

DC BATMAN

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BATMAN

WITH ROBIN THE TEEN WONDER

A HAUNTING HALLOWEEN NOVEL

NIGHT OF THE REAPER!

EXTRA-SPECIAL!
A BATMAN
SOLO STORY FROM THE
FABULOUS FORTIES!

50¢

48 PAGES 25¢ BIGGER AND BETTER

DC BATMAN

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IT IS DARK IN THE **VERMONT** WOODS THIS OCTOBER EVENING... DARK EXCEPT FOR THE PALE, COLD GLOW OF A BLOATED MOON SHINING THROUGH BRANCHES WHICH PLUCK AT THE SKY LIKE DEAD FINGERS... AND A LIGHT ATOP A DISTANT MANSION BLINKING LIKE AN EYE OF BLOOD, BLINKING, BLINKING.

AND THERE ARE SOUNDS... SCRAPINGS, RUSTLINGS... THE WHISPER OF BREEZE IN THE BRUSH--OR THE STIRRING OF SHROUDS? NONE IS ALIVE TO HEAR...

...BECAUSE THERE IS ALSO DEATH IN THIS PLACE! THE MASKED FIGURE OF THE BATMAN LEANS AGAINST A BIRCH, UNMOVING, UNBREATHING, GROWING STIFF AND COLD AS THE DIRT... A VICTIM OF THE...

NIGHT OF THE REAPER!

ART BY: NEAL ADAMS & DICK GIORDANO.
STORY BY: DENNY O'NEIL
(FROM AN IDEA BY BERNI WRIGHTSON WITH AN ASSIST FROM HARLAN ELLISON).

EDITED BY:
JULIUS SCHWARTZ.

GGB-S

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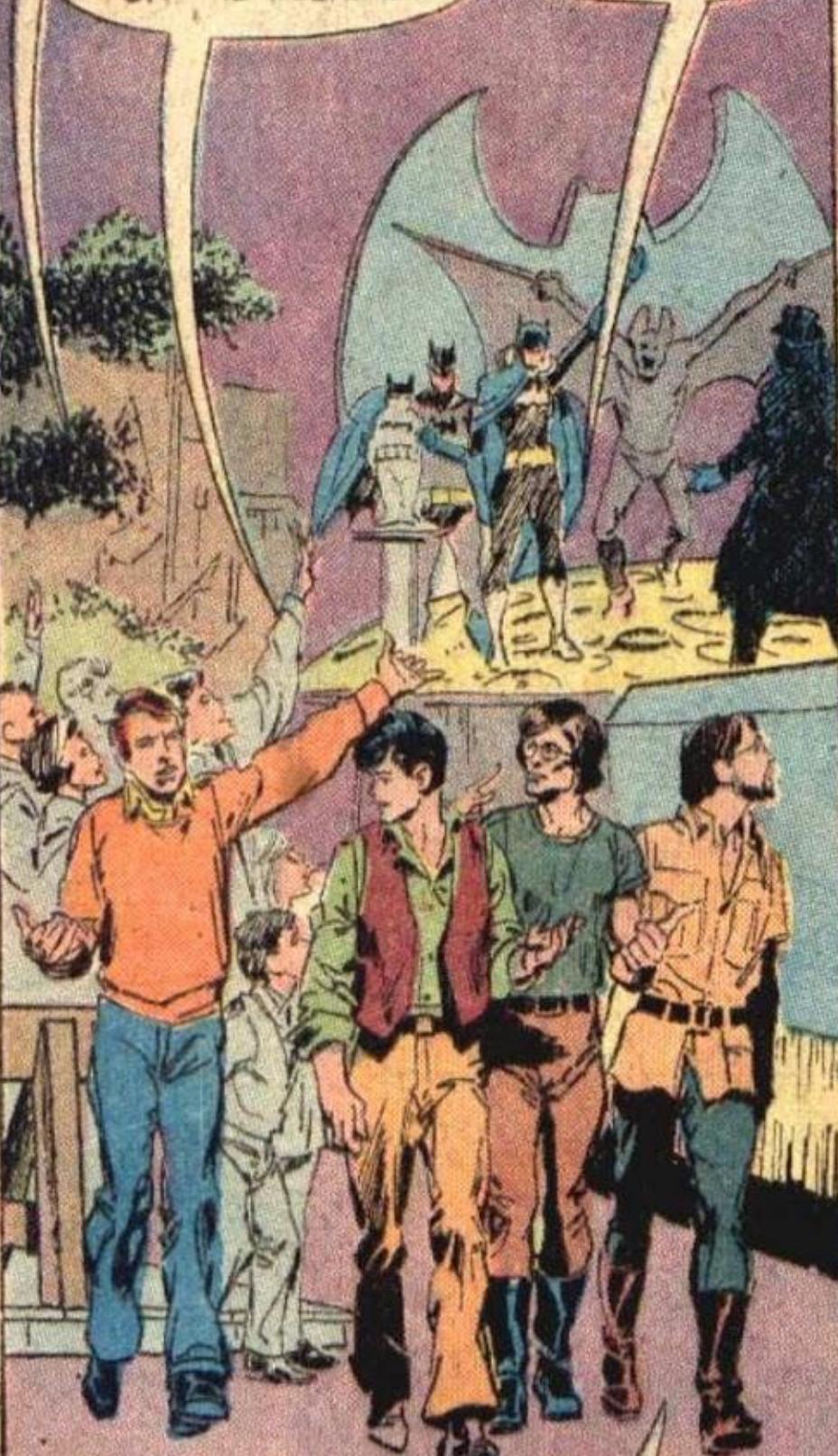
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ELSEWHERE, A FESTIVAL
BRIGHTENS THE AIR... THE
ANNUAL RUTLAND
HALLOWEEN PARADE...

