

Birds of Prey #26

THE SUITOR

The **BANE** issue for
VILLAINS MONTH

Chuck Dixon's Evil Twin, story.
Butch Guice, "The Baby Crusher", art.

Bob "Noodles" Schreck and Social Misfit Matt Idelson, known associates.

PAGE ONE

SPLASH

Bane, in mask and wearing a cloak and Arab headress and mufti partly concealing his mask, rides atop a camel. He has a crossbelt of ammo over his chest and wears a dagger and a holstered handgun and an AK-47 with drum magazine across his knees. Some very tough looking Afghan guerilla types ride camels behind him. Bandoliers packed with ammo and AK-47s and daggers and all that good stuff. He's topping a ridge with nothing but sky for background.

TITLE: ***THE SUITOR***

CAPTION: I AM BANE.

PAGE TWO

PANEL ONE

LARGE SCALE.

Downshot. Big scale. David Lean time.

The camel train of warriors nears a great rift, a narrow canyon cutting through the mountainous and hostile terrain. They raise a cloud of dust behind them.

CAPTION: I AM HUNTING.

CAPTION: HUNTING FOR SOMETHING DANGEROUS AND DESIRABLE.

CAPTION: MY HUNT BRINGS ME TO THE DHABAR KUSH.

CAPTION: I AM LED BY FANATICS WHO OPPOSE THE RHAFI-UR—

CAPTION: --THE CENTURIES-OLD RULING CLASS OF DHABAR.

PANEL TWO

Bane has dismounted. His cloak still covers his back but his head dress is thrown back to reveal his masked head. The guerillas with him dismount as well. Bane has his AK in his fist and nears the edge of the deep rift.

CAPTION: ONLY THESE MEN ARE COURAGEOUS ENOUGH TO BRING ME TO THIS FORBIDDEN WASTE.

GUERILLA ONE: [WE ARE HERE. THE **AGHA RIFT**.]

GUERILLA ONE: [WHY YOU CAME HERE IS YOUR **OWN** BUSINESS.]

PANEL THREE

Bane in the foreground holding the AK. His buddies (about a half dozen) step up behind him. The one in the lead has his palm out. The others have guns ready.

GUERILLA ONE: [PAY US WHAT YOU OWE AND WE ARE **GONE**.]

CAPTION: COURAGEOUS AND UNPRINCIPLED.

PAGE THREE

PANEL ONE

Bane turns in a crouch and blasts away with that AK blowing Mujhadins all over the landscape and startling the camels. Empty shellcasings go flying like batteries at a Mets game when the Braves are in town.

CAPTION: THEY THINK I AM HERE FOR **TREASURE**.

CAPTION: THEY WOULD **REMAIN** TO LURK IN MY SHADOW LIKE JACKALS.

SFX: ***BBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBTTTT!***

PANEL TWO

Bane throws down the smoking AK and trots for the edge of the cliff.

CAPTION: NOW THEY WILL REMAIN **FOR** THE JACKALS.

PANEL THREE

Downshot. He's leapt off the cliff, tearing his cloak from his as he does so. That reveals a parachute harness he's been wearing. The deep, narrow canyon disappears into shadows and darkness far below.

CAPTION: THERE **IS** A TREASURE BELOW.

CAPTION: IT IS NOTHING YOU CAN **TOUCH**.

CAPTION: NOTHING YOU CAN **SEE**.

CAPTION: YET **ALL** MEN SEEK IT.

PAGE FOUR

SPLASH

Bane drops toward us, the chute unfurling above him. In the background is a color hold montage of shots of Talia (Ra's Al Ghul's little girl.). We see her in her usual action wear with a gun and in silky robes looking seductive. Ra's Al Ghul is a spectral image behind it all.

CAPTION: I THOUGHT MY HEART WAS STONE.

CAPTION: I THOUGHT ALL EMOTIONS WERE SEARED FROM ME
WITHIN THE WALLS OF ***PENA DURO***.

CAPTION: THAT WAS BEFORE **TALIA**, DAUGHTER OF THE DEMON.

CAPTION: NOW I KNOW THAT I CAN FEEL **PASSION**.

