

THE BLACK HOOD

by Al Camy
AND
Cliff Campbell

MAN OF MYSTERY



A NEW FIGURE ZOOMS ONTO THE HORIZON OF LAW AND ORDER... THE BLACK HOOD, MAN OF MYSTERY.... THE GREATEST FORCE FOR TRUTH AND JUSTICE THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN !..... BUT FIRST, OUR STORY STARTS IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, WITH OFFICER KIP BURLAND PATROLLING HIS BEAT.....

HOW DY, KIP, HOW'S TRICKS TODAY?

YOU GONNA REFEREE THE P.A.L. BOUTS TONIGHT, OFFICER KIP?

COULDN'T BE ANY BETTER MR. KAHN!

THE NEIGHBORHOOD CERTAINLY HAS BEEN PEACEFUL SINCE KIP CAME ON THIS BEAT!

IT CERTAINLY HAS! AND ALL THE CHILDREN IDOLIZE HIM, TOO!



TEN MINUTES TILL MIDNIGHT. WELL, I GUESS IT'L JUST MEANDER PAST THE OLD WOODROW MANSION, BEFORE I KNOCK OFF FOR THE NIGHT!



WELL / WHAT GOES ON THERE!



STRANGE..... HE'S IN A MASQUERADE COSTUME. I'D BETTER INVESTIGATE..... **HEY! YOU, STOP!**

STOP? WHY, BECAUSE A MERE POLICEMAN ORDERS ME TO?

HOLY JUPITER..... WHAT IS THIS, A MAN OR A CORPSE?



FOOL / YOU DARE TO INTERFERE WITH THE SKULL!



INSOLENT MEDDLER..... YOU SHALL PAY FOR INJURING MY DIGNITY!



MAN OR CORPSE, INDEED! YOUR BROTHER OFFICERS SHALL FIND YOU WITH THESE FEW BAUBLES IN YOUR HAND..... AND ARREST YOU FOR THE CRIME I HAVE JUST COMMITTED!



IV'VE BEEN LEADING THE POLICE SUCH A MERRY CHASE, THAT THEY'LL BE GLAD TO PIN MY CRIMES ONTO ANY VICTIM....THIS WILL BRING THEM IN A HURRY!



GOSH, KIP BURLAND! WITH A HAND FULL OF DIAMONDS! WHO'DA THOUGHT THAT OF HIM!



HE MUST HAVE TRIPPED WHEN HE CAME OFF THE BALCONY!

THERE'S NOTHING LOWER THAN TO USE YOUR UNIFORM AS A COVER, WHILE YOU ROB THE PEOPLE YOU'RE PAID TO PROTECT!



I TELL YOU I WAS FRAMED!

BURLAND'S STORY MAKES SENSE.....WE DON'T HAVE MUCH EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM, OTHER THAN THE DIAMONDS HE HAD, BUT THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN AFTER US FOR A LONG TIME, AND IF WE CONVICT HIM, THAT WILL KEEP THEM OFF OUR TRAILS!



AS POLICE COMMISSIONER IT IS MY DUTY TO RELIEVE YOU OF YOUR BADGE.....YOU WILL REPORT TO THE COUNTY JAIL TO GO ON TRIAL FOR GRAND LARCENY!



....OUT ON BAIL / THEY WON'T LISTEN TO ME, OR GIVE ME A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN. THE ONLY WAY I CAN CLEAR MYSELF, IS BY BRINGING IN THAT WALKING CORPSE WHO FRAMED ME!



FOR THE FEW DAYS PRECEDING HIS TRIAL, KIP PROWL'S THE STREETS OF THE CITY, EVER ON THE ALERT FOR THE MAN WHO HAD CAUSED HIS DISGRACE.....



ONE NIGHT-

FUR WAREHOUSES DON'T GET DELIVERIES AT THIS HOUR / THAT'S A ROBBERY... AND MAYBE MY FRIEND IS TIED UP WITH IT!



I CAN'T AFFORD TO PASS UP ANY BETS!



