



NO. 319 **40¢**
JAN. ALL NEW!

BATMAN®

THE
RETURN
OF THE
GENTLEMAN
GHOST!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
 AUTHORITY

KUBERT &
GIORDANO

IS SHE A GHOST-
OR NOT?
AND WILL BATMAN
LIVE LONG ENOUGH
TO FIND OUT?

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

BAT-MAN

CREATED BY BOB KANE

THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH SOUND AND FURY--FOR THOSE WHO KNOW HOW TO LISTEN!

LISTEN CLOSELY AND YOU CAN HEAR THE LOW SAD RUMBLE OF THUNDER ON THE HORIZON--THE SOFT STEALTHY TREAD OF TRESPASSING FOOTSTEPS--THE FAINT CLICK OF SAFE TUMBLERS BEING TEASED TO REVEAL THEIR SECRETS--

--AND THE AUDIBLE GASP THAT RISES FROM THE GATHERED THIEVES, WHEN A SUDDEN STROKE OF LIGHTNING REVEALS...

THE B-B-BATMAN!?

NEVER GIVE UP THE GHOST!

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IRV NOVICK &

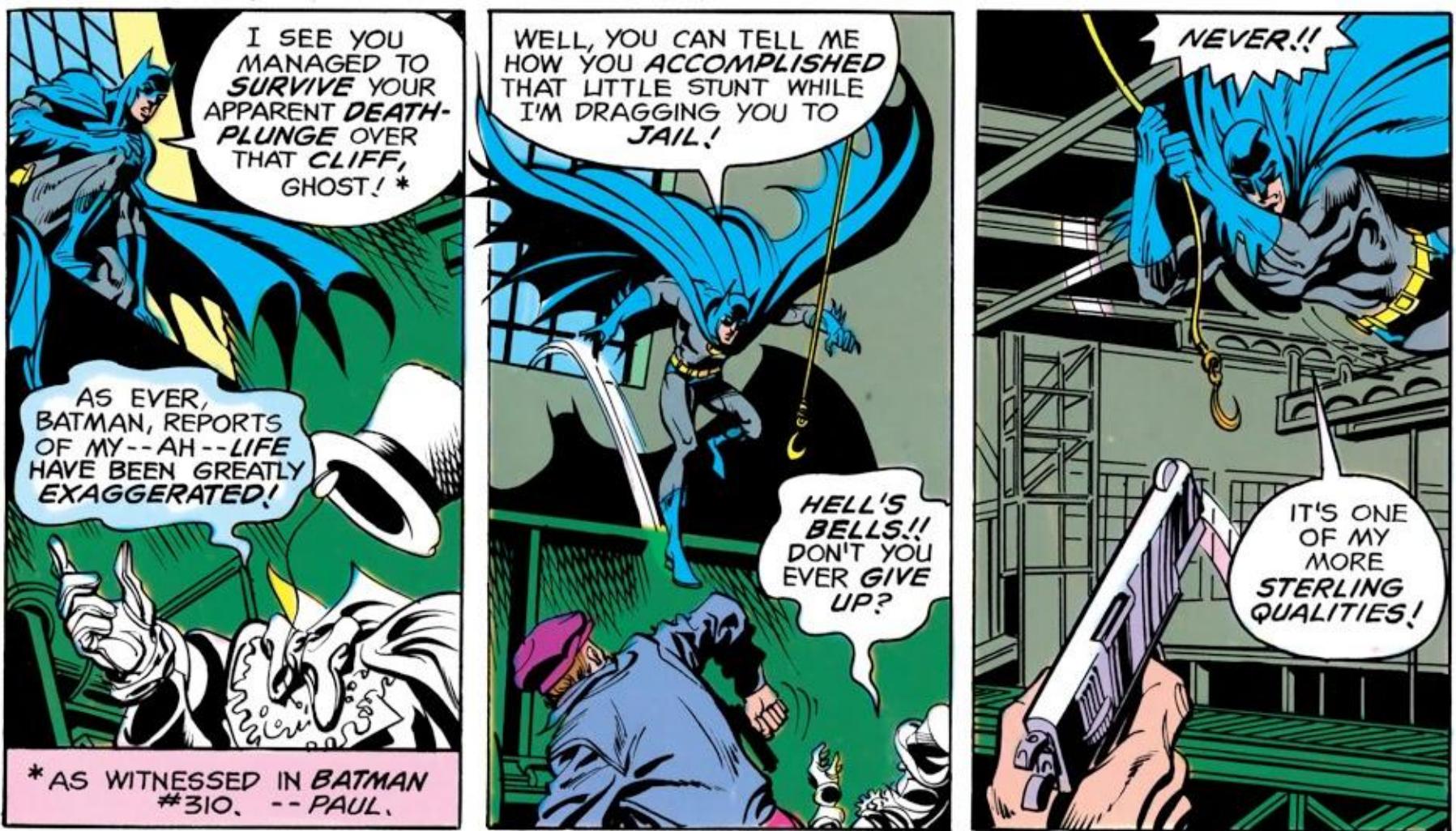
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STEADY ON,
LADS! NO MAN
ALIVE IS A
MATCH FOR--THE
GENTLEMAN
GHOST!

J-6275



DON'T KNOW WHY A SUPPOSEDLY HIGH-CLASS JEWEL THIEF LIKE YOU IS STEALING CRUDE INDUSTRIAL DIAMONDS, GHOST--

--BUT YOU'LL SERVE THE SAME AMOUNT OF HARD TIME EITHER WAY!

OH, I RATHER THINK NOT!



AND EVEN AS THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE HURLS HIMSELF SAVAGELY AT HIS HOARY FOE...

EH--?/?

THAT HOIST-HOOK HE ACTIVATED SNAGGED MY BILLIONG CAPE--

HOW ASTUTE!



--ONE SHOULD ALWAYS WATCH ONE'S BACK!

