

# GRAYSON

written by  
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EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

A BUM hobbles through a dark alley.

He approaches a garbage can and rummages through it as a church bell marks the hour.

*BANG* - a gunshot rings out.

The rain makes it difficult to see. There's no one in any direction. Until...

A SHADOW overtakes him. The bum looks up to see a FIGURE falling toward him.

CUT TO:

Water pours from a sink faucet. We are in...

INT. JIM GORDON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

JIM GORDON (76) stands at his kitchen sink and cleans up after dinner. His hair is white, his glasses thick - a shell of the man he once was. To his surprise...

The RED GLOW OF A ROTARY PHONE illuminates from the study.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Gordon arrives in a modest sedan, a red light clamped to the roof of his car.

COP #1

Commissioner Gordon, right this way.

Gordon pulls the collar up on his raincoat and makes his way into the alley. Cops swarm the area, when--

*POOF* - blue smoke rises from a group of officers and sends them to their knees, coughing.

O'HARA

Get back!

Hollering over the scene is CLANCY O'HARA (59), the Chief of Police. He's an imposing man wearing dress blues and thin glasses.

Gordon pushes closer, covering his mouth from the fumes. The smoke clears to reveal...

BATMAN lying in a pool of blood.

GORDON

*My god.*

CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHERS do their job, snapping dozens of photos. We only catch glimpses of Batman's body, his costume - navy against gray, with a metallic, mustard-colored belt.

GORDON

Time of death?

O'HARA

Who says he's dead...

A CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR tries to collect a GREEN HAIR from Batman's fist when--

ZAP! He receives an electrical shock.

O'HARA

We can't get close enough to find out.

Gordon removes his badge. Tucked into the leather backing is a COIN embossed with the BAT SYMBOL. In kneeling closer, a magnetic force pulls the coin from Gordon's fingers and into a slot on Batman's belt.

The buckle unlatches - his defenses disarmed.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A COMMUNICATOR glows red. It's sewn into the belt of an iconic hero who needs no introduction. Despite the silver that graces his hair, SUPERMAN, aka CLARK KENT (55), is still an awesome site to behold. With childlike ease, he wrestles a tank to its side, his costume awash in sand and oil.

Amid the chaos of exploding missiles and burning corpses, he switches off the comm and launches skyward.

BACK TO:

EXT. ALLEY - SAME

A cop taps Batman with his billy club.

COP #1  
He's good. All clear.

One of the cops reaches for his cowl.

COP #2  
Let's get a look...

GORDON  
Get back!

Gordon draws his gun. He doesn't point it at anyone in particular, but the message is clear.

O'HARA  
Jim-

GORDON  
I SAID GET BACK!

The surrounding cops do as he says.

A wave of emotion washes over Gordon as he searches Batman for a pulse.

GORDON

*Come on... come on...*

SUPERMAN descends into the alley. Gordon looks up at him with a sadness in his eyes.

CUT TO:

An elaborate building constructed of white marble and blue glass sits at the heart of a bustling city. This is...

EXT. THE HALL OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

A soothing fountain trickles out front. All is peaceful, until a COMPUTER CONSOLE comes flying out the window.

MAN (O.S.)

Nice try, hot pants...

INSIDE THE BUILDING

A MAN dressed in a crimson unitard snickers while admiring the damage. Seen here without his mask on, the slick blonde hair and shit-eating grin belong to BARRY ALLEN (41), or as he's more commonly known - THE FLASH.

FLASH

...but you still throw like a girl.

Fashioned in knee-high boots, gold bracelets and a patriotic bustier, DIANA PRINCE (49), aka WONDER WOMAN, isn't one to piss off. She grabs a decorative statue from the corner of the room and tears it from its base.

FLASH

Oh, now that's impressive.

Wonder Woman brings the statue down for a crushing blow--

The Flash dodges, his movements immeasurably fast. The statue hammers into the floor, shattering to pieces.

FLASH

Especially for someone your age.

She prowls after him, knocking over everything in her way.

WONDER WOMAN

*YOU'RE GONNA LEARN SOME RESPECT!*

FLASH

This coming from a grown woman in a bikini three sizes too small.

Seething, Wonder Woman rips a gigantic, iron globe from the wall and hurls it toward him. To her surprise...

It's intercepted by a spectral GREEN GORILLA.

This is the work of HAL JORDAN (58), aka the GREEN LANTERN. He's decked in a black and green body suit and armed with an emerald RING, the source of his power.

GREEN LANTERN

That's enough.

FLASH

Nice monkey.

The Flash zips across the room, stopping inches away from Green Lantern's face.

FLASH

You're pretty tough with that ring on your finger, aren't ya?

The gorilla leans closer, snarling, when...

The communicators on everyone's belts suddenly glow in unison.

FLASH

*Wonderful.*

The Flash switches off his comm and makes for the building's main computer - an enormous wall of new-wave technology.

Rising from a dark pool at the back of the room is ARTHUR CURRY (73), aka AQUAMAN, the king of the seas. Long, matted hair drapes down in front of his eyes, his beard unkempt. A jacket of sleek, bronze armor clings to his torso.

He shuts off his comm, adding...

AQUAMAN

This better be good.

The Flash switches on the computer, powering the building's external cameras. Silence fills the room as a flat-screen monitor gives view to--

Superman in mid-flight. He descends from the sky, holding Batman in his arms.

EXT. SUBURBS - MORNING

Gordon parks his car in front of a quaint, brick house. He takes a drink from a small flask before exiting his vehicle.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

BARBARA GRAYSON (37), an attractive redhead, readies herself for a meeting. She's all smiles and warmth.

BARBARA

Should I wear pearls or silver?

In the background, DICK GRAYSON (35) makes breakfast for their daughter, BETHANY (2). Dick's more average than he is handsome, with a thick beard, a receding hairline, and a heavy pair of glasses.

DICK

What do you think? Should Mommy wear pearls or silver?

BETHANY

Banana.

DICK

Well there's your answer.

Barbara pokes her head out from the bathroom.

BARBARA

Pearls? Or... silver?

DICK

Silver.

She plucks a breakfast sausage from the table and kisses him.

*DING-DONG.*

Barbara and Dick share a look.

BARBARA

Ha. See what happens when you ask nicely?

She strides toward the door.

DICK

So now every morning he's gonna hand deliver it?



BARBARA

Maybe he wants to apologize for leaving it at the end of the driveway, and in the bushes, and in the neighbor's yard...

She opens the door to see Gordon.

BARBARA

Dad! What a nice surprise.

She greets him with a hug - and then sees...

BARBARA

I swear...

(marches outside)

That kid's gonna turn me into the old lady on the block who complains about everything.

She marches into the neighbor's yard and bends down to get the newspaper, her back clearly causing her discomfort though she does her best to hide it.

BARBARA

You want some breakfast? Dick's making his famous pancakes.

Gordon doesn't respond.

BARBARA

What's wrong?

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

Dick slides a pancake onto a plate.

DICK

Syrup face?

BETHANY

Yes please.

Dick dots the pancake with syrup and looks toward the entryway to see Barbara with tear-filled eyes.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - DAY

Dick drives up to the building and squeals to a stop. He hops to the pavement and storms past a dozen police cars already parked out front.

Gordon arrives shortly after him.

GORDON

Dick, wait!

Dick enters the building behind one of the policemen.

INSIDE

O'Hara and a group of cops mill about. Dick brushes past them.

COP #1

This building's off limits-

Dick folds back the cop's wrist and sends him to the floor.

The other cops react, however Dick's not in the mood for games. He starts dishing out blows, sending five officers to their backs, before--

A blur of RED catches him in the jaw, knocking him off his feet.

FLASH

That had to hurt.

The cops cuff Dick as Gordon enters the room.

GORDON

Stop! All of you! Take those cuffs off him.

O'HARA

Now wait one minute. That man just-

GORDON

That man's my son-in-law!

O'HARA

Dick?

(to the cops)

Help him up.

The cops lift Dick to his feet, his lip now bleeding.

O'HARA

My apologies. We didn't recognize you. Not that it matters. You just assaulted six officers.

GORDON

And he got what he deserved. Now let's move on.

O'HARA

Very well. Though tensions are plenty high around here without your family getting in the way.

Gordon and O'Hara exchange a look.

GORDON

I appreciate your concern.

O'HARA

I would hope so.

The two men stand opposite one another, their eyes threatening, when...

Wonder Woman enters the room. She hands an autopsy report to Gordon.

WONDER WOMAN  
Gunshot wound to the chest.

The cops mumble in disbelief.

GORDON  
He's been shot before...

WONDER WOMAN  
This was point blank. Forty-four  
caliber.

O'HARA  
When can we see the body?

SUPERMAN (O.S.)  
Never.

Superman enters the room. Without his trademark smile he's an intimidating force, a living god dressed in primary colors.

SUPERMAN  
Batman is dead. No one sees the  
body. That was his request and we  
ALL will honor it.

CUT TO:

ROLL CREDITS OVER

A mason chisels stone. The onyx sculpture stands thirty feet tall - its features undefined.

INT. CITY HALL

Chief O'Hara storms down the hall with a throng of reporters in his wake, pictures flashing.

REPORTER

Is it true the Joker was at the  
crime scene?

O'HARA

We will find Batman's killer and  
bring him to justice. That is all.

CLARK KENT is among the reporters. He turns to see Dick watching from afar.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Rain comes down as a feeble old man, ALFRED PENNYWORTH (87), is helped out of a wheelchair. He joins a procession of mourners, all following a casket bearing the Bat Symbol.

The pallbearers include, on one side, Commissioner Gordon, Aquaman, and the Flash; on the other side are Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, and Superman.

As the funeral plays out, Dick and Barbara stand among a privileged group of five hundred policemen and politicians. Those less fortunate line the fence, their umbrellas entwined into an endless canopy that encircles the cemetery.

Among the crowd Dick spots a SEXY BRUNETTE. They lock eyes. Barbara spots her and leans closer, whispering...

BARBARA

*She's got no business here.*

The tension is suddenly interrupted by the SOUND OF A MAN SOBBING. It's Gordon, his emotions sending him to his knees.

Barbara goes to his side, leaving Dick in the crowd. His expression however doesn't blend with the sullen faces around him. There's an anger brewing...

And O'Hara notices. He watches in curiosity as Dick looks up at the GRAVESTONE towering over them.

It's an astounding monument, both beautiful and frightening. Lifting from its center are two massive wings, forming an ominous, black shape resembling neither man nor bat but something in between.

Along its base reads, "Whatever evils come this way, we will be here to stop them - Batman, Justice League of America."

Dick gazes at the monument, a fire in his eyes.

INT. GORDON'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

Friends gather to reminisce, O'Hara among them. At the opposite end of the room Dick sits by himself and polishes off a bottle of scotch.

GORDON

Whoa, slow down on that stuff while you still have the sense to.

DICK

You see the headlines?

Gordon exhales a sigh and sits next to him.

GORDON

I read them this morning.

DICK

You think he did it?

GORDON

I don't know what to think.

DICK

You don't know what to think?

Gordon leans closer, attempting to keep the conversation private.

GORDON

He escapes Arkham the same night  
and they find traces of his hair-

DICK

The Joker - getting the drop on  
Bruce? No way.

GORDON

Forty-four caliber... powerful  
round. An inch from his chest -  
even the strongest Kevlar can't  
compete with that.

DICK

You don't get it. The Joker was  
the exception to the rule. With  
him, we had a strike first policy.  
That means, no warning, no chance  
to surrender - nothing. Just--

(smacks his fist)

--attack from the shadows. Hell,  
nine times out of ten he wouldn't  
know what hit him until he was back  
in his cell.

GORDON

*Shhh...*

DICK

I don't care who hears me!

The room quiets to a hush.

GORDON

Dick, why don't we go for a walk-

Dick stands and stumbles into Gordon.

DICK

*I know there's more to this.*

He exits, slamming the door behind him.

