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DARING! DASHING! DAUNTLESS!
DAMES

FROM THE GOLDEN AGE OF SUNDAY FUNNIES!

FEBRUARY 2024 NO. 113

**PLUS...SHE-HULK, THE SEA
HAG & DAN CLOWES'
MONICA!**

**BRENDA STARR:
REPORTER!**

FLYIN' JENNY!

CAIRO JONES!

INVISIBLE

SCARLET O'NEIL!

MISS FURY!

TORCHY BROWN!

And More!



The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of

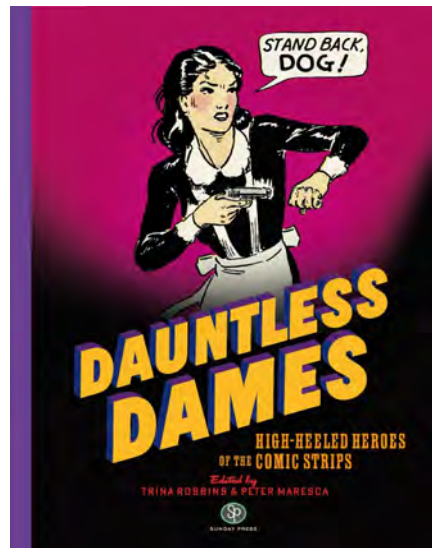


Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!

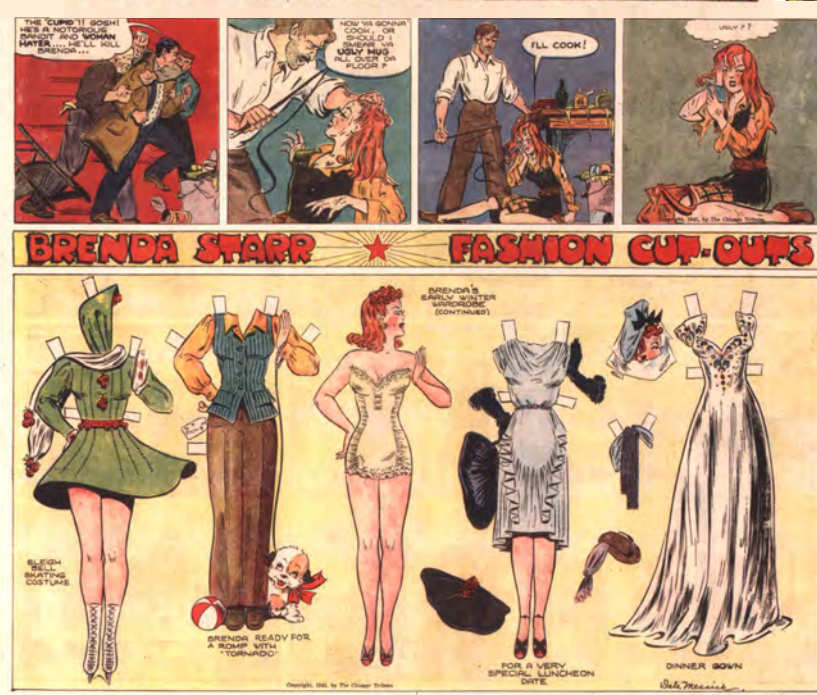
Reporters, aviators, nurses, private eyes and masked marvels—Two-fisted heroines from the Golden Age of comic strips fight and flirt their way around the globe in the gargantuan compilation, *Dauntless Dames*, at Central!



