

BEYOND the CLOCK

\$1.25



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BUTCH GUICE 1980

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Rich Morrissey, Co-Editor and Trustee
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All letters of comment are to be sent directly to Rich.

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"weaken the control over the fundamental mark." Therefore, the title was changed to **BEYOND THE CLOCK**. We will in essence remain the "fan-zine for Batman fans" but with added sidelines. So at this point, I soulfully state that if anyone wishes a refund because he/she feels misled, let us know.

For those of you who want to stick around and usher in a new "wave," we have many pots "a cookin'". We will be having pro covers and sometimes an occasional center splash page. There isn't any aspect of the Batman that we will not "talk" about as we have many interesting articles on the Batman books in the works (such as a chronology between the Batman of Earth I and the Batman of Earth II). We will be doing interviews with the writers and artists. In addition, we will go outside our realm for some articles on science fiction and writers and other areas of interest to the readership. Beginning this issue, we will have our own comic series ---**TEMPEST**. Next issue, we will have an additional eight pages of this series.

Annually, we will award a plaque for the best Batman related story of the year. (Details elsewhere in this issue.) Your voice will be heard in the voting. We would also like to issue you an invitation to submit your articles and art for consideration. You are on staff!

In an effort to reward your support, we will be giving away original artwork, old comics, or whatever we have on hand. I don't want it to sound like we will be giving away junk, so I'll hint on one contest we will be offering in the future. As soon as I'm thru writing an article on the Batman movie serials of the 1940's, we will be giving away at least one complete serial to some lucky Batman fan. More details on this and other events will be forthcoming in future issues of **BTC**.



From the "White House of Comics" came forth the first issue of **Batmania**. The time was July, 1964; and the collector-in-residence was Biljo White. His tenure as publisher continued up to and including issue #17 (the **Batmania Annual**).

For reasons unknown to me (Uncle Sam had decided to occupy my time), Bat-fans became silent in 1967. This silence continued for seven years. Suddenly, a young upstart had broken the stillness; and in 1974, Rich Morrissey published **Batmania #18**. The standard had been lofted again.

Rich's struggle to produce this second "wave" of issues was indeed difficult; but this was not his fault. The quality of Mr. Morrissey's work in issues #18 thru #23 was/is of high standing. The polished, rallying point of Batman fans was there; unfortunately, the interest was not.

Perhaps the loss of interest was due in part to a "maturing fandom." In the early days, collectors like Jerry Balls, Phil Seuling, G.B. Love, and our own Biljo White were "the force." They gave us a sense of respect which allowed us to look others in the eye when we told them we "collected comic books."

With a growth in numbers, new "adzines" appeared and the fun of collecting was slowly overtaken by the "hoarding of value." Dealerships became big-time business; investors inflated prices; and a myriad of other forces (or lack of forces as I see it) destroyed the innocence of those early days. I don't mean to infer that publications like **The Buyer's Guide** were/are bad for fandom. On the contrary, Alan Light has done more for fandom's benefit than anyone in recent times. Let me offer now an analogy to better express what I mean.

TBC is the energy of fandom, **The Price Guide** is the technical manual, and we are the engineers. We can either make the "bomb" to destroy what has been built, or we can build the generator to rid fandom of the dark spots that still exist. Then others who have lost interest will return; and those collectors not already enlightened (several million if you believe the ad promoters) join our ranks.

Therefore all things considered, Rich did an excellent job. Those who remained faithful will attribute to this. **NOW IT IS TIME FOR ME.**

Unless you're blind, you may have noticed this thing isn't called **Batmania** --- it's called **BEYOND THE CLOCK!!!!** What kind of rip-off is this?

For those of you who were expecting to see "Batmania" on the cover, we share your "surprize". I shall attempt to explain the situation as simply and as fully as I can.

When Rich decided to turn **Batmania** over to me in June, I was delighted for it afforded me an avenue to pursue my favorite character in greater detail. Since it had been several years since the last issue had been sent out, I wrote Joe Orlando (managing editor at DC) to see if the title was still usable by their understanding of "fair use" under the U.S. Code. In the meantime, Rich and I had discussed using the title in one more issue with the belief that if the issue were good enough, we could continue to use the title. This was not to be.

A week after placing the ad in the **Guide**, I received notice from Paul Levitz that I could not use the title because the legal department (not Mr. Levitz as I read the letter) determined that it would

For those of you who had subscriptions to **BATMANIA** under Rich, we will fulfill your subscription. If you wish to know when your sub runs out, send us a **SAS** and we will verify your questions.

For all contests this zine offers, we will be trying to set up a deal with Mike Wahl of the **WSA** to officiate the selection of winners and verification of prizes awarded. No one should have any doubts in this regard; with Mr. Blair in control once again, I don't think anyone can question the integrity of the **WSA**.

For those of you who hold (or used to hold memberships) in the old **Batmanians Club**, we would like to hear from you. When writing to us, let us know your official number. Also, if you know of other members who have become disinterested over the years, let us know about it so we may contact them. We may be revitalizing the club. (The name may be different, but...)

For those of you who would like to obtain some artwork by Butch Guice (you wouldn't believe the number of requests I've received), Butch will be glad to do a page (14"x16") for you the way you would like to have it done. Battle scenes, or just a close-up; whatever you would like. The price is \$25.00 per page; and make the checks payable to Butch Guice. Color is extra (\$37 per page). A good investment in my opinion.

BATMAN FAN looking for all Batman items (toys, games, puzzles, books, caps, etc) The more obscure----the better. Send description and price to
 Joe Desris phone evenings
 7524 36 Ave 414-694-6484
 Kenosha, Wisc 53142

WANTED: Covers to Batman #1 and #7. Covers to Detective #34 and #37. Have over 5000 DC and Marvel comics for trade or will pay cash for these. Contact James Doyle
 P O Box 72
 Monticello, N.Y.
 12701

WANTED: any original artwork by Rogers, Adams, and Kane from any Batman story. Contact: Eleiades, PO Box 542, Asheville, North Carolina 28901

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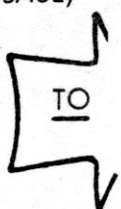
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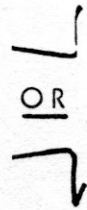
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| <input type="checkbox"/> FAN | <input type="checkbox"/> Comics | <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolios | <input type="checkbox"/> SF | <input type="checkbox"/> Dell | <input type="checkbox"/> Horror |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> ARTIST | <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Star Trek | <input type="checkbox"/> DC | <input type="checkbox"/> Super Hero | <input type="checkbox"/> (Specify) |
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the story, praise must be granted in their narrative emphasis within the panels. (As a positive example of this, check out #2, page 21, panel 2... watch the note flutter down before Robin's eyes. As one of the few negative examples, look at #2, page 9, panel 1... Dick's attitude is under discussion; foreground and middleground should be exchanged.)

