



BATMAN

by STARLIN,
APARO &
DeCARLO

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Book Four
of Four

a Death in the Family

Robin is dead,
murdered by
the Joker.

And the Batman
can do nothing
about it.

Or can he?



Mignola

A DEATH in the FAMILY

CHAPTER 6

HIS NAME'S RALPH BUNDY, A CIA AGENT. THE PRESIDENT SENT HIM TO TALK TO ME. I ALREADY KNOW WHAT HE'S GOING TO SAY, BUT I LISTEN ANYWAY.

IT'S LIKE THIS, BATMAN.

YOU TAKE OUT THE JOKER AND IT'S GOING TO CAUSE A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S CURRENTLY IN THE MIDDLE OF SOME VERY DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN.

ANOTHER ARMS FOR HOSTAGES DEAL?

JIM STARLIN | JIM APARO | MIKE DiCARLO | JOHN COSTANZA | ADRIENNE ROY | DAN RASPLER | DENNIS O'NEIL
WRITER | PENCILLER | INKER | LETTERER | COLORIST | ASST. EDITOR | EDITOR

BOB KANE • CREATOR



THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

GUYS LIKE US SHOULD JUST DO OUR JOBS AND LET THE "BIGSHOTS" DO THEIRS.

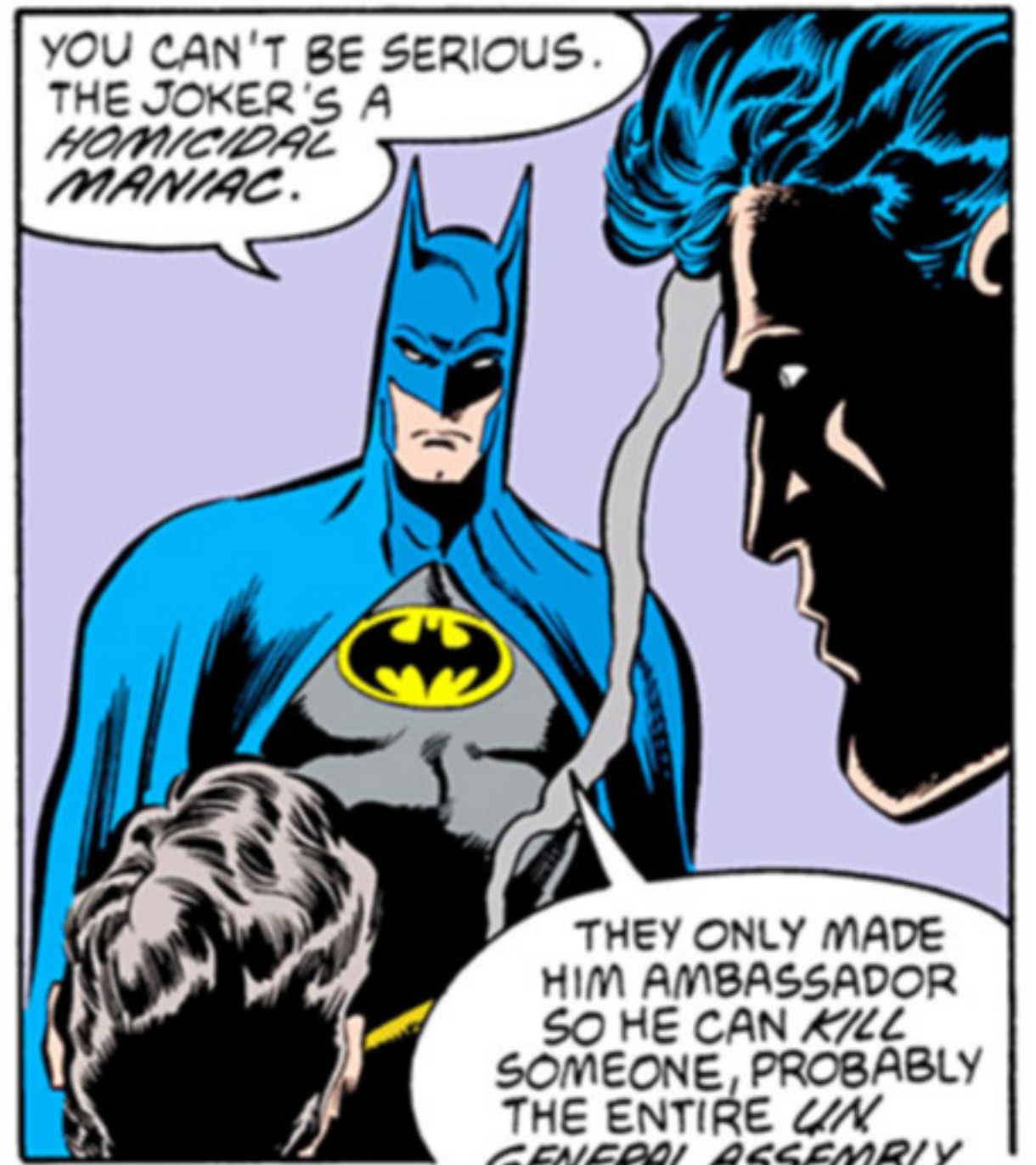
THEY KNOW WHAT'S DOING AND THEY SAY HANDS OFF IRAN'S NEW U.N. AMBASSADOR!

UNDERSTAND?



THE JOKER'S GOT DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY. STATE DOESN'T WANT ANYONE MESSING WITH HIM.

ESPECIALLY YOU!



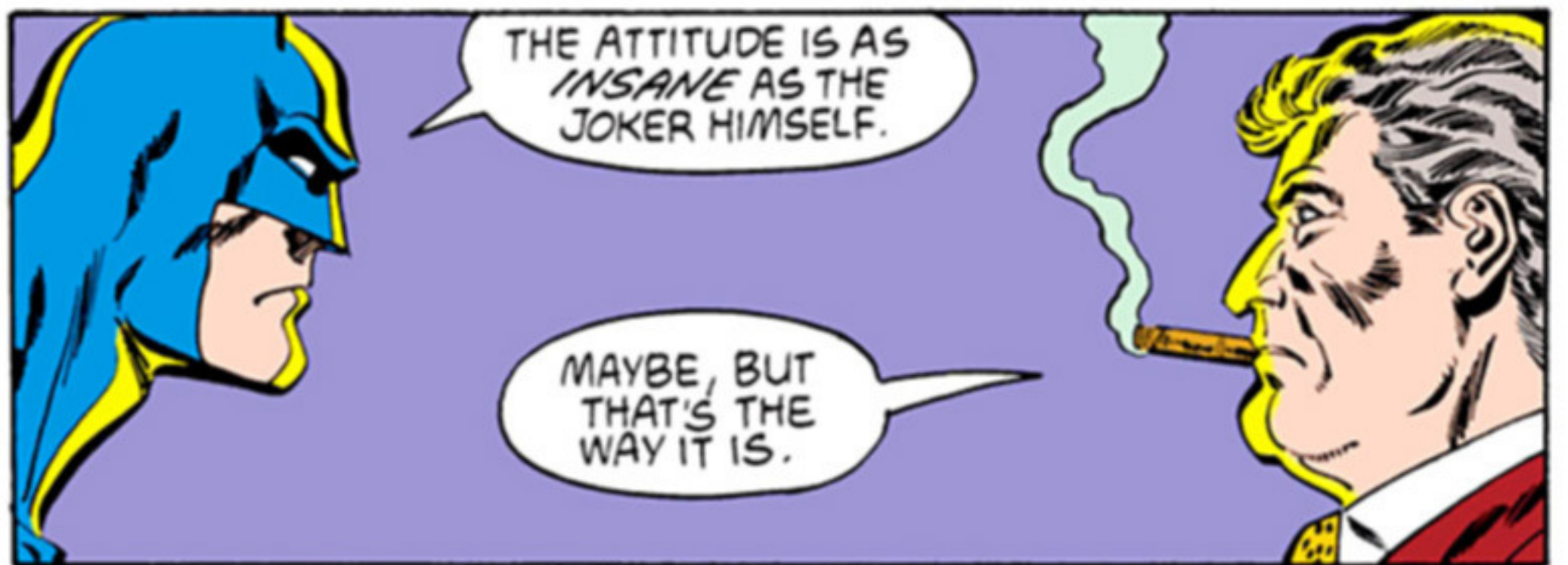
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. THE JOKER'S A HOMICIDAL MANIAC.

THEY ONLY MADE HIM AMBASSADOR SO HE CAN KILL SOMEONE, PROBABLY THE ENTIRE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY.



WE'VE GOT NO HARD EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT.

UNTIL WE DO, THE JOKER HAS TO BE TREATED LIKE ANY OTHER DELEGATE.



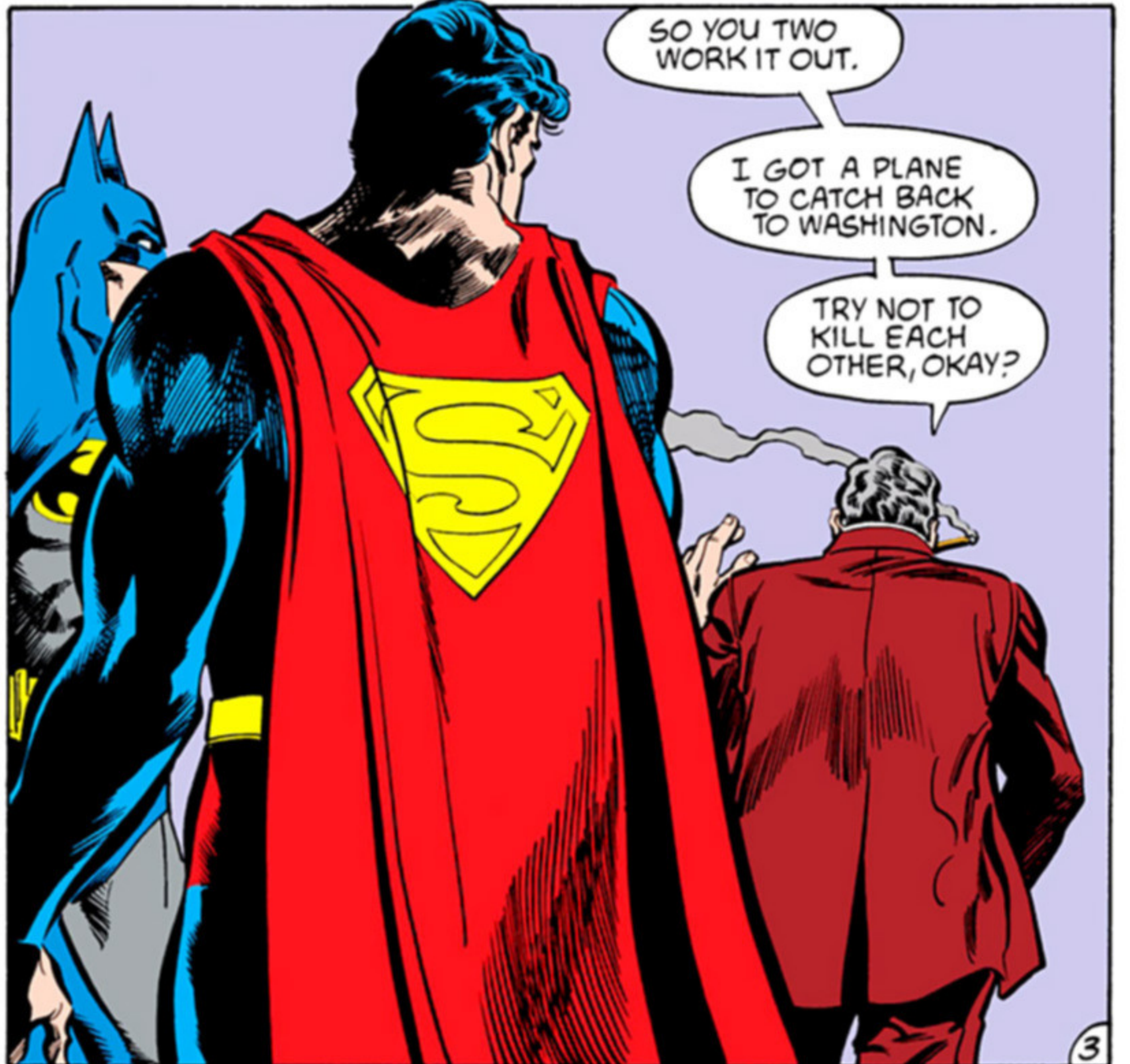
THE ATTITUDE IS AS INSANE AS THE JOKER HIMSELF.

MAYBE, BUT THAT'S THE WAY IT IS.



NOT FOR ME, IT ISN'T.

AFRAID SO, PAL.



