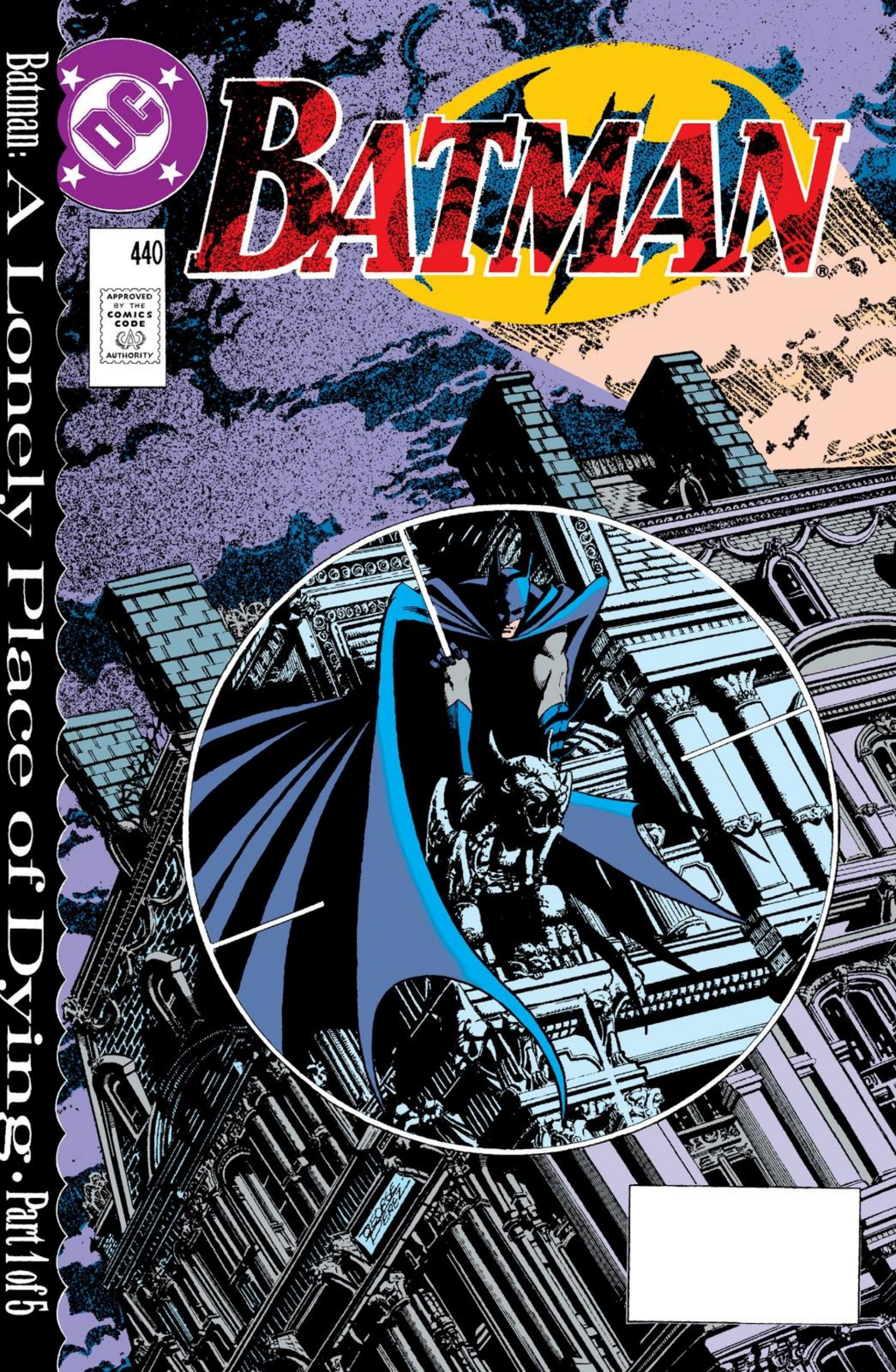

BATMAN
440
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying · Part 1 of 5
GEORGE PEREZ

A LONELY PLACE OF DYING

CHAPTER ONE: SUSPECTS

HE FEELS IT NUMBING HIS LEG-- THE WATER RUSHING LIKE ICY SHARDS JUST INCHES BELOW. HIS THIGH WOUND THROBS, SCARLET SMEARING GREY-BLACK.

A PHLEGMY PIT LODGES IN HIS THROAT AS CALLUSED-FISTS HAMMER UP INTO SOLAR PLEXUS.

IF HE WERE ANYONE ELSE, HE'D GIVE IN TO HIS WOUNDS WITH A FINAL GASP OF BLOOD-SPATTERED AIR.

BUT HE IS **THE BATMAN.**

AND THIS JUST MAKES HIM DETERMINED.

MARV WOLFMAN ° co-plot/writer
GEORGE PEREZ co-plotter
JIM APARO ° MIKE DeCARLO artists
JOHN COSTANZA ° letterer
ADRIENNE ROY colorist
DANIEL RASPLER ° assoc. editor
DENNIS O'NEIL editor
created by BOB KANE

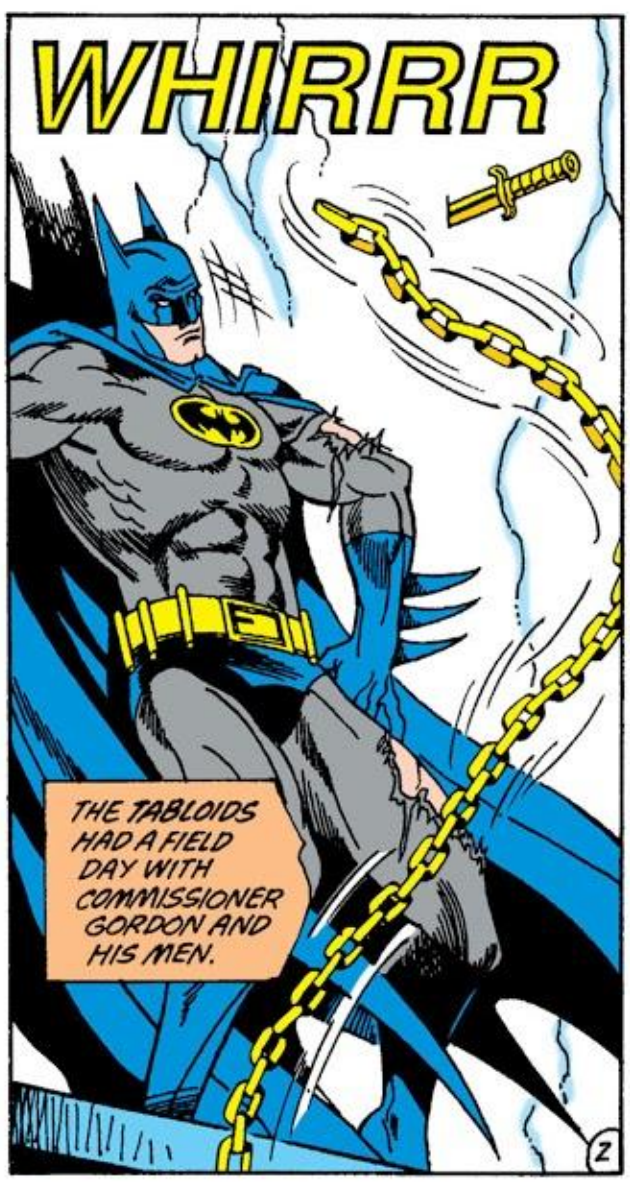
SNAP
HE WAS LED HERE BY A SERIES OF ALL-TOO-OBVIOUS CLUES. SOMEONE DESPERATELY WANTED HIM TO FIND THE RAVAGER.

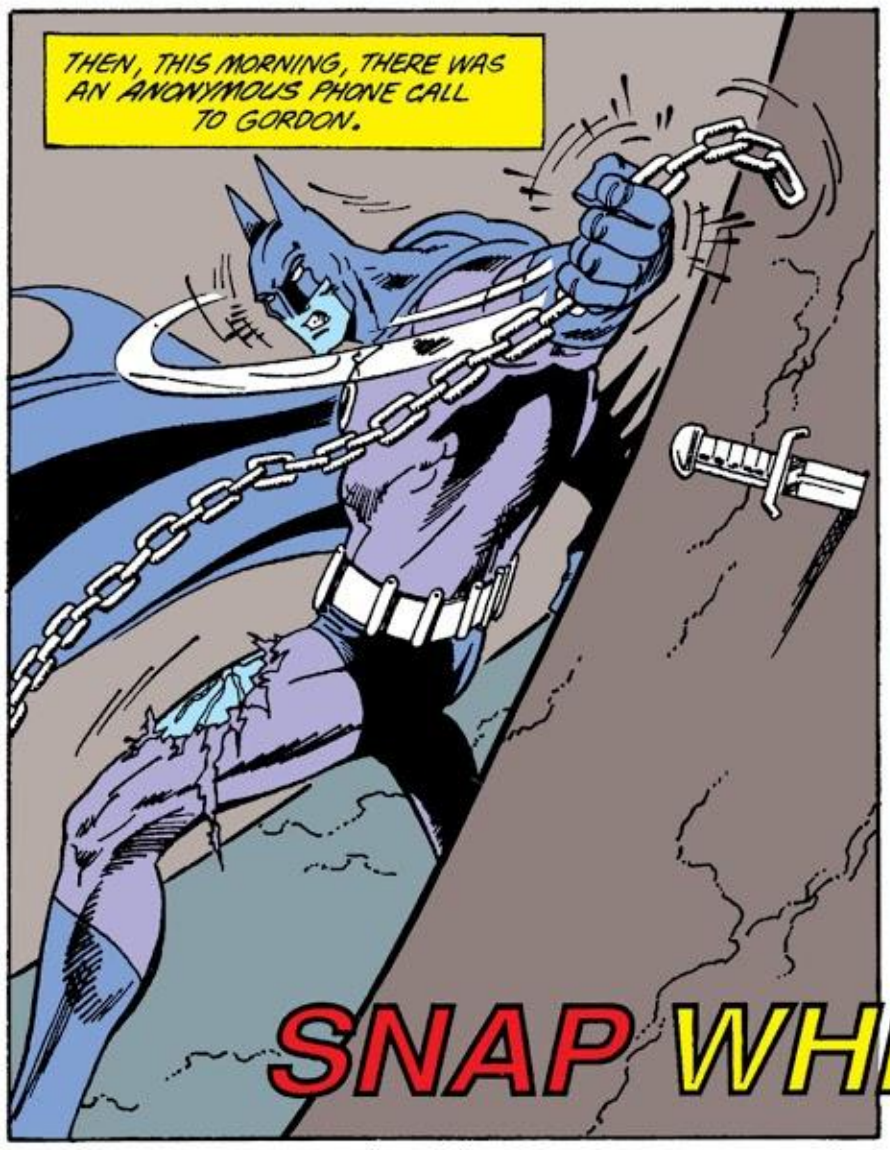
WHIRRR
THE RAVAGER. IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS HE HAD KILLED AS MANY POLICEMEN.

