Ye Olde Editorial

BILL G. WILSON

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For future issues, I am trying to secure more contributions from some of the top names in fandom. By the way, I would like to take time out to thank THE OUT SPEAKS #4, 1966, and its editors for allowing me to print the illustrations of scores that appear on the book cover (Bob Anderson - pencil, Gary Dehnery - inks, and I sketched in the title logo and the background) and also for letting me write the tribute to Alex Raymond & for supplying me with the necessary reproductions from his collection to engrave the illustrations. I'd also like to thank you and all of you out there who have helped out in some small way. I always have and always will appreciate it greatly.

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Colin Ecton

Westerne Winners

written and drawn by
COLE ECTON

Ah yes those were the days...days when a gun only fired bullets not multi-paralytic rays. When a horse was the only form of transport not a super-atomic powered, indestructible, sideways-taken, faster-than-light transportation. Doc Blake still had to find his walking stick Tony Stark was a piece of shrug and Menace Richards, Storm and Grimm had never even contemplated being riddled with cosmic rays.

They were the days when the kids ran rampant, aids in name only. They were the roughest, toughest, fastest, shootingest, hard riding bunch of hoisters whenever needed anyone off at the pass. They were the days when the Tin Man of the Silver/Atlas/Marvel western heroes.

To any fan who remembers them names have a ring of magic about them, Texas Kid, Kingo Kid, Apache Kid, Rodeo Kid, Two Gun, Kid Colt. The list is endless. They ruled the roost at Marvel in those days.

The longest lived hero of them all is of course aid Colt, who has the distinction of bridging the gap from the forties to the present. Apart from Batman, Superman and Blackhawk who else can make that claim?

The Kid's origin has been printed several times during the last few years that every one must be acquainted with the story. The aid, then called Blake was highly skilled in the use of a gun because he had no wish to harm anybody he never carried a gun. When his father is murdered the kid buckles on his 45's and heads for town. When he corners the killer, he kills him in a fair fight. Because he never carried a gun he is thought inexperienced in it's use and is branded a coward by the townspeople who believe he couldn't have overpowered the villain in a fair fight. He flees and from then on becomes Kid Colt...Outlaw.

The early tales of the aid were amongst the best ever written, indeed it is no coincidence that the Kid Colt stories issued in the forties are among the best adventures of that period. The artists who worked on the strip were amongst the great, Joe Maneely, John Severin, Syd Shores, Russ Heath, Dick Ayers and of course the name of kid Colt would be without Jack Keli. Jack worked on the aid longer than any other artist.

Two Gun Kid has lasted almost as long as Kid Colt. He did have to undergo a metamorphosis to stand the pace. The only relation the present TUK has to the older version is the name. Gone is the black garbed gunfighter on his equally black stallion, Cyclone.
Two Gun Kids' origin was similar to that of Kid Colt. His rancher father was killed and the Kid gets revenge upon the killers. The difference between this and the origin of Kid Colt being the fact that TGG was branded an outlaw. The Kid's real name was Clay Harder. In some of the tales of the late forties the Kid was accompanied by a young companion. As if as a prelude of the change that was to come Cyclone suddenly switched from a black stallion to a pure white one.

Artists who worked on the Kid were Maneely, Severin, Heath, Shore, Isaka and the longest running artist Chuck Miller.

Like the Two Gun Kid, the Texas Kid also underwent a change although not as drastic a change as that of TGG. After his book folded in the late fifties, it reappeared in the fifties under another name. He was now called the Outlaw Kid. Both origins were similar a blind rancher with a son who has sworn never to use guns, even the confidants of the Kids were the same, an Indian and a Mexican. These two were later dropped in the Outlaw Kid series. The Texas Kid was called Lance Templeton and the Outlaw Kid Lance Temple.

The older version was the superior with Joe Maneely handling the art followed by an unnamed artist. Doug (Johnny Quest) Wildey did all the art for the Outlaw Kid.

The Black Rider was one of Marvel's greats. He lasted from the forties until well into the fifties, but he finally died despite efforts such as Jack Kirby handling the art chores.

Black Rider's uniform changed from time to time, depending upon the individual artist concerned. His mask fluctuated from a Lone Ranger type to one which covered the lower part of his face to one which covered his whole face.

