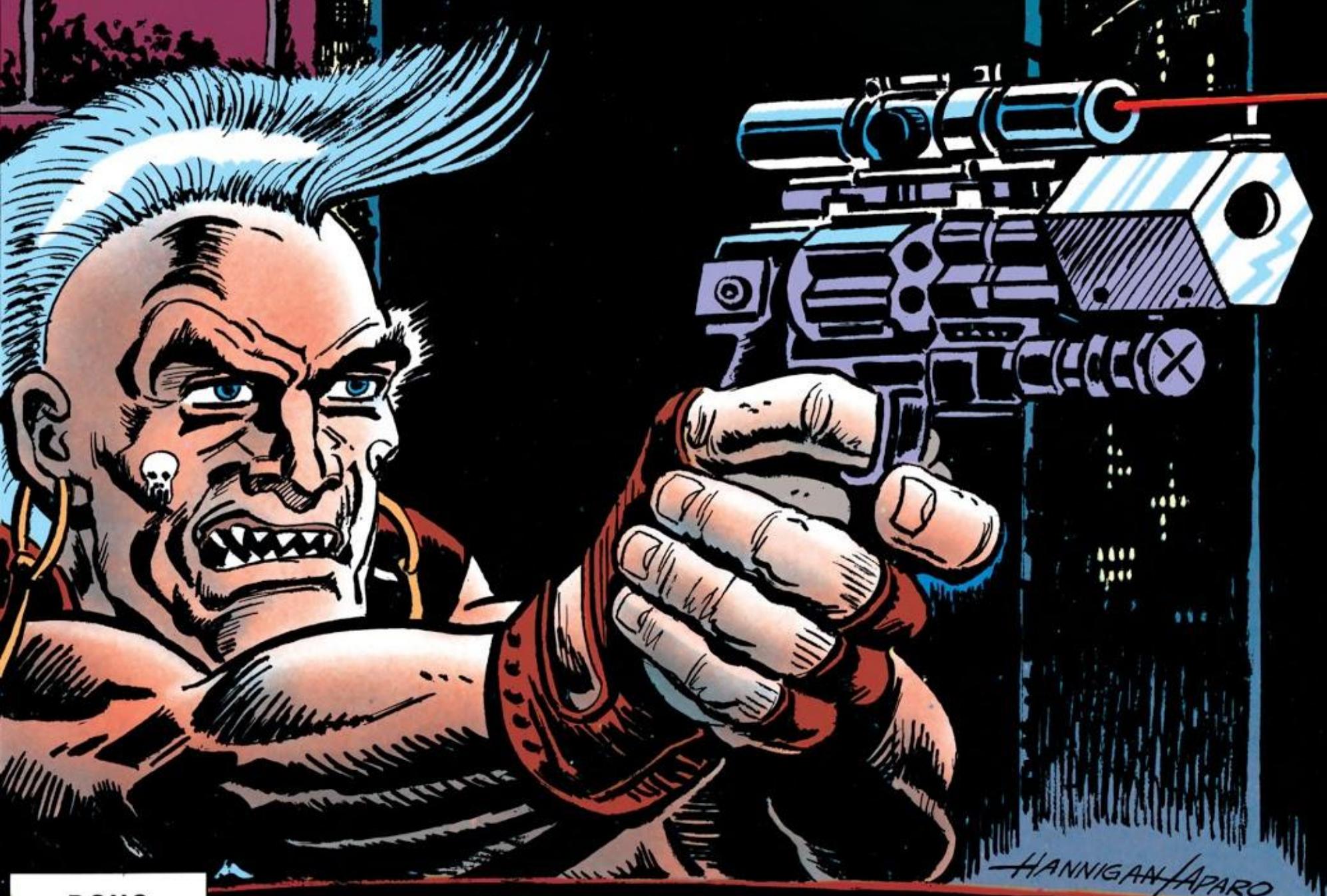




487
DEC 92

BATMAN

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
CA
AUTHORITY



HANNIGAN/APARO

DOUG
MOENCH
—
JIM
APARO

HEADHUNTER!

BOX OF BLOOD

TOO HURT FOR ONE AND TOO
TIRED FOR THE OTHER, HE CAN
NEITHER SLEEP NOR SCREAM.

BREATHING IS AN EFFORT,
DYING ALMOST AN OPTION.

IF YOU NEED
HELP, SIR...

YEAH, WE CAN
CARRY YOU
UP TO--

I'M...
FINE.

HE WISHES FOR A WIND
STRONG ENOUGH TO BLOW
THEM BOTH AWAY.

DOUG MOENCH JIM APARO ADRIENNE ROY SCOTT PETERSON DENNIS O'NEIL BOB KANE
WRITER ART/LETTERS COLORIST ASST. EDITOR EDITOR CREATOR

EVEN THE CAVE IS NO COMFORT. ITS ECHOES TOO LOUD, SMELLS TOO RIPE, SHADOWS TOO DARK, LIGHTS TOO BRIGHT...

FORGIVE ME, SIR, BUT I REALLY THINK THAT THIS TIME--

I SAID...

...I'LL BE FINE.

WITH EVERY STEP HE LIFTS THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD.

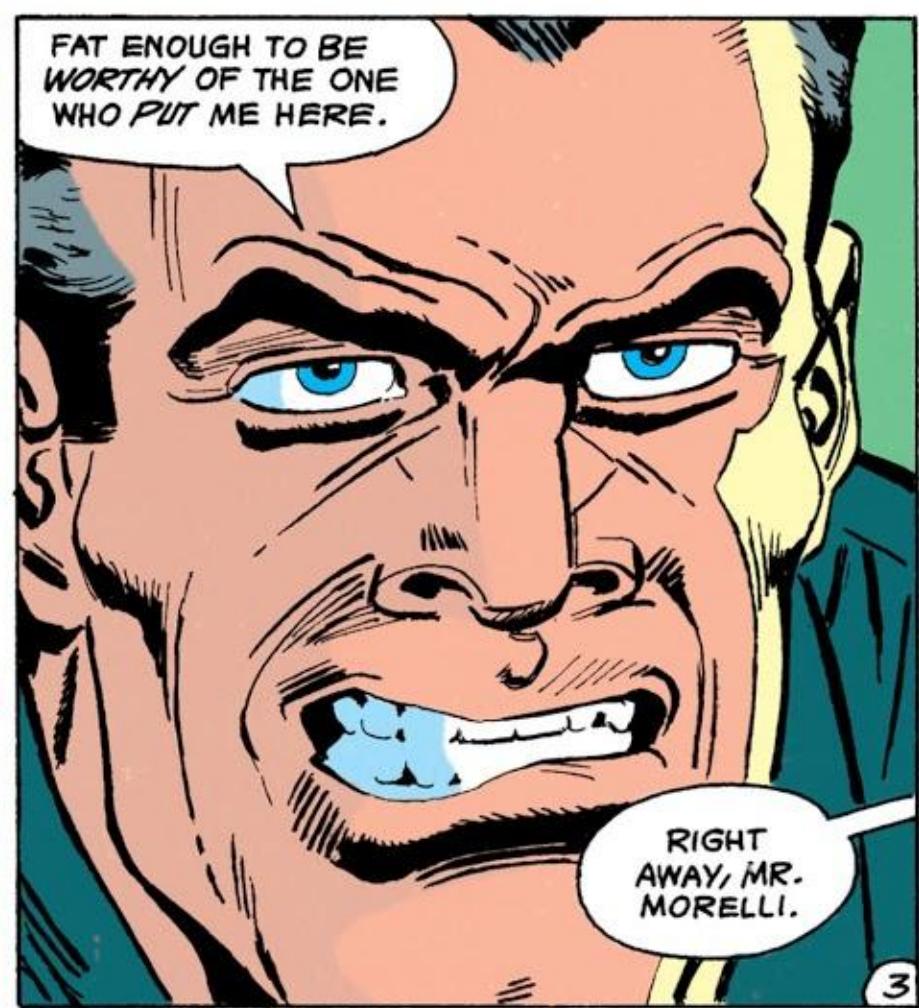
NOW JUST... LEAVE ME... IN PEACE...

