



BATMAN

"Legends of the Dark Knight"

(Script)

407-439

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"Legends of the Dark Knight"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

CLOSE-UP ON A NEWSPAPER VENDING BOX -- featuring a picture of a burning building. The headline reads, "THIRD SUSPICIOUS FIRE THIS MONTH."

CARRIE'S VOICE

(reading)

"Mysterious arsonist strikes again.
Police baffled--"

MATT'S VOICE

(cutting in)

Look -- they got a shot of Batman!

CARRIE'S VOICE

Where?

Suddenly, what looks like the BAT SIGNAL hits the vending box window, highlighting a corner of the photo.

MATT'S VOICE

There!

CLOSER ON PHOTO

Centered in the Batsignal is a vague shadowy form, leaping off the roof of the building.

WIDE - ON THREE KIDS IN FRONT OF A SUPERMARKET - DAY

Three adolescents -- MATT, CARRIE AND NICK -- huddle in front of the vending box and inspect the photo. Matt, the youngest of the group, points at the glass with a flashlight that has a cut-out bat-symbol taped over it. After a second, Carrie pushes his hand away.

CARRIE

(a little superior)

Okay sport, you can move the light now!

She studies the photo carefully, and her attitude melts.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

It is him!

NICK
 Awesome. They never get a shot of
 Batman -- he's too quick.

The group starts walking down the sidewalk, in front of a big
 supermarket. A sign over the store reads, "GOTHAM-MART." Matt
 waves his Batsignal at everything they pass. *

CARRIE
 Well if the Dark Knight's on the
 case, arson-boy's history. *
 (shakes a fist in the air)
 And the Batman doesn't take
 prisoners.

NICK
 The way I hear it -- he isn't even
 human!

Nick leaps onto the market's concrete window ledge.

NICK (CONT'D)
 He's like -- a giant pterodactyl-
 beast -- with big fangs and talons!

Nick crouches like a bird, spreads his arms like wings, and bends
 his fingers into claws.

NICK (CONT'D) .
 -- And when he sees a bad guy, he
 swoops down from the sky and
 carries them off -- SKREE! SKREE!

He mimes "swooping," and grabs a phantom crook in his "talons."

CARRIE
 Reality check, Nick!

She pulls Nick down off the wall and they walk on.

MATT
 My uncle knows Batman. He says
 he's really nice.

Carrie and Nick turn to Matt incredulously.

NICK
Nice?!

CARRIE
 Yeah, right!

MATT

No, I mean it! He says Batman's neat. He's got lots of cool equipment, and he and Robin are real funny.

CARRIE

And my dad's a spy with the C.I.A.

MATT

I'm serious! See, my uncle was the guard at the Walker Music Center...

The trio walk past a MUSIC STORE, and we PUSH IN on the instruments in the window. As CAMERA SETTLES on a toy piano...

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE WALKER MUSIC CENTER - NIGHT

ON A PIANO -- only it's a HUGE PROP PIANO, which we realize as we PULL BACK. (Everything and everyone in this sequence should be in colorful, classic '50s, Dick Sprang style.)

PAN AROUND THE ROOM -- the main hall of the Music Center -- revealing more oversized instruments: a pair of TRAMPOLINE-SIZED TIMPANI DRUMS, a GIANT UPRIGHT BASS AND BOW, a TWENTY-FOOT HIGH SAXOPHONE. It's the middle of the night: The lights throw long shadows; it's dark outside the windows; and the hall is deserted.

From somewhere O.S., OPERA MUSIC plays, and a SOPRANO VOICE sings. (Recommend something upbeat and filled with laughter, like the "Queen of the Night" aria from "The Magic Flute.")

PAN ENDS on a display case in the center of the room. A sign on the case identifies the papers within as a "SPECIAL EXHIBIT: THE ORIGINAL HANDWRITTEN SCORE TO 'PAGLIACCI.'"

CUT TO:

INT. GUARD'S STATION

In a small room off from the main hall, a SECURITY GUARD sits with his feet up on a desk and his cap over his eyes. The opera is coming from an old-fashioned radio behind him, circa 1950s.

Suddenly STATIC BLASTS over the radio, and the guard awakens with a START.

GUARD

Whuh-?

