



BATMAN



386
AUG. 85

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AUTHORITY



CRAZIER THAN
THE JOKER! DEADLIER THAN
INTRODUCING A VILLAIN FOR THE '80s!
BLACK MASK!

MACABRE AND MENACING, TURNING HIS BACK ON THE MIRROR, HE STRIDES FROM SANITY INTO SHADOW, A STRANGER WITHIN HIS OWN SKIN.

SOME NIGHT VERY SOON HE WILL LEAD AN ARMY FROM THE DARKNESS, SWEARING TO SLAY FIRST BRUCE WAYNE AND THEN--

BAT MAN

CREATED BY BO KANE

G-1959

THIS IS THE STORY
OF HIS BIZARRE
ORIGIN.

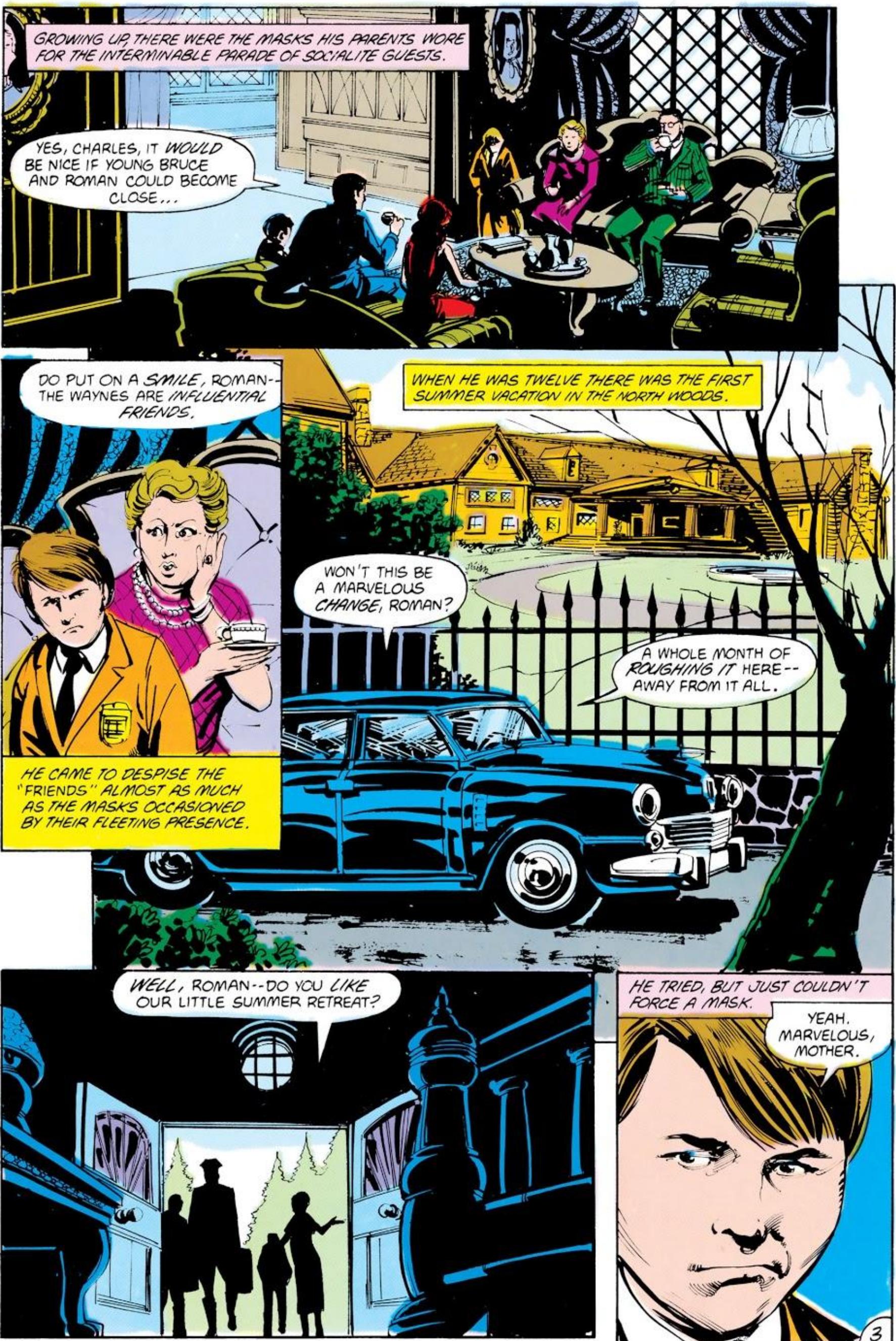
BLACK MASK: LOSING FACE

DOUG MOENCH . TOM MANDRAKE . JOHN COSTANZA . ADRIENNE ROY . LEN WEIN
WRITER ARTIST LETTERER COLORIST EDITOR

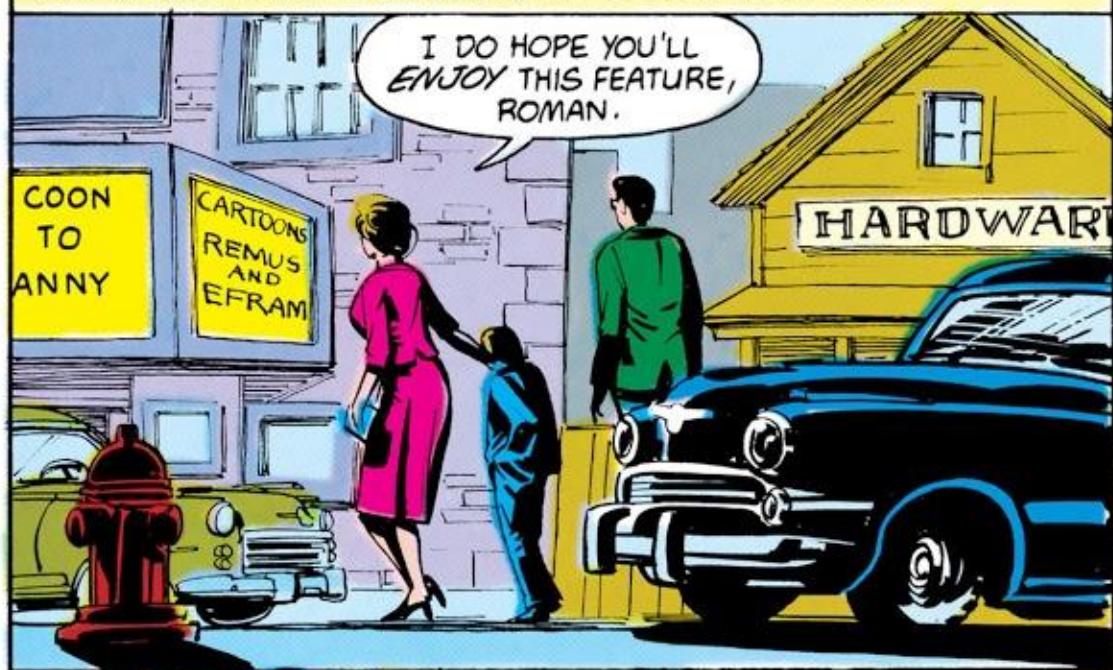


... A CERTAIN DULLNESS WHICH NEVER FULLY CONCEALED THE BURNING.