I STILL DON'T SEE WHY
YOU DRAGGED US UP HERE,
DICK! TO SEE A BUNCH OF
DUM-DUMS GOOF AROUND
DRESSED AS SUPER-HEROES?

I THOUGHT IT'D BE
NICE TO GET AWAY
FROM YE OLDE
COLLEGE GRIND
FOR THE WEEKEND.

I'M WITH DICK!
IT'S FUN... AND
BESIDES, WE
MIGHT MEET
SOME GIRLS!



I'M WORRIED ABOUT
MY ROOMMATE!
HE'S ACTING...
STRANGE!

HE SHOULDN'T HAVE
COME... NOT AFTER
STAYING AWAKE THREE
DAYS CRAMMING FOR
THAT ART EXAM!

RIGHT... AND
GULPING COFFEE
AND WHO-KNOWS-WHAT-
ELSE TO KEEP
HIS EYES
OPEN!

MAN, THOSE
FLOATS ARE
SOMETHING ELSE!



? ANY SIMILARITY TO ACTUAL PERSONS OR
PLACES DEPICTED IN THIS TALE IS PROBABLY A
STRANGER TALE THAN YOU'D EVER REALLY
BELIEVE!

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THAT ART EXAM!

RIGHT... AND
GULPING COFFEE
AND WHO-KNOWS-WHAT-
ELSE TO KEEP
HIS EYES
OPEN!

MAN, THOSE
FLOATS ARE
SOMETHING
ELSE!

OH, MAN!
DIG THE
FLOATS!

ANY SIMILARITY TO ACTUAL PERSONS OR
PLACES DEPICTED IN THIS TALE IS PROBABLY A
STRANGER TALE THAN YOU'D EVER REALLY
BELIEVE!

I HEAR THERE'S A PARTY AT
TOM FAGAN'S HOUSE OUTSIDE
TOWN! WANT TO GO?

SURE!
WHERE A PARTY
IS, GIRLS IS!

FUNNY... I NEVER
GOT INTO FLOATS
BEFORE!

I HEAR THERE'S A PARTY AT
TOM FAGAN'S HOUSE OUTSIDE
TOWN! WANT TO GO?

SURE!
WHERE A PARTY
IS, GIRLS IS!

FUNNY... I NEVER
GOT INTO FLOATS
BEFORE!

TOM LIVES
AT THE END
OF THIS
STREET~

HEY! UP
AHEAD... A
FIGHT!

FROM HERE,
THE ODDS
LOOK THREE-
TO-ONE!

COME
ON!

RIGHT
BEHIND
YOU, DICK!

WONDER
WHY THEY'RE
CALLED
FLOATS...?

CAREFUL...
THEY GOT
BLACKJACKS!

HE'S DOWN! --
OUT!

BUT DICK'S
WARNING IS
SHOUTED
TOO LATE!



WHY'D THOSE CATS
JUMP YOU, FELLA?

I'M NOT SURE! FROM
SOMETHING THEY SAID,
I GOT THE IMPRESSION
THEY THOUGHT I WAS
THE REAL ROBIN!

PROBABLY JUST
MUGGERS! CRIME IS
ON ALL KINDS
OF STREETS
THESE DAYS!

HEY...
WHERE'S MY
ROOMMATE?

YOU GUYS GO
ON AHEAD TO
THE PARTY!
I'LL SEARCH
FOR OUR
ZONKY PAL!

I GUESS
HE WANDERED
OFF DURING
OUR LITTLE
BRAWL!

OKAY,
DICK!

THEN, IN A NEARBY CLUMP OF TREES...

I DON'T FOR A SECOND BELIEVE THE
BLACKJACK CREW WERE CASUAL
RIP-OFF ARTISTS--

NO, THEY WORKED LIKE PROS!
SOMETHING PUTRID IS STINKING
IN RUTLAND--

...AND
THAT'S THE
CLUE FOR
ROBIN TO
SCOUT THE
SCENE!

SWIFTLY, STEALTHILY, WITH THE
SKILL OF THE GREAT BATMAN
HIMSELF, THE YOUNGSTER SLIPS
THROUGH THE FOREST, UNTIL...

A FIGURE AHEAD...
A DARN FAMILIAR
FIGURE!

BATMAN...
IS THAT YOU?







REFLEXIVELY, HE DODGES THE WHISTLING BLADE...



HIS BOOT CATCHES ON A DEW-WET STONE...



FLAILING DESPERATELY, HE PITCHES BACKWARD, OVER THE LIP OF A STEEP INCLINE...



AND TUMBLING TO A CLUSTER OF ROCKS IN A SWIFT-RUNNING STREAM BELOW...



A MOMENT OF BLINDING, EXPLODING PAIN... AND NUMBNESS... AND STILLNESS... AND WATER FILLS HIS NOSTRILS, HIS LUNGS...



MAN, I JUST GOTTA FIND SOMEONE TO RAP WITH ABOUT FLOATS!

SUDDENLY, A CAPE SHADOW
SWELLS FROM THE DARKNESS—
THE DREAD BATMAN...

HEARD SCUFFLING FROM
THIS AREA! HARD TO TELL
EXACTLY WHAT MADE
THE NOISE WITH THAT
STREAM GURGLING...

ROBIN--!?
OR A KID WHO
COULD BE
HIS DOUBLE!

PRAY
I'M NOT
TOO
LATE--

IS...IS IT
REALLY
YOU--?