BARBARA

Dick, honey...

Barbara hurries after him but he's already started the car and pulled away from the house.

BARBARA

Dick! Wait! You've had too much to drink!

O'HARA

It's alright. We'll get him before he hurts himself.

O'Hara motions for a few other cops to leave with him. They get in separate cars and follow after Dick.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAYNE MANOR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dick stands outside the gates of Wayne Manor and stares at the mansion.

Car headlights pass - and then come back around. A vehicle pulls up alongside Dick and O'Hara climbs out.

O'HARA

Pretty view. A bit much for my taste, but I guess a billionaire's gotta spend his money on something.



DICK

I guess.

Dick practically ignores him, never pulling his eyes away from the manor. O'Hara takes notice.

O'HARA

That's quite the stare.

Dick diverts his eyes, but it's too late...

O'HARA

Almost as though you were looking at more than just a fancy house.

DICK

Whatever you say.

Dick heads for the car, when--

O'Hara's skin goes flush, the hairs on the back of his neck prickling up as he comes to the stunning realization...

O'HARA

*It was you.*

They lock eyes.

O'HARA

I'll be damned. All these years...  
it seems so obvious now. This  
house on the hill, Bruce Wayne...  
*he's the Batman.* And you... you're  
the circus boy in the yellow cape.  
*By god...* it's hard to see with  
that beard of yours - but that's  
you, isn't it?

Dick grabs him by the collar and throws him against the gate.

DICK

*You tell a soul-*

O'HARA

I have no intention of telling anyone. Batman may be gone but he still has enemies.

DICK

*Enemies that hold grudges.*

O'HARA

Trust me when I say that I more than understand the danger involved, should either of your identities become public knowledge. I will tell no one. You have my word.

Dick lets him go. O'Hara glares at the manor, reeling from his discovery.

O'HARA

*The Dynamic Duo... my god. Tell me, the Boy Wonder disappeared what - ten years ago?*

DICK

Twelve.

O'HARA

Twelve, wow. And do you mind if I ask why?

DICK

Yes, I mind.

O'Hara shrugs it off and heads for his car.

O'HARA

Fair enough. Come on, I'll give you a ride home.

DICK

You think I can just go home? And what - watch some TV, call it a night? No. Now that you know who I am, you know I'll do whatever it takes to find his killer.

O'HARA

Whatever it takes, eh?

Dick holds his stare, his eyes unwavering.

O'HARA

*What a mess.* Very well. Stop by first thing Monday. We'll go from there.

DICK

Tonight.

O'Hara beams him with a look. *Tonight?*

DICK

The first twenty-four hours of a crime scene are the most critical. It's already been six days, that puts us behind.

O'HARA

You're gonna lecture me on crime scenes, are you? Let me tell you something - twelve years is a long time to be out of uniform. I don't want to sound ungrateful for your service, but nowadays you're a stay at home dad. So if you want to take part in this case and you want to be privy to classified information, then you're gonna do things my way. Understood?

Dick holds his gaze.

DICK  
Absolutely.

CUT TO:

An office door reads CHIEF O'HARA across the glass. Dick picks the lock. We are in...

INT. CITY HALL - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dick enters O'Hara's office. Upon opening the door, he discovers--

A HOODED THIEF rummaging through the files.

With cat-like agility the thief escapes out the window. Dick hurries to the ledge - it's a long way down, but he follows in pursuit.

ROOFTOPS

Dick's out of shape but he manages to stay in the chase, hopping from rooftops to fire escapes.

The thief makes an astounding leap between buildings, a display of acrobatics not found in most crooks.

DICK  
SELINA!

Dick gets the reaction he was expecting, causing the thief to stop in her tracks. However, her next move he's not prepared for.

The thief PUNCHES through a windowpane. She grabs a WOMAN on the other side of the glass and THROWS HER OUT THE WINDOW.

DICK  
NO!

Dick dives after her.

He makes an amazing grab and reaches for an electrical cable strung across the street.

*SNAP* - the cable gives way, swinging them headlong into a speeding taxi.

Dick absorbs most of the hit, shattering the windshield before rolling to the pavement. He lies without moving.

A series of images flash through his mind...

1) A wire snaps and three acrobats go falling. A seven-year old Dick Grayson grabs hold of the trapeze-platform and watches in horror as his parents fall to their death.

2) Bruce Wayne's hand comes down on Dick's shoulder. They stare at a pair of headstones marked Grayson.

3) Dick and Bruce share dinner. Without explanation, Bruce gets up from the table and leaves the room in a hurry. Dick turns to see Alfred closing the curtains, a glimpse of a signal in the night sky.

4) Dick triggers a hidden switch, causing a wall of bookshelves to rotate out of the way, revealing the BATCAVE. Alfred and Batman are there to greet him.

5) Dick trains for combat. Bruce teaches him everything: Jujitsu, forensic science...

6) Batman and Robin swing into action, waging battle against a team of gunmen wearing Joker masks. Superman, Flash, Wonder Woman, Aquaman and Green Lantern join the fight.

7) A purple motorcycle screeches to a stop. Red hair flows from beneath the mask. This is BATGIRL and Robin is wowed.

8) Alfred tailors the Robin vest while Dick, now much older, reads a newspaper about Batman's "child sidekick".

Disgruntled, he marches into a chamber filled with capes and cowls - this is the ARMORY. A pair of black grieves draw his attention.

9) A team of burglars fall under attack from a man dressed in a black body suit - it's NIGHTWING, Dick's new alias. He puts a stop to the crooks, all except for one - who readies a machine gun and empties the clip.

Dick throws a Batarang--

It THUNKS into the robber's arm, forcing the gun up.

Dick hollers in slow motion, the words "get down" rolling off his lips, but it's too late. A woman in a window overlooking the alley is hit and killed.

10) Dick throws his black costume into a roaring fireplace. Barbara wraps her arms around him, their days of crime fighting behind them.

11) *BANG!* Batman is shot in the chest.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Dick wakes in a cold sweat. Barbara sits beside him.

BARBARA

Dick! Oh thank god...

He tries to talk, his voice not responding.

BARBARA

Shhh, it's okay. Everything's okay.

DICK

The... woman...

BARBARA

The woman? Oh - she's fine. You caught her. She's perfectly fine.

DICK  
The files... Selina...

BARBARA  
Shh, it's all okay.

DICK  
No...

Barbara pushes the nurse button.

BARBARA  
Dick, calm down.

Dick reaches for the phone, his arm sluggish.

DICK  
Selina...

BARBARA  
Stop. It's over, Dick. *The Joker*  
*plead guilty.*

The news hits Dick like a lead weight.

DICK  
What?

BARBARA  
He's serving an additional three  
life sentences because of it.

DICK  
No... that's wrong.

BARBARA  
It's not wrong. It's done.

Dick tries to get up. Barbara thumbs the nurse button.

BARBARA

Nurse!

(to Dick)

Stop. Listen to me. You almost died.

Dick struggles to sit up but doesn't have the strength.

BARBARA

Think about your daughter. Think about what you almost gave up.

The NURSE comes in.

NURSE #1

Relax Mr. Grayson. Everything's gonna be alright. Betty!

Another nurse races in the room.

DICK

No...

BARBARA

Don't fight it, Dick.

NURSE #1

Listen to your wife, Mr. Grayson. She's a smart woman who knows what's best - been by your side this whole time.

Dick stops.

DICK

How long have I been here?

A tear slips from Barbara's eye.

BARBARA

Two years, three months and six days.



Dick collapses, his mind whirling.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

Superman stands alone at the main computer and works the controls.

The screen reads "ACTIVATING SATELLITE" giving view to an overhead of the globe. The camera zooms into the eastern seaboard. It draws closer and closer, until the screen is consumed by...

The Metropolis cemetery.

He points the camera to a conservative headstone. We don't recognize the grave, but it's clear that whoever's buried here weighs heavily on Superman's mind.

His comm indicates a call.

GREEN LANTERN (O.S.)

Clark, you there?

He switches off the league computer.

SUPERMAN

What do you need?

GREEN LANTERN (O.S.)

Did you forget about the race?

Superman grimaces. He switches off his comm and pushes a large button on the league computer.

A portion of the ceiling opens and Superman takes flight.

EXT. STADIUM - DAY

An Olympic-size stadium is packed to capacity. Wonder Woman, Aquaman and Green Lantern stand on the track.

WONDER WOMAN

What'd he say?

GREEN LANTERN

Nothing.

Flash zips into their conversation.

FLASH

Well, is he coming or not?

Aquaman scowls at a crowd of photographers snapping his picture.

AQUAMAN

Relax, Barry. We've all got more important things to do.

FLASH

Important, my ass. He probably just doesn't want to embarrass himself among all his fans.

The crowd ROARS with applause at the sight of Superman flying overhead. He descends to the track.

SUPERMAN

Let's get this over with.

FLASH

'Bout time.

Superman and Flash step up to the starting line.

A race official raises a STARTING PISTOL in the air. The Flash crouches, while Superman doesn't bother with a stance.

A dozen high-speed cameras are turned on as the official pulls the trigger. The hammer meets with the back of the round and--

Time seems to stop.

A BLUR OF RED AND BLUE tear around the track. The smoke hasn't even cleared the barrel of the gun before they cross the finish line - way too fast to see with the human eye.

At a second glance, the high-speed cameras reveal both men shoulder to shoulder, trading the lead with every step. Frame by frame, they get closer to the string, when we...

CUT TO:

A CRAYON DRAWING of Superman and the Flash is taped to the wall. The illustration shows them racing toward the finish line. We are at...

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Dick stares out the window while Barbara tapes yet another drawing to the wall - a picture of a little girl on a swing.

The hospital TV flickers in the corner.

BARBARA

Last month she got her hands on a toy stethoscope. This, of course, meant that if you needed a band-aid, you'd have to steal one from Brown Bear. But once the swing set went in... well, so much for having a doctor in the family. I swear, the way she jumps around, she's your daughter alright.

Barbara sits beside him, curling her fingers around his.

BARBARA

She wants to know why she can't come visit you. It's been weeks, Dick. You're not listening to your therapists. You're hardly eating. I know you're upset, but why can't you talk to me?

Dick pulls his hand away from hers and grabs the TV remote. He turns up the volume.

Barbara gets up and heads for the door.

BARBARA

Most women would've moved on.  
Don't give me a reason to now.

She exits.

NEWSCASTER

Chinese officials are calling the President's use of force excessive and without provocation.

On the TV we see - a Chinese SUBMARINE rise out of the North Atlantic ice.

NEWSCASTER

In response, the U.S. Secretary of Defense issued a statement reaffirming the President's position, citing that any subterranean exercises without U.S. approval would be viewed as a threat to national security.

Muscling the submarine out of the water is SUPERMAN. Dick stares at the TV, a look of determination in his eyes.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

-Dick works hard at strengthening his legs. Weeks pass.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Sweat drips off Dick's face as he struggles to walk without holding onto anything. He collapses into a chair and tries to catch his breath.

VOICE

I heard you were getting stronger.

Dick turns, surprised to see O'HARA watching from the corner of the room.

DICK

Commissioner.

O'HARA

I'm here to clear the air.

DICK

I've got nothing to say to you that I haven't already said to a dozen other cops.

O'HARA

No? You break into my office, steal my files-

DICK

I did NOT steal those files.

O'HARA

Right. Selina did. So you say.

DICK

Probably three crooks in the world that move like that.

O'HARA

But you didn't see her face.

DICK  
Didn't need to.

O'Hara spots a WOMAN mopping in the corner.

O'HARA  
Selina!

The woman turns. O'Hara exchanges a look with Dick.

DICK  
I know what I saw.

Dick struggles to get his crutches in order.

O'HARA  
Unfortunately, no one else does.  
Too bad that woman you rescued was  
all junked up on heroine. She  
doesn't even remember the incident.

DICK  
What do you want?

O'HARA  
I've come here to make it clear to  
you that I won't tolerate another  
vigilante in my city.

