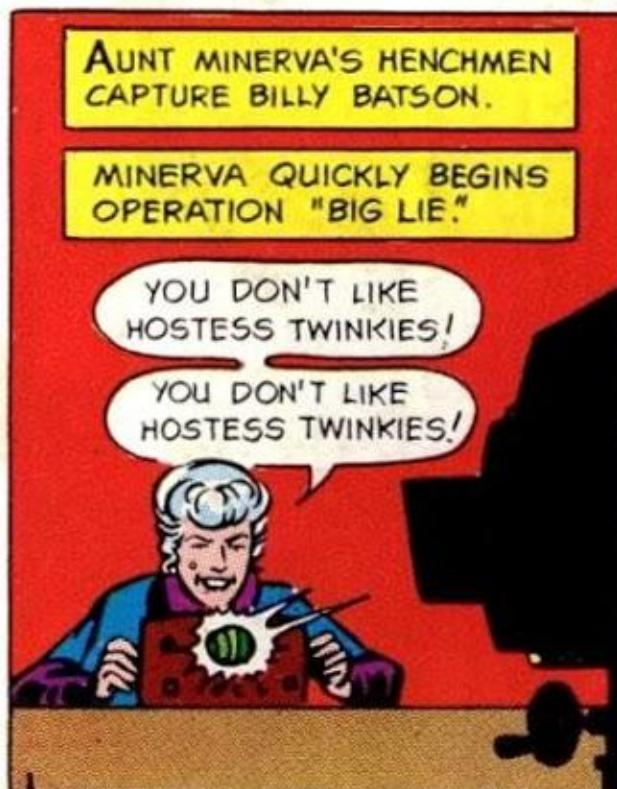


# SHAZAM!

THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL FIGHTS THE...  
**MINERVA MENACE!**



# AN UNDERWORLD OLYMPICS '76 STORY



WRITER  
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ARTIST  
ERNIE CHUA

EDITOR  
JULIUS SCHWARTZ

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**THE UNDERWORLD OLYMPICS '76 ARE NOW AT THE HALFWAY MARK... AND THE ARISTOCRACY OF OUTLAW SOCIETY-- THE MASTERS OF CRIME IN EVERY FORM AND FASHION-- GATHER AGAIN AT THEIR SECRET HQ... TO CONTINUE THEIR DEADLY COMPETITION--**

AS YOU SEE, THE PRECEDING SCORES ARE RELATIVELY LOW-- BUT DEFINITELY ON THE RISE-- AS WE MOVE ON TO OUR THIRD TEAM-- THE AFRO-ASIAN BLOC!

THEY HAVE DECIDED TO COMBINE FORCES, USING ONLY THEIR SUPREME OPERATIVES-- THREE FROM EACH CONTINENT!



A HUSH FALLS AS THE AFRO-ASIAN TEAM LEADER-- THE CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL AMBA KADIRI-- CHOOSES BETWEEN THE REMAINING ASSIGNMENTS--

FRIENDS, THE DOUBLE-A HAS CHOSEN A VENTURE TO TAX THE FINEST CRIMINAL MINDS AMONG US!

THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO A TREASURE HUNT-- WITHOUT KNOWING THE NATURE OF THE TREASURE THEY'RE HUNTING!

I SELECT THIS ONE-- ACCORDING TO THE DICTATES OF MY KARMA!\*

ONLY THE CLUE TO THE FIRST PHASE HAS BEEN GIVEN THEM!

EVERYTHING ELSE IS FOR THEM TO DISCOVER AND DECRYPT-- IN THE NEXT 48 HOURS!

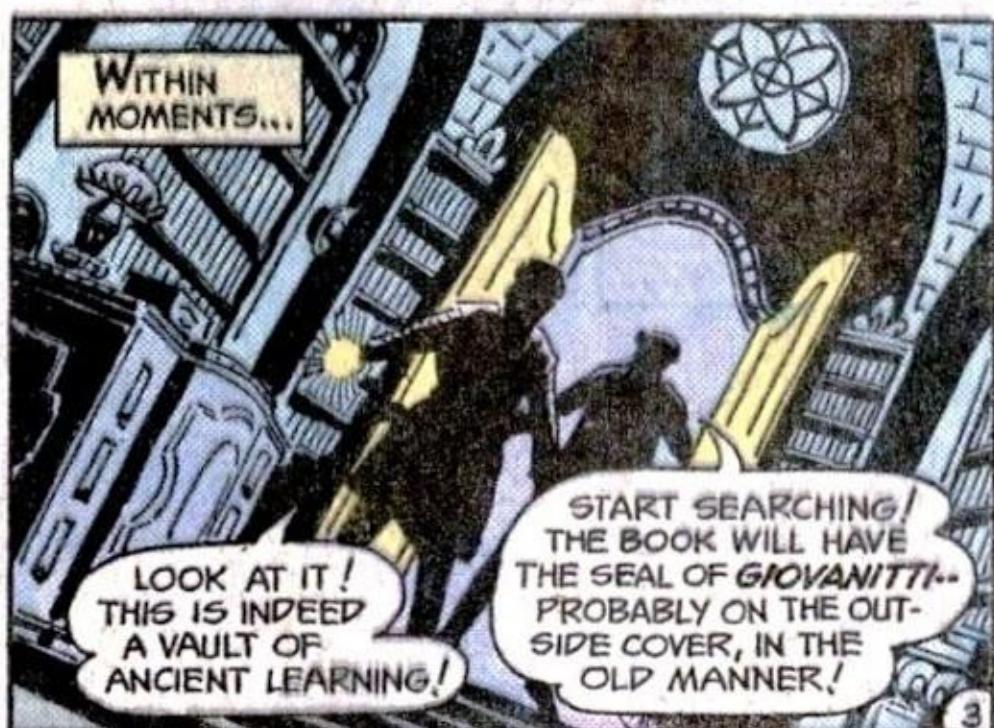
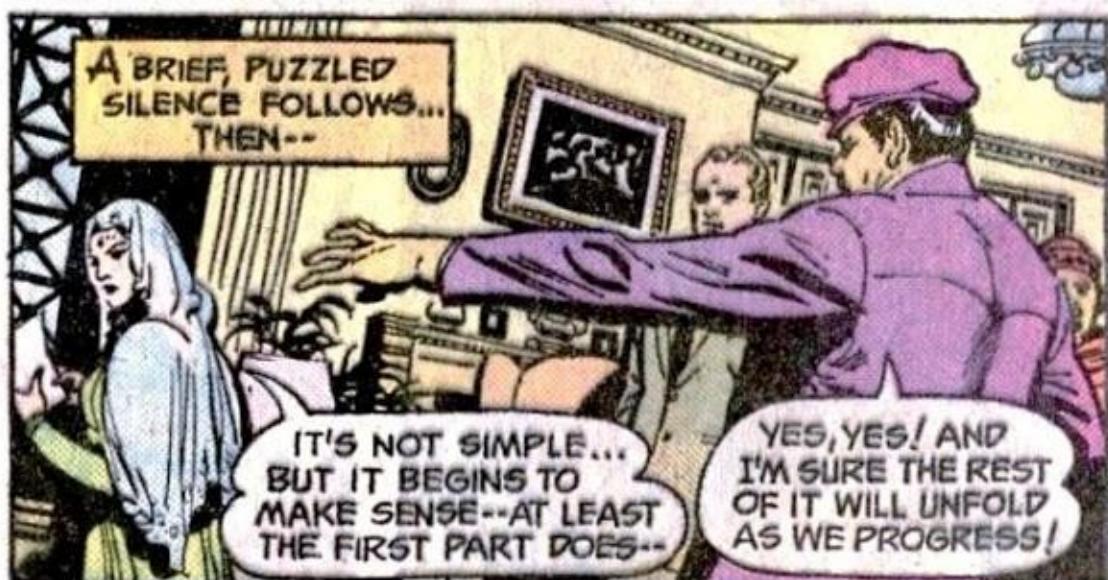
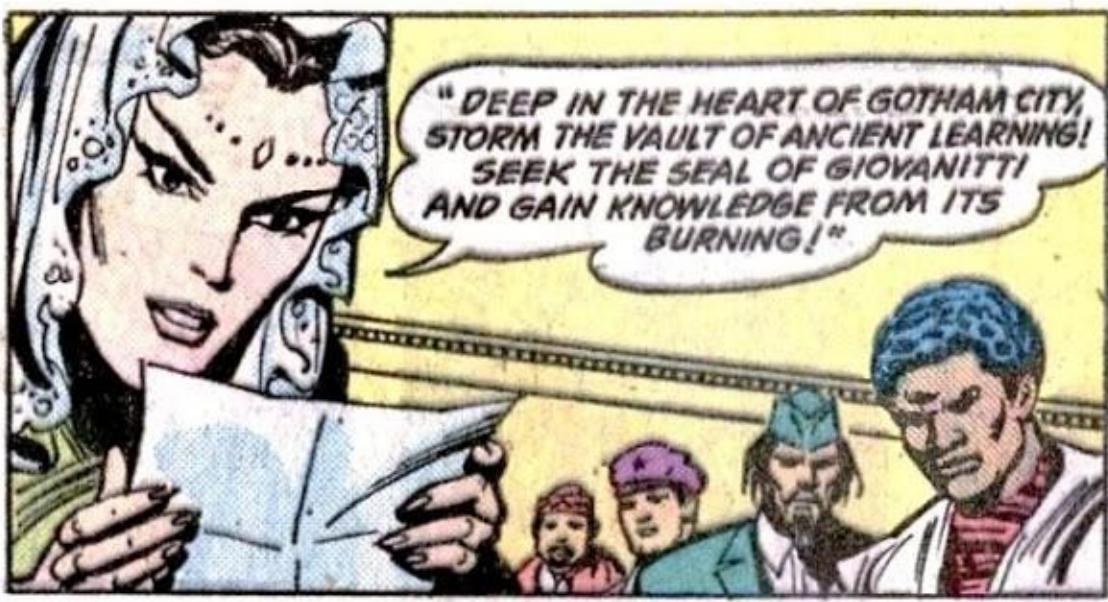
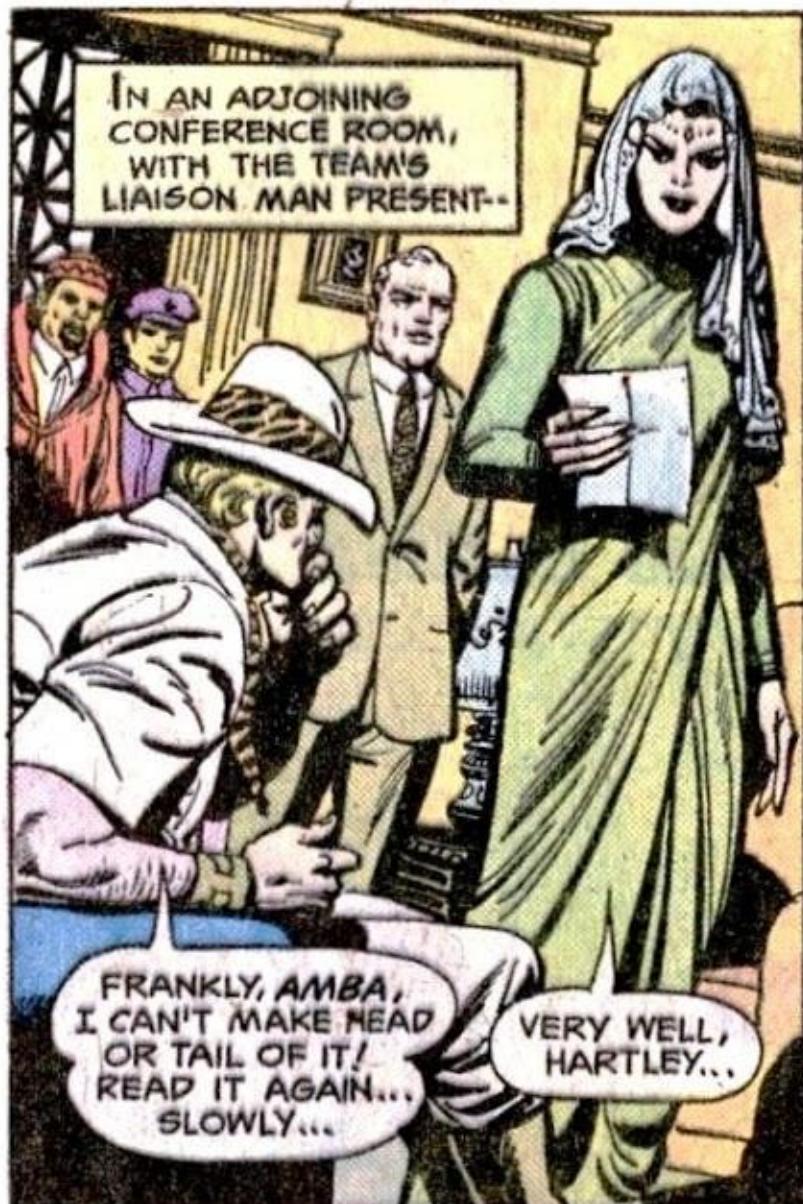
TO THE DOUBLE-A... GOOD LUCK!



I DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO MAKE A BET ON THEM-- EITHER WAY!

WELL, YOU HEARD AMBA KADIRI-- CONSULT YOUR KARMA!

\*HINDU BELIEF IN DESTINY-- Editor



CONFRONTED WITH THOUSANDS OF VOLUMES, THEIR TASK SEEMS ENDLESS... AND YET, BEFORE LONG--

PLACE IT ON THE TABLE-- WHILE I LIGHT THE TORCH!

SET THE SEAL ON FIRE!

HERE IT IS-- WITH HIS FULL NAME EMBEDDED IN THE WAXEN SEAL!

IT'S GIVING OFF GREAT HEAT!

WE MUST CIRCUMVENT THE SPRINKLER SYSTEM!

I HAVE ALREADY DONE SO!

BUT-- UNKNOWN AND UNSUSPECTED BY THE INTRUDERS-- THE VERY ACT OF BLOCKING THE SPRINKLER SYSTEM'S HEAT-SENSORS HAS SET OFF A SEPARATE SILENT ALARM!

ELSEWHERE IN GOTHAM-- ON NIGHTLY PATROL-- THE BATMAN PROWLS AND PONDERS...

TWO CASES... AND ALL THEY HAVE IN COMMON IS THAT BOTH ARE BUGGING ME...

...AND BOTH INVOLVED HISTORICAL TREASURES OF THE CITY!

ON THE POLICE WAVELENGTH, THE AIRWAVES CRACKLE WITH CODED CALLS OF CRIME AND TRAGEDY...

FIRST, CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE... THEN THE BICENTENNIAL CANNON ON STANDISH HILL...

CAR 47... 15 AND 3... REPEAT 47, 15 AND 3... CAR 6...

CAR 19... GCL... 85...

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A LITTLE LESS THAN A MEAL. A LITTLE MORE THAN A SNACK.

If you've ever said...

# "There must be a better way to earn a living..."

one of our free Career Booklets may provide the opportunity you've been looking for.

It happens to all of us, sooner or later. No matter what kind of job we have.

One day, it suddenly strikes home that we're going to have to work for a living the rest of our lives. And most of us are horrified at the thought of forever being locked into the jobs we now hold.

"Surely," we tell ourselves, "there must be a way to get more satisfaction out of working. Surely, there must be a way to find a job that's more rewarding."

"Surely," in other words, "there must be a better way to earn a living!"

If you have been thinking these same thoughts, you'll find one of our free Career Booklets very helpful at this time. We invite you to send for one.

