



STARRING IN THIS ISSUE--The Joker!

NO. 294 DEC.
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BATMAN

**SO LONG,
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THIS TIME
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RUBBED
YOU OUT!**

WHAT A
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CREATED BY

BOB
KANE

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

THE BATMAN

THIS IS HOW YOU END, BATMAN-- SURROUNDED BY DEATH!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

THERE IS STILL NO ANSWER TO 'ROUND THE GLOBE -- WHERE NIGHT BATMAN WAS KILLED? OF THE UNDERWORLD-- FROM BRAINSICK, THE RABID-- THE HIGHEST AND THE MIGHTIEST OF CRIME HAVE COME WITH THEIR CLAIMS FOR GLORY-- AND FAILED! NOW IT'S THE GRINNING GARGOYLE'S TURN -- THE HARLEQUIN OF HATE -- WHO TELLS IT AS IT IS IN THE...

THE QUESTION HEARD
WERE YOU ON THE
FROM THE HELLPITS
THE FRENZIED, THE

"TESTIMONY OF THE JOKER!"

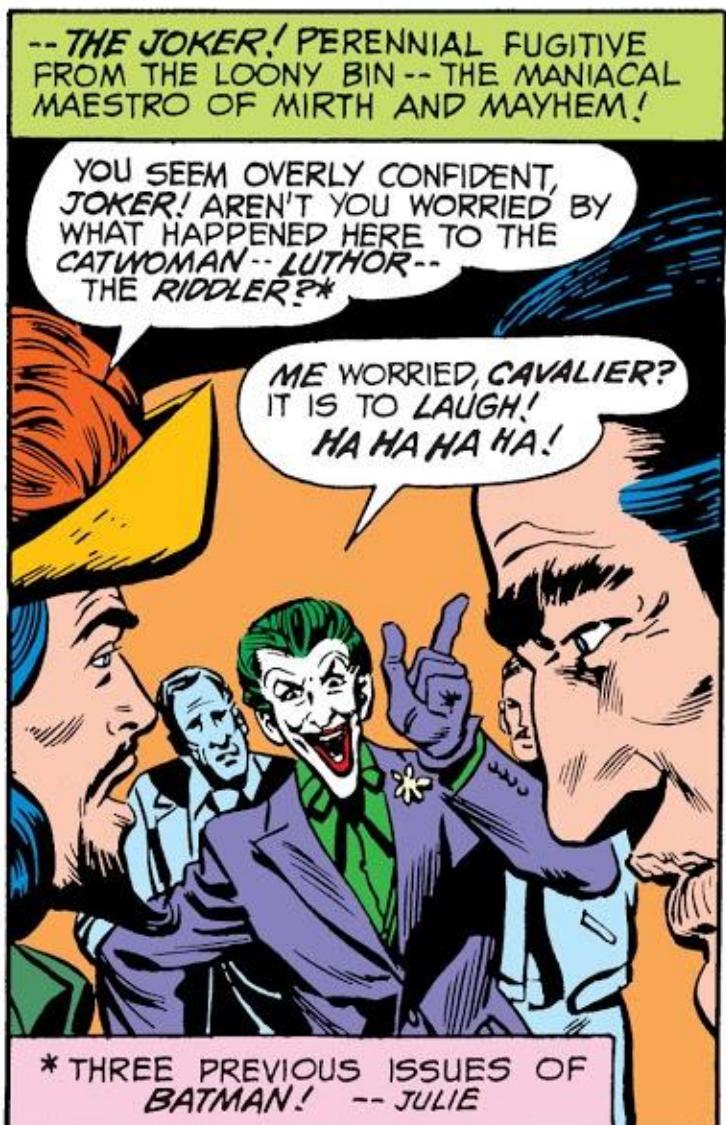
STORY:
DAVID V. REED

COLOR:
JERRY SERPE

LETTERING:
BEN ODA

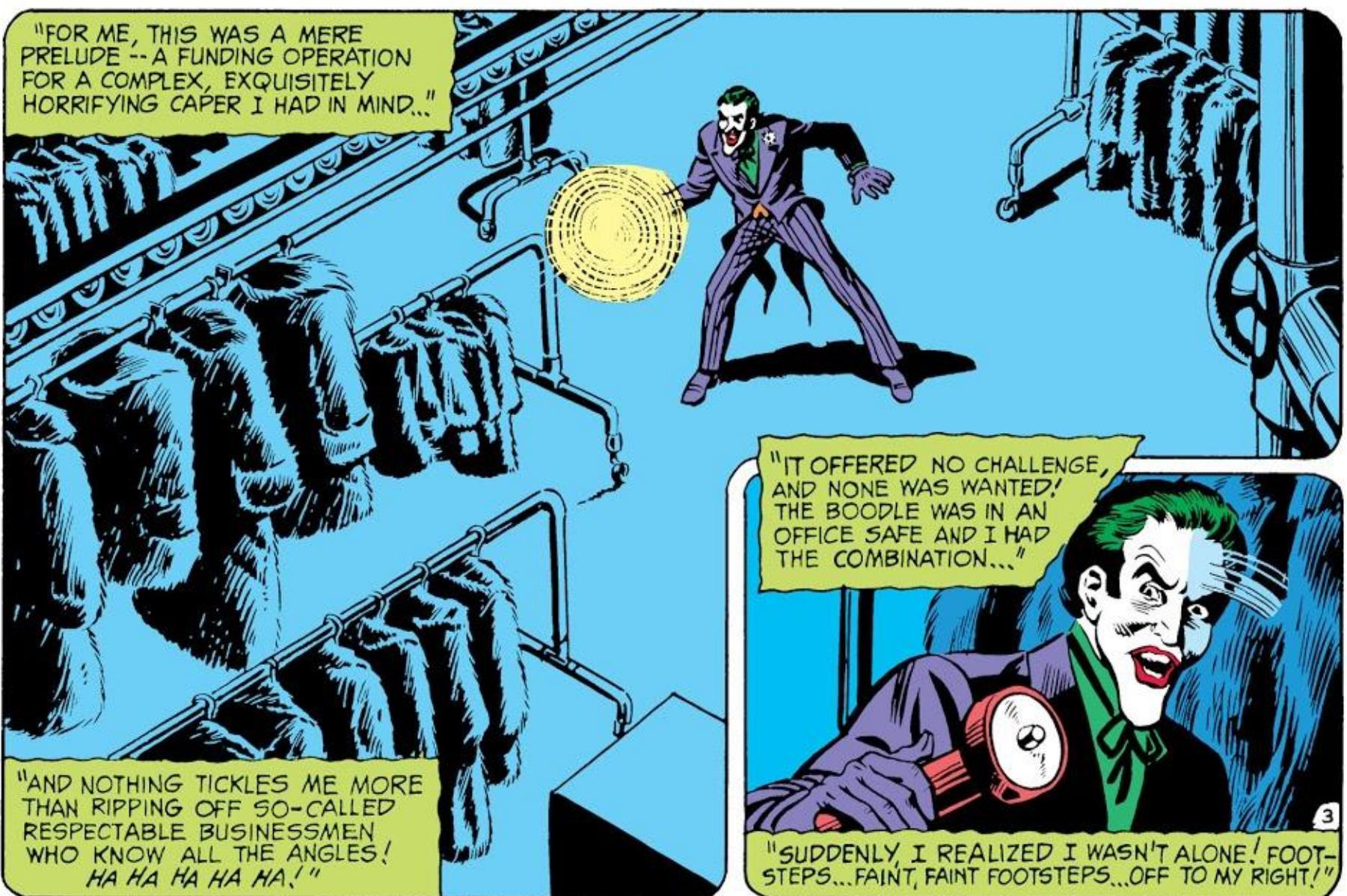
EDITOR:
JULIUS SCHWARTZ

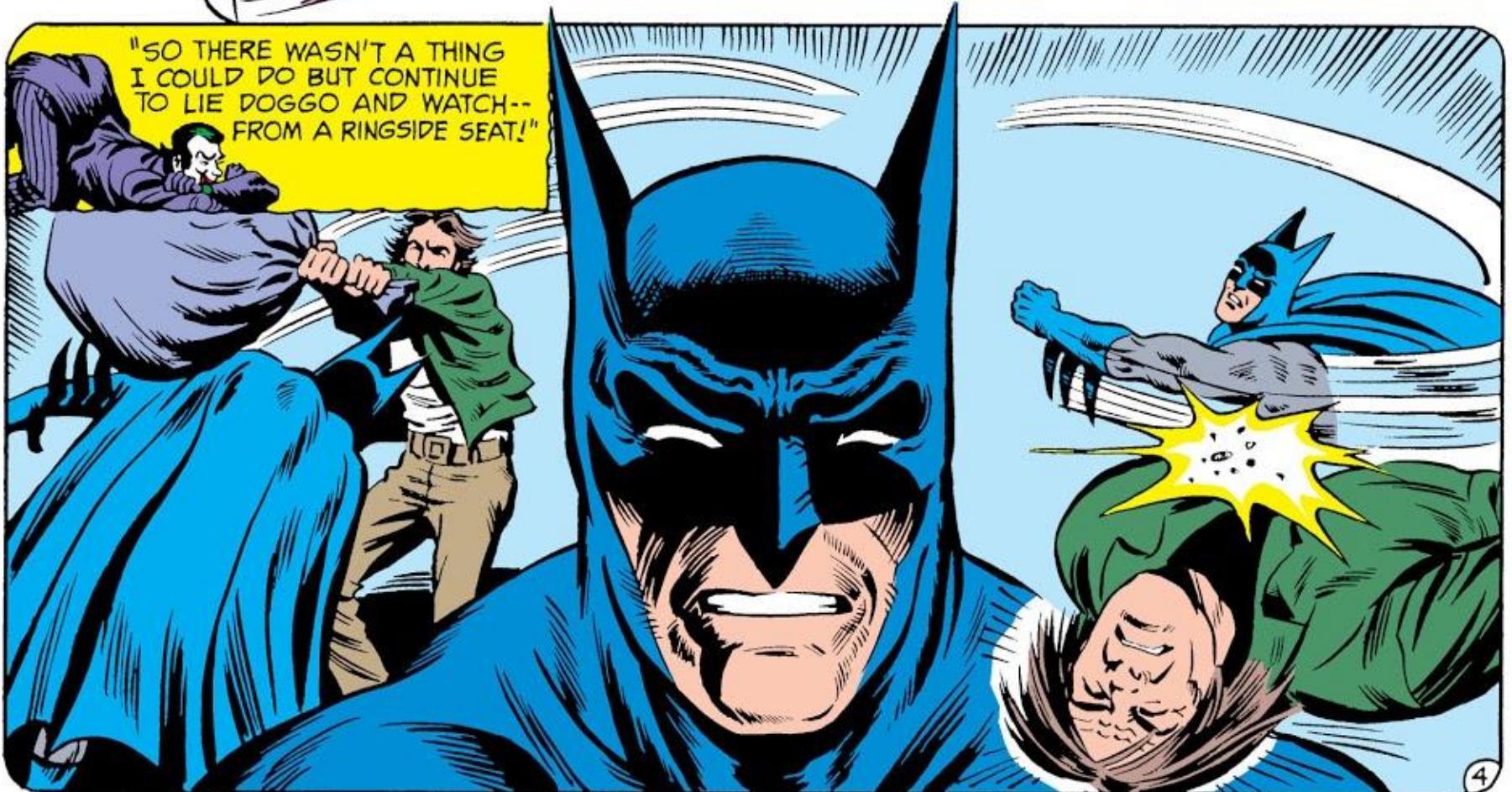
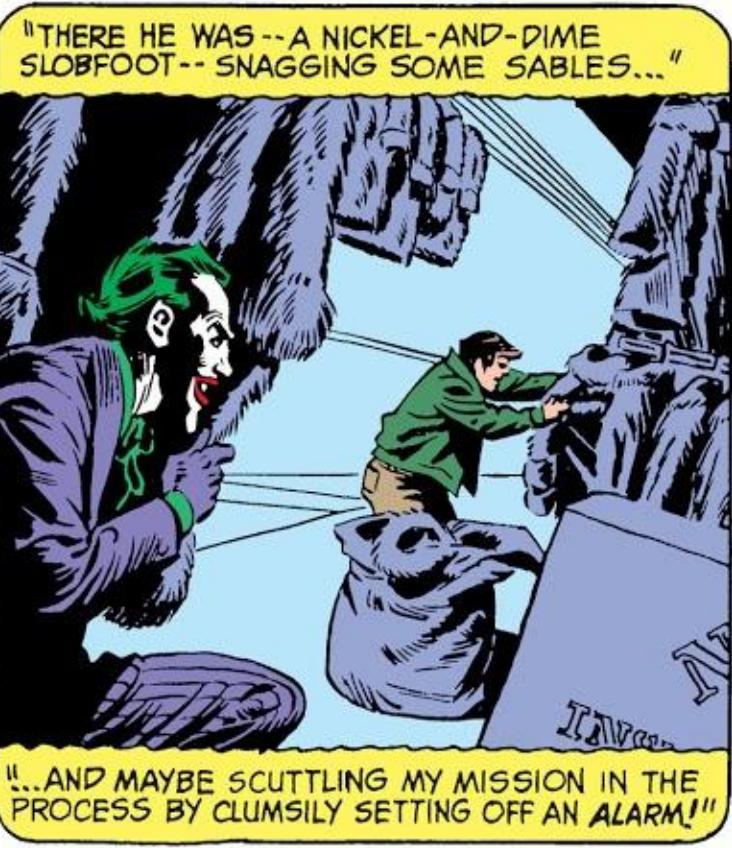
ART:
JOHN CALNAN &
TEX BLAISDELL



BUT TONIGHT, THE CLOWN PRINCE OF CRIME IS UP AGAINST THE DREAD AND DAZZLING TWO-FACE -- HARVEY DENT, TURNCOAT D.A. -- WHOSE VENOMOUS DISPLAY OF FORENSIC VIRTUOSITY HAS EARNED HIM THE WHISPERED SOBRIQUET OF GRAND INQUISITOR!







"THE MORE I WATCHED, THE MORE MY INITIAL ANGER AND FRUSTRATION GAVE WAY TO ENJOYMENT!..."

"...AND THEN, TO A PROFOUND, CONCENTRATED STUDY OF THE BATMAN'S MOVES--"