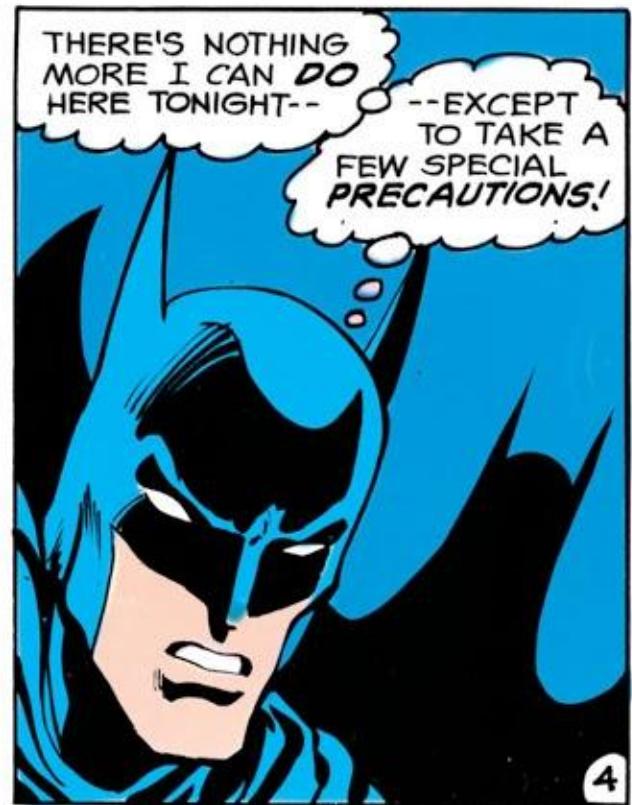
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, MY LADS AND I WILL BE LEAVING!

I SINCERELY HOPE WE DON'T CROSS PATHS AGAIN, BATMAN!

I DOUBT YOU CAN AFFORD THE EMBARRASSMENT!

HA HA HA HA







THE DARKNESS GIVES WAY TO DAWN AS A POLICE CAR, LIGHTS FLASHING, WHEELS THROUGH THE DESERTED STREETS OF LOWER GOTHAM--

--TO FIND ITS WAY SUDDENLY BLOCKED BY...



BETTER BE CAREFUL! THIS MIGHT BE A TRICK TO FREE OUR PRISONER!

BUT HOW COULD ANYONE KNOW WE'D BE TAKING THIS RANDOM ROUTE?

IN THIS BUSINESS, CHUM--ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!

INCLUDING...

HUH? IT'S A MANNEQUIN--WITH THE FACE OF A CLOWN!?



OH, BUT YOU WILL, FRIEND--YOU WILL!

HEY, THAT'S--GAS!?

C-CAN'T BREATHE--!

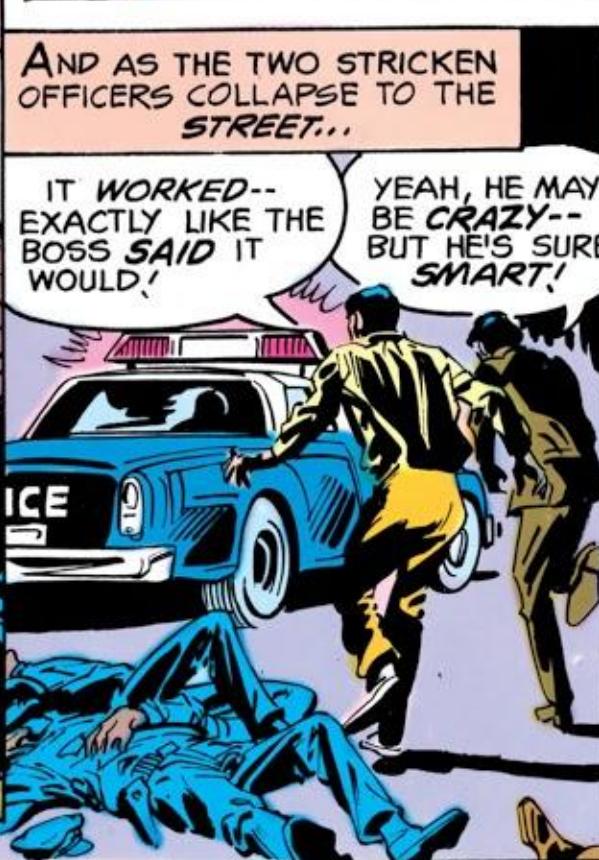
AND AS THE TWO STRICKEN OFFICERS COLLAPSE TO THE STREET...

IT WORKED--EXACTLY LIKE THE BOSS SAID IT WOULD!

YEAH, HE MAY BE CRAZY--BUT HE'S SURE SMART!

OKAY, SOUTHPAW--OUTTA THE CAR!

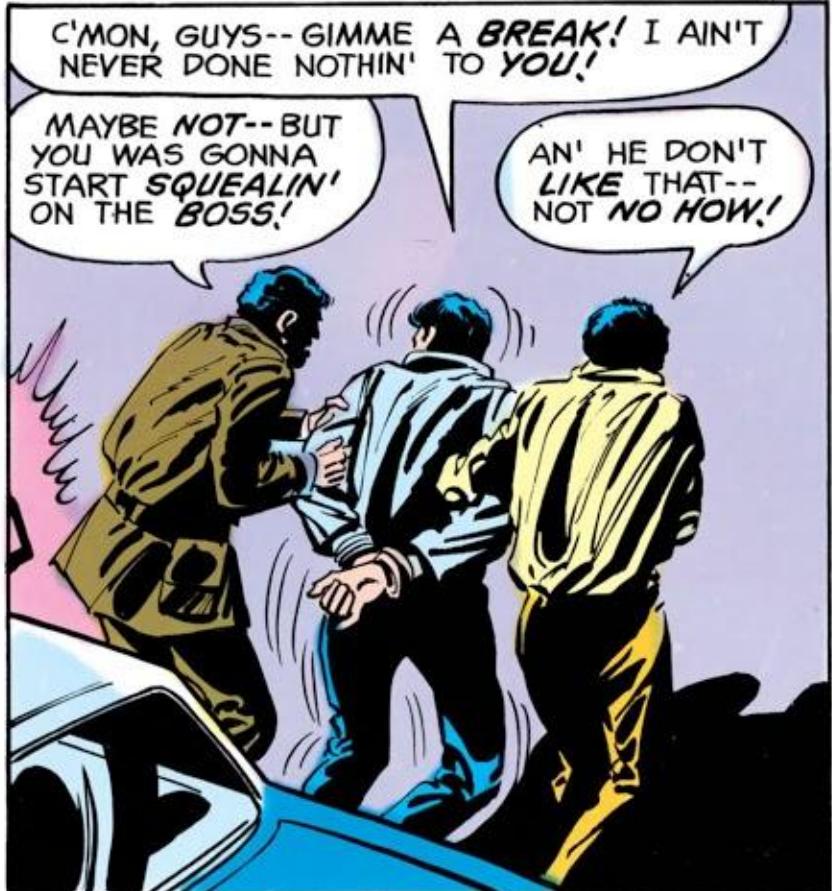
LIKE IT OR NOT, YER COMIN' WITH US!



