

TALES OF

FREE

WEIRD CRIME

With Dr. SATAN.

PULSE POUNDING TXT!

“JSA 1938: Blue Massacre”

STARRING

by Brian McNally



Marla Drake



Alan Scott



Kent Nelson



Carter Hall



The Sandman

狂った犯罪人が魔法付き、恐怖なスペクター警察マンを抹殺

2016年8月1日 第一弾 スペシャル割引値段販売中

SYNOPSIS

THE HORRIBLE PLOT OF DOCTOR SATAN

In 1938 Doctor Satan opens a supernatural gate and summons a horrible and deadly monster in the middle of a titanic hurricane. All over Gotham City, police officers are brutally slaughtered by a ghostly executioner from the other side.

Over four dozen police could die in a fortnight, while a deadly abomination risen from Gotham National Swamp lurks in an abandoned lighthouse. The death of Jim Corrigan is key, as he is the first officer to fall. His death launches Doctor Satan's deadly plot to use a wrathful spectre of vengeance to decimate the Gotham PD.

A circle of anonymous vigilantes gathers to face the approaching storm, working in the shadows. The mysterious Sandman runs the opposition to Doctor Satan and his. Female adventurer the Black Fury and her partner, the Green Lantern join the group as new members. Carter Hall, international adventure, brings the weapons as quartermaster, and Doctor Fate lends his strength as a sorcerer.

And deep in the dark of the night, the Shadow laughs.

"When policemen break the law, then there isn't any law. Just a fight for survival." --From the ballad of Billy Jack

INTRODUCTION - HOW THIS GOT STARTED

A few years ago, when DC published their New 52: Earth 2 featuring a band new (and gay) Alan Scott, aka the New 52 Green Lantern. At this time, I happened to catch an online thread discussion on the iFanboy website. John Siuntres of Word Balloon Podcast clashed with iFanboy host, Josh Flanagan. Both made excellent points that flew right past each other. After hearing that, I resolved to one day rescue Alan Scott for these two noble men in the following manner:

- 1) Address all the points Josh made, and do it that way
- 2) Address all the points John made, and do it that way
- 3) Make Alan Scott gay, because that is what I want, and James Robinson left the door open so gosh darn it, I am going to walk right through it.
- 4) Produce something so good, both Josh and John love it. Me too.

At the end of the day, if you were a kid and read Green Lantern, you took the oath. "In brightest day, in darkest night." Straight, gay, black, white- we all took the same oath.

THE STORY BEGINS HERE

JSA 1938: BLUE MASSACRE

By Brian McNally

PROLOGUE: GOOD COP DENIED
HEAVEN

The last thing Detective Jim Corrigan saw was a flash as he turned toward the shooter and fell to the ground. Corrigan groped through the dark for any light or door to a place of light. His memory of his end was slipping. The lights came on and he saw his entire life in a flash that lasted both one second and infinite time split apart.

Yesterday followed by tomorrow, followed by today. He was outside the world of four dimensions of time and space. He felt a giant, invisible hand grab his collar and pull him up and out of his body. He saw himself, on the ground, falling away as he sped upwards into the night sky.

He rose above Gotham City. The air around him felt fresh and raw. He rose up farther, where the sunlight emblazoned infinite clouds in an eternal sky, smoldering golden, silver and bronze. He rose up through the stratosphere, and orbited the earth and moon, which made him gasp in awe like a small boy.

Nothing touched him because he was ethereal in nature, and no longer composed of substance. He was flown through the mirror image of our world towards his final great reward. All his hopes and victories and sadnesses would be cast into the forge of creation. He prayed to his Catholic God to forgive his sins and trespasses. He tried to speak the words of the Lord's Prayer but he couldn't remember the words.

The Solar Disk loomed up, burning supreme destruction and atomic creation. His entire body relaxed as he prepared to meet his end. His final thoughts were a prayer for the welfare of his family. He closed his eyes and called out to his mother.

And then he came to a halt. For some reason he was stopped from passing through the gates of eternity.

He felt the grip of an iron hand on his ankle. All around him he heard heavy static from a radio transceiver. It pulled him down through the stratosphere. When he hit the atmosphere, he found himself consumed by a raging fire ball. At the heart of this falling star, he was immune to the heat. He was aether, not substance.

A Voice spoke from an invisible source, speaking through the flames. "Listen, Jim Corrigan and you will learn." A gigantic radio set appeared to be reentering the atmosphere right next to him.

"Who are you?" Corrigan asked.

"Your mission on earth is unfinished. You shall remain earthbound battling crime with supernatural powers, until all vestiges of criminality are wiped out!"

Corrigan spoke to the Voice. "Something feels off here, I don't want to return to earth. I want eternal peace."

Giant doors the size of California slammed shut. The Voice went silent as the fireball burned itself out. He fell back toward Gotham City, a phantom in the aethereal mirror image of our world. He saw a broken tower on a stormy cliff overlooking a turbulent ocean. He saw a tall water tank like those used by escape artists, He went numb all over as he plunged into the water, and blacked out. This event was the start of everything, foreseen by a diabolical enemy.

The year is 1938. Roosevelt is still in office at a time of peace, crime and corruption in Gotham City is rampant, and Doctor Satan remains at large. One decade after the Wall Street Crash,

America is still in the grips of the Great Depression, leaving most people flat broke.

The time is two weeks before the death of Jim Corrigan and the arrival of the Long Haven Hurricane, when Doctor Satan looked into his cauldron fire and saw a glimpse of things to be.

WELCOME TO THE GOLDEN AGE

Marla Drake, director of the tony design firm Marla Drake and Associates, Edited a few proposals for advertising campaign, now ready to show to the clients. She had time to kill, so she turned on the radio to hear Alan's program. The broadcaster wasn't shy about exploiting their 32 year old star reporter's good looks in their print advertising, to promote him as a serious journalist on the radio. Marla thought Alan was very handsome for an overly serious young journalist, and tall. She turned the radio dial and found Alan's program. She came in right at the top of the second hour.

WGCB marked the hour with chimes.

"Good Evening, Ladies and Gentleman, you are listening to WGCB on the Republic NBC syndicated networks. GoodEvening. My name is Alan Scott and the name of the program is 'Strictly One Man's Opinion.'"

Mister and Mrs. America, In light of the recent news coming out of Munich and war hysteria sweeping the globe, the broadcasters of WGCB have asked that I prepare a few thoughts for the listeners at home, to gain perspective on 1938 as we head into 1939. I'm no FDR on the radio, but let's see how I do.

Gotham City is still trying to shake off the effects of the Great Depression, but the economy is stubborn, still running on fumes. Nobody gets a break when everyone else has to dig deep. FDR is still in the White House and keeps us out of war, while The rich are flush, but everyone else has holes in their pockets. Newspaper headlines announce daily the latest crime or corruption scandal in the press. especially here in Gotham City, where elected

officials are best buddies with mob bosses. People said Boss Falcone paid a larger city payroll than Mayor Wentworth Walker did last year, and nobody is surprised.

Also, there is trouble abroad.

two aggressively militaristic empires rise in the East and West with Uncle Sam caught in the middle.. Chamberlin is in Munich right now looking for a Gentleman's Agreement for Peace with the local bully, Adolf Hitler. At this hour, rumors from the highest corners persist that Britain and France are not willing to go to war over Czechoslovakia, leaving them wide open to Nazi invasion.

In China, The Japanese Emperor's war of bloody occupation extends from Harbin in the north to Shang Hai in the south. Chinese communists are everywhere in the hinterland, and score more victories than America's ally General Chiang Kai Shek. Officers of His Imperial Majesty in Tokyo do not spare the rod for recalcitrant chinese too proud for japanese domination. Christian Missionaries report war atrocities by the Japanese, but Prime Minister Konoe has renewed Japan's national project of bringing China to its knees.

Here In the USA, the American people remember the first Great War and the horrible slaughter of millions of mother's sons, so munitions companies could make obscene profits. However, times change and people are beginning to think another world war is unavoidable 20 years later.

But let me tell you something, Ladies and Gentlemen, we survived the depression and continue to be the most modern nation on the earth. Perhaps our democracy is fraught with danger, but we still show the world how a free people orders sovereign society. We need no dictator. We built the world's greatest machines, and we survived financial collapse. I believe the people of Gotham City and this nation were forged in steel and hometown values.

Now, I understand that a majority of the public

still favor a neutrality policy. I also understand that even more limits constricting the president's Article I war powers is still the will of the Congress. People fear repeating the mistakes of the last horrible world war, and I understand that point of view.

But we must not live in fear. Life is too precious to waste cowering on the sidelines. We'll work for peace, but if someone starts a war with us, then we'll be the ones to finish it. I do not think that is a controversial opinion, because I trust the wisdom and patriotism of my fellow citizens. If we are attacked by a foreign power, we will fight back, and win the day.

So let Hitler and Mussolini and Hirohito take their best shot. Let them come at us, guns blazing. We'll show them the world's number one industrial and commercial superpower is not so easily defeated, 100% guaranteed by the guts and steel fiber of the American People, raised by our mothers on Judeo-Christian values and the best darn Democracy in the world.

There will be a Golden Age, ladies and gentlemen, and we will be the ones that build it, and it will be an American time of wonders. So now is a time to endure. As ever, I leave it to you for the final decision.