The artists pace the story well within the limits of the information-laden script. Issue #1 does better than #2 and #3 in this respect with its page 2 splash, the tight forceful panels of pages 4 thru 7, the large symbolic panel of page 9, the tight moody form of page 12 played off against the one panel-page "Face of Evil" panorama opposite it... Sol'm tempted to praise Byrne who reportedly began the work a bit more than Aparo for this.

Both artists worked with a realistic stylized quality of drawing which is especially appropriate to the superhero work. Both used a less than dynamic layout within the panels; but as we noted earlier, panel size was a problem. (Still, I think the work would have been more dramatic with more front-to-back superimposition and more foreshortening...)

We measure a critical aspect of comic story-telling when we speak of economy. In comics, as in plays, there's no room for the inclusion of random, purposeless elements: Gordon and Wayne won't discuss the paint used in redecorating Wayne's bathroom unless it later turns out to be important to the story. (Maybe hallucinatory paint fumes?... whatever...) Admittedly, the creators must be allowed some misdirection or all stories become totally transparent from the start. This particular information-laden script allowed for no fat. Therefore, in using laudable economy, Wein also laid the key to the story under our nose: Issue #1, page 3, panel 5 (the headache) explains the whole situation; issue #2, page 11, panel 2 (the explosion recap) lays it before us a second time. (Gordon's comment in #3, page 7, last panel, and Bruce Wayne's thoughts in #3, page 16, last two panels, bring the solution which many of us already realized to the Batman.)

To sum up this point: economy as an element of story-telling is especially well-handled in these three issues.

The visual-textual balance is good. The works and art are appropriately complementary throughout. There seems to be a lot of words for a comicbook; but the material is always interesting, and the text almost never overlaps the art. (Note in #1, page 7, panel 1, that the text does not speak of the weather which is critical to the visual mood of the panel... another example of how it should be done... note in #2, page 2, panel 3, that the Batman has taken command by snuffing the cigarette into the drink... something not included in the text.)

Glynis Wein's coloring is well done though not great. John Costanza's lettering in #1 is excellent; however, the uncredited lettering of the last two issues is a bit erratic and not totally up to Costanza's lettering of the first issue. (Some of it is; some of it isn't. That's why I see many hands in its production.)

If I were reviewing THE UNTOLD LEGEND OF THE BATMAN, I would simply say, "Buy it... it's good reading... it tells you much of what you want to know about the Batman Legend within the framework of a good story."

But the purpose of a critique is to advise on rightness/wrongness in such a way that future comics can tell their stories even better... So that every future comic can be a bit closer to being a masterpiece than every past comic was. Minor mistakes like the mechanical T-Rex being present in the Batcave the first time that Alfred entered it... or... like the Batman always having the yellow ellipse on his chest... doesn't really matter.

With that in mind, for Len Wein, I find myself without comment except to say "Well-done!" For Paul Levitz: If you must cover so much information in a future book (or books), please seek more pages (or more issues), so that the artists can work more drama into the pacing." And finally for John Byrne and Jim Aparo: "Please try to squeeze a bit more graphic drama into your panels on an emotion packed story like this. Though we admire your work greatly, we think you could do even better."



THE UNTOLD LEGEND OF THE BATMAN: A CRITIQUE

by H. L. Davis

(It's very poor form to begin an article with parentheses, but in this case it's required. This is a critique, not a review. We hope to tell you not just whether the subject comics were worth reading, but also we hope to explain why they were good or bad examples of our favorite story-telling medium and how they could be better.)

The Untold Legend of the Batman #1, #2, #3. Three issues dated July, August, September, 1980. DC Comics, Inc. Covers by Garcia-Lopez, Gioriano. Edited by Paul Levitz; written by Len Wein; art by John Byrne (part of #1) and Jim Aparo; colored by Glynis Wein; lettered by John Costanza (#1) and many hands (#2 and #3 which are uncredited).

Because of its length... 64 pages in the three chapters... there is a temptation to consider the work to be a novella or short novel. It's not though. It is a short story with a great many flashbacks and asides.

The short story which forms the bones of the work is a character-emphasizing piece. It's meager plot turns on someone destroying the Batman's treasured relics and personal equipment.

The aforementioned flashbacks and asides are the real "raison d'etre" for the work. Levitz and Wein are to be congratulated for finding an interesting story to frame the myriad of "secret origin" bits which make up the BATMAN LEGEND.

Issue #1 gives the origin of the Batman together with its Chill, Chilton, and Moxon aspects; the origin of the Batman costume; and the origin of the Robin costume. Number two serves up the origins of Robin, Alfred, Joker, and Two-Face. Issue #3 informs us of the origins of the recent (if not original) Batmobiles and Batgirl, the basis of the Commissioner Gordon-Batman relationship, and the basis of the Lucius Fox-Bruce Wayne relationship.

As you can see, that's an awful lot of information to pack into a short story. While this becomes the value of the work, it also spawns the weakness of the work as story-telling art.

Comics as we know them are a wedding of the verbal and the visual. The ultimate comic story will be one where the TEXT and the ART complement each other. The visual should not be described by the TEXT; the TEXT should not describe that which could be better shown. (The only exception to this that I can think of is where the TEXT and ART duplicate each other to give greater emphasis to a point.)

The specific weakness of the BATMAN LEGEND SERIES lies in its need to carry so much text. Because of this, the artists find themselves compelled to use many small panels and few large panels as they breakdown the work. The subject matter which is thematically quite dramatic is visually less dramatic than it could be because of the panel size limitation.

(An editorial opportunity was muffed in issue #3. Because of the price change, issue #3 had three extra pages. Levitz chose to add a three page filler --- "Secrets of the Batcave" by Joe Staton. The LEGEND story would have been stronger had it been reworked to be three pages longer with some larger, more dramatic, and revealing panels.)

For Byrne in the early pages and Aparo throughout the rest of



RESULTS OF THE 1976 BATMANIA BALLOT

Best Batman Story

1. "There Is No Hope in Crime Alley"--Detective #457, 88 points.
2. "The Underworld Olympics '76"--Batman 272-75, 42 points.
3. "Slow Down and Die", "Bruce Wayne--Bait in a Bat-Trap," and "Kill Batman in Triplicate"--Detective #460-62, 31 points.
4. "Riddler on the Rampage" (Batman #279) and "Murder Comes in Black Boxes"/"4 Doorways to Danger"/"Omega Bomb Target: Gotham City" (Batman #281-83)--tied at 30 points each.

Best Batman Team-up

1. "Claws of the Emperor Eagle"/"Death at Rainbow's End"--Brave & Bold #129-30, 57 points.
2. "Small War of the Super Rifles (B&I #124) and "Streets of Poison" (B&B #125)--tied at 42 points each.
4. "Death By the Ounce"--B&B #128, 36 points.
5. "What Lurks Below Buoy 13?"--B&B #126, 35 points.

