



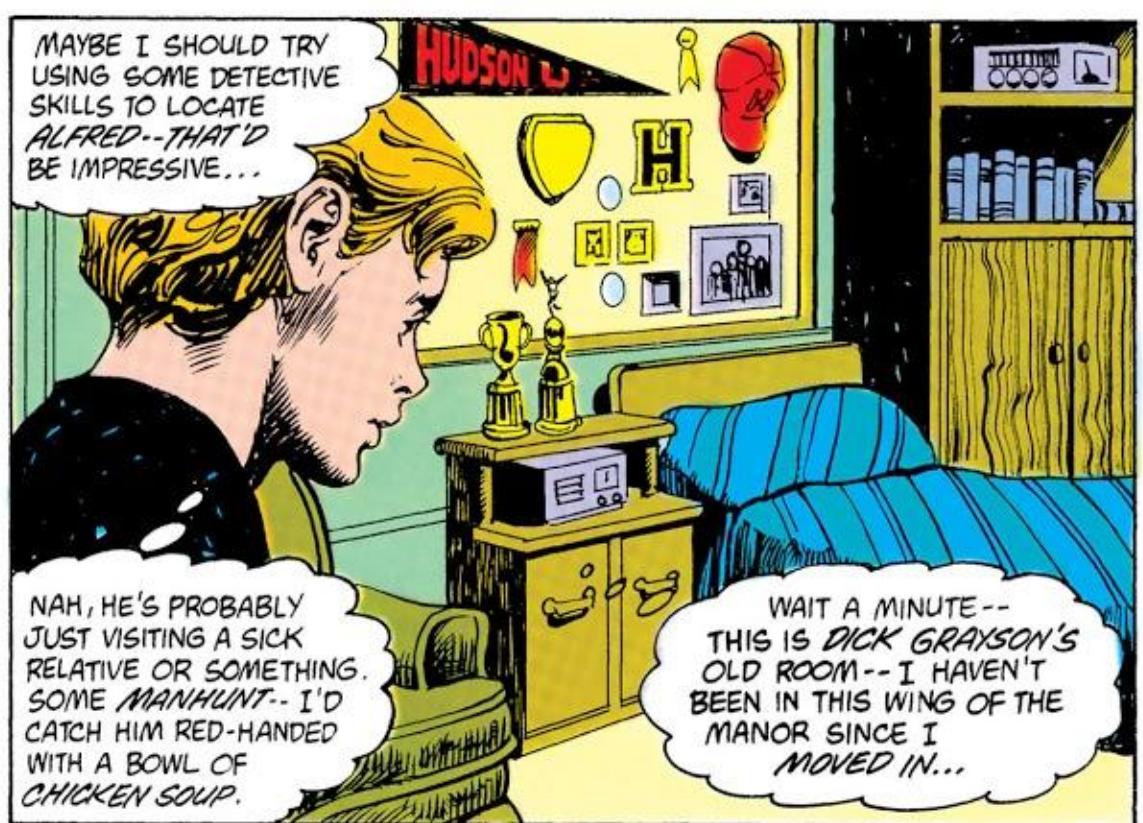
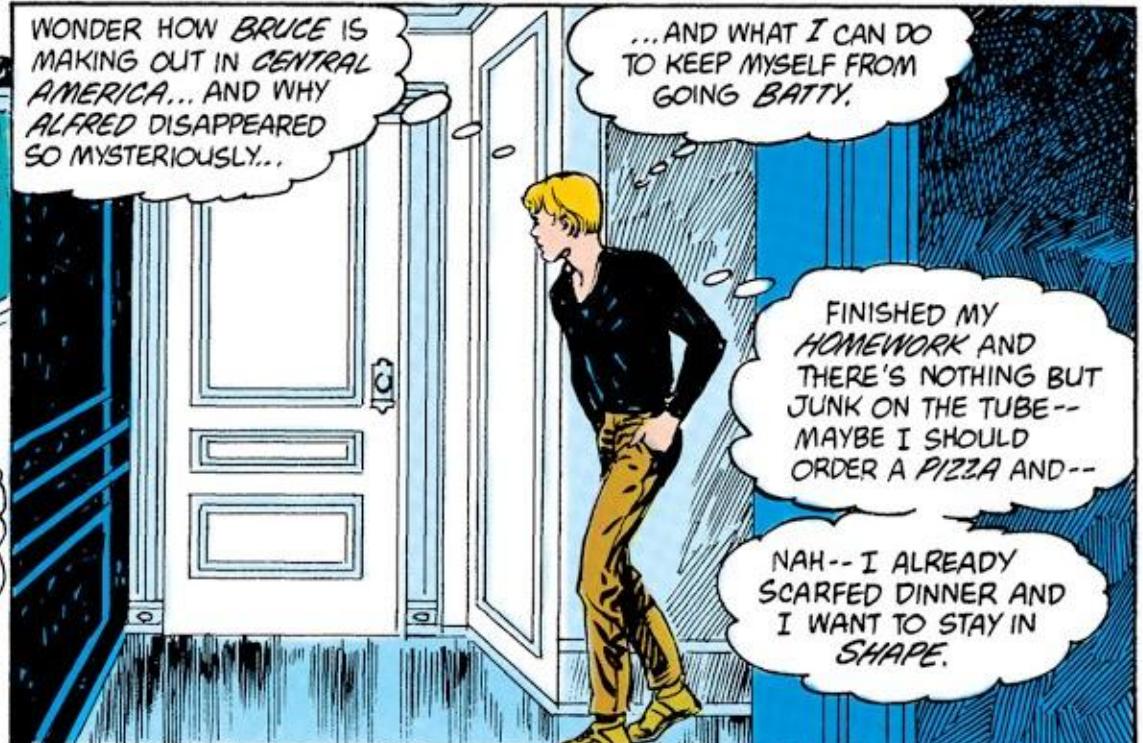
"THE JOKER IS WILD!"

