Chapter 133: Plot for Wonder Woman

"Gail, good to see you," I said, rising from my chair.

Gail Simone approached with a warm smile, extending her hand. "Good to see you too, Daniel," she replied.

"Please, have a seat—the others will be here shortly," I said, gesturing to the array of chairs around the conference table. Today was a big day. We were reviewing the scripts for Wonder Woman and Superman. With Batman Begins already halfway through principal photography, we needed to expedite the next movies—Superman, and especially Wonder Woman.

The executives—Victor and his team—were insistent on releasing two movies in 2013: Batman in the summer and Wonder Woman later that year. That wasn't part of my original plan; I'd hoped for a more staggered release schedule to give each film its space. But this demand was non-negotiable, and even Dave was confident we could pull it off. So here we were, aiming to finalize Wonder Woman's script and begin pre-production by August. It was doable, though I would have preferred more time.

Soon, the others began to filter in: Dave; Jenna Wells, the Head of Casting; Jeremy Lynn and Luke Harmon, the screenwriters; Emily Vaughn, the Talent Relations Manager; Scott Snyder, and other executives.

After a few minutes of greetings and small talk, we settled in. Dave cleared his throat, getting straight to business.

"Alright, let's get started. We need to finalize the script for Wonder Woman this week," he began briskly. "We've got three completed scripts and a list of potential directors."

We had already read the scripts; today's meeting was to select which one would be best.

I stood up and walked over to the large TV screen on the wall, using the remote to display a slide. The screen showed a timeline with four movie titles and tentative release dates.

"As you can see," I said, gesturing to the screen, "Batman Begins will be our first movie, set for release next year. We'll follow up with Wonder Woman toward the end of the year." I paused for effect. "That means two movies for 2013."

Jenna leaned forward slightly. "Are we planning for two movies in 2014 as well?"

I shook my head. "That depends on how Batman performs. If it does well, I imagine we'll be pushed to rush Superman into 2014."

In my mind, Superman was always slated for a 2015 release, but given the current momentum, if Batman did well... I was sure they'd ask us to accelerate things. I caught Dave's gaze; he nodded in agreement, looking focused.

He gestured toward the folder in front of him. "Alright, let's move on and finalize which script we will be moving forward with. We've all read them, so let's start with the first one Gail wrote."

"She only had to write one, but she wrote two—that's something I like to see," Dave added, amusement lacing his voice.

Gail shrugged lightly, a grin tugging at her lips. "Had too many ideas," she said, eliciting polite laughter from the room.

Both of Gail's scripts were set in the modern day, while mine, like the Wonder Woman movie from my old world, was set in World War I.

The first script, in my opinion, was the weakest. It focused more on Themyscira and had less to do with what was happening outside of it. It featured Circe as the big bad, but overall I felt it was underwhelming—even though it went deeper into Amazon lore and highlighted more Amazons beyond Diana.

Circe, a powerful sorceress, trades her soul to a dimension of Hell in her quest for immeasurable magic. Regretting her decision, she becomes obsessed with reclaiming her soul, believing it to be hidden behind the Pandora Pits—a mystical gateway to Hell located at the heart of Themyscira, the island home of the Amazons. For centuries, Circe has attempted to breach the Pandora Pits, only to be consistently thwarted by the Amazons, led by Queen Hippolyta. The Amazons are dedicated to sealing the Pandora Pits to protect both their island and the world from the monsters within. While Hippolyta is content with this ongoing defense, her daughter Diana aspires to go beyond mere containment to secure lasting peace for her people.

