

# BATFERNO

---

A Play in One Act

by

Adam Martin

(unproduced)

Copyright © 1987  
by Adam Martin

SETTING: Dark and dreary, Wane Manor.

AT NIGHT: BATWING, the caped crusader, struggles with his most dreaded arch enemy, JOKESTER, as he wraps a rope around BATWING's neck. He tries to strangle the life out of him.

JOKESTER

I've always had you pegged for a sentimentalist, Batwing! Every time I come around, you get all choked up! Ha, ha, ha!

BATWING

(Choking and reciting)

Great Scott! How did you get in here?! You're supposed to be in the Gotham Sanitarium going through rehabilitation, so that you can once again become a normal, law abiding, citizen, like all the others!

JOKESTER

Ha, ha, ha! I'll tell you how I got in here, Batwing!... I came in one ear... and went out the other! Ah, ha, ha, ha!

BATWING

I don't understand!

JOKESTER

Oh, but you do, my rotting winged friend!

(BATWING starts to go under as the JOKESTER keeps cackling)

BATWING

Can't breathe... Rope... too tight... No strength... fade to black...

(The light dies down briefly. We hear the JOKESTER cackle as he disappears. The light comes back up. The JOKESTER is gone. BATWING lies on the floor in a fetal position. ALF, the hapless butler, enters with a tray of medicine. He has a bandage on one side of his neck. He goes to BATWING)

ALF

Master Batwing! Are you all right?!

(ALF sits BATWING up on his knees. BATWING experiences the after effects of his hallucination of the JOKESTER. He deliriously recites a short childlike poem with his head bobbing

from side to side like a puppet)

BATWING

I got into a little fight, and then I went to fly a kite. And when I paid off all my bills, I frolicked through the daffodils.

(BATWING keeps bobbing his head like a little child)

ALF

Oh, dear. It's worse than I thought.

(ALF goes to the tray and gets a huge syringe full of Bat Serum. He jabs it in BATWING's arm and injects the contents. BATWING conks out briefly and then springs back to normal)

BATWING

In the name of Zeus! Stop that bozo son of a bitch before he wreaks more havoc!

ALF

What son of a bitch, sir?

BATWING

Jokester! He was here! Didn't you hear him laughing at me?!

ALF

I heard no one laughing at you, sir.

BATWING

Well, I did! That maniac tried to strangle me!

ALF

That's impossible, sir. I just spoke with Doctor Handbag, and he told me to tell you that Jokester's lobotomy was a success.

(BATWING goes to the window facing Gotham city and looks out into the night)

BATWING

Oh, for shame, Alf. I'm such a fool... I've been hallucinating again... Haven't I?

ALF

It would seem so, sir... If it's any consolation sir, the others have been experiencing the same difficulty.

BATWING

The others?

ALF

Yes, sir... The guests... Remember?

BATWING

J.C. Penny! How could I have been so inconsiderate?! I completely forgot about them.

ALF

No need to worry, sir... They've all seemed to have forgotten about you and the others around them... I've had my hands full trying to tend to them... They insist on mulling around in the dark... Some are lying by the pool... Others I can hear, but can't seem to find... Some have even attempted to taunt me by following me around at a distance, and when I approach them, they run off, as if I was some sort of monster... Imagine! Me, a monster! If you ask me, sir, it's quite odd.

BATWING

Odd indeed, Alf... Odd, indeed... What time is it, Alf?

ALF

Three a.m., sir.

BATWING

Gadzooks! The party ended three hours ago. Why haven't they left?

ALF

I'm not sure. All I can say is that they all look... well... rather sickly.

(BATWING removes one of his gloves.  
We see that his hand is severely rotting away. He holds his exposed

hand up to ALF)

BATWING

Like this, Alf? Is this what they look like?

ALF

Master Batwing! What's happening to you?!

(BATWING goes to the window.  
He clutches his rotting hand  
with his gloved one)

BATWING

I'm not sure, Alf... I've come to the conclusion that  
my condition is exactly as it seems.

ALF

I don't understand, sir.

BATWING

I'm rotting away Alf... We all are... And for the  
first time in our lives, we're all really afraid of  
leaving the party, knowing that tomorrow will bring  
with it, another form of painful reality, that not  
even the best champagne, or even the greatest lay,  
could anesthetize.

ALF

Any theories, sir?