DICK  
From what I read, you're in need of  
one.

Dick stands and hobbles away from him.

O'HARA  
Crime rates go up, that's just the  
nature of things.

Dick continues toward the door, never looking back.

DICK

And if things get worse?

O'HARA

We call in the League - an affiliation of which you're no longer a part of.

DICK

I think my gym membership expired too, but thanks for reminding me.

EXT. GRAYSON HOUSE - DAY

Dick comes home from the hospital. He walks with the aid of a cane. Barbara and Bethany walk beside him. His daughter has grown quite a bit. She's almost five.

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - NIGHT

They sit at the dining room table and eat dinner, laughing and carrying about like a loving family.

BETHANY

And whoosh!

DICK

It didn't...

BETHANY

Mayonnaise everywhere!

There's a KNOCK at the door. It can be heard opening.

GORDON (O.S.)

Hello?

Barbara gets up from the table. Concerned.

BETHANY

Grandpa!

GORDON

There's my sack of potatoes...

They hug. Then, Gordon falls into a shelf - he's drunk.

BARBARA

*Damn it, Dad...*

BETHANY

*Oooh, mommy swore.*

BARBARA

Bed time, let's go.

BETHANY

But I wasn't done with my corn.

BARBARA

Go on - go brush your teeth.

BETHANY

*Awe, mom...*

Dick sits there, slack-jawed, completely taken aback by the haggard condition of Gordon.

BARBARA

Dick?!

Dick gets up and leads Bethany out of the room.

DICK

Come on. Show me where your bedroom is, I think I forgot.



INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - BETHANY'S ROOM

Bethany's in her pajamas, her teddy bear still covered in band-aids. She sits up in bed and points to a ribbon on the wall.

BETHANY

For this one, I had to spell  
fireman.

DICK

Fireman. That's a tough one. I  
know it starts with an O.

BETHANY

O?

DICK

OH my goodness! Look what time it  
is!

He smothers her in tickles and closes with a kiss.

BETHANY

Dad, don't get hurt again. Okay?

Something about the way she says it knocks the wind right out  
of him.

DICK

Okay.

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Dick comes downstairs to find the dining room empty. The  
SOUND of VOMITING can be heard down the hall.

IN THE BATHROOM

Dick peeks in the doorway to see Barbara caring for Gordon.

DICK

Why don't you take a break.

Barbara eagerly exits the room, adding...

BARBARA

Don't feel sorry for him.

Gordon wipes the slop from his chin.

GORDON

Welcome home, Dick.

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Barbara places a pile of blankets on the couch.

BARBARA

You're all set. But I mean it,  
this is the last time.

She heads to bed.

GORDON

She's a good girl, that one. Tried  
to get me help. Oh, I went to the  
meetings - *Hi, my name's Jim and  
I'm an alcoholic - hmff.* But with  
Bruce gone and, well, you...

Dick pats Gordon on the shoulder and hands him a cup of tea.  
A comforting silence holds the room, when Dick asks...

DICK

Do you still believe it?

GORDON

Believe what?

Dick beams him with a look. Gordon hangs his head, he knows what he's asking.

GORDON

Doesn't matter what I believe. The case has been over for what now...

DICK

That's O'Hara talking.

GORDON

Yeah, well, you should listen. Times have changed, Dick. Sounds cliché, but god damn if it isn't the truth. O'Hara's got the reins to the city. He's a political powerhouse with connections that run to the top of the food chain - and I mean to the very top. And as for the League, well, these days they do as their told.

DICK

I can get through to the League once I have something to show them.

GORDON

What do ya got?

DICK

As of now, I've got nothing. But I know who might.

INT. MUSEUM - NIGHT

A stunning BLONDE strolls through a posh crowd.

She struts past a trio of POLICE OFFICERS who stand vigilante over a display case of diamonds. Her shapely hips don't go unnoticed as she enters...

THE WOMAN'S BATHROOM

She ducks into a bathroom stall and removes her skirt. On the flip side of the fabric is a detailed BLUEPRINT of the museum. It belongs to...

SELINA KYLE (44), aka CATWOMAN. We recognize her as the sexy brunette at the funeral.

She makes corrections to the blueprint and kicks the flusher. As she exits the stall, a HANDCUFF slaps down on her wrist and yanks her against the wall. Her assailant is--

DICK

Nice wig.

*WHACK!* She knees him in the stomach.

Selina pulls a PICK from her earring and STRADDLES HIS ARM - attempting to unlock the cuffs.

DICK

They're voice-activated.

SELINA

Dick?

DICK

I always thought they were cool.

An ELDERLY WOMAN walks into the bathroom.

DICK

Hi.

The old woman steps right back out, the bathroom door slow to close.

SELINA

Oh my god, Dick... that night on the roof - I never meant for anyone to get hurt.

DICK

You threw a woman to the street!

SELINA

I knew you'd catch her.

DICK

Oh, I appreciate your confidence.

SELINA

Don't act like we haven't done that dance before.

DICK

Explain that to the cops.

He gets to his feet and pulls down on a FIRE ALARM. A siren bellows.

Before the bathroom door fully closes, we see the elderly woman talking to the police and pointing back this way.

Selina pulls Dick into a bathroom stall as a pair of cops enter the room.

SELINA

*What do you want?*

DICK

*I wanna know what you were doing that night.*

SELINA

*Same as you - looking for answers.*

DICK

*Then show me what you found.*

A COP kicks in the stall door, to find--

Selina and Dick in an impassioned embrace. Her top, pulled down, her chest pressed against his.

COP

Let's go. Outside.

She fixes her blouse and drops her shawl over the cuffs.

SELINA

(to cop)

He's relentless.

EXT. MUSEUM - NIGHT

Selina and Dick walk hand in hand down the museum steps, past a gathering of police cars and fire trucks.

SELINA

I've been casing this exhibit for months. If they find my gear, they'll up and ship those diamonds to Metropolis.

DICK

And I'll feel real lousy about that.

EXT. TENEMENT BUILDING - LATER THAT NIGHT

Selina pulls the wig from her head, letting her long, black hair unfurl. They walk toward a rundown apartment complex in a bad part of town. A few locals eye them as they pass.

SELINA

Relax.

DICK

I'm not worried. More curious.  
You don't exactly blend in.

SELINA

I keep to myself.

TWO HULKING THUGS lean out from an alley and block their way.

THUG

That's a pretty necklace-

WHACK - WHACK - she lays them both out.

SELINA

For the most part.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING

Deep shadows run the length of the hall, obscuring most of the graffiti.

SELINA

How's Barbara?

DICK

Fine.

SELINA

I hear she made a full recovery.

DICK

Not full.

SELINA

I can't imagine. Tell her I said  
hello.

DICK

Sure... *"Honey, how was your day?  
Catwoman says hello."*

They round a corner and approach an apartment door. She slides a board aside and reaches in, pushing a release.

The door opens opposite its hinges.

INSIDE HER HIDEAWAY

The room is filled with drills, grappling hooks, glass-cutters, everything a professional thief could ever want.

DICK  
Keeping busy, I see.

SELINA  
(holds up the cuffs)  
Can we...?

DICK  
Golly.

The cuffs snap open. Selina massages her wrist and struts across the room. She retrieves a file.

SELINA  
Here. First six days of the investigation.

Dick thumbs through it.

DICK  
Anything stand out?

Selina pulls off her coat and sinks into a comfy chair.

SELINA  
I'm the thief. You're the detective.

Dick nods "thank you" and makes for the door.



SELINA

There's something else.

Selina's tone has suddenly changed, her eyes saddled with guilt.

SELINA

I don't usually do breakouts but...  
at that price...

DICK

Who did you break out?

SELINA

I was in over my head with other  
debts that had to get paid.

DICK

WHO?

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM - NIGHT

Nothing moves down here. Until...

A DRILL pushes up through a sewage pipe. It cuts a wide circle, spilling excrement.

Lifting from the filth is Selina. Steam rises from her Catwoman wetsuit, her face, completely covered by a protective mask with re-breather. We are in...

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - MAIN PRISON

Polished black loafers walk down the hall. Selina now wears a prison security outfit.

She enters the SECURITY BOOTH and incapacitates the guards.

Her attention turns to the main control panel. She runs her finger down a line of numbered switches, stopping at #42. With the push of a button...

ELSEWHERE IN THE PRISON

Cell door #42 unlocks and creaks open.

BACK TO:

INT. SELINA'S APARTMENT

SELINA

I tried to look at it like any other job, but-

Dick SLAPS her. She doesn't fight back. She knows she deserved it.

DICK

How much were you paid?

SELINA

Thirty-four, up front.

DICK

Who was your contact?

SELINA

I don't know.

DICK

You don't know?

SELINA

The whole thing was odd. Even the breakout. When I got to his cell, it was like he had no idea I was coming.

DICK

How was it arranged?

SELINA

It was all done in code. Want ads.  
Gotham Times.

Dick takes off his coat and grabs a newspaper from a stack on the floor.

DICK

Show me.

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - 3:10 A.M.

Dick enters his house with the file tucked under his arm.

BARBARA (O.S.)

Are those O'Hara's files?

He turns to see Barbara sitting at the dining room table. Judging by her expression, she's been waiting here all night.

DICK

Yes.

BARBARA

How did you find her?

DICK

That's what I do, Barb.

BARBARA

Not anymore.

DICK

Listen, I need to do this.

BARBARA

I loved him too, Dick. But nothing you do is gonna bring him back.

DICK

Then what's the harm? If what they say is true, then-

BARBARA

Every minute you work on this case, you put our daughter's life further at risk.

DICK

And if we don't know the truth, how much less is she at risk?

BARBARA

Oh don't give me that bullshit about fighting for what's right! Who do you think you're talking to?

DICK

What do you expect me to do?! Just walk away?!

BARBARA

YES!

DICK

Well I can't. And I won't.

BARBARA

Well, you better. Learning the truth about Bruce's death won't make the world a better place for our daughter if it gets her father killed in the process.

She marches past him and up the stairs.

IN THE STUDY

Dick turns the light on at his desk and opens the file. He stares at it for only a second before closing it.

UPSTAIRS IN THEIR BEDROOM

Dick crawls in bed and puts his arms around his wife.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sun peaks through the curtains. Barbara awakens to discover that her bed is empty.

DOWN IN THE BASEMENT

Dick does pull-ups.

MONTAGE:

-Dick visits the crime scene, taking pictures.

-Dick balances atop a playground jungle gym, one-handed.

-Barbara watches as Dick goes over the case files.

-Dick jogs in the rain. He's clearly getting fit.

EXT. GRAYSON HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Dick returns home from his jog to find O'Hara's car parked out front.

INSIDE

Barbara shares coffee with O'Hara in the living room.

DICK

Don't let me interrupt.

Dick heads for the kitchen. Barbara doesn't hold back...

BARBARA

Have you been to the crime scene?

DICK

It's not a crime scene anymore,  
it's just an alley. More coffee?

Dick exits the living room and storms into...

THE KITCHEN

Barbara follows in after him. Her voice hushed.

BARBARA

I would appreciate it if you were a  
little less RUDE to our guests.

DICK

Rude? That was me being nice.

BARBARA

What's gotten into you? He's here  
because he cares.

DICK

That's endearing.

BARBARA

Don't think I don't know what  
you're doing. The running every  
morning, the pull-ups... it's like  
you're training for a war.

O'HARA (O.S.)

I appreciate the hospitality, but I  
really should get going.

Dick empties the coffee pot into the sink.

DICK

Just as well, we're out of coffee  
anyway.

BARBARA

Fine. But you keep this up and I  
swear I'll leave and take Bethany  
with me.

Barbara exits the kitchen.

CUT TO:

Darkness abounds with nothing but the tranquil SOUND OF RAIN,  
until a clap of thunder and an arc of lightning give view to  
BATMAN'S GRAVESTONE. We are at...

