
DANGER MAN (D. 104)

"DANGER MAN'S" SPY KIT.

"It's getting this way now," Patrick McGoochan says, "that I look at the most every-day objects and find myself wondering if they could be adapted for a secret agent's spy kit!"

It happened when he was looking at a double-headed electric razor. The next day, studio technicians were at work adapting one into a miniature tape-recorder for "Danger Man" John Drake's spy kit.

Pat has, in fact, invented several of those clever gadgets which have attracted so much attention in the "Danger Man" series, and if some of them seem far-fetched, he will point out that truth is stranger than fiction. When it is reported - as it has been recently - that British embassies abroad have been secretly "bugged" and that innocent-looking car lamps have been concealing spy cameras, almost anything is feasible.

But, so far as "Danger Man" is concerned, Pat McGoochan has taken a resolute stand against any suggestions that the series should try to compete with the more fanciful science-fiction stories which introduce colourful but improbable creations.

"They have to serve a practical purpose," Pat explains. "Certainly, they are ingenious. But the basic approach is that they should be unrecognizable."

Anything approaching the fantasy of science-fiction is therefore right out. The challenge is to provide John Drake with unique secret weapons. The gadgets have to look like ordinary objects which will not arouse suspicion. And they have got to work.

If you were presented with a "Danger Man" spy kit, you would have a fascinating collection of gadgets. You would possess, for instance, a cigar which would really be a "de-bugging" device enabling you to detect right away if a room contained hidden microphones or TV cameras.

You would have one of those useful cigarette lighters which are, in reality, miniature cameras. John Drake uses a lot of these.

On your wrist would be a watch which look ordinary enough but would have a double purpose. Lift the winder, and it becomes a secret weapon enabling you to paralyze your opponent.

John Drake uses cigars and cigarettes for other purposes than smoking them or anti-bugging devices. One cigar shoots out a cloud of tear gas the moment it is lighted. There's a pipe which can be smoked but also used for picking up radio signals.

The M.I.9 department which evolves these gadgets for the use of its secret agents would issue you with a variety of fountain pens, and you wouldn't expect to use them merely for making your reports!

One, for instance, would contain a tiny microphone and radio transmitter.

Your kit would contain a fishing rod which would catch far bigger fish than most anglers hope to catch. Easily adapted, it becomes a high velocity rifle worked on compression air - not, however, to fire bullets, but to project capsules containing miniature radio transmitters.

Skeleton keys? These would be safely tucked away inside the hollow handle of a shaving brush.

You want to take photographs without people knowing what you are doing? John Drake demonstrates his cunning in a variety of ways, one of which is to adapt a typewriter, hiding a tiny camera inside which is operated when he touches a certain key.

You want to know if anyone has entered your room while you are absent? John Drake has the answer: an alarm clock containing a camera which automatically goes into action when anyone comes into the room, photographing every movement of the intruder.

And, of course, there are a lot of other highly useful gadgets. They dream up new ones every time a fresh episode of "Danger Man" goes into production!