Best Batman Reprint

1. "Track of the Hook" (Super-Team Family #2, from Brave & Bold #79)--67 pts.
2. "The Silent Night of the Batman" (Limited Collector's Edition #43, from Batman #219)--62 points.
3. "The Year 3000" (Batman Family #3, from Batman #26) and "Paint a Picture of Peril" (LCE #44, from Detective #397)--tied at 28 points each.
5. "The Secret Life of the Catwoman" (LCE #45, from Batman #62)--19 points.

Best "Batman Family" Story

1. "Beware the Eyes of Baron Tyme"--Man-Bat #1, 46 pts.
2. "Luthor--You're Driving Me Sane"--The Joker #7, 37 points.
3. "The Joker Goes 'Wilde'"--The Joker #5, 28 points.
4. "Isle of 1000 Thrills"--Batman Family #3, 26 points.
5. "Fugitive from Blind Justice," Man-Bat #2, 24 points.

Best Writer

1. Denny O'Neil--75 points
2. David V. Reed--62 points
3. Len Wein--50 points
4. Bob Rozakis--40 points
5. Bob Haney--30 points

Best Editor

1. Julius Schwartz--87 points
2. Murray Boltinoff--47 points
3. Gerry Conway--44 points

Best Artist

1. Jim Aparo--100 points
2. Dick Giordano--74 points
3. Irv Novick--46 points
4. Curt Swan--30 points
5. Mike Grell--21 points

Best Cover

1. Detective 457--75 points
2. LCE #44--31 points
3. Man-Bat #1--26 points
4. I&E 124--13 points
5. The Joker #9--12 points



(The portfolio entitled STRANGE by Marshall Rogers can be purchased from Pacific Comics, 4887 Ronson Court, Suite E, San Diego, Calif 92111. Cost is \$15.00 plus \$1.75 postage and handling.)

It should be stated from the start that I'm not anti-Marshall Rogers, though I may tend to sound so on occasion. Reviewing his portfolio, in fact, was quite hard as I had several long talks with Marshall on art and comics in general, and as a fellow artist, sympathize with much of what he has said. Heck, I even like the fellow to a great degree, and to find fault with someone you like, even admire, tends to run against the grain. But there are areas in which Marshall and I see things totally differently. Worlds away, in fact. This portfolio, "Strange," is one of those instances.

"Strange" is a very aptly named portfolio, for it is quite unusual in itself; a paradox considering that this should have been Marshall's "tour-de-force" explosion, following so closely on the heels of his highly acclaimed, and deservedly so, series of Batman tales teamed with author Steve Englehart. Although the art is nicely executed, I found "Strange" highly unfulfilling. There is simply no "soul" to this series of illustrations. Marshall has chosen to display the scenery, the area of action, rather than the characters themselves, and I believe, failed artistically in doing so, for, while nice, the landscapes simply do not carry this portfolio well. Marshall turns in what is best described as a vivid, unleashed job of "artistic drought."

The illustration for the title folder is quite likely the second best illo in the entire portfolio. The simple reason upon examination is that this is one of the few pieces in which the characters in the portfolio are revealed to us. There are simply too few close-ups, or even semi-closeups in this portfolio to hold adequate interest. In fact, save for this one drawing, all other plates either have the characters cloaked backs to us, or have them reduced to near miniscule size.

The lack of faces, my major complaint for the readers who still haven't picked that up yet, is especially heartbreaking if one mentally reviews the year-long stint Marshall did on Batman. What scenes come to mind? How about the dramatic unveiling of Hugo Strange, Silver St. Cloud's realization in the convention hall that Bruce is the Darknight Detective, or the cold, maniacal glint of the Joker's eye as he attempts to copyright his "joker fish." All good solid shots that will live in many a comic fan's memory for years to come. Close-ups. Hard-hitting, emotional, eye contact, drawing the reader into the story like an unwary fly-- and this portfolio does have a story; or at least a timed progression to the plates.

Reviewing the plates individually would serve little purpose without accompanying reproductions of the illustrations, so I have reserved my comments for the portfolio as a whole. There are several plates which could be singled out as superior works of art-- plates four and five come to mind; but when digested as a whole, "Strange" is peculiarly empty. Far less than what one would expect from Marshall, and yet, still enough to whet the appetite for another Roger's portfolio, perhaps one with a detective/mystery slant with moody atmosphere and art deco surroundings. I feel as soon as Marshall shakes his "Walt Simonson sci-fi" approach and draws more of himself and his experiences into the illustrations, a substantial improvement will be seen; and Marshall will finally shake the "amateur" professionalism approach his artwork sometimes assumes.

Until then, efforts such as "Strange" must suffice. This portfolio, while recommended, is done so cautiously. It's not for everyone. Collectors of science-fiction material will enjoy it's slant, as will less art-oriented fans simply looking for a nicely done, inexpensive portfolio. Die-hard Marshall fans may have trouble

accepting this fare from their leader as well as fellow art-interested fans looking for inspiration.

In the final account, buy it... and keep praying for another from Rogers in the near future-- and Marshall, I really would love to see that thirties detective portfolio. 'Til then...enjoy.

EG

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Ron Schwartz 2031 Paseo Olivos Ct San Jose California 95130

WHAT WAS THE BEST BATMAN STORIES YOU LIKED?

That's right people, and we are behind the times. So rather than make up a lot of forms for three years balloting (have you seen the price of publishing this thing? OUCH!!!), grab the nearest piece of paper and pencil and make the following outline:

	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Best Batman story:			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
Best Batman Team-UP:			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
Best Batman Reprint:			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
Best "Batman Family" Story			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
Best Cover:			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
Best Writer:			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____
Best Artist:			
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____
3) _____	_____	_____	_____

<u>BEST OVERALL STORY (1939-1979)</u>	<u>BEST OVERALL COVER(1939-1979)</u>
1) _____	1) _____
2) _____	2) _____
3) _____	3) _____
4) _____	4) _____
5) _____	5) _____

I realize that is a lot of work, pulling and reviewing all those comics; but look at it this way, think of the fun you'll have looking over all those adventures. Old friends are good friends. All ballots due October 1, 1980. Mail to Pleiades, Inc. P.O. Box #42, Asheville, N.C. 28801.

Those of you who have subscribed, this space should contain your classified ad! This space is free to you, so please use it and become active. You'll make new friends, obtain those books you need to fill those holes in your collection; or you can sell those items you have cluttering up your collection. (This service is only for subscribers; single issue purchases not included.)

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PLEASE NO C.O.D. ORDERS

THE BATMAN RETURNS! (Again)

(The following article is a bit old, but I thought it appropriate to use it anyway in this issue since it does contain a look at the art of Marshall Rogers, in general. It is unsigned so I can't give credit to the writer; but I can say that I agree with the contents.)