In his other identity, the Mystery man of the western range was Mark Dr. Masters. He was a dead ringer for Clark Kent. I am unable to comment on ER's origin, never having read it.

I welcome any information on his or even more a copy of the story. Besides Syd Shore's other artists to work on KID were Maneely, Severin, Jey Scott, Tyke, AL Hartly, Dick Ayers and of course Jack Kirby.

My personal favorite amongst the Marvel galaxy of heroes is the Kingo Kid. Kingo was late in entering the field, he didn't appear until the middle fifties. Only three artists worked on this strip, two of them being Marvel's best, Joe Maneely and John Severin.

The third artist to handle Kingo was named Kidd, who at one time did the art chores on Flash Gordon. It was Maneely who did the origin story as well as the first six or so issues. John Severin did the following half dozen. Kidd was next in line and worked on the strip until Maneely returned. The origin of the Kid runs thus, his father, Cory Kidd, was a brilliant lawyer, his mother a Comanche princess. Because of this racial intermarriage hatred is felt by the townspeople for the couple. Finally the ranch is burned and the Kid's mother murdered and his father about to be lynched. The Kid, by this time grows to manhood, and his father with the aid of his Indian blood brother, Bull Knife. All three are branded outlaws.

The Kid's father and blood brother played important parts in the tales, rarely an issue passed by without them making an appearance. The Kid's real name was never used in the series.
The Apache Kid was one of the few Indian heroes to come from Marvel. His origin is unknown to me at present. He had two identities, The Apache Kid and Aloysious Sean, a roving cowboy. As Apache Kid he was a war chief of the Apache nation.

The most noticeable artist to work on the strip was Werner Roth. His work on AA was infinitely superior to his current work on the L-Men series.

Another Indian hero was Arrowhead. Arrowhead was an outcast of the Apache tribe, he was also regarded as a renegade by the army. He was later induced into the Apaches, but left them also. His only friend was an army scout called Andy. Joe Simon has handled all the art on this strip, and it was his best ever.

Matt, or as he was later known Kid Slade, was a short-lived character. He lasted barely half a dozen issues. Once again he was a creation of Joe Simon. The first issue boasted three tales, one by Keneally, one by Severin and one by the combined talents of both. This was as far as I know the only time these two great collaborators worked on a tale.

Art in later issues was by Simon and Roth.

Matt was quite the unlike many of the other Marvel heroes, in that his father was not a rancher. Matt and his father become unwitting accomplices in a bank robbery, and are outlawed. Matt's father is killed by the leader of the gang. Matt seeks revenge, he spends the years on the run and builds up a reputation as "the wizard of the Cross Draw."

One day Matt save a young girl from a blazed panther. The girl turns out to be the state governor's daughter. For this Matt is pardoned and becomes an undercover marshall. His first assignment is to break up the hold-up in the wall gang. Matt does this and fulfills a vow, the leader of the gang is the man who killed his father. Matt promptly kills him.

Marvel had a lot of minor heroes some who never graduated to their own books. One such hero was Texas Taylor, who later became the Prairie Kid.

Possibly to combat falling sales figures a new character was created to share the limelight with Kid Colt in Gunsmoke Western. This was the Gunsmoke Kid. The only good thing about this character was the art it was by Jack Davis. The kid boasts that he can cut his teeth on a sixgun and proves it by identifying his father's killer by teethmarks on the handle of the gun the killer stole after the murder.

Two of the last Westerns to come from Marvel were the Kid from Dodge City and the Kid from Texas. Neither was very notable. The Dodge City Kid was by Ron Heck and the one from Texas by Joe Simon, who sadly drew many figures out of proportion in this strip.

Most of the Westerns were written by Don Rico, Sonny Hart, or Stan Lee.
A TRIBUTE TO...

by

Ken Liozerty

Even in his early years, Alex Raymond's art and high adventure stories swept the public's imagination. After working for his neighbor (Russ Westover, creator of "Tillie"

A WATERCOLOR BY RAYMOND WHEN HE WAS A MARINE COMBAT ARTIST IN WORLD WAR II ABOARD AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER.

the Toilet"), Raymond then forth in Lyman Young's "Tin Tyler's Luck", an African setting.