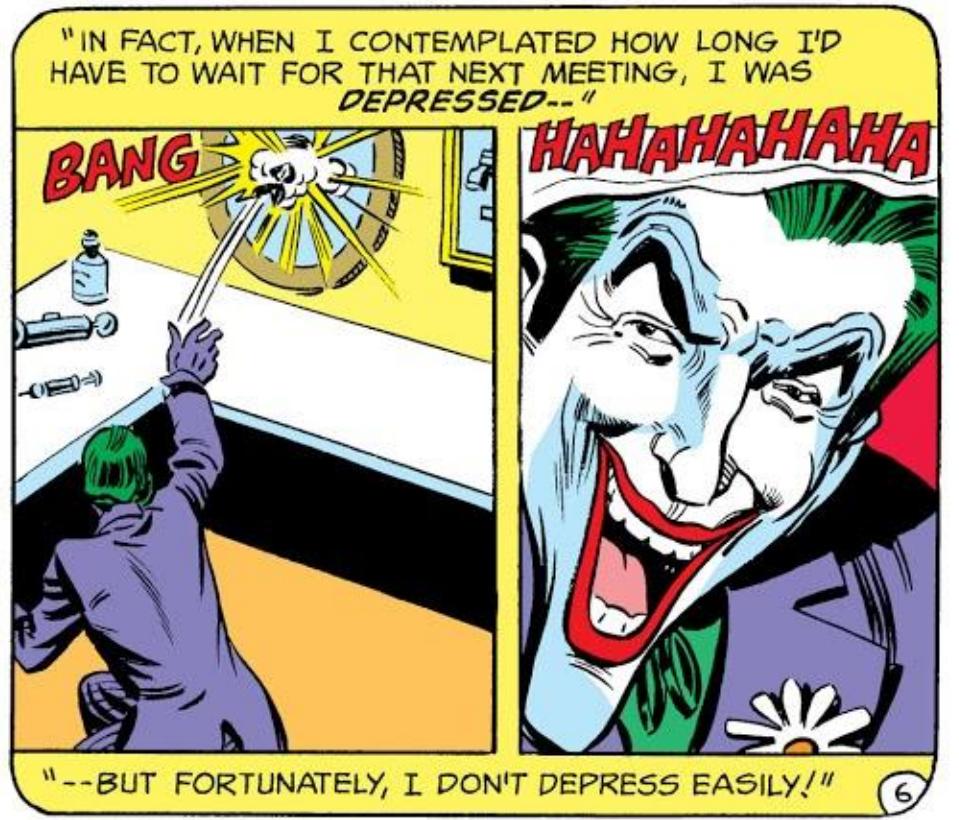
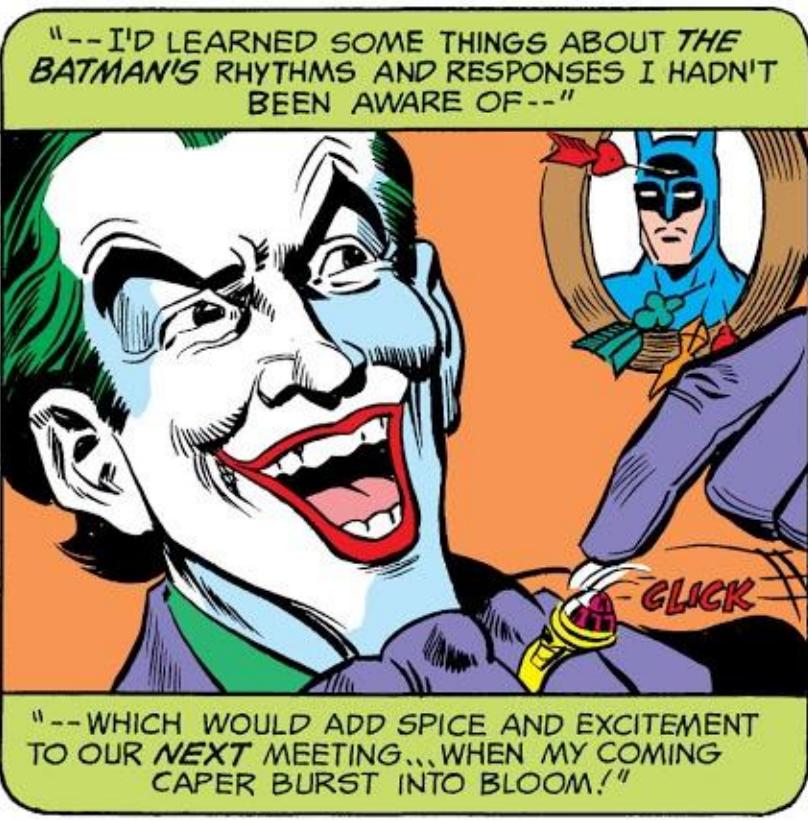
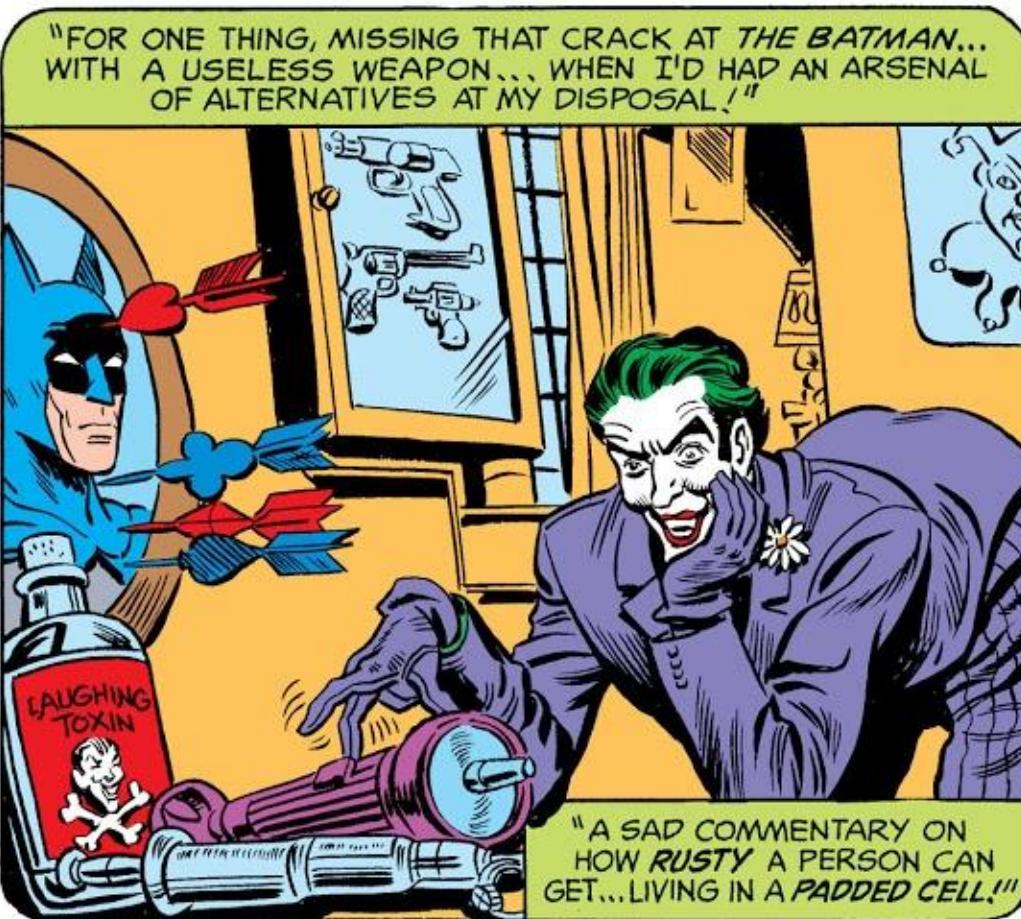
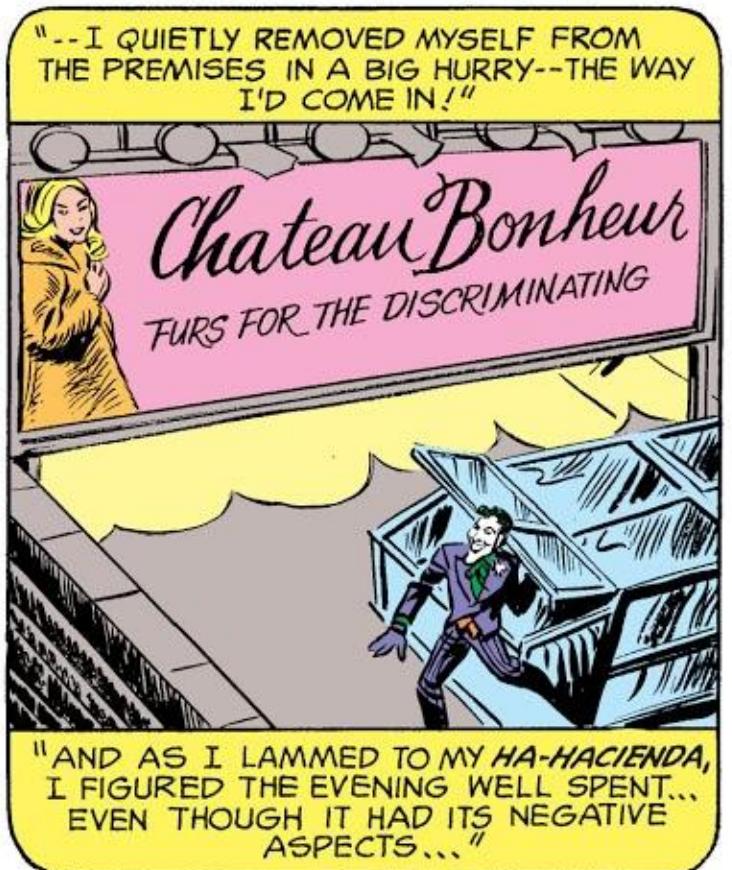
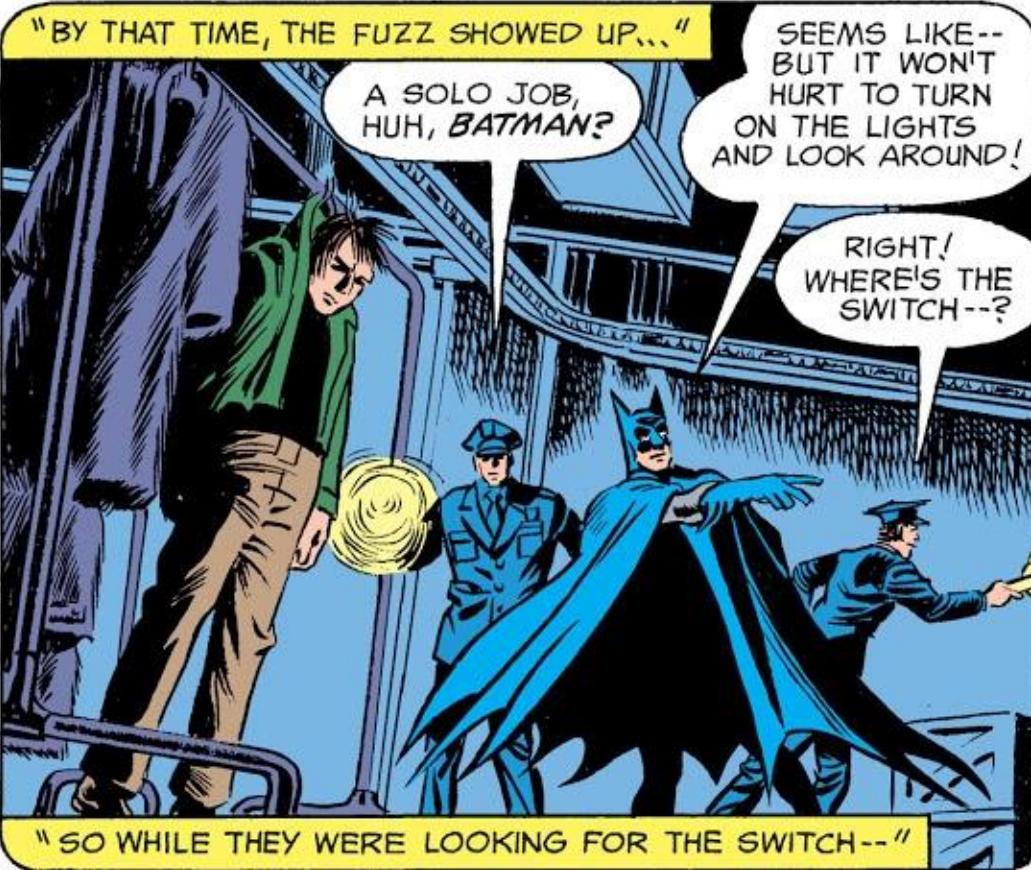
-- HIS LIGHTNING REFLEXES --

