



R BATMAN
514 JAN 95

MOENCH
WAGNER
RUBINSTEIN

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
CARTOON
AUTHORITY

BATMAN



R. WAGNER + R
PRODIGAL
NINE

ONE NIGHT in the WAR ZONE

I'M THE BATMAN,
BUT THE BATMAN
IS NOT ME.

DICK GRAYSON, ROBIN, NIGHTWING,
BATMAN - ALL THE SAME, ALL DIFFERENT,
ALL ME... BUT NOT QUITE.

ROBIN'S SKIN, SHED LONG AGO, IS NOW
WORN BY ANOTHER - AND BEING BATMAN IS
ONLY TEMPORARY, MAYBE ANOTHER MONTH,
MAYBE ANOTHER NIGHT.

STILL, IT ONLY TAKES A
SECOND TO LOSE IT ALL...

AND IT TAKES GUTS TO
WEAR A BAT OVER
YOUR HEART.

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DENNIS O'NEIL · BATMAN CREATED BY
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GOT IT
YET?

I THINK SO,
DICK--ALTHOUGH
IT SURE WASN'T
EASY HACKIN'
THROUGH ALL THE
GARBAGE AND
GARBLE.

TWO-FACE WORKED
A REAL NUMBER
ON THE PENAL
SYSTEM'S MASTER
COMPUTER.

THE FOUL-UPS CAUSED
DOZENS OF CONS TO
BE PREMATURELY
RELEASED.

GORDON'S
PEOPLE CAN
TRACK
DOWN
AND NAIL
MOST OF
THEM...

...BUT THESE
ARE THE THREE
WORST ONES
STILL AT LARGE--
LIFERS
WITHOUT
POSSIBILITY
OF PAROLE...

...AND NEVER ELIGIBLE
FOR RELEASE.

THEN THESE
ARE THE ONES
DEMANDING
BATMAN'S
ATTENTION.

LIKE
YOU SAID, DICK,
TWO-FACE HIMSELF
IS DOWN--BUT NOW
IT'S TIME TO CLEAN
UP HIS MESS.



ALL
MURDERERS,
OBVIOUSLY,
BUT EACH ONE
DOES HAVE A
UNIQUE
TWIST...

STRAKE, BONAVVENTURE
McCONE, JOHN
CHEUNG, HSUI

"STRAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, SPECIALIZES IN DRUGS--SOMETIMES WITH A PARTNER NAMED GEORGE SAMSON."



NOTHIN', HUH?
THAT'S RIGHT,
GEORGE, I
FORGOT.

OLD DAYS, YOU ALWAYS
DID LIKE TO CARRY
NOTHIN' FROM SOME-
WHERE ELSE ALL THE
WAY TO HERE AT
MIDNIGHT...

...DIDN'T
YA?

AND THE SECOND
NAME-MCCONE?

AN
ENFORCER FOR
TOUGH TONY BRESSI'S
MOB.. A SOLDIER
MADE TEN TIMES
OVER...

"IT'S A GOOD BET HE'S GOT A
MAD-ON FOR VINCE CASTLE,
THE GUN WHO ROLLED OVER
AND GOT HIM SENT AWAY."

YOU
MCCONE?

DEPENDS
ON WHAT
YOU GOT
FOR ME.

HEY,
WHEN IT'S A
FAVOR FOR A
FRIEND OF BIG
TONY, REST HIS
SOUL...

...YOU
GET TO
TAKE YOUR
PICK.

THANKS...



