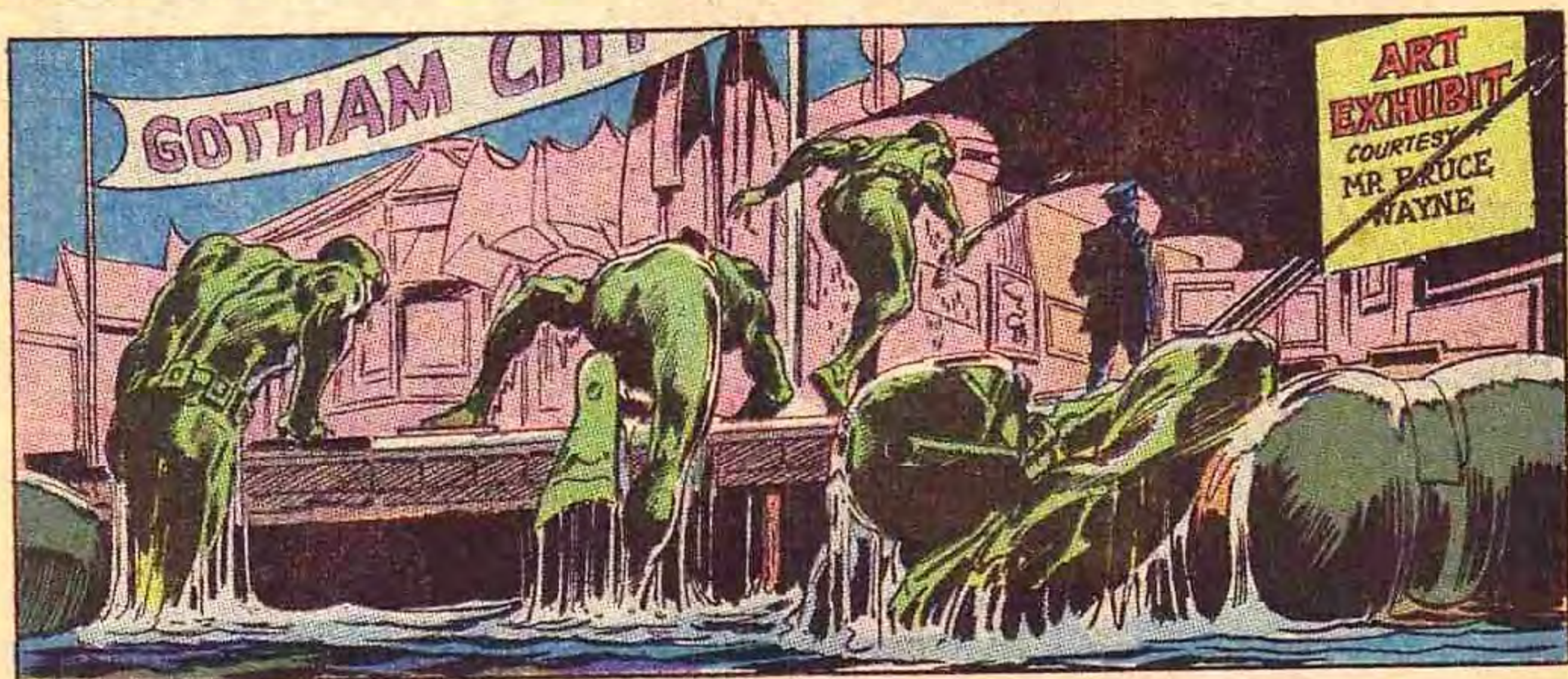


"PAINT A PICTURE OF PERIL!"

A GENTLE TWILIGHT AT *GOTHAM BAY*... A STILLNESS BROKEN ONLY BY DISTANT ECHOES FROM THE NEARBY STREETS AND THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE SEA. IT IS THE EVE BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE ANNUAL *MARINE FESTIVAL* -- AN EVENT THAT POURS MILLIONS INTO WORTHY CHARITIES... AN EVENT THAT NOW BRINGS FROM THE DEPTHS-- *EVIL!*

STORY BY: DENNY O'NEIL

ART BY: NEAL ADAMS & DICK GIORDANO



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THE BATMAN--!

SO WHAT! WE'RE FOUR TO ONE!--NAIL HIM!



HE'S MOVIN' TOO QUICK --UNNGH!



WE TAKE HIM ALIVE, WE'LL BE THE BIGGEST MEN ON THE EAST COAST!---ARRRRGH!

HOLD IT, LAWMAN!



YOU SO MUCH AS TWITCH AND THIS GUARD GETS IT! JUST ...STAND STILL!

WE'RE FOOLS IF WE TAKE ANY MORE CHANCES! HE... AIN'T HUMAN!



GRAB WHAT WE CAME FOR, NICK! I'LL KEEP A GUN ON--

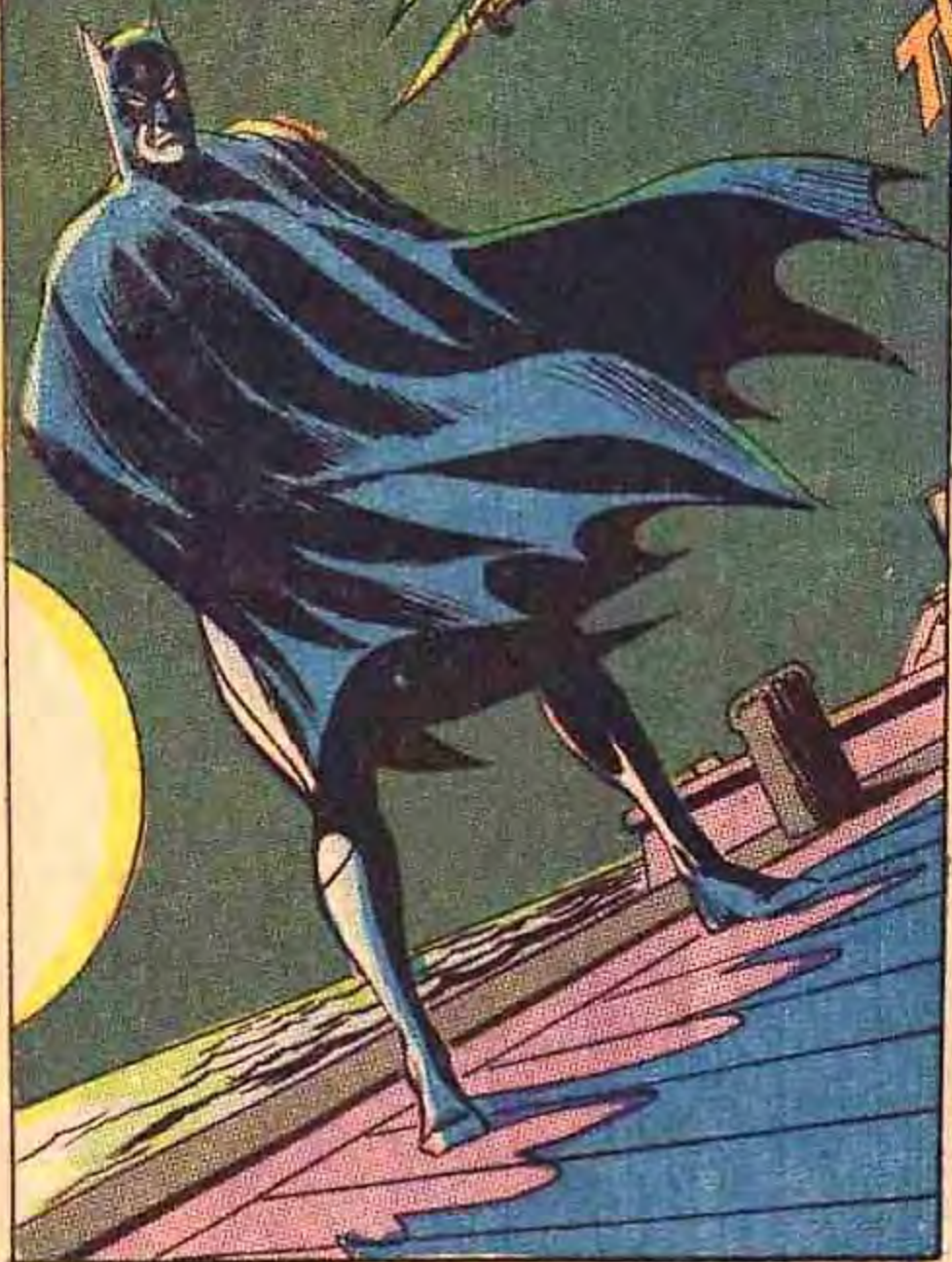
NO! WE AIN'T SAFE LONG'S HE'S BREATHIN'!

