

The Watcher Files

December 30th, 1932

Reports from the Watcher Team of the Gingerbread Hall

The Case of Stolen Time

The Assiniboine Wonder group, led by The Watcher, regrets the temporary interruption in regular reports. As you will note, this interruption was the result of adversary actions.

As you may be aware, while providing security support for Sir Hamish's funeral the team intercepted a person presenting as Sir Clarence Cartwright. The individual was secured for questioning.

After completing the security assignment with no further incidents, the team undertook to question the prisoner. This was on the evening of November 23rd, 1932.

The prisoner exhibited symptoms of a split identity. One identity demonstrated a degree of familiarity with the life of Sir Cartwright. He expressed surprise at being alive and having legs. The second identify seemed disdainful of all humanity. Specifically, this alternate voice issuing from Sir Cartwright's body pronounced the doom of all humanity ('monkeys'). It regarded humans as easily manipulated because 'you drank the water'. It demonstrated an ability to manipulate the minds of team's members despite the formidable mental defenses. In fact, none of the affected team could even detect said manipulation as an attack. It ended with a pronouncement that 'our time has come' as a result of 'having the formulary and the potions'.

At this point the integration was interrupted by two armed RCMP constables escorting a man in a bowler hat. Alarmed at the mental powers exhibited, Might Mite attempted to subdue the prisoner. The man in the bowler hat ordered the wonder team to 'sleep'. At that point, all team members lost consciousness for an extended period.

The team regained consciousness approximately thirty-seven days later, at the Winnipeg General Hospital on Friday, December 30th, 1932.

The Case of Many Cases

There were two immediate conclusions:

First, there was a clear linkage between previously reported independent cases. The Case of the Half-Eaten Man was now clearly linked to the Case of the Bank Robber and the Case of the Assassinated Body Double (through recently obtained information that the 'Bowler Hats' are a wondrous construction of Sir Hamish's design).

Second, that there existed a group that viewed as its mission to replace humanity. Members of this group appeared to have powers and allies unlike any of those previously demonstrated by the world's Wonders. At least one of those members expressed water as a vector by which the uncanny influence could be exerted on humans.

Additional information became available when the team returned to Gingerbread Hall.

One, the RCMP constables that had been on watch on the evening of November 23rd were missing. Two, a meeting of world leaders and dignitaries is taking place in the city of Assiniboine. The highlight of this gathering is the planned address by the Queen on the state of the Commonwealth to occur in the early hours of January 1st. This gathering has naturally led to the presence of extraordinary numbers of security forces. Three, in the past month there has been a noticeable number of large-scale robberies. Purloined goods include, but not limited to, crates of sodium, box cars of bauxite, all the feathers from a pillow factory, a warehouse worth of aluminium sulfate and all the poison sacs from all the snakes in the Assiniboine zoo.

The team's first priority was to alert authorities and allies of the danger and see if they had any additional information. Mighty Mite travelled to Sir Hamish to provide a personal briefing. Jeeves and the Zygote alerted allies in Wondertown. The rest of the team briefed the Maple Squad who were again in town for security reasons. All parties were warned about the potential vulnerability linked to ingesting local water. Sir Hamish alerted the Prime Minister of the threat including the link to the water supply. The reported response was to tighten security and send someone to investigate the water reservoir.

The team reassembled to determine next steps.

It was hypothesized that the opposition was planning a major operation to take advantage of the Queen's public broadcast on January 1st. There was deep concern with demonstrated ability of the malfeasants to compromise and coopt security personnel. It was also theorized that the team may have a degree of temporary immunity arising from not having consumed any Assiniboine water in the last five-plus weeks. On that basis, said protection was likely to extend to Maple Team member, Sir John A. MacDonald.

Options to enhance protection, or limit damage, were briefly discussed and tabled. The concern was that the team's ability to protect the lives of Assiniboia residents and visiting dignitaries would be limited once the insurgents began taking control of the security apparatus. It was therefore decided that the best contribution the team could provide would be to attempt to locate and neutralize the threatening parties before they could spring their final plan.

To that end, The Watcher undertook to locate Sir Clarence Cartwright. His powers led the team to a body in a shallow grave in Assiniboine Park. Despite The Watcher's power identifying said body as belonging to the human person interviewed as Sir Cartwright, the body was that of some form of humanoid reptilian. Preliminary examination suggested the creature had died of bullet-like injuries to the sternum. Decay and decomposition of the body was consistent with the body having been in its hiding place for about a month. The body was transported to the morgue of the Assiniboine Police Service for further examination.

At this point the team was contacted by Lord Wrack, a representative of Sir Hamish. It had been reported to Sir Hamish that the person set to investigate the water supply, specifically the McPhillips' Street Pumping Station, had not reported back. The team went to investigate.

At the pumping station, the team found the city vehicle, but the employee was not in evidence. The team made entrance to the pumping station through multiple points in case of ambush. However, there was no immediate opposition. A search of the site yielded a blood trail leading to a lower level. There a

foul scent of unknown origin was also detected. The team followed the trail. In the lower level the team came across five unknowns apparently consuming the body of a sixth person.

Action Report

Given the egregious nature of the crime, and considering the history of this gang to use mental controls, the team engaged in combat operations without the usual calls to surrender.

The environment provided no lighting which limited the ability of some of the members of the team to engage. Mighty Mite was unable to distinguish targets and choose to remain on standby.

The White Ghost and Dust Devil were able to each hit one of the five targets with their ranged attacks. Neither target was disabled. Jeeves closed range. Shadow used his ranged attack but missed the target. Zygote used his mental powers to locate a target.

At this point the targets used a 'howl' to deliver a 'fear' attack. Once again, mental defenses failed to protect. However, this time there was an ability to resist the power. Jeeves, White Ghost, Zygote and Dust Devil were able to overcome the projected emotion. The Shadow was not as lucky and was compelled to begin to flee.

The team continued with ranged attacks. White Ghost hit again but the Dust Devil missed his target. Jeeves closed to combat range and dropped one of the gang members.

The remaining four criminals focused their howl power on Jeeves. The combined assault overcame his resistance, and he too was forced to flee. This did produce an opening for Dust Devil to deliver another successful strike on one of the targets but again it did not down the individual.

Being faster than the miscreants, White Ghost and Dust Devil were able to delivery another ranged attack before the situation could change again. White Ghost's attack hit, Dust Devil's did not. Again, the target was not brought down.

Jeeves shook off his compulsion and reversed course back to the fight. Unfortunately, the Shadow was unable to do the same. Meanwhile, the Foetus was able to pick up one of the targets with his telekinesis.

At this point the rest of the criminals fled by swimming away in the reservoir. The remaining criminal escaped the Foetus' control but took a final hit from the Dust Devil and went down.

The combination of water environment, lack of light, and amount of energy already expended precluded pursuit. Three miscreants escaped the scene.

Immediate Post Action Activity

Dust Devil as the team medic confirmed that unfortunate city employee was indeed dead and partly eaten. He was also able to ascertain that the assailants were not regular humans. Though they might have once been of human origin, the two bodies of the downed assailants were morphologically different from humans and the same as each other. Such similarity is not normal for persons altered by the Wonder effect.

Further Investigations

It seems these 'ghouls' were not the 'Bowler Hat Men' as they exhibited different appearance and powers. It is likely that the ghouls are another of BHM's uncanny allies. The team will take further steps to locate and stop the BHM behind these crimes.