INSET PANEL

Bane's chute is open and drops into the shadows between the rock walls closing in on either side.

CAPTION: AND SINCE SHE SPURNED ME THAT PASSION **BURNS**.

CAPTION: I **WILL** SEE HER AGAIN.

PAGE FIVE

PANEL ONE

Bane is on the canyon's sandy floor and releasing the chute harness. The chute drifts away behind him. Deep shadows come down over the canyon obscuring the background.

CAPTION: DHABAR'S HISTORY IS A LONG ONE.

PANEL TWO

Same shot and angle but now Bane moves toward the background as sunlight invades the canyon partly revealing the end of the canyon.

CAPTION: IT IS AN ANIMISTIC CULTURE UNLIKE ITS ISLAMIC NEIGHBORS.

PANEL THREE

Same shot and angle but the sunlight reveals more as Bane walks away from us toward an ancient edifice carved in the rock at the end of the canyon. It's the entrance to a temple as old as time itself.

CAPTION: ITS BARRENS HIDE SECRETS OLDER THAN THE WRITTEN WORD.

PANEL FOUR

Bane has removed his mask to look upward. He squints through the sun streaming down into the canyon.

CAPTION: HERE I WILL FIND THE TREASURE BEYOND PRICE.

PANEL FIVE

He steps through the entrance of the temple in a downshot. Dust stirs at his feet.

CAPTION: THIS TEMPLE WAS BUILT IN WORSHIP OF A PANTHEON OF GODS LONG FORGOTTEN

CAPTION: ITS BUILDERS HAD NO IDEA OF ITS FUTURE SIGNIFICANCE.

PAGE SIX

PANEL ONE

He is down on one knee touching the floor of the temple. There are footprints in the dust. Footprints of a woman.

CAPTION: THERE IS ANOTHER HERE BEFORE ME.

CAPTION: A WOMAN OR A CHILD.

PANEL TWO

Bane wrinkles his nose, eyes squinting. Creepy.

SFX: sniff sniff

CAPTION: A WOMAN.

PANEL THREE

From Bane's POV we see an upper level of the temple where broad stairs lead to an altar above. High on the wall a woman's shadow is thrown. A woman with long hair. COULD be Talia.

CAPTION: IT COULD ONLY BE **HER**.

CAPTION: TALIA.

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL ONE

Bane charges up the stairs raising dust as he runs.

CAPTION: WE WILL MEET AGAIN.

CAPTION: MY PASSION GROWS AT THE THOUGHT.

PANEL TWO

He's running down a stonewalled corridor lined with relief sculptures. A woman's shadow is at the end of the corridor where it turns.

CAPTION: I HUNGER TO HAVE HER IN MY GRASP.

CAPTION: TO HAVE MY HANDS ABOUT HER THROAT.

PANEL THREE

Bane comes around a corner where a feminine figure turns in the extreme foreground. The figure is silhouetted.

CAPTION: AND CRUSH THE **LIFE** FROM HER.

BANE: **TALIA!**

PANELS FOUR THROUGH SIX

Same sized panels across the bottom tier. The off panel woman gets in a few shots. The heel of her hand strikes him full in the face. A woman's fist delivers a pounding blow to the side of his head. A spray of spittle flies from his mouth. A foot rockets into his head snapping it in the opposite direction.

BANE: uh!

BANE: unnh!

BANE: unh!

PAGE EIGHT

PANEL ONE

Large panel. The Black Canary stands ready to open another can of whup-ass on Bane who is rising on one knee and wiping his bleeding lips with the back his hand. Canary wears her nightvision goggles.

CANARY: I'M **NOT** TALIA, BUCKO.

CANARY: NEVER **HEARD** OF HER.

CANARY: YOU **ALWAYS** MEET YOUR GIRLFRIENDS IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?

PANEL TWO

Cut to Barbara looking at Bane on the heads-up displays. This is the view from Canary's video receptors. Bane smiles but there anger in his eyes. Babs looks alarmed.

BARBARA: **OH** NO.

PANEL THREE

Canary appears ready to clobber Bane again as he stands regarding her with narrowed eyes.

