

JIM ANTHONY SUPER-DETECTIVE

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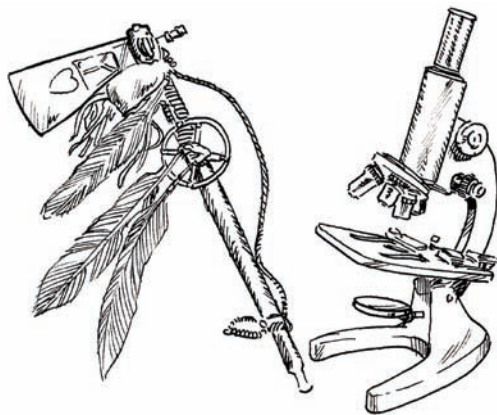
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A SPICY SAVAGE

By Norman Hamilton

Perhaps the most outlandish pulp publisher of them all was Culture Publications. By the early 1930s there were many pulp titles that catered in one fashion or another to prurient taste. The adage that sex sells couldn't have been more obvious and as more and more publishers entered the market, that rule of thumb simply could not be ignored. In 1932, brothers Harry and Irwin Donenfeld acquired *Pep*, *La Paree* and *Spicy Stories* after the original publisher, Frank Armer, went bankrupt. They soon became the first titles of the DM Publishing (Donenfeld Magazines.)

The Donenfelds, not wanting to lose his contacts and experience, hired Armer to edit for them starting with *Super Detective*. It should be noted that this magazine featured a comic strip called *Betty Blake*. Farmer was a proponent of comics and would incorporate them in most of the pulps he was involved with. Eventually, Harry Donenfeld and Armer agreed to start a new publishing venture called Culture Publishing to specifically print "spicy" fiction. These would be the standard crime/mystery stories only with overt erotic underpinnings. The duo hired Kenneth Hutchinson as the Managing Editor of the "spicy" line.

Their first title dated July 1934 was *Spicy Detective Stories*. It would soon be followed by *Spicy Adventure Stories* and *Spicy Mystery Stories*. Two years later they would add *Spicy Hollywood Stories* and even a *Spicy Western Stories*. Regardless of the genre, their covers featured beautiful young women skimpily clad while frantically trying to escape the clutches of some hor-

rific impending doom.

Culture Publications would never achieve the success of their competitors but between the years of 1934 and 1946 they did a healthy business. Their most popular, long-lasting title being *Dan Turner, Hollywood Detective*. Eventually conservative-minded church and civic groups began protesting the flagrant use of sex and by 1942 the company had dropped all its “spicy” titles when it then became Trojan Publishing. Although things tamed down a wee bit, keep in mind these were the same people running the show and any title they published still exploited sex and violence.

All the while publishers like Culture/Trojan were scrambling daily to make a profit in an overcrowded market, Street & Smith, the industry giant, continued to produce the biggest selling monthlies of them all, *The Shadow* and *Doc Savage*. As expected, several of these cut-rate outfits attempted to copy them by creating mirror-like heroes of their own and Donenfeld and Armer were no different. Between them, and Ken Hutchinson, the idea was born to produce a Doc Savage rip-off who would be a brilliant superman, known throughout the world for his scientific breakthroughs. Like Savage he would have a New York headquarters and surround himself with a handful of special, unique aides. The difference would be in his personality. Unlike the stoic, near emotionless Clark Savage, Jr., this new fellow would be a man of hot-blooded passions, capable of flying into a fiery rage from the least provocation while at the same time having an appreciative eye for the fairer sex. In other words, he would be a sexy Doc Savage.

Super Detective would be the venue for this new, all American, red-blooded pulp hero, Jim Anthony. He would appear in the magazine from 1940 to 1942 in a total of twenty-five stories. Eventually the title would be altered to read: *Jim Anthony – Super Detective*. The son of an Irish adventurer, his mother was a Native American princess of the Comanche tribe. He was a scientific genius; inventor, research engineer, aerodynamics expert, art collector, adventurer, philanthropist; champion athlete, world famous criminologist, and chemist. He even resembled the Man of Bronze and was said to have the body of Greek God.

Aiding Anthony in his war on crime were a handful of close allies. Tom Gentry, a hulking, battered, freckled red-head, Irishman, he was Anthony’s chief pilot, chauffeur, trained agent and best pal. Dawkins was Anthony’s butler and kept his penthouse suite atop the Waldorf-Anthony spotless. But the strangest of this close knit group was Anthony’s maternal grandfather, the Comanche medicine man, Mephito. The old man was

well versed in Native American spirit lore and a true mentor to the often times impulsive Anthony.