JOKER'S VOICE ON RADIO
 Sing a song of larceny,
 Sing it 'round the town!
 Joker's stealing laughter,
 And Batman's going down!
 (laughing maniacally)
 The comedy is finished!
 (keeps laughing)

Then the radio BURSTS STATIC again. The guard fumbles to his feet.

GUARD
 (to himself)
 The Joker! Better stay on my toes!

SMASH CUT TO:

THE KIDS

as Nick eyes Matt, giving him a hard time.

NICK
 "Better stay on my toes?!" He
 actually said that? Out loud?

MATT
 (defensive)
 I don't know! This is how my uncle
 tells it!

CARRIE
 (to Nick)
 Just let Matt tell the story!

Nick waves his hand, and Matt goes on.

MATT
 Okay, so he runs through the
 center, making sure everything's
 locked up...

CUT BACK TO:

THE MUSIC CENTER - CLOSE ON THE MAIN DOORS

as the guard's hands reach IN and shake the padlock and chain
 that hold the doors from the inside.

WIDE

Satisfied, the guard turns around, his back to the doors, and
 looks around. He scratches his head.

GUARD

Ahh, what am I worried for?

CLOSER - ON TRANSOM BEYOND GUARD (GUARD'S SHOULDER IN FG)
as the transom CREAKS OPEN.

GUARD (CONT'D)

It's not like the Joker's comin'
here.

A metal canister with a Joker-face drops in and CLATTERS TO THE FLOOR.

THE GUARD

spins around and looks.

GUARD

What the...?

ON THE FLOOR - THE CANISTER

as GREEN GAS SPEWS out of the Joker mouth and fills the room.

JOKER FACE

(automated laughter)

Ha ha ha ha -- ha ha ha ha...

BACK TO WIDE

The guard covers his mouth in panic, but it's too late.

GUARD

(cough! cough!)

What? -- Gas!

He fumbles with his keys, unchains the front door, and --

-- gets thrown backward as the door BURSTS IN from the outside. THE JOKER strides triumphantly in, arms in the air, followed by TWO MOBSTER-TYPE THUGS with handguns drawn. Joker wears the classic purple tails and vest, and all three wear see-through gas masks.

JOKER

Thank you, good fellow, so kind of
you to get the door.

(to the two thugs)

And who says chivalry is dead?

He looks around, and his eyes light up.

JOKER
Ah, the arts!

The guard collapses to his knees, weak from the gas.

GUARD
(coughing, getting weaker)

Joker grabs a (normal, i.e. small) ukulele from a display near the door, and strums an ear-splitting chord. TWAAANNG! Then he breaks the uke over the guard's back, sending him face-down to the floor.

GUARD
(unconscious moan)

JOKER
Mother always said I had talent!

Joker takes a low bow.

...Then he peeks up at the thugs under an annoyed eyebrow.

JOKER
Well?

The thugs realize, and break into applause and cheers.

THUGS
Whoo-hoo! / Bravo!

Joker rises, smiling graciously, as he pulls off his mask. The thugs do the same.

JOKER
Thank you. You're too kind.

ON THE GUARD

Joker kicks the guard over onto his back, revealing his keys on the floor underneath him. Joker kneels INTO FRAME.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Truth be told, strings never were
my section.

He picks up the keys and JINGLES them near the guard's face.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I'm much better on the keys!
(laughs uproariously)

He stands and runs OUT.

ON DISPLAY CASE

Joker runs IN and fidgets with the large keyring, trying to select a key.

JOKER
(humming as he goes through the keys...)

He chooses one, tries it, and it works.

JOKER (CONT'D)
Ahhh!

He lifts the top of the case, when --

'50s BATMAN'S VOICE
Hold it right there, Joker!

JOKER
(startled)
Eh?

Joker looks up and sees --

NEW ANGLE - UP AT CEILING

-- the classic '50s BATMAN AND ROBIN standing in the rafters, beneath an open skylight.

JOKER (O.S.)
Batman!

'50s BATMAN
We got your clue about stealing laughter! "The comedy is finished!"

'50s ROBIN
A famous line from "Pagliacci," the opera about a sad clown!

'50s BATMAN
It was your twisted way of saying you'd steal the original score!