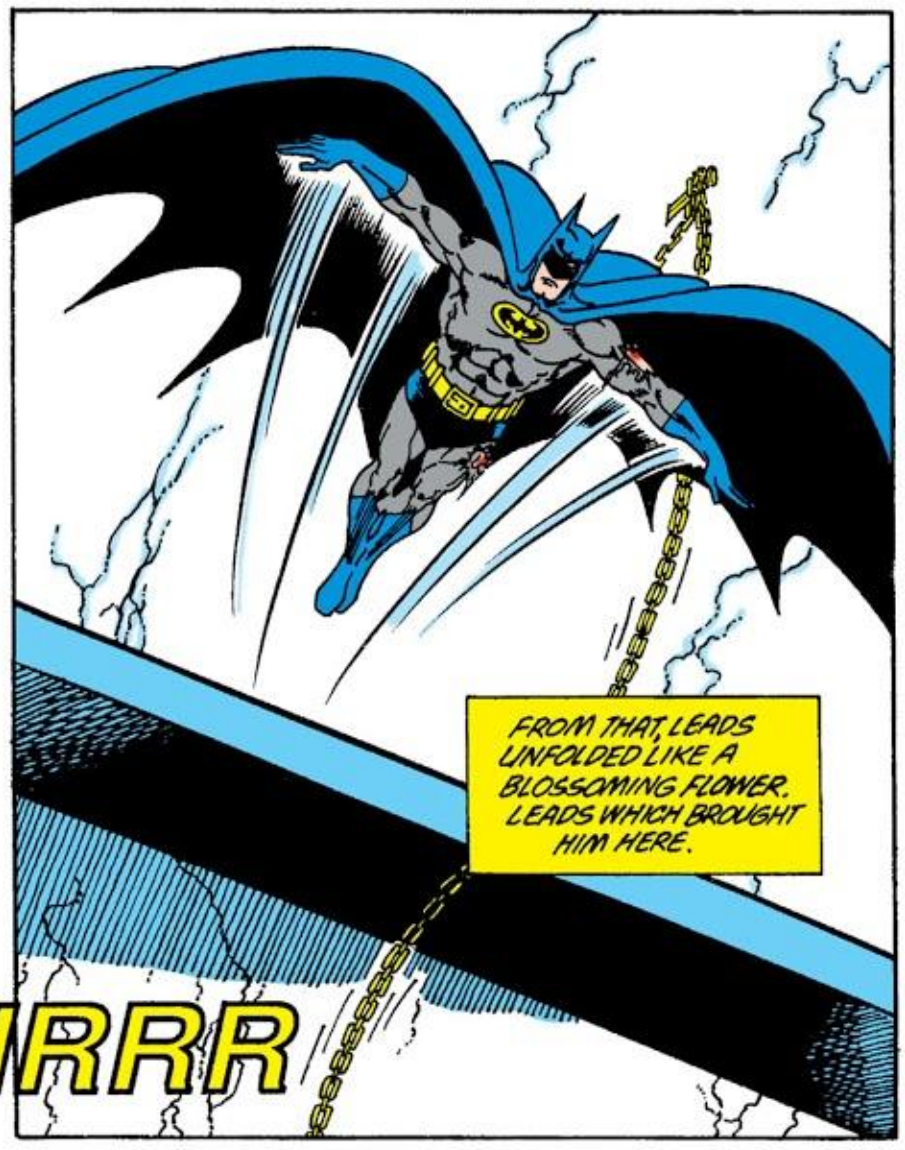
HE HAD FOLLOWED THEM TO THEIR HOMES AND FOR NO APPARENT REASON SHOT THEM WHILE THEY SLEPT.

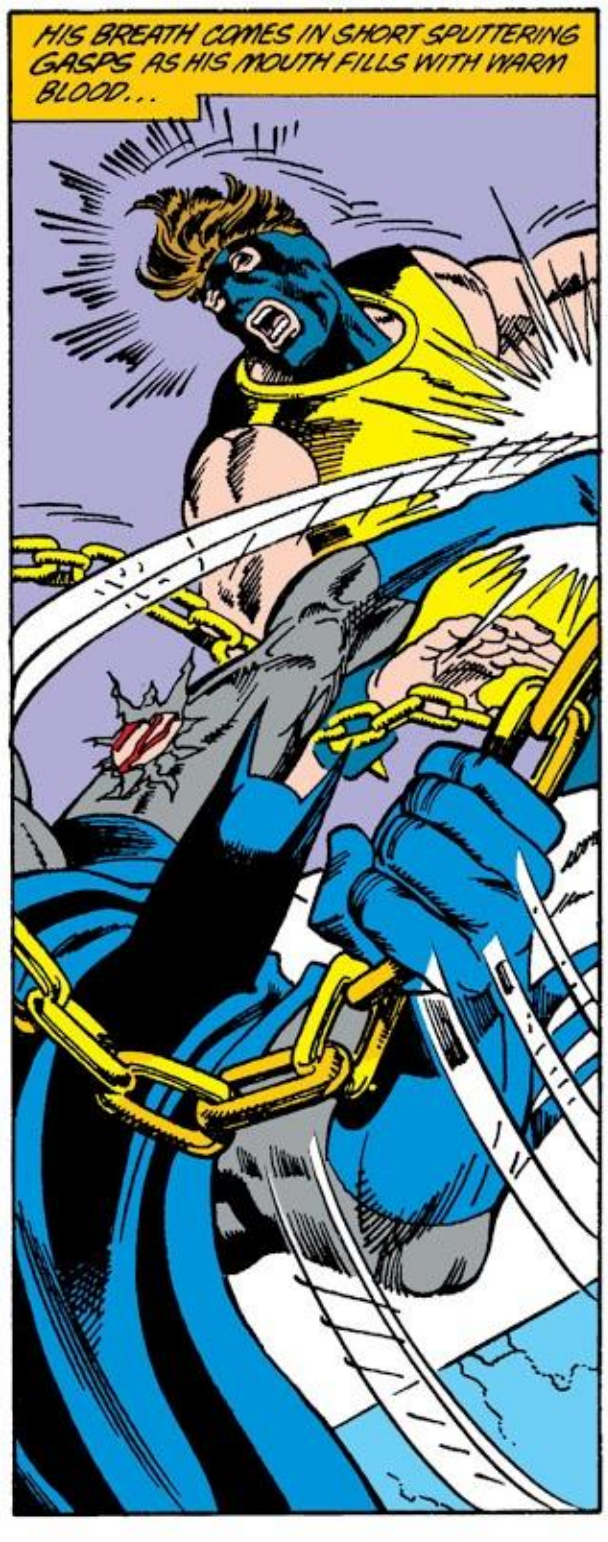
TWO WEEKS PRIOR HE GUNNED DOWN "DANNY AND DAWN", THE FAMOUS BROTHER-SISTER ROCK ACT IN FRONT OF 50,000 FANS.
2

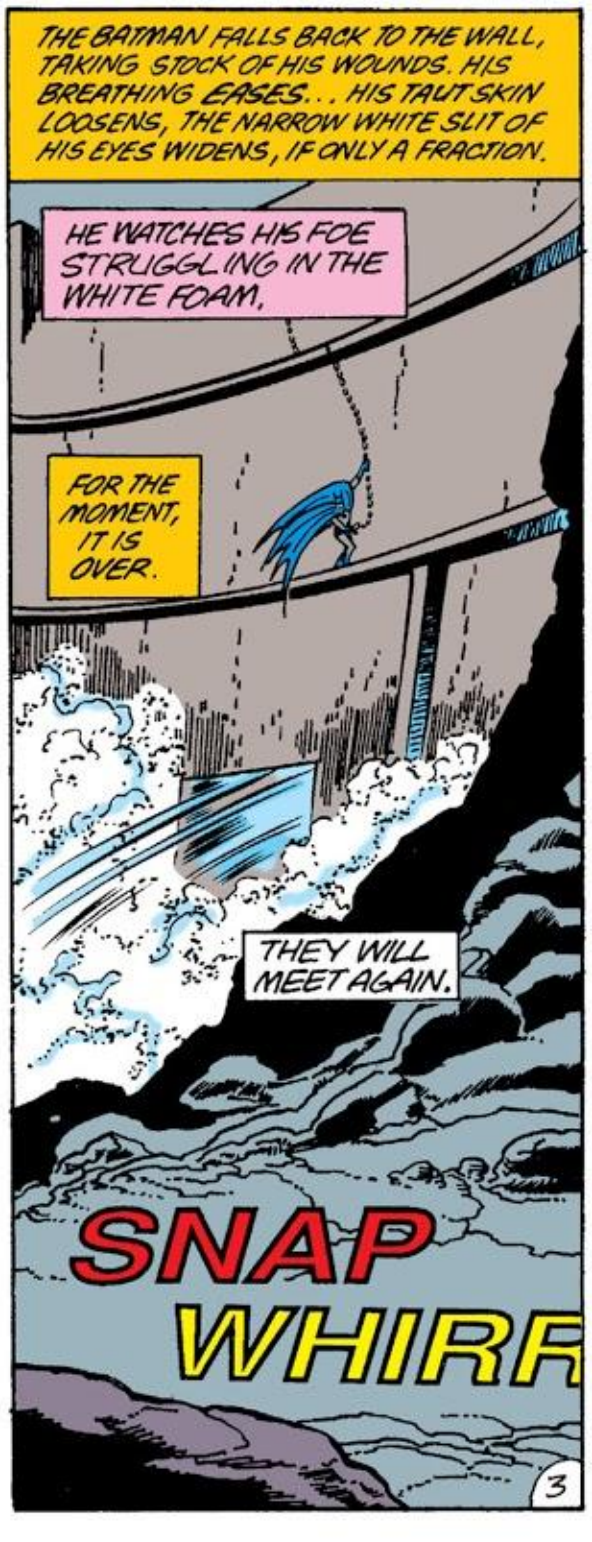
SNAP
THERE WAS NO CONNECTION. NO SEEMING REASON FOR THE KILLINGS. AND THE POLICE HAD NO CLUES-- OR LEADS.