And that is, Strictly One Man's Opinion, This is Alan Scott, broadcasting to you on WGCB. Stay tuned for news in review with me, Alan Scott, and the Gotham Society Report from Luella Hopper, also our man with the sports scores, and the weather.

Please note, The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of WGCB management.

Now let's turn to the weather. So what's the weather look like, Jack?

For now OK Mr. Scott. The hurricane coming off the Atlantic will hit Long Haven North shore like a hammer next week. So, it could get pretty rainy and windy here in Gotham too, especially

if you live on the East Side. Keep your eyes on the sky and your porches and windows closed and locked. Shutter if you got them. Wood Boards, ask your landlord. Until then, we could see some humid, windy weather, typical for a large city on the Atlantic at this time of the year. Back to you Mr. Scott.

Thanks Jack. Tune in every night for Jack's up to the minute weather reporting, seven days a week, every night at this time.

Before we get back to our regular program, I'd like to tell you about something that can really help the housewives in the audience. And let me tell you, they sure could use the help, Blue Haven hand soap, a revolution in handsoap. Using modern methods, Blue Haven Handsoap has created a safe formula that washes off that greasy feeling, leaving your hands soft and young. Women of all ages can maintain soft hands. We guarantee. Blue Haven Handsoap. Just ask your local dealer, "Do you carry Blue Haven Handsoap in the one gallon bottles?" The chores may pile up, but your hands will look great.

This is Alan Scott on WGCB. Please stand by for station identification and the society report after the jump.

LIGHT AND FURY OVER DRINKS

After the broadcast Alan had three hours until he had to go on the air again. Larry was late with the copy again and the producer wanted to take another look at it. Even if he showed up three hours early, they'd still give him the final copy two minutes before he jumped on the mic for the live broadcast. If he goofed, everyone in Gotham City would hear it at the same time. But his producer had writer he liked, blah blah blah, guy can be difficult, blah blab blah. He left the hothouse to the production staff, grabbed an elevator going down, and went down for a drink in the lobby.

-----TWO-----

the bar was next to CharliePizazz, a five star restaurant, which kept the bar busy with people waiting on tables. the waiters wore clean shirts

and black bow ties. Their swoosh swoosh swoosh of their baggy trousers swung with the apron they wore, covering them from neck and chest to knees. The sharp shuffling of linen pants and aprons made a muffled sound you could hear as they went by your table.

Wait staff wore their hair short and well groomed, no beards. They balanced large silver trays filled with food and drink with great ease, moving at high speed in a crowded restaurant down the aisles between tables. Alan found a job for an unreliable friend here. The restaurant had exacting standards and did not allow dramatic public displays by customers or staff. Alan's friend did not last long, but this was before Paul.

TABLE FOR TWO, PLUS ONE

He grabbed his favorite seat at the corner of the bar and ordered a vodka and orange juice, two icebergs. He settled in and scanned the sparse early evening crowd. A young couple sat in loving bliss by the window, waiting on a reservation that may never come. They wore modest clothes of rough make, and were very adorable.

An older man drank alone, clouds above his head. A salesman for the radio station kept feeding advertisers drinks and jokes in line for a table, while his assistant checked on the tables by roughing up the maitre'd. A sailor in a crisp white uniform asked to use the bathroom, then marched out on duty. In two hours, this place would be packed.

The bar soaked up all the people waiting for tables to open up. The bar and restaurant were all wood paneling, leather paneling, red velvet drapes, and lightbulbs installed in the old frames of large kerosene lamps bolted to the walls. It resembled a turn of the century Victorian funeral home.

A fashionable young woman dressed in black walked in the door. She moved with the grace and confidence of a champion athlete. She was tall and pale, dressed expensively but dressed for work in an elegant but professional blouse,

skirt and jacket, a bit more chic than Chanel. Her cascading black curls were the envy of Mary Pickford, tumbling down to her shoulders from beneath her saucer shaped hat.

She walked right up to the tall blonde sitting all by himself at the bar. A few feet away she stopped short, to rummage through her purse. Turning to the blonde, she asked, "can you get me a vodka on the rocks, with a lemon slice?"

Alan smiled. "I hear liberated women buy their own drinks."

"Oh don't be difficult," she replied. "Got a smoke? I only smoke socially which means I never have smokes on me at social occasions." She kept fishing in her purse.

"Yes, I've heard that," the man replied. "I have a half pack of Lucky Strike, here take it." He held out a pretty beat up pack of cigarettes.

"No way, brother," she said waving No with a gloves in her hand. "I won't steal smokes away from a working stiff."

"Paul wants me to quit," he explained. "I need to dump the evidence. Here. Take it." He turned to the bartender, "HEY barkeep, vodka on ice with a lemon slice for the lady and another one of these," he called, holding up and jingling the leftover ice in his glass.

"Sure thing Mister Scott" said the bartender, swinging into action like a punch drunk palooka on the mend. He had a sure eye, a steady hand, and he was generous with the booze, most of the time. Sometimes Bernard he had the shakes.

"So," Marla said triumphantly, finally with a smoke in her hand, "are we alone? No awkward radio execs about to totter back from the toilet?"

"I keep all the radio business upstairs, unless I'm grilling a source on background. This is my unwinding time. It's hard to clear your head surrounded by the melodrama upstairs."

Marla fished for her comb in her purse. "When do you go on?"

"Nine pm. Long night tonight. We have people standing by in case news breaks from Munich last minute. Could be peace in our time."

The telephone rang on the wall behind the bartender, sounding like a bell with a horse throat. The bartender lifted off the earpiece and leaned into the horn on the wall. It was short conversation. "That was your producer, Mr. Scott. They need you in one hour."

"OK, message received." Alan liked to people watch, the natural hobby of a quiet man. The young man in the cheap suit with his sweetheart got up to check on the wait. The Maitre'D was impregnable. CharliePizaz got a recent write up in the Gazette recently and there were no tables for weeks. Gary Cooper was sighted here yesterday, so the mad rush was on. His hotel was probably right next door.

"How's Francine?" Alan asked. Still having panic attacks?"

"Francine's better since I took her to a neurologist on Tark Avenue. Hypomania, apparently. He recommended an opiate treatment, which helps calm her down. Francine is now and officially the most expensive french maid ever."

"So what will you do?"

"Promote Francine to Asst. Director at the Design Firm. I can't live without her, and she's one of the few people I can trust at the office. She would jump out of a window for me, and I need that level of dedication. Also, If people miss their deadlines, I'll send Francine to pester them into submission. That might work. Oh I love Francine, what can I do? My logic is ridiculous, but it's Francine. We're family and I can't get by without her. it's so difficult to find good help these days, y'know?"

"Francine will be fine, you'll be fine. Francine is like a lovable pooch. She makes all her worst mistakes when she gets excited."

"I do realize I am quite lucky. I have no family to drag me down, just a giant inheritance. So, I have Francine, Cappy and Winchester making sure my life doesn't go over a cliff. Again." She sipped her vodka.

"Hey who's the best at getting a table?" Alan asked.

"That would be me." Mara was right and he knew it.

Alan pointed to a table across the bar, in front of the window. "You see that adorable country couple of over there? The ones dressed like they shop for clothes by mail order?"

"Don't be too cruel, Alan."

"I'm not," He replied. "Those lovely newlyweds have been waiting a long time and there is no way they get in without help."

"So where's Piotoresque?" Marla asked, ready to beat up the maitre'd. She was a woman of action, not words.

"Our Matre'D is obviously hoping they would get tired of being forgotten and go back to their hotel." Alan's tone of disapproval at the maitre'd was audible.

"Let's let it sit for a bit more. Tres gallant, Mister Scott. Tres gallant." Marla was impressed. She loved Alan like a brother, or comrade in arms.

"You know, I love you for a lot of reasons, sister. But I didn't know you spoke French." Alan smiled. He loved this gal.

"You are too clever. I caught your broadcast, by the way. Good. Informed. Uplifting, if a little truculent. Bonus points for challenging the conventional wisdom." Marla's praise was very professional.

Alan put on his Indignant face. "Truculent? Patriotic. Red is last year's color, y'know. Uncle Joe does not carry the same currency in the USA anymore." He paused and looked around

the room, then back at Marla. "Truculent? Really?"

"You seem.... something. What's eating you, Mr. Scott? Spill," she commanded in between sips of her cocktail.

It was obvious this was not his favorite topic, but he had to get it out of his system. "The suits that run the radio station are screaming like hens in a burning barn. We're winning the local broadcast battle but syndication is taking over everything these days, and our numbers in that regard lack zest."

"Nonsense. you have a big audience."

Alan wagged his forefinger back and forth. "Not in syndication. We have to go nationwide or bust, and that's the owners talking. Forget the cities, if it don't play on country radios in Smallville then go home."

"Has your audience share taken that big a hit?"

Alan sighed. "The Fawcett News Hour out of Metropolis is currently featuring a 12 year old radio reporter now enjoying great popularity. I don't get written up in the trades anymore. I am too old to be the reigning boy reporter, so everyone wants an article about this kid. Which makes him more popular."

"You're worried about competition from a kid?"

"Well, there's something about this kid, appealing to mothers at home desperate for something novel on the radio. They tune in and eat him up with their afternoon tea. He's been a surprise hit. And its all about numbers and ad rates for sponsors in the radio business these days, who pay for hits, not losers."

"So, he's stealing your audience just a little, bored house wives. Just a fad, Alan, this too shall pass. What makes this kid so special?"

