

Please be aware that this issue may contain language that some people might find offensive or unsuitable for younger readers.

Home-Made Heroes
Issue #3
The Old Red, White and Blue

FLASHBACK

The interior of a cinema circa the 1940's. The house lights are down and a movie newsreel is playing on the screen, the audience watches the flickering black and white images with bated breath and patriotic pride.

“And here we have Americas newest superheroes, Society Six, now on the northwest leg of their tour”

The scene filling the cinema screen shows a group of costumed superheroes standing on a platform come stage with thousands of people crowded around, the six superheroes are waving to the spectators.

“All of America comes out to greet them and, for the lucky few, a chance meeting with the boys and girls that will be defending our great nation”

The scene changed to a small group of people up on the stage shaking hands with the superheroes all talking and laughing and in amongst the group of heroes we can see Captain Cody as young here as he is in the present day.

“The message across the country is if you're in the neighbourhood come and join us, you never know you may just meet the men of tomorrow?”

THE PRESENT DAY

The wrinkled liver spotted hands clasped the newspaper as tightly as they could, the headline reading “CAPTAIN CODY KILLS GANG MEMBER” splashed in large bold black letters across the front page. The second paper picked up by the set of old hands spells out something not so dissimilar “SUPERHERO KILLS GANG MEMBER” nor the third “GANG MEMBER KILLED BY SUPERHERO” nor the forth “CODY KILLS BANK ROBBER”.

Meanwhile over at the extremely busy city hospital, doctors and nurses are scurrying around checking patients in beds or in wheel chairs, checking details with other colleagues.

Outside one room two police officers stand talking to some well suited gentlemen.

Inside the hospital room, standing over one of the wounded gang member of Lord Montague, who is lying down, eyes closed on a white sheeted bed, are Dr King, Dr Nicholson and outside the room hovering in mid air, by the room's long opened bay window is Darkhalf.

Slowly a black mist starts seeping it's way out of Darkhalf's body, whispering it's way around the room like ink in water, making it's way towards the sleeping bedridden figure.

Finally forming it's self around the gang members neck, Suddenly with a series of gasps for breath the gang member's eyes shoot open, he claws at the bed sheets his eyes darting down, desperately searching for the patient alarm button only to see it in the hands of Dr King.

"Looking for this?"

Dr King quizzes as he holds up the buzzer.

"Where's Montague?"

Asks Darkhalf, still hovering outside the window.

The gang member's eyes look across towards Darkhalf

"What the fuck has it got to do with you?"

He rasps back.

"Wrong Answer"

Replies the super powered villain as the black mist thickens, becoming darker and tightens its hold around the gang member's neck choking him.

As he lies there the gang member starts to gag and croaking sounds fill the room as he grapples for breath, after a few moments the gang member tries to speak.

"I do believe our friend here is trying to tell us something?"

States Dr Nicholson

"Darkhalf if you please"

He asks looking over to the floating black figure.

The black mist thins and the gang member coughs and splutters upon the release of pressure from his neck.

"The disused district of Kirby and Lee, the waterfront end"

Dr King looks across to Darkhalf and then looks over to Dr Nicholson and smiles

"See, I told you he could do it"

High above the streets and buildings amongst the white cotton wool clouds Captain Cody drifted, His battle torn clothes now replaced with new, clean apparel his features showing only the faintest of scars from his first encounter with Lord Montague earlier that day.

Suddenly the small watch shaped radio transmitter on Cody's right wrist beeped,

Cody pressed a tiny button on its side and a crackling voice can be heard.

"Base to Captain Cody, repeat base to Captain Cody. Information obtained, targets whereabouts located, details being radioed to your current position through regular high frequency transmission. Clean up crew awaiting your confirmation of capture, over and out"

Cody changes his direction of flight and increases his speed in a seconds thought.

Unknowing and unaware of the events playing themselves out involving his location, Lord Montague, having return to his hideout, sits in his favourite chair drinking a cup of English Earl Grey tea a dog's watering bowl beside his feet.

"Maxwell...Maxwell want a cup of tea boy?"

He cries out.

In another part of the old dilapidated house Maxwell the dog lies stretched out on a large chair, his head resting up on one of the armrests and a leg dangling down, in the distance Lord Montague's voice calls again.

"Maxwell here boy"

The Bulldog slowly opens one eye, stretches, lifts his leg back up onto the chair whilst licking his mouth he then pulls himself up and jumps down off his chair. The wooden floorboards creaking and groaning under his weight, throwing up clouds of dust under his nose, which causes him to sneeze, he lumbers his way off in the direction of the voice.

In the dirty broken down kitchen area of the hideout two of Lord Montague's Gang stand by the boarded up windows looking through the gaps in between the boards, the rest are crowded round an old table playing cards.

"So what do you think it is?"

Asks the first gang member of the second

"How the hell should I know?"

Replies his colleague.

A larger built gang member turns around to face the two standing at the window.

"What the fuck are you two going on about now? We're trying to play a game here you morons"

“There’s something in the sky flying towards us real fast”

Returns the first gang member

“Like what?”

