

# GOLDEN AGE

## THRILLING ACTION!



### FEATURING:

**\$1.00**



# DAREDEVIL

# VS.

# CLAW



BY JOE BARDALES AND DAN HOUSER

# **GOLDEN AGE** **THRILLING ACTION!**

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*Art: Dan Houser and Lev Gleason Productions Designs*

*Editing and Layout: Dan Houser*

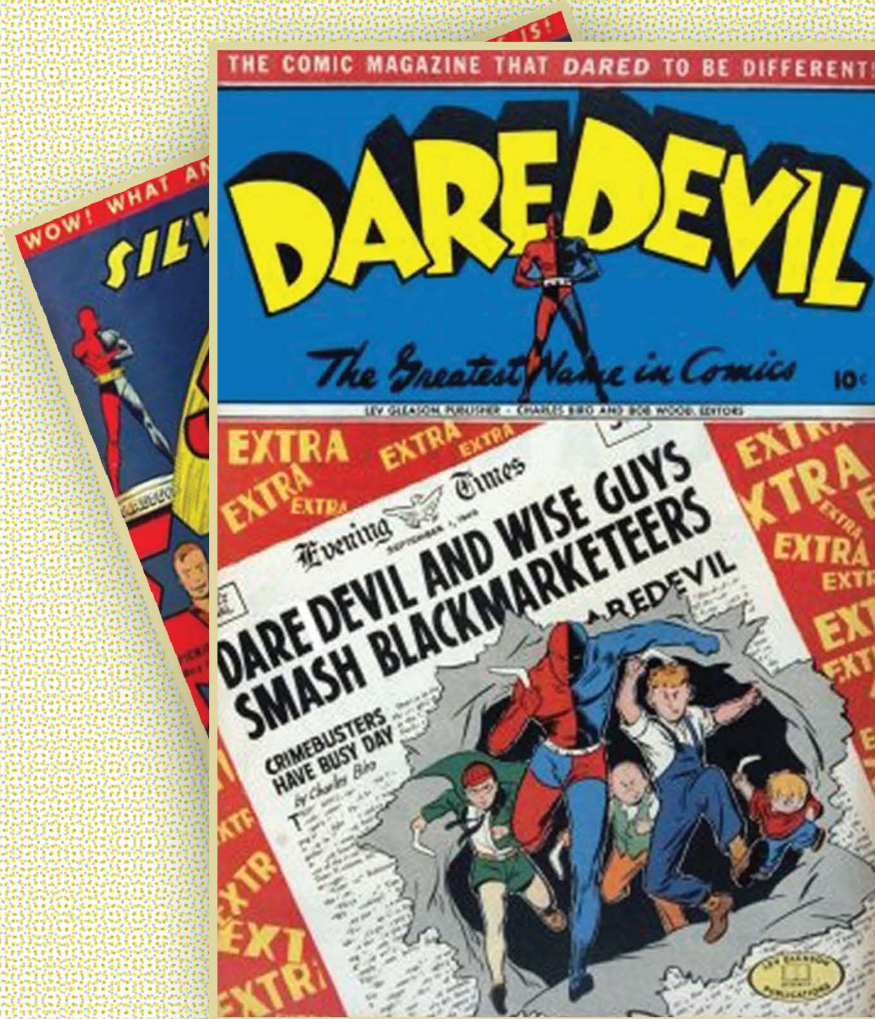
## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome back to Golden Age Thrilling Action! by Stark City Press. The second edition is going to carry a pair of brilliant bastions of the pulp era of superpowered derring-do! The amazing boomerang brandishing baron of bombast: Daredevil! And carrying on our tradition of macabre malevolence in matchmaking, we have the jaundice-jawed jasper, The Claw!

This is a supplement for the ICONS Superpowered Roleplaying game by Adamant Entertainment, and is designed as both an introduction to classic heroes from the Golden Age of comics, and as an aid to GMs who'd like to add some Golden Age flavor to their campaigns or just play a quick one on one battle with a friend over a single shot session.

Within these pages, you're going to see a hero and a villain come alive, along with their preferred battleground. In this issue, you've got Daredevil and The Claw, two men squaring off in the heart of The Claw's hidden SKULL MONASTERY!

This classic battle begins on the next page with a little background on the hero, Daredevil!