"He wears this harness ... it has everything he needs to broadcast radio. He uses it to report live from the field. Fires, prison breaks,

hurricanes, bank robberies, and did I mention he's 12 years old? Me? I'll be reading cheap ad copy and weather warnings the rest of my life."

"What's the kid's name, at Fawcett Broadcasting?"

"Batson. Billy Batson. He has great diction for a 12 year old. He sounds like a starry eyed eternal optimist but still sounds like young kid, or a squirrel. Goofy, super smart and a natural talent on a microphone. I'm sunk."

"Oh come on. You're overplaying it," Marla knew Alan. He did this sometimes.

He was not to be deterred from wallowing. "He was homeless for four years. In mass media terminology, he's a battleship and I'm a row boat. I just can't compete with all his little boy charm. He's the most chipper boy scout you ever met. Always with a smile. Sounds like a squirrel. I'm doomed." He covered his face with his hands.

"Why doesn't this Batson kid go to school?"

Alan warmed to this topic. "Great question. Didn't we just pass a law banning child labor? Don't they have truant officers in Metropolis?"

"You're on you own, brother. I don't beat children." Marla neither loved nor hated children. They always seemed to her like martian creatures with uncertain motives. "So how about that couple? Do we invite them over, Mr. Scott?"

Alan had the bartender ask them over for a drink. They came over curious, and were very friendly. They introduced themselves like good people do at the county fair. Polite but definite, to the point, and pious.

It turned out they were visiting relatives on their honeymoon to finally see a few big cities before settling down. They drove what seemed like half way across the country. Daniel did well for himself as an apprentice plumber. Madeline worked as a secretary in the Water Office half the week, and at the telephone

exchange the other half. Alan was impressed by her diction, the tool of the good telephone operator. She was every bit the Girl Next Door, just as he was the Boy Next Door.

Daniel was a great example of young men raised by the church to be polite, responsible, kind, hard working, respectful, and open minded until someone unit they mentioned race, heresy, or homosexuality. But Alan mostly set aside his urban prejudices to enjoy their their small town love story. He had a hard time picturing Mr. and Mrs. Clark hurting anyone. As someone who did not feel normal, it was endlessly fascinating to him to observe the normal, in all different shapes and sizes.

In Gotham they were staying with her Uncle Raymond across the river. In a few days they would stay with his cousin, Aunt Martha's boy, up in Metropolis. His cousin graduated from the same high school, class of '31. Daniel had heard stories about Gotham drivers, and found them to be very intimidating in person. He'd never heard so many horns all at once like machine gun fire. Or yelling and cars that come out of nowhere going faster than 40 mph on a city street, all four cylinders going like gangbusters. "Golly, my nerves are shot," he said half laughing at himself.

When they found out he was Alan Scott, as in, the guy that read the news on the radio, she got very excited. She was a regular listener and liked to imagine what he looked like." She gushed at Alan while holding her husband's hand. He turned red and smiled broadly to see her so happy. They could now go home and tell people they went to Gotham and met someone famous. Alan was charmed by Daniel's determination to be the perfect knight in shining armor for his hometown sweetheart. He became acutely aware that he would not see Paul until 5am.

"So are you waiting for a table in CharliePizzaz?"

"We were," explained Daniel. "But it's so packed and the Maitre'D doesn't like me for

some reason. It's a shame because we blew a gallon of gas to drive over the river and back. We're on a tight budget."

"Are you aware this place is pretty expensive?"

"Oh no, We didn't. My brother and his gal won a dinner for two at this place in a dance context back home, then gave it to us as a wedding present. Maddy knows it better than me. But it's no big deal. We've seen plenty in Gotham. We've been here three days."

ALAN and MARLA TO THE RESCUE

"Well hang on, don't give up the ship quite yet, Mr. Clark. Wait here for a minute. Mr. Scott, shall we fix this?" They walked right up to Piotresque's podium just inside the front entrance of the restaurant. He immediately took a defensive posture - "o seats until next year." Alan claimed the Broadcaster was furious because this was his sister's boy and his new wife, "have a heart, or hear about it from upstairs."

Piotresque was no amateur. "We are completely full as ever, sir, it is beyond my power." Marla made a point by dropping a few twenties on the podium.

"Madame," he answered, you are an inspiration to all of Gotham City, but we are more popular than that." With a scowl trained on the Maitre'D, she slipped a roll of bills from her purse, and peeled a few more off.

He eyed the dropping money, so in response. "Just two seats, but at the table of a customer dining alone."

"That's perfect."

"But Miss Drake," the maitre'd pressed back, "the man is Gary Cooper."

"Then it's settled." He tapped her fingers on the handset of the telephone on the podium. "Does this telephone connect to his table?"

"Of course but"

"No but." She picked up the receiver. "Connect me with Mr. Cooper's table or I'll call the owner of this dump." He did as ordered, like an animal in an iron trap. He picked up the handset, dialed the table, and informed Mr. Cooper that he had a visitor up front named Miss Marla Drake. There was a jovial sound on the other end of the line. Piotresque handed the phone to Marla.

Marla had a hushed, whispered conversation of about two minutes in length, then handed the phone to Piotresque to take instructions from Mr. Gary Cooper.

The maitre'd hung the phone and called out for "Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Clark, we have a table for you." Marla knew that Gary was bored with the rich and famous swarming him, and would appreciate being in the aura of small-town newlyweds in love for dinner and drinks. She always told him all the time it was important for actors to stay connected to the common people. If not for the Curse of the Black Leopard, she would have said yes to Mr. Cooper.

Surprised, Daniel Clark asked how they managed such a feat. "Never you mind, Mr. Clark. Just enjoy your honeymoon. I'm afraid you'll have to share a table. You'll be dining with Mr. Gary Cooper this evening." Madeline looked like she might faint, so she held tight to her husband. He put his arm around her, and help her steady. He was kind and gentle with her. Then he thought to ask, "Did you say Gary Cooper?"

Marla clucked like a mother hen. "Don't gush, talk about yourselves, be genuine. Just let him be an ordinary guy too and you'll get on very well." Madeline almost fainted again. "So this is a real thing..."

Alan chimed in, "Looks like it, Dan. by the way, I've been trying to place that twang of yours. Where are you kids from?"

"Smallville," he replied. "The best little small town in the whole wide world. You guys are the best. We were told people in Gotham can

be cold, but that's not you two at all." As they walked into the restaurant, Marla took Alan aside for some quiet talk.

"Anything for Light and Fury?" she asked in a whisper. "I'm anxious for another case."

"I think Jim Corrigan is sitting on something really big," he whispered back.

"How big?" she asked.

"Don't know yet" he said in a low voice. "I'm still waiting for Jim to get his ducks in order. But soon."

As he saw her off, they took a moment to take in the weather. A newsboy, about twelve years old, was hawking his stack of Gotham Gazette Evening Extras. These were the popular broadsheets, with photographs hot off the presses with the breaking news in appreciated style.

"EXTRA EXTRA - VIGILANTE JUSTICE - The Green Lantern and Black Fury Shut Down Bank Heist. Mad Sivana and Minions now awaiting trial in County Jail. Monster Robot confiscated by Star Mechanics. Pulse Pounding Photographs on Page 12. EXTRA EXTRA -"

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GOTHAM NATIONAL SWAMP:
DOCTOR SATAN MAKES HIS PLAY

Doctor Satan looked into his cauldron's fire and spied a future crime. To exploit it, he went out to check on his local investments to be prepared. Yesterday his tallest thugs brought a suitcase full of cash to manchurian mobsters and running dogs working for the Japanese Kwantung Army. He took delivery of a sh*tload of raw opium at Port Gotham, bound for his hillbilly cooks in the swamp on the other side of the city. The street value of heavily cut dope would make him ten times his initial investment, and pay for his current experiment to open a dead gate.

He always locked his door when he changed

clothes. Satan hated people talking and walking around, ruining the moment. He chased everyone out of the laboratory and got down to business. For a day at the swamp, he wore a sleek Italian suit in dark colors and gray tones. The line of his european trenchcoat was light and tight, with that new streamlined profile just right for the modern mob boss on the go.

He wore a red featureless mask that covered his entire face and pointed down like a bandana, made of tailored red felt and red leather trim. His hat, more formal than a fedora, cast a shadow over his two predator eyes, staring out from eye holes cut diagonally. When the light hit the red mask just right, you could almost see the mark of the beast: Six Six Six. Two curved horns peeked out from his hat band. When he was ready, he did a final check in the mirror. "Perfect," he whispered, in love with his own taste and aesthetic.

He had many free standing bulletin boards in the lab around the cauldron. One board had all his notices: Derailment of the Express to Kansas City, fruitless manhunt for Doctor Satan, Police stumped by Doctor Satan. Cops Confess: Nobody has seen the true face of the masked Doctor Satan. All they knew was his look and will to commit atrocious violence and mayhem. His involvement in organized crime was rumored, but people refused to talk. They had a rat fink ready to sing in the interrogation room, but a miniature tree grew from inside his brain, cracking his skull open to grow its branches towards the light. His face was contorted in horrible pain, roots of the tree dug in deep, and hushed up the entire investigation.

Doctor Satan took the big blue van. Clarence Bratt, his confidential secretary, drove while Doctor Satan rode shotgun. They stashed Shorty, Dopey, Dutch, Denny, Airplane, Twofingers and Huntz on the other side of a stack of crates in back. Doctor Satan preferred to keep the help at arm's length. He worked hard to advance his criminal career, and that meant the privileges that naturally accrue to a Occult Boss like him.