FIRST WE KILL!--THEN WE DO OUR STEALIN'!



IT GIVES ME THE
CREEPS, THE BATMAN
JUST STANDIN' THERE...

WHAT'RE WE
WAITIN' FOR?--
SHOOT!



TWUNG
TWUNG



FLUP
FLUP



WE DONE IT!
WE SCRAGGED
THE BATMAN!

YOU SHOULD'A
DONE IT SOONER!
HE HIT ME LIKE A
BLASTED WRECKIN'
BALL!

I GOT THE
PICTURE THE
BOSS WANTED!



SECONDS LATER, THE TREACHEROUS
QUARTET KNIFE INTO THE MURKY
BAY, PAST A STILL, UNMOVING FIGURE...



THEN, THE CAPED MANHUNTER STIRS... AND BEGINS TO SLOWLY STROKE TOWARD THE SURFACE...

I ALMOST DODGED THEIR SPEARS... MOVED MY BODY BEHIND THE CAPE TO AVOID THE POINTS...

ALMOST... BUT NOT QUITE! ONE OF THEM JABBED A NERVE CENTER IN MY UPPER ARM...

IT'LL BE OKAY IN A DAY OR SO --BUT MEANWHILE, THE ARM IS USELESS--

-- AND HURTS LIKE THE DEVIL! IT'LL BE SENSELESS TO ATTEMPT PURSUIT IN THIS CONDITION!

MIGHT AS WELL CHECK OUT WHAT THEY STOLE!

ODD... THE ONLY THING THEY TOOK IS A PAINTING BY VAN DER SMUTS-- THE "STARTLED MERMAID"--

-- THE LEAST VALUABLE ITEM ON DISPLAY!

I BLEW IT... GOOD! ALL I CAN DO IS GET HELP FOR THE GUARD....

FOR EMERGENCY ONLY

... AND THEN TAKE CARE OF MY WOUND! I'LL LET THE REGULAR POLICE TAKE CARE OF WATCHING OVER THE EXHIBITS!

HELLO, OPERATOR...

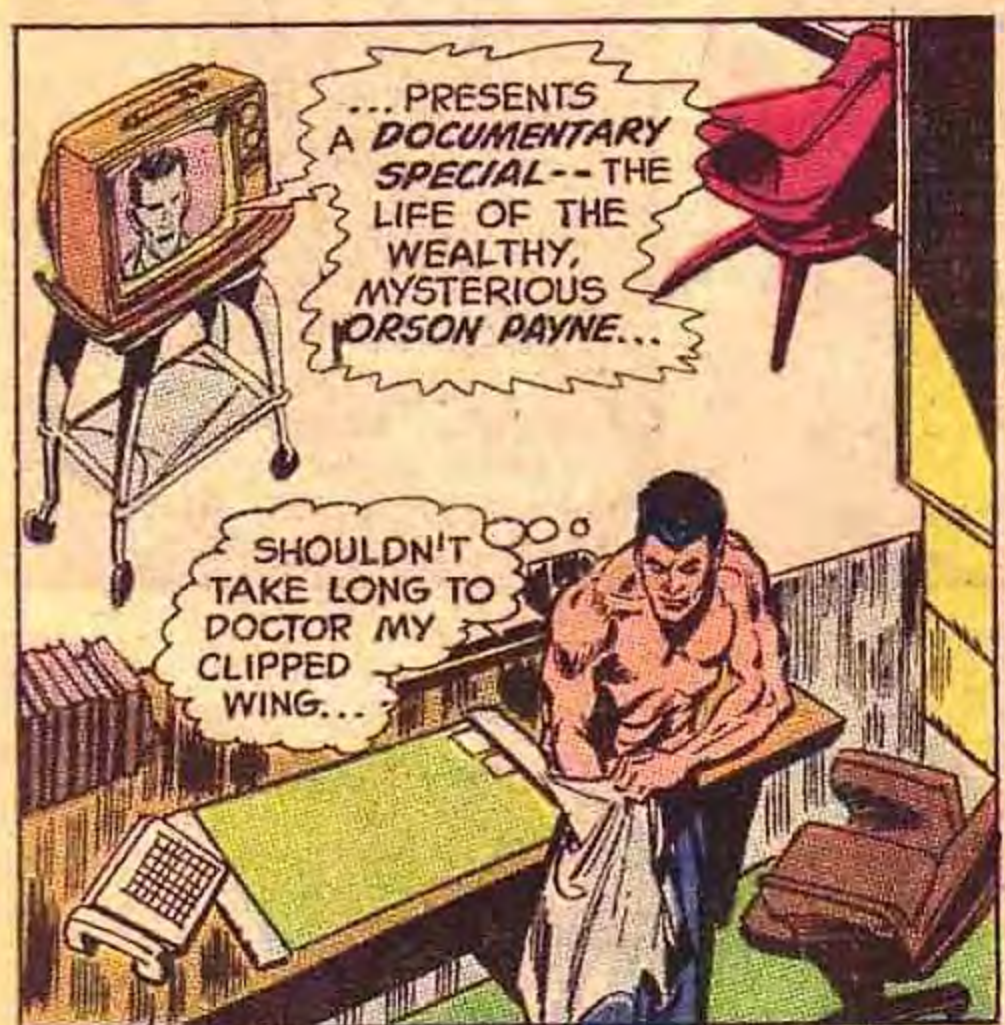
SWIFTLY, THE COWLED CRUSADER CHANGES TO STREET CLOTHES-- AND HIS OTHER IDENTITY, THAT OF BRUCE WAYNE, MILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST-- AND RETURNS AT HIS MID-TOWN PENTHOUSE...





