



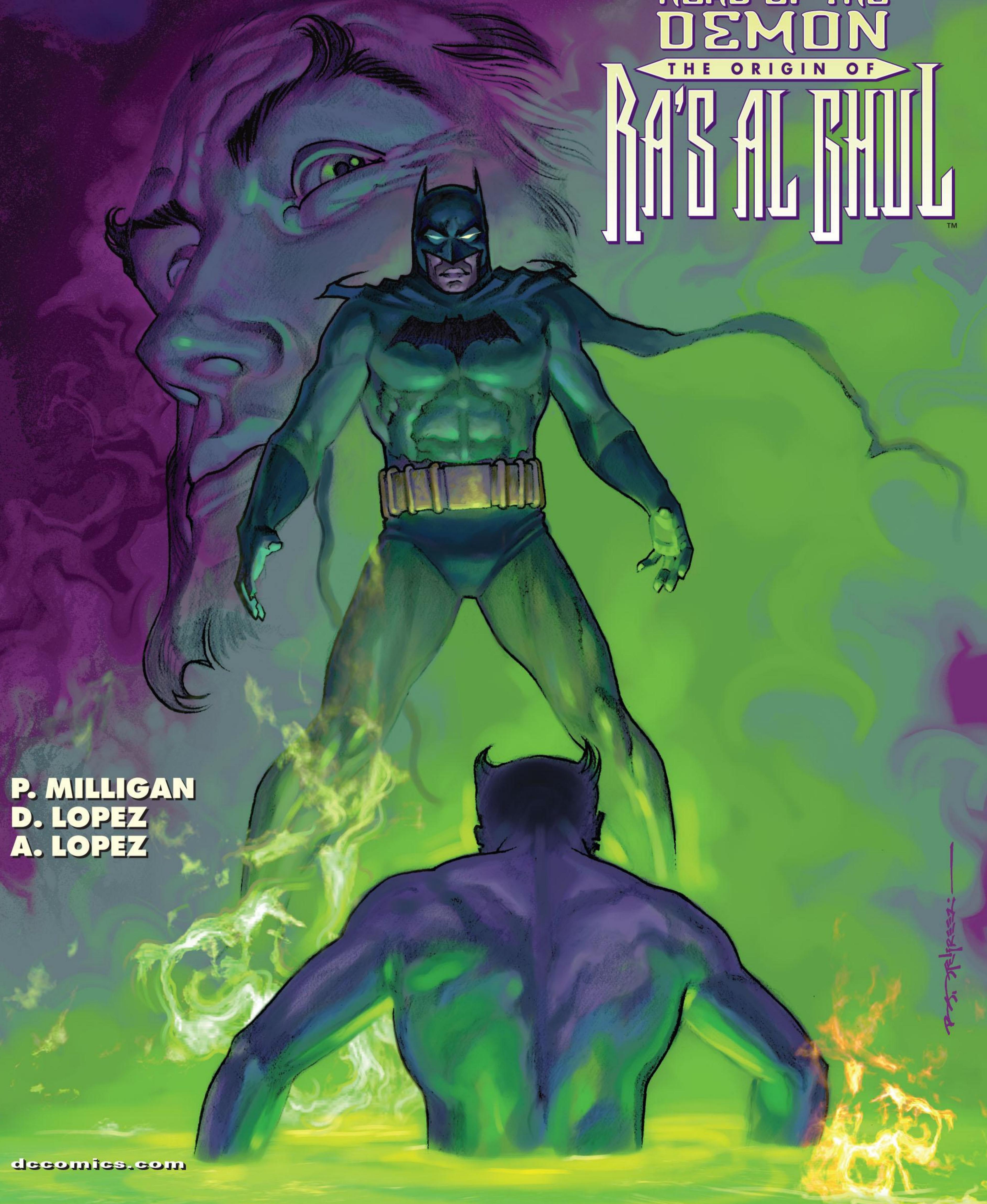
26
2007

ANNUAL

BATMAN

HEAD OF THE
DEMON

THE ORIGIN OF
RA'S AL GHUL



P. MILLIGAN
D. LOPEZ
A. LOPEZ

PS. DREZZI

RESURRECTION SHUFFLE

COME,
TALIA. THERE
IS NO TIME TO
LOSE.

WE MUST
BEGIN DAMIAN'S
EDUCATION.

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WRITER

DAVID LÓPEZ
PENCILLER

ÁLVARO LÓPEZ
INKER

TRISH MULVIHILL
COLORIST

PHIL BALS MAN
LETTERER

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COVER ARTIST

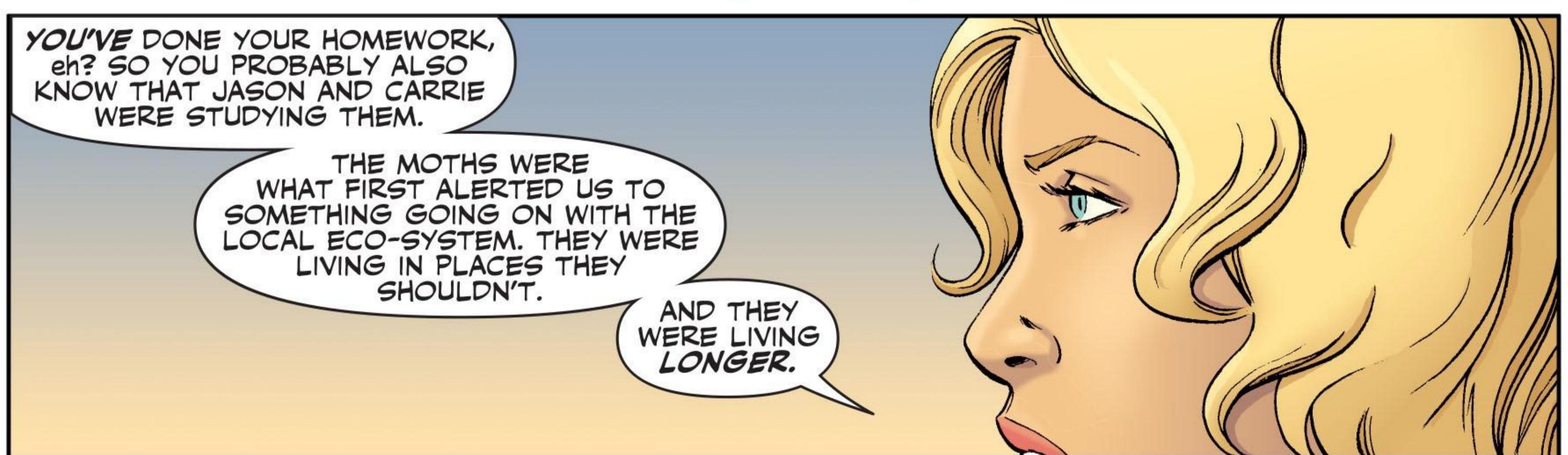
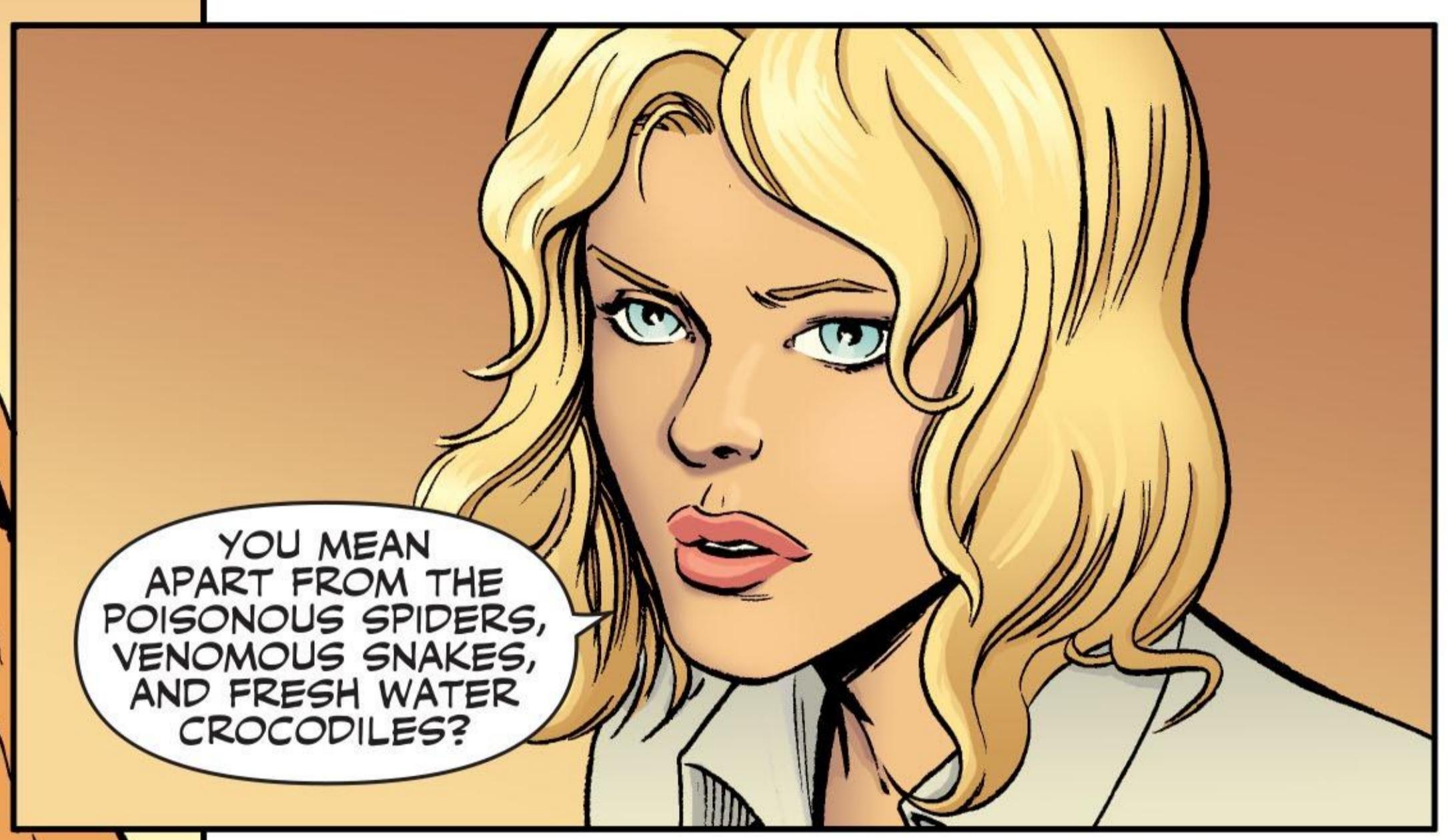
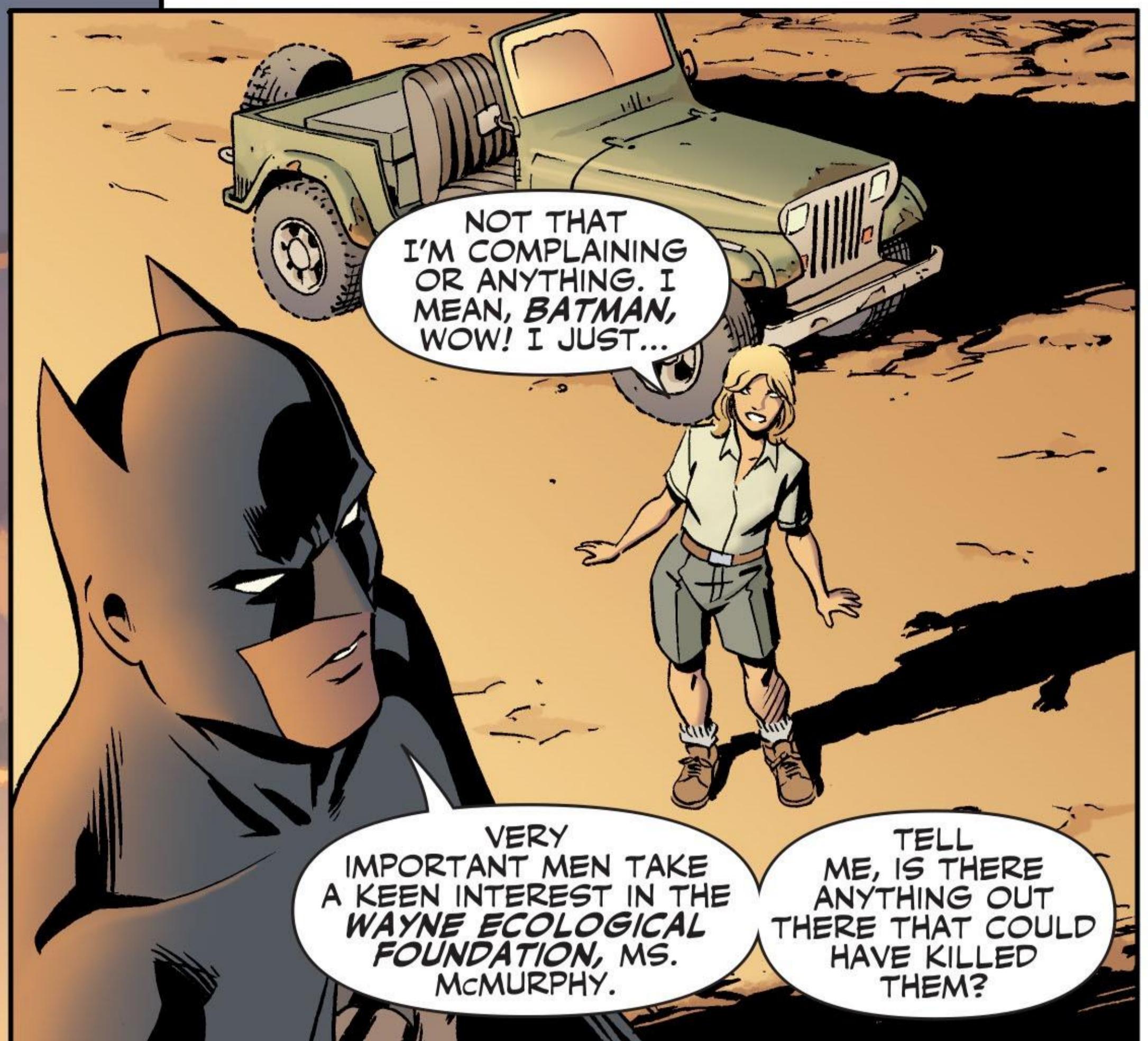
JEANINE SCHAEFER EDITOR
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

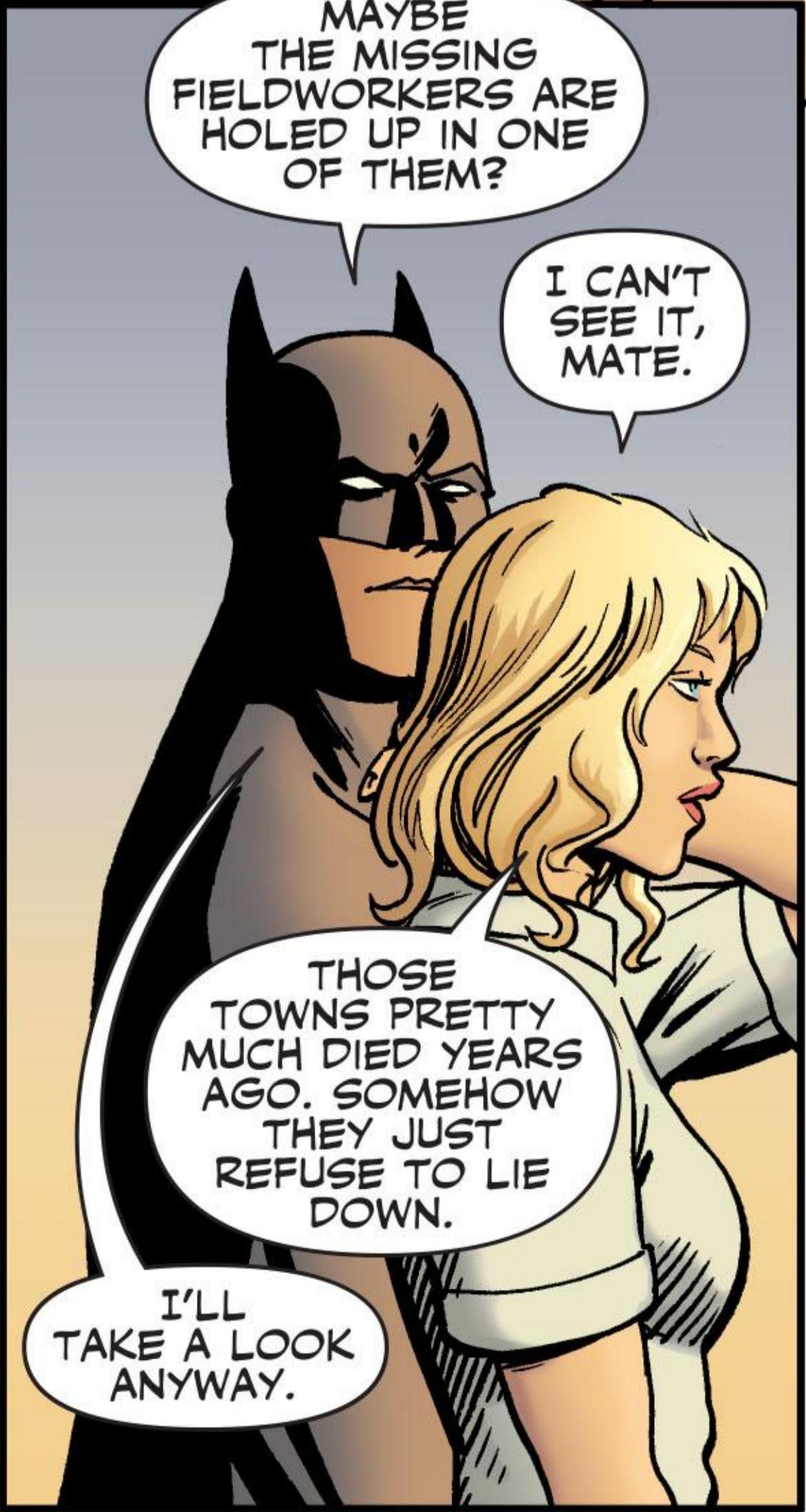
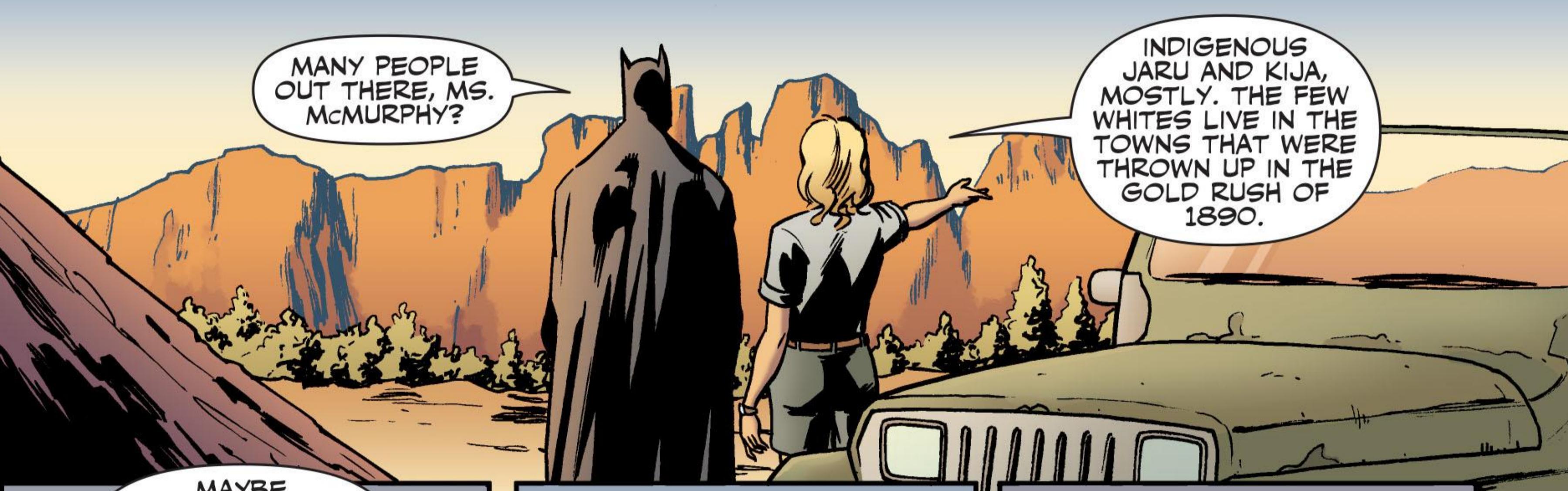
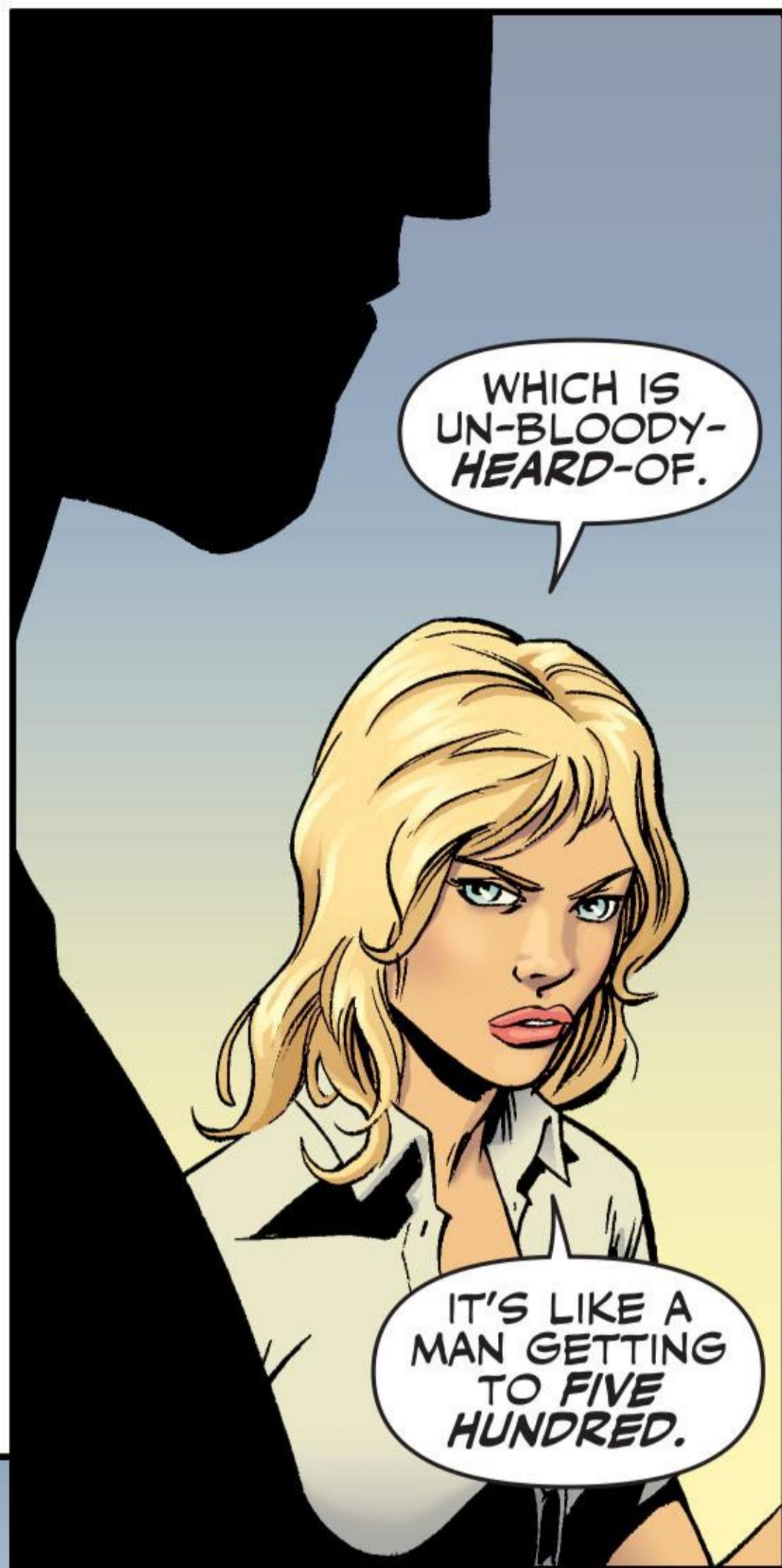
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CONVERSION BY
WildStorm