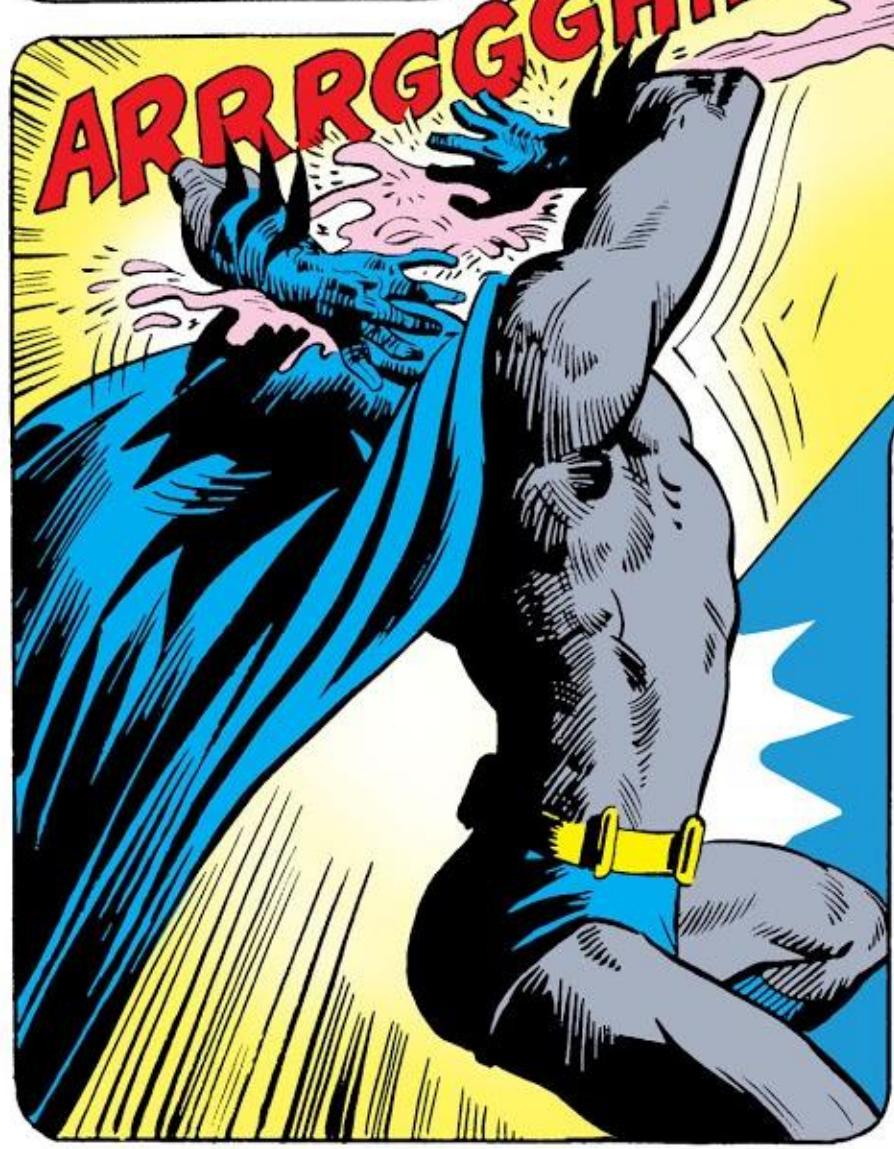
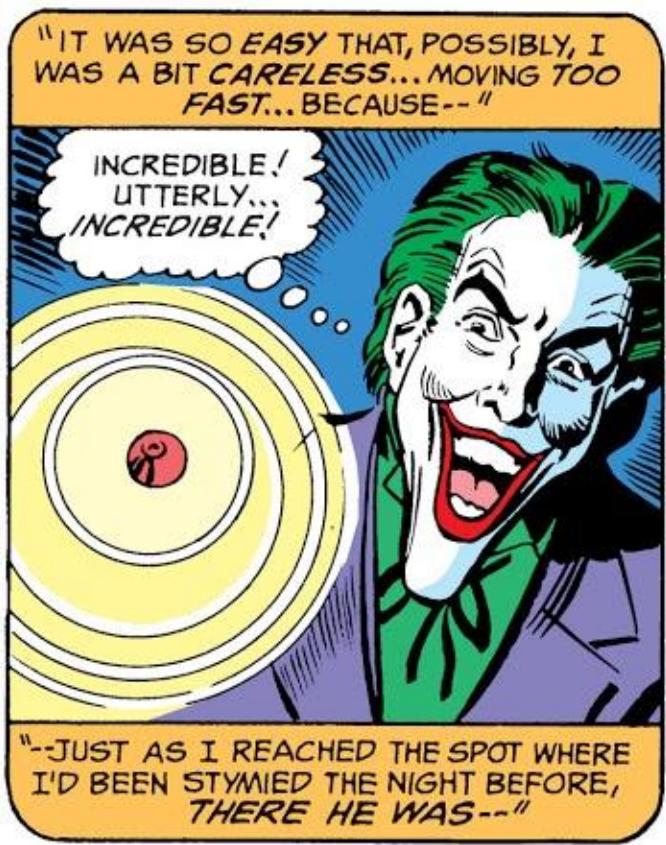
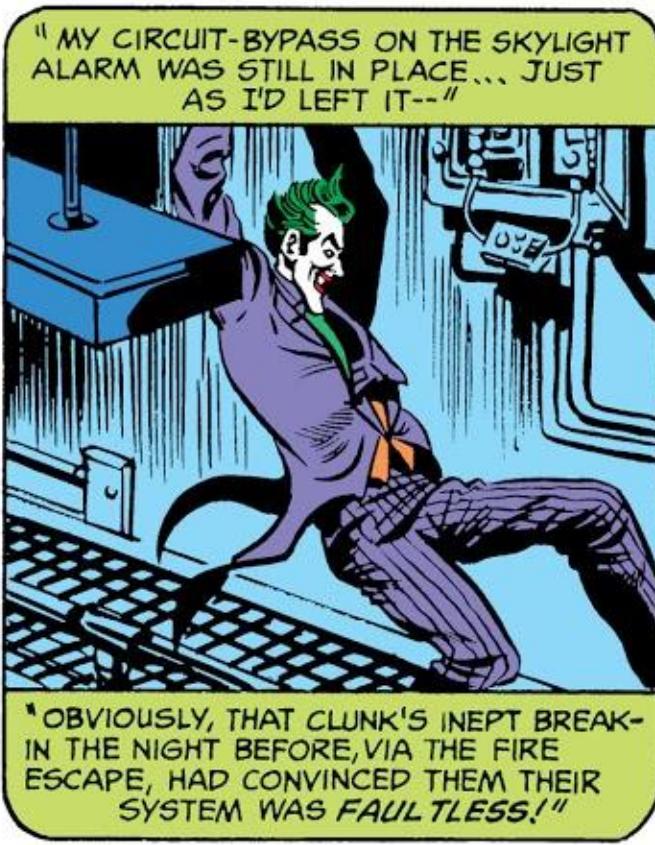
-- THE INSTINCTIVE COUNTERS --