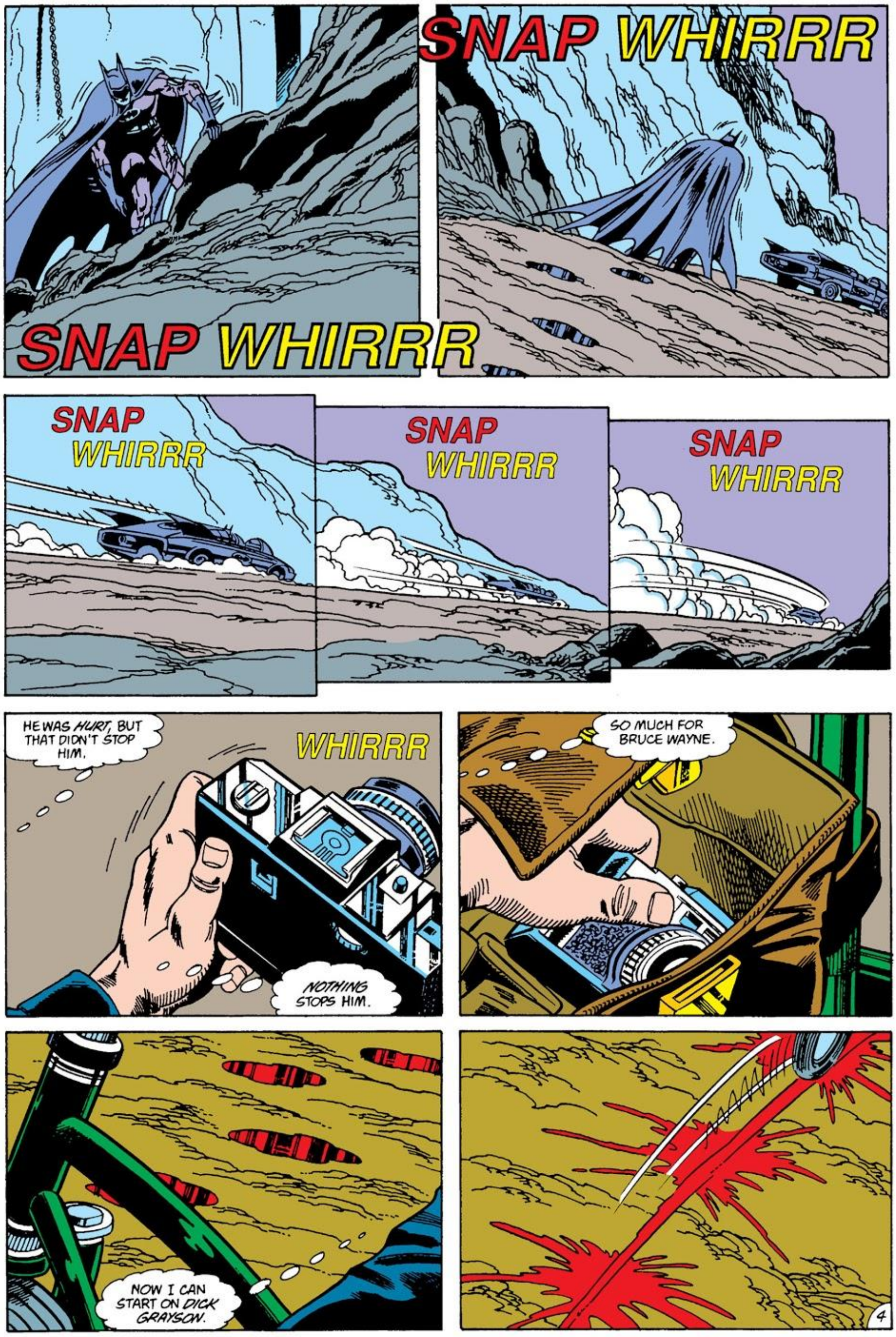

WHIRRR
THE TABLOIDS HAD A FIELD DAY WITH COMMISSIONER GORDON AND HIS MEN.
2

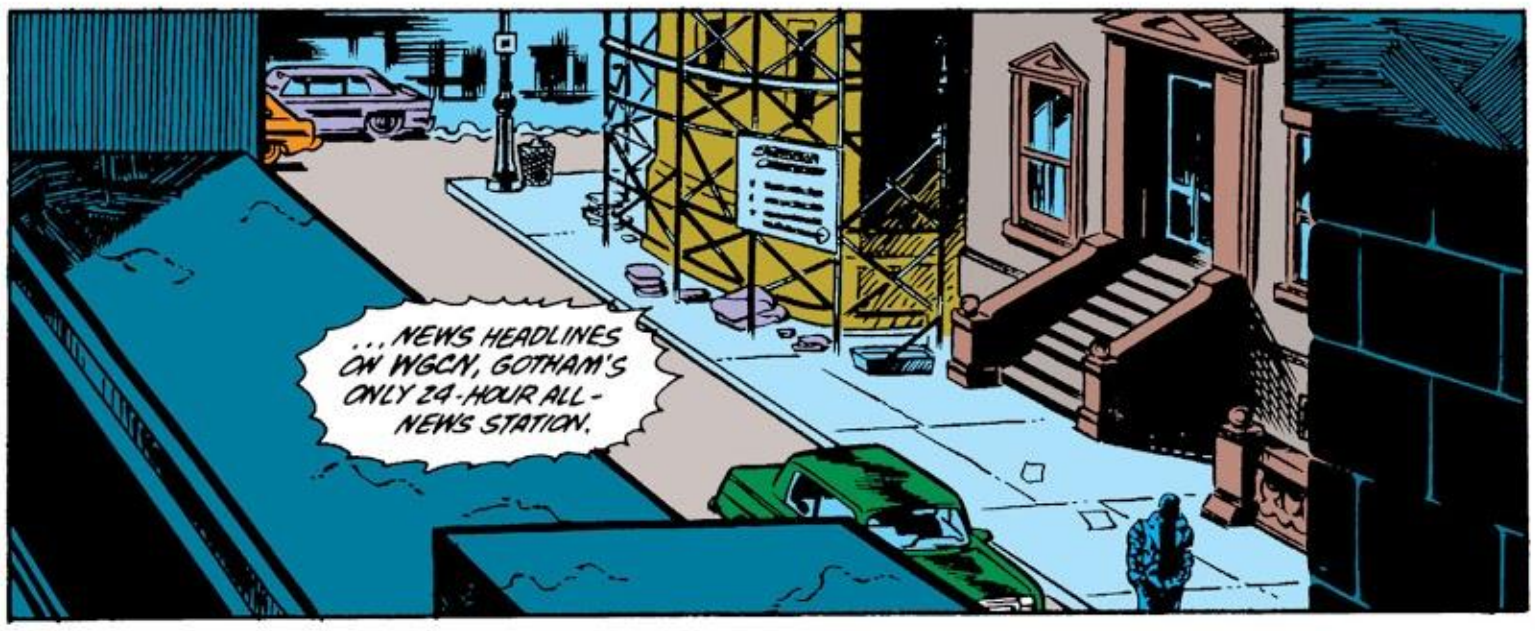

THEN, THIS MORNING, THERE WAS AN ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL TO GORDON.
SNAP WHIRRR

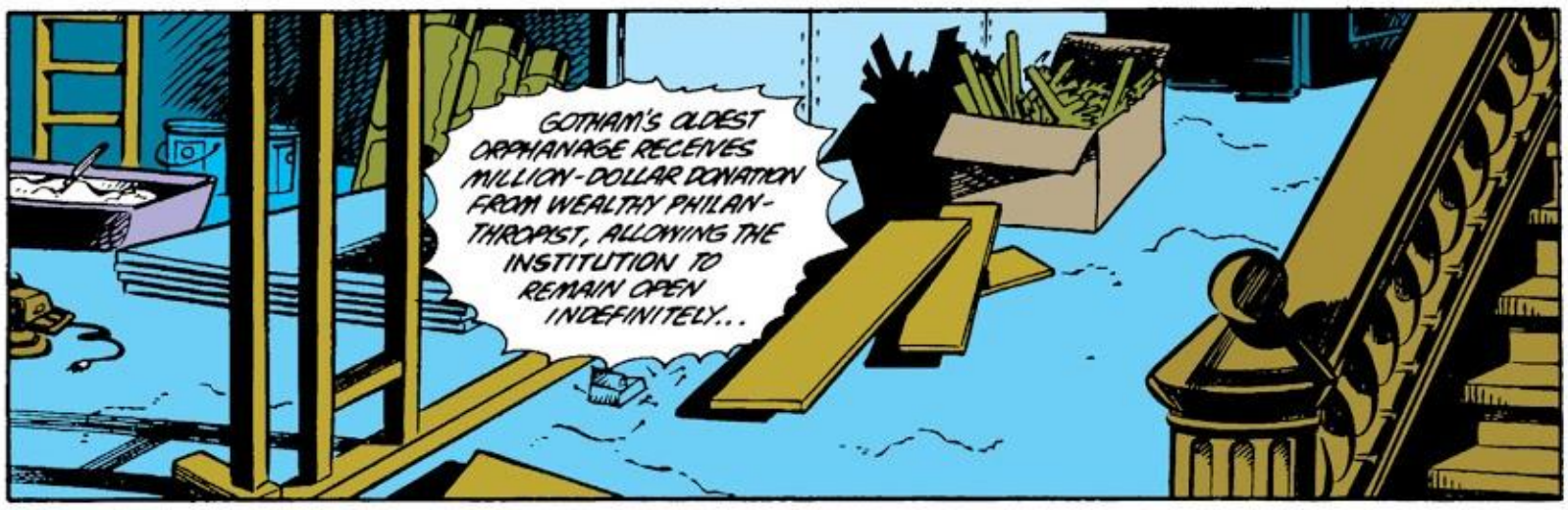

FROM THAT, LEADS UNFOLDED LIKE A BLOSSOMING FLOWER. LEADS WHICH BROUGHT HIM HERE.