HIS BODY HAS BECOME A STRANGER, DETACHED FROM HIS MIND AND WILL, HEAVIER, WEAKER, A MAGNET FOR MUFFLING FOG.

TOMORROW... I'LL... SEE A DOCTOR.

THIS TIME... IT MUST BE--

BAD.



A WEEK LATER:

THE RESULTS OF YOUR LAB WORK ARE BACK, MR. WAYNE, AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TELL YOU -- EVERYTHING IS NEGATIVE.

DR. MORRIS GRIGGINS
M.D.

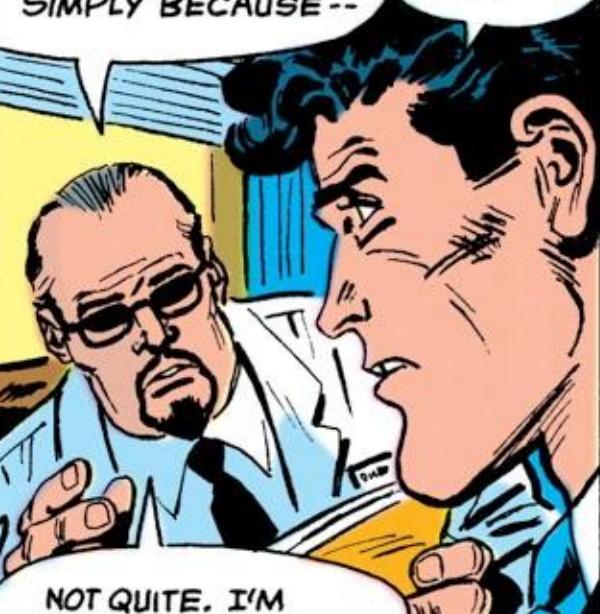
YOU'RE SAYING NOTHING'S WRONG WITH ME? I'M FINE?

I WOULDN'T PRESUME TO DO THAT, MR. WAYNE...

LET'S JUST SAY THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU-- PHYSICALLY-- WHICH COULD BE DETECTED BY ANY OF THE TESTS.

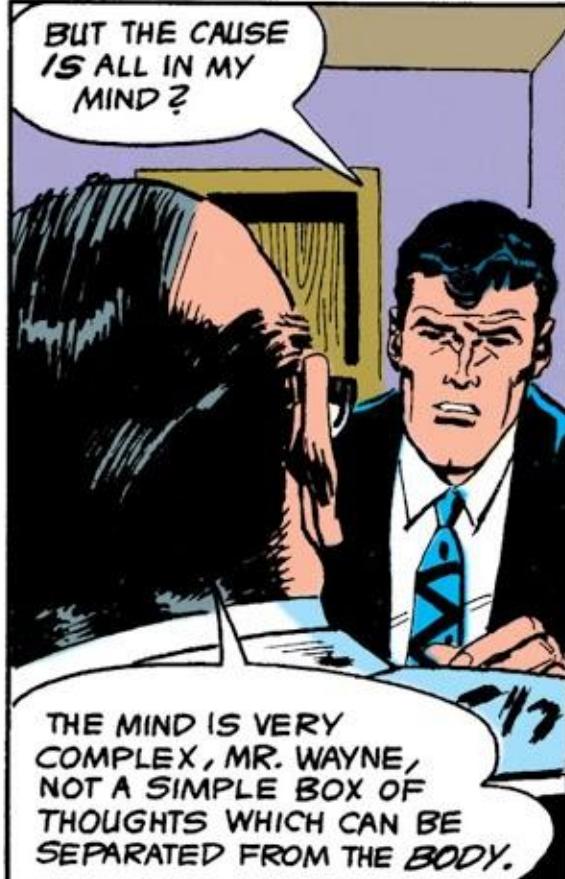
THE SYMPTOMS OF A PSYCHOSOMATIC MALAISE, HOWEVER, ARE NO LESS REAL SIMPLY BECAUSE--

IT'S "ALL IN MY MIND"?



NOT QUITE. I'M SAYING THE EFFECTS MAYBE VERY PHYSICAL INDEED, EVEN IF THE CAUSE IS NOT.

BUT THE CAUSE IS ALL IN MY MIND?



THE MIND IS VERY COMPLEX, MR. WAYNE, NOT A SIMPLE BOX OF THOUGHTS WHICH CAN BE SEPARATED FROM THE BODY.

YOU MAY WELL BE SUFFERING FROM STRESS, EXHAUSTION, MENTAL FATIGUE, PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS...

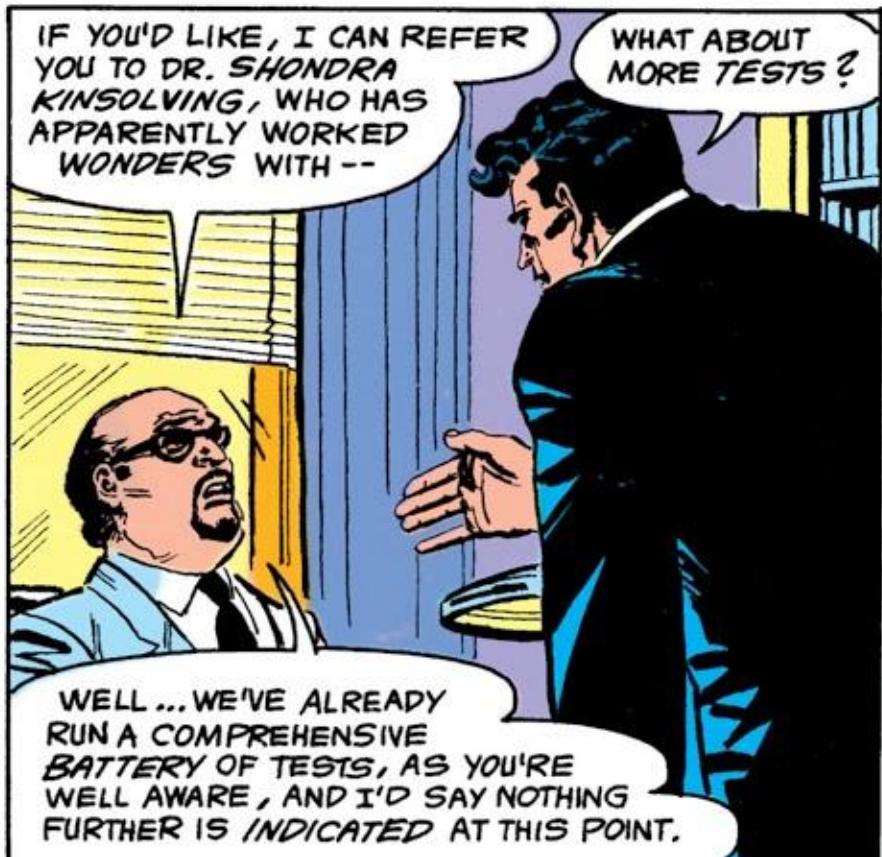
YOU'RE SUGGESTING I GO TO A SHRINK?



NOT NECESSARILY, BUT IT MAY BE TIME FOR A HOLISTIC APPROACH.