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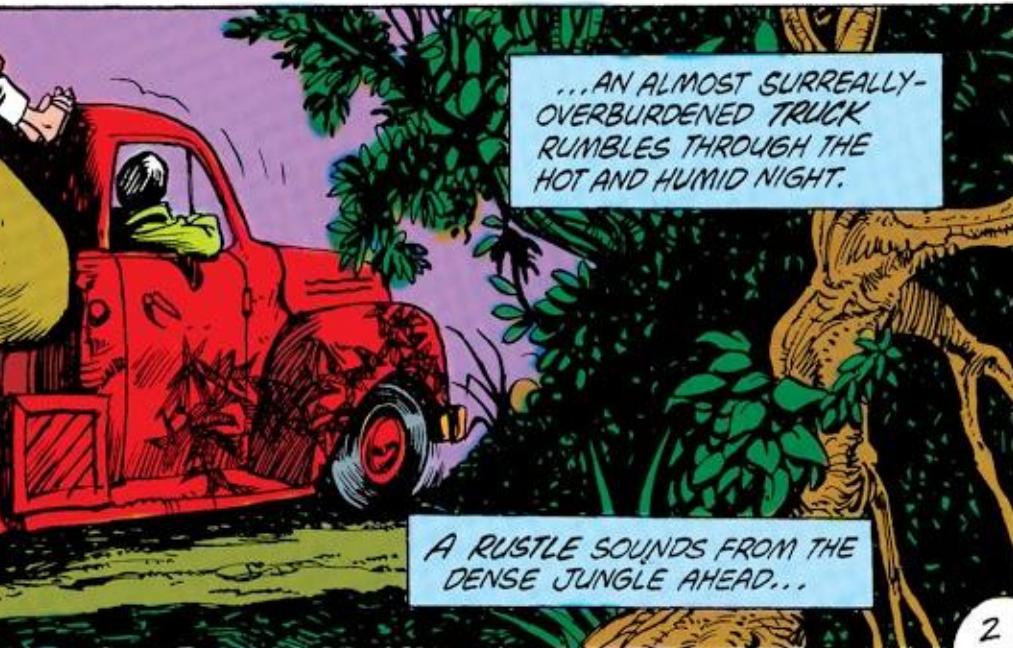
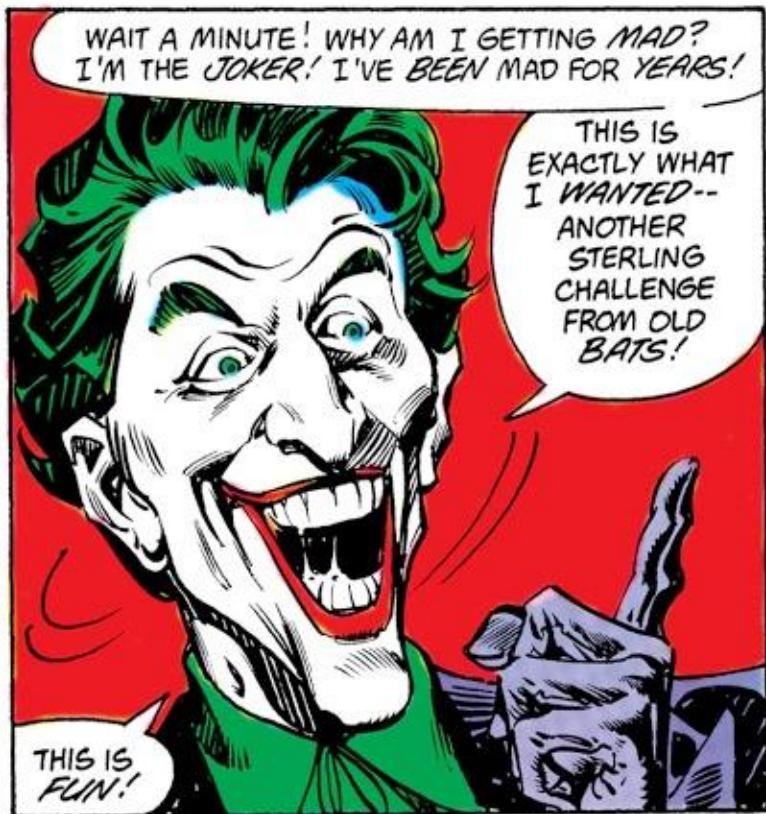
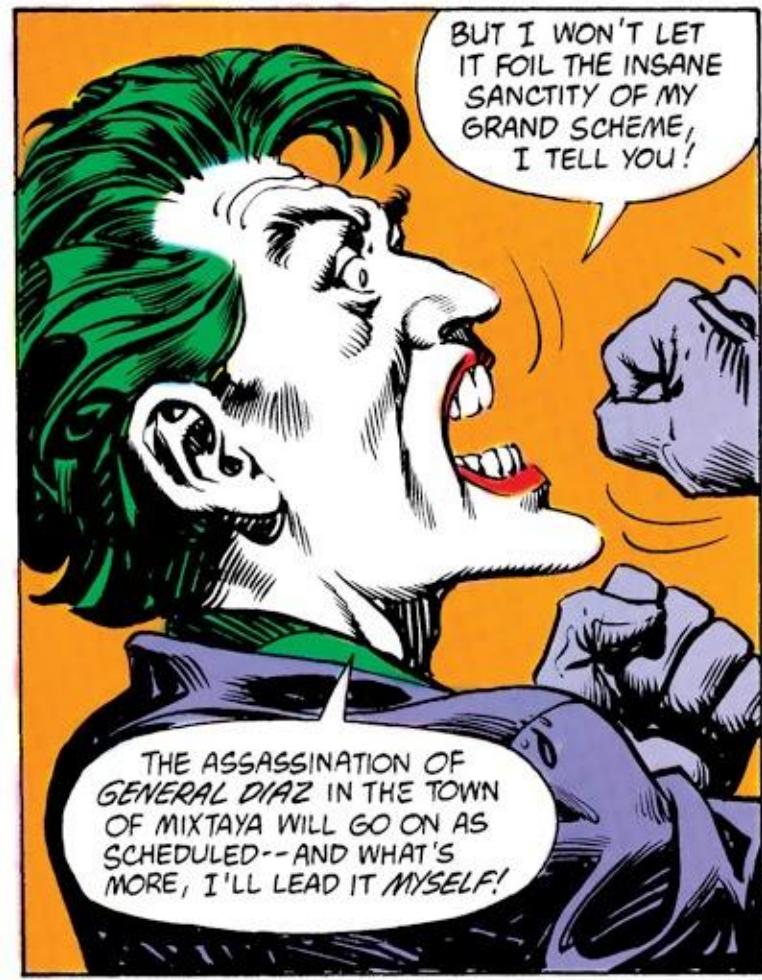
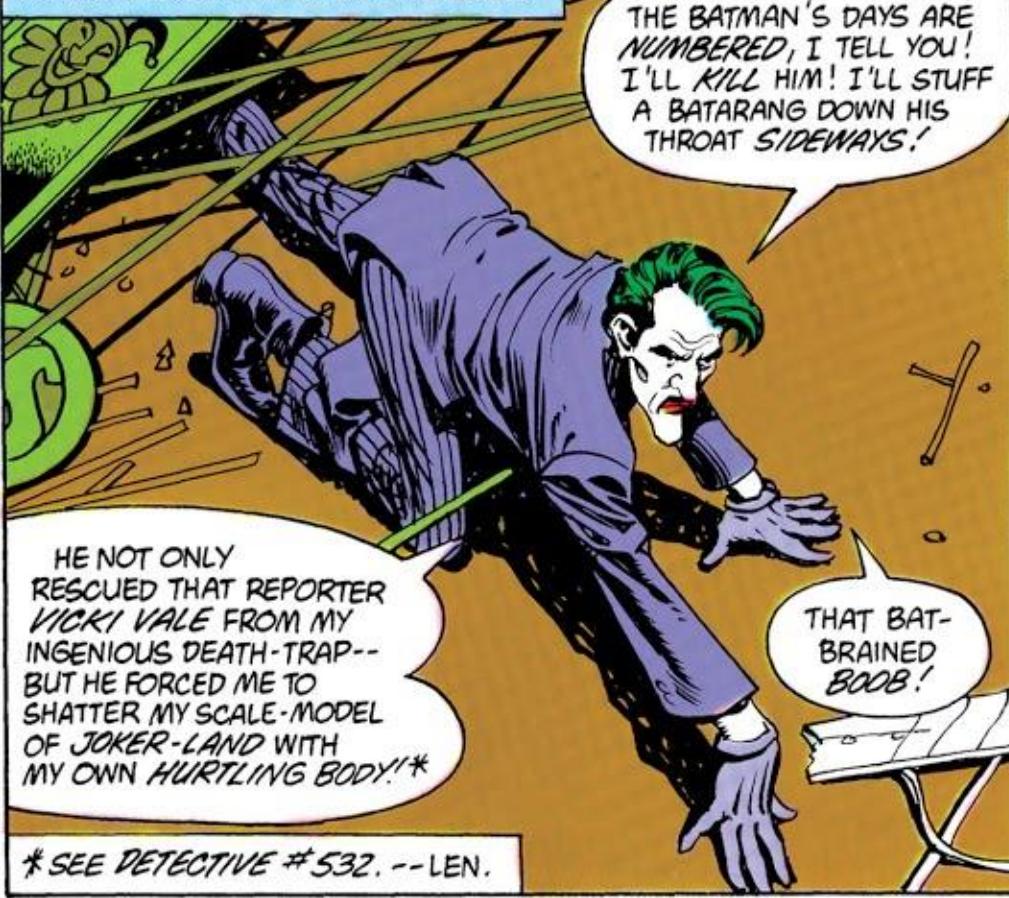
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CODE
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AUTHORITY



PROLOGUE ONE: FRIDAY NIGHT AT WAYNE MANOR...



PROLOGUE TWO: THE SAME NIGHT, IN A CAVE UNDER AN ANCIENT MAYAN PYRAMID IN GUATEMALA...



<WHAT IS THAT--?>*

<IT... IT IS SOMETHING COMING FROM THE JUNGLE!>

<IT IS-->

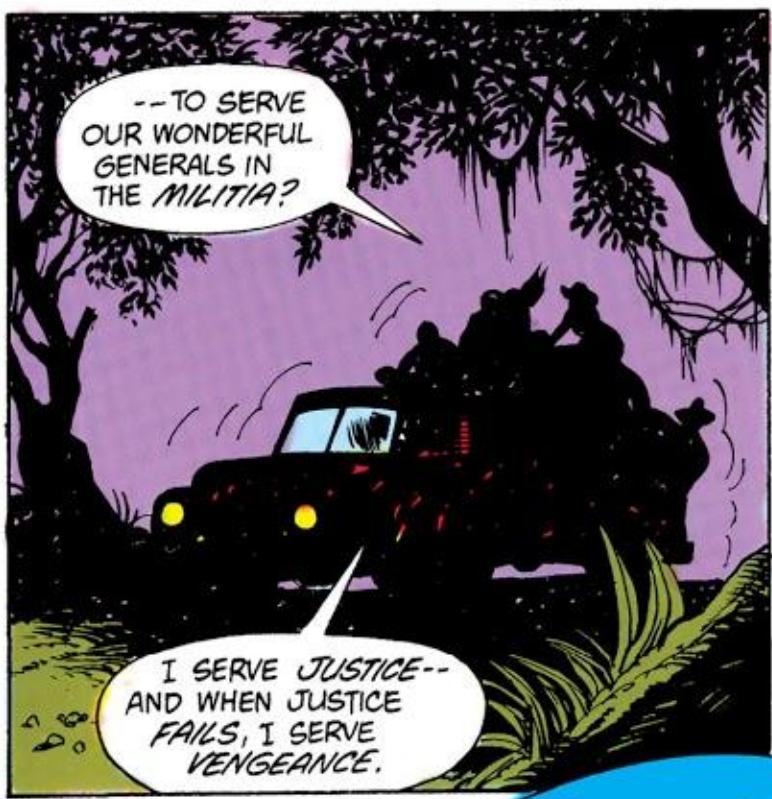
HE STEPS FROM THE DARKNESS ONTO WHAT PASSES FROM A ROAD, INSTINCTIVELY RAISING HIS CLOAK AGAINST THE HARSH GLARE OF HEADLIGHTS, AS IF WARDING OFF SOME SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT OF PAIN.

