



Mightiest Mortals #13

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*Mightiest
Mortals*

#13: *Opening Passages*

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Billy Batson's first clue that something was amiss came in the dingy apartment. He'd stumbled out of bed, into what he and his room-mate charitably referred to as the kitchen, and poured out a bowl of dry cereal to munch on for breakfast when he saw it. Tucked into a corner of the room, like he and it belonged in "A Christmas Carol."

Freddy's crutch. Uncle Dudley had gotten him such a nice one too, all hand-crafted and made cool (as cool as a crutch could be, Billy supposed). And there it stood in the corner of the kitchen.

By the time Billy's day had passed through the morning radio broadcast (which now earned him extra credit as well as a paycheck, and let him be officially late to school in the morning, which Billy always enjoyed), the tedium of classes punctuated only by the cacophony of lunch hour, and into the afternoon sporting event, Billy had pretty much confirmed his suspicions.

It didn't take Captain Marvel and his Wisdom of Solomon to figure out Freddy Freeman was hiding his true nature when he saw the way he played that afternoon's baseball game. Freddy was always one of the big stars in the school athletics department. But today's performance was a stand-out even for a stand-out.

Unlike the rest of the screaming crowd, Billy was not amused.

He did notice that Mary Bromfield and her friend were amused, quite amused. They cheered loudly for Freddy, and seemed quite involved in the game. Billy mused over this as well, since they were from the

suburbs, and went to a different school. But then again, Freddy was as popular with the girls as he was with the sports, Billy knew.

The game came to an end finally and Freddy came in off the field, slapping his team-mates for a great game they'd easily won, then grabbed up his gear. He turned around quick and nearly bumped into Billy, who stood there, waiting, arms crossed.

"What do you think you're doing, Freddy?" Billy hissed under his breath as he paced alongside his friend, who moved without any sign of injury.

"Playing a brilliant game of baseball and now headed home for a shower," Freddy said lightly as he grinned and waved to the pretty girls. "Why? Got a problem with that?"

"I have a problem with the fact that you're out here as Kid Marvel," Billy whispered low as the pair walked out of the park and headed for their home. "You can't be Freddy if you're Kid Marvel."

"Why not?" Freddy asked, dismayed, and a just a little irritated by his friend's nagging. "When I'm Freddy, my leg's a mess. I have to walk with a crutch. I can't play sports. And it hurts."

"But you can't play sports if you're super-strong and indestructible," Billy countered, shocked at Freddy's cavalier reply. "That's cheating."

"That Wisdom thing is great at figuring out where I should be for normal, Billy," Freddy said as he ignored his friend's concerns. "Not like I'm playing football and someone tries to tackle me. C'mon, you're just being pill now, buddy. I'm hurting no one, and I get to keep being me, instead of cripple boy." He rubbed at his leg unconsciously as he thought about it. "I don't think you get how much the knee can hurt, even after my recovery."

"Being a Marvel gives us a huge amount of power," Billy argued. "If the Wizard wanted us to have all that power all the time, he'd have made the spell permanent. He didn't, doesn't that tell you something?"

"Tells me that you're just sorry you can't stay lightninged up," Freddy said with a laugh. "Look, Billy, I get it. Tons of power, tons of

responsibility, blah blah blah. Got it. You have to switch back and forth if you want to keep being Billy, and I'm not sure why you'd not want to jump right to being a grown-up, but fine. You don't. That's cool. I don't change. I stay the same. I don't know why, and I don't care. I just know the only difference is this damned leg, and if I can get off the crutch staying Kid Marvel, I'm going to do it. So get off my back!" He turned away from his friend and marched off in a huff, as Billy stopped and let him go for now. He wanted to go after Freddy and keep trying to get through to the power of wisdom inside his thick-headed friend. He rubbed the back of his head and then glanced at his watch.

The radio station, Billy mused and took off in the direction of the Plaza and his job. It was a rush, but Billy made it in time, if a little out of breath as he almost fell into the elevator. He had been tempted to fly, but somehow, after the talk with Freddy, turning into Captain Marvel to make his job deadline felt hypocritical. *That you in there, Solly? Or just me and my overgrown conscience?* He chuckled, and made his elevator companion glance at him. "Hiya," Billy said with a wave, then jumped out and dashed for the broadcast booth.