C'MON, GUYS--GIMME A BREAK! I AIN'T NEVER DONE NOTHIN' TO YOU!

MAYBE NOT--BUT YOU WAS GONNA START SQUEALIN' ON THE BOSS!

AN' HE DON'T LIKE THAT--NOT NO HOW!



STILL STRUGGLING, THE MAN CALLED SOUTHPAW IS DRAGGED AWAY PAST THE SPRAWLED POLICEMEN, THEIR DEAD FACES TWISTED INTO A HIDEOUS GRIN, THEIR TAUT LIPS A BRIGHT RUBY RED--

--AND THE ECHO OF MANIACAL LAUGHTER DRIFTS FAINTLY ON THE BREEZE!



AND WHILE SOUTHPAW SIMMERS ON THE BACK BURNER FOR THE NONCE, WE SHIFT AHEAD TO THE FOLLOWING EVENING--

--SPECIFICALLY, TO THE SHADYVILLE FUNERAL HOME--

SHADYVILLE
FUNERAL HOME

--A MOST APPROPRIATE RESIDENCE FOR ONE WHO PROFESSES TO BE A GHOST!

'ERE'S YOUR TEA, GUV'NOR.

THANK YOU, ALFIE. AS SOON AS I FINISH, WE'LL BE ON ABOUT OUR BUSINESS FOR THE EVENING.

WE AIN'T REALLY GONNA TRY ROBBIN' THAT SAME FACTORY AGAIN, ARE WE?

WE ARE INDEED, REGGIE! ALL MY PLANS DEPEND ON IT!

BUT THE BATMAN WILL LIKELY BE WAITIN' FOR US!

PRECISELY AS I INTENDED!

IT'S OUR OPPORTUNITY TO RID OURSELVES OF HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL!

I'VE GROWN QUITE FOND OF GOTHAM CITY! IN MANY WAYS, IT REMINDS ME OF MY OWN LONDON OF A CENTURY AGONE!

BUT, AS THE CLICHE GOES, THIS CITY SIMPLY ISN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR BOTH THE BATMAN AND MYSELF!

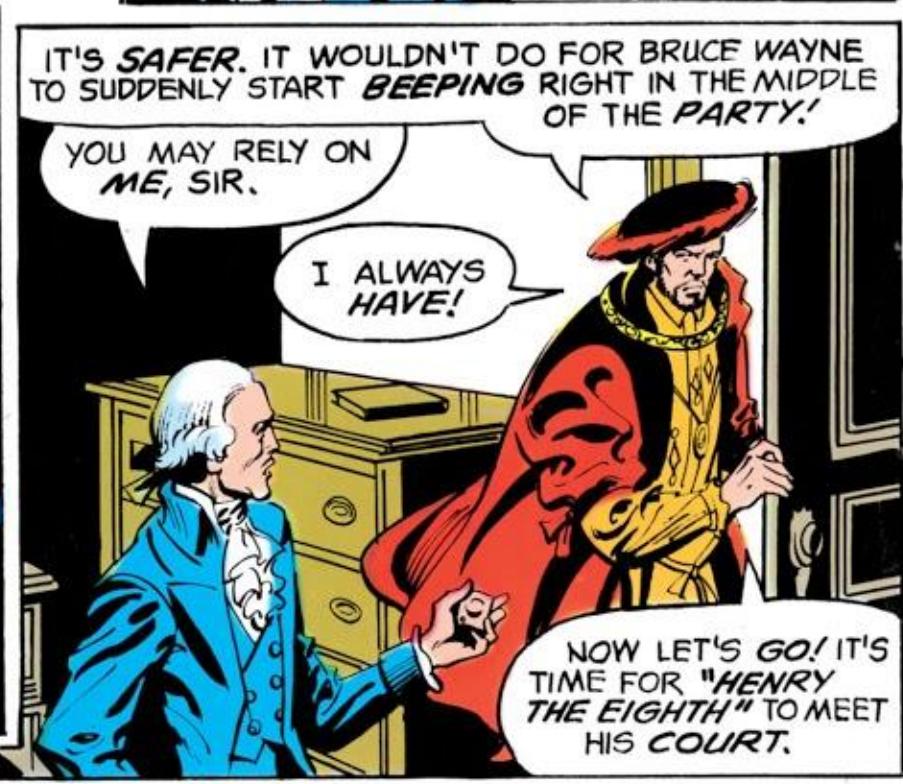
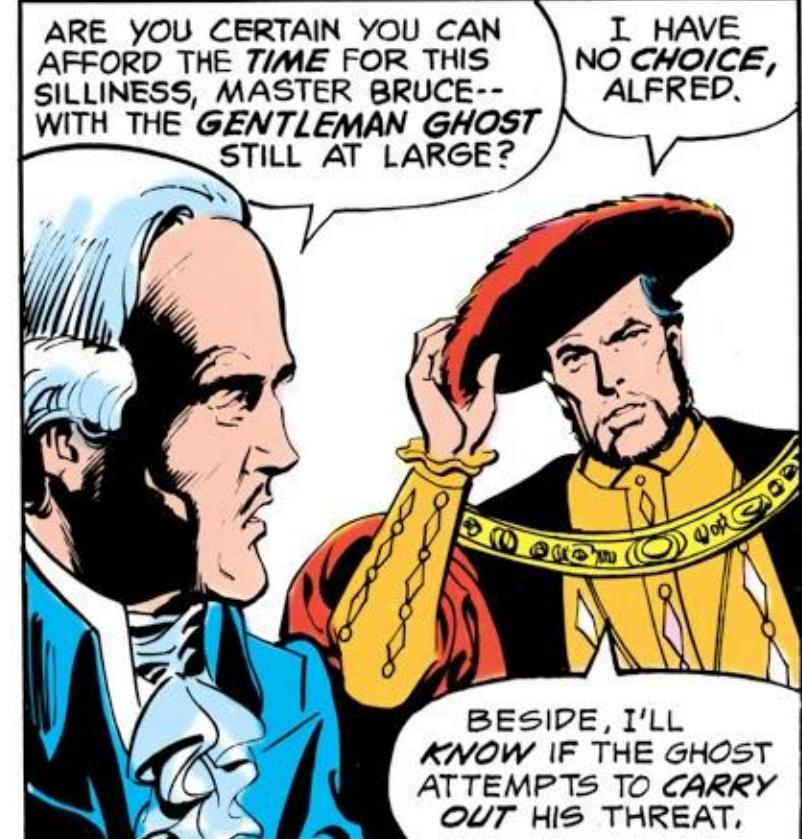
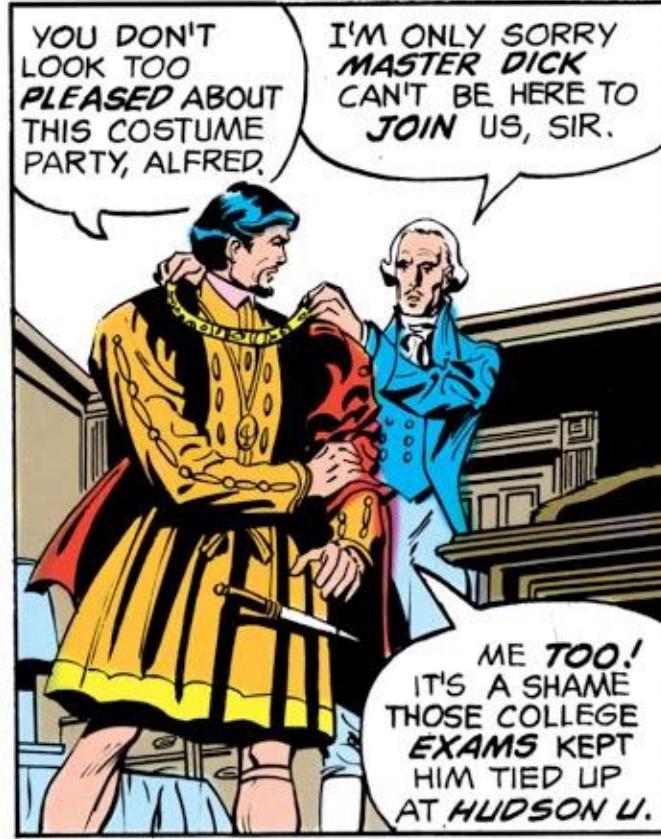
ONE OF US WILL HAVE TO GO-- AND I ASSURE YOU IT SHAN'T BE ME!