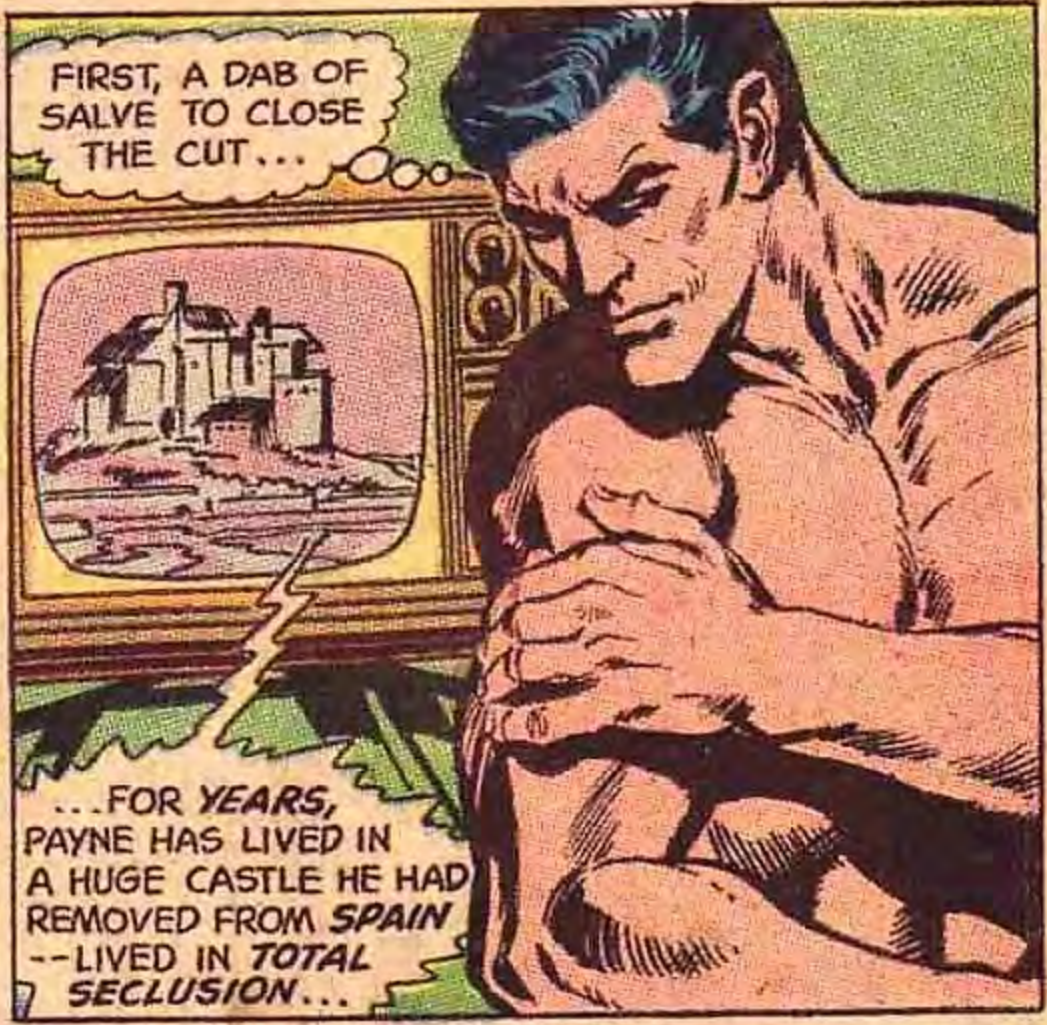
HMM -- LOOKS LIKE THE **CLEANING WOMAN** LEFT THE TELEVISION ON AGAIN!

SHE **LOVES** THOSE HOKEY SOAP-OPERAS...



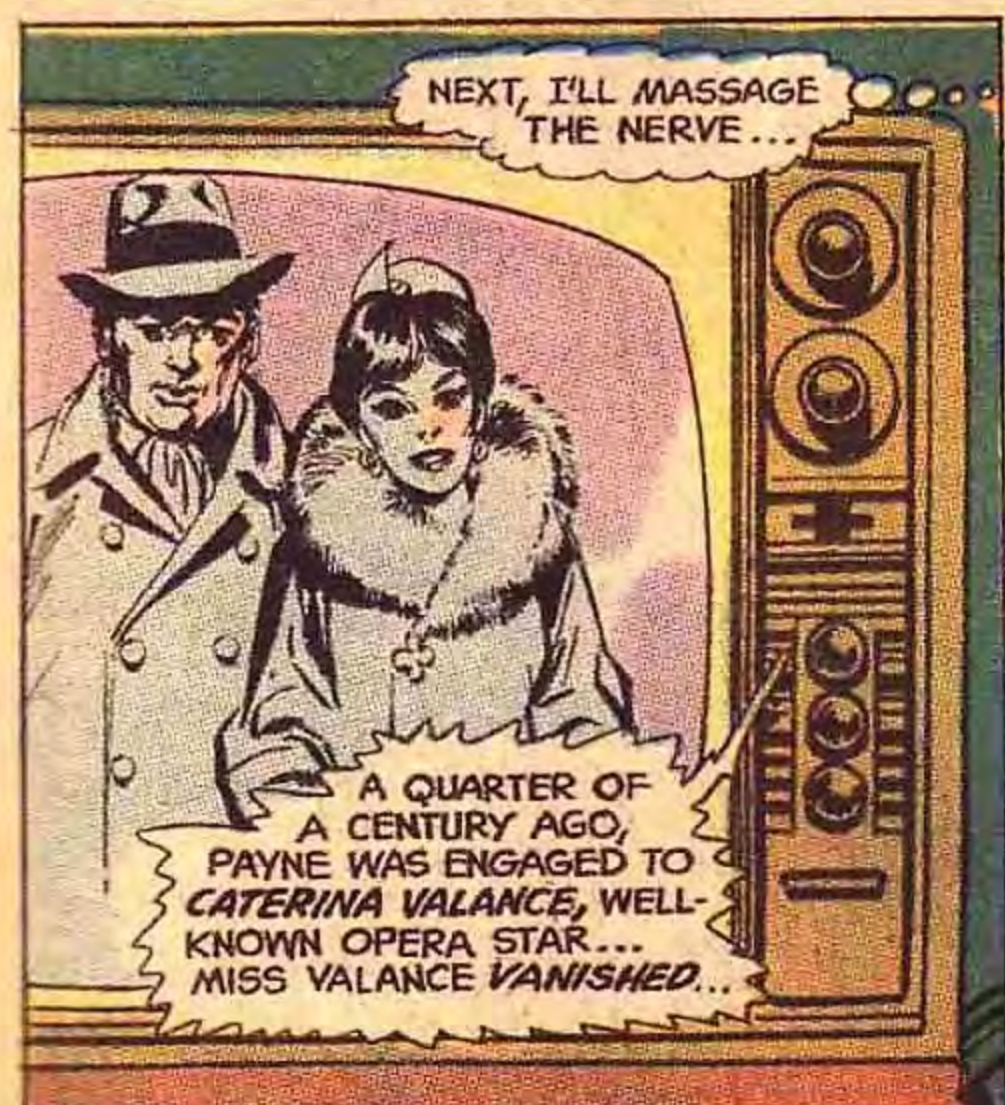
... PRESENTS A **DOCUMENTARY SPECIAL**-- THE LIFE OF THE WEALTHY, MYSTERIOUS **ORSON PAYNE**...

SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG TO DOCTOR MY CLIPPED WING...



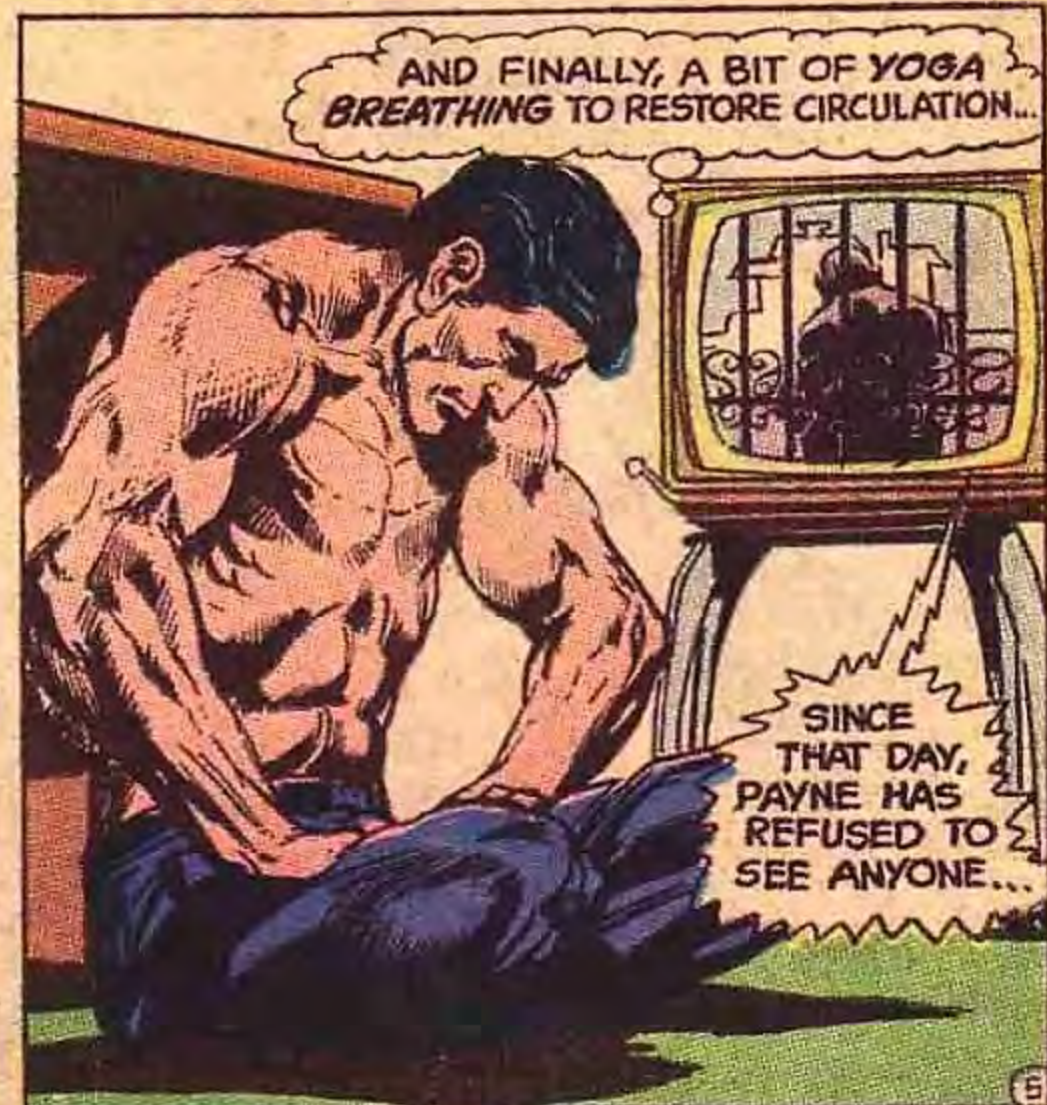
FIRST, A DAB OF SALVE TO CLOSE THE CUT...

... FOR YEARS, PAYNE HAS LIVED IN A HUGE CASTLE HE HAD REMOVED FROM **SPAIN** -- LIVED IN **TOTAL SECLUSION**...



NEXT, I'LL MASSAGE THE NERVE...

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO, PAYNE WAS ENGAGED TO **CATERINA VALANCE**, WELL-KNOWN OPERA STAR... MISS VALANCE **VANISHED**...



AND FINALLY, A BIT OF **YOGA BREATHING** TO RESTORE CIRCULATION...

SINCE THAT DAY, PAYNE HAS REFUSED TO SEE ANYONE...



BEGGING YOUR PARDON, MR. WAYNE -- I FORGOT MY HANDBAG!

HELP YOURSELF, CATHY!



EH?! FOR SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T LIKE THE TUBE ... SHE CERTAINLY WATCHES IT ENOUGH!

VILE THING...

CLICK



'BYE, SIR! SEE YOU THURSDAY!

GOT TO CONCENTRATE ON THAT THEFT! I COULD LEAVE IT TO THE POLICE...



...BUT THE BIZARRENESSE SEEMS MADE TO ORDER FOR BATMAN!

SOMETHING'S NAGGING AT MY MEMORY... SOMETHING I SAW UNDERWATER...



OF COURSE! THE ALGAE... THE SEAWEED! IT WAS GLOWING!