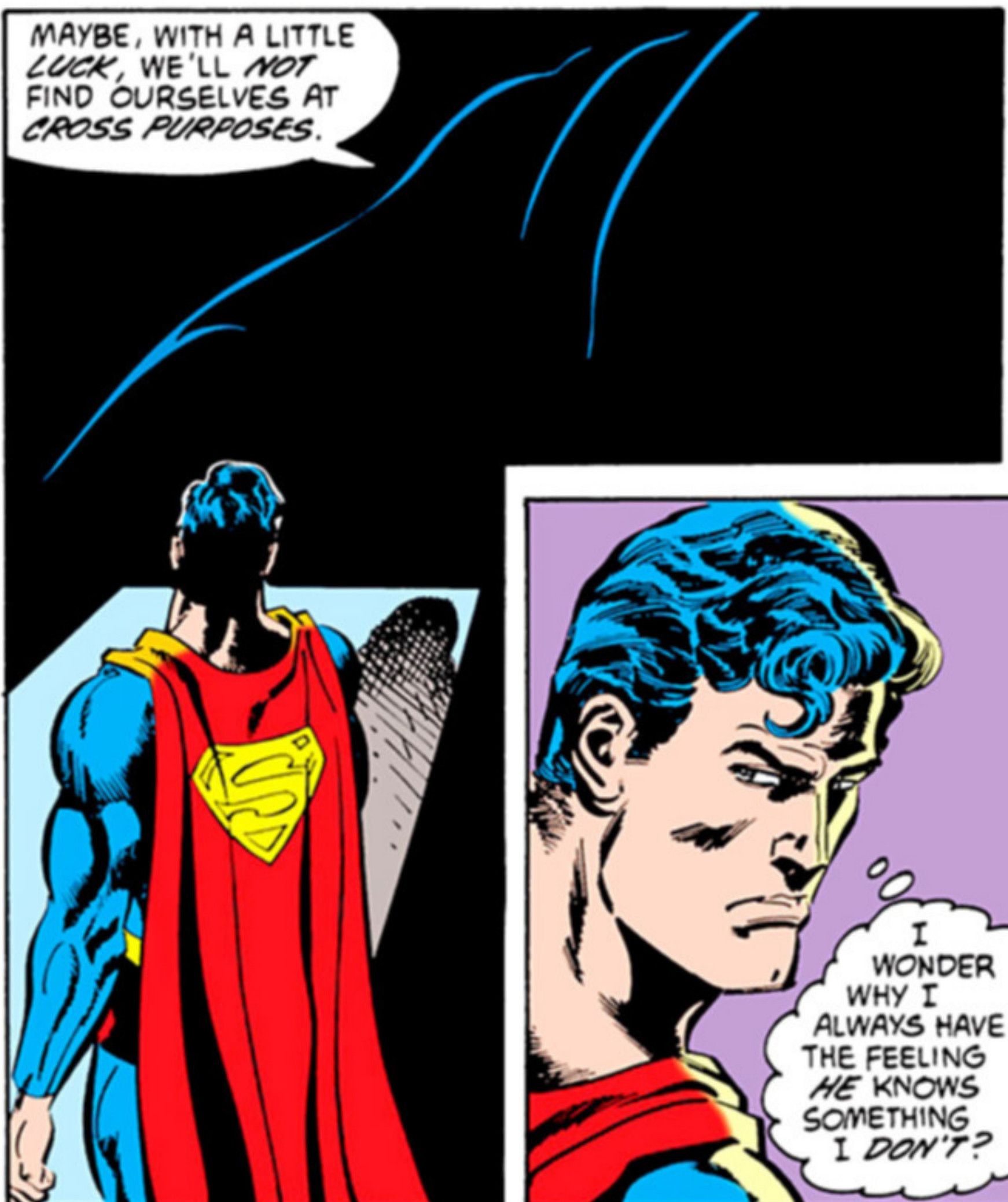




YOU CAN'T PUT YOUR THIRST FOR VENGEANCE ABOVE YOUR COUNTRY'S BEST INTERESTS.

SPARE ME YOUR BOY SCOUT SENTIMENTALITIES, KENT.

TO USE YOUR OWN WORDS... I'LL DO WHAT I HAVE TO.



MAYBE, WITH A LITTLE LUCK, WE'LL NOT FIND OURSELVES AT CROSS PURPOSES.

I WONDER WHY I ALWAYS HAVE THE FEELING HE KNOWS SOMETHING I DON'T?



BACK IN MY HOTEL ROOM, I SEE WHAT MY FEDERAL CONTACTS CAN DO ABOUT GETTING ME INTO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS BRUCE WAYNE.



MY REPUTATION AS A PLAYBOY DILETTANTE KEEPS ME FROM OBTAINING A POSITION AS A DELEGATE.

BUT THEY MANAGE TO SQUEEZE ME IN AS AN UNOFFICIAL OBSERVER.



NOW I CAN KEEP AN EYE ON THE JOKER WITHOUT MAKING THE STATE DEPARTMENT NERVOUS.

THE FOOLS.

LOOKS LIKE THIS IS IT.



THE FINAL SHOWDOWN BETWEEN THE JOKER AND MYSELF.

GUESS I ALWAYS KNEW IT WOULD SOMEDAY COME TO THIS.

ONE OF US IS GOING TO DIE. BUT IS THAT REALLY WHAT I WANT TO SEE HAPPEN?



THE MAN'S HOPELESSLY INSANE. HOW CAN I HOLD HIM RESPONSIBLE EVEN FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO JASON?

OR AM I JUST LOOKING FOR A COP-OUT?



ADMIT IT, WAYNE. THE JOKER'S COME CLOSE TO FINISHING YOU OFF DOZENS OF TIMES. TOO CLOSE.



YOU'RE STILL NOT BACK TO TOTAL EFFICIENCY AFTER THAT ENCOUNTER YOU HAD WITH DEACON BLACK-FIRE.

YOU'RE TOO EMOTIONALLY INVOLVED -- NOT THINKING STRAIGHT.



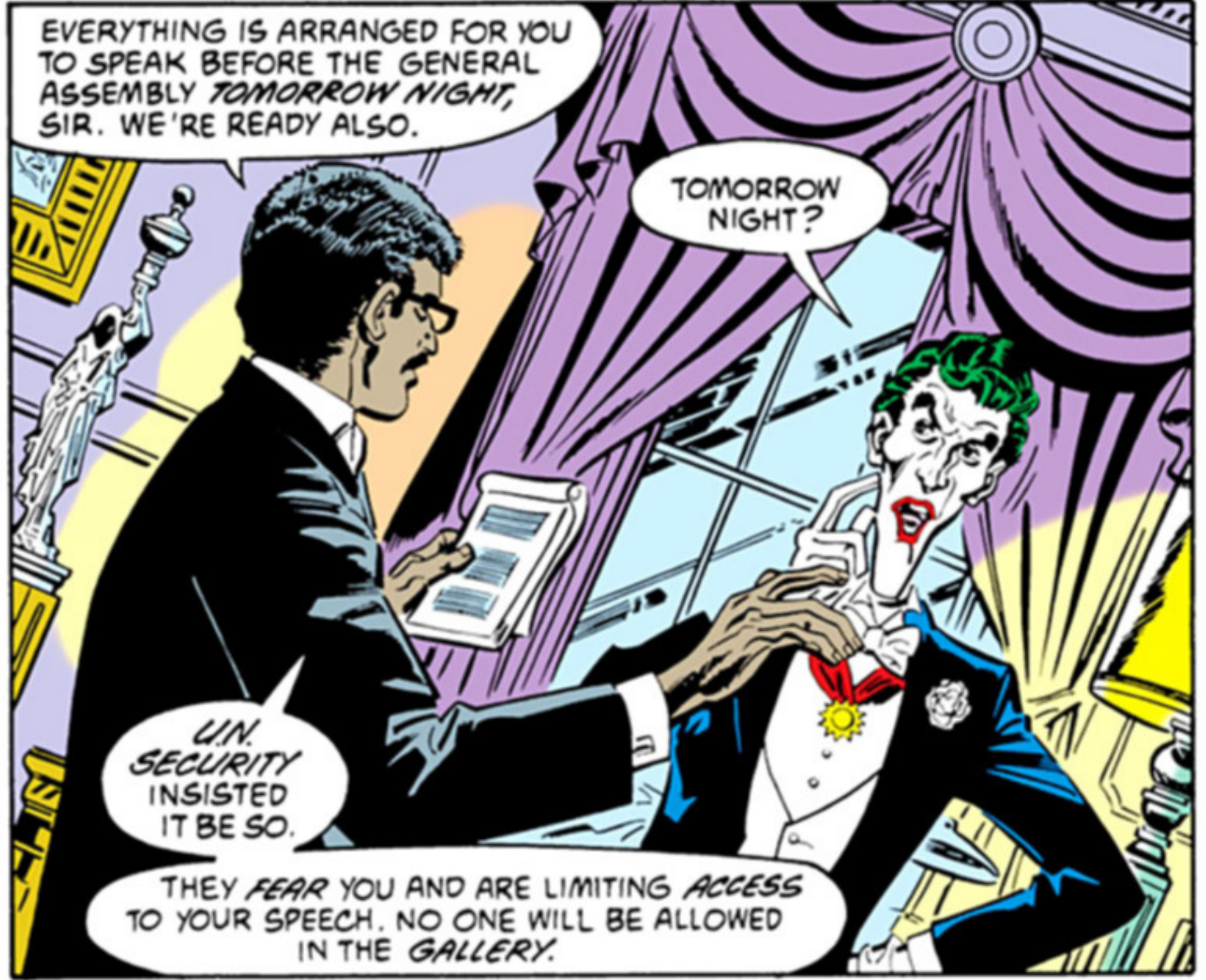
MAYBE IT'D BE BEST TO LET SUPERMAN HANDLE THIS?

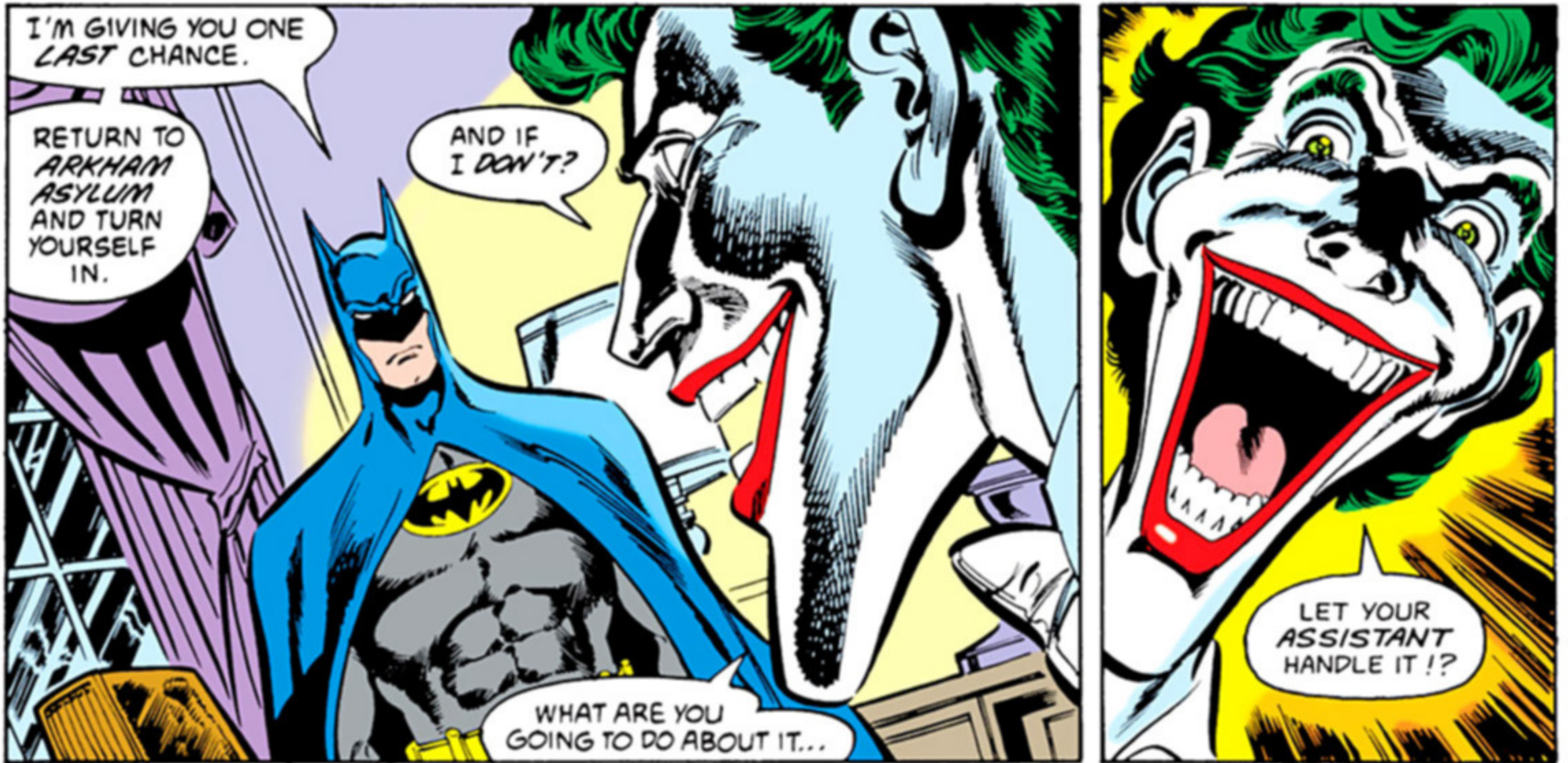
THAT WAY YOU WON'T DO SOMETHING YOU'LL REGRET FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.



BUT HE MURDERED JASON.







