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# Twelve™



A THRILLING NOVEL OF  
**TOMORROW**

By J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI  
& CHRIS WESTON



# DAILY BUGLE *metr*



Richard Jones, fighting crime in the forties as **The Phantom Reporter**.

## THE TWELVE

A THRILLING NOVEL  
OF TOMORROW

by

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BERLIN,  
GERMANY.

WEDNESDAY,  
APRIL 25, 1945.



THE RAT WAS TRAPPED  
IN A BUNKER ON THE  
WILHELMSTRASSE...AND THE  
END WAS FINALLY AT HAND.





EVERY ALLIED SUPERPOWER, EVERY MAN, WOMAN OR HALF-ASSED SIDEKICK WHO HAD EVER WORN A COSTUME, HAD DESCENDED UPON BERLIN.

DYNAMIC MAN SAID YOU COULDN'T THROW A ROCK WITHOUT HITTING SOMEBODY IN A MASK AND TIGHTS.



"AND THOSE ARE JUST THE PANSIES IN THE GERMAN ARMY," HE SAID, THEN ADDED--

"THEY'D PROBABLY RUN EVEN FASTER IF THEY WEREN'T WEARING THOSE STILETTO HEELS."

CURT WAS ALWAYS SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT. HE MADE A POINT OF SAYING THEM.

WHICH MADE SOME OF US WONDER IF MAYBE IT WAS D.M. WHO HAD SOMETHING BESIDE HIS COSTUME HIDDEN DEEP IN HIS CLOSET.





WHEN TWELVE OF US WENT INTO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE S.S. TO CHECK FOR SNIPERS AND OTHER OPPOSITION FORCES, IT WASN'T LIKE WE WERE A TEAM OR SOMETHING. THE GROUP CONSISTED OF WHOEVER HAPPENED TO BE NEAREST THE PLACE.

IT WAS STRICTLY LUCK OF THE DRAW.

WHICH IS NOT TO SAY WE DIDN'T KNOW EACH OTHER. SOME OF US HAD EVEN FOUGHT SIDE-BY-SIDE BEFORE. THE REST WE KNEW MAINLY BY REPUTATION.



THERE WAS MISTER E, WHO I NEVER SAW DEMONSTRATE ANY ACTUAL POWERS. I THINK HE WAS MAINLY ABOUT THE LOOK--

--AND MASTER MIND EXCELLO. WORD IN THE TRENCHES WAS THAT IN ADDITION TO BEING MASSIVELY STRONG, HIS SENSES WERE EXTRAORDINARILY SHARP. HE COULD SEE HALFWAY TO THE MOON AND HEAR A PIN DROP A MILE AWAY. THE PERFECT GUY TO HAVE ON POINT IN ENEMY TERRAIN.



MOST OF ALL, HE WAS ABLE TO VISUALIZE WHERE HE WAS DESTINED TO BE AT ANY MOMENT. NOT WHERE HE WANTED TO BE NECESSARILY, BUT WHERE HE WAS FATED TO BE.

YOU'RE SURE WE'RE GOING THE RIGHT WAY?

YES, THIS IS THE RIGHT PATH. BUT THE WAY IS BLOCKED. ROCKMAN--



--IT APPEARS WE ARE IN NEED OF YOUR PARTICULAR STRENGTHS.

ROCKMAN WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE ULTRA-STRONG, BIG-SHOT LEADER OF A SECRET RACE OF PEOPLE WHO LIVED UNDERGROUND. AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT HE SAID, AND AS FAR AS I COULD SEE, WHAT HE BELIEVED.

NOBODY EVER REALLY KNEW IF THAT WAS TRUE OR NOT.



BUT AT TIMES LIKE THIS...  
I DON'T THINK ANYBODY MUCH  
CARED ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.



BLACK WIDOW AND CAPTAIN WONDER  
COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE DIFFERENT  
ON A BET. C.W. WAS STRAIGHT-UP,  
MIDDLE-CLASS, HONORABLE AND  
MASSIVELY STRONG. RUMOR WAS HE  
HAD A WIFE AND KIDS BACK HOME.