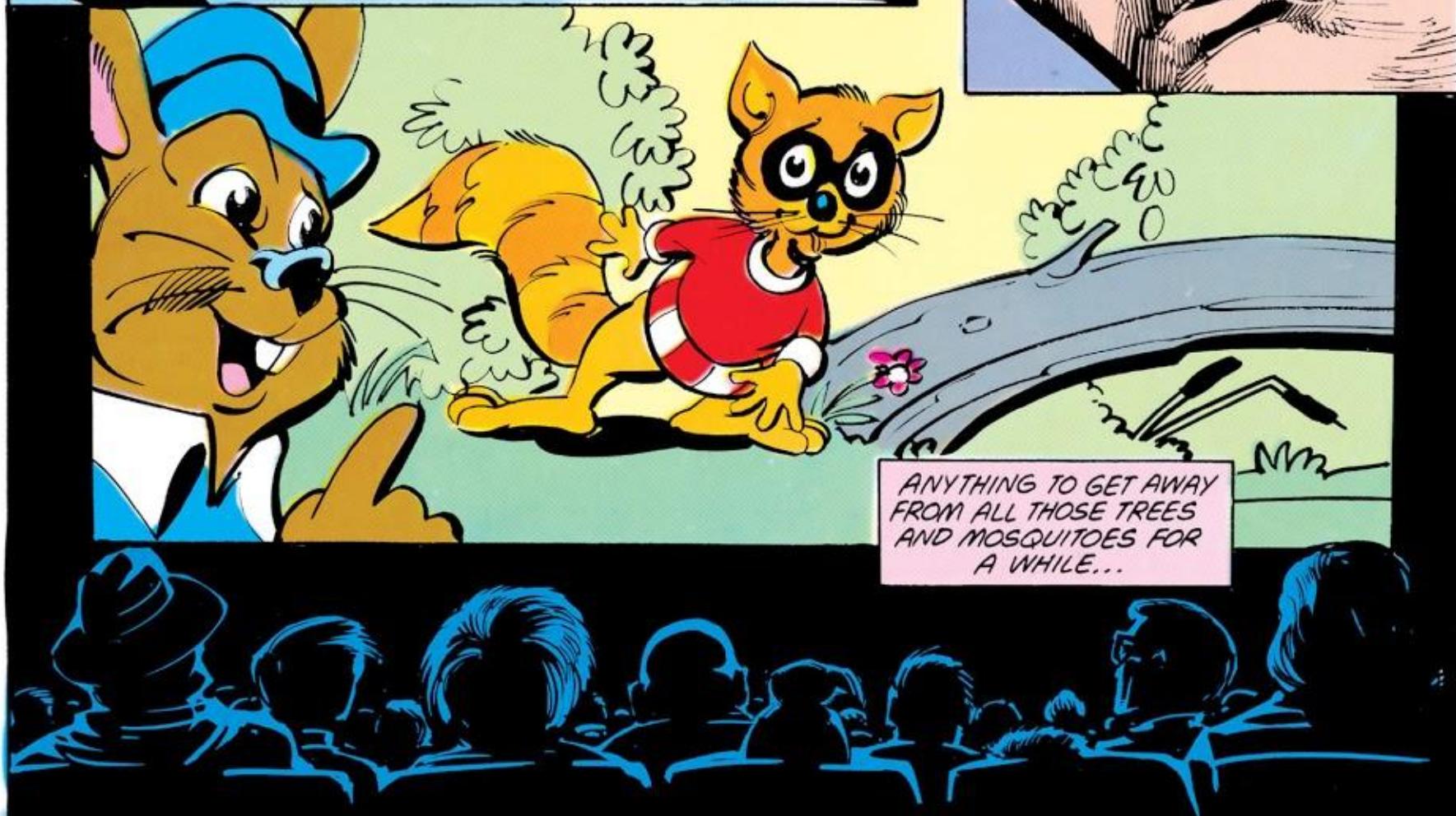


THERE WAS ONLY ONE MOVIE THEATER IN THE NEAREST TOWN AND IT WAS PLAYING A, YUCK, KID'S STUFF CARTOON.



BUT HE PUT ON A MASK OF EAGERNESS.

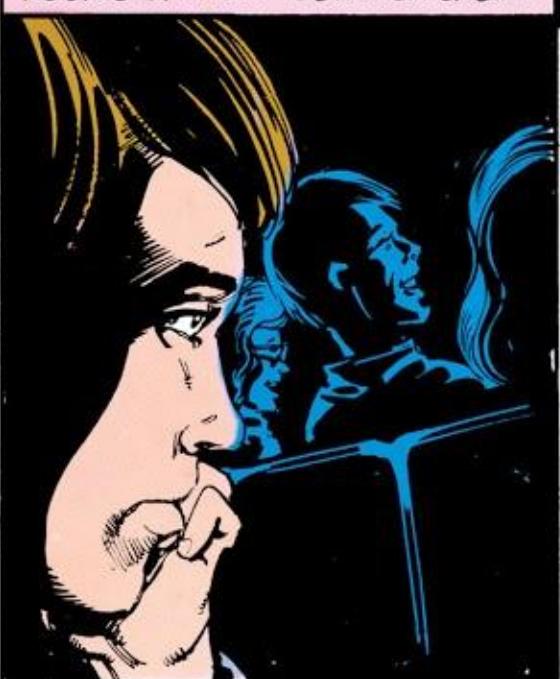
I'M CERTAIN I SHALL, MOTHER.

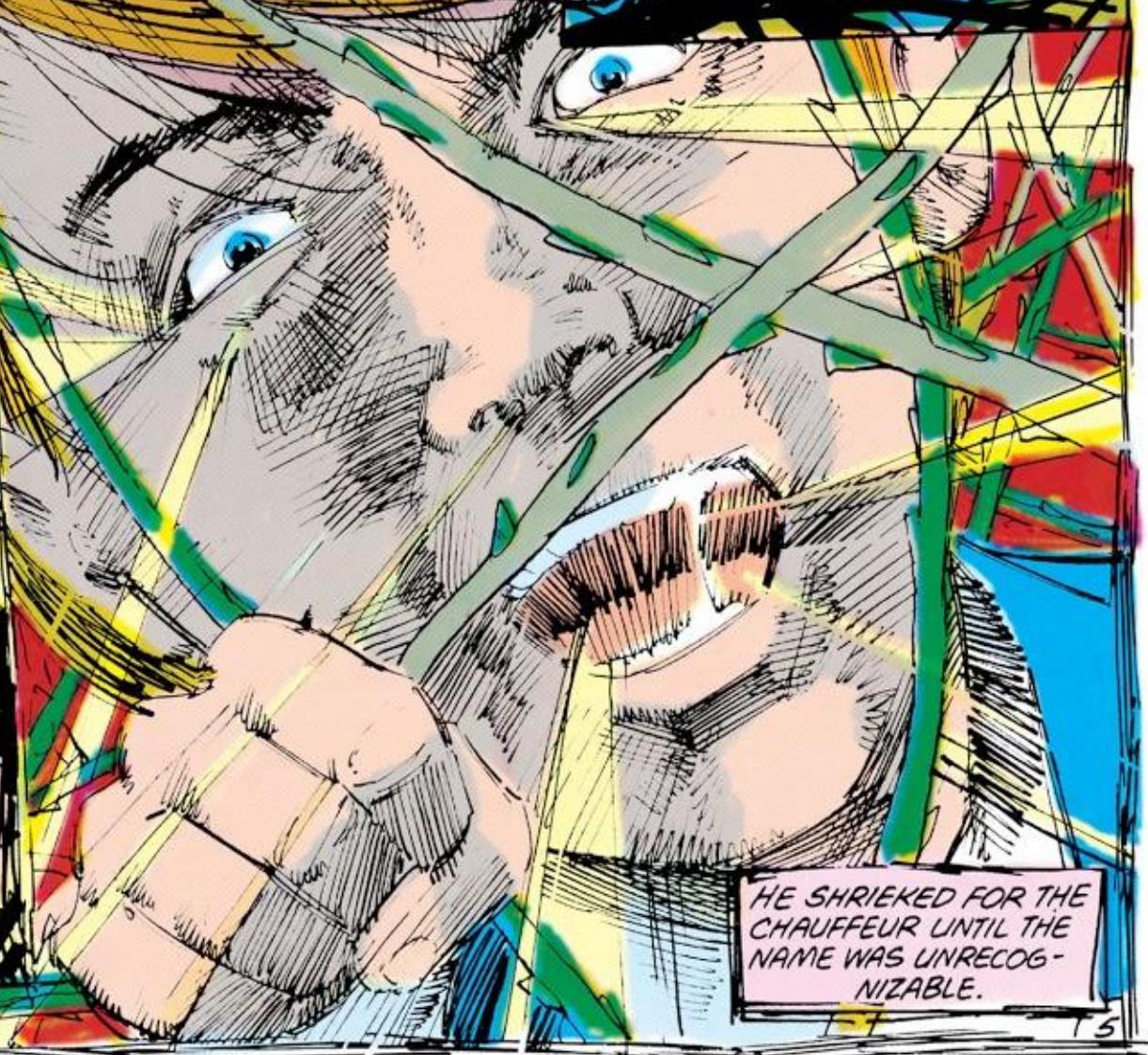


...TREES AND MOSQUITOES NEVER ALLOWED TO PENETRATE THE HEAVILY CURTAINED WINDOWS AND AIR-CONDITIONED FOURTEEN ROOMS OF THEIR "SUMMER CABIN."

THE NEXT DAY HE TRIED TO ESCAPE, THINKING HE MIGHT NEVER RETURN AND HOPING FOR AN ENCOUNTER SOMEWHERE ALONG THE PATH.

STILL HE FELT A STRANGE SENSE OF KINSHIP WITH THIS CREATURE WHICH WAS ALSO TRAPPED IN A LIFELONG MASK.





