

**741.5**

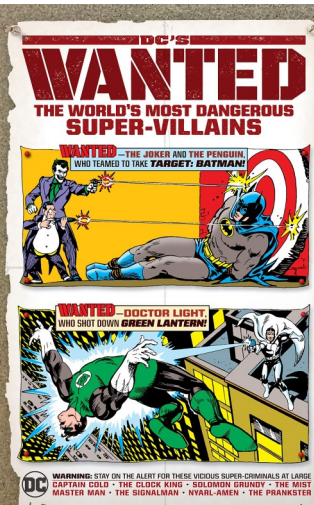
# SANTA'S GRAB BAG!

**COMICS WE OVERLOOKED**

**DECEMBER 2020 - NO. 48 PLUS...SANTA COMICS COVERS**







Looking for that extra-special stocking stuffer for the geek in your life? 741.5 recommends two new compilations from DC. Both are titles from the early 1970s, when the beleaguered Distinguished Competition was locked in a losing battle with Mighty Marvel. *Wanted: The World's Most Dangerous Super-villains* was typical of the era, when bad guys like the Joker and the Secret Society of Super-Villains had their own books. *Wanted* sampled the vast amount of material available from not only DC, but former competitor Quality, whose Golden Age headliners Kid Eternity and Doll Man rub shoulders with Superman, the Vigilante and both versions of the Green Lantern. The Silver Age stories are better written and drawn. But the older stuff has a lot of exuberant charm, like young Joe Kubert cutting his teeth on the postwar Hawkman and Wildcat (right).



Three years later, DC's head honcho Carmine Infantino was frustrated that the only comics guaranteed to sell were first issues. So some jerk said "Well, how about a comic that's nothing but first issues?" The result was *1st Issue Special*. Some characters showcased were already existing members of the DCU like the Creeper, Metamorpho and Golden Age mage, Dr. Fate. Drawn by Walt Simonson, Fate's revival was one of the best DC comics of the decade. *1st Issue Special* was very much a product of the Seventies as shown by *Lady Cop*, *Code Name: Assassin* and the disco *Starman*. But it's best remembered for the DC swan songs of former partners Joe Simon and Jack Kirby. Simon's deeply weird *Outsiders* and kid gang *The Green Team* paled before Kirby's *Atlas* and *Manhunter* (see 741.5 no. 18). Go reserve *1st Issue Specials* at [lexpublib.org/](http://lexpublib.org/)!



Farmer Jedidiah Jenkins grows a very special crop: human organs. At first a godsend to the afflicted, the fruits of the farmer's labors have turned sour. An ancient evil is flowering, calling its creations home. Joining the long list of modern horror comics offered by Image, *Farmhand* stands out thanks to the humane script and creepy cartooning of one-man-band Rob Guillory.

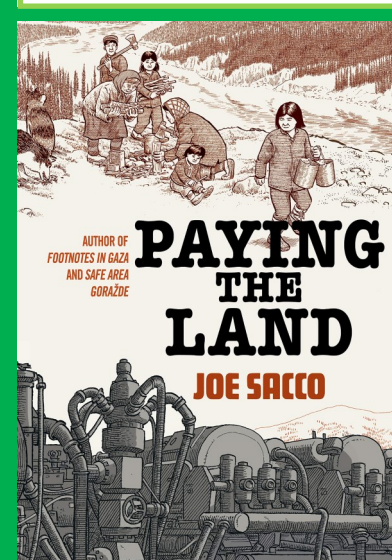
Jane Zei is a young woman of the world like so many others. She hates her job. She loves her work. She loves solitude. She's lonely. Her neuroses would be in control, if her cat wasn't already the boss of her. In the kooky confessional vein of *Sarah's Scribbles*, this collection of her webcomic *Pigeon Gazette* is as real as it is funny. Find *Success...* at all LPL locations.



Lupus is a vagabond plying the spaceways with his homeboy Tony. While getting some R & R on the planet Norad, Lupus and Tony pick up a local girl and, on the spur of the moment, take her with them when they lift off. Saana is her name, and she changes everything. Now Lupus and Saana are on the run, dodging their pursuers in a vastness that's closing in on them.



