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BATMAN

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
 AUTHORITY

WE'VE KILLED
THE BATMAN!
HIS THREAT
IS OVER!

AIEEEE!
LOOK
BEHIND YOU--
HIS
GHOST!

5-2852

THE BATMAN

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...

CREATED BY BOB KANE

NO WAY OUT! RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MOST BIZARRE MYSTERY THAT HAS BAFFLED THE BATMAN IN YEARS-- THE CASE OF THE CRIMSON COFFIN-- HE HAS BEEN FORCED TO TAKE TIME OUT TO DEAL WITH THE FOOLHARDY ANTICS OF A WILD AND WOOLY INTERLOPER!

WELCOME, BATMAN! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU--AND YOU HAVEN'T FAILED ME!

AND NOW--MASK-TO-MASK--THE CAPED CRUSADER AND HIS TORMENTOR MEET AT LAST!

"The Island of Purple Mist!"

SUDDENLY--SIMULTANEOUSLY-- THE BLACK LIGHT GOES OUT-- TO BE REPLACED BY A SHIMMERING GOLDEN RAY!

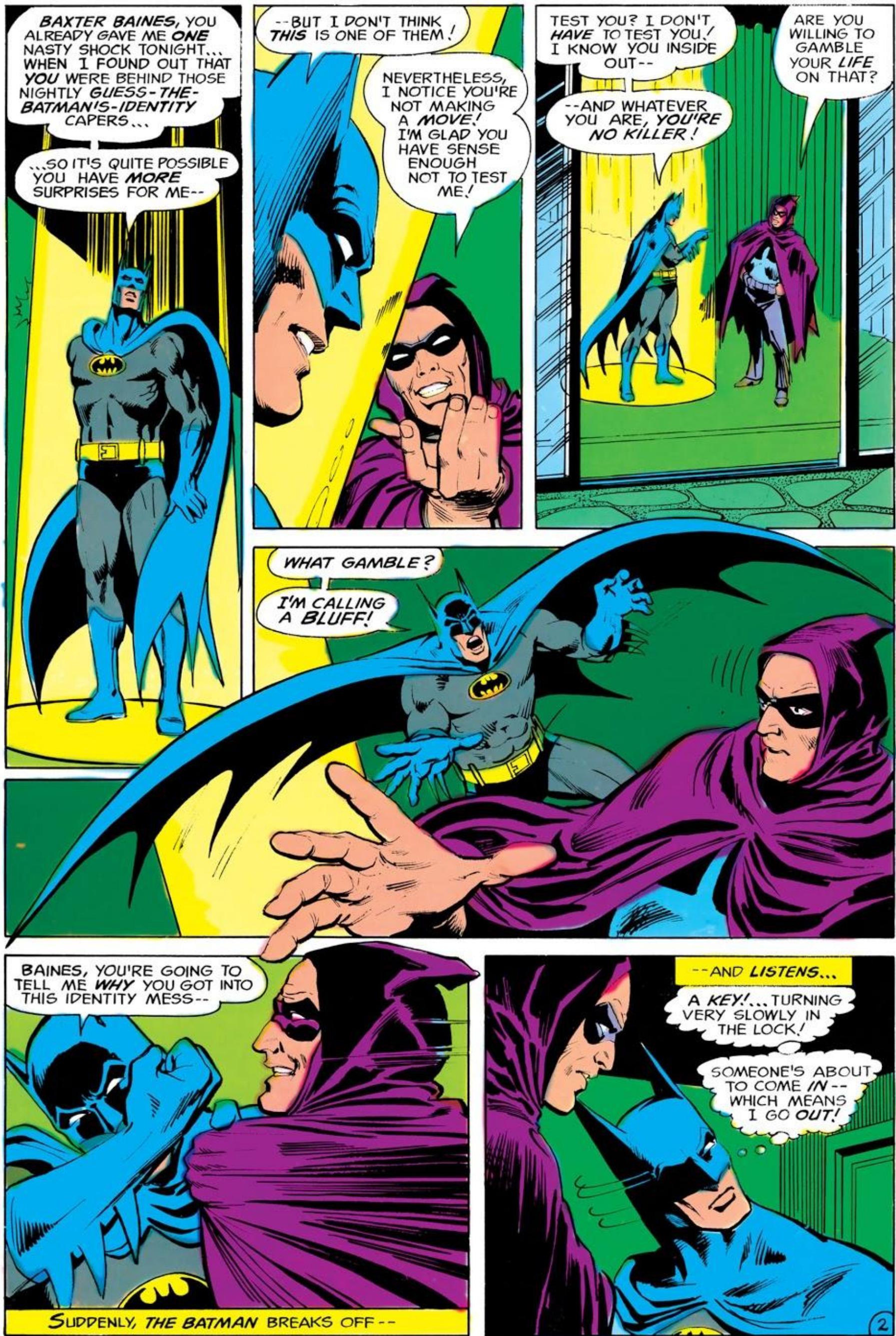
ONE STEP OUTSIDE THAT CIRCLE-- AND YOU'RE A DEAD BATMAN!