BY DARK HE
WAS STUMBLING
AND STAGGER-
ING.

IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL IF
HIS EYES WERE SWELLING SHUT
OR SIMPLY FAILING.

HE NEVER FELT THE FALL NOR
WOULD HE EVER REMEMBER IT.

HE FELT VERY, VERY HOT
BUT FROZEN AROUND THE
EDGES, WHICH WERE
TURNING FUZZY AND
WEIGHTLESS.

BUT THAT WHICH
FOLLOWED WOULD
NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

IT DRAGGED HIM
STRAIGHT DOWN
TO HELL.

THE NIGHTMARE CONTINUED FOREVER,
AN ENDLESS MOVIE OF HIS OWN MAKING,
PLAYED OUT SOMEWHERE DEEP BEHIND
HIS FACE.

AND THEN...

...HE
LIVED.

WH-WHERE...?

YOU'RE FINE, ROMAN--
WE'LL BE GOING HOME
SOON.

SO HE LIVED, AND HE
RECOVERED, BUT AGAIN
THERE WERE SUSPICIONS.

IT WAS THE CHAUFFEUR WHO'D
FOUND HIM.

I TELL YOU HE'S NOT THE
SAME BOY, CHARLES--
HIS EYES--HE'S SO
STRANGE...

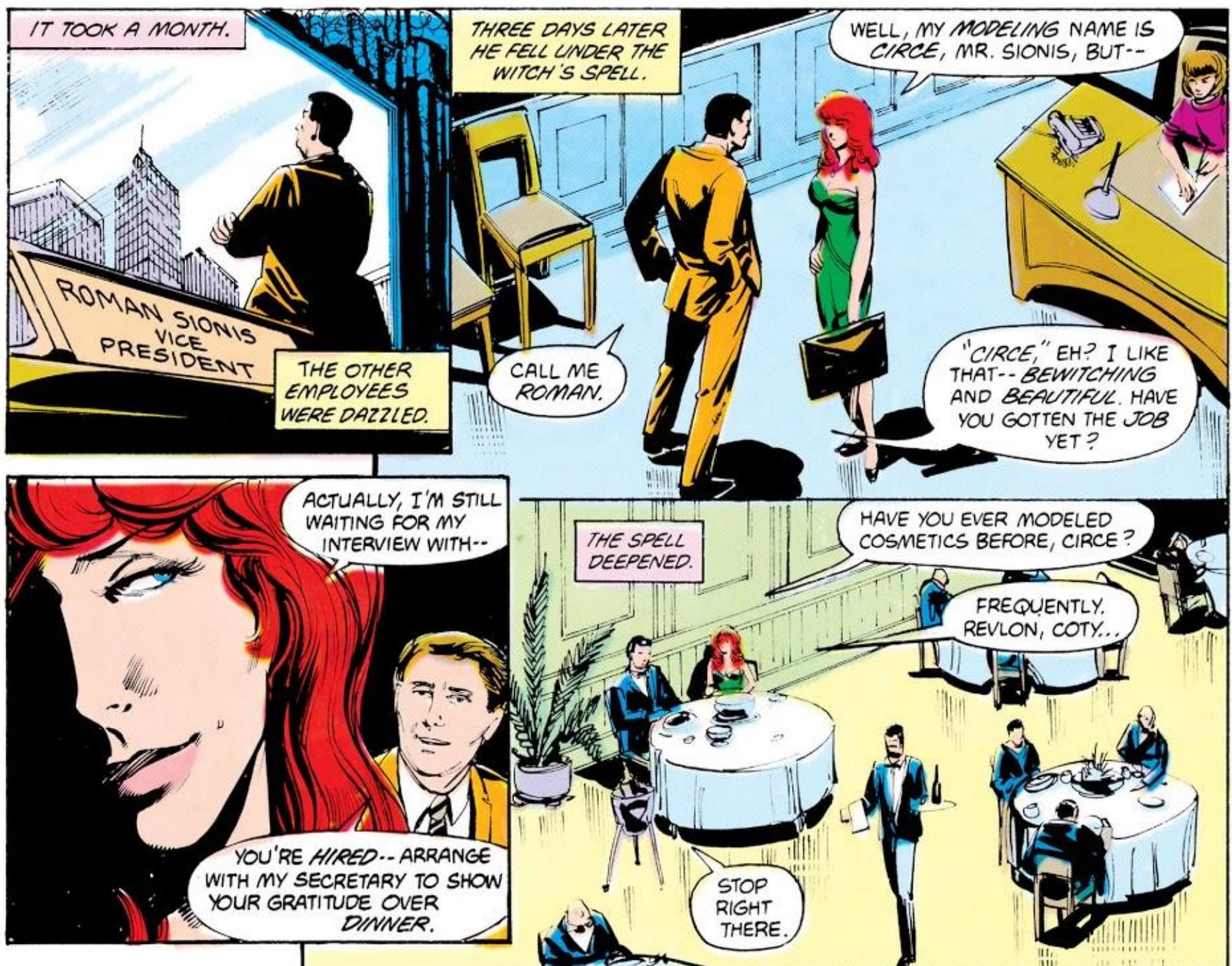
HE'S BEEN STRANGE SINCE
THE DAY HE WAS BORN, AND IF
YOU'D HAVE LET ME SUE THAT
INCOMPETENT BUTTER-FINGERED
DOCTOR FOR MALPRACTICE...