ANOTHER CUP OF TEA, PLEASE, ALFIE.

RIGHT AWAY, GUV'NOR.

I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO KNOW 'OW A BLOKE WIT' NO 'EAD DRINKS SO MUCH TEA.

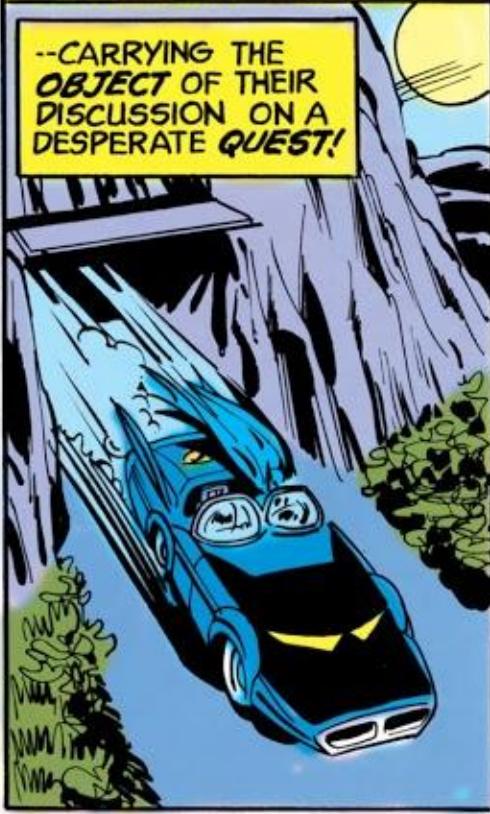
ME TOO, ALF-- BUT I SURE AIN'T GONNA BE THE LAD WHAT ASKS 'IM!