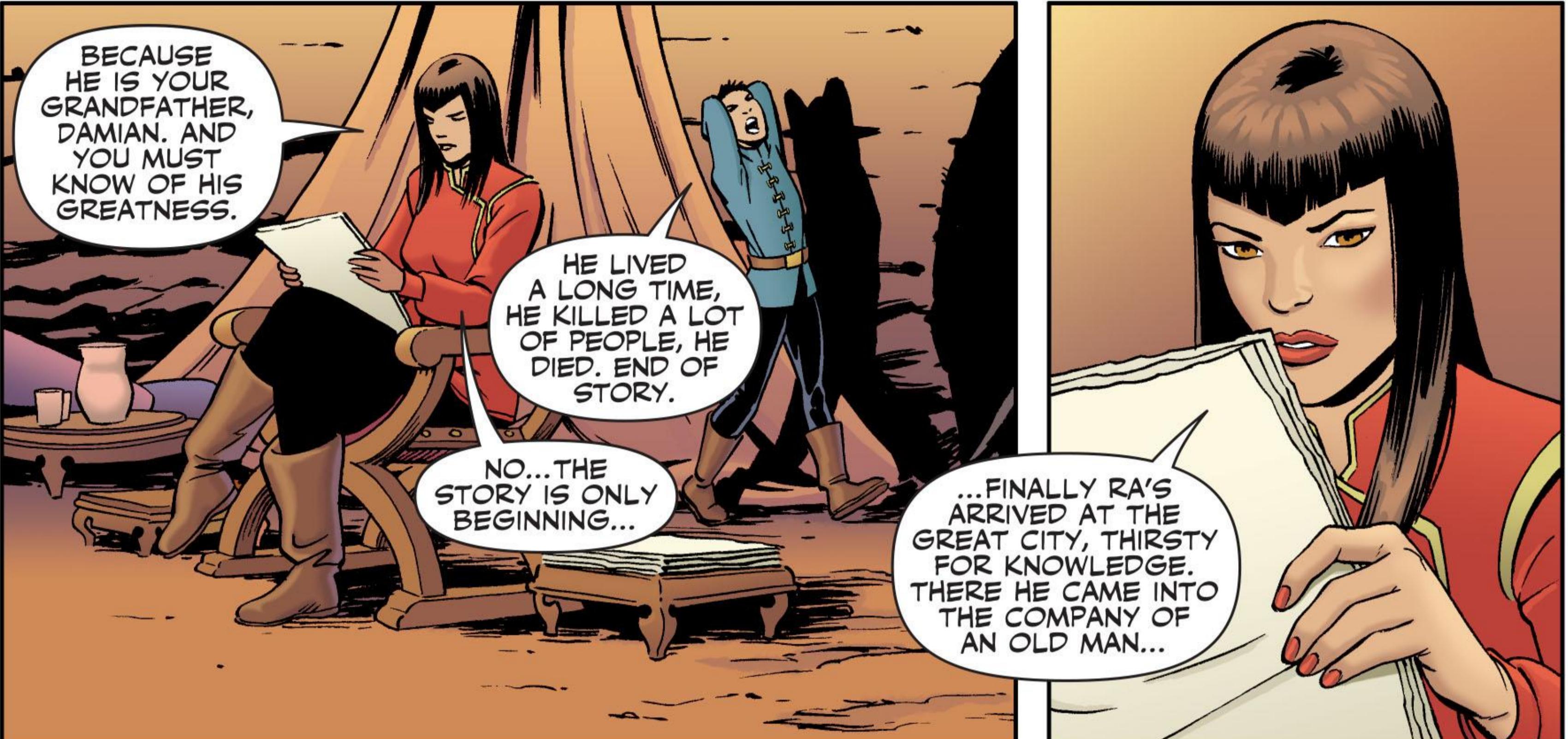
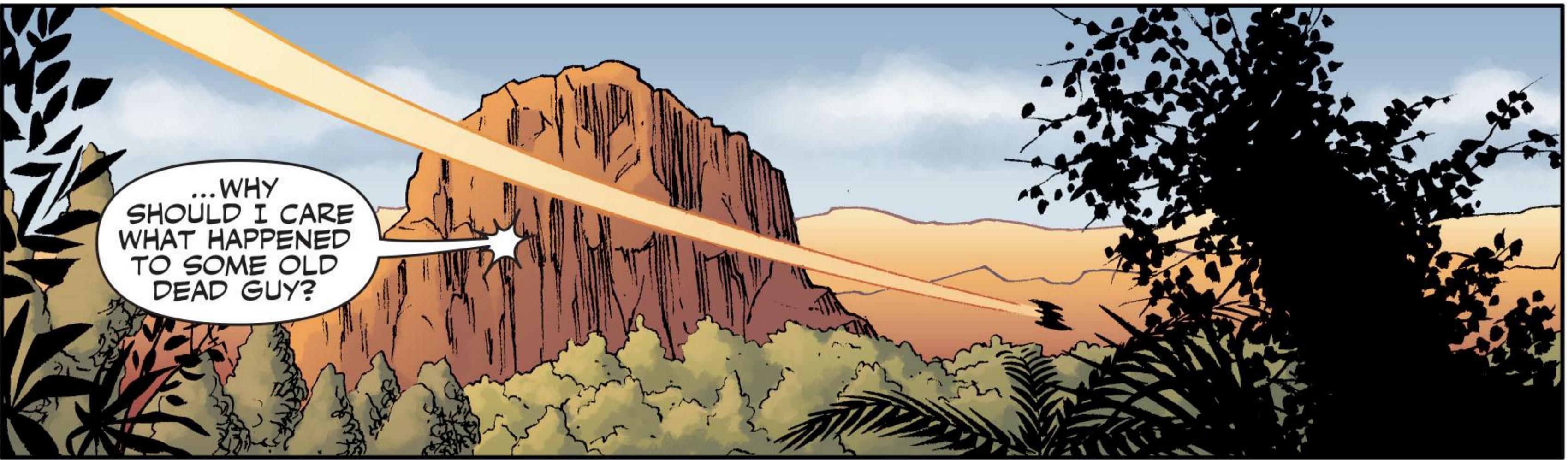
...SURPRISED
SOMEONE LIKE YOU
WOULD BOTHER HIMSELF
OVER TWO MISSING
ECOLOGISTS.







SHOOOM



I'LL BE HONEST WITH YOU, RA'S...I DON'T REALLY LIKE BOYS MUCH...

...BUT I CAN OFFER YOU COMPANIONSHIP AND SUPPORT. AND IF WE GET MARRIED IT WILL MAKE MY FATHER'S LAST DAYS MUCH HAPPIER.

AND STOP HIM PESTERING ME.

HMM. I ADMIT, I'M MORE INTERESTED IN THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE THAN WOMEN.

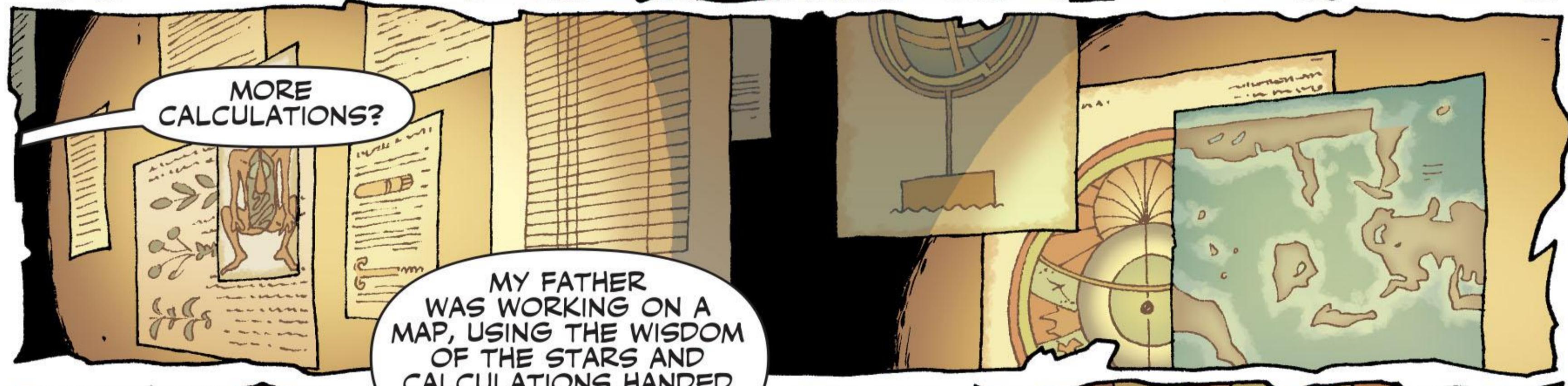
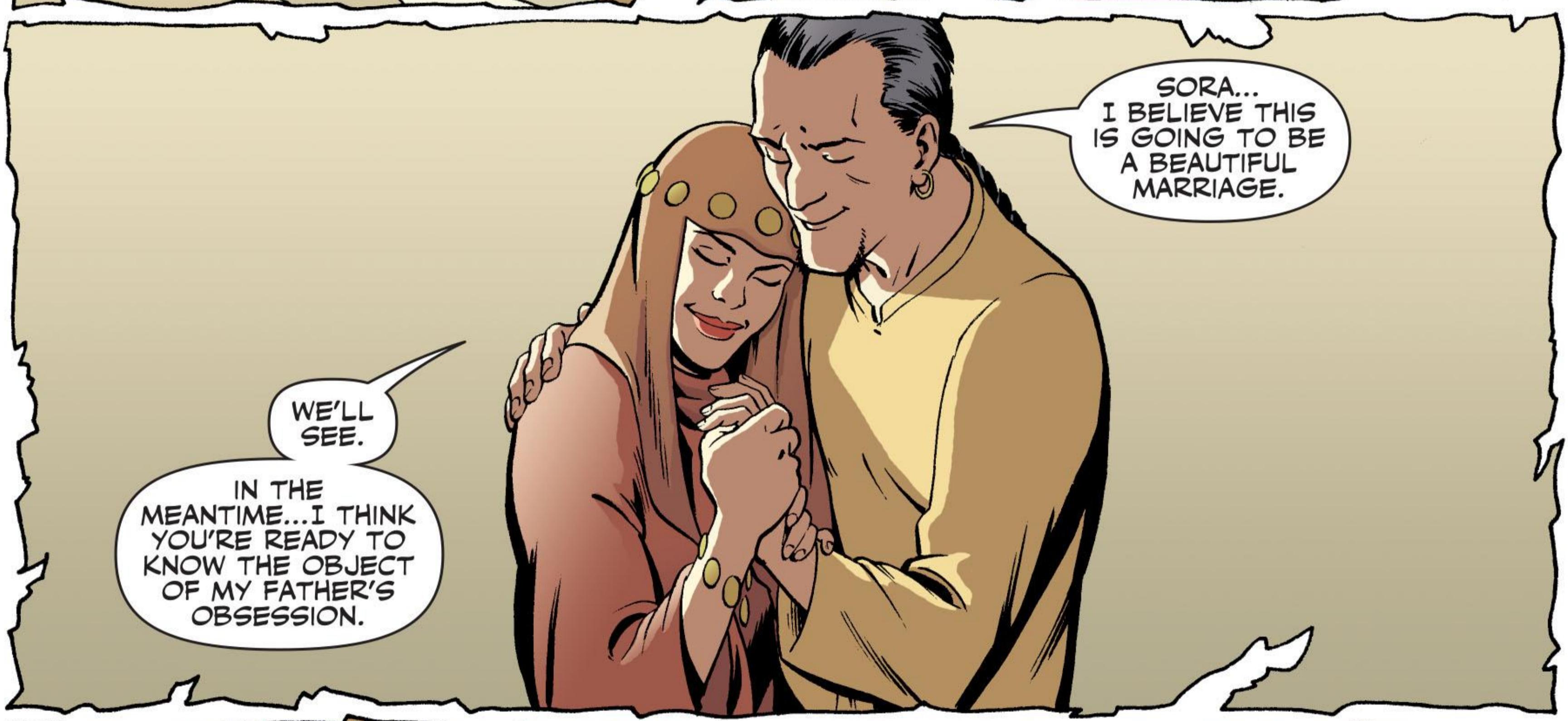
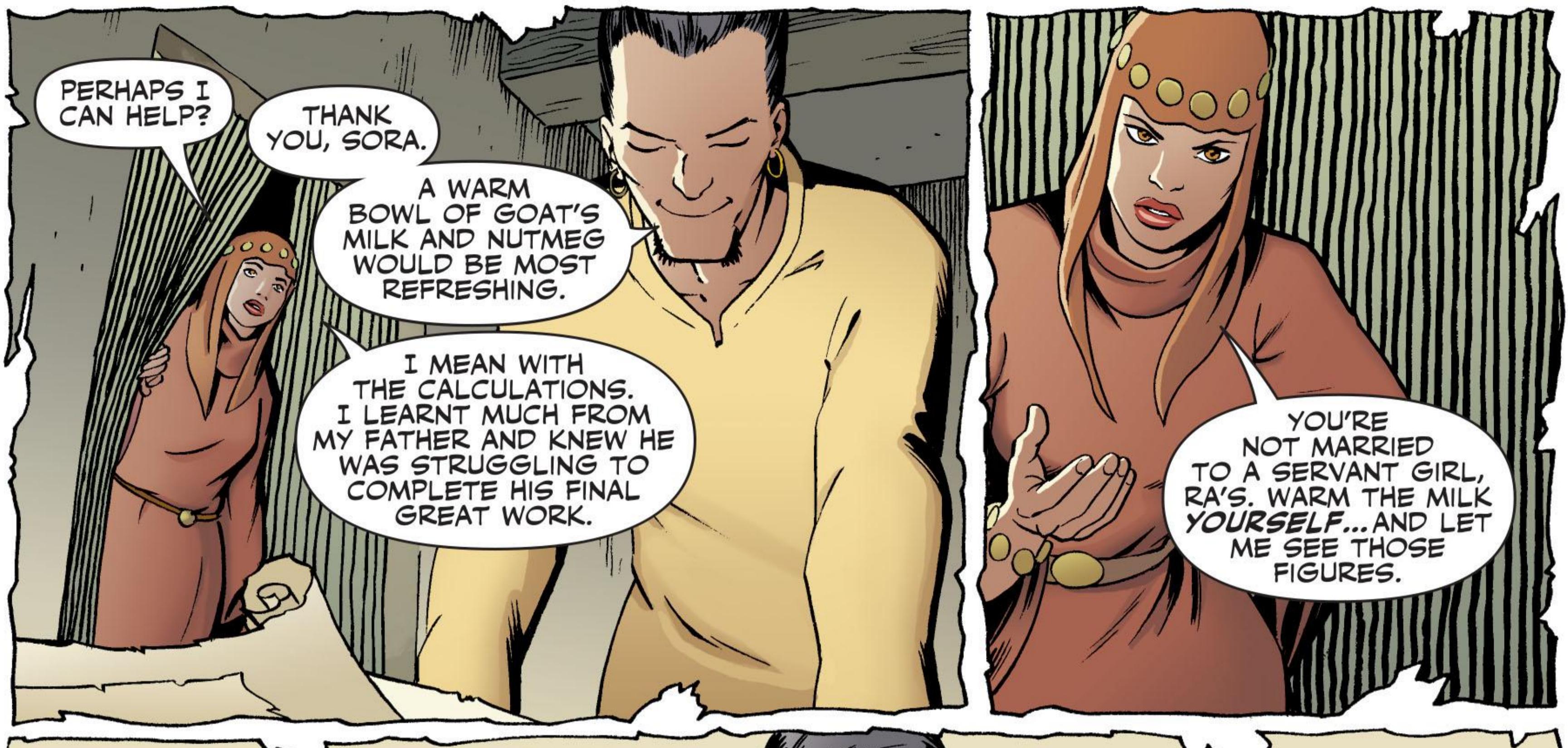
WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO COME TO SOME...MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL ARRANGEMENT.

