

**LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT
"CHICKS DIG THE BAT"
WRITTEN BY ADAM BEECHEN**

PAGE 1

Panel 1. A fifteen-year-old Hispanic boy, utterly average in appearance, closes the door to his family's apartment and steps out into the hall. We see stairs leading up and down. The boy, FERNANDO (NANDO) GUERRERO, wears a light jacket and a pack on his back that looks like it was made to accommodate a long tube and some other equipment besides – It actually holds a telescope and tripod, which we'll discover soon.

CAPTION: FERNANDO GUERRERO WAS A GOOD STUDENT. HE MADE SOLID B'S AT WEST GOTHAM HIGH, AND HE KEPT HIS MOUTH SHUT IN CLASS.

CAPTION: HE DIDN'T PLAY ANY SPORTS, BUT HE WAS SECRETARY OF THE COMPUTER CLUB, AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SCIENCE CLUB.

Panel 2. Nando walks toward us down a Gotham street with storefronts on each side. It's night. His hands are in his pockets and he's looking down at the ground. There's maybe a couple other pedestrians, and they aren't looking at him. Parked cars line the streets.

CAPTION: IN HIS SPARE TIME, HE LIKED TO READ SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS AND BOOKS ABOUT ASTRONOMY.

CAPTION: AND WHILE HE WASN'T **OBSESSED**, LIKE HIS BEST FRIEND JAVIER, HE LIKED TO PLAY ONLINE COMBAT GAMES AGAINST PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

CAPTION: NANDO GUERRERO WAS AN ALL-AROUND **GOOD GUY**.

Panel 3. Nando's in a trash-strewn alley, reaching up for the bottom rung of a fire escape.

CAPTION: IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS PRACTICALLY **INVISIBLE** TO GIRLS.

Panel 4. Nando pulls himself over the edge of the rooftop, the buildings of Gotham a forest around him. The roof is pretty unremarkable. Cooling units, a stairwell door, bird shit, the usual.

CAPTION: **SURE**, IT BUGGED HIM. **EVERYONE** HE KNEW HAD A GIRLFRIEND, EVEN **JAVIER**, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD.

CAPTION: BUT NANDO WAS SHY BY NATURE, AND PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO ASK GIRLS OUT HAD ENDED PRETTY BADLY. FORTUNATELY, THEY HADN'T BEEN GIRLS HE REALLY, **REALLY** LIKED...LIKE SONIA COSTA.

Panel 5. Nando kneels on the tarpaper of the roof, opening his pack. He's already taken out the tube of the telescope and laid it gently next to him, and now he's taking out the tripod.

CAPTION: HE'D BEEN SMART ENOUGH NOT TO HUMILIATE HIMSELF IN FRONT OF **HER**, AT LEAST.

CAPTION: THAT WAS THE ONLY BRIGHT SIDE OF BEING TOO SCARED TO TALK TO HER.

PAGE 2

Panel 1. Nando, standing, meticulously secures the telescope to the set-up tripod.

CAPTION: SO NANDO TRIED NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

CAPTION: INSTEAD, AFTER HE'D FINISH HIS HOMEWORK, HE'D GET ONLINE AND FIND A GAME.

CAPTION: OCCASIONALLY, HE'D TAKE THE TELESCOPE HIS UNCLE HORACIO HAD GIVEN HIM AND GO SCOUTING FOR GOOD SPOTS TO LOOK AT THE STARS.

Panel 2. Nando stands beside his telescope, looking up into the dark sky even as he adjusts his telescope to a point in the heavens.

CAPTION: THE PROBLEM WAS, THERE **WEREN'T** MANY GOOD SPOTS IN GOTHAM, BECAUSE THE LIGHTS OF THE CITY WERE SO **BRIGHT**.

CAPTION: AND NANDO COULDN'T DRIVE YET (HURRY **UP**, SIXTEEN!), SO HE COULDN'T GET OUT OF TOWN.

Panel 3. Nando leans over the eyepiece of his telescope, one eye squeezed shut.

CAPTION: SO HE TRIED TO FIND **HIGH GROUND**, WHERE THE LIGHTS WOULDN'T BE SUCH A PROBLEM.

CAPTION: AND ON **THAT** NIGHT, NANDO DECIDED TO TRY THE ROOF OF THE **SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL GOTHAM ARMORY**.

Panel 4. Nando's POV through the eyepiece of the telescope. A few large-ish fuzzy-edged white circles.

