

The analysis of the adaptation of Christopher Paolini's *Eragon*



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The Teenage New York Times Best Selling Author

Back in 2002 the world of fantasy literature welcomed *Eragon* to the shelves of bookstores; the first book of what would be a four part saga (and even more in the expanded compilation) written by first-time writer Christopher Paolini, who was only fifteen years of age when the first draft was complete and nearing nineteen when the first edition was self-published. Within a year, the book was picked up by Knopf Publishing Group and published once again to be mass-shipped; the book was an immediate New York Times Best Seller (and held its title for 121 weeks!). (Christopher Paolini - Full Biography, n.d.)

A Critically Panned Film

Only another year had passed, the sequel book was in the works with a promised third (it would later become a third and fourth book), and in the wake of the huge success Peter Jackson's adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (\$2.98bil worldwide box office against \$281mil budget) as well as the boom of interest in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series which were coming fresh of the printing press and straight into the studios for filming (by this time the two films released had \$1.86bil ww box office against \$225mil budget) it was inevitable that a studio would want to pick up the rights to *Eragon* and its sequels; 20th Century Fox purchased the rights and began the production process, hiring screenwriter Peter Buchman (*Jurassic Park III*) and giving Stefen Fangmeier his directorial debut (having previously worked on films such as *Saving Private Ryan* and *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*).

Whilst the film had a successful opening weekend and did achieve the number one film worldwide on opening (though this is attributed to having very little competition), *Eragon's* success was not long-lived; its success and profit (\$249mil ww box office against \$100mil budget) was a poor reflection of the films critical reception, which panned the movie as unoriginal and lacking the depth and wonder that its source material possessed. (Honeycutt, 2006)

Script to Screen

The first and immediate difference the film has to the book is its opening moments; whilst Paolini had the freedom to describe as much as he wanted with text in the book, Fangmeier is restricted by time constraints and conventions when making the film; the audience is met with establishing shots of the storyworld and a narrator - the book does not have a direct narrator, but in a way the author is narrating the entire story - who is providing

some backstory to the world they are about to enter. The narrator is the character Brom and the closest event from the book this draws from is a passage in which Paolini describes some of Eragon's memories followed by Brom telling a story that shares elements (p29-34). The decision to open the film in this way, as opposed to how the book starts, could draw from how *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* was adapted, as that too opened with a narrated backstory supported with fleeting establishing shots and montages whereas the book started in the present time around the main character.

It's not until 00:03:23 that we get to a point where events on screen resemble those on the first page of the book. The events do pan out differently, opting for more action at a faster pace, thus reducing the suspense but keeping the thrill; the dialogue from the book is all gone, and a simple exchange of lines was thrown in at the end of the scene. The characters have more of a vignette as they are introduced in the film, whereas Paolini could explore their introductory description in more depth with a written medium. This could be down to the set-up of the scene, as the adaptation remains the same to the source with the urgency of someone racing through the woods on horseback trying to escape their attackers; the book can describe smaller details, even if it diverts from the action, and the reader is still caught in the moment, whereas the film has the smaller details on screen but if it diverts for more than a moment the audience can lose the feeling of urgency; it also contrasts against the opening sequence of the film which had no urgency and was slow, so the audience would need drawing back into the film before they give up only minutes in to watching.

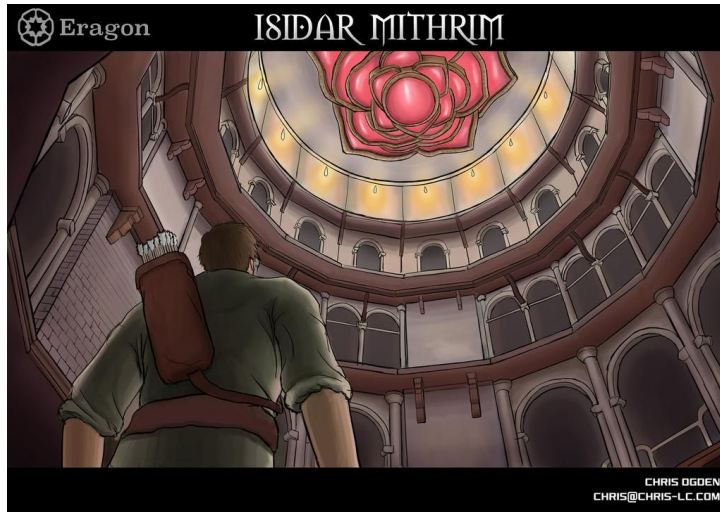
The three minutes of the scene (00:03:20-00:06:20) only adapts the first 8 pages and given that the book has 498 pages, a consistent manner of time per page would produce a film of over three hours; the film actually clocks at 144 minutes (including splashes and credits), which is more than the average film but still much less than the expected time to adapt the whole book, however the book has very short and concise chapters - the events of

which are often concurrent - which makes for easier adaptation as the writers can splice the chapters into chronological order and skimming the less eventful 'day in the life' chapters.

Almost all the dialogue is entirely different in the film than it was in the book; firstly the majority of dialogue is cut entirely in order to keep the pace of the film moving forward, and the dialogue that remains is rewritten. The fantasy languages of the various races are also omitted from the film with the exception of the language of dragons, as this is a vital aspect of the story; it is the means to cast magic spells in the story world. This seems to be a decision made due to the language of the books being more complex than necessary for the intended audience; it works in the book as the writing style outside of dialogue compliments the style of dialogue, whereas the film has a very lighthearted atmosphere and a faster pace for long winded dialogue - it worked in *The Lord of the Rings* as the films kept the tone and pace of the books, where despite also being considered childrens' literature the films proved to be much more mature; *Eragon* as a film tried to be a childrens' film (the studio would not have known that the yet to be finished sequel books would take a much darker turn and as such began the film franchise at a different tone that it would later have to become, much like Warner Bros. had done with *Harry Potter*).

Analysing the climactic sequence, the film once again diverges a great deal from the source material; whilst the most important aspects - characters, locations and events - remain the same, the details are changed greatly; as mentioned before due to time constraints of the film and to simplify the story to a younger audience, a lot of the character development and less vital events are skipped in place of events that lead to action and the action itself. The time spent in the city of Farthen Dûr, the evacuation and many of the preparations for battle are omitted in place of a rushed attack shortly after Eragon's arrival. The number of significant characters is reduced, leaving only the leading cast and a few major support characters with dialogue and relevance in the film, most likely to make the

writing process easier as well as reducing casting costs; whilst the minor characters were still present and credited, they did not have a role that reflects their source role; Orik, for



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example, spent a lot of time helping Eragon and Saphira during their time in the city, presenting armour as a gift in the book, whereas he has almost no presence in the film and the armour is almost meaninglessly given by Ajihad instead. The city itself is quite different from how it is

described in the books, most probably due to budget and/or talent available to the production, as instead of a vibrant, masterfully crafted underground city full of colour and detailed architecture and the only source of daylight being through a large gemstone fitted into the ceiling of the city, the film portrays it as a city built into a deep pit, with simple and dull clay-stone buildings and plenty of mud. The battle of Farthen Dûr takes place outdoors, inside the pit, as opposed to the interiors of the large halls and corridors of the book; and the battle with Durza is dramatised into a visually impressive action epic instead of the nail-biting tension of a farm boy struggling with basic face-to-face combat of his first real battle. This choice is clearly to create more action and excitement for the movie's climax, as the source has a much simpler fight sequence to reflect the characters ability but also greater impact thematically and in the growth of Eragon's character.