"WITHIN A YEAR, RA'S AL GHUL WAS MARRIED, AND HIS TEACHER DEAD.

"BEING A ZOROASTRIAN, HIS BODY WAS LAID OUT IN THE TOWER OF SILENCE FOR SKY BURIAL.

"BUT EVEN AS THE VULTURES TORE AT THE LAST OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW'S FLESH, RA'S AL GHUL WAS HARD AT WORK..."

IT'S NO GOOD. THESE EQUATIONS YOUR FATHER WAS WORKING ON HAVE ME BEAT. I CAN'T BREAK THE CODE...



"FINALLY, TOGETHER, RA'S AL GHUL DIVINED THE SECRETS OF THE UNFINISHED MAP, AND FOUND WHAT THEY WERE SEEKING."

MY FATHER CALLED IT A LAZARUS PIT.

IF WE COULD UNDERSTAND THE PHYSICS THAT MAKE THIS STRANGE SUBSTANCE WORK--WE MIGHT HELP MAN FIGHT HIS OLDEST ENEMY.

DEATH.

EXACTLY.

"WHILE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE SECRETS OF THE LAZARUS PIT, RA'S AL GHUL WORKED AS A PHYSICIAN... AND HIS REPUTATION GREW."

MY SON AILS BADLY. FIND ME A PHYSICIAN WHO ISN'T A CHARLATAN. OR I'LL HAVE YOUR LIPS SLICED OFF.

Y-YES, YOUR HIGHNESS.

IF I COULD CURE THE PRINCE--OUR REPUTATION WOULD BE MADE. I'D HAVE THE FUNDING TO PUSH MY RESEARCH FORWARD.

THE PRINCE IS NOTHING BUT A CRUEL YOUNG ARISTO--I'VE CAUGHT HIM LEERING AT ME IN THE BAZAAR.

DON'T DO THIS, HUSBAND. WE CAN DO WITHOUT THE KING'S MONEY.

YOU'RE WRONG, SORA. WHEN I WALKED THROUGH THE DESERT, I NURTURED A DREAM.

THIS IS MY WAY TO FULFILL IT!

A DREAM...

...A DREAM
THAT TURNED INTO
A NIGHTMARE.

I HEARD
ABOUT THIS. THE
PRINCE SURVIVES
BUT GOES CRAZY
AND KILLS
SORA.

BORR-RING!

TELL ME
SOMETHING
I DON'T
KNOW.

YOU
MIGHT KNOW
SOME OF THE FACTS.
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW
THEY TURNED A YOUNG
IDEALIST INTO THE
TERROR OF THE
WORLD.

YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW THE
DEATH OF SORA BROKE
YOUR GRANDFATHER'S
HEART... AND FOREVER
DARKENED HIS
SOUL.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I
DON'T KNOW.

AND
GUESS
WHAT? I
DON'T
CARE!

YOU
MUST
CARE.
YOU MUST
REMEMBER ALL
THAT I TELL
YOU!

WHY? WHAT'S
THIS ABOUT? WHY
MUST I REMEMBER
THIS STUFF?

BECAUSE IT'S
IMPORTANT!

OH,
MOTHER.

YOU'LL
HAVE TO DO
BETTER THAN
THAT.

ALL
RIGHT. WHAT
IF I WERE TO
TELL YOU...

...THAT YOUR
GRANDFATHER
HAS CHEATED
DEATH.



KILL
THEM
ALL!

AGHHH--



"THE RA'S AL GHUL WHO RETURNED TO THE CITY WAS A VERY DIFFERENT MAN FROM THE ONE WHO'D FIRST ARRIVED THERE."

"A MAN WITH A VERY DIFFERENT DREAM..."

UNCLE, YOU ARE STILL LEADER OF OUR TRIBE. BUT THE TRIBE I AM DESCRIBING WILL STRETCH FARTHER THAN THE SANDS OF ARABY.

STRETCH INTO EVERY LAND... PAST THE WALLS OF EVERY CITY.

OH, NEPHEW. JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER, YOU WERE ALWAYS THE DREAMER. WHAT YOU SPEAK OF IS... TOO FANTASTICAL.

FATHER. MY FATHER. MY FATHER NEVER HAD HALF MY VISION, UNCLE, NOR MY TALENT.

BUT... IT WOULD TAKE SEVERAL LIFETIMES FOR ONE MAN TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU SPEAK OF!

YES, UNCLE. YES INDEED. AND IT WILL BE QUITE SOME JOURNEY.

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

YOU WILL IN TIME. TIME IS SOMETHING WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THIS CITY... HAS UNLEASHED A DEMON.

AND I...

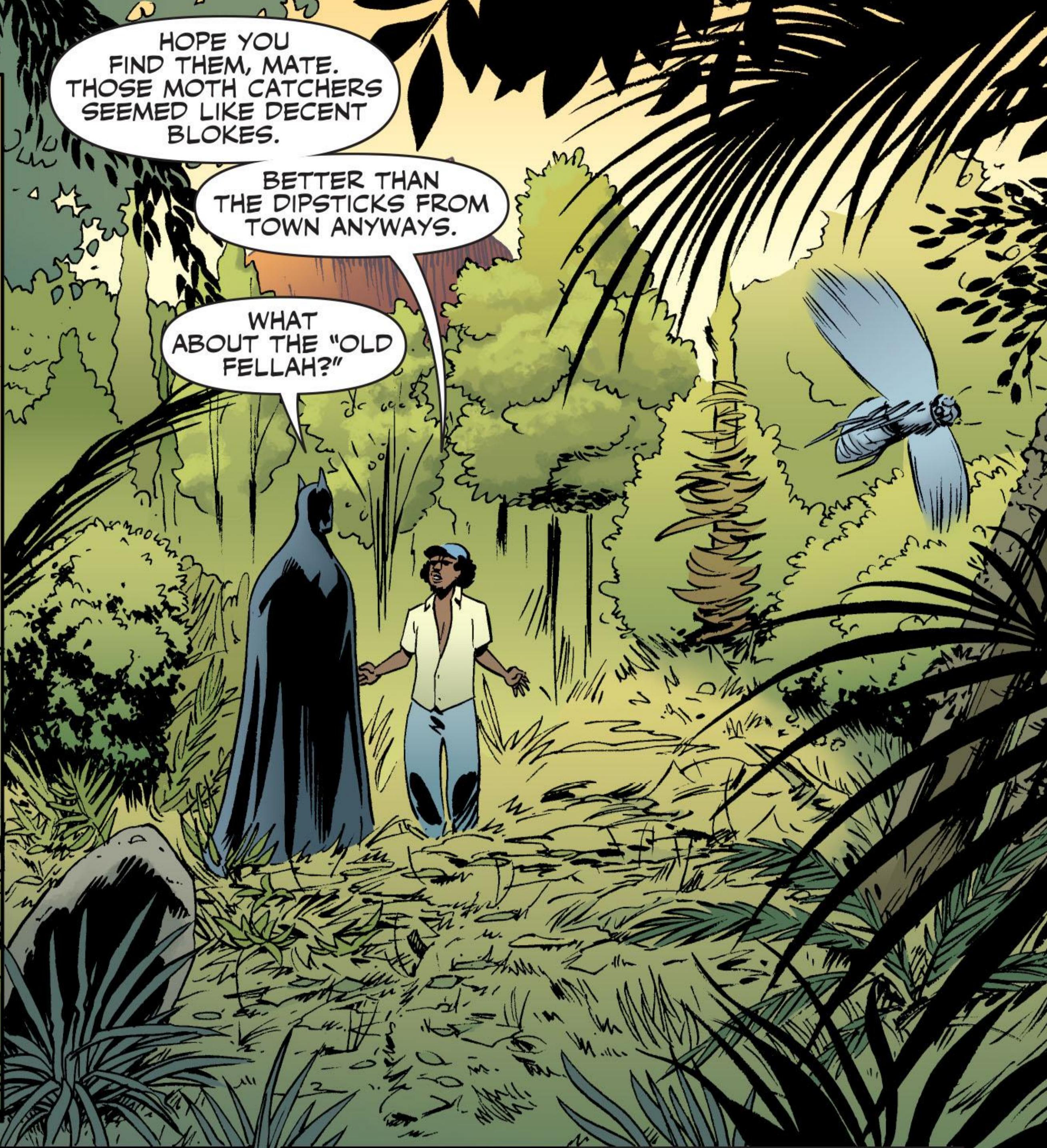
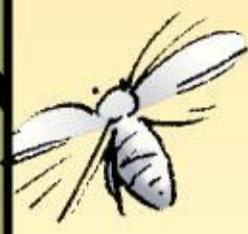
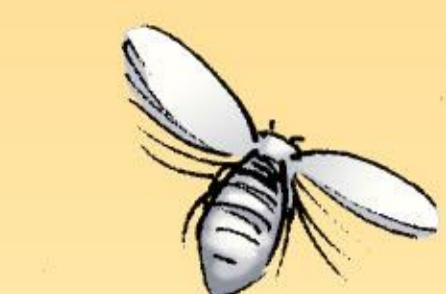
RA'S AL GHUL...

I AM TRULY THE DEMON'S HEAD!

HOPE YOU
FIND THEM, MATE.
THOSE MOTH CATCHERS
SEEMED LIKE DECENT
BLOKES.

BETTER THAN
THE DIPSTICKS FROM
TOWN ANYWAYS.

WHAT
ABOUT THE "OLD
FELLAH?"



CRAZY
AS A CUT
SNAKE. YOU'LL
BE WASTING
YER TIME.

YOU'D BE
SURPRISED. THE
SUIT HAS A VERY
SOPHISTICATED
COOLING
SYSTEM.

MATE, YOU MUST BE HOTTER
THAN A STUNNED MULLET
IN ALL THAT.



BA

BOOM



WELLINGTON!
WELLESLEY!

WHERE IS HE?



WHAT
THE HELL ARE YOU
DOING, MAN? NAPOLEON'S
MOVING IN HIS IMPERIAL
GUARD!

WATERLOO'S
LOST, RA'S. AND
EUROPE WITH IT.
THAT INSUFFERABLE
LITTLE FROG HAS
OUTFLANKED
ME.

I WAS JUST
ABOUT TO GIVE
THE ORDER TO
SURRENDER.

THOOOM

I-IF YOU
DO MANAGE TO
SURVIVE--BE A GOOD
CHAP AND TAKE A
MESSAGE TO LADY
HAMILTON...

MY
DEAR DUKE,
I HAVE EVERY
INTENTION OF
SURVIVING...

GUNHH!

SURCH

QUELLE
VITESSE!

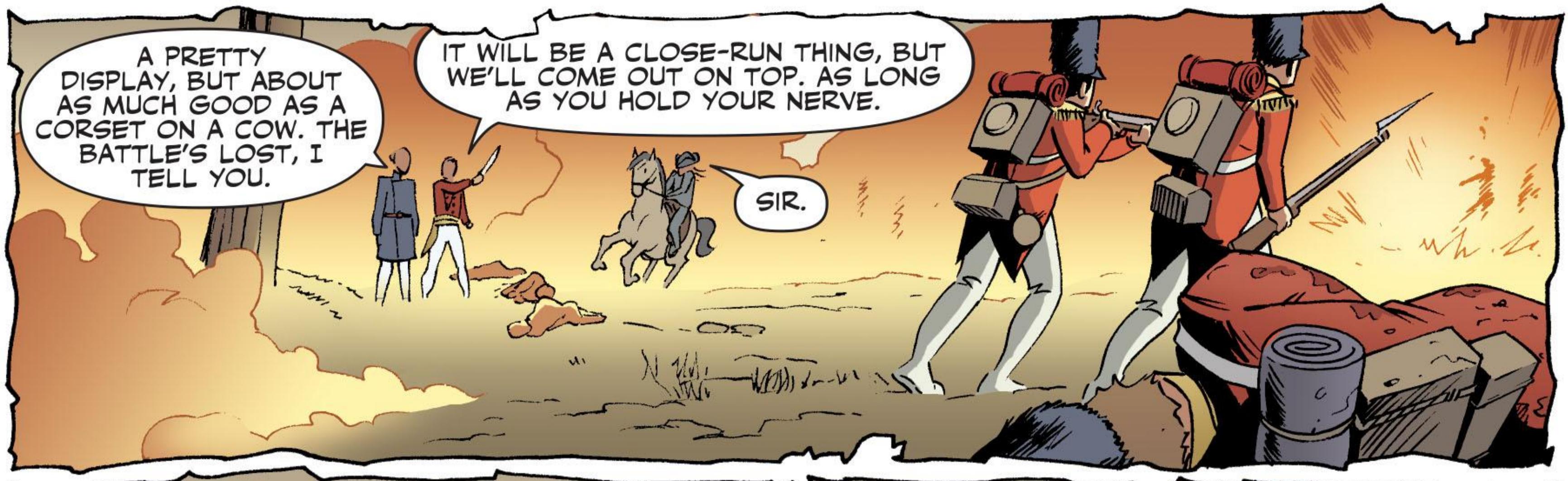
...NOT
JUST THIS
LIFE...

GNN...
QUELLE...

...GRACE...

SHUNK

...BUT MANY
OTHERS.





RA'S AL GHUL TOOK THIS GIRL AS HIS MISTRESS, AND LIVED IN PARIS WITH HER FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

ONLY ONCE DID HE SLIP UP AND CALL HER *SORA*, AFTER HIS BRUTALLY MURDERED WIFE WHOM SHE SO UNCANNILY RESEMBLED.

OF COURSE, AS SHE STARTED TO AGE, HE FOUND A GOOD REASON TO LEAVE FRANCE...

IF HE LOVED HER, WHY DIDN'T HE USE THE LAZARUS PITS TO KEEP HER YOUNG AND LIVE WITH HER FOREVER?

YOUR GRANDFATHER HAD BIGGER PLANS. PLANS THAT DID NOT INCLUDE A WOMAN...

YOU MUST REALIZE THAT, THOUGH MASSIVELY CHARMING, YOUR GRANDFATHER COULD BE A COLD AND RUTHLESS MAN.

IT COMES WITH LIVING SO LONG. THINGS THAT MIGHT MOVE OR HORRIFY NORMAL MORTALS ARE NOTHING TO HIM...

...MERE SHADOW-SHOWS, FLICKERING QUICKLY ON AND OFF THE STAGE OF LIFE...

I DON'T BUY IT.
THE WHITE GHOST? THAT'S SO OBVIOUSLY NOT REAL.

MOST OF ALL, I DON'T BUY THAT GRANDFATHER'S STILL ALIVE.