Mister Bratt drove south and west from the

cracked and lonely lighthouse to Long Haven Expressway straight to the Cobblepott Tunnel at good speed, 30-40 mph. They made time faster than the other cars on the road. On the side of the truck it said, "Blue Coal. Call for Rates."

SLAUGHTER SWAMP, HOME OF SUICIDE GROVE

They got to Gotham City via Cobblepot Tunnel NW66 in an hour, then drove crosstown to get on the highway for Gotham National Swamp, made federal land by President Roosevelt after his reelection.

Blackgate State Prison squatted in front of the worst of the swamp, The front gate of the prison facing the highway that cut down down the middle of public land. Tourists and local families with children enjoyed the east parts of the swamp, but the back of the prison faced the west, on a high ridge overlooking grimmer places not safe for families. Nobody wanted to hear about the the monstrous peat bog that emits poison gas. Once an entire row of cells got wiped out by poison blowing in from the swamp. Nobody cared. The prison bricked up the windows and gave the cells new inmates, entitled to sunlight one hour a day.

Suicide Grove was near the far end of the swamp, where the despondent and ruined went to vanish. Bodies hung deep inside the densely overgrown woods. Nobody went in to cut them down, so they rotted like baskets of fruit in high humidity. Nobody checked on the bodies. Being in a dark overgrown forrest surrounded by rotting corpses was not a motivating thought. "Best not to worry about it."

They say the day after the Great Stock Market Crash of 1929, people had a horrible time finding a quiet place to themselves in Suicide Grove. Latecomers after the Bank Panic the next year couldn't find a spot at all. Some dark wits said, "I hear you have to make a reservation." People punched their own ticket, half way to hell already. Doctor Satan popped popcorn.

Local gossip says even the local Cherokee said the grove was bad medicine, before they were driven into Slaughter Swamp next door and wiped out. They went down fighting, warriors to the last. The settlers on horseback lost half their number, but their horses ran free, taking the warriors to their ancestors in eternal peace.

The Swamp was mostly green but smelled of death. Rotting things floated on the filthy sludge in great abundance. A few lilly pads grew up out of the muck and settled on the slime, waiting to bloom. Insects were everywhere, and did not go away at night as the treasure trove of humid stink kept them coming back. Flies and mosquitoes hatched in dead water swarmed everywhere, spreading disease.

SWAMP LIFE: EVIL HILLBILLY DOPE FIEDS AND CANNIBALS

The Delivery Truck stopped briefly at the prison front gate and dropped off care packages for select officers. Then they pushed deep into the swamp's interior, where everything was humid and muddy. When the car could no longer push through the muck without stripping its gears, they parked and walked the additional 100 yards to the large, 10 bedroom shack built around a massive swamp tree, deep in the lawless reaches of Slaughter Swamp. These were the people to be managed.

They were surly looking hillbillies that never wash themselves, carrying shotguns. They squatted on the land and sold moonshine they cooked themselves. Lately, they started heroin production from raw opium they cooked themselves. At least twenty other swamp gangs declared loyalty to the Hatfield Gang, who ruled their piece of the swamp with an iron hand all under the thrall of a new rising master. "Zor would transform the world."

The McCoy Gang was not happy, but they went along, biding their time. Perhaps they could throw in with Doctor Satan and eat the Hatfields to celebrate their great victory.

Suddenly an old Hatfield granny pushed through the crowd of swamp rats and walked

right up to Doctor Satan. She leaned into his featureless mask and stared him right in the eye slits. "I din't know who ye is, but ye ainna from aroun here, no account say other, savvy? This swamp is belongs to the master, Zor, now scam back to your city slickers." and she spat at him, but missed.

Suddenly a whispering chorus of "zor zor zor zor zor zor" started up from the Hatfield gang. The assembled McCoys said nothing, but their eyes fumed, biding their time. Those that slighted their ways and customs would grease their frying pans. Biding their time. They watched as Doctor Satan just stood there, motionless, like a dog, ready to pounce.

Doctor Satan lunged forward like a and grabbed the woman around the throat with his human hand, still tight as an iron vice. He was at least several inches taller than the frail old hag, so he stepped forward abruptly and kept her off balance like a hanging man with one toe on the scaffold, barely. Doctor Satan leaned in deeper to the old granny's face, forcing the her to bend backward, her hunchback and hips cracking under the strain.

Satan got on with it. "This is s a stupid little puppet show, you inbred vermin and assorted garbage zombies. Take me to Zor's coffin or your granny gets it." He dropped the old woman in the dirt and kicked her in the ribs a few times as her men looked away, ashamed that they did nothing. Their erstwhile McCoy allies looked at the horrifying tableau and licked their chops.

Satan dogwhistled from behind his mask and a giant Rottweiler jumped out of the back of the Blue Coal delivery van. It ran up to Doctor Satan's right side and sat down. With one fluid motion the masked villain whipped out a thick iron chain and leashed his dog. He was satanic psychopath, but he was no barbarian. His dog looked at the mangy and starved dogs of the hillbillies and liked its chops to see so much easy prey.

The giant hound's eyes glowed with the color of demonic possession, entirely obedient to his

master. The dog was easily 300 pounds, with an enormous head displaying teeth like a shark. covered in slime. Doctor Satan pointed to the old granny and shouted, "Chester! Chum-Chum! Chum! Chum! Chum!" He was an impatient man.

As the dog ripped her apart, the McCoys mourned the loss of good meat. She would have made pretty good jerky.

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MEANWHILE, BACK AT POLICE
HEADQUARTERS IN DOWNTOWN
GOTHAM CITY

SANDMAN CREEPS FILES IN DEAD
RECORDS

A dark shadow wearing a black cloak and hat crept through the deepest shadows of the back parking lot of GCPD Headquarters. Police enjoying a hot thermos and a good story from their partners stood between parked squad cars, and never noticed him. The stranger crept up to the back door, a large iron portal of iron and steel. He passed easily with a key he obtained surreptitiously.

He walked in, masked, and shut the door slowly. Again he navigated the darkest corners as he made his way down the concrete corridor. In the dark, his hat, cloak and quiet step vanished him into the shadows. It was evening so most of the lights were softly lit to save money. He walked without a sound through Police Records to an obscure corner in the basement.

The sprawl of the basement built in 1890 filled up the massive building's foundation. He entered Dead Records with his skeleton key, and locked the door behind him. He had 20 minutes before the guard making the night rounds would find himself locked out. He planed to be done in 20 minutes, but if not the door was locked, so "no passaran" and time to bug out the back door if things went south.

He already planned out his escape route, out the

loading door in the back of Dead Records. He had a key prepared and went to work.

Like a sneak thief he crept over to the circuit box and broke the circuit in the sprawling but cramped Dead Records Section. Anyone who worked here punched out hours ago and went home at sunset. In the dark, the tight beam of his flashlight lead the way. His other hand rose from his cloak to brandish a weird gun, like something on a Flash Gordon poster.

The beam of light danced across the metal shelves packed with cardboard boxes filled with fat files stacked to the ceiling. Dead Records felt like a library in a submarine, going on forever, tight and confined. As he walked towards his goal, he dropped small amounts of sand to silently mark the way for others. Realizing he didn't have much time, the mysterious intruder slipped down the rows and found the O section, and the box he wanted. He pulled it out and dropped a tiny pouch of sand in the empty space on the shelf.

Kneeling on the ground with the box on the floor, he quickly flipped through the files with his left hand, holding his flashlight with this right, scanning the paper. He found what he wanted - OIS - Officer Involved Shootings. This was the heart of Doctor Satan's secret plans to cause havoc in Gotham City and murder the police. He found stats for two years, incident reports, disciplinary action if any, memos between DA and GCPD and even the Mayor's office. He did a quick cut of wheat from chaff, and put the files he wanted in his black bag working in total silence except for the weird sound of his breathing, a muffled, repeating echo in a tight space. In the dim light and dark shadows, his weird insect face and brown suit was bizarre, like a fly that walks like a man, wearing a hat.

After photographing the files in his hidden sanctum, he would return them, never to be missed. Confident that this operation was about to be completed without a hitch, The mysterious Sandman started for the exit.

That's when the lights popped on like one big

flashbulb, POP. Somebody was here with him, at the circuit breaker box. He crept in that direction, completely dependent on the long corridors of shelves to keep him hidden. He was careful to not be trapped in the middle of a long corridor. He raised his gas-gun and set the range for 20 feet or less. He shook it to check the tank. Half and half. He had refills but no time reload in a pinch. That was enough gas to take down three large men.

He crept down the row to the aisle, and made his way down to the circuit box, 20 feet down and three rows over. 10 feet down and three over. He heard a sweeping sound moving away from the breaker, sweep sweep sweep. He stood ready with his gas weapon. The chemical in the tank made a slight sloshing sound. Half empty or half full. He closed on his target, his muffled breathing a quiet repeating echo. "Huu-Hiss. Huu-Hiss. Huu-Hiss."

WOMAN SCREAMS IN DEAD RECORDS

The cleaning lady found the breaker box in the dark, cursing all the way. She got the lights back on, then went back to work. She wanted to get home early to see her grandkids before they went to bed. She grabbed her broom and went to work sweeping the spaces between the bookcases. (Sweep sweep sweep) went her professional broom.

