



Sleight of Mind

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A Different Kind of Game Jam! Reflecting Science, Technology and Society through Game Design

Agenda

Goals

Setting

Story

Game Mechanics

Inspiration



GEORGE CRUIKSHANK'S ENGRAVING IN A SATIRE

Goals



Dangers of Unchecked Power

Hypnosis, symbolizes the ability to control others' minds. Is there a moral dilemma of using such power, even for purposes like crime-solving?



Consent and Autonomy

Can people truly consent to something as invasive as hypnosis?



Truth is Fragile

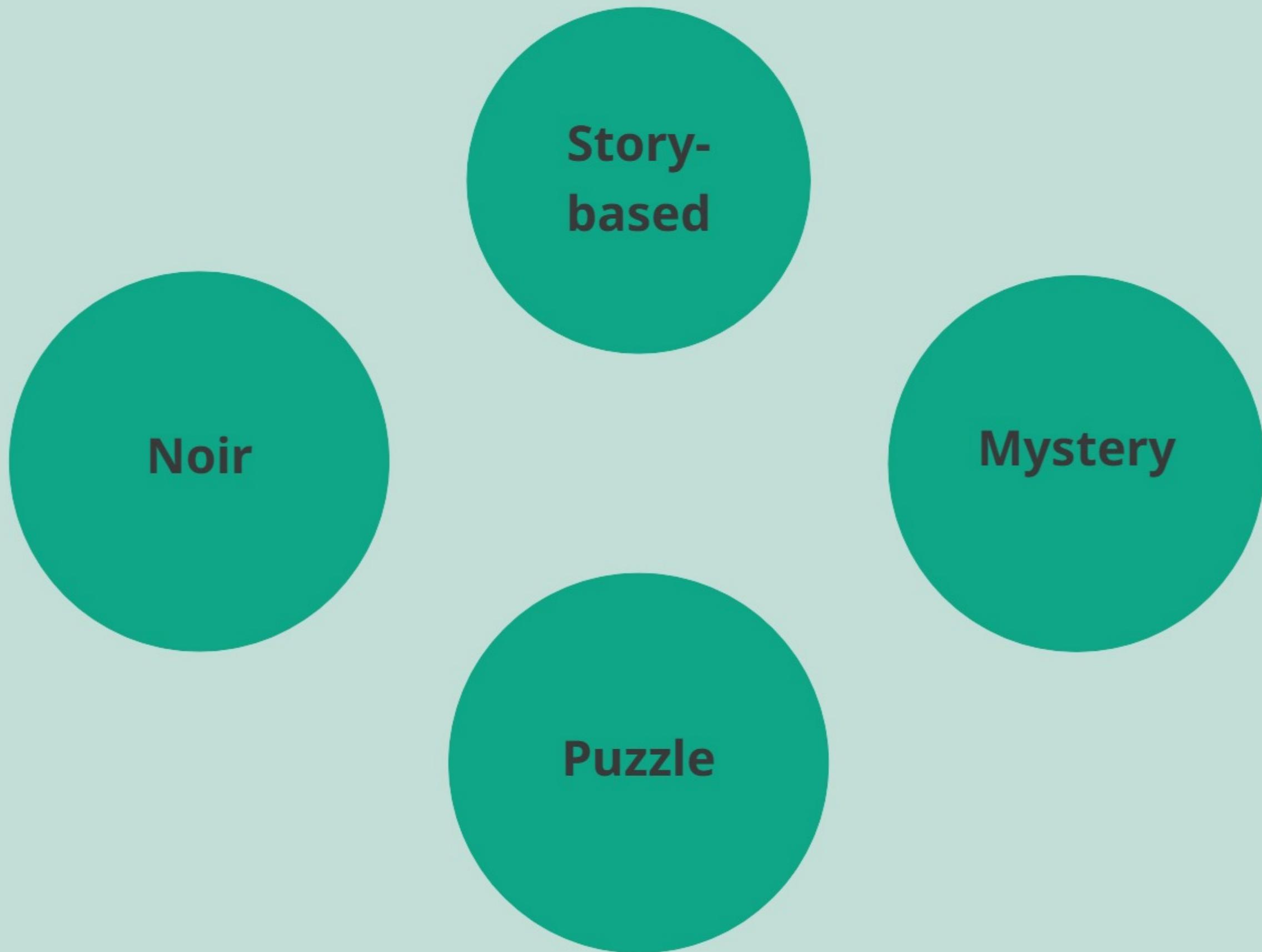
Truth is fragile and can change depending on who holds the power to define it.



Science & Justice

Solving the case using era-specific methods, players experience how societal views of science influence justice and ethics.

Genre



Setting

Time Periods

The game takes place in 3 periods in Paris: 19th Century, the present (2025) and the future (2065)

Past



In the 19th century, crimes were sensationalized in the press, creating a culture of fear and intrigue. Social classes were sharply divided, with the wealthy viewing the working class as potential criminals. Hypnosis and other "new sciences" were both revered and feared, creating the tension between progress and morality.

Setting

Present



The present day is shaped by advanced forensic science, digitized police work, and ethical debates around technology's role in justice. Public trust in institutions is fragile, with concerns about data privacy, bias in AI, and the misuse of power.

