



15¢

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COMICS  
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AUTHORITY

JUNE  
NO. 222

# BATMAN

HERE  
THEY  
COME!

ONE OF  
THEM IS  
**DEAD--**  
BUT  
WHICH  
ONE?

DEAD TIL PROVEN  
ALIVE

THE CLUE  
IS ON THEIR  
**ALBUM COVER!**

5-437

# NOW!

Unchanged men in a changing land.  
Out of step, out of place and desperately out of time.

1

THE  
WILD  
BUNCH

HOLDEN BORGNIENE RYAN O'BRIEN DATES SANCHEZ JOLSON

WARREN BEATTY  
FAYE DUNAWAY

BONNIE & CLYDE

5

COWBOYS BATTLE MONSTERS IN THE  
LOST WORLD OF FORBIDDEN VALLEY

THE VALLEY OF  
GWANGI

4

D.H. LAWRENCE'S  
THE FOX

DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE  
OBVIOUSLY

6

The  
MADWOMAN  
of CHAILLOT



7

8

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BACK TOGETHER AGAIN!

# BATMAN and ROBIN

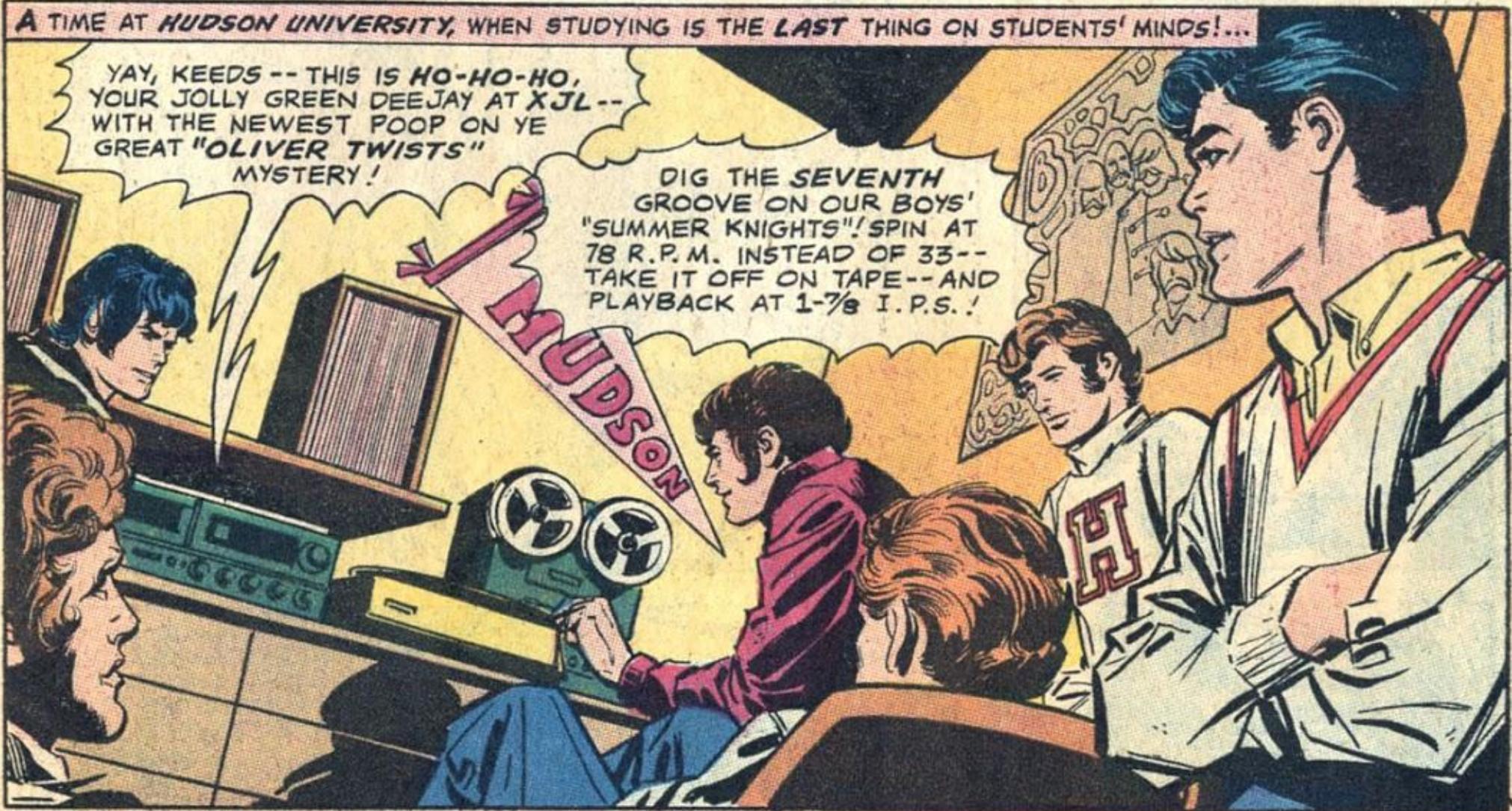
"DEAD...  
TILL  
PROVEN  
ALIVE!"

STORY: FRANK ROBBINS • ART: IRV NOVICK & DICK GIORDANO

A TIME AT HUDSON UNIVERSITY, WHEN STUDYING IS THE LAST THING ON STUDENTS' MINDS!...

YAY, KEEDS -- THIS IS HO-HO-HO,  
YOUR JOLLY GREEN DEEJAY AT XJL--  
WITH THE NEWEST POOP ON YE  
GREAT "OLIVER TWISTS"  
MYSTERY!

DIG THE SEVENTH  
GROOVE ON OUR BOYS'  
"SUMMER KNIGHTS"! SPIN AT  
78 R.P.M. INSTEAD OF 33--  
TAKE IT OFF ON TAPE--AND  
PLAYBACK AT 1-7/8 I.P.S.!



GLEEPITY--  
BEEPITY--  
SLRP-P-P...

YE-AH, THAT'S WHERE  
GLENNAN RAPS: "YAIN'T  
GOT IT-- IF THEY AIN'T  
BOUGHT IT!" I'D KNOW  
HIS VOICE AT ANY  
SPEED!

EVEN DICK (ROBIN) GRAYSON IS SWEPT UP IN THE  
CURRENT CAMPUS FEVER AS THE PLAYBACK MOVES AT  
ONE AND SEVEN-EIGHTH INCH PER SECOND...

SURE WAS A BALL,  
SAUL -- TOO BAD IT'S  
OVER!

HMM... WHO ELSE  
COULD GLENNAN  
MEAN -- BUT  
SAUL CARTWRIGHT?

5-395

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AT LAST, DICK THE GREAT SKEPTIC,  
BREAKS DOWN! NOW DO YOU  
BELIEVE SAUL'S DEAD?



THE "TWISTS" ARE COMING  
TO GOTHAM CITY-- MAYBE IN  
A PINK SUBMARINE-- TO  
PROVE THAT SAUL IS ALIVE  
AND WELL, AND LIVING  
IN OL' LUNNON TOWN!



AS "DICK GRAYSON"  
I HAVE TO PLAY IT  
COOL, BUT AS  
ROBIN -- I'M  
REALLY INTRIGUED  
BY THIS  
MYSTERY!

LATER, AT  
WAYNE  
FOUNDATION,  
WHERE  
BRUCE  
(BATMAN)  
WAYNE HANDLES  
HIS "COVER"  
ENTERPRISES...

AS A MAJOR STOCKHOLDER  
IN EDEN RECORDS, THIS  
PUBLICITY HAS BEEN BOOM  
BUSINESS, BUT AS BATMAN--  
I DON'T WANT TO BE PARTY  
TO A HOAX!

GOTHAM NEWS

ALIVE... OR DEAD?  
SAUL CARTWRIGHT

BRING ON THE BANGS!

As DICK RELAYS HIS CLASSMATES' REQUEST...

I'D LOVE TO, DICK--  
BUT YOU KNOW THE  
FOUR "ORPHANS"  
ARE AN INDEPENDENT  
BUNCH! THEY DON'T  
"PUSH" EASILY...

COULD YOU  
INVITE THEM  
TO BE YOUR  
GUESTS WHILE  
THEY'RE IN  
GOTHAM?

I DON'T LIKE TO  
INFLUENCE-PEDDLER,  
FELLAS -- BUT I'LL GIVE  
IT A TRY!



THEN, GIVE ME A CRACK AT PERSUADING THEM! I'LL COME DOWN SPECIAL FOR THE WEEK END...

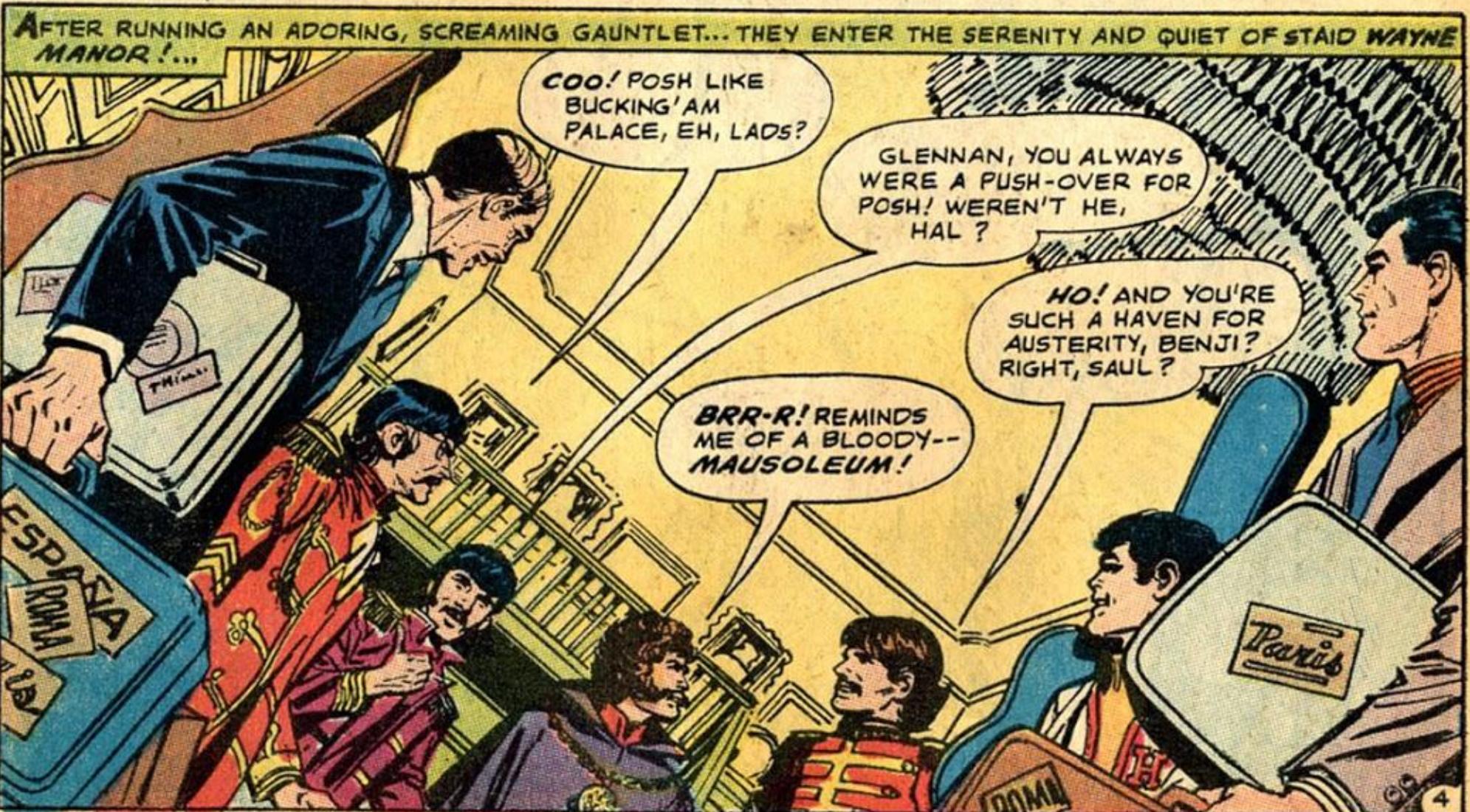
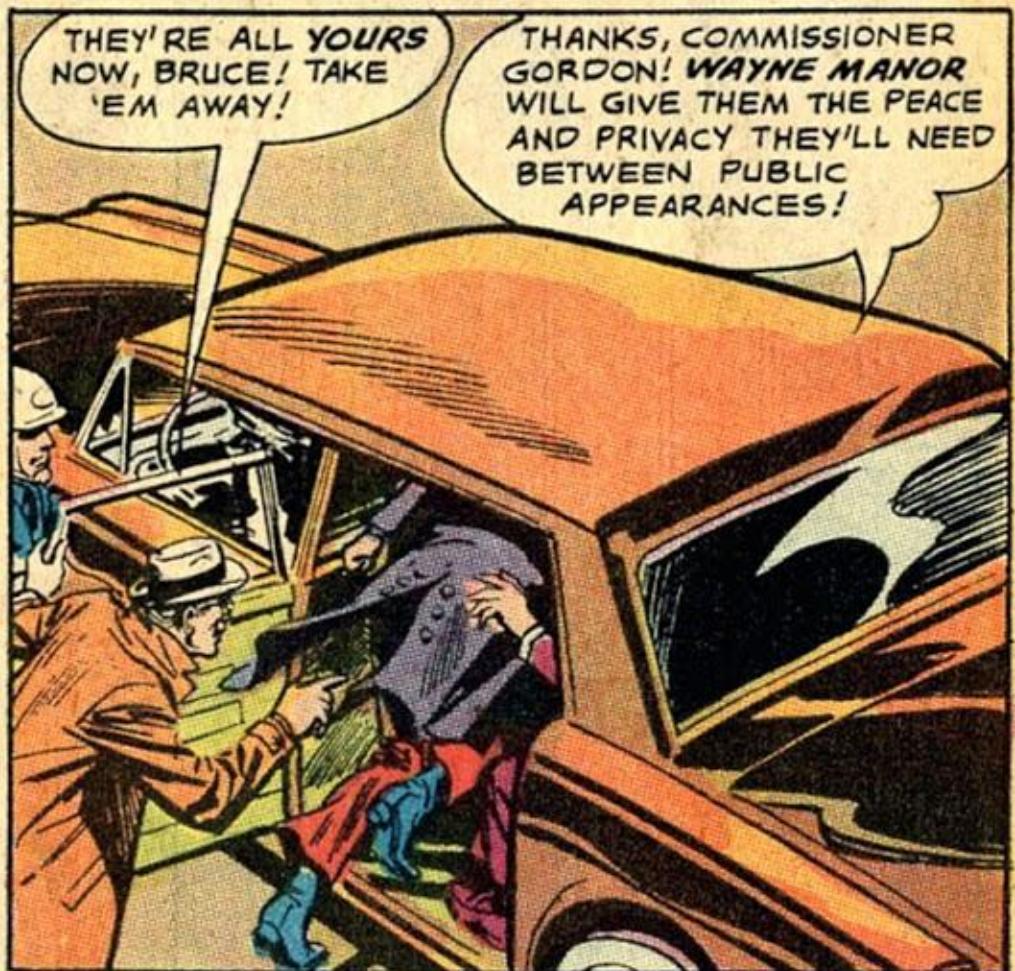
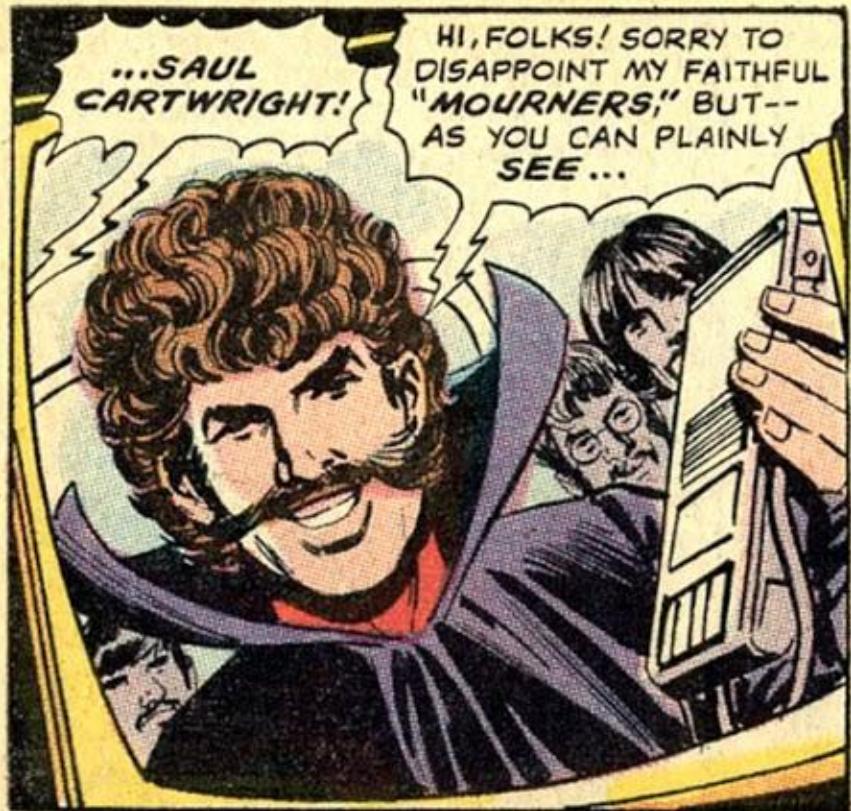
IT'LL MEAN RE-OPENING WAYNE MANOR-- NO ROOM HERE IN THE PENTHOUSE FOR THOSE MAD MODS! OKAY, WILL DO...