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Dick stands before the monument, rain washing down. His  
anger brewing.

INT. CITY HALL - EARLY MORNING

Dick barges into O'Hara's office.

DICK

You need to tell me what you know.

O'Hara sits behind a desk with two businessmen seated in  
front of him. His secretary follows into the room.

SECRETARY

I'm sorry, Commissioner-

O'Hara silences her with a wave.

O'HARA

We were finished here anyway.

## THE HALLWAY

They walk and talk, O'Hara recounting a story he's told a hundred times.

O'HARA

I arrived in the alley at 11:37 PM. We found strands of green hair on the roof as well as on the deceased. Two days later we caught the Joker, whose DNA matched the hair found at the crime scene and who later confessed to the crime.

DICK

He claims to have shot Batman in the chest and watched him fall off the roof, landing...

(refers to the file)  
quote, "Flat on his back like a wingless bat."

O'HARA

I'm well aware of his testimony.

DICK

Then explain this. The autopsy report says he shattered both ankles. Look -

(shows him the file)  
He didn't land on his back, he landed feet first and fell forward, accounting for the contusion to his skull.

CUT TO:



INT. ALLEY - NIGHT

WHAM - Batman meets with the pavement, shattering his ankles and cracking his skull.

BACK TO:

INT. CITY HALL - HALLWAY

O'HARA

Proving what?

DICK

Proving that the Joker didn't commit the crime - *because he didn't see it.*

O'HARA

Come on, Dick. Forensics can put him on the roof at the time of the murder and the history between the two of them establishes more than enough motive. And if that wasn't enough, the gun used to commit the crime was his gun of choice - a forty-four caliber Smith and Wesson. The same make and model he used to shoot your wife.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR

The Joker levels his gun at Barbara's abdomen and pulls back on the trigger - *BANG!*

BACK TO:

INT. CITY HALL - HALLWAY

Dick holds out a photo.

DICK

Look at this. Powder burns on the armor. That means the gun was fired from point blank range.

O'HARA

We know this.

DICK

Batman would *never* allow the Joker within arms length of him. And supposing for some reason that he did, he'd be ready for whatever followed.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUILDING ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The barrel of the gun goes off an inch from Batman's chest.

BACK TO:

INT. CITY HALL - HALLWAY

O'HARA

We all get old, Dick, and we all slip up.

DICK

There's a man in the alley who says he heard a single gunshot followed by Batman nearly landing on top of him.

O'HARA

A drunk in the alley.

DICK

There's no mention of hearing any laughter following the gunshot.

O'HARA

Dick...

DICK

The Joker may have been on that roof, but he didn't witness the shooting and he didn't pull the trigger.

O'HARA

Well he says he did - and a jury believed him.

DICK

Of course he confessed! He's already serving life at Arkham. In the eyes of his peers, being the triggerman makes him a god damn hero!

O'HARA

Are you finished?

DICK

Listen to me, at the very least, let--

O'HARA

I think I've heard enough. Albeit a bit late, you've said your piece.

O'Hara leads Dick to a conference room filled with people.

O'HARA

Now let it go, Dick. Your crime  
fighting days are over.

O'Hara enters the room, leaving Dick outside.

INT. GRAYSON'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Dick sits at his desk, trying to unravel the mystery behind  
the want ads and who hired Selina.

A picture of a PUDDLE OF BLOOD sends his mind reeling--

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK of Dick dressed as Nightwing.

He sends a Batarang whirling--

It connects, forcing the gunman's hand up. Above, a woman  
overlooking the alley is hit and killed.

BACK TO:

STUDY - SAME

Dick shakes the memory from his thoughts and HEARS Bethany  
giggling down the hall.

UPSTAIRS IN THE BATHROOM

Dick watches from the hall as his wife scrubs Bethany in the  
tub.

BARBARA

Did you get your elbows?

BETHANY

When can we go back to the market?

BARBARA

That's on Thursdays.

BETHANY

I wanna buy Daddy some flowers.

BARBARA

What color?

BETHANY

Red and yellow. And orange. And purple.

Dick takes it all in, considering...

BACK AT HIS DESK

The crime scene reports are boxed up and thrown in the closet.

EXT. GRAYSON HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Bethany plays on a swing set.

BETHANY

Dad, watch this.

Dick breaks from raking the leaves to watch his daughter hang from her legs. Barbara gazes from...

THE KITCHEN WINDOW

She smiles at the sight of her husband and daughter playing. Before she finishes making lunch, the doorbell rings.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

Barbara is greeted by...

BARBARA

Alfred!

She bends down to his wheelchair and gives him a hug.

ALFRED

How good to see you, Miss Barbara.

BARBARA

Come in, come in, I'm making lunch.

EXT. GRAYSON HOUSE - BACKYARD - LATER

Alfred sets a small MANILA ENVELOPE on the table in front of Dick. Barbara sits next to him.

ALFRED

Master Bruce expressed a hope that you would continue to donate a portion of his earnings to the charities he supported. However, it is entirely up to your discretion. Wayne Enterprises, the estate... everything now belongs to you.

Dick exchanges a look with Barbara before reaching for the envelope. As he picks it up, her hand comes down on top of his.

BARBARA

We don't want it.

DICK & ALFRED

*What?*

BARBARA

We don't need this. A garage full of cars, a stable full of horses - you can't even ride a horse.

DICK

Barb...

BARBARA

Besides, I have a good job and we're paying down your medical bills-

DICK

You would never have to work again.

BARBARA

I don't mind working.

DICK

Bethany's college education, what about that?

BARBARA

That's what our savings are for.

DICK

By this time tomorrow we could afford to have your back looked at by the best doctors in the world.

BARBARA

It isn't worth it!

ALFRED

I apologize if I've come at a bad time.

DICK

Don't apologize.

BARBARA

We don't need this in our lives right now.

DICK

That decision isn't up to you.

BARBARA

Give the money to Clark. He'll do something good with it.

DICK

*Hmff...* Clark's out of his mind. He's turned his back on his friends and let the League go to hell.

BARBARA

I don't care what's happened to the League and I don't care what you have against Clark! I care about this family!

ALFRED

Please, please...

Alfred takes hold of Barbara's hand.

ALFRED

Miss Barbara, with all due respect, this inheritance is not meant for Clark Kent.

(to Dick)

And you... you should know that despite their falling out, Master Bruce held Mr. Kent in high regard. And rightfully so, when you consider the complexity of his obligations. It's not every man who can handle the weight of the world on his shoulders.

DICK

No offense, Alfred, but we all have burdens to carry.



ALFRED

Yes, and you should be thankful you  
are not required to carry his.

CUT TO:

Polished RED BOOTS walk across a field of HUMAN BONES. We  
are in...

EXT. AFRICA - DAY

The boots belong to SUPERMAN, who wanders through a valley  
littered with corpses.

An emptiness consumes his eyes, his expression no different  
than the vultures feeding on the dead - lifeless and drained,  
as though he'd walked through a thousand of these fields.  
When...

A blood-curdling SCREAM spins Superman on his heels.

There, springing from the tree line, is a WOMAN COVERED IN  
BLOOD, her dark skin lacquered red as though she'd been  
dipped in paint.

GUNSHOTS ring out and a bullet tears into her shoulder,  
sending her headlong into Superman's arms.

He pivots to protect her as more gunfire erupts from the  
brush, the bullets ricocheting off his back - not that it  
will matter.

The woman's last breath trickles from her lungs.

Superman gently sets her down and turns to face the culprits.  
A dozen machine guns blaze at him from the safety of the  
trees.

The Man of Steel lifts back his arms and, with the force of a  
crashing meteor, CLAPS HIS HANDS.

A SONIC BOOM fills the air and a SHOCK WAVE shakes the jungle, the trees barely clinging to their roots.

When the dust settles, an EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BOY stumbles from the tree line. He drops his rifle and falls to the ground, his ear drums bleeding.

Superman watches in horror as a dozen other gunmen topple out from hiding, all of them children.

INT. WAYNE MANOR - DAY

The front door opens and Dick steps inside. Sheets cover everything.

He makes his way to the library and reaches for a book on the shelf. When pulled, a portion of the floor slides back - revealing a HIDDEN STAIRWELL.

Descending through darkened hallways, he enters...

THE BATCAVE

With his first step, Dick sinks into a foot of water. A portion of the cave is flooded.

He continues further into the cavern. His fingers follow the contours of one in a series of twelve Batmobiles, all gathering dust.

Relics of the past consume every corner: a giant Joker card, an oversized penny, a rack of the Penguin's umbrellas...

And that's when he sees it - the ROBIN COSTUME, hanging in a glass display case.

ALFRED (O.S.)  
A bit colorful, I admit.

Dick turns to see Alfred sitting in a motorized wheelchair at the far end of the cave.

ALFRED

Still, a fine suit of armor.

Alfred wheels himself over to a tool bench and continues his work, re-wiring some sort of handheld, electronic GIZMO.

DICK

Ever heard of pinochle?

ALFRED

Ha, that's a game best played with friends. These days I'm very much alone. However, I do enjoy tinkering with these things. Helps keep the mind sharp.

DICK

What's this one do?

ALFRED

Oh, just another toy. Similar in function to an E.M.P., only, instead of overloading the circuits, it reverses polarity.

(off Dick's look)

Ha ha... I forget. You never had a love for science. No, your area of expertise was in leaping off heights with never a care as to where you might land. Always the acrobat, eh Master Dick?

Dick lets a smile sneak across his lips that quickly fades.

DICK

So... what are we supposed to do with all this?

ALFRED

I suppose you'll know, when the  
time's right.

Alfred wheels himself to the cave elevator.

ALFRED

It's good to have you home, sir.  
Now if you'll excuse me, I'll leave  
the two of you alone.

DICK

Wait - what?

The elevator door closes.

Dick looks around. There's no one else in the cave. That's  
when he notices...

A blinking RED LIGHT.

Dick steps closer. He brushes away the cobwebs and lays his  
hand on a scanner. There's a *CLUNK* as power floods into a  
hulking machine - this is the BAT COMPUTER.

Dick removes the MANILA ENVELOPE from his coat pocket and  
tears it open. Out slides an odd KEY, its distinct  
triangular shape matches a tumbler on the Bat computer.

Timidly he slides the key into the console and gives it a  
twist, not expecting to hear...

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)

If you're listening to this, Dick,  
it means I'm already dead.

The sound of Bruce's voice echoes through the cave.

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)

Let me start by saying, that the  
day you left, I was filled with  
such... relief.

(MORE)

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Just to know that you would get the chance to live a normal life. I know you feel guilty for having gone, but it takes courage to begin again and for that, I've never been more proud of you.

A VAULT automatically unlocks across the room.

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)  
This vault - the one you always wanted to see the inside of as a boy, well... I'm afraid it's not filled with any of those exciting things you once imagined. Inside it is paperwork - the documentation you'll need to bring all of this - the house, the stocks, my entire worth - into your name. As for Bruce Wayne, well, for now he's very much alive. You'll even hear accounts of him popping up from time to time. In fact, he'll live for several more years until he tragically dies in a plane crash North of the Himalayas. A fitting death for a billionaire, I suppose.

A RED FOLDER sits in the vault.

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)  
All that I do ask, is that you continue with my contributions to the companies in this city that are still out to do good. They're listed on the second shelf, red folder.

The Bat computer gives view to a series of HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGES. The first reveals a SECRET PASSAGE.

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)

In the years that you've been gone, I've made some additional improvements to make the job a little easier. Like the southern tunnel, which opens right at the front gate.

Next, we see images of the BAT CYCLE. What looks like an hourglass filled with neon liquid is strapped to the exhaust. Biohazard emblems line the manifold.

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)

The bikes have each been retrofitted with a magnesium inductor. But don't say I didn't warn you. This stuff makes nitrous feel like you're standing still.

Last, we see a holographic display of a UTILITY BELT.

BRUCE WAYNE (V.O.)

