

The Father

You're an 18-year-old kid who has just discovered something unforgivable in your father's basement room. You need to run. You gather a few things in a backpack and head out into the Stockholm night. Where are you going? What will you do?

A fan-made scenario for KULT: Divinity Lost

Introduction

“The Father” is a one-shot game for one player with character creation by questionnaire.

Content warnings: murder, human sacrifice, abusive parent, losing family members, psychiatric disorders, being unsafe in somatic and psychiatric care institutions.

These notes are unofficial Fan Content for KULT: Divinity Lost, permitted under the Helmgast Fan Content Policy: <https://helmgast.se/meta/fan-content-policy>

“The Father” is a work in progress. This is version 4.

If you decide to run this scenario, I encourage you to change anything you feel needs changing, and keep what you like.

Text in *italics* are examples of what the GM might say.

Themes

“The Father” is based on the idea that someone close to you may be doing awful things without your knowledge. It’s meant to be played fast and intense, with a clear antagonist with few redeeming features. It also leans into the urban fantasy aspect; after the main character has been forced to run, and their whole world is falling apart, a new, scary and magical world opens up before them.

Alternative setup

Omitting the bullet points on the first question leaves the unspeakable thing found in the basement up to player choice. This often works well.

To speed up character creation, the game could be played with +1 to every attribute.

Questionnaire

First a few basic facts of the character.

Name and gender and **looks** are all up to you.

Attributes. Assign +2, +1 and +0 to the passive Fortitude, Reflexes and Willpower. Assign +3, +2, +1, +1, +0, -1, and -2 to the other attributes. Any choice you like goes!

What have you found in your father's basement?

- ◆ The decomposing body of your lost sibling
- ◆ A sacrificial altar covered in dried blood
- ◆ A walk-in fridge with human organs in jars

What did you take from there as evidence of his crime?

What is wrong with you?

- ◆ Your father put a curse on you as soon as he notices the intrusion (**Cursed**)
- ◆ A piece of your father's soul is implanted in you, struggling for control of your mind (**Haunted**)
- ◆ What you have seen in the basement will haunt your dreams for life (**Nightmares**)

What strength have you inherited from your father?

- ◆ A keen eye for the cracks in reality (**Enhanced Awareness**)
- ◆ A spellbook that belonged to your grandfather (grandfather's grimoire and **Dabbler in the Occult**)
- ◆ A ruthless killer instinct (**Streetfighter**)

What was your relationship with your father like before?

Is there anyone you can turn to, or are you all alone?

What's in your backpack?

How are you leaving the house? Did you steal a vehicle from the garage, are you on foot, or are you taking the metro?

Setting the stage

It's Thursday 28 October 2022. Your parents' house is in Danderyd, an extremely affluent suburb of Stockholm.

Because of what you have found, you start out with a stability of Shaken (-2 to disadvantage rolls and -1 to Keep It Together).

What will you do? Where will you go?

What has happened

The father is a death magician or an occult-minded serial killer, but his exact purpose and powers can and should vary with player choices. Incorporate any object mentioned by the player (e.g., when asked about evidence) into the ritual and following events.

The decomposing body of your lost sibling. The sibling disappeared a few months ago. Police have been around, interviewing everyone, but there are no concrete leads. The consensus may be that the sibling has run away. No suspicion has been voiced against the father, or has it? The sibling may have been murdered because they refused to enter into the father's apprenticeship as a magician, or because they threatened to expose him. The murder may be part of a ritual to bring back the child as a being under the father's control.

A sacrificial altar covered in dried blood. A ritual has been performed here. In this case, the victim is more likely unknown to you. There is no body. Have there been any missing persons on the news lately?

A walk-in fridge with human organs in jars. The jars may contain organs linked to different aspects of the human psyche, and handling the jars may bring back traces of related emotions and memories from the unwilling donors. The father is testing, through serial killings, his theory that emotion as well as cognition are placed in our bodies to keep our souls in check. Is there a suspected serial killer operating in the city, or has he been too good at hiding his tracks?

