

"BATMAN - NO MAN'S LAND"

A Blokovision Production
A Tommy M. Production

Story - Steven Shanahan & Beast Boy
Screenplay - Steven Shanahan

With special thanks to;
Jonathan Markiewicz, Chas Blakenship & James Mclean

Characters -
Batman
Nightwing
Robin
The Joker
Jim Gordon
Harvey Bullock
Alfred Pennyworth
Leslie Thompkins, Several Police Officers, Several Thieves, Old woman. (Don't require new actors.)

A silhouette of something passing the screen, blocking the view of the logo.

A TOMMY M. PRODUCTION

The sound of falling rubble is heard.

The piece continues past, revealing the next opening credit introduction.

BLOCK-O-VISION

Establishing Shot - Gotham City, an Earthquake is ripping it apart. The road begins to rip in half, as the camera continues to shake. Cars are thrown off balance. Street lamps break and fall. People scream in panic, fleeing from the destruction and falling rubble. Utter chaos.

PRESENTS

A lone figure sits on the edge of a building back to frame, as two towers fall to the ground in the foreground. A third tower falls behind it. Smoke and rubble pours from them all. More things break. His shoulders slouch in despair, but the lone figure is never identified.

NO MAN'S LAND

A row of judges look down on a man with his back turned, stood in isle while they're perched above all on their "thrones." They squabble amongst themselves, but the audience can't hear what. They all start nodding to each other.

STEVEN SHANAHAN

Close up of Bruce Wayne, listening to their squabbles. His face slowly twists into a grimace; they're decision obviously not being good news.

ERIC SMIGIEL

"Gotham City Limits" ("No Trespassing" has been stamped across it)

NIKI NOTARILE

"You are now leaving the United States"

TIM J. FORBES

"By Federal Authority This Area Has Been Declared OFF LIMITS"

TOMMY M.

The final sign reads: "Welcome to Gotham City" but has been vandalised with red paint to instead read: "HellcomeS to Gotham City"

FADE IN:

EXT. GCPD ROOFTOP

To the night sky, illuminated by the bat-signal. (Not the regular Bat-signal, but a "home-made" one, in light of the quake. It's a simple sky-light with a metal twisted bat over it.) The camera pans diagonally along the light's beam. We stop panning at the light's source, on the G.C.P.D building. Commissioner James Gordon stands next to the signal, his head gazing skyward. Jim Gordon checks his watch, with a thoughtful moan.

Three other police officers stand behind the signal. Their discussion can be heard as they approach the frame Jim Gordon is in.

COP;

"So, uhh.. whatcha think the government's got in mind for us?"

A DIFFERENT COP turns;

"They ain't got no plan. This was the cheapest solution. Shut it down, cut it off. No federal aid, no state aid, no disaster relief. Save tax dollars."

ANOTHER COP;

"I reckon it was a ploy by the insurance companies to not have'ta pay any claims after the quake."

COP;

"Maybe they'll bulldoze it. Make a parking lot."

A heavy voice is heard (O.S.)

HARVEY BULLOCK;

"Whatcha' doing up here?"

Bullock climbs on the rooftop.

JIM GORDON;

"Waiting."

HARVEY BULLOCK;

"Sorry Comish' buses don't run on rooftops, only freaks stop here."

BEAT

HARVEY BULLOCK;

"He aint' coming, yer wasting police resources. God knows, we can't afford to uhh.. over-indulge on these kinda, toy things anymore." ("Toy things" summarises Bullocks entire view on superheroes. They're for kids.)

Jim Gordon continues staring skyward, ignoring Bullock.

HARVEY BULLOCK;

"Jim, if he were here, he wudda' shown himself months ago. I figure, he's eithah' abaddoned the sinkin' ship ...or he's.. (trails off.) Well, he's gone. He's gone."

Bullock pats Gordon on the shoulder, then returns to the other officers.

Jim Gordon hangs his head. All is quiet. Gordon tilts his head skyward. His lips don't move, showing this is a voice-over not him actual character dialogue.