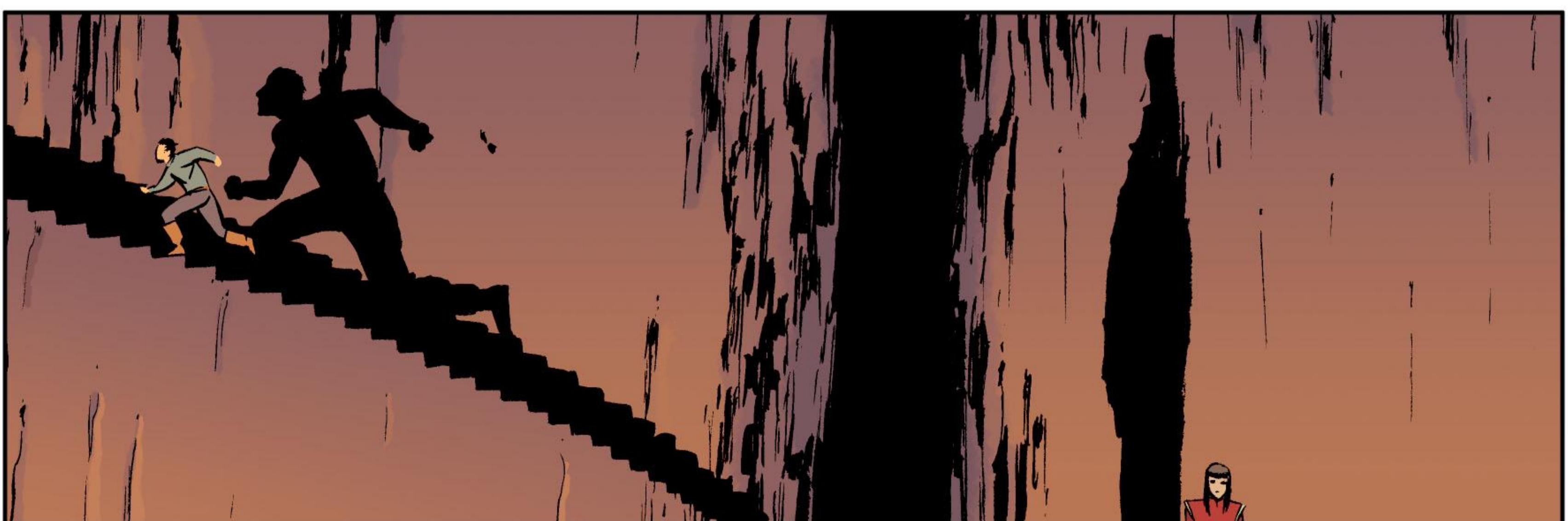
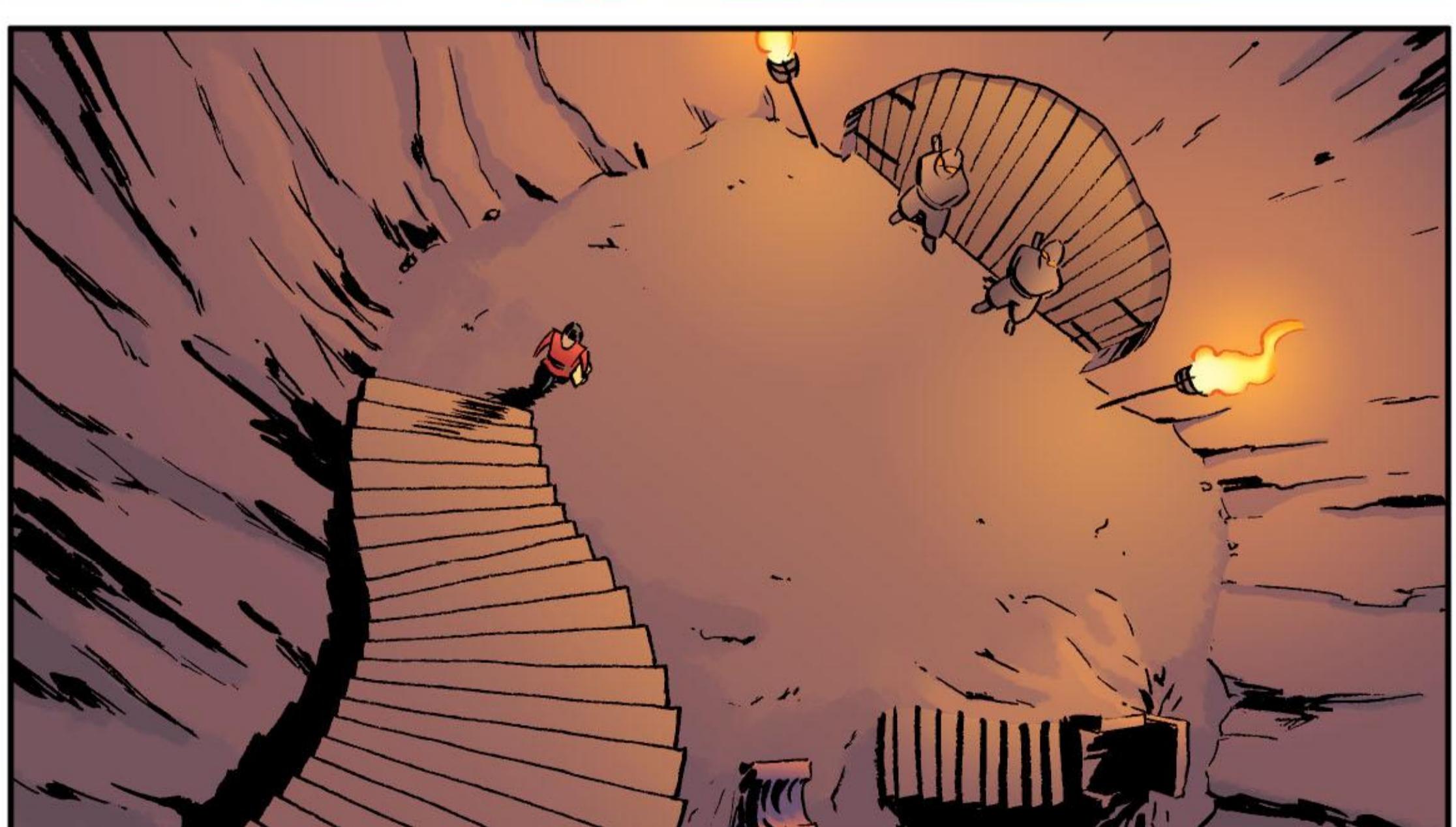
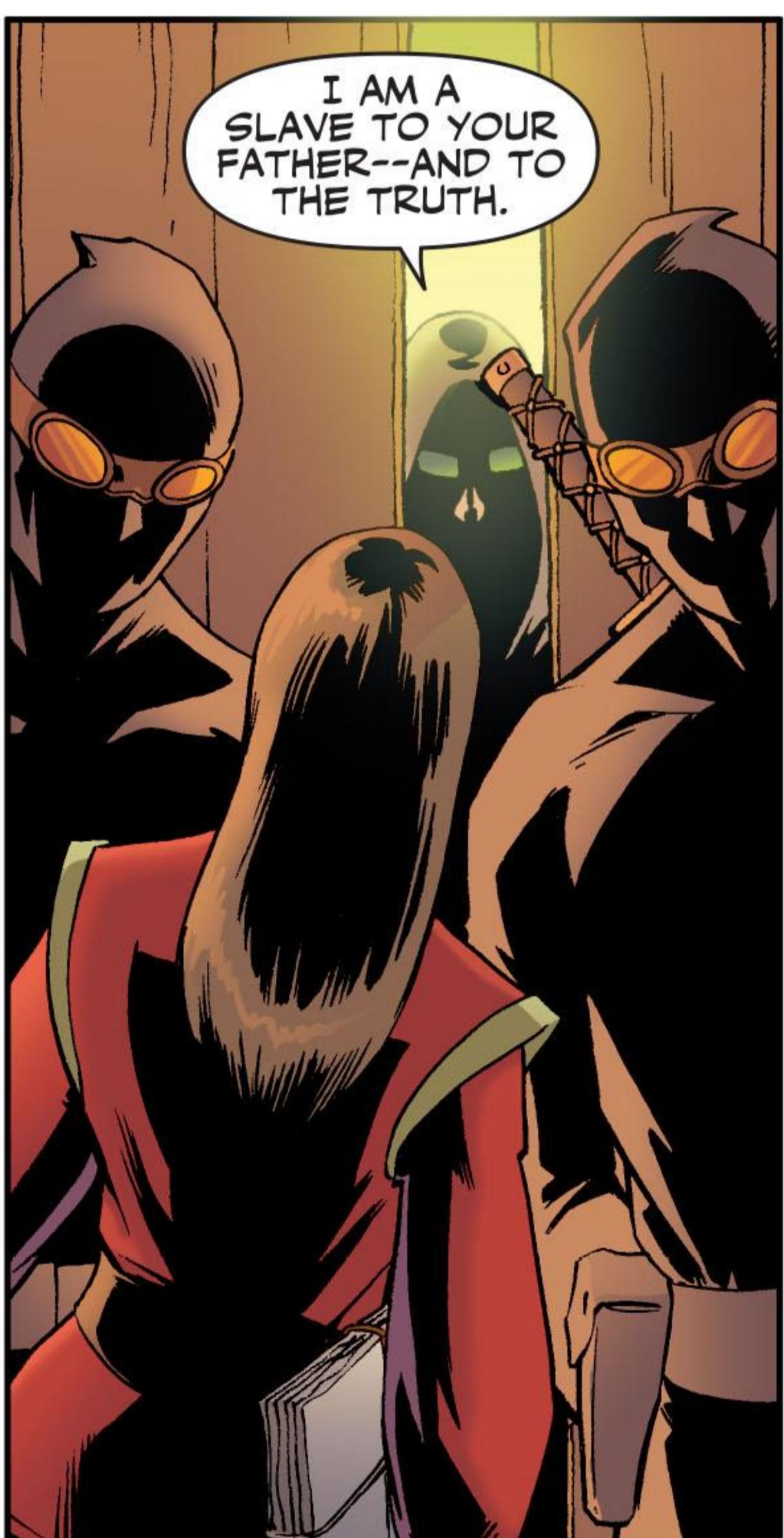
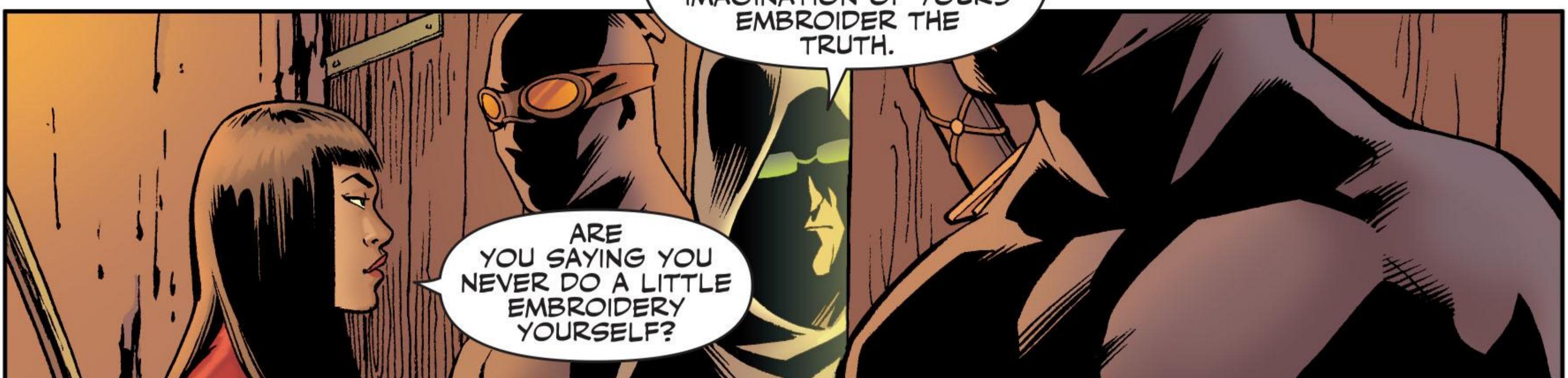
YOU THINK I'D *LIE* TO YOU, DAMIAN?

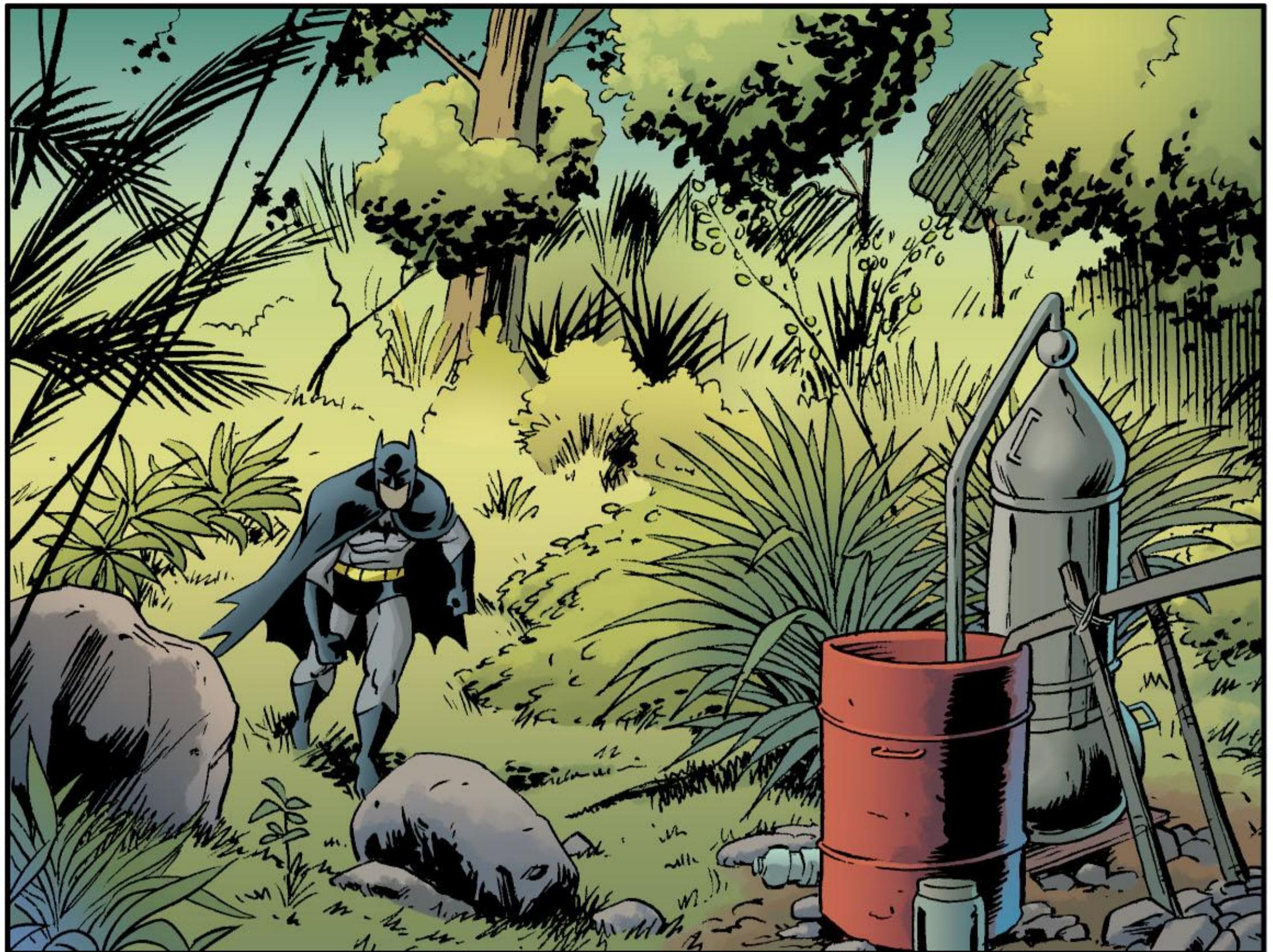
I DUNNO. MAYBE.

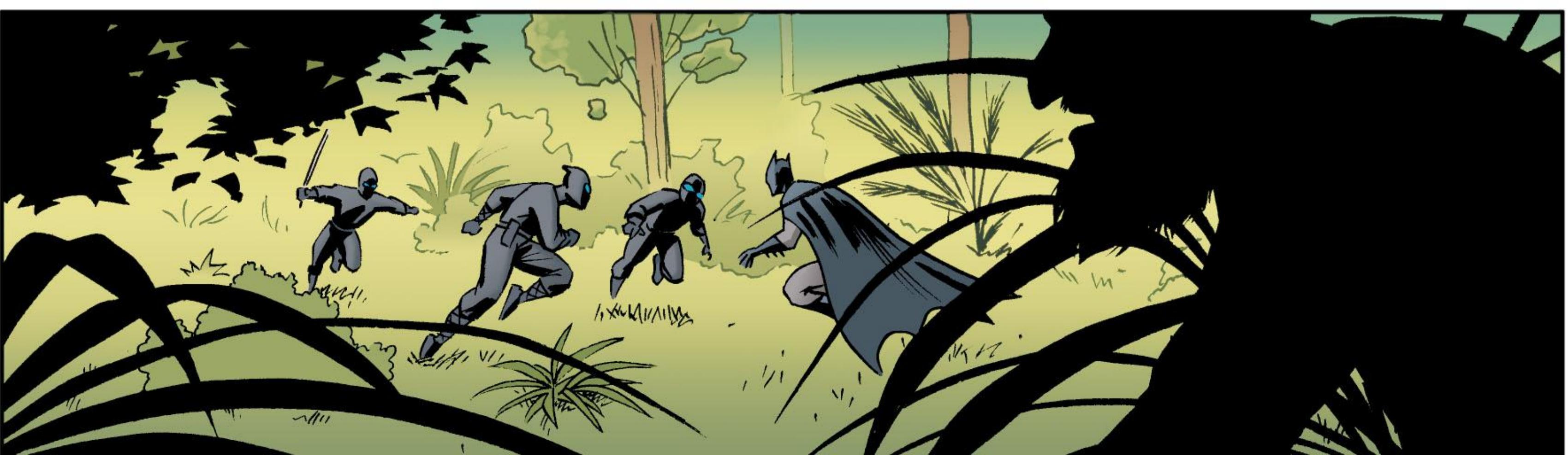
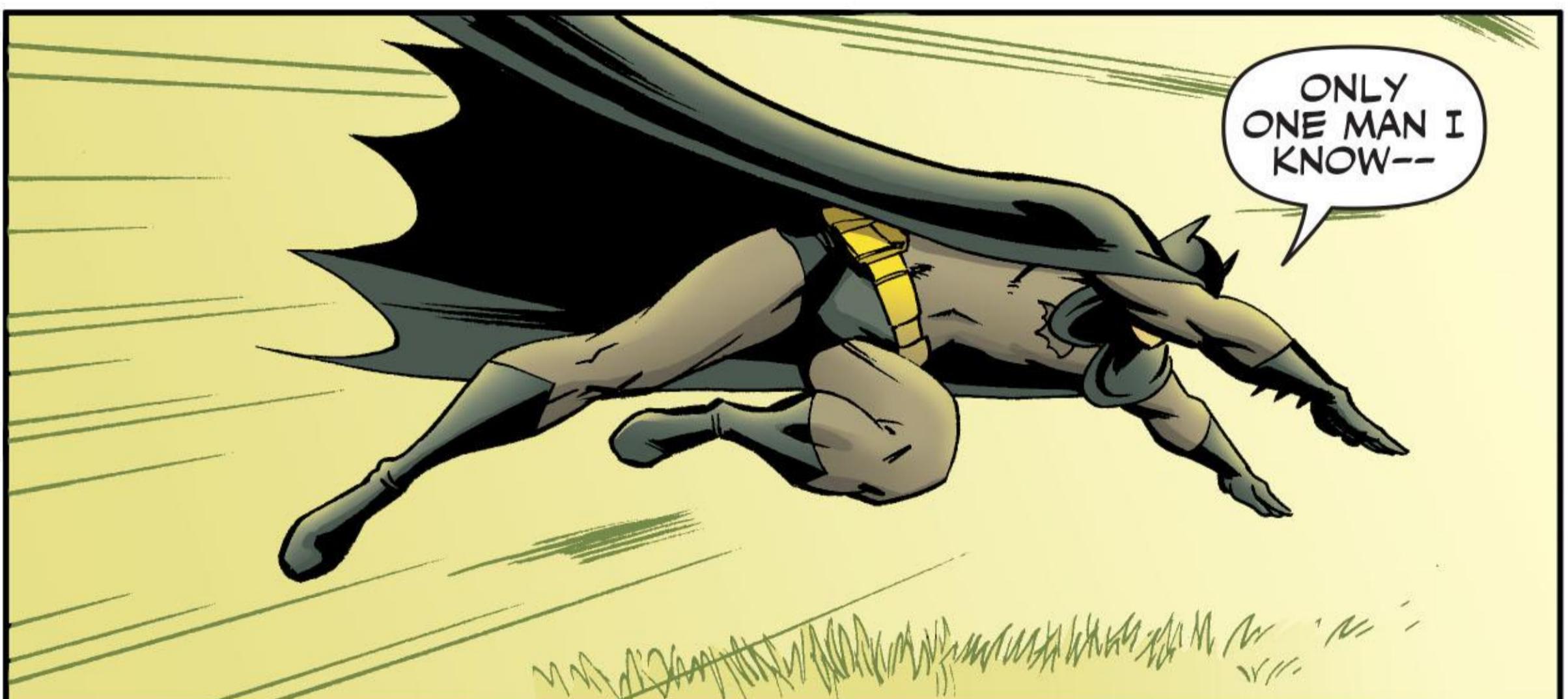
IF GRANDFATHER'S ALIVE, WHERE IS HE?

