

Melanie Dunn, the Vengeful Loner

Quotes: "I appreciate the attention, killer, but my eyes are up here."

"I don't know how you can stand all those rules and pomp and crap. It would drive me crazy. Doesn't it drive you fucking crazy?"

"Hey, let's talk about this. I'm sure I've got something that will make this all better."



Virtue: Fortitude. Melanie is very stubborn, and tries to get her way whenever she can.

Vice: Lust. She is not only a sexual creature, but she's also impatient. It's hard for her to keep still when she wants something.

Background: Melanie was an impoverished artist, trying to make a living through sculpting and being a nude model, when she met Roth in 2002. Roth tried to feed from her, but her fire and determination caught his eye. He asked her if she wanted to be Embraced. She said she had to think about it, but one of Mr. Petrovsky's spies overheard the exchange. The next night she agreed, and Roth Embraced her in a hotel suite nearby. He left her in the bedroom while he went hunting for Vitae for his new child, but as he was about to leave he was attacked and killed by Mr. Petrovsky and his enforcers. As he was being killed, a Latino woman came to the window of the bedroom and helped her escape. She said her name was Simone, and she told her to get out of town before she was found. She didn't listen, and has been in and out of town building up contacts in the art scene for the night when it's safe for her to come back.

Description: Melanie is an attractive woman with short blond hair and bright green eyes. She's prone to wearing tight-fitting but rugged clothes, like leather pants and low-cut cotton shirts, and carries a leather backpack with her traveling supplies. She speaks with an East Coast accent.

Storytelling Hints: Melanie is used to living by herself. She flirts, strips and sometimes sleeps with men and women to get what she needs to make it through. She doesn't like or trust many other vampires, but

she's not above making a pass at the most attractive member of the coterie (and using her Majesty) to get them on her side. The only thing that will get her to think of anything but herself is if someone offers her a legitimate chance to get revenge on Mr. Petrovsky.

Opinion on the Other Characters:

Mr. Petrovsky: "Sometimes I think that the only reason why I continue to exist is so I can get a chance to take him out."

Rosario Small: "Simone's ghoul, as far as I know."

Simone: "She saved my life. I figure this makes us square."

Vampire

THE ROLEPLAY

Name: Melanie Dunn	Concept: Vengeful Loner	Flaw: Gangrel
Player:	Virtue: Fortitude	Enchant: Unaligned
Chronicle:	Vice: Lust	Stress:

Attributes			
Power	Intelligence ●●●●●	Strength ●●●●●	Presence ●●●●●
Finesse	Wits ●●●●●	Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●
Resistance	Resolve ●●●●●	Stamina ●●●●●	Composure ●●●●●

Skills		Other Traits	
Mental (-3 unskilled)		Merits	
Academics	00000	Danger Sense	●●●●●
Computer	●●●●●	Barfly	●●●●●
Crafts	●●●●●	Contacts (Att. Community)	●●●●●
Investigation	00000	Striking Looks	●●●●●
Medicine	00000	Resources	●●●●●
Occult	●●●●●		00000
Politics	00000		00000
Science	00000		00000
Physical (-1 unskilled)		Flaws	
Athletics	00000		
Brawl Dirty Tricks	●●●●●		
Drive	00000		
F Firearms	●●●●●		
Larceny	●●●●●		
Stealth	●●●●●		
Survival Shelter	●●●●●		
Weaponry	00000		
Social (-1 unskilled)		Disciplines	
Animal Ken	00000	Protean	●●●●●
Empathy	00000	Resilience	●●●●●
Expression Sculpting	●●●●●	Majesty	00000
Intimidation	00000		00000
Persuasion Seduction	●●●●●		00000
Socialize	00000		00000
Streetwise	●●●●●		00000
Subterfuge	00000		00000