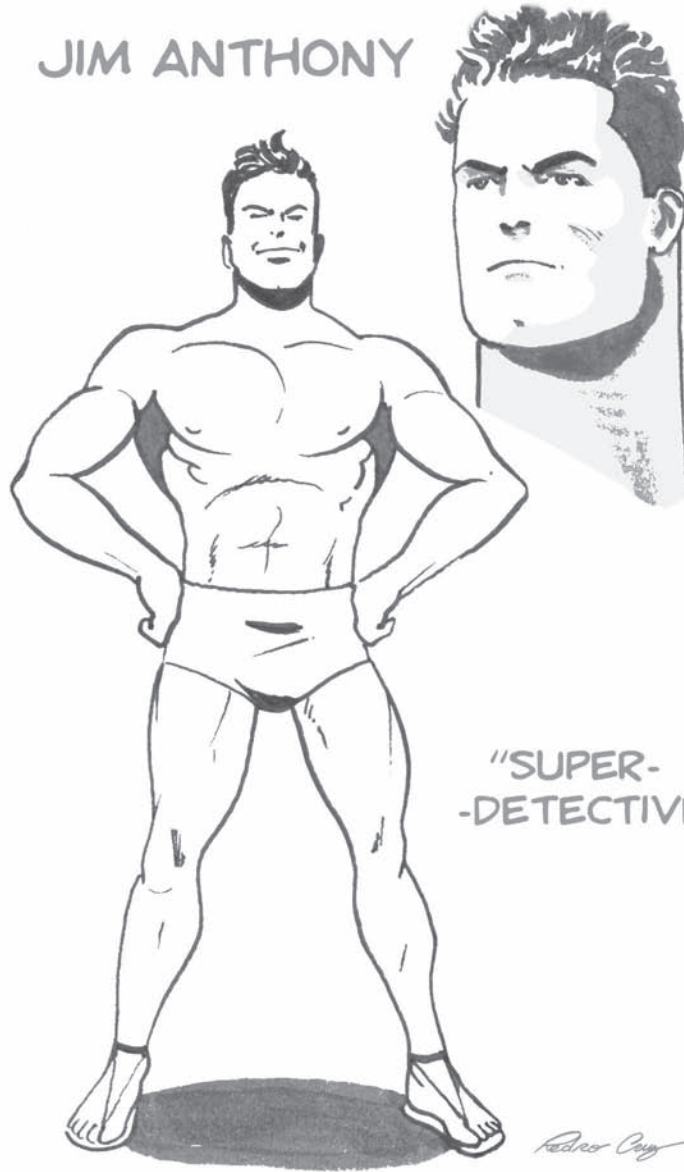
Now, as stated above, Jim, unlike Doc, did like women and they certainly liked him. All kinds of femme fatales peppered his adventures. Many pulp fans are critical of this repeating thread throughout the early episodes, claiming they diluted the suspense and action of the tales and often times skirted the edges of soft pornography. Eventually one particular young woman arrived to take on the role of Anthony's primary love interest and she was Delores Colquitt, the daughter of Senator Colquitt. A blond, she had a slim shape, clear skin, taller than average and sparkling blue eyes. In the later stories she and Jim became engaged, thus ending his romantic escapades, much to the delight of his readers.

During the course of his short literary life, Jim Anthony battled several would be world conquerors, but his most tenacious foe was one Rado Ruric, who appeared in three stories. Ruric was the head of a group dedicated to the overthrow of the government and Anthony fought him in such places as Tibet, Mexico, Central America and the U.S.

Now, many long years after his last appearance, Jim Anthony, Super Detective is back in three brand new adventures thanks to *Airship 27 Prod.* During his original run, the character never seemed to find his proper place. He began as a clone of another hero and when that didn't work, his editors and writers attempted to morph him into a more down-to-earth detective character. Neither approach realized the genuine potential inherent in the series and thus it floundered as a pulp oddity. Not so with this new, improved Jim Anthony. Here he appears full blown as the true pulp hero he was always intended to be, clearly his own character full of possibilities. Roberts, Salmon and Bell have whipped up three terrific yarns that will have you applauding Jim Anthony's return and clamoring for more; much more. There's also some added historical data provided by Bell as an epilogue to his story that will round out what I've related here. I purposely opted not to repeat that material in this informal introduction.

We end with a rousing bravo to cover painter, Chad Hardin, whose magnificent image here pays homage to the classic *Super Detective* covers, with our hero's naked physique on the display for all the world to admire. And of course there's that scantily clad damsel in distress. Thank God, some things never change.

JIM ANTHONY



"SUPER-
-DETECTIVE"

Robert Coy

JIM ANTHONY

in

Dawn Of The Purple Hoods

By Erwin K. Roberts

To all outward appearances the tall man in the custom tailored tuxedo seemed cool, calm, and collected. In reality, under his raven black hair, his mind roiled with frustration. He wanted desperately to be anywhere but in the gaily decked out hotel ballroom. Not that he wanted anything untoward to happen. The charity benefiting from the soirée helped untold numbers of people in need. The event just happened to be the capstone of a totally frustrating week. His face managed to maintain its easy going smile, just barely.