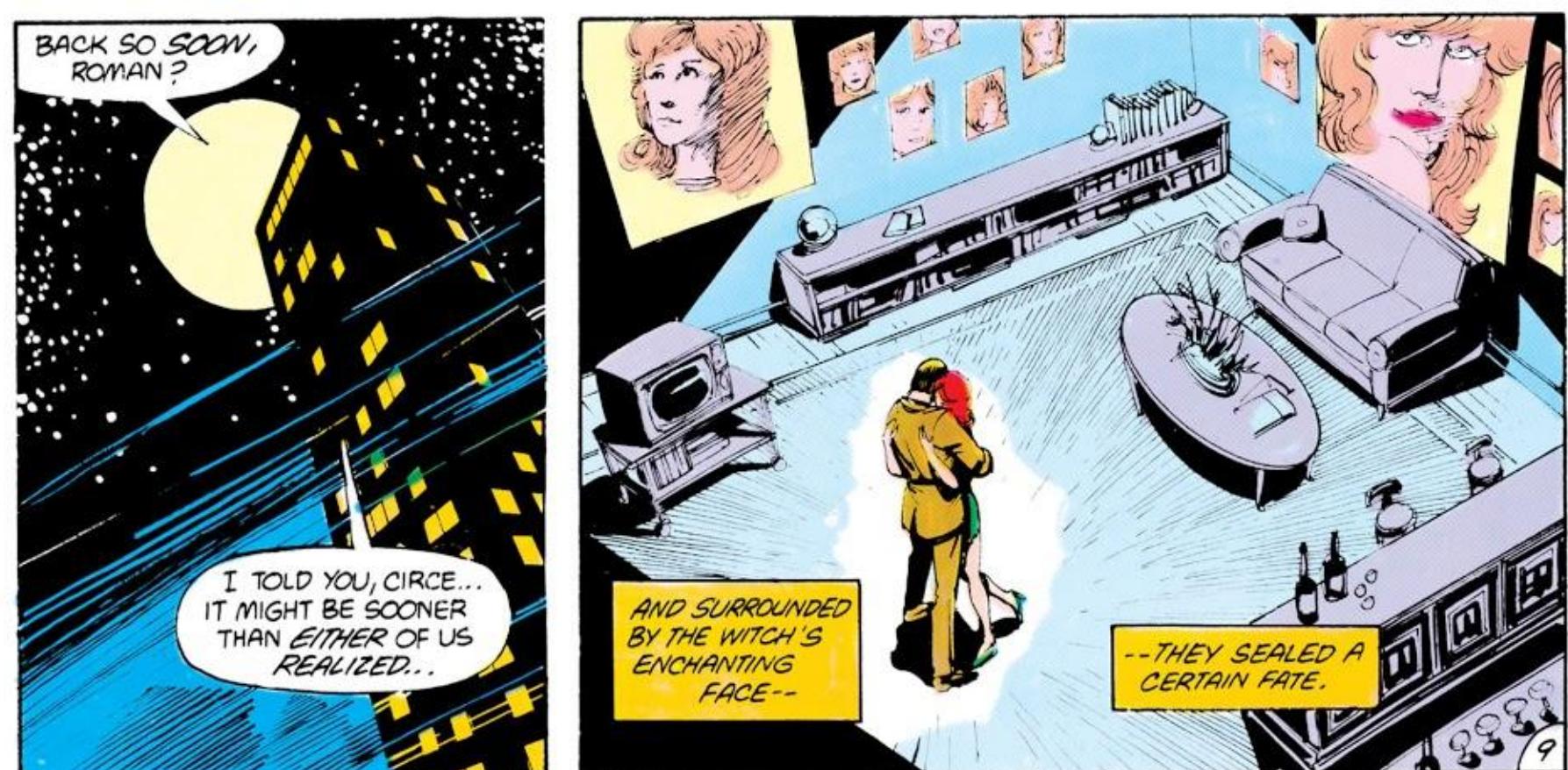
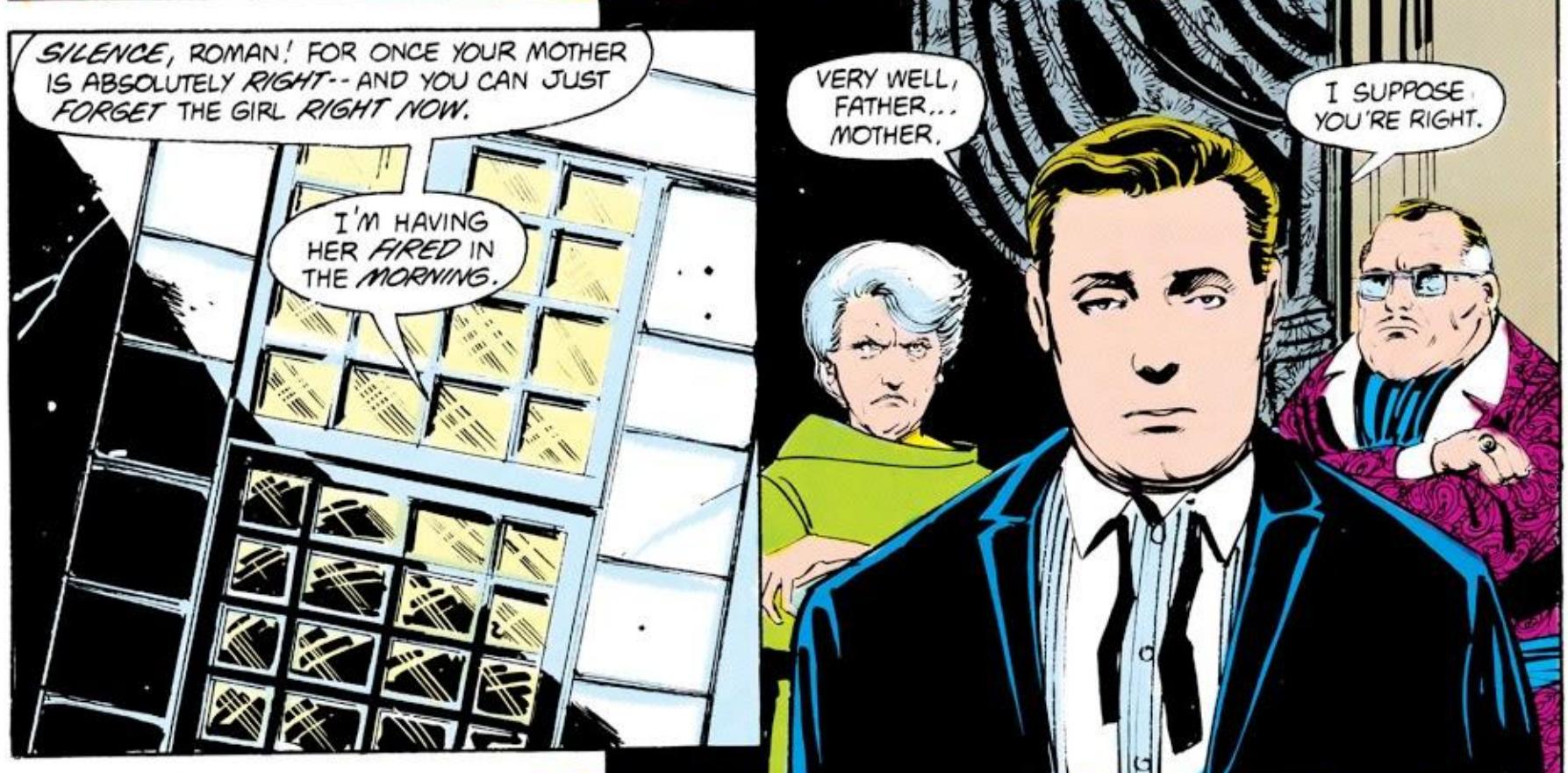
THE VERY IDEA--
DRAGGING OUR
NAMES AND
FACES THROUGH
THE PAPERS IN
A COMMON
LAWSUIT.

LET'S JUST GET
AWAY FROM THIS
DREADFUL PLACE.

APPARENTLY YOU WERE
BITTEN BY SOME SORT OF
FILTHY RABID ANIMAL, BUT
DON'T YOU WORRY-- YOUR
FATHER HAD THE BEST
AVAILABLE DOCTORS
BROUGHT IN BY HELICOPTER.

WE'LL NOT GET
INTO THAT
AGAIN.





THE FOLLOWING SUMMER THE KING AND THE QUEEN DIED IN A FIRE...

...OF SUSPICIOUS ORIGINS.

...YET... ORIGINS NEVER CHALLENGED.

...BUT I CAN ONLY REPEAT WHAT I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOUR MEN, COMMISSIONER GORDON.

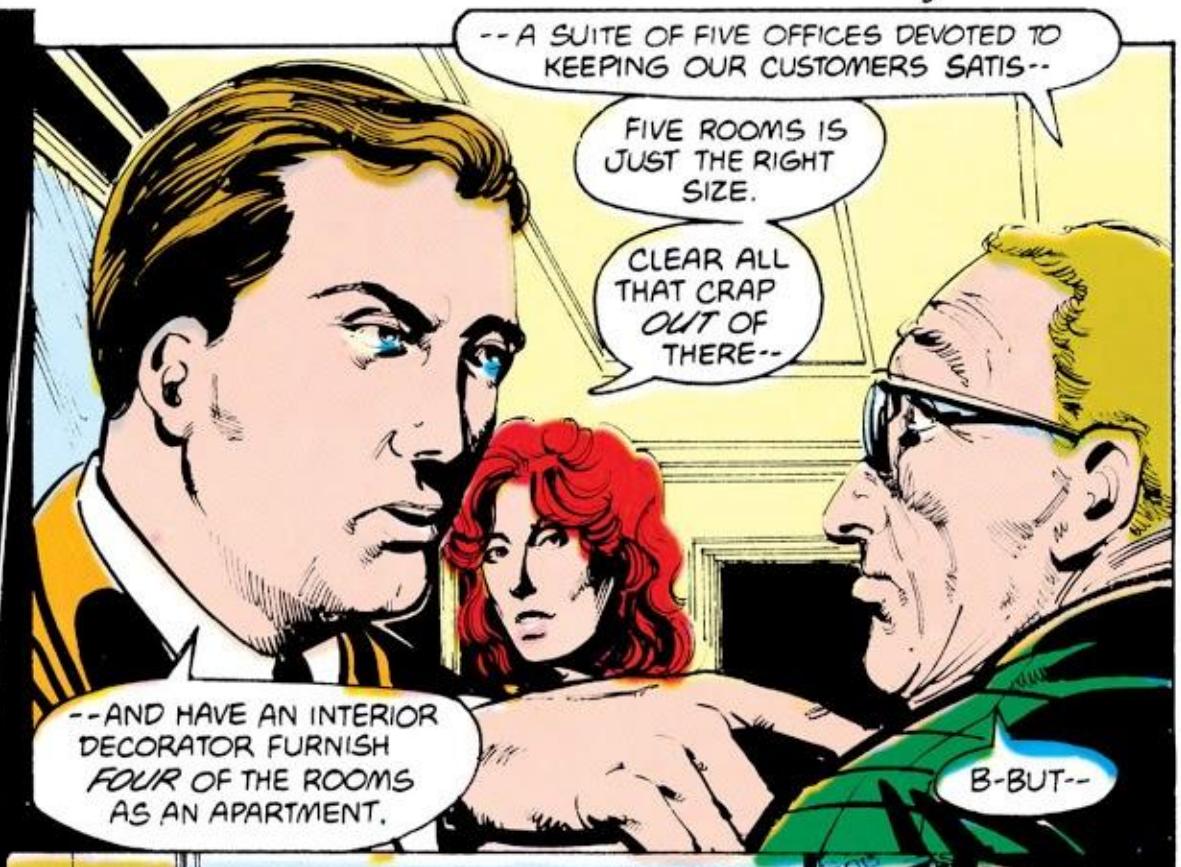
I'M HONORED BY YOUR COMING HERE IN PERSON...