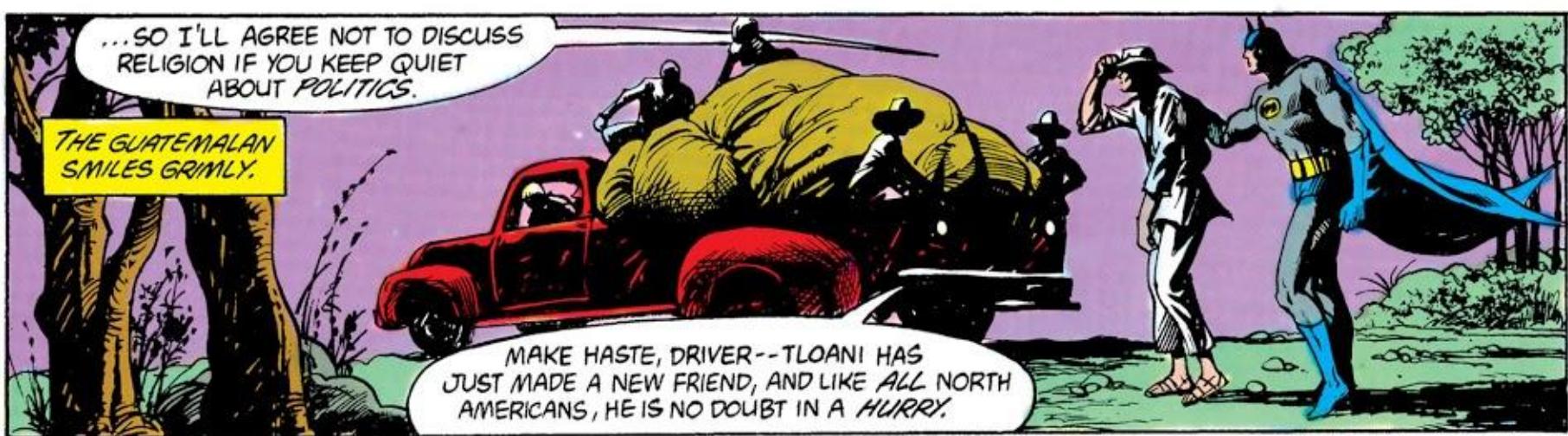
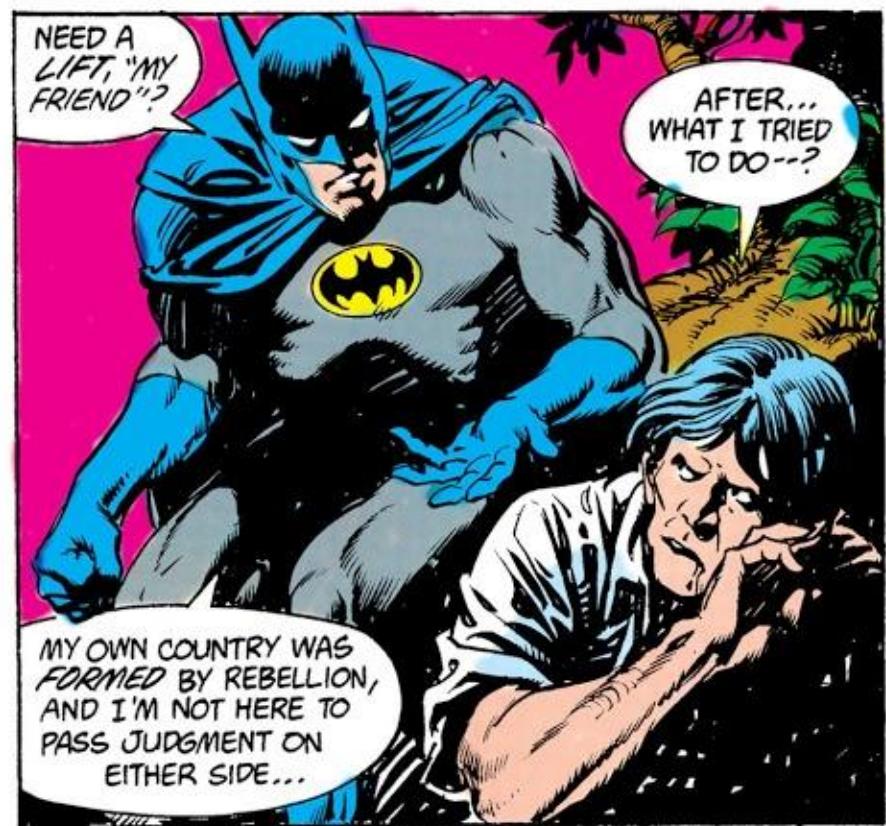
THE TRUCK GRINDS TO A HALT.

WELL, AREN'T WE IN LUCK? A JUNGLE TAXI-CAB--GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION--AND WITH PLENTY OF ROOM ON THE UPPER BERTH...

THE TRUCK IS MORE THAN IT SEEMS, MS. VALE--I'LL DO THE TALKING...







TWO HOURS LATER,
IT IS ALREADY
MORNING IN
GOTHAM...

... WHERE TWO PEOPLE, AS CLOSE
AS BLOOD CAN BOND, ARE STILL
UNCOMFORTABLE IN EACH OTHER'S
MERE PRESENCE...

HOW EXACTLY
DID YOU FIND
OUT, JULIA?

WHEN MY
ADOPTIVE FATHER
JACQUES REMARQUE
DIED --

-- HIS ATTORNEY
GAVE ME THIS
LETTER...

< I AM SORRY TO BOTHER YOU AT A TIME SUCH
AS THIS, JULIA, BUT MY SWORN INSTRUCTIONS
WERE TO DELIVER THIS LETTER THE VERY MOMENT
JACQUES WAS LAID TO REST... >

< "MY DEAR JULIA,
ALTHOUGH I HAVE
RAISED YOU AS MY
DAUGHTER, IT IS
NOW TIME FOR YOU
TO KNOW THAT YOUR
REAL FATHER IS THE
ENGLISHMAN ALFRED
PENNYWORTH, CURRENTLY
OF GOTHAM CITY IN
THE UNITED STATES. >

< "DO NOT BE HARD ON HIM.
HIS MOTIVES FOR KEEPING
THIS SECRET MAY HAVE
BEEN MISGUIDED, BUT
WERE ALSO AND ALWAYS
NOBLE. WITH LOVE
FOREVER, JACQUES" >

THE LETTER, NOW TEAR-STAINED, IS SLOWLY LOWERED...









MIXTAYA: WHERE TORCHLIGHTS GLOW EERILY FROM THE CENTRAL SQUARE OF THE SMALL TOWN...

(OF ONE FACT THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT!)



... AND WHERE A STRONG VOICE SPEAKS LOUDLY--

--TO THE TOWNSPEOPLE AND HIS OWN MILITIAMEN ALIKE.

(THE COWARDLY REBELS ARE MURDERERS--AND THEY ARE RECEIVING OUTSIDE AID TO COMMIT THEIR ACTS OF ATROCITY!)



(THIS AID COMES FROM ONE SOURCE--COMMUNISTS!)

