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AUTHORITY

# BATMAN®



JAMES GORDON: HE REMEMBERS THE LAUGH ON HIS DAUGHTER'S LIPS AS SHE RACED ACROSS THE SAND THEN DIVED INTO THE OCEAN, A DWINDLING PINK DOT IN AN EXPANSE OF BLUE. HE REMEMBERS HER IN COLLEGE, RIDING THE PARALLEL BARS, PERFECTING THE BROAD JUMP, COMPETING IN EVERY EVENT.

BUT NO MORE.

JOKER: HE REMEMBERS BEING TOO FRIGHTENED TO LAUGH THE NIGHT OF HIS FIRST ROBBERY, BUT HIS FIRST MURDER WAS A MARATHON OF JOY. HE REMEMBERS WHEN EVERYTHING TWISTED ON HIM AND THE WORLD WAS SUDDENLY A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE. IT WAS SO SIMPLE ONCE HE LET HIMSELF GO CRAZY.

BUT SOMETHING HAS CHANGED.

BATMAN: HE REMEMBERS THE LAUGH BESIDE HIM AS THEY SLID THROUGH THE AIR SOMEWHERE BETWEEN TENEMENT AND SKYSCRAPER. THAT LAUGH GREW OLDER AND LEFT, AND WAS REPLACED WITH ANOTHER--PERHAPS DARKER, COLDER, BUT STILL YOUNG AND FILLED WITH LIFE. HE REMEMBERS THE CARING, THE ADMIRATION AND THE LOVE.

AND THEN IT WAS STOLEN FROM HIM.