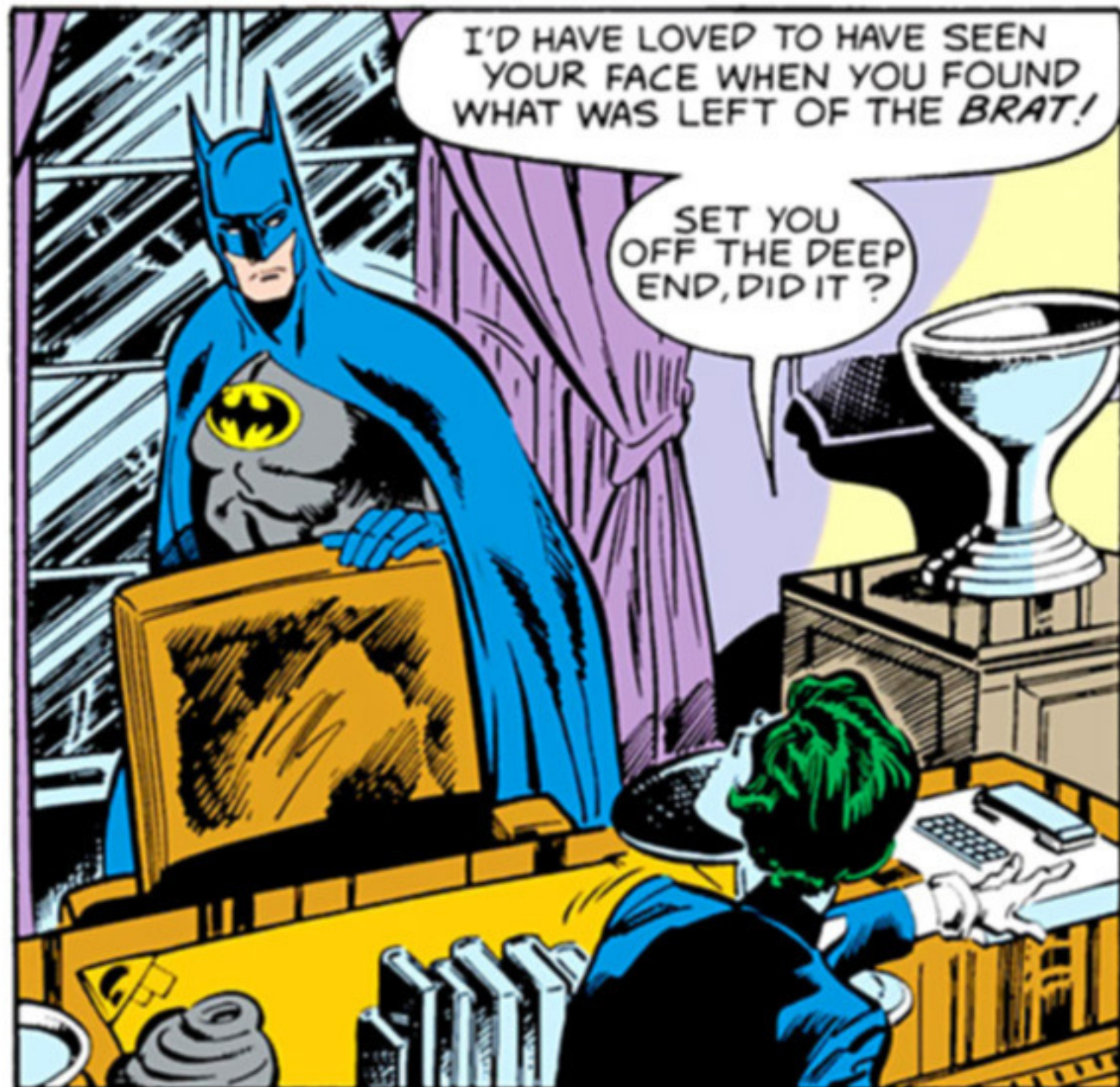
I'M GIVING YOU ONE LAST CHANCE.

RETURN TO ARKHAM ASYLUM AND TURN YOURSELF IN.

AND IF I DON'T?

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT...

LET YOUR ASSISTANT HANDLE IT!?



I'D HAVE LOVED TO HAVE SEEN YOUR FACE WHEN YOU FOUND WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE BRAT!

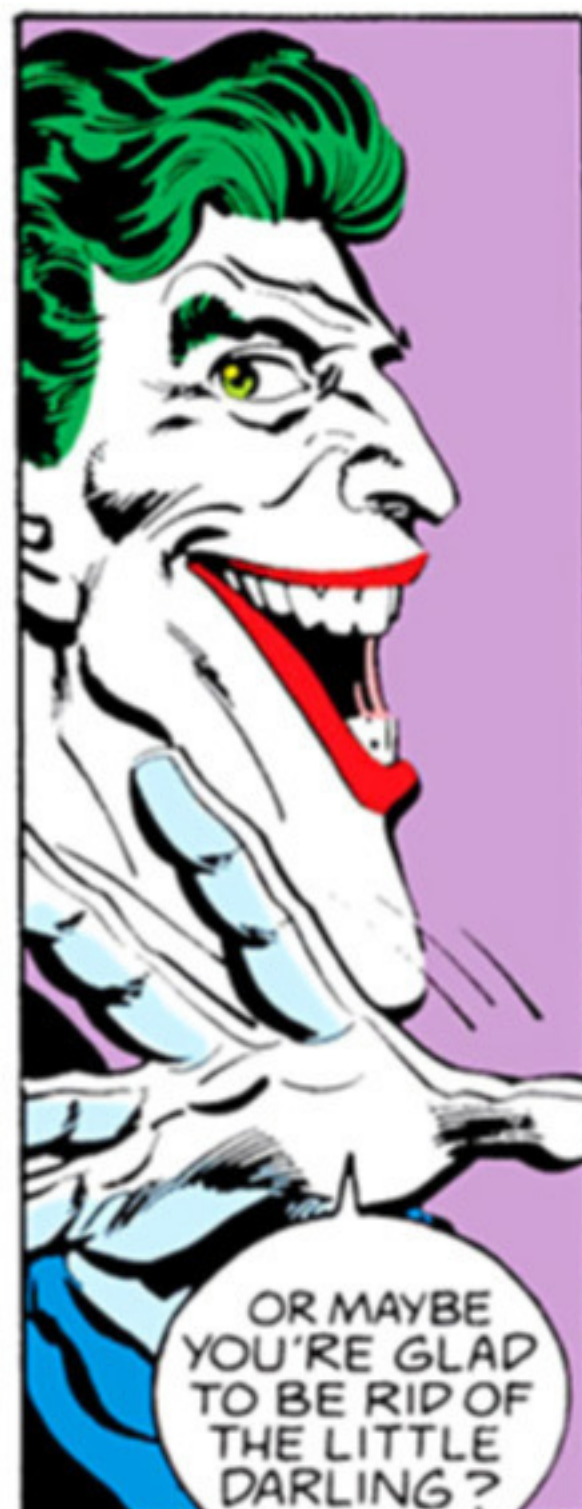
SET YOU OFF THE DEEP END, DID IT?



YOU SEE, EVEN A MADMAN CAN ADD 2 PLUS 2...



AND COME UP WITH 5.



OR MAYBE YOU'RE GLAD TO BE RID OF THE LITTLE DARLING?



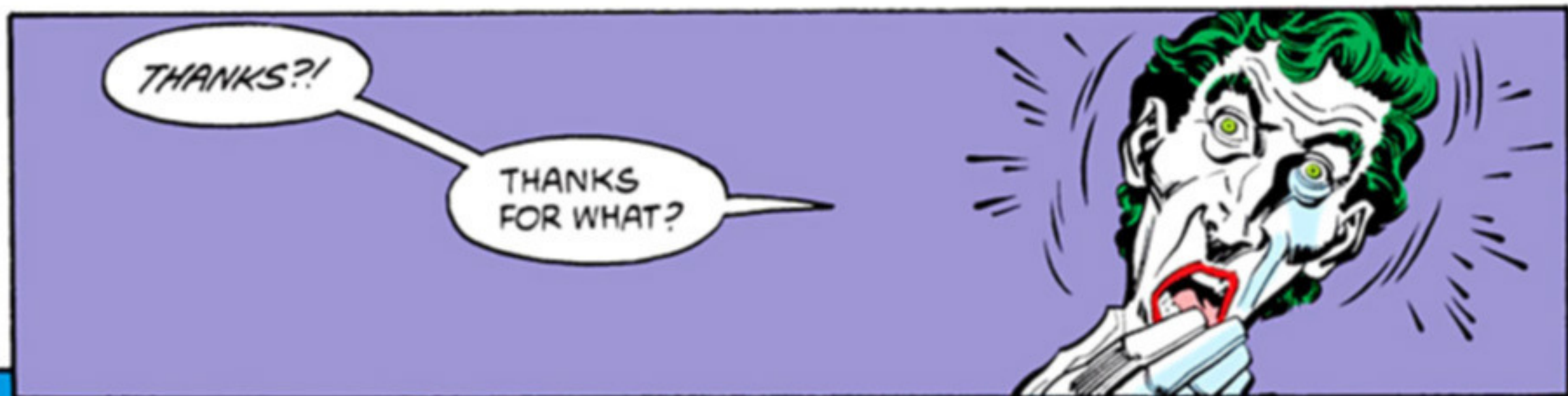
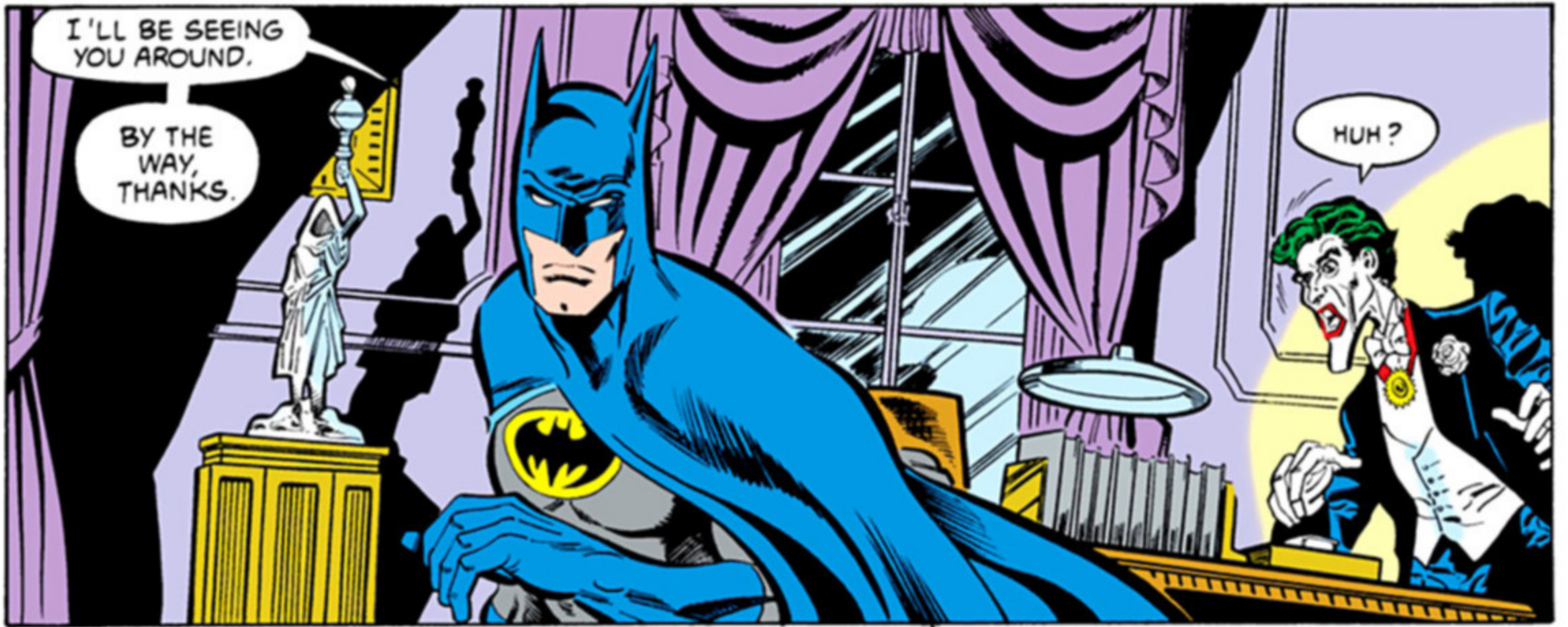
YOU ALWAYS KNOW EXACTLY THE WRONG THING TO SAY, DON'T YOU?