And the belts have been equipped with micro-processors to record up to five hours of audio. Just insert the chip into the mainframe for playback.

We see how the chip is removed and plugged into the Bat computer.

BRUCE WAYNE

There's plenty more but I'm sure you'll discover it all for yourself. And while I know I don't need to say this, it was an honor to have fought beside you. You're a great detective, an honest man, and a true friend.

EXT. GOTHAM COURT HOUSE - DAY

A black sedan pulls up to the curb and O'Hara gets out, rain falling. He's quickly swarmed by reporters.

REPORTER #1

Is it true Superman will now be patrolling the streets of Gotham?

O'HARA

Yes, and we are lucky to have him.

REPORTER #2

Who in Washington commands the authority over where Superman-

O'HARA

The decision was that of the Attorney General.

REPORTER #3

Should the citizens of Gotham be worried that Superman now answers to you?

O'HARA

For the record, Superman does what's best for the good of this country. And no, the people of Gotham should not be worried about his presence here. Not unless they're criminals.

The reporters all laugh. Looking past them, O'Hara thinks he sees Dick across the street. However, at a second glance, Dick is nowhere to be seen.

FROM INSIDE A NEARBY BANK

Dick stares out the window, using the bank as cover.

BANK TELLER

Can I help you?

DICK

No thank you.

Before exiting, Dick spots GORDON at the teller window.

DICK

Jim...

GORDON

Dick -- you bank here?

DICK

No.

Gordon collects his things.

GORDON

What's wrong?

DICK

Nothing the League can't answer.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - OBSERVATION DECK - DAY

A TOUR GROUP is paraded through a section of the facility overlooking the main council room.

WONDER WOMAN strides into the main room, garnering elated chatter from the tourists.

TOUR GUIDE

Now there's a woman who needs no introduction. Standing five feet eleven inches tall and capable of lifting over twelve thousand tons, she's one of the team's founding members, though you'd never know it to look at her.



Wonder Woman presses a button, fogging the glass along the observation deck.

TOUR GUIDE

Sorry folks, but not even we get to see what goes on behind the curtain. Now if you'll follow me, you'll get a glimpse of what an invisible jet *really* looks like.

As they walk out of the viewing area, one of the tourists lingers behind and admires a heavy bust of the Flash.

With the force of his shoulder, he muscles it over. The bust topples into the viewing window, shattering the glass and setting off alarms.

Without hesitation, the tourist leaps through the window frame and lands in the main council room below. Before he can take a step, he's surrounded by a--

Towering circle of GREEN FIRE.

GREEN LANTERN eyes his captive. It's none other than...

DICK

Got a minute?

CUT TO:

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - ELEVATOR

Green Lantern escorts Dick into an elevator. The doors close and they begin to descend.

GREEN LANTERN

Quite the dramatic entrance.

DICK

Maybe next time you'll try returning my calls.

GREEN LANTERN

We get a little busy around here,  
incase you've forgotten.

DICK

Well then I won't waste any of your  
time. Take me to Bruce's body.

GREEN LANTERN

Bruce?

DICK

I need to see it.

GREEN LANTERN

There's nothing to see. Clark's  
already taken care of it.

DICK

Taken care of it how?

GREEN LANTERN

Per Bruce's wishes - he torched it.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - THREE YEARS AGO

Superman engulfs Batman's body in HEAT VISION.

BACK TO:

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - ELEVATOR

The elevator doors opens and Green Lantern points.

GREEN LANTERN

That's all that's left.

Dick steps off the elevator and enters...

A HANGER FILLED WITH OLD BATMAN EQUIPMENT

The room is a mess - an unkept storage facility overflowing with antiquated gadgets and vehicles.

At the far corner of the room sits Batman's UTILITY BELT. Dick looks it over. It's a charred mess, melted beyond recognition.

Green Lantern grins at the sight of a 1966 BATMOBILE with stylish tail fins.

GREEN LANTERN

Voice recognition, atomic battery -  
don't make 'em like this anymore.

DICK

Yeah, pretty car. You remember the  
man who drove it?

Green Lantern's comm suddenly crackles with the VOICE of...

FLASH (O.S.)

Hal, you better have a serious talk  
with *Wonder Bra* before I'm made to  
teach her a lesson.

DICK

How is Barry these days?

FLASH (O.S.)

I'm telling you, I'm one-tenth of a  
second away from taking that lasso  
of hers and-

Green Lantern shuts off his comm.

GREEN LANTERN

Should've kicked him out years ago.

DICK

And Clark?

GREEN LANTERN

Spends most his time on the front lines, cleaning up the President's mess.

DICK

Clark's a pawn, just like Diana - and don't tell me you think otherwise.

GREEN LANTERN

We're all pawns in some way or another.

DICK

That's a great motto.

GREEN LANTERN

We're a different League now, Dick.

DICK

That's what happens when you sit O'Hara at the head of the table.

Green Lantern steps up to him.

GREEN LANTERN

If there's a point you're trying to make, make it.

DICK

Bruce is dead, HE'S DEAD, and you've buried his memory like all this junk. What happened to this place? This building used to stand for something. WE used to stand together.

Again, Green Lantern's comm signals and we hear...

WONDER WOMAN (O.S.)  
O'Hara's asking to speak with you.

DICK  
I'll let myself out.

Dick storms out of the room with the belt in hand, leaving Green Lantern to his thoughts.

INT. BATCAVE

Dick pulls apart Batman's utility belt.

DICK  
You're positive he made a recording every night?

ALFRED  
Indeed, every night.

Dick removes the chip and inserts it into the Bat computer, when...

His cell phone rings. He checks the number and answers.

DICK  
Perfect timing. You want to hear what happened that night?

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LINE

Gordon listens from home.

GORDON  
What night?

DICK (O.S.)  
Listen...

Dick activates the recording. It begins with--

The JOKER LAUGHING.

Gordon sits wide-eyed, listening...

INT. BATCAVE

The JOKER'S LAUGHTER fills the cave. His cackle is proceeded by a MAN'S voice, however, only in indiscernible bits. We hear a church bell ring as...

The audio becomes distorted.

GORDON (O.S.)

What happened?

A WARNING illuminates on the Bat computer, indicating damage.

DICK

*God damn heat vision...* he must've fried it.

GORDON (O.S.)

Who? What are you talking about?

DICK

The chip's damaged. DAMN IT!

GORDON (O.S.)

Can it be fixed?

ALFRED

Master Dick, we have a visitor.

DICK

No visitors. Keep the gates closed.

ALFRED

I'm afraid the gates are closed, though it doesn't seem to matter.

THE FRONT DOOR

Opens to reveal SUPERMAN. Rain or no rain, Dick doesn't invite him in.

SUPERMAN

Richard.

DICK

Kent.

Superman pushes past Dick and begins looking around the foyer.

SUPERMAN

Barbara's concerned. She's worried you're getting in over your head.

DICK

Yeah, well, wives worry about their husbands. That's what they do.

SUPERMAN

You don't want to listen to her, that's fine. But I'm here to tell you - you're walking a thin rope.

DICK

I'm not interested in your opinion, Clark.

SUPERMAN

Bruce didn't want to hear it either and it cost Jason his life.

DICK

GET OUT.

Superman makes for the door, stopping to add...

## SUPERMAN

From here on out, I'll do what's  
expected of me.

He exits the house and lifts into the night sky. Dick SLAMS  
the door.

## MONTAGE:

1) Alfred toils with the audio chip, carefully pulling it  
apart while Dick pounds away at a heavy bag.

2) Dick studies dozens of newspaper clippings, still trying  
to crack the code.

3) Sprinting through the woods, Dick snaps out a Batarang and  
hurls it toward the treetops. As it angles back, he flips  
over a fallen tree and...

## EXT. GRAYSON HOUSE - MORNING

Dick catches the PAPER thrown at him by the paperboy.

## LATER THAT MORNING

The newspaper lay spread out across the kitchen table as Dick  
studies the personals. An advertisement for the CIRCUS  
catches his eye.

Bethany sits across from him and struggles with a word jumble  
on the back of her cereal box.

## BETHANY

Dad, how do you spell  
"boysenberry"?

## DICK

Um... I don't know. Ask your  
mother.



Bethany picks up the box and exits the room.

BETHANY (O.S.)  
Mom, will you help me with this  
riddle?

Dick looks up from the paper - *riddle...*

INT. BATCAVE

Dick enters a chamber filled with KEYS and removes a set marked ARKHAM.

INT. BATCAVE - LATER

A BLUEPRINT of Arkham Asylum lay across a wide table. Dick studies the schematic and places a key on each door it'll open.

EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - NIGHT

The building looms like a weathered castle, overrun with gables and wrapped in barbed wire. High atop the wall, Dick scales the stonework. No ropes - he does it the hard way.

He disappears into a smokestack.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - FURNACE ROOM

Dick exits out the furnace and disrobes.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - HALLWAY

Now DRESSED AS A JANITOR, Dick unlocks a steel-plated door and enters a corridor. On either side of him are solitary confinement cells, numbered sequentially.

He passes door #42, hearing the faint SOUND OF LAUGHTER. A thin window is the only visual access into the room.

Dick's curiosity gets the best of him and he looks in the window. The cell appears empty, however...

#### INSIDE THE PADDED CELL

What Dick doesn't see is the JOKER (72) lying with his back against the door, his arms bound in a straightjacket, his mouth splayed wide and ROARING WITH LAUGHTER.

#### IN THE HALLWAY

Dick moves further down the hall and comes to cell #63. A wall of glass separates Dick from a thin man facing the corner. Crossword puzzles cover the floor.

DICK

Edward Nigma.

EDWARD NIGMA (78), aka THE RIDDLER, looks up from his puzzle, his green eyes sparkling.

#### INSIDE THE MAIN CONTROL ROOM

Dick can be seen standing outside the Riddler's cell on one of thirty monitors. Two SECURITY GUARDS take notice.

SECURITY GUARD #1

What's Darrel doing?

DARREL (O.S.)

You say somethin'?

The guards turn to see DARREL THE JANITOR wheel his cart into the room.

AT THE RIDDLER'S CELL

Dick holds the personals against the glass for Edward.

EDWARD

Hmm. Not a very clever code,  
that's for sure.

DICK

Who placed these ads?

EDWARD

And why would a janitor care to  
know?

DICK

Tell me who placed these ads.

EDWARD

The coveralls fit you a bit tight  
and bear a softer yellow embroidery  
in the patch - a subtle distinction  
from the new uniforms, though an  
adequate disguise nonetheless.

DICK

The ads...

EDWARD

You're left-handed, far-sighted,  
and your accent makes it apparent  
that you are not originally from  
this city. Yet, here you are,  
determined to uncover the truth  
about Gotham's greatest champion  
with a fire in your eye as though  
you knew him personally.

DICK

I don't have time for this!

EDWARD

Oh come now, *DICK GRAYSON*, what's  
the rush?

IN THE STAIRWELL

A throng of SECURITY GUARDS race up the steps.

OUTSIDE THE RIDDLER'S CELL

DICK

Who placed these ads?!

EDWARD

What was the pay out?

DICK

Thirty-four million.

EDWARD

Ah... therein lies your answer.

DICK

I don't understand.

EDWARD

Look about and sniff around, its  
someone rich within this town.

DICK

No riddles!

EDWARD

For he who spends and pays out  
millions, has himself some extra  
billions.

The door to the hallway opens and a DOZEN SECURITY GUARDS  
enter, guns out and pointed.

SECURITY GUARD  
STEP AWAY FROM THE GLASS AND GET  
DOWN ON THE GROUND! DO IT NOW!

What they don't know is that Dick is armed with--

The electronic GIZMO. He pushes the button, causing an ear-splitting pulse to sound.

INSIDE THE MAIN CONTROL ROOM

A bank of numbered RED LIGHTS flicker GREEN.

AT THE RIDDLER'S CELL

All the doors along the hallway UNLOCK. Chaos ensues as the world's most dangerous villains spring from their cells and attack the guards.

