

"DEATH TRAP!"



12¢

DEC.
NO. 207

BATMAN



DUSK IN GOTHAM CITY... THE BEGINNING OF A NIGHT THAT MAY WELL BE THE LAST NIGHT SEEN BY THE INHABITANTS OF THIS GREAT METROPOLIS...

CALLING ALL CARS! CALLING ALL CARS! CONDITIONS... RED! THE MAD BOMBER HAS DELIVERED A MID-NIGHT ULTIMATUM TO CITY HALL!

ALL POLICE ARE TO GIVE COMPLETE AID AND ASSISTANCE TO STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES...

PSSST!
HEY...
SONNY!

...IN THEIR SEARCH FOR THE BOMB! YOU WILL BE KEPT ADVISED ON ALL DEVELOPMENTS...

HOW'D YOU LIKE A NEW BOUNCY BALL?

GEE!
I--I NEVER EXPECTED YOU WOULD...

FOR THEIR OWN PROTECTION, THE PUBLIC MUST NOT BECOME AWARE OF THIS IMPENDING PERIL!

THAT'LL SERVE HIM RIGHT! TH' LITTLE PUNK!

MUST BE SOME KINDA NUT...! AFTER TH' WAY HE...

PANIC MUST BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS!

AW, WHO CARES NOW? LEAST I GOT ME A NEW BALL ALL MY OWN!

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BATMAN AND ROBIN...
RED ALERT! YOUR PRESENCE
URGENTLY REQUESTED AT CITY
HALL...TOP-ECHELON CONCLAVE
...ESSENTIAL YOU ATTEND!

KZOWIE!
LOOKA THAT
BOUNCE! MUST
BE A...SUPER-
BALL!



STORY BY:
FRANK ROBBINS

ART BY:
IRV NOVICK &
JOE GIELLA

BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

FACE THEIR GREATEST
AND POSSIBLY LAST
CHALLENGE FROM--

"The Doomsday Ball!"

AS THE DYNAMIC DUO ENTERS THE TENSE AND TROUBLED MEETING ROOM...

COMMISSIONER GORDON...CAME AS FAST AS...

MAYOR HAYES YOU KNOW! THESE GENTLEMEN, TO WHOM WE HAVE PLEDGED OUR UTMOST CO-OPERATION, ARE...

MAJOR-GENERAL HAWKINS--ARMY AIR FORCE COMMAND!

ROBERTSON... FAIRBANKS...OF THE C. I. A.!

PROF. WILLI VON GAIL...ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION!

MASTER SERGEANT OWENS OF THE ARMY-NUCLEAR-DEMOLITION TEAM!

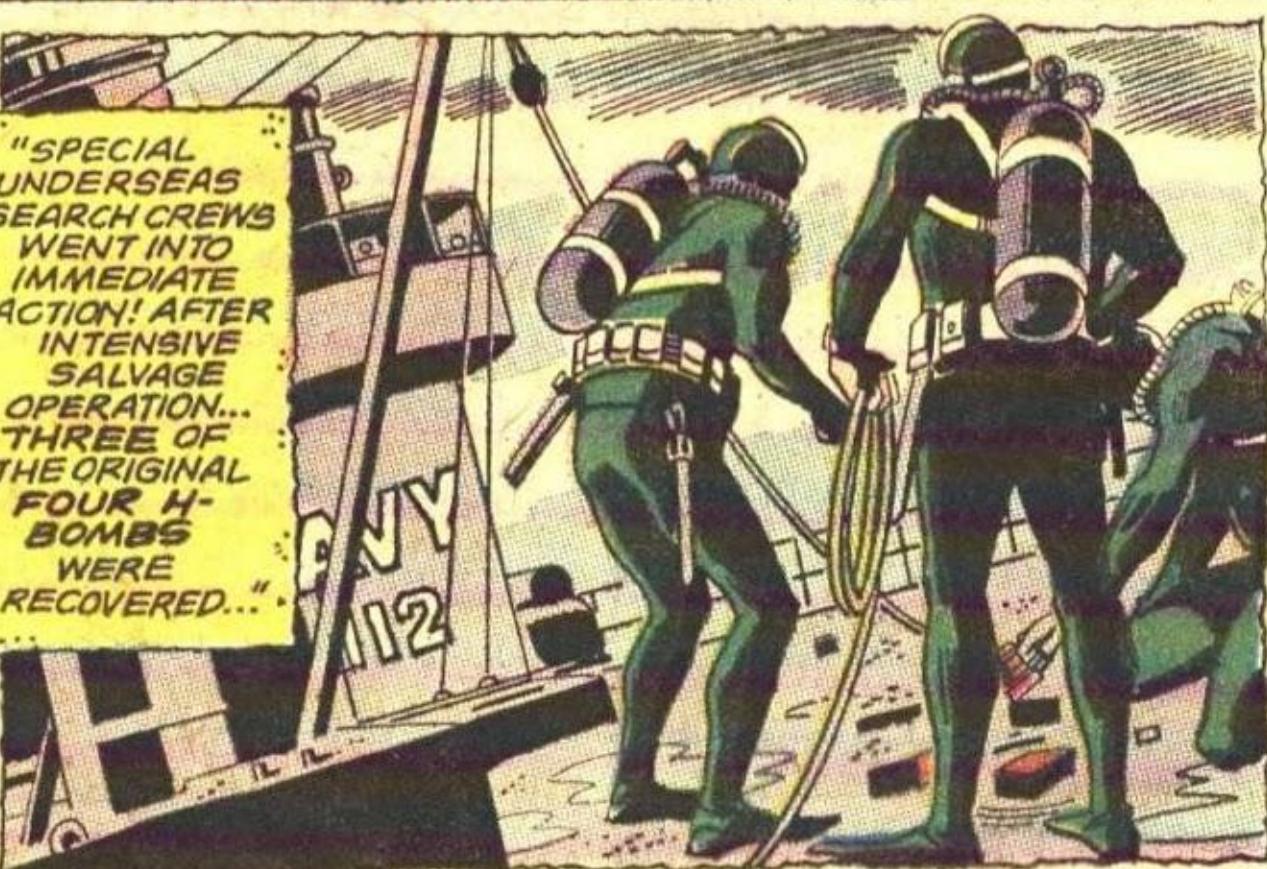
"PHEW!" OUR MONITORING OF POLICE RADIO-CALLS GAVE US SOME IDEA OF THE URGENCY... BUT DIDN'T REALIZE IT WAS THIS--

