

The Devil's Night

A new Storytelling Adventure System Scene for the World of Darkness

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One Place Left

There are only two places in the city where I thought I'd be safe.

"We've just learned that the city's oldest church, Saint Michael's, is also up in flames. As firefighters rush to yet another fiery scene, many citizens are wondering whether or not they'll live through this year's tragic Devil's Night..."

Now there's only one left.

I hurry past a reporter on the sidewalk in front of Saint Michael's, hoping she won't notice me. "Padre nostro," I pray softly. Taking refuge in the shadows, I pull the collar up on my trench coat and start making my way toward the city cemetery.

Along the way, I accidentally stumble past another blaze I had started. The fires crackle and spit so loudly that they barely cover up the screams of the people trapped inside. Their cries will haunt me, but I don't have time to be afraid of them right now.

La notte del diavolo. Maybe the devil is doing this to me. Maybe I didn't go to church enough or I didn't pray enough...

"Oh, God!" I shout. The flames dance in my hands, reacting to my heavy guilt.

"Are you okay, miss?" an older-but-kinder voice asks. "What's wrong with your hands?"

"Per piacere, stay away from me," I hear the warning escape from my lips, but my hands betray me and reach for his jacket. He tries to pull away, but it's too late. The angry flames eagerly lick his clothes, burning through the fabric in order to get to the aging flesh beneath.

"Help!" he screams into the empty night.

Running past him, I douse my hands in a muddy puddle and try to outrun the acrid smell of his burning flesh. One place left. Lord, let me find sanctuary on that hallowed ground. Maybe even peace.



About the Storytelling Adventure System

Think of an SAS product as a story kit, as if you'd bought a piece of modern furniture and brought it home in a big flat box. You open it up, eager to be the Storyteller for your troupe, but what you find is a collection of pieces and parts (like the parts in this article). To put it together, you'll need some tools: in this case, the [World of Darkness Rulebook](#), and any other books for the World of Darkness for the

particular chronicle you're running (such as [Vampire: The Requiem](#) or [Changeling: The Lost](#)). You'll use these parts and tools to build a story together with your friends. It might not look quite like you expect it to when it's all done, but as long as everyone enjoys it, it doesn't matter how you end up using all the pieces, or even if you throw some of them away.

To learn more about the **Storytelling Adventure System**, be sure to read the free SAS Guide, found at the SAS website: www.white-wolf.com/sas

The Devil's Night

Mental • Physical • Social •

Overview

As the player characters plan for All Hallows Eve, they suddenly find themselves embroiled into a deadly fight with a pyrokinetic named Gabriella who has lost control of her ability. Several buildings around the city are on fire; this offers the player characters plenty of options to find and determine the best way of dealing with an “innocent” teenage pyrokinetic.

Description

Normally you'd ignore the vandals creating havoc on Devil's Night, because you have better things to do. Only this time, they're not just jumping on cars or bullying kids out of their Halloween candy. This time, they're trying to burn the entire city to the ground – and they don't care who gets caught in the flames. That old place on Seventieth Street. A grocery store. Some hospital. You follow the trail of burning flesh and glowing embers straight to a single girl who's looking right at you with a confused look in her eye.

Storyteller Goals

Introducing a pyrokinetic who has lost control of her ability allows Storytellers to show that not every situation is cut-and-dried in the World of Darkness. This particular scene can be customized to fit the needs of any story. For example, Gabriella could be introduced as a villain who lost control because she got drunk at a party. On the other hand, she could also be brought in as a victim, and some other monster is controlling her through other means. Your goals could range from “a chance for the player characters to use their investigative skills” to “provide an opportunity for the player characters to address an explosive situation in a non-violent way.”

The tone of this particular scene is frightening, because Gabriella's loss of control could signal more dangerous scenes ahead. Because Devil's Night is a time of citywide mischief, both Gabriella's actions and the decisions made by the player characters could potentially affect the Storyteller characters in the scene; they could either help or hinder the resolution.

Gabriella is motivated by her guilt to regain control over her ability. She identifies certain buildings as “safe” because they have a religious or deeply personal significance to her, and she will try to find haven in them. When Gabriella starts a fire in a random location (or on an innocent bystander), she flees from the scene out of fright, relying on her ability to blend into the night. Because her emotions often act as a catalyst for her actions, Gabriella may start fires more frequently when cornered.

Character Goals

Track down the girl that's starting fires all over the city and figure out a way to stop her.

Actions

Player characters can use whatever actions they feel are necessary to “contain” Gabriella without killing her. An unconventional approach would be for the player characters to lure Gabriella to a specific location, and into a trap of their own design.

