

[BRAVE and the BOLD]

[ISSUE #12 - BATMAN FEATURE STORY]

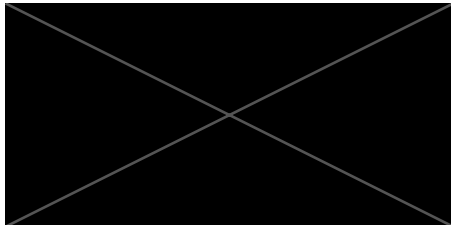
"[MOTHER'S DAY]" Part [03]

By

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PAGE 1

ISLA MACPHERSON stands in her doorway looking shocked.

ISLA
Bruce? What's happened? Yuir clothes...
(Beat)
Were you in an accident?

BRUCE WAYNE is on the other side of the open door, standing on the front porch. His clothes are ragged and covered in blood and dirt but aside from that he's oozing charm.

BRUCE
Motorcycle spill. I'm fine.
(Beat)
BETTER than fine. Can I come in?

Isla looks skeptical.

ISLA
Shouldn't you go to the hospital?
Something might be broken.

Bruce enters the house, leaning into Isla, looking aggressive.

BRUCE
I don't BREAK easily.

In an instant, he's knocked over by HAM, Isla's protective doberman.

HAM
GRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

BRUCE
Ahh!

ISLA
HAM!

PAGE 2

The dog is snapping at Bruce's face, standing on his chest on the floor. Bruce is holding him back by his throat.

HAM
GRRRRARK ARK ARK

ISLA (OFF-PANEL)
HAM! Get off! HAM!

Bruce kicks the dog backwards off of him, smashing Ham into a table.

He grabs Ham by the collar and flings him over again, pounding the animal into the floor. Isla is aghast in the background.

SFX

CRNCH

HAM

Yiiipe

Bruce looks up at Isla, his face sweaty and his eyes flaring red. There are fangs in his mouth.

BRUCE

Now...where were we?

HAM (OFF-PANEL)

Whine

PAGE 3

Close on Isla. She's backed into a corner of the living room, holding a lamp that she unconsciously picked up for self-defence. The light flickers starkly on her face.

Bruce swats the lamp out of the way. It shatters in a burst of glass.

BRUCE

I SAID I'd come back, Isla. I MEANT it.
I just needed some time to THINK. Now
it's all so clear.

SFX

SKSHHHH

Bruce presses Isla up against the wall, his hand on her throat - not choking her but cradling her neck in a convenient biting position.

BRUCE

I don't need to live two lives anymore.
All of the things I thought were
important...

(Beat)

It's all NOISE. None of it matters. Only
this. Only YOU.

ISLA (SMALL)

Bruce...

Close-up as Bruce opens his mouth wide against Isla's neck, his fangs prominent.

BRUCE
And ME.
(Beat)
TOGETHER.

Bruce screams as Isla mashes a burning cigarette stub into his forehead.

SFX
FSSSSSS
BRUCE
Yeeaghhh!

PAGE 4

Isla stumbles through a bedroom doorway, holding her throat, as Bruce starts to pick himself up off the floor.

She slams the door closed and searches for the lock.

ISLA (BREATHING HEAVILY)
Hahh... hahh...

SFX
CHK-CLIK

Isla listens, her ear at the door, still breathing heavily in the dark.

ISLA
Hahhh... Where are you?

Same panel, but now she's reacting in terror to something - someONE - behind her.

BRUCE (OFF-PANEL)
Right here.

Reverse angle. Bruce is crouched in the open bedroom window, mostly in silhouette. It's a very 'Batman' pose but without the pointy ears and cape.

BRUCE
HSSSSSSSSSSSS

Closer on Bruce and his vampy face as he's knocked out in mid-sentence by something behind him.

SFX
PSHHHHT

BRUCE
UNhhhhh...

PAGE 5

Bruce drops to the floor, unconscious, revealing MAPS MIZOGUCHI in the window behind him.

SFX
Ka-THUMP

MAPS
Whoa. That worked faster than I thought.

On Isla, crouched into the corner of the room in front of the door. She's holding a lamp in self-defence.

