

**BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT # 0**  
**WRITTEN BY GREGG HURWITZ**  
**PENCILS BY MICO SUAYAN & JOSE JUAN RYP**  
**INKS BY MICO SUAYAN & VINCENTE CIFUENTES**  
**DISTRIBUTED BY DC COMICS**

To celebrate 1 year of its new 52 reboot last August, DC comics decided to do nothing but #0 issues for all 52 of its titles. They were supposed to fill in some gaps of the history of the new 52 continuity. Batman which has 4 separate comics, Batman, Batman and Robin, Detective Comics, and Batman



the Dark Knight, decided to do stories about Bruce Wayne's past before he became Batman. In the case of Batman The Dark Knight, which to me is a totally useless comic, not because it has bad writing or art, but because we have three other Batman titles. You do not need a 4th one, their # 0 story lead to something that Bruce did just before he went on his world tour of training.

Everyone knows the story. Bruce as a 10 year old sees his parents gunned down in Crime Alley due to a random mugging. He was not harmed, but his parents were killed. So he vowed to avenge them anyway he could. So not surprisingly he becomes a sullen depressed, driven young man who wants to find out who killed his parents and then avenge them in some way. This issue of Batman: Dark Knight takes a look at his hunt for his parents killer just before he disappeared. We follow young Bruce as he is trying to find clues as to who killed his parents, even going so far as to go into seedy bars and chat up real criminals who do not give him a second thought.

Eventually through some more detective work which he has started to hone, he discovers the location of Joe Chill the killer of his

parents and is determined to go in and bring him down hard. What he finds is a depressing drunk, sitting in his ramshackle rat infested hotel room just being a nobody. Bruce having built up this horrible image of who the



killer is feels sorry for the drunk and asks him why he killed his parents and the only thing he says is he wanted the pearls Bruce's mother had on and he did not even get those. Bruce decides that this lonely depressed drunk is not worth getting revenge on, since his life seems to be horrific. So he leaves determined to avenge his parents death but taking on the more evil of people.

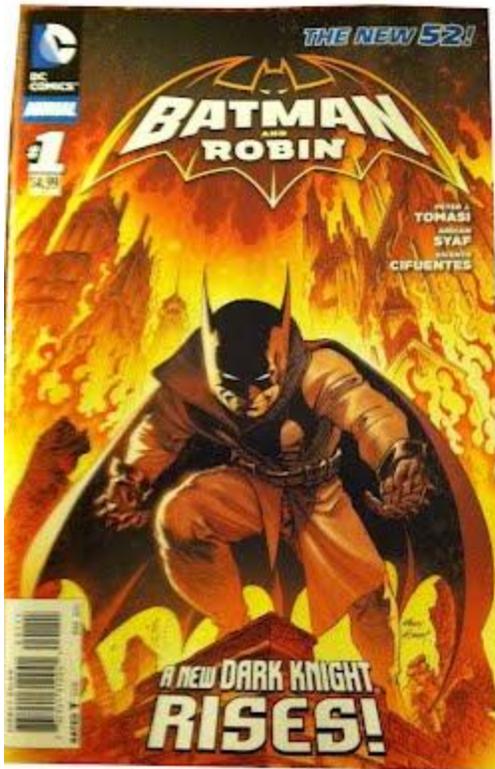
Hurwitz has written some crime novels and he decided to take his chance with a character that has a lot to do with the characters he writes about. So in that way it is a good fit. The story read like a crime novel since Batman had not been created yet it was just a typical crime story, guy wants to get revenge on person who killed his parents. And Hurwitz keeps it interesting. He has a different take on Batman other than Snyder and Tomasi, so he fits. He has taken over as writer of Batman the Dark Knight and his jumping on point just came out recently also, and i will be reviewing it soon. But he brings a different take to Batman and it is definitely interesting. Suayan and Ryp are almost identical with the way they do their art, so the joint art on the issue was fine. It stayed linear so there were no jumps in the art when they switched off. The only thing they didnt do was create interesting box formats. It was a straight forward approach to the art, which is fine, but sometimes you'd like to get some interesting composition.

