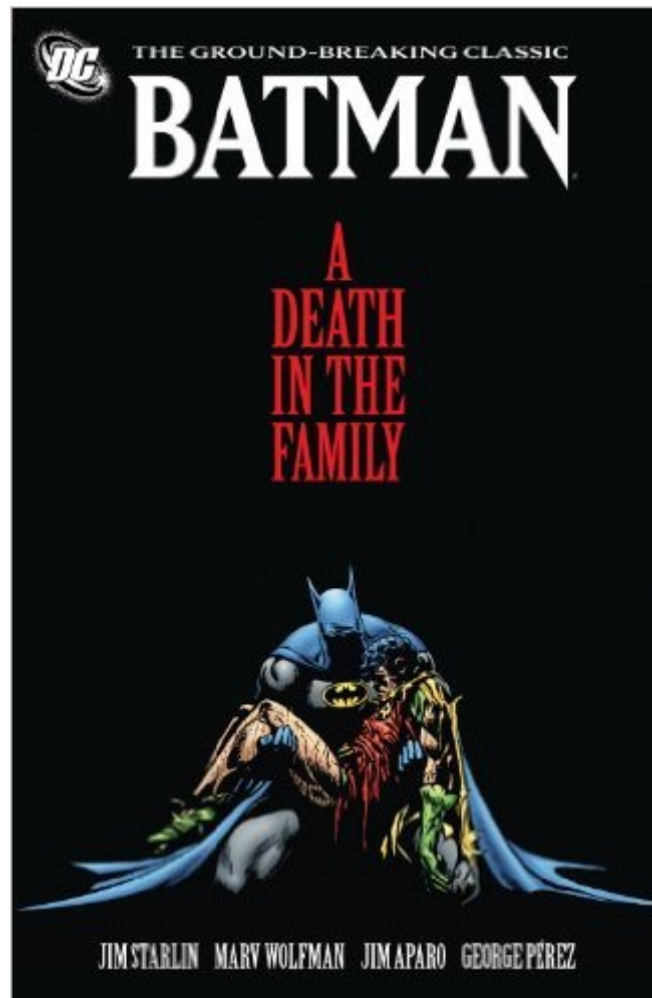


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# Batman: A Death In The Family



## Synopsis

Batman readers were allowed to vote on the outcome of the story and they decided that Robin should die! As the second person to assume the role of Batman's sidekick, Jason Todd had a completely different personality than the original Robin. Rash and prone to ignore Batman's instructions, Jason was always quick to act without regard to consequences. In this fatal instance, Robin ignores his mentor's warnings when he attempts to take on the Joker by himself and pays the ultimate price. Driven by anger with Superman by his side, Batman seeks his vengeance as he looks to end the Joker's threat forever.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It has been said that there are three milestones in the modern age of Batman: 1. The death of Thomas and Martha Wayne. 2. The alliance of Batman with the newly christened Robin, Dick Grayson. 3. The death of Robin II, Jason Todd. Chip Kidd mentions in his book "Batman Collected" that the name Todd echoes in the German word "Tod" which means death. It is no irony that Jason Todd represents loss and tragedy in the DC universe and he is remembered as a boy who fought in a man's war against crime. While many of the tragedies of Bat-lore are based on villains' origins, the impact of this story is heavily weighed upon a not-so-righteous Robin. Fan never bonded much with Jason, a hotheaded youth who grew up fending for himself on the streets of Gotham. His nature vs. nurture instinct left him with little sympathy for criminals. (He once pushed a rapist off a roof to his death.) This is not to say that all streetwise parentless children are juvenile delinquents but in the

case of Jason Todd, Batman was unable to successfully channel his inner rage into the more positive goal of Robin. "Death in the Family" unfolds as Jason goes off to Ethiopia in search of his long-lost mother. Bruce follows him and the two are caught up in a deadly battle of terrorists, betrayal, and the Joker. Despite Bruce's warnings, Jason's desire for truth blinds him from practical self-defense and he is lured into a trap before being beaten half to death by the Joker. Batman rushes to save him but it's too late and the Boy Wonder is finally annihilated in an exploding warehouse. The scene of a defeated Batman clutching Jason's bloodied body covered in tattered red and green rags is one of the most powerful iconic moments in all of DC's stories. The Joker's influence in Iran is a bit far fetched and has annoyed fans for its almost ridiculous stereotypes, but it only serves to channel the story along. After Batman returns to Gotham and buries Jason's body he discovers that his archenemy is rising up in the ranks of foreign alliance. Superman has to intervene to prevent Batman from bringing the wrong vengeance down for Jason's death. What made "Death in the Family" so powerful and a controversial best seller? Answer: The fans. DC allowed readers to call in by phone for two days to vote on Jason's outcome of the story: live or die. By a narrow margin in the ratings of fellow fans around the country, he was given thumbs down. I have heard in the world of the media, "There is no such thing as bad publicity". Hate mail did rain down on DC comics for doing this but the scenario just a small taste of how much of an influence the readers truly have on the outcome of a story. The story telling is adequate but what makes "Death in the Family" so influential is its titanic tragedy. Robin has been a part of the Bat-mythos since 1940 and his relationship with Batman has always not only been that of a mentor and a student, but as a father and a son. This book IS controversial but I believe DC knew they were taking a risk from the start. Those that read this story should be getting more out of it than a thrill or being disappointed if they don't like it. "Death in the Family" is a powerful reminder of the larger plan that works in the graphic novel market of a modern age audience. This story is one of the darkest of all dark stories, which says much for a serious hero like Batman whose origins are rooted in the death of his parents. The death of a surrogate son remains a stirring memorial in the Bat Cave where Jason's uniform hangs in a crystal case. The inscription reads, "In memory of Jason Todd. A good soldier." If the story leaves you feeling downtrodden and depressed, I recommend reading "A Hero Reborn" next as an uplifting tale of how the mantle of Robin found worthy hands in Tim Drake, the third Boy Wonder and the current one to date. For another brooding but even more bewildering and thrilling story, "Under the Hood" is a recent work of fiction by Jud Winick. It brings about a question that has haunted Batman for over 16 years now: "What if Jason was never meant to die?"