She noticed something out of the corner of her eye. It was lines of salt? Lines of sand. All over the carpet. Sand was hard to get out, and the dim lady, her boss, wouldn't let her use a vacuum "Just use the broom, you'll be fine."

She stood silent for a second, and heard a very slight sloshing sound, like somebody shaking a half bottle of beer. She slowly peered down the aisle. He stood looking at her from three rows up, peering around a corner. He wore a big black cloak with lots of fabric and a black hat and.... what was wrong with his face?

She froze.

He wore his hat, suit and cloak to disguise that he is a weird monster with a head like a giant

insect, a giant fly. An inhumane horrible mars creature with great big bug eyes and slobbering tube, wearing a hat.

His loud, unnatural breathing was horrifying. She screamed. She screamed and screamed again, until the monster spat his horrible fluid right in her face, causing her to pass out, right before she hit the floor.

(LEAVES A TRAIL OF SAND)

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MEANWHILE BACK AT THE SWAMP

The Hatfield men were broken by the sight of their granny being ripped to pieces by a hellhound named Chester. The entire time, Doctor Satan kept a strong grip on Chester's chain, giving it some slack. He made the Hatfield and McCoys pledge their obedience to Him, Doctor Satan. The McCoys urged their brothers in whispers to bide their time. They took the fiendish Satan and his men to the back of the swamp, where the monstrous peat bog spewed up a horrible smells like decay, excrement, and death. Some said the Devil's Peat Bog itself was some kind of giant self aware organism, spewing up nature's bile, feeding to gather strength to flood Gotham with its wicked progeny.

Slaughter Swamp was haunted after the sun went down. It was just past twilight according to the sky. Off in the dark places lost in the woods, bodies hung from trees.

THE COFFIN THAT DROPPED FROM OUTER SPACE

Devil's Peat Bog was a perfect place for Doctor Satan to stash Zor's coffin, until Zor put the whammy on the local swamp gangs, making them his personal hypnotized minions. It was a cute set up, but Doctor Satan had bigger fish to fry. The blackness seemed to swallow everyone up, so he screamed from behind his mask for the hillbillies to bring tiki torches. They walked to a small clearing at the edge of the peat bog, where skulls hung from trees all around the clearing. These last human remains were rivals

eaten by the McCoys, because these swamp pirates were deadly cannibals with horrible tribal habits, like raping cousins and sisters in the woods. These hillbillies were the worst kind of white trash.

Doctor Satan found them tedious and boorish. Even the cannibalism of the McCoys seemed old hat, a ho-hum cliché. Doctor Satan called out to John McCoy's boys. Half of these boys couldn't remember how to crack a human wishbone, but they remembered their mama every day of their short brutal lives, living their life of anarchy where the flatfoots are afraid to go and get their boots wet.

Doctor Satan commanded them. "Joleb, Jeb, Jebadiah, Joshua, Clampet, Jethro. Stand forward. The Hatfields require the McCoys also share in sacrifice. The ancient entity Zor is rapacious for human sacrifice. You are nothing to me. He turned to his men, "bind these boys. and bring them with us."

Jolene Dolly McCoy and Rose Carter Hatfield screamed at the men for their cowardice and toadyism before a boss who was an outsider. If their husbands and clan leaders refused to represent, their wives and mothers would step up. Jolene drew her cutlass and Rose Carter took aim with her momma's sawed off shotgun made by her granny Mae Clarke Hatfield, now in heaven with the lord. She pulled the trigger. BOOM. trigger BOOM. She cracked the breach open and noticed both Doctor Satan and his dog were untouched. Laughing, Doctor opened his left yellow hand to reveal gun smoke rising away from two very large slugs that were never fired. He fed the slugs to Chester, who happily crunched a surprise treat.

"Did you see how I did that? It's a clever trick, can you see how I did that?" He could tell the crowd was merely biding its time but his power to modulate and control his Voice was hypnotic. It was common sense that Doctor Satan was a doctor of persuasion and trickery.

The Devilish Doctor hurled curse words in a dead language at the women, to make swift and strong a hex of snakes and poison. He

whispered obscene flattery to wicked forces. He wound up like a professional pitcher, and let fly with two deadly black mamba vipers. Jolene used her cutlas to chop one of the flying snake in two, but the second hit her in the neck, and held tight with its jaws. She dropped and died of lung failure, wheezing a defiant and long blue strea. She cursed Doctor Satan and died gasping for a breathing.

Rose Carter Hatfield raised her sawed-off shotgun and fired again, BOOM BOOM.

He caught both shots, tossed them into the air, and said "bang." Both shells popped in midair, and POP POP Rose Carter fell to the ground, hit in the chest twice by a sawed off shotgun at close range. A river of blood poured out of her exit wounds into the black muck. Doctor Satan invoked Satanikus Insindiarly Infernus, and snapped his fingers. The bodies caught fire, already falling halfway to hell and dropping rapidly.

SATAN TAKES COMMAND

"Follow me my brothers" Doctor Satan called to the crowd of hillbillies. I'm not all bad. We brought 600 Keys of Opium, ready to be cut for the street market." They looked at him as the new Rat King of the Swamp. Satan looked to his dog, and switched his beloved Chester's chain to his right hand, to remove his black leather glove from his left hand.

His revealed his left hand - a parchment yellow, mummified claw, the wrapping covered in the Runes of an ancient, vanished civilization. The hand was a confused mix of human and wolf claw. He raised this horrible claw into the air, and spoke to the Devil's Peat Bog, and to Zor who fell to earth from outer space.

"Behold the Yellow Hand of Satan. do not dare disobey the eye that watches you all commit your criminal acts." A large eye opened in the middle of yellow, mummified palm. His claws stretched out to full length, pop pop pop. The yellow eye searched all with its narrow beam of yellow light. A hissing sound rose up around him.

Doctor Satan spoke to them again with mesmerism in his voice to compel them by magic, "Behold the Eye of the Morning Star, all is observed and recorded in the eye. He gestured dramatically and menaced the swamp-rats and the peat bog with his large yellow claw.

Vapors emerged from the surface of the peat bog. A bubbling started in the fetid water.

Doctor Satan raised his voice to the Peat Bog, commanding, "The Ancient Key to your prison, Zor, hangs around the neck of my dog. If you want your freedom, then show yourself but hurry because i grow bored with you quickly."

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(LEAVES A TRAIL OF SAND)

POLICE HQ: IN THE WAKE OF THE MYSTERIOUS SANDMAN

the Cleaning Lady was floating in a pleasant, warm dream when someone threw water on her face. One whole glass. She woke up to see two extremely handsome young men, redhead and blonde in green suits, at her side looking at her with concern. She swooned, they were so handsome, "Where am I, why am I floating?" They hit her with another glass of water. She came to, recognized Det. Jim Corrigan, but the blonde seemed familiar... something about this voice. They made her sit up and breath, deep and slow.

"Ma'am, I'm Detective Jim Corrigan. I work here in HQ, in homicide. Were you attacked?" His voice was burly, deep, low and very reassuring.

"I was attacked ... by a horrible monster, with a face like a giant fly, oh, it was he was so horrible. He wore a hat and cape, all in black black black it was godawful."

"Can you tell me more about what you saw, Ma'am?" Corrigan asked.

Her face summoned the horror of the attack. "It spat in my face! A long stream of fly saliva, oh am I gonna catch a cancer or rabies now?"

Alan spoke up. "I called the Desk Sargent when Jim, er, the Detective was rousing you. They're sending a nurse from the 3rd floor. You're going to be OK, Ma'am."

Jim motioned for Alan to come over and take his place next to the lady. "I want to look at the evidence while its fresh... yeah, here we are. See the dark spots? Probably a liquid spray, shooting forward and dribbling down as it condenses according to room pressure. You keeping up, Scottie?"

Alan couldn't resist. "It's been a long time since we played Hardy Boys."

"Well pay attention. The stains on the floor run this way (motioning with hand), so our perpetrator stood... here. Swoosh."

"So she fell sideways?" Alan asked.

"Did I fall sideways?" the woman asked. "I don't remember." Alan helped her get up and sit in a chair. "Thank you so much, young man. Your voice seems familiar..."

The detective jumped in, "He's on the radio. He reads the news. On the radio."

The color returned to her cheeks. "I listen to you every night. You have such a nice voice."

Corrigan jumped in, clearing his throat. "As I was saying, when she fell, she fell sideways."

I said that

"Pipe down, Scottie." Corrigan liked to think with his mouth and his hands. "If we assume she fell like a plunging speedometer to the left in a ninety degree arc..." he said as he examined the floor. "OK, and, yeah, her feet ending up at point where the two trajectories line up like the letter "T" right here," he pointed downward.

"Ma'am, did you sustain any injuries, especially on your left side?"

"Oh no, feels fine. Actually, oh, yeah, I guess I got aftereffects?"

Corrigan turned to Scott. "A lady like this falls like that, on a concrete floor, straight down, she's going to have bruises, maybe worse."

"So what are you saying?" the lady asked.

"I think your attacked gassed you, then in one quick motion, stepped forward and caught you as you fell."

Alan jumped in. "So what you're saying is, he's not all bad."

"In rough strokes," Corrigan shot back. "Take a look at how the gas residue is already evaporating into a sticky substance like sand in the eye. It dries into a crystalline substance that breaks off in fine grains, also like sand." Corrigan peered into the floor, thinking. "Hey Scottie, remember that time a crew tried to break into the Gotham National Bank at night?"