In 1934 came "Jungle Jim" and "Flash Gordon" under his own name, and realistic art with vivid action. As the years passed, Raymond's art grew photographic with brush work that, when printed, had the appearance of fine line pen work.

When World War II started, Raymond fretted to put his gift to the war effort, but it had to be the Marines. Only by quitting "Jungle Jim-Flash Gordon" could he be a U.S. Marine Corps. Combat Artist.

In 1944, Raymond went aboard the U.S.S. Gilbert Islands aircraft carrier. He was seen daily on the flight deck making sketches. Raymond's "sketches" turned into news photographs of the men at war around him. (see watercolor above)

On his return from the Pacific, Raymond would not re-enter the fantasy world of Flash Gordon, but wanted a realistic current feature, and so the sophisticated detective "Hed Kirby" was created. (right)

Now, the Raymond style predominated and influenced countless other adventure strip artists. At a new high in his career, Alex Raymond was killed in a sports car crash on Sept. 6, 1956.

But his style goes on, and the old "Jungle Jim-Flash Gordon" drawings have been brought to the light again by many fans that were born in later years and had never seen those early features.

Certainly it is a tribute to a great artist.
When Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos first hit the comic stands in 1963, the Marvel Comics Group had produced another big winner. No other war magazine was to come close to it in quality, not even now. Fury is known as the war mag for people who hate war mags, and I believe that this is true. Neither Charlton, nor DC can ever hope to pick up their war mags at the same rate. The only possible comic that could dethrone Fury is the new Captain Savage And His Leatherneck Raiders—but at this time its first issue is only out, and therefore it is virtually impossible to tell its future. Let us examine the reasons why Fury is such a high quality mag.

First of all the stories are very interesting and more true to life than its competitor’s mags. With three writers already having worked on this mag (that’s unusual with Marvel), it has lots of plot variety.

The art in this mag is very good—and was very good when it first appeared. Kirby, who in my opinion is the greatest comic artist of all time, started the art in this mag off, and you can bet your MMMS button that it was sensational art. When Dick Ayers came to Fury he created the present Fury image. (By Fury, I mean the mag, not the man.) All art was excellent until John Severin took over—then oops! The art was the worst I’ve seen. Severin just isn’t the type that can draw the Howlers. But then Ayers again—with Severin inking. Now that is one of the best art teams in existence! So art-wise, this mag has been first class, most of the time.

Back to the stories. Stan Lee, is obviously #1 in writing comics (we have proof—he won the Best Writer Award at the 1967 New York Comic Con). His work on the Howlers was sensational. This mag is one of the few to lose one of their main characters so early in the mag’s existence. "Junior" Juniper was killed in issue #2—now that’s an example of realism. Also, Fury’s girl was killed in action in issue #13—more realism. Not only that, but Dino Kemelli was almost killed also. Two new Howlers have entered the mag since its beginning, which has made for a variety of characters. With so many good-characterized Howlers, stories can be centered around any one of them, making one of them a hero, for about 20 issues! (That is if they just did that). It’s the way that Roy Thomas wrecked up the Howlers when he began to write them, I think he added new life to them. In fact, Roy may have done a better job than Stan himself. A very interesting story done by Roy was the origin of the Howlers, in which Mr. Thomas proves he’s a good writer. Then came Gary Friedrich, who once, the Howlers reached the peak of their greatness & are still there now. Gary, for some reason has a knack of writing fantastic war stories, and is undoubtedly the best Fury writer yet. I think that Annual #2 was one of the greatest comics I’ve ever read. It surely was Fury’s best, while it was probably better than any of the super hero annuals published. About the characters—it would take too much room for me to go into them all at once, but maybe in a future issue I’ll do...
On Fanzines
by Steven Carlberg

One topic today is: What Makes A Good Fanzine?