BATWING

One, Alf... Just one... And I tend to chuckle... when  
it comes to mind.

ALF

Would you care to share it sir? It will be kept in the  
strictest of confidence, of course.

BATWING

(Smiling)

Good ol' Alf.

ALF

Cheers to you, sir.

BATWING

Where do I begin?

ALF

Try the beginning, sir.

BATWING

Ah, yes. The beginning. The ol' beg-er. The big 'B.'

(BATWING paces)

BATWING (Continued)

I was in Chinatown with Revin. He wanted a bundle of bottle-rockets for the Fourth of July. I agreed to purchase the fireworks on the condition that I, a legal adult, was present when he set them off, and when he lit the fuse, he stood twenty feet away. We bought them

BATWING (Continued)

from a cheerful little Asian boy, who happened to be reading a Batwing comic. He insisted that Batwing was fallible and that one day Batwing and all those likehim would simply vanish into thin air.

ALF

And how would this come about, sir?

BATWING

According to him, it was quite simple... He said that Batwing and the others like him could only exist as long as children around the world read our comics... otherwise they would turn brown and crusty, and eventually disintegrate... just like old comic books do when they're left in a cardboard box, in the back of some dingy garage, where they can be doused in dirty spiderwebs, infested with maggots, and peed on by stray cats.

ALF

I do chuckle at that, sir.

BATWING

Well, I'm not chuckling any longer. How's your neck?

ALF

Just fine, sir.

BATWING

I'm sorry I stabbed you with that number two pencil...  
I guess I got a little too friendly with that keg of  
Golden Crown Ale.

ALF

It's forgotten, sir. I suppose the condition is  
accompanied by fits of madness. Quite understandable,  
sir.

BATWING

You're too kind, Alf.

ALF

I know, sir.

(BATWING goes to the window)

BATWING

How long have the power lines to Gothim City been down?

ALF

Precisely three hours.

BATWING

All I can make out is the outline of the horizon, and  
the stars. As for Gothim City, it looks like a  
cancerous black void, swallowing itself... Wouldn't  
you agree Alf?

ALF

All I see is fog, sir.

BATWING

Fog?

ALF

Beggin' your pardon sir. My eyesight is going. I'm in  
no position to confirm the reality of the situation.

(Suddenly, the generator in the  
room goes dead. The lights go  
out again. We a voice)

REVIN

Holy light source!

(We hear some "clanging" and "tinkering" as the newcomer fixes the generator. Suddenly, the lights come on again. We see REVIN, the boy wonder, excessively readjusting the generator. BATWING turns to REVIN)

BATWING

Revin! Stop fiddling with that atomic generator, and get over here!

(REVIN drops everything)

REVIN

Coming, Batwing!

(REVIN stands next to BATWING and gazes out the window with him. He has scars all over his face and arms)

ALF

If you don't mind, sir. I should be tending to the other guests.

BATWING

Very, well Alf. That will be all.

(ALF bows and exits. REVIN stands next to BATWING and stares out the window with him)

REVIN

I don't get it, Batwing. The Bat Phone's dead. The Bat Station Wagon won't start. And every one seems to be afraid to leave the house.

BATWING

I'm well aware of that, Revin.

REVIN

I could have sworn I had the Bat Wagon serviced earlier this week.

BATWING

Forget it, Revin.

REVIN

And then Alf drove it to Seven-Eleven to get clove cigarettes.

BATWING

Go check on the others, Revin. I want to be alone.

REVIN

Let's see... who else was near the Bat Wagon after that?

(CLUNK! A distributor cap falls  
from BATWING's cape onto the floor.  
REVIN spots it immediately)

REVIN (Continued)

Holy distributor cap!

(BATWING grabs REVIN by the collar)

BATWING

Shut up! Just shut up!

(REVIN starts sobbing, scared, and  
disappointed)

REVIN

(Sobbing)

Why'd ya do it Batwing?! Why?!

(BATWING releases REVIN)

BATWING

Because, I'm scared, Revin. I'm so scared... It sickens me to allow others to see me like this.

REVIN

(Sobbing)

What happened to the Batwing I used to know?! You don't play the national anthem at six a.m. anymore... You don't lick your finger and slick my hair back before school... and you put dirty slides on the Bat Spotlight! How could you do such a thing?