"Hey there, Billy-boy! How're we doing today?" Victor Craize asked as he clapped the teen's hand in his. "Things going well for you?"

"Going good, thanks for asking, Mr. Craize," Billy answered the radio host with a grin. "Can't wait for summer vacation, of course."

"Yeah, can't blame you there. Get some time down on the beach, cruising the boardwalk, eying the pretty ladies," Victor replied with a friendly nudge. "Late mornings and later nights?" He chuckled as he remembered his own high school days now.

"Well, more like some extra hours here at the station, and more foot traffic down at the stand," Billy said in a less exuberant voice. "Things are getting so expensive. Can't let paying hours slip by."

"Right. Yeah." Victor looked awkwardly around. "Can't say I blame you there, either, Bill. Just me, putting my foot in it. I have to speak so fast and so edgy on air, I forget I can turn it off when there's no mike around."

"Hey, no harm done, Mr. Craize," Billy replied, beaming at being referred to as Bill. That had never happened before. "Time to go get the news out to the people." He waved and dashed into the booth.

"Good kid," Victor said as he saw Betty Sommersley walking up the hallway.

"Hm? Billy? Yeah, he's polite, works hard, does his homework," the harried secretary said as she gave a toss of her brown hair and glanced at him through the booth window. "Makes me wonder what my niece sees in him." She chuckled at her joke as Victor cracked a smile, and the pair parted, going onto their usual routine.

When Billy finished up his broadcasting for the evening, including time spent a desk learning to write the news stories he'd read, he headed back down to the lobby, and for home.

"Hiya, Billy!" Cissie Sommersley said with a jump up from her seat, face brightened up. "Right on time! Ready for our date?"

"Date?" Billy choked and stared at the pretty teen-ager, blond hair braided up tight and round pink cheeks. "Um, yeah... right, our date! Burgers good? I know a place." He glanced away bashfully then added, "Well, the Ghostly Gourmet knows a good place, and he works my afternoon shift with me, really."

"Burgers sounds great," Cissie replied. She grabbed his hand in hers and started out of the building. She chose to ignore the fact that Billy had forgotten, especially in light of his offer of her favorite food, for where there were good burgers, there were often good trench fries, and with them would be the onion rings. "Hey, who're those girls with Freddy?" She pointed to the newsstand where indeed, Freddy leaned forward over the counter and chatted with two teen-aged women.

"Let's find out," Billy said as he gripped Cissie's hand back now and headed to the trio. He suspected he knew one of them, and he couldn't figure out why it was irritating him that she was there again. "Hey, Freddy. Who are your friends?"

"Heya, Billy," Freddy called back with a wave and hearty smile. "This is

Mary and her friend, Lori. They live up in Beckstone, go over to Rydell High. Mary, Lori, this is my bestest bud in the world, Billy. And apparently, his girl. That the Cissie I've heard so much about?" He gave her a wink and a thumb's up.

Both Billy and Cissie blushed, Cissie giggling and nodding to the other two girls, all politely saying hello to each other. Billy's blush was less playful, as he slipped up to the booth and glanced inside. "Yeah, it's still at home, Billy. Lay off," Freddy whispered. "The girls came into town cruising for Marvels, that's why they're here. They know the Big Red Cheese zips around these parts sometimes. Think maybe you can make their day?"

Billy shook his head and snickered. "You're too much, Freddy. Fine, I'll lay off, but no, no special appearances to help you score. Besides, check out Lori, I don't think Cap would grab her attention now." He winked and went back to Cissie. "Off to get some food. See you later tonight, pal."

Mary and Billy continually glanced at each other as the entire scene played out, each one trying to figure something out about the other, neither able to do it. Lori was too engrossed in talking to Freddy and checking out how his hands felt with her fingers to notice, but Cissie saw.

And Cissie decided then and there that Mary was trouble and had to go. But she smiled proud and triumphant when Billy grabbed her hand back up, then led her back on the trail of their date.

Swayze Circle

It was another late night for Susan Kent Barr as she hunched at her computer, fingers typing furiously away. She glanced over at the papers spread out over her desk again, and then rolled her chair over to tug one of the many leather-bound tomes on her shelf out for reference. She flipped through the pages and then paused.

