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BATMAN

489

FEB 93

# BATMAN



DOUG  
MOENCH

JIM  
APARO

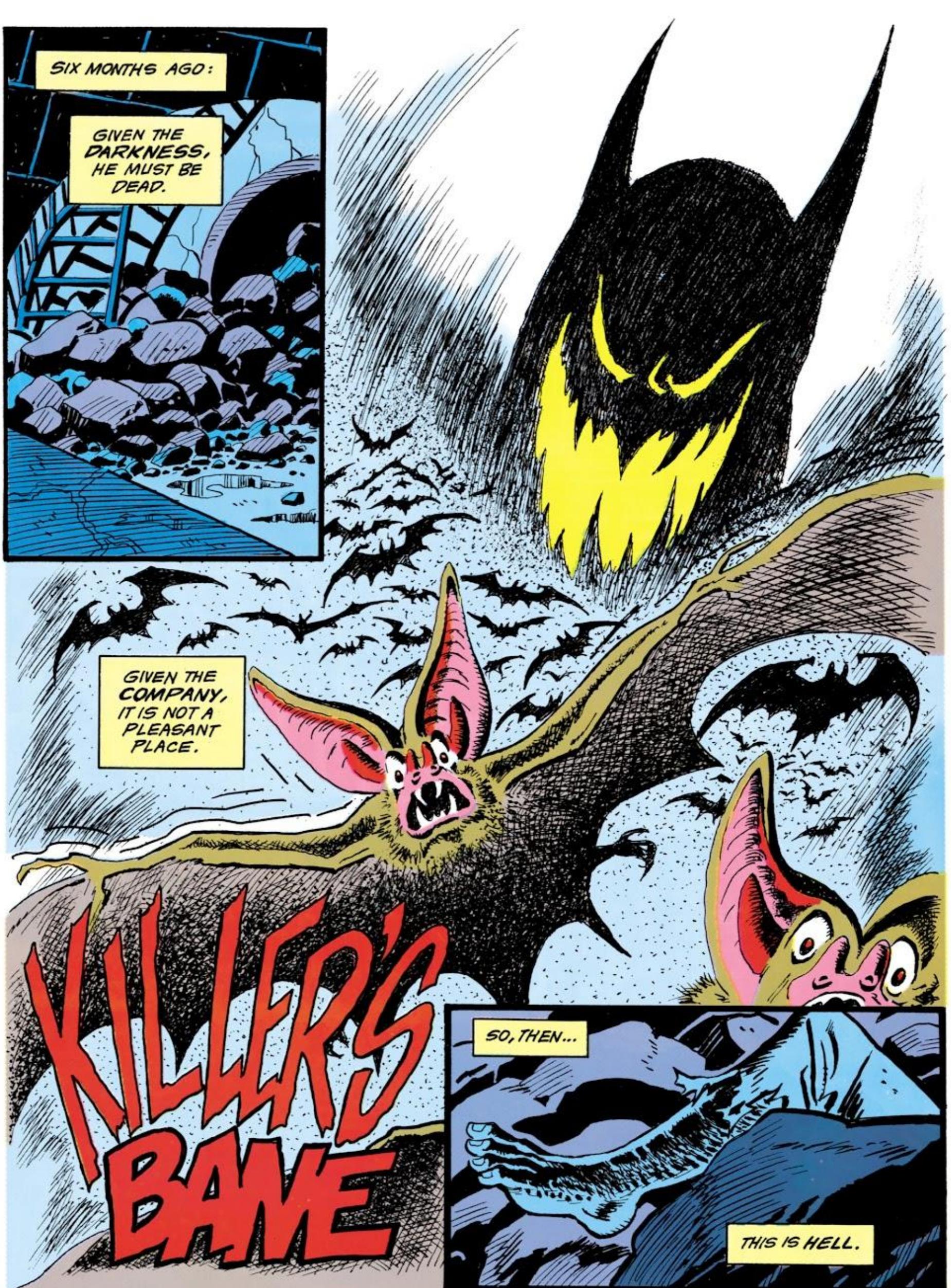
T.C.  
RAM

SIX MONTHS AGO:

GIVEN THE  
DARKNESS,  
HE MUST BE  
DEAD.



