

Batman: Reunion

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Batman Reunion

FADE IN:

EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM -- NIGHT

The gothic Arkham Asylum sits amongst the forests of the dark countryside.

INSIDE

The hips and ass of a perfectly sculpted curvaceous woman strut down one of the brightly lit white and green halls of Arkham Asylum. She wears an obscenely tight white and red nurse's outfit, her skirt barely covering her ample backside.

In front of her seductive hips, she pushes an empty wheelchair.

She struts down hall after hall of the huge labyrinth sized Arkham. As she walks, she passes numerous orderlies and doctors along with gray uniformed armed security officers.

Each male she passes can't help but stare at the lust inspiring nurse, each woman staring and MUTTERING under her breath in uncontrollable envy.

The NURSE approaches a large Plexiglas wall cutting the hall in half, a large Plexiglas door in it's center. Within the door and wall, six large two-inch diameter locking bars can be seen along with the door's internal circuitry.

The nurse stops.

She reaches into a small pocket on the back of the wheelchair.

She produces a small remote control device which she immediately presses a button on.

A BUZZ can be heard and the door unlocks, the metal bars now floating solely in the door.

The nurse smiles and continues on through the door.

MAXIMUM SECURITY WING -- MOMENTS LATER

The nurse walks down more of Arkham's countless hallways, but now the once green walls have been replaced by light orange ones.

She and her wheelchair approach two armed security guards, one sits behind a large counter while the other man sits in a wooden chair on the other side of the hall. Both men casually TALK and JOKE with each other.

Next to the man in the wooden chair, an assault rifle sits propped up against the wall.

The man behind the desk reads a magazine and looks up to RESPOND and LAUGH with his partner.

The guard in the chair spots the approaching nurse out of the corner of his eye, quickly turning to see her better. Again, his gender cannot help but react.

He makes a SOUND to get the other guards attention.

The other guard looks up from his magazine, joining the uncontrollable stare.

NURSE

Howdy boys.

The nurse's smile is huge, almost impossibly so, her bright red lips framing her brilliantly white teeth. Her hair is a silky blonde and she wears it in two pigtails which sprout from her head like golden fountains.

NURSE (CONT'D)

I gotta a question or two-

As she speaks, the nurse kicks a pedal on the back of the wheelchair and pulls up on the chair's handles. Both slide out revealing two long silenced custom made pistols.

NURSE (CONT'D)

-mind if I shoot away.

The guards eyes are large with panic. Both go for their guns but the nurse guns them down, LAUGHING hysterically.

MOMENTS LATER

The nurse walks by the rows of cell doors, the wheelchair again in front of her, the handles replaced.

Like the rest of the asylum, the cells have a Plexiglas wall and door with the same visible steel locking mechanism within it.

Within each cell is a cot protruding from the wall.

NURSE

Let's see, door number one?

Within the first cell sits a short round balding man in the standard inmate garb. He sits in a chair reading a book entitled, "Southern Migration." His face is hidden in shadow but light reflects off of a glass monocle on his right eye.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Door number two?

She walks by another cell, appearing empty.

And by another.

Within the third cell, a figure masked in shadow lays on his cot. His black shoes the only thing exposed in the light.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Or door number three?

As she passes the third door, she removes a small liquid filled balloon animal in the shape of a flower from a hidden compartment in the wheelchair.

She gently places it in the cell door handle.

INSERT BALLOON: A small black cube floats inside the liquid filled balloon.

BACK TO SCENE

The nurse backs up so she can see all three doors.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Well, Bob. I think I'm gonna have to go with door number three.

Immediately she presses a button on the wheelchair handle and the balloon explodes, acid splashing across the door and handle.

Smoke fills the hall as the corrosive liquid eats through the plastic and steel.

SECURITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

An alarm flashes and RINGS in the large security room.

CCTV camera's monitor every corner of the asylum, three of which show the nurse and the smoking door.

A large burly hand flips a switch and the ALARM is SILENCED.

A large thug, BRUNO, dressed as a janitor sits behind a large desk watching the camera's.

Spread out around the room are the still bodies of four armed security guards and bullet holes dot the walls.

Bruno turns off the three monitors showing the nurse, stands and exits the room.

MAXIMUM SECURITY WING -- CONTINUOUS

The acid quickly destroys the door handle and steel lock. The nurse pushes the smoking cell door open easily and enters with the wheelchair.

The shadowy figure sits up on his cot, only his eyes can now be seen.

JOKER

Baby, you're smokin'!

MOMENTS LATER

The nurse pushes the JOKER through the halls of Arkham in the wheelchair, the Joker's face is never visible.

The two pass by a gate, on the floor, lay three dead guards. Bullet holes riddle the walls and windows.

JOKER (O.S.)

Harley dear, what a mess you've made.

NURSE

Well, they couldn't keep their eyes to themselves, so...

JOKER (O.S.)

Let me guess, so you shot them a look. HA,HA,HA,HA!!

Both LAUGH hysterically.

LOADING DOCK -- MOMENTS LATER

The nurse wheels the Joker out the loading dock door where a white van sits waiting.

Another very large thug dressed as a janitor, RUSTY, stands at the rear of the van and as the two approach, he opens the van's back doors.

Bruno sits behind the wheel of the vehicle, he watches in the side mirror.

The Joker hops out of his wheelchair and steps into the back of the van.

The nurse follows suit and Rusty folds the chair up and loads it into the van.

Rusty climbs inside. The van drives away as he closes the back doors behind him.

EXT. ARKHAM ASYLUM DRIVE -- NIGHT

The white van cruises down the narrow winding country drive away from the large castle like Arkham Asylum sitting upon it's peak, overlooking the heavily wooded countryside.

A bolt of lightning cuts the sky in half.

TITLE CREDITS BEGIN

Title credits roll over various moving aerial shots of Gotham City. Within the credits, all of the future locations in the movie are seen.

END CREDITS

EXT. NIGHTCLUB -- NIGHT

A nice black limo pulls up outside a large exclusive club. Outside long lines of lavishly dressed civilians fill the sidewalk, all hoping for their chance to get inside.

Security is extraordinarily heavy, many of those flanking the door are wearing obvious body armor and only somewhat hidden firearms. They keep the waiting horde at bay, letting those on the guest list and those too beautiful to refuse inside.

A well dressed middle aged man climbs out of the limo, two beautiful women follow and slide onto his arms.

The man walks up to the guarded door, making eye contact with the lead door man, with a smile and a ceremonial opening of the velvet rope, the man and his women walk inside.

INSIDE

Inside the club the loud THUMPING of bass fills the air. Hundreds of well dressed men and women fill the club, dancing, TALKING and drinking copious amounts of alcohol.

The man and his women make their way through the mass of moving bodies.

They approach a booth just off of the dance floor.

Sitting within the large booth are numerous suited men and even more partially dressed women.

In the center of the group is DANNY VESPUCHI. Around the booth are numerous armed guards.

The newcomer and his dates stop in front of the table.

DANNY

Michael, welcome to my court.

MICHAEL

This is one hell of a club.

DANNY

You have no idea. Grab a seat, make some room ladies, have a drink. Tell me you have good news.

MICHAEL

Not good, great.

DANNY

That's all I needed to know, sit
down, relax and we'll talk business
later. Right now, enjoy yourself.

High above the club a large skylight sits squarely in the
center of the ceiling.

SKYLIGHT LEVEL

The boots of a well armed guard walk across the floor and
around the large skylight within it, below the crowds dance.

Above the pacing man, a matching skylight, directly in line
with the first sits, the moonlight glowing brightly in the
sky.

The rough guard wears dark jeans and black jacket. He carries
a Thompson machine gun in his hands. He walks relaxed but
alert.

The room is large, spanning the majority of this level of
the building.

At one end of the room is another armed guard, dressed
similarly.

Between them and throughout the room are numerous large pieces
of furniture, boxes and various things stored by the club
out of sight in the attic like room.

The first guard stops pacing and lowers his gun, allowing it
to hang on his shoulder and down at his side.

He pulls out a cigarette and lighter.

The guards SHOUT across the room at each other.

GUARD 1

Cold as hell up here.

GUARD 2

What? You say somethin'?

GUARD 1

Cold as hell up here.

(lights cig)

Freakin' fingers are sticking to the
gun.

GUARD 2

Correct me if I'm wrong, but to my
understanding, hell ain't exactly
cold. More like on fire or somethin'.

GUARD 1

Ha, ha, real freakin' funny. You know what I'm talkin' about. Alright then, I feel like an ice cube in Antarctica.

GUARD 2

Now that's cold.

Both begin to LAUGH.

GUARD 1

That's what I'm sayin'.

DOWNSTAIRS

Sweaty half naked bodies rub and grind themselves to the BEAT while Danny Vespuchi and MICHAEL COTHREN sit in their VIP booth surrounded by beautiful women and well dressed goons.

Danny takes a long sip of his drink, savoring the atmosphere he so loves.

DANNY

So Michael, what is this oh so great news you are so kind as to deliver to me personally.

MICHAEL

Well sir, I am pleased to inform you that we have officially unloaded the last container of merchandise as of 9:34 PM Eastern Standard Time. And cutting out all the fat, this concludes all of our business with the Red Claw syndicate and fills our pocket books with a net figure of twenty one million, six hundred fifty nine thousand two hundred and forty six god blessed American dollars.

DANNY

(smiling largely)

Michael my boy, the champagne's on me. Whatever your heart desires is yours, the house is covering the bill. Try some wine, some dancing and by all means, try some Candy.

Danny motions over to a sexy redhead with matching lipstick sitting in the large booth with them. She winks at the welcomed guest and smiles a seductress smile.

SKYLIGHT LEVEL

GUARD 2
You know what we need?

GUARD 1
What's that?

GUARD 2
Some of those dames downstairs.

GUARD 1
Now you're talkin'. That would get
our blood flowin'.

Again both LAUGH.

GUARD 2
Oh, how 'bout that hot number,
Veronica.

GUARD 1
Oh yeah.

Suddenly something grabs GUARD 2's attention.

He turns as he hears the sound of metal CLANKING against
metal outside one of the large windows.

GUARD 1 continues to TALK, unaware.

Guard 2 heads toward the window and the SOUNDS beyond. As
he approaches he readies his tommy gun. The SOUND of boots
on concrete can now be heard.

He leans in toward the large window when suddenly the window
shatters as the Bat-grapple shoots through and grabs hold of
the guard's gun.

The force of the impact SLAMS the gun into his chest and
knocks him off his feet.

The large man falls to the ground hard on his back, a MOAN
of intense pain forced out.

Guard 1 runs toward the scene when suddenly the Bat-grapple
yanks the gun from Guard 2's hands and whips through the air
in a wide arc.

Guard 1 turns to see the gun a half second before it SLAMS
into his face, knocking him out cold.

BATMAN'S black boots CRUNCH over broken glass as he walks
into the room, a cold breeze escorting him in. His cape
dances in the wind.

The large boots walk over to Guard 2's body, who struggles to catch his breath.

Seeing Batman the guard reaches for a holdout pistol.

Before he can reach it Batman puts the heel of his boot across the man's face, knocking him into unconsciousness.

Batman holds the Bat-grapple launcher in his hand. With a press of a button, the grapple releases the tommy gun and retracts back in lightning speed.

Batman attaches the grapple to his belt.

The boots continue on and stop at the edge of the large skylight window overlooking the first floor of the club.

Colored lights dance in the darkness.

DOWNSTAIRS

The gangsters all sit around their large table LAUGHING and partying.

GANGSTER

Waitress! Another round of shots
for my-

Suddenly the skylight explodes as the fear inspiring dark knight descends on the scene.

The gangsters' shield their eyes from the falling glass.

Batman lands on the large table with a CRASH.

Batman's sudden weight throws the far side of the table up into the air and into the gangsters' jaws.

SCREAMS ring out from nearby onlookers.

Throughout the club criminals draw their guns, but in usual fashion, Batman is already on the move.

One man catches a boot to the face as another is tackled.

Batman pitches another man into a table.

Guns begin firing from various areas of the club.

From out of the chaos, Bat-a-rangs stab into the hands of two gunmen. They drop their guns and clutch their wounds in pain.

A criminal gets Batman in his sights, firing round after round at the elusive crimefighter.

Batman jumps and weaves, avoiding each and every round.

Batman dives behind a bar as bullets riddle the other side.

He glances up at the ceiling and the elaborate steel lighting grid hanging from it.

Batman pulls the Bat-grapple from his belt and takes aim at one of the beams supporting eight large spotlights.

The grapple fires and clamps onto the metal working. With one solid pull, the supports give.

The sound of metal SCREECHING is heard as that part of the grid tears free and plummets to the club floor.

The gunman and party-goers leap for safety as the metal CRASHES into the floor.

Innocent civilians crowd around the exits as they try to escape the violence.

Amidst the chaos Batman is back in the shadows incapacitating thug after thug.

Soon the civilian crowds are gone and unconscious thugs and gangsters lay scattered throughout the club.

Michael hides under a table, sweat pouring down his face.

Suddenly he bolts from his hiding spot and runs toward one of the exits.

Before he makes it halfway, a bolo wraps around his ankles. His run is stopped instantly, his legs bound together.

Michael falls face first to the ground.

He GROANS in pain as he regains his breath, the lights in the club continue to dance.

Michael rolls onto his back, looking down at his bound ankles.

He quickly begins attempting to untie his legs.

Suddenly he stops as he looks out into the club.

From the shadows steps the black silhouette of Batman.

He walks slowly toward Michael, seemingly teleporting from shadow to shadow amidst the swirling lights.

BATMAN

Don't get up on my behalf.

MICHAEL

Stop! Don't come any closer! Stay away!

Michael reaches into his jacket and pulls out a small chrome plated pistol. He immediately begins firing at the approaching dark knight.

Again, Batman continues to seemingly appear and disappear from shadow to shadow, unfazed by the gunfire.

Soon Michael's gun is empty, the metal CLICKING of the gun hammer never ceasing.

Michael continues to pull the trigger over and over again until Batman is standing above him.

BATMAN

Keep trying, one might be hiding in there.

MICHAEL

What do you want? I'll give you anything.

Michael reaches into his jacket and pulls out a wad of hundreds, he holds them out to Batman.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Take it. I'll get you more. I can get you a quarter mil within the hour. What do you want?

BATMAN

Don't insult me.

Batman grabs Michael by his shirt and jacket violently lifting him up onto his feet. Batman holds his face an inch from Michael's.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

I want answers. I want you to tell me everything you know about this weapons deal, about your organization and your boss, Rupert Thorn. Does that answer your question?

Michael stares into Batman's eyes, his face frozen in fear.

MICHAEL

I, I can't. If I...He'll kill me. You can't kill me. You're one of the good guys.

BATMAN

That may be true, but I'll break you. And believe me, being broken hurts much more than being dead.

MICHAEL

You wouldn't.

BATMAN

Try me.

Michael hesitates as he continues to stare into the crimefighter's eyes.

And then like that, his spirit breaks.

MICHAEL

What do you want to know?

BATMAN

What was in the shipment? What kind of armaments?

MICHAEL

Mostly small arms. Submachine guns, handguns. A few thousand grenades.

BATMAN

And what else?

Again Michael hesitates but quickly the fear overtakes him.

MICHAEL

A few surface-to-air missiles. There was also about five hundred pounds of high explosives.

BATMAN

Who was the buyer?

MICHAEL

I don't know.

BATMAN

Do you know how long it would take me to break every one of your ribs?

MICHAEL

I don't know their names. Some kinda Chinese syndicate. I really don't know.

BATMAN

Where are they going?

MICHAEL

Hell if I know.

BATMAN

Where's the money?

MICHAEL

Whose money?

BATMAN

Now I know your not that stupid.
The money for the deal. Where is
it?

MICHAEL

It was an electric transfer. Bank
to bank.

BATMAN

What's the account number? What
bank?

MICHAEL

I don't know. Something overseas.
I don't handle that stuff, that's
the accountant's responsibility.

BATMAN

Where do you keep the books?

MICHAEL

Are you crazy, I can't tell you that.

There is the CRACK of a bone snapping and Michael SCREAMS in
pain.

BATMAN

What were you saying?

MICHAEL

(through tears)
Sixth floor of the Hammond building.
Room 634. You'll never get inside.
The place is a fortress. Stolen
government security gear. A platoon
of armed guards. It would be suicide
to try.

BATMAN

I think I'll take my chances.

MICHAEL

You're insane.

BATMAN

That may be. Now let's talk about
Thorne.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COUNTRY HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

The Joker's white van drives down a two-lane highway through
the darkness.

INSIDE VAN

Bruno sits behind the wheel as Harley sits in the passenger seat, chewing a large wad of gum.

In the back of the van, Rusty sits with his back against the sidewall. He reads a magazine with a flashlight.

Across from him sits the Joker. He holds up a mirror, hiding his face, a large makeup kit beside him.

JOKER (O.S.)

Oh, Harley dear?

Harley smiles and leans back to look at her man.

HARLEY

(excitedly)

Yeah, Mr. J?

JOKER (O.S.)

Can you tell me how I'm supposed to make myself presentable WITH ALL THIS CONFOUNDED BOUNCING?! It's like your trying to hit every bump in the road.

Harley's smile vanishes and fear enters her face.

Rusty looks up from his magazine and at the Joker.

BRUNO

Sorry Mr. J.

JOKER (O.S.)

Just find some place to pull over so I can pretty myself up properly.

BRUNO

Yes, Mr. J.

The van continues down the dark highway.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB -- NIGHT

A fleet of cop cars swarm to the large nightclub.

SQUEALING tires and WAILING sirens fill the air as car after car comes to a stop.

Police surround the building, reaching into the trunks of their cars and arming themselves with shotguns and submachine guns.

Police zeppelins float above the crime scene, shining bright spotlights on the nightclub.

Out of one police car steps the portly and ill tempered DETECTIVE BULLOCK, a toothpick resting between his lips. He wears an old gray trench coat and weathered fedora.

BULLOCK

Montoya!

A young and attractive Hispanic officer looks to Bullock.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Form a perimeter! If anything tries to leave, shoot it!

MONTOYA nods and begins directing the police.

A large brown van arrives and as it comes to a stop, the back opens and a twelve man Gotham SWAT team marches out, submachine guns in hand.

Within moments the SWAT team rushes the building in two orderly lines.

INSIDE CLUB

The SWAT team enters cautiously, the multicolored lights continue to dance.

The SWAT team members soon slow their pace. Lowering their weapons, all of their gazes turn up.

One SWAT member raises his radio to his mouth.

MOMENTS LATER

Detective Bullock makes his way into the club.

He muscles his way past the SWAT team members, their eyes still focused above.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Out of my way. Coming through.
This better be good.

As Bullock reaches the front of the line he too looks up.

Hanging from the ceiling, some fifteen feet above the floor, is Michael. He is bound in a high strength black cord. Stuck to his chest is a large manila envelope with the words "For Commissioner Gordon" written on it in large black letters.

Below the hanging man is a pile of handcuffed and unconscious thugs and gangsters. A few give out weary MOANS.

Anger fills Bullock's plump face.

SWAT OFFICER

Looks like another present from the
Batman.

Bullock clenches his jaw and the toothpick shatters in half.

INT. GAS STATION NIGHT

A large gas station convenience store, empty at this late hour.

A young CLERK wipes down the slushy machine.

OUTSIDE

The gas station is an oasis on the dark rural highway.

A set of headlights approach the brightly lit station.

INSIDE

The clerk continues to clean the slushy machine when the DING of an arriving car rings out.

The clerk looks up to see a white van parked outside the large glass doors.

He turns back to his cleaning.

Another DING rings out as the door to the store opens, again the clerk looks up.

Harley enters, followed by the two thugs and the Joker, his face still unseen.

The clerk watches curiously as Harley and the Joker walk to the bathrooms.

The thugs begin browsing the racks.

CLERK

How are ya'll doing?

Bruno and Rusty look at the young clerk with cold emotionless faces and the clerk smiles nervously.

EXT. ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Batman sits perched upon a rooftop hidden in shadow, binoculars pressed against his eyes.

INSERT BINOCULAR VIEW: Cops move the handcuffed thugs and gangsters from the nightclub and into the paddy wagons.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman lowers the binoculars and touches his right hand to his ear.

BATMAN

Alfred?

ALFRED (O.S.)

Yes, Master Bruce?

BATMAN

Did you receive the transmission?

ALFRED (O.S.)

Yes, Master Bruce. Everything has been uploaded into the bat-computer as you requested.

BATMAN

Excellent. I'll be home shortly.

ALFRED (O.S.)

Very well, Master Bruce. I will have dinner waiting.

BATMAN

Thank you, Alfred.

ALFRED (O.S.)

My pleasure, sir.

Batman lowers his hand and stands.

He tucks the binoculars into his cape and steps to the roof's edge.

Without hesitation he leaps from the roof, his cape billowing out behind him.

Batman pulls out the Bat-grapple and fires.

The grapple CLANKS into a nearby building and Batman's decent slows.

EXT. ALLEY -- MOMENTS LATER

Batman lowers gently to the ground beside the parked Batmobile.

With a press of a button the Bat-grapple retracts.

The Batmobile's canopy slides open and Batman leaps inside.

INSIDE

The canopy slides back into place as Batman grabs the controls.

OUTSIDE

The Batmobile's engine ROARS to life as a burst of flame explodes from its jet turbine.

And with that, the Batmobile speeds off down the alley and onto the street.

INT. GAS STATION -- NIGHT

The nervous clerk stands behind the counter watching the two thugs.

Rusty continues to browse the aisles as Bruno stares back at the clerk.

From the back of the store comes Harley's childlike HUMMING.

Harley skips into the store. She now wears her skin tight black and red jester costume, her face painted white.

She continues to HUM as she skips up to the counter and the clerk behind it.

Fear fills the young man's face as he recognizes Harley for the notorious criminal she is.

HARLEY

Howdy, bub.

The clerk, jaw slack, says nothing.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

Mighty nice store you got here.
What's your name?

The clerk's jaw moves weakly but no sound can be heard.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

(turning to Bruno)
Isn't that sweet, he's bashful.
(back to clerk)
Are you all tongue tied over me?

Secretly Harley pulls out a massive knife, and holds it behind her back, a huge grin on her face.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

I bet you I could loosen up that
tongue of yours.

The clerk is frozen in fear, all color drained from his face.

JOKER (O.S.)

Harley, dear. Are you making new friends?

Harley spins around to see her love.

HARLEY

Pudin'!

Now able to see the knife behind Harley's back, the clerks eyes roll up into his head and he falls to the floor unconscious.

The Joker walks through the store, face unseen. He now wears his trademark purple three piece suit, purple fedora, spats, white gloves and a flower pinned to his lapel.

JOKER (O.S.)

Looks like your new friend is quite smitten with you.

HARLEY

Isn't he a sweetheart?

Harley bounds over to the Joker, wrapping her arms around his neck.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

You look so handsome.

JOKER (O.S.)

And you, my darling, look quite deranged.

HARLEY

(swooning)

Oh thank you, Mr. J.

JOKER (O.S.)