Health	
Danger Sense	●●●●●○○○○○
Barfly	○○○○○○○○○○○○
Willpower	
Striking Looks	●●●●●○○○○○
Resources	○○○○○○○○○○
Vitae	
	○○○○○○○○○○
	●●●●●●●●●●
Blood Potency	
	●●●●●○○○○○
Humor	
	10 ○
	9 ○
	8 ○
	7 ●
	6 ●
	5 ●
	4 ●
	3 ●
	2 ●
	1 ●
Equipment	
Size	5
Defense	2
Initiative Mod	4
Speed	9
Experience	
Armor	

Attributes: 5(4) • Skills: 11(7) (+3 Specialties) • Clan (+1 bonus Attribute; see p. 92) • Covenant • Blood Potency 1 (May be increased with Merit points) • Disciplines: 9 (Two dots must be in-clan) • Merits: 7 (Buying the fifth dot in Attributes, Skills or Merits costs two points) • Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = 5 for adult human-sized Kindred • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5 • Staring Humility = 7 • Vitae = d10 roll

Scenes

Scenes are the main building blocks for your story. All the material thus far sets the foundation and provides the mortar, but you and your troupe will decide how to put these blocks together.

Plotting

The heart of **Criminal Intent** is a problem that becomes more and more complex as the coterie digs deeper into it. The more they uncover, the harder it is for them to get out without making an enemy of someone. As such, the story plays out in a somewhat linear fashion, as the players follow the clues to uncover more and more of the story. However, immersing this story into the politics of your chronicle's Kindred can make the story seem far less straightforward than it really is. Even if you decide to run this as a contained or unconnected story with very few ramifications to the overall chronicle, it touches on the conflict between legalities and politics in Kindred government. And in the Danse Macabre, politics doesn't just mean standing around in an Elysium arguing about feeding rights – blood, violence and even Final Death are a possibility in every negotiation. That said, you have a lot of control over two elements of the story: how fast-paced it is, and how much of an impact politics play.

The story is very player-motivated, so it might seem difficult to control pacing. What if the players want to spend an hour investigating Rosario's apartment, when they need to be looking for Melanie? What if they breeze through their conversation with Simone without finding out her connection to Rosario? Part of the strength of the Storytelling Adventure System is that scenes and other story elements can be moved around and revised on the fly based on your needs. If you need to get things moving more quickly, move up the scene where Simone gets the drop on the coterie or Mr. Petrovsky's enforcers attack. If you need to slow things down, throw more obstacles at the coterie – have them find out that someone moved the painting, or make it harder to find one of the key Storyteller characters in the chain of events. You can use the political background as well to control pacing, as one Primogen can provide a valuable clue while another threatens to turn them over to the Sheriff.

How much the events of this story impact your political structure is also flexible. On the one hand, **Criminal Intent** might have little impact – Mr. Petrovsky and Simone are small cogs in a huge political grist mill, nothing more than the latest casualties in the Danse Macabre. Conversely, they might be the puppets of already-established Kindred in the local court, or Mr. Petrovsky and Simone might be puppeteers themselves. They might be relatively isolated from the established webs of intrigue, or so firmly enmeshed that even being seen with one or the other sends ripples throughout the chronicle.

Ultimately, it's about what your players have fun with. If they enjoy spending hours meeting various Storyteller characters in a variety of locations to deal with the events of this story, feel free to let them do so. If, however, they're sick of dressing up and sipping tea and just want to get some action, toss out the Machiavellian plotting and dive into the mystery.

Sample file



Storyteller Character Relationships

Scene Flowchart

Simone: Blunt instrument.

Rosario Small: Unfortunate bystander.

Melanie Dunn: Rabid animal.



Mr. Petrovsky: Sick fucker.

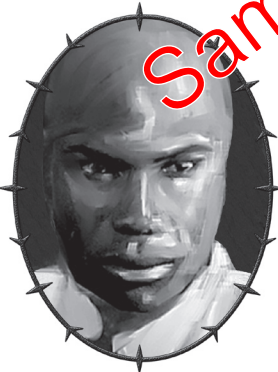
Rosario Small: Needed tool.

