

The Men in Black Ride Again

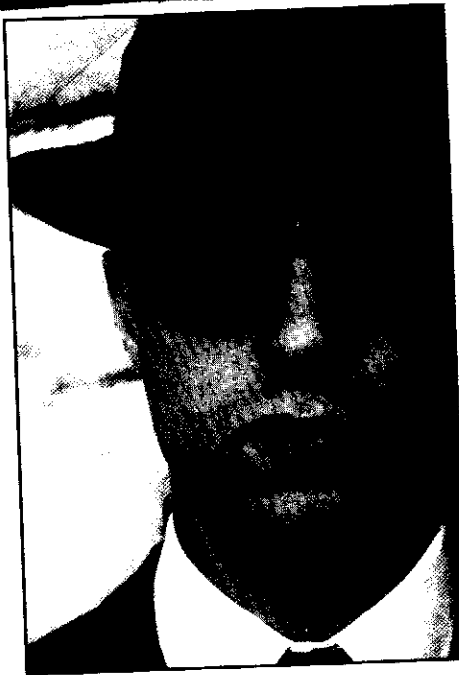


Photo by Joe, Rich, and Paul Giannone from cover of March 1992 FATE.

by Scott Corrales

Lady, you'd better tell me what this is about!" shouted the taxi driver to his fare. Another taxi cab identical to his own had pulled up behind him and was now ramming his car in the back—all of this in broad daylight and on Avenida Corrientes, one of the busiest arteries of the city of Buenos Aires.

The woman looked through the rear window in terror at the attacking livery vehicle, its driver, and more ominously, its passenger. "No! This can't be!" she wailed.

"Look, lady, you don't seem to be the type to get into trouble, but...do you know

that guy? The other cab driver seems to have gone nuts!" The first driver was doing his best to avoid getting rammed again and hitting other traffic in turn. Gunning the accelerator, the taxi ran a yellow light and managed to put an end to the frantic and surreal pursuit.

Pursued

While the foregoing may seem like the script for a new Bruce Willis project, it isn't. It is simply the ending of a real-life experience involving the wife of an Argentinean UFO researcher who found herself the tar-

get of a pursuit by the impeccably dressed characters known in ufology as the Men in Black, or MIB.

The anonymous woman, who told her story to author Fabio Zerpa, was aware of her husband's research and of his success in meeting with a diplomat who gave him a crucial piece of information on UFOs. On February 20, 1983, she had gone to downtown Buenos Aires for a medical appointment when she realized that she was the subject of unwelcome attention by a bearded man in dark clothing who pretended to read a newspaper as he shadowed her movements, even boarding the same bus. "No one would sit near him," she added, which served to heighten her sense of paranoia about the man.

Losing herself among the big city throngs, the woman was frightened to see the man again—reading his newspaper—at the corner of a busy intersection, having somehow kept ahead of her by a considerable distance. Out of sheer terror, she neglected her appointment and instead went into a hair salon, confident that the stranger would not dare follow her there. Leaving the salon, she boarded another bus to return home—no sign of the stranger.

Changing clothes, the woman once again headed to the downtown area, this time by subway, feeling that "everyone's eyes were upon her" as she left the train car. To her horror, she realized that her bearded pursuer was disembarking from another car, quickly trying to close the distance between them.

In true action-film fashion, the woman ran up the subway stairs and across the street, zigzagging her way through traffic. This time a new pursuer joined the chase—a formally attired man in a gray suit, black velvet topcoat, and a blue pullover sweater clearly visible under his suit jacket despite the 90-degree temperature. He seemed uncertain as to how to step onto an escalator. It was this last, overdressed-for-the-weather pursuer who boarded the taxicab that rammed into her own, after she had decided to go to her husband's office in a quest for safety.

Paraphysical Forces

At this point, the reader will be thinking of a number of possibilities that may explain the preceding account without involving anything untoward: the woman may have simply been paranoid; the pursuers may have been real enough, but only interested in holding her for ransom; they may have been foreign operatives interested in grilling her about her ufologist husband's meeting with the diplomat. But the detail of the overdressed man seemingly unable to step onto an escalator (as if he had never seen one before) is strongly reminiscent of other incidents in which the so-called Men in Black manifest a sense of astonishment at perfectly mundane activities or situations, such as eating Jell-O or cutting a steak, situations highlighted in John Keel's landmark *The Mothman Prophecies*.