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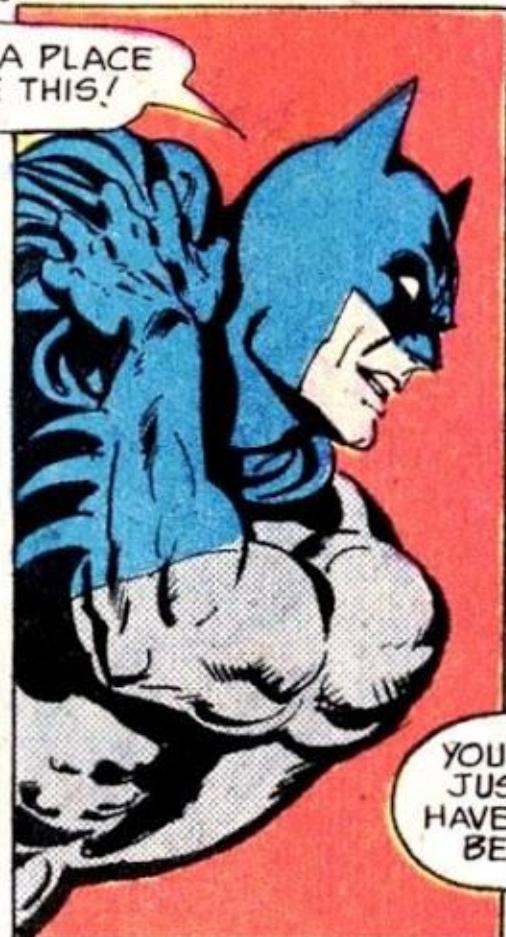
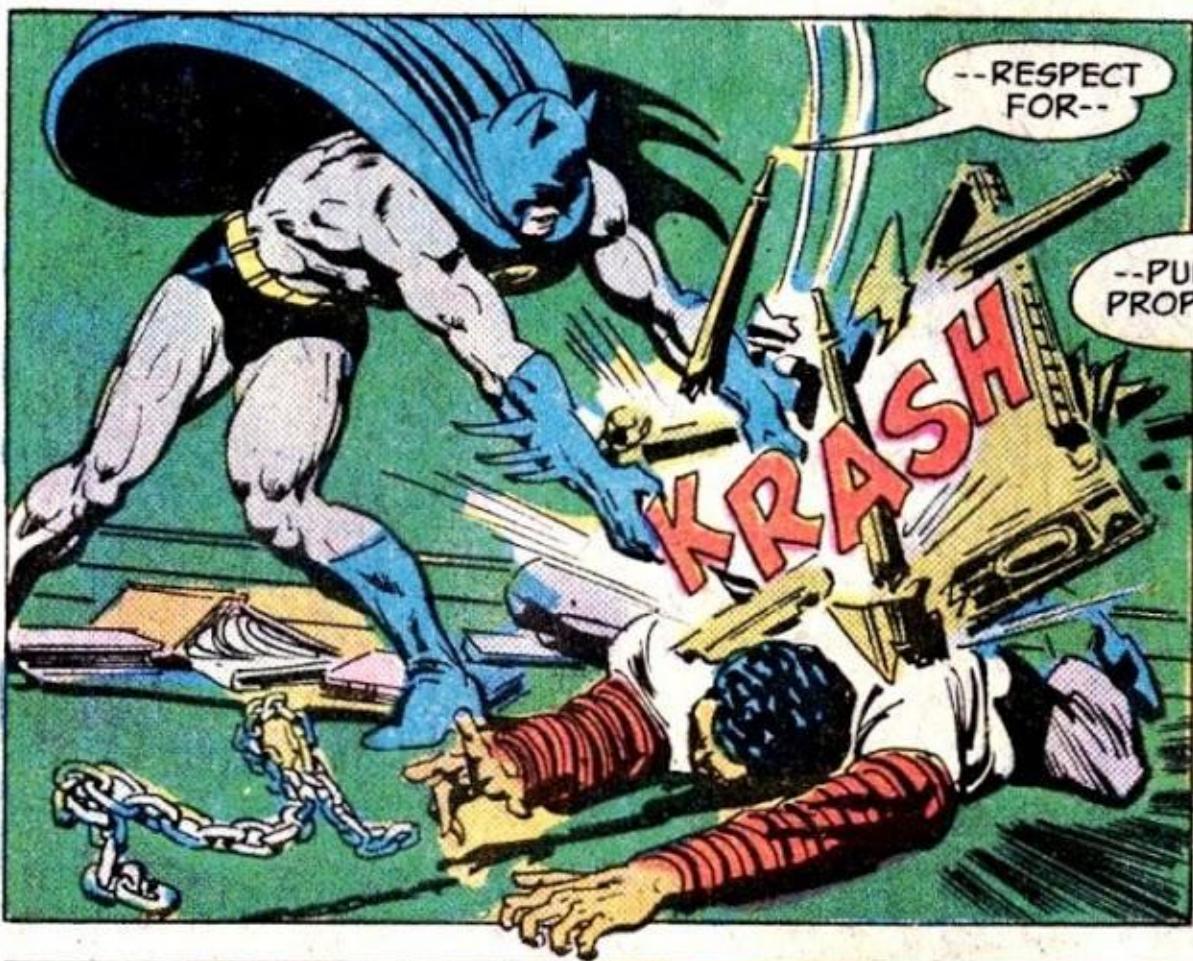
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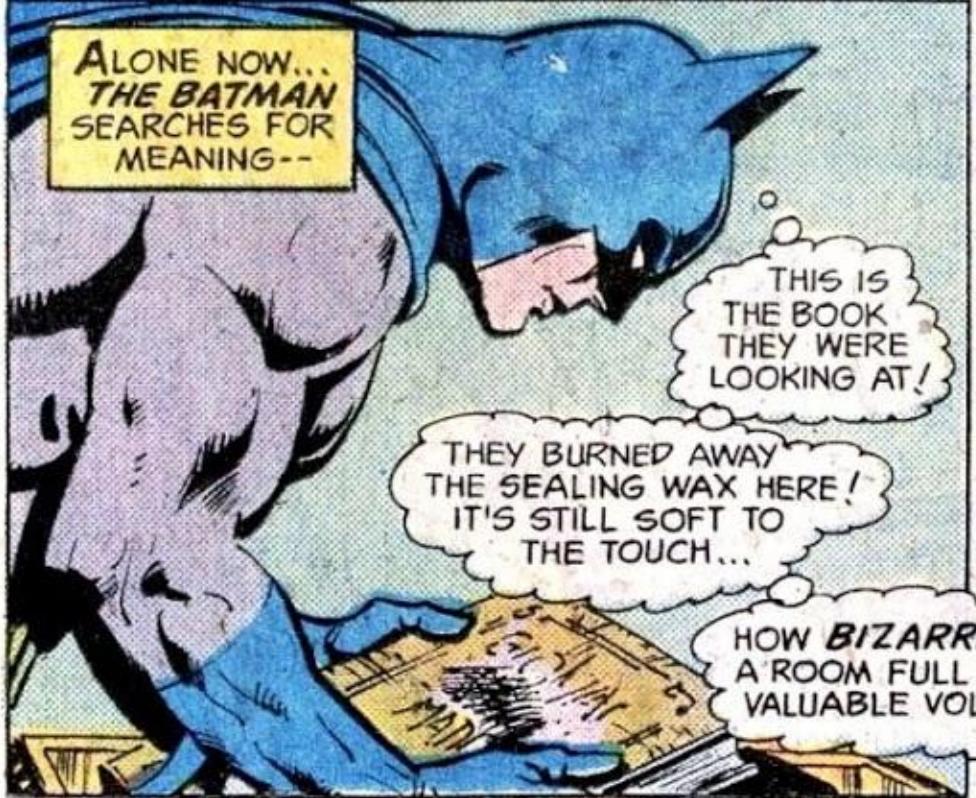
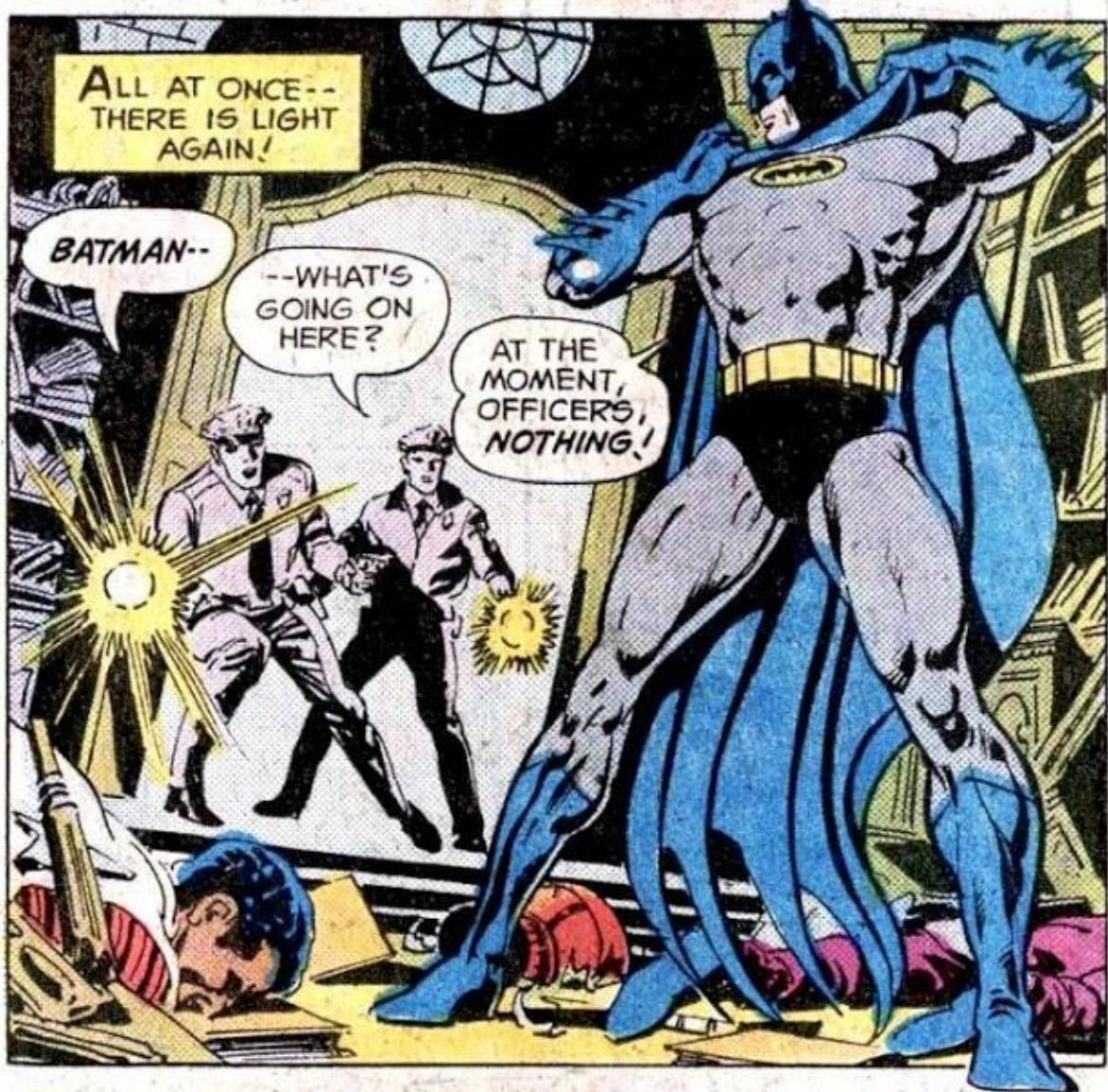
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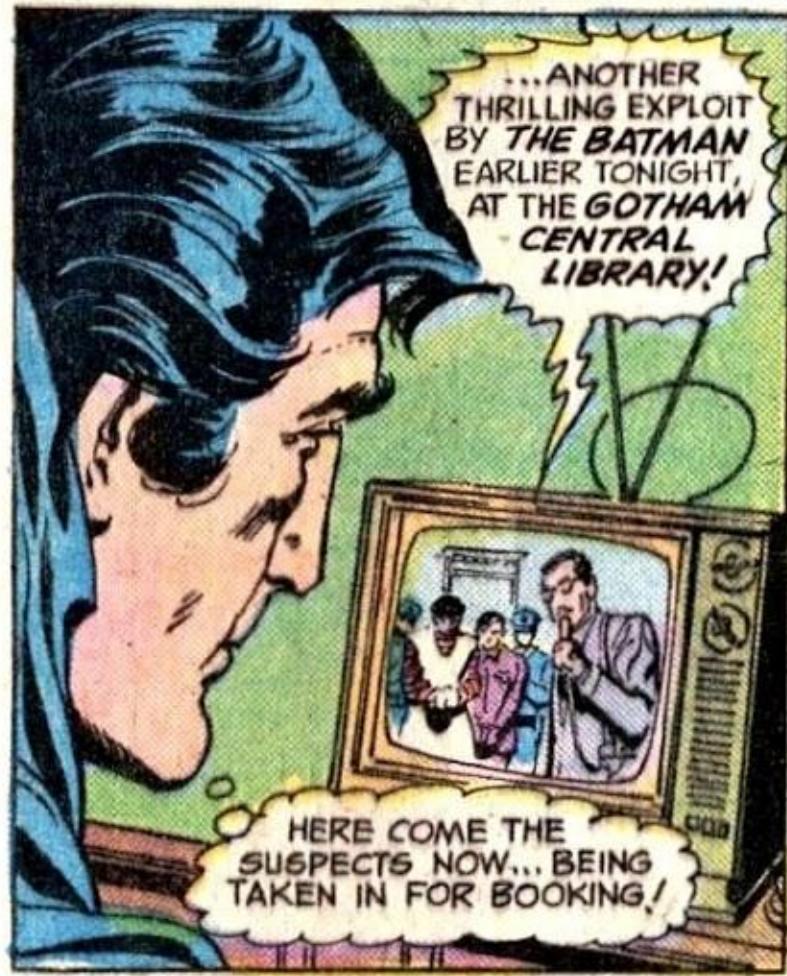
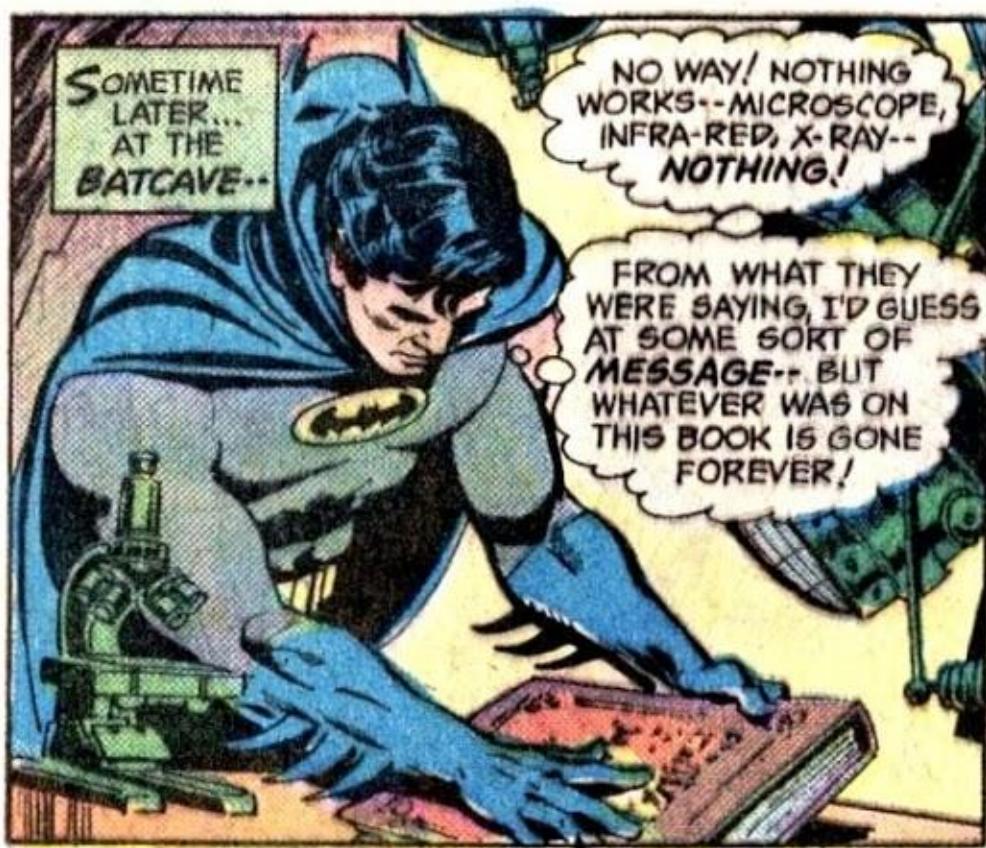