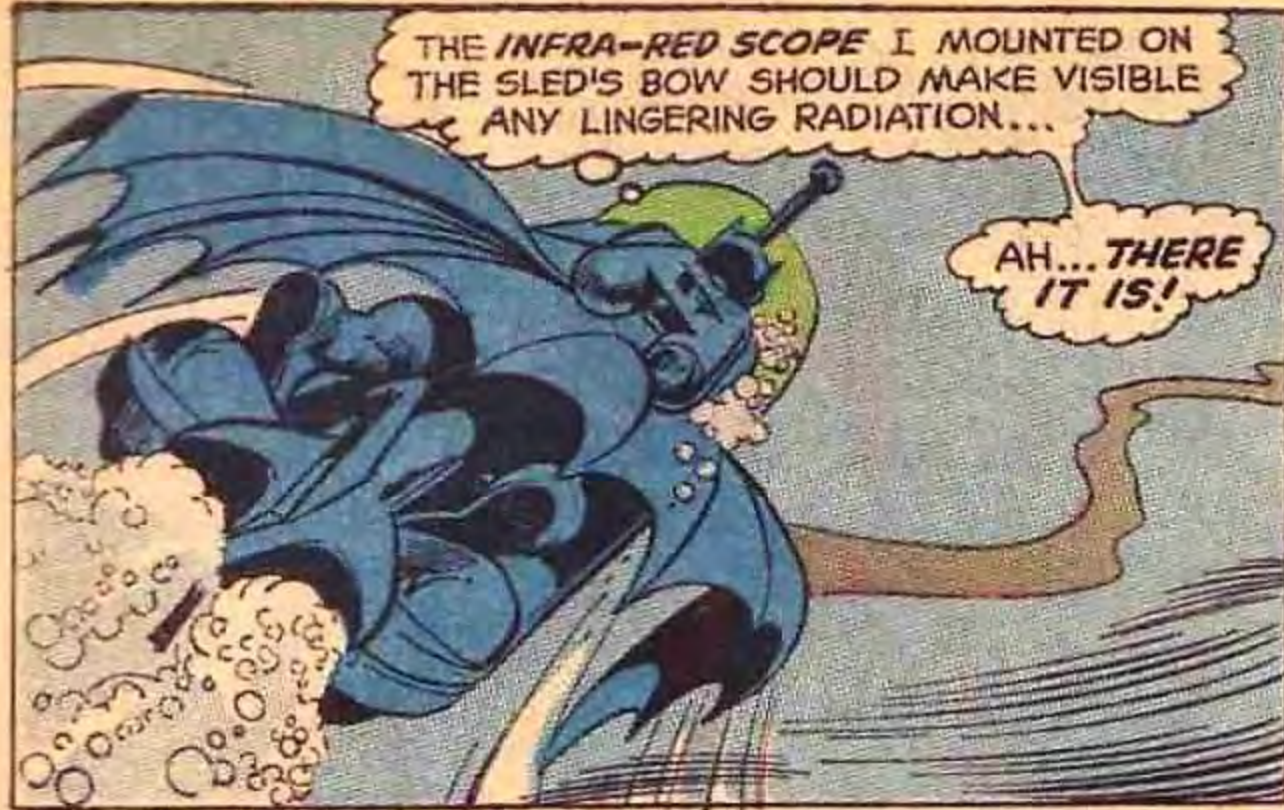
AND THAT GLOW COULD ONLY HAVE COME FROM SOME SORT OF POWER SOURCE...

...LIKE FROM A SUBMARINE EQUIPPED WITH LOW-YIELD NUCLEAR ENGINES!



AND SO, AT MIDNIGHT, AT A DESERTED PIER ...

THE BATTERY THAT RUNS THIS UNDERSEA SLED IS GOOD FOR TWO HOURS...



THE *INFRA-RED SCOPE* I MOUNTED ON THE SLED'S BOW SHOULD MAKE VISIBLE ANY LINGERING RADIATION...

AH... *THERE IT IS!*



LEADING OUT TOWARD THE *ISLAND... THE AFFLUENT SECTION!*



I WONDER WHICH OF THOSE OLD MANSIONS HOUSES A *THIEF-- AND A WOULD-BE KILLER?*



FOR A FULL FORTY MINUTES *BATMAN* GLIDES THROUGH THE CHILL WATER, UNTIL...

AS I FIGURED... A SMALL *NUCLEAR SUB!*

THAT *LADDER* MUST LEAD TO ONE OF THE ISLAND ESTATES!



WHOEVER SET THIS UP MUST HAVE *MILLIONS* TO SQUANDER!

I'M NEAR THE *TOP-- AND PROBABLY A FEW THUSS!*



A FEW FEET HIGHER... A FEW SECONDS LATER...

'ZAT YOU, *CHARLIE?* HEY--WHO'S THERE?!



CAN YOU BELIEVE ?



WONDER WOMAN and JERRY LEWIS--TOGETHER!

ON SALE JAN. 20



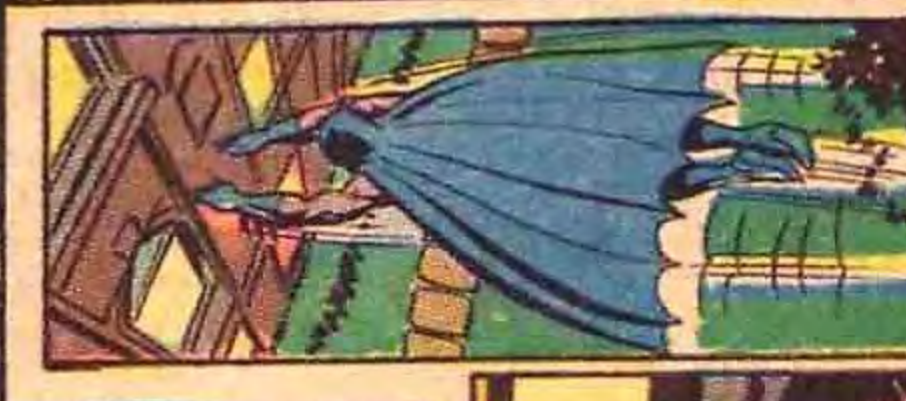
QUIET, YA HOUNDS!
AIN'T NOTHIN' AROUND
'CEPT A FEW BIRDS!

ARRUFF

RAF



PAYNE'S
CASTLE!
RATHER THAN
DROP TO THE GROUND
AND CHANCE A RUN-IN
WITH THOSE KILLER
DOGS, I'LL ...



WITH A TREMENDOUS PUSH OF HIS
THICK-THEWED LEGS, **BATMAN**
LAUNCHES HIMSELF ACROSS THE
REMAINING TWENTY FEET OF OPEN SPACE...