It emerged rather inconspicuously, coming on the heels of a non-Batman saga --- the Calculator back-up which ran in Detective Comics #463-468. But, surprise! --- writer Bob Rozakis decided to employ the wits of the Batman in a novel-length conclusion to this epic. The team of Marshall Rogers and Terry Austin who had handled the last two installments were assigned the art chores for this issue, an issue which was destined to bring about a new wave of Batman storytelling.

Rogers and Austin sought to break with current trends and presented Batman in a new light. Here was a mysterious manhunter --- swinging through the night mists, lurking in the shadows, striking fear in the hearts of criminals ---THE BATMAN! Readers were captivated by this Golden Ageish Batman. In fact, the response elicited by this issue was so heavy that editor Julius Schwartz decided to have Rogers and Austin implement a new phase of Golden-age Styled Batman stories in Detective Comics.

The Batman has, of course, been revived before -- the most loved reincarnation being that instituted by Neal Adams. Neal did give us a Grim Avenger of the Night, but Neal's roots were firmly implanted in the dynamic realism for which he is best known. However, the Golden Age Batman was not realistic -- far from it! These early stories were characterized by stylization, EXTREME stylization. This is why the Rogers/Austin approach constitutes a real return of the Batman, for their Batman is stylized. Of course it is not the rustic simplicity of early Golden Age art, but therein lies the beauty of their work. They have managed to combine the simplistic stylization of the past with the maturity of modern graphics.

Rogers and Austin began their new series in Detective Comics #471. With even a casual glance at this issue it is clear that there has been a dynamic change in the Batman. There is an ominous macabre atmosphere which pervades the entire story. This is achieved as it was in the initial Batman adventures -- through a heavy emphasis on shadows and night scenes. Background inks and colors are the darkest blue or black -- a rarity in present day comics. The Batman prowls mysteriously, engulfed in his swirling cape. His face is often completely masked, hidden by the dark shadows -- an awesome sight!

To see the Batman presented so magnificently is truly heart-warming. Marshall Rogers and Terry Austin are to be commended, for they have produced the finest stories to grace the pages of Batman or Detective Comics in years. These issues will soon become highly sought-after classics as the O'Neil/Adams stories of yesteryear are. What's really exciting is that it is happening now. (We Wish.--jr) Followers of the Caped Crusader who have been unenthused by recent stories can once again rekindle their interest, for here is a Batman to announce to the world! Batman fans, stand up and be proud.

Editorial note: Next issue, we will have a full page of art by Marshall. We think you will enjoy it. Now on the following page is the cover we were planning to run until the name change. Some day, I'll explain the double "N". Funny thing, only a few noticed.

NEWS OF NOTE: Long-time Batmanian, Edwin Murray, has decided to stop the publication of Vertigo (the Official Organ of the Carolina Fan Federation). His reasons are his own. However, I do hope that he doesn't fall into the pattern of other "old-timers" and fade into the background of inactivity. Issue #43 brings to a close of over twelve years of publication and will be missed by those of us in the Carolinas. While others are still around, none will replace Vertigo.

Below is our new character (created by Butch Guice). Tempest will be a regular feature in BTC starting with the four pages in this issue. Next issue, we will have the second installment which will be eight pages in length. Don't despair, there will be more pages in the next issue. We were rushed in putting out this issue and we apologize for the brevity. (When you consider that there are over 1100 words in the "Untold" article, only the number of pages is brief.)



BATMAN



Buck
Giles '90

Q E X V O Y M T A P C Z H

Address all comments to: Rich Morrissey
55 Claudette Circle
Framingham, Mass. 01701

Dear Richard,

I did want to express my admiration of the latest BATMANIA. To me it's the finest issue you've produced... in content, art and layout. A splendid job. The Gardner Fox interview in particular was extremely well done.

I was distressed, however, to read the issue may be the final one. I hope that won't be so. There are so few "class" zines left in fandom these days, and I consider BATMANIA to be a class production.

Yet I well understand the problems of finance. Wish I could make a cash contribution--- instead of just words of praise--- but unfortunately, I'm not in a position to do so.

Tom Fagan
21 East Center Street
Rutland, Vermont 05701

(Regrettably, my financial situation has shown no signs of alleviating; but, thanks to J.R. Sams, BATMANIA lives on! I'm sure he'll do a fine job of continuing the tradition of Biljo White and myself--- but, at least for this issue, I'll continue to answer the letters relating to my issue.)*****Rich will be staying with us in a capacity equal to myself as co-producer****jrs

Dear Rich,

Thanks for BATMANIA #23. It was excellent! BATMANIA is the type of fanzine I love so much, it unfortunately is the type that isn't quite as popular with today's fans (you didn't have Howard the Duck or Red Sonja on the cover). Hence few fanzines are published that match BATMANIA's caliber. Most fanzines out today are poor efforts that last only a few issues as the older fans who used to put out the quality fanzines are now in apas or turned pro. It is really a shame that BATMANIA can't garner enough support to survive. Are all the younger fans totally given over to Marvel? Most of them sneer at the established heroes of DC seem to think that DC is a lesser company. Superman, Batman, and the others don't command as much respect as Nova and Ms Marvel, but then there's no accounting for taste! I sincerely hope BATMANIA stays alive.

I've always had a desire to see a fanzine devoted to Superman, much like BATMANIA. He did start everything off and you hardly ever see him on the cover of a fanzine! A good title would be: (are you ready?) SUPERMANIA!

Need I say that the Fox interview was superb? It was about time that someone interviewed Mr. Fox, one of the giants of the field. It was one of the best interviews I've read lately. I absolutely love those Hawkman stories that Fox did with Kubert and Anderson. Hawkman is one of (if not the #1) my favorite series (right up there with Superman/Swan, Deadman/Adams, Flash/Infantino, etc.). I have a bunch of PLANET STORIES with Fox stories in them. Comics owe a lot to space opera. It was sad to see Fox leave DC and his creations.

BRAVE AND THE BOLD mostly sucks the mop. I think one reason that the Adams issues were so good was because Adams surely had something to do with the scripts. Otherwise Haney's efforts are usually incompetent. He pays no attention whatsoever to what has gone before in the guest star's own strip as far as characterization and motivation. He seems to have no interest in what any of the other writers at DC are doing, and he pays no attention to Earth one and two bouniries. His scripts for WORLD'S FINEST are AWFUL. I haven't bought WF for years until the dollar books. Haney is a washout as a superhero writer.

Speaking of the dollar comics, they've been a terrible disappointment to me. WORLD'S FINEST has had some nice art but terrible scripting. Anyway, who really wants to pay a buck for Krypto, Jimmy Olsen, and Lois Lane stories that are so bad that even Irving Forbush won't read them.

The Limited Collector's Edition with the Ra's al Ghul sort of let me down too. It just wasn't as good as I remembered it to be. They also did not print the last page of the story. It was a newspaper with the headlines PLAYBOY FOUND IN JUNGLE, or something like that.