I WAS INDEED WITH ROMAN... ALL NIGHT.

THEY WERE DISPLAYED WITH THEIR MATCHING EBONY LIDS SEALED.

ACCEPTABLE DEATH MASKS COULD HARDLY BE SALVAGED FROM SUCH CONFLAGRATION.

STILL, HE FOUND HIMSELF WONDERING IF JANUS HAD YET TAPPED THE LUCRATIVE MARKET FOR MORTICIANS' COSMETICS.



STRUCK BY THE HALLMARK OF HIS LIFE, HE BEGAN COLLECTING THE REAL THINGS.

BY THE SCORES.

HIS WORK WENT ON.

MADE BY THE HANDS OF PRIMITIVES...

THE "INVISIBLE" APPROACH TO COSMETICS IS OLD HAT-- IF WE'RE SELLING SOMETHING, IT SHOULD BE TANGIBLE, VISIBLE.

IT'S THE MASK THAT'S IMPORTANT, NOT THE FACE, AND THE MASK MUST BE EXTREME.

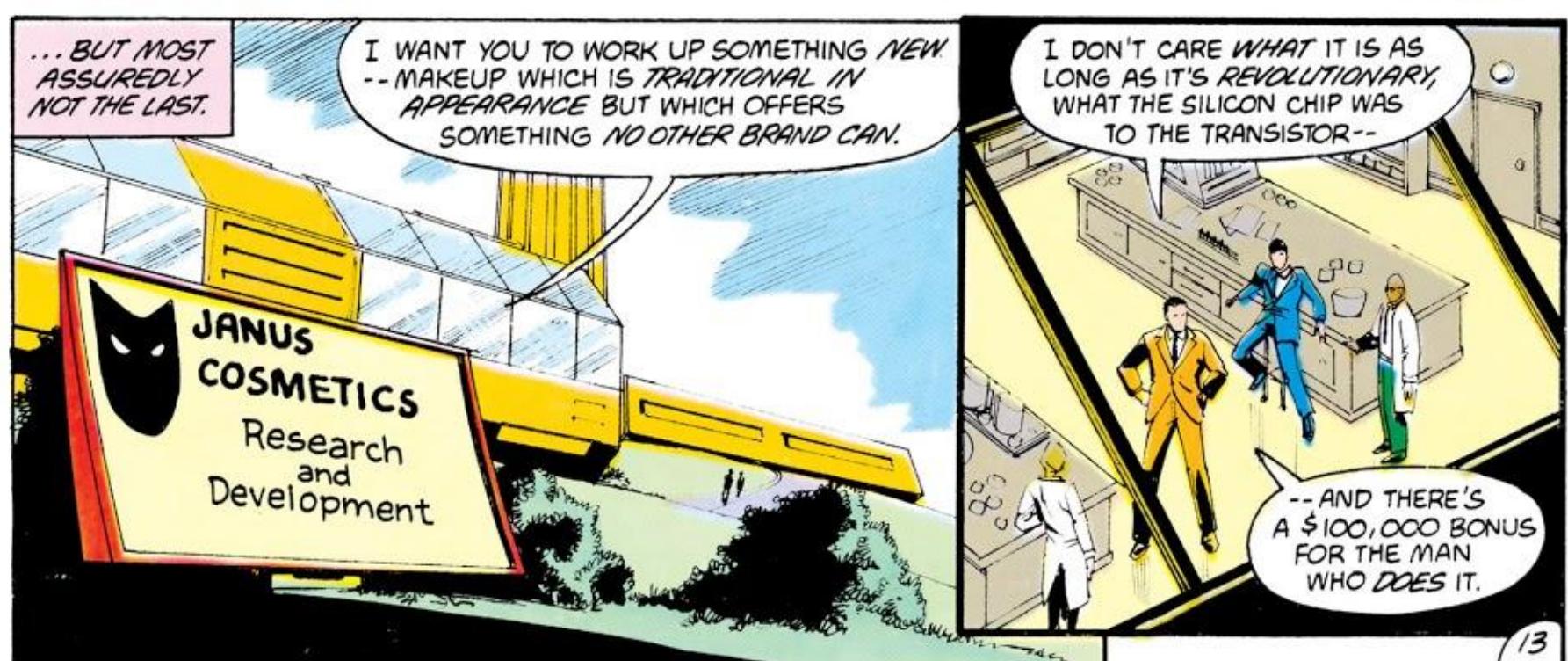
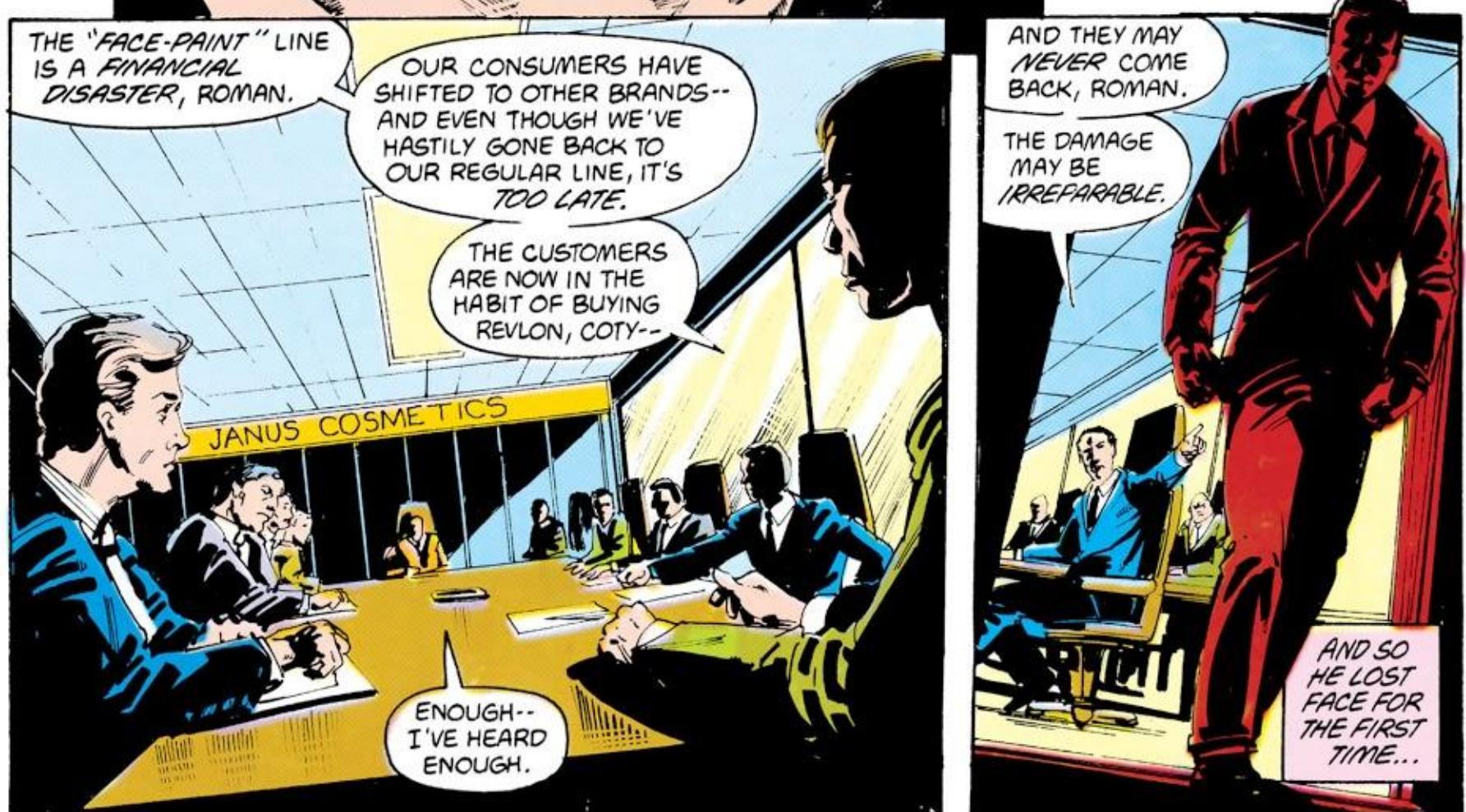
JANUS IS TAKING A BOLD NEW APPROACH, GENTLEMEN.

