

SYNOPSIS—THE ANNIHILATOR

By:

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*Joseph Pulitzer's the **New York World**, said of the Austin murders: "may well give to history a new story of crime—the first instance of a man who killed in order to gratify his passion."*

BACKGROUND

While it's generally accepted in criminology that Jack the Ripper in 1888 became the world's first true serial killer, partly because of his press notoriety, a large body of evidence indicates he was preceded three years earlier in 1885. In the backward but growing capital of Austin, Texas, a maniac more perverse than the Ripper preyed on pretty young servant girls. He not only killed more people, a documented total of eight, he's also believed to have committed rape, possibly post mortem. One of his victims was an eleven year-old girl. Five of his female victims and one man were black; two were white. His weapons were an ax, a knife and in some cases an iron rod pounded into the victims' brains. He always attacked at night, while the women were in their beds. In several accounts, they slept with their husband and children only to be dragged out into the back yard and desecrated. Other than a bloody footprint and an ax, very little physical evidence was ever found, though fingerprints and DNA samples didn't yet exist.

Theories abound on his identity, but nothing was ever proven, so the case remains the most notorious cold case ever investigated in Austin. Rushed arrests of the husbands of the last

two victims by incompetent authorities were later overturned. The famous bloodhounds of the era were equally incompetent. Austin of 1885 had a population around 10,000. Today's population exceeds two million and rising. As much as ten new residents arrive daily, by some counts.

What if against this modern, hip metropolis a sophisticated student of history also finds the murders fascinating? What if he's not, in scientifically accepted terms, a true psychopath? He's an educated man, in fact considered brilliant in his field. While he has killed before, he's far too intelligent and socially adept to initially consider murder most foul as a solution to his dilemma. But perhaps he's forced to act to protect his new identity from the woman he moved to Austin to punish...and decides to use the violation of Tamara Jones as his modern Molly Smith, the first servant girl victim in 1885.

What if, after he meticulously copies the first servant girl murder, he finds he has a taste for his work? One trait he shares with serial murderers of women: he despises them, resents them, wants to control them first only to make them suffer later. All women are natural whores, teasing a man with their dress and pleasing forms, then using his own aroused urges against him. And of all the women he hates most, one is an exemplar of her kind—Assistant University of Texas, Austin, Professor of Microbiology Dr. Terry Baxter. An old friend, an old classmate, an old lover and the object of his obsession.

First she'll follow his trail of bread crumbs and suffer, and suffer more, when he remains tantalizingly out of reach while the body count rises. Who knew killing could be so much fun? When she's dead, finally he can find a measure of peace and move on with his life.

But only when he's ready will Terry and her busybody sister be the magnum opus to his symphonies...