

HERE YOU ARE, BATMAN! IT'S BEEN ALMOST 24 HOURS SINCE ROBIN DISAPPEARED FROM HUDSON UNIVERSITY AND YOU TOOK TO THE TRAIL-- THE TRAIL THAT FINALLY LED YOU HERE... TO THIS DUSTY OLD MANSION ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF GOTHAM CITY... TO THIS ROTTING REMNANT OF BETTER TIMES!

ONLY ONE THING BOTHERS YOU-- THIS HOUSE WASN'T HERE LAST WEEK!

LISTEN BETWEEN THE ECHOES, BATMAN... TO THE PERSISTENT POUNDING OF THE RAMPANT RAIN THAT RATTLES THE BROKEN GLASS... TO THE HOWLING OF THE COLD NIGHT WIND AS IT DIES, SCREAMING IN THE TREES...

ROBIN... ROBIN...!  
ROBIN... ROBIN...!

WHO...?!

...TO THE CHAOTIC CRACKLE OF THE LIGHTNING THAT REVEALS...

BUT SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT, BATMAN! YOU MOVE HESITANTLY TOWARDS THE DRIPPING FIGURE AND...

ROBIN!!

ROBIN!...  
WHAT'S  
WRONG?

OH, MY  
GOD...  
NO!

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STORY BY  
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THE FLEETING LIFE THAT HAD BEEN ROBIN SIFTS THROUGH YOUR FINGERS-- AND YOU ARE ALONE! ALONE SAVE FOR THE SPECTER OF DEATH THAT HOVERS OVER YOU! IT'S A PRESENCE YOU'VE FELT EVER SINCE THE MOMENT YOU FIRST ENTERED...

the **HOUSE** that

**HAUNTED**  
**BATMAN!**

DO YOU HEAR IT...  
THAT TERRIFIED, PLEADING  
SCREAM? IT'S COMING  
FROM SOMEWHERE UPSTAIRS!  
HURRY, BATMAN, HURRY!

THAT'S RIGHT--BEHIND  
THAT DOOR! OPEN IT!

BATS!!  
THOUSANDS OF...  
ARRGGHH!

THAT DESPERATE  
SCREAM! EVEN  
ABOVE THE DEAF-  
ENING ROAR OF  
BEATING WINGS, YOU  
MUST HEAR THAT  
URGENT CRY FOR  
HELP!



THE ROOM STANDS EMPTY NOW,  
BATMAN! COBWEBS THAT HAVE HUNG UNDISTURBED FOR  
YEARS NOW LITTER THE CRUMBLING CARPETING! ANTIQUE FURNITURE LIES  
OVERTURNED, SCATTERED MEANINGLESSLY ABOUT THE ROOM! NOTHING  
REMAINS STANDING, SAVE FOR...

A GRAMOPHONE?  
HOW IN THE WORLD...?



THAT'S RIGHT, BATMAN--  
THOSE SCREAMS ARE  
COMING FROM THAT OLD-  
TIME PHONOGRAPH! WHY  
DON'T YOU TAKE OFF THE  
RECORD AND STOP THEM...?