Conclusion

Many of the decisions the filmmakers made when adapting *Eragon* into a movie seem to be made in response to the successes and trends of other successful films both of fantasy genre and those based on best-selling book series; whilst other films (as mentioned *LotR* and *Harry Potter*) may have taken liberties in changing the material to better suit the medium of screen and succeeded in their efforts, the choices made for *Eragon* undermined the characters and themes Paolini had in his writing.

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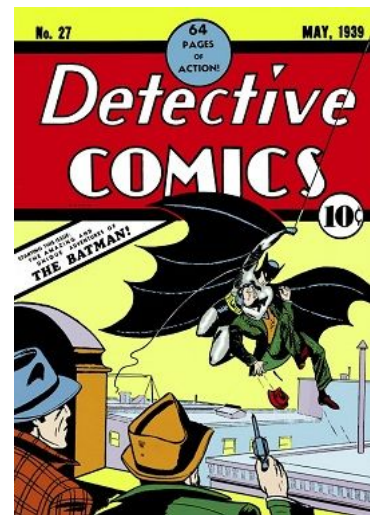
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The comparative analysis of adaptations of Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*



Birth of an Antihero

Batman is a fictional superhero belonging to the Detective Comics (DC) franchise, first appearing in *Detective Comics Issue #27 May 1939* (Zalben, 2014) and was the creation of artist Bob Kane and writer Bill Finger. Since then Batman has become a staple pop-culture icon and regarded as one of the greatest superheroes of all time (Telegraph, 2009).



Batman has appeared across over 80 years of media content and has been revised and redesigned many times during this time. Whilst Batman began as a dark unrelenting anti-hero (Daniels *et al.*, 1999, p25), in 1954 when the Comics Code Authority formed and enforced its code - much like the Motion Picture Production Code did in Hollywood from 1930 - Batman started to become a much sunnier child-friendly character portrayal; a much campier version to cover the allegations of Batman and Robin's relationship seeming

homosexual prior to the code (Pearson and Uricchio, 1991). Only 10 years later, whilst still abiding by the Comics Code, the staff behind Batman launched his 'New Look' taking away many of the science fiction elements and refocusing on the detective origins of the character. This era of Batman is widely recognised as the preeminent era of Batman, accompanied by the popular *Batman* TV series starring Adam West and Burt Ward as the Dynamic Duo.



Batman Born Again

As Batman became campy and popularised by the TV show, the Comics Code was becoming more lax and the Production Code had become obsolete, allowing popular

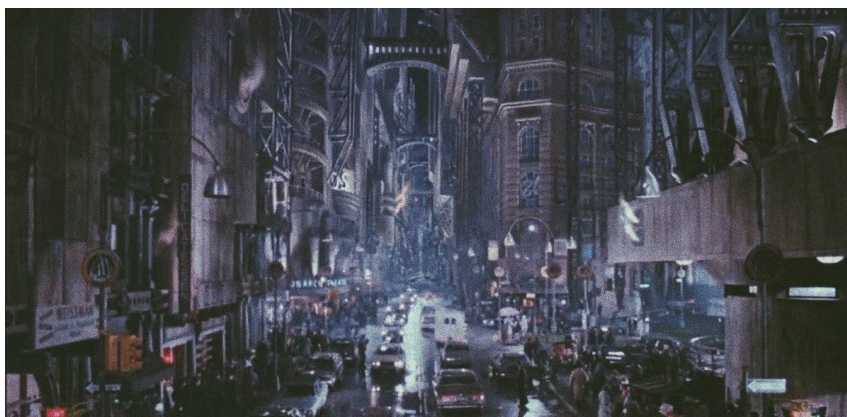
media to become darker in tone and genres such as science fiction and gangster/crime to develop further. In turn, writers wanted to take Batman back to his darker roots; Dennis O'Neil began in 1970 writing darker stories into the issues of Detective Comics which was acclaimed by fans but did not improve sales significantly (Daniels et al., 1999, p140-141) and was followed by Steve Englehart, who wrote a mini-series that influenced Tim Burton to begin drafting a film adaptation.

It wasn't until Frank Miller wrote a series of graphic novels that released throughout 1986 that the new darker Batman became the mainstream Batman; the four-part The Dark Knight Returns series has become regarded as one of the greatest pieces of work in the comics industry (Goldstein, 2005) and has been one of the main pieces of source material that influenced subsequent Batman media, in particular the live-action films. As the graphic novel is quite long, and covers several different subplots and themes, it would prove difficult

to adapt into a singular film (even DC Entertainment's direct adaptation was split into two feature-length animated films, *Part 1* (2012) and *Part 2* (2013)), and so the various writers and directors that have adapted elements of Miller's novel have often done so in a series of films.

Tim Burton and Joel Schumacher - The Batman Saga (1989-97)

Tim Burton's *Batman* was written adapting several works of Batman comics but mainly *The Dark Knight Returns* [from here on *TDKR*] and Alan Moore's *The Killing Joke* (1988) - itself a reworking of the much earlier 'Man Behind the Red Hood' storyline but inspired by the styling of Miller. The film uses its own unique twist on the story of the Joker's origin from *The Killing Joke*, but borrows elements and visuals from Miller's work; the tone of Gotham city and the gothic theme is inspired by *TDKR*, whereas a heavy use of news and TV broadcast bites throughout the film are a much more obvious use of panels from *TDKR*. The choice to do so is to emphasise a theme of consumerism and selective marketing, whereas in the comic it signifies the theme of Batman's contrasted social image.



Burton opens *Batman* with a couple of establishing shots of Gotham city, showcasing its exaggerated towers and skyscrapers with gothic architecture and

claustrophobic bridges, alleys and overhangs; all of which draw inspiration from the artwork in *TDKR*, and the darker tone of the source material, building a larger-than-life city that would not exist in reality but is instantly recognisable as none other than Gotham city. It

progresses into a scene mimicking the shooting of Thomas and Martha Wayne, a notable moment across almost all versions of Batman, in which even an audience that isn't aware they are watching *Batman* (but is knowledgeable to a minor degree of the character and his story) would pick up that they are being introduced to Batman; in a clever twist, Burton sets this scene up with a family that mirrors, but is not, the Waynes, coming out of a theatre and into an alleyway where they will be mugged at gunpoint; the scene introduces Batman in theme as well as literally, by having Batman appear and enacting his justice upon the muggers.

