

# THE DARK KNIGHT RISES

(2012)

Screenplay by Jonathan Nolan and Christopher Nolan

Story by Christopher Nolan & David S. Goyer

Directed by Christopher Nolan

Running Time: 160 minutes

## THE BEAT SHEET

*(Note: this is compiled from memory; this is not a final Story Map.)*

### ACT ONE



**OPENING SCENES:** Gordon speaks at podium on Harvey Dent Day, on the grounds of the rebuilt Wayne Manor, eight years after Harvey died.

Bane kidnaps LEONID PAVEL, a nuclear physicist, from CIA custody, and fakes Pavel's death.

Under the Dent Act, the vast majority of crime and corruption in Gotham has been eradicated. Gordon tries to read a prepared statement about the truth behind Harvey Dent's death, but he decides not to. He puts the papers back in his jacket pocket.

FOLEY is told that Gordon will be dumped by the MAYOR in the Spring.

BRUCE WAYNE lives as a recluse in the east wing of Wayne Manor and walks with a cane.

**INCITING INCIDENT:** Bruce catches SELINA KYLE stealing his mother's pearl necklace. She escapes and he discovers she lifted his fingerprints off the safe.

Police officer JOHN BLAKE questions Gordon about Batman on the roof of the MCU. Gordon tells him to focus on finding the Congressman, who was last seen with Selina Kyle.

Selina Kyle delivers Wayne's fingerprints to one of Daggett's men, who intend to kill her. She escapes as police storm in to save the Congressman. Bane's men (shown in the Opening) battle the cops, providing cover for the transaction to get Bruce Wayne's fingerprints.

Gordon is captured and brought to Bane – WE SEE BANE HAS AN UNDERGROUND LAIR AND MORE HENCHMEN. Bane takes the copy of Gordon's speech before Gordon escapes through a water duct.

Blake finds and rescues Gordon.

After finding an orphan boy dead, Blake goes to the orphanage where he grew up and finds out that the funding from the Wayne Foundation has dried up.

**STRONG MOVEMENT FORWARD:** John Blake meets with Wayne and reveals he knows he's Batman – only an orphan could know how to cover up anger with a “public” face. He urges Batman to come back. Alfred tells Bruce that the Wayne Foundation money dried up because Wayne Enterprises is no longer making money.



Wearing a mask, Bruce meets with Gordon in the hospital. Gordon urges Batman to come back.

Bruce meets with LUCIUS FOX regarding his financials. There are no profits in the company after he invested in a clean energy project. Bruce shut it down after he discovered the core could be used as a nuclear weapon.

**END OF ACT ONE TURN (External):** Fox shows Bruce new gadgets in Applied Sciences, including “The Bat,” which only has one problem: a defective auto-pilot.

**DECISION:** Bruce gets fitted with a brace to fix his leg. He's started to train again.

**END OF ACT ONE TURN (Internal):** Alfred appeals to Bruce in the cave. He's afraid that Bruce wants to fail; that he has a death wish. (THEME: The fear of death. It's not healthy to have a death wish.)

**DECISION:** Bruce attends the charity ball; his first public appearance in years.

## ACT II-A

Bruce speaks with MIRANDA TATE, who appeals to him to re-activate his fusion energy project.



Bruce confronts Selina Kyle, takes back the pearls but she steals his sports car.

Bane storms the Stock Exchange.

**FIRST TRIAL (External):** SET PIECE – Stock Exchange heist leads to a high speed pursuit. Batman joins the pursuit on the Batpod, leading the police away from Bane and onto him.

Bruce recovers the “clean slate” device that Bane used to download a virus into the Stock Exchange and makes a spectacular getaway in the Bat. The news reports “The Batman is back!”

**FIRST CASUALTY (External):** Bruce has been bankrupted by Bane and Daggett -- they used his fingerprints, courtesy of Selina Kyle, and made bad trades that crashed at midnight. Bane is targeting Bruce.

Alfred reveals Bane was ex-communicated from the League of Shadows by Ra’s Al Ghul.

Bruce gives control of Wayne Enterprises to Miranda Tate to prevent Daggett's control of the Wayne Enterprises' Board of Directors.

**COMBAT:** In a desperate attempt to get Bruce to give up his fight against Bane, Alfred tells him of Rachel's intent to marry Dent before she died. Alfred knows that he may have lost Bruce, but it’s more important to him that Bruce lives and finds happiness. Bruce feels betrayed and says goodbye to Alfred.

Gordon promotes Blake to detective.

**MIDPOINT (Internal):** Miranda Tate seduces Bruce.

Selina Kyle double crosses Batman, leading him into a trap set by Bane.

**MIDPOINT (External):** Bane and Batman have a brutal fight. Bane defeats Batman, breaks his back, and blows open the Applied Sciences division, taking control of all of Lucius Fox’s weapons.



Bane imprisons Bruce in some foreign locale, the underground prison he grew up in. The only way to escape is by climbing the sheer walls of the pit. He wants Bruce to stay alive so he can watch Gotham burn on television.