STORY: B+

ART: B+

**BATMAN AND ROBIN ANNUAL # 1**  
**WRITTEN BY: PETER TOMASI**  
**PENCILS BY: ADRIAN SYAF**  
**INKS BY: VINCENTE CIFUENTES**  
**DISTRIBUTED BY DC COMICS**

Peter Tomasi started his comics career as an editor at DC. He did that for years, and gradually he worked his way into writing some scripts and some books. Soon Peter decided he wanted to be just a writer and not an editor, so he parlayed that into his work on the Green Lantern Corps, a great series



focusing on other Green Lanterns besides Hal Jordan. He then parlayed that into a gig writing the new Batman and Robin comic after Grant Morrison stepped down to write Batman Inc. Tomasi has very quietly become an A number one writer, but he does not get the attention or kudos that a Grant Morrison or Geoff Johns does, though he should. Tomasi knows about characters and he has some wild ideas that he can turn into a more realistic storyline. And it is excellent.

An annual is a double sized comic that comes out once a year. It used to be as a treat during the summer, but now

Annuals come out all the time now. Sometimes it is used as a the last part of a huge storyarc, much like Tomasi did with the Green Lantern Corps annual that came out a few weeks ago. Sometimes it is just to tell a story that does not fit into the regular book, or would be a multiple part story. That's the case with Batman and Robin Annual # 1.

A quick refresher. In the 5 years that Batman has been Batman (in the new 52) he has had 4 Robins. Comics fans are still trying to figure that out as well but it is what DC is doing now. Dick Grayson was the first and the oldest. He is now on his own as Nightwing. Jason Todd was 2nd and was killed by the Joker but resurrected as only comic characters can be by magic. He is now the brutal anti-hero The Red Hood. He fights bad guys, but he kills them instead of capturing them. Tim Drake was never really a Robin, but was Red Robin. He is now a member of the Teen Titans. And then there is Damian, who is Bruce Wayne's real son from a tryst he had with villainess Talia Al Ghul. He is learning to be a good Robin, while before he met his father he was trained as an assassin at a young age by his psycho mother. He's an annoying 10 year old who has an old soul and acts much older than his 10 years. In Batman's care he is both using that and also trying to get him to live a little like a young boy. So much so he has gotten him a dog and a cat and a cow to take care of, and he tries to do father son things that don't include crime fighting, but it is tough for Batman as well because he is in uncharted territory as well. Damian is also extremely intelligent as well. And this is the set up for the annual.

Damian has begun to realize that his father has lost some of his history and does not quite know the full history of his parents. So doing some research he sets Batman up on a trip across Europe. A scavenger hunt if you will. Damian is leaving clues in certain countries and Batman has to decode them while trying to catch up with Damian who is one step ahead of him. So he decides to leave Gotham in the care of his family, Nightwing, Batgirl, Red Robin, Red Hood et al and go on this trip as a way to not only connect with his history but also to connect with Damian. HOWEVER, Damian being a 10 year old, he actually is not in Europe, he is in Gotham by himself at the mansion. He gives Batman the clues via Green Screen and has used some tricks to have others set up the scavenger hunt. He does this because he wants to patrol on his own as mini Batman. And he does a great job. He needs a little independence, he's a kid.



Meanwhile Bruce and Alfred are discovering new things about the history of Bruce's parents. Plus Alfred reunites with his old theater troupe and before long he is trodding the boards at the Royal Shakespeare theater while Bruce continues the scavenger hunt alone discovering new things about his parents.