In the eventual flashback sequence in which we witness Bruce's parents murder, it features a focus on Martha's pearl necklace shattering and the pearls hitting the ground in slow-motion; as the graphic novel cannot use motion like a film and would be assumed to be in regular speed if visualising a motion-picture, Burton decides to take the panels which highlight the pearls hitting the ground as a slower motion, to perhaps infer that this moment is the memory that embeds itself the most within Bruce's recollection of the murder, also in hand with the consensus that shocking events often happen so quickly but the mind processes it in slow-motion. This could also be the reason Miller decided to dedicate panels to a close-up of the pearls rather than just follow the characters in the scene when writing it. Whilst Miller gave the criminal that kills the Waynes no further significance in *TDKR*, Burton decides that the shooter is Jack Napier, the criminal that later becomes the Joker, in order to create a bond between Bruce and Jack, the Batman and the Joker; Jack's actions cause Bruce to later become Batman, and in turn Batman's actions cause Jack to become Joker, an almost poetic series of events that symbolise the iconic bond between Batman's order of justice and Joker's chaos of madness.

Burton adapts Miller's subplot involving the Joker, in which he appears on live television and unleashes a Joker-gas, killing people whilst leaving their faces with a Joker-esque grin, into a gritty reflection on commercialism and consumerism. In *Batman*, the

Joker contaminates many cosmetic products with his Joker-gas chemical, before later hosting a parade where he showers the crowds with free money, preying on people's greedy desire for more cash, in which he's filled giant balloons with his gas. Whilst Miller's Joker simply does so to lure out the Batman, due to his obsession with his nemesis, Burton's Joker has a deeper motive, due to his previous criminal background as Napier and that he blames the loss of his good looks (and his mental stability) on Batman, whilst Gotham obsesses over cosmetics to look good.

Burton's *Batman Returns* simply continues the tone and visual style from the previous film, both of which were inspired by *TDKR*.

Schumacher's *Batman Forever* starts to diverge from Burton's tone, despite the continuity being the same; Schumacher, at the behest of the studio, leant away from Burton's grim dark tone to a brighter family-friendly tone, using lighter dialogue and a heavier use of one-liners and wordplay whilst also introducing more colour to Gotham whilst keeping in line with Burton's set design. This change of colour allowed Schumacher to bring in Miller's Mutants gang, though named the Golums, a neon-punk group of hooligans that live in the city's gutters. Schumacher's version of Two-Face does not seem to draw much influence from Miller's material, although he does seem to have a somewhat split personality in which Harvey Dent's persona is still present and Two-Face will sometimes converse with himself as Harvey, which he does in Miller's material.



Schumacher's *Batman & Robin*, much like *Batman Returns*, does not draw any additional influence from adapting *TDKR* than its predecessor, and only really includes more of the Golums.

Christopher Nolan - The Dark Knight Trilogy (2005-12)

One giveaway that Nolan was influenced by Miller's work is the choice of titles he uses for his films; whilst *Batman Begins* may not have derived from the novel, *The Dark Knight* and *The Dark Knight Rises* both clearly have, the latter even more so by sharing its initials with the graphic novel.

Batman Begins is a retelling of Batman's origin, so has very little to draw upon from *TDKR* other than the flashbacks to Bruce falling in a well and remembering his parents' death; Nolan uses the falling into a hole in his film as a staple moment in Bruce's youth, changing the scene into a game with a young Rachel Dawes, the film's love-interest for the main character, and a concealed well as opposed to playing in front of his parents and a falling in a rabbit hole; this is to build a better structure within the context of the film introducing another leading character, as the well leads down into the old foundations of the manor, which would later in the movie become the Bat-cave.



The death of Bruce's parents is, like previous films, portrayed accurately from the source material, whilst also, like Burton's *Batman*, giving the killer of Bruce's parents a

greater importance to the plot. Unlike Burton, however, Nolan went with the more traditional material in which the criminal Joe Chill murdered Bruce's parents, and Nolan goes on to use this in greater depth to develop Bruce's journey toward becoming Batman. Once again, Martha's pearls are included in the scene, but this time not focused upon nor did Nolan utilise any slow-motion. His decision to do this could be to give the moment a greater sense of realism, as time is at a continuous speed and doesn't slow down in reality, and/or to help his grittier tone for this retelling of Batman to begin to develop from the start, focusing on character development and story rather than trying to capture the feeling of the comic books.

Nolan's Batmobile is based upon Miller's concept, though redesigned to be more practical as well as realistic; Miller had conceived a unique Batmobile from previous renditions, as it was designed as a large militarised vehicle almost like a tank, as opposed to a car with sci-fi enhancements; Miller's Batman was depicted more like a soldier in his own-made war against injustice, and didn't name his vehicle the Batmobile himself, rather Carrie Kelley (as Robin) named it. Nolan's version was a military prototype designed by Wayne's company, which Bruce claims and proceeds to use as his vehicle, which the media coins as the Batmobile (*Burton/Schumacher's saga never provided a backstory to the design and naming of the Batmobile, though it would be presumed that Bruce designed and named it himself*).

The Dark Knight, unlike previous directors' sequels, includes more from Miller's work, especially since all three directors so far drew heavy influence from Miller. The film opens with a scene in which Jonathan Crane (aka Scarecrow) and a group of Russian gangsters meet for a deal, hoping to draw out the Batman, but is instead met by several Batman copycats; Nolan adapted the Sons of Batman from *TDKR*, keeping their identity as copycat vigilantes that worship Batman and wish to rid Gotham of crime but without Batman's aversion to guns and lethality, but given the change in the times he opted against the punk

style of the group and instead they had makeshift Batsuits, as it had become easier and more affordable to access resources to do so by 2008 than 1986, and dropped the name Sons of Batman. In addition, Nolan's Batmobile has a new feature in which it can launch the driver on the new Batcycle (thanks to the major success George Lucas and Steven Spielberg had in franchising and marketing movies with merchandise, particularly toys, and creating a need to add minor changes to characters and props to encourage the sale of the same merch/toy but with slight differences), the design of which closely resembles the Batcycle in book three of *TDKR*, omitting Robin's sidecar.

The Dark Knight Rises [from here on *Rises*] is the first film so far to have adapted the concept of a retired Batman; much like Miller's story, Bruce retired the Batman due to personal blame for the death of a loved one (Bruce's love interest Rachel, as opposed to Robin, as no Robin had been established yet in Nolan's continuity) and for deciding to take the blame of Two-Faces actions to preserve Harvey Dent's memory, as well as being haunted by his other experiences as Batman, unable to truly be Bruce Wayne again. Unlike Miller, however, Bruce's motive to donning the cowl once again was not the direct return of a past nemesis (as Two-Face was killed off at the end of the previous film, and the actor portraying the Joker had untimely passed away prior to the film's release), however Nolan and his writers managed to mirror the theme by having the League of Shadows, the antagonising organisation of his first film, return instead. Nolan also takes the scene from Miller in which Bruce requires a special brace in order to physically handle his return as Batman; the brace is identical in design and purpose, though is used on his leg as opposed to his arm -



Nolan has also moved this scene from a midpoint in the story to the first act, most likely to

emphasise Bruce's aging and physical decline of his retirement, especially as only four years had passed in reality since the previous film's production, and only six in terms of the continuity, so Christian Bale (thus Bruce) had not aged as greatly as Miller had depicted Bruce in *TDKR*. The media, and as result the police and citizens of Gotham, have turned on Batman, due to blame he took to cover for Harvey, and as a result has become a controversial and disputed figure amongst the community; much like how the news and talk shows discussed Batman following his return to Gotham in the books, whilst also very similar to how Batman must become a fugitive after the Joker's suicide is pinned on Batman at the very end of book three.