"Wasn't that the Purple Death and his boys?"

"Yeah. We didn't make that bust. We were called in to the bank, and found all these mugs face down in the floor, with this substance all over everything. Every one of them got dosed with sleeping gas."

"So who took 'em down?" Alan asked, remembering the heist.

"We kept a lid on it." Corrigan turned to the woman. "Ma'am, is it possible your assailant wore a gas mask?"

"Well, if a gas mask looks like the head of a giant fly, he was."

Corrigan was definite. "Ma'am, I think you had an encounter with the Sandman."

Alan jumped at the bone. "Can I quote you on that, detective?"

"Oh this is never going on the radio, Scottie, you know that."

"I was right here, Jim. I have squatters rights to the scoop,"

"Did you see the Sandman?" Corrigan asked Alan, "Or did a confused, drugged woman say she saw the Sandman? Were you there, Scottie?"

"I ain't confused," the lady said. "He had a head like a giant fly. And it spit in my face. I want to file a police report, if I don't gotta sign nothing."

"Well then," said Corrigan, smiling. "Giant Fly. Put that on the radio. On the nightly news. Cleaning lady attacked in Dead Records by a Giant Fly Monster."

Alan Scott was miffed. "You have no respect for freedom of the press."

"You ain't in the freedom of press department" Corrigan shot back. "This is the police department."

"I have to think about my career, Jim"

Just then the nurse arrived and helped the lady out of Dead Records. Both men fell silent as the two slowly walked to the exit. Corrigan gave her the name of an officer on the 2nd floor, said goodbye, and turned back to Alan.

"You're breaking my heart, Scotte, a real sob sister." Jim could be an unmovable force when he dug in his heels. "Tell you what, get the OK from my ranking officer on the 7th floor, and i don't care what you broadcast."

Alan was watching a great story slip away. "Oh have a heart, for old times and your old school chum..."

Corrigan did not budge. "I got a wife and kid, I need to think about them and not get in hot water. I'm already under pressure for exhuming some old cases, and the interest rates on my

mortgage is giving me heartburn."

Alan could be stubborn too. "So what you are telling me is, you are drying up as a source."

Corrigan decided to throw him a bone. "OK look, his voice dropping to a whisper, "I have something. Really big. But if I go off half cocked, our you go off half cocked, you won't get your headline. Only misery from the highest up the food chain. Trust me, you have to be patient and play it cool."

"OK OK." At the end of the day, Alan Scott could not say no to Jim Corrigan.

Corrigan got serious. "The heat is on, Scottie. I heard some detectives fingering you for communist subversion. The FBI has been telling tales on you."

"Oh if they only knew what I do at home," Alan mused.

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"You have to be careful, Scottie. If people find out you're living in sin with a man, you could be ruined." Jim meant well and had concern in his voice.

"I live with that always, as I alway will. But rather than hide in a basement and bemoan my fate, I'd rather reach for the stars." Alan felt an opening, so he kept going. "As you know, I'm too goal orientated and hungry for success to sit at home. And if I can't control what other people think, so I better not get a fixation on things I can't change. If it all falls apart in 1939, then at least I had a pretty good 1938."

"You somehow sound like coach when you talk like that." Corrigan observed. "He meant the game, tho."

Alan was honest. "Don't worry, I'm careful about my home life, but I simply have a hard time living an unhappy life."

"Yeah, well," Corrigan stammered, "as long as

you feel lighthearted and gay. I mean happy."

"Me too."

"I will say," Corrigan ventured, you're nothing like a pansy."

"A pansy?" Alan smiled.

"A swish," Corrigan spelled out. "A nelly boy, a real two bit fairy. You know, a mama's boy. No pop at home so a guy turns queer."

"Your mother raised you, Jim. You adore her and she adores you."

"So. OH. Yeah, that's different." Corrigan argued. "I love my ma but I was never a mama's boy. She used to use a real mean switch on me. Does Father Murphy know you're, y'know..."

"No. Does he know you use birth control with your wife?" Alan enquired with a point to make.

"How do you know that?" Corrigan asked, a little surprised.

"You're irish catholic, married for ten years, and you have one child?"

"Well, Father Murphy doesn't shelter and feed my family," Corrigan replied.

"Your logic is amazing," Alan said, honestly amazed.

Corrigan was always a little cocky. "School of Hard Knocks and Common Sense. You turned out to be a pretty masculine guy. Despite being a lousy quarterback and a pansy."

"Smart ass," Alan shot back. "I was no worse than the guy before me. Who was that?" he asked to make a point.

"Gotham City College's best quarterback ever. You known, a lotta females broke their heart over you, after Clarice took me off the market." Cocky Corrigan was his college nickname.

"I made no promises." He had been extremely popular at school with the girls.

"You hit on me," Corrigan accused.

"I did not." Alan turned red. Had he?

"It was in your eyes, you heel," Corrigan said, making them both laugh. "By the way, is Marla still single?"

"Yes, but aren't you married, Jim?"

Corrigan made a face. "Can't I ask about a women with a pure heart?"

"She has poor choice in men," Alan explained. "Marla is a classic overachiever. She tends to push away boy scouts for heels, then retreats into her job".

"She's definitely a looker," Corrigan noted. "You can tell by the way she walks that she's athletic. Hubba Hubba, t*ts pointing up and caboose riding low, long and sleek. She's a tall gal. That ain't bad," He said, looking at the picture of his wife and kid he kept in his wallet.

Alan noticed his friend looking at the photograph. "Clarice has always been in love with you." He met Jim when the three of them were at Gotham City College, where they first became fast friends. Alan was a witness to the developing young love story of Jim and Clarice, that ended in marriage and a baby. And Alan's search for someone that was more gay than Jim Corrigan.

Corrigan's face lit up. "Hey, here's news - Tommy qualified for the Gotham City Spelling Bee. If he does well at Regionals, he can qualify to take on Billy Batson at the Nationals in Metropolis. And guess what Gotham is a lock, my kid is a genius. Doesn't that Batson kid compete with you on the Radio?"

"I'm nota liberty to discuss that," Alan said, smiling.

"I like you better on the radio. I can't have a kid

read my news after clocking out. It's too weird. You have a good, deep, gravitas kind of voice. Not like a pansy at all. I like listening when Clarice feeds me dinner and I debrief with my twelve year old."

"What does Tommy think?"

"He's too young for radio news." Corrigan explained. He thinks you're better in real life, which is to say boring, daddy-O. Tommy just waits for the Green Hornet and Jack Benny before bed. Well OK Jack Benny is my pick. But really we love to listen together as a family while we eat the evening meal." Talking about his square life always put Corrigan in a happy mood.

There was something about Corrigan that encouraged Alan to be more sincere about things. "Well, do me a favor," he asked him, "and be careful out there, officer."

"YadaYadaYadaYada. Comes with the territory. By the way, would like to see what we have on the vigilantes?"

DEVIL'S PEAT BOG SPITS OUT ZOR, CREATURE OF PURE EVIL

Doctor Satan and all his minions were surrounded by torchlight and dead skulls in the impenetrable dark. Snakes, worms and dung beetles squirmed past their feet to get away from the Bog.

Doctor Satan surveyed the Peat Bog from behind his inscrutable mask. He stood on a muddy embankment on the edge of the Bog that stretched out to consume an area equal to a small lake, long and narrow, surrounded by low, overgrown hills. His vision pierced the darkness. Tall sticky grass grew in clumps, rising out of the fetid slime water of the Bog. Alligators lurked in the dark, hiding everywhere. Predators were strangely attracted to an object that fell from the sky, but the smart creatures kept their distance.

The thick layer of sludge and parasites on the

surface of the water began bubbling and spitting out streams of thick vapor, smelling of brimstone and swamp gas. Dead snakes, leeches, and diseased fish floated to the surface. All around them the insects became weirdly agitated, then silent before taking flight all at once.

Ignitions over the water from combustible gases briefly lit up the surface of the bog in sudden intervals, poof... poof, poof. The flies stuck around, hoping for a taste of human fecal matter. Water bubbled and troubled just ten feet from the muddy embankment, and something emerged from deep under the bog.

An ancient wood Coffin rose out of the water to float on the surface of the bog. It was large, and covered in ancient languages, and kept closed by two metal straps and an arcane lock. It sat still on the surface of the fetid water, as if by magic.

"Oh get on with it," Doctor Satan groaned.

A mesmerizing voice rumbled out of the darkness, whispered in small thunderbolts. The Voice of Zor was, in reality, a psychically charged electromagnetic occultation of telepathic waves, beamed out to those within range, using the structure of their brain as a receiver. His voice was the gateway before he inhabited your heart and mind. The whole crowd felt the Evil. Doctor Satan just gave Zor a slow round of tepid applause.

Rumbling thunderbolts drowning in the rotting water became the Voice of Zor. "You will never be immortal if you do not learn to be patient, Satan. For millions of years I have bided my time in my Ectobane Coffin, gathering power. I have a right by the way to claim tribute from you. Give me my due, Satan."

"Blah blah blah." Satan was not amused by these creaky old evil entities. they had no perspective on the modern world. Play the sob sister, and they roll right over you. To stay in line, they needed the discipline of Doctor Satan.

THE SWAMP ZOMBIE of BLACKGATE PRISON

"The gold coins paid to Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus of Nazareth, right before he hung himself. A fool's reward, perfect the occasion" (chucks it).