Marshall Roger's Batman is terrific and a refreshing change from Chan. I really hate to see Englehart leave!

Roger Caldwell
1119 Mayflower Road
Kingston, Tn 37763

(As I'm sure you know by now, there is a Superman zine recently founded by Kevin Gould, GREAT KRYPTON! All interested parties should send \$1.25 per issue (#1 is out, and #2 will be shortly) to Kevin at 4018 No. Hall #4, Dallas, Texas 75219.

Neal Adams didn't really have that much to do with the scripts in Brave & Bold; he made mostly changes in interpretation (e.g., turning what was scripted as a daytime scene into a nighttime one) which wouldn't have worked if Haney hadn't had some excellent script ideas to begin with. It's interesting, though, that B&B #96 (the second Batman/Deadman team), which I've often mentioned as the best story Haney ever wrote, was apparently his one B&B script that was heavily rewritten by Adams.

The Ra's al Ghul Limited Collector's Edition was, of course, restrained by space limitations from including all the stories including Ra's and/or Talia, but it did include those most central to the first major struggle between Batman and Ra's. The stories reprinted in the LCE did indeed leave the major loose end of Bruce's assumed disappearance, which was resolved in the following issue of Batman, #245. That story, "The Bruce Wayne Murler Case," was chiefly concerned with how Batman stopped a crooked politician from framing his rival for Bruce's death, and I believe it and the third Man-Bat story from Detective #407 are the only two Batman stories drawn by Neal Adams that have never been reprinted. The last panel (the final half-page), however, was largely independent of the rest of the story, and it really should have been used in the LCE as the bottom half of the final page, rather than (very badly) attempting to expand the final half-page of Batman #244 (and also that of #243) to a full page.)

Dear Rich,

Okay! BATMANIA #23 was so good that I devoured it in one big gulp! But I'd best dissect my comments...

EPHOS FROM THE BATCAVVS: I couldn't agree more with your views on fanzines. I buy BATMANIA (or any zine) for the information, not the art. It could be printed on loose leaf with no art at all, for all I care. It's a shame that the emphasis now seems to be on the slick approach. Fandom is losing sight of what fanzines are really about. (Here, here! --ir) Nevertheless, from the issues of BATMANIA that I've read, this one seems to be the best yet --- in art and content. I hope it attracts a wider audience.

THE BATMAN ENCYCLOPEDIA: The two reviews gave a fairly balanced perspective of the encyclopedia, though more praise deserves to be given to this work. Michael Fleisher has done us a favor in preparing this volume! Tom Fagan is right in pointing out the mass of info this book omits. But let's face it, a really complete chronicle would be ten times this size. Fleisher had to limit himself, and given these restrictions he has still done a phenomenal job. He did cover all the really important events. I must confess I have a few beefs myself, though. Like why doesn't he mention that extra cape that Batman used to carry with him in the forties and fifties? And most importantly, I can't find Bob Kane's name anywhere in the book! Surely, he should've credited Batman's creator in the "Acknowledgements."

UPDATE: Jay L. Zilber's essay on the Ra's al Ghul Collectors Edition was quite thought-provoking, especially his discussion on the problematic timely aspects of reprints. However, I personally don't feel that this project was a success. In its original format this epic was a little masterpiece, but it just doesn't translate well into an oversized edition. Why? The main problem is

continued next page

the sketchiness of Neal Adam's art. This is okay in comic size, but when blown up like this the lines become too indistinct, giving the art an almost unfinished look. Also, the cover left much to be desired. Showing the Batman in such heart-rending agony was quite evocative, but covers are supposed to attract and this was not a very pleasant scene. Finally there is that open-ended conclusion (as Jay points out) which is awkward in any format. No, I really don't think this project will make any drastic changes in the status of comics in tabloid format.

GARDNER FOX ADVENTURES: The issue's highpoint! Fox is one of my fave Batman scripters and the best sf comics writer (his Adam Strange is unparalleled). I was hoping you'd touch on characterization and you did! Lack of characterization is the only criticism I have of Fox's old stories and Golden Age tales in general. But what he lacked in characterization was more than amply compensated with plot. Few writers can tell us as interesting and entertaining a story as Fox did. Most importantly, though, he never marked time with senseless action and fisticuffs. Gardner Fox is, above all else, a storyteller. Thanks for this brief (considering his output) look at this great talent.

ROMERO: It's always interesting to read what these serious actors have to say about the old Batman show, and it's always nice to hear that they enjoyed this intentionally silly series. Romero was excellent, as were most of the characters. However, I still feel that Burgess Meredith in his Penguin role was the best cast and most successful actor on the show.

COIC ODDITIES: God bless Mark Evanier for his tip on distinguishing Bob Kane's art. In indexing old reprints I'm always trying to determine whether or not Kane actually had anything to do with those "Bob Kane" stories. This tidbit will prove most helpful!

The art this time was quite good all around. Al Bradford's piece was the perfect cover choice--- it reached out and grabbed you. Nice and simple. Covers should never be cluttered. The finest piece, though, was Arlen's Adam Strange/Infantino tribute. 'Ole Carmine couldn't have done better himself (note that Adam is leaning).

Rich, your BATHANIA may not be steady in frequency but at least it is ever-improving. Quality over quantity is also always refreshing. Keep up the great work!

Gerald Duet
1719 Slizardi Blvd.
New Orleans, La 70114

(I still think Fleisher stopped a bit too early in his BATMAN ENCYCLOPEDIA--- maybe some day he, or someone else, will update them to at least a few months before the time of publication. On the other hand, it wasn't really his purpose to discuss the creative personnel---although that, too, would have made a good appendix to this (and the other volumes, devoted to Wonder Woman and Superman)

Unfortunately, personal differences have led to Arlen Schumer's departure from the BATHANIA staff, but I'm still grateful for the many logos and finished jobs he's left the zine with.)

Dear Richard,

I now remember the point of fact that bothered me in your Gardner Fox. You said Kirby's association with Captain America was the only one that rivalled Fox's 20-year attachment to Batman.

May I suggest also Bill Everett, who created Namor, the Sub-Mariner, who created the character in the thirties and worked on it off and on until his death several years ago? Everett, of course, is known mostly for his artwork, but he did a considerable amount of scripting on Submariner throughout his career. Here, in fact, than Kirby, who certainly wrote little, if any, of the Captain America material in the 50's, 60's, and 70's.

Joe Brancatelli
1695 East 21st Street, Apt. C1
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210

(Many thanks for the plug in your column for the Warren magazines, Joe---and what's happened to that column lately? And you're right about Bill Everett, although I considered him largely an artist who had a great deal of input on the scripting---and, with that in mind, probably C.C. Beck's work on Captain Marvel between 1940 and 1973 also qualifies. Kirby, on the other hand, wrote the first Golden Age Captain America issues at least in part, and his last issues of the character in the mid-70's he wrote by himself. And Fox still appears to be supreme in the comic book field as far as length of association between a non-artistic writer and a character is concerned.)