Before I even knew who Jason Todd was, I knew there was a Robin who died. I didn't start reading comics much up until recently, but I have always loved watching the cartoons (Batman the animated series, Batman Beyond, Justice League, and even a bunch of Marvel cartoons including Spider-Man and the X-Men) because my dad used to collect comic book movies. Sometime a year or two ago my husband and I were bored and headed to a local redbox to find some entertainment for the night. Under the Red Hood just happened to be in stock and as soon as we read the description the rabid geeks in us were like "OMG we have to see this tonight!!" Finally I was gonna learn a little something about Bat History! We were just blown away! If anything inspired my husband and I to start trying to read comics besides The Dark Knight movies, it was Under the Red Hood the animated film alone. We own the Blu-ray now and have watched all the documentaries on that disk more than once. We decided to get *A Death in the Family* as we started collecting and I just finished reading it. I was not disappointed in any way, shape, or form! And I still almost cried when Jason died (even though I knew it was going to happen anyways.) It took a tremendous amount of willpower to maintain my composure. The animation is also very good because you see sooooo much pain on Batman's face as he holds the young man hopelessly in his arms. It is now one of my top 3 and I have a feeling it will always be there. I did not find Jason to be the nasty smart @\$@ brute people claimed he was. Was he reckless, yes. Ruthless, a little. Human, Absolutely. More so than anybody in the bat family ever has been. If ever he was a jerk in the comics, as soon as you open up the pages you start to see him grow as a character and quickly at that. Which makes losing him at the end of the story all the more painfully profound and moving. You also see more of Batman's humanity too. You see how deeply he loves and cares even though he would never tell a soul. Most importantly, it reminds you that Batman is not infallible! It's a painful eye opener about what it costs to be "The Batman." It also raises the untimely question, What Price is too high for "Justice?" This book is a MUST if you have any interest in the graphic novels featuring Batman and it is as relevant today as it was 24 years ago. That is some strong staying power for a graphic novel that is almost a quarter of a century old. Lastly, what makes this edition extra awesome is that you get two 5 star stories for the price of one. *A Lonely Place of Dying* (the follow up) is included in this book as well and that story is equally wonderful and powerful. You see how much of a difference one random act of kindness from many years ago can make. The impact has the potential to be HUGE! You see exactly how much one moment can change your life. Whether it's for the better or the worse, it's completely up to you. And as a Fan Favorite, Tim Drake is a completely accessible, sympathetic, and rich character full of depth. He has incredible courage inspired by the compassion and enthusiasm only a child could have. This child is also a wise and very bright one, so it's

fascinating getting a peek into how his young mind works.

The events in this book are undoubtedly significant to the Batman mythos, I'm not arguing that. It's an historic moment that sees the end of Robin #2 (Jason Todd) and the introduction of Robin #3 (Tim Drake). The events in this book are still rippling out and effecting batman story arcs to this day. However, the actual story that revolves around these momentous events is "meh" at best. To put it lightly, it's a bit hokey. Hokey as in the Joker becomes a U.N. embassitor to Iran in order to gain diplomatic immunity for crimes committed. Now batman can't touch him! He's got diplomatic immunity! Gosh darn it! Hokiness aside, this book is surprisingly violent. I guess it makes sense since it came out roughly around the same time as Die Hard and all those other super violent action movies from the 80's. One thing that really bothered me was the joker's lack of facial movement. Almost every depiction of the Joker's face is seemingly a cookie cut image that never changes. It's almost as if the artist drew one face and then just copied and pasted it onto every other panel where the joker appears. It comes off as lazy and it distracted me from the story. This book also includes "A Lonely Place of Dying" which is the introduction of Tim Drake as the new Robin. It's a good read if you want to know some of Robin's back story. But it's no jaw dropper. Just saying.

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