

GROUP PARTY TERROR

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INT. FBI REGIONAL OFFICE-DAY

Barbara sits in a much-too-large office chair with her hands folded in her lap. She wears a cheap, yet professional, blouse along with a pencil skirt, and dress heels that would look better on a pilgrim. Her posture is rigid, her hair is pinned down with such grip that her scalp could bleed. She chews on her bottom lip. Opposite her, off-screen, is an FBI RECRUITER.

FBI RECRUITER

You're too short.

BARBARA

I'm sorry?

FBI RECRUITER

You don't meet our minimum height requirements.

BARBARA

Well, I understand that. I also need a law degree but I--

The recruiter flips through a file of school transcripts. It's thick.

FBI RECRUITER

--Apparently that's the only one you don't have.

BARBARA

I love to learn.

(Nervous Chuckle)

Plus I have a good memory.

FBI RECRUITER rifles through papers.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

--I did take pre-law.

FBI RECRUITER

I see that, and I see that your studies have centered around information gathering. That's essential to being an agent but that's not the problem Mrs., Gordon? As in James Gordon?

BARBARA

No. Gordon as in Barbara, Gordon.

FBI RECRUITER

Why the FBI?

BARBARA

My father won't let me on the force, look I qualify for training in a few years. This is what I want to do. I'm good at it.

FBI RECRUITER

Ms. Gordon. If you wanted to work in research, I would keep my eye out for you in the future but you want to be a field agent. Your skills and education cannot help you. You do not meet the minimum height requirement. You could do some brilliant work in a chair behind a computer screen, but it seems that for you, that's not enough. So, unfortunately, the answer is no. I'm sorry.

Barbara's right shoe falls off.

INT. POLICEMAN'S BALL-NIGHT

A trumpet SQUEALS a loud jazzy tune. High society is in full swing at the Annual masquerade-ball fundraiser. Women wear expensive custom made costumes. The men wear their finest suits.

The ballroom is flooded with shades of gray, deep blue, purple, maroon and scarlet. Tonight's theme is Fresh Blood. Guests dance and drink to the music from a full orchestra which includes a local college choir.

BARBARA, late teens, dressed in purple and black, walks by. She holds a tray of bite sized desserts. Her whole front and face is hidden. She reaches a WAITER, 20's, in a leather trench coat with slick blonde hair.

BARBARA

Hey have you seen the chief?

WAITER

I think he's near the band, probably trying to schmooze up to money bags over there.

The waiter turns to face figure.

WAITER (CONT'D)

Hey nice costume! He'll get a kick out of it. Or die of fright, he's getting old.

BARBARA

Well maybe a little scare will do  
him good.

WAITER

What, you two met?

She lifts the tray and walks off. We get a glimpse of her face as she heads towards the band.

BARBARA

(to herself)

Lets see if your buddies on the  
force get a kick out of this. You  
better not be drinking or I swear  
to Christ...

She nears the band and sees JAMES, 50's, thin, with gray hair. He talks to a MAN IN POMPOUS SUIT, tall, 40'S, with broad shoulders, slick back hair, and the most expensive suit you have ever seen. His date looks 10 years younger, with the body of a withered Greek statue.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Brown nosing?

(Beat)

Really?

James awkwardly grips a glass of champagne.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

When we get home I'm gonna kill you-

-

KABOOM! An explosion rips through the air. Chunks of concrete, broken tables, place settings, and chairs, zip through the air. The blast knocks guests to the ground. James, Man in pompous suit and his date, crash into the orchestra. The room fills with shrieks.

Calamity.

Guests trip, punch, and push each other aside. They flee the ballroom. Some reach doors. They bang and pull at them. Their feeble attempts are met with chains and cables that haphazardly clamp the doors shut.

A table top is pushed to the side. Barbara is covered in debris. She is dazed and holds her head, but has no serious injuries. Guests run past. Her ears ring.

Barbara squints through clouds of dust to get her bearing's. It clears in time to see several thugs march through the fresh, jagged hole in the concrete. A man leads the group.

MAN WITH FLAMETHROWER enters. He is much taller than Barbara. He wears brown and gray attire, it resembles a cross between biker armor and a fireman's suit. His average height is topped by a metal welding helmet. He carries a tank on his back. A homemade flame thrower in his arms.

MAN WITH FLAMETHROWER  
Um, ok, everybody stop moving!

No affect. He hoists up the barrel of the flamethrower and lets loose a ferocious stream of hellfire. Guests stumble to a stop. They cower and whimper.

MAN WITH FLAMETHROWER (CONT'D)  
Alright! You've been through this  
enough times, you know the drill.  
My boys here are gonna walk around  
with bags. Hand over your shit.  
Now!

Barbara looks around and scrambles behind a bar. She is met with a WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT, 20's, African American, tall, with long curly hair. The Woman in Black Bodysuit cries and breathes heavy. She holds her side.

The girls sit in puddles of liquor, olives, and shredded napkins. Thugs bark orders into the crowd.

