

corpses litter the scene, the only survivor an old Frenchman with a bleak sense of humor who will not explain what happened.

can the hunters trust him? And if they can, should they?

COLLECTION

OF

HORRORS

MR. THÉLÈME

**A Storytelling Adventure System
anthology for Hunter: The Vigil**

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
2075 WEST PARK PLACE
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Special thanks to our voice actors for giving up a Saturday to help us out:
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Mr. Thélème

MENTAL •••

PHYSICAL •

SOCIAL ••••

Overview

The hunters stumble across the aftermath of a massacre, just around the corner from their safehouse or base of operations, only a few minutes before the police arrive. Present at the scene, injured and shaking, is Mr. Thélème. He has no reason to trust the hunters; they have no reason to trust him. What happens when the police arrive? Do they help the enigmatic hunter pick up the pieces? Or will they take a different course of action? They must decide soon. The clock is against them.

Description

The first thing that gets you is the smell, metallic and wet. It sticks to the roof of your mouth, like the smell of an abattoir, a smell of blood and burning. The next thing is the way that your shoes start to stick in the generous spatters of sticky liquid that cover the sidewalk. And around the corner, outside of your home, a scene of horror. Eight, ten, twelve, fifteen, maybe sixteen bodies, men and women, clothes torn, flesh torn, a hell of slashes and dismemberment. Limbs crushed and torn. Eyes gouged out. Mouths torn open. Your stomach turns.

A groan suddenly breaks the appalling silence. One of the bodies is beginning to move. A small, middle-aged man, covered with blood, pushes out from under two of the bodies and tries to get to his feet. He stumbles and slowly straightens himself, running his hands over a tattered suit. He looks up at you and says in a faint French accent, "This is unfortunate, n'est-ce pas? I think the police are on their way."

THE THÉLÈME DOSSIER



Task Force: VALKYRIE have been watching Mr. Thélème for years now. They've even managed to catch him once or twice.

TFV often maximizes its effectiveness by "instrumentalizing" other hunters who work on lower tiers, feeding them information that helps them to do VALKYRIE's work. And in the hunt for Mr. Thélème, they've used researchers and hunters to compile a dossier on him. Much of the information that Susan Doyle receives in the Horror Recognition Guide (pp. 299-324) is precisely from this source, so you can feed copies of those pages — and the audio play that accompanies this scene on p. 6 — to the characters piece by piece as they embark on other investigations, just as VALKYRIE did with Susan Doyle.

Characters who are in Task Force: VALKYRIE are not immune to this sort of instrumentalization. In fact, they're possibly even more vulnerable, as the labyrinthine nature of the agency makes it even harder for them to get to the bottom of the documents, videos and audio that keeps making its way into their in-trays.

How they react to it, and what they do with it, is up to them. Consider springing this scene on the hunters just as they begin looking for the canny old devil in earnest. They expend only a minimal amount of effort looking for him: he turns up on their doorstep.

Thélème's mother engineered the possession of a group of club-goers, who then assaulted her son in a pack. They held him down and beat him into unconsciousness. While he was unconscious, Mr. Thélème's *Maman* then directed the possessed victims to turn upon each other. Mr. Thélème's own injuries aren't too bad (all but one of his Health boxes are filled with bashing damage). Her intention was a lesson for her son, a mocking statement of his impotence: *This is what I can do, and you could not save these people.*

Mr. Thélème isn't stupid. He knows exactly why these people died. And he knows exactly how pointlessly and wastefully they died. Which is part of the whole reason behind it. At the same time, he knows he has to leave.

Storyteller Goals

The only real goal in this scene is for the characters to meet Mr. Thélème. What happens when they do, and what they do with him is entirely up to them, although a character that has been fed the Thélème Dossier will doubtless react differently. The impending arrival of the police gives an opportunity for suspense. If the players waste time, the sound of sirens is a great focuser. Trouble with the police can always add more drama and tension to a chronicle.

Character Goals

Find out what happened here. Get out of here before the cops arrive.

Actions

First Aid for Mr. Thélème

The old hunter is in a terrible state. He doesn't remember what happened here and for the first time, he doesn't know what to do about it. He wants to get out of here. He's not in as bad a way as he looks — most of the blood is not his own. Still, his right shoulder is dislocated and he has a number of cuts and bruises.

The police arrive after seven minutes.

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Medicine + equipment

Action: Extended; each roll amounts for one minute of time. Six successes are needed to stop his bleeding and heal one of his levels of bashing damage. This roll can use teamwork rules.

Hindrances: Darkness (-2), police are arriving (limited dice rolls), no first aid kit (-2)

Help: Field surgical kit (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character makes Mr. Thélème's condition worse. He takes another point of bashing damage. His shoulder, already dislocated, suffers particularly badly; the Storyteller should roll Stamina for Mr. Thélème (two dice) at the beginning of the next round to see if he loses consciousness.