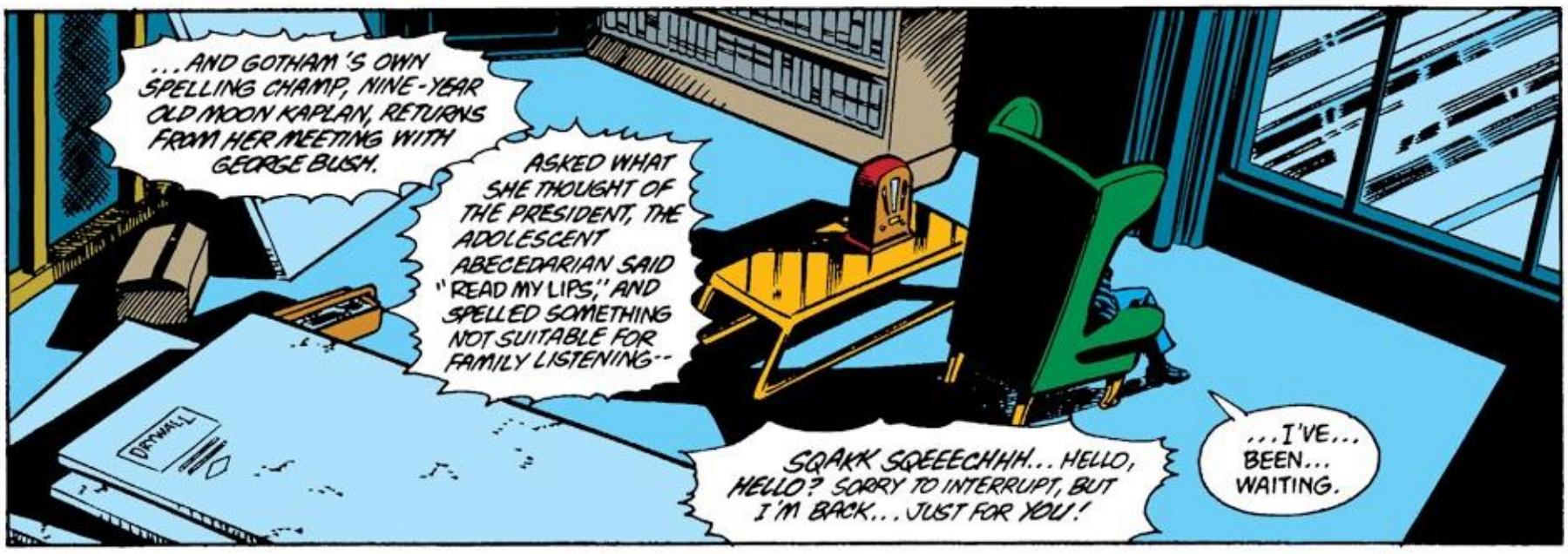

HIS BREATH COMES IN SHORT SPUTTERING GASPS AS HIS MOUTH FILLS WITH WARM BLOOD...


THE BATMAN FALLS BACK TO THE WALL, TAKING STOCK OF HIS WOUNDS. HIS BREATHING EASES... HIS TAUT SKIN LOOSENS, THE NARROW WHITE SLIT OF HIS EYES WIDENS, IF ONLY A FRACTION.
HE WATCHES HIS FOE STRUGGLING IN THE WHITE FOAM.
FOR THE MOMENT, IT IS OVER.
THEY WILL MEET AGAIN.
SNAP WHIRR


SNAP WHIRRR
SNAP WHIRRR
SNAP WHIRRR
SNAP WHIRRR
SNAP WHIRRR
HE WAS HURT, BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP HIM.
WHIRRR
NOTHING STOPS HIM.
SO MUCH FOR BRUCE WAYNE.
NOW I CAN START ON DICK GRAYSON.


...NEWS HEADLINES ON WGCN, GOTHAM'S ONLY 24-HOUR ALL-NEWS STATION.


GOTHAM'S OLDEST ORPHANAGE RECEIVES MILLION-DOLLAR DONATION FROM WEALTHY PHILANTHROPIST, ALLOWING THE INSTITUTION TO REMAIN OPEN INDEFINITELY...


...AND GOTHAM'S OWN SPELLING CHAMP, NINE-YEAR OLD MOON KAPLAN, RETURNS FROM HER MEETING WITH GEORGE BUSH.
ASKED WHAT SHE THOUGHT OF THE PRESIDENT, THE ADOLESCENT ABECEDARIAN SAID "READ MY LIPS," AND SPELLED SOMETHING NOT SUITABLE FOR FAMILY LISTENING--
SQAKK SQEEECHHH... HELLO, HELLO? SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BUT I'M BACK... JUST FOR YOU!
...I'VE... BEEN... WAITING.
DRYWALL

WHO ARE YOU?
WHO AM I? BETTER ASK WHO WE ARE. C'MON, PAL--I'M YOU, YOU'RE ME.
YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN GOING CRAZY FOR YEARS.

TA TA. GUESS WHAT?
CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE SUCCEEDED! YOU'RE OFFICIALLY CRACKED. SCHIZOID! DAFFY AS A DUCK!
LOOK IN THE MIRROR, PAL. YOU'RE NOT TALKING, BUT YOUR LIPS ARE MOVING.
IF THAT AIN'T PROOF THAT YOU'RE SEVERAL CHAPTERS SHY A BOOK, NOTHING IS.

SO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO TODAY, PAL? CLIMB A WATER TOWER AND TAKE POT-SHOTS AT PEDESTRIANS?
NAH, DID THAT ALREADY.

WE'RE WAITING. WHAT DO WE WANT TO DO?

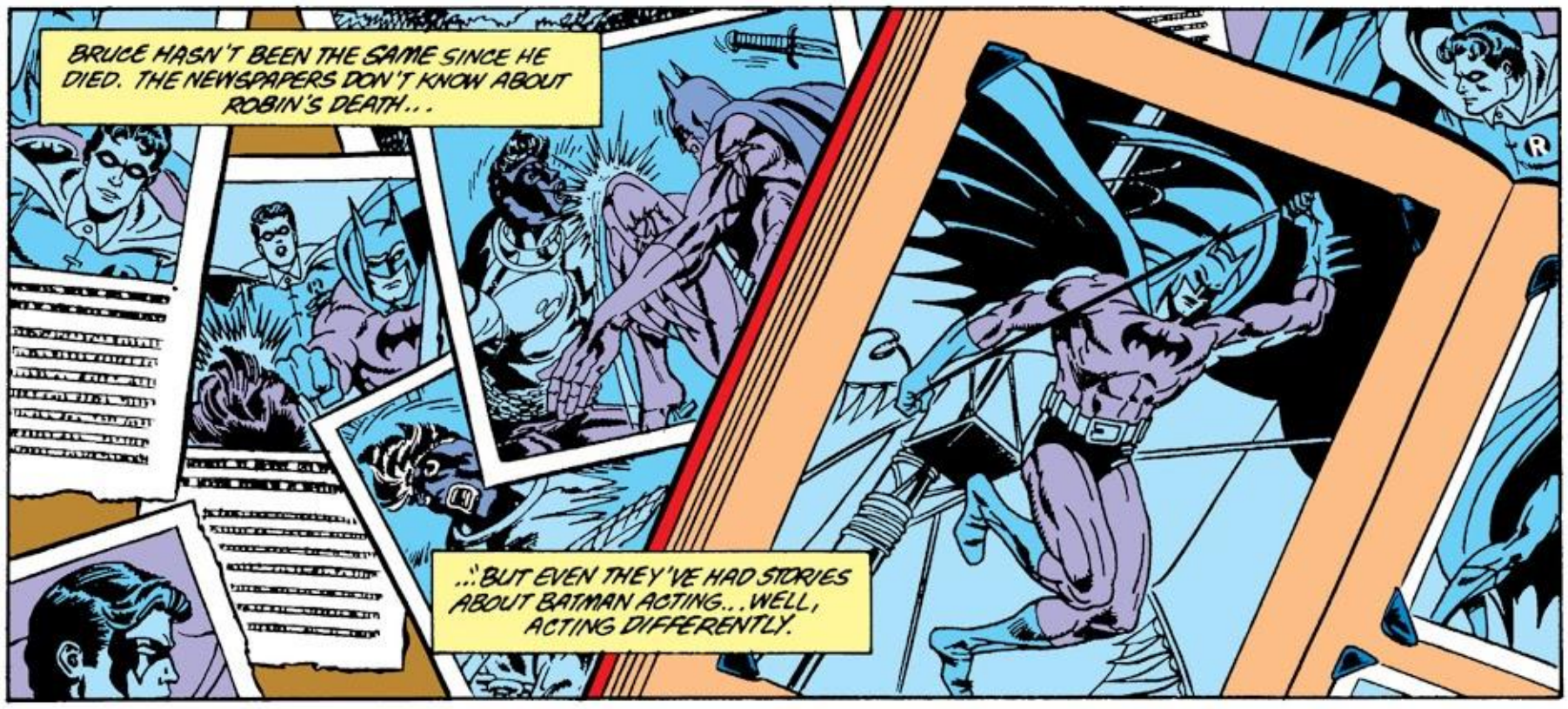
C'MON, YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I DON'T WANT TO ANY MORE.
SURE YOU DO. YOU JUST DON'T KNOW IT.
FOR US-- JUST SAY IT. C'MON. PWETTY PLEASE.