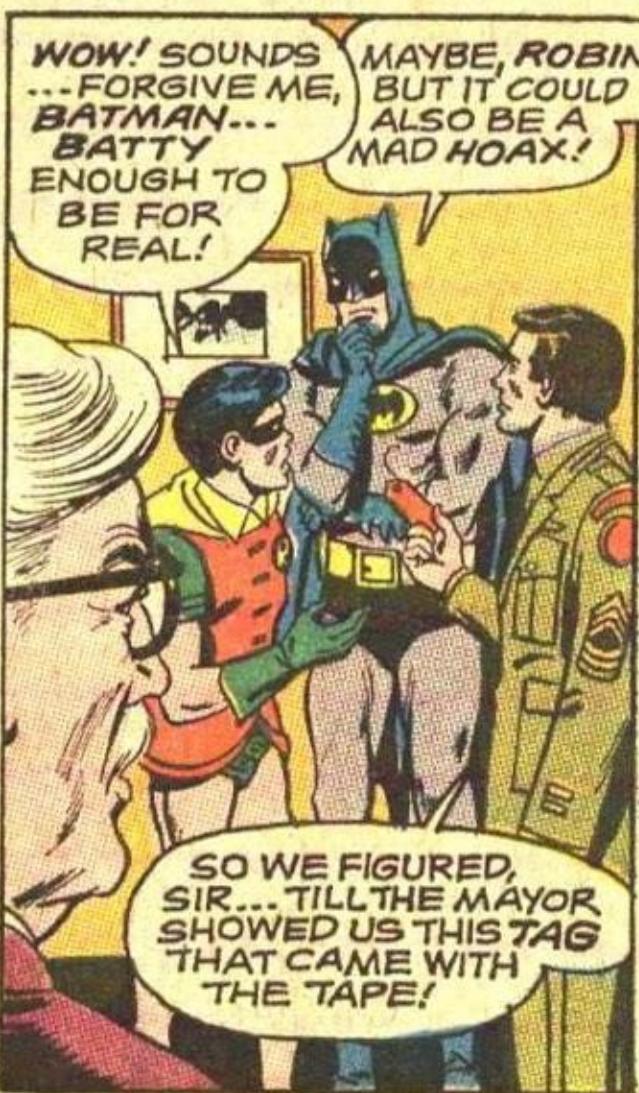
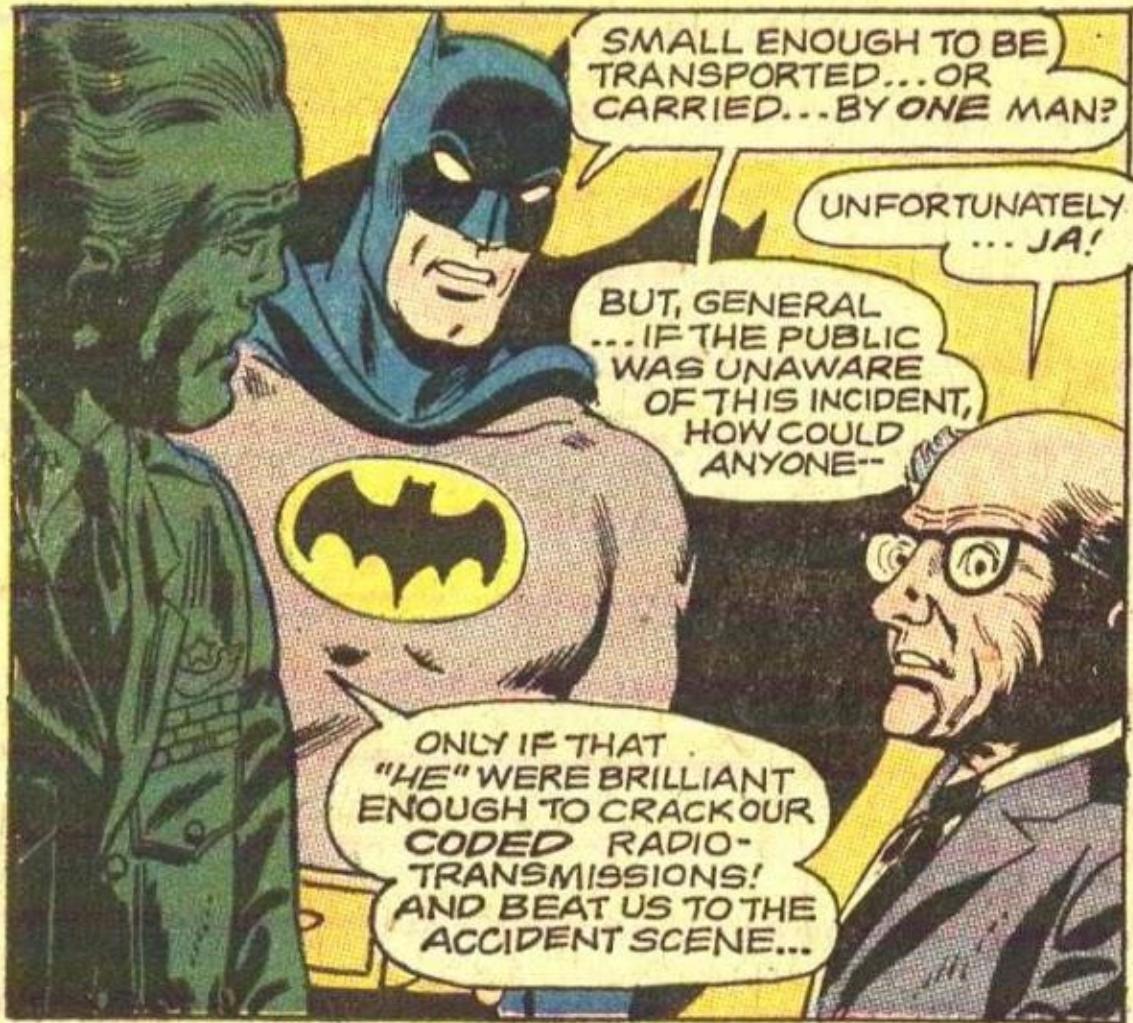
...THIS SERIOUS? IT'S MORE THAN THAT, ROBIN... THIS MAY BE DOOMSDAY FOR GOTHAM CITY!

LAST WEEK... UNKNOWN TO THE PUBLIC...

...ONE OF OUR NUCLEAR-ALERT PATROL BOMBERS... FLAMED OUT... WENT DOWN INTO THE SEA OFF GOTHAM CITY!

"SPECIAL UNDERSEAS SEARCH CREWS WENT INTO IMMEDIATE ACTION! AFTER INTENSIVE SALVAGE OPERATION... THREE OF THE ORIGINAL FOUR H-BOMBS WERE RECOVERED..."





HOW CAN THAT TAPE HELP US FIND THAT BATTY BLACK-MAILER, BATMAN?

HE MAY NOT BE NUTTY, ROBIN ... BUT A COLD, CALCULATING CRIMINAL, WHOSE VOICE MIGHT BE RECOGNIZABLE TO SOMEONE IN GOTHAM CITY!

AND AS THE BAT-MOBILE SPEEDS THEM ON THEIR IMPOSSIBLE QUEST, A FOREIGN CAR PULLS TO THE CURB...

WHERE DO WE START?

AT THE LAST PLACE THE POLICE WOULD LOOK, ROBIN...

...AND A SHADOWY FIGURE HURRIES AWAY...

--THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF GOTHAM'S CRIME-SYNDICATE!

60127

MINUTES LATER... AT THE BRILL BUILDING...

AND YOU EXPECT TO GET HIS CO-OPERATION?

IT'S CO-OPERATE... OR PERISH! IN HIS OWN EVIL WAY... BRILL HAS A BIG STAKE IN THE SURVIVAL OF GOTHAM!

YE-AH, BOSS... I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT EITHER -- IF I DIDN'T SEE IT!

T'ROWTH BUMS OUT!

PRETTY FANCY COMMAND-POST FOR GOTHAM'S WORST, BATMAN!

AND A CRYING SHAME, ROBIN! DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS, BIG BRILL CONTINUES TO LOOT AND VICTIMIZE THIS CITY!

THE BIG MAN YOU'RE FRONTING FOR, SNAKE-EYES! ANNOUNCE US!

TELL BRILL...
THANKS! WE
ACCEPT... THE
'INVITE'!

BOSS! THEY AIN'T TAKIN'
NO FOR AN ANSWER...!

NOBODY GETS
T'SEE BIG BRILL
WIT'OUT AN
APPOINTMENT!.

SNAKE-EYES
THINKS HE'S STILL
RUNNING CROOKED
DICE GAMES,
ROBIN!

...SO LET'S
UNLOAD HIS
DICE! HIT HIM
HIGH...

KPOW!

...AND LOW!

WE'LL
TAKE BRILL'S
PRIVATE EXPRESS
ELEVATOR!

SOMEHOW...
DON'T THINK HE'S
GOING TO LIKE THIS
INVASION OF HIS
PRIVACY!

CAPTAIN ACTION[®]
and **ACTION BOY™**
meet

DR. EVILTM

HA! I HAVE
IONIZED YOU... NOW
MY THOUGHT-SENSOR
WILL CONTROL
YOUR MIND!

I... I
CAN'T
MOVE!
WHO ARE
YOU?

I AM DR. EVIL!
AT LAST... YOU'RE
IN MY GRASP...
HEH... HEH!

ACTION BOY!

MY REDUCER
WILL FREEZE
YOU, ACTION
BOY!

MY RAY-
GUN IS
STRONGER!

THANKS,
ACTION
BOY!

I'M GLAD I WAS IN
TIME TO FOIL DR. EVIL!

**WHO WILL
SAVE CAPTAIN ACTION
NOW... ???**

GET DR. EVIL... ALIEN FROM
ALPHA CENTURA! HE COMES
WITH DISGUISES TO HIDE
HIS EVIL DEEDS... HE COMES
WITH EVIL OUTFIT AND
EVIL, EVIL THINGS!

GET CAPTAIN
ACTION...
GET HIS CRIME-
FIGHTING
ACCESSORIES.



ACTION BOY
COMES WITH
HELMET, KNIFE,
RAY GUN AND
PANTHER.