IF YOU'D LIKE, I CAN REFER YOU TO DR. SHONDRA KINSOLVING, WHO HAS APPARENTLY WORKED WONDERS WITH --

WHAT ABOUT MORE TESTS?

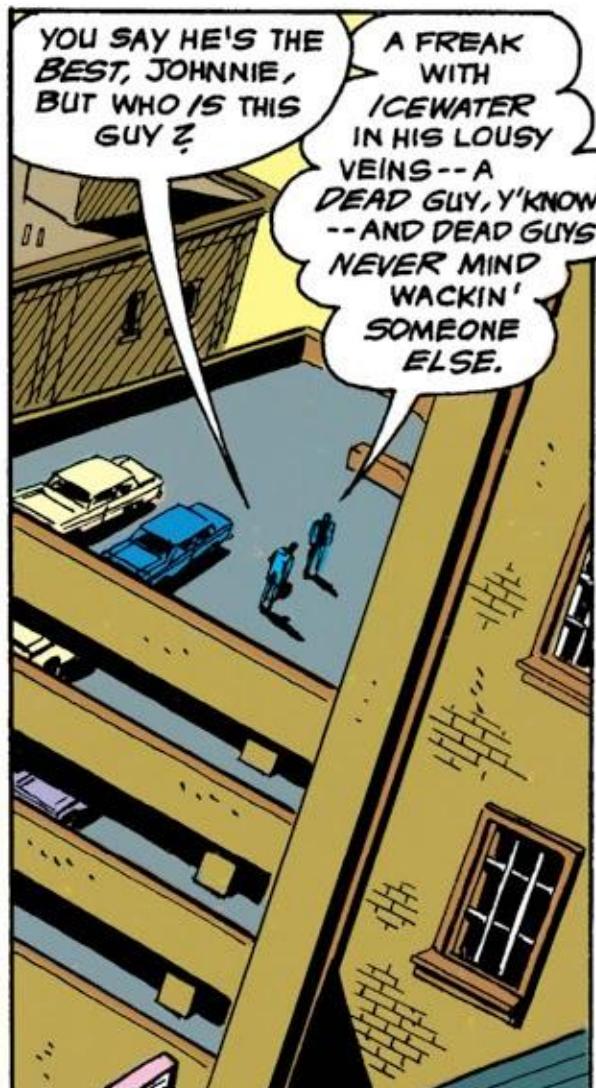


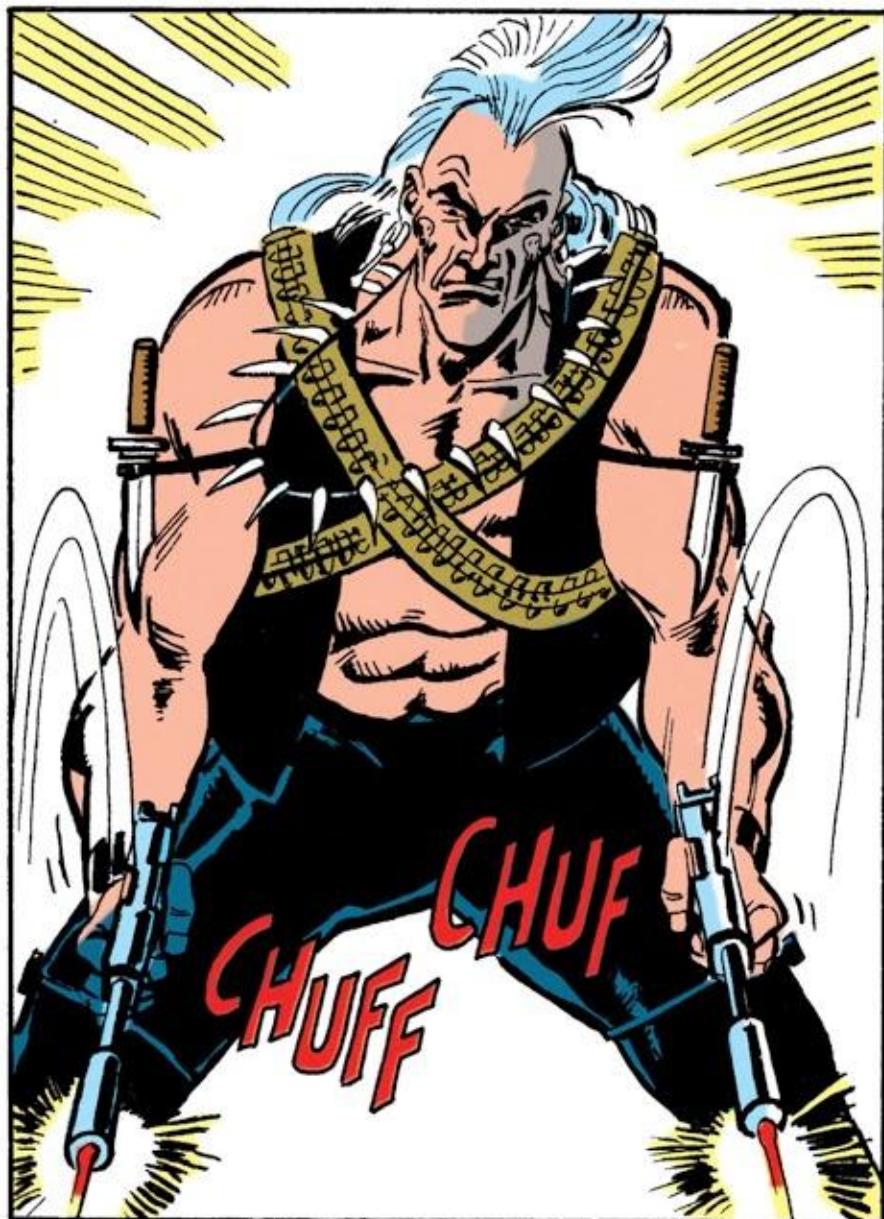
WELL ... WE'VE ALREADY RUN A COMPREHENSIVE BATTERY OF TESTS, AS YOU'RE WELL AWARE, AND I'D SAY NOTHING FURTHER IS INDICATED AT THIS POINT.

THEN THANK YOU, DOCTOR.

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT-- MAYBE I JUST NEED SOME REST.















STRESS.

EXHAUSTION.

PSHAK

SKRRR

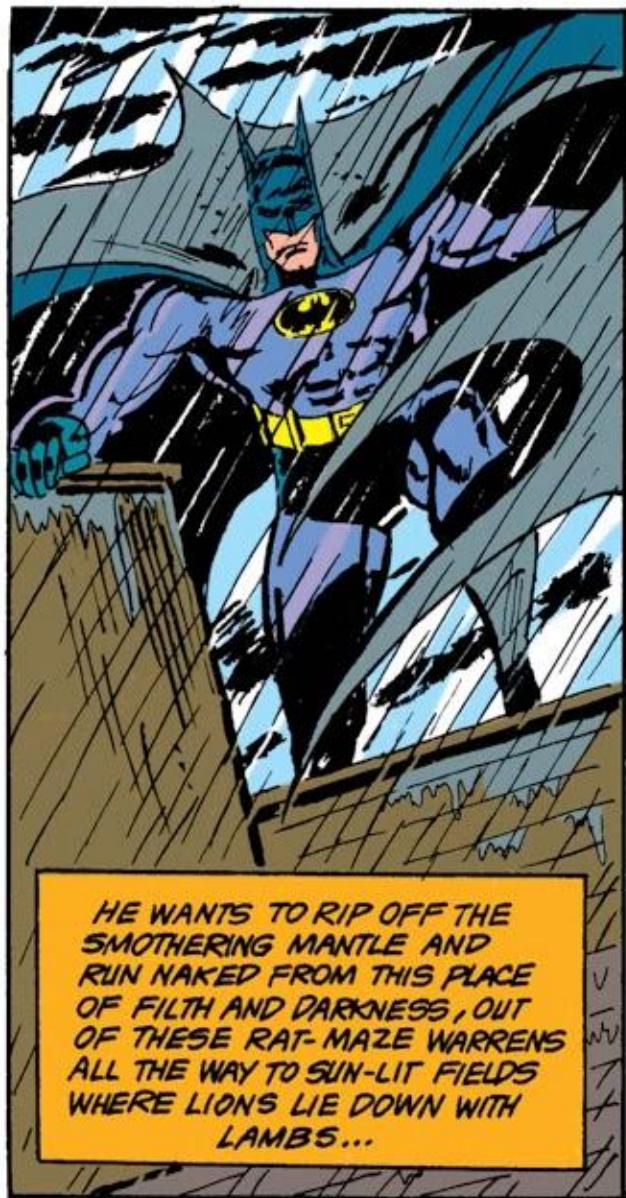
BURN-OUT.

