

Batman Begins At 15: The Start Of A Legendary Trilogy

By **Murjani Rawls** - Jun 15, 2020



Photo Credit: Warner Bros Pictures

In a trilogy world where *The Dark Knight* exists, I feel that *Batman Begins* is not talked about enough in being one of the great superhero origin films. After the extreme campiness of 1997's *Batman and Robin*, the franchise needed a definite restructuring. Christopher Nolan, who was coming off a directorial run of 2000's *Memento* and 2002's *Insomnia*, was the perfect choice to usher in a Batman who was steeped in realism and less in the high glitz of the past.

The heart of 2005's *Batman Begins* is that the Gotham in the movie could exist anywhere. It's a slow rot from within after the tragedy of the Waynes murder. Thomas Wayne had a dream of a prosperous Gotham that benefited many. Christian Bale's Bruce Wayne/Batman grew into it gradually and took it to the next level. This movie is all about father figures. The father Bruce loses (Thomas Wayne/Linus Roache), the fathers that provide him tools to walk into his destiny (Ra's/Lucius Fox) (Liam Neeson/Morgan Freeman), and the father who provides him love and wisdom (Alfred/Michael Caine).

In the previous movies, it felt like you were dropped into Bruce Wayne already in that transformation. In *Begins*, you witness all the rough edges within him becoming a symbol for good. Bruce is initially filled with anger and revenge. Thus, he's void of direction until he goes on a journey to find it. A lot of this movie is about choice. It completes a through-line that reverberates throughout the entire Nolan trilogy. There's his stint in the League of Shadows where he learns the powers of illusions and ultimately decides to use them for the liberation of Gotham. However, every action has a reaction and the League of Shadows – as they have a hand in Bruce's past, will also in his future.

Begins is the movie that I felt made Batman feel more triumphant out of the entire trilogy. It's not without its hardships, but Bruce Wayne gains something in this film rather than losing a piece of himself. There's a darkness to him, but he's not necessarily being punished for it like in the other films in the trilogy. Nolan and David Goyer's story manifests Bruce's childhood fear into something that stokes the same fear into the hearts of the most brazen of criminals. The first time we see Batman in action, he hides in the shadows and takes on criminals like a horror figure. He's the returning hometown hero that enacts hope in men like then officer James Gordon (Gary Oldman).

Then there's Rachel Dawes (Katie Holmes) – one of the personifications of the good that still present in Gotham. Her relationship with Bruce is interesting because it embodies what he can't have. He comes home a changed man with this overarching experience. It's to the point where Batman is just a manifestation of who he is. In the scenes where Bruce is at the restaurant and has the party, it doesn't even seem natural. Rachel is just a woman – just on different levels. While they have history and the desire for love is there, it would be something that he is unable to give himself fully to her and she knows this after being tipped off to his secret.

and the monsters of the world are grounded. The action sequences were filmed with realism in mind. The loss of Bruce's youthful agility. You get to see all the imperfect instances of the suit before you get to the more iconic version that we know the comic book Batmobile looks like and goes for a more off-road tank. Carmine Falcone (Tommy Lee Jones) and Ansel (An Murphy) are products of a corrupt Gotham system where evil is left unchecked; both in the underground

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and at a bureaucratic level. The sleight of hand used to reveal Ducard as being Ra's Al Gu is an amalgamation of Batman's key principle to not to kill.

Hans Zimmer's score gradually gives you the full theme. The music grows in instrumentation as Bruce embodies more of his role as Batman. When you get to the end of the movie, that's when you hear 'Molossus.' It's as if Bruce gains the mantle of being Gotham's protector, he then has earned the theme. The Batman movie series as a whole needed a refresh. It needed a return to the dark and brooding detective that many comic fans have known to love for decades. He's the silent protector in the shadows. Batman Begins was able to give a proper hero that Gotham deserves.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHhHibNuok8>

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