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BATMAN

FIGHT ALL YOU
WANT, BATMAN!
FOR EVERY
DEMON YOU
DEFEAT...

...I WILL
CONJURE
UP TWO
MORE!

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Featuring...
The RETURN
OF THE DIABOLICAL
DR. TZIN-TZIN!



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The B-24J Liberator is one of history's heroes that you can build today... and fun.

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ALL GOTHAM CITY NEEDED THESE DAYS -- CONSIDERING THE HEKTIC WAY THINGS HAVE BEEN GOING -- WAS THE RETURN OF DR. TZIN-TZIN, THE MYSTIC MASTER OF MALICE AND MAYHEM!

BAT MAN

SO, NATURALLY -- OR PERHAPS SUPERNATURALLY? -- IT HAD TO HAPPEN!

WISER, WILIER AND MORE WARPED THAN EVER, HE BRINGS HIS ASTOUNDING POWERS FOR MORTAL -- AND MENTAL -- COMBAT WITH THE CAPED CRUSADER IN ...

"**IF THERE WERE NO BATMAN... I WOULD HAVE TO INVENT HIM!"**

STORY BY:
DAVID V. REED
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ROMEO TANGHALL &
FRANK SPRINGER
EDITED BY:
JULIUS SCHWARTZ

S-2459

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"IT WAS TIME NOW, BELOW ME
THE GREAT SPHINX OF GIZEH
LAY VEILED IN DARKNESS... THE
COLOSSUS, IN OCCULT RENDEZVOUS
WITH THE MIGHTIEST OF
SORCERERS!"

"THE MOMENT OF RELEASE--AND THE
VITAL FORCE LEAPED FROM ME IN
SHAFTS OF RADIANCE TO ENVELOP
THE MONOLITH... AND MANIFEST MY
MAGIC WILL!"

"THE SUBLIME SPHINX...
GUARDIAN OF THE TEMPLE
OF KHA-EF-RE, HEWN FROM
LIVING ROCK IN THE TIME
OF CHEOPS OF THE FOURTH
DYNASTY--ROSE SLOWLY
IN MIDAIR AND BEGAN TO
MOVE TOWARDS THE SEA!"

"GENTLY, I LET IT
SINK INTO THE
DEEPEST WATERS
OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN--"

-- THERE TO CONFFOUND THE SCHOLARS OF
ANOTHER AGE... AND GIVE RISE TO YET ANOTHER
FABLE OF ATLANTIS!"

"THEN, WHERE THE EXALTED CENOTAPH HAD STOOD, I CAUSED ANOTHER TO BE PLACED... IN EVERY WAY A DUPLICATE OF THE ORIGINAL--AND YET, AS I ALONE WOULD EVER KNOW--A COUNTERFEIT!..."

"AND SO, I HAVE CONCLUDED THE FIRST PART OF MY PREPARATIONS. TOMORROW, IN THE CITY OF GOTHAM, I BEGIN THE SACRED RITES..."

EVERY WORD, DR. TZIN-TZIN!

IS THE RECORD COMPLETE?

NOW ONLY YOU AND I HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT I HAVE DONE...

...AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!

YES, EXALTED NALJORPA*--AND I GLADLY EMBRACE THE HONOR OF MY FATE!

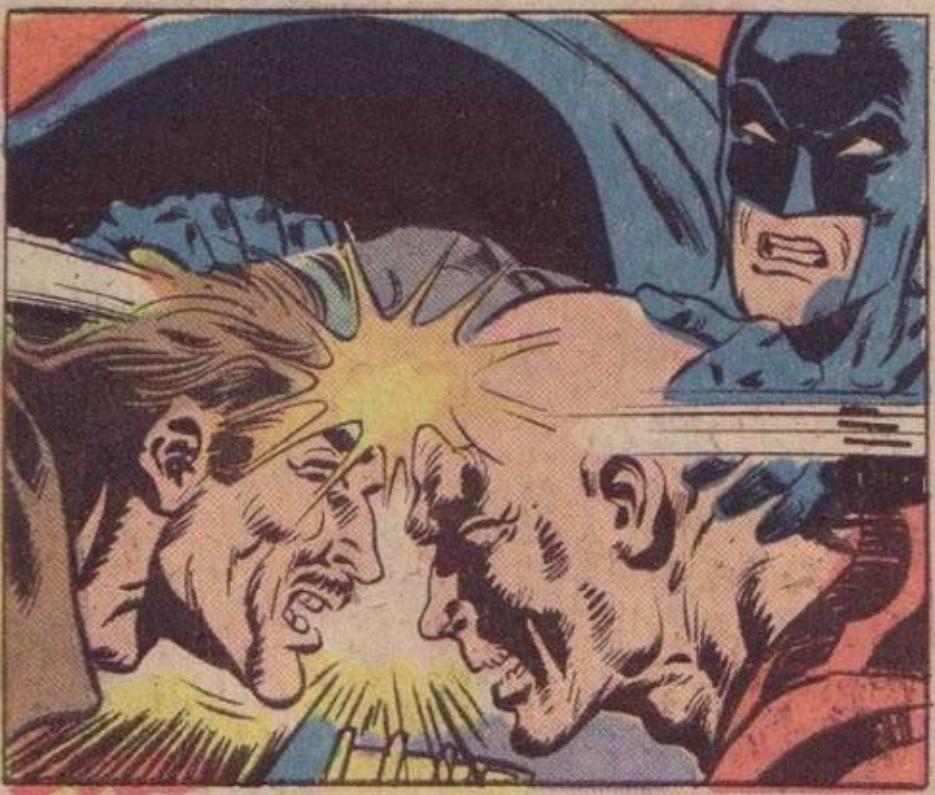
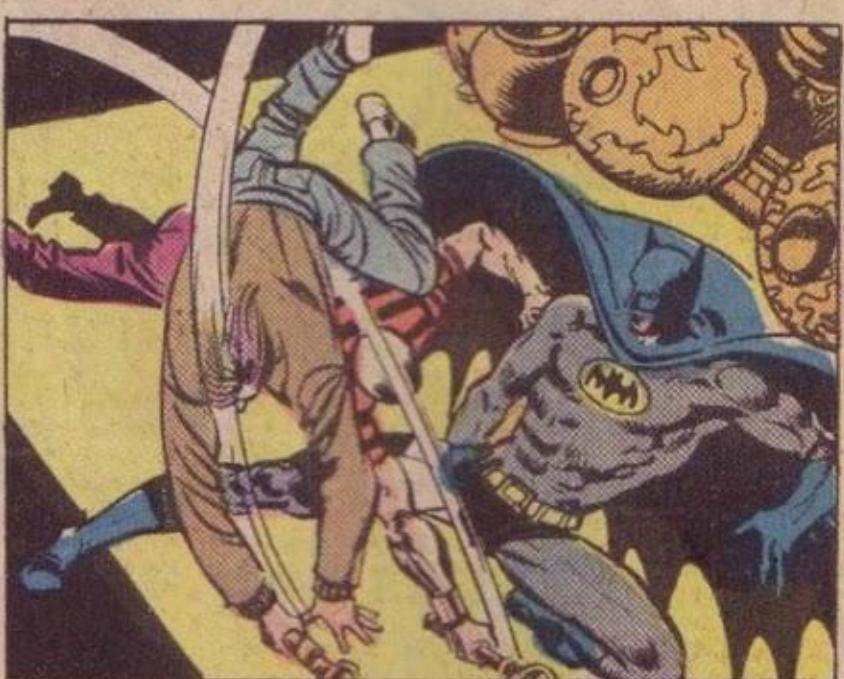
*NALJORPA:
A WIZARD OF TIBET--D.V.R.

THEN, FROM THE SPEEDING AIRCRAFT, A BODY IS UNCELEMONIOUSLY COMMITTED TO THE SEA--AS THE SERENE MASTER RIDS HIMSELF OF ALL HUMAN CONTACT!

UNTIL IT IS TIME TO MEET THE BATMAN--I AM ALONE WITH MY PHANTOMS!

AT THAT MOMENT... IN FAR OFF GOTHAM CITY... THE OBJECT OF DR. TZIN-TZIN'S EXULTANT THOUGHTS IS IN A PRETTY FAIR STATE OF ELATION HIMSELF--

:GAAAH!:
THE BATMAN!



CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE
FOLLOWING.

Wonder Woman**AND CUP CAKES****"THE MALTESE CUP CAKE"**

WONDER WOMAN, YOU MUST HELP ME. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN.

HOW... MR. ASTOR?

HELP ME FIND THE **MALTESE CUP CAKE**... THAT MYSTERIOUS, FABLED, LEGENDARY IDOL-- I MUST HAVE IT-- BECAUSE I MUST HAVE IT!!!

ENTER PETULA LORRY, SNIVELING, SHADY HENCHWOMAN, AS IF FROM NOWHERE.

FOLLOW ME... I'LL TAKE YOU THERE.

HMMMM... UH-OH?

UH-OH!
GREAT APHRODITE!

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE **MALTESE CUP CAKE**?

BUT WHAT'S THIS ON THE SHELF UP HIGH? IT LOOKS LIKE HALF CUP CAKE - HALF MONSTER. COULD IT BE THE CURSED IDOL?

MY CHARMING LADY OF GRACE AND STRENGTH-- YOU'VE JUST BEEN TRICKED. NOW MEET MY BOSS, THE CORRUPT CINDY BLUESTREET, BETTER KNOWN AS THE FAT LADY. YOU'LL LOVE HER WICKED, SNARLING LAUGH...