ISLA
MIA?? What... what's happening?
What...how did you--?

Maps has crawled into the room now and is kneeling beside Bruce's prone body, shining a flashlight into his eyes.

MAPS
Yup. He's definitely out cold. Mr. Wayne was attacked by some kind of bat creature and was under its influence. Professor Langstrom was trying to help him with a serum but I guess he escaped.

Close on Maps, grinning at Isla.

MAPS
Lucky I was around, right?

On Isla, maybe not completely convinced.

ISLA
R-right. Sure.

Isla's on her feet now, still a cautious distance from Bruce's body, while Maps is heaving to pick him up under the shoulders.

MAPS
Hnghh. Better call 911, Professor. He's going to have to go to the hospital. I'm like ninety percent sure he's not contagious or anything but you never

know. Where do you keep your gas masks?

ISLA
Gas...masks?

PAGE 6

Outside now. The ambulance is in front of Isla's house and a masked paramedic is pushing Bruce (on a gurney) into the back of the vehicle. Maps and Isla look on.

ISLA
I'm sorry I can't go with you. I have to take Ham to the emergency. He's hurt, poor thing.

PARAMEDIC
Up we go, now.

SFX
K-Chung

Maps sits in the back of the ambulance beside Bruce, giving Isla a thumbs-up.

MAPS
I've got this, Professor MacPherson. The doctors are gonna' want to see this serum and hear about what happened. Plus, I've never ridden in an ambulance before.

The ambulance drives away, leaving Isla behind.

SFX
WEEE-0000 WEEE-00000

Inside the vehicle now. Maps is leaning over Bruce, looking him over.

MAPS
Bruce Wayne. Wow. I hope you're not mad at me for this.

Close on Bruce's groggy face. He has an oxygen mask on. One eye opens up sleepily to look at Maps.

BRUCE (GROGGY)
Alfred...

Back on Maps, surprised.

MAPS

Um, no. It's, um, Mia. Mizoguchi. We met before at--

BRUCE

Alfred. The...cave.

Now we see the ambulance paramedic/driver pull down his mask and look behind him. It's ALFRED PENNYWORTH!

ALFRED

Are you absolutely sure, Master Bruce?

Back on Bruce, smiling weakly at Maps.

BRUCE

Ninety...percent.

PAGE 7

Huge panel of THE BATCAVE, with all the trimmings. Batmobile, giant penny, tyrannosaurus, etc. And lots of bats. Somewhere in the panel, the ambulance drives into the massive space.

Alfred supports Bruce as he staggers out of the ambulance and walks on his own. Maps watches with realization and awe.

ALFRED

There we are, sir. One step at a time.

BRUCE

I'm fine, Alfred. The serum did its job. Just a little weak in the legs.

Bruce takes his shirt off (he's still bandaged from last issue) and winces in pain as a needle pokes him in the arm. Alfred stands ready to receive the dirty laundry. Bruce is standing beside a Bat-laboratory. Centrifuge, beakers, etc. A screen shows his anatomy.

BAT-COMPUTER VOICE

Genetic makeup: normal. Blood levels: 99.9 percent normal. Undocumented toxin present in 0.1% quantity.

ALFRED

No one is perfect, Master Bruce. Not even you.

BRUCE

Step one: replicate Langstrom's serum and hopefully strengthen it. There are at least fifty of these creatures holed up in the MacKenzie Club and there'll be TWICE that by morning. We can't take any chances.

Bruce and Alfred two-shot.

BRUCE

The creatures are transmitting the Man-Bat disease through the blood. My guess is that Tristan Grey was patient zero. But they're acting against their will. Being mind-controlled by something...else. It was big. A woman with a serpent's tail. She was speaking what sounded like Latin.

(Beat)

Mia? Care to join us?

Close on Maps, watching Bruce Wayne, who is clearly also Batman. Talking to her.

MAPS

What? Me? Um, yeah. I mean YES. Sir. Mister...Wayne.

PAGE 8

Maps walks nervously over to join them at the Bat Computer.

MAPS

Um. It doesn't sound like a vampire. More like a succubus or a varcolac. Did it try to, um, SEDUCE you? Or EAT you?

BRUCE

Both.