CABLE-STRONG FINGERS CLAMP
ONTO THE SLIPPERY STONE
WINDOW SILL...



THAT
MUST BE
PAYNE
HIMSELF...

YES, MY
DEARS, YOU
ARE LOVELY--
EVERY ONE
OF YOU!



BUT YOUR BEAUTY
PALES BEFORE MY
MEMORY OF HER!

HE'S TALKING TO AN
EMPTY ROOM?!
NO... NOT TO THE
ROOM-- TO THE
PAINTINGS AND
STATUES!

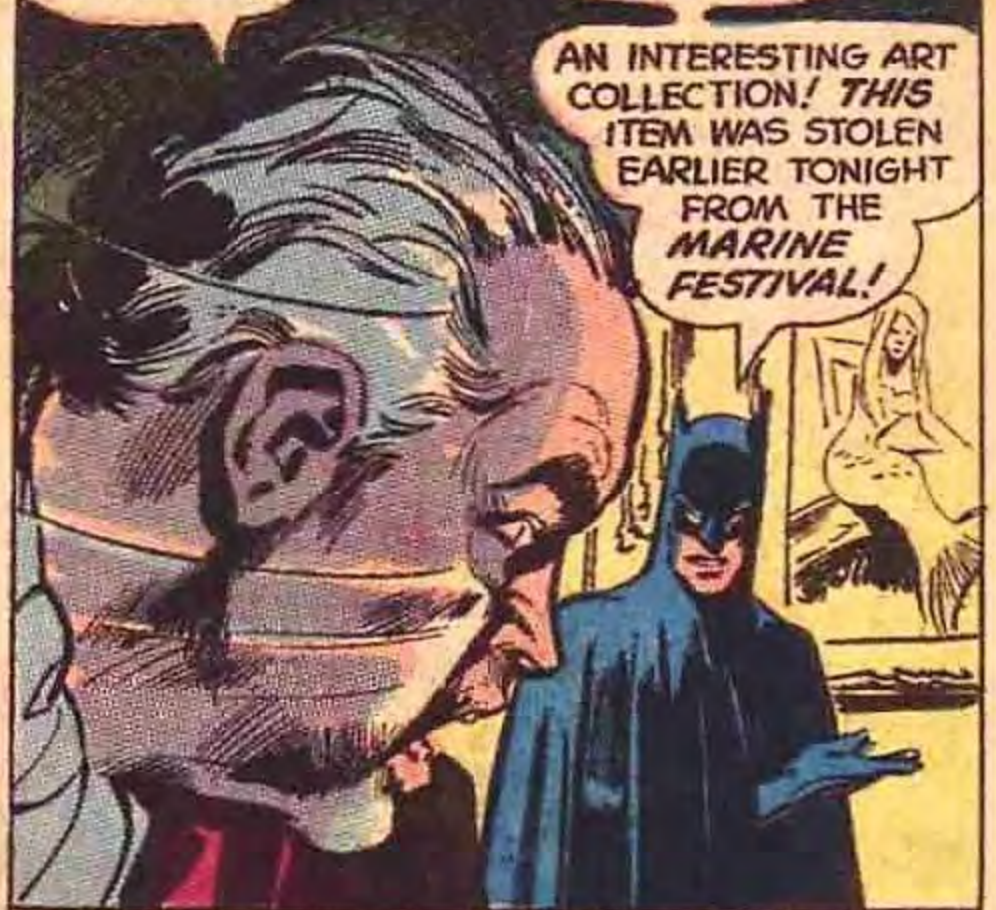
ALTHOUGH *SHE* COULD NOT RECOGNIZE IT, I HAVE A SHARE OF *GREATNESS*--



-- AND A SHARE OF *MADNESS*, ORSON PAYNE!

HOW *DARE* YOU ENTER MY CASTLE UNBIDDEN?

I ENTER ANY PLACE WHERE THE LAW IS BROKEN!



AN INTERESTING ART COLLECTION! THIS ITEM WAS STOLEN EARLIER TONIGHT FROM THE *MARINE FESTIVAL*!

I WONDER HOW MANY *OTHER* WORKS IN THIS ROOM HAVE BEEN STOLEN?



MANY! I *HAD* TO EMPLOY THEFT BECAUSE THEIR OWNERS WOULD NOT *SELL* THEM TO ME!

MY SECRETARY *DID* MENTION SOME BUYER FOR THE *MERMAID* A FEW DAYS AGO...

I *MUST* HAVE EVERY LIKENESS OF... *HER!* OF *CATERINA*... THE WOMAN WHO SPURNED MY AFFECTIONS A QUARTER OF A CENTURY PAST...

SHE *DISAPPEARED* WITHOUT A WORD OR TRACE!

I'VE ACCUMULATED *GREAT WEALTH*, HOPING TO ENTICE HER BACK--!



WHEN I SAW IT WAS *HOPELESS*, I SOUGHT TO CONSOLE MYSELF WITH *IMAGES* OF MY BELOVED!



AND I *REFUSE* TO BE ROBBED OF THAT CONSOLATION--!



DON'T BE A *FOOL*--!



PAYNE... YOU'RE **SICK-TERRIBLY SICK!** I'LL **HELP YOU!**

FIRST YOU'LL HAVE TO **CATCH ME!**

THERE ARE LITERALLY **HUNDREDS** OF OBJECTS HE COULD BE HIDING BEHIND! IT'D TAKE ALL **NIGHT** TO SEARCH THIS CHAMBER!