Future



The future is a world of hyper-advanced technology such as memory-reconstruction technology and AI dominates crime-solving. Society deals with questions like how much autonomy is left in a world of predictive policing?

Map



The playable area is limited to a single building - a police station.

Not only does the appearance of the building change in different time periods, but also the access restriction to rooms.

Most of the story plays on the ground floor. But there is also an old archive in the basement.

The map is inspired by the police department of Resident Evil.

Police Station



Past

In the past, solving crimes relied on witness testimonies, social cooperation, street patrols, basic crime scene investigations, and sometimes coercive interrogations.

Setting

Present

Police forces rely on a combination of advanced forensic science, digital technologies, data analysis, international cooperation, and community engagement to solve crimes.

Future

The future of police work and crime-solving in Europe will be shaped by advanced technologies such as AI, robotics, quantum computing, blockchain, and smart city infrastructure.

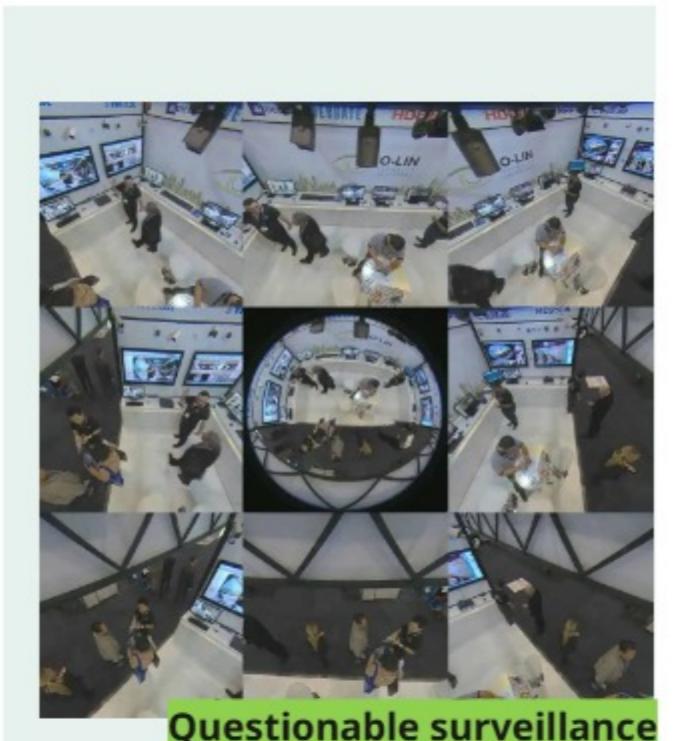
World Building

Truth is Fragile

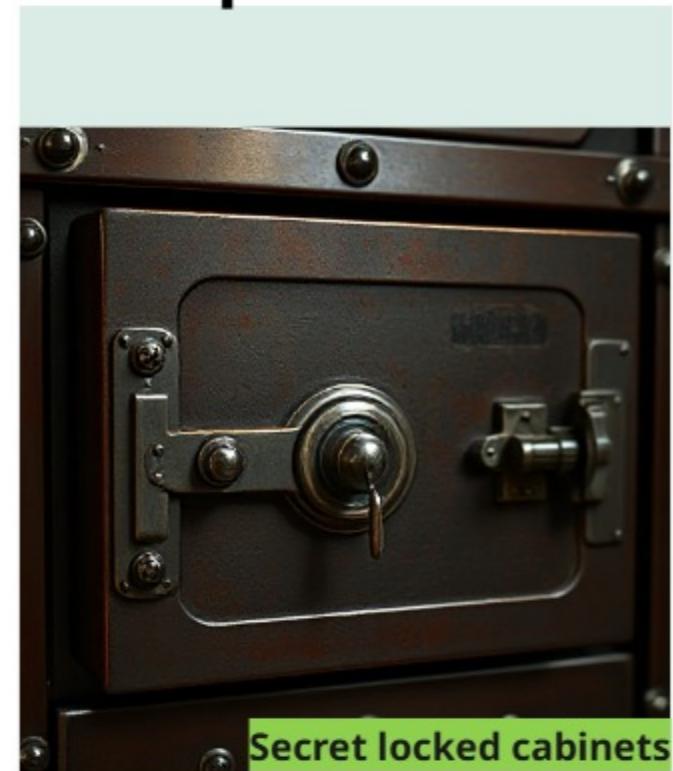


Setting

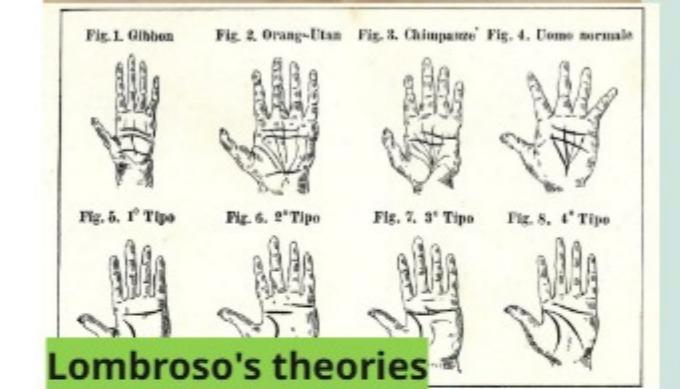
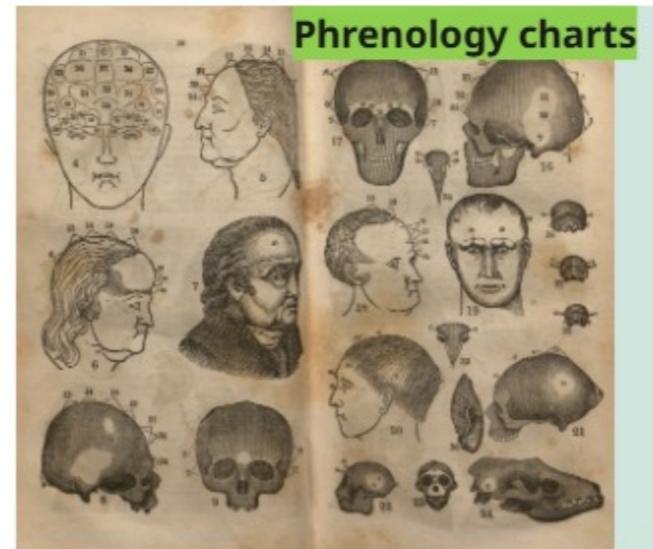
Consent & Autonomy



Dangers of unchecked power



Science & Justice



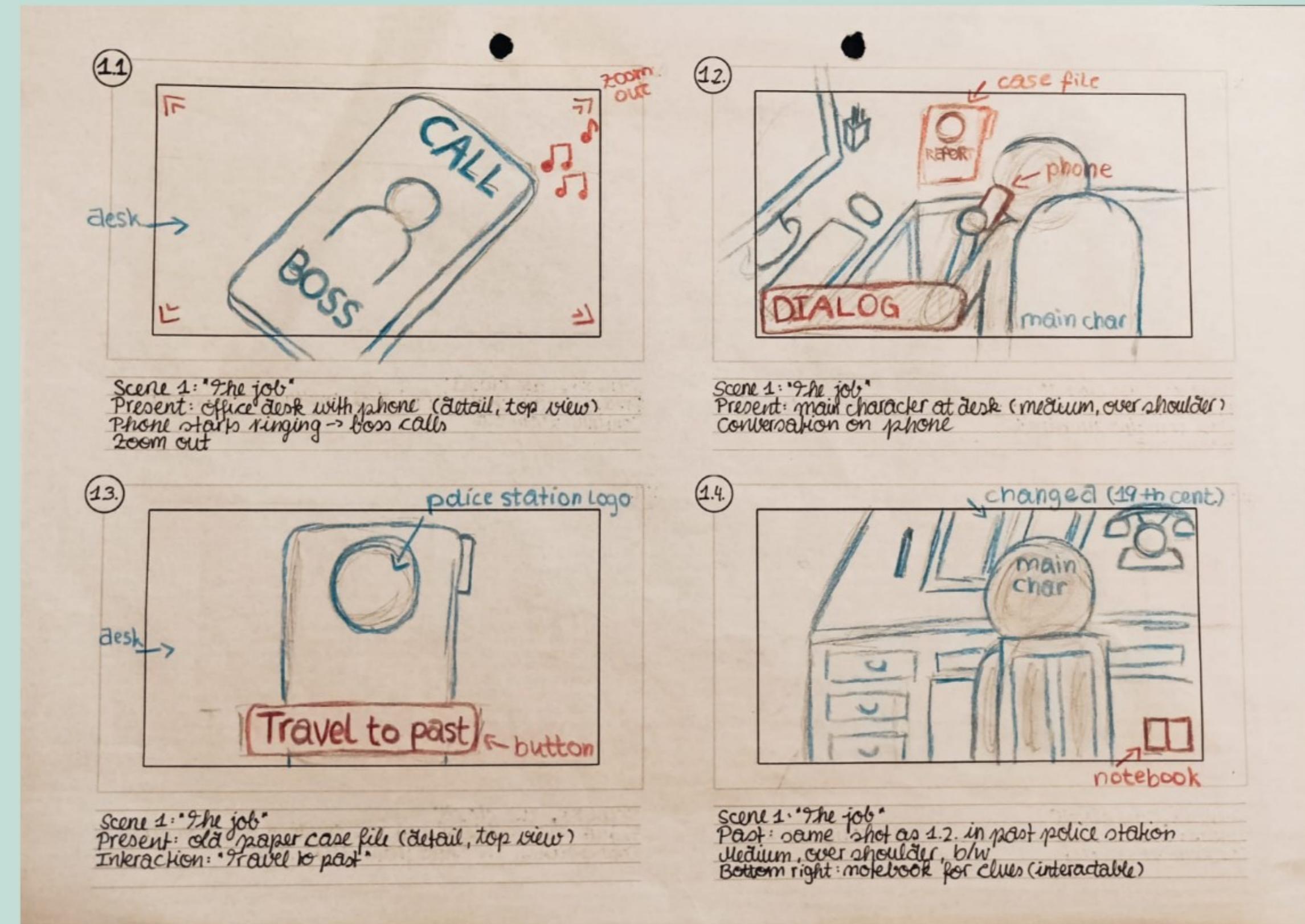
Privacy vs Security



Storyboard: Intro sequence

The boss instructs player to investigate an unsolved case from the 19th century which still raises question to this day.