Steve Trevor, an agent investigating unexplained phenomena occurring around the world, crashes on Themyscira. He is caught and interrogated by the Amazons. Unbeknownst to Steve, Circe has manipulated events to use him as a means to infiltrate the island's defenses. Shortly after his arrival, Circe launches an attack and partially opens the Pandora Pits, unleashing creatures from Hell. A fierce battle ensues between the Amazons, Circe, and the summoned monsters. After the confrontation, Circe retreats. Defying her mother's wishes, Diana vows to pursue Circe into the world of man, taking Steve as her guide. Leaving Themyscira, Diana navigates modern society, experiencing its complexities through her interactions with Steve. She encounters the values, chaos, and beauty of the contemporary world, leading to moments of bewilderment, humor, and personal growth. During this journey, she forms a deepening bond with Steve.

The movie ends in an ancient temple beneath Washington, D.C., where Circe succeeds in opening another portal to Hell. Her aim is to unleash the horrors of the Pandora Pits upon the world and regain full control of her powers. Diana confronts Circe in a magical and intense battle, pitting Circe's sorcery against Diana's warrior skills. Ultimately, Diana prevails by closing the portal and thwarting Circe's plan. In the aftermath, Circe is defeated, and Diana chooses to remain in the world of man, recognizing that her purpose extends beyond Themyscira.

I got straight to the point with my opinion on the first script. "It's well-written, but I felt like it belonged to an animated movie, not a feature film, especially for the DCU."

Jeremy backed me up. "I'm sure Victor would love it—he's been wanting to kickstart our animated ventures. But I agree with Daniel; this doesn't fit what we're going for."

"Exactly why I started working on the second one," Gail said. "But if you can use this in any other capacity, I'd be happy to see it happen."

I then spoke up, "I think everyone here who's read the second script will agree it's the much better one."

Emily looked curious. "What about the third one—the one you and Scott came up with?" she asked me.

"That can be the backup," Scott said, breaking his silence.

I gave a quick dismissive wave. "Let's not get into that now. Let's move on to the second one."

The second script, in my opinion, was the best. It had the same plotline—Steve crashes, Diana leaves Themyscira—but with more fun and intriguing characters, a better villain, and a more engaging storyline. It balanced the modern world elements and the mythological aspects perfectly.

The story begins by explaining what the Spear of Destiny is—a powerful and corrupting artifact prophesied to unleash untold darkness upon the world if ever wielded. It is explained that the Amazons guard a relic that would lead someone to it.

Diana, the queen's curious and headstrong daughter, yearns to explore the outside world but is forbidden by her mother. The island's tranquility is disrupted when the Amazons detect disturbances in their magical barriers, suggesting that an external force is seeking something on Themyscira.

Steve Trevor, an agent investigating an organization known as Leviathan, crash-lands on the island. Diana captures and interrogates him, learning that he was following Leviathan's trail to this uncharted location. His warnings prove timely as Leviathan, led by the ruthless Paula von Gunther, invades Themyscira. Paula is a misanthropic ideologue intent on "purifying" humanity by eliminating its perceived weaknesses.

Despite the Amazons' valiant defense, Leviathan secures a key relic that reveals the location of the Spear of Destiny. In the aftermath, Steve informs the Amazons about Leviathan's extreme plans. Determined to stop Paula and against her mother's wishes, Diana leaves Themyscira with Steve to pursue Leviathan.

Arriving in the modern world, Diana is both fascinated and overwhelmed by its complexities—the rapid pace of life, technological advancements, and societal contradictions. Steve becomes her guide, helping her navigate this new environment. They ally with Etta Candy, a skilled intelligence operative with whom Diana forms a quick bond.

There is also a small cameo by Barbara Ann, a young archaeologist intrigued by Amazonian history, setting up Cheetah for future movies.

Leviathan, an extremist offshoot of the League of Shadows, aims to cleanse humanity, a philosophy deemed too radical even by the League. As Diana witnesses the world's beauty and flaws—Steve's disillusionment, Etta's struggles in a male-dominated field, and widespread moral ambiguities—she grapples with her mission to save a seemingly conflicted humanity.

Throughout their journey, Paula taunts Diana, questioning her dedication to protecting a flawed world. Despite these challenges, Diana finds hope in small acts of kindness and resilience displayed by ordinary people. Bolstered by these observations, she remains committed to her mission.