# JUDGEMENTS!

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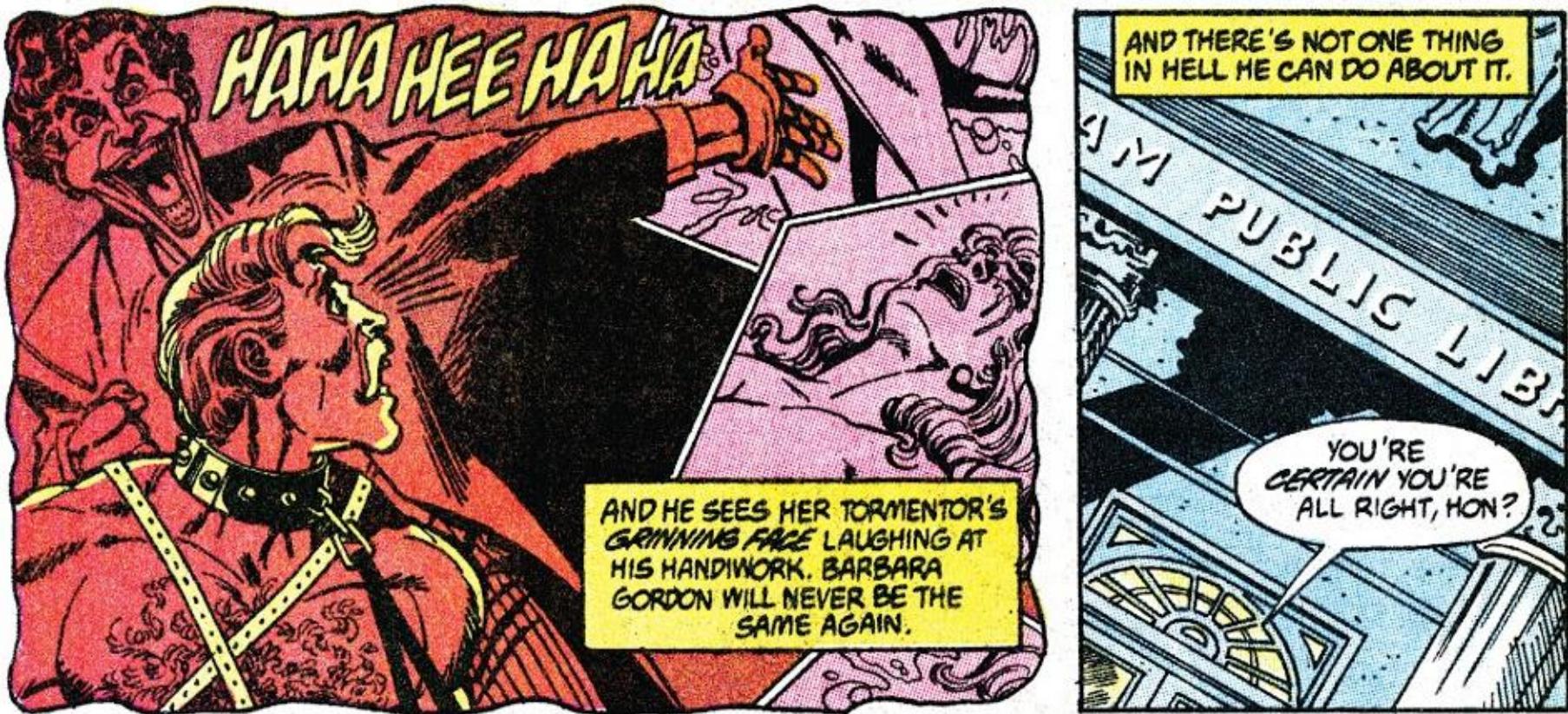
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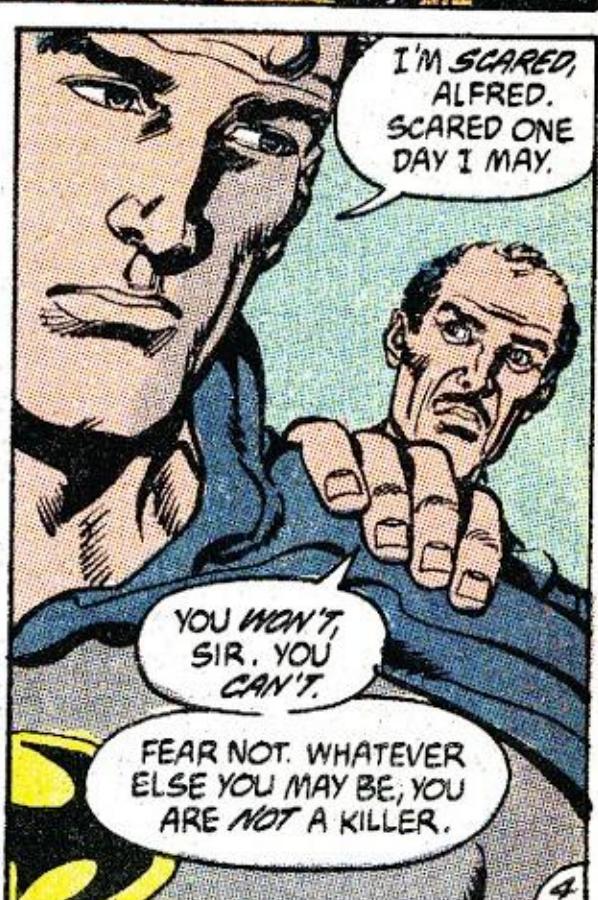
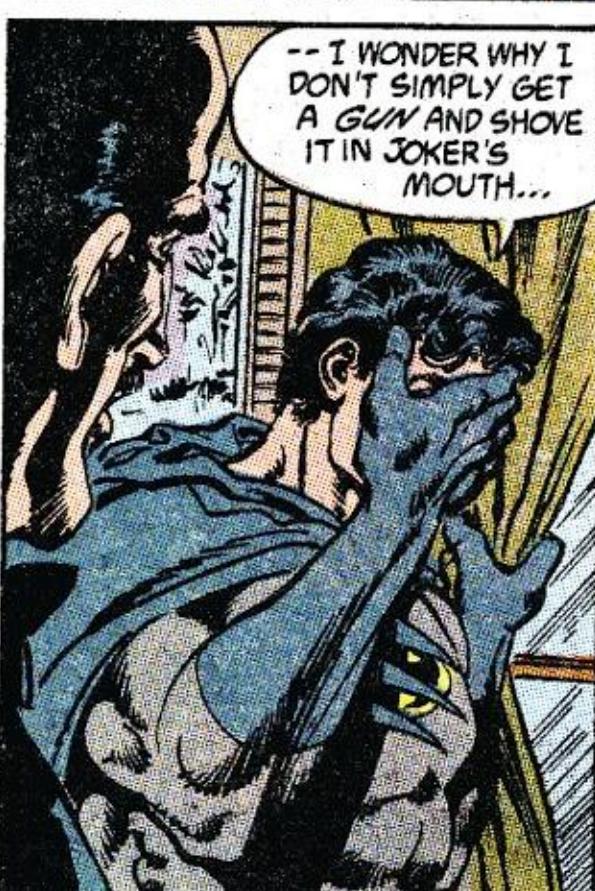
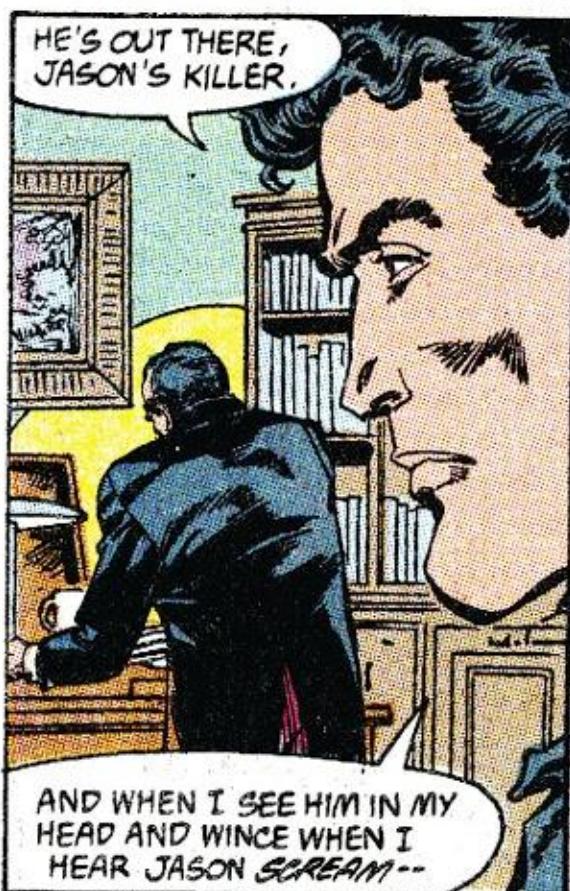
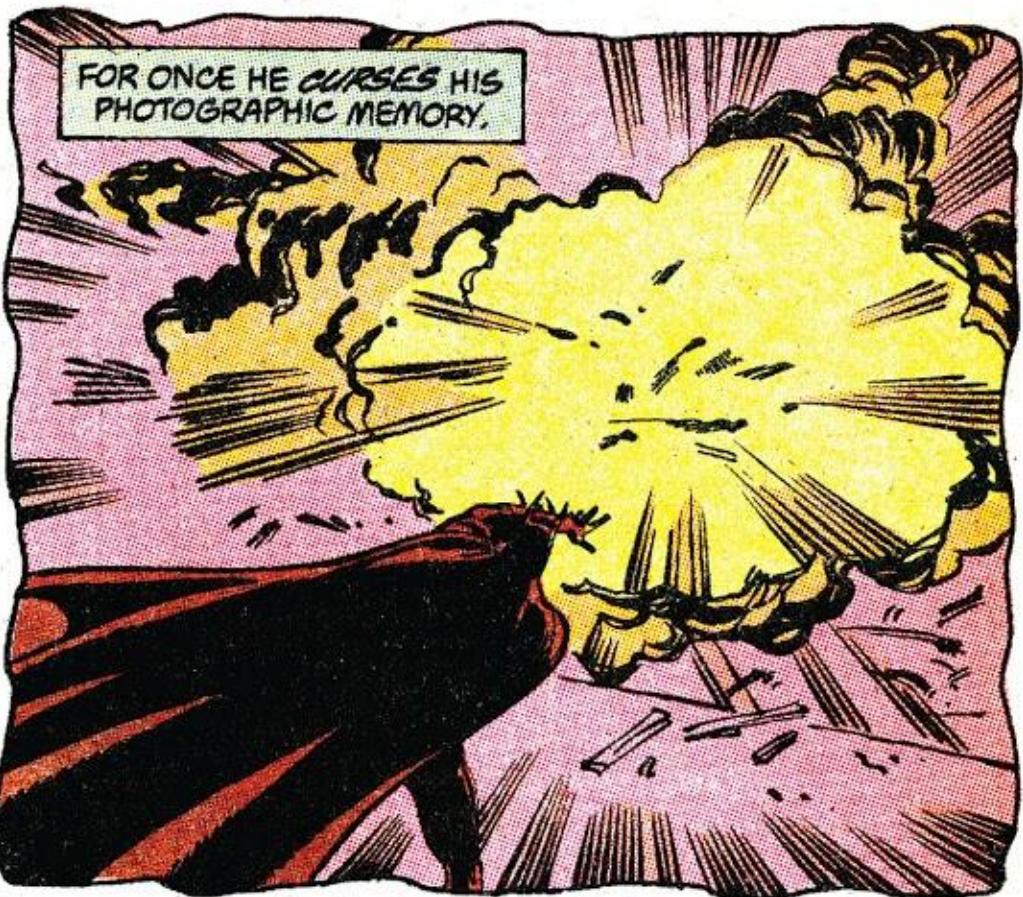
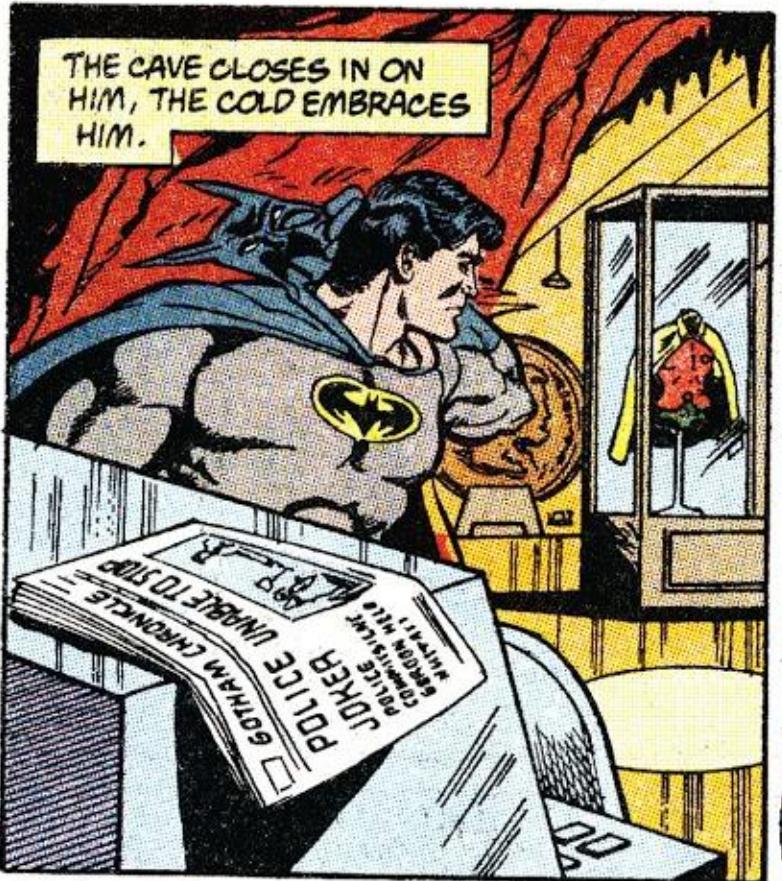
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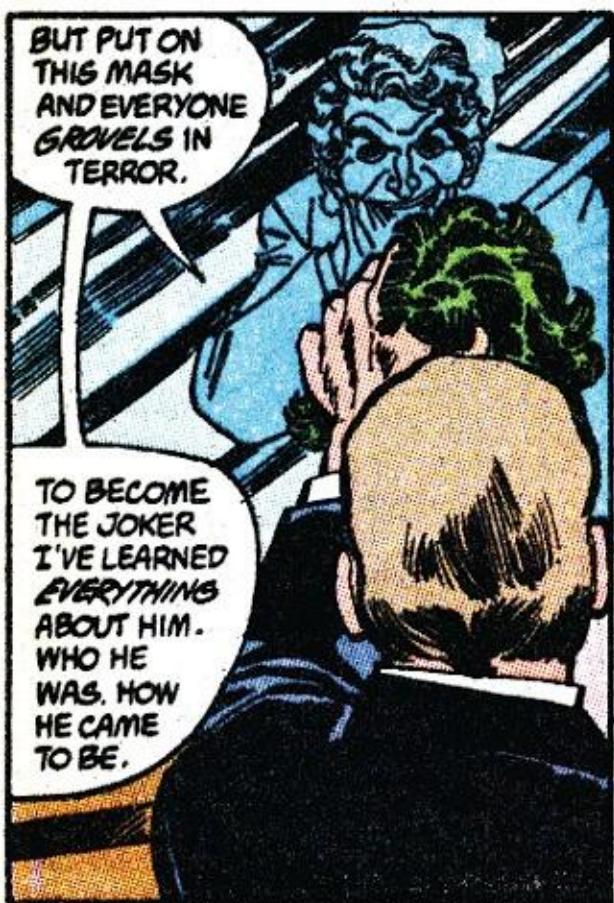
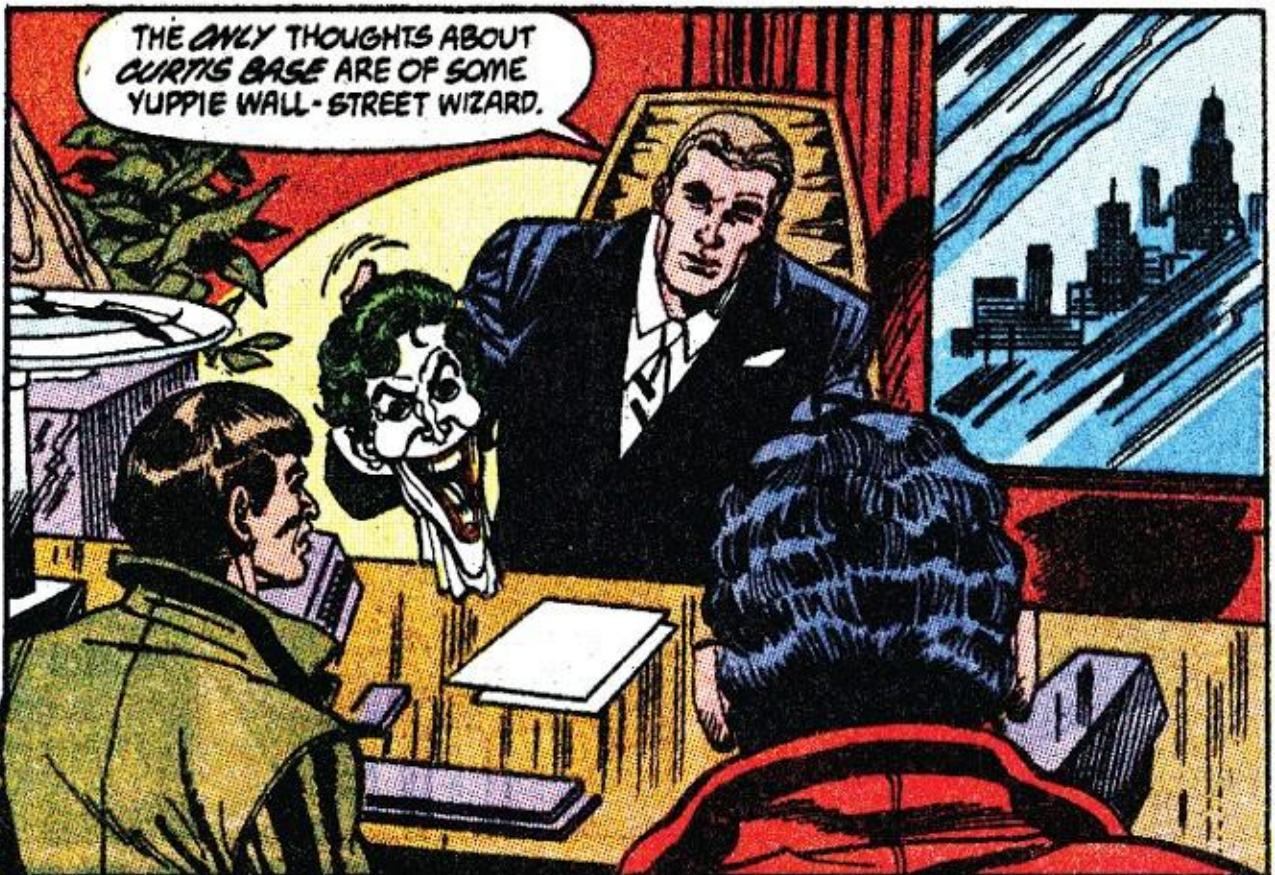
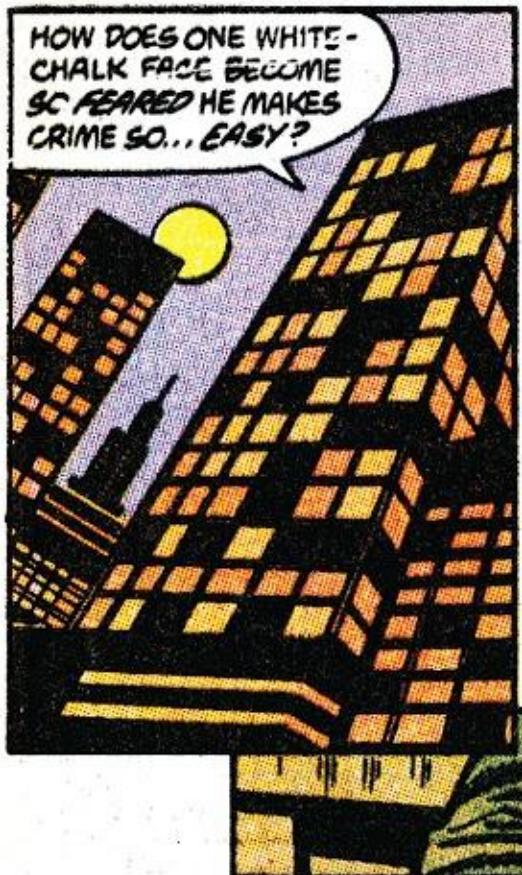
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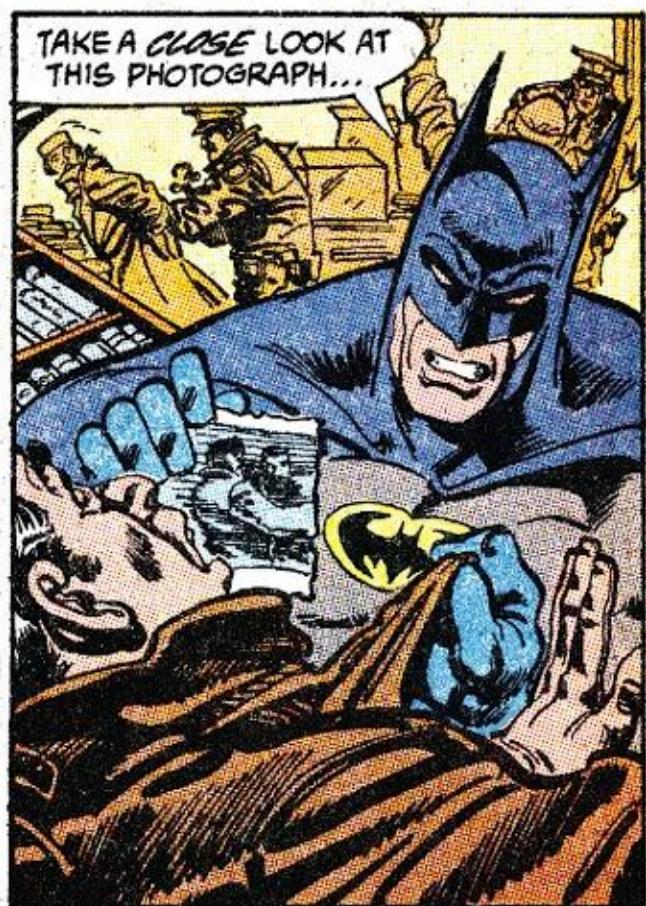
BATMAN created by BOB KANE