After Bane's raid on the stock exchange and during the police chase, Batman makes his return in the public eye, mimicking the scene of similar nature from the novel and paraphrasing a bubble of dialogue between an older cop and his rookie partner; "We're in for a show, kid" (*TDKR* book 1 p24) "You're in for a show, kid" (*Rises*).

The fights between Batman and Bane in *Rises* heavily resemble the fights between Batman and the Mutants leader; in the first fight with the Mutants leader (*TDKR* book 2 p21-26) Batman, out of practice and physically worn, loses and has his arm broken. Nolan follows the same premise and frames some of the scene in matching visuals to a couple of panels from the book, but ends with Bane snapping Batman's back. The second fight in both the source and the film has Batman return having recovered and prepared and beginning the fight in a manner to even the playing field; in the book he fights in the mud to counter the leader's greater speed and strength whereas in the film he strikes Bane's pain inhibitor on his mask to cause great pain and distress to Bane.

Bane's lockdown over Gotham mirrors the blackout from book four, with chaos and riots engulfing the streets. Even though Nolan had previously adapted the Sons of Batman as the copycats in the previous film, the events involving Joker making a public spectacle of

murdering one of the copycats during the previous film in addition to the downfall of Batman's heroic legacy in between the last and current film, it would make little sense to have kept the copycats in action, and as such Nolan replaces the role of the Sons of Batman as the keepers of justice during Gotham's anarchy with the Gotham police force that Batman rescues from the sewers.

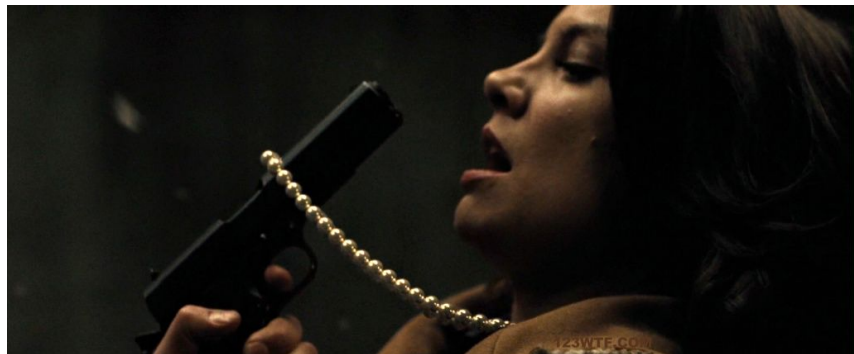
Whilst Miller ends *TDKR* with Batman faking his death mid-fight with Superman, despite Batman seemingly winning throughout, only to resurface in hiding, after his funeral, with Robin and the Sons of Batman, presumably intending to build a new Batcave and continue the legacy of the Batman with a new man (or woman) behind the mask. Nolan takes the same premises, but adapts them to suit the context of the film better; lacking a superpowered alien in *Rises'* continuity, Nolan uses a nuclear bomb as the cover Bruce needs to fake his death, whilst leaving a new Batcave with all the necessary equipment and technology to Officer John 'Robin' Blake, intending for this Robin to take the mantle and protect Gotham. Meanwhile, Bruce begins a new life in Paris with Selina Kyle, as suggested earlier in the film by Alfred (who unlike the book, doesn't die when Bruce fakes his death).

One key aspect Nolan focuses on across his trilogy that derives from, but is not explicitly stated, nor adhered to, Miller's novel is Batman aversion to killing. Nolan made it Bruce's one key rule, though Miller only implies it with Batman's refusal to kill Joker which Joker then comments upon before snapping his own neck. The books, however, do show Batman killing which contradicts the rule, so it may be possible that in the book it is because of the synthesis Batman and Joker have.

Zack Snyder - Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice (2016)

Batman vs Superman [from here on *BvS*] is heavily influenced by and adapts elements of the fourth book in *TDKR*, but uses imagery from all four chapters. Whilst the

story is loosely adapted from the the fourth, whilst writing in continuity from *Man of Steel* (2013) and Snyder's original vision for *Justice League* (2017) (HBOMax's *Zack Snyder's Justice League* (2021)), many elements of Batman's storyline in the film are adapted from the entirety of *TDKR*, such as the opening credits scene; it entwines two different scenes in a establishing sequence for the character of Batman, rather than a traditional establishing shot for a location. The two scenes are; first of Bruce's parents being shot (at this point it's questionable if audiences need to see this again, as the moment is stapled in pop culture) and second a scene of Bruce running through the woods; adapting the moment where Bruce falls into a hole in the ground. These entwined



scenes are not chronological with each other, but both are key moments in Batman's birth within Bruce. The shooting scene draws almost directly from Miller's source, as almost each shot within the scene is drawn from a panel from the book; visuals such as the gun barrel catching Martha's necklace as it's pointed in her face match the panel in the novel exactly. Bruce running through the woods is tweaked from Miller as it is taking place after Bruce's parents die, but the hole being grown over with grass, and Bruce falling to the ground before sliding in match Miller's version more closely than *Batman Begins* had done previously. Snyder does as Burton had in *Batman* and uses slow motion for emotional effect and inferring these as memories rather than present events, whilst also allowing for the medium of opening credits to play out smoothly without throwing the audience straight into the movie. As a direct sequel to *Man of Steel*, a Superman film, it also draws the focus to Batman as a key character in the film as opposed to the previous films focus.

Batman in *BvS* is depicted as a much older, hardened veteran than versions we saw throughout the previous seven films, drawing straight from Miller; like in *TDKR*, Batman has more or less retired due to his age and his war against injustice having a greater toll on Bruce's life. Unlike *Rises* he has adapted to his role as Bruce Wayne better, and has still been working on various projects in the Batcave in response to Superman's presence on Earth. As this continuity follows Superman's story from *Man of Steel* and introduces a new version of Batman, it doesn't feature much of Batman's past in the film and as such Snyder has had to adapt the elements of Miller's story that he used in a way that build from *Man of Steel*'s plot; the prime example is Superman's fight with General Zod at the climax of *Man of Steel* caused mass destruction in Metropolis (only across the river from Gotham in Snyder's world), including toppling one of Wayne Enterprises towers, resulting in many civilian casualties, including Wayne's workforce. It is this event that Snyder uses in place of Two-Face's return to crime that throws Bruce back into the Batman lifestyle. Whilst Snyder excludes Batman's rogues gallery and a detailed backstory, he does feature the glass display case with a Robin suit in (*TDKR* book 1 p11), but unlike Miller it isn't explicitly stated if Robin is dead or which Robin it is (though due to the lack of any other mentions of Robin or Nightwing, it could be presumed Snyder intended this to be the original Dick Grayson Robin) though it seems evident it was still a result of the Joker.