CANARY: STAY WHERE YOU ARE AND KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF.

BANE: WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU HERE?

CANARY: I'M THE BLACK CANARY.

PAGE NINE

PANEL ONE

Canary smirks in close-up. She's pulled her nite-vision goggles down.

CANARY: AND YOU KNOW WHY I'M HERE. WE'RE HERE FOR THE
SAME REASON...

CANARY: BANE.

PANEL TWO

Bane smiles a very thin smile.

BANE: IF YOU KNOW MY NAME...

BANE: ...THEN YOU KNOW MY PAST.

PANEL THREE

Canary smiles in close-up again.

CANARY: SURE. INTERNATIONAL CRIME FIGURE AND TERRORIST.

CANARY: YOU WERE BORN IN SOME HELLHOLE PRISON. YOU TRIED
TO TAKE OVER GOTHAM---

PANEL FOUR

Cut to Barbara looking at heads up files of Bane. Pictures. Mug shots. Police files.

BARBARA: --TWICE.

BARBARA: YOU'VE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH RA'S AL GHUL AND HIS
DAUGHTER.

PANEL FIVE

Canary stands ready as Bane stands to his full height in a two shot.

CANARY: AND APPARENTLY YOU'RE **STILL** HUNG UP ON HER.

BANE: YOU SAID YOU DID NOT **KNOW** TALIA.

CANARY: I JUST MADE THE CONNECTION, OKAY?

PAGE TEN

PANEL ONE

Bane in close-up with narrowed eyes.

BANE: THERE IS MORE TO YOU THAN APPEARS ON THE SURFACE.

BANE: PERHAPS WE MIGHT---

PANEL TWO

Canary turns, holding out a hand to Bane. Canary looks alert.

CANARY: **HOLD** THAT THOUGHT.

CANARY: YOUR AMIGOS ARE HERE.

BANE: AMIGOS?

PANEL THREE

Barbara in her lair. She's looking at a satellite image of the Agha Rift. There's three bright dots on the screen.

BARBARA: THREE VEHICLES MOVING FAST TOWARD YOUR LOCATION, DINAH.

BARBARA: YOU WERE RIGHT. THERE MUST BE SENSOR ALARMS THERE.

PANEL FOUR

Canary is turned to a crouching Bane and tossing her Canary Cry orb toward him.

CANARY: GOTTA RUN, BIG GUY.

CANARY: I'LL PASS ALONG YOUR REGRETS TO YOUR FRIENDS.

BANE: ...I **HAVE** NO FRIENDS.

PANEL FIVE

Canary hares off as Bane drops to his knees as the sound assault from the Canary Cry washes over him.

SFX: **EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE**

CAPTION: INTENSE CEREBRAL PAIN.

CAPTION: DISORIENTATION.

PAGE ELEVEN

PANEL ONE

He stumbles away from the orb with hands held to his ears.

SFX: **EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE**

CAPTION: SOME KIND OF SONIC WEAPON.

PANEL TWO

He looks really pissed as he leans back against a wall pulling his mask down over his head..

CAPTION: THIS BLACK CANARY WILL REGRET THAT.

PANEL THREE

He moves, menacingly down a corridor within the temple.

CAPTION: NO ONE BESTS BANE.

CAPTION: NOT A MAN.

CAPTION: NEVER A **WOMAN**.

PANEL FOUR

He looks from an arched opening down into the canyon before the temple. Three helicopter/hovercraft type vehicles are landing here in a cloud of dust. They're very high-tech 21st Century military looking. Smallish. Each holds only three men. No markings on them.

CAPTION: FLYING CRAFT WITH NO MARKINGS.

CAPTION: I NEED NO SYMBOLS TO RECOGNIZE THEM.

PANEL FIVE

A trio of modern ninja-type/SWAT guys in masks and body armor run from the vehicles with weapons visible. These are Ra's Al Ghul minions.

CAPTION: THRALLS OF THE DEMON.

CAPTION: ONLY **HE** WOULD SHOW THIS MUCH INTEREST IN A FORGOTTEN TEMPLE.

PAGE TWELVE

PANEL ONE

Bane leaps down from the archway.