Questions the card player.

“We can’t tell it’s all blurry looking on the count of it flying so fast”

Replies the second window watcher.

The card playing larger gang member throws his cards down on the table and gets up from it turning round fully to the window itself.

“You two better not be shitting me or I’ll replace you... permanently”

He bends down to a large black bag lying on the kitchen floor and unzips it, inside is a whole bunch of guns and equipment, rummaging around he finds a pair of digital imaging binoculars.

“Come on you guys get out of the way will yah, lets take a look at this U.F.O of yours”

Pushing his way past the other two he leans over the sink with the binoculars in hand and raises them up to his eyes. Looking through the boards on the window, he adjusts the settings on the goggles a few times before speaking.

“Holy Crap...its Cody”

“Let’s get the hell out of here”

Shrieks the second window watching gang member turning to run as the rest of the gang shoot up from the table in a panic.

“No way man we got to tell his lordship”

Calls the first window watching gang member who runs across the room and bolts through the door leading to Lord Montague’s room.

“No Johnny don’t go in there just like that”

Shouts the large gang member.

But it’s too late and the first window watcher gang member; Johnny doesn’t hear his colleague and bolts through the door abruptly.

“Lord Montague forgive me but it’s...”

But he doesn't get chance to finish his sentence as the sound of a very angry, raised and powerful voice bellows out.

“SILENCE”

“Bbbbut..”

“I SAID SILENCE”

The gang member stops himself and stands still shaking slightly, Lord Montague sitting in his chair picks up the white napkin which sits upon his lap up and drops it onto a small wooden table which stands beside him, on top of which sits a silver tea set consisting of a tea pot, two bowls for cream and sugar, spoons and china tea cups.

Lord Montague stands up and walks over to Johnny with a wry smile on his face.

“I know you haven't been with us long Jimmy my boy”

“It's Johnny...Sir”

Corrects the gang member

Lord Montague's expression changes to one of a frown for a second before returning to a smile as he draws up next to Johnny and puts a fatherly arm around Johnny's shoulder.

“Of course it is...well you know Johnny that I never like people to interrupt me when I'm having afternoon tea”

Behind them, various gang members have congregated around the kitchen doorway looking in on what's happening.

“Sometimes a man just likes to be left alone for a while...know what I mean”

Lord Montague Smiles broadly at Johnny who returns the gesture.

“I...I suppose so”

Replies the now very nervous Johnny

“Good”

Lord Montague pulls his arm back along Johnny's shoulder and stops at his neck taking a firm grasp of it and squeezing tightly, a cracking sound is heard and Lord Montague relaxes his grip and Johnny's lifeless body falls to the ground, slumped over like a rag doll.

“GERALD”

Calls Lord Montague as he walks back over to his table, picks up his cup of tea and takes a sip, the heads and faces of the congregated gang members disappear from the doorway and slowly the large gang member walks into the room.

“Ah Gerald, would you mind cleaning that mess up please”

He asks pointing to the body of Johnny.

“Yyyes Sir...but before I do that I’ve got to tell you...”

But that’s as far as Gerald gets because at that moment a great crashing sound is heard and the whole of the building starts to shake.

“What on earth is all this about?”

Questions Lord Montague.

Suddenly Maxwell starts growling.

“It’s Captain Cody your lordship he’s...”

And again Gerald doesn’t get to finish his sentence as he is interrupted.

“HERE”

Comes a cry from beyond a sea of brown swirling dust.

As the dust cloud clears Cody stands facing the pair of them.

“It’s over Montague, give it up”

Montague lets go of the teacup, which falls to the floor and shatters as he put his arms up in the air

“Yes...I do believe it is”

Later that day as the bright sun starts to set once again Cody stood by the two-way mirror in the labs watching the doctors and scientists working around the figure of Darkhalf, now returned to his horizontal table and restrained, both Dr Nicholson and Dr King stand waiting in the shadows before stepping over to Cody.

“Don’t worry James, your brothers going to be just fine, he’s going to get everything he needs”

Speaks Dr Nicholson in a hushed tone.

“We’re doing all we can”

Adds Dr King

Cody bows his head.

“By the way this envelope came for you today”

Dr Nicholson tells him as Cody lifts his head and turns to Dr Nicholson who points to Dr King. Cody turns round to Dr King who fumbles about in the pockets of his white lab coat for a few seconds then, finally, pulls out a crumpled envelope, which he hands to Cody.

Cody takes the envelope from Dr King and unfolds it. Written on it's front, in very scrawny handwriting, is just Cody's name.

“Thank you Dr king, Dr Nicholson”

Cody returns to staring through the two-way mirror.

The two doctors looked at each other for a second then Dr Nicholson speaks

“Anyway James we know that you'll probably want to be left alone for a while and we both have work to be done, will see you later.”

Both doctors turn and leave the room leaving the superhero alone with his thoughts.