GIVEN THE  
COMPANY,  
IT IS NOT A  
PLEASANT  
PLACE.



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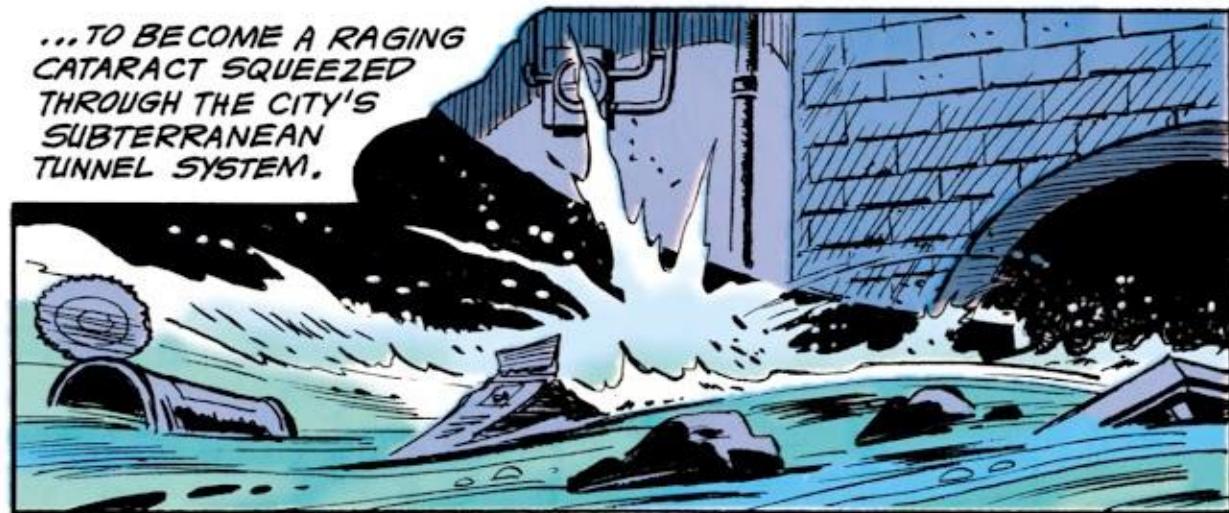
IN AUGUST, GOTHAM ENDURED ITS HARDEST RAINFALL ON RECORD, PEAKING AT SIX INCHES OF PRECIPITATION IN A SINGLE HOUR.



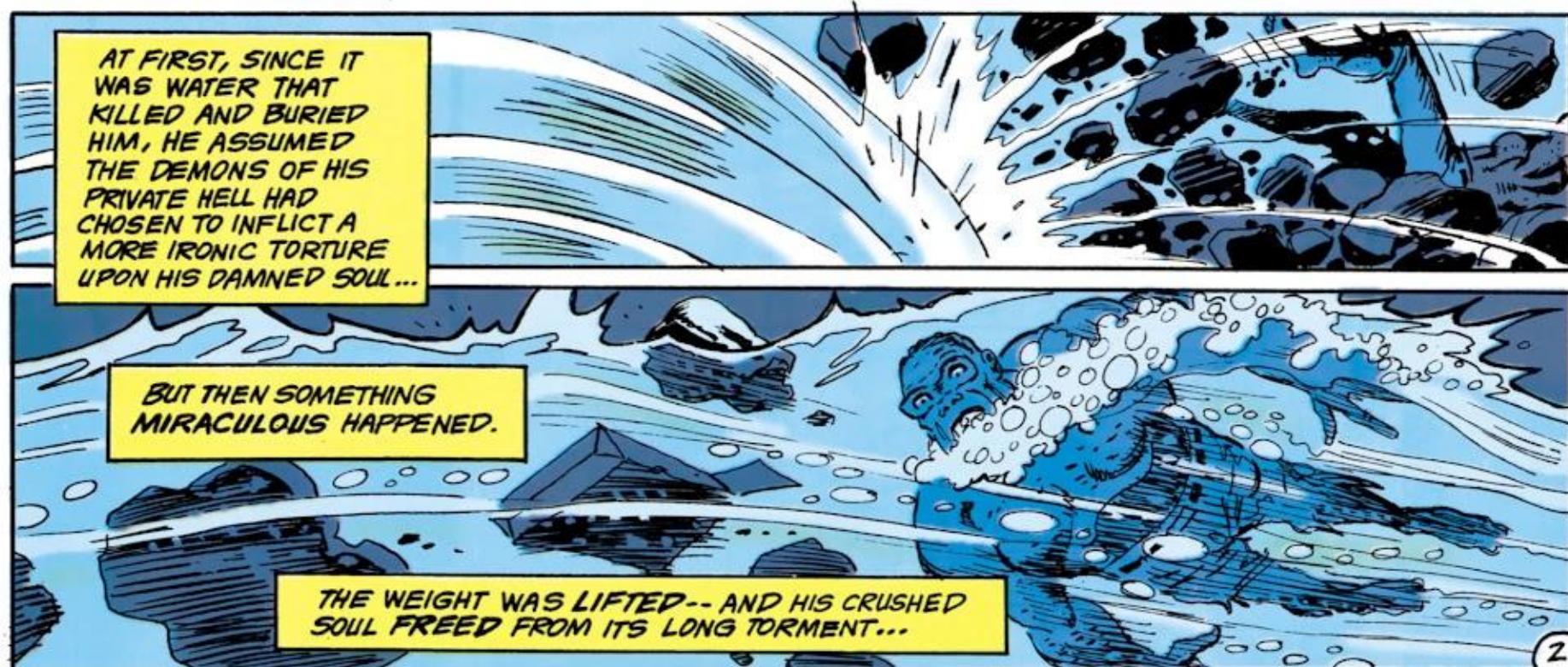
THE ENTIRE DELUGE, HOWEVER, SPANNED NINE HOURS OF RELENTLESS DOWNPOUR...