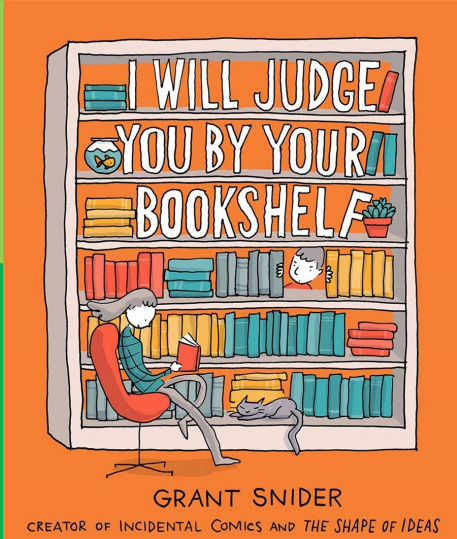
Released by TopShelf, *Lupus* is the award-winning graphic novel that took Europe by storm. *Lupus* is not a science fiction story, but a love story that happens to take place in a sci-fi universe. The everyday occurs in a world of robots and aliens (above) made real by Frederik Peeters's loose line and fierce, lively brush work. Get *Lupus* from Central and Beaumont.



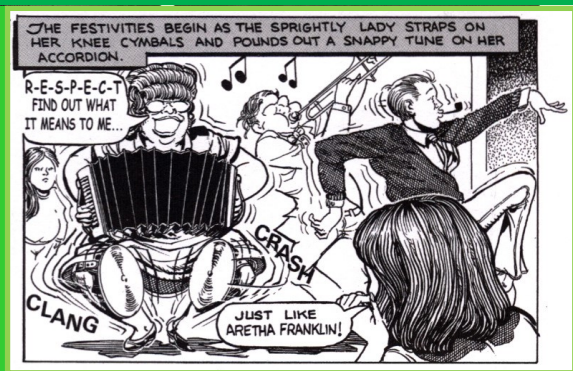
If you enjoyed Santa's recommendation of *Book Love* last year (741.5 no. 36), you should snag a copy of Grant Snider's *I Will Judge You by Your Bookshelf* (AbramsComicArts). Snider's loose penline is perfect for the gently off-kilter look at bibliophiles and the books they love.

As discussed in 741.5 no. 6, Joe Sacco is the leader in the field of journalistic comics. His latest report comes from Canada, where the indigenous Dene people struggle with the cultural and ecological damage wrought by an implacable union of industry and government. Find *Paying the Land* under 971.2 Sa 14p at our Beaumont, Central and Village locations.

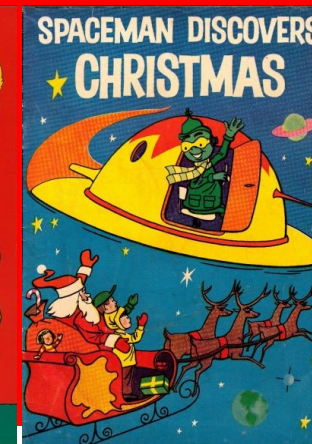
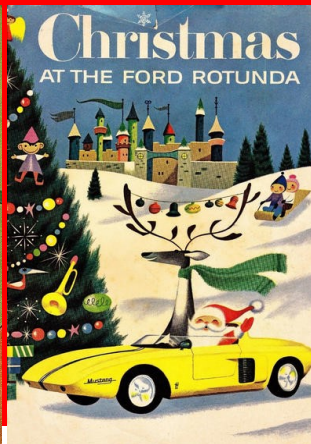
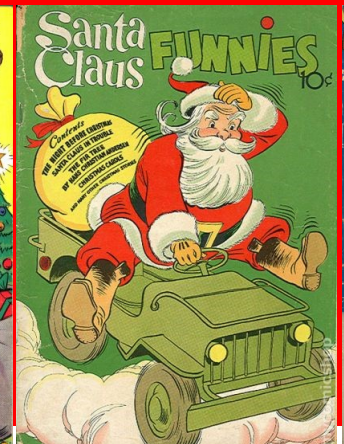
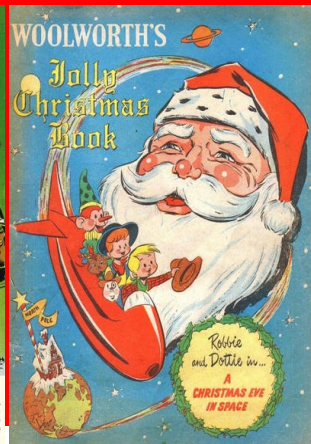
Jean-Pierre Gibrat continues his hero's peregrinations through the war-torn Europe of the early 20th Century in *Matteo Book Two: 1917-1918* (EuroComics). Matteo, a Spanish deserter from the French army (see 741.5 #27), finds refuge in Petrograd during the Russian Revolution. But has Matteo gotten mixed up in a mess he can't fix or flee? Find out when you get this lovely book at Beaumont, Central and Village!