THERE'S AN ADDED INCENTIVE WITH THE "TWISTS" UNDER ONE ROOF--AS BATMAN, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SPOT WHETHER SAUL IS A PHONEY!

T-DAY! PANDEMONIUM REIGNS AT GOTHAM AIRPORT AS THE ELUSIVE TWISTS MAKE THEIR FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE IN OVER A YEAR!...

EEE EEEEEE! HERE THEY COME! ORPHANS-- WE LUV YA-- AND SAUL'S MEMORY!

STAY CLOSE TO YOUR TV-SCREENS, FOLKS! OUR ZOOM-LENS BRINGS YOU--LIVE-- A PORE-BY-PORE CLOSEUP OF THE ONE AND ONLY...







# TUFF

YOU BET THEY ARE



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FROM AURORA THE FASTEST,  
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**AURORA**  
MODEL MOTORING

SUDDENLY...



AS BRUCE LIFTS THE LIMP FORM...

STILL BREATHING  
GOT TO GET  
HIM OUT OF  
SIGHT BEFORE...

'EY! WHO'S  
TRIPPIN' THE  
LIGHT-FANTASTIC  
OUT HERE?  
YOU, SAUL?

NOT ME,  
GLENNAN--  
I'M NO  
SLEEP-WALKER!  
MAYBE HAL?  
BENJI?

CLOSE--BUT THEY  
DIDN'T SPOT US!  
THIS NEEDS THE  
PRIVACY OF THE  
**BATCAVE**...

SECONDS LATER...

WHAT HAPPENED,  
ROBIN?

TRIED TO  
GET SAUL'S  
RECORDER--  
THEN SOMEONE  
CLOBBERED ME--  
FROM BEHIND!  
I-I LOST!

MUST HAVE  
BEEN SAUL--  
WOKE AND  
FOLLOWED  
ME!

BUT WHY HIS DESPERATE  
INTEREST TO GUARD  
THAT RECORDER?  
UNLESS HE'S TRYING  
TO HIDE HIS VOICE...

...THAT COULD PROVE  
HE'S NOT "SAUL"?

THE NEXT EVENING AS THEY DRESS  
FOR DINNER...

THEY ALL CAME DOWN TO  
BREAKFAST LOOKING  
INNOCENT AS LAMBS!  
AND "SAUL" STILL HAD HIS  
RECORDER!

AFTER A CURIOUSLY TERSE DINNER...

EVERYONE REMAIN  
SEATED--I HAVE A  
**SURPRISE!**

ALFRED--WOULD YOU  
TURN OUT THE LIGHTS,  
PLEASE?

THEY MUST BE IN  
CAHOOTS, DICK--BUT  
THERE'S ANOTHER  
WAY TO GET HIS  
"SINGING" VOICE!

AS YOU'LL SOON  
SEE ...

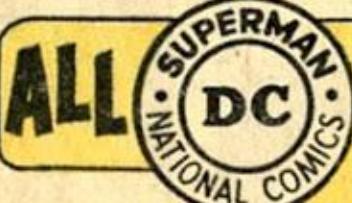
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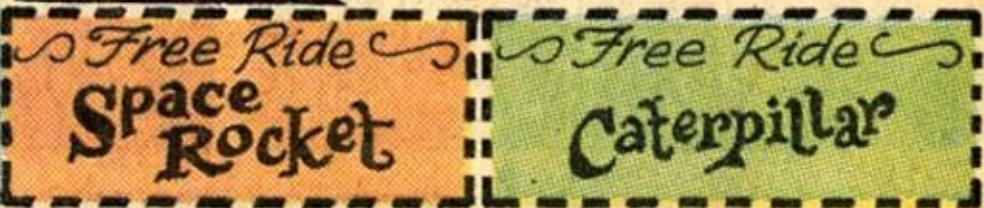
ADMIT ONE (1) TO  
**PALISADES**  
AMUSEMENT PARK  
ADMISSION **FREE** PARKING  
GOOD MONDAY,  
WEDNESDAY  
AND FRIDAYS  
WORTH \$1.10 (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)  
UNTIL 7 P.M.

# PALISADES AMUSEMENT PARK N.J.

1/2 MILE SOUTH OF THE  
GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE



COMICS IN  
MAY THROUGH  
OCTOBER HAVE  
THE **FREE  
COUPON!**



*Blow Your Mind With the Greatest Game of All!*

**Yes... Now YOU Manage All 24 Major League Teams!**



Baseball Fans Have Gone WILD About BE A MANAGER!

"I have had the game for three years and enjoy playing it."

- D.G., Illinois

"We have set up a four-team league around my house, where we have just completed a forty game schedule."

- G.H., New York

"The game has been the best I have ever played. It has made my dream come true. I know 100 people who have it."

- A.S., Texas

"BE A MANAGER is definitely the most enjoyable, accurate baseball game ever manufactured. Some friends of mine played it with me and I bought one."

- R.F., New Jersey

YOU Decide On the Line-Ups ... YOU Plot the Strategy, Control the Pitching, Batting, Running. You Decide How You Want Your Outfield Played, Tell Your Men When To Hit, Run, Steal. Yes - Now YOU Manage the Big Leagues!

Imagine the excitement of a World Series playoff and you'll get just the slightest idea of the THRILL of playing BE A MANAGER! You'll be caught up in baseball as never before...because YOU are the manager! You have real control over all 400 big league players - who actually bat, field, run, pitch according to their playing abilities.

#### HITTING, FIELDING, RUNNING AS IN REAL LIFE!

With YOU planning strategy, deciding on pinch-hitters, ordering defensive moves - you've still got to be crafty, because every man on your team plays exactly according to his real life quality. He makes errors you've got to watch out for. He may go into a sudden slump and you've got to get him out. He may rush into a red-hot hitting streak you've got to take advantage of; he may become a hero - at the wrong time!

#### KNOW 400 PLAYERS!

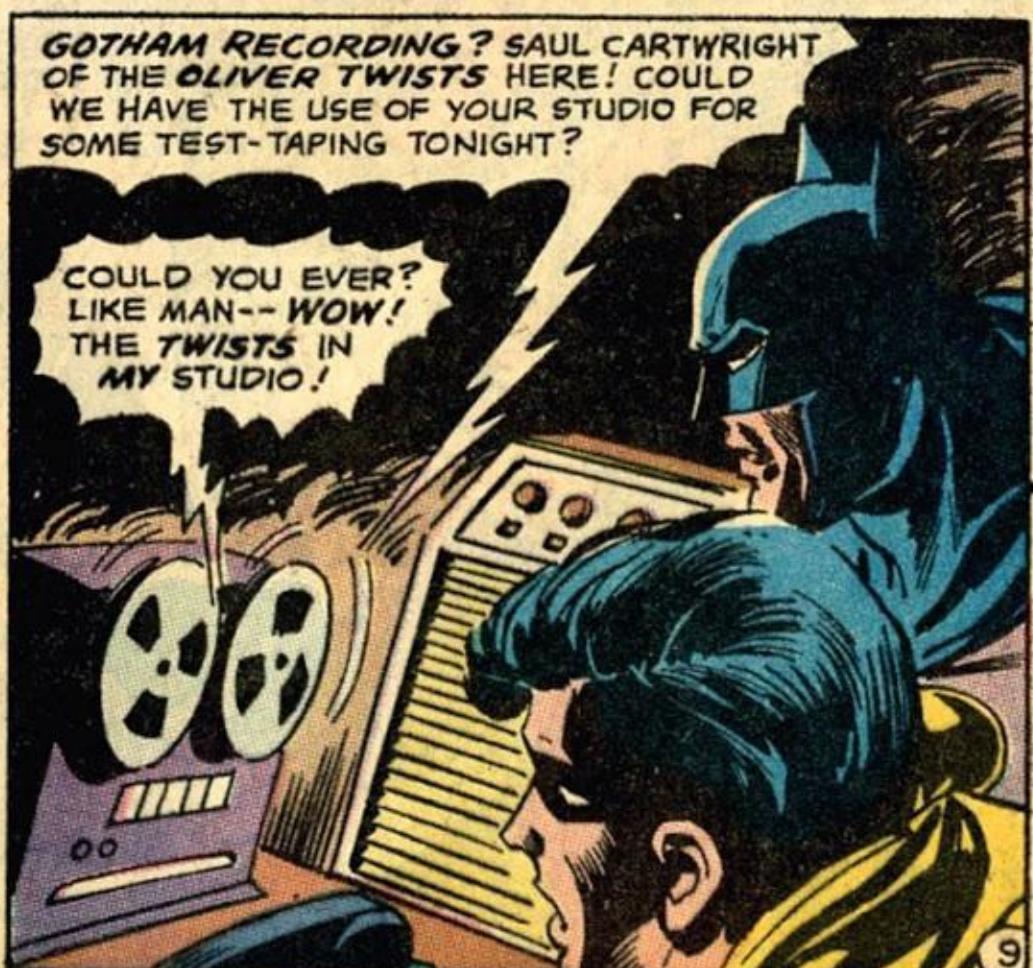
Yes, you'll get to know 400 real life players - on all 20 big league teams - better than anybody in your neighborhood! Because as a MANAGER you've got all the statistics at your fingertips - every man's hits, runs, stolen bases, batting record, etc. With this exciting real knowledge, it is possible, for YOU, the manager, to

achieve thrilling victories even with a weak team.

