

SANTIAGO

A MYTH OF THE FAR FUTURE

They say his father was a comet and his mother a cosmic wind, that he juggles planets as if they were feathers and wrestles with black holes just to work up an appetite. They say he never sleeps, and that his eyes burn brighter than a nova, and that his shout can level mountains.

They call him Santiago.

Far out on the Galactic Rim, at the very edge of the Outer Frontier, there is a world called Silverblue. It is a water world, with just a handful of islands dotting the placid ocean that covers its surface. If you stand on the very largest island and look into the night sky, you can see almost all of the Milky Way, a huge twinkling river of stars that seems to flow through half the universe.

And if you stand on the western shore of the island during the daytime, with your back to the water, you will see a grass-covered knoll. Atop the knoll are seventeen white crosses, each bearing the name of a good man or woman who thought to colonize this gentle world.

And beneath each name is the same legend, repeated seventeen times:

Killed by Santiago.

Toward the core of the galaxy, where the stars press together so closely that night is as bright as day, there is a world called Valkyrie. It is an outpost world, a place of ramshackle Tradertowns filled with dingy bars and hotels and brothels, where the explorers and miners and traders of the Inner Frontier congregate to eat and drink and embellish a few tall tales.

The largest of Valkyrie's Tradertowns, which isn't really very large, also has a postal station that stores subspace messages the way the postal stations of old used to store written mail. Sometimes the messages are held for as long as three or four years, and frequently they are routed even closer to the galactic core, but eventually most of them are picked up.

And in this postal station, there is a wall that is covered by the names and holographs of criminals who are currently thought to be on the Inner Frontier, which tends to make the station very popular with bounty hunters. There are always twenty outlaws displayed, never more, never less, and next to each name is a price. Some of these names remain in place for a week, some for a month, a handful for a year.

Only three names have ever been displayed for more than five years. Two of them are no longer there.

The third is Santiago, and there is no holograph of him.

On the colony world of Saint Joan, there is a native humanoid race known as the Swale. There are no longer any colonists; they have all departed.

Near the equator of Saint Joan, very close to where the colony once lived, there is a blackened swath of land almost ten miles long and half a mile wide, on which nothing will ever grow again. No colonist ever reported it, or if any of them did, the report has long since been misplaced by one of the Democracy's thirty billion bureaucrats—but if you go to Saint Joan and ask the Swale what caused the blackened patch of ground, they will cross themselves (for the colonists were a religious lot, and *very* evangelical) and tell you that it is the Mark of Santiago.

Even on the agricultural world of Ranchero, where there has never been a crime, not even a petty robbery, his name is not unknown. He is thought to be eleven feet three inches tall, with wild, unruly orange hair and immense black fangs that have dug into his lips and now protrude through them. And when youngsters misbehave, their parents have merely to hint at the number of naughty children Santiago has eaten for breakfast, and order is immediately restored.

Wandering minstrels sing songs about him on Minotaur and Theseus, the twin worlds that circle Sigma Draconis, and always he is portrayed as being exactly 217 years old, taller than a belltower, and broader than a barn, a hard-drinking, womanizing Prince of Thieves, who differs from Robin Hood (another of their favorites) primarily in that he takes from rich and poor alike and gives only to himself. His adventures are legion, ranging from his epic hand-to-hand struggle with a chlorine-breathing Gorgon to the morning he went down to hell and spat full in Satan's burning eye, and rarely is there a day that does not witness the addition of a few new stanzas to the ever-evolving "Ballad of Santiago."

And on Deluros VIII, the huge capital world of the race of Man, the nerve center of the Democracy, there are eleven governmental departments and 1,306 men and women charged with the task of finding and terminating Santiago. They doubt that Santiago is his given name, they suspect that some of the crimes attributed to him were committed by others, they are almost certain that somewhere in their files they possess his photograph or holograph but have not yet matched it with its proper identity—and that is the sum total of their knowledge of him.

Five hundred reports come to them daily, two thousand leads are followed up each year, munificent rewards have been posted on half a million worlds, agents are sent out armed with money and everything that money can buy, and still those eleven departments exist. They have outlived the last three administrations; they will continue to survive until their function has been fulfilled.

Silverblue, Valkyrie, Saint Joan, Ranchero, Minotaur, Theseus, Deluros VIII: interesting and evocative worlds all.

But an even more interesting world in the strange tapestry of Santiago's life is the outpost world of Keepsake, at the heart of the Inner Frontier; for Keepsake is the home, at least temporarily, of Sebastian Nightingale Cain, who dislikes his middle name, his profession, and his life—not necessarily in that order. He has fought what he believes to have been the good fight many times over, and he has never won. Not much excites his imagination anymore, and even less surprises him. He has no friends and few associates, nor does he seek any.

Sebastian Nightingale Cain is by almost every criterion a nondescript and unremarkable man, and yet our story must begin with him, for he is destined to play a major role in the saga of the man known only as Santiago....





*Giles Sans Pitié is a spinning wheel,
With the eye of a hawk and a fist made of steel.
He'll drink a whole gallon while holding his
breath,
And wherever he goes his companion is Death.*

There never was a history written about the Inner Frontier, so Black Orpheus took it upon himself to set one to music. His name wasn't really Orpheus (though he *was* black). In fact, rumor had it that he had been an aquaculturist back in the Deluros system before he fell in love. The girl's name was Eurydice, and he followed her out to the stars, and since he had left all his property behind, he had nothing to give her but his music, so he took the name of Black Orpheus and spent most of his days composing love songs and sonnets to her. Then she died, and he decided to stay on the Inner Frontier, and he began writing an epic ballad about the traders and hunters and outlaws and misfits that he came across. In fact, you didn't officially stop being a tenderfoot or a tourist until the day he added a stanza or two about you to the song.

Anyway, Giles Sans Pitié made quite an impression on him, because he appears in nine different verses, which is an awful lot when you're being the Homer for five hundred worlds. Probably it was the steel hand that did it. No one knew how he'd lost his real one, but he showed up on the Frontier one day with a polished steel fist at the end of his left arm, announced that he was the best bounty hunter ever born, foaled, whelped, or hatched, and proceeded to prove that he wasn't too far from wrong. Like most bounty hunters, he only touched down on

outpost worlds when he wasn't working, and like most bounty hunters, he had a pretty regular route that he followed. Which was how he came to be on Keepsake, in the Tradertown of Moritat, in Gentry's Emporium, pounding on the long wooden bar with his steel fist and demanding service.

Old Geronimo Gentry, who had spent thirty years prospecting the worlds of the Inner Frontier before he chucked it all and opened a tavern and whorehouse on Moritat, where he carefully sampled every product before offering it to the public, walked over with a fresh bottle of Altairian rum, then held it back as Giles Sans Pitié reached for it.

"Tab's gettin' pretty high," he commented meaningfully.

The bounty hunter slapped a wad of bills down on the bar.

"Maria Theresa dollars," noted Gentry, examining them approvingly and relinquishing the bottle. "Wherever'd you pick 'em up?"

"The Corvus system."

"Took care of a little business there, did you?" said Gentry, amused.

Giles Sans Pitié smiled humorlessly. "A little."

He reached inside his shirt and withdrew three Wanted posters of the Suliman brothers, which until that morning had been on the post office wall. Each poster had a large red X scratched across it.

"All three of 'em?"

The bounty hunter nodded.

"You shoot 'em, or did you use *that*?" asked Gentry, pointing toward Giles Sans Pitié's steel fist.

"Yes."

"Yes *what*?"

Giles Sans Pitié held up his metal hand. "Yes, I shot them or I used this."

Gentry shrugged. "Goin' out again soon?"

"In the next few days."

"Where to this time?"

"That's nobody's business but mine," said the bounty hunter.

"Just thought I might offer some friendly advice," said Gentry.

"Such as?"

"If you're thinking of going to Praetep Four, forget it. The Songbird just got back from there."

"You mean Cain?"

Gentry nodded. "Had a lot of money, so I'd have to guess that he found what he went looking for."

The bounty hunter frowned. "I'm going to have to have a little talk with him," he said. "The Praetep system's got a Keep Out sign posted on it."

"Oh?" said Gentry. "Since when?"

"Since I put it up," said Giles Sans Pitié firmly. "And I won't have some rival headhunter doing his poaching there and picking it clean." He paused. "Where can I find him?"

"Right here."

Giles Sans Pitié looked around the room. A silver-haired gambler on a winning streak, decked out in bright new clothes made from some glittering metallic fabric, stood at the far end of the bar; a young woman with melancholy eyes sat alone at a table in the corner; and scattered around the large, dimly lit tavern were some two dozen other men and women, in pairs and groups, some conversing in low tones, others sitting in

silence.

"I don't see him," announced the bounty hunter.

"It's early yet," replied Gentry. "He'll be along."

"What makes you think so?"

"I've got the only booze and the only sportin' ladies in Moritat. Where do *you* think he's gonna go?"

"There are a lot of worlds out there."

"True," admitted Gentry. "But people get tired of worlds after a while. Ask *me*—I know."

"Then what are you doing on the Frontier?"

"People get tired of people, too. There's a lot less of 'em out here—and I got me my fancy ladies to cheer me up if ever I get to feelin' lonely." He paused. "'Course, if you want to hear the story of my life, you're gonna have to buy a couple of bottles of my best drinkin' stuff. Then you and me, we'll mosey on out to one of the back rooms and I'll start with chapter one."

The bounty hunter reached out for the bottle. "I think I can live without it," he said.

"You'll be missing out on one helluva good story," said Gentry. "I done a lot of interesting things. Seen sights even a killer like you ain't likely ever to see."

"Some other time."

"Your loss," said Gentry with a shrug. "You gonna want a glass with that?"

"Not necessary," said Giles Sans Pitié, lifting the bottle and taking a long swallow. When he was through, he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. "How long before he gets here?"

"You got time for a quick one, if that's what you mean," said Gentry. "Just give me a minute to check and see which of my frail flowers ain't working this minute." Suddenly he turned to the doorway. "Whoops! Here he

is now. Guess you'll have to go loveless a little longer." He waved his hand. "How're you doin', Songbird?"

The tall, lean man, his face angular and almost gaunt, his eyes dark and world-weary, approached the bar. His jacket and pants were a nondescript brown, their many pockets filled with shapeless bulges that could mean almost anything on the Frontier. Only his boots stood out, not because they were new, but rather because they were so demonstrably old, obviously carefully tended yet unable to hold a polish.

"My name's Cain," said the newcomer. "You know that."

"Well, it ain't what they call you these days."

"It's what *you'll* call me if you want my business," replied Cain.

"But Black Orpheus, now, he's got you all written up as the Songbird," persisted Gentry.

"I don't sing, I'm not a bird, and I don't much care what some half-baked folksinger writes about me."

Gentry shrugged. "Have it your way—and while we're on the subject, what else'll you have?"

"He'll have Altairian rum, like me," interjected Giles Sans Pitié.

"I will?" asked Cain, turning to him.

"My treat." The bounty hunter held up his bottle. "Come on over to a table and join me, Sebastian Cain."

Cain watched him walk across the room for a moment, then shrugged and followed him.

"I hear you had pretty good luck on Praetep Four," said Giles Sans Pitié when both men had seated themselves.

"Luck had nothing to do with it," replied Cain, leaning back comfortably on his chair. "I understand you didn't do too badly yourself."

"Not so. I had to cheat."

"I don't think I follow you."

"I had to shoot the third one." Giles Sans Pitié held up his steel fist. "I like to take them with *this*." He paused. "Did your man give you much trouble?"

"Some," said Cain noncommittally.

"Have to chase him far?"

"A bit."

"You're sure not the most expansive raconteur I've ever run across," chuckled Giles Sans Pitié.

Cain shrugged. "Talk is cheap."

"Not always. Suliman Hari offered me thirty thousand credits to let him live."

"And?"

"I thanked him for his offer, explained that the price on his head was up to fifty thousand, and gave him a faceful of metal."

"And of course you didn't then take thirty thousand credits off his body without reporting it," said Cain sardonically.

Giles Sans Pitié frowned. "The son of a bitch only had two thousand on him," he growled righteously.

"I guess there's just no honor among

thieves."

"None. I can't get over the bastard lying to me!" He paused. "So tell me, Cain—who will you be going out after next?"

Cain smiled. "Professional secret. You know better than to ask."

"True," agreed Giles Sans Pitié. "But everyone's allowed a breach of etiquette now and then. For example, you know better than to make a kill in the Praetep system, but you did it anyway."

"The man I was hunting went there," replied Cain calmly. "No disrespect intended, but I wasn't going to let four months' work go down the drain just because you think you own the deed to an entire solar system."

"I *opened* that system," said Giles Sans Pitié. "Named every planet in it." He paused. "Still, it's an acceptable answer. I forgive you your trespass."

"I don't recall asking for absolution," said Cain.

"Just the same, it's freely given. *This* time," he added ominously. "But it would be a good idea for you to remember that there are rules out here on the Frontier."

"Oh? I hadn't noticed any."

"Nevertheless, they exist—and they're made by the people who can enforce them."

"I'll keep it in mind."

"See that you do."

"Or you'll brain me with your metal hand?" asked Cain.

"It's a possibility."

Cain smiled.

"What's so funny?" demanded Giles Sans Pitié.

"You're a bounty hunter."

"So?"

"Bounty hunters don't kill people for free. Who's going to pay you to kill me?"

"I've got to protect what's mine," replied Giles Sans Pitié seriously. "I just want to be sure that we understand each other: if you go poaching on my territory again, we're going to come to blows." He slammed his metal hand down on the table, putting a large dent in it. "Mine are usually harder."

"I imagine they are," said Cain.

"Then you'll steer clear of Praetep?"

"I'm not aware of any pressing business engagements there."

"That's not exactly the answer I was looking for."

"I'd suggest you settle for it," said Cain. "It's the best you're going to get."

Giles Sans Pitié stared at him for a moment, then shrugged. "It could be years before anyone hides there again, maybe even longer. I suppose there's no law that says we can't behave cordially in the meantime."

"I'm all for living in peace with my fellow man," said Cain agreeably.

Giles Sans Pitié looked amused. "You picked a mighty strange profession for a man who feels that way."

"Perhaps."

"Well, shall we talk?"

"What about?"



"What about?" repeated Giles Sans Pitié mockingly. "What do two bounty hunters *ever* talk about when they meet over a bottle of rum?"

And so they fell to discussing Santiago.

They spoke of the worlds where he was most recently thought to have been, and the crimes he was most recently thought to have committed. Both had heard the rumor that he had robbed a mining colony on Bemor VIII; both discounted it. Both also had heard that a caravan of unmanned cargo ships had been plundered in the Antares region; Cain thought it might well be the work of Santiago, while his companion felt he was far more likely to have been on Doradus IV at the time, masterminding a triple assassination. They exchanged information about the planets they themselves had been to without finding any trace of him, and of the other bounty hunters they had encountered who had added still more planets to the list.

"Who's after him now?" asked Giles Sans Pitié when their tallies had been completed.

"Everyone."

"I mean, who most recently?"

"I hear the Angel has moved into the area," answered Cain.

"What makes you think he's come for Santiago?"

Cain merely stared at him.

"Stupid remark," said Giles Sans Pitié. "Forget I made it." He paused. "The Angel's supposed to be just about the best."

"So they say."

"I thought he worked the Outer Frontier, somewhere way out on the Rim."

Cain nodded. "I guess he decided Santiago's not there."

"I can name you a million places Santiago *isn't*," said Giles Sans Pitié. "Why do you suppose he thinks he's on the Inner Frontier?"

Cain shrugged.

"Do you think he's got a source?" persisted Giles Sans Pitié.

"Anything's possible."

"It's more than possible," he said after a moment's consideration. "He wouldn't move his base of operations halfway across the galaxy if he didn't have hard information. What planet is he working out of?"

"How many worlds are there out there?" replied Cain with a shrug. "Take your choice."

Giles Sans Pitié frowned. "Still, he might know something worth listening to."

"What makes you think he'll talk to you, even if you find him?"

"Because the one thing bounty hunters never lie about is Santiago; you know that. As long as he stays alive, he makes all of us look bad."

"Maybe the Angel does things differently where he comes from," suggested Cain.

"Then I'll just have to explain the ground rules to him," said Giles Sans Pitié.

"I wish you luck."

"Interested in throwing in with me until we catch up with the Angel?"

"I work alone," said Cain.

"Just as well," said Giles Sans Pitié, suddenly remembering his rum and taking a long swallow of it. "Where did you hear about him?"

"In the Meritonia system."

"I think I'll head out that way later this week," said Giles Sans Pitié, rising to his feet. "It's been an interesting conversation, Cain."

"Thanks for the rum," said Cain wryly, staring at the empty bottle.

"Any time," laughed his companion. "And you *will* make an effort to keep out of the Praetep system from now on, won't you?" He flexed his steel fist. "I'd hate to have to give you an object lesson about trespassing."

"Would you?"

"Not really," was the frank answer.

Cain made no reply, and a moment later Giles San Pitié placed the empty bottle on the bar, left enough money to cover another one he ordered for Cain, promised Gentry he'd be back to sample some nonalcoholic wares later in the evening, and walked out into the hot, humid night air of Moritat in search of some dinner.

Gentry finished serving the girl with the melancholy eyes, then brought the bottle over to Cain's table.

"What is it?" asked Cain, staring at the clear liquid.

"Something they brew out Altair way," replied the old man. "Tastes kind of like gin."

"I don't like gin."

"I know," replied Gentry with a chuckle. "That's why I'm just dead certain you're gonna invite me to sit down with you and help you drink it."

Cain sighed. "Have a seat, old man."

"Thank you. Don't mind if I do." He lowered himself carefully to a chair, uncorked the bottle, and took a swallow. "Good stuff, if I say so myself."

"You could save a hell of a lot of money by not supplying glasses," remarked Cain. "Nobody around here seems to use them."

"Savin' money ain't one of my problems," replied Gentry. "And from what I hear, makin' it ain't one of yours."

Cain said nothing, and the old man took another swallow and continued speaking.

"Did old Giles Without Pity warn you off the Praetep system?" he asked.

Cain nodded.

"Gonna pay him any heed?"

"Until the next time I have business there," replied Cain.

The old man laughed. "Good for you, Songbird! Old Steelfist is gettin' a little big for his britches these days."

"I'm getting tired of telling you what my name is," said Cain irritably.

"If you didn't want to be a legend, you shouldn't have come out here. Two hundred years from now that's the only name people'll know you by."

"Two hundred years from now I won't have to listen to them."

"Besides," continued Gentry, "Songbird



ain't on any Wanted posters. I seen Sebastian Cain on a flock of 'em."

"That was a long time ago."

"Don't go gettin' defensive about it," chuckled the old man. "I seen posters on just about all you bounty hunters at one time or another. Ain't no skin off my ass. Hell, if Santiago himself walked in the door and asked for one of my sportin' gals, I'd trot him out the prettiest one I've got."

"For all you know, he already has," remarked Cain.

"Not a chance," said Gentry. "He ain't that hard to spot."

"Eleven feet three inches, with orange hair?" asked Cain with an amused smile.

"You start huntin' for a man who looks like *that* and you're going to be out here a long, long time."

"What do *you* think he looks like?"

The old man took a small swallow from the bottle.

"Don't know," he admitted. "Do know one thing, though. Know he's got a scar shaped like this"—he traced a crooked S on the table—"on the back of his right hand."

"Sure he does."

"Truth!" said the old man vigorously. "I know a man who saw him."

"Nobody's seen him," replied Cain. "Or at least, nobody who's seen him knew it was him."

"That's all *you* know about it," said Gentry. "Man I used to run with spent a couple of weeks in jail with him."

Cain looked bored. "Santiago's never been arrested. If he had been, we'd *all* know what he looked like."

"They didn't know it was him."

"Then how come your friend knew?"

"'Cause Santiago's gang broke him out, and one of 'em called him by name."

"Bunk."

"Here I am, offerin' to do you a favor, and you turn your nose up at it," said Gentry. "Damned good thing for you I'm an old man

who ain't got the wherewithall to give you a thrashing for insulting me like that."

"What favor?"

"I thought maybe you might be interested in knowing who my friend is and where you can find him."

"There are half a dozen bounty hunters who frequent this place," said Cain. "Why give it to me?"

"Well, now, *give* ain't exactly the term I had in mind," answered Gentry with a grin. "Name like that, name of a man who actually spent some time with Santiago, it ought to be worth a little something now, shouldn't it?"

"Maybe."

There was a momentary silence.

"I didn't hear no cash offer yet."

"Let's get back to my question," said Cain. "Why *me*?"

"Oh, it ain't just you," said Gentry. "Sold it to Barnaby Wheeler a couple of months ago, but I heard on the grapevine that he got killed chasing down some fugitive or other. And I offered it to Peacemaker MacDougal just last week, but he didn't want to come up with no money. And I'll see if I can't tempt old Steelfist with it before he takes advantage of one of my poor innocents tonight." He smiled. "I got to be fair to *all* my customers."

"People have been after Santiago for thirty years or more," said Cain. "If you have any information worth selling, why did you wait until now to put it on the market?"

"I ain't got anything against Santiago," said the old man. "He ain't ever done me any harm. Besides, the longer he stays free, the longer you guys'll stay on the Frontier lookin' for him, and the longer you stay out here, the more money you'll spend at Gentry's Emporium."

"Then what caused this change of heart?"

"Hear tell the Angel has moved in. Wouldn't want no outsider picking up the bounty fee."

"What makes you think he will?" asked Cain.

"You know what they say about him," replied Gentry. "He's the best. I'll bet you Black Orpheus gives him a good twenty verses when he finally gets around to meetin' him. So," said the old man, taking yet another swig, "I'm hedging my bets as best I can. The Angel collects that money, he'll be back on the Rim before he has a chance to spend it. But if *you* get it, you'll spend a goodly chunk of it on Keepsake."

"If I don't retire."

"Oh, you won't retire," said Gentry with assurance. "Men like you and Sans Pitié and the Angel, you like killing too damned much to quit. It's in your blood, like wanderlust in a young buck."

"I don't like killing," replied Cain.

"Gonna give me that bounty hunter guff about how you only kill people for money?" said the old man with a sarcastic laugh.

"No."

"That makes you the first honest one I've met. How many men did you kill for free

before you found out there was gold in it—two? Three?"

"More than I hope you can imagine," replied Cain.

"Soldier?"

Cain paused before answering. "I thought so once. I was wrong."

"What the hell does *that* mean?"

"Never mind, old man." Suddenly Cain sat erect in his chair. "All right—how much do you want for the name?"

"What kind of currency can you lay your hands on?"

"What kind do you want?"

"Credits'll do, I suppose," replied Gentry. "Though I'd be real interested in Bonaparte francs or Maria Theresa dollars if you got any."

"I haven't seen a Bonaparte franc in ten years," said Cain. "I don't think they're in circulation anymore."

"I hear tell they're still using 'em in the Binder system."

"Let's make it credits."

The old man did a quick mental calculation. "I think ten thousand would do me just fine."

"For the name of a man who might or might not have seen Santiago ten or twenty years ago?" Cain shook his head. "That's too much."

"Not for a man like you," said Gentry. "I saw the poster for the body you brought in. I know how much you got for it."

"And what if this man is dead, or if it turns out he didn't see Santiago after all?"

"Then you got a free pass to fertilize my flowers for a full month."

"I visited your garden last night," said Cain. "It needs weeding."

"What are you quibbling about?" demanded Gentry. "How long have you been on the Frontier, Cain?"

"Eleven years."

"In all that time, have you ever met anyone who's seen Santiago? Here I am offering you what you ain't never found before, for maybe a tenth of what you just picked up on Praeteep, and you're haggling like some Dabih fur trader! If you're gonna just sit there and insult the most beautiful blossoms on the Frontier and haggle with an old man who ain't got the stamina to haggle back, we ain't going to be able to do no business."

Cain stared at him for a moment, then spoke.

"I'll tell you what, old man. I'll give you twenty thousand."

"There's a catch," said Gentry suspiciously.

"There's a condition," replied Cain. "You don't supply the name to anyone else."

Gentry frowned. "Ever?"

"For six months."

"Make it four."

"Deal," said Cain. "And if you're lying, may God have more mercy on your soul than I will."

"Ain't got no reason to lie. Only two more of you fellers due in here in the next four months, which means one of 'em's probably dead, and there's only a fifty-fifty chance the other'd come up with the money. Not everyone makes out as well as you and Sans Pitié."

"All right. Where do I find this man?"

"I ain't seen no money yet."

Cain pulled out a sheaf of bills, peeled off the top twenty, and placed them on the table. Gentry picked them up one at a time, held each up to the light, and finally nodded his head and placed them in his pocket.

"Ever hear of a world named Port étrange?"

Cain shook his head. "Where is it?"

"It's the seventh planet in the Bellermaine system. That's where he'll be."

"And his name?"

"Stern."

"How do I locate him?"

"Just pass the word you're looking for him. *He'll find you.*"

"What's he like?" asked Cain.

"A real sweet feller, once you get used to a couple of his little peculiarities."

"Such as?"

"Well, he drinks too much and he cheats at cards, and he ain't real fond of people or animals or aliens, and he out-and-out hates priests and women, and he's been known to have an occasional disagreement with the constabularies. But taken all in all, he's no worse than most that you find out here, and probably better'n some."

"Should I use your name?"

"It ought to get him to sit up and take notice," said Gentry. "When are you planning on leaving?"

"Tonight," said Cain, getting to his feet.

"Damn!" said Gentry. "If I'd of known you were that anxious, I could've held out for thirty!"

"I'm not anxious. I just don't have any reason to stay here."

"I got seven absolutely splendid reasons, each and every one personally selected and trained by Moritat's very favorite son, namely me."

"Maybe next time around."

"You got something better to spend it on?"

"That depends on whether you told me the truth or not," said Cain, walking to the door. Suddenly he stopped and turned to Gentry. "By the way, I assume your friend Stern is going to want to be paid for this?"

"I imagine so. Man sells his soul to the devil, he spends the rest of his life trying to stockpile enough money to buy it back." Gentry chuckled with amusement. "Have fun, Songbird."

"That's not my name."

"Tell you what," said Gentry. "You bring in the head of Santiago, and I'll hold a gun to old Orpheus until he gets it right."

"You've got yourself a deal," promised Cain.



Myths of the Far Future

SANTIAGO: A MYTH OF THE FAR FUTURE is a multi-part adventure path set in a future western-style sci-fi universe designed for D&D 4th Edition and the PATHFINDER RPG.

From the critically acclaimed publisher of the *War of the Burning Sky* and *ZEITGEIST* adventure paths.

SANTIAGO is based on and used under license from the novel *Santiago: A Myth of the Far Future* by award-winning sci-fi author Mike Resnick.

The player characters begin as bounty hunters, hunting down wanted criminals on the Inner Frontier of the galaxy, a long way from Deluros VIII, the huge capital world of the race of man and the nerve center of the Democracy. But soon they will take up the ultimate challenge, and race their rivals to find the biggest prize of all - the arch criminal known only as SANTIAGO. Throughout their adventures, they will meet colorful characters, rival bounty hunters, alien races, and more as they follow their target's trail across the Inner and Outer Frontiers.

MYTHS OF THE FAR FUTURE is designed not only to provide background information and rules for the SANTIAGO adventure path, but also so that you can create your own myths of the far future for the PATHFINDER RPG or D&D 4th Edition.

The Adventures

- A Visit to Keepsake
- Belladonna, Nightshade and the Sargasso Rose
- Of Devils and Virgins
- His Name is Father William
- Games of Chance
- Enemies On the Move
- An Extended Stay on Sunnybeach
- Stuck in an Alphanella Haze
- The Tangled Web We Weave
- The Angel of Death

For more information on the MYTHS OF THE FAR FUTURE setting and the SANTIAGO adventure path, please visit EN World at:

www.enworld.org/ap/

or visit us on Facebook on the *Myths of the Far Future* page



About Mike Resnick

Mike Resnick is, according to *Locus*, the all-time leading award winner, living or dead, for short science fiction. He has won 5 Hugos (from a record 34 nominations), a Nebula, and other major awards in the USA, France, Japan, Croatia, Poland and Spain, and has been short-listed for major awards in England, Australia and Italy. He is the author of more than 60 novels, over 250 short stories, and 2 screenplays, and is the editor of 40 anthologies. His work has been translated into 25 languages. He will be the Guest of Honor at the 2012 World Science Fiction Convention.

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