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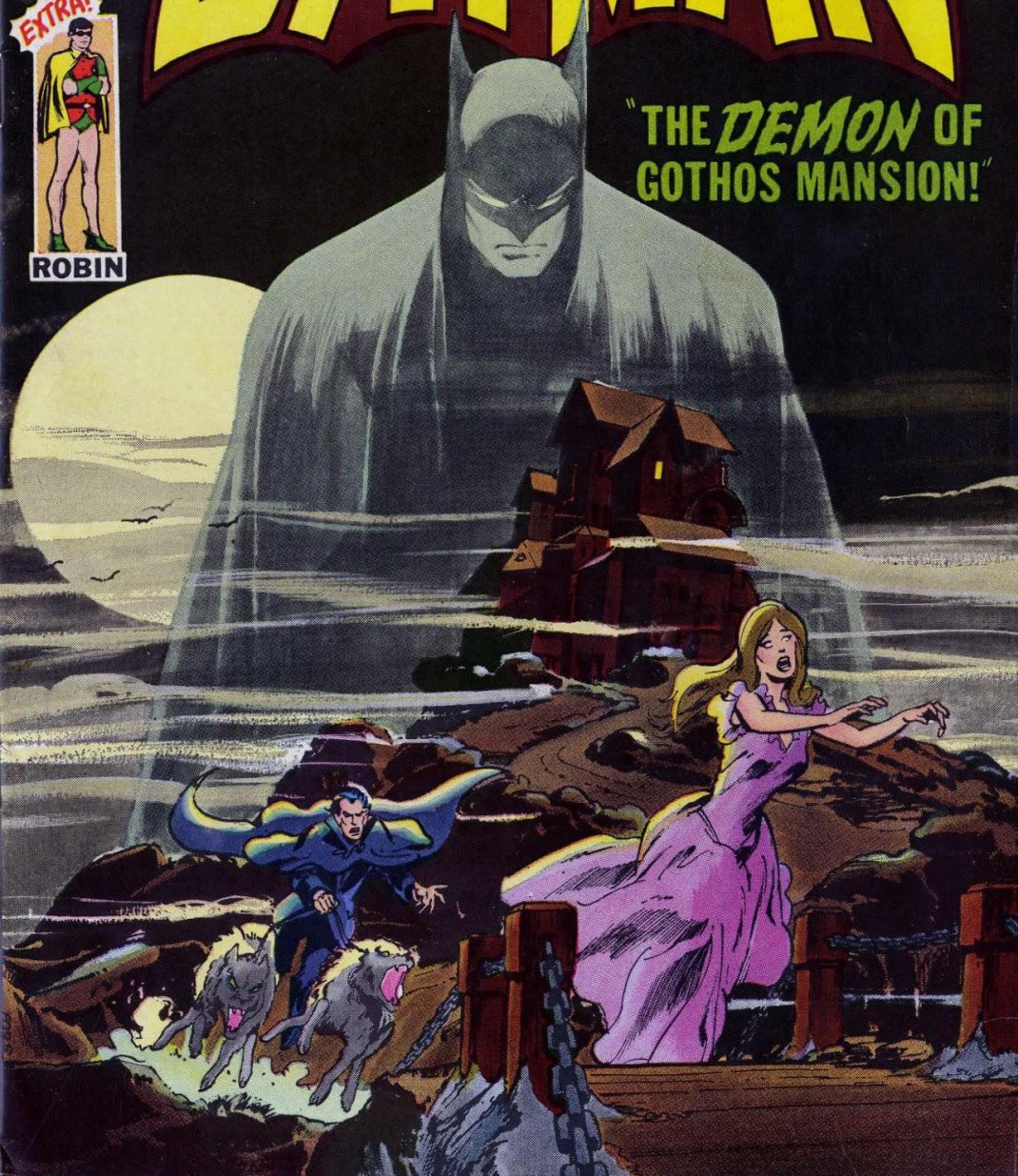
NO. 227
DEC.

DC
BATMAN



BATMAN

"THE DEMON OF
GOTHOS MANSION!"



MEAN™

MAVERICK

Wicked and rugged. And as fierce as they come.

That's the MEAN MAVERICK! Monogram's hottest funny car to shoot from the starting line yet. And concocted by California designer, Tom Daniel.

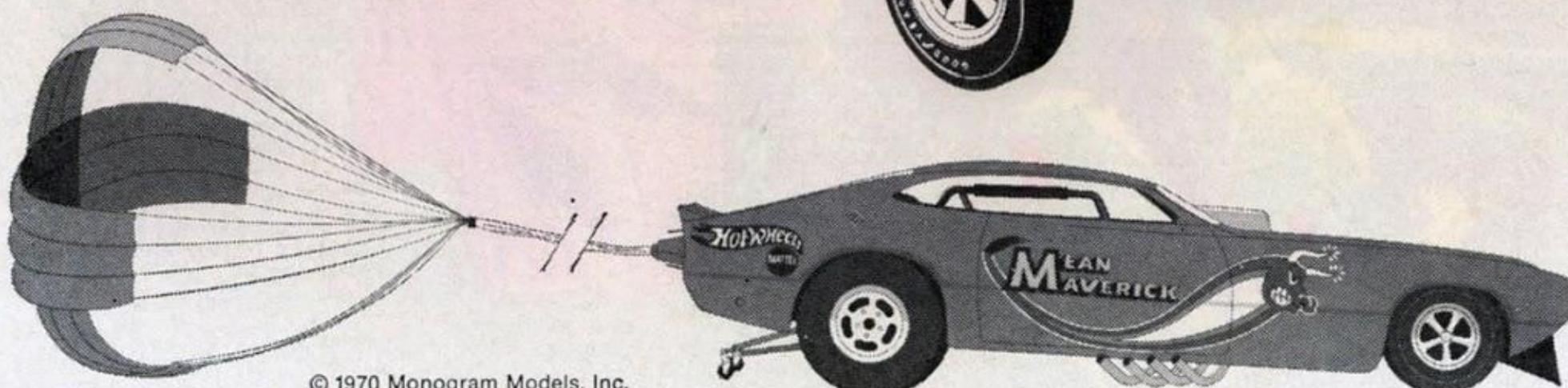
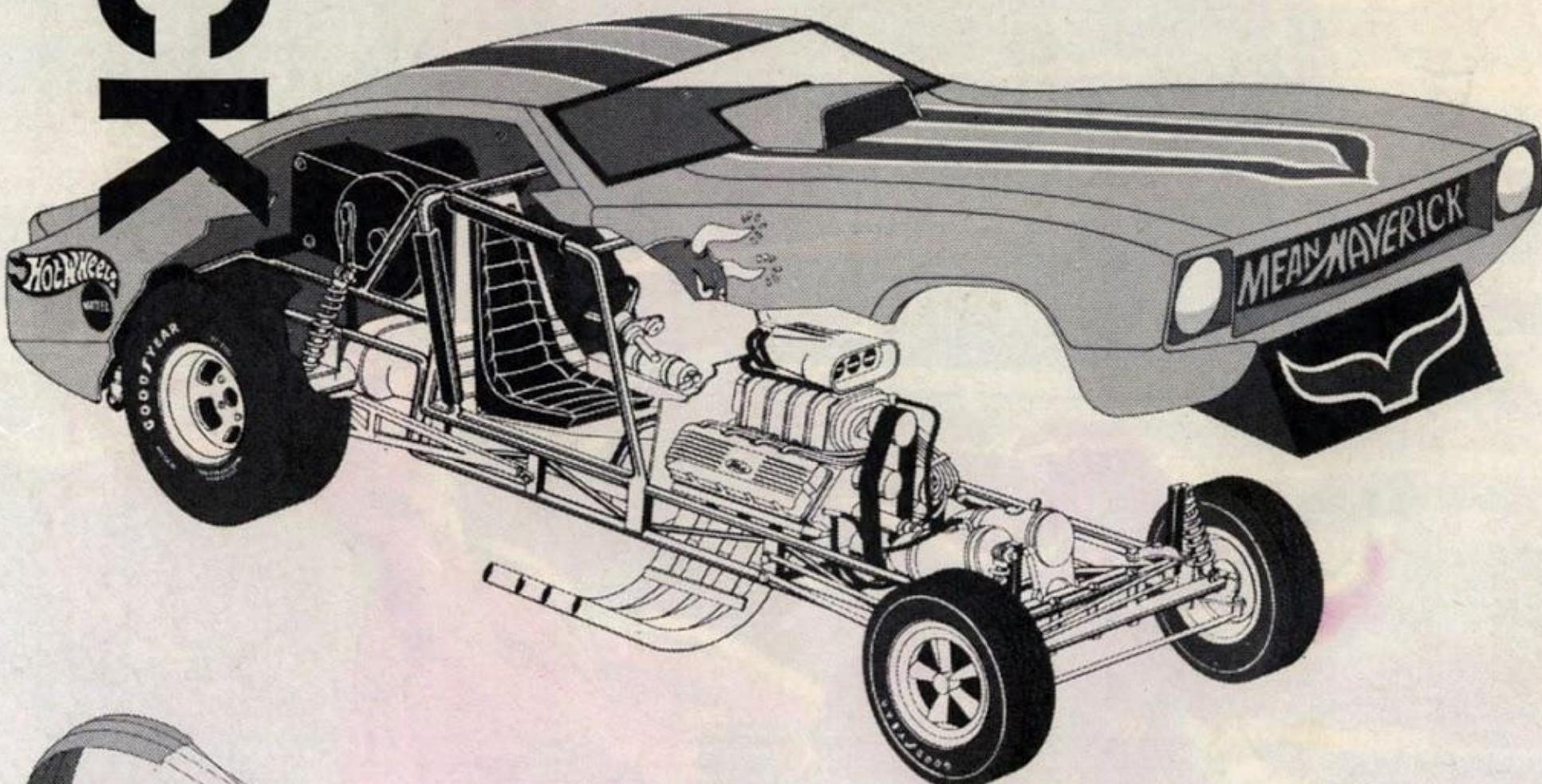
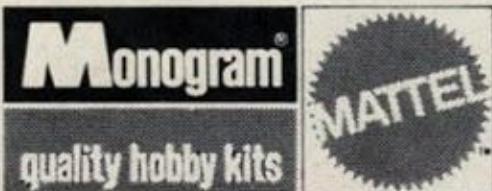
Punch the pedal and up comes the chopped shell. With a dynamite Ford 427 blown mill whining underneath.

With every nitty-gritty detail cut down to 1/12 scale.

Like the custom-designed tubular chassis. Super fuel and water tanks running up front. Front-end spoiler. And fully opened braking drogue chute.

Plus blazing fat slicks on racing mags.

Dig the Funny Car of all times... the MEAN MAVERICK!



IN ALL THIS BLEAK, CAVERNOUS COUNTRY-SIDE THERE IS BUT A SINGLE GLEAM OF LIGHT--A YELLOWED LUMINESCENCE GLOWING IN A CRUMBLING TOWER--

--AND THEREIN STANDS A LOVELY GIRL, TROUBLED, TERRIFIED--

-- WHILE WITHOUT, AN EERIE FIGURE GLIDES OVER THE TANGLED GROUNDS AS SILENT AS A SHADOW ON SNOW.

NO NOISE, NO MORTAL SOUND BREAKS THE SHROUDED STILLNESS, SAVE THE SCRAPING TOGETHER OF SKELETAL LIMBS IN THE TOPS OF ANCIENT TREES... AND A DISTANT, AGONIZED HOWL THAT MAY BE AN ANIMAL PLEADING FOR THE MOON, OR MAY NOT!

Follow The **BATMAN** as he plunges into the morass of evil where lurks--
The Demon of Gothic Mansion!