Doctor Satan turned to the corrupt hillbillies. "McCoy, stop biding your time and get over here." The man walked over and stood beside Doctor Satan. The masked mastermind grabbed McCoy's jacket, spun him, and pushed him down into the mud and muck. Doctor Satan kicked his knees to make sure he stayed down. He commanded McCoy to crawl toward the bog on his hands and knees. The masked fiend kicked him as he crawled the few short feet, taking forever.

When McCoy reached the edge of the bog, Doctor Satan fell on him and pushed his face into the filthy water. He drowned him, pushing McCoy's face into the foul water until he stopped moving. He lingered so Satan punched him in the ribs. Obedient Chester, commanded to sit and stay, did just that. Satan pulled a finger off. McCoy just screamed, begged, whimpers, and begged some more. He was without honor in death.

When McCoy was finally dispatched for good, Satan had his men push the corpse off the muddy, grassy embankment, into the muck of the peat bog. Dead McCoy was pulled right in, by some ravenous suction below the surface. The remaining Swamp Gangs hailed him as King of the Swamp, with a mesmerized sense of awe that whispered animalistic devotion. Zor's coffin continued to sit ten feet from the edge of the embankment, floating on the water motionless and silent.

Doctor Satan raged at the Coffin of Zor, "You want a (f-censored) sacrifice? Well now you got a (f-censored) sacrifice."

The thunderbolt voice rumbled out again from the ancient sarcophogus. "He was of no value to you, so he was not a proper sacrifice."

Doctor Satan audibly spat at Zor's sarcophagus. He spelled out the facts of life to the ancient evil entity. "As an earner, McCoy and his inbred cannibal family made me quite a bit of cabbage. They cut my white powder, minded my hostages, and made bodies vanish. I invested a lot of chump change in their hillbilly operation. Believe you me, it killed me to have to kill that guy."

He spoke to the box on the bog, and heard silence. Feeling uninterested in a million year old evil diva out to be difficult, Doctor Satan called it quits. He called out to all the men. He was being so good he gave Chester a finger he ripped off McCoy.

"No show diva so we go, let's go. Come on, Party's over hillbillies. Get back to work if you want to get paid by your master, which is me. Chester, time to go." Doctor Satan turned away from the bog and followed his men back to the Blue Coal Van, talking baby talk to Chester.

Zor spoke suddenly in a booming voice emitted by the coffin. "wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute."

"Show yourself, Zor, quickly! I have little time for your games."

A hideous gas came pouring out from the seams between the wooden box and its heavy lid. The horrible cloud became a tall silhouette hidden within the vapor, and moved from the coffin on the bog to the muddy wet lands on the embankment. It slid across the surface of the peat bog as if riding on an invisible conveyer belt across the slime coated water.

It looked and smelled like a phantom made from gases that bloat corpses. The swirling vapors began to coalesce into a silhouette, obscured by the vapors. rising up to form the creature that fell from outer space called Zor, King of All Magic, recently released from prison.

The gases dissipated and Zor revealed himself in front of the tall sticky swamp grass at night,

lit by torches, a human figure in a cloak wearing a tuxedo, top and mask. His hands emerged from the cloak, and parted the edges, to show the classic cut of tuxedo he favored. He was enamored by a Deco cut of Tux.

Doctor Satan is known in the underworld for getting results.

POLICE PHOTOGRAPHS SHOW VIGILANTE JUSTICE

As they made their way down a hallway to homicide, Alan Scott noticed large notice boards hung on the wall three in a row. There was a map with pins and crime scene photographs pinned to the wall with dates and times of incidents on little pieces of paper.

"What is this?" Alan asked.

"It's our vigilante board. Pins on the map are sightings. Cards pinned next too it describes the crime that was in progress. We distilled all the crazy statements into a good approximation of what really happened. We even have a timeline of vigilante incidents, and photographs we believe to be real."

Corrigan pointed to one of the photographs. "Here, take a look at this, Scottie - a photograph of the Green Lantern floating in midair."

"Get outta town." Alan was honestly surprised.

"Take a closer look. Its grainy, gray...."

Alan examined the photo. "No, this is a fake."

"How do you know that, Mr. Radio Reporter?"

"Real sightings of the Green Lantern always mention a weird green glow." Alan explained. "If this were real, you would see a lot more lighter gray tones in your photographs. This one is dark, but no glow." Alan stepped forward to peer at the photos. "This is a guy on wires. See how the photograph was taken to cut off the top? I bet all their photographs look like that, taken by a confederate."

"I had no idea you were an expert."

Alan smiled. "The modern rise of the Vigilantes is popular news. Our listeners can't get enough of them. In a depression, the notion of a Robin Hood is very attractive. People feel left out in the rain, law of the jungle, nobody stands for the little guy, so people love a good crusading hero. We run a story as soon as we have it."

"You want something big on deep background?" Corrigan asked.

"A scoop just for me?" Alan's eyes lit up, but signaled he did not want to be disappointed again by a flat tip.

"Just for you, Scottie."

"Spill, Corrigan. Out with the goods."

Corrigan hushed his voice and got to the point. "The big brass is getting heavy pressure from the Hall and the Mayor's office. The city fathers know the mystery men are popular, but have to be seen condemning any form of lawbreaking. Say what you want, the vigilantes are still anonymous characters that decide what laws to follow arbitrarily. Dogs without a leash make the higher ups nervous."

"Well, that's the nature of the beast."

"That may be, but the Powers that Be are getting ready to make a move. The Big Brass is forming a high level special anti-vigilante squad reporting to the Commissioner directly." Alan knew Corrigan had this on good authority. He had eyes and ears on the top floor.

"But what about real threats like Doctor Satan and the Falcone Crime Family?" Alan asked.

The Falcones buy protection and Doctor Satan is too tough a nut to crack. Besides, FBI hijacked the Doctor Satan case. Hoover is still sitting on it. The FBI's got nothin. They're a disaster in the field, they have no idea. G-Men are just office jockies. We're just waiting for

another disaster. Then Hoover will throw the file back to us, pressure from Congress, YadaYadaYada."

"Have you ever caught a serious vigilante?" Alan asked.

"That's the point. We got nothin, so the Blue Ribbon Panel on Vigilante Violence will swoop in and take over the investigation completely. Just more red tape if you ask me. That's why I'm dropping a dime to you. Give 'em the glare of the press before they do too much damage. I hate showboating blue ribbon panels."

"Tell you what, Jim," Alan offered his friend. "I'll drop this on my pal at the city desk and see if it floats. Anything else?"

"Awww come on, that's good material," Corrigan protested.

"Sorry Jim, we can't run a story based only on deep background sources. In your world that's called anonymous hearsay with no probably cause."

"Come into my office," Corrigan asked as he walked across the hall. "My partner is gone so we have the place to ourselves." He checked for easesdroppers and shut the door.

Alan felt obliged to air a suspicion he had. "Why do I get the feeling you're not being completely honest with me?"

Corrigan had a quick reply. "You're Irish, I'm Irish, we do that from time to time."

"So what's up, Detective Corrigan?" Alan asked, pulling up a chair.

Corrigan perched on the front of his desk, his legs sticking out to stretch them. "I'm sitting on something real big, but I can't tell you much, yet. Too hot and explosive. I need to handle things very carefully, or I could lose my job."

"Sounds dangerous."

Corrigan kept his voice low. "I have to remain

hidden for now, but to protect my family. you have to wait. It concerns the police, our negro population, and murder."

"Don't we say "black" now?" Alan suggested.

"Better Dead than Red," Corrigan murmured. "Seriously, the last thing we need is a race riot. Now would you look at the time. If this pans out, I'll let you know if I have anything, on deep background of course."

"Be sure you put in a good word with Father Murphy for me," Alan asked.

"You should ask yourself," Corrigan countered. "He asks a lot about Mrs. Scott's boy, Alan.

"Well, we'll see, maybe for old times sake."

"You're a good man to have on the radio, Scottie. I like how you encourage people to do the right thing."

"Well I guess I picked us something from you," Alan said, blushing. "Let me know when you have something a little more on the record."

"We'll see after this meeting tonight," Corrigan said opening the door to go. "I'll get Officer Flanagan to show you out. Flanagan! Quit Yer Loafin and get over here!!"

ANCIENT ENTITY OF EVIL, ZOR, RISES FROM SWAMP

"Zor, you are the personification of true evil," Doctor Satan observed, "so you are very mundane."

"Murder is more horrifying when you lose your life to a killer more boring than yourself." Zor replied.

Zor's face was covered by a white mask that mimicked human features, complete with a monocle over the left eye, and a frozen expression. Doctor Satan thought he looked like a cross between the Morton Peanut Man

and Hitler. For an entity that was millions of years old, he had very conventional tastes,.

"Why have you called me here, Doctor Satan? My telepathic might has already enslaved these hillbillies. I build a new empire. I do not need you." When Zor spoke, one part of his voice was muffled behind the mask. Behind the mask and under the top hat, there was nothing but emptiness and malignancy.

Doctor Satan produced something like a Tarot Card. depicting a white phantom wearing a gray hood and mantle. He tossed the card at Zor, who caught it with his telekinesis. He examined the picture closely as it levitated before him.