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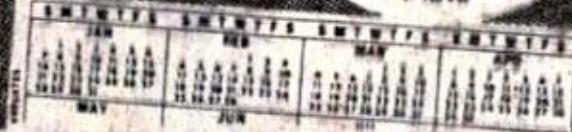
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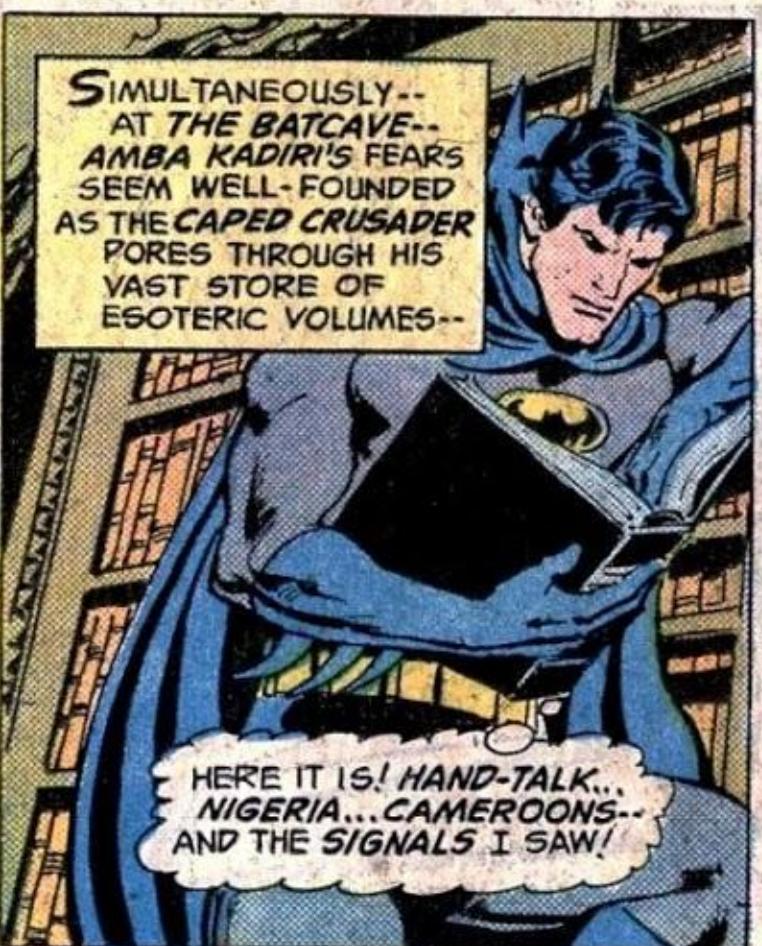
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NOTHING YET  
FROM GORDON...  
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INTERPOL... AND  
NOT A WORD FROM  
THE NIGERIAN OR  
THE CHINESE...