It is about the murder of Inspector Henri in a room full of witnesses who claim not to have seen anything unusual.

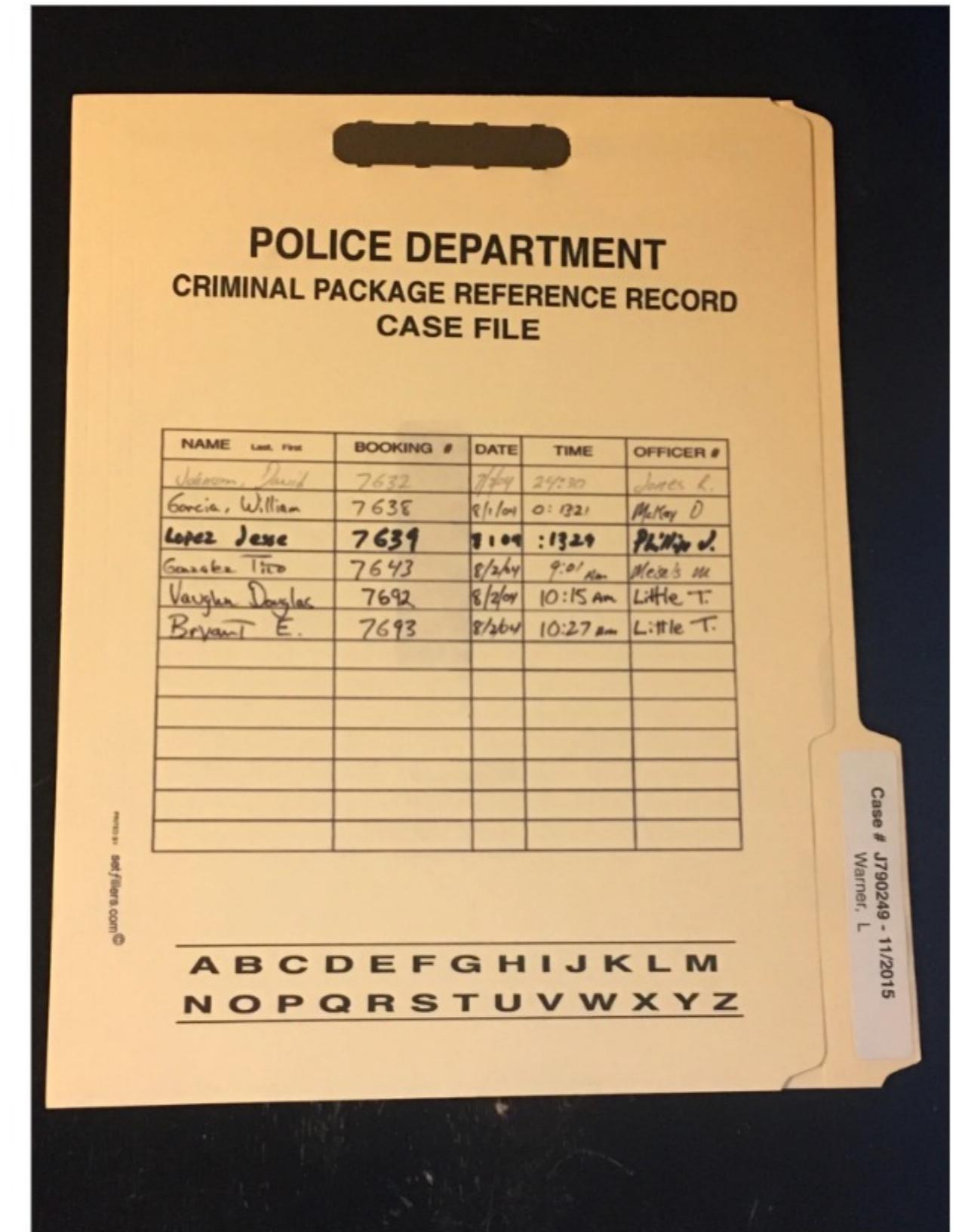


Paper File

The paper file of the past murder is a special item.

It doesn't only include the basic information of the past murder but player can also use it to travel back in time to investigate the scene of the actual crime.

To create a strong visual distinction between the past and the present time, the past scenes are additionally displayed in black and white.



Hypnoism Scene



Inspector Henri tries
to induce
Mademoiselle Dupont
into a hypnotic state.



He uses a special
device, a music box,
that plays a melody
making people more
suggestive to
hypnosis.



However, the
demonstration doesn't
end with a confession;
instead, there is a
dead body now.

Main Character

Detective Nancy Dion

- Fiercely independent and unafraid to challenge authority.
- She takes the case to confront the ethical implications of her own profession
- The case is complex and requires unraveling layers of mystery, which appeals to the detective's inherent desire for clarity and justice.