EASY, LAD!
SAVE YOUR
STRENGTH...
I'M TAKING
YOU TO A
DOCTOR!

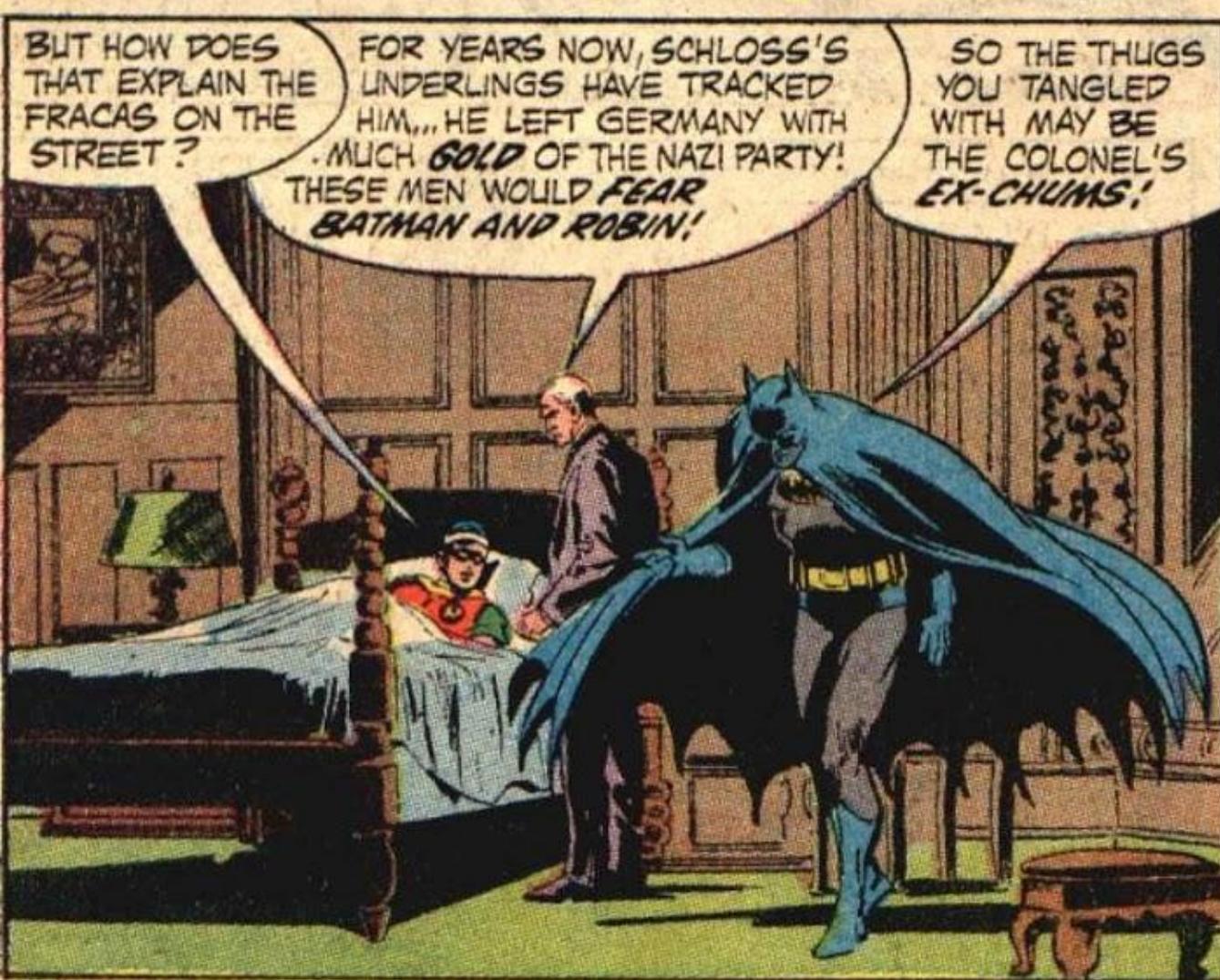
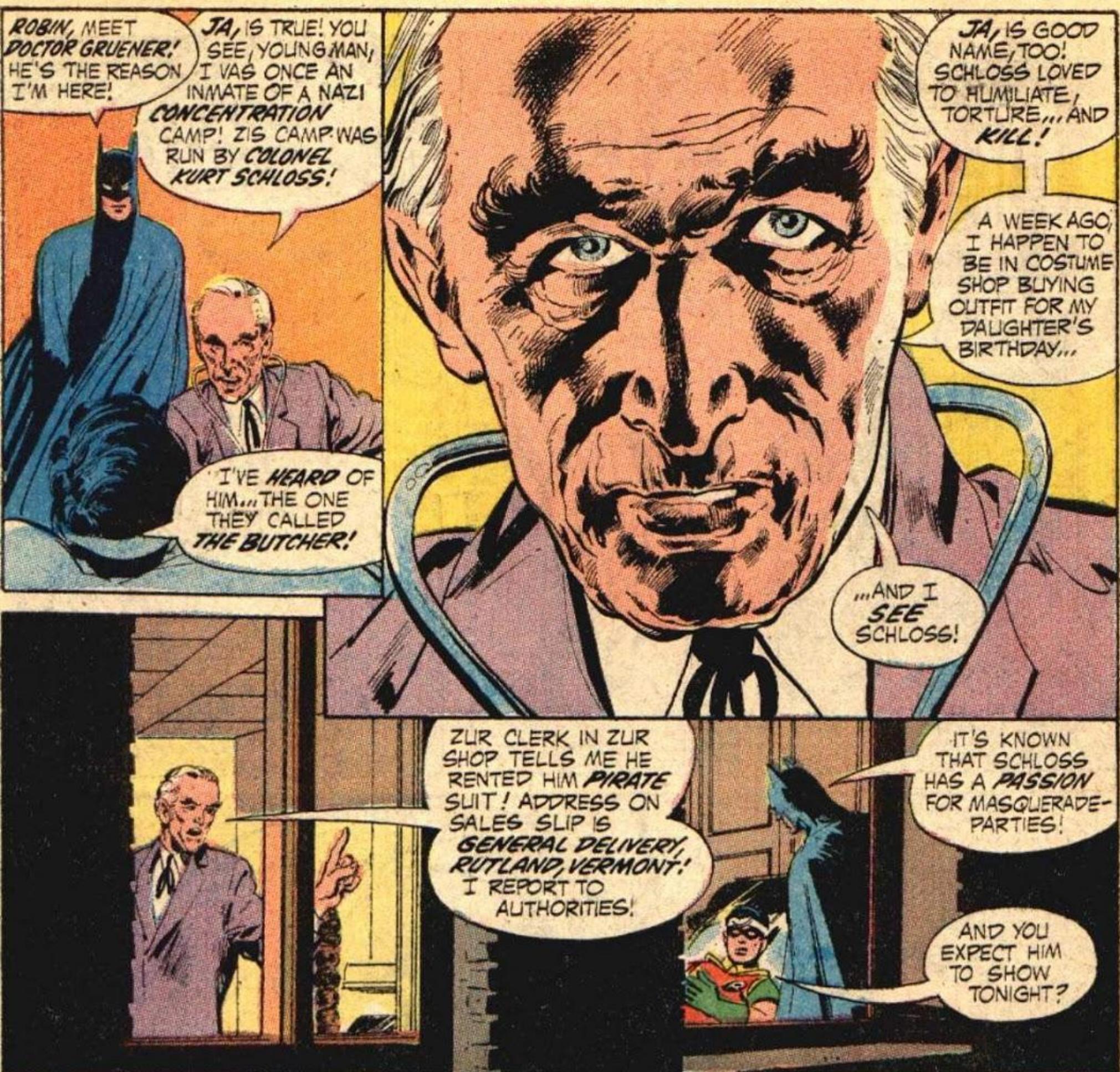
AS THE BATMAN CARRIES HIS
WARD TO THE SPRAWLING OLD
MANSION OF TOM FAGAN, THE YOUTH
STUMBLINGLY RELATED HIS STORY...