Then Jimmy Durante, the master of ceremonies, proclaimed, “The Sentinel chain of newspapers and magazines has raised a lot of money for The Salvation Army tonight, thanks to your generous donations. The silent auction closed while we sold an evening with the young new publisher. We will have those results momentarily. While we wait, we’ll try to top our last auction. Ladies, now up for bid, an evening on the town, including Broadway show, dinner, and dancing, with one of the most eligible bachelors in the city. No! In the nation! He’s over six foot tall. Charles Atlas seems a bit peaked standing next to him. He’s a scientist, a solver of mysteries, and recently

became publisher of one of the Sentinel's most prestigious competitors. Ladies, please give a warm welcome to Mr. Jim Anthony."

Trying not to blush, Jim Anthony stepped from the crowd to join Durante on the stage. Most of the audience clapped, but a couple of strident wolf whistles added laughter to the applause. Then came a few gasps as one of the energetic whistlers' evening gown almost took leave of her upper body.

"Whatcha think of the introduction?" asked Durante out of the side of his mouth.

"Good, but the reaction was even better," replied Jim with the first genuine smile on his lips in in three days.

Still waiting for the audience to quiet down, the comedian continued, "You think those female wolves'll win the bidding?"

"The one who held on to the top of her gown is the closest thing I have to a 'girlfriend.' She'll only bid to jack up the charity price. I think I recognize the one with the red face. If I'm right, she doesn't have nearly the deepest pockets in the bidding pool. We'll see."

The bidding got off to a lively start in fifty dollar jumps. Jim surveyed the audience. When the bid reached twenty-five hundred dollars a woman of about fifty called out, "I'll double that bid!"

"Why thank you, ma'am!" exclaimed Durante. The host's head did a double take as Jim Anthony's voice seemed to pop directly into his ear while the big man's lips did not move.

"That's Mrs. Stubbing. She's standing next to her husband!"

"Am I correct? We have a bid of five thousand dollars from... Is it Mrs. Stubbing?"

The older lady didn't bat an eye. "That is correct. I'm bidding in the name of my daughter who is in graduate school."

"Oh my," exclaimed Durante with a slightly befuddled expression, "I sure wish I had a mama like you! Are there any other bids? No other bids? Going once. Going twice! SOLD! One evening on the town with Señor Jim (love that name) Anthony goes to Miss Stubbing."

A few days later Marinda Stubbing unpacked her light travel case at her parents' small "in town" apartment. As she tried to decide what to wear for her surprise "birthday present" date she felt both nervous and very excited. She had almost told her mother that she had wasted her money. Then she looked a little closer at the engraved invitation. Jim Anthony! Of all people.

The apartment doorbell rang. Through the peephole she saw a good looking blonde smiling at her. Marinda blinked for a moment. The face looked familiar to her. Then she made the connection. Senator Colquitt's daughter. Wasn't she supposed to be... Oh, my!

Marinda decided to meet the issue, whatever exactly it turned out to be, head on. She opened the door saying, "Hello. Delores, isn't it?"

"That's right. I came to see you before your big date tonight."

"I've heard it said that you and Jim Anthony have been 'an item,'" replied Marinda. "I hope you don't think I'm deliberately poaching..."

"I haven't got an exclusive with the big lug. The way he sees things, no woman ever should. Too dangerous. In his opinion, anyway." Delores paused before continuing, "I asked around 'cause I couldn't remember ever hearing about you attending any kind of social event. Everybody says your nose never gets any sun for all the books covering it. I can't say if that's true, but I sure don't want the Big Boy Scout accused of mercy dating. If you're going to be my competition, even just for one evening, I want you to be worthy competition. Now, what kind of evening gown do you have?"

In the early evening of the day following the big charity date Delores wandered into Jim Anthony's laboratory in the penthouse of the Waldorf-Anthony Hotel. She wanted to hear all about what went on. She walked around an unfamiliar screen.

Delores stopped dead in her tracks. On a hospital bed lay Marinda Stubbing. Covered by a sheet so thin Delores could tell that she wore little or nothing under it. Wires ran from her forehead, from within her auburn hair, and upper chest, while tubes ran into both of her arms.

Marinda smiled through pale lips saying softly, "I must look quite the sight. I'm groggy and I feel like I'm roasting. But, Jim and two doctors tell me I'll be fine."

Not often caught completely off guard, Delores managed to stammer only, "What? How? Why are you here? And alone?"

"My nurse will be back in just a moment," replied Marinda with a thin smile. "I'll get to what happened in a moment. But first I wanted to thank you for your help. We had a wonderful time. At least I sure did. We ate at a terrific Chinese place. Saw Lunt and Fontanne in *Giradoux's Amphytrion* 38 at the Schubert Theater. And we danced until after one o'clock. He was so nice. And he can really talk about my field of study."

"I don't think I ever heard just what that is," said Delores.

“That’s one of my big problems. My parents wish it was something conventional like English Literature. Ugh! I hate the idea of putting some long dead writer under a microscope. Dammit, I’m proud to be a Physicist! I’ll have my PhD. in the next couple of years.”

“I’ll bet that got Big Jim’s attention.”