Why was the door open? Here are a few suggestions:

- ◆ To let you find the scene, putting you in a susceptible state where the father can awaken your magical talents
- ◆ As a part of the ritual, to let the soul of the dead sibling leave before the father takes control of the body
- ◆ It was opened by your mother, in the hopes that you find it and leave before the father does something to you too

When you grow with it you might not even think there's anything strange about it, because it's always been there—a door that was always closed, that only your father could open.

The disadvantage

The curse. The curse comes into effect after about one hour. It might cause a traffic accident destroying any vehicle used, vivid memories of what was found in the basement, a fire while sleeping at the friend's place, in a motel or on the train. If communicating with the father, he explains that the curse will follow you wherever you go, until you submit to his will.

The child will never rest in one place until they are back under my roof.

Alternatively, if the father is present in the basement room, he may speak the curse to you immediately.

A piece of your father's soul is implanted in you, struggling for control of your mind. Other than in exceptional circumstances, this is not a direct link to the father's mind, but rather a weakened, angry and confused version of him, sharing his mind with you. The piece of the father will try to wrest control of your behaviour, to make you do risky things, scare or antagonise your friends, or weaken you when you face threats.

You notice something. Maybe it's new, or maybe it's always been in you, laying dormant. There's someone in your head, an uninvited guest. You hear a voice that is like your father's voice, only distorted, as if he was speaking through a toy megaphone. He's yelling your name. "What are you doing? Where are you?"

What you have seen in the basement will haunt your dreams for life. When sleeping, you dream of what you saw in the basement, your father explaining in great detail what he did and how much pleasure he took in it, or of him doing the same to you. If pulled into the dream, you may have to face the father there.

The advantage

A keen eye for the cracks in reality. The Enhanced Awareness advantage allows insights about a place where the Illusion is weak, and the Illusion is weak in many places in Stockholm. In the father's basement room, you might see glimpses of Inferno and your father's crimes. In proximity of the Angel or when seeing the towers, you might see further into Metropolis. If a part of your father's soul is in you, focusing hard might allow you to speak with him in a vision. In the Underworld of Stockholm, you can get further insights into what awaits below. At the police station, or in the psychiatric ward, you can sense a lictor's presence.

Grandfather's grimoire. This is a brown leather-bound notebook carved with symbols that eclectically mixes Hebrew, Greek, Norse runes, astrological symbols and occult emblems. Your grandfather was born in 1922, and died when you were around seven. His longhand is not easy to read, especially since he mixes Swedish, Latin and German. You almost wish that Södra latin, your school, lived up to its name and still was a Latin school, as it was in your grandfather's time. It contains your grandfather's magical record, effectively his diary, ceremonies, spells, and beliefs. There are sketches of magical circles and pentagrams, but also crop circles, what looks like space ships and other machinery mixing futurism and what we might now call steampunk. He describes different ceremonies and spells. What kind of spell are you looking for? You might find it.

The grimoire also contains your grandfather's journal. If you take the time to read it, you will learn that your grandfather believed that humanity was ruled by an ancient race of aliens hiding among us. There's a sketch of a tall fat creature with a long tongue. He also believed that humans came from space, and that all our technical achievements, from pyramids to the industrial revolution, are inspired by alien knowledge. You will also learn that he found your father a great disappointment, a failure who would not take up his mantle and his knowledge.

A ruthless killer instinct. In addition to the mechanical advantage in close combat, this should shape your view of the world. Do you usually respond to opposition with violence? Does that mean you are capable of the same things as your father?

Places to be, people to see

The towers of Metropolis. Stockholm is close to Metropolis. In your affected state, you will see steel and glass towers, silhouettes in the sky, mirror images in the water. They are visible from the Metro, when it's above ground close to the station, and when you're driving on the highway, or when walking in central Stockholm. If you consciously try to travel towards them, they will elude you at first. If you persist, and See Through the Illusion, you might be able to enter the borderlands of Metropolis.