STORY: Denny O'Neil

ART: Irv Novick and Dick Giordano

S-516

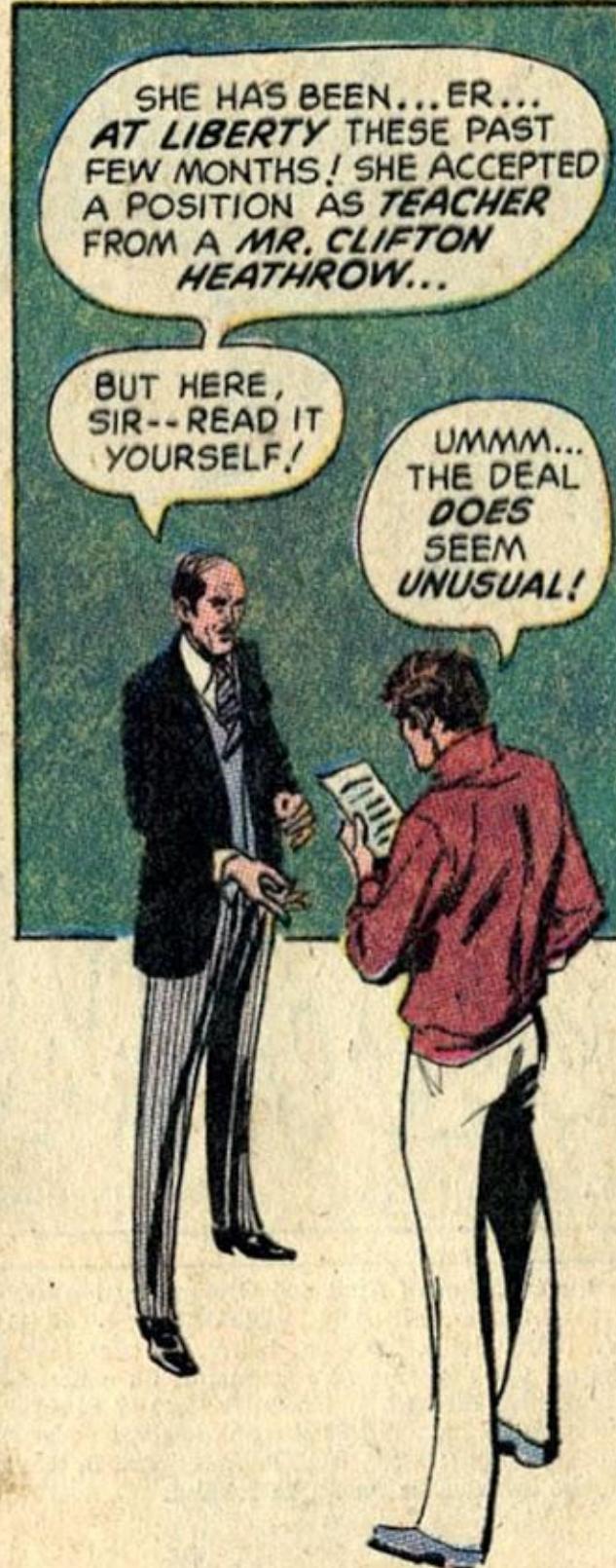
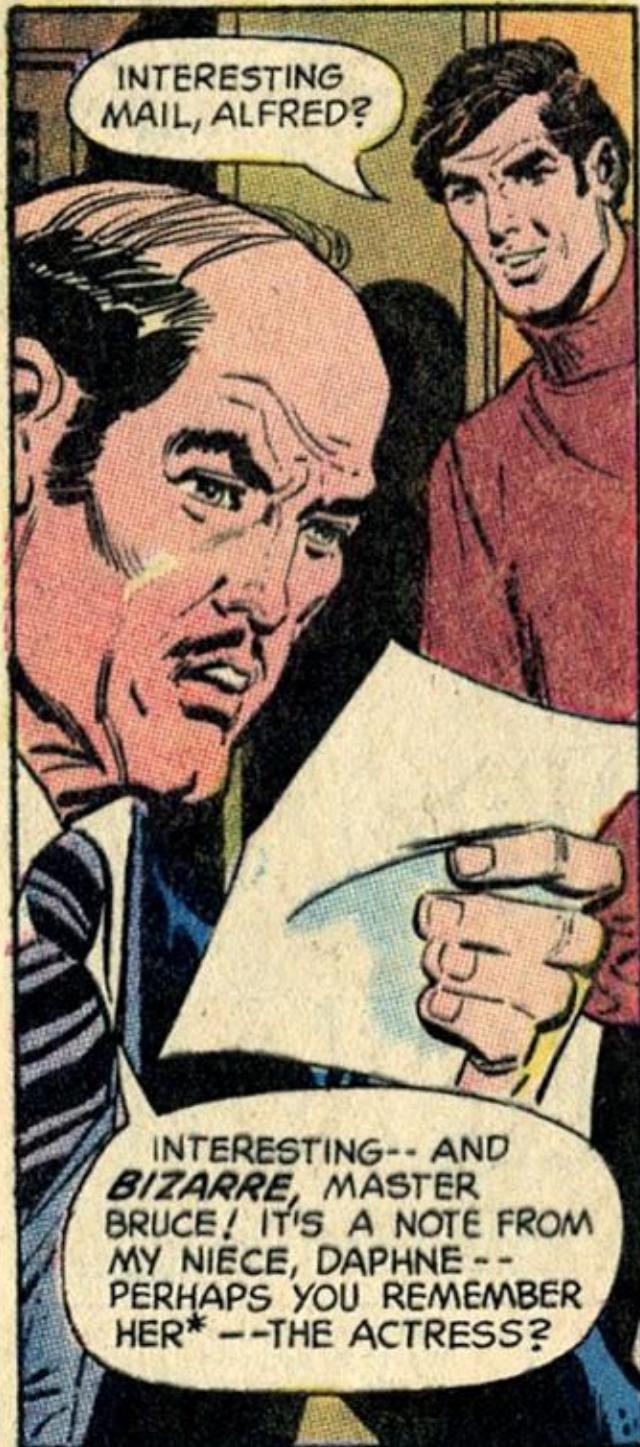
1

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all!" to
a
IT BEGAN JUST TWO
DAYS AGO, WITH THE
ARRIVAL OF A LETTER--
and so, dear uncle, while
my employer seems gentlemanly, I
can't help feeling that something
strange is happening here. The
house is remote and isolated,
and the children I have been
hired to tutor seem, to put it
mildly, very odd indeed.
I hope you are well. Give
my regards to Bruce Wayne
and Dick Grayson.

Your loving niece,
Daphne.



*NOTE: AND YOU REMEMBER HER, READER OF OURS, IF YOU THRILLED TO HER FIRST APPEARANCE IN "ANGEL--OR DEVIL" BATMAN #216! -- Editor.

THUS IT IS THAT THE CAPE CRUSADER STANDS ON A BARREN ESTATE IN THE MOUNTAINS A HUNDRED MILES FROM THE NEAREST TOWN--

THOSE FELLOWS APPEAR TO BE GUARDS! I COULD EVADE THEM--EASILY!

--BUT I'M CURIOUS...

...WHY WOULD ANYONE POST WATCHMEN HERE? I'LL TEST THEIR HOSTILITY--BY SHOWING MYSELF!

GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN! BIT NIPPY FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR, ISN'T IT?

EH--? WHO BE THAT?

'TIS A GIANT BAT!

NONSENSE YOU TALK, EPHRAIM! 'TIS NO MORE THAN A MAN! STRIKE A FLAME--WE'LL HAVE A LOOK AT HIM!

FEEL FREE! MIND TELLING ME THE NAME OF THIS PLACE?

GOTHOS MANSION-- AND WE'VE NO LIKING FOR STRANGERS!

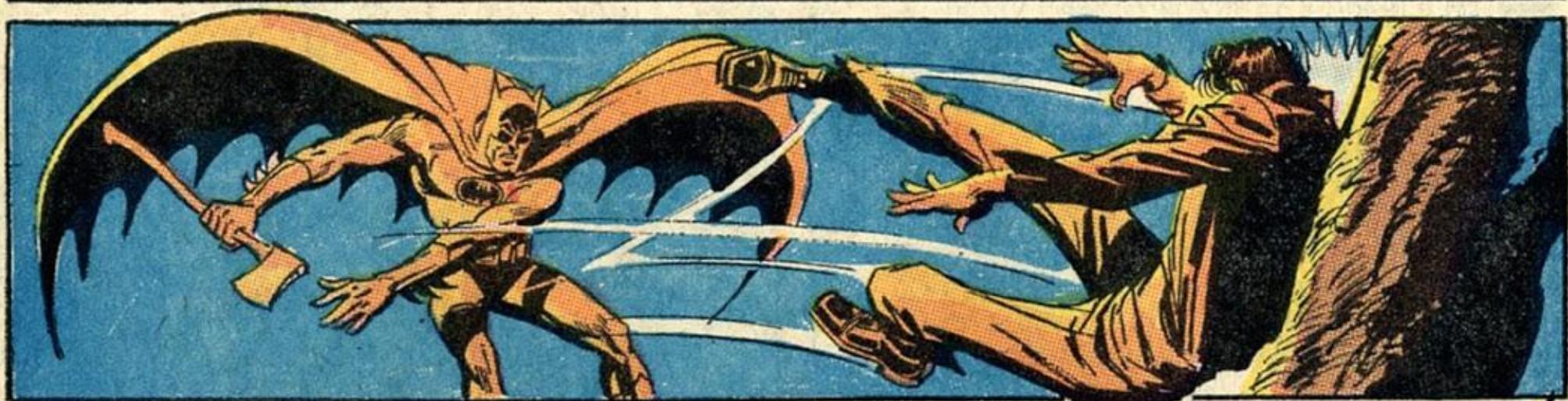
WELL, NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN ME, I'LL BE STROLLING ON!

BUT NOT FAR--!

WHEN THEY SAID THEY DIDN'T LIKE STRANGERS --THEY WEREN'T KIDDING!

FORTUNATELY, I WAS PREPARED FOR A SNEAK ATTACK!

FOR LONG YEARS, THIS BATMAN HAS TRAINED--AND OTHER MEN, ARMED THOUGH THEY BE, ARE NO MATCH FOR HIM...



SWIFTLY, NOISELESSLY, THE BATMAN
CROSSES THE GROUNDS, AND...





ALMOST AS THOUGH
HE WERE WEIGHTLESS,
THE BATMAN RISES
UP THE SMOOTH,
STONE TOWER ...

SO THAT'S
WHERE I
BEGIN
LOOKING
FOR DAPHNE!



THE--
BATMAN--!!

I'VE COME
TO TAKE YOU
AWAY FROM
HERE, DAPHNE!



PLEASE... PLEASE,
MISTER HEATHROW--
LET ME OUT!

YOU HAVE
NO CAUSE FOR
FEAR, MISS
PENNYWORTH!



THANK HEAVEN!--
IT'S BEEN HORRID!
THEY MADE ME WEAR
THESE AWFUL, OLD
CLOTHES... THEY'VE
KEPT ME LOCKED
UP...

...AND THE CHILDREN
I WAS HIRED TO
TEACH... I DISCOVERED
THEY'RE NOT **REALLY**
KIDS--THEY'RE A
PAIR OF HIDEOUS
DWARVES!

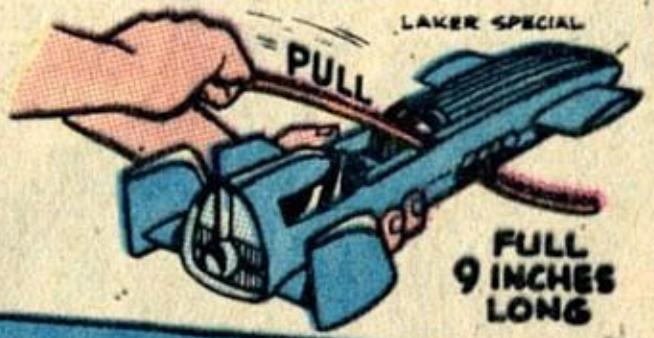
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WITH FANTASTIC

GYRO-POWER



ONE QUICK PULL REVS
POWER WHEEL UP TO 20,000 RPM
AND...



Kenner.

THEY'RE OFF!

**FAST!
400 SCALE MPH!**
**NO TRACK!
NO BATTERIES!
NO MOTOR! NO PUSH!**

BILLY'S SSP ELIMINATOR TAKES THE LEAD!

TOMMY'S SSP SIDEWINDER TOOK HIM ON THE JUMP!

THE SSP SKI-BALLER AND TEE-RIFFIC ARE NECK AND NECK!



BOBBY'S SSP CAN-AM RACER NOSED OUT THE SIAMESE SLINGSHOT!

WHAT A RACE!
WHAT A FINISH!

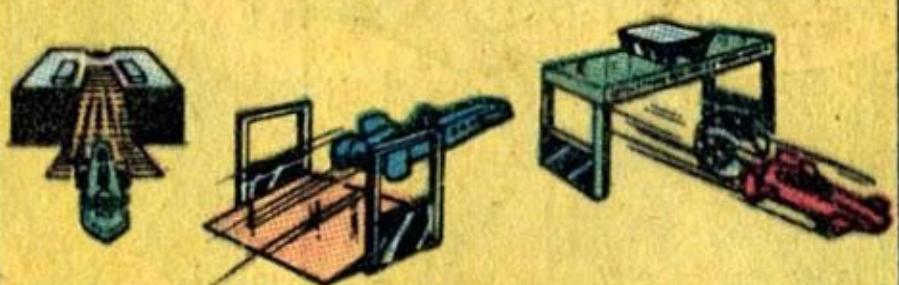
WHAT BIG RACING FUN!



