



BEGINNING: **THE LAZARUS AFFAIR!**
THE DEADLIEST MENACE EVER TO THREATEN THE...

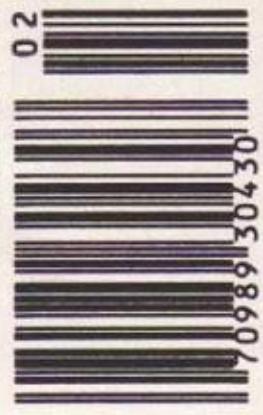
50¢
ALL NEW!
NO. 332
FEB.

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
 AUTHORITY

BATMAN



PLUS: **CATWOMAN--**
QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD
IN HER **FIRST** SOLO STORY !!



FROM THE DIARY OF AL TALMUN, 17TH CENTURY HISTORIAN:

"HE MARCHED THROUGH THE COUNTRYSIDE RAVAGING ALL HE TOUCHED. HE LEFT OUR FERTILE LANDS DYING WITH PESTILENCE. WE SENT OUR ARMIES AGAINST HIM, AND OUR ARMIES WERE SLAIN. WE BESEECHED OUR NEIGHBORS TO RESIST HIS ADVANCES. OUR NEIGHBORS DIED EVEN MORE HORRIBLY THAN WE. THERE IS NO STOPPING HIM. INDEED THERE NEVER WAS."

"THE LAZARUS AFFAIR"

THE BEGINNING...

BAT-MAN

CHAPTER
ONE:

FALLOUT!

MARY WOLFMAN
WRITER

IRV NOVICK &
FRANK McLAUGHLIN
ARTISTS

BEN ODA
LETTERER

ADRIENNE ROY
COLORIST
PAUL LEVITZ
EDITOR

BATMAN® (USPS 045-340), Vol. 42, No. 332; February, 1981. Published monthly by DC COMICS INC., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019. Second Class Postage paid at New York, N.Y. and Additional Mailing Offices. Copyright © 1980 by DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Printed in U.S.A.

This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition, nor affixed to, nor as part of any advertising literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.

Advertising Representative, Sanford Schwarz & Co., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, (212) 391-1400

SUBSCRIPTION DEPT.: DC COMICS INC., 14 Vandeventer Ave., Port Washington, N.Y. 11050. Annual subscription rate \$7.95. Outside U.S.A. \$8.95

Jenette Kahn, Publisher
Joe Orlando, Managing Editor
Paul Levitz, Editor
Jack Adler, Vice-Pres. Production

Sol Harrison, President
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer

INFINITY ISLAND
LIES ALMOST
LOST IN THE
INDIAN OCEAN.
A FORGOTTEN
HUSK OF LAND
ABANDONED
BY MAN WHEN
THE PORTUGUESE
FORSOOK
THEIR
EASTWARD
CONQUESTS...



ITS TWIN VOLCANOES NO LONGER SMOKE WITH
RUMBLING FIRE. ITS ANDESTINE PATHS ARE NOW
GROWN OVER WITH CENTURY-OLD WEEDS...

FOR ALL INTENTS, INFINITY
ISLAND IS DEAD. YET, IF
YOU LISTEN ABOVE THE
LAPPING OF OCEAN WAVES,
YOU CAN HEAR A FREN-
ZIED HEARTBEAT. AND IF
YOU LOOK INTO ITS CAVERN-
OUS CRATERS, YOU CAN SEE
A HUMAN HAND REACHING
UPWARD... GRASPING AS
IF FOR DEAR LIFE...

HIS BREATHING IS HEAVY,
LABORED, AS HE TUMBLES
OVER THE CRATER'S RIM. HE
STUMBLERS, TRIPPING PAIN-
FULLY DOWN THE VOLCANO'S
SLOPING SIDE...



FROM HIS BACKPACK HE REMOVES
AN INFLATABLE RAFT. THEN, HE
HEARS THE BREAKING OF TWIGS
FROM SOMEWHERE BEHIND HIM.

FRIGHTENED, HE SCRAMBLES ONTO
THE RAFT AS THE TIDES CHURN
AWAY FROM HIS TEN-YEAR-LONG
PRISON...



HE LAYS LOW
IN THE RAFT
AS IT PULLS
AWAY FROM
THE ISLAND...
HIS BREATHING
IS SHALLOW.
HE COUNTS
EACH SECOND
TO HIMSELF...



THEN, AT
LONG LAST,
HE REACHES
FOR THE
TINY RADIO
TRANSMITTER
HIDDEN
DEEP IN HIS
KNAPSACK...



...UNAWARE THAT HIS EVERY MOVEMENT
IS BEING CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZED...

SIR, TEMPLETON'S
ESCAPED. SHALL
WE SEND OUT A
RETRIEVER?

NOT YET,
SALTZER. GIVE
HIM HOPE. THEN
WE SHALL
CRUSH IT!



HALF A WORLD
SEPARATES THE
ICY INDIAN
OCEAN FROM
THE DANK, HUMID
BATCAVE
FAR BELOW
THE WAYNE
FOUNDATION...

YOU'RE STILL
PLANNING TO LEAVE,
ROBIN?

DOES IT
LOOK LIKE I'M
PITCHING A
TENT?

I'M SPLITTING--
AS FAST AS I
CAN!

THEN YOU AND
YOUR CROOKED
LADY FRIEND
CAN HAVE THE
BATCAVE ALL
FOR YOUR
LONESOME!

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO
END THIS WAY. YOU
CAN STAY...

YEAH?
LISTEN
THIS WAS
YOUR
DECISION.
YOU WANT
TALIA TO
STAY...

AND IF SHE
STAYS, I GO!

BATMAN, YOU MAY HAVE
MADE YOUR BED, BUT FRANKLY,
I THINK YOU SHORT-SHEETED
YOURSELF!

DON'T BOTHER
SHOWING ME THE
WAY OUT. I
KNOW IT!

MY LOVE, IT IS BETTER
THIS WAY. HE IS STILL
YOUNG, PERHAPS
EXPERIENCE WILL TEACH
HIM WHERE YOUR WORDS
HAVE FAILED.

I WISH
I WAS SURE
OF THAT,
TALIA...

ROBIN'S HEADSTRONG.
HE'S AT THE AGE WHERE
HE BELIEVES HE KNOWS
EVERYTHING.

FRANKLY, I
WORRY FOR
HIM... MORE
THAN HE COULD
GUESS.

STILL, HE IS HARDLY A CHILD. HE MUST FACE THE DISAPPOINTMENT LIFE HAS TO OFFER.

ON HIS OWN, HE'LL DO THAT-- IN SPADES.

IT SEEMS ONE OF BRUCE WAYNE'S BUSINESS RIVALS HAS BEEN UNDERBIDDING ME ON VIRTUALLY EVERY MAJOR CONTRACT.

NOT SUSPECT. I'M POSITIVE. WE PURPOSELY HELD OUR LAST TWO BIDS TO THE LOWEST FEASIBLE COSTS. ANY LOWER AND WE'D LOSE MONEY.