Past Detective

Inspector Charles Henri

- Persistent, ambitious and arrogant.
- A firm believer in the emerging science of criminology.
- Intended to try hypnosis on the criminal suspect to reveal what she knows about Rousseau's whereabouts



Criminal

Marguerite Dupont

- An independent thinker.
- Began associating with radical intellectuals and social outcasts.
- Detained after being accused of orchestrating the disappearance of a prominent industrialist, Francois Rousseau.



Journalist

Jean Pierre Laurent

- An investigative journalist for *Le Petit Parisien*
- Quick to piece together subtle clues but does he really know how the murder happened?
- Writes an article titled “*Death in the Hall of Justice, A Killer's Silent Strike*”



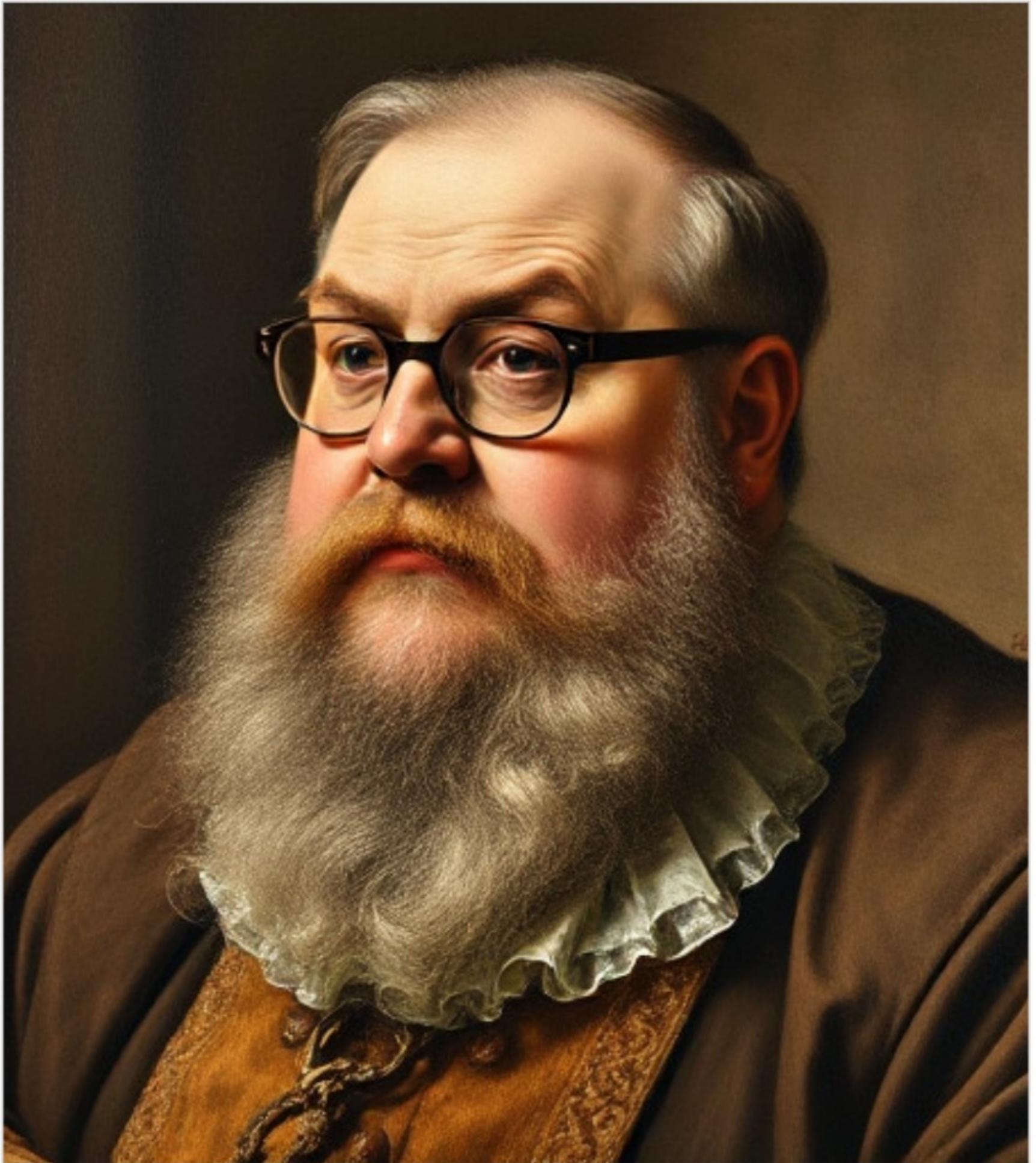
Doctor Etienne Moreau

- A respected physician with expertise in neurology
- He was invited by Henri to assess the criminal's mental state during the interrogation.
- Writes a medical report on Henri's death