COME OUT INTO THE OPEN, RATS, I WANT ONE GOOD LOOK AT EACH OF YOUR FACES!



HEY, BOSS! A RAID!

FOOLS! IT'S JUST ONE MAN. TAKE CARE OF HIM!



YOU / YOU'RE THE MAN I WANT!



YOU'LL NEED MORE THAN BULLETS TO PIERCE THE SKULL'S CLOTHES. GET HIM, YOU INCOMPETENT SLOBS!



HOW'S THIS BOSS?

SPLENDID!



HE'S THE SAME FOOL POLICEMAN WHO TRIED TO CROSS ME ONCE BEFORE! HE SHALL HAVE NO MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO WASTE MY PRECIOUS TIME! GET RID OF HIM!



WHEN WE GET A COUPLE OF MILES UP THE POST ROAD WE'LL TOSS HIM OUT!

BETTER PUMP SOME SLUGS INTO HIM FIRST!

YEAH, WE'LL GIVE HIM A COUPLE, ON THE FLY, TOO, FOR GOOD MEASURE!

NOW, STEP ON IT, JOE. LET'S GET OUTA HERE QUICK!

SHOTS, / SOMEONE IS SHOOTING!

I HAD BETTER INVESTIGATE.....THEY CAME FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE ROAD!

HE'S STILL ALIVE, BUT ONLY INSTANT MEDICAL ATTENTION CAN KEEP THE FLAME OF HIS LIFE FROM FLICKERING OUT!

I PRAY THAT MY MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE DOES NOT FAIL ME NOW!

THE MAN HAS A REMARKABLE CONSTITUTION. I TOOK EIGHT BULLETS OUT OF HIM AND STILL HE LIVES!

FOUR DAYS NOW, THAT HE'S BEEN IN A COMA, HOVERING BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.... I WONDER WHO HE IS? HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A GANGSTER, AND YET IT IS EVIDENT THAT HE WAS TAKEN FOR A RIDE!



WH...WH...WHERE AM I?

IN THE CABIN OF A HERMIT, MILES DEEP IN THE WOODS. YOU CAME CLOSE TO DEATH LAD, BUT YOU'RE WELL ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY NOW!



I OWE MY LIFE TO YOU, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME.... I WAS A POLICEMAN, UNTIL I WAS FRAMED FOR A ROBBERY BY SOME CRIMINAL WHO LOOKS LIKE A LIVING CORPSE. THEN ALL THE YEARS I SERVED THE PUBLIC MEANT NOTHING.....



LOOKS LIKE A LIVING CORPSE, ER? THEN IT MUST BE THE SKULL. I KNOW HIM WELL. MANY YEARS AGO I WAS A SHERIFF IN A SMALL WESTERN TOWN, BUT HE MADE ME AN OUT-LAW. I SWORE THAT I'D STUDY AND WORK, AND BECOME SMART ENOUGH TO DEFEAT HIM.....



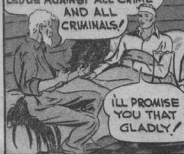
... BUT MY STUDIES TOOK A LONG TIME, AND NOW THAT I'M SMART ENOUGH, AGE HAS SAPPED MY STRENGTH, SO IN THE LONG BATTLE OF LIFE, I'VE BEEN DEFEATED BY THE SKULL!

NOT NECESSARILY, IM YOUNG, AND I CAN BE STRONG AGAIN. TEACH ME WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED.....



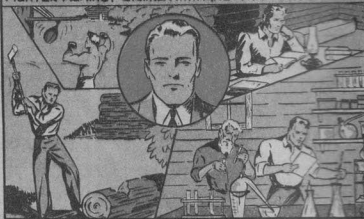
AND I'LL MAKE YOUR FIGHT AGAINST THE SKULL MY FIGHT. I TOO HAVE REASONS TO HATE HIM.....

NO, SON. THE SKULL ONLY REPRESENTS CRIME.... IF I TEACH YOU WHAT I KNOW, YOU MUST PROMISE TO USE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AGAINST ALL CRIME AND ALL CRIMINALS!