#### GET THE BIG STORY!

Remember: it's always YOUR skill, knowledge, foresight and courage that wins games. Now...BE A MANAGER! Find out all the facts about this greatest of all games - the original, official game....plus you get THREE FREE GIFTS when you mail the coupon. Do it today!

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PO Box 98, Springfield Gardens Stn., Jamaica N.Y. 11413
- I want to know all about BE A MANAGER; please send me all the exciting details plus THREE FREE GIFTS... (1) Player Card (2) 7 All-Time Baseball Oddities (3) Proposed Roster for 1970 Big League Teams. I enclose 10¢ to cover postage and handling.
- NAME \_\_\_\_\_
- ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_
- CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



OH, BUT SAUL -- ALL MY  
ENGINEERS HAVE LEFT!  
I WAS JUST CLOSING...

DON'T NEED 'EM, FRIEND--  
WE DO OUR OWN! JUST  
LEAVE THE KEY UNDER  
THE ENTRANCE-MAT--  
WE'LL MAKE IT WORTH  
YOUR WHILE!

JUST THE  
BREAK WE NEEDED,  
**ROBIN!** C'MON  
WE'RE SETTING UP  
A PRIVATE RECORDING  
DATE -- TO GET A  
TAPE OF "SAUL"  
SINGING!

REACTIVATING THE **BATMOBILE**, THE  
DYNAMIC DUO RACES AGAINST AN  
UNKNOWN DEADLINE! THEN, PARKING  
OUT OF SIGHT...

UNDER THE ENTRANCE-  
MAT, HE SAID...

SIMPLER THAN  
"PICKING" OUR  
WAY IN,  
**BATMAN!** WE  
OPEN UP--SLIP  
THE KEY BACK  
UNDER THE  
MAT...

...AND RELOCK  
FROM THE INSIDE!  
THEY'LL NEVER  
GUESS WE'RE  
HIDING HERE...

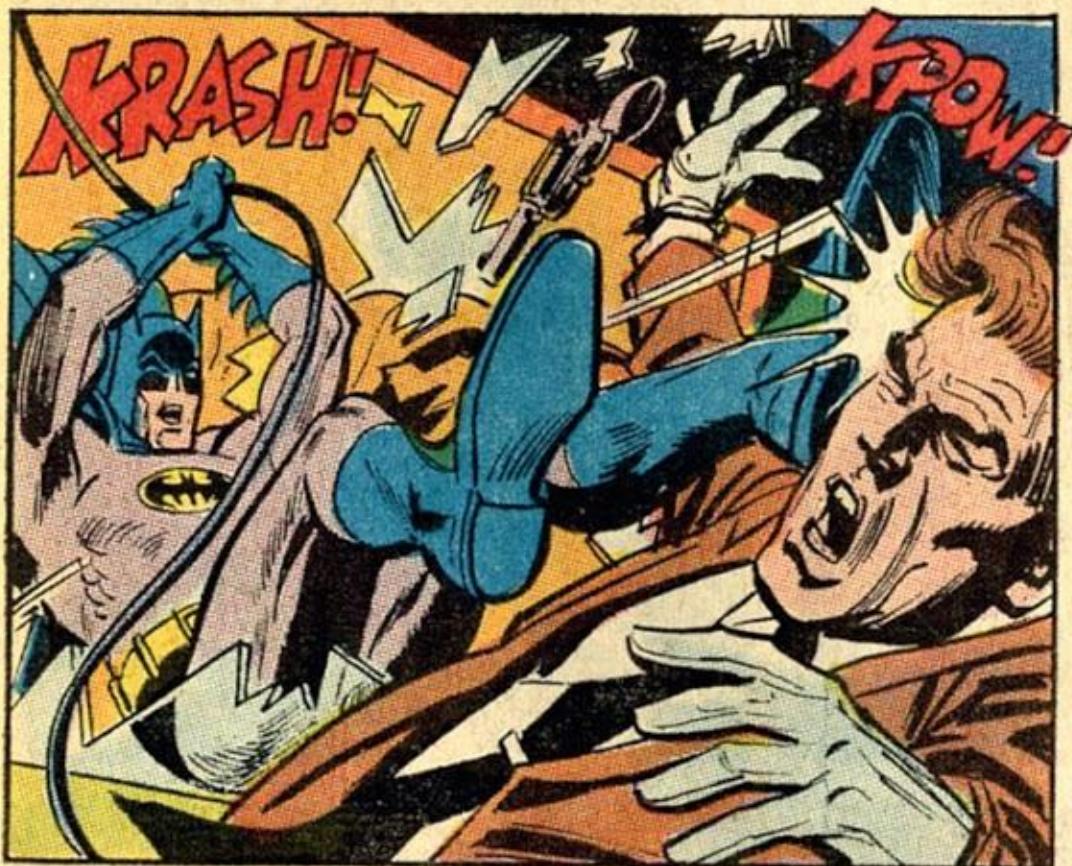
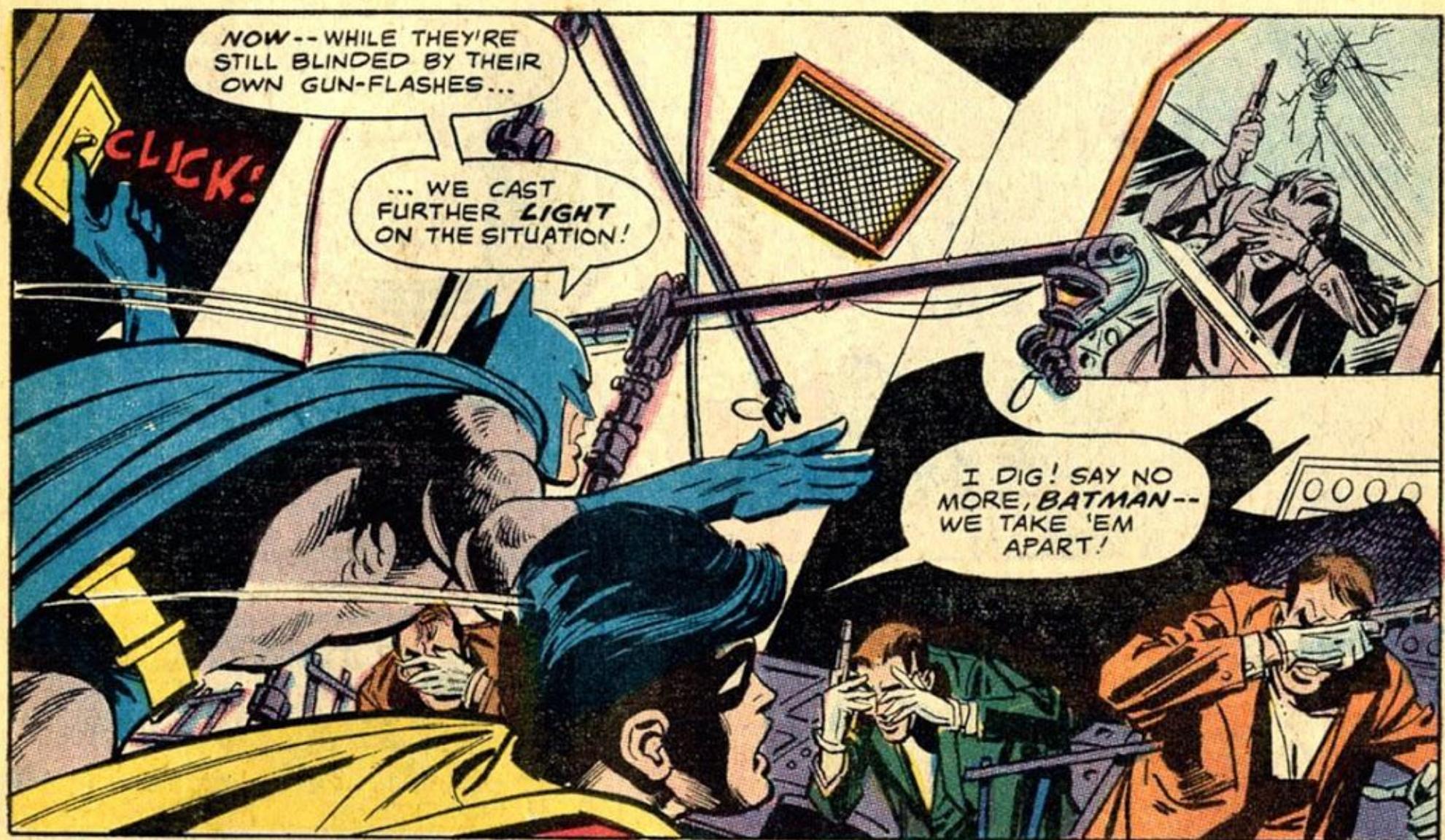
GOOD PLAN,  
**ROBIN**--  
EXCEPT...

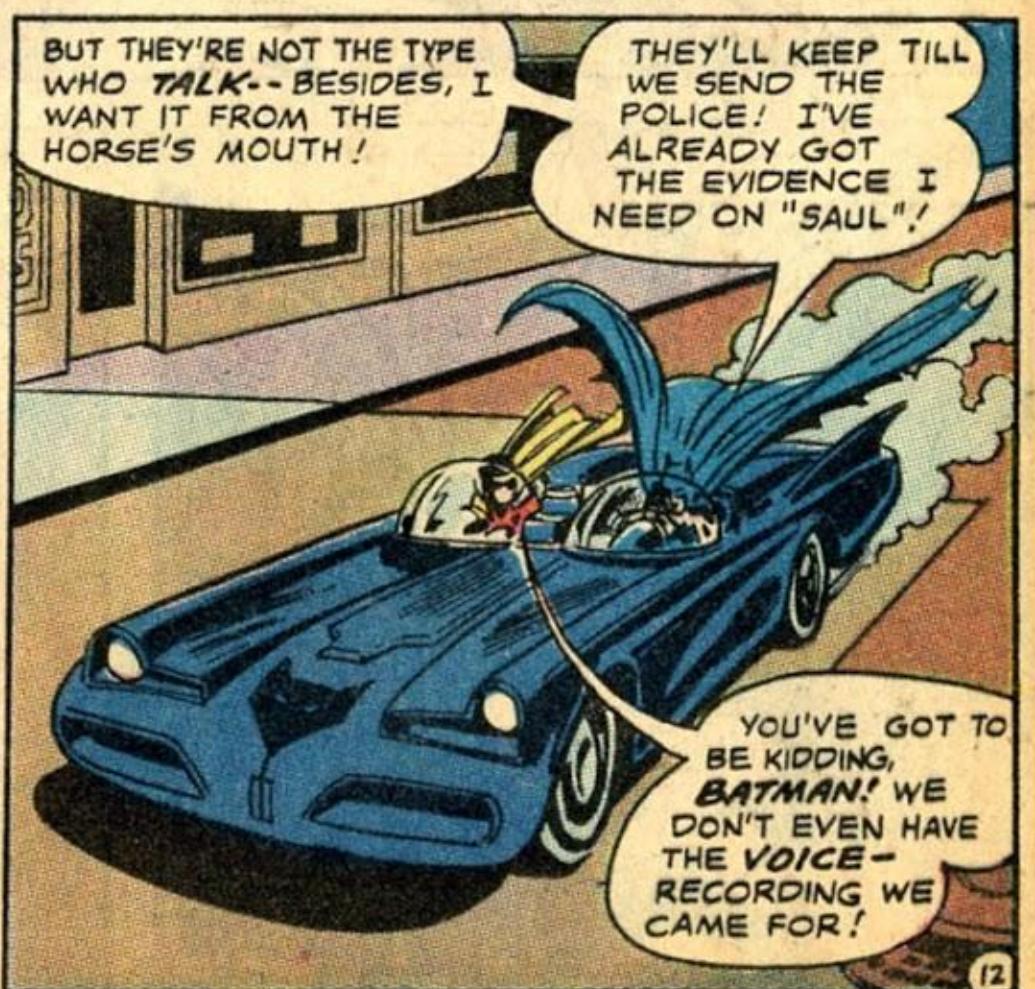
EXCEPT--  
WHAT?

SOMEONE  
ELSE...

...GOT THAT  
IDEA FIRST!