“Did it ever,” replied Marinda with slight giggle. “By the time we were done dancing I worked up the nerve to ask to see his laboratory.”

“Dear, weren’t you concerned that the Big Boy Scout would try to show you his etchings?” asked Delores with a perfectly straight face.

Marinda looked her directly in the eye. “If that had been the price for a tour of his lab, I’d have paid it. Willingly. I’m not the vestal scientist my parents seem to imagine.” She blushed a bit before continuing, “At least not quite. But, he remained the perfect gentleman.

“I’m not trying to steal his work, but his opinions on what lines of research hold promise are invaluable to someone like me. He let me experiment with some of his electrical gear. Things I’ve only seen mentioned in the journals. And we talked theory. We even tore apart the science of some Buck Rogers style science-fiction gizmos. Most women, hell, most men too, would have been bored to death. To me it was refreshing. Exhilarating. Then we noticed that the sun was about to come up. We both got a little red faced.

“Before we left the lab I threw my arms around his neck and kissed him square on the mouth. I told him thank you for the wonderful evening, and night. He kissed me back. Really kissed me back. Whew! But he didn’t try to advance. If he had, I’d have melted.

“Instead, he drove me home. Walked me to my parents’ brownstone door and thanked me for a great time. I put my key in the door, but I tried to show him that I wouldn’t mind another kiss. I think he started to grant my wish when all hell broke loose.”

Jim Anthony regretted that his time with Marinda Stubbing was ending. At the same time he realized she was not for him. One of the reasons he dated was to take his mind completely off of his work, both as a scientist and what the papers had recently begun referring to as an adventurer. Still, one more kiss couldn’t hurt. He leaned toward her slightly upturned lips when a huge crash reverberated through the heavy oak door of the luxurious brownstone.

“Marinda, stay behind me,” Jim whispered as he swept her hand from the key. He turned it as quietly as possible. With the door open a few inch-

es he looked inside. A man in the livery of an English butler lay sprawled in the remains of a heavy glass display case. His hand clutched a stout walking stick like a weapon.

Behind him he heard the girl whisper, "Gainor, oh no!"

Then Jim Anthony made a mistake. He figured he had delivered Marinda home just as a burglary went bad. The butler had been no match for one or two panicked crooks who even now probably were headed out the back door as fast as their legs could carry them. Jim opened the door to help the butler and to clobber any second story man dumb enough to hang around.

As he took in the scene in the foyer and beyond, his first muttered words in Comanche involving buffalo chips. Two heavysset men wearing identical suits topped with dark purple hoods faced the door in the vestibule. Two more stood in the room beyond. Another paused on the way up the stairs while yet two more popped out of a door under those same stairs.

Each hooded man seemed identical to the others except the one on the stairs. His hood sported a small orange flame painted on the forehead. The man looked at Jim Anthony, then behind him. "That's the girl," he called out. "Get her!"

Marinda knew a couple members of the Yale Boxing Team. She'd seen them train and fight. What seemed lightning fast to her before became turtle slow as she watched her date go into action.

Jim Anthony took one step into a flying side kick. The nearest hooded man stood about six feet tall. The pointed heel of Jim's shoe impacted next to his ear. As the man toppled, Jim rebounded from his hands in a forward flip into the second man in the vestibule. He augmented the impact with a hard driven leading elbow to the solar plexus. The man folded over on to him.

In the next split second Jim's fast moving hands frisked the mystery man. He removed a weapon of an unfamiliar feel, a wallet, and a strange apparatus from a holster opposite the gun. Then Jim heaved.

The heavysset man went flying. One of the men in the next room barely danced out of the way. His partner caught the heavy body full in the chest. He staggered backwards until a footstool tripped him. His head whacked the door post as he fell.

The "dancer" tried to get another of the strange weapons clear of its leather. Jim, his hands still full of pilfered gear, took two steps forward before diving enthusiastically into the infamous Ty Cobb sliding groin kick.

A quick glance behind assured him that Marinda was out of the line of fire of the other hooded men. Then Jim sprang to his feet without use of his hands. He leaped to the stairs, then up the seven steps to the slightly stunned leader of the group. Dropping the strange pistol he ripped the hood off of the man before he could react. The face seemed vaguely familiar, but he had no time for conjecture. The fellow yelled, "Gas it!" as he just managed to leap past Jim to the bottom of the stairs.

Instantly Jim heard several loud pops from the first floor. A split second later small capsules shattered in the vestibule area. A purple mist billowed throughout the front area of the floor.

Still in clear air, Jim filled his lungs to capacity. Then he glanced at what he still held in his hands. The wallet he reflexively put in a pocket. Then he peeled off the wrapper of the device from the second shoulder holster. He found he held a compact breathing device that had both a filter canister and small oxygen capsule. In an instant he clipped his nose closed and clamped his jaw onto the mouthpiece. A quick glance at the hood showed that it contained eye lenses. With the hood on, Jim headed down the stairs.

