

Chuck Dixon: Wingman

This January writer Chuck Dixon returns to **Nightwing** to tell a six-issue “Year One” story that bridges the gap between Dick Grayson’s last days as Robin and his start as Nightwing. Beginning in issue #101, Dixon, co-writer Scott Beatty and artist Scott McDaniel will reveal what really happened between Batman and Robin the day Dick was fired, why Dick chose the name Nightwing, and how this delicate time period impacted Dick’s relationships.

Nightwing: Year One marks the third mini-series of origin stories written by Dixon and Beatty. In the last three years they have delivered powerful tales about Robin and Batgirl, giving weight and meaning to formative events in Bat history that weren’t fully explored.

I talked to Chuck about what it’s like to write **Nightwing** again and what other “Year One” stories he might have up his sleeve.

MARKISAN NASO: With **Robin: Year One**, **Batgirl: Year One** and now **Nightwing: Year One** you and Scott Beatty have created a trilogy of connected miniseries that define the Batman sidekick mythos. Did you and Scott always plan to write a trilogy?

CHUCK DIXON: Actually, our dream is a whole darned bookshelf! I can’t see why this series of “Year Ones” couldn’t continue. They consistently rank at the top of DC’s sellers each year and backlist well. **Nightwing: Year One** leaves itself wide open to the same treatment for another character and we’d love to take the concept outside of the Bat crowd and do more.

NASO: What are some other characters you’d like to give the “Year One” treatment to?

DIXON: That would be telling. But a certain masked bowman would be fun to do, especially to show the transition period between the Silver and Bronze Age version.

NASO: Dick’s transition from Robin to Nightwing hasn’t really been given much attention. Why hasn’t this time period been explored until now?

DIXON: Dick’s transition from Robin to Nightwing is one of those “deleted scene” kind of deals. I think it was omitted because there was nowhere to run it. Back in the day there wasn’t a catch-all book for this kind of stuff and mini-series were few and far between. Lucky for me and Scotts (Beatty and McDaniel) this bit of business has never been visited by anyone.



NASO: How do you view Dick’s current relationship with Bruce/Batman?

DIXON: My understanding is that their relationship right now is worse than its ever been. That makes the timing of this arc particularly acute. I think it’s always been a father and son relationship. And for anyone who’s been a son or a father, or both, the signs are all there. Come to think of it, you kind of HAVE to be a son unless you’re a daughter, right?

NASO: You wrote the **Nightwing** ongoing series for six years (1996-



2002). What's it like to come back to the character?

DIXON: Dick Grayson lived and breathed, and thought like a real person to me when I was writing him. This is from the years of familiarity I had with the character. Even so, I was surprised how quickly I got back into his head.

NASO: Your scripts seem to bring out the best in Scott McDaniel's art. From your collaboration on **Nightwing** to **Richard Dragon** and back to **Nightwing: Year One**. Why do you and Scott work so well together?

DIXON: I give the guy room! He's one of the few artists I feel comfortable with leaving lots of space for. And even though he has this rep as an over-the-top action guy, he works SO many subtleties into his work! And you can look high and low and you'll never, ever find a more adept storyteller. His art paces out so perfectly. I guess we work well together 'cause I understand what makes Scott such a talent, and then hand him the best material I can and let him fly.

NASO: How much of an impact will the events in **Nightwing: Year One** have on Devin Grayson's current run on the title?

DIXON: We really didn't want to unconsciously telegraph current events so this is very much a stand alone story just like the other Year Ones.

NASO: Will **Nightwing: Year One** complete your exploration of Dick's past or are there more stories left to tell?

DIXON: I could surely do more. I'd love to revisit his time as Robin and his unrequited relationship with Babs. His first days at college could be fun. And there's lots of gaps in his career that haven't been explored.

NASO: Your run on **Nightwing** was (and is) highly regarded by fans. If you had the opportunity to write the ongoing series again what do you think you'd do with the character?

DIXON: I never think about that kind of thing until it's thrust on me. I took on the initial run after the original writers bailed and had three weeks to come up with the first script. Dick and the whole Bat crew are classic characters. I never felt as though I'd exhausted my ideas for them.

For a seven-page preview of **Nightwing #101** go to:
http://www.dccomics.com/media/excerpts/2520_x.pdf