

Murderers' Row™



by James Andrysik, David West, Cliff Christiansen and Steven S. Long



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JIM'S DEDICATION

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JEFF'S DEDICATION

Special thanks are in order: Thanx Cliff for giving me the opportunity to draw bad guys. Thanx Kate for believing in me when nobody would. Thanx to James for giving me artistic inspiration (that kept going and going and...). A gratuitous cheers and a tip of the mug to... Margo (who's sweeter than chocolate), to Dave for being a man of few words, to Lee and Jason for expert advice, to my analyst in training, Greyden Beyer (I'm not crazy, damn it!), to Steve for his uplifting contributions, to the patient staff at Perkins (your tip is in the mail), and also to my folks (this is only the beginning).



INTRODUCTION

Operations of 2/11/94, 10:35 PM Patrol Pattern 4-Q, Near 'The Strip'

I had an encounter this evening which has disturbed me a great deal, and given me pause for thought.

I was conducting a patrol around 'The Strip' — I do not say a "routine" patrol, for no patrol of that cesspool of vice is ever routine — when I chanced to notice one of the prostitutes leave her patch of sidewalk to step into an alley. This sometimes indicates a drug deal or some other offense serious enough to merit my attention, so I stepped from my car and followed her.

I didn't see what I was expecting to see. She was simply walking down the alley, going home, perhaps, after her evening's work. There was no one with her — or so she thought. As I watched, a figure wearing a hockey mask seemed almost to melt out from behind a dumpster. Before he turned to follow her, I saw him draw from beneath his coat a long, wicked-looking knife. He took two steps towards her and began to raise the knife — and then I shot him three times in the back with my Mark XII-C assault pistol. The impact knocked his corpse to the ground, but he still held on to the knife somehow. The woman turned to face the noise, saw me, screamed, and ran.

I walked forward to place a 'calling card' on the would-be murderer's body — but something felt wrong. I got closer, and suddenly the "corpse" leapt up, whirled around and slashed at me with the knife! Thanks to my intuition I was able to jump back out of the path of his blade, but I was amazed. Three square hits to the upper chest region, including one to the heart — how had he survived?

I didn't have time to ponder the matter though, as he came at me again with the knife, seemingly clumsy, yet strangely agile. I sidestepped his attack and hit him with an elbow strike to the back of his neck that would have knocked Blackjack dead. He stumbled forward with the force of the blow, smashed through one of the cheap metal doors that lined the alleyway, and disappeared inside.

I followed him immediately. We were in a pornographic magazine and video shop; what else would one expect on The Strip? The masked killer was running away from me down one of the aisles; the fat, greasy-looking men who had been looking at the magazines and the prostitutes that accompanied them were staring dumbly at us, wide-eyed with fear, or were trying to get out of the killer's way. Before he could attack one of them, I used my Mark I Flechette pistol to shoot him in the hand, forcing him to drop the knife. Clutching his injured hand to his chest, he used his other hand to turn one of the display racks over, knocking me down and pinning me underneath it before I could get out of the way.

He ignored me and kept running. Just as he got to the sidewalk outside I squeezed off two shots from my Mark I-R

pistol, again hitting him squarely in the back. The force of the shots knocked him into the street — where he was hit by an Cadillac driven by one of the pimps that cruise The Strip. The driver didn't stop, of course; he just sped off as fast as he could.

By the time I extricated myself and was able to get out into the street, the man in the hockey mask was gone. He may have held onto the car somehow and gotten away, or he could have escaped into the sewers in all the confusion, I don't know. But I would be a fool to assume that he was dead.

The last thing this city needs is another serial killer, let alone one who seems to take his motif and inspiration from "slasher" movies. Looking back at my files for the past six months, I can draw possible links to five murders that seem to have aped such films.

Aren't there enough evil predators stalking the innocent of Hudson City already? Just speaking their names is enough to bring a bad taste to my mouth: the assassin Swansong; his yakuza counterparts, Satsujin and Sanpaku no Kami; the Passion Killer, whom the tabloids say is a reincarnation of Jack the Ripper; Puritan, who claims to be a crime fighter but is nothing but a murderer in the clothes of a true vigilante; the Cabal, a group of murderous cultists with delusions of mystic grandeur.

Assassins, serial killers, thugs who kill for money — their ranks are endless. But I have no time to set forth the complete catalog of them here. Instead, I must return to my work; it is time to turn the catalog into an obituary.

— *An excerpt from the journals
of the Harbinger of Justice*

■ ■ ■

Welcome to *Murderers' Row™*, a collection of some of the worst murderers ever to grace the front of a wanted poster. This book contains five villain teams and fifteen solo villains, thirty-eight characters in all and each and every one a murderer. Some use guns, others prefer poison, while some seem to kill with just a thought. It is up to you to stop them!