BUT I SENT RAVAGER TO DO IT AND HE FAILED.
SAY IT, PAL. SAY IT.
OKAY, OKAY. WE KILL BATMAN.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU GOT THE RIGHT ANSWER. DON PARDO, TELL THE MAN WHAT HE'S WON!
WON? WHY FRIEND, YOU'VE WON BATMAN'S ITINERARY FOR ONE FULL WEEK.

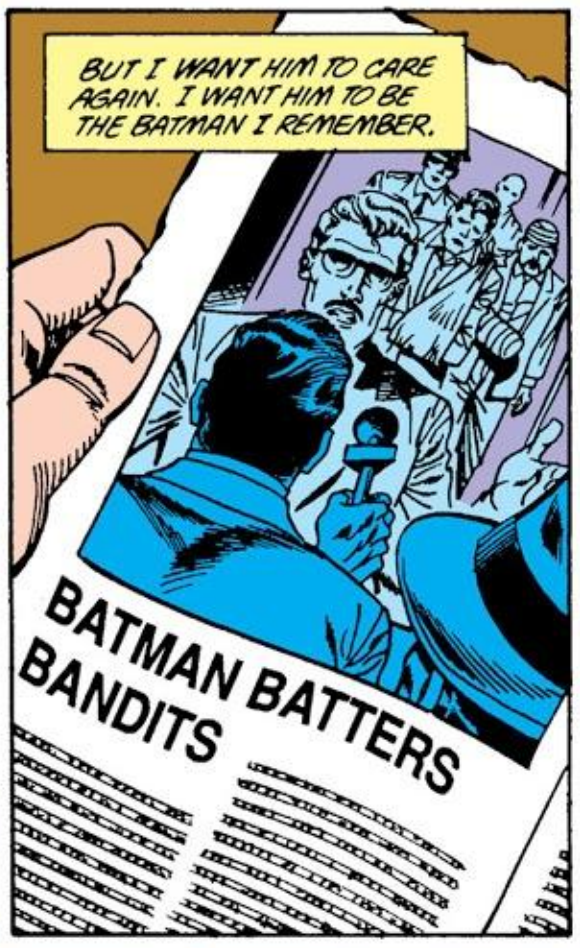
YOU'LL KNOW WHERE TO KILL HIM WHILE HE'S BUSTING UP SOME DRUG RUNNERS.
SMITHSON CONSTRUCTION
OR MAYBE YOU'LL JUST BLOW HIM TO BITE-SIZED BAT-BITS WHEN HE'S CLOSING IN ON SOME HAPLESS MURDERER WHICH WE'VE SET UP FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE.

"YOU'LL BE GIVEN A THOUSAND CHANCES TO SEE YOUR DREAM KILL COME TRUE.
"AND IT'S ALL YOURS. CONGRATULATIONS. IT COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED TO A BETTER PSYCHO IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF.
"AND NOW BACK TO OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED REPORT:
... MEETING THE PRESIDENT WAS A DREAM COME TRUE."
2:24
4:47
HE LOOKS SO TIRED. HE HAS SINCE JASON PASSED AWAY.
5:18


BRUCE HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE HE DIED. THE NEWSPAPERS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ROBIN'S DEATH...
...BUT EVEN THEY'VE HAD STORIES ABOUT BATMAN ACTING...WELL, ACTING DIFFERENTLY.

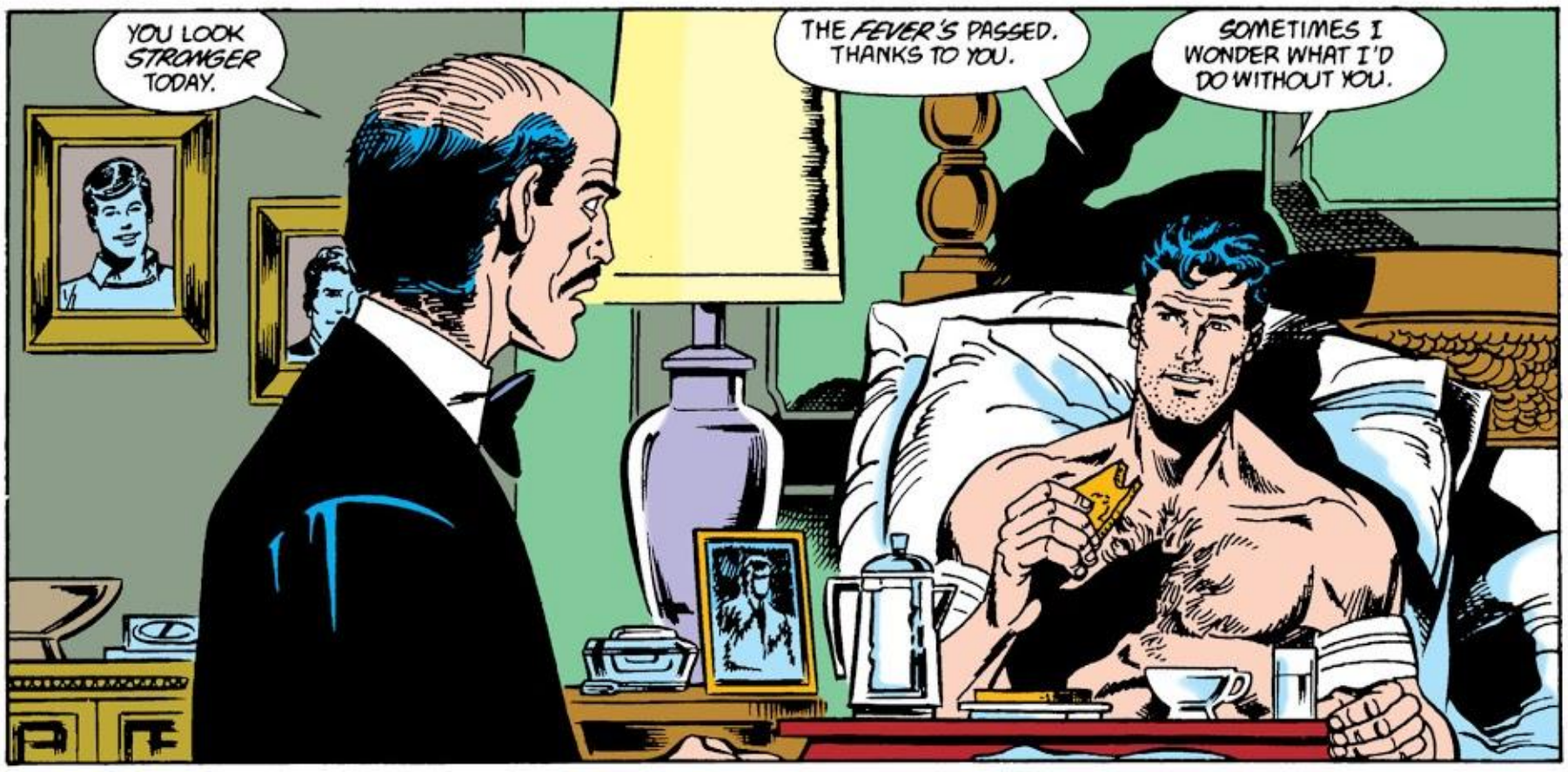
HE SEEMED HAPPIER WITH DICK.
POLICE

GOTHAM
BATMAN ATTACKS MOB
BATMAN ON THE RAMPAGE
BATMAN COLLARS DOPE RING
FIVE ARRES IN ONE NIG
NOW, I GUESS IT'S LIKE HE JUST DOESN'T CARE.


BUT I WANT HIM TO CARE AGAIN. I WANT HIM TO BE THE BATMAN I REMEMBER.
BATMAN BATTERS BANDITS

AND I DO REMEMBER HIM...
...AND I REMEMBER DICK...

...I REMEMBER IT ALL."


YOU LOOK STRONGER TODAY.
THE FEVER'S PASSED. THANKS TO YOU.
SOMETIMES I WONDER WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU.

AT TIMES...
... SO DO I.
SIR--

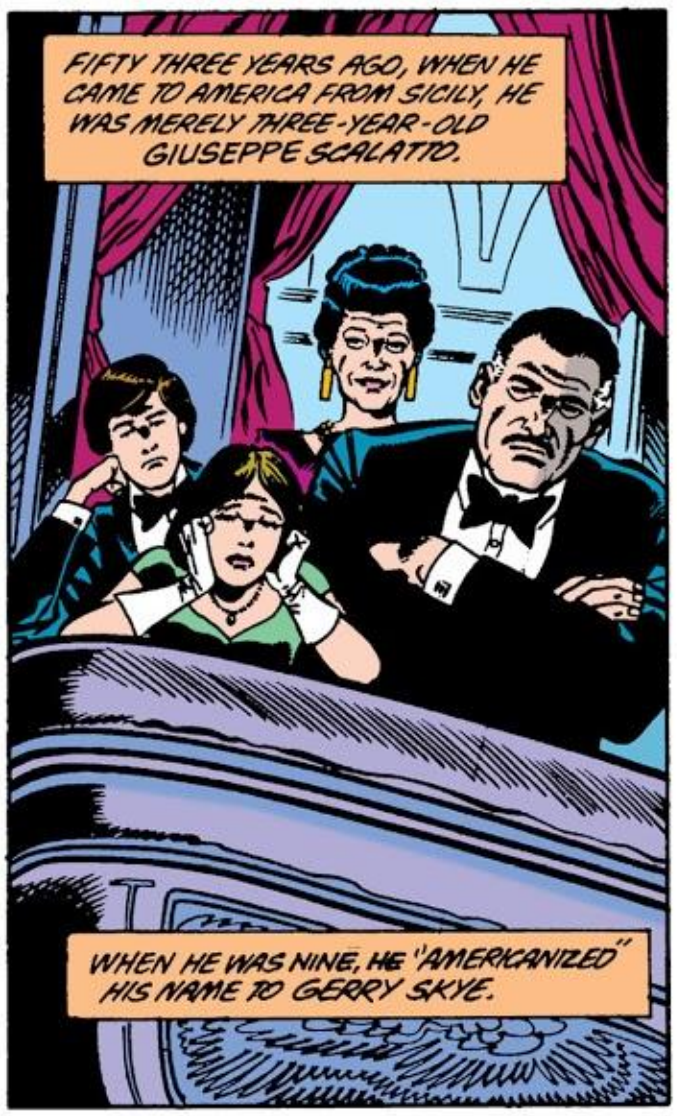
--PERHAPS THIS ISN'T MY PLACE, BUT...
...BUT I CARE FOR YOUR WELL-BEING.