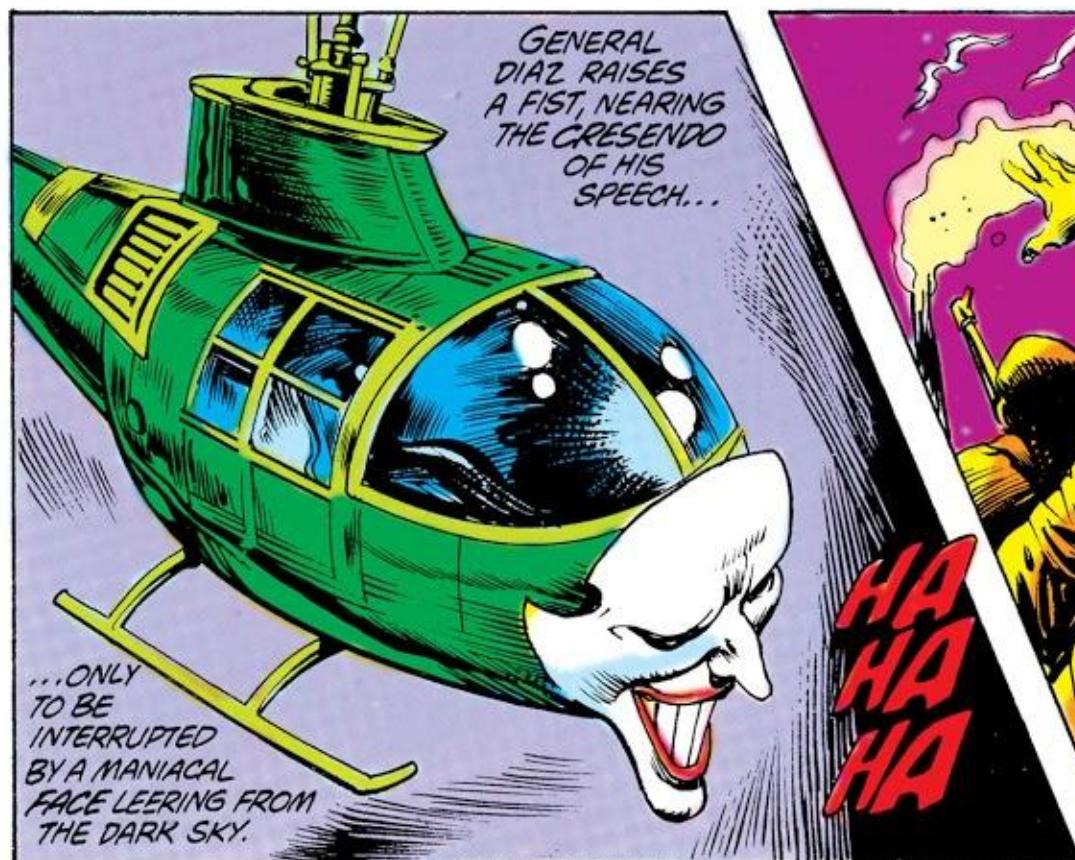


(COMMUNISTS WHO CLAIM TO BE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE--?)

(--BUT WHO ACT WITH A SINGLE GOAL IN MIND-- TO SEIZE CONTROL OF OUR COUNTRY THROUGH ACTS OF TERROR AND VIOLENCE!)

THE SOLDIERS ARE MARTIALLY IMPASSIVE; OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE, SOME CHEER LOUDLY, WHILE OTHERS JEER FAR MORE QUIETLY.

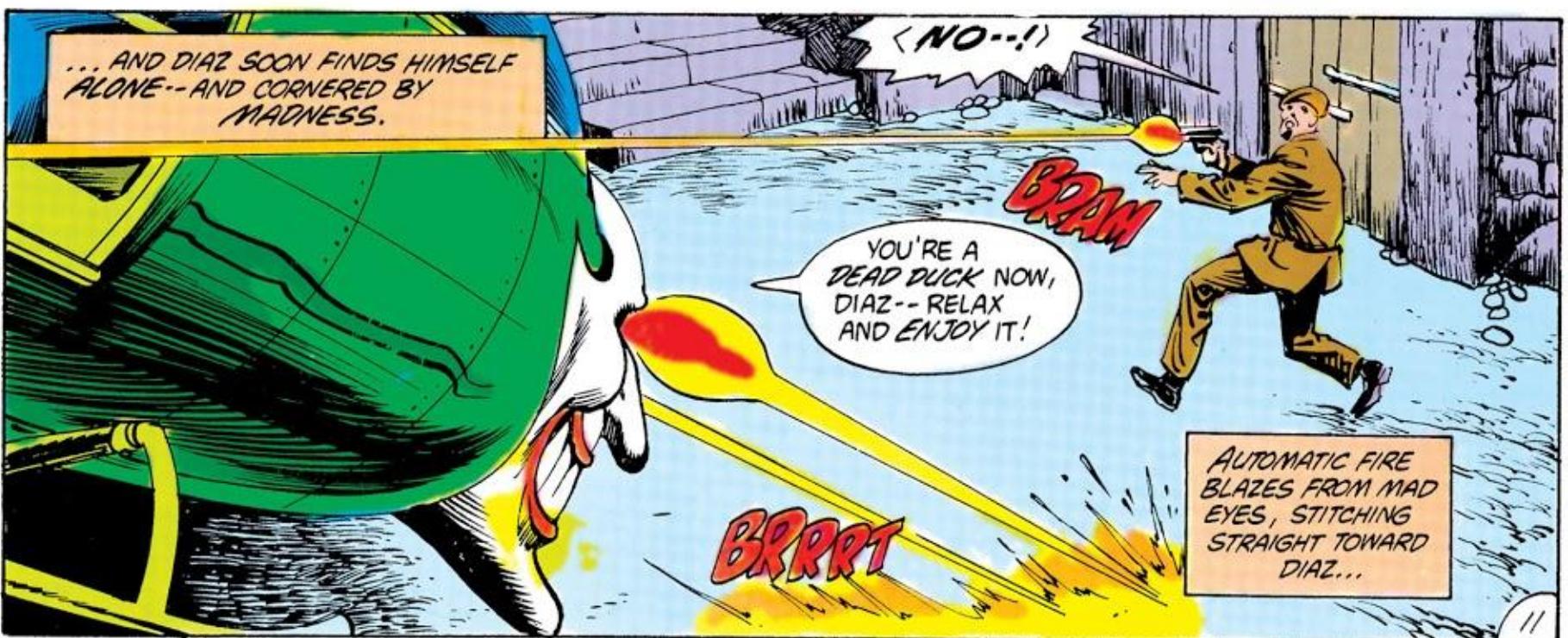
GENERAL DIAZ RAISES A FIST, NEARING THE CRESCENDO OF HIS SPEECH...



...ONLY TO BE INTERRUPTED BY A MANIACAL FACE LEERING FROM THE DARK SKY.

(WHO IN THE NAME OF GOD--?!)





AND THEN, AS IF SPRNGSHOT FROM THE DARKNESS --

CHEEOWW



-- THE BATMAN IS JUST A HAIR FASTER.

THE TRUCK FISHTAILS INTO THE SQUARE MERE MOMENTS LATER--TLOANI AND HIS FELLOW "PEASANTS" DIGGING CONCEALED WEAPONS FROM THE DEPTHS OF ITS CANVASSED CARGO.



VICKI VALE VAULTS INTO THE THICK OF THE ACTION, SNAPPING SOME OF THE BEST PHOTOS OF HER CAREER...

... WHILE THE JOKER SEES THE TWISTED SKEIN OF HIS PLAN SWIFTLY UNRAVELING.

RETREAT!
THERE ARE TOO MANY
OF THEM!



HEAD BACK FOR THE JOKER-CAVE UNDER THE RUINS!

YOU'LL BE SAFE NOW, DIAZ--
BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW ONE THING...