*BOOM* - a shotgun blast fractures an overhead pipe, adding a downpour to the frenzy. Dick takes advantage of the distraction, all the while defending the guards from their aggressors. That is, until--

*WHACK* - a chair smacks him over the head and sends him to the floor.

Wielding the chair is a small, round man with a long nose - this is OSWALD COPPLEPOT (81), aka THE PENGUIN. He raises the chair for a crushing blow. When...

*CRUNCH* - Oswald is crushed behind the cell door of SOLOMON GRUNDY, a pale giant who bears down on Dick and proceeds to beat him senseless.

MORE GUARDS quickly arrive in riot gear and tranquilize Grundy and his counterparts.

SECURITY GUARD  
(into radio)  
LOCK DOWN HALL TWELVE!

The main door to the corridor suddenly RE-LOCKS, trapping Dick amid the brawl.

Dick swipes a shotgun from a guard--

*BOOM - BOOM - BOOM* - he empties three rounds into a wire-mesh window, then DIVES THROUGH IT. Landing...

IN THE ADJOINING HALLWAY

Dick picks himself up and races toward a barred window. He hurls a stubby Batarang that adheres to the glass.

*BOOM* - the window explodes, twisting the bars. He's about to exit when he hears--

SECURITY GUARD  
AHHHHH!

Dick spins to see a HANDSOME MAN choking out a security guard. As the man turns, we see that half his face is covered in scars. This is HARVEY DENT (61), aka TWO FACE, a schizophrenic murderer.

Inches away from his escape, Dick hurries to the guard's rescue. He delivers a roundhouse kick that knocks Harvey for a loop. No sooner does he save the guard's life when--

*THWERP!* A tranquilizer dart hits Dick in the shoulder.

FIVE MORE GUARDS race into the hall. They wrap Dick in a straightjacket and sedate him with three more darts.

DICK  
No...

They throw Dick into--

AN EMPTY CELL

And lock the door.

DICK

Wait! No! *Get down...*

The medicine takes effect, Dick's dreams taking over...

1) Dressed as Nightwing, Dick sends a Batarang whirling. It THUNKS into a robber's arm, forcing the gun up.

Dick hollers in slow motion, the words "get down" rolling off his lips, but it's too late. Above, a woman overlooking the alley is killed. Her six-year old son, JASON TODD, witnesses it all.

2) Jason is brought through the halls of a foster home. Unbeknownst to him, Dick watches from a distance.

3) To Bruce's surprise, Dick leads Jason into the Batcave.

4) Dick trains Jason. Bruce watches, unsure.

5) The Joker levels his gun through a doorway and shoots Barbara in the abdomen.

6) Gordon arrives at Barbara's apartment to find her sprawled across the living room floor, blood everywhere.

7) Disguised as Nightwing, Dick chases the Joker into a factory filled with Joker dolls.

Batman and a new Robin arrive on the scene. For a moment, they work as a team - Batman, Nightwing and Robin - all three fighting as one. That is--

Until Jason meets with a CROWBAR-WIELDING Joker. Steel cracks against bone, spraying blood.

And to make matters worse - a BOMB ticks down the seconds...

3... 2... 1...

*BOOM* - the building collapses.

When the smoke settles, Batman rises from the rubble with Jason in his arms - DEAD.

8) The Robin costume is sealed in a glass case and hung in the Batcave.

9) Superman stands at the head of the Justice League table, surrounded by his peers. Batman stands opposite him. Though we can't hear their conversation, they're having the kind of argument that dissolves friendships.

Batman walks out.

Losing his cool, Superman flicks the table, throwing it across the room.

10) Dick tosses his black costume into a roaring fireplace. Barbara wraps her arms around him. She's confined to a WHEELCHAIR.

11) *BANG!* Batman is shot in the chest.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM - PADDED CELL

Dick awakens, still strapped in a straightjacket. The door opens and O'Hara enters.

O'HARA

You're lucky no one escaped. That would've added a few more indictments to the list.

DICK

Get this thing off me.



O'HARA

I've taken the liberty of calling your wife. She's already at the station and she's not all that pleased.

DICK

You stay away from my family!

O'HARA

It'll be you who has to stay away. You're going to jail, Dick. This stunt was the last of it.

(to the guards)

Bring him to County and have him booked. Four-man surveillance at all times.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Dick goes through processing, undergoing mug shots and fingerprints. Seconds later, he's locked inside a...

JAIL CELL

The door echoes as it closes.

FADE TO BLACK:

The darkness becomes a black robe belonging to a JUDGE. We are in...

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Dick stands beside a court appointed lawyer as the arraignment plays out.

JUDGE

Let the record show that the defendant has entered a plea of guilty on all twenty-six charges pending against him. This court will reconvene three weeks from today, on April fifth at eleven o'clock, to carry out sentencing. In agreement with the prosecution, bail is set for five million dollars.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Five million dollars?! Your Honor, this is my client's first offense--

JUDGE

His first of *twenty-six* offenses. Bail is set for five million dollars. Court is adjourned.

The gavel bangs.

INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - LATER

Chief O'Hara shakes hands with the prosecutor as the defense attorney watches from a distance.

A man in a wheelchair approaches the defense attorney.

ALFRED

That was five million, was it?

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - DAY

Barbara looks out the window to see a black sedan pull up to the house. Dick exits the car.

BETHANY

I can't find my red sweater.

BARBARA

I have your blue one. Let's go.

BETHANY

But I want my red-

BARBARA

NOW.

Bethany follows in her mother's lead and exits the house via the side door.

IN THE DRIVEWAY

The two get in the car.

BARBARA

Seat belt.

Bethany buckles in, when-

BETHANY

Daddy!

Bethany undoes her seat belt and rolls down her window.

BARBARA

Put your seat belt back on.

BETHANY

Why?

BARBARA

PUT IT ON.

Dick notices the SUITCASES piled in the back seat.

DICK

Barb, wait...

BETHANY

Hi Daddy.

BARBARA

(to Bethany)

I will NOT tell you again!

Bethany buckles in as Barbara puts the car in reverse.

DICK

Barb, I need your help. I can't do this alone.

BARBARA

I won't be a part of it, Dick. Not again.

She pulls away, leaving him in the driveway.

INT. GRAYSON HOUSE - BATHROOM

A mirror swings back into place. Dick's shaven off his beard.

INT. BATCAVE

Dick slaps a RED FILE to the table. It reads WAYNE ENTERPRISES, DONATIONS. He pours through it, searching.

His finger comes to rest on a company called GOTHAM SECURITIES. Their allotted donation: thirty-four million.

ALFRED (O.S.)

Master Dick, Mr. Gordon is here, sir.

DICK

Any luck on that chip?

ALFRED. (O.S.)

Some. The computer has identified the damage, but it may take some time to reconstruct.

DICK

Stay on it.

ALFRED (O.S.)

Of course, sir. And Mr. Gordon?

DICK

Let him in.

Dick sits at the Bat computer and types in "Gotham Securities."

Gordon enters the cave. Having never been down here, he's a bit overwhelmed.

GORDON

My god. He always called it a cave, but I thought he was kidding.

DICK

Gotham Securities, ever hear of it?

GORDON

Um - should I have?

Dick hands him the file.

DICK

No address, no employees. Just an offshore account.

GORDON

Dick, I know you don't want to hear this right now, but I think you need to take a deep breath and just - sit down for a moment.

Dick isn't listening.

GORDON

Dick...

DICK

Son of a bitch did it right under  
our noses...

Gordon slams the file to the table.

GORDON

HEY. I've gone down this road.  
Lost it all... hell, thought I lost  
my mind. Not a day goes by when I  
don't think of it. My daughter,  
lying in all that blood...

Gordon shakes off the memory.

GORDON

You listen to me. You need to  
think about Barbara now. Think  
about your marriage - of what this  
could do to Bethany. *Is it worth  
losing your family over?*

Alfred wheels into the room, short of breath.

DICK

What?

ALFRED

*He's escaped.*

CUT TO:

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM

A group of GUARDS IN RIOT GEAR open cell #42. Guns drawn, they approach an inmate wrapped in a straightjacket and hunched in the corner. To their surprise, it's not the Joker - it's a prison guard.

BACK TO:

INT. BATCAVE

GORDON

Oh my god.

ALFRED

He must've escaped during your escapade the other night.

DICK

*Barbara.*

Gordon picks up a phone and dials out...

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Barbara's cell phone rings, only it's in the car. She and Bethany can be seen walking toward a bustling market.

INT. BATCAVE

GORDON

She's not answering.

Dick rips a covering off the BAT CYCLE. He punches the ignition and the engine roars to life.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Flower vendors, vegetable stands, juggling clowns - with so much excitement, Barbara doesn't notice the one CLOWN making his way toward them.

INTERCUT

-The Bat cycle blasts to the street and tears down the road.

-The clown stalks closer...

-Dick steers through traffic at breakneck speed. He activates the magnesium afterburners. The speedometer jumps from 120 to 250.

-Barbara turns for a split second and Bethany's gone.

BARBARA

Bethany?

Dick zooms onto the scene and skids to a stop, the tires smoking. The sight of him on the Bat cycle sends a chill through Barbara's veins.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

A Xerox machine copies Bethany's picture, adding to a stack of leaflets already printed.

Dick paces as cops mill about.

DICK

I need to get out of here.

COP #1

We're doing everything we can.



DICK

I'm telling you, I can find him.

COP #1

You're likely to put yourself or your daughter's life at further risk.

DICK

You're not listening to me!

COP #1

No, you're not listening! Now get some coffee, pull up a chair and have a seat, 'cause you're not going anywhere.

Barbara exits from a room full of investigators, her face swollen from crying. She locks eyes with Dick and approaches.

*SLAP* - her hand comes across his face. She tries to hit him again but the cops intervene.

BARBARA

You bastard!

She goes hysterical, crying and screaming. It takes three men to restrain her. They usher her into another room and close the door.

The commotion draws O'Hara into the room.

Dick lunges at him. He only gets a hand on O'Hara's shoulder before a swarm of cops tackle him against the nearest desk.

DICK

You did this! First Batman--

O'HARA

Get him out of here!

DICK  
AND NOW MY DAUGHTER!

O'HARA  
Put him somewhere to cool off!

The officers drag Dick down the hall and throw him into a...

JAIL CELL

The door to the cell locks shut. Dick stares back at them, chest heaving.

COP #1  
Let me get you that coffee.

The cops head back the way they came, chatting among themselves.

COP #2  
You alright?

COP #3  
Yeah, he tagged me good though.

COP #1  
Hard to believe that guy's Robin.

COP #2  
Yeah, didn't put up much of a fight.

Cop #1 feels his pockets.

COP #2  
Lose somethin'?

Cop #1 races back down the hall. He rounds the corner to see Dick's jail cell open, his KEYS in the door.

INT. POLICE STATION - ROOF

A POLICE HELICOPTER touches down on a landing pad.

Dick kicks the pilot from his seat and takes the chopper airborne, barely escaping an army of cops racing out to stop him. However, he doesn't get away unscathed.

The cops open fire, puncturing the fuselage - leaking gas.

EXT. GOTHAM SKYLINE - NIGHT

Dick flies out of the city, leaving Gotham behind him. He grabs the radio.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

The Flash sits at the League computer, his costume on, save for the mask. He reads a comic book and snacks on potato chips when a call squeaks across the radio...

DICK (RADIO)

Rider, zero, Krypton, yellow, five.

Rider, zero, Krypton, yellow, five.

Aquaman hears it too.

FLASH

What the hell is that?

AQUAMAN

That's an old distress signal.

Open the hanger.

Suddenly the words "GOTHAM ALERT" appear on the GIANT SCREEN overhanging the room. Aquaman flips a switch on the console, giving view to O'Hara.

AQUAMAN

Go ahead, Commissioner.