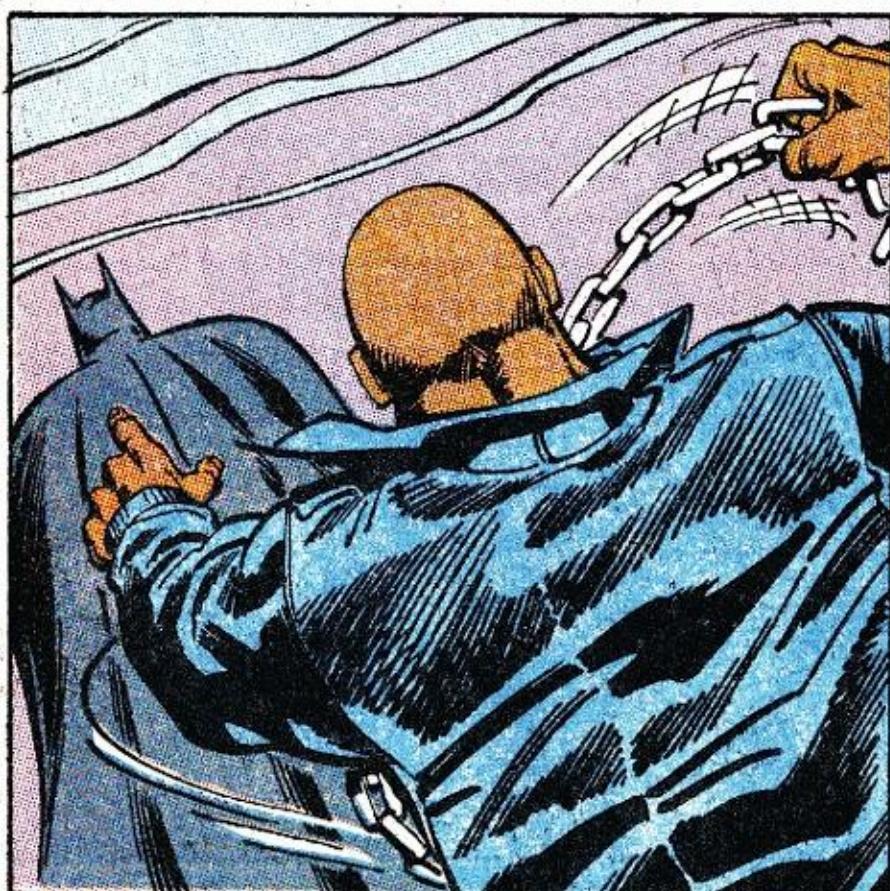
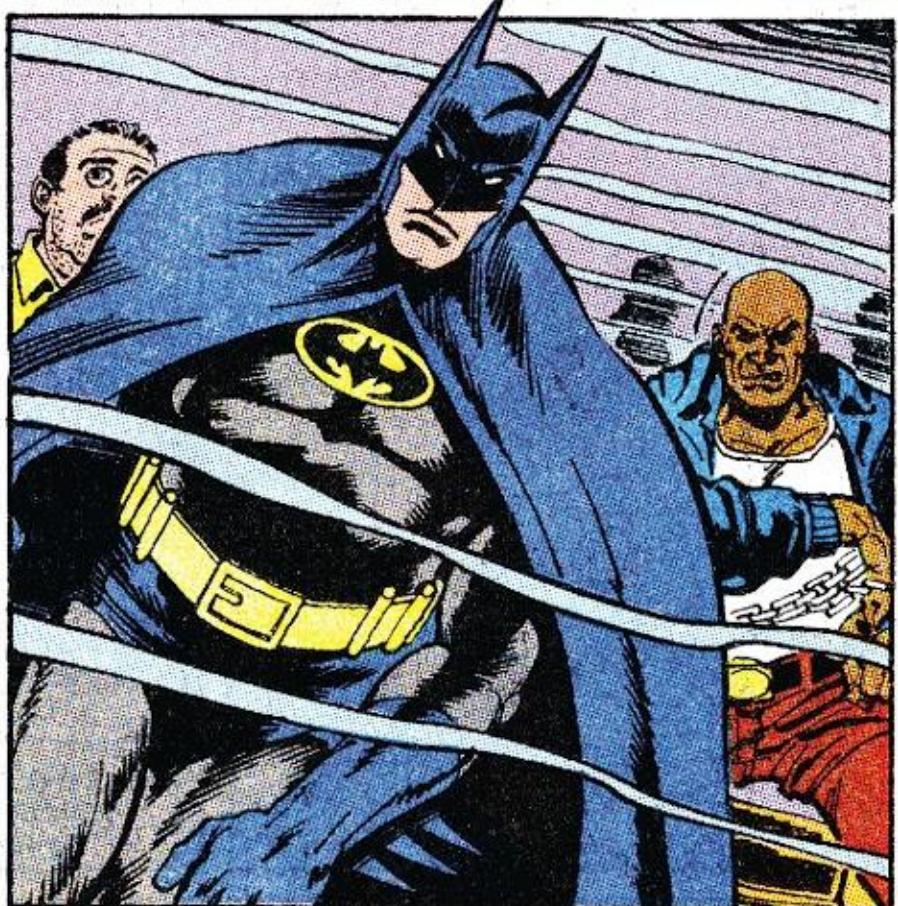
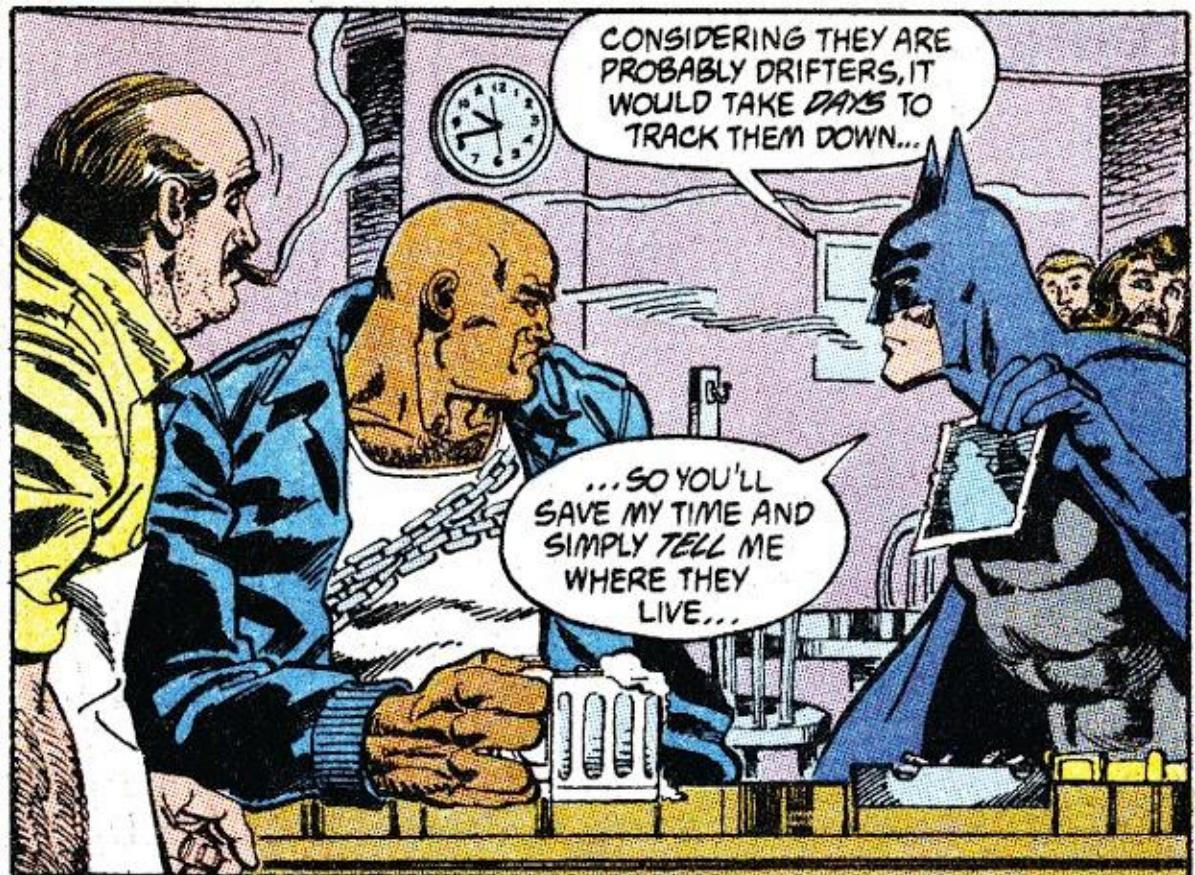