CAPTION: THE CANARY THOUGHT I WAS WITH THEM.

CAPTION: PERHAPS I AM **MISTAKEN** ABOUT HER.

PANEL TWO

He looks down toward the floor of the main chamber of the temple as the minions enter in a long rectangle of light from the temple opening. They move like pros, wary and keeping guns up and ready. He can see Canary crouched on some sculpture or balcony or other detail inside the temple. She's lower than Bane but above the minions.

CAPTION: THE WOMAN WOULD BE OF MORE USE TO ME **ALIVE**.

CAPTION: FOR **NOW**.

PANEL THREE

Canary turns alarmed as Bane drops down behind her.

CANARY: oh.

BANE: I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

PANEL FOUR

She turns to strike at him but he catches her hand in his fist.

CANARY: NOW IS NOT---

CANARY: uh!

CANARY: --A **GOOD** TIME.

PANEL FIVE

Both stumble a bit as she kicks out at him. He maintains his grip on her wrist. Their struggle loosens some detail on the ledge or sculpture they're on.

BANE: YOU ARE **WRONG** ABOUT ME.

CANARY: MY **APOLOGIES**, OKAY?

BANE: YOU MUST **LISTEN**.

CANARY: COULD WE KEEP IT **DOWN**?

PAGE THIRTEEN

SIX PANEL GRID

PANEL ONE

Low angle shot as the bits of sculpture fall into the chamber below alerting the minions who ready their guns and position for a firefight.

OFF PANEL: (ABOVE) PLEASE?

PANEL TWO

All hell breaks loose and the two leap away. Bullets fly up from below chipping rock splinters which fly every which way. Dust is thrown about. Collateral damage to the max. These gunmen ain't foolin'.

CANARY: SEE?

SFX: ***viip viip viip viip viip***

PANEL THREE

Canary and Bane are concealed behind a huge, pitted statue. There's a narrow gap between the statue and the wall. They're squeezed in here. Bullets strike the statue.

SFX: ***viip viip viip***

BANE: YOU DID NOT TELL ME WHY YOU ARE HERE.

CANARY: I GOT WORD THAT AN ANTI-RAHFI **TERRORIST** CELL WAS HERE.

PANEL FOUR

He begins pushing in the statue's back. She is pressed against the wall regarding him.

BANE: unnh...

CANARY: THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A DUMP FOR **WEAPONS**.

PANEL FIVE

His muscles strain and bulge as he presses on the statue. Stone dust falls on him. She regards him.

BANE: unnnh...

CANARY: WHAT'S **YOUR** INTEREST IN THIS PLACE?

PANEL SIX

The statue is budging as Bane, bathed in sweat, pushes on it.

BANE: IT'S--unnh---**PERSONAL**.

PAGE FOURTEEN

PANEL ONE

Large panel. The statue falls toward the startled thugs below, Some run or dive for cover but those caught in the shadow can only look upwards in resigned horror.

RESIGNED THUG: **AAAAAAHHHHHH!**

PANEL TWO

The statue falls with a thunderous impact and breaks up when it hits in a cloud of dust and flying stone shards. Ra's guys dive for cover.

SFX: **BUH-KROOOOOOM!**

PANEL THREE

Bane and Canary trot from a rising cloud of dust toward us.

CANARY: THEY'RE **STILL** BLOCKING THE WAY OUT OF HERE.

BANE: I AM NOT LEAVING THE WAY I CAME IN.

CANARY: YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU'RE SAYING.

BANE: AS DO **YOU**.

PAGE FIFTEEN

PANEL ONE

Large panel. They've run into the middle of a room lit by a shaft of light from an opening high above. The place is stacked thirty feet high of crated weapons. There's a few TOW missile launchers and several metal cases with radiation warning symbols on them.

CANARY: THIS IS WHAT **I'M** LOOKING FOR.

BANE: IMPRESSIVE.

BANE: AND **USEFUL**.

PANEL TWO

Canary is by the opening to the room and looking down the corridor leading to it where the dust is settling.

CANARY: WE HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER WAY **OUT** OF HERE.