Maps produces a monster manual from her backpack.

MAPS

Hold on. Here we go. Varcolac. Undead creatures, typically from Slavic countries, with a taste for human livers? And get this - the older they are the more powerful they get.

Bruce is looking at a giant screen full of news clips and videos.

BRUCE

There was a crashed plane from Slovenia
last week.

Now Bruce is standing in front of his armory, full of Bat suits
and gear. Maps is off to the side and Alfred is in the distance
folding something.

BRUCE

These things are multiplying fast.
Before long there'll be an outright Man-
Bat pandemic. This ends tonight. Alfred.

ALFRED (IN BG)

Yes sir.

BRUCE

Mia needs a suit.

ALFRED (IN BG)

Already on it, sir.

Close on Maps, her eyes gleaming as she looks up in awe at...

The Batman suit. Even empty, it looks amazing.

PAGE 9

CUT TO: Dawn. The MacKenzie Club building (from last issue). A
big, masonic, columned structure. The first colours of daylight
creep over the horizon behind it.

MAPS (RADIO VOICE-OVER)

They're definitely asleep, right?

Maps (in a brand new ROBIN costume that's cooler than her home-
made one) is hunched in front of the doorway in the shadow of a
pillar, holding a bat-tool up to the door handle.

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)

Imaging and sonar all show resting
heartbeats and zero movement.

MAPS

At least ONE of them is UNDEAD. She
probably doesn't HAVE a heartbeat.

(Beat)

I hope I'm doing this right. I'm not the
lockpick in our group.

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)

Let the Bat-Tool do the work. It's automated. Shouldn't take more than-

CLICK! The door unlocks and Maps enters cautiously.

SFX

CLICK

MAPS

I'm in.

She creeps through the lounge area we saw last issue. It's empty.

MAPS

It's dark. There's no one here.

(Beat)

Smells like...rotten eggs.

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)

Up the big staircase to the left.

Maps is at the top of the stairs now. Just down the hall is the large, masonic door that leads to the inner sanctum. She's holding her nose.

MAPS

Oh god. It's bad.

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)

Stick to the plan. It's going to be okay.

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)

Mia.

MAPS

Yes sir?

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)

I won't let anything happen to you.

Close on Maps. She's entering the dark room and strapping a small gas mask to her face.

MAPS

Yes sir.

PAGE 10

SPLASH PAGE. The Varcolac. MOTHER. Huge and slimy. She's asleep on her altar, surrounded by an entire room full of Man-Bats. Two of them suckle on her drowsily. Some are draped across her snakey

lap. Dim candles light the scene eerily. Maps is in the foreground, her back to us, arm raised to throw something.

PAGE 11

Maps pitches a small Bat-bomb (looks like a thermal detonator) toward the sleeping creatures.

It bounces on the dais near the varcolac's snake tail, smoke traveling in its wake.

SFX
TNK TNK FSSSSSSSSSSSS

Extreme close-up of MOTHER'S eyes as it hears the sound.

SFX
TNK

The bomb explodes, filling the room with a purple serum gas.

SFX (HUGE)
FOOM

MOTHER (AND ALL)
SKREEEEEEEEEEEE!!

Maps is running for her life from the room. Several Man-Bats are chasing her.

MAN-BATS (VARIOUS)
KEEEEEEEEEEE KEEEEEE SKREEEEK

MAPS
Bombs away!

She's tackled by one of the Man-Bats. It's Tristan. He's hissing in her face, claws raised to strike.

TRISTAN
HSSSSSSSS

MAPS
TRISTAN?! Tristan! Snap out of it! Don't kill me!

Tristan coughs, clutching his head. He's reverting back to his mostly-human form as the serum courses through his system.

TRISTAN
Cough, cough. Where...where am I?

MAPS
Oh, thank god. Boss! I'm clear!

BATMAN (RADIO V.O.)
Good girl.

PAGE 12

Big Panel. The roof above the altar explodes, pouring sunlight into the room.

SFX
KA-BOOOOOM

The varcolac looks up toward the sky, her scaly arms shielding her from the deadly sun as pieces of debris rain down around her.