During its 1970s heyday, the *National Lampoon* used all kinds of cartoonists, from funnybook warhorses like Frank Springer to former Air Pirate Shary Flenniken. But one artist stood out due to his combination of slick comedic illustration and oddball sense of humor. *The Comics of B.K. Taylor* finally get the recognition they deserve in *I Think He's Crazy* (Fantagraphics). The wacky adventures of abnormally normal family-next-door *The Appletons* (right) switched off with the Canuck cut-ups of *Timberland Tales* and the fractured fables of the anti-Remus, *Uncle Kunta*. His tenure as a staff writer for the hit sitcom *Home Improvement* pays off with an introduction from its star, Tim Allen. Lots of loopy laughs await at Beaumont and Eastside.



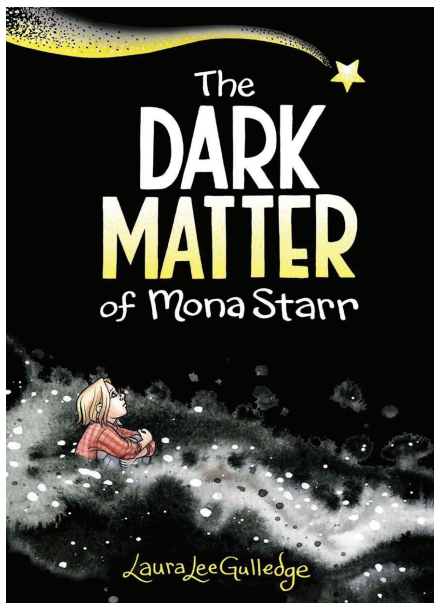
**HAPPY HOLIDAYS! ENJOY THIS GALLERY OF CLASSIC SANTA COMIC BOOK COVERS FROM THE 1940S TO THE SIXTIES**







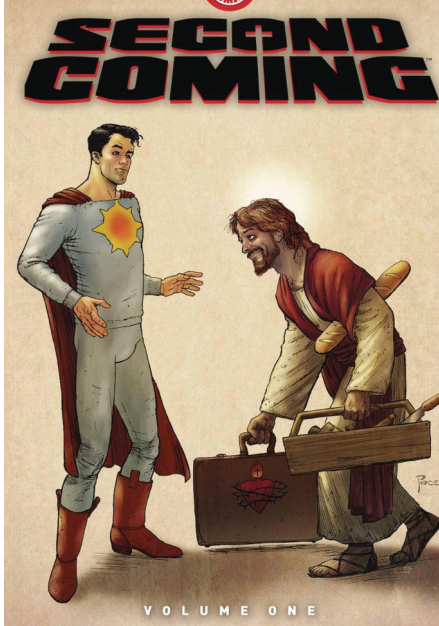
Andre the Giant, Andy Kaufman, Harry Anslinger— each life has been rendered in the deceptively bland line of cartoonist **Brian "Box" Brown**. (See *Meanwhile* 741.5 nos. 16 & 32). His newest, *Child Star* (FirstSecond), is his first try at fiction. The story of Owen Eugene is that of **Jackie Cooper**, **Lauren Ann Chapin**, **Dana Plato** and too many other children raised in the limelight and lost to the darkness. Though Owen and his hit sitcom *Everyone's Friend* didn't exist, his history is all too real. A handicap turned advantage; the parents living off the kid; the ups of catchphrases, hit singles and made-for-TV movies, the downs of imitation, cancellation and reality TV— this is the history of kids in TV. **Brown** captures the 1980s milieu of *Child Star*, with its combination of ruthless exploitation and unctuous moralism, featuring a cameo by the Gipper himself! A cartoon Hollywood tell-all, *Child Star* can be found at all LPL loca-