It was only when this flurry of activity was interrupted by her heavy sigh that she gave herself another of her few precious moments to think. She glanced at the photo of her husband James on her desk, staring out

at her, that warm smile and soft brown eyes gazing on her. She leaned back in her chair, the book rested against her chest and rubbed her eyes.

Okay, this has got to come to an end, she mentally chided herself. Good God, woman, so he's Bulletman. So there's the Marvel Family flying out there too, and they'll keep an eye on him. He's fine.

That wasn't what bothered her however as she rolled back to her desk and flipped over a page of her legal pad. She plucked out a pen and stated to jot down notes she found in the reference book as her brain battled to think over the thorny topic of the costumed crime-fighters.

Okay, so the Master Man precedent helps to off-set some of Chief Kitchens' vigilante charges, she continued to play out in her head. I'm still going to have to figure out if I'm really okay with the idea of super-heroes. Where do we draw a line with them? How do I convince the chief that there might be a line to draw? She chewed on the end of her pen as the same arguments bounced around in her mind that had kept her distracted in the month since the fall of Sabbac and Ibac.

"Okay, that's enough," she grumbled to herself aloud. She saved her file and shut her computer down then stood and stretched out. "Enough. Time for home, time for dinner, time for sleep." *Can't go into the Karnes kid's arraignment like this, that'd be a disaster.*

She stopped and ran her fingers along the frame of the photograph, her head shaking. "Never could make things easy on me, could you?" Then she turned off the light and closed the door behind her.

Seaside

The Cathay Garden was one of the oldest restaurants in the area. The Chinese restaurant started back in the Sixties, and rode through the ups and downs of the Seaside area, proudly providing some of the finest Asian cuisine through the decades. When Seaside rose again, new and shiny, aimed to the tourist, Cathay Garden stood out as an icon of the past, resisting the face-lifts and renovations. This merely served to improve its customer base, the restaurant now a landmark and admired for its food, service and now-retro look.

"Don't make me do this," the scrawny man said with a vicious look at the owner of the Cathay Garden. "Please don't. I like this place, I really do. I've brought all my lady friends here, and I want to keep doing it. So really now... just pay the money."

"I will not, not now, no more," the owner said, a mixture of defiance and fear as he stared at the jittery, mean little man. "The bosses are gone, we have the Marvels now! I will not bow down to criminals anymore."

"I see. That disappoints my boss. Doesn't disappoint me, but will disappoint the boss man. See, we need to make sure people know, crime doesn't pay." He winked and chuckled, gnarled and blackened teeth appearing from behind dried, cracked lips. "You pay crime." He laughed and erupted into fire suddenly.

Standing as they were in the middle of the well-worn kitchen, the human pyre quickly set his surroundings ablaze. He laughed as he watched the shock on the victim's face, and reached out to grab the owner's arms. The fire swept up along the thin shirt, burrowing into his skin. With a surge of adrenaline caused by the pain, the owner broke away from the grip and ran screaming out of the restaurant, the laughter of the scrawny, flaming man in his ears.

"If you survive your burns, tell 'em Arson Fiend sent you, and all your buddies better pay up!" he called out after the owner, then turned to leave through the back way. He opened the door and bounced off a large red barricade.

"Arson Fiend? That's a new one, isn't it?" Captain Marvel asked as he stepped into the kitchen, his big beefy hand grabbing the blazing criminal without a flinch. "Couldn't help but notice the owner of this place racing out of here on fire."

"Burn!" Arson Fiend cried out, more jittery now, and the dance of orange flames shifted in hue, turning blue, but his eyes grew fearful when he saw Captain Marvel yawn.

"Time to go, I think," the hero said. "You going to put yourself out, or do I need to dunk you in the ocean first?" He grinned.

“One question, Marvel. Doesn't this place use gas stoves?”

Arson Fiend's smirk returned when Captain Marvel let him go in order to stop the growing kitchen fire before it could cause an explosion. As the firefighters arrived to the emergency, and paramedics tended to the owner Captain Marvel had thoughtfully put out before intercepting the arsonist, Captain Marvel took a quick circuit to confirm what he knew would be the case: Arson Fiend had given him the slip in the crowded streets of Seaside.