IT'S SERIOUSLY EATING INTO WAYNE ENTERPRISE'S FINANCIAL FUTURE.

UNDERBIDDING? YOU SUSPECT SOMETHING CRIMINAL?

IF GREGORIAN FALSTAFF UNDERBID US, HE'S TAKING A LARGE LOSS!

NOW, PARDON ME, I'VE GOT WORK!

HMM. FALSTAFF SEEMS TO HAVE MADE HIS MONEY MORE RECENTLY THAN I SUSPECTED... ONLY IN THE PAST THREE YEARS...

BANKS OUT OF SWITZERLAND. FIGURES! NO WAY TO TRACE WHERE HIS ORIGINAL FINANCING CAME FROM.

ORIGINAL FINANCING?

ACCORDING TO THE COMPUTER, IT'S OBVIOUS SOMEONE HAS BANKROLLED MR. FALSTAFF.

WHICH MAKES HIM A FRONT, BUT FOR WHOM?

WHO WANTS WAYNE ENTERPRISES TO LOSE OUR SHIRTS SO BADLY THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO SPEND MILLIONS TO DO IT?

WHO--?

HE IS TIRED AS HE RISES FROM THE COMPUTER, BUT HIS WEARINESS IS NOT SOMETHING THE BATMAN WILL GIVE INTO, NOT YET. NOT WHILE THERE IS WORK THAT MUST BE DONE...

THE GOTHAM WIND WHIPS HIS FLOWING CAPE BEHIND HIM. THE COLD WINTRY AIR REFRESHES HIM AS HE GLIDES PAST THE TOWERING CITY SPIRES ...

CAROLINE CROWN! BRUCE WAYNE'S NEW SECRETARY!

IT'S A SHAME... SHE WAS A GOOD WORKER... COULD HAVE MOVED UP IN THE COMPANY WITH VERY LITTLE EFF--EH?

BRUCE WAYNE'S BEEN GOOD TO ME... HE DOESN'T DESERVE THIS.

I'LL WORRY ABOUT FALSTAFF AFTER I'VE CLOSED DOWN HIS SOURCE OF INFORMATION!

WASN'T TOO DIFFICULT TO GUESS WHO WAS FEEDING HIM THE NUMBERS HE NEEDED TO UNDERBID US.

PLEASE, I DON'T LIKE DOING THIS. WHY CAN'T FALSTAFF LEAVE ME ALONE?

YOU WILL CONTINUE TO DO AS ORDERED.

REMEMBER, FALSTAFF HOLDS ELIZABETH!

OH, GOD! I--I'LL KEEP WORKING -- JUST DON'T HURT ELIZABETH AGAIN ... PLEASE...?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY, MISS CROWN-- NO ONE IS GOING TO BE HURT!

CHONK!

GOOD LORD!

SURPRISED, BATMAN? WERE YOU EXPECTING SOMETHING... MORE HUMAN?

PERHAPS YOU EXPECTED SOMETHING YOU COULD EASILY DEFEAT?

WELL, BATMAN--WE MUTATES ARE ANYTHING BUT DEFEATABLE!

WHUMP!
INDEED, WE CAN NOT BE STOPPED-- NOT EVEN BY YOU!



BUT SHOULD WE WISH IT, BATMAN--YOU COULD BE MOST EASILY ELIMINATED!



THE BATMAN IS SILENT AS HE MENTALLY PREPARES FOR THE MOMENT OF IMPACT...



AND, WHEN IT COMES, HE IS READY WITH A MOVE OF HIS OWN...

GAVE HIM EVERYTHING I'VE GOT-- AND HE ISN'T EVEN FAZED!



IF THE BATMAN CAN'T STOP IT, THEN IT'S HOPELESS! I--I'VE GOT TO KEEP ON WORKING FOR FALSTAFF...

...KEEP SELLING MY SOUL TO THAT CURSED FAT DEVIL!

NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SAVING ELIZABETH--NOTHING, NOT EVEN MY LIFE!



THE WOMAN YOU CAME AFTER HAS FLED, AND THAT MEANS THIS SKIRMISH IS OVER!

DO NOT INTERFERE WITH US AGAIN, DETECTIVE...

OUR NEXT ENCOUNTER MIGHT BE YOUR LAST!

BUT, THE MUTATE'S FINAL WORDS ARE LOST, FOR THE BATMAN IS ALREADY UNCONSCIOUS...

BUT, AS THE FRIGHTENED SECRETARY RACES THROUGH THE CHILLED GOTHAM NIGHT SHE REALIZES A FAINT GLIMMER OF HOPE...



AT FIRST THE MUFFLED CRY WAS DISMISSED AS THE WAILING OF A FREEZING HOUND, BUT, WHEN ROBIN HEARD THE SHOUTS FOR HELP...

WHAT IS IT WITH YOU PUNKS? YOU'RE SUCH BIG SHOTS ALL YOU CAN DO IS PREY UPON THE MEEK AND HELPLESS?

SCRAMBLE-- IT'S ROBIN!

THUNK

YOU'RE PATHETIC, MAN. IF YOU'RE LUCKY, ONE DAY YOU'RE GONNA BE OLD ENOUGH TO BE SOMEONE ELSE'S VICTIM!

WHUMP!

ONLY WHEN YOU ARE, I HOPE THERE'S NOBODY AROUND LIKE ME TO SAVE YOU!

MOVE IT, CLOWNS, IF THE KID'S HERE-- BATMAN'S GOTTA BE CLOSE!

KID? I'VE HAD ENOUGH WITH PEOPLE CALLING ME KID!

THWAMMO!

IT'S THE COPS-- RUN!!

BUT BEFORE THEY CAN MOVE...

THE POLICE HAVE THOSE PUNKS, BUT ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

UNHH--MY SIDE... THAT ANIMAL KEPT POUNDING AT ME... I--I THINK IT'S BLEEDING.

AND MOMENTS LATER, AFTER THE AMBULANCE ARRIVES...

HE'LL PULL THROUGH, BUT I WONDER HOW I'M GONNA DO?

I NEED SOMEONE WHO WILL LISTEN TO ME... AND I THINK I KNOW WHO THAT SOMEONE MIGHT BE!

THE SOOTHING GREEN CORRIDORS OF GOTHAM HOSPITAL DO LITTLE TO CALM THE GROWING ANGER IN BRUCE WAYNE'S HEART...

FRANKLY, LUCIUS,
IT'S BEGINNING
TO GET ME DOWN!

GOTHAM
GENERAL
HOSPITAL

CAROLINE WAS
PASSING DATA TO
FALSTAFF. OUR
CASH FLOW IS
DANGEROUSLY
LOW!

...AND SOMEONE
IS OUT TO SINK
WAYNE ENTERPRISES.

NOT TO MENTION
THAT I'M USELESS
TO YOU HERE IN THE
HOSPITAL.