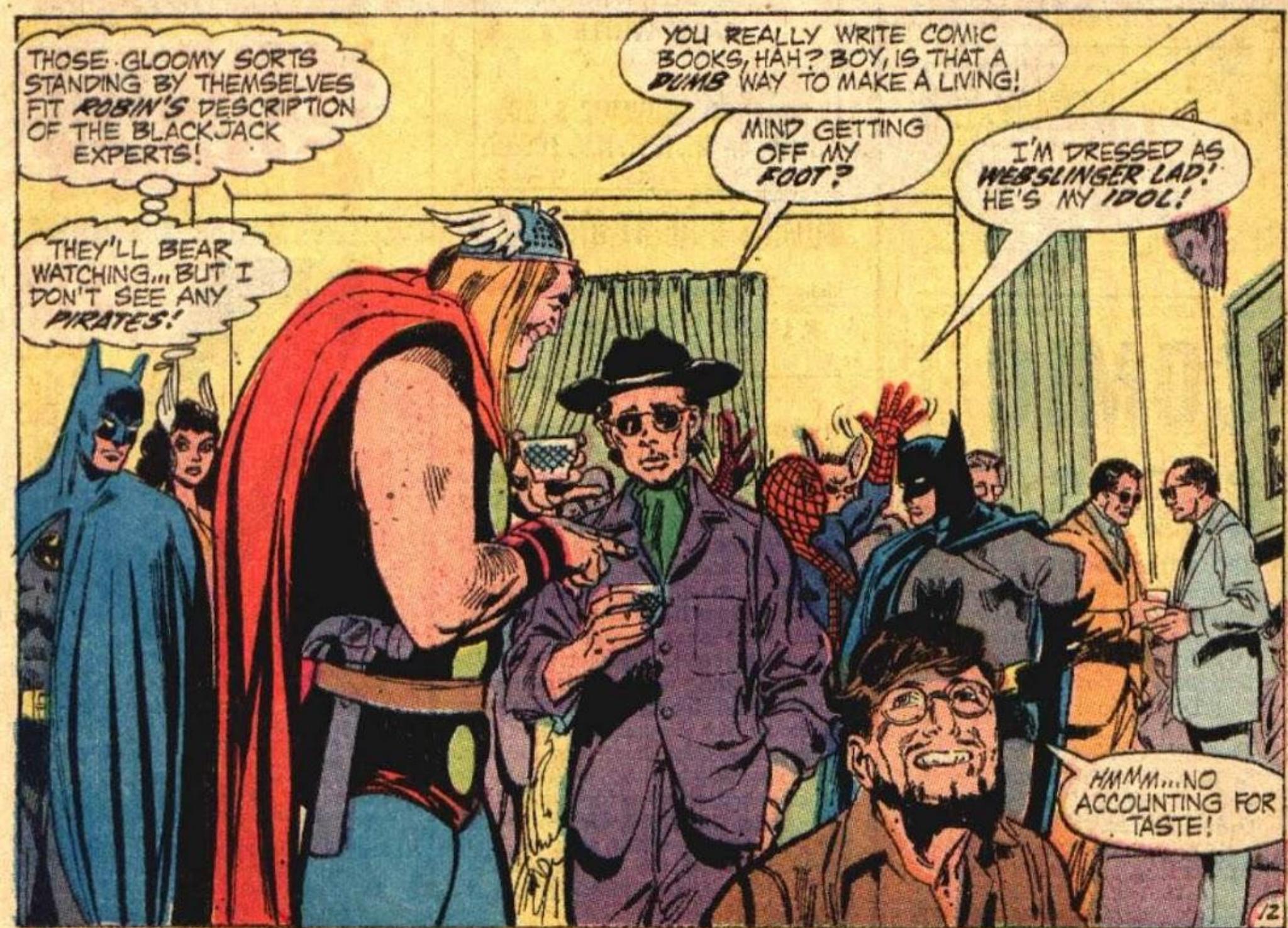
SOON, IN A VACANT BEDROOM...