“Thanks for the help, Cap,” the lieutenant said as he situated his men to cordon off the building and deal with the damage. “We'll hose her down some more and make sure nothing sparks back up, but you made what could have been a disaster a pretty light evening.”

“Thanks. As for light evenings, I have a date to get back to,” Captain Marvel said and shook the firefighter's hand before zipping high into the sky.

“Man, I was able to sneak in and get a report on what happened from the emergency guys,” Billy said as he pressed up through the crowd back to Crissie's side. “Sorry to bail on you like that, I appreciate you sticking around.”

“No problem, Billy. I got to see Captain Marvel in action. He's amazing.” She looked at her date, and then let her face drift up into the sky, where the hero had flown.

“Yeah, he can be,” Billy chuckled in agreement.

Beckstone

The bus pulled away from the curb and left Mary Bromfield and Lori Zechlin to walk down the street to their houses. The moment they were away from the prying ears of the other passengers and the driver, they began to chatter excitedly.

“He's gotta be the Kid,” Lori said with a toss of her straight black locks. “I'm telling you, there's no doubt about it.”

"I'm not arguing with you, I just wonder what that means about who Captain Marvel could be?" Mary countered as her mind wandered back to the strange kid, Billy Batson. The way he looked at her reminded her of the one time she'd met Captain Marvel.

"His buddy there? The radio geek? C'mon, Mare, stop being silly, they're like..fifty years apart in age or something. Never mind like two hundred pounds and two feet of dreamy muscle." Lori poked Mary in the side and teased her, "Ooo, you're crushing on the nerd!"

"Ew! Am not!" Mary said immediately as she jumped to the side away from her friend's finger. "I mean, not ew. He's not ugly or something, it's just... ew, no way!" They both giggled at her reaction, and Mary continued, "Besides, if there's a crushing going on, it's you for Freddy. Especially if he's Kid Marvel and can fly you all over the world for your illicit trysts." Mary blushed as she brought the thought up.

"Omigod!" Lori screeched as she pivoted and grabbed Mary's hands in hers. "You really think? I hadn't thought of that! Oh man, just think, doing it at the Great Pyramids, or something!"

Mary's cheeks flamed redder and she tugged her hands back. "C'mon, we have to get you home quick, you need some cold water splashed over you. And the pyramids? All that sand? Really?"

"Paris and Monaco are so done with," Lori said with a mock expression of disdain. The girls giggled, squealed and then raced on down the sidewalk to their homes.

The Tangles

Billy Batson stumbled into the apartment and slammed the door shut behind him before he flopped into the heavy beanbag chair. He tossed his red cap to the side and let out a long, low sigh.

"You're home earlier than I figured, Billy," Freddy said as he stepped out from the bedroom. "You and Cissie were looking pretty tight, figured it would be another hour or two before you got back."

"That's you, Freddy, not me," Billy chuckled and shook his head.

Freddy sniffed the air, looking confused. "What smells like a fire?"

"Oh, that. That would be the fire I put out. Some maniac calling himself the Arson Fiend set the Cathay Garden up like a matchstick. Can you believe that? The Garden," Billy shook his head some more, sadly now.

"The Garden? How bad is it?" Freddy asked with alarm.

"Pretty bad. Not sure what's going to happen with it. I kept it from the dining area as Captain Marvel, but the kitchen looked like a total loss." Billy shrugged helplessly.

"Man, no way!" Freddy grumbled and kicked at a nearby textbook laid out on the floor. It hurtled up and smashed through the wall and embedded itself in the wall on the far side of Billy's bedroom. Freddy stared at the hole in shock at first, and then started to chuckle.

"How are we supposed to explain *that* to Uncle Dudley?" Billy asked, exasperated. "You can't stay Kid Marvel, don't you see that?"

"So much for backing off. Beside, with an Arson Fiend running around, I should be ready." He smacked his fist into his palm, then did it again. "I loved that place. My parents, they'd bring me there at least once a month. The family dinner time. Gramps and Grams and Mom and Dad and me..." His voice trailed off. "Not so much left for me to go to, but that place..."

"We'll bust this guy, don't worry buddy." Billy stood up to comfort his friend but was stopped by a knock at the door, a peculiar, rhythmic knock. "There's Uncle Dudley now. Man, he must have ears like a fruit-bat."