I'M REALLY SORRY,
BRUCE. I WANT
TO HELP, BUT--

NO, LUCIUS, YOU
REST. YOU NEED
IT AFTER THAT
MUGGING.

THE POLICE
STILL HAVE NO
IDEA WHO DID
IT, EH?

THEY DON'T, BUT
I DO. LISTEN. YOUR
SON TIMMY WORKED FOR
A GANG SECRETLY
CONTROLLED BY
FALSTAFF...

FALSTAFF'S GOONS GO
AFTER CAROLINE. FALSTAFF'S
NEWSPAPER SPREADS LIES
ABOUT ME. HE'S TRYING TO
BANKRUPT ME. DO I HAVE
TO CONTINUE?

I NEVER
TOLD YOU
THIS BEFORE,
BRUCE-- BUT
FALSTAFF TRIED
HIRING ME.

OF COURSE
I TURNED HIM
DOWN. BUT...

LUCIUS, IT'S
GETTING LATE,
AND I'VE GOT
TO GET BACK
TO THE
OFFICE.

YOU TAKE
CARE OF
YOURSELF,
OKAY?

BRUCE WAYNE WAS TIRED WHEN THE NIGHT
BEGAN. NOW HE IS EXHAUSTED AS HE
RETURNS TO HIS OFFICE WHERE...

CAROLINE?

M-MR. WAYNE, IT'S
URGENT. I-I HAVE
TO SPEAK TO YOU
RIGHT AWAY.

AS HER STORY UNFOLDS, CAROLINE CROWN'S FEAR TURNS TO TEARS...

YOUR DAUGHTER? HOW LONG HAS FALSTAFF HELD HER AS HIS CAPTIVE?

ALMOST FIVE MONTHS, MR. WAYNE. YOU SEE, HE OWNS A HOSPITAL UPSTATE--

I SENT ELIZABETH THERE FOR TREATMENT AND NOW HE WON'T LET HER GO.

I-I'M SO SORRY, MR. WAYNE, BUT HE MADE ME SPY ON YOU.

THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO APOLOGIZE, CAROLINE.

NOT WHEN IT'S FALSTAFF WHO IS GOING TO FEEL SORRY.

And...

FALSTAFF, IT'S TIME THE TWO OF US MET!

M-MR. FALSTAFF, I'M SORRY, HE WOULDN'T LET ME BUZZ YOU.

OH, THAT'S ALL WELL, MISS GILROY. COME IN, BRUCE. COME IN.

COME SIT, M'BOY. YOU KNOW KARLYLE KRUGERRAND, MY ASSISTANT?

AH, THIS IS AN HISTORIC OCCASION, SON. TWO MAGNATES OF POWER SHARING ONE ROOM. HISTORIC.

CUT THE BULL, FALSTAFF. I'M NOT HERE FOR SMALL TALK!

FIRST, YOU'RE HOLDING CAROLINE CROWN'S DAUGHTER. I WANT HER RETURNED.

SECOND, YOUR UNDERHANDED BUSINESS METHODS ARE ABOUT TO BE EXPOSED. MS. CROWN HAS AGREED TO TESTIFY.

YOU'RE THROUGH, FALSTAFF!

THROUGH? MY BOY, YOU DO HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR! SON, I'VE ONLY BEGIN!

YOU SEE, I HAVE PURCHASED THE MORTGAGES ON ALL YOUR ASIAN OIL PROPERTIES.

I'M THROUGH? OH, DEAR LAD-- IT'S YOU WHO ARE THROUGH, YOU!!

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

OF COURSE, SON, IF YOU AGREE TO SELL ME THE REST OF YOUR NOW VIRTUALLY WORTHLESS ASSETS, I'LL LET YOU RUN MY COMPANIES FOR ME.

COMPANIES SUCH AS FALSTAFF ENTERPRISES! THE FALSTAFF FOUNDATION!

WELL, SPEAK UP, SON. I DON'T HEAR YOUR ANSWER!

I DON'T THINK YOU'D WANT TO HEAR WHAT I HAVE TO SAY. GOOD DAY!

THE BATCAVE IS DARK, WHICH LENDS ITSELF BEST TO THE BATMAN'S MOOD...

I CHECKED AND HE'S RIGHT. HE'S BOUGHT UP ALL MY ASIAN PROPERTY-- AND I TIED UP HALF MY OTHER ASSETS TO RAISE THE CASH FOR THOSE LAND LEASES.

BLAST THE MAN! HE'S BEATING ME!

YOU'RE TIRED, MY LOVE. YOU'VE BEEN WORKING WITHOUT SLEEP FOR TWO DAYS NOW.

YOU NEED REST BEFORE YOU PLAN YOUR REVENGE.

GO TO BED, MY LOVE, YOU NEED TO SLEEP...

TO SLEEP...
TO SLEEP...

THERE, MY LIPSTICK CONTAINED ONLY A MILD SEDATIVE, BUT ENOUGH.

TOMORROW YOU WILL DO WHAT YOU WILL DO, WHILE TONIGHT I DO WHAT MUST BE DONE.

SWEET DREAMS, MY HANDSOME DETECTIVE... TILL MORNING.

THE ROOM IS DARK, AND ONLY THE LIGHT OF A SINGLE FLUTTERING CANDLE BATHES THE CHAMBER IN A WARM LUMINESCENCE...

FRANKLY, I DIDN'T KNOW WHO ELSE I COULD TURN TO WHO COULD HELP ME THE SAME WAY YOU CAN.

YOU KNOW THE BATMAN. YOU UNDERSTAND HIM.

AND MAYBE I DON'T. IT'S JUST... WELL, I THINK TALIA IS PLAYING HIM FOR A FOOL.



WHY CAN'T HE SEE THROUGH HER?

YOU KNOW, I TRIED WARNING HIM, BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ME.

HE STILL THINKS OF ME AS A KID, YOU KNOW, THE BOY WONDER, HIS TEENAGE SIDEKICK, NOTHING MORE.

MAYBE I'M NOT AS GOOD AS HE IS, BUT I'M NOT HALF AS BAD AS HE THINKS I AM.

I NEED YOUR HELP.
PLEASE?

SELINA KYLE SAYS NOTHING. HER FACE BETRAYS NO EMOTIONS...

SHE SIMPLY THINKS FOR A LONG WHILE, AND THEN AN ENIGMATIC SMILE CROSSES HER MOST BEAUTIFUL FACE...



R

INTENSELY, THE BATMAN WATCHES THE SLENDER FIGURE DART FROM THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING TO HAIL A PASSING CAB...

"AND WHY DID SHE TRY DRUGGING ME?" TWO QUESTIONS. THE FIRST SHOULD BE ANSWERED SHORTLY...

THE SECOND WILL WAIT.

"WHERE IS TALIA GOING THIS LATE AT NIGHT?" HE MUSES.



MAYBE BRUCE WAYNE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT GRINNING GLUTTON--

--BUT THE BATMAN CAN...

