

741.5

**RELEASE THE
BATS**

**FROM THE GOLDEN AGE
TO ONE BAD DAY**

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Reading Is Just the Beginning!



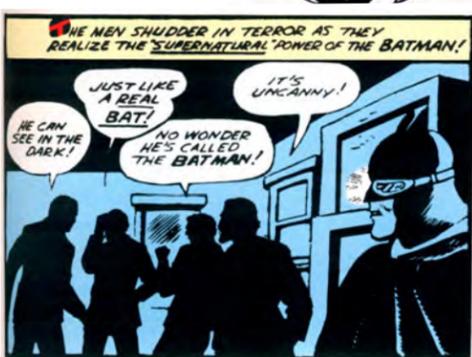
The origin of the Batman, first told in a page and a half in his third appearance in *Detective Comics* #29 (July 1939; see right), is well-known: Crime Alley, goon with gun, dead parents, one sad, pissed-off kid. But the details of how that kid became the Dark Knight have been filled in by multiple creators over the years. Some details, such as Bruce Wayne's training with French manhunter Henri Ducard and occult detective Zatara, father of Zatanna, are fleshed out in *The Knight*. Writer Chip Zdarsky adds a few more mentors, and a frenemy who matches Bruce every step, even as they fall under the influence of the Head of the Demon! Go to lexpublib.org!



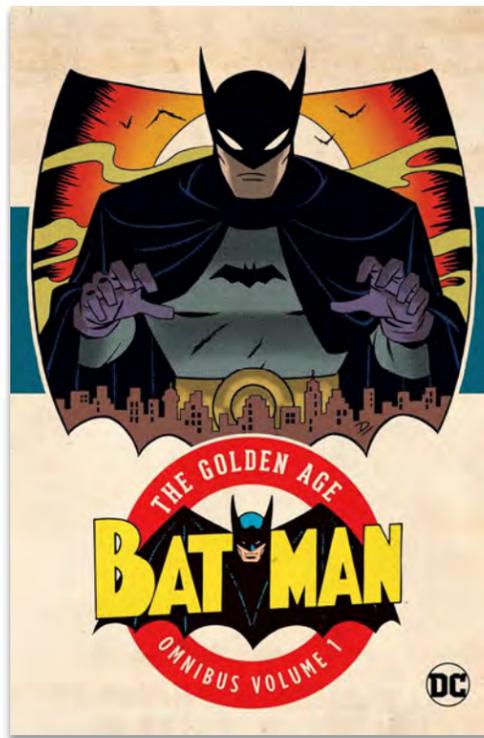
The Batman was not born, he was made. Bruce Wayne becomes THE KNIGHT in this fierce and lovely novel by Zdarsky & Di Giandomenico!



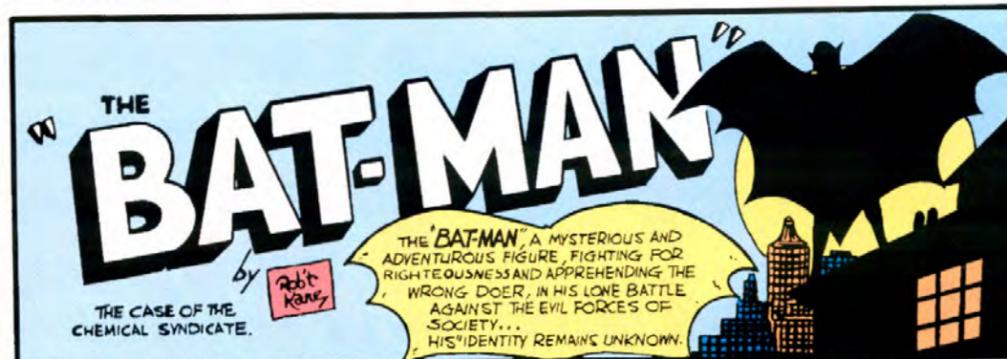
The art was bad, even by the rough'n'ready standards of the day. The plots were swiped from popular pulps and radio shows, beginning with the very first story. But to readers of the 1940s, it didn't matter. They loved Batman, warts and all.



From his debut in *Detective Comics* #27 May 1939 (right), Batman (he lost the hyphen three issues later, and we're still arguing about the definitive article) has been one of the most beloved characters in the modern history of global pop culture.