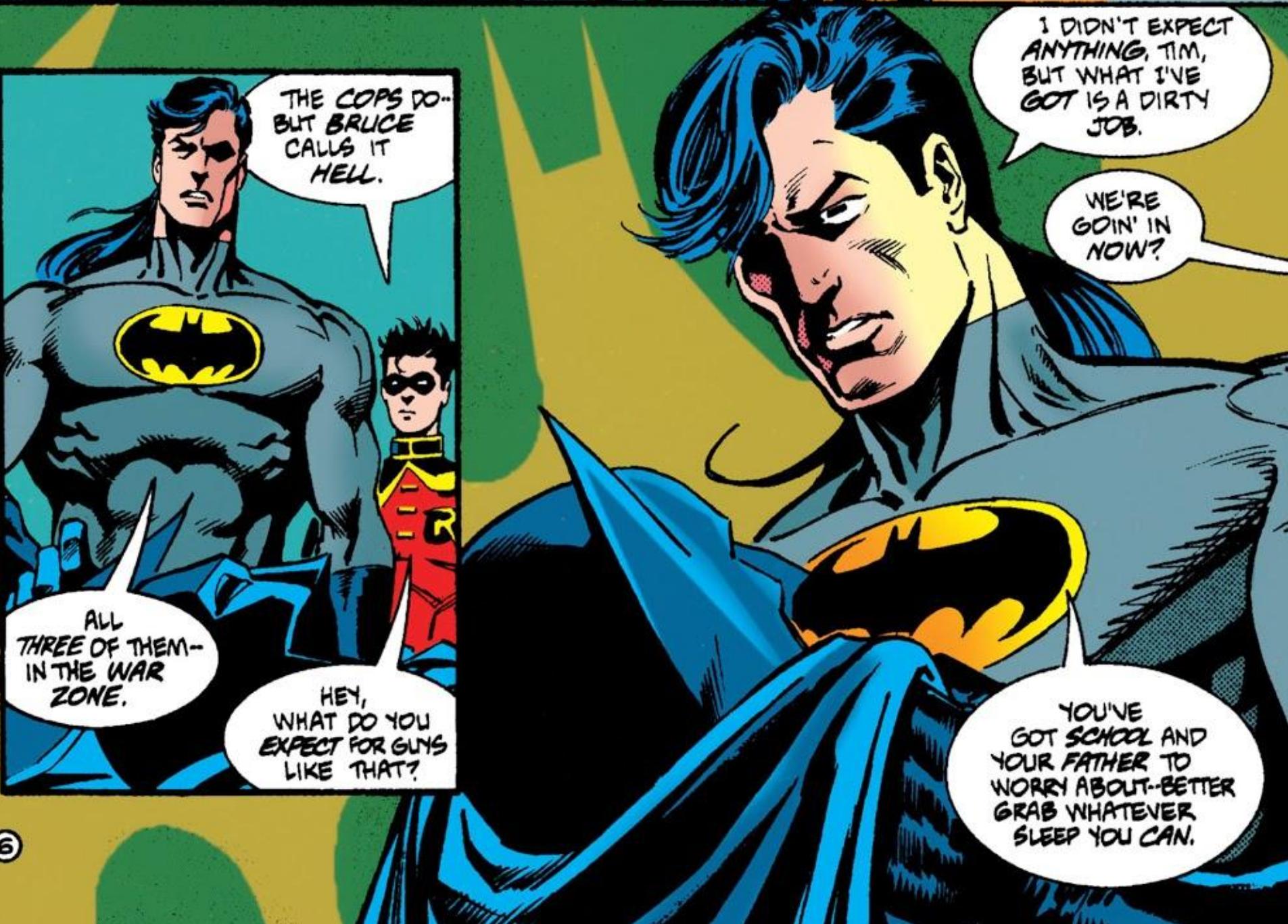
BUT THEY DID! THE GREEK SEEN HIM--
TODAY--OVER ON THE STRAND--AN' HE
WAS ASKIN' ABOUT US!



THE ADDRESSES UNDER EACH NAME ARE LAST KNOWN RESIDENCES, PLACES OF HANG-OUT, ADDRESSES OF KNOWN ASSOCIATES...

AND EVERY LAST ADDRESS... IS IN BATTERGATE.

DO THEY STILL CALL THAT AREA "THE WAR ZONE"?



LEAVING
YOU TO ENTER
THE WAR ZONE
ALONE?

NO..
WITH THE
BATMAN
RIDING ON
MY BACK...

...AND
LET'S HOPE
THIS CAPE'S
WORTH AT
LEAST A
REGIMENT.

NOW THAT TWO-FACE
IS DOWN, I MAY NOT
NEED, OR WANT, THE
BAT...

...BUT I'VE
GOT TO PUT
MY HEART
INTO IT.

BOUND TO BE A LONG NIGHT,
MAYBE LONG ENOUGH TO
CURSE THE SUN FOR
SETTING.