S-2780

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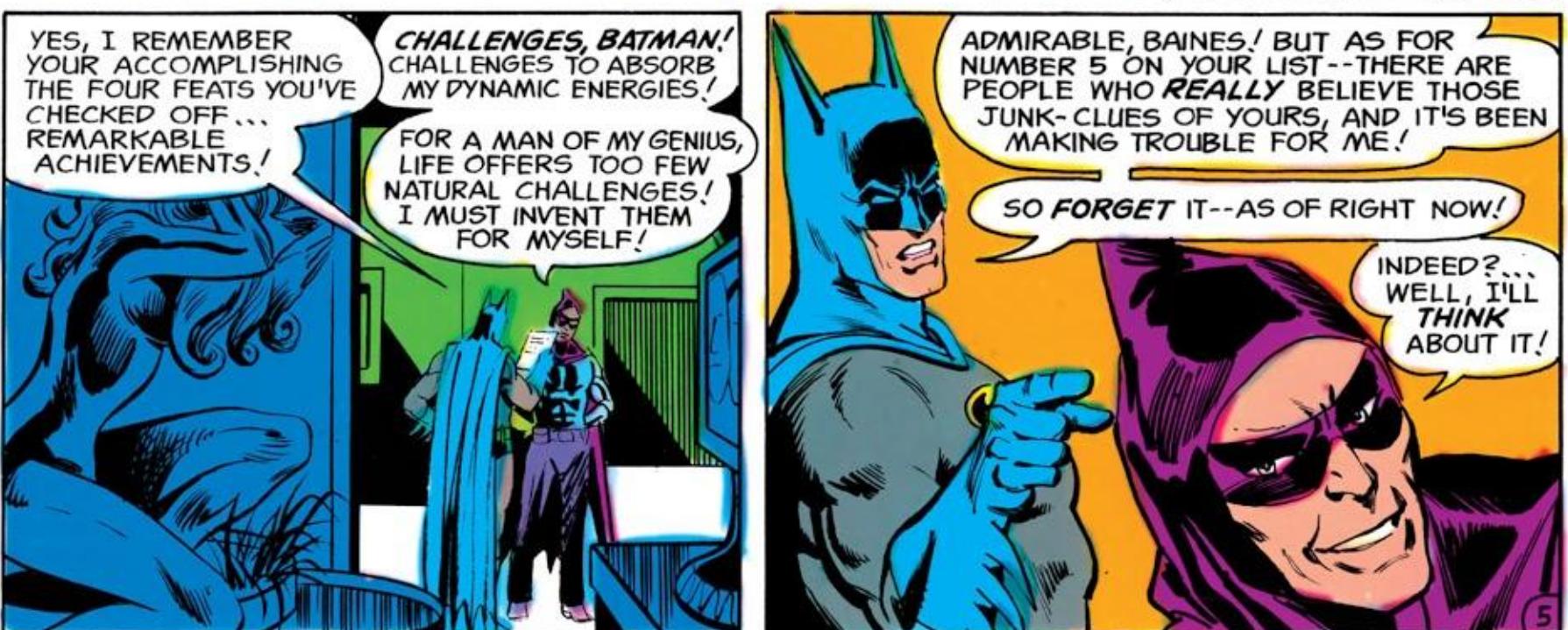
