

# DEATHBIRD BLACK

The comedy noir RPG

ALPHA VERSION (Ronnies 2011)

By Baxil, 2011.02.05

Heat smothers the dark streets of the city. Sirens wail in the distance as some hardcase squanders his last few minutes as a free man. Upstairs, some dame sobs the soulful notes of a broken heart into the phone. Saxophone music slinks in from the street below, and smoke wafts like the memory of a departed lover's kiss through your mind. (The memory, that is, not the smoke. The memory wafts through your mind, and the smoke wafts through your kiss ... .. no, I mean, through your lover ... wait, the lover was your memory, it's the streets wafting through – **AUGH, START OVER**)

Anyway, you're a hard-boiled man (or woman) in a gritty, corrupt world. Lust, greed, vengeance, jealousy – one of these is the bitter taste in the back of your throat. Some might call it a sin. You call it a mission. And you're not going to let anything stand in your way (except maybe your own flaws).

Meanwhile, the city is seething around you. The night is steamy, and ready to boil over at the slightest provocation. And in the shadows, steely eyes glint from above a demonic black beak\*, silently driving people into ever greater acts of desperation ...

Waiting to unleash chaos and hell ...

With one mighty CAW.

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**

**SAYS ...**



“That would be me.”

# GETTING READY

You will need:

- **4-9 players** (including you), ideal for 5-6
- At least **two full sets of dice** (d4s through d20s), and maybe a few more\*
- Some sort of **dice target**, such as: a bucket; a small garbage can; or a large mixing bowl
- A deck of **playing cards**
- (Optional but highly recommended) A **birdlike stuffed animal** (with no pointy bits!)

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**  
**SAYS ...**



“Play with dice that hate rolling high. They might get lost. If not, you'll get to watch all your friends deal with crappy rolls. Either way, you win!”

# PLAY OVERVIEW

This is **comedy noir**. What that means: It is a comedy game set in the 'film noir' genre. Character bleakness, cynicism, pessimism, etc., are obligatory. Player bleakness, etc., is counterproductive. Play it for the laughs. Add alcohol if your group swings that way.

Game starts with play area setup (see “The Deathbird Arrives”), then each player chooses their starting characters (one will become the starting GM), and collaboratively determines goals for each other.

During play, everyone tries to make the GM laugh, and to accomplish their character goals (which requires the aid, and opposition, of the other players). GM laughs add bonus dice. Completing goals adds to your score (for bragging rights, and influence over who wins).

Every so often, the in-character opposition will boil over into chaos as the Deathbird arrives on the scene. Deathbird scenes stop regular play and involve a ritualized catharsis of incomprehensible crosstalk and flying objects. When the dust clears, at least one character will be dead, at least one character will be guilty of murder, and maybe some goals will get accomplished while everyone else is distracted.

The murder attracts the eye of a hard-boiled detective, who arrives on the scene and interrogates the killer. Justice will be served! (Or at least that's the theory. We're all cynical enough to know it doesn't work out that way.) After one of the characters pays for the murder, the victim becomes the new GM, and the game returns to free play.

Play continues until the Deathbird's meddling comes to a climax, at which point the survivors get slaughtered in an epic finale, and one player is chosen as the winner.

# PREPARING DICE

You will need a pair of matching dice for each player in the game (except for the GM). They will be passed around the table continuously, so you should either use one person's dice, or take notes on what belongs to who. Dice may also get lost during play, so set aside some others as backups. Based on the number of players\*, here are the sets to use:

- 4 people – 2d6, 2d8, 2d10
- 5 people – 2d6, 2d8, 2d10, 2d12
- 6 people – 2d4, 2d6, 2d8, 2d10, 2d12
- 7 people – 2d4, 2d6, 2d8, 2d10, 2d10•, 2d12
- 8 people – 2d4, 2d6, 2d6•, 2d8, 2d10, 2d10•, 2d12
- 9 people – 2d4, 2d6, 2d6•, 2d8, 2d10, 2d10•, 2d12, 2d20

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**



**SAYS ...**

“Game balance is going to be a little lopsided for some group sizes, but this is noir, life isn't fair. And the dice are always in motion.”

2d6• – means one set of d6's should have numbers, and one set should have pips (dots).

2d10• – means one set of d10s should have 1-0, and one should have 10-00. (The latter set is still scored 1 to 10, but this makes them easy to tell apart.)