...AND THE BATMAN WILL!



FALSTAFF,
WE'VE GOT
BUSINESS!

BATMAN?

KARLYLE, BE KIND
ENOUGH TO KILL OUR
GUEST, WILL YOU?

WITH
PLEASURE,
MR. FALSTAFF!



BE WARNED, MANHUNTER--
FOR TWENTY YEARS
I'VE TRAINED TO MASTER
ALL THE FIGHTING ARTS--

AND NOW--
NO MAN IS
MY EQUAL!

KARLYLE...

REMIND
ME TO BE
IMPRESSED!

POOR KARLYLE,
I BELIEVE YOU
WILL HAVE
DAMAGED
HIS FRAGILE
EGO!

BUT NOT AS PERMANENTLY
AS MY ANXIETIES SHALL
DAMAGE YOU!

HIS MIND IS KEEN AS THE ARCTIC
WIND, HIS REFLXES INSTANTANEOUS
FROM YEARS OF BATTLE.

YOU SEE, DETECTIVE--
BEFORE YOU CAN REACH ME,
YOU MUST FIRST GO THROUGH
MY GANTLET OF DEATH!

BEFORE GREGORIAN FALSTAFF COMPLETES HIS THREAT, THE BATMAN
IS ALREADY A BLUR OF ACTION...



I SENSE TREMENDOUS
TIREDNESS, BATMAN.
HOW LONG CAN
YOU CONTINUE
TO AVOID MY
DEADLY
TAIANA!

SOON YOU SHALL
COLLAPSE, AND WHEN
YOU DO--

WUMP!

MAAAARGHHH!!!

MUTATE, YOU
TALK TOO
MUCH!

THE BATMAN IS GRIM
AS HE SCOOPS THE
FIGHTING TAIANA
STICK FROM THE
FLOOR. HE KNOWS
THE MUTATE WAS
CORRECT...

BUT HE FIGHTS
HIS GROWING
EXHAUSTION.
HE WILL NOT
GIVE IN TO HIS
WEAKNESSES...

CERTAINLY NOT UNTIL ALL THAT
MUST BE DONE HAS BEEN DONE...

FIGHTING
THESE
CREATURES
IS A WASTE OF
TIME... HAVE TO
GET THROUGH
TO FALSTAFF
HIMSELF...

ONLY ME
CAN STOP HIS
MUTATES --

--AND ONLY HE
CAN GET ME CAROLINE
CROWN'S DAUGHTER!

KRANG!

SPEAKING OF FALSTAFF,
HE'S RUNNING LIKE A
SCARED CHICKEN...

...AND TALIA'S
ALREADY GONE.
WELL, I'LL WORRY
ABOUT HER LATER--

--RIGHT NOW I'VE GOT
TO GET MYSELF FREE
FROM THIS OVERSIZED
GOLEM!

HMM... WONDER
IF FALSTAFF IS
THEIR ACTUAL
MASTER. NOTHING
IN HIS RECORD
TO INDICATE ANY
SCIENCE
BACKGROUND...

... AND THESE CREATURES
WERE DEFINITELY
SCIENTIFICALLY MUTATED!

FIRST THINGS FIRST--
AND THAT MEANS
FINDING FALSTAFF!

THIS ISN'T GOING
AS PLANNED--
AND IF I SHOULD
FAIL...

... THE
MASTER
WILL SEE ME
DESTROYED!

STILL, GREGORIAN
FALSTAFF IS ALWAYS
PREPARED!

IT'S OVER,
FALSTAFF!

OVER?
MY DEAR LAD,
IT'S NEVER
OVER--

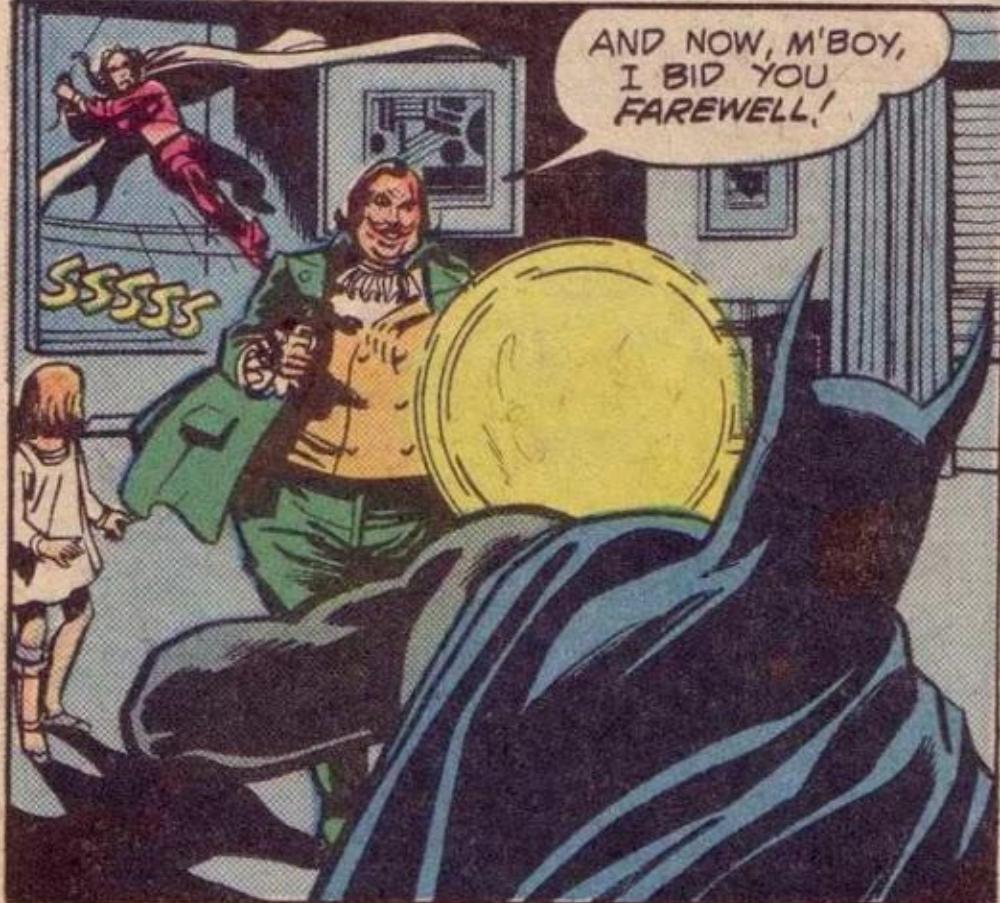
--NOT UNTIL
THE TRUMP CARD
IS PLAYED!

BY THE
WAY, M'BOY,
HAVE YOU MET
ELIZABETH
CROWN? LOVELY
GIRL, ISN'T
SHE?

BUT, ONE MOVE
FORWARD, AND SHE
WON'T BE LOVELY
MUCH LONGER.

BUT SUCH
A CLEVER
ONE, LAD.