I hate to have break you two up, but we do have a time table to keep.

The Joker TAPS his watch face.

Harley's smile turns into a fake pout, her bottom lip sticking strongly out.

HARLEY

(smiling again)

Oh well!

Harley does a back handspring and lands on the counter, she stares down at the unconscious clerk.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

I just hate to break his heart.

The Joker and thugs walk up behind Her.

JOKER (O.S.)

I know. Why don't you leave him a present. You know, something to remember you by.

Harley gives a broad smile.

OUTSIDE -- MOMENTS LATER

The white van zooms out of the gas station lot and onto the highway, the Joker's LAUGH spilling out into the night air.

INSIDE

The clerk slowly comes to, his eyes blinking rapidly. A quiet HISS can be heard.

The young man reaches up and grabs hold of the counter.

He pulls himself up to a kneeling position, his eyes level with the counter top. His eyes go wide as he sees the origin of the HISS.

Sitting on the counter is a cannonball style bomb, the wick almost extinguished.

Then, before his eyes, the wick is gone.

There is a pause as the sweaty clerk prepares for the explosion.

Then suddenly a small sign pops out of the bomb's top causing the clerk to flinch.

INSERT SIGN: "BOOM"

The clerk sighs in relief.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE

The gas station erupts in huge balls of fire and smoke, lighting up the night sky.

The distant sounds of Joker's LAUGH can still be heard.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

The Batmobile ROARS down the city streets.

INSIDE

Batman steers the large Batmobile.

INSERT WINDSHIELD

Through the windshield the Bat-signal can be seen shining on the few clouds in the sky.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman reaches over and flips a switch on the control panel, a small video screen showing a GPS readout changes.

INSERT SCREEN

The image is now that of Bruce Wayne's dining room.

Suddenly ALFRED, Bruce's elderly butler, steps into frame.

ALFRED

I assume this means you won't be home for dinner, Master Bruce?

BATMAN

Gordon has the signal up.

ALFRED

Very well, sir. I will keep your supper warm in the oven. Do be careful, sir.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman flips the switch again and the video screen changes back to a GPS readout.

OUTSIDE

Flames spray from the Batmobile's jet turbine as the black vehicle accelerates down the street.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COUNTRY HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

The Joker's white van continues down the highway.

INSIDE

HARLEY

Where to now, Mr. J?

JOKER

I think it's time we checked out the old homestead.

Harley and the thugs expressions dampen.

RUSTY

Things have changed Mr. J.

HARLEY

Things ain't like they used to be
before you went away, Mr. J. They
ain't like they used to be at all.

OUTSIDE

The van drives on.

EXT. GOTHAM POLICE PRECINCT ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

The roof of the police precinct is relatively small, the
large batsignal spot light taking up a good portion of the
space.

COMMISSIONER GORDON, early 60's with white hair and mustache,
stands next to the large batsignal, his brown trench coat
blowing in the wind.

From out of the darkness, Batman swoops down to the rooftop.

Gordon smiles.

Batman lands smoothly and retracts the Bat-grapple.

GORDON

Glad you could make it.

BATMAN

How bad is it?

GORDON

The worst kind. It seems your old
friend the Joker was feeling too
confined up in Arkham. He escaped a
few hours ago and we haven't been
able to pick up the slightest bit of
a trail.

BATMAN

Any witnesses?

GORDON

All dead. The surveillance tapes
were taken as well.

BATMAN

As to be expected.

GORDON

I've doubled the number of beat cops
out on the street for tonight and
tomorrow night. With luck we'll
hear something in the next twenty-
four hours.

BATMAN

Let's hope we find him before it's too late. With the Joker on the loose time is a luxury we don't have.

Batman turns and walks to the roof's edge.

GORDON

I thank you for wrapping Michael Cothren up for me, but I didn't know it was my Birthday. How is your case against Thorne coming?

BATMAN

Cothren was quite helpful.

Batman fires the Bat-grapple and leaps from the rooftop.

Gordon shakes his head.

GORDON

Godspeed friend.

EXT. 233 LEXINGTON PLACE, THE BREXLER BUILDING -- NIGHT

The large, lavish skyscraper sits amongst the crowded city.

INT. THORNE'S PENTHOUSE, 40TH FLOOR -- NIGHT

The Gotham cityscape sits beautifully framed through the massive windows of RUPERT THORNE's penthouse.

THORNE (O.S.)

When I was a boy, I dreamt of the day that I would own this city.

Thorne steps closer to the windows and the landscape beyond.

THORNE (CONT'D)

Now, Gotham sits in the palm of my hand, waiting for me. But he stands in my way. The last obstacle. The Batman. I, Rupert Thorne, have worked too hard and waited too long to have some costumed jerk send my people to the pen.

Thorne turns to face the other occupants of the room.

The head's of Thorne's operations sit and stand throughout the room. A handful of thugs are also present.

THORNE (CONT'D)

(angrily)

Can someone tell me why Batman still lives?

No one answers Thorne, many avert their eyes.

THORNE (CONT'D)

I have always made it clear to those in my organization that the man who killed the Bat would receive a handsome reward. And yet still he lives, thwarting me on this very day. Is it that I have too much faith in my own men?

Again, no one answers.

THORNE (CONT'D)

I don't pay you to sit there like idiots, someone answer me!

STANLEY

He ain't like no man I ever seen. He's unstoppable. I've seen 'em take on six men at once.

TONY

Yeah, he's inhuman.

JACK

Boss, we've tried to ice 'em but he's always one step ahead.

THORNE

So those are your answers? Awe. Fear. Incompetence.

Thorne turns back to the window, disgusted.

THORNE (CONT'D)

I am afraid I have burdened you all with too much responsibility. I have grown tired of this dance with the Dark Knight.

(sighs)

Spread the word. Send your men out into the streets. Let the underworld know that beginning tonight, I will pay five million dollars to the man who brings me the head of Batman.

The men in the room are taken aback but no one moves.

THORNE (CONT'D)

Prove to me you are not all worthless for once...AND DO AS I SAY!

The men jump to their feat and exit the room.

Thorne continues to stare out at the city.

Outside, shining on the clouds, is the Bat-signal.

THORNE (CONT'D)

This city is mine, Batman.

The Bat-signal is extinguished and Thorne smiles.

EXT. GOTHAM DOCKS -- NIGHT

The Gotham docks are a dreary place. Abused by weather and salt water mist, the docks are dank and dingy.

The Joker's white van drives through the docks and all the warehouses and factories that reside there.

The van pulls to a stop in front of a large warehouse.

Two armed goons stand at the warehouse door, both wear designer suits.

They watch as the van pulls up and stops. Both men exchange glances.

The van doors open as the goons produce small submachine guns.

Harley and the thugs step out.

HARLEY

Home sweet home.

STEVEN (O.S.)

Wrong.

STEVEN GILES exits the warehouse and walks past his armed goons.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

You don't live here anymore.

HARLEY

Funny, I don't remember signing the title over to you.

STEVEN

This is our turf now. A no freak zone if you will. Like I told you the last time, the Joker's gone, the game's over, this is ours.

HARLEY

But I thought the grouch lived in a trash can.

STEVEN

Cute. Now scram before I let my dogs loose.

Both goons cock their weapons.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
I'd hate to have to riddle that
perfect body of yours with holes.

JOKER (O.S.)
Tsk, tsk, tsk.

Steven and his goons look to the van, its open rear doors facing them.

The Joker walks through the van toward the open rear doors, his body slowly coming out of shadow.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I'm disappointed in you.

Finally the Joker is totally illuminated, his face visible for the first time.

JOKER (CONT'D)
That's no way to beg for mercy.

The Joker smiles his enormous and sinister grin, a CHUCKLE starting in the depths of his body and growing.

Steven and his goons are petrified with fear.

Harley smiles.

The Joker's LAUGH grows to a hysterical cackle filling all the docks.

INSIDE WAREHOUSE

A large group of gangsters and hired muscle play poker, watch TV and otherwise pass the time.

The sound of the Joker's LAUGHTER can be heard faintly.

GANGSTER
Do you hear that?

The LAUGHTER grows louder.

GANGSTER 2
Sounds like someone laughin'.

Suddenly GUNFIRE erupts just outside the warehouse.

Those inside scramble out of their chairs.

Suddenly the warehouse door flies open, the Joker standing inside the doorframe. He holds a large pistol in each hand.

JOKER

Boys, I've decided to foreclose.

The Joker bursts into LAUGHTER and opens fire on the surprised and frightened men.

INT. BATCAVE -- NIGHT

Batman climbs out of the Batmobile as it sits parked in the massive cave.

He makes his way to the large Batcomputer.

He plops down wearily into his large chair.

Batman presses a button and the computer HUMS to life.

Multiple large screens blink on as do numerous lights and readouts.

Batman pulls his cowl from off his head and drops it on the desk.

A tired BRUCE WAYNE stares at the screens.

He reaches down to his utility belt.

INSERT UTILITY BELT: Bruce opens a compartment in the yellow belt and removes a small mini-disc.

BACK TO SCENE

Bruce opens a disk drive and drops the mini-disc inside. The drive closes.

With shocking speed and efficiency, Bruce navigates through information.

His fingers dancing across the keys as he works.

Finally he pauses and one of the computer monitors begins to show a news broadcast.

Bruce leans back in his chair and watches.

INSERT BLACK AND WHITE NEWS BROADCAST

Arkham Asylum looms in the background as a young NEWS WOMAN stands holding a microphone.

NEWS WOMAN

And that was merely four hours ago. Since the Joker's bloody escape, the Gotham City Police Force has doubled their presence and efforts.

(MORE)

NEWS WOMAN (CONT'D)

But for now, time will only tell what horrors the clown of chaos will have in store for the unfortunate residents of Gotham City.

ALFRED (O.S.)

Dreadful news, isn't it, Master Bruce?

Bruce turns to see Alfred walking down a flight of stairs carrying a silver dinner tray.

Bruce presses a button and the TV goes MUTE.

BRUCE

Isn't it always?

ALFRED

I'm glad to see you made it home safely, sir. Was the night productive?

BRUCE

Quite. I got Michael Cothren to fill in some of the gaps. I brought Danny Vespuchi in as well. That's two more of Thorne's Lieutenants off the streets and behind bars.

Alfred places the serving tray down on the desk beside Bruce.

ALFRED

It seems you're becoming quite a thorn in Thorne's side.

BRUCE

No pun intended.

ALFRED

(smiling)
Of course not, sir.

Bruce begins working the computer again.

BRUCE

I'm so close. But I'm afraid this new development with the Joker is going to make things...complicated, to say the least.

ALFRED

If I might say so, Master Bruce, I think it might be in your best interest to put your work aside and get some much needed rest. You look as though your candle's been burning from both ends.

BRUCE

You may be right, Alfred.

Bruce lifts the silver cover, a hearty meal stares back.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

I might do just that, but after I help myself to this wonderful meal.

Alfred smiles.

ALFRED

Very well, sir.

INT. WAREHOUSE/JOKER'S HIDEOUT -- NIGHT

Brass bullet casings CLANK under Bruno's large boots as he walks across the warehouse floor.

The shiny casings nearly carpet the large floor and the gangsters' bodies lay scattered throughout the room.

Harley sits on the back of a chair, her head in her hands.

Rusty stands surveying the room.

BRUNO

Everything's gone, boss. Everything.

RUSTY

All your artwork, the toys.

HARLEY

They even got rid of Mr. Stinky.

A toilet FLUSHES and the Joker enters the room.

JOKER

Now, now. There's no time to waste crying over spilled milk.

The Joker glances down at the floor where a carton of milk sits on its side, still leaking it's contents.

A small GIGGLE slips out.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Boys and girls, load up the car, 'cause we're going shopping.

HARLEY

Yippee!!

Harley throws her hands up in excitement but in doing so falls out of the chair.

EXT. FAT CAT CATFOOD FACTORY -- NIGHT

The large catfood factory sits dark and quiet at this time of night.

INSIDE

Inside the factory, all lights are out, the machines sit cold and still.

Then, a single GOON carrying a tommy gun walks slowly through a back section of the factory.

He paces casually, glancing around at his still surroundings.

Finally he reaches a door marked "Hazardous Storage: Do Not Enter" and RAPS on it with his knuckles.

The door opens and another goon, this one dressed in an expensive suit and tie, stands in the doorway.

Behind him, down a flight of stairs, is a brightly lit backroom casino. The sounds of MUSIC, TALKING and LAUGHING spill out into the factory.

GOON IN SUIT

What is it?

GOON

I gotta hit the head.

GOON IN SUIT

Can't you hold it?

GOON

I was tryin', but I gotta go.

GOON IN SUIT

Alright.

The GOON IN A SUIT WHISTLES at an armed goon at the bottom of the stairs.

The armed goon jogs up the stairs, stopping next to the goon in a suit.

GOON IN A SUIT

Watch the door while he goes to the bathroom.

The armed goon nods and steps out into the dark factory, the other goon enters the casino and quickly moves down the stairs.

The goon in a suit shuts the door.

INSIDE CASINO

The casino is filled with blackjack, roulette, craps and poker tables.

Men in tuxedos and women in cocktail dresses LAUGH and TALK loudly.

Cigarette and cocktail girls walk through the crowds wearing their trademarked short skirts and tiny hats.

A ten piece band plays big band MUSIC.

Two gangsters in tuxedos sit at the roulette table, stacks of chips in front of them.

DONNY

Did you hear about the clown?

KEVIN

Yeah. They say he killed eleven during the escape.

DONNY

I hate it when he's out on the streets. I have to sleep with one eye open.

KEVIN

You're tellin' me. Nobody's safe when that freak's runnin' 'round.

Suddenly a gangster jumps up on stage with the band and grabs the microphone.

GANGSTER 3

Hey everybody!

The room goes SILENT as they look to the stage.

GANGSTER 3 (CONT'D)

Thorne's just put out a hit. He says he'll pay five million for the man who brings him Batman's head!

For a moment no one moves.

Then, suddenly, men and their dates grab their things and stream to the exit, the room filled with excited TALK.

Many of the men pull out cell phones.

MAN ON PHONE

Call the boys, Thorne's payin' five mil' for Batman's head.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM, WAYNE MANOR -- NIGHT

Bruce Wayne stands in the large marble shower, shower heads pointing in all directions.

Steam fills the massive bathroom as Bruce showers.

Horrible scars cover Bruce's chest, back and arms: bullet wounds, knife wounds, scrapes, lash scars.

BEDROOM MOMENTS LATER

Bruce walks into the bedroom, he wears nothing but pajama pants as he dries his hair with a crisp white towel.

The bedroom, like the bathroom, is regal in every sense. The room is massive and filled with dark woods, marble, designer carpet and any and all conveniences imaginable.

Bruce stops at a dresser, on top of which is a pitcher of ice water and a glass.

He lays the towel on the dresser and pours himself a glass of cold water.

Bruce sips from the glass as he walks over the bed.

He sits on the edge of his king sized bed and puts his glass on the nightstand.

INSERT NIGHTSTAND: He places the glass next to a book and expensive platinum wrist watch.

BACK TO SCENE

Bruce grabs the book and lays back in bed.

He begins to read.

Suddenly a red light begins flashing on his watch face accompanied by a soft BEEPING.

Bruce looks over at the watch on his nightstand.

ALFRED'S ROOM

Alfred stands in his pajamas as he puts laundry away.

Bruce walks down the hallway and past Alfred's open doorway.

Alfred looks up at him as he passes.

ALFRED

Something wrong, Master Bruce?

Bruce stops.

BRUCE

Looks like my night's not over. The Bat-signal's been activated again.

ALFRED

Shall I wait up for you sir?

BRUCE

No. There's no reason for both of us not to get any sleep. I'll be home soon.

ALFRED

Good luck, sir. And don't forget you have a lunch date tomorrow with Ms. Kyle.

BRUCE

Thanks Alfred.

Bruce continues on.

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COUNTRY HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

A rural stretch of New England highway.

A tractor-trailer sits derelict on the highway blocking both lanes of traffic.

Police and paramedics swarm the area.

The only cars seen are police cruisers and ambulances, the highway blocked off a mile down the road in each direction.

Dead bodies lay scattered across the pavement, white lines outlining each.

Gordon stands surveying the scene as Batman walks up.

GORDON

I'm starting to get concerned.

BATMAN

How long?

GORDON

We got the call an hour ago. Highway patrol got here first. We have five dead. These four...

Gordon motions to the dead bodies in the highway.

GORDON (CONT'D)

...and one in the cab.

BATMAN

The driver?

GORDON

Yeah.

BATMAN

And the truck?

GORDON

Reported stolen three days ago. The trailer, Empty. Whatever they were carrying is long gone.

Batman glances over at a frightened man and wife, they sit on the curb talking to a police officer and drinking coffee.

BATMAN

Do the witnesses have any information?

GORDON

No. They called it in, but other than that, they didn't see anything. It was over before they got here. Any ideas?

BATMAN

Mind if I take a look at the bodies?

GORDON

Go ahead.

Batman walks over to the nearest body, bullet casings scattered around it.

He leans down and lifts the dead man's wrist.

Batman turns the wrist over to reveal a red animal paw like tattoo.

Realization setting in, he looks up at the truck's cab.

Two police officer's stand in the open driver's side door, looking at the dead body slumped against the steering wheel.

COP 1

Look at this one, he sure went peaceful.

COP 2

Look at that grin.

The corpse wears a morbid grin on his cold face.

COP 1 grabs the body and begins to lean it back in the seat.

BATMAN

NO!!!!!!

But it is too late, as Cop 1 sits the body up, an obvious booby trap trigger can be seen attached to the dead man's chest and steering wheel.

The cops have no time to react.

Immediately the truck and trailer explode in massive fireballs.

Batman jumps at Gordon, wrapping his cape around them both and knocking him to the ground.

Cops, cars and debris fly through the air.

As the smoke settles, Batman stands, helping Gordon to his feet.

Debris, cops and paramedics lay scattered across the area, MOANS and CRIES fill the air. Fires burn.

GORDON

Tend to the wounded! Call this in
and get us some help!

(to batman)

Thank you, friend.

BATMAN

They were of the Red Claw Syndicate.
The truck was carrying small arms
and explosives they'd recently bought
from Thorne.

GORDON

How do you know all this.

BATMAN

Tattoos.

GORDON

Well, who killed them?

BATMAN

Only one man can leave a smile on a
dead man's face.

GORDON

Dear God.

BATMAN

I have to go. Now that he has some
toys he won't waste any time using
them.

Batman runs and leaps into the Batmobile, flames explode from the turbine and the Batmobile ROARS away.

GORDON

It has begun.

EXT. THE NEVERMORE HORROR STORE -- NIGHT

The once booming Nevermore Horror Store sits boarded up and abandoned.

A large black luxury car pulls up and parks out front.

INT. NEVERMORE HORROR STORE/SCARECROW'S HIDEOUT -- NIGHT

Shelves and shelves of costumes, gory gags and make-up fill the Halloween themed store, a layer of dust covering most.

In the back of the store, a few lights glow dimly.

In the weak light, a figure moves about.

The figure stands over a large table on which sits test tubes, beakers and more making up a full chemistry lab.

The figure lights a burner, the flames light illuminating his face for the first time.

A burlap mask cover's the figures face, evil eyes and a ragged mouth cut into it.

The SCARECROW continues to work.

Behind the Scarecrow a VOICE rings out.

JOKER (O.S.)

Trick or treat.

The Scarecrow spins around, surprised.

Standing ten feet away is the Joker, Harley Quinn and the thugs.

The Joker stands smiling, holding his hands out in welcome.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Oh, pumpkin head, is that you!

SCARECROW

Joker?! How...how did you get by my defenses?

JOKER

Oh, Johnny boy, did you really think you could keep me out?

The Scarecrow grabs his nearby scythe.

SCARECROW

What do you want?

JOKER

I'm not here to hurt you, spooky pants. Believe me, if I were, you'd already know it.

SCARECROW

Then what is it you want? I'm busy if you didn't notice.

JOKER

You really need to loosen up old pal, let yourself laugh once in awhile.

The Joker GIGGLES.

SCARECROW

You do enough laughing for the both of us.

JOKER

Such a shame, there's nothing better than a great big laugh. That's why I'm here, sour puss. I'm all out of laugh juice, the boys at Arkham threw out my last batch. I need you to make me some more.

SCARECROW

I'm sorry, Joker, as you can see, times have gotten a little hard.

Scarecrow motions at his pieced together lab.

SCARECROW (CONT'D)

You can blame the Bat for that. I'm all out of cash and resources. I couldn't make you another batch if I wanted to, and trust me, I don't want to.

The Joker's grin sinks into a frown. He begins walking slowly toward the Scarecrow.

JOKER

Now is that anyway to treat an old friend?

The Joker's voice is low and the underlying threat is obvious.

The Scarecrow backs into the table, the lab equipment JINGLING.

SCARECROW

(fear showing)
What's it matter?
(MORE)

SCARECROW (CONT'D)

They already have a cure, thanks to Batman. Your laugh toxin is worthless now.

A smile returns to the Joker's face as he clasps the Scarecrow by the shoulders.

JOKER

Your right, bag face, but lucky for us, I have a brain. While I was in the old laugh factory, I did some thinking.

Harley walks up carrying a small briefcase.

JOKER (CONT'D)

I've come up with a few new ingredients to add to the old magic formula.

Harley holds the briefcase out to the Scarecrow.

SCARECROW

And what do I get in return for my, services.

JOKER

What you hold most dear of course. Your life.

The Scarecrow takes the briefcase.

JOKER (CONT'D)

That's what I like about you, Cane, you're always so sensible.

The Joker bursts into LAUGHTER, Harley joins in.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY -- SUNRISE

The Sun rises over Gotham city bathing it in a brilliant orange haze.

EXT. GOTHAM'S UNION STATION -- MORNING

Gotham's Union Station is a large train station, six platforms servicing twelve tracks.

Crowds of people board and disembark from the trains, others stand, sit and wait for their friends and family.

Clouds of steam roll across the tracks and platforms, a side effect of the steam powered locomotives.

The 32 pulls into the station, a puff of steam and loud WHISTLE accompanying it.

People stream off the 32 and onto the platform, amongst them, one man stands out.

A man dressed in a black and gray suit, matching trench coat and large fedora walks down the platform with the others.

6'2" and lean, the man walks with dangerous confidence. In his right hand he carries a massive five foot long case. His name is VALENTINE.

INT. EXERCISE ROOM, WAYNE MANOR -- MORNING

Bruce works the punching bag in his exercise room, he wears nothing but a pair of loose white pants.

His fists are taped up and on his back small cuts and new bruises are seen.

He punches furiously.

Alfred enters.

ALFRED

Master Bruce.

Bruce stops and turns to face Alfred.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

A Ms. Kyle is on the telephone. She would like to confirm your lunch appointment.

BRUCE

What is it with you two? When I say I'll be there, I mean, I'll be there.

ALFRED

Very well, sir.

Alfred turns and leaves as Bruce begins again.