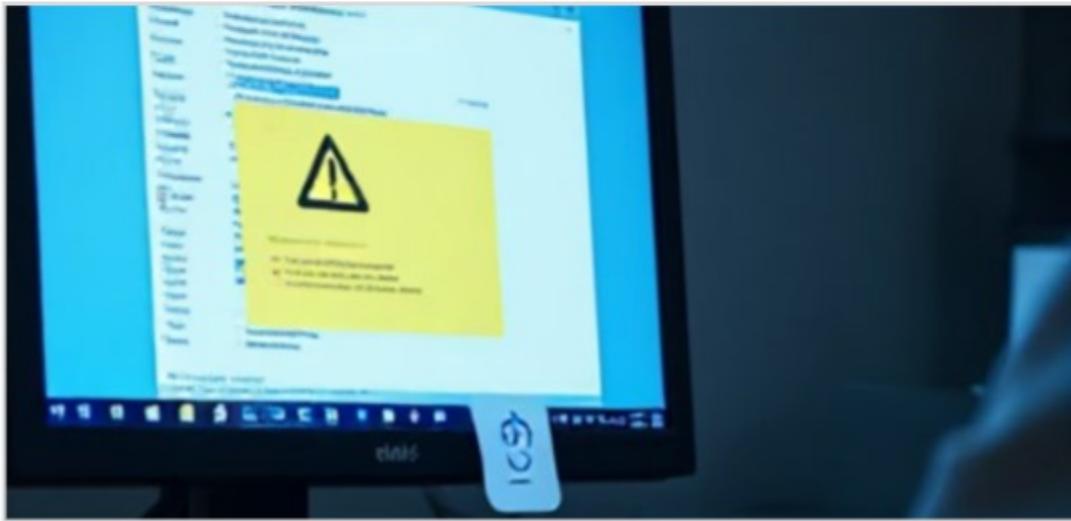
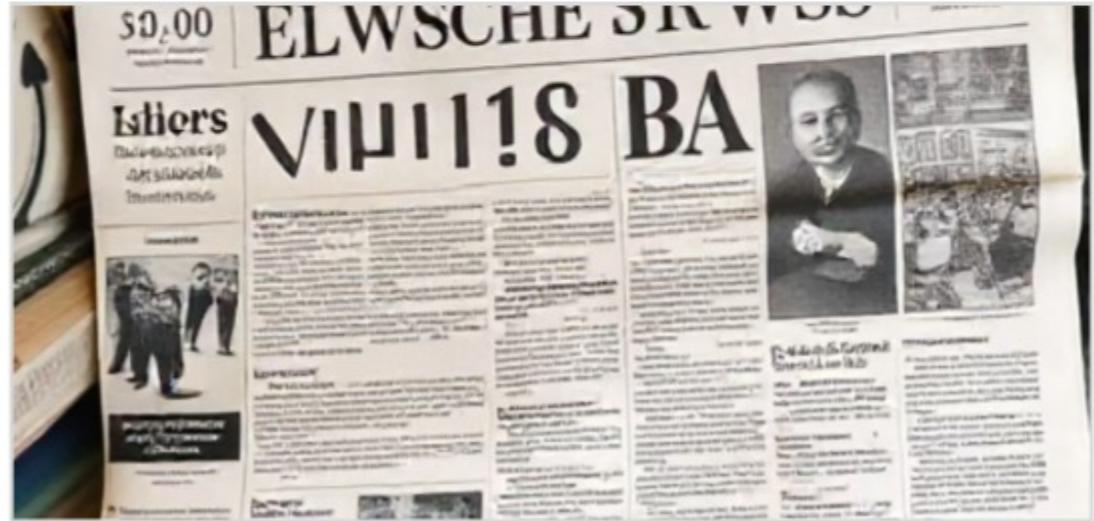


Prosecutor François Martin

- Rising star in the judicial system.
- Sympathetic to the scientific trends of the time, such as criminology, but skeptical of other "soft sciences" like hypnosis.
- His witness account reflects this.



Evidence



Past

Press article from Jean Pierre
(Journalist),
Medical Report from Dr Martin
(Doctor)
Witness testimony
Physical evidence from the
interrogation room

Present

The evidence is stored
on the computer,
physical evidence is
still available in the old
archive

Future

The evidence is stored
on a virtual chip

Mesmerizing Music Box

The music box is a mechanical device that plays a hauntingly beautiful melody. However, the tune is more than just music, it is designed with subtle, rhythmic patterns that facilitate hypnosis when played under controlled conditions.