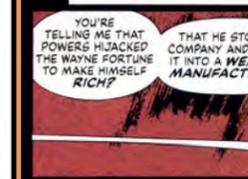
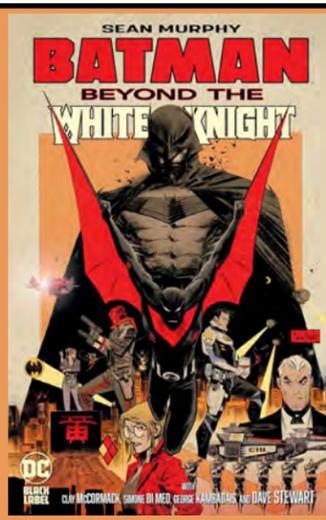


Now you can see how it all started in **BATMAN: THE GOLDEN AGE OMNIBUS VOLUME 1**, available at Marksbury Family Branch. A lap-busting 822 pages reprints Batman's lead stories from *Detective* #27-56 and #1-7 of his solo title, plus early

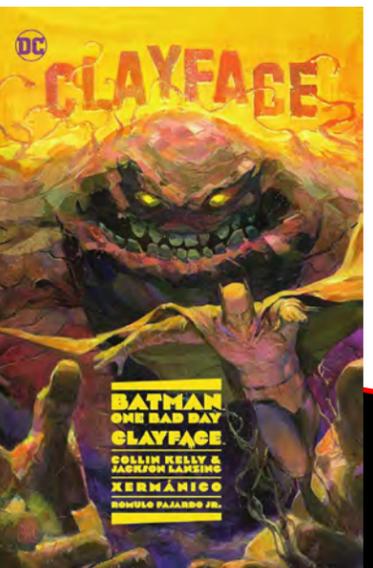
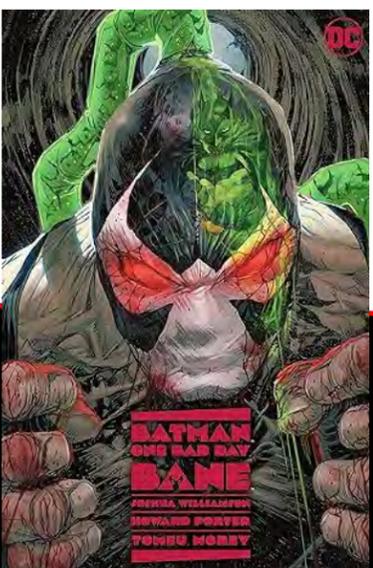


appearances in *World's Finest Comics*, including "Batman & Robin Visit the New York World's Fair." The series really gets going after the introduction of Robin the sidekick (above), Jerry Robinson, art assistant to Bob Kane, and the Joker!

Take one Batman, add another Batman, mix in not one but four Robins, plus one ex-Batgirl and the former Harley Quinn, top off with the digital ghost of the reformed Joker and garnish with a new Ace the Bathound, and you've got the recipe for fun and frenzy that is *Batman: Beyond the White Knight*. Sean Murphy's sequel picks up years after the first volume. Imprisoned after giving himself up, Bruce Wayne is forced to confront the unintended consequences of his surrender when a new Batman shows up. With a wicked eye on the relationships between his characters, Murphy takes his version of the Batman into a wild new future!



It's a time-tossed, love-lost Batman Family reunion in a future Gotham in Sean Murphy's *Beyond the White Knight*. Read Volume One, *BATMAN: WHITE KNIGHT* at [Tates Creek!](http://TatesCreek.com)



Edward Nygma isn't playing anymore. He's tired of being a joke. Soon no one's laughing. Least of all the Bat. Tom King explores the Riddler's troubled past as he delineates a terrifying future for the Prince of Puzzles!

Despite the havoc wreaked by his other half, Harvey Dent's been given chance after chance to clean up his act. Gotham's mayor gives him another. Will a threat to Dent's father force the return of the vicious Two-Face?

His criminal empire overthrown, Oswald Cobblepot is *persona non grata* in the underworld he used to run. He's armed with only a gun and one bullet. Can even the perspicacious Penguin rebuild on such a flimsy foundation?

Victor Fries keeps his beloved wife on ice. He's always claimed it's for her own good. But the closer the Dynamic Duo of Batman and Damian look, the less love and the more evil they see in the malevolent actions of Mr. Freeze!

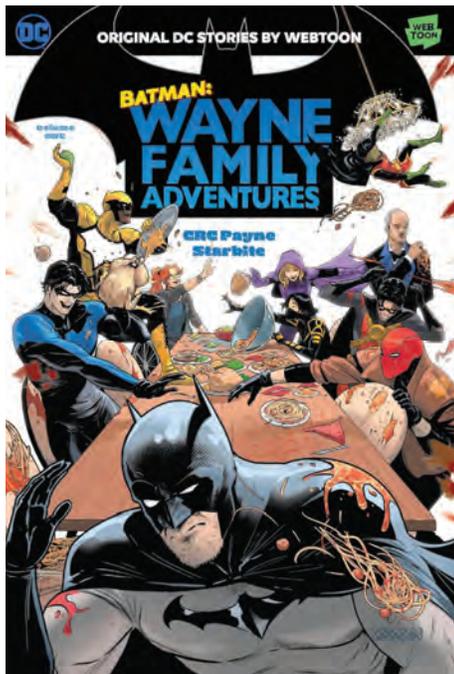
Years after Bane broke the Bat, the masked monstrosity is now a professional wrestler replaying his moment of triumph as sports entertainment. When the opportunity to make true amends arises, can Bane take it?