BUT WHY SHOULD
THIS NIGHT FEEL
SO MUCH WORSE?

WHY WAS IT SUCH AN
EFFORT TO DON THE
CAPE AND COWL--TO
LEAVE THE CAVE? WHY
DOES IT FEEL LIKE IT
SHOULD BE FINISHED?

DID I PUT THE BAT OVER
MY HEART JUST TO TEST
MYSELF--TO GET THE
MONKEY OF TWO-FACE
OFF MY BACK?

NO--I DID IT BECAUSE BRUCE
ASKED ME, BECAUSE HE
NEEDED ME.

I GAVE MY WORD, AND THAT
KIND OF PROMISE--NO
MATTER HOW LONG THE
NIGHT--STICKS FOR THE
DURATION.



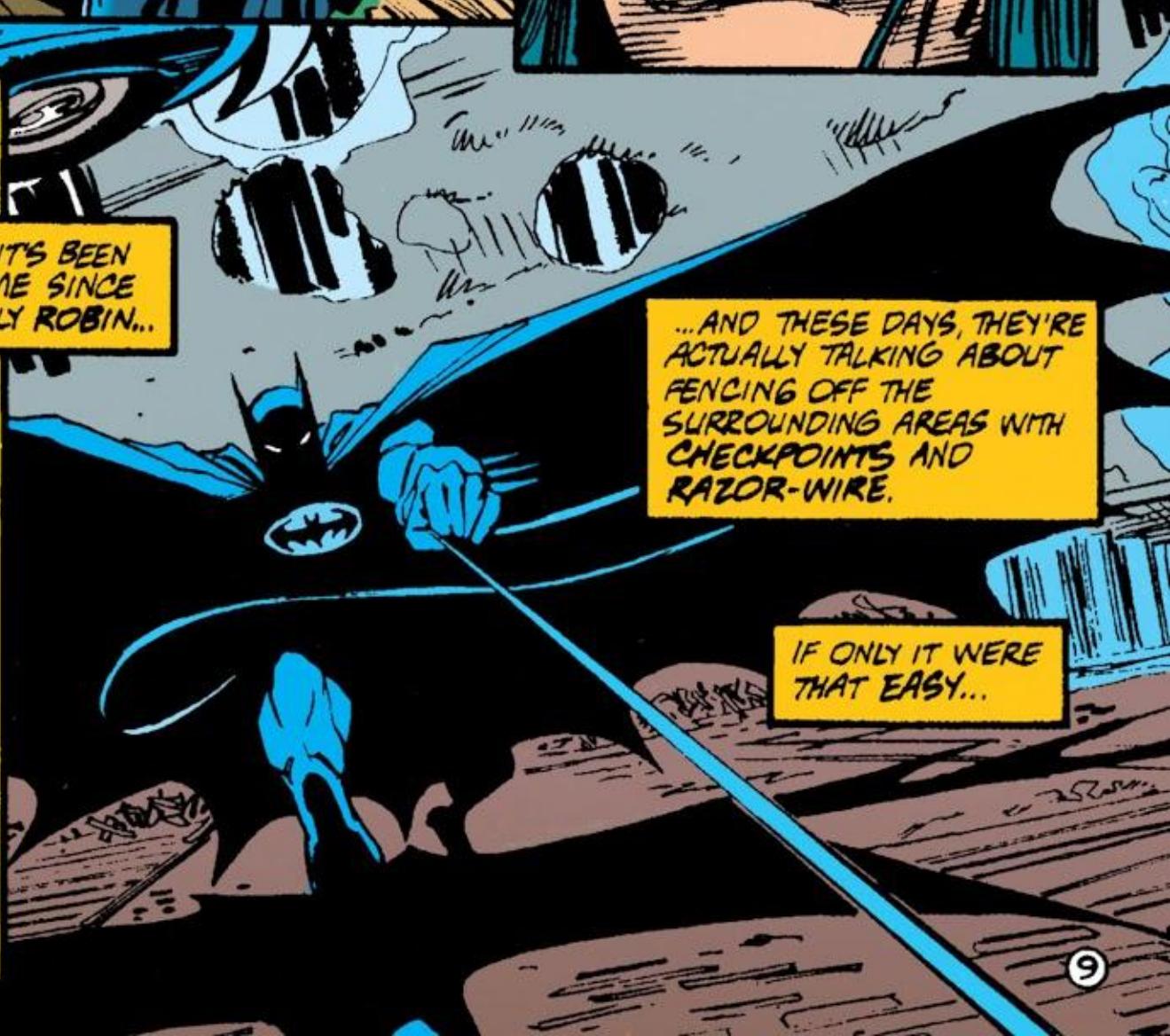


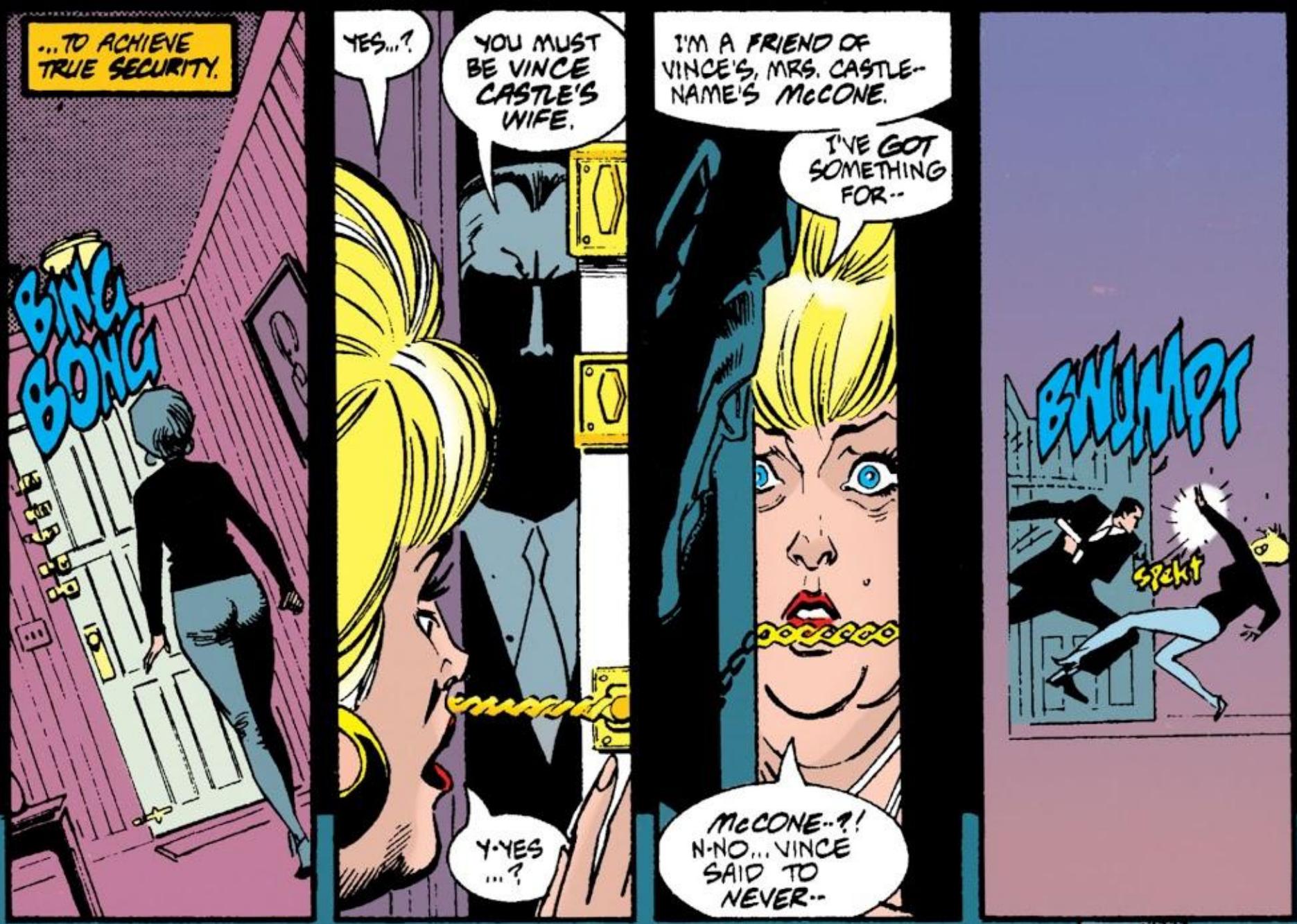
THE FRONT LINE OF THE
WAR ZONE--EVEN WORSE
THAN I REMEMBER IT.

