



PULP VILLAINS: VIOLET

A SUPPLEMENT FOR

THRILLING TALES



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by Bill Maxwell

INTRODUCTION

The doll serving me looked scared as hell and she had every right to be. Cute brunette, big eyes, straight off the bus from Idaho and serving dinner in a joint that was now filled to the brim with the toughest mooks this side of the tracks.

Then there was the dame. Lady Spider, sitting right across that cold formica table from me. Sleek as the devil, with the most beautiful red lips and peepers that would freeze a man in his tracks, married or not. A stone cold killer to boot.

"Flat car, flop two and serve 'em hard." I said to the waitress, never taking my eyes off the Spider. "And a cup of your best joe." Nod from the doll and she was off. My best sarcastic smile to the Spider. "I see your boys are drinking the hard stuff tonight." I say to her. Water all around except for Little Frankie. He was sipping on his flask when he thought no one was looking. Waitress was touching his shoulder,

trying to interest him in a piece of pie.

"After the last time, I wanted my boys to be sober." The way Spider wrapped her lips around that word, hell, it made me shudder and all smiles and I wasn't even the target. Cup of joe was up in front of me.

Smart girl. Remind me to give her a big tip.

"Can't say I blame you." I said, taking a sip of that sweet bitter, taking my time. "So what's with the firepower, Spider? We going to get ugly here?"

Spider toyed with her half-empty water, dipping a finger in, dabbing it on her lips. "You tell me, darling. You were the one who called the meeting."

All my hackles went up and my mouth shot off before I could stop it. "What do you mean I called it?"

The waitress slid a piece of pie next to the lady. Spider was about to wave it away when she noticed a



card underneath the plate. She pulled it out quick, glanced at it, glanced at the backside of the waitress going into the kitchen. "I am an idiot" she hissed, throwing the card at me. "You were only the distraction."

I took up the card and opened it. I saw a crushed violet inside it. "What?" the words barely left my mouth as I started to see the gunsels, one by one, keel over. The ever demure Lady Spider slipped off her chair. I managed one curse before my world began to blur.

If there is a name that causes a shudder to go through the underworld and worry even the hardest mooks, that name is "Violet". Around her, people die silently or bleeding out or taken away screaming. Some even lose control of their emotions. She is, without a doubt, the quietest assassin on the boss' payroll.

That's not to say she's never seen. A person might be introduced to 'Bridget' if her hair's ginger. "Molly" for brunette. "Doris" for blond. But she always plays the part of the innocent, the wide-eyed goof looking to be somebody's plus one. This covers the fact that she is a very gifted chemist with a unique talent for mind-altering drugs. Her greatest asset, other than a profound understanding of poisons, is that she instantly understands how to bring out the protective instincts in people.

She has only been in business a handful of years, but she's left behind her a trail of bodies and broken souls. The Anselm Family killings? That case of "bad shrimp" that took down Hook Malone? The time the whole Nursery went down at once? All her. Her motivation is simple though her methods may be complex. She is governed by curiosity. She wants to find that balance between life and death, that vital essence that makes

up a person's spirit. And she wants to find a way to break it and put it back together as she wills.

To that end, she always has a lover or three around, low on the brains, thick on the loyalty, as protection. Sometimes, if they are very unlucky, they end up as unwitting test subjects. In addition, she employs one sharp-shooter to protect her from a distance, a paid professional who thinks he's protecting the daughter of a mob boss. That one she leaves alone to do his work.

As a side venture and to fund her career, she also creates some of the more interesting brands of perfume in the city. In addition to cash, it doubles as an explanation for any strange smells that might follow her home. Her current popular brand is 'Lilac' and she had to eliminate two supervisors at the factory before the third would agree to deposit the royalties to her "husband's" account instead of pocketing the royalties as their own.

Violet is methodical, an expert at being innocuous, and impossibly good at making compounds with even the most basic of materials. Whether it's causing hallucinations, emotion extremes, physical degeneration or death, she's the one people want to keep busy and on their good side. Because if she isn't occupied with one task or another, she might get bored. And no one wants to see that happen again.