Pursuit by vehicle. How observant are you? If driving, walking or biking, you eventually notice a car tailing you. It may be driven by your father himself, trying to shoot at you to disable your car, or by the corpse of your dead sibling, trying to hit you and ram you off the road. If a fragment of your father's soul is in you he may try to take control of you, to make you crash the car.

The message. When you have a moment to check your phone, maybe on the Metro or the train station, you will find missed calls from your father, and a text. The text begins with "Please, son/daughter, I just want to talk with you ...". If you read further, the text continues with obscure Unicode characters, and then what looks like corrupted symbols, with pixels that move. The phone gets stuck on that screen, light on, not responding to any commands and impossible to turn off. In addition to bricking the phone, this tells your father where you are, until you destroy or throw it away.

Your high school friend. You attend Södra latin, one of the most prestigious upper secondary (high) schools in the country. You may have a best friend from there. They may know what to do, but maybe you don't want to put them in danger by involving them? They live in Årsta in southern Stockholm. You can get there by getting the red Metro line and then switching to commuter train in Liljeholmen. You pass the central station on the way. If your father is in you, he may try to antagonise them.

Your mother. Your mother, if she is in play, has been abused and manipulated by your father for decades. However, she loves you more than anything and will not tell on you if you contact her. If you've contacted her, she may show up when you face the father. It might be possible to convince her to help you. Should your father try to outright murder you, and she is present, she might step in.

Attack by purgatide. If you have angered the father, and you rest in a hostel, motel or at your friend's place, you may be attacked by a purgatide. It may be an unknown face, or your dead sibling. It won't relent until killed or until you've witnessed it killing someone you care about. If your father's soul is in you, he will try to hinder you from fighting or running.

Going to the police. The closest police station that is open this late is Täby, north-east from Danderyd. You can get there by bus or by tram, or it's about 15 minutes drive. After struggling to get them to take you seriously, you are put in a locked waiting room. After an hour, a large man in a suit comes and introduces himself. If agitated, you may see a glimpse of his true form. He's a lictor, who is delighted that you are defecting from your father. He will demand the evidence from you, and the grimoire if you have it, so that he can destroy them, and then attempt to put you in mental hospital. In that way, he seeks to lure your father out so that he can be attacked. He may also decide that you can be a pawn in a later plot against the father.

Going to hospital. The closest hospital is in Danderyd, a square glass building. If in hospital, you may get treatment for your physical wounds. However, your father will find you, and try to bring you home. If you've drawn the attention of the police, the lictor may come to see you here. If your father is in you, he tries to make you behave erratically.

Mental hospital. St Görans psychiatric emergency ward, Kungsholmen, central Stockholm, takes you if you are sent there by the police. You may be taken here if you are too agitated when going to the hospital. Your father may also have told the authorities that you're having a psychiatric episode. In any case, he may come see you physically or in a nightmare. He may try to recruit you, try to harm you, or tell you that you're experiencing psychosis—of course, you both know that isn't true, but he may be able to sweep the evidence under the rug and make sure no-one believes you.

The angel on the Metro. If you travel by metro, you will take the red metro line towards the central station. There aren't that many people on it on a Thursday night. After a couple of stops, you are alone in the cart with a man dressed only in frayed jeans, t-shirt and sandals. He looks at you; do you meet his gaze or look away? If you look at him, See Through the Illusion to notice his broken wings. You may have to also Keep It Together. He notices, and comes up to you. You can run, but if you don't he will talk to you, offering his help. He will recognise your father's name. He can introduce you to the laughing man if you need help to hide.

“You’ve had a rough night, if you can see this. What are you doing here, kid?”

The laughing man. There’s an all-night open cafe close to the central station, where in the early morning you may find the laughing man, if guided by the angel, or by chance/intuition. In exchange for information about your father, effectively your life story, and the evidence, he may guide you into the underworld of Stockholm.

The Underworld. The entrance is a tunnel located on a metro station that is perpetually being refurbished. Below is a society of outcasts, living in the borderlands of the real Underworld below. This may be a way out, to live there and bide your time for a potential future revenge. You might also be able to trade for a weapon, if you feel the need for one. They won’t take money, but if you empty your bank account and buy drugs, that will work as barter.