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SSP THRILL-PAK!**

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**10 INDIVIDUAL RACERS
COMPLETE WITH POWER T-STICK
READY TO RACE!**

I'M SUPPOSED
TO SPEND MY TIME
LOOKING AT THESE
OLD PAINTINGS!

THAT
WOMAN...SHE
LOOKS LIKE...AND
IS DRESSED LIKE
YOU! I WONDER
HOW--?

WE'LL
FIGURE IT
OUT LATER
AFTER I GET
YOU TO
SAFETY--!

THEY MAY HAVE
SPOTTED MY ROPE, SO--
THIS LOCK IS OLD...
RUSTY... SHOULDN'T BE
TOO DIFFICULT TO
BREAK!

WA-REENK!

THERE--! I'LL
GO FIRST! STAY A
FEW FEET BEHIND
ME... JUST IN CASE!

NOBODY SEEMS TO
BE IN THE HOUSE...
THEY'RE PROBABLY ALL
GETTING READY FOR
THE FESTIVITIES--!

BUT... SUDDENLY... THE ANCIENT
FLOOR GIVES WAY... AND BEFORE
THE BATMAN CAN REACT, HE IS
PLUMMETING DOWNWARD...



COIN CURIOS

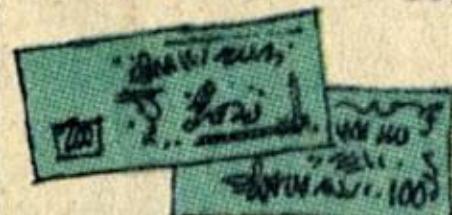
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\$1000.00

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you might find on a letter today! or you could find others that just sold for a few hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars, in your mail or on old letters.



HERE IS A SMALL SAMPLE LIST OF WHAT WE WILL PAY FOR CERTAIN SPECIAL STAMPS OF THESE ISSUES"

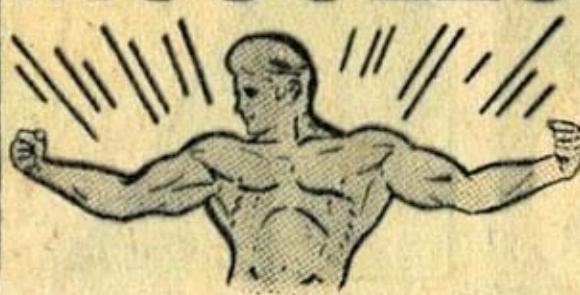
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FOR YEARS,
I SEARCHED
FOR A MAIDEN
BORN PRECISELY
AT MIDNIGHT
ON OCTOBER 31ST

... A MINUTE
EITHER WAY
WOULD NOT
HAVE
SUFFICED!

FOR IF SUCH
A ONE IS
SACRIFICED THIS
NIGHT, THE SPIRIT
OF **BALK** WILL
ARISE ONCE
MORE!

SIX GENERATIONS
MY FAMILY HAS LIVED
TO DO THIS DEED!

AND MISS
PENNYWORTH
FULFILLS YOUR
CONDITIONS?

YOU
REALIZE,
YOU'RE
MAD?!

NOT AT ALL! MY
ANCESTOR ACTUALLY
SUCCEEDED IN LIBERATING
THE DEMON!

THE GHOST OF
THE MAIDEN
THEN SLAIN STILL
WALKS THESE
VERY HALLS!

AND NOW--
FAREWELL!

ALREADY... HARD TO
BREATHE! I WON'T LAST
FIFTEEN MINUTES!

TOES BARELY
TOUCHING
THE PLATFORM
BUT THERE IS A
CHANCE... A
SLIM ONCE...

THAT TORCH!
IF I CAN TENSE MY
NECK MUSCLES...
KEEP FROM
STRANGLING...

...START MYSELF SWINGING FORWARD...

...NOW BACKWARD...

...TO GATHER ENOUGH MOMENTUM...

...TO REACH IT...

MADE IT!
NOW TO TWIST AROUND!

GOTTA GET MY HANDS LOOSE...

BURNS LIKE THE DEVIL...BUT BETTER BURNS THAN DEATH!





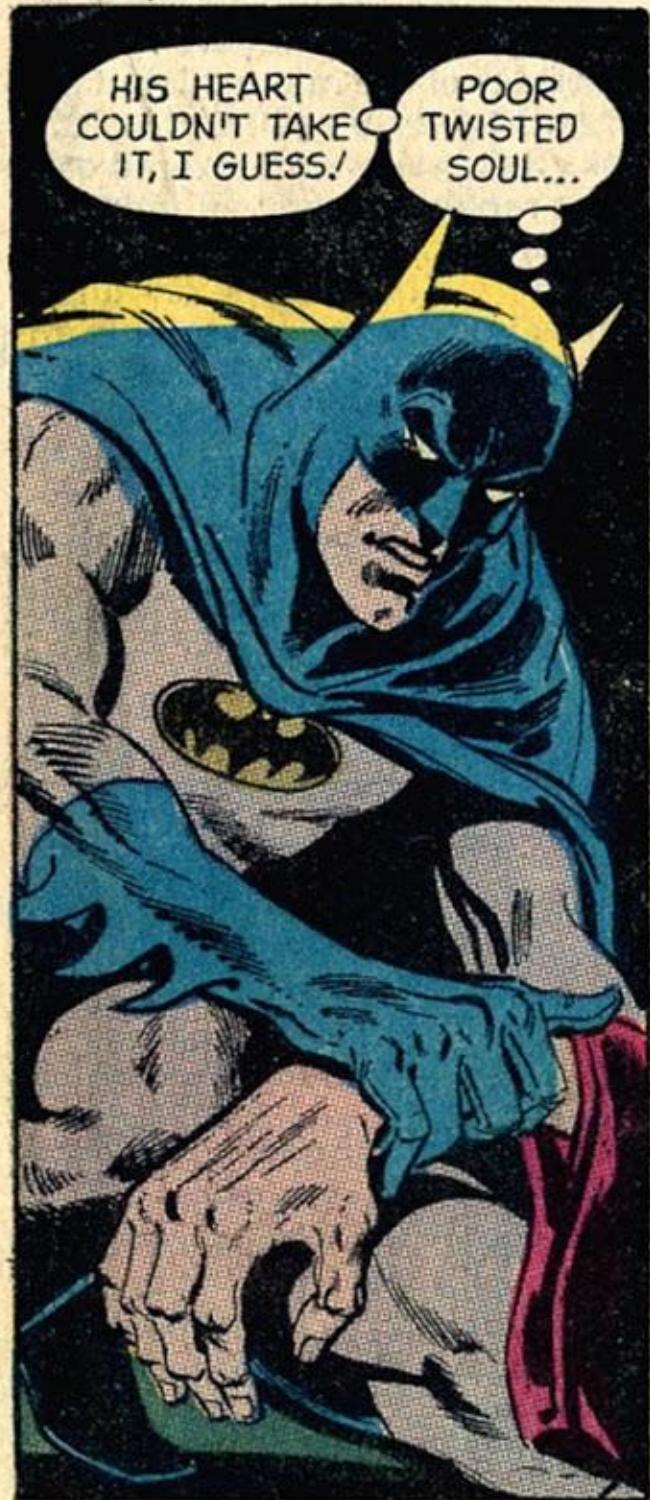
INSIDE, THE COVEN BEGINS A DANCE
OF DARKEST MAGIC, AND DEFILES THE
EARTH WITH ITS CHANT--

Mighty demon,
heed
suppli-
us, thy
chants!









DIRECT CURRENTS

ALL-STAR WESTERN brings you the second stirring episodes in two new series when its January issue (#3) hits the stands, Oct. 15! You'll see Gil Kane's fabulous work on **OUTLAW** and Gray Morrow's amazing art on **EL DIABLO!** Both stories came from the enchanted typewriter of Bob Kanigher, who does everything from Romance to War—and does it well! If the Old West is your bag, this is where it is! So get it!

When Alfred's niece takes a job in an eerie manor, the **BATMAN** decides to snoop around and see what strange things are going on. What he finds is much more than he ever expected—"The Demon of Gothic Mansion"—one of the weirdest tales of the Caped Crime-fighter's career. Also in this December issue (#227), Robin starts a new series of solo adventures in the **BATMAN** mag. The one's called "Help Me—I Think I'm Dead!" If that title grabs you, be sure and grab the magazine on Oct. 10.

THE FLASH heads for movieland and runs smack-dab into an eerie set of happenings that would put a horror movie to shame. What can I say after I've said the title—"The Satan Circle"? And for you Kid Flash fans, editor Julie Schwartz promises a stirring solo adventure called "The Accusation"—full of top Flash-y action. This is the December issue (#202), on sale Oct. 20.

There's a double treat in the January **WITCHING HOUR!** Author Steve Skeates proves he's a triple-threat man with three stories—all based on the double nature of man! Gil Kane and Dan Adkins turned out a top job on "Double Cross"; Al Toth did the art honors on "Double Edge"; and George Tuska handled the third tale—"Double Take"! Our Witches will be there to introduce the fright-tales that tell of "Double, double toil and trouble!" It's issue 12, on sale Oct. 22.

Enemy Ace and the Unknown Soldier headline the great January issue of **STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES!** Rittmeister Von Hammer soars through 15 pages of searing air action in the skies of World War II! Then comes the intriguing origin of the Unknown Soldier! If you haven't seen these fab features, which have the comic world talking, you'd better get SS #154 when it goes on sale—Oct. 22.

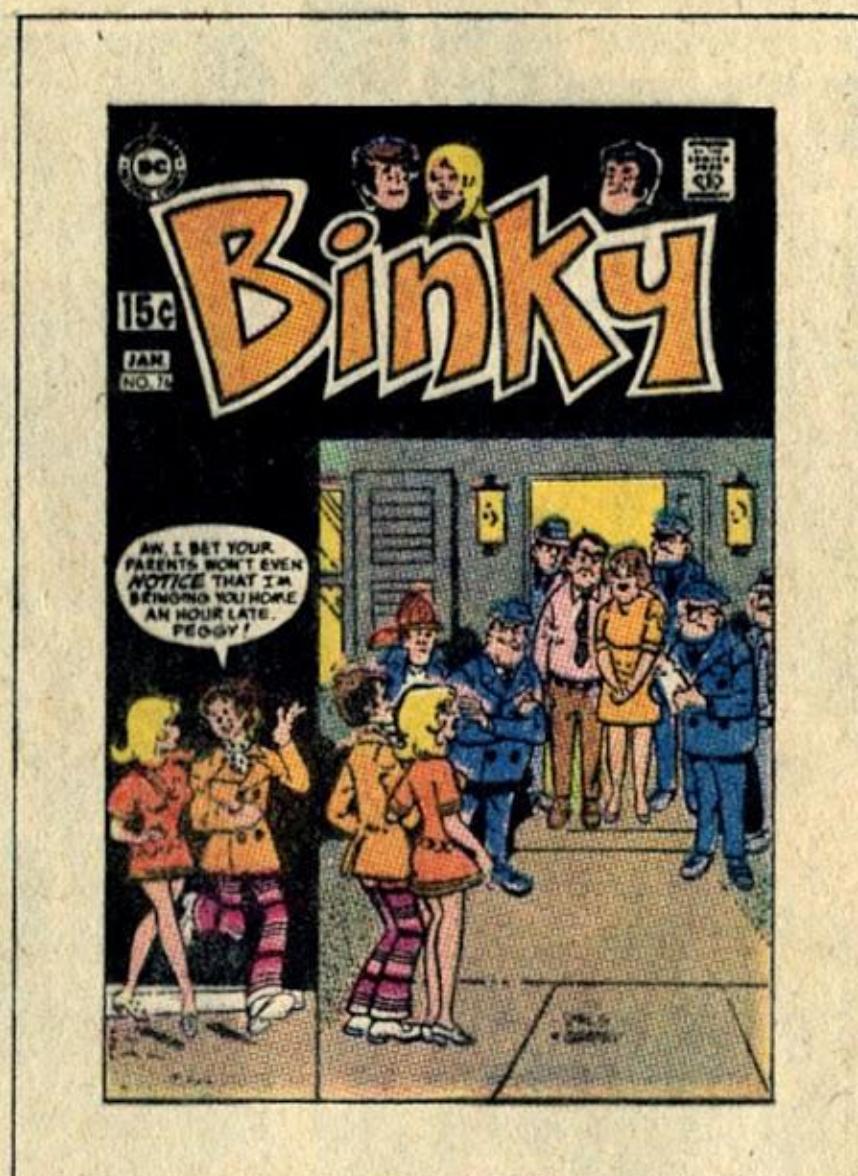
One of the most offbeat tales of the year comes along in **THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD** #93 (January). Can you picture the Batman in the House of Mystery? Well, that's it—a weirdie introduced by that little old caretaker, Cain, and featuring the Masked Manhunter. Scripting honors this time go to the devastating Denny O'Neil, while the artwork was done by amazing Neal Adams! If it's something different you hanker after, this is a must! It's on sale Oct. 27.