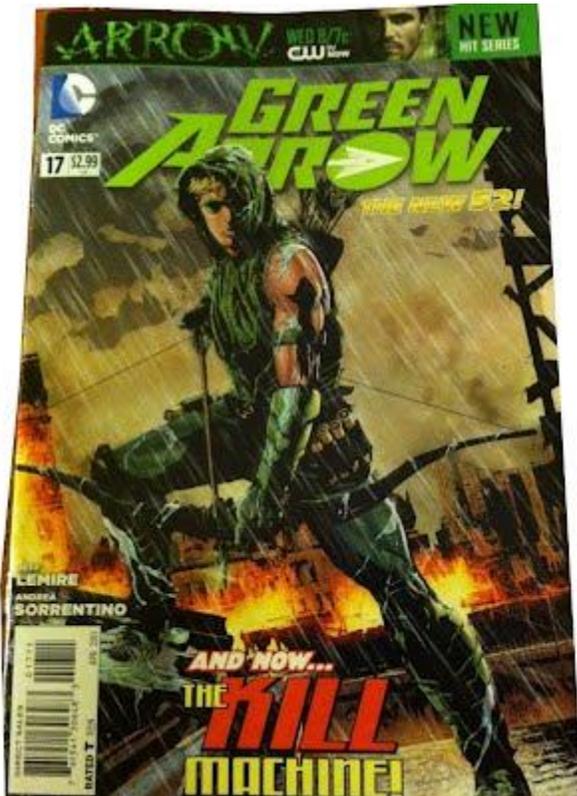
That's it. There is no great villain, no attack by the Joker. Just a 10 year old patrolling as mini Batman trying to solve a mysterious crime about a gas station robbery, and Bruce

regaining a little perspective about where he comes from and how his son, his flesh and blood set this all up for him to gain that perspective. Tomasi nails the story. It is by far one of my most favorite stories about Batman ever written. And it has less then Batman in it than you think. Syaf and Cifuentes artwork is crisp and clean and fun and it is a great respite from the darkness that has attached itself to Batman recently in the comics. And is a truly magnificent story. Then this week Tomasi wrote another brilliant issue of Batman and Robin which I will review soon. This one two punch has elevated Batman and Robin up there with the great work of Scott Snyder on Batman, making it a clear number 2 and pushing Detective Comics down the list. Highly recommended.

**STORY: A+**

**ART: A+**

**GREEN ARROW # 17 WRITTEN BY JEFF LEMIRE**  
**ART BY ANDREA SORRENTINO DISTRIBUTED BY DC**  
**COMICS**

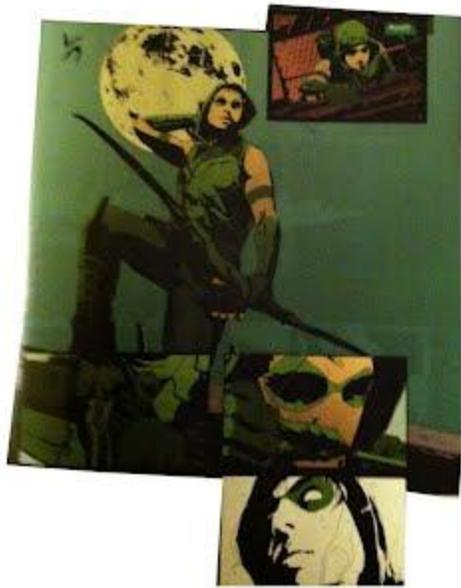


Jumping on points are a big deal in comics. One of the biggest fears of comic companies when trying to lure new readers is that the new reader will have no idea where to start with a comic. If a comic is on

issue 17 they will be afraid to pick it up because they are afraid that they will not be able to follow the story seeing as how they missed their first 16 issues. Now trades are a good starting point but they only really release 6 issues per trade, so if only one trade exists you will have issues 1 -6, but not 7-

12. You will have to wait until that trade comes out and it might not be for months. So occasionally the comic book either creates a natural jumping on point, or they hire a new creative team. In the case of Green Arrow that is what they did.

I have been an occasional reader of Green Arrow. I liked his 70s team up with Green Lantern which is some of the best comics ever written, then they rebooted him in the dark late 80s and early 90s. Gone were the trick arrows, in their place Green Arrow used real arrows and killed bad guys instead of capturing them. There were some good stories there, especially since many of them had mature themes in them. Then in the late 90s after the comics world collapsed, they came back with a missing son that he never knew he had. Then they killed him, as they had killed Superman, and



Batman, and Green lantern. It took Kevin Smith to bring Green Arrow back in the new century, and then Judd Winick from the Real World on MTV to write some of the best stories. Then they went all new 52 on us and de-aged Green Arrow to a young 20 year old. Coincidentally when a new tv series featuring a young Green Arrow was due to come out. I read the first issue and was meh about it so I did not read anymore. Then I read recently that Jeff Lemire, one of my favorite New 52 writers was hired to write the series. He was going to create a perfect jumping on point. So I figured why not check it out. Then I saw some of the preliminary artwork of the series and was blown away. I wanted to read the story. And I finally did.

