

# PERCHANCE TO KILL

The investigators are drawn into a string of murders when one of their professional acquaintances is killed within her own workshop. However, things aren't always what they seem. Sometimes, they're actually much simpler—and deadlier.

## A LITTLE GROUNDWORK

Eunice Mournier was a patent scientist working out of a ramshackle house in New Orleans' Tremé neighborhood. She hadn't had a big score with any of her inventions, but she made a living doing simple repairs keeping gadgets and appliances running for folks who weren't rich enough to replace them. She never looked too hard at money that crossed her desk, so she did a fairly brisk business with the less reputable members of society as well.

Lately, she'd gone a little far afield of her usual studies and began tinkering around with biological augmentations. For anatomical practice, she'd cobbled together parts of some cadavers she'd managed to acquire. She kept her latest experiment hidden behind a tarp in her workshop, as she'd obtained her source material through...less-than-legal channels.

Frank Woods, a barely successful thief and convicted felon, visited her a little while ago to get a sonic lockpick that had gone on the fritz repaired. Woods never learned to keep his hands off other people's stuff and was fiddling with an electric pulse gun while Mournier wrote up his receipt. The gun went off, killing the inventor.

Knowing that standing over a dead body with would land him a long, long stint in Angola, Woods fled,

taking his lockpick with him. What he didn't know was the charge skipped right through the makeshift wall and hit Mournier's practice dummy. The bolt of electricity gave the patchwork cadaver life, or at least an unholy semblance of it, and the creature stumbled out into the night utterly confused by its existence.

Since then, Mournier's accidental monster's confusion has turned to rage, which it vents by killing residents. It possesses enough animal cunning to remain unseen during the day—and eliminate anyone who encounters it after dark.

## RAMPAGE OF TERROR

Hidden back toward the rear of the *Times-Picayune*, one of the heroes spots a minor story about how Tremé is currently plagued by a series of brutal murders. The editors apparently decided to not spend any prime real estate on a crime in a neighborhood where they don't sell many papers. Details on the murders are sketchy, limited only to the victims were all "brutally beaten in their own homes."

What catches the shamus's eye is mention of one particular victim—Eunice Mournier, a patent scientist and occasional professional contact. Mournier wasn't a particularly successful inventor, but she was competent. More importantly, she didn't ask questions, a particularly valuable talent given the nature of many private detectives' work.

There might not be much honor among gumshoes, but one of their few common principles is if you kill one of their friends, they're going to come looking for you...

## OFFICIAL SOURCES

The paper itself has little more in the way of details, getting its story from the police blotter. Visiting the police station runs into the usual roadblocks. Unless one of the heroes has an appropriate Contact, it takes a very good story and a Social Conflict (see *Savage Worlds*) to get access to the police reports. At least three tokens are necessary to see the reports.

The reports are very cursory, as the police department seems to take only slightly more interest than the paper does in Tremé. All of the victims were beaten with blunt instruments or strangled. There has been little sign of theft and no known links beyond the geographical area.

A detective who succeeds on a Research roll notes Mournier's report makes no reference to physical assault. The cause of death is left blank. Robbery was dismissed as a motive, as the workshop appeared relatively untouched.

If asked, a clerk tells the character the cause wasn't obvious, and the investigating officer was probably waiting on the coroner to identify it. The officer probably didn't consider the case high enough priority to regularly follow-up, but it takes a Persuasion roll to get the clerk to admit that.

A visit to the coroner office likewise requires either a Contact or Social Conflict. Once the detectives get past that hurdle, they discover Mournier's cause of death was different—an apparent electrocution. There was a pair of burns, one on the front of her torso and one on the back consistent with a high-voltage discharge.

## HITTING THE STREETS

The heroes can discover largely the same information by Networking in the neighborhood around Mournier's workshop. Use the rules on Legwork (from *Deadlands Noir*) to determine how easy a time they have of it. The only additional info they garner is the local residents are convinced someone's raised a zombie to torment them for some reason. There are even whispers of the Red Sect's involvement.

## THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

Mournier's house and workshop is a shotgun house near the end of a block. None of the neighbors recalls anything out of the ordinary surrounding the night of her death, a fact which might raise an observant investigator's eyebrows, since the other attacks were fairly violent affairs.