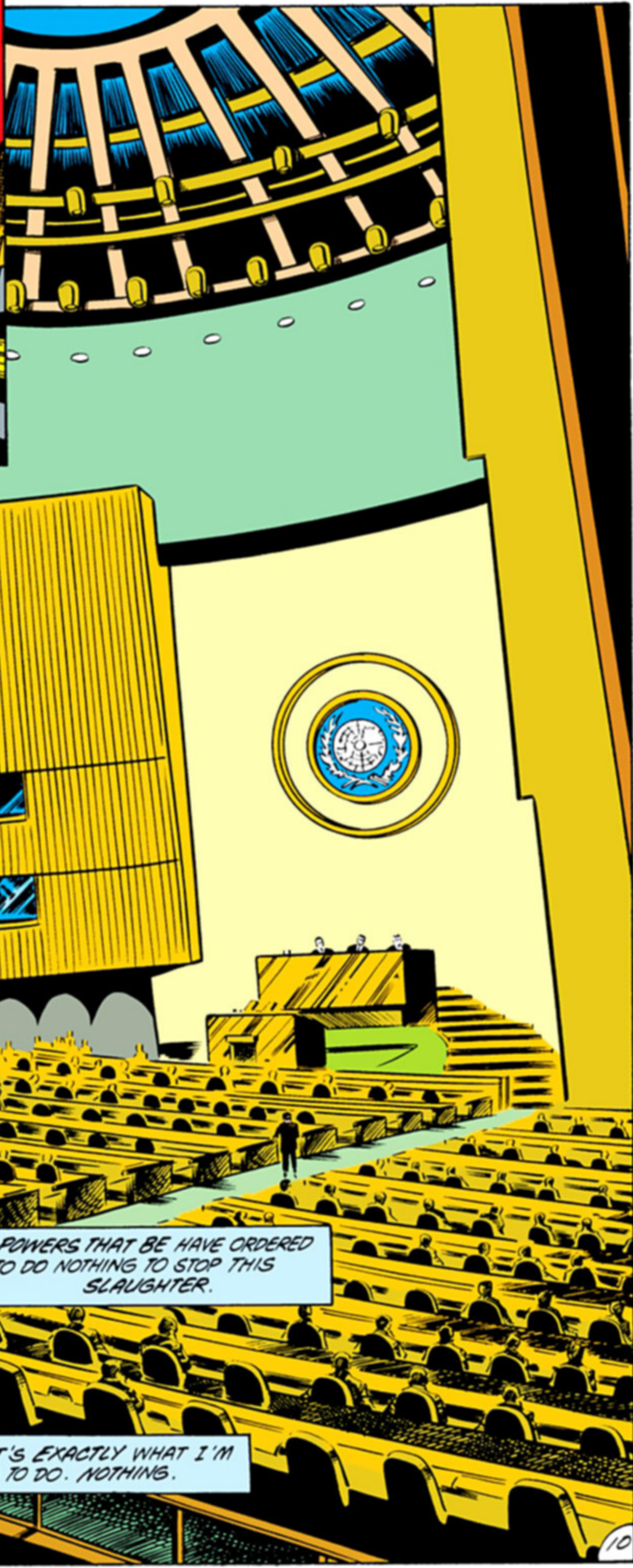


THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME SO SPECIAL.

VERY WELL.

HAVE IT YOUR WAY.





BUT AFTWARDS...
THE JOKER IS MINE!

YOU PICKED A
GREAT DAY TO
START AS AN
OBSERVER, BRUCE.

THE JOKER'S SPEAKING
TONIGHT. FAR-OUT, HEY?

VERY.

HEY! HERE
HE COMES
NOW!

EVERY EYE IN THE AUDITORIUM
IS LOCKED ON HIM. HE TRULY
IS MAGNIFICENT. FASCINATING.

WOULDN'T
HAVE MISSED
IT FOR THE
WORLD.

WILL
YOU LOOK
AT HIM!

ALL KNOW
THAT HE IS
DEATH
PERSONI-
FIED.

I'VE LOST TRACK OF
HOW MANY HE'S
MURDERED OVER
THE YEARS.

BUT IT ALL ENDS TONIGHT. NO
MORE KILLINGS. NO MORE JOKER.

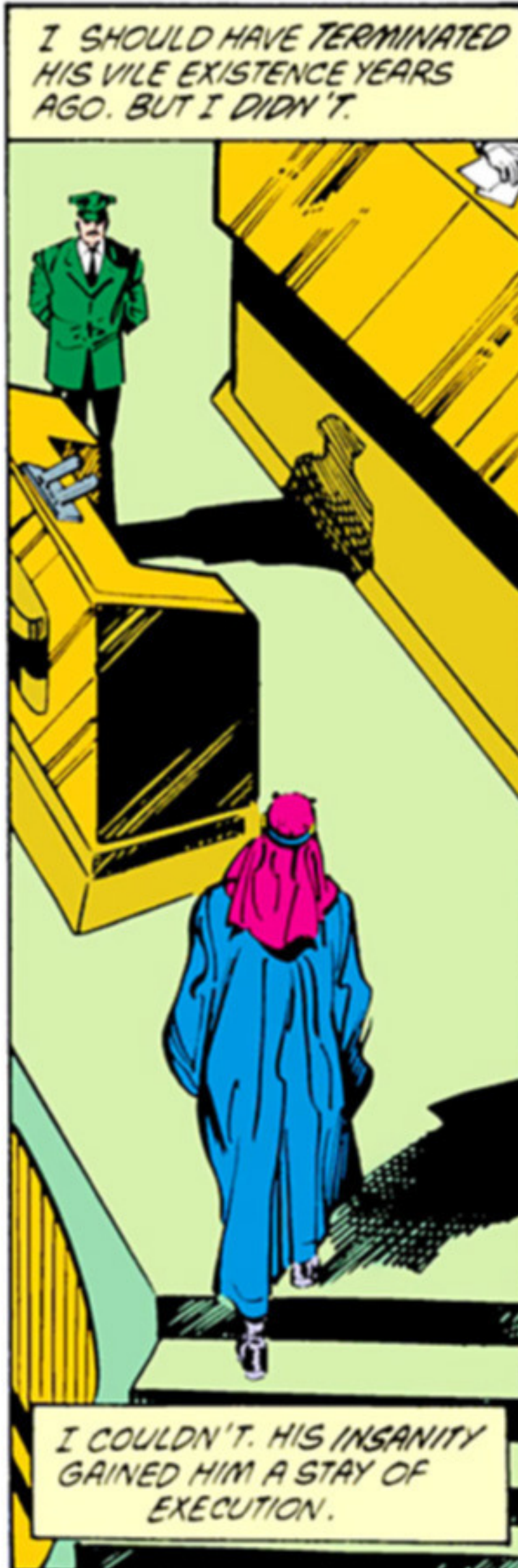
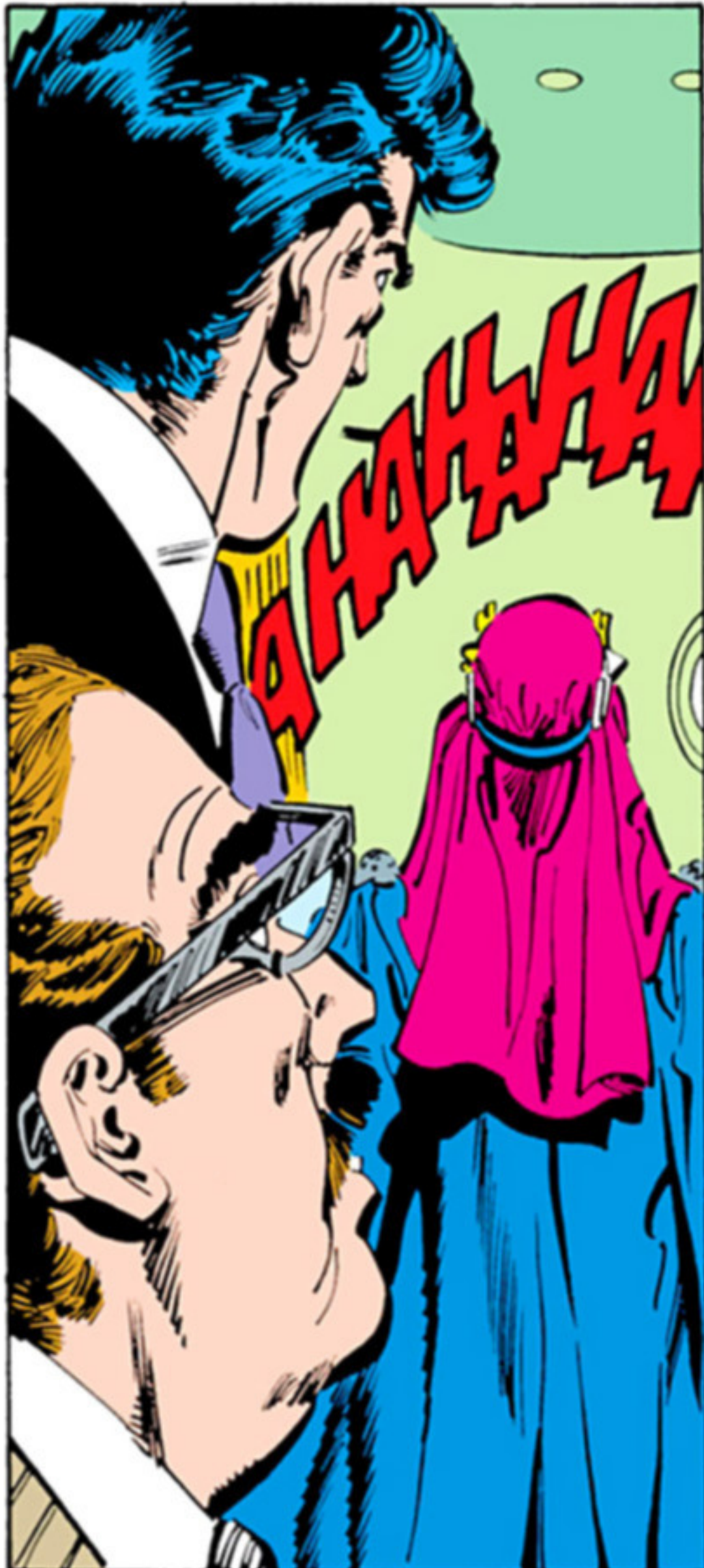


DOES HE RECOGNIZE ME? DOES HE KNOW WHO I AM?

I MAY NEVER KNOW. I'M FEELING A TERRIBLE SENSE OF FINALITY...

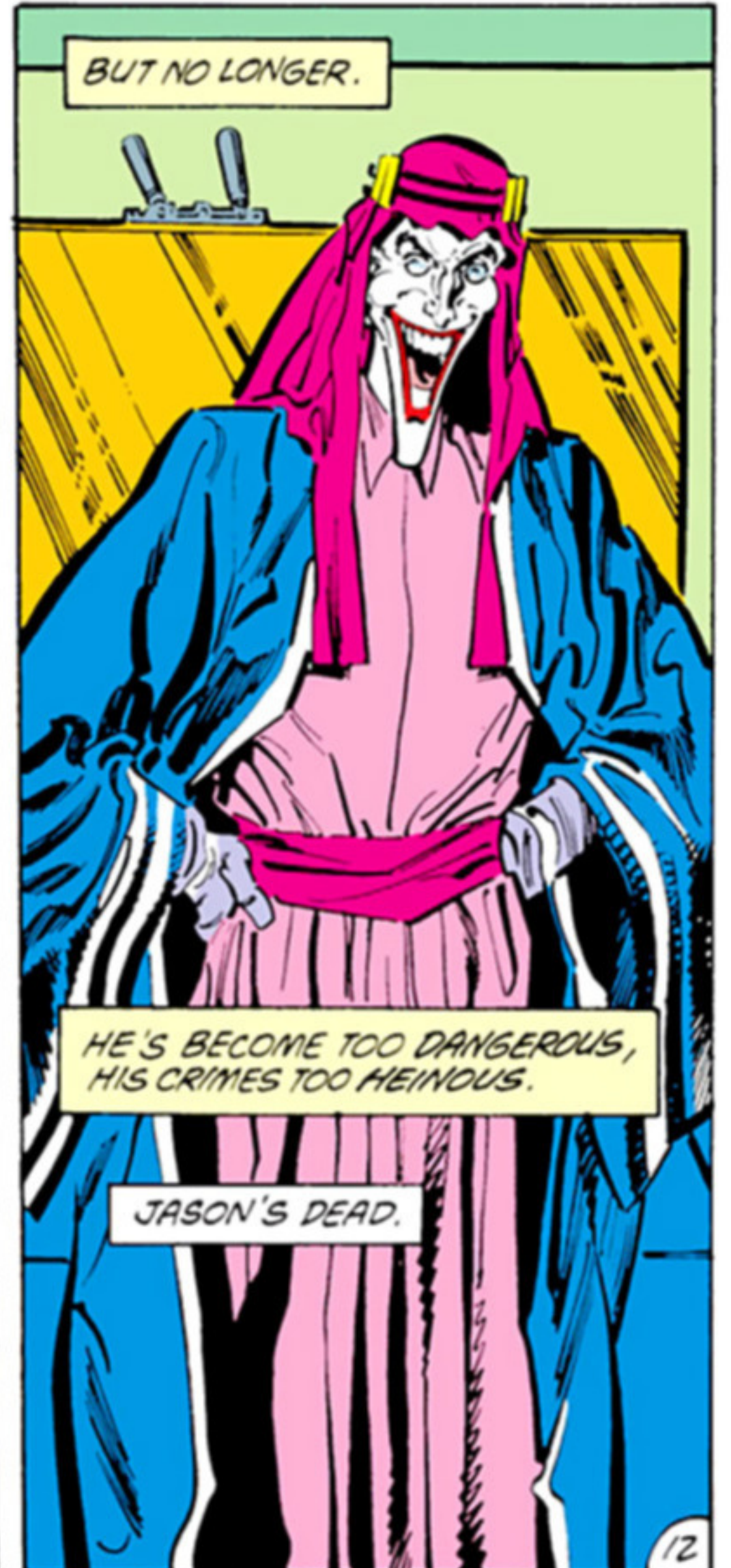


WE'VE BEEN LINKED TO EACH OTHER FOR SO LONG, NEITHER OF US TRULY UNDERSTANDING THE BOND.