Melanie Dunn: Owes me a favor.

Mr. Petrovsky: Wants me dead.

Simone: Weird mentor

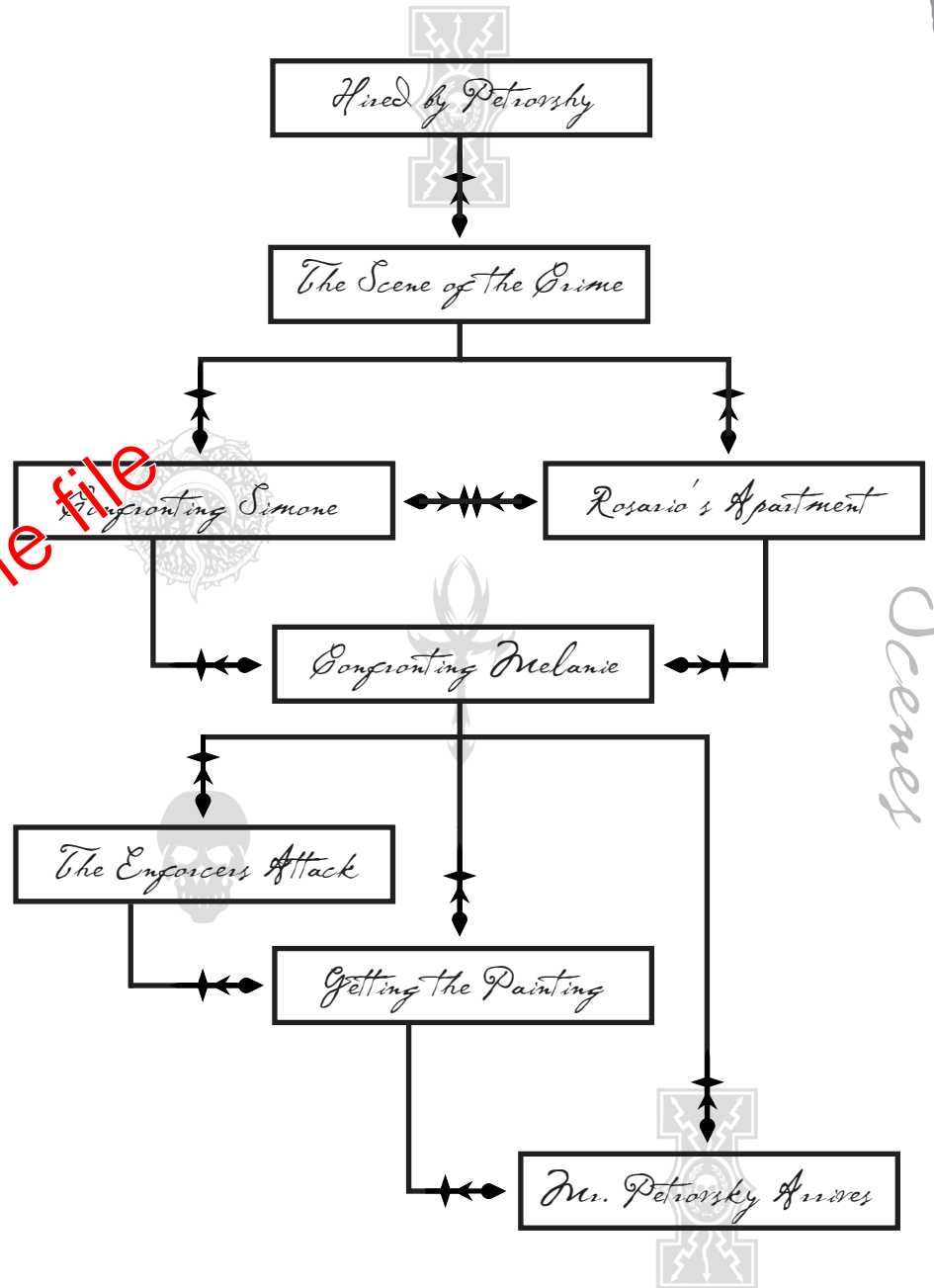
Melanie Dunn: Hot, but not bright.



