

Dark Profiles: Biographies of Serial Killers

Javier Soto

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Second Revised and Expanded Edition.

First edition published in 2025.

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Published by Javier Soto.

First edition: 2025

Second edition: 2025

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Introduction

IN THE DEPTHS OF the human mind there are cracks that do not receive the light. Cracks where obsession germinates, where violence grows and annihilation flourishes.

Since ancient times, mankind has felt an unhealthy attraction to the abyss: For that which it cannot comprehend, but also cannot ignore. And among all the horrors, **the serial killer** occupies a special place. It is the monster that walks among us, the one that devours what we believe to be safe: Home, routine, trust.

Dark Profiles: Biographies of Serial Killers is not intended to glorify these predators, nor to justify their crimes under the comfortable cloak of popular psychology. Nor does it seek to provide simple answers to impossible questions.

This book is a deliberate descent into horror. A brief but incisive tour through the lives, impulses and crimes of those who chose to consume the lives of others to complete their own. Each profile is a cracked window into a fractured psyche. Each biography is a warning of what lurks on the margins of normality.

Throughout these pages, we will explore the origins of evil, the factors that shaped these killers, and the echo their acts left in societies that would prefer to forget them.

JAVIER SOTO

There are no heroes here. No redemption. Only shadows.
Dare to enter.

Ted Bundy - The Charm of the Abyss

Date of birth: November 24, 1946

Location: Burlington, Vermont, USA

Victims: Estimated more than 30

Executed: January 24, 1989 (electric chair)

FEW FIGURES SO ACCURATELY embody terror with a human face as Theodore Robert Bundy. His story is a map of deceit, manipulation and pathological narcissism. A predator with gentlemanly manners. A monster with an impeccable smile.

Bundy was not the ogre of fairy tales; he was the prince. Intelligent, articulate, charismatic, with a background in psychology and law. His profile defied all social expectations of a serial killer. And it was precisely this impeccable facade that allowed him to move without arousing suspicion, feeding his arrogance and his absolute belief of being above good and evil.

During the 1970s, his manhunt spread across several U.S. states. Not only did he murder young women, but he did so with a mixture of theatricality, sadism and surgical coldness. He would show up with his arm in a sling or pretending to

need help. The victims, empathetic by reflex, offered themselves. They fell into the trap of the wolf disguised as a victim.

Psychologically, Bundy was an extreme narcissist, possibly with traits of antisocial personality disorder. He felt no remorse. Only hunger. His need for control and domination was insatiable. After killing, he returned to the bodies. He made them up. He slept next to them. Murder was only the beginning of a macabre relationship.

The social context also played in their favor: the 1970s were a time when collaboration between police jurisdictions was scarce. There were no shared databases, no DNA. Bundy moved from state to state like a ghost. The law was blind. And he was cunning.

He was captured more than once, but escaped. Twice. Once, after sawing through the bars of his cell and escaping through the roof, he killed again. In his mind, his freedom was worth more than any life.

During the trial, Bundy, in a final act of vanity, played himself. His rhetoric was sharp, but his eyes betrayed a broken mind. He did not apologize. He expressed no guilt. He just posed.

He died in the electric chair on January 24, 1989. Outside the prison, a crowd celebrated with banners. Bundy's death did not bring back the victims, but it closed a door that should never have been opened.

Jeffrey Dahmer - The Milwaukee Cannibal

Date of birth: May 21, 1960

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.

Victims: 17 confirmed

Death: November 28, 1994 (murdered in prison)

THERE ARE HORRORS THAT hide in the forest. Others, in the alleys. But there are some who stay in rented apartments, decorated with cheap furniture, where neighbors complain about the smell, but don't ask questions. Jeffrey Dahmer lived there. And he killed there. Methodically. Calmly. With a coldness that chills the soul.

At first glance, Dahmer was just an introverted, withdrawn young man with a low voice and an awkward gait. But beneath that nondescript surface lay a psyche broken by loneliness, obsession and a pathological need for absolute control over others.

His childhood was not particularly brutal, but it was dysfunctional. Parents in constant conflict, changes of residence, and a progressive emotional detachment. At the age of 14, Dahmer was already fantasizing about lifeless bodies.

Not with the sexual act, but with submission. He wanted companionship. But one that could not leave. He wanted bodies, not people.

Between 1978 and 1991, Dahmer drugged, strangled, mutilated and, in many cases, consumed his victims. He kept skulls, organs, photographs. He practiced what he would call "zombification," drilling living skulls and injecting acid in an attempt to create obedient slaves. He failed. They died. He kept them.

His apartment was a mausoleum disguised as a residence. In the refrigerator, human heads. In the drawers, genitals. In the bathtub, acid. Despite the unbearable stench, her neighborhood didn't know - or didn't want to know - until it was too late.

The most tragic element, however, was not only the brutality of their acts, but the chain of systematic omissions that enabled them. Police, after receiving complaints, ignored the signs. In one particularly abhorrent case, Dahmer convinced officers that a naked, drugged young man fleeing his apartment was his partner. The cops, visibly uncomfortable with the homosexual environment, turned him back on him. He died that same night.

Psychologically, Dahmer is a study in contradiction. He was diagnosed with schizotypal personality disorder, with anti-social and necrophiliac traits. Yet he showed remorse-late, yes, but real. He was not a psychopath devoid of conscience, but a broken man inside, devoured by his own compulsion.

His capture in 1991 was accidental. One of his victims escaped. When the police entered, what they found was a

scene of absolute horror: containers with acid, Polaroid photos of mutilated bodies, human remains everywhere. Hell, bottled up.

Jeffrey Dahmer was sentenced to 15 consecutive life sentences. In 1994, he was murdered by another inmate at Columbia Prison, beaten with a metal bar. Some saw it as poetic justice. Others saw it as mercy.

Today, his story is a heartbreaking reminder of what happens when evil doesn't scream, but whispers from the routine.

John Wayne Gacy - The Clown of Death

Date of birth: March 17, 1942

Location: Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

Victims: 33 confirmed

Executed: May 10, 1994 (lethal injection)

BY DAY, HE WAS a respected businessman, community event organizer, hospital and children's party volunteer. Dressed as "Pogo the Clown," John Wayne Gacy handed out balloons, smiles and a facade of harmless civility. But at night, he went down to the basement.

There, in that small, damp space, he shed his masks. There, the screams could not be heard.

Gacy was the living embodiment of a perfect double life. In his social circle he was seen as the exemplary neighbor: married, with children, generous with his time. But beneath that skin of a model citizen, there pulsed a mind deeply troubled by repression, frustration and a desire for absolute control over young male bodies.

His childhood was a common but dangerous combination: an alcoholic, violent, homophobic father and a sensitive son desperately seeking approval. Gacy grew up repressing his

sexuality, cultivating a facade of normalcy while his dark impulses fermented in the shadows.

Between 1972 and 1978, Gacy lured dozens of young men into his home with promises of jobs, money or just a drink. Once inside, he would drug them or trick them with "magic" tricks. His favorite: the "handcuff trick," where he would put them on first... and then place them on the guest's wrists. At that point, the game was over. The confinement, the torture, the abuse would begin. Then, death.

He buried 26 of them under the foundations of his own house. Others he threw into the Des Plaines River. He turned his home into a crypt, a carefully planned mass grave.

Psychologically, Gacy represents the dark side of narcissism and extreme sexual repression. He showed no guilt. He did not deny the acts. He only justified them as "mistakes." At trial, he said that he had only killed a portion of his victims, that the others died by accident. He claimed that another "I" had taken control. An alter ego. An excuse that neither the jury, nor logic, accepted.

He was convicted of 33 murders, although it is suspected that there may have been more. During his time on death row, he painted portraits of clowns, as if to immortalize his mask. To many, it seemed provocative.

He died by lethal injection in 1994. His last meal was a bucket of KFC chicken, fries and strawberries. The irony: Gacy had been a regional manager for that same chain.

His story is an icy warning: sometimes, the monster doesn't lurk in the dark... but hosts the neighborhood bar-becue and hands out candy.

Richard Ramirez - The Night Prowler

Date of birth: February 29, 1960

Location: El Paso, Texas, USA

Victims: 14 confirmed (although more are suspected)

Death: June 7, 2013 (lymphoma, San Quentin Prison)

RICHARD RAMIREZ, KNOWN AS "The Night Stalker," was a notorious serial killer who terrorized California residents during the 1980s. Born on February 29, 1960 in El Paso, Texas, Ramirez lived a difficult childhood, marked by the presence of a violent father and the influence of his cousin, Mike, who was a war veteran and traumatized him with his horrific Vietnam stories. From an early age, Ramirez showed signs of mental instability and a penchant for violence.

As he grew older, his tendencies became more evident: he became a runaway, addicted to drugs and plunged into the world of crime. In 1984, his chilling crimes began to become notorious. Ramirez would break into his victims' homes, leaving behind a trail of terror and brutality. He killed in cold blood, regardless of the age or gender of his victims. His modus operandi included stabbings, strangulations, rapes and mutilation of the bodies. In addition, he left satanic mes-

sages and symbols at the crime scenes, further confusing the police.

The city of Los Angeles was under his domination, his image appeared in the newspapers and on television. The population lived in constant fear, installing security systems and avoiding walking alone at night. The hunt for Richard Ramirez became a priority for the police and the FBI. Finally, in August 1985, Ramirez was captured thanks to the fierce efforts of the Los Angeles police. He was caught by a crowd in the East Los Angeles neighborhood, who recognized him by his widely publicized face in the media. After a trial that captured national attention, Richard Ramirez was sentenced to death in 1989. However, his case dragged on for more than two decades due to appeals and legal proceedings.

Finally, on June 7, 2013, Ramirez died in prison due to complications from lymphoma. Although Richard Ramirez may have left a bloody and terrifying legacy, his story served as a chilling reminder of what a human being is capable of. His name was etched in the history of serial crime and his place among the most notorious killers will forever be remembered.

Dennis Rader - Bind, Torture, Kill

Date of birth: March 9, 1945

Location: Pittsburg, Kansas, U.S.A.

Victims: 10 confirmed

Sentence: 10 consecutive life sentences (serving time at El Dorado Correctional Facility)

ON THE SURFACE, DENNIS Rader was an ordinary man: city employee, church leader, family man. His life was spent between city ordinance paperwork and congregation meetings. He mowed lawns. He greeted neighbors. He organized a neighborhood watch club. All the while, he fantasized about murder.

And it did. With accounting precision.

His nickname, BTK, was not given to him by the press or the police. He gave it to himself: **Bind. Torture. Kill.** - Bind. Torture. Kill. Three words like a manifesto. Three steps that summed up his personal vision of hell.

Rader killed for the first time in 1974. His victims: the Otero family, mother, father, two children. He did not choose at random. He observed, he planned, he went in. He was methodical, almost ritualistic. He used ropes, improvised

ligatures, plastic bags. He did not seek to kill quickly, but to dominate. It was a private show for one spectator: himself.

Psychologically, Rader is a case of profound narcissism with sadistic and fetishistic traits. He was aroused by the sight of his helpless, bound, moaning victims. Afterwards, he would masturbate to memories, photographs, even writing tales of what he had done. In some cases, he dressed in his victims' underwear. Control was his drug.

But the most chilling thing was not his violence. It was his **parallel life**. For three decades, while his crimes were investigated in vain, Rader maintained an exemplary routine. No one suspected the animal control manager, the father who went to soccer games, the man who hung crucifixes and planned murders between administrative tasks.

For years, he kept silent. But he could not resist. Narcissism does not let the ego die. In 2004, after 25 years without committing crimes, he contacted the press again. He sent mocking letters to the police, boasted about his exploits, proposed riddles. He wanted attention. He wanted **to be remembered**.

And it was his ego that betrayed him. In one of those communications, he sent a diskette. He thought it was anonymous. It was not. The police traced the metadata: the file had been edited on a computer... from the Lutheran church. User name: Dennis.

When he was arrested, he confessed with the same coldness with which he chose ropes. He did not cry. He did not beg. He explained.

Today, Rader is serving a life sentence. He writes letters, answers interviews, sorts through his legacy like a library inventory. He continues to try to control the narrative.

His story reminds us that evil doesn't always roar. Sometimes, it puts on a tie and asks how you are. **And waits.**

Gary Ridgway - The Green River Killer

Date of birth: February 18, 1949

Location: Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

Victims: Confessed to 71, convicted of 49

Sentence: Life imprisonment without possibility of parole (Washington State Penitentiary)

THE BANALITY OF EVIL has a name, and it is Gary Leon Ridgway.

Unlike other killers famous for their theatricality or eccentricities, Ridgway was a gray man. A truck painter. Twice married. Religious. Taciturn. No one would have paid attention to his existence except that, between 1982 and 1998, he became one of the most lethal serial killers in U.S. history.

It had no style. It had no signature. Just an almost robotic mechanics of murder.

His modus operandi was efficient, repetitive and utterly devoid of emotion. Ridgway would gain the trust of women - mostly prostitutes or vulnerable teenagers - by offering them money. Then, he would take them to a forest, or a country road, and strangle them. With his hands. Sometimes with a rope. Or whatever was handy. Then he would abandon their bodies near the Green River or bury them in the trees.

I often returned to them. Not out of remorse, but for pleasure. He held post mortem meetings. He photographed the remains. In one of the interrogations he declared, with terrifying coldness:

"Killing was the easy part. The hard work was getting rid of the body."

Her childhood was, as often happens, a cradle of contradictions: an authoritarian mother, with whom she had a relationship of tension and fixation, and a father who constantly talked to her about prostitutes. Ridgway developed a distorted and deeply misogynistic view of women. He saw them as objects, as temptations to be destroyed.

Psychologically, Ridgway has been described as a man of limited intelligence, but with an obsession for order and cleanliness. As a child, he would wet the bed, and his mother would forcibly clean it. The humiliation of these episodes marked him, by his own admission, deeply. He began to associate sexual arousal with guilt, with punishment, with nullification.

For years, he was invisible to the police. The fact that his victims were marginalized women didn't help: investigations were superficial, fragmented. Meanwhile, Ridgway kept killing. Without haste. Without pause.

It was DNA that finally gave him away, in 2001. Upon his arrest, he offered a deal: he would confess to all the murders in exchange for avoiding the death penalty. The prosecutor accepted. Ridgway, as if listing lost objects, began to recite names, places, dates. Sometimes he cried. Sometimes he

didn't remember. Or didn't want to remember. But the bodies were where he said.

In total, he confessed to 71 murders. He was convicted of 49, although authorities believe the real number is higher. Many bodies were never found. Many names will never be known.

Gary Ridgway was not looking for fame. He didn't want to leave messages or symbols. He just wanted to **kill without consequences**. And for nearly two decades, he succeeded.

Today, he is still locked up, growing old in a cell. His story is a cruel warning: the real monster can be boring. He can wear work boots. He can be faceless... and still devour lives.

Aileen Wuornos - The Manslayer

Date of birth: February 29, 1956

Location: Rochester, Michigan, USA

Victims: 7 confirmed

Executed: October 9, 2002 (lethal injection, Florida State Prison)

AILEEN WUORNOS WAS NO ordinary serial killer. She did not hunt for pleasure. She didn't do it for power. She was something else: a lethal mix of rage, trauma and an existence eroded by decades of neglect. Aileen did not become a monster. She was molded, blow by blow, by a life that never gave her anything but reasons to distrust, to hate, to defend herself like a cornered beast.

Orphan before she understood the meaning of the word, abused, abandoned, sold by her grandfather in exchange for cigarettes, prostitute at thirteen, mother at fourteen, no family, no future. Her life was an endless prologue to disaster. If society were a protective environment, Aileen was thrown out at minute one.

In 1989, her final spiral began. Traveling the highways of Florida as a sex worker, she was picked up by men who, in her

words, were not always looking for sex. Sometimes they were looking for violence. She gave them back something worse.

Over a period of about a year, he killed seven men. All were shot. All were stripped of their belongings. All were abandoned in rural areas, in bushes, swamps or on the side of the road. He did it with a .22 caliber pistol, and with a conviction that bordered on desperation.

The lingering question is the same as always: **was she a murderer or a survivor?** She said it herself: she killed in self-defense. That some men tried to rape her. That she had no choice. That she just wanted to avoid being hurt. But the pattern was repeated too many times, with too much blood, with too much preparation.

Psychologically, Wuornos was a battleground. Diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, antisocial disorder and paranoid tendencies, her mind was a mixture of unresolved trauma, extreme impulsivity and total distrust of the world. Her only stable emotional relationship was with another woman, Tyria Moore, who ended up betraying her under police pressure.

The trial was a circus. Wuornos was portrayed as a monster, a soulless harpy. The fact that she was a lesbian was exploited in the media. Her personal history was minimized. She was condemned without hesitation. Her erratic behavior during the hearings - shouting, accusations, confusing statements - didn't help. And it didn't matter. She was already marked.

She was executed on October 9, 2002. Her last words were a mixture of threat and prophecy:

"I'll be back, as in *Independence Day*, with the mother ship, on June 6. To take it all back."

Today, Aileen Wuornos is an uncomfortable symbol. To some, a victim of systemic misery. To others, a ruthless killer. The truth lies, as almost always, in the shadows.

Zodiac - The Coded Ghost

Known Activity: Late 1960s, early 1970s

Area: Northern California, U.S.A.

Victims: 5 confirmed, 2 survivors, over 30 claimed

Identity: Unknown

UNLIKE OTHER SERIAL KILLERS, the Zodiac did not simply want to kill. He wanted to **be seen**. He wanted his words to cause panic, his symbols to circulate in the newspapers, his name - the one he chose - to be engraved in the collective memory. He was not a monster in the dark. He was an author.

His first known attack occurred in December 1968, when two teenagers were killed in their car on a lonely road. Others followed, with the same pattern: young couples, parked cars, guns or knives. But what set the Zodiac apart from any other criminal was his need for **spectacle**.

In July 1969, the letters began. Manuscript, signed with a symbol of a rifle's telescopic sight crossed with a cross: his personal emblem. Inside, riddles. Codes. Threats of mass murder. Demands. Mind games. In one of them, he wrote:

"I like killing people because it's so much fun. It's more fun than killing wild animals in the forest."

Those letters were not confessions, they were provocations. Public challenges to the police, to cryptographers, to journalists. Some contained figures of how many people he claimed to have murdered. Others were accompanied by supposedly satanic symbols, references to movie plays, or warnings about how he would murder children on school buses. And always, the same signature: **Zodiac**.

