



INTRODUCING NOCTURNA!

ALL NEW!
60¢

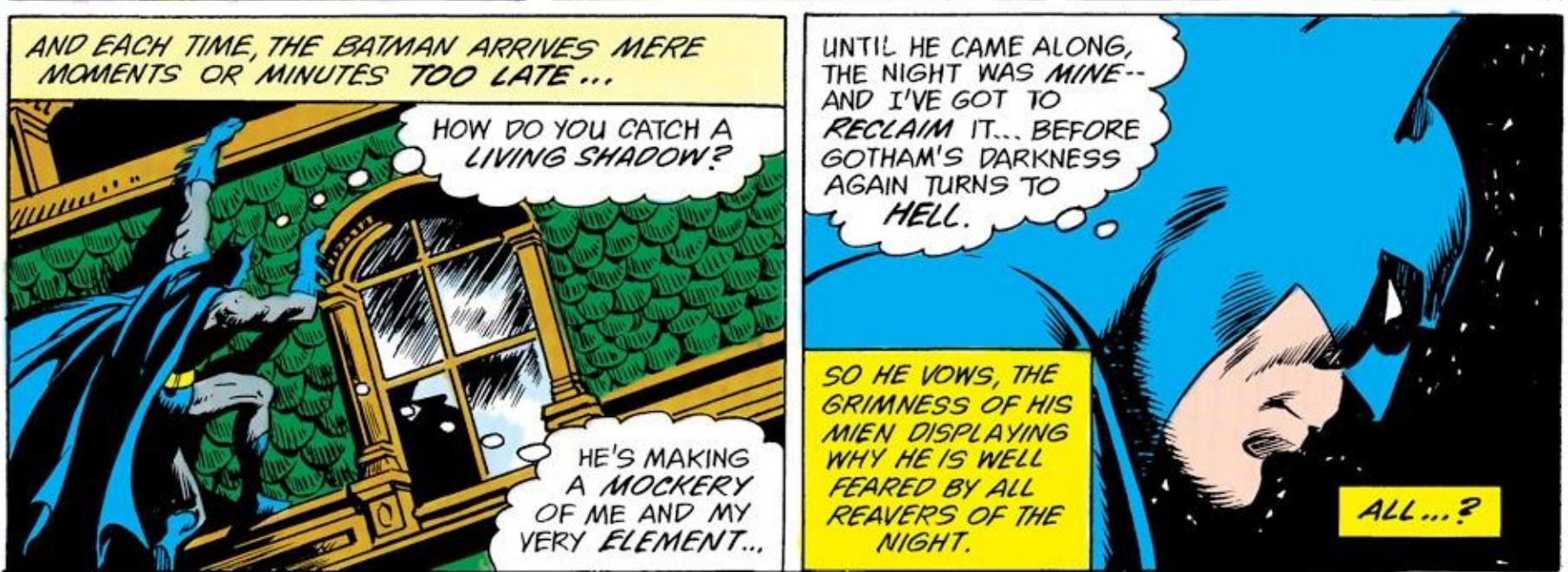
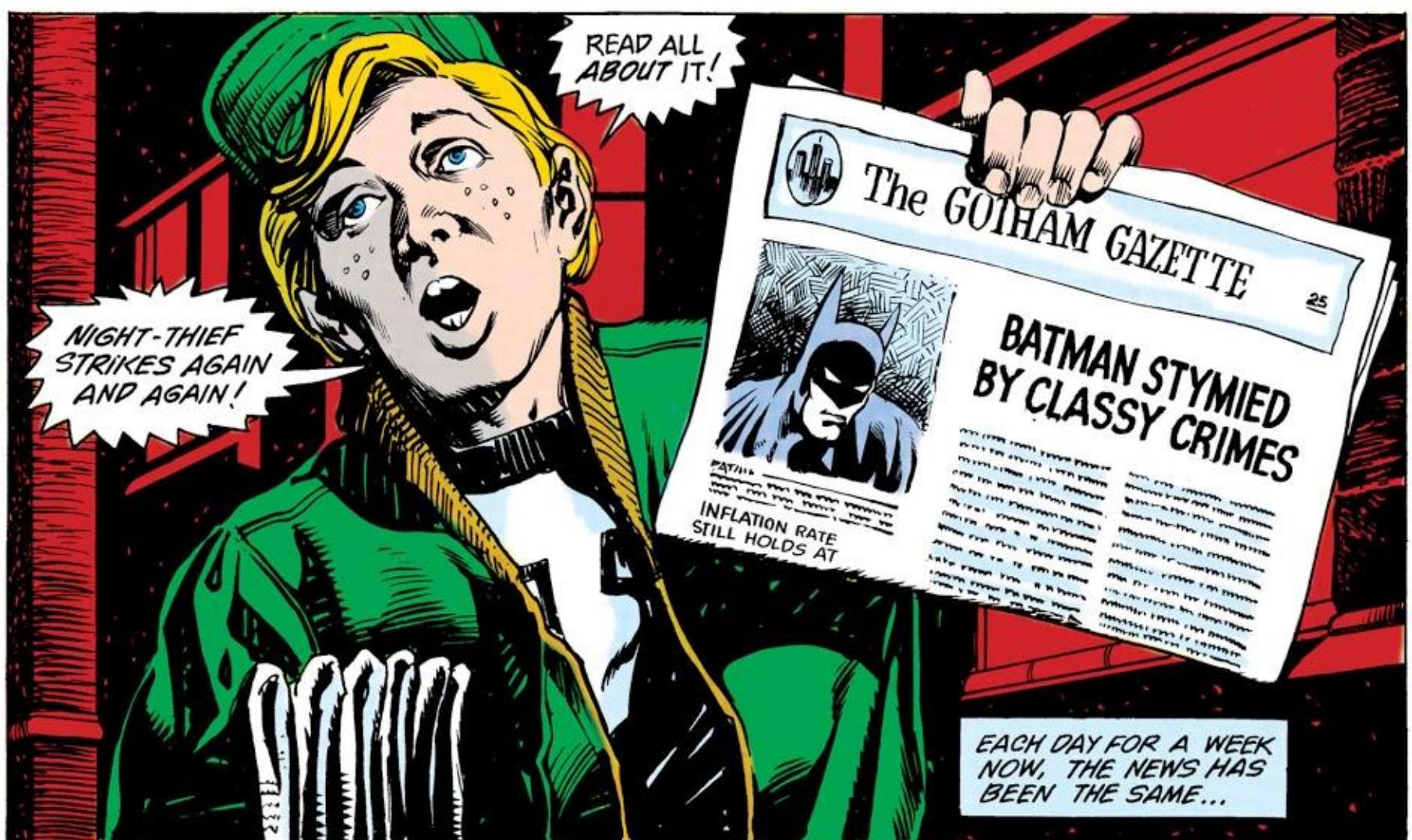
NO. 363
SEPT.