JIM GORDON; (voice-over):

"Gotham is dead. The world has gotten smaller. Simpler. The only possessions that matter anymore, are the one's that stop hunger. People trade guns for orange peel. It makes my job a little easier. It's still the hardest thing I've ever had to do. (Emphasis) Without him. Coward. The GCPD has a few supplies stockpiled. They won't last. We won't last. I thought about leaving with everyone else. With my daughter. A sense of duty I can't shake. I hate myself for it. I don't know how to do anything else. The people.. Why do they stay? Some had little choice; the poor, the destitute, the immigrants, the criminals. Some saw it as an adventure. An opportunity. Others have their own take on reality. [Alien signs.] Feudalism is alive, feed by Jeremiah Arkham's decision to release all the inmates in the asylum before fleeing town. The neighbourhood's are controlled by gangs. Tagging. Hell, even we do it now. All animals mark their territory. Gotham needs a saviour."

(All during the voice-over) Angled Bird's Eye View. The big reveal of the city, half destroyed, a large fire still raging in a corner. Quick cuts of between the stuff below and shots of the destroyed city. Kids fighting with knives, over a sandwiched lying on the ground. Someone trading an expensive watch for an apple. A priest walking to the gates holding a box with a "+" on it. An army major barks orders at him and turns him away. Shots of The Joker, Poison Ivy, Mr. Freeze, and Scarecrow are also combined with the montage. Alfred, at a destroyed Wayne Manor, looks at a newspaper headline beside a picture of Bruce Wayne. "Billionaire fails to change Congress' mind in Washington." (No spoken dialogue should be needed.)

JIM GORDON;

"Gotham needs her Hero."

When Gordon finishes, a distant voice is heard.

THE JOKER;

"Oh, Jim! I do LOVE the way you refer to Gotham as a she! So.. vintage of you. Makes sense though, you being alive since Stalin 'n all. God, I did love that man. Then again, I'm quite fond of jackets with straps and rooms with padding, so what the hell do I know?

Everyone turns their heads toward the bat-signal - only to find

The Joker standing on it. He's in his usual purple suit getup, but also wearing a cap with "Bat ears" attached. The cops whip out their guns.

COP;
"Freeze! Uhh, put your hands in th--"

THE JOKER; (taunting with a grin)
"--Can you afford the bullets? Oh, do pardon me, I happened to overhear tubby earlier."

The cops look around at one another confused, lowering their guns slightly, unsure of what to do.

JIM GORDON; (says coolly)
"What do you want, Joker?"

THE JOKER;
"It's not what I want... it's what you need! A new Batman!"

Jim Gordon turns away from the peculiar visitors, as The Joker indicates the "Bat-suit" on his head.

THE JOKER;
"Oh c'mon, Jimbo! As you quite rightfully stated: Gotham needs her hero! And here I am! Ready to make my list of naughty and nice, then give them all a good spanking! (Indicating Bullock) Especially you, handsome. I'm a vampire, and I need my fix for the evening. Help me, help you!"

The Joker prances in front of Jim whilst talking. Jim ignores him.

THE JOKER;
"Awww.. Jimbo, what gives? If you don't want me as your Dark Night... then find the real BAT!"

The Joker strides to the edge of the building.

THE JOKER; (deeply saddened - the only time he's not in absolute hysterics)
"It just.. doesn't make sense without him.."

THE JOKER; (Reverted back)
"Oh and.. Jimmy? Seeing as your wallets so tight these days, I figured I'd help out a little. Consider this pay cut my thank you card for all the years of fun."

The Joker spins around, and aims his gun at one of the officers. His face shrivels up, he wants to laugh so much he's almost crying. The cop buckles, in fear.

JIM GORDON;
"Joker, NO!"

The Joker pulls the trigger, revealing a "BANG" flag. The cop relaxes, realising Joker isn't going to shoot him. Joker lowers the gun with a giggle.