The December issue of **ADVENTURE** is #400... and marks the 35th anniversary of the mag, which started with the December, 1935 issue as **NEW COMICS**. For the occasion, Mike Sekowsky has answered one of the most persistent requests from you fans—to bring back their favorite villainess, **Black Flame**, to battle **Supergirl** once more! Three of the criminals from the **Phantom Zone** get into the act, too—in an issue that is really Special! It goes on sale Oct. 29!

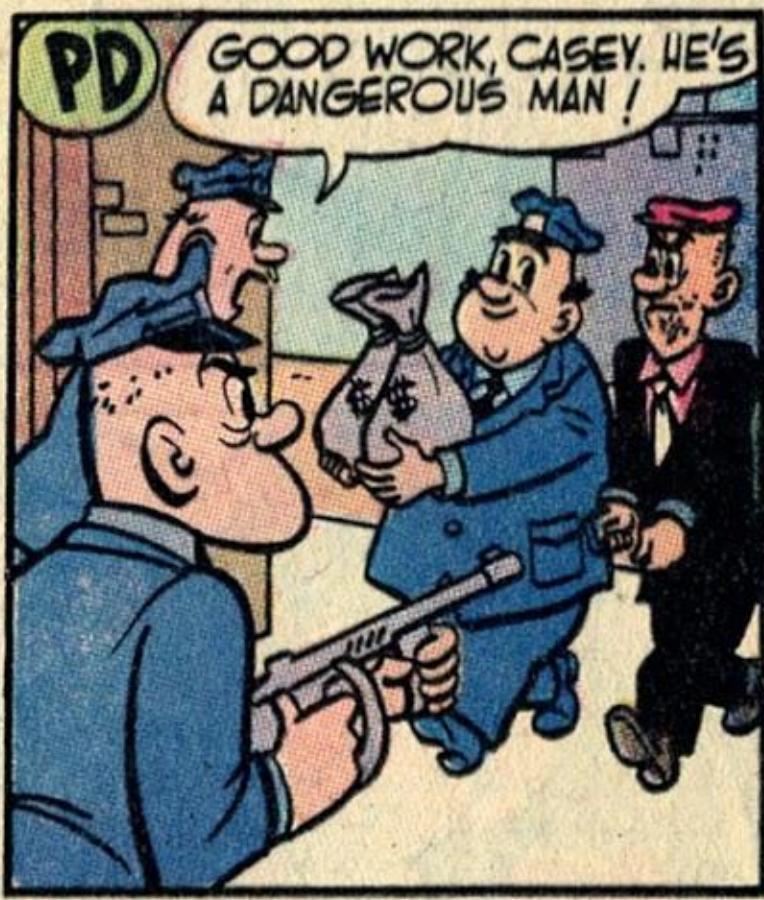
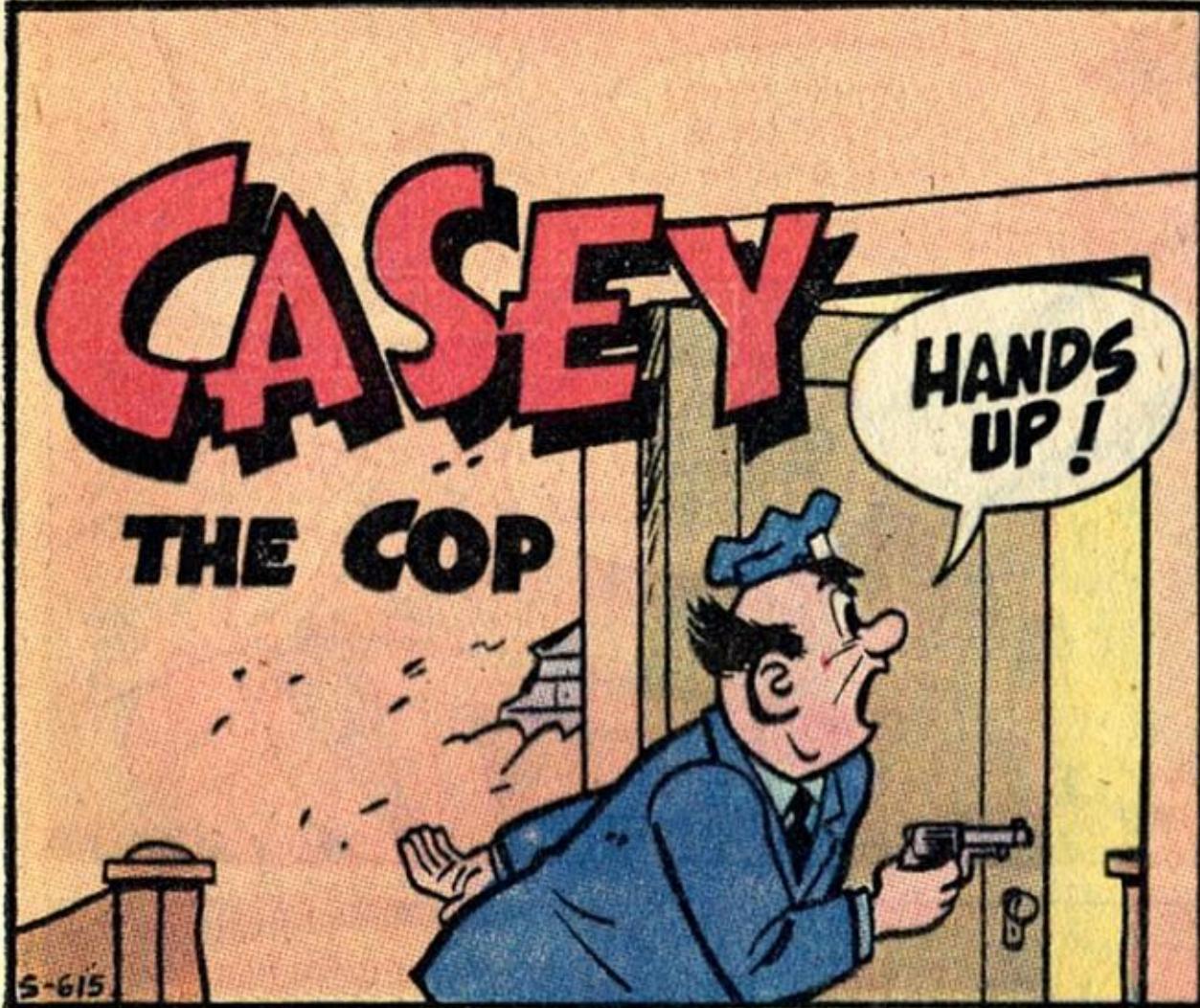
You met the League of Assassins in the November issue of **DETECTIVE** (and if you didn't, you missed a doozy of a story)! Now, in the December issue, this band of killers is back to battle the **Batman** in a tension-tale titled "Your Servant of Death—Dr. Dark!" Also, with **Robin** moving over to **BATMAN**, **Batgirl** takes over the second spot in **DETECTIVE** on a regular basis, beginning with this issue—#406—in a tale which is sheer dynamite—as you can gather from its title—**The Explosive Circle!**" On sale Oct. 29.

Prepare to learn the mysterious "Secret of Superman's Fortress"—something the **Man of Might** has hidden from the world, but which is revealed to you in the December issue of **ACTION!** That's not all, either; a brand-new, updated diagram of the **Fortress of Solitude** is included here, in issue 395. Find out all you've wanted to know about Superman's secret sanctum—and top it off with an intriguing tale called "Cards of Catastrophe!" It's on sale Oct. 29!

And before I go, let me put in a plug for DC's great laugh-getters—**BINKY** (on sale Oct. 7), **SUGAR AND SPIKE** (on sale Oct. 13) and **DEBBI'S DATES** (on sale Oct. 22). To try to tell you what's in each one would be impossible in this small space—and it's going to become more impossible. Because, beginning with the 1971 issues, **DATE WITH DEBBI**, **BINKY**, **SCOOTER** and **THE THREE MOUSEKETEERS** are all becoming 64-page **GIANTS**! And they'll remain on their current bi-monthly schedules! That's 24 king-size laugh-zines a year!



CASEY THE COP



THE END.

LUCKY IS
HUDSON
UNIVERSITY--
FOR WHEN A
STUDENT IS
WEARY, FEELING
SMALL, AND
TIMES ARE
ROUGH, THERE
ARE THE
VOLUNTEER
SERVICES OF
THE--"FRIENDS
PHONE"...

HIYA, TINA...RUSS!
SORRY I'M LATE
FOR MY SHIFT!

NO PROBLEM,
DICK. THE PHONES
HAVE BEEN QUIET
SO FAR!

YOU SURE
CARRY THAT
BRIEFCASE
EVERYWHERE!



S-534





SCRIPT:
MIKE
FRIEDRICH

ART: IRV NOVICK & MIKE ESPOSITO
EDITOR: JULIE SCHWARTZ

LUCKY IS HUDSON UNIVERSITY--
FOR WHEN DECISIVE ACTION IS
NEEDED IN EMERGENCIES, THERE
IS THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE OF...