Keeping low, Jim looked around the banister. He saw a man holding his crotch shuffle through a door to the rear. The unconscious ones still lay where they fell. Jim raced back to the vestibule. The butler had no pulse. Not surprising, considering the stiletto driven in next to his sternum.

By the door Jim found Marinda coughing amid the thick purple fumes. As he dragged her outside she lost consciousness.

"Hold it right there, Mister Masked Man," came a sharp edged voice. Jim found himself looking down the barrel of a police service revolver.

"There's radio cars on the way from the precinct. Don't try nothing funny. There be good folks in these houses. We take alarms serious."

Very carefully Jim Anthony pulled off the purple hood. He took a full breath before spitting the breathing device into his hand.

"Officer, I'm Jim Anthony of *The Daily Star*. This is the daughter of the house. There's poison gas coming out that door."

The cop quickly backed down the steps to the sidewalk. Then he growled, "Bring her down easy! Let me get a look at you in the sunlight. I see anything funny in your hands and I shoot."

Jim moved as fast as he dared. He could feel that Marinda was barely breathing. He blinked as the sunlight hit him.

"I'll be darned. You are Jim Anthony, even if your hands and neck are all purple," exclaimed the cop. "What can I do to help?"

“Call for an ambulance with oxygen aboard. Then get the Fire Department on the way with gas masks,” replied Jim.

“There be a call box on the corner,” said the cop over his shoulder as he sprinted off.

A few minutes later Jim led firefighters inside to check for victims. He used clean mason jars from the kitchen to take air samples. He retrieved the weapon he had dropped on the stairs. Then he tried to draw the gas gun from the holster of one of the now very dead hooded men. Fortunately he noticed some wires running from the bottom of the holster to the man’s belt. Jim hooked the grip of the weapon with a long piece of cord. When he pulled on the cord the gas gun exploded releasing another dangerous purple cloud.

By ten o’clock, Jim Anthony consulted with several doctors at the hospital on Roosevelt Island about Marinda’s condition.

“We all agree,” summed up Jim, “the gas acts as a blood poison, blocking oxygen absorption. Administering pure oxygen can stave off death in those with a medium exposure. Blood transfusions are the likely cure unless there is some other toxic component to the gas of which we are not yet aware.

“Thank you all very much for your quick work. The Police have not yet been able to locate Mr. and Mrs. Stubbing. However, it is a matter of public record that they left her in my care yesterday evening. Unless anyone has a legal objection I will continue to act as her guardian until she is able to say otherwise.”

Henry Doric, the Captain of the local police precinct chuckled under his breath as he heard that. A moment later he joined Jim in an empty office.

“Well, Mr. Anthony,” he said with a sly wink, “you sure staked your claim to responsibility for the young lady.”

With a grim smile Jim replied, “Fortunately her mother’s purchase got reported in all the society columns and our picture appeared in a couple of this morning’s papers. Anybody, maiden aunt or family trustee, who wants to take her out of my care can go through my lawyers. After the message I left with the senior partner, that will take a minimum of six weeks.

“Miss Stubbing clearly was the target of those purple hooded killers. I’m sure you’ve heard from the downtown precinct that there were signs of a break in at the apartment she stayed in night before last. If I’d taken

her home at any so-called reasonable hour she would be kidnapped or dead now. Your men, so far, have turned up no information about other incidents involving this group. I'm going to start certain 'special' sources digging into this matter. In the meantime, I want to quietly get Marinda transferred to the Waldorf-Anthony penthouse."

"I agree that she will be safer there," frowned the Captain, "but what about the guests and hotel staff?"

"I'll be taking a serious chance moving her even that far," replied Jim. "I can make the hotel safer than this hospital would ever be to a gas attack. I'll have the top four floors cleared out. Because of the experimental work that I sometimes do, the penthouse has an air handling system that should render that purple gas totally ineffective. Captain, your men, and the firemen, have worked wonders containing this deadly mess so far. Your detectives are digging like crazy for more information. If you can find a way to keep me informed, I'd appreciate it. I'm going to find these Purple Hoods. And believe me, they won't be happy about it."

Frank Havens strolled up the street to the Clarion Building after having lunch at a quiet hole-in-the-wall beanery. He hummed the tune to a popular song as he walked. He returned greetings from the shop keepers, street vendors, and private citizens he passed. Everybody on these streets knew the crusading publisher of the Clarion newspaper chain.

One fellow stepped away from a newsstand holding a copy of the latest issue of *Doc Savage*. "Say, Mr. Havens. You're a coin collector. Take a look at what I got in change today!"

Havens deftly caught the tossed coin. An Indian Head penny dated 1907. Nothing all that special. Then he flipped it over. Another Indian, this one dated 1908. Havens blinked. "Now this is unusual! Care to sell it?"

"Be glad to," replied the roughly dressed man.

"Come on with me," said Havens cheerfully. "I'll have to make a call or two, to find out what it's worth."

