

# PORTAL

By Michael San Giacomo

Art: MIKE GUSTOVICH!

The portal is a vehicle that allows plucking of MLJ superheroes from the Golden Age and temporarily bring them into the present, a present where The Mighty Crusaders have been missing for many years. It's a world without superheroes.

The mirror is an old device from the very first appearance of The Fly back in 1959. It was never really Young Tommy Troy used it to contact Turan from the Fly world, who gave young Tommy his fly powers. It was rarely (if ever) seen again, same with Turan. Troy lived in a spooky old house with his foster parents.

In this proposal, the mirror will be used as a portal to literally pull 1940s Golden Age characters into the modern day for a mission. The modern world is without superheroes, they all died, disappeared or were jailed by the government. (That's a subplot to be explored later). The portal is stuck on one day in 1944. By manipulating the carvings on the side, the portal can move geographically around the world. It tends to focus on superheroes.

A government agency, run by a 50-year-old general later revealed to be a de-powered Steel Sterling, wants to use the portal to find and free the long-missing Might Crusaders, last seen battling The Spider.

He calls up Golden Age versions of the current Crusaders (The Comet, The Shield, Black Hood and The Hangman) in the hope that they could home in on the location of the current selves.

It works. The Crusaders are held captive by The Spider, who is using them and dozens of other superheroes as living batteries to feed his now-monstrous, gluttonous and very spider-like self.

At the end of the mission, General Sterling vows to use The Portal to pull out heroes for missions.

The Crusaders are back, as are a host of formerly captive superheroes, all anxious to face the new crop of evil villains that have taken hold in their absence.

I propose a mini-series that would accomplish several things: restore the Mighty Crusaders (and explain their youth, health and absence) and set up The Portal as a source for future stories using those wonderful heroes of the Golden Age.

With Mike Gustovitch on board, old fans will flock to the book. I'm no Mark Waid, but I have a decent following thanks to my work on Phantom Jack and Tales of the Starlight Drive-in and more than 15 years of comic reviews in the Plain Dealer and Newsarama.

Below is a sample script of the first seven pages.

Page 1:

Big panel:

A crane with a wrecking ball is poised outside a ranshackle mansion, the house is skinny, not sprawling, and has seen better days. Show a beat-up mailbox that has the name MARCH on it.

A foreman, beefy guy smoking a cigar, is shouting.

FOREMAN: Let's go you lazy bastards. Time is money, let's knock this place down so we can get lunch. MOVE IT!

Page 2:

Panel 1:

The wrecking ball hits the house and tears it open.

SPX: SMASH

Panel 2:

A closer look insides the house. Now exposed by the ball, we see a room that is full of junk, including a huge trunk, an ornate, wood-carved, oval mirror about 7 feet tall and a skeleton dressed in some kind of body stocking.

Panel 3:

Foreman sees it, holds up his hand, looks worried.

FOREMAN:

Holy... what is that? STOP. STOP.

Page 3:

Panel 1:

Foreman carefully climbs into the room.

FOREMAN: mumbling, this is all I need. a freaking body. we're never gonna get out of here now.

Panel 2:

He's in the room now, looking at the body. Another man stands beside him.

FOREMAN: This isn't a skeleton, it's looks more like a dried-up bug. What the hell is this?

Panel 3:

The second man is staring at the mirror, a shocked look on his face. We see the back of the mirror. He is pointing at the front of the mirror.

SECOND MAN: Never mind that. Look at this.

Page 4:

Whole page. Inside the mirror show the Shield fighting Nazis in some war-torn city ripped from time. Go nuts with this page. Feel free to draw Shield's sidekick, Dusty, in the background.

Page 5:

TITLE: PORTAL

Panel 1: Interior of a military office. A serious looking general is seated at his desk, two men standing in front of it. Between them is the mirror, still showing the Shield fighting Nazis. The figures are moving.

GENERAL: So the dead body was some kind of alien-bug thing?

MAN 1: Yes sir. It's name was Turan. According to our files, it was some kind of emissary from another dimension. It had a connection with the free agent called The Fly. Neither has been seen for decades.

Panel 2:

General walking toward the mirror, still showing the Shield. (NOTE: THE GENERAL IS ABOUT 50, BURLY. IT TURNS OUT HE IS THE RETIRED STEEL STERLING WHO AGED VERY SLOWLY.)

GENERAL: And this is The Shield fighting Nazis? Are we actually looking through a window into the past?

MAN 1: Yes sir. It appears that we are observing an event that took place on June 12, 1944 in a small city outside Berlin. We found records of an assault by The Shield and several others on a Nazi stronghold. We're watching that assault.

Panel 3:

General puts his hand toward the mirror.

GENERAL: Amazing.

MAN 1: Sir, STOP right there.

Panel 4:

General stops, looks pissed.

Excuse me? Are you giving me orders?

MAN 1: Yes sir, I mean so sir. I mean, it's dangerous to get too close to the glass.

Panel 5:

MAN 1; You see it's not just a window. It's a portal.

Page 6:

Panel 1: The man steps in front of the mirror and stares.

MAN 1: Watch carefully.

Panel 2:

The man reaches through the glass, which shimmers at the point of contact, and picks up a brick from the rubble.

The General is amazed.

GENERAL: How did you...?

Panel 3:

The man strikes a Nazi closest to the glass across the skull, an act which is noticed by the Shield.

MAN: Hah, I always wanted to hit a Nazi. You see general, we can actually affect the reality of the past, though it's not something that should be done lightly.

Panel 4:

The man starts to pull his arm back. As he does, The Shield grabs it. The man looks shocked.

MAN1: Holy. He's got me!

GENERAL: PULL OUT!

Page 7:

Full page: The man pulls his arm out of the mirror and The Shield comes through with it. The scene is a confused Shield 3/4 through the mirror and, of course, the people in the room are just as shocked.