**GET ALL THE
ACTION WITH
CAPTAIN ACTION,
ACTION BOY, AND
DR. EVIL!
THEY'RE**

IDEAL

AND ON THE PENTHOUSE FLOOR...

THEY
CAN'T STOP ANYPLACE
ALONG TH' WAY... THIS
IS THEIR ONLY...

...AND
LAST
EXIT!

AND AS THE "LAST EXIT" IS REACHED...

WE'LL GIVE IT THE
OLD COMMANDO
TECHNIQUE! SOON'S
THE DOORS OPEN...
WE GO IN--



AND AS THE DOORS SPRING OPEN...

BLASTIN'!

RATATA

BRATA !

POW!
POW!

IS THE FATE THAT BATMAN AND ROBIN HAVE MET. MORE MERCIFUL THAN THAT AWAITING GOTHAM CITY? WITH BATED BREATH WE PAUSE... AND AWAIT THE ANSWER ON THE NEXT PAGE FOLLOWING!

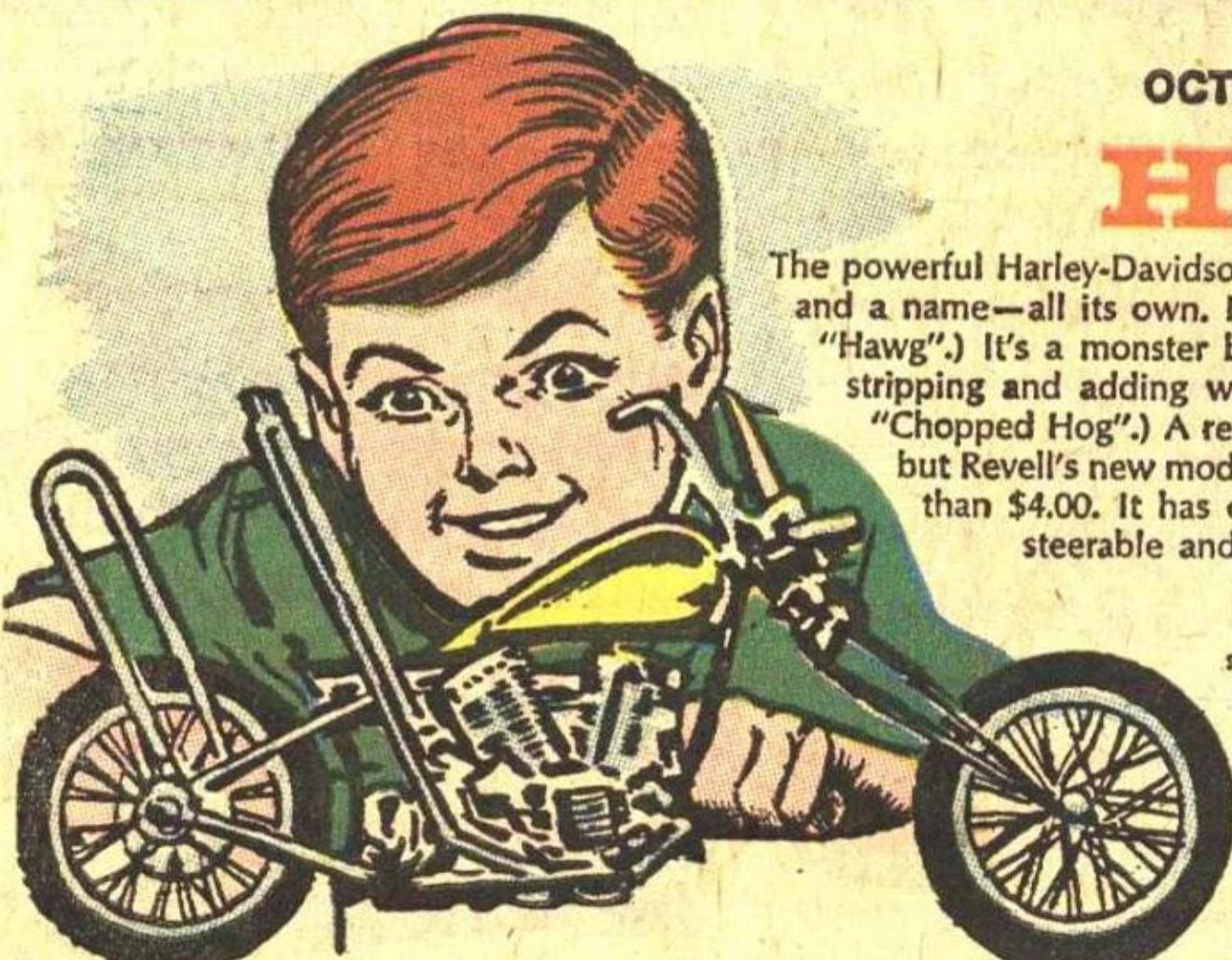


OCTOBER, 1968

HOG

The powerful Harley-Davidson is a motorcycle with a personality—and a name—all its own. It's known as the "Hog". (Pronounced "Hawg".) It's a monster bike... even when it's customized by stripping and adding wild new parts. (Then it's known as a "Chopped Hog".) A real Chopped Hog can cost over \$2,000, but Revell's new model of this colorful motorcycle costs less than \$4.00. It has colored, clear and chrome parts, plus steerable and moveable wheels. And building one can be a moving experience.

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Model
of the
Month
Harley-Davidson
"Chopped Hog"

Revell

BURSTING IN, THE GUNMEN FIND
THE CAB...

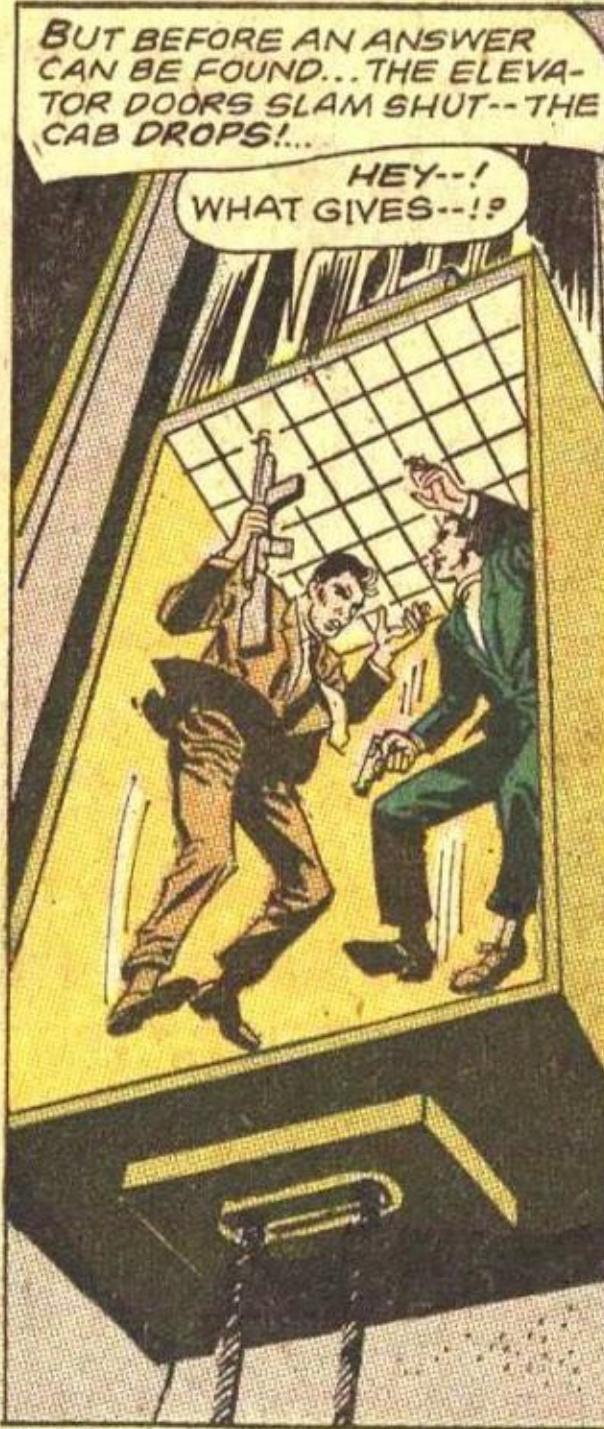
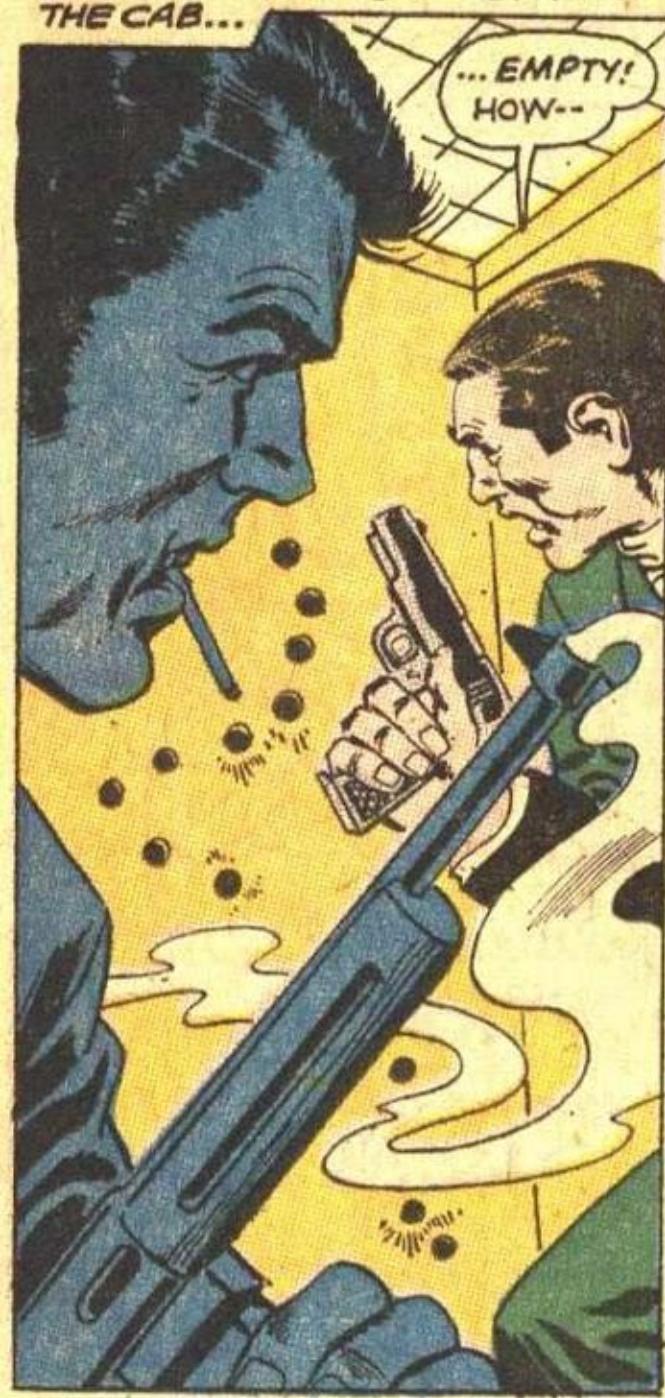
...EMPTY!
HOW--