I'LL PROMISE YOU THAT GLADLY!

THUS KIP BURLAND STARTS HIS TRAINING BOTH TO REBUILD HIS STRENGTH, AND TO LEARN ALL OF SCIENCE, AND ALL OF KNOWLEDGE, IN ORDER TO MAKE HIMSELF THE WORLD'S GREATEST FIGHTER AGAINST CRIME!..... AND THEN.....



MANY MONTHS LATER.....
THE BLACK HOOD
 IS BORN!



WITH THE NAME AND COSTUME OF THE BLACK HOOD, YOU ARE NOW A MAN OF MYSTERY..... AND THAT YOU MUST REMAIN, FOR ONLY MYSTERY CAN STRIKE TERROR INTO THE HEARTS OF CRIMINALS!



I'LL DO THAT, AND YOU SHALL NOT REGRET HAVING MADE ME YOUR PUPIL..... AND NOW, GOODBYE!

IN THE MEANTIME, THE SKULL HAS BEEN MAKING A LAUGHING-STOCK OF THE LAW.....



....ROBBING WHEREVER HE PLEASES, SPREADING TERROR AMONG THE POLICE.....



....GIVING WARNINGS OF HIS CRIMES AND THEN BOLDLY COMMITTING THEM UNDER THE VERY EYES OF THE LAW!



HA! THE FOOL POLICE, THEY THINK THEY CAN COPE WITH THE SKULL..... HAM..... THIS IS INTERESTING, BARBARA SUTTON IS HAVING A MASQUERADE PARTY FOR HER DEBUT, IN TWO WEEKS.... AND THE RICHEST MEN AND WOMEN IN THE COUNTRY ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND!



IN THE SUTTON HOME IN NEW YORK.....

BE SURE YOU MAIL ALL THOSE INVITATIONS JAMES, AND BE SURE YOU CALL THE DECORATOR AND THE CATERER!



VERY GOOD, MRS. SUTTON!



WHAT IS THIS?

A NOTE, MADAM, ADDRESSED TO YOU!



DEAR MRS. SUTTON... I FORGIVE YOU FOR OVERLOOKING ME WHEN YOU SENT OUT INVITATIONS, BUT NEVER FEAR, THE SKULL SHALL NOT MISS YOUR DAUGHTER'S PARTY!



OH!



BARBARA/BARBARA!
THIS IS TERRIBLE!
HORRIBLE/AMFUL!
OH BARBARA
LOOK AT
THIS!

I'M
COMING,
MOTHER!



...KINDLY NOTIFY YOUR
OTHER GUESTS THAT
IF THEY FAIL TO AT-
TEND THE PARTY, I
SHALL VISIT THEM
LATER, PERSONALLY!

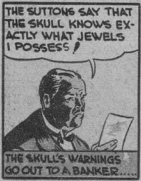


WHAT CAN WE DO? HE SAYS
THAT IF WE NOTIFY THE POLICE,
OR IF ANYONE WHO HAS NOT
ALREADY BEEN INVITED COMES
TO THE DEBUT, THE
TEN RICHEST
GUESTS WILL
BE KILLED!

WE'LL HAVE TO DO AS
HE SAYS, AND GO A-
HEAD WITH THE
PARTY!

WHAT'S HAPPEN-
ING!

THE SKULL'S
GOING TO VISIT
BARBARA'S
DEBUT!



THE SUTTONS SAY THAT
THE SKULL KNOWS EX-
ACTLY WHAT JEWELS
I POSSESS!

THE SKULL'S WARNINGS
GO OUT TO A BANKER.....



IF I DON'T WEAR ALL MY
JEWELS, THE SKULL WILL
KILL ME AND STEAL
MY JEWELS LATER!

A SOCIETY MATRON.....



....AND A PROMINENT YOUNG
LAWYER, DAVID SEYMON!!

THE SKULL
WILL TAKE THE
JEWELS HE WANTS
SOMETIME DURING
THE NIGHT, AND
ANY VICTIM WHO
RAISES AN
OUTCRY
WILL DIE!