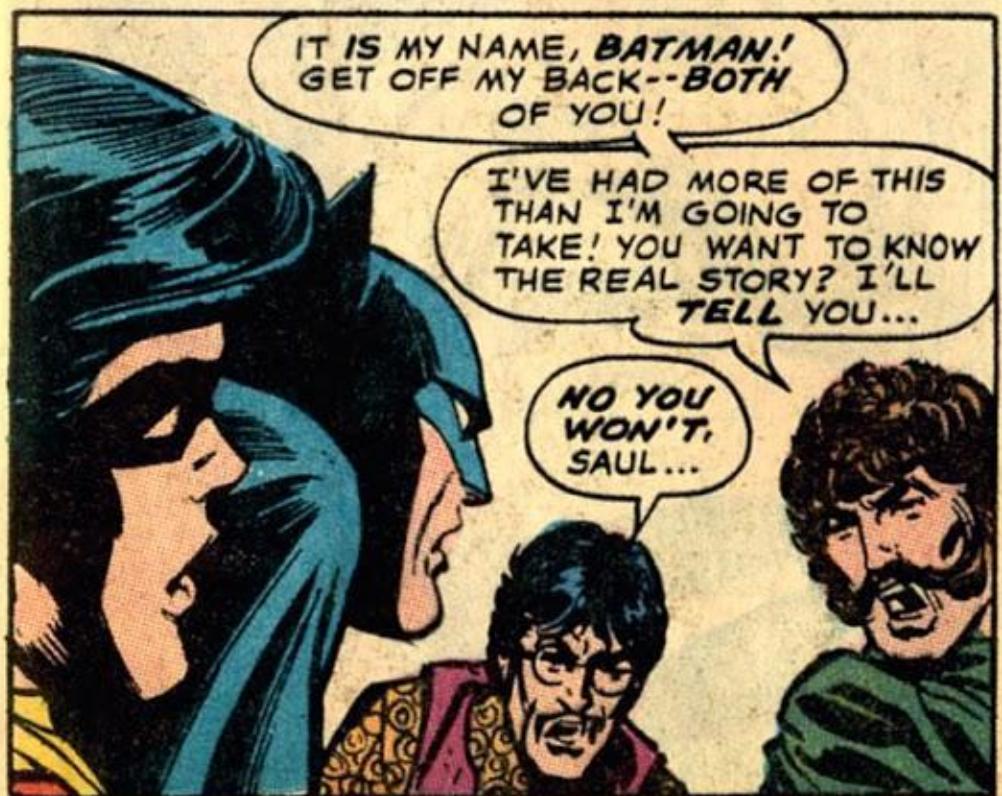




SPEEDING BACK TO THE BATCAVE...

AFTER WE'D LEFT HERE, I REALIZED WE DIDN'T NEED A SINGING-VOICE ANYMORE! BUT I HAD TO FOLLOW SAUL'S "BAIT" THROUGH TO BE SURE!

YOU FORGET WE NOW HAVE THE TALKING PHONE-BUDDING TAPE-- AND THE FIRST TALKING-TAPE FROM THE CHANDELIER-BUG! WE COMPARE THEM...



NEVER THOUGHT  
YOU'D FREAK-OUT  
LIKE THIS,  
CHUMLEY...

...BUT I WON'T  
GO ALONG  
WITH IT!

KRAK!  
G!

HOWCH!

SOMETHING  
TELLS ME I  
OWE THIS TO  
YOU FOR LAST  
NIGHT!

WHAT DID YOU JUST  
CALL "GLENNAN,"  
SAUL?

CHUMLEY--HIS REAL NAME! JUST  
LIKE THIS IS REALLY PRITCHARD  
AND GILBEY!

I'M NOT THE  
PHONY--  
THEY ARE!

WHAT?!

YOU HEARD ME RIGHT!  
THESE LADS ARE THE FRAUDS--  
THE PUT-ONS! BECAUSE  
GLENNAN; SOB; BENJI....  
HAL... MY GOOD OLD  
BUDDIES ...

--THEY'RE  
**DEAD!**  
KILLED LAST  
YEAR IN A  
CRASH OF A  
PRIVATE  
JET THAT  
WAS TAKING  
THEM TO  
GROOVE  
WITH THE  
MYSTERIES  
OF THE EAST!

THEY'RE LYING  
BURIED SOMEWHERE IN  
THE TRACKLESS SNOWS  
OF THE HIMALAYAS!

I THOUGHT I COULD  
KEEP THEM "ALIVE"  
TO THEIR DEVOTED  
FANS THE WORLD  
OVER...

...BY RECRUITING THREE UNKNOWN LOOK-  
ALIKES TO STAND-IN FOR THEM!

SOME MINOR PLASTIC-SURGERY  
AND ALMOST A YEAR OF  
COACHING-- AND THEY  
WERE GOOD!  
REAL GOOD!

BUT THE BIG TRICK WAS TO PREVENT  
ANY WILD RUMORS OF THEIR  
DEATH SPRINGING UP-- AND  
UPSETTING THE APPLECART!

SO I DREAMED UP MY "DEATH"--  
AS A DECOY TO FOCUS ALL CURIOSITY  
ON ME! THAT WAY, WHO WOULD  
EVEN BEGIN TO SUSPECT THAT  
**ANYTHING** HAD HAPPENED  
TO MY THREE TEAM-MATES?

AND THEN-- **THEY** FLEW BACK,  
OUT OF THEIR INCOMMUNICADO  
JUNKET, IN A **DUPLICATE**  
PLANE-- RIGHT BACK INTO  
THE **HEARTS** OF THEIR  
DEVOTEES!

I-- I ONLY  
TRIED TO  
PRESERVE  
THEIR "**IMAGE**"--  
BUT I HADN'T  
FIGURED ON THIS  
ONE WEAK LINK!  
CHUMLEY'S  
GREED!

WHICH MADE HIM  
GO TO ANY LENGTH  
TO PROTECT OUR  
FRAUDULENT GROUP...  
AND THE **FASTEST**  
**INCOME** HE'S EVER  
SEEN IN HIS WHOLE  
MISERABLE LIFE!

I BELIEVE NOW THAT  
YOU SET UP THIS  
COCKEYED SCHEME  
WITH THE NOBLEST  
OF MOTIVES, SAUL--  
BUT LIKE ALL DISHONEST  
PUT-ONS, IT **BACK-**  
**FIRED**!

YOU REALIZE NOW THAT THE WORLD HAS TO  
LEARN THE **TRUE STORY**, SAUL! BUT IF YOU  
FACE UP TO IT AND LEVEL WITH THEM,  
YOUR FANS WILL UNDERSTAND...

...AS **WE** DO!  
BESIDES, IF  
THESE BOYS  
ARE AS "REAL  
GOOD" AS YOU  
SAY THEY ARE--  
YOU MAY HAVE  
A NEW GROUP  
AND A NEW  
SOUND!

AND SO LIKE THE LEGENDARY BIRD, THE "PHOENIX"!... A NEW SMASH TRIO RISES FROM THE ASHES OF THE OLD! A WEEK LATER AT HUDSON U...

YAY--SAUL!

YAY--PHOENIX!  
WE LUV YA!



16

YOU DIDN'T DELIVER THE "GOODS" WE REQUESTED, DICK-- BUT YOU SURE CAME UP WITH THE BIGGEST "TWIST" OF THE CENTURY!

AND JUST SO YOU DON'T COME UP WITH THE BIGGEST HEAD, GRAYSON...

JUST REMEMBER  
YOU OWE IT  
ALL TO --  
BATMAN  
AND ROBIN!



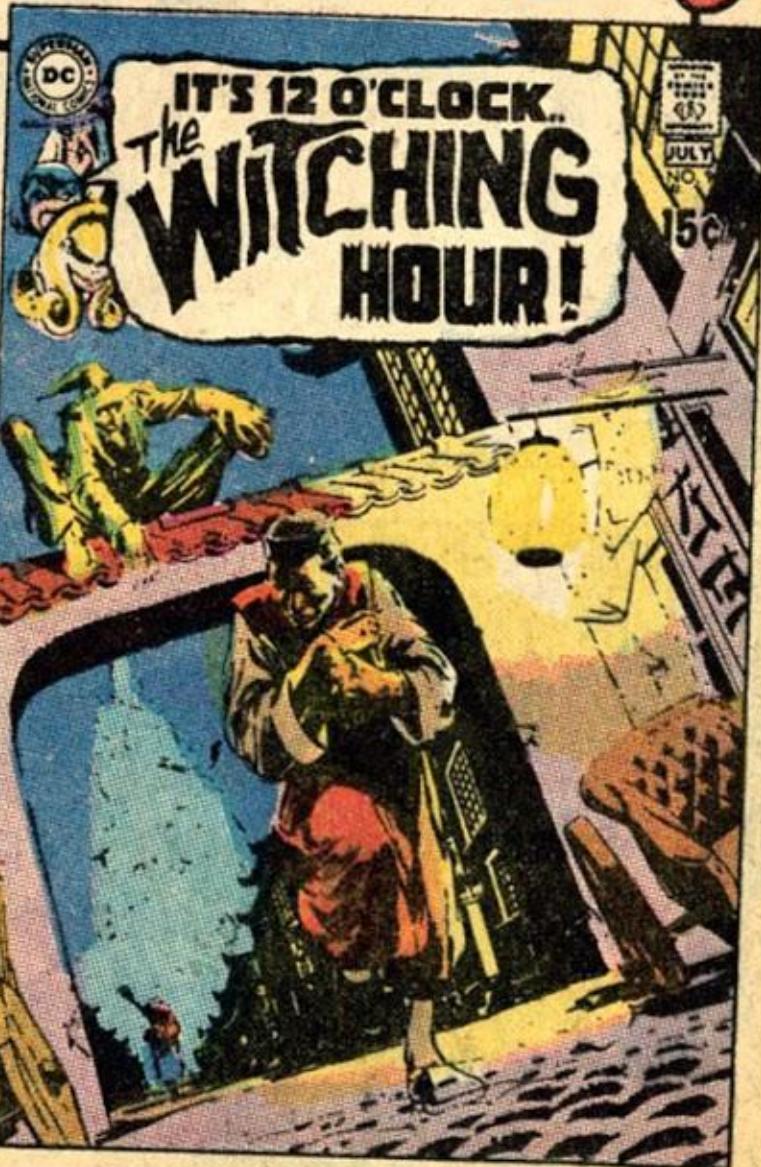
THE END.

# WOULD YOU BELIEVE..?



TWO EXCITING DC GRABBERS TO HOLD YOU SPELLED BOUND!

ON SALE APRIL 9<sup>th</sup>-APRIL 16<sup>th</sup>



# SO YOU WANT TO BE A CARTOONIST?

By **JOE KUBER**

K-316

During my years as a professional cartoonist, I have been approached by many people (in addition to receiving hundreds of letters) who want more than anything else to become a CARTOONIST for COMIC MAGAZINES. Many of the letters included sketches or samples from these aspirants along with inquiries concerning TYPE OF PAPER to be used, PAGE SIZE, PENS, INK, etc. Of course, without this rudimentary knowledge, any attempt at creating a cartoon-drawing becomes extremely difficult and frustrating. In response, this page will describe some of the basic materials and information as applied to the comic industry in general.



## PAPER & SIZE

Original art work is very rarely done "same size" as shown in printed form. The original drawing should be HALF AGAIN or TWICE the size of the reduced copy. 10" x 15" (border-size) is the dimension used by our artists.

Paper should be 2-PLY, which is similar to a LIGHT CARDBOARD. Texture of paper can be KID FINISH (rough) or PLATE FINISH (smooth).

## PENCILS

Preliminary sketches are done with a #2 or #3 pencil (lead). This enables you to erase for corrections without difficulty. PENCIL DRAWINGS are merely the first step toward a completed illustration.

## ERASERS

NON-SMEARING is the desired quality in an eraser. Test your eraser on a piece of scrap paper BEFORE you use it on a drawing.

## PEN, BRUSHES, INK

After completing your pencil DRAWING, it is essential to GO OVER the illustration with INDIA INK. The reason is that printing processes used to produce comic books demand a CLEAN, SHARP, BLACK, LINEAR drawing. If an ink line is TOO GREY, it may not reproduce.

The types of PENS and BRUSHES vary, depending on one's own personal inclination. Pens may be FLEXIBLE (to give a thick and thin line) or STIFF.

Brushes will vary in size (#3 water-color sable brush is most generally used). After "inking", the pencil sketch is erased, leaving only the pen-brush-ink illustration.

These are the PRIMARY ESSENTIALS concerning material and information needed to begin to learn about cartooning. Of course, the FIRST prerequisites are: A STRONG DESIRE; CONSTANT PRACTICE; STUDY OF ART IN GENERAL, COMPOSITION and FIGURE-DRAWING in particular.

There are NO SHORTCUTS. Don't let your first attempts frustrate you—every professional cartoonist started in the SAME MANNER, as you are beginning right now.

Remember that all the combined talents of National Periodical Publications will try to encourage your efforts as much as possible—but it's really up to YOU! That is, if YOU WANT TO BE A CARTOONIST!