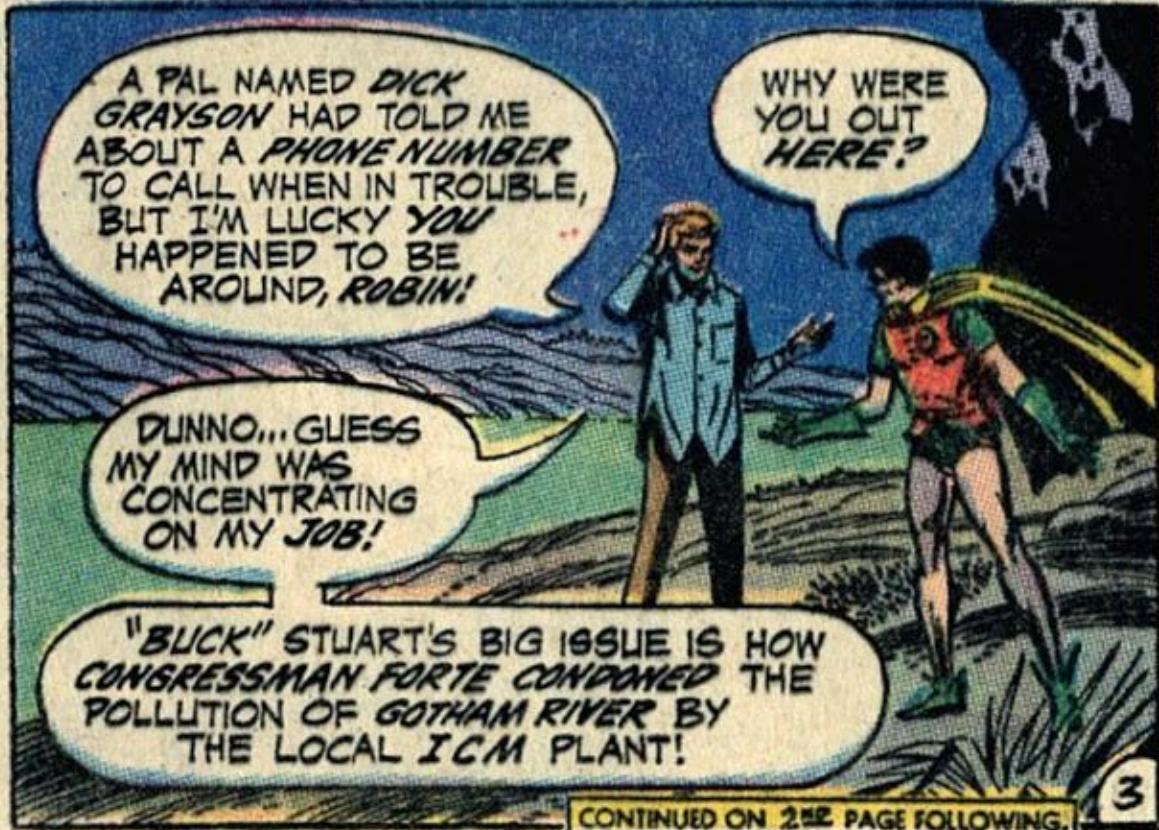
Robin

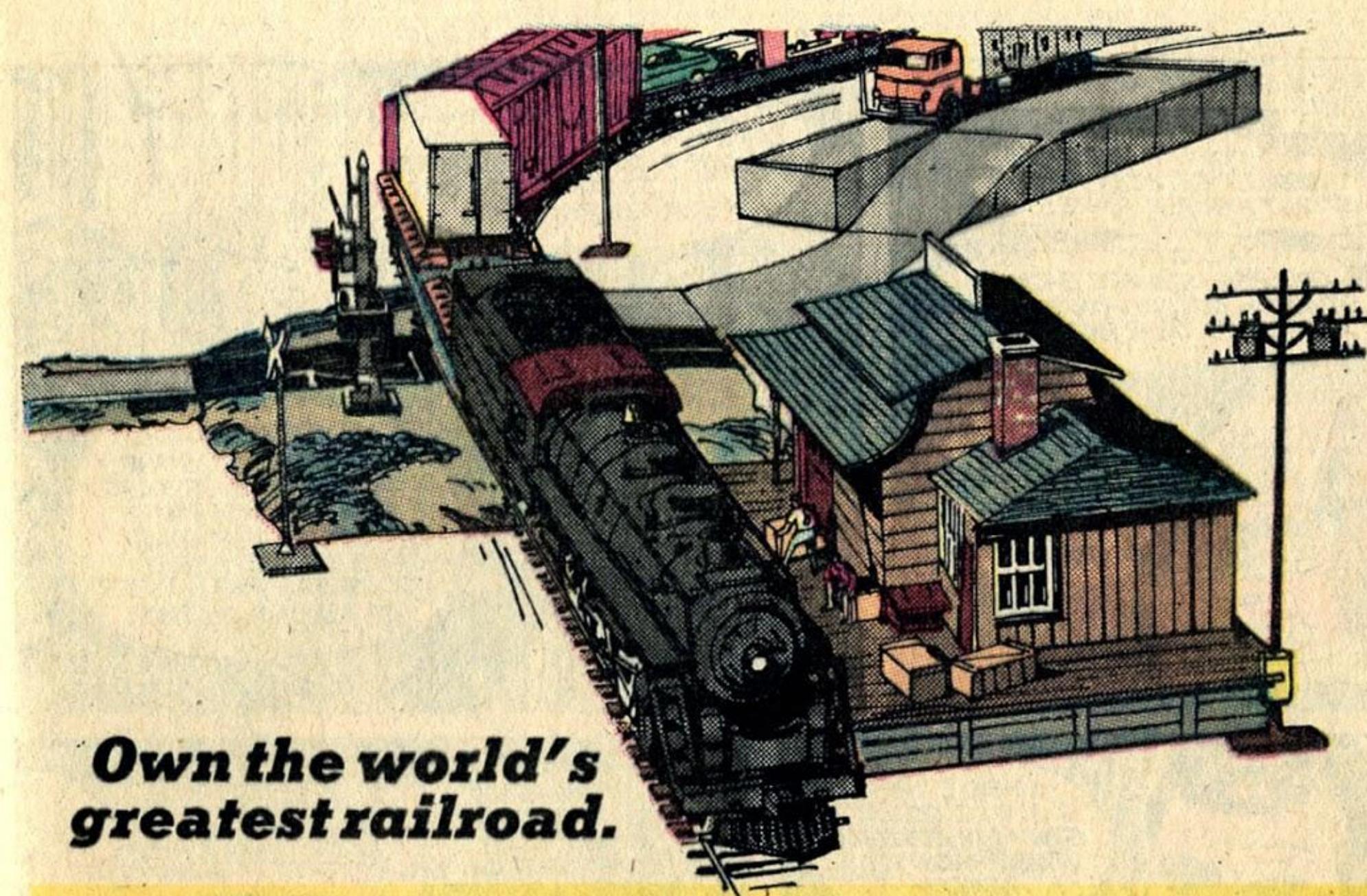
RACING TO
PICK UP HIS CYCLE...

PHIL'S
APARTMENT IS
OVER THERE BY
THE GOTHAM
RIVER-- WAIT--

WHAT'S
HE DOING ON
THAT LEDGE?

HE'S
TOTTERING--!





Own the world's greatest railroad.

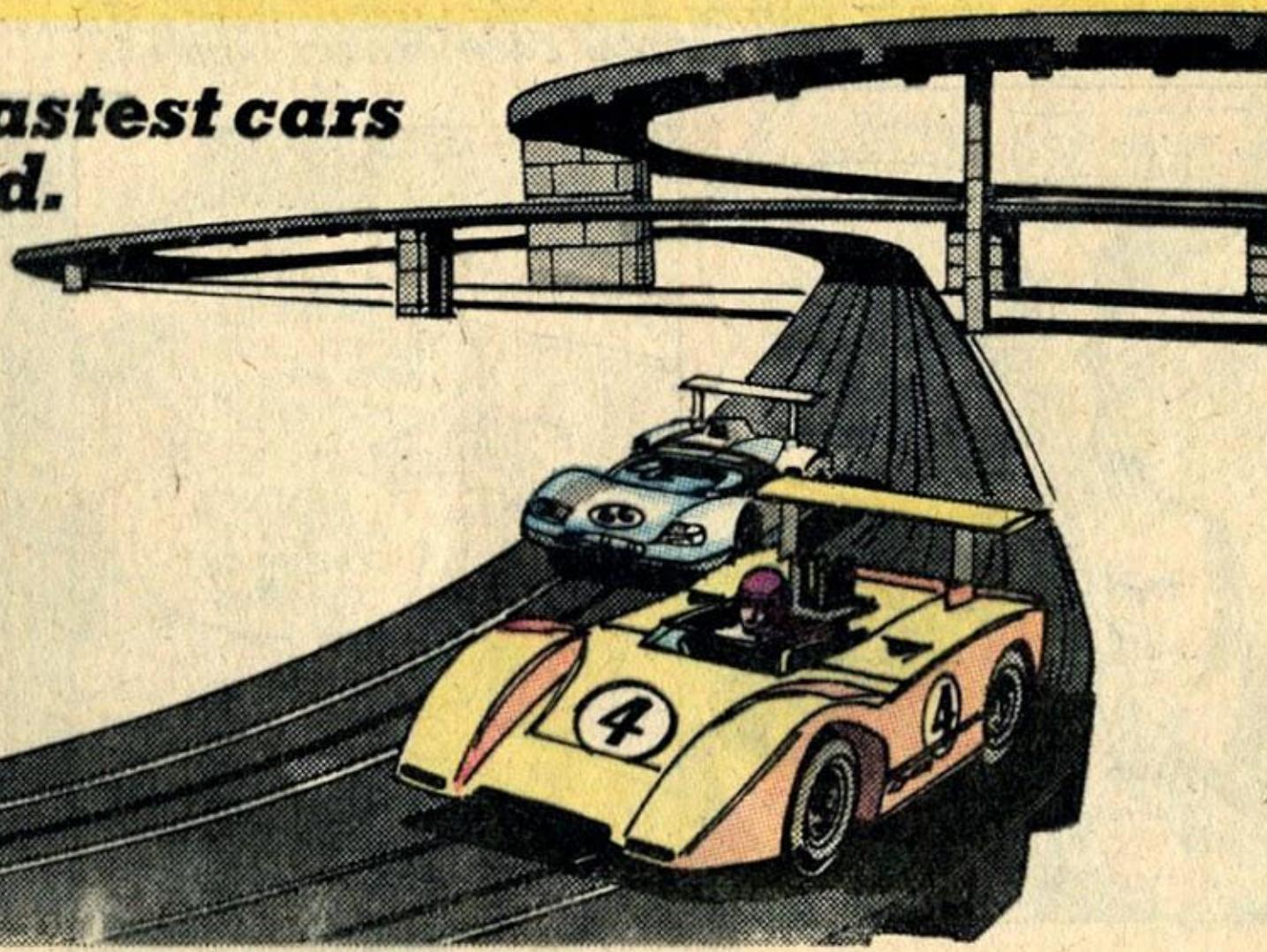
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Tyco makes more different HO trains and more action accessories than anybody! Cars dump logs. Signal man comes out of his shanty. Freight is unloaded at the depot. Turn them on and everything happens!

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Drive the fastest cars in the world.



NEXT NIGHT, DICK MICRO-BUSES TO TOWN...

TODAY'S THE BIG DEBATE BETWEEN PROF. STUART AND REP. FORTE!

A LOT OF COLLEGE KIDS ARE BACKING STUART--LOOKING FOR A NEW ANSWER TO THEIR PROBLEMS!

TODAY WE'LL SEE WHERE THE GENERAL PUBLIC STANDS!



THROUGH INACTION, MY OPPONENT, MR. FORTE, HAS ALLOWED ICM TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT!

ON THE CONTRARY, PROF. STUART, I STAND PROUDLY ON MY RECORD! IT WAS THROUGH MY INFLUENCE THAT ICM CAME TO THIS AREA, DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF AVAILABLE JOBS!

WHEN I WAS A KID, I COULD SWIM IN GOTHAM RIVER--NOW IT'S A HEALTH HAZARD!

I SAY THAT WITH AN AWARE PUBLIC AND STRINGENT CONTROLS WE CAN HAVE JOBS AND CLEAN WATER!

ACTION AND VIGILANCE ARE NEEDED! I'M THE ONE TO DO IT!

WITH AN AWAKENED SENSE OF PURPOSE, THE CROWD RISES IN SUPPORT OF ITS FAVORITE CANDIDATES...



UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, POLITICS ---AND THE AMERICAN DESIRE FOR "MAKING GOOD" IN THE EYE'S OF ONE'S SUPERIORS--IS RAMPANT WITHIN THE ICM CORPORATION! WITNESS...

THE BOARD CHAIRMAN...

THE POLITICAL ACTION KIDS ARE CONVINCING THE PEOPLE TO SUPPORT STUART! THAT WILL UP OUR OPERATING COSTS! I DON'T APPROVE!

THE VICE-PRESIDENT...

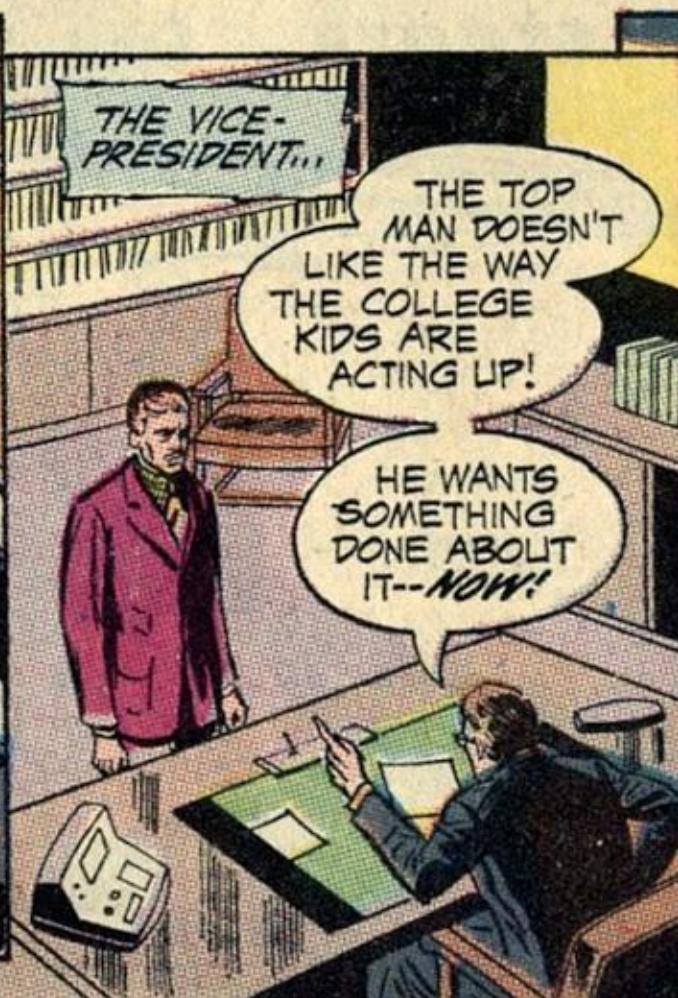
THE TOP MAN DOESN'T LIKE THE WAY THE COLLEGE KIDS ARE ACTING UP!

HE WANTS SOMETHING DONE ABOUT IT--NOW!

THE SUPERVISOR...

I HAVE ORDERS TO SQUASH THE KIDS' CAMPAIGN!

YOU HANDLE IT!



MOST OF THE CROWD SEEMED TO GO FOR "BUCK"!

THEY'RE TIRED AND FED UP-- EH?



FIRE!--IN THE STUART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS! THOSE GUYS NEED HELP!

TIME AGAIN FOR THE RED-AND-YELLOW!

STUART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

DICK'S RED MICRO-BUS MAY LOOK INNOCENT, BUT ACTUALLY IT SERVES AN INGENIOUS DOUBLE PURPOSE...

FOR WITH A PUSH OF A DASHBOARD BUTTON...



A SMALL MOTOR BEGINS TO OPERATE...

CHANGING DICK GRAYSON'S LICENSE PLATES TO THE SPECIAL PLATES OF ROBIN...



