

# In Machu Picchu

by Craig Snyder

"I wonder what happened to Murder Man and Lust Girl?" wondered The Black Toadstool. The Anti-Justice League were in Machu Picchu, on a short vacation after taking over most of South America and the South Pole. The South Pole had been so easy.

"They were defeated by a force or forces unknown," snapped Captain Evil. "Of course."

"It doesn't matter," said Dr. X. He was dodging this way and that, trying to find some shadows to emerge from, but there were none in Machu Picchu. "We have the Rat Pack to augment our numbers."

"Rat Pack! Rat Pack!" cried various members of the Rat Pack. They were heavily armed idiots. Their only superpower was generating mild irritability in others. But they could swarm if necessary. They could sneak up behind people in airports.

"Well shouldn't we, I don't know, try to rescue them or something?" ventured The Black Toadstool. "It seems like the thing to do." His loyalty index was very high compared to most evil superheroes.

"No time," said Captain Evil. "We're scheduled to beat the living crap out of one billion Red Chinese Communists in six hours."

The Black Toadstool got out of his lounge chair and helped himself to some more grilled shrimp kabobs. He sat back down and munched thoughtfully. "These are good kabobs," he said. "But hey, what about The Schismatic Man? If he took Murder Man and Lust Girl, he might come after us too."

The ingenious Dr. X had opened a large umbrella and was experimenting with emerging out of, and retreating back into, the small shadow it created. "The Schismatic Man is yesterday's news," he said. "He's ten years out of date. What can he do?"

"I wonder," said The Black Toadstool. "He totally kicked your ass at the battle of Auburn Hills."

"There were absolutely no shadows at Auburn Hills!" protested Dr. X. "I was at a severe disadvantage."

"You dropped a Hydrogen Bomb on his head," The Black Toadstool pointed out. "And he still kicked your ass. You refused to emerge from the shadows for like six months after that. It was kind of funny, how you kept refusing to emerge and all."

"Yes. Very amusing," replied Dr. X. His voice dripped with sarcasm so caustic, the words seemed to dissolve the very air around them. At the same time there fell from his bitter lips some drops of actual liquid which, spattering on the marble floor, started to smoke and eat holes in it. So maybe it was not sarcasm but real acid after all. You could never tell with Dr. X.