HE IGNORES THE LIGHTS,
KNOWING THEM FOR THE LIE
THEY ARE, AND SEARCHES
THE SHADOWS BETWEEN,
PONDERING THAT WHICH LURKS
WAITING TO POUNCE.

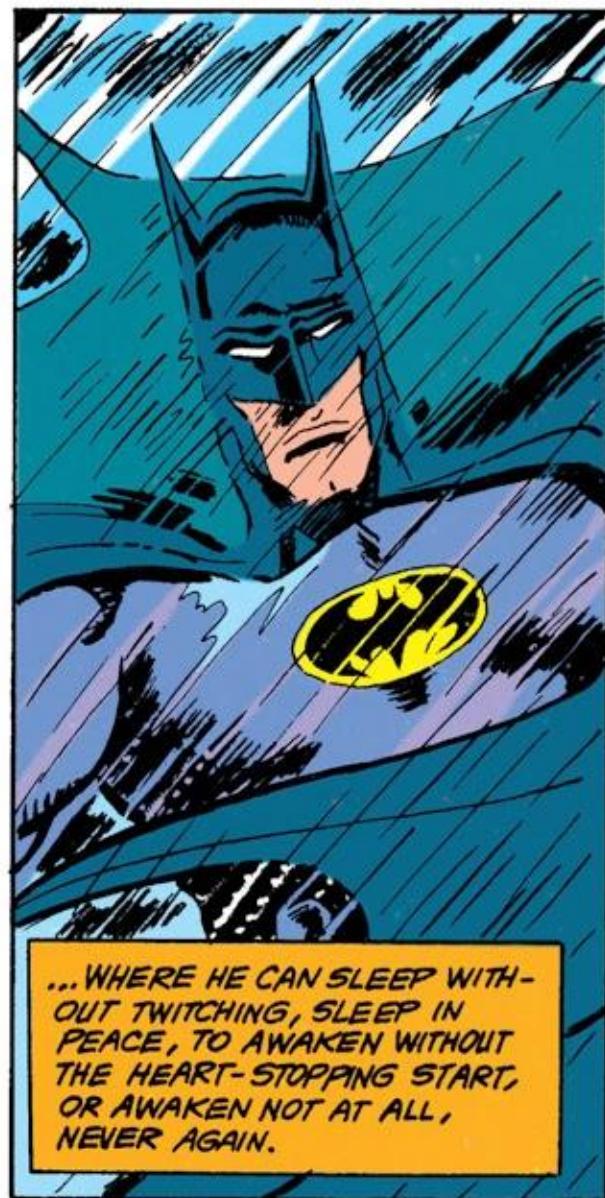
A WEEK'S BITTER
BREW OF THE SAME--
MORE GREED, HATE,
AND HORROR.

IT HAS BECOME AN
EFFORT TO BREATHE,
AND THE AIR IS FOUL
ANYWAY.

FOR THE TEN-THOUSANDTH TIME, THE
BOX OF BRIGHT BLOOD SPRINGS OPEN
IN HIS MIND... BUT FOR THE FIRST
TIME, THE FREEDOM OF HIS COSTUME
IS SUDDENLY A TRAP.



HE WANTS TO RIP OFF THE SMOOTHERING MANTLE AND RUN NAKED FROM THIS PLACE OF FILTH AND DARKNESS, OUT OF THESE RAT-MAZE WARRENS ALL THE WAY TO SUN-LIT FIELDS WHERE LIONS LIE DOWN WITH LAMBS...



...WHERE HE CAN SLEEP WITHOUT TWITCHING, SLEEP IN PEACE, TO AWAKEN WITHOUT THE HEART-STOPPING START, OR AWAKEN NOT AT ALL, NEVER AGAIN.



A DREAM, HE KNOWS, AND SUCH DREAMS NEVER HAPPEN...



...NOT EVEN NOW, IN WHAT PASSES FOR SLEEP.