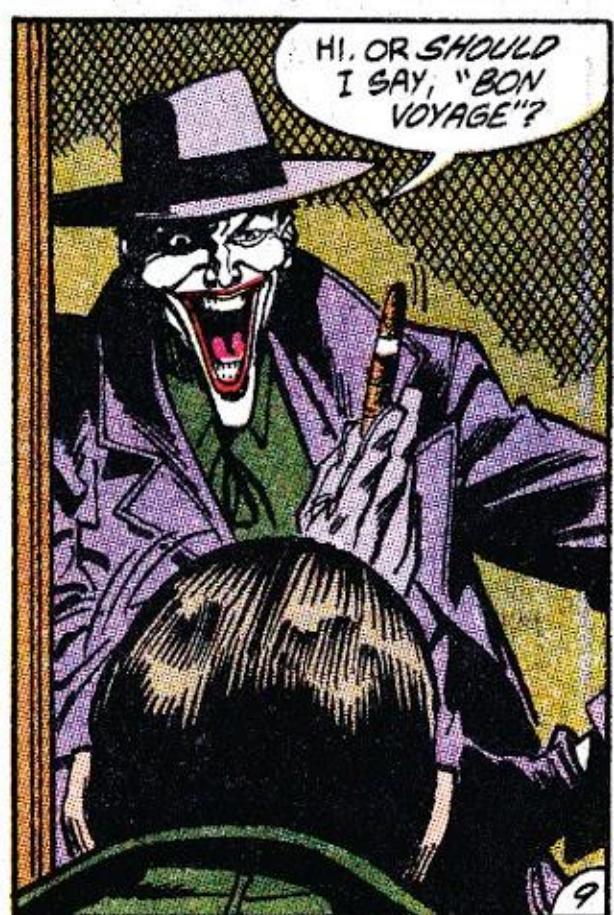














THIS BOBBY CHARACTER SAID  
BASE IS POSING AS THE JOKER?  
GREAT! JUST WHAT WE NEED.  
TWO MANIACS ON THE  
LOOSE.

HOW'S  
BARBARA?

PROUD, STUBBORN.  
REFUSES MY  
HELP.

