

A NEW  
**BATMAN**  
THRILLER

HEY, BATMAN, HEARD ANY GOOD ONES LATELY? YOU KNOW -- JOKES! YOKS! GAGS! BOFFOLAS! WELL, WE HAVE! ALL ABOUT THIS JOKER, SEE-- AND HOW HE DOES THIS HILARIOUS REVENGE BIT.

KNOW WHO HIS VICTIM IS? HANG ON, BATMAN, THIS'LL GRAB YOU! THE VICTIM IS-- READY, BATMAN?--THE VICTIM IS **Y-O-U!**



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WAIT--DON'T GO 'WAY--NOT TILL YOU'VE HEARD THE PUNCH LINE! NO KIDDING--

"This One'll **KILL** You, **BATMAN!**"



# CHAPTER 1: "AND IF I LAUGH..."

AT THE EDGE OF ARKHAM, NEW ENGLAND, STANDS A FOREBODING STRUCTURE--HOME OF THE MOST DANGEROUS MEN ALIVE--THE ASYLUM FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE--



INSIDE, ALL IS ROUTINE! NO ONE CAN GUESS THAT CHAOS IS ABOUT TO ERUPT...



HERE'S YOUR JAVA, AL!

THANKS, PETE! SAY, YOU SEEN TODAY'S PAPER? THE NEWS IS GRIM!



...WAR-THREATS... ENERGY CRISIS... GUYS GETTIN' BRIBED! IT'S...



...IT'S THE FUNNIEST... HEE HEE HEE... FUNNIEST DARN STUFF...



HA-HA-HA HA-HA!



AND ELSEWHERE, THE INSTITUTION'S MOST FAMOUS INMATE IS BEING SERVED SUPPER--

YOUR FAVORITE, JOKER... HEH HEH HEH HEH... FAVORITE FOOD--!

SOMETHING TICKLING YOUR WARPED SENSE OF HUMOR, GUARD?



C-C-CAN'T S-STOP L-LAUGHING... HAHAHAHA...

YOU'RE HAVING SUCH A GOOD TIME...

...YOU MIGHT LOSE YOUR KEYS!

HERE-- I'LL HOLD THEM FOR YOU!





HA HA HA HA!

THAT'S WHAT I LIKE -- AN APPRECIATIVE AUDIENCE... EVEN WHEN THE LAUGHS ON HIM!



ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO LEAVE THROUGH THIS KITCHEN DOOR AND HOP IN THE CAR MY ACCOMPLICE PLANTED--

I'VE TAKEN CARE OF YOUR CAR, JOKER-- NOW I'M TAKING CARE OF YOU!



THE BATMAN--! I ANTICIPATED YOU'D "CRASH" MY COMING-OUT PARTY!

THAT'S WHY I INVITED SOME OTHER GUESTS--



-- MY FELLOW-INMATES WHOSE CELL DOORS I UNLOCKED ON THE WAY OUT!

THEY TELL ME THEY'RE CRAZY TO MEET YOU!



SNARLING, THE MADMEN CHARGE...