Failure: The character makes no progress. All he does is waste time.

Success: Progress is made with Mr. Thélème's injuries. If six successes are acquired, he stops bleeding and heals one point of bashing damage, meaning that his dice pool penalty is reduced to -1.

Exceptional Success: Extra successes merely add to the progress toward healing Mr. Thélème.

Getting Mr. Thélème to explain what happened

Mr. Thélème is their only key to explaining what happened, and why. He's barely conscious, but his faculties are intact. Getting him to spill the beans will be easy — but not here. Characters who want to get what happened out of him right now will meet with resistance.

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy or Intimidation versus Mr. Thélème's Wits + Subterfuge (-2 for his injury, total dice pool 6)

Action: Contested

The old man is still shaken, and under different circumstances, he might be a harder mark. Still, although he expresses impatience, skilled characters might be able to get some information out of them.

Hindrances: Thélème: Injury (-2, already calculated). Hunters: identifying themselves as Task Force: VALKYRIE agents (-3)

Help: Hunters: expressing obvious contempt for TF:V (+2), helping with his injuries (+1)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Mr. Thélème feeds the characters a completely convincing line.

Failure: The character doesn't manage to get anything out of the old man.

Success: Mr. Thélème denies that he harmed any of these people and says that he was an intended victim (which are both true).

Exceptional Success: Mr. Thélème reveals, in an unguarded moment, that the deaths were random, and wholly contrived by his mother as a means of getting to him.

Scattering

When the police arrive, they show up in three full squad cars, sirens blaring. Three minutes later, the Homicide detectives arrive.

What the characters — and Mr. Thélème — don't know is that the "witness" who called the police described Mr. Thélème as a major player in the massacre. Meanwhile, Task Force: VALKYRIE has got Mr. Thélème's face onto the police most-wanted roster in the locality. Once the police arrive, characters are pegged as likely suspects. If they're armed (if they've been out hunting, for example) or if they've been in trouble with the law before, it may not end well.

If the characters end up in a fight with the police, use the statistics for Cops found in **The World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 205. Characters who want to avoid a confrontation with the law are best served running.

Dice Pool: Stamina + Athletics

Action: Extended

The system here is more abstract than the usual foot chase rules (**The World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 65), to reflect the fact that a dozen or more police arrive in the space of a couple of minutes. Each player needs to roll a total of five successes in three rolls to allow his character to escape without the police seeing the hunter.

Hindrances: The characters wait until they can see the police cars before running (-2); the characters try to drag Mr. Thélème, who seems unconcerned by the arrival of the cops, along with them (-3).

Help: The characters break and run immediately they hear the sirens (+2); the characters run within 10 seconds of hearing the sirens (+1).

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The police corner the hunter. Any further attempts to run away suffer a -3 penalty to dice pools.

Failure: The police see the character, who must either stop for the cops or run away using the foot chase rules found in **The World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 65.

Success: The player rolls a total of five or more successes in three or fewer rolls. The character gets away without the police seeing her.

Exceptional Success: The character gets away immediately.

Consequences

Teaming up with Mr. Thélème and following up the Thélème Dossier: If the characters might get Mr. Thélème out of the situation, he might ask for their help, and reveal something of the nemesis that he alone is unable to kill. He's a tremendously knowledgeable advisor in other matters (in fact, he qualifies as a four-dot Mentor, if characters are so inclined to take the Merit), and so he could well earn the right to the characters' help. He'll be just as straight with characters that have the Thélème Dossier as he was with Susan Doyle: the Government want him. He'll work alongside VALKYRIE or Cheiron Group hunters to a degree, but stresses that their masters are manipulating them, too. But in the end, he needs other hunters, because only they can kill his *Maman*.

MAMAN



Statistics for Mr. Thélème's mother don't appear here. Partly for reasons of space, but mostly because Maman is not tremendously powerful. She's a minor demon with a lot of friends and an ability to create illusions. Characters trying to track down Mr. Thélème's mother might have to face a lot of lesser demons — no major demons — but in the end, taking her down could, and should, be almost insultingly easy. Her true power lies in manipulating her vastly more powerful son, who cannot harm her.

If characters go looking for her, Storytellers should create statistics for Maman that present only a small challenge to the hunters' abilities.

Trying to get out of Mr. Thélème's way: Other hunters, realizing who Thélème is, may choose to get as far away from him as they can. This is fine, although they may find that difficult. Government agencies have them on file as his associates, and demonic forces begin to target them as allies of the hunter. He is a dangerous acquaintance to make, even fleetingly.

Getting in trouble with the cops: The massacre happened outside of the characters' safehouse, and it stands to reason that the place is at risk of being compromised, as the cops begin to investigate the area. Meanwhile, hunters who get caught by the police, possibly holding arms or with blood on their hands, have questions to answer. Even if no jury could pin the deaths of all these people on them, it doesn't mean they go free.