YOU WERE LOOKING FOR A SHADY MAN! INSTEAD, YOU FIND A BIG LADY WHO THROWS A BIG SHADOW-- HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HO... AND NOW-- YOU'LL PROMISE ME TO GIVE UP THE SEARCH FOR THE **MALTESE CUP CAKE**... ?! OR ELSE...

BUT WHY SUCH A FUSS? WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT A STONE CUP CAKE? HA HE HE HA HA ... THE **MALTESE CUP CAKE** IDOL IS RUMORED TO BE THE ANCIENT FORERUNNER OF THE MODERN CUP CAKE... GREAT HISTORIC VALUE FOR ASTOR... BUT I'M INTERESTED IN WHAT IT'S WORTH!

OOOPS... ANOTHER FALLEN IDOL!!



GREAT HERA... WHAT A CRUMBY IDOL!

THAT'S NOT THE **MALTESE CUP CAKE**!!!

SO WHAT? MY SEARCH HAS FORTUNATELY LED ME TO THE ULTIMATE! A DELICIOUS HOSTESS® CUP CAKE! SCRUMPTIOUS, MOUTH-WATERING!

I LOVE DEVIL'S FOOD CAKE! AND SO MOIST!

AND NOW FOR MY SERIOUS WORK-- TO FIND A JAIL BIG ENOUGH TO HOLD THE FAT LADY AND HER EVIL FRIENDS.

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THE SUPERMAN FAMILY and **THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY**

BUT, NOT LONG AFTERWARD, AT POLICE H.Q... THE BATMAN'S MOOD UNDERGOES AN ABRUPT CHANGE...

BATMAN, WE HAD THAT FENCE-OPERATION STAKED OUT FOR WEEKS-- AND YOU COME ALONG AT THE LAST MINUTE-- INTERFERE WITH THE POLICE--

-- AND GRAB ALL THE GLORY!

INTERFERE? GRAB THE GLORY?

LISTEN, INSPECTOR, I DON'T WORK AGAINST THE POLICE-- NOR DO I WORK FOR THE POLICE... OR WITH THE POLICE!

AHEM... WELL, THE PRINCIPLE IS THE SAME!

NOW, I'M AWARE THAT COMMISSIONER GORDON APPROVES OF YOUR UNORTHODOX METHODS AND GIVES YOU A FREE HAND--

CHIEF INSPECTOR
P.J. MADDOX

-- BUT AS LONG AS HE'S ON VACATION AND I'M IN COMMAND, I INSIST YOU FOLLOW DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES!

I KNOW SOME PEOPLE THINK WE CAN'T GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU... AND THAT YOU ALONE ARE EQUIPPED TO HANDLE THE WIDE VARIETIES OF CRIME WE GET HERE IN GOTHAM--

--BUT THAT CUTS NO ICE WITH ME!

I WANT TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING! IF YOU HAVE A CASE, A PROJECT, WHATEVER -- I WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU PROPOSE TO GO ABOUT SOLVING IT!

UNDERSTOOD?

WHAT'S SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND?

INSPECTOR, I'LL DO MY BEST TO GIVE YOU WHAT YOU'RE ASKING FOR!

AND NEXT TIME... DON'T LEAVE BY THE WINDOW!

ELSEWHERE IN GOTHAM... JUST BEFORE DAWN... DR. TZIN-TZIN BEGINS THE SACRED TWELVE-HOUR RITES OF ANGKUR IN THE SECRET AERIE OF HIS TSAM KHANG--

AND THEN THE SACRED SCARF IS BOUND IN CHARMED TULPA KNOTS... RESERVOIRS OF POWER RADIATING THROUGH HIM TO THE SPIRITS OF ANCIENT DIBCHENS-- THE TEACHERS OF WIZARDS!



*SIDDHA: A SUPER-NORMAL PERSON-- D.V.R.



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...
GOTHAM CITY PLAYS
HOST TO THE ANNUAL
CONVENTION OF THE
ANCIENT ORDER OF
EXPLORERS, WHICH
OPENS THE TRADITIONAL FESTIVITIES
WITH A DAZZLING
TORCHLIGHT PARADE...



AMONG THE INVITED NOTABLES...
BRUCE WAYNE--THE BATMAN'S
PUBLIC PERSONA--INDUSTRIALIST,
PHILANTHROPIST, AND DEVOTEE OF
PARADES AND PRETTY WOMEN...



SUDDENLY--ABOVE
THE DIN--A SHRIEK
FROM THE CROWD!



AND BRUCE WAYNE--
REACTING INSTINCTIVELY--
DOES SOMETHING!...



BUT IN THAT SPLIT-SECOND OF THE
RESCUE--SOMETHING INEXPICABLE
HAS HAPPENED...



ANCIENT ORDER OF
PLONK

AND AN INCREDIBLE
INSTANT LATER...

CONTINUED ON 3rd PAGE FOLLOWING.

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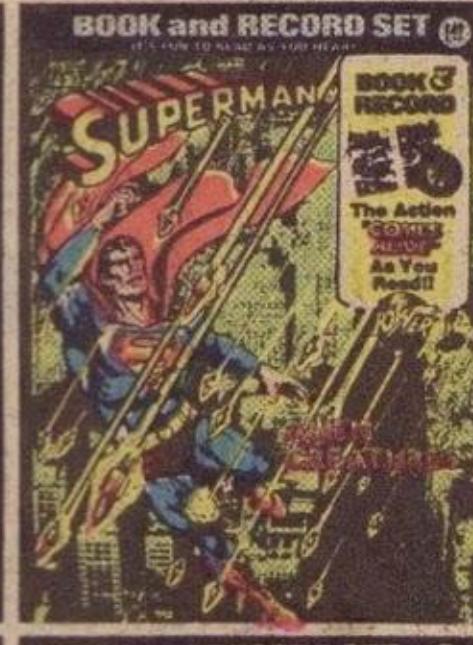
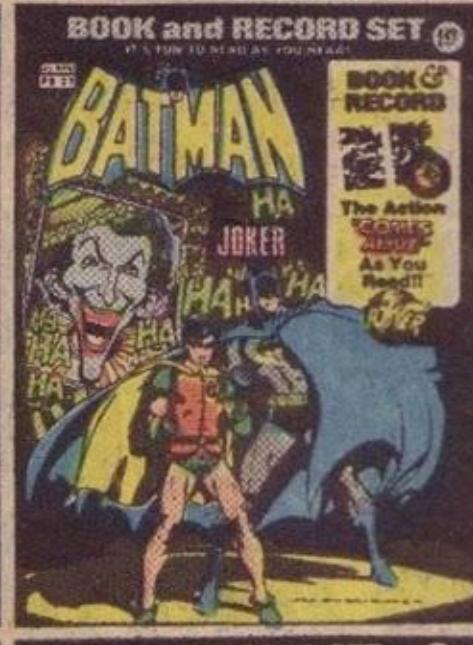
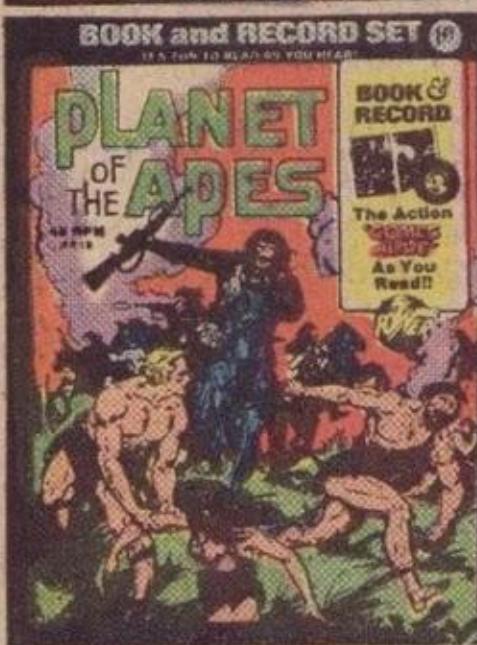
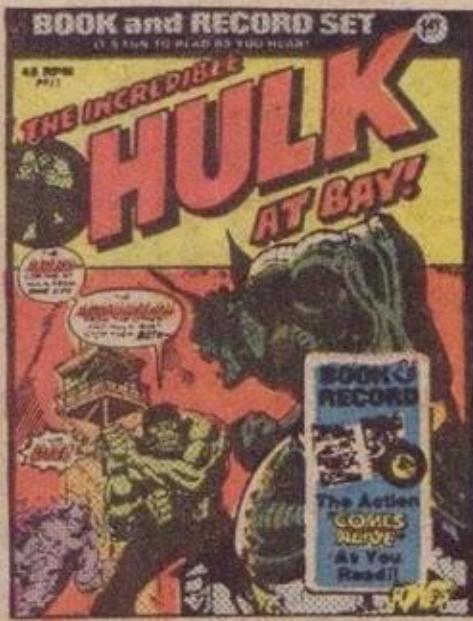
A LITTLE LESS THAN A MEAL. A LITTLE MORE THAN A SNACK.

Volume 2



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IN A FLASH, THE PHANTASMAGORIA HAS VANISHED--
AND ALL IS AS WAS...

IT'S OVER...
BUT EVERYONE'S
STILL IN A TRANCE--
CATALEPTIC--
PARALYZED!

EXCEPT THERE--
SOMEONE MOVING!