WANTED: Detective #68, 69, 74, 150, 153, 154, 158, 159, 166, 185, 187

Will pay Overstreet Price Guide

Contact: Robert Olson
211 NE 91st
Seattle, Wa.

98115

(letters cont.)

Rich,

Sure am sorry #23 is gonna be your last issue of BATHANIA! Another very, very, enjoyable issue!!

As you mentioned... it's been a year since #22. Maybe, we would be able to get Biljo to put out one issue a year... THE BATHANIA ANNUAL?

Oh well, what the hell, the second "birth" of BATHANIA was FUN while it lasted.

Jim Jones
744 Pomelo Drive
Vista, Calif. 92083



(Glad to hear from you again, Jim. I just hope this will get to you--- my last letter to you seems to have been forwarded to someplace called "Guyana," and then returned.

Seriously, I only wish Biljo could do some writing and art for this zine again--- but he seems to have gaffiated; I haven't heard from him in years. At least, despite my somewhat tasteless joke, some of his best artists like yourself are still around.

Dear Rich,

Hello again, and thank you for the advance copy of BATHANIA. I see you're having some doubts about whether you'll be able to go on as editor there, which is certainly regrettable, though understandable in your financial situation. I suppose I've no place deploring the lack of fan support, since I've never bought a copy or subscribed myself, but it does seem a shame that even so long-established and (I would have thought) beloved a character as the Batman can't muster the backing to keep a zine editor from impoverishing himself to keep the zine afloat. A Batman apa is an interesting idea, especially since, as you point out, apas seem to have taken over the communication factor of fandom once belonging to zines. The problem is, I'm afraid, that apazing can be an expensive proposition for the individual fan, as I'm sure you're aware.

But at any rate, this is an excellent issue of BATHANIA. The artwork and layouts are very well done, as you noted, the only exception being some slightly sloppy paste-ups (which are a small problem, no more), and the articles and such are also quite good. (I had no idea Gardner Fox was a Lovecraft fan! My stars! Or that he was involved in the fantasy-wargame field.) OUCH, yes that awful Penguin story in #190, with the gimmicks---"The Penguin Takes a Flyer - Into the Future," if I recall properly. Gad, that's dreadful. But then the camp period left me stone cold anyway... I remember how at the time I was buying both the current comic and the reprint specials and annuals and being just amazed at the higher quality of the older stories. (Not all of them--- "Phantom Eye of Gotham City" comes to mind as one I thought silly, if involving some clever detection from photos--- but most.)

Very much enjoyed Jay's UPDATE on the Ha's al Ghul book, and Martin Lock's article. Interesting how much visual stress he puts on the use of the Batman's cape/cloak by various artists, and he's quite right, it has made immense differences.

Paula O'Keefe
Shivack Apartments, #3
Mirksville, MA 07001

Dear Rich,

I was very pleasantly surprised when the new BATHANIA arrived in the mail today. I had all but forgotten about it in the year since I received the last issue.

My ties with comics are very nebulous these days. I was never a very active fan. I've had a handful of loc's published and I wrote an article for the Legion Outpost years ago.

It seemed to me after the wonderfully innovative period in the late sixties and early seventies (particularly at National) that comics began to lose their enerv. All of the top people that came to prominence in that period (particularly the illustrators) have moved on to (I imagine) greener pastures or, sadly lost their magic.

Over the past two years, I've been buying comics in fewer and fewer numbers and reading fewer still. Trying to read an Ernie Chua Batman story became an endurance test I found I could do without. And so I stopped reading Batman. I still bought them but only for the sake of my collection. I buy only a low (cnp)

percentage of the titles I once bought four or five years ago.

It seems that the comics have sadly misused their potential and are settling for their own brand of banality. Sturgeon's Law states that ninety percent of everything is crud which, as Harlan Ellison points out, means ninety percent of everything is mediocre, ninety percent of everything just gets by. And of course comics are no exception.

On the bright side (there is one?), Batman has been looking much better lately, particularly in Detective, and I'm once again a faithful reader. The Legion of Super Heroes knock me out more and more each month and some of the other titles continue to hold my interest. So you see, I haven't given up ...YET.

Joe Filice
7671 Miller Ave
Gilroy, CA 95020

Dear Richard,

I loved BATMANIA #23 and think you deserve the thanks and the praise of every true Gothamite. Best piece this ish was the Gardner Fox interview, natch, and Martin Lock's look at Brave and Bold was also very good, mirroring my opinions almost exactly. Valeria Beasley contributed an interesting letter, accurately fingering the writers who seem to know nothing about the subtleties of sex and provide Bruce Wayne with a succession of "airheaded lovelies" at the tennis clubs and dinner parties. Not to mention the ever-present museum openings, which occur with such alarming frequency in Gotham City they could almost provide the subject of a fascinating article.

I'm afloat with ideas for Batmania #24. How about an interview with the incredible drawing hand of Marshall Rogers, liberally sprinkled with examples of his mind-boggling bat-art?

Steve Berry
1614 Union St
San Francisco, CA 94123

(These two last letters, besides underlining how unconscionably long it's been since the last issue, demonstrate how regrettably transient truly first-rate comics seem to be today. In the four years since then, the promising ALL-STAR COMICS has disappeared (with the much-discussed revival still unscheduled), and the Legion has lost its promising writer and artists of 1976 and plunged into mediocrity. And, as for Batman himself, I'd be more than happy just to see Mr. Rogers BACK, even with Giordano inks. Irv Novick and even Don Newton don't come anywhere near his unique suitability for the character, and although Marv Wolfman is valiantly trying to recapture Enklehart's writing quality, I can't imagine Gerry Conway even coming close. Maybe our tastes are too high, but it's only because we've been literally spoiled--- and, in the case of the Batman, we've been genuinely pampered often enough to make it difficult to settle for less than we know is possible.)

Dear Rich,

I was shock when you said, "I get only 12 of the ballots that accompany each issue back, and receive even fewer letters." Sheesh, I feel downright guilty when I don't loc a fanzine. It does beat me why Biljo White's fanzine should have been so much more popular. Someone in k-A, however, suggested what I think is a large part of the answer: emphasis today is on the creators, not the creations--- Steve Enklehart, not Bruce Wayne. On the face of it, I'm inclined to regard that as a healthy development; as you know, I would like to see comics criticism develop along the lines of present-day film criticism--- saturated with auteur doctrine. But... I admit that what has displaced the Batmania-type fanzine is not, for the most part, the kind of criticism I want. Keep struggling, all the same.