VIOLET

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12,
Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d10

Skills: Knowledge (Poisons)
d12, Knowledge (Science) d8,
Investigation d10, Intimidation d8,
Persuasion d6, Repair d8, Streetwise
d4, Taunt d6

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6;
Parry: 2; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Arrogant,
Vengeful (Minor), Wanted.

Edges: Connections, Nine Lives

Gear: varies.



SAMPLE POISONS

Violet is an expert in timing; a number of her poisons only work with a secondary trigger. She prefers compounds that are either ingested or received through touch.

BOOSHWASH BULGE

A German diet pill mixed with ingredients specific to her target, this poison alters a person's mood, making them easier to emotional manipulate.

Type: Mind Altering; **Failure:** Specific overwhelming emotion for 2d6 hours; **Success:** overwhelming emotion for 2d6 hours & Exhaustion; **Raise:** overwhelming emotion for 2d6 minutes & Exhaustion.

COPPER DROPPER

Difficult to make, Violet uses this to remove targets too risky to kill. It has a two-part activation; the second trigger is an electrical shock.

Type: Knockout; **Failure:** Knocked out for 2d6 hours; **Success:** Paralyzed for 2d6 minutes; **Raise:** Paralyzed for 2d6 rounds

HONEY COOLER HOTSQUAT

Made in part from dried fish, this poison can be delivered by a kiss.

Type: Venomous; **Failure:** Death in 2d6 minutes; **Success:** Paralyzed for 2d6 minutes; **Raise:** 1 wound & Exhaustion.

THE BIGHOUSE BRODIE

This brutal poison is reserved for targets who have angered Violet. The poison is in two parts: one through touch, the other through drink. The target bleeds out.

Type: Lethal; **Failure:** Death in 2d6 rounds; **Success:** 1 wound & Exhaustion; **Raise:** Exhaustion

TIBERIUS O'CONNELL

IRISH SHARPSHOOTER

Tiberius is an Irish anarchist who moved across the ocean to avoid prosecution for an incident in Barcelona. In his early 60s, he's served as Violet's guardian angel for several years and has come to see her like a daughter.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Drive d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

Charisma:0 ; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:**5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Obligations: Anarchist Cause (Minor), Overconfident, Shellshock

Edges: Dead Shot

Gear: Springfield M1903 (24/48/95, RoF 1, 2d8, Shots 5, AP1)



ADVENTURE HOOKS

- Two fine upstanding citizens have perforated a couple of mid-level mob bosses in the Player Characters' city. The first went down in a hail of lead. The second ended up in the slammer but died of a bad batch of jailhouse slop. Neither of their families would talk about why their spouses suddenly started killing people.

Behind the scenes, Violet has been poisoning the families to get those spouses to do her dirty work. She's been hired to take out several lieutenants in a takeover bid for the local mob. Her secret employer is the 2nd in command and her scheme is to sow paranoia among the mobsters so they can't figure out the angle of attack until it's too late. There's still three men she's after before the run on the big boss, which means three more families soon to be in danger.

- A companion close the Player Characters falls prey to an exotic and excruciating slow-acting poison. To save them, Violet offers them the antidote if they'll do her employer a favor and safely deliver a package across town. As it turns out, the package is a set of military-grade weapon plans for the Nazis. Violet's payment will be a treatise on the effects of certain compounds on the human body.

What the Nazis don't realize is that Violet doesn't care if the Player Characters succeed or fail at their mission. The fact that she might be able to manipulate the Player Characters is what matters. She might even take a hand in ensuring the Nazis' demise if they don't. After all, it's not like people are going to miss them and she appreciates the opportunities presented by the land of freedom over Nazi rhetoric.



- In the course of an investigation, a Player Character gets a lungful of gas from a trap. Not meant for them, it's actually for an unassuming older man who really runs the numbers racket on the entire Eastside. The characters will have to discover both the antidote and the target before Violet strikes again.

- In the middle of a mob war, the Player Characters have to protect a doe-eyed girl who witnessed a mob death and is willing to turn state's evidence regarding the killer.