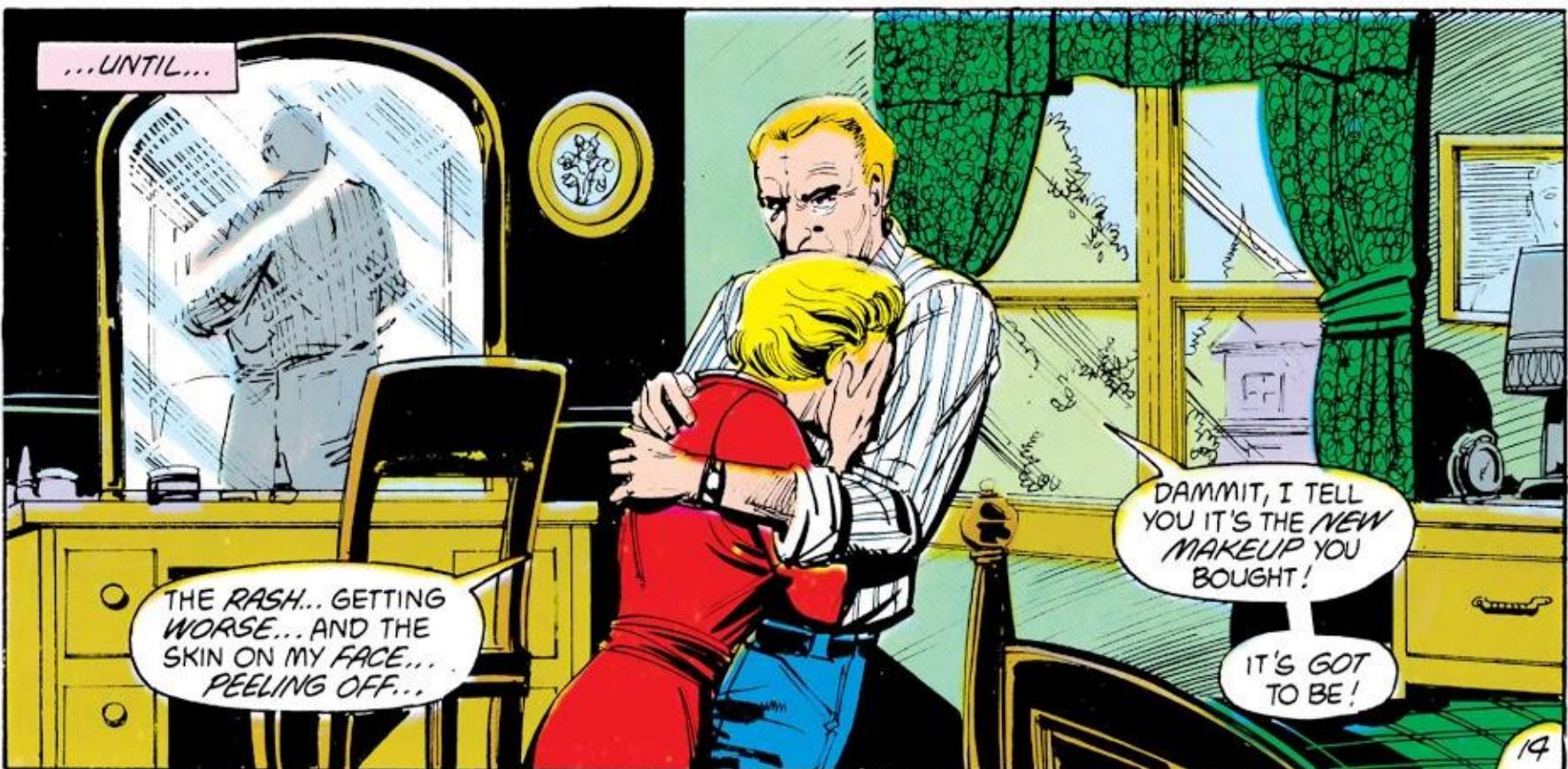
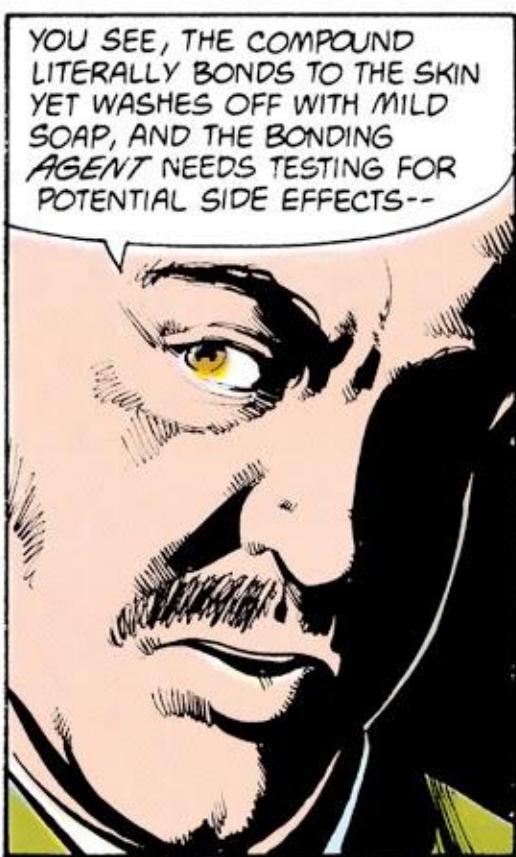
I'VE DECIDED TO GEAR OUR ENTIRE PRODUCTION TO BE IN THE FOREFRONT, LEADING THE WAY WITH A RADICAL NEW LINE... AND THIS IS ITS FACE.

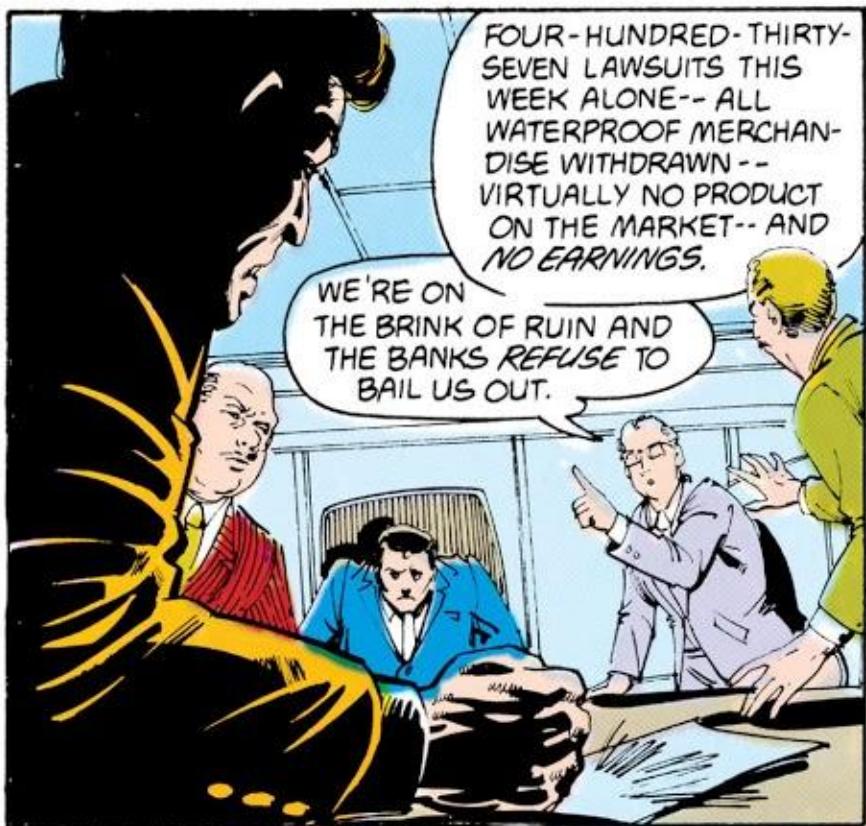
CIRCE -- YOU CAN COME IN NOW.