'50s ROBIN
Now we're going to make our own clown cry!

They dive down off the rafters.

WIDE

As the dynamic duo come soaring down, Joker turns to his thugs and points.

JOKER

Get them!

The thugs open fire -- BANG! BANG! But Batman and Robin bounce on the first drum -- BA-DUM! -- then the second drum -- BA-DUM! -- and the bullets go whizzing past them.

CLOSER ON THE THUGS

as Batman's and Robin's feet KICK the guns out of their hands.

THUGS

Aaah!

WIDE

Batman and Robin land beside the thugs, and DUCK as the thugs take their first swings.

THUGS

(punching grunts!)

ON JOKER

as he dives for cover behind a showcase of sheet music.

ON ROBIN AND THUG #1

Robin backs away as Thug #1 takes fruitless swings. They pass a giant metronome in the bg.

'50s ROBIN

Not much of a dancer, are you?

Robin pulls back on the metronome's pendulum and lets go. It swings back, KNOCKING the thug in the head.

THUG #1

(OOF!)

'50s ROBIN

Now you've got the beat!

The thug drops woozily to the floor.

ON BATMAN AND THUG #2

trading punches. A giant tuning fork rests against the wall behind them.

'50s BATMAN AND THUG #2
(grunts and oofs...)

Batman connects with an uppercut to the chin, and the thug goes down.

THUG #2
(OOF!)

ON JOKER

hiding behind the showcase, WINCING as his men get beaten. He looks up and spots something. TILT UP to reveal a sousaphone (a big tuba-like instrument, the type marching-band players hoop around themselves), resting atop the showcase.

JOKER

shakes the showcase.

WIDE

as the sousaphone FALLS IN and hoops around Robin like a ring toss, pinning his arms to his sides.

'50s ROBIN
(surprised cry!)

JOKER
I win!

ON BATMAN

as he turns and sees his pal in trouble.

'50s BATMAN
Robin!

Unseen behind him, Thug #2 rises with the giant tuning fork in hand, and CONKS Batman on the back of the head. PIIINNNNGGG!
Batman drops, unconscious.

ON JOKER

pleased.

JOKER
Ooooh, very good! I'll have to
make a note of that!
(laughs)

WIDE

Joker points to the giant bow beside the bass.

JOKER
(to his thugs)
Tie them up with those bow hairs!

He turns and walks toward CAMERA, rubbing his hands.

JOKER (CONT'D)
I'm not done fiddling with them
yet!
(laughs maniacally)

And as the thugs reach for the giant bow and Joker laughs, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

RESUME - THE MUSIC CENTER - ON THE SECURITY GUARD
as he starts to come to, and shakes his head groggily.

GUARD
(groans...)

The guard looks up and reacts to what he sees.

WIDE

Batman and Robin, bound with the bow's horse hairs, lie inside the giant piano. The duo struggle against their binds, as the two thugs hold them down.

Joker flips his tails up with great show, and sits at the piano bench.

JOKER
Now for my next number, I'd like to
do a little ditty for you...

CLOSER ON BATMAN'S HAND

as Batman surreptitiously pulls a mini-electric saw from his belt, and uses it to cut through the bow hairs -- BZZZZZZZ!

JOKER (O.S.)
...that I've been working on for --
oh, it seems like years.

NEW ANGLE

as Joker stands and glares over Batman.

JOKER
I call it, "Bat-hoven's Last
Movement!"
(laughs)

Joker lifts a wooden mallet into view, and lines it up against the post supporting the piano lid.

JOKER
For some, I'm afraid, it may hit a
sour note!
(laughs again)

And with that, Joker winds up his swing --

CLOSE ON BATMAN AND ROBIN

-- as Batman and Robin both spring to a crouching position and grab the two thugs' hands --

CLOSE ON THE PIANO LID'S SUPPORT

-- and Joker KNOCKS the support out with the mallet.

WIDE

As the giant lid comes swinging down, Batman and Robin pull the thugs into the piano, and leap clear themselves.

THUGS

Aaah!

The lid CRASHES DOWN NOISILY, trapping the two thugs (safely) inside.

TWO THUGS

(muffled AUGH!)

ON JOKER

reacting in fear.

JOKER

No!

He turns and runs for the door, passing the mouth of the giant saxophone.