SHE'S THE SAME AS  
SHE WAS BEFORE  
THE JOKER SHOT--

KOF KOF. SMOKE  
TOO MUCH.

BUT SOME THINGS  
ARE HARD TO LET  
GO OF.

YOU WANT  
TO BE MY ON  
THIS?

I SHOULD  
GIVE IT  
UP ONE  
OF THESE  
DAYS.

EVEN WHEN YOU  
KNOW IT'S IN YOUR  
BEST INTEREST.

YOU'RE AFRAID WHAT MIGHT  
HAPPEN IF YOU DO LET GO. AND  
YOU'RE AFRAID IF YOU DON'T.

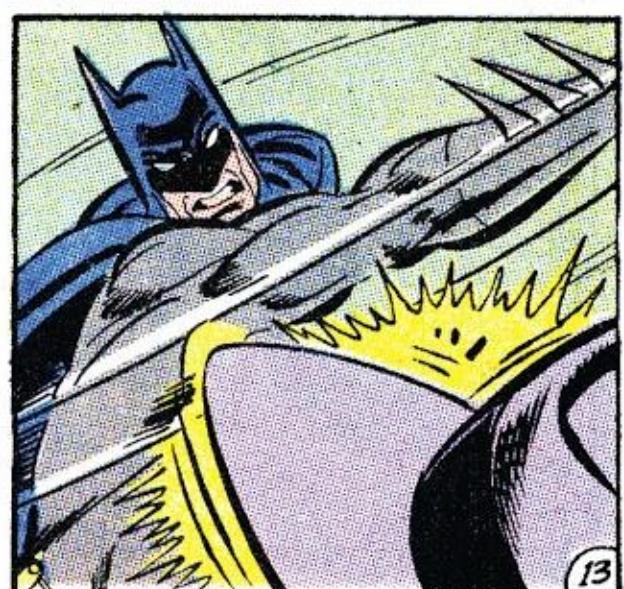
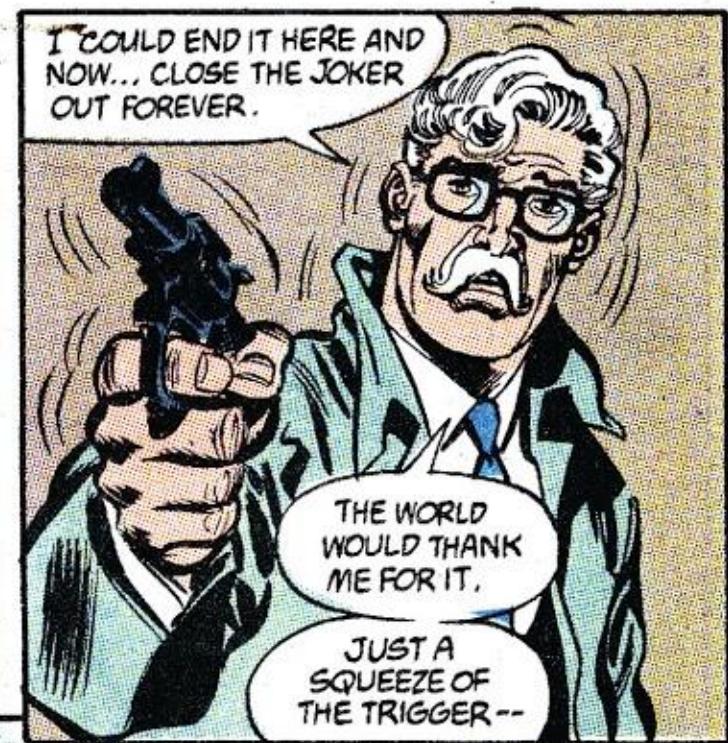
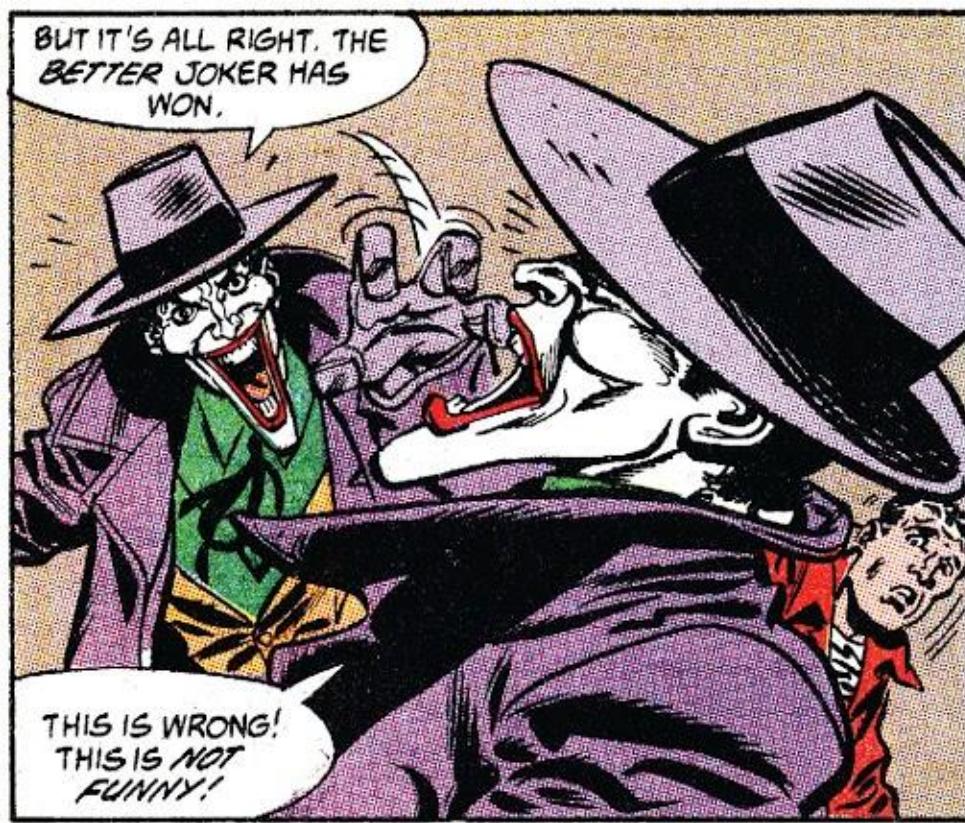
BUT YOU HAVE  
TO CONFRONT  
YOUR FEARS.  
DON'T YOU?

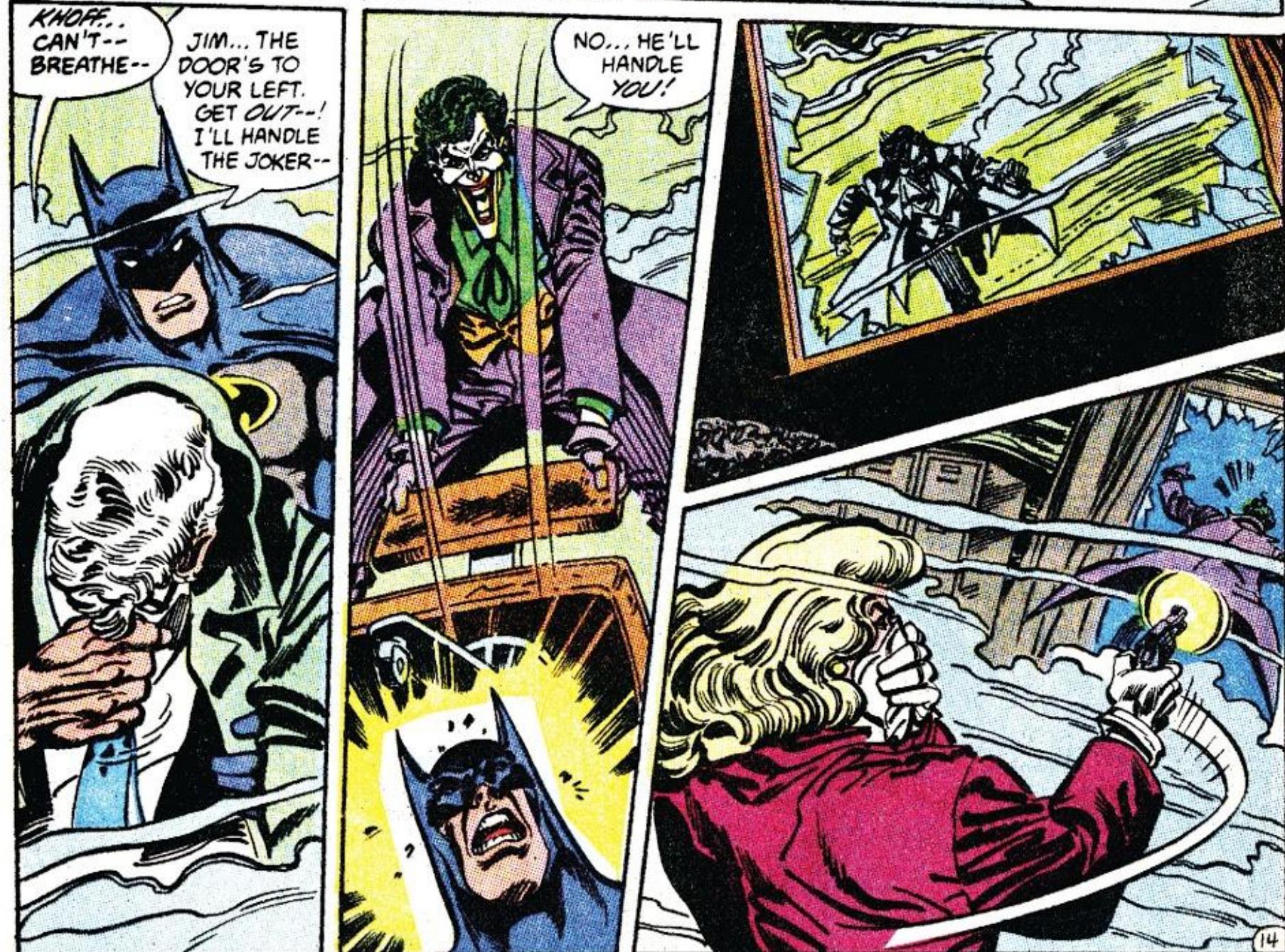
WHAT  
ABOUT  
YOU?