The story ends in the American Southwest, where Paula has located the Spear's resting place within a hidden sanctuary. Using the relic stolen from Themyscira, Paula unlocks the Spear and prepares to perform a ritual to cleanse humanity. Diana, Steve, and Etta race to stop her.

In the final battle, Paula wields the Spear to conjure powerful illusions, attempting to manipulate Diana by showcasing humanity's darkest aspects. The confrontation tests Diana's physical prowess and moral convictions. Drawing strength from the positive experiences and the potential for good she has witnessed, Diana resists the illusions. She overpowers Paula and destroys the Spear of Destiny, thwarting Leviathan's plan.

With the threat neutralized, Diana faces the choice to return home but decides to remain in the modern world. Recognizing humanity's capacity for growth and redemption, she commits to being a beacon of hope and a bridge between Themyscira and the world of man.

There was room for improvement in the script, but it was good enough for me. Wonder Woman was an important character among the Trinity.

Batman approaches problems with a cynical mindset, often preparing for the worst. He operates from the shadows, and his distrustful, sometimes brutal methods stem from years of battling the darkest elements of humanity. His cynicism isn’t entirely negative; it keeps him sharp, prepared, and capable of facing horrors that others might overlook.

Superman, on the other hand, is driven by hope and an unwavering belief in the goodness of humanity. Raised in Smallville, he sees the best in people and believes that they can always be inspired to do good.

Diana serves as the grounding force of the Trinity, embodying a realistic, balanced perspective shaped by her dual heritage as both Amazonian royalty and an outsider in the human world. She understands the complexities of human nature and holds a tempered view of both their virtues and flaws. Wonder Woman's wisdom and compassion make her more pragmatic than Superman but less cynical than Batman.

"So we are agreed, then, to move forward with the second script?" I asked.

"Yes, it needs some more work, but I like the direction of this one," Scott said.

Scott's opinion was echoed throughout the room; it looked like everyone was in agreement. The second script did have a complex narrative and a more compelling villain. For me, there was also the fact that Leviathan could easily be connected to the League, allowing me to add more connections to Batman.

The script also set up Cheetah for future movies, so it hit all the right places.

There were more discussions of changes to be made in certain parts—some were rejected, and others were considered. Finally, Dave gave the final word.

"I think we can all agree here," Dave said, his voice carrying a hint of finality, "that we can move forward with this one."

"Yes," I said, leaning forward slightly. "I believe we should."

The others nodded, murmuring their agreement.

"Alright," Dave said, giving Gail a respectful look. "Gail, how long do you think it'll take you to perfect the final draft?"

Gail thought for a moment, tapping a finger against her chin. "I'd say about a month. That should be enough time to polish it, add some of the things you want, and make sure everything flows properly."

I nodded, relieved. "Good, that keeps us well within our schedule."

"Perfect," Dave said, a satisfied smile crossing his face. He leaned back in his chair and looked around the room. "How about we take a break now and return afterward to discuss the rest of the agenda."

The room began to clear as people stood up, chatting among themselves, praising Gail's work, and making plans for lunch.

As I was about to leave, Dave approached me, his expression turning a bit more serious. "Oh, Daniel, just to give you a heads-up—Victor will be joining us after lunch."

I sighed, my tone turning sarcastic. "Oh, joy. Is Victor here to push for even more movies next year?"

Dave gave me a resigned look. "Look, let's just keep Victor happy. We don’t need to get on his bad side right now. There are still plenty of people who aren't entirely convinced about the DCU. We just need to show them how big this will be. Until then, we don't need to ruffle any feathers."

I gave a small nod, my expression tightening. "Yeah, I get it," I said, my voice laced with irritation. "I just wish I didn't have to manage all these egos."

Dave gave me a sympathetic smile. "You're doing great, Daniel. Just keep your cool. We'll get there."

‘Sometimes I think these people hate money,’ I thought as I walked away.