



BATMAN

25¢  
NO. 265  
JULY  
30430

# BATMAN

APPROVED  
BY THE  
COMICS CODE  
C.C.  
AUTHORITY

YES,  
BATMAN--  
I'M A  
MURDERER!  
AND HERE  
COMES MY  
WEAPON!

KILL  
HIM,  
BRUTUS!

"BATMAN'S  
GREATEST  
FAILURE!"

**I**N HIS LIFELONG CRUSADE AGAINST VILLAINY, THE BATMAN HAS MATCHED WITS WITH EASILY A THOUSAND CRIMINALS, AND ONE BY ONE HE HAS DEFEATED THEM ALL! BUT NOW A MANIAC KILLER IS LOOSE IN GOTHAM CITY AND EVEN THE COWLED CRUSADER SEEMS HELPLESS TO STOP HIM! AS THE TOLL OF GRISLY CARNAGE MOUNTS, A SHOCKED AND BEWILDERED CITY IS FORCED TO CONFRONT...

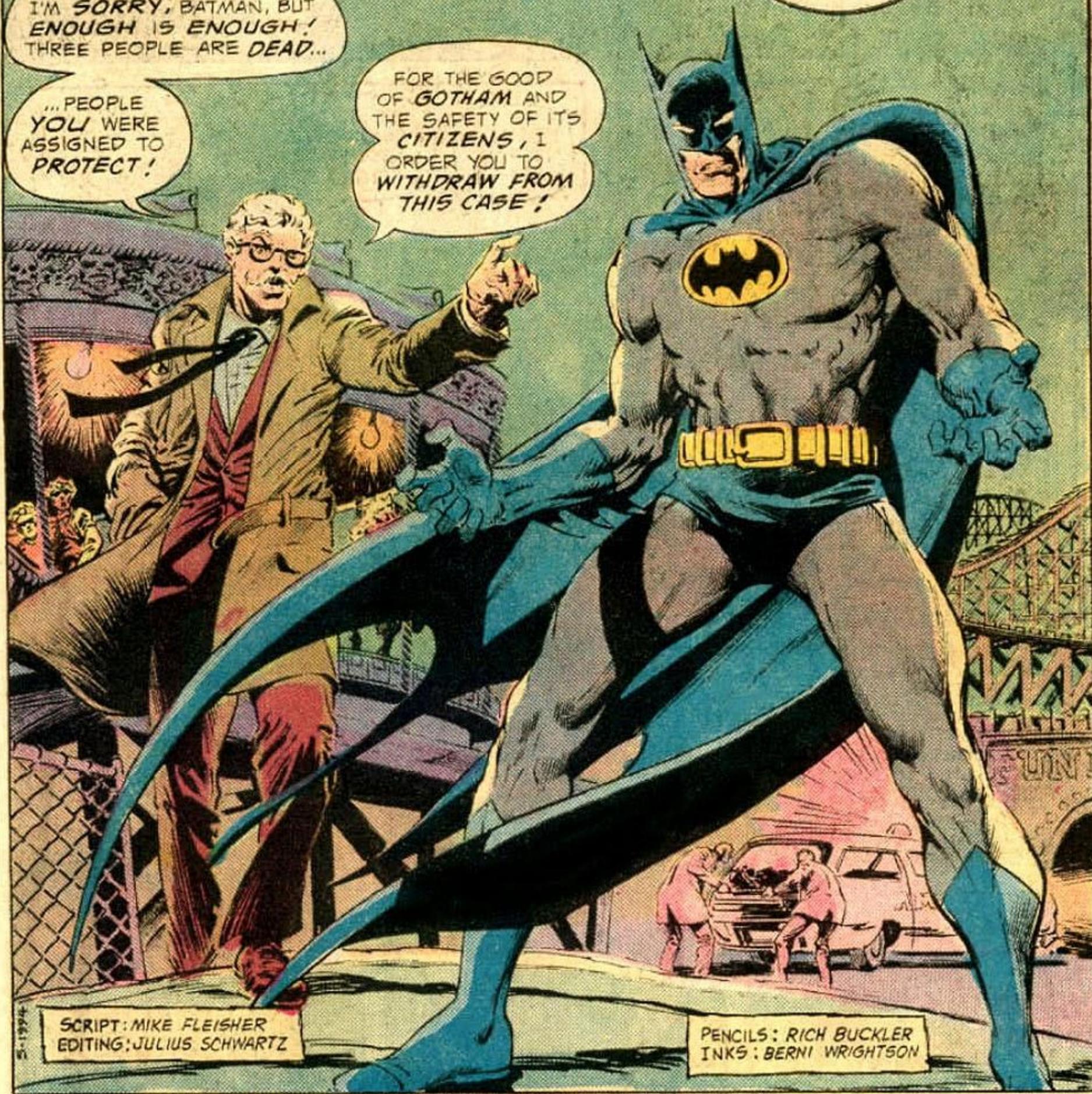
# "BATMAN'S GREATEST FAILURE!"



I'M SORRY, BATMAN, BUT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!  
THREE PEOPLE ARE DEAD...

...PEOPLE  
YOU WERE  
ASSIGNED TO  
PROTECT!

FOR THE GOOD  
OF GOTHAM AND  
THE SAFETY OF ITS  
CITIZENS, I  
ORDER YOU TO  
WITHDRAW FROM  
THIS CASE!



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INKS: BERNI WRIGHTSON

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WHILE GOTHAM SLEEPS,  
A FILM CREW IS HARD AT  
WORK "SHOOTING" A MOVIE  
STARRING ACTOR ROBERT  
TRENTON AS DETECTIVE  
HARRY ZOE...

PLEASE, BOB! YOU KNOW  
HOW I FEEL ABOUT ACTORS  
DOING THEIR OWN  
STUNTS! IT'S TOO  
DANGEROUS!

AND YOU  
KNOW HOW  
I FEEL...