I SHOULD HAVE TERMINATED HIS VILE EXISTENCE YEARS AGO. BUT I DIDN'T.

I COULDN'T. HIS INSANITY GAINED HIM A STAY OF EXECUTION.



BUT NO LONGER.

HE'S BECOME TOO DANGEROUS, HIS CRIMES TOO HEINOUS.

JASON'S DEAD.



IT IS A *GREAT HONOR* FOR ME TO BE HERE TONIGHT.



I AM PROUD TO SPEAK FOR THE GREAT ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN.



THAT COUNTRY'S *CURRENT LEADERS* AND I HAVE A LOT IN *COMMON*.



INSANITY AND A *GREAT LOVE* OF *FISH*.



BUT UNFORTUNATELY, WE ALSO SHARE A *MUTUAL PROBLEM*.



WE GET *NO RESPECT*.



EVERYONE THINKS OF IRAN AS THE HOME OF THE *TERRORIST ZEALOT!*



THEY SAY EVEN *WORSE THINGS* ABOUT *ME*, WOULD YOU BELIEVE?



WE'VE BOTH SUFFERED UNKIND *ABUSE* AND *BELITTLEMENT!*



WELL, WE *AREN'T GOING* TO TAKE IT ANYMORE!!



YOU'LL *NO LONGER* BE ALLOWED TO *KICK* US AROUND!



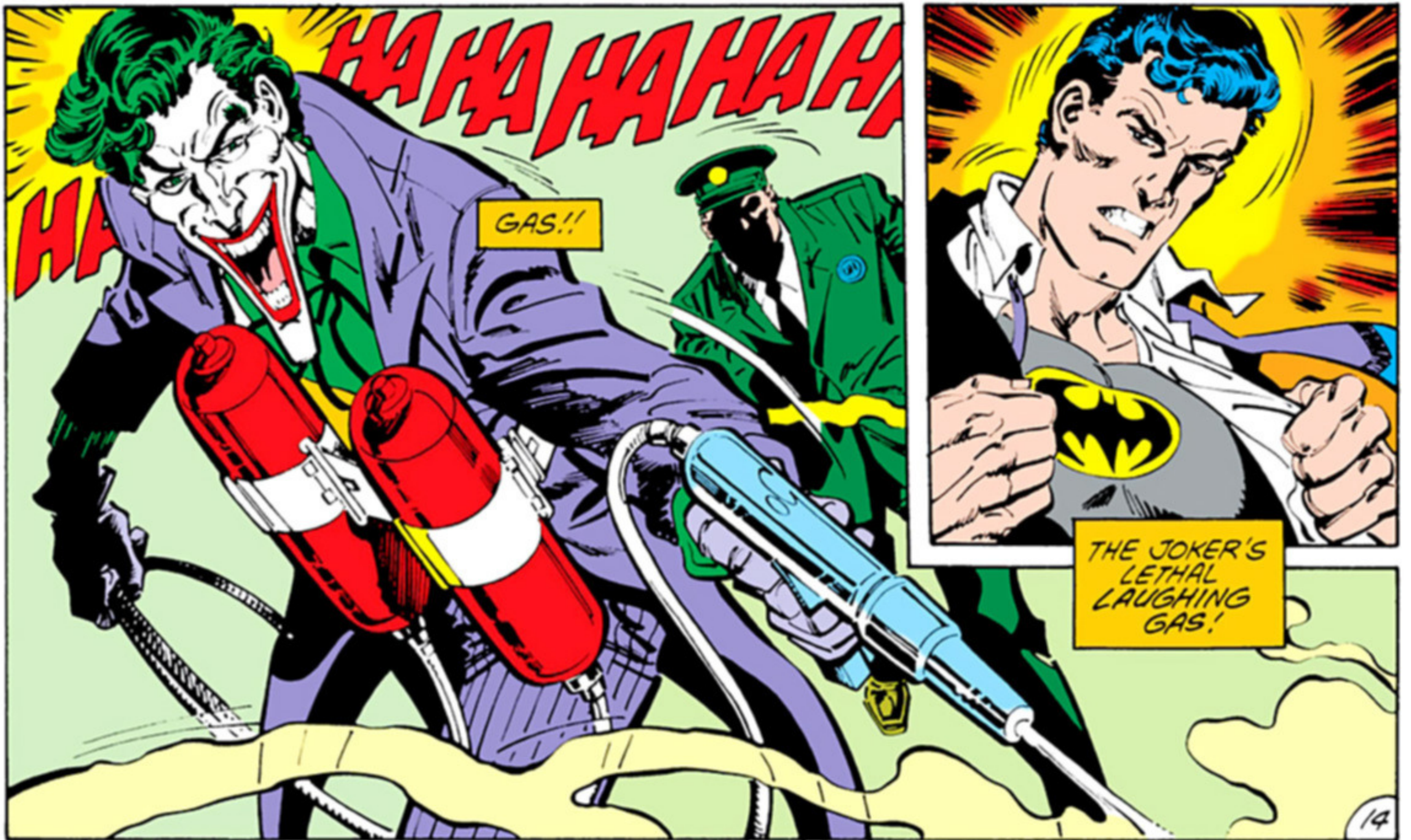
IN FACT, YOU *AREN'T GOING* TO BE ABLE TO *KICK ANYONE* AROUND EVER AGAIN!



SAY GOOD - NIGHT, GRACIE!



THE SHEEP FINALLY REALIZE THEY'VE BEEN LED TO SLAUGHTER.



HA HA HA HA HA HA

GAS!!

THE JOKER'S LETHAL LAUGHING GAS!



JUST AS I FIGURED, I DON'T HAVE TO LIFT A FINGER TO SAVE THE DAY.

WHAT!?



I KNEW THE BOY SCOUT WOULDN'T LET ME DOWN.

YOU'RE TOO LATE!



MY GAS WILL STILL TAKE OUT THESE POMPOUS FOOLS!

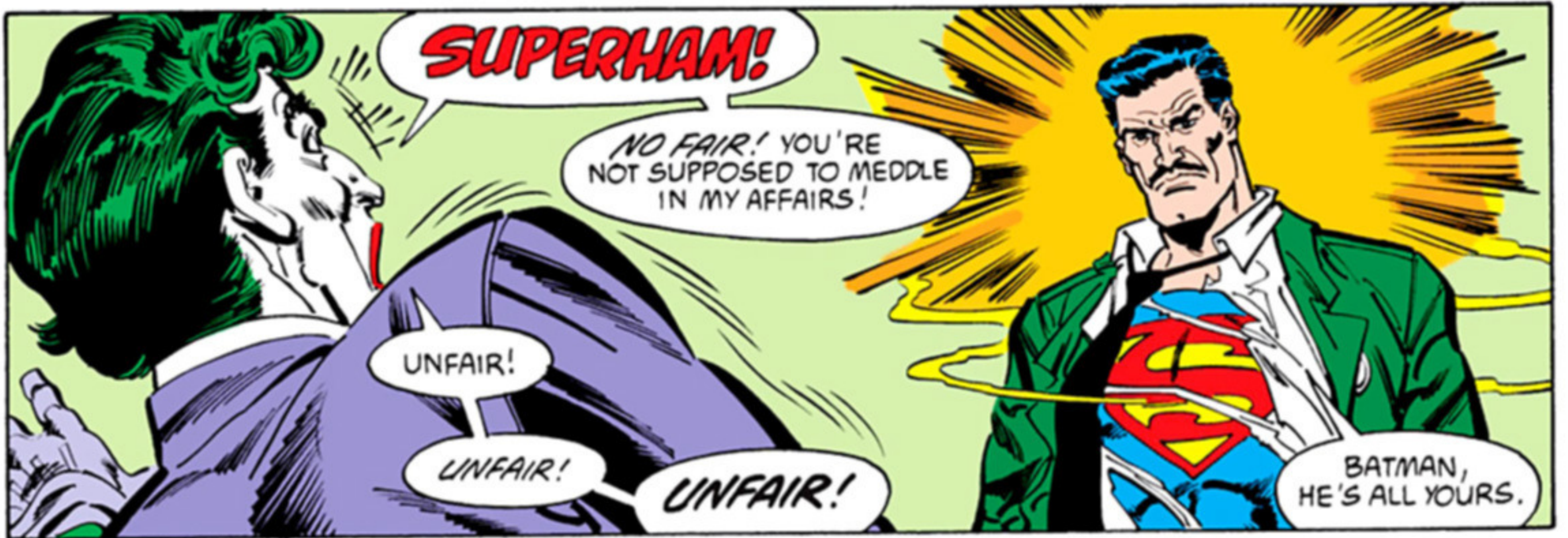
DON'T BET ON IT.

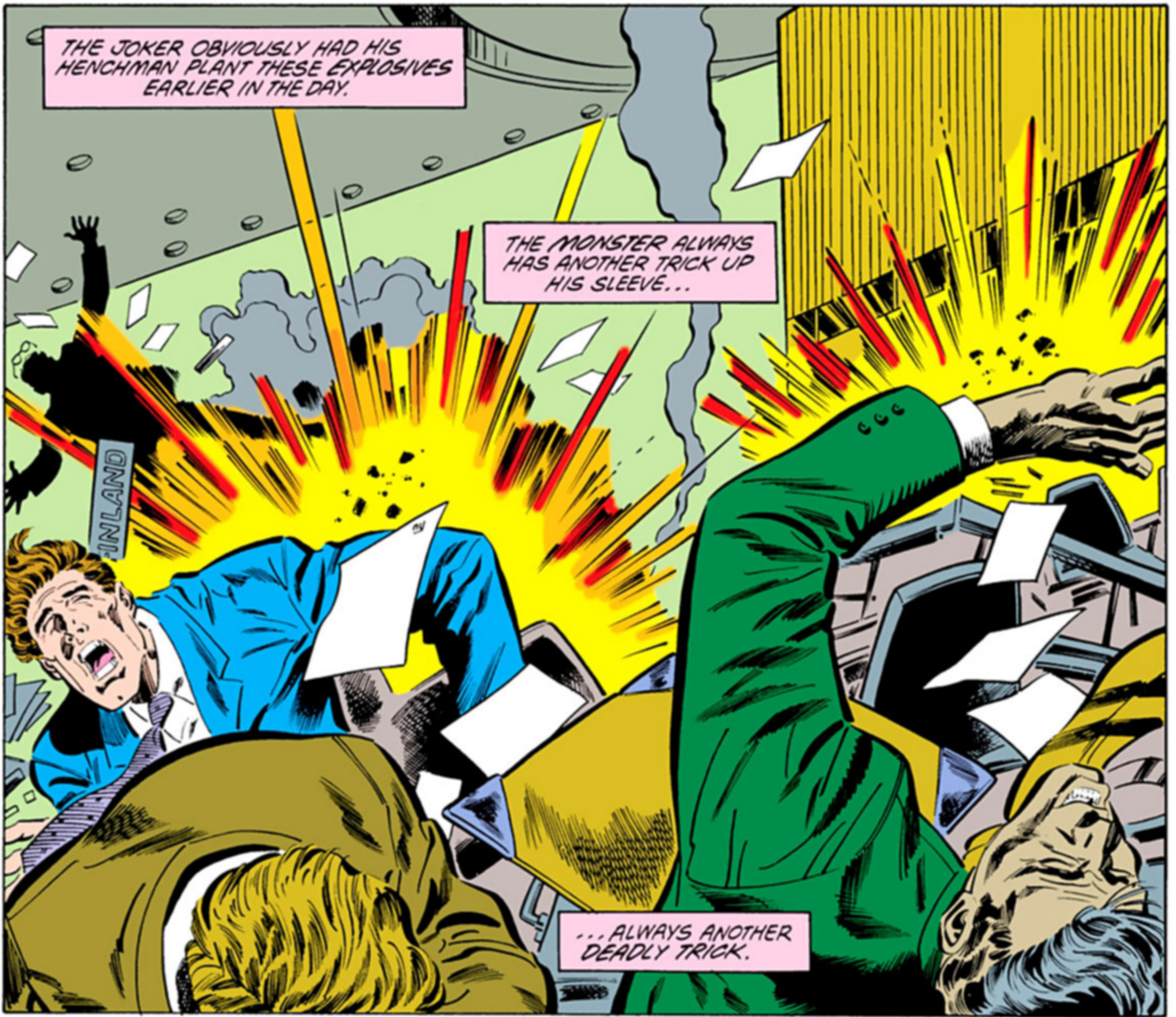


IT'S A SPECTACULAR SIGHT, HIM INHALING ALL THAT GAS, TAKING IT ALL INTO HIS BODY.



EVEN I'M IMPRESSED.