The impact was immediate. Police in Northern California panicked. The public locked themselves in their homes. The media elevated him to legend. He wasn't just a killer, he was **a mythical figure**. A villain with branding.

The investigation was a maze of false leads, absurd theories and discarded suspects. The FBI got involved. Speech sketches were generated. Cryptograms were published. Some were deciphered, others not until decades later. One of them, solved in 2020, contained this disturbing message:

"I hope they're having a lot of fun trying to catch me.... I'm not afraid of the gas chamber."

Psychologically, Zodiac appears to have been a high-functioning narcissist, obsessed with notoriety and control over the public narrative. Murder was his signature, but **fear** was his masterpiece.

And then... he disappeared.

He stopped writing. He stopped killing. Or changed tactics. Or he simply died. The case is still open. He was never arrested. No conclusive pattern was ever found. Only shadows.

His figure has inspired films, novels, documentaries. His name is a silent presence in the history of modern crime. A

reminder that there are minds that seek neither redemption nor reward, but immortality through chaos.

Zodiac was, and perhaps still is, **the killer who turned crime into cryptocurrency and fear into legacy.**

Charles Manson - The Prophet of the End of the World

Date of birth: November 12, 1934

Place: Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Victims: 9 murders attributed to his "family"

Death: November 19, 2017 (prison, natural causes).

IF HELL HAD A preacher, he would undoubtedly resemble Charles Manson: small, hypnotic, with a whispering voice and a look that oscillated between messianic delirium and the rage of a wounded child.

Born into ruin, raised in neglect, Manson was a pure product of the margins. He spent his adolescence and young adulthood in and out of correctional institutions. He learned two things: how to survive in hostile environments...and how to read people. In prison, he read about mind control, about manipulation, about distorted spirituality. When he got out, he had a plan.

At the height of the hippie movement, counterculture and rootlessness, Manson found his ideal setting: California, late 60s. He surrounded himself with young people, almost all of them women, broken, lonely, tired of reality. To them he

offered something better: belonging, purpose, a new world. They followed him. Everywhere.

They called themselves **the Manson Family**. They lived together on an isolated ranch. They used LSD as a sacrament. They spoke of the apocalypse as an imminent event. And that's where Manson unveiled his personal prophecy: **Helter Skelter**.

According to his delusion, a race war was approaching that would destroy the social order. African-Americans would dominate the world... but would be unable to rule it. Then Manson and his family - hidden for years - would emerge to take over as the new messiahs. It was apocalyptic racism at its most lysergic.

But the end of the world was slow. So they decided to speed it up.

On August 8 and 9, 1969, members of the Manson family murdered seven people in two nights. The first was the most brutal: Sharon Tate, actress and wife of director Roman Polanski, eight months pregnant, was stabbed 16 times. Her friends, all unrelated to Manson, also died. The scene was ritualistic. Blood on the walls. Knives. Fear. All etched in the nation's memory.

Manson was not physically at the murders, but he orchestrated them. He was the director of the play. The Family only interpreted the script.

Psychologically, Manson was a paranoid narcissist with messianic delusions. He believed he was Christ, the devil, and a rock star all at the same time. He defined himself in

opposition to the system. He hated it. And he wanted it to bleed.

During the trial, his behavior was as theatrical as it was frightening. He carved a swastika on his forehead. He screamed. He chanted. His female followers imitated him, adored him. The court was not judging a man, but a symbol of the deformed counterculture. He was sentenced to death, but the abolition of capital punishment in California in 1972 saved him. He spent the rest of his life in prison, giving interviews, selling autographs, cultivating his myth.

Died in 2017. At the age of 83. Of natural causes.

His story proves that **you don't need a knife to kill**. Just an idea, sick enough, and believers willing to execute it.

Jack the Ripper - The First Ghost of Urban Horror

Known activity: August to November 1888

Area: Whitechapel, London, England

Victims: 5 confirmed (known as "the canonical five"), possibly more

Identity: Never disclosed

BEFORE MEDIA SERIAL KILLERS, before DNA, before forensic profiling, before even the term "serial killer", there was a figure who emerged from the fog and spread terror among the cobblestone streets of London's East End: **Jack the Ripper**.

Its setting was Whitechapel, a district infected by squalor, overcrowding, alcoholism and hopelessness. A perfect breeding ground for invisibility. His victims: women on the streets, prostitutes without a voice, without power, without justice. Jack knew it. And he chose them with surgical precision.

It began in the early hours of August 31, 1888, with the body of Mary Ann Nichols, found with her throat slit and her abdomen cut open. From then on, the crimes became progressively more brutal, as if the killer became increas-

ingly comfortable in his role. Annie Chapman was dismembered. Elizabeth Stride and Catherine Eddowes murdered on the same night, barely 45 minutes apart. The last victim, Mary Jane Kelly, was virtually flayed. Her room looked like a slaughterhouse.

But what made Jack a legend was not just the brutality. It was the staging. The clinical exhibitionism. And, of course, the cards.

Signed with the now famous "Jack the Ripper," some of these letters mocked the police, recounted macabre details of the crimes, and even included human organs. Although not all of them were confirmed as authentic, they served their purpose: **to spread panic**. The entire city went into hysteria. The police presence was doubled. Rewards were offered. Innocent people were arrested. To no avail.

The killer disappeared as suddenly as he had appeared.

Psychologically, Jack has been analyzed more than any killer in history. It has been speculated that he was a doctor, a butcher, a nobleman, an immigrant, a madman, a moral avenger. Every possible profile has been cast on his shadow. But what seems clear is that he possessed **anatomical knowledge**, a ritualistic fascination with mutilation and a need for absolute control over the female body. His was not just killing: it was decomposing.

Socially, Jack the Ripper emerged at a key moment: the birth of tabloid journalism, the rise of urban fear, and the desperation of the lower classes. He was the perfect symbol of evil lurking on the margins. But it was also used as an excuse

to reinforce controls, stigmatize immigrants, and cover up the Empire's shame with fear.

Jack killed no more than a dozen, at most. But he generated millions of words, illustrations, myths. His legacy is disproportionate. And that, perhaps, was his real goal.

Today, more than a century later, **his identity remains unconfirmed**. There are hundreds of theories, dozens of suspects, from princes to poets. They are all shadows. None is Jack.

Because Jack was not just a man. He was a symptom. And like the worst symptoms, he disappeared before he could be cured.

Ed Gein - The Butcher of Plainfield

Date of birth: August 27, 1906

Location: La Crosse, Wisconsin, USA

Victims: 2 confirmed, multiple exhumations and desecration

Death: July 26, 1984 (respiratory failure, psychiatric hospital)

WHEN POLICE RAIDED ED Gein's farmhouse on November 16, 1957, they were simply looking for a missing woman: Bernice Worden. What they found was something else. A scene straight out of rural American hell. A ritual slaughterhouse. A grotesque collection of macabre art.

There was Bernice, hanging upside down, decapitated, gutted as if she were game. But that was only the beginning.

In the kitchen: a frying pan with human remains. In the living room: chairs upholstered with leather. In a box: vulvas preserved in salt. In his closet: a belt made of nipples. And at the bottom of it all: a mask of a human face, carefully tanned and stitched.

Ed Gein was not a traditional serial killer. He didn't kill often. He didn't stalk like a predator. He was more of a **gath-**

erer, a rural ghoul with a mind ravaged by isolation, fanatical religion and an Oedipus complex so monumental it would make Freud sweat.

His mother, Augusta, was the absolute center of his universe: ultra-religious, domineering, she despised women and taught him that sex was sin, that the world was corruption, and that he should remain pure. When she died, Ed broke down completely. He locked his room, left it intact as an altar... and began to descend into a spiral of madness that included nightly visits to cemeteries, exhumations, and the making of women's costumes... made from real bodies.

Yes: **Gein was trying to become his mother. Literally.**

Psychologically, he was an extreme case of paranoid schizophrenia, with psychosexual delusions, dissociation and necrophiliac behavior. But he was also passive, childish, almost pathetically naive. When he was arrested, he was more confused than guilty. He did not seem to understand the magnitude of what he had done.

He was declared unfit for trial and sent to a psychiatric institution, where he lived the rest of his life in a kind of limbo between patient and legend. When he died in 1984, his grave was desecrated. The myth of Ed Gein had already surpassed the man.

And the myth is this: that in the heart of America, beneath the veneer of the everyday, something primitive, savage, inhuman can beat. That a lone man on a farm can be more terrifying than any fictional monster.

Ed Gein was not a high-figure serial killer. But he was **the blueprint for modern horror**. His story is a constant echo in

JAVIER SOTO

film, literature, popular culture. Because what he did doesn't need repetition to be eternal.

David Berkowitz - Son of Sam

Date of birth: June 1, 1953

Location: Brooklyn, New York, USA

Victims: 6 confirmed murders, 7 wounded

Sentence: 6 consecutive life sentences (serving time at Shawangunk Correctional Facility)

IT ALL STARTED WITH isolated gunshots in deserted streets. A couple inside a car, a flash, screams, death. Then another couple, another shot, another life cut short. At first, it seemed random. But the fear grew like an oil slick.

David Berkowitz was the adopted son of a working-class Jewish family. As a child, he showed signs of emotional disturbance: fire, violence against animals, social isolation. He was a minefield with short legs. And like so many future killers, he found his only companionship in his own fantasies: of power, of control, of revenge against a world that didn't want him.

In adolescence, he discovered something that would never leave him: a deep rage directed mainly towards women. Rage born of abandonment, insecurity and an almost childish

misogyny. He was not an intelligent monster. He was a man who had let his resentment ferment until it became lethal.

In 1976, armed with a .44 caliber revolver, Berkowitz began his campaign of terror. He did not target specific individuals. His victims were young people, mostly women, often on date nights. The pattern was brutal: approach parked cars, shoot without warning, disappear into the night.

But it wasn't just the crimes that immortalized Berkowitz. It was **his letter**.

Signed as *The Son of Sam*, sent to a journalist, full of delusions about demonic voices and orders from a possessed dog, that letter turned a series of murders into an apocalyptic spectacle.

"I am the Son of Sam. I love to hunt. Thirsty for blood."

Fear broke out. People stopped going out at night. Clubs closed early. Couples went into hiding. The most vibrant city in the world curled up like a wounded animal.

Psychologically, Berkowitz was initially diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, although he was later labeled as an antisocial personality with narcissistic disorders. The "demonic dog" (which he claimed to obey) could simply have been a strategy to sow more chaos or to reduce his criminal responsibility. The line between insanity and excuse, in his case, is as murky as the East River at dawn.

He was caught in August 1977, thanks to an underpaid parking ticket. A delicious irony: the man who had paralyzed an entire city fell for the most absurd bureaucracy.

During his trial, Berkowitz pleaded guilty without resistance. He avoided the death penalty. Since then, he has rein-

vented himself several times: first as a "son of God," then as a model inmate. No one cares.

Because David Berkowitz already did what he wanted to do: go down in history as **the killer who turned New York into a city besieged by fear.**

Richard Kuklinski - The Iceman

Date of birth: April 11, 1935

Location: Jersey City, New Jersey, USA

Victims: More than 100 suspected (he confessed to nearly 200)

Death: March 5, 2006 (in prison, natural causes)

IF MOST SERIAL KILLERS are emotional monsters, Richard Kuklinski was something colder and more functional: **an engineer of death**. Killing was not an art for him. It was a craft.

He grew up in a home so toxic it would have made a child protection committee blanch: an alcoholic and brutal father, a fanatically religious and physically abusive mother. From an early age, Kuklinski understood two things: that violence was inevitable, and that it was better to be on the side of the batterer.

He killed for the first time in his adolescence. Not for money. Not out of necessity. Simply to see what it felt like. And he discovered that it **felt like nothing**.

During the 1950s and '60s, as New Jersey and New York blossomed into bustling industrial corruption, Kuklinski found his calling: murder for hire. He worked for several

Mafia families-Gambino, DeCavalcante-though he was never officially initiated. He was too useful as a freelancer: no one who could be traced back to a last name.

His *modus operandi* was as varied as it was brutal: guns, knives, poisons, clubs, cyanide in hamburger bites, cross-bows, strangulation. He would freeze the bodies to confuse the time of death - hence his nickname *Iceman* - and abandon them weeks later. The police were slow to learn when and where the murder had occurred.

But Kuklinski did not only kill for money. He also killed for petty "offenses": an insult, an outstanding debt, a suspicion. He had a threshold for violence as low as the freezing point of water.

Psychologically, he was a brutal case of psychopathy: **no empathy, no remorse, with an almost inhuman ability to compartmentalize his life.** He was a husband, father of two, seemingly normal neighbor. He would go to school picnics, buy Christmas toys... and on the way back he would stop by to strangle someone for a couple of thousand dollars.

His downfall began in the 1980s, when law enforcement mounted an undercover operation called *Operation Iceman*. After gaining his trust, an FBI agent obtained taped confessions about several murders. In 1986, Kuklinski was arrested and, in one of the tastiest strokes of irony in criminal history, ended up in jail for good.

During his time in prison, he participated in interviews where he described his murders with the same emotion with which someone tells a cooking recipe. A phrase of his sums up his philosophy:

"Killing is like stepping on a cockroach. If you don't think about it, you don't feel anything."

He died in 2006, supposedly of natural causes. Some say he was poisoned to prevent him from revealing more Mafia secrets.

Richard Kuklinski was neither a mythical monster nor a ritual demon. He was worse. **He was a man who killed because he could**, because it was profitable, and because to him, other people's lives were worth less than the ice he used to hide his crimes.

Andrei Chikatilo - The Rostov Butcher

Date of birth: October 16, 1936

Place: Yabluchne, Ukraine (then part of USSR)

Victims: 52 confirmed

Executed: February 14, 1994 (shot in the back of the head, Russian prison)

IN A COUNTRY WHERE crime was not supposed to exist, **one of the most prolific murderers of the 20th century was born.** Andrei Chikatilo was the perverse product of a society obsessed with public image, where admitting that evil existed was considered unpatriotic. Thus, the monster grew, killed and mutilated more than fifty victims... with the complicity of state silence.

Raised during the Holodomor - the artificial famine caused by Stalin - Chikatilo was born in absolute misery. He grew up in a hut shared with animals, without food, without affection and with a foundational trauma: his older brother, according to him, **had been kidnapped and eaten by cannibals** during the famine. Reality or delirium, the truth is that his mind was not unscathed.

As an adult, he developed a miserable public life and a hellish inner life. He was impotent. Unable to maintain a functional sexual relationship. His early experiences were linked to failure, humiliation... and, finally, violence. He discovered that he could climax **not through sex, but through murder**.

His crimes began in 1978, with the rape and murder of a 9-year-old girl. Another man was arrested, forced to confess under torture and executed. Chikatilo went free. And he did not stop for 12 years.

He acted at train stations, bus stops, rural markets. He lured children, teenagers and women with promises of food, jobs or money. He would take them to the forest or abandoned fields. There he would begin his private ceremony: rape, torture, uncontrolled stabbings (sometimes more than 30), mutilation of sexual organs, **occasional cannibalism**, and abandonment of the body as a message of horror.

Impotence turned him into an organ predator. He substituted sex for destruction. In the words of Soviet forensic scientists:

"The pleasure was in the dismemberment."

The investigation was a bureaucratic mess. The state denied the existence of serial killers, so the authorities **refused to recognize a pattern**. Meanwhile, the number of corpses increased.

He was finally captured in 1990, after years of official ineptitude and thanks to the work of a group of detectives who ignored orders from their superiors. Chikatilo confessed with

a surgical coldness, describing the murders in excruciating detail and a bored professor's tone.

During the trial – a late Soviet circus full of shouting, crying and threats – he was kept in a metal cage to prevent the crowd from lynching him. Sometimes he shouted that he was Jesus Christ. Sometimes he slept. His lawyer, in desperation, pleaded insanity. The court did not take the bait.

He was shot in the head in 1994. No ceremony. No last words recorded. Just one more bullet and one more body.

His case left a permanent scar on modern Russia. Not only because of the number of victims, but because of the way **the entire system facilitated his existence**. Chikatilo was not just a murderer. He was a symptom of what happens when horror is denied, buried, and allowed to grow like a tumor under the uniform of a retired teacher.

Harold Shipman - Doctor Death

Date of birth: January 14, 1946

Place: Nottingham, England

Victims: Estimated to have murdered more than 300 patients

Death: January 13, 2004 (suicide in prison)

HAROLD FREDERICK SHIPMAN DID not look like a murderer. He seemed quite the opposite: a trusted country doctor, with a calm voice, metal-rimmed glasses, and a firm manner. He was the kind of man to whom one handed the keys to one's house, one's medical records, and one's life itself. He was, for decades, **the best disguised angel of death in the UK.**

Shipman began his medical career in the 1970s, and early on showed an obsessive need for control. He was not the typical physician who shared decisions with the patient. He dictated. And in many cases, he executed. **Literally.**

His modus operandi was as simple as it was terrifying: **he injected lethal doses of morphine into elderly patients,** mainly women, in their own homes or during clinic visits. He would then sign the death certificate himself, with medical authority that no one dared question. The cause of death:

"advanced age", "heart failure", "natural death". A white blot on a perfect crime.

For years, the numbers piled up. The deaths were not individually shocking. Only when they were compared did the pattern emerge. In a small town like Hyde, where he practiced, the death rate among his patients **was five times** that of any other physician.

Psychologically, Shipman was a cold enigma. He did not kill for money (although he forged a few wills). He did not kill for hate. His drive seemed to be something else: absolute power over life and death. To be the only one with the key to the exit. **The minor god of the office.**

It was discovered in 1998 when the family of a dead patient began to suspect that something was amiss in the will. Subsequent investigations revealed a pattern so overwhelming that even the British health care system could no longer look the other way. Exhumations. Forensic analysis. Testimony.

The trial was devastating. Shipman showed no emotion. No confession. No remorse. He was convicted of 15 murders, although a subsequent official inquiry - the *Shipman Inquiry* - estimated **the real figure** to be **over 300 cases**. The biggest serial killer in the UK, and one of the most lethal in the modern world.