YOU'RE SLOW,
FALSTAFF.



GREGORIAN FALSTAFF IS WIDE-EYED AS HE STUMBLES INTO THE SHIMMERING BUBBLE.

HIS FLESH CONTORTS HORRIBLY FOR AN INSTANT... AND THEN HE IS NO MORE.



THAT WEAPON HAD BEEN DESIGNED BY MY FATHER. FALSTAFF ONCE WORKED FOR HIM.



I THOUGHT IF I CAME HERE I COULD STOP HIS ATTACKS ON YOU.



OUTSIDE, THE PADDING OF RACING FEET...

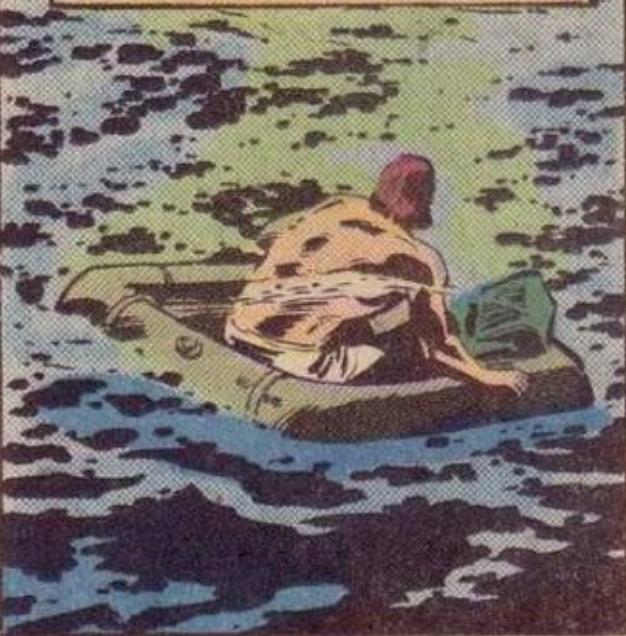
SELINA, I THINK YOU WERE RIGHT-- STARTING OUR INVESTIGATION WITH FALSTAFF IS THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES ANY --



EPilogue

HE AWAKENS FROM HIS SLEEP STILL COLD, THE ICY OCEAN WATERS WASH OVER HIM, BUT HE NO LONGER CARES...

HE IS AWAY FROM INFINITY ISLAND. THAT IS ALL THAT MATTERS.



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TEN YEARS, ARCHER TEMPLETON FEELS JOY.

HE THROWS BACK HIS DRAWN, SALLOW FACE AND LAUGHS!...

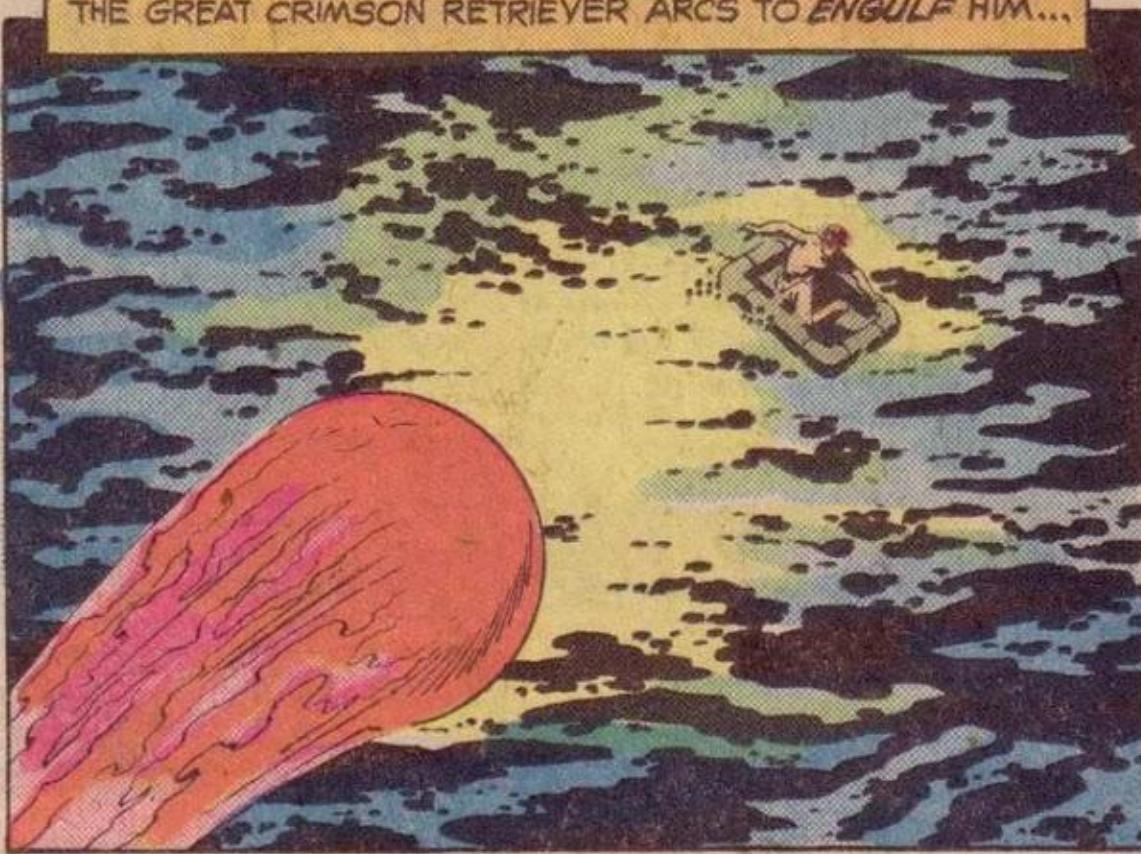
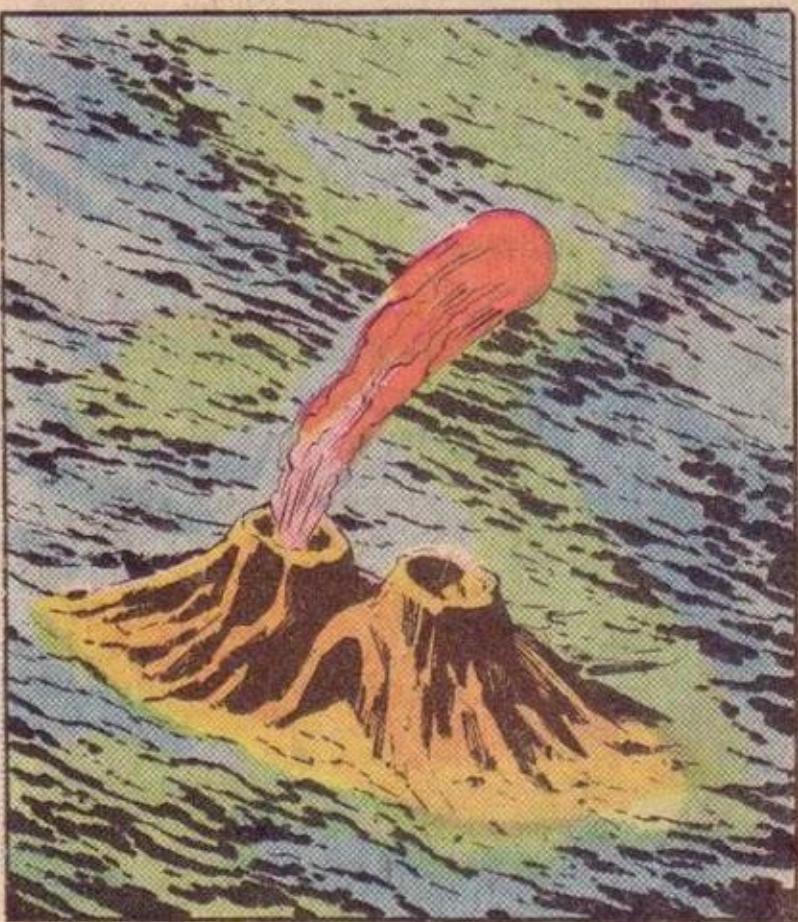