MOTHER
SHRIEEEEEEEEEEK

Batman jumps down from the hole in the roof looking awesome.

PAGE 13

Batman faces off against the huge varcolac. There's smoke and dust everywhere. Some of the Man-Bats have transformed and are fleeing.

BATMAN
Good morning.

He slugs her in the face.

SFX
POW

She recoils, wiping blood from her lip, hiding partially in a shadow. As she speaks, her words turn into music.

MOTHER
HSSSSSSSS. You... are a FOOLISH little man. You belong...to me.

MUSIC (MORPHING INTO WORDS)
Mia nomo estas Legio, cxar ni estas multaj... Aligxu al ni...Come to Mother...

Close on Batman. He taps his ear.

BATMAN
Binaurals. Counteracting the frequency
of your hypnosis. Sorry, Mom.

He punches her again.

SFX
BAM

PAGE 14

MOTHER slaps her tail hard onto the floor, trying to crush
Batman, who dodges just in time.

SFX
THWAK

But the impact (and the weight of the ceiling debris) caves in
the floor beneath them, sending the two combatants tumbling
downward.

SFX
CR-RRRACCCKKK

The giant pieces of ceiling (along with Batman and Mother)
plummet through the first floor as well.

SFX
SKSHHHHH RUMBLE

Batman picks himself up from the dark, dirty water of a flooded
old subway tunnel. They're under the building now. But he's
seemingly...alone?

BATMAN
Unhh.

MAPS (RADIO V.O.)
Boss? Radar shows you're...UNDER the
street now?

BATMAN
Yes.

A pair of red eyes flashes from the shadows.

SFX
Rattle rattle

MOTHER
HSSSSSSSSSS Back...in the darkness...

MAPS (RADIO V.O.)
Was that part of the plan?

Batman gets up, dripping wet, ready to fight.

BATMAN
No.

PAGE 15

Mother lunges from the shadows, all teeth and spittle, knocking Batman over into the muck.

MOTHER
SHAAAAAAAAAAAAA

BATMAN
Uff!

She rises up above him, extra tall due to her snake-like body, and lords over her prey.

MOTHER
My child. You have cost me NOTHING.
Nothing but TIME. And what is time to
one such as I?

Batman rolls out of the way of her huge, clawed hand smashing down. She would have caved in his face.

MOTHER
We will rebuild!

SFX
SPLSHHH

She whips her tail again, and this time it finds its mark. Batman is smashed into the tunnel wall. It hurts.

MOTHER
And begin our once-great civilization
anew.

SFX
WHIPPPP

SFX
CRNCHH

BATMAN
Aaahh!

PAGE 16

Batman, on his knees, catches his breath. He holds his fractured ribs with one hand and grabs a broken chair leg from the nearby debris with the other.

BATMAN
Hahhh...hahh

Mother is upon him again. She thrusts him back into the wall with an outstretched hand, getting right up in his face.

BATMAN
Unh!

MOTHER
What was once yours...this sickly, dying city, will be mine.

Batman plunges the broken chair leg into her chest.

BATMAN
HraAAH!

SFX
SPLORK

Mother looks down at the wound, somewhat surprised.

Closer on her as she begins to laugh.

MOTHER
Ha ha ha...

And even closer, as she continues to laugh hysterically, filling the whole panel. Her face is a terrifying grimace.

MOTHER
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

PAGE 17

Mother transforms herself into a young woman.

MOTHER
You seek to destroy my heart...but my heart was taken from me long, long ago.

She morphs into a bat-like creature now.

MOTHER
By one not so different from yourself.

In Salamis. He sought to own me. CONTROL me. And so he DID for a time. But only one of us stands now.

And finally, she morphs into Isla MacPherson.

MOTHER
The heart outlives the body. And this body... could be yours.

Batman looks taken aback. Almost hypnotized again by the sight of Isla walking seductively toward him.

MOTHER
Is this not what you desire, my young wolf?

She (Isla) moves close to Batman's face, smiling, ready to kiss him/bite him. Batman looks pretty convinced.

BATMAN
...Yes.

MOTHER
Yessssssssss

PAGE 18

Batman wraps a cable around the impostor's neck. She shrieks in surprise.

