

ISSUE #1

DANGER DAN



CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND



LESLEY-ANNE & MONICA LIM

Praise for *Danger Dan Confronts the Merlion Mastermind*

“A fun story that also educates! Readers can learn good vocabulary and understand more about Singapore history as they join Danger Dan on his adventures.”

—Dr Tay Hui Yong, Vice-Principal,
Nanyang Girls’ High School

“Singapore, get ready for your newest superhero as he stumbles his way into greatness...accidentally! *Danger Dan Confronts the Merlion Mastermind* is laugh-out-loud funny!”

—A.J. Low, author of *Sherlock Sam* series

“A refreshingly well-written book of adventure with lots of local flavour. A fun and engaging read for the whole family.”

—Zahira Mohd Sedik, Head of Department GEP
Humanities, St Hilda’s Primary School

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CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND



written by
Lesley-Anne & Monica Lim

illustrated by
James Tan



EPIGRAM BOOKS / SINGAPORE

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Published in Singapore by Epigram Books.

www.epigrambooks.sg

Illustrations by James Tan

Edited by Ruth Wan

Cover design and book layout by Lydia Wong

National Library Board, Singapore

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Lim, Monica

DANGER DAN CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND/

by Monica Lim and Lesley-Anne Tan –

Singapore : Epigram Books, 2014.

pages cm

ISBN: 978-981-07-7843-9 (paperback)

ISBN : 978-981-07-7844-6 (epub)

1. Superheroes – Juvenile fiction.

2. Singapore – Juvenile fiction.

I. Tan, Lesley-Anne. II. Title.

PZ7

S823 -- dc23 OCN862201019

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places,
and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination
or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons,
living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First Edition:

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Andre and all other secret superheroes





CHAPTER

1

Danger Dan scans the terrain. The volcano is close to erupting and lava has already started flowing down the mountain. His headquarters is in sight, its anti-lava force field forming a pulsating blue orb. Clinging precariously to the side of the volcano, he inches forward slowly, moving sideways like a crab along the narrow rocky ledge. Every few minutes, the volcano rumbles, sending showers of rocks his way and threatening to knock him off balance.



He is in a dangerous situation.

But Danger Dan is no stranger to danger.

His watch beeps and shows a glowing red number '5'. Five minutes! Only five minutes to disaster! He is horrified to realise that lava has flowed right in front of him, blocking his path to the headquarters. Danger Dan glances around frantically. Then he spots it—a floating rocky island in the middle of the stream of lava. He springs away from the ledge, which crumbles immediately after his great leap. He lands expertly on the floating island and braces himself for one final jump towards his headquarters. If he aims well, he should make it safely onto the roof. Unfortunately, a huge boulder smashes into the floating island right at that moment, causing Danger Dan to fly through the air.

Will this be the end of Danger Dan?

CRASH!

Danny flopped onto the study table, sending pens and paper hurtling in all directions. “Yes! Danger Dan does it again!” rejoiced Danny, striking a Superman pose.

“You are such a wretched boy!” yelled Amy, Big Sister Number One who was 18 years old and trying to study for her ‘A’ level exams. She lunged at Danny’s arm, but he dodged just in time by rolling off the table. Amy didn’t exactly have the fastest reflexes. Her special feature was her Big Mouth. Amy was the star speaker on the school debating team which had won all the national debating championships for the past two years. Her motto was: If you can’t convince them, confuse them. She could talk circles around anyone.

“Stop bothering us, you pest!” squealed Betty, Big Sister Number Two who was 16 years old and trying to study for her ‘O’ level exams. She threw an eraser at Danny but missed completely. Betty didn’t exactly have the best aim. Her strength

was her Big Brain. Every year for the past four years, Betty had been the winner of the National Mathematical Olympiad, Science Olympiad and History Olympiad. She had also won the Home Economics Olympiad by whipping up a delicious bowl of fishball noodles using only her chemistry kit and some soya sauce.

“Why must you be such a pain?” growled Candy, Big Sister Number Three who was 12 years old and trying to study for her PSLE. Candy didn’t have a Big Mouth or a Big Brain. She was just...BIG. She represented her school team in judo and her opponents often prayed that they wouldn’t have to compete against her. She was as strong as a weightlifting elephant and had a terrifying flip that people commonly referred to as the ‘Candy Crush’.