CAPTION: THE VIEW WAS PRETTY GOOD, AND THE STARS WERE RIGHT WHERE THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN.

Panel 5. Nando presses his hands to the base of his spine and arches, stretching his back.

CAPTION: NANDO WAS JUST ABOUT TO PACK UP AND HEAD HOME FOR THE NIGHT...HIS PARENTS DIDN'T LIKE HIM TO BE OUT PAST TEN...

Panel 6. Close on Nando as he suddenly spots something above him and to the side. His eyes are wide in shock and surprise.

CAPTION: ...WHEN SOMETHING IN THE SKY **MOVED**...

PAGE 3

Panel 1. Our splash. The Batman swings dramatically toward us through the concrete canyons of Gotham. Behind him is the armory, and there's Nando on the edge of the roof, watching Batman go by.

CAPTION: AND NANDO GUERERRO'S LIFE CHANGED.

PAGE 4

Panel 1. Closer on Nando, still standing on the edge of the roof, still looking out into the night, a thrilled look on his face.

CAPTION: NANDO STOOD THERE FOR A GOOD TWENTY MINUTES AFTER THE BATMAN HAD VANISHED INTO THE NIGHT.

CAPTION: HE'D GROWN UP WITH THE BATMAN AS A NIGHTLY PRESENCE IN THE NEWS, HE'D BEEN TOLD LEGENDS BY HIS UNCLE AND GRANDMOTHER ABOUT THINGS THE BATMAN HAD SUPPOSEDLY DONE OVER THE YEARS.

CAPTION: AND NANDO HAD HEARD WILD STORIES HE KNEW WEREN'T TRUE FROM FRIENDS WHO'D SWORN THEY'D SEEN THE BATMAN KNOCK OUT KILLER CROC WITH ONE PUNCH, OR THE PENGUIN WITH A PRECISELY THROWN BATARANG FROM THREE MILES AWAY ("F'**REAL**," JAVIER INSISTED. HE ALWAYS SAID "F'**REAL**," AND SOMETIMES IT DROVE NANDO NUTS).

Panel 2. From behind Nando, looking out at the glittering lights of the cityscape, constellations unto themselves.

CAPTION: BUT THOUGH NANDO HAD FELT VAGUELY SAFER BECAUSE THE BATMAN WAS SUPPOSEDLY AROUND, THAT WAS BECAUSE HIS PARENTS SAID **THEY** FELT SAFER.

CAAPTION: HE HAD NEVER ACTUALLY **SEEN** THE BATMAN, PERSONALLY.

CAPTION: UNTIL THAT NIGHT.

Panel 3. Nando again climbs over the edge of the roof, wearing his special pack. It's a different night, though, and we can tell because Nando's not wearing a jacket, and he's wearing a different t-shirt.

CAPTION: THE NEXT NIGHT, RATHER THAN TRY A NEW SPOT, HE WENT BACK TO THE ARMORY.

CAPTION: HE DIDN'T LET HIMSELF LOOK FORWARD TO IT – HE FORCED HIMSELF TO THINK OF IT AS JUST ANOTHER NIGHT STARGAZING, KNOWING THE ODDS WERE PRETTY SLIM HE'D GET LUCKY TWICE.

Panel 4. Essentially a repeat of our splash page, but from a different angle. Nando stands on the edge of the roof and watches with awe as the Batman swings past.

CAPTION: BUT, AT PRETTY MUCH THE SAME TIME AS THE NIGHT BEFORE, HEADING IN EXACTLY THE SAME DIRECTION...

CAPTION: ...THERE HE WAS.

PAGE 5

Panel 1. Nando scuffs joyously across the roof in a little victory dance, doing a Tiger-Woods-esque fist pump.

CAPTION: NANDO COULDN'T STOP LAUGHING. HE'D **NEVER** BEEN THIS LUCKY.

CAPTION: NEVER.

Panel 2. Same angle. Only Nando has stopped dancing and just stands there, looking thoughtful.

CAPTION: BUT THEN HE GOT TO THINKING.

CAPTION: WHAT IF IT **WASN'T** LUCK?

Panel 3. Nando, in different clothes again, sits on the edge of the roof, looking up from checking his watch. We see just enough of the Batman's cape to know he's just swung by.

CAPTION: HE CAME BACK EVERY NIGHT FOR A WEEK.

CAPTION: EVERY NIGHT, AT THE SAME TIME...

CAPTION: IT **DEFINITELY** WASN'T LUCK.

Panel 4. Nando has turned to sit facing the rooftop, his arms dangling between his legs as he sits, thinking.