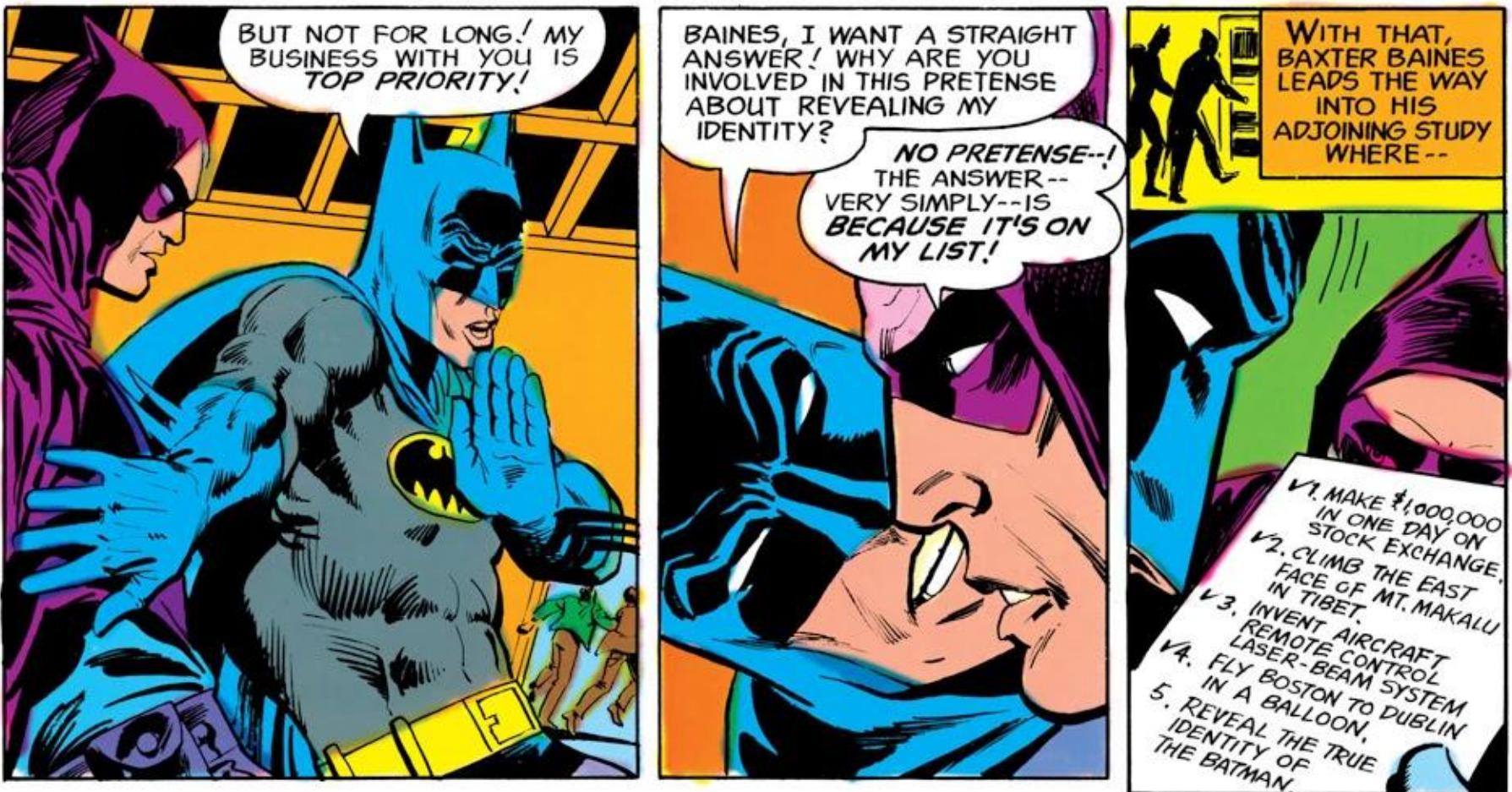
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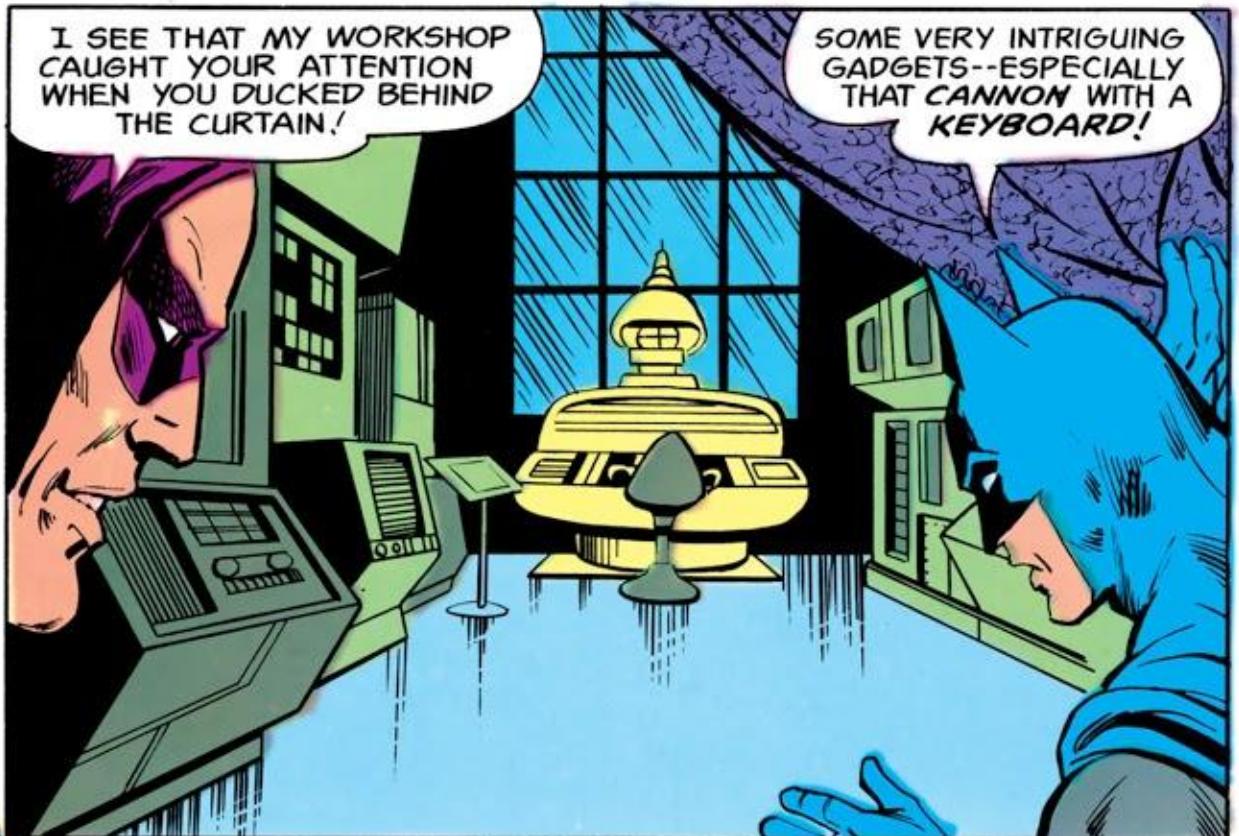