In the span of his first issue, Lemire had Oliver Queen (Green Arrow) have his company taken out from under him while he was playing Green Arrow, his handpicked CEO is murdered in front of him with an arrow that had one of his tricks on it, he is discovered surrounded by blood and a window smashed open and blamed for the death of his CEO, then on the way to get his equipment from a different location that is protected by his friends, that building blows up along with regular office workers in side and all of his equipment. He goes to a safehouse and is soon trying to solve the attack when he is attacked and beaten to a pulp by the same guy who killed his CEO. He is then saved by a strange person who says that (in true Lost fashion) that he was not supposed to leave the island where he was stranded for a few years before the present day. End of the story. Ok Breath.

Lemire just pulls you right in to the worst day Oliver has ever had and does not let go. He gave us enough background that if we have never read or heard of Green Arrow before this issue, we should be

ok. Sorrentino's art is dark and moody which fits the story perfectly, though there are a little to many in shadows in some of the art and it's hard to tell who is talking. But that does not diminish the story or the art at all. A perfect jumping on point for those who may have gotten into Green Arrow while watching the successful Arrow tv series. I for one cannot wait to see where Lemire takes this.

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**STORY: A**

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**ART: A-**

**FAIRYQUEST:OUTLAWS #1**  
**WRITTEN BY PAUL JENKINS ART BY HUMBERTO RAMOS DISTRIBUTED BY BOOM STUDIOS**

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For the first time in my reviews, I am reviewing a book that just came out this week. Boom Studios is a medium sized distribution



company that releases a good number of comics. Some are family friendly. They have the rights to a Garfield Comic Book, a Peanuts comic book, Adventure Time comic book, and Planet of the Apes are just some of the books they work on. Another cool thing about this studio is a friend and former work colleague by the name of Filip Sablik who is the VP of Publishing & Marketing, something he is really good at. He is a good guy and I like to support my friends. But when they release books like



Fairyquest, it makes it really easy to support them.

Fairyquest: Outlaws is the first issue of a 2 part mini series. It is family friendly. There is a land where fairy tales are acted out whenever somebody reads the story. So the characters do the same thing over and over again without any deviation. So obviously after doing the same thing over and over again for millenia it is not surprising that some of the characters are getting bored and antsy to do other things, but cannot because they

are under the watchful eye of Grimm and his enforcers who notice every little deviation and if it goes to far they capture the character and put them in the mind eraser a device that erases their minds and makes them subservient again. A group of these characters are hiding in secret where they

learn that there is a place outside of their world where they can live as they want. However one of the characters is captured and is forced to turn on her fellow hiding characters.

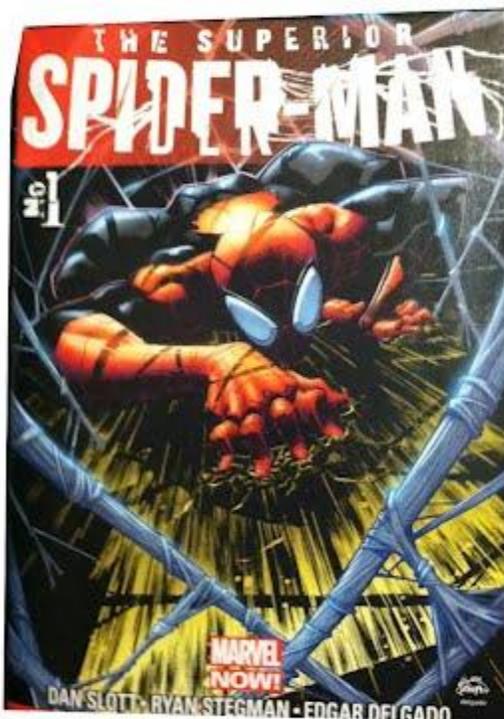
The main character is Little Red Riding Hood who has befriended the big bad wolf and they risk their lives to leave this land to live as they want. It's a quick read, but you get a feeling for these characters and feel bad for them having to live in such conditions. I mean just think if you do the same thing over and over and over

again with no deviations and you begin to see why some people will want to start to revolt. Jenkins does a good job giving the characters individual voices and also describing the horrendous conditions they are living in. Ramos art has always been slightly cartoonish and has a heavy manga influence. But it fits perfectly in this fairytale world. The ending introduces another fairy tale character which should make the second issue just as fun as the first. In local comic stores now. But probably in limited quantities. Well worth it.