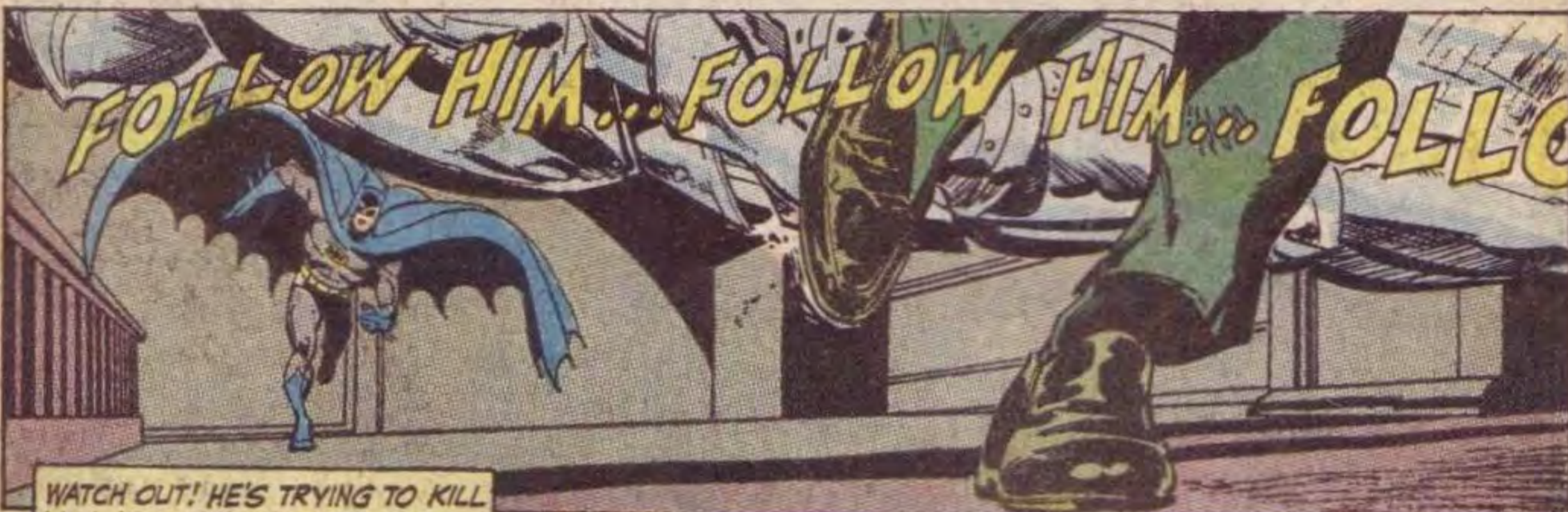


BUT STILL THE SCREAMS DON'T STOP!