CANARY: THOSE GUYS WILL FIGURE OUT WHERE WE **WENT**.

PANEL FOUR

Canary is turned in surprise to see Bane has one of the cases opened and is fiddling with a device within.

CANARY: WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU **DOING**?

BANE: UTILIZING THE TOOLS AVAILABLE TO ME.

PAGE SIXTEEN

PANEL ONE

Canary does a spinkick to Bane's head that causes him to stumble from the control panel inside the case.

CANARY: GET **AWAY** FROM IT!

CANARY: HAVE YOU LOST YOUR **MIND**?

PANEL TWO

She stares in dismay down at the complex control panel inside the case. A digital countdown screen is at 18:34. Bane stands behind her.

CANARY: THIS THING'S **NUCLEAR**.

BANE: THERE IS NO HALTING THE DETONATION SEQUENCE.

BANE: YOU WISH THESE ARMS **DESTROYED**, NO?

PANEL THREE

They leap away as Ra's boys come in through the doorway behind them firing weapons as they go.

SFX: **BRRRRRT!**

CANARY: THIS WAS **SUPPOSED** TO BE A RECON MISSION!

PANEL FOUR

Bane rises from cover with some kind of heavy grenade launcher in his fists. He's firing a grenade from it.

BANE: I WILL COVER OUR ESCAPE.

SFX: **BOK!**

PAGE SEVENTEEN

PANEL ONE

Ra's thugs are blasted from their feet as the grenade explosion causes the entrance to crumble and cave in.

SFX: ***BRUUUMMMM!***

PANEL TWO

Canary whirls on Bane as he tosses aside the smoking grenade launcher.

CANARY: **COVER** OUR ESCAPE?

CANARY: YOU **PREVENTED** OUR ESCAPE, STUPID!

BANE: YOUR RAGE MAKES YOU EVEN **MORE** ATTRACTIVE.

PANEL THREE

He walks away from her toward a set of steps carved into the floor into the shadows of the room.

CANARY: **FIRST** OF ALL---yuck.

CANARY: AND SECOND OF ALL—IS THIS A **SUICIDE** THING?

BANE: FOLLOW ME.

PANEL FOUR

Canary follows him down a long set of steps.

BANE: BELOW US IS THE **TRUE** DANGER HIDDEN IN THIS PLACE.

CANARY: MORE DANGEROUS THAN A TICKING **NUKE**?

PAGE EIGHTEEN

PANEL ONE

They're in a subterranean chamber lined with walls crowded with worn hieroglyphs. Along the walls is a canal filled with water running around a raised platform at the center of the room. In the middle of the platform is a Lazarus pit. There's canopic jars lined up along the side of the rectangular pit.

BANE: A **LAZARUS** PIT.

BANE: THIS IS ONE OF **RA'S AL GHUL'S** MANY LAIRS.

BANE: IT IS PREPARED FOR HIS FUTURE **RESURRECTION**.

PANEL TWO

Bane looks upward as Canary looks at the pit. He's pulled his mask off. It's in his fist.

CANARY: SO **THIS** IS HOW HE'S SURVIVED FOR FIVE CENTURIES.

BANE: I DENY HIM **THIS** RESPITE.

BANE: THE TEMPLE ABOVE WILL **BURY** THIS CHAMBER.

PANEL THREE

Bane turns back to the Canary who's backing away from him.

CANARY: ALL THIS TO GET BACK AT TALIA'S **DAD**?

BANE: I WILL NOT LET **YOU** DIE, CANARY.

PANEL FOUR

He's close to her, towering over her. She looks coldly furious.

BANE: YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL. WILLFUL. INTELLIGENT.

BANE: **YOU** COULD ERASE TALIA FROM MY HEART.

CANARY: COOL YOUR **JETS**, BIG GUY.

PAGE NINETEEN

PANEL ONE

He looks very earnest in close-up.

BANE: I AM **NOT** A MONSTER.

BANE: IN TIME I WOULD **PROVE** MY WORTHINESS TO YOU.

PANEL TWO

She smiles in a sly, seductive way.

CANARY: BANE...