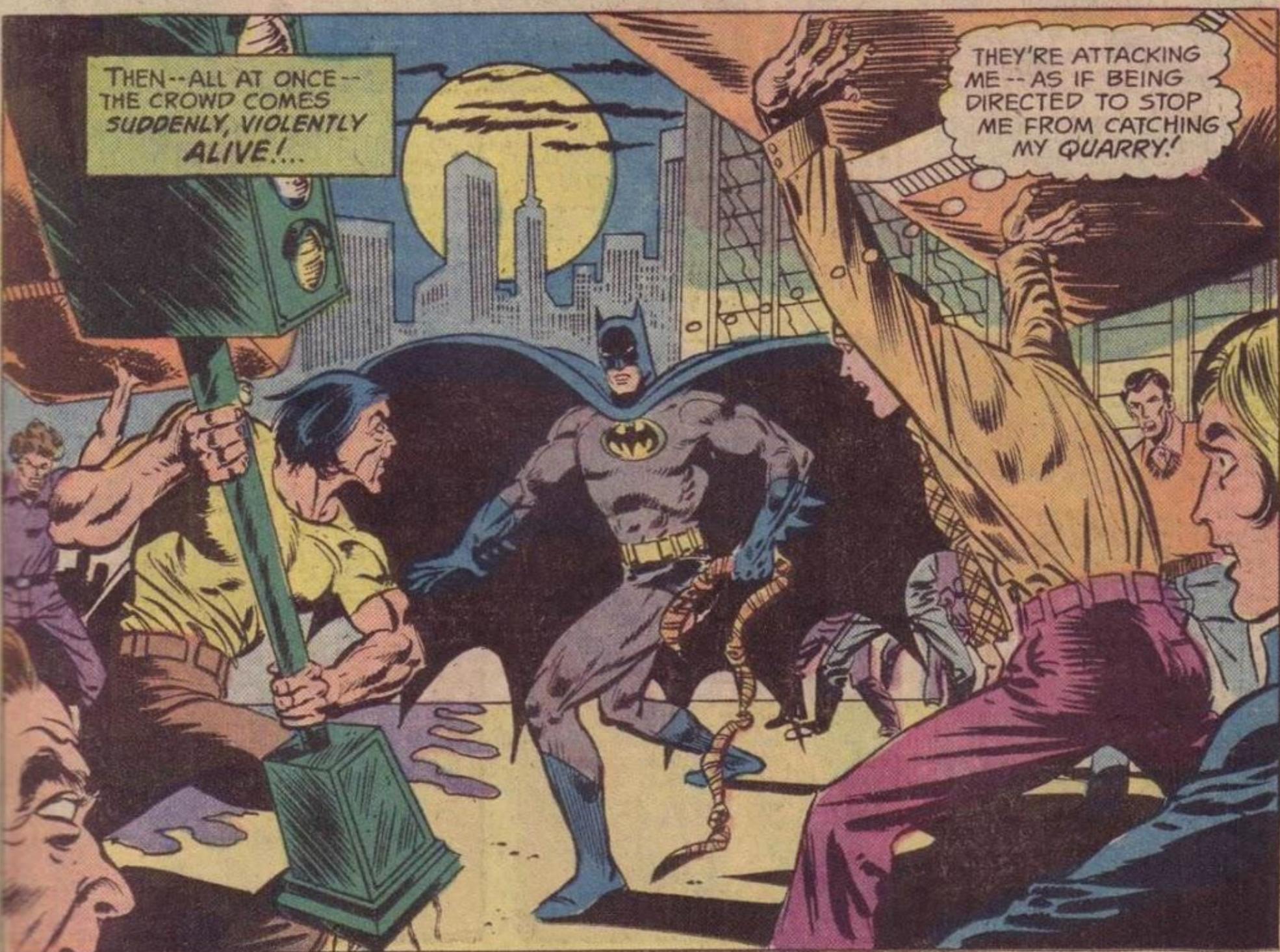
TRANSFERRING THE IMMOBILIZED CHILD TO
IMMOBILIZED ARMS--THE BATMAN BOLTS
INTO ACTION!...

EVEN IF THESE PEOPLE
SEE ME--THEY DON'T
REALLY SEE ME!



THEN--ALL AT ONCE--
THE CROWD COMES
SUDDENLY, VIOLENTLY
ALIVE!

THEY'RE ATTACKING
ME--AS IF BEING
DIRECTED TO STOP
ME FROM CATCHING
MY QUARRY!



THERE'S SUPERHUMAN
STRENGTH IN THIS MOB!

I'LL GET TORN TO
PIECES IF I CAN'T FIGHT
MY WAY OUT!

-- WHICH
I CAN!

THEY'RE FAINTING...
EXHAUSTED...
COMPLETELY
DRAINED!



AND AGAIN -- AN
ASTONISHING,
INSTANTANEOUS
CHANGE...

HUH?



THE POLICE ARRIVE WITHIN
MOMENTS -- MOMENTS
TOO LATE...

BATMAN --
WHAT
HAPPENED?

FELLERS...
I'M AFRAID
IT'S A LONG
STORY...

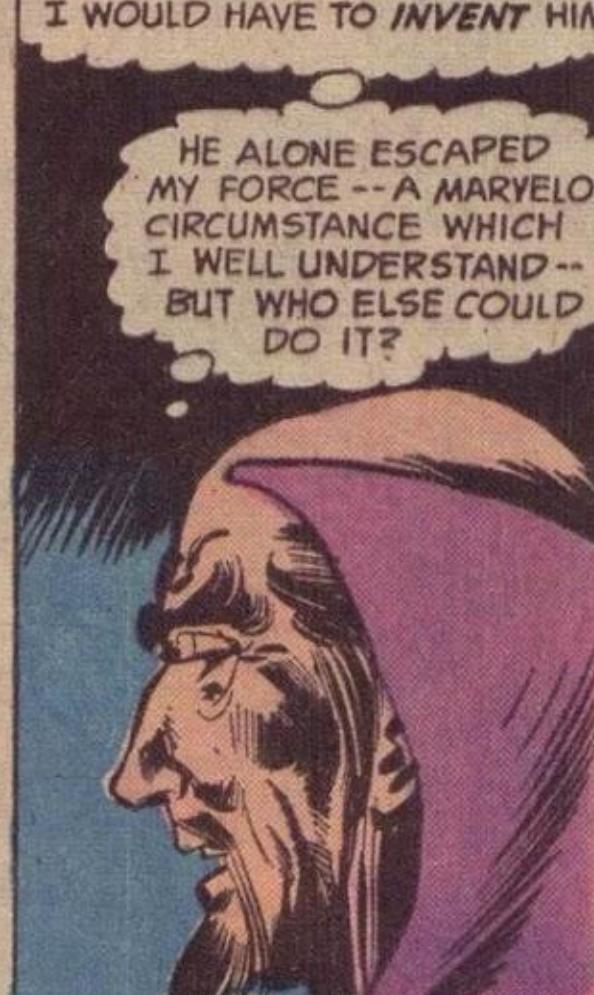
FROM NEARBY, WATCHFUL
EYES TAKE IN THE SCENE...
EYES BRIMMING WITH JOY!

WHAT A MAGNIFICENT
OPPONENT HE IS! YES!
IF THERE WERE NO BATMAN,
I WOULD HAVE TO INVENT HIM!

AND WITH HIS
INCREDIBLE
SWIFTNESS, HE
MADE OFF WITH
MY SCARF!

WELL, LET HIM
KEEP IT! IF HE
KNOWS WHAT IT
IS, IT WILL ONLY
POISON HIS VITALS
WITH FRUSTRATION!

THE ISSUE
HAS BEEN
JOINED!