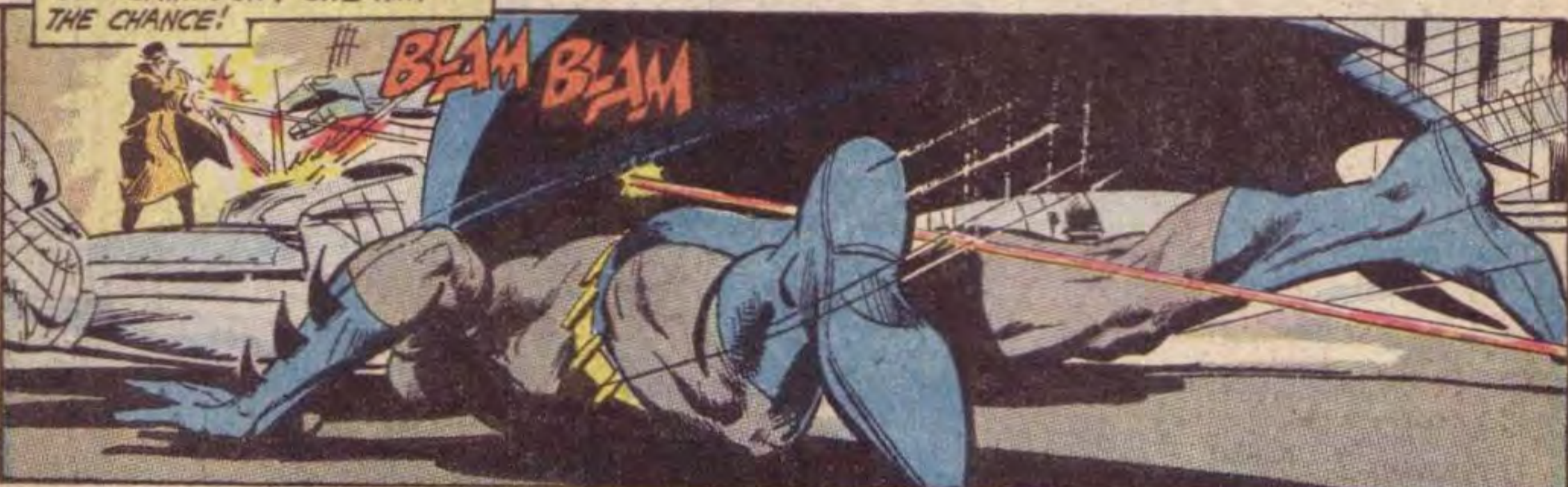


THERE HE IS, BATMAN--THE ONE WHO ALMOST KILLED YOU! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY! FOLLOW HIM!



FOLLOW HIM... FOLLOW HIM... FOLLO

WATCH OUT! HE'S TRYING TO KILL YOU AGAIN! DON'T GIVE HIM THE CHANCE!



BLAM BLAM



MOVE IT, BATMAN! DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE! HE MUST KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ROBIN!



HE'S BLOWN IT! IF I'M RIGHT, THIS HALLWAY COMES TO A DEAD-END RIGHT AROUND THIS CORNER!

THE NEXT INCREDIBLE MOMENT...



FALLING THROUGH THE WALL...!

WHERE ARE YOU NOW, BATMAN? GO AHEAD-- TRY TO PIERCE THE SHROUDING BLACKNESS! YOU CAN'T SEE? WHY NOT TAKE OUT YOUR FLASHLIGHT?



WHAT NOW, BATMAN? NO FLASHLIGHT? INSTEAD YOU'VE FOUND...

MATCHES?! BUT I WAS SURE I HAD...NO MATTER! THESE WILL HAVE TO DO!

WHY THE GASP, BATMAN? ARE YOU SO SURPRISED TO SEE--



SUPERMAN! ROBIN! FLASH! THE JUSTICE LEAGUE! EVEN COMMISSIONER GORDON! MAN, AM I EVER GLAD TO SEE YOU! I WAS GOING OUT OF MY M...

HEY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? DON'T YOU HEAR ME? DON'T YOU SEE ME?



HE WAS A GOOD MAN... A BRAVE MAN! ALL THE WORLD SHALL MOURN BATMAN'S PASSING...

M-MY PASSING? BUT I'M ALIVE-- ALIVE! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

CONTINUED ON 2<sup>ND</sup> PAGE FOLLOWING.



I WORKED WITH HIM...I LEARNED FROM HIM...I CALLED HIM MY FRIEND--BUT...

BUT IT WASN'T TRUE! HE WAS A FRAUD-- A HYPOCRITE--A DISGRACE TO THE LAW HE VOWED TO UPHOLD!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? I'VE ALWAYS BEEN YOUR FRIEND!



YOU'RE RIGHT! THE SUPERMAN-BATMAN TEAM... HA! WHAT A JOKE! I DID ALL THE WORK AND THAT CAPED CONMAN TOOK ALL THE CREDIT!

THAT'S A LIE! I NEVER DID THAT-- NEVER!

WAIT A SECOND! OF COURSE! I'M DREAMING-- THIS IS NOT REALLY HAPPENING... IT'S A TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE!



HE LOCKED ME AWAY--NEVER LET ME SHARE THE SPOT-LIGHT! THAT'S WHY I LEFT HIM! I--HATED HIM!

NO! I WON'T LISTEN! YOU'RE JUST A DREAM! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SHUT MY EYES TO WIPE YOU OUT!



NOW THAT BATMAN'S DEAD, I'M GOING TO BE THE BOSS--ME! AND THE FIRST THING I'M GONNA DO IS REVEAL HIS SECRET IDENTITY! IT'S...

NO! YOU CAN'T! I'M NOT DEAD! I'M AS ALIVE AS YOU--



THE MATCH... IT DIED OUT!

AND BY THE TIME YOU  
LIGHT ANOTHER ONE,  
BATMAN...

GONE--LIKE A  
LEAF IN THE WIND!