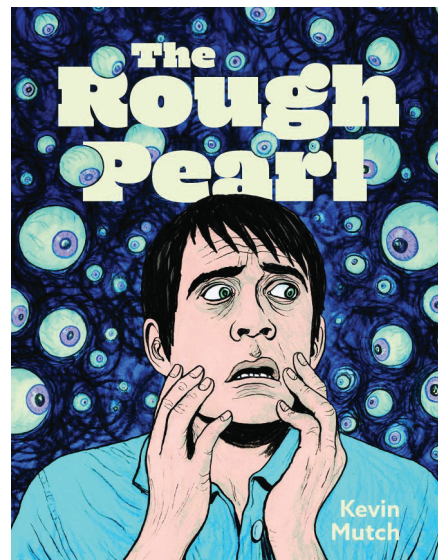
## MEANWHILE

tions. Look to our TEEN shelves for *The Dark Matter of Mona Starr* (Amulet). Former Eisner and Harvey Award nominee **Laura Lee Gulledge** combines ink and pencil art with imaginative, symbolic layouts to tell the semi-autobiographical story of teenager Mona Starr. Sweet, smart, well-liked by friends and loved by her parents, Mona has a hard time getting out of her own way. Her chronic depression manifests itself as "the Matter", a swirling black cloud right out of *Dr. Strange* that tries to poison every moment with its incessant naysaying and backbiting. Fortunately, Mona isn't as alone as she thinks. If you know a young person struggling with depression, reserve them a copy of *The Dark Matter of Mona Starr*. Meanwhile, the Reason for the Season is sent back to get it right this time in *Second Coming* (Ahoy). Still peeved about the sinfulness of man, God commands superhero Sunstar to toughen up His Only Begotten Son. "Look, Jesus is a good boy. He means

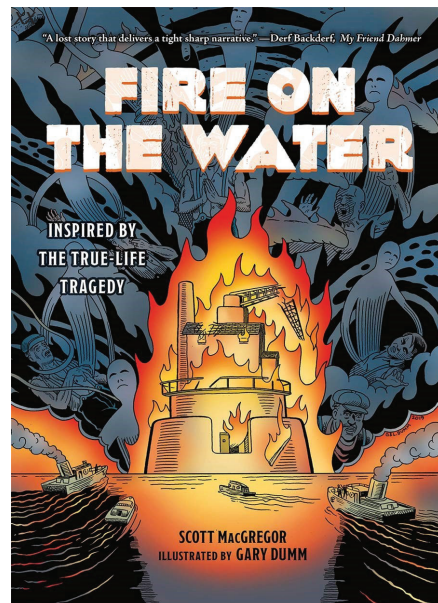
MARK RUSSELL • RICHARD PACE      LEONARD KIRK • ANDY TROY



well. But...He doesn't understand how this world works. Not like you and Me. We're men of action. The important thing is that you do *something*." But Christ's time on Earth taught Him a far different lesson. "The greatest temptation...isn't to do evil," says the Son of Man. "But the need to be seen doing good." The bulk of the story pits both philosophies against each other. Sunstar tries to punch his way out of his problems—including the stalker harassing his Lois Lane—only to dig himself into a hole. Jesus takes to the streets and speaks unto the multitudes. He ends up in the nut tank after getting His butt kicked by angry Christians. This *mishegoss* has not gone unnoticed by Lucifer, who, as always, has his own plans. **Mark** (*Red Sonja*) **Russell** and artist **Richard Pace** have concocted a warm-hearted satire that makes you laugh and leaves you thinking. Get *Second Coming* at Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek. The striking cover of *The Rough Pearl* reminds this comics scholar of **Norm Saunders's** classic painting for Fawcett's *Worlds of Fear* #10 6/53. But the terrors



portrayed by cartoonist **Kevin Mutch** are more bizarre and more banal than those found in the pages of old horror comics. Protagonist Adam Kline is an aspiring artist saddled with an boring job, a worsening marriage and a really bad drinking problem. Kline's been blacking out...then waking up somewhere strange having done something weird. Is it the booze or something stranger, more terrifying? A critique of academic culture wrapped in a **Philip K. Dick** story, *The Rough Pearl* can be found at Beaumont, Central and Northside. A different kind of terror tale is told in *Fire On the Water* (Abrams) by **Scott MacGregor** and **Gary** (*American Splendor*) **Dumm**. The terror is that exacted by the harsh, heartless capitalism of the 19th Century, which sends "sand hogs" to their doom as they dig a tunnel under Lake Erie. **Dumm's** art, like a meaty mix of **Bill Griffith** and **George Evans**, captures the blunt humanity of the immigrants who paid the price for progress. As always, go to [lexpublib.org/](http://lexpublib.org/)



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