This issue's highlight, of course, was "Gardner Fox Adventures". I'm sorry you spent so much time in reference-type facts (like the naming of all the characters, significant or not, that he has written) instead of his views on composition (how much needs to be said in captions, for example), rhetoric (e.g., his captions were much more florid than Broome's, but less emotionally involved in the story than Manigher's), characterization, artwork (what DID he like in an artist?), and stuff like that.

The two reviews of Fleisher's Encyclopedia were informative, but too much alike. (I mostly preferred Alan Turniansky's, I guess; Fagan sounds too much in love with his own rhetorical cleverness.) I was even planning to buy a copy of the Batman volume, until I read that creators are ignored. Shavai zeek, I should think that a book like those needs nothing more than it need a long index, including exhaustive credits. Who did work in the Bob Kane shop, for example? What are examples of all those different inkers? Where did Jack Schiff come from?

Jay Zilber's "Update" was the worst I've ever seen from him. Gobs--- his explanation of what the series' original context meant was even incoherent. There was no evaluation (beyond meaningless superlatives) of plot, artwork, characterization--- anything. The "Comic Oddities and Bat-Facts" was fun, though. I never had noticed the resemblance between "Jerome Siegel" and Superman's father, nor

those little lines in Bob Kane's signature. The latter, however, are less helpful than I had hoped at first, for checking the Batman Annual number 3, I have down here, I see it's on every story.

Enlock's piece on The Brave and The Bold I enjoyed in spite of myself. He does give a lot of credits, which I appreciated (since it means I have all the B&B's I'd like to have.), and writes with a nice, light touch; e.g., "and Bruce Wayne looking about four years younger than usual" as he stars with Sgt. Rock. His observations on what Batman's cape has meant are good (there's a minor example of the specifics that I think good reviews are about), and likewise the whole idea of taking a second look at #79. However, there's not a lot of substantial criticism: of how Adams' style changed from issue to issue (most flaboyant for the Creeper, obviously, with panels in the shape of arrows and bricks, for example, and most subdued, as I recall, for Sgt. Rock), of all the usual zips with Haney's writing (and whether or not he ever did a lot better than usual), and what makes Jim Aparo of Adams' stature. As I said, though, I enjoyed it anyway.

I'm glad so many in your lettercol wish for credits and commentary in the Batman index. I've used it plenty, I admit--- identifying various reprints (even the titles of half the stories in Batman Annual #1). Without credits and commentary on significance, though, it is virtually worthless as a collector's guide.

My favorite illo in the whole fanzine was that for "Gotham Wiretaps"--- return, at last, of the Infantino Batman. You didn't care for that version so much, though, did you? How much less please! I was to see that "Superhero Puzzle" at the bottom, though, mainly because I then wasted a bunch of time trying to figure it out and gave up before I did, GRRR! (No need for the "apologies to Bob Rozakis," I'd say. This was much superior to his silly find-the-word grids, and even to his double crostics.)

Christopher Melchert
Center for Arabic Studies
American University in Cairo
P O Box 2511
Cairo, A R Egypt

(My own belief is that Bob Kane did all the art credited to him but little or no writing through late 1939 or early 1940. After that, the increased success and pay rates accruing to the Batman feature enabled Kane --and DC-- to hire an increasing number of ghosts, and his actual work disappeared completely after 1941 or so. Mike Gold has argued that Kane's work was mostly ghosted even in the very first Batman stories, by Jack Cole and others, but I can't see any evidence of this--- nor any way that an impoverished artist like the pre-Batman Kane could afford to make a living and have enough left to hire any other artists. Nor, for that matter, why any artist would want to work for Kane instead of getting his own job (as distinguished from a writer like Bill Finger, who had ideas but lacked the ability to turn them into pictures by himself--- until Kane had an established character and a regular schedule he could offer in return.

Over the years, Bob Kane became less and less interested in the Batman art--- so, although the line under his name was supposed to be added only by himself, other artists would sometimes copy "his" signature, line and all. The DC editors kept his name on the stories mostly as a courtesy, but it began to disappear in 1966--- when Carmine Infantino refused to have it on the stories he drew--- and was completely dropped when Infantino became DC's editorial director in 1968. In recent years, Kane has been receiving a credit as creator of the character, a practice now followed on many DC features since Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster were award the privilege on Superman stories, in 1976.)



1, 2, ... 500!

It has taken over forty years (since March, 1937 to be exact), but a milestone will be reached with the release of Detective Comics issue number 500. Although, Action Comics reached this rare number sooner (though starting in June of '38), and Superman is revered as the number one hero of the comics (but not around here), Detective Comics has the distinction of giving DC Comics it's name.

The first issue of Detective Comics did not star the Batman as all of us know. However, it did have a guy by the name of Slam Bradley. Therefore, it is only fitting that he makes an appearance in #500. As a matter of fact, all the detectives who have appeared in this series are in this issue. Len Wein and Jim Aparo have teamed up to bring us "The Too Many Crooks Caper" featuring the above mentioned Slam Bradley as well as The Human Target, Jason Bard, Roy Raymond, Mysto, Captain Compass, and Pow-Now Smith. As you can see, the years will be well represented by those characters that have come and gone; and yes, the character that has stayed all these decades is still proudly calling this comic "home."

This milestone will cost a buck-and-a-half, but should be well worth it as it will contain eighty pages of good art and stories. The cover will be laid out by Joe Kubert, but will be finished by all the artists whose work will appear inside this issue. One story has the Dynamic Duo (How I love that phrase!) in a creation by Alan Brennert and Dick Giordano entitled "To Kill a Legend."

Other features will be a solo Batman story by Wein and Simonson; plus a Batman text story by Walter Gibson (creator of the Shadow--- this should be worth the price by itself) and illustrated by Tom Yates.

Edgar Allen Poe even makes an appearance in an Elongated Man story. Marking the 140th anniversary of the detective story concept, this story will be done by Mike Marr and Jose Garcia Lopez, Sounds like a lot for this issue, but wait... there is more.

There will be a team-up of the Dynamic Duo and Deadman by Cary Bates, the returning Carmine Infantino, and Bob Smith. Although not making an appearance, there will be a tie-in of the Martian Manhunter. The scientist who brought M.M. to Earth has Hawkman up in the air (Shades of Robin!) as Paul Levitz and Joe Kubert bring us "The Strange Death of Dr. Erdel." NO ONE does Hawkman like Mr. Kubert.

Last, but certainly not least, there may be a Batman solo by Harlan Ellison. This plot reportedly has Batman caught in a riot in Chicago and may be in this issue IF the story arrives in time. I understand that there will be special editorial consideration by Julius Schwartz this issue.

Let us not forget to give thanks to Mr. Levitz for this issue. The hard work being put into this landmark issue is permeating fandom with exciting anticipation. (After the duel of Action #500, this one will be better even if it only has a cover.)