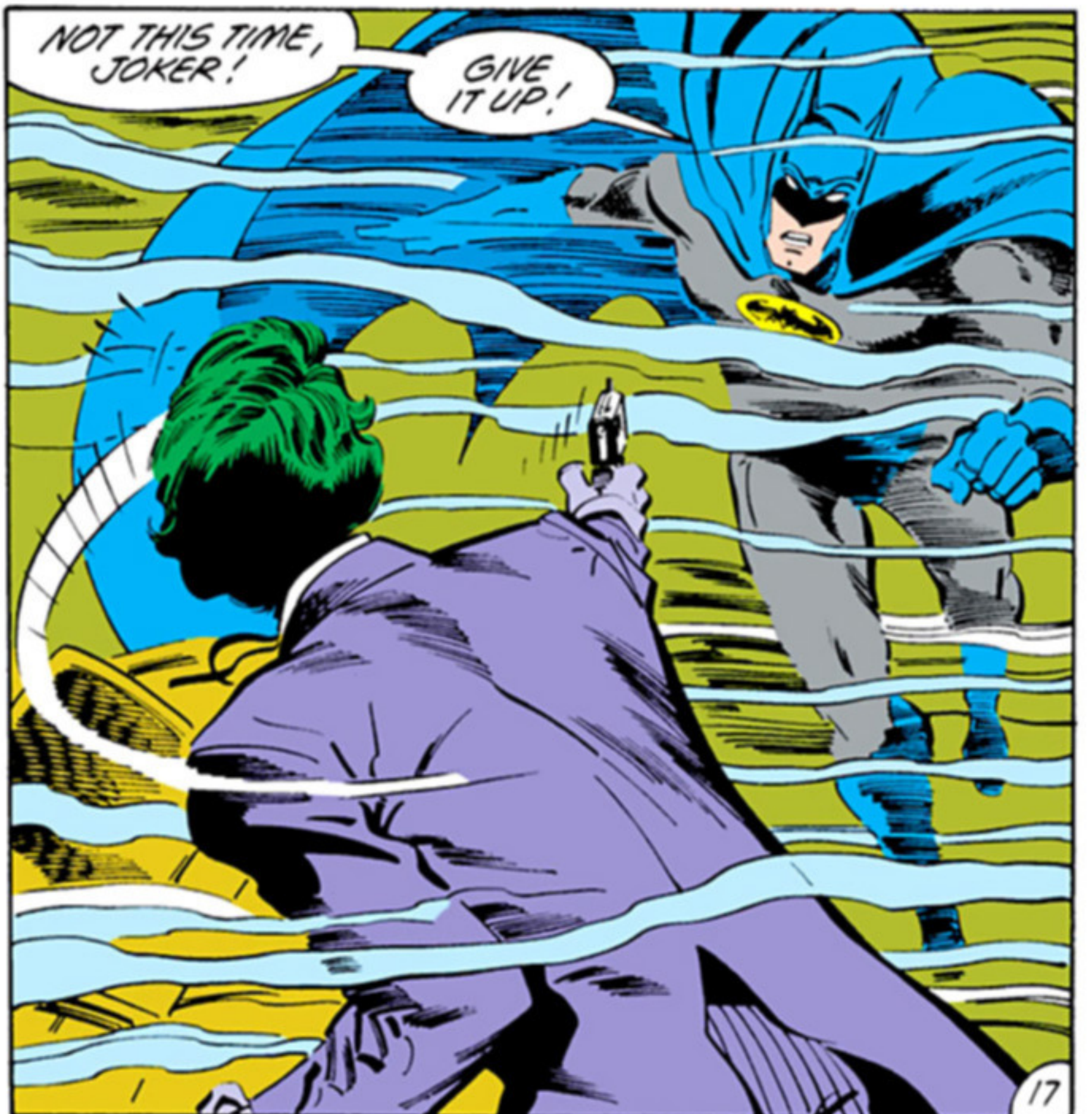
THE JOKER OBVIOUSLY HAD HIS HENCHMAN PLANT THESE EXPLOSIVES EARLIER IN THE DAY.

THE MONSTER ALWAYS HAS ANOTHER TRICK UP HIS SLEEVE...

... ALWAYS ANOTHER DEADLY TRICK.

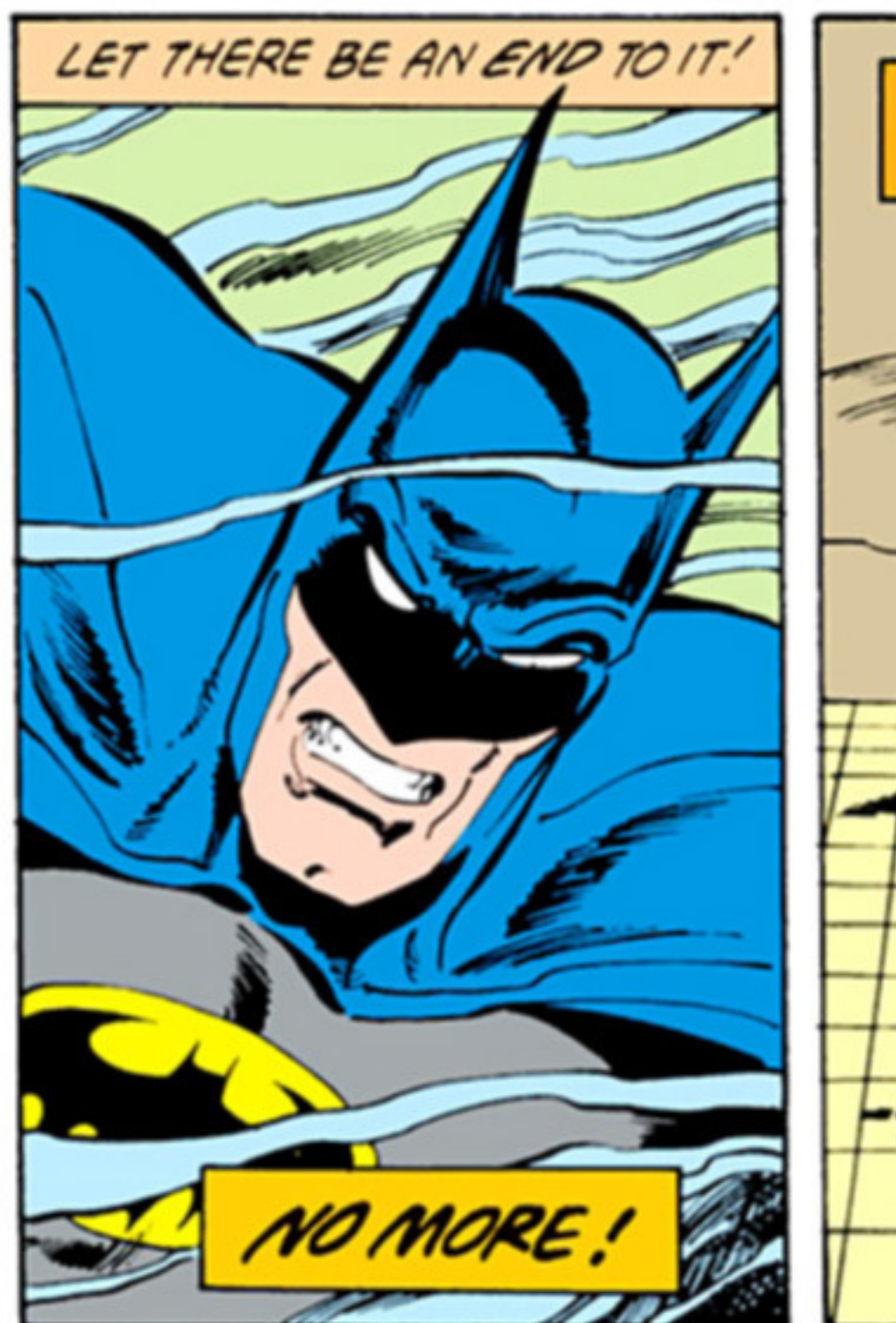
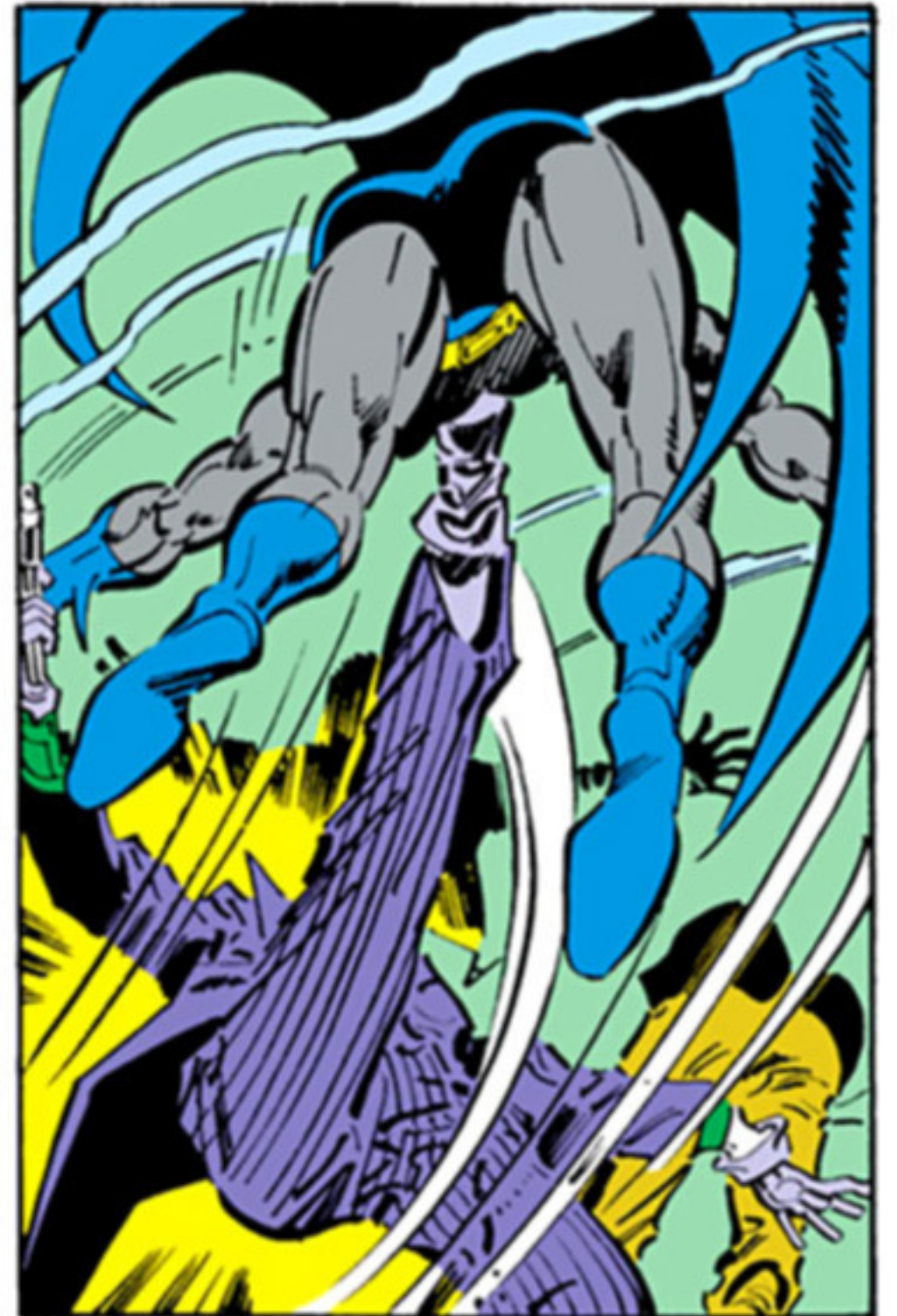