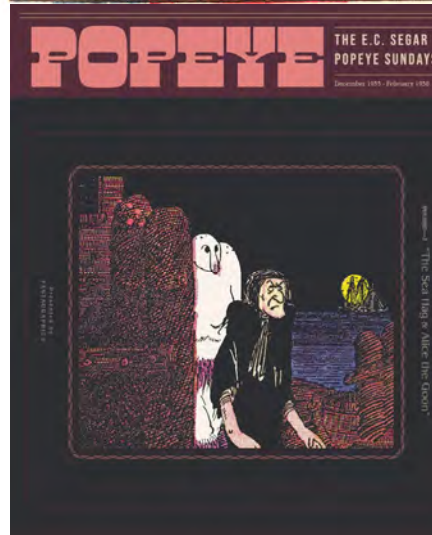
took its swiftest protagonist into the far future and outer space. From private nurse *Myra North* to resurrected Egyptian *Deathless Deer* (wielding a gat on the cover), these bodacious babes broke new ground in pulp equality. Several of them were created by women no less dashing than their creations, such as *Brenda Starr's* Dale Messick and Tarpe Mills, the spitting image of her pioneering superheroine, *Miss Fury*. And, as attested by the paper dolls that often accompanied their strips, they were as fashionable as they were fierce. Printed the large size of the originals, *Dauntless Dames* is a real knockout!



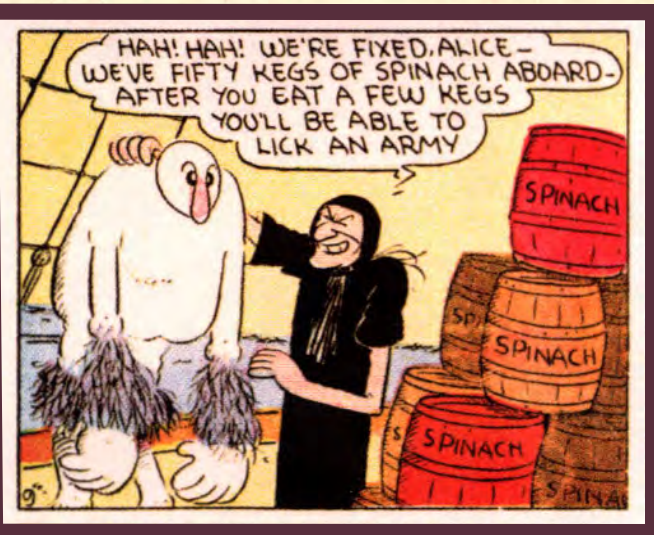
Above: comic books starring our dauntless dames; Detail from *Cairo Jones*; right: brutality and elegance, courtesy of Dale Messick and *Brenda Starr*; below: *Connie* in the year 2936.



The changing roles for women in the early 20th Century were reflected, even promoted, by the popular arts of the day, including one of the most dominant, the comic strip. The "New Woman" appeared in daily black & white strips and lavishly colored Sunday pages. Frank Godwin's *Connie* lead the way, a romantic melodrama that evolved into an adventure story that



E.C. Segar has been credited with coining the name "Jeep", from his magical beastie, Eugene the Jeep. Segar didn't invent the word "goon", which has roots in Irish American slang, but he certainly popularized it with the introduction of the monstrous Alice the Goon in his globally beloved comic strip, *Popeye*. The latest paperback version of Fantagraphics' series of *Popeye Sunday* strips centers on "Plunder Island," the serial adventure that first brought Popeye and his gang into conflict with the Goon's boss, the malevolent Sea Hag. Popeye and the Sea Hag rustle and tussle, with pirates, cannibals and gorillas getting into the action, too. J. Wellington Wimpy plays a big part in this series, so there's lots of laughs to go along with the thrills, available at Central and Village!