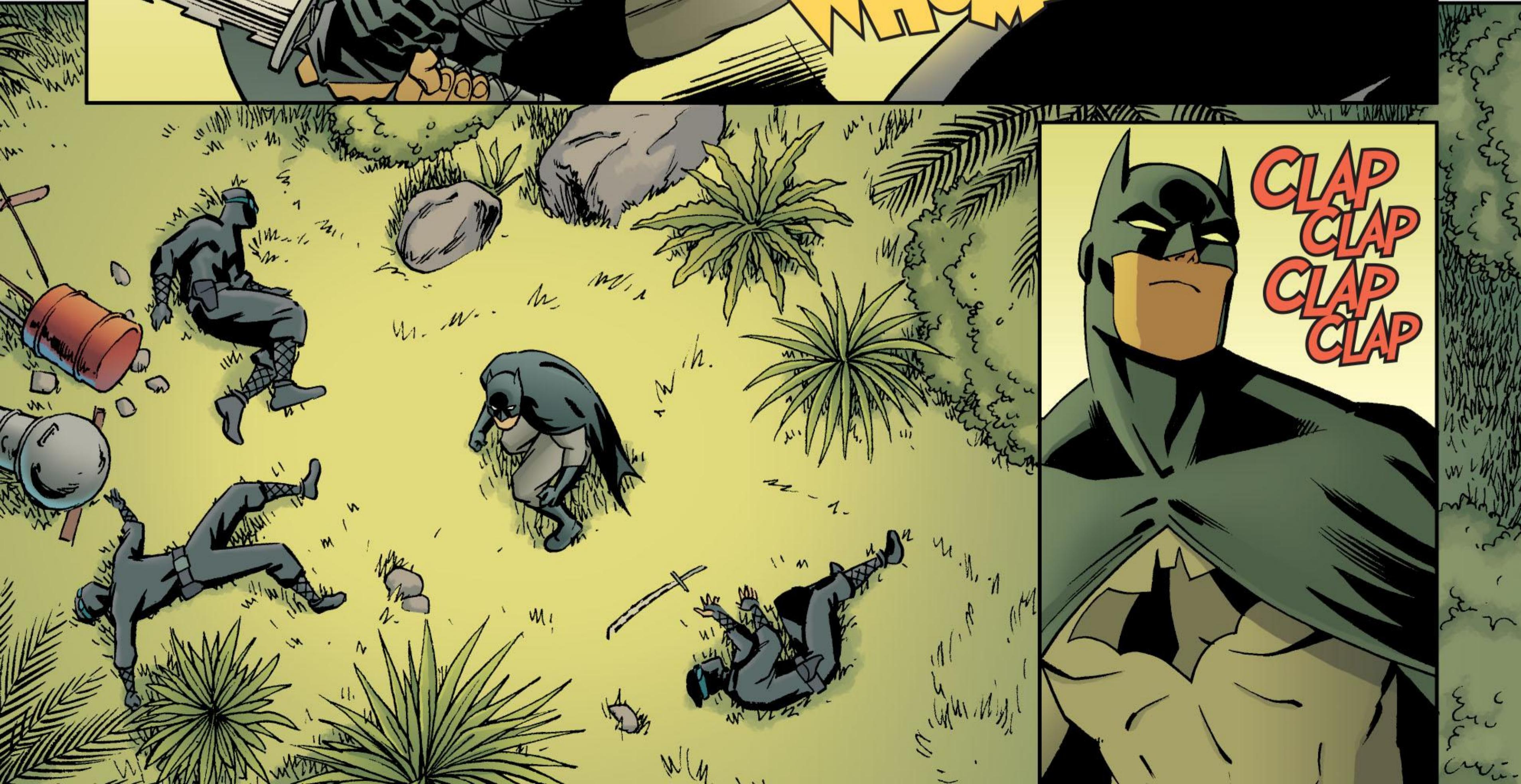
I DON'T KNOW!

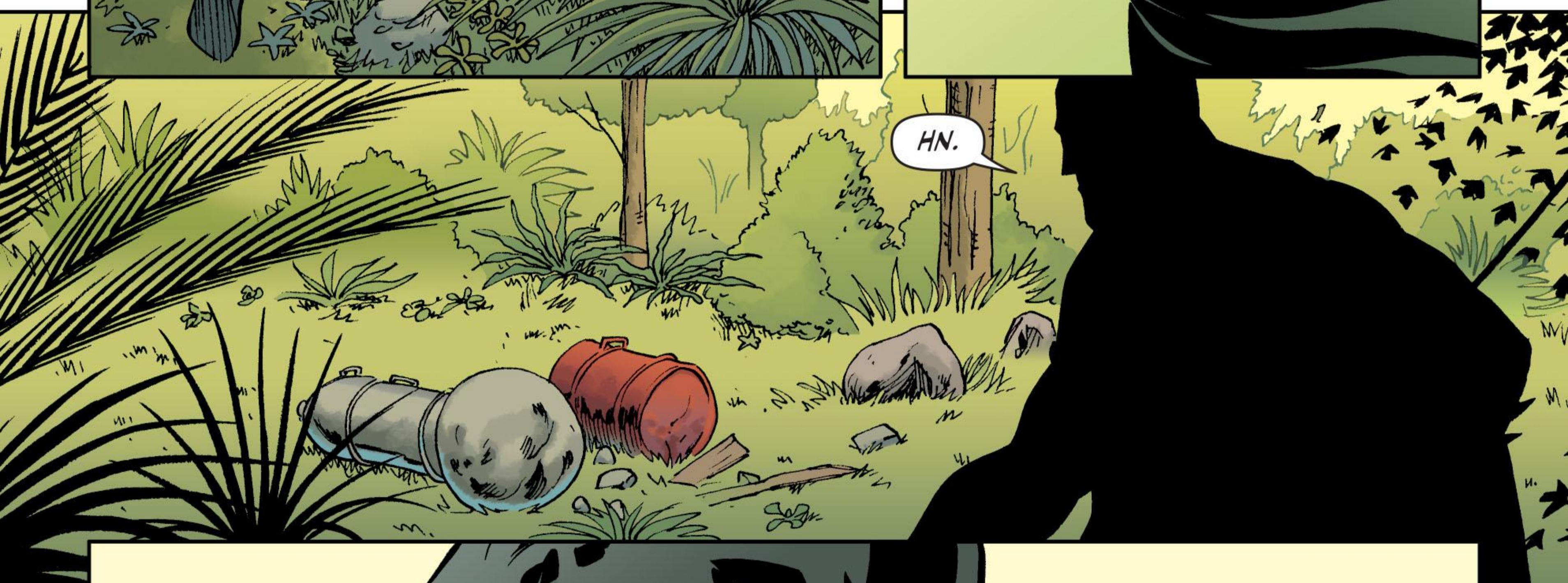
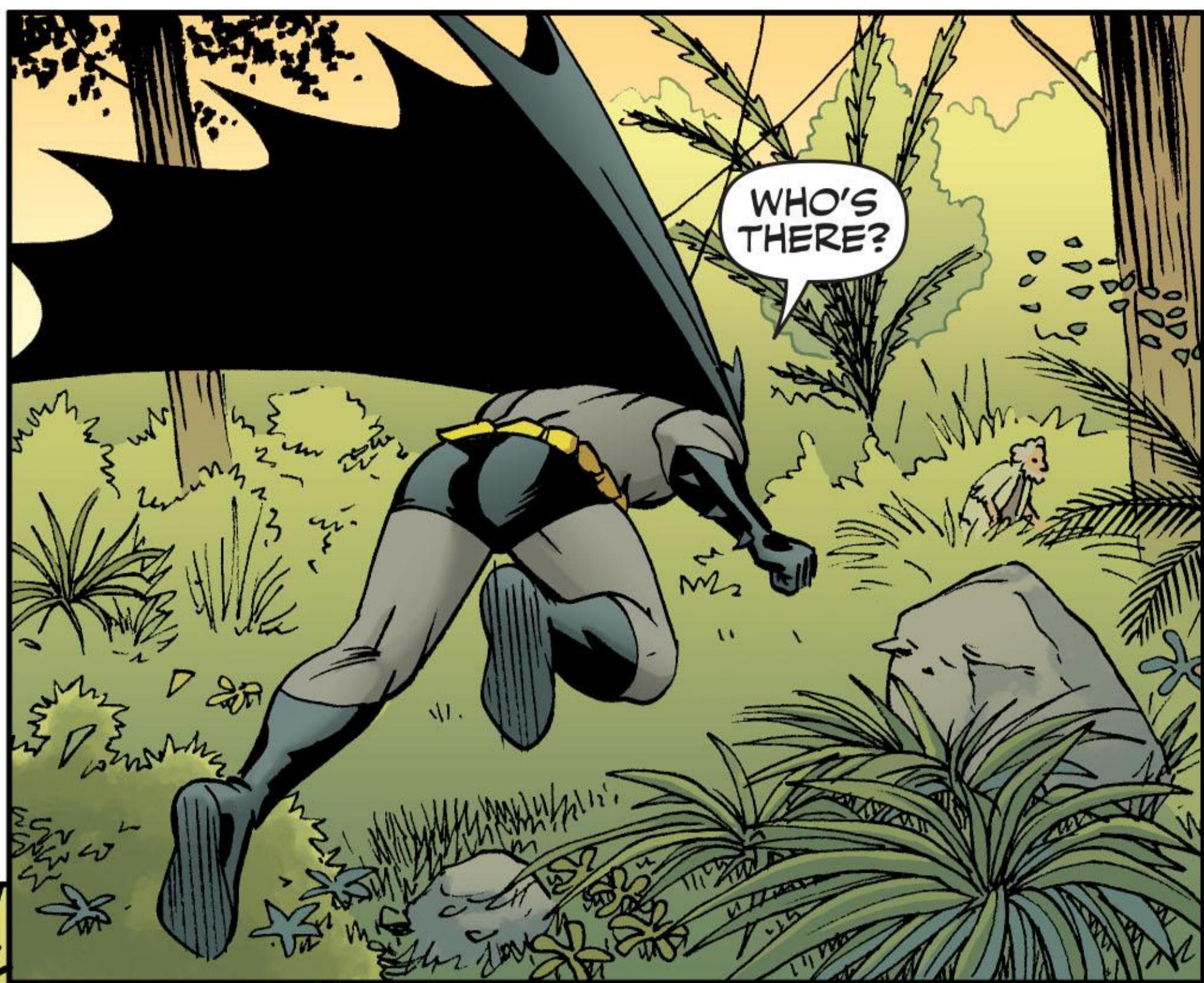
WELL, I WANT TO SEE HIM!



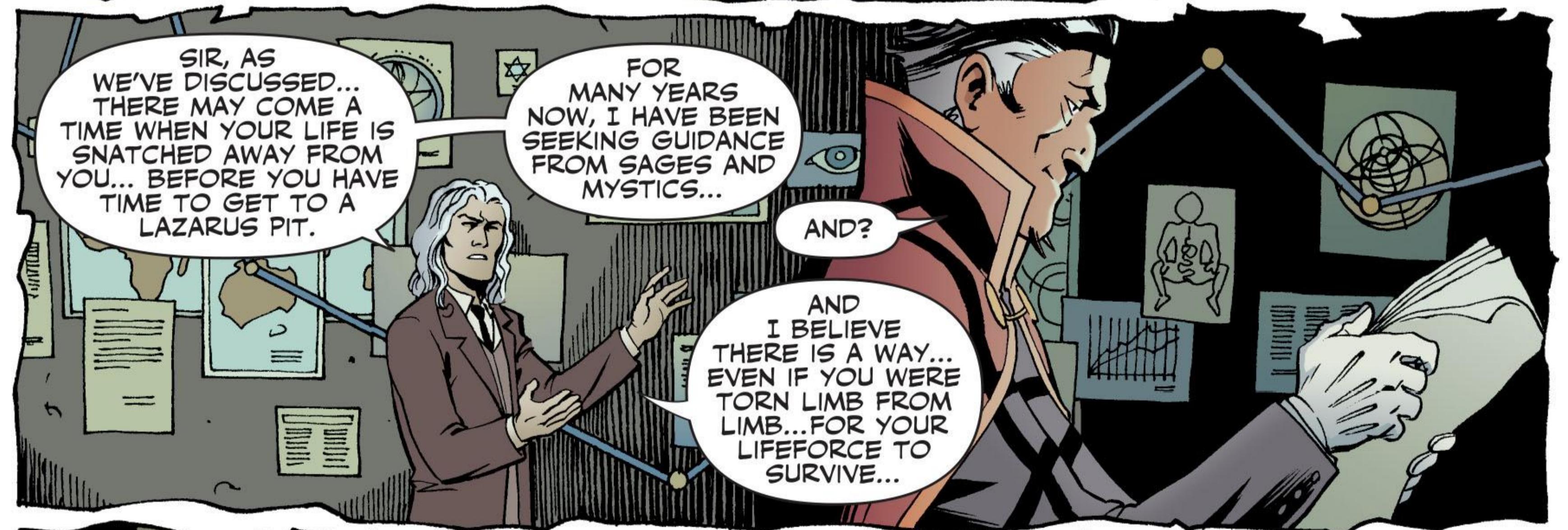


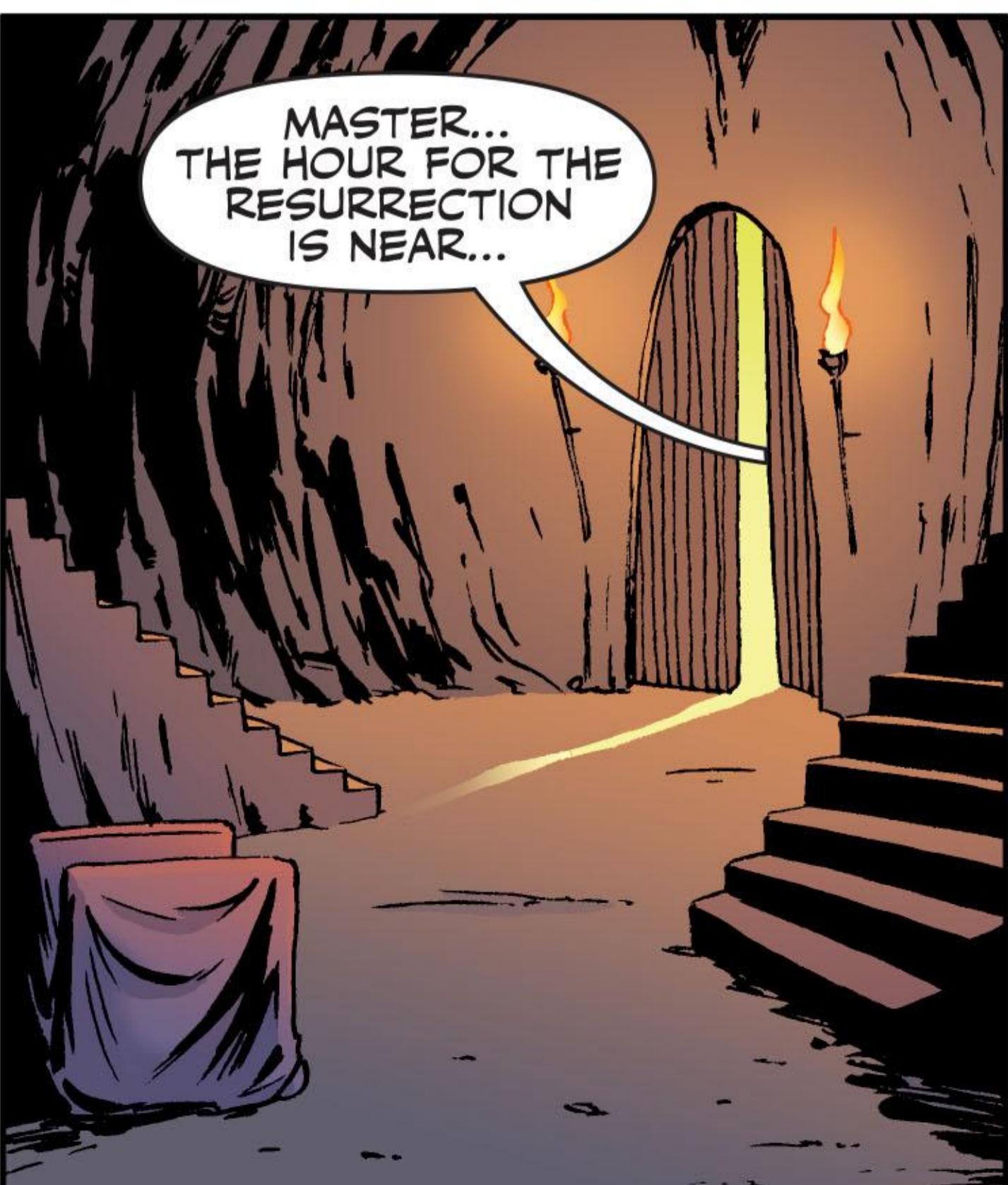
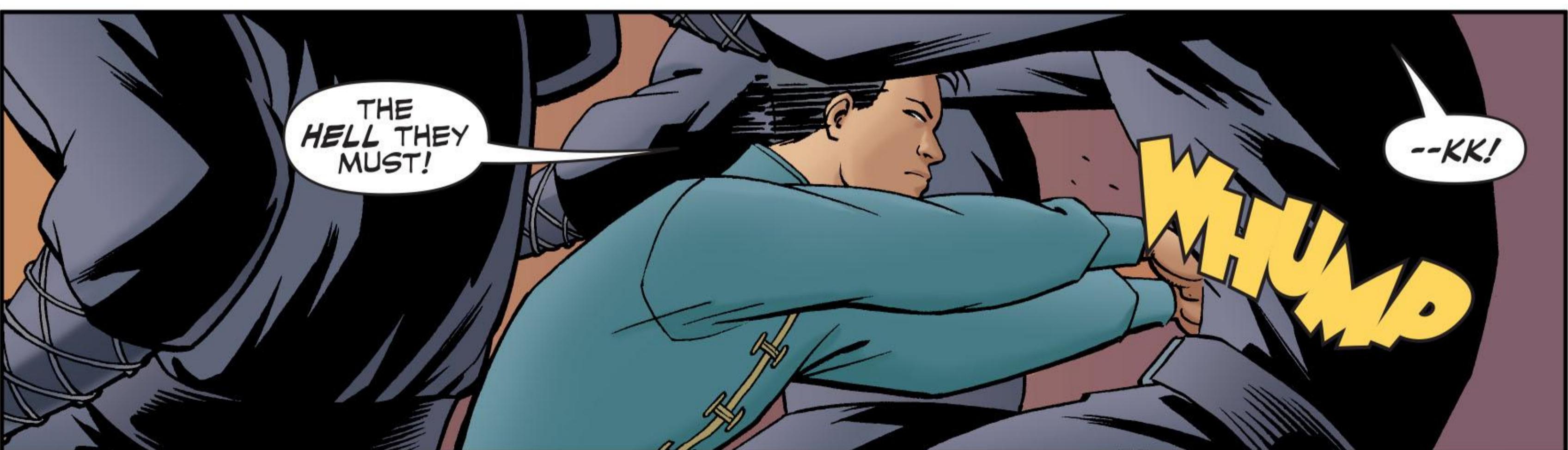