INT. THORNE'S PENTHOUSE, 40TH FLOOR -- DAY

Thorne sits behind his huge mahogany desk. In front of him sit the remains of a large breakfast.

He reads the paper and sips his coffee.

The front door opens and one of his men, VINCE, enters.

VINCE

Sir. There is a gentlemen here who would like to meet with you. He says it concerns your bat infestation.

THORNE

Tell him my offer stands for whoever brings me the Bat.

VINCE

I have. He is very insistent on speaking with you.

THORNE

Have you disarmed him?

VINCE

Yes, sir.

THORNE

Send him in.

Vince leaves and a few moments later, he returns, escorting Valentine.

VINCE

Mr. Valentine, sir.

Thorne folds his paper and sets it down on the desk.

THORNE

Have a seat.

Valentine walks to one of the plush leather chairs opposite the desk and sits.

THORNE (CONT'D)

Now what can I do for you Mr...

VALENTINE

Valentine.

THORNE

Mr. Valentine.

VALENTINE

It's not what you can do for me.

THORNE

How cliché.

VALENTINE

I've heard your offer. Five million for the Batman.

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

An elegant and classy restaurant located in the heart of downtown Gotham.

SELINA KYLE, a stunningly beautiful woman with raven hair and green eyes, sits alone in the busy restaurant.

She wears an expensive pen striped suit and skirt.

Selina takes a sip of her drink as she looks around, bored.

She turns to see Bruce Wayne enter.

Bruce wears an expensive suit and carries a bouquet of beautiful flowers.

He makes eye contact with Selina and they both smile.

Bruce makes his way to the table.

BRUCE

I'm sorry I'm late...again.

Bruce hands her the flowers.

SELINA

It's okay.

Bruce leans down and kisses Selina on the cheek.

He sits.

BRUCE

You look amazing.

SELINA

Thank you. The flowers are beautiful.

BRUCE

Have you ordered?

SELINA

No.

Bruce picks up a menu.

SELINA (CONT'D)

You look tired. I heard about the Joker. Have you figured out what he's up to?

BRUCE

No, not yet.

SELINA

You will.

A WAITER stops at their table.

WAITER

Madam, misuser. Would you like to order?

BRUCE

Yes. She'll have the grilled scampi and lobster tail and I'll have the filet mignon of swordfish.

WAITER

Very well, sir

The waiter exits.

SELINA

You know, if you need help with the clown...I could offer some assistance.

BRUCE

You and I both know that it's better for everyone if Catwoman stays retired.

SELINA

Yeah, but you're not the one who sits on the sidelines and watches everyone else have all the fun.

BRUCE

Do you really miss it?

SELINA

Of course, Bruce. I used to be out there, free. Doing what I wanted. Taking what I wanted. I used to have claws.

BRUCE

And those claws almost got you put away.

SELINA

That's not the point, Bruce. It's about being alive. You know all this. It's about living life on the next level. Don't you miss the chase? Between you and I? Don't you miss the rooftop rendezvous? The mystery?

BRUCE

But--

SELINA

Can you imagine living your life caged, like an animal?

BRUCE

Selina, I had no idea you felt this way.

SELINA

Honestly, Bruce? Did you really think I'd be happy being a nine to five business woman?

BRUCE

No, but I'd always hoped. It's better this way. I can protect you this way.

SELINA

That's the problem, Bruce. You still don't understand. I don't need protecting.

In the rear of the restaurant the bartender turns the volume up on a black and white flatscreen TV attached to the wall.

A news broadcast is underway, many of the occupants, including Bruce and Selina turn to see.

INSERT BLACK AND WHITE TV

A news anchor sits behind a desk.

At the bottom of the screen "BREAKING NEWS" scrolls across.

ANCHOR

...received the call only six minutes ago. What will await Gotham in the wake of this tragedy has yet to be seen. Again, for those of you just joining us, State Governor, Kenneth Callahan has just been assassinated.

BACK TO SCENE

Selina looks at Bruce, disappointment in her eyes.

SELINA

Well, I guess you should be going.

Bruce stands.

BRUCE

I...I'm sorry. Really I am.

SELINA

So am I.

Bruce looks for forgiveness in her eyes but finds none.

Reluctantly Bruce leaves.

OUTSIDE

Bruce climbs into his waiting vintage Rolls Royce Limousine.

INSIDE LIMO

Alfred sits behind the wheel, a chauffeur's cap on his head.

Bruce climbs into the back seat.

ALFRED

I'm so sorry, sir. I know he was a friend of yours.

BRUCE

He was a good man. Are there any more details?

ALFRED

Not yet I'm afraid.

BRUCE

Let's go, I need to change.

OUTSIDE

The limo pulls away down the street.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION -- DAY

Cops and police tape cover the grotto located in the rear of the Governor's Mansion.

Sunlight shines down on the beautiful and once peaceful setting.

Batman lands gracefully in the grass.

Surprised police officers put hands on their guns.

He approaches Gordon as he retracts the grapple.

GORDON

We always meet at such lovely occasions.

The police officers return to their duties.

BATMAN

What have you found.

GORDON

Always business, no time for pleasantries, huh, old friend?

BATMAN

I'm sorry commissioner.

Both men start walking.

GORDON

We don't know much. No one saw a thing. From what we've gathered the killer was long gone before anyone knew what had happened.

BATMAN

Sniper?

They stop beside the Governor's dead body.

GORDON

That's our guess, however, look around.

Gordon motions.

GORDON (CONT'D)

There isn't a single location with a clear vantage point.

BATMAN

Did anyone hear anything?

GORDON

No. It seems our assassin was not only invisible but silent as well.

Batman leans down over the Governor's body.

GORDON (CONT'D)

It's a shame. He was a good man.

BATMAN

One of the few.

GORDON

Do you think it was the Joker?

BATMAN

Hard to say. There doesn't seem to be any of the Joker's theatricality.

Batman removes a small vile and swab from his belt.

He dabs at a pool of the Governor's blood, placing the cotton swab inside the vile.

Batman returns the vile to his belt and stands.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Mind if I have a look around?

BULLOCK (O.S.)

What the hell is he doing here?!

Gordon and Batman turn to see the angry Bullock approaching.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Commissioner, with all due respect, this nut job has no right to be involved in this. This is a Gotham PD case.

GORDON

In my opinion, Batman has earned every right to be here. His input is highly prized.

BULLOCK

This is ridiculous.
(to Batman)
I should bust your ass right here.

GORDON

Detective, Batman is here under my invitation. I will not have you threatening or otherwise berating him. Do you understand?

BULLOCK

Yes, commissioner.

GORDON

I apologize for him, friend. Feel free to look around.

Batman begins slowly walking.

BULLOCK

(under his breath)
Funny, I thought bat's only came out at night?

Batman looks around him, turning his gaze towards the privacy wall and tree tops that surround the yard.

He produces a small binocular like device from his belt.

Batman raises the device to his eyes and scan's the fence and trees.

INSERT BINOCULAR VIEW

Tinted red, the binocular view is bordered with numerous numbers and readouts.

As he surveys the area, he zooms in and out, snapping pictures with the press of a button.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman lowers the device and returns it to his belt.

He then walks back to the corpse.

Batman takes out a small stick camera and snaps a few pictures of the Governor and surrounding grass. He returns the camera to his belt.

Taking note of the bodies position, he begins to walk in a straight line from it.

He stops at a distant tree and begins to exam its trunk.

He runs his gloved hand over the bark until he stops suddenly.

Batman lifts his hand and pulls a tweezers like tool from his belt.

Using the tweezers he removes a small flake of bark and finds a very small and shallow hole.

Batman reaches into the hole with the tweezers and removes a tiny sliver of dark gray metal.

Again he produces a vile and drops the discovery inside, returning the vile back to his belt.

Batman walks back to Gordon.

GORDON
What did you find?

BATMAN
I'm not sure yet. I'll have to do some analysis. What was the Governor doing in the grotto?

GORDON
According to the servants, he was taking his morning walk, something he did everyday.

BATMAN
I don't think this was the Joker.

GORDON
Another wack job? Just what I wanted to hear. You'll keep me informed?

BATMAN
As always.

Batman walks to where he arrived at.

Pulling his grapple he fires and rises up out of the yard.

BULLOCK
I don't know what you see in him commissioner, but I can tell you one thing, he's dangerous.
(MORE)

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

And one day I'll bring his vigilante
hide in myself.

INT. THORNE'S PENTHOUSE, 40TH FLOOR -- DAY

Thorne stands gazing out of the huge windows onto the city.

THORNE

I underestimated you Mr...

Seated behind him, Valentine sits in a plush leather chair,
his feet propped up on Thorne's mahogany desk.

VALENTINE

Valentine.

Thorne turns to face Valentine.

Seeing the killer's feet on his desk, a surge of anger washes
over him, but he restrains it.

THORNE

You can deliver on your word. That
is a hard thing to find these days.

VALENTINE

As I said, I never fail.
Unfortunately for you, due to your
lack of faith, the price has just
gone up.

THORNE

What?! You arrogant little punk!

Thorne calms himself.

THORNE (CONT'D)

(through clenched
teeth)

How much?

VALENTINE

Twenty five million. By electronic
transfer. Ten million now, fifteen
when the job's done.

THORNE

I am impressed with your...skill.
How will I know it is done?

VALENTINE

You wanted his head? I'll bring it
to you.

THORNE

Very well Mr. Valentine, we have a deal.

Valentine stands.

He produces a business card that he hands to Thorne.

VALENTINE

That is my Swiss account number. I will expect a completed ten million dollar transfer no later than one hour from now.

THORNE

Of course.

Valentine turns to leave.

THORNE (CONT'D)

Do not disappoint me.

Valentine begins for the door.

VALENTINE

I will kill the Bat. You have my word.

THORNE

I certainly hope you do, but I have a feeling you are in over your head.

VALENTINE

When it's done you'd better honor our agreement. Do not think you can double cross me.

THORNE

(faux astonished)
I wouldn't dare.
(smiling)
Good luck son, remember, he's no ordinary man.

Valentine pauses in the doorway.

VALENTINE

All men die, ordinary or not.

Valentine exits.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY

Bruce Wayne's vintage Rolls Royce sits idling on the roads edge.

INSIDE

Alfred sits behind the wheel.

Suddenly the rear door opens and Batman slips inside quickly and quietly.

ALFRED
Shall I head home, Master Bruce?

BATMAN
I don't think so. I might as well get started early.

ALFRED
Are you sure, sir? You have been working yourself awfully hard of late.

BATMAN
I'll be fine Alfred. I'll call the Batmobile when I need it. Take the limo home.

ALFRED
Very well, sir.

Batman opens the door and slips back outside.

ALFRED (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Do be careful.

INT. JOKER'S HIDEOUT -- EVENING

The Joker stands in the hideout, the dead bodies and bullet casings removed.

He RINGS a large bell.

JOKER
Alright boys and girls, time for homework!

Harley and the thugs enter.

The Joker holds a stack of papers in his hands.

RUSTY
Homework, Mr. J?

JOKER
That's right my lovable caveman, I have assignments for you all.

BRUNO
But boss, you know I can't read.

JOKER

That's alright, Bruno, your's has pictures!

The Joker holds up a paper with pictographs on it.

HARLEY

Ooo, ooo! I want pictures!

JOKER

Now now, Harley, you didn't graduate medical school for nothing.

Harley sticks her bottom lip out.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Now I need each of you to complete your homework assignments by tomorrow night. Once finished you are to meet back here. Everybody understand?

Harley and the thugs nod.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Great!

BRUNO

What about you, Mr. J? What'll you be doing?

JOKER

I have the most important task of all. Thorne has put out a five million dollar hit on our friend, guano man.

BRUNO

(smiling)

Five million dollars?

Joker shoots him a look.

JOKER

Don't even think about it. The Batman is all mine. As we speak, every Tom, Dick and super villain is out scouring the streets for our caped nemesis. I can't risk having some two-bit hack take him out and spoil all my fun.

The Joker's smile sinks away and a sadness fills his face.

JOKER (CONT'D)

The thought that the game could be over...no, no I can't think of it. It would be unbearable.

He snaps back into a grin.

JOKER (CONT'D)
So in order to guarantee no one
interferes, I have a public address
to make.

HARLEY
But what if they don't listen?

JOKER
Oh they'll listen...

Joker's grin grows larger.

JOKER (CONT'D)
...I promise you that.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

The Batmobile ROARS through the city.

INSIDE

Batman steers the car.

Alfred appears on the view screen.

ALFRED
Master Bruce, Ms. Kyle called and
wanted me to tell you her offer still
stands.

BATMAN
Thank you Alfred.

ALFRED
Also, your tuxedo has just returned
from the cleaners. I will leave it
in your room for the banquet you
will be attending tomorrow evening.

BATMAN
Is that tomorrow?

ALFRED
Yes, sir.

A BEEPING begins.

BATMAN
Hold on.

Batman flips the switch and the screen changes to the GPS
map.

On one of the streets a small red dot blinks in unison with the BEEPING.

Batman changes the screen back to Alfred.

ALFRED
Trouble, sir?

BATMAN
An alarm's been activated at Howard's and Sons' downtown.

ALFRED
Shall you let the police handle it?

BATMAN
With everything that's happened in the last twenty-four hours the force is stretched pretty thin. I think I'll check it out.

Alfred smiles and Batman flips the switch.

OUTSIDE

The Batmobile ROARS on.

EXT. HOWARD AND SONS' JEWELRY STORE -- NIGHT

The jewelry store sits amongst a shopping district. The various stores sit in darkness.

Inside the jewelry store shadows move.

INSERT NIGHT VISION VIEW: Inside the Jewelry store two men in ski masks move about filling bags with jewels.

INSIDE STORE

The two ski masked criminals move about.

One man leans down and reaches into a glass display case. He grabs a handful of jewels and stuffs them in a bag and then stands back up.

Batman now stands directly in front of him .

Surprised, the ski masked man stumbles back, CRASHING into a glass counter.

SKI MASK 1
It's the Bat!

The second man turns to see Batman.

BATMAN

Didn't anyone ever tell you, you
shouldn't take what isn't yours.

The second man raises a walkie talkie to his mouth.

SKI MASK 2

He's here.

The first man quickly draws a pistol and points it at Batman.

Batman is faster.

He leaps over the display case and pushes his arm down, the
gun firing twice into the case.

Batman grabs the man and hurls him over the display case.

The second man runs to the store's rear door, pistol in hand.

SKI MASK 2 (CONT'D)

Hey Batman!

Batman turns as the second man opens fire.

Batman leaps for cover behind a counter as bullets WHIZ by.

After a short while the GUNFIRE stops.

Batman leaps over the counter just in time to see the rear
door close behind both men.

OUTSIDE

A Hummer comes to a stop in the street just outside the
jewelry store. A fifty caliber machine gun is bolted to
it's roof, a large man standing in the turret.

The man wears a tactical helmet and holds the handle of the
gun. He chambers a round.

INSIDE

Batman looks to see both bags of jewels sitting on the floor.

Suddenly he spins around and looks out the store's front
windows just as a large spot light blinds him.

OUTSIDE

A large spotlight mounted on the Hummer shines into the store,
illuminating everything.

The man behind the machine gun opens fire.

INSIDE

Batman leaps for cover as massive bullets tear through the store.

Batman leaps, rolls and dives to stay alive.

He makes his way to the rear door and finds it locked.

OUTSIDE

The large man LAUGHS as he continues to fire into the store front.

MACHINE GUN MAN
Good-night Bats!

INSIDE

Breathing heavily, Batman hides behind a half wall as bullets continue to destroy the store.

Batman produces a Bat-a-rang.

He leans out from behind the wall and throws it.

OUTSIDE

The Bat-a-rang flies from the store and SMASHES into the spotlight, exploding in a shower of sparks.

The store is plunged back into darkness.

MACHINE GUN MAN (CONT'D)
Son of a...

INSIDE

Batman's Gaze turns up to the ceiling.

Batman quickly pulls out the Bat-grapple and points it at the ceiling.

UPSTAIRS

The Bat-grapple explodes through the clothing store floor directly above the jewelry store.

The grapple's metal claws stab into a support beam in the clothing store's ceiling.

OUTSIDE

The machine gun man puts on a pair of night vision goggles.

INSERT NIGHT VISION GOGGLES: Through the goggles the man behind the machine gun watches as Batman launches straight up into the air.

UPSTAIRS

Batman SMASHES through the clothing store's floor, debris flying through the air.

Batman rolls onto his side and retracts the grapple.

OUTSIDE

The machine gun man stops firing as he searches for Batman in the jewelry store.

Not seeing anything he flips a switch on his goggles.

INSERT GOGGLES

The view changes from the green of night vision to the orange and blue of infrared.

He searches for Batman's heat signature but there is none in the jewelry store.

Suddenly he glances up to the store above.

Batman's orange silhouette finishes standing.

BACK TO SCENE

The machine gun man points the large gun at the clothing store.

INSIDE CLOTHING STORE

Batman stands wearily recovering from the crash.

Police SIRENS can now be heard.

OUTSIDE

The man behind the gun turns to face the approaching SIRENS.

Three cop cars turn onto the street at break-neck speeds.

The machine gun man smiles and opens fire.

Bullets tear through the police cars. One police car flips, tumbling down the street, as the other two come to a SCREECHING halt.

The officers clamber for cover as the cars are perforated.

The machine gun man continues to fire until the cop cars are a heap of smoking metal.

Again he smiles as he turns the gun back to the clothing store.

INSIDE CLOTHING STORE

Batman runs for the front windows as he pulls the grapple and fires.

The windows shatter as he leaps outside.

OUTSIDE

The man behind the gun opens fire as Batman leaps into the night air.

Bullets WHIZ by just behind the swinging crimefighter.

Batman produces a Bat-a-rang with a small blinking red light.

He cocks back and whirls the Bat-a-rang into a large pipe attached to a nearby building.

The machine gun man continues to fire at the elusive superhero.

The Bat-a-rang explodes, severing the pipe and releasing a huge cloud of HISSING steam.

INSERT GOGGLE VIEW: The machine gun mans view fills with orange as the hot steam blinds the electronics.

BACK TO SCENE

Quickly he switches the goggles back to night vision

INSERT GOGGLE VIEW: The image turns back to the green of night vision just in time to see Batman swinging directly at him.

BACK TO SCENE

Machine gun man has no time to react as Batman's boot CRASHES into his face.

INSIDE HUMMER

The DRIVER looks around nervously, the SOUND of gunfire stopped.

The driver flinches as a loud THUD can be heard above.

Suddenly the body of the machine gun man SLAMS against the hood of the car.

The driver's eyes go wide as he grabs the steering wheel.

Before he can hit the gas, Batman's gloved hand reaches through the side window and grabs him.

The driver is yanked through the window and finds himself face to face with Batman.

BATMAN
(angrily)
Who hired you?

Tears stream from the man's frightened eyes.

DRIVER
Nobody, we work for ourselves.

BATMAN
Why are you trying to kill me?

DRIVER
Thorne--

BATMAN
What about him? Talk!

DRIVER
He put out a hit on you.

BATMAN
How much?

DRIVER
Five million. Please don't kill me.

MOMENTS LATER

The driver and machine gun man sit bound and handcuffed in the center of the street.

Police cars and ambulances approach from all directions.

EXT. ALLEY -- NIGHT

The two ski masked men stand in an alley, their masks rolled up.

SKI MASK 1
Where are they?

SKI MASK 2
I'm sure the Batman didn't go down easy.

Suddenly there is a SLAM as Batman lands on a dumpster directly behind them.

BATMAN
No, I didn't.

Shock fills both men's faces.

Batman lunges.

Shadows dance across the alley's brick wall as Batman pummels them, the SOUNDS of violence filling the air.

EXT. LARGE WAREHOUSE/UNDERWORLD AUCTION -- NIGHT

The large warehouse is dark from the outside

INSIDE

Deep inside the warehouse, fifty gangsters stand facing a large loading dock.

The criminals wear various suits and hats, many smoke cigars and cigarettes.

On top of the loading dock is a makeshift podium comprised of two large crates, behind it stands an AUCTIONEER.

To the podium's left there is another stack of crates, this one acting as a display table for a set of knives. Flanking the display are two large goons.

The auctioneer bangs the handle of a pistol on the crate like a gavel.

AUCTIONEER

Sooold, to Bruiser Cane for one
hundred and twenty-five G's.

There is a muttering in the crowd as the auction ends.

The two goons move the knives out of the way.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Next up in the auction we have
these...

The auctioneer motions blindly to his left as the goons place two solid-gold tommy guns on the crates.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Owned by none other than the infamous Al Capone himself, this pair of solid-gold Thompson Machine Guns are an opportunity that comes only once in a lifetime. Fully functional and still containing the bullets loaded by the Chicago kingpin, you can't afford to pass this one up. The bidding starts at one hundred thousand.

A gangster holds up his hand.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

I have one hundred, do I see two?

Another gangster raises his hand.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Two, two do I hear three? Anyone?

JOKER (O.S.)

How bout nothing.

The gangsters grow quiet as the Joker steps out onto the loading dock, he grins largely.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Zero, zip, zilch, nada.

MALE VOICE

It's the clown!

The Joker produces a playing card that he hurls toward the auctioneer.

The metal playing card stabs into the podium and the auctioneer backs away.

JOKER

My personal check for bupkiss drawn
on the first national bank of squadoo.

Angry SHOUTS issue forth from the crowd, many of the gangsters pull guns as do the two goons on the loading dock.

TWO-TONE TONY

We don't want no trouble, Joker.

JOEY SIXES

Yeah, this is a closed auction.

Joker continues toward the podium, the auctioneer backing away.

JOKER

Boys, boys, boys, we're all convicts
here.

SCALES

Whatdya want, Joker?

The Joker stops behind the podium.

JOKER

If I may, I'd just like to say a few
words.

BOSTON SAM

It's some kind of trick. Waste 'em.

The room fills with the sound of COCKING BOLTS as BOSTON SAM and the rest takes aim with their guns.

JOKER
Oh, go right ahead...

The Joker pulls open his suit jacket to reveal packs and packs of plastic explosives wired to his body.

JOKER (CONT'D)
But then again, I always did like fireworks.

The gangsters hesitate, fear in their faces.

SCALES
He's bluffin'. Not even he's that crazy.

JOKER
Yes, surely I'm not that crazy.

The Joker smiles a wicked grin.

Slowly the men lower their guns, uneasy and afraid.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Does anyone else have any objections?

The room is silent as the Joker picks up the golden tommy guns..

JOKER (CONT'D)
Fabulos. It has come to my attention that many of you are looking to cash in on the Batman.

A MURMUR comes from the crowd.

The Joker COCKS both tommy guns.

The crowd shifts uneasily.

JOKER (CONT'D)
And I'm hear to make something absolutely clear.

The Joker lowers the guns, pointing them at the crowd.

JOKER (CONT'D)
The Batman's mine! Any man who thinks otherwise will answer to me. Thorne offers you riches, I offer you your life and the lives of your wives, your children, your kid's goldfish Bubbles.

(MORE)

JOKER (CONT'D)

Remember, money's no good if you
ain't around to spend it. So spread
the word, the Bat's mine.