# DAREDEVIL

In this installment of Golden Age Thrilling Action, we're going to take a look at Daredevil, an iconic Golden Age superhero now in the public domain from Lev Gleason Publications. Daredevil is interesting in that the origin story, background and look presented in his very first appearance (Silver Streak Comics #6) were changed and later re-written starting with his very next appearance. Initially, Daredevil was mute, the result of a childhood trauma at the hands of vicious criminals who murdered both his parents and tortured the young Bart Hill by branding a boomerang-shaped scar on his chest - a mark that led him to take up the study of his signature weapon later in life.

He also wore a two-toned costume of yellow and blue. In his second appearance, the colors of Daredevil's costume were changed to red and blue, and he also somehow regained the ability to speak (how and why was never explained). He did, however, retain his spiked belt and his definitive skill with the boomerang. Daredevil's origin story was officially retconned much later when he had his own comic book title (Daredevil Comics #18), and that is the version presented below. One other important thing came about from these early concept changes: Daredevil was firmly established as the leading opposition to Lev Gleason Publications' major super-villain, the Claw!

# ORIGIN STORY

The Claw was a mysterious and powerful supernatural being of Asian origin, in the mode of a demon or a god, who was determined to conquer the United States and eventually become the emperor of the entire world. He could appear gargantuan in size, had the ability to control minds, and possessed a tunneling vehicle that could travel rapidly underground by boring through solid rock. Only Daredevil stood in his way, and over many epic battles that often spanned several comic book issues, he was always defeated in the end, often a victim of his own arrogance and overconfidence. In addition to the Claw, Daredevil had other enemies over the course of his crime-fighting career such as the Scarlet Skull, the Deadly Dozen and the Bolt.

Daredevil had many personal connections in his life, perhaps the most important being the love of his life, Tonia Saunders. Tonia and Bart Hill fell in love after he rescued her (as Daredevil) from the Bolt who had kidnapped her and tied her to the railroad tracks. She was frequently the target of many of his other enemies including the Claw. After he almost died in her arms, Tonia refused to agree to marry Bart until he gave up once and for all his Daredevil alter-ego, afraid more for him than her own safety, something that Bart couldn't commit to while the world still needed Daredevil. He also had a group of four young sidekicks, the Little Wise Guys, who often became involved in his adventures as well as a loyal butler named Williams. Eventually a nosy reporter named Kilroy exposed Bart Hill as the Daredevil, which he used to his advantage to wind down his career and take up publishing and crime reporting, and his young proteges the Little Wise Guys began to take center stage. Hopefully Tonia and Bart, now retired, were happily married soon after!



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# DAREDEVIL

# DAREDEVIL

**Origin:** Trained

**Real Name:** Bart Hill

**First Appearance:** Silver Streak Comics #6  
(Lev Gleason Publications September 1940)

## ABILITIES

**Prowess** 5

**Coordination** 6

**Strength** 6

**Intellect** 3

**Awareness** 3

**Willpower** 6

**Stamina** 12

**Determination** 5

## SPECIALTIES

Acrobatics Master

Athletics Expert

Martial Arts Expert

Pilot

Stealth Expert

Weapons Master (Throwing –  
Boomerang)