THEN-- AT  
EXACTLY  
11:00 P.M.--

CAR 34...  
GA... 85--

GA-- THE  
GOTHAM  
AQUARIUM!

ANOTHER CITY  
LANDMARK AND  
ANOTHER POSSIBLE  
BREAK-IN!

INSTANTLY, THE  
BATMOBILE  
CANNONBALLS  
INTO HIGH GEAR!...

FISH-WATER--  
A HIGH PLACE--  
COULD BE THE  
AQUARIUM  
TOWER!

GOT HERE  
FAST ENOUGH!

NOW FOR A  
LOOK AT THE  
HIGH PLACE!

CAUTIOUSLY,  
THE BATMAN  
RECONNOITERS  
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TOWER--

LOOKING  
FOR SOMEONE,  
SAHIB BATMAN?

HUH?

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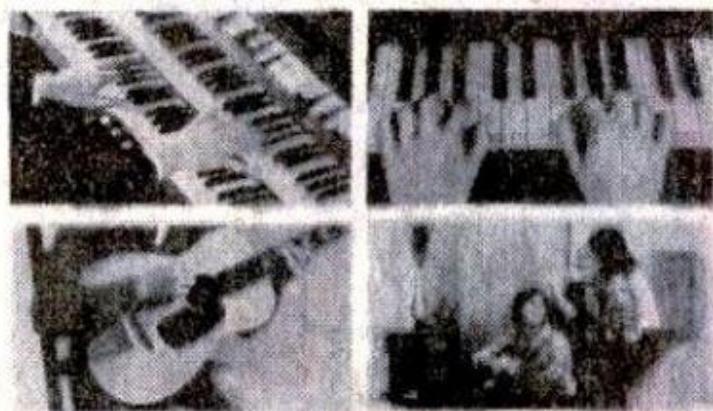
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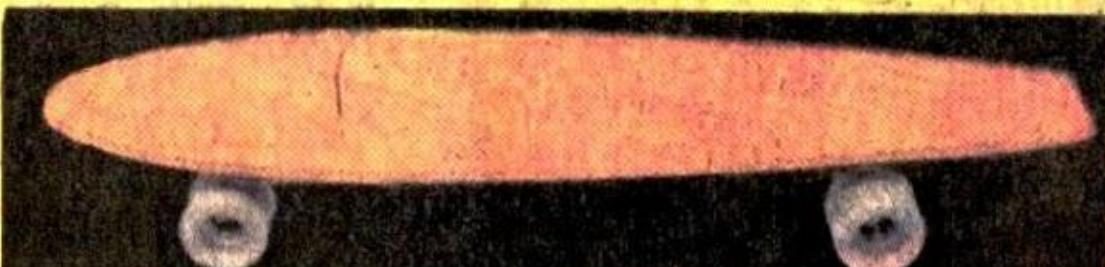
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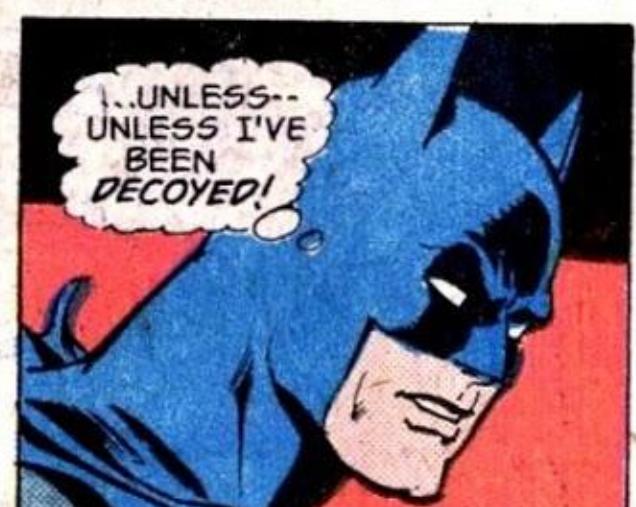
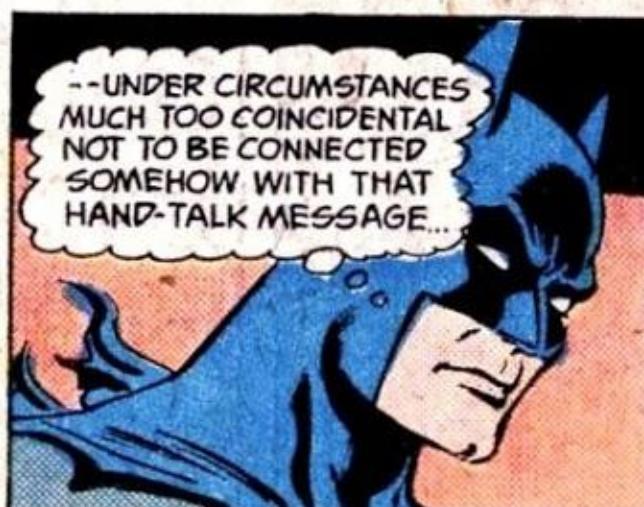
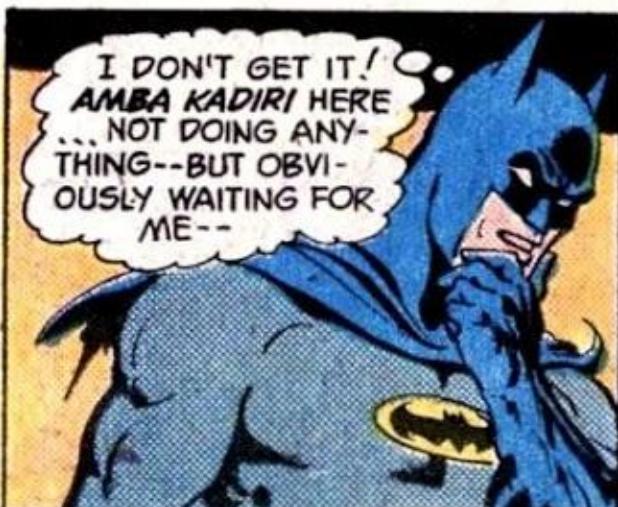
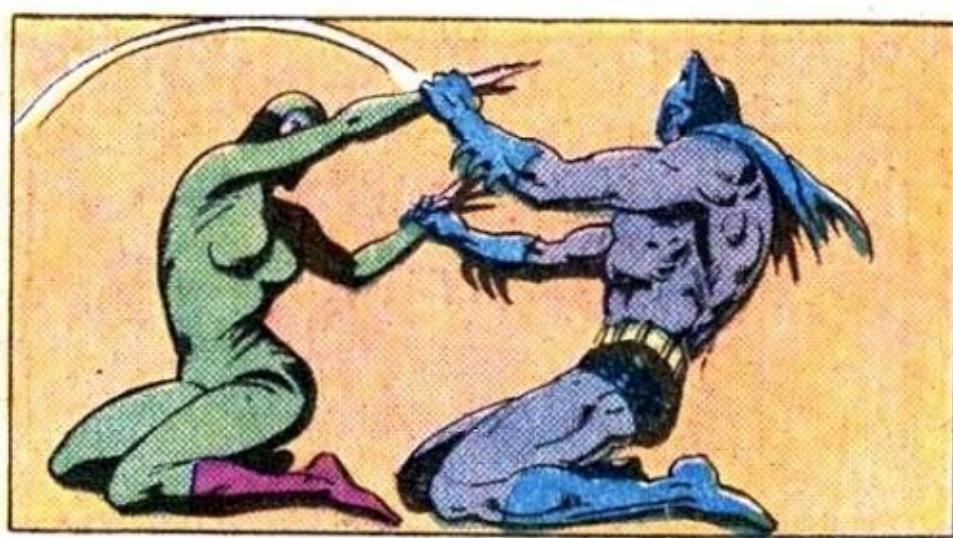
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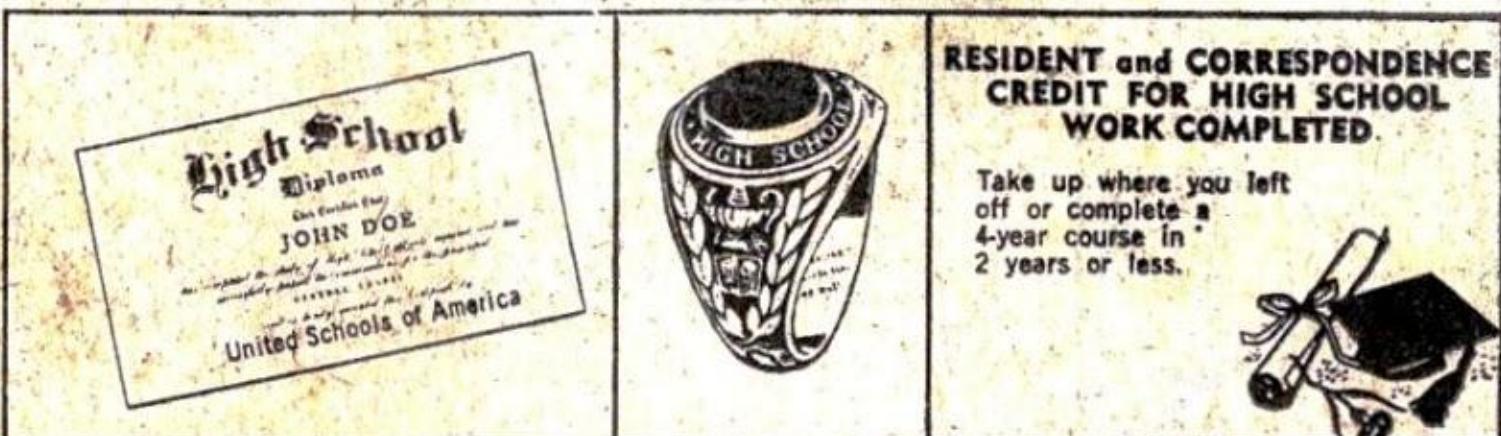
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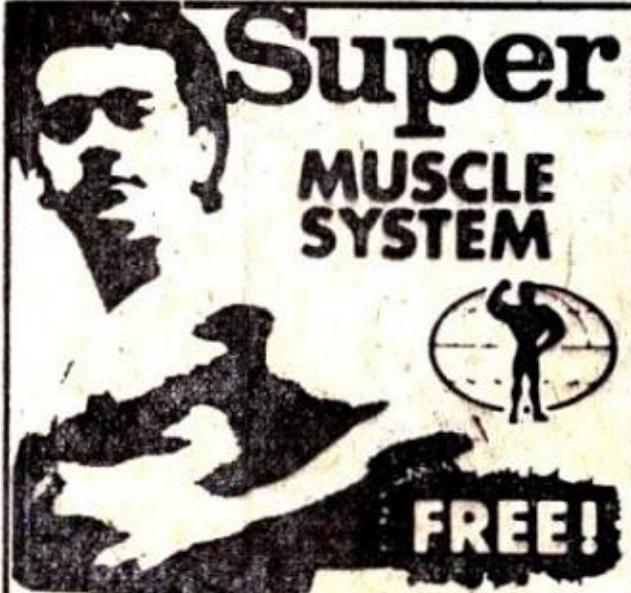
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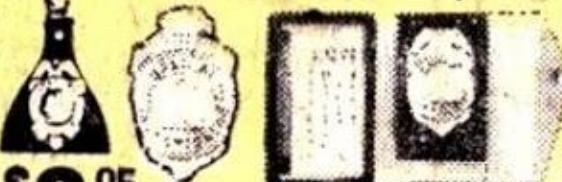
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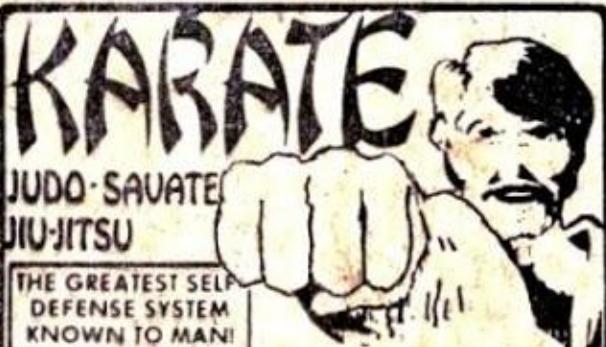