In the 19th century

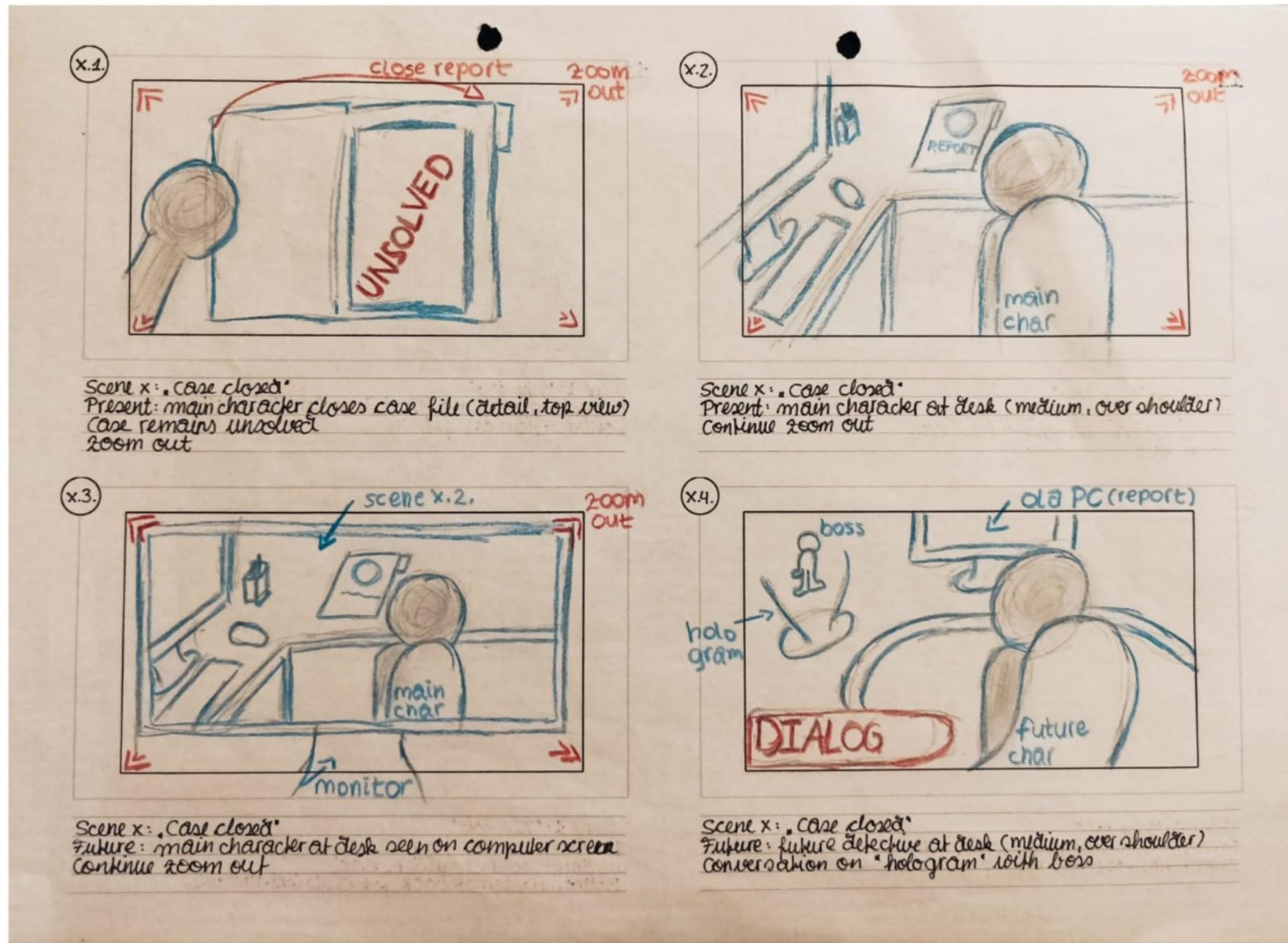
The music box is central to Detective Henri's groundbreaking interrogation method. He believes it enhances his ability to extract confessions by putting suspects in a suggestible state of mind.

In the Present

The box is seen as a relic, it is dismissed as pseudoscience by modern police officers. Out of curiosity, the detective (Nancy) plays the melody, unknowingly exposing herself to its hypnotic effects. The melody clouds her ability to think clearly, distorting her perception of the case.



Ending: Seeing the Future



In the end, player deems the case unsolvable and proceeds to close it.

The camera keeps zooming out until we see that someone is watching player on a monitor.

It turns out, that this is a future detective who tries to solve the case and is actually travelling "back" into the present time to gather evidence.