The three of them looked around the room in disgust. Books were strewn across the floor having fallen off the bookcase that Danny had leapt from. A bulky volume of *The Complete*

Works of William Shakespeare lay in the centre of the room. The rug that Danny had slipped on was scrunched up in a corner.

The only things that had escaped unscathed were the three display cabinets lining the wall. One held Amy's Debating Championship trophies, another showcased Betty's Olympiad certificates and the third exhibited Candy's judo medals. There was no cabinet for Danny because he had never won anything. Unless you counted the one time he won an ice cream-eating contest at his school funfair.

"Go away, Mickey Mouse," scoffed Candy.

"Stop calling me that!" shouted Danny. He stopped moving momentarily, his prominent ears turning red with rage. It was so unfair! Danny didn't have a Big Mouth or a Big Brain and he was nowhere close to being Big. Of all the Big features he could have possessed, Danny had Big Ears. (Actually, they weren't really that big but they stuck out at an unfortunate angle.)

"I'm not Mickey Mouse!" yelled Danny, putting his hands on hips. "I'm Danger Dan, Protector of the Universe!"



Candy looked at him menacingly and slowly stood up. Danny flinched and started to back away. He knew what it felt like to be 'Candy Crushed'. He dashed out of the living room.

He heard Amy comment drily, “Oh look, it’s Run-Away-From-Danger Dan.” The other two sisters burst into uncontrollable giggles and Danny seethed with indignation. He hated being the youngest and the only boy in the family. It was always three against one and it didn’t help that he was a small and scrawny 11-year-old.

Danny’s mother called out from the dining room. “I need one of you to deliver this pack of herbs to Grandma.”

“I’m studying!” shouted Amy.

“I’m studying!” squawked Betty.

“I’m studying!” snarled Candy.

“Wait, wait, I’m...” Danny frantically tried to think up an excuse but his brain failed him.

“And we have a winner,” said his mother, coming towards him with a paper bag.

“No! No! You can’t make me do this! I have things to do! I’m busy with...er...er...” stammered Danny.

His mother ignored his protests. “Go on,” she insisted, thrusting the bag into his hand. “If you hurry, you can come home in time to finish your homework before dinner. Looks like it might rain, so better wear your jacket.”

Homework! He could have been ‘busy with homework’! Why didn’t he think of that? Silly brain!

Danny felt rather peeved that Danger Dan had to do something as ordinary as run errands. He grudgingly put on his red waterproof jacket and stuffed his wallet into a sling bag, along with his favourite *Fantasy Squad* comic book.

As he left the flat with his little red sling bag and the bag of herbs, Betty called out, “Have fun at Grandma’s, Little Red Riding Hood!” This triggered more howls of laughter. OOOOHHHH!!! He really wanted to strangle his sisters. One day, Danger Dan would show them!

Danny made his way to Toa Payoh MRT

station which was just a short walk away from his HDB flat. He didn't have to wait long for the train. It wasn't too crowded but only the reserved seats were not taken so Danny chose to stand. He stationed himself by a pole and started to read his comic.

Silver Wing streaks across New York's night sky. The Sinister Spy is holding the ElectriCannon, firing electric charges everywhere. Silver Wing folds in his eagle-like wings and his entire body changes to pure silver. He dives down headfirst towards the ElectriCannon at full speed.

The Sinister Spy shoots a huge charge of electricity towards Silver Wing.

A stylized, bold, and jagged sound effect word 'ZAP!' in a grey, metallic-looking font with a slight shadow.

Streaks of electricity deflect off Silver Wing and shoot up into the sky. Chunks of asphalt go flying and car windows shatter. Silver Wing reels from the impact but the Sinister Spy emerges unharmed.

"You may be able to fly like a bullet but your wings are no match for the force of my electric rays!" roars the Sinister Spy. "Say goodbye, Fantasy Squad. I will enjoy destroying you all!" He sends a brilliant bolt of lightning towards them.