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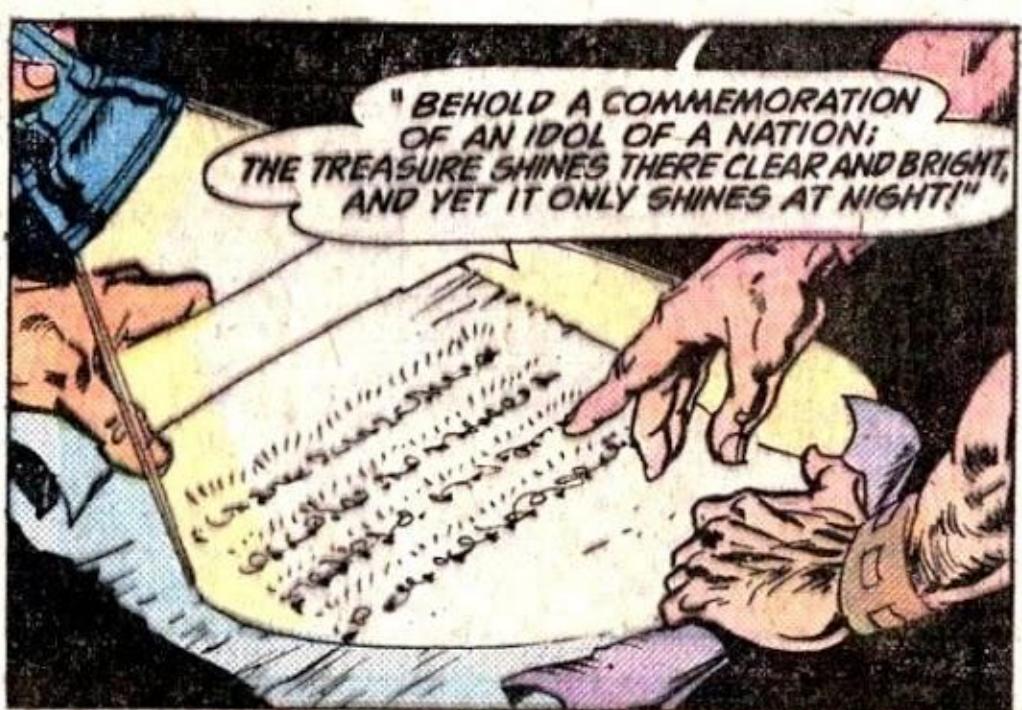
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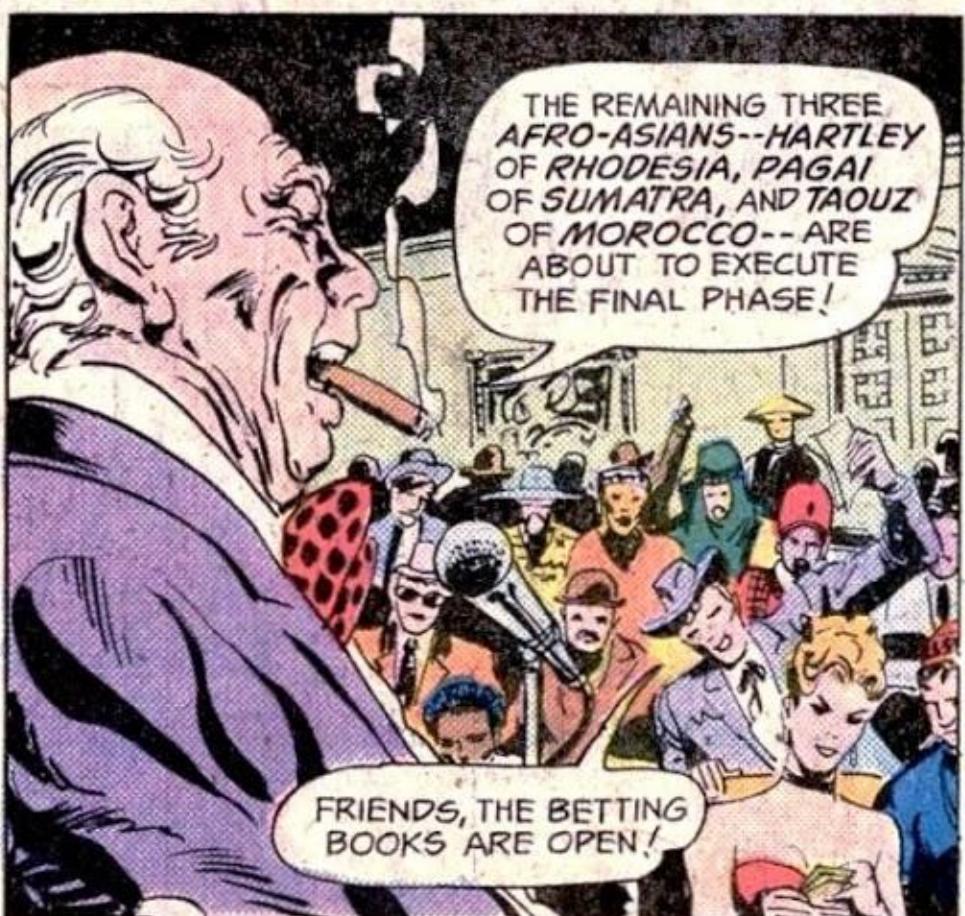
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HIGH ABOVE  
THE THRONG--  
HIDDEN IN THE  
SUPERSTRUCTURE  
OF THE HUGE  
SIGN--THE  
BATMAN  
ATTENDS THE  
PREMIERE!