DO YOU MAKE ANY
SENSE OF THE WEIRD
STUFF GOING DOWN?

I CAN'T EXPLAIN
THE ATTACK ON THE
BOY DRESSED
AS YOU... NOR
THE MURDERED
MAN WEARING
MY COSTUME--

IS POSSIBLE
I CAN, HERR
BATMAN!





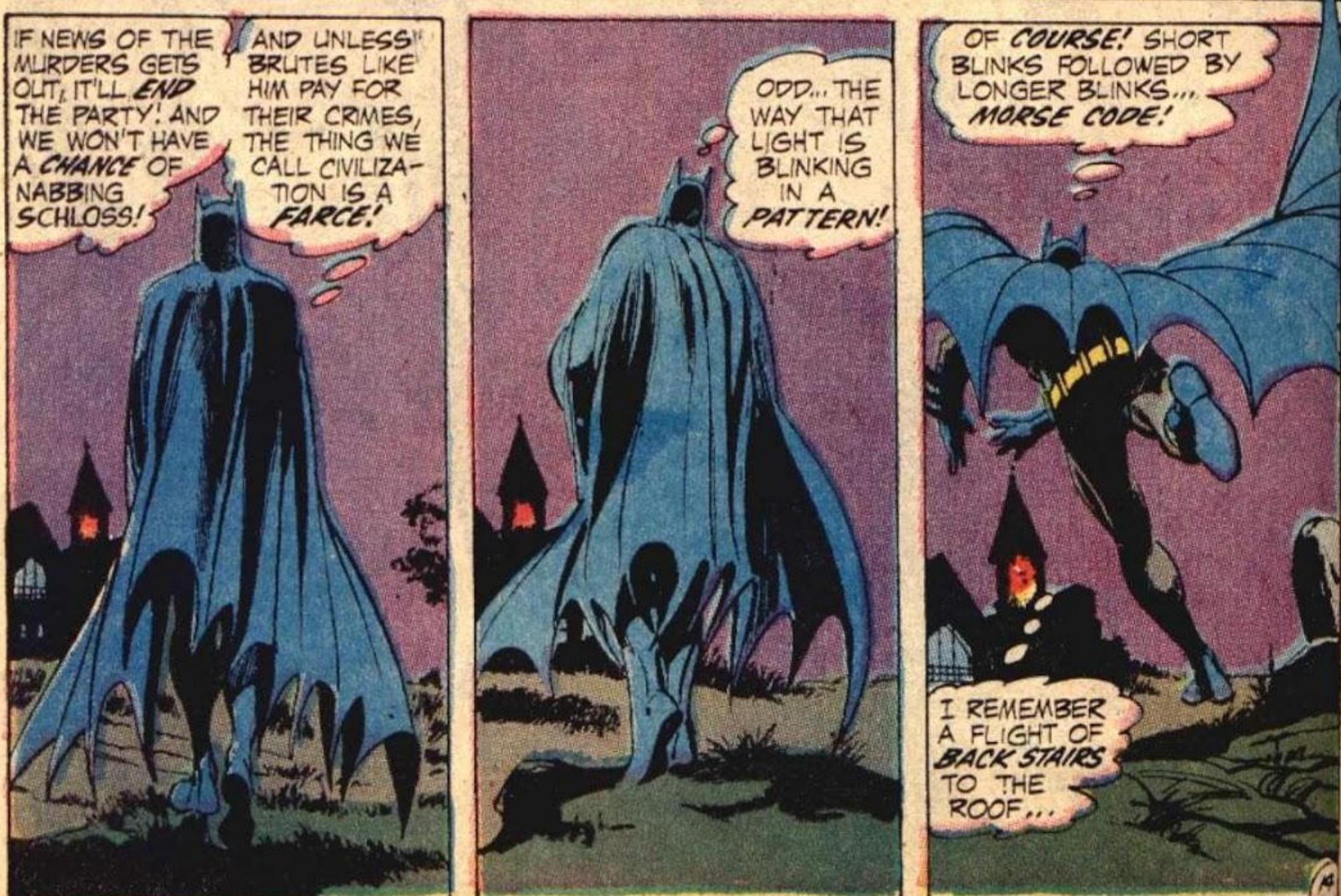
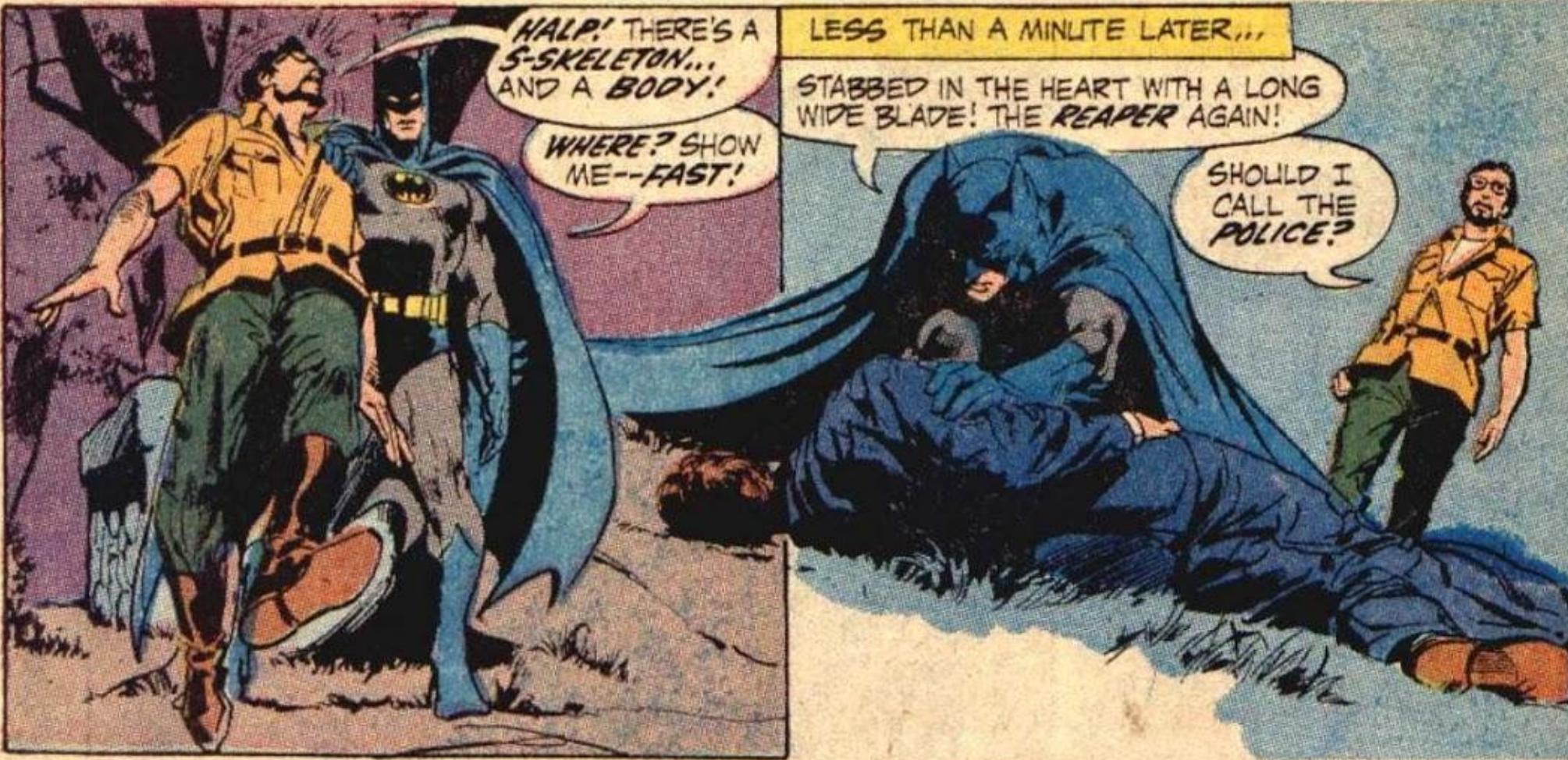
I THINK THESE
SUPER-HERO
BASHES ARE
NEAT! DON'T
YOU?