CAPTION: "THE BATMAN MUST PATROL GOTHAM EVERY NIGHT," NANDO FIGURED. "AND HIS ROUTE MUST ALWAYS TAKE HIM RIGHT BY HERE."

Panel 5. Seen in silhouette, Nando hops down to the alley floor from the last rung of the ladder.

CAPTION: HE COULDN'T HELP BEING A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED.

CAPTION: THOUGH IT WAS ABSOLUTELY THRILLING THAT HE COULD SEE THE BATMAN ANY TIME HE WANTED...

CAPTION: ...THE FACT THAT IT WAS NOW AN EVENT HE COULD WRITE DOWN IN EVERY SQUARE OF HIS CALENDAR SOMEHOW MADE IT A LITTLE **LESS** THRILLING.

PAGE 6

Panel 1. We're close on sour-faced Nando as he walks down the halls of his high school. Beside him walks JAVIER, his best friend, wearing a turned-around baseball cap and grinning sociably at anyone he sees. Nando has some books under one arm, a regular backpack over his shoulder, and a jacket tied around his waist. We catch just the chests and turned heads of the boys behind and in front of him, leaning against lockers, walking by, chatting laughing -- we're mostly focused on Nando. And because we are, we might not notice that several of the girls we can partially see have various pieces of Bat-themed clothing on – a Batman-decorated shirt, a Bat-signal patch over a rear jeans pocket, a Batman charm bracelet, etc.

CAPTION: NANDO WAS PRETTY BUMMED THE NEXT MORNING AT SCHOOL.

CAPTION: HE'D RESIGNED HIMSELF TO SIMPLY TELLING THE STORY TO JAVIER. IT'D BE COOL FOR A DAY OR TWO, TO BE KNOWN AS "THE GUY WHO SAW THE BATMAN," BUT IT WOULDN'T BE AS COOL ACTUALLY **SEEING** HIM SWING BY FOR THE FIRST TIME, READY FOR ACTION, BIG AS LIFE.

CAPTION: **NOTHING** WOULD BE THAT COOL.

Panel 2. We're down the hall from Nando and Javier, and they're walking toward us. Javier's turned to knock knuckles with another boy standing by a locker, but Nando's looking up in surprise at the gaggle of girls walking down the hall toward him, particularly one that's a little shapelier than the rest – we can tell already that this girl is the hottest thing on campus.

CAPTION: AND THEN NANDO HAPPENED TO LOOK UP, AND HE SAW SONIA COSTA COMING HIS WAY.

CAPTION: AND HE SUDDENLY THOUGHT OF SOMETHING THAT **WOULD** BE AS COOL AS SEEING THE BATMAN SWING BY FOR THE FIRST TIME.

Panel 3. Front view, waist-up, of the girls walking toward us. Sonia is talking to the girl next to her, her head turned so she's definitely not looking at Nando. The girl she's talking to isn't as attractive as Sonia – not ugly, just not as attractive. Sonia should stand out. On her midriff-baring tank top is a stylized Batman design that goes nicely with the simple chain around her neck with the stylized Batman pendant.

CAPTION: NANDO GUERERRO HAD DISCOVERED ONE OF THE **GREAT TRUTHS** OF THE UNIVERSE.

TITLE: **CHICKS DIG THE BAT.**

(NO CREDITS HERE – those will come at the end of the story)

PAGE 7

Panel 1. Sonia passes Nando by with her friends. He's unnoticed by them, even though he's turned to say something to her. Javier is still chatting with his other pal, not paying any attention.

CAPTION: UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S **ONE** THING TO REALIZE ONE OF THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE UNIVERSE...

CAPTION: IT'S ANOTHER THING TO ACTUALLY **DO** SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

Panel 2. Nando stands desolately alone in the middle of the corridor, watching the girls about to disappear around the far corner.

CAPTION: HE'D BLOWN HIS BEST AND ONLY CHANCE. HE WAS DOOMED TO A LIFE OF HIGH SCHOOL OBSCURITY, JUST ANOTHER FORGOTTEN MEMBER OF THE STUDENT BODY.

CAPTION: JUST ANOTHER GOOD GUY.

CAPTION: UNLESS...

Panel 3. Same angle. Nando is shouting Sonia's name, much too loudly.

NANDO: **SONIA!**

Panel 4. Same angle. Literally everyone in the hall – Sonia, her friends, the other students, have turned to look at Nando. As this is the first time this has happened, Nando is looking around with an expression of panic, already starting to sweat. Javier, practically doubled over with laughter, gives him a thumbs-up.