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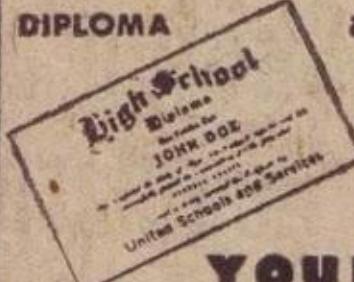
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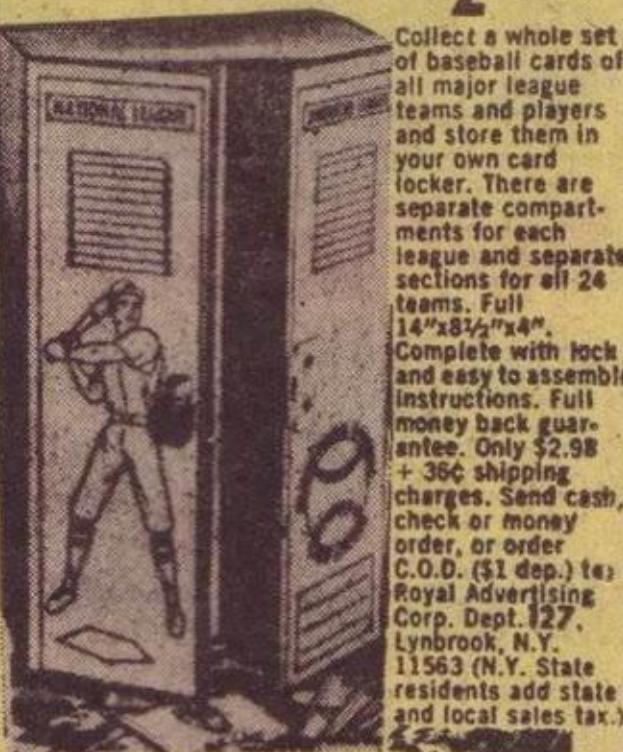
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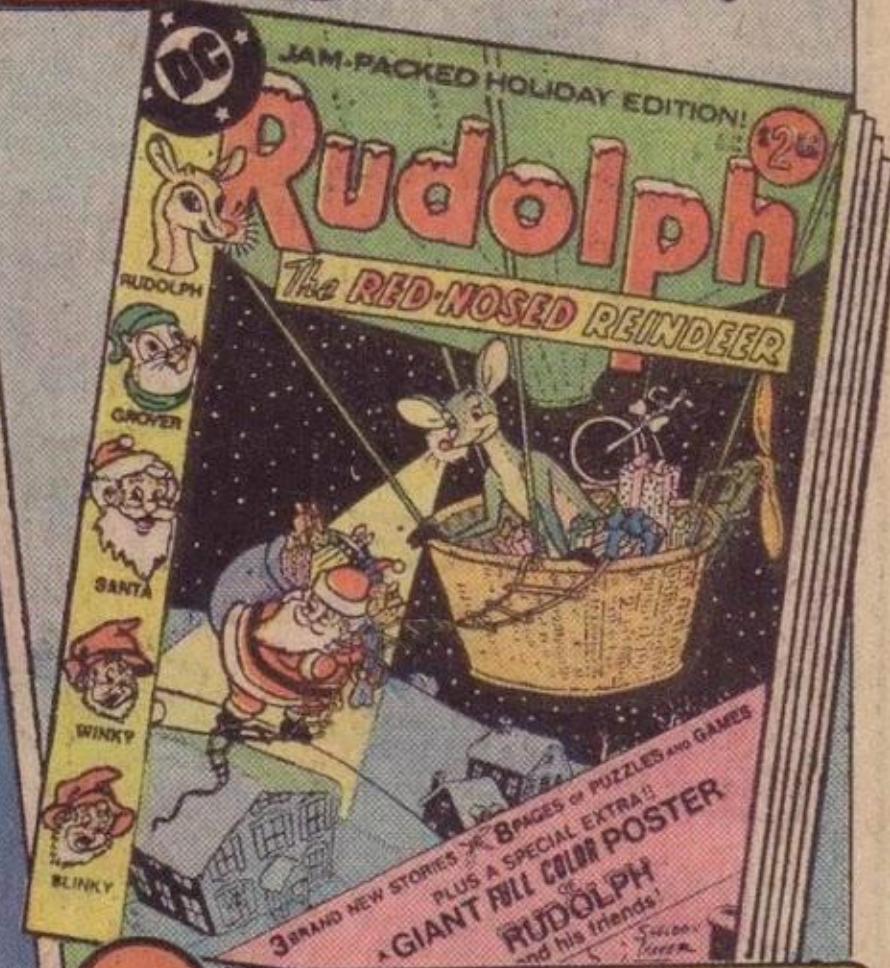
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AND NOW -- FOR THE BATMAN -- THE ISSUE HAS INDEED BEEN JOINED -- BUT WITH CHIEF INSPECTOR MADDOX!

WHY IS IT NOBODY CAN MAKE SENSE? WILD STORIES ABOUT FLYING HORSES ... PEOPLE SWINGING TRAFFIC LIGHTS!

SOME SWEAR THEY SAW IT -- OTHERS SAW NOTHING!

ALL I KNOW IS THERE WAS A TERRIFIC RUCKUS HERE... AND YOU, BATMAN, WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF IT -- IF NOT THE CAUSE OF IT!

WELL, BATMAN -- WHAT WAS IT -- HALLUCINATION -- ILLUSION --?

YOU MUST BE THINKING SOMETHING AND I DEMAND TO KNOW WHAT IT IS!

VERY WELL, INSPECTOR... IT WAS TIBETAN MAGIC!

THAT'S WHAT DR. TZIN-TZIN USED!

TIBETAN ... MAGIC? WHAT'S THAT?

AND WHO IS DR. TZIN-TZIN?

HIS ORIGINS ARE UNKNOWN. SUPPOSEDLY, HE'S REALLY AN AMERICAN ORPHAN, FOUND AND RAISED BY CHINESE BANDITS...

...WHO LATER SPENT YEARS IN TIBET STEPPING HIMSELF IN THEIR MYSTICAL TEACHINGS.

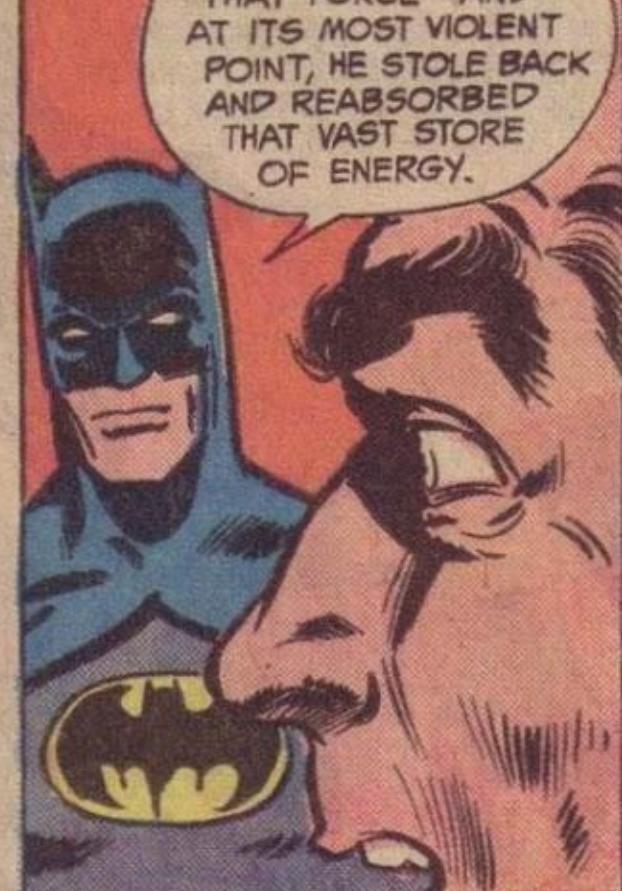
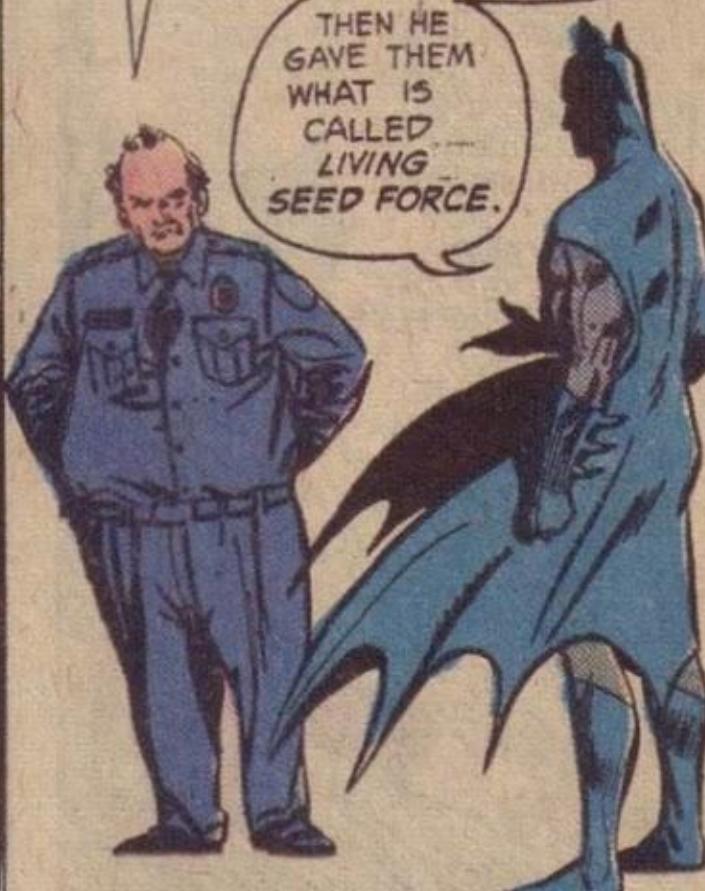
UH-HUH... AND WHAT HOCUS-POCUS DID HE DO HERE?

FIRST, HE RADIATED HIS OWN PSYCHIC ENERGY... TO PRODUCE INSENSIBILITY ALL AROUND HIM, IN EVERYONE.

THEN HE GAVE THEM WHAT IS CALLED LIVING SEED FORCE.

NEXT, HE CREATED ASTOUNDING MOVEMENT EVENTS... WHICH MULTIPLIED THE SEED MANY TIMES.

FINALLY, HE EXPLODED THAT FORCE -- AND AT ITS MOST VIOLENT POINT, HE STOLE BACK AND REABSORBED THAT VAST STORE OF ENERGY.



UH-HUH... TO
DO WHAT?
ROBBERY--?
MURDER--?

NOTHING SO MUNDANE. BUT
THERE'S NO DOUBT HE'LL
USE IT--TO CREATE HAVOC--
TO UNDERMINE ALL BELIEF IN
REASON AND LOGIC--

--AND TO
CHALLENGE
ME!

DO YOU SERIOUSLY,
HONESTLY **BELIEVE**
ANY PART OF WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING?

YOU-- THE
SO-CALLED
GREATEST
SCIENTIFIC
DETECTIVE
IN THE
WORLD?

WELL, SIR,
YOU ASKED ME--
AND I TOLD
YOU!

WITHIN AN HOUR... AT
THE BATCAVE-- UNDER
WAYNE MANOR... THE
CRIMEFIGHTER PORES
THROUGH HIS ESOTERIC
VOLUMES ON ANCIENT
TIBETAN LORE...