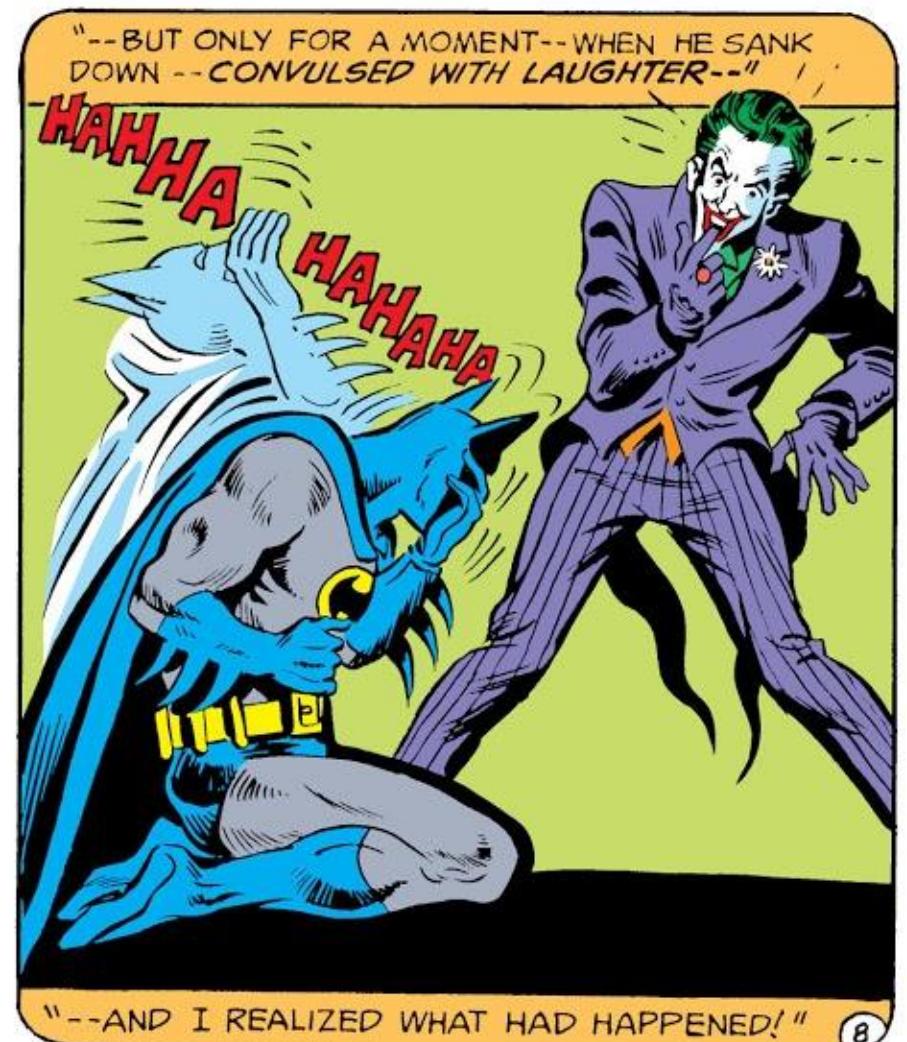
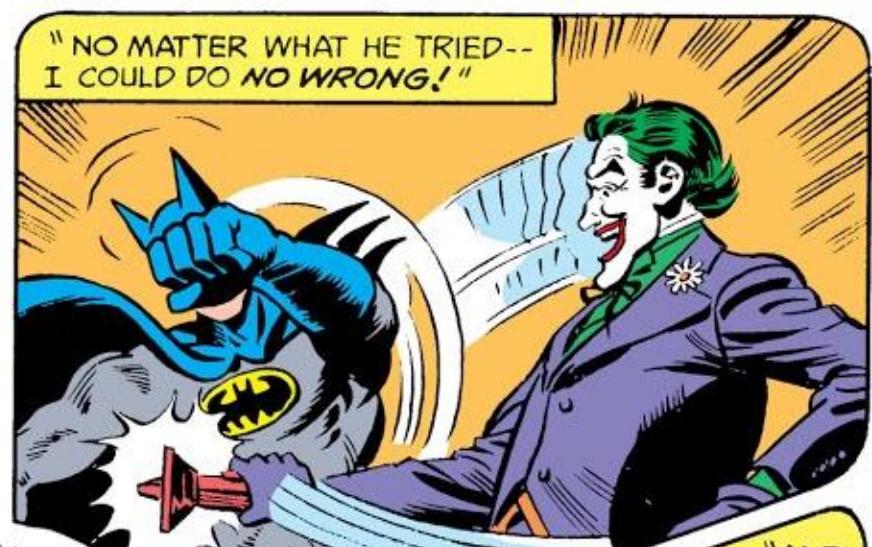
"IT WAS A SEMINAR IN SLUGGING-- AND I PAID CLOSE ATTENTION!"

"THE END WAS CLASSICAL! HOW WELL I REMEMBERED THAT LEFT HOOK COMING OFF A JAB!"

"THE SLEEPING LAND SPECIAL!"







"MY COMBAT RING HAD BEEN JOLTED OPEN FROM IMPACT--AND INJECTED HIM WITH A LETHAL SHOT OF LAUGHING TOXIN!"



"IN ALL OUR YEARS OF WARFARE, I'D SEVERAL TIMES HAD CHANCES TO KILL HIM--BUT LET HIM SURVIVE--TO PRESERVE MY MOST EXHILARATING OPPONENT--MY PARTNER IN FUN AND GAMES!"



"A FATAL ACCIDENT! I HAD NEITHER NEEDED NOR INTENDED HIS DEATH!"

"THERE WAS STILL SOME HUMOR LEFT TO BE WRENCHED FROM THIS FINAL EPISODE -- A GUESSING GAME FOR THE POLICE! -- WHETHER THEY ACTUALLY KNEW WHO THE BATMAN WAS OR NOT!"



"I BLOTTED HIM OUT COMPLETELY -- HIS FEATURES, HIS FINGERPRINTS--EVERY MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION-- AND LEFT HIM THERE!"

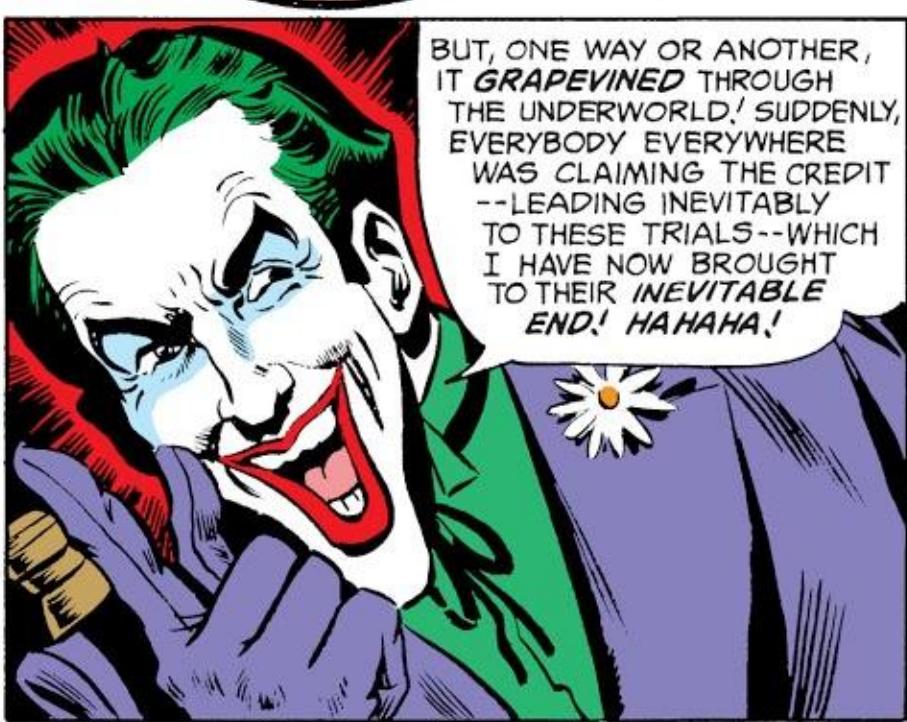


THEN I EMPTIED THE SAFE... WENT HOME... AND WAITED FOR THE FUN TO BEGIN!

BUT NOTHING HAPPENED! NOT A WORD IN PRINT OR ON THE AIR--NOTHING! THEY WERE KEEPING IT QUIET-- EVIDENTLY AFRAID TO LET THE NEWS OUT!



BUT, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, IT GRAPEVINED THROUGH THE UNDERWORLD! SUDDENLY, EVERYBODY EVERYWHERE WAS CLAIMING THE CREDIT --LEADING INEVITABLY TO THESE TRIALS--WHICH I HAVE NOW BROUGHT TO THEIR INEVITABLE END! HAHAHA!



A MOST COMPELLING STORY... BUT BECAUSE OF YOUR FAILURE TO SUBMIT IT IN ADVANCE, YOU DENIED US THE OPPORTUNITY TO INVESTIGATE AND POSSIBLY REFUTE IT!

WHERE'S YOUR PROOF?



YOU KNOW THE JOKER BETTER THAN THAT, TWO-FACE! YOU KNOW I'D NEVER COME HERE WITHOUT SOMETHING TANGIBLE TO BACK UP MY WORDS!

I DO HAVE PROOF-- AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I DIDN'T SUBMIT A WRITTEN CLAIM!

ANYONE WHO READ THAT CLAIM--AND WHO KNEW ME-- WOULD NEVER DOUBT THAT I HAD EVIDENCE--EVIDENCE WHICH, IF STOLEN--

--COULD BE USED BY ANYONE TO CLAIM THE CREDIT FOR THE BATMAN'S DEATH--WITH A STORY INVENTED TO GO WITH IT!

AND WHAT MIGHT THAT EVIDENCE BE?