# CREATING CHARACTERS

It's a bloody, backstabby noir game. Don't get attached to your characters – their life span might be measured in minutes. So the creation process is as simple as possible.

- 1) Pick a character archetype. I recommend drawing randomly from your deck of cards and consulting the table on the last page; your group may also decide to let people choose from the list, or come up with their own.
- 2) Pick a defining character flaw. Again, random flaws from the table are recommended.
- 3) Define your character goal. See next section.
- 4) Now pick a name. (The earlier draws might affect this, so.)
- 5) Grab one of your new character's matched dice, and set the other one aside somewhere within reach. (Which dice are yours? See two sections down.)

What's that? “I want attributes!” you cry? “What's my backstory” you cry? Look, don't overthink this. You've got a stereotype, play with it, ham it up. If it doesn't make sense yet, drink another beer.

One other thing: Someone needs to start as the GM. If drawing cards, high card is it. Otherwise, choose someone. You'll all get the job at some point.

# CHARACTER GOALS

A character has a maximum of one active goal (make a new one after you accomplish it, or immediately when your “who” leaves play). A goal has three parts: WHAT YOU WANT, WHO YOU WANT IT FROM, and a COMPLICATION.

WHO is chosen first. At the beginning of the game, it will be the player on your right (ignore the GM here). But after play starts, you may choose **anyone that has a lower score than you**. (If you're at the bottom, then pick anyone, you poor thing.)

It helps to pick someone you have good comedic rapport with; it's polite to pick someone who has been quiet (or just finished GMing), so you can draw them into the game.

No matter when you're creating a goal, WHAT you want is guided by a draw from the deck of cards:

<b>Hearts</b>	Lust. Get love/sex from your target.
<b>Diamonds</b>	Greed. Get something for yourself that your target possesses.
<b>Clubs</b>	Vengeance. They've wronged you. Right it.
<b>Spades</b>	Jealousy. They have something you envy them for. Break/remove it.

Ask the **player on your right** to elaborate\*: i.e., what are you jealous of? What possession do you want? You can suggest an idea to that player, or negotiate with them, but it's their call. (Note: If their idea is lame, the GM may veto it.)

Once you know WHAT and WHO, turn to the **player on your left** (unless they're your WHO – then ask someone else). It's their job to give you a COMPLICATION. This can be anything within reason ... ok, more specifically, anything within the spirit of noir. It must draw at least one other player into the conflict, and you'll have to untangle it before getting what you want.

Here are some sample complications: Hearts - “They're already married to (character).” Diamonds - “What you want was stolen by (character).” Clubs - “(character) forced them to double-cross you and is your true enemy.” Spades - “They know of your jealousy and have asked (character) to protect them.”

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**

**SAYS ...**



“If you're coming up with details or Complications midgame, base the issues off of previous events! The more labyrinthine and incestuous the plots get, the more in the spirit of noir it will be.”

# DICE AND GOALS

You, with the rules. Yes, you, reading this. Once everyone has a starting character and goal – and not before! – it is your job to collect all the dice and read the underlined parts out loud to the group:

“Alright, this is how the dice system works. You use the dice for two things – rolling to accomplish your goal, and defending yourself against the Deathbird. We’ll cover the Deathbird later – it’s super easy. And this is how you roll for goals.”

At this point, pick up the two biggest\* dice from the collection.

“You have to earn your second die for the Deathbird, but for goals, you always use both of your dice. If you get doubles, add them up. Otherwise, take the higher number. If your roll meets or beats an 8, you succeed.”

Demonstrate. Then make a show of putting those dice back in front of you.

“So bigger dice are better for your character. Incidentally, I start with the best ones. It says so in the rules.”

Wait until they stop throwing things at you.

“But bigger dice also make you more likely to die when the Deathbird comes. And the longer your character survives, the bigger dice you get.”

At this point, distribute the other dice pairs however you want (we recommend playing favorites based on how they reacted to your speech).

You’ll also have to redistribute dice after each Deathbird scene. Here’s how you do it: Everyone who died gives up their dice. Then, starting with the person with the biggest dice (break ties in favor of the lowest score), everyone upgrades if possible, and keeps their current set if not. Finally, any new character entering play gets the leftovers (i.e., the worst sets).

