

DARK KNIGHT: TRIAD

by
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FADE IN

INT. DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM - EVENING

The decor is late 1970's contemporary with faux wood paneling. The orange and brown upholstered furniture looks uncomfortable at best.

Beside a tacky gold wall clock is a poorly painted picture of a jester. It's dressed in a red and white one-piece motley with black diamond appliqués.

Alone on the couch sits BRUCE WAYNE (28). He's well groomed and dressed in a tailored dark blue double-breasted suit. Not a hair is out of place.

On the other side of the admission counter sits the receptionist, CAROL (25). Only the top of her auburn beehive hair-do rises above the counter as she types away.

The beehive's silhouette is oddly similar in shape and color to the bubbling orange lava lamp on the counter.

The drone of the typewriter competes with a Muzak version of THE GIRL FROM IPANEMA.

Wayne seems impatient and drums his fingers on the armrest. His manicured nails are an odd juxtaposition to his bruised and scabbed knuckles.

He looks to the clock and then to his watch. It's almost six-o'clock. His eyes roll and he lets out a great SIGH.

Moments later, the receptionist's phone BUZZES and the typing stops.

CAROL (O.S.)

Yes, Doctor? Yes. Yes, he's still here. Of course.

She hangs up and calls over the counter.

CAROL (O.S.)

Mister Wayne, Doctor Quinzel will see you now. Just go on in.

When Wayne stands, a grimace spreads across his square-jawed face as he stretches his lower back. He's broad shouldered and barrel chested. One big dude.

He knocks on a door with an engraved nameplate for HARLEEN F. QUINZEL PHD.

QUINZEL (O.S.)

Come in, Mister Wayne.

Wayne enters.

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

DOCTOR QUINZEL (25) rises from behind an old metal desk.

Her blonde hair is unkept, her tortoise shell glasses are askew, and her white doctor coat is too large. Still, she's very pretty.

On the wall behind her desk hangs another poorly painted picture of a jester.

QUINZEL

Mister Wayne. So nice to me'cha.

She has a hard Gotham City accent that is very similar to someone from the Bronx. And she's chewing gum.

WAYNE

Doctor Quinzel, please, the pleasure is mine.

He shakes her hand and holds it for a moment before he lets go. Just long enough to make her blush.

QUINZEL

Oh, Mister Wayne. Aren't you the charmer.

WAYNE

Please, call me Bruce.

QUINZEL

Bruce, then. Have a seat.

He has a choice of chaise lounge, love seat or couch. He chooses the love seat and immediately starts to fidget.

Quinzel sits on the couch with a pad and pencil in hand. She crosses her legs. Her skirt is way too short.

QUINZEL

Bruce, relax.

WAYNE

Right, sorry.

Wayne shifts from fidgeting to being seated upright and rigid with arms planted firmly on the armrests and shoes flat on the floor.

QUINZEL

So... Just so you know, this is not what I do.

WAYNE

Excuse me?

QUINZEL

I don't normally see, ah, your kind. You know, private patients.

WAYNE

Yes, I know. You prefer the criminally insane at the Arkham Asylum.

She wags her finger at Wayne.

QUINZEL

Correction, Mister Wayne: Inmates or Patients. And they're not insane unless I diagnose them as such.

WAYNE

Duly noted.

QUINZEL

Yes, well, I figured with your recent generous donation and all, I could make an exception.

WAYNE

And I thank you for that.

QUINZEL

I need to ask, though... there are plenty of other Psychologists out there... Why me?

WAYNE

I've heard a lot of good things about you lately. They say that you've had some breakthroughs with, dare I say, a couple of the harder nuts to crack.

Wayne's play on words is not funny to Quinzel. She is offended at the remark and responds with a cold scowl.

Wayne realizes his faux pas.

WAYNE

My apologies, the more... severe... patients. I've heard that you've taken a keen interest in a new inmate. The one they call Joker.

Just hearing the name JOKER gives her a start.

QUINZEL

I prefer not to support a patient's moniker or pseudonym. I address him as Mister J. And, yes, I find him quite fascinating. Our sessions have, well, chemistry. We're making real progress. I think I may get lucky with Mister J.

QUINZEL gets a brief faraway look in her eyes before getting grounded once again. She leans forward in her chair.

QUINZEL

Enough about me, Mister Wayne. Why are you here?

WAYNE

I've recently returned after many years of studying abroad and I'm... struggling.

QUINZEL

Struggling?

Wayne is not yet ready to start his session, changes the subject, and pries for more information.

WAYNE

Let's take Jo--, sorry, Mister J for example. Can a sociopath know that they're a sociopath?

QUINZEL

You're struggling with whether or not a sociopath can be self-aware?

WAYNE

No. That's a question...a curiosity I have.

QUINZEL

That's a very interesting question. Let me see how to best answer that.

Quinzel sits back and ponders Wayne's curiosity.

QUINZEL

Let's first clarify the qualities of a sociopath. Their symptoms include: a lack of a conscience or sense of guilt, lack of empathy, egocentricity, pathological lying, repeated violations of social norms, disregards for the law,

(MORE)

QUINZEL (cont'd)
shallow emotions, and a history of
victimizing others.