BATWING

It's all so simple, Revin. One morning you just roll out of bed and... give up... I should have told you about the Bat Wagon... I also knocked out all the phones.

REVIN

I know... I saw you do it.

(BATWING grabs REVIN by the collar again)

BATWING

You mean to tell me, you laid down that prepubescent guilt trip, and now you have the gaul to admit you knew what I did all along?!

REVIN

Don't kill me, Batwing?! Don't kill me?! I'm afraid to go out there too!

(BATWING throws REVIN down again)

BATWING

It doesn't jibe, Revin. It... just... doesn't... jibe... The most evil villains ever produced by mankind are in maximum security facilities, and some thing, or some one manages to put a stranglehold on Gotham City as if it were child's play. The Bat Mac computer has confirmed that if someone of my caliber and intellectual stature were to take over a city of this magnitude, it would take approximately seventy to hours to paralyze all sources of electricity, computer data, and crude oil lines. And yet, someone does it in a matter of minutes!

REVIN

Maybe when the sun comes up, we'll be able to get a good look at our competition.

BATWING

What if the sun never comes up, Revin? What if I can't see what I'm fighting? What if it's more ominous than I ever imagined? What if it's a villain so super-human, so diabolic, so streamlined, that I can't even begin to find a way to defeat it?... What if I'm no longer indispensable?

REVIN

Well, you're still a role model, to me.

BATWING

Revin, don't... don't kiss my ass.

REVIN

Sorry.

BATWING

Do we have any munchies?

REVIN

Heck, no. Everyone raided the fridge.

BATWING

Then you'll have to go to the store and get some groceries.

REVIN

Can't you get Alf to go?

BATWING

I have no intention of sending a defenseless senior citizen into that cauldron of crime. Street lights have been rendered useless, immobilizing our police force. Rioting and pillaging are rampant. Alf wouldn't get two steps into Gotham City without getting his skull caved in... You'll have to go, Revin.

REVIN

I won't, I tell ya! I won't!

(BATWING grabs REVIN by the collar)

BATWING

Who the hell do you think you're talking to?! Huh?! When I give you an order, you'll take it and like it!

REVIN

I ain't goin'!

(BATWING slaps REVIN across the mug, hurling him to the ground. REVIN begins to sob. BATWING goes to REVIN)

BATWING

Great Scott! What have I done?! I've assaulted my life-long companion, a minor who looks up to me for proper etiquette and manliness!

(BATWING puts his hand on REVIN's shoulder. REVIN shrugs him off)

REVIN

Get away from me, you dick!

BATWING

I'm sorry Revin. I'm so sorry... Hey! How about a crash course in ballet?

(REVIN shakes his head. BATWING pulls out Dr. Seuss' "CAT IN THE HAT")

BATWING (Continued)

I've got it. How about a recital from Cat in The Hat?!

(BATWING recites some verse from Cat in The Hat. The verse is an illustration of the overwhelming responsibility BATWING has had to juggle during his whole crime-fighting life. He bobs his head from side to side, reading to REVIN in a demeaning fashion, as though he were still a child)

BATWING (Continued)

Look at me! Look at me! Look at me now! It is fun to have fun, but you have to know how. I can hold up the cup, and the milk and the cake! I can hold up these books, and the fish on the rake! I can hold the toy ship, and a little toy man! And look, with my tail, I can hold a red fan...

(WHAMMO! REVIN belts BATWING across the mug. BATWING falls back)

BATWING (Continued)

I deserved that. And to think, I tried to earn your love with Dr. Seuss.

(FLASHY, the comic relief with shitty jokes, enters with his arm

around his fiancée, BAT HUSSY, a dame as daffy as FLASHY is. They both show signs of rotting. FLASHY and BAT HUSSY have repressed their fears with mass quantities of booze, pot, and pills, which is why they appear to be in such a good mood. All they care about is a good laugh, and humpin' in the sack)

FLASHY

Hey! Life's one big party! Am I right, or am I right?

BATWING

Flashy... Bat Hussy.

BAT HUSSY

We have an announcement to make!

FLASHY

Tell 'em hon'.

BAT HUSSY

Flashy and I are getting married!

REVIN

Holy matrimony!

BATWING

(Smiling)

Married! What?! How?!

FLASHY

I popped the question in the wine cellar.

