body. He’s lit up like a moon. Completely white and blue. He resembles an apparition.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I shall contain the presences that roam these rooms and narrow stairways. I shall surround them with bars and walls and electrified fences and pray they never break free. I am the dragon’s bride, the son of the widow.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - MOTHER’S ROOM - PRESENT

The room now is lit in blue with red on the side of CADENDISH’s face. With his eyes bright, he points at BATMAN with delight.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Leather wings enfold me.

CAVENDISH
You see now? Understand?

BATMAN grips the journal.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
You’ve kept this place supplied with poor mad souls for years. You who’ve fed this hungry house. Do you see?

BATMAN looms over CAVENDISH yet he falters from his injuries. He’s vulnerable.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
You are the bat!

BATMAN
No. I’m...I’m just a man.

CAVENDISH
I’m not fooled by that cheap disguise. Arkham tried to kill his broker in 1929. That’s what they finally locked him for. Did you know that? It didn’t stop him.

(MORE)
He’d read “The Golden Bough”, he’d studied shamanistic practices and he knew that only ritual, only magic could contain the bat. So do you know what he did?

CAVENDISH pulls ADAMS closes to the knife.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
He scratched a binding spell into the floor of his cell.

LAYERED: SCRIBBLES APPEAR OVER CAVENDISH’S CLOSE-UP FACE.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
He used his fingernails. Can you imagine that? His fingernails.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - ARKHAM’S CELL - PAST

ARKHAM, now elderly with wild grey hair, crouches to the dirty floors of his cell and painstakingly scratches words on the floor in the formation of a circle.

CAVENDISH (O.S.)
It took years!

ARKHAM (V.O.)
I see the virtue in madness, for this country knows no law nor any boundary. I pity the poor shades confined to the Euclidean prison that is sanity.

ARKHAM coughs up blood. His fingernails are bloody.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
All things are possible here and I am what madness has made me.

ARKHAM suddenly goes limp. His face hits the floor.

ARKHAM (V.O.)
Whole and complete.


ARKHAM (V.O.)
Free at last.
CIRCLE ABOVE ARKHAM INTO A CLOSE UP.

We see line after line of scratched writing. The same BATMAN witnessed.

ARKHAM
Finished...it is finished.

A NURSE bursts into the cell.

NURSE
Get someone up here! Quickly!

FINISH THE SHOT ON THE CLOSE-UP


ARKHAM (V.O.)
I’m Arkham. I’m home. Where I belong.

CAVENDISH (O.S.)
He gave everything!

INT. ARKHAM HOUSE - MOTHER’S ROOM - PRESENT

CAVENDISH looks more and more deranged but very pleased with himself.

CAVENDISH
But it still wasn’t enough. Two years ago, I found this hidden room. Read the journal then too. I just couldn’t stop thinking about what Arkham had said and I realized it was my destiny to finish what he started.

CAVENDISH stands up, holding the open razor. ADAM grabs his arm, trying to stop him.

CAVENDISH (CONT’D)
I set a trap for the Bat, you see. I surrounded the asylum with a circle of salt so it couldn’t escape again. And now...well...

ADAMS
Doctor Cavendish! Charles!

CAVENDISH knocks ADAMS back viciously
CAVENDISH
Shut up you ignorant cow!

CAVENDISH advances on the injured BATMAN.

BATMAN
Cavendish, you’re sick. You need help.

THE SCREEN VIBRATES WITH A DARK RED.

CAVENDISH
I’m sick? Have you looked in a mirror lately? Have you?

CAVENDISH lunges his entire body with zero remorse. He wildly swings the razor at BATMAN who holds his arms up to block. They get cut badly.

BATMAN
Jesus!

CAVENDISH is a mad man attacking in chaotic fashion. BATMAN catches CAVENDISH’s hand and the razor falls to the floor.

ADAMS notices this.

BATMAN kicks CAVENDISH down but he leaps back at him in seconds. Knocking him over and flaying his fists at him. BATMAN covers his face and CAVENDISH sticks his fingers into BATMAN’s side wound.

CAVENDISH
Mommy’s boy! Mommy’s boy!

ADAMS
No.

He screams and unblocks his throat. CAVENDISH takes the opportunity and chokes BATMAN.

BATMAN
Help me!

ADAMS
No...

CAVENDISH
Mommy’s boy!

BATMAN
FOR GOD’S SAKE DO SOMETHING!
ADAMS suddenly grips CAVENDISH’s hair up.

CAVENDISH
Mommy?

ADAMS
NO!

ADAMS slits his throat. BLOOD splashes. He’s dead.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
Oh god...

ADAMS gives the razor a side long horrified glance and let’s it drop to the floor. Her face is splattered with blood.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
Oh my god...

The WHITE CLOAK of CAVENDISH is now soaked in his blood.

ADAMS (CONT’D)
His throat...

BATMAN approaches her grimly.

BATMAN
He got what he deserved...come on.

ADAMS remains still. She cannot take her eyes off of him. BATMAN grabs her arm and pulls her towards the exit.

ADAMS
I didn’t mean to...I really didn’t...

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - SECRET PASSAGE

BATMAN looks around at the murky secret passage. It’s very dark. ADAMS’s still feeling the previous scene.

BATMAN
I take it this passage is the way out?

ADAMS
Yes...yes It must be. I...I think it’s this way.

BATMAN
I know. Do you still have Two-Face’s coin?
BATMAN holds out his hand.

ADAMS
Yes...I...oh christ, I just killed someone.

BATMAN
Just give me the coin.

ADAMS meekly hands over the coin to BATMAN.

ADAMS
You’re going back in, aren’t you?
You’re going to undo all my work...what are you?