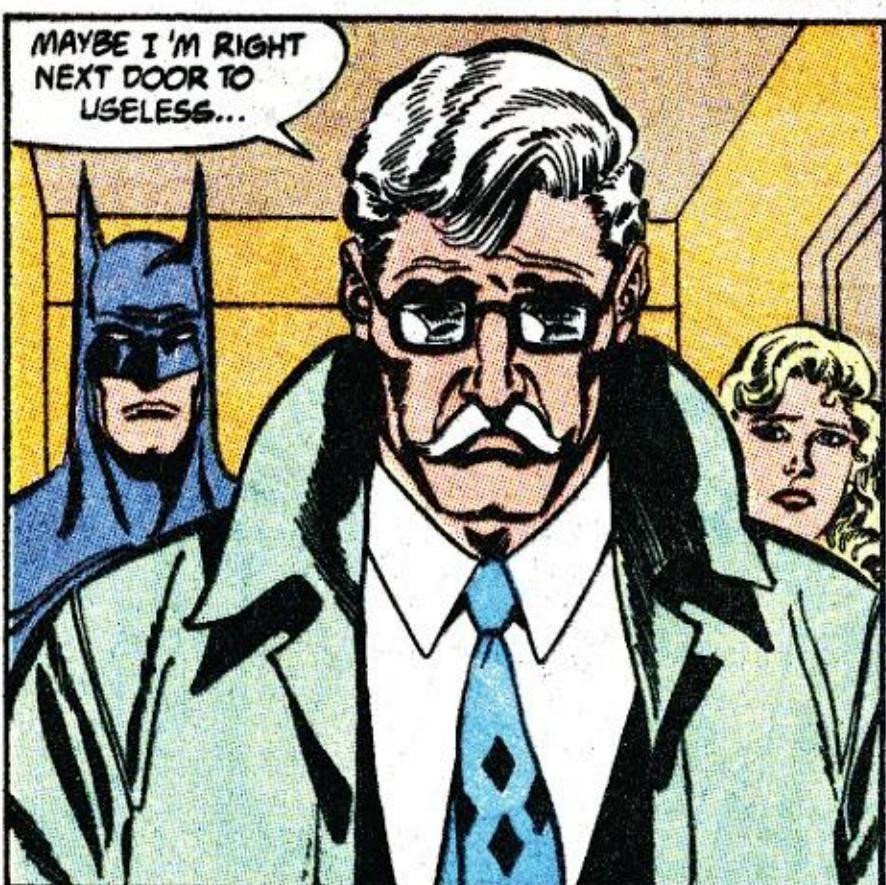
IT'S THE ONLY  
WAY I KNOW  
TO LIVE.