I'M...UH...LEARNING
TO LIKE 'EM! WHY
DON'T WE GO SOME-
WHERE AND DISCUSS
THE MATTER?

NOTHING
TO DO EXCEPT
CIRCULATE
AND HOPE FOR
A BREAK!

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE...

MAN, THAT BLINKING
RED LIGHT ON TOP OF
THE HOUSE IS COOL!
ALMOST AS COOL
AS FLOATS!



I'LL SAVE
PRECIOUS
SECONDS BY
AVOIDING THE
CROWD IN
FRONT!

IN A DARKENED CUPBOARD, HIDDEN FROM
THE BATMAN'S SIGHT, THERE IS A SUDDEN,
FRIGHTENED MOVEMENT...

A PARTY-ER CLAD IN A COLORFUL
PIRATE GARB STEPS FORTH,
HIS GAZE RIVETED ON THE
BATMAN'S RETREATING BACK...

AT THAT VERY
INSTANT, THE
BATMAN'S
HEAD-LONG
DASH TAKES
HIM TO HIS
QUARRY...

EXACTLY WHAT I
EXPECTED TO SEE!
HE'S UNDOUBTEDLY
STANDING GUARD...

YOU'VE USED
YOUR SKULL-
SMASHER ENOUGH!

HIS QUARRY WILL BE IN THE
CUPOLA ABOVE, SENDING
THE MORSE MESSAGE!

IS YOU, HANS?
I AM FINISHED
SHORTLY! RETURN
TO YOUR POST!

HUH...? IS NOT
HANS! WHOEVER
YOU ARE, YOU
MUST DIE!

BUT BEFORE THE EX-NAZI
CAN TRIGGER HIS LUGER,
THE LIGHT SWITCHES OFF...



SKRAASH



THE HOST, TOM FAGAN,
RIGGED THIS BLINKER
SET-UP,, ADDS A NICE
SPOOKY TOUCH TO THE
PROCEEDINGS!