A few minutes later, in Frank Havens office, Jim Anthony pulled off his shaggy brown wig and stretched to his full height. "That worked well," he observed, "but with the enemies you have, aren't you taking a chance bringing someone in off the street like that?"

"James, my boy," chuckled Havens, "for a block in all directions the streets are rigged in my favor. The fellow who sold you the magazine

spent years in the Marines with Chesty Puller. Got almost as many medals. You'd shown any hostility to me, you would be in one tough scrap. Even with your skills. And he's not the only one in that area who either works for me, or owes me favors.

"You are about the last person I expected to see today. The *Clarion* graciously used up its own ink to put our rival's publisher in our society section. I figured you'd be sleeping off your big night on the town."

"I wish, Frank," said Jim with a sigh. "You heard about that brownstone gas leak?"

"Sure did," replied Havens. "Couple of fatalities and a whole block evacuated."

"Then the police have managed to keep the lid on," said Jim with a grim smile as he pulled two purple hoods, the gas gun and the breathing device from his baggy pockets. "The event happened at the Stubbing home, not the empty one two doors down as reported. Hooded marauders targeted Marinda Stubbing for either kidnapping or murder. I pulled this hood off the leader, but he got away. Let me borrow that pad of newsprint. Have you got an HB pencil?"

Soon a *Clarion* photographer shot Jim's highly detailed drawing of the leader of the hooded attackers so that copies could be made. Havens promised a quiet search for the identity of the man with his sources, including the mysterious sleuth known as The Phantom.

Shortly after that Jim Anthony left the *Clarion* Building with a sheaf of photographs of his drawing. At almost the same instant three bonded messengers hurried inside to pick up various envelopes containing copies of Jim's artwork. These were not eager young men in uniforms. They looked like the average fellow on the street. Except, that each carried a fully licensed automatic pistol that they knew how to use. Soon one began to make the rounds of the city's Federal Offices. Another spread copies to the N.Y.P.D. The third headed to Fort Dix in New Jersey.

Using the subway, and sometimes a taxi, Jim Anthony bounced around New York City for the next couple of hours. One day he planned to have an information network that spanned the entire metropolis. But in 1937 this was far from the case. He relied more heavily than he liked on Frank Havens, and a few others. Still he had some sources of his own. Before heading back to the Waldorf-Anthony he worked them diligently.

Soon his two headed Indian penny admitted him to the owner's quarters behind a small newsstand and cigar store in a slightly run down area. The proprietor knew nothing of the Purple Hoods or their equipment. But

he blinked rapidly when he saw the likeness of the group's leader.

"Lord, he looks familiar. Must have been quite awhile. Not a crook... No, not a crook. Not a hanger on. Must be back while I was still a cop. Not a cop, either. Not even state police. Well, maybe, sort of related. Fed? Not FBI. Not Volstead related. What's left? What's left? State Department? No. War Department? That's it! Intelligence. Army? No. don't think so... Navy... That's it. Naval Intelligence. Name. Name. Name. Something to do with heating. Stove, furnace, duct work, got it! Vents. Ventway? Venter, no. Vent-nor! That's it. I worked a case involving a waterfront dive pumping Navy men for information in '33. Harmon Ventnor worked the Navy side of the case. Smart man, but I always felt he'd be damn dangerous to cross."

One of the phone lines rang in the newspaper morgue of The Daily Star. The Crypt Keeper, as Robb Roberts sometimes called himself, took the lineman's handset off of his belt and plugged it into a nearby wall jack.

"Morgue. All the news that's fit to bury."

"Very funny, Robb," came Jim Anthony's voice sounding unamused. Robb heard traffic sounds in the background. "I need information on Harmon Ventnor of Naval Intelligence. Where he is. What he might be doing."

"He's dead, Jim," said Robb matter of factly. "Been dead for a couple of months according to the War Department."

"Then how did I happen to see him today?" asked a perplexed Jim Anthony.

"I'll look up the original citation, but I think facts were awful slim. Line of duty. Confidential assignment. That sort of thing. Course you know a lot more about impersonating the dead than most people, boss."

"You're right about that, Robb. Dump what you find to both the special teletype circuit and to the recorder at my penthouse. Second, add any hint of what he was working on. Third, find anything about thugs in business suits wearing purple hoods. Also, dig up the background on Robert Stubbing and his wife, Alicia Fortier Stubbing, and his business. Pay special attention to any possible connection to chemical warfare."

"Will do, boss," replied Robb. As soon as the connection ended he headed back into the files on his latest quest.

As he neared the Waldorf-Anthony Hotel, Jim planned to use the delivery entrance as he still wore the shaggy wigged disguise.

That was before he saw two newspaper reporters watching that door. As he circled the block he found other members of the fourth estate en-

camped. A glance into the lobby showed the Bell Captain jawing with Rex Parker, the bright young reporter of the *New York Comet*.