BACK TO BATMAN AND ROBIN

Robin sees the Joker and points.

'50s ROBIN

He's getting away!

Batman looks up. Placing one foot on the piano bench, Batman LEAPS into the air --

*
*

WIDE

-- then bounces on the giant timpani drum like a trampoline and SPRINGS up to the top of the giant saxophone. He puts his lips to the reed --

*
*

THE GUARD

sees what's coming and sticks his fingers in his ears as --

BATMAN

BLOWS A LOUD NOTE: HONNNNKK!

ON JOKER

spinning around in agony, holding his hands to his ears.

JOKER

Aaaah! My ears!

He drops to the floor, beaten.

ON BATMAN AND ROBIN - OTS GUARD

As the guard rises to his knees and watches, Batman lands next to Robin. The pair pull their Bat-earplugs out of their ears.

'50s ROBIN

Good thing we thought to wear our
Bat-plugs, Batman!

*

Batman turns to the security guard.

'50s BATMAN (CONT'D)

Call the police so they can round
up these clowns.

THE GUARD

nods, speechless with awe.

BACK TO BATMAN AND ROBIN

as the pair turn and dash out the door. As they do, Batman pats Robin on the back, and the guard hears:

'50s BATMAN

Well done, old chum!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - ON NICK AND CARRIE - LATE AFTERNOON

Nick can't take it anymore.

NICK

"Old chum"!? You gotta be kidding!

CARRIE

The whole story's bogus. Your
uncle was asleep half the time!

WIDE - A RETAIL DISTRICT

Matt looks down at his feet self-consciously, as the group walks past a strip of stores. Time has passed during Matt's story, and the shadows are growing long.

MATT

Well -- like I said, that's how he tells it.

SKINNY KID (O.S.)

Hey, who's talking about Batman?

CAMERA FOLLOWS, as the threesome reach a THRIFT SHOP with a dressmaker's dummy outside. The dummy wears a neon-orange leather jacket, and a SKINNY KID with long stringy hair is wrapping a feather boa around it. The kid smiles at them, but they just keep walking, trying to ignore him. The kid fusses with the boa as he daydreams.

SKINNY KID (CONT'D)

I love Batman... all those muscles, the tight rubber armor, and that flashy car... I heard it can drive up walls.

Nick gives him a pained look.

NICK

Shut up, Joel.

Just then Matt reacts to something O.S.

MATT

Hey, what happened to Kozy's?

THE KIDS' POV - A BURNED-OUT LUNCHEONETTE A FEW DOORS DOWN

Its walls are blackened and the window is broken. A charred sign overhead reads, "THE KOZY KORNER."

SKINNY KID (O.S.)

The arsonist happened.

BACK TO THE KIDS

staring in shock. Joel pushes his hair back from his face and heads back into the thrift shop.

SKINNY KID

You should've seen the fire. It was fabulous!

Concerned, Matt, Carrie and Nick run OFF.

CUT TO:

INT. LUNCHEONETTE - CONTINUOUS

The kids venture cautiously inside, with Carrie in the lead. She shines Matt's flashlight around, investigating the site.

CARRIE

Wonder if there's any clues...

ON CORNER OF LUNCH COUNTER - IN BEAM OF FLASHLIGHT

A RAT scurries by, crossing through the light's beam.

WIDE

Nick looks around, worried.

NICK

We should get out of here.

CARRIE

(still "investigating")

Batman wouldn't run.

Matt looks at her, and crosses his arms.

MATT

How do you know?

CLOSER ON CARRIE

as she turns to face the two boys.

CARRIE

'Cause I know what he's really like. And you guys are both totally clueless.

PUSH IN CLOSE ON CARRIE'S FACE as she talks...

CARRIE (CONT'D)

First of all, Batman's real old, like about fifty. And second -- Robin's a girl...

MATCH-CUT TO:

INT. RUN-DOWN APARTMENT.

ON CLOSE-UP - FEMALE ROBIN (who looks conspicuously like Carrie) -- with green-tinted sunglasses and a shock of red hair. (The look and characters in this sequence are to match the style of "The Dark Knight Returns.")

PULL BACK to reveal that she's a hostage in a rundown apartment. A MUTANT GANGMEMBER has an arm around her throat.