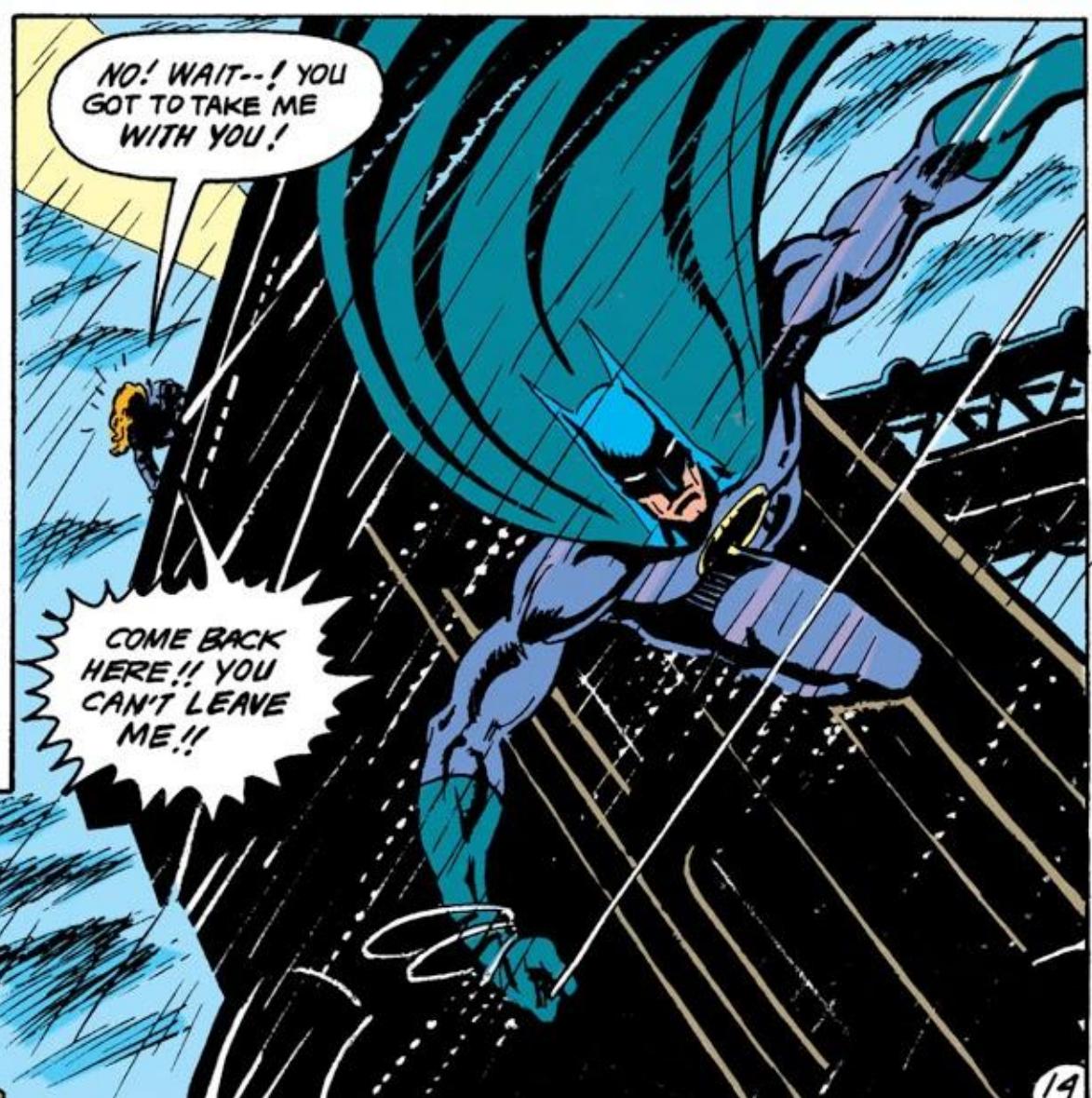
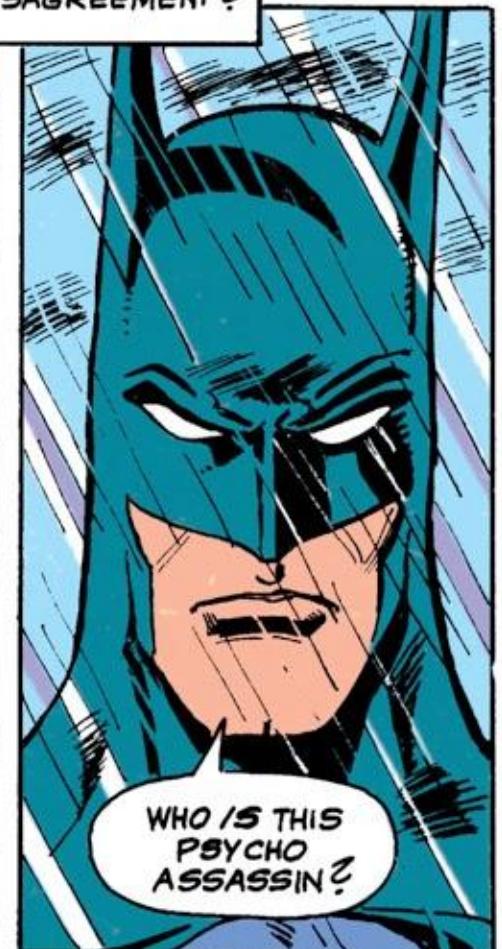
SHE WAS WRONG-- DEAD WRONG...

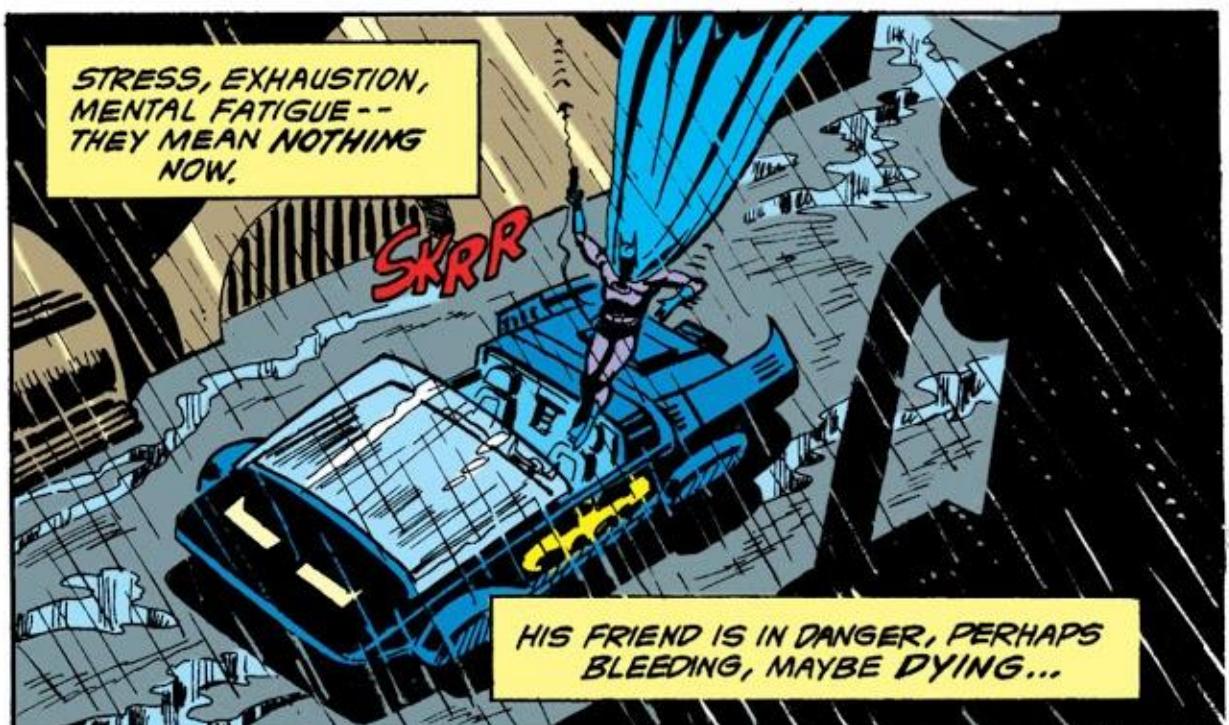
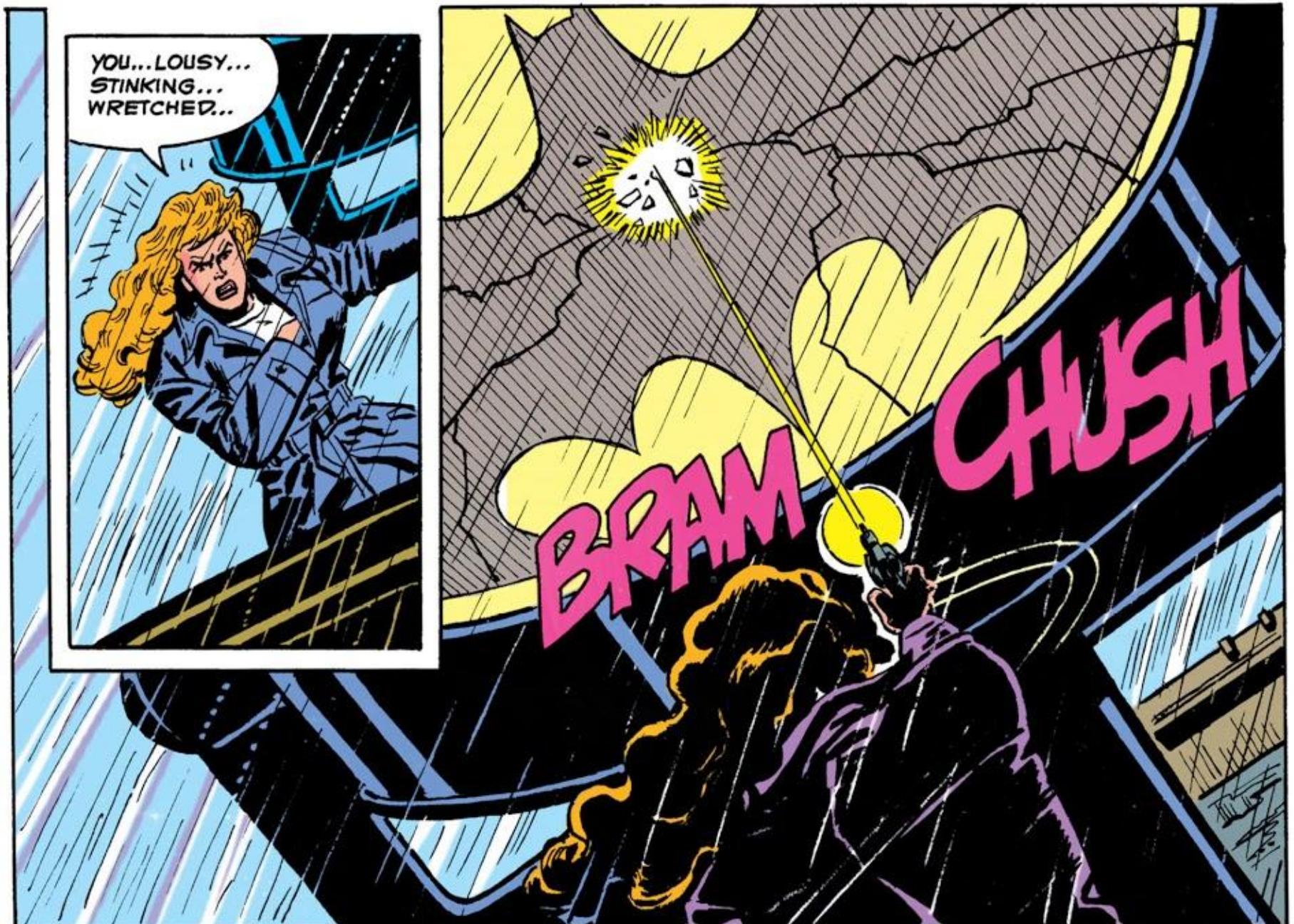