...TO BECOME A RAGING CATARACT SQUEEZED THROUGH THE CITY'S SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL SYSTEM.



AT FIRST, SINCE IT WAS WATER THAT KILLED AND BURIED HIM, HE ASSUMED THE DEMONS OF HIS PRIVATE HELL HAD CHOSEN TO INFILCT A MORE IRONIC TORTURE UPON HIS DAMNED SOUL...



BUT THEN SOMETHING MIRACULOUS HAPPENED.

THE WEIGHT WAS LIFTED-- AND HIS CRUSHED SOUL FREED FROM ITS LONG TORMENT...



...UNTIL, AT LAST, HE CAME TO BLESSED  
REST ON SOME STRANGE SHORE OF  
SALVATION, THE SMOTHERING DARKNESS  
BANISHED BY CLEANSING LIGHT.

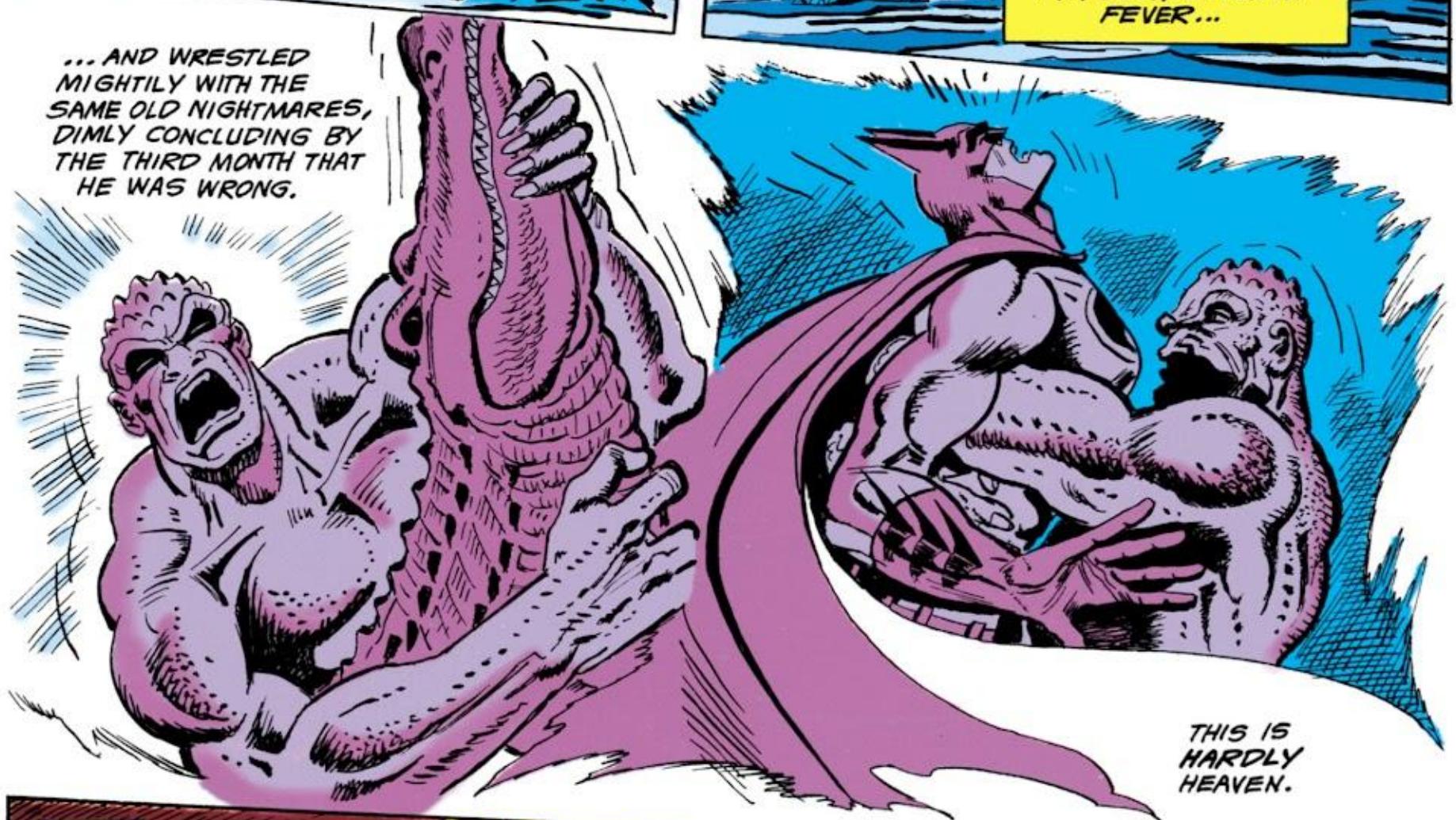
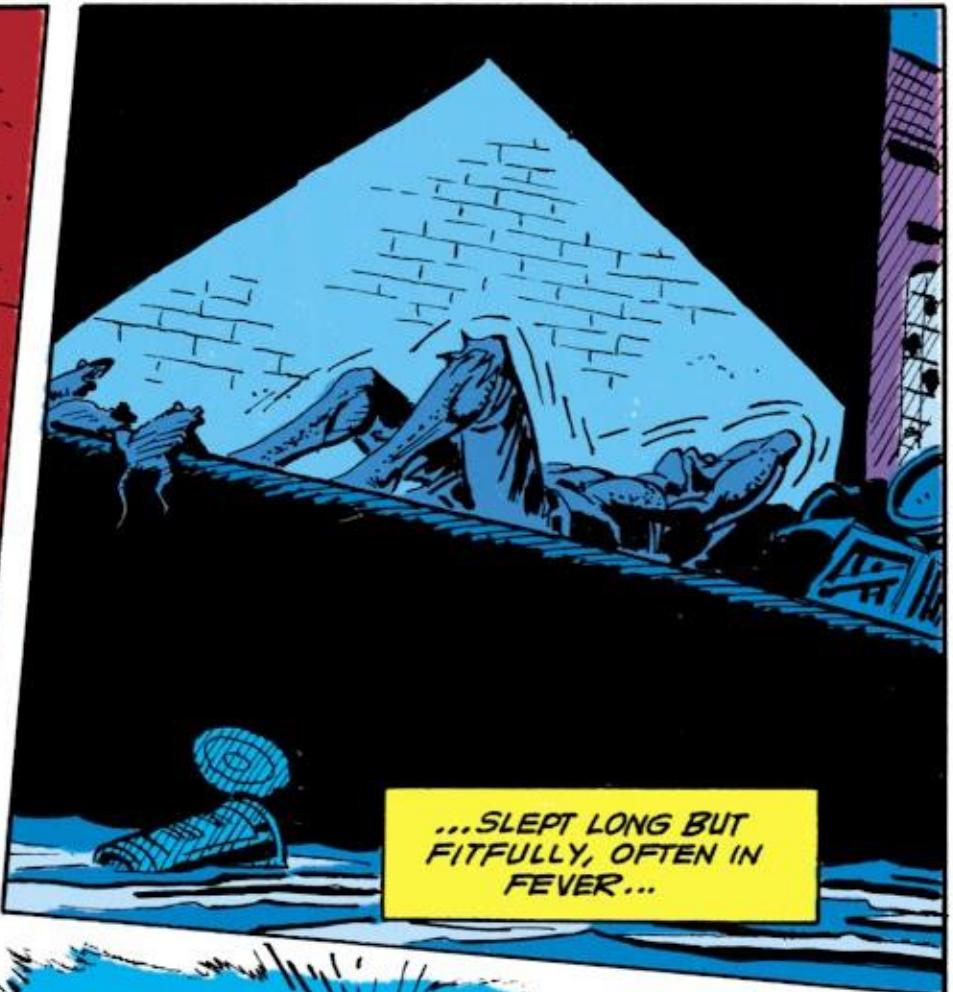