The Joker smiles and the men wait uncomfortably, but no one moves.

The Joker's smile fades.

JOKER (CONT'D)

What part of "spread the word" didn't
you understand.

The Joker opens fire into the mass of gangsters.

SCREAMS and CRIES fill the warehouse as men run for the doors.

The Joker laughs hysterically as he fires.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Andele, andele, arriba arriba!

OUTSIDE

The Joker's LAUGH floats out into the night air as the gangsters flee.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

The Batmobile cruises down the streets.

INSIDE

Batman sits behind the wheel, he holds his right arm.

He lifts his hand.

INSERT RIGHT ARM: A long tear can be seen in the suit, a bloody gash exposed.

Batman looks at his glove and the blood on it.

Suddenly the Batmobile is rocked, Batman quickly grabs the wheel with both hands and fights for control of the car.

OUTSIDE

A green car races beside the Batmobile, it swerves and SLAMS into the Batmobile a second time.

INSIDE

Again, Batman fights to keep control.

OUTSIDE

A second car, this one black, races up on the other side of the Batmobile.

Two men lean out of the windows with guns, they open fire on the Batmobile.

Sparks fly as the bullets RICOCHET off of the black canopy and fender.

Batman hits the brakes, the Batmobile SCREECHING to a halt.

Both cars ZOOM ahead.

Batman guns the engine and the Batmobile explodes into pursuit.

The green and black cars speed down the city streets as the Batmobile closes ground.

INSIDE

Batman flips a switch on the ceiling and the GPS map changes to a tactical display of the Batmobile, numerous weapon and gadget locations marked with green.

INSERT SCREEN

He taps the screen with a gloved finger and a weapon system blinks from green to red.

OUTSIDE

A panel opens and a large cannon like weapon emerges.

INSIDE

Batman taps another part of the screen and the display is replaced by a live camera feed from the bumper of the Batmobile. Targeting readouts crisscross the image.

More bullets ricochet off the canopy and hood as the cars turn a sharp corner.

Batman steers with his left hand as he takes hold of a small joystick with his right. As he moves the joystick, the cannon outside moves in unison.

He centers the cross-hairs over the black car and pulls the trigger.

OUTSIDE

The Batmobile's cannon fires, a missile with a trail of smoke ROARS at the speeding black car.

The cars turn a corner and the missile follows, SLAMMING into the trunk of the black car.

INSIDE BLACK CAR

A large steel harpoon punches through the center of the back seat, the men seated in back jump away from it.

MAN 1

What the hell is that?!

OUTSIDE

A thick cord dangles from the hole in the black car's trunk, a large basketball sized container on it's end.

Suddenly the basketball sized container pops open, a huge parachute unfurling behind the car.

Catching the air, the parachute opens into its massive ten-foot diameter.

Smoke billows from the black car's tires as the parachute slows it, the men inside pitched forward.

INSIDE BLACK CAR

The men CURSE as the car slows against their will, then, through the hole in the back seat, yellow smoke begins to fill the car.

The men begin to cough as the smoke over takes them. Soon all four men are asleep.

OUTSIDE

The, now slow moving, black car bumps harmlessly into a parked car and stops.

The green car continues to speed through the city, the Batmobile hot on its heels.

The green car makes a hard ninety degree left turn into an alley, its wheels SCREECHING.

INSIDE BATMOBILE

Batman quickly taps the tactical screen.

OUTSIDE

A large grapple fires from the left hand side of the Batmobile, wrapping itself around a steel light post.

The Batmobile follows the green car around the corner with the grapple's assistance.

Once around the corner the grapple SNAPS free.

The green car flies down the alley followed by the Batmobile.

Suddenly the Batmobile is pulverized by a garbage truck which speeds out from a side alley.

The Batmobile is SLAMMED into the alley wall by the massive truck.

Both vehicles come to a stop, smoke floating up from the wreckage.

INSIDE BATMOBILE

Batman looks around slightly dazed.

Batman looks through the windshield and at the large truck grill pressed against the side of the car.

OUTSIDE

Batman opens the canopy and climbs slowly out.

He looks into the cab of the garbage truck and sees an unconscious driver slumped against the wheel.

Batman looks down the alley.

From numerous doorways men enter the alley.

Movement behind him catches his attention and Batman looks down the other half of the alley.

Another group of men enter the alley behind him.

Combined, there are roughly a dozen men surrounding Batman.

From the crowd one man steps forward.

Batman recognizes him immediately.

BATMAN

Scarface.

SCARFACE, a ventriloquist's dummy with a large scar on one cheek, wears a three piece suit, holds a cigar in his mouth and a small tommy gun in his left hand.

Scarface sits on the ventriloquist, ARNOLD WESKER'S, hand. Arnold, 50's balding with glasses, is a feeble and timid looking man.

Beside Scarface stands the massive RHINO. Standing over seven feet tall and weighing well over four hundred pounds, Rhino is a wall of muscle.

SCARFACE

Long time no see, Bats.

BATMAN

Let me guess, you're looking to cash in on Thorne's offer.

SCARFACE

Bingo. Nothin' slips by you, huh Bats? Tanks to dose hacks at da jewelry store we knew just where ta finds you.

BATMAN

So you set up the jewelry store.

SCARFACE

Buzz! Wrong, Bats. I had nothin' ta do wit those morons. Wit all the racket dose loud mouths were makin' it wasn't hard ta find ya.

BATMAN

And you think you and your goons can take me?

SCARFACE

No Bats, I guarantee it.

BATMAN

You didn't bring enough.

SCARFACE

We'll just have ta see about dat.

BATMAN

I'm disappointed in you Arnold.

Arnold's face fills with guilt.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

I'd expect something like this from Scarface, but from you...I thought you'd finally learned you didn't need him. I thought you might even be cured.

ARNOLD

I was.

Arnold's voice, like his body, is weak and timid, a total opposite of Scarface's.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

The doctors at Arkham were so nice, so helpful. Believe me Batman, I didn't want to do this. But Mr. Scarface wouldn't take no for an answer, you know how he is. This isn't what I want.

SCARFACE

(to Arnold)

Shutup, dummy. When I wanna hear your voice I'll pull your string.

(to Batman)

Nice try, Bats, but the dummy here knows his place. Now back ta business. I've been waitin' a long time for dis Bats.

Batman secretly slides a batarang out of his belt and into his right hand.

RHINO

Let me do 'em, boss.

SCARFACE

No, Rhino, I think I'll do the honor's myself--

Scarface raises his little tommy gun.

Suddenly Batman throws the batarang which severs Scarface's left arm.

Scarface SCREAMS out in pain, his arm and gun falling to the wet concrete. With Arnold's help he grabs the stump with his little wooden right hand.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)

I'm hit boys! Shoot him!!!

Gun fire rings out but Batman is already on the move.

Grapple in hand, Batman fires up into the night air, in a flash he soars up into the sky.

The thugs fire up into the air as Batman climbs ever higher.

Soon Batman can no longer be seen.

MAX

He's gone.

ROCKY

I told ya we shoulda put guys on the roofs.

SCARFACE

Shutup you's mugs. He ain't gone. We still got his car.

Scarface motions over to the Batmobile.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)

Keep your eyes peeled, boys, it's just a matter of time.

The thugs hold their guns up into the sky, their eyes searching.

Suddenly, three golf ball sized spheres rain down from the dark sky.

The spheres CLANG against the wet street and immediately begin spewing a red smoke.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)

Gas! Cover your mouths, don't breathe
it in!

The dozen men pull sleeves and collars over their noses and mouths, still many begin to cough and hack, eyes watering.

Soon the alley is filled with thick red smoke.

In the smoke, vision is almost nonexistent.

Men hold their guns out and search the blinding smoke.

Behind one man the dark silhouette of Batman, cape extended, descends.

Batman closes his cape around the man, cocooning him.

The man's SCREAM rings out as the other men point their guns in the noise's direction.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)

Steady yous mugs. Don't forget,
he's worth five mil.

The man's unconscious body is hurled through the air and slams into another man.

The tension grows as the men hear their fellow thugs being taken out one by one.

Two GUNSHOTS ring out followed by a SCREAM.

Rhino looks to Scarface.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)

Find 'em.

Rhino nods and walks off into the smoke.

Three more thugs are taken out by the Dark Knight.

Batman stands over the unconscious body of a thug.

Behind him, emerging from the smoke, is Rhino.

Suddenly Batman spins around and finds himself face to face with Rhino.

RHINO

I'm gonna enjoy this.

Rhino lunges at Batman firing off an onslaught of blows.

Batman blocks, parries, weaves and ducks as many as he can but a few get through.

Each time a blow connects, Batman is shaken.

When Batman makes contact Rhino is unfazed.

As they fight the smoke begins to thin.

Rhino lands a solid uppercut and lifts Batman from his feet.

Batman CRASHES into a wall and falls to the ground.

Rhino approaches him.

RHINO (CONT'D)

This is it Batman. It's all over.

Scarface and a handful of still conscious thugs can now see them.

SCARFACE

Stop talkin' to 'em and finish 'em!

Rhino turns and flashes a smile to the puppet.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Freakin' idiot.

Rhino turns back to the winded and bleeding Batman.

Suddenly the alley is lit up by bright spotlights.

Rhino, Scarface and the thugs look into the sky, shielding their eyes.

A large police zeppelin floats above the buildings shining its spotlights down on the scene.

INSIDE ZEPPELIN

Two Police officers sit behind the controls, one lifts a CB radio mic to his mouth.

OFFICER

Put down your weapons.

OUTSIDE

The OFFICER'S voice BOOMS out from the PA system.

OFFICER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You are all under arrest.

SIREN'S can be heard in the distance.

MAX
It's the cops!

BREWSTER
We gotta get outta here!

SCARFACE
Scatter boys!

The thugs run out of the alley, one climbs into the garbage truck.

INSIDE GARBAGE TRUCK

The driver turns to see the thug climb in.

THUG 3
Come on! We gotta get out of here!

The driver throws the truck into reverse.

OUTSIDE

The truck quickly backs down the side alley leaving the Batmobile.

Rhino looks back to Batman but he's gone.

SCARFACE
Com'on Rhino!

Rhino turns and runs over to Scarface.

Rhino scoops up Arnold and Scarface. He tucks them under his arm like a football and runs out of the alley.

INSIDE BATMOBILE

Batman climbs inside and starts the car.

OUTSIDE

The thugs run out into the Gotham streets as cop cars speed toward them.

The Batmobile comes to life and ROARS out of the alley.

CUT TO:

STREET 1

Police cars SCREECH to a halt forming a perimeter blocking the thugs escape.

The Batmobile flies out of the alley.

Two police cars attempt to block the Batmobile in but Batman threads the needle, passing between both, sparks shoot out on each side.

The Batmobile speeds away from the scene, free and clear.

Cops climb from their cars, guns drawn and pointed at the thugs.

COP 3

Freeze!

The thugs stop, hands in the air.

CUT TO:

STREET 2

The garbage truck backs out onto the street, slamming on its brakes the truck spins around with a SCREECH to face forward.

In front of the truck cop cars come to a stop, blocking them in.

COP 4

Stop the vehicle. Turn off the engine and come out of the truck with your hands up.

INSIDE TRUCK

The truck driver looks to his passenger.

TRUCK DRIVER

I ain't goin' back to the joint.

The passenger nods.

OUTSIDE

The trucks wheel's SQUEAL and smoke as it speeds toward the cop cars.

COP 5

OPEN FIRE!!!

The cops open fire on the garbage truck, sparks exploding across the trucks cab as the windshield is turned to Swiss cheese.

The truck speeds on.

At the last moment the cops run from their cars as the truck crashes through them.

The garbage truck continues in a straight line until it crashes into a store front and comes to rest.

CUT TO:

STREET 3

Rhino runs down the street with Scarface and the ventriloquist under arm.

Cop cars come to a stop blocking them in.

Rhino continues on, unaffected.

SCARFACE
Make a hole, Rhino!

Cops clamor from their cars as Rhino lowers his shoulder.

Rhino slams into a cop car with his shoulder, the blow spins the car and knocks the police around it to the ground.

Rhino sets Scarface and Arnold down and quickly tears the police car's driver's side door off. He Throws the door at the police who duck for cover.

Rhino tosses Scarface and Arnold into the car and climbs in behind the wheel.

SCARFACE (CONT'D)
Punch it.

Cops open fire as the stolen police car speeds off into the night, lights flashing.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

The Batmobile speeds down the streets, police SIRENS fill the air.

INSIDE

Batman wipes blood from his mouth.

He reaches down and flips a button, the viewscreen changes to a schematic of the Batmobile.

Red lines and symbols appear on both sides of the Batmobile image.

BATMAN
Great.

Batman flips another switch and the Wayne Manor kitchen appears.

Alfred stands at the sink washing dishes, he turns to face the camera.

Concern fills his face.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Alfred, I'm going to need you to get the garage ready. The Batmobile needs some work.

ALFRED

Is everything alright, sir?

BATMAN

Just one of those nights.

Outside the windshield the Batsignal appears on the clouds.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

It never ends. Looks like Gordon needs me again. I'll be home in thirty.

ALFRED

Very well, Master Bruce.

Batman flips the switch and the image turns back to the GPS map.

OUTSIDE

The Batmobile drives off toward the symbol in the sky.

EXT. GOTHAM POLICE PRECINCT ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

The Batsignal shines brightly into the sky, a trench coated figure standing beside it.

Batman swings onto the rooftop.

BATMAN

What is it now, Gordon?

Batman takes another step forward and slows.

The figure is the right size and height but the face is hidden in shadow and it stands completely still.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Gordon?

Batman takes one last step.

His foot catches a nearly invisible trip wire.

Instinctively Batman leaps into a rolling dive.

An explosion erupts from where he stood moments ago.

INSIDE POLICE STATION

The building trembles slightly with the explosions.

Police officers look up to the ceiling, concerned and surprised VOICES filling the room.

Bullock burst out of his office.

BULLOCK

What the hell was that?

OUTSIDE, ROOFTOP

Batman rolls into a crouch as silenced machine gun fire rings out.

Bullets pepper the rooftop as Batman leaps and dodges.

The Batsignal explodes in a shower of sparks.

Batman takes cover behind a cooling unit as bullets SLAM into the other side.

Immediately Batman notices a small metal box bolted to the roof at his feet.

Without hesitation Batman leaps from his hiding spot, the bomb detonating at the same time.

Batman lands roughly, his suit smoking slightly.

Batman scrambles to his feet as the machine gun fire continues.

INSIDE POLICE STATION

Again the building is rocked.

COP 6

That one came from the roof.

Bullock draws a large revolver from his shoulder holster.

BULLOCK

Arm yourselves! Somebody get on the horn, we need eyes in the sky!

Montoya runs up to Bullock, gun in hand.

MONTOYA

Do you think we're under attack?

BULLOCK

I don't know, sweetheart.

OUTSIDE, NEARBY ROOFTOP

On a nearby rooftop the sniper lays on his stomach firing down on the police precinct.

He wears black slacks, suspenders and a black shirt.

The sniper is Valentine.

GOTHAM POLICE PRECINCT ROOFTOP

Batman continues to dodge and weave.

Batman reaches down to his belt for his Batgrapple.

INSERT BELT

His hand finds nothing where the grapple should be.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman looks across the rooftop where his grapple lay amongst small pieces of rubble.

Bullets WHIZ by and he jumps out of the way.

NEARBY ROOFTOP

Valentine's gun runs empty.

VALENTINE

Light on your feet aren't you? Let's see you dodge this.

Valentine sits up and produces a radio detonator.

GOTHAM POLICE PRECINCT ROOFTOP

Batman breathes heavy as the gunfire ceases.

Immediately he sprints for the grapple.

NEARBY ROOFTOP

Valentine presses the red button on the detonator.

The police precinct rooftop explodes in six massive fireballs.

Batman swings through the air on the grapple, the rooftop exploding behind him.

Batman CRASHES through the large windows of an adjacent building.

INSIDE STATION

The explosions rock the station, lights flicker, computers crash to the floor and police officers take cover.

BULLOCK

(to Montoya)

There's no time to wait for those blimps? This whole station could be brought down on us at any point.

(addressing the station)

Everybody outside! Evacuate!

Cops run for the doors.

OUTSIDE, NEARBY ROOFTOP

Valentine finishes putting his jacket and fedora on.

He exits the rooftop leaving the gun and detonator behind.

ADJACENT BUILDING, OFFICE

Batman stands, glass and debris crunching under foot.

He holds the back of his head.

His costume is crisscrossed with tears, blood seeping from numerous wounds.

OUTSIDE POLICE STATION

Bullock and the rest run out of the building and into the street.

Cops search the buildings and rooftop with their eyes, guns aimed.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Careful people, there could be snipers.

INSIDE ADJACENT BUILDING

Batman walks to the shattered window's edge.

He gazes down at the cops below.

STREET

COP 7

Look! It's the Batman!

The crowd looks to the window in question.

ADJACENT BUILDING

Batman fires the grapple and leaps from the building.

STREETS

The cops watch as Batman leaps from the building.

GORDON (O.S.)
Hold your fire!

The cops turn to see Gordon step out of a police car.

Everyone turns back to see the Batman swinging away into the night.

OUTSIDE NEARBY BUILDING

The front door of an apartment building opens and Valentine steps out.

Suddenly he is bathed in bright white light.

He continues to walk out into the street.

Floating above a large police zeplin shines its spotlights down on Valentine.

BLIMP (O.S.)
Get on the ground!

Valentine stops in the center of the street.

Two police cars pull up on either side, four cops exit with guns drawn.

COP 8
On the ground, now!

Valentine puts his hands up.

VALENTINE
Hey, let's everyone stay calm. I haven't done anything.

COP 8
On the ground!

VALENTINE
There's no reason to be rude...

Valentine smiles.

VALENTINE (CONT'D)
I'm no threat.

Suddenly Valentine spins and drops to one knee, in a flash he has a pistol in each hand.

The cops, surprised, fire over Valentine's head.

In lightning speed Valentine fires four shots and each cop falls dead.

Valentine takes aim at the zeppelin high above.

He opens fire.

INSIDE BLIMP

Bullets SLAP into the cockpit.

COP 9

He's firing at us! Get us out of here!

COP 10

I'm tryin'!

OUTSIDE

Valentine watches as the blimp begins to turn away.

He ceases fire.

Valentine holsters his pistols and starts casually down the street.

Hands in pockets, he WHISTLES a happy tune.

INT. BATCAVE -- NIGHT

The Batmobile ROARS into the Batcave and pulls to a stop.

Alfred approaches the car with a white towel draped over his forearm.

Batman climbs out of the Batmobile and jumps to the ground.

He WINCES and his right arm hangs loosely at his side. He is beaten and broken, blood seeps through his torn and scorched costume.

ALFRED

Good heavens, Master Bruce, you look like you've just fought a war.

BATMAN

Close to it.

Alfred hands Batman the towel and he begins to dab at his bleeding lip with it.

Both men walk over to a brightly lit medical station.

ALFRED
Was it the Joker?

BATMAN
No. It seems that he's the least of
my problems at the moment.

ALFRED
What happened, sir?

Batman sits down on the edge of an examining table. He takes
off his cape, cowl and shirt.

Bruce's exposed body is bloody, bruised, torn and swollen.

Alfred begins to treat the wounds.

BATMAN
Thorne, it seems, has put a
substantial bounty on my head. Five
million to be exact. With that kind
of money out there for the taking,
everyone seems interested in getting
in on the fun. Every two-bit criminal
out there was gunning for me tonight.

ALFRED
I see.

BATMAN
I walked into three ambushes out
there. I was off my game. I should
have figured them out. Seen them
coming. If it wasn't for the police,
Scarface might have been able to
cash me in.

ALFRED
Lucky for us he didn't.

BATMAN
Ow.

ALFRED
Sorry, sir. So what will you do
now?

BATMAN
Sleep, Alfred. I'm going to sleep.

ALFRED
Now your talking sense.

EXT. GOTHAM POLICE PRECINCT -- MORNING

Construction workers and cranes work on the police precinct
rooftop as well as the adjacent office building.

Police officers search the surrounding rooftops as police blimps float overhead.

Outside the police station an army of reporters blocked off by police tape cover the story.

INSIDE, COMMISSIONER GORDON'S OFFICE

Gordon stands behind his desk as Bullock stands opposite.

Both men lean on the desk resting on their knuckles and shout at each other.

GORDON

Batman's done more for this city than anyone!

BULLOCK

I don't care what he's done for this city! He's a menace!

GORDON

You have no basis for such accusations!

BULLOCK

Look around you, Commish! The building's still smoking! We have four of ours in the morgue! And who do we have to blame for it? The Bat! We all saw 'em, you saw 'em!

GORDON

The Batman doesn't kill! He never has, not once. Those dead officers were not his doing. Nor does he have any reason to blow up the top of the precinct.

BULLOCK

Commissioner, with all due respect, open your eyes! The caped crusader is nothing but a vigilante drugging up the freaks of Gotham! Whoever attacked the station and killed those cops was after him! Like it or not, they wouldn't be dead if it wasn't for the Bat!

GORDON

I think I've had enough of this. Get out of my office.

Bullock clenches his jaw in controlled rage as he straightens and turns for the door.

Bullock stops in the doorway and turns back to Gordon.

BULLOCK

I've already formed a team to bring him in.

GORDON

What?! Bullock, I'll have your badge.

BULLOCK

I think the Mayor would disagree with you. He personally approved the team's creation.

Shocked, Gordon sits in his chair.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Commish, but if you won't do anything to stop him, we will.

Bullock exits.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, KITCHEN -- MORNING

Alfred wears an apron and fills a glass with juice, a beautiful breakfast laid out beside it.

Bruce walks into the kitchen dressed in slacks and a dress shirt.

His bottom lip is swollen and red.

Bruce sits at the table.

ALFRED

Well that's an ugly reminder of last night.

BRUCE

That's nothing. I feel like a stampede of horses rode through my bed.

Bruce begins to eat.

ALFRED

Are we going to take it easy today?

BRUCE

If only it were that simple.

EXT. GOTHAM POLICE IMPOUND -- MORNING

The Gotham Police Impound is large, within its yard a fleet of cars, trucks and trailers sit parked and chained.

A large ten foot chain topped with razor wire surrounds the yard.

A large warehouse also sits within the fenced in yard.

A red tow truck pulls up to the guard booth.

Harley Quinn sits behind the wheel, her golden hair hanging at her shoulders. She wears overalls, a dirty cap and cherry red lipstick. She chews a large wad of gum and has grease stains on her cheeks.

The security guard steps out of the guard booth, clipboard in hand.

SECURITY GUARD 2
Picking up?

HARLEY
How'd you guess?

The guard looks down at the clipboard.

SECURITY GUARD 2
Name and case number?

HARLEY
Paula Dini. 655-J.

The guard flips through the pages.

SECURITY GUARD 2
655-J.

He continues to scan the papers.

The security guard finds the entry and stops.

SECURITY GUARD 2 (CONT'D)
There must be some mistake. That's
a Joker item. We can't release those
to anyone.