PHOTOGRAPHS I TOOK OF THE DEAD BATMAN--BEFORE I OBLITERATED HIS IDENTITY!

AND YOU HAVE THESE PHOTOGRAPHS WITH YOU?

HA-HA-HA! YOU DON'T REALLY THINK I'D CARRY SOMETHING THAT VALUABLE--IN A ROOM FULL OF PEOPLE LIKE US-- WITHOUT FIRST GETTING MY STORY ON RECORD IN OPEN COURT?

YOUR HONOR, I ASK THE COURT TO DECLARE A RECESS UNTIL THE JOKER RETURNS WITH HIS PROOF!

GRANTED!
THIS COURT STANDS IN RECESS FOR ONE HOUR!

AS THE SESSION BREAKS, EXCITEMENT IS AT FEVER PITCH..."

YOU'RE OKAY, BIG JAY!

YOU GOT IT MADE, LAUGHING BOY!

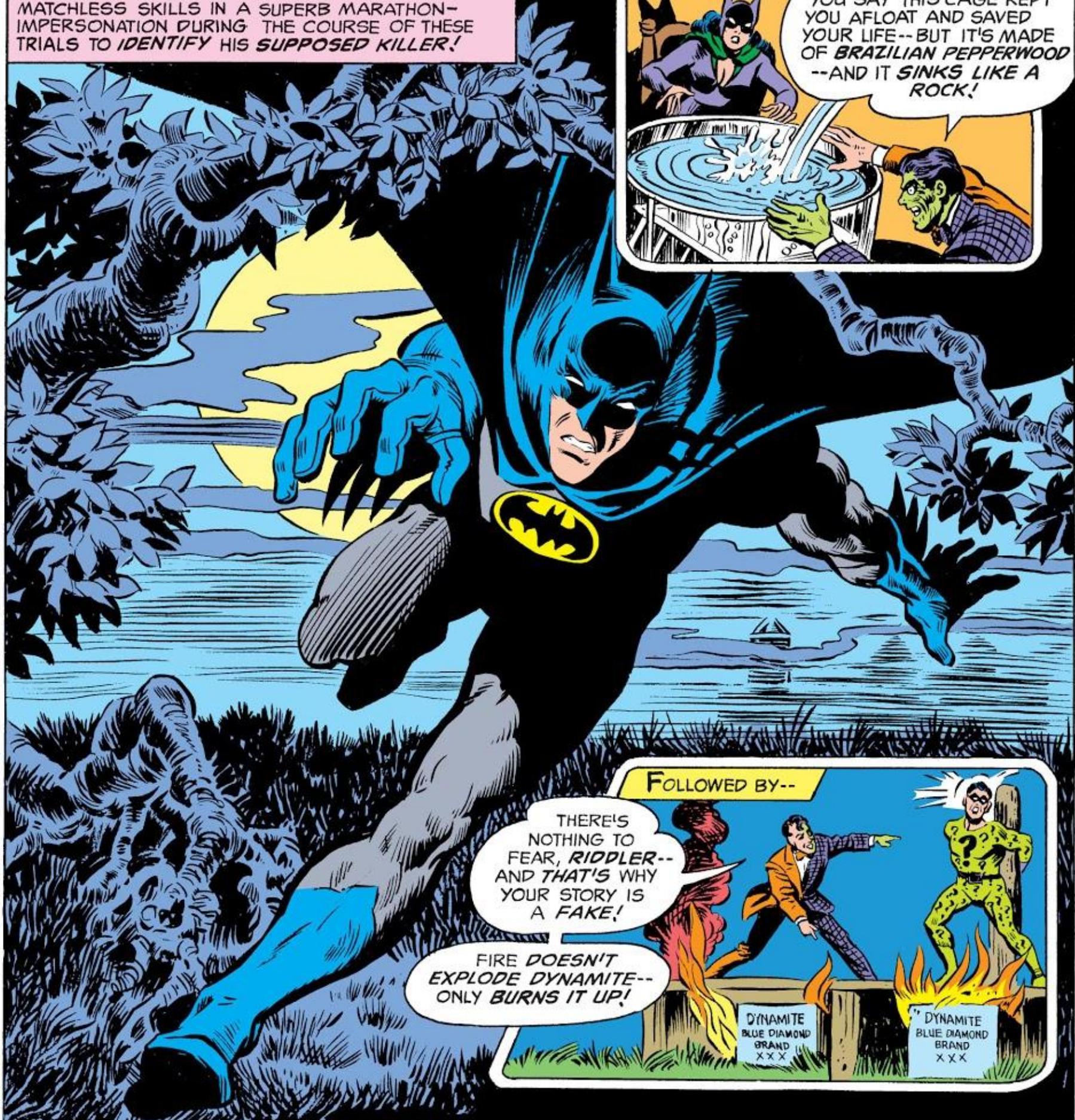
HURRY--

--BACK!

MOMENTS LATER, AS TWO-FACE SURREPTITIOUSLY LEAVES THE MANSION AND STARTS RUNNING THROUGH THE DARK, SURROUNDING FIELDS--AN ASTOUNDING METAMORPHOSIS UNFOLDS!...

...IT BEGINS WITH HIM SAVAGELY RIPPING AWAY AT HIS SCARRED AND TWISTED VISAGE--

-- AND ENDS WITH THE MATERIALIZATION OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE--CONSUMMATE MASTER OF DISGUISE--WHO HAS USED HIS MATCHLESS SKILLS IN A SUPERB MARATHON-IMPERSONATION DURING THE COURSE OF THESE TRIALS TO IDENTIFY HIS SUPPOSED KILLER!



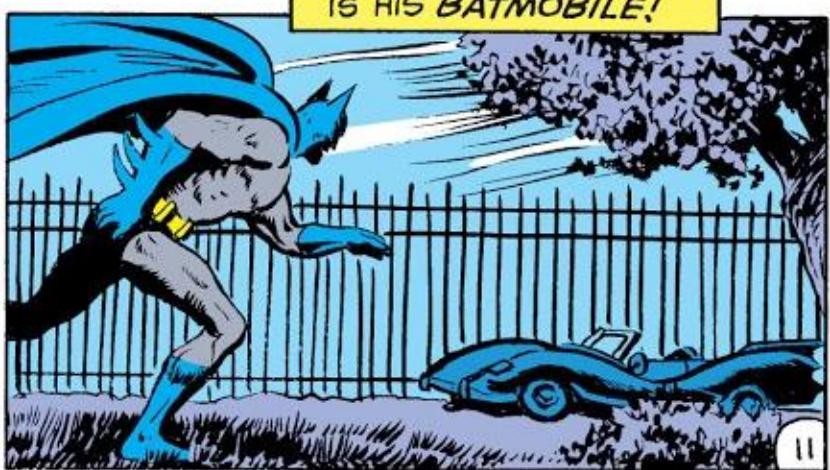
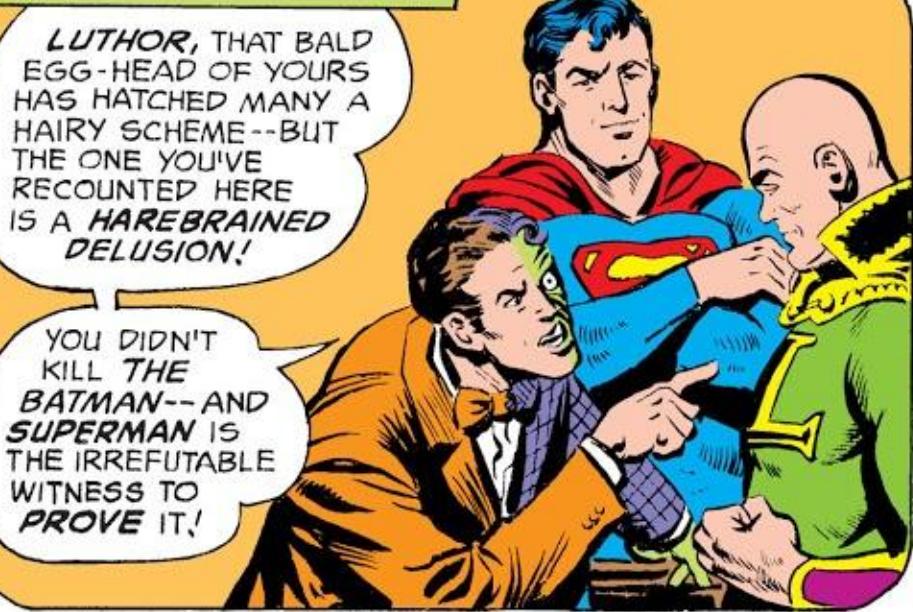
AND--MOST RECENTLY...