"Heya, Unc," Billy said as he opened the door. The older man, tousled, balding white hair sticking out in all directions, bulky and stocky, dusty and greasy, with big red cheeks and bright blue eyes and a great big smile on his face. In his hands was a cardboard box, and only when Billy noticed the lettering on it, did he then notice that Dudley Simpson's smile was forced, unusual for his jovial appearance. "'For Billy?'" the teen read out. "What's up? This isn't about the hole in the wall, is it?"

Dudley entered with the box and dropped it onto the large wooden cable spool the boys used for a table. "No, it's not, Billy, my boy—what hole?"

"Nothing, Dudley," Freddy said quickly as he stepped in front of the hole, waving and smiling.

"Right. I'll just check into that tomorrow, when you kids are off to school." He looked at Billy now, then back to Freddy. "I know, my boys. I know why Freddy's not using his crutch, and I know why your neighbors wonder about the weird wind patterns around the building, and all of it. I know, boys. And you've done your ol' Uncle Dudley proud, and... so I guess it's time."

"Kn-know what, Uncle Dudley?" Billy asked, unnerved by the very strange greeting.

"You're Captain Marvel. Freddy's Kid Marvel." They opened their mouths to protest, but Dudley just lifted up his hands to stop them. "Ah, ah! None of that. No lying to Dudley Simpson, me bucks. Just deal with the fact that I know. And I can keep secrets. I'm going to prove that one." He looked at Billy and pointed to the box. "Open it up. You'll see what I mean."

Billy pulled the flaps open, and gazed into the container, a lump hurting his throat. His eyes blinked rapidly as they watered and he pulled out a pile of papers and photographs. "Dad? And this is... Mom?" He stared at them, flipping through them, whole body welling up with emotion as it shook. "How...?"

"I knew your parents, kiddo. Grew up with your mother, she was a sweetheart. Katherine, her name was. Kathy, to all of us who knew her," Dudley said wistfully as he picked up a picture of her. "Clarence was good people too, if a bit too egghead for her, I thought. At first anyway. They were good together though."

Billy continued to tear through the photographs as Dudley talked about how they came together, a couple of years into college. How inseparable they were, as Dudley pointed out each of the people in each wedding photo to be found in the box.

“What happened to them? Dad raised me, and he never talked about Mom. Ever. Then he didn't come home one day.”

Freddy sat off to one side, staying silent, remembering that day three years back, when his best friend didn't come into school. Freddy went to find out why and learned that Clarence Batson had died in a car accident. It was all too familiar to Freddy, even if the car crash that cost him his parents wasn't an accident.

“I never could get either of them to tell me what had happened. It was overseas, I think, and they just refused to talk to me about it,” Dudley said as he settled down next to Billy and draped a heavy arm over the boy's shoulders. “But it wasn't an accident. Your parents, they lived in fear of their lives. That's all I could get out of them. I kept in touch with Clarence, because he had no family, and in case anything bad happened to you, they wanted to make sure you were taken care of. Kathy had family she could fall back on,” Dudley paused, took a deep breath, then finished his statement. “To take care of her daughter.”

“Daughter?” Billy stared up at Dudley's face. “My parents had a daughter? That means I have a sister?” He turned to Freddy and repeated himself. “I have a sister!”

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Danger Trail: The Blood & Dragon Affair, Part 1 (of 3)

Danger Trail #2 (2007)

Danger Trail: The Blood and Dragon Affair, Part 2 (of 3).

Ninjas and vampires and diabolical plots, oh my! King Faraday, Speed Saunders and the Enemy Ace are joined by a masked crime-fighter as they face two secret societies with a monstrous agenda! Pulp action at its finest as we seek out...the Danger Trail!

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Learn the mission of the Blood Red Moon! Uncover the mastermind behind the Black Dragon Society! Watch our heroes try and work together when some can't trust others, and one has no clue that there's cavalry coming to the rescue! Who would have thought marital strife could be so much danger for the heroes, or so entertaining for the readers! It's the conclusion to "The Blood and Dragon Affair!"

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Mightiest Mortals #1 (2007)

Mightiest Mortals: With a Stroke of Lightning!