WHEN I FIRST ENTERED YOUR EMPLOY, I WAS IMPRESSED BY YOUR EXTRAORDINARY PLANNING AND DEDUCTIVE SKILLS.
YOU SPENT AS MUCH TIME ORCHESTRATING YOUR ACTIONS AS EXECUTING THEM.

ASIDE FROM MUSCLE STRAIN AND AN OCCASIONAL PULLED LIGAMENT, YOUR NEED FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION WAS MINIMAL.

CONVERSELY, SINCE MASTER JASON'S DEATH, YOUR ATTENTION TO DETAIL HAS BEEN... UNIMPRESSIVE TO SAY THE LEAST.
AND IT IS HARDLY COINCIDENTAL THAT YOU HAVE REQUIRED ALMOST CONSTANT DOCTORING.

IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS, YOU HAVE BEEN SHOT TWICE. STABBED TWICE. YOU HAVE BEEN BLOODIED AND BLUDGEONED BY FOES YOU ONCE WOULD HAVE DANCED AROUND WITHOUT THINKING.
I DISTINCTLY REMEMBER WHEN YOU FIRST INSTRUCTED MASTER DICK IN COMBAT, YOU SAID, "WE'RE NOT BRUTALIZERS. WE'VE GOT TO THINK WITH OUR HEADS, NOT WITH OUR FISTS."
SINCE MASTER JASON'S DEATH, YOU'VE CHANGED.
IT SEEMS, SIR, THAT YOU NOW DO ALL YOUR THINKING WITH THOSE SADLY BRUISED AND BATTERED KNUCKLES.
YESTERDAY YOU COLLAPSED FROM YOUR WOUNDS. I CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT NEXT TIME YOU WILL SURVIVE THEM.
SIR, AS LOATH AS YOU MIGHT BE TO HEAR THIS, I DO NOT INTEND TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE PLAYING NURSE.
SIR--?
10


FIFTY THREE YEARS AGO, WHEN HE CAME TO AMERICA FROM SICILY, HE WAS MERELY THREE-YEAR-OLD GIUSEPPE SCALATTO.
WHEN HE WAS NINE, HE "AMERICANIZED" HIS NAME TO GERRY SKYE.

OVER THE FOLLOWING FORTY YEARS GERRY ACCUMULATED A FORTUNE BY JOINING THE FAMILY BUSINESS.
THAT'S THE FAMILY. NOT HIS FAMILY.
PSSST. SKYE.

WHATEVER IT IS--LATER.
NOW. "PAYROLL ACTIVATION."
OKAY, OKAY-- NOW.

GERRY, WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING. DON'T WORRY. ENJOY.

THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD.
YOU HAVE A COUPLE OF BOYS THAT HAVE BEEN CAUSING YOU TROUBLE.
YEAH. PICO AND ROBERTSON. HOW'D YOU KNOW?
I JUST DO. WE CAN TAKE THEM OUT AND BATMAN AT THE SAME TIME. TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE.

TOMORROW. THE ZWEI BROTHERS WAREHOUSE. TWO A.M.
NOW GO BACK TO YOUR NICE WIFE.
THE FAT LADY'S ABOUT TO SING.

AHAHAH
HAHAH

I DID IT -- I SET UP THE HEIST. BATMAN'S GOING TO GET IT.
AREN'T YOU PLEASED?
WHERE ARE YOU? I SAID, "AREN'T YOU PLEASED WITH WHAT I DID?"

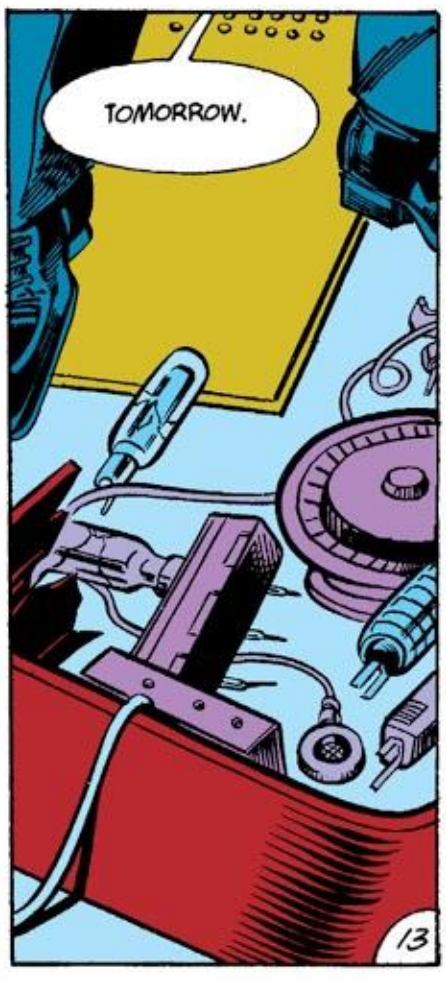
KLIK
YOU THERE NOW?
...SALE FOR TWELVE HOURS ONLY. FORTY PERCENT OFF ALL MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CLOTHING...
NOW, I DON'T MIND FORTY PERCENT OFF WOMEN'S CLOTHES--
--BUT MEN, KEEP YOUR PANTS ON!

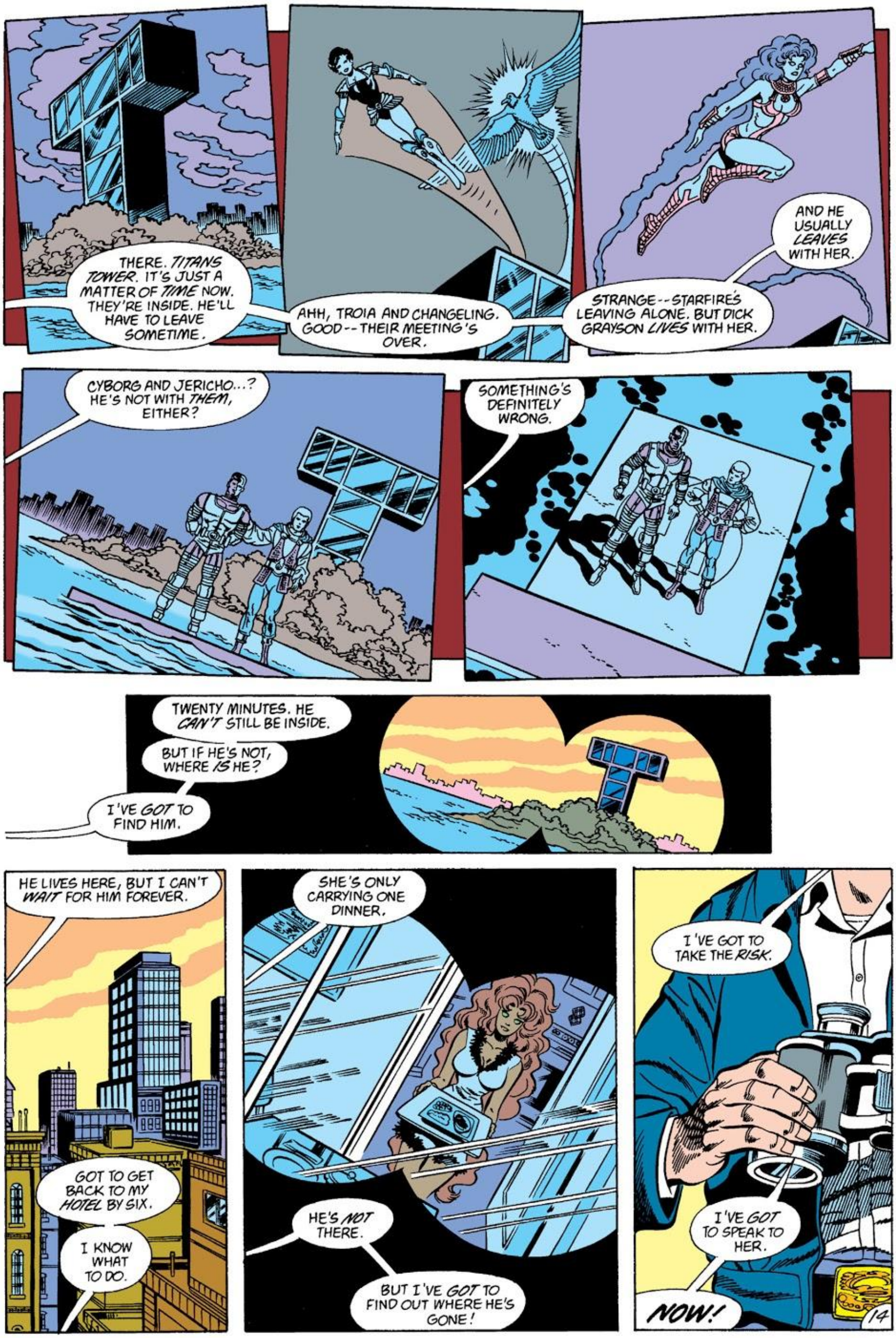
SQUAKKK SQREEE LET'S NOT CONGRATULATE OURSELVES YET, PAL. WE'VE STILL GOT WORK TO DO AND BATS TO KILL...
I KNOW... I KNOW, EVEN IF I DON'T WANT--

...SO GET GOING...
...DOWN TO ART STAMPLER CLOTHIERS, 246 EIGHTH STREET, TAKE THE ELEVATOR TO THE SECOND FLOOR.
WHAT? WHERE ARE YOU? DON'T GO. DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE. BY MYSELF. JUST ME. ONE.