Much like Burton and Nolan in *Rises*, Snyder draws from Miller with Batman being a controversial figure, with media and news debating his status as a hero or an illegal vigilante acting above the law. Unlike all previous films, however, Batman is more akin to that in *TDKR* as a man who's over the edge, more willing to brutalise his victims and has no aversion to killing (as evident in the car chase, where Batman has no problem shooting at gunmen and firing missiles or otherwise flipping cars to take out enemies, in ways which would have a minimal chance of survival). Much like *TDKR*, Batman only seems to be

concerned with apprehending the notable villains without serious injury - in the R-rated anthology film *Suicide Squad* (2016), Batman makes his cameo appearances bringing in criminals without severely hurting them beforehand - yet in the 12 rated main film Batman brutalises and kills several henchmen.

Like how Miller uses Joker to try and push Batman to killing him, thus proving the Batman breakable by disregarding his (optional) rule of no killing, Snyder uses Superman's nemesis Lex Luthor in the same manner; Luthor is extremely intelligent, tactical and egocentric, with a pathological desire for power - similar traits to the Joker - and having deduced the identities of Batman and Superman, he realises he can push Batman into killing Superman rather than go after Superman himself. Snyder makes the small things Luthor does to push Bruce (such as returning an ex-employees cheques) resemble the work of the Joker (such as similar writing on the returned cheques to that on Robin's suit), preying on Bruce's haunted past with the Joker. Bruce is also haunted by an apparition that appears to him in the form of an oversized bat with a burning fire within its body, alluding to the persona of the Batman being more than just Bruce; this draws from a panel from the tenth page of book one.

The fight between Batman and Superman draws a lot of visual elements from the fourth book of *TDKR*, especially the Exo-Batsuit; the design is a direct adaptation of Miller's



suit, but given the advances of science and technology (and therefore the bounds of science-fiction) some small changes were made; in the source, in order to contend with Superman the Exo-Batsuit requires charging using a high-voltage mains access from a streetlight, whereas in the

film Snyder has the liberty to make the suit self-sufficient, with advanced technology built into the visor. Regarding weakening Superman in order for Batman to stand toe-to-toe, Miller used the at-the-time threat of a nuclear strike due to the Cold War as a suitable explanation for Superman being stripped of sunlight (the source of Superman's incredible power), whereas at the present time of Snyder working on the film the Cold War had long ended and the threat of nuclear strikes had diminished considerably; Snyder, due to lack of nuclear threat and for sensitivity due to the increasing number of terror attacks in the 21st century, instead opted with Superman's weakness, Kryptonite (crystalline fragments of Superman's homeplanet), as it similarly weakens Superman to cutting him off the sun. Snyder not only made this choice as to appropriately substitute a nuclear attack, but also as a major focal point of the plot; it is the Kryptonite that the antagonist, Luthor, obsesses over in order to kill Superman and that Batman steals in order to build weapons to fight Superman, of which becomes the vital element to defeat the monster that Luthor creates due to it being of Kryptonian origin.

During the fight sequences of Batman against Superman, and then the heroes against Doomsday, Snyder uses various frames of the novel as visual guidelines for how he directed the sequences; Batman versus Superman uses several frames from the fight between the same characters in the novel as a basis for the camera angles and actions in the scene. In the battle with Doomsday, Snyder has an action shot of Batman using his grappling hook to dodge Doomsday's attacks, during which there is a blink-and-you'll-miss-it moment to match the cover image of the first book, and the complete editions, of *TDKR*.



Other Notable Mentions

The television series *Gotham* (2014-2019) is written to tell the story of Jim Gordon, a GCPD officer and eventual commissioner, as well as Bruce Wayne in the years following his parents murder but prior to Batman. The first episode of the first season is a retelling of the murder of the Wayne's murder; the event is once again derivative of Miller's version, focusing on Martha's pearls.

The video game *Batman: Arkham Asylum* (2009) has a sequence midway through the story of the game in which the player as Batman is drugged with a hallucinogen and projects his memory of his parents murder (yes, yet again) around him, during which the point in which he remembers hearing the gunshot is followed by the sound effect of many pearls bouncing across the ground. The game also features a focal plot point of the Joker using a variation of Joker-gas with another chemical, VENOM; the effects of the Joker-gas (both in liquid and gas form) is the same as that of the gas in *TDKR* in that it kills the victim whilst also distorting their face to resemble the Joker grinning; the compound chemical also distorts the victim into a Joker-esque appearance but is not intended to kill them.

The standalone DC film *Joker* (2019) is an original take on the origins of the Joker character; one notable scene is that of the climax, in which Joker makes his TV talk show debut which builds until he shoots the host point-blank; this scene was based upon the scene in *TDKR* in which the Joker appears on a talk show after waking from his coma.

Conclusion

Whilst none of the film adaptations discussed were direct adaptations of Miller's material, they have all been heavily influenced by his work. Some elements have followed

through each adaptation, namely highlighting Bruce's parents deaths and the impact it has on Bruce's mentality, particularly focusing on Martha's pearls; the darker tone and grizzled persona of the Batman, especially in recent films in which Bruce has been portrayed as older and semi-retired; and the aesthetic style. The three discussed continuities include all theatrically released live-action Batman films; coincidentally the only live-action Batman film that wasn't theatrically released was the television film *Batman* (1966) which predates *TDKR*; going to show that Miller's *TDKR* is perhaps the most adapted piece of Batman source material, and his influence on the Batman franchise since the release of *TDKR*.

It can also be concluded that despite a source material having such a strong identity, it can be read in many different ways and developed into very different adaptations.

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FINAL FANTASY IX - EPISODE I

I Want to Be Your Canary

Dean Cropper

FINAL FANTASY IX by Hironobu Sakaguchi

DPLCFilm 2020

1 INT. EVENING. LINDBLUM THEATRE SHIP

BAKU enters a dimly lit room followed by BLANK, CINNA, MARCUS and finally ZIDANE. They surround a table laid with a crude yet accurate construct of Alexandria Castle.

BAKU

Here's the plan one last time! We dock
in Alexandria, we pose as an acting
troupe and perform 'I Want to Be Your
Canary'. Break a leg, Marcus, 'cause
you're playin' the lead! 1

MARCUS

Leave the actin' to me! Blank and
Zidane, you're the real kidnappers. 2

BLANK

I'll distract the audience from
backstage with these little buggers... 3
(BLANK pulls out a strange beetle-
like creature)
Ugh... I can't stand oglops... but
I'll manage... and that'll be your
cue!

ZIDANE

Okay! That's when I kidnap the most
babe-ilicious beauty in all of
Alexandria! 4

Camera tracks out of the window to exterior of the ship.