BUT THEN, IT'S BEEN
A LONG TIME SINCE
I WAS MERELY ROBIN...

...AND THESE DAYS, THEY'RE
ACTUALLY TALKING ABOUT
FENCING OFF THE
SURROUNDING AREAS WITH
CHECKPOINTS AND
RAZOR-WIRE.

IF ONLY IT WERE
THAT EASY...





BRUCE IS RIGHT--
IT IS HELL.

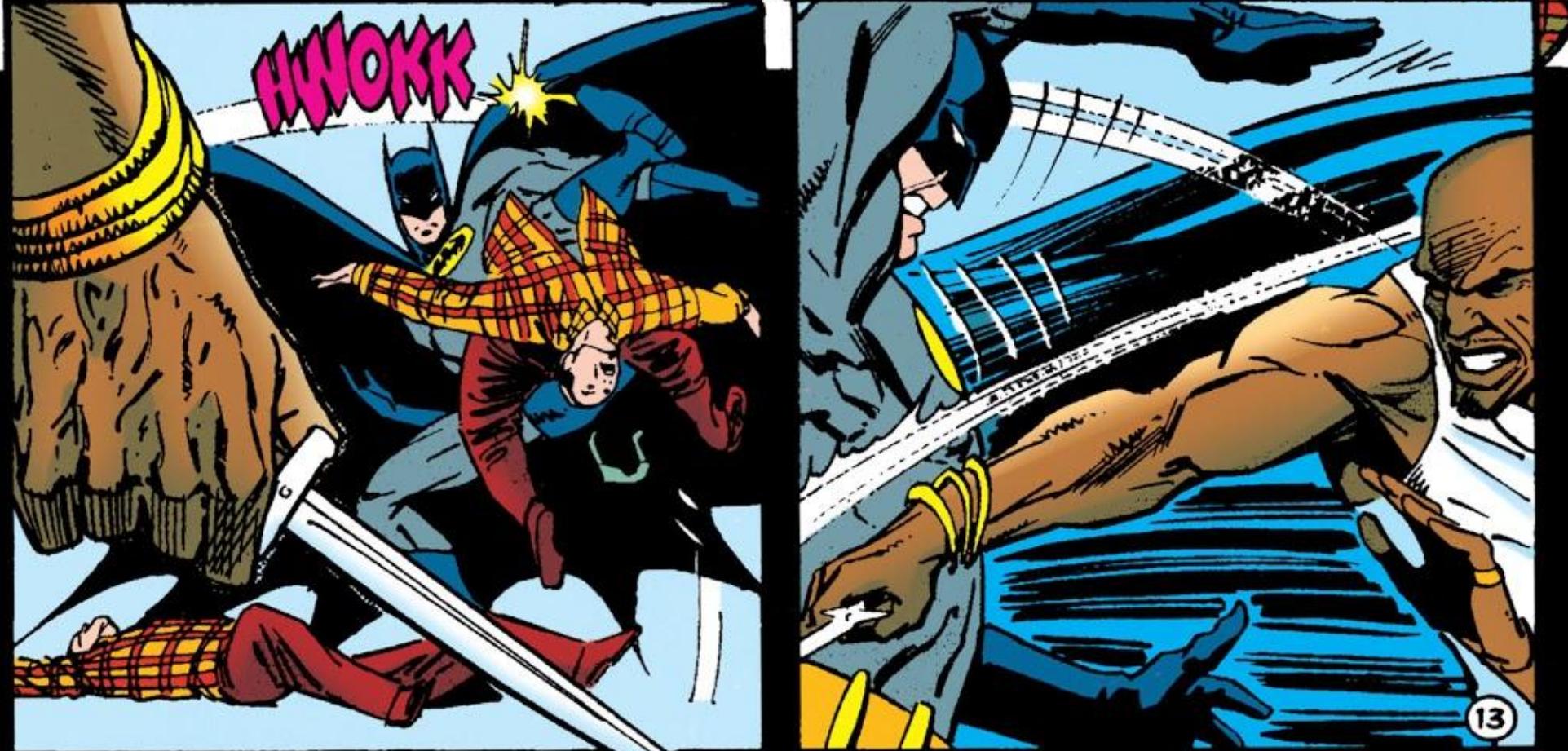
AND TIME TO
ENTER IT.