A brooch pawned by her mother during Selina Kyle's impoverished childhood returns to haunt the master thief as she plans to heist the now-valuable piece. But a new competitor called the Forger has other plans for Catwoman!

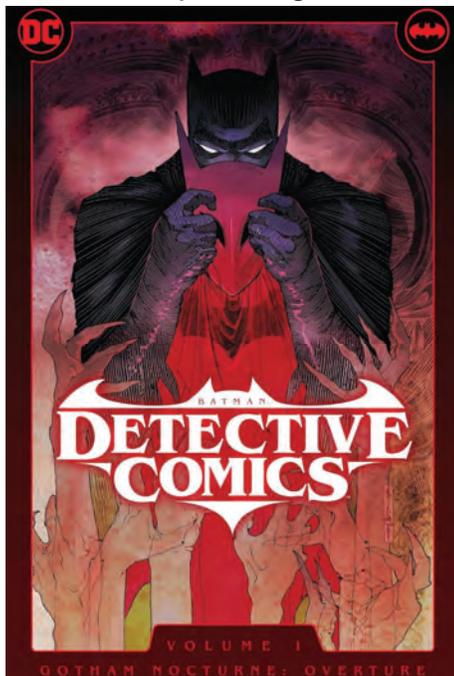
Once the actor Basil Karlo, Clayface returns to Hollywood with a new name and face. Behind the bright lights he finds a different darkness. Clayface has an artistic vision, but does it blind him to his own unfathomable malice?

Resurrected once again, Ra's al Ghul initiates a subtle but brutal plan to replace the world's worst oligarchs with better people. Will Batman stop the Head of the Demon or at last join his radical crusade to save the Earth?

It takes just ONE BAD DAY for eight bad guys to reveal unspoken secrets...face fears and chase dreams...finally achieve or ultimately reject redemption...in these beautiful DC hardbacks!

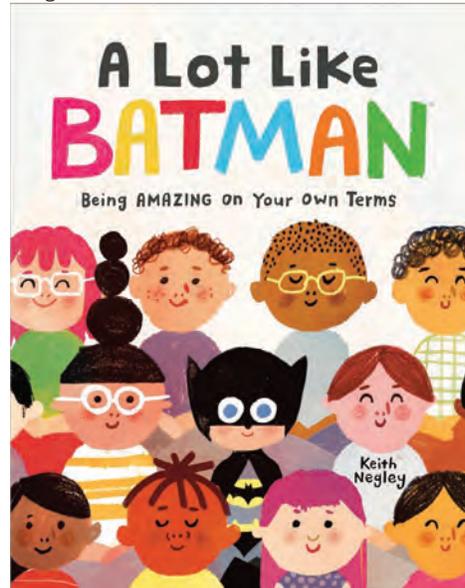


This entire issue is dedicated Batman. Even then, there's so much Bat-product, 741.5 has let some slip through the cracks. So check out *Batman: Fortress*, in which Batman must defend the world against an alien invasion while Superman is AWOL, and New arrival, *Shadows of the Bat: House of Gotham*, featuring the fierce artwork of **Fernando Blanco**. Where they fit in DCU canon, I haven't the foggiest. But reading the items discussed here, I get the feeling DC has returned to an editorial policy more like the old days, before the fanboys took the reins, where each writer and his crew tell their own story. The closest thing we get to "canon" is, oddly enough, the kiddie book. Collecting the popular webtoon, *Batman: Wayne Family Adventures* is published in the digest size of DC's Young Adult offerings, and the artwork of **Starbrite** is sufficiently mangafied to attract the Youth of Today. All the current Bat characters contribute to the hi-jinx, including the new kid, the