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AA
AUTHORITY

BATMAN



HANNIGAN
GIORDANO



NOT QUITE--AS THESE TWO DENIZENS OF A PLUSH TOWNHOUSE TESTIFY, QUIETLY EXULTING IN THE FRUITS OF THEIR...

Elegant NIGHT CRIMES

BAT-MAN®

A NEW TALE OF MENACE AND MOOD IN THE ANNALS OF THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE KNOWN AS--

I HAVE RETURNED FROM THE DARKNESS, MY MISTRESS OF THE NIGHT, BEARING GIFTS FIT FOR YOUR BEAUTY.

SO YOU HAVE, ANTON. YOU ARE A MOST APPRECIATIVE SUITOR...

I DO IT ALL FOR LOVE--I DO IT ALL FOR YOU, NOCTURNA.

AND THE PALE CREATURE WHO IS NOCTURNA SHAPES HER LIPS INTO THE GHOST OF A SMILE. REMOTE AND LANGUID, SHE IS ELUSIVE AND MELANCHOLY... ETHEREAL AND BEWITCHING.

HER WHITE FLESH SHEATHED IN BLACK SATIN, SHE IS A HAUNTING PARADOX. MYSTERIOUS AND SEDUCTIVE, SHE IS NIGHT.

SHE IS NOCTURNA.

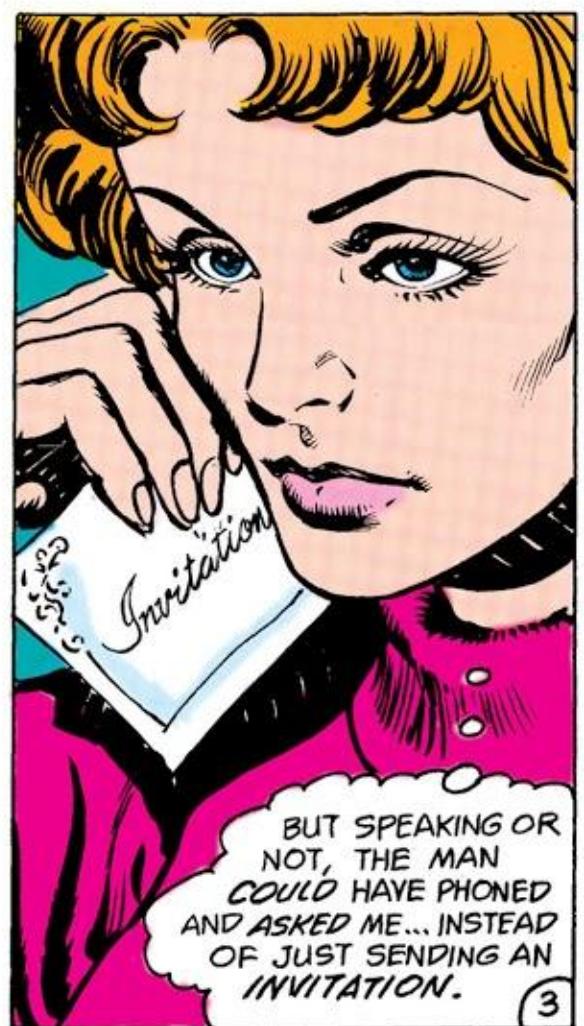
DOUG
MOENCH
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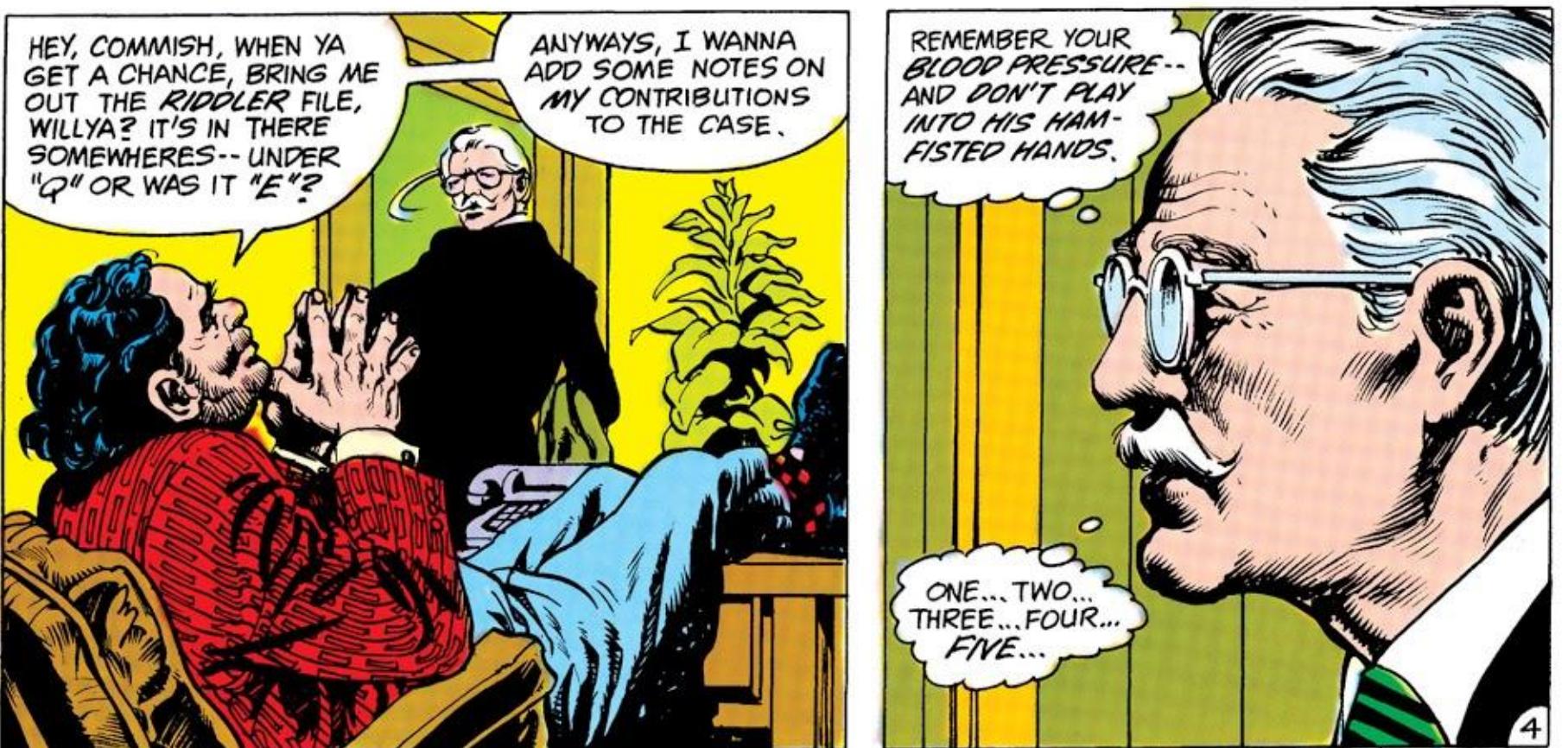
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NEWTON
ARTIST