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**



**SAYS ...**

“Biggest generally means 'having the most sides', but if any of your dice are of an unusual size, you may wish to grab those, to prevent them from being used as ammunition.”

# FREE PLAY: THE PLAYERS

Free Play is open roleplaying, with a few rules about accomplishing Goals and what brings about Deathbird scenes. All the action comes from the players, so let's go over that first.

**Your job as a player:** Play your character. Attempt to accomplish Goals, and make the GM laugh. Assist or oppose other players as they attempt their own Goals, and narrate the results of those interactions.

Here's why you want to make the GM laugh: Normally, you only get one die in Deathbird scenes (we'll cover that in the next section). But if you've made the GM laugh since the current Free Play started, you get a second die to throw!

Here's how Goals work: Your Complication and your Flaw both stand in the way of your Goal; you can't try to accomplish it until you have already overcome one of the two, and have stated a plan for how to deal with the other. (When the GM approves that, then roll your dice. The consequences of the plan will be a reflection of your die roll.)

In general, overcoming your Complication will require opposing another player; and overcoming your Flaw will require getting another player's assistance. Solutions that you can pull off without interacting with the other players are lame, and the GM is free to rule that you were insufficiently inconvenienced.

(Note: What if your Flaw doesn't directly relate to the Goal? Then you have to get into a situation where the Flaw distracts you, works against you, or makes your goal harder. Example: Flaw of "Heroism", Goal of "Jealousy - Destroy Kate's car". You might say, "Alright, I walk toward her car with the explosives, but just after I set the timer, I notice a grandmother who needs to cross the street.")

Here's how you react when another player wants to do something to you: Be as fair as you can; if their plan seems reasonable (or if it makes people laugh!), agree with them that it works. If it's lame, tell them why it doesn't work. Note that saying "it doesn't work" twice in a row is lame; if someone fails and then tries again in a totally different way, be generous. If you're at an impasse, the GM will decide. Don't let rules arguments bog down the game.

## **A special note on character death**

In Free Play, you are the ultimate arbiter of your own character's survival. The GM cannot kill (or totally incapacitate) you. Other PCs cannot kill (or totally incapacitate) you without your permission – fatal blows will miraculously glance off lapel buttons, miss vital organs, etc. However, if you ever choose to die because of another PC's actions, everyone should stop for a moment while you narrate a touching and powerful death scene. After which the GM will immediately call the Deathbird, giggling insanely.

Using this invincibility to block another player's Goal is lame – for both you and them. No Goal should ever require the death/incapacitation of a PC. Savage beating, yes, but not death.

## **Goal success and failure**

If you **succeed** at a goal roll, narrate your success and add that goal toward your score (note: YOUR score, not your character's. Character death does NOT reset you to 0). Create another goal after the Deathbird scene (you only get one Goal per Free Play); until then, help or oppose other players, and kibitz mightily.

If you **fail** at a goal roll, then narrate how and why you failed. You may try to roll against it later in this scene, but only under different circumstances (e.g. with another character's help). It's lame to immediately retry a goal; don't monopolize table time.

## **FREE PLAY: THE GM**

Don't worry – it's easy! The players are going to be handling most of the creativity. You're a facilitator. A facilitator WITH POWERS TO SUMMON DEMONIC AVIANS. Awww yeah.

**Your job as a GM:** Set the scene when Free Play begins. Control pacing and ensure everyone participates. Be the decision-maker in inter-player disputes. Adjudicate whether a player has dealt with their Complication/Flaw sufficiently to attempt their Goal. Call a Deathbird scene when appropriate. Describe locations and general color. Play NPCs when necessary.

Here's how to set the scene: Just pick something noirish. It's only for color; the PC interaction is the meat of the game. Bars, nightclubs, dark city streets, etc., are good starts.

Here's how NPCs work: They're kinda like the chorus in a Greek play. They exist and can interact with the PCs, but they should be few and their roles minor. In general, they should be dealt with when directly interacted with, and should otherwise be background color.

Do not let PCs use NPCs as a way to resolve their problems. That is not what they are there for.

Here's some guidelines on when to start a Deathbird scene: You should Deathbird to bring a frantic roleplaying moment to its climax; to close off a Free Play when many goals have been finished; or to mercy-kill a dull/deadlocked scene.