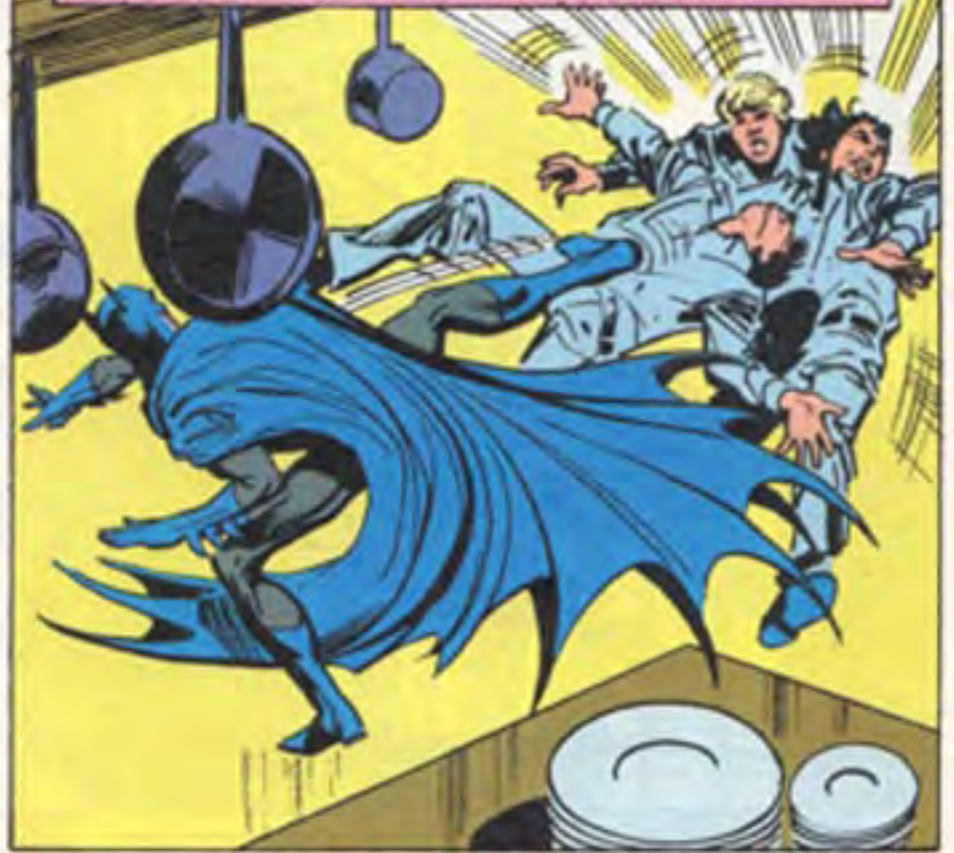
HOW DELIGHTFUL! WHATEVER HAPPENS TO THE BATMAN, THE LAW CAN'T HOLD THESE HOMICIDAL MANIACS RESPONSIBLE!



THE FIRST TWO STOP AS THOUGH HIT WITH A WALL!



A MASTER OF UNARMED COMBAT IS THE BATMAN... KUNG FU--



--AND JUDO...



...AND AIKIDO...



...AND PLAIN OLD FISTICUFFS--!



BUT THE ODDS ARE A DOZEN TO ONE... AND HIS FOES FIGHT WITH THE DESPERATE STRENGTH OF MADNESS!

STILL, HE MIGHT WIN--





-- EXCEPT FOR A TREACHEROUS ATTACK FROM BEHIND! THE HEAVY COFFEE URN STRIKES... AND AS THE BATMAN FALLS, HE IS SPLASHED WITH SCALDING LIQUID--



HA HA HA--



COME ON, MARCUS!

YEAH... SOON AS I STOMP HIM TO DEATH!

HOWEVER...



SORRY, MARCUS--



-- YOU'RE A FRIEND... AND THE BATMAN IS AN ENEMY!

NEVERTHELESS, I CAN'T LET YOU KILL HIM!



TWO-FACE--?!

IF YOU'RE ABOUT TO THANK ME, BATMAN-- DON'T!

I HAD TO SAVE YOU!



I TOSSED MY COIN--



-- AND THE GOOD SIDE LANDED FACE UP!

BELIEVE ME, IF THE BAD SIDE HAD, I'D HAVE HELPED HIM KILL YOU!







THEN, AT A NEARBY LABORATORY...



GOOD EVENING, DOCTOR!

WHO... THE BATMAN--!

YOU STARTLED ME!

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?



I GOT A MASSIVE DOSE OF THE JOKER'S DRUG AND, FRANKLY, IT HAS ME WORRIED!

IT SHOULD! I'VE STUDIED THE PREPARATION... NASTY STUFF!

ONLY TWO MEN IN THE WORLD ARE QUALIFIED TO PREPARE AN ANTIDOTE--

--DOCTOR ROCKWELL IN LONDON IS ONE...



...AND, FORTUNATELY, I AM THE OTHER!

R-RINGGG!

EXCUSE ME, SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR!



FLOWERS FOR DR. HAMISH!

BUT I DIDN'T ORDER ANY--

THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, DOC!



MMM... THEY ARE LOVELY... FRAGRANT...

DOCTOR... I DON'T LIKE THE SMELL OF THIS!

GET RID OF 'EM-- QUICK!



BUT BEFORE THE SCIENTIST CAN OBEY--

T-SSSSSS

G-- GAS...

CHOKES



DOCTOR!

AGHH





HE'S DEAD!

A CARD DROPPED FROM THE BOUQUET!

EVEN BEFORE I LOOK, I KNOW IT MUST BE--



--A JOKER!



THAT CLOWN MAY VARY HIS TRICKS--BUT NOT HIS M.Q.!