... WHILE ALFRED
LABORS AND PONDERS...

IF I MAY SAY
SO, SIR, THERE
ARE STILL SEVERAL
THINGS I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.

WHERE DID DR.
TZIN-TZIN GET
THE POWER TO
PUT EVERYONE IN
THAT TRANCE?

SUCH AS...

FROM A SURPASSING
FACULTY FOR **CONCENTRATION**,
WHICH GENERATES CURRENTS
OF FORCE OR ENERGY,
CALLED **TSAL**...

... WHICH CAN
CHARGE-- AND THEN
CONTROL -- ALMOST
ANYTHING, ALIVE OR
INANIMATE!

WHY WEREN'T
YOU AFFECTED?

SHEER LUCK!
AT THAT INSTANT,
I WAS LEAPING
TOWARD THE
CHILD-- WITH
MY OWN PSYCHIC
ENERGY SO
HEIGHTENED,
IT BLOCKED OFF
EVERYTHING ELSE
... AT LEAST,
ACCORDING TO
TIBETAN DOGMA!

YOU DON'T
REALLY
BELIEVE
THAT?

BELIEF IS UNNECESSARY,
ALFRED! THINGS WORK OR
THEY DON'T! DOES
ELECTRICITY DEPEND ON
YOUR BELIEF IN IT?

THE MORE
ILLUSION THERE
IS TO WHAT
TZIN-TZIN DOES,
THE MORE
DANGEROUS IT
IS! IMAGINATION
IS THE MOST
POTENT KILLER
OF ALL!

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

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Authentic SUPERMAN Costume

Item #CB...\$3

AND THIS
STRUCTURE,
MASTER
BRUCE?

A TSAM KHANG--A
PLACE OF SPECIAL
SECLUSION--MADE OF
106 VARIOUSLY-SIZED
PIECES OF GREEN
WOOD!

IT CAN BE USED IN
THE RITES OF ANGKUR
FOR EMPOWERMENT...
OR, AS I INTEND...

...IN THE MYSTIC DOCTRINE
OF THE "SHORT PATH"...
WHERE I WILL ATTEMPT
TO EMPTY MY MIND AND
CEASE TO PRODUCE ALL
ENERGY!

THEN, USING
THIS -- THE
SCARF OF DR.
TZIN-TZIN--
WITH ITS
CHARMED
TULPA KNOTS...

...I HOPE TO BECOME
SENSITIVE ENOUGH
TO BE ATTRACTED
TO ITS ORIGINAL
SOURCE OF TSAL--
DR. TZIN-TZIN
HIMSELF!

YOU KNOW
WHAT TO DO
WHEN I COME
OUT, ALFRED.
NOW, GET THE
WHIRLYBAT
AND BE READY
FOR ME!

AN
HOUR
PASSES... NOT A
SOUND IS HEARD
AS A GREAT HUSH
FALLS OVER EVEN
THE SMALLEST OF
NOCTURNAL
CREATURES...

THEN--THE BATMAN EMERGES--
HIS EYES UNSEEING... HIS
GAIT HALTING--GUIDED BY
ALFRED TO THE WAITING
WHIRLYBAT...

THERE, A COMBINATION OF CAREFULLY PREPARED
SUBCONSCIOUS DIRECTION--AND REFLEXES,
CAREFULLY TRAINED AND NURTURED--TAKE OVER.

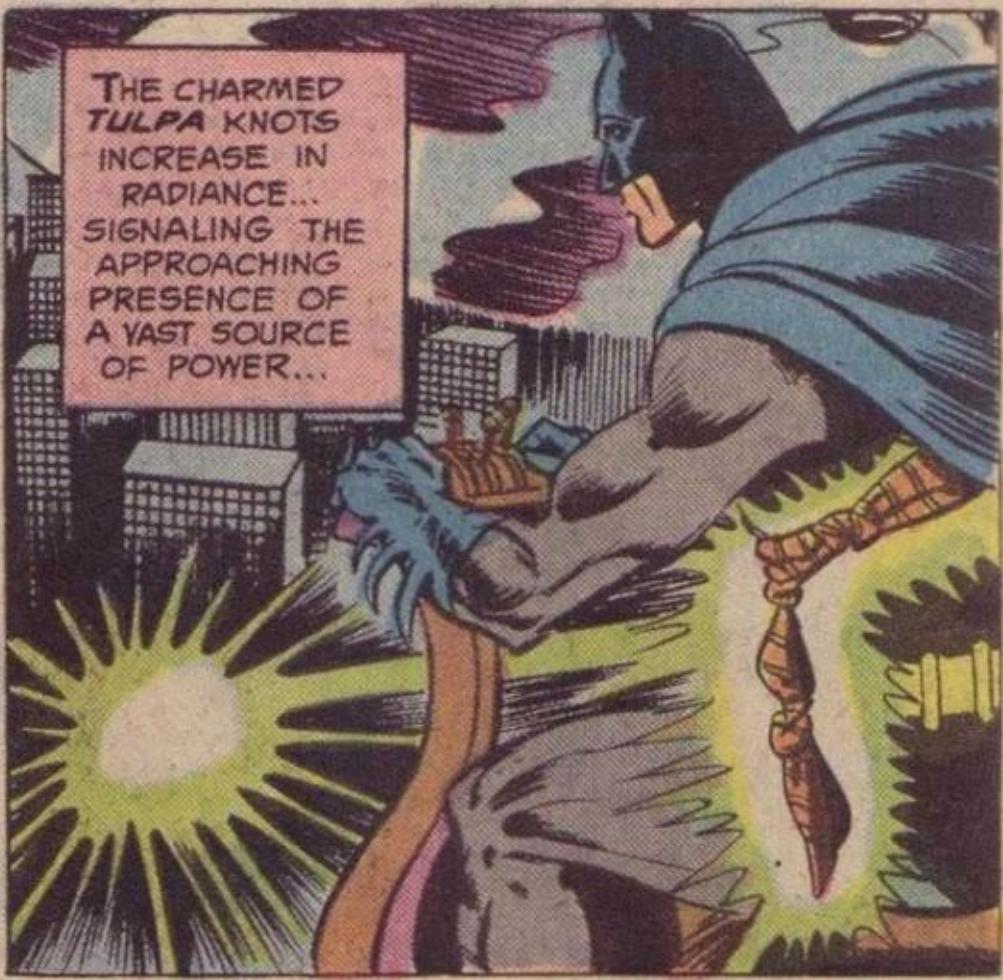
AND IN
MINUTES, THE
MASKED MANHUNTER
IS SLOWLY CIRCLING
HIGH ABOVE THE
NIGHTBOUND CITY--



SOON, THE BATMAN IS PSYCHICALLY AWARE OF PROXIMITY TO HIS TARGET...



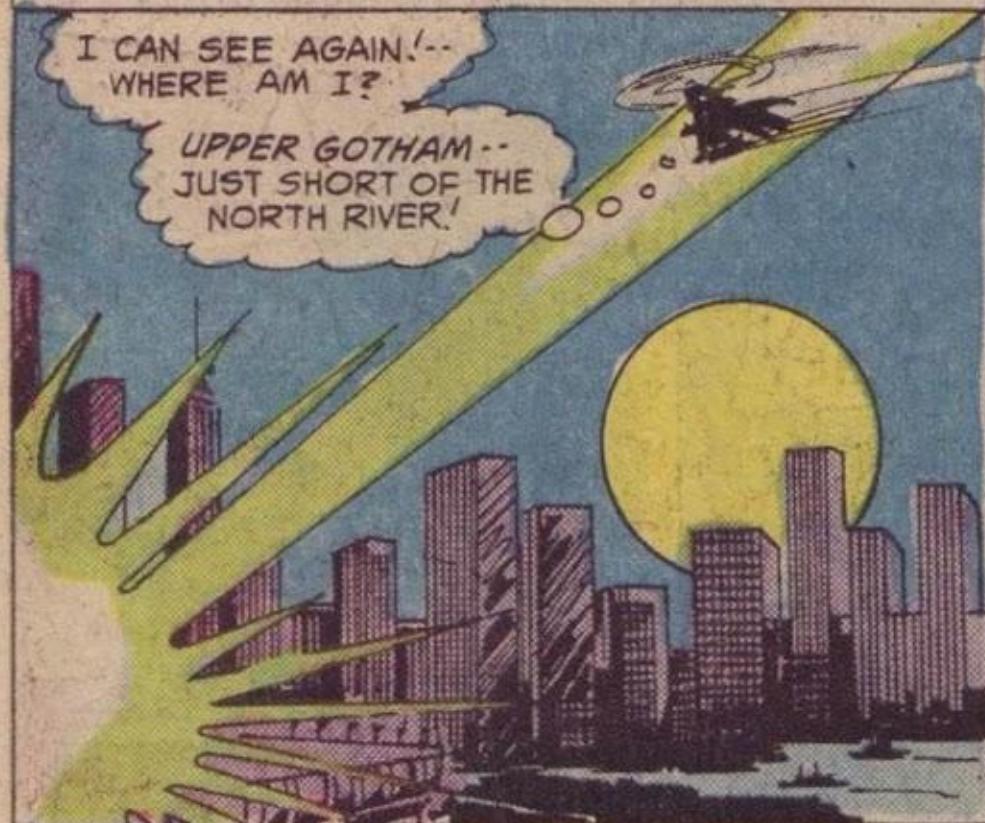
THE CHARMED TULPA KNOTS INCREASE IN RADIANCE... SIGNALING THE APPROACHING PRESENCE OF A VAST SOURCE OF POWER...