There are several reasons people will buy fanzines: good artwork, discussions, articles on Golden Age comics, opinion columns, fanzine strips, fan stories by fans, and possibly for other things. As far as I know, there are only two reasons fanzines publish fanzines. One is to make money and the other is to have fun. Naturally, if a fanzine is neither making nor has fun, it is not fulfilling its purpose as a fanzine editor. Some fanzines only make money and do not have much fun. I suspect that Gordon Lox, editor-publishers of The Rocket’s Blind/Comiccollector, may fall into this category. Other fanzines do not make much money, but have a lot of fun publishing, I am one of these. My fanzine made a profit of 90c on one issue, but I had a whole lot of fun publishing the thing and would have not given up the privilege for the entire amount of my profits. Bill Wilson, editor of The Collector, openly admits that his publication is a "non-profit, amateur magazine." Many other fanzines don’t make any effort to disperse their motives by offering to trade their fanzines for other fanzines. Apparently having fun is the primary purpose of fanzine publishing, and making money is only an accessory after the fact. As Steve Johnson said in his "I Believe" column in The Collector 5/6, "when the fun in fan publishing fails to materialize, the next issue of said fanzine will probably fail to materialize also."

As I said, one of the reasons a fan will buy a fanzine is for fun artwork. What makes good artwork? Is it artwork with a professional look, as if it could have been used in a professional comic? Is it artwork with a "message," that tells the reader something as does an editorial cartoon, or just to make a joke? Not being an artist myself, it’s hard for me to say just what is good and what is bad, but as an editor, I can tell you that the only artwork that will be readily accepted is that which can be immediately recognized as what it is. Therefore, if the artwork is intended to make the reader laugh, it should be easy to tell that this is what it is. By the same token, if it is meant to be a serious study of an artist’s style, the reader reading it should be able to tell that, without the need for my explanatory text. Another reason fans buy fanzines is for articles on Golden Age comics. Steve Johnson has already covered the subject of what makes a good GCA article well, so I won’t go into it. In brief, it takes an article with a reasonable number of facts and well-written so that it can be read with pleasure and not just used as a guide for information.

What makes a good amateur strip? This question goes much deeper than others, as a good amateur strip may be Johny Chambers’ "Little Green Dinosaur" or a short story of a man on a raft in the middle of the ocean going mad from delirium of his brain cells. With amateur strips, the only purpose is not entertainment. Sometimes it is to show what can be done without having to worry about the comics code; sometimes it is to show what can be done without making any difference if the code has been in effect. Bill Spicer’s Graphic Story magazine regularly features "amateur" strips of an experimental nature which are dedicated to nothing in particular except quality. He wants to further the comic medium, and tries his best to show how it can be done. Sometimes the reason for an amateur strip is to show off an artist. Sometimes it is to show off writing ability. Sometimes, unfortunately, it is to take up space.

What makes a good fanzine story? Good science fiction? Solid mystery reading? Horror? Satire? I contend that it can be any or all of these. However, it must be good. Too many fanzine stories today seem to have been written just to take up space. Amateur strips and fanzine stories are both done for a similar purpose, and that is to give the writer and/or artist a chance to practice before submitting a script to a professional company. Let’s face it— all or most fans would love to be professional writers in the comics business. Myself included. Fanzines are the perfect places for fans to practice their writing before trying to go pro. Many editors of fanzines begin their careers with that thought in mind and wind up with fanzines chock-full of one-shots and fan stories but no serious articles on opinion columns and not very often any letter columns.

Letter columns? That is another ingredient in the recipe for a good fanzine. All fans enjoy letter columns, and the cartoons themselves aren’t really done without one for their zine if they want to know what needs to be improved. These are letter columns in professional comic books, so fan clubs might as well copy the pros there and have a lettercol in their zines, too. Many fans get their letter columns in the lettercol columns of comic books before they even enter fandom. And certainly no fan is now alive who doesn’t enjoy getting to criticize a zine publisher.

What makes a good opinion column? That depends on what the opinion column is about. If it’s about, say, recent comics, then it should offer opinions on the recent stories, editorial changes, artists, and all other basis where heroes are due. Another variation on the opinion column is the comic reviews column. In this, as in all opinion columns, it is utterly necessary that the writer lets his own feeling be known. He’s supposed to let everyone know if there’s a good zine out worth buying, and he is similarly obligated to warn his reading public when a dog comes along that is nothing more than a waste of money. For instance, I might, if doing a zine review column, tell everyone that there is a newsletter out monthly from Robert A. Denen, Edmond, Oklahoma 73034, to all members of WA-F that has material on movies, tapes, comic books, pulps, and science fiction that any “multi-fan” will love and any fan of one of those specialties mentioned will not dislike it either. I’d go on to say that the newsletter’s name is OF and it costs $2.00 a year to join. This would be what is known as a “good review”. Why did I give OF a good review? Because
I liked it? Perhaps. Or perhaps there is a membership drive on and as a member, I get a free gift for plugging it in my column. Then I might go on to mention Jerry Bails's publication, The Variantologist. I might say that it is a poorly done, mis-represented little zine, which, despite all its advertising, is nothing more than a sheet of typewriter paper folded in half. It isn't worth your money. Why? Because simply I didn't like it. Perhaps. Or perhaps I am an enemy of Dr. Bails even since he had me voted out of a club I belonged to, and I have been looking for a way to get back at him ever since. As a reader, you've just been left to enjoy any kind of an opinion column, because that's exactly what they're going to have—opinions. And these opinions are more likely to be prejudiced.