STORY: A-

ART: A-

**THE SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN # 1**  
**WRITTEN BY: DAN SLOTT ART BY: RYAN**  
**STEGMAN PUBLISHED BY MARVEL COMICS**



Spider-man was my very first superhero. He was my first comic. He provides a connection with my dad who collected them when he was a teenager and he gave me his collection. I have a pretty good run of his book. During his 700 issues of his existence I probably have half of the books if not slightly more. I've collected him off and on for years and still do.

Marvel trying to breath some life into their books and take away some of the spotlight from DC announced last year Marvel Now, where they cancelled a number of their older books and restarted them with number 1s. However they did not totally change their continuity as DC did. They have new creative teams, new costumes, new superhero teams. And some new Status quos. That is what happened to Spider-Man.

The original run of Spider-Man finished up with a three issue story arc culminating in issue 700. In that story **(SPOILER ALERT)** A dying Doctor Octopus, a villain that has bothered Spider-Man since issue 3, is able to somehow transfer his mind into the body of the young, virile Peter Parker (AKA Spider-Man), while Peter's mind is put into Ock's dying body. So with his younger body and superpowers Ock decides to begin a quest for World Domination. He does have Peter's memories so he can easily pretend to be Peter. And Peter has all of Ock's memory as well. Somehow with his inner spirit Peter is able to escape and go after Ock to try and stop him. However it is almost too much for him and it looks like Ock is going to win until somehow Peter is able to bring forth all of his terrible memories and how he overcame adversity to the forefront, as well as all the guilt he carries. Now Ock has all of these memories that he does not want, put a dying Peter tells him he must carry on in a good fashion and redeem himself. And Peter dies in Ock's body. Ock declares he will be the best Spider-Man there ever was. End scene. Sigh. What a terrible ending. The villain wins and due to Peter's strong emotions of with great power comes great responsibility Ock all of a sudden changes his tune and says he will change. Hmm. No. Don't buy the change of heart. So i was very disappointed in the ending. But being the Spider fanatic I am. I had to see where Slott was going to take this.

I didn't hate the first issue of The Superior Spider-Man. It has Ock trying to be a good guy, while woing Mary Jane Watson, and working at Horizon Labs trying to fix the world. He stops crimes, helps police officers, still a little begrudgingly, but Spider-Man is finally being respected by New York. Ock as Peter works on creating new inventions to help save the world that are light years beyond



anyone else's work, and what is starting to tick him off is that Peter will get all the credit. Should have thought that through Ock. He is also lusting after the beautiful Mary Jane, because let's face it, Ock is a dweeb with a bad haircut, now he is a strong virile handsome guy. Of course he wants to jump a gorgeous woman. The main part of the story is Ock taking on a new Sinister Six, a team of six villains that Ock himself created a long time ago

(Amazing Spider-man Annual number 1 some time in the mid 60s). This team is filmed with a

bunch of lesser villains and this pisses Ock off so he uses his superior intellect to create new traps for the Six to beat them. And that is my favorite part of the book. Just the way Ock is able to use his head to defeat them is perfect. But at the end he is on the verge of beating the villain Boomerang to death when he suddenly stops and webs him up for the police then leaves feeling a little weird. We see that a spirit of Peter Parker was able to stay his hand and manipulate Ock from killing him. Meanwhile the spirit of Peter vows he will stop Ock somehow and get his life back. So Peter is still around there inside and now we just have to figure out how to get him back. This ending is a little better. But the overall story feels a little like change for change's sake and as a way to get as much publicity as you can. WE KILLED PETER PARKER! A VILLAIN IS SPIDER-MAN! it's an interesting story idea and I don't know how long it will last and what will happen in the future. I guess that is why we keep reading. And I will. Reluctantly.