BUT EVEN AS LUCIUS FOX AND SELINA KYLE COMPARE NOTES, A SLEEK BLACK RACING MACHINE IS ROARING THROUGH THE DARKNESS--

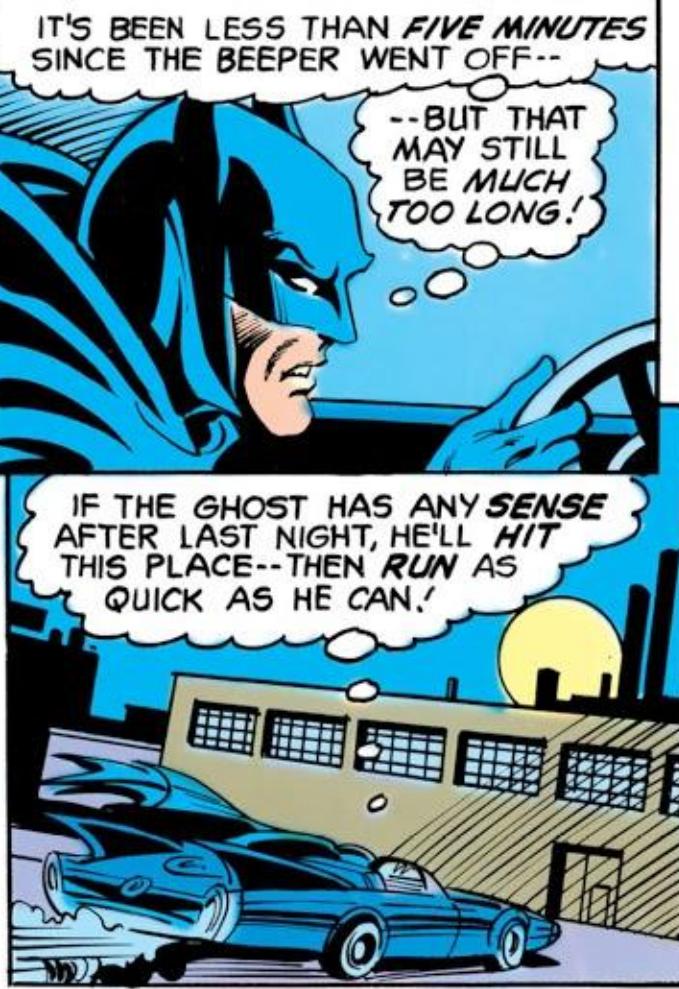
--CARRYING THE OBJECT OF THEIR DISCUSSION ON A DESPERATE QUEST!



IT'S BEEN LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES SINCE THE BEEPER WENT OFF--

--BUT THAT MAY STILL BE MUCH TOO LONG!

IF THE GHOST HAS ANY SENSE AFTER LAST NIGHT, HE'LL HIT THIS PLACE--THEN RUN AS QUICK AS HE CAN!



BETTER BE CAREFUL--THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE I'M ALREADY TOO LATE!

THERE ISN'T A SIGN OF--



--EH?

THAT LIGHT-- SPILLING OUT FROM UNDER THAT DOOR--!

MAYBE THE GENTLEMAN GHOST ISN'T AS SMART AS I THOUGHT!

WHAT--? MUFFLED BREATHING ON EITHER SIDE OF ME--?!?

THEY WERE WAITING!

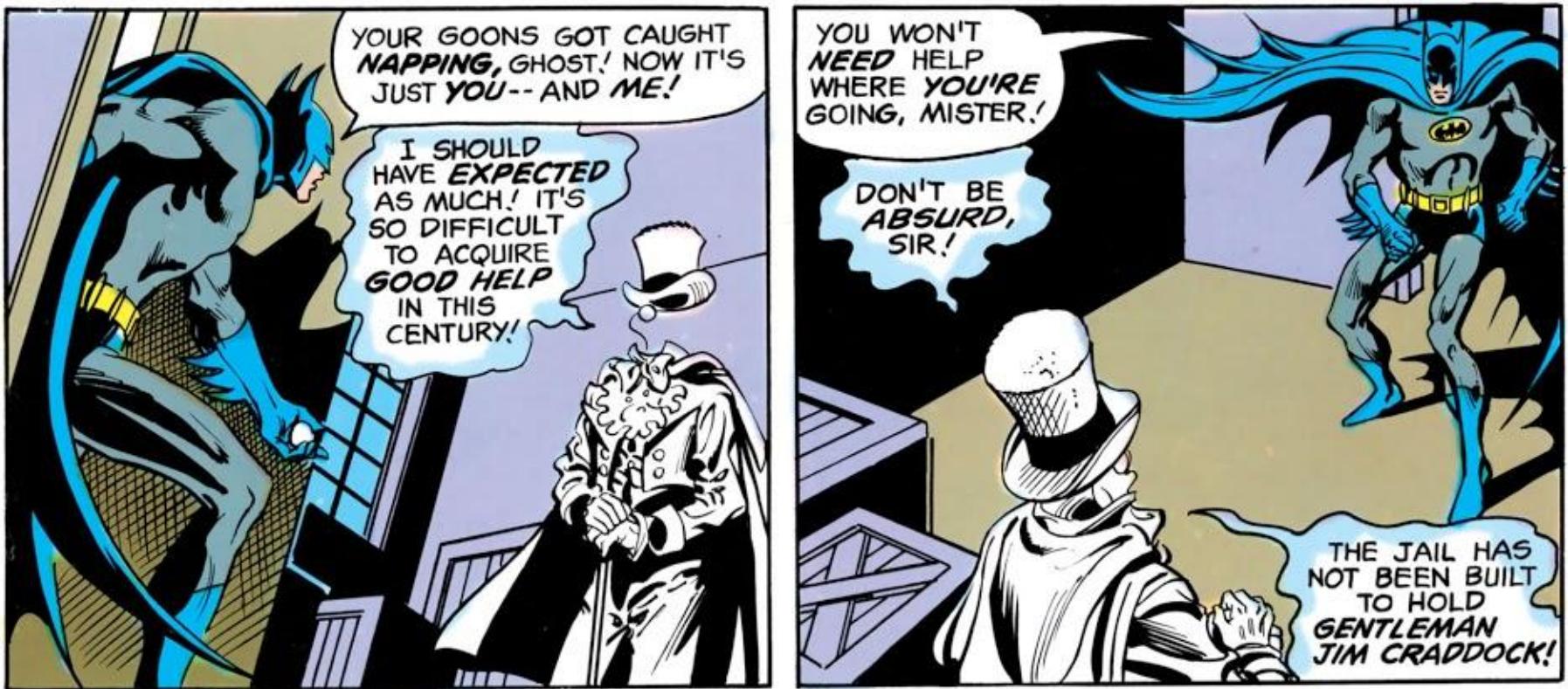
YOU SHOULD NEVER'VE COME BACK 'ERE, MATE!

WE AIN'T FORGOTTEN THAT BEATIN' YOU GAVE US LAST NIGHT!

AND YOU OBVIOUSLY HAVEN'T LEARNED ANYTHING FROM IT EITHER!

NOW WHY DON'T YOU BOTH LIE HERE WHILE I GO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BOSS!