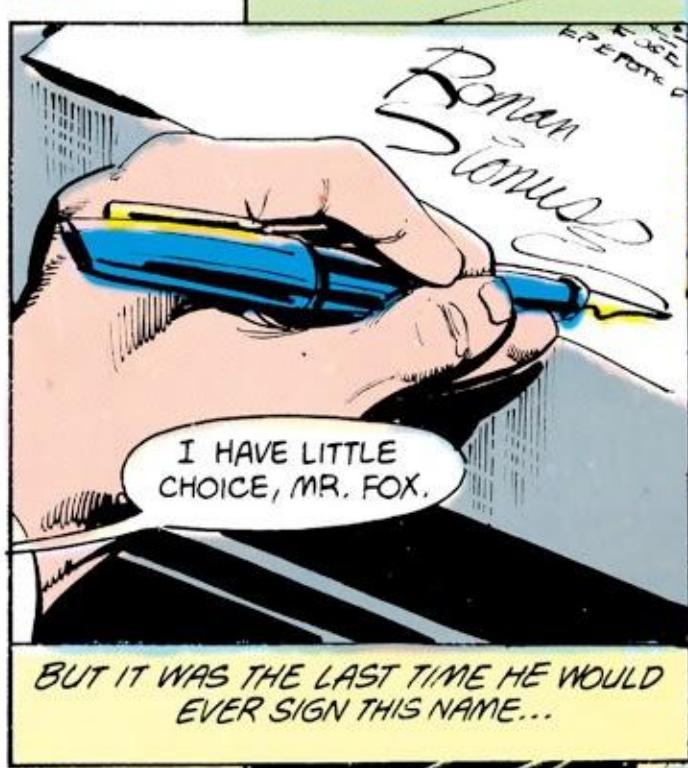
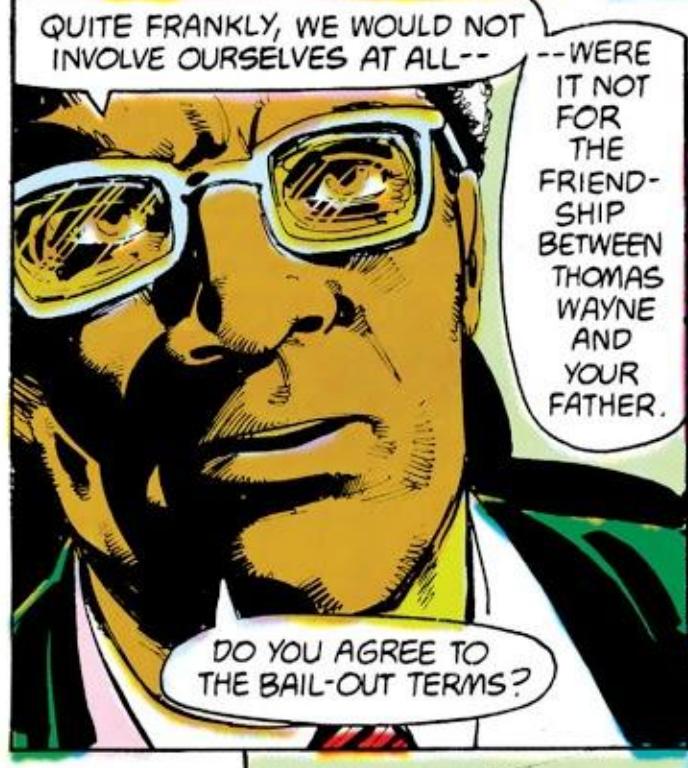
GOOD... LORD!

WELL, GENTLEMEN -- WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NEW JANUS "FACE-PAINT" COSMETICS?









THE PAST
RECEDES
UNTIL
THERE IS
ONLY
THE
NOW, A
NOW OF
HATE
DEMANDING
VENGEANCE.

AND SINCE VENGEANCE
UPON HIMSELF IS UN-
THINKABLE...

DAMN YOU,
FATHER!

...HE BLAMES
FATE...

SHRAAAAM

...THEREBY
TEMPTING
IT.

AGH-H!!

STOP
CHOOOM

DROPPED...
AGAIN...

...JUST LIKE
THE FIRST TIME
I WAS BORN...

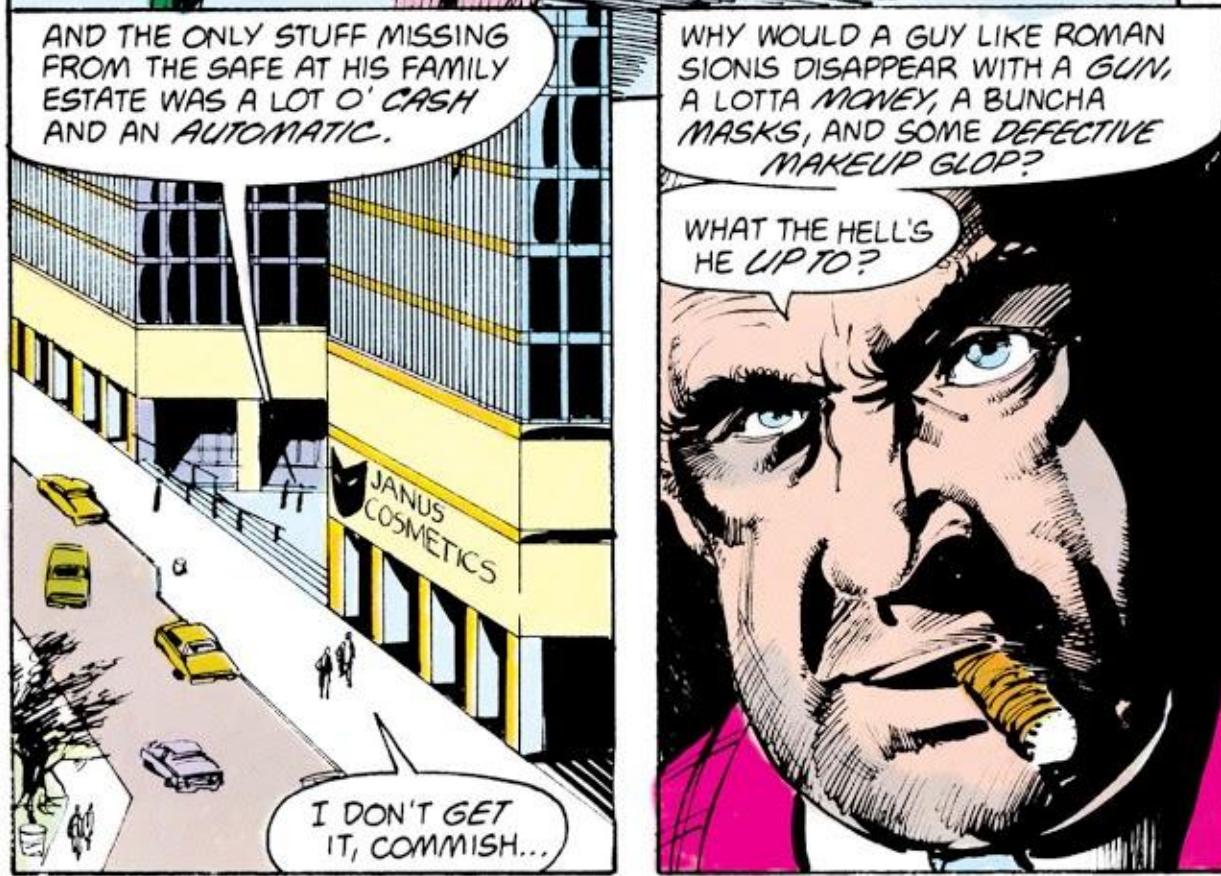
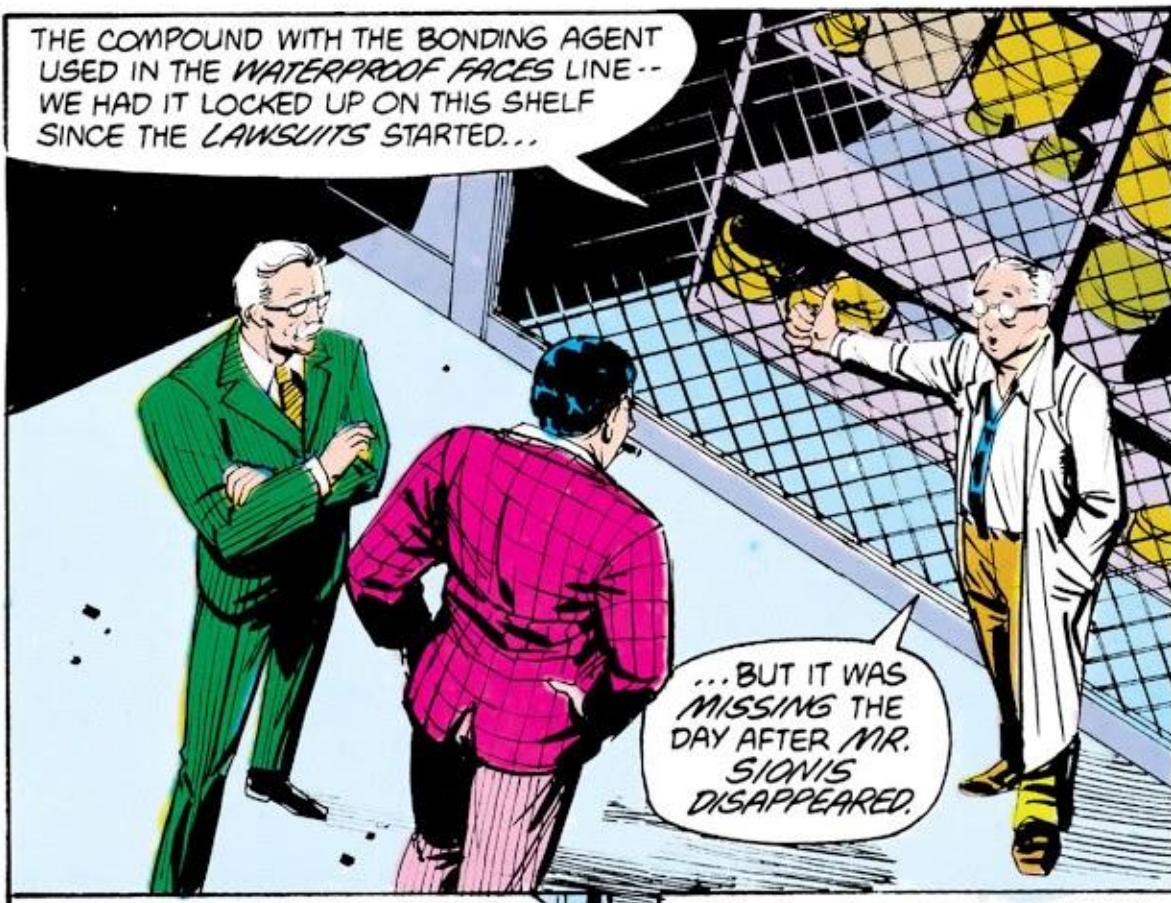
AND HE SEES THAT THE CRYPT DOOR
HAS SWUNG WIDE.