...ABOUT SOME  
STUPID STUNTMAN  
BECOMING THE  
CENTER OF ATTENTION  
IN MY  
PICTURES!

BRUTUS!  
LIGHT!

BESIDES,  
IT'S IN MY--

YES, YES... I  
KNOW ALL  
ABOUT YOUR  
CONTRACT!

SNAP!

ALL RIGHT,  
THEN! IN THIS  
SCENE, SYNDICATE  
HOODLUMS HAVE  
BOOBY-TRAPPED  
YOUR CAR!

LISTEN, BOB! THE WAY OUR  
BOMB GADGET WORKS, A RED  
LIGHT WILL GO ON WHEN YOU  
HIT THE IGNITION!

THAT MEANS YOU'VE GOT  
EXACTLY TWELVE SECONDS  
TO GET OUT OF THAT CAR!  
GOT THAT?

OF COURSE!  
SO LET'S  
GET ON  
WITH IT!

WELL, MISTER WAYNE... THINK  
YOU'RE GETTING YOUR MONEY'S  
WORTH?

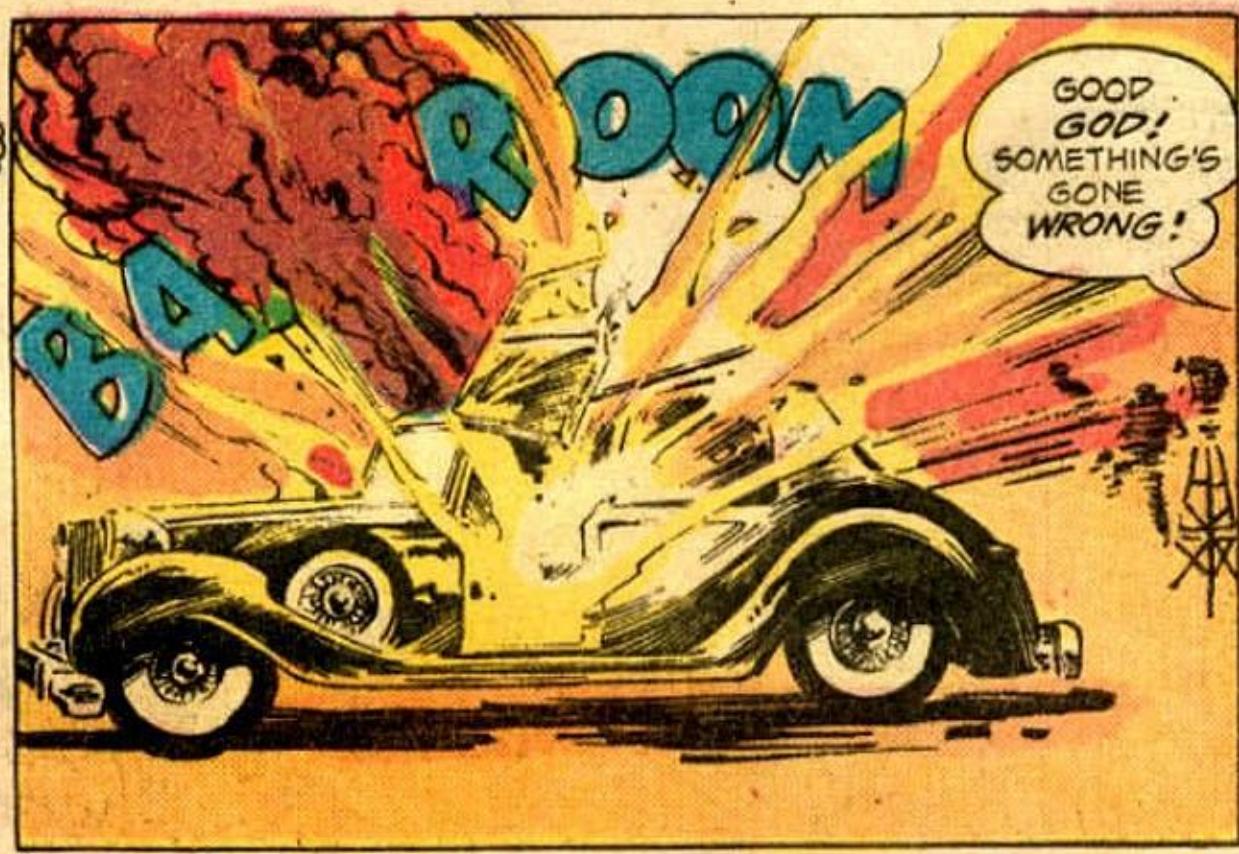
I SURE AM,  
MR. LARABEE! AND  
I'M MIGHTY GLAD  
I DECIDED TO  
BACK THIS  
PICTURE!

GIVES ME AN  
EXCUSE TO MINGLE  
WITH FAMOUS SHOW-  
PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF...

...AND HELPS ME FULFILL  
A LONGTIME GOAL OF MINE  
...ATTRACTING MORE FILM-  
MAKERS TO GOTHAM!

GLAD TO  
HEAR  
IT!

EXCUSE  
ME NOW!  
I'VE GOT  
TO GET  
BACK!



BRUTUS, TRENTON'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, REACTS INSTANTLY...



SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF THE SHADOWS...

LUCKY THING  
BRUCE WAYNE  
WAS NEARBY SO  
THE BATMAN  
COULD LEND  
A HAND!

WHAT LUCK! HE  
CAN GET TRENTON  
OUT IF ANYONE  
CAN!

THE  
BATMAN!