IN NEW YORK, WE FIND THE BLACK
HOOD, BUT HE LIVES UNDER AN ALIAS,
FOR KIP BUR; AND IS AN OUTLAW,
WANTED FOR GRAND LARCENY
AND BAIL JUMPING!



THE NERVE OF THE SKULL ANNOUN-
CING HIS PLANS FOR THE SUTTON
DEBUT IN THE
PAPERS.... I
THINK I'LL
LOOK INTO
THIS!



THE NIGHT OF THE SUTTON
MASQUERADE DEBUT!

YOU'RE DAVID SEYMON,
AREN'T YOU?

YES, WHAT CAN
I DO FOR YOU?



PLENTY, GET INTO THAT ROOM.
AND GIVE ME YOUR INVITATION
TO THE SUTTON PARTY / I'M
GOING THERE, POSING AS YOU!

I CAN'T, I CAN'T, I MUST
GO TO THE PARTY MY-
SELF, THE SKULL WILL
KILL ME IF I DON'T!



SORRY I HAVE TO DO THIS
TO YOU, BUT IT'S
ABSOLUTELY
NECESSARY /
AND DON'T WORRY
I'LL SEE TO IT THAT
THE SKULL DOESN'T
HARM YOU!



MR. AND MRS. VAN RENSALEER, I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME!

HELLO BARBARA!

HAS THE SKULL COME YET? HAS ANYONE SEEN HIM?

NO, THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF HIM YET!



WHY, DAVID SEYMON! THAT'S QUITE A NOVEL COSTUME YOU'RE WEARING. ARE YOU FRIGHTENED BECAUSE THE SKULL IS COMING?

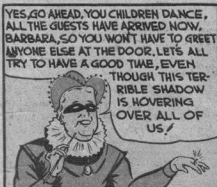
NOT PARTICULARLY!



YOU HAVE NO REASON TO BE FRIGHTENED, DAVID, AFTER ALL YOU HAVE NOTHING THAT THE SKULL COULD POSSIBLY WANT!

I GUESS THAT'S RIGHT, MRS. SUTTON!

C'MON DAVID, LET'S DANCE!



YES, GO AHEAD, YOU CHILDREN DANCE, ALL THE GUESTS HAVE ARRIVED NOW, BARBARA, SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO GREET ANYONE ELSE AT THE DOOR, LET'S ALL TRY TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, EVEN THOUGH THIS TERRIBLE SHADOW IS HOVERING OVER ALL OF US!



I DON'T KNOW WHY, DAVID, BUT SOMEHOW I LIKE YOU MUCH MORE TONIGHT THAN I EVER DID BEFORE!

THAT'S STRANGE, ISN'T IT?



HELP! HELP! I'VE BEEN ROBBED! MY PEARLS! MY PEARLS! UGH!



WHAT HAPPENED!

THE SKULL! THE SKULL!

THE SKULL! HE'S HERE!

OOOHH!



AS THE VICTIM, FALLS, DEAD ON HER FEET, HER FLESH STARTS SHRIVELLING, UNTIL HER FACE IS A CARICATURE OF THE SKULL!



LOOK! THIS IS WHAT KILLED HER! THE SKULL CAUGHT HER IN THE JUGULAR VEIN WITH A POISONED PELLET!

HE'S IN HERE, ALRIGHT, DISGUISED AS ONE OF THE GUESTS, AND HE'S USING A BLOW GUN TO QUIET HIS VICTIMS. THOSE PELLETS MUST BE DIPPED IN A POISON THAT EATS AWAY ALL THE FLESH OF THE FACE!



**SILENCE!
THE SKULL
SPEAKS!!**
YOU HAVE JUST SEEN
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN
MY VICTIMS ARE
NOISY.... I TRUST
MY NEXT CUS-
TOMER WILL BE
WISER AND STAY
ALIVE!

OH DEAR /IT'S HAPPENED/ HE'S HERE /WHO WILL BE NEXT/ I CAN'T STAND THIS /I THINK I'M GOING TO FAINT!