## POWERS

Blast Device 8 - Boomerang

## QUALITIES

Motivation: Hates crime and evil as passionately as the underworld loves it

Sidekicks: The Little Wise Guys

Connections: United States

Government and Military

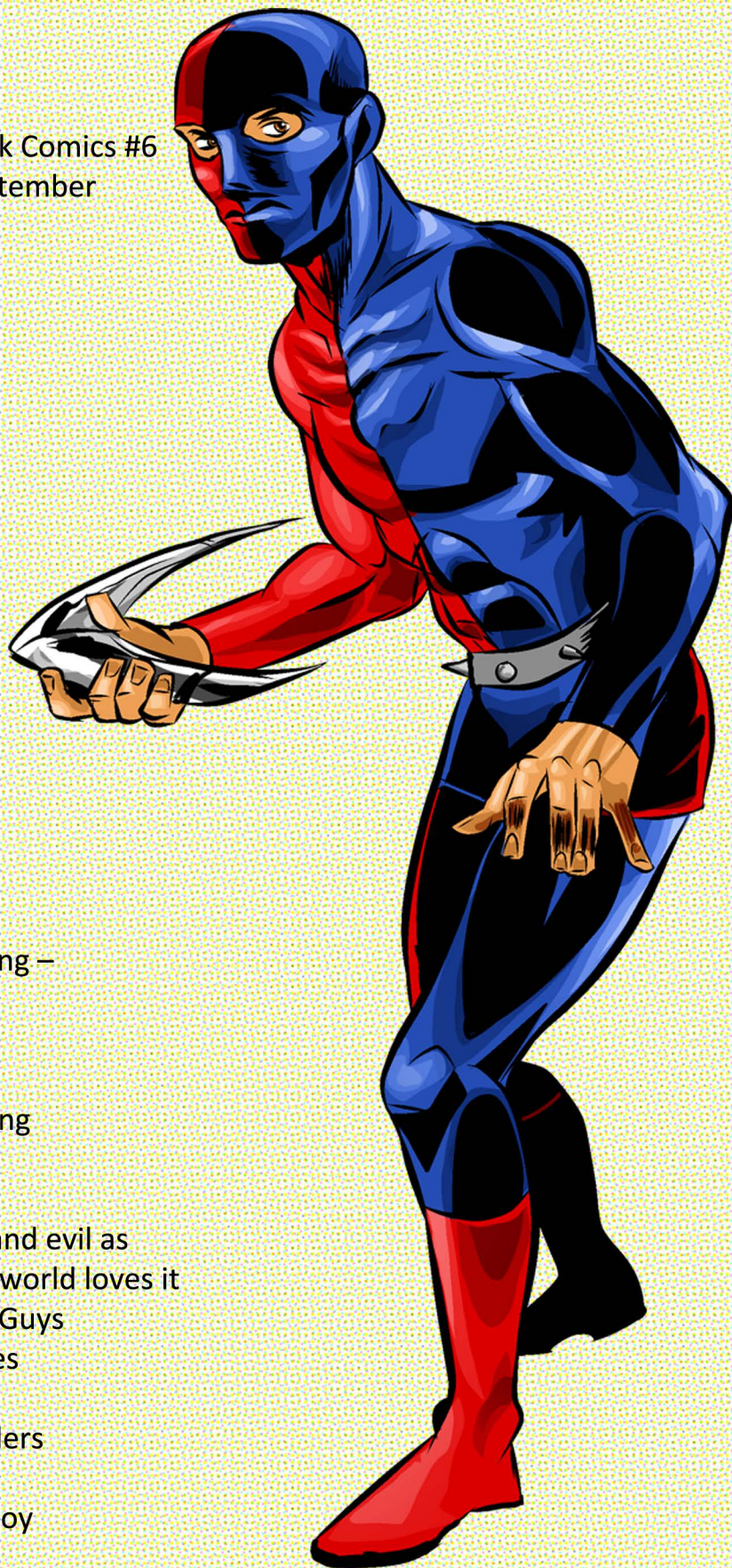
Connections: Tonia Saunders  
(girlfriend)