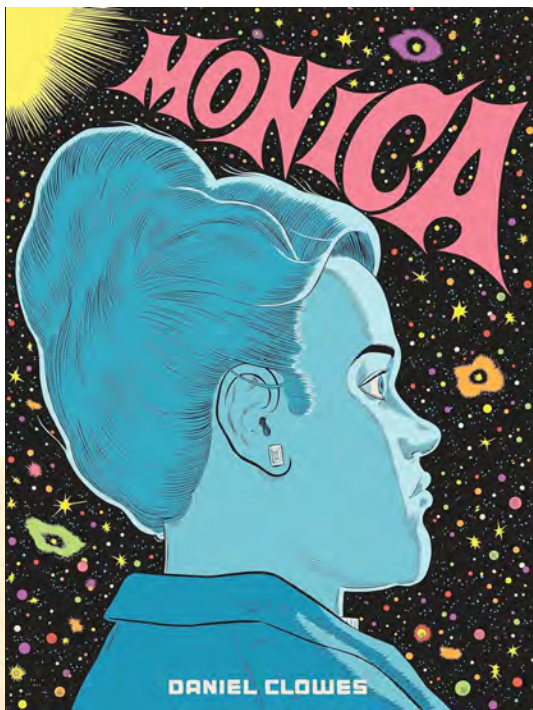


Best-selling author Rainbow Rowell continues her tenure as writer for the Sensational SHE-HULK in two new volumes. V2 follows Jennifer Walters as she begins a new relationship with Marvel D-lister *Jack Of Hearts*. But *Girl Can't Help It* when sparks fly after she meets raffish new super-villain Scoundrel!

Ongoing dramas of danger and destiny continue in these sensational sequels!



Her love for Harley Quinn may be the only thing still connecting POISON IVY to her humanity as the Lamia spores wreak havoc in part 2 of Ivy's crusade against *Unethical Consumption*. Trapped in an eternal 1963, JOAN PETERSON stops running and embraces *Love Everlasting...or does she!?!?*



This FANTAGRAPHICS hardback graphic novel is available at ALL LPL LOCATIONS via lexpublib.org!

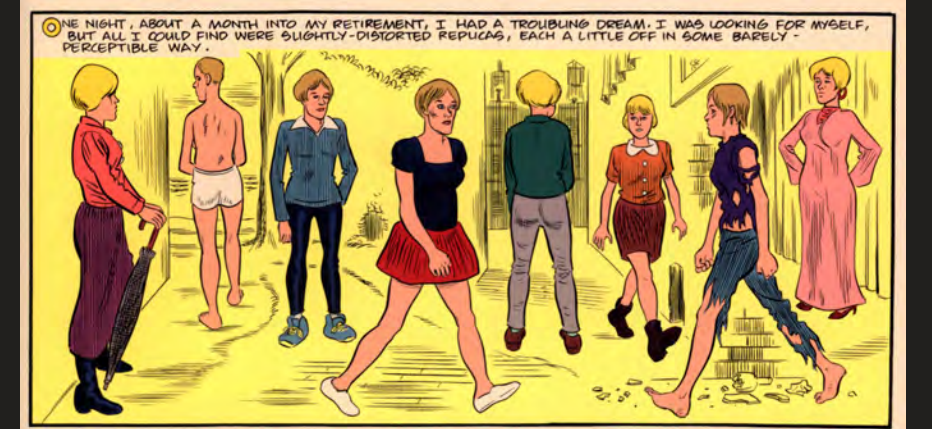
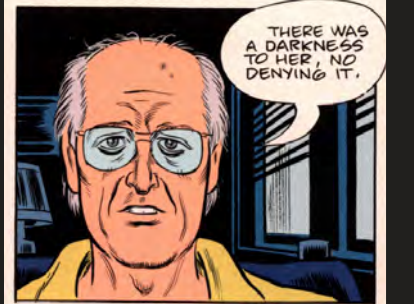
AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF A DANGEROUS CULT, ALONE AND TERRIFIED FOR MY LIFE.



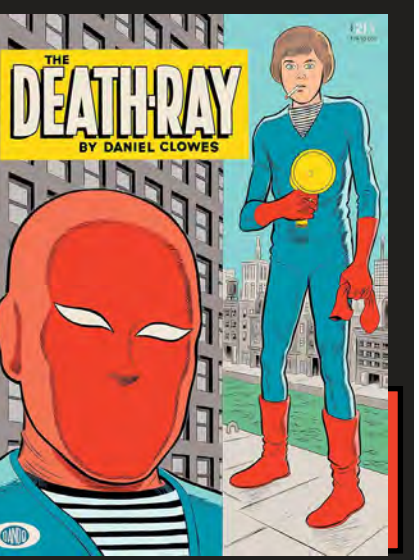
Meanwhile, Clowes' sharpest commentary on the superhero myth that looms over comics past and present is THE DEATH-RAY, newly re-released and available at Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek. Originally published in 2004 in the periodical EIGHTBALL and released as a single novel in 2011, this mordant riff on the teenage urban vigilante trope still carries a kick twenty years later.