MIGHT AS WELL
HUNT THE DEMONS
IN THE ORDER OF
TIM'S LIST...

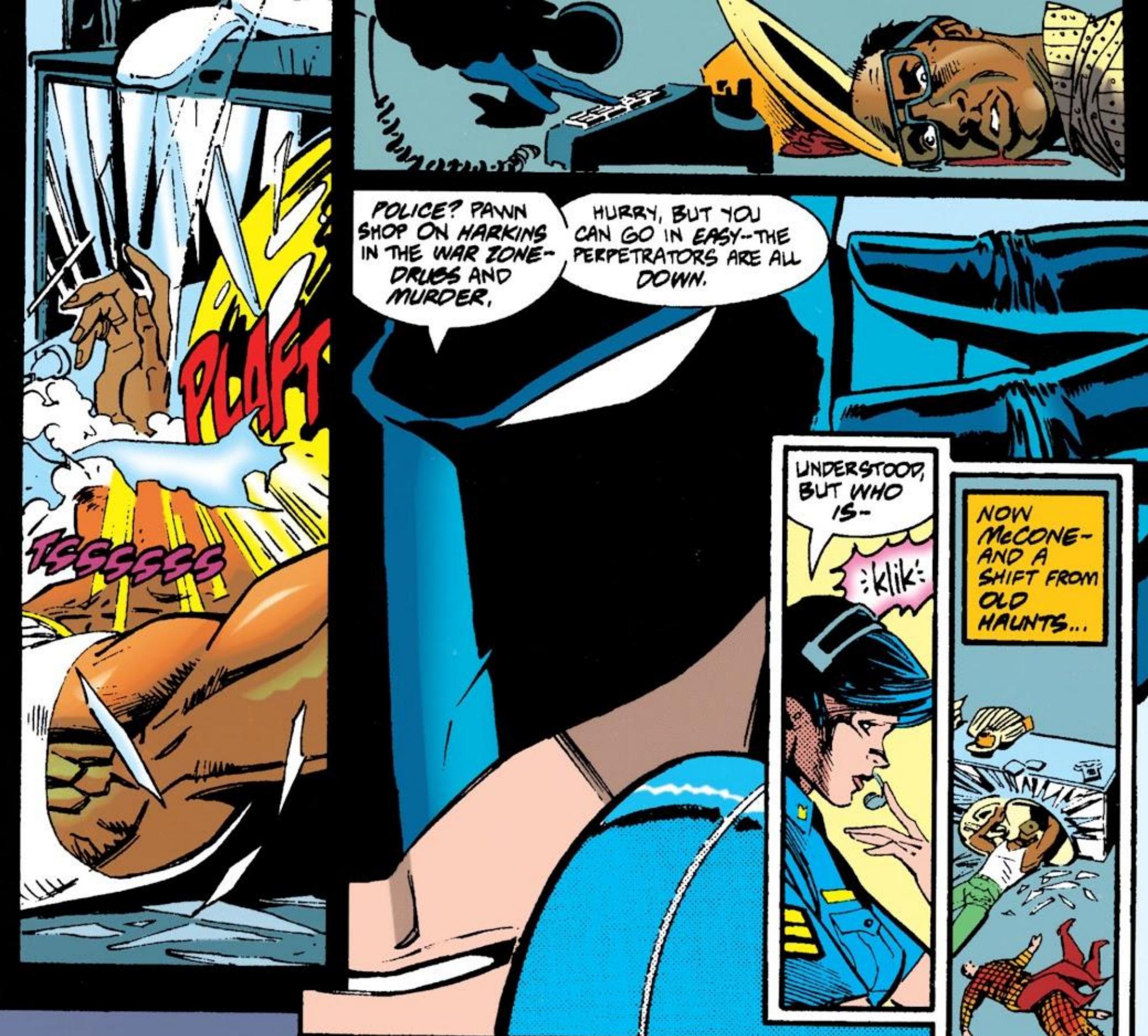
...MAKING STRAKE
FIRST.