NOW, SALTZER-- NOW!

RETRIEVER ACTIVATED, SIR! PHASE RED FOR PERMANENCE!



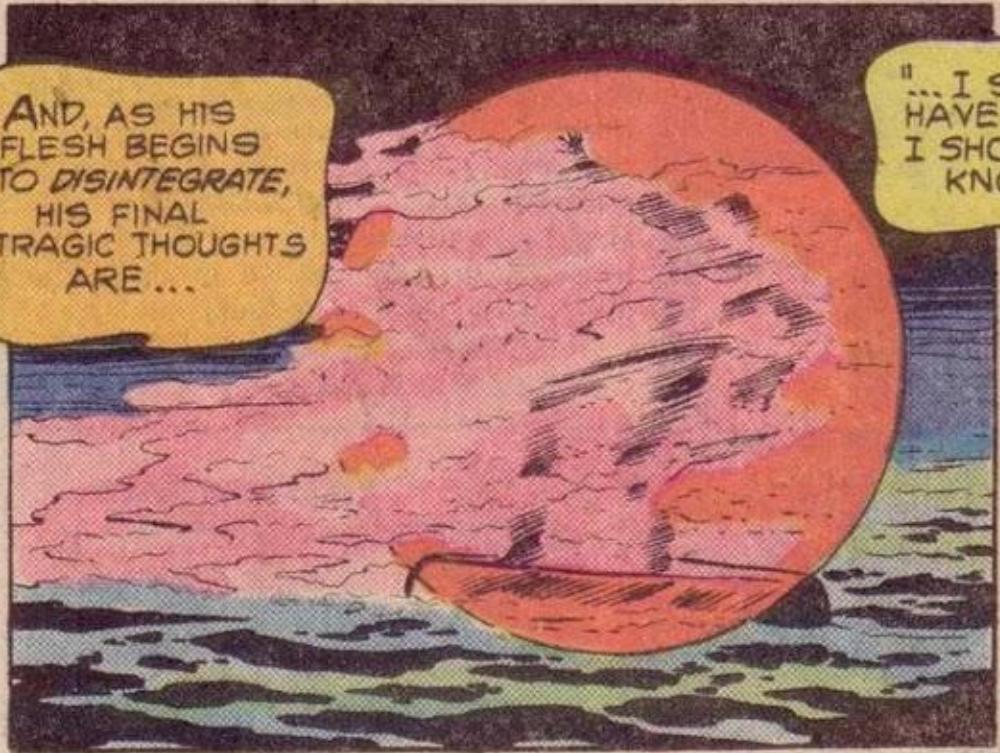
ARCHER TEMPLETON'S LAUGH CHOKES IN HIS THROAT AS THE GREAT CRIMSON RETRIEVER ARCS TO ENGULF HIM...



AND, AS HIS FLESH BEGINS TO DISINTEGRATE, HIS FINAL TRAGIC THOUGHTS ARE ...

"... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN..."

THE RETRIEVER, NOW SATISFIED, RETURNS TO INFINITY ISLAND, LEAVING BEHIND ONLY A SMALL RUBBER RAFT, AND AN EVEN SMALLER, STILL FUNCTIONING, RADIO TRANSMITTER...



BEEP... BEEEP
BEEPP... BEEP
... BEEP...

NEXT: The China syndrome...

PROLOGUE: HIS NAME IS JACK KLANNON, AND HE IS A STRONG-ARM THUG WHO NORMALLY DELIGHTS IN PUSHING AROUND CREEPS SMALLER THAN HE.

RIGHT NOW, HOWEVER, FOR PERHAPS THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CROOKED LITTLE LIFE, JACK IS THE ONE BEING PUSHED...



CAT'S PAW!

AND, TO MAKE MATTERS ALL THE WORSE, TO MAKE IT ALL THE MORE DEGRADING FOR THE BIG, TOUGH MUSCLE MAN HE IS...



...JACK KLANNON IS BEING PUSHED BY A FEMALE...



A FEMALE WHO GOES BY THE NAME OF...

CATWOMAN

UP,
KLANNON.
THE TWO
OF US HAVE
THINGS TO
DISCUSS!



C'MON,
CAT... LEMME
GO. THEY'LL
KILL ME IF
I TALK!



--TALK NOW. MY ENEMIES
CONSIDER ME QUITE ...
UNFRIENDLY.

=choke=

THE WORDS SPUTTER FORTH QUICKLY NOW, AND WHEN HE IS
DONE, JACK KLANNON FALLS TO THE GROUND A PITIBLE, BROKEN
MAN...

HE RAISES HIS HEAD
TO LOOK AT HIS
TORMENTOR, BUT
SHE IS ALREADY
GONE...

ONE MORE SHADOW AMONG ALL-TOO-MANY OTHERS.

JACK KLANNON LIMPS HOME. TONIGHT HE
WILL TAKE A BUS TO CHICAGO AND SOON
FADE INTO CRIMINAL OBSCURITY.

MEANWHILE, THE CATWOMAN
CONTINUES HER MIDNIGHT
PROWL...

KLANNON DIDN'T LIE.
THOSE CREEPS ARE
BREAKING INTO THE
ROXANNE CHEMICAL
WAREHOUSE...



HARRIS INC.
CHLORINE
ACID
BLEACH
PLASTIC

BUT WHY--?
I WISH I
KNEW...

BUT, THAT WON'T
STOP ME FROM
MOVING INTO
ACTION!

GREETINGS,
FRIENDS. AREN'T
WE OUT A TAD
LATE TONIGHT?

WHAT--YOU?
CATWOMAN? BUT
YOU'RE A CRIMINAL
LIKE US!

I WAS,
MY FRIEND.
BUT I'VE
REFORMED!

STILL, IT'S NOT YOUR CRIMINAL
ACTIVITIES THAT INTEREST ME--
I WANT INFORMATION!