Luring Gabriella

Dice Pool: Presence or Manipulation + Persuasion vs. Gabriella’s Resolve + Composure (dice pool 6)

Action: Contested

Hindrances: Speaker is cruel (-1); Characters have previously injured Gabriella (-1 to -3, depending on Gabriella’s current wound penalty); Other Storyteller characters are starting fires of their own (-1 to -3)

Help: Speaker is kind (+1); Speaker is religious (+1); Storyteller characters are helping to contain the situation (+1 to +2)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The speaker fails to lure Gabriella into their trap, and Gabriella’s emotions get the better of her, causing her body to ignite. For her next action, Gabriella will try to light the speaker on fire.

Failure: The speaker fails to lure Gabriella into a trap and she decides to flee from the scene.

Success: The speaker convinces Gabriella to accompany the player characters to a location of their choosing.

Exceptional Success: The speaker convinces Gabriella to follow them wherever they tell her to go. As a result, Gabriella regards the group as her “saviors” and believes they were sent to her from heaven.

Consequences

If Gabriella gets upset or feels threatened, she’s likely to start another fire. If the characters attack her directly, her actions will depend upon her perceptions of the player characters. For example, if she perceives the player characters as “helpful” before they attack, she’ll do everything she can not to start a fire. On the other hand, if Gabriella believes that the player characters are not there to help her and they attack anyway, she may eventually give in to their relentless pursuit because she thinks they’re there to punish her.

Bystanders could potentially be affected by Gabriella and the player characters, and might take their cue to either help start more fires or help put them out for their part during Devil’s Night.

Depending upon how the player characters choose to deal with Gabriella, this scene could integrate with an existing story or lead to a new one where they end up encountering whoever (or whatever) is pulling Gabriella’s strings.

Gabriella St. Bruno, Confused Pyrokinetic

Quotes: *“Do you know what it’s like to watch your sister die? I do, because I did it. I’m the one that started the fire, and I’m damned for it.”*

“Your guilt is nothing compared to mine.”

“I must be in hell. I’ve lost control of the fire.”

Virtue: Faith. Regardless of how many buildings she's destroyed and how many people she's killed, Gabriella still believes that some day she will be redeemed.

Vice: Wrath. Fueled by guilt, Gabriella is angry with herself and with the world. She has been known to lose control of her temper on more than one occasion.

Background: Gabriella St. Bruno grew up just outside the city limits in a small house by the docks. She likes to think that she came from a hard-working, devout family, but Gabriella doesn't really know much about her family's origins. Her pyrotechnic ability first manifested in her family's home when she was twelve; Gabriella is still haunted by the sight of her sister burning to death. After the tragedy, Gabriella was taken in by a sympathetic priest at Saint Michael's who taught her how to control her "gift" and to find shelter in her faith. Even though the priest never explained why he knew what he knew, he took more than a passing interest in Gabriella's welfare, and even offered to help her find a home so she could enroll in school. Besieged by guilt, Gabriella turned down his numerous offers to help her get reacquainted in society. It wasn't until after the priest died of natural causes that Gabriella started to realize what a saint the man was. Oddly enough, his death came about the same time she started losing control over her ability.



Description: Living on the city streets has toughened Gabriella's appearance. Not only is she scrawny, but her face has already weathered from being out in the sun too long. Even though she relies on the charity of others, Gabriella prefers clothing that will allow her to blend into the shadows. Conscientious of her appearance, Gabriella is adamant about her personal hygiene, almost to the point of obsession. As a result, the casual observer regards Gabriella as just another vain teenager. For someone that might take the time to get to know her, they might notice that she always wears a pair of gloves (even in the summertime), or the haunted look in her eyes. Gabriella's face looks gaunt and hollow because she can't afford any makeup; she keeps her white-blond hair closely cropped to her head out of convenience more than anything.

Storytelling Hints: Gabriella's past offers you the chance to use her character in a variety of ways to fit your story. The priest in her past could have been a hunter who reported to The Long Night, or a ghoul for a member of the Ordo Dracul. Gabriella could have been the daughter of a mage, or maybe she inherited her pyrokinetic ability through her grandparents who had emigrated from Italy amidst claims that they were related to Lucifer.

If you don't want to delve into Gabriella's past, you can focus on her present situation. Her inability to control her pyrokinesis provides you with the flexibility to enhance your current story or add a little spice for one scene. Gabriella could have been manipulated by other vampires to target certain havens, or she could also be used by hunters who prefer less scrupulous methods for dealing with the supernatural. Regardless of why Gabriella is starting fires around the city, her seemingly random targets will give the player characters plenty to do if they want to keep their safe houses, havens, laboratories or sanctuaries safe.

Before you integrate Gabriella into your story as a regular antagonist, you'll want to determine whether or not she's a victim or villain for your chronicle. To best portray Gabriella as a victim, you can amplify the fact that she's homeless, desperate and hungry. If you decide to introduce her as a villain, you can describe her roving, angry nature, and the suspicious way she keeps to the shadows.