WIDER - THREE SHOT

MUTANT GANGMEMBER #2 stands against a wall with a high-tech machine gun trained on Robin. Both Mutants have punky clothes and sunglasses; one is bald, the other spike-haired.

MUTANT GANGMEMBER #2
Spill it, chicken-legs. Where's
the Bat?

Suddenly TWO FISTS BURST THROUGH THE WALL behind him, and pull him backward out of sight.

MUTANT GANGMEMBER #2 (CONT'D)
(startled SCREAM!)

CLOSER ON HOLE IN WALL

Then as the dust settles, the "Dark Knight"-style '80s BATMAN steps through the hole. This Batman is older, denser, immensely muscular. He looks at the remaining O.S. Mutant, all business.

ON MUTANT #1 AND ROBIN

Mutant #1 tightens his grip on Robin, his whole body shaking with fear. Robin stays perfectly calm.

MUTANT #1
(shaking in his boots)
Back off, man! I'll waste her!

BATMAN

steps closer.

BACK TO THE MUTANT - TIGHTER ON HIS FACE

MUTANT #1
Believe me! I'll do it!

WIDE

Faster than the Mutant can see, Batman's FIST SMASHES HIS FACE and the Mutant falls backward out of SCENE.

'80s BATMAN
I believe you.

Robin looks at Batman's handiwork, then up at him with a smirk.

FEMALE ROBIN
Figured I had all night, boss?

BATMAN

ignores the jibe, and silently steps around her. He picks up the dazed Mutant #1 by the collar, and lifts him to his face.

'80s BATMAN
Your leader.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY DUMP - NIGHT.

where a huge MUTANT LEADER with file-sharpened teeth stands atop a trash heap in the middle of a wide circle of his MUTANT GANG. Many of the Mutants bear hi-tech arms. The Leader marches back and forth, shaking his fists in the air.

MUTANT LEADER
They think we a gang! They think
we just noisy kids! But soon they
see -- we are the future! We are
the law!

*
*
*
*

MUTANT GANG
(rallying cheers!)

ON TWO MUTANTS

DON and ROB, watching their leader's speech with goofy grins on their faces. Each wears a shirt that says "MY NAME IS," along with their name.

ROB
See, Don, Leader's riffin now.

DON
Leader's billy berserk, man.

ON THE MUTANT LEADER

marching around the circle of his followers, beating his chest with his fist.

MUTANT LEADER
I myself will kill the fool,
Batman! I will rip the meat from
his bones and suck them dry!
Gotham City belongs to the Mutants!

Suddenly a RUMBLING NOISE gets their attention, and they all turn to see:

NEW ANGLE ON GARBAGE HEAP

An enormous TANK-LIKE-BATMOBILE thunders into view over the heap.

THE MUTANTS

turn and OPEN FIRE on the tank.

INSIDE THE TANK

Batman is at the helm, Robin's beside him; safe inside as rounds EXPLODE against the window. Batman scowls.

'80s BATMAN

They don't even wait for an order.
Kids these days. No respect.

He grabs the controls.

EXT. THE TANK

A GUN-TURRET spins into position and starts FIRING PROJECTILES at the gangmembers.

ON GANG

getting hit by the projectiles, and spilling in all directions.

MUTANT GANGMEMBERS

(screams and cries!)

INT. TANK

Batman turns to Robin.

'80s BATMAN

Rubber bullets.

She looks at him skeptically.

'80s BATMAN (CONT'D)

Honest.

EXT. TANK - SIDE HATCH

The hatch flips open and Robin pops up, slingshot in hand. She starts firing away.

ON GANGMEMBERS

as Robin's shots peg more gangmembers.

MUTANT GANGMEMBERS

(more cries of pain!)

NEW ANGLE - WIDE

The tank rolls to a stop, right in front of the Mutant Leader, who holds his ground. He clenches his fists and spits his words venomously at the tank.

MUTANT LEADER

BATMAN! I call you coward! Come out and face your death like a man!

ON THE TANK - TOP HATCH

as it opens and the massive Batman steps into view. He grins down at his foe. He's going to like this.

BACK ON THE MUTANT LEADER

MUTANT LEADER

I kill you! I eat your heart! I show you who rules Gotham City!

