



NO. 302 AUG.

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AUTHORITY

BATMAN

WHO ARE THE
WIRE-HEAD KILLERS
PROGRAMMED TO
SEEK OUT AND DESTROY
The BATMAN?



THE BATMAN

ORPHANED AS A CHILD WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE KILLED BEFORE HIS EYES, BRUCE WAYNE TRAINED HIMSELF TO WAGE RELENTLESS WAR AGAINST CRIME AS THE DREAD AVENGER OF THE NIGHT...

CREATED BY

Bob
Kane



WHY DID
YOU KILL MY
HUSBAND,
BATMAN?
WHY?
WHY???

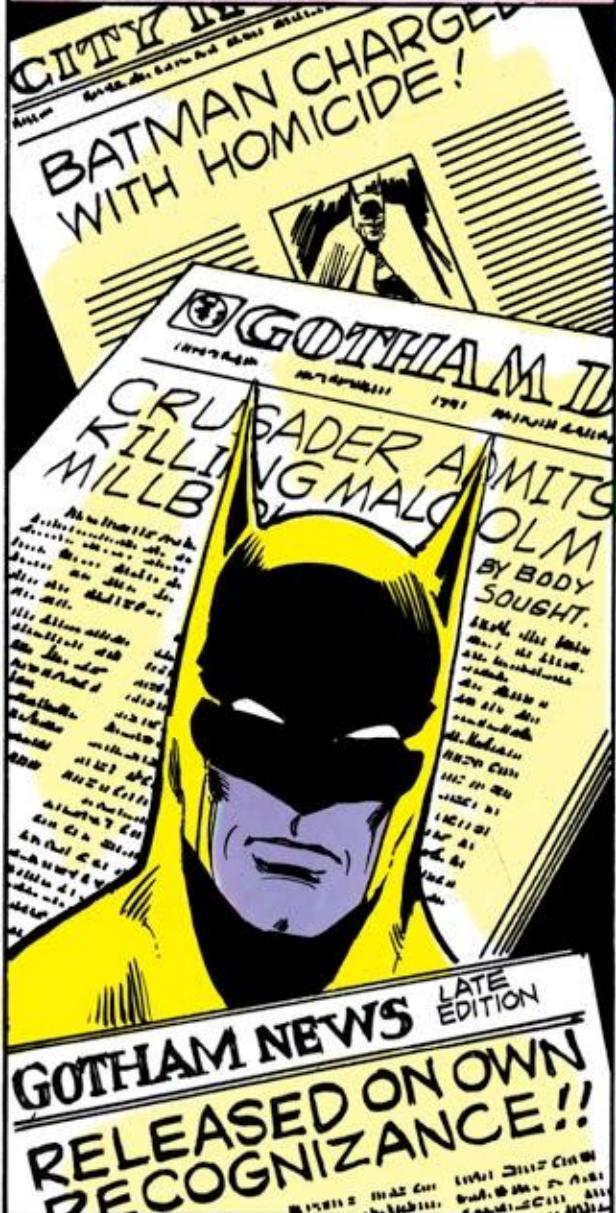
FIVE FATEFUL DAYS--
--OF PLANNING AGAINST THE UNKNOWN
FACE OF TERROR AND IMPENDING
CATASTROPHE--FIVE FRENETIC DAYS
HAVE LED TO THIS INCREDIBLE
MOMENT IN...

"THE ATTACK OF THE WIRE-HEAD KILLERS"

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ALL NIGHT THE RADIO AND TV CRACKLE WITH THE NEWS--AND BY MORNING...



IT IS NINE A.M. AT THE PENTHOUSE OF BRUCE WAYNE--WHO DIVIDES HIS LIFE BETWEEN HIS PUBLIC IDENTITY AS TYCOON AND PLAYBOY... AND THE SHADY EXISTENCE OF HIS ALTER EGO, THE BATMAN--

--AND WHO IS AT THE MOMENT DEALING WITH THE UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL OF DICK GRAYSON--A.K.A. ROBIN, THE TEEN WONDER--THESE DAYS AN UNDERGRADUATE AT HUDSON U...



BELIEVE ME, IT WASN'T EASY!

NOW SIT DOWN AND LISTEN-- YOU, TOO, ALFRED-- AND I PROMISE TO MAKE YOUR HEADS SPIN!

FOR YEARS WE'VE BEEN PICKING UP VAGUE GRAPEVINE RUMORS ABOUT AN UNKNOWN OVERLORD OF CRIME IN GOTHAM!

HIS RULE OVER THE LOCAL MOBS IS BASED ON A SECRET BAND OF KILLERS CALLED "WIRE-HEADS"--BECAUSE OF A PLATINUM ANKH SUPPOSEDLY IMPLANTED IN THEIR SKULLS!



"IF THE OVERLORD WERE TO DIE ANY BUT A NATURAL DEATH, THESE WIRE-HEADS-- THEMSELVES UNAWARE OF THEIR STATE-- ARE PROGRAMMED TO KILL ANYONE EVEN REMOTELY CONNECTED WITH THAT DEATH!"



"AND THAT WOULD MEAN MASSACRE RAMPANT IN THE CITY!"

"SIX DAYS AGO, A MAN NAMED JUDSON PRICE WAS ACCIDENTALLY KILLED DURING A BANK-HEIST--"



--AND HIS AUTOPSY REVEALED A PLATINUM ANKH IN HIS SKULL!"

"TO FERRET OUT THE OVERLORD AND HIS WIRE-HEADS, I WORKED OUT A PLAN WITH GORDON IN WHICH I'D MASQUERADE AS A WEIRD CHARACTER NAMED AKELDAMA -- "

THAT MADE HIM THE **PERFECT ASSASSIN** FOR RIVAL MOBSTERS TO USE AGAINST THE OVERLORD!

WITH AKELDAMA, THEY COULD KILL HIM -- AND HAVE IT ASCRIBED TO NATURAL CAUSES!



FOR SOME TIME, THE COMMISSIONER HAD SUSPECTED SOMEONE IN HIS IMMEDIATE CIRCLE OF LEAKING CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL TO THE LUKE BRANT MOB...

...AND WE HOPE TO USE THIS LEAK TO GET OUT THE WORD ON AKELDAMA!

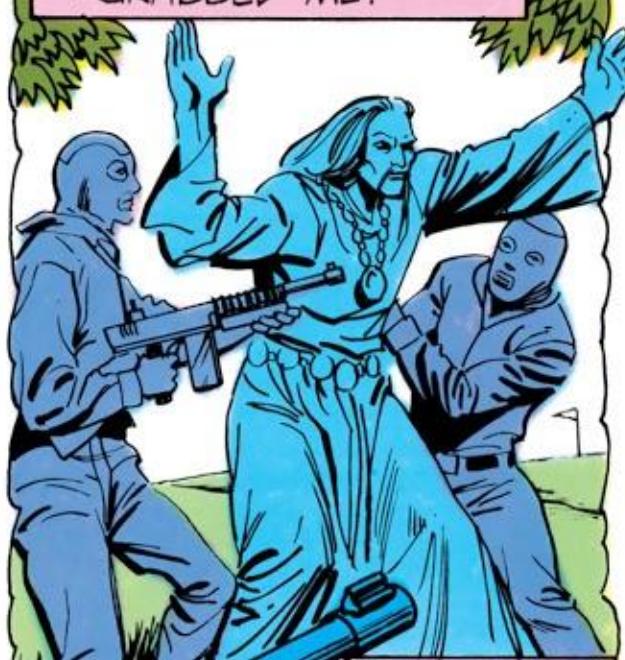
"SO I DEMONSTRATED AKELDAMA'S 'PROWESS' AT KILLING -- ALL PREARRANGED, WITH ONLY GORDON AND CHIEF O'HARA IN THE KNOW -- BEFORE A SELECT GROUP OF GORDON'S TOP OFFICERS..."