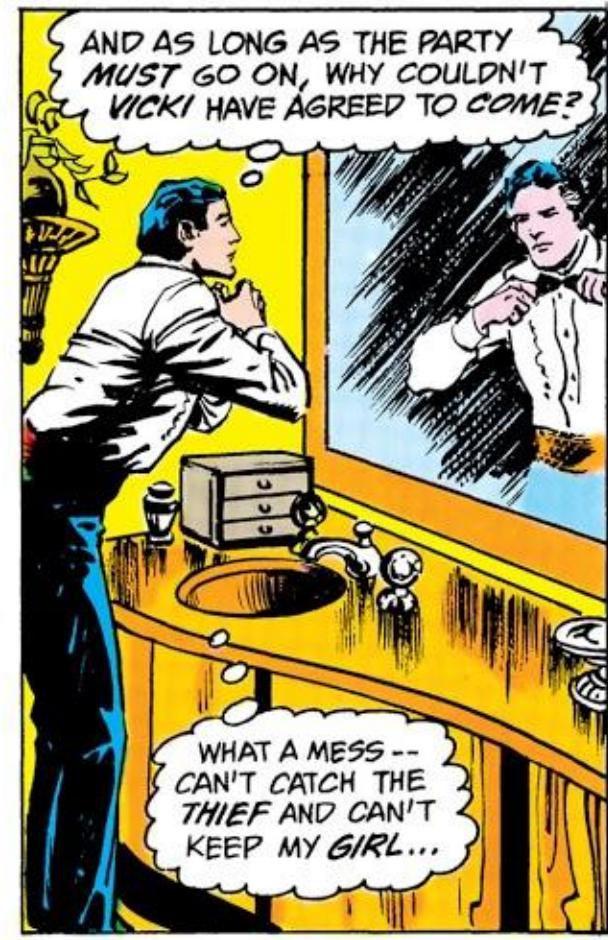
ALFREDO
ACCALA
INKER

BEN ODA.....LETTERER
ADRIENNE ROY....COLORIST

LEN
WEIN
EDITOR

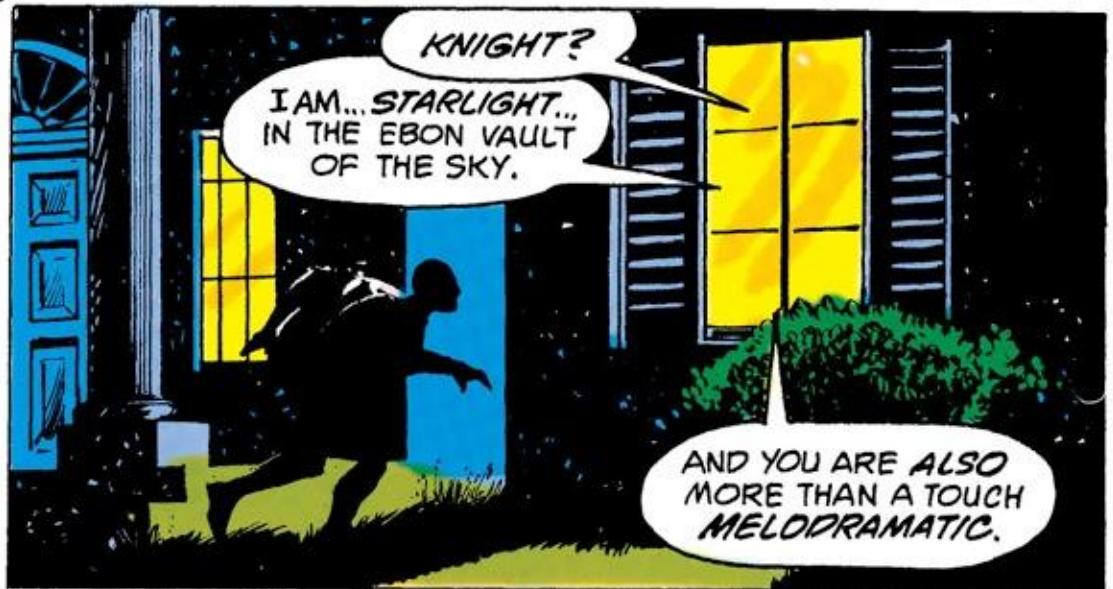






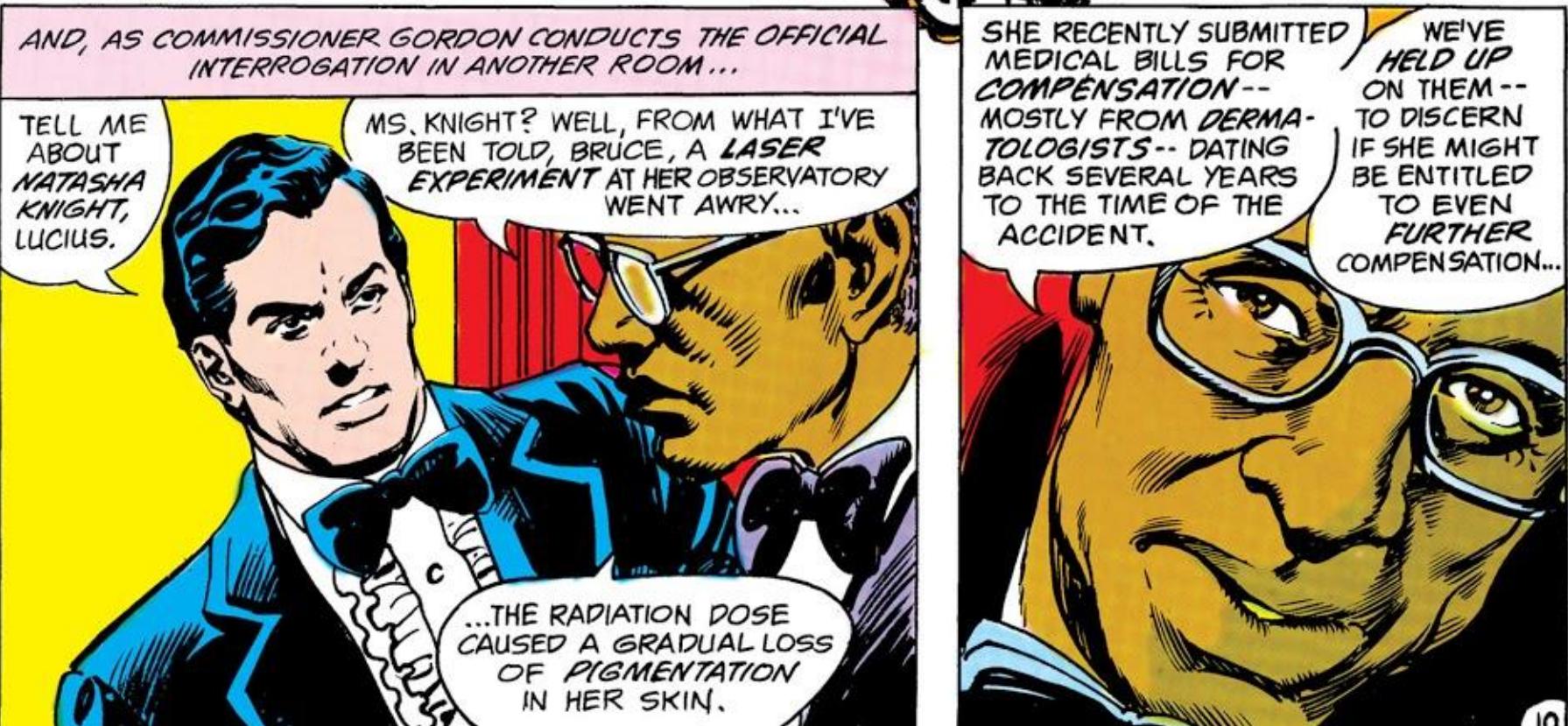