Meanwhile, across town amongst the rushing crowds of business people, tourists, everyday workers and others all moving without a care for who the other was, the slow moving slightly hunched over figure of an elderly gentleman made his way along the street, walking stick in hand for help with his balance.

In the crowds that past him nobody pays him that much attention and those that do only treat him like an obstacle in their way. For him on this day he thinks and feels the same way about them, for he too has a place to get to of great importance and he to wants nothing to stand in his way.

He potters on through the masses of people with the same resentment for them that he feels coming of them about him but he doesn't waver he doesn't give up for he knows he's got to keep himself going because if he stops even for just the briefest of moments he many never get himself going again.

After what seems like hours his journeys end arrives with him stopping at the front entrance of a disused, extremely tall glass fronted office building. The glass doors and windows painted over with white paint from the inside, so nobody can look in.

The old man hobbled up to the large steel and glass entrance doors. A strong heavy fitted security lock barring the entrance to the building, but it's a strange looking lock, neither a key fitting lock nor a key pad lock, no hand, eye or voice scanning equipment visible just an imprint of a single number seven imbedded into the metal.

The old man lifts his right hand up to the door's lock and on his third finger is a gents gold signet ring with the raised symbol of a number seven on it. Shakily he fits his signet ring seven into the

locks imprinted number and a glow of light flashes from between the gap of the double doors and they hiss open sliding to the left and right allowing him access.

Once inside the buildings lobby the old man stands still for a moment scanning the scene all around him. The large once cathedral like lobby is now a dank and dusty place, the patterned marble floor below his feet now filled with rubbish and discarded papers. Old disused equipment is scattered around in some boxes, most just left where it was once of use, now covered with cobwebs. Slowly he makes his way across the room, picking his way through the mess and boxes towards the elevators, the tapping sound of his walking stick hitting the marble floor echoing all around him.

At the elevators doors he places his free hand into one of his jacket pockets and takes out a screwdriver and with shaky hands begin to unscrew the elevators operational panel.

Once off he returns the screwdriver to his pocket and pulls at the old worn wiring, Breaking some of them and then rewiring them back together, suddenly the doors of the elevator slide open. It's dark inside but he steps in anyway and the doors close shut behind him, the lights above the elevators doors light up with each floor it takes him to.

The huge, long top floor windows help him look out high above and over the cityscape spread before him like a giant cinema screen, he stands in silence, the sounds of the city below him distant and inaudible.

FLASHBACK #1

The young mans smile beamed across his features, strong and solidly as the cinema screen images flashed across his face lighting him and the rest of the crowd who all watched intensely as the newsreel played to them, the reporter's commentary echoing around the hall.

NEWSREEL DIALOGUE

"All America holds its breath waiting for the news that Americas favourite heroes SOCIETY SIX are safe? BUT as we can see the evil master mind DR DIABLOGICAL could now be unstoppable"

FLASHBACK #2

The mask fits tightly, snugly over his head, a perfect fit. The boots made of leather shone brightly as he's feet slipped inside the soft padded interior. The leather gloves creaked as his hands tightened and un-tightened their grip and a hushed voice spoke.

"There's no turning back"

The old man stands looking down at the dots on the streets below him his face sad whilst in thought but his eyes as bright as they ever where, and suddenly waking him from his past a small breeze blows cold into the room, papers once littering the floor swirl around in high animated motion before slowly dying back down and a voice calls out softly to him.

"Hello Michael"

The old man turns his body round slowly and standing there before him is Captain Cody.

“Hello James”

“What can I do for you Michael?”

The old man, Michael, breathes in deeply before answering.

“You’ve been making the news a lot again lately”

“I’m sure you didn’t call me all the way up here Michael just to talk to me about my P.R”

“NO...No I didn’t.... How’s Janice these days?”

For a moment Cody dips his head and looks to the floor before realising his drop in demeanour and shoots his head back up to face Michael.

“She’s fine...just fine”

“I called you here...to warn you”

“To warn me?”

Michael turns back around to look out across the city as he did so Cody walks up closer behind his old friend.

“Yes warn you. You might be able to see a bad guys cape flapping in the breeze some 500 miles away but sometimes you’ve got to take a look at what’s in your own back yard.”

“What are you talking about Michael?”

“I can’t believe it after all these years you’re still looking at things as if they’re in black and white...still after what’s happened in the past...what we went through...what the rest of us went through?”

“Things happen because that’s what’s meant to happen you can’t change that, you can’t change the whole world”

Michael turns back round to face his old friend.

“For Christ sake how can you still be that bloody naive boy scout that you were when we were a team?”

“Your making no sense Michael...yes the team died out a long time ago, along with certain ways of thinking, the paranoid ideas of the secret enemy behind the scenes pulling the strings is dead”

“Do you think so? Today’s world is full of even more conspiracy and counter conspiracy theories”

“From out dated minds”

“You bastard you really have the guts to call ME out dated?”

“I’m sorry Michael”

“Don’t be, people like us are only told what where needed to know...TO ACT...remember?”

James Cody lowered his head and said nothing in response to his old friend.

END OF ISSUE THREE

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