...AND THERE WAS NO WAY TO STAY THERE WITH HER FOR ANOTHER MINUTE.

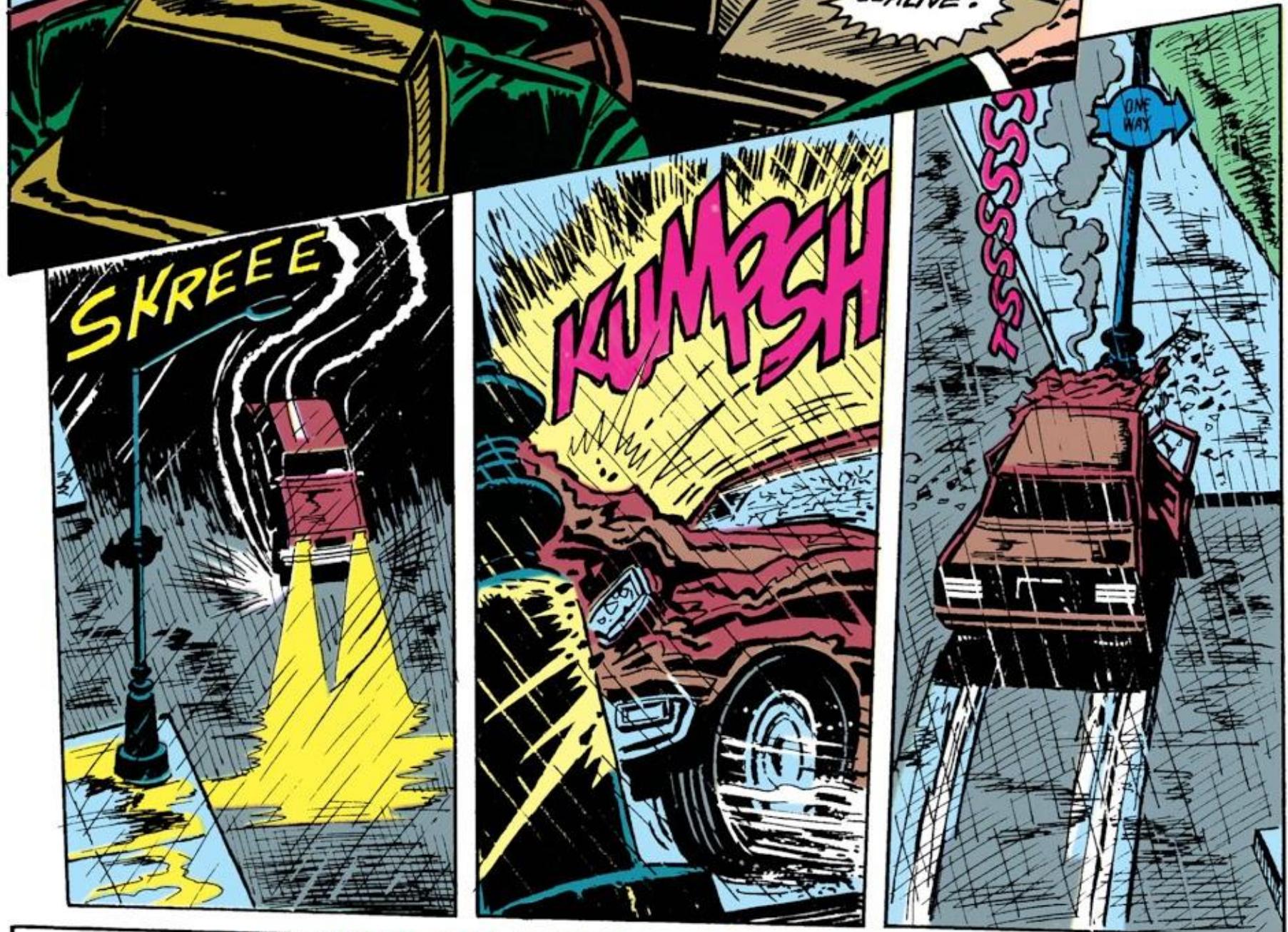
NOT WITHOUT GOING MAD.