BUT BEFORE AN ANSWER
CAN BE FOUND... THE ELEVA-
TOR DOORS SLAM SHUT-- THE
CAB DROPS!

HEY--!
WHAT GIVES--!?

AND AS, SUDDENLY, THE CAB JOLTS
TO A BONE-JARRING HALT... ONE
FLIGHT LOWER...

OOOF!



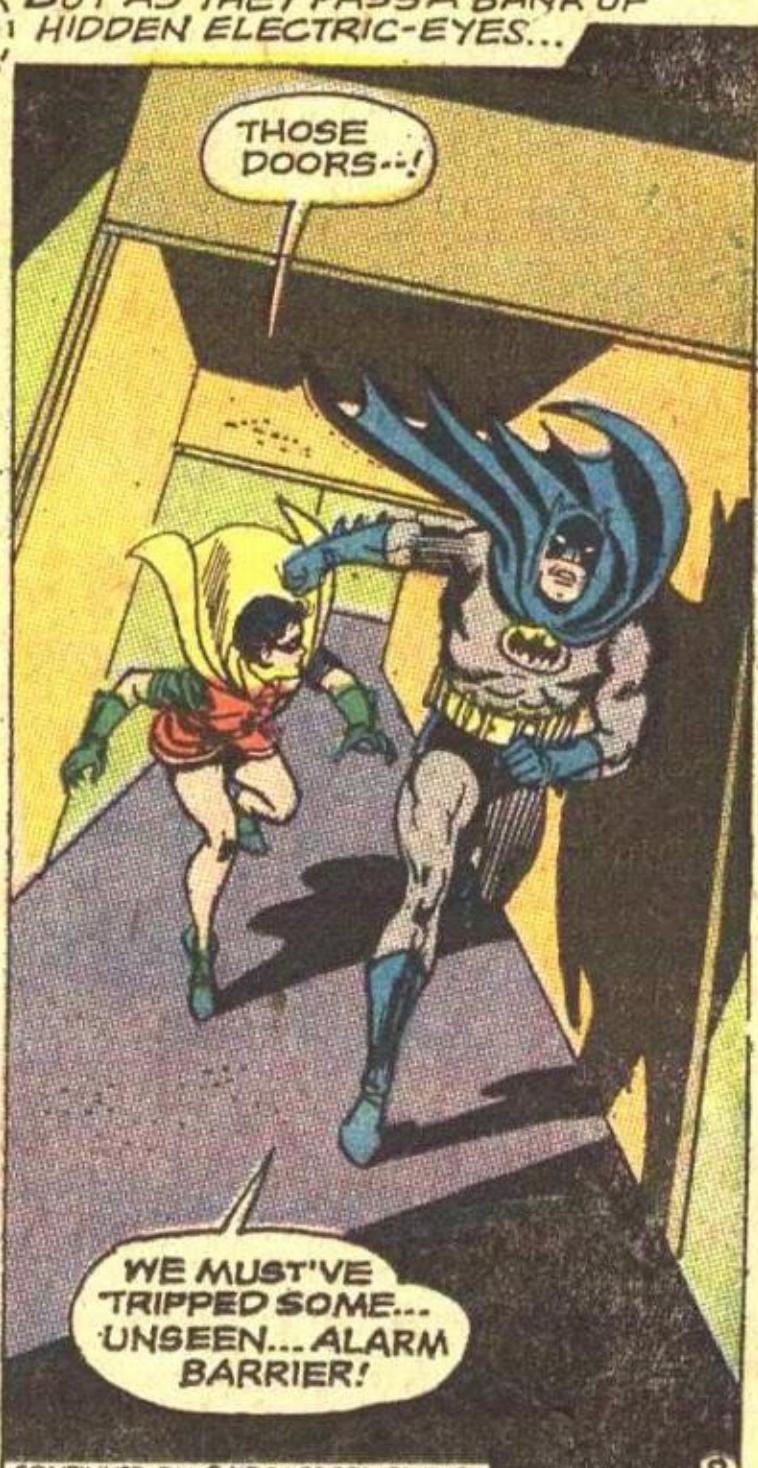
... WHILE ABOVE THEM, ON TOP
OF THE CAB...

LUCKY
WE ANTICIPATED THIS,
BATMAN-- AND CLIMBED
OUT THE TOP HATCH!

THREE DOWN
... AND HOW
MANY MORE
TO GO? GOT
TO GET
THROUGH
TO BRILL...

THAT DOOR-
WAY... LEADING
OUT TO THE
PENTHOUSE
ROOF-
GARDEN!

BUT AS THEY PASS A BANK OF
HIDDEN ELECTRIC-EYES...



WE WANT YOU TO
BABY-SIT...
WITH THE
WORLD'S
MIGHTIEST
TOT.

SUPER

BABY!



JUST
SIT
DOWN...
AND
READ
THIS
LATEST
GIANT.

EXTRA! "The GIRL SUPERBABY - STARRING SUPERGIRL!" **ON SALE OCT. 15th**

AND AS THEY TRY TO STEM THE INEKORABLE DOWNWARD MOVE-
MENT OF THE STEEL DOORS...

WE'RE
WALLED
IN!

HELPLESS...!
WHILE SOME-
WHERE OUT
THERE... A BOMB
TICKS AWAY,
THAT CAN DESTROY
EVERYBODY!

-- INCLUDING
THAT FATHEAD--
BIG BRILL!...
AND ALL WE
WANT TO DO
IS JUST
TALK
TO HIM!

WE MAY
NEVER GET
A WORD IN
EDGEWISE,
ROBIN...