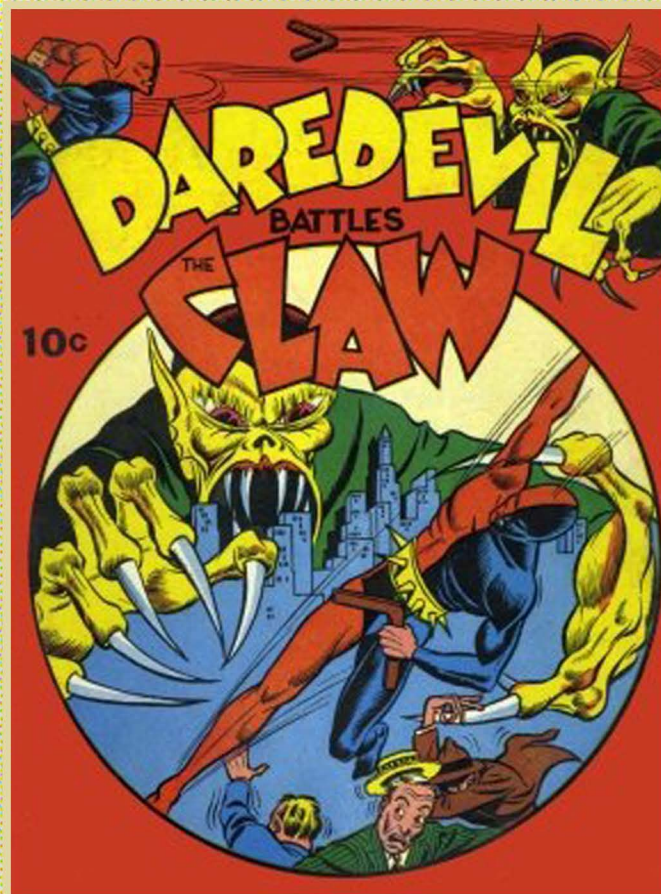
Identity: Millionaire Playboy

## CHALLENGES

Enemy: Axis Powers

Enemy: The Claw





# THE CLAW

Now let's turn our attention to one of the most memorable and monstrous super-villains of the Golden Age, the Claw! Making his first appearance in the very first issue of Silver Streak Comics, the Claw is somewhat unique in that his villainous character takes center stage as the star of the story and the less memorable hero of the tale plays second fiddle. He made one more similar headline appearance before he finally met his match in Silver Streak Comics #7 where he went head-to-head for the first time with a truly worthy adversary, the newest superhero from Lev Gleason Publications, Daredevil.

The two would match wits frequently over the years, and although the Claw faced off against several of the other major superheroes in Lev Gleason Publications stable as well, the confrontations between the two were truly legendary and made Daredevil his most hated foe. And even though the Claw's ultimate goal of world conquest and domination was clearly rooted in the Yellow Peril stereotypes of the day, he somehow transcended the racist caricature seen in other comics of the era and emerged as something else: he was a powerful demon, or perhaps an evil god, or some other supernatural being from Asian mythology. He was undeniably a powerful force to be reckoned with, and not even the Axis Powers he sometimes aligned with during World War II could rely on being spared from his ultimate machinations.

# THE CLAW

## ORIGIN STORY

The Western world first learned of the existence of the Claw when Eloise Pearsall, America's only female ambassador at the time, and Jerry Morris, a chemist-adventurer, docked at the Island of Ricca in the Pacific while en route to China aboard the ocean liner Marosa. Throughout Asia, legends were told by superstitious peasants of a mammoth creature of supernatural and hypnotic powers with sharp fangs for teeth and long, razor-sharp nails on his hands whom they referred to as the God of Hate and the High Lord of Evil, but most Westerners dismissed these stories as fantasy. Eloise and Jerry quickly learned that the idyllic paradise with a beautiful natural harbor that made Ricca a favorite resting spot and trade hub hid a dark secret – the inhabitants of the island paradise were all enslaved by fear to the very real and very monstrous gigantic being known as the Claw!

The Claw used dream control acclimation to control and enslave the native population of Ricca by addicting them to exceedingly pleasant dreams (and punishing them with equally vivid and horrific nightmares) so that they would do anything to experience such a dream instead, including secret raids on the passenger and freighter ships in the harbor to loot their cargo. On the night of the full moon, the Claw appeared before all on the island and docked in the harbor in gigantic form and made himself known. He used mind control to lure Eloise to his castle lair on top a hill overlooking the entire island and began to subject her to his dream control acclimation process, intending to take her as his bride. Jerry Morris was able to design a radium serum that provided protection against the Claw's mind and dream control as well as invulnerability to all physical attacks which he used to inoculate the crew of the ocean liner as well. The Claw's castle was stormed and Eloise Pearsall rescued, but not before the Claw could escape.

It was in Daredevil that the Claw met his greatest match. The two great foes first came into conflict during World War II when the Claw decided to take advantage of America's overconfident sense of security away from the front lines of Europe and Asia and launch a full-fledged invasion on an unsuspecting continental United States. After he left the island of Ricca, the Claw established residence in Tibet with a hoard of his cult-like followers and slaves in an abandoned skull-shaped monastery in the Himalayas with levels and tunnels going deep down into the mountain it was built on. By using a tunneling vehicle that could travel rapidly underground to any location in the world by boring through solid rock, his army of followers performed a miracle of modern engineering by cutting a path from their Tibetan mountain fortress through the earth to New York City. On what had been a peaceful moonlit night in the City, suddenly the giant shadow of the Claw fell over the island of Manhattan as the gargantuan monster proclaimed, "DEATH TO AMERICA!"