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Owner: Dennis Howard

ATTENTION Bat-fans! This is the first of many contests we will be offering. To the first person who can tell us when and where Batman and Catwoman were married, we will award three books printed in the 1800's featuring the great detective, Sherlock Holmes, by Conan Doyle. Second winner will receive a new Price Guide.





THE AMBER PALADIUM IS IMMERSSED IN SOFT, WATER DIFUSED SOUNDS...

WHISPERING BROOKS BUBBLING VOICE TO THE WIND... SEA GREEN CURRENTS FLIRTING WITH THE SUN IN BRIGHT SILVER FLECKED HIGHLIGHTS...

THE WEALTHY OF THIS RIM-WORLD PAY HEFTY SUMS TO COME VISIT THESE VAST TIDAL POOLS AND SWIM AMONG THE MER-WOMEN THAT INHABIT IT...



-- THESE GOLDEN DRAPED RUINS ARE THE PLAYGROUND FOR THE GALAXY'S AFFLUENT-- THE WEALTHY ORE TRADERS, CORRUPT POLITICIANS, ELITE ROYAL BLOOD--



-- AND OTHERS !!
THERE HE IS... AND WITH ONLY A THREE MAN ESCORT LIKE GUITTER-RAT SAID...

... YES.
THE TALL ALIEN ?

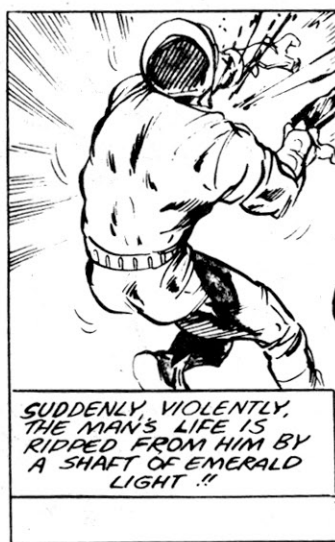


HIS LORD-SHIP KARNAL, THE MAST-DODIAN AMBASSADOR, ALSO KNOWN AS THE CORRUPTOR, THE MIESTER GENERAL'S BODYGUARD AND SECOND IN COMMAND.

WATCH YOUR SELF WITH HIM...



-- NERVOUS ?
YES. BUT WE'VE COME TO FAR TO STOP NOW!
SHALL WE LOVE ?
YES.



SUDDENLY, VIOLENTLY, THE MAN'S LIFE IS RIPPED FROM HIM BY A SHAFT OF EMERALD LIGHT !!



WHO ??



THERE IS A SHORT GASP-- A PITIFUL EPITATH-- OR PERHAPS A FINAL CURSE AGAINST UNHEARING GODS !!

-- THEN, IT'S OVER. A COLD BLOODIED CORPSE AND A MEMORY...

PROTECT ME, KARNAL !! DO SOMETHING!

THEY APPEAR SUDDENLY!
THRUST FROM THE SHADOWS
INTO THE GOLDEN TWILIGHT
OF EVENING--

ONE, AN AWE-INSPIRING FIGURE
WITH THE COUNTENANCE OF THE
GREAT CATS -- ROARING HIS RAGE,
A STILL SMOLDERING BLASTER
IN HIS IRON-SHEATHED HAND!!

THIS SERIES DEDICATED
WITH LOVE TO SHARON

BUTCH GUICE
WRITER / ARTIST / CREATOR

THE OTHER: A FIGURE ETCHED IN IVORY. A LITHE
ORANGE-HAIRED ALBINO ARCHER CLAD IN BLUE
SATIN. HIS NAME: PITHIUS -- HERS: TEMPEST--
TOGETHER, THEY HAVE JUST DECLARED WAR ON
A WORLD-- WITH A GALAXY AT STAKE !!



THE AMBER EFIDICES ARE THICK WITH DEFENSE AND THE TIDES OF BATTLE TURN QUICKLY LIKE SCALES OF FATE, PECARIOUSLY BALANCED!



MEN FALL! THEIR SHELLS BRIGHT SCARLET SPLASHES AGAINST A DEEP GOLDEN BACKDROP!

THE TIDE SHIFTS AGAIN...



IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT... ONE VERY DEADLY MOMENT--



--RIPPING--



--SPRAWLING--



--CONSUMING--



--ALL!

--PITHIUS! THESE EXPLOSIONS! THEY BEGIN TO SEETHE FROM THE VERY TOWERS THEMSELVES!

YES... A MOST BEAUTIFUL EFFECT, IS IT NOT?



BEAUTIFUL? UH... YES, I NEVER THOUGHT OF IT THAT WAY, BUT I GUESS IT IS!



BEAUTIFUL--AND DEADLY! QUITE A COMBINATION! IT'S SOMETHING YOU BOTH SHARE IN COMMON!!



"ESCAPE" WOULD BE NICE, TOO!

THERE ARE MEMORIES HERE -- WORDLESS, CHAOTIC, UNSPOKEN OF BONDS OF HERITAGE THAT HAVE CHANGED THE COURSES OF BOTH THEIR LIVES--



MEMORIES OF HARSH, VIOLENT, CRIMSON TRUTHS

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASIER TO ACCEPT THE LIES!



--MUCH EASIER--!

--AND MUCH SAFER !!

QUICKLY, YOU FOOL! STOP THEM BEFORE THEY ESCAPE!

THE EMERALD-EYED DARK LORD SAYS NOTHING, BUT INSTEAD, LAUNCHES SILVER SPINES ACROSS THE BREADTH OF THE COURTYARD WITH ONE SWEEP OF HIS AWESOME, BOIL-COVERED ARM--!

--WITH PRECISE EFFECT !!

--UNNNNGH* TEMPEST... I--

PITHIUS !!

--WITH GRIM DETERMINATION, SHE HAULS THE GREAT CAT'S BODY ONTO THE FRAIL SCALFOLD--CURSING THE FATES...! THE FEDERATION...!

--BUT MOST OF ALL, CURSING THE DARKLING LORD KARNAL, the corruptor!

PITHIUS...! oh my dear pithius...!

YOU BUMBLING MORONIC FOOL! YOU'VE LOST THEM--!

THAT CATWALK CAN TAKE THEM ANYWHERE IN THE CITY LONG BEFORE WE CAN EVER REACH THEM !!

YOUR SUPERIORS SHALL HEAR OF THIS! I SHALL--

NO, MIESTER/GENERAL-- MY SUPERIORS SHALL HEAR OF NOTHING, I'M AFRAID--

COMING SOON'S **LUCIUS THORN** THE AMAZING MASTER

THRILL TO AMAZING FEATS

--SAVE OF YOUR UNTIMELY DEATH IN A REBEL ATTACK TODAY--

..SO SORRY, GENERAL...

GOODBYE...

NEXT: THE COMING OF **HAVOCMASTER!**



BUTCH
GUICE
TEMPEST
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THIRD CLASS



KEN MEYER
1997 LINCOLN
SAIT LAKE CITY, UTAH

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