THWOK!

BABE, THAT'S ONE
THING YOU AIN'T
GETTIN'!

FACT IS, ALL
YOU'RE GONNA
GET IS--
DEAD!!

PAL, ONE THING I LEARNED
AS A CRIMINAL IS DON'T
WASTE YOUR TIME
TALKING!

BLAM!

ARRGH!

I HAD ENOUGH TIME TO
PREPARE A SANDWICH
WHILE YOU WERE BLABBERING
ABOUT SHOOTING
ME!

CRIPES! THAT BROAD'S TOO GOOD!
THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' WORSE'N AN
ANGRY DAME!

BLUT LET HER
TAKE ON THE OTHERS! I'M
GETTING BACK TO KRUGERRAND
WITH THESE CHEMICALS!

HIS NAME IS JOSEPH
WALTERS, AND JOSEPH
BELIEVES HE HAS MADE
GOOD HIS ESCAPE.

JOSEPH, HOWEVER,
IS A FOOL!

SHORTLY...

MR. KRUGERRAND,
I GOT THE STUFF
YOU WANTED.

BUT THE
CATWOMAN
GOT TOMMY AND
VINCE!

CATWOMAN?
WHAT'S THAT
SHE-DEVIL
AFTER US
FOR?

I HEAR
SHE SCARED
OFF JACK
KLANNON.
NOW THIS?

THINGS ARE GETTING OUT OF HAND.
I'D BETTER CONTACT THE MASTER!

MASTER?
BUT I THOUGHT
MR. FALSTAFF
WAS DEAD!

WE ALL HAVE OUR
MASTERS... EVEN
GREGORIAN
FALSTAFF!

HE WAS
WORKING FOR
SOMEONE ELSE...
SOMEONE WITH
TRUE POWER.

SOMEONE WHO
PROMISES TO MAKE
US ALL VERY RICH
WHEN THIS IS
OVER.

JOSEPH, GROUP
TOGETHER A NEW
GANG. I'LL NEED
THEM WITHIN AN
HOUR.

YES,
SIR, MR.
KRUGERRAND

SO, FALSTAFF WAS WORKING FOR
SOMEONE ELSE. I THOUGHT
AS MUCH.

NOW, YOU, KRUGERRAND,
WILL LEAD ME TO YOUR
REAL MASTER!

I'M CERTAIN TALIA IS BEHIND THIS.
AND, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I
INTEND TO PROVE THAT TO
THE BATMAN!

OR MISTRESS,
AS I'M MORE
LIKELY TO
BELIEVE.

AND, AN HOUR LATER...

IS EVERYTHING
READY, JOSEPH?

YES, SIR.
THE UNITS HAVE
BEEN PLACED IN
THE VAN!

WHAT IN BLAZES } AND WHAT
IS GOING ON } ARE THOSE
NOW? } LARGE
CANNISTERS
THEY WERE
LOADING?

I'M GETTING
A BAD
FEELING.

WONDER IF I SHOULD GET
THE BATMAN IN ON THIS?

NO!! I DON'T NEED
TO RELY ON
ANYONE ELSE.

THE
CATWOMAN HAS
ALWAYS PROWLED
--ALONE!

SHE IS A LITHE
FIGURE DARTING
'TWEEN ALLEY
AND SHADOW,
FOLLOWING THE
WINDING COURSE
OF THE SLOW-
MOVING VAN...

THEN FINALLY SHE COMES TO A STOP AS THE VAN
PULLS TOWARD THE GOTHAM CITY NORTHERN
DIVISION POWER STATION...

NORTH
POWER S

SHE IS SILENT AND STILL AS THE VAN CRASHES
THROUGH THE HIGH-GAUGE STEEL GATE...

SHE IS UNMOVED AS THREE POWER COMPANY GUARDS ARE
GLUNNED DOWN INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS...

THEN...

VERY GOOD. OUR
VOLUNTEERS ARE
STILL ASLEEP AND
READY.

READY TO
JOIN IN THE
MASTER'S NEW
ORDER!

THE
BATMAN
MAY HAVE
DESTROYED
OUR FIRST
MUTATES...

...BUT
NOBODY
WILL
DESTROY
THESE!

MUTATES? IS THAT
WHAT IT'S ALL
ABOUT?

AND IF THIS
IS HER GANG,
WHERE IS
TALIA?

MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT...

WITH FALSTAFF DEAD, OUR GENERATORS IN THE BASEMENT WERE IMPOUNDED.

BUT, IF WE'RE TO CHANGE OUR FRIENDS HERE INTO MUTATES, THEN ONLY THIS POWER PLANT CAN HELP US.

AND GOTHAM CITY CAN GO TO BLAZES!

SUDDENLY, THE CITY IS BLANKETED IN DARKNESS AS GOTHAM'S POWER SUPPLY IS ROUTED TOWARD A PURPOSE MOST SINISTER...

ALL THE HOOKUPS ARE SET?

THEY ARE, SIR. THE ELECTRICITY WILL ACTIVATE THE CHEMICALS WE STOLE...

THESE GUYS WILL BE CHANGED LIKE THE FIRST BLINCH!



LISSEN, WITCH! YOU'RE NOT THE BATMAN!



AND THERE'S NO WAY YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE ME ON!



I FOLLOWED YOU HERE BECAUSE
I THOUGHT SOMEONE WAS BEHIND
THIS INSANITY.

BUT EVEN THOUGH
I'M WRONG, I STILL
INTEND TO STOP
YOU!

YOU CAN'T,
WITCH! YOU'RE
ALREADY
TOO LATE!

THE NEW
ORDER IS BEING
CREATED!

WITHIN MINUTES
THEY WILL BE
UNSTOPPABLE
DREADNOUGHTS!

AND WHEN MY
MUTATES ARE FULLY
FORMED, I SWEAR
I'LL HAVE THEM REND
YOU LIMB-FROM-
LIMB!

IN THAT CASE, MISTER,
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO
STOP YOU
THAT
MUCH
SOONER!

FORGET IT,
SISTER. NO
DAME'S GONNA
STOP ME!

NO DAME,
KRUGERRAND
... WOMAN--

--CATWOMAN!

KARLYLE FALLS CHOKING TO THE GROUND AS THE CAT-WOMAN HEARS A FAINT TICKING FROM BEHIND...

SHE SPINS AND LEAPS BACKWARD JUST AS...

BLAMMO!

EVERYTHING WENT UP IN FLAMES! KRUGERRAND COULDN'T CONTROL THE ENERGY OUTPUT!

FIRST FALSTAFF DEAD, NOW HIM...

AND I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY EITHER OF THEM WAS TRYING TO CREATE MONSTERS!

JUST AS I'M NOT CERTAIN WHO THEY WERE ACTUALLY WORKING FOR!

I WAS SO CERTAIN IT WAS TALIA. SO CERTAIN SHE WAS PLAYING WITH THE BATMAN... LEADING HIM INTO SOME DANGEROUS TRAP...