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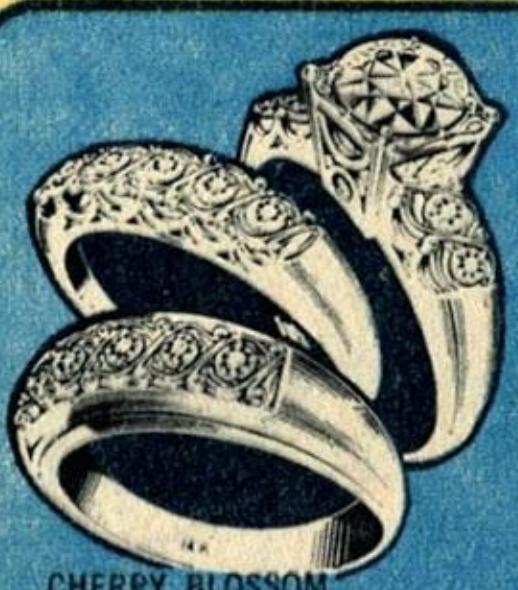
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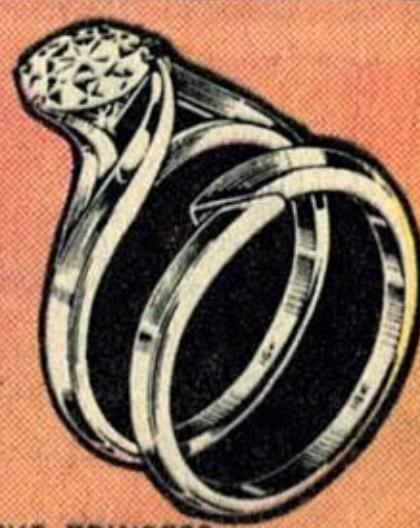
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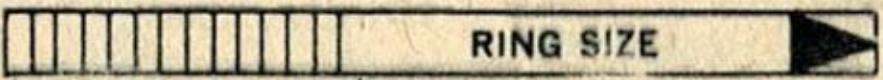
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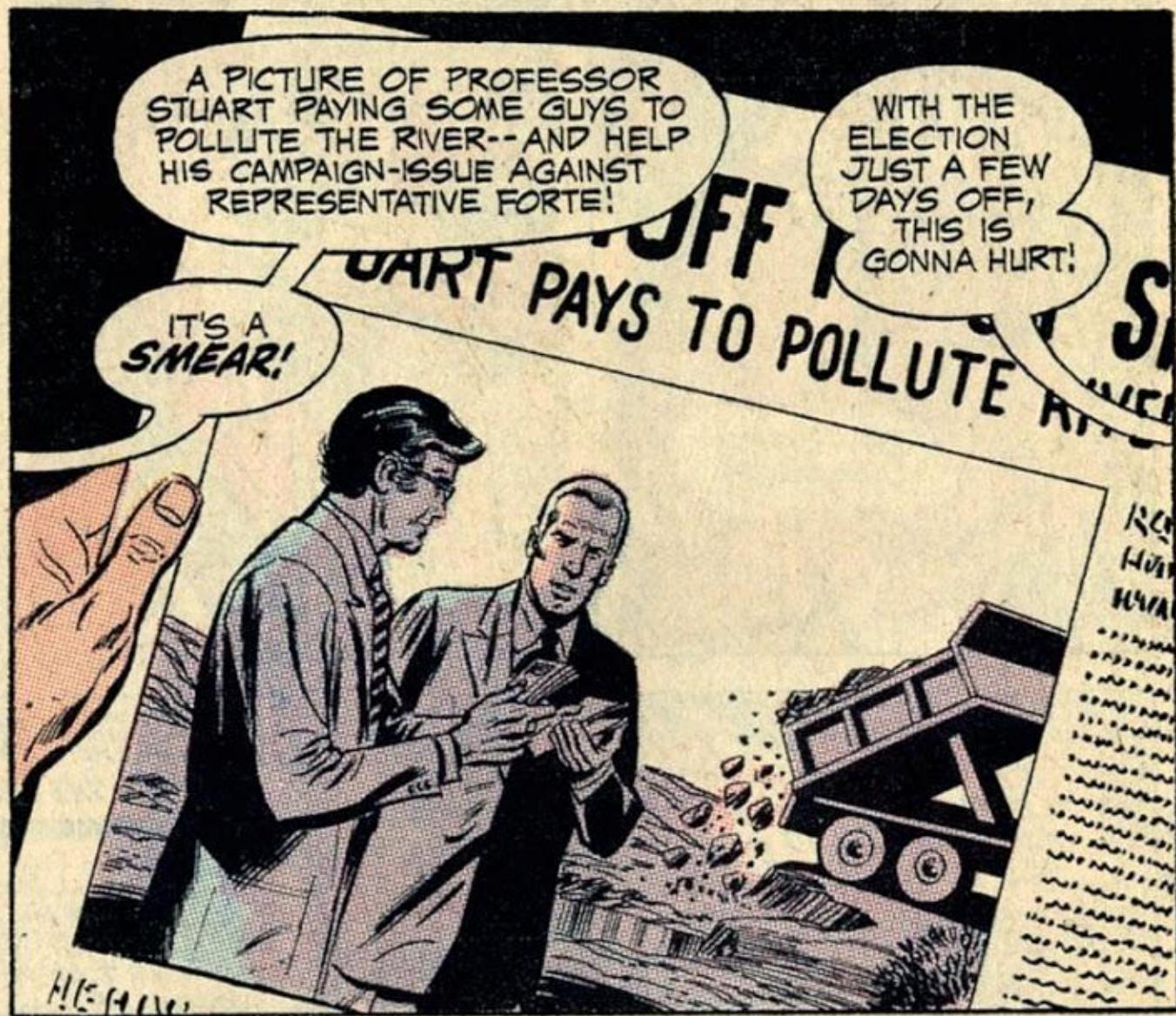
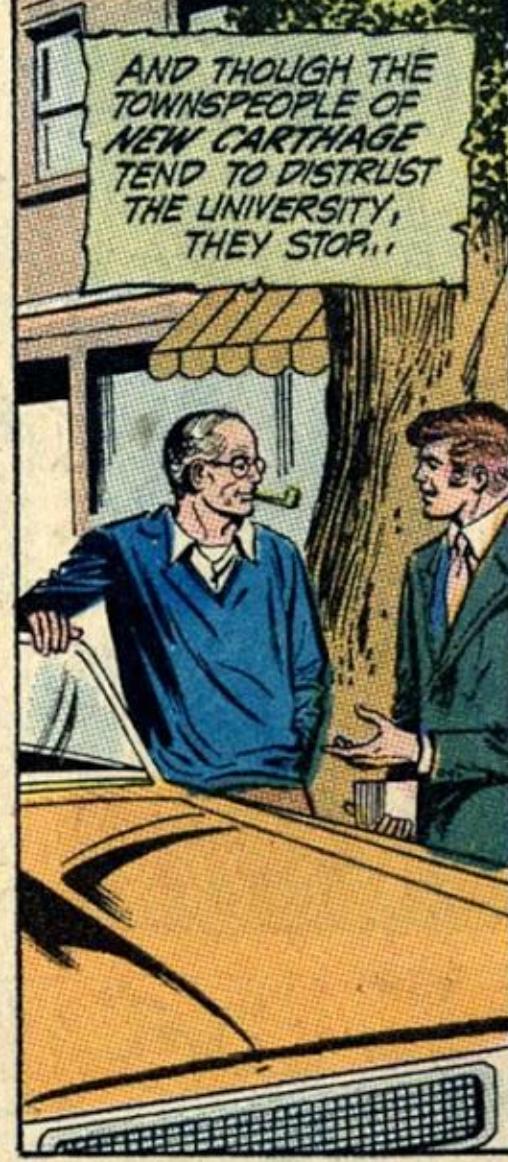


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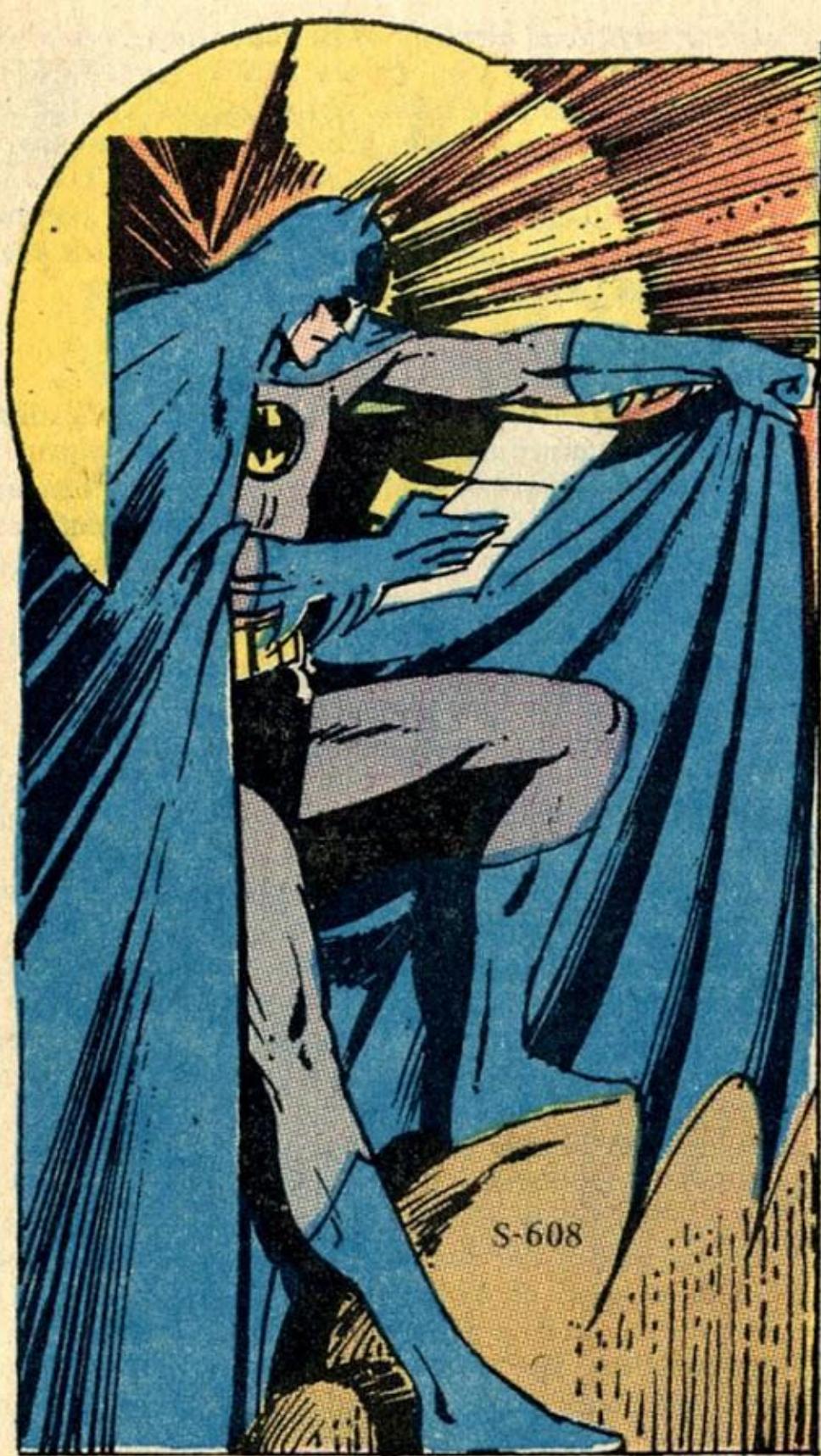
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7



Dear Editor:

In a carton, under a staircase, carefully wrapped in a plastic bag, is *Detective Comics* No. 139. This semi-oldie, from 1948, contained a story, "The Crimes in Jade," dealing with jade smugglers, Chinese-Americans, and a murder. I look back and picture Bill Finger researching the story, uncovering facts to be slipped into the story-line as extraneous prefab. The scene was Gotham City's Chinatown, and the cover pictured a killer, armed with a Samuri sword, perched on a huge statue, and, in line with the publishing gimmick of sensationalism, about to cut a shank portion out of *Batman*.

That was 1948, near the end of what just about everyone calls *Batman's Golden Age*.

This, however, is 1970, and a second magazine beside me is *Batman* No. 224. The cover shows a huge hulk (sorry) about to dump *Batman* into a huge paddlewheel. Sensational, glaring, gaudy. The similarity between the two issues doesn't end there, though.

A jazz musician, an old, downbeat, blind Negro walks on a street in New Orleans, greets and is greeted by a policeman, and is then yanked into an alley, and beaten to death. The muggers, silhouetted against the lights of a city, search for some unknown object and not finding it, melt away into the inky blackness.