Three SHOTS. The room screams.

Two more SHOTS whizz over the bar. The girls flinch, cover their heads, and slip on the debris. More Screams. Barbara slips on her broken heel.

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT  
God--

BARBARA  
Hey are you hurt?

Two SHOTS. Glass and vodka rain over the girls. They cover their heads.

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT  
Wha-what? I...oh. Oh God, what's happening?

BARBARA  
I said, are you hurt?

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT  
I...I think so. I was tending bar,  
I think I fell or something. It  
happened so fast.

Woman in black bodysuit removes her hand from her side. A large shard of glass sticks out from her ribs. It bleeds. She panics. Her breath quickens, fast and shallow. Barbara grabs the girl's chin. They lock eyes.

BARBARA  
Ok uh...ok, just breathe. Breathe  
ok! Look at me.

Woman in Black's eyes widen.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Look at me! Breathe like this, like  
me.

They mimic each other and breathe slow.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Ok? Alright. That's it. Slow  
breaths.

Barbara looks around. She grabs a bar rag.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Alright, look. It's not as bad as  
you think, ok? We should probably  
just leave the glass in?

More SHOTS.

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT  
Oh God!

BARBARA  
Hey! Eyes on me!

Barbara gently places the rag on and around the wound.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Uh, ok. I think we should leave the  
glass in for now, right? Ok, put  
pressure here. Got it? Ok? It...it  
shouldn't bleed to bad if you keep  
the pressure. Keep breathing slow.

Barbara tends to her wounds. She spots a whip and a cat-eared headband on the floor next to woman in black bodysuit. The woman tries to muffle her sobs.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
So, Catwoman?

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT  
What?

BARBARA

You dressed as Catwoman. For the policeman's ball.

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT

I thought it would be funny.

(points to Barbara's  
chest)

Looks like we both have a weird  
sense of humor.

One SHOT. Screams. Waiter clamors behind the bar and startles them.

WAITER

(Looks at blood)

Oh Jesus! You guys OK?

BARBARA

Here, put pressure on this. I think  
we should keep her calm.

Barbara risks a PEEK over the bar and reveals the brightest eyes you have ever seen. Several people have been shot, most of them cops. Eyes locked on the room, she smacks the Waiter.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Can we get out of here? What's  
going on?

WAITER

That crazy guy has a flamethrower.  
He's getting everybody's stuff.  
They shot a few people, mostly  
cops. Dunno if they're OK.

Barbara returns to cover. She takes a deep breath. Her eyes snap shut. The noise in the room dims around her. She raises her palms in front of her face. Her right index finger twitches from left to right.

WAITER (CONT'D)

What are you doing--

BARBARA

Shut up.

After a moment, she opens them again. The noisy room rushes back.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

(To herself)

Seven guys. Two, between me and the  
leader. OK.

Another peek. Barbara struggles to see through the crowds of people. She spots Man with Flamethrower. He yells at someone near the orchestra. Man in Pompous Suit stands up. James steps forward, slow, with his hands up. He talks to Man with Flamethrower.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
(to herself)  
Dad.

She turns back to the group, gets closer, and slips on her broken heel once more. She begins to unlace her boot.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Where's a way out of here?

WAITER  
I dunno. Doors are blocked.

Barbara looks at her laces. They are smeared with blood. She looks at her hands. Small cuts cover them. There is blood on the glass around her.

BARBARA GORDON  
Dammit.

She grabs her other heel and breaks it off.

WAITER  
You ok? Lemme get a--

JAMES (O.S.)  
Stand down! Stand down! Look, kid,  
take me ok? It's better if you take  
me. Safer for you.

OFFICER 1 (O.S.)  
I don't like this chief!

JAMES  
I said stand down goddammit! Put  
your gun down! Now!

Barbara risks another peek. An officer has Man with Flamethrower in his sights. He lowers his gun. Barbara turns back to the group. She reaches across woman in black bodysuit's lap, pushes the cat-eared headband aside, and picks up the whip.

BARBARA  
Hey is this leather?

WOMAN IN BLACK BODYSUIT  
Huh wha--

BARBARA takes off without another word. She stumbles, whip in hand. She runs through the crowd of people and pushes guests out of her way.

BARBARA  
Excuse me! Sorry. Watch it...watch  
out, excuse me!

Barbara sprints through the crowd. She passes one man with a gun, grabs a second man, and knocks him into the first. They tumble to the ground. She bursts through the crowd just in time to see Man with flamethrower lift the barrel. He unleashes another stream of fire directly at James.

CRACK! The barrel is caught by the tail of a whip. Barbara yanks it towards her. Streams of fire singe guests. The flames reach Barbara.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Shit!

Barbara covers her face and lunges at Man with Flamethrower. She dives up directly through the fire and elegantly clears the cloud of flames finally revealing a short, young woman, with vibrant red hair. She throws her arms back and screams, as a front kick closes in on our face.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: BATGIRL