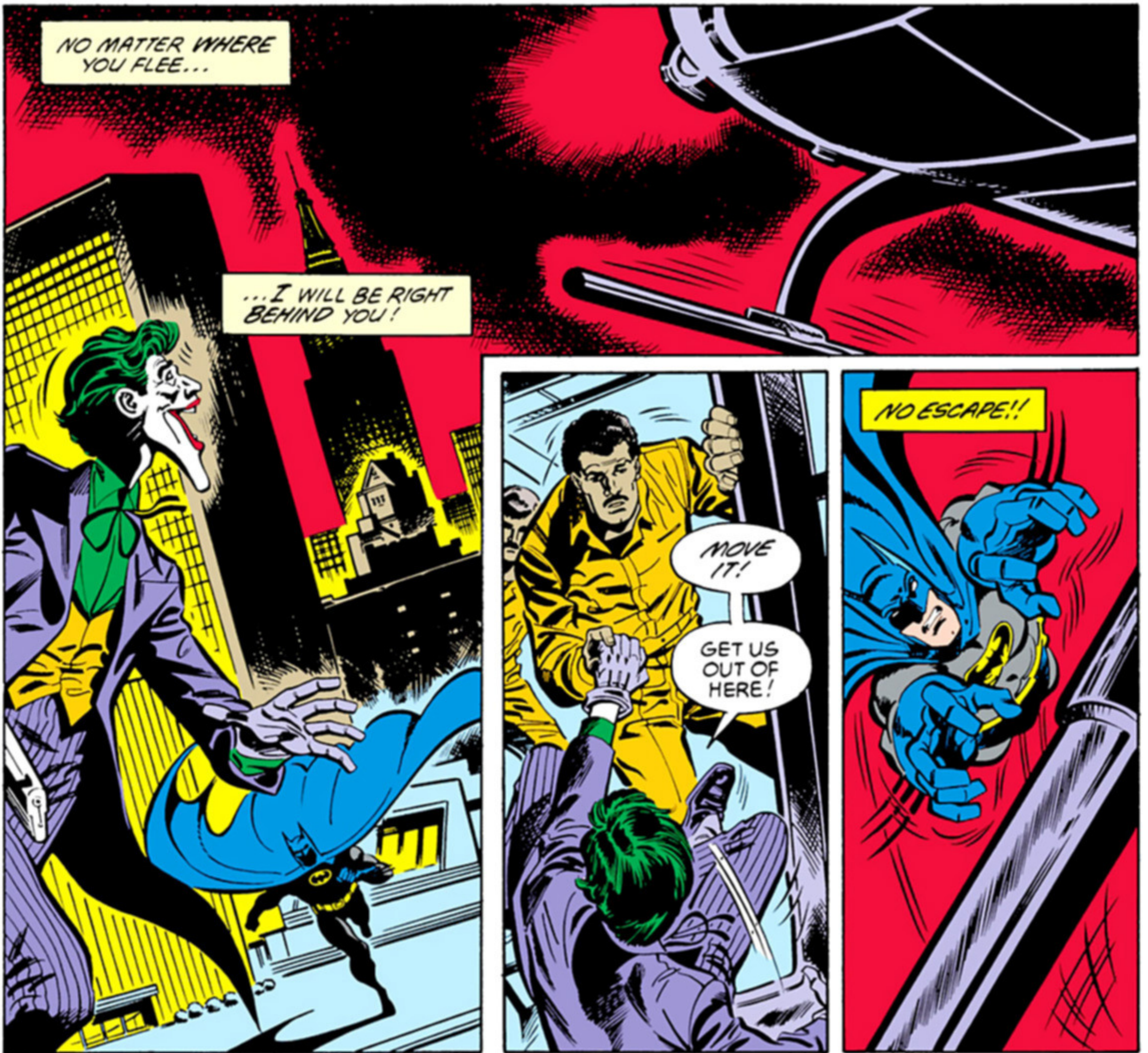
NOTHING LIKE A LITTLE DEATH, DESTRUCTION AND SMOKE TO MAKE AN EXIT ON!



NOT THIS TIME, JOKER!

GIVE IT UP!





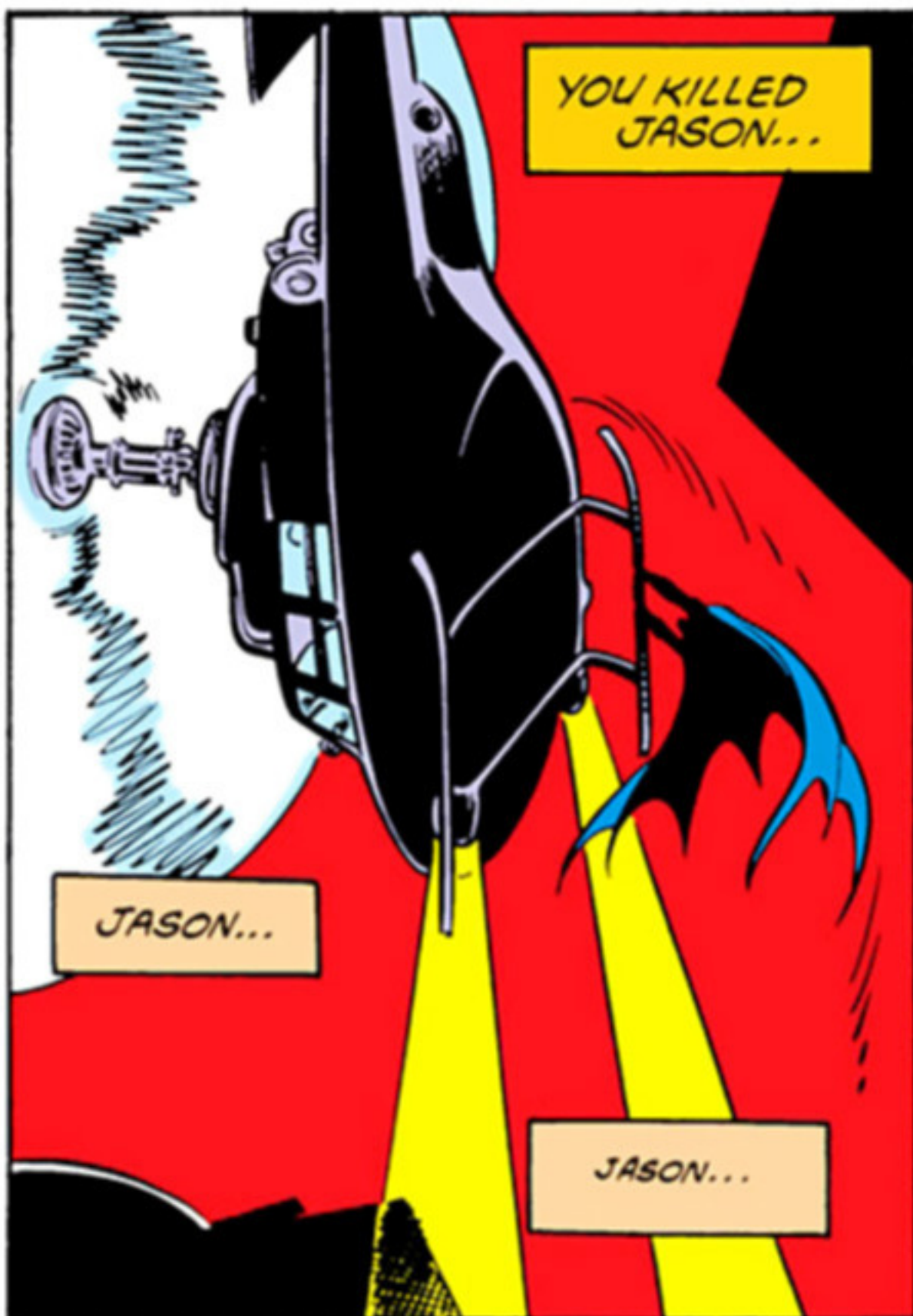
NO MATTER WHERE YOU FLEE...

...I WILL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

NO ESCAPE!!

MOVE IT!

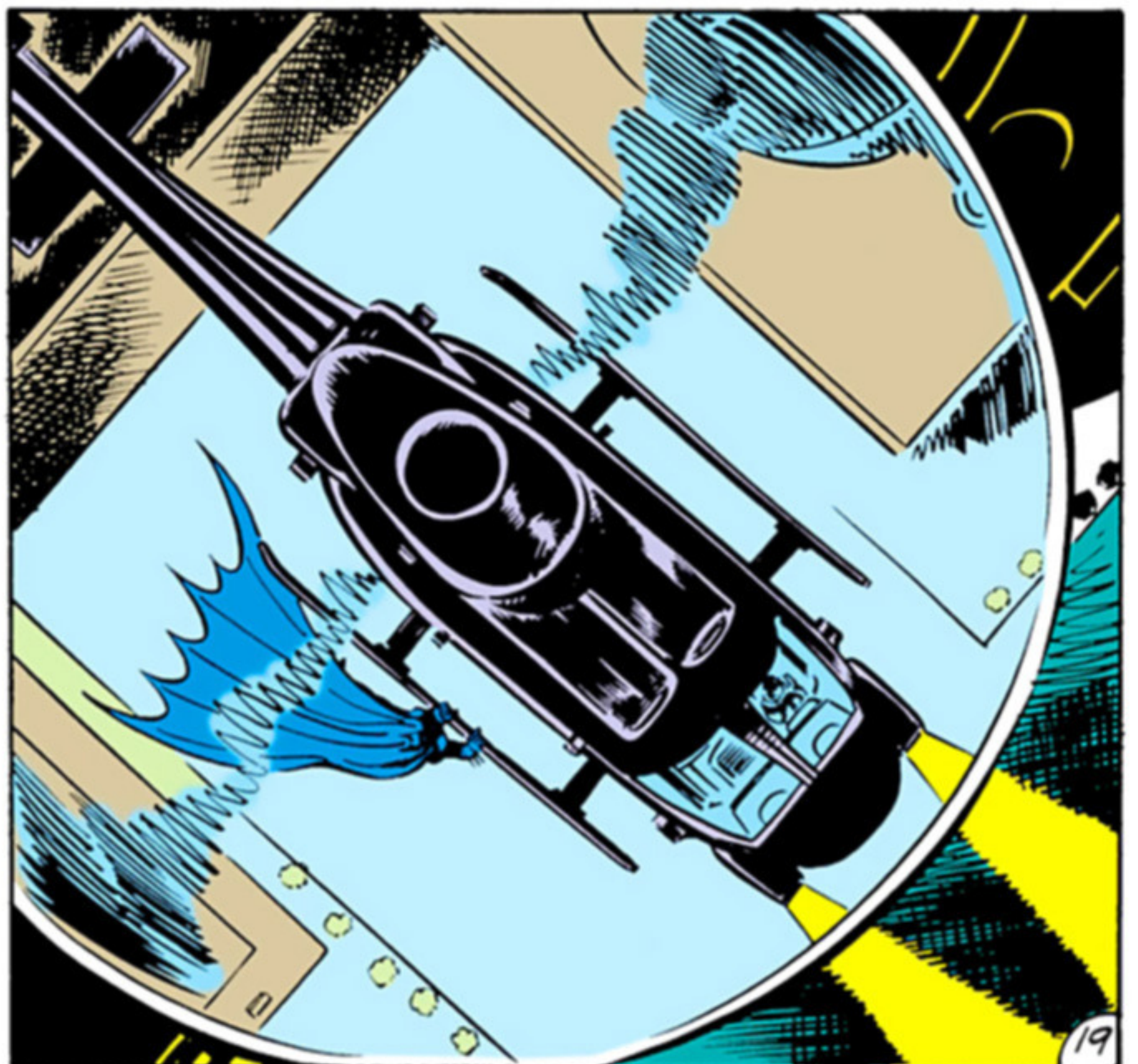
GET US OUT OF HERE!



YOU KILLED JASON...

JASON...

JASON...





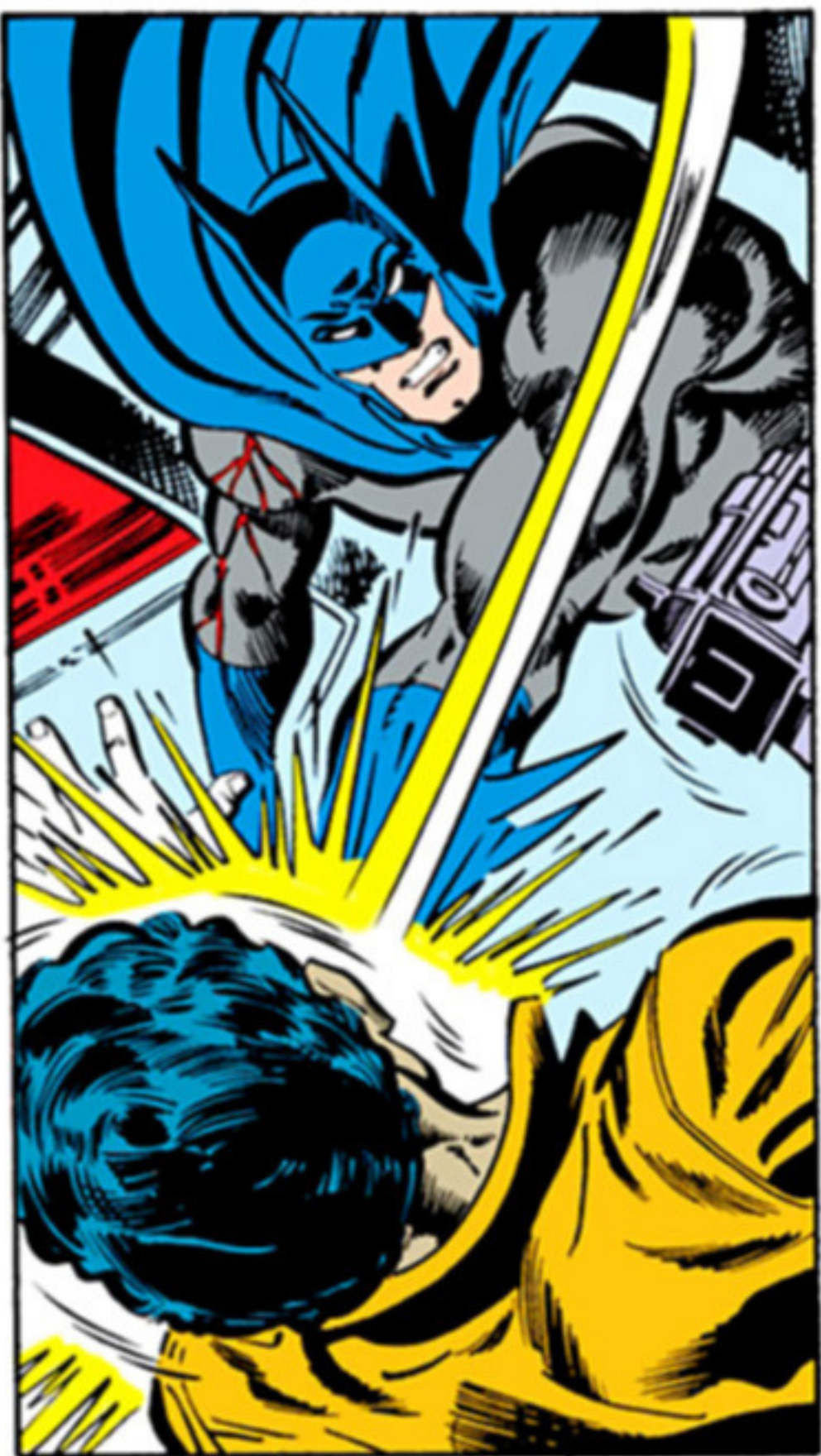


THE PANICKED ARAB'S GUNFIRE IS INDISCRIMINATE, NOT CARING WHO IT STRIKES.