O'HARA (TRANSMISSION)

It appears we have a situation.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME

O'Hara stands in front of a camera.

O'HARA

Dick Grayson has violated his parole and stolen a police helicopter. We believe he's headed in your direction. However, to avoid a conflict of interest, you are not to intervene. The authorities in your area have my complete confidence. Thank you and that is all.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

O'Hara's image switches off. The Flash sits back in his seat.

FLASH

This should be interesting.

INT. HELICOPTOR - SAME

Dick nears the Hall of Justice - two hundred yards up ahead.

DICK

Rider, zero, Krypton-

The FUEL LIGHT comes on and the engine sputters.

DICK  
Holy shit.

INT. JUSTICE LEAGUE - SAME

Aquaman watches on the JLA monitor as the chopper starts to pitch.

AQUAMAN  
Good lord.

FLASH  
Don't get any ideas. You heard  
O'Hara.

AQUAMAN  
That's Dick Grayson up there!

FLASH  
Not for long.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

The chopper drops from the sky. Dick straps on his seat belt as *KA-RAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!*

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

FLASH  
Guess we're due for a new  
fountain.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

Dick stumbles from the wreck, a wicked cut across his left eye. He hurries to the main entrance and pounds on the door. Only, he's not alone...

POLICE

Dick Grayson, you're completely surrounded! Put your hands in the air and turn around!

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

FLASH

(chuckling)

How's he gonna get out of this.

Aquaman marches toward the door.

In the blink of an eye, the Flash crosses the room, putting himself between Aquaman and the door.

AQUAMAN

Get out of the way, Barry.

FLASH

I don't think so.

AQUAMAN

Step aside.

FLASH

You're gonna have to do better than that, old man.

AQUAMAN

I said, *STEP ASIDE*.

Aquaman angles his stare.

FLASH

Ha... save that telepathy shit for the fish.

The Flash suddenly feels a dizzying sensation. His expression goes blank and he steps out of the way.

AQUAMAN

Works on whales too, asshole.

EXT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

The cops close in on Dick, when--

The door slides open, allowing Dick inside. The door quickly closes behind him.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - SAME

AQUAMAN

You alright?

Dick nods yes and spots the Flash just standing there, dazed.

AQUAMAN

You wanna clock him, now's your chance.

DICK

Tempting.

The POLICE can be heard pounding on the door.

POLICE (O.S.)

Attention Justice League members,  
you are harboring a wanted man...

DICK

I need to get back to the cave.  
Does the passage still work?

AQUAMAN

Your guess is as good as mine.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE - HANGER

Aquaman leads Dick into the hanger filled with old Batman equipment. They approach a thin, ROCKET-SHAPED POD resting on a track.

AQUAMAN

Let's hope there's power.

Dick brushes away the cobwebs and pushes a button. Nothing happens.

AQUAMAN

No luck.

DICK

I can run a patch.  
(to the Batmobile)  
Atomic batteries to power.

The classic Batmobile of the 60's revs to life. Dick pops the hood and runs a cable from the car engine to the rocket-pod console.

DICK

Try it again.

Aquaman flicks a switch and the rocket-pod hums with power. Dick opens the cockpit and shakes Aquaman's hand.

DICK

Thanks, Arthur.

AQUAMAN

Anytime-

*WHACK* - a whirl of red catches Aquaman in the jaw, knocking him cold.

*WHAM* - Dick is kicked to the floor. His assailant, none other than...



FLASH

Hey there, Dick. Good to see ya.

*BAM* - he hits Dick with another lightning fast punch.

DICK

Barry... my daughter...

FLASH

Yeah, I got a few myself. So I've heard.

He delivers three more punches that leave Dick gasping for air.

DICK

*Don't... make me... hurt you.*

*KRACK* - the Flash wallops him again.

FLASH

There it is, that attitude.

Dick crawls toward the pod, his nose bleeding.

FLASH

Bruce had the same thing. Always made me want to set the record straight, show you what it means to have real power.

Dick tries to fight back, but he's no match. The Flash pummels him to the ground.

FLASH

So much for that attitude, eh Dick? What's the matter? Nothin' else to say?

What the Flash doesn't realize is--

Dick has lead him around to the tail of the BATMOBILE.  
Through swollen lips, Dick utters...

DICK  
*Turbines to speed.*

The Batmobile registers his VOICE COMMAND and the engine ignites, engulfing the Flash in FLAMES.

FLASH  
AHHHHHHHH!

Dick grabs a nearby tarp and helps smother the flames. The Flash will live, however he'll be moving a lot slower.

Dick climbs into the pod. He closes the cockpit and straps in. A push of the button sends the pod whizzing down the track.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

A rotting SKELETON in a pink dress lies in a casket.

The coffin lay six feet below the earth and is marked by a conservative headstone that reads "BELOVED WIFE, LOIS KENT." It's a disturbing sight, seen only by one man...

Superman stares down at the grave, his x-ray vision providing more then we'd care to see.

His comm glows red and he launches skyward.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Superman descends out of the night sky. O'Hara is waiting.

O'HARA  
This ends now. Do you understand  
me? I want him OUT of the  
equation!

INT. BATCAVE

The pod comes zipping into the cave and makes an abrupt stop. Alfred and Gordon are there to greet him.

GORDON

Dick! Thank god you're alive. We heard about the crash.

DICK

Any visitors?

ALFRED

Plenty.

DICK

Initiate defenses and get me the Pulse.

ALFRED

Very good, sir.

Alfred flicks a dozen switches...

OUTSIDE WAYNE MANOR

MACHINE GUNS lift from the lawn and open fire. The encroaching SWAT team runs for cover.

INSIDE THE BATCAVE

GORDON

Guns? I thought Bruce was against-

ALFRED

He was. I wasn't.

Alfred opens a chamber filled with dated electronic gadgetry. He pulls a RADAR-SCOPE from the shelf.

GORDON  
What's that?

DICK  
Homing beacon.

Dick throws in a new battery. It beeps to life.

GORDON  
To what?

DICK  
The Joker.

GORDON  
How?

ALFRED  
It's sewn inside him.

GORDON  
What?! When...

ALFRED  
Years ago. After Barbara was shot.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - FOYER

The Joker shoots Barbara.

BACK TO:

INT. BATCAVE

ALFRED  
Master Bruce was adamant that the  
Joker would never cause anyone harm  
again.

Gordon is floored - sewn *inside* the Joker? Wow.

DICK  
Alfred, power up The Beast.

ALFRED  
Right away, sir.

Dick opens a chamber filled with ROBIN ATTIRE - boots, gloves, capes...

DICK  
Jim, I want you to stay here and get a call into the Editor and Chief of the Gotham Times.

GORDON  
And say what?

DICK  
Let him know...

He opens a special vault - home to his original ROBIN VEST.

DICK  
...there was another man on the roof that night.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

O'Hara steps from the shadows, his gun drawn and pointed at the Joker.

BACK TO:

INT. BATCAVE

Dick selects an assortment of Robin armor from the vault.

DICK

O'Hara hires Selina to free the Joker. Bruce takes the bait and when he's not expecting it...

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

BATMAN steps from the shadows. He nears O'Hara, who suddenly turns...

*BANG* - the barrel goes off an inch from Batman's chest.

BACK TO:

INT. BATCAVE

GORDON

O'Hara? What's his motive?

DICK

He's been second in command his whole career. Even with your retirement, if it's power he's after, then Batman has to die.

Dick pushes over the case enshrining the Robin uniform. It CRASHES to the floor, glass shattering.

GORDON

Do you have any proof?

DICK

Gotham Securities - a dummy corporation set up to receive money from the Wayne foundation. The same money O'Hara used to hire Selina. Link O'Hara to Gotham Securities...

Dick grabs the utility belt off the floor.

DICK  
...and we catch our killer.

EXT. WAYNE MANOR - NIGHT

The cops take the offensive and drive a HUMVEE into the iron gates. Surprisingly, the gates hold.

HUMVEE CAPTAIN  
Back it up, we'll hit it again-

Suddenly the Humvee is caught in the lights of an oncoming vehicle. Too bad for them, this is no car...

A SECRET PASSAGE gives way to an armor-plated vehicle with tank-like treads. THE BEAST, as it's appropriately called, plows through the gates - launching the Humvee airborne.

Treads churning, the Beast takes to the street, mowing over everything in its way.

Two POLICE HELICOPTERS give chase.

HELICOPTOR PILOT  
We've got him. Moving south by  
south-east towards Gotham Harbor.

AT THE POLICE STATION

O'Hara grabs the radio.

O'HARA  
Do NOT lose him. That is an order!

GOTHAM HARBOR

HELICOPTOR PILOT

Copy that. We're on him.

The pilots aren't prepared for the Beast to drive off the pier and vanish beneath the Gotham River.

UNDERWATER

Fully suited up, ROBIN steers the Beast along the bottom of the riverbed. His tracking device shows the Joker on the move.

INT. JOKER'S HIDEAWAY

Mold and broken windows make up this one story house.

The Joker exits the bathroom clutching his abdomen, his stark white hands covered in BLOOD.

Bethany sits on the couch, snacking on a spindle of cotton candy. For the first time, she becomes afraid.

JOKER

There there, don't be frightened.  
My girls love children.

TWO LEATHER CLAD, WHITE-SKINNED JOKER GIRLS step out of the back room. The Joker's laugh echoes over...

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

The Beast surfaces and takes to the city streets, closing in on the Joker's location. The tracking device leads to...



THE JOKER'S HIDEAWAY

Robin springs from the tank and dives into the house through a plate glass window. He rolls to his feet and spies--

Bethany's SWEATER on the floor.

As soon as Robin grabs it, the floor gives way, dropping him into...

THE BASEMENT

Wicked traps line the hall.

Robin makes his way through a sinister maze, dodging darts and ducking axes.

The last room he enters is filled with purple and green BALLOONS. To his horror, something beneath the balloons GROWLS and tramples closer.

It's a white TIGER with green stripes. It pounces!

INT. BATCAVE

Gordon climbs into the rocket-shaped pod.

ALFRED

I do believe Master Dick meant for  
you to stay here...

WOOSH - too late, Gordon is sent zipping underground.

INT. JOKER'S PLAYHOUSE

The tiger slumps to the floor, a needle stabbed into its neck.

Robin gets to his feet. His cape's torn to hell and claw marks run the length of both arms, but he's still breathing.

Panic sets in at the sight of--

The HOMING BEACON sewn into the Joker - now removed.

EXT. JOKER'S HIDEAWAY

Robin races out of the house. He leaps onto a mailbox, bounds across a moving bus and flips onto a lamp post. Perched above the street, a row of POSTERS catch his eye - advertisements for--

The CIRCUS.

EXT. CIRCUS - PARKING LOT

The Joker steers his white '73 Cadillac into a parked car, generating a hardy laugh.

His girls gleefully pull Bethany out of the trunk.

JOKER

(singing)

The wheels on the bus go 'round and  
'round...

He grabs Bethany by the hair and drags her toward the big tent.

INT. HALL OF JUSTICE

The rocket-pod comes zipping to a stop and Gordon climbs out, dizzy.

GORDON

*Too old for this.*

He spots the FLASH and AQUAMAN both splayed across the floor and is startled by the arrival of--

GREEN LANTERN

What happened here?

EXT. CITY STREETS

The Beast skids around a corner at an alarming speed, when suddenly, the roof peels back, revealing--

WONDER WOMAN. She yanks Robin from the vehicle and throws him to the asphalt.

Robin tries to get away, when he's ensnared by a GLOWING LASSO. Its pulsating hum overwhelms his nervous system, paralyzing his muscles.

WONDER WOMAN

Don't fight it, it'll only hurt  
more.

She yanks him by the collar and marches down the street, his feet dangling in the air.

ROBIN

*Diana, please. The Joker... has...  
my daughter.*

WONDER WOMAN

And I'll do everything in my power  
to get her back - right after I  
turn you over to the authorities.