DON'T FAINT YET, MRS. SUTTON, WE'RE THE NEWS-PAPER PHOTOGRAPHERS, AND WE'D LIKE TO HAVE YOUR PERMISSION TO TAKE SOME PICTURES!

I CAN'T BE BOTHERED NOW, DAVID, BE A DEAR AND TAKE CARE OF THESE GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS!

I'D BE GLAD TO!

THE SUTTONS ARE CANDID CAMERA FIENDS, THEY'D LIKE IT IF YOU BOYS GET UP ON THE BALCONY AND TAKE ALL THE PICTURES YOU WANT WHILE NOBODY IS EXPECTING THEM!

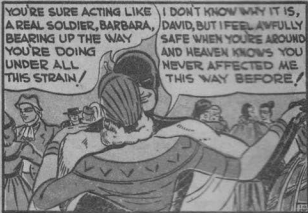


THAT'S RIGHT, YOU GET OVER THE OTHER SIDE, SO YOU CAN COVER THE ENTRANCE!

THERE'S JUST ONE THING I'VE GOT TO DEMAND, THE SUTTONS ARE VERY PARTICULAR ABOUT WHAT KIND OF PICTURES THEY ALLOW TO BE PRINTED.....SO YOU'D BETTER SET UP A DARK ROOM AND DEVELOP ALL THE PICTURES RIGHT AFTER YOU TAKE THEM, I'LL HAVE TO OKAY THEM ALL!



SURE THING!



YOU'RE SURE ACTING LIKE A REAL SOLDIER, BARBARA, BEARING UP THE WAY YOU'RE DOING UNDER ALL THIS STRAIN!

I DON'T KNOW WHY IT IS, DAVID, BUT I FEEL AWFULLY SAFE WHEN YOU'RE AROUND AND HEAVEN KNOWS YOU NEVER AFFECTED ME THIS WAY BEFORE!

SUDDENLY.....

I'VE BEEN ROBBED!
I'VE BEEN ROBBED!
I'VE BE.....UGH!



LOOK! HER HEAD
LOOKS LIKE A
SKULL!

SHE SHOULDN'T
HAVE SHOUTED!

WHO'LL BE NEXT?
I WONDER!

I CAN'T STAND
ANY MORE
OF THIS!



YOU'VE GOT TO BE BRAVE
MRS. SUTTON. EVERYTHING
WOULD BE ALL RIGHT,
IF THE VICTIMS
DIDN'T SCREAM!

WHAT
CAN WE
DO, DAVID?



I'LL SEE IF THE PHOTOGRAPHERS
HAVE CAUGHT ANYTHING
I CAN USE!



HMM! VERY
INTERESTING!



HE'S SMART, THIS SKULL.
DARNED SMART, BUT
HIS CONCEIT IN LETTING
THE PHOTOGRAPHERS
COME IS GOING TO
PROVE HIS UNDOING!



SHALL
WE
DANCE,
MRS.
SUTTON?

WHY, DAVID!
I'D LOVE
TO DANCE
WITH YOU!



DAVID, CAN'T YOU DO
SOMETHING TO TRY
TO CATCH THE
SKULL?

I WOULDN'T
DARE, MRS.
SUTTON. HE'S
FAR TOO DAN-
GEROUS.....



.....BUT I'LL CATCH YOU,
IN YOU GO / DOWN INTO
THAT JUG, GOOD AND
TIGHT, / AND DROP THAT
CIGARETTE HOLDER!



OH/OH! DAVID, HOW DARE YOU/OH! HELP!



WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHO'D THE SKULL KILL NOW?

DAVID/MOTHER! WHAT ON EARTH IS HAPPENING!

DAVID MUST BE THE SKULL!

STAY BACK! ALL OF YOU, I'VE GOT SOMETHING INTERESTING TO SHOW YOU!

HE MUST BE THE ONE!



DAVID, DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH MY MOTHER!