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Murderers' Row is an Enemies book designed specifically for *Dark Champions* to add an element of mystery and danger to a campaign. It presents a variety of characters, including both heroic and superheroic level characters. The backgrounds for the characters and organizations presented directly tie in with others in *Dark Champions™* and *Justice, Not Law™*. We hope that *Murderers' Row* provides you with several new character and adventure ideas as well as many hours of enjoyment.



USING MURDERERS' ROW

Murderers' Row is divided into three sections. Five villain teams compose the first section. These teams include The Cabal, The Legion of Death, Morita Yoshio No Te, Ying and Arsenic and Old Lace. Each has a section describing the team's background, its members, their tactics and any agents, bases or vehicles they use.

The second section presents fifteen solo villains. These characters range from a police officer gone bad and a neo-Nazi assassin to a slasher serial killer and a cyberninja. The sheer variety of characters should hold the PC's interests for a long time. Some of these characters have very strong ties to each other, while others don't have any ties with other characters in the *Dark Champions* Universe leaving the GM's options open.

The final section contains an article on how to conduct a police investigation into a homicide. This article can be useful to both the GM and the players. The GM may want police NPCs to use the procedures to add flavor to a game. The players can either use the information to conduct their own investigations or, in the case of some vigilantes, to interfere with an ongoing police investigation.

Anyone reading or using this book may want to refer to the following books for rules clarification's: *Dark Champions*, *Ninja Hero™* and the *Hero System Almanac I™*. For more information on some of the characters mentioned in passing please refer to the following books: *Dark Champions*, *Justice, Not Law* (a must!), *Creatures of the Night : Horror Enemies™* and "Ancient Chinese Secrets" in *Adventures Club™* #17.

CONVERTING TO OTHER GENRES

All of the characters and organizations presented can be converted to other genres. We have included a section in each character entry on converting the character to *Champions*. This usually involves simply raising the character's power level, since the character's backgrounds will work in *Champions* just as easily as they work in *Dark Champions*. Many of these characters can be used in other genres as well.

Some characters, such as Siberia, Colonel Wolf and Cain, are perfect for *Danger International™* or another spy genre game system. The Cabal, if toned down a little, and Arsenic and Old Lace, if presented in their youth, are excellent characters for *Justice Inc.™* or any pulp fiction game. For

Cyber Hero™, *Euthanasia*, *Deathblade*, and *Scalpel* work well. *Taxidermist* and *Passion Killer* might fit into *Western Hero™* if placed in a large city, such as turn-of-the-century San Francisco.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

This book came about when we were discussing another book we were working on with Bruce Harlick, the Hero System Editor, at GenCon. We were in the middle of *The Assassin Directory* and had split the book into two sections, one composed of *Champions* characters and the other of *Dark Champions* characters. Bruce, wise editor that he is, suggested splitting it into two books, one for *Champions*, *The Assassin Directory™*, and the other for *Dark Champions*, *Murderers' Row*.

From the start we decided to strongly base the characters in the *Dark Champions* universe. Thanks to the fact that we had Steven Long on our team we were able to accomplish this. He had just finished *Justice, Not Law* and sent us advance copies to use for source material. This proved invaluable and led to *Murderers' Row* almost becoming a sister book to *Justice, Not Law*. The release of *Creatures of the Night* gave us even more material to draw upon.

At GenCon we acquired another tool that helped in writing the book. Ray Greer and Steve Peterson introduced us to the wonders of HeroMaker™, a computer program designed to create Hero System characters. No more sleepless nights poring over character sheets checking to see if we got our sums right. With HeroMaker, we could plug in characteristics and powers, play with them until we found the correct balance and then print them out at our leisure. This program cut our character creation time in half. We strongly recommend it for any serious GM or player who uses the Hero System rules.

We also decided to try a different style of presenting the character backgrounds. We chose a file format for each character, with the idea that all of the files were from the Master of Crime. He was the only character we knew of in the *Dark Champions* Universe who had the resources and contacts to gather all of this information on these characters and organizations. We hope that these file formats make the character entries more interesting than the old omnipotent viewpoint entries. Not all of the entries are in file formats, so write in and let us know which you prefer.

Well, we hope you enjoy the book and perhaps we'll be seeing you on Murderers' Row...

Murderers' Row™

Here they are!

In this Enemies Source Book you'll find the most ruthless collection of bloodletters ever assembled in one volume! The newest and nastiest villains have arrived, and they're waiting for...you! An invaluable source book for any aspiring hero for hire who's faced death at its bloodiest! This book has everything you'll need to challenge your heartiest hero to his limits:

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