HOW DROLL-- TO USE AN OLD PRACTICAL JOKE TO SNUFF THE MAN WHO COULD HELP ME!



...NO! FUNNY IT'S NOT! I'VE GOT TO NAB A MURDERER!

THE PHONY DELIVERYMAN CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN TOO FAR--



THERE HE IS... JUST STANDING THERE!

WHAT'S HE DOING -- WAITING FOR A BUS?



NO... BATMAN-- JUST WAITIN' FOR YOU!

I'M GONNA FINISH THE JOB I STARTED AT THE ASYLUM!

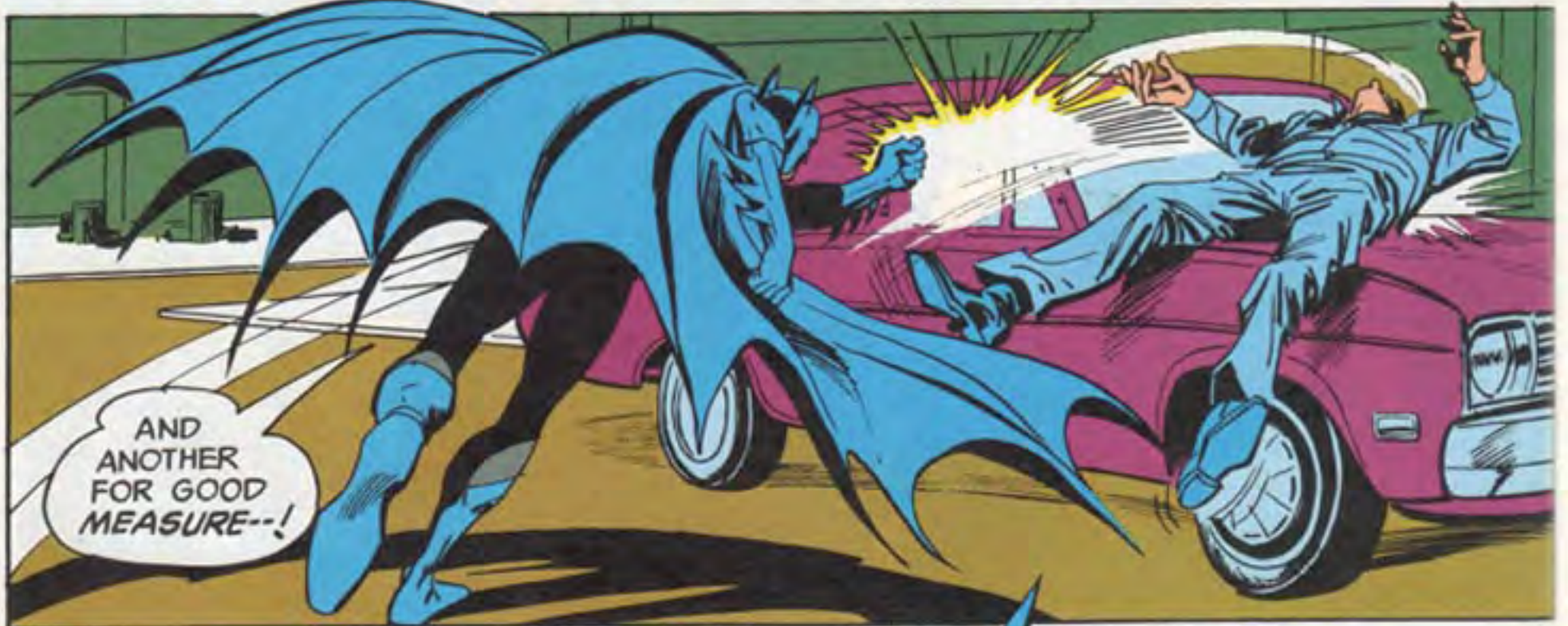
MY WOULD-BE STOMPER--MARCUS!

OKAY, CREEP-- YOU'VE HAD YOUR SWING--





--MY TURN NOW!



AND ANOTHER FOR GOOD MEASURE--!



HA! THAT'S A LAUGH-- REACHING FOR A GUN!

GO AHEAD-- IT'D BE MY PLEASURE TO WRECK YOU!

NO GUN! THE BOSS SAID THAT IF YOU CAUGHT ME I WAS TO GIVE YOU THIS--



A POCKET-SIZED TAPE-RECORDER!