ZIDANE

(O.C.) Princess Garnet! 5

[The ship flies through an orange-yellowish sky toward
Alexandria Castle. VIVI stumbles then looks up to see the
massive Theatre Ship pass overhead, casting a shadow over
him. The camera pans as the ship moves into place near the
castle then focuses on the tall crystal centred in the
castle; Title]

2 EXT. EVENING. ALEXANDRIA STREETS

In a colourful bustling expanse of cobblestone houses, towers
and alleyways, a tiny black mage, VIVI, is exploring the
streets of the city of Alexandria. His tiny size contrasts
the enormity of the city and justifies his nervousness. VIVI
is walking down what appears to be a main street when a RAT
KID runs into VIVI and both fall down, causing VIVI to drop a

ticket.

RAT KID

Oww! Why you... get outta my way!

6

RAT KID runs off. A crowd walks around VIVI paying no attention to him at all, aside from acknowledging to avoid him.

HERALD

Honourable nobles of Treno, Castle
Alexandria is this way!
(honks his horn)

7

VIVI picks himself and his ticket up. The crowd continues onward. VIVI continues down the street to a booth in the centre of a small plaza. VIVI presents his ticket to the man at the booth.

TICKETMASTER

(inspecting the ticket)

What's this? Why, it's another fake!
I've seen so many today.

8

(VIVI whines)

Now, now, I know how you must feel...
Here, have a free candy-cone, do try
up now, hmm?

VIVI walks away in a slump.

RAT KID

(o.s.)

Pssst! Psssst, over here.

9

Vivi notices RAT KID peering out of an alley gesturing to come to him. VIVI walks over weaving through the moving crowd avoiding colliding with oblivious townsfolk and join Rat Kid in the alley.

RAT KID

Hey shrimp! I saw the guy tell you it
was fake!

10

VIVI

S-so?

11

RAT KID

I'll let you see the show if you
become my slave! Whadd'ya say?

12

(RAT KID holds out his hand, VIVI)

(hesitantly shakes it)
 Awesome! Follow me! 13
 (RAT KID runs off down the alley
 with VIVI following)
 Don't fall behind!
 (then)
 Into the steeple!

The two begin climbing the ladder in the steeple. The camera rises up the steeple exterior to the bell tower. The sun has started to see RAT KID emerging in the bell tower followed by VIVI, then they proceed along the rooftops toward the castle in the background. A MOOGLE flies into shot landing in the bell tower, looking out toward Rat Kid and Vivi.

3 EXT. DUSK. ALEXANDRIA CASTLE

The theatre ship is docked inside the castle, surrounded by seating and entertainment stalls. A band plays from one of the decks of the ship facing the seats. On the royal balcony, QUEEN BRAHNE is fanning herself.

QUEEN BRAHNE
 Must we wait much longer? This band is 14
 mediocre at best.

PRINCESS GARNET shows little interest in the entertainment. STEINER stands guard by Garnet.

STEINER
 I believe any moment now, your 15
 Majesty!

Fireworks start going off and the band changes to a theatrical opening number. QUEEN BRAHNE begins shuffling in her seat.

QUEEN BRAHNE
 Oh, good! The real show begins! 16

4 EXT. DUSK. THEATRE SHIP STAGE

VIVI and RAT KID shuffle into the back row of the standing audience just in time for BAKU to rise on stage, dressed in a big robe.

BAKU
 Ladies and Gentlemen! Tonight's 17
 performance is a story that takes
 place long, long ago. Our heroine,
 Princess Cornelia, is torn from her

lover, Julian. She attempts to flee 18
 the castle, only to be captured by her
 father, King Leo. When our story
 begins, Julian, having heard this,
 crosses swords with the King. And now,
 your Royal Majesty, Queen Brahne
 (he bows)
 Your Highness, Princess Garnet
 (he rises)
 noble ladies and lords, and all our
 esteemed viewers, Tantalus proudly
 presents 'I Want to be Your Canary'!
 (he descends into the stage as the
 crowd erupts with cheers)

Back at the royal balcony, QUEEN BRAHNE is focused on the stage as Baku reemerges from a different stage-lift, as King Leo, and two knights (Benero and Zenero) on adjacent lifts. STEINER allows himself to be distracted as Marcus walks on stage to initiate the swordfight. GARNET, noticing Steiner is distracted, sneaks away inside.

On stage, ZIDANE, CINNA and BLANK join Marcus from stage right.

BLANK
 We shall back thee, kinsman! 19

MARCUS (AS JULIAN)
 Pray, sheath thy swords! This villain 20
 is mine alone!

CINNA
 Nay, kinsman! For I, too, have lost a 21
 brother to this fiend!

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
 What, ho? Out, vermin! Away! Thou 22
 dares bare thy sword before the
 King!? All who stand in my way will be
 crush'd!
 (Baku commands his knights to
 attack)

ZIDANE
 Treacherous Leo, my kinsman's 23
 suffering shall not be in vain!
 (Zidane clashes swords with Zenero)
 For I shall instruct thee in his
 incomparable pain!
 (Benero clashes swords with Blank)

Marcus and Cinna engage Baku in swordplay. Zidane and Blank both defeat Zenero and Benero, 'killing' them and joining against Baku. Zenero and Benero descend on stage lifts. Marcus lunges at Baku and catches his belly.

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
 (groans as he is hit, then snorts)
 Thou hast not seen the last of me, 24
 Marcus!
 (leaves via stage bridge)

ZIDANE
 Come back! 25
 (he goes to follow Baku but Blank
 blocks the way)
 Out of my way, Blank!

BLANK
 Consider this, if Prince Schneider 26
 were to marry Princess Cornelia, peace
 would reign across the kingdoms!

ZIDANE
 'Tis foolishness! If all were so easy, 27
 why, none would suffer in this world!
 (Zidane engages Blank in swordplay
 on stage bridge)

Zidane and Blank fight across the stage bridge before heading into the aisle of the standing crowd. Cinna and Marcus leave the stage as the crowd is distracted.

BLANK
 En garde! 28
 (he lunges Zidane)

ZIDANE
 (blocking Blank's lunge)
 Expect no quarter from me! 29
 (sweeps Blank's feet, Blank jumps
 over the sword)

They lock swords in an equilibrium of strength and skill, pushing each other back a stride when they release the lock.

BLANK
 We shall finish this later! 30
 (he runs into the castle)

ZIDANE

Come back here! 31
 (chases Blank, the crowd roars
 with applause and throw flowers
 and coins to the stage and the
 aisle)

5 INT. ALEXANDRIA CASTLE

ZIDANE and BLANK emerge from a guards' barracks, now wearing castle guards' armour and putting on the helmets.

BLANK

According to recon... 32
 (leading Zidane to the hall)
 ...the royal seats should be right
 above these stairs!

ZIDANE

Got it! 33

The crowd's cheer bellows through the corridor.

BLANK

Marcus and Cornelia's scene is about 34
 to start! Let's get this over with
 before the finale, okay?

Blank signals ZIDANE up the stairs whilst he checks the corridors for any castle staff. As ZIDANE reaches the upper floor, a HOODED GIRL comes running out of a set of doors almost colliding with ZIDANE.