"... FIRST AT H.Q., THEN AT THE BAY-VIEW GOLF CLUB!"

"WITHIN MINUTES OF THAT SECOND DEMONSTRATION, BRANT'S MASKED HOODS GRABBED ME!"

"... AT THEIR HIDEOUT, THEY SHOWED ME A PHOTO OF THE OVERLORD -- MALCOLM MILLBROOK, OBTINENTLY A RETIRED REAL ESTATE MILLIONAIRE -- AND GAVE ME HIS LOCATION..."



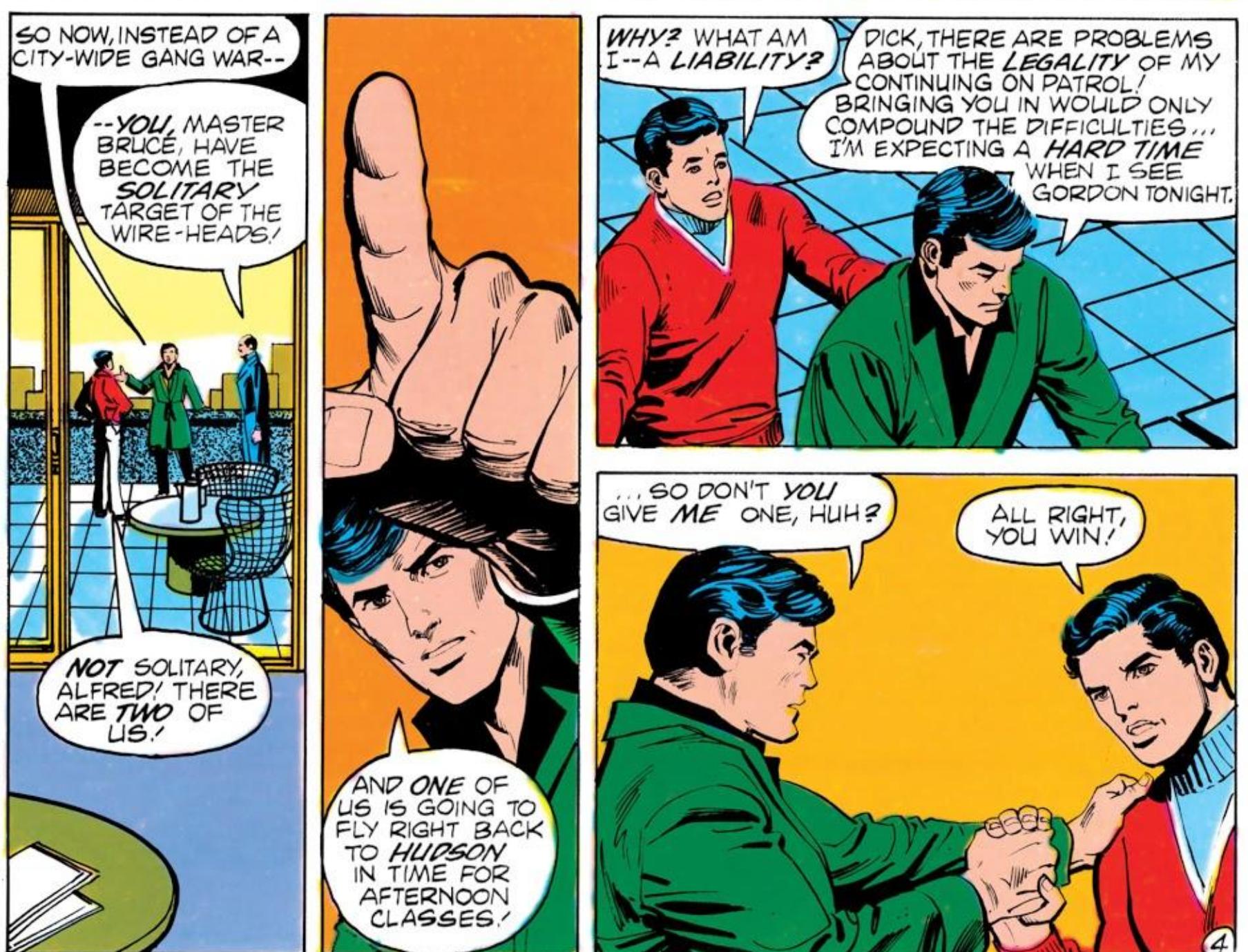
"MASKED BECAUSE MYSHTICK WORKED ONLY IF I KNEW A VICTIM'S FACE ... AND LOCATION!..."

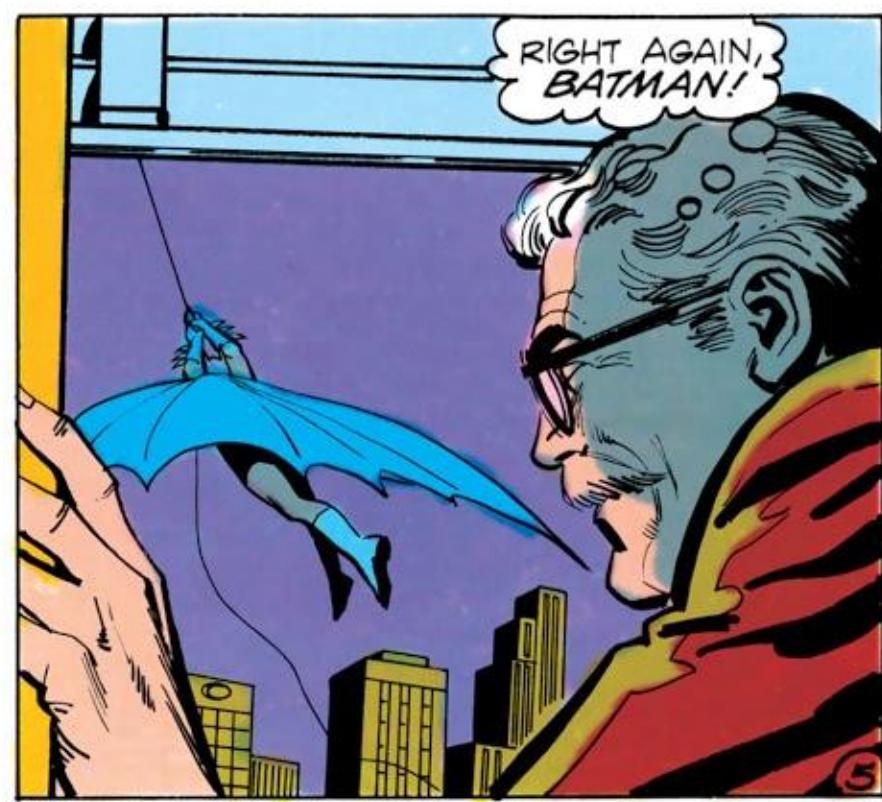


"... I DID MY AKELDAMA BIT AGAIN... TOLD THEM MILLBROOK WAS DEAD -- AND BRANT IMMEDIATELY TOOK OFF TO CHECK IT OUT!..."