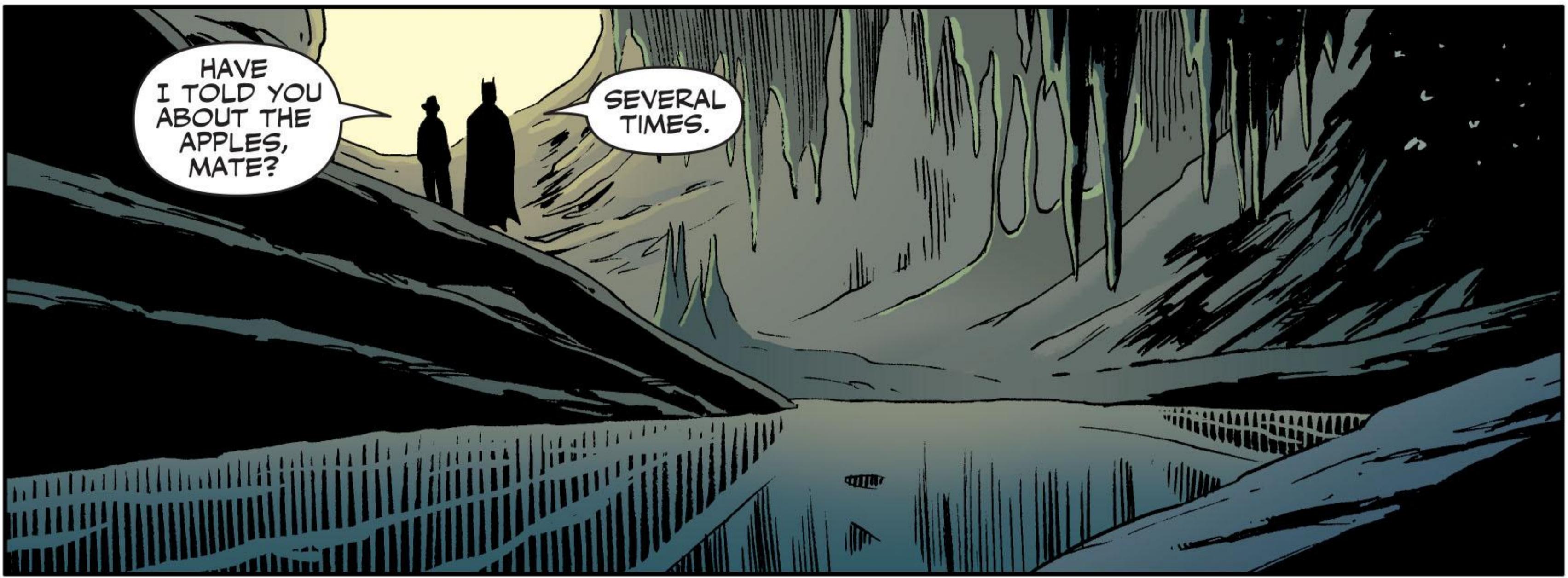


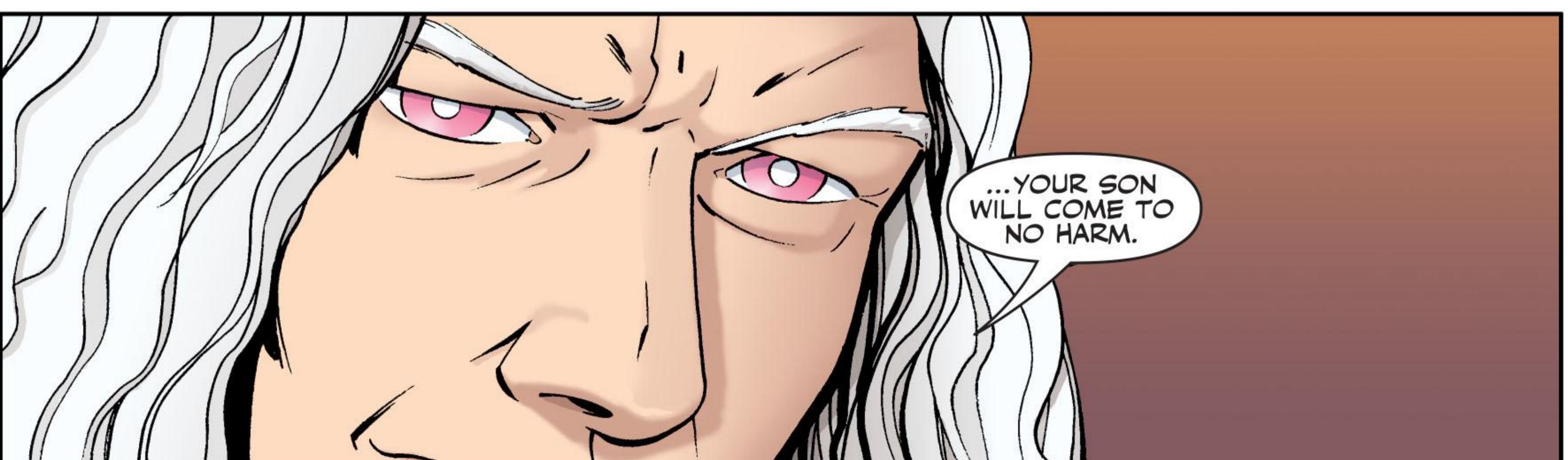
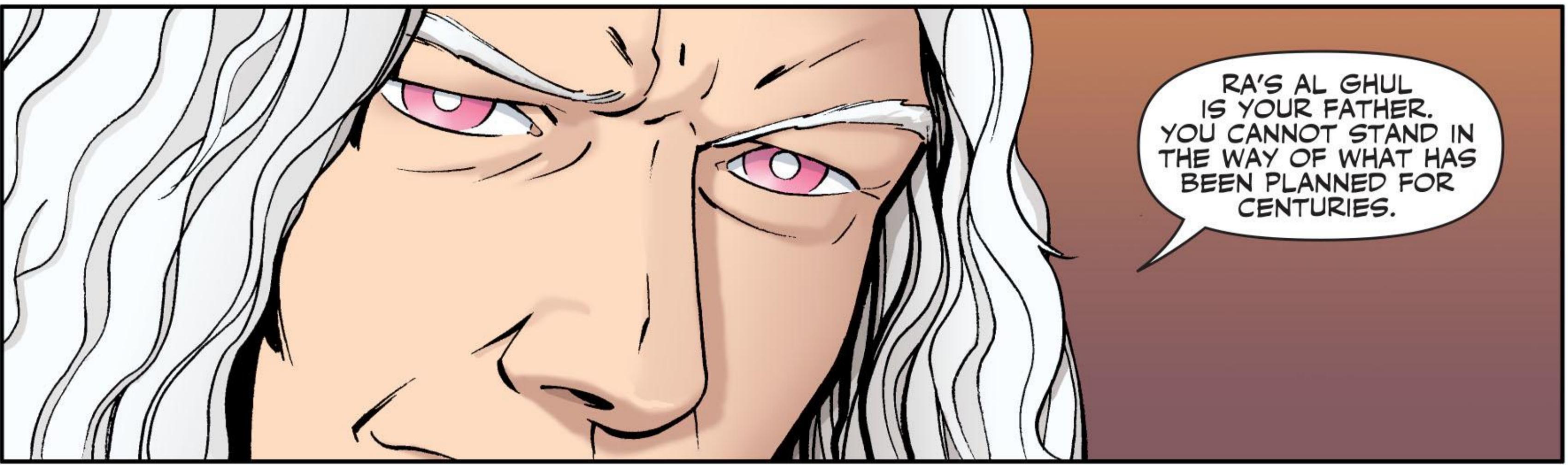


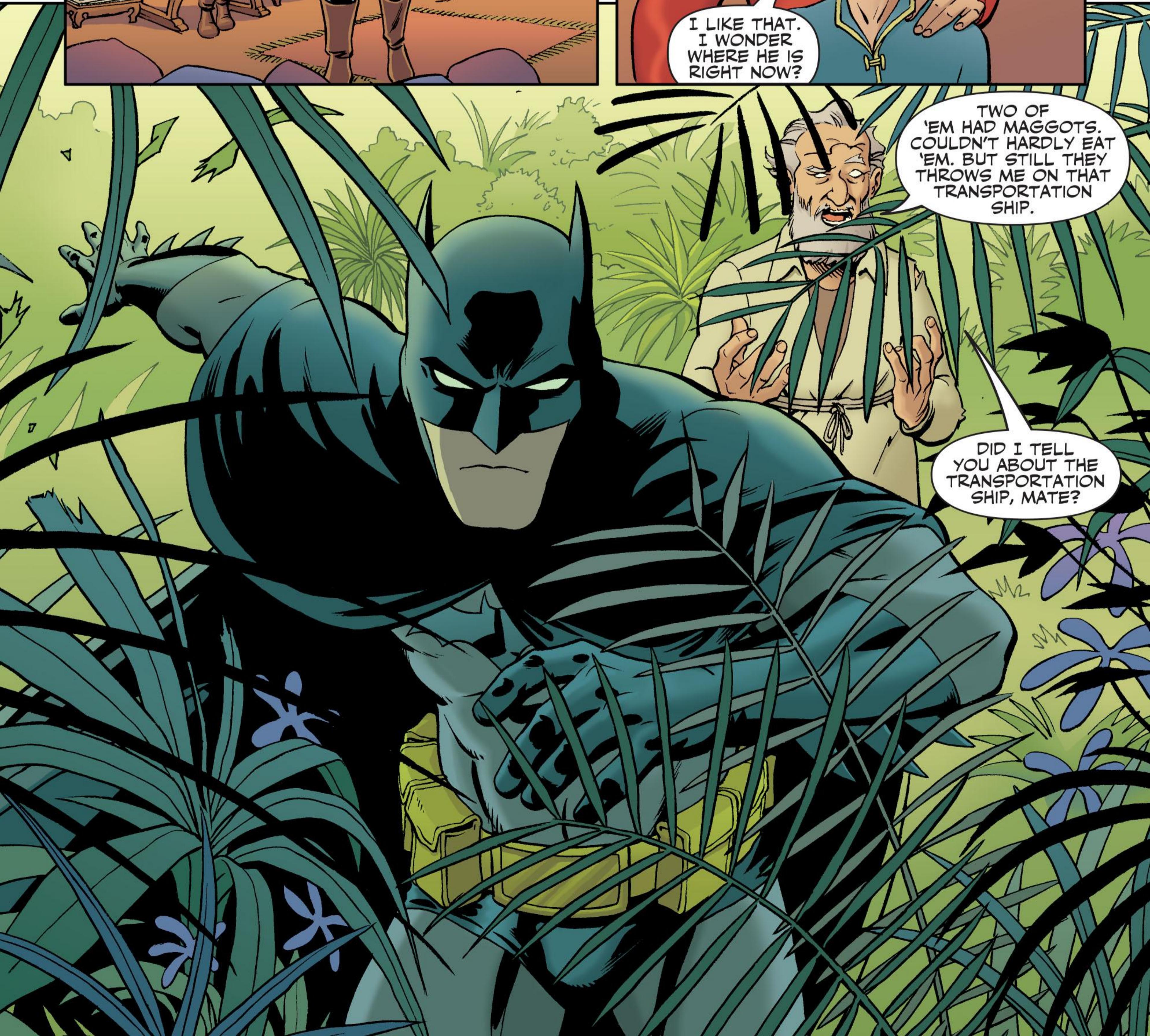
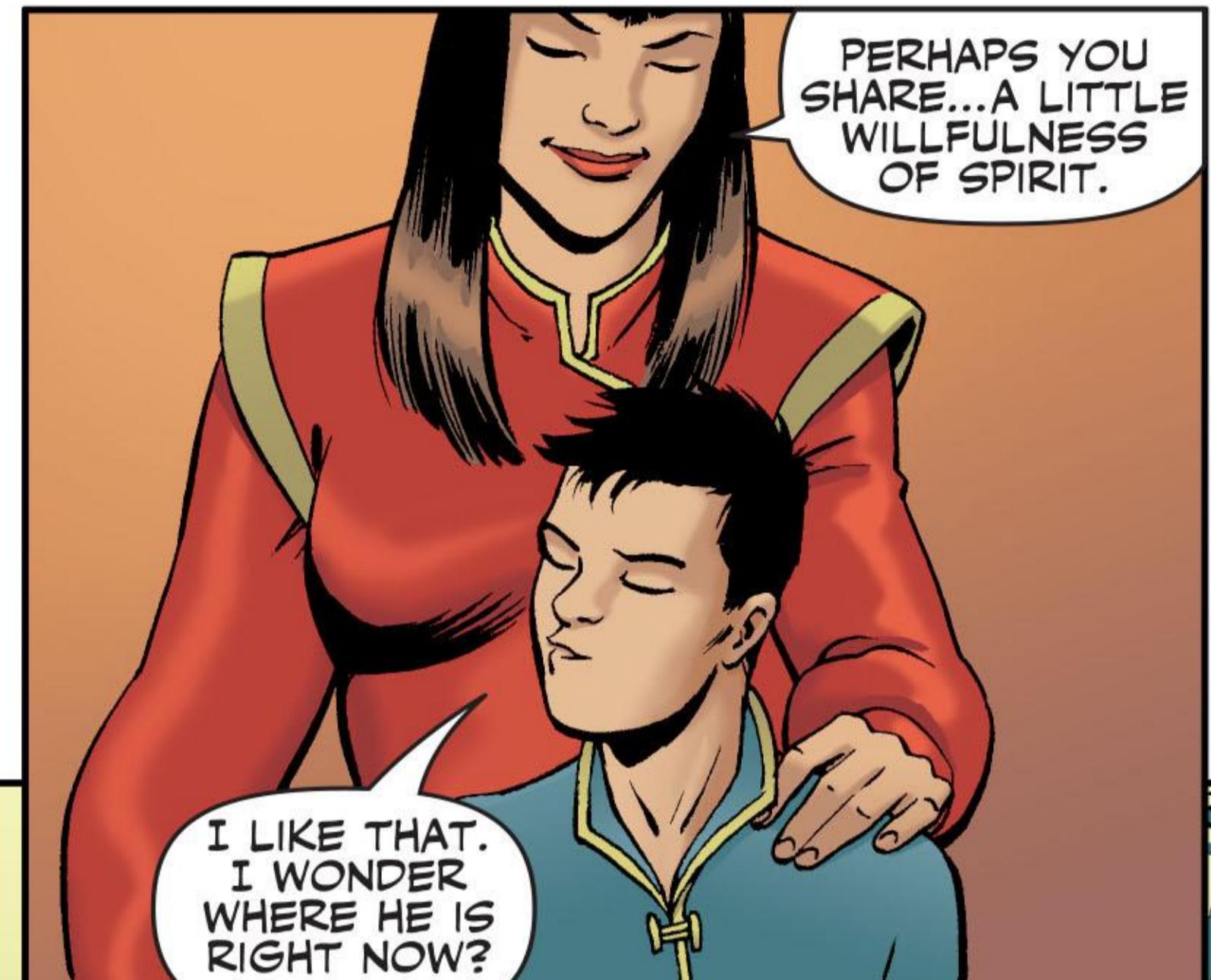


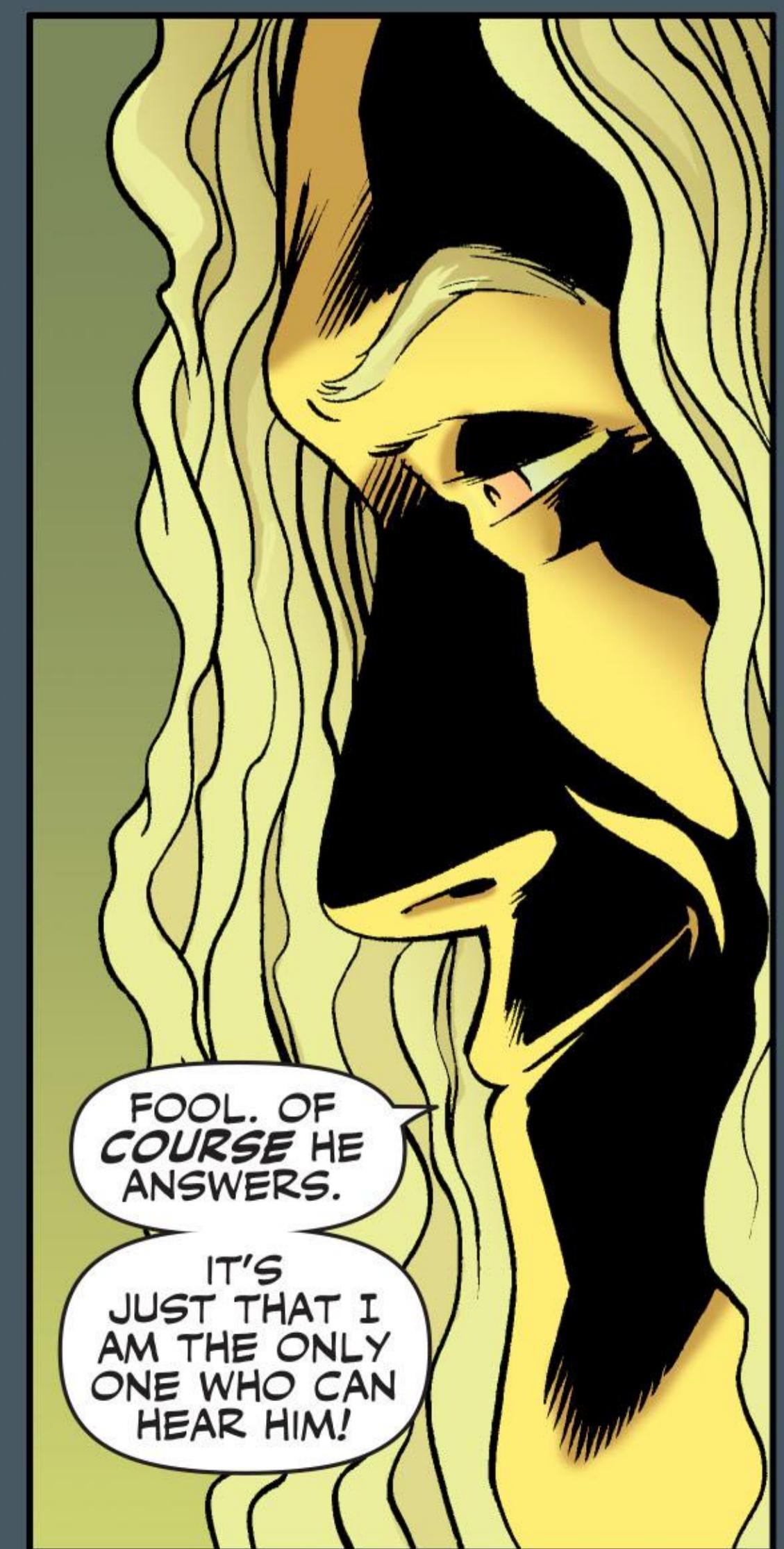
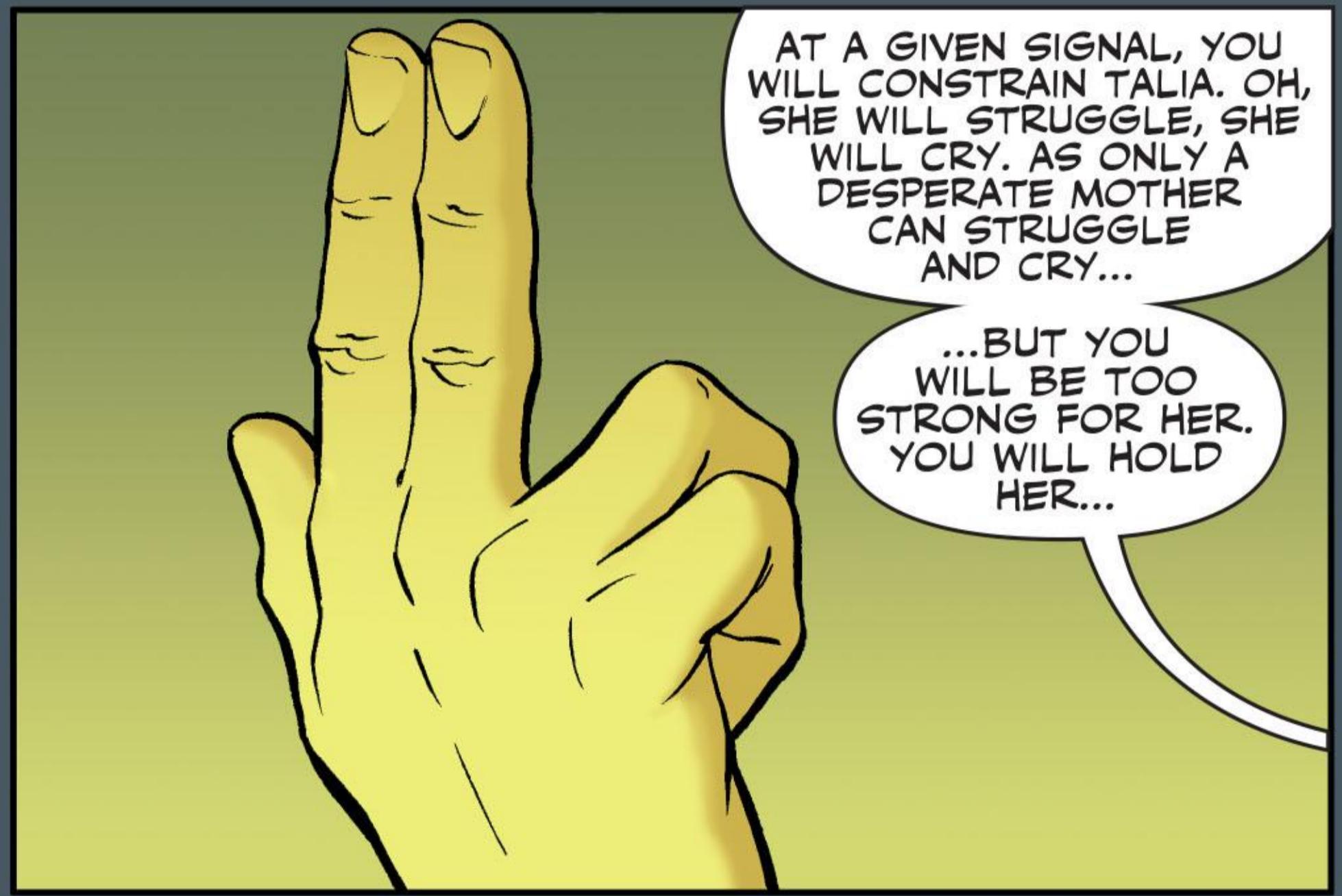