THE JOKER;
"Relax Jimbo, I was kidding."

Gordon mutters, putting his gun away. Suddenly, the cop is gunned down by a sniper shot from another building. One of The Joker's men.

THE JOKER;

"--Well obviously, I mean --he wasn't kidding-- but I, you get the point."

Joker finally loses it and laughs manically. Gordon redraws his gun, in a fit of rage aiming it at the Joker.

The Joker; wiping his brow impatiently:

"Oh c'mon now, you know how our little game works. "You shoot me, he shoots you. The others. Your wife, your daughter--well what's left of her anyway--anyone you've ever met, etc etc" I really didn't think I needed to explain this--you must be getting old.. in your age. Well anyway, love to stay and kill, but I have a City to decorate red. Ta-tar!"

Joker turns, tossing 2 cents over his shoulder for Gordon's trouble, and as the ultimate tease he can afford to shoot whereas the GCPD can't. He walks out, disappearing into the darkness. His sick laughter builds as he gets further and further away.

Jim Gordon rushes over to see to his fallen comrade. He checks his pulse, realising he's dead. He looks across at the Bat-signal with a scowl. He throws his gun at the signal, smashing the light.

A shot of the dying Bat signal as we fade to black.

FADE IN: Gotham Sewer system.

INT. GOTHAM SEWERS

A large pipeline is threw directly at the camera. Nightwing flips around the small condensed Sewer system while Robin kicks Killer Croc in the back. Croc grunts and growls, brawling with the two heroes. They fight however, until Nightwing and Robin defeat him.

ROBIN;

"Look out! Walking cliques!"

Several stereotypical dim witted thugs try to get the drop on Nightwing. Nightwing spins around, hitting one in the face. He walks towards the other two.

NIGHTWING;

"Walk away."

The two men suddenly gain a strain of courage when it's only Batman's "side-kick" they have to deal with, and not Batman himself.

THUG 1;

"Why, what you gonna do?"

THUG 2;

"Yeah, you ain't The Bat!"

Nightwing knocks one down.

NIGHTWING;

"No. I'm much worse."

He knocks the other clean off their feet, cleaning house.

BEAT

NIGHTWING;
"That wasn't a cool line was it?"

More goons arrive, for Nightwing & Robin to fight.

ROBIN;
"I think Batman has better puns."

NIGHTWING;
"Hey c'mon now, be reasonable."

ROBIN;
"Speaking of which, what's happened to tall, dark and brooding?
(Aside)--That one was good.--"

NIGHTWING;
"I'm not sure, neither is Alfred. Maybe he flew the coop--"

ROBIN;
"-Not remotely witty. What do you wanna do about these guys?"

Robin swings the last punch, knocking the last Thug out cold.

NIGHTWING;
"I don't know, not like we can drop them off at Police
Headquarters anymore. Um, well like, we could just y'know.. leave
them tied up here? I'm sure this fairly serve beating will keep
them off the streets. For a while, at least."

BEAT

ROBIN; (Shrugging)
"Works for me."

Nightwing and Robin walk down the tunnel, walking down the long
alley away from shot, you can just hear them talking to each
other.

NIGHTWING;
"So, where do your Superhero lines come from?"

ROBIN;
"Y'know, the book."

NIGHTWING;
"Wait, what? There's a book? Why wasn't I told about the book?
Did Batman give you the book? Oh for the love of, this is so
typical of him--"

ROBIN;
"I was kidding."

NIGHTWING;
"There's no book?"

ROBIN;
"There's no book."

CUT TO:

EXT - THE THOMAS WAYNE MEMORIAL CLINIC/LESLIE THOMPSON'S CLINIC

Alfred Pennyworth and Leslie Thompson stand behind a desk,
handing out relief aid packages to a crowd of people. Alfred and

Leslie exchange looks.

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"They're running out."

BEAT

ALFRED PENNYWORTH
"We'll make do."