Mightiest Mortals #2 (2007)

Mightiest Mortals: In a Crash of Thunder

Mightiest Mortals #3 (2007)

Captain Marvel: Under a Seal of Six Gods!

Justice League #8 (2007)

Justice League: Lucky Number 7.

What are the chances that a rash of good fortune across the globe could be the League's next case? Pretty good when this luck starts rewriting the laws of the universe and threatening the existence of

ages-old mystic defenses keeping ancient, primordial forces at bay!

Justice League #9 (2007)

Justice League: To See Tomorrow.

Why are there hawk soldiers of Thanagar on Earth? Who are the strange new superhumans appearing around the globe, testing and probing local governments? What exactly is the Justice League facing when a quartet of self-proclaimed heroes declares Earth "their last stand?" It's the beginning of an epic threat wrapped inside two strange mysteries that will leave the Justice League hoping that Earth survives "To See Tomorrow!"

Justice League #10 (2007)

Justice League: To See Tomorrow, Part Two (of Four).

"To See Tomorrow" continues as the stakes only get higher and secrets slowly start to unravel. Hawkman and the Martian Manhunter are caught between the Thanagarian invaders and their own satellite! The rest of the League is caught between Mon-El and Wandjina! And in the big picture, it's all symbolic of the Earth being caught between the enigmatic Overmaster and a still-hidden mastermind with dreadful intent!

Danger Trail #5 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Verdant Darkness Affair, Part 2 (of 2).

What connection lies between la Llorona's kidnapped children and Nyola's captured heroine Rima? What is drawing the natives of Central America and Mexico together? Speed Saunders, King Faraday and Midnight are joined by Doctor Occult to learn the truth before an Empire of Blood washes over the land!

Weird Western Quarterly #11 (2008)

Johnny Thunder: Steel Heart Iron Soul.

As Johnny Thunder, John Tane has evaded the deathbed oath to his mother never to do violence, and become Mesa City's great protector. Now he's about to be challenged on a whole new level when a powerful land baron makes a grab for greater wealth and glory, and the enigmatic renegade, Madame .44, has Johnny Thunder's heart in her sights! What might be his most dangerous

mission yet will also be the first chapter in a ballad of love and gunslinging like the Wild West has yet to see!

Danger Trail #6 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Man in Stitches Affair, Part 1 (of 2)

Danger Trail #7 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Man in Stitches Affair, Part 2 (of 2).

The Revenant Program proceeds apace as Saunders and Midnight must struggle with former ally King Faraday to find the evidence that can shut down Doctor Zero for good! Maybe, just maybe, newcomer Argent St. Cloud can help out!

Speeding Bullet #4 (2008)

Bulletman: The Birth of Bulletman, Part 4 (of 4): Man Made Gods. This is it! The mystery is revealed and the gloves come off as Bulletman duking it out with the Murder Prophet and his god of murder, the Nihilist! Can he come through his baptism of fire and blood intact? And even if he wins, does the Prophet truly get the last laugh?

Danger Trail #9 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Nation of Murder Affair, Part 2 (of 2).

As Speed Saunders and King Faraday join Argent St. Cloud to search for Michael Gallant, a wave of murders leaves the city of New York reeling as the heat rises, tempers flare, and Rue Morgue revels in the bloodbath!

Danger Trail #8 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Nation of Murder Affair, Part 1 (of 2).

Gangsters want Thomas Dewey dead at all costs, bringing Michael Gallant onto the case, Argent St. Cloud at his side! But when Murder, Inc. steps up to the challenge, can even he call on enough reinforcements to save the day?

Danger Trail #10 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Stolen Myth Affair, Part 1 (of 3).

It begins here! Threads woven from the start of the series, put into play centuries beforehand, all start to come together in this issue, as familiar faces return to the scene, dark forces gather for the

attack, and the secrets of the Trail yawn wide and threatening! All this and a special guest-star...the Queen of the Amazons!

Danger Trail #11 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Stolen Myth Affair, Part 2 (of 3).

Things heat up for our heroes as the Dragon Queen and the Queen of Blood unite to betray Vandal Savage; Savage raids Washington, D.C. to acquire the Ineffable Libram; and King Faraday and Speed Saunders face off with Queen Hippolyta and Rima the Jungle Woman! Things couldn't get any worse than this, could they?