(FLASHY holds up BAT HUSSY's hand.  
On her wedding finger is a band with  
a gaudy looking stone)

FLASHY (Continued)

How 'bout that rock, huh? Top of the line zirconium diamelle.

REVIN

Wow. You getta sleep in the same bed.

BATWING

Revin... Please, don't embarrass them. I wouldn't want to spoil the only glimmer of contentment, amidst these walls of turmoil and shame.

FLASHY

Actually, we're not content.

BAT HUSSY

We're just really stoned.

FLASHY

Let's face it. We're just as confused as you are.

BATWING

At least the place you call home is a haven from confusion. As for Batwing Manor... It is confusion... And some how, somewhere, some way, I must restore order within it. I must restore the place I call home... Speaking of homes, how's your mansion in Malibu?

FLASHY

It's still there.

REVIN

You still got that neat ol' swimmin' pool?

BAT HUSSY

Uh... It's still there.

REVIN

And the tree swing?!

FLASHY

Uh... yeah, Revin... Sure. We got the tree swing.

BATWING

I'm assuming when you start a family of your own, you'll want a bigger place.

FLASHY

Actually, we already got a bigger place.

BATWING

Oh?

BAT HUSSY

Actually, it's a smaller place.

REVIN

How small?

BAT HUSSY

It's right next to the golf course.

BATWING

There aren't any homes next to the golf course.

FLASHY

Actually, it's right on the golf course.

BAT HUSSY

It's a caddy shack.

FLASHY

Yeah. It's got two stories... Her's and mine! Ha, ha, ha!

BATWING

Good God, man! What happened to all your investments.

FLASHY

Well... When the reflexes started to go, so did my craps game... You know how that goes.

BATWING

How are you supporting yourself?

BAT HUSSY

Oh, we got that all figured out. Between caddy stints, Flashy and I sell monster make-up door to door.

FLASHY

Hey, how 'bout a cut off finger? Bloody eye? Chest wound? Pools of blood? Whip and spike scars?

BAT HUSSY

Squished rat? Fake heart? Bleeding guts? Day-glo brain? Gorilla feet?

BATWING

Egad! You live in poverty!

FLASHY

Lighten up, Batwing. We got it made.

BATWING

Yeah, right... Thank God you didn't get Bat Hussy pregnant.

(FLASHY and BAT HUSSY just look at each other)

BATWING (Continued)

Don't tell me you got her pregnant?!

FLASHY

Well... Sir... I did... But, we lost it when I wrapped the Impala around an oak tree.

BATWING

You wrapped my Impala around an oak tree?!

(FLASHY and But Hussy break down and cry)

FLASHY

(Sobbing)

I guess life isn't a party after all! Waaaaaa!

BATWING

There. There. Don't cry.

FLASHY/BAT HUSSY

Waaaaa!

BATWING

Great Scott, Revin?! What have I done?!

REVIN

(Sobbing)

Ya made 'em cry! Just like you make everyone cry!

BATWING

I can't bare to see the others in pain any longer. If I lose my ability to spread peace and goodwill, surely I'll go mad! I've got to do something!

(BATWING flips on his ghetto blaster. We hear seductive bat muzak in the background. BATWING charms the

OTHERS with his seductive, snake-like bat sway. FLASHY and BAT HUSSY see BATWING dancing and spring back to life)

FLASHY

Hey! Let's dance!

(EVERYONE goes into their best beach blanket shake. We wrap up the gala with a few steps of the Konga. The music stops. EVERYONE winds down)

BATWING

I haven't got that wacky in years.

BAT HUSSY

I feel like a million bucks.

FLASHY

Ya look like ten fifty!

BATWING

Touche, Flashy.

FLASHY

Hey, Batwing. How 'bout doin' some tricks in the backyard with your Bat-o-rang.

BATWING

I think I'll take you up on that Flashy. I'll have to dig through my closet. I'll meet you all downstairs.

FLASHY

We'll do.

(The OTHERS exit. BATWING finds his Bat-o-rang. He turns to exit the room. Suddenly, the door SLAMS shut. The lights go dead briefly. When they come on, we see BATWING and JOKESTER at opposing sides of the room, each wearing holsters with a gun)

JOKESTER

Win, lose, or draw, Batwing!

BATWING

Why won't you let me be, Jokester?

JOKESTER

We have a score to settle.