He was sentenced to life imprisonment. He committed suicide in prison in 2004, one day before his 58th birthday. Apparently, to ensure that his pension was transferred to his wife. Even his exit was surgical, calculated, **as a last prescription without prior consultation.**

His case left deep scars in the United Kingdom: death certification laws were reformed, stricter control systems for physicians were put in place, and, most appallingly, **a permanent doubt was cast on the role of the trusted physician.**

Harold Shipman was not a visible monster. He didn't scream. He didn't collect trophies. But he killed more than most of the butchers we've dissected here.

And he did it with a robe, steady pulse and pen in hand.

Albert Fish - The Cannibal Monster

Date of birth: May 19, 1870

Location: Washington D.C., USA

Victims: 3 confirmed, hundreds of sexual abuses, multiple suspicions

Execution: January 16, 1936 (electric chair, Sing Sing Prison)

IF THERE IS A figure who embodies pure evil without embellishment, without justification, without romanticism... it is Albert Fish. Known as *The Cannibal Monster*, Fish was not simply a killer. He was a living aberration. A walking catalog of every possible human perversion. And most disturbing of all, he looked like a harmless, candy-giving grandfather. Literally.

Fish was born into a deeply religious family devastated by mental illness. His father died when he was an infant. His mother, unable to raise him, abandoned him in an orphanage where abuse was routine. There, he received constant beatings... and discovered he liked them. That was his starting point.

From then on, her sexuality became a spiral of pain and domination. She inflicted torture on herself. He would insert needles into his groin (X-rays revealed 29 of them permanently stuck in his pelvis). He beat himself with spiked paddles. He drank urine. He ate excrement. But the worst, the most abominable, was **what he did to the children**.

For decades, he roamed the United States sexually abusing minors. He lured them with candy, promises of work or innocent games. Once isolated, he tortured them with wires, blades, scissors, whips. Sometimes he killed them. Sometimes not. Sometimes **he ate them**.

His most infamous crime was the murder of **Grace Budd**, a 10-year-old girl he kidnapped in 1928. He convinced her parents to let him take her to a supposed birthday party. In reality, he took her to an abandoned house. He strangled her. He dismembered her. Cooked parts of her body in an oven. He ate them.

The most inhumane came next: Fish wrote a letter to Grace's mother. In it, in cold prose, he detailed how he killed her, how he cooked her and **how her flesh tasted**.

"She was sweet and tender as a veal roast. I ate off her buttocks for four days."

That document is, to this day, one of the most disturbing testimonies ever written by a murderer.

Psychologically, Fish is a compendium of pathologies. Pederasty. Sadism. Masochism. Cannibalism. Schizophrenia. Religious delirium. He defined himself as the new Abraham: sent by God to sacrifice the innocent. **A prophet of pain.**

He was arrested in 1934, after years of evading justice. At his trial, he was completely serene. He claimed that the voice of God commanded him to do what he did. His lawyer tried to plead insanity. The jury agreed... but he was sentenced to death anyway.

The electric chair was slow to kill him. Some said the needles in his body caused short circuits. Others that he was simply resistant to hell.

He died on January 16, 1936, after looking into the eyes of his executioners with an expression of absolute peace.

Albert Fish is not just a killer. He is an abyss. An example of what happens when trauma, deformed faith and perversion merge into one body. He was not seeking pleasure. He sought transcendence through horror.

And, sadly, he got it.

H. H. Holmes - The Architect of Horror

Real name: Herman Webster Mudgett

Date of birth: May 16, 1861

Location: Gilmanton, New Hampshire, USA

Victims: Estimated between 27 and more than 200

Execution: May 7, 1896 (hanging, Moyamensing Prison, Philadelphia)

BEFORE THE TERM "SERIAL killer" existed, **H. H. Holmes had already turned it into a business model.** While the United States was celebrating its progress at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, Holmes was offering something very different to his guests: dead-end rooms, corridors that led nowhere, traps, gas, acid, blades, and death.

Welcome to the **castle of horror.**

Holmes was educated, handsome, charming. He had a medical degree, refined manners and an impeccable smile. But beneath that veneer of civilization was a machinery of fraud, manipulation and murder.

In Chicago, he built a three-story hotel, which from the outside looked like modern, attractive accommodations. Inside it was a hellish labyrinth: soundproof rooms, staircases

leading to walls, doors that opened only from the outside, poison gas chutes, corpse chutes leading to a basement equipped with ovens, dissection tables and acid.

The "Castle of Death," as it later became known, was not a hotel. **It was a death trap designed with surgical premeditation.**

During the world's fair, thousands of people came to Chicago. No one asked about those who did not return. Holmes selected his victims - usually young, single women seeking employment - with predatory precision. He seduced them, locked them up, asphyxiated them, mutilated them, and in some cases, sold their skeletons to medical schools.

Psychologically, Holmes was a megalomaniacal narcissist with a natural talent for deception. He enjoyed total control over his victims. He killed not out of uncontrolled impulse, but for opportunity and systemic pleasure. He was, above all, **an entrepreneur of murder.**

He was eventually arrested for insurance fraud, and as investigators tugged at the thread, they **uncovered a tapestry of corpses, disappearances and torture rooms.** During the trial, he confessed to 27 murders, although many of his claims were contradictory. Some victims turned up alive. Others were never found.

He was sentenced to death and executed in 1896. His last request was to be buried in a cement-sealed grave, for fear that his corpse would be desecrated. Irony: even in death, Holmes feared being treated as he treated so many others.

His story continues to inspire books, movies and legends. Because Holmes didn't just kill people. **He built a temple to**

horror within the optimistic America of the 19th century,
and left us with a disturbing message:

True evil doesn't need grotesque masks or delusions.
Sometimes all it needs is an architectural plan... and a good
facade.

Pedro Alonso López - The Monster of the Andes

Date of birth: October 8, 1948

Location: Santa Isabel, Colombia

Victims: Confessed to more than 300 murders of young girls

Whereabouts: At large since 1998; currently missing

ON THE VAST AND dusty map of South America, Pedro Alonso Lopez did not leave a footprint. **He left a cemetery spread over three countries.** Colombia, Ecuador and Peru were the scenes of his homicidal pilgrimage. His victims: girls. Hundreds of them. None of them older than 12 years old.

He was nicknamed *The Monster of the Andes*. But that title is generous. A monster is a mythological creature. Lopez was something much worse: real.

His childhood was an incubator of horror. Born in misery, with a prostitute mother who mistreated him, he was thrown out of home at the age of eight for attempting to abuse his sister. He wandered the streets, and in that context was caught and gang raped by several adults. He did not break. He was molded.

Years later, he began his criminal career. By his own admission, his "awakening" came when he kidnapped, raped and murdered a young girl in Peru. He liked it. He said he felt *"an inner peace"*. And since then, he **repeated the process hundreds of times**, crossing borders, taking advantage of the impunity of the judicial systems and the indifference towards poor girls.

She lured little girls with candy, promises of food or toys. She was kind. She was patient. And when he took them to the countryside, to the bush or to vacant lots, he transformed himself. He raped them. He strangled them. He left them there, lying there, as if the world was not going to claim them.

In 1980 he was arrested in Ecuador. The horror exploded when he **took the police to the graves**: more than 50 corpses in a perfect state of organized decomposition. He confessed to more than 300 murders. He did not boast. He spoke like someone taking inventory.

But the most infamous fact in his story is this: **he was sentenced to 16 years in prison. He got out after 14.**

The Ecuadorian justice system at the time did not contemplate harsher sentences. In Colombia, after a brief psychiatric internment, he **was released in 1998**. He was lost track of. Some believe he died. Others, that he hid under another name. The truth is that **his death was never confirmed**.

Pedro Alonso López did not have an aesthetic of crime. There were no elaborate rituals. He left no letters. He did not seek fame. **He was looking for girls. And that no one would ask questions.**

Psychology of an exterminator

- **Total depersonalization:** He never saw his victims as human beings. He referred to them as "angels he had to free".
- **Mystical narcissism:** He believed he was a superior instrument, "sent by God to cleanse corruption".
- **Operational coldness:** He planned his crimes as if they were part of a domestic routine. Eating. Sleeping. Killing.

Legacy of emptiness

Pedro Alonso López has not been made into a movie. He does not star in series. He is not mentioned in mainstream documentaries. Perhaps because his story offers no redemption, no psychological complexity, no macabre glamour.

It only offers figures. Bodies. Absences. And the certainty that **hell sometimes wears a human face, a soft tone, and a smile that promises candy.**

Dennis Nilsen - The Muswell Hill Killer

Date of birth: November 23, 1945

Location: Fraserburgh, Scotland

Victims: 15 confirmed, possibly more

Conviction: Life imprisonment

Death: May 12, 2018, in prison

DENNIS NILSEN DIDN'T HUNT in alleys, he didn't wear masks, he didn't scream. He was the silent killer. Solitary. Domestic. **He killed because he couldn't stand to be alone. And then, he kept the bodies... so he wouldn't feel abandoned.**

Nilsen was an isolated child, obsessed with death since childhood. His deepest connection was with his grandfather, whose corpse he saw at the age of six. That image never left him. From then on, death became for him a form of intimacy, of permanence. In his mind, love did not last... **unless the other was dead.**

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Nilsen lived in a modest apartment in London. That was the beginning of his routine:

1. He strolled through bars or subway stations.
2. He was looking for young men, preferably homeless,

in need of affection, food or a place to sleep.

3. He offered them company.

4. He would take them home.

5. And at dawn... **he strangled them while they slept.**

But it didn't end there. Nilsen would keep the bodies for days or weeks. He talked to them. He bathed them. He would sit them next to him while he watched television. It was a kind of post-mortem relationship, a one-sided coexistence with silence as the only language.

When they began to decompose, he dismembered the corpses with almost surgical precision. He kept some parts in crates. Others he boiled to remove the flesh and preserve the bones. Many he threw into the sewer system, which, paradoxically, **was his undoing.**

It was precisely a blockage in the pipes that led the workers to discover human remains. The smell of death suffocated the walls. The police went in. And what they found was a scene that no horror script could have imagined: **heads in bags, nameless torsos, a basement turned into a private grave.**

Nilsen put up no resistance. He confessed to everything. Even more than the police could corroborate. As if he finally needed someone to listen to his story.

Psychological profile

- **Emotional necrophilia:** Their interest was not the

sexual act, but total control, perpetual presence.

- **Extreme social isolation:** Nilsen built a world where the dead were better companions than the living.
- **Manipulative self-pity:** He saw himself as a victim of unrequited love.

During the trial he was convicted of 6 murders and 2 more attempted murders, although the actual figure is at least 15 victims. He received life imprisonment.

From prison, he wrote memoirs, gave interviews, corresponded with real crime aficionados. **He never showed true remorse. Only nostalgia.**

He died in 2018, at the age of 72. Alone. Just as he lived. Only this time, without bodies to accompany him.

Dennis Nilsen was neither an impulsive killer nor a traditional sadist. He was, perhaps, the most tragic and twisted of all: **a man who killed so he wouldn't have to say goodbye.**

Alexander Pichushkin - The Chessboard Assassin

Date of birth: April 9, 1974

Place: Moscow, Russia

Victims: 48 confirmed, confessed to 60, aspired to 64

Sentence: Life imprisonment (2007)

ALEXANDER PICHUSHKIN DID NOT kill on impulse. He killed because he **had a goal: to fill a chessboard. One victim for each square.** His story is the epitome of crime turned into a personal project, methodical, cold, with no other goal than accumulation.

From an early age, Pichushkin demonstrated traits of social isolation and behavioral disorders. After a brain injury in childhood, his temper became explosive. He found solace in only one place: chess. He was good. Very good. He admired Karpov. He dreamed of perfect games. But his mind wandered not to the Grandmaster... but to death.

His first confirmed murder was in 1992. He was 18 years old. He took a young companion to a secluded spot in Bittsevsky Park - his hunting ground - and pushed him down an open manhole. A clean crime, no fingerprints. One test. Passed.

Since then, the park became his chessboard. There he hunted his victims, usually vulnerable people: alcoholics, the elderly, the homeless. He would offer them vodka, company or a game of chess. And when they were sufficiently drunk or confident, he **would brutally hit them over the head with a hammer**. Occasionally, he would drive a broken bottle into the skull to ensure death. Then he would throw the body down a sewer or abandon it in the brush.

It was a routine. And like a good gambler, he carried it out with **killer discipline**.

Pichushkin was not chaotic. He kept track of his murders **on a real chessboard**, placing a piece for each kill. His goal was 64. When he was arrested in 2006, he had placed 60. 48 were confirmed, but he himself claimed more.

During his trial, he was lucid, articulate and even proud. He said:

"For me, a life without killing is like a life without food."

The court did not need much evidence. In 2007, he was sentenced to life imprisonment, with the first 15 years in absolute solitary confinement. Russian justice does not play games.

Psychology of deadly calculation

- **Extreme narcissism:** he saw himself as an artist of death, a misunderstood genius whose canvas was human life.
- **Symbolic fixation:** chess was not just a pastime. It was the perfect structure, the absolute order that his

disturbed mind sought to replicate in the chaos of murder.

- **Methodical coldness:** he did not improvise. He planned each crime as a play. He felt no guilt. Only ambition.

Legacy

Alexander Pichushkin is not the most numerous murderer in modern history... but he is **one of the most terrifyingly rational**. He killed not out of hatred, not out of sexual desire, not out of impulse. He killed because he set his mind to it. Because he wanted to be remembered. Because each victim was a chip. And each crime, one more move towards the checkmate of his own ego.

Robert Hansen - The Butcher of Anchorage

Date of birth: February 15, 1939

Location: Estherville, Iowa, USA

Victims: At least 17 confirmed murders attributed to him; he confessed to 21

Sentence: Life imprisonment without the possibility of parole

Death: August 21, 2014 (natural causes)

ROBERT HANSEN WAS NOT a lone stranger lurking in back alleys. No. He was a respected baker. A husband. A father. A neighbor. And at the same time, **a hunter of human women armed with a rifle, a private plane and a cabin in the middle of the woods.**

I lived in Anchorage, Alaska. Cold city. Isolated. Perfect place to hide a man with a double life. From the outside, it was quiet. Modest. But inside his mind, a primitive obsession boiled: **absolute dominion over the life and death of his prey.**

Over more than a decade, Hansen developed a chillingly methodical pattern:

1. He collected young women, preferably prostitutes or exotic dancers, taking advantage of their vulnerability.
2. He offered them money in exchange for favors or fake photo shoots.
3. Once in his possession, he would kidnap them and fly them in his private plane to a cabin in the woods.
4. There, he raped them, tortured them... and finally, **released them into the forest as if they were deer. Then he hunted them with his rifle.**

Yes. Literally.

Sometimes he gave them a head start. Sometimes he watched them from the brush before shooting them. For Hansen, it wasn't about killing on impulse. It was a game. **A perverse recreation of his sexual frustration and resentment against women.**

He was arrested in 1983 thanks to the testimony of a survivor who escaped bound and half-naked. The police discovered a map with markings in Hansen's house. Each mark was a grave. He was taken to the forest and he himself pointed out the places where he had buried his victims.

During the trial, he confessed without drama. It was as if he was talking about bread recipes. He was sentenced to life imprisonment. He died in prison in 2014.

Psychological profile

- **Pathological compensation:** He was stuttering, shy, rejected by women in his youth. His revenge was methodical.
- **Rationalized sadism:** He justified his acts as a form of *natural balance*.
- **Impeccable double life:** His public image was unblemished. His obscurity, carefully hidden under flour and oven.

The hunter's legacy

Robert Hansen was not simply a murderer. He was **a predator who turned nature into a stage for his homicidal fantasy**. The coldness of his crimes contrasts with the normality of his daily life. And that's what makes him unforgettable: he **didn't look like a monster. But he was more than many**.

John Christie - The Rillington Place Strangler

Date of birth: April 8, 1899

Place: Halifax, West Yorkshire, England

Victims: 8 confirmed

Conviction: Death by hanging (July 13, 1953)

JOHN CHRISTIE WAS NOT an impulsive killer. He was methodical. A dull, soft-spoken man, ex-military, civil servant. The kind of person who goes unnoticed. But behind that gray facade, **he hid bodies under the floor, behind the walls, and in the cupboards** of his home at 10 Rillington Place, Notting Hill.

Her story is a portrait of domestic sadism. Of how horror can live among cups of tea, polite neighbors and visits from the letter carrier. Christie seduced women in need - prostitutes, housewives, even his own wife - and brought them to his home. There, in a frighteningly repeated ritual, **he would slowly asphyxiate them while or after raping them.** Domestic gas was his usual ally.

He kept the bodies in his house as if they were part of the furniture. One in the fireplace. Another under the floorboards. Three more behind a sealed wall.

For years, no one suspected. He was a good neighbor, they said. Discreet. Polite. But he didn't just kill. He also **covered up**. In 1949, his neighbor Beryl Evans and her infant daughter died. The husband, Timothy Evans, was charged and **executed for the crime Christie had committed**. The murderer himself testified against him. Coldness and calculation, pure and simple.

In 1953, after murdering his wife Ethel and hiding her under the living room floor, Christie went on the run. He was finally captured in a London park. His trial was swift, and his sentence, inevitable: **hanging**.

Psychological profile

- **Passive-aggressive extreme:** unable to establish normal relationships, resorted to absolute dominance as a form of connection.
- **Emotional dissociation:** he talked about his crimes as if they were domestic accidents.
- **Social manipulation:** he deceived the police, the judicial system, and the jury... until his own excess betrayed him.

The echo of their crimes

Christie didn't just leave corpses. She left an indelible stain on British justice. His involvement in the conviction of Tim-

othy Evans prompted a review of the case years later. The result was a national scandal. And one of the key factors in the **abolition of the death penalty in the UK in 1965**.

His house was demolished. Literally. Number 10 Rillington Place no longer exists. As if the country wanted to erase the memory of the murderer who turned his home into a mausoleum of blood.

John Christie was the killer who **killed at a routine pace**. A tea. A chat. A poison gas. One more corpse.

Gary Heidnik - The Butcher of the Philadelphia Basement

Date of birth: November 22, 1943

Location: Eastlake, Ohio, USA

Victims: 2 confirmed murders, 6 abducted women

Sentence: Death penalty

Executed: July 6, 1999 (lethal injection)

GARY HEIDNIK HAD TWO faces: one was the successful investor, eccentric preacher and founder of his own "church". The other was **the monster who built a subway prison in his home to chain, rape, torture and eventually murder women as if they were human cattle.**

In his childhood, Heidnik showed signs of mental instability and suffered physical abuse. He was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, but that didn't stop him from creating an investment fund that brought him hundreds of thousands of dollars. With that money, he **bought his personal hell: a modest house in Philadelphia, with a basement that he converted into a torture chamber.**

Between 1986 and 1987, he abducted at least six women, all from marginalized, vulnerable or homeless communities.