NH-NHN...











I...I THOUGHT
YOU...YOU WERE MY
DAUGHTER,
MARGIE...

HER DAUGHTER?
BUT THEN,
WHERE IS--

BNAKT

NO,
VINCE! HE
SAVED
ME!

CASTLE...

SHRIIP

...HIDING IN
THE CLOSET
THE WHOLE
TIME.

IT NEVER
ENDS.

...EVEN A BLIND
D.A. GETS TO
BAG THEM BOTH.

GO TO
A NEIGHBOR'S
HOUSE AND CALL
THE POLICE, MRS.
CASTLE.

I'LL WAIT
OUTSIDE UNTIL
THEY GET
HERE.

I...I...
YES...

PROBABLY A GREAT MARRIAGE THE CASTLES HAVE... BUT THEN, I MESSED UP WITH KORY MYSELF.

BLEW IT WITH THE TITANS... LOST MY WAY AS NIGHTWING.

I'M TOO OLD TO BE ROBIN...

...AND BEING THE BATMAN ON A GRIM TOUR LIKE THIS CERTAINLY ISN'T ME.

AT LEAST THE CAVALRY'S HERE TO MOP UP THIS SKIRMISH.

BUT WHAT IS? WHAT AM I? --OTHER THAN A RELUCTANT GRUNT IN A FOREIGN WAR ZONE...

TIME FOR CHEUNG... BUT MAN, DO I HATE MARTIAL ARTS GUYS.

THE LAST OF THE THREE ADDRESSES LISTED FOR CHEUNG--AND EVEN LESS PROMISING THAN THE FIRST TWO...

LUCK WAS BOUND TO RUN OUT ON ME-- NO ONE HERE FOR A LONG TIME.

MAYBE THE HEAT'S OFF IN CHINATOWN BY NOW...

MAYBE CHEUNG NEVER
EVEN CAME BACK TO
THE WAR ZONE.



WHAT MAKES YOU
THINK CHEUNG'LL COME
HERE?

IT'S WHERE HE
STARTED IN
BATTERGATE--WHERE
HE ALWAYS GOES
WHEN THERE'S
TROUBLE.

TOLD
ME ONCE HE
KEEPS A STASH
HERE--MONEY,
WEAPONS...

"...ALTHOUGH I AIN'T NEVER
FOUND IT--AND BELIEVE ME,
I'VE LOOKED PLENTY."