Mr. Thélème is of course completely sanguine about getting arrested. If the police get him, he just walks out of the van the moment it stops at a red light.

Mr. Thélème, nearly immortal monster-hunter



Quotes: *"You have to laugh, non?"*

"You may be right. You may even kill me. But when you wake up tomorrow, you will still nevertheless be an imbecile. Terribly hard luck there."

"Shh! You are damaging my concentration."

Virtue: Charity. Mr. Thélème's not a bad man, and although he has, over the years, done many terrible things, he's

a sucker for a person in need. Much of the time, he does what he does because he believes it's the right thing to do.

Vice: Lust. He does enjoy his work just a little too much. It's not sexual, but he gets a massive kick from the violence, and sometimes from the torture.

Background: He's the child of an incubus and a medieval French farmer. He's the scourge of the Spanish Inquisition. He had a part in the fall of the Revolutionary Terror. He berated Karl Marx for being stingy. He saved Aleister Crowley from zombies. He manipulated Rudolf Hess into flying to Scotland. He escaped a plague of intelligent flies with John Lennon. He's been half-eaten by ghost-rats in the sewers of London and pursued through the Sumatran rain forest by spirit-summoning ape-men. He's been responsible for the deaths of more of his friends than he cares to think about. He has a familiar demon named Franz.

And after 700 years, he's finally getting old.

Description: This short, slim man has seen better days. His finely-tailored suit is in tatters. He's covered with cuts and bruises, but unlike the bodies around him, he isn't injured really all that badly. Cleaned up, he's in his late fifties or early sixties. He's all angles: straight, square shoulders, pointed chin, aquiline nose, eyes that sparkle like quartz.

Storytelling Hints: Mr. Thélème smiles a lot, but the smile rarely reaches his eyes; he makes a lot of bleak wisecracks and comments on any situation in which he finds himself. He's deadily funny.

However messed up he gets, he's always in control. He always seems to have the grasp on a situation. Chained up and tortured, or facing the firing squad, Mr. Thélème is always in control. It's half an illusion, but that illusion is often enough to get him out of a fix.

He cannot harm his mother. This more or less drives Mr. Thélème now, especially after what happened to Susan Doyle. His powerlessness in this terrifies him. In the last year, he's seen her more and more. He knows that she is toying with him, twisting the knife before finishing him once and for all. Mr. Thélème isn't a man used to relying on other people, but now he realizes that other people are his only hope. Because she's coming for him.

CASTIGATION ENDOWMENT: UNHOLY ESCAPOLOGIST

The Chevalier Thélème's fearsome reputation has, in the past, largely hinged upon the fact that no one has ever really been able to hold him. That's partly because of his uncanny skill in picking locks, but it's also because his terrible heritage has given him the ability to slip any bond, to walk out of any locked prison cell. He touches a lock that confines him and concentrates for a moment... and it clicks open. He relaxes in the ropes that tie him down and closes his eyes... and they loosen.

The power only works on physical locks (including locked doors) and bindings that confine the character. It's no use to a character for gaining entry into a place, or for freeing anyone other than himself (but if someone else shares his cell, they can of course walk out when the door opens, if they wish).

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Composure

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The hunter not only fails to escape his bonds, but finds that he cannot attempt to use this power again until he has been freed. The point of Willpower used to activate this power is lost.

Failure: The character does not escape from his confinement. The point of Willpower used to activate this power is lost. The character may attempt to use this power again.

Success: Ropes confining the character loosen, and locks click open (although locks close themselves again a few seconds after the character has escaped).

Exceptional Success: The character does not only escape his confinement, but does not need to pay the point of Willpower to do so.

Other members of the Lucifuge can learn this Castigation Endowment at the Storyteller's discretion.

HUNTER THE VIGIL

Name: Mr. Thélème

Virtue: Charity

Profession: Occultist

Concept: Near-immortal
demon hunter

Vice: Lust

Compact: Lucifuge
Conspiracy:

Intelligence ●●●●●	Strength ●●●●●	Presence ●●●●●
Wits ●●●●●	Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●
Resolve ●●●●●	Stamina ●●●●●	Composure ●●●●●

SKILLS

- ☐ Academics* ●●●●●
- ☐ Crafts* ●●●●●
- ☐ Investigation ●●●●●
- ☐ Medicine ●●●●●
- ☐ Occult ●●●●●
- ☐ Politics ●●●●●
- ☐ Science ●●●●●
- ☐ Brawl ●●●●●
- ☐ Firearms ●●●●●
- ☐ Larceny* ●●●●●
- ☐ Stealth ●●●●●
- ☐ Survival ●●●●●
- ☐ Weaponry* ●●●●●
- ☐ Empathy ●●●●●
- ☐ Expression ●●●●●
- ☐ Intimidation* ●●●●●
- ☐ Persuasion ●●●●●
- ☐ Socialize ●●●●●
- ☐ Streetwise ●●●●●
- ☐ Subterfuge ●●●●●