BUT NOW, I JUST DON'T KNOW. I'M WONDERING IF SEEING BATMAN WITH TALIA MADE ME... JEALOUS IN SOME STUPID MANNER!

BLAST! AM I REALLY THAT PETTY?

I WISH I KNEW... I JUST WISH I KNEW...

AS THE CATWOMAN MERGES WITH THE SHADOWS OF NIGHT, OTHER SHADOWS BEGIN TO SHIFT...

...AND ONE SEEMS ALMOST TO COME ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MOCKING LAUGHTER!

BAT SIGNALS

c/o DC COMICS, INC.
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

L-664

Dear People,

There is no better way to start off an excellent comic than with an excellent cover. BATMAN #327 was one and had one. I prefer Joe Kubert's Batman if it is inked by Dick Giordano but it was still an impressive cover. Nicely colored, too.

"Asylum Sinister" was a good story as well as a catchy title. The story opened very well. The splash page showing Batman as an outsider and his narration of the early part of the story were both novel ideas.

The story looked to be interesting, though not great, until Milo put Batman into the room with all of the insane people. At this point, the story became great. Having the patients aiding Batman was also a good idea. Who would believe that Milo was finally defeated by a gang of lunatics where the Batman couldn't manage it?

"Express to Nowhere" was one of the best short stories I've ever seen. It had a simple yet not overly outright mystery, characterization, snappy dialogue, and a lot of action. This is a lot more than I've come to expect from eight page stories.

All considered, BATMAN #327 was one of the best issues in many a month. Sparkling stories by Wein and Barr plus crisp, clear art by the teams of Novick & McLaughlin and Giordano & Mitchell made the issue a joy to behold. Kudos to all and a special thanks to Len on his last issue.

Jon Green
415 Shelter Rd.
Ronkonkoma, NY 11779

The cover of #327 elicited many comments, which leads us to let you know that the story was written around the cover—which had been drawn almost a year earlier. We still have another Kubert classic (and a couple of Starlin specials) awaiting similar treatment.—PL.

Dear Paul:

After watching "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" on TV, then seeing Stanley Kubrick's film "The Shining", you can well assume what I was thinking when I read BATMAN #327 "Asylum Sinister".

Although Professor Milo does not play the role as a crazed lunatic in the same flavour of Jack Nicholson, I would like to praise Len Wein in his attempt to show us how some of Batman's foes view the world, through the Batman's eyes. This was truly a unique device in writing a good story and Len's use of continuity helped the story immensely. Some writers would have stuck Two-face or the Joker in the story just for a bit of sensationalism, but Len explained why their cells were empty. Paul insists that Maxie Zeus be used as often as possible and Zeus not wanting anything to do with Milo's scheme seemed realistic. However, has everyone forgotten that Rupert Thorne is still in Arkham? A showdown between Batman and Thorne has been anticipated since Doc Phosphorus met Bats last.

The second tale "Express to Nowhere" was unfortunately predictable, but the story itself was good because of the dialogue between Robin and Batman. The Giordano-Mitchell art was fantastic.

Even though Len is leaving, I am happy his buddy Marv Wolfman will be taking over. Marv's old mystery tales in Batman (like the Dr. Tzin-Tzin tale reprinted in Detective 477) would fit in the new style because they featured a villain and

lots of action too. Despite what the other readers stated in the letter-col I wouldn't mind seeing a return bout with a more realistic Capt. Boomerang. Dr. Polaris and the Hellgrammite are fine villains that we don't see enough of, too. Now Paul, back in your editorial in BATMAN #311, you stated that we would see exciting tales featuring villains every time out, and we have. But you also said we could expect the return of Tweedledum and Tweedledee and I'm still waiting, but not so patiently, also for the cross-over you mentioned from one of your magazines to another. Now the past 2 years have been very enjoyable for me and I'm looking forward to my next years as a Batman reader, but get that Tweedledum and 'dee story done in a hurry, I've only been waiting for 18 months.

Dave Lauder

764 Mona Drive
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7M 5C2

Plans for the Tweedle-brothers departed with Len, we're afraid, since he's the only one who dared think he could pull off the story. And while we're answering questions, Andrew Laubacher of Albion, NY, wrote in to ask what happened to the promised Batman novel, and we're proud to announce that the completed manuscript of "Joker in the Pack" by Gerry Conway is now on our desk.—PL.

Dear Paul:

"Asylum Sinister" by Len Wein was an extremely well-crafted story; "Express to Nowhere" by Mike Barr was an outstanding reminder of how truly terrific the Batman-Robin team can be. Put them all together and they spell...well, it ain't "Mother", but it sure is excellence. BATMAN #327 was just that.

The first tale was set in Arkham Asylum, and inmate Batman had full opportunity to show his stuff. His facile escape from a strait-jacket and his "sub-tongue" picklock smuggling only serve to demonstrate to us that this man is a modern-day Houdini as well as Sherlock Holmes. Yet the man is always a fighter! Only Batman could fight a group of henchmen in a straight-jacket...and win!

The Batman-Robin story was highly action-packed, but then again, that is the key word for such yarns with this team. Barr is a talented newcomer who should be given more important assignments immediately. The Giordano/Mitchell art didn't hurt, either.

One suggestion: how about using all 25 pages for a Batman-Robin full-length story?

Sincerely,

Mark Lagasse
R.D. #1 Box 116

* Hoosick Falls, New York 12090

It's hard to arrange artistic schedules to permit 25 pagers, so we've compromised for the duration of our "Lazarus Affair" saga by interweaving back-ups with leads to tell one story (using one artist some issues, two others). After that we plan a series of Batman stories in front with Robin solos in the back, and team-ups as often as desirable.—PL.

NEXT MONTH: The long road continues to stretch forward as Batman goes east for "The China Syndrome", while Robin and Catwoman are "Shanghaied" (in a special story guest starring King Farraday!). Be here—Paul Levitz.

NOW ON SALE! DC COMICS PRESENTS #30 (Superman and Black Canary) ** FLASH #294 (with Firestorm by Jim Starlin) ** JUSTICE LEAGUE #187 ** SUPERMAN #356 ** WONDER WOMAN #276 (featuring the Huntress and Power Girl) ** TEEN TITANS #4 ** SECRETS OF THE LEGION #2 ** and WORLD'S FINEST #267.

COMING ATTRACTIONS! SUPERBOY #14 ** LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #272 (with a special bonus comic prevue of DIAL H FOR HERO by Marv Wolfman and Carmine Infantino) ** SUPER FRIENDS #41 ** GREEN LANTERN #137 ** WARLORD #42 (now featuring Omac) ** ACTION #516 ** MYSTERY IN SPACE #116 ** BRAVE & BOLD #171 (Batman and Scaliphunter in a wild tale by Gerry Conway and Garcia Lopez) ** and DETECTIVE #499 (Blockbuster and Batman trapped together—and a Batgirl solo, too!)