UNTIL, LIKE PLANETS IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN INTO THE SUN, THEY ARE CONSUMED AS THEY MAKE CONJUNCTION WITH THAT POWER!

I CAN SEE AGAIN!-- WHERE AM I?

UPPER GOTHAM-- JUST SHORT OF THE NORTH RIVER!



AND THE CAPE CRUSADER BEHOLDS A SIGHT TO CONFFOUND ALL SANITY--

GOOD LORD-- HE'S LEVITATING THE STANDS-- STEALING THE STADIUM!

THIS IS TZIN-TZIN'S MOST SPECTACULAR CRIME-- EVER!



HE KNOWS I'M HERE--
BUT I'VE CAUGHT HIM
DURING THE TRANSFER
OF POWER!

HE CAN'T
LET GO!

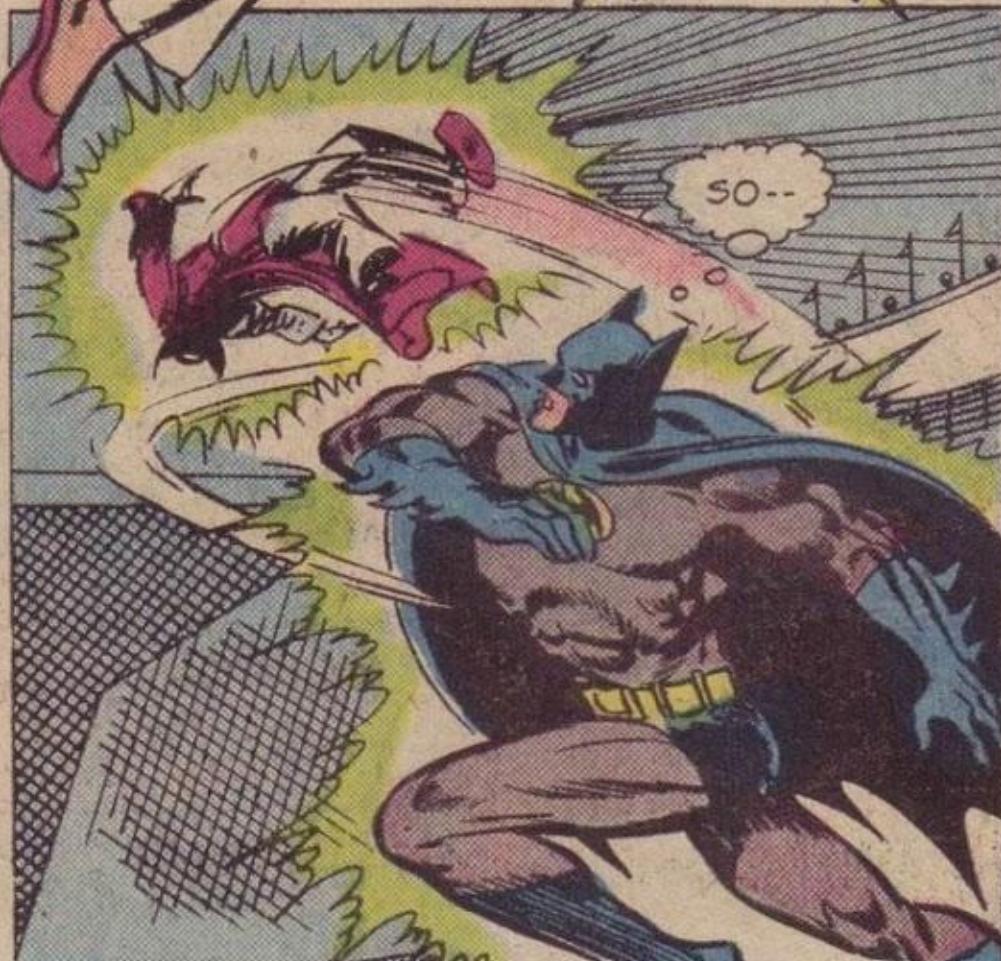
HIS ENERGY IS
ALMOST TOTALLY
ENGAGED--

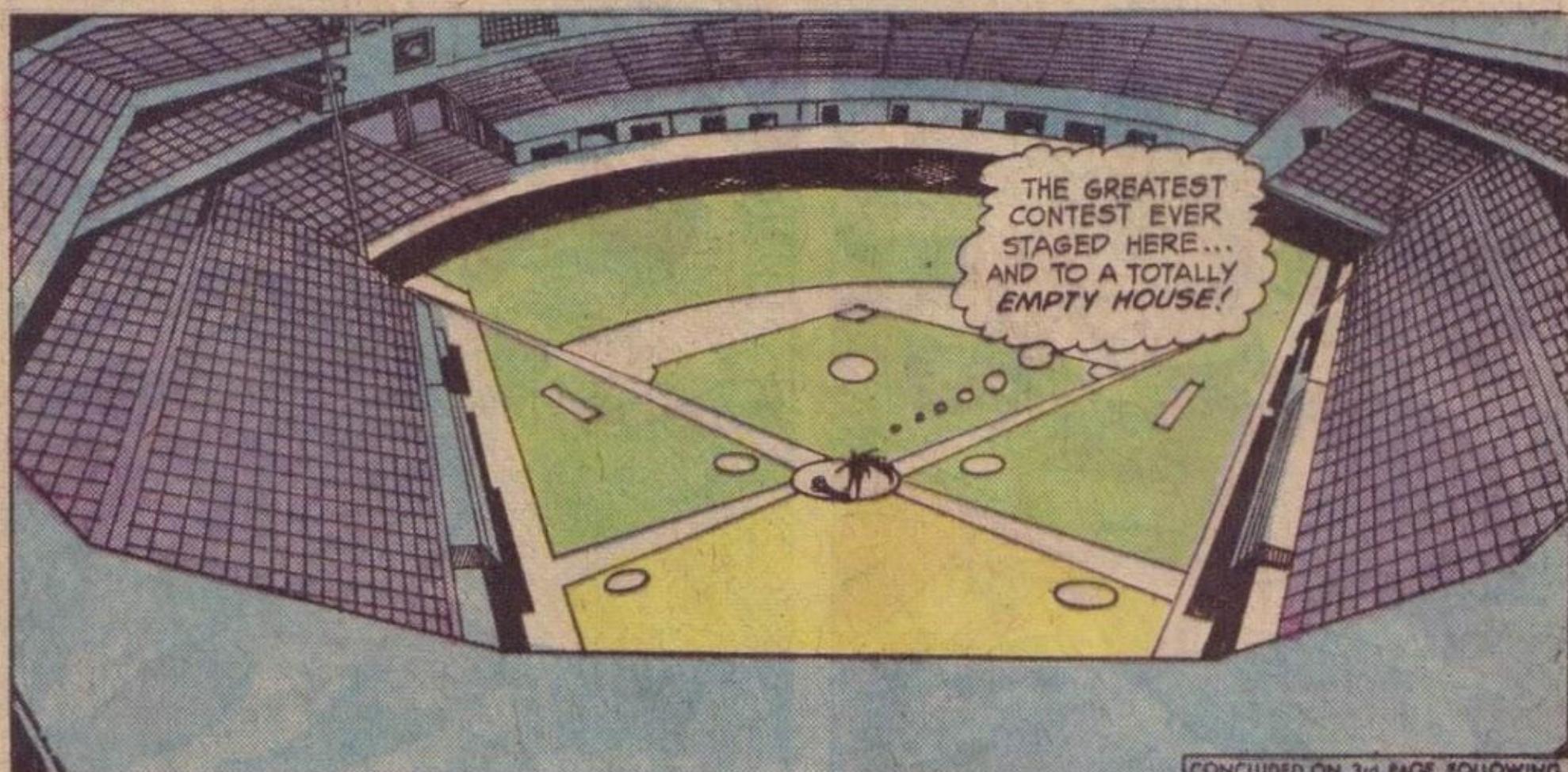
-- WITH TOO
LITTLE LEFT TO
STOP ME!

NO--NO!
MUST
REMEMBER--

-- THEY'RE
APPARITIONS!

NOTHING
MORE!





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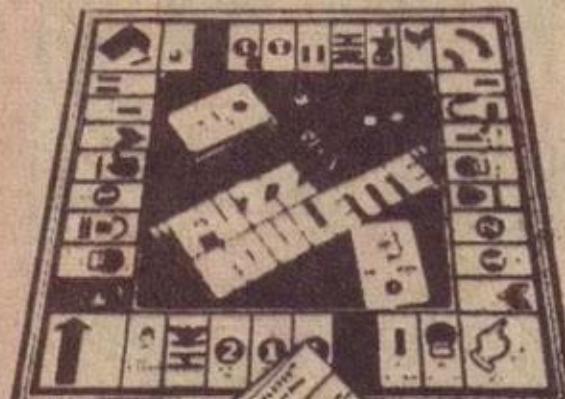
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--NO ONE BUT CHIEF INSPECTOR MADDOX...

...AND AS YOU SEE, SIR, THE STADIUM IS STILL TEN FEET UP IN THE AIR!

IT'S SETTLING AS IT LOSES ENERGY, AND SHOULD BE COMPLETELY RESTORED IN A FEW MINUTES!

UNTIL THEN, I THOUGHT IT WISER TO KEEP THIS BETWEEN US!

NO POSSIBLE GOOD CAN COME FROM LETTING A STORY LIKE THIS CIRCULATE IN GOTHAM!