CANARY: WHEN YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT---

PANEL THREE

Close-up of Bane again but now he looks shocked and pained.

OFF PANEL: --IT **STILL** TURNS MY STOMACH!

BANE: urgh!

PANEL FOUR

Bane is on his knees clutching his groin. What DID she do to him? Canary is diving into the canal that runs around the platform.

BANE: (WEAK) urrrrr...

CANARY: THIS IS **ADIÓS**, LOVER.

ELECTRONIC: (SMALL) THE TIMER'S AT 1:56, DINAH.

PANEL FIVE

Canary swims underwater toward an opening in the wall of the canal.

PAGE TWENTY

PANEL ONE

Canary swims down the channel toward a source of light.

PANEL TWO

She swims upward toward a light source.

PANEL THREE

She surfaces in an oasis pool surrounded by date palms. The mountains rise above her on either side.

CANARY: WOW.

CANARY: HOW MUCH **TIME**, BARB?

ELECTRONIC: (SMALL) THREE SECONDS AND COUNTING.

PANEL FOUR

LARGE PANEL

That temple explodes in a massive blast that blows those flying vehicles parked before it to tinkertoy parts.

PAGE TWENTY ONE

PANEL ONE

Canary steps from the pool.

CANARY: **THAT** WAS A SQUEAKER.

CANARY: WHERE AM I? AND MORE IMPORTANT---

PANEL TWO

Barbara looks at a topo map on her heads-up. A canary symbol on the creen indicates Canary's position. A triangle shows ehre the cycle is.

ELECTRONIC: ---WHERE'S MY **CYCLE**?

BARBARA: PUT YOUR GOGGLES BACK ON.

BARBARA: I'LL **GUIDE** YOU TO WHERE IT IS.

PANEL THREE

Canary climbs toward us up a steep, rocky incline with the goggles on.

CANARY: AND THIS IS THE **SHORTCUT**?

ELECTRONIC: (SMALL) YOU'D RATHER BE PICKING OUT SILVERWARE WITH BANE?

CANARY: NOOOOOO **THANK** YOU.

PANEL FOUR

Pullback of her climbing the incline.

CANARY: I FEEL **SORRY** FOR THE BIG GOOF.

ELECTRONIC: (SMALL) DON'T.

CANARY: HE WAS LIKE AN OVER-GROWN ADOLESCENT.

ELECTRONIC: (SMALL) DON'T REFER TO HIM IN THE PAST TENSE, DINAH...

PANEL FIVE

Pull much further back but now we see Dinah as though through binoculars.

CAPTION: "...HE HAS A NASTY HABIT OF ALWAYS COMING **BACK**."

TAILLESS BALLOON: MISTRESS---ONE HAS SURVIVED.

TAILLESS BALLOON: SO I **SEE**.

PAGE TWENTY TWO

PANEL ONE

Some of Ra's thugs look down from a height toward the enormous rising cloud of dust rising from a canyon in the distance. A female figure in the extreme foreground holds those binoculars.

RA'S THUG 1: I DO NOT SEE THE ONE CALLED BANE.

RA'S THUG 2: YOUR FATHER WILL BE **MOST** ANGRY.

PANEL TWO

It's Talia standing in some kind of action outfit and one of those patterned scarves favored by Arabs. She smiles slyly and holds the binoculars in her gloved hands with thugs behind her.

TALIA: ONE BENEFIT IS THAT **OAF** IS FINALLY DEAD.

RA'S THUG 3: BUT YOUR FATHER'S **SANCTUM**.

TALIA: HE WILL BE **DISPLEASED** AT THAT, I FEAR.

PANEL THREE

Her smile is more pronounced as she raises the binoculars to her eyes.

TALIA: HIS DISPLEASURE WILL TAKE AN **UGLY** FORM I AM SURE.

TALIA: OR PERHAPS **NOT**.

PANEL FOUR

Closer shot than before of Dinah walking toward her motorcycle concealed in the shadows of a rocky ledge with a tarp covering it. We see this through binoculars.

TAILLESS BALLOON: I MAY HAVE FOUND SOMETHING TO **LEAVEN** HIS DISAPPOINTMENT.

THE END

