



Skin Game (Dark Angel)

By Max Allan Collins

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The saga of Dark Angel continues!

Someone is killing normal humans in the fog-enshrouded city of Seattle. The murders are brutal and grisly, but inside Terminal City they barely cause a ripple of concern. The transgenics who live there have problems of their own. In an area under siege by the oppressive arm of the police, the transgenics must protect their fledgling colony against the outside world—a world that eyes them with contempt and suspicion . . . and will do anything to be rid of them.

As the killings escalate, Joshua comes to Max with a dire suspicion: the killer may be one of their own. Tensions are high between normal humans and transgenics, and many inside the protected City would just as soon let the humans fend for themselves. Yet Max and her inner circle know they must investigate the crimes and stop the bloodshed. Doing nothing would simply give the normals more reasons to hate.

But what they discover will shock even the most jaded among them—and expose a sinister agenda that leads to an old, nefarious foe. . . .

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Skin Game (Dark Angel) By Max Allan Collins Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #815401 in Books
- Published on: 2003-02-04
- Released on: 2003-02-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .90" w x 5.20" l, .30 pounds
- Binding: Mass Market Paperback
- 272 pages

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

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About the Author

Max Allan Collins has earned an unprecedented ten Private Eye Writers of America Shamus nominations for his historical thrillers, winning twice for his Nathan Heller novels, *True Detective* and *Stolen Away*. A Mystery Writers of America Edgar nominee in both fiction and non-fiction categories, Collins has written five suspense novel series, film criticism, short fiction, songwriting, trading-card sets, and movie/TV tie-in novels, including *Air Force One*, *The Mummy Returns*, the *New York Times* bestselling *Saving Private Ryan*, *CSI: Double Dealer* (from the CBS series), and *The Scorpion King*.

He scripted the internationally syndicated comic strip *Dick Tracy* from 1977 to 1993 and has written the *Batman* comic book and newspaper strip. His graphic novel, *Road to Perdition*, has been made into a DreamWorks feature film starring Tom Hanks and Paul Newman, directed by Sam Mendes.

Collins lives in Muscatine, Iowa, with his wife, writer Barbara Collins, and their teenage son, Nathan.

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IMAGER IS EVERYTHING

SECTOR THREE, 11:00 P.M.

TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021

Like a relentless boxer, rain beat down on the city, first jabbing with sharp needles, then smacking Seattle with huge fat drops that hit like haymakers, the barrage punctuated by the ominous rumble of thunder and the eerie flash of lightning.

An unmarked black car drew to a stop in a rat-infested Sector Three alley, the rain rattling the metal roof like machine-gun fire. Two men in dark suits climbed out, to be instantly drenched, though neither seemed to notice. Each wore a radio earplug with a short microphone bent toward his mouth.

Sage Thompson--the man who'd emerged from the passenger's side--was relieved that the headsets, at least, seemed to be waterproof. In their coat pockets, each man carried one of the new portable thermal imagers that, just this week, had become standard equipment. Thompson--barely six feet, almost skinny at 180 pounds--wondered if water-tightness was among the gizmo's various high-tech bells and whistles.

Water sluiced down the alley in a torrent that seemed to express the sky's anger, eventually bubbling over the edge of a rusty grate maybe ten yards in front of them. Thompson was forced to jump the stream and his feet nearly slid out from under him as he landed and bumped into a triangle of garbage cans, sending them crashing into each other, creating a din that rivaled the storm's, his hands flying wide to help maintain his balance. Then his hands dropped back to his sides, the one holding his flashlight clanging off the imager in his coat pocket, the other moving to make sure his pistol was still secure in its holster on his belt.

The hefty man who'd been driving--Cal Hankins--shone his flashlight in Thompson's face, huffed once, and eased around a dumpster that looked like it hadn't been emptied since before the Pulse. Moving slowly ahead, their flashlights sweeping back and forth over the brick hulk in front of them, the two men finally halted in front of what had once been a mullioned window.

The interior of the six-story brick building--an abandoned warehouse, Thompson surmised--seemed a black hole waiting to devour them without so much as a belch. Next to Thompson, his partner Hankins swept a flashlight through one of the broken panes, painting the rainy night with slow, even strokes. Darkness surrendered only brief glimpses of the huge first-floor room as it swallowed up the light.

"You sure this is the right place?" Hankins asked gruffly.

There was no fear in the man's voice--Thompson sensed only that his partner didn't want his time wasted. At forty, bucket-headed Hankins--the senior partner of the duo--wore his blondish hair in a short brush cut that revealed only a wisp or two of gray. His head rested squarely on his shoulders, without apparent benefit of a neck, and he stood nearly six-three, weighing in (Thompson estimated) at over 230. But the man wasn't merely fat--there was enough gristle and muscle and bone in there to make Hankins formidable.

Still, Thompson knew their boss--that nasty company man, Ames White, a conscienceless yuppie prick if there ever was one--had been all over Hankins about his weight and rode the older guy mercilessly about it. Though he knew better than to ever say it out loud, Thompson considered White the worst boss in his experience--which was saying something.

White was smart, no doubting that, but he had a sarcastic tongue and a whiplash temper that Thompson had witnessed enough times to know he should keep his mouth shut and his head low.

"This is the right place, all right," Thompson said, raising his voice over the battering rain. "Dispatch said the thermal imager team picked up a transgenic in the market in Sector Four."

"This is Sector Three."

"Yeah--they followed him here before they lost him."

Hankins shook his head in disgust. "Then why the fuck ain't they lookin' for him, then? What makes us the clean-up crew for their sorry asses?"

These questions were rhetorical, Thompson knew, though they did have answers, the same answer in fact: Ames White.

And Hankins spent much of his time bitching about White, behind the boss's back, of course. But they both knew it was only a matter of time before White found a way to get rid of Hankins ...

. . . and then Thompson would have to break in a new partner, possibly one even younger than himself. Then he would be the old-timer. The thought made him cringe.

Not exactly a kid at twenty-seven, Thompson was the antithesis of Hankins: the younger man seemed like a long-neck bottle standing next to the pop-top beer can that was his partner. Married to his college sweetheart, Melanie, and with a new baby daughter, Thompson was the antithesis of Hankins in terms of home life, as well: the gristled bulldog had been divorced twice and had three or four kids he never saw and didn't really seem to give a damn about.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Daphne Shew:

The book Skin Game (Dark Angel) make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You may use to make your capable more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem with your subject. If you can make studying a book Skin Game (Dark Angel) to get your habit, you can get much more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You can know everything if you like open and read a guide Skin Game (Dark Angel). Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science guide or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this reserve?

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Catharine Rosol:

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