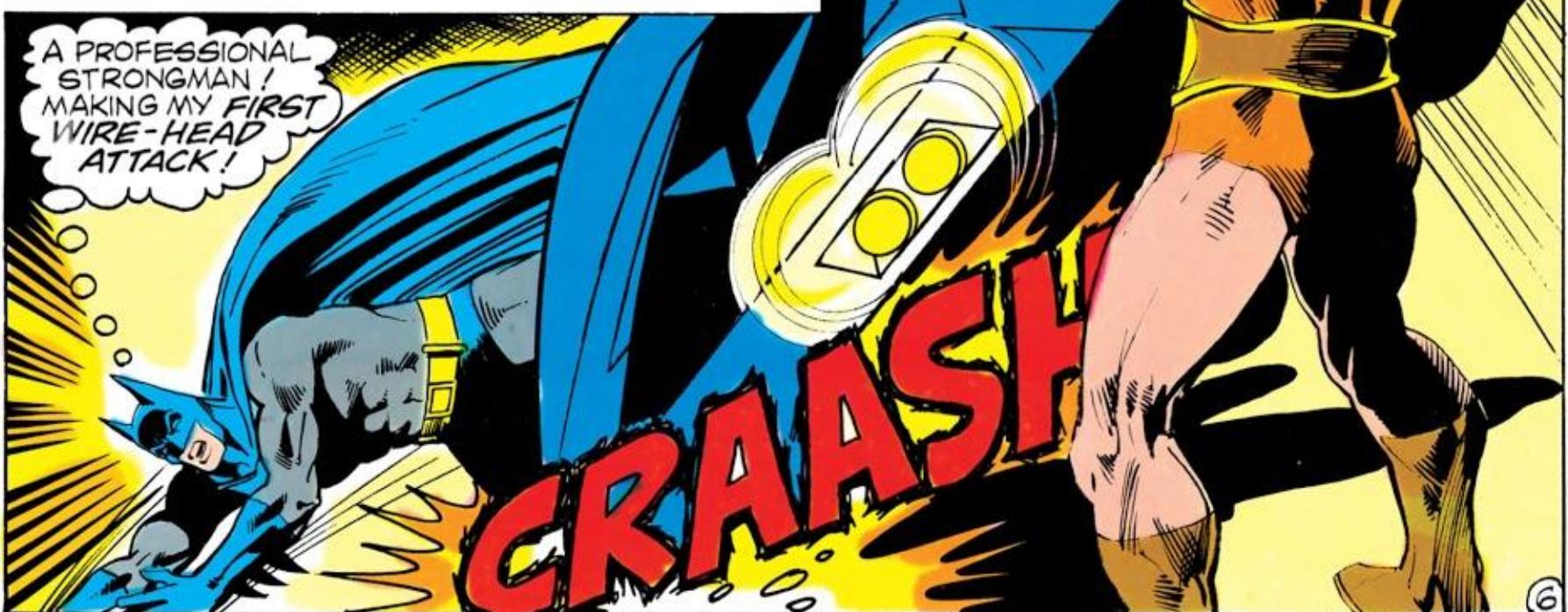
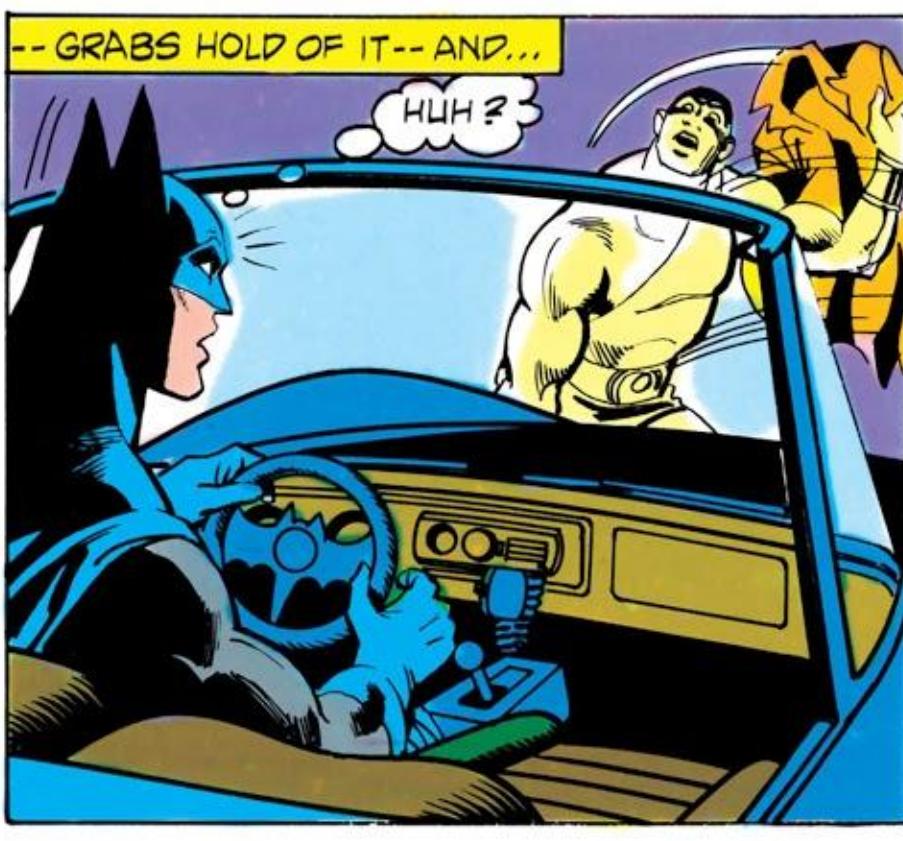
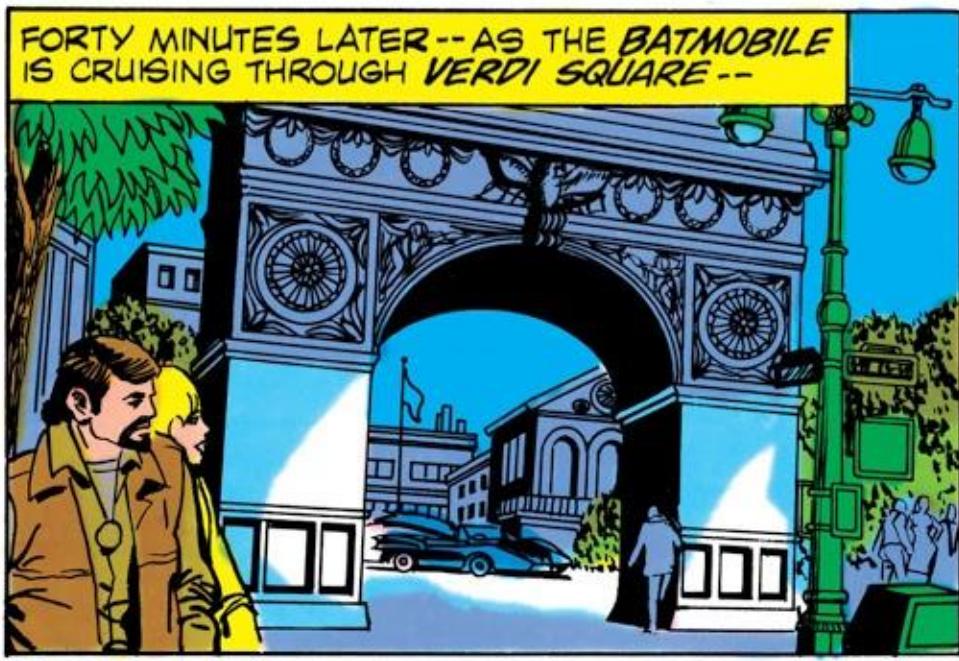
"-- WHO BY PROJECTING 'MENTAL WAVES' AT A CHOSEN VICTIM COULD CAUSE HIM TO DROP DEAD OF HEART FAILURE!"