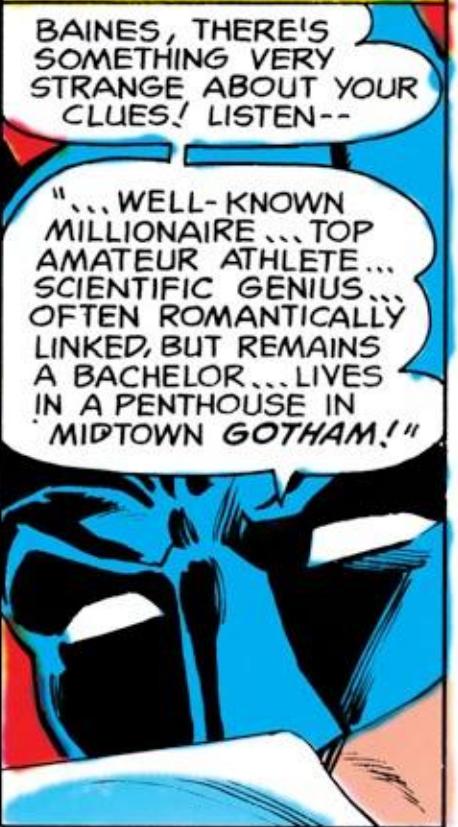
WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD,
THE BATMAN WHIRLS--
HOW SUPREMELY CONFIDENT
HE IS... AS THOUGH HE'S
ALREADY SETTLED THIS
ISSUE--AND WON!

THE WAY HE GREETED ME...
VERY GRAND, VERY DRAMATIC
--BUT IT SAID TOO MUCH!

WAITING FOR ME, WAS HE?
LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT SOME
OF THAT HARDWARE
I GLIMPSED!



FOR A MOMENT, THE
BATMAN STUDIES THE
SHEET--THEN...



NOTICE-- WHETHER OR
NOT THEY DESCRIBE ME
--ALL APPLY TO YOU!

YOU IDENTIFY WITH ME!
SUBCONSCIOUSLY YOU
THINK YOU COULD BE
THE BATMAN
YOURSELF!

SUBCONSCIOUSLY,
NOTHING! YOU'RE
NOT IRREPLACEABLE,
BATMAN! I DON'T
DENY IT HAS GREAT
APPEAL FOR ME--
THE SPORT-- THE
HUNT-- THE
GAMESMANSHP!







YOU FINALLY COMPREHEND, BATMAN! ALL I'D HAVE HAD TO DO WAS WATCH THE MIDTOWN AREA--THE PLACES YOUR ALTER EGO MUST FREQUENT--

--RESTAURANTS...DISCOS...OFFICE BUILDINGS-- AND LONG BEFORE THAT EFFECT WORE OFF... I'D PICK YOU OUT OF A CROWD FROM HALF A MILE AWAY!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, BATMAN?
SPEECHLESS WITH ADMIRATION?

LET'S PUT YOUR TREBUCHET TO WORK A LITTLE AHEAD OF SCHEDULE! REMEMBER, EVERY CLUE YOU GAVE SO FAR ACTUALLY PERTAINS TO YOU!

BUT NOW WE'LL MAKE THAT UNMISTAKABLE--WITH CLUE NUMBER 5!