Slott is a good writer and he loves Spider-Man. He has written him solo for a few years now, and a few years before that he was 1 of about 6 writers who wrote spider-man. He has written other stuff

that has been brilliant, and there is some good stuff in Spider-Man run, but I am still a little leery of this storyline. Ryan Stegman's art is very nice and looks very comic booky, which is a compliment. I'm gonna hang on for awhile to see where Slott goes, but I still have a bad taste in my mouth.

**STORY: B-**

**ART: A-**

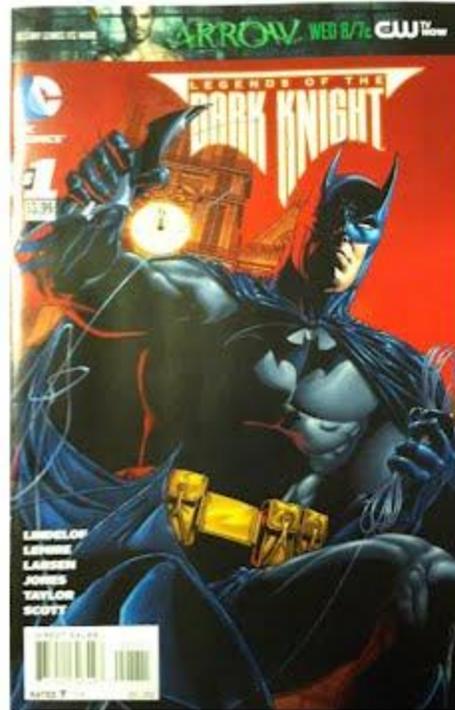
### **LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT#1**

**WRITTEN BY: DAMON LINDELOF, JONATHAN**

**LARSEN, TOM TAYLOR**

**ART BY: JEFF LEMIRE, JG JONES, NICOLA SCOTT  
AND WAYNE FAUCHER FROM DC COMICS**

Back in 1989 Batman was getting a rebirth with the Tim Burton film trying to clean the stink of the campy TV series from the 60s. The batman comics had a rebirth 3 years earlier with the release of both The Dark Knight Returns and Batman Year one. So he was becoming more popular and slightly darker character. The popularity had two Batman books in rotation at DC. Detective Comics and Batman. So they decided to release a 3rd one to commemorate the new film. This one was called Legends of the Dark Knight. except it would be different then the other comics. It would have different creative teams doing Batman stories from anytime in his career. From present day, to the past, to the future. It may even do imaginary stories as well. These stories would be able to roam free and not have to be in current continuity. This opened up opportunities for all kinds of writers and artists to do their ultimate Batman stories. The story arcs could be as long as 6 issues or as short as 1 issue. The series lasted around 250 issues I think. Then it was cancelled during the dark ages that were the 90s.



Fast forward to 2011. DC had decided to totally update and revamp their comics in the New 52 initiative. They cancelled ALL their comics and restarted 52 of them over from scratch. It has not gone well. But I digress. Another thing that came out of the new 52 initiative was their decision to also release their books digitally the same day. Soon DC announced they were going to create some digital first comics that would eventually be released in regular comic book form. Here is where Legends of the Dark Knight shows up.

Instead of multiple story arcs, they would release short stories by different comic creators once again anytime in Batman's history or future without in being canon. so they started to get released digitally first. They are now up to story #47 and the comics have just started to reprint them for those who did not want to buy them digitally. Since they were short they reprinted 3 per issue. This is the first issue.

Written by Damon Lindelof he of Lost, Prometheus, Star Trek and more writes the first story set during the very early part of Batman's career. Art is by excellent writer artist Jeff LeMire. Batman is cocky, he has had some success and it is going to his head. He is getting over confident and this worries his butler/helper Alfred. So he has to figure out away to ground Batman back to reality. Its a good story seeing a cocky Batman facing something he may not be able to defeat. Lemire is a great writer, his art is ok for me because he comes from independent comics where you typically dont draw superheroes so it looks a little odd.