Game Mechanics

Game Play

Basic flow
of the
game

Quests

Player incentive
to push
forward in story

Evidence

Interaction with
items

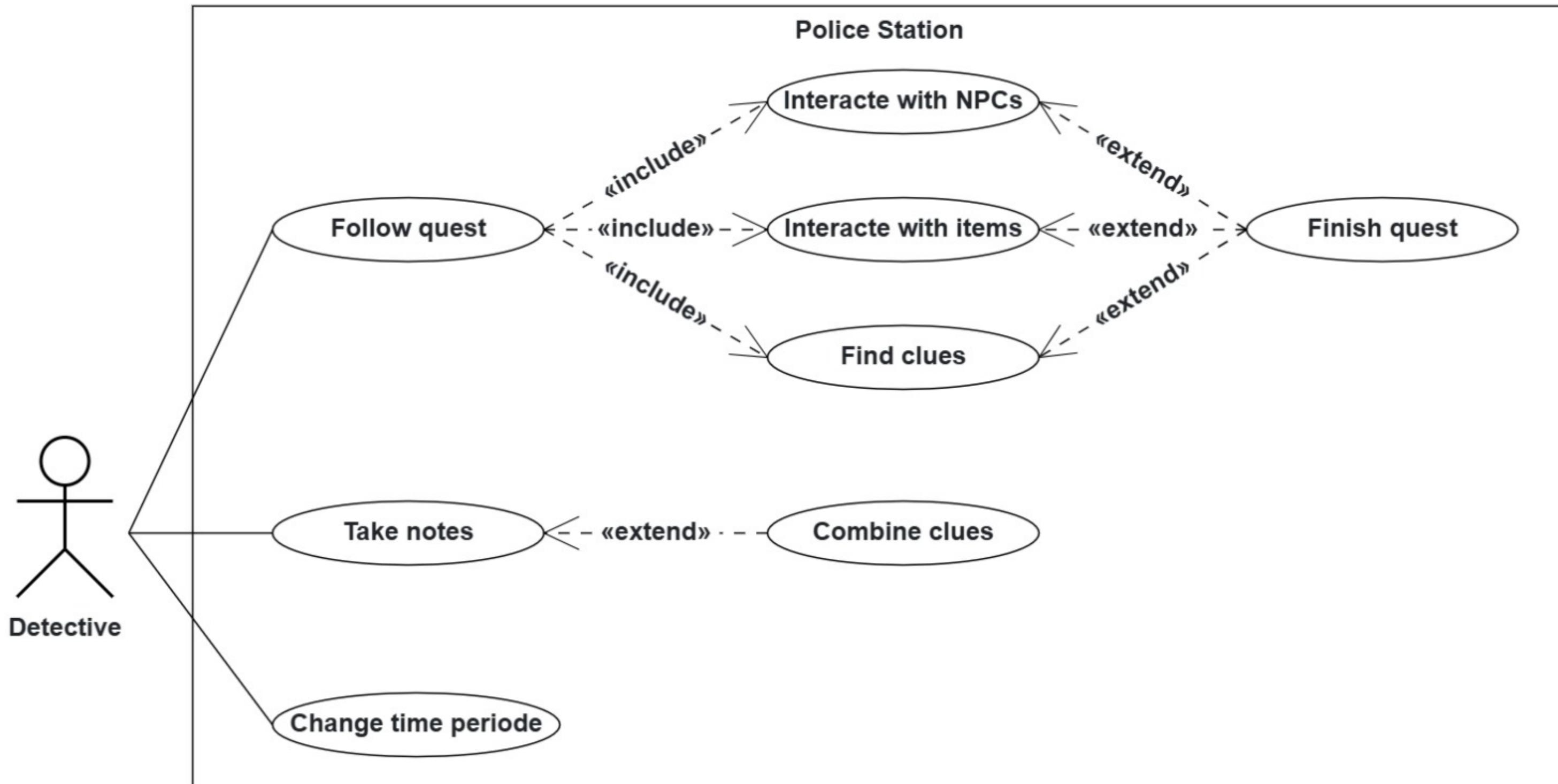
Dialog

Interaction with
NPCs

Notebook

Finding
connections
between clues

Game Play: Use Case Diagram



Quests: Key Task



Present

Player wants to enter the old archive but there is no key.



Past

Player has to travel into the past to get the key.



Present

Player can enter the old archive with the key.

Evidence: Recording Task



Present

In the old archive, the player finds a wax recording. It's broken.



Past

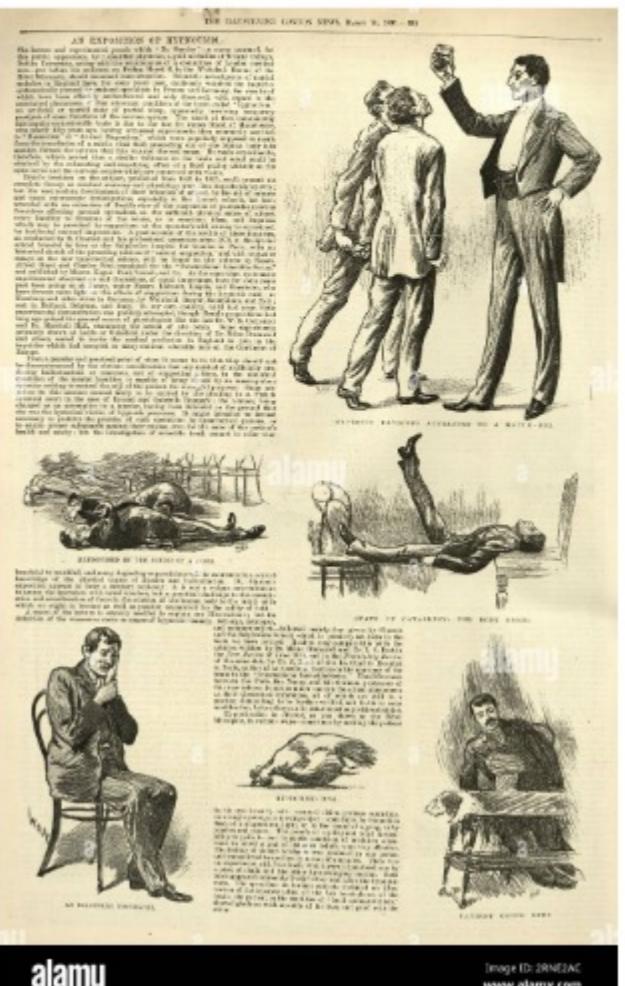