YES... YES, OF COURSE! YOU DID THE RIGHT THING!

AND WHERE IS THIS DR. TZIN-TZIN NOW?

HERE-- GIFT-WRAPPED IN THE PROTECTIVE NETTING BEHIND HOME PLATE!

NOW, REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU ABOUT HANDLING THE DOCTOR-- **ESPECIALLY THAT HE MUST BE KEPT IN SOLITARY!**

IF HE GETS A CHANCE TO BOUNCE HIS TSAL OFF ENOUGH PEOPLE-- **LOOK OUT!**

LOOK OUT?... OH... LOOK OUT... YES...

INSPECTOR, DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME? YOU SEEM CONFUSED!

YES... AHEM... PERHAPS I AM! BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF STAYING CONFUSED! I'M GOING TO GET ME SOME BOOKS ON TIBET!

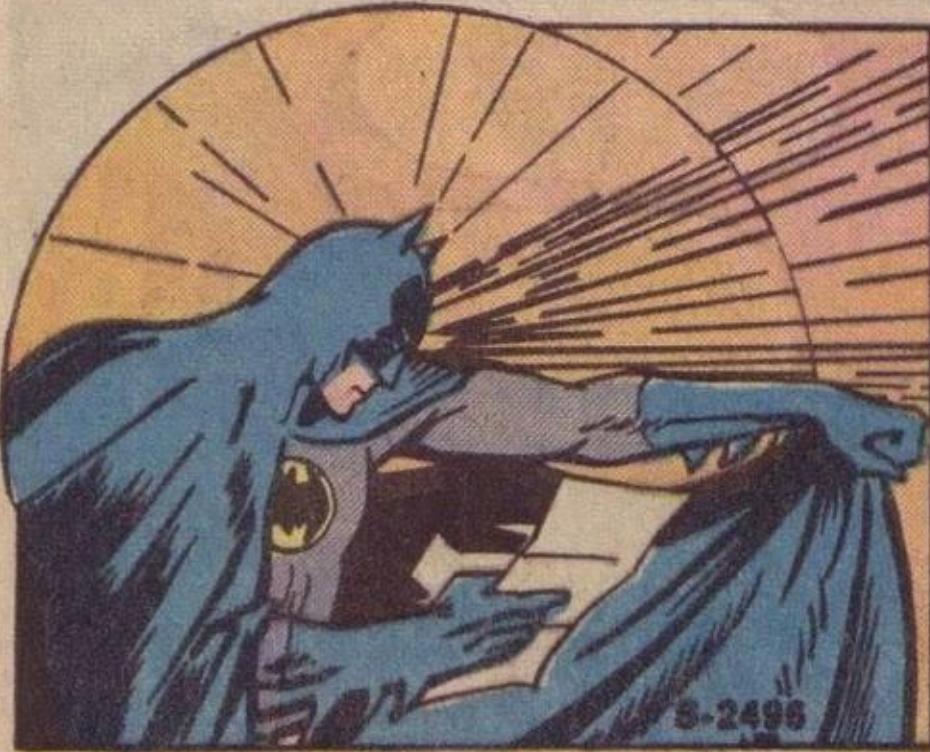
WELL, IF HE THINKS HE'S CONFUSED NOW, WAIT TILL HE STARTS READING THOSE BOOKS!

SOMETHING TELLS ME WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF DR. TZIN-TZIN-- AND WHEN SOMETHING TELLS ME, IT'S USUALLY **RIGHT!**

RECONCILE YOURSELF, BATMAN-- WHATEVER THAT "SOMETHING" IS-- IT'S **RIGHT AGAIN!** AND SOMETHING ELSE IS WAITING FOR YOU IN THE NEXT ISSUE--

'The MYSTERY OF CHRISTMAS LOST!'

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LETTERS to the BATMAN

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,
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Dear Editor:

"The Only Crime in Town" in **BATMAN #280** was the only comic in town to really hold my interest for a good amount of time. There are masterpieces of the written mystery novels and **BATMAN #280** was a masterpiece of the comic book mystery tale. David V. Reed has done it again!

Why is there a halt in organized crime between two marks of a clock, to the point where criminals committing a crime willingly surrender rather than violate the curfew? It is an involved puzzle and it takes all the skills of **The Batman** to figure it out. And the twist and double twist of the solution befit the maestro well; of course it would be the victims themselves!

All through the story, one can practically hear **The Batman's** mind racing the subtle movements of a finely tuned clock, taking out each piece of the puzzle, shaking it and judging with quick and easy precision where it belongs in the puzzle. "The Only Crime in Town" echoes something; it echoes the workings of **The Batman's** gears, the mainspring which keeps him going!

David V. Reed is an artist in his own way, just as a watchmaker is. Watch for him in future issues!

ELIZABETH M. SMITH

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(Watch for Dave as he and Batman tackle The Penguin in **BATMAN #286!**—BR)

Dear Editor:

I'm surprised. It was one of the best things my eyes have seen in some time. I'm astonished, awe-struck and amazed. No, not with Dave Reed's script in **BATMAN #280**. What impressed me most was instead the excellent art by Ernie Chua and Frank Giacoia. Chua's free-flowing style took on more form and shape. Facial expressions especially benefited from this collaboration. When **Batman** was in battle, you could see the fury in his face. And for once, **Batman** didn't look muscle-bound—just plain powerful.

As for the script, the whole idea was rather silly. Does Dave expect me to believe that the killing of one criminal is going to halt all crime in Gotham for one hour? I can't picture a gang leader taking any amount of money for the purpose of stopping crime. I'm no expert, but I think the head honcho would take the money and ignore the curfew just the same. That way he'd make more money!

By the way, I must come to Dave's defense in one instance. One reader accuses Dave of sending **Batman** to "camp". Hardly! **Batman** spouts an occasional witticism, but why must it instantly be considered campy? I'm glad Dave inserts these lines into his scripts because they make the story more interesting. Heck, if I had to do half the stuff **Batman** does, I'd be tempted to hire a comedy writer just to lift the gloom!

MIKE WHITE

Mackinaw, IL

(You'll be seeing a wider variety of Bat-artists in the future as evidenced in this issue and in **DETECTIVE 467**—with John Calnan and Vince Colletta—and **468**—Marshall Rogers and Terry Austin—Bob Rozakis)

Dear Editor,

Batman #280 is an example of David V. Reed at his best. It sets out the pattern followed in all his stories, but this time, everything works! We start off with the "gimmick"—some bizarre occurrence the meaning of which **Batman** must unravel. Many of these stories stand or fall on whether Dave can provide an explanation sufficient to justify the "gimmick". This time Reed is successful, although I am with the feeling that there must have been an easier way for Fletcher and Goodwin to pull off "The Only Crime in Town!"

Next we see **The Batman** swing into action and break open the case. Here, Reed slights the "creature of the night" aspect which other writers have emphasized, but he more than makes up for it with his masterful presentation of **Batman** the detective. We see him combine observation and deduction in a plausible fashion to solve the most unsolvable mysteries. Indeed, **Batman** comes across as a real professional who works logically from the facts and not a magician who pulls solutions out of his hat.

And there is Bruce Wayne. Where other writers often ignore this aspect of the character, David V. Reed fits him effectively into the story. He shows us clearly that **The Batman** is but one aspect of Bruce Wayne and how their different personalities fit together to form a totality.

Dave's action scenes are something of a letdown, however. The problem is that **Batman** never meets a serious challenge. There is almost a ho-hum quality about the way he lays out numerous crooks with the greatest of ease. And it seems that poor Commissioner Gordon exists only to listen to **Batman's** explanations of it all. Doesn't he get tired of it?

However, despite these relatively minor faults and the formula approach he takes to the stories, David V. Reed writes tales that are good and occasionally far more than just good. His gimmicks can be tiring and yet they appeal to the element of the macabre that is central to the appeal to **The Batman**. The Caped Crusader himself is handled with an understanding for the character and a skill that makes him interesting to watch even if the plot flops. Dave has returned the World's Greatest Detective and for that we must all thank him.

RICK PETERSON
2533 Hillsgass #305
Berkeley, CA 94704

(Dave's Batman tales are so interesting and exciting that even we editorial types—including editor Julie—look forward to each new script to see what Mr. Reed has cooked up!—BR)