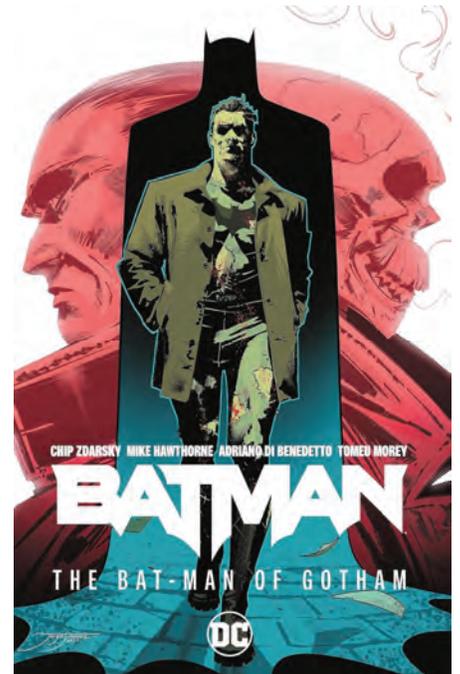


MEANWHILE

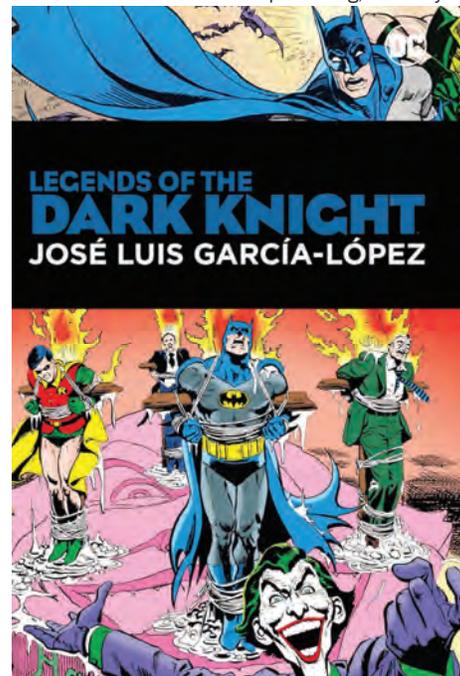
Signal, appear in short and often funny stories. Much more light-hearted than the usual Bat-fare, it makes for a good psychic palate cleanser. So you might wanna save it for after the latest collection of *Batman: Detective Comics*. Written by fresh face in the biz **Ram V**, *Gotham Nocturne: Overture* is a literally operatic take on the Dark Knight. A mysterious sound, an ancient music box, a villain known as the Maestro— this and other aspects of the story make sinister music together as Batman faces some deeply weird threats, all while his own abilities seem to be deserting him. Like previous iterations of *Detective*, which featured back-up strips like Pow Wow Smith, the Elongated Man and **Goodwin & Simonson's** legendary Manhunter (see 741.5 #61), the new book co-stars Commissioner Jim Gordon in "The Coda." (See? Music again.) Former Commissioner, that is. Gordon's out of a job and on his own and up to his neck in trouble once he starts digging around the burnt-out ruins of Arkham Asylum and finds an enigmatic young superhuman who talks fancy. Gordon's story dovetails with the overarching saga of the return of the true heirs of Arkham, and it's just getting started. Go to lexpublib.org to reserve your copy of this beautifully designed book. Two newish children's books take the



Caped Crusader as inspiration. **Keith Negley's** charmingly childish artwork is perfect for *A Lot Like Batman* (Random House Kids). **Negley** uses notable loner Batman as a stand-in for shy, quiet or even autistic kids, providing examples of *Being Amazing On Your Own Terms*. Meanwhile, in the Spanish language *Hora de Dormir*, *Batman* is rendered by artist **Ethan Beavers** in the Tlmmverse style; that is to say, it looks like the WB's *Batman* cartoon. Translated as *Bed-time for Batman*, it follows a little boy around his house as he pretends to be Batman, performing heroic acts (like cleaning up after himself) while Batman carries on with his night. Find both books via lexpublib.org. While **Ram V's** Batman gets symphonic, **Chip Zdarsky's** gets psychotic. Zur-En-Arrh is an alternate personality embedded in the subconscious of Bruce Wayne. Stealing moments here and there, Zur-En-Arrh created the android Failsafe to eliminate Batman if the Dark Knight ever took a life. Now in the second volume of *The Bat-Man of Gotham*, the real Batman has been zapped to another dimension where he never existed. That Gotham is even uglier than his own. Batman must find his way home, but first he must fix this Gotham.



Legends of the Dark Knight is the hardback reprint series dedicated to collecting the best of the best artists to work on Batman. **Jose' Luis Garcia-Lopez** left Argentina for New York City in the 1970s, where he began a relationship with DC that lasted decades. Combining the slickness of **Curt Swan** with the sleekness of **Jim Aparo** with just a touch of **Krigstein** in his treatment of action scenes, Garcia-Lopez became THE DC ARTIST. His work appeared on everything from ads to Underoos. This book focuses on the plot-heavy stories from the 1970s, including a fierce team-up of Batman and the last of the DC Western heroes, Scalphunter. But the highlight is the *Elseworlds* story *Reign of Terror*, where **Garcia-Lopez** got to do pencils and inks. It's a gorgeous historical fantasia, available at Marksbury. Aw, jeez...you know what I forgot to mention? *The Riddler: Year One*, a spin-off from the latest Batman movie! Go to lexpublib.org, already!



Back issues of 741.5 are available at www.lexpublib.org under the READING SERVICES tab!