Mr. Petrovsky: Needs to die.

Rosario Small: Simone's ghoul.

Simone: Paying off a debt.



Hired by Mr. Petrovsky

MENTAL • PHYSICAL — SOCIAL •

Overview

The coterie arrives to meet with Mr. Petrovsky in what appears to be a rented home (not his haven) to find out what they're supposed to be doing. Mr. Petrovsky proceeds to tell them a false version of the events of the previous evening. During the conversation, they learn a bit about Mr. Petrovsky and possibly realize that they're being lied to.

Description

The directions you're given lead to a residential area in town. It's a middle-class neighborhood: the houses are too run-down to be a bland suburbia, but it's quiet and clean. There are neighborhood watch stickers on most of the windows, and every once in a while you can see a curtain twitch as you make your way down the street. Probably some nosy housewife or old lady looking for a bit of excitement, but some of them could be spies working for Mr. Petrovsky – or his enemies.

You almost end up passing the house you're looking for. It's a well-maintained brick home with a one-car garage that sits a little further back from the street. The address is on a discreet brass number plate by the door, only barely noticeable in the evening gloom. The doorbell chimes faintly behind the door, and you are greeted by a fit middle-aged blond man who introduces himself as John.

As John shows you inside, the house reminds you of a nice hotel room – it's comfortable, but it doesn't have any of the individual touches that a home accumulates over time. He leads you quietly to the basement, which is furnished as a game room in a similar style as the main floor. The only personal touches are a few extremely well-maintained guns and metal sculptures lying around the room, some of which are stamped with Cyrillic characters. Standing by the door is another plain-looking man, a dark-haired version of John, who gives an almost imperceptible nod as you enter. Mr. Petrovsky sits on a barstool next to a bar topped with stiff leather, fiddling with the parts of a disassembled pistol. John gently taps him on the shoulder, and he looks up at you, smiling.

"Good evening," he says softly, with no trace of an accent. "Please have a seat, and let's get right to business, shall we?"

Storyteller Goals and Tips

It's important to leave a vivid image of Mr. Petrovsky in the players' minds as this scene unfolds. As you portray him, keep a conversational distance – don't have him engage in small talk, always refer to everyone as "Mister" or "Miss," don't use contractions ("I am" instead of "I'm") and have him politely ignore any humorous comments. When the topic of compensation comes around, his tone turns to that of a disapproving father, and he will excuse the coterie as soon as the conversation is completed.

Don't let all this characterization tempt you to linger too long in this scene, though. The focus should be on communicating the appropriate information to the players so they can start digging into the meat of the story. The coterie should leave the meeting with three main clues – the scene of the incident, Simone and a mortal named Rosario.

TWEAKING MR. PETROVSKY'S PITCH

There are a lot of ways that Mr. Petrovsky might try to entice the coterie into working for him depending on what motives are being used. Here are some lines of dialogue that you can sprinkle into the scene.

Previous Experience: "We have done good business in the past, and I hope we can continue that working relationship."

Covenant Support: "I trust your devotion to the goals and ideals of our covenant will serve you in good stead in the coming nights."

Working From The Inside: "Your interest in the workings of my covenant intrigues me. I hope you find this small concern merits your attention and brings you to a closer understanding of our philosophy."

Paying Off A Debt: "Honoring one's debts is one of the keystones of our society. It pleases me to see such young members as yourself keenly respectful of it."

Up-and-Comers: "Your rise in our society has not gone unnoticed. I'm sure a decisive resolution to a problem such as this will do nothing but further your growing respect in the eyes of my peers."

Here Comes The Money: "I am willing to pay handsomely and promptly for discreet and thorough resolution to this situation."