SO I'LL HAVE TO PLAY IT THE **RISKY** WAY... MAKE MYSELF A **TEMPTING TARGET!**

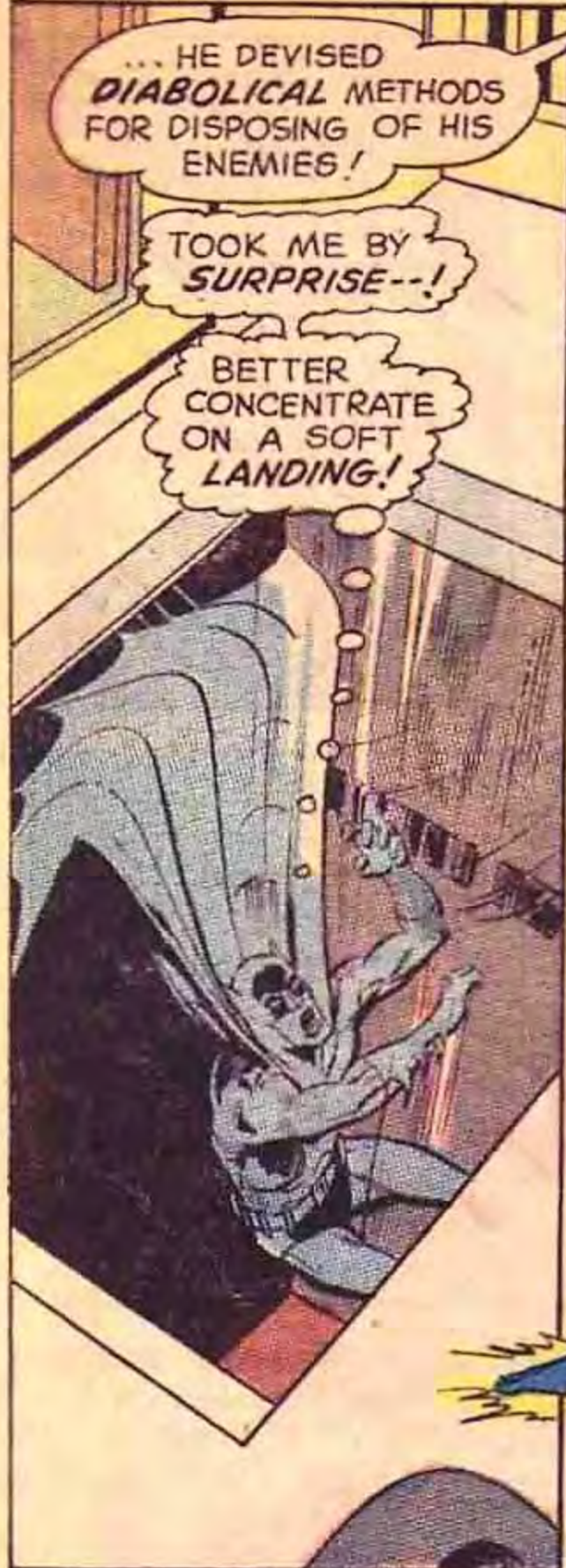
SHOW YOURSELF, PAYNE! DON'T MAKE THINGS WORSE...



YOU THINK ME **INSANE?** THEN I SHALL **REJOICE** IN MY **INSANITY--**

-- AND IN YOUR **DEATH!**

THE SPANISH DUKE WHO ORIGINALLY BUILT THIS FORTRESS HAD AN **INSIDIOUS MIND...**



... HE DEVISED **DIABOLICAL** METHODS FOR DISPOSING OF HIS ENEMIES!

TOOK ME BY **SURPRISE--!**

BETTER CONCENTRATE ON A **SOFT LANDING!**



BATMAN'S INTENSIVE **JUDO** TRAINING SERVES HIM WELL! HE WILL HIS BODY TO LIMPNESS AND, AT EXACTLY THE PROPER INSTANT, TWISTS TO LAND ON HIS SHOULDERS AND FOREARMS...

UH WALLS AND FLOOR... SMOOTH AS POLISHED GLASS! NO CHANCE OF **CLIMBING** OUT!..



WELL-DONE, **BATMAN!** HOWEVER, YOUR ACROBATIC SKILL MERELY **PROLONGED** YOUR LIFE-- NOT **SAVED** IT!

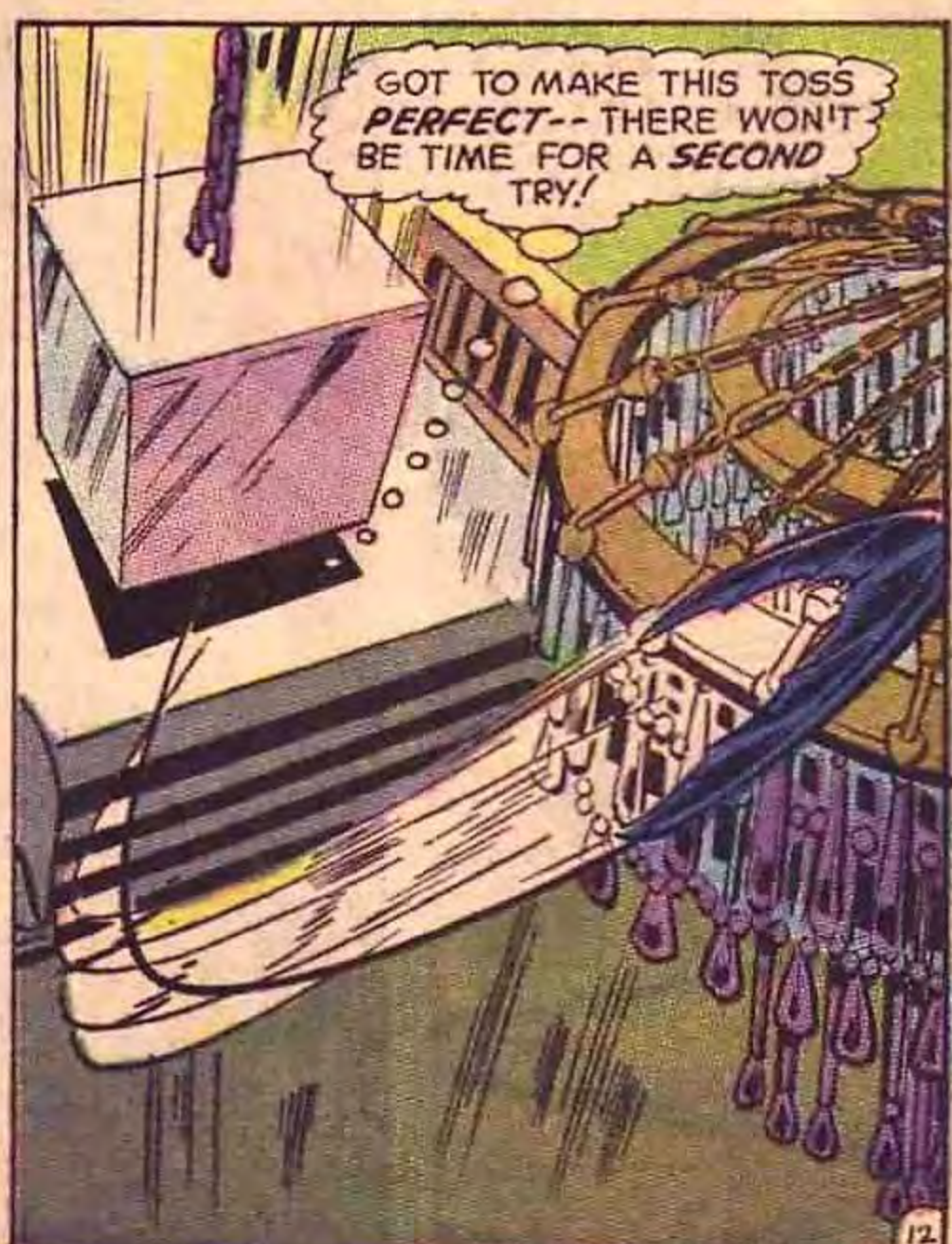
THE **DEADFALL** I'M LOWERING ONTO YOU WEIGHS **TWO TONS!** IT FITS **SNUGLY** INTO YOUR CELL--