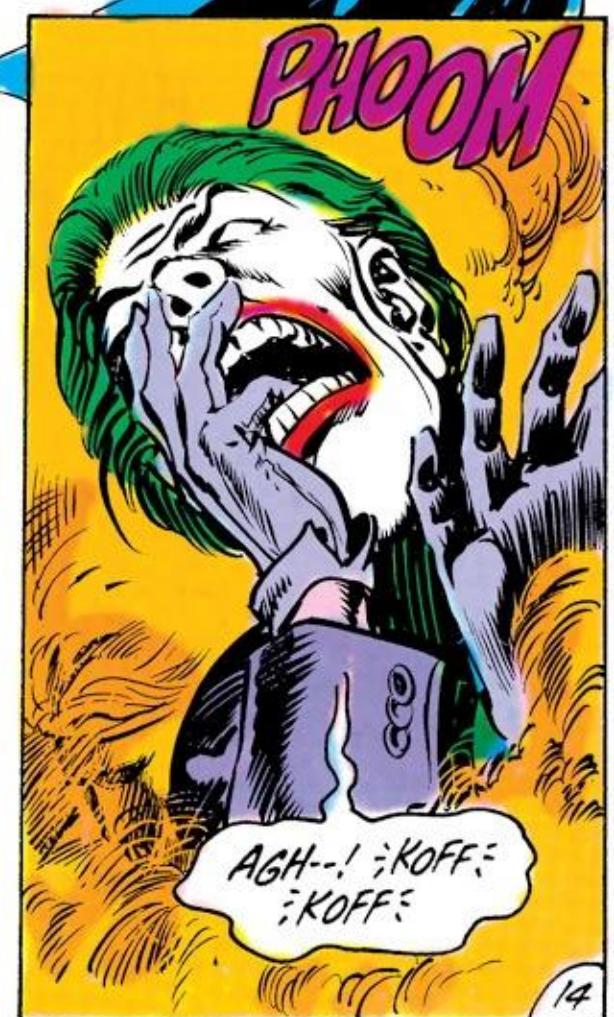
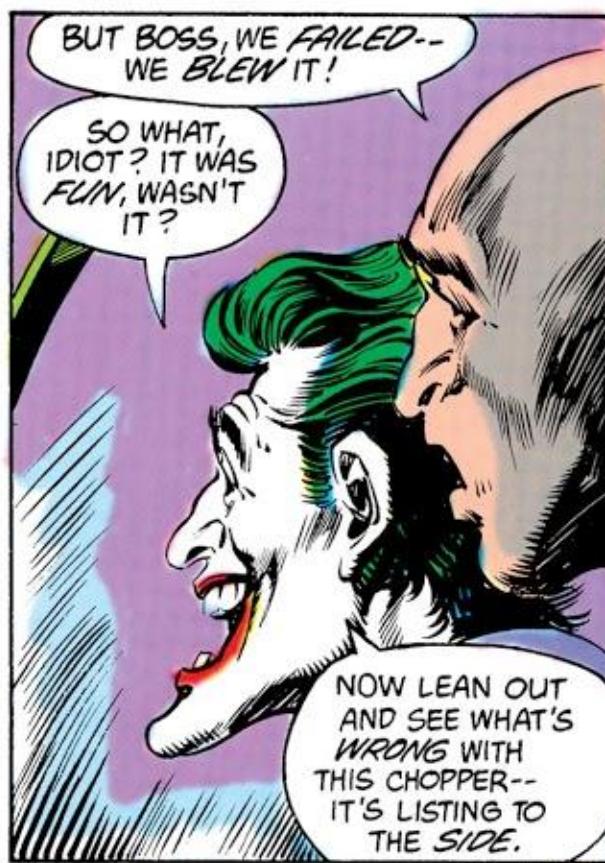
AND BEFORE THE ASTONISHED GENERAL CAN EVEN SPEAK--