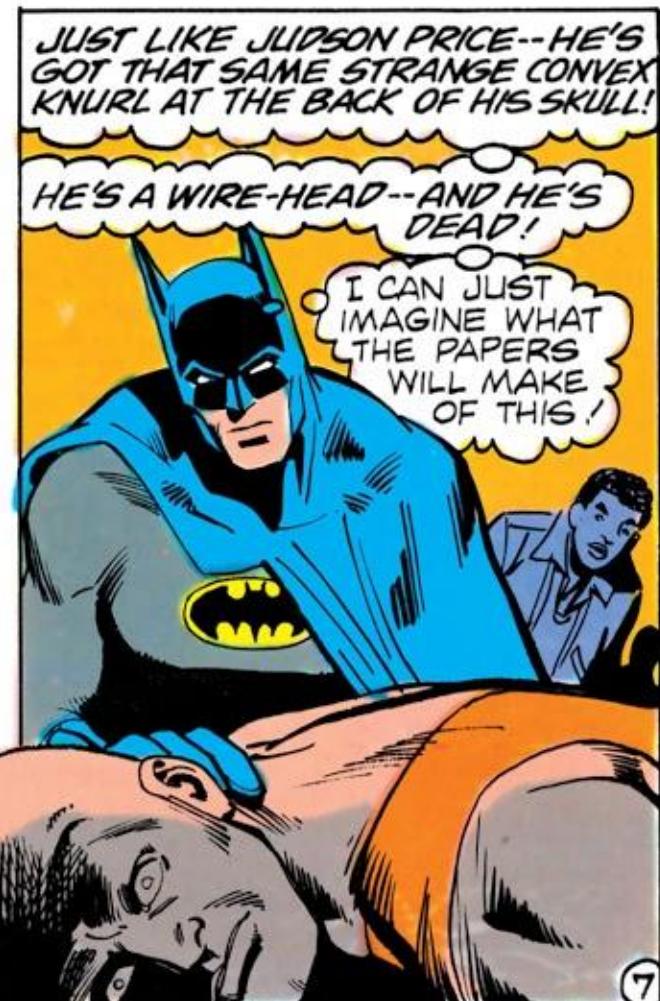
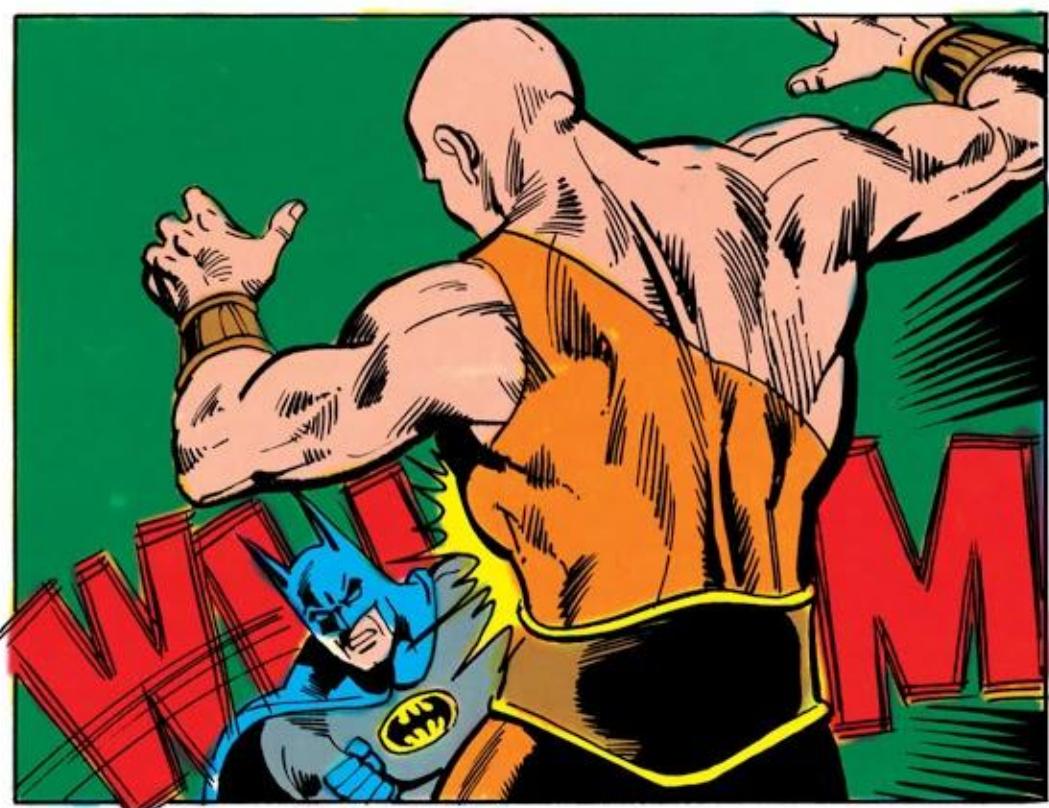
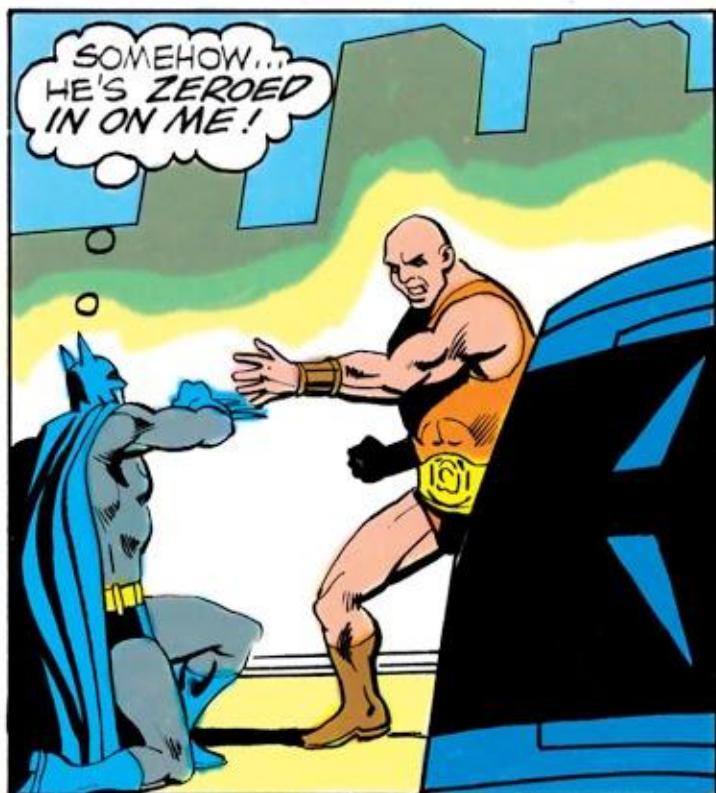




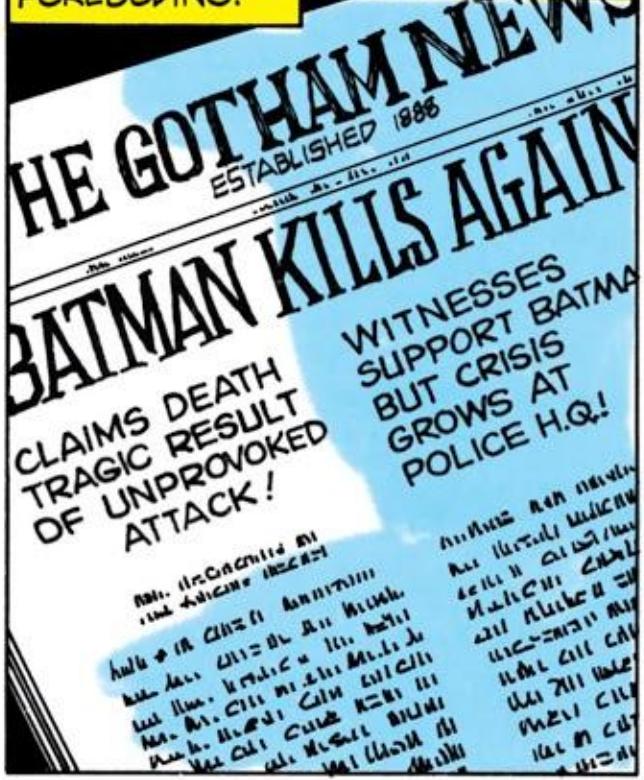
FORTY MINUTES LATER--AS THE BATMOBILE IS CRUISING THROUGH VERDI SQUARE--

--A GIANT OF A MAN DARTS OUT FROM BETWEEN PARKED CARS--DASHES HEAD-ON IN FRONT OF THE SHARPLY-BRAKING BATMOBILE--





NEXT MORNING-- SWIFT CONFIRMATION OF THE CAPE CRUSADER'S FOREBODING!