STORY:A-

ART:C+

Jonathan Larsen writes a purely superheroic story with excellent art by JG Jones. This one starts out with Batman floating in space trying to figure out how to get back into the JLA Watchtower satellite that has been taken over by Amazo a villain that has every JLA members super powers and then how to defeat him. Here we get a fantastic look into how Batman's mind works and how he approaches an unwinnable situation and turns it into a winnable situation. I have never heard of Larsen but he writes a really good Batman. JG Jones as always draws very pretty pictures perfect for comics. Clean lines and good storytelling.

STORY: A

ART:A

Tom Taylor writes and Nicola Scott and Wayne Faucher on art on this story that throws Tim Drake Robin into the story with Batman as we see the detective work of the Dynamic Duo as they attempt to stop a man from comitting a crime before he even does it. Again I have never heard of Taylor but he comes up with a pretty straight forward fast story that keeps with the charecterization of Batman and Robin. Nicola Scott is one of the few female artists working on mainstream comics which is criminal since there are some brilliant

female artists and writers out there that should get a chance to work on mainstream books instead of cookie cutter no talent hacks from the 90s. But I digress. Wayne Faucher compliments Nicola's pencils well with his unobtrusive inking.

STORY: B+

ART: A

## **SAVAGE WOLVERINE # 1:** **Written and Drawn by Frank Cho From** **Marvel Comics**

Wolverine is by far the most popular of Marvel's characters with Spider-Man a close second. As proof Wolverine has a number of series devoted to just him. But he is also in the Xmen series of



Books and even the Avengers series of books. He also finds time to do lots of guest shots since Wolverine= CASH. He's got 1 solo movie with another one coming out this year, three Xmen movies and even a cameo in the "reboot" of the Xmen series of movies. He is also coming back as a regular to the "reboot" of the Xmen series of movies, when the sequel is released in a year or two. So as Marvel is undergoing a mini facelift of their series of books a new Wolverine books emerges. And it is nice to look at but...

Frank Cho is a local boy. He lives and works in Beltsville, Maryland. At one time was a syndicated cartoonist with his hilarious cartoon Liberty Meadows. Then Marvel snatched him up and have had him working non stop pretty much for years. His art is very clean and detailed and he loved to draw Women. And they are gorgeous. He is also a big fan of Dinosaurs and Monkeys so he tries to draw them as well as often as he can. His writing skills are good but his artwork is his selling point. So of course when he went to Marvel with what he wanted to do with Wolverine. Well why not?

The book opens with SHIELD the counter intelligence agency of the Marvel Universe investigating a mysterious island that is a part of the Savage Land. The Savage Land is a lush jungle where the past is still alive. Dinosaurs and giant monsters roam the land as do Kazar and Shanna a married couple who live their lives in the Jungle. Shanna has joined the SHIELD agents to investigate the mysterious island. They notice a mountain carved to look like a grotesque creature and all of a sudden power fails on the plane and they crash. Weeks later a bright light appears in the woods and Wolverine just appears unconscious. After he wakes up and gathers his wits. He takes on some natives then discovers the crashed plane and sees Shanna who he knows well. She explains all the Shield agents are dead and she is the only one left. She is trying to figure out a way off the island but much like Lost every attempt to escape the island results in failure. They have one last ditch effort to climb the mountain that is showing signs of having a transmitter which they can use to try to get a message out to the world. They are soon attacked by Dinosaurs and Wolverine trying to protect Shanna, who doesn't need it though gets carried away by a Pterodactyl then dropped from thousands of feet up. End scene.



The book is exactly what Frank Cho loves. Sexy women, giant dinosaurs and creatures, and a bizarre mystery that leaves you wanting answers. Though my one concern is that the set up seemed very LOST like with the island almost taking on sentience and not allowing anyone off the island. Plus we have to figure out how and why Wolverine got there. It's a good set up issue and you really don't need to know the characters to well since it is pretty well explained who they are. I will be checking it out to see what happens mainly because I love

Cho's artwork. It's very WHANOGGY!

With my reviews I think I will use a letter grade scale. A+ =BEST  
F=WORST

**STORY: B**

**ART: A+**