MOTHER
EEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

The creature has morphed back into its snakey self. She's pulling at the cable as Batman grapples with her in a semi-headlock.

MOTHER
FOUL ONE! You will...die...

Still clutching Mother, Batman aims his grappling gun up toward the ceiling.

BATMAN
Robin. Are you in position?

MAPS (RADIO V.O.)
Affirmative!

Batman fires the grapple up through the hole in the floor, and subsequently through the hole in the top floor ceiling as well.

SFX

POOM

PAGE 19

SPLASH PAGE. The Bat-Plane hovers directly over the MacKenzie Club roof, Batman and the Varcovac attached to it by the grappling cable. They're shooting out of the hole in the roof into the blazing morning sunlight.

PAGE 20

Inside the Bat-Plane, Maps sits in the cockpit with Tristan, who's leaning on her, unconscious from the stress. She has her hands on the yoke, steering the jet upwards.

MAPS

Hang on!

Mother is shrieking and flailing in terror, but she's bound by the cable wrapped around her neck. Batman is slightly above her, out of her reach.

MOTHER

SHRIIIIIEEEEEEEEEEK

Her body ignites in flame from the sunlight as she spews curses at Batman in a foreign tongue.

MOTHER

Curses

The stress of the cable and the speed of their ascent sever the creature's head from its body with a sickening sound.

MOTHER

Cuts off--

SFX

SKLLK

Long shot. The body of the creature (and its head) falls from the sky into Gotham harbour.

Batman watches her fall, still dangling from his grappling cable, the Bat-Plane in the sky above him.

PAGE 21

EPILOGUE. Isla MacPherson approaches the reception desk of a busy Gotham City hospital. Doctors, nurses and patients scuttle by. A few nurses are watching a large TV behind the desk showing the local news.

The administrative nurse looks up.

NURSE

Can I help you, miss?

Isla is digging in her purse for ID as she answers.

ISLA

Yes, please. Hello. I'm here to see a patient. Bruce Wayne? I'm not family, but--

NURSE

Sorry, honey. He ain't here.

ISLA

What do you mean?

Still looking at Isla, the nurse points her pen up toward the TV screen.

NURSE

I MEAN he ain't here.

On the TV. Showing photos of Bruce in swim shorts and sunglasses aboard his yacht, surrounded by women.

REPORTER (FROM TV)

Gotham playboy BRUCE WAYNE, having suffered a serious accident a few days ago, now seems to be 'in the care' of movie starlet MINERVA QUINN. The two have been photographed by paparazzi on Wayne's private yacht in the Mediterranean.

A couple of the nurses watching the TV turn to snicker at Isla.

Close on Isla, watching the screen. She looks hurt. Not surprised. Not sad. Not pissed off. Just wounded.

BRUCE (NARRATION)

I feel terrible.

PAGE 22

CUT TO: BIG PANEL. Bruce Wayne on the yacht. The same basic pose

we saw on the TV. Bruce is topless (still has bandages around his chest), wearing swim trunks and sunglasses as he leans against the railing with the wind in his hair. MINERVA QUINN has one hand on his shoulder, the other holding a drink. Other models frolic in the background.

BRUCE (NARRATION)

Even this view isn't enough to take my mind off of...everything.

BRUCE (NARRATION)

We cured all of MOTHER'S victims with fortified doses of the serum. The only two Man-Bat cases in Gotham (that I'm aware of) are the boy, TRISTAN GREY, and LANGSTROM himself, both of whom are in remission and non-contagious. ROBIN is keeping an eye on them while I'm away.

BRUCE (NARRATION)

I'm calling her ROBIN now. Almost against my better judgment. But her instincts are GOOD and she's keen to learn. We'll see.

Closer on Bruce as he looks out over the water toward the Cyprus shoreline.

BRUCE (NARRATION)

This isn't over yet. MOTHER mentioned SALAMIS. An ancient Cypriot city-state excavated in the eleventh century BC. If she was telling the truth... if she's truly lived since then, that's where I'll find her HEART.

Last Panel: The yacht drifts away from us into a setting sun reflected in the Mediterranean Sea.

BRUCE (NARRATION)

That's where I'll BURY it.

END