BATMAN
CLUE 5:
HIS REAL
INITIALS
ARE B.B.

BAXTER, IN SPITE OF YOURSELF, YOU HAVE PROVIDED ME WITH A BREAK I BADLY NEEDED!

SO I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A BREAK TOO--A CHANCE TO REALIZE YOUR SECRET AMBITION!

B.B.?
B-BUT I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THE WORLD WHO FITS ALL FIVE CLUES!

--AND WHOEVER WANTS TO TAKE A CRACK AT THE BATMAN WILL NOW KNOW WHERE TO COME--TO TAKE A CRACK AT YOU!

THE MORE IMPORTANT QUESTION IS WHEN? BUT DON'T WORRY--YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE THE BATMAN!

SEE IF IT REALLY IS YOUR AMBITION--OR SHOULD I SAY--YOUR GAME?

B-BATMAN--
Y-YOU'VE SIGNED
MY DEATH
WARRANT!

LET'S
WAIT...
AND
SEE...!

THIRTY MINUTES LATER...

BAINES GOT THE MESSAGE!
HERE COMES AN ARMORED TRUCK--AND HALF A DOZEN GUARDS WITH SHOTGUNS!

--AND THERE GOES BAINES--RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE TO WHO KNOWS WHERE!

--WHICH LEAVES THINGS JUST THE WAY I WANT THEM--FOR TOMORROW NIGHT!



EARLY NEXT MORNING, THE HOME OF THE BATMAN'S PUBLIC PERSONA-- BRUCE WAYNE, MILLIONAIRE INDUSTRIALIST AND NOTABLE MAN ABOUT TOWN-- WHERE A GRINDING DAY OF SUSPENSE AND URGENT PREPARATION IS ALREADY WELL UNDER WAY...



...DOWN IN THE BATCAVE...

ALFRED, CALL THE OFFICE AND CANCEL ALL MY APPOINTMENTS FOR THE DAY!

INCLUDING YOUR LUNCH APPOINTMENT WITH MISS PHOEBE, SIR? THE LAST TIME YOU BROKE A DATE WITH--

EVERYTHING!

HOURS PASS...

HMM... APPARENTLY BAINES MISCALCULATED SOMEWHAT. THE EFFECT IS BEGINNING TO WEAR OFF... BUT IT'S ALREADY LASTED LONG ENOUGH FOR MY PURPOSES!

THEN, A BRIEF RESPIRE...

THIS MAY INTEREST YOU, MASTER BRUCE... I TAPED PART OF THE NOON TV NEWS!

EVERYONE SEEMS TO AGREE THAT LAST NIGHT'S FIFTH CLUE IN THE ONGOING BATMAN GUESING GAME REFERS TO NONE OTHER THAN BAXTER BAINES! RIDICULOUS, YOU SAY? SO DOES COMMISSIONER GORDON-- BUT HE WOULD SAY THAT EVEN IF IT WERE TRUE!



--AND SPEAKING OF BUZZING, THE HOT-LINE FROM COMMISSIONER GORDON HASN'T STOPPED!

IGNORE IT! THIS OVERHAUL WILL TAKE ME RIGHT UP TO THE DEADLINE!

IF I'M LUCKY, I'LL GET ONE CHANCE TONIGHT... BECAUSE IF THEY'RE COMING AT ALL, THEY'LL COME FAST!

THAT EVENING... A BLOOD-RED SUNSET SLOWLY TURNING TO DUSK... THEN DARKNESS TAKES THE CITY. IT IS TIME FOR THE NIGHT-CRAWLERS--





FOR ALMOST AN HOUR, THE UNSEEN "BAT" AND BOAT SPEED UP RIVER, THEN EAST ACROSS GOTHAM BAY TO ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE OCEAN. THERE, CREATED BY THE ABRUPT TEMPERATURE CHANGE OF THE WATERS --



--HUGE BANKS OF PURPLE MIST SUDDENLY ENVELOP THEM...



GENTLY... SOUNDLESSLY... DROPS THE BATCOPTER, THEN, AT 200 FEET, THE HAZE RARIFIES... SCATTERS... UNTIL...



MOMENTS LATER...

POLICE STILL GUARD THE PLACE -- BUT THE BATMAN WAS GONE! HE MUST HAVE FLED THE CITY!



AND THAT CONTROL CAN BE REAFFIRMED IN ONLY ONE WAY-- THE SACRIFICIAL RITES!
FOR DAYS WE HAVE POSTPONED DESTROYING ALDRICH, BECAUSE I GAVE MY WORD THAT THE BATMAN WOULD DIE WITH HIM IN A DOUBLE CEREMONY!