In fact, it was Keel's work on the subject that made him the unquestioned expert in documenting the uncanny pow-

ers of these beings. In 1960, William Dunn, Jr., a UFO investigator, had his home burglarized, his files burned, and his photos stolen. Men in Black were notably active during the West Virginia "Mothman" sightings of 1966–67 as well as in Long Island, New York. Far from believing them to be extraterrestrial agents, Keel introduced the concept of the Men in Black as negative, parapsychical forces whose warnings were not to be taken lightly. His sentiments would be echoed by other writers and researchers. Other authors, like David Tansley, believe that they are a form of demonic psychic energy—a conjecture substantiated by records from past centuries. Others opine that they are thoughtforms of some sort, although whose thoughtforms remains unclear.

Men in Black reputedly harass eyewitnesses to UFO sightings and encounters, turning up at their homes (or places of business, as transpired in one Puerto Rican case) typically long before the witnesses have even thought about going public with their stories. Case histories have them dressing in black suits, white shirts, and jaunty red ties. (The fabrics, however, have often been described as being unusual or unearthly.) They are witnessed traveling in threes, more often than not aboard spanking-new models of large, outdated automobiles. With notable exceptions, they seem to deliver a boilerplate warning: do not discuss the particular sighting, if a witness; cease and desist investigation, if a ufologist.

South America's "Hombres de Negro"

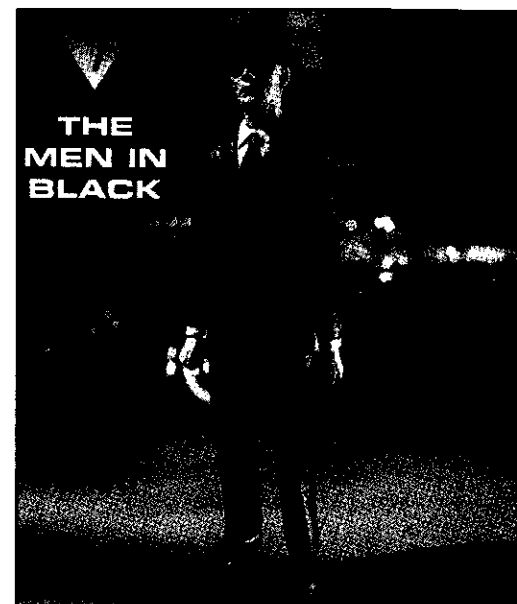
Mexican researcher Dr. Rafael A. Lara notes that on the evening of June 24, 1967, over 110 UFO incidents were logged in a 24-hour period in the skies over Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay. Perhaps more astonishing than the scope of this UFO event was the fact that it had been foretold by a Man in Black.

Four days earlier, the newsroom of the Cordoba (Argentina) *Los Principios* journal had received the visit of a very strange man dressed in black. The unusual character left a long letter addressed to the paper's editor, saying that before the week was out, the skies of the South American landmass would be swarming with extraterrestrial vehicles. The day before the sightings began, the paper received a phone call stating: "Attention! It is about to happen at any moment."

But the MIBs' work in South America was hardly finished. During several days in the month of August 1968, strange lights were seen in the night skies over Santa Fé, Argentina. Farmers were surprised to find strange, circular burn marks on their properties as a result of these sightings; numerous animals died as a result of some sort of radiation in the area. A Jeep carrying four men in black coveralls drove up to the home of a local family. One of the men asked the owner the best way to get off the property. UFO sightings over the region ceased shortly after the incident involving these Jeep-riding MIB.

In 1971, Arguello de la Mota and Antonio Arocha, both physicians, were in San Juan de los Morros, a small town not far from Caracas, Venezuela, when they were startled by the unexpected arrival of two characters dressed in black who drove into the dusty town in a sporty Mustang. Unaware that they were being watched, the MIB exchanged remarks and donned orange-colored belts. Suddenly, a brilliant object appeared in the sky, descending rapidly to the surface. The doctors swore that the object was a 60-foot-wide disk-shaped craft, which produced a parabolic ladder while hovering inches off the ground. The MIB entered the vehicle, which rose into the skies and vanished out of sight. (No information is available on the fate of the brand-new sports car they left behind.) The story was circulated worldwide by United Press International.