OKAY, ALL RIGHT-- CALM DOWN. THERE'S NO ONE HERE... NO ONE'S BEEN HERE.
I'M TALKING TO MYSELF. BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THINGS.

BATMAN STILL HAS TO DIE. TOMORROW... THE TWENTY-SECOND.. HE DIES...
TOMORROW!


TOMORROW.


THERE. TITANS TOWER. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME NOW. THEY'RE INSIDE. HE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE SOMETIME.
AHH, TROIA AND CHANGELING. GOOD--THEIR MEETING'S OVER.
STRANGE--STARFIRE'S LEAVING ALONE. BUT DICK GRAYSON LIVES WITH HER.
AND HE USUALLY LEAVES WITH HER.
CYBORG AND JERICHO...? HE'S NOT WITH THEM, EITHER?
SOMETHING'S DEFINITELY WRONG.
TWENTY MINUTES. HE CAN'T STILL BE INSIDE.
BUT IF HE'S NOT, WHERE IS HE?
I'VE GOT TO FIND HIM.
HE LIVES HERE, BUT I CAN'T WAIT FOR HIM FOREVER.
GOT TO GET BACK TO MY HOTEL BY SIX.
I KNOW WHAT TO DO.
SHE'S ONLY CARRYING ONE DINNER.
HE'S NOT THERE.
BUT I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHERE HE'S GONE!
I'VE GOT TO TAKE THE RISK.
I'VE GOT TO SPEAK TO HER.
NOW!

THE WORD HIT THE STREET LAST NIGHT. SOMETHING GOING DOWN AT ZWEI BROTHERS. SO HE'S BEEN SITTING HERE SINCE ELEVEN, WAITING, THINKING, TIME SLOWLY PASSING BELOW HIM.
EACH MINUTE VIBRATES, SHOCKING HIM OUT OF HIS REVERIE, REMINDING HIM OF HIS SOLITUDE.
ZWEI BROTHERS IMPORTERS
TICK...TICK...TICK...TICK..
GEARS JERK INTO PLACE, PAUSE, THEN CRANK ON IN AN ENDLESS CIRCLE.
HE SITS AND WAITS.
TICK...TICK...TICK...TI--
YOU SURE THIS IS THE PLACE, MAN?
YEAH, ZWEI BROTHERS. THIS'S GOTTA BE IT.
22 SECOND STREET
DON'T LIKE IT HERE, MAN. DON'T LIKE COMIN' HERE DURIN' THE DAY, LET 'LONE NOW!
WE'RE NOT BEIN' PAID TO LIKE IT. C'MON.
EXCELLENT. THEY'RE ALL IN PLACE.
BOOKS? MAN, I DON'T GET IT. WE'RE STEALIN' BOOKS?
THE BOSS SAID WE WERE BEIN' PAID TO BY THE PUBLISHERS. THEY GET THE INSURANCE AN' THEN SELL 'EM AT A DISCOUNT ON STREET CORNERS...
THEY GET THEIR MONEY TWICE-- AND THE WRITERS GET ZIP!
BUT BOOKS? MAN, LIKE WHO READS ANYMORE?
YOU SHOULD.
WHO SAID--

BATMAN!?!
THE BOSS SAID HE'D SHOW. JUST LIKE HE DID FOR THE RAVAGER!
BUT WE'RE READY!
BAM BA
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
16

BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM

WHAT TH--

YOU'RE DEAD MEAT, BATMAN! DEAD MEAT!
ALFRED'S VOICE KEEPS RUNNING THROUGH HIS MIND: "WE'RE NOT BRUTALIZERS. WE'VE GOT TO THINK WITH OUR HEADS, NOT WITH OUR FISTS."

BAM BAM B
"THINK...WITH... OUR... HEADS..."
"THINK!!"

SOMETHING IS WRONG... SOMETHING--
SPLANG
THE PUNK MENTIONED THE RAVAGER. THERE'S A CONNECTION WITH THE RAVAGER?
"THINK WITH OUR HEADS, NOT WITH OUR FISTS."

ISOLATED, SEEMINGLY UNCONNECTED FRAGMENTS FALL INTO PLACE.
BAM BAM

BAM BAM BAM BA
TWO WEEKS AGO--TWO POLICEMEN KILLED. TWO WEEKS BEFORE THAT, BROTHER AND SISTER SHOT. TWO MORE VICTIMS.

TODAY--THE TWENTY-SECOND. TWO A.M. THIS ADDRESS: 22 SECOND STREET.
BAM BAM BAM BAM BA

IT'S ALL BEEN THERE ALL ALONG.
ZWEI BROTHERS WAREHOUSE... ZWEI IS GERMAN FOR TWO.
"THINK WITH YOUR HEAD!!"

BAM BAM
HE CURSES HIMSELF-- WHAT WERE YOU DOING?

--THAT **TWO-FACE** WAS BACK!

DRY WALL

HE SURVIVED, BUT THAT'S OKAY. EVERY *CLOUD* HAS A SILVER LINING.

THERE'S ALWAYS *TOMORROW.*

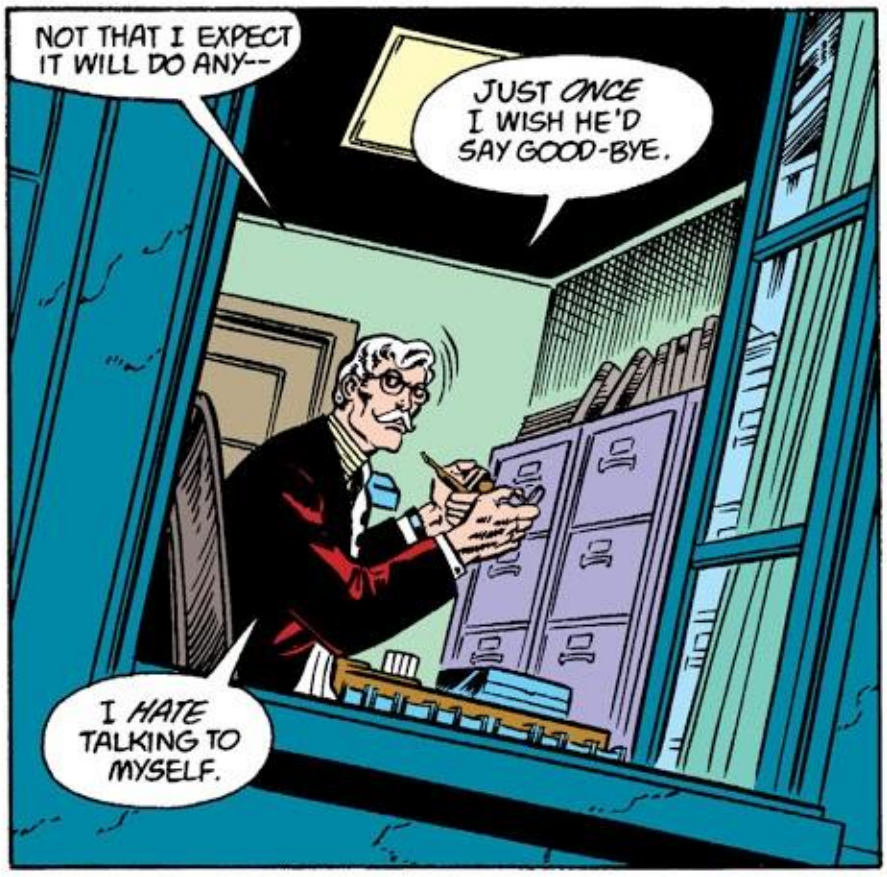
IF AT FIRST YOU *DON'T* SUCCEED...

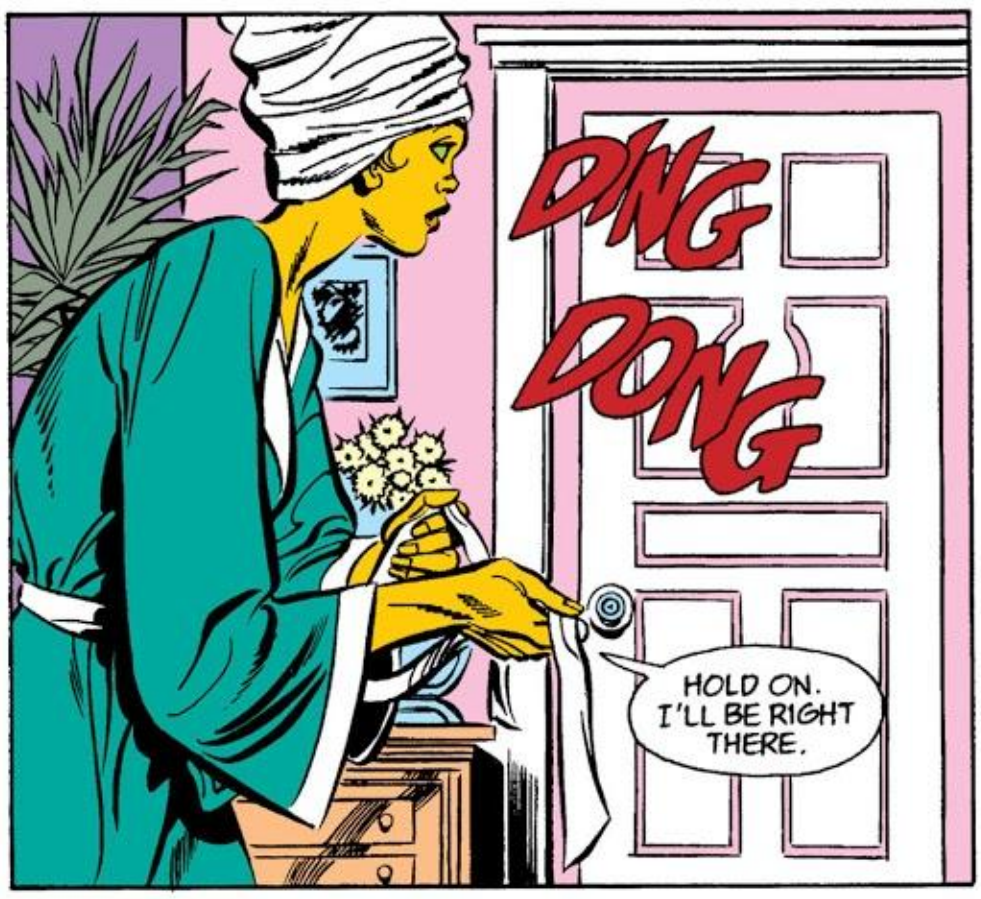
ALL'S WELL THAT *ENDS* WELL. THAT'S WHAT *I* ALWAYS SAY.