BACK ON BATMAN - CLOSER

'80s BATMAN

Okay, boy...

He LEAPS --

TWO SHOT

as Batman lands face to face with the Mutant Leader.

'80s BATMAN (CONT'D)

Show me.

The two dive into a wrestling clench.

'80s BATMAN AND MUTANT LEADER

(grunts and growls...)

The Mutant Leader throws Batman backwards. Batman catches himself, and as the Leader charges forward, Batman KICKS -- and the Leader catches the foot cleanly in his hands.

MUTANT LEADER

(laughs)

You slow, old man! You borin' me!

He shoves Batman's leg down, pushing Batman off balance.

MUTANT LEADER

I show you what real kick like.

And he does, SLAMMING his foot into Batman's gut.

'80s BATMAN
(BIG OOF!)

Batman collapses to his knees. The Mutant Leader walks toward Batman -- and the Dark Knight doesn't move. The Mutant leans in cautiously...

Then with surprising speed, Batman JABS the Leader's face, square in the nose. *

MUTANT LEADER
(OWW!)

'80s BATMAN
Just letting you get close -- boy.

Batman dives onto the Mutant Leader, and the two go down into the muck and garbage -- punches and kicks flying. After a moment, the Leader comes up, his hands holding Batman down, suffocating him beneath the trash heap.

MUTANT LEADER
Not bad for old man, but I am the
future! I am nasty! I kill you
now, and Gotham City is mine! *

All we see are Batman's arms, flailing helplessly from beneath the muck, as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

RESUME - AT THE DUMP - as the Mutant Leader is drowning Batman under the garbage and muck.

ON ROBIN

looking elsewhere, firing her slingshot on an O.S. gangmember. She turns, and sees that she's needed. She trains her weapon on the Leader -- and fires.

BACK TO MUTANT LEADER

Robin's shot nails him right in the arm, and the Mutant Leader reels backward in pain.

MUTANT LEADER
(angry howl!)

It's all the time Batman needs to come back up -- fighting.

A powerful fist to the sternum -- emptying the leader of air. *

MUTANT LEADER
(UHF! -then gasps for air!) *

The Leader struggles to suck in breath, as Batman jabs him again, this time in the side -- *

MUTANT LEADER
(Aaah!)

The Leader's hands go to his side in pain. *

ON THE TWO MUTANTS DON AND ROB

on the ground, having taken cover, still watching the fight.

ROB
(worried)
Leader's boggin'!

DON
(assuring)
Leader peg Batman, you see.

An O.S. CRUNCH makes the pair squirm.

DON (CONT'D)
Ooh. He dusted!

BACK TO BATMAN AND MUTANT LEADER

as the Leader -- off-balance and bloody, charges at Batman again.
Batman easily dodges --

'80s BATMAN
You don't get it, boy. This isn't
a trash heap...

-- and delivers a debilitating kick to the Leader's femur. *

MUTANT LEADER
(SCREAMS in pain)

'80s BATMAN
...It's an operating table.

The Leader falls to the ground, and Batman picks him up by the
shirt.

'80s BATMAN (CONT'D)
...And I'm the surgeon.

ROBIN

grins with satisfaction.

FEMALE ROBIN
Gotta love 'im.

BACK TO BATMAN AND MUTANT LEADER

as Batman pulls his fist back and lets it fly.

MUTANT LEADER'S POV

as Batman's fist flies at CAMERA -- and everything goes BLACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREETS - ON NICK AND MATT - NIGHT.

staring at CAMERA in awe.

MATT AND NICK
Cooooool...

WIDE

It's dark now, and the kids are walking on city streets again.

CARRIE
And that's what Batman's really
like.

Matt shines his flashlight on his watch.

MATT

It's late. My mom's gonna kill me.

Carrie stuffs her hands in her pockets.

CARRIE

Yeah, I should head back too --

A SHADOW passes over them from high above. They look up. Nick points.

NICK

Hey, it's him!

KIDS' POV - THE ROOFTOPS

where A FIGURE runs across a roof, silhouetted against the night sky. He leaps from one roof to another and vanishes from sight.

NICK (O.S. CONT'D)

It's Batman!