YEAH... WITH A MESSAGE FROM THE JOKER!

**CLICK!**



LISTEN, BATMAN-- THIS ONE'LL KILL YOU!

THAT DRINK OF COFFEE YOU HAD IN THE ASYLUM WAS DRUGGED! ITS EFFECTS WILL KEEP INCREASING... AND IN 72 HOURS YOU'LL LAUGH YOURSELF TO DEATH!

A FITTING REVENGE FOR THE JOKER, YOU WILL AGREE...?





REE-DICULOUS! HE EXPECTS ME TO BELIEVE HIS CRAZY STORY?

IF DR. HAMISH'S MURDER WEREN'T SO TRAGIC--

--I WOULD LAUGH--



--IN FACT, I WILL!

LAUGHTER... GALES OF HOWLING MIRTH SHUDDER THROUGH THE NIGHT--

--AND END IN A HORRIFIED GASP! THE BATMAN WHISPERS HARSHLY...



IT'S TRUE!

IT MUST BE... ALL TRUE!



THE JOKER SAID I HAVE THREE DAYS!

PLENTY OF TIME TO BATJET TO LONDON...

... AND TO CONSULT WITH THE DR. ROCKWELL THAT HAMISH MENTIONED!



BUT BEFORE I LEAVE, I MUST PAY MY LAST RESPECTS!

LAST RESPECTS? HOW AMUSING!



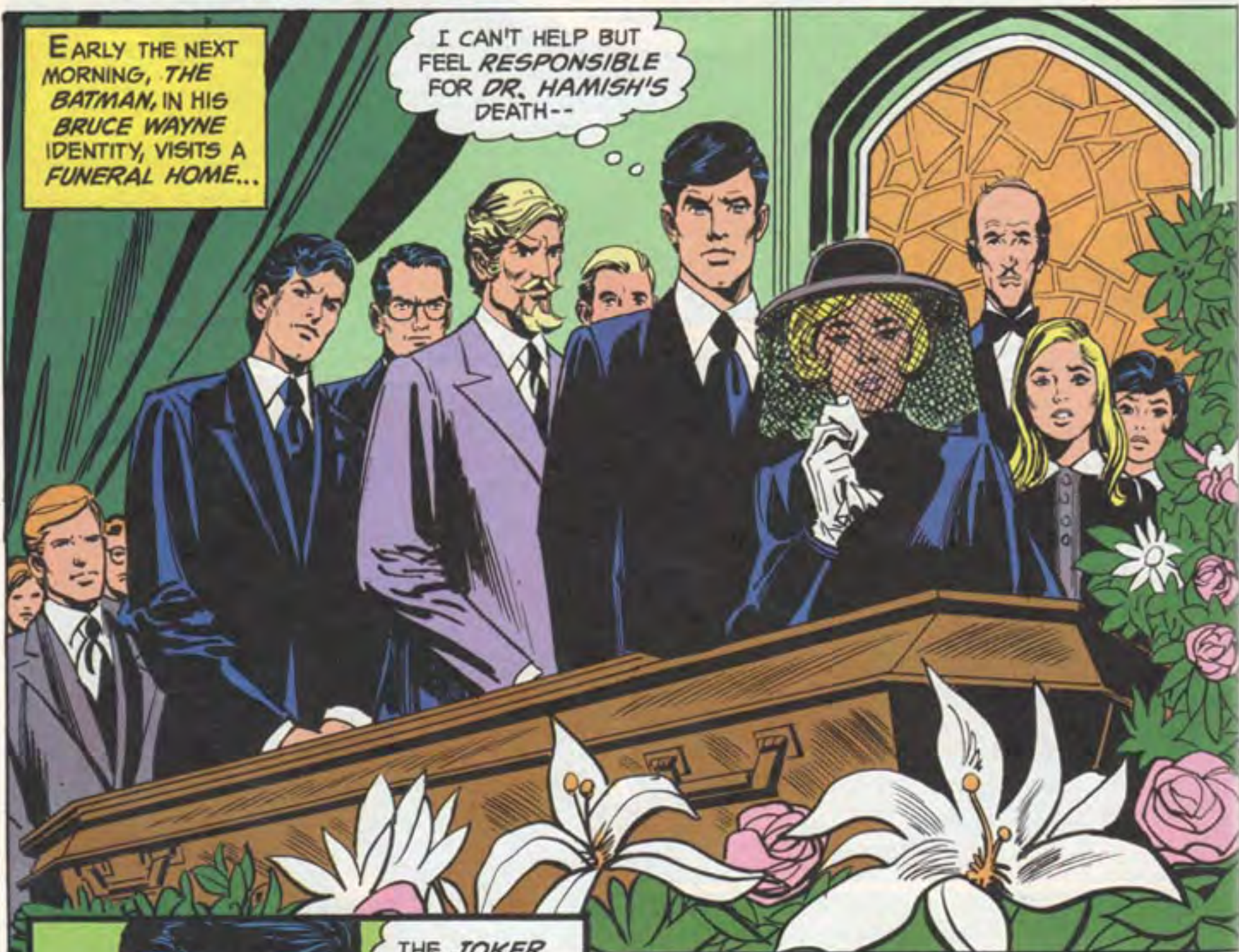
A CHUCKLE RISES IN HIM... A GUFFAW... AND HIS BODY TREMBLES WITH THE TREMENDOUS EFFORT OF KEEPING THE TERRIBLE SOUND LOCKED WITHIN --!