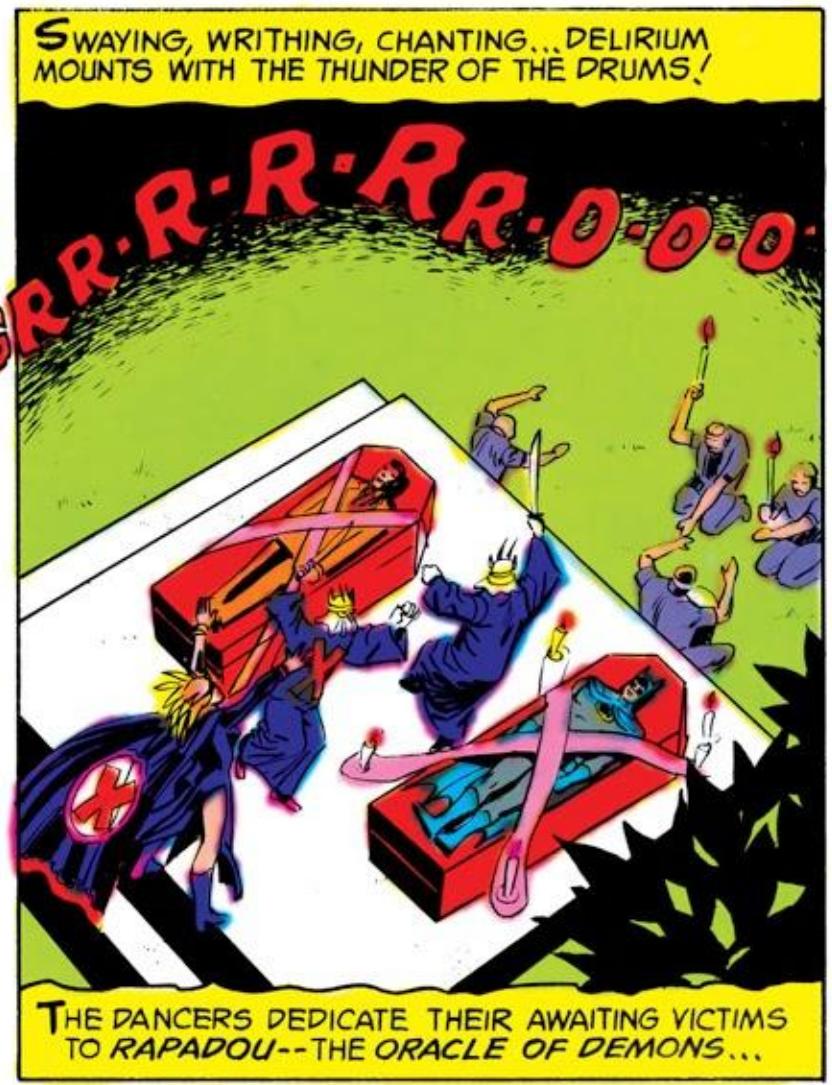
FLED?... THAT FIEND OF DARKNESS? NO, RICO, UNLESS WE FIND HIM AND PUT AN END TO HIM, HE WILL FIND US... AND END US!

BUT WE CAN WAIT NO LONGER! MY WORD MUST BE UPHELD!

THE RITES WILL TAKE PLACE NOW! ALDRICH AND THE BATMAN WILL DIE TOGETHER!







WHEREUPON THE GROVE ERUPTS IN CONVULSIVE FRENZY!

THEN, FROM WHERE THE NEXT VICTIM HAD AWAITED DEATH -- SUDDENLY THERE STANDS THE AVENGING BATMAN -- THE REAL BATMAN -- SHADY SCOURGE OF THE SERVANTS OF SATAN!...



THE
BATMAN,
LIVES!

NO!
HIS SPIRIT
HAS RISEN.

AND THE "RISEN SPIRIT" ENTERS INTO THE SPIRIT OF THE OCCASION -- WREAKING RACK AND RUIN ...



... DEALING DEFEAT
TO THE DISCIPLES OF
DOOM!...



FINISHED!
EXCEPT FOR--

THERE
SHE IS!