AS FOR THE WIDOW, WORD WAS THAT  
SHE'D MADE SOME KIND OF PACT WITH  
THE DEVIL HIMSELF, GIVING HER ALL  
KINDS OF DARK POWERS, INCLUDING  
THE ABILITY TO KILL WITH A TOUCH.



ALL I KNOW IS THERE WERE A LOT  
OF G'S AND OTHER GUYS WHO WERE  
PREPARED TO TAKE THAT CHANCE.

BLUE BLADE AND LAUGHING MASK WERE WHAT SOME OF  
THE HEROES WITH REAL POWERS CALLED TOURISTS. SHOW-  
OFFS WOULD BE MORE LIKE IT. WITHOUT REAL POWERS, GUYS  
LIKE THIS WERE JUST IN IT FOR THE PRESS AND THE BABES.

YEAH, OKAY. LAUGHING  
BOY WAS AS GOOD  
WITH THOSE '45'S AS  
BLADE WAS WITH THAT  
SWORD. BUT STILL...

HEY, BLADE...  
WHAT HAPPENED?  
LEAVE THE REST OF  
THAT OUTFIT AT HOME  
WITH THE TAFFETA  
SKIRT?

QUIET.



THE FIERY MASK, HOWEVER, HE WAS  
BIG-TIME LETHAL. BY ONE REPORT, HE'D  
WIPE OUT AN ENTIRE COMPANY OF  
NAZIS BY WILLING A FIRESTORM TO  
APPEAR AROUND THEM. YOU COULD HEAR  
THE SCREAMING FROM HALF A MILE AWAY.

AS FOR THE WITNESS,  
HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY  
POWERS. JUST HIS FISTS--

--BUT HE COULD  
REMEMBER EVERY EVIL  
ACT HE'D EVER SEEN,  
AND HAD SWORN TO  
AVENGE THEM ALL.

ON THE WAY IN, HE SAID HE'D  
JUST COME FROM SEEING A  
PLACE CALLED AUSCHWITZ.

NO POWERS.



BUT NOT ONE OF US COULD LOOK HIM IN THE EYE  
WITHOUT FEELING LIKE WE'D PEERED INTO SOMETHING  
DARK AND ANGRY AND VERY, VERY DANGEROUS.





BUT THE ONE THAT UNNERVED ME THE MOST WAS ELECTRO. BECAUSE HE WASN'T HUMAN. WASN'T EVEN ALIVE. HE WAS SOME KIND OF ROBOT, CREATED AND CONTROLLED BY A GUY HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD. YOU COULD SEE THE IMAGE OF THE GUY IN ELECTRO'S FACEPLATE. THE TWO WERE IN CONSTANT MENTAL CONTACT.

SOMETHING ABOUT THAT ARRANGEMENT JUST CREEPED ME OUT IN A BIG WAY.

THAT'S IT...UP AHEAD AND LEFT.



FINALLY...THERE WAS ME. DICK JONES, ALSO KNOWN AS THE PHANTOM REPORTER. AND YEAH, I GUESS I'M ONE OF THOSE TYPES THE SUPER-GUYS WOULD CALL A TOURIST.

NO POWERS. A GOOD BOXER. NOT TOO BAD IN THE LOOKS DEPARTMENT. NOT AFRAID OF MUCH...BUT STILL NO POWERS.



I DID MY PART BACK HOME, BEFORE PEARL HARBOR, BUT WHEN THE WAR STARTED, I HAD TO DO SOMETHING, SO...

ANYWAY...SUFFICE IT TO SAY I WAS WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE WITH SOME OF THESE GUYS.



BUT, TOURIST OR NOT, I WAS DAMNED IF I WAS GOING TO LET THEM KNOW IT.

CAREFUL... I HEAR SOMETHING UP AHEAD.

OKAY, EVERYONE, FORM UP...NO STRAGGLERS.

YES, THIS--



--THIS IS WHERE IT HAPPENS.

THIS IS WHERE WHAT--



LOOK OUT!













AMERICA'S PATRIOTIC MYSTERY-MEN,  
THRUST INTO A TIME OF  
UNSPEAKABLE *WONDERS*  
AND TERRORS!



THEY LIVED ON  
ACROSS THE AGES!  
*An* **EXTRAORDINARY TALE**  
*of* **THE WORLD TO COME!**  
IN **TWELVE** PARTS.