A successful Networking roll reveals someone has been poking around since the police left. The neighbors

occasionally hear noises from inside, as though someone was throwing things, overturning furniture, etc. No one's been brave enough to investigate, though—especially given the recent deaths.

## ENTERING...AND MAYBE BREAKING

The front door is locked, and an official-looking crime scene notice is tacked to it. The lock is surprisingly complex, applying a -2 to any attempts to pick it. Shamuses walking around the house's perimeter find the back door is also marked with a notice, but the door's frame has been broken, making it impossible to lock.

Inside, the house has a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and a living room from which Mournier did her work and business. The place is in disarray, with furniture tossed haphazardly, fragile items smashed, and so forth. Searching anywhere but the front room turns up nothing helpful.

In the front room, there are two clues to be discovered. The first is an oilskin tarp laying across a large wooden table. It's been torn from where it used to hang between two walls. Anyone who's visited Mournier before recognizes it as an impromptu room divider she used to separate her work area from the place she met with customers.

A Notice roll spots a small blackened burn on it. If they've examined her body, they see it roughly corresponds with the same burns on Mournier's torso. The burn also lines up with the large, now-empty table. An astute gumshoe poking around that area finds some tools on the ground that seem more suitable for a medical doctor than an electrical repair shop—scalpel, saws, etc.

The other clue takes a Notice roll to find, or just 1d4 hours of digging through the debris. It's a receipt, dated the date of Mournier's death, and written out to one Franklin Woods. There are four tiny burns on one side of the paper roughly the size of fingertips. (Mournier was holding it when the gun went off.)

A successful Common Knowledge roll at -4, or -2 for someone who regularly deals with criminals and lowlifes, reminds the detective Woods is a two-bit thief who's done more than his share of hard time. He's never committed any acts of violence, though.

## BABY'S HOME

If the detectives visit after dark (which is probably the best time to break into a crime scene), Mournier's accidental patchwork man arrives after they've had time to thoroughly investigate the scene. The creature knows very little beyond anger and death, but the one

thing it does remember is some strange attachment to the workshop. It attacks immediately and fights to the death.

Any gun battle is sure to eventually draw the police, who are happy to put a lid on the case, declaring the patchwork man a dangerous lunatic and responsible for all the murders, Mournier's included. A simple Persuasion roll convinces them to let the investigators off with little more than a warning.

 **PATCHWORK MAN: SEE DEADLANDS NOIR.**

## THE REAL MURDERER

While the police are satisfied, the heroes may realize the patchwork man isn't responsible for the death of their acquaintance. Tracking down Woods isn't that difficult a proposition. A single success on

a Networking roll is enough to point the characters in the right direction. He's not exactly a criminal mastermind.

Woods denies the accusation at first, but if the investigators produce the incriminating receipt, he explains it was an accident. He didn't know anything about the patchwork man. He was just terrified of going back to the Big House.

He tries to cut a deal, offering his services in the future in return for his freedom. (He's already pawned both the sonic lockpick and the pulse gun...and wasted that money at the track.) If that fails, he tries to run, but Woods isn't a fighter under any circumstances. If the heroes are about to get rough, he folds like a copy of the *Times-Picayune*.

There's no reward for his capture. The police had already written off Mournier's death as solved, but they're happy to take custody of Woods for the umpteenth time.

# THE BIG EASY

*The Big Easy* is a competitive standalone card game for 2-4 players set in the 1930s New Orleans of *Deadlands Noir*.

Players take the roles of rival gumshoes competing to solve a brutal crime. The game is available only from Kickstarter and the campaign is live now. Check out the game and the stretch goals unlocked so far by following this link: <https://kck.st/2SM6kiK>

An added bonus for GMs is that the cards can function as a quick adventure generator. John Goff, who designed *The Big Easy* used the game to generate this adventure. In this case, he drew a Motive, Evidence and Encounter card to form the basis of the adventure and developed the rest of the story from there.



Jealousy... Betrayal... Murder  
Deadlands Noir mysteries  
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# THE BIG EASY

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