If there's in-character fightin', it's a judgment call. Interrupting good roleplaying is lame. But Deathbird scenes are also your only way to resolve deadly conflicts. Err on the side of players having fun.

If at all possible, give every player a chance to roll for their Goal once before Deathbirding. Otherwise it's unfair. But what if 2+ characters are locked in a deadly conflict and short-circuiting to Deathbird is the only way to get them out of it? Maybe you can try saying, "Alright, that will be resolved momentarily with the Deathbird's arrival. But first, while you were doing that, Alice and Bob here were having their own conversation across the room ..." and guide play through as many scenes not involving the "stuck" PCs as you can.

### **GM Tips**

If you're getting overwhelmed by the chaos or there are people not getting to do stuff, then institute a turn order. Otherwise just handle it how your group usually does.

The prime directive of comedy games is: keep it moving! If someone's making a huge epic monologue that bleeds and breathes noir, or if there's an in-character argument that's simmering with great roleplaying energy, that's great, but lingering in them too long can create mood whiplash. This game works best when everyone's **parodying** noir with face straight and tongue in cheek.



# THE DEATHBIRD ARRIVES

Before your first Free Play scene, let's get you set up for the heart and soul of DEATHBIRD.

First, take your dice target. (Remember that? A bucket, large bowl, etc.) You want to set that up somewhere away from your gaming table. Do your best to get it equally far from all players (this won't happen, but try). Do your best not to have it directly behind anyone's chair. Everyone needs a line of sight to the target.

Ideally, you want to locate it far enough away that about 80% of dice thrown will miss. A good starting distance is about 1.5 feet away per 1" of opening. Adjust it based on player feedback.

Right before your first Free Play scene, hand the rules to your starting GM.

Alright, GM, go ahead and read the underlined parts out to the group:

"One of my jobs as GM is to play the Deathbird. Let me tell you a little bit about him, and then what the Deathbird means to our game.

"Some say the Deathbird is a supernatural curse on the city – summoned when three people lit a cigarette off of the same match. Some say the Deathbird is a metaphor for the insanity at the heart of your city. Some say the Deathbird is the helper of Satan himself, attracted to sin and punishing the sinners."

If you have a plush bird like we suggested, hold it up now.

"Whatever the truth, when you see the Deathbird, it means murder. Maybe even YOUR murder. Everyone in the city knows to fear his evil CAW. And at some point, very soon, you WILL be hearing it. So here's what you have to do.

"The Deathbird always caws three times. On the first caw, you MUST stop everything you're doing, and shout in panic. Exactly like this: "AAAAAAH!" (Make it a short shout, not longer than a second.) "Got it? Let's try it."

At this point, caw, and savor their beautiful, beautiful screams.

"Great! On the second caw, you have to react before it's too late. You'll have about two seconds to tell me how you're killing the Deathbird before he can kill you. I won't be able to understand you, because everyone will be talking at once, but it's important that you LOOK ME IN THE EYE and call out an attack. Silly, serious, whatever, but you have to say SOMETHING, QUICK. Can we give it a try?"

At this point, caw, and appreciate the chaos.

“Sweet! And then, on the third caw, this is where the dice come in. Take your single die – or both of them, if you made me laugh in the previous scene – and throw it into the” (bucket, bowl, whatever) “over there. As quickly as possible – no aiming! This represents you fighting off the Deathbird. For each die you get in the target, something good happens. Every time you miss, you get kinda caught up in the crossfire as you guys drive the Deathbird off. And when there's crossfire, there's murder.”

If you don't have a plush bird, now stop reading out loud.

Otherwise, once you've answered any questions that might come up:

“Oh, and one final thing. You see the Deathbird\* here?”

(hold it up) “He'll be flying around you, starting when the first caw sounds. Last player to hold him before the dice throwing finishes has to roll a penalty die – so if someone tosses him to you, keep him moving! Power throws and holding are both worth a penalty die too, so keep it fast and gentle, ok?”

Ok! (Remember: toss him at someone when you first caw.)

So what are the consequences of your players' dice-throwing? Simple. Every die in the target is worth a point toward that player's score (if that player has an unresolved Goal, they may narrate how they easily accomplished it amid the chaos; no Complication or Flaw required).

Every player with a die **outside** the target, even if one die went in, looks at the result of that roll. (If a player missed with both of their dice, their result is the LOWER of the two.) Highest result just got murdered. Lowest result just killed the victim.