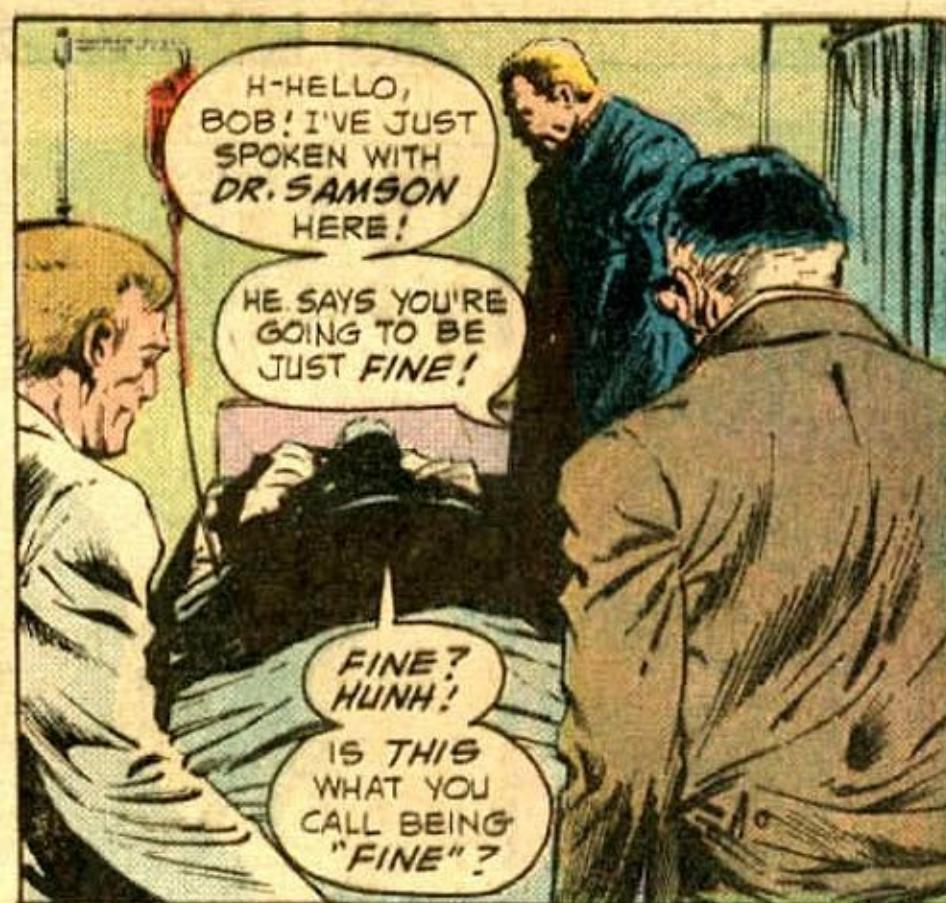
IT'S TOO  
LATE!  
HE'LL BE  
KILLED,  
TOO, IF HE  
TRIES IT!

BY SWINGING  
DOWN HARD ENOUGH  
AND FAST ENOUGH...

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

4

SEVERAL AGONIZING DAYS AFTER THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT...



YOU PROBABLY ARRANGED THAT SO-CALL ACCIDENT YOURSELF, TO GET RID OF ME!

BOB, PLEASE! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING!

GET OUT OF HERE, LARABEE! GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!

MOMENTS LATER...

HE THINKS HE'S RID OF ME NOW THAT I'M NOTHING BUT A HELPLESS CRIPPLE...

...BUT WE'LL SHOW HIM... WON'T WE, BRUTUS?

YES, MR. TRENTON...

AND SO, LATE THAT NIGHT...

YOU AWAKE, MR. TRENTON?

...IT'S TIME FOR YOUR... UMMMPH!!

GOOD WORK, BRUTUS!

THE NURSE IS OUT COLD! NOW GET ME AWAY FROM HERE... QUICKLY...

YES, MR. TRENTON ...

DOWN...  
...THE...  
...CORRIDOR...

HEY! WHAT'RE YOU UP TO, MR. TRENTON?

YOU AND YOUR FRIEND CAN'T GO PROWLING AROUND THE HALLS AT THIS HOUR!

BRUTUS! STOP HIM!

YES, MR. TRENTON!

CRUMMP!

UNNNNN

HURRY! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

YES, MR. TRENTON!

A SHORT WHILE LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF POLICE COMMISSIONER GORDON...

ROBERT TRENTON... WHAAAT?!

DON'T WORRY, DOCTOR!

WE'LL GET RIGHT ON IT!

SGT. HAINER! ACTIVATE THE BAT-SIGNAL! I WANT TO SEE THE BATMAN IMMEDIATELY...

...IF...

...NOT...

WILL DO, COMMISSIONER!

...SOONER!

UH... SERGEANT? YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT THE BAT-SIGNAL!

YOU! HOW IN BLAZES DID YOU GET IN HERE?

I DELIBERATELY HAD A PADLOCK PUT ON THAT WINDOW SO YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SPOOK ME LIKE THAT ANY MORE!

YOU MEAN THIS?

I DON'T THINK WE'LL BE NEEDING IT!

WHATEVER YOU SAY, COMMISSIONER!

AND IF YOU  
WANTED TO  
TELL ME THAT  
ROBERT TRENTON  
AND HIS MAN-  
MOUNTAIN  
SERVANT BROKE  
OUT OF THE  
HOSPITAL...

...LEAVING A NOTE  
THREATENING THE LIFE  
OF HUGH LARABEE, DON'T  
BOther! I ALREADY  
KNOW IT!

AND... YES, I'LL  
PROTECT LARABEE  
FOR YOU UNTIL  
TRENTON'S  
APPREHENDED!

HOW COULD YOU  
POSSIBLY KNOW  
THAT?

I JUST FOUND  
OUT MYSELF...  
ONLY MINUTES  
AGO!

MAYBE I BUGGED  
YOUR PHONE!

MY  
PHONE?!

YOU  
WOULDN'T  
DARE!

I'M THE  
POLICE  
COMMISSIONER!  
IT'S--

--IT'S--OH,  
BLAST!

HE'S  
GONE  
AGAIN!

THE SHOOTING ON THE  
HARRY ZOE FILM  
RESUMES WITH A  
REPLACEMENT ACTOR  
IN THE TITLE ROLE...