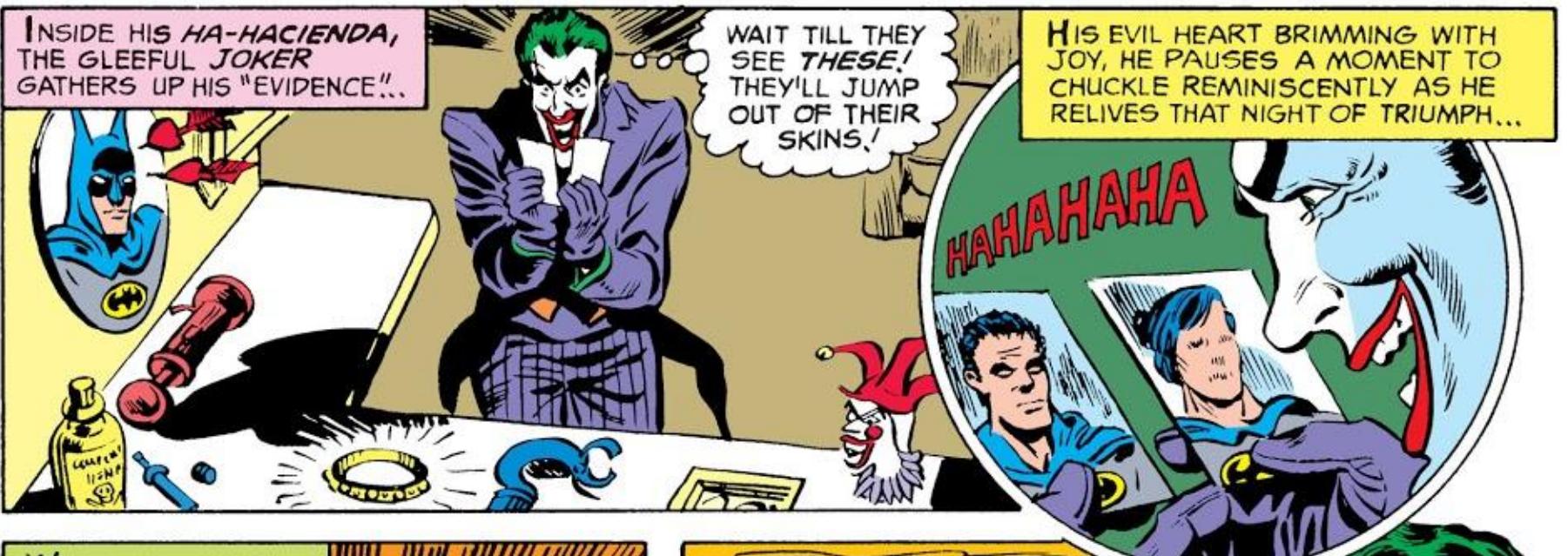
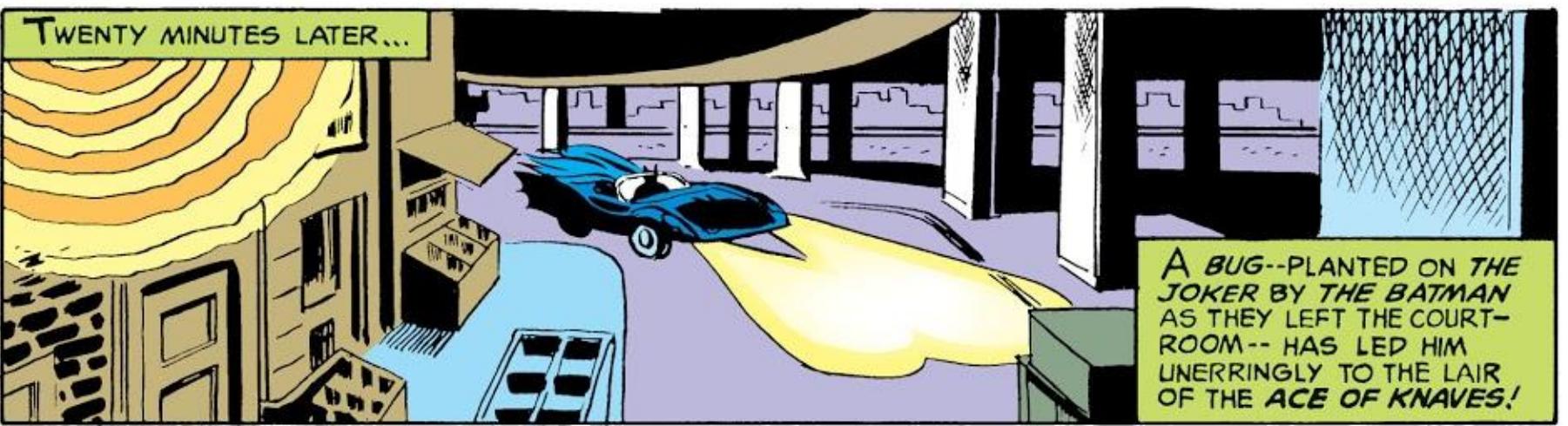
LUTHOR, THAT BALD EGG-HEAD OF YOURS HAS HATCHED MANY A HAIRY SCHEME--BUT THE ONE YOU'VE RECOUNTED HERE IS A HAREBRAINED DELUSION!

YOU DIDN'T KILL THE BATMAN--AND SUPERMAN IS THE IRREFUTABLE WITNESS TO PROVE IT!

FIRST--WITH THE CATWOMAN!

YOU SAY THIS CAGE KEPT YOU AFLOAT AND SAVED YOUR LIFE--BUT IT'S MADE OF BRAZILIAN PEPPERWOOD--AND IT SINKS LIKE A ROCK!







ONLY ONE WAY
TO HANDLE THIS--
INCREASE THE
TEMPO AND
IGNORE THE
TARGET!

BECAUSE IF HE'S
NOT WHERE HE SHOULD
BE -- HE MUST BE
SOMEPLACE ELSE!

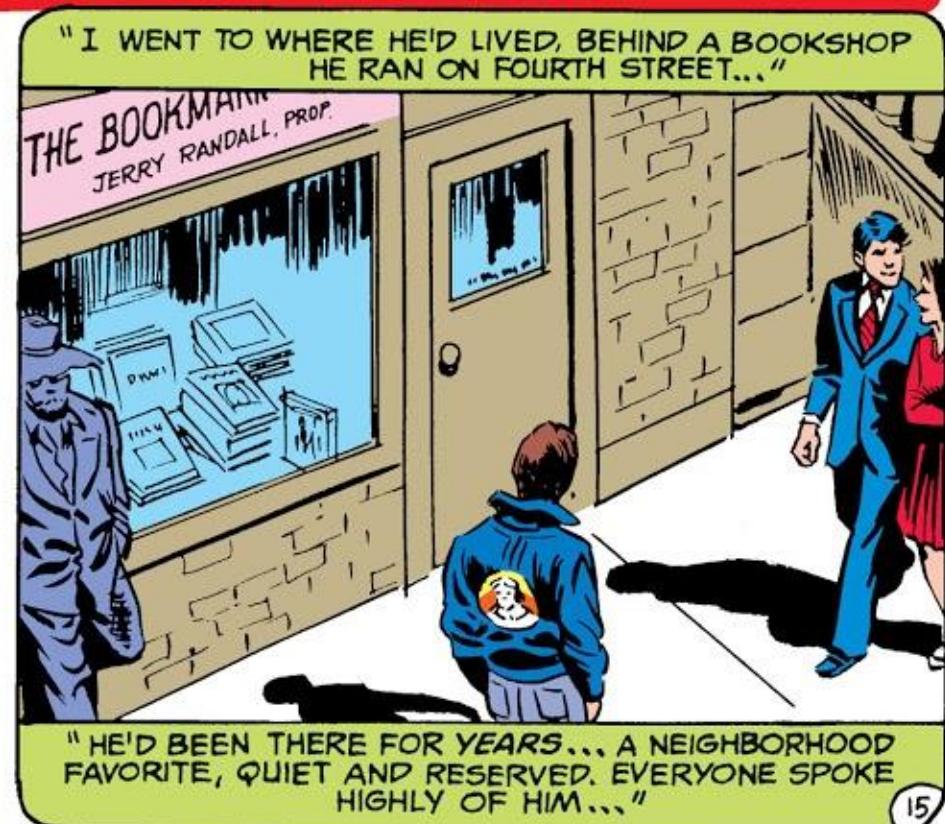
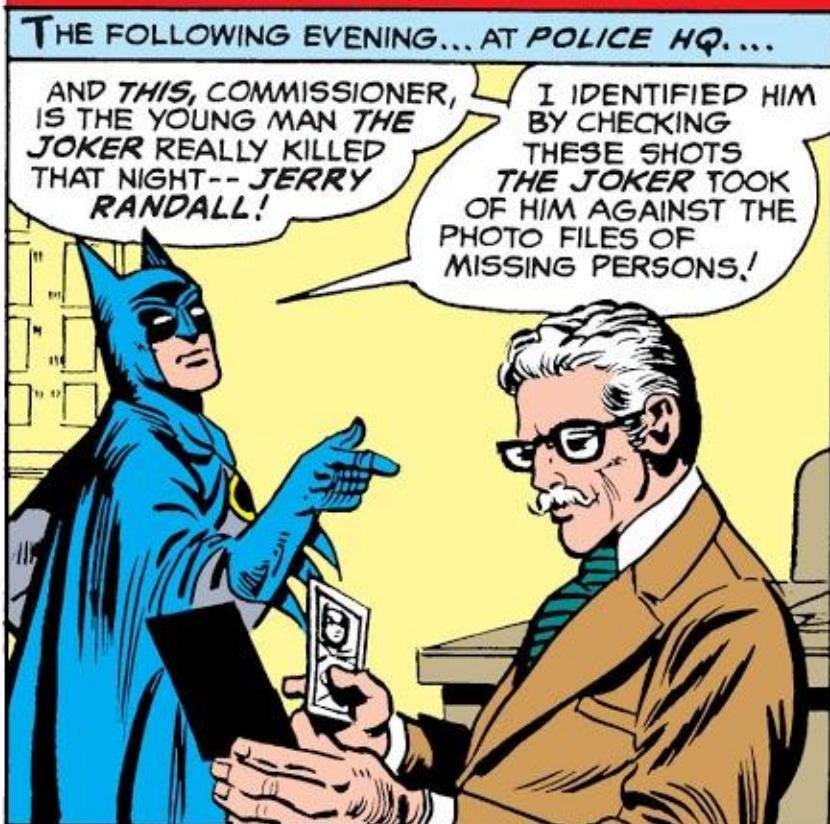
SO BY SYSTEMATICALLY
ATTACKING THE OTHER
SOMEPLACES--