FOR SIX MONTHS HE HAS EATEN FAT FILTHY RATS...



...SLEPT LONG BUT FITFULLY, OFTEN IN FEVER...

...AND WRESTLED MIGHTILY WITH THE SAME OLD NIGHTMARES, DIMLY CONCLUDING BY THE THIRD MONTH THAT HE WAS WRONG.



THIS IS HARDLY HEAVEN.

NOW:



THE TORMENTIAL RAINS OF AUGUST HAVE LONG SINCE GIVEN WAY TO SNOW.

HIS TOUGH SKIN, RED EYES, AND BATTERED BRAIN, HOWEVER, BARELY NOTICE.



HE SLEEPS EVEN WHEN AWAKE, NOW, AND HIS NIGHTMARES ARE COMPLETELY ENROSSING.



NOT RATS AT ALL, BUT  
PEOPLE--PEOPLE AND  
THEIR ENDLESS CRUELTY.

BUT NOW, AFTER HIS LONG  
SLEEP OF NIGHTMARES,  
HE AWAKENS...

AAAIEEEE

YAAHH

HE HAD ALMOST  
FORGOTTEN  
THEM...

WITH A  
VENGEANCE.

THEN IT COULD BE  
SOME KIND OF VIRUS,  
DR. KINSOLVING?  
EPSTEIN-BARR  
OR--

BUT IN  
ANY CASE,  
YOUR BODY NEEDS  
REST BEFORE IT CAN  
ATTACK THE PROBLEM,  
WHETHER ITS CAUSE  
IS AN ACTUAL VIRUS OR  
SOMETHING MORE--

PSYCHOLOGICAL?

I DON'T  
FAVOR DRUG TREATMENT  
AS A RULE, BUT YOUR BODY  
IS CLEARLY EXHAUSTED AND  
FOR SOME REASON YOUR MIND  
REFUSES TO CONCEDE THE  
FACT. EVEN HYPNOSIS  
HASN'T WORKED...

YES--WHATEVER  
OTHER DOCTORS MAY  
TELL YOU, MR. WAYNE,  
SOME VIRUSES ARE  
EXTREMELY DIFFICULT  
TO DETECT, PERHAPS  
IMPOSSIBLE...

YES.

I KNOW--NOR MY  
OWN MEDITATION  
TECHNIQUES.



SO IF YOU WON'T OR CAN'T LET YOURSELF REST -- LET YOUR BODY RECOVER -- WE MAY HAVE TO... PAVE THE WAY... WITH SEDATIVES.



I HAVE...TREMENDOUS RESPONSIBILITIES.

YES, BUT EVEN FOR A BRUCE WAYNE, THIS MUST BE AN ENORMOUS BURDEN OF STRESS.

SO MAYBE I'LL JUST... BURN OUT.

I DON'T THINK SO. HOWEVER LARGE YOUR PROBLEM IS, YOU MUST HAVE AN EVEN LARGER RESERVE OF INNER STRENGTH...