LOOK!

THERE'S
NO WAY
OUT!
WE'RE
GONNA
DROWN!

ONE SLIM...
CHANCE! GOT TO
WORK FAST...

INHALE ALL
THE AIR YOU CAN,
ROBIN... HOLD
IT WHEN THE
WATER TAKES
OVER!



IN BRIEF
INSTANTS, THEIR
AIR SUPPLY
IS SNUFFED
OUT LIKE A
CANDLE!
UNDERWATER,
BATMAN
FEVERISHLY
TAKES AN
OBJECT
FROM HIS
UTILITY
BELT...



THE POWERFUL RUBY-LASER SPUTTERS
TO LIFE... JETS ITS PENCIL-THIN STREAM
OF COHERENT LIGHT AGAINST THE
HEAVY STEEL DOOR...



MOMENTS LATER...



AS THE DYNAMIC DUO IS JETTED OUT UNDER THE HIGH PRESSURE OF THE SUDDENLY RELEASED WATER!



BUT FIRST... WE
NEED A SMOKE-
SCREEN!

I'LL SIGNAL
ROBIN TO
TAKE SOME
OF THESE
SMOKE
CAPSULES!
THEN--

WHEN THE POOL LIGHTS GO ON...

W-WHAT?
FOG...

...IN A
POOL?

SUDDENLY,
FROM OUT OF
THE MIST...
A COUNTER-
ATTACK WITH
BEACHBALLS...

WHERE...
ARE THEY?
BLAST 'EM!

WHILE
UNDER THE
COVERING
SMOKE SCREEN...

THESE BABIES
GO LIKE JET-
PROPELLED WHEN
YOU RELEASE THE AIR
VALVE!

SSH!

PFFT!

AND WE'D
BETTER GO
LIKewise IF
WE'RE GONNA
WIN THIS GAME
OF WATER-
POLO!

THROWIN'

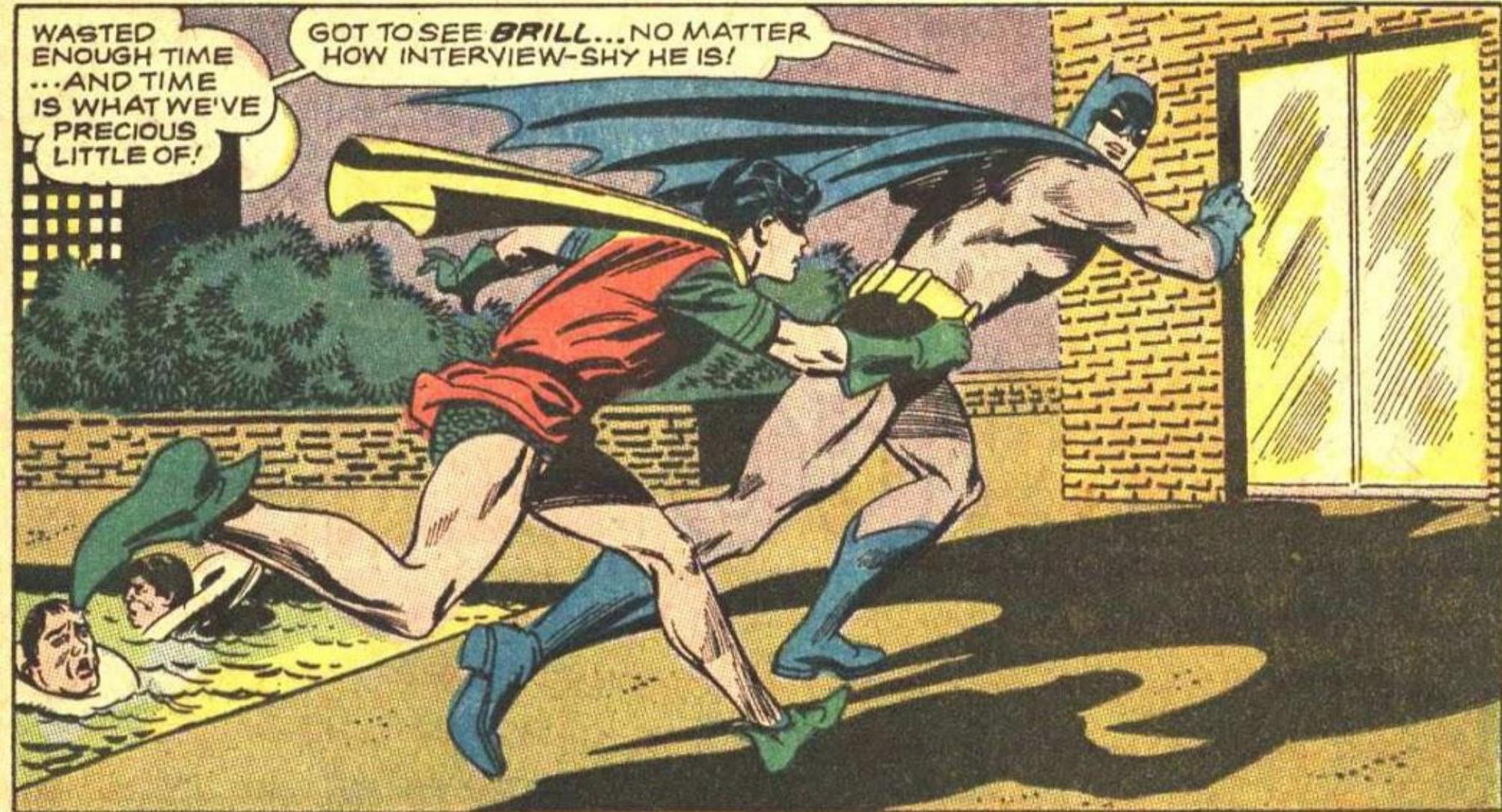
FOLLOWING UP HIS BEACHBALL BARRAGE, THE CAPED CRUSADER LEAPS UP FOR A TWO-HANDED CATCH...

WHILE ROBIN DOES A REVERSE HALF-GAINER... FROM UNDER THE BOARD...



WASTED
ENOUGH TIME
...AND TIME
IS WHAT WE'VE
PRECIOUS
LITTLE OF!

GOT TO SEE BRILL... NO MATTER
HOW INTERVIEW-SHY HE IS!



MOMENTS
LATER, AS
THE GOTHAM
GANG-
BUSTERS
BREAK INTO
THE INNER
SANCTUM...

BATMAN...
AND ROBIN? HOW IN BLAZES DID YOU...

WE JUST
TOOK OUT
SOME MINOR
INTER-
FERENCE!

ROBIN!
DON'T
REACH
FOR THAT
GUN...

Y-YOU'RE RIGHT...
I DON'T NEED
IT! YOU'VE GOT
NOTHIN'
ON ME...

I'M CLEAN!
WHAT DO
YOU WANT
HERE?

AN I.D. ON THE
VOICE BEHIND
THIS TAPE,
BRILL! YOU
MAYBE OUR
ONLY HOPE TO
SAVE GOTHAM
CITY!

ME...? SAVE...HAW!
GOTHAM? THAT'S A
TWIST ALL
RIGHT... BUT
THE "TWIST"
THAT MAY DESTROY
IT-- IS ON THIS TAPE!

I DON'T
DIG... BUT
BE MY
GUEST
FOR A
PLAY-
BACK!

...I WILL BLOW
UP ALL OF GOTHAM
CITY AT MIDNIGHT!
FURTHER INSTRUC-

TEN
MILLION
RANSOM
...MAKES
ME LOOK
LIKE A TIN-HORN
CHISELER! WHO
IS THIS SPORT,
ANYWAY?

THAT'S
WHAT WE
HOPED YOU'D
KNOW!

CONTINUED ON SEP. PAGE FOLLOWING

NEVER HEARD THE CREEP'S VOICE! AND IT'S NONE OF MY BOYS! BUT THEY COVER THE CITY! MAYBE ONE OF THEM MIGHT...

ALSO WHAT I HOPED YOU'D SAY! CAN YOU GET YOUR DISTRICT-CAPTAINS HERE FAST?