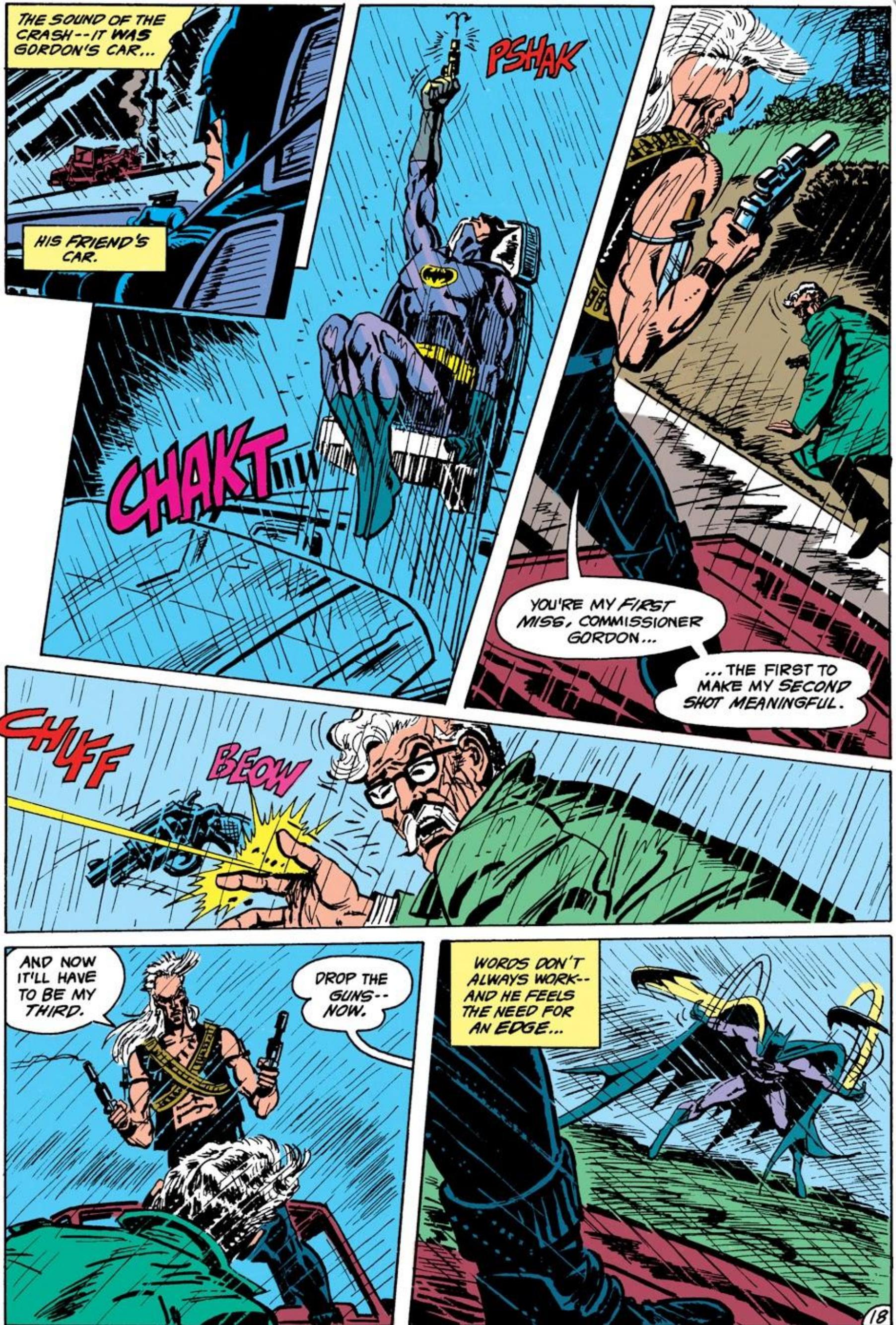


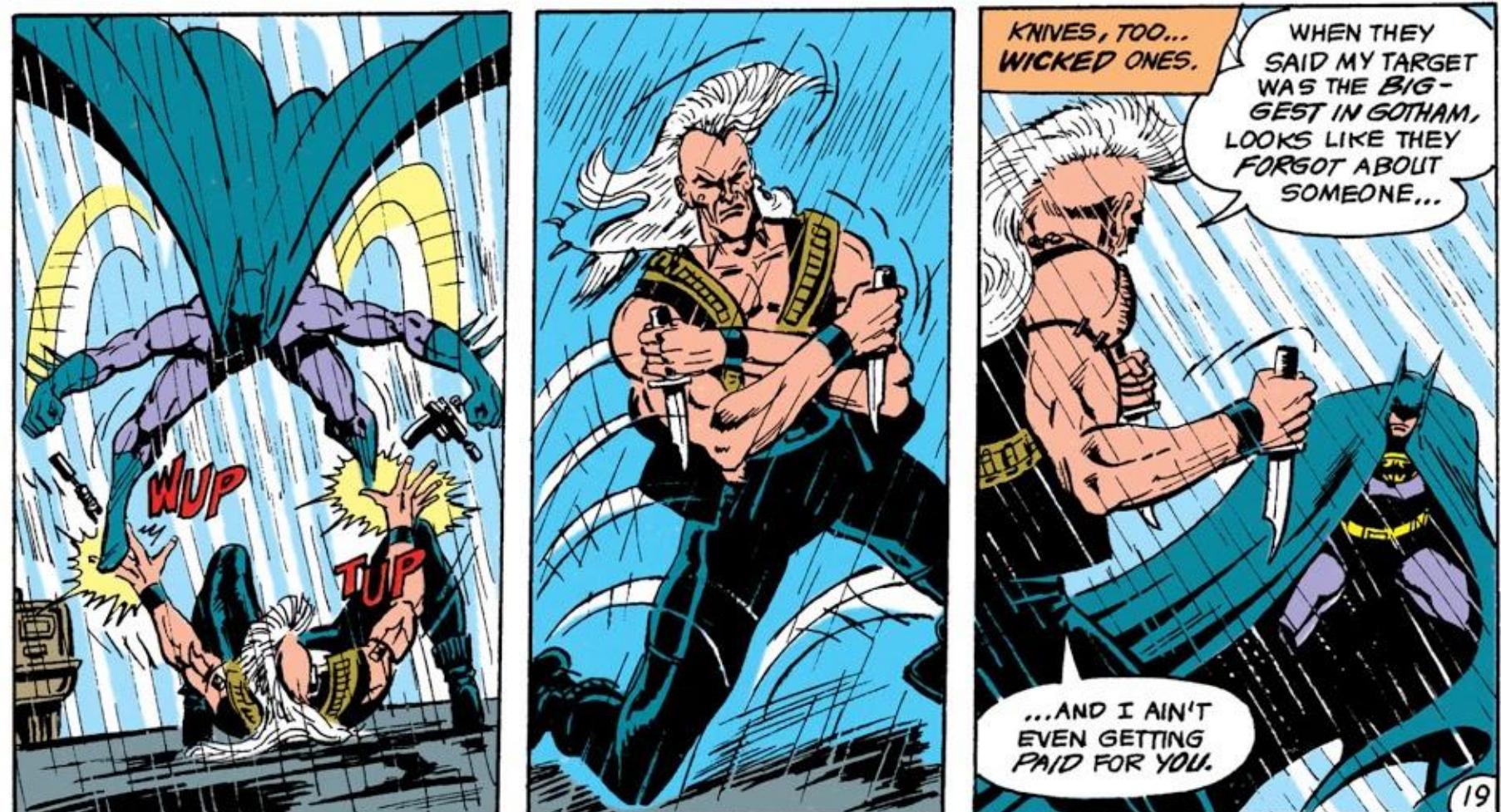
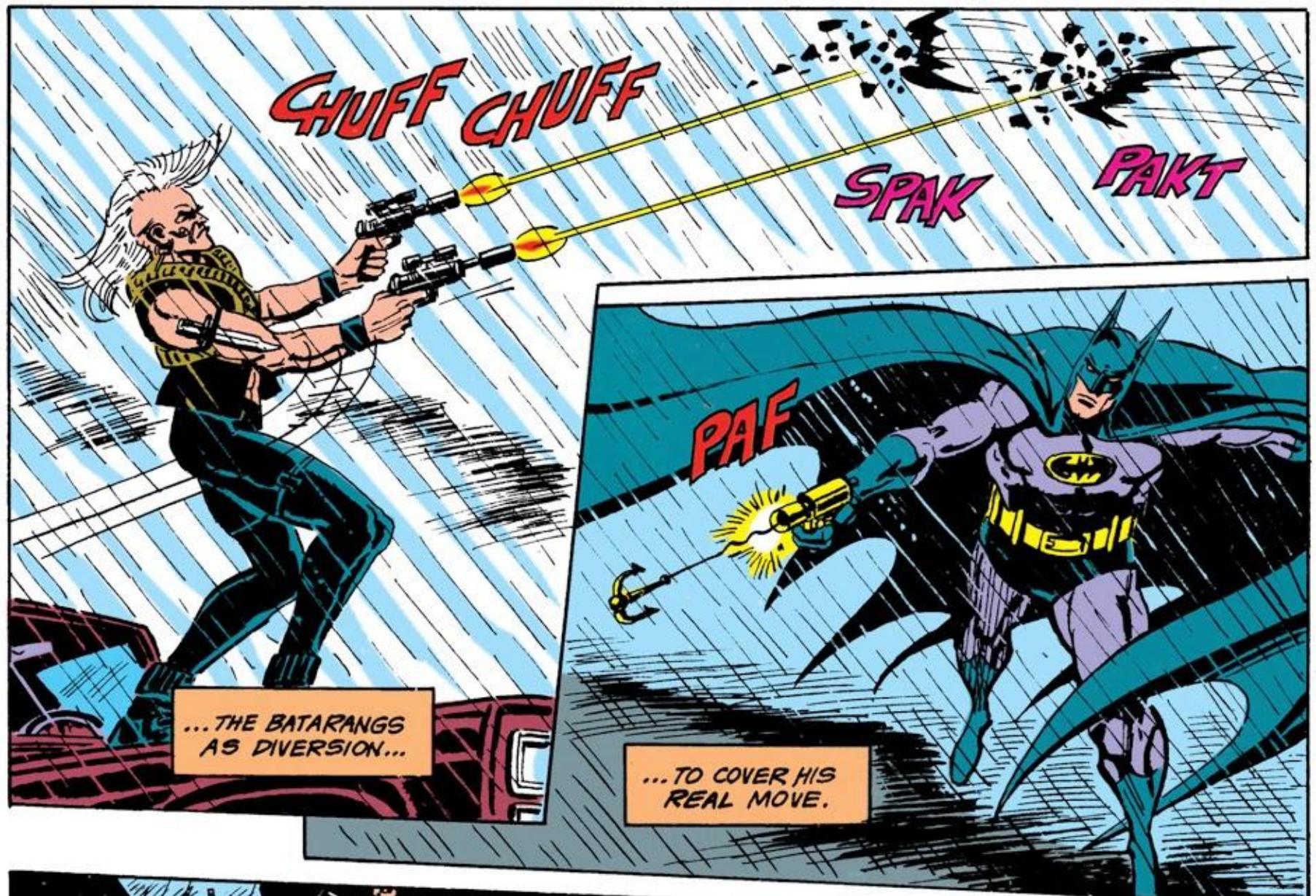