AT NOON, COMMISSIONER GORDON FACES A CLAMOROUS PRESS CONFERENCE...

...AND OUR SPECIAL INQUIRY HAS ESTABLISHED THAT THE BATMAN'S ATTACKER WAS KARL BRONISLAU... A ONE-TIME CARNIVAL STRONG MAN, LONG OUT OF TRAINING... WHO SUCCUMBED TO STRAIN AND DIED OF A HEART ATTACK!

I TRUST THIS CLOSES THE UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR!



AN INTERESTED TELEVIEWER, BRUCE WAYNE AT HOME...

COMMISSIONER, THERE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SUCH AN "UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR" IF THE BATMAN HADN'T BEEN THERE TO INVITE IT!

WHY IS HE STILL ON PATROL-- WITH A HOMICIDE CHARGE PENDING?



NOW LOOK HERE! SUPPOSE YOU--AS A NEWSMAN--WERE CHARGED WITH A CRIME AND RELEASED ON RECOGNIZANCE ON BAIL?

WOULD THAT MEAN YOU HAD TO STAY OUT OF WORK UNTIL THE CHARGE WAS RESOLVED? PATROL IS THE BATMAN'S WORK--AND HE'S BACK DOING IT!



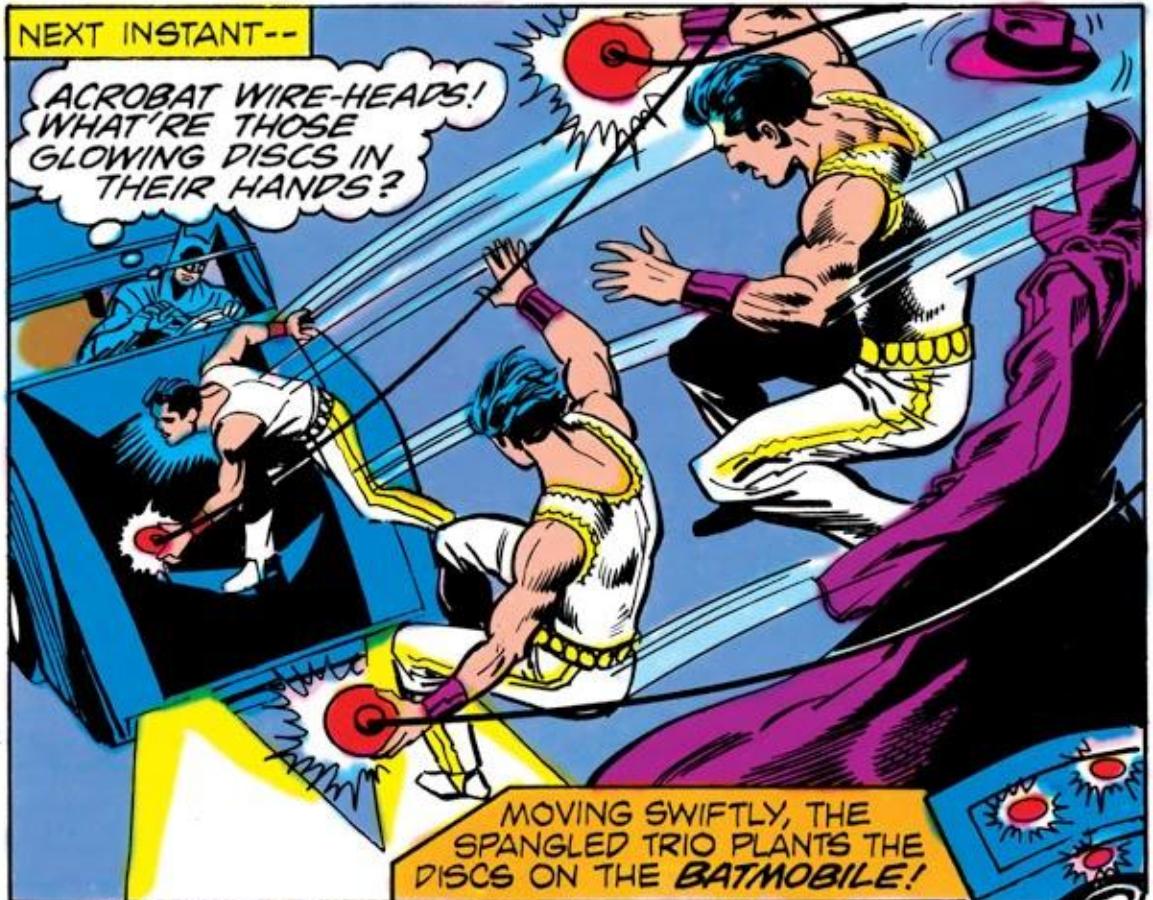
GOOD OLD JAMES! BRAZENING IT OUT WITH AN ARGUMENT THAT WON'T EXACTLY HOLD WATER!