In an instant, Flex Rex, the superdog, stretches out his elastic tail and wraps it around Cryptic. He rapidly uncurls his tail, catapulting Cryptic towards the lightning bolt. "Time for a change!" Cryptic hollers. Just before the lightning hits him, Cryptic shape-shifts into a large titanium shield.

A stylized, bold, and jagged sound effect word 'ZING!' in a grey, metallic-looking font with a slight shadow.

The lightning ricochets off Cryptic and strikes back towards the ElectriCannon. It hits the ElectriCannon, which buzzes and slowly loses its glow. The weapon short-circuits, shakes unstably and releases a huge pulse of electricity. Electricity radiates through New York City, shorting out all

the power lines and street lamps. For a moment, the city is illuminated by a blinding white light. Then...darkness.

The only source of light is Energia. Her skin radiates a soft warm glow, while her green eyes shine like a cat's. She clasps her hands together and with a swift rolling motion, forms a bright orange energy orb. As the Sinister Spy frantically tries to restart the ElectriCannon, she throws the

energy orb right into the mouth of the cannon.

"Run!" she yells. The Fantasy Squad swiftly flees from the scene.

BOOM!

The orb explodes and destroys the ElectriCannon once and for all.



“Woohoo!” exclaimed Danny out loud in glee. “That thing is DA BOMB!”

“What thing? What bomb?” A sharp voice startled Danny. He looked up and saw an MRT official a few steps away, staring at him. “Hey,” the official signalled to another official behind him. “That boy said he has a bomb!” As the two men headed towards him, Danny was unnerved and backed away.

“Stop, boy!” shouted the first official. Danny turned and broke into a run. He nimbly weaved through the mass of astonished passengers and sprinted down the length of two carriages. The two officials were in hot pursuit and Danny was starting to feel desperate. Sooner or later, they would catch up with him.

Just then, he heard the automated MRT voice announce: “City Hall.” As the train doors opened, Danny vaulted out of the train without another thought. For a split second, he caught sight of a flash of wavy blue streaks on either

side of him. He heard a sound that reminded him of his toy soldiers being sucked up by his mother’s vacuum cleaner.



Danny glanced around. Instead of being on an MRT platform, he found himself in the middle of a large field, the vast blue sky above him.

Whaaatt...?

DANGER DAN'S FASCINATING FACTS

1

Alec Fraser-Brunner was the curator of the Van Kleeef Aquarium when he created the Merlion for the Singapore Tourism Board logo in 1964. He was probably a much smarter man in real life than we made him out to be in the book. Blame it on the time warp!

2

Quah Kim Song was Singapore's star footballer in the 1970s. His nickname was the Mercurial Speed Demon (in other words, he was very, very fast!) He studied at Raffles Institution during his pre-university days and during that time, the school football team was pretty much unbeatable.



3

The entire site where Raffles City Shopping Centre and City Hall MRT station are now used to be Raffles Institution (RI). Since the MRT station is underground, Danny should technically have emerged like a zombie from beneath the RI field. But we thought that might be too creepy for a children's book.

4

Van Kleeef Aquarium was a popular tourist attraction in the 1960s and 1970s. Ask your parents! Chances are they went on a school excursion to the aquarium. It used to be one of the best aquariums in the world, with 6,500 marine creatures when it opened. We apologise to all who worked at the aquarium for making them sound mean and grumpy. No starfish were harmed by ice balls in the writing of this book.



5

The Queen Elizabeth Walk underpass was brand new in 1964. It was the first-ever pedestrian underpass in Singapore! Though it looks somewhat different, Queen Elizabeth Walk is still there today. So are Victoria Theatre, the clock tower and Cavenagh Bridge. The building around which Melody chased the thief is now the Asian Civilisations Museum. It'd be pretty cool if you traced Danger Dan and Gadget Girl's path during the chase. Please don't throw anything over Cavenagh Bridge though.



About the Characters



Name	Danny aka Danger Dan
Age	11 (but often behaves like he's eight)
Distinctive feature	Big ears
Signature items	<i>Fantasy Squad</i> comic book. Red sling bag.
Likes	Anything cold and sweet. All of Melody's gadgets. Comic books and superheroes.
Dislikes	His three older sisters. Vegetables in any form. Cockroaches, especially big, flying ones.
Strengths	Imaginative. Brave. Acts quickly in any situation.
Weaknesses	Doesn't think before he acts. A magnet for trouble (and danger).