(JOKESTER removes a musical pendant from his pocket with WONDER BROAD'S photo inside of it)

BATWING

What's your game?!

JOKESTER

The game is... kill for the woman you love.

BATWING

That's Wonder Broad's pendant! Where did you get that?!

JOKESTER

She gave it to me.

BATWING

You mean, you stole it from her, after you violated her supple, fawn-like body.

JOKESTER

No hard feelings, Batwing... It was all in jest! Ah, ha, ha, ha!

BATWING

You sick, loathsome, abominable, maggot!

(JOKESTER chuckles. He sets the pendant down on the table. He turns on the music. We hear sounds of a music box. JOKESTER steps back)

JOKESTER

When the music's over... We draw!

BATWING

I will not take part in this insane charade!

JOKESTER

It's too late. You're taking part in it now.

(The MUSIC swells, then dies down, then gets slower, and slower, the last note rings out. BLAM! The

two men draw. BATWING falls.  
JOKESTER stands. He bursts out  
laughing. BATWING calls out for  
help that will never come)

BATWING

(Loud whisper)

Help me! Help me!

(JOKESTER picks up the pendant,  
then goes to BATWING and towers  
over him)

JOKESTER

This might help.

("Blam!" JOKESTER unloads his  
remaining bullets into BATWING's  
torso at point blank range.  
BATWING writhes in stupefying  
pain as the imaginary bullets  
soar into his flesh. "Blam!"  
"Blam!" "Blam!" "Blam!" BATWING  
finally lies motionless)

JOKESTER (Continued)

Nice killing you... Ah, ha, ha, ha!

(JOKESTER exits with insane laughter.  
The lights come up again. WONDER BROAD  
enters, showing signs of rotting. She  
goes to BATWING and cradles him in  
her arms)

WONDER BROAD

Batwing! Batwing! Wake up!

BATWING

Mommy?

WONDER BROAD

No. Wonder Broad.

BATWING

Mommy? Hold me mommy. Protect me from the world,  
mommy.

(WONDER BROAD grabs BATWING by the collar, and shakes him up)

WONDER BROAD

Snap out of it!

BATWING

Okay, mommy.

(SMACK! WONDER BROAD slaps BATWING across the mug. BATWING comes around)

BATWING (Continued)

Wonder Broad. I'm glad your here. You make me feel safe inside.

WONDER BROAD

You make me feel safe. Are you all right?

BATWING

Yes, I'm fine now. I guess I fainted.

(SUPRAMAN, lover of WONDER BROAD, enters with signs of rotting. He appears pissed. He goes to WONDER BROAD and yanks her away from BATWING)

SUPRAMAN

Stay the hell away from him!

WONDER BROAD

Leave Batwing alone!

(SUPRAMAN goes to BATWING. He exposes his rotting hands)

SUPRAMAN

What have you done to us?!

BATWING

I've done nothing.

(SUPRAMAN grabs BATWING by the throat)

SUPRAMAN

Is it a jealousy trip? Is it because I can fly? Or because I can breathe in space? Or is it because I've won over every woman you've ever loved?

WONDER BROAD

Why, you narcissistic son of a bitch! Where do you get off throwing your weight around, when you know your stronger than everyone else?

(SUPRAMAN turns and goes to  
WONDER BROAD)

SUPRAMAN

Now, look here little lady.

(SPLOOSH! WONDER BROAD throws a nearby drink in SUPRAMAN's face. SUPRAMAN becomes enraged, but holds it down silently. He goes to BATWING and starts heaving his fist into BATWING's stomach)

WONDER BROAD

Stop it!

(BATWING analyzes SUPRAMAN's condition as he gets wailed on)

BATWING

It's okay, Wonder Broad. I understand what he's going through. He's torn between the role of liberator and executioner, and since you are of the female gender, he will not assault one such as you. Therefore, his aggression must be displaced upon myself.

(WONDER BROAD throws her magic lasso at SUPRAMAN. He grabs it momentarily and snaps it. He then goes back to kicking BATWING's ass)

WONDER BROAD

(Yelling out door)

Somebody, help! Supraman's beatin' the shit out of Batwing!

(ALF and REVIN enter with a huge chain laced with kryptonite. They wrap it around SUPRAMAN. He grows weak and falls back in a chair)

SUPRAMAN

A chain laced with kryptonite! How?!