HARD TO  
SAY, MR.  
LARABEE--

--BUT UNTIL WE  
LOCATE TRENTON  
AND THAT  
BODYGUARD  
OF HIS...

I APPRECIATE  
YOUR OFFERING  
TO PROTECT  
ME, BATMAN--

--BUT DO YOU  
REALLY THINK I'M  
IN DANGER?

...I THINK  
I OUGHT TO  
STAY AS  
CLOSE  
TO YOU AS  
I CAN!

WHATEVER  
YOU SAY,  
BATMAN!

ALL  
RIGHT,  
PEOPLE!

BACK TO  
WORK!



IN THIS  
SCENE, DOUG,  
YOU'VE PURSUED  
THE SYNDICATE  
HIT-MAN--

-- TO THIS  
DESERTED  
AMUSEMENT  
PARK...

--RUN ONTO THE  
CAROUSEL, LIKE THIS...

...NOW  
WATCH  
ME...

LOOK WARILY BACK  
OVER YOUR **SHOULDER**  
TO SEE IF ANYONE HAS  
BEEN FOLLOWING YOU...

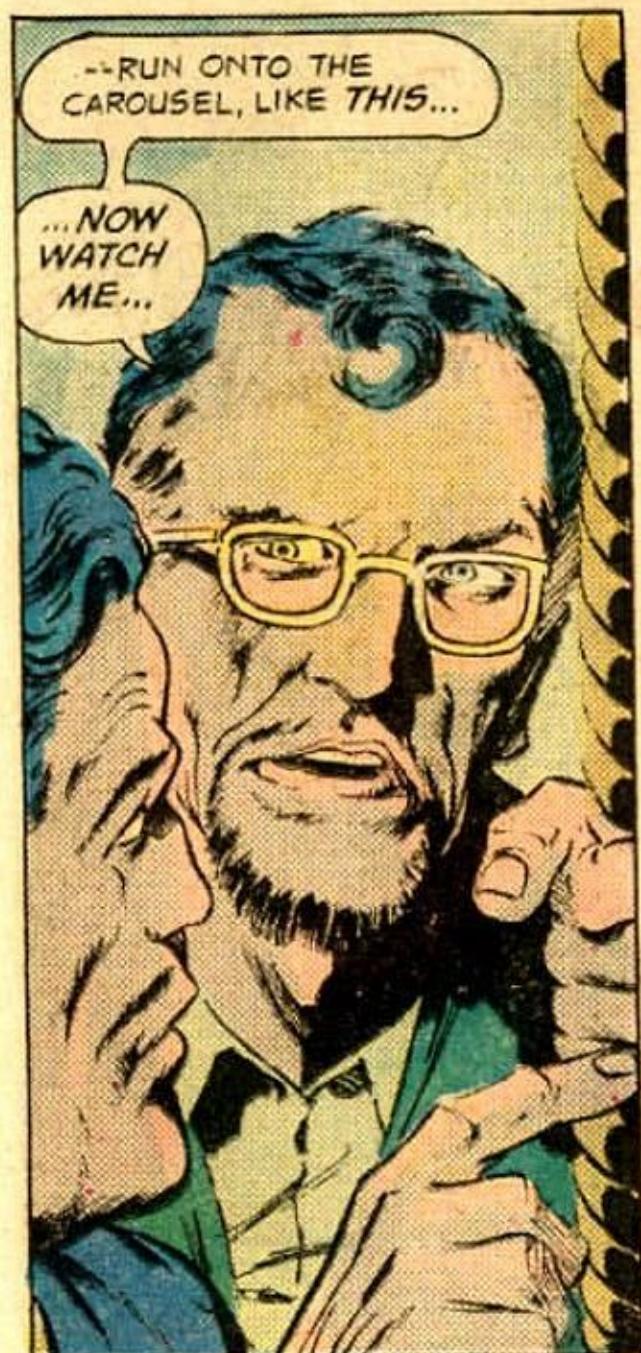
ONE  
POLE  
WITH YOUR  
RIGHT  
HAND...

-- WEAVE  
YOUR WAY  
IN AND OUT  
AMONG THE  
POLES, LIKE  
THIS!

...THE NEXT  
WITH YOUR  
LEFT--

ZAAAAPP!  
GHAGGGH!

:GASP!: L-LOOK!



QUICK!  
EVERYONE  
BACK FROM  
THAT  
CAROUSEL!

CALL A  
DOCTOR!

IT'S TOO  
LATE  
FOR THAT!  
HE'S DEAD!

OH,  
NO!

PRESENTLY...

TAKE A LOOK  
AT THIS,  
COMMISSIONER!

--TO  
ELECTROCUTE  
LARABEE  
AS SOON  
AS HE  
TOUCHED  
IT!

--JUST WHAT THE  
WORLD HAS COME TO  
EXPECT FROM THE  
WORLD'S GREATEST  
DETECTIVE!

LOOK AT THE  
SCRATCH  
MARKS ON THIS  
RUNG! A MOVIE  
CAMERA WAS  
MOUNTED HERE--

SOMEBODY  
WIRED  
THAT POLE--

BRILLIANT  
DEDUCTION,  
BATMAN--

COME  
OVER  
HERE,  
COMMIS-  
SIONER!

I WANT TO  
SHOW YOU  
SOMETHING!

WHAT'S  
WITH YOU,  
BATMAN--?

A MAN HAS BEEN MURDERED TONIGHT... A MAN YOU WERE ASSIGNED TO PROTECT!

DON'T WORRY, COMMISSIONER! I'LL FIND TRENTON AND HIS FRIEND AND BRING THEM IN! IT MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME...

FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR REPUTATION, IT BETTER NOT TAKE TOO MUCH TIME! GOOD NIGHT, BATMAN!

...TINY CLUMPS OF GRAYISH CLAY INSIDE BRUTUS' GIGANTIC FOOTPRINTS!

WHERE HAVE I SEEN THEM BEFORE...?

LATER...

THE CLAY-CLUE HELPS A LITTLE... BUT NOT ENOUGH!