He chained them naked to the basement floor. He denied them food, forced them to beat each other, subjected them to systematic sexual abuse, and in the worst cases, **electric torture and cannibalism**.

Yes, cannibalism.

When one of his victims died from malnutrition and abuse, **Heidnik chopped up her body, cooked parts of the human flesh and mixed it with dog food that he then fed to the rest of the prisoners**.

It all ended in March 1987, when one of the women managed to escape. Half-naked, chained, and in a state of panic, she ran to a police station. The complaint led to an immediate raid. The scene was unreal: malnourished women, an inhuman stench, human remains, torture tools. Hell had a postal address.

Psychological profile

- **Functional psychopathy:** extremely calculating, capable of completely isolating his financial life from his criminal life.
- **Messianic delirium:** he claimed to be building a superior race with his prisoners. He believed he was chosen by God.
- **Absolute control:** everything in his basement was designed for **the total annulment of human will**.

During the trial, Heidnik behaved like an automaton. No remorse. No emotion. He pleaded insanity, but the court didn't buy it: **he was too methodical to be functionally insane.**

He was sentenced to death in 1988. Executed eleven years later by lethal injection. His last meal was steak, French fries and cherry pie.

Gary Heidnik was not simply an assassin. **He was an engineer of captivity**, a symbol of what happens when darkness is organized, planned and executed with clerical efficiency. A monster who acted not by impulse, but by structure.

Rodney Alcala - The Dating Game Killer

Date of birth: August 23, 1943

Location: San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A.

Victims: 5 confirmed, up to 130 suspects

Sentence: Death penalty (California, 2010)

Death: July 24, 2021 (in prison, natural causes)

RODNEY ALCALA WASN'T JUST a killer. He was a narcissist with a camera. A hunter with a charming smile. And a competitor on national television. In the late 1970s, as the lights on the set of *The Dating Game* shone on his perfect hairdo, **he had already begun to kill.**

Alcala appeared on the popular ABC dating show in 1978. He looked confident, witty, seductive. He won. Cheryl Bradshaw, the contestant, chose him for a date. But she didn't go. She said "*there was something off about him.*" A hunch that possibly **saved her life.**

By then, Alcala already had a criminal record that included the attempted rape and kidnapping of an 8-year-old girl, multiple sexual assaults, and at least several murders. But he always managed to get away with it, either through legal technicalities or his ability to manipulate.

His modus operandi combined the visual with the lethal: Alcalá **photographed his victims** -- young women, girls and even men -- gaining their trust as if he were a fashion photographer. He would then rape them, strangle them, and sometimes revive them to do it again. A macabre cycle of absolute power.

When he was arrested in 1979, he was found in a warehouse with hundreds of photographs. Many of those faces were never identified. Some of those people are still missing today. The police feared the obvious: **those portraits were his catalog of death.**

Psychological profile

- **Narcissistic psychopathy:** for Alcalá, the camera was an extension of his ego; the victims, accessories to his power.
- **Organized sadistic tendency:** combined control, torture and manipulation with methodical precision.
- **Chameleon-like:** he could be an artist, a seducer or a monster, depending on what the moment demanded.

His trial was a farce of egomania. He represented himself. He questioned the relatives of his victims coldly. He spoke in the third person. He made jokes. But the verdict was unforgiving: **guilty of five murders. Sentenced to death in 2010.**

Still, Alcala left a more chilling figure at the end: he **confessed to being responsible for up to 130 deaths**. A figure never fully corroborated, but one that many investigators consider plausible, given the magnitude of his displacements and the photographic evidence.

Died in prison in 2021. Without execution. Without showing remorse.

Rodney Alcala was the face of evil disguised as a TV star. The smile that seduces, the camera that deceives, and the soul that kills. A serial killer who understood better than anyone that **appearance not only deceives... it kills**.

Yang Xinhai - The Monster Killer

Date of birth: July 29, 1968

Location: Zhengyang, Henan province, China

Victims: 67 confirmed murders, more than 20 rapes

Sentence: Death penalty

Executed: February 14, 2004

IF PREVIOUS KILLERS MOVED between the logic of sadism or narcissism, **Yang Xinhai was simply a destructive force with a human face.** He did not kill for aesthetic pleasure, nor for recognition, nor for money. He killed out of compulsion. Out of impulse. Out of a centerless fury.

He was born in the deep interior of China, into an impoverished and broken family. From a young age he was troubled, volatile and antisocial. He was expelled from school, wandered the streets, and soon began to delinquent. But the real turn to horror occurred when his life **became a nomadic chain of murders with no apparent connection, no pause, no fixed pattern beyond brutality.**

His modus operandi was direct and devastating: he broke into rural homes at night, armed with hammers, axes or crowbars. He attacked families while they slept. **He killed**

everyone present - fathers, mothers, children - and raped women, even still-warm corpses.

His crimes occurred between 2000 and 2003, in at least four provinces. He was nicknamed "the monster killer" because he **left no survivors. He did not steal. He did not talk. He did not explain. He just came, killed, disappeared.**

In his own words:

"Killing people is what I do. There's no reason why."

For three years he eluded the police, changing his name and city like someone changing his shirt. He slept in fields, worked in factories for weeks and then vanished.

He was finally captured in November 2003, while trying to contact an acquaintance. The police arrested him without knowing who he was. Under interrogation, he **confessed to 67 murders and more than 20 rapes. No remorse. Without emotion. Like someone who lists market purchases.**

The Chinese authorities were so shocked by the coldness of his confessions that some evidence and details were **classified so as not to cause public panic.**

He was tried and convicted in a dizzying trial. The execution took place on February 14, 2004. Valentine's Day. Ironically, the only time Chinese society breathed a sigh of relief was when it learned that Yang Xinhai was dead.

Psychological profile

- **Uninhibited violent psychopathy:** no emotional attachment, no empathy, no internal logic beyond extermination.

- **Destructive impulsivity:** he acted without planning, without rational motives. He was a spontaneous predator.
- **Total dissociation from reality:** he did not see himself as a monster... **because he never considered himself human.**

Legacy

Yang Xinhai was not just China's most lethal serial killer. He **was living evidence of what happens when violence finds freedom in rural anonymity, extreme poverty and lack of psychological support.** An invisible man who razed entire villages to the ground. And who, when he died, left behind a void where once there were families, homes, and entire communities that no longer exist.

John Allen Muhammad and Lee Boyd Malvo - The Washington Snipers

Dates of birth: John Allen Muhammad: December 31, 1960 Lee Boyd Malvo: February 18, 1985

Victims: 10 confirmed murders, 3 seriously injured

Sentences: Muhammad: death penalty (executed in 2009). Malvo: life imprisonment without parole

IN OCTOBER 2002, **WASHINGTON D.C. was transformed into a city besieged by fear.** There was no way to predict who would be next, or when, or from where. People were dropping dead while getting gas, leaving the supermarket or just walking down the street. The enemy had no face. **Just an accurate shot from a distance... and the silence that followed.**

John Allen Muhammad and his protégé, Lee Boyd Malvo, were the architects of that panic. They met years earlier, in Jamaica. Malvo, a neglected and disoriented teenager, found in Muhammad a father figure. Muhammad, ex-military, traumatized and radicalized, found in Malvo a moldable instrument.

Their relationship was symbiotic, toxic and lethal.

Using an old blue sedan adapted to shoot from the trunk without being seen, they began their reign of terror in the Washington metropolitan area. **They were mobile, invisible and accurate.** Their weapon: a long-range .223 caliber rifle.

Their victims were completely random: men, women, children. The selection did not respond to a classic pattern. They just wanted to kill. Sow terror. Make an entire city hold its breath.

Muhammad's original plan was much more devious: as Malvo confessed, they planned to kill six whites for every black, child or elderly person killed, to provoke a race war. They also intended to extort millions of dollars from the city. **Death as propaganda. Death as manifesto.**

The end of the hunt

They were arrested on October 24, 2002, asleep inside their car at a Maryland rest area. Police had identified the vehicle after weeks of forensic analysis, calls from the public, and tracking down leads.

At the trial, Muhammad appeared cold, almost arrogant. Malvo, on the other hand, revealed the details of the indoctrination, the psychological abuse, and over the years, showed remorse and collaborated in campaigns against youth violence.

Psychological profile

- **Muhammad:** paranoid, narcissistic, messianic. He

considered that he had a divine mission to punish the system.

- **Malvo:** victim transformed into executioner. Brain-washing. Emotional submission and total dependence.

Legacy

The story of Muhammad and Malvo **transcended individual crimes**. It marked a before and after in the way domestic terror is conceived. They were snipers, yes. But they were also a living symbol of what happens when neglect, radical ideology and manipulation combine.

Muhammad was executed in 2009. Malvo remains imprisoned for life.

The Washington Snipers did not kill with bullets alone. **They killed with fear. With the idea that at any moment, in any corner, you could fall... for no reason.**

Robert Yates - The Spokane Killer

Date of birth: May 27, 1952

Location: Spokane, Washington, USA

Victims: 13 confirmed; confessed to 17; suspected over 20

Sentence: Life imprisonment without possibility of parole

ROBERT YATES WAS THE living portrait of American normalcy: decorated ex-military, Army helicopter pilot, father of five, postal service employee. But while he delivered letters by day, **at night he hunted women on the streets of Spokane and the surrounding area, killed them and left them as if they were disposable human garbage.**

His victims were mostly women in prostitution or drug addiction, which, in the 1990s, ensured relative police "invisibility". He would pick them up in his family car, take them to remote areas or even murder them inside the vehicle itself. **One shot to the head with his .25 revolver. Clean. Cold. Terminal.**

At first, there was no obvious pattern. There were no mutilated bodies. There was no ritual. Just missing women

and bodies discarded in vacant lots, next to highways, near landfills. It was so methodical that **forensics saw no signs of a struggle and no clear forensic clues.**

But his criminal history did not begin in the 1990s. Investigations revealed that his first murder occurred in 1975, long before his apparently stable life. **A couple was found dead with gunshot wounds to the skull. Both were young and did not fit his later profile. It was an experiment. A rehearsal.** One that left a trail of blood that would take decades to connect.

He was finally arrested in 2000, when DNA evidence found on one of the victims matched his own samples. Under interrogation, he **confessed with clinical calm. 13 murders. Then 17. Then... silence.** Some investigators believe he killed more than 20 women.

Psychological profile

- **Pathological double life:** he maintained a facade of an exemplary man, while living a parallel life of nocturnal predation.
- **Extreme dehumanization:** for Yates, the victims were waste, objects. He didn't even torture them: he just eliminated them.
- **Progressive compulsion:** started as improvisation; ended as a perfectly organized addiction.

The trial of the invisible man

The trial was as grim as his story. He showed no remorse. He offered no explanation. The prosecutor defined him as "an exterminator with the face of a neighbor".

In 2002, he was sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. A year later, he also received the death penalty in a separate case. However, that sentence was later commuted.

Yates proved that not all killers need elaborate rituals or horror scenarios. Sometimes, **a familiar car, a small gun and a life sufficiently anodyne not to arouse suspicion are enough.**

John George Haigh - The Acid Bath Murderer

Date of birth: July 24, 1909

Place: Stamford, Lincolnshire, England

Victims: 6 confirmed **Sentence:** Death penalty

Execution: August 10, 1949 (hanging)

JOHN GEORGE HAIGH WAS no impulsive killer. He was a meticulous con man, an amateur chemist with an inflated ego and an idea as macabre as it was elegant: **no body, no crime**. And sulfuric acid was his great ally.

From a young age, Haigh was drawn to fraud rather than honest work. He spent much of his youth in and out of jail for petty crimes. But it was during those confinements that he developed his true calling: **crime without a trace**.

Inspired by cases of mysterious disappearances and his own desire for greatness, he designed his lethal formula: he poisoned his victims, put them in a drum full of sulfuric acid, and in a matter of hours... **all that was left was a gelatinous paste that he poured down the drain**. Zero evidence. Zero witnesses. Just the victim's bank account, now conveniently emptied by Haigh.

He began his killing spree in 1944, with William McSwan, his former boss. He owed him money. So he killed him. Then he did the same with McSwan's parents, and then with other high net worth acquaintances. **Each victim was carefully selected for their wealth.** He duped them with supposed investments, drugged them, and finally dissolved them as if they were industrial waste.

But his perfect plan had a fissure: in 1949, the disappearance of his last victim, Olive Durand-Deacon, aroused suspicion. The police found human remains in his workshop: teeth, bones, gallbladder fragments. Enough to collapse his theory of the perfect crime.

During the trial, Haigh didn't just confess. **He claimed that he drank the blood of his victims.** Yes. He claimed to have developed a taste for human blood and that his real goal was to achieve immortality.

Psychological profile

- **Delusional narcissism:** He believed he was superior to the judicial and moral system. His belief in impunity was total.
- **Psychopathic rationality:** His crimes were not chaotic. They were logistical. Calculated down to the last detail.
- **Ritualized megalomania:** His claim to drink blood was probably a messianic fantasy... or a theatrical act to immortalize himself in the press.

The trial and the fall

He was sentenced to death on August 10, 1949. He was hanged the same day. During his imprisonment, he displayed an almost literary calm. He even asked if acid would dissolve his sins.

John George Haigh was not simply a murderer. He was **a criminal scientist**, a con man who saw in acid not only a weapon, but **a philosophical statement**: if matter can disappear, so can crime.

He did not count on the fact that the British judicial system still knew how to read between the fumes of acid and the lies of charm.

Ottis Toole and Henry Lee Lucas - The Couple from Hell

Dates of birth: Ottis Toole - March 5, 1947 Henry Lee Lucas - August 23, 1936

Victims: 11 murders were confirmed, although Lucas confessed to more than 300

Convictions: Toole: life imprisonment (died in prison in 1996). Lucas: life imprisonment (died in prison in 2001)

ON THE VAST AND dusty map of American killers, Ottis Toole and Henry Lee Lucas stand out not for precision... but for sheer **homicidal lawlessness**. They had no method. They had no pattern. They had no sense. Just a raw, dirty, erratic urge to kill. Together they formed a toxic duo that roamed the southern states leaving a trail of blood, lies and confusion in their wake.

Toole was a pyromaniac, an occasional cannibal with serious mental deficits. Raised in a brutal environment, he developed an early taste for fire, the pain of others and criminal vagrancy. **Lucas**, meanwhile, was a compulsive, one-eyed mythomaniac with a nightmarish childhood that included rape, extreme punishment and neglect. When they met in

the 1970s, something clicked. It wasn't love. It was **combustion**.

They embarked on a criminal tour with no apparent logic. They killed at random: men, women, children. Sometimes with knives, sometimes with firearms, sometimes for no clear reason. And most chilling: **they themselves did not seem to remember who, when or why.**

In the 1980s, after being arrested separately, they began a wave of confessions that unleashed chaos in police departments across the country. Henry Lee Lucas claimed responsibility for **more than 300 murders**. Authorities, needing to close unsolved cases, **began to believe him.**

Only later was it discovered that many confessions were false. Lucas memorized dossiers, watched news reports, and concocted convincing stories. He played with the authorities like a conjurer of horrors.

Combined psychological profile

- **Toole:** disorganized aggressiveness, cannibalistic necrophilia, no capacity for planning or remorse.
- **Lucas:** pathological liar, functional narcissist, attention-seeking and constant manipulation.
- **Together:** an uncontrollable force of scattered damage, with no structure or end beyond chaos.

The legacy of smoke and blood

Both died in prison, without it ever being established with certainty how many people they actually killed. The only thing that is clear is that **they did kill. And they did lie.** Enough to destabilize justice departments, deceive prosecutors and manipulate journalists.

Toole and Lucas are the perfect example of evil without design. They were not criminal geniuses. They were not strategists. They were simply **the worst part of human misery with access to a car and time on their hands.**

Ian Brady and Myra Hindley - The Moorland Killers

Dates of birth: Ian Brady - January 2, 1938 (Glasgow, Scotland). Myra Hindley - July 23, 1942 (Manchester, England)

Victims: 5 confirmed, all minors

Sentence: Life imprisonment for both

Deaths: Hindley - November 15, 2002 Brady - May 15, 2017

IN THE GALLERY OF serial killers, few stories are as chilling as that of **Ian Brady and Myra Hindley**. Not only for the brutality of their crimes, but for the lethal combination they represented: cold intelligence, blind devotion and **an absolute disregard for human life**.

They met in 1961 in a Manchester office. Hindley, young and withdrawn, became fascinated by Brady, a voracious reader of Nietzsche, Nazi enthusiast and advocate of an alternative morality in which murder was an art form. **Brady didn't just want to kill. He wanted to create a manifesto of evil. And Hindley was his first conversion.**

Both planned and executed a series of crimes that shook the United Kingdom. Their favorite prey: children and

teenagers. They lured them with banal excuses - help carrying objects, motorcycle rides - and took them to isolated areas such as **the moors of Saddleworth Moor**, a landscape that seemed designed to bury secrets.

There, the victims were raped, tortured and murdered. Some crimes were audio-documented, others photographed. **The murder of Lesley Ann Downey, only 10 years old, was recorded as she begged for her life.** The tape was used as evidence in the trial, and its mere existence remains one of the most sickening pieces of evidence in British criminal history.

Macabre chronology

- **July 1963:** Pauline Reade (16) is murdered.
- **November 1963:** John Kilbride (12)
- **June 1964:** Keith Bennett (12)-his body was never recovered.
- **December 1964:** Lesley Ann Downey (10)
- **October 1965:** Edward Evans (17), killed with an axe in front of Hindley's brother-in-law

It was this last crime that led to his arrest. The horrified brother-in-law denounced the murder and the police found irrefutable evidence in his home: recordings, photos and, on the moors, the buried bodies.

During the trial, Hindley's public image generated unprecedented fury. She was a woman. She was young. And yet a willing accomplice to hell. To the press, she became **the embodiment of female evil**.

Anatomy of the couple

- **Ian Brady**: cold intellectual, psychopath with a nihilistic philosophy. He saw crime as a superior, almost aesthetic act.
- **Myra Hindley**: pathological emotional dependence, capable of overriding any moral judgment for love or fascination.
- **Together**: a machinery of mutual manipulation where empathy was replaced by the cult of transgression.