When Karl Brugger, author of the *Chronicles of Akakor* (a narrative of lost underground cities in Brazil) was mysteriously murdered on the streets of Rio de Janeiro in January 1984, a number of South American investigators promptly placed responsibility for the crime on the HDN (*hombres de negro*, the Spanish acronym for MIB). Fabio Zepa, editor of the now defunct *Cuarta Dimensión*, declared: "These deaths always have the appearance of being



Package insert in Man in Black toy from Shadowbox Collectibles Alien Series, 1996.

natural events, but curiously enough, every time someone has important information on a crucial subject, strange accidents seem to befall them."

Argentinean author Guillermo Gimenez writes of a 1983 event he refers to as "the P.A.H. Incident" after the initials of the case's protagonist—an official in a major ministry of Argentina's government, whose position understandably required anonymity.

P.A.H., 42 years of age at the time of his interview with Gimenez, is a native of La Pampa whose interest in the UFO phenomenon began after his second UFO sighting in 1965, eventually prompting him to write

a novel with a ufological flavor. In October 1976, a year after his novel appeared on the shelves, P.A.H. left his home at 8:30 in the morning when an unknown woman, dressed in black and described as having "a strange, aggressive and mocking expression" greeted him by name and continued her path. The following day he ran into her again. "At first I felt nothing special," he said, "since I didn't foreshadow anything. On the second occasion, a sensation of cold and panic overwhelmed me feeling certain that I was facing something beyond my comprehension." The woman-in-black's eyes—menacing and malicious with a golden sheen—gave him pause.

P.A.H. would later run into other black-garbed figures with "shining eyes" while on a subway train in Buenos Aires' Junin Station. Two men, one of them described as tall and clean-shaven, the other shorter and with a trimmed mustache, caught his attention. The strangers were dressed "like bank managers," their eyes concealed by dark glasses. Their complexions were dark and serene. They were obviously traveling together, but never exchanged a single word. The subject told Gimenez that the Men in Black had decidedly Asiatic or Eskimo features (a common description in these cases).

"They sat on the left row of seats—bearing in mind that the train was headed toward Buenos Aires and my own location," P.A.H. told Gimenez. "Then one moved some three or four seats toward me on the right. Then three or four more before they

sat down together on the left. They finally separated and the one with the mustache sat on the right, some three meters from where I was sitting. The other one remained in the left row, a few seats behind." Despite the fact that there were other people in the train car at the time, no one seemed aware of the MIBs.

"Because I had an ephemeral political career...at the time," P.A.H. explained, "I attributed it to elements of some police or para-police outfit that wanted to assassinate me. It was only with time that I learned I was never a 'marked man.' When I tied loose ends together, I realized that I was dealing with MIBs." To add to the strangeness, the curious pair in black suddenly fell asleep at once, their heads falling to one side as though "switched off." P.A.H. thought this might be due to intervention by a higher power—this deactivation allowed him to get off at another subway station and take an alternate route home.

Reflecting upon this, the subject of the interview expressed the belief that he was about to be silenced because of the nature of his book *El Ocaso de los Redentores* (Twilight of the Redeemers), which delved into such subjects as "the complete spiritual fall of Man, the failure of the Redeemers, the existence of the Council of Nine, which plans all malign events, and whose minions pretend to work for the Good." A translator working on this project had a lens fall out her eyeglass frames, and a carefully carved triangular shape ap-

peared on one of the lenses of her spare pair.