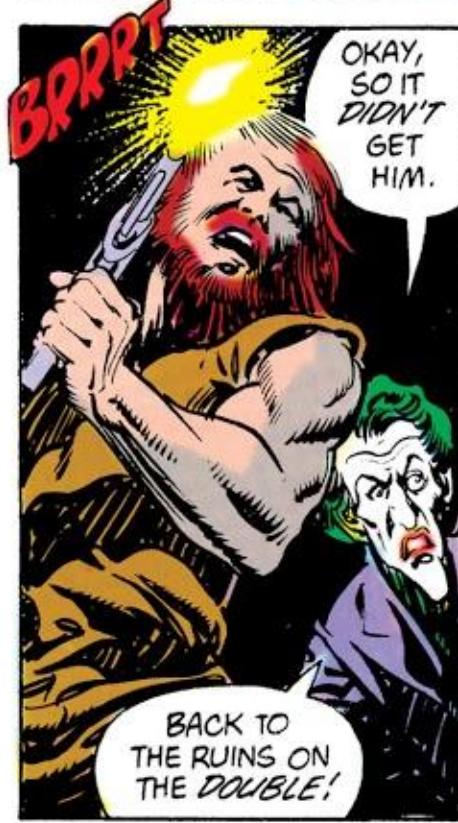
--THE BATMAN IS GONE--

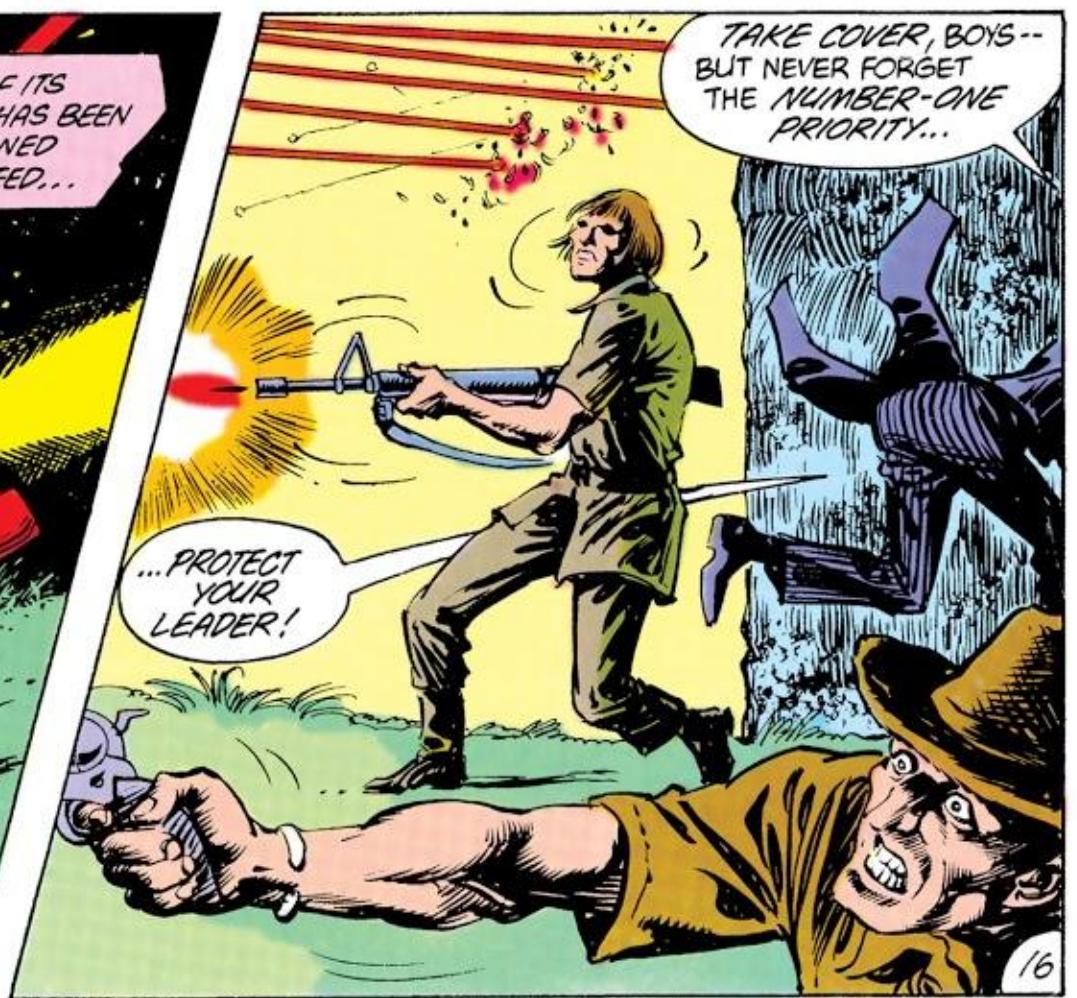
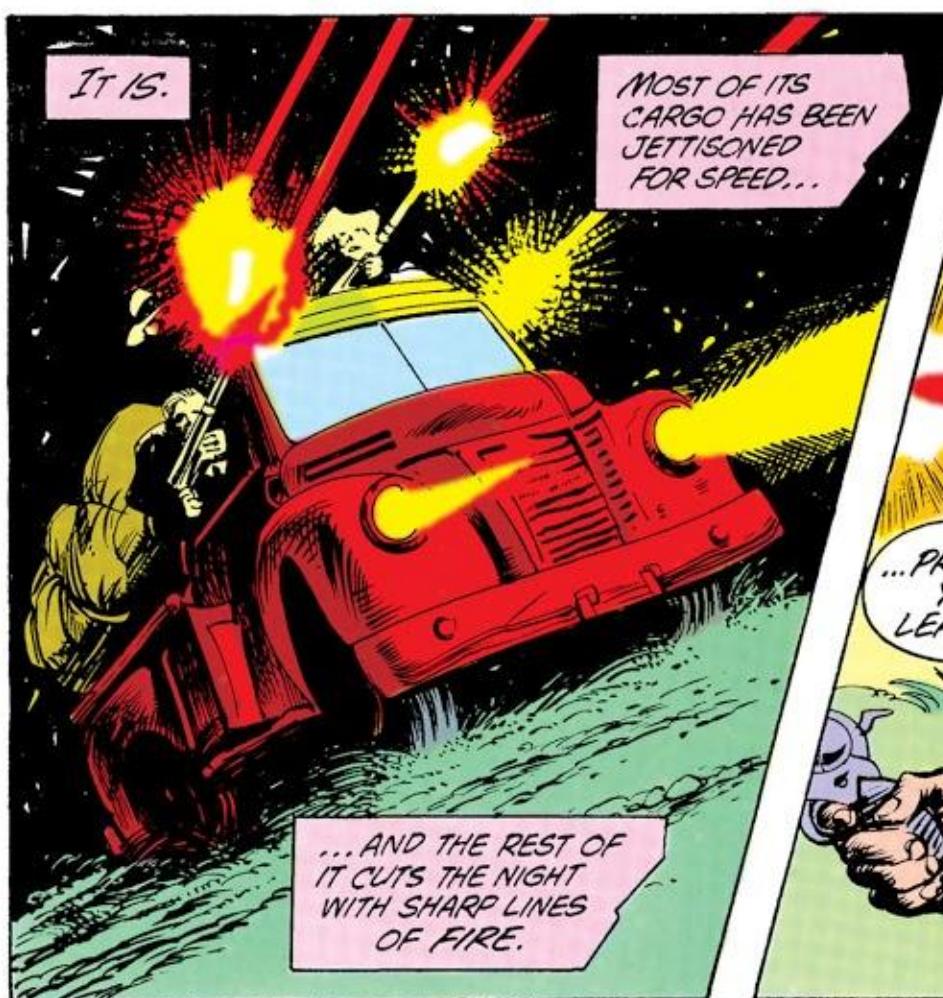
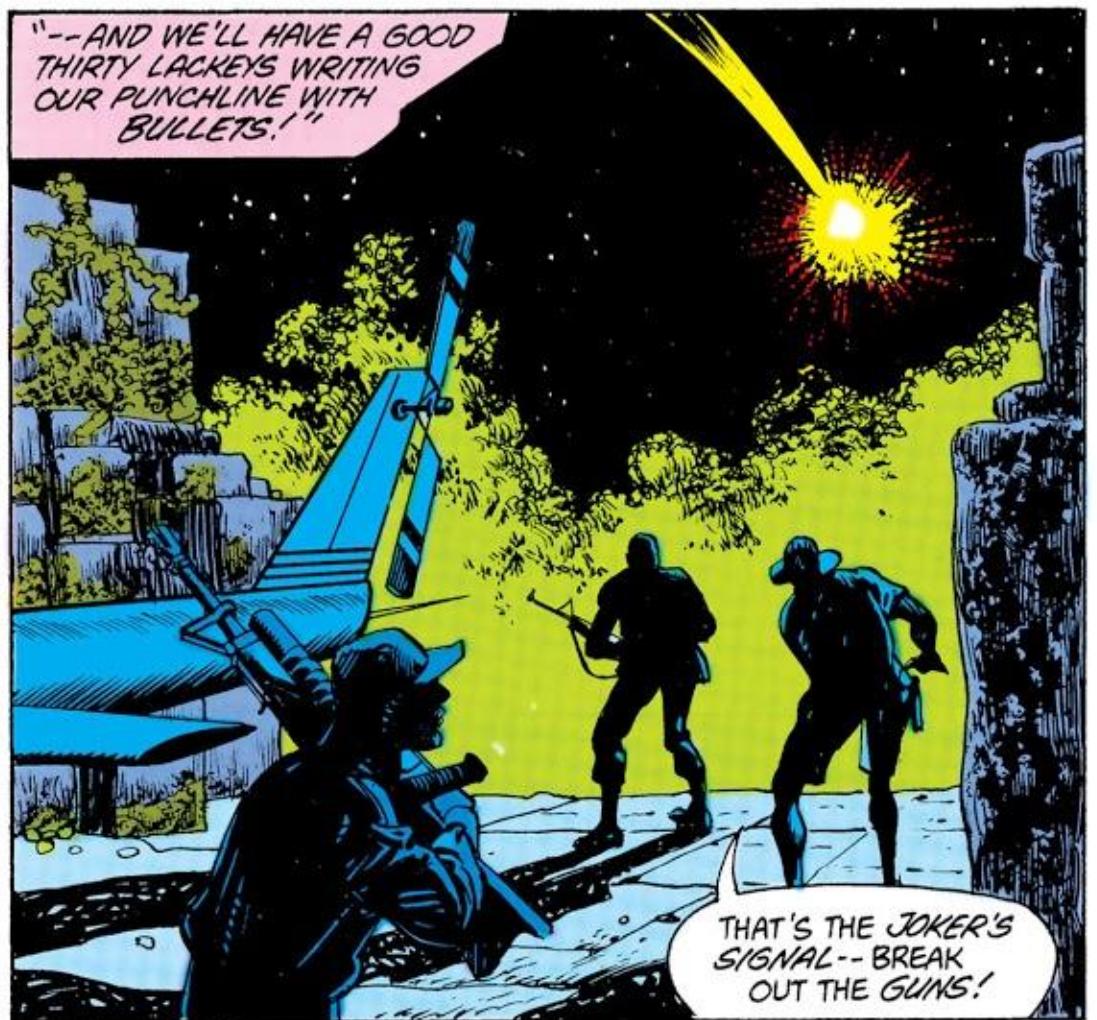
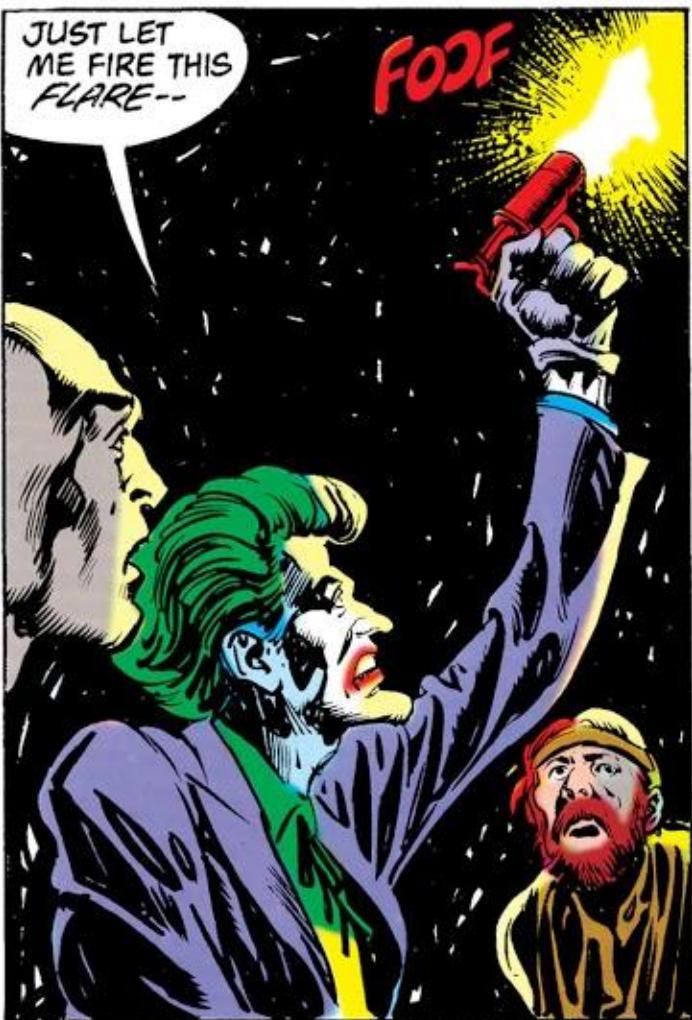