Brady was diagnosed as a paranoid psychopath, and spent much of his life in the maximum security psychiatric hospital at Ashworth. He refused until the end to reveal the whereabouts of Keith Bennett's body, despite the family's pleas.

Hindley tried to redeem himself, cooperated with the police, asked for forgiveness. But the pardon never came. He died in prison after multiple failed attempts to obtain freedom.

Legacy

The Páramos crimes were not only shocking for their brutality. They also **marked a before and after in the public perception of shared evil**, of the female role in murder, and of how love - or its distortion - can become a murder weapon.

The landscape where they buried their victims is still today an object of search, of memory, of mourning. Because the moors do not only hide bodies. **They hide the story of a couple that turned love into ruin, and death into a shared language.**

Fred and Rose West - The Butchers of Cromwell Street

Dates of birth Fred West: 29 September 1941, Much Marcle, England Rose West: November 29, 1953, North Devon, England

Victims: 12 confirmed (including his daughter Heather), suspicions of many more

Convictions: Fred: committed suicide in prison in 1995, before trial. Rose: life imprisonment without possibility of release

FRED AND ROSE WEST were not a couple. They were **a collision of pathologies**, a machinery of sexual sadism that disguised hell with domestic routine. Their home at 25 Cromwell Street, Gloucester, **became a mass grave decorated with wallpaper and promises of cheap accommodation.**

Fred was already a predator before he met Rose. His history included incestuous relationships, sexual abuse and at least one previous murder. But it was upon meeting Rosemary Letts - herself a victim of childhood abuse - that his homicidal drive found echo, fuel and direction.

Together, they lured vulnerable young women - often homeless or orphans - with the promise of employment, help or shelter. But **what they received was rape, systematic torture and death.**

Victims were stripped naked, raped by both - sometimes while being filmed - and, finally, murdered. Many were dismembered, buried under the basement floor or in the backyard. Others simply disappeared.

One of the most heinous acts was the murder of his own daughter, Heather, who threatened to tell what was going on. Fred killed her, buried her under the patio...and years later, joked with his children that "if they didn't behave, they would end up like Heather."

The end of Cromwell Street

For years, the disappearances were ignored or poorly investigated. It was only in 1994, when suspicions arose about Heather's whereabouts, that police excavated the house. What they found **was not a house, but an ossuary**: human remains, charred bones, hair, teeth. In all, 12 victims were identified. Others remain the subject of speculation.

Fred was arrested in 1994. He committed suicide in his cell in 1995, hanging himself with sheets tied to the bars. Rose was convicted in 1995 of 10 murders. He showed no remorse. Not then, not later.

Psychological profile

- **Fred West:** extreme antisocial personality, history of intergenerational abuse, sadistic sexual compulsion.
- **Rose West:** psychopathic traits, active sadist, dominating, possibly even more cruel than Fred.
- **Together:** shared destruction. Fred executed, but Rose legitimized and directed. Home was their territory of absolute domination.

Cromwell Street, wiped off the map

After the trial, the house was demolished. Not a stone was left. Number 25 Cromwell Street disappeared **as if the country wanted to erase the crime from the landscape**. But not from memory. In the criminal annals of the United Kingdom, few names provoke as much revulsion as Fred and Rose West.

Fred and Rose were no ordinary serial killers. They were a **franchise from hell**, a couple who built their love story on the bones of innocents. And they turned home - that space they were meant to protect - into **the worst place in the world**.

Joseph James DeAngelo - The Golden State Killer

Date of birth: November 8, 1945

Location: Bath, New York, USA

Victims: 13 confirmed murders, more than 50 rapes and more than 100 robberies

Sentence: Life imprisonment without parole (2020)

JOSEPH DEANGELO WORE A uniform. He was a cop. And at night, while the rest of the neighborhood slept, he became one of the most calculating and persistent predators in the history of American crime.

His criminal career began in the 1970s, when he broke out as the "**East Sacramento Rapist**," a meticulous attacker who stalked women alone in their homes, tied them up, raped them and then disappeared. Over time, he escalated. He changed areas, changed patterns. He became the "**Night Killer**," and later, the "**Golden State Killer**": a man who **would break into homes, torture his victims for hours and, in many cases, murder them.**

He stalked with pinpoint accuracy. Sometimes he would study his victims for weeks. He would hide in their backyards,

steal their personal belongings, call them on the phone to warn them what he would do. Then he would come in at night, tie up the husbands, rape the wives in another room and threaten to kill if any of them moved. **His method was as humiliating as it was sadistic. Her coldness, absolute.**

For more than a decade, California police departments couldn't connect him. He changed zones, tactics, even nicknames. And then, he disappeared.

A ghost for 40 years

For decades, the case remained deadlocked. The crimes, unsolved. The victims, without justice. But then, **the DNA spoke.**

In 2018, using public genetic databases and reverse genealogy, researchers traced his genetic profile back to him: **an elderly retired, former police officer**, living in Sacramento as if nothing was wrong. When he was arrested, he was frail. But the records, the memories, the DNA matches left no room for doubt.

In 2020, he pleaded guilty to 13 murders and numerous sex crimes to avoid trial and the death penalty. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Psychological profile

- **Absolute control:** DeAngelo didn't just rape or kill. He destroyed the security of the home, broke the routine with horror.

- **Social mimicry:** like BTK, like Ridgeway... he was invisible. His facade was impeccable.
- **Pathological narcissism:** he enjoyed the power, the fear, the following. He wanted to be remembered, even as a myth.

The killer who lasted for generations

DeAngelo's case is an example of how crime can age without disappearing. For decades, he was **a shadow with multiple names**. But in the end, he fell. And he fell thanks to a technique that didn't even exist when he started killing: genetic genealogy.

The Golden State Killer was not simply a rapist, a murderer or a thief. He was **an epidemic of fear** that lasted more than a decade and silenced entire neighborhoods. And in the end, time - and DNA - did what justice could not for years: they caught him.

Charles Starkweather and Caril Ann Fugate - The Bloody Getaway

Dates of birth Charles Starkweather: November 24, 1938
Caril Ann Fugate: July 30, 1943

Victims: 11 confirmed murders in Nebraska and Wyoming

Convictions: Starkweather: executed in the electric chair (June 25, 1959). Fugate: life imprisonment (released after 17 years in 1976)

CHARLES STARKWEATHER WAS A young man with a vacant stare and a dull rage. Raised in Nebraska, his childhood was an emotional battleground: poverty, an alcoholic father, and a deformed body that made him a target of ridicule. As a teenager, he discovered that the world despised him... and he returned the favor. His idol: James Dean. His cause: none.

Caril Ann Fugate was 13 when she met him. A relationship that began as teenage love, but quickly turned into something much darker. **A suicidal alliance with the smell of gasoline, gunpowder and resentment.**

On November 30, 1957, Charles killed Caril's stepfather, her mother and two-year-old stepsister. Caril claimed not

to know, others saw her living in the house days later as if nothing had happened. The truth, like most everything else in this story, remains buried with the victims.

In January 1958, Starkweather and Fugate began one of the **bloodiest criminal escapes in American history**. In just two months, they murdered eleven people: strangers, friends, teenagers, even an elderly couple who gave them refuge.

There was no plan. There was no pattern. Just a spiral of nihilistic violence. Starkweather killed with shotgun, knife or pure impulse. Caril, according to him, was an eager accomplice. According to her, a hostage.

Psychology of an adolescent apocalypse

- **Starkweather:** antisocial, resentful, with no goals beyond destruction. His philosophy was clear: if you can't have the world, break it.
- **Fugate:** her role is still a matter of debate. Accomplice? Emotional captive? A girl trapped in a romantic hell? No one has given a definitive answer.
- **Together:** a road tragedy. A Bonnie and Clyde with no cause, no ideal. Only hate and gasoline.

The end of the road

The massacre ended in Wyoming, when they tried to steal another car. The police chased them. Starkweather cowardly

surrendered. Caril accused him of everything. He accused her. Both were arrested on January 29, 1958.

Starkweather was tried, sentenced to death and executed in June 1959. He died without a word of repentance. Fugate, a minor, was sentenced to life imprisonment, but was released after 17 years. To this day she insists she was just another victim.

Legacy

The story of Starkweather and Fugate **marked the end of American innocence in the 1950s**. It was the nightmare made flesh: two directionless teenagers, turned into symbols of heartbreak, hatred and the ever-present possibility of chaos.

They inspired books, songs, movies (such as *Natural Born Killers* and *Badlands*), and endless debates about the moral malleability of young people.

Charles Starkweather did not kill for revenge. He killed because he could. And Caril Ann Fugate was, perhaps, the last girl of the decade who believed that love could do anything...**even kill**.

Donald Harvey - The Angel of Death

Date of birth: April 15, 1952

Location: Butler County, Ohio, U.S.A. **Victims:** 37 confessed murders, more than 80 are suspected

Conviction: Life imprisonment **Death:** March 30, 2017 (murdered in prison)

DONALD HARVEY DID NOT shoot guns. He didn't use knives. He didn't need to hide bodies. He killed in silence, between injections, heart monitors and hospital gowns. And worst of all, he **was paid to do it.**

From his position as a nursing assistant in hospitals in Kentucky and Ohio during the 1970s and 1980s, Harvey conducted a stealthy, surgical and meticulously camouflaged campaign of extermination under the cloak of medicine. His victims were helpless patients. Terminals, yes...but also others who simply **annoyed him.**

He used a variety of methods:

- Cyanide.
- Arsenic.
- Lethal injections.

- Plastic bags on the head.
- Even food contaminated with poison.

Some died from morphine overdose. Others, by manipulation of their respiratory systems. And almost all their crimes were registered as "natural death".

For years, no one suspected. Because no one wanted to look. Because **the hospital was supposedly a safe place.**

The homicidal ego

Harvey didn't kill out of compassion, although he was justified in doing so. He did it for control. Out of revenge. Out of boredom. And when he was found out, he showed no remorse. He showed pride.

undefined

At trial he confessed to 37 murders. Police believe **the real figure could be more than 80.** It will never be known for sure. Many of his crimes were buried with the bodies and statistics.

Psychological profile

- **Functional sociopathy:** friendly with colleagues, respected by his superiors, but internally dominated by an absolute disregard for the lives of others.
- **False compassion:** he called himself an "angel", but his victims never asked to die.

- **Necrophilia of power:** his pleasure was to observe how life was extinguished... with him as the only witness.

Silent end

He was arrested in 1987 following an investigation prompted by a suspicious number of deaths at a hospital. Sentenced to multiple life sentences, he spent the rest of his days in prison. There he also met his end: he was beaten **to death by another inmate in 2017**. As if death, in the end, came to settle the score.

Donald Harvey was the perfect serial killer: invisible, silent, and with unlimited access to vulnerable victims. He didn't lurk in alleys. He didn't hide corpses in the trunk. **He killed with a uniform, a smile, and a hospital tray.**

Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka - The Ken and Barbie of Crime

Dates of birth Paul Bernardo: August 27, 1964 Karla Homolka: May 4, 1970

Victims: 3 confirmed murders, multiple rapes

Convictions: Bernardo: life imprisonment without possibility of parole. Homolka: 12 years in prison after plea deal (released in 2005)

Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka were an infamous pair in Canadian true crime history. Together, they carried out a series of gruesome acts that left a trail of devastation in their wake.

Paul Bernardo was handsome, charming and absolutely ruthless. A wolf with an advert smile. As a teenager, he stalked and raped women in Scarborough, Ontario, where he was known as "The Scarborough Rapist," an identity he hid for years under his impeccable image.

Karla Homolka, on the other hand, was the ideal fiancée. Young, blonde, charismatic. And absolutely willing to do any-

thing for her fiancé. Even to give up her own younger sister as a sacrifice.

When they met in 1987, it was an instant and lethal attraction. He, a narcissistic manipulator. She, receptive and devoted. What was born as romance quickly became an experiment in shared perversion.

In 1990, to please Bernardo, Karla gave her 15-year-old sister Tammy as a "sexual gift". They drugged her, raped her between them, and she died choking on her own vomit. The whole thing was videotaped. The official version: a tragic domestic accident.

But that was only the beginning.

Filmed deaths

- **Leslie Mahaffy**, 14 years old, kidnapped, chained, raped, murdered and dismembered.
- **Kristen French**, 15, held captive for days, forced to record sex tapes before being murdered.
- Both victims appeared on videotapes found by the police, where Homolka's voice is as active as Bernardo's.

For years, they continued to appear normal. They lived in a suburban house. They received visitors. They filmed their routine. Meanwhile, **they hid bodies in cement and memories on VHS.**

The fatal error

Everything fell apart when Karla, after suffering domestic violence from Bernardo, decided to cooperate with the police. She confessed her involvement and denounced Bernardo. In exchange for testifying against him, she received a reduced sentence: **12 years in prison for involuntary manslaughter.**

What came next was the scandal: by the time the prosecution discovered the videos of the rapes – and Karla's active involvement – it was too late. The deal was done. Bernardo was sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of release. Homolka, on the other hand, was released in 2005. Today she lives under a different identity, married with children.

Psychological profile

- **Paul Bernardo:** sadistic narcissist, compulsive sexual predator, extremely manipulative and charming.
- **Karla Homolka:** dependent personality with psychopathic traits. Not only an accomplice, but an active participant.
- **Together:** an unrestrained fusion of desire, violence and domination, reinforced by toxic love and mutual idolatry.

The legacy of perversion

Bernardo and Homolka destroyed not only lives, but the very notion of what an "ideal couple" is. They were not Bonnie and Clyde. They were not rebels in love. **They were a catalog Ken and Barbie...with a basement, duct tape and a camera.**

Richard Angelo - The Angel of Death

Date of birth: June 9, 1962

Location: New York, USA

Victims: At least 25 confirmed murders

Sentence: Life imprisonment without possibility of parole

Nickname: "The Angel of Death".

RICHARD ANGELO DID NOT go out hunting at night, nor did he stalk from the darkness. No. **He killed under fluorescent lights, surrounded by syringes, stethoscopes and clinical records.**

During the 1980s, he worked as a nurse at a hospital on Long Island, New York. He was friendly. Friendly. The kind of professional you could trust. And that's precisely why **his victims never imagined that the poison came not from his illness... but from the hand that supposedly cured them.**

His method was as cold as it was clinical: he injected epinephrine or other compounds that induced severe allergic reactions or cardiac arrest. Then, he would appear as a hero trying to "save" them. But he did not do it out of mercy. He did it out of egomania. **He created emergencies to feel like**

the savior. And if he failed - as he almost always did - they died.

Patterns and purpose

For years, the deaths were considered accidents. After all, they were sick patients. Vulnerable people. But in 1985, the statistics spoke. The staff noticed a pattern: **deaths were skyrocketing during Angelo's shifts.**

What began as suspicion ended in horror when the truth was discovered: Richard Angelo had murdered at least 25 patients. Investigations indicated that the number could be much higher.

Psychological profile

- **Narcissism disguised as a vocation:** he did not kill for compassion, but for prominence. He wanted to be seen as a hero... although to do so he had to create victims.
- **Dehumanization of the patient:** his victims were not people, but tools for his personal validation.
- **Absolute control:** every death was a surgical act of power, of life and death at his whim.

Trial and conviction

He was arrested on March 12, 1985 at his place of work. During the trial, multiple irrefutable evidence came to light:

- Testimonials from medical staff
- Toxicological analysis
- Angelo's own statements

He was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. His case became one of the most infamous in the spectrum of medical crimes.

Richard Angelo proved that evil does not always carry a knife. Sometimes, he carries a stethoscope. And instead of screaming, **his victims simply stopped breathing... under the care of the "hero" who killed them.**

Danny Rolling - The Gainesville Ripper

Full name: Daniel Harold Rolling

Date of birth: May 26, 1954

Location: Shreveport, Louisiana, USA

Victims: 5 students murdered in Gainesville (Florida), in addition to 3 other previous homicides

Sentence: Death penalty

Executed: October 25, 2006 (lethal injection)

IN AUGUST 1990, **THE college town of Gainesville, Florida, experienced a nightmare without warning.** In just three days, five students were brutally murdered in their apartments. The perpetrator: a wandering drifter with a violent past, childhood traumas... and a compulsion to kill that went beyond the sexual or criminal. **Danny Rolling didn't just kill. He broke down the humanity of his victims with rituals worthy of the abyss.**

Raised in a home dominated by violence and abuse - with a military father who constantly beat and humiliated him - Danny grew up emotionally deformed, unable to empathize or regulate his impulsivity. From a young age he stole, loitered, and eventually began to fantasize about murder.

His most infamous attack began on August 24, 1990. Over three nights, he broke into student apartments at the University of Florida. His pattern was creepy:

- He entered armed with a knife.
- He was quick to murder men if they were present.
- He raped women, often after death.
- He positioned the bodies in theatrical scenes, with torsos exposed and limbs positioned in a deliberately grotesque manner.
- In one case, he **decapitated his victim and placed the head on a shelf so that the first witness to enter would find it.**

Gainesville, a laid-back college town, was paralyzed. Classes were suspended. Students abandoned the dorms. No one slept without knives under their pillows. **A single man had sown mass panic...without leaving a single useful clue.**

Capture and confession

Rolling was arrested on September 7, 1990, in Ocala, following an attempted home burglary. He was completely disconnected from the Gainesville case... until police, upon investigating his belongings, found recordings, writings and weapons directly linking him.

During his trial, he coldly confessed. And he went further: he **admitted to having also killed an entire family in**

Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1989, a year before his massacre in Florida.

He was sentenced to death in 1994. He spent more than a decade on death row, appealing unsuccessfully.

Finally, on October 25, 2006, he was executed by lethal injection. In his last words, he **sang a religious hymn**. No apology. No explanation. Only the closing of a throat that could no longer sing horrors.

Psychological profile

- **Organized psychopathy:** Rolling was erratic in his life, but methodical in crime. He studied his victims, acted with surgical precision.
- **Ritualized necrophilia:** the postmortem positioning of the bodies revealed a profound scenographic sadism.
- **Total depersonalization:** for him, the victims were props. Part of a private show where he was the only director.