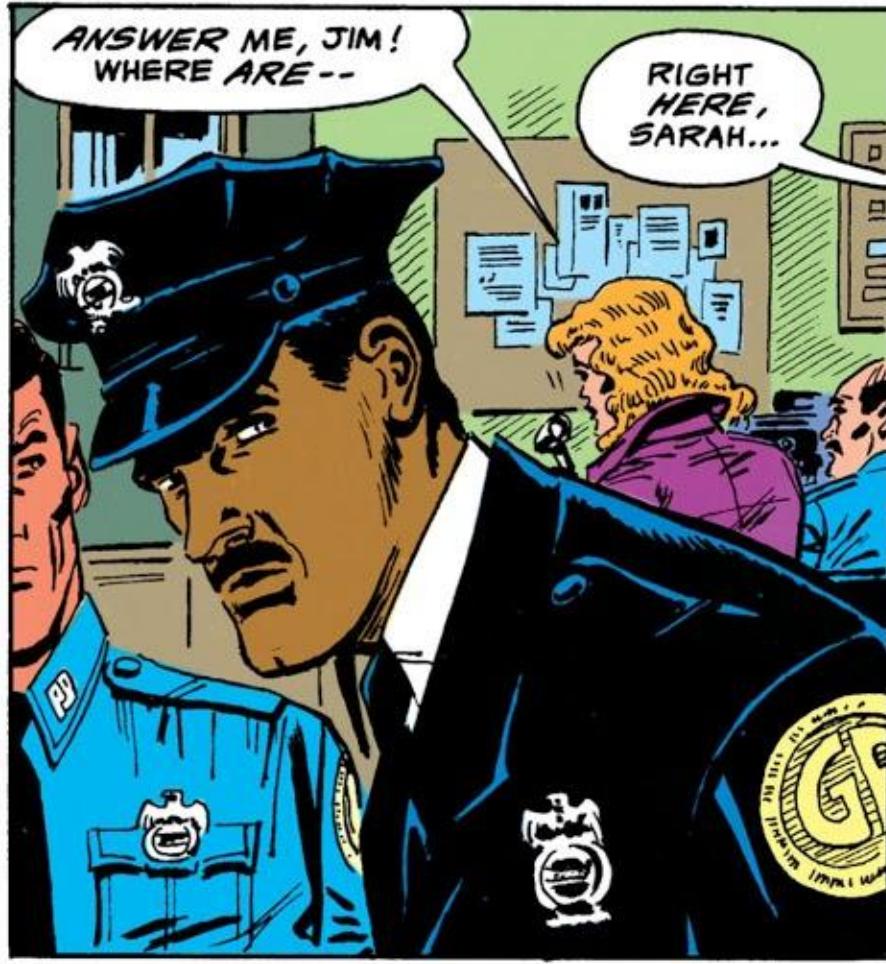




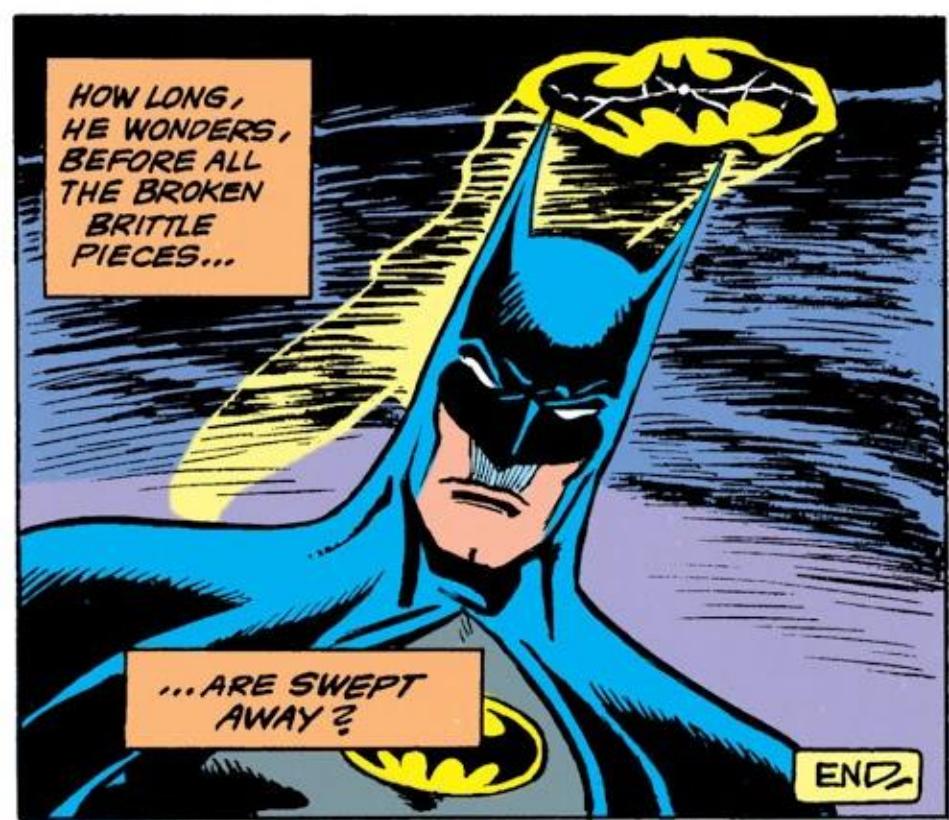








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