BACK TO THE KIDS

CARRIE

Whoa!

NICK

Come on!

They break into a run in the direction the figure was headed.

EXT. OLD THEATER

The kids come to an old, neglected theater. Nick looks up.

NICK

I think this is it.

One of the doors is off its hinges, and Nick starts to crawl through the opening.

MATT

Uh -- I don't know about this...

Carrie nudges him forward.

CARRIE

Come on! This could be his headquarters!

Matt goes for it.

INT. THEATER

It's a rundown, deco house. Chunks of the walls and roof are missing, and the room's been exposed to the elements.

ON THE KIDS

as they get inside and look around. Nick puts a finger to his mouth and points toward the stage.

ON STAGE

The shadowy figure moves around behind the scrims and curtains -- it looks like he's setting things in place.

THE KIDS

duck between two rows of seats and watch.

MATT
(whispering)
What's he doing?

KIDS' POV - THE STAGE (PEEKING OVER SEAT TOPS IN FG)

...And then the person they're watching steps into full view on the stage -- and it's not Batman...

CLOSER

-- it's FIREFLY.

THE KIDS

react!

CARRIE
(hushed)
Firefly!

ON FIREFLY

as he presses a button on an electronic device, causing a tiny red light to start flashing. He places the device on the stage.

ON THE KIDS

huddled behind the seats again.

CARRIE
(hushed)
We gotta tell Batman.

MATT
(hushed)
My Batsignal!

He turns it on and aims it up toward the ceiling.

ON CEILING

as the faint flashlight signal pans until it finds the hole in the roof -- then as Matt barely gets it aimed right, the signal flickers and dies.

ON KIDS, FAVOR MATT

They react despondently. Matt looks at the flashlight and bangs its side.

MATT
The batteries are dead.

NICK
(sarcastic)
Y'think?

FIREFLY (O.S.)
Who's there?!

The kids turn, startled.

ON FIREFLY

looking toward the seats. He throws a small ball into the air.

WIDE

The ball BURSTS BRIGHTLY overhead like a flare, illuminating the room.

FIREFLY
Show yourself!

ON SEATS

as the terrified kids stand up into view.

BACK TO FIREFLY

reacting.

FIREFLY
(annoyed)
Kids.

Then he pulls a remote control off his belt, and shrugs.

FIREFLY (CONT'D)
Tough break. Hope you like it hot.

WIDE

And with that he presses a button and devices all around the theater EXPLODE INTO FLAME.

The kids run for it -- but there's no escape, the doors they came in are blocked by fire.

ON FIREFLY

as he activates his jet-pak and starts to rise off the stage.

FIREFLY
See you around.

He rises all the way up toward the hole in the ceiling -- when BATMAN (our Batman) comes shooting through the hole feet first. Batman KICKS Firefly in the chest, and the pair go tumbling downward.

BATMAN/FIREFLY
(impact grunts!)

ON THE STAGE

as Firefly FALLS IN and Batman lands on his feet in a crouch.

FIREFLY
(OOF!)

ON THE KIDS

watching with awe. Matt beams proudly.

MATT
He got my signal!

ON BATMAN AND FIREFLY

as Batman approaches the still-kneeling Firefly.

BATMAN
I'd heard you were setting fires
for money, Lynns. A little
pressure, and your client gave up
where you'd be.

BACK TO MATT

crestfallen.

MATT

Oh.

BACK TO BATMAN AND FIREFLY

BATMAN

I thought insurance fraud was too common for you.

FIREFLY

Fires need fuel. Chemicals are expensive.

Suddenly Firefly straightens up, revealing his FLAME GUN in his hand. He FIRES a flame-pellet at Batman, and the Dark Knight dodges.

ON CARRIE

watching the fight, wide-eyed.

ON FIREFLY

as he turns to fire again, and Batman's foot KICKS IN, sending the flame gun flying.

THE FLAME GUN

slides across the stage and is lost behind the burning scrim.

BACK TO BATMAN AND FIREFLY

as Firefly takes a clumsy swing at Batman. Batman dodges easily, and follows up with a mean fist to the solar plexus. Firefly goes down again in a heap.

FIREFLY

UGH!

CARRIE

watches, the fire sparkling in her eyes.

CARRIE

Wooooowww...