MERITS

- Allies (Lucifuge) ●●●●●
- Allies(Union) ●●●●●
- Contacts
- (Ashwood Abbey) ●●●●●
- Danger Sense ●●●●●
- Encyclopedic
- Knowledge ●●●●●
- Endowment
- (Castigation) ●●●●●
- Languages (English, German,
- Greek, Classical Greek,
- Japanese, Italian, Latin,
- Hindi, French)
- Meditative Mind ●●●●●
- Resources ●●●●●
- Status (Lucifuge) ●●●●●

FLAWS

HEALTH

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
□□□□□□□□□□□□

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
□□□□□□□□□□□□

TACTICS

Morality 5
Size 5
Speed 11
Defense 4
Initiative Mod 8
Armor _____

NOTES

*Skill Specialties: Academics-History, Crafts-Woodwork, Larceny-Pick Pockets, Pick Locks, Weaponry-Rapier, Intimidation-Sardonic Humor

Endowments: (Castigation) Unholy Escapologist, Familiar, Gaze of the Penitent, Hellfire, Sense of the Unrighteous

Notes: Mr. Thélème has only just regained consciousness. All of his Health boxes bar one are still filled with bashing damage, meaning that he suffers a -2 penalty to dice pools until at least two of the Health boxes are cleared.

Franz: Power 3, Finesse 4, Resistance 2, Willpower: 5; Essence: 10 (10 max); Initiative: 6; Defense: 4; Speed: 12; Virtue: Fortitude; Vice: Envy; Size: 3; Corpus: 5; Dread Powers: Agonize ●, Balefire ●●, Gremlinize ●; Ban: Must laugh audibly when in earshot of prayers, hymns or readings of religious texts (ban of task)

Audio Prop

Female Agent: And you keep escaping.

Male Agent: How do you do that?

Female Agent: 1996. 2003. 2007.

Male Agent: Do you really think that Colonel Washington deserved that? He's still on meds. He'll never work again.

Female Agent: Do you know who that man was? Man was a God-damn American fucking hero. And you reduced him to... that.

Male Agent: Difficult to condone.

Female Agent: Under-fucking-statement of the century. You have no idea of what we would have in store for you if I had my way.

Thélème: Oh, I don't know. I can imagine quite a lot.

Male Agent: How do you do it? That's all we want to know. Simple question.

Thélème: I don't.

Male Agent: Don't what?

Thélème: I don't escape.

Male Agent: Sorry?

Female Agent: So what, you're saying that you never escaped US custody? That we've got the wrong man, is that it? Mistaken identity?

Thélème: No. I think you know exactly to whom you are talking.

Female Agent: So what? Is this all some sort of a dream? Have you been in custody all this time and we just thought you got away?

Male Agent: Maybe it's a philosophical thing.

Female Agent: What, some of that "We're all prisoners in our minds" bullshit?

Male Agent: Yeah, I reckon.

Female Agent: That'd make you even more of a fuck-up than I thought.

Thélème: It could only be considered "escaping" had you actually caught me.

Female Agent: So what, Fucknut? We never caught you? The handcuffs don't count? The fucking manacles don't count as having caught you? The jumpsuit?

Male Agent: She's got a point. Saying we haven't caught you sounds like denial, really.

Female Agent: He's fucking with us. Are you fucking with us?

Male Agent: Listen, my partner's under a lot of stress right now. It doesn't have to work out like this. Tell me how you escaped last time, and exactly what you did to Washington to make him... yeah. And maybe we could —

Thélème: Cut a deal?

Male Agent: No promises, man, but —

Thélème: That would be a change.

Male Agent: What?

Thélème: No. Promises.

Male Agent: I'm hurt.

Female Agent: What the fuck are you smiling about?

Male Agent: What was that?

Female Agent: Look, Washington may have caved, but you're not —

Thélème: Not going to do the same to you? Are you made of sterner stuff, old chap? Are you going to sit there and look me in the eye and tell me how much better a man you are?

Franz: I'd call that pride.

Female Agent: What the —? What was that? What was that?

Thélème: Franz is usually insufferable, but what can I say? Even a stopped clock is right twice a day. As they say.

Male Agent: Now listen here —

Thélème: Or? Now. My friend, you should be aware that pride is a terrible sin.

Female Agent: What are you —

[Screams]

Franz: A "thank you" wouldn't go amiss sometimes, you smug bastard.

To listen to the audio prop of Thélème and the agents double click the poster.

Once you start the recording you will not be able to stop it until it reaches the end without closing the pdf.