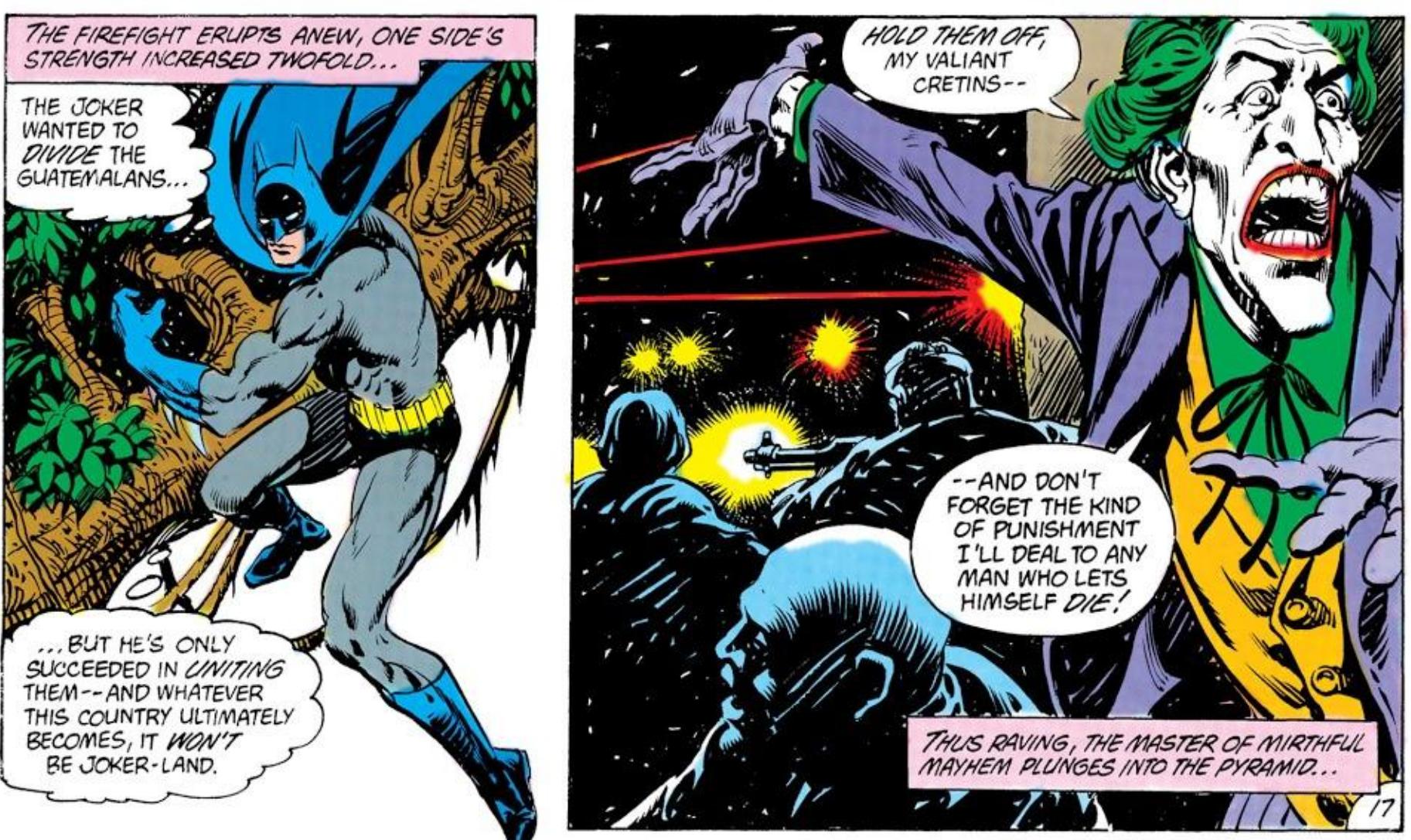
--SPRINTING AFTER THE JOKER'S RETREATING CHOPPER.











AND THE AVENGER
OF THE NIGHT SWOOPS
INTO THE CLEARING,
DARTING FROM COVER
TO CRUMBLING COVER--

--USING THE PITCHED BATTLE AS A
DISTRACTION TO REACH THE PYRAMID...

THE FEARS,
HOWEVER,
PROVE
UNGROUNDED.

LIKE SOME MAD
JACK SPRINGING
FROM THE BOX OF
THE PYRAMID'S
SUMMIT, HE
LOOMS SUDDENLY
ON HIGH, HIS
CACKLES NOW
CHILLINGLY
DEMENTED AS HE
ORCHESTRATES
THE MAYHEM
SPRAWLED
BELOW...

CHAOS,
CHAOS--
RAH, RAH,
RAH!

HA HA
HA HA

CUT 'EM DOWN,
BOYS! BLAST!
SHOOT! KILL!
ANNIHIL--

EH--? THE
BATMAN!

THE FIGHT'S WINDING DOWN NOW--
WITH THE COMBINED REBELS
AND SOLDIERS MAKING QUICK WORK
OF JOKER'S GUNSEL...

... BUT
SOMETHING
TELLS ME THE
BEST BATTLE IS
STILL TO
COME...

OH, NO--! THE
JOKER'S GOT A
MACHINE-GUN
UP THERE!

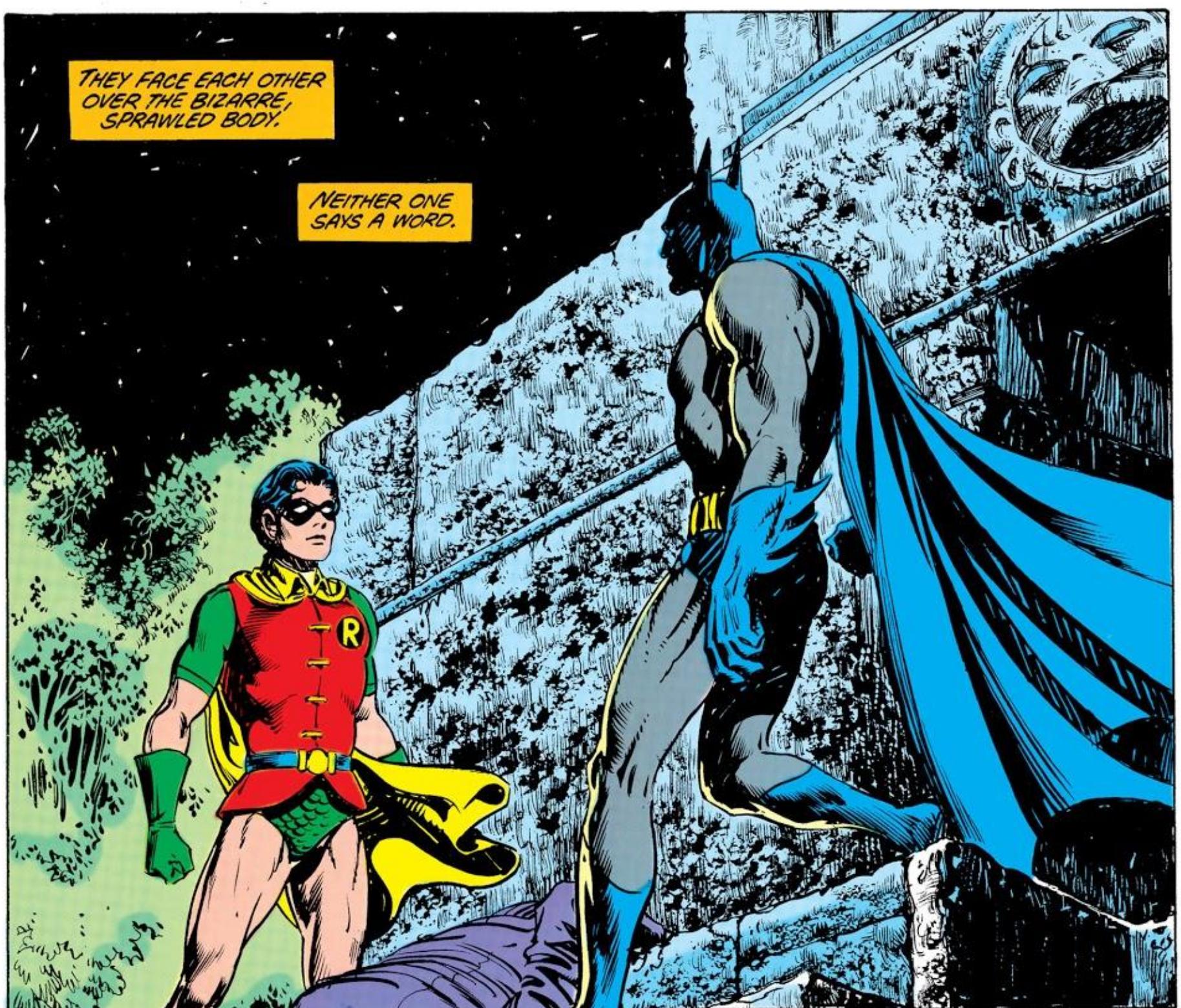
AND THE
BATMAN... IS
UNARMED!





THEY FACE EACH OTHER
OVER THE BIZARRE,
SPRAWLED BODY.

NEITHER ONE
SAYS A WORD.