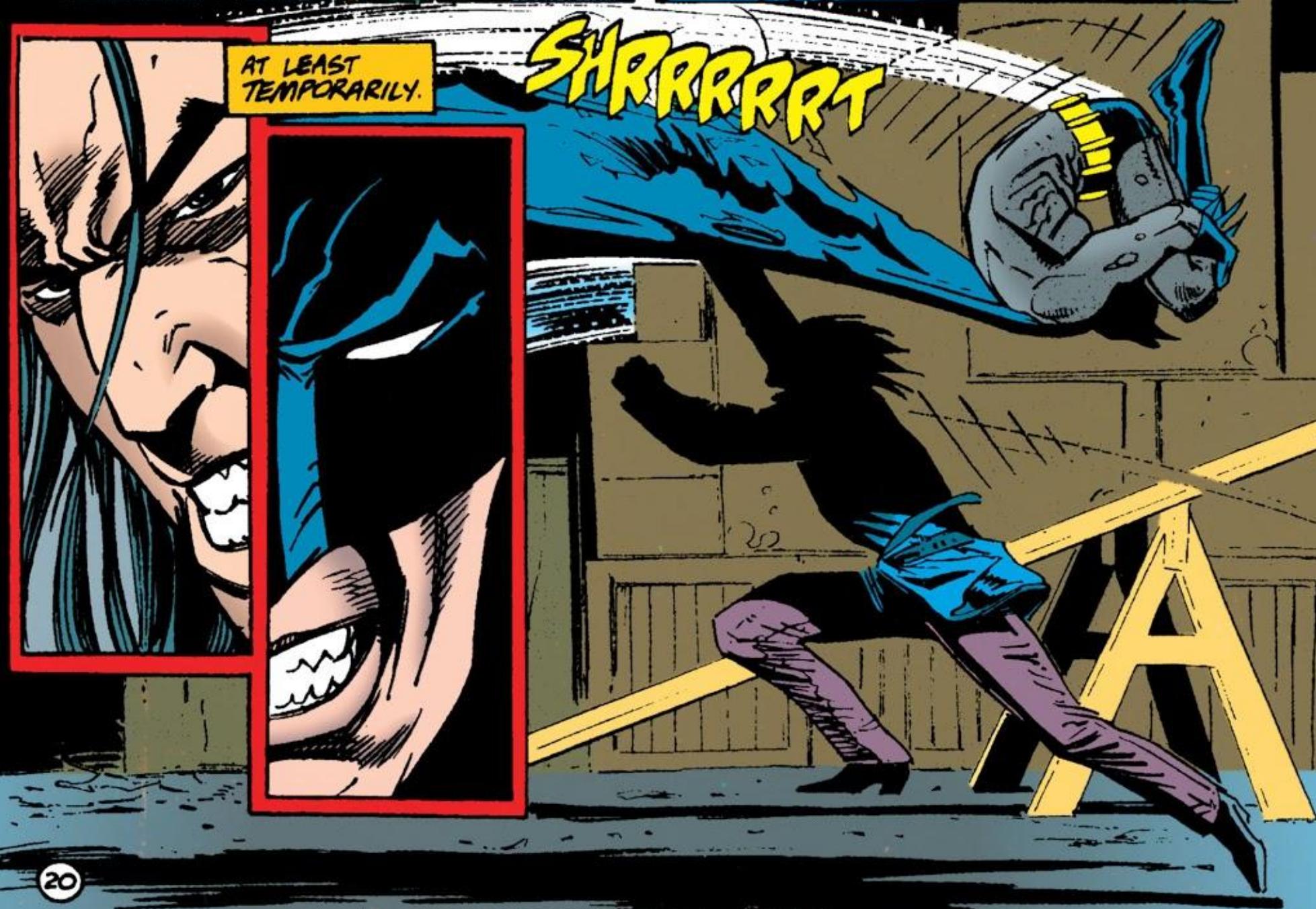
BAM
BAM

WEEAR

SPLAT



NO...IT IS HIM...BUT WAGING
A WAR OF HIS OWN WITH
OTHERS...





AT LEAST I'M STILL ALIVE,
TWO HOURS SHY OF DAWN.

LONG NIGHT BY ANY MEASURE,
AND A RELIEF TO END IT
EARLY. TRADE WAR ZONE
FOR MANOR AND-

BLAM BLAM BLAM

EEEEEEEEE

THREE SHOTS ECHOING
THROUGH CANYONS
OF CRUMBLLED BRICK.

A DISTANT SCREAM
FROM SOME UPPER
FLOOR IN THE
OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

THE THREE WORST HAVE BEEN
RECAPTURED, THE PRE-TWO-
FACE STATUS QUO RESTORED...
BUT THERE ARE NEW CRIMES
EVERY MINUTE, IN EVERY
DIRECTION.

IT NEVER STOPS, NEVER ENDS...
AND IF AN ENTIRE POLICE
FORCE CAN BECOME OVER-
WHELMED AND DEMORALIZED,
HOW DOES ONE MAN, ALONE
IN AN ETERNAL NIGHT OF EVIL
AND VIOLENCE, POSSIBLY
COPE?

BY BEING DRIVEN,
OBSESSED, MORE
THAN A NORMAL
MAN...

THERE'S ONLY ONE
BATMAN. IT WASN'T
JEAN PAUL VALLEY,
AND IT ISN'T ME.

COME BACK, BRUCE... THE
NIGHT NEEDS YOU...

...AND ALL I CAN DO IS
CURSE THE BAT ECLIPSING
MY HEART.

... AND A LOT MORE THAN
I'M PREPARED, OR ABLE,
TO BE.

NEXT ISSUE:
TROIKA part 1
- Dark Rider,
Cold Warrior -



novus
Distributions