DON'T WORRY BARBARA, I WON'T TOUCH YOUR MOTHER, I JUST WANT TO INTRODUCE YOU TO



THE SKULL!

DOG! YOU'LL SUFFER FOR THIS, YOU'LL LIVE TO HATE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN!



YOU'LL PROBABLY FIND YOUR MOTHER SAFE AT HOME, BARBARA, MAYBE JUST A BIT SHAKEN UP AND FRIGHTENED, BUT NOT HURT... AND YOU'LL FIND DAVID SEYMON AT HIS HOME, IN THE SAME CONDITION... NOW CALL IN THE POLICE, THEY'RE STATIONED OUTSIDE!

BUT... BUT WHO ARE YOU?



ME?... I'M THE **BLACK HOOD!** GOOD BYE. NOW!

BUT WON'T YOU WAIT, AND LET ME THANK YOU!

COME ALONG SKULL, WE GOT THE HOT-SEAT WAITIN' FOR YOU!



THE BLACK HOOD... I WONDER WHO HE IS, AND WHY HE RAN FROM THE POLICE... AND... AND... GEE! I'D LOVE TO SEE HIM AGAIN!



THE NEXT NIGHT...

HELLO, BARBARA!
REMEMBER ME?

THE
BLACK
HOOD!

I THOUGHT I OWED YOU A LITTLE
EXPLANATION... THESE PICTURES
ARE THE THINGS THAT TRIPPED
UP THE SKULL. HE HAD HIS
CIGARETTE HOLDER FIXED
UP TO BLOW POISON DARTS.
...BY THE WAY... HOW
IS YOUR MOTHER?

SHE'S FINE! COM-
PLETELY RECOVERED
FROM HER SHOCK!



MOTHER SAYS THAT
JUST BEFORE SHE LEFT
FOR THE PARTY, SHE
WENT INTO HER ROOM,
AND THE SKULL WAS
THERE. HE TOOK HER
COSTUME AND THEN
DISGUISED HIMSELF
TO LOOK
LIKE HER!

THAT'S RIGHT!
AND BEING
A MASTER OF
VOICE IMITA-
TION, HE HAD
NO TROUBLE
ON THAT
SCORE!

BUT WHO ARE
YOU. AND HOW
CAN I SEE YOU
AGAIN? AND
WHY DO YOU
RUN FROM
THE POLICE?

WHO I REALLY AM, AND WHY I RUN
FROM THE POLICE, I CANNOT TELL.
BUT IF YOU WANT TO SEE ME,
YOU CAN LOOK FOR ME.....
LOOK WHEREVER CRIME IS BE-
ING DONE, WHERE
EVER INNOCENT
PEOPLE ARE BE-
ING OPPRESSED
WHEREVER IN-
JUSTICE REIGNS
THERE, YOU
WILL ALWAYS
FIND THE
BLACK HOOD,
FIGHTING TO
RIGHT ALL
WRONGS!



.....AND SO I GUESS THAT
ENDS THE CAREER OF THE
SKULL. THE POLICE TOOK
HIM UNDER HEAVY GUARD
TO THE DEATH HOUSE!

THE POLICE TOOK HIM!
MY SON... YOU MADE A
BIG MISTAKE..... THE
JAIL HAS NOT YET BEEN
BUILT FROM WHICH
THE SKULL
CANNOT
ESCAPE!

SO THE BLACK HOOD
WILL BE WHEREVER
THERE IS TROUBLE.
WELL, BARBARA, FROM
NOW ON YOU GO
LOOKING FOR TROUBLE,
AND WHEN YOU FIND
IT... YELL LONG
AND LOUD, FOR
THE BLACK HOOD!

SO, THE BLACK
HOOD CHALLENGES
THE SKULL.....
HE WON THE
FIRST DEAL...
BUT WE'LL
SEE... WE'LL
SEE.....



THE BLACK HOOD VERSUS THE
SKULL - IS THIS BATTLE FINI-
ED, OR DOES THE SKULL ES-
CAPE? DON'T MISS THE NEXT
ISSUE OF TOP-NOTCH COMICS