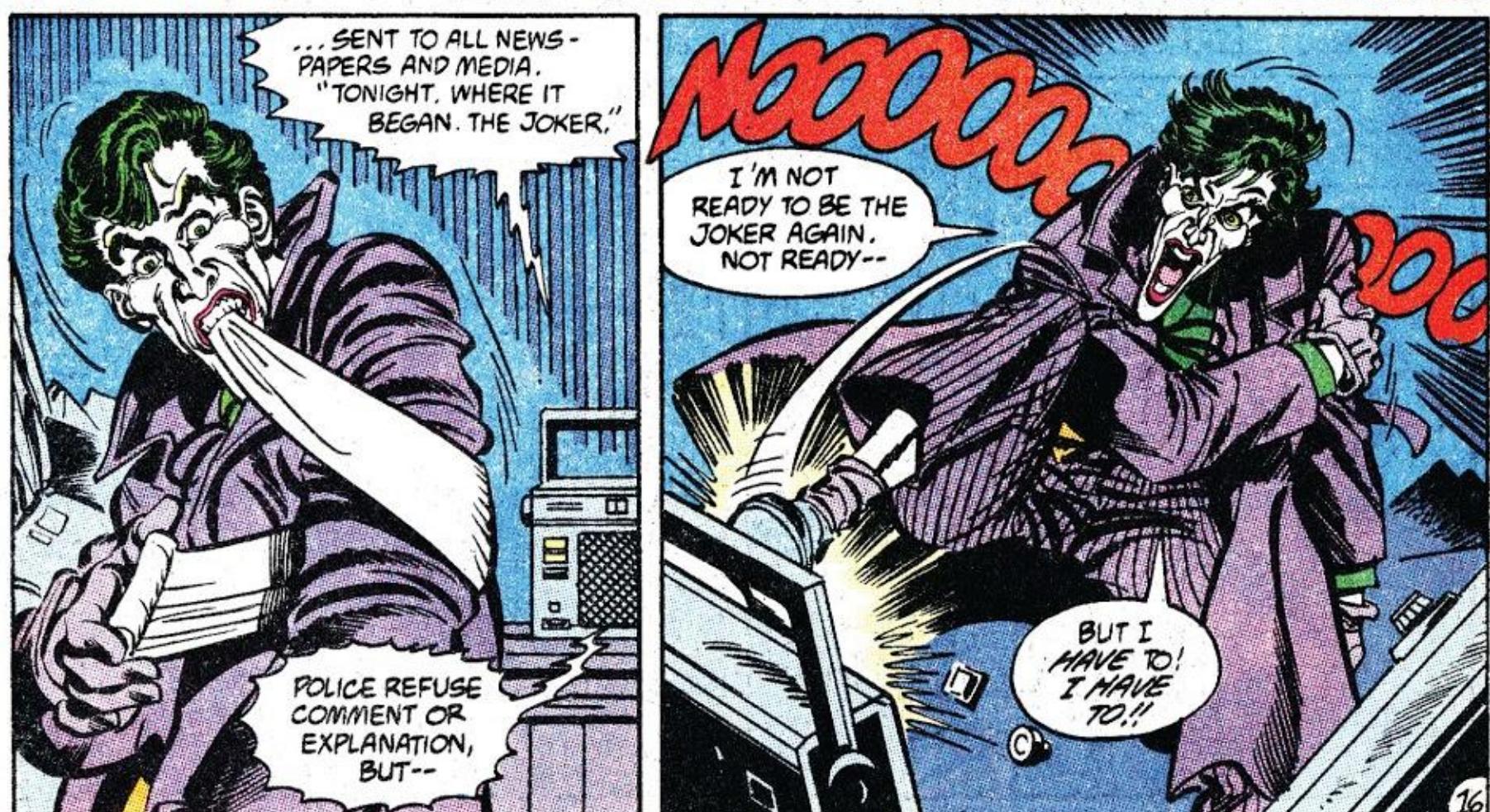
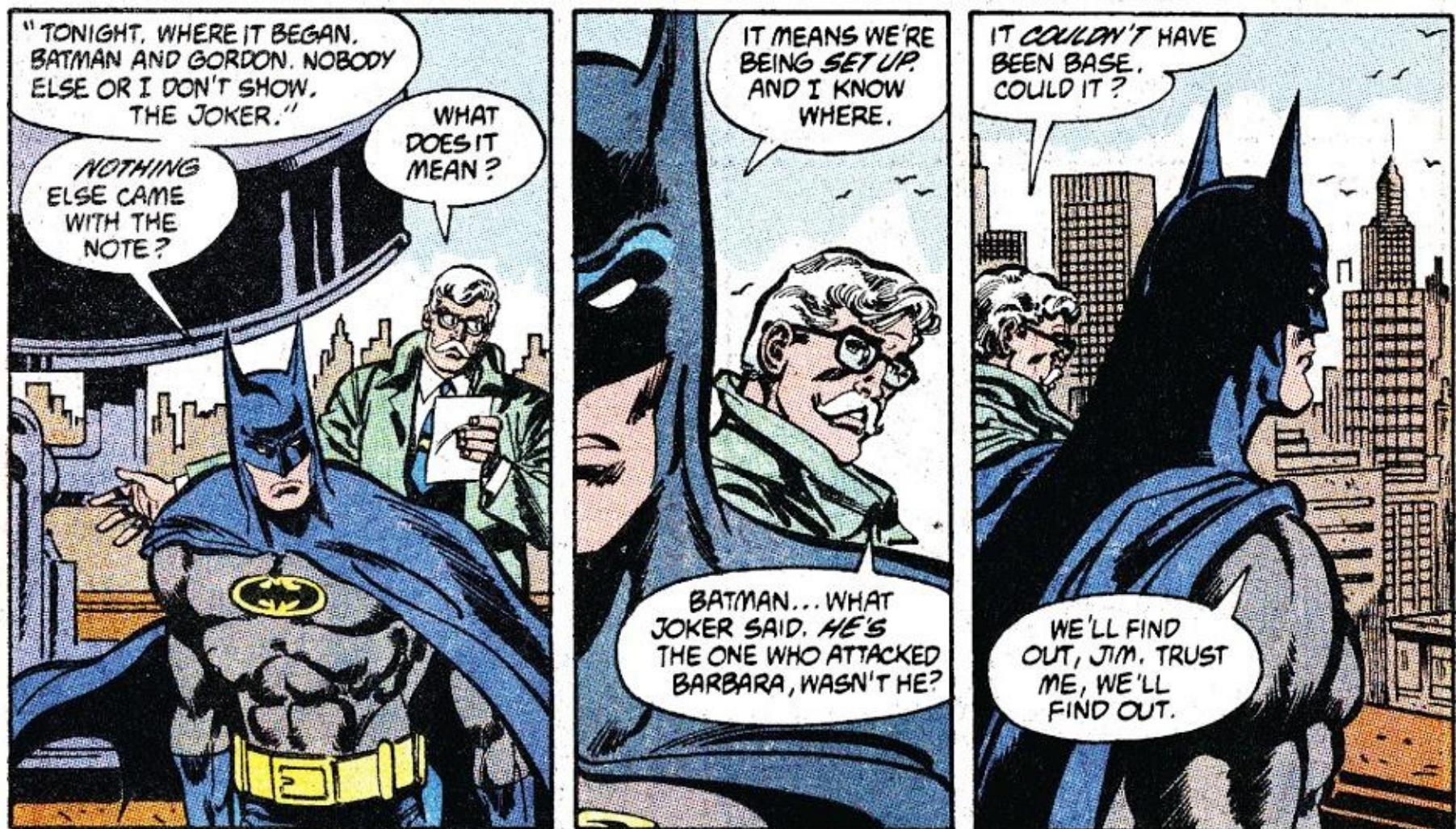
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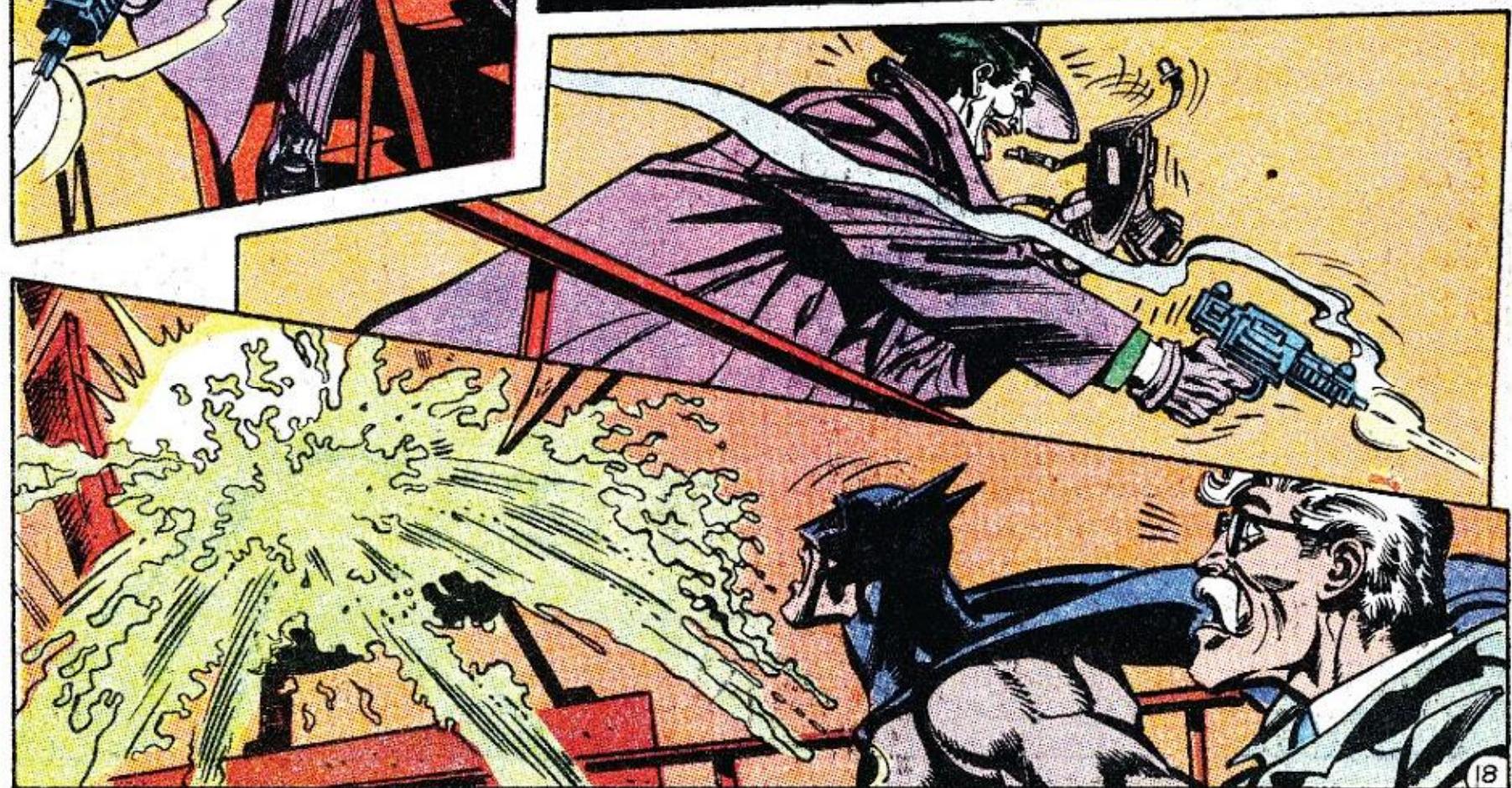