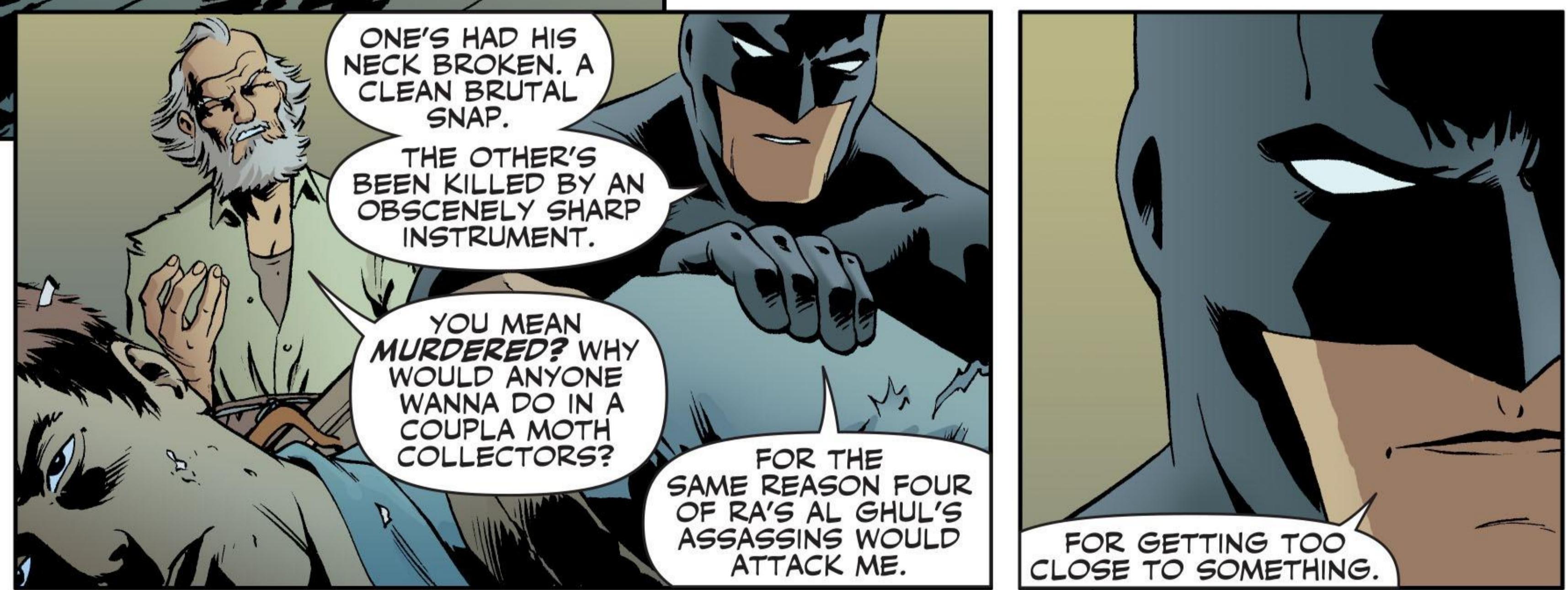
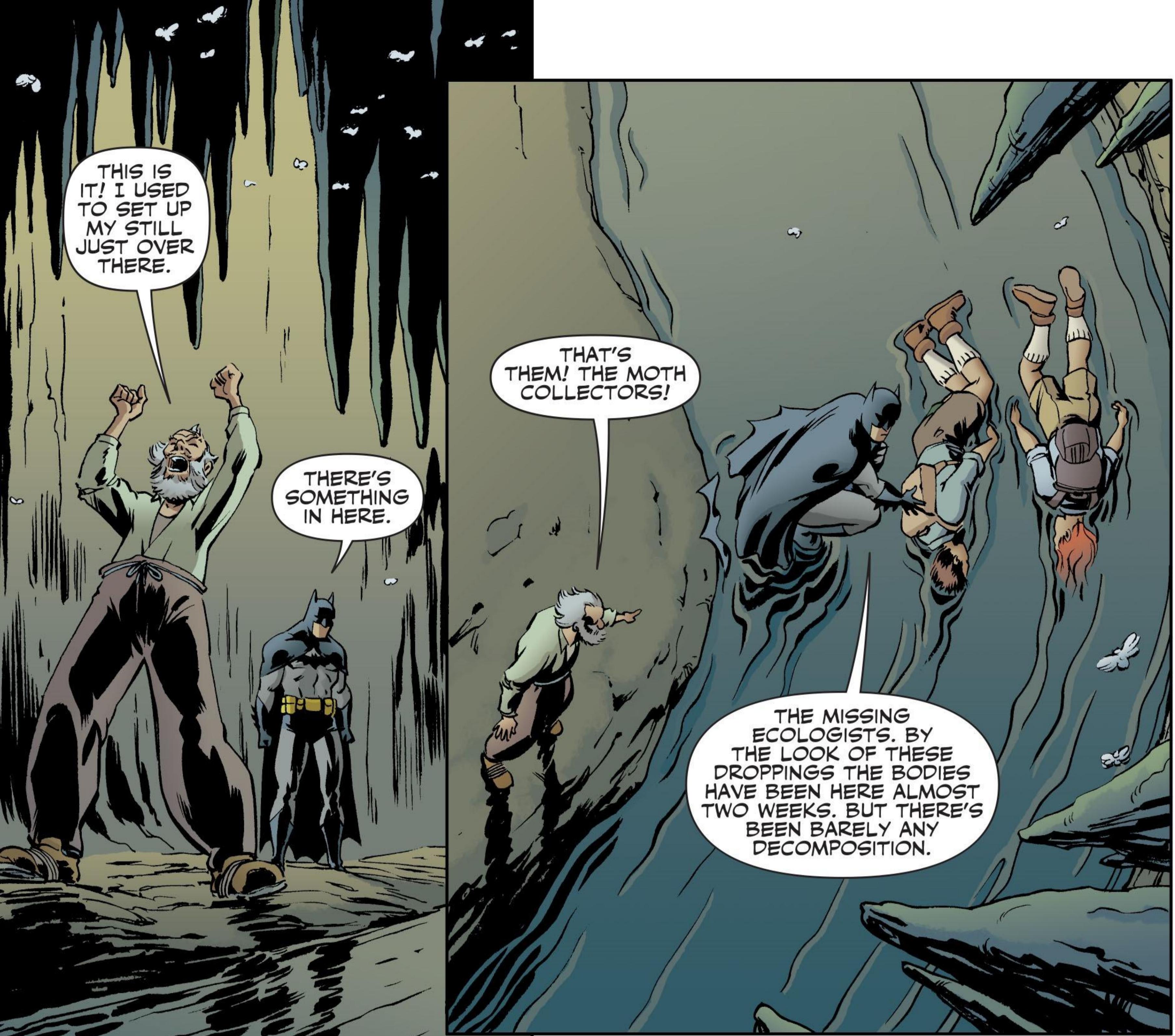




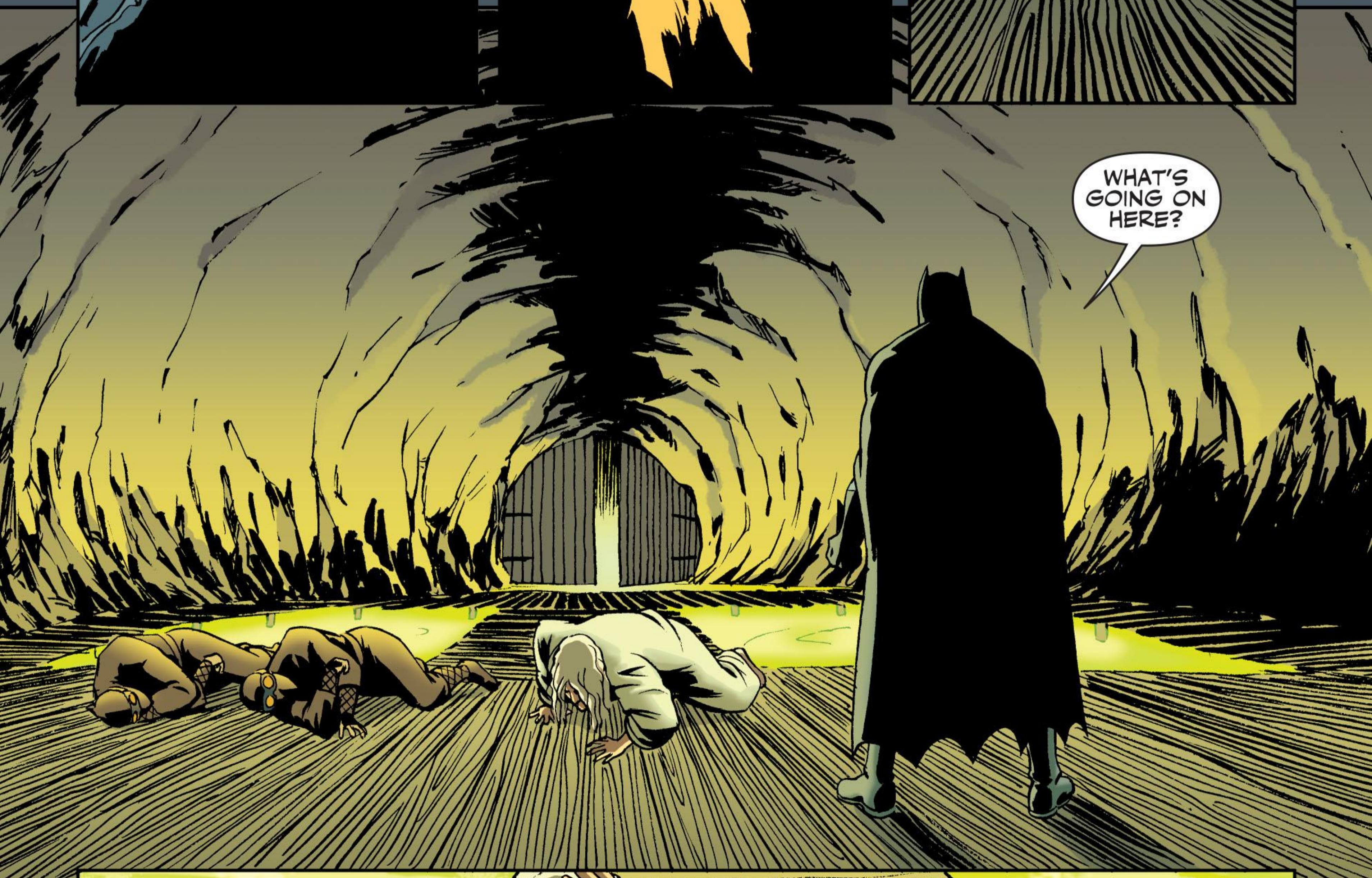
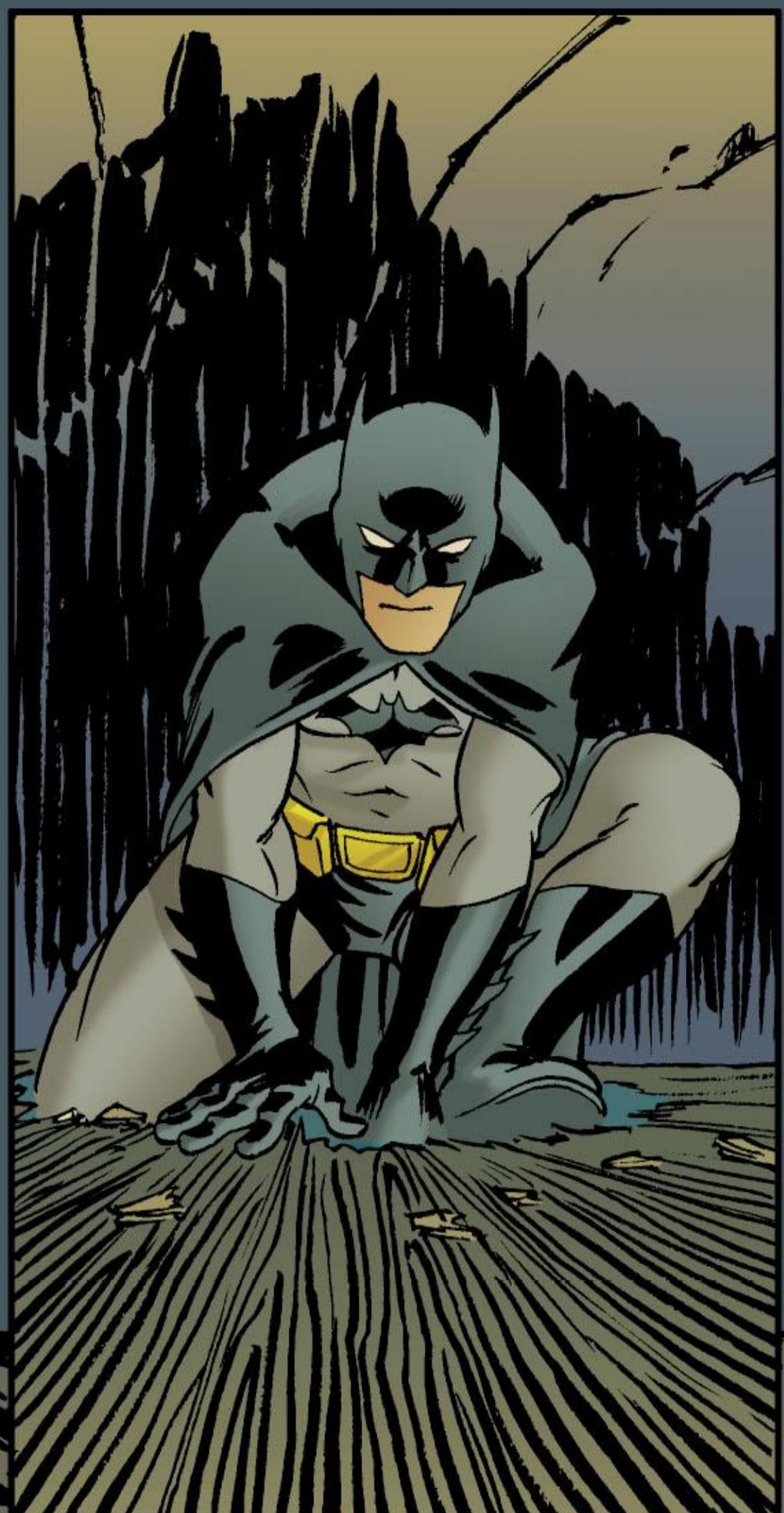


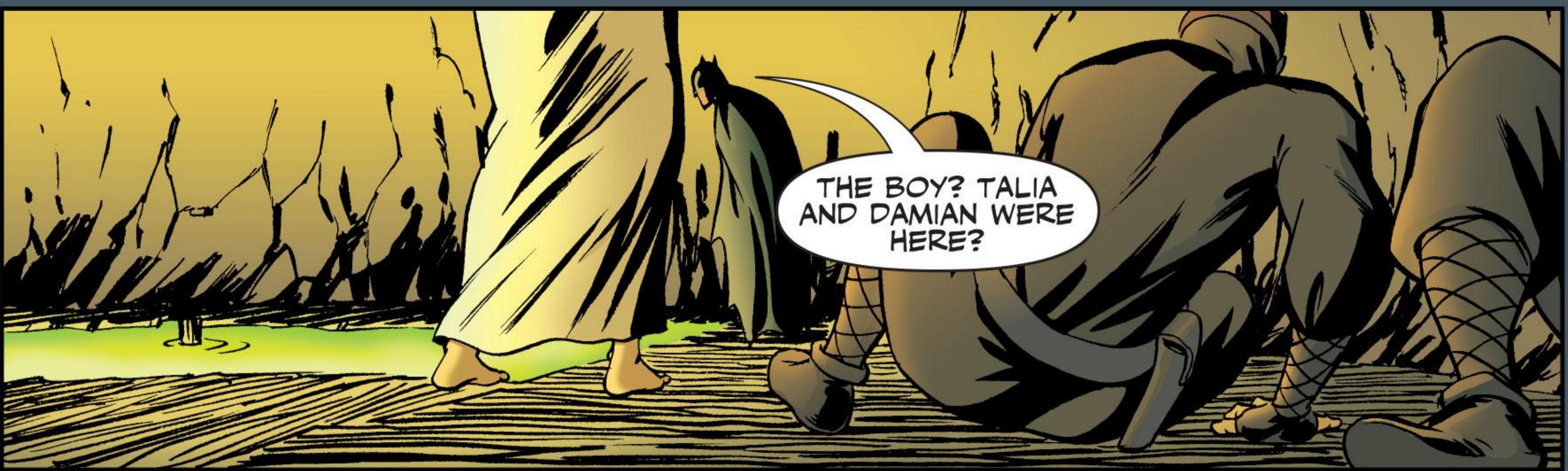














LATER...

THEY COULD BE ANYWHERE. TALIA'S A VERY RESOURCEFUL WOMAN.

AND THIS WHITE GHOST FELLOW STILL HASN'T SURFACED?

I HAD A CALL FROM MS MCMURPHY AT THE WAYNE ECOLOGICAL FOUNDATION LAST NIGHT. IT SEEMS THE OUTBACK LAZARUS PIT IS LINKED TO AN ALMOST BOTTOMLESS UNDERGROUND CHASM, FEEDING INTO MANY LOCAL STREAMS.

ALL OF WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STRANGE LOCALIZED ENVIRONMENT. WHICH LED TO THE METHUSELAH MOTHS... WHICH IN TURN LED TO TWO YOUNG ECOLOGISTS LOSING THEIR LIVES...

METHUSELAH MOTHS. THAT'S RATHER GOOD, SIR.

I ALSO GOT THE TEST RESULTS BACK ON THOSE HISTORICAL RECORDS. SEEMS THEY'RE NOT HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD THEY WERE PRODUCED IN THE 1880S.

SURELY THEY COULD BE COPIES MADE OF THE ORIGINAL, MORE ANCIENT RECORDS, SIR?

"...A SIMPLE WORK OF FICTION..."

YES. OR THEY COULD ALL BE A PRODUCT OF A DELUSIONAL MIND...