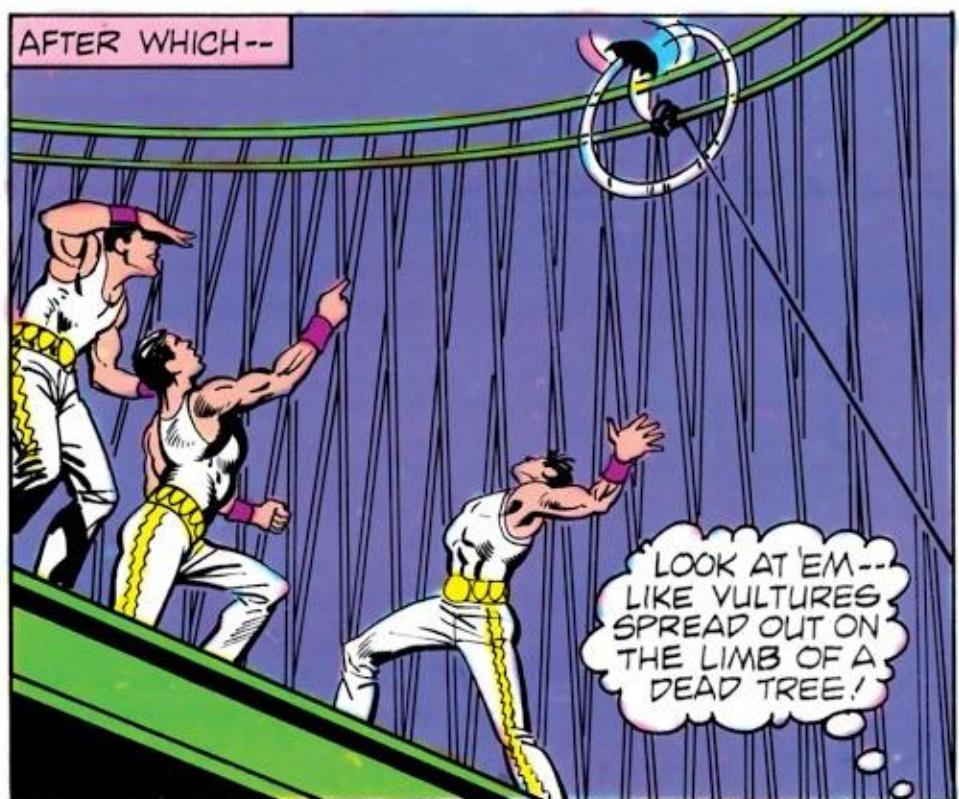
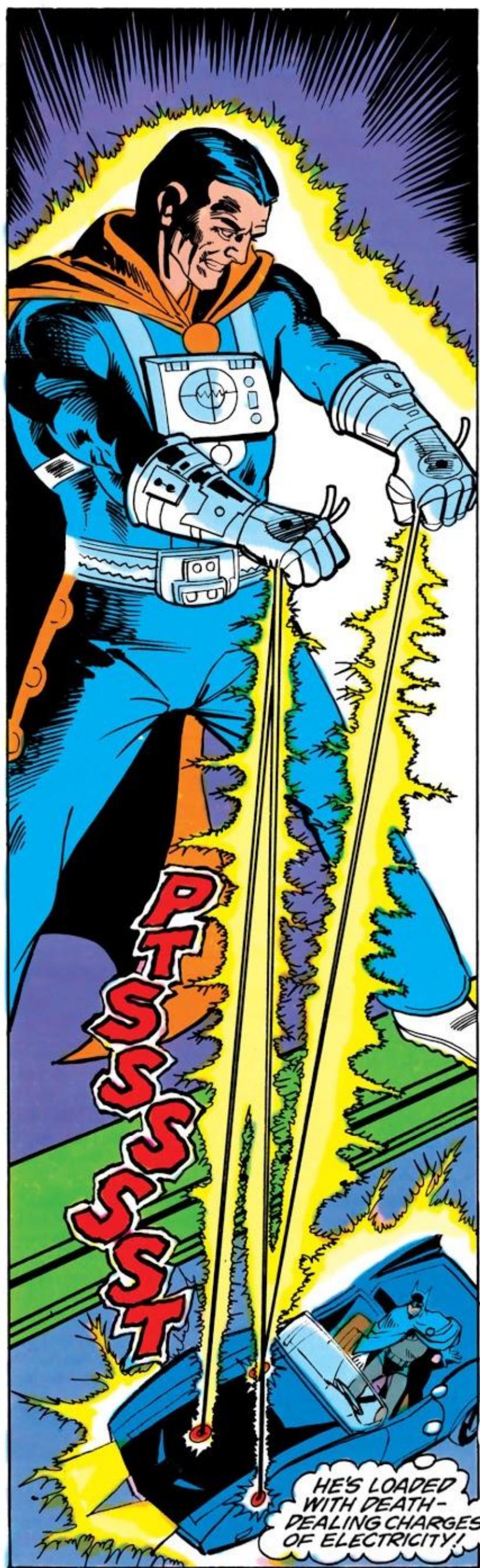
HOW IRONIC! AFTER AKELDAMA'S FADED HEART-ATTACKS-- A REAL ONE-- BROUGHT ON BY ATTACKING AKELDAMA'S CREATOR!

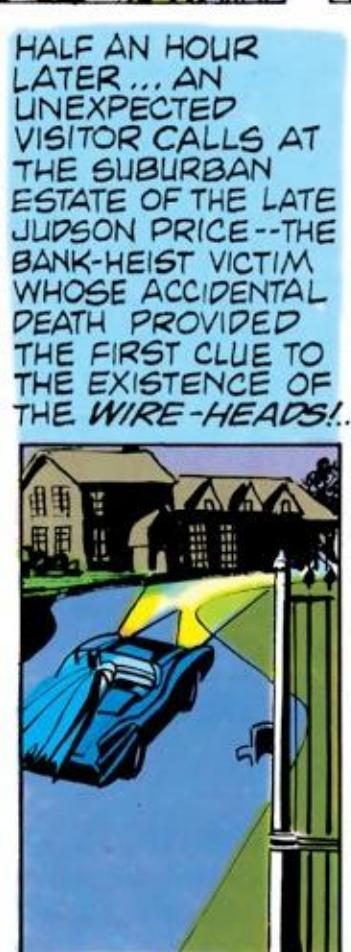
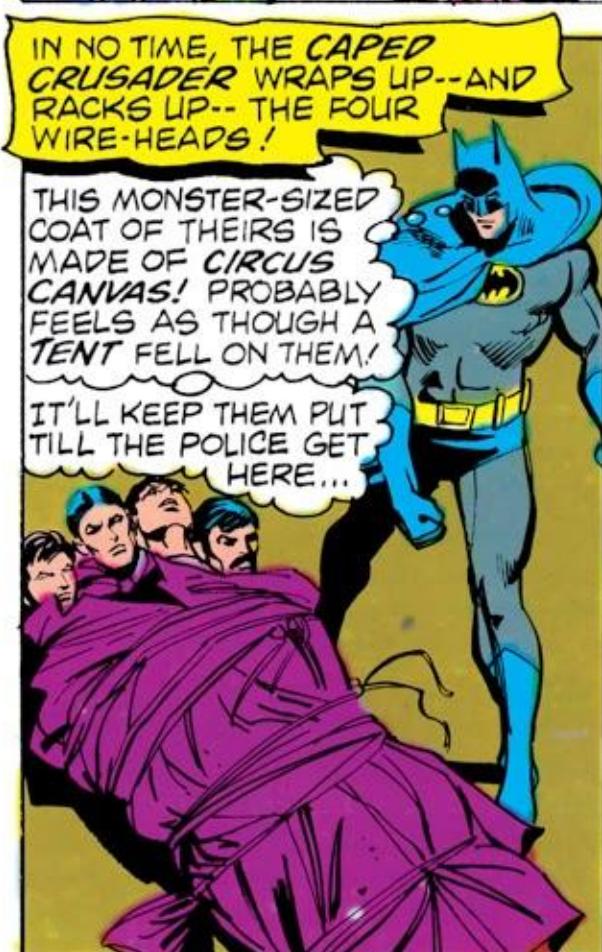
AND, AFTER LAST NIGHT, IT'S ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THE OTHER WIRE-HEADS WON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM HOMING IN ON ME! THE ONLY QUESTIONS ARE WHEN--AND WHERE!