RIVER HARBOR

I'LL JUST HAVE TO HOPE SOMETHING HAPPENS SOON TO GIVE ME MORE TO GO ON!

MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF GOTHAM...

ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL, BRUTUS? SEE HOW TERRIFIED HE IS...

YES, MR. TRENTON!

...HOW HIS EYES BULGE IN TERROR AT THE SUDDEN, AWFUL REALIZATION HE IS ABOUT TO DIE!

WHAT A BRILLIANT IDEA OF MINE TO HAVE YOU FILM THE MURDER SO I COULD WATCH LARABEE DIE WITH MY OWN EYES!

YES, MR. TRENTON.

NOW SHUT IT OFF, BRUTUS! WE HAVE A LONG NIGHT AHEAD OF US...

...PLANNING MORE KILLINGS AS BRILLIANTLY CINEMATIC AS THE FIRST!

THEY ALL HATED ME... NOT JUST LARABEE! VIEWING THAT FILM HAS MADE ME REALIZE MURDER CAN BE INSPIRATIONAL... EVEN ARTISTIC!

BRUTUS,  
YOU WILL  
KILL THEM ALL  
FOR ME!

YES,  
MISTER  
TRENTON!

AND SO, THE FOLLOWING MORNING...

YOU HAVE ANOTHER HOT FLASH FOR ME, COMMISSIONER?

A SIZZLER-- THIS NOTE FROM THAT LUNATIC ACTOR!

I HAVE MURDERED LARABEE AND INTEND TO KILL THE ENTIRE CAST OF THE FILM... IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE!

ROBERT TRENTON

I'M COUNTING ON YOU, BATMAN-- TO STOP THAT MADMAN FROM KILLING ANYONE ELSE!

LATER THAT AFTERNOON, AS FILMING RESUMES AT A DEMOLITION SITE...

LOOK, I KNOW YOU'RE ALL JITTERY AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. LARABEE, BUT WE CAN'T JUNK THE FILM!

BESIDES, THE BATMAN HAS GUARANTEED US HIS PERSONAL PROTECTION--

--UNTIL IT'S FINISHED!

IN THIS SCENE, MITZI, YOU'RE STANDING LOOKOUT WHILE YOUR GANGSTER BOYFRIEND ROBS THE PAYROLL OFFICE INSIDE!

WHEN HE COMES RACING OUT WITH THE MONEY, YOU DO YOUR DIALOGUE BIT!

ALL RIGHT, NOW--

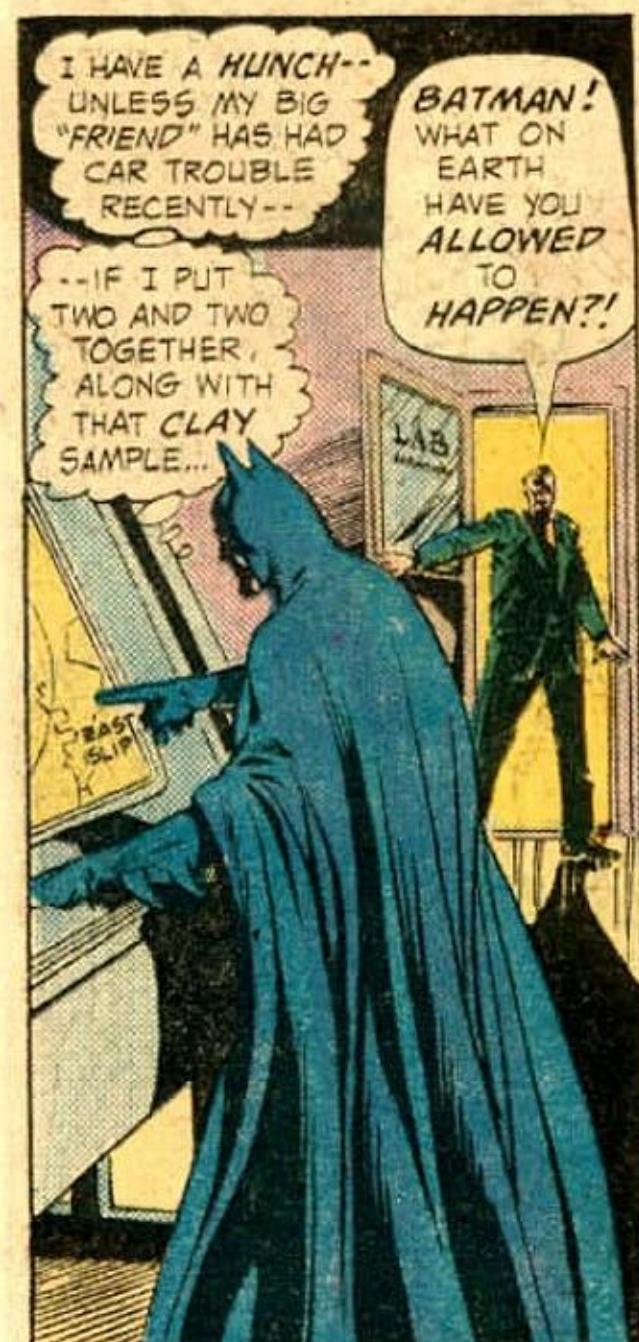
ROLL IT!!

BLAM!

BLAM!







THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, FILMING RESUMES ONCE AGAIN, THIS TIME AT THE GOTHAM RAILROAD YARD...

IN THIS SEQUENCE, DOUG...

...JACQUELINE HANDS YOU THAT FANCY HAT-BOX CONTAINING THE COUNTERFEIT PLATES!



BATMAN!  
THIS IS THE  
LAST STRAW!

YOU'VE  
ALLOWED  
THREE  
PEOPLE TO BE  
BRUTALLY  
MURDERED!

I NEVER  
THOUGHT I'D  
LIVE TO SEE  
THIS DAY,  
BUT-- I'M  
ORDERING  
YOU OFF  
THIS CASE!  
AS OF NOW!