Ras Al Ghul
c. 1885, Dr. St. John's College,
University of Cambridge, England

END

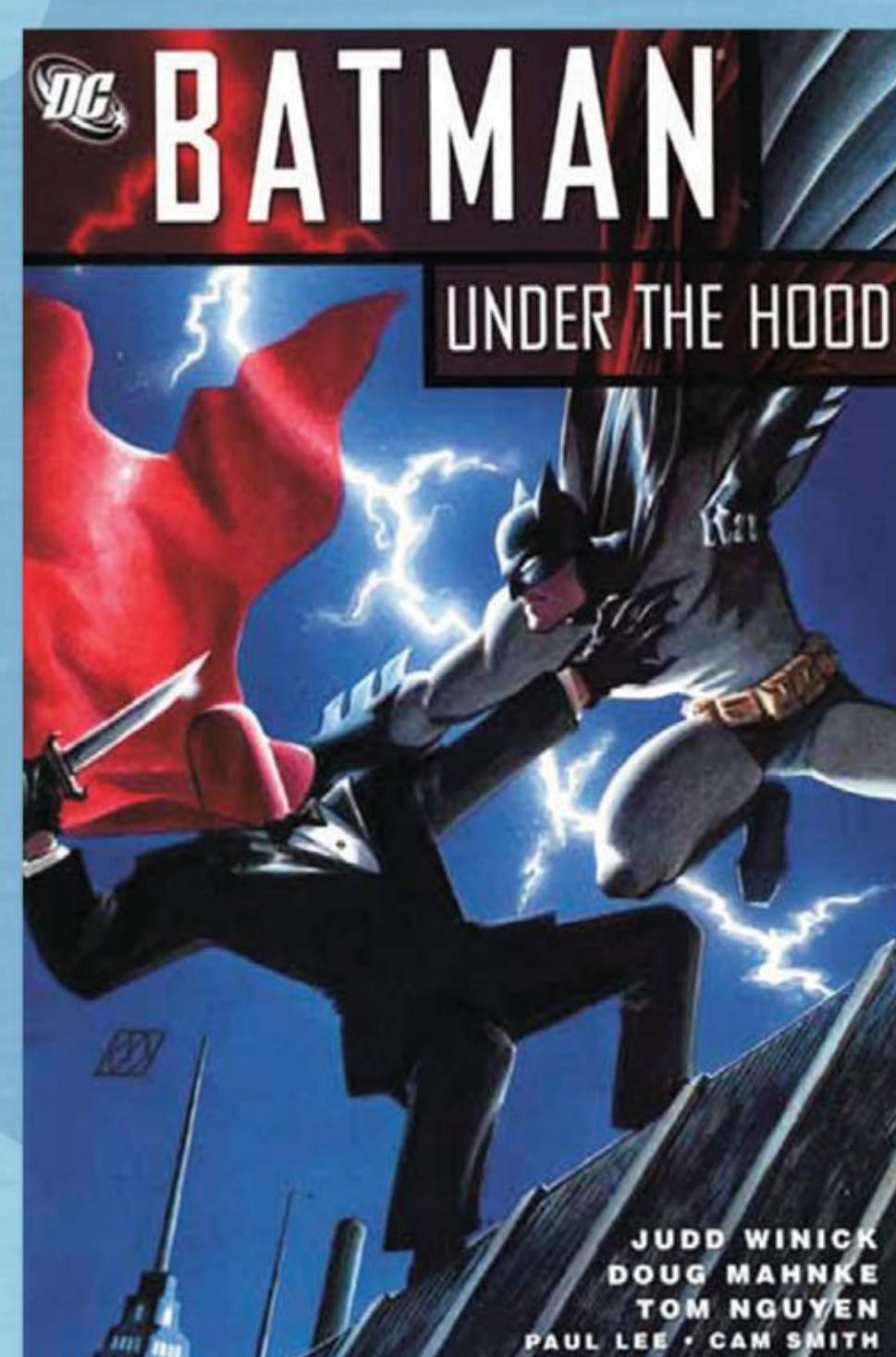
MORE CLASSIC TALES OF THE DARK KNIGHT

BATMAN: HUSH

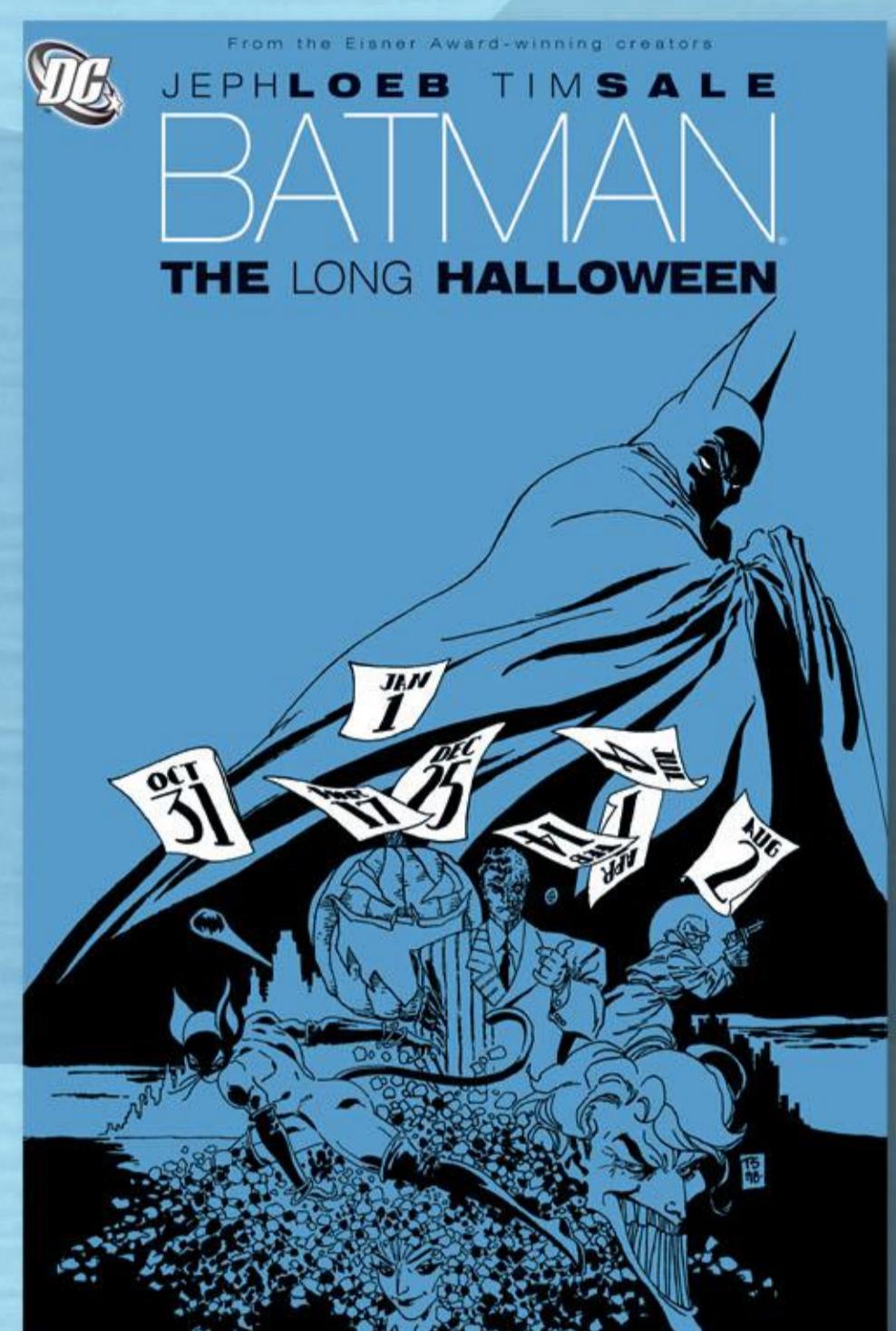


JEPH LOEB
JIM LEE

BATMAN: UNDER THE HOOD
VOLS. 1 & 2

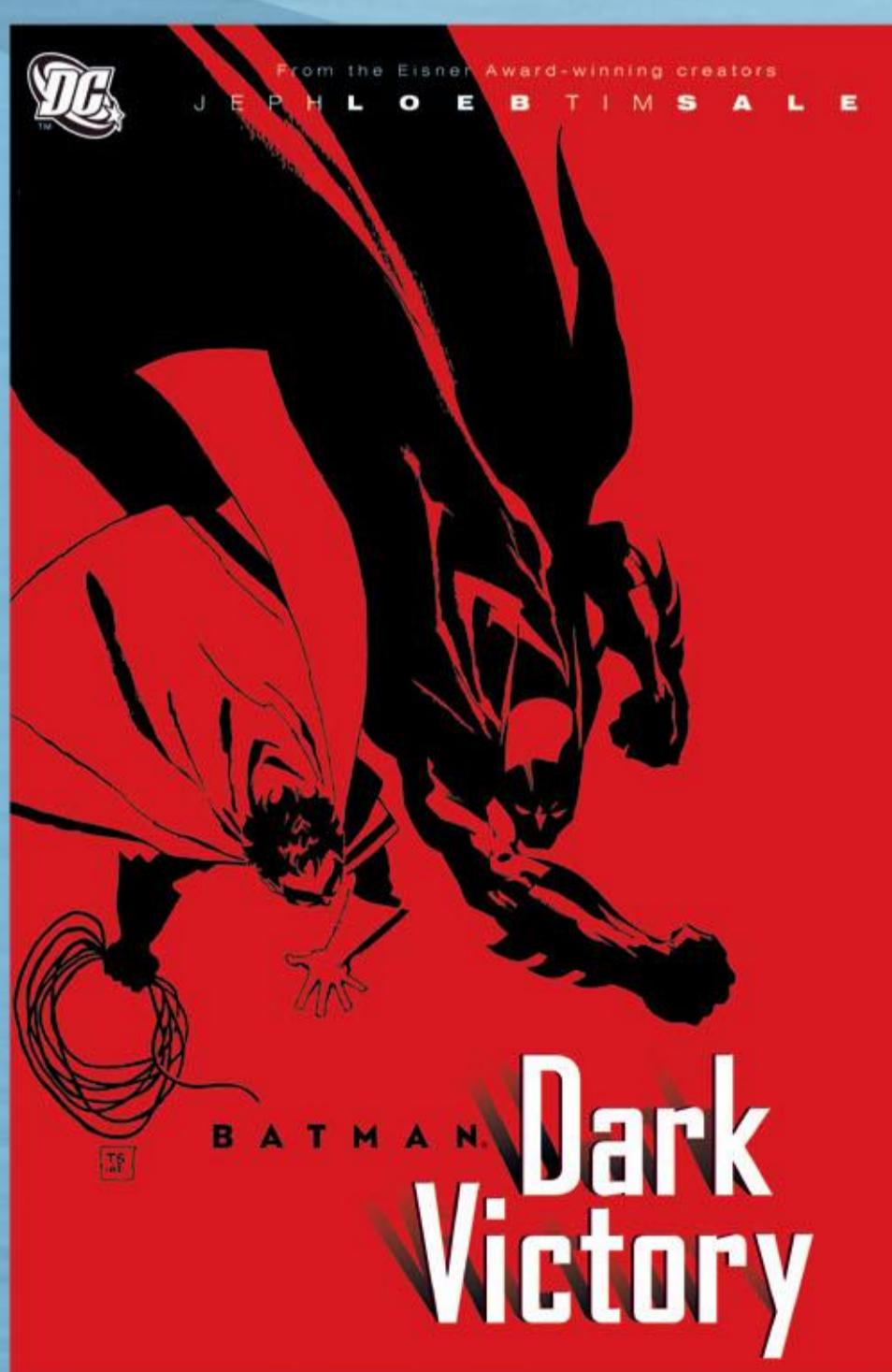


BATMAN:
THE LONG HALLOWEEN



JEPH LOEB
TIM SALE

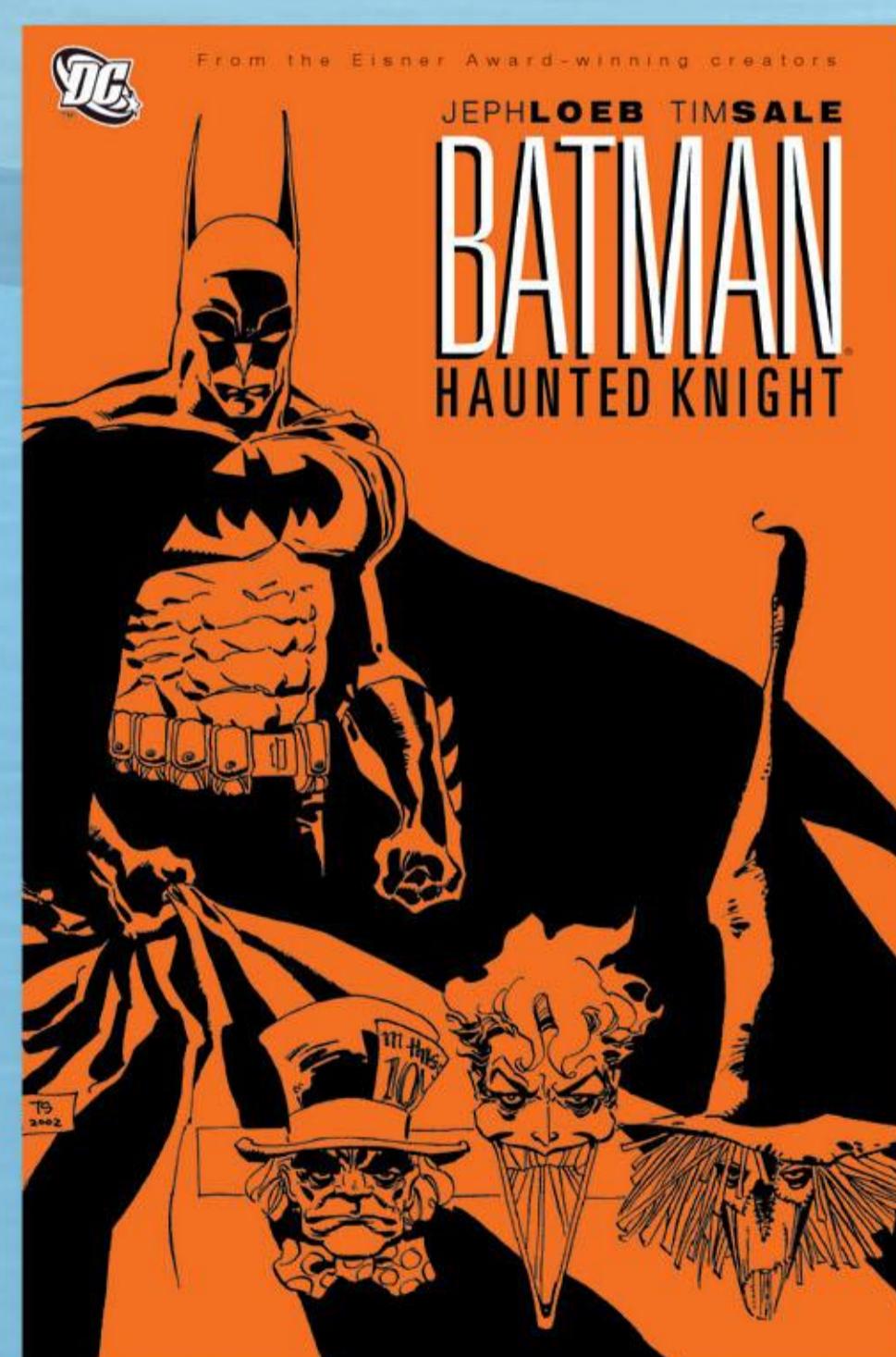
BATMAN:
DARK VICTORY



JEPH LOEB
TIM SALE

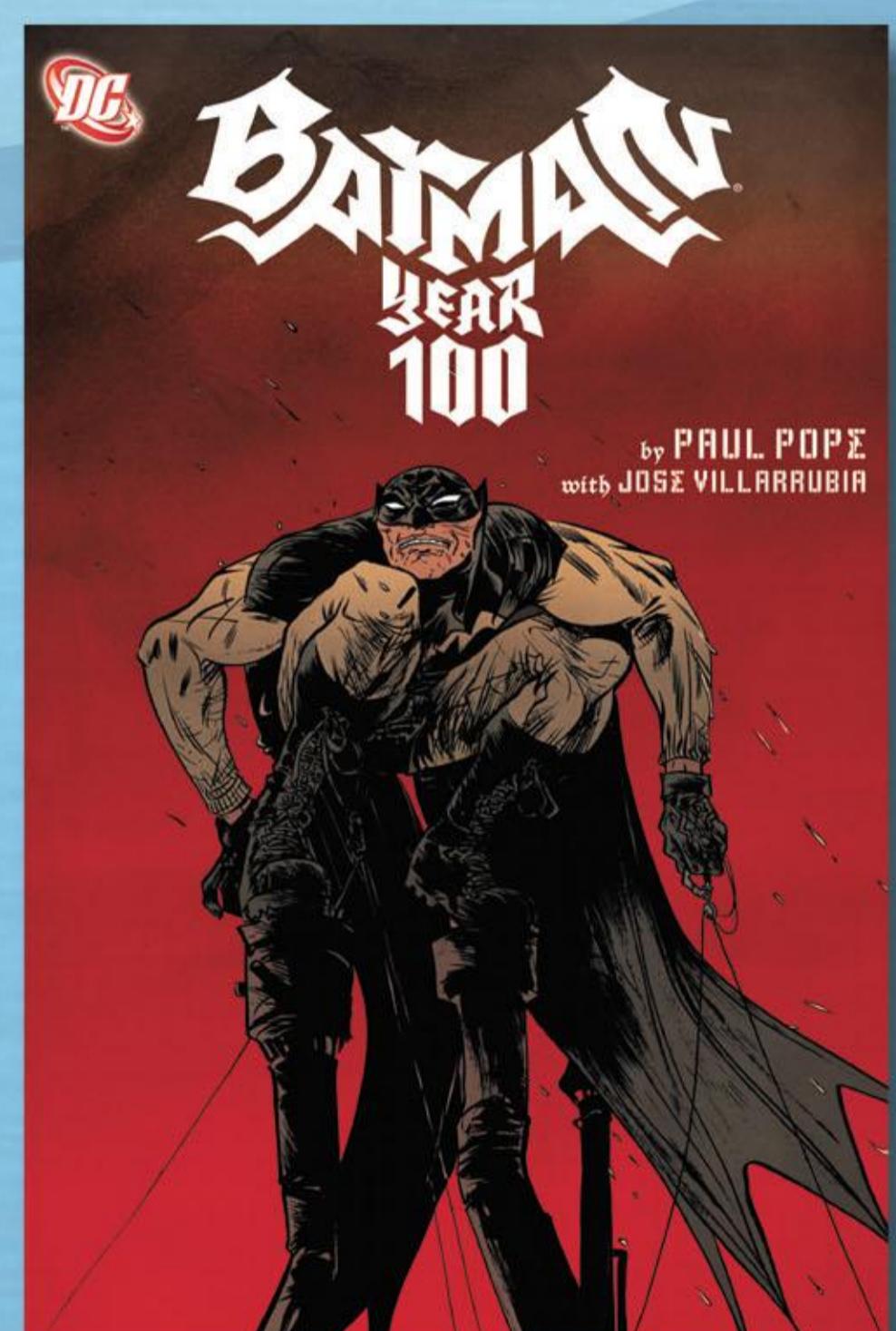
JUDD WINICK
DOUG MAHNKE

BATMAN:
HAUNTED KNIGHT



JEPH LOEB
TIM SALE

BATMAN:
YEAR 100



PAUL POPE

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