What makes good advertising? This is almost self-explanatory. The only bad advertising I have seen in a fanzine was on page 4 of The Rocket's Blast/Comicolor, and the utter lack of results kept another advertisement of its type from appearing again. (In case you didn't see the ad, it was an ad from one of those novelty places, with a couple of items that were "obscene" or "sassy").

Now: What Makes A Good Fanzine? We haven't really said, have we? Zines may be combinations of all these, or may have little more than one of them. The way a fanzine can be good is to be outstanding in its field. Rocket's Blast is definitely outstanding in its field, but the way a little ditto zine, Nostalgia, has been coming along, it looks as though the 80's is soon going to have some serious competition. Fantasy Illustrated and Neo-Stylized Comics are both near the top for masterpieces, but Pumped and Graphic Showcase are both up there trying, too. (I'm-alpha is definitely the acknowledged #1 apazine, but that doesn't mean that #1 is better or that the other happens to be as good.)

But our zine! It's better! Better than what? Who cares? As long as a zine seems better than something, there's hope for it.

Terry Golightly

FAN
FOCUS

THE FIRST ISSUE OF THIS NEW ZINE FEATURES...

Interview with Ray Bradbury!
Info on L.A.'s WEEKLY COMICON!
ARTICLES by Dwight Decker, Ted Belmonte, Mark Evanier, James Shull
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Flash Gordon
by Bill G. Wilson
published by Nostalgia Press

PREPAID—being the avid Flash Gordon fan & collector that I am, I felt that the best edition to my collection would be the collection of old Ace reprints of Flash published in a large volume by Nostalgia Press, Inc., Box 293, Franklin Square, N.Y. 11010. This page is dedicated to any opinions & views on this outstanding book.

Flash Gordon by Alex Raymond available from Nostalgia Press, Inc.
Box 293
Franklin Square
New York 11010


I know that as soon as some of you see the price you will probably disregard everything I am about to say. Well, if you're that kind then it's no use for you to read any farther. There is no way I could convince you that this magnificent collector's item is a treasure for any fan. As most of you know, Alex Raymond's art was not as fine in today. It provided enjoyment for both the reader and the artist. Besides drawing the strip, Raymond also wrote it; while his uncle's lettering gave it the super-ultra which was needed to compete with such strip greats as Tarzan and Buck Rogers.

The unique thing about Raymond's work when he first started Flash Gordon, was that he was only 25 when he began to do them. His great art, combined with his writing technique and his uncle's magnificent lettering, made Flash Gordon the most popular strip at the time. And, even though Raymond has long since passed away, whenever a person mentions Flash Gordon, one's mind immediately goes to Alex Raymond, without whom Flash would not be "alive" today.

Well, back to the book. It is clothbound, 3x14 in size, and contains embossed silver lettering & 2 small pictures on the cover. The dust jacket (front, back, & inside flaps) contains beautiful color work by Raymond. The inside front & back covers feature various reproductions of Raymond's strip art. The first strip in the book is the very first Flash Gordon strip (dated January 7, 1934) and is reproduced in full color on high-grade paper, while all the others are in black & white. Flash Gordon drawings grace every page, & certain pages are included from the publisher, etc. Finally, on the back side of the dust jacket, is a full color reproduction of a 1935 comic which can also be found elsewhere in the book. Even, if worth the money. — Ml
BATS

The Batman debuts in '66 as an almost-instant success. Even though he was a success, he was "ixed" for the '68 thru '69 season.