WAYNE
That sounds like our man.

QUINZEL
Yes, well, it's also what they do
with those traits, Mister Wayne.

Quinzel's eyes narrow and seem to study Wayne before she
continues with her reply.

QUINZEL
A sociopath may not necessarily
define themself as one, but they
can know that they're different.
And when they do, they compensate
for it by trying to act how they
perceive as normal. This act will
usually come off over the top and
suspicious.

WAYNE
I see.

QUINZEL
The trick is to have them expose
those traits.

Quinzel leans forward again.

QUINZEL
And then there's the Dark Triad.

WAYNE
Dark Triad? I've not heard that
term before.

Quinzel smiles.

QUINZEL
The Dark Triad is reserved for the
worst of the worse. The real bad
man.

WAYNE
The bad man.

QUINZEL
It's an overlapping combination of
three traits: Narcissism;
Machiavellianism; and Psychopathy.

WAYNE

Narcissist. Grandiosity, pride and egotism. Check.

She scribbles some notes as she talks.

QUINZEL

Yes. Definitely has an air about him. Very well dressed and poised.

WAYNE

Albeit with an odd sense of style and color blocking.

She looks up from her pad.

QUINZEL

You must be referring to Mister J, yes?

Wayne looks puzzled and Quinzel snickers.

QUINZEL

Just checking.

She POPS her gum that makes Wayne involuntarily blink.

WAYNE

Machiavellianism. What exactly is that?

QUINZEL

It's characterized by manipulation and exploitation of others. It's abuse of power and a focus on self-interest and deception.

Wayne scratches his square chin and ponders.

WAYNE

I see. Yes. Definitely.

QUINZEL

Definitely.

WAYNE

And, of course, the psychopathy is a no-brainer.

Quinzel's eyes are now narrow with scrutiny.

QUINZEL

On that, the jury's still out.

WAYNE

I'm sure you'll make that call soon enough.

QUINZEL

Surely.

Wayne is deep in thought. Quinzel shifts gears.

QUINZEL

So. What is it that you're really struggling with?

He hesitates before he answers.

WAYNE

Justice.

QUINZEL

Justice? Go on...

Wayne shows a subtle sign of fidgeting again but catches himself. He resumes his rigid stature once again.

WAYNE

My parents were killed when I was a child. We ventured into an alley and...that's where they were murdered.

QUINZEL

And you feel guilty for their deaths.

His eyes widen ever so subtle. He shifts slightly in his seat and before he answers.

WAYNE

We're not discussing guilt.

Quinzel sits still and quiet until Wayne continues.

WAYNE

Responsible, yes. Angry, absolutely. But, guilty? No. That's not why I'm here.

Quinzel does not let it go.

QUINZEL

I see. You think you should feel guilt but don't. Why is that, Mister Wayne?

WAYNE

Should I feel guilt? Would... a normal person feel guilt?

QUINZEL

Normal is a relative term, Mister Wayne. You were a child. Was it your decision to walk through the alley?

WAYNE

It doesn't matter if it was my decision or not. I was the reason they were there. That's not the issue here. I want to talk about justice. I want justice!

QUINZEL

Isn't that what the court system is for? How do you think justice should be handled?

Wayne is agitated. His brow furrows as he leans forward.

WAYNE

With a heavy hand. I know they're guilty. Gotham Police know they're guilty. Gotham needs to step up. To clean up the streets. Lock them up and throw away the keys!

Quinzel scribbles furiously in her pad until she feels his stare. She looks over the top of her pad and her gum pops.

QUINZEL

Bruce, the decision is yours. Are you to be the heir to Wayne Enterprise and well respected philanthropist of Gotham City? Or are you going to let this ruin your life? It sounds like you want to be the bad man?

WAYNE

Bad man?! No. I'm the good guy. It's about right and wrong. Balance. Black and white. Justice!

The phone on her desk BUZZES and snaps him out of his rant.

QUINZEL

Excuse me.

She gets up and answers the phone.

QUINZEL

Yes, Carol? Just another minute.
Okay, thanks.

She hangs up and turns to Wayne.

QUINZEL

I'm sorry, Mister Wayne, but I need to cut this short. My receptionist needs to leave and I must ask that we end our session for now.

WAYNE

Of course.

QUINZEL

I think this has been very enlightening and we're making progress.

Wayne stands and brushes out any creases in his suit. He seems to ignore her.

WAYNE

Shall I schedule another session on my way out?

QUINZEL

I think it would be best if you could call in the morning.

She opens the door to prompt his departure. They leave the office...

DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM

...and walk to the exit.

Wayne and takes her hand in his. The gesture does not quite have the same effect as his earlier greeting.

WAYNE

Well, Doctor. It was a pleasure chatting with you. I look forward to our next meeting.

Quinzel looks uncomfortable as he holds her hand way too long. Her smile is forced.

QUINZEL

Yes. Until next time.

As the door closes, Quinzel leans against it with her forehead on her arm.

QUINZEL

Carol?

CAROL (O.S.)

Yes, Doctor?

QUINZEL

If Mister Wayne calls to schedule another session, we're all booked up, okay? That man's bat-shit crazy.

CAROL (O.S.)

Yes, Doctor.

FADE OUT