THOSE AGING
GOOSE-STEPPERS SAW
IT AS AN EASY WAY TO
COMMUNICATE! BUT...
COMMUNICATE WHAT??



MY WOULD-BE
KILLER CAN
ANSWER THAT...
AND HE WILL!



LISTEN TO ME, NAZI...
I GIVE YOU A CHOICE!
YOU CAN TALK OR...

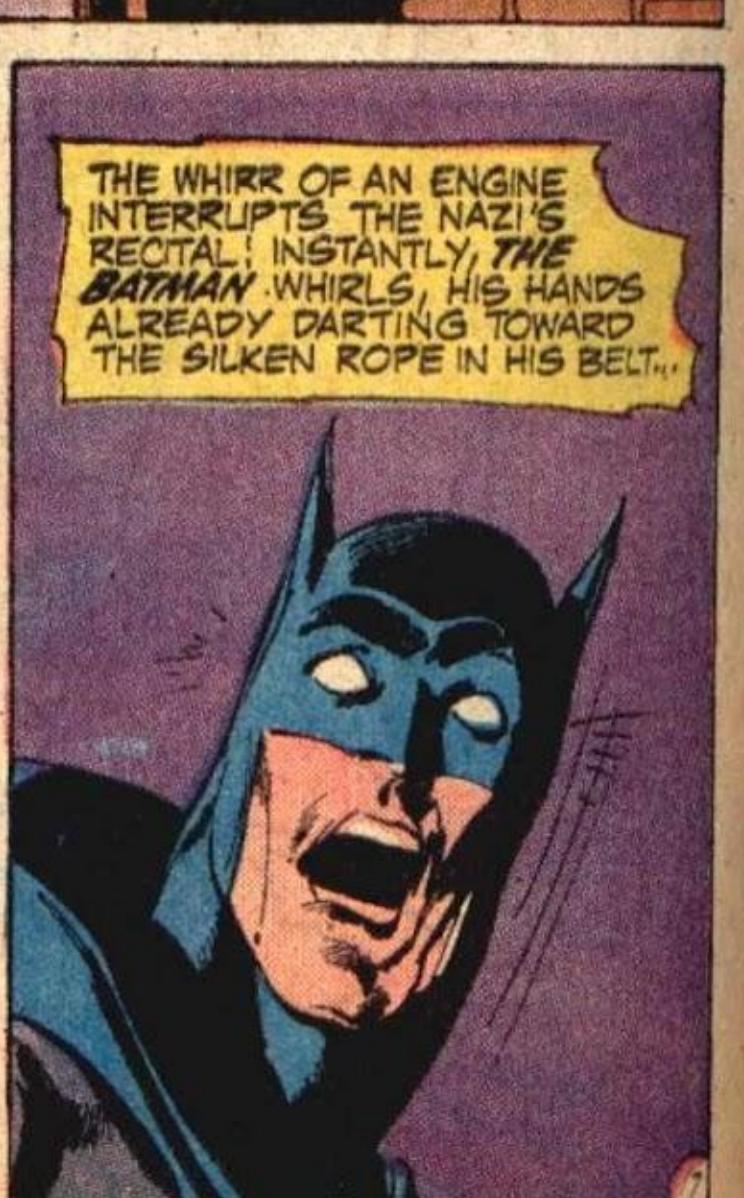
I TALK!
I TALK!



I WANT TO KNOW
THE CONTENTS OF
THE MESSAGE YOU
WERE SENDING TO
YOUR FRIEND IN
THE WOODS!

WE SEEK REVENGE
ON COLONEL SCHLOSS
FOR SPENDING NAZI
PARTY TREASURES!
WE OBSERVE HIM
ARRIVING IN YELLOW
AUTOMOBILE...

...I INFORM MY FRIEND
THAT REVENGE IS
COMPLETE! WE PUT
BOMB IN AUTOMOBILE...



THE WHIRR OF AN ENGINE
INTERRUPTS THE NAZI'S
RECITAL! INSTANTLY, THE
BATMAN WHIRLS, HIS HANDS
ALREADY DARTING TOWARD
THE SILKEN ROPE IN HIS BELT...



HE'S
FINALLY...
PAID!

BATMAN...
YOU
OKAY?

... INCLUDING AN INNOCENT
BYSTANDER WHOSE ONLY FAULT
WAS WEARING MY COSTUME!
YOU TELL HIS WIDOW... HIS
ORPHANS... JUST EXACTLY
HOW GREAT I AM!

IT WASN'T
YOUR FAULT!

OH, SURE!
JUST SWELL...
GREAT!
THREE MEN
SLAIN...

ANYWAY, THE
CASE IS
CLOSED...

DON'T BE
STUPID, KID! SURE,
THE NAZIS BOOBY-
TRAPPED SCHLOSS...
BUT THEY HAD NO
REASON TO MURDER
THE MAN DRESSED
AS ME...

... NOR
THEIR OWN
COMPANION!

THEY DIDN'T EVEN
KNOW THEIR PAL
WAS DEAD!