JAVIER: SMOOTH, NANDO...!

JAVIER: ...F'**REAL!**

Panel 5. Looking from the other end of the corridor, over Sonia's shoulder. Nando looks very small from here. Javier's behind him, walking the other way with his other pal, though turned around to laugh.

NANDO: UM.

PAGE 8

Panel 1. Nando walks tentatively up to Sonia, looking around nervously as people start going back to their business. The girls look at him like an interesting new species of bug.

NANDO: UM...COULD...I WAS WONDERING IF COULD...COULD I TALK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE?

NANDO: YOU KNOW...**PRIVATELY**?

Panel 2. Sonia looks to her friends for help. They're backing away, smiling, giving her little sarcastic waves as Nando looks on.

SONIA: WELL...ACTUALLY...WE WERE GOING TO --

SONIA'S FRIEND: IT'S OKAY! YOU CAN MEET US! TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED...

Panel 3. Sonia looks pleadingly over his shoulder at the retreating backs of her friends as Nando babbles.

NANDO: UM...SO, YOU LIKE THE BATMAN, HUH? I MEAN, OF **COURSE** YOU DO, WHO **DOESN'T**? WELL, I GUESS THE **JOKER** DOESN'T...OR MAYBE HE **DOES**, IN SORT OF A **DIFFERENT** WAY, I'VE NEVER REALLY BEEN SURE WHAT'S UP WITH THAT. **TWO-FACE** DOESN'T LIKE THE BATMAN, I KNOW THAT, SO LET'S SAY TWO-FACE AND --

Panel 4. Sonia turns back to him, out of patience and exasperated.

SONIA: **WHAT'S** YOUR NAME?

NANDO: OH, UH, FERNANDO. **NANDO**.

NANDO (small type): WE HAVE, LIKE, SIX CLASSES TOGETHER.

Panel 5. Sonia has her hands out in front of her in a gesture of denial, her eyes closed as she tries to beg off. Nando, to his credit, hangs in there, leaning forward a bit, his eyes wide open as he finally spits out what he's been trying to say.

SONIA: LISTEN, NANDO, IT'S BEEN **GREAT** TALKING TO YOU, BUT I REALLY HAVE TO GET TO --

NANDO: WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO WITH ME TO SEE THE BATMAN TONIGHT?

PAGE 9

Panel 1. Same angle. The only difference is that now Sonia's eyes are open, and she's looking at him with a mixture of astonishment and suspicion.

SONIA: -- WHAT?

Panel 2. Nando walks back down the hall toward us, smiling more broadly than we've ever seen him, plainly walking on air. In the b.g., we see Sonia, smiling and waving goodbye to him as she turns to walk the other way.

CAPTION: FIVE MINUTES LATER, SONIA WAS SWORN TO SECRECY AND VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO THEIR DATE THAT NIGHT.

CAPTION: NANDO PICTURED WHAT JAVIER'S FACE WOULD LOOK LIKE WHEN NANDO TOLD HIM THE NEXT DAY, AND SMILED FOR THE NEXT THREE AND A HALF HOURS.

Panel 3. Nando stands in front of the bathroom mirror, shirtless, face comically overloaded with shaving cream, holding a razor.

CAPTION: IN LIGHT OF THE NIGHT'S SPECIAL EVENT, NANDO DECIDED TO MOVE HIS REGULAR WEEKLY SHAVE UP A FEW DAYS.

Panel 4. Nando sniffs dubiously from a bottle of cologne.

CAPTION: HE HAD DECIDED TO SKIP THE COLOGNE, BUT THEN IMAGINED HIMSELF DRENCHED IN NERVOUS SWEAT FOR THE ENTIRE NIGHT, AND CHANGED HIS MIND.

Panel 5. Standing in front of a mirror in his bedroom, Nando concentrates furiously as he smooths his hair down. He's wearing the hippest clothes he has, which aren't very hip.

CAPTION: HE THOUGHT UP SEVEN DIFFERENT CONVERSATION STARTERS, SO THEY COULD PASS THE TIME WAITING FOR THE BATMAN TO SWING BY.

PAGE 10

Panel 1. In the alley beside the armory, Nando gallantly stacks a number of crates under the dangling fire escape ladder. Sonia looks up toward the roof. She looks good, but clearly hasn't made the special effort Nando has. Maybe she's wearing the same things she was wearing at school.