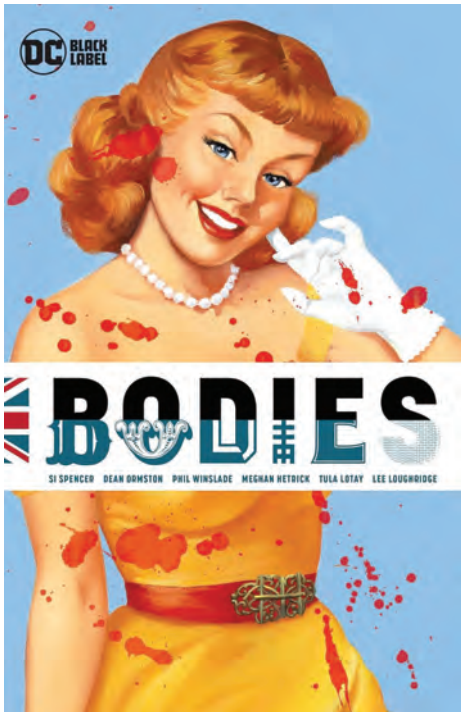
The title of the book is *Monica*. The name of the narrator is Monica. But the protagonist of the story is not Monica. No, the tale of *Monica* is very much that of Monica's mother, Penny, so typical of the legions of young women who rejected the traditional expectations of womanhood in the Swinging Sixties. And even after Penny abandons Monica to a better life, the daughter becomes obsessed with her mother, an quest that leads Monica to trace Penny's steps, ending up the willing thrall of a weirdo cult. Could Monica truly be the harbinger of a New Age?

OBVIOUSLY I DON'T REMEMBER THOSE DAYS, SO THIS HISTORY IS COBBLED FROM THE SELF-SERVING MEMORIES OF OLD WEIRDOS WHO TOOK A LOT OF DRUGS.



As usual, describing the plot of the latest graphic novel by Dan Clowes in no way makes sense of it. As one of America's leading magical realists, Clowes renders a world both banal and, as it says in the title of one odd chapter, "infernal." With *Monica*, Clowes writes a biography of Generation X, his generation, the truly Lost Generation, with its darkly skewed relationship with wealth, celebrity, and family. And dig those crazy endpapers!



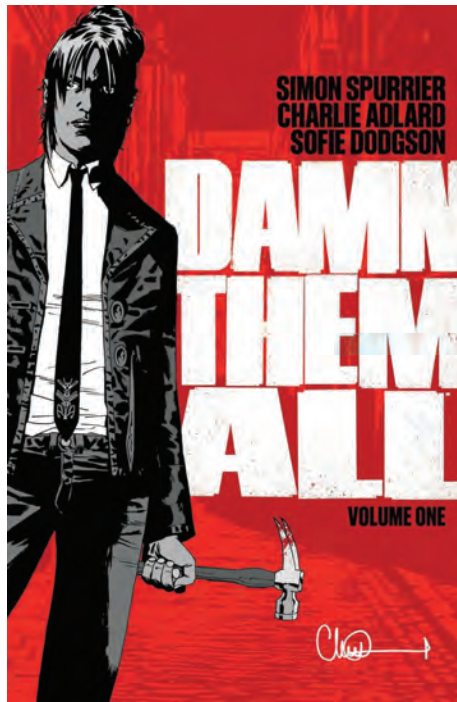


Bodies are, indeed, the subject of our quintet of items this month. Bodies found in similar crime scenes across the decades, bodies remade by artifice into something both horrid and wondrous, bodies yanked from hell and made the puppets of bad actors, bodies turned fleshy by nature and pliable by desire, bodies torn apart by bullets and beatings and bodies burnished by leather and lingerie — yikes, where's the Comics Code when you need it?!? *Bodies* might take its name from the Sex Pistols song; it definitely replicates their disdain for the British class system. The corpse of a man tortured and murdered in the same ritualistic fashion appears under mysterious circumstances. First in Victorian England — no, it's not Saucy Jack, though there is a connection—then during the Blitz, followed by the terror-shadowed years of the early 21st Century and ending in a near-future