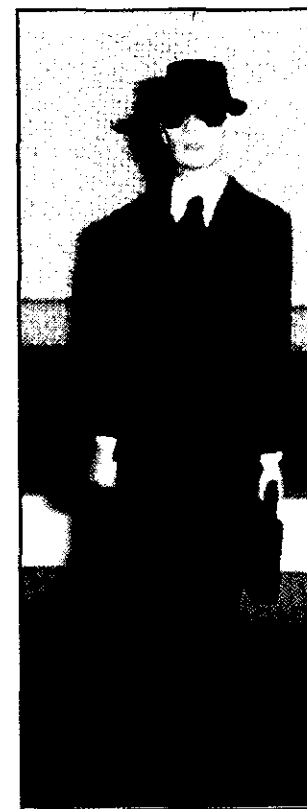
A Chinese MIB

Most readers will be surprised to learn that Men in Black are not an exclusively Western phenomenon. In his book, *China and the Extraterrestrials* (Difel, 1985—translation available in French and in Portuguese), author Shi Bo relates an interview between newspaperman Wang Shili and a military chauffeur named Li Jingyang, who had a UFO experience in Shansi province in 1963, when he was only six years old.

While out with his friends, Li Jingyang noticed an awe-inspiring discoid object emerging from the clouds in an otherwise clear sky. The terrified boys observed the UFO closely, which remained static in the sky for some ten minutes.

The following day, while walking the streets alone, Li was surprised by a tall man "completely dressed in black" who stopped him in his tracks, barring his way and demanding to know what the boy had seen. "Since I didn't understand him very well," the hapless witness explained, "he repeated his question, and I replied yes. He pointed at the sky, where the luminous object had staged its appearance and asked me again: was it there? I told him yes. He advised me to never tell others what I'd seen. Only after I gave him my word of honor did he allow me to leave."

Li Jingyang recalls the man as having dark skin, adding that many other people



Man in Black toy from Shadowbox Collectibles Alien Series, 1996.

saw him and discussed the strange character, whose "gestures were incomprehensible." The Man in Black walked in a mechanical manner and its mouth did not move whenever it spoke. It disappeared suddenly after turning around a street corner. ☞

Scott Corrales is a frequent contributor to FATE. He is the editor of *Inexplicata: The Journal of Hispanic Ufology*.

MIB



Book Reviews

The Truth Behind the Men in Black

Jenny Randles

St. Martin's Press, New York

Softcover, 1997, 249 pgs., \$5.99

Ufologists can be a nervous bunch. One low-flying helicopter over their house and you can practically hear the sweat dripping onto the floor. Mention the Men In Black and watch them leave skid marks.

For too long, a good, clear-headed account of MIB lore has been absent from bookshelves. With so many books on Roswell, it could be that many writers simply ran out of ink. Luckily, Jenny Randles didn't, and it is to her we owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude for this stylishly written and engaging book.

MIB aficionados may find portions of what's included here tediously familiar: the case of Maury Island, Albert Bender, Herbert Hopkins, and even some of John Keel's classic tales. Even so, the tedium won't last, as Randles dazzles readers with cases previously unknown — at least in the United States.

In a 1973 encounter reported by a woman living in Somerset, England, a UFO/entity sighting along a country road led to a lapse of consciousness followed by a terrifying medical exam and rape during which she found herself physically unable to move or scream. About two months later — before publicly sharing her ordeal — she received phone calls and anonymous letters urging her to remain silent about her experience.

Not long after, two ordinary-looking men, similar in physical appearance and wearing dark-framed glasses, arrived at her home. They described the woman's encounter in amazing detail, warning her again not to report it if she valued her "health, welfare, and sanity." More visits followed, and the warnings were repeated. Eventually the woman broke her silence and, as in countless other cases, the MIB proved to be all bark and no bite — even thanking her for keeping silent for as long as she did and promising no further harassment!

Randles admits that most accounts like this one can easily be attributed to terrestrial forces — government agencies investigating UFOs, or "cranks and crackpots...engaging in some sort of fantastic party trick." But she is hesitant to slam the door on the possibility that a few MIB incidents may be inter-dimensional or extraterrestrial.