Legacy of terror

Danny Rolling's crimes inspired the movie *Scream* (1996), whose premise is based on college student murders committed by a masked killer. But Rolling didn't need masks. **His**

face was that of an ordinary man. His soul, a bottomless wasteland.

Alexander Spesivtsev - The Chess Freak

Date of birth: March 1, 1970

Place: Novokuznetsk, Siberia, Russia

Victims: More than 20 confirmed

Sentence: Life imprisonment in psychiatric hospital

Nickname: "The Chess Maniac".

ALEXANDER SPESIVTSEV DID NOT become a murderer. **He was manufacturing himself** as such, on a mental chessboard where he was both player and piece. He was a Russian chess prodigy in his childhood, brilliant, methodical and aggressive at the board... and with a mind that slowly ceased to distinguish between strategy and psychopathy.

While he had been winning local tournaments since the age of 10, at home he lived a hell disguised as routine. His mother, Lyudmila, was a possessive and authoritarian woman, with an unhealthy fixation on her son. **An incestuous and symbiotic relationship** that marked the beginning of his mental drift.

As he grew older, Spesivtsev isolated himself from the world. He spent entire days locked away, obsessed with

chess and with the idea of punishing the world for not understanding his "genius". Social marginalization, school humiliations and his absorbing relationship with his mother created a perfect cocktail of resentment.

The carnage begins

In the 1990s, as Russia descended into economic and social chaos, Alexander and his mother **began a series of ritualistic murders**. They lured street children - orphans, beggars, lost teenagers - under the pretext of food or shelter. Once inside the apartment, they tortured them, killed them... and, in many cases, **cooked them**.

Yes. Literally.

The mother collaborated in the cleaning, in the disposition of the bodies, and even in the preparation of the "leftovers". The bones were flushed down the toilet. The meat was sometimes used as food in the house. A functional cannibalism, not ceremonial. **They ate not out of necessity. They ate out of contempt.**

The murder that gave him away

In 1996, after human remains were found floating down the sewage system, police traced the source to Spesivtsev's apartment. What they found was a Dantesque scene: stained walls, surgical instruments, photographs of the victims and diaries detailing each murder.

Alexander was arrested. So was his mother. During the trial, **he showed not a single sign of guilt. Only annoyance. As if he had been interrupted in the middle of a game.**

Declared mentally insane, he was sentenced to life imprisonment in a high-security psychiatric hospital in Siberia, where he still remains.

Psychological profile

- **Paranoid schizophrenia:** formally diagnosed after his arrest, with delusions of persecution and extreme misanthropy.
- **Maternal fixation:** his mother was not a casual accomplice; she was his only ally, his privileged spectator, his tacit ideologue.
- **Progressive depersonalization:** the victims were not individuals. They were pieces in a game where defeat was paid with death.

The chess player who played with bodies

Spesivtsev did not kill on impulse. He killed out of logic. For punishment. He turned his apartment into a chessboard, and he decided who was a pawn and who was discarded. A brilliant player, devoured by his ego and dragged into the abyss by the only person who should have set limits for him: his mother.

David Parker Ray - The Toy Box Killer

Date of birth: November 6, 1939

Location: Belen, New Mexico, USA

Victims: More than 60 suspected; no formal murder convictions

Sentence: 224 years imprisonment (died before serving time)

DAVID PARKER RAY WAS not a conventional killer. He didn't lurk in dark alleys or strike at random. **He built his own private hell:** a mobile torture chamber disguised as a trailer, which he called "The Toy Box."

From an early age, Ray showed inclinations toward sexual violence and sadism. While growing up in a dysfunctional home, his fascination with domination intensified. In the late 1980s and 1990s, on his property in **Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, he** brought those fantasies to real life.

Inside his "Toy Box" he installed an arsenal of torture devices:

- Metal cages.
- Suspension harnesses.

- Medical devices modified to inflict pain.
- Shackles, whips, electrodes.

He videotaped and audio-recorded the entire process. Before each session, he would have the victims listen to a recording where he explained, with surgical calm, the horrors they were about to suffer.

It did not kill immediately. It prolonged the suffering. The victims – mainly young women – were kidnapped, drugged, tortured for days or weeks, and then released, killed or simply left in a state of total collapse, unable to remember what happened.

The end of the Toy Box

His reign of horror ended in March 1999, when one of his victims managed to escape. Half-naked and chained, she ran for help. The police, upon searching his property, were horrified: videos, instruments of torture, biological remains. The scope of his crimes was so vast that many bodies were never found.

Ray was arrested and faced multiple charges of kidnapping and torture. Interestingly, he **was never formally convicted of murder**, although he is believed to have killed more than 60 people.

He died of a heart attack in 2002, just three years after his arrest, taking to his grave secrets that the police still regret not having unearthed.

Psychological profile

- **Instrumental sadism:** pleasure derived from the pain of others, prolonged and ritualized.
- **Absolute control:** everything in the "Toy Box" was designed to eliminate human will, turning the victims into mere objects.
- **Organized psychopathy:** meticulous in planning, cold in execution, lacking remorse.

The invisible monster

David Parker Ray did not seek the public notoriety of other serial killers. **He sought absolute control in his own private little kingdom.** And he achieved it, for years, with terrifying efficiency.

His crimes remain a grisly study of evil not only as an impulse, but as an architectural project: **an industry of suffering erected piece by piece.**

John Edward Robinson - The Internet Serial Killer

Date of birth: December 27, 1943

Location: Cicero, Illinois, USA

Victims: At least 8 confirmed

Conviction: Death penalty and multiple life sentences

WHEN DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY WAS just beginning to weave its web over the world, **John Edward Robinson** had already discovered the power of anonymity. Where others saw opportunity for communication, he saw **a new hunting ground**.

Raised in an apparently respectable family, from a young age he proved to be a born manipulator. He stole, lied, swindled. In the 1980s and 1990s he honed his ability to build facades of success: entrepreneur, philanthropist, mentor. But behind the social veneer, Robinson operated with the soul of a methodical predator.

The Internet was his blessing and his curse. Using pseudonyms, dating forums and BDSM rooms, he lured vulnerable women: those looking for work, affection, submission or simply to be seen. He promised them employment contracts,

sexual adventures, eternal love. **What they received was captivity, abuse and death.**

Modus Operandi

- He contacted his victims online, exploiting their insecurities and desires.
- Once he had gained their trust, he summoned them personally and subjected them to extreme physical, psychological and sexual abuse.
- Some were forced to sign documents of submission or wills in their favor.
- When he was finished with them, he murdered them and hid their bodies in industrial barrels or buried them in remote properties he controlled.

For years, the corpses of his victims slowly decomposed in warehouses and vacant lots, while he continued to live a life of apparent respectability.

The fall of the hunter

The disappearance of **Suzette Trouten**, one of his victims, put an end to his macabre game. Suzette's tireless mother hired a private detective. The investigation revealed Robinson's shady movements and, finally, his capture in 2000.

During the trial, horrifying details emerged: false contracts, manipulated letters, virtual witnesses seduced and

abandoned. His responsibility for at least eight murders was confirmed, although authorities suspect many more.

He was sentenced to death in Kansas and received multiple life sentences in Missouri. He died in prison on December 28, 2021, taking with him the secrets of all the lives he destroyed.

Psychological profile

- **Criminal narcissism:** his need for total domination was not only sexual; it was existential.
- **Chameleon-like ability:** Robinson knew how to disguise himself as whatever each victim needed to see.
- **Operational coldness:** for him, human beings were exploitable, disposable and forgettable resources.

The first serial killer of the digital age

John Edward Robinson was a pioneer of a new kind of monster: **the invisible connection killer**. He didn't lurk in dark parks. He stalked in forums. He didn't stalk by screaming. He seduced by typing.

In his wake he left not only death, but **an eternal warning about vulnerability in the virtual world**.

Israel Keyes - The Faceless Predator

Date of birth: January 7, 1978

Location: Cove, Utah, USA

Victims: 8 to 11 suspected, possibly more

Conviction: Never convicted - committed suicide in prison in 2012

ISRAEL KEYES WAS A serial killer who defied all categories, all patterns, all profiles. He was **the perfect monster of the 21st century**: a man with no brand, no fixed modus operandi, no emotional attachment to his victims. Just a meticulous will to hunt and destroy.

From an early age, Keyes showed disturbing signs: a fascination with suffering, cruelty to animals, and a complete disdain for any kind of empathy. His childhood was spent in extremist religious communities, isolated, outside any system that might have detected his progressive dehumanization.

Growing up, Keyes created an impeccable facade: businessman, family man, respectable citizen. Behind it, **he planned murders like others plan vacations.**

A hunter without a master

What made Israel Keyes so dangerously unique was his method:

- He did not select his victims by type, age or gender.
- He traveled thousands of miles to avoid connections.
- He buried "assassination kits" - weapons, tools, kidnapping materials - in remote locations for use years later.
- He never killed impulsively: **each attack was the final act of a play planned with sickly anticipation.**

He killed couples, kidnapped single women, attacked at random. He left no letters. He left no ritual signatures. Only death and silence.

Capturing a ghost

Keyes was arrested in 2012 in Texas after kidnapping and murdering Samantha Koenig, a young Alaskan waitress. Although he tried to keep his identity secret, forensic investigation and psychological pressure led him to confess to multiple unsolved murders.

During interrogations, he described his crimes with chilling serenity. He seemed more upset at being caught than remorseful. **He never showed remorse. Only boredom.**

Before he could be tried for the full extent of his crimes, he **committed suicide in his cell in December 2012**, slitting his wrists and strangling himself with bed sheets.

Psychological profile

- **Calculated psychopathy:** zero impulsivity in the criminal act, but maximum sadism in its execution.
- **Social anomie:** absolute disregard for any moral or legal norm.
- **Extreme depersonalization:** for Keyes, the victims were part of a logistical game, not human beings.

The faceless killer

Israel Keyes left behind a trail of scattered victims, unrecovered bodies, secrets he never revealed. He was, and remains, **a black hole in modern criminology:** a killer who perfected the art of disappearing into everyday life.

Randy Kraft - The Scorecard Killer

Date of birth: March 19, 1945

Location: Long Beach, California, USA

Victims: 16 convicted, up to 67 suspected

Sentence: Death penalty (still awaiting execution)

Nickname: "The Scorecard Killer".

RANDY KRAFT WAS METICULOUS. Polite. Intelligent. And behind that veneer, a methodical mind dedicated to **hunting, torturing, and recording with sick precision** his every act.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Kraft stalked the high-ways of California, primarily abducting young men - often soldiers or students - with whom he shared drinks, trust and, ultimately, death.

His routine was ruthlessly organized:

- He drugged the victims with tranquilizers.
- He tied them up, tortured and raped them, often for hours.
- He applied electric shocks, strangulation, genital mutilation and other even crueler methods.

- Finally, he killed and dumped the bodies in remote places or on the side of the road.

But his most sinister detail was his "scorecard": a coded list with nicknames, numbers and codes that seemed to keep a tally of each victim. **A macabre, almost sporting catalog of the pain he had inflicted.**

Capture on the road

He was stopped by chance in 1983, during a routine highway checkpoint. He was carrying an unconscious passenger in his car. In the trunk: ropes, photographs, and a handwritten list that would later become known as the "scorecard".

During the trial, the evidence was overwhelming. Not only from the objects found, but from the behavioral patterns, forensic testimony and physical remains associated with his crimes. Kraft, however, **maintained a chilling calm**. As if the entire room was misreading the perfection of his work.

He was sentenced to death in 1989 for the murder of 16 men, although investigators believe his actual number of victims could be as high as 67 or more. He remains on death row in San Quentin, awaiting an execution that never seems to come.

Psychological profile

- **Methodical narcissism:** Kraft didn't just kill, he documented. He recorded. He categorized.

- **Extreme sexual sadism:** his tortures were not improvised, they were part of a private ritual of total control.
- **Functional duality:** he maintained a stable job, a social life and even relationships... while collecting victims with obsessive efficiency.

The body counter

Randy Kraft was a serial killer without masks or disguises. His facade was that of an ordinary, polite and helpful guy. But underneath, **an administrator of horror**, an accountant of pain. And his handwritten list is a document that **no one has ever fully deciphered**.

Kenneth McDuff - The Beast of Broomstick

Date of birth: March 21, 1946

Location: Rosebud, Texas, USA

Victims: Minimum 9, suspected more than 14

Sentence: Death penalty (executed in 1998)

Nickname: "The Broomstick Killer".

KENNETH MCDUFF WAS A living anomaly in the American judicial system: **a murderer sentenced to death... who was released and went on to kill again.** A bureaucratic error that cost lives, and left an indelible scar on the criminal memory of Texas.

His homicidal career began in 1966, when, together with an accomplice, he kidnapped a young teenage couple. The boy was shot to death. The girl was **raped and strangled with a broomstick** - hence his nickname. The crime was brutal. Unnecessary. Almost ceremonial.

McDuff was sentenced to death that same year. But in 1972, when the U.S. Supreme Court temporarily suspended capital punishment, his sentence was commuted to life in prison. And later - in an act of near-suicidal judicial malpractice - he **was released in 1989.**

Less than two years later, **women began to disappear**. Prostitutes, waitresses, vulnerable young women. McDuff was killing again, in a pattern even more chaotic and violent than before. Some were strangled. Others were asphyxiated. Their bodies turned up days later. Sometimes weeks. Other s... never.

The return of the predator

McDuff didn't just kill. He gamed the system. He changed his name, used different cities, worked in several states. When police recaptured him in 1992, **the entire state demanded his immediate execution**.

During his trial he showed a mixture of indifference and arrogance. His look did not ask for forgiveness. His personal history - a childhood without obvious trauma, but with traces of early manipulation - offered no mitigating factors.

He was again sentenced to death. This time, there was no mercy. **He died by lethal injection on November 17, 1998**. During his execution, he did not say a word.

Psychological profile

- **Primary sociopathy:** no remorse, no guilt, no restraint.
- **Destructive impulsivity:** unable to control his desires once released.
- **Institutional manipulation:** he knew how to exploit

the cracks in the penal system to return to doing what he enjoyed most: killing.

A warning written in blood

Kenneth McDuff is remembered not only for his crimes, but because **his freedom cost new lives**. He was the killer they let out. The one who came back with more rage. More desire. More victims. His story forced a review of hundreds of early release cases in Texas.

It was living proof that evil, when the door is opened, does not enter silently. It bursts the lock... and drags bodies.

Robert Pickton - The Pig Ranch Killer

Date of birth: October 24, 1949

Location: Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada

Victims: Convicted of 6 murders, suspected of at least 26

Sentence: Life imprisonment without possibility of parole

ROBERT PICKTON SEEMED, AT first glance, to be just another farmer. An awkward, reserved man, raised among manure and pigs. But on the fringes of Vancouver, on his stinking ranch, **one of the most grotesque horrors in Canadian criminal history was brewing.**

For more than two decades, Pickton used his property - a decrepit farmhouse full of hidden nooks and crannies - as the scene of kidnapping, abuse, murder and, in many cases, destruction of bodies.

Their victim profile was consistent: vulnerable women, mostly sex workers or drug addicts, from Vancouver's forgotten Downtown Eastside. They disappeared quietly. No urgent investigations. No press.

Pickton lured them by offering them drugs, shelter or easy work. Once inside, he subjected them to extreme violence. He would kill them and, investigations revealed, **feed their body parts to his pigs**. At other times, he would mix the human remains with pork for local distribution, a fact that would horrify the entire region when it came to light.

The discovery of hell

The truth emerged in 2002, almost by accident, during a raid on drug charges. Police found scattered human remains, bloody tools, belongings of missing women. What at first seemed isolated soon revealed itself to be a **silent death factory**.

The remains of at least 26 women were identified. Pickton, however, was only tried for six murders - the prosecution preferred to concentrate the case to ensure conviction.

He was convicted in 2007 and sentenced to life imprisonment. To this day, he has **never shown true remorse**. Rather, he hinted that he had killed many more than would ever be discovered.

Psychological profile

- **Primary psychopathy:** unable to empathize, he saw his victims as animals in his horror farm.
- **Emotional marginality:** his social isolation since childhood built a monster that did not distinguish between human and animal.

- **Absolute dehumanization:** the act of feeding human remains to the pigs sums up the extreme objectification he applied to his victims.

The pig that devoured the city

Robert Pickton was not an impulse killer. He was **an industrial predator**: his farm was his butcher shop; his victims, his commodity forgotten by the system.

The tragedy of his crimes was not only his brutality, but also the social indifference that allowed, for years, **a monster to thrive among the pigs and the shadows.**

Marcel Petiot - The Doctor of Horror

Date of birth: January 17, 1897

Place: Auxerre, France **Victims:** At least 26 confirmed, up to 200 are suspected

Sentence: Death penalty

Execution: Guillotined on May 25, 1946

MARCEL PETIOT HAD EVERYTHING to be a respected Parisian physician. A promising career, a well-placed practice and a solid professional reputation. But he also had a warped mind, **a fascination with death... and an oven in his basement.**

During the Nazi occupation in World War II, Petiot saw fear as an opportunity. He presented himself as a member of the resistance, offering supposed "safe escapes" to those fleeing the German regime: Jews, deserters, persecuted people. He promised them a new life in South America. He asked them for money, passports, jewelry. And then he killed them.

The clinic as an extermination chamber

At his home on Rue Le Sueur, Petiot converted the practice into a slaughterhouse:

- Lethal injections under the guise of vaccines.

- Closed chambers where the bodies were incinerated.
- A clandestine operation where **the doctor was the executioner, thief and gravedigger.**

When it was finally discovered in 1944, after complaints from neighbors about the unbearable stench, the police found a domestic hell: decomposing human remains, bones, valuables of its victims. **A private morgue disguised as a doctor's office.**

Trial and fall

During his trial, Petiot tried to manipulate the story. He claimed to have killed only Nazi enemies. He wanted to present himself as a hero of the resistance. But the evidence was overwhelming. And the psychological profile was devastating.

He was convicted of 26 murders, although investigators believe the actual number may have been as high as 200. He **was guillotined on May 25, 1946. Without repentance. Without asking for forgiveness.**

Psychological profile

- **Psychopathy with delusions of grandeur:** Petiot saw himself as judge and executioner.
- **Justified moral deviation:** it transformed murder into a "patriotic act".

- **Criminal hyperfunctionality:** he maintained an impeccable professional facade while running his clandestine operation.