CAPTION: NANDO SCARED HIMSELF, IMAGINING THE ARMORY FIRE ESCAPE HAD SOMEHOW RUSTED AND FALLEN OFF SINCE HE'D BEEN THERE LAST, BUT WHEN HE AND SONIA ARRIVED, EVERYTHING WAS JUST FINE.

Panel 2. On the roof, Sonia walks away from the top of the ladder just as Nando is peeking over the lip of the roof. Sonia's looking around, curious.

CAPTION: NANDO IMAGINED SONIA FALLING OFF THE LADDER, OR WORSE, IMAGINED **HIMSELF** FALLING OFF THE LADDER, INTO A DUMPSTER, AS SONIA LAUGHED AND CALLED ALL HER FRIENDS ON HER CELL.

CAPTION: DIDN'T HAPPEN.

Panel 3. Sonia sits at the edge of the roof, looking out at the city. Nando sits beside her, looking at her eagerly, like a puppy.

CAPTION: THEY WERE EARLY, SO NANDO PULLED OUT HIS PREPARED CONVERSATION STARTERS.

NANDO: BOY, GEOMETRY SUCKS, HUH?

Panel 4. Now they're both facing out toward the city. Sonia's still looking out at the buildings. Nando is tentatively looking at her out of the corner of his eyes.

CAPTION: HE RAN THROUGH THEM IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES.

Panel 5. Over Nando's shoulder as he nervously checks his watch, which shows somewhere in the vicinity of ten minutes to nine.

CAPTION: THEY SAT IN UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE (AT LEAST **NANDO** WAS UNCOMFORTABLE) UNTIL THE BIG MOMENT APPROACHED.

Panel 6. Now both kids are standing, looking eagerly out at the night, with great anticipation.

CAPTION: THE BIG MOMENT CAME.

PAGE 11

Panel 1. Same angle. They remain standing, but Sonia's arms are folded and she looks grumpy. Nando looks very, very anxious.

CAPTION: THE BIG MOMENT PASSED.

NANDO: HE PROBABLY STOPPED TO BEAT UP DOCTOR DOUBLE-X OR SOMETHING...

CAPTION: NANDO WAS GLAD HE'D DECIDED TO USE THE COLOGNE.

Panel 2. Sonia sits now, still looking unhappy. Nando stands behind her, looking apprehensive.

CAPTION: MORE TIME PASSED.

Panel 3. Same angle. Sonia checks her nails, bored. Nando covers his face with his hand.

CAPTION: MORE TIME PASSED.

Panel 4. Sonia walks across the roof toward the fire escape ladder. Nando chases her.

CAPTION: FINALLY...

SONIA: ...CAN'T BELIEVE I ACTUALLY **BELIEVED...SO** HUMILIATING...!

NANDO: SONIA, **WAIT**...!

Panel 5. Nando steps between Sonia and the fire escape ladder, desperately pleading.

NANDO: I REALLY **HAVE** SEEN HIM, RIGHT HERE, EVERY NIGHT FOR A **WEEK!**

NANDO: I **SWEAR! I'M NOT LYING!**

Panel 6. Sonia, hands on her hips, lets him have it.

SONIA: THAT IS **SO** WEAK! YOU THINK GUYS HAVEN'T MADE UP STUFF AROUND ME **BEFORE?**

SONIA: NORMALLY, I AUTOMATICALLY THINK THEY'RE FRONTING, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY YOU CAME UP TO ME THAT MADE ME THINK "MAYBE..." SO I GAVE YOU A **CHANCE.** BUT NOW...**NOW...**

SONIA: I'VE NEVER **BEEN** SO EMBARRASSED! AND WHEN MY **FRIENDS** FIND OUT...?

PAGE 12

Panel 1. Sonia pushes past him to the fire escape, and steps on to it, looking down. Nando looks like he's about to die of embarrassment himself.

NANDO: SONIA, WAIT, **PLEASE**...!

Panel 2. Sonia, wearing a shocked expression, backs away from the ladder past Nando as though he weren't there. She's staring at the fire escape. Nando's looking at her, genuinely puzzled.

NANDO: ...DON'T GO...?