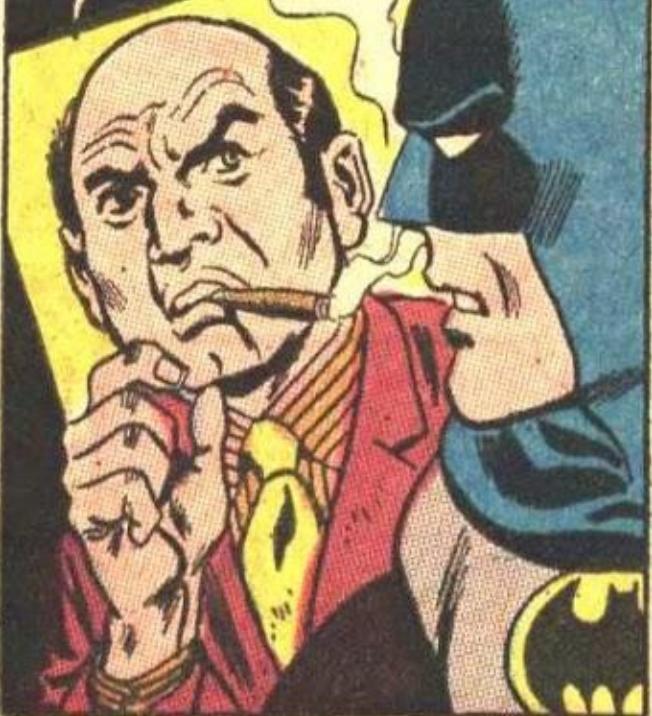
A SHORT TIME LATER... AS THE DEVASTATING DEADLINE DRAWS CLOSER...

NOW GET THIS-- BAT-MAN AND ROBIN GOT A PROPOSITION TO MAKE--

THEY GONNA TURN THE TERRITORY OVER TO US?

WE'LL LISTEN IF THEY GET OUTA TOWN!

IF YOU DON'T LISTEN, YOU'LL ALL LEAVE TOWN-- ALONG WITH THE TOWN!



AND AS BATMAN PLAYS BACK THE TELL-TALE VOICE...

DON'T RING NO BELLS WITH ME!

ME NEITHER!

WAIT!

YOU KNOW THE LUG, ONE-EAR? BUT YOU DON'T HEAR SO GOOD!



NAW... I DON'T KNOW HIM! BUT I HEARD SOME-THIN' ELSE!

TURN IT UP REAL LOUD, BATMAN!

...BLOW UP... (TWEETWEETWEETWA...) HEY, SKINNAY! FLIP THE BALL TO ME... (TWEETWEETWEETWA...) ALL OF GOTHAM CITY...

THAT'S IT!!

YA MEAN THAT KID YELLIN' "SKINNAY"?

NAW... THAT "TWEETWEETWEETWA..." IT'S TH PEANUT-WHISTLE FROM THE PEDDLER IN MY TURF!

THEN... THE BACKGROUND NOISE PROVES THE TAPE WAS RECORDED IN ONE-EAR'S NEIGHBORHOOD! IT'S AN AWFUL SLIM LEAD, BUT I'LL GRAB AT STRAWS WHEN GOTHAM'S DROWNING!

A MAD RACE AGAINST THE CLOCK BRINGS BATMAN AND ROBIN TO ONE-EAR'S RUN-DOWN BAILIWICK...

WHO... IN A NEIGHBORHOOD SO POOR COULD AFFORD A TAPE-RECORDER? IT'S A WONDER THEY CAN BUY BALLS FOR THEIR KIDS...

AND WE CAN'T EVEN QUESTION THEM... WITHOUT A DESCRIPTION! WHICH WE HAVEN'T GOT... YET! MUST BE ANOTHER WAY TO TACKLE THIS...

HEY, SKINNAY... PLAY YER ONE-WALL?



ON A FAR-OUT HUNCH, THE CAPED CRUSADER ENTERS A TV REPAIR SHOP...

THREE YEARS NIGHTS I STUDY... RADAR-COMPUTER REPAIR... SPACE ELECTRONICS... MICROWAVE TRANSMISSION... AND I GET STUCK IN THIS HOLE! TV TRANSISTORS, KIDDIE RECORD-PLAYERS...

...BUT LAST WEEK... AH! THIS LOCAL TRANSIENT... BERTRAM SMITH... BOARDS OVER AT MRS. CONWAY'S --- BRINGS IN--

...AN HONEST-TO GOODNESS-LIVE... TAPE-MACHINE! IT WAS DAMAGED BY SOME KID'S BALL...

TILLIE CONWAY'S PLACE! WE ONCE CHECKED OUT A MUGGING THERE, ROBIN!

MOMENTS LATER...

APARTMENT 2-B YOU SAY, MRS. CONWAY?

YES, SIR! BUT HE'S SUCH A QUIET, POLITE, GENTLEMAN!





16

It's the t'rantula
WITH BLOSSOMED BRAKE CHUTE
Get This Screaming Monster Dragster
Ready to Jump All Competition

Exciting New Kit by Monogram
Only \$2

It's hard to believe, even when you see it. But the monster is here.

Long, low and mean-looking slimy green body. Great big Ford engine with GMC huffer. Headers that fan out like a giant black spider's legs. Wide Goodyear slicks on rear with louvered fenders which permit rubber

dust, smoke and "stuff" to escape. Detailed interior.

Make the t'rantula with chute closed or open. Chute pack and four-panel blossomed chute both included in kit along with 1 1/4 inch molded tarantula, the giant spider and decals.

Get a t'rantula now—at your favorite store.

Monogram

quality hobby kits



Monogram Models, Inc.,
Morton Grove, Illinois.



SECONDS LATER, ACROSS FROM CITY HALL...

GONE!

NOT NECESSARILY, BATMAN! LOOK...

ANOTHER DEAD END!

TOW-AWAY ZONE
NO PARKING AT ANYTIME

I WONDER--HAS THE MAD BOMBER FINALLY MADE A MISTAKE?

WE'VE GOT ONE THIN HOUR LEFT!

AFTER A MAD DASH TO THE CITY TOW-AWAY LOT...

THAT'S IT, SIR! RELAYED YOUR CALL TO THE ARMY NUCLEAR-BOMB SQUAD! THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY!

PUT THROUGH A CHECK ON THE OWNER OF THAT CAR, OFFICER! IT'S POSSIBLE THE DRIVER WAS USING AN ALIAS!

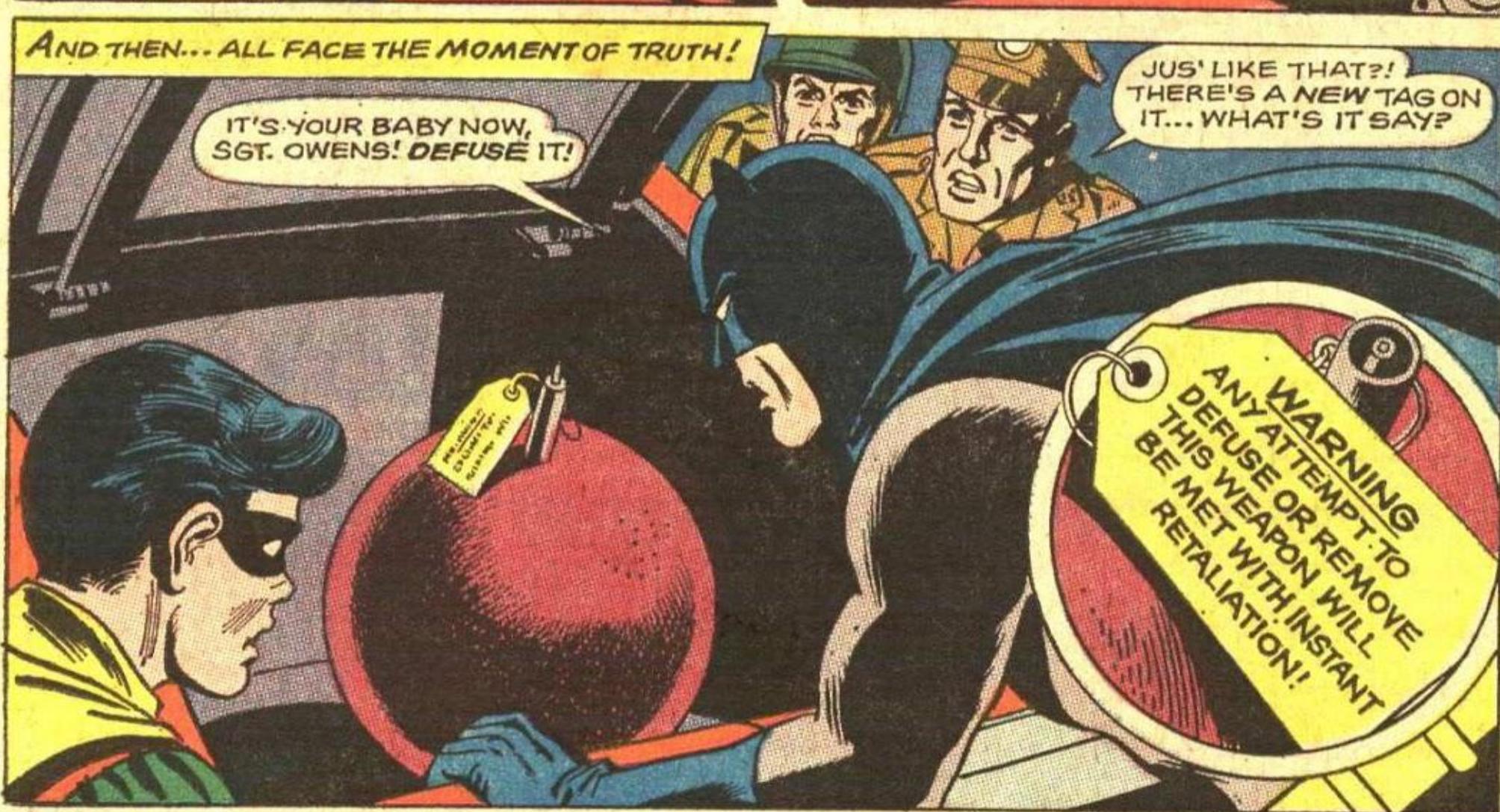
AND FRANTIC MOMENTS LATER...