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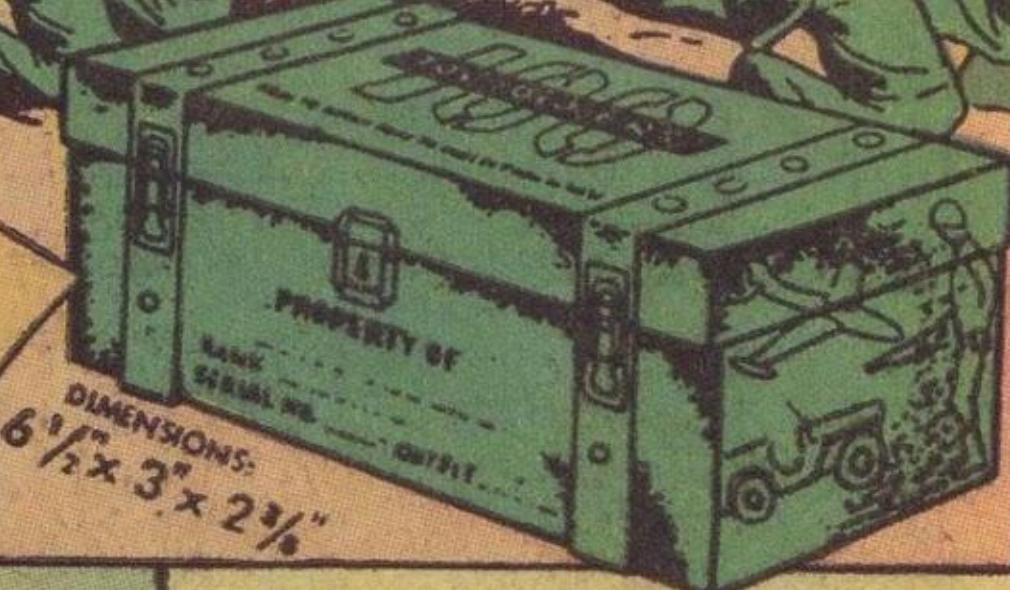
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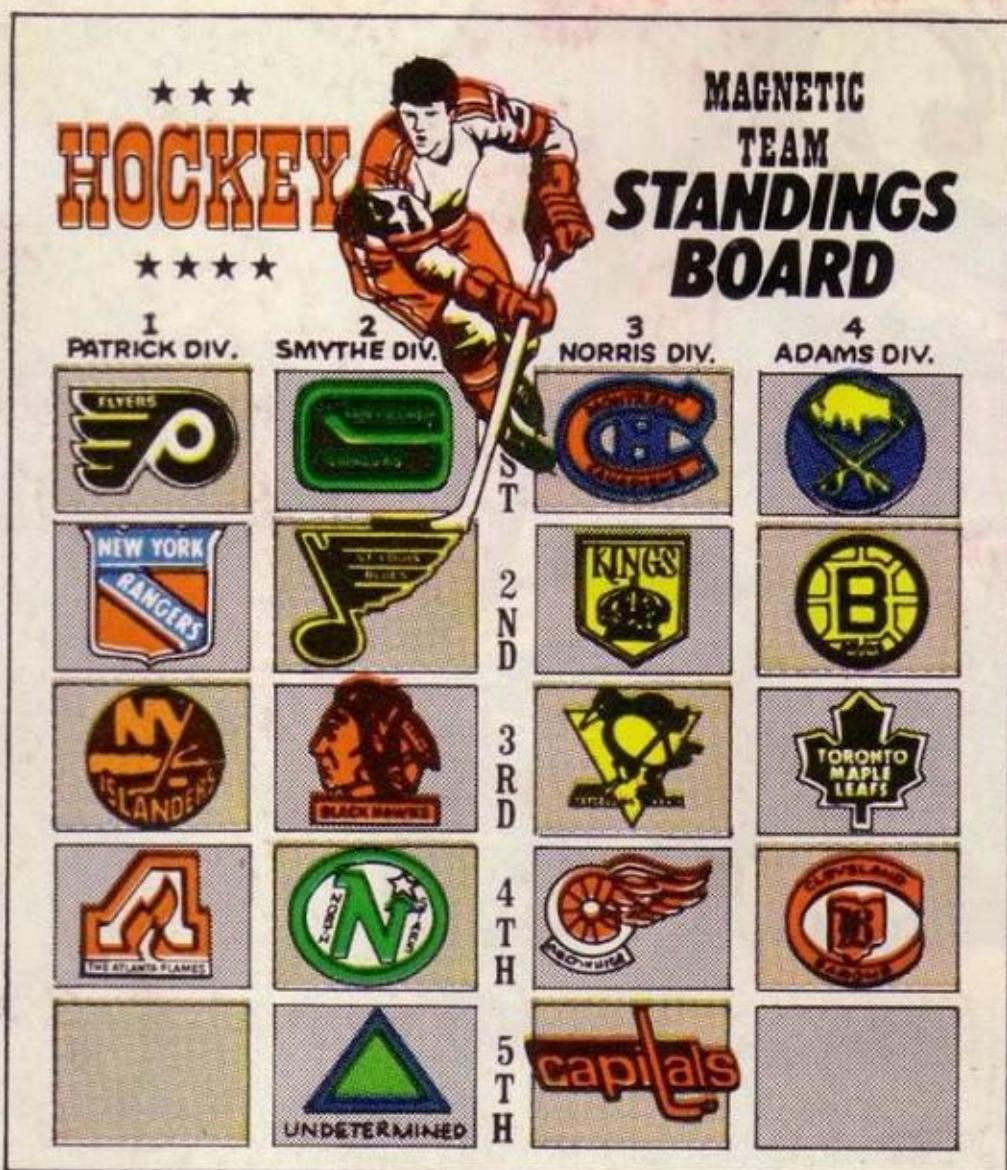
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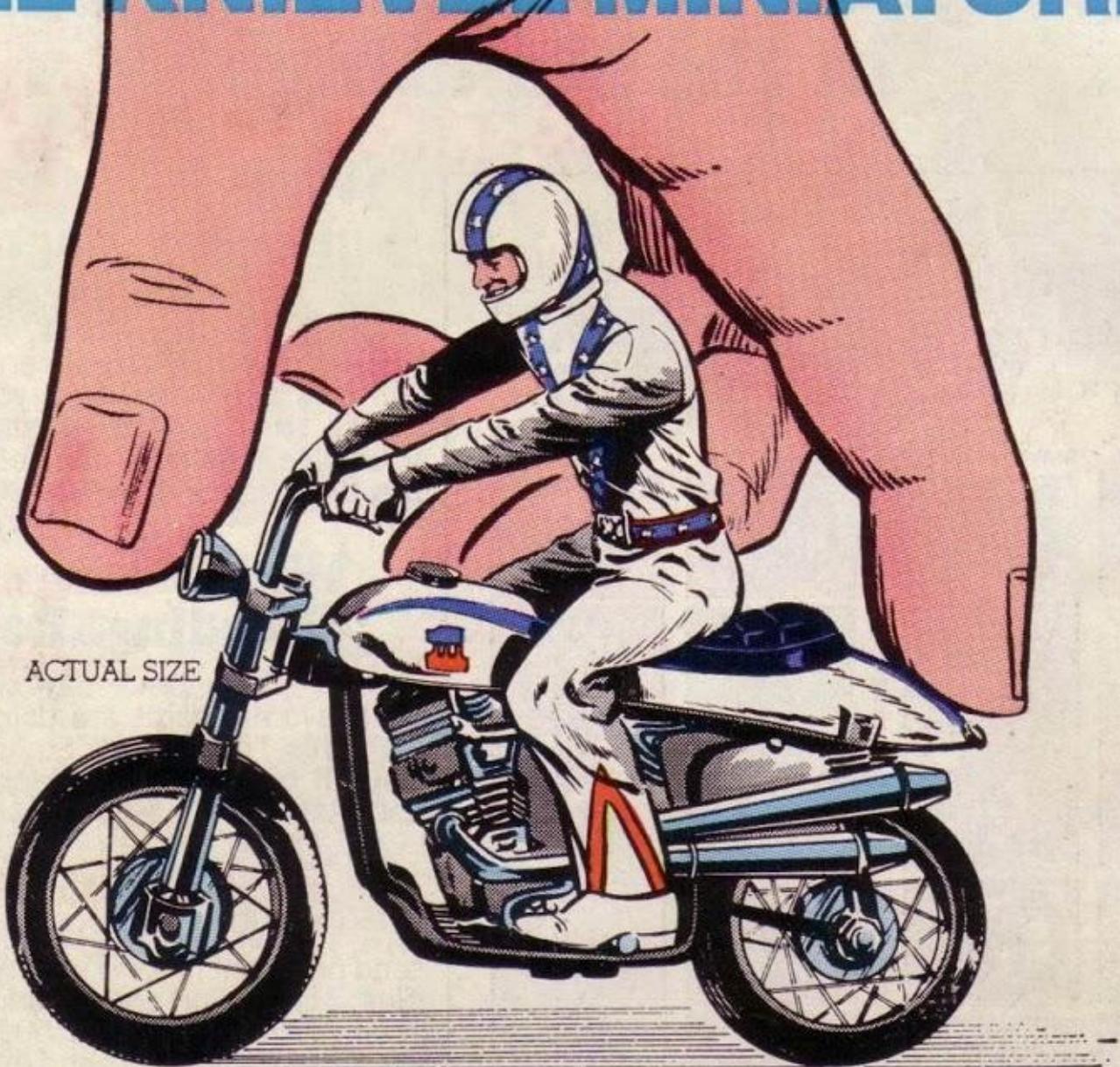
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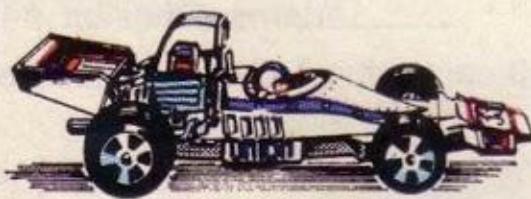
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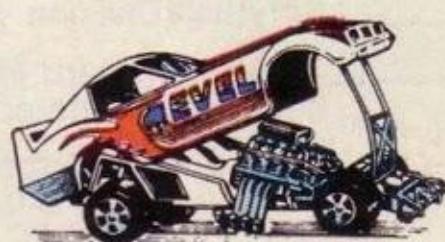
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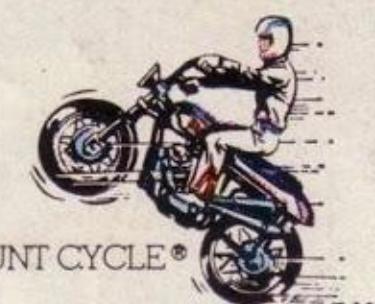
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