Panel 3. Same angle. Sonia has backed even further across the panel, still looking at the fire escape. Nando has turned to follow her gaze, and now his expression is as shocked as his. There's a commando in a full face mask stepping over the edge of the roof. His uniform is sleek and skintight, with a belt full of equipment (i.e. ropes, pitons, etc.) and various holsters. Clearly, this is a high-tech criminal. And he's not alone. A number of similarly-clad men are clambering over the edge of the roof to either side of him.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 4. Nando and Sonia turn tail and run toward us, toward the far side of the roof as even more men step onto the roof behind them. Clear panic on the kids' faces.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 5. At the other edge of the roof, the kids skid to a stop, seeing more commandoes coming over the roof edge on this side.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE 13

Panel 1. The scared kids back toward the locked stairway access enclosure. Black-booted feet drive them back, implacably advancing.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 2. Backed against the roof access enclosure, Nando looks one way and Sonia looks the other. They're surrounded by commandoes.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 3. Nando and Sonia's POV, as the line of commandoes stare at them.

COMMANDO 1: WELL, **THIS** BLOWS.

Panel 4. Angle. Commando 1 turns to Commando 2, miffed. Behind them, we can see Nando,, eyes as big as saucers, looking at Sonia, who looks indignant.

COMMANDO 1: NICE WORK. YOU REALLY PLANNED THIS WELL. "THE ARMORY'S WHERE THEY KEEP ALL THE WEAPONS THE SUPERVILLAINS USE. WE'LL GO IN THROUGH THE ROOF ACCESS AND GET OUT WITH NO PROBLEM!"

COMMANDO 1: AND WHAT DO WE FIND ON THE ROOF? TWO TEENY-BOPPER **LOVEBIRDS** ON A DATE!

SONIA: WE'RE **NOT** ON A DATE!

Panel 5. Commando 1, still talking to Commando 2 without turning to Sonia, has extended an arm and clamped a hand across her mouth. She looks surprised.

COMMANDO: WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO GET RID OF 'EM.

SONIA: GLMPH!

PAGE 14

Panel 1. Commando 2 looks as worried as you can make him look behind his mask.

COMMANDO 2: WHAT, YOU MEAN **KILL** THEM? I DON'T WANT NO **MURDER** BEEF...ESPECIALLY NOT FOR KILLING **KIDS**...

COMMANDO 2: I MEAN, **SURE**, WE COME IN **ARMED**, BUT THAT'S A "JUST IN CASE" THING, RIGHT...?

COMMANDO 1 (off-panel): I'D CALL **THIS** A "JUST IN CASE" THING, WOULDN'T YOU?

Panel 2. Nando, backed against the roof enclosure, looks on, not really believing any of this is happening.

COMMANDO 2 (off-panel): WE **CAN'T** LET ANYTHING SLOW US DOWN, AND WE SURE AS **HELL** CAN'T HAVE ANY WITNESSES!

COMMANDO 1 (off-panel): I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

Panel 3. The commandos turn, surprised by the sound of Nando's voice.

NANDO (off-panel): **HEY!**

Panel 4. Nando protectively shields Sonia, who can't decide if she's more scared of the commandoes or surprised by Nando's outburst. Nando looks serious, grim.

NANDO: SHE MAY **NOT** BE MY GIRLFRIEND, BUT I'M STILL THE ONE WHO BROUGHT HER HERE, SO THAT MEANS I'M **RESPONSIBLE** FOR HER!

NANDO: AND I'M **NOT** GOING TO LET YOU **HURT** HER!

Panel 5. Nando puts up his dukes, ready to take them all on with his fists. Sonia, standing behind him, looks at him like he's absolutely nuts.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE 15

Panel 1. The next three panels are all the same angled shot of the line of commando, from Nando's POV. Here, they're looking right at us (Nando), eyes wide, unable to believe what they've just heard and what they're seeing.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 2. The commandos turn to each other with stunned expressions like "Can you believe this?"

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 3. The commandos turn back to us (Nando), raising their guns to point right at us.

SFX: SHAK!

SFX: SH-SHAK!

SFX: CHAK!

SFX: SHAK!

Panel 4. Close on Nando. He still has his fists up, but he suddenly looks like he's just realized what he's done, i.e. "Oh, shit." At the very top right edge of frame, which Nando doesn't see yet, is a corner of blue cloth hanging down from somewhere above.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 5. The blue cloth now hangs down entirely over Nando's face. His fists have unclenched, as he's been taken by surprise. We can't see his face, but we can guess how he must look.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE 16

Panel 1. Here's the money shot, friend artist, and the page I'm gonna buy from you when we're all done here: it's a splash, and at the top center of it all is the Batman, crouched atop the roof access enclosure, looking spooky and shadowy, his cape billowing around him, blown by a wind behind him. He's staring down the commandos. Directly below him, Nando pushes aside the piece of cape blocking his face and looks up in utter surprise. Sonia cranes around from behind him to look up, looking just as shocked as Nando is. In our f.g. are the commandos, their body postures letting us know just how taken by surprise they are.