A monster in a white coat

Marcel Petiot did not kill out of passion. **He killed for greed. For power. For the certainty that no one would suspect the kind doctor who promised salvation.**

And under that disguise... he built his own neighborhood Auschwitz.

Wolfgang Schmidt - The Beast of Beelitz

Date of birth: September 16, 1967

Place: Berlin, Germany

Victims: Multiple, exact number uncertain

Sentence: Life imprisonment

WOLFGANG SCHMIDT WAS NOT a monster at first glance. Small, gangly, harmless in appearance. But beneath that nondescript mask lay **a clinical and brutal predator.**

From his childhood he showed signs of disturbance: unprovoked violence, emotional isolation, and a latent disregard for human life. His adolescence was a silent escalation of petty crimes that foreshadowed something far worse.

In 1989, Schmidt was admitted to the Beelitz-Heilstätten hospital, a sinister hospital complex on the outskirts of Berlin, known for both its size and its decay. There, among empty corridors and abandoned rooms, **Schmidt found the perfect preserve for his sadism.**

He used his weak appearance as a decoy. He approached patients and visitors, especially vulnerable women and children, **with the ease of one who does not seem to inspire**

fear. Once alone, he unleashed his brutality: choking, savage beatings, strangulation. Acts of such disproportionate violence that they suggested more an outburst of primal rage than premeditated murder.

Terror grows and the siege closes

Schmidt's crimes shook the Beelitz community. Fear was pervasive. **The hospital, once a place of healing, was transformed into a minefield of paranoia.**

German police, pressured by public opinion, launched a large-scale operation. Schmidt was finally captured in 1991, thanks to the stubbornness of investigators and the connection of attack patterns.

During his trial, it was revealed not only the extent of his sadism, but also his total lack of remorse. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for multiple murders and assaults.

Psychological profile

- **Antisocial personality disorder:** no empathy, no guilt, and a spontaneous inclination toward lethal violence.
- **Total break with empathy:** the victims were not people to Schmidt, but targets of his accumulated rage and frustrations.
- **Opportunistic predator profile:** he acted where he could, when he could, without the need for elaborate

planning.

The Beast in the White Coat

Wolfgang Schmidt turned a sanatorium into his personal hunting ground. He was not a strategist. He was not a movie monster. **He was simply the brutal embodiment of the most primal violence... dressed up in the guise of harmlessness.**

Her story is a brutal reminder that sometimes places of care can also be the scenes of the rawest horror.

Serhiy Tkach - Butcher of Dnipropetrovsk

Date of birth: February 23, 1952

Place: Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine

Victims: More than 50 confirmed murders

Sentence: Life imprisonment

SERHIY TKACH LOOKED, ON the surface, like one of the thousands of men who survived the Soviet machine. But inside him **burned a perverse obsession with pain, submission and death.**

Raised in an apparently quiet family, Tkach developed an unhealthy fascination for cruelty as a child. As an adult, his public life was unremarkable: railway worker, telecommunications technician, even former police officer. No one imagined that among the rusty rails of Ukraine, **he was sowing corpses with the regularity of a homicidal gardener.**

For a quarter of a century - from the 1970s until well into the new millennium - Tkach performed his macabre work:

- Kidnapped girls and young women in rural or marginalized areas.

- He raped, tortured and, finally, murdered them.
- Occasionally, he used techniques to mislead forensic experts, such as faking accidental asphyxiation or doctoring crime scenes.

He was a predator with forensic knowledge, which allowed him to elude capture far longer than the usual police incompetence would warrant.

The mistake that sealed his fate

His reign of terror ended in 2005, when one of his victims managed to escape and denounce him. Under mounting public pressure, Ukrainian police finally pieced together the loose cases and tracked down Tkach.

At his trial, Serhiy Tkach was cold and dismissive. He emotionlessly admitted to the murders. He even suggested that he **had killed many more women than officially attributed to him**.

Sentenced to life imprisonment, he died in prison in 2018. He never showed remorse. He never sought redemption.

Psychological profile

- **Methodical psychopathy**: he rationalized every crime as part of an inevitable compulsion.
- **Total control and domination**: their crimes were not impulsive; they were rituals of absolute power over

innocent lives.

- **Social mimicry:** he appeared normal to camouflage his daily sadism.

A monster between the cracks

Tkach was not a killer acting in fits and starts. **It was a silent plague.** A shadow that used neglect, poverty and marginalization to feed itself, year after year, without raising alarms.

His legacy is an open wound in the criminal history of Eastern Europe: **a grim warning of what happens when evil knows how to hide better than the systems designed to detect it.**

Charles Sobhraj - The Serpent

Date of birth: April 6, 1944

Location: Saigon, Vietnam

Victims: 12 to 24 murders suspected

Sentence: Life imprisonment in Nepal

CHARLES SOBHRAJ DID NOT kill on impulse. **He killed as an artist forges a painting: with patience, deception and sinister perfection.**

Born to an Indian father and a Vietnamese mother, Sobhraj grew up always feeling like a foreigner: in his country, in his family, in himself. This early dislocation forged a character that was cold, shrewd and utterly incapable of establishing sincere bonds.

By the age of 19 he was already an accomplished con man in France, where he discovered that his natural charm and penetrating gaze were as lethal a weapon as any knife.

A cosmopolitan predator

Sobhraj took his criminal career to Asia in the 1970s, following the **hippie trail** that thousands of Western tourists

traveled seeking spiritual enlightenment. He offered them a twisted version of that dream:

- He posed as a tour guide, benefactor or travel companion.
- He drugged his victims with drugs that caused drowsiness or paralysis.
- He stole their documents, money, belongings... and in too many cases, he also took their lives.

His modus operandi was as flexible as he was himself: he adapted the crime to the situation. He could have been simply a talented thief, but his need for control and domination pushed him further into murder.

The world learned his story when his bloody trail was discovered in Thailand, Nepal and India. The press, fascinated by his exoticism, nicknamed him "**The Snake**".

Trials, leaks and ultimate downfall

Sobhraj didn't just kill. He also escaped. He was arrested several times and managed to escape from prisons using bribes, manipulations or spectacular escapes.

In 2003, after years of semi-hidden life, he made a fatal mistake: he returned to Nepal, where he was still facing charges. He was arrested, tried and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Today, Charles Sobhraj is still incarcerated, aging behind the walls of Kathmandu's central prison. **He remains, in the**

eyes of many, the archetype of the seductive killer, the criminal who kills with a smile... and disappears in the smoke of his own legend.

Psychological profile

- **High narcissism:** he did not kill out of economic necessity; he killed because he could, because he believed he was superior.
- **Master manipulator:** he used his charm as a weapon, as lethal as his chemical poison.
- **Absolute emotional detachment:** their victims were not people, but pieces in their game of power and control.

The elegant shadow

Charles Sobhraj was the snake that, instead of crawling through the jungle, **slithered between cocktail parties, beaches and embassies**, leaving a trail of discreet corpses in its wake.

His story is not just that of a killer. It is that of **an accomplished actor... whose deadliest role was his own life.**

Christopher Wilder - The Beauty Queen Killer

Date of birth: March 13, 1945

Location: Sydney, Australia

Victims: At least 8 confirmed

Conviction: Killed in police confrontation

CHRISTOPHER WILDER WAS THE perfect predator in the guise of a heartthrob: charming, polite, with an impeccable smile that hid **an insatiable appetite for control, pain and death.**

Born in Australia and moved to the United States in the 1970s, Wilder had a history of antisocial behavior since his teenage years. Assaults, sexual harassment, violent episodes that seemed to fade away thanks to his harmless appearance and family connections.

Under the guise of a successful fashion photographer, he toured shopping malls and beaches, offering young women - mostly aspiring models - the promise of fame and glamour. **What they received was kidnapping, torture, rape and, often, death.**

The reign of terror

Between February and April 1984, Wilder left a bloody trail across the United States:

- He abducted his victims after brief public encounters.
- He held them captive in hotels, where he subjected them to prolonged abuse.
- Some were forced to participate in macabre photo shoots before being killed.

The brutality of his crimes and his appearance as a common man baffled the authorities and the press, who dubbed him "**The Beauty Queen Killer**".

The end of the hunt

The manhunt against Wilder reached its climax in April 1984. He was located in New Hampshire, following an intense nationwide manhunt. When agents attempted to arrest him, Wilder **violently resisted**. In the confrontation, he was fatally shot.

He died before he was brought to trial, taking with him details that were never fully clarified.

Psychological profile

- **Pathological narcissism:** his need to dominate young women was both sexual and existential.
- **Opportunistic predator:** used charm and the promise of success to psychologically disarm his victims.

- **Ritualized sadism:** the abuse was not only physical, it was a meticulous way of degrading the identity of their victims.

The monster disguised as a photographer

Christopher Wilder was a walking paradox: **the kind face of horror**, the outstretched hand leading directly to death.

His story is a timeless warning: **not all monsters hide in the dark. Some shine under camera flashes.**

Herb Baumeister - The Fox Hollow Manor Killer

Date of birth: April 7, 1947

Location: Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Victims: At least 11 confirmed

Conviction: Never tried - committed suicide in 1996

HERB BAUMEISTER WAS THE perfect picture of the model citizen: Successful businessman, family man, pillar of the conservative Indianapolis community. But behind the facade of respectability **lay one of the most putrid secrets of American true crime.**

From a young age he showed signs of mental instability, but his problems were overlooked, buried under the social urgency to preserve appearances. Founder of a successful chain of garden supply stores, Baumeister built an impeccable public life. And, simultaneously, **a private life full of death.**

The horror at Fox Hollow Farm

During the 1980s and early 1990s, young gay men began disappearing from the bars and streets of Indianapolis. Police had no solid leads. Until the investigation led to a rural property: **Fox Hollow Farm**, a sprawling tract of land owned by Baumeister.

The revelation was nightmarish:

- Human remains buried in the forest and scattered on the property.
- Bone fragments crushed, probably to make their identification more difficult.
- Evidence directly linking Baumeister to the missing persons.

His mansion was not just a home: it was a silent slaughterhouse.

The fall of a monster

Before being formally arrested, Baumeister fled. In July 1996, his body was found in Canada, the victim of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. In the suicide note, he did not admit to any of the murders.

He died as he lived: **denying his monstrosity.**

Psychological profile

- **Partial dissociative identity disorder:** unable to reconcile his public façade with his homicidal impulses.

- **Opportunistic predator:** it chose vulnerable victims, isolated from social scrutiny.
- **Ritualized compulsion:** the disposition of the remains suggests a pattern of trophy and control, rather than mere disposal.

The murderer who mowed lawns... and lives

Herb Baumeister was the wolf in the suburban garden, **the monster the neighbors greeted every morning, oblivious to the tragedy fermenting under their noses.**

His case remains **a chilling reminder that true horror rarely roars. Almost always, it whispers.**

Edmund Kemper - The Giant of Horror

Date of birth: December 18, 1948

Location: Burbank, California, U.S.A.

Victims: 10 confirmed murders

Sentence: Life imprisonment without possibility of parole

ED KEMPER WAS OVER six feet tall, weighed almost 140 kilograms, and had an IQ of 145. But his size and intelligence were not weapons of overcoming. **They were tools of mass destruction.**

Raised in a toxic home under the emotional tyranny of his mother, Kemper developed a dull and brutal resentment that eventually exploded sooner than expected. At age 15, he killed his maternal grandparents in a fit of pent-up rage. Interned in a psychiatric hospital, he was diagnosed as a juvenile sociopath... but released at 21, considered "rehabilitated". **A clinical error that would cost many lives.**

The schoolgirl massacre

Between 1972 and 1973, while California seemed to be living its golden age, Kemper began his dance of death:

- He would pick up young student hitchhikers, using his affable air and "big dummy" looks to disarm them emotionally.
- Once isolated, he strangled, shot or stabbed them.
- He mutilated the bodies, took them home, practiced necrophilia and sometimes **kept parts as trophies**.

His signature was not only physical violence: it was **emotional brutality**, post-mortem humiliation, the transformation of his victims into objects.

And all this while living under the same roof as his mother, with whom he had a relationship of seething hatred.

The murder that "freed" Kemper

Finally, in April 1973, his compulsion found its true target: **Clarnell Strandberg, his mother**.

He murdered her in her home, decapitated her, and, in an act of sadism that defies description, **shouted insults at her decapitated head**, as if he could finally win the lost arguments of his childhood. After also killing a friend of his mother's, he called the police and **voluntarily turned himself in**.

Psychological profile

- **Narcissistic intelligence**: his high IQ fed a perception of superiority over the system.

- **Channeled maternal hatred:** his crimes were progressive rehearsals of what he truly wanted: to annihilate his mother.
- **Necrophilia of control:** it was not just about killing, but about **possessing** the victims **completely**, beyond life.

The assassin who spoke... too well

Ed Kemper is an atypical monster: **the cooperative killer who** explains his crimes with disturbing eloquence, who analyzes his evil with surgical coldness. His interviews, even today, are study material for criminologists and forensic psychologists.

Imprisoned for life, he spends his days reading audio books for the blind. A sinister echo of his ability to "enchant" with his voice... before destroying with his hands.

Edmund Kemper was not just a murderer. He was an abyss with a name of his own. A giant that devoured not only bodies, but any possibility of innocence.

Manuel Delgado Villegas - El Arropiero

Date of birth: October 22, 1943

Place: Peñarroya-Pueblonuevo, Córdoba, Spain

Victims: Officially 7, confessed to more than 40

Conviction: Never formally tried - committed to a mental institution

Death: February 2, 1998

RARELY HAS A SERIAL killer been so elusive, so changeable, so... ghostly as **Manuel Delgado Villegas**, known as "**El Arropiero**", a nickname inherited from his father, a street vendor of arrope.

From his childhood, Delgado's life was a noir novel of abandonment, marginality and morbid obsessions. His mother died when he was five years old, and with her his only emotional bond seemed to disappear. From then on, **death became his emotional language**.

The homicidal nomad

In his youth he wandered all over Spain, and beyond: France, Italy, even Morocco. A nomad without a destination. A psychopath without a pattern. During these years, he commit-

ted a series of brutal murders that, for a long time, went unnoticed: old people, immigrants, vagrants. **Invisible victims for a blind system.**

Their modus operandi was as variable as their whereabouts:

- Sometimes he would hit with stones.
- Others, he choked with his bare hands.
- In some cases, he committed cannibalism or post-mortem mutilation.

He confessed to more than **40 murders**, but only seven could be proven. He was so adaptable that he would even change his name and appearance depending on the city, outwitting the authorities time and time again.

The fall of the spectrum

He was finally arrested in March 1971. The confession of his crimes chilled the investigators. Not only because of his coldness... but also because of the indifference with which he recounted them. **He killed on impulse. Out of boredom. Out of hunger. Out of rage.** Never out of remorse.

However, he was never formally tried. He was diagnosed with a severe mental disorder and sent to the Carabanchel psychiatric hospital and later to the Fontcalent psychiatric hospital, where he spent the rest of his life.

He died in 1998, with his criminal record officially unfinished and his mind still full of unresolved secrets.

Psychological profile

- **Dysfunctional schizoid psychosis:** responded to immediate impulses without planning.
- **Extreme rootlessness:** his lack of emotional or social identity made him unpredictable.
- **Fuzzy profile, no pattern:** the terror of criminologists: a killer with no apparent logic, impossible to trace with traditional methods.

The monster without a map

Manuel Delgado Villegas was a murderer from another time. He did not kill for ego, nor for fame, nor for revenge. **He killed because he could. Because no one noticed. Because no one would stop him.**

It was a social error incarnate: a vagabond who, between stations and alleys, left a trail of nameless death.... and a justice that **never came in time.**

Manuel Blanco Romasanta - The Werewolf of Allariz

Date of birth: November 18, 1809

Location: Regueiro, Ourense, Galicia, Spain

Victims: 9 confirmed

Sentence: Death penalty commuted to life imprisonment

Particularity: First documented court case of clinical lycanthropy in Spain

IN THE GREEN AND misty heart of Galicia, land of legends and superstitions, there arose a figure whose monstrosity broke the line between myth and crime: **Manuel Blanco Romasanta**, the man who claimed to become a wolf... to kill.

Known as "**The Werewolf of Allariz**", Romasanta was a murderer who turned the forests and rural roads into his hunting ground. His life was already, from birth, an anomaly: initially registered as a woman, he was legally reassigned as a man at the age of six. That change, at a time of brutal medical ignorance, marked the beginning of a tortuous and marginal existence.

Romasanta worked as a peddler and itinerant healer. He traveled with his cart between Galician villages, offering natural remedies, translation services, and, as would later be discovered, **death wrapped in courtesy**.

Slaughter between routes and superstition

For years, women and children who trusted Romasanta disappeared without a trace. He claimed to take them to other cities to get them work. In reality, **he murdered them, butchered them... and used their fat to make soap that he then sold**.

He was arrested in 1852 and accused of 13 murders, although only 9 could be proved. The macabre aspect of his case was not only the brutality of the crimes, but also his defense: **Romasanta claimed to have committed the murders transformed into a wolf, with no control over his will**.

A trial between science and the arcane

The trial was a media spectacle for the time. Nineteenth-century Spain was still flirting with the mystical, but it was also beginning to embrace forensic medicine.

The court did not believe in lycanthropy, although **it could not fully explain his psyche either**. He was sentenced to death, but Queen Elizabeth II commuted the sentence to life imprisonment on the recommendation of French doctors interested in studying his clinical case.

He died in 1863 in the prison of Ceuta. Until the end, he **maintained that he was not guilty... but the victim of a lupine curse.**

Psychological profile

- **Dissociative identity disorder with delusional components:** unable to assume direct authorship without attributing it to an "inner beast".
- **Narcissism hidden behind rural humility:** he used his role as a healer to exert psychological dominance over his victims.
- **Personal mitigation:** he took advantage of popular beliefs to shield himself from logic and guilt.

Crime dressed as a legend

Manuel Blanco Romasanta was not just a murderer. **He was a creature forged in equal parts by disease, ignorance, and myth.**

Where others saw a cursed lycanthrope, the story reveals **a dangerously sane man... who knew how to disguise himself as a legend to escape his real monster: responsibility.**

Milena Quaglini - The Italian Black Widow

Date of birth: 1957

Place: Mezzanino, Pavia, Italy

Victims: 3 confirmed **Sentence:** 13 years and 8 months imprisonment

Ending: Suicide in prison in 2001

MILENA QUAGLINI WAS NO ordinary serial killer. She did not hunt for pleasure. She did not kill on impulse. **She killed as a reaction. As self-righteousness. As a last line of defense.** But that didn't make it any less lethal.