Along with the original data in this book, Randles provides deliciously dark

entertainment, playfully nudging at the readers' unconscious, reminding them we just might want to check the driveway to be sure no dark-clad strangers are parked there. — Peter Jordan ■

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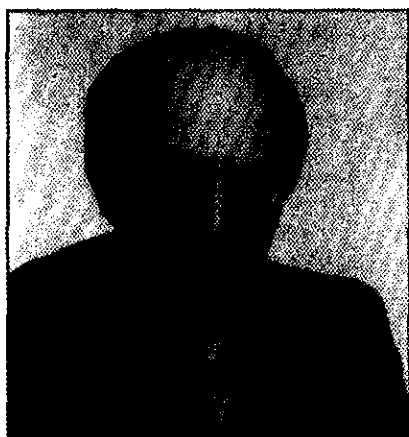
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Loyd Auerbach

The house was built in 1935. The family moved into the house in 1963, just after the mother's divorce. The presence was first experienced in 1973, after the oldest daughter had moved out, increasing in frequency and magnitude in the summer of 1979. The initial phone conversations yielded sketchy details of the situation, but it looked as though the events were frequent enough, current enough, and with more than just a single witness, so a visit was planned.

The First Visit

During the first visit, Tom Malone and I went to the home and spent a few hours with the mother and her 16-year-old daughter, "K." K's twin brother had been committed to an institution for mentally disturbed juvenile delinquents following incidents of truancy, burglary, and running away from home. Our initial visit provided us with details from the mother and daughter's points of view, but we were missing pieces. We came to no definite conclusions about what was going on, due to the fact that we really needed to speak with as many of the other family members as possible. Tom and I decided that a second visit was warranted.

Here's what we learned the first visit:

In 1973, the middle daughter, "D," was living in the bedroom which became her mother's bedroom after she moved out. D

was awakened one night and felt as though there was a weight on her chest. At the same time, she apparently saw a figure in black at the foot of her bed.

After that experience, D asked her mother to stay with her. She fell asleep before her mother did, and soon after her mother felt like she was being pushed into the bed, receiving the same impression of a figure in black, again at the foot of the bed. This experience prompted the mother to call her priest, who came over to bless the rooms in the house. D continued to feel odd about the room, but apparently didn't have another encounter with the figure in black.

~~The Middle Daughter~~

The younger daughter, "K," was the next to experience the apparition. She had apparently been seeing it for a while before telling her mother about it in September 1979. According to K, the figure was male, dressed completely in black, and wore some sort of helmet that covered all facial detail. There was a swirling effect around the body that suggested a cape, and the figure also wore distinctive black boots (coming up just below the knee), and carried a black broadsword. It was less "seen" with the eyes than visualized. Both mother and daughter got the feeling of evil from the figure. The figure appeared to be a "black knight" and the mother admitted that if she hadn't seen the figure before *Star Wars* came out, she might have assumed it was her imagination conjuring up Darth Vader.

Things got a bit stranger for them in September 1979, after K told her mother about her experience with the figure. K got the impression of a second entity in the house, which she saw more as a prankster than the ominous figure in black. Physical disturbances were noticed by mother and daughter from this point on, including problems with an alarm clock, a window opening and closing in the son's room (he

had already been placed in the youth home), unusual noises heard in the house, the lamp in the mother's bedroom vibrated in an unusual way, and strange, cartoonish voices coming from the son's room at times. These were mostly attributed to this secondary presence.

K offered us her theory about the figure. She felt that he was quite ancient, and that he was stuck in time in their house, seemingly waiting for an opponent to do battle with. They both felt it was an evil presence, but that it wouldn't necessarily do anything to harm them. It always appeared in the same place in the mother's bedroom.

In discussion, Tom and I asked if they had tried to communicate with either "entity." They were not bothered by the "prankster," and were too afraid of the figure in black. Yet K told us, when asked why it wouldn't appear in her room, that she simply wouldn't let it, that she was "bigger than he was" (perhaps in a psychic sense).

Was the Son Responsible?

The mother continuously tried to tie all of this in with her son's abnormal behavior. While growing up, her son began collecting ("with an obsession," his mother said) very odd things such as boots, capes, masks, and toy weapons like swords and guns, some left over from old Halloween costumes, others from sources the mother was not aware of. The son often spent time in the crawl space under the house, and according to K often brought his toys there with him.

He developed emotional problems as he grew up, and for a while the mother thought the apparition and other incidents were the result of pranks played on them by the son. That was until she realized the apparition once appeared while the son was in Atlanta with his father.

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