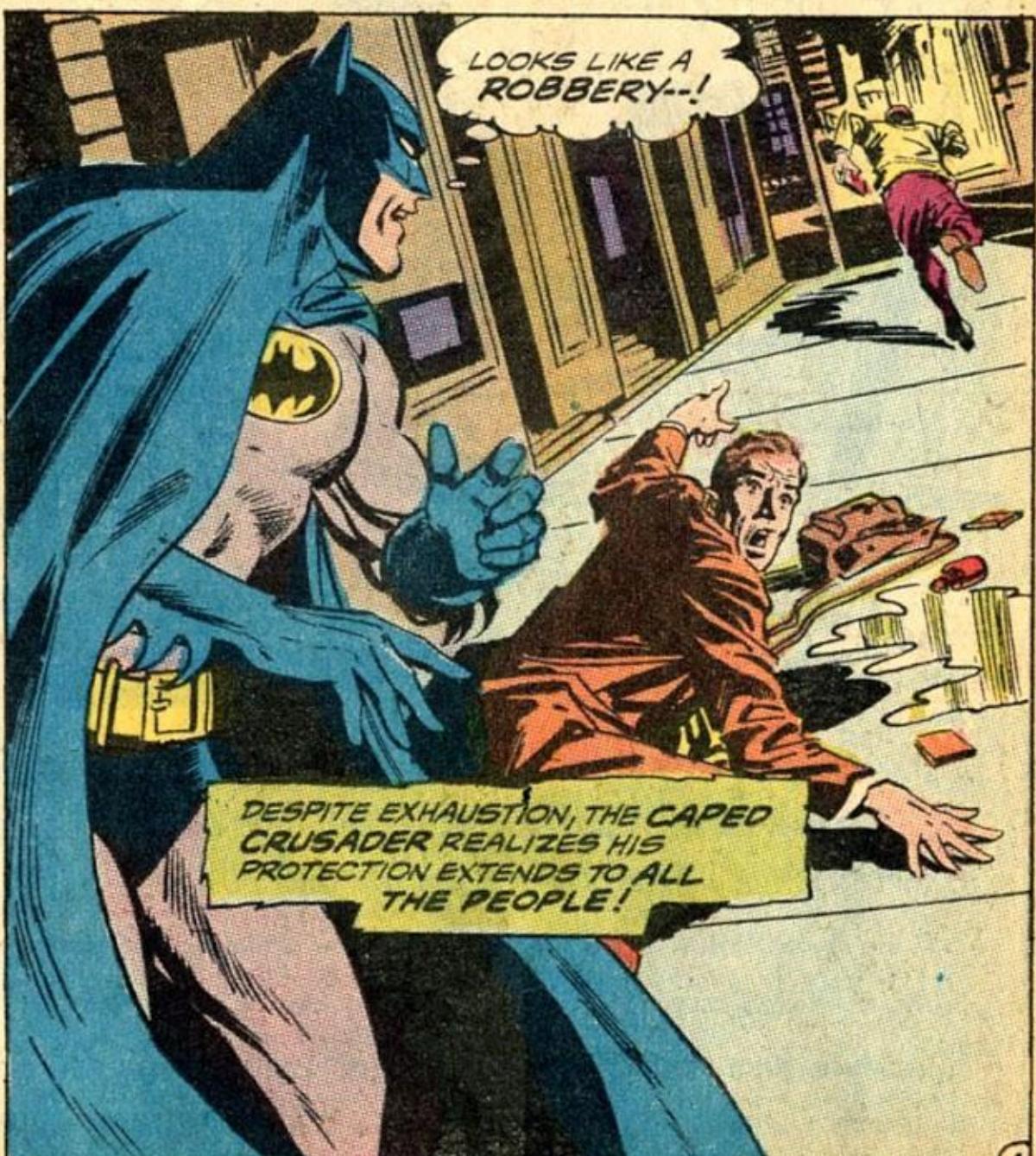
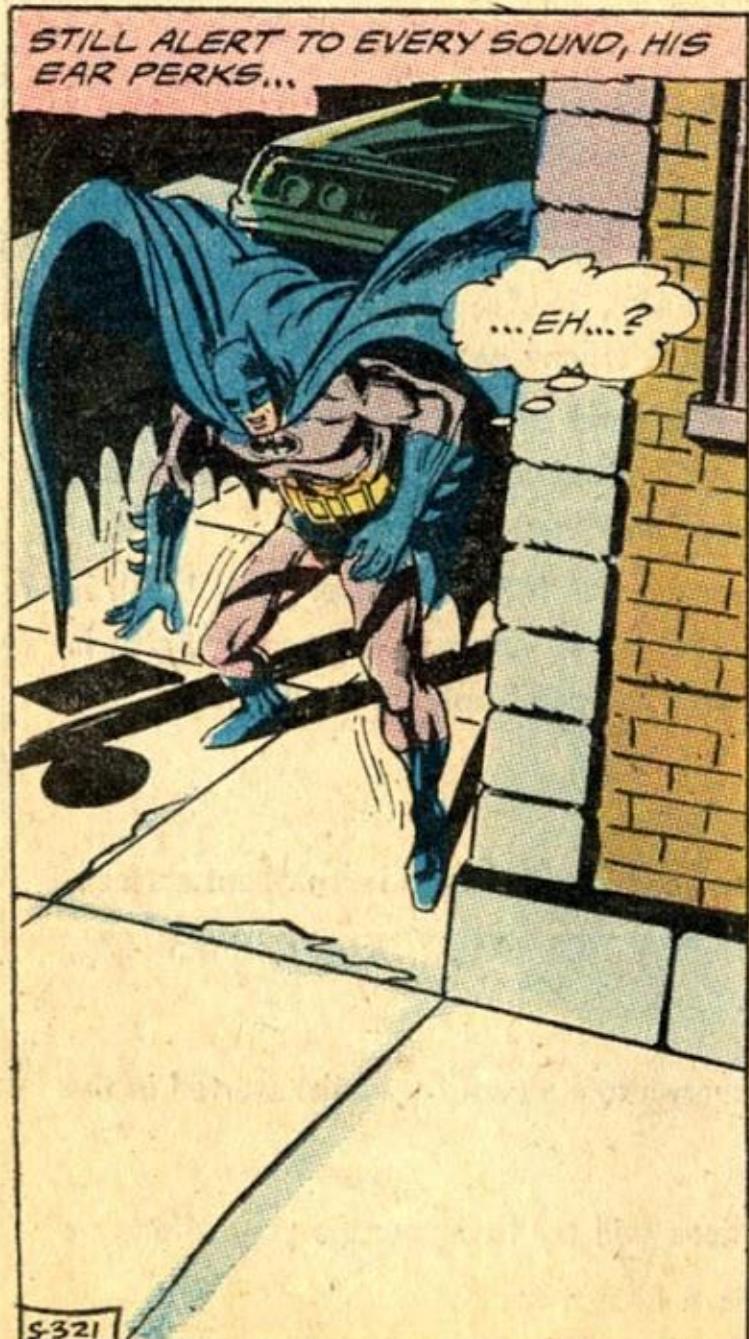


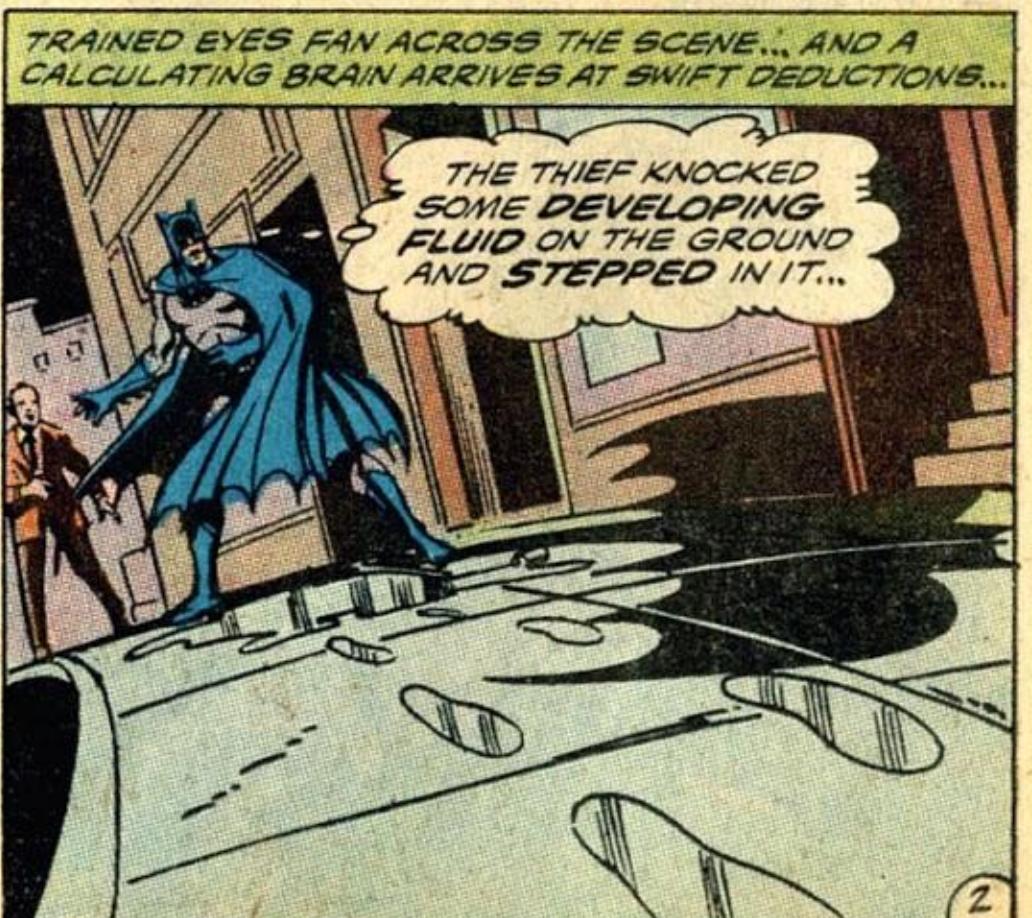
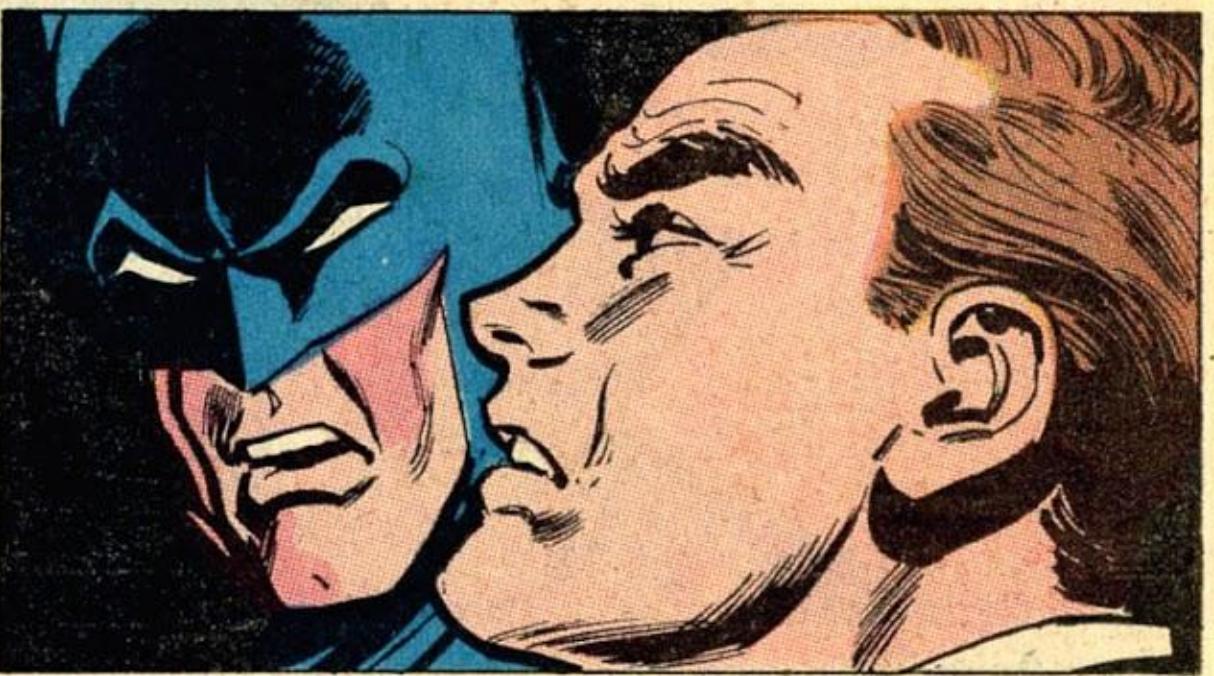
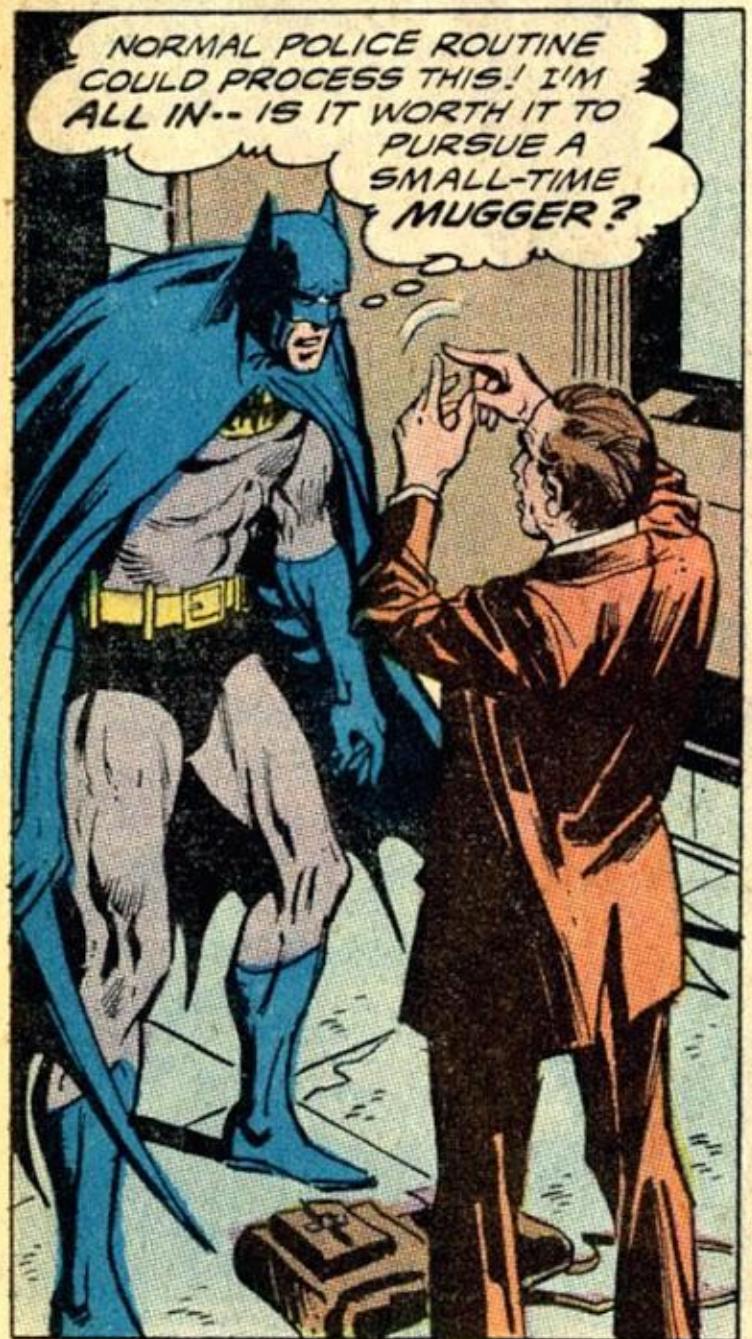
AS HUSHED STREETS ECHO THE DISTANT SOUNDS, THE