(“Penalty die”: Have them reroll their result, and take the HIGHER of the two. A penalty die for a player who didn't miss means they have to roll a die as if they did.)

**Ties:** All tied players suffer the consequences. If there are three people rolling 8's and nothing higher, three people just died. If there are four people rolling 1's, then the murder victim has four different fatal wounds. In the unlikely event that every player who missed gets the same roll, then the PCs just slaughtered each other in a glorious TPK. Rejoice!

With multiple murder victims, GM duties will go to the person with the highest score, and the other victims create new characters for the next free play round. **But first!** The murder must be avenged!

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**

**SAYS ...**



“I am A Deathbird, not THE Deathbird. There are other Deathbirds with different names. Now might be a good time to name your group's Deathbird and give him (or her) a personality. Horrible puns are encouraged.”

# THE DETECTIVE ARRIVES

There's a body on the floor, and the Deathbird has flown the coop. Someone's got to be held responsible! So, with sirens blaring, the authorities arrive to clean up the mess, and the grizzled detective (played by you, the GM, in your last task before drawing up a new character) arrives to confront the murderer.

Everyone alive gets to roleplay here if they want, but this scene is really between you and the murderer (break ties in favor of lowest score). You have the murder weapon, you have the motive, everything should be open-and-shut ... but you're cynical enough to know this city is full of double-crossing bastards and multilayered plots. So you'd better wring a confession out of this mook before you chuck anyone in the hoosegow.

Confront the murderer. Tell them what killed the victim and the incredibly damning thing that made you pin it on them. (Monogrammed handkerchiefs, unique murder weapons, or fingerprints are good standbys. As for the murder weapon, if you actually managed to hear what that player yelled during the Deathbird scene, you can use that. Or just make something distinctive up. Are they playing a chef? “She choked to death on whipped cream. Got anything to say about that?”)

The murderer can either **take a stand** or **shift blame**. Here's how it works.

Taking a stand is the classic “You'll never take me alive, coppers!” moment, going out guns blazing. If they have an unresolved Goal, the murderer can make one last desperate attempt at it (rolling 2d8 instead of their current dice). Then they die in a hail of bullets. JUSTICE ... SERVED.

Shifting blame works like this: Everyone in this damn city is a self-serving liar and you're too smart to fall for their tricks. A plausible alibi is easy enough to say with a straight face ... but something ridiculously outlandish and easily disprovable? Who would dare lie like that? No, the only reason to say something so brazen is that it must be the truth!

So, the murderer has to try to pin the blame on another PC in an utterly implausible way. And they have to do it with a totally straight face. You as GM decide whether it was ridiculous enough. If so ... well, you've got far too much caseload to verify the story. Shoot that PC instead and give the former suspect one point toward their score. JUSTICE ... SERVED.

\* *MEPHISCAWPHELES*



*SAYS ...*

“Give your detective a name and a few distinctive traits. Make him a recurring character. The detective that always cleans up after me is Sgt. Ace Spade, who can't get anyone's name right, and whose bad combover seems to have a mind of its own.”

## ENDING THE GAME

So remember that deck of cards you've been drawing new characters and goals from? Don't replace cards that you draw! Put them in a discard pile off to the side somewhere.

When you reach the end of the deck, it's a moment of truth. End the game. Or, if everyone's having fun and still full of energy, shuffle the deck back together and keep going!

When the game ends, the GM IMMEDIATELY Deathbirds, no matter where in Free Play you were. (Play through the point-scoring and the killing, but NOT the detective's arrival.) Then gather the characters: i.e. everyone who didn't just die in the Deathbird havoc. The GM will sketch out a brief final scene: either the Deathbird's curse spirals the city into riots, or Satan gets summoned, or the Army invades, or the madness lifts and the PCs stand clear-headed as the sirens draw closer. Whatever. As long as it's going to result in fire, explosions, and bloodshed.

Then each survivor in turn gets to narrate one final action. PC invincibility is explicitly turned off for these actions, but you cannot deny someone their final action by killing them; they will still get to do something as they die.

The GM gives one final point to the player whose character had the most awesome finale (whether they survived or not). Then go to scoring.

## SCORING

The points that you've accumulated over the course of the game don't directly determine the winner. They are votes that you cast for the winner. Of course, if you got the highest score, you still get bragging rights.