ON BATMAN AND FIREFLY

as Firefly gets to his feet again. Now he's pissed. He pulls out his blowtorch-sword and ignites it.

FIREFLY

(enraged growl...)

That's it!

He attacks Batman, swinging the lethal weapon as Batman dodges.

FIREFLY (CONT'D)
 You've gotten in my way for the
 last time!

CLOSE ON BATMAN'S HAND

as Batman pulls an aerosol can off his belt and FIRES.

BACK TO WIDE

Foam shoots out of the can, burying the sword and most of
 Firefly's arm.

BATMAN
 Sorry to put you out.

CLOSE ON MATT

He cracks a smile -- this is heaven.

MATT
 Yeah!

BACK TO FIREFLY AND BATMAN

Firefly drops the blowtorch and turns to run. Batman pulls out
 his bolas and throws them, catching Firefly around the ankles and
 tripping him. Firefly falls, hitting his head against the floor.

FIREFLY
 (Uhf! -then dazed moan...)

Batman picks up a fallen velvet rope, and wraps it around the
 dazed Firefly, sandwiching his "wings" together and pressing his
 arms against his sides.

ON THE KIDS

watching from the back of the theater. A drape behind them
 FLARES UP and the kids are forced forward by the flames.

KIDS
 (frightened yells!)

BATMAN

hears them and looks up to see -

BATMAN'S POV - THREE AWESTRUCK KIDS

standing behind the rows of seats, staring at him, frozen.

BACK TO BATMAN

He looks around, and then up at the ceiling.

BATMAN'S POV

of a deco iron chandelier overhead, the plaster around it already cracked.

BATMAN

fires a grapple toward the ceiling.

THE GRAPPLE

takes hold in the ceiling, right near the chandelier's anchor.

WIDE

Batman PULLS on the wire, ripping a chunk of ceiling down. The chandelier breaks free, swings down like a wrecking ball, and CRASHES through a wall of the theater -- not only providing an exit, but blowing up enough dust to extinguish a path in the fire.

BATMAN

Go!

THE THREE KIDS

run for the exit. Nick looks back one last time and sees --

NICK'S POV - BACK INTO THE THEATER

Barely visible through all the smoke and dust, the spread-caped shadow of the Batman rises into the air with Firefly in tow.

NICK

watches, his eyes following the shadow up, his jaw wide open -- until Carrie reaches back IN.

CARRIE

Come on!

They run outside.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

as FIRE TRUCKS and POLICE CARS arrive outside the burning building, lights flashing and sirens blaring. FIREFIGHTERS get right to work unloading ladders and hoses.

CLOSER - ON ONE CAR

as BULLOCK and a UNIFORM COP climb out and look up at the building. The cop's eyes widen, and Bullock grins.

BULLOCK

Looks like someone left us a present.

THEIR POV - ON ROOF OF BURNING BUILDING

where Firefly is hanging upside-down from a gargoyle, bound and waiting to be picked. The flames are licking up at the bottom of FRAME, almost reaching him.

BACK TO BULLOCK AND THE COP

UNIFORM COP

He's gonna fry up there!
(turns and shouts)
I need a ladder over here now!

The cop runs urgently OFF, calling and pointing, as Bullock leans back against the car and sticks a toothpick in his mouth.

BULLOCK

(real casual)
Yeah, you get right on that.

He looks around, as something else occurs to him.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Now who made the 9-1-1 on this?

CUT TO:

A BLOCK AWAY - LONG SHOT ON BULLOCK AND OTHER ACTION IN BG

as Carrie places a pay phone back on its cradle. She turns to the two boys, satisfied, and they walk toward CAMERA and OFF.

REVERSE ANGLE - ON THE KIDS

as they walk away from us down the street, and CAMERA RISES into the night.

MATT

See? He was just like I said.

CARRIE

What are you talking about?! Did you see the way he fought?

MATT

Yeah, but he also had that foam-
thing!

NICK

(more hushed, spooked)
And when he flew away at the end?!
I'm telling you -- he's not human.

Carrie shoves him, as the trio round a corner and disappear.

CARRIE

Get off it! He's human!

NICK (O.S.)

I don't know -- I thought I saw
fangs...

FADE OUT.

THE END.