# BATMAN

FIGHTS FATIGUE WITH EVERY STEP AS HE HEADS FOR THE WARM HEARTH OF HOME! WHO WOULD BLAME HIM FOR IGNORING THE...

## "CASE of NO CONSEQUENCE!"





WAIT...  
RIGHT...  
HERE!

DEVELOPING FLUID GLOWS YELLOW  
UNDER THE BATMAN'S ULTRA-  
VIOLET LIGHT...

...AND A TELLTALE TRAIL IS  
FOLLOWED...

THE MUGGER STOPPED  
RUNNING HERE-- HIS  
FOOTPRINTS ARE  
CLOSER TOGETHER!

SHOULD CATCH UP TO HIM  
SOON... IF MY FEET HOLD  
OUT...

UH-OH! TRAIL'S STARTING  
TO FADE-- FLUID  
WEARING OFF!

I'LL HAVE TO  
TRAIL HIM...  
BLIND!

HE'S EITHER  
HEADING HOME...  
OR SOMEWHERE  
TO SPEND HIS  
LOOT! CHANCES  
ARE--

THERE'S AN'  
ALL-NIGHT  
POOL  
HALL  
NEAR  
HERE!

I'LL GO THROUGH  
THE BACK  
ENTRANCE--  
SAVE ME A LOT  
OF TIME...  
AND  
ENERGY!



**RIDE WITH SNOOPY** INTO THE  
WILDEST DOGFIGHT EVER!

**WOW!** WHAT A  
KIT FROM MONOGRAM.  
HIS SOPWITH CAMEL. COMES WITH A  
BATTERY-POWERED PROPELLER YOU FLIP  
TO START LIKE A  
REAL PLANE.

EASY AND FUN TO BUILD. JUST  
SNAPS TOGETHER SO YOU DON'T  
NEED GLUE.



**MINUTES LATER...** LOOKS GROOVY!

AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO PAINT  
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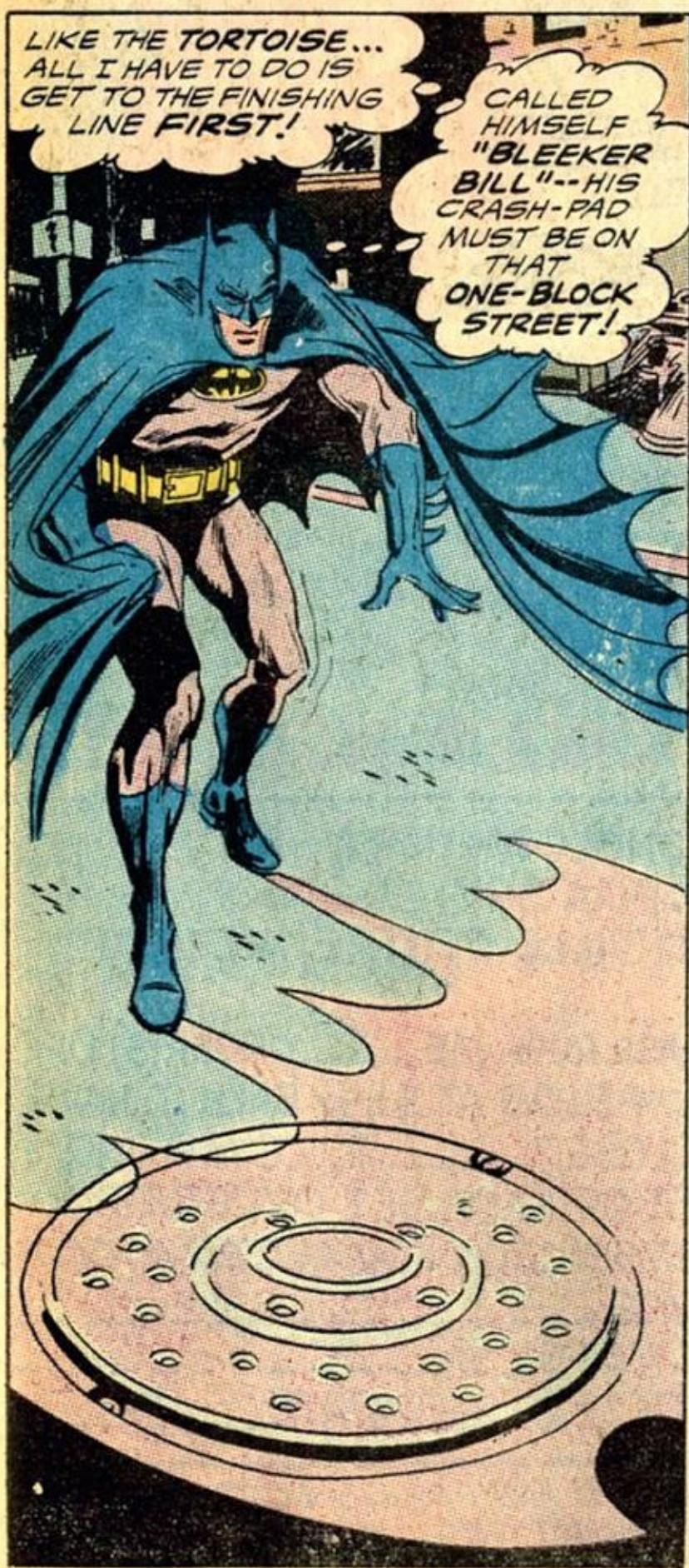
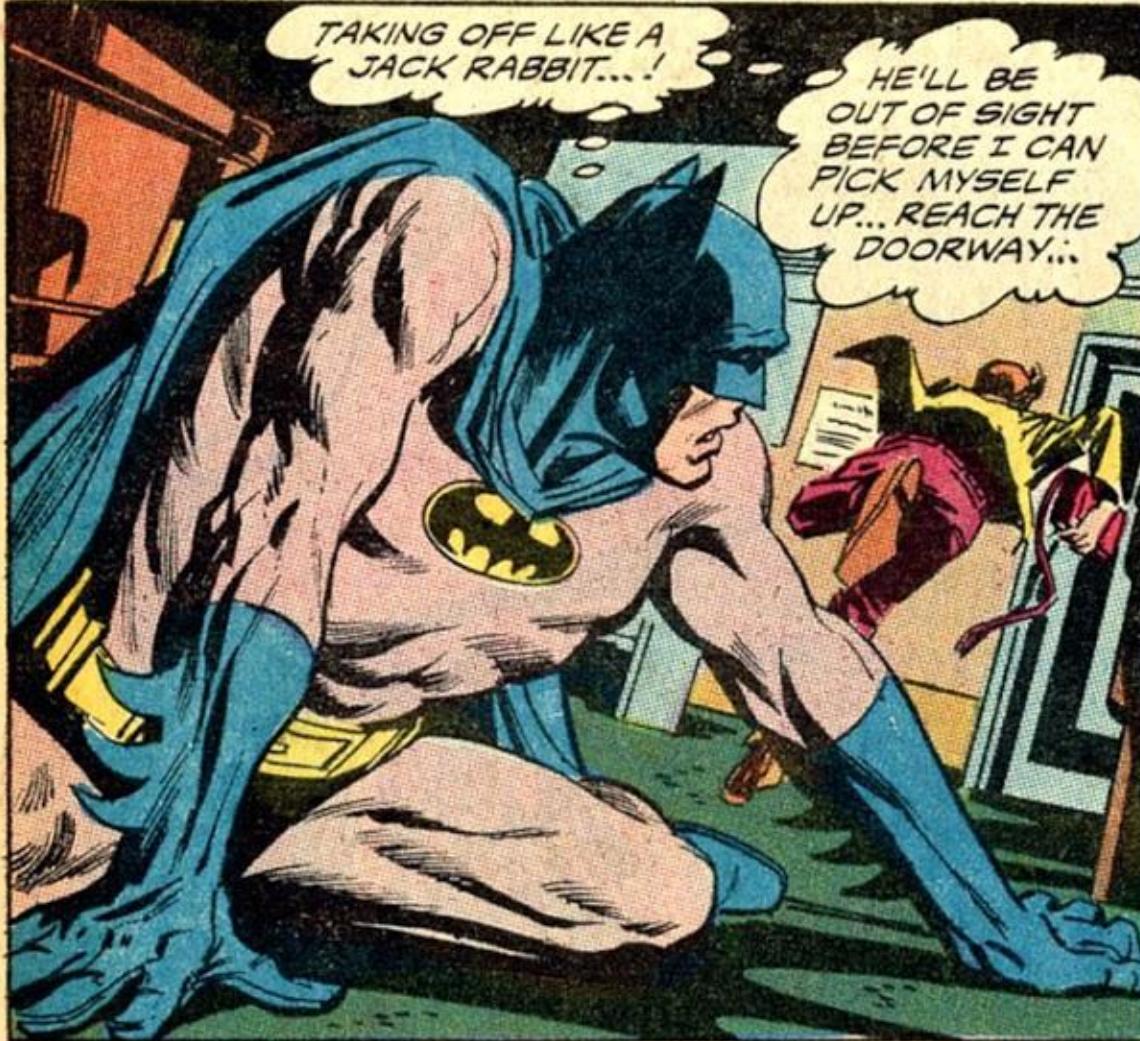
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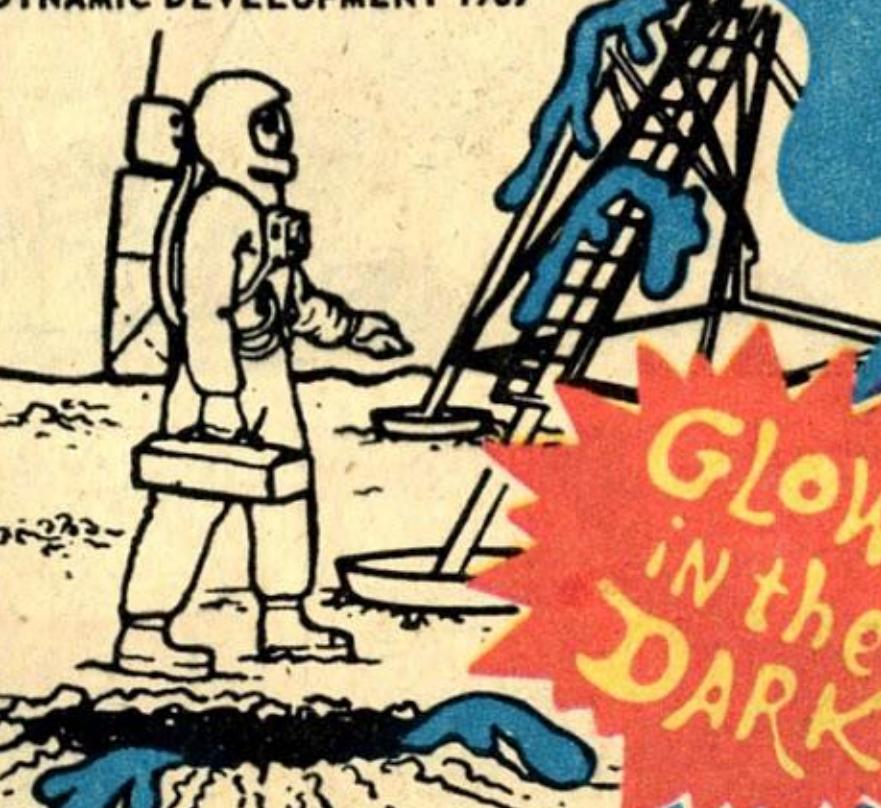
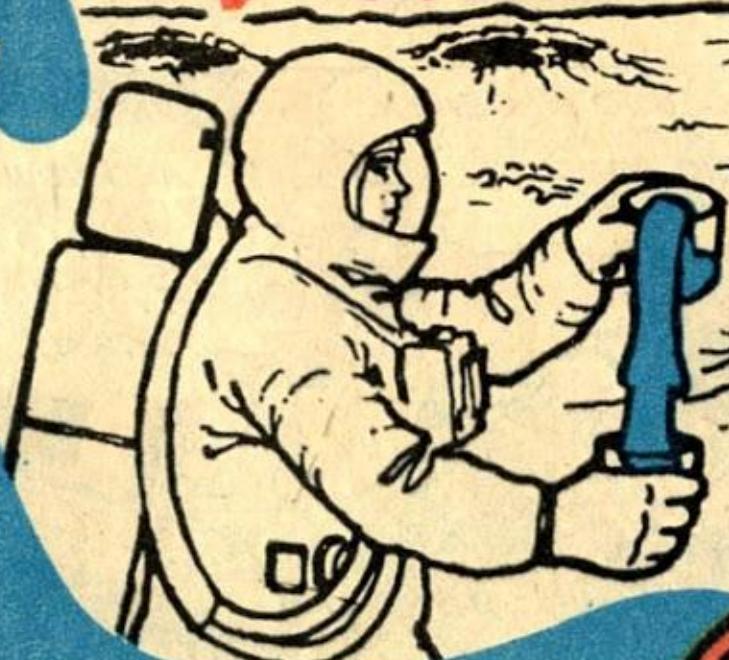
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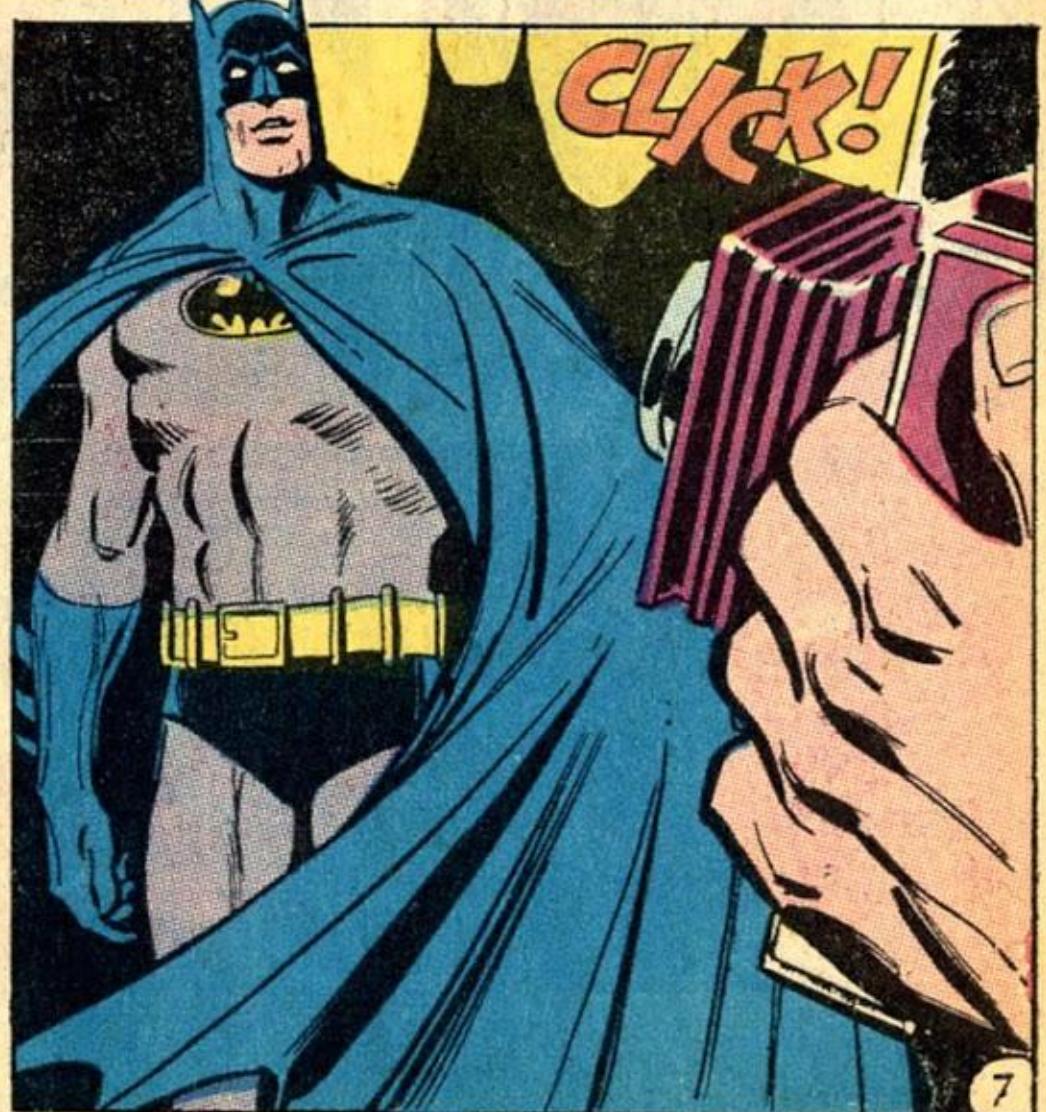