--AND  
TRUST  
ME! I'LL  
BE IN  
TOUCH!

LISTEN,  
COMMISSIONER!  
FORGET  
ABOUT THE  
VICTIMS--

SHORTLY, AT AN AUTOMOBILE  
GRAVEYARD...

YOU DID  
AS I TOLD,  
BRUTUS?

YES, MR.  
TRENTON!

HUH?  
TH-- THE  
BATMAN!

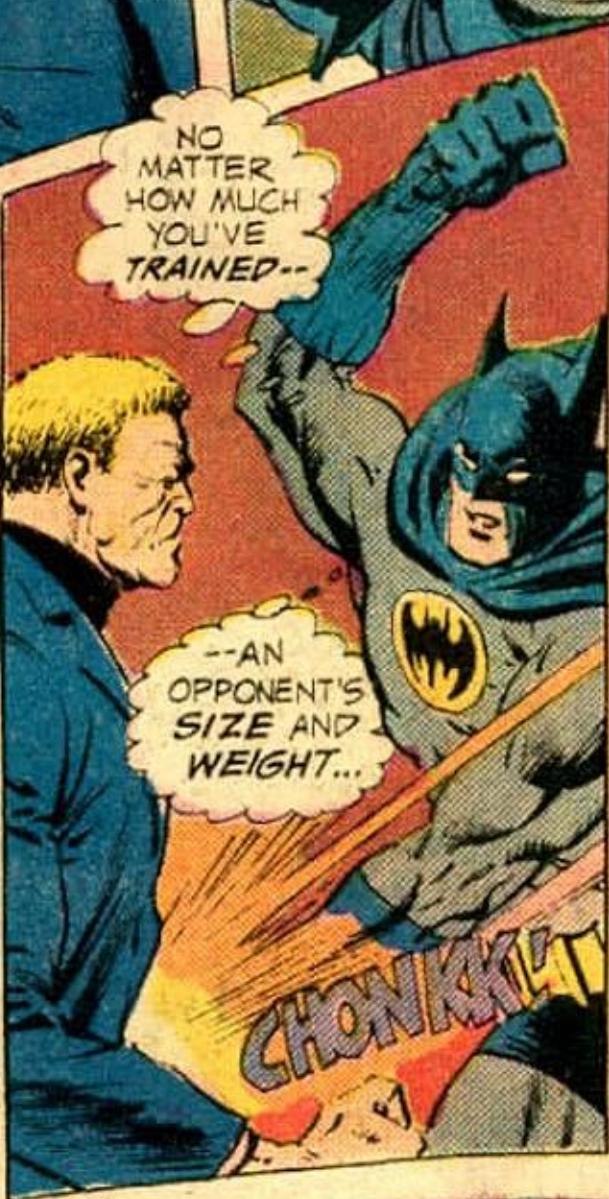
HOW DID  
YOU FIND--?

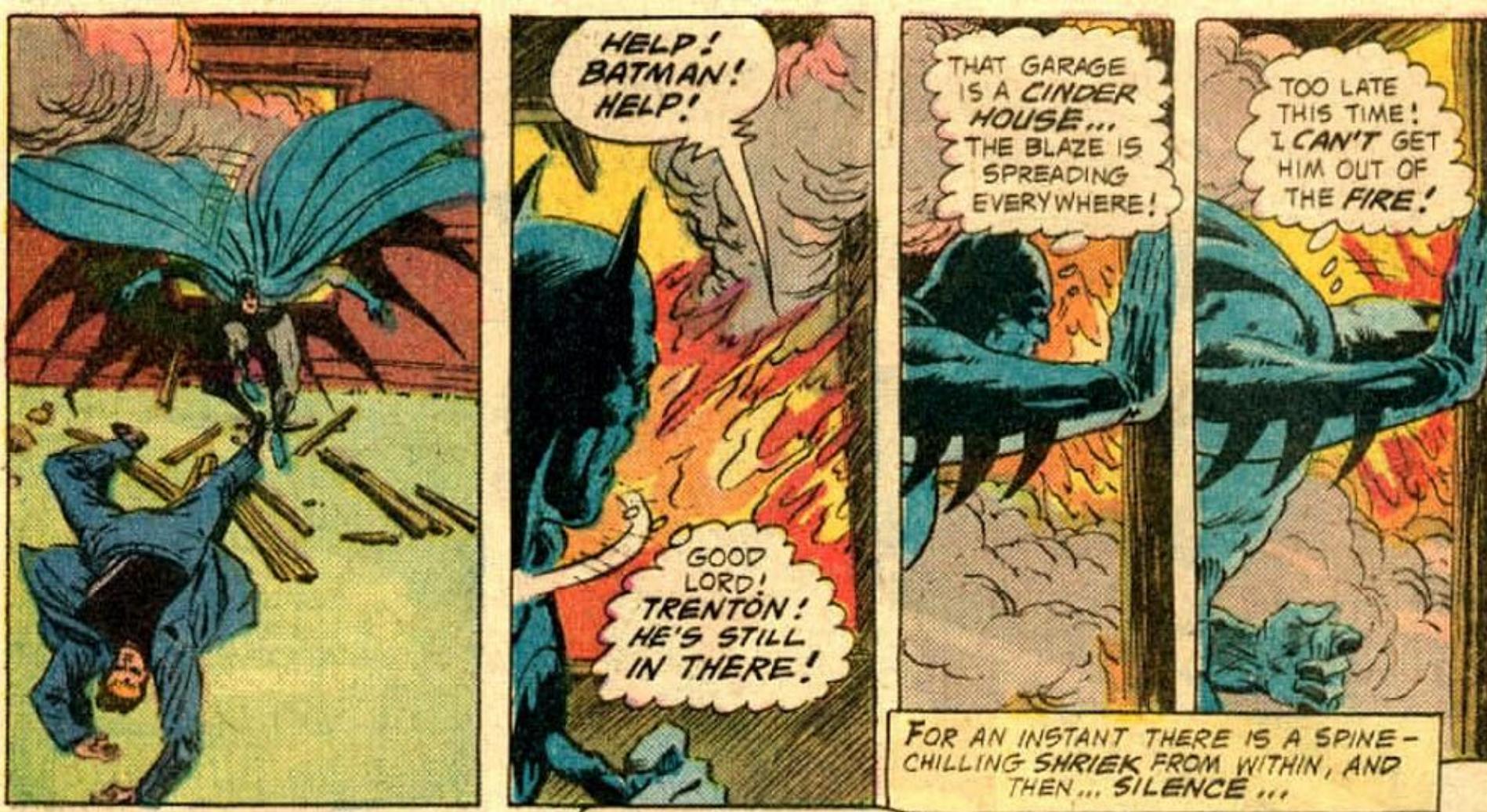
BUT LARABEE--  
AND THE CAST  
OF THE FILM--