CHAPTER 2: **"'TIS THAT I MAY NOT WEEP!"**

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, THE BATMAN, IN HIS BRUCE WAYNE IDENTITY, VISITS A FUNERAL HOME...

I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR DR. HAMISH'S DEATH--



THE JOKER MURDERED HIM JUST TO PREVENT HIM FROM SAVING MY LIFE!

HOW FUNNY HE LOOKS LYING IN THAT COFFIN--



..VERY FUNNY...!





M-MASTER BRUCE--?  
HURRY, ALFRED--GET ME TO... HAHAHA ... AIRFIELD... HA-HA-HA!

WHA-HA-HA!



IN LESS THAN AN HOUR, THE BATMAN IS AIRBORNE AND LOST IN THOUGHT...

THANK GOD... THE GHOULISH LAUGHTER IS OVER... FOR THE PRESENT...



PHONED DR. ROCKWELL--

-- AND HE'S STANDING BY TO TREAT ME...



LONDON-- A THICK FOG MASKS A CAPED FORM STEALING SILENTLY ALONG AN EXCLUSIVE STREET TOWARD THE ROCKWELL RESIDENCE...

IT'S SO SILENT... I'M HAVING TROUBLE BELIEVING I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A METROPOLIS!



HELP!

UH-OH... NOT SILENT ANY LONGER!

I HAVE AN UGLY HUNCH I KNOW WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT WINDOW--



--THE JOKER... AND TWO OF HIS STOOGES!

BATMAN, ESQUIRE! WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU!

K-RASSH!



YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS, STOOGES-- EXECUTE THEM!

WE'RE TO PLAY GOOD GUY VERSUS THUGS, HUH?

TIRESOME...



...BUT AT LEAST THE EXERCISE KEEPS ME IN SHAPE!

HA!-- THAT WASN'T A BAD QUIP!



IN FACT, I CONSIDER MY HUMOR... HA-HA-HA...

HI-HI-HILARIOUS!







LIGHTS OUT FOR YOU, BUDDY! HO-HAH-HAA!

HOO-BOY... THE WORSE THE JOKES GET, THE HARDER I LAUGH!



A KARATE-CHOP IN THE LIVER FOR YOU, BATMAN!

HEY-- THAT GIVES ME--

--CHOPPED LIVER!

HAHAHA... JOKER-- YOU'RE TOO MUCH!



THAT'S USING YOUR HEAD!

HA HA- HA- HA- HA-

DOUBLED UP FROM LAUGHTER... CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF...



I COULD FINISH YOU NOW-- BUT YOU STILL HAVE SOME TIME REMAINING BEFORE THE FUN-FILLED FINALE!

WHACK!

MEANWHILE, HERE'S SOMETHING TO KEEP YOU AMUSED--

-- IT'S AN IDEA IN THE COMEDY MANNER!



I CHALLENGE YOU TO FIGURE OUT WHERE THE DOCTOR AND I WILL BE AT MIDNIGHT, WHEN I SLAY HIM!

THEN... TRY TO STOP ME... IF YOU CAN!

HAHAHA... CAN HARDLY WAIT... TO DO... JUST THAT!



AGONIZING MOMENTS LATER...



WHEW! AS IF I DON'T HAVE PLENTY OF PROBLEMS ALREADY... HE GIVES ME A PUZZLE TO SOLVE!