Danger Trail Annual #1 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Savage Sins Affair.

As the Stolen Myth Affair heats up, as a covert war rages on the Danger Trail, take a peek inside the history of the man who has set this all into motion...Vandal Savage! Balloon Buster Steven Savage is doing just that as he uncovers threads and connections surrounding the many figures of the age that all lead back to this diabolical mastermind, some stretching back centuries! If the truth about him can't be unraveled soon, those threads will choke the present day and continue into the future!

Danger Trail #12 (2008)

Danger Trail: The Stolen Myth Affair, Part 3 (of 3).

Vandal Savage begins his plan to bring the world into his control! King Faraday, Speed Saunders and Midnight, along with their assembled allies, make their bid to stop him, but there are three queens in this game, and each one has their own vision for how the endgame should play out! It's the end of the first year on the Danger Trail...is it also just the end?

Speeding Bullet #1 (2008)

Speeding Bullet, Part 1 (of 4): Modern Gods.

James Barr has developed a special device that allows him tremendous powers! Now he steps into a new world of masked men and heroic deeds, but is he really ready to take his place among the world's newest gods? Will the Murder Prophet usher in an age of blood first?

Speeding Bullet #2 (2008)

Speeding Bullet: The Birth of Bulletman, Part 2 (of 4): Deepest Secrets.

James Barr steps into costume for the first time, and Bulletman is on the case of the Obermyer murders. But so is another person...the actual killer, a mysterious being called the Murder Prophet, who is paving the way for his master, and the police and the rookie hero struggle to catch up and stop him!

Speeding Bullet #3 (2008)

Speeding Bullet: The Birth of Bulletman, Part 3 (of 4): Bleeding Truths.

The race is on to uncover the real killer as Detectives Farley and Doherty try to dig through the murder mystery, Martin Obermyer meets the killer and Bulletman stumbles in a critical way, leaving him to face the fury of his wife!

Mightiest Mortals #4 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: Wielding Fists of Virtue.

Captain Marvel is caught between a throwdown with Ibac and Sivana launching an all-out assault on our hero and the Fawcett itself! As bad as that is, though, it gets worse for Kit Freeman...much worse! Meet Sabbac!

Mightiest Mortals #5 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: Scenes of a Day

Mightiest Mortals #6 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: Between Opposing Forces.

Freddy finds himself having the most startlingly worst day of anyone's life! Can it be worse than losing a close relative? What about the dark secret within another relative? Or the secrets being held by his best friend? It all comes crashing down on him in a terrible avalanche of revelations! All this while the city moves on without him!

Mightiest Mortals #7 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: From the Shadows of Twisted Minds.

Get ready for action and excitement! Freddy buries his cousin, Christopher Freeman, and has another showdown with his stepbrother Tim Karnes. And we discover just how fiendish Sivana

can be when he pushes Captain Marvel's every attribute in an issue in which the World's Wickedest Scientist...doesn't even appear! All this, and the fate of Beautia!

Mightiest Mortals #8 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: To the Truth of the Matter.

Billy and Freddy have their confrontations on secrets kept, power hoarded and relations hidden, all the while the forces of the law struggle to keep Lady Justice apart from her new champion and Miss Minerva asserts her innocence!

Mightiest Mortals #9 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: The Abyss of Blood Relations

Fawcett City goes on despite the gang war, despite the debut of new heroes, despite it all, Fawcett City goes on. Come and see how it does, as Chief Kitchens deals with the presence of Captain Marvel and what it means for his police force! And has Miss Minerva over-played her hand?

Mightiest Mortals #11 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: The Tide of Heroism.

The beginning of the stunning two-part finale to Captain Marvel's first year! Sabbac has gone on a rampage, and Ibac is taking advantage of the chaos! Bulletman struggles to intervene, but everyone wants to know where Captain Marvel is! All this and more (and boy, do I really mean it this time)!

Mightiest Mortals #10 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: The Punishment of Good Deeds.

Amazing origins issue as we discover the secret behind the magic words, and the history of Sabbac and Ibac! Freddy walks into a deathtrap, Victor Craize starts to feel the power of the people, and the police make a startling discovery about Miss Minerva!