Alfred continues to hand out packages. A gang of men walk push past the cue (3-4 of them) all holding burning matches, and knives. Two at the back carry a barrel. Alfred goes to hand a package to an old woman beside them, but his hand is stopped by Thief 2.

THIEF 2;
"Listen old man, we're just here for that there relief whatsyamacallit. Penguin is offerin' a lot for it, you know how it is."

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"But.. but.. you can't. This is the relief aid.. for the people who need it."

THIEF 2;
"Maybe we's the one's that needs it. You think of that, Grandpa?"

THIEF 1;
"Yeah, uhh, just like, do what we say, and like, no one gets hurt. Cool?"

They both threaten him with their knives. Alfred buckles, not wanting anyone to get hurt. He hands them the package in his hand.

THIEF 2;
"Johnny, search the hospital thing. See if they've got anymore stashed someplace. Pack the truck."

The thieves with him (apart from Johnny, who has already headed inside) begin lifting the packages from the desk, and tossing them into the barrel they carried with them. All the thieves throw their heads around, hearing an ear-aching scream.

THIEF 1;
"Ohmigod! What was that?!"

THIEF 2;
"I dunno, Johnny probably stubbed his toe or somethin' dumb. Y'know Johnny."

THIEF 1;
"Man.. what.. what if it was.. was y'know.. 'Him'."

THIEF 2;
"Shutup man, he's gone. You don't know nothin' 'bout what you're talkin' 'bout."

THIEF 1;
"What about Jimmy Figgs? He said he saw 'im."

THIEF 2;
"Figgs would say anythin' to get somes' attention."

THIEF 1;
"Whatever, you were thinkin' it too."

Johnny is thrown out the window, smashing through the wooden planks holding it shut. He lands on the gravel, in front of all the other men. They all jump and scream, as a smoking bomb is tossed out the open window behind him. It hits the ground, and hisses releasing massive amounts of smoke. Batman follows him out the open window, in silhouette against the smoke. Johnny goes to crawl away. Batman steps onto his back, pinning him to the ground. He cries out in fear, as Batman walks over him.

A different thug runs towards frame fleeing. A set of bat-bolas wraps around his ankles, dropping him to the ground.

Thief 2 tries to sneak up on Batman, who raises his fist over his shoulder, back-punching him in the nose. He tumbles out of frame.

Batman ducks the swipe of another thug, and blocks his hand as he tries a second swipe. Batman yanks down on his arm, pulling the Thug's gut into his thigh kicking him. As the thug keels over, Batman punches down across his jaw flooring him. Teeth and blood fly free of his mouth as he goes down from the knockout blow.

Batman fans his cape aside, scanning for the remaining Thugs. His eyes narrow as he glares down the street, seeing 3 Thugs fleeing down it.

Thief 2 is the only one still uninjured, trying to crawl away. Batman saved him for last. Batman drags him up, lifting him off his feet. He holds him dangling in front of him.

BATMAN;
"CHANGE YOUR LIFE!"

Batman pulls him forward, head butting him out cold. He drops him down by the floor, then walks over to the barrel. He pours the relief aid back onto the desk, where it originally lay. Thief 2 scurries away in the background, crying with fear.

BATMAN; handing the old woman a ration out of the open trunk.
"Here."

OLD WOMAN, taking it;
"Tha-Thank you."

BATMAN;
"Keep in-doors for as long as you can. Only leave the house when absolutely necessary."

OLD WOMAN;
"Will.. will we see you again? Or.. or.. are you leaving again? With the others? I mean.. we weren't sure.."

BATMAN smiles slightly;
"I'll be around."

She nods politely, then hurries away. Alfred takes Batman aside, to talk in private.

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"Where have you been, sir?"

BATMAN;

"I had some things to work out."

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"And.. are they? 'Worked out,' sir?"

BATMAN;
"Yes Alfred, thank you."

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"And so.. what now?"