--AND YET, HAVE YOU NEVER APPRECIATED THE BLOSSOMING OF A FLOWER, NATASHA?

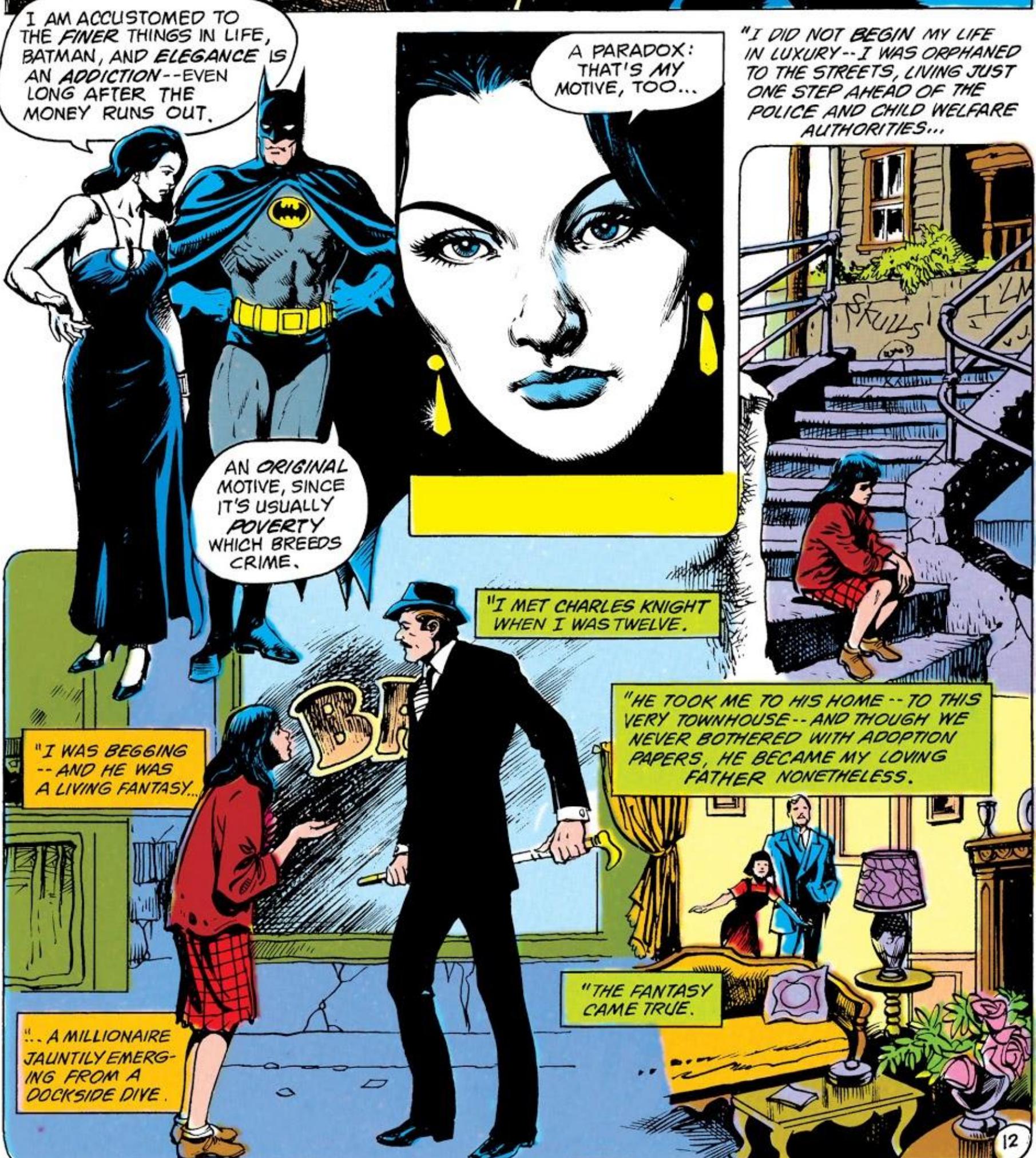












"ONE NIGHT YEARS LATER, WHEN I HAD MATURED INTO A YOUNG WOMAN, HE FAILED TO RETURN HOME."