The madness magician. After a day or two, you may be contacted by Sonja Edelkrantz, a madness magician. She is aloof and slightly erratic, not of this world. She may offer to help you, if you help her make a move against your father. She wants the grimoire, if you have it, or if not, a sacrifice from you. You may give up a piece of your body or a piece of your mind. In return, she performs a ritual that strengthens you or weakens the father.

Leaving Stockholm

Here are some potential ways to leave Stockholm and run further afield:

Going north. Northern Sweden is big and sparsely populated, but has some cities. If you See Through the Illusion outside of them, expect to see Gaia. There is a night train to Umeå (some 600 km north along the coast). The train will take about eight hours. Driving would take about seven. On the way, you will pass several smaller towns including Gävle, Sundsvall, Härnösand.

Going south. Likewise, there will be a night train going south to Malmö. It takes about seven hours. A train during the day is more like five. Driving would be six hours. On the way, you will pass through places like Södertälje, Norrköping, Linköping, Växjö, Lund. As Sweden’s third largest city, Malmö will have most things you can find in Stockholm, including a rich community of occultists and drifters. From Malmö, a commuter train over the Öresund bridge can take you to Copenhagen in 40 minutes. You will arrive in Vesterbro, a legendary district known for drugs, decadence, and nowadays gentrification and tourism.

Long-distance buses. There are long distance buses, departing from the City Bus Terminal, which is only a couple of escalators away from Stockholm Central station. They will be cheaper but more confined than the trains.

Getting the commuter train. There are commuter trains departing from a different set of platforms than the long-distance trains. It's easy to ride these trains without paying, because the ticket inspections are scarce. There are night buses as well, that take a bit longer.

The most common departure is Uppsala, a university town about 40 minutes away. Uppsala houses the seat of the archbishop of the Church of Sweden, and the national cathedral, as well as a one of the oldest universities (the other being Lund). As such, it has an active occult scene but also a strong influence of hierarchy. Expect lictors to keep an eye on you here.

Beside Uppsala, you might also get commuter train to smaller towns like Sigtuna and Strängnäs, each about an hour away, or Södertälje, 20 minutes south of Stockholm but basically grown together with the metropolitan area. Södertälje is industrial, dominated by pharma and vehicle manufacturing, and close to Metropolis.

Arlanda airport. Arlanda airport is about halfway on the way to Uppsala by commuter train, night bus, or the dedicated train Arlanda Express (always empty because it's extremely overpriced and not appreciably faster). To even get into Arlanda you need to have bought a ticket ahead of time and be able to show it on paper or on your mobile device. If you try to get in anyway, in the state you are in, security will probably surmise that you are on the run, and take you to the small police station they have at the airport. If you have bought a ticket and have your passport or national ID card, however, there should be a flight in the morning to several major airports in Europe. Flying outside of Europe is probably too expensive, even if you empty your account.

The End

Running. You may be able to leave Stockholm and run. You have to keep running all your life. Maybe you can find the means for revenge, and ridding yourself of your haunting or curse, somewhere else?

Hiding. There are several places in Stockholm where one can escape the prying eyes of others. The Underworld might be such a place, where you could find shelter, and even eventually plan your revenge, should you desire.

Facing the father. If you are armed, have set a trap with the help of your grandfather's grimoire, or have convinced the angel to fight with you, you might stand a chance against your father. He uses destructive death magic and is armed with a handgun, but he is only a human. If your father is convinced that you won't join him, he will simply try to shoot you. Defend yourself as best you can.

Joining the father. Your father may explain that he wants you to follow in his footsteps. He needed to find if you were ready. If you can convince him, sincerely or not, that you will be loyal to him, you can join him. This will lead you down a path of death magic. In the future, you may be able to take revenge, if you so desire.

He smirks at you. "Why did you think that door was open tonight in the first place?"

Being recruited. The lictor, the Laughing Man, or even the madness magician, may take recruit you—willingly, or by means of threats, to later be a part of their schemes against the father.