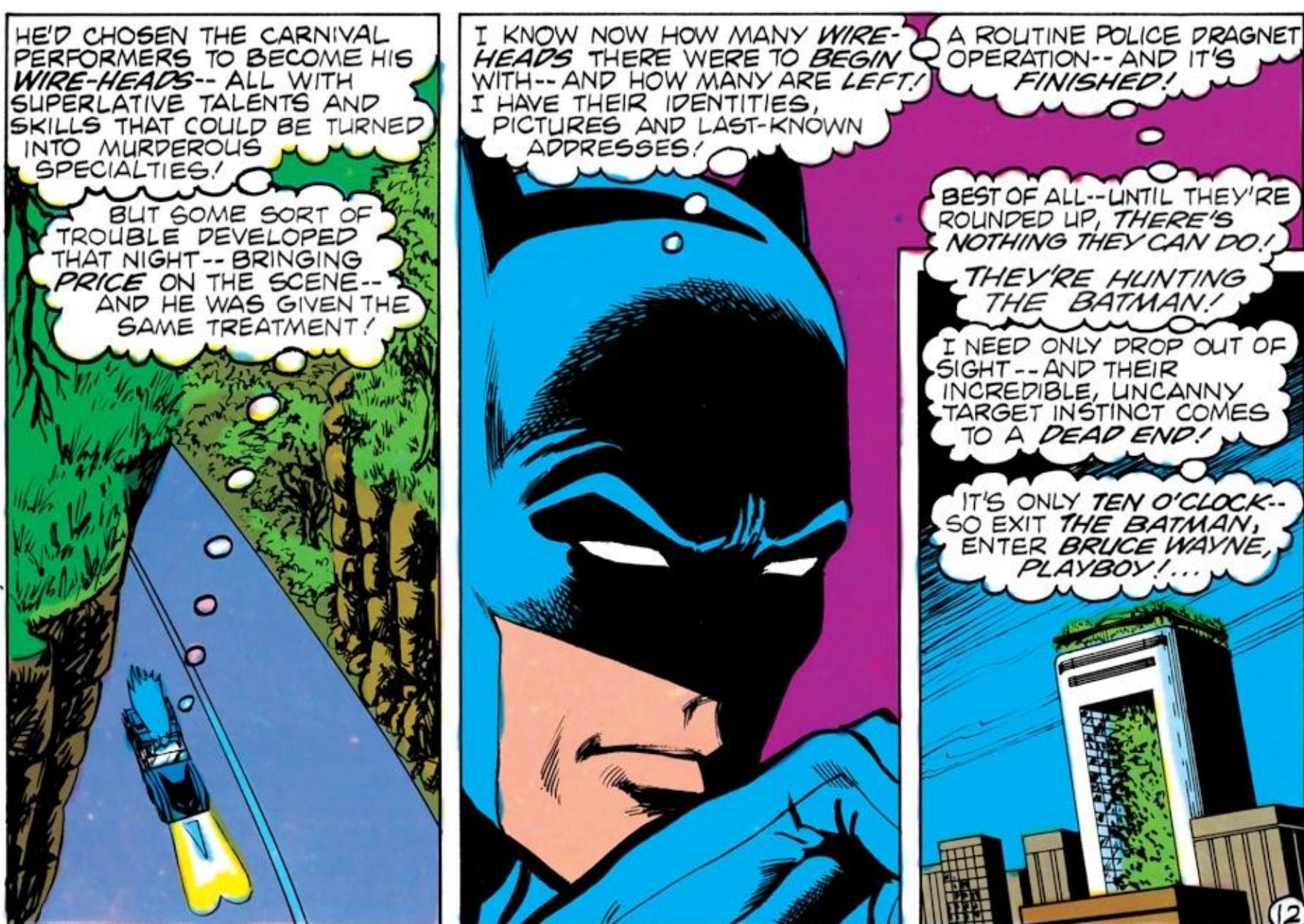
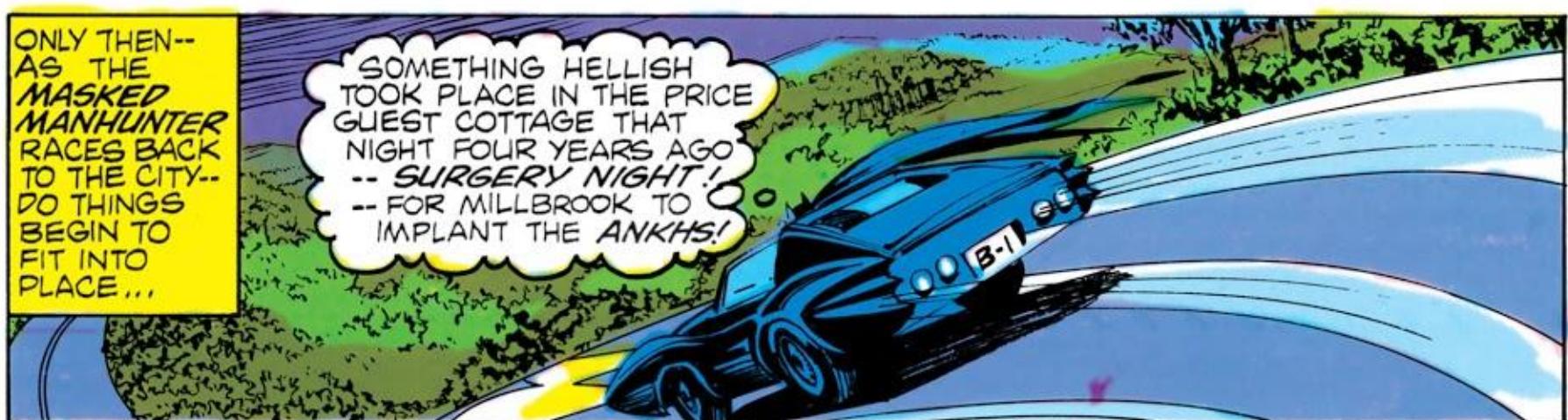
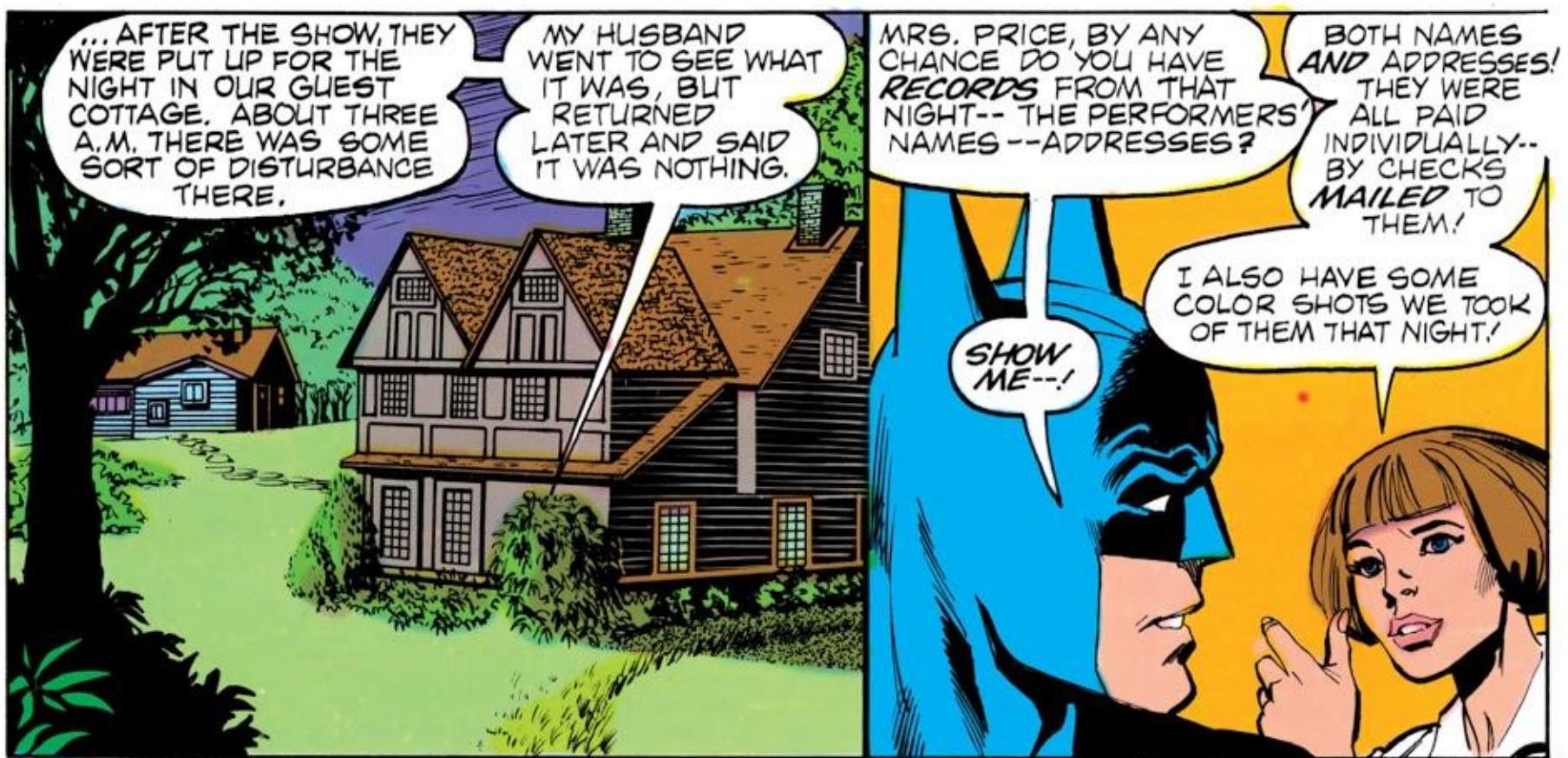