"I PACED EVERY ROOM ON ALL THREE FLOORS, NEARLY OUT OF MY MIND WITH WORRY..."

"THEN CAME THE KNOCK ON THE DOOR."

I'M SORRY, MISS, BUT CHARLES KNIGHT HAS BEEN MURDERED BY FOUR MEMBERS OF A RIVAL GANG.

"IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT I LEARNED WHERE MY FATHER'S MONEY TRULY CAME FROM..."

"...AND THAT OUR GOOD LIFE HAD BEEN FINANCED BY CRIME."

BUT ONCE I'D HAD A TASTE OF THAT LIFE, I COULDN'T GO BACK.

IF CRIME, AND THE NIGHT, BROUGHT ME ELEGANCE -- WHILE THE DAYLIGHT'S STRAIGHT AND NARROW PATH LED TO NOTHING BUT MISERY AND DEGRADATION.

WELL, LET'S JUST SAY... I DECIDED TO PURSUE ELEGANCE.

THERE'S SOMETHING IN MY NATURE, BATMAN, PERHAPS SOMETHING IN THE NATURE OF EVERYONE...

...WHICH EVER STRIVES FOR SOMETHING BETTER.

AND ONCE SOMETHING BETTER HAS BEEN ATTAINED, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TAKE A STEP BACK DOWN TO ANYTHING LESS.

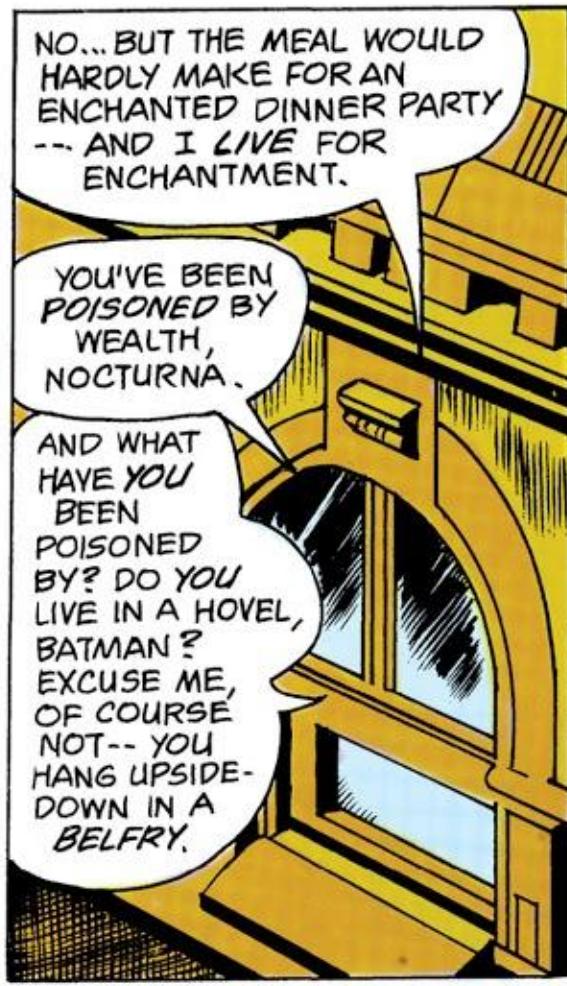
AFTER THE SMOOTH, COOL CARESS OF PEARLS, PASTE WOULD BURN MY SKIN.

AND THE ACCIDENT WHICH TURNED MY SKIN PALLID AND RENDERED ME HYPER-SENSITIVE TO LIGHT ONLY REINFORCED MY DEVOTION TO THE NIGHT AND ITS ELEGANCE.

ONCE I'D OWNED A MERCEDES, I COULD NEVER AGAIN BE SATISFIED WITH A... A VOLKSWAGEN. AFTER THE SWEET INTOXICATION OF THE FINEST CONCERT HALLS IN EUROPE, I COULD NEVER GO BACK TO A BEER-HOUSE JUKE-JOINT.