REVIN

We keep a spare jug in the Bat Lavatory! Looks like you're on the low end of the totem pole now!

BATWING

Enough, Revin.

ALF

Shall we take him away, sir?

BATWING

No, Alf. Leave him be. I want to observe him myself. Maybe I can help him.

SUPRAMAN

Maybe you can stick that Bat-o-rang up your ass!

(BATWING points out the window)

BATWING

Hey, look! The Fantastic Five!

(EVERYONE goes to the window)

REVIN

Where?!

(BATWING belts SUPRAMAN across the mug, knocking him out temporarily. The OTHERS face BATWING again)

REVIN (Continued)

I don't see anything, Batwing.

BATWING

Must have been the fog.

(Suddenly, SUPRAMAN breaks free of the chains. He faces BATWING. SUPRAMAN takes a swing at BATWING, misses and hits poor old ALF instead, knocking him out instantly. WONDER BROAD goes to ALF and checks his pulse)

WONDER BROAD

He's dead.

SUPRAMAN

Hey, I didn't mean to kill anybody! Well, Batwing. I guess this means execution by kryptonite.

BATWING

On the contrary, Supraman. You'll be read your rights, arrested, and then granted a fair trial, like any other U.S. citizen.

(SUPRAMAN whips out a vile of Kryptonite in led and drinks it before anyone one can respond. SUPRAMAN falls to the ground. BATWING picks up the vile)

BATWING (Continued)

Great Scott! Kryptonite in a lead vile!

REVIN

Let him die!

BATWING

No. We must do all we can to save him. If were successful, he will also be charged with suicide, since it is illegal in this country.

WONDER BROAD

What can we do to save him?

BATWING

We'll need a capsule of Anti-Kryptonite serum. They only produce it in small quantities somewhere off the coast of the Alutian Islands.

REVIN

Great. We'll never get there in time.

BATWING

No need to fear, Revin. I just happen to have a capsule in my Bat Utility Belt.

(BATWING pulls out a capsule, and sticks it in SUPRAMAN's mouth. SUPRAMAN comes around. BATWING

springs over to ALF, and checks  
his pulse)

BATWING (Continued)

A pulse! But it's very faint!

(BATWING sprinkles some white  
powder on ALF's nose)

WONDER BROAD

What is that?

REVIN

Bat crack!

BATWING

It'll make a yak do summersaults on a tightrope.

(ALF comes around)

BATWING (Continued)

Good ol' Alf.

(FLASHY and BAT HUSSY enter again,  
and plop down on the couch. They're  
both dying)

FLASHY

Well, guys. I guess it's the end of the road for us.

BAT HUSSY

Yeah... and so it goes.

REVIN

Do something Batwing!

BATWING

What?

WONDER BROAD

Don't you have some kind of pill, or medication you  
can give them?

BATWING

'Fraid not Wonder Broad. This time I'm stumped.

BAT HUSSY

Forget it... It's better this way.

FLASHY

Yeah... We had a few laughs, kicked some ass, solved a few crimes. What more can you expect?

BATWING

You can expect to live! Hang in there! Just hang in there!

BAT HUSSY

What for? There's no cure. We're all gonna go the same way. Might as well say our good-byes now.

FLASHY

In the immortal words of Donny Marie Osmond...  
Goodnight everybody!

(FLASHY and BAT HUSSY conk out.  
REVIN drops to the ground. BATWING  
goes to REVIN)

BATWING

Revin!

REVIN

So, long Batwing. It was nice knowin' ya.

BATWING

Revin. Don't die on me!

REVIN

I'm not dying, Batwing. I'll live forever in the minds of young children for years to come.

BATWING

But, that's not the same. What about me?!

REVIN

What about you? When your time comes, you'll understand. It's not so bad.

BATWING

But, it is bad! And I don't wanna understand! I don't want to end up like this! I don't want you to end up like this!

REVIN

Hasta la vista.

(REVIN conks out. WONDER BROAD drops to the ground. BATWING runs to her)

BATWING

Wonder Broad?

WONDER BROAD

He's right, Batwing. When your time comes, you'll understand.

BATWING

I've always loved you Wonder Broad.

WONDER BROAD

And I've always loved you. But, don't tell Supraman that. It'll just be our little secret.