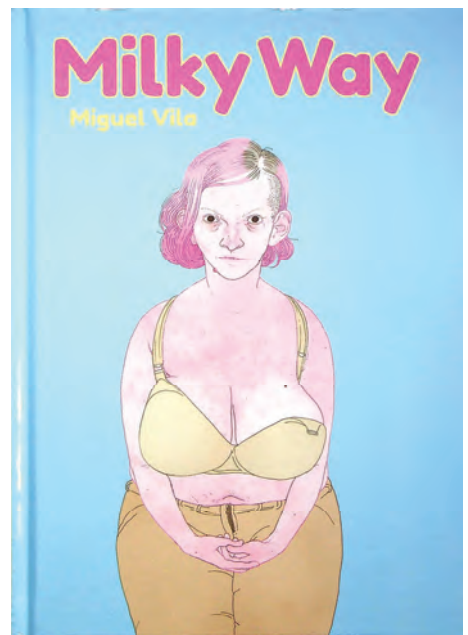


MEANWHILE

of technocratic crash and universal idiocy. In each case, a British cop investigates: the closeted Sherlock Holmes wannabe, the corrupt refugee from Nazi Europa, the Muslim detective caught up in a firestorm of nativism and counter-intelligence, the daft woman who can't remember who she is or why she keeps running into that awful corpse...each are drawn by a different artist in one of the most Vertiginous of recent releases from DC Black Label. I'm not too sure about that weirdly kumbaya climax, but, heck, the solution is usually the least important thing about an interesting murder mystery. Meanwhile, Dana Drucker is a typical American girl who deals with her typical high school boredom by creating awesome wicked special-effects makeup, like the detachable arm that gets Dana and her pals a lot of eyeballs on the internet and a lot of grief at home and school. To stay in school and graduate (and thus cop that coveted slot at NYU film school), Dana and BFF Lily join a community college film class. The gals start work on an eco-horror movie, which puts them in touch of a local Wiccan rabble-rouser, which gets



Dana involved in the mishogoss of local politics, and that's not to mention that guy Andre who makes Dana all discombobulated and that impossibly hip chick Lily seems to be falling for and suddenly everything's going wrong. It's *Night and Dana* (Graphic Universe), the charming TEEN coming-of-age novel by Anya (School Spirits) Davidson, whose lumpy naturalism reminds me of Gary Dumm and others who drew for Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor*. Then it's back to Blighty for the funeral of notorious occultist, Alfie Hawthorne. It's probably just a coincidence that the death of the Fortean troubleshooter is followed by some pillock unleashing the 72 devils of the Ars Goetia from their infernal slumber. Now everybody's got a devil in their pocket and playing at being that Magick Man, and the only one who can fix it is Alfie's nearly-as-infamous niece, Ellie "Bloody El" Hawthorne. Armed with her magic hammer, Ellie comes on like a cross between John Constantine and Luba from the *Palomar* stories by Gilbert Hernandez as she cries *Damn Them All* (Boom). Don't know why, but Central's the only location with a copy of this slam-bang mystical thriller. The physical mystique of motherhood and the way sex puts a hex on people is the story of



Milky Way by Spain's Miguel Vila. An accomplished cartoonist and damn good-looking man, Vila uses the space on the page in an inventive, intriguing way. His panels vary in size according to their emotional import, from clusters of tiny panels delineating simple actions and exchanges to huge, looming panels that take up most or all of the page. He's obviously influenced by Chris Ware, but Vila is far more physical in his depiction of human faces and bodies. And we see plenty of both as our hero Marco develops a erotic fixation on new acquaintance Lulu, with all the shame and sneaking around affecting the lives of their loved ones as well. The nature of that obsession is rare and raw, so reader beware at Beaumont, Central and Village. A more typical sexuality exudes from the pages of *Gun Honey* (Hard Case Crime/Titan). Joanna Tan is a bombshell in more ways than one, as she exacts *Blood for Blood* from the spooks who betrayed her in this grindhouse epic of bosoms'n'bullets galore!