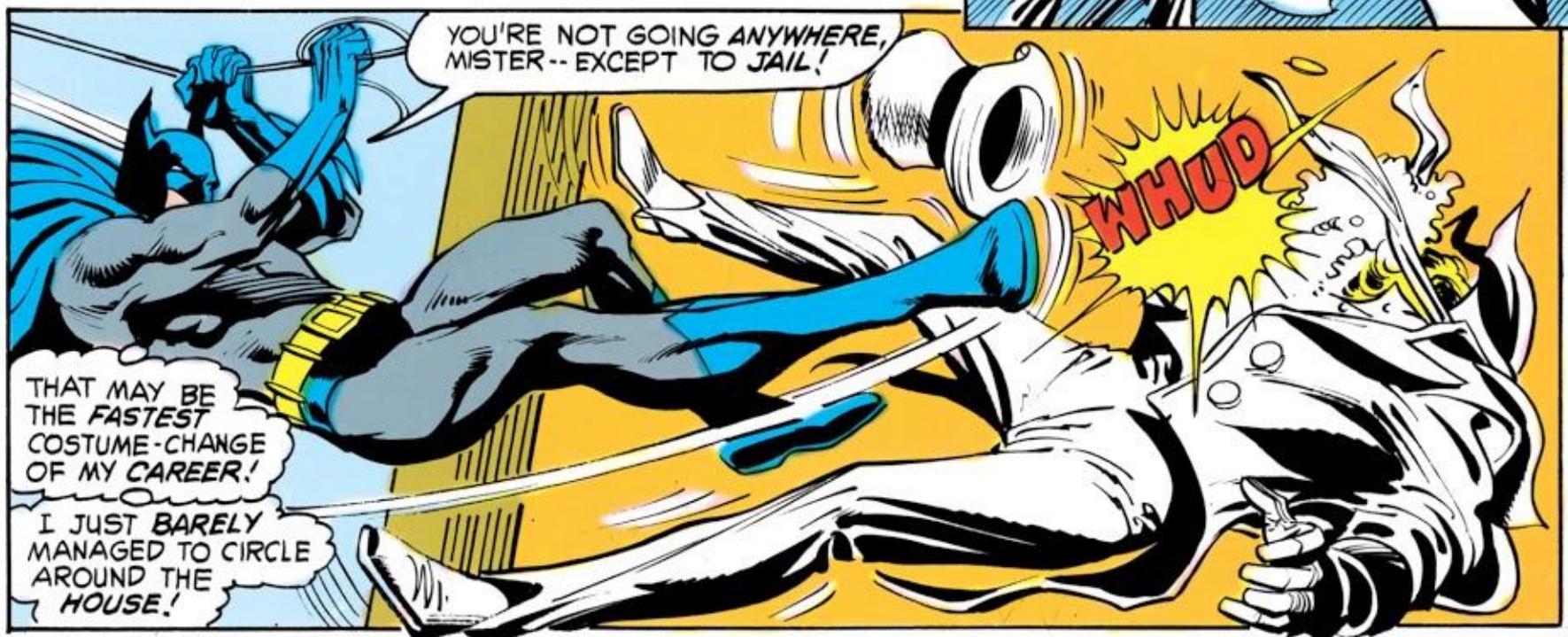


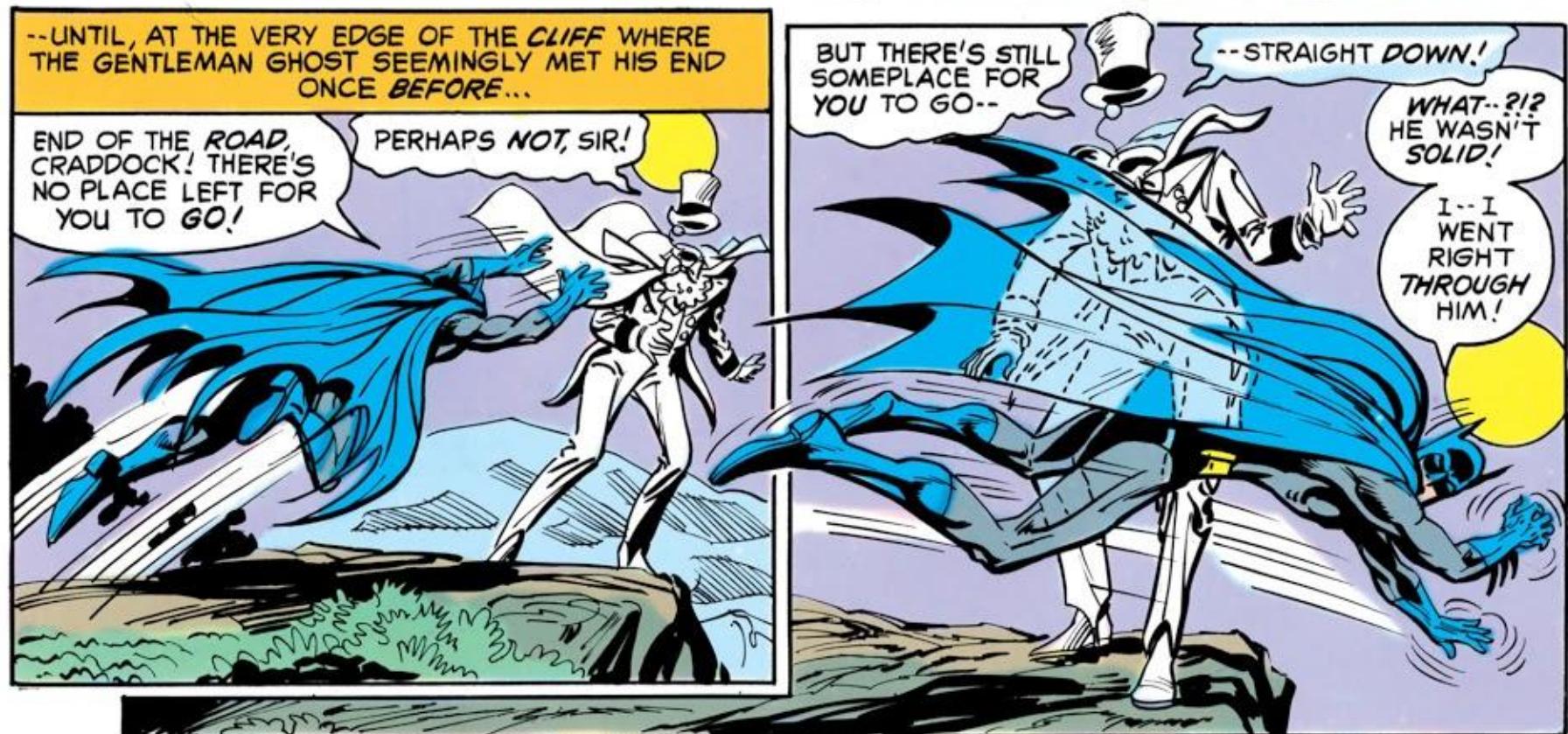
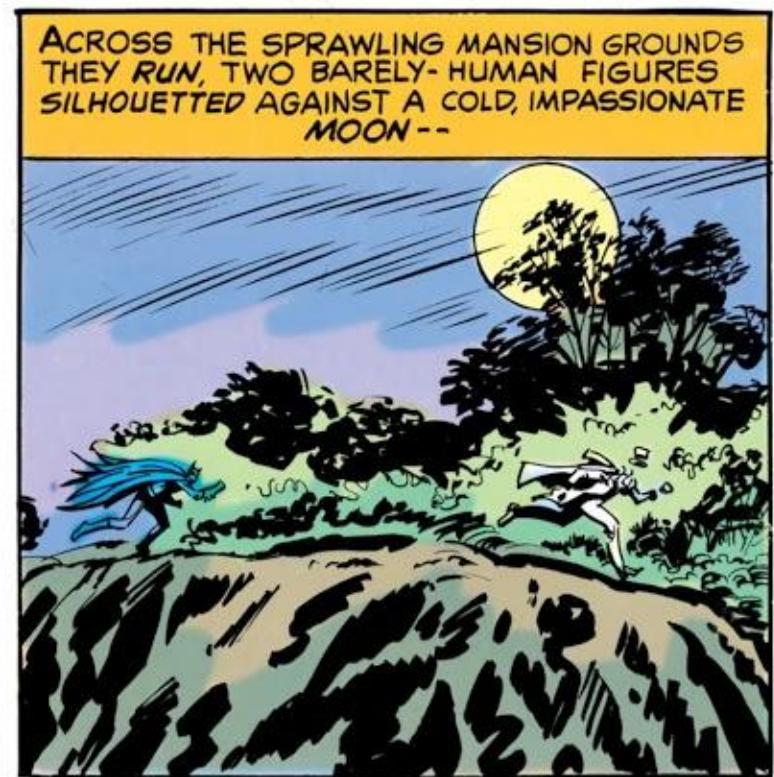