WHERE DO I LOOK--? WHAT DID HE SAY?-- AN "IDEA IN THE COMEDY MANNER"...



GOT IT-- JOKER HID HIS CLUE IN A PUN!

COMEDY MANNER EQUALS COMEDY MANOR--



--A THEATRE, ONCE A RENOWNED LONDON MUSIC HALL WHERE THE GREATS CONVULSED AUDIENCES ... ENTERTAINERS LIKE CHAPLIN, FIELDS, THE MARX BROTHERS...

...NOW DARK AND SILENT EXCEPT FOR THE SCURRYING OF RATS AND THE GROAN OF ANCIENT TIMBERS...

...STANDING LIKE AN IMPOSSIBLY OLD DOWAGER REMEMBERING YOUTH, BEAUTY, GAIETY...



...HOSTESS THIS SHROUDED NIGHT TO THE BATMAN...

MY TRANSLATION OF THE JOKER'S CLUE WAS RIGHT! THE DUST HAS BEEN RECENTLY DISTURBED!

HE PROBABLY EXPECTS ME TO SNEAK IN BY WINDOW OR ROOF--



--SO I'LL SURPRISE HIM BY BOLDLY WALKING IN THE FRONT ENTRANCE!

AHH... I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T DISAPPOINT ME, BATMAN--!





READY--  
SHOW'S ABOUT  
TO BEGIN!  
NOW...

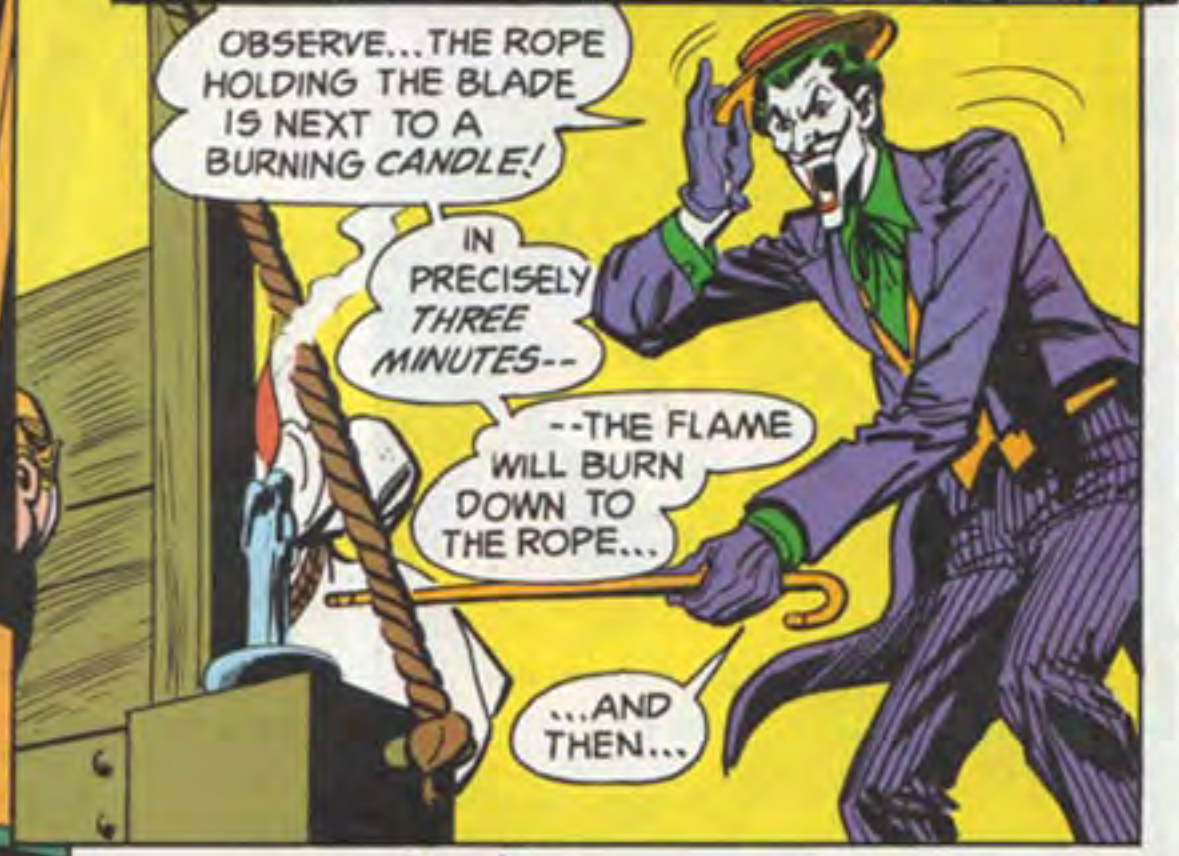
... LOOK AT  
DR. ROCKWELL--  
BOUND IN A  
GUILLOTINE!