-- SOONER
OR LATER--

CONTACT!



EPILOGUE: TESTIMONY OF THE BATMAN



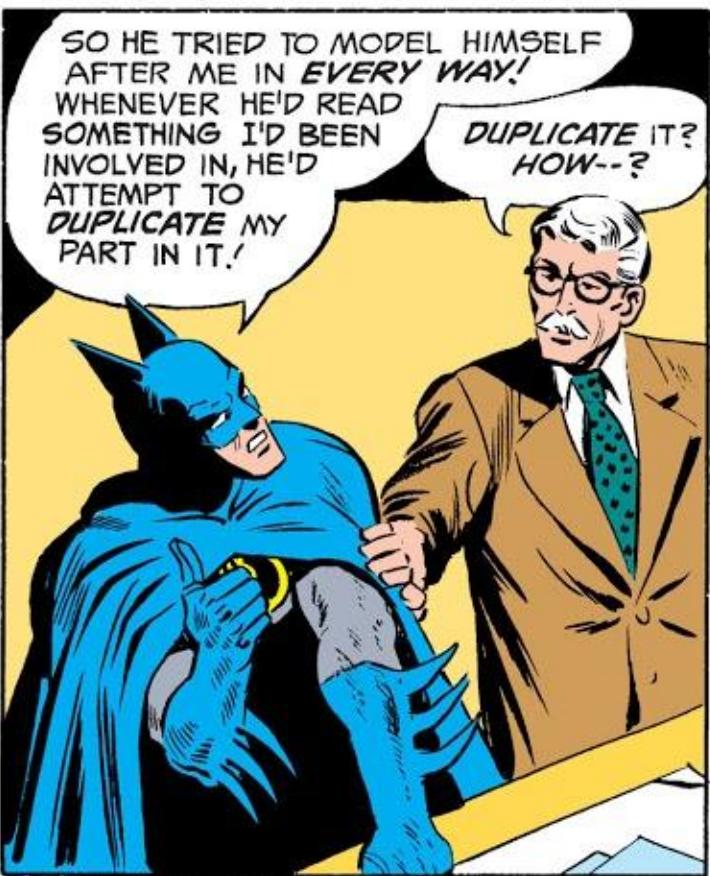
"HE HAD A VERY PRIVATE, VERY SECRET HOBBY... WHICH HE DESCRIBED AT LENGTH IN A DIARY I FOUND..."

"HE WAS A GREAT ADMIRER OF MINE... COLLECTED PICTURES OF ME, STORIES, NEWS ITEMS! NOTHING WAS TOO TRIVIAL FOR HIM..."

"AND HE APPARENTLY WORRIED A LOT ABOUT THE BATMAN BEING IN CONSTANT JEOPARDY..."



"HE FEARED SOMEBODY WOULD DO ME IN EVENTUALLY... AND WHEN THAT HAPPENED, HE PLANNED TO TAKE MY PLACE AND CARRY ON MY WORK!"



DUPPLICATE IT? HOW--?

HE'D GO TO WHEREVER THE EPISODE HAD OCCURRED... CHANGE INTO A COPY OF MY COSTUME... SOMEHOW MANAGING TO GET INTO THE PLACE-- EVADING GUARDS AND DETECTION SYSTEMS --

--AND THEN ACT OUT WHATEVER HE'D READ OR THEORIZED HAD HAPPENED!

HE MUST'VE BEEN PRETTY GOOD AT IT--

--BECAUSE HE NEVER GOT INTO ANY TROUBLE--UNTIL THAT NIGHT AT CHATEAU BONHEUR!

HIS LAST DIARY ENTRY WAS ABOUT THAT LOFT-WORKER I'D CAUGHT THERE THE NIGHT BEFORE. HE'D READ THE NEWS ACCOUNTS AND WAS GOING TO ACT THEM OUT!



"SO THERE HE WAS--DOING HIS ROUTINE-- WHEN THE JOKER RAN ACROSS HIM... AND KILLED HIM!"

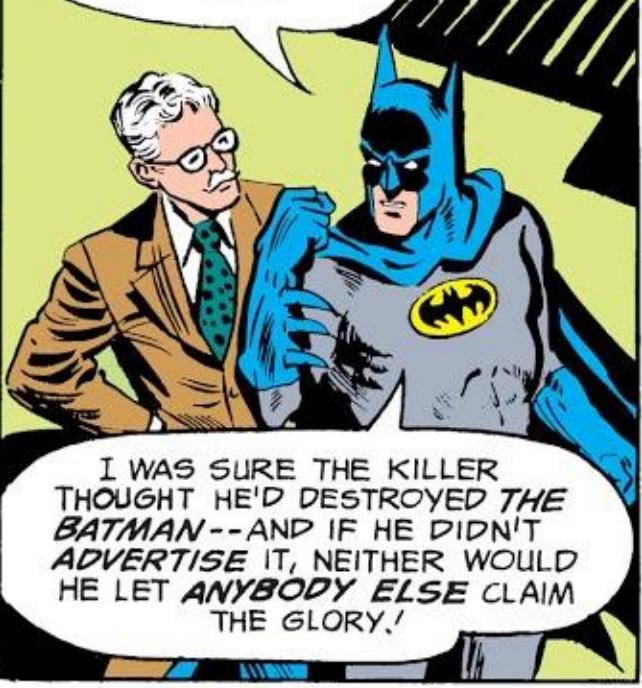
"WE DIDN'T HAVE CLUE-ONE ABOUT HIM, OR WHAT HE'D BEEN DOING THERE... BUT FROM HIS COSTUME, I GUESSED WHAT HAD PROBABLY HAPPENED..."



"YOU REMEMBER, COMMISSIONER, THAT WHEN HE WAS FIRST FOUND, YOU THOUGHT IT MIGHT REALLY BE ME... UNTIL I RESPONDED TO YOUR HOT-LINE CALL!"

"IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME I'D SEEN THAT SORT OF THING... THOUGH I PRAY IT WILL BE THE LAST!"

IT'S SOMETHING THAT HAS WEIGHED ON ME A *LONG TIME*... THESE PEOPLE TRYING TO IMITATE ME... OFTEN WITH *DISASTROUS RESULTS!* AS YOU KNOW, I SWEAR I'D GET WHOEVER HAD MURDERED THAT POOR LAD!



SO, THROUGH ABSOLUTELY TRUSTWORTHY UNDERWORLD CONNECTIONS, I PLANTED CONFLICTING RUMORS FROM GOTHAM TO FRISCO THAT I WAS DEAD... KILLED IN ACTION!

THEN, WITH TWO-FACE SAFE AT ARKHAM, I HAD HIM PUT IN SOLITARY--AND ASSUMED HIS IDENTITY!



I PRESENTED MYSELF TO "JAKE-THE-CLAW" VAN CLEVE AND SOLD HIM ON THE TRIALS--WITH ME AS PROSECUTOR--AND WITH HIS PRESTIGE AMONG THE TOP DOGS OF CRIME, THE REST WAS EASY!

I KNEW THAT ONLY THE *REAL KILLER* WOULD KNOW THE TRUE DETAILS OF "*MY*" MURDER!



-- AND THAT TURNED OUT TO BE THE JOKER!

WELL, SIR, THAT'S IT! I'LL BE GOING NOW... I HAVE A JOB TO DO...