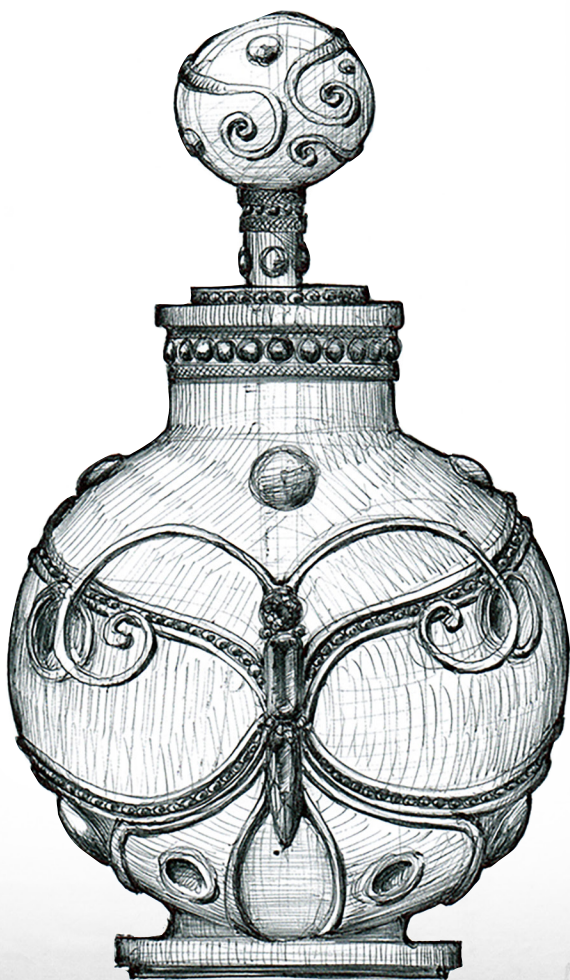
Unknown to the Player Characters, that bystander is actually Violet, who caused the whole war.

If revealed early, Violet has a sob story ready about leaving an abusive home in the Midwest--she leaves out the part about a trail of bodies--or another about being apprenticed to an insane mob doctor, again, leaving out the part about him turning up dead later, in order to garner sympathy. If she is protected until the end, though, she will leave the promised evidence; both that Violet committed the killing (furthering her reputation) and a link to the man who ordered it, the same mobster

who left her hanging so she needed protection.

- A young woman has died, with the only clue that she used the perfume 'Lilac' recently and she perished due to an unknown poison. Unknown to one of the Player Characters, one of Violet's current boy toys has been cheating on her, and he stole a bottle of Lilac from her to gift to his piece on the side. Unfortunately, that was a tester for one of Violet's poisons. When she finds out what happened to it, he won't last long.

But, if the Player Characters can track him down first, they might have a chance to get on the trail of this macabre mistress, before she starts mass exporting a new type of death to criminals across the country.





"How are you doing, sugar?" The drawl was affected. Normal folks might have mistaken it for an honest belle, but I'd done business in the South.

Couldn't feel my legs. Suppose that was a bad thing. Vision was coming back though. Some muscled mook was hauling Lady Spider over their shoulder. Wasn't sure if she was still breathing or not, but if someone would figure out how to survive, it was her. Her minions weren't quite so lucky.

"You have a guardian angel on your shoulder. He didn't want you taking a dirt nap yet. So I felt obliging." I could hear her smile as she pressed lips to my ear. "And I wanted to thank you properly, sugar. You really were the perfect patsy." She gave me the softest of kisses and then was gone, her man and the package behind her.

Got some feeling in my legs back. Was considering what to do about it when I heard the sirens light up. Here I was, roomful of corpses, Lady Spider missing and last time we met, I had threatened to kill her if I saw her again. In public. In front of the cops. Who were now on their way.

Hell.

Looked down at the floor and there was the card. That crushed Violet. And as the cops broke in the door, I realized with some grim humor she sure knew how to show a tired old shamus like myself a 'good time'.

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