ROBIN

*There isn't time. You have to...  
let me go.*

WONDER WOMAN

I'm sorry, Dick, but you've crossed  
the line. Right now, you're no  
better than the rest of them.

*POWWW* - the Beast plows into her.

Freed of her lasso, Robin looks to the Beast, surprised to see CATWOMAN at the helm. She bulldozes Wonder Woman into a building, knocking the amazon cold.

CATWOMAN

*Republican bitch.*

Catwoman hops to the street and helps Robin to his feet.

CATWOMAN

You can thank me later.

A HAND comes from out of nowhere and grabs Catwoman by the neck.

IT'S SUPERMAN. He bangs her head against a block of cement and drops her to the sidewalk. His eyes shift to Robin.

SUPERMAN

Easy boy.

ROBIN

Stay out of this, Clark!

SUPERMAN

You're coming with me.

Robin musters all his strength and lays into Superman with a right hook. We hear BONES SNAP.

SUPERMAN

All that optimism just cost you  
your wrist.

Out come the BATARANGS. Robin hurls four, one right after another.

Superman catches the first three and lets the fourth one continue past.

SUPERMAN

Are we done playing?

ROBIN

Just about.

The fourth Batarang cuts through an ELECTRICAL CABLE and sends the wire swinging down. It strikes Superman, erupting in sparks and forcing him to his knees.

When the fireworks subside, the power's gone out across five city blocks and Superman lies in the street, smoldering.

Robin heads for the Beast. Only...

Superman recovers. He slams his FIST into the cement, cracking it like porcelain. The crevice zigzags up the pavement, caving in the street and dropping the Beast into a gaping fissure.

Robin rolls to safety and tries to get away, however--

Superman grabs hold of him. His fingers curl around the emblem on Robin's vest, a grip no earthly power could pry free of, when--

WHAAACK - a ghostly, GREEN WRECKING BALL wallops into Superman, tearing the "R" clean off Robin's vest and sending the Man of Steel into the nearest building.

GREEN LANTERN has arrived. Gordon's with him.

GREEN LANTERN

Sorry we're late.

Gordon goes to Robin's side.

GORDON

Good god, are you alright?

ROBIN

*Bethany...*

GORDON

Where is she?

ROBIN

*He's taken her...*

GORDON

Taken her where?

ROBIN

*The circus.*

GORDON

The circus? Are you sure?

Superman lifts from the rubble.

ROBIN

(to Gordon)

Get out of here.

GORDON

Not without you.

ROBIN

It's me he's after.

GORDON

Dick...

ROBIN

JIM, GO GET MY DAUGHTER.

Gordon doesn't need to be told again. He heads off down the street.

GREEN LANTERN

I think I'll stick around.

Superman draws closer.

SUPERMAN

Is there a problem, Hal?

GREEN LANTERN

I see I got your attention.

SUPERMAN

For your sake I was hoping that was an accident.

GREEN LANTERN

The Joker's got Dick's daughter!

SUPERMAN

It's always some excuse.

GREEN LANTERN

Listen to me-

SUPERMAN

Not this time.

He pushes Green Lantern aside and reaches for Robin, when--

*ZUMMP* - a GREEN CAGE incases Superman.

GREEN LANTERN

This can go one of two ways.  
Either you get your priorities in line, or I line them up for you.

Superman grabs hold of the bars - bending them and stepping free.

SUPERMAN

Cute. Now stay out of my way.

GREEN LANTERN

Maybe you didn't hear me.

Green Lantern spawns a towering GREEN CANNON aimed straight down at Superman.

SUPERMAN

Oh I heard you - and I respect your opinion...

ZIP - Superman is instantly behind him, locking Green Lantern in a CHOKE HOLD.

SUPERMAN

But you forget your place.

BOOM! The cannon fires. It misses Superman but tears through the street.

The force of the blast knocks Superman and Green Lantern through a row of cement pillars, shattering the foundation of a fifty-story building.

Despite the damage, Superman maintains his grip around Green Lantern's throat. When--

WHAM! A gargantuan GREEN SLEDGEHAMMER slams into Superman, driving him beneath the pavement.

Struggling to catch his breath, Green Lantern locks eyes with Robin.

GREEN LANTERN

GO!

Robin commandeers a HORSE from a city policeman.

ROBIN

*Can't ride a horse, eh...*

As he jumps into the saddle, the animal kicks.



ROBIN

Whoa! Hey now... stop - HEY!

He pulls back on the reins, stopping the horse in its tracks. Leaning closer he whispers...

ROBIN

*You're gonna prove my wife wrong.*

With a swift kick, the steed springs into an all out run. Fully in control, Robin rides the horse through the bustling city-scape, leaving behind...

SUPERMAN, who punches up through the street. There's an unsettling look in his eye as he wipes the asphalt from his lips and hovers off the ground.

However, before he can give chase, a massive GREEN SNAKE wraps around his wrist. As more of it comes into view, we discover...

This is no snake. It's a colossal GREEN ELEPHANT - a fearsome creation of Green Lantern's ring.

The elephant's trunk tightens around Superman's arm and begins wielding him like a mace, flattening cars as if they were made out of tin.

Pedestrians scurry for cover as the two warring titans wreak havoc across the city.

INT. CIRCUS - SAME

The Joker steps into the center of the ring. He drags Bethany behind him, disrupting the show. Assuming it's part of the act, the audience applauds.

Entering the tent is...

GORDON

BETHANY!

The Joker heads for the trapeze. Gordon tries to follow, but the Joker Girls are on him.

They dish out a flurry of kicks that send Gordon back against an EMPTY CAGE.

The cage door swings inward, taking Gordon with it. They both follow in after him and try for another kick--

Gordon moves and swings the cage shut, locking them inside. As it turns out, the cage isn't empty after all. A LION steps out of the darkness and widens its jaws. Meanwhile...

AT THE TOP OF THE TRAPEZE

The Joker shoots an acrobat at the top of the platform and sends him falling. The audience goes into a state of panic.

Gordon climbs the spiraling stairwell. Before he can reach the platform, the Joker gives the high bar a push and grabs Bethany by the back of her shirt.

JOKER

On three! One - two - six - eight -  
HA HA HA! THREE!

Gordon doesn't make it to the platform in time.

GORDON

NOOOOOO!

The Joker hurls Bethany toward the high bar!

Her fingers outstretch--

But don't grab hold.

Luckily, a BAT CABLE winds around her leg. The other end of the cable ensnares the high bar and sends her rocking back and forth high above the circus floor.

The Joker looks down to see--

ROBIN mid-way up the spiraling staircase. He rips off his mask and calls to his daughter.

ROBIN  
Hang on, Bethany!

JOKER  
THAT'S NOT FUNNY!

The Joker leans over the platform and opens fire--

*BANG* - Robin takes a bullet in his thigh.

*BANG* - he takes another to the shoulder.

GORDON  
NOOOOOOO!

Gordon tackles the Joker. They wrestle for the gun--

*BANG!* The gun goes off, shattering the high bar.

The two halves of the bar swing out wildly, causing the Bat cable to unravel, Bethany just seconds away from falling to her death.

Crazed, Gordon tightens his grip around the Joker's throat.

GORDON  
That bullet was meant for you!  
THAT BULLET WAS MEANT FOR YOU!

Robin's face goes white as he makes the realization...

INT. BATCAVE

Alfred makes an adjustment to the audio chip and the Bat computer commences playback. FLASHBACKS follow...

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

It's not Chief O'Hara, but rather--

GORDON who steps out of the shadows and aims his gun at an unsuspecting Joker.

To his disappointment--

BATMAN swings onto the scene. Before his cape can even settle, his knuckles meet with the Joker's chin.

Sent airborne, the Joker lands on a SKYLIGHT, shattering the glass and falling twenty feet to the floor below.

Wiping the sweat from his eyes, Gordon hurries to the hole in the rooftop and sees the Joker lying face down in a pile of debris, his leg broken at the knee.

Oblivious to the threat looming over him, the Joker cackles like a wounded hyena.

JOKER

HA HA HA HA!

Again, Gordon raises his gun.

BATMAN

Jim, put down the gun.

GORDON

This has to end!

BATMAN

And it will. Just give me the gun.

GORDON

NO! He'll just escape again! And when he does, more families will be made to suffer!

Images of BARBARA LYING IN A MESS OF BLOOD flash through Gordon's mind.

GORDON

He needs to pay for all the blood  
he's spilled! For all the pain  
he's caused!

A Church bell strikes the hour.

BATMAN

He'll pay, but not like that. Put  
the gun down.

GORDON

He needs to die... HE NEEDS TO DIE!

BATMAN

Jim...

Tears cascade down Gordon's face as he lowers the gun.

GORDON

*I... I...*

Batman reaches for the gun, when--

A vision of BARBARA LYING IN A POOL OF BLOOD flashes through Gordon's mind. He tenses...

*BANG!*

Both Gordon and Batman are equally horrified.

Batman slips backwards and falls off the roof. Gordon watches from the ledge as Batman hits the pavement, narrowly crushing a homeless man beneath him.

Gordon pulls back from the ledge so not to be seen. A surge of fear and anger sweep through him as he hurries to the hole in the rooftop, only to discover--

The Joker is gone. Sirens can be heard in the distance.

CUT TO:

INT. GORDON'S HOUSE

The sink faucet turns on. Upon closer look, Gordon wasn't doing the dishes when he got the call about Batman's death - he was washing the BLOOD from his hands.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK

Dick spots Gordon managing his check book - at a closer look, the top of the check reads: GOTHAM SECURITIES.

BACK TO:

INT. CIRCUS

Robin and Gordon locks eyes.

GORDON

It was an accident. You have to believe me... AN ACCIDENT!

The Joker muscles the gun against Gordon's chest--

*BANG!* Gordon pulls away from the Joker, a circle of red widening across his shirt. His eyes beg for forgiveness as he steps off the platform and reaches for Bethany.

*SNAP!* Her cable gives way--

Gordon dives after her, the ground quickly making its way toward them.

He catches her and pivots to his back, absorbing the impact.

JOKER

HA HA HA! TWO FOR THE PRICE OF  
ONE!

Robin looks down at the circus floor. Gordon and Bethany lie without moving.

ROBIN

NO!

JOKER

OH YES! AND IT'S TIME YOU JOINED  
THEM!

The Joker aims his gun at Robin's face when--

**A BAT-SHAPED FIGURE** swoops down and knocks the Joker off his feet. No it's not Batman...

It's BATGIRL.

Barbara's dressed in uniform, her hair spilling out the back. She proceeds to beat the Joker senseless.

Before she's through, she grabs him by the collar and leans him over the platform. Lucky for him, her husband spots--

ROBIN

Bethany!

Barbara looks down to see Bethany squirming. She's alive.

Barbara opts for cuffing the Joker to the railing and goes to her husband's side.

BATGIRL

Dick...

ROBIN

I'm okay. Go.

Barbara clamps a Bat cable and repels to the circus floor. Her mask comes off and she embraces Bethany.

Suddenly, the tent comes ripping inward as Superman drives Green Lantern into the earth.

The trapeze supports rupture, sending Robin and the platform to the floor.

The chaos of it all sends the Joker into a laughing craze. He roars in delirium - that is, until a trapeze WIRE snaps loose and--

*SCHLUNK* - severs his head from his neck.

When the dust settles, Green Lantern lay unconscious. Superman proves the victor, though he doesn't look it. Bruises pock his face and nothing's left of his cape.

In his hand he holds Green Lantern's RING - which he crushes and throws it to the dirt.

Enraged, he grabs Robin by the throat.

Barbara tries to stop him, however--

Superman SLAPS her to the floor.

BETHANY

No!

Bethany rushes to her father's side. Despite all the fighting, it's the sight of this little girl that awakens Superman from his frenzied state.

Feeling the eyes of the crowd, Superman lets Robin go and slumps down beside him.

The two men sit without speaking. The future uncertain.

THE END