THE MINUTES DRAG BY...  
THEN, ABRUPTLY--THE  
BATMAN'S VIGIL IS  
REWARDED--



THE NEXT MOMENT--  
IN FULL VIEW OF THE  
CROWDS BELOW--



AS THE MOROCCAN SPEEDILY CARRIES OUT HIS TASK-- SURPRISE BECOMES ASTONISHMENT--THEN, TOTAL CONFUSION!...

AMAZING! THE TREASURE THEY'RE AFTER IS THE WORD "TREASURE" FROM THE SIGN!

WHILE HE'S CLIMBING BACK UP, I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIS WAITING BUDDY-- AND BE THERE TO WELCOME HIM!

IN A FLASH-- THE COWLED CRIMEBUSTER SWINGS INTO ACTION!...

THE SIGN SPIDER

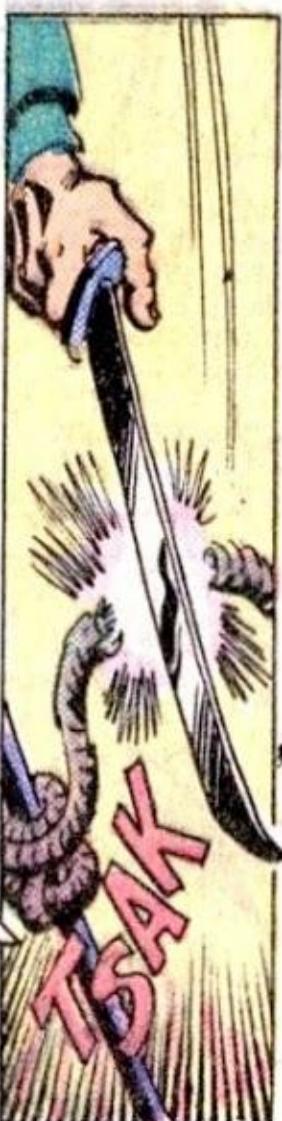
HE'S CUTTING A WORD OUT OF THE MARQUEE SIGN!

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THE BATMAN!-- IT CAN'T BE!

--BUT IT IS!

HERE'S MY AUTOGRAPH!



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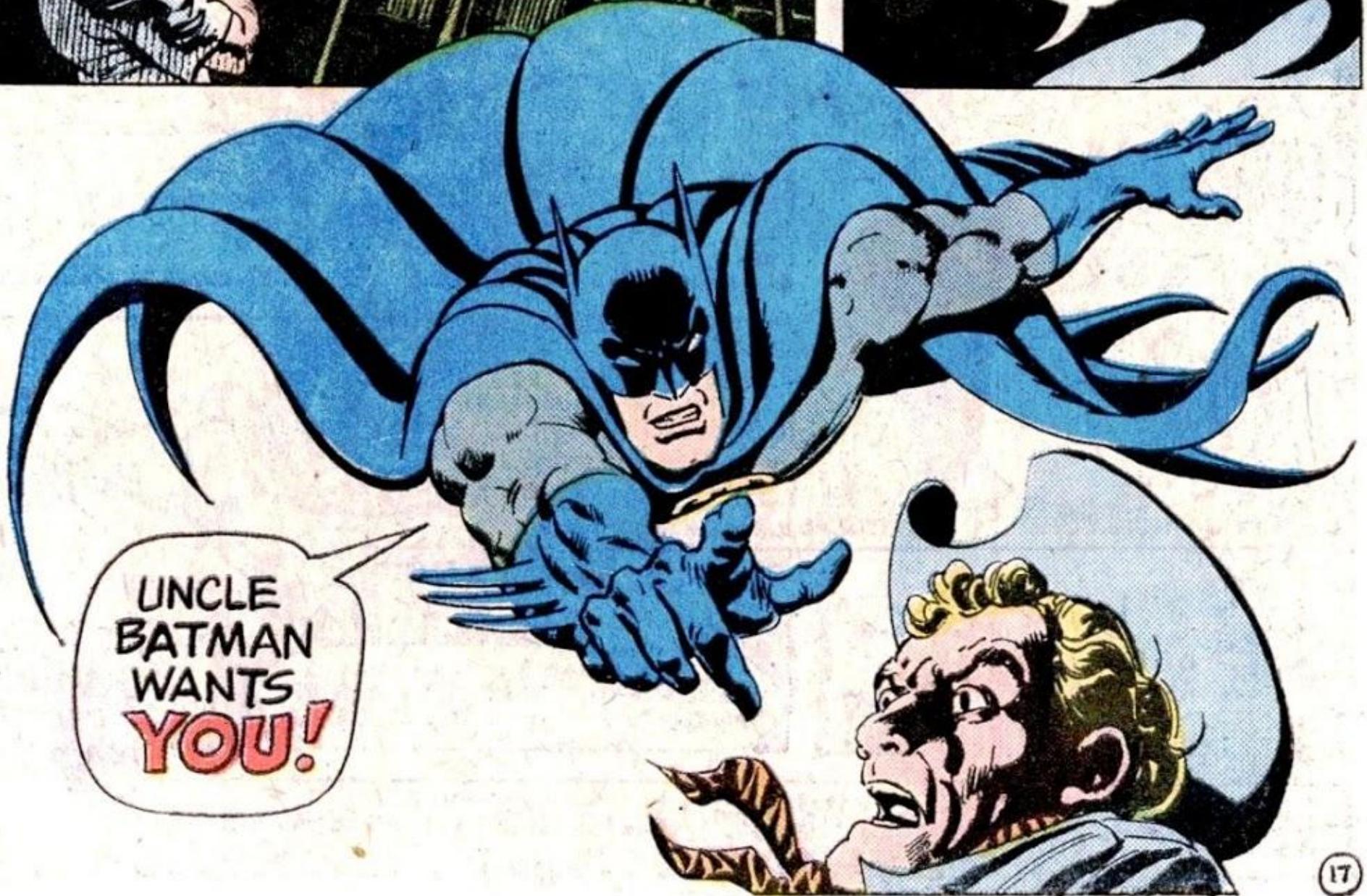
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DUST MINED FROM A  
MOUNTAIN--

-- WHICH  
COMES TO  
NOTHING  
IN THE END...  
AS IT DID  
HERE!

ANYWAY,  
THANK THE  
LORD IT'S  
OVER!

OVER?-- FAR FROM IT!  
FIRST, SIX SOUTH AMERICANS,  
THEN SIX EUROPEANS-- AND  
NOW SIX FROM ASIA  
AND AFRICA--

-- ALL OF THEM DOING  
INSANE STUNTS, NOT  
FOR PROFIT BUT  
GLORY-- PLAYING  
GAMES!

... IT WAS ALL  
MARVELLOUSLY  
PLANNED WITH  
CLUES EVERYWHERE  
-- MADRE ON THE  
BOOK... GOLD DUST  
FROM SIERRA  
MINING --

-- AND ONCE I REALIZED  
IT WAS A TREASURE HUNT  
BASED ON SIERRA MADRE...  
AND REMEMBERED THE  
HUMPHREY BOGART FESTIVAL  
OPENING TONIGHT... WELL,  
I PUT IT ALL TOGETHER!