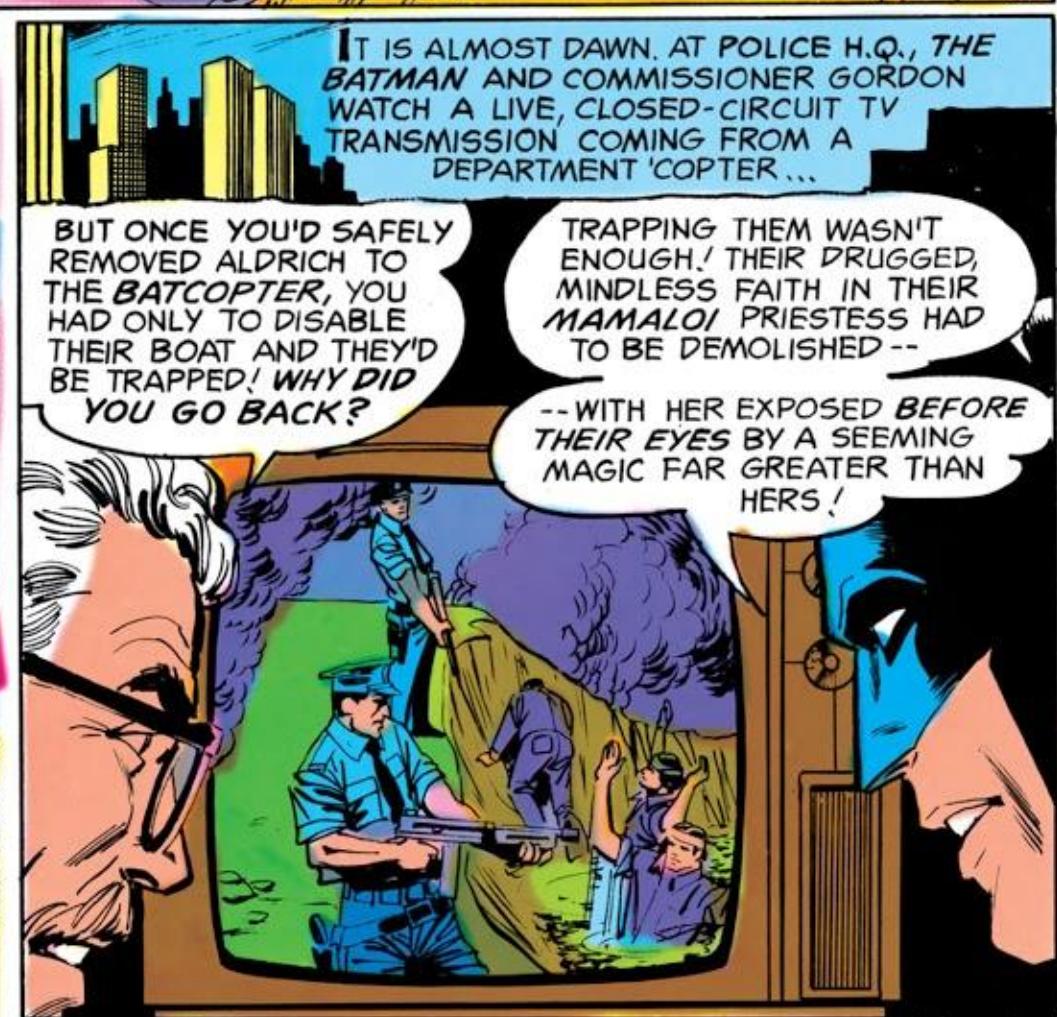
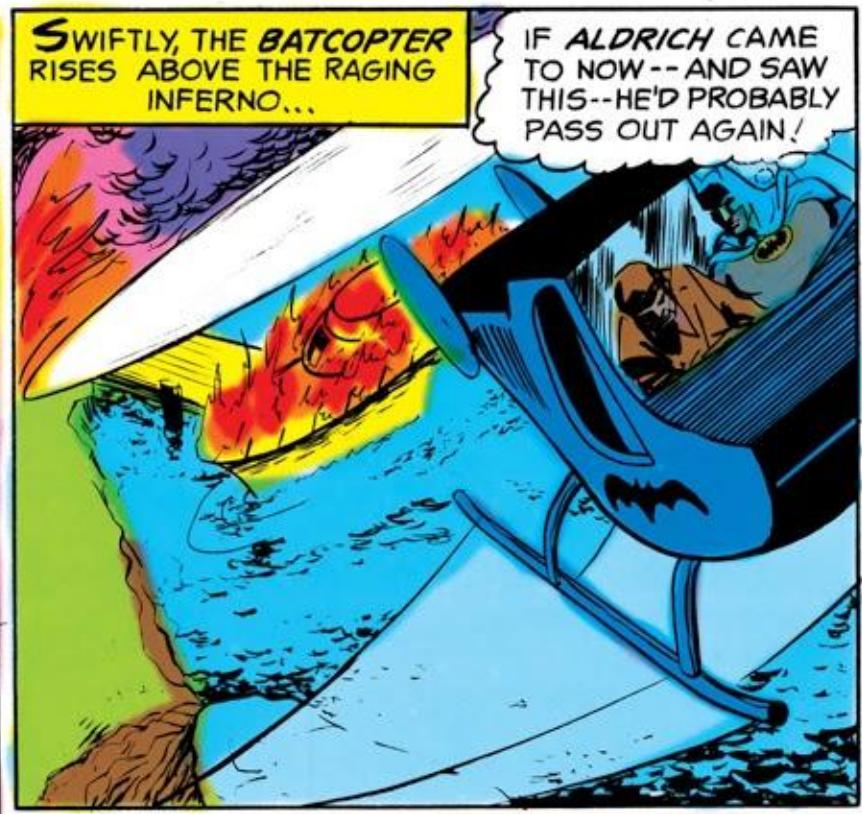
ZOK

B-BATMAN...
SAVE ME!