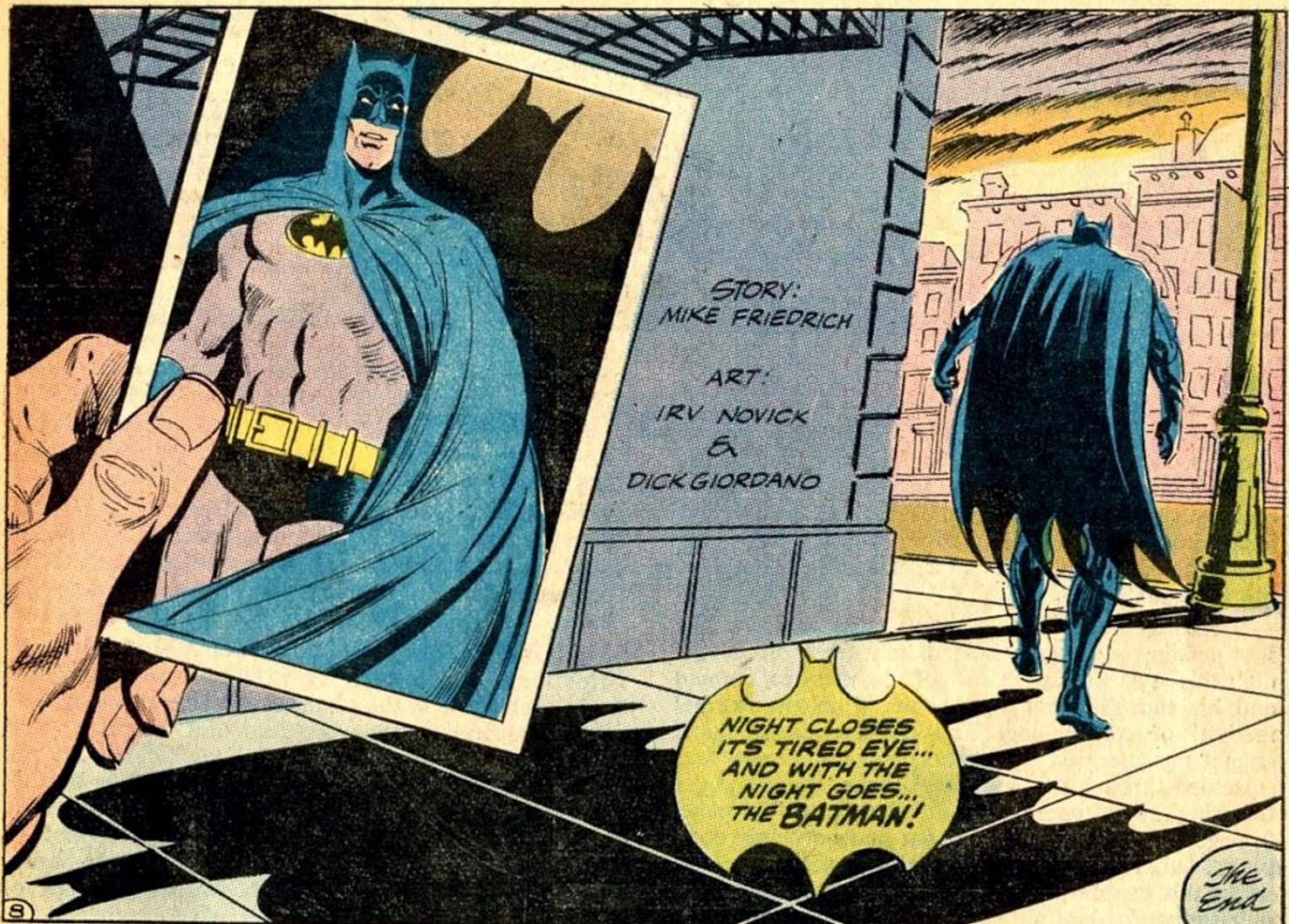
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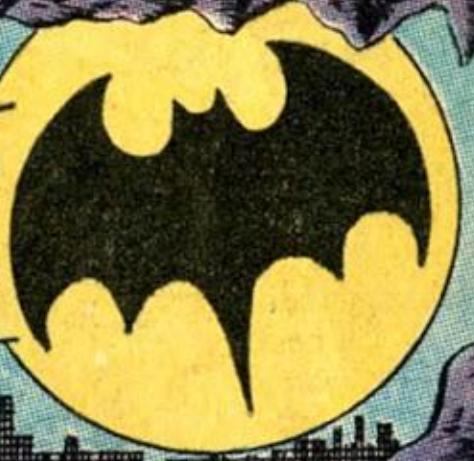




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# LETTERS to the BATCAVE



*Dear Editor:*

I just bought *Batman* #219 and, having finished reading it only moments ago, feel I ought to write you about it. Why? Because it is undoubtedly one of the finest *Batman* comics I've read in years. My collection of *Detective* and *Batman* numbers over 200 different issues, but few of them excited me as much as "Death Casts the Deciding Vote" and "The Silent Night of the Batman!"

"Death Casts the Deciding Vote" was written in the first person style, which immediately set it off as special; this style brought a sort of closeness to *Batman* and his thoughts that isn't achieved in the normal method of story-telling. The divided splash panel caught my attention right away, and my interest was sustained through the last panel. True, the bit about throwing the costume out as an "explanation" of panel 3, page 1 was a bit phoney... but that's my only complaint. Otherwise, I'd be content to have *Batman* stories of this calibre all the time. And, oddly enough, I didn't miss *Robin* at all! In fact, it just occurred to me as I write this that he didn't appear anywhere in issue #219!

"The Silent Night of the Batman" was totally different, yet captivating in every way. It carried with it the magic aura of good feeling that I associate with Christmas, a touch of sentimentality, the mysterious image of *Batman* that I love, and a charm that is not present in enough *Batman* tales. Neal Adams is perfect for drawing the *Cowled Crusader*, and Dick Giordano's inks complement the pencils beautifully. Artistically, I couldn't ask for more on any comic strip.

A few miscellaneous comments: First, the idea of two stories in an issue is excellent, and quite fresh after years of 23-24 page yarns. I wouldn't want this to be the permanent format, but every few issues, it would be a nice change-of-pace. Second, I hope this "new" *Batman* will meet up with the *Joker* and some of his older costumed enemies. True, he is devoting his time to corruption and more down-to-earth crimes, but the *Joker* could be fitted into this world without much trouble.

—BILL SCHELLY, U. of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho

(Next issue goes book-length again with Dennis O'Neil's masterscript, "Carnival of the Cursed," an eerie tale that finds *Batman* on the haunt in New Orleans. No plans for the *Joker* and/or his costumed cronies as yet, but they're bound to rear their ugly heads.—Editor)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dear Editor:*

*Batman* #219 proves that you weren't just talking through your editorial hat when you promised us a newer, more exciting *Caped Crusader*. This issue pre-

sented your readers with the respective talents of Neal Adams, Irv Novick, Mike Friedrich, Frank Robbins, and Dick Giordano, as well as a 17-year-old DC Extra and a full 27 pages of reading material, excluding the lettercol. Match that, competitors!

Mr. Robbins' "Death Casts the Deciding Vote" was very satisfying, with its intriguing delve into the world of politics. At last Bruce Wayne and *Batman* are being treated as two different individuals: Wayne is the man, and *Batman* the legend. Very effective!

Meanwhile, Friedrich's "Silent Night of the Batman" was the most beautiful Christmas story I have ever seen published in the comics magazine medium. The individual vignettes were real and touching. The scripting and artwork presented terrific insight; the story's theme was inspirational. I feel nothing but admiration for a team of professionals like yourselves, who dare to break from the traditional super-hero mold to present such a meaningful and thought-provoking story. I reverently wish you all the best of luck and the happiest holiday season imaginable.

—STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich.

(Your wish for the happiest of holiday seasons was fulfilled with the overwhelmingly joyous reception accorded *Batman* #219. There were a few sour notes, but before we tune in on one, let us carry on with another blowing of our own horn.—Editor)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dear Editor:*

It seems like the *Batman* is here to stay!