YOUR HUNCH WAS A HOT ONE, YE-AH... I DIG, SGT. OWENS! MUST BE IN THE TRUNK! LET'S GET IT OPEN!

IT MIGHT BE BOOBY-TRAPPED!

BUT, BATMAN--

Click
Click
Click!



AND CHANCES ARE HE'S A LONG... LONG WAY FROM GOTHAM CITY BY NOW! IF WE DON'T PAY UP... HE'D WANT TO BE WELL OUT OF RANGE!

BATMAN! BATMAN! THIS IS A HOT-LINE ALERT! JUST GOT A PHONE CALL FROM THE MAD BOMBER!

GAVE US NO TIME TO TRACE IT, BUT--

AND AT GOTHAM CITY HALL...

...HE DEMANDS WE PUT THE TEN MILLION DOLLARS ABOARD A SINGLE-SEATER PLANE... FLY IT OUT TO SEA... AWAIT RADIO-INSTRUCT!

WE'RE LOADING UP AN ARMORED TRUCK NOW... CAN'T TAKE ANY FURTHER RISKS! HE WANTS IT AIRBORNE BY 11:30 OR HE'LL--

FIFTEEN MINUTES MORE! GIVE ME THAT TIME TO NAB HIM, COMMISSIONER GORDON!

NOT A CHANCE! AS OF NOW... THE MANHUNT IS OFFICIALLY OVER!

BUT, COMMISSIONER-- YOU DON'T REALIZE-- SKIP IT!

ONE FAVOR, SIR... LET ROBIN AND ME GO ALONG FOR THE RIDE-- IN THE ARMORED CAR!

GRANTED!

SO, FIVE MINUTES LATER...

WHAT DIDN'T COMMISSIONER GORDON REALIZE, BATMAN?

THAT WE HAVE NO GUARANTEE THAT OUR BEREFT BLACKMAILER WON'T BLOW UP GOTHAM CITY ... EVEN IF HE GETS THE RANSOM!

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'D BE AT THE AIRPORT?

IF YOU WERE HIM, ROBIN-- WOULDN'T YOU WANT TO SEE THIS MONEY PUT ABOARD THE CONTACT PLANE?

AND AS THE MONEY-TRUCK ENTERS A DESERTED END OF THE FIELD...

SHORT... FAT... THAT'S HIM, ROBIN!

NOW, SOON AS WE TURN THE HANGAR CORNER...

AS THE LOADING STARTS...

JUST AS THE PLANE TAXIES INTO POSITION FOR TAKE-OFF...

CIRCLE AROUND THE BACK, ROBIN!
I'LL TAKE THE SIDE! HE MUSTN'T SEE US...OR HE'LL PANIC AND RUN!

HANGAR 6

WHAT WAS THAT--?

KLANG!

ALERTED BY BATMAN'S UNFORTUNATE OIL-CAN FUMBLE, THE BOMBER SNATCHES A FIRE-FIGHTING FOAM-DISPENSER FROM THE WALL AND...

SLURP!!

... THEN BLINDLY RUNS OUT AS THE MONEY-JET RETURNS FOR A TAKE-OFF INTO THE WIND...

IN A PANIC, THE TRAPPED TORMENTOR OF GOTHAM CITY TURNS AND...

YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME!

NEVER!



HEY... WHA'CHA
MEAN BUSTIN' IN
HERE? YOU'LL WAKE
SKINNAY!

IT'S A CHANCE
WE'VE GOT TO TAKE--
OTHERWISE IT MIGHT
MEAN A PERMANENT
SLEEP FOR EVERYONE
IN GOTHAM CITY!

NOW TO
CUT THIS BALL
OPEN--FAST!

A SELF-WINDING
WATCH-TIMER...
WIRED TO A MICRO-
SIGNALTRANS-
MITTER!

DIABOLICAL...
THE WINDER
HAD TO BE
KEPT IN
MOTION FOR
AT LEAST AN
HOUR TO TRIGGER
THE REMOTE-
BOMB!

AND WHAT BET-
TER WAY THAN
A BOUNCING
BALL?

NOW JUST
ONE SNIP...

AND ALL OF
GOTHAM CITY--
LIKE SKINNAY--
CAN CONTINUE TO
SLEEP IN PEACE--

1/20 SCALE MODEL CAR KITS

**SUPER
SIZE**

STP INDY TURBINE CAR
NO. 40--THE MOST FAMOUS
INDY 500 RACER IN THE WORLD!
BODY COMES IN RED, CHASSIS
IN BLACK...AND LOADED WITH
PLASTICRHOE PARTS! GIANT HOLLOW
TIRES...15-PIECE ENGINE...DESK
DISPLAY STAND...ALL IN
MPC'S 1/20 SUPERSCALE!

1969 AMX--BIGGER PARTS, EASIER BUILDING,
SUPER DETAIL! 3 SUPERSCALE BUILDING VERSIONS.
INCLUDING THE GREAT RACING
AMX! HOLLOW TIRES...TILT-BACK SEAT...
BIG 390 ENGINE! THIS ONE YOU'VE
GOT TO GET! 1/20 SCALE AMX
ONLY FROM MPC!



1969 VETTE
STING RAY--SUPER-
COLOSSAL MODEL!
MOLDED IN 2 COLORS!
WIRING AND HOSES...
METAL SPRINGS...WORKING
SUSPENSION! THREE BUILDING VERSIONS INCLUDING A SUPER-
HOT DRAG CAR! LOADED WITH EVERYTHING EVER IN A KIT IN
MPC'S GIANT 1/20 SUPERSCALE!



FACT FILE #1

TARANTULA appeared in Star-Spangled Comics from issue No. 1 (October, 1941) through issue No. 19 (April, 1943).

Although the adventures of Tarantula appeared in only nineteen stories, all of which were eight pages in length, he nevertheless remains one of the most fondly remembered costumed crime-fighters of the Golden Age of Comics. It is hard to explain exactly why Tarantula is so well remembered by the fans, because he certainly wasn't one of the major characters of the day. Perhaps it is because the readers recognized a potential in the character that was never allowed to reach fruition for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the wartime paper shortage. But idle speculation is not what this article is supposed to be about. Rather than trying to guess what might have been, we're here to tell you what kind of comic strip character Tarantula was.

Tarantula's origin story, which appeared in Star-Spangled Comics No. 1 was written by Mort Weisinger (now editor of Superman), and the art was by Hal Sharpe, the artist who was to illustrate the majority of the Tarantula strips. The origin tale's opening scene finds gang-leader Ace-Deuce and his criminal cohorts in the process of holding up a premiere-night theatre crowd. As the crooks are busily engaged in robbing both the cash receipts and the customers, a weirdly costumed character, descending from the ceiling on a thin silken strand, swoops down upon the felons. After a short and furious battle, the costumed newcomer has all the criminals ensnared in silken webs he has created with the strange gun he carries at his sides. When the police arrive and start asking questions, the web-spinner rushes off without answering their queries, thereby leaving the police to wonder whether or not he is a crime-fighter, or merely a crook working for some rival criminal gang.