BATMAN: GOOD EVENING.

PAGE 17

Panel 1. Close on Batman – through the shadows covering his face we can just make out that he’s smiling tightly.

BATMAN: DON’T BLAME THESE CHILDREN FOR MESSING UP YOUR PLAN. I KNEW ALL ABOUT IT **WEEKS** AGO. I’VE BEEN KEEPING A VERY CLOSE EYE ON THIS ARMORY, **WAITING** FOR YOU...

BATMAN: ...PLANNING **EXACTLY** WHAT I’D DO TO YOU WHEN YOU GOT HERE.

Panel 2. Batman leaps off the enclosure at the commandos, who fire wildly at him, none of them on target.

BATMAN: LET’S GET STARTED.

SFX: BLAM!

SFX: BLAM!

SFX: K-BLAM

SFX: P-KOW!

Panel 3. Nando pushes Sonia down as wild bullets spray into the stairway access enclosure wall just above them. Sonia has her eyes squeezed shut and her hands over her ears.

NANDO: SONIA, **DUCK!**

SFX: SPAK!

SFX: SPAK!

SFX: SPAK!

Panel 4. Batman flips over two commandos, knocking their heads together with one hand. With the other, he blindly but unerringly throws three of his famous Bat-darts, which strike the gun-hand of Commando 3, forcing him to drop his weapon. Commando 2 backpedals, holding his gun with both hands. Despite what he’s saying, he looks a little panicked.

COMMANDO 3: YAAAAH!

SFX (head-crack): BOK!

COMMANDO 2: DON’T **PANIC!** REMEMBER, WE **TRAINED** FOR THIS!

COMMANDO 2: **DON’T PANIC!**

PAGE 18

Panel 1. Batman completes his flip and nimbly lands in front of Commando 2.

BATMAN: **TRUST ME...**

Panel 2. Batman head-butts Commando 2, whose eyes roll back in his head.

SFX: WHUNK!

BATMAN: ...YOU SHOULD PANIC.

Panel 3. Sonia stumbles away from Nando toward the fire escape ladder, hands still over her ears, tears running down her face. From his prone position on the ground, Nando reaches out for her in vain.

SONIA: ...**CRAZY**... GETTING OUT OF HERE...SO **CRAZY**...!

NANDO: **SONIA!**

Panel 4. Batman, at the center of a small mob of commandos, sends them all flying in different directions with a kick and a punch.

SFX: SWACK!

SFX: THUDD!

SFX: BRAK!

Panel 5. Batman stands over the fallen bodies of the commandos, cape swirling around him. Job well done.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 6. Close on Batman as he spins at the sound of the voice. Job apparently not well done, and Batman doesn't look happy about it.

COMMANDO 1: **BATMAN!**

PAGE 19

Panel 1. Over Batman's shoulder. He sees Commando 1 standing behind Sonia, one arm wrapped around her neck, the other hand pointing a pistol at her temple. Sonia claws at his arm with both her hands, crying. Commando 1's backing them both away from the fire escape ladder, more towards the center of the roof.

COMMANDO 1: TRY AND SCARE ME ALL YOU WANT – I **KNOW** YOU DON'T WANT ME TO HURT HER...!

Panel 2. The commando backs with Sonia toward the roof access enclosure. There's no sign of Nando. The Batman walks slowly across the roof with them, keeping the distance between himself and the commando even.

COMMANDO 1: SO LET'S NOT PLAY ANY GAMES!

COMMANDO 1: I'M GOING TO TELL YOU WHAT I **WANT**, AND YOU'RE GOING TO **GIVE** IT TO ME!

Panel 3. The commando, now backed against the wall with hostage Sonia, keeps his gun trained on her temple, his eyes out in front of him, on Batman. We see a silhouetted head peeking around the corner of the roof access enclosure.

COMMANDO 1: I WANT YOU **OFF** THIS ROOF!

COMMANDO: I WANT YOU ON THE NEXT BUILDING OVER, WHERE I CAN SEE YOU **EVERY SECOND** UNTIL I'M GONE WITH HER!

COMMANDO: IF YOU DON'T MESS WITH ME, I'LL RELEASE HER AT **DAWN**. IF YOU **DO** MESS WITH ME, WHAT HAPPENS WILL BE YOUR **OWN** FAULT!