Mightiest Mortals #12 (2008)

Mightiest Mortals: By an Act of Love.

This is it! Sabbac is on a rampage! Ibac sends his men out against the leaderless forces of his gangland opponent! Into the middle of this stands Captain Marvel and his allies! When the smoke clears, who will stand triumphant?

Nightwing #30 (2008)

Nightwing: The Riddle of the Sphinx.

Just when you'd think Dick's got enough trouble juggling Titans duties as Nightwing, solo duties as the Batman, and mentoring duties with Tim, things get harder. There's a new villain hitting the streets, one with a dangerous delusion, and Dick's not happy to see that Nightwing is apparently on the case, without Dick's permission! Come and join us for "The Riddle of the Sphinx!"

Nightwing #31 (2008)

Nightwing: Riddle of the Sphinx, Part 2 (of 2)

Dick must try to get to the bottom of the crazed King Tut and foil his rampages, but he also needs to figure out how to deal with the new Nightwing! As he digs up more information on both, all three men spiral into a collision course of tragic proportions, and Professor McElroy might just be the ultimate victim in all of this!

Justice League #11 (2008)

Justice League: To See Tomorrow, Part Three (of Four).

Things are falling into place at a rapid pace now... for the villains! With the League stretched thin across the globe, friends come racing to the rescue and the action only heats up! Watch Hawkgirl lead the storming of the JL satellite; witness Superman confront Mon-El over his mysterious mission; and thrill to the throwdown between Wonder Woman and the Persuader, as the master villain behind it all draws closer to his goal! All this and more!

Danger Trail Vol. 1 (2009)

This volume collects Danger Trail #1-12 as well as Danger Trail Annual #1. This is the complete first story arc in which our pulp heroes confront the treachery of the Blood Queen, the Dragon Queen and their mysterious backer. Stay tuned for Danger Trail #13 coming soon!

Danger Trail #13 (2009)

Danger Trail: The Brown Lady Affair, Part 1.

In the wake of the battle with Vandal Savage, Speed Saunders has set his sights on finding the Sigil of Seven; that quest being his only remaining link to the missing (and treacherous) Harriet

Cooper! His friends Argent St. Cloud and Michael Gallant, along with ally Doctor Occult, want to know what his intentions are, but first they must untangle a dark scheme involving the ghosts of Great Britain!

Danger Trail #14 (2009)

Danger Trail: The Brown Lady Affair, Part 2 (of 2).

Speed Saunders must deal with the fact that the artifact Harriet had been searching for, the Sigil of Seven, is Doctor Occult's primary weapon against supernatural evil! In the wake of her treachery, what can that mean? And none of our heroes can take the time to figure it out now, as they struggle to save Michael Gallant from the Dagger of Koth!

Danger Trail #15 (2009)

Danger Trail: The Falkenstein Affair.

Once rivals of the air and enemies at war, now the Enemy Ace and the Balloon Buster must work together to penetrate the secrets of Castle Falkenstein and the strange mad scientist ready to bring two worlds together to fuel his rise to power!

Danger Trail #16 (2009)

Danger Trail: The Blood of Templars Affair.

Danger Trail #17 (2009)

Danger Trail: The Blood of Templars Affair, Part Two.

Things heat up for our heroes as they head into an ancient Knights Templar castle as one of three groups desperate to unlock its secrets and find a powerful relic that will decide the victor in the opening battles of a far greater war, one that has the attention of the enigmatic Sanguine Father! A far greater war that echoes across the decades!

Danger Trail #18 (2009)

Danger Trail: Affairs of Blood and Fate, Part Two: The Angel of Death!

The strangest crossover of all times continues here, as Rose Psychic, Eel O'Brien, Speed Saunders, Midnight, Trin Dee and Andrew Bennett find themselves caught in a holy war between the forces

of the Order of St. Dumas and the Sanguine Father, who offers a glimpse into a terrifying future for the world!

Danger Trail #20 (2010)

Danger Trail: Affairs of Blood and State, Part 6 (of 6).

Danger Trail #19 (2010)

Danger Trail: Affairs of Blood and State, Part 4.

Weird Western Quarterly #18 (2010)

Weird Western Quarterly: Lust Faith Love Treachery.



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