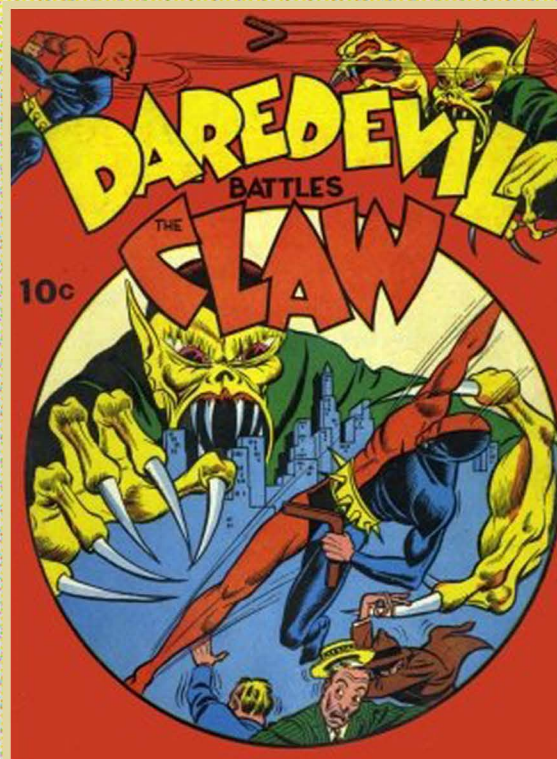


## ORIGIN STORY

All chaos broke loose as the Claw proceeded to attack New York with all his might and fury. Entire city blocks were destroyed, and skyscrapers dwarfed in comparison to the enormous fiend crumbled and fell. In response, Bart Hill donned the costume and deadly boomerang of the Daredevil and began to battle the Claw's invading army who stood no chance against him. In Central Park, Daredevil discovered the Claw's underground command center and came face-to-face with the would-be conqueror for the first time. Making quick work of the Claw's guards, Daredevil soon proved to be much more than a mere annoyance but an equally powerful force to be reckoned with. The Claw directed his full attention at Daredevil, capturing him and throwing him into a pit filled with countless sharp spikes and deadly cobras.

Daredevil managed to crawl out of the pit and strike the Claw in the head with his boomerang, and then smashed the generators powering the Claw's invasion machinery preventing him and his minions from escape through their tunnels. The Claw launched a full-out attack in return, and Daredevil decided to drive the fiend out into the open by smashing a water main and flooding the bunker. Once outside, the epic battle continued to rage on until a chance discovery of a box of dynamite turned the tide in Daredevil's favor when he managed to light the explosives and toss them into the Claw's gaping mouth. Internally damaged and his plans for conquest defeated, the Claw simply vanished, but Daredevil knew the world hadn't seen the last of the God of Hate and he would return again someday.

In addition to Jerry Morris and Daredevil, the Claw was also opposed by other heroes such as the scientist-adventurer Major Carl Tarrant and the Ghost. At times during World War II, the Claw would ally himself with the Axis Powers and would stab his so-called friends in the back by his own desire to conquer the world and make himself its emperor. His powers included growth to great heights, mind and dream control, the ability to radiate heatwaves that acted as an invulnerable armor, and the ability to shrink opponents down to tiny size. Other odd and assorted powers would appear in the comic book pages from time to time, but these were often loosely defined or one time only abilities. He even sold his soul to the devil in exchange for the power to defeat his greatest foe Daredevil once and for all. The Claw was truly a memorable and formidable super-villain in every sense of the word.



THE

# CLAW

# THE CLAW

**Origin:** Unearthly  
**Real Name:** Unknown  
**First Appearance:** Silver Streak Comics #1  
(Lev Gleason Publications December 1939)

## ABILITIES

**Prowess** 6  
**Coordination** 8  
**Strength** 6  
**Intellect** 6  
**Awareness** 6  
**Willpower** 8

**Stamina** 14  
**Determination** \* - Villain

## SPECIALTIES

Area Expert - Subterranean Earth  
Deception Expert  
Mental Resistance Master  
Occult Expert