HOODED GIRL

Umm... Would you please let me pass? 35

ZIDANE

(inspecting her, she tries to hide
 her face)
 Just a sec! Haven't we met before? 36

HOODED GIRL

No, I do not know you... 37

ZIDANE

Hm, maybe you're right... I'd never 38
 let someone as pretty as you get away.
 Say, you wouldn't-
 (interrupted)

BLANK
 (running halfway up the stairs)
 All cle... hey, what's going on? 39

HOODED GIRL
 I... 40
 (pushing past Zidane)
 I must go!
 (knocks Blank down and runs off)

BLANK
 Who the heck was that!? 41

ZIDANE
 Get up, that was Princess Garnet! 42

BLANK
 (as he gets up)
 Are you serious!? 43

6 EXT. DUSK. THEATRE SHIP STAGE - ROYAL BALCONY

Two COURT DWARVES are stopped as they approach the balcony by STEINER and BEATRIX, the Queen's personal knight. They inaudibly give distressing news to the knights to pass on to the Queen. BEATRIX walks over to QUEEN BRAHNE to whisper in her ear.

QUEEN BRAHNE
 No interruptions! Can't you see I'm 44
 enjoying the play!

BEATRIX
 Your Majesty, I'm afraid Princess 45
 Garnet has-
 (interrupted)

QUEEN BRAHNE
 Ah, yes... She did leave her seat 46
 awhile ago.

BEATRIX
 Your Majesty, it seems that the 47
 Princess has run off with the Royal
 Pendent.

QUEEN BRAHNE
 (retracts her fan)
 Well, of all the... What could she be 48

thinking!? General... 49

BEATRIX
Yes, Your Majesty! 50

QUEEN BRAHNE
...Captain... 51

STEINER
(scurries over next to Beatrix)
Yes, Your Majesty! 52

QUEEN BRAHNE
...Go find Garnet! 53

STEINER
Yes, my Queen!
(simultaneously) 54

BEATRIX
At once, Your Majesty! 55

STEINER and BEATRIX march into the castle, the COURT DWARVES scurry alongside them. QUEEN BRAHNE opens her fan and resumes watching the play.

7 EXT. NIGHT. ALEXANDRIA CASTLE - TOWER TURRET

STEINER bursts through the door only to find nobody on this turret. He signals to a knight in a lower window and the knight disappears. STEINER leans against the edge, looking out over the crowd watching the play. On another turret in the background, GARNET emerges with ZIDANE chasing her.

STEINER
Wait! 56
(trying to see Hooded Girl and
Zidane, then shouting to the
guard below)
Over there! Hey! It's the Princess!
(to himself)
Fear not, Princess! Your knight is
coming!

On the other turret, BLANK arrives to cover the door. ZIDANE has GARNET trapped between himself and Blank. SHE steps up on the turret edges.

ZIDANE
Whoa, Princess, it's not safe up
there! 57

GARNET smiles at Zidane, whilst grabbing onto the bunting rope behind her. SHE leans backwards off the edge. ZIDANE, BLANK and STEINER all run to the edges of their turrets. GARNET swings high above the crowd holding onto the rope. ZIDANE grabs another rope and swings after her. STEINER rushes back in the castle. GARNET, followed by ZIDANE, land on an awning atop the Theatre Ship above the band. GARNET slides down first and goes inside the ship. ZIDANE struggles getting down at first, then goes through the same door.

8 INT. NIGHT. LINDBLUM THEATRE SHIP

ZIDANE chases GARNET down a set of corridors and stairs until they reach the room with the construct of Alexandria Castle. GARNET, not knowing where else to run, stops running.

ZIDANE

(out of breath)

Whew... You've made up your mind,
then?

58

GARNET

Do you... do you work on this theatre
ship?

59

ZIDANE

(disappointed, but impressed, that
she figured it out)

60

GARNET

As you have no doubt suspected, the
truth is that... I am actually-
(removes her hood)
Princess Garnet til Alexandros, heir
to throne of Alexandria. I have a
favour I wish to ask of you... I wish
to be kidnapped... right away.

61

ZIDANE

H-huh!? I don't... I mean...

62

The other door to the room is banged upon loudly.

KNIGHT

(o.s. mumbled)

Princess! Where are you?

63

GARNET

Please... They've come for me!

64

ZIDANE
So that's what's going on... Alright!
Leave them to me! 65

GARNET
Thank you. You have my gratitude. 66

ZIDANE
Alright then, Your Highness! I shall
hereby do my best to kidnap you! 67

The door bangs again. GARNET puts her hood back up.

KNIGHT
Princess! You in there!? 68

ZIDANE
This way! 69
(he presses a button on the Castle
model and the table lifts to
reveal a hidden passage)

They both jump down into the passage. STEINER charges through
the door followed by two knights, one his own and the other
BLANK still in disguise.

STEINER
The Princess must be down there! 70

BLANK (AS KNIGHT)
I-I'll go first, sir! 71
(trips into the passage, pulling
the table back down as he falls)

STEINER
Idiot! You! 72
(to other knight)
Follow me!

9 INT. NIGHT. LINDBLUM THEATRE SHIP - UNDER STAGE

ZIDANE
C'mon, Princess, let's keep moving! 73

GARNET
(Blank falls into the room)
They are here! 74

BLANK
 (removes helmet)
 Just relax, Princess. I'm helping get
 you outta here! 75

GARNET
 Oh! 76
 (Zidane and Blank usher Garnet
 into the next room)

The next room is directly under the stage filled with various props, costumes and set pieces and in the centre of room the various trap lifts that go up to the stage floor. Cinna appears to be operating the room for the play. One of Steiner's KNIGHTS appears in the opposite doorway and calls upstairs.

CINNA
 Zidane! Get on Number Two! 77

ZIDANE grabs GARNET by the hand and leads her onto one of the lift platforms. STEINER runs into the room alongside his knight.

STEINER
 Stop! 78

CINNA pulls a lever and Zidane and Garnet's lift rises. STEINER knocks Cinna out of the way and pulls a lever whilst stepping onto an adjacent lift platform.

10 EXT. NIGHT. THEATRE SHIP STAGE

The scene in the play has ZENERO and BENERO carrying MARCUS between them to present to BAKU (as KING LEO).

ZENERO
 Your Majesty! 79

BENERO
 We have caught an intruder! 80

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
 Hark, lad. No matter how much thou
 dost treasure Cornelia, no matter how
 deeply she might believe she doth love
 thee... never shall I see her marry a
 peasant such as thee. 81

A bell rings once.

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
When the bell strikes three, under the
axe thou shall be! 82

The bell rings a second time. ZIDANE and GARNET rise on stage.

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
Furthermore! 83

STEINER rises on stage as the bell rings a third time. The crowd goes quiet.

ZIDANE
(whispers to Baku and Marcus)
Guys! Just improvise! 84

STEINER
(dazzled by the stage lights and
large crowd)
What's all this? 85

MARCUS (AS JULIAN)
(breaks free from the guards and
runs up to Garnet)
Cornelia! 86

GARNET
Um... 87

There is a long pause as Garnet and Steiner are in shock. ZIDANE nudges GARNET whilst the other cast members are looking at her to do something.