--I HAD THEM  
KILLED! YOU  
CAN'T UNDO  
THAT,  
BATMAN!

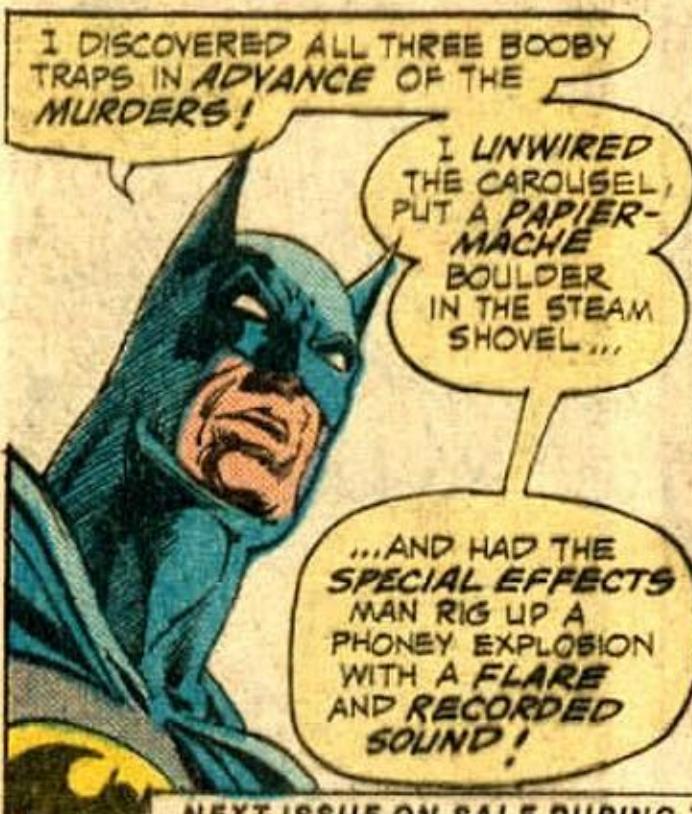
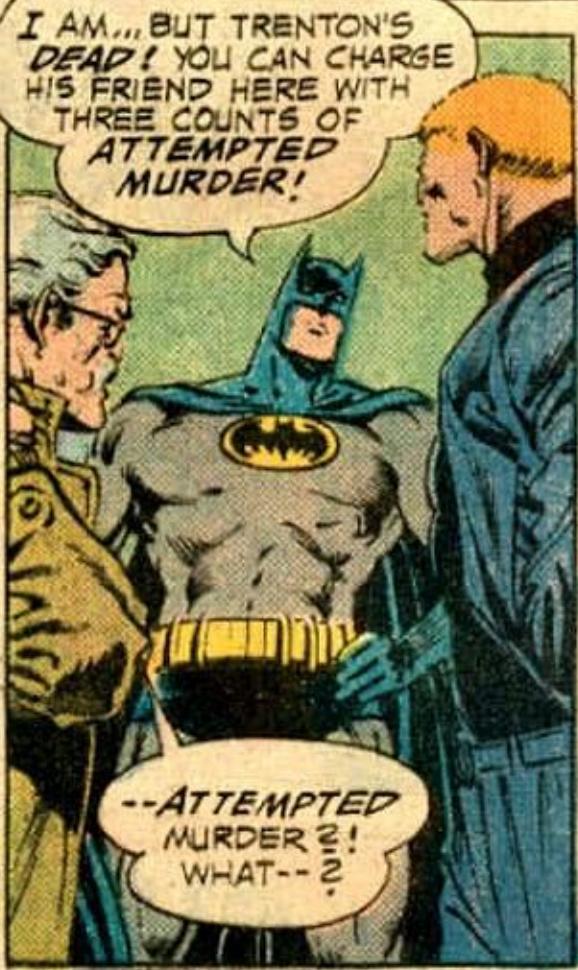
TRENTON, I'M TAKING  
YOU IN, WHETHER  
YOUR GIANT BUDDY  
HERE LIKES IT  
OR NOT!

NO!