## POWERS

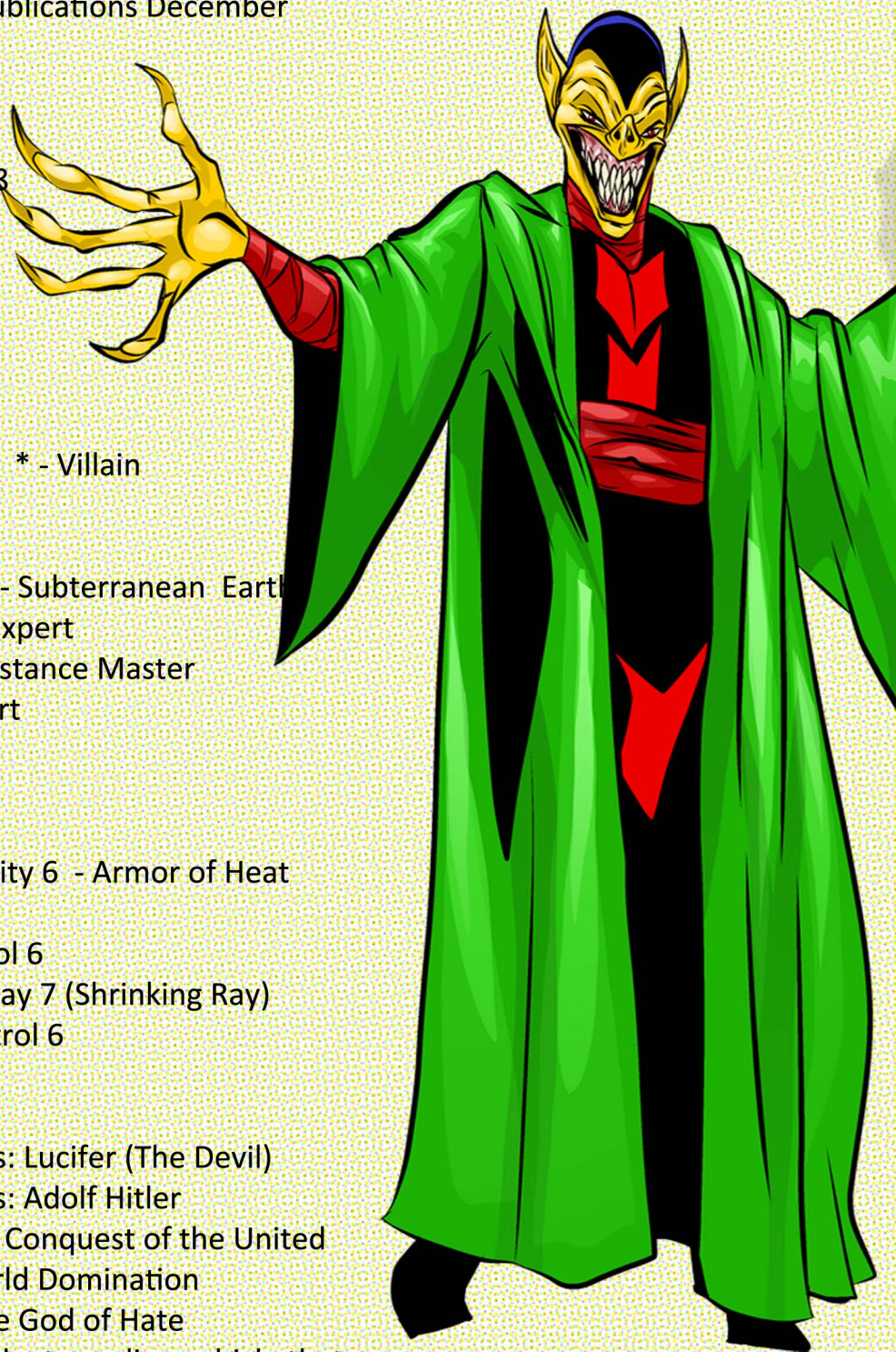
Growth 10  
Invulnerability 6 - Armor of Heat Waves  
Mind Control 6  
Alteration Ray 7 (Shrinking Ray)  
Dream Control 6

## QUALITIES

Connections: Lucifer (The Devil)  
Connections: Adolf Hitler  
Motivation: Conquest of the United States and World Domination  
Identity: The God of Hate  
Super-Vehicle: tunneling vehicle that can travel rapidly underground by boring through solid rock

## CHALLENGES

Arch-Enemy: Daredevil  
Enemy: Professor Jerry Morris; Major Carl Tarrant; Ghost



**Weakness:** Innate Powers limited by the phases of the moon (full moon: no penalty; waxing/waning moon: half power level; new moon: no powers)  
**Personal:** Overconfident