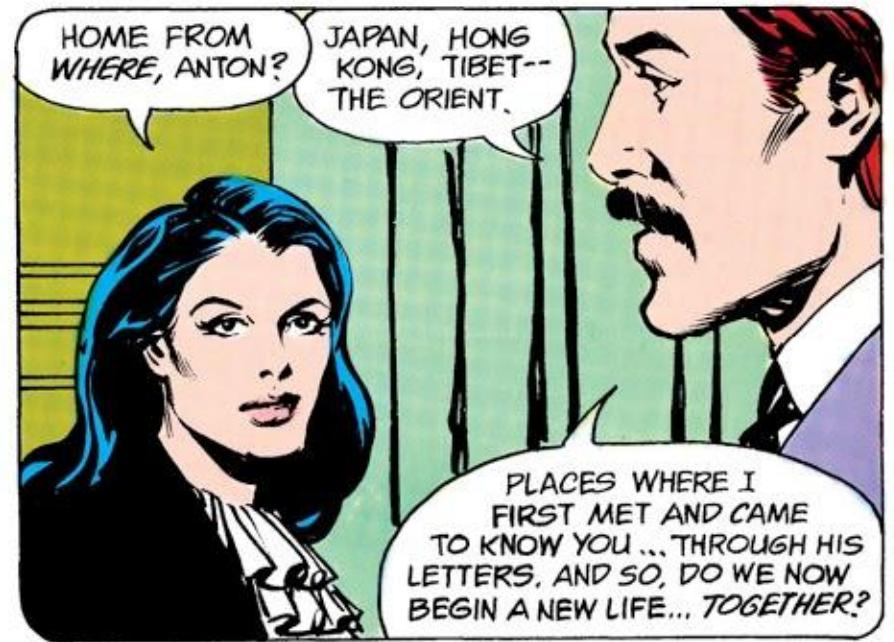
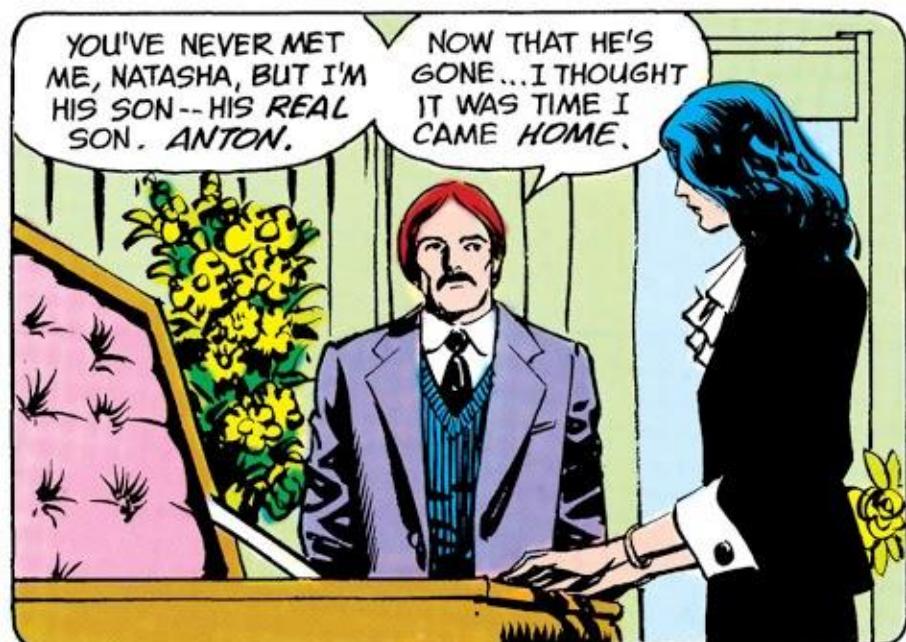
ONCE I'D HEARD THE FINEST STEREO MONEY COULD BUY, A TRANSISTOR RADIO MERELY HURT MY EARS.

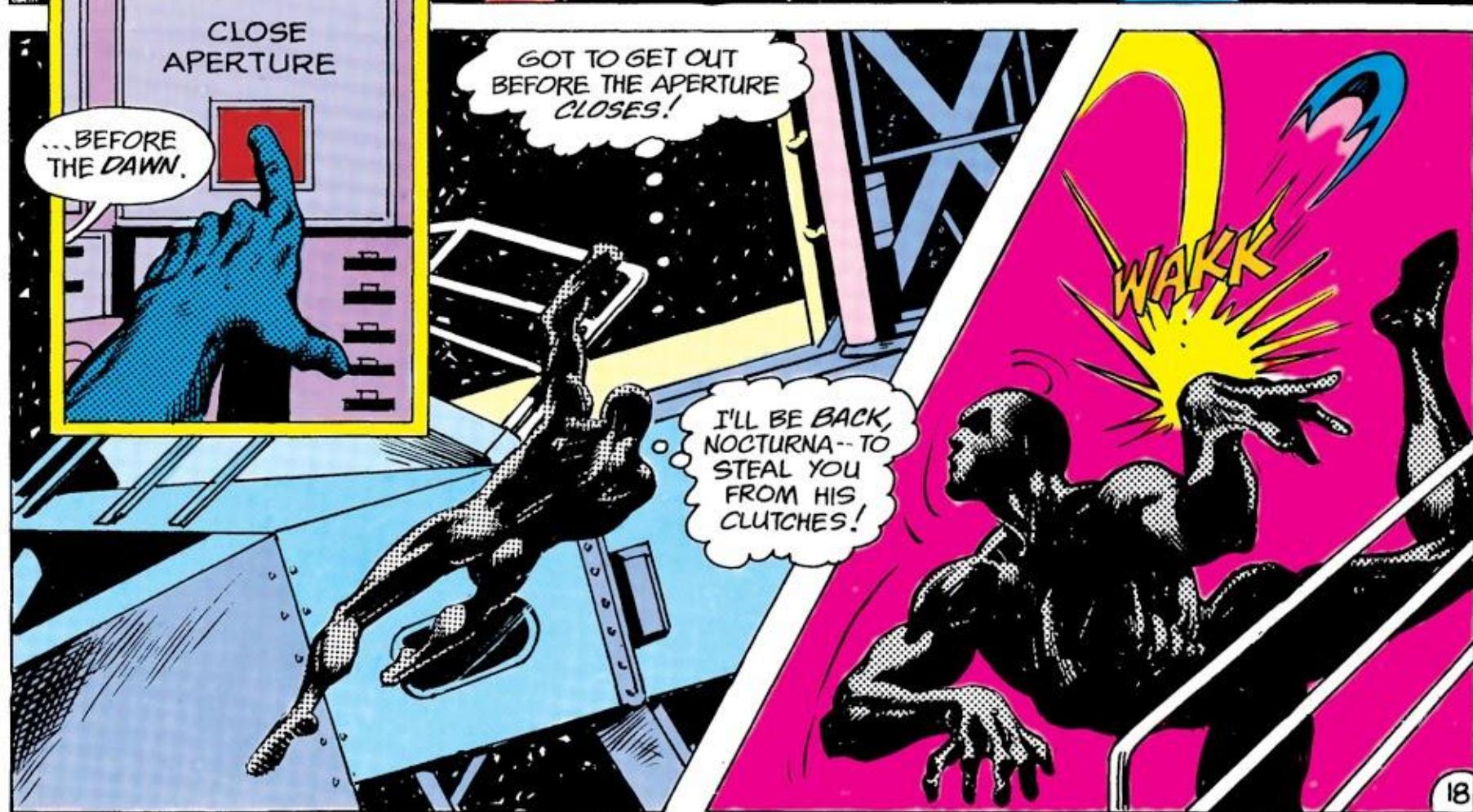
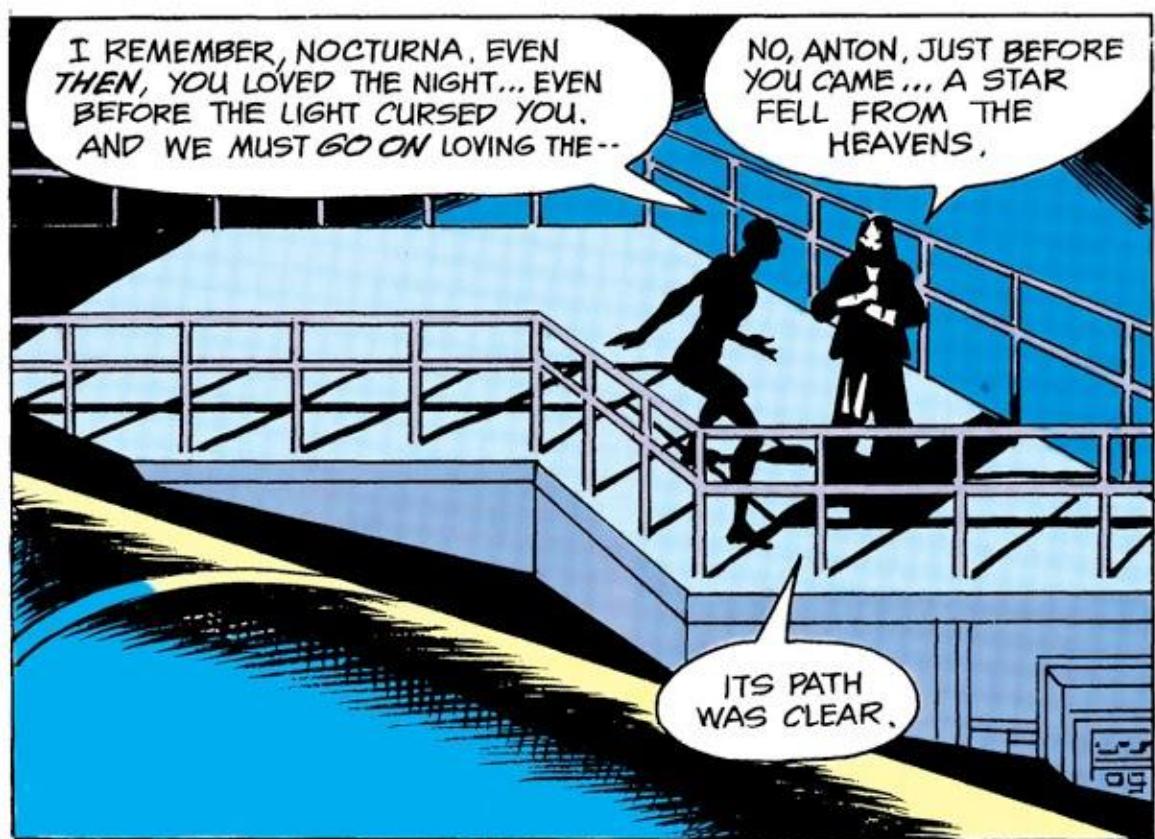
DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, BATMAN?