The creature pictured on the card wore an executioners mask under a hood, and held aloft the scales of justice, with the motto, "death brings justice, justice brings death." The style of the drawings was early medieval, the hand of a warped monk, writing with slender sticks that crippled his hands. Satan's deck was all black and white with just one pigment - blood red, dried. and looked like a Fritz Lang and Murnau movie stills, soaked in a potion by Aubrey Beardsley.

Zor gestured and the card flew back to Doctor Satan. "Yes," Zor said, "This is the creature that imprisoned me so many million years ago. Only my tremendous will power enabled me to become one with my prison coffin by atomic osmosis, a great feat of sorcery and epic mental will that effectively put me in control of my prison. I am a wizard worthy of the cosmic reaches."

"Bully for you, but before Chester and I give up the key to your celestial coffin's locks, I have other business.

"What business?" Zor audibly fumed.

Doctor Satan broke it down. "Just pipe down and let me break it down - In a few days there will be a terrific storm above Long Haven Island. We have a unique conjunction of forces opening up, forces and events that we can

exploit, for power and mayhem. After just one detective bites the dust, then I can summon this Spectre of Vengeance from the other side, where he lurks. After a long banishment, he will relish being in our world, doing justice by killing our enemies and stick it to authority. Blood soaked anarchy."

"After a pause, Zor spoke. "You lost me."

"Your willfull ignorance exhausts me, Zor."

Zor's voice rumbled from behind the mask. "So what do you need me for?" .

"I understand you used your sorcery to raise a horrible corpse born of the swamp."

"I may have done something like that. Or not."

"Zor, as long as I hold the key to your coffin, I command you. And, I have seen this creature you raised in my cauldron's fire, lurking in the Peat Bog and Suicide Grove, in the deep shadows far below the west wall of Blackgate Prison, sitting on a forty foot ridge." Doctor Satan kept an eye on things, fanatically.

"I claim from you the risen corpse of the homicidal lunatic imprisoned in Death Row then executed in Blackgate Prison's electric chair. Few know his body was dumped in the Peat Bog like garbage, because Potter's Field was past full."

"You have no right to demand tribute of me."

"I beg to differ. McCoy was the first in an exchange of sacrifices. You took payment and devoured him, so you owe me."

"I will not haggle with you," Zor complained.

"If you are determined to be of no use to me, then you can sit in your coffin and rot. Me, the key and the dog can walk away at any time, Mr. Grand Pooba."

"I understand."

"Then stop stalling and give me what I want

now, you worthless piece of (censored)." Doctor Satan was not above hitting an entity when it was down.

BORN ON A MONDAY: THE SWAMP ZOMBIE of BLACKGATE PRISON

When the state police arrested a noted murder for killing his wife and children, he would only say one thing, a line from a nursery rhyme: "Solomon Grundy, born on a Monday." He repeated it like a lunatic, starting with a low voice that slowly rose until he was screaming the words with spit flying from his mouth. They locked him in the dimmest corner of Death Row, overlooking the poisonous Devil's Peat Bog.

They gagged him for his last mile to the Gotham State Prison's high speed elevator to Hell: Death by Electrocutation. After they strapped him down in the chair with heavy leather straps, they took off his gag to ask his last words. He said, "Solomon Grundy born on a Monday, Solomon Grundy born on a Monday, Solomon Grundy born on a Monday" so they shoved a rubber mouthpiece in his jaws to shut him up and keep him from smashing his teeth apart when they gave him the jump juice to the other side.

Potter's Field was overcrowded, so the prison dumped his body in the Peat Bog. Zor the Ancient tapped into the massive psychic energy discharge from this particular corpse, and began growing it back to life by emanations from his ectobane coffin. He thought he could keep it from Doctor Satan. Oops. The corpse's form is reinforced by vegetable matter grown from the muck, increasing its size and height. It has walked this bog, and been seen by those on Death Row that dubbed the faraway phantom, "The Swamp Zombie of Blackgate Prison."

Doctor Satan turned to Zor. "You thought you could control the monster, you idiot. Nothing controls this creature. It is magnificent." People then heard movement out on the bog, sounding like a sloshing sloshing. A large hand, then two rose from the Devil's Peat Bog. They were white and wet gray in color, like a dead thing.

It's hand rose from the foul muck a little at a time, looking at them, the lower half of its head still submerged.

The monster's nose turned up at a rude angle, emphasizing its bizarre ugliness. As the creature pushed through the brackish water toward the mudbank, it rose from the muck like a man but hunched like an animal. The monster stood eight feet tall, wearing a rotted striped prison uniform and an oversized black blazer, torn, wet and moldy.

A singular weird voice from beyond the grave was heard as the massive creature stepped into the torchlight. "Solomon Grundy, Born on a Monday, Solomon Grundy, Born on a Monday."

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JIM CORRIGAN'S LAST DRIVE

Detective Jim Corrigan took a ride with Detectives Mullone and O'Malley. A source in the department told Corrigan an anonymous officer had evidence to share. They drove out to meet him. On the way, Corrigan at the wheel sang the praises of his wife and kid. "I don't want to be an iceberg like my old man. I want my kid to have a father around, to throw a baseball around, or listen to the game on the radio together."

"Then you should be more careful. It's not a win if your family suffers." Detective Jim Corrigan was a red headed Irish Catholic from the struggling side of town, a good cop, and a man's man. He didn't back down because he felt called to do the right thing. And the school of hard knocks made him stubborn.

"Relax, boys," Corrigan reassured them, "We're just listening to people. Nobody is going on trial or ending up on the front page."

They found the guy in a secluded alley under the Elevated, where it was impossible to speak

when the trains rumbled above. He took them to another location at the corner of Hatchet and Crime Alley behind the Gotham Tower Building. The person with the story to tell was very nervous, and wanted to make sure nobody knew he ratted on his brothers in uniform.

Mullone tried to talk reason to Corrigan. "People upstairs are not happy about the stones you're turning over, Jim. Best to leave it alone, think about the family."

"Look here, Mullone," Corrigan explained. "Cops have a right to go home safe and sound to the family, but they have a right to go home with a clean conscience. I'm fine taking the flack as long as my brother flatfoots can get a break from covering up for the few bad apples."

"Corrigan, there are no bad cops. All the bulls vote in the same hall. This is the expressed will of the rank and file officers. If the union don't stand up for their own, then the (censored) and (censored) will be picking us off in the streets. Even traffic cops won't have any authority with the public."

"Look, I don't want to bust anyone, but I've had mothers begging me to do something, anything. You know I'm not a soft touch, but its getting out of hand. If the Fraternal Order doesn't deal with it, things could explode."

This was the night Jim Corrigan was murdered, foreseen by Doctor Satan in his cauldron fire. This was the catalyst for the massacre that came later.

THE SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME

"Duty Officer. What do you need?"
"Frank, it's me. Officer down, corner of Park View and Hatchet Alley, in back of the Gotham Tower Building."
"Who is it?"
"Jim Corrigan. Shot in the head."
"RiGht. I'll get uniforms there double time. Are you in danger?"
"No, the (censored) ran off. I'll wait with the body. Poor sap."

Wesley sat down in his study and turned on his police radio scanning equipment. The only light in the room was from two dim lamps, and the control panel of the radio. The news about Jim Corrigan blew through the police frequencies like a sudden windstorm. Dodds sat back to mourn the death of a promising agent and great source of information for his secret society. Was there someone behind him?

The room filled with a sinister laugh that seemed to come at him from every shadow in the room. A man wearing a long black cloak, black slouch hat, and a red scarf covering his face stepped out of the darkness, still half covered in shadows. "Do you know who I am, Wesley Dodds?"

"I was told I could ask to see the proof of who you are."

The stranger looming out of the darkness pulled the black leather glove off his left hand, to reveal long tapering fingers and deathly pale skin. On his ring finger sat a large fire opal, the only one of its kind. It shimmered with an unearthly light and like his voice, had a mesmerizing quality.

The stranger spoke again in his raspy, ghoulish voice like a walk in a graveyard. "The last Czar of Russia snuck the fire opal and some of his treasure out of St. Petersburg before he was shot by the bolsheviks. When the yards picked through the bodies of the women and children, they found the Treasure of the Romanovs. People thought the treasure had been lost forever, devoured by the Bolshevik State.."

The stranger put his glove back on, never taking his eyes off Wesley Dodds. There was no doubt about it. This man was the terror of the New York City underworld. "I appreciate your help," Wesley said sincerely.

The stranger laughed maniacally again. Dodds struggled to peer through the gloom at the stranger's face. His scarf and black hat concealed most of his face, but his eyes burned out through the darkness like two simmering

hot coals. The unconcealed part of his face, from eyes to nose, seemed scarred and pitted. A long hook nose hung over the scarf. The rest of him just faded into blackness like a shadow.

"We need your help. Can you help us with Doctor Satan?"

"I work alone," he hissed. "I have my own network of agents. I don't need complicating personalities. Leave Doctor Satan to me." The stranger paused as he looked around the room like a seasoned predator. "I have looked into the flame, Wesley Dodds. Not all of your people will survive the final battle."

"Nobody signs on without first understanding the risk. Gotham has many powerful vigilantes in play right now. You should join us."

The stranger tossed his head up and laughed, chilling Dodds down to his bone marrow. As he laughed, he stepped back two or three steps into the shadows of the dimly lit room, and vanished. His laughter remained like a persistent echo. Whispers spoke from the darkness. "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts and minds of men? the Shadow knows."

He came back around to his desk, and discovered a card with a telephone number.

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END PART ONE