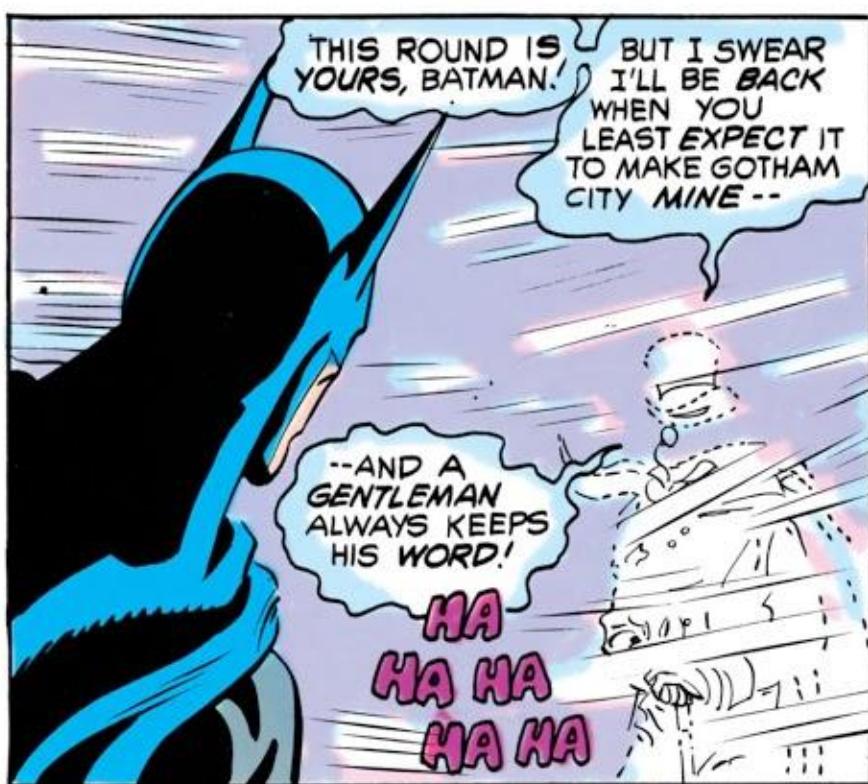
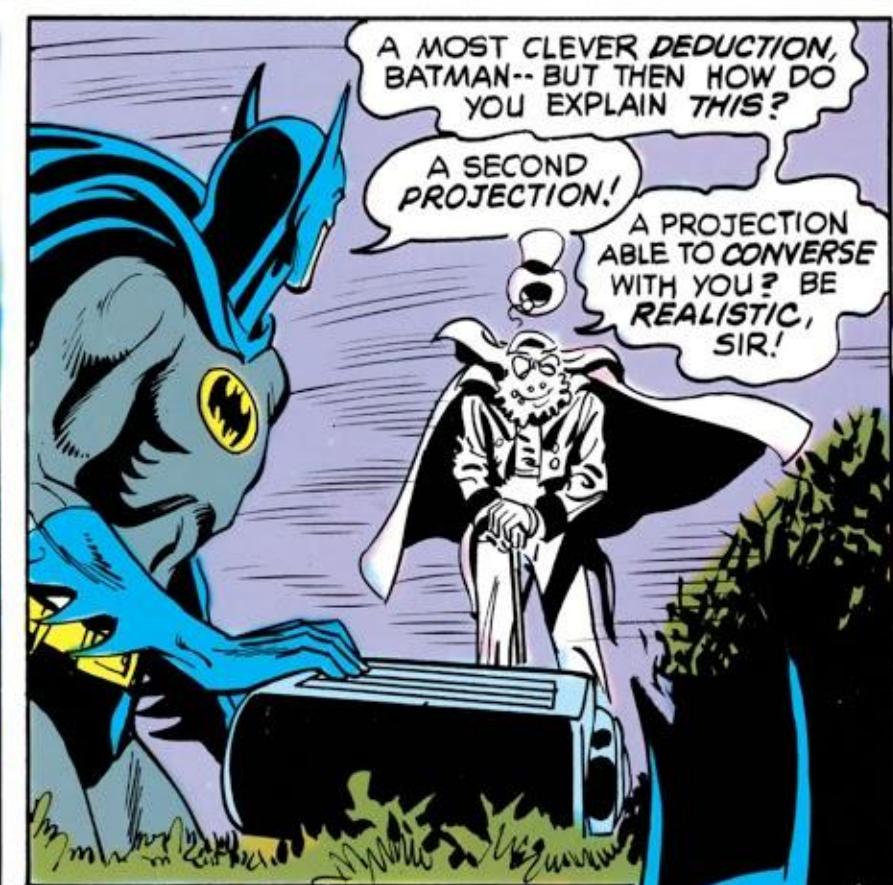
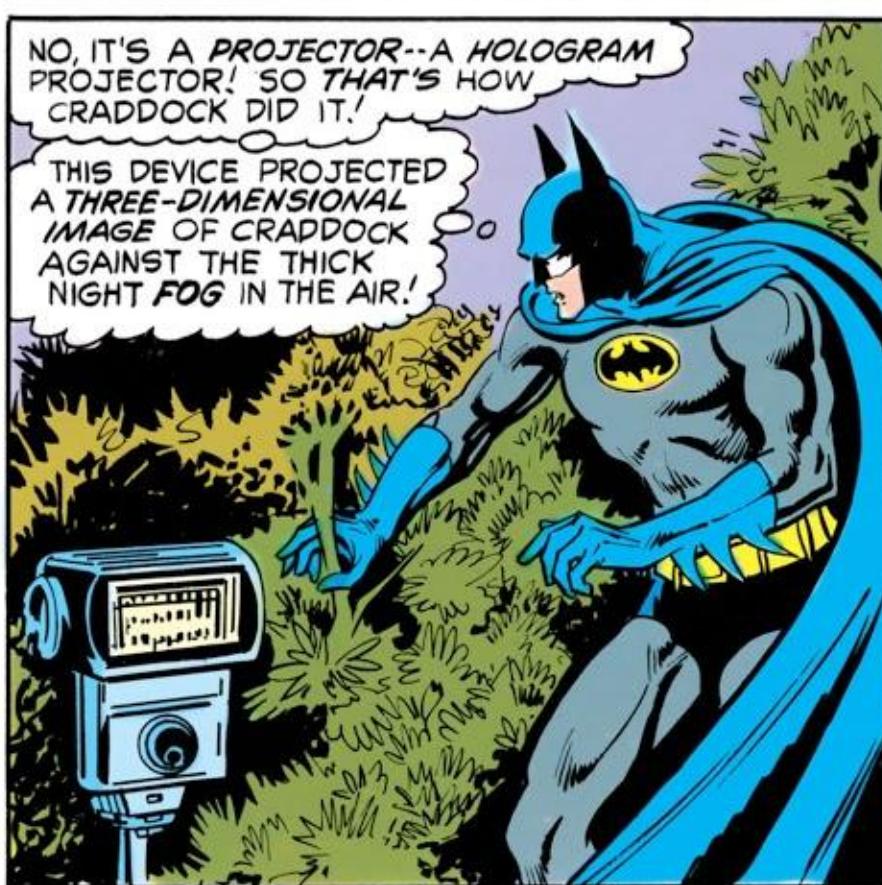
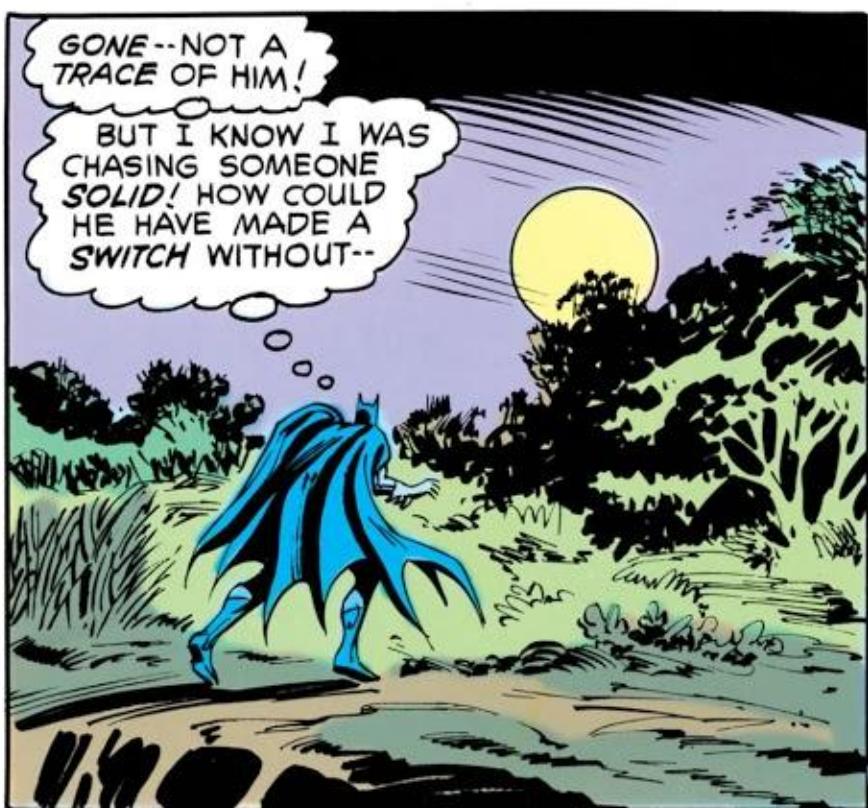












NEXT ISSUE:

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"THE CURSE OF THE INQUISITOR!"



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