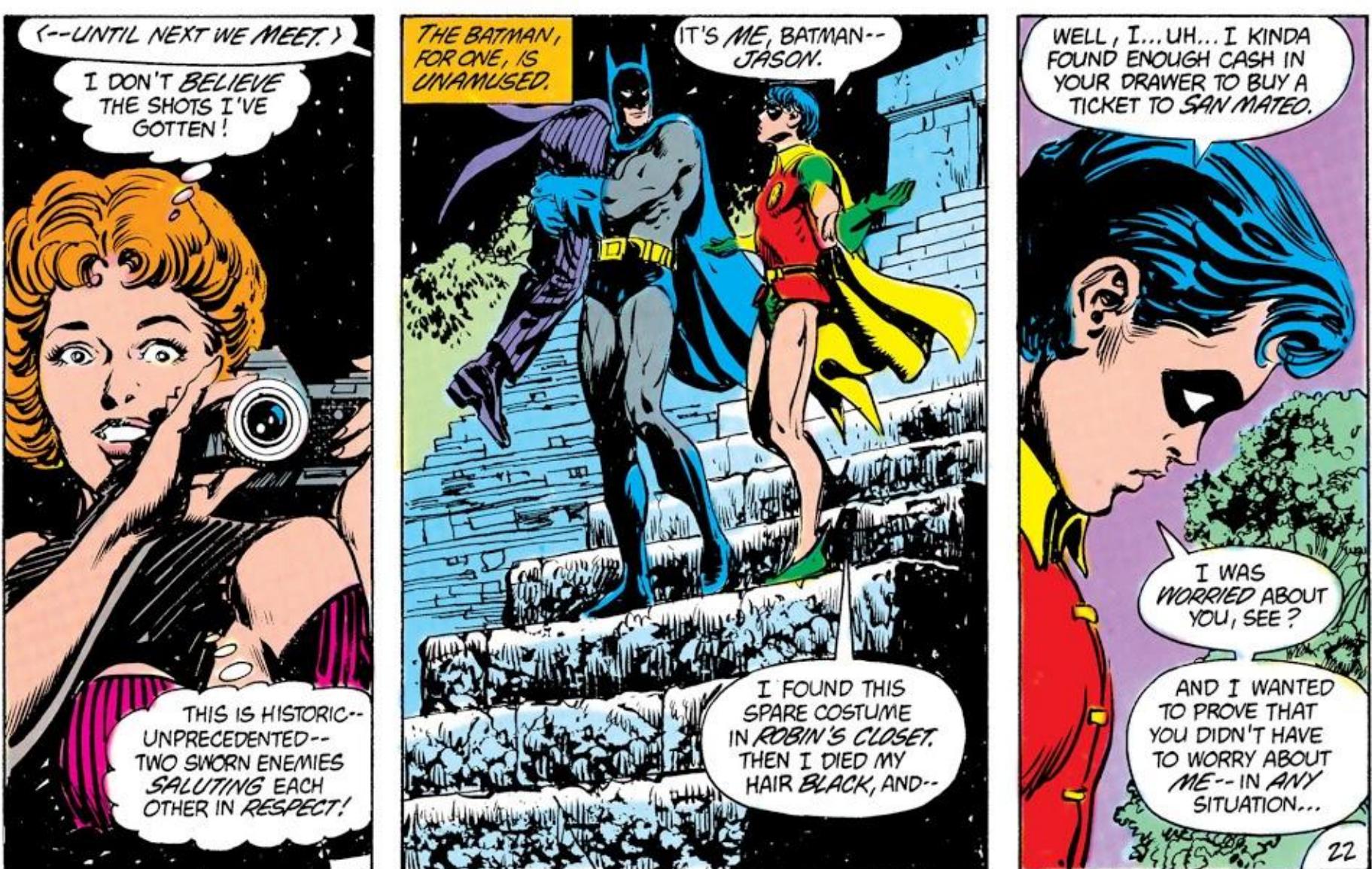
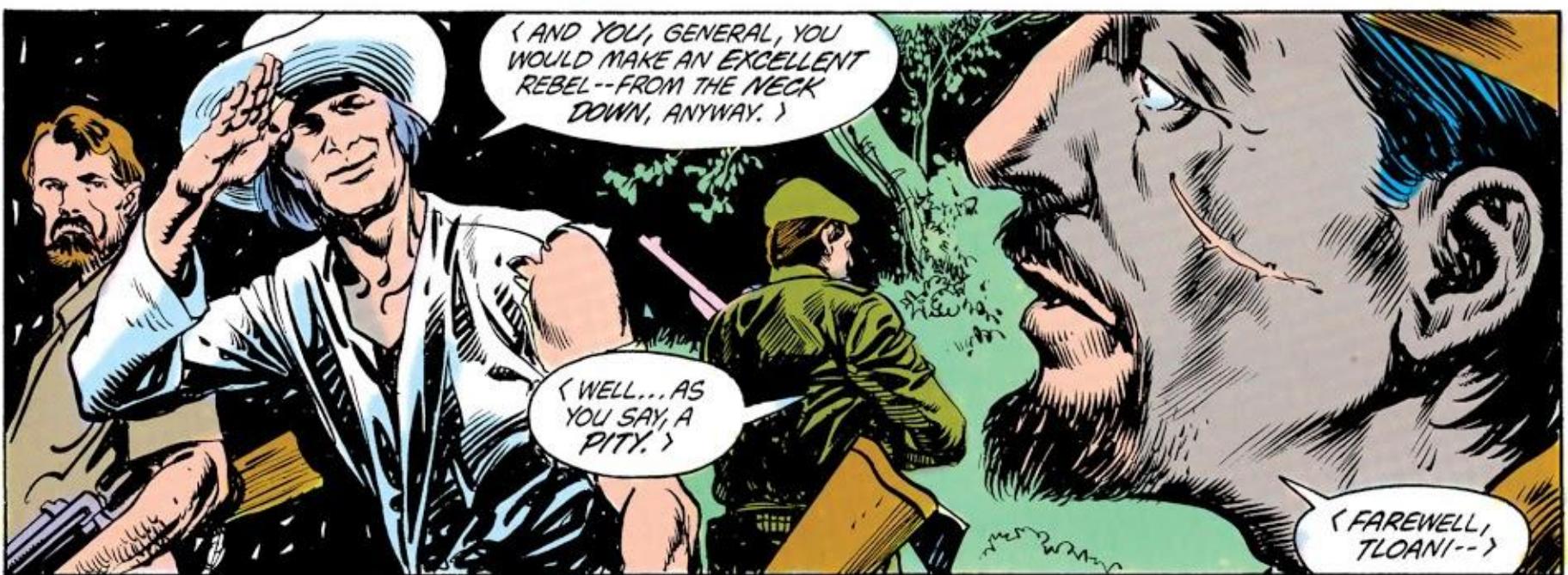


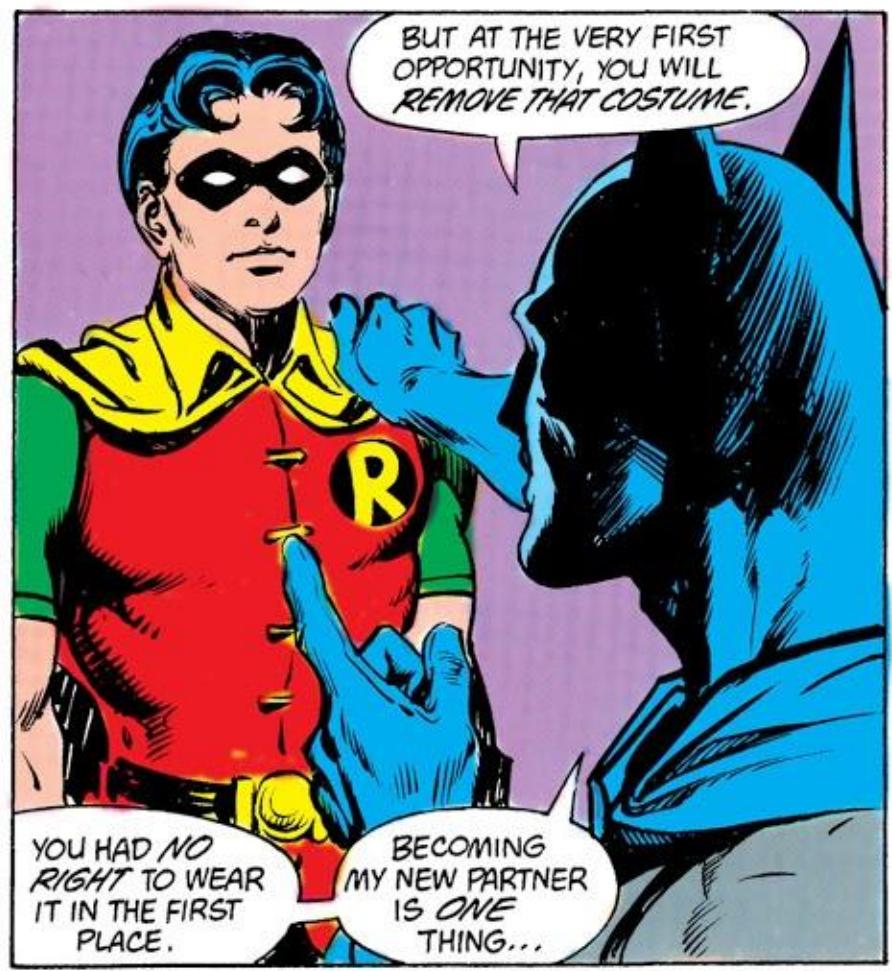
BELOW, THE SOUNDS
OF BATTLE DWINDLE
TO SILENCE.

THEN--

UH... HI
THERE.









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