BATMAN looms over ADAMS. It’s the fearful symbol once more.

BATMAN
I’m stronger than them. I have to show them.

ADAMS
That’s insane.

BATMAN holds up the coin. Scarred side up.

BATMAN
Exactly. Arkham was right; sometimes it’s only madness that makes us what we are.

BATMAN sweeps his cape around him and melts into the darkness.

The BATMAN we recognize is back.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
Or destiny perhaps.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - BEAT EM UP MONTAGE

BATMAN moves quickly in the shadows. A couple of clown guards stroll the place. From the shadows, BATMAN appears behind one. Takes him down. Swoops away. The other thugs look around in confusion.

BATMAN swoops down and kicks a thug, knocks the other’s face in and knees the last one in the gut. He ninjas away in the shadows.

BLACK MASK
BLACK MASK and his two goons are immediately attacked by a raging BATMAN. Like nothing, he takes them down.

ANARKY

Runs around in corridors. BATMAN appears upside down behind him and wraps his cape around him.

THE PENGUIN’S CELL

PENGUIN hosts a poker game with other thugs. BATMAN swoops in from above. Covers the screen in shadow

ZSAZ

BATMAN knocks down a thug and ZSAZ swings a knife at him. BATMAN dodges several then beats the crap out of him.

SCARECROW

SCARECROW sprays his fear toxin on willing inmates in need of a high. BATMAN swoops behind him and knocks him down. He fights back but BATMAN breaks his arms.

INMATE POV: BATMAN looks like lucifer covered in shadow.

GREAT WHITE SHARK

BATMAN dodges several axe strikes from him. BATMAN knocks him to the wall, grabs the axe and strikes it into the wall next to him. Then punches him out. Taking the axe with him.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM - CON

A JOKER THUG bursts into the room.

JOKER THUG
The Bat! It’s the Bat!

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Gripping the axe, BATMAN begins violently whacking away at the front entrance. Wood chips fly everywhere. He lets all the rage out.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

THE JOKER eyes the THUG.

JOKER THUG
The bat’s destroying everything!
INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN brings the axe into a window. It explodes.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BLACK MASK, holding his side, stands up in rage.

BLACK MASK
You should never have allowed him in here, Joker! He’s too dangerous!

THE JOKER
That’s right! Blame me! Go On!

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

BATMAN knocks the door completely down.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - RECEPTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The axe lands by THE JOKER’s feet. BATMAN stands in the doorway. THE JOKER looks at the axe then at BATMAN.

BATMAN
You’re free.

BATMAN stands bloody but as majestic as ever. The big hero shot.

BATMAN (CONT’D)
You’re all free.

PROFESSOR MILO and the other INMATES looks at each other with confusion. Only THE JOKER continues staring at him. Intrigued. Satisfied. Admired.

THE JOKER
Oh, we know that already. But what about you?

THE JOKER lifts up a straitjacket off the floor. The light, over exposed on his face.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Have you come to claim your kingly robes? Or do you just want us to put you out of your misery, like the poor sick creature you are?

BATMAN reveals the SILVER COIN.
BATMAN
Why don’t we let Two-Face decide what to do with me?

THE JOKER
YES! HARVEY!

THE JOKER loves this idea. He’s so proud of BATMAN.

TWO-FACE
Me? No...I can’t...really...I

THE JOKER
Brilliant!

BATMAN flips him the coin.

BATMAN
Here.

TWO-FACE catches the coin and as soon as it lands, his entire posture changes. He straightens up, loses all the indecisive slackness. He’s whole again.

TWO-FACE
If the unmarked face comes up, he goes free. If it’s the scarred face, he dies here. Okay?

CLOSE-UP: TWO-FACE’S HAND. HIS THUMB FLIPS THE COIN.

The COIN rises with a slow, spinning grace. It seems like forever. The COIN reaches the apex of its spin. LIGHTING cracks behind it.

TWO-FACE catches it. We cannot see how it landed.

TWO-FACE opens his palm. He looks up, fixes his gaze on BATMAN.

TWO-FACE (CONT’D)
He goes free.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - ENTRANCE - DAWN - LATER

The RED DAWN light shines through. BATMAN and THE JOKER walk side by side towards the broken front entrance. It pours outside.
THE JOKER
Parting is such a sweet sorrow, dearest. Still, you can’t say we didn’t show you a good time.

BATMAN turns in only slightly in response.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Enjoy yourself out there.

BATMAN stares at THE JOKER for a long time. Where there was once anger is now a non-confrontational, zen like face.

He slowly turns back around and leaves the scene. THE JOKER waves bye.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
In the asylum.

THE JOKER grins.

THE JOKER (CONT’D)
Just don’t forget – if it ever gets too tough. There’s always a place for you here.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM – RECEPTION ROOM

We PUSH IN through the window to where TWO-FACE stands, still gazing at the coin. The DAWN LIGHT and the FOG make for an interesting visual.

We see the SILVER DOLLAR.

SCARRED SIDE UP.

TWO-FACE smiles a smile for himself. He turns to the HOUSE OF TAROT CARDS he built. The asylum of triangles. TWO-FACE stares at it, impassively.

TWO-FACE
“Who cares for you? You’re nothing but a pack of cards.”

TWO-FACE sweeps his arm through the CARDS.

SLOW MOTION: THE CARDS TUMBLE THROUGH THE AIR. THEY FALL TOWARDS US.

THE LOVERS.

THE HANGED MAN.
ART.

THEN THE MOON CARD.

Spinning through blackness. Closer and closer. Larger and larger. Until it fills our whole space and we close on the card.

A shot of the moon, caught in between two statues of ANUBIS.

THE END.