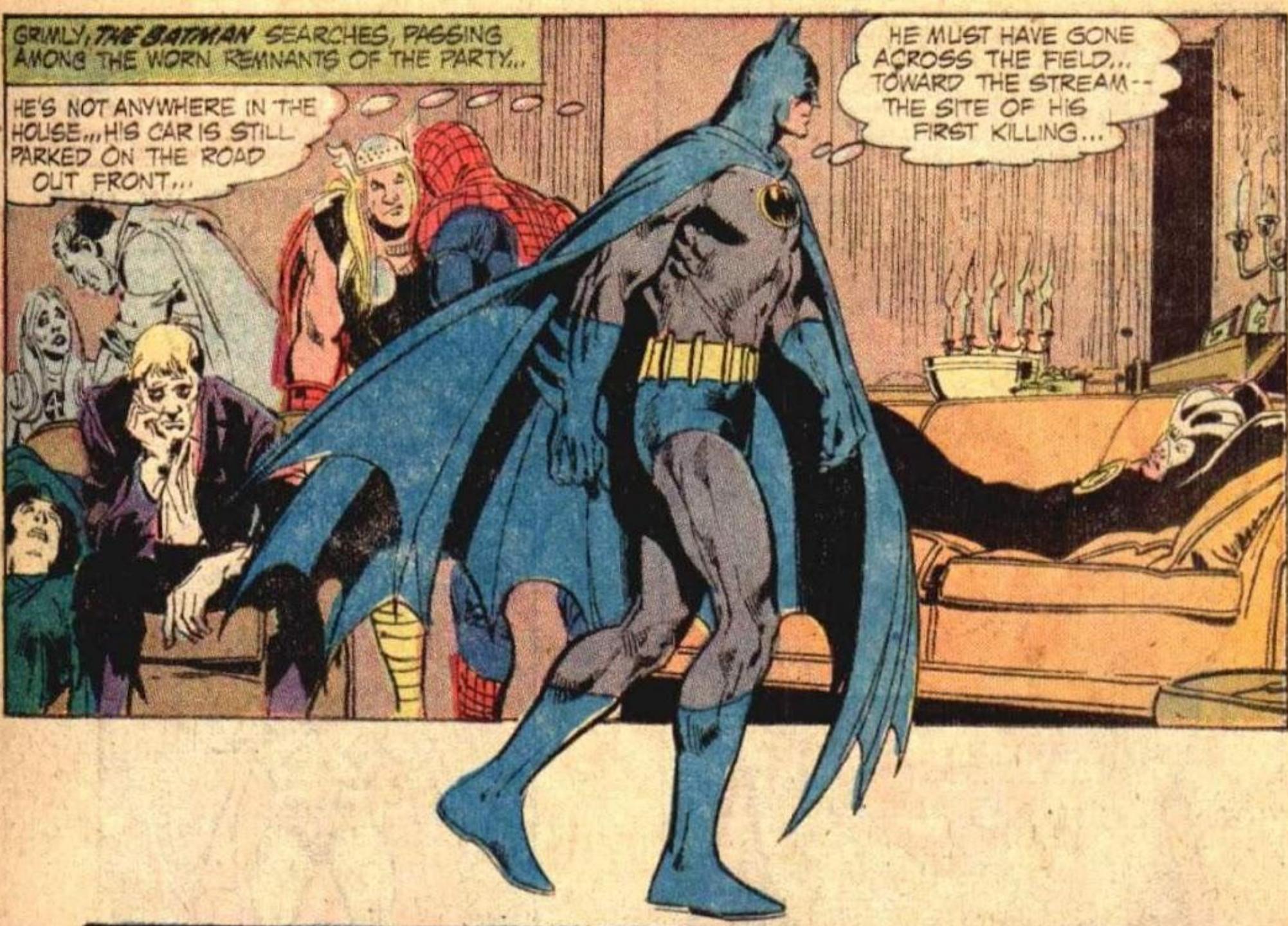
NO, THE REAPER IS YET
TO BE STOPPED--AND I'VE
GOT TO DO IT... ALONE!

I'VE NEVER
HAD A TASK I
HATED
MORE...

GRIMLY, THE BATMAN SEARCHES, PASSING AMONG THE WORN REMNANTS OF THE PARTY...

HE'S NOT ANYWHERE IN THE HOUSE... HIS CAR IS STILL PARKED ON THE ROAD OUT FRONT...

HE MUST HAVE GONE ACROSS THE FIELD... TOWARD THE STREAM-- THE SITE OF HIS FIRST KILLING...



IT IS DAWN... THE LONG NIGHT IS GONE! MIST RISES FROM THE ETERNAL EARTH, CHILL AND ENVELOPING AS THE MEMORY OF OLD GRIEF! SLOWLY, THE BATMAN STALKS HIS QUARRY...

AT LAST HE EMERGES FROM THE WOODS, AND FACES THE TAKER OF LIVES! WHEN HE SPEAKS, THERE IS NO TRIUMPH IN HIS VOICE...



OF COURSE! THOSE NAZIS CHASING SCHLOSS--THEY COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN I WAS AROUND--UNLESS YOU TOLD THEM!

AND HAVE YOU ALSO GUESSED WHY I TOLD THEM?

YES! AFTER YOU INFORMED ON SCHLOSS, YOU HAD A CHANGE OF HEART... YOU DECIDED ON PERSONAL VENGEANCE!



AND WHO HAS BETTER RIGHT? MY FATHER AND MOTHER, MY SISTERS... I SAW THE BUTCHER EMPTY HIS PISTOL INTO THEIR BODIES...

I HEARD HIM LAUGH AS THEIR BLOOD POURED ONTO THE FILTH OF THE CAMP!

WHO ARE YOU TO JUDGE ME? YOU--WHO HAVE NOT WITNESSED THE HORROR OF THOSE DAYS!

STILL, I AWAKE FROM SLEEP SCREAMING! I FEEL THE AGONIES... SMELL THE SMOKE OF THE EXECUTION CHAMBER... LISTEN TO THE HELPLESS CRYING OF BABIES...









W-WHAT HAVE
I BECOME?

HEY--
MISTER...
WATCH IT!

DOCTOR!...DON'T
STEP BACK...