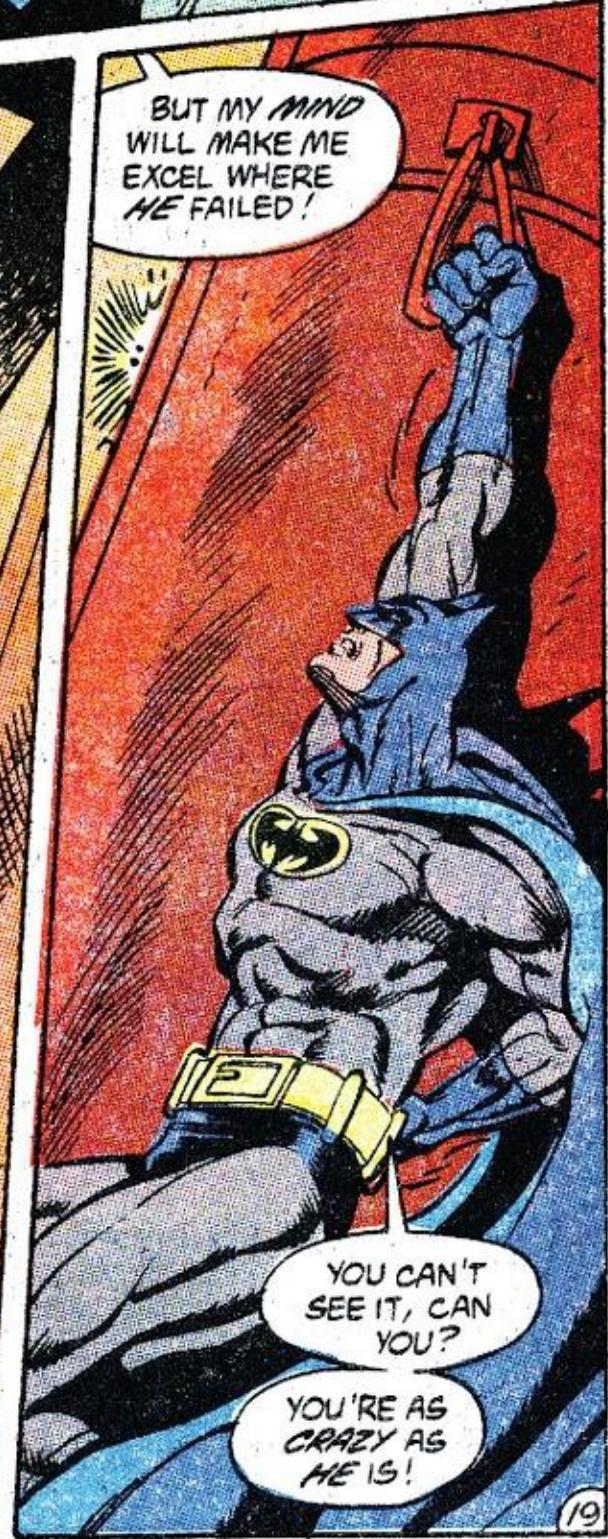
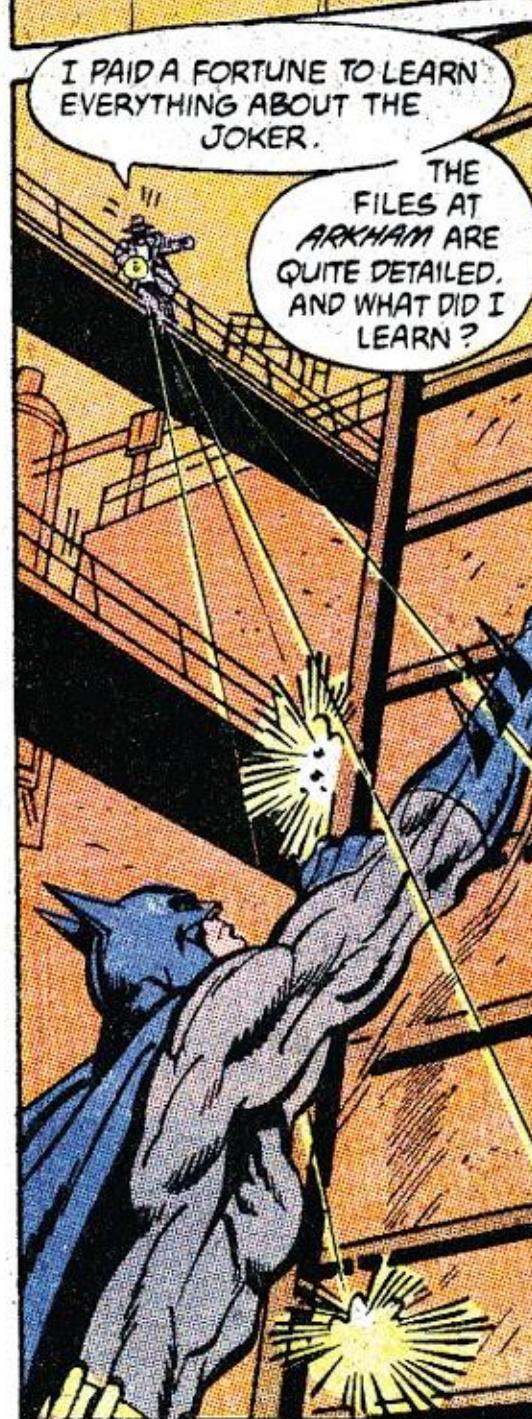










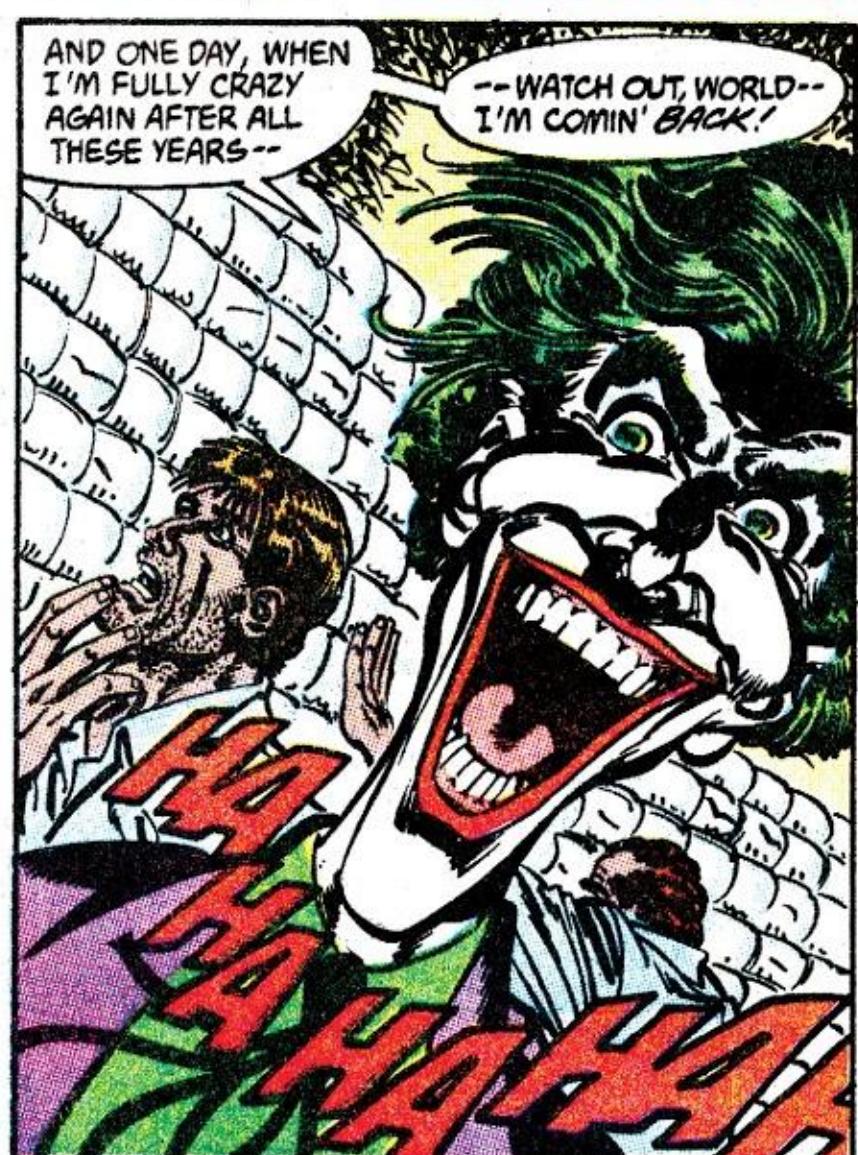
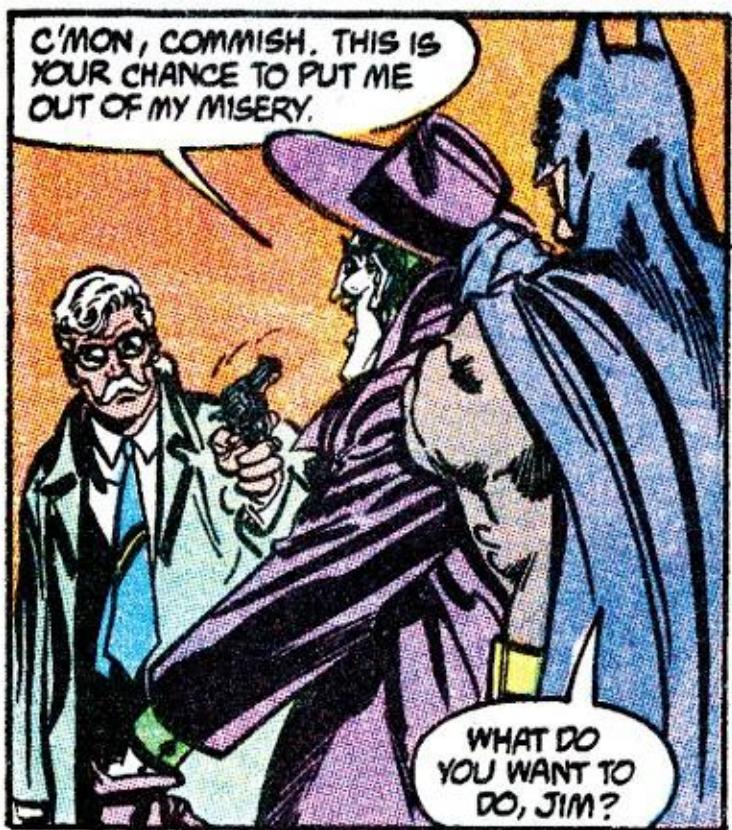




I'M THE REAL JOKER, PAL. ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTES.







**NEXT  
ISSUE:**

THERE HAS BEEN A TERRIBLE SECRET LURKING IN GOTHAM.  
IT IS FINALLY REVEALED IN-- **DARK NIGHT/DARK CITY**  
A SPECIAL THREE-PART SERIES THAT BEGINS IN BATMAN #452