Batman;
"We move on Scarface soon. He has an iron grip on Newtown. Prostitution and Drug racketeering are at an all-time high, seems people need to be.. 'happy' right now. They mostly originate from him. Makes sense, to strike their first, cripple the market."

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"Very good, Master Bruce."

A pause. Batman glances around, then notices the graffiti tagging on the walls indicating which gang owns each area of the City.

BATMAN, indicating the tagging;
"What's that?"

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"Oh, the graffiti? The gangs do it, helps them to.. if I put this correctly 'keep off their turf,' or 'out of each other's hoods.' I'm not quite sure of which. Do they mean the same thing?"

BATMAN;
"Hm."

A police siren. Batman gives a quick salute to Alfred, then fires his grapple hook to an opposing building. He swings away. Jim Gordon approaches, with a few GCPD officers with him as back-up.

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"Commissioner, what are you doing here?"

JIM GORDON;
"We thought your little charity store here might attract a little.. 'attention.' Bullock was across the street the whole time, gave me a call when it started to go down. Got here as quick as I could. Where are the thieves?"

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"Changing their undergarments, I'd assume."

Gordon is puzzled by the strange statement. Bullock approaches Gordon.

HARVEY BULLOCK;
"Your buddy was here. He.. well, he ain't gone."

Gordon looks across to Alfred, who nods confirming the return of Batman.

HARVEY BULLOCK;
"He was talkin' to this guy. What was that about, anyway?"

ALFRED PENNYWORTH;
"We share a tailor. Clearly, I've misplaced my cape."

Bullock smiles with slight irritation, as Alfred stands smugly. Gordon rubs the brim of his nose.

JIM GORDON; (Voice-over during the next shot)
"Gotham needs her hero.."

FADE OUT

FADE IN TO - EXT. THE WAYNE'S GRAVE

Subtitle - Earlier

Batman knelt before his parent's grave, mask dropped. His hand reaches up, tracing the "WAYNE" engraving.

BRUCE WAYNE;
"Tell me what to do. My..-Your City.. is in.. ruins.. I couldn't stop it.. I couldn't.. save them.. I couldn't save.. you.. I'm sorry."

The big reveal of the Wayne's grave. The tombstone is cracked down the centre, a tree lodged in the break. Large boulders of destroyed buildings line the grass.

BRUCE WAYNE Cont;
"Tell me what to do !"

Bruce clenches a fist, in a fit of rage. He drags the mask off himself, throwing it to the ground. He spits at it, ashamed of Batman and himself. He slams his palm into the tombstone furiously.

BRUCE WAYNE Cont;
"Tell me what to do Father !"

A bolt of lightening, seemingly from nowhere, strikes down at the tree, setting it alight. The flames roar as Bruce pounds his hand into the headstone. Vines begin to snap. The tree cracks in two, the top half falling out of headstone, landing down beside Bruce, tears running down his face. The grass around him catches fire. The flames circle him, and the Batman mask lying on the ground beside him. The flames rage around him and the mask, growing larger. Bruce looks down at the mask, and then back to the gravestone, twice. Bruce stands instantly calmly, and looks to the sky, in silent understanding. Rain begins to pour, dousing the flames, and soaking Bruce. He leans down, and lifts the mask from the ground.

BRUCE WAYNE, whispering;
"Yes father.. I shall become a bat.."

Slow pan to one of the dying flames, dancing on the grass.

DISSOLVE INTO: INT - INSIDE THE THOMAS WAYNE MEMORIAL CLINIC

A flame, dancing on a lit match.

PAN OUT

A criminal walks petrified, a lit match in his hand. A sign reading "Thomas Wayne Memorial Clinic" is present in the background just lighted enough from the match to read.

The match is blown out, from something behind him.

THIEF 3 (JOHNNY);
"..Oh god.."

The criminal whimpers, and fumbles with the match. re-lighting it off the box.

BATMAN; (just as he's lighting it)
"Not even close."

It illuminates the symbol of a bat.

CUT TO: BLACK

An ear-aching scream is heard.

The credits roll on No Man's Land.