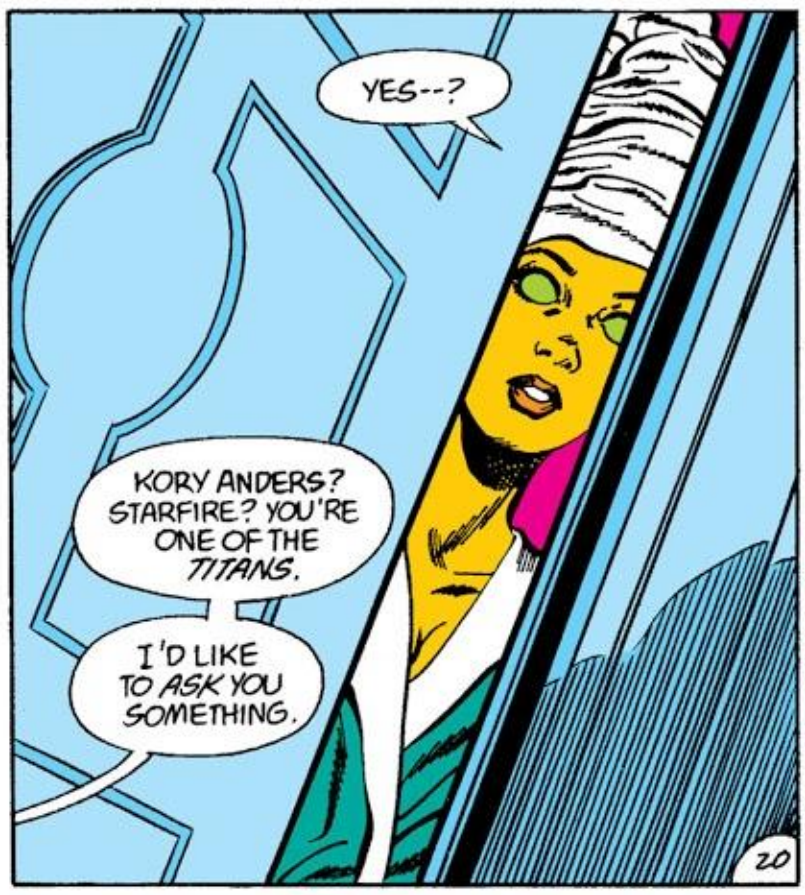
YOU DO KNOW I'VE GOT A DOOR.
TWO-FACE.
YOU MEAN THE MAN YOU BROKE OUT OF JAIL--

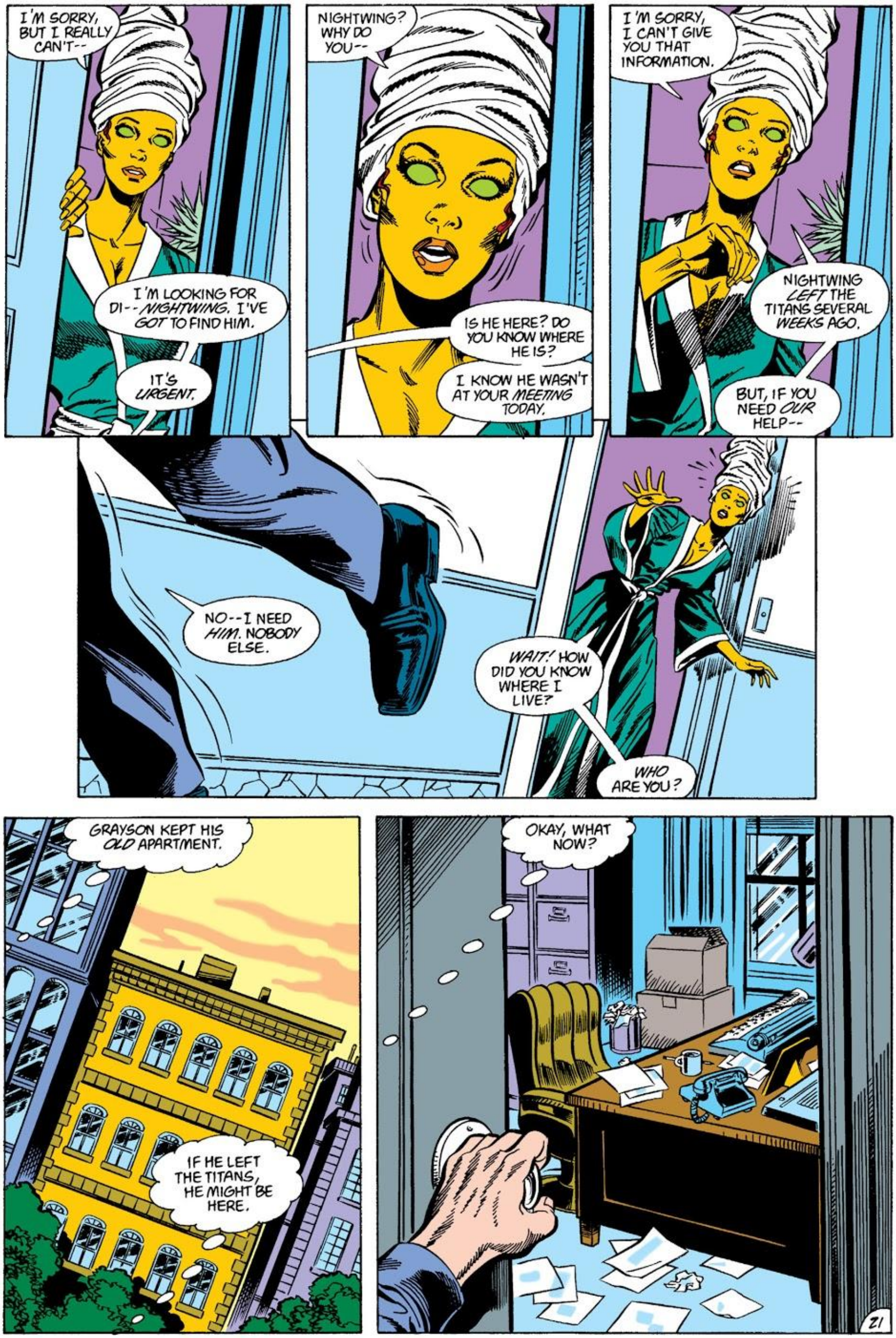
--AND THEN LET ESCAPE FROM A CARIBBEAN ISLAND?
ANY WORD?
THAT TWO FACE? WHAT ABOUT HIM?

WE'VE ISSUED AN A.P.B. FOR THE TRI-STATE AREA AND NOTIFIED THE FBI.
I'VE CANCELED LEAVES, PUT EXTRA MEN ON DUTY AND DOUBLED SHIFTS.


NOT THAT I EXPECT IT WILL DO ANY--
JUST ONCE I WISH HE'D SAY GOOD-BYE.
I HATE TALKING TO MYSELF.


DING DONG
HOLD ON. I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.


YES--?
KORY ANDERS? STARFIRE? YOU'RE ONE OF THE TITANS.
I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.


I'M SORRY, BUT I REALLY CAN'T--
I'M LOOKING FOR DI--NIGHTWING. I'VE GOT TO FIND HIM.
IT'S URGENT.
NIGHTWING? WHY DO YOU--
IS HE HERE? DO YOU KNOW WHERE HE IS?
I KNOW HE WASN'T AT YOUR MEETING TODAY.
I'M SORRY, I CAN'T GIVE YOU THAT INFORMATION.
NIGHTWING LEFT THE TITANS SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.
BUT, IF YOU NEED OUR HELP--
NO--I NEED HIM. NOBODY ELSE.
WAIT! HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE I LIVE?
WHO ARE YOU?
GRAYSON KEPT HIS OLD APARTMENT.
IF HE LEFT THE TITANS, HE MIGHT BE HERE.
OKAY, WHAT NOW?

HE'S A DETECTIVE... HE MUST KEEP NOTES. EVEN SOMETHING SCRIBBLED ON A SHOPPING LIST.
GRAYSON, WHERE ARE YOU?
HOLD ON JUST ONE MOMENT...
END OF AMERICANA IN SIGHT?
LOCAL CIRCUS TO CLOSE AFTER SIXTY YEARS
Haly Circus, which has entertained children of all ages for more than sixty years, will close this October after their final summer season. Faith Haly, granddaughter of circus founder Garrison Haly, said, "We simply can't compete with the larger corporate circuses. The days of the small family circus, sadly, are over."
NO! THE HALY CIRCUS IS CLOSING?
IT CAN'T BE!
IT CAN'T!
"BUT AT LEAST I NOW KNOW WHERE HE IS!"

OK C.O.M.P.U.T.O.
novus
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