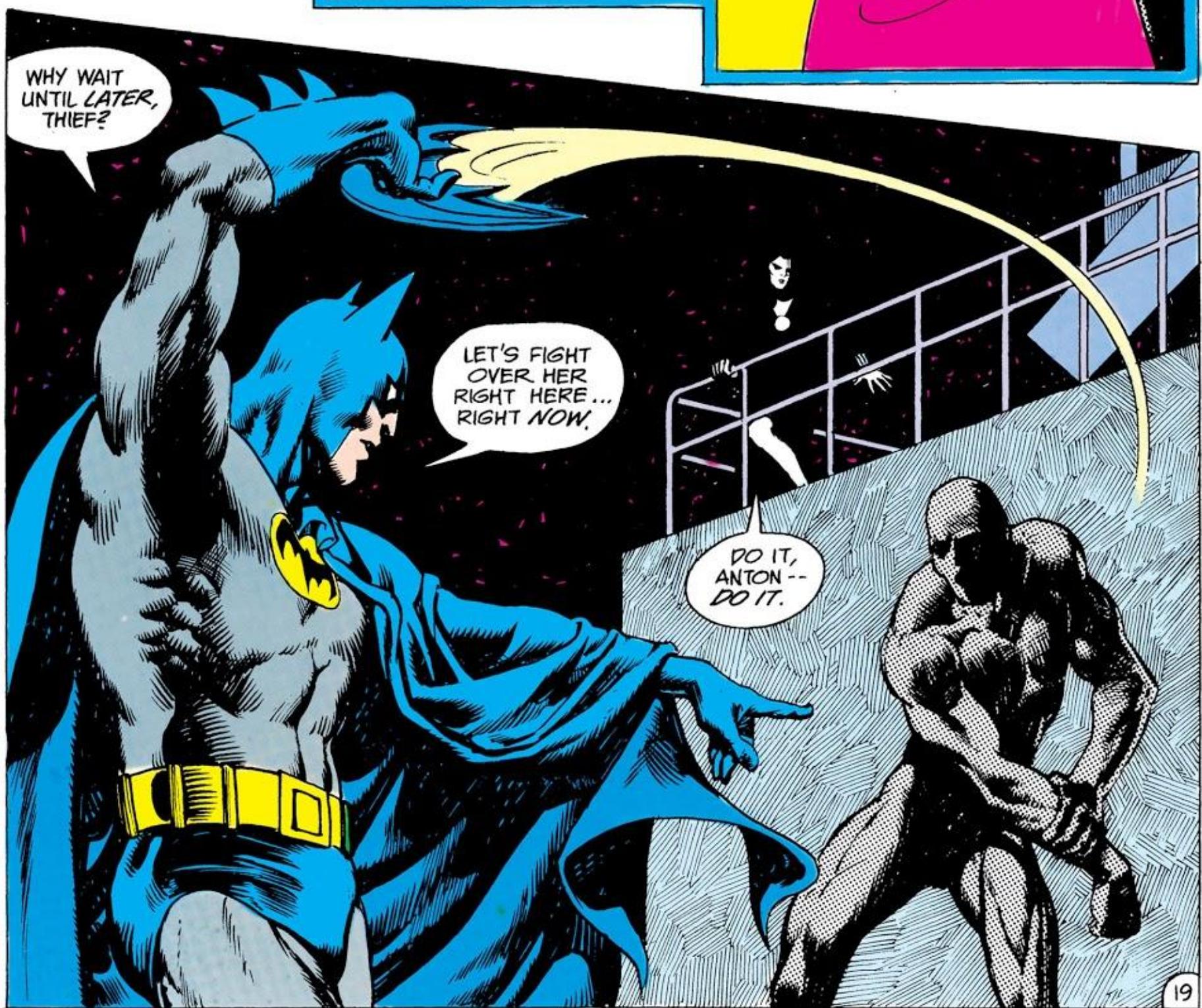












SLOWLY, SERENELY, AS IF RETREATING BEYOND THE SWEEP OF METALLIC CLOUDS, THE MAJESTY OF NIGHT IS ECLIPSED...