ONE SLUG TAKES OFF THE BACK OF THE PILOT'S HEAD.



THE GUNMAN IMMEDIATELY REALIZES HIS MISTAKE.



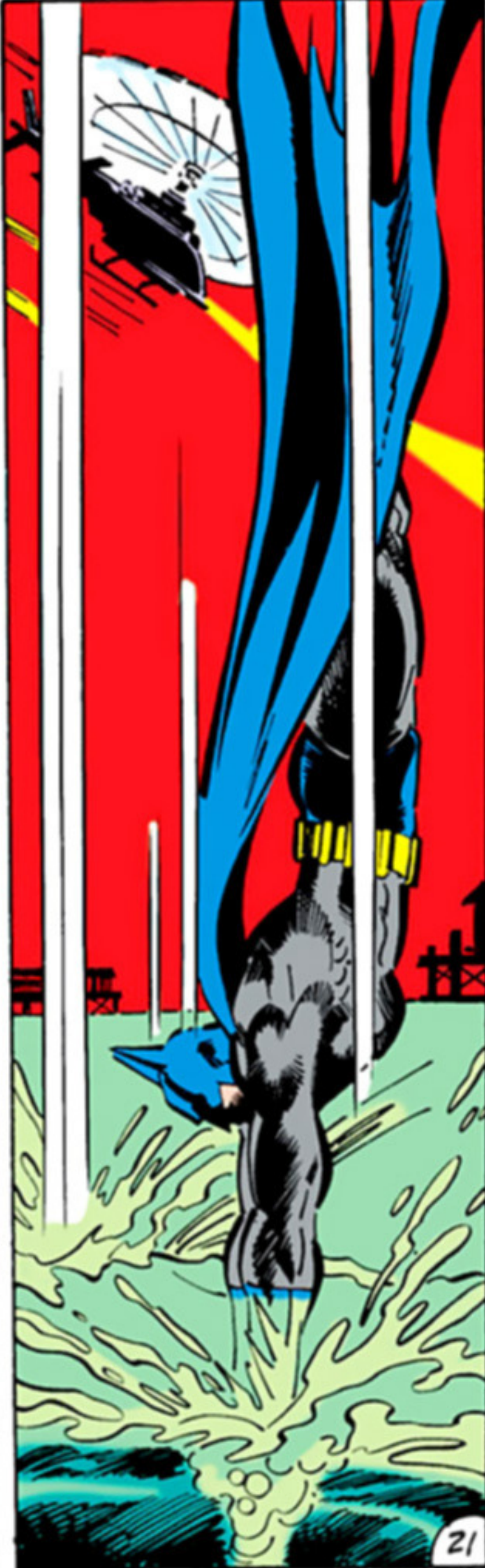
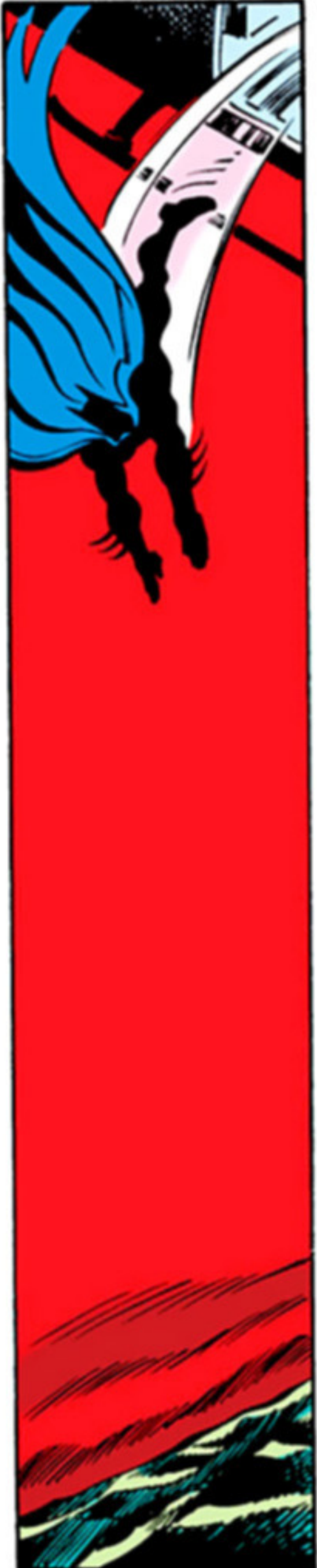
NOT QUITE THE WAY I IMAGINED THE SCENARIO ENDING.

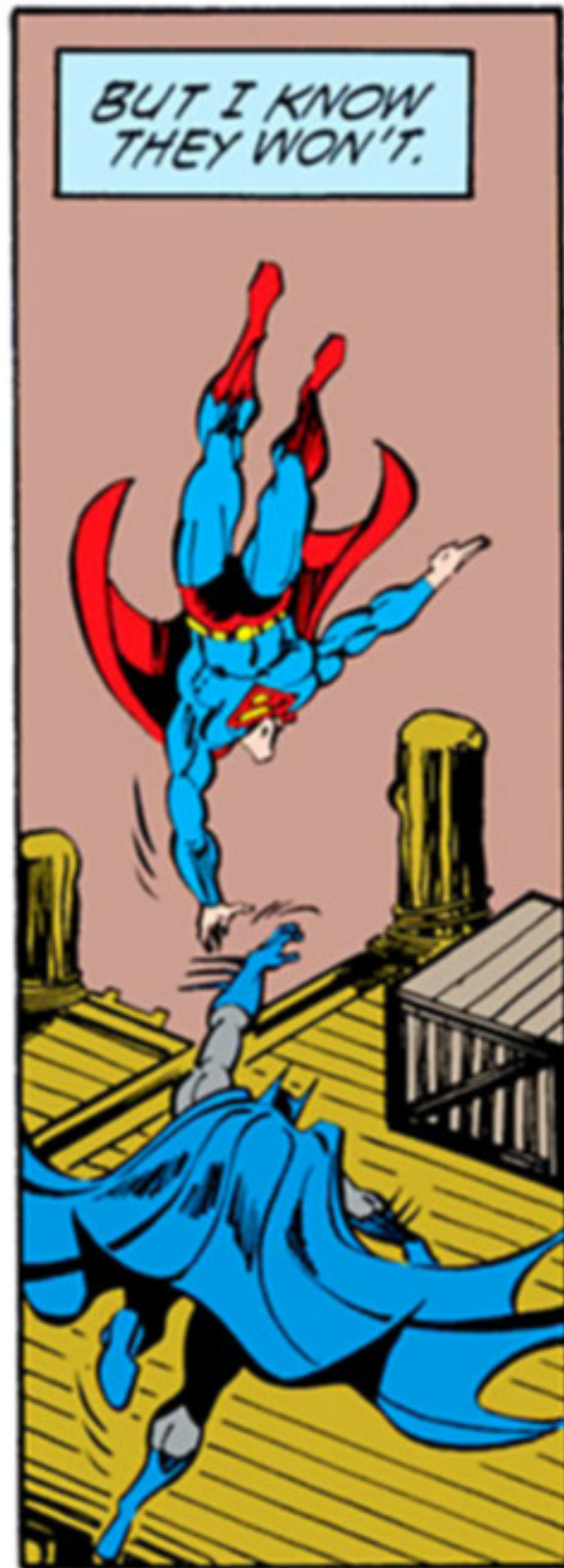
I'LL BE LUCKY TO ESCAPE WITH MY LIFE.



FAREWELL, OLD FOE.

HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH...



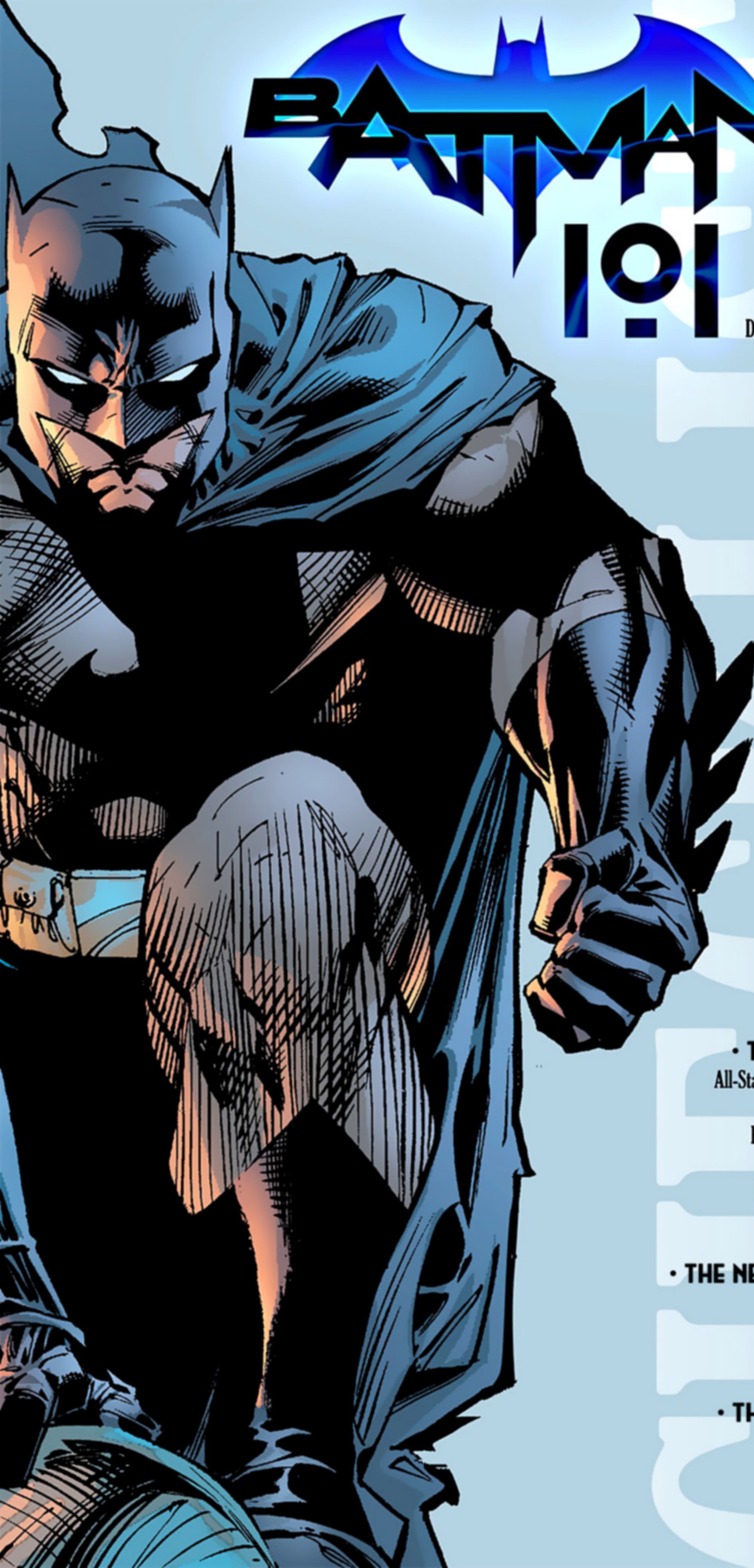


END



BATMAN

101



• BATMAN BEGINS! •

Detective Comics (1937-2011) #27-33

Batman (1940-2011) #1-4

Batman: Dark Victory #0-13

BATMAN: YEAR ONE

Batman #404-407

Batman: The Long Halloween #1-13

• DARK TIMES FOR THE DARK KNIGHT! •

Batman: The Cult #1

BATMAN: DEATH IN THE FAMILY

Batman #426-429

BATMAN: HUSH

Batman #608-619

BATMAN: HEART OF HUSH

Detective Comics #846-850

BATMAN: KNIGHTFALL V. 1

Batman #491-497

Detective Comics #659-663

BATMAN: NO MAN'S LAND

Batman: No Man's Land #1

Batman: Shadow of the Bat #83-#84

Batman #563-#564

Detective Comics #730-#731

Legends of the Dark Knight #116

• THE BATMAN FAMILY! •

All-Star Batman & Robin the Boy Wonder #1

Batman: Black and White #1

Batman/Catwoman: Trail of the Gun #1

Gotham Central #1

Batman and Robin (2009-2011) #1-6

Superman/Batman #1

• THE NEVER-ENDING BATTLE! •

Dark Knight Returns #1

Batman Beyond (1999) #1

Batman Beyond (2011) #1

• THE CITY HE PROTECTS! •

Batman: Arkham City #1

Batman: Gates of Gotham #1

Batman: Streets of Gotham #1

Planetary/Batman: Night on Earth #1



EMPIRE