# BATTLEGROUND:

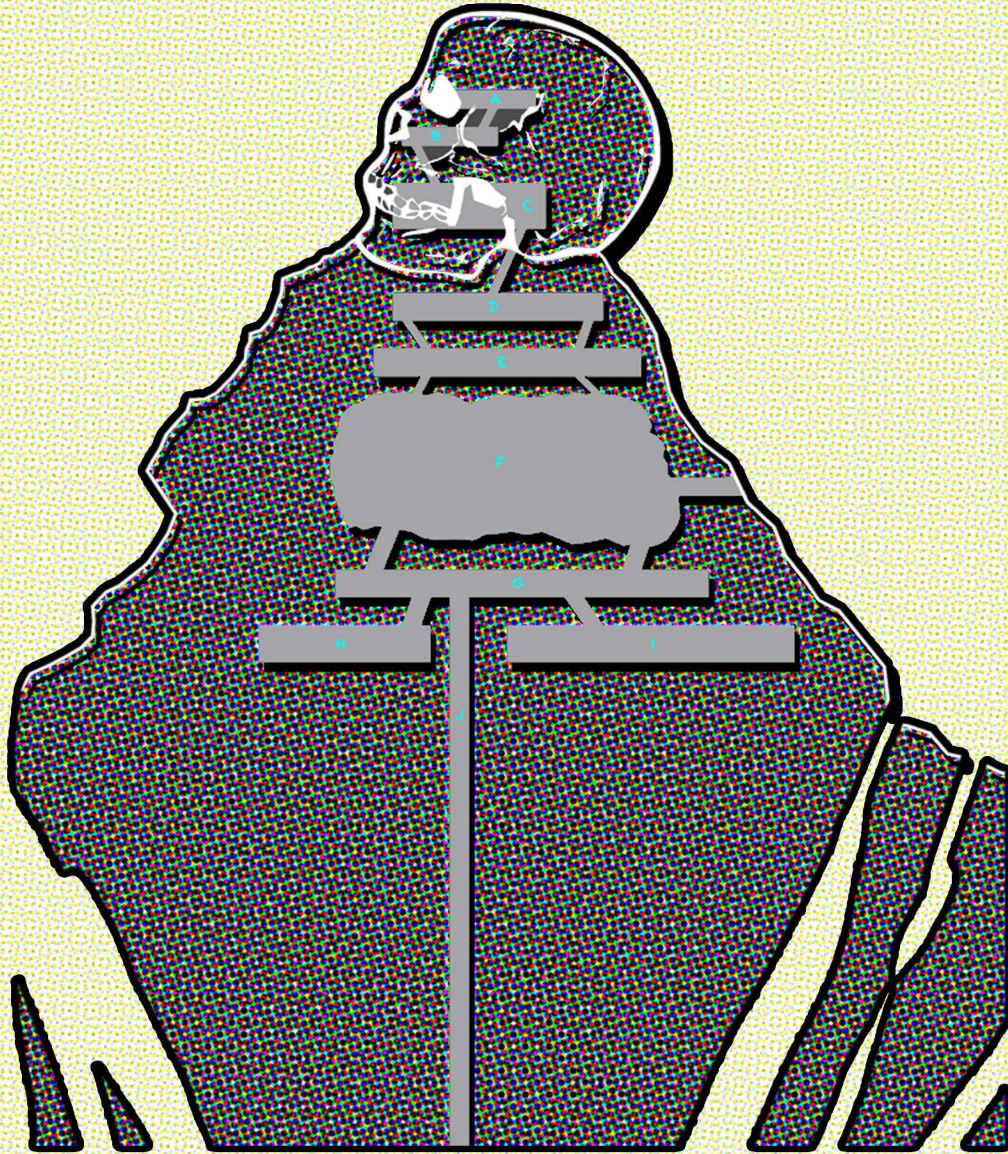


## THE CLAW'S SKULL MONASTERY!

It is the summer of 1943, and the entire world is engulfed in a bloody and brutal war. Daredevil has been contacted by United States Navy Intelligence regarding intercepted transmissions between the Imperial Forces of Japan and the world's most notorious super-villain, the Claw! Apparently the Emperor of Japan has agreed to pay the Claw a fortune in gold bullion if the Claw and his cultist minions agree to invade Los Angeles and conquer the West Coast, effectively taking the United States out of the war in the Pacific Theater.

The Claw would use his amazing tunneling device that can bore through solid rock and dig a tunnel through the earth and underneath the Pacific Ocean from his skull-shaped monastery in Tibet to the city of Los Angeles in California, and lead his army of followers through to conquest and victory. The U.S. Government has asked Daredevil to travel to Tibet, infiltrate the Claw's lair in the Himalayas, and put a stop to the nefarious plot before it even starts by destroying his subterranean boring vehicle once and for all.

# MONESTARY (CUT-AWAY)



**A. Landing Platforms:** Located in the orbital eye cavities of the skull-shaped facade of the Claw's Tibetan monastery, there are currently two fully-armed and fueled Japanese A6M Zeros and their pilots inside. The two pilots have just delivered a shipment of gold bullion to the Claw as down-payment for his end of the bargain with the Emperor of Japan. Use the stock character stats for Soldiers found in Villains chapter of the ICONS core rulebook. Each pilot is armed with a sidearm (shooting damage 4) and a katana sword (slashing damage 5). If Daredevil is subdued or captured, the pilots will report to the cultist guards in area C.