... AS **SNUGLY** AS A HAND IN A GLOVE! YOU HAVE NO AVENUE OF ESCAPE-- **NONE WHATSOEVER!**

AND SO, **FAREWELL!**

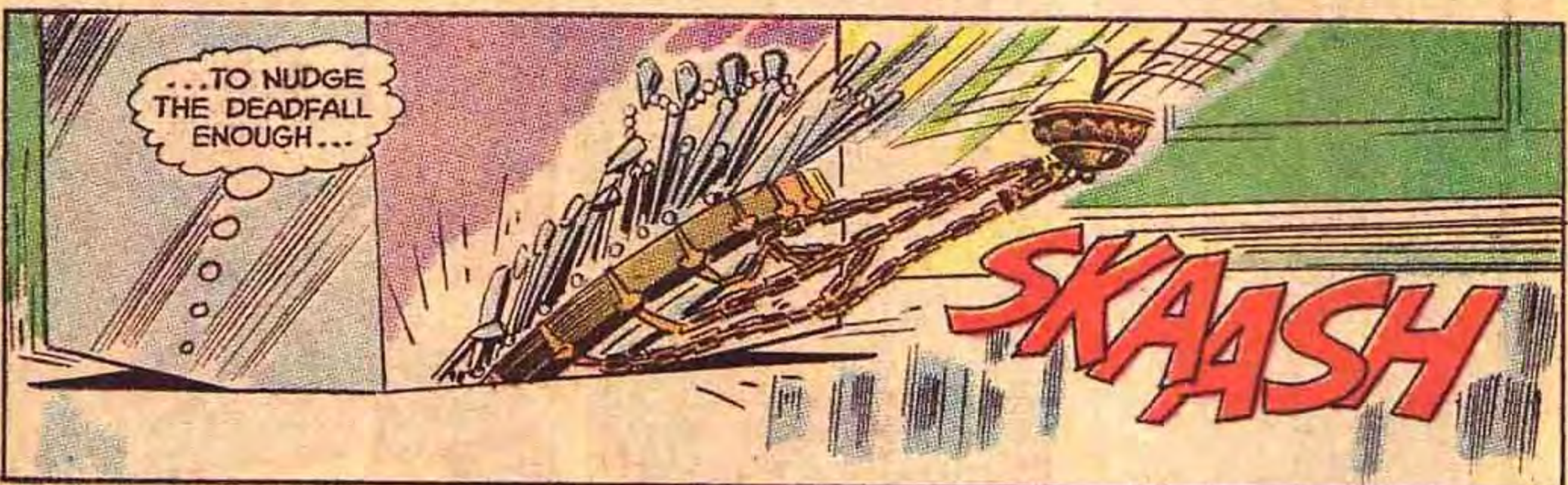
THERE IS A CHANCE-- A VERY **SLIM** ONE--!



GOT TO MAKE THIS TOSS **PERFECT--** THERE WON'T BE TIME FOR A **SECOND TRY!**



I'M COUNTING ON THE *HEAVINESS* OF THE CHANDELIER--AND MY *SWINGING* IT ACCURATELY WITH ENOUGH *MOMENTUM*...



...TO NUDGE THE DEADFALL ENOUGH...

SKAASH



DID IT! THE REST IS ROUTINE...



WHAT THEY SAY OF YOU IS *TRUE*... YOU'RE NO *MAN*... YOU'RE SOME -- *THING!*

GIVE UP, PAYNE -- FOR YOUR OWN *GOOD!*

NO... NO--



YOU ALWAYS WANTED ME TO GIVE UP... TO ABANDON MY *AMBITION*... BUT WHY CAN'T YOU *UNDERSTAND?*

EVERYTHING I DID WAS FOR *YOU!*

GOOD LORD! HIS LAST REMAINING BIT OF *SANITY* IS *GONE!*



-- COME TO ME, MY PRECIOUS! TAKE ME IN YOUR ARMS!



GNNN--
GOT HIM... BUT I TOOK THE STRAIN OF HIS FALL ON MY BAD ARM...

OH, THANK YOU, THANK YOU FOR RETURNING TO ME, BELOVED CATERINA...

I'LL FIND A PHONE... CALL COMMISSIONER GORDON... GET THIS POOR, TORTURED SOUL THE HELP HE NEEDS... I'M THROUGH FIGHTING FOR TONIGHT... AND SO IS PAYNE...

THE PAIN IN MY ARM WILL SOON HEAL... I HOPE PAYNE'S AGONY CAN BE SOOTHED, TOO!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING... AFTER A SOUND AND MUCH-DESERVED REST, BRUCE WAYNE RELAXES IN FRONT OF THE TUBE...

MORNING, MR. WAYNE!

HELLO, CATHY!

YOU SHOULDN'T BE WATCHING SUCH TRASH--!

SOMETHING JUST DAWNED ON ME... IT ISN'T TELEVISION YOU OBJECT TO-- IT'S ORSON PAYNE!

CATHY... WERE YOU EVER AN OPERA SINGER?

CLICK

WHY, YES... MANY YEARS AGO... I CHOSE TO FOREGO MY CAREER... BECAUSE A TERRIBLE MAN INSISTED ON OWNING ME...

HE WON'T BOTHER YOU AGAIN... AND YOUR SECRET IS SAFE--I PROMISE...

I'M ONLY A CHARWOMAN NOW... BUT I'M FREE!

I GUESS I SYMPATHIZE WITH PEOPLE WHO WANT TO KEEP SECRETS!

FOLLOWING BATMAN'S SUGGESTION, AUTHORITIES HAVE COMMITTED ORSON PAYNE TO THE STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL FOR OBSERVATION...

SOMEWHERE WITHIN CATHY LIVES CATERINA VALANCE... AS BATMAN LIVES WITHIN BRUCE WAYNE... A FITTING THOUGHT ON WHICH TO-- **END.**

SUPERHEROES WITHOUT POWER?



PLEASE... I'M STARVING! SINCE I LOST MY SUPER-POWERS, I NEED MORE FOOD THAN THIS TO STAY ALIVE!

HOW DARE YOU COMPLAIN SUPERMAN! YOU AND BATMAN ARE CONVICTED SPYES! JUST BE THANKFUL YOU GOT LIFE IMPRISONMENT INSTEAD OF THE FIRING SQUAD!

BOTH DC HITS ON SALE AT YOUR FAVORITE NEWS-STAND!

JAN 27th

Featuring **The PRISON OF NO ESCAPE!**

A WORLD WITHOUT AIR?



STOP THE DEADLY POLLUTION-- OR NO ONE ON EARTH WILL BE LEFT ALIVE!