It's all there. The melodrama, the melancholy, the untouched air of that 1948 story. There's a murder mystery which turns out not to be a murder mystery, gobs of action, an unusual setting, and a tightly woven plot. There, the similarity ends, because this is 1970, and not

LETTERS to the BATMAN

1948, and the writer is Denny O'Neil and not Bill Finger. And because of these differences, "Carnival of the Cursed" was, in this reader's opinion, a classic, and not a sales-minded try at all the gimmicks of the early *Batman*. There's a "human" *Batman* who reads a headline in an unnamed tabloid, rips and crumples it in disgust, and tosses it on the floor for all (readers) to see. It's an account of a musician's death, and it sends *Batman* off to New Orleans to track down the killer.

Although the story was dotted with such "clever" quips as "Vermin—crawl back into your hole!" and "'Cause I coulda swore I just seen a giant bat!", it was excellent. Irv Novick's pencils were fine and Giordano's inks blended in better than in past issues.

But the script deserves more comment than the art, I feel. Denny O'Neil is improving. He put a note of subtlety in the story and carried through with a smooth flow of action that almost never seemed to stop. Moreover, he centered the story around a society that many of us know little or nothing about. The old jazz musicians seemed larger-than-life, integrated, and terribly, terribly real. This issue was close to flawless, and certainly the best since the "Big Change."

—CLEM ROBINS, Sheffield, Mass.

(*The "beat" (New Orleans style) goes on with harmonious praise from reader after reader—proving that this issue can't be beat!*—Editor)

Dear Editor:

I've just spent about twenty minutes searching through my thesaurus . . . no luck. The new *Batman* is beyond description. "Carnival of the Cursed" was, as usual, an excellent example of this. I don't think a story has ever been written focusing on jazz, and this was a more than welcome treat. How can you possibly realize how much fans adore *Batman* now that the "Big Change" is in effect? It is not just the superb plots; the magnificent artwork; it is that now, **BATMAN HAS SOUL!** *Batman* is a human being now; the fact that he *seems* like a god now makes no difference! We readers can relate to *The Batman* now (we love the use of the word "The" in his name); he is . . . fantastic!

Examples in the story itself include the second page: does not *Batman* have emotions too? Pages nine and ten, which bring back *The Batman* as the cunning creature of the night he was always meant to be. Pages fifteen and sixteen . . . *Batman*: the death-cheater! The final page: things do not necessarily have to have a happy ending in *Batman* anymore.

And the letters are more intellectual now (with some exceptions, like this one), so that *Batman* is becoming like the works of Shakespeare . . . there is so much to comment on that you must search for.

—JEFF RISTINE, Ann Arbor, Mich.

(*To our personal knowledge, "Carnival of the Cursed" was not the first comic story to feature jazz as an essential element. That honor goes to "King of New Orleans," originally published in the Dec., 1962 Strange Adventures—and currently (and coincidentally) reprinted in the Dec., 1970 Strange Adventures.—Editor*)

Dear Editor:

Unfortunately, it seems the best method of obtaining a "regular's" status in your letter columns is to become hypercritical and downright stubborn. It's also too bad (?) that I just can't bring myself to become unjust to what must be recognized as comics' best character . . . *The Batman*. The August #224 issue is another bit of convincing proof to add to that claim.

Dennis O'Neil has conceived yet another macabre tale and Irv Novick surpassed his own outstanding talent in producing a mysterious novel for which the *Bat-fan* has been clamoring! The human touches which were incorporated . . . the dialect, the old jazz funeral, the carnival, the sternwheeler . . . made the eerie setting that much more realistic. Dennis's characterization was also superb, as he fashioned living personalities of the main people involved. The murder and all further events were linked expertly together and the solemn ending was . . . *exquisite!*

Meanwhile, Irv Novick turned in his finest performance to date. Neal Adams might be everyone else's "*man for Batman*" (he is one of my all-time favorites) but Novick ranks right alongside him, in my opinion. He depicted New Orleans with accomplished verve and his rendering of *Batman* was at its emotion-filled, awe-inspiring best. Not to mention Dick Giordano, who really brings out the boldness in Irv's pencils.

—MIKE OSLANCE, Hoffman Estates, Ill.
(*We know you've been waiting for the usual sour note, so here it comes—loud and clear . . . —Editor*)

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

Despite a good plot and good art, "Carnival of the Cursed" was, like most of the new-new look *Batman* stories that preceded it, only fair. It would have been excellent, if not for the following flaws:

(1) The "campy" death-trap that *Batman* was put in. Can you give me one good reason why Moloch didn't just simply shoot *Batman* on page 14, panel 5, and then toss him in the river to eliminate the evidence, instead of tying him to the sternwheel and leaving the scene of the crime so that anybody might find the body? Can you give me one *bad* reason? Surely such a ridiculously unbelievable situation is beneath Denny O'Neil's writing ability, and your own editorial acceptance.

(2) Now that you've got our hero in this mess, the least you could do is rescue him in a realistic manner, but no, his escape was contrived. Suppose that loose cable hadn't been there? Suppose *Batman* hadn't been able to catch it in his teeth? Suppose he hadn't been able to throw it to the axle? Suppose it hadn't wrapped itself *around* the axle? Suppose it hadn't tightened that way, instead of slipping off? *Batman* was pretty darned lucky!

(3) This is not such an obvious, nor as important a defect in the story as the first two, but it was present, nonetheless. There are three sides to *The Batman*: Bruce Wayne, the human being; the awesome night-creature; and the logician-detective. O'Neil shows us a little of the first (*Batman* avenging "Blind Buddy's" murder because he is an old fan was a good, *human* touch), concentrates mainly on the second, but almost totally ignores the third, making *The Batman* seem like a brainless muscle-man who relies solely on brawn and a scare-reputation to catch criminals. I am thinking specifically of the fact that this ingenious super-sleuth never realized that Moloch and Rufus Macob were the same person, although it was obvious to me from the beginning.

—PAUL DUSHKIND, Fairfax, Cal.

(#1: The death-trap—"campy" or straight—has always

been a traditional highlight of *Batman* stories. (And who is to psychoanalyze a murderer's motives for the manner he chooses to dispose of his victim?) #2: Yeah, *Batman* was darned lucky, all right. #3: Not every story can—or even should—show the three sides of *Batman*. *YOU* realized Moloch and Macob were the same because the story was presented on-stage that way to *YOU* . . . but not to the off-stage *BATMAN!*—Editor)

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

To readers of some of your more recent publications, it has been immediately apparent that Bruce Wayne in cape and cowl is a very frightening figure. Tall, lean, and as forbidding as a giant bat, the mysterious gentleman makes sudden, silent appearances and has taken to posturing his gaunt frame quite cinematically—cloaked in inky darkness, long cape swirling, framed by a few appropriately sombre tree-branches and spotlighted by a full moon just over one shoulder. I am not speaking sarcastically—ecstasy would be a closer approximation of my emotions. At long last, MOOD has returned to the *Batman* strip, thanks to the artistry of Irv Novick and Dick Giordano.

The reason these men have succeeded where so many artist-inker teams have failed is largely due to Irv and Dick's appreciation of an important rule that universally applies to the art of all comic mags—that the art must somehow match the mag's main character; there must be some tie-in between the style of art and the main character's physical appearance. Sounds simple, right? Surprisingly, this basic yet vital commodity is lacking in many of today's strips, leaving an empty "moodless" effect and detracting from the unity of the mag as a whole.

In the case of *The Batman*, the key to the strip's mood can be summed up by the words GAUNT and DARK. The *Gaunt Look* is achieved by use of long, sweeping brush-strokes and an emphasis on vertically-oriented lines and panel shapes. Examples are liberally sprinkled throughout #224's "Carnival of the Cursed"—page 2, panel 1; page 8, panels 1-2-3; page 13, panel 2; page 20, panel 1. Dark, dark inks and sharp contrast between colors add to the mood by pointing up the severity of both character and situation, while midnight settings convey the mystery which is so much a part of *The Batman* of today.

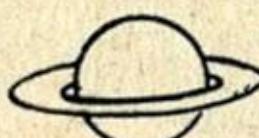
To change the subject: I agree with every fibre of my being that the letter-column in *Batman* is in desperate need of a new title. The suggested *Batsignals* seems to fit the bill—and the present masthead—quite nicely.

—STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich.

(Other suggestions for new titles to this lettercol have been: Bring it to *The Batman*; Calling *The Batman*; *Via Batman*; *Batman's Batmail*; Speaking for *Batman*; *The Bat-Roost*; *Batmania Mail*. But the overwhelming choice was for Letters to *The Batman*. Indeed, one of our correspondents—Anthony Kowalik, 15641 Union Avenue, Harvey, Illinois, 60426—not only suggested this name but drew a pencil-sketch to go along with it! This sketch has been inked by Neal Adams and now adorns this department. Our thanks to Mr. Kowalik . . . and an original *Batman* manuscript is being presented to him as an award!—Editor)

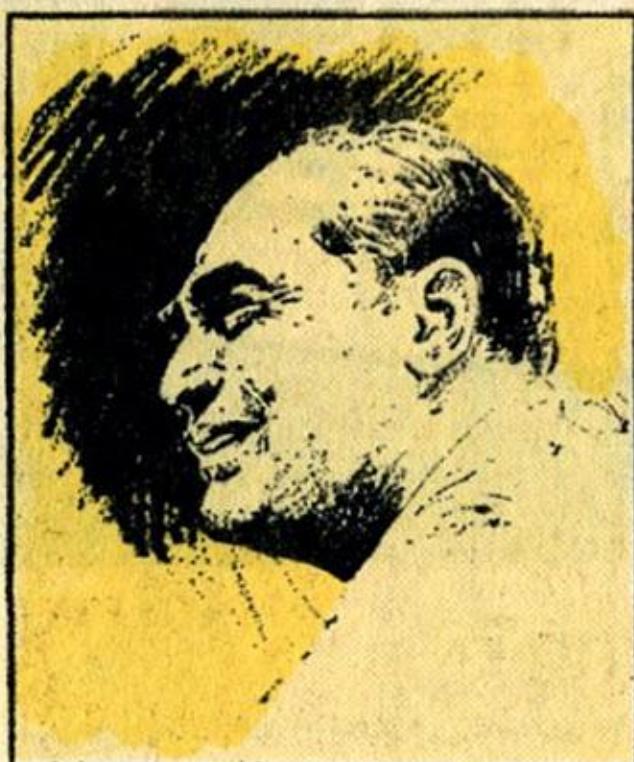
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DC TAKES TOP HONORS AT COMIC ART CONVENTION!

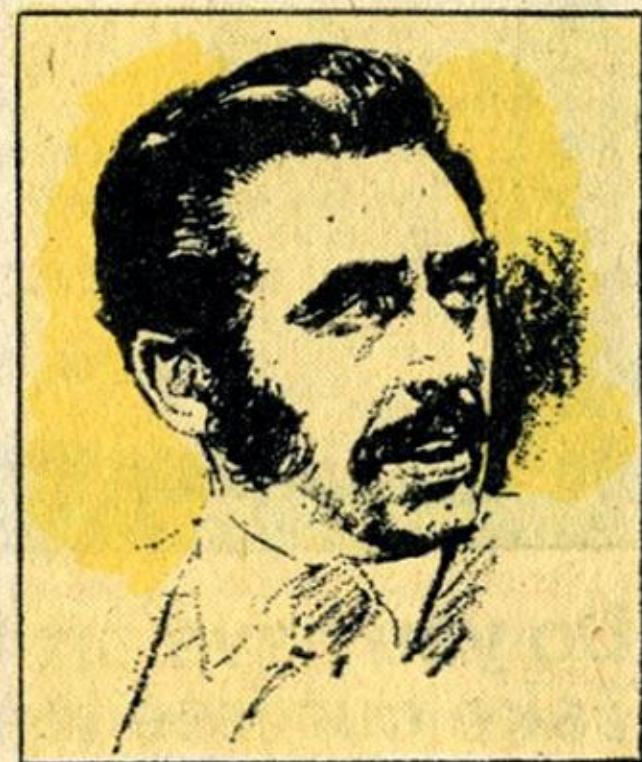
July 3, 4, 5, 1970 — At the Comic Art Convention, held annually in New York City, four of DC's own came away with the highest honors.



CARMINE INFANTINO was foremost among those honored by Phil Seuling, chairman and organizer of the Convention. DC's editorial director was presented with a plaque inscribed: "To Carmine Infantino, who exemplifies the spirit of innovation and inventiveness in the field of comic art." Carmine is no stranger to awards. He was once named Best Comic Book Artist by The National Cartoonists' Society, and has won several Alley Awards.