Go around the table to each person in turn. Each player will award their points to the person they think contributed most to the game. Say why you think so; name one of their memorable moments.

You must award your points, and you may not award them to yourself. Whoever is awarded the most points wins!

\* **MEPHISCAWPHELES**

**SAYS ...**



“If you want a slightly less predictable end to the game, shuffle a joker in on your second drawthrough. Drawing the joker ends it, rather than running out of cards.”

## DESIGNER'S NOTES

This game was written with the cue words WINGS and MURDER from the February 2011 Ronnies. I started by toying with the idea of “a murder of crows”, went through a couple of refinements (yes, my game had a moody goth teenage phase), and realized I really needed to write a comedic game this time around. From there, I settled on representing “wings” by the major mechanic of the Deathbird Scenes, with flying dice and a flying bird, as the narrative centrality of the bird itself fell away. This freed me up to give the game a little more thematic focus, and it settled into its current bastard film-noir pastiche state.

In future revisions, it would be great to give the writing of the game itself more of a noir tone. More balanced dice would also be nice, but not at the cost of complexity (the current system is a compromise based on the time limit).

I welcome all feedback: [baxil at tomorrowlands. dot-org](mailto:baxil@tomorrowlands.dot-org)

This game is available via my website, <http://www.tomorrowlands.org/gaming/>, as well as the 24-Hour RPG site, <http://www.lkmlkt.net/cat/24-hour-rpg> .



## DESIGN/PHOTO CREDITS

Fonts used: Mona Lisa Solid ITC for headings; American Typewriter for body text.

All images are used with permission, under Creative Commons license.

Crow head, by “jen 64”: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/61745644@N00/276085897>

# RANDOM CHARACTER GENERATION\*

\* *MEPHISCAWPHELES*



*SAYS ...*

“You can draw once to determine both Character and Flaw, or you can choose them separately. The former is more intuitive to play. The latter gives you more possibilities.”

A

- Character: A hardboiled private eye. You know the type.
- Flaw: Narration. (Cannot do or think anything significant without saying it out loud in past-tense first-person.)

2

- Character: A glamorous femme fatale (or the male version, an -mme -tale).
- Flaw: Backstabber. (Must double-cross anyone who does anything to assist them.)

3

- Character: An ingenue forced into a life of depravity, trying to maintain his or her innocence and positivity.
- Flaw: Naivete. (Believes anyone that wants it should have a shot at redemption, no matter how improbable their newfound morality.)

4

- Character: A corrupt cop, cynical and world-weary.
- Flaw: Trigger-happy. (Shoot first, then ask “Should I shoot at them?”. Yes; shoot more.)

5

- Character: A down-and-out writer of crime fiction, living in desperate poverty.
- Flaw: Author Brain. (Anytime things start going wrong, they must gleefully escalate the situation, talking about how much more interesting this would be with more adversity.)

6

- Character: The jilted spouse, or ex-spouse, of one of the other characters.
- Flaw: Obsession. (No matter what their current Goal is about, they will go to great lengths to spy on, disrupt, or hook up with the obsessed-over character.)

7

- Character: A grifter, making a living through his cons, with his lies catching up to him.
- Flaw: Luckless. (Nothing goes their way. Their failures are remarkably improbable and inconvenient. Even their successes turn bitter.)

8

- Character: An aging athlete, long past their prime but with something to prove.
- Flaw: The Spirit Is Willing. (The flesh is weak.)

9

- Character: A scrappy gangster with a hair-trigger temper.
- Flaw: Pursued. (Must constantly hide from some external force.)

10

- Character: A heroic claims adjuster - pure of heart, strong of body, insufferable of spirit.
- Flaw: Heroism. (Must drop everything they're doing to help someone in need.)

J

- Character: An ambitious young reporter or photographer, angling for the big scoop.
- Flaw: Inquisitive. (They **MUST** know what's going on. Especially when it means trouble.)

Q

- Character: A moral and conscientious priest with a troubled past.
- Flaw: Dirty Secret. (They **REALLY** don't want people knowing what they've done in the past. So, naturally, they will leap at any chance to deny it, no matter how trivial.)

K

- Character: A hobo - once rubbing elbows with high society, now they've lost it all.
- Flaw: Addiction. (Must continuously seek out some substance or action, at great personal cost and inconvenience.)