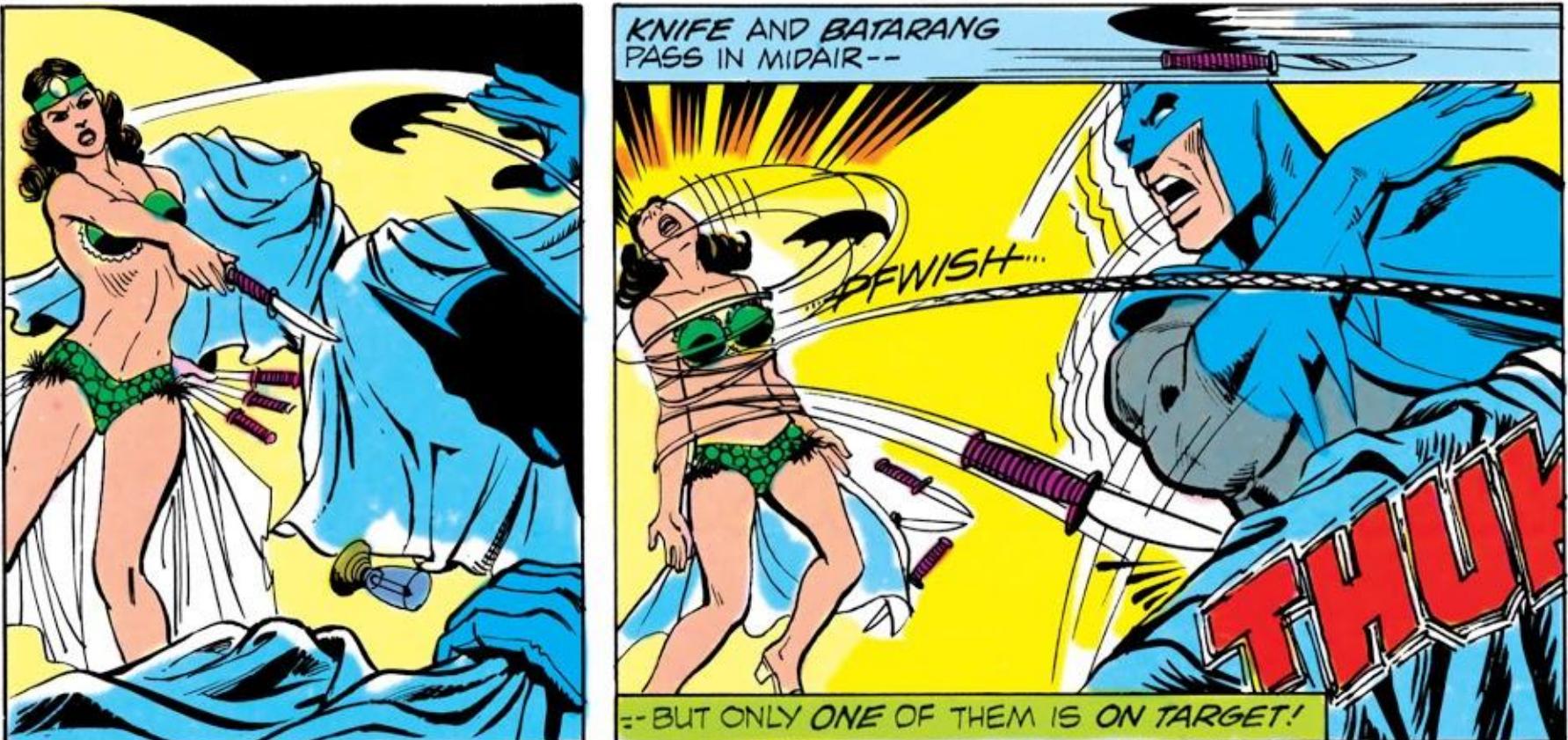
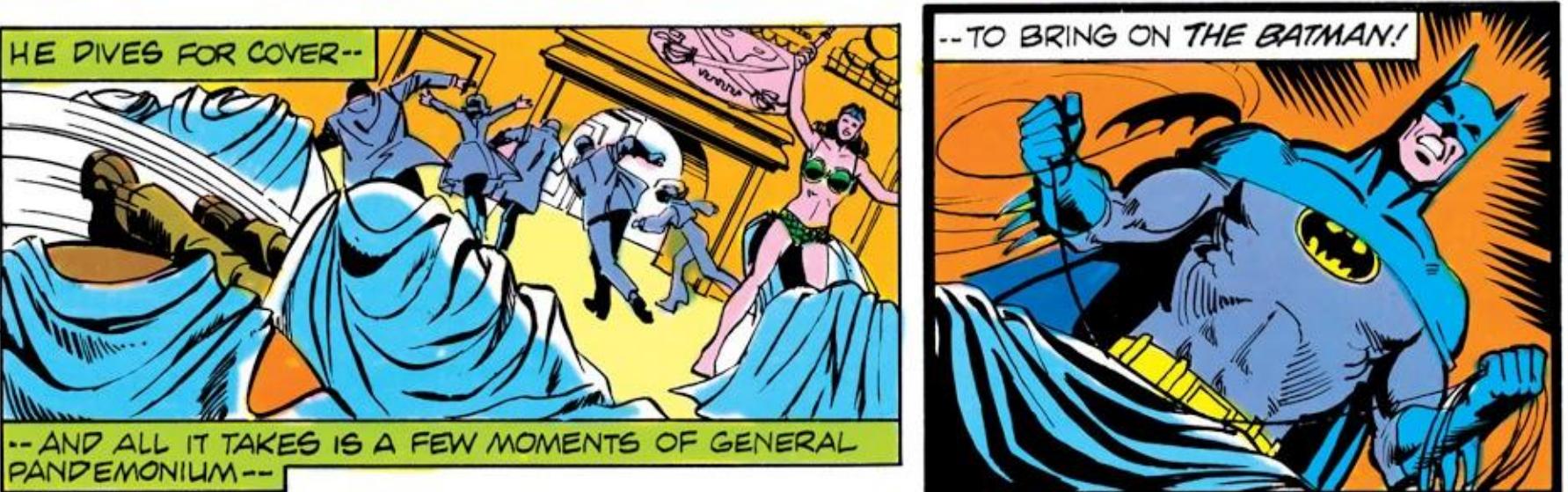
--WHO WAS APPARENTLY LYING ON THE BRIDGE ROADWAY JUST BEYOND THE BARRIER-- AND STOOD UPRIGHT AS THE BRIDGE WAS RAISED UP!















WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR A VERY ODD SCENE
SOON AFTERWARD... IN COMMISSIONER GORDON'S
OFFICE--

WHAT DO YOU MEAN--
THE *WIRE-HEADS* ARE
FINISHED, BUT YOU CAN'T
GIVE ME ANY DETAILS
NOW?

THERE'S A PANTING
MOB OF NEWSMEN
WAITING OUTSIDE--
AND WE'VE GOT OUR
BIGGEST STORY IN
YEARS FOR THEM!

YOU BROUGHT IN **SEVEN** PEOPLE
TONIGHT-- **SEVEN** VICTIMS--MANIPULATED
REFLEX MANIACS! I WANT THE DETAILS!

TOMORROW,
COMMISSIONER...
IT'S BEEN A LONG,
EXHAUSTING NIGHT!



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