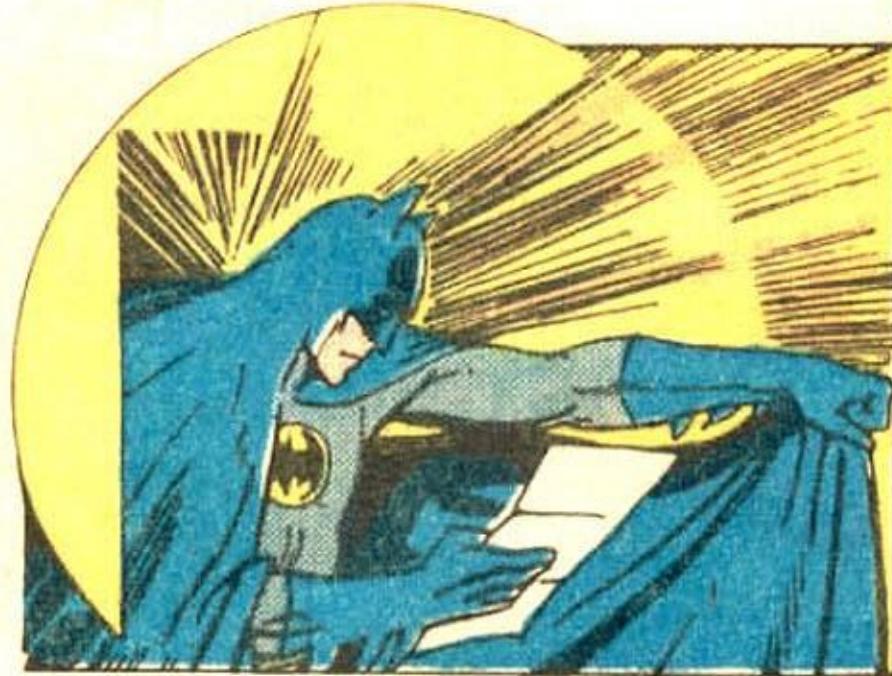
FOR AN INSTANT THERE IS A SPINE-CHILLING SHRIEK FROM WITHIN, AND THEN ... SILENCE ...



NEXT ISSUE ON SALE DURING THE THIRD WEEK IN MAY

Congratulations, BATMAN! YOUR FAILURE TURNED OUT TO BE A SUCCESS!

END



# LETTERS to the **BATMAN**

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,  
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019. S-2011

Dear Julie,

Once again, the Masked Manhunter has returned to what he was meant to be. Denny O'Neil has been better, but not by much! He brilliantly displayed **The Batman** as an avenger of the night wreaking vengeance on the underworld. I just loved lines like "Or do I use you for a wrecking ball?"

Irv Novick and Dick Giordano were never better. **The Batman** looked human and yet, the way he stood over the grave of Hal Hemingway gave me chills. And if somebody looked at me the way **Batman** glared at the guy on page 19, I'd die!

If we get stories like this every month, **BATMAN** will hit the top of the sales charts!

DAN JURGENS, Ortonville, Minn.

(We know **The Batman** still has what it takes when it comes to striking terror into the hearts of criminals . . . but now he's even scaring the readers!—BR)

• • • •

Dear Friends,

Denny O'Neil did an absolutely beautiful job in #261. Though he did not leave any mystery for the reader to solve after clearing Hal Hemingway halfway through the tale rather than at the end. This story of sheer vengeance is the type of **Batman** adventure I like the best.

As for the villains topic mentioned in the letter-col, I think **Catwoman** could be **Batman's** greatest foe if you give her back the costume from the 1940's. She could be both interesting and bizarre. **The Penguin**, on the other hand, is a simple neurotic and does not fit into today's style of story. **The Joker** and **Two-Face** can have a great future if played to the hilt. Their recent appearances have been quite good. I like **The Spook** and think **Ra's al Ghul** is great, so need I say more?

JERRY STEPHEN, Bonne Terre, Mo.

(You need not say more, Jerry, but we will since you're a fan of **Batman's** Rogues' Gallery. First, the **Catwoman** dons her "Golden Age" outfit in "The Curious Case of Catwoman's Coincidences", coming right up in this magazine! And the next **BATMAN COLLECTORS' EDITION** features stories of **The Joker**, **Catwoman**, **The Penguin**, **Two-Face** and the origin of **The Scarecrow** and will be on sale in early May!—BR)

• • • •

Dear Editor:

"The Mystery That Never Was" almost put me to sleep. It was plain out-and-out boring!

P.F.C. STEVEN L. THOMPSON, USMC

(This nappy chap's rap cannot dissuade us from a happy, snappy wrap-up so... B-b-b-bat's all, folks!—BOB ROZAKIS)

Dear Editor:

"The Mystery That Never Was" in **Batman** #261 was a culmination of all the best things in the **Batman** legend. The **Caped Crusader** skulked around, giving credence to his "thing of the night" image without descending into melodrama. The case was, as **Batman** put it, "a variation on the locked room mystery"—the type of curious crime that he really works well with. It gave him a chance to really exercise his detecting skills.

The valuable plans missing from the impenetrable industrial complex was handled with flair. **Batman** solved the clues, tackled the crooks, slipped into a disguise and cracked the final problem easily like a superhero should. Even his escaping from the balloon death-trap was done with matter-of-fact excitement—without our having to witness the "beads of sweat collecting on the Gotham Goliath's brow as he searches desperately for an avenue of escape" type of junk.

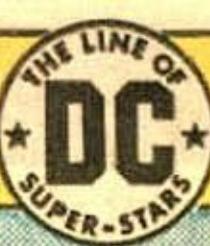
Happily, man-servant Alfred was on hand for a few moments, hovering like a mother-hen and dubiously backing master Bruce in whatever strange scheme he has in mind. Just as happily, Dick (Robin) Grayson wasn't on hand, lending little more than inane comments while blundering into one trap or another.

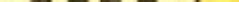
As for **Batman's** costumed foes—as discussed in #261's letter-col—you are using them too much! Heavenly days—from **BATMAN** #201 to 250, you used hardly any . . . and in the past year you've tried to shove them all down our throats. How about a compromise, dividing the issues evenly among the costumed villains and regular crooks. And while you're at it, employ the lesser-used super-villains like **Scarecrow**, **Poison Ivy**, **Mr. Freeze**, **Riddler**, **Spellbinder**, **Cluemaster** and **Masquerader**. Use the more infamous ones, like **Catwoman**, **Penguin**, **Two-Face** and **Spook**, infrequently, perhaps once every two years.

SCOTT GIBSON, Evergreen, Colo.

(The **Riddler** and **The Scarecrow** have made their criminal comebacks to these pages and perhaps the others will get their turns, Scott. However, we are yielding to reader demand and will be varying the Bat-tales from here on, much along the lines you suggest . . . about a 50/50 split between the super-baddies and the regular rogues!—BR)

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