Blake apprehends Selina Kyle and questions her about Bruce Wayne.

Blake discovers Daggett's construction company has poured explosive concrete all over Gotham.

Bane kills Daggett.

**WAR:** Bane lays siege to Gotham with several explosions. He traps the majority of Gotham's Police Department underground, blows up the football stadium, and reveals his nuclear weapon (stolen from Wayne's fusion reactor), urging the citizens to "take control" of their city. Bane executes Dr. Pavel, the only man who knows how to defuse the bomb.

If anyone leaves or attempts to access the island, a lone triggerman will detonate the bomb (Talia Al Ghul Setup). (We know that the bomb will corrode and detonate in five months even if not triggered.)

### ***ACT II-B***

Bruce languishes in the foreign prison, getting aid from two fellow prisoners. He is told the story of the child that escaped the pit. He assumes the child was Bane.

Months pass as Gordon and Blake run an underground resistance network as Bane's army rules Gotham with martial law. Dr. Jonathan Crane runs a makeshift court where he sentences Gotham fat cats to "death or exile." Gordon tracks the truck that holds the nuke. Blake tends to the orphans. A Special Forces mission fails to help the resistance.



Bruce's back slowly heals -- he fails twice to make the climb to freedom and is only saved from certain death by his safety rope.

Bruce's mentor tells him that he must regain his fear of death to make the jump. He must climb...without the rope.

**ASSUMPTION OF POWER (EXTERNAL):** Bruce climbs out of the pit.

Gordon is caught, condemned to "exile" by Dr. Jonathan Crane. He walks out on the ice to certain death...and he is saved by Batman.

**DECLARATION OF WAR (EXTERNAL):** The bat symbol blazes in fire on the bridge, giving hope to Gotham's citizens and baffling Bane.

Catwoman takes Bruce to Lucius and Miranda and they brief him on the stakes.

**END OF ACT TWO TURN (EXTERNAL):** The bomb will detonate soon!

**DECISION (EXTERNAL):** Batman helps Blake rescue the police officers from the tunnels and launches a plan with his team, including Catwoman, John Blake, Lucius Fox, and Miranda Tate.

**DECISION (INTERNAL):** Bruce gives Catwoman the clean slate device and trusts her to use the Batpod to blast an exit in the South Street Tunnel for citizens to escape the island.

### *ACT III*

Batman and crew must seize the bomb from Bane's control and connect it back to the fusion chamber to disarm it.

**TRUE POINT OF NO RETURN (EXTERNAL):** The Gotham Police force marches against Bane's army. The Bat lays down some cover fire and the Police (led by Foley) battle Bane's army on the steps of city hall.





Batman fights Bane once again, this time getting the upper hand when he damages Bane's mask.



Meanwhile, John Blake tries to lead an exodus across the lone bridge that's still intact, but he is stopped by the National Guard. Blake stays strong in the face of certain doom, to maintain the orphans' hope.

**TRUE POINT OF NO RETURN (INTERNAL):** Miranda Tate stabs Batman! She reveals herself as TALIA AL GHUL, the daughter of Ra's Al Ghul. She was the child who escaped the pit. Bane was her protector in

the prison, thus she owes him a life debt. She has come to Gotham to fulfill The League of Shadows mission to destroy Gotham City and Bruce Wayne.

Gordon is able to block the signal so Talia cannot trigger the bomb.

Talia escapes in the truck holding the bomb and they race away as the clock ticks down.

Just before Bane can kill Batman, Catwoman kills Bane with the Batpod cannons.



SET PIECE (Chase – all team up to divert and stop the convoy with the bomb): Batman, Catwoman, and Gordon take down the convoy protecting the bomb, killing Talia Al Ghul – her last act is to trigger the flood of the fusion machine so they cannot disarm the bomb. Lucius Fox escapes the flooded chamber.

**CLIMAX (EXTERNAL):** Batman sacrifices himself for the city, flying the nuclear bomb out to sea. The bomb detonates at sea. John Blake throws away his badge.

**EPILOGUE:** Bruce Wayne is buried next to his parents on the Wayne Manor grounds. Alfred weeps, saying “I failed you.”

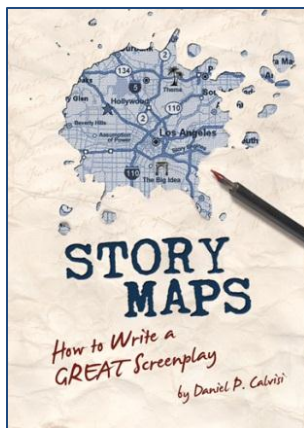
Batman is hailed as Gotham’s sacrificial hero. Wayne Manor is left to the city to be used as an orphanage. John Blake’s legal name is “Robin.”

Lucius Fox discovers Bruce fixed the auto-pilot problem with the Bat (Did Bruce survive?).

**CLIMAX (INTERNAL):** Alfred discovers Bruce Wayne is alive, living with Selina Kyle in Italy.

John Blake inherits the Batcave.

FADE OUT



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