SAVE YOURSELF,
PRIESTESS!

HEAD FOR
THE WATER--
WITH THE
REST OF THE
RATS!





"THEIR NATIVE RECRUITS WERE FAMILIAR WITH CARIBAN WITCHCRAFT... AND THEIR PRIESTESS MAGNIFIED THEIR PRIMITIVE FEARS AND SUPERSTITIONS WITH SYSTEMATIC DOSES OF AN HALLUCINOGEN AND ANESTHETIC--VAPORIZED BY FIRE..."



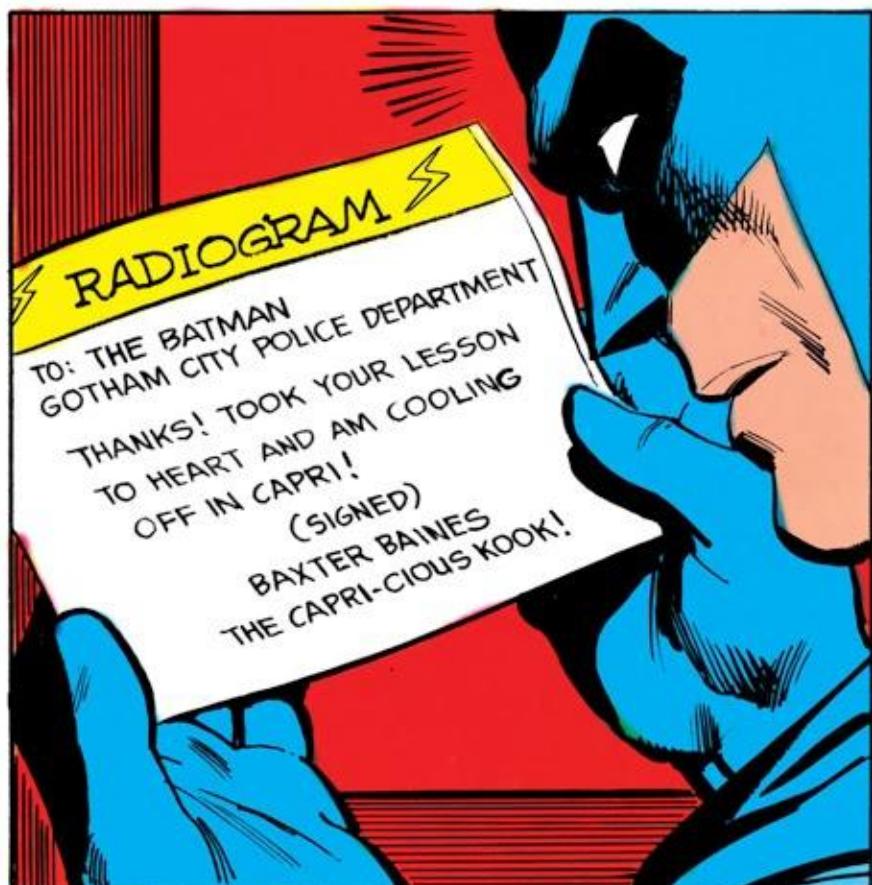
"I'D GUESSED AS MUCH WHEN I FIRST SAW ITS EFFECTS -- PUPILS ABNORMALLY CONTRACTED WITH SEVERE MYOSIS -- SO I WAS WELL-PREPARED WITH NASAL FILTERS... AS DOUBTLESS WERE A CHOSEN FEW OF THE CULT..."



"BUT IT WORKED OUT EVEN BETTER THAN I HOPED! THEIR ATTACK DOGS WERE LOCKED-UP AND THEIR GUNMEN UNARMED..."

YOU SEE, SIR, I EXPECTED THEY'D GO FOR ALDRICH FIRST-- TO BUILD THE HYSTERIA FOR THE BATMAN'S EXECUTION -- AND THEY PROBABLY WOULD'VE IF RICO HADN'T STIRRED!

AS IT WAS, ONE INSTANT THEY'D KILLED THE BATMAN AND WERE READY TO GO AT ALDRICH-- AND SUDDENLY ALDRICH WAS GONE AND ANOTHER BATMAN HAD MATERIALIZED!





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