Her childhood was the perfect breeding ground: a violent home, an abusive father and an adolescence marked by constant running away. She fled that environment as best she could, building a life with studies, work and family. And yet, **violence always knew how to find her.**

He had two important partners. Both ended the same way: with screams, blows, humiliation... and blood.

First murder: between instinct and desperation

In the 1990s, Milena worked as a caregiver for an elderly man, Siusto Dalla Pozza. The man, fond of her, lent her money. But when Milena could not pay him back, he reacted violently: he **tried to rape her**.

Milena defended herself by hitting him on the head with a lamp. He died on the spot. She fled. Then she called the police claiming to have found the body. And they believed her.

Second crime: the inner circle is stained in red

On August 1, 1999, tired of the constant abuse from Mario, her partner, she waited for him to fall asleep, tied him up, and **beat him to death**. Then she dragged his body to the balcony and called the carabinieri: - "Police... I have killed my husband."

She was sentenced to 13 years, but only served six under house arrest. When she got out, no one was waiting for her. Her mother, her friends, her neighbors... everyone had turned their backs on her.

Third crime: the last drop

Alcoholic, marginalized, Milena answered an ad in the newspaper looking for companionship. That's how she met Angelo Porello, an older man with a history of sexual abuse and pederasty. And predictably, **history repeated itself**.

Angelo raped her twice. Milena served him coffee with sedatives, drowned him in the bathtub and **hid the corpse**

under manure in the garden. This time, she was arrested and confessed: - "When someone reacts badly, I react worse."

The end in the cell

She was convicted again. She was serving her sentence in Vigevano prison. On October 16, 2001, a few days before her final verdict was announced, she **hanged herself with the sheets in her cell**. He left a note: - "I can't take it anymore. Forgive me, mom."

Psychological profile

- **Homicidal reaction:** he was not looking for victims, he was responding to years of chained abuse.
- **Distorted justice:** in his mind, every murder was legitimate defense, even if the method was savage.
- **Emotional resignation:** he never asked for forgiveness. Nor did he demand understanding.

Revenge as a refuge

Milena Quaglini was the inverted mirror of the classic killer archetype. She didn't kill for control. She killed because it was **the only way she knew how to regain hers**.

But in his private justice, he left a trail of corpses that society could no longer ignore.

Leonarda Cianciulli - The Soap Dish of Correggio

Date of birth: November 14, 1893

Place: Montella, Italy **Victims:** 3 women

Sentence: 30 years imprisonment and 3 years in an insane asylum

Death: October 15, 1970

LEONARDA CIANCIULLI WASN'T JUST a murderer. **She was a desperate mother, an incurable superstitious... and a creepy cook.**

From birth, her life was marked by trauma. An unwanted child, the product of rape, she was raised amidst abuse and contempt by her mother. Throughout her life, she suffered seventeen pregnancies. Only four of her children survived. Personal tragedy turned into obsession: Leonarda was convinced that her mother had cursed her... and that **only a human sacrifice could protect her favorite son, Giuseppe**, who was to be sent to the front during World War II.

Crimes: blood, soap and cakes

Her logic was as twisted as it was methodical. The victims were single, unsuspecting women who came to her for advice or job help. She offered them a fresh start... and delivered death:

1. **Faustina Setti**: he promised her a husband in another city. He drugged her, killed her with an axe and **dissolved her body in caustic soda**. With her blood, he made cakes. With the fat, soap. "They were both excellent," he would later confess.
2. **Francesca Soavi**: he promised her a job in Florence. Same destination. This time, she **made finer cookies and better quality soap**.
3. **Virginia Cacioppo**: a former opera soprano. She was the last one. Her fat, according to Leonarda, produced a "creamy and perfumed" soap. In exchange for their lives, she **obtained jewels and 3,777 lire**.

The discovery

The perfect crime collapsed because of an imperfect detail: a suspicious testimony and a soap with fragments of eyeball. She was arrested in 1940. During the trial, she narrated her crimes with eerie calm and unbecoming gastronomic detail: - "The cakes were scrumptious!".

Psychological profile

- **Delusional disorder with ritualistic components:** she believed that the blood of other women could save her child.
- **Extreme maternal narcissism:** she saw other people's lives as a bargaining chip to preserve her lineage.
- **Grotesque rationalization:** he transformed murder into an act of love, and butchery into pastry.

The mother who cooked with blood

Leonarda Cianciulli was the rural incarnation of modern horror. She acted not for revenge, not for money, not for pleasure. She acted **because she believed it was the right thing to do**. Because her love for her son was worth more than the lives of three women... and the soul of her own.

She died in an insane asylum in 1970, consumed by a stroke and the fumes of caustic soda. Her story was engraved in Italian lore like a witch's tale... only **this witch existed. And she cooked with corpses.**

Albert DeSalvo - The Boston Strangler

Date of birth: September 3, 1931

Place: Chelsea, Massachusetts, USA

Victims: 13 women (confessed, but not all confirmed)

Sentence: Life imprisonment

Death: Murdered in prison in 1973

BETWEEN 1962 AND 1964, Boston experienced a slow-motion hell. A series of women were found strangled in their homes. The killer didn't break in, didn't leave fingerprints, and didn't commit burglaries. He only **left a carefully posed corpse, with a scarf or stocking knotted around the neck in the form of a decorative bow.**

The press dubbed him "**The Boston Strangler**," and he soon became a nightmarish figure in American society. The victims were almost always older women, alone, some with signs of sexual abuse. Then the pattern diverged: younger victims, quicker murders, less ritualistic. **As if the killer was changing... or there were several of them.**

The man who confessed everything

In 1964, Albert DeSalvo was arrested... for rape. He had no prior record of murder. But in prison, he began telling his story to another inmate: **he was the Strangler**. And he gave details that, according to some investigators, only the killer could know.

He confessed to 13 murders. One by one. With surgical precision. But here begins the crack: **there was no conclusive physical evidence linking him directly to the crimes**. Only his word. And his word was not particularly reliable.

Conviction for another crime

DeSalvo was eventually convicted, but not for the murders. He was sentenced to life in prison for a series of rapes committed during his time as the "**Man in Green**," a serial rapist who posed as handyman to break into homes. Meanwhile, justice and public opinion divided their verdict: **Genuine confession... or an impostor desperate for notoriety?**

In 1973, Albert DeSalvo was stabbed to death in his cell. The motive was never clear. In 2013, thanks to DNA testing, it was possible to link him to at least one of the strangulation victims: **Mary Sullivan**. The rest remain shrouded in shadows of doubt.

Psychological profile

- **Mythomania and need for prominence:** his confession may have been a way to gain fame behind bars.
- **Compulsive sexual aggressiveness:** DeSalvo was a se-

rial rapist, with a clear pattern of stalking, deception and assault.

- **Forensic ambiguity:** he fits as a killer... but not completely. His profile does not quite satisfy the logic of the most ritualized crimes.

The murderer... or the narrator?

Albert DeSalvo was convicted as a criminal, but remembered as a symbol of criminal ambiguity. **Was he the Boston Strangler... or just someone who desperately wanted to be?**

Whatever the answer, his figure remains in history as a **larger shadow than his confirmed crimes. A mask placed over the face of horror... that perhaps we never fully knew.**

Peter Sutcliffe - The Yorkshire Ripper

Date of birth: June 2, 1946

Location: Bingley, West Yorkshire, England

Victims: 13 women murdered, 7 survivors of attacks

Sentence: 20 life sentences

Death: November 13, 2020

BETWEEN 1975 AND 1980, the streets of northern England were the scene of a nightmare with historical echoes: **a murderer with a hammer and knife who acted in the shadows**, evoking Jack the Ripper himself.

His name was Peter Sutcliffe. Truck driver by day. Monster by night.

He began by attacking sex workers in Leeds and Bradford, but later expanded his violence to women unrelated to that environment. His crimes were characterized by a mixture of **frenzy and calculation**: blows to the head with a hammer, savage stabbings, mutilations. But always with a common detail: violence aimed **to silence, to dominate, to punish**.

The monster that hid in everyday life

Sutcliffe was interviewed several times by police during the investigation? and each time he walked home. Meanwhile, the body count continued to grow. The case was an exemplary lesson in **massive police negligence**, marked by class and gender bias: the first victims, being sex workers, were ignored or dismissed by investigators.

The United Kingdom panicked. The killer sent letters signed "Jack the Ripper", taunting the police. The siege only closed in 1981, when he was arrested for a minor infraction... and confessed.

Trial and confinement

During the trial, Sutcliffe claimed that "a voice from God" ordered him to kill prostitutes. He was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, but the jury was not fooled: he **was sentenced to 20 life sentences**.

He spent the rest of his life between psychiatric hospitals and maximum security prison. He died in 2020, by COVID-19, without expressing remorse. Without asking for forgiveness.

Psychological profile

- **Structured misogynistic aggression:** their violence was a ritual punishment of the feminine.
- **Pathological religious rationalization:** he used divine delusions to justify a very human hatred.
- **Double life criminology:** he passed for an ordinary

citizen... while living in a homicidal routine.

The butcher of the north

Peter Sutcliffe was the modern echo of the Ripper myth. But unlike Jack, he **did not disappear into the fog**, but was captured, exposed and caged.

And yet, **the fear he sowed continues to vibrate in the cities he walked.**

A brutal reminder that sometimes, hell wears no cape? but a work uniform and a shy smile at the bar.

Anatoly Onoprienko - Ukraine's Terminator

Date of birth: July 25, 1959

Location: Lasky, Ukraine

Victims: 52 confirmed murders

Sentence: Life imprisonment

Death: August 27, 2013

ANATOLY ONOPRIENKO DID NOT kill on impulse. Nor by emotion. **He killed as if obeying a programming, as if someone had replaced his soul with a homicidal protocol.** That is why he was called "**The Terminator**".

After the death of his mother when he was only four years old, he was abandoned by his father and raised in an orphanage. This early abandonment was, he would later say, **the seed of his hatred of traditional families.** The childhood he did not have... became the childhood he vowed to destroy in others.

The domestic exterminator

Between 1989 and 1996, Onoprienko carried out one of the most ruthless murder campaigns in modern European history. His modus operandi was chillingly consistent:

- He chose an isolated house, usually in rural areas.
- He would come in armed, kill all family members, including children.
- He would then steal valuables... and often **set the place on fire** to erase the evidence.

He also often killed witnesses, neighbors or any unfortunate bystanders. He did not leave alive. **For killing was his purpose, and stealing only a by-product.**

The fall of the killer robot

The investigation was slow, riddled with mistakes and accusations of innocent people. Ukraine, newly independent and with a fragile judicial system, was not prepared for a threat of this magnitude. Onoprienko was arrested in 1996 after an intensive search, in which weapons and belongings of the victims were found in his possession.

During interrogations, he **confessed to 52 murders without showing any remorse**. He said it like someone reciting a technical report: - "They sent me. I don't know who, but it was my destiny. I am an instrument."

Psychological profile

- **Functional psychopathy:** lacking empathy, remorse or emotional connection with their victims.
- **Instrumentalized mentality:** he perceived himself as a killing machine, not as a responsible individual.
- **Delusion of existential mission:** he believed he was fulfilling a higher purpose by exterminating families.

The exterminator with a human face

Anatoly Onoprienko was not a typical serial killer. He was not a pleasure seeker. He did not seek power. **Only destruction.**

Her story is an unhealed wound in Ukrainian history. A reminder of what happens when neglect, resentment and coldness combine in one body. A body armed, ruthless... and perfectly obedient to chaos.

Tsutomu Miyazaki - The Otaku Killer

Date of birth: August 21, 1962

Location: Itabashi, Tokyo, Japan

Victims: 4 girls murdered between 1988 and 1989

Sentence: Death penalty

Death: June 17, 2008 (executed)

TSUTOMU MIYAZAKI WAS THE archetype of the modern hermit: despised for his physical deformity, absorbed by the unhealthy consumption of comics, pornography and horror films. **But in his mind, fiction and violence were indistinguishable. They merged into a real need to possess and destroy.**

In the late 1980s, when Japan seemed a beacon of technological progress, Miyazaki plunged into his private abyss. An abyss that soon demanded real victims.

The sequence of horrors

Between 1988 and 1989, he committed a series of crimes that still send chills down the spine:

- He preyed on young girls in parks and suburban areas.

- After gaining their trust, he would kidnap them, strangle them, and then abuse their bodies post mortem.
- He kept human remains as trophies: hands, teeth, clothes.
- He photographed and filmed his victims, creating **an audiovisual archive of their horror**.
- In an extra act of sadism, he sent part of the remains of one of his victims to her parents, accompanied by mocking letters.

Miyazaki did not seek only the death of his victims: he **sought to immortalize them in his private universe of ritualized violence**.

Arrest and trial

His capture took place in July 1989, after he attempted to photograph a naked girl in public. They searched his home: they found **more than 5,000 tapes of extreme violence**, combined with actual recordings of his acts.

During the trial, his defense claimed severe mental illness. Psychiatrists concluded that, although he suffered from dissociative disorder and delusions, he **knew perfectly well that he was killing**. He was sentenced to death in 1997 and executed in 2008.

Psychological profile

- **Dissociative disorder with persecutory delusions:** he believed he was driven by an internal "Mouse".
- **Ritualized necrophilia:** it sought absolute control over the victims, beyond life.
- **Fusion of reality and fantasy:** unable to distinguish between his animated obsessions and the real world.

The otaku spectrum

Tsutomu Miyazaki didn't just kill. **He transformed his loneliness, his marginalization and his hatred into unreal acts of physical horror.** He didn't just want to kill: he **wanted fantasy to consume reality... and he succeeded, at an incalculable price.**

Luis Alfredo Garavito - The Beast

Date of birth: January 25, 1957

Location: Génova, Quindío, Colombia

Victims: 172 children confirmed, more than 200 are suspected

Sentence: 40 years imprisonment (maximum allowed in Colombia at the time)

Death: October 12, 2023

LUIS ALFREDO GARAVITO WAS not just a murderer. **He was a plague. A phenomenon of human destruction disguised as a man.**

He grew up in misery and violence, suffering physical, psychological and sexual abuse that molded a twisted and vengeful psyche. His hatred was not spontaneous: it was cultivated, fermented... and finally, unleashed on the most vulnerable.

Between 1992 and 1999, Garavito traveled Colombia with an unthinkable purpose: to **hunt, rape, torture and murder children between the ages of 6 and 16.**

The modus operandi of hell

Garavito used disguises:

- He pretended to be a peddler, a monk, a disabled person or a social worker.
- He tricked poor or street children, promising them candy, money or work.
- He took them to remote rural areas.
- There, he would tie them up, sexually torture them for hours and finally kill them, often by strangulation or deep cuts.

His accuracy was frightening: he selected victims who often **would not even be reported missing**.

Capture and trial

Garavito was captured in 1999 after attempting to abuse a child who managed to escape. During the investigation, he was found in possession of diaries documenting the crimes, maps with coordinates of mass burials and a history of movements that coincided with the locations where bodies were found.

He confessed to the murders with an almost mechanical coldness. Authorities estimated that he may have killed **more than 300 children**, although only 172 could be judicially confirmed.

He received a 40-year sentence, the maximum in Colombia at the time, although it was later reduced for confession and

collaboration. He died in prison in 2023, after being attacked by another inmate.

Psychological profile

- **Extreme sadism linked to sexual compulsion:** he found pleasure not only in killing, but also in psychologically destroying his victims.
- **Fantasies of absolute power:** murder was the culmination of his need for total domination.
- **Manipulative charisma:** his insignificant appearance concealed a meticulously predatory mind.

The incarnation of the absence of God

Luis Alfredo Garavito is **the ultimate abyss of human nature**. He did not kill for revenge, nor for greed, nor even out of pure rage. **He killed to annihilate what he could not have: a dignified childhood, a life without horror.**

And it did so on a scale that defies comprehension. **The Beast. Not a nickname. An accurate biological description.**

Closing

SIXTY NAMES. SIXTY STORIES that, together, form a grotesque map of the deformed human psyche.

This book has not pretended to offer answers. It has served to do something more uncomfortable: to **put the questions on the table and not take them away**. What happens when the soul is twisted? When childhood does not redeem but condemns? What kind of silence allows these monsters to grow up and walk among us?

Each profile described here is a warning with human skin. There is no redemption. No moral. Only the echo of decisions made in dark rooms, and bodies found too late.

But amidst the darkness, **there remains a choice**: That of understanding, of looking without averting our eyes, of remembering the names of the victims and not only those of the executioners. Because forgetting is the best hiding place for repetition.

If this book has made you uncomfortable, it has done its job well. And if it has left you with more questions than answers...then it has served its purpose.

Epilogue

EXTREME VIOLENCE IS NOT born out of nothing. It is nurtured. It breeds in the shadows. It masquerades as normality.

In each case recounted here, there was a moment-sometimes mild, sometimes brutal-when something snapped. A tear in the conscience, a decision of no return, a crack through which horror seeped in.

And yet, **evil does not always manifest itself in shouting.** Often, it sits at the table. It smiles at you. It shakes your hand.

This book is not a collection of monsters. It is a cracked mirror. One that shows what happens when you stop looking.

Now you know their names. Now you know what they did.

The important thing is that you don't forget them. Neither them... nor those who can no longer tell the tale.

About the Author

JAVIER SOTO IS A recognized expert in criminology and author of several books on unsolved crimes and criminal profiling. He has dedicated his career to researching and analyzing the darker aspects of the human mind, with the aim of understanding and preventing violence.

With an innate passion for unraveling mysteries and seeking the truth, Javier has collaborated with law enforcement agencies and has been involved in numerous high-profile cases. His investigations and analysis have helped shed light on unsolved crimes and provided new perspectives in the fight against crime.

In addition to his work as an author and criminologist, Javier is also a featured speaker, sharing his experience and knowledge at international conferences and events. His main goal is to raise awareness and encourage positive change in society.

We recommend visiting for more information on criminology, cold cases and criminal profiling www.casoabierto.com. On this site, you will find additional resources, informative articles and updates on ongoing cases. We invite you to explore this valuable resource to expand your knowledge in this fascinating field.

JAVIER SOTO

Thank you for your interest and continued support!
Javier Soto