INSIDE, THE MATCHING EBONY CASKETS
ARE STILL SEALED...

...FOR
NOW.

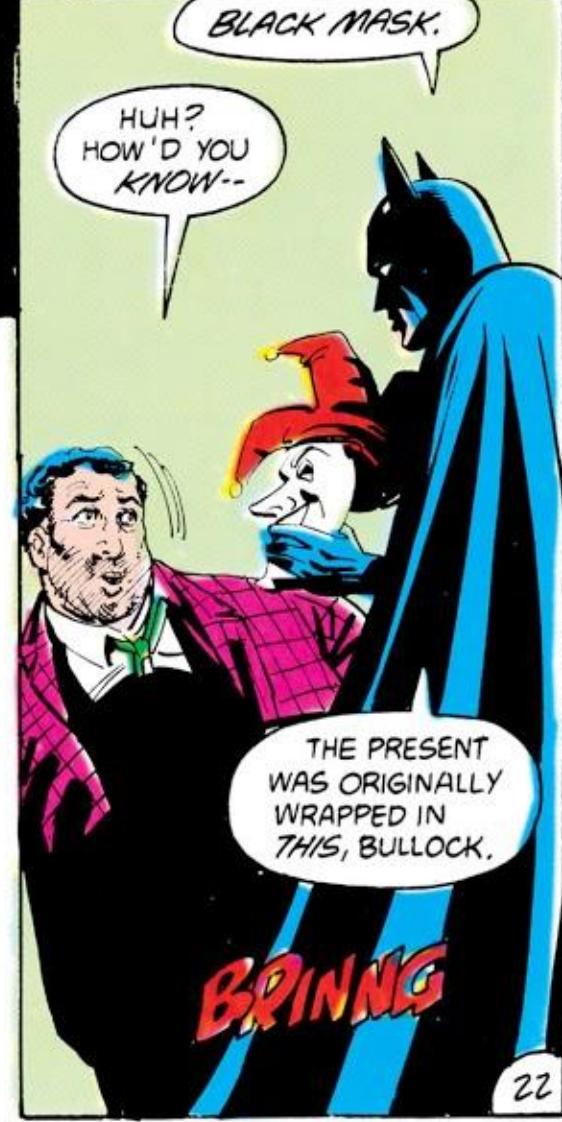
DO YOU
HEAR ME,
FATHER?!
YOU'RE
DEAD--

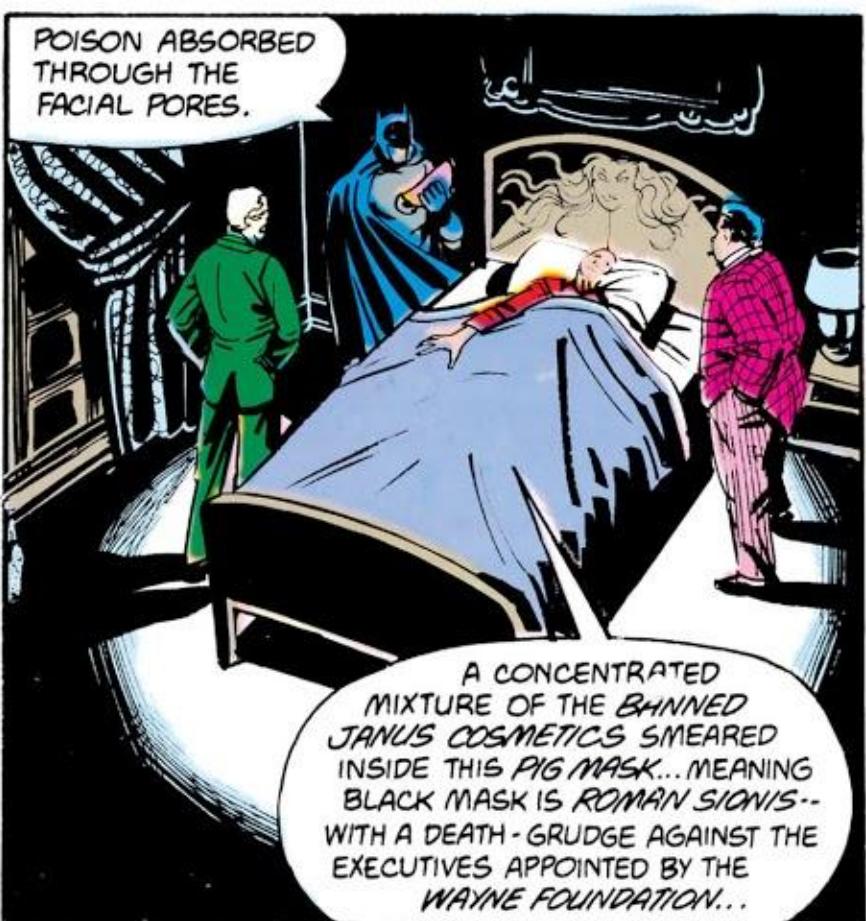
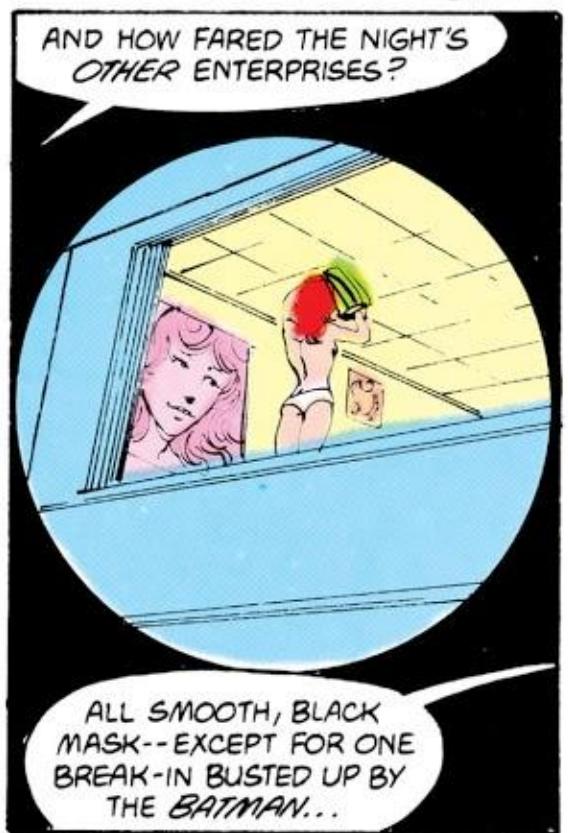














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