IT WAS ALL  
AN ILLUSION--BUT  
WHO'S BEHIND IT? THE  
JOKER?  
RIDDLER?  
CATWOMAN?  
WHO?



YOU MAY NEVER LIVE TO  
FIND OUT, BATMAN, BECAUSE...

THE WALLS...  
THEY'RE  
CLOSING IN!



THAT'S IT--FIGHT!  
FIGHT FOR YOUR  
LIFE!

THIS IS  
RIDICULOUS! IT'S LIKE  
AN OLD-TIME MOVIE  
SERIAL...



NO! I'VE GOT  
TO GET OUT OF HERE--  
GOT TO!... BUT  
THERE'S NO WAY!



LET ME  
OUT... LET  
ME...



...OUT!  
HUH?  
WHERE  
AM I?

YOU FEEL  
A SUDDEN,  
TREMBLING  
PRESSURE  
SURGE  
BENEATH  
YOUR FEET,  
AND THEN...

WHAAA?  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING?

**BWOOSH**

YOU ARC  
YOUR  
BODY TO  
REGAIN  
YOUR  
BALANCE  
AND YOU  
SUDDENLY  
SEE...



ROBIN?

ABSOLUTELY  
CORRECT,  
BATMAN!  
ROBIN IS MY  
PRISONER...  
JUST AS  
YOU ARE!

THAT VOICE--  
I CAN NEVER  
FORGET IT...



LOOK, BATMAN--  
GAZE UPON THE  
FACE OF YOUR  
MASTER...

DR. TZIN-TZIN\*--  
THE MASTER OF  
ILLUSION! BUT I  
THOUGHT YOU WERE  
IN PRISON!

FOOL, DID YOU  
REALLY BELIEVE ANY OF  
YOUR ABSURD PRISONS  
COULD HOLD ME?

\* EDITOR'S NOTE - INTRODUCED IN DETECTIVE  
COMICS # 354, "NO EXIT for BATMAN!"



WHEN I ESCAPED, I TRIED TO  
REJOIN THE TONG-- BUT THEY  
SCORNED ME... BECAUSE I HAD  
LOST FACE AT YOUR HANDS!

I WANTED  
REVENGE-- BUT THAT LUXURY  
REQUIRES MONEY AND EQUIPMENT!  
THE LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS PROVIDED  
THAT! TWICE BEFORE THEY HAVE  
FAILED TO DESTROY YOU...

THIS TIME,  
THEY HIRED AN EXPERT  
TO DO THE JOB-- ME!!

DON'T BOTHER SEARCHING THROUGH YOUR UTILITY  
BELT, BATMAN! ITS CONTENTS HAVE BEEN  
REMOVED-- EMPTIED THERE ON THE FLOOR, NEAR  
THE SWITCH THAT COULD END YOUR ORDEAL!



YOU SHOULD FEEL HONORED, *BATHAN!* I PREPARED THIS HOUSE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU! EVERYTHING IN IT WAS DESIGNED TO WEAKEN YOUR WILL--TO DRIVE YOU TO THE *BREAKING POINT!*

YOU AND *ROBIN* ARE PRISONERS IN MY *HUMAN ACCELERATOR*--WHERE YOU EACH WILL CONTINUE TO BOUNCE UNTIL THE COUNT REACHES *ONE HUNDRED*--WHEREUPON A BOMB PLACED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TUBE WILL *EXPLODE*, BLASTING YOU BOTH!

CAN'T GIVE IN... ONLY ONE THING TO DO...

BEG, *BATHAN*--PLEAD WITH ME AND PERHAPS I WILL *SPARE ROBIN'S* LIFE!

EVERYTIME I STRIKE THE TOP OF THIS TUBE, THE COUNT INCREASES! BY SPEEDING UP MY MOTION, I CAN OVERTAKE *ROBIN'S* COUNT!

*BATHAN!* WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?* DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU ARE HASTENING YOUR OWN *DOOM?*

BEG MY FORGIVENESS... THAT'S *ROBIN'S* ONLY HOPE! BEG, YOU BLASTED FOOL--*BEG!!*

TOO LATE! YOU'VE...