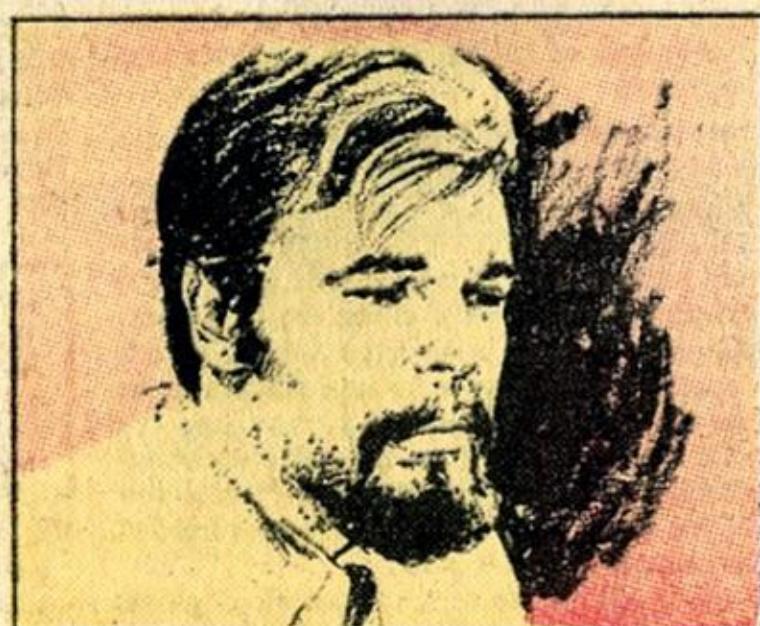
JOE KUBERT, editor of such mags as **OUR ARMY AT WAR** and **TOMAHAWK**, also received a plaque. The inscription reads: "To Joe Kubert, for the cinematic story-telling techniques and the exciting and dramatic style he has brought to the field of comic art." Joe has been drawing comics since he was 16, and produces some of the finest work in the field.

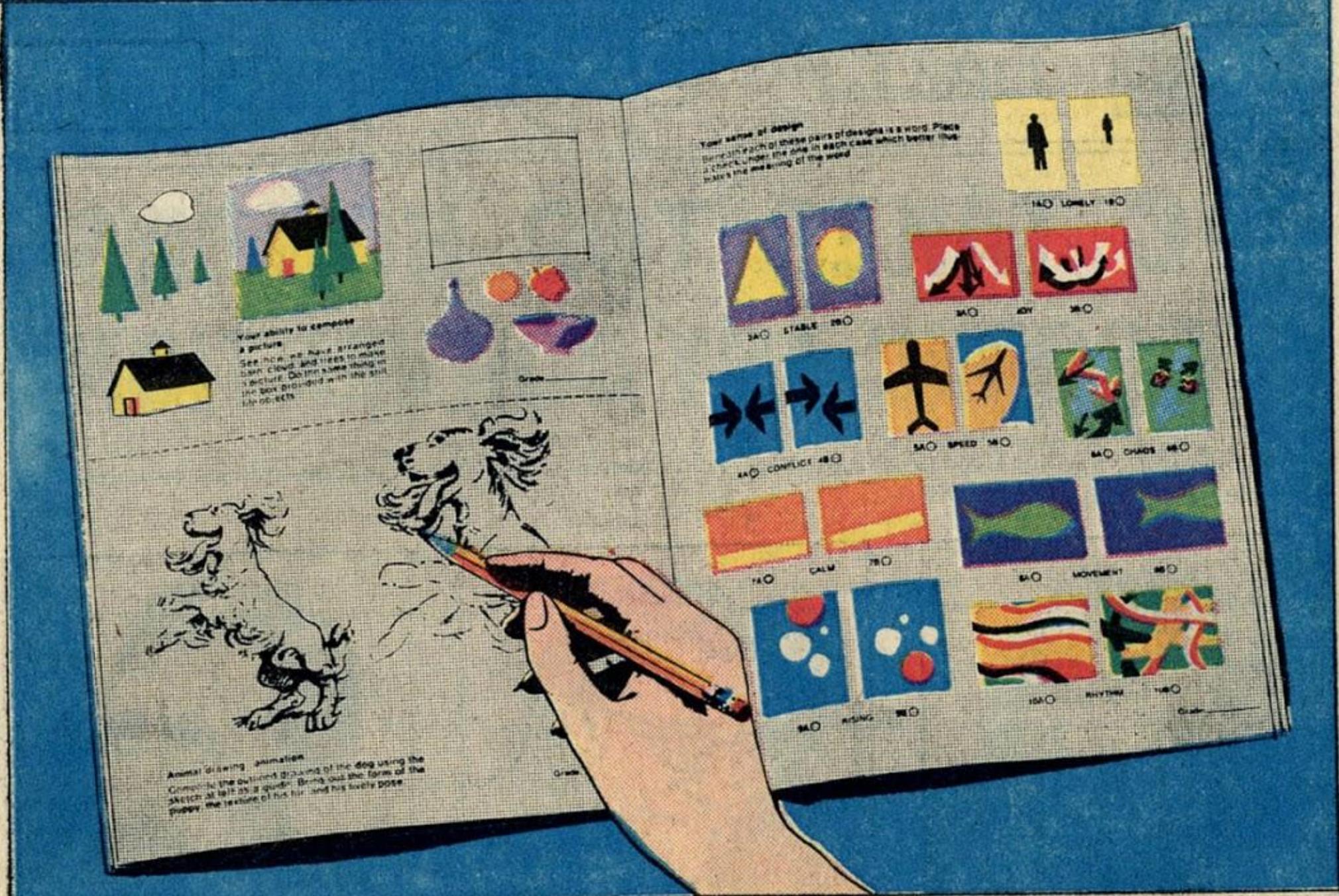


DICK GIORDANO was named Best Comic Editor by the fans this year. The Alley Awards are voted on annually by comics fans, and are presented by The Society of Comic Book Fans and Collectors. A top artist, Dick edits **AQUAMAN**, **TEEN TITANS**, **HOUSE OF SECRETS**, **WITCHING HOUR**, and several other great DC mags.

DOUBLE HONORS FOR NEAL ADAMS!

Honored by the Convention "for the new perspectives and the dynamic vibrance he has brought to the field of comic art," Neal Adams also won an Alley Award as Best Pencil Artist. No wonder! At the age of 21, Neal was the youngest artist ever to have his own strip, and he is now serving as Vice President of the newly formed Academy of Comic Book Art. He's won acclaim from DC fans for his work on Batman, Green Lantern, Deadman and other features.





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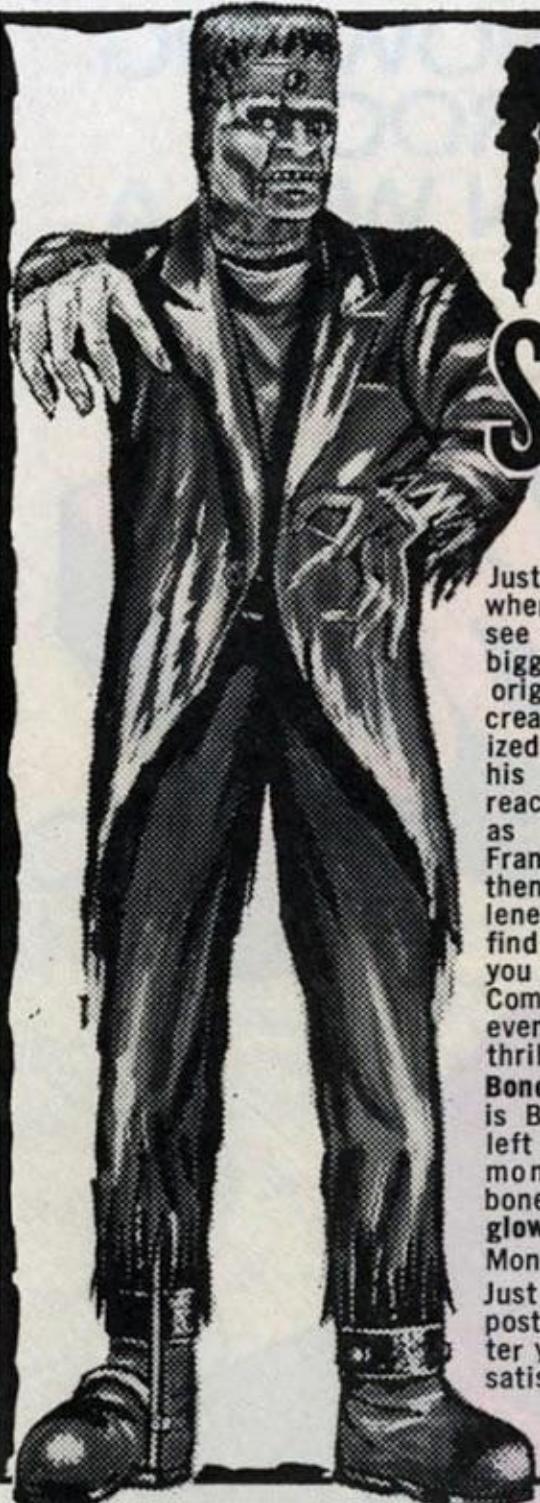
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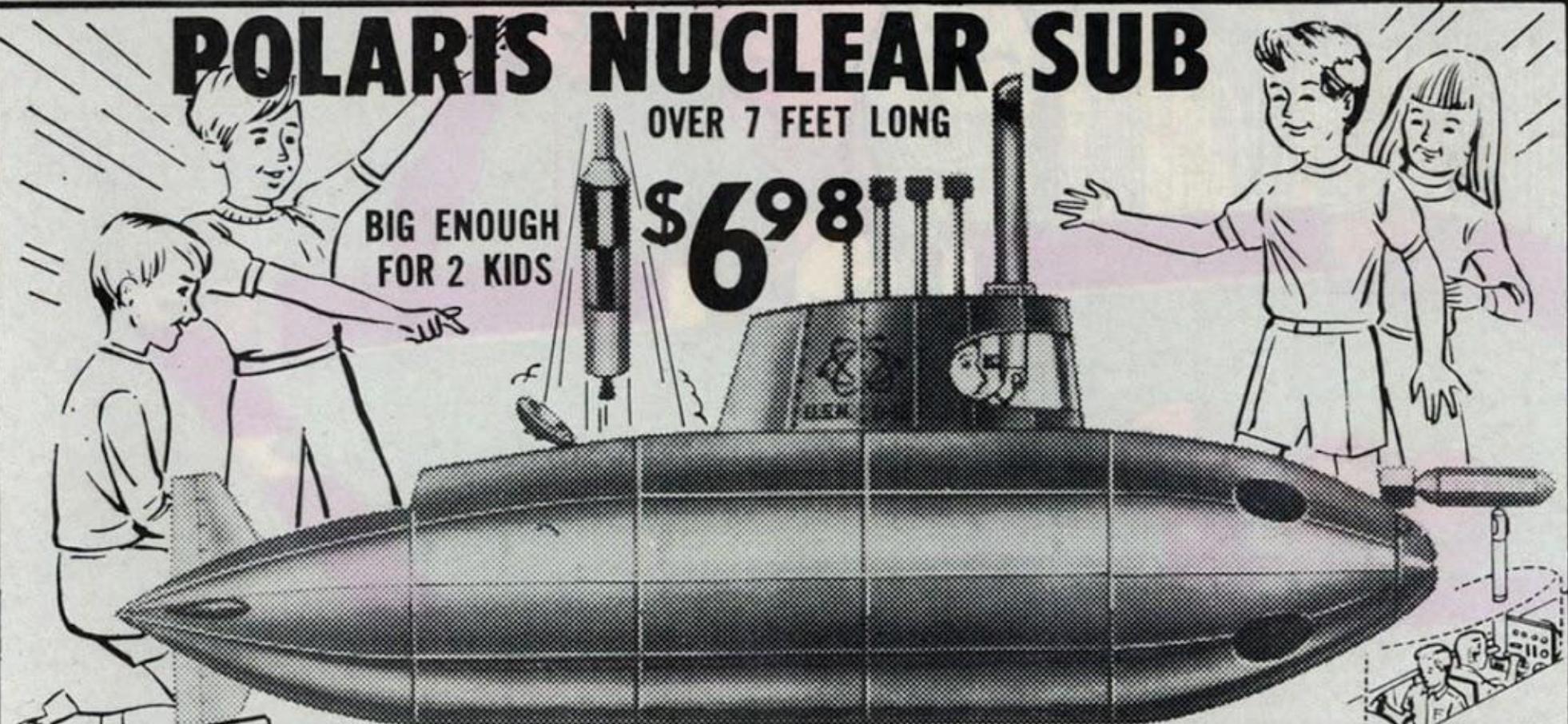
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