GARNET (AS CORNELIA)
(to herself)
Yes, right. 88
(as Cornelia)
Oh, Julian! I missed you so!
(hugs Marcus)
I wish never to leave thy side.
Prithee, lead me from this place!

ZIDANE
See, King Leo! Thou shouldst give them
thy blessing! 89

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
Never! Never leave his side, thou
sayest? Foolish banter! I'll not allow
it! Cornelia shall marry none other 90

than this man - Prince Schneider! 91
 (to Steiner)
 Is that not so, Prince Schneider?

STEINER
 M-marry the princess? Me!? 92

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
 Aye! And this traitorous crew, I will 93
 put to death!

ZIDANE and MARCUS draw swords toward Leo's guards.

BENERO
 Too many of them! 94

ZENERO
 Run away! 95
 (they run off stage left)

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
 (approaches Garnet)
 Pray, sweet daughter, come home to the 96
 castle with me.

GARNET (AS CORNELIA)
 Nay, Father! I shan't return! 97

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
 Cornelia... Trouble me no more. This 98
 wedding is for thine own welfare. Be
 mindful of that.

MARCUS (AS JULIAN)
 Not if I can help it! Now is my moment 99
 of vengeance! For my parents, and for
 my love...
 (to Garnet)
 ... Cornelia...
 (draws sword at Baku)
 I shall cut thee down!

MARCUS goes to 'stab' Baku, but GARNET steps in front of him,
 getting stabbed.

MARCUS (AS JULIAN)
 No... Cornelia! 100

STEINER
(simultaneously)
Princess! 101

GARNET (AS CORNELIA)
Ju...lian, forgive me. I still... love 102
my father...

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
Cornelia! 103

GARNET (AS CORNELIA)
(to Baku)
Prithee, forgive my selfishness... 104
Father, and spare... my sweet
Julian...

MARCUS (AS JULIAN)
What have I don!? Am I never to hear 105
her loving voice again!? Am I cursed
never again to feel her soft touch!?
O, cruel fate! Thou hast robbed me of
all I treasure!

MARCUS stabs himself, joining GARNET in playing dead.

ZIDANE
Julian! 106

Back on the royal balcony, QUEEN BRAHNE is hiding that she is
crying with her fan.

QUEEN BRAHNE
Why did she have to die!? Why, this 107
year's show is splendid!
(looking back from her seat)
Now, where could Garnet be?

Amongst the standing crowd, VIVI and RAT KID have been
noticed by some guards.

RAT KID
Wow, what a show! 108

VIVI
Yeah, so sad... 109

RAT KID
(noticing guards approaching from
both sides)
Uh oh! Looks like trouble! 110

Rat Kid and VIVI run into the crowd toward the stage.

KNIGHT 1
Stop, you! 111

KNIGHT 2
Trespassers! 112

Back on stage.

BAKU (AS KING LEO)
Forgive me! 113

STEINER
(breaking down)
Princess! 114

VIVI
(running on to stage)
Leave me alone! 115

KNIGHT 1
Come back here! 116

KNIGHT 2
We lost the other one! 117

VIVI
Don't come any closer! 118

VIVI casts a fireball spell that hits GARNET.

GARNET
(getting up)
Ow! That's hot! 119
(she throws off her hooded cloak
and stamps out the flames)

BAKU
(running off stage with Marcus)
Zidane! It's time! 120

ZIDANE
Princess! Let's get outta here! 121

STEINER
What!? What is going on!? 122

GARNET
Steiner, don't follow me anymore! 123

On the balcony.

QUEEN BRAHNE
(now recognising Garnet and
Steiner)
Garnet!? General!? Anyone, she's on
that theatre! 124

On stage.

KNIGHT 1
(to Steiner)
Captain, sir! We await your orders,
sir! 125

STEINER
Well... err... Princess! I'm afraid I
cannot comply! 126

GARNET
Stubborn as always, aren't you? 127

ZIDANE
Come on, Princess. Let's ditch Sir
Rustalot and get outta here!
(walks over to VIVI)
Hey, kid... You okay!? 128

VIVI
Y-yeah... I just tripped, that's
all... 129

STEINER
Princess, I cannot allow you to go!
Seize them at once! 130

The ship starts quaking as the engines start up, causing
everyone on stage but Zidane to stumble. The crowd starts
fleeing in a confused panic.

STEINER
What in the... 131

On the balcony. BEATRIX arrives along with the COURT DWARVES.

QUEEN BRAHNE
General. 132

BEATRIX
Yes, Your Majesty!? 133

QUEEN BRAHNE
Fire on that ship.

134

11 EXT. NIGHT. ALEXANDRIA SKIES

The theatre ship begins ascending, snapping its docking ropes. ZIDANE guides GARNET inside of the ship, STEINER and his two knights stumble after them. BEATRIX commands a group of knights manning harpoon cannons along the castle dock's walls.

BEATRIX
Fire!

135

On each side the theatre ship is hit by two large chained harpoons. The cannons wind back the chains until they are taut, opposing the ship's lifting force. The ship is forced down a few yards and collides with the top of some buildings. It continues forward, slowly gaining altitude as it fights the pulling chains. The ship manages to shake off two of the chains, though damaging the hull in the process.

On her balcony, the Queen gives a signal. Above her, the wall reveals another cannon which proceeds to fire a flaming bomb. The bomb triples in size by the time it hits the ship. A huge cloud of smoke engulfs the ship. The Queen cheers. Various pieces of debris fall from the cloud and the remaining two chains fall slack. The ship emerges from the cloud of smoke, now in flames and falling apart, though still mainly in one piece.

12 INT. NIGHT. LINDBLUM THEATRE SHIP - BRIDGE

BAKU
Now, that was a nasty hit!

136

ZIDANE
(helping Garnet up onto her feet)
Are you okay, Princess!?

137

GARNET
Yes, I am alright.

138

BAKU
It's not over yet, she's not going to hold!

139

CINNA
We're gonna crash!

140

13 EXT. NIGHT. ALEXANDRIA SKIES

The ship starts descending leaving a trail of smoke. It skims the surface of the lake and over the crest of Alexandria Falls. It descends into the mist covering the valley below, and disappears into the forest beneath the mist.

14 EXT. NIGHT. ALEXANDRIA CASTLE - ROYAL BALCONY

QUEEN BRAHNE

(to self)

Garnet... I never imagined you would
do such a thing. Perhaps you're not
such a helpless little girl anymore... 141

(calling out)

Zorn! Thorn!

(as she calls each name, the two
COURT DWARVES appear at each of
her sides)

Is our little experiment ready?

ZORN

Yes, Your Majesty. It is combat-ready. 142

THORN

Easily terminate the Princess, it can,
Your Majesty. 143

QUEEN BRAHNE

I need her alive. 144

(slams her fan on her armrest)

Bring her back at once.