W  
W  
A  
C  
O  
M  
M  
M



THAT ~~ACT~~... CHOOSING SUICIDE TO SUBMISSION! HIS WORTHLESS ACT OF BRAVADO SHALL COST HIS YOUNG COMPANION'S LIFE!



DON'T BET ANY YEN ON THAT, TZIN-TZIN!

B-BUT YOU'RE DEAD... YOU HAVE TO BE!!

**CUNG**



WRONG, TZIN-TZIN! I MANAGED TO WEDGE MYSELF AGAINST THE TOP OF THE TUBE AT THE CREST OF MY FINAL BOUNCE--THEN THREW MY UTILITY BELT DOWN, SETTING OFF THE EXPLOSION!

AND, HIDDEN BY THE SMOKE, I SOMERSAULTED DOWN OUT OF HARM'S WAY!



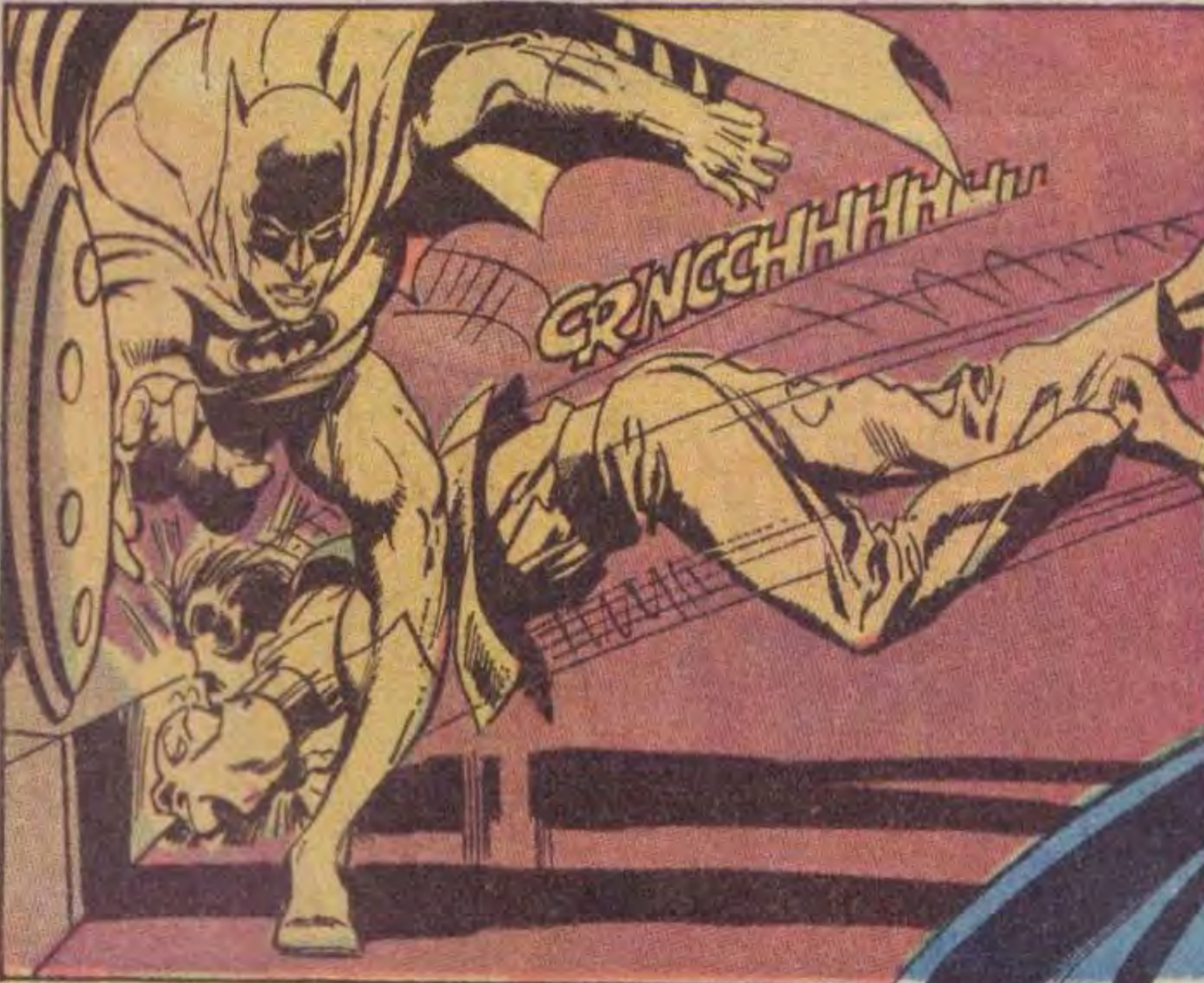
YOU ARE GOING TO WISH YOU HAD DIED, BATMAN--FOR NOTHING ON EARTH CAN STOP...