COMMANDO: WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Panel 4. Batman's silhouette, backlit by the city lights, simply stands there in the middle of the roof, silent. It's an eerie sight.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 5. Close on the Commando's eyes, now spooked.

COMMANDO 2: **WHAT DO YOU SAY?**

Panel 6. Stet of Panel 4.

BATMAN: "GET HIM, BOY WONDER."

PAGE 20

Panel 1. Nando desperately leaps out from behind the corner of the enclosure and grabs the commando's gun hand, yanking it away from Sonia's head and sending his shot up into the air. The commando releases his grip on Sonia, who ducks away, hands over her head.

NANDO: NNNYAAAAA!

COMMANDO 2: WHUH -- ?

SFX: K-BLAMM!

Panel 2. A Batarang thunks into the commando's hand, forcing him to drop the gun.

SFX: THUNK

COMMANDO 2: AOOOOWWW!

Panel 3. Motion progression shot. In the same frame, moving left to right, we watch Batman deliver three punches to the hapless Commando, driving him across the panel, the last punch lifting the Commando off his feet and into the air, falling/flying backwards. Nando, on the ground, watches with wonder.

BATMAN (first figure): **THIS...IS FOR MAKING ME...**

SFX: THWOKK

BATMAN (second figure): ...PUT **CHILDREN** AT RISK...

SFX: SHWUDD

BATMAN (third figure): ...BEFORE I COULD GET A CLEAR SHOT AT **YOU!**

SFX: WHAMM

Panel 4. The Commando lands in a heap atop his unconscious cronies.

SFX: SH-THLUMP

Panel 5. Nando puts a comforting arm around Sonia, who's hunched over, looking at the ground, still shaken up. Neither notices Batman's shadow extending across the bottom of the panel toward them.

NANDO: IT'S OVER...ARE YOU ALL RIGHT...?

SONIA (small type): YOU SAVED ME...YOU **SAVED** ME...!

PAGE 21

Panel 1. The two kids look up as the shadow completely covers them.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 2. The Batman looms over them. Scary and intimidating.

BATMAN: IT'S A SCHOOL NIGHT.

BATMAN: GO HOME.

Panel 3. Nando, arm still around Sonia's shoulder, turns with her for the fire escape ladder. All we see of the Batman is his cape fluttering in from the edge of the panel.

BATMAN (off-panel): WAIT.

Panel 4. Nando and Sonia turn around to see Batman extending a hand to him.

BATMAN: COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU. THANKS.

Panel 5. Nando looks way up at Batman, mouth wide open in awe as he shakes the Dark Knight's hand. Batman looks way down at Nando, but doesn't smile.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 6. Over Nando's shoulder as he watches Batman swing off the roof and away into the night. Sonia's hand falls on his shoulder.

SONIA (off-panel): NANDO...

PAGE 22

Panel 1. Nando turns to see Sonia looking at him with pure adoration. God, she looks beautiful.

SONIA: ...YOU SAVED MY **LIFE**...!

Panel 2. Sonia leans in and kisses a very surprised Nando, whose hands and arms flail about, and his eyes go wide.

NANDO: MMPH?!?!

CAPTION: IT WAS A BIG NIGHT FOR NANDO, NEEDLESS TO SAY, AND HE WAS **DEFINITELY** GLAD HE USED THE COLOGNE...

CAPTION: BUT IT WAS **MORE** THAN THAT. THAT NIGHT, NANDO LEARNED THAT CHICKS DON'T **JUST** DIG THE BAT...

Panel 3. Large panel of Nando and Sonia embracing and kissing on the rooftop, the fallen bodies of the commandos behind them on the roof, and the lights of the city beyond them. Maybe there's even a Bat-Signal in the sky.

CAPTION: ...SOMETIMES CHICKS JUST DIG THE **GOOD GUY**.

CAPTION: AND EVEN AS NANDO KISSED SONIA FOR THE FIRST GLORIOUS TIME HE HAD SO LONG IMAGINED...

CAPTION: ...EVEN AS NANDO HEARD THE APPROACHING SIRENS OF POLICE CARS...

CAPTION: ...HE COULD HEAR WHAT JAVIER WOULD SAY TOMORROW, WHEN HIS JAW WOULD HIT THE FLOOR AS HE SAW NANDO AND SONIA WALKING DOWN THE HALLS OF THE SCHOOL, HAND IN HAND:

CAPTION: "F**REAL**."

CAPTION: A LEGEND OF THE DARK KNIGHT, AS TOLD BY:

CREDITS

THE END