

Return of the Dark Knight

By

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The Dark Knight Returns

By

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INT.NEWS ROOM.NIGHT

A news reporter sits at a desk. She shuffles her notes at begins to speak to the camera.

NEWS CASTER

Today's top stories, A group of nuns were found dead today in yet another brutal crime attributed to the rebel gang, The Mutants. Crime in Gotham is reaching a record high. We are vastly approaching another crime epidemic the likes we haven't seen for almost 10 years. Commissioner Gordon once again received death threats for his stand against The Mutants today, this close to his retirement, just under a month away. He could not be reached for comment. The news of Commissioner Gordon's retirement comes appropriately on the 10 year anniversary of the last known sighting The Batman. Some of our younger audience may not remember his one man war on crime and some remember it all too well. All we at channel 6 news hope is that he is sitting enjoying his retirement with friends.

INT.BAR.NIGHT

Two glasses come into the shot as a toast is announced. Bruce Wayne and Commissioner Gordon are sitting at a table.

GORDON

To ten years, and me finally joining you.

Bruce just sits there looking at the television.

NEWS CASTER

(Heard in background)

In other news Bruce Wayne had a very lucky escape at the Numan Elimination Race today.

GORDON

That was some stunt you pulled at the racetrack.

(CONTINUED)

BRUCE
Keeps the blood flowing

GORDON
S'long as most of it stays inside
you.

BRUCE
Worried about me Jim?

GORDON
Lets just say that I'm glad you
survived Batman's retirement, I was
hoping you would keep it that way.

Bruce again says nothing, looking at the television.

NEWS CASTER
(Heard in background)
The whole city is in hope, that
with Gordon's retirement, this
whole situation with the Mutants
will calm down and blow over.

GORDON
You're not worried about me are you
Bruce?

BRUCE
(Looking out the window)
No more than I am the rest of the
city. People have given up Jim,
they're hiding, burying their heads
in the sand.

GORDON
These are scary times, and The
Mutants, they're not the normal
street crooks. A mugger, he's after
a wallet, it makes sense. These
kids, it's just random violence.
There's no humanity in them at all.

BRUCE
(Turning back to Gordon)
Sounds like a certain piece of scum
we used to deal with Jim.

GORDON
Thank god he's keeping quiet.

Gordon pauses for a moment, he eventually cracks a smirk and
turns back to Bruce.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

Remember how you used to have us
all going back then? You with that
ginger ale of yours, pretending it
was champagne. You fooled everyone,
you kept your secret for so long.

Bruce drains the rest of his drink.

GORDON

You've made up for lost time in
that respect.

BRUCE

Makes it easier.

GORDON

Makes what easier?

BRUCE

Staying retired

Gordon pauses for a moment looking at Bruce as Bruce looks
back out the window.

GORDON

Things are different now Bruce. The
government, the public, they
wouldn't stand for you now.

Bruce carries on looking out of the window, deep in thought.

GORDON

You spoken to Dick lately?

BRUCE

You know I haven't Jim.

Gordon pauses again, staring at Bruce with sorrow in his
eyes.

GORDON

Shame you didn't keep up with him.
He could have been invaluable to
you, a shoulder to lean on,
especially after Jason

Bruce cuts him off and stands up.

BRUCE

Lets call it a night Jim.

Bruce walks away from Gordon as Gordon sits there watching
him leave shaking his head.

EXT.STREET.NIGHT

Bruce is walking down the street staring at his feet. He passes through the city as religious extremists stand proclaiming the end of the world.

BRUCE

These streets, these streets used to be so familiar to me by night. Now they're an unwelcome memory of a previous life. My time protecting my city seems a life time ago. The darkness is no longer my protection. Like everyone else in this god forsaken city the night is a time that brings fear. But my fear is for the choices I have made. Did I make the right one? Did I choose the right path? I made a promise, a promise I kept for most of my life. Have I turned my back on my promise, my city, my parents.

A bullet casing appears falling through a black backdrop. Bruce breaks out of the memory and is back on the streets. Bruce stops by a street lamp. He looks at the street lamp, it changes into a pearl dropping on a black backdrop.

EXT.WAYNE MANOR.NIGHT

A storm brews outside Wayne Manor.

INT.WAYNE MANOR.NIGHT

Bruce walks over to the dressing table and pours himself a drink. Bruce moves over to his chair and sits down.

BRUCE

This city used to be mine, I was her protector, she was my mistress. I knew her every alley way, every street corner, every rooftop. She knew how to cover my tracks, in her darkness and shadow I preyed on the corrupt, the immoral and the psychotic. She now seems like a cruel old woman, laughing at my inability to keep up with her.

Bruce will turn on the television and the news will come on.

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NEWS CASTER

The criminal organisation known as The Mutants have once again made the news, this time for hijacking a school bus. The Mutants held them for ransom, and after the ransom was delivered they detonated a bomb that was on board. Killing 16 school children aging from as young as 7.

BRUCE

Maybe I should have never retired. But would Gotham have been any safer with me still exacting my revenge? I'd clean the filth from my Cities streets only for them to be replaced by new filth, an ever growing plague of degenerates.

Bruce stands up

BRUCE

Everyone involved in my vendetta came to harm. Jason,

A flashback of The Joker killing Jason

BRUCE

Barbera,

A flashback of The Joker paralysing Barbera

BRUCE

The Citizns of Gotham.

Bruce drops his glass as he stands terrified by his memories. Bruce walks over to the dresser again and stands looking in the mirror at himself.

NEWS CASTER

This is the worst outbreak of criminal activity since The Joker's last outbreak of violence, ten years ago.

Bruce will think he see's the Joker standing behind him, he spins round in fear. He walks towards the window and puts his hand against the glass.

BRUCE

I made a promise, a promise that no child shall ever have to experience

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRUCE (cont'd)
the agony and rage I have had to
live with my whole life. I tried to
deny who I am, tried to deny that I
am anything more than an instrument
of war against the unjust. I
thought hanging up the cowl would
stop the criminals, stop them
thinking up newer and more
elaborate ways of hurting my city.
I have failed, failed my city,
failed my people, my parents,
failed myself.

Flashback of his parents falling as a young Bruce looks on
in horror.

BRUCE
Once again my mistress, my city, is
screaming out in agony as the filth
bleeds her dry. I feel the draw of
the night pulling me in. One last
time I shall put on my armor, one
last time I shall answer the call
of my city.

Bruce looks on as a bat comes flying toward the window.

BRUCE
One last time, the Dark Knight will
return.