I COMMISSIONER, IT'S  
AS IF WE'RE IN SOME  
KIND OF UNDERWORLD  
OLYMPICS!

AND THERE'S  
STILL ONE TEAM  
TO BE HEARD  
FROM-- THE  
NORTH  
AMERICANS!

SO I KNOW WHAT'S COMING-- AND TO  
QUOTE THE TITLE OF A PICTURE BOGART  
MADE IN 1952-- IT'S "DEADLINE U.S.A.!"

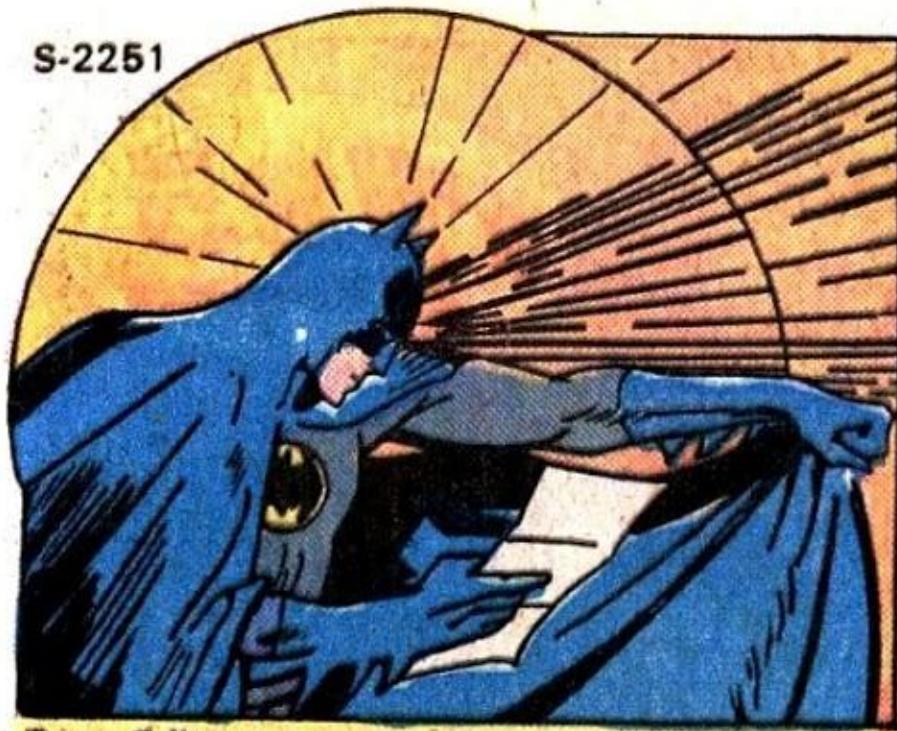
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18  
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ISSUE:

"THE FERRY BLOWS AT MIDNIGHT"

ON SALE DURING THE SECOND WEEK IN FEBRUARY

AS OLYMPICS '76 COMES  
TO AN EXPLOSIVE CONCLUSION!



**Dear Editor:**

**Prescription:** Take one blazing, blood-curdling mystery, superbly written by David V. Reed, mix with the beautiful artwork of Ernie Chua and the World's Greatest Detective and what have you got? **BATMAN #270**'s "Menace of the Fiery Heads"—one of the finest issues in comicdom!

"Fiery Heads" was another gold star for David Reed, who continues to amaze the reader with his complex twists and turns which all seem so simple when Batman explains them in the end. Also to be commended is Dave's fine handling of Bruce Wayne—it's about time somebody put some spunk into Batman's alter-ego.

As for Ernie Chua, he has captured the true Batman so perfectly that it's downright spooky! His cover art was as smooth and easy as the interior work. He is the first artist to give Commissioner Gordon a face with some expression. Bravo, "Champ" Chua!

**BRIAN SCOTT, Streator, Ill.**

(It never ceases to amaze us how two readers can take the same "prescription" and come up with two totally different "fillings"! Witness the letter below!—BR)

**Dear Editor:**

**Prescription:** Take one blazing, blood-curdling mystery, mix well with several scorching encounters that include duplicity, danger and death. Add The Batman and what have you got—? A **HEADACHE!!!**

"Menace of the Fiery Heads" was, to say the least, a flaming flop! The story moved very slowly and made little headway until page 16. The skullful art of Ernie Chua helped a bit, but not enough to save the story. The Batman was portrayed as too headstrong, almost melodramatic. While flying out the window, Batman chortles "I'll find him! Even if he's on the moon—I'll find him!" Now isn't that a bit overdone—in fact, burnt?

David V. Reed has come up with a few hot ideas for Batman tales but he must have burned out with this one!

**KEN WOLF, Yorktown, N.Y.**

(Since this correspondent seems burned up about #270, let's dive headlong into our next epistle!—BR)



**Dear Bob,**

The cover of **BATMAN #270** knocked me out!

## LETTERS to the **BATMAN**

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

It's been a long time since those wordless, figure-of-the-night, Neal Adams-type covers have graced the issues of **BATMAN**. Ernie Chua's masterpiece was a pleasant surprise and quite exciting!

As for the story, well, I've been a bit prejudiced against David Reed's work because he writes "gimmick" stories which take a weird occurrence and build a plot around it. Yet, "Menace of the Fiery Heads" was great! It seemed a bit like his "Invitation to a Murder" but it had improvements, and great ones at that. The action was more exciting, the youth program subplot tied the story together and Bruce Wayne's stint as crimefighter was well done.

Now for brickbat time. The fight on page 10 is too wordy and makes Batman look more like a costumed comedian than an avenger of the night. Does he think those lines up on the spot or does he have microfilms of Don Rickles in his utility belt?

**ADAM CASTRO, New Rochelle, N.Y.**

(Better than microfilm, Adam! Batman's got Dave Reed—who has written material for a number of famous comedians and also shows his sense of humor as Coram Nobis in **PLOP!**—BR)



**Dear Editor:**

"Menace of the Fiery Heads" is fantastic! I clung to every panel. It was one of the best Batman stories I have ever read with the precise amounts of intrigue and suspense and the perfect dash of irony. After I finished reading it, I went back to take a good look at the artwork. The cover is superb and everything inside is top notch!

But there is one problem. How come **BATMAN**'s cape is doing the "blowing in the breeze" bit indoors?

**CARL CHRISTIANSEN, Lakewood, Colo.**

(Maybe somebody left the fan on . . .?—BR)



**Dear Julie,**

Where does David Reed get all the weird ideas? If it isn't some guy with black teeth, it's a maniac who leaves burning skulls at the scenes of the crimes. Dave is becoming DC's master of situations—but not like the old days with the campy stories. We've gone from the ridiculous back to Batman's element—murder with a mysterious twist and "Menace of the Fiery Heads" is a sublime example.

The art wasn't Ernie Chua's best, but it was good nonetheless. I miss Dick Giordano, though, so what are the chances of his doing a solo on the Caped Crusader?

**KEVIN L. CALLAHAN, Brea, Cal.**

(Chances are very good, especially since Dick's Bat-art is currently on display in **DETECTIVE #457**'s "There Is No Hope in Crime Alley", now on sale!—Bob Rozakis)



**Dear Bob,**

The cover of **BATMAN #270** knocked me out!

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They're fun and easy to build because they're Snap-Tite® kits. All the parts just SNAP together . . . no gluing or painting needed. How does the car get into the bottle? That's a snap too, and

it will be your secret. Mounted on the display stand, your Car-in-a-Bottle "pop" art is a conversation piece. A model that will make you proud to say, "I built it myself."

Monogram's Snap-Tite® "Car-in-a-Bottle" kits are a whole new idea in model building fun. And you can get them for around \$4.00 wherever model kits are sold.

For full color catalog of complete line of  
Monogram model kits, send \$1.00 to Dept. 199

MONOGRAm MODELS, INC.  
MORTON GROVE, ILL. 60053

**MONOGRAm**

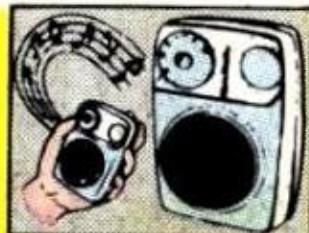
**snaptite**  
model kits

## Model building fun from Monogram.

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COMPLETE FISHING OUTFITS



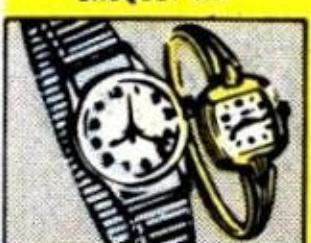
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Barry ChamberlainAmerica needs American Seeds  
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Valerie Flint New YorkIt's easy to order, easy to sell, and it's easy to win a prize selling American Seeds.  
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