MY BEADLY DOZEN!!

THE GIANT, FONG WU, ALONE CAN CRUSH THE LIFE FROM YOUR BODY... SLOWLY... PAINFULLY...



YOUR MUSCLES TENSE AND THEN...



YOUR EYES BURN WITH A SAVAGERY THEY HAVE NEVER SHOWN BEFORE, AS...

WHEN I'VE FINISHED WITH YOUR GOONS, TZIN-TZIN, I'M COMING AFTER YOU--

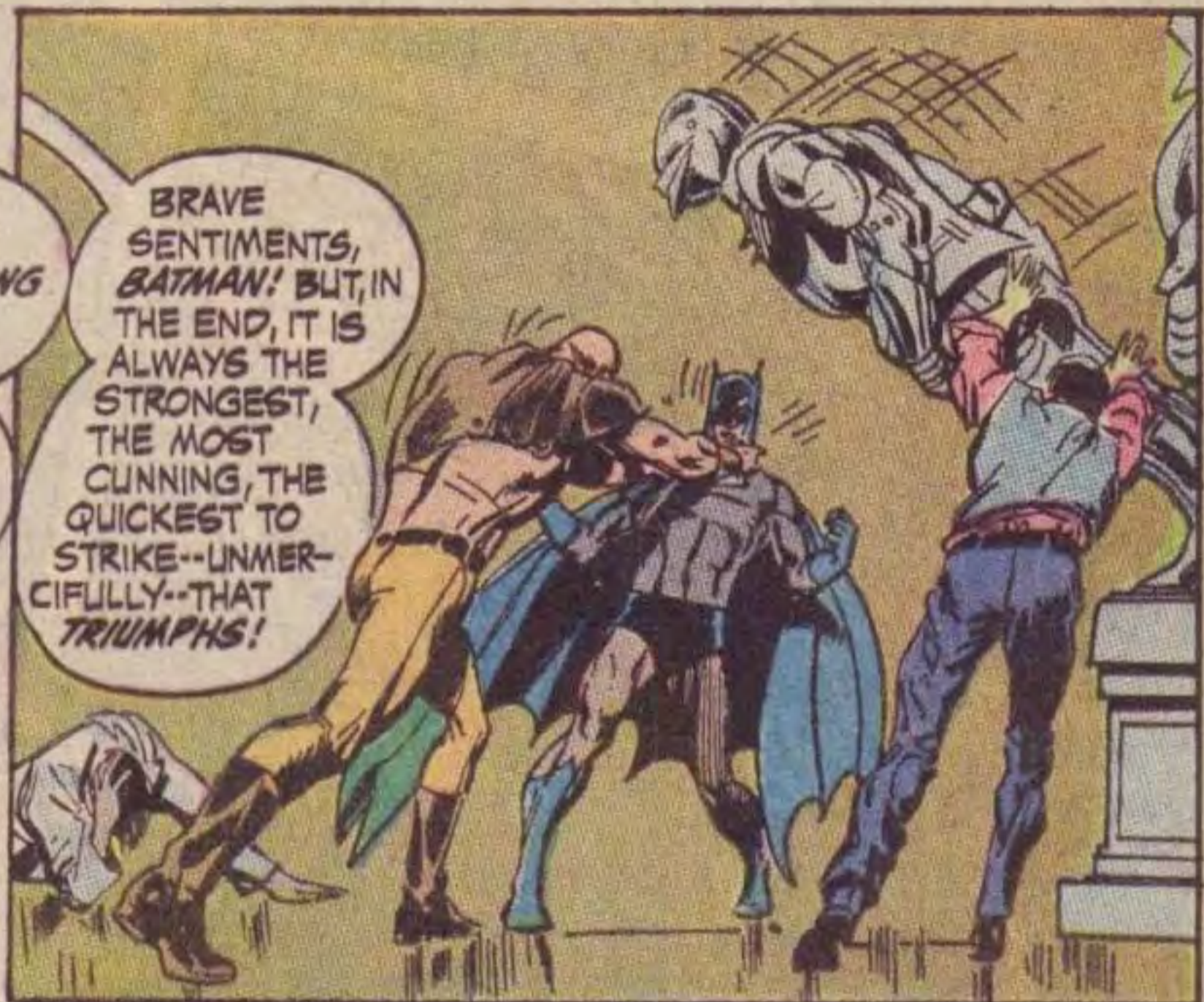
--NO MATTER WHERE YOU TRY TO HIDE!