Name	Melody aka Gadget Girl
Age	14 (in the year 2135)
Distinctive feature	Silvery voice
Signature items	Silver hair clip (actually a mega computer which also conveniently keeps her hair in place). Grappling hook watch.
Likes	Goey Gooberberry Gummies in all flavours except Coconut Explosion. Virtual jetpack tennis.
Dislikes	Danny being annoying. Birds.
Strengths	Smart. Usually calm (unless with Danny). Able to think under pressure.
Weaknesses	Terrible aim. Sometimes a little bossy.

About the Authors



Monica Lim and Lesley-Anne Tan are a mother-daughter writing team (in that order). If Lesley-Anne could have a super power, she would choose the ability to stop time, so that she can study and write books in no time at all. Monica's preferred super power is mind control, so that she can make Lesley-Anne stop dreaming about time freezes and get back to work.

About the Illustrator



James Tan is an illustrator living in the western part of Singapore. He likes to draw animals and loves cats. He enjoys reading and drawing, garnering inspiration from daily life and travelling. James' most heroic acts involve saving snails from being crushed by joggers and cyclists when he goes for walks.

A SNEAK PREVIEW OF ISSUE #2



The driver of the truck hit the brakes and it came to a sudden halt. A few cages toppled out of the back of the truck and the cage doors flew open.



Embracing their newfound freedom, chickens tumbled out onto the flooded road. Squawking and flapping their wings, they floundered in the water. Feathers flew everywhere.

Some people from a nearby coffee shop dashed out into the rain to help the fallen

motorcyclist. The man from the truck ran around trying to gather his sodden chickens.

“Melody, Melody, Melody!” spluttered Danny urgently. “Girl! Girl! Girl!”

Melody turned to her left, where Danny was pointing frantically. There was a large open drain by the side of the shophouses. It was overflowing and water was spewing from its banks. A strong current swept away leaves and debris.

Then Melody saw her. A young girl was in the rushing water, clutching on desperately to the edge of the storm drain.

TUNE IN NEXT TIME WHEN

DANGER DAN

TACKLES THE MAJULAH MAYHEM

Danger Dan and Gadget Girl are back together for another time-travelling adventure, involving riots, a musician, spicy noodles and a giant cockroach! Say whaaat?

In *Danger Dan Tackles the Majulah Mayhem*, it's up to Danny and Melody to save the composer of the national anthem from giving up on music. But the time warp appears to be more sinister than Danger Dan initially thought. What is the real story behind these time glitches?

“A fun and funny adventure! An exciting debut!”

- Adeline Foo, author of *The Diary of Amos Lee* series

“Warning: Danger Dan is dangerously fun. A solid hit. Kids, parents and even teachers will love this book!”

- David Seow, author of *Sam, Sebbie and Di-Di-Di* series



PSST! PAY ATTENTION: ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD DANNY IS ABOUT TO START HIS SECRET LIFE. AND YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TELL ANYONE, OR WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN? A STRANGE TIME WARP IS ALREADY MESSING UP SINGAPORE. BIG TIME. BUT DON'T WORRY. DANNY IS ABOUT TO TRANSFORM INTO DANGER DAN—THE ONLY BOY SUPERHERO WHO CAN SAVE US ALL!

IN DANGER DAN CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND.

DANGER DAN MEETS MELODY, A MYSTERIOUS GIRL FROM THE FUTURE. THEY HAVE TO RACE AGAINST TIME TO ENSURE THE MERLION DOESN'T END UP WITH ORCHIDS AROUND ITS HEAD! SOUNDS EASY? NOT WHEN YOU SEE THE ODDS THEY'RE FACING...



**WATCH OUT FOR
DANGER DAN TACKLES THE MAJULAH MAYHEM
AS THE ADVENTURES OF DANGER DAN CONTINUE!**

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ISBN-13: 978-9810778439



9 789810 778439

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