...UNTIL THE BATMAN STANDS WITHOUT EVEN THE BENEFIT OF STARSHINE --



IT'S INSANE! EVERY TIME I TRY TO COUNTER--

--HE FADES AWAY--

--ONLY TO RETURN WITH AN EVEN DEADLIER ATTACK!





BUT THEN, LOOKING
QUICKLY AROUND, THE
DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE
FINDS--

NOCTURNA'S
GONE... BUT THE
DOORS ARE STILL
LOCKED-- FROM
THE INSIDE...

EH--?
THE APERTURE--
IT'S OPEN AGAIN...

FAREWELL, BATMAN
-- UNTIL THE NIGHT
AGAIN BRINGS US
TOGETHER...

THAT VOICE-- IT'S HER
BUT WHERE--?

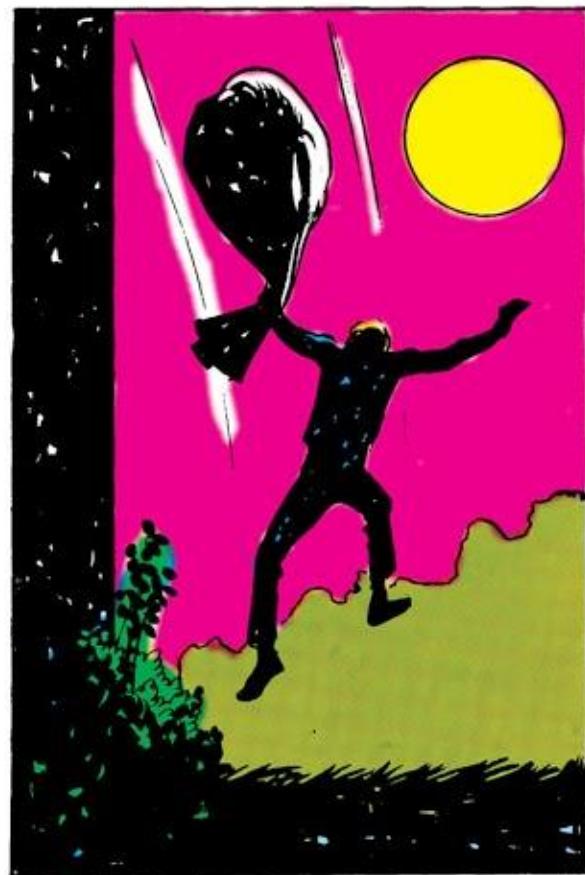
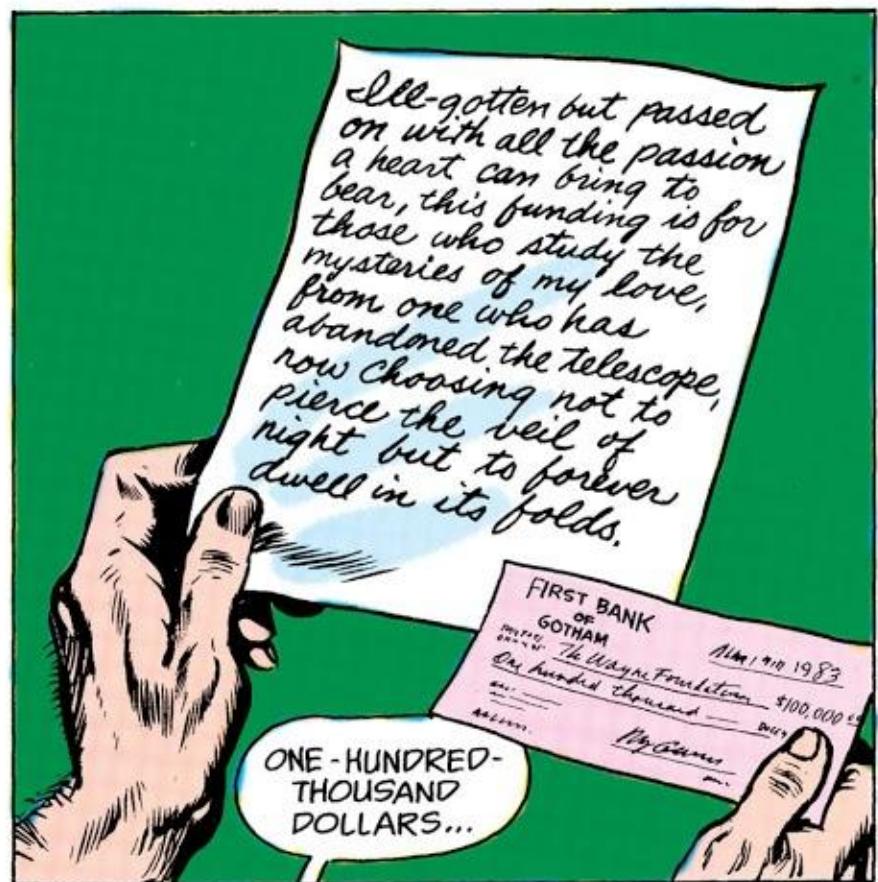
THE GLISTENING WHITE-
NESS OF THE MOON
TELLS THE TALE: A
THIEF OF NIGHT HAS
BEEN CAPTURED...

...BUT NIGHT HERSELF,
AS ELUSIVE AS THE
BEAUTY OF A WOMAN
GLIMPSED AFAR, HAS
SLIPPED AWAY...

...FREE UNTIL
THE DAWN.

DAMN
HER.

DAMN THE
NIGHT.





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