YOU'RE MAD, BATMAN--I...



MAD? YOU'RE DARNED RIGHT, I'M MAD... FIGHTING MAD! THE WAY I AM WHENEVER SOME TWO-BIT PUNK LIKE YOU TRIES TO SET HIMSELF UP AS A TIN-PLATED GOD!


BRAVE SENTIMENTS, BATMAN! BUT, IN THE END, IT IS ALWAYS THE STRONGEST, THE MOST CUNNING, THE QUICKEST TO STRIKE--UNMERCIFULLY--THAT TRIUMPHS!



WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY NOW, TZIN-TZIN?

I BEG TO DIFFER WITH YOU, BATMAN! IT'S--WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY NOW!






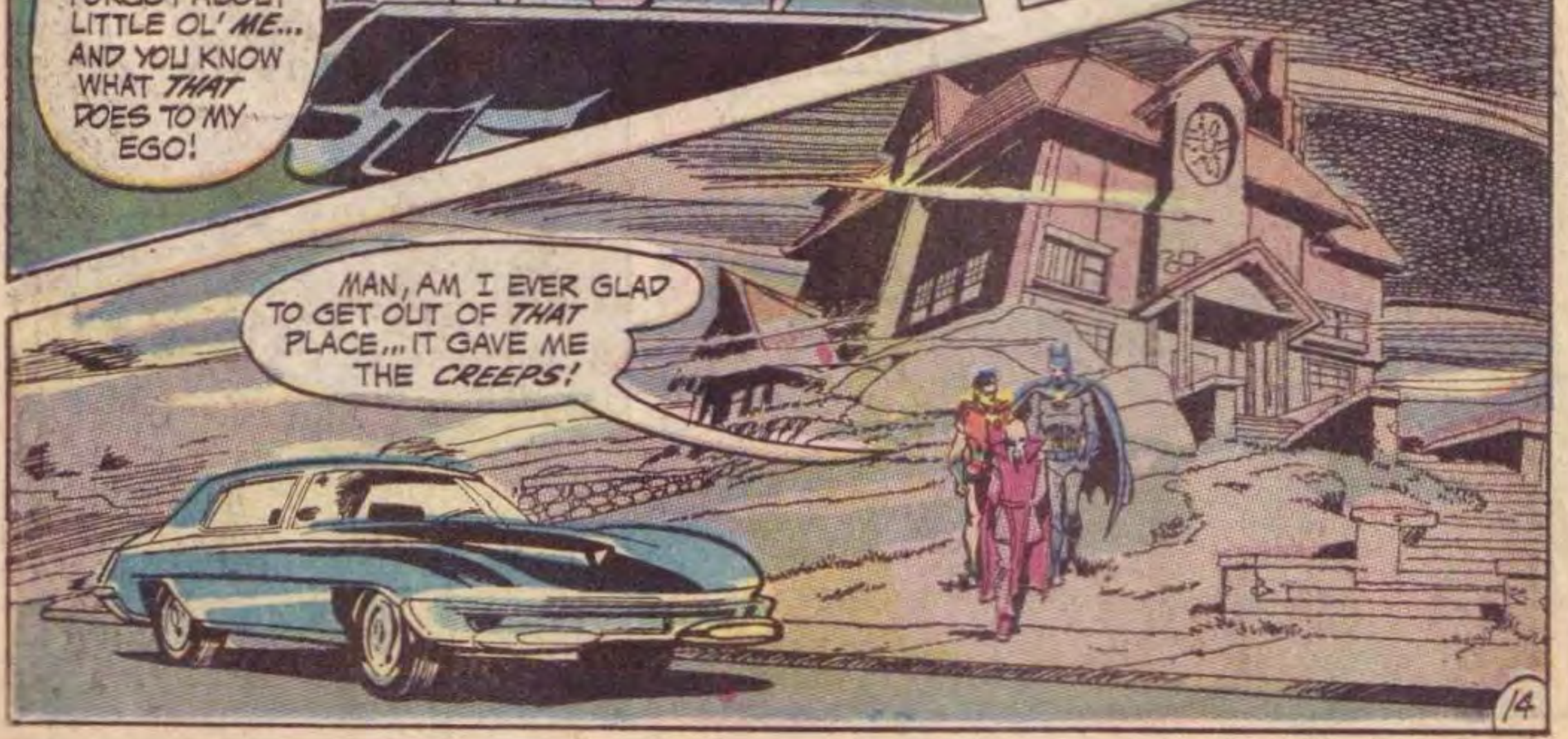
YOU ARE A FLY IN THE OINTMENT, *BATMAN*--A THORN IN MY SIDE--EASILY DEALT WITH! THERE SHALL BE NO MORE TRAPS--NO MORE ILLUSIONS! I SHALL END IT HERE... QUICKLY... CLEANLY... WITH A BULLET!



NOT SO FAST, *BIG T*... YOU FORGOT ABOUT LITTLE OL' ME... AND YOU KNOW WHAT *THAT* DOES TO MY EGO!