*Batman* #219 brought the much-maligned *Caped Crusader* out from under the heavy mass of garbage piled up upon the *Batman* legend by the poor quality stories of the fifties and early sixties and the transformation of the 1964 *New Look* into the 1966 (ugh) *Camp Look* which killed a good effort by you and your crew to put some life into *Batman*.

First, there was the cover and the cover story. The cover was a brilliant, if not misleading, work by Neal Adams. I should have known when the cover has such a scene on it, in which the hero is in a position which for him is impossible to get out of, that it should be treated as a symbolic cover.

Now, the cover story. "Death Casts the Deciding Vote" was a nice, uncomplicated story. It gave Bruce Wayne a chance to show off his ingenuity by having the *Batman* and Bruce appear at the same time!

But, now, the second story! "The Silent Night of the Batman" was a definite move in the right story direction. I found it to be a very moving piece—*Alley Award* stuff, I'd say. The more-cynical-than-usual *Batman* reluctantly accompanying the Gotham police in the Christmas spirit while waiting for the inevitable call for action, unaware that his spirit is busy keeping the peace in old Gotham. It was a beau-

tiful statement and everyone involved with this issue should take a well-deserved bow.

—JAMES HAGGENMILLER, Jersey City, N.J.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Editor:

Perhaps my hopes for the February *Batman* were too high. They were certainly soaring from the spell of the December *Batman*, which I regarded as nothing less than the best comic magazine ever to hit the market. So *Batman* is finally getting involved, I said. At last he has left his tiring years of super-science to others, and is now again concerned with the common man on the streets. Again he is the man of a thousand faces, living with crime and fighting it at its roots. Finally he is renewing his origin and living up to his namesake. I said.

But suddenly came the February *Batman*. And, I said, what happened to the streets? Where is the common man, where even is nighttime, the time of mystery, the time of the bat? Where is the common criminal? Certainly none of these is to be found on an airplane headed for Washington, D.C. Politics on the national level is no place for a thief, for a mugger or a murderer. Then why is the *Batman* there, if his cause is now with the dangers facing everyday people?

It seems that Frank Robbins' idea for the story was that social activity involves political activity; that anyone, including the *Batman*, who fights for social justice will inevitably be drawn into the arena of politics. Perhaps this is true; but as a story featuring the creature of the thousand eyes, this idea is found wanting. Here we are asked to believe that because politics is the official record of the American dream, it is just as gripping, just as immediate as day-to-day life in the city.

But surely there is enough drama going on in the streets where the line is thin between life and death, where the fight concerns everyone who enters a city, to draw involvement for both the *Batman* and the reader. And surely anyone who has been to a political event knows the yawns hanging over every word, has felt the heavy eyebrows of the speaker. And surely Frank Robbins has imagination enough to pit nightman against night-fears without going into the overgrown complexities (such as a blown-up *Batman* suit flying over Washington D.C.) as he has created in the February *Batman*.

Robbins proved beyond doubt his imagination in the December *Batman*. My trust still lies with him; but the new *Batman* needs city streets—or at least darkness and mystery—to operate in, and involved stories will no longer work. So I leave my trust with Editor Schwartz to see that the *Batman* is guided back to the quiet excitement of the city.

—EDWARD BRODERICK, Arlington Ht., Ill.

(To negate the negative—as Johnny Mercer once advised us—accentuate the positive, as we promptly proceed to do next.—Editor)

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Editor:

*Batman* #219 was an excellent issue. Your whole staff deserves congratulations. Congratulations. This is, in my opinion, the finest comic you have produced since the price rose to 15¢.

The cover depicting a scene from "Death Casts the Deciding Vote" was superbly done by Neal Adams. Notice the lack of balloons, the simplicity of the idea, and the excellent coloring, not to mention the well-placed title. Good show.

"Death Casts the Deciding Vote!" A good title. A good plot by Frank Robbins. I like the idea that the bulk of the story occurred in the confines of a plane, rather than somewhere in Gotham City, then back to Wayne Manor, then to the police station, then to a giant statue factory, and back to Wayne Manor for a lousy closing pun by Dick Grayson (glad he's gone). This is usually the pattern of a regular *Batman* story. Ah, but this is no ordinary story. Thank you for a fine story, Frank Robbins.

The art was excellent, as it has been ever since Dick Giordano joined the team, and Giella left. Giella's inks didn't do much for Novick's pencils. (Don't get me wrong! I liked Giella-inks when over Infantino-pencils.)

Now for the second story. I usually don't like two stories in one issue. It breeds incompetence. But this time I was delighted. "The Silent Night of the Batman!" Excellent title. Excellent cinematic art by the incomparable Neal Adams. I immediately sensed it was written by Mike Friedrich. He really knows what the fans want, being one himself for many years. Good work. I can only say that the reaction to this story will be one of ecstasy. I know mine was.

—ROB MEUER, Madison, Wis.

(For possibly the first time ever, there was unanimous approval of a *Batman* story! To round out this column, we offer a sampling of these praiseworthy comments.—Editor)

\* \* \* \* \*

"The Silent Night of the Batman" epitomized the feelings of Gotham City toward *Batman*. It is because of stories like this that the *Caped Criminologist* has risen far above the multitude of comic magazine characters to become an almost legendary figure. I firmly believe that every major city could use a *Batman*.

—MIKE W. BARR, Akron, Ohio

\* \* \* \* \*

As I write this, the days are growing steadily colder, there is talk of snow, Christmas decorations are appearing with amazing rapidity, and my feelings toward the trepidations of life are mellowing greatly. I have just finished reading your wonderful Christmas story, "Silent Night of the Batman." To a guy in a strange city, trying to get some minute amount of education pounded into his head, and facing hardships he never knew existed, it was a bit of inspiration that just can't be found anywhere else.

—JOHN WORKMAN, JR., Vancouver, Wash.

\* \* \* \* \*

There just are not words to describe "The Silent Night of the Batman." It is, without a doubt, the BEST *Batman* story I have read in my 5 years of uninterrupted reading. It was drawn...superbly. I can't even state a "best" panel or page; they were all top-notch. Of the 38 panels in the story, only 9 needed "word balloons", proving that they were not necessary for this fine piece of work. If the story had been written to accommodate 15 pages (or more), I shudder to think of the consequences. It was perfect...just as it was...positively NO flaws. I wish that "The Silent Night of the Batman" would turn out to be non-fiction...soon.

—JEFF RISTINE, Ann Arbor, Mich.

\* \* \* \* \*

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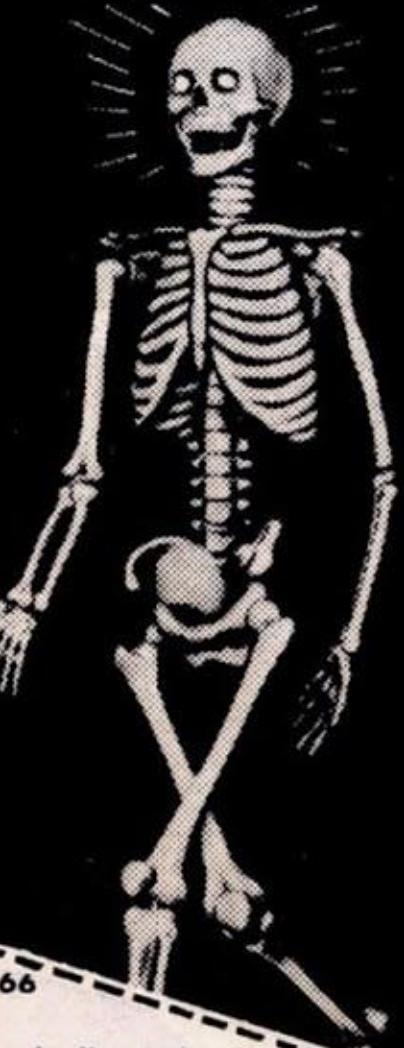
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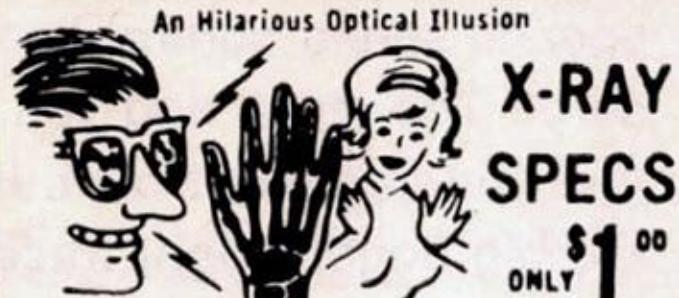
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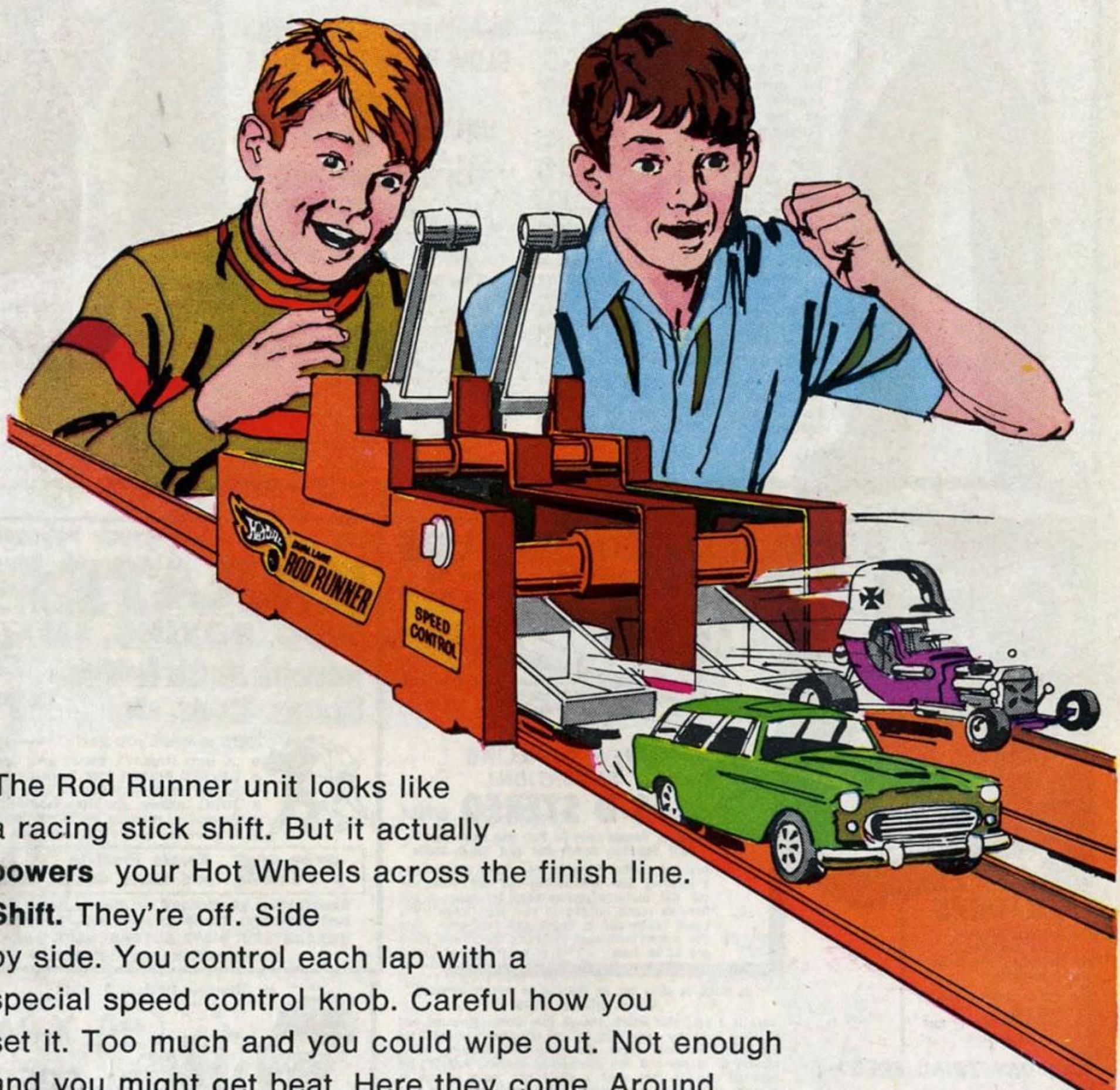
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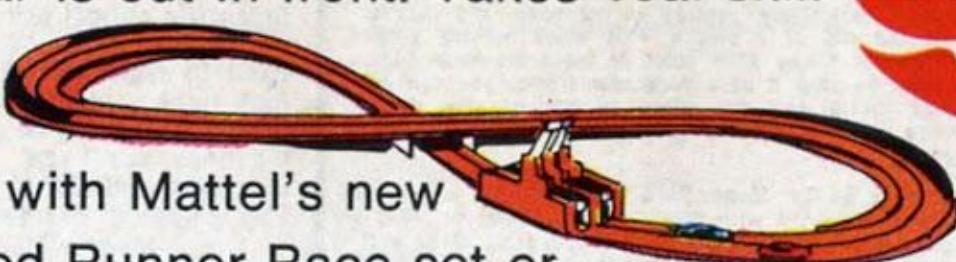
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