**B. Observation Deck:** Located in the nasal cavity of the skull-shaped facade of the Claw's Tibetan monastery, this area is currently empty.

**C. Main Entrance:** A giant black reinforced steel door (currently locked and bolted) is built into the mouth and jaw of the skull-shaped facade of the monastery. Inside the entrance way, four of the Claw's cultist followers stand guard. Use the stock character stats for Cultists found in Villains chapter of the ICONS core rulebook. They are armed with spears (slashing damage 4) and knives (slashing damage 3). If Daredevil is subdued or captured, they will take him prisoner and present him to the Claw in area F.

**D. Staging Area:** This area is used for training and troop formation by the cultists before they are sent out by the Claw. Roll 1d6. On a 1 or 2, the area is empty. On a 3, one to three of the Claw's slaves (see area I below for stats) are present in a cleaning capacity; on a 4 or 5, there are four cultists present (see area C above for stats); and on a 6, there are 12 cultists present (see area C above for stats).

**E. Cultist Living Quarters:** This area is where the Claw's cultists reside when they are not on duty. It is currently empty as they are currently gathered in the Claw's throne room detailed in area F below, but feel free to add random encounters with cult members or slaves as desired, or use the d6 breakdown in area D above.

# BATTLEGROUND

# BATTLEGROUND

**F. Throne Room:** This large natural cavern is where the Claw holds court. His gigantic throne is located at one end of the room, and a large fire pyre sits in the center of the room. There is a secret exit behind the Claw's throne that leads out to the backside of the mountain that his monastery lair is built on. The Claw is currently sitting upon his throne, and there are at least 200 of his cultists (see area C above for stats) and 200 of his slaves (see area I below for stats) in attendance – feel free to adjust the exact numbers and breakdown based on your own preferences and needs. If Daredevil or any other hero is captured by the Claw's forces elsewhere in the monastery, they will be brought to this area to face judgment and learn their fate – torture, death or worse!

**G. Laboratories and Storage Rooms:** This area contains several laboratories where the Claw performs his ingenious and sometimes mad experiments as well as storage for food, supplies, weapons, equipment, and the tunneling vehicle that bores through solid rock. There are plenty of items located on this level that might prove useful to Daredevil or other heroes on their mission such as dynamite, chemicals, weapons and firearms of all types. It's currently lightly guarded now too, as most of the Claw's minions can be found in the throne room in area F. There are only four Cultists actively patrolling the area in pairs (see area C above for stats). This means that the Claw's tunneling device, the keystone to his plans for invasion of Los Angeles, is currently vulnerable to sabotage or destruction by Daredevil or other superheroes on the scene.

#### **Subterranean Tunneling Vehicle**

**Strength/Stamina** 8

**Coordination** 6

**Burrowing** 6

**Max Speed:** 20 miles/hour while boring through solid rock

**H. Dungeon and Torture Chamber:** This area consists of dank, dark cells where the Claw keeps his prisoners caged up as well as the torture chamber he uses to extract any pertinent information he desires. There are currently a handful of disobedient slaves located here who are in no shape to harm or help anyone.

**I. Slave Quarters:** This area houses the Claw's slaves when they are not otherwise laboring for their cruel master. Use the stock character stats for Bystanders found in Villains chapter of the ICONS core rulebook. If they are currently under the Claw's mental or dream control, they will attack any interlopers with whatever impromptu weapons they can find like wrenches and other tools, clubs and broken furniture for bashing or slashing damage 2. Otherwise, they simply cower in fear and offer no resistance.

**J. Tunnel through the Earth:** This tunnel, created by the Claw's subterranean tunneling device, leads straight down into the earth's crust and can be used as a launching point from the monastery to anywhere on the face of the globe. Be sure to watch your step around the top of the hole, it's a long way down...

**GOLDEN AGE CREDITS:** Daredevil first appeared in Silver Streak Comics #6 (September 1940) published by Lev Gleason Publishing and was created by Jack Binder and revamped in the next issue by editor Jack Cole. Artist and writer Charles Biro later took over when Daredevil was given his own comic book title.

### **REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

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<http://comicbookplus.com/?dlid=15020>

Read Daredevil's alternate origin story at Comic Book Plus (in Daredevil Comics):

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Read more Daredevil comics at Comic Book Plus (in Silver Streak Comics):

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**ADDITIONAL READING**