GOOD GOING, *ROBIN*! I SAW YOU REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS SO I STALLED FOR TIME!



MAN, AM I EVER GLAD TO GET OUT OF *THAT* PLACE... IT GAVE ME THE *CREEPS*!



WHAT...? LAUGHTER--  
COMING FROM  
THE HOUSE!



TZIN-TZIN!?!

BUT IT CAN'T  
BE... HE'S HERE  
WITH US!



GONE! HE GOT  
AWAY WHILE WE  
WERE DISTRACTED!



IT'S GONE--  
SCATTERED TO  
THE SKY!

THE GROUND TREMBLES BENEATH YOUR FEET,  
BATMAN--THE DARK, OLD HOUSE BEGINS TO  
QUIVER--INTERNAL EXPLOSIONS ERUPT THROUGHOUT  
THE ERODING EDIFICE--THEN COLLAPSES IN A  
PAROXYSM OF HEAT AND FLAME...



THE FIRST BREEZE OF MORNING  
WHISTLES ACROSS THE HILL--  
SWEEPING AWAY THE EBONY  
MEMORIES THAT FILLED THE NIGHT  
BEFORE! THE BATMOBILE  
ROARS QUIETLY AWAY--AND  
IS LOST IN THE FIRST  
MISTS OF DAWN...

The  
End