A few minutes later Jim Anthony used a tunnel to enter the sub-basement of the hotel. From there he made his way to the base of the shaft of his recently installed private elevator. To his surprise the car was aloft. Quickly he uncovered a hidden panel. The embedded counter showed only one movement that he could not account for. He glanced at the last bit of ticker tape that recorded the codes of the buttons pushed to activate service. Delores. Probably wanted a post date briefing.

Jim smiled. Smart, adventurous, and intensely loyal to her friends, the beautiful girl, no the beautiful woman Jim corrected himself, seemed just what he wanted in life. But should not have. His growing list of enemies would surely target her. Still, Jim felt himself longing for her touch as he climbed quickly up the elevator shaft.

At about the same time three heavysset men with overnight bags checked into the Waldorf-Anthony one after another. The desk clerk would later remember that the three had the same body type, but each had a different style of dress; spiffy, conservative, and threadbare. As the second of the three signed the register, a limousine pulled up to the front door. Out stepped a man in continental evening dress. His liveried private secretary and valet registered him as Sir Halley Gideon. Sir Halley took the large twentieth floor suite reserved for him by cable from his arriving ocean liner. Sir Halley's man asked that he not be disturbed as the crossing had been a rough one. Hardly had the well tipped bellman cleared the floor when the three heavysset men began to arrive unseen.

Just after the third man slipped in, a door at the other end of the floor opened. Another recently arrived guest soon asked the floor attendant for help with a possible bathroom fixture problem. The attendant easily solved the problem and returned to her desk shortly. In the short time she had been gone the five men from Sir Halley's suite summoned the elevator. As the door opened, the operator barely saw the incoming fist that put him in dreamland.

In the tiny hidden room that held the elevator entrance, Jim checked a board of lights and gadgets. All seemed well. He slipped into the penthouse proper.

As he passed the door of his personal suite he realized that he had

donned his disheveled tuxedo about twenty hours previously. With that thought came the sudden feeling that his closed collar with bow tie felt like a noose. Jim didn't really like ties, at all. Yet his severely wilted black tie was more or less in place. Suddenly clothing flew in all directions.

Less than a minute later, clad only in a golden swimsuit with Comanche trim at the top, a more relaxed Jim Anthony entered his laboratory. He headed for the screen that allowed Marinda Stubbing some privacy in the very large open room. As he approached he heard the voice of the nurse.

"...have to leave soon. Miss Stubbing needs to rest as much as possible."

"If that's really necessary," came Delores' voice, "I'll wait for the Big Boy Scout in the parlor."

"I don't feel sleepy," said Marinda. "Not really, but I can tell I'm still dopey from whatever is going into my arms. Normally I'd ask for some of those scientific journals on that table. But right now I'm sure they'd read like Sanskrit. Maybe in a couple of... Oh,my! Either I'm hallucinating, or there's a bronze statue walking this way."

Delores turned, then chuckled. "No, dear. Your vision is 20/20. And that statue can be soft and cuddly, when he feels like it. Hello Big Jim. I've just been hearing how this gadget infested tennis court works as an aphrodisiac."

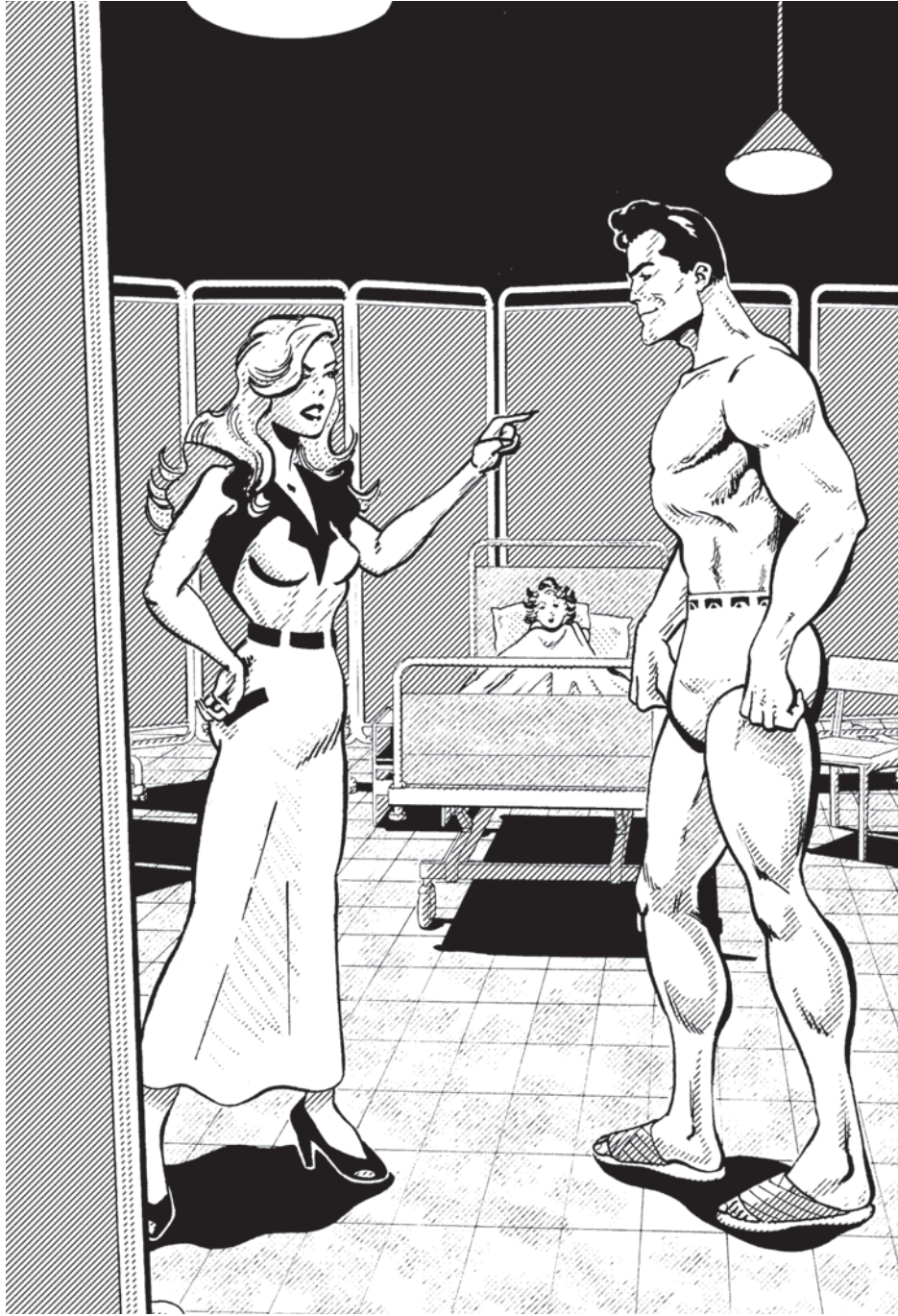
Jim Anthony actually blushed. His approach ended abruptly as he fumbled for words. "Why whatever do you mean, Delores?"