Steeped in her emotions, Gabriella reacts first and thinks later most of the time. The faith that the priest instilled in her has had a profound effect on her psyche. When Gabriella has control over her pyrokinetic

ability, she will seek out threatening fires and “help” firefighters put them out. When she doesn’t, as in this scene, she will allow her desperation (and subsequently, her Wrath) to take over. Her vice allows you to introduce the idea that she can regain control over her abilities if someone mentors her to master her anger.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Investigation 1, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Science 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2 (Running), Drive 1, Stealth 2 (Moving in the Darkness), Survival 3

Social Skills: Intimidation 1, Persuasion 1, Socialize 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4 (Spotting Lies)

Merits: Pyrokinesis 5 (see below), Pyrokinetic Immunity 2 (see below)

Willpower: 6

Morality: 7

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Size: 5

Health: 8

Armor: None

Supernatural Powers

Pyrokinesis

Effect: Pyrokinesis represents the ability to cause objects to spontaneously combust. Psychics with this power are usually referred to as pyrokinetics. Pyrokinesis is separate and distinct from Thermokinesis, the latter of which permits a psychokinetic to actually manipulate ambient temperature. Pyrokinesis does not directly produce heat. Instead, this power triggers a chemical reaction that causes a given material to burn. A fire triggered by this power continues to burn until its fuel has been exhausted or until the fire is put out normally. A pyrokinetic can also extinguish an existing flame (whether or not she started it), but stopping a fire may be more difficult than starting one, as a fire may quickly spread to encompass a bigger area than that which was ignited. Once a fire is set, it follows all normal rules for fire damage. (See the [World of Darkness Rulebook](#), p. 180.)

For more information, refer to [Second Sight](#), pp. 50-51.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Resolve to start a fire. Stamina + Resolve to snuff one out.

Action: Instant to start a fire. Extended to snuff out a fire, with each roll representing one turn.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The psychic suffers one point of lethal damage due to painful psychic feedback. Alternately, the psychic might produce a flame of the desired intensity but not where he wants it to combust. A pyrokinetic attempting to snuff a flame might make it larger instead.

Failure: The attempt to start or extinguish a fire is unsuccessful.

Success: The pyrokinetic ignites his target. If attempting to snuff out a flame, the pyrokinetic accumulates a number of successes equal to the Size of the fire +1.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes are their own reward.

Pyrokinetic Immunity

Prerequisites: Pyrokinesis

Effect: Your pyrokinetic is highly resistant if not completely immune to fire. Make a reflexive Stamina + Resolve roll when your character is exposed to mundane fire, with each success providing one point of armor that protects only against fire damage.

The effects of Pyrokinetic Immunity last for one scene, although clothes and possessions are not protected. No protection is provided against supernaturally induced fires or flames.

For more information, refer to [Second Sight](#), p. 52.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Stamina + Resolve

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The psychic is not protected from the flames, and fire damage is increased by one.

Failure: The psychic is not protected from the flames, but she can try again in the next turn as a subsequent attempt.

Success: Each success provides one dot of armor.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes are their own reward.

SCENE: The Devil's Night		
MENTAL ●●	PHYSICAL ●●●	SOCIAL ●●●
HINDRANCES	HELP	OTHER
Speaker is cruel (-1). Player characters have previously injured Gabriella (-1 to -3 depending on Gabriella's current wound penalty); Other Storyteller characters are starting fires of their own (-1 to -3)	Speaker is kind (+1); Speaker is religious (+1); Storyteller characters are trying to contain the situation (+1 to +2)	None
STs Offer a night of mischief and mayhem for the player characters. PCs Track down the girl that's starting fires all over the city and figure out a way to stop her.		

Scene Name: The Devil's Night

MPS Scale: Mental 2, Physical 3, Social 3

Hindrances: Speaker is cruel (-1), Player characters have previously injured Gabriella (-1 to -3 depending on Gabriella's current wound penalty); Other Storyteller characters are starting fires of their own (-1 to -3)

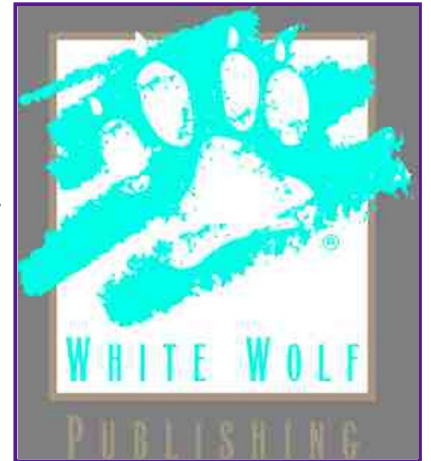
Help: Speaker is kind (+1); Speaker is religious (+1); Storyteller characters are trying to contain the situation (+1 to +2)

Other: None

STs: Offer a night of mischief and mayhem for the player characters. (Although you have the flexibility to add additional goals.)

PCs: Track down the girl that's starting fires all over the city and figure out a way to stop her.

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