

# Villainy Amok

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## The Review:

*Reviewed By Gordon Feiner*

The Upside:

Villainy Amok is a collection of scenarios for Champions. There are seven classic plots outlined in detail, plus a chapter of miscellaneous plot ideas and how to work with them. These differ from standard adventures in that the whole adventure is not written, instead this is a how-to on create scenarios. The bonus is that you can reuse the scenarios in the book with some easily changed details and new twists.

The first seven chapters all follow the same basic formula for presenting, setting up, running and concluding the scenarios. Since these are presented as a Build You Own Scenarios they come with lots of options.

First is the type of scenario you want to run (from a one shot, to comedy and other themes). Each chapter comes with several suggestions on some appropriate themes to explore or motivations behind each scenario. Second a cast of various character types is presented. Both villainous, heroic and some generic NPCs are presented as appropriate to each scenario type. Also included are some NPC write-ups appropriate to each scenario. Complications for each scenario make sure things aren't going to be predictable for the Players.

Ten Unusual Scenarios gives some off beat, and unexpected, plot setups and complications for each scenario as well, just to keep the PCs on their toes. Since this is presented as a Build A Scenario resource the last part of each chapter provides random generation tables to quickly put together a plot of each type. And in case you need a premade scenario on the spot each chapter comes with one of those too, all of which are pretty inventive and should keep the PCs busy.

With all this you could keep a group of Players occupied for most of a campaign just with this book alone.

*Chapter One - Hands In The Air.* The classic of classic Superhero scenarios - the bank robbery. Of all the scenarios this might be the most cliché, of course it can also be the most fun. If you've got half a session left after wrapping up the previous adventure why not toss in a quick and easy bank robbery. Or if the PCs have come out of a harrowing experience a simple robbery can make them feel like heroes again as they trounce a group of would be villains. But don't overlook the heist as a possible gateway to a larger story. And moving beyond banks, you can use the advice here as part of a robbery for any type of place with things to steal. This chapter breathes new and exciting life into what could otherwise be an overdone cliché.

*Chapter Two - The Threat Beyond.* Alien invasions have been a staple of literature since the early days of fiction, and superheroes love to thwart entire invasions. Instead of a full scale invasion however this chapter covers the probe, or first strike to test the defenses of little old Earth. For the NPC write-ups four different Alien Probes are written-up; the all consuming Silver Ooze, the classic Tri-Pod War Machine, the plant based alien life form that sends a seed to earth, and the Vivisector designed to take apart Earth life.

*Chapter Three - Ask Your Doctor If Metatron Is Right For You.* While the first two scenarios have the potential for a lot of good old fashioned fun, this one has the potential for severe tragedy if you want to explore the darker side of Superpowers. Eleven different effects of a Superdrug are presented, since the drug itself is a plot device they're presented as Package Deals you add onto the affected person for the duration of their addiction (or permanently if that suits your game).

*Chapter Four - Burn Baby Burn!* Nothing adds to the drama, tension and danger of a situation quite like setting it on fire. The chapter starts with some rules for handling fires in the Hero System, including damage, spreading the fire, putting it out, smoke and other effects. As well as a write-up of a fire truck. The scenarios presented are for fires to be stand alone adventures - either one shot where the heroes get a chance to be heroes and save lives, or part of ongoing plots with arsonists.

*Chapter Five - It Came From A Mad Scientists Lab.* Science, Mad Science! Eighteen mad scientist experiments are presented, with variations, for over two dozen plots ideas to choose from. Along with stuff in a Mad Scientists lab. The Characters here are actually a Mad Scientist package deal with some add on Deals to specialize them, this can easily be redone to reflect any scientist in a Supers Universe.

*Chapter Six - Honey, I Shrunk The Superheroes!* This chapter provides some possible rules you can use for Heroes of various sizes, including the Microverse, a realm so tiny it's another dimension. The Characters here are a nanomachine and an anti-body for when your characters have to enter someone's body to save them from, well, there's plenty of ideas for the what in this chapter. Also as a bonus is The City Of Naldar, if you're using Firewing (from the Champions Universe) this can be used as a different kind of plot hook for him instead of his standard tropes.

*Chapter Seven - My Big Fat Caped Wedding.* Weddings are about love, happiness and if you're Superheroes a really big fight. This scenario sets up a Wedding (between PCs or NPCs) as an event to be really remembered. Of all the scenarios in the book this is the one to most likely take many sessions to complete, and can be an involved story arc. If you're into drama this is a good scenario to include in your game at some point, especially if you want a happy ending after a big event.

*Chapter Eight - The Plot Gallery.* This is a collection of plots, plans and schemes to use in your games. They are presented as generic with few, if any, outside connections presented in the plots of Hero's other books. The include interesting ways to start campaigns, some generic plot ideas, personal and moral dilemmas, villain master plans, and scenarios to take advantage of characters Disadvantages (Secret Identity, DNPC, and Hunteds), Rumors and Investigation Tips. Overall there are one hundred and sixty-five plot ideas in this chapter, many of which have complication suggestions for added fun.

The Appendix contains two new villains to introduce into your campaigns. The Engineer is a cyborg, or sorts. He body is constantly regenerating the flesh as the machine side tries to convert her to a robot, creating one disturbed supervillainess. Invictus is a bundle of archetypes rolled into one, he's possessed by an ancient Roman sorcerer, son of a politician, a hero to the public and a senator. He's also evil to the core with ambitions of creating a new Rome, as a behind the scenes manipulator. While he's publicly a superhero he schemes to take over the United States. If you need a scheming long term arch villain who will put up a climactic and titanic battle in the end Invictus fits the bill.

### The Downside:

The only thing missing from this books is maps. Full page, easily copied for handouts, maps of the seven main scenarios would have been cool. And a set of generic maps to go with the chapter of generic plots would have pushed this book into the stratosphere as far as adventure books go.

### The Otherside:

The book is good for anyone running a Superhero game in any system. While a lot of the suggestion rules may be system specific all of the advice on setting up and running the scenarios is universally applicable.

The book is great. For a novice GM you can run an entire campaign from all the ideas in this book alone. Even veteran GMs could add a few new tools to their box of adventures and scenarios.

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