WHICH REMINDS  
ME-- YOU KNOW  
WHAT A GUILLOTINE  
IS?



--A PERMANENT CURE  
FOR DANDRUFF!

THAT'S A... HA HA HA...  
T-TERRIBLE J-JOKE!



OBSERVE... THE ROPE  
HOLDING THE BLADE  
IS NEXT TO A  
BURNING CANDLE!

IN  
PRECISELY  
THREE  
MINUTES--

--THE FLAME  
WILL BURN  
DOWN TO  
THE ROPE...

...AND  
THEN...



...THE BLADE WILL  
DROP AND PART THE  
DOC'S HAIR--  
TO HIS ANKLES!

AND YOUR  
HOPE FOR A  
LIFE-SAVING  
CURE WILL  
BE KAPUT!



H-H-HORRIBLE...  
HA HA HA HA HA



NATURALLY YOU'LL WANT  
TO SAVE HIM! BUT  
YOU WON'T... BECAUSE  
I'LL KEEP YOU  
ENTERTAINED!

DID YOU KNOW I'M WRITING  
A SONG IN HONOR OF MY  
MOTHER-IN-LAW?

SAY, ANYBODY GOT  
A RHYME FOR  
HATCHET-  
FACE?





HEARD MY OTHER SONG?

"SHE WAS ONLY A PRINTER'S DAUGHTER, BUT SHE WASN'T MY TYPE!"

MISERABLE... YET I CAN'T STOP LAUGHING!

HA-HA-HA-HA



THEN THERE'S THE PRISONER'S SONG--

"I FRIED FOR YOU!"



DON'T STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE-- "SHE WAS ONLY AN UMPIRE'S DAUGHTER, BUT SHE WAS NEVER SAFE WHEN SHE WAS OUT!"

HA-HAHA

LIMBS TREMBLING... RIBS ACHING... WITH HIS BRUTAL, UNCONTROLLABLE LAUGHTER!



THE ROPE'S SMOLDERING! ONLY BARE SECONDS LEFT TO SAVE DR. ROCKWELL!

HOW ABOUT THIS ONE, BATMAN?--

"I JUST FLEW IN FROM GOTHAM, AND GEE, MY ARMS ARE TIRED!"



WOULD YOU BELIEVE MY HOTEL ROOM IS SO SMALL THE MICE ARE HUNCHBACKED!

MUST CONCENTRATE... BLOCK HIS VOICE-- AND THOSE HIDEOUSLY UNFUNNY JOKES!











DAWN IN LONDON...A GLORIOUSLY HOT SUN BURNS AWAY THE FOG AND WARMS THIS SUBURBAN HOSPITAL...

I'VE INJECTED YOU WITH THE ANTIDOTE TO THE JOKER'S SERUM, BATMAN!

WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS IN A MINUTE!

WHILE WE WAIT... MAY I ASK HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE SERUM LAST NIGHT --AND SAVE MY LIFE?

SIMPLE, DOCTOR--

I REASONED THAT THE DRUG CAUSED ME TO LAUGH WHEN I WAS CONFRONTED BY HORROR... DEATH... VIOLENCE!

THEREFORE, I THEORIZED THAT SOMETHING GENUINELY FUNNY WOULD AFFECT ME THE OPPOSITE WAY!

SO I SIMPLY CONCENTRATED ON THE FUNNIEST SCENES FROM ALL THE MARX BROTHERS PICTURES!

BRILLIANT! AND NOW IT'S TIME TO TEST THE ANTIDOTE! PAY CLOSE ATTENTION--

A FORK SAYS TO A SPOON, "WHO WAS THAT LADLE I CAUGHT YOU WITH?"

THE SPOON REPLIES--

"THAT WAS NO LADLE, THAT WAS MY KNIFE!"

A TRULY HORRIBLE JEST-- AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN CRACK A SMILE!

CONGRATULATIONS, DOCTOR!

YOUR CURE IS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS!

THE END.