Delores pounced. Jim Anthony at a loss for words, amazing! "You Comanche Casanova! You brought this impressionable young scientist up to this hot bed of the latest discoveries. That's like making a just-into-port sailor the only judge for the Miss America pageant." Then she added with a smile and a wink, "You should be ashamed of yourself."

Not seeing the wink, Marinda felt shocked for a moment as Delores stalked over to the much taller man. Finally she managed to begin, "But Delores, he didn't..."

Delores hopped up to lock her arms around Jim's neck. In his ear she whispered, "Thanks for showing her such a good time, Mr. Gentleman Jim. I really like her. But, I still want you all for myself."

Marinda then watched Delores kiss Jim. The big man hesitated a moment then returned the kiss with a great intensity. She sighed to herself as she thought, "Me, put myself between those two again. No chance."



"You should be ashamed of yourself."

At the same time the purloined elevator arrived at the top of its normal run. Knowledgeable hands shifted a safety stop out of the way to allow the car to rise a short distance further. Now clad in dark coveralls, the five men formed a pyramid to let one of their number examine the emergency door to the top of the car. A moment later swearing drifted down.

“The flaming thing’s got an alarm. Hand me the Yankee drill.”

The leader glanced at his wrist watch.

A few moments later the nurse stood glaring at Jim, Delores, and Marinda with her pocket watch in her hand. In five more minutes she would throw the visitors out.

Suddenly Marinda’s eyes widened. What little color there was drained from her face.

“Marinda, what is it?” asked Jim, his voice full of concern.

“I said I felt dopey. I didn’t realize just how dopey. How could I forget? How could I? How is Gainor?” When Jim hesitated she gasped, “No. No. No! Is he...”

“I’m sorry, Marinda,” replied Jim. “He was dead before the gas got to him. He was probably dead when he crashed into that cabinet.”

Marinda did not speak. Did not move. Somehow her face slowly seemed to become devoid everything but the bone and cartilage below her skin. Delores told herself it was as if the other girl’s soul imploded. Then tears began to flow from her eyes. She did not sob or cry. In fact she barely seemed to breathe. Soon Jim and the nurse each grabbed a hand to check her pulse.

The tears continued, but Marinda’s heartbeat kept steady. Then a bit of color began to return to her face. Next her respiration became deeper. Finally, in a voice just above a whisper she moaned, “Oh Gainor. Gainor. What will I do without you?” Then she fell silent.

When she did not speak again, Jim asked, “Marinda, I’m sorry you had to find out this way. I take it that Gainor was with your family for a long time.”

Marinda tried to blink the tears away. “For as long as I can remember. Gainor was my anchor. My bedrock. He helped me understand the world beyond the circles my parents move in. My mother grew up in a remote part of provincial Canada. Now, she’s is so in love with the idea of being in Society, with a capital ‘S.’ My father’s business takes him all over. My mother sometimes goes with him, or travels with the ‘in-season’ crowd. The only thing that kept me from an English style boarding school