The show brought in the news, Martha Bitt. She became known as the Catwoman on TV. When she became well-known as an actress, she also became known as a political leader. Will she help Batman's campaign for president??

Adam West is the perfect actor for Batman, except for his physique, but

Barry Ward is Robin. (Anyone want to argue??)

The villains that have appeared are: Joker, Penguin, Riddler, Catwoman, King Tut, Mr. Freeze, Mr. Market, Bookworm, Koo Koo, and a half-dozen more. (An interesting thing to note is that Catwoman has been played by 4 different actresses!) Is Batman doomed to die again?

NEXT ISSUE: THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

WHO IS REALLY NUMBER ONE?

NEWS & VIEWS from Bill G. Wilson, Editor

T-BELL #75 (April, 1969) features an adoption of Edgar Rice Burroughs' TARZAN AND THE LIZARD MEN. It's entitled "THE SURPRISING GIANT". Also from Gold Key, HOCUS POCUS #28 (May, 1969) reprints the very first Magnus story.

Marvel, at the present time, planning a special, one-shot, large-sized, professional Spiderman magazine which will sell for $2. This will probably be very similar in format to Warren's CREEPY & EERIE titles. All the artwork will be done by John Romita, and the cover will be a full color painting, similar to the covers of most of Gold Key's titles. It should prove quite interesting, & if things work out OK, some others of Marvel's super-heroes will be featured in magazines like this.

Right after his smashing debut in SHOWCASE #73, The Creeper gets his own mag this month! (see cover reproduction below) This character shows great promise, and should become one of the most popular heroes in D.C.'s line.

ALFREDO, a new concept in heroes, will debut in SHOWCASE #74 under the pencil of Andy Hest. Also, rumor has it that after this one exhibition in SHOWCASE he will get his own book, a Steve Ditko's Creeper. Speaking of Steve, he will be illustrating THE HAWK AND THE DOVE, which will premiere in SHOWCASE #75. How don't tell me that they'll get THYRE OWN BOOK!

By now, you've probably read "The Review Page" in this issue that reviews Nostalgia Press Flash Gordon books. Well, it just might happen that Nostalgia may publish other books such as this on Prince Valiant, Magan's Torzan, and others as well. We'll all hold our fingers crossed for the best, & may even end up with some truly great publications.

ABOTT & COSTELLO #3 (July, 1968) features Costello becomes "Captain Costello" and shares a thrill-a-minute (?) adventure with the "Zen Men". This story is cover-featured. Also in the same issue, ABIT meets Torzan, though they don't mention him by name. In the story, you can find the caption saying "Don't say my name. You want Charlton to get sued?? Very interesting!

ODDITIES from Robert Kurosaki: On pg. 32 of JLA.plast panel, the Martian Lash sponsored chest bands are missing. They've gone again on pg. 34, panel 5, Strange Tales #165 lists the next issue's stories as "The Reunion" & "The Ancient One Lives". But pg. 38 features "If Death Is My Destiny" & "Nothing Can Hold... Voltaire".

LATENT FOR COLLECTORS:

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Send case for free lists. Send your want lists, I have many hard to get titles and will quote lot prices as well as individual items. Reasonable prices. Also movie and stage play material. Thank you.
THE ONLY CRIME FIGHTER (ALIAS BILL BAILEY) BY MARK MILLMAN

EPISODE SEVEN: GOOD IS MUCH BETTER THAN EVIL 'CAUSE IT'S NICE.

REMEMBER... CRIME FIGHTER WAS ON THE VERGE OF VIC- TORY AS HE STALKED THE (SHudder) MAD BAKER!

GREAT BRAIN! WHAT WAS THAT GREAT IDEA YOU HAD?

HERES WHERE I LEAVE.

OUTSIDE -- COPs! BREAK IT DOWN, MEN! CHARGE!

GREAT JOB C.F. WE WERE WAITING FOR YOU TO FLUSH OUT THE MAD BAKER, WE WERE TIRED OF WAITING SO WE WERE GONNA BREAK IN BUT YOU GOT HIM OUT, YOU'RE UP FOR A FULL TIME JOB, Fella! Thus ends the story of crime fighters. For the first time the good people of Los Angeles will now sleep at night without worry. Because crime fighter is there! The End.

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