Once alone, the masked man dons the everyday garb of John Law, a writer of detective fiction. Returning home, he is met by his housekeeper, Olga, who excitedly shouts, "Mr. Law! You did it. The news came over the radio. 'Spider-Man', the announcer said, and, 'Tarantula' — the name you picked yourself!" Olga is the only other person to know that John Law is Tarantula.

After her initial outburst, Olga quiets down somewhat and asks if the mystery writer is finished playing games, and won't he get rid of that silly get-up now? In answer, John Law explains that he feels strongly that something must be done to stem the ever-growing crime wave, and, since he is always coming up with ingenious methods of crime-busting in his books anyway; why not put some of those ideas to actual use!! He further explains how he was inspired by observing his pet tarantula to design his equipment after it. (True, a tarantula is an offbeat kind of pet to keep, but then again, writers are an offbeat kind of people.... And anyone who would set out to be a costumed do-

gooder has just got to be a wee bit unusual to start with!!) The crime-writer created a web-gun that shoots a liquid silk which solidifies into a variable type of webbing once it is fired from the weapon. He can use the instrument to quickly travel from place to place by swinging on its silken strands, or to weave webs in which he can trap his opponents. He has also devised suction cup devices for his feet and gloves, which enable him to walk on walls and ceilings. Once these inventions were perfected, he set out on his web-spinning, wall-crawling career.

His reflection is interrupted, however, when a radio-newsflash announces that Ace-Deuce and his gang have managed to escape from police custody, threatening to pull an especially spectacular theft. The scene now switches to the hideout of Ace-Deuce, the next day, where the master criminal is plotting one last super-crime before leaving the city for good. The plan is to steal the proceeds of a War Relief Party that is being held on the sixtieth floor of a skyscraper, but they will need the services of someone who can stall the elevators and allow them a clear get-away trail. Ace orders one of his henchmen to get Rags O'Bannion to do the job, and that evening, the robbery gets under way. However, Rags O'Bannion turns out to be Tarantula, in disguise. Tarantula makes quick work of subduing the criminals and, following a wild roof-top battle, he manages to thwart Ace-Deuce's escape by autogiro (a forerunner of today's helicopters):

That, in essence, was Tarantula's first excursion into crime-busting. Although there weren't very many more adventures in store for the spider-man, he did manage to combat and defeat an assortment of villains including The Crime Candle, The Blade, and The Fly, in his short but memorable career. And memorable is the word for Tarantula!!



LETTERS to the BATCAVE

Dear Editor: Batman 204 brought with it quite a surprise! I mean, of course, the surprising quality of that issue. When it was announced that Batman would be given to another artist and writer team, I was dismayed. Never will Batman achieve the pinnacle of greatness he was destined for, I thought. So I bought the August issue only out of sadistic curiosity to see how far Batman's come-down would be. I opened to the first page and was amazed; never did I think Irv Novick could illustrate so well. Joe Giella subdues Novick's scratchy inks; he is the perfect inker to compliment Irv's pencils!

Frank Robbins' writing talent was more than expected; in fact, "Operation: Blindfold" is more than I might expect from your ace, Gardner Fox! The reason was because Batman was once more returned to the element that he originated under — MYSTERY! Again, Batman became the detective with the cloak of secrecy around him. The past few years, he had digressed into a gosh-awful gadgetry super-hero, which was untrue to his original inception. But at last, the real Batman is back, thanks to Mr. Robbins! He filled his script with many interesting deductions by Batman, such as the one that proved the dead man blind. And he didn't resort to using a costumed villain, a "getaway" used by lesser writers. You know what I mean; they introduce a costumed villain, then the hero has a pow-zam battle with him, which leaves few pages for characterization and twists.

Yes, Batman 204 introduced a new era of Batman to all of comicdom that will (or should, I might say) become the best since the Batman of the forties. Thanks again for bringing back the Batman of old — the TRUE Batman — Fred Hembeck, Yaphank, N.Y.

(One thing about our Batmännacs — they play fair! When we give out with a Batman "bomb", their return-mail bombardment to us is nerve-racking! But when an issue is good, their letter-avalanche is heart-warming! The comments on Batman 204 were practically all in the same vein — indicating our "New-Old Look" is not in vain! — Editor)

Dear Editor: Batman 204 depicted the Caped Crusader as I like to see him: a figure of the night, relying not on pseudo-scientific devices but rather on his detective ability . . . and his fists! . . . under suspicion by the police, operating on his own. . . . this is the kind of Batman I've been waiting for ever since the inception of the "New Look".

And to think that this long-awaited ideal Batman story came from the pen of the same person who was responsible for the recent two-issue Flash "Samuroids" fiasco! Frank Robbins supplied all the elements needed for the perfect Batman story: a night-time setting . . . plenty of action. . . . a down-to-earth, realistic plot. . . . a puzzling mystery. . . . a minimum of puns. . . . and, thank goodness, none of those absurd costumed villains prancing around! Even the narrative was written in that good old "pulp magazine" style so noticeable in the early Batman classics. It's all too seldom nowadays that we find captions to compare with. . . . "Has it finally come to pass? Has the doughty defender of truth and justice met. . . . the unconquerable foe?" That's true "Golden Age," man!

Of course, your new art team of Irv Novick and Joe Giella played an integral part in contributing to the

atmosphere of this story. They did a great job of realizing what was a most difficult script to do justice to, and their night scenes were nothing less than superb!

Perhaps . . . hopefully. . . . Batman 204 will be the beginning of another "New Look" . . . the one so many of us were anticipating four years ago. Please, don't disappoint us this time! — Gordon Flagg, Jr., Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Editor: Wonderful! I am, of course, referring to Batman 204, "Operation: Blindfold". I knew the issue would be a hit when I first saw the cover. It matched and surpassed my highest hopes.

Let's start our dissection with the cover. The very idea of Batman being mugged in a slummy area of Gotham arouses interest in the story instantly. But when you have it drawn in that marvelous style, you outdo yourselves. First, look at Batman. Having him be the only figure in natural colors is a good idea, since he, naturally, is the main figure. And that facial expression — pure fear! Beautiful! The over-sized moon, the dark green sky contrasted with the lighter shade of the ground, the absence of "sound", the overall darkness, and the bat-shadow on the fence, fading as it nears the ground, all combined to make this your best cover in a long time.

Now for the inside art. The new kind of splash page is an interesting idea. I like it. The art averaged to be great — Novick and Giella are Batman's men!

Story was great. An automatic aura of mystery was created since the action took place at night, for which Batman was made. The murder on the first page informed us that we weren't dealing with cheap stuff. Then we were immediately launched into the story by the mystery of the next page. We knew that the victim wasn't Batman . . . but what, then? As the story develops, so do more touches of genius, like: a mad villain, deep plots and counterplots, human interest (Commissioner Gordon's reaction to the supposed death of the World's Greatest Detective), a mystery, and Batman and Robin up to their respective necks in trouble.

In summing up, let me say that, besides being an obvious classic, this issue really restored my faith in human nature. After some of the bombs you've been handing out lately, it is truly refreshing to read an issue such as this. But, it all goes to prove one tried and true fact: DC is the greatest! — Frank Erwin, Toledo, Ohio

Dear Editor: Having never really liked Bob Kane's artwork (except prior to the sixties), the only Batman adventures I read were in Detective when Infantino still took pencil and brush in hand. But now that Infantino has gone to that great, happy editorial ground on the top floor, I remained Batman-less for many months. Out of sheer curiosity, I picked up Batman 204 to witness the new team of Robbins and Novick. And well, I was more than slightly surprised at the results and must apologize for ever doubting the DC Dynasty of Comics.

To be honest, I was almost scared when I heard that Robbins would write for Batman. The comical slant used on The Flash did not seem to fit to Batman; nor would it ever. But again, I was pleased at the results. It's hard to criticize the first part of a two-part story, so I won't. Let's just say that there was enough intrigue, build-up of the plot and action to make me buy the next issue. And isn't that part of the purpose of a first episode in a continuing story? — Klaus Janson, Bridgeport, Conn.

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