(WONDER BROAD conks out. SUPRAMAN sits on the couch getting weak again)

SUPRAMAN

I heard what you said.

(BATWING goes to SUPRAMAN)

BATWING

I'm sorry. I'm quite embarrassed.

SUPRAMAN

Don't be. It doesn't matter any more. All I care about now is the pain. I just want it to leave my body. All I can think about is how good it would feel if I wasn't in any pain.

(SUPRAMAN conks out. BATWING lies him down gently)

BATWING

So, that's how it goes... eh, Alf? We just sit here until we die.

ALF

'Fraid so, sir. Is there anything I can do, sir?

BATWING

No. Except keep me company.

ALF

I'll do that, sir.

(Suddenly, the little ASIAN BOY enters. He goes to BATWING)

ASIAN BOY

Hi, Batwing! Remember me?!

BATWING

Why, Alf, it's the little Asian boy who sold us bottle rockets!

ALF

Cheers to you, Asian boy.

BATWING

What can I do for you, little Asian Boy?

ASIAN BOY

Well, I just came to tell you that children have stopped buying your comics altogether.

BATWING

Aren't you reading them?

ASIAN BOY

I was. But, when I went to the newsstand Every last one of them was gone. I guess they don't even make 'em anymore.

BATWING

Don't feel guilty little Asian boy.

(JOKESTER enters. He has bandages on his head from his lobotomy. He appears docile and tame. He goes to BATWING)

JOKESTER

Batwing?

BATWING

Jokester?

JOKESTER

What's happened to Gotham City?

BATWING

I was going to ask you that same question.

JOKESTER

What happened to all the heroes?

BATWING

Dead... All of them.

JOKESTER

All over the world?

BATWING

Possibly.

JOKESTER

I suppose a lot of it was my fault.

BATWING

On the contrary, Jokester. The fault was mine. I've become defective, fallible, ill-suited for the life of a crime fighter. I had a chance to react, and I didn't. I had several opportunities to find a way out of this maze of torment, and yet I stood still and let it rape my flesh.

JOKESTER

But, why? You were so quick and so brave. You were the only one who could keep me on my toes. It finally dawned on me that the only reason I became a master villain, was because my competition was a master crime fighter. I had no choice, but to become the best at what I did.

BATWING

I'm flattered, Jokester. I suppose you were the only one who kept me on my toes. I'm glad to see you're reformed. I didn't think I'd live to see it. I'm glad I did. It's ironic. The person I've hated the most has finally given me some sort of genuine contentment.

JOKESTER

Likewise, I'm sure.

BATWING

Where will you go? What will you do?

JOKESTER

Retire. I have a little place in the country.

BATWING

Is there a little woman?

JOKESTER

No... No little woman... Just me.

BATWING

Sounds a bit lonely.

JOKESTER

I'll be fine. Well, I'd better get going. You probably don't want me hanging around while you're dying.

BATWING

Very considerate of you Jokester.

(JOKESTER removes a something  
from his vest pocket)

JOKESTER

Oh, I thought you might like to have this.

BATWING

What is it?

JOKESTER

The last issue of Batwing comics. It was the only one on the newsstand.

BATWING

Great Scott! Someone still reads Batwing comics!

(BATWING goes to the window and  
holds the comic book above his  
head towards the sky. He cries  
out to Gotham City)

BATWING

Look! Look, everyone! Someone still reads Batwing comics!

(BATWING and JOKESTER go to the window and look out over Gotham City. Suddenly, the song of "angels" swells. Beams of light shine through the window. BATWING and JOKESTER look out at Gotham City in awe)

BATWING

The sun's coming up! The fog has lifted! The electricity is on again! Gotham City Thrives!

JOKESTER

It's beautiful!

ALF

Happy days are here again, sir!

(The other HEROES spring back to life, and look out the window)

REVIN

Holy solar salute!

BAT HUSSY

Our sores are healing!

FLASHY

I'm feelin' it! I'm feelin' it!

SUPRAMAN

It's a great time to be alive!

WONDER BROAD

Adventure lies just beyond the horizon!

REVIN

Hey, Batwing! Whatta ya say we go out and fight some crime!

BATWING

That's a wonderful idea, Revin... But, first... we're gonna sing!

(EVERYONE stands side by side and bursts out singing "GOD BLESS AMERICA," LIGHTS FADE)

END OF PLAY