He looks up at Harley who smiles back.

Realization fills his face as he goes for his gun.

Harley throws open the tow truck door.

The door SLAMS into the guard and knocks him to the ground.

Harley leans out of the cab, a silenced pistol in hand, and fires five times into his body.

She jumps out of the truck, enters the guard booth and raises the gate.

Harley then skips and jumps back into the truck.

She closes the door and pulls into the yard.

INSIDE IMPOUND WAREHOUSE

Somewhat of a museum, the warehouse is filled with items ranging from artwork to machine guns. Amongst it all there are numerous cages filled with various animals.

A handful of men and women work inside cataloging the merchandise.

The tow truck CRASHES through the warehouse wall.

The men and women look up in fear as the truck SCREECHES to a halt.

The truck's door flies open and Harley hangs out, large revolver in hand.

HARLEY

Sorry 'bout the intrusion, but I
think you have something that belongs
to me.

A second security officer runs into the room, gun drawn.

Harley guns him down and then opens fire on the rest of the room.

Smoke billows from the revolver's barrel as Harley surveys the room.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

So that's where my slinky went.

INT. BATCAVE -- DAY

Bruce sits behind the Batcomputer working, he still wears slacks and a dress shirt.

Work lights illuminate the Batmobile which now sits up on Jacks.

BRUCE

It's worse than I'd feared.

Alfred slides out from under the Batmobile, he is grease stained and wearing a mechanic's uniform. He holds a large wrench in his hand.

ALFRED

How so, Master Bruce.

BRUCE

When I was at the Governor's Mansion
I had a feeling something was up,
and I was right.

(MORE)

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Whoever assassinated Kenneth was much more dangerous than I'd originally thought. I checked the medical examiner's report and they confirmed that the bullet has absolutely no ballistic markings. The bullet fragments were completely clean. This matches my findings with the fragment I pulled out of the tree in the grotto.

ALFRED

Is that even possible?

BRUCE

Yes it is. Assassins have been known to use a kind of bullet within' a shell. When a the firearm is discharged bullet is actually encased in a disposable shell which burns away in the firing.

ALFRED

So the shell acts as a shield to protect the bullet from any scrapes the inside of the barrel might make.

BRUCE

Exactly. And any markings left by the firing pen or bolt as well. But that's not the disturbing part. When I ran the vile of the Governor's blood through the computer I found minute traces of Hydranol Dioxinode Four. A chemical agent that causes muscular paralysis. Once administered, Hydranol Dioxide Four interferes with the nervous system, acting as a kind of mirror. It causes the muscles in the body to believe they are receiving the same signal over and over again, freezing them in place. It is believed to be a horrifically painful experience.

ALFRED

Turning the poor Governor into, what you could call, a sitting duck.

BRUCE

Precisely. But that leads us to the most alarming element. Hd-4's interaction with the nervous system will eventually end in a series of fatal strokes.

ALFRED

So he was already dying?

BRUCE

Yes he was, and the killer knew it. I can only assume the bullet was used to disguise the assassins trail. The only way he could have administered the drug was to inject the Governor's bloodstream directly.

ALFRED

That means he was in the grotto?

BRUCE

And with a bullet in his throat, the police would simply assume it was a sniper and would stop looking anywhere on the grounds. He's definitely a professional.

ALFRED

He sounds quite dangerous. Do you think he's still in Gotham?

BRUCE

Yes I do. I think he tried to kill me last night.

"The bullet has a kind of shell that peels off when the gun is discharged."

Need to add something about the banquet.

INT. HOTEL -- DAY

A lavish two-bedroom hotel suite sits high above Gotham City.

Sun streams through the huge wall of windows filling the room with a bright airiness.

Valentine strolls through the room in nothing but his pajama pants as he sips from a cup of coffee.

Valentine sits on the couch.

On the coffee table in front of him a mess of file folders, reports and pictures, all of the Batman, can be seen. Amongst them is a Laptop and pistol.

Valentine opens the laptop and presses a few buttons.

On the large flatscreen TV opposite him a media player begins.

Surveillance footage of Batman at the police precinct the night before plays.

Valentine leans back and sips from his coffee as he watches.

He picks up a photograph of Batman climbing into the Batmobile and takes yet another sip of coffee.

INT. CONDO HALL -- EVENING

A fist with scabbed knuckles knocks on the door to the high-rise condo.

Bruce stands waiting outside the door, he wears a tuxedo and holds a beautiful bouquet in one hand and an elegantly wrapped present in the other. His lip is still swollen and red.

REBECCA (O.S.)
(through the door)
I'm coming.

The sounds of UNLOCKING can be heard and the door opens.

Inside the doorway stands a stunningly beautiful woman. She wears a tasteful yet incredibly sexy cocktail dress. A large smile crosses her face.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Hello, Bruce.

Suddenly she sees his swollen lip and the smile changes to concern.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Oh, Bruce, what happened?

BRUCE
Hello Rebecca. It's nothing.

REBECCA
Are you sure, do you need some ice?

BRUCE
Really, I'm fine.

Bruce holds out the present and Rebecca takes it, a smile returning to her face.

REBECCA
You shouldn't have. Come on inside,
I'll be ready shortly.

Rebecca grabs hold of Bruce's arm lovingly and the two enter the condo.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
I only need a few more minutes.

The door closes.

BRUCE (O.S.)

Where should I put these flowers?

EXT. GOTHAM POLICE PRECINCT -- EVENING

Bullock stands in the police station parking lot addressing the twenty men and women in front of him.

BULLOCK

Alright, boys and girls, this is the big time. I hand picked you all for this team and I expect you not to let me down. I want the Batman brought in. I don't care what you think of him, like 'em or hate 'em, your job is to find 'em and take 'em down. Gotham City has no room for costumed vigilantes. I want constant communication between your team and me. We don't need no heroes, if you find him call in the Calvary. Understand.

The men and women nod.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Good. Me and Montoya will be hittin' the streets with ya. Now you know your teams and your assignments.

Everyone begins to move to their vehicles.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Oh, and don't forget, the Joker's goons hit the impound this morning. Now that the Joker's got some of his toys back, there's no tellin' what he'll pull. Keep your eyes open out there.

The police officers climb into their cars and onto their motorcycles.

SIRENS wail as the cars and bikes drive out into the sunset.

INT. JOKER'S HIDEOUT -- NIGHT

The Joker sits behind a desk, his feet propped up.

He LAUGHS hardily as he flips through a book titled "Horrors of the Holocaust."

The large garage door rises as Bruno enters followed by thirty rough looking men.

The Joker looks up from his book and smiles.

JOKER

Gentlemen. So good of you to make it.

The Joker stands and approaches the men.

THUG 2

I got as many as I could, boss. Too many of 'em is scared of you.

The Joker begins to survey and comment on the men.

JOKER

Too fat. Too ugly. Bad teeth. Too skinny. Too short. Uni-brow. Horrible fashion sense. Too young. Stupid. Old. And Smells. I'm amazed. These have to be the saddest and seediest bunch of roughians in the whole city. Bruno.

The Joker turns to face Bruno.

Bruno swallows hard.

THUG 2

Yes, Mr. J?

JOKER

(giddy)
They're perfect!

A smile of relief crosses Bruno's face.

Harley and the Tow-truck drive into the warehouse HONKING "Shave and a haircut, two bits." It tows an icecream truck behind it.

Following the tow-truck is a large tractor-trailer, Rusty behind the wheel.

JOKER (CONT'D)

And here's the rest of the class.

The tow-truck and tractor-trailer both come to a stop.

Harley climbs out of the tow-truck, she wears her red and black costume.

HARLEY

Howdy boys!

JOKER

Harley, dear. Perchance, did you happen to find our lost items.

HARLEY

All of 'em, Mr. J. I even found my
slinky!

Harley holds up a slinky in her right hand.

Suddenly it slips from her grip and hits the floor.

Immediately it shoots up into the air toward the thugs.

The men watch wearily as the slinky approaches them.

The slinky bounces a few times and then shoots right into
one of the men.

The slinky coils around the man and tightens.

The man's eyes grow wide and he falls backwards, dead.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

Whoops.

JOKER

Careful, Harley. These thugs don't
grow on trees you know.

INSIDE TRACTOR-TRAILER CAB

Rusty puts the truck in park and looks over to the passenger
seat.

A dead body lies slumped over in the seat, a tommy gun in
his lap.

Rusty grabs a tommy gun and opens his door.

INSIDE WAREHOUSE

Rusty climbs out of the tractor-trailer.

RUSTY

I got the paint, boss. Whatta we
doin' with it?

JOKER

All in due time my psychopathic
friend. First we must wait for the
last piece of the puzzle.

HARLEY

I love puzzles! Does this one got
puppies in it?

Joker frowns.

JOKER
 Medical school ain't what it used to
 be.

HARLEY
 Ooo, ooo. Mr. J, look what else I
 found.

Harley runs over to the ice cream truck.

JOKER
 What is it now.

Rusty joins the rest of the men.

Harley opens the rear doors of the ice cream truck.

The sound of evil LAUGHTER spills out of the ice cream truck
 and the men look to each other nervously.

Harley steps out into to view, in front of her stand two
 large and ferocious hyenas. She holds a leash in each hand.

HARLEY
 I found our babies!

The hyenas LAUGHTER echoes through the room.

JOKER
 (to Harley)
 Wonderful, babe!

The Joker leans over to one of the men.

JOKER (CONT'D)
 (under his breath)
 Great, those things aren't housebroken
 you know.
 (to the room)
 Well, it looks like almost everyone
 is here.

BRUNO
 Who else we waitin' for, Mr. J?

JOKER
 Ol' straw sleeves, of course.

RUSTY
 The Scarecrow?

At that moment a long black hearse pulls into the warehouse.

JOKER
 Righty O.

The hearse pulls up and parks in front of the men.

JOKER (CONT'D)
He's always so morbid.

The Scarecrow climbs out of the hearse along with three goons in ski masks.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Find the place alright?

Scarecrow looks to his goons then back at the Joker.

SCARECROW
I have your new batch.

JOKER
Have you tested it?

SCARECROW
No, I've left that...honor...for you.

The Joker smiles largely.

BACK OF THE HEARSE -- MOMENTS LATER

The ski masked goons pull two large caskets from the rear of the hearse and lay them on the ground.

The Scarecrow unlocks and opens both of them.

SCARECROW (CONT'D)
As ordered. Sixty-two gallons of pure laugh juice.

Inside the caskets are numerous large containers of green liquid.

JOKER
It's just like Christmas.

The Joker reaches in and takes one the containers in his hand.

JOKER (CONT'D)
And you followed my new recipe exactly?

SCARECROW
To the letter.

The Joker opens the top of the container and raises it to his lips.

The thugs, goons and Scarecrow look around nervously.

SCARECROW (CONT'D)
I wouldn't do that if I were you.

The Joker smiles and takes a swig.

He SWISHES the liquid around in his mouth.

Everyone watches concerned.

Suddenly he turns to one of the men and smiles.

The man smiles back, uncomfortably.

The Joker spits the liquid into the man's face

The man SCREAMS as he grabs at his face.

Soon his screams turn to hysterical LAUGHTER.

He lowers his hands to reveal a painfully large grin, tears streaming from his eyes.

The man laughs uncontrollably eventually doubling over and falling to the floor.

JOKER

He seems to like it.

SCARECROW

How did you...you should be dead.

HARLEY

He's immuninized.

SCARECROW

But that's impossible. That mixture is purely toxic. No one could build up an immunity to so many lethal chemicals.

JOKER

Boys.

Rusty and Bruno walk up to Scarecrow, each carrying a handle of a large trunk.

They set the trunk down in front of Scarecrow.

SCARECROW

What's this?

JOKER

A present, from me to you.

SCARECROW

I'm not one for presents.

JOKER

Trust me, you'll like this one.

The Scarecrow looks from the Joker to the trunk and then back to the Joker.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Go on, open it.

The Scarecrow motions and one of the goons kneels down in front of the trunk.

Scarecrow and the rest back away from the trunk slowly.

The goon POPS the locks and then looks back up at the Scarecrow who nods.

The goon looks back to the trunk and lifts the lid.

Suddenly the lid springs open and a pie SPLATS against the goons face.

The Joker and Harley burst into LAUGHTER, many of the men joining in.

The goon wipes the pie from his face and pulls out the plastic hand and spring device.

The Scarecrow leans in as the stacks and stacks of cash become visible.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Three-quarters of a million clams.

SCARECROW

Why?

JOKER

Like you said, times are tough. Us Loony Toons have to look out for each other.

The Scarecrow nods to the other goons and they quickly close the trunk and load it into the hearse.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Don't spend it all in one place.

SCARECROW

Give the Batman my regards.

Scarecrow nods and he and his goons climb into the hearse.

JOKER

Everyone gather around.

The men close in around the Joker.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Boys, it's time to paint this town
red.

EXT. MANSION -- NIGHT

A large mansion sits amongst a small forest of large trees.

A fleet of valets handle the long line of limos and expensive
sports cars.

Men and women dressed in elegant evening wear walk up the
large stone staircase to the huge mansion.

INSIDE

Inside the mansion people fill every room, finger foods,
drinks and CONVERSATION flow freely.

Bruce walks through the crowd with Rebecca on his arm.

GRANT (O.S.)

Bruce, baby.

GRANT steps out from the crowd, hand outstretched.

BRUCE

Grant.

GRANT

How the hell are you. And who is
this?

BRUCE

Grant Armstrong, I'd like you to
meet Ms. Rebecca Dwyer.

Grant takes her hand and smiles.

GRANT

Truly a pleasure.

He kisses her hand.

REBECCA

It's a pleasure to meet you too.

GRANT

You always do pick the prettiest
flowers in the garden, don't you
Bruce.

BRUCE

Easy boy.

GRANT

What I meant to say is that you, my dear, are simply stunning.

REBECCA

Thank you.

GRANT

I sure can't say the same about you, Bruce. What happened to your face?

CUT TO:

Bruce explains what happened to numerous groups of guests.

BRUCE

I got smashed, tripped and fell through a plate glass window.

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

I played in a charity rugby game.

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Believe it or not I was mugged.

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Fell asleep behind the wheel.

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

You just ever have one of those days?

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

A bookshelf fell on me.

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Unexpected airbag deployment.

CUT TO:

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Tennis accident.

CUT TO:

Finally Bruce and Rebecca are alone for a moment.

REBECCA
So how'd you really get that fat
lip?

BRUCE
Well--

Behind Rebecca Bruce sees Selina Kyle and her date approaching them.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Selina.

Rebecca turns to see the approaching couple.

SELINA
Bruce. This is Anthony Marshall.

Bruce shakes his hand.

BRUCE
I've heard great things about you.
And this is the lovely Rebecca--

SELINA
Dwyer. I've seen your work. Your a
wonderful model.

REBECCA
Thank you.

BRUCE
(to Rebecca)
And this is Ms. Selina Kyle.

SELINA
(to Anthony)
And Bruce Wayne.

REBECCA
Wait, the Selina Kyle? Catwoman?

SELINA
In the flesh.

REBECCA
Oh my god. I'm a huge fan. You
always looked so amazing in those
newspaper pictures.

SELINA
Thanks.

BRUCE
I hear you made a fortune in military
robotics.

ANTHONY

That's what they say.

BRUCE

I've done a little work with the military, off and on.

REBECCA

Was your costume black leather or vinyl?

SELINA

Neither. It was latex.

REBECCA

Of course. It was so hot.

SELINA

I'm sure it would look better on you.

REBECCA

Do you really think so? I hope I'm not being too forward, but do you think you would let me try it on sometime.

SELINA

Sure thing, sweetheart. Anthony, would you mind getting me another drink from the bar.

ANTHONY

Sure.
(to the rest)
Excuse me.

Anthony walks off.

REBECCA

Actually, you'll have to excuse me, too. I have to powder my nose.

Rebecca gives Bruce a small kiss and walks off.

SELINA

She's cute.

BRUCE

He's rich. Does he own a cape and cowl?

SELINA

Don't worry, Bruce, you're the only one that wears a costume.

BRUCE
You look beautiful.

SELINA
Thank you. How are things coming with the Joker? And good lord what happened to your lip?

BRUCE
Nothing yet. Seems Thorne wants me dead.

SELINA
So I've heard.

BRUCE
I stepped into three ambushes last night. The lip is thanks to a certain Rhino.

SELINA
Scarface? Doesn't surprise me. Three ambushes? That's not like you.

BRUCE
Well, I'm not used to this kind of attention.

SELINA
All you have to do is call.

BRUCE
I can handle it.

Anthony returns and hands a drink to Selina.

ANTHONY
There you go, my dear.

SELINA
Thank you.

ANTHONY
So what are you two talking about?

BRUCE AND SELINA
Work.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

A dozen black sedans drive down the city streets, right above them a helicopter cruises.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

The Joker sits behind the pilot, headphones on.

JOKER

Alright class, you know what to do.
(to pilot)
Take us up.

OUTSIDE

The helicopter rises up into the night sky.

Suddenly the black sedans scatter, each one turning onto a different street.

One sedan pulls to a stop in front of a building and two thugs step out.

They open the trunk and reveal hundreds of spray paint cans.

Each thug grabs one and they begin to paint the front of the building bright red.

CITY STREETS -- ACROSS TOWN

Across town another sedan stops, two thugs get out and they begin to paint a store front bright red.

EXT. MANSION -- NIGHT

The party goes now move down the steps to their waiting vehicles.

Bruce holds the door as Rebecca climbs into the Rolls Royce.

Selina stops beside him and places her hand on his back.

SELINA

Be careful out there. I don't know what I'd do if something happened to you.

BRUCE

I'll call you.

SELINA

Promise?

Both smile and Bruce climbs into the car.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

More of Joker's thugs paint buildings bright red.

Above them the Joker's helicopter watches.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

PILOT

Looking good, boss. It's going to take the city months to clean this up.

JOKER

It just needs to last two days.

PILOT

Is that the big day?

JOKER

Indeed.

PILOT

We still got a lot of buildings to paint, what if the Batman shows up?

JOKER

We do what we always do, we run.

INT. BATCAVE -- NIGHT

Bruce finishes putting on his costume, cowl in hand, and walks over to the Batcomputer.

Alfred enters.

ALFRED

You sure are in a hurry.

BATMAN

The Joker's out there, painting the city red.

ALFRED

Straying a little from his normal murder and mayhem, aye Master Bruce.

BATMAN

That's what concerns me. The Joker always has something horrible up his sleeve. I have a feeling this is just the beginning.

ALFRED

You don't think it's a trap do you? Maybe he too is trying to cash in on Thorne's offer.

BATMAN

A trap it may be, but I don't think he's planning on turning me into Thorne. He's much more...possessive than that.

ALFRED

Do be careful, sir. With everyone
looking for you I do worry.

BATMAN

I can handle them, Alfred.

Batman climbs into the Batmobile and it ROARS out of the
Batcave.

EXT. ALTERI TOY FACTORY -- NIGHT

The large factory sits quiet at this late hour.

INSIDE

Crates and crates of toys sit waiting for delivery.

Suddenly the loading dock doors EXPLODE, fire and smoke
spilling into the factory.

The large stolen tractor-trailer backs through the smoking
hole.

Once inside, the truck stops.

Harley climbs out of the passenger door as Rusty jumps down
from the driver's side.

RUSTY

Look at all the toys.

Harley opens the back of the trailer and three thugs climb
out.

HARLEY

Load all the teddy bears you can
find.

RUSTY

Just the teddy bears?

HARLEY

Yeah, just the cute little teddy
bears.

Harley points at two of the thugs.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

Wait, you two, unload the barrels
first.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

Two of Joker's men spray paint the side of a building.

BUGSY

I don't get it. How is this gonna make the city tremble?

JAKE

I dunno. But the Joker says it's important.

BUGSY

I just don't get it.

Suddenly Bugsy is launched from the street as a net pins him to a wall.

JAKE

Holy...

Bugsy GROANS as the thick cords hold him tightly against the brick.

Jake turns to see the Batmobile SCREECH to a halt.

Jake reaches into his belt and pulls his pistol.

He opens fire on the Batmobile.

Sparks shoot across the car as the bullets glance off.

Finally his gun runs empty and Jake throws it down.

He sprints for their car.

Before he can reach the car, the Batmobile fires a large metal disc that embeds itself in the hood of the car, nearly splitting it in half.

Jake stumbles to a stop.

He looks at the Batmobile as the canopy slides open.

Batman climbs out.

BATMAN

Do yourself a favor, don't run.

Jake turns and runs.

Batman points the Batgrapple at Jake and fires.

The grapple misses Jake by less than an inch and SLAMS into a wire trash can down the street.

Batman grabs the grapple chord with both hands.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

They never listen.

Batman tugs hard on the chord lifting the trash can into the air and directly back toward Jake.

Jake's eyes go wide as the trash can slams into his face.

He falls hard on his back.

Jake MOANS as he opens his eyes.

Batman stands above him.

JAKE

I don't know nothin'.

BATMAN

We'll see about that.

Batman leans down and grabs Jake, lifting him to his feet.

ACROSS TOWN

Across town the Joker's helicopter hovers above two men painting.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

PILOT

Still no word from Buggy and Jake.

JOKER

I have a feeling the Dark Knight is onto our game.

PILOT

So what do we do?

JOKER

We can't let ol' guano man ruin our fun, not yet. It's up to you and me, lets see if we can slow 'em down.

PILOT

Aye aye, sir.

OUTSIDE

The helicopter turns and zooms off into the night.

ACROSS TOWN

A brown unmarked police cruiser drives down the streets.

INSIDE

Montoya sits behind the wheel while Bullock chews on a toothpick in the passenger's seat.

BULLOCK

I don't get it, Montoya. Why are some lousy goons spray paintin' the city red?

MONTOYA

Got me. Gordon seems to think it's the Joker.

BULLOCK

Probably is. That whacko will try anything.

Montoya pulls to a stop at a red light.

MONTOYA

At least he...

Montoya trails off as she leans forward to see out the windshield.

MONTOYA (CONT'D)

Look.

Bullock leans forward too.

OUTSIDE

Hanging from a flag pole around the corner is a bound and gagged Jake.

INSIDE

Bullock turns to see Bugsy still pinned to the wall behind the net.

Bullock clenches his teeth.

BULLOCK

Keep your eyes peeled, he's close.

OUTSIDE

Bullock SLAPS a police light on the car's roof and they drive off, SIREN wailing.

INT. ALTERI TOY FACTORY -- NIGHT

The thugs finish loading crates of stuffed teddy bears into the back of the truck.

Harley watches, a dozen large 20 gallon drums at her side.

RUSTY

That's the last of 'em, Harley.

HARLEY

Spiffy. Now dump the barrels.

Rusty and the thugs jump to the ground and begin rolling the large barrels deeper into the factory.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS

The Batmobile cruises down the streets.

INSIDE

Batman sits behind the wheel and flips a switch on the dash.

The viewscreen changes to an audio stream with the words "Police Frequency" written in the top left hand corner.

Immediately CHATTER fills the car.

MALE VOICE 2

Copy that. We still have no arrests. The graffiti bandits are still on the loose. Be advised, the Batman is present. Anyone making visual identification of the Batman or his handiwork are to report in immediately. Again, anyone--

Batman flips the switch and the GPS screen returns.

BATMAN

Great. As if being hunted by criminals wasn't bad enough.

OUTSIDE

As the Batmobile approaches an intersection a car pulls out in front of him and stops.

Batman slams on the brakes to keep from hitting the car directly in his path.

Smoke floats up from both the Batmobile and the car's tires as the Batmobile stops inches away.

INSIDE BATMOBILE

Batman looks out the windshield to find the car completely empty.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

What?

OUTSIDE

Suddenly the car explodes in a massive fireball, engulfing the Batmobile in the blast.

As the fireball dissipates, the Batmobile is clearly smoking, the car totally gone.

The Batmobile is badly damaged, large holes have been torn in the thick outer plating and a large section of the canopy is gone.

INSIDE

Batman leans against the wheel, smoke swirling around him in the now exposed interior.

He GROANS as he leans back.

His cheek is bleeding and soot dirties his face.

Batman looks down at the viewscreen to see it flickering and distorting.

He TAPS the screen with his fingers and it clears up slightly.

Batman flips a switch.

At first nothing happens but he flips it a few more times and the screen changes to the Batmobile schematic.

Most of the front of the car is lit with bright red lines and flashing warnings.

Batman plays with another switch until Alfred appears on the screen.

ALFRED

Master Bruce? I can't see you.

BATMAN

Alfred, I'm sending the Batmobile back to you. It's in bad shape. I'll be calling in the Batwing.

ALFRED

Maybe you should come home, sir.

BATMAN

I can't. The Joker's close, I can feel it.

OUTSIDE

Blocks away the Joker's helicopter hovers.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

The Joker looks out at the smoking wreckage.

JOKER

Well, that's handy, looks like someone
beat us to the punch.

PILOT

Do you think he's dead?

JOKER

No, not Batboy.

INSIDE BATMOBILE

ALFRED

Alright, Master Bruce.

Batman presses a series of buttons and climbs out of the
gaping hole in the canopy.

OUTSIDE

The Batmobile ROARS with a series of CLANKS and GRINDINGS.

A large cloud of smoke begins to pump out from under the
hood and wheel wells.

Batman pulls his Batgrapple and fires it into the sky.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

Out the windshield Batman rises into the night sky.

JOKER

Look, there he goes. I guess, he's
out of our hair for the time being.

The Batmobile begins to drive through the wreckage and off
down the street.

PILOT

The car's drivin' with no one inside?

JOKER

Quite observant aren't we. Come on,
we have to get back to supervising.
I can't leave you muscle-heads alone
for a second.

PILOT

Alright, boss. Hey, who do you think
blew up the car?

JOKER

I don't know, but I'd sure like to
shake his hand.

OUTSIDE

The helicopter flies off.

INSERT BINOCULAR VIEW

The Batmobile exits the wreckage.

NEARBY ROOFTOP

Valentine lowers the binoculars and smiles.

VALENTINE

Takes a licking and keeps on ticking.
I'm gonna have to get myself one of
those.

Valentine looks down at the radio detonator in his hand and tucks it into his jacket.

VALENTINE (CONT'D)

Hmm.

Valentine turns and walks toward the stairs.

INT. ALTERI TOY FACTORY -- NIGHT

The barrels lay on their sides, the spouts open.

The last of the gasoline trickles out onto the floor already covered in it.

The thugs climb into the truck.

Harley stops and pulls out a small wind-up monster lizard toy.

She winds the crank and sets it on the floor.

The little plastic legs begin to move as the toy walks, very slowly, into the factory.

Harley turns and climbs up into the passenger side of the truck.

HARLEY

Sayonara!

The tractor-trailer pulls off into the night as the plastic monster walks on.

The monster stops in a pool of gas.

The crank continues to spin in its back for a second and then, suddenly, a small spout of fire erupts from the toy's mouth.

The floor ignites and in a flash, the factory is engulfed in flames.

OUTSIDE

The tractor trailer drives away from the now burning factory, Harley's LAUGHTER echoes out into the night.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

Batman swings onto a rooftop, landing softly.

He walks to the buildings edge.

In the distance the Joker's helicopter can be seen hovering.

Batman presses a button on his belt and the Batwing rises up in front of him.

INSIDE JOKER'S HELICOPTER

A warning bell goes off in the helicopter and the pilot looks down at his radar.

PILOT

Boss, we got something, another aircraft and it's close.

JOKER

Is it a police blimp?

PILOT

No, it's too low.

JOKER

Where is it?

PILOT

About two hundred yards behind us.

JOKER

Turn us around, let me see it.

OUTSIDE

The helicopter pivots to face the distant Batwing.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

JOKER (CONT'D)

Well, well, well. That teaches us to count our chickens before they hatch.

ROOFTOP

Batman steps onto the Batwing as the canopy opens.

INSIDE BATWING

Batman climbs inside and shuts the canopy.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

PILOT

What do we do now, boss?

JOKER

As I explained earlier, I think it might be high time we made a run for it.

OUTSIDE

The Batwing pivots to face the Joker's helicopter

INSIDE

Batman sits behind the controls.

He flips switches and presses buttons.

INSERT VIEWSCREEN: A targeting system appears on the screen.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

PILOT

He's targeting us.

JOKER

Run, my good man! Run!

OUTSIDE

The helicopter tilts forward as it accelerates away.

INSIDE BATWING

Batman smiles as he pushes the throttle forward.

OUTSIDE

The Batwing's engines ROAR as it starts off after the helicopter.

NEARBY ROOFTOP

Valentine stands, a surface to air missile launcher on his shoulder.

INSERT SCOPE: The Batwing centers in the scope, a red bracket surrounding it.

Valentine pulls the trigger and a missile SCREAMS out of the launcher.

Smoke streaks off toward the Batwing.

INSIDE BATWING

Warning BELLS fill the cockpit.

Batman quickly looks to the viewscreen which shows the approaching missile.

Batman yanks the controls to the left.

OUTSIDE

The Batwing attempts to turn out of the missile's path but it is too late.

The missile slams into the right wing, flames and smoke erupting into the sky.

INSIDE JOKER'S HELICOPTER

The Joker watches the explosion rip through the Batwing.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Wait, wait! Turn us around.

The pilot pulls at the controls and the helicopter spins around.

PILOT

Again?

The Joker leans close to the window, anxiously.

INSIDE BATWING

Batman fights with the controls, smoke seeps inside the cockpit as the warning BELLS continue to ring.

CITY STREETS

Bullock and Montoya's car drive down the street.

INSIDE CAR

Montoya and Bullock stare out the windshield at the smoking Batwing.

MONTOYA

Oh god.

INSIDE JOKER'S HELICOPTER

The Joker watches as the Batwing banks to the left and out over the ocean.

JOKER

(under his breath)

Eject. Damn it, eject.

OUTSIDE

The Batwing loses altitude over the calm sea, smoke billowing from its wing.

INSIDE BATWING

Batman struggles to control the aircraft as he speeds toward the water's surface.

Finally he grabs for the ejection handle and yanks hard.

"Ejection Seat Malfunction" appears on the viewscreen as nothing happens.

Batman looks out the windshield as the ocean approaches.

OUTSIDE

The Batwing SLAMS into the ocean, a huge plume of white water exploding up into the sky behind it.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

The Joker watches, his jaw open, as the Batwing disappears under the water's surface.

PILOT

Now, do you think he's dead?

JOKER

I...I...don't know.

PILOT

Well, whoever fired that missile sure did us a favor.

Anger fills the Joker's face.

JOKER

Yes. I must find him and thank him personally.

ROOFTOP

Valentine smiles as the bubbles pop at the ocean's surface.

VALENTINE

No ordinary man indeed.

INSIDE POLICE CAR

Bullock grabs the radio.

BULLOCK

I need search and rescue boats off the South piers. We have a man down in the water. I want Coast Guard support. I want all rescue workers to approach with caution, victim may be hostile.

UNDERWATER

The Batwing sinks through the dark water as Batman swims away, his right arm limp at his side.

Batman wears a small breathing device in his mouth.

UNDER PIER

Underneath a pier, Batman's head emerges.

He yanks the breathing device from his mouth as he PANTS heavily.

UNDERWATER

The Batwing settles on the sea bottom.

UNDER PIER

Batman pulls a small electronic device from his belt and presses a button on it.

UNDERWATER

The Batwing's thrusters fire underneath each wing kicking up a huge cloud of sand.

The sand settles, covering the Batwing entirely.

UNDER PIER

Batman looks up as the sounds of SIRENS and TIRES ON WOOD can be heard overhead.

PIER

The unmarked cop car comes to a stop on the pier, Bullock and Montoya exit.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

It went down just out there.

MONTOYA

I don't see anything. No bubbles.

BULLOCK

Where's our search and rescue?

Suddenly a blimp HUMS by overhead, it's spotlight shining down on the smooth water.

MONTOYA

There you go.

In the distance the bright lights of a half dozen boats approach.

BULLOCK

I want divers in the water in five.

UNDER PIER

Batman SIGHS and places the breathing device back into his mouth.

He lowers back into the water and is gone.

INT. BATCAVE -- NIGHT

The badly damaged Batmobile sits parked on jacks.

Alfred stands in front of the Batcomputer, one of the monitors shows a news broadcast.

INSERT MONITOR

A NEWS MAN stands on the docks, a swarm of search and rescue boats in the water behind him.

NEWS MAN

Less than an hour ago, the police chase ended with the Batman's violent crash landing in the ocean behind me. At this time there is still no word on Batman or his notorious jet aircraft.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman stumbles into the Batcave, his boots SHUFFLING across the hard ground.

Alfred turns hearing the sound.

ALFRED

Master Bruce!

Alfred races over to Batman and helps support him.

BATMAN

Careful with my arm, it's broken.

ALFRED

I feared the worst.

BATMAN

So did I.

ALFRED

The Batwing?

BATMAN

Hidden on the ocean floor.

ALFRED

What happened?

BATMAN

Someone hit me with a surface to air missile.

ALFRED

Someone?

BATMAN

I think it's the same person who ambushed me at the police station and who knocked out the Batmobile.

ALFRED

And the murdered the Governor.

BATMAN

Exactly.

Alfred helps Batman sit on the examining table and immediately grabs a pair of large scissors.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

The police are after me now too.

ALFRED

So I gathered.

Alfred begins to cut the torn, scorched and battered costume from Bruce's body.

Batman winces occasionally.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Do you have any idea why?

BATMAN

Not yet. I saw Bullock tonight, I wouldn't be surprised if he's launched another crusade.

ALFRED

With the Joker on the loose, the city's underworld, a professional killer and the police all after you, maybe you should lay low for a while.

BATMAN

Trust me, Alfred, I wish I could.
The Joker has a plan and every minute
I sit here, is a moment sooner someone
will die.

ALFRED

I'm afraid your body won't be able
to take much more of this. Your arm
is badly broken.

BATMAN

I know. I need you to cast it.

ALFRED

Surely you don't expect to fight
with a broken arm.

BATMAN

You'd better make it thick.

EXT. PIER -- NIGHT

Gordon walks down the pier, through the crowds of police,
and stops beside Bullock.

GORDON

Anything?

BULLOCK

Not yet, Commissioner. The divers
are still looking. I know he went
down here, so how is it we can't
find a single piece of his jet or
the man himself?

GORDON

He's no ordinary man, Detective.
He's full of surprises.

INT. JOKER'S HIDEOUT -- NIGHT

Stuffed teddy bears fill the hideout.

Harley's hyena's chew one apart savagely.

The thugs and Harley sit scattered across the room

The Joker walks into the hideout, his shoulders hunched.

Harley looks up at him and smiles.

HARLEY

Suga!

Seeing his defeated posture her face sours.

She stands and walks over to him.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

What's wrong, Mr. J?

JOKER

He's gone, stolen from me. After all this time, all this work.

BRUNO

Who, boss? Who's gone?

JOKER

(angrily)

The Batman you dolt!

BRUNO

But...?

JOKER

With the Batman gone, there's no reason to go on. Everything, all of this, is for nothing.

The Joker collapses into a chair, his chin in his chest.

Harley jumps into his lap.

HARLEY

But haven't you heard, Mr. J? The cops have been searchin' for hours and they ain't found a thing.

The Joker's eyebrow's rise.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

No clues, no Batjet and no Batman. Honestly, I don't think he's dead.

The Joker leaps up, taking Harley in his arms, a huge smile across his face.

JOKER

Of course he's not dead!

The Joker kisses Harley passionately.

As they pull apart Harley playfully faints, a smile on her face.

The Joker holds her limp body against his.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Boys, the plan's still on. Let's get back to work.

EXT. GORDON'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

A large two story house sits behind a circle drive.

Gordon approaches the house from his car.

INSIDE

Gordon enters the house.

BARBARA, late teens with red hair, sits on the couch sleeping, the TV on.

Gordon smiles and walks over to her.

He leans in and kisses her forehead.

She smiles with eyes closed.

BARBARA
Glad your home, Daddy.

GORDON
Me too. Go back to sleep, Barbara.

Barbara curls up with a pillow and falls back into slumber.

Gordon heads up stairs.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE -- NIGHT

There is a loud KNOCKING on the front door.

The lights CLICK on as an OLDER MAN opens the door.

OLDER MAN
Yes?

Standing in the doorway are two of Joker's thugs, BRUISER and GEORGE.

BRUISER
Knock knock.

OLDER MAN
What is this? Do you know what--

A silenced GUNSHOT whispers out and the older man falls. George holds a smoking gun in his hand.

BRUISER
The correct answer was who's there.

BOARDING HOUSE BASEMENT

Bruiser and George carry large black duffel bags into the basement.

GEORGE

Hurry up, we got six more buildings
to rig.

Bruiser UNZIPS his bag and begins removing plastic explosives,
dynamite and wire.

INT. BATCAVE -- NIGHT

Bruce wears a new costume and he looks down at his newly
casted arm.

BRUCE

Impressive, Alfred.

ALFRED

I still feel it's a bad idea to go
back out again, Master Bruce. At
least wait until tomorrow.

BRUCE

Alfred, you know how much I hate
repeating myself.

ALFRED

Well, excuse me for carrying about
your safety, sir.

Bruce walks over to a tarp covered object in the corner.

BRUCE

I'd always hoped I would never have
to dig this piece of junk back out.

Bruce pulls the tarp off to reveal a large sleek black
motorcycle.

ALFRED

There's nothing left.

Batman climbs onto the motorcycle and turns the key.

The bike ROARS to life.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Don't forget what happened last time
you rode that thing.

BATMAN

How could I forget. I'll be back
before sunrise.

Batman puts his full face helmet on.

ALFRED

I'll have breakfast waiting.

Batman leans forward and the motorcycle closes in around him.

The tires SQUEAL as Batman speeds out of the Batcave.

INT. GORDON'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Barbara continues to sleep in front of the TV.

Suddenly there is a KNOCK at the door.

Barbara wakes.

UPSTAIRS

Gordon wakes as the KNOCKING continues.

His wife, SARAH, sleeps beside him.

GORDON
What in God's name?

SARAH
(eyes closed)
It's probably one of your men come
to take you away again.

Gordon climbs out of the bed.

GORDON
They know to call, not show up at
the house. I'll settle this.

DOWNSTAIRS

Barbara stands sleepily and heads toward the door.

BARBARA
I'm coming.

She opens the front door to reveal Bruno and Rusty.

The beginning of a SCREAM slips out but is stifled by Bruno's hand.

He spins her around, holding her arms with one of his and covering her mouth with his other hand.

BRUNO
(whispering)
Shhh.

UPSTAIRS

At the top of the stairs, Gordon hears the faint SCREAM, and freezes.

He leans against the wall and creeps to the corner.

Gordon looks downstairs.

DOWNSTAIRS

Rusty and Bruno move into the house.

JOKER (O.S.)

Try not to scare him, he's old you know.

The Joker enters with five more thugs.

The Joker walks past the restrained Barbara.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Hi Red, is Daddy home?

Barbara MUMBLES angrily through Bruno's hand.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Go on, spit it out.

(to Bruno)

Not much for conversation, this one.

(to the rest)

Fan out and find the old man.

The thugs move off into the house, two start for the stairs.

UPSTAIRS

Gordon pulls back from the corner.

BEDROOM

Gordon moves into the bedroom, closing the door quickly and quietly behind him.

SARAH

Who is it, Jim?

Gordon grabs his pistol from the holster on the coat rack.

GORDON

(whispering)

Quiet. It's the Joker and his goons.

Sarah sits up quickly, fear in her face.

SARAH

(whispering)

What?

GORDON

Shhh. They might hear you.

Gordon grabs a cordless phone and tosses it to Sarah.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Hide in the closet and call the precinct.

SARAH

Okay.

Sarah clamours out of bed and moves quickly toward the closet.

Gordon cracks the door open and peers out.

The two thugs move down the hall toward them.

Gordon closes the door softly, keeping his hand on the knob.

He holds the pistol at the ready.

HALL

The two goons move down the hall, one stops in front of the bedroom door.

BEDROOM

Gordon waits, his hand on the knob.

HALL

The thug reaches out and turns the handle slowly.

Suddenly Gordon throws his shoulder into the door, throwing it open.

The door SLAMS into the thug and knocks him against the wall.

He slides to the floor, unconscious.

Gordon races into the hall and out in front of the second surprised thug.

Gordon brings the back of his hand across the thugs face only to follow it with a backhand from the pistol.

The second thug CRASHES to the floor unconcious.

DOWNSTAIRS

The NOISE of the fight carries downstairs.

Everyone looks up at the ceiling.

JOKER

What was that?

Suddenly Gordon steps out at the top of the stairs, gun raised.

GORDON
Let my daughter go.

JOKER
Jim! Long time no see. How are ya?

Gordon starts down the stairs.

GORDON
Let her go.

JOKER
Of course, Jimmy. Red's been a wonderful host. Um, but before I can do that, I'm gonna need you to come with us.

GORDON
I swear, if you harm a hair on her head, Joker...

JOKER
No reason to be rude, Jim.

The Joker draws a revolver and immediately puts it to Barbara's temple.

JOKER (CONT'D)
It'd be a shame if you hurt my feelings and Red sneezed her brains all over your living room.

GORDON
I have no assurance you wouldn't kill her even if I went with you.

JOKER
Of course you do, Jimmy, you have my word.

The Joker grins and GIGGLES.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Hurry, act now! This is a limited time offer.

The Joker pulls back the gun's hammer with his thumb.

Gordon looks at his daughter's frightened face. He starts to lower his gun.

GORDON
You'll never get away with this, Joker.

Suddenly, one of the two thugs upstairs appears and hits Gordon over the back of the head.

Gordon collapses into the thugs arms.

JOKER

Boy, was he wrong. Get him in the truck, we still have another pick up to make. And somebody go upstairs and get Ted.

Two thugs run up stairs.

JOKER (CONT'D)

(to Barbara)

Looks like it's your lucky day, Red.

The thugs carry Gordon and the unconcious thug, TED, outside.

Only the Joker, Bruno and Barbara remain.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Don't worry, Red, I'll take good care of sweet old Daddy. Kisses.

The Joker walks out as Bruno lets go of Barbara.

Barbara goes for the door but Bruno catches her.

BARBARA

I'll get you Joker!

OUTSIDE

The Joker blows her a kiss.

INSIDE

Barbara turns to Bruno.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

If you don't let go of me right--

Bruno punches her hard in the face and Barbara falls to the floor unconcious.

Bruno turns and exits the house.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

Batman cruises down the streets on the Batcycle.

INTERSECTION

A police car sits at a red light, two young cops, DOUG and SAM, sit inside.

INSIDE

SAM

So do you think he's dead?

DOUG

If I had to put money on it, I'd say
he's still kickin'.

SAM

Yeah, me too. Startin' to think
we'll never find 'em, though.

Suddenly the Batcycle blows through the intersection.

DOUG

You were saying.

Doug floors it as Sam grabs the radio.

SAM

This is GPC 66. We have a positive
ID of the Batman traveling Westbound
on Madison Avenue. Suspect is
traveling on a black motorcycle.

OUTSIDE

The Batcycle zooms down the streets, the police car in
pursuit.

Batman looks back at the cop car.

BATMAN

Here we go.

Batman opens the throttle and ROARS on.

INSIDE POLICE CAR

The Batcycle begins to pull away.

DOUG

We're never gonna catch him with
this.

SAM

This is GPC 66, all motorbike officers
respond.

OUTSIDE

The police car grows small behind the Batcycle.

Batman smiles.

Suddenly two motorbike cops pull out onto the street behind him, SIRENS wailing.

Batman's smile fades.

He speeds through the city followed by the police bikes.

The Batcycle turns onto another street and three more motorbike cops join the chase.

One motorbike cop brings a mic to his mouth.

BIKE COP
Suspect is now heading East on
Arlington.

Batman flips a switch on the bike.

INSERT HELMET VIEW: A targeting system appears with a live video feed of the cops and road behind him.

He flips another switch and a compartment opens on the back of the bike.

Batman places a finger over a trigger on the handlebars.

He steers himself until the targeting system locks on one of the pursuing bikes.

Batman pulls the trigger and a two-liter sized container launches from the bike and back at the police.

The canister bounces down the road a few times before it explodes into a massive mound of white foam the consistency of very thick shaving cream.

One of the officers lays down his bike and slides directly into the foam.

BIKE COP (CONT'D)
Officer down!

Batman weaves through the city followed by the four remaining motorbike cops.

Batman speeds through an intersection, two cars SCREECHING to a halt to avoid him.

Two police backs are layed down to avoid the cars.

Police blimps arrive, illuminating Batman and the chase with their bright spotlights.

Finally Batman leads the two remaining police bikes into Gotham Central Park.

The bikes tear through the grass and hills.

Batman leaps over a ridge.

The police bikes follow.

One police bike lands in a small pond while the other continues the pursuit.

Batman flips another switch and the Batcycle begins spraying a thick smoke screen behind it.

The police bike is engulfed by the smoke.

The police bike exits the smoke, a large group of bushes before it.

The cop is launched from the bike as he SLAMS into the bushes.

Batman jumps back onto the road and cruises on.

EXT. GOTHAM CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

BULLOCK

Damnit!

Bullock SLAMS his fist down on the hood.

Bullock and Montoya stand beside their car in a diner parking lot.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

I'll kill that clown for this. I'll tear this city apart if I have to. I'll find that wise craskin' jerk and wring his kneck with my own bare hands.

MONTOYA

Your the boss.

BULLOCK

What's that supposed to me.

MONTOYA

With Gordon gone that puts you in charge.

BULLOCK

Oh yeah, right.

MONTOYA

So what's the plan?

BULLOCK

We need to pull our guys off of Batman duty and focus on finding Gordon.

MONTOYA

Maybe Batman can help, now that we know he's still alive.

BULLOCK

We don't need the bat's help. Gordon is a cop and us cops look out for our own. Get on the radio, there'll be a briefin' back at the station in twenty minutes.

Bullock tosses the keys to Montoya.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Start the car, I gotta hit the head.

Bullock enters the diner as Montoya climbs into the car.

An ice cream truck pulls up and parks at the diner's other entrance.

INSIDE BATHROOM

Bullock stands at the urinal as the bathroom door OPENS.

Two figures walk in and stop behind Bullock.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

How 'bout you all stop crowdin' me and wait your turn.

The figures don't move.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Aw, your askin' for it. I've had one hell of a day--

Bullock ZIPS up and FLUSHES the toilet.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

And bustin' some skulls is just what the doctor ordered.

Bullock turns and finds himself face to face with Bruno and Rusty.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

You gotta be kidding me.

OUTSIDE

Montoya hangs up the radio as she sits behind the wheel.

Suddenly SCREAMS ring out from the diner.

Montoya looks up as a cash register SMASHES through the diner windows.

She throws open the car door and draws her pistol.

Rusty CRASHES through the glass diner door and Bullock steps into view, blood seeping from his lip.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Montoya, get out of here! It's the--

Bullock is yanked out of view by Bruno.

Montoya takes a step toward the diner when a rubber chicken hits her over the back of the head.

Montoya hits the concrete cold.

The Joker stands behind her, thugs on both sides and the rubber chicken in hand.

JOKER

And they say red meat's bad for you.

Joker carelessly tosses away the rubber chicken and it SMASHES into the car's window.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, KITCHEN -- DAWN

Bruce walks into the kitchen wearing only his costume's pants.

Breakfast sits on the counter.

Bruce walks up to the counter and looks down at the food.

Unexpectdantly, he knocks the breakfast from the counter with a wild swing of his arm.

The dishes SMASH against the floor and walls.

He lets out a furious CRY and kicks a barstool across the room.

Alfred enters quickly.

ALFRED

What in heaven's name do you think you're doing in here?

Bruce looks up at Alfred, anger still in his eyes.

BRUCE

I can't do it! I can't stop the deaths to come! I've failed!

ALFRED

What are you talking about, Master Bruce? You haven't failed.

BRUCE

Yes I have, Alfred. Look around. The Joker's kidnapped Gordon and Bullock, painted the city red and burned down a toy factory. He's running free and getting closer and closer to doing something horrible that will no doubt end in death and destruction. And I can't do anything to stop him because everytime I go out there the scum of the city and the police are all over me.

ALFRED

Calm down, sir. You've been in worse spots than this, and you always come out on top. In the end the city will be safe and the Joker will be behind bars.

BRUCE

Not this time, Alfred. I don't think this story has a happy ending.

Alfred walks over to Bruce and puts his arm around him.

Alfred begins leading him out of the room.

ALFRED

You've been working yourself too hard, Master Bruce. What you need is some rest. You haven't slept in three days and your body's taken a beating. You need to lay down, sir. You'll see things more clearly after a few hours of rest.

BEDROOM

Bruce lays in bed as Alfred covers him with a blanket.

BRUCE

It just isn't making sense. First the graffiti, then arson and now the kidnappings, I just can't connect the pieces.

ALFRED

Sometimes, Master Bruce, with a mind like his, there is no puzzle to complete. Now get some rest. I'll wake you in a few hours.

Alfred turns and heads for the door.

BRUCE

Alfred.

Alfred stops and turns to face him.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

ALFRED

Your welcome.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- DAY

Valentine exits the shower, a white towel around his waist.

He walks down the hall, turns the corner into the living room and stops.

The Joker sits in one of the room's large white plush chairs, he wears a fedora and trench coat. In his hands he holds a large heart shaped box of chocolates.

JOKER

Will you be my valentine?

Beside Valentine is a small dresser, a pistol on top.

Valentine goes for the gun but the Joker is faster.

In a flash the Joker is on his feet, a large revolver pointed at Valentine.

Valentine freezes.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Not so fast Val. You ain't the only killer in the room.

VALENTINE

I assume your the one they call the Joker.

JOKER

How'd you guess? I have to say, this is a pretty nice place you got here.

VALENTINE

No offense, but I'm not too keen on costumed killers letting themselves into my hotel rooms so why don't you just tell me what you want?

The Joker approaches Valentine.

JOKER

I've noticed your recent interest in Batman. I have to admit I'm a little impressed.

VALENTINE

Thanks for the pat on the back and now feel free to show yourself out.

JOKER

Mom wasn't much for manners was she? Believe me, I understand wanting to kill the bat. I've practically spent my entire career trying to do so.

VALENTINE

Then I'll be doing you a favor.

JOKER

Wrong. Me and Batboy have a certain relationship. A crimefighter archvillian kinda thing. Last night you got too close.

VALENTINE

Something I will--

The Joker slaps the gun across Valentine's face.

JOKER

It's rude to interrupt.

Valentine touches his cheek.

JOKER (CONT'D)

As I was saying. This relationship me and Bats have is a special one and I can't let some unmannered hotshot jeopardize that.

VALENTINE

So that's it. You want me to leave town.

JOKER

Yes! Exactly. I appreciate you keeping old Batboy busy, whoo hoo, try saying that five times fast. But now it's time for you to go.

VALENTINE

I have bad news for you clown. Thorne paid me to complete a job and I always finish what I start. I'll leave Gotham, alright, but only when the Batman's dead.

Joker frowns.

JOKER

What did I say, exactly, that made you think you had a choice?

Suddenly the Joker smiles.

JOKER (CONT'D)

There I go again, the pot calling the kettle black. Where are my manners? You know, I'm glad we had this talk.

VALENTINE

Sure.

JOKER

No hard feelings?

Valentine shrugs.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Oh, I almost forgot!

The Joker hits Valentine in the face with the gun.

Valentine stumbles and the Joker continues to beat him with the pistol until Valentine falls backwards to the floor.

The Joker squats down over the dazed Valentine.

JOKER (CONT'D)

I never liked Valentine's day, you know. Too sappy. Now April Fools Day and Halloween were always much more my style. Do you know what my favorite part of Halloween always was?

The Joker reaches into his jacket and produces an enormous knife.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Carving the pumpkin.

INT. WAYNE MANOR, LIBRARY -- DAY

Alfred dusts as Bruce enters.

ALFRED

(smiling)

Good morning, sir.

BRUCE

It's not exactly morning, Alfred. I thought you were only going to let me sleep a few hours.

ALFRED

Must have slipped my mind.

BRUCE

Cute.

ALFRED

And how are we feeling?

BRUCE

Tired but refreshed. I think I'm gonna go over all the evidence again. I feel like I can see more clearly now.

ALFRED

Glad to hear it, sir. You had me worried.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- DAY

Valentine's room sits still and quiet.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

The room remains silent.

There is another KNOCK.

The door is UNLOCKED and OPENED from the outside.

A MAID enters, pushing a cart in front of her.

MAID

House keeping.

The maid continues into the room, soon abandoning the cart and grabbing an armful of towels.

She takes two steps and stops.

The towels hit the floor as the maid SCREAMS.

EXT. BANK -- DAY

The 1st National Bank of Gotham sits in the bright sunlit day.

Men and women move in and out of the large glass building.

The ice cream truck pulls up to the curb along with a large delivery truck.

The Joker and ten thugs climb out.

The thugs wear large gas masks. Six of the thugs carry large grenade launchers the other four Thompson Machine Guns.

A few frightened SCREAMS and CRIES can be heard.

JOKER

Boys, lets take their cares away.

The Joker starts up the large staircase, flanked by the thugs.

Immediately the thugs with grenade launchers begin lobbing gas canisters through the banks front windows.

INSIDE

The bank is filled with customers and employees.

Suddenly windows shatter as gas canisters CLANK across the floor.

SCREAMS ring out as the cans spew thick green smoke.

Almost instantly the sounds of hysterical LAUGHTER mixes with the the CRIES of fear.

Men and women inhaling the smoke are over taken by gut busting LAUGHTER, huge smiles spread across their faces.

Soon the bank is full of green gas, everyone on the floor LAUGHING.

OUTSIDE

The thugs fire a few more canisters inside and stop, green smoke spills out the ruined windows and out into the air.

A few men and woman lay on the steps of the bank LAUGHING.

INSIDE

The Joker and thugs enter the green smoke and LAUGHTER filled bank.

Senior citizens, college students, business people, tellers, all LAUGH uncontrollably. They walk by a LAUGHING security guard.

The Joker stops in the center of the lobby.

BRUNO

You alright boss?

The Joker turns around to face the thugs, tears in his eyes and a smile on his face.

JOKER

It's so beautiful.

INT. WAYNE MANOR -- DAY

Bruce sits in a large leather chair reading a file.

The TV is on across from him.

TV (O.S.)
This just in.

Batman lowers the file and looks at the TV.

INSERT BLACK AND WHITE TV

ANCHOR
We have just received word that the
1st National Bank of Gotham has come
under attack from the notorious and
vicious killer the Joker. We now go
live to the scene.

The image switches to a live shot of the bank front.

BACK TO SCENE

Batman stands and rushes from the room.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)
It seems the Joker is again using
his trademark laughing gas. Witnesses
report.--

EXT. BANK -- DAY

Police cars surround the building, cops train their guns on
the bank.

INSIDE

The once LAUGHING people now lay still, smiles on their faces,
their eyes staring blankly in death.

One thug stands looking out the window.

KNUCKLES
Hey, boss. The cops is here.

The Joker turns to face him.

JOKER
Well tickle their funny bones.

Three more thugs join the first and they point their grenade
launches outside.

OUTSIDE

COP 11
They got grenade launchers! Open
fire!

The police open fire just as the thugs begin raining gas canisters into the cops and surrounding street.

Immediately police begin to fall with LAUGHTER.

INSIDE LOBBY

One thug takes a bullet and falls.

INSIDE VAULT

Four thugs load up bags with stacks of cash and safety deposit box contents.

LOBBY

The Joker leans against a counter reading a magazine, Bruno stands beside him.

BRUNO

It sure is taking him a while.

JOKER

He'll be here.

BRUNO

How can you be so sure?

JOKER

Because he already did.

BRUNO

I don't get it.

JOKER

That is because you are unintelligent.

BRUNO

Yeah.

INSIDE VAULT

One of the thugs walks out of the vault with a loot filled bag over his shoulder.

Suddenly Batman lands in front of him, a small gas mask on his face.

The thug stops, surprised.

BATMAN

I'm pretty sure that doesn't belong to you.

The thug swings the bag at Batman who ducks and does a leg sweep.

The thug falls hard, money and valuables spilling across the floor.

A second thug steps out of the vault.

Immediately he sees the downed thug and Batman.

He charges.

Batman parries a blow and delivers a solid right cross.

The thug stumbles into a wall.

The first thug, back on his feet, grabs Batman from behind.

Batman GRUNTS as the thug squeezes.

Batman head butts the thug repeatedly until the thug releases him.

Immediately Batman spins and lands a kick to the thugs ribs, sending him to the floor.

Batman spins around again to find the second thug charging.

The thug picks Batman up and SLAMS him into the opposite wall.

Batman interlocks his hands and hammers down a heavy blow to the thugs shoulders.

The thug GROANS and falls to a knee.

Batman then brings his knee up into the man's jaw, knocking him out cold.

The first thug rises to his wobbly feet.

Batman pulls out a Batarang and hurls it at the thug.

The Batarang catches the thug in the temple and he collapses to the floor.

Batman grabs the large vault door and begins to swing it closed.

The two thugs inside look up to see the door closing.

Both run for the shrinking opening but it is too late.

Batman shuts the large steel door and spins the lock.

INSIDE VAULT

Both thugs BANG uselessly at the door.

LOBBY

Joker and the goons stand around idly.

BATMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Robbing banks isn't your style, Joker,
not anymore.

Batman walks into the lobby.

Joker and the thugs turn to see him.

The thugs ready their guns.

JOKER
That's what I like about you, Bats.
Your always so dependable.

BATMAN
What's your angle, Joker? What's
this all about?

JOKER
That's for me to know and you to
find out.

BATMAN
It's over, Joker.

JOKER
That's where your wrong, Bats, it's
only just begun!

The Joker throws out his hands and fireworks shoot out.

Batman throws his cape up to block the sparks.

Batman lowers the cape.

BATMAN
You'll have to do better than that--

JOKER
Ahem.

The Joker looks down at Batman's waist.

Batman looks down.

INSERT BATMAN'S STOMACH: A bladed playing card sticks out of
his stomach, the corner imbedded.

JOKER (CONT'D)
How's that?

Batman grabs his head as the world begins to spin.

BATMAN
What...have you...done to me?

JOKER

Isn't it obvious? I've beaten you.

Batman takes a step forward and stumbles to a knee.

BATMAN

It's...

The Joker waves as Batman collapses to the floor and the world goes black.

INT. HIGH-RISE RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Batman blinks as he comes back to consciousness.

He raises his head and finds himself seated at an elegant restaurant table.

His arms and legs are bound securely to the chair and his utility belt is gone.

A bright spotlight shines down illuminating him and the table, the rest of the room is pitch black.

Fine China, wine and a silver candle holder adorn the table.

A small beautifully wrapped purple and green present sits in the center of his dinner plate.

An empty chair and place setting sit across the table from him.

The SCRATCHING of a needle on vinyl starts as "AT LAST" by Etta James begins to play.

Batman waits.

JOKER (O.S.)

I'm sorry I'm late.

The Joker emerges from the darkness and steps into the light.

He wears a purple tuxedo and carries a bouquet of green roses.

JOKER (CONT'D)

But some joker went and held up the
1st National Bank of Gotham tonight.
And you can just imagine what that
did to the expressway.

The Joker stops next to Batman.

JOKER (CONT'D)

You look ravishing. I bought these
for you.

BATMAN
Green isn't my color.

JOKER
Yeah, you're probably right, black
is much more slimming on you. I
should put these in water.

The Joker drops the bouquet into a water pitcher sitting on
the table.

BATMAN
Cut to the chase, what's your game,
Joker?

The Joker sits in the empty chair opposite Batman.

JOKER
Is that how you talk to an old friend
like me?

BATMAN
I don't associate with madmen.

JOKER
Stop, you're making me blush. Madman?
Really? You're not just saying that,
now, are you?

BATMAN
Where are we?

JOKER
You haven't figured it out yet?
You're slipping in your old age,
Bats. Don't worry, it'll all be
clear soon enough.

A thug dressed as a waiter steps into the light and approaches
the table. He carries a silver serving dish with lid.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Not yet!

Fear fills the waiter's face and he backs out into the
darkness.

JOKER (CONT'D)
That's the one bad thing about this
restaurant, the wait staff is simply
atrocious. Now, where were we?

Batman begins to twist his wrists, looking for a weak point
in his restraints.

BATMAN

You were about to tell me where we were and why you brought me here.

JOKER

No. No I wasn't. Oh, I remember. Tonight is a celebration, and what good is a celebration without friends? Soooooo, I invited all of our old chums to share in this monumental occasion.

The Joker sits waiting but nothing happens.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Now!

The waiter shuffles in quickly, serving dish and lid in hand.

The Joker rolls his eyes.

The waiter lifts the lid to reveal a remote control device.

The Joker picks the device up and presses a button.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Don't you just love gadgets?

The entire room lights up as the remaining lights switch on.

Seated at similar tables around the room are Gordon, Bullock, and a dozen other people. All of them are bound and gagged.

Armed thugs stand guard at every exit and around the restaurant's perimeter.

BATMAN

I'm the one you want, Joker, let them go.

JOKER

Batman, don't be rude to our lovely guests. They haven't even had supper yet. Look, everyone is here.

The Joker begins pointing the different people out.

JOKER (CONT'D)

There's Commissioner Jim, and good ol' Detective Bullock. He really needs to wear more deodorant. And there's Harvey.

The Joker points at a blow up dummy that is made up like Two-Face.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Unfortunately Ex-District Attorney Dent is enjoying a holiday inside Arkham Asylum, thanks to you Bats, and couldn't make it to our little shindig. So you'll have to use your imagination.

With his finger tips Batman pulls a small blade from his cast.

He begins to saw at the restraints.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Ooo, ooo, ooo, do you know what time it is now? It's time for the big unveiling.

The Joker presses another button on the remote.

The blackness behind the Joker begins to move as thick black curtains slide on remote tracks.

As the curtains separate, a panoramic view of the Gotham cityscape becomes visible.

It is now clear that they are on the sixtieth floor of a round skyscraper.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Look familiar?

BATMAN

Where on the Northside, in the Holiday Tower.

JOKER

That's my Bats. I told you you'd figure it out.

The Joker stands and starts toward the windows.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Gotham City. Home to the world's greatest detective and it's most deranged psychopathic criminals.

The Joker points out the window at a group nearby buildings.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Do you remember what used to be right there? Right where those buildings are?

Batman says nothing.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Nothing.

The Joker presses a button on the remote.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Absolutely nothing.

Massive explosions erupt from the buildings and the restaurant trembles.

The Joker LAUGHS.

OUTSIDE

Explosion after explosion tear through the buildings until one by one they fall to the ground in massive clouds of debris and flame.

INSIDE RESTAURANT

BATMAN

(furious)

You sick lunatic! Do you know what you've done?! How many you've killed?!

JOKER

Hopefully a lot. Now, you're ruining the moment. Be quiet and look.

As the dust settles there is now a new view of the city.

From this vantage point, all of the red painted buildings from earlier come together.

In massive bright red letters the buildings spell out "Happy Anniversary, Batman!"

BATMAN

What is this?

JOKER

An anniversary, Bats. Read the words.

BATMAN

An anniversary of what?

Behind his back, Batman presses his right thumb and forefinger together.

INT. SELINA KYLE'S HIGHRISE APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Amongst the large elegantly decorated apartment a phone begins to ring.

Selina enters, a glass of wine in hand, and lifts the receiver to her ear.

SELINA

Hell--

JOKER (O.S.)

(over the phone)

What? You don't remember? I can't believe you've forgotten.

Selina grabs a nearby pen and scrap of paper as she listens.

INT. HIGH-RISE RESTAURANT -- CONTINUOUS

JOKER

Ten years ago I came to Gotham. Ten years ago those buildings didn't exist. And ten years ago to this day--

BATMAN

We met.

The Joker smiles.

JOKER

I knew you remembered.

BATMAN

Ten years ago, today, you robbed the 1st National Bank of Gotham and I came to stop you. And I chased you across the city until I caught you in your hideout in the old fish market. The old fish market that was leveled for the construction of the Holiday Tower. This building. I should have seen this. It's all so clear now. Only you're twisted mind could come up with--

JOKER

Present Time!

The Joker hurries over to Batman.

JOKER (CONT'D)

I hope you like it. It took me forever to pick it out.

Batman looks at the small present sitting on the plate in front of him.

The Joker watches, a huge smile on his face.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Well, aren't you gonna open it?

The bound Batman looks up at the Joker, annoyance in his eyes.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I can't take it! The suspense is
killing me.

The Joker snatches up the small gift box and slides the ribbon off.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Look!

The Joker holds the box out to Batman.

INSERT BOX: A long yellowed tooth sits inside.

JOKER (CONT'D)
It's mine! It's the first tooth you
ever knocked out. Don't you remember?
I hit you with the wrench, you hit
me with an uppercut and this little
guy went soaring. I've kept it close
to my heart ever since. And now I
want you to have it.

The Joker looks for a reaction and finding none his smile fades.

JOKER (CONT'D)
You don't like it do you? Oh I knew
I should have gone with the cufflinks.

Harley enters the room, Batman's utility belt around her waist.

HARLEY
Mr. J, Mr. J!

The Joker smiles.

JOKER
You'll have to excuse me a moment.

The Joker steps out of earshot and begins to talk with Harley. They whisper back and forth.

JOKER (CONT'D)
What now?

HARLEY
The bombs are all set. Ten minute
timer just like you said.

Batman watches their mouths intently.

JOKER
And the helicopter?

HARLEY
Minutes away. When are the fireworks?

JOKER
Soon my darling. Soon.

HARLEY
Yay!

Harley quiets herself.

HARLEY (CONT'D)
Yay. I hope it's a good show.

JOKER
Trust me, baby, they'll bring the house down.

The Joker smiles and turns back to Batman.

Harley skips out of the room CLAPPING to herself.

JOKER (CONT'D)
You know, Bats, it really doesn't feel like ten years. I mean, you've put on a few pounds.

The Joker nudges him with his elbow.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Not hitting the gym like we used to, huh? And you've sent me to that dreadful Arkham sixty-two times but other than that, it seems like it was only yesterday we first met.

Batman cuts through his restraints but does not let on.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I've done everything possible to make this reunion unforgettable. I hope you appreciate it.

BATMAN
You certainly have outdone yourself this time, Joker.

The Joker smiles.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
But I would think such a special reunion deserves a toast.

JOKER

You're absolutely right. How could
I have overlooked the toast.

The Joker grabs a wine bottle and walks over to the table.

He picks up a wine glass and begins to fill it.

He raises the full glass in the air.

JOKER (CONT'D)

To dancing with the devil!

The Joker brings the glass to his lips.

Suddenly, with all the force he can muster, Batman kicks the table into the Joker.

The table slams into the Joker's waist doubling him over.

Wine spews from the Joker's mouth as he falls to the floor.

The thugs rush the scene.

Batman jumps to his feet and grabs the chair in one fluid movement.

He swings the chair, smashing it into the head of the closest thug.

A second thug swings a club at Batman who dodges the blow.

Batman grabs hold of the thug and pitches him over the table.

Batman stands waiting, his legs still bound together.

The third thug approaches more carefully.

He points a submachine gun at Batman.

The Joker pulls himself up with the table.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Don't kill him!

Suddenly Batman grabs a plate from the table and hurles it into the thug's head.

The plate explodes against the thugs face.

As the thug falls he opens fire, a stream of bullets tearing through the room.

The other thugs take cover.

Batman grabs a shard of the broken wine bottle and slices through his leg restraints.

The Joker, back on his feet, pulls the remote control out.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Just like old times, huh Bats?

The Joker presses a button on the remote and runs to the other side of the room.

Harley and six more thugs enter.

Harley holds a massive pistol and still wears Batman's utility belt.

The other thugs carry weapons of various types.

HARLEY

Guess you didn't like the food, huh, Mr. B. I'm afraid we'll have to show you the door.

BATMAN

You heard the lady, come and get me.

The six thugs move toward Batman.

One twirls a large steel chain at his side.

Suddenly, the one with the chain charges.

The chain lashes out and Batman leaps out of the way.

The thugs continues to swing the chain at Batman who takes cover behind the table.

The thug swings again, this time Batman moves the table directly in the way.

The chain cuts into the table, lodging itself there.

The thug, pulls at the chain but cannot free it.

Batman hurls the table to the side, yanking the chain from the thug's hands.

Batman stands.

The thug throws a punch that Batman easily parries and counters with one of his own. His cast CRACKING hard against his face.

Batman winces and the thug falls to the floor.

The other thugs charge.

The Joker stands beside Harley at the far end of the room. He studies his purple suit soaked with red wine.

JOKER

There's no doubt about it. It's gonna stain.

HARLEY

Maybe with some club soda...

JOKER

No, my dear, there's no saving it.

An unconscious thug flies into Harley, Both fall to the floor. Harley shoves the body off and stands back up, a little dizzy. Underneath the thug the utility belt remains.

The other two thugs continue to battle with Batman.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Is the helicopter ready?

Harley pulls a walkie talkie from the belt of the unconscious thug and holds it to her mouth.

HARLEY

Whirly Birdie, this is Twirly Girlie.

ROOFTOP

Bright lights blink and illuminate the expensive skyscraper as a large military cargo helicopter swoops in and begins to land. The helicopter is painted in classic Joker purple, green and yellow.

COCKPIT

The HELICOPTER PILOT guides the helicopter to the roof.

HARLEY (O.S.)

(over radio)

Where are you? Over.

HELICOPTER PILOT

Twirly Girlie, this is Whirly Birdie. Touching down now.

RESTAURANT

HELICOPTER PILOT (O.S.)

(over radio)

Over.

Harley smiles.

HARLEY

It's here.

JOKER

Excellent. Well what do you say,
doll, shall we ditch this shindig?

HARLEY

But I was waiting for the fireworks.

Harley sticks out her bottom lip.

JOKER

But of course, my dear.

Batman downs the last of the thugs.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Well Bats, I've had a wonderful time.
But now I must make my exit.

Batman watches the Joker and Harley while still in his battle stance.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Do enjoy the fireworks.

The Joker presses a button on the remote.

SHRIEKS and WHISTLES of fireworks fill the air quickly followed by massive BOOMS and CRACKLES.

BASEMENT

A large basement with explosives attached to all the support columns.

INSERT BOMB: The timer clicks on and begins counting down from ten minutes.

RESTAURANT

JOKER

Tootles.

The Joker and Harley sprint through a nearby door and are gone.

Batman grabs his utility belt, snaps it on and runs over to Commissioner Gordon. He Ungags him and begins to cut through the restraints.

GORDON

He sure knows how to throw one heck
of a party.

Batman cuts through the restraints. He and Gordon run from hostage to hostage cutting them free.

BATMAN

You have to get everyone out of here.
He's rigged the building with
explosives. We have less than ten
minutes.

GORDON

How do you know?

BATMAN

I read their lips.

GORDON

Is there anything you can't do?

BATMAN

I've notified a friend. There should
be backup here shortly.

GORDON

Can we diffuse the bombs?

BATMAN

No time. This building's coming
down. You have to get everyone as
far away as you can.

Batman cuts through the last of the restraints.

GORDON

I'll take care of them. You go and
get the Joker.

And with that Batman sprints toward the glass wall overlooking
the city.

Batarangs fly from his hands.

Huge sheets of glass shatter and fall away in front of him
as he continues to run full-on toward the open window.

The ROAR of wind gusts and exploding fireworks fill the room
as Batman reaches the wall and leaps out into the night sky.

OUTSIDE

Batman flies through the air away from the building, fireworks
exploding all around. With one hand he aims and fires the
Batgrapple, the teeth CLANKING into the building's steel
frame.

With the grapple now engaged Batman swings around the building
in one large arc.

INSIDE

The Joker and Harley walk quickly through room after room, the glass wall to their left.

JOKER

Harley dear, you'd better move a little fast--

The glass wall beside them explodes as Batmans swings through, feet first.

The Joker falls as Batman barrels into him.

Both scramble to their feet as Batman looks from Harley to the Joker.

BATMAN

Thought I'd crash in.

The Joker bursts into LAUGHTER followed by Harley.

JOKER

He made a joke!

Batman's fist slams into the Joker's face and he stumbles back into the wall.

HARLEY

Not so fast, Mr. B.

Harley takes aim and fires her large revolver.

An expanding net wraps around Batman and he falls tangled to the floor.

The Joker wipes blood from his lip as he looks down at Batman.

JOKER

And I thought you didn't have a since of humor.

BATMAN

Not much time left, Harley. Think you have enough to get your pets?

Panic fills Harley's face.

HARLEY

Pudin! I forgot the babies!

JOKER

Leave 'em. I'll buy you more.

HARLEY

I can't leave the babies!

Harley drops the large revolver and runs from the room.

The Joker watches her leave in disbelief. He turns to Batman and talks about Harley as though Batman is a trusted old friend.

JOKER

You try to overlook the flaws but...Oh well, I see your all tied up so I'll be off.

The Joker runs from the room as Batman frees a Batarang. Quickly he cuts through the netting.

Batman jumps to his feet and runs through the door after the Joker.

INSIDE OFFICE

Batman runs into the office and finds the Joker standing in the open doorway on the other side. A HISSING sound fills the air.

JOKER (CONT'D)

You know what I like about this building? The low overhead.

Batman looks around the room.

Smoke billows up from the room's support beams as acid eats through them.

Batman looks back to the doorway to find it empty, the Joker's LAUGH echoing from within.

The room gives a low GROAN and Batman leaps back the way he came.

PREVIOUS ROOM

As he dives through the doorway the ceiling collapses down in the office. A massive cloud of dirt and debris engulfs him.

Batman stands and walks to the doorway. The ceiling has collapsed but only partially. The debris making a ramp up to the next floor.

Batman runs up the newly formed ramp.

LOUNGE

Harley runs into the lounge in a panic.

HARLEY

Momma's here!

The hyenas stand on the far side of the room, their leashes secured to the wall.

Their tails stop wagging and they both begin to growl.

Harley stops in confusion.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

What's wrong, babies? It's me.

Without warning, a pistol clubs her over the back of the head and she collapses into Bullock's hands.

BULLOCK

Goodnight, Giggles.

The lounge fills with Gordon and the rest. The hostages now hold machine guns on the bruised and broken thugs.

GORDON

Let's move people. The clock's tickin'.

BULLOCK

And the mutts?

Gordon looks to the growling hyenas.

GORDON

Bring 'em.

Bullock frowns.

ROOFTOP

The Joker steps out onto the roof where a group of thugs has gathered.

They approach the waiting helicopter.

THUG 4

Where's Harley?

JOKER

She decided to watch the fireworks.

The Joker is first to the helicopter. He reaches in the side door and pulls out a Tommy gun.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Sorry boys, there's only room for one in this bird.

The Joker opens fire, killing every last thug. The Joker climbs into the helicopter.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

The Joker sits down and smiles.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Take us up.

The pilot nods and the helicopter begins to lift off.

ROOFTOP

Batman rushes out onto the roof as the helicopter rises into the air. He sprints toward the helicopter as he raises the batgrapple.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

The Joker sees the approaching Batman and smiles. He grabs the Tommy gun.

JOKER (CONT'D)

(to pilot)

Looks like he didn't take the break-up well.

The Joker stands and leans out the open side of the helicopter.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Sorry, Batboy! I think we need a little time apart!

The Joker opens fire with the Tommy gun and begins a hysterical LAUGH.

ROOFTOP

Batman continues to run across the roof as bullets WHIZ by and THUD against the rooftop.

He fires the grapple and it CLANKS into the helicopter's underbelly.

Batman rises up into the air with the helicopter as he retracts the grapple.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

The Joker continues to fire down at Batman until he disappears below the helicopter.

JOKER (CONT'D)

(to pilot)

Looks like we got a hanger on. Maybe we can brush 'em off.

The pilot nods.

OUTSIDE

Batman dangles just below the helicopter.

The helicopter begins to swerve from side to side, Batman holding on as he is tossed about.

JOKER (CONT'D)

That's it. Rock his socks off.

INSIDE LOBBY

Gordon leads the group through the empty lobby, Harley slung over Bullocks shoulder and the hyenas' jaws muzzled with kneck ties.

GORDON

Hurry!

OUTSIDE

An army of police and paramedics fill the parking lot and streets outside the Holiday Tower.

Gordon and the rest run from the building.

The police take aim but quickly lower their guns.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Everybody back! This building's about to blow! Move!

Everyone begins to scramble.

ABOVE CITY

The helicopter continues to fly erradically in an attempt to shake the crimefighter.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

JOKER

Did we lose him?

The pilot shrugs.

The Joker leans out further, trying to see below.

Batman's boots slam into his face.

The Joker stumbles back, grabbing onto a strap to sturdy himself.

Batman swings up into the helicopter.

BATMAN

You're coming with me, Joker.

HOLIDAY TOWER BASEMENT

INSERT BOMB: The bomb counter reaches zero.

OUTSIDE

Explosions rip through the Holiday tower. Fire, smoke and debris rip through the air.

The massive skyscraper starts to collapse in on itself.

Gordon, Bullock and the rest take cover as the shock wave and debris cloud washes over them.

INSIDE HELICOPTER

Batman and Joker turn to see the explosions and falling building.

The Joker smiles.

JOKER

Sure thing, guano man. I'll just grab my things.

The explosions' shock wave reaches the helicopter throwing it into severe turbulence.

The Joker grabs the Tommy gun and immediately opens fire.

Batman ducks and leaps out of the way, the bullets tearing through the cockpit and pilot.

JOKER (CONT'D)

Whoops!

Warning BELLS fill the helicopter as it begins to buck back and forth.

Batman reaches for a handhold, fails and falls out the side of the helicopter.

The Joker stumbles about trying to gain solid footing but another bump throws him out the opposite side.

OUTSIDE

Batman hangs onto a landing strut with one hand, the Joker hangs on the other strut across from him.

JOKER (CONT'D)

I guess I got a little trigger happy.

The helicopter begins to veer for the dead center of a nearby skyscraper.

BATMAN

Joker! Swing over to me!

The nearby skyscraper zooms closer.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
 Quick, before it's too late!

The building looms ahead, only a few dozen yards away.

The Joker continues to LAUGH.

Batman looks back and forth between the Joker and the building.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
 On the count of three, let go! One!

Twenty yards away.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
 Two!

Ten yards away.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
 Three!

Both Batman and the Joker let go of their struts. Like two arrows they smash through the large glass windows feet first.

A floor above the Helicopter tears into the building. Twisted metal, fire, smoke and glass fills the air.

INSIDE OFFICE

Batman and the Joker crash through the office finally coming to rest.

The roof above them partially collapses with the wreck of the helicopter, the office filling with smoke and dust.

The Joker rises out of the settling smoke and debris.

Batman stands slowly and turns to see the bloody Joker standing across the room. The Joker smiles.

JOKER
 You look a little winded, Bats. How about--

The Joker fans out five bladed playing cards in one hand.

JOKER (CONT'D)
 --I give you a hand.

In one fluid motion he throws all five cards at Batman.

Batman raises his casted arm as three of the cards THUD into it. Batman GRUNTS in pain. One card slices through his side, the other THUDS into the wall behind him.

Batman takes a step back.

JOKER (CONT'D)
What's wrong, old chum?

The Joker walks over to a sharp twisted piece of helicopter debris the size and shape of a hockey stick. He tears it free and starts toward Batman.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Age slowin' you down?

BATMAN
The party's over Joker.

JOKER
You know you always were a party pooper.

The Joker attacks swinging the debris with a violent fury.

Batman weaves, ducks and dodges, just barely escaping the blows.

Batman backs away as the Joker presses forward. Soon Batman has his back to the wall.

The Joker swings again and Batman is caught square, he raises his cast to block.

The blow smashes into the cast and shatters it. Batman SCREAMS in pain as his forearm breaks again. He falls to a knee.

The Joker stands above him, a joyous LAUGH bubbling out of him.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Tough break.

Kneeling, Batman holds his shattered forearm in his hand. His breathing is ragged.

BATMAN
This...isn't...over.

JOKER
That's where you're wrong, Bats.

The Joker raises the debris over his head.

JOKER (CONT'D)
It finally is.

A whip CRACK fills the air as the debris is yanked from the Joker's hands.

The debris CLANKS across the floor.

The Joker turns around.

JOKER (CONT'D)

What the...

Standing in the remains of the shattered windows is Catwoman. She stands with the whip dancing in her hand.

CATWOMAN

You're right, Joker. It is over.

JOKER

Kyle? I thought you were retired?
And aren't you supposed to be on our
side?

CATWOMAN

How's it gonna go, Joker? Easy or
hard?

A leg sweep from Batman throws the Joker to the floor, his face slamming hard against the granite.

Catwoman winces.

CATWOMAN (CONT'D)

I guess that would be hard.

Batman stands as the Joker slowly pushes himself up with a GROAN.

BATMAN

(angrily)
Ten years.

Batman grabs hold of the Joker's jacket with his good hand and lifts the dazed madman to his feet. The Joker begins to GIGGLE.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Ten years of your schemes.

Batman tosses the Joker against the wall, hard. He grabs hold of the Joker's lapel.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Ten years of your insanity.

Batman brings a knee up into the Joker's diaphragm. The Joker doubles over as he COUGHS up air and blood.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Ten years of death.

Batman spins the Joker around and slugs him in the face with his good hand. The Joker stumbles back a few feet toward the shattered windows. He continues to GIGGLE softly.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Ten years of destruction.

Batman hits him again and the Joker stumbles back a few more feet.

CATWOMAN

(worried)

Batman, wait!

BATMAN

Ten years of your brutatlity.

Batman hits the Joker a third time and the Joker stumbles back again. His shoes reach the window's edge, his heels hanging off over 400 feet of air.

JOKER

Wooo!

He throws his arms out to his sides to balance himself, but he begins to tip backward out over the city.

Batman's hand grabs hold of the Joker's lapels, suspending him over the ground 40 stories below.

The Joker bursts into uncontrollable LAUGHTER.

Batman continues to hold him their as he leans in closer.

BATMAN

Ten years. And all that's changed is the number of innocent men and women you've tortured, mutilated and murdered. For the good of this city, for me, I should drop you right now.

The Joker smiles at Batman.

JOKER

(filled with pride)

Do it, Bats. Finish the joke.

Fear fills Catwoman's face as she watches them.

CATWOMAN

He's not worth it.

Batman turns and looks to Catwoman, then back to the Joker.

BATMAN

So many have died today.

Batman pulls the Joker back inside and throws him to the floor.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

I will not kill another.

The Joker lays in an exhausted pile on the floor. He looks up at Batman.

JOKER

I was wrong, Bats, you still don't have a sense of humor.

Catwoman's boot comes up across his face and the Joker is laid out cold.

CATWOMAN

How's that for a punchline.

BATMAN

Seli...

Batman suddenly collapses to his knees. Catwoman rushes over to him.

CATWOMAN

Hold on Bruce. I'll get you home.

BATMAN

What...about...him.

Batman motions toward the unconcious Joker.

CATWOMAN

Don't worry about that. I'll take care of him.

BATMAN

Selina...Thank you.

CATWOMAN

No, Bruce. Thank you. For giving me my claws back.

EXT. CITY STREETS -- CONTINUOUS

The debris cloud that was once the Holiday tower slowly settles over the area. Police and emergency personel swarm the scene.

The thugs and Harley are led into a paddywagon while the Hyena's are locked in K9 cages.

Gordon and Bullock watch over the scene.

GORDON

Any casualties?

BULLOCK

Naw. We got everyone out in time.

GORDON

Thank Heavens. And the other buildings?

Bullock shakes his head no.

BULLOCK

Over a hundred dead. Hundreds more wounded.

Gordon looks down at the ground.

GORDON

Those were apartment buildings. So many families.

There is a moment of silence.

BULLOCK

Do ya think he got away?

GORDON

The Joker? Not a chance.

BULLOCK

You sound so certain.

GORDON

I am. You may not have faith in him, Bullock, but Batman will do whatever it takes to protect this city.

BULLOCK

Pssht. He's just as bad as the clown. He might not be a killer but he's a nutjob like all the rest.

GORDON

You know, he did just save your life.

BULLOCK

Bah.

EXT. CITY LOCATION -- DAY

Batman does something to do with Thorne.

INT. THORNE'S PENTHOUSE, 40TH FLOOR -- DAY

Thorne's fist SLAMS against his desk.

THORNE

Three of those buildings were mine!

Thorne's Leutenints sit and stand throughout the room.

THORNE (CONT'D)

I've lost millions!

TONY

But that was the Joker.

Tony immediately ducks a paperweight which BANGS into the wall behind him.

THORNE

Batman! The Joker! Does it matter?!
I'm still out three buildings and
twenty million dollars.

STANLEY

Well, the Joker's back in the looney
bin. So all you gotta worry about
now is the Bat.

THORNE

I'm surrounded by idiots! Why do you
think I put up five million dollars
for his head? He's supposed to be
dead already. But not even a city of
criminals can seem to accomplish
such a simple task as that.

TONY

Simple, boss?

THORNE

Shut up! This city. My city. Still
remains out of my grasp. The Batman
still haunts me.

(remembering)

The kid. Where's the kid? The one I
fronted seven and a half million to?
The one who killed the Governor?
What the hell happened to him?

TONY

Valentine.

THORNE

Valentine, St. Patrick, Christopher
Columbus? What happened to him?!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Sunlight streams through the window into the pristine hospital
room and onto the lone bed that inhabits it.

Valentine lays beneath a crisp white sheet. Clean bandages
wrap his head and left eye.

A MALE NURSE checks Valentine's fluids and charts.

Valentine's right eye flutters open. He tries to move and lets out a GROAN.

The nurse looks down at Valentine.

MALE NURSE

Hold it champ, you gotta take it easy.

VALENTINE

(through a dry mouth)
Where...am I?

MALE NURSE

Gotham General.

VALENTINE

My...chest is...on fire.

MALE NURSE

You're were in pretty bad shape, my friend. You're lucky to be alive.

VALENTINE

(remembering)
The clown.

Rage fills Valentine's face and he clenches his jaw.

MALE NURSE

Clown?

VALENTINE

What happened to me?

MALE NURSE

That's not for me to tell you. I'll grab Dr. Marshall.

The nurse starts for the door.

Valentine starts to sit up, pain etched into his face.

MALE NURSE (CONT'D)

He'll be glad to talk--

The nurse notices Valentine's movement.

MALE NURSE (CONT'D)

Sir, relax.

The nurse rushes to the bedside.

MALE NURSE (CONT'D)

You need to stay in bed.

Without warning Valentine grabs hold of the nurses lapels and stands.

Valentine shoves him against a wall.

Fear fills the nurses face.

VALENTINE

What happened to me?

MALE NURSE

(stuttering)

You were carved up bad. Stabbed over a dozen times. Your heart was completely severed from your body.

VALENTINE

And my face? What happened to my face?

MALE NURSE

Burned.

VALENTINE

Burned?

Valentine releases the nurse and turns toward a nearby mirror. He begins to unwrap his face and head.

MALE NURSE

No. You're not healed. It will get infected.

Valentine continues to unwrap, his right eye focused intently on his own image.

Soon he removes the last bit of gauze from his face and stops.

INSERT MIRROR IMAGE: His entire left eye is now a bright red and around his eye, in a heart shape, his skin is a matching red.

MALE NURSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

They used some kind of chemical on you. Purely cosmetic...but permanent.

Valentine continues to stare at his image. A tear escapes his right eye.

Below, his gauze wrapped chest is now visible. Blood seeps into the white gauze in a heart shape.

OUTSIDE

Valentine's primal ROAR pours out from the hospital.

INT. WAYNE MANOR -- DAY

Bruce lays in his massive bed, bandages and bruises covering his body and face. A new cast covers his arm.

Sunlight fills the room as Alfred and Selina stand beside him.

ALFRED

With the Joker behind bars again,
maybe now you will take my advice
and get some rest.

Bruce smiles.

BRUCE

Sure thing, Alfred. I promise I won't
go out until tonight.

ALFRED

Honestly, Master Bruce. Your
pigheadedness exceeds even your
mother's.

Alfred turns and exits the room.

Selina sits on the edge of the bed and takes Bruce's hand.
She smiles.

SELINA

I thought I'd lost you.

BRUCE

So did I.

SELINA

I was lucky to get there in time. I
followed the helicopter as soon as
it took off.

BRUCE

You looked good.

Selina blushes.

SELINA

I felt good.

BRUCE

Thank you, again.

SELINA

You don't need to thank me.

Bruce's smile fades, he looks down at their clasped hands.

BRUCE

You know you can't put it on again.
The suit. We were lucky that no one
saw you.

Selina joins his gaze, all joy leaves her face.

SELINA

I know. Last night I understood why
you care so much. When I thought I
was going to lose you I...I couldn't
bare it.

Bruce and Selina make eye contact and they both smile.

BRUCE

I told you I would call.

INT. ARKHAM ASYLUM -- NIGHT

A dozen armed guards move down the halls of Arkham, behind
them the Joker follows.

Fitted in an elaborate harness system, his mouth muzzled and
his arm's restrained against his chest, the Joker is joined
by four muscular orderlies who hold on to him via five foot
long steel poles.

Behind them Harley follows in a heavy duty straight jacket
and gag. She sits restrained in a wheelchair, an orderly
pushing her.

Taking up the rear are another six armed guards.

MAXIMUM SECURITY WING

The prisoners and their escorts walk past the cells of the
other inmates.

CELL 1

TWO-FACE, a massive man with half of his face horribly scared,
watches them pass. Anger fills his face as he flips a silver
dollar over and over again with his thumb.

CELL 2

POISON IVY, a beautiful redheaded woman, looks up from a
small vegetable garden in her cell and smiles.

POISON IVY

Good to have you home, Harley.

Harley turns and smiles through her gag.

HALL

Harley is wheeled into a cell and locked up as the escort continues on.

JOKER'S CELL

The orderlies walk the Joker into his cell and bolt his harness to the wall with a massive chain.

DOCTOR RICHARDS(50's with glasses) watches from the doorway with the armed guards. He holds a clip board in his hands and a white lab coat covers his body.

The orderlies disconnect their steel rods and look back to the doctor.

DOCTOR RICHARDS

You may ungag him.

Two of the orderlies unbuckle the muzzle and remove it.

JOKER

What's up, doc?

The orderlies exit the cell.

DOCTOR RICHARDS

So glad to have you back, Joker. Did you enjoy your time outside?

JOKER

It was a blast.

DOCTOR RICHARDS

I hope you have a good memory for you will never see the outside of these walls again. I think you'll find your stay this time to be much more...

The doctor smiles

DOCTOR RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Rehabilitating.

The cell door slams shut with a THUD plunging the Joker into darkness.

A sliver of light from the view window illuminates only his mouth.

The Joker's smile begins to part as a CHUCKLE bubbles up from inside and grows into a hysterical LAUGH.

HALL

The doctor leads the escort back down the hall, past the other cells as the Joker's LAUGHTER continues to grow and fills the entire ward.

OUTSIDE

The Joker's LAUGHTER echoes out from the gothic Arkham as a full moon shines above it.

CUT TO:

EXT. GOTHAM CITY -- NIGHT

The full moon floats above the city.

Batman watches over the streets as he crouches on a building's stone ledge beside a grotesque gargoyle.

Suddenly, the Batsignal appears on a group of clouds.

Batman stands and looks to the signal. He raises the batgrapple and fires it.

Batman leaps from the ledge and swings off into the night.

THE END