What, then, does it take to be a really good villain? We asked the actors who know best to share their valuable experience and advice.

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Shaun Chen, who plays the bad guy in currently-airing Channel 8 serial Your Hand In Mine, and has a slew of bad guy roles under his belt.

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How does it feel to know that you're the No. 1 TV villain of all time?

I think that's terrific. The other villain that I'm fond of is the matriarch in The Golden Pillow. I preferred that particular villain. On the side of the good, there was Zoe Tay, Fann Wong and Alex Man — three heavy-weight stars versus the one villain. It's the villain who has to push and make things happen, because the villain is the catalyst.

How do you play a convincing villain?

There is always a thin line that the actor draws. For example, I just finished Emily Of Emerald Hill at the Victoria Theatre. You can’t go to a soap opera and expect things to be normal. It's not meant to be normal. It is larger than life.

Why do you prefer that villain?

Well, she had far more resonance. She had far more reasons to be who she was. She was less cardboardish. Whereas, I think, in the particular soap opera genre from America, the villains were required to be more cardboard. Just more pure out-there and upfront.

You must also know the context: Masters Of The Sea was produced by Joanne Brought, the executive producer of Falcon Crest. Very often, with that kind of TV series, the villain actually pushes the show on.

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ON A dark and stormy night, you just want to get out your Count Dracula Halloween costume, stand at the window, wait for a flash of lightning, rub your hands together in unholy glee and cackle your icy cold heart out.

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MAY SEAH

VETERAN villans Margaret Chan, Jerry Yeo and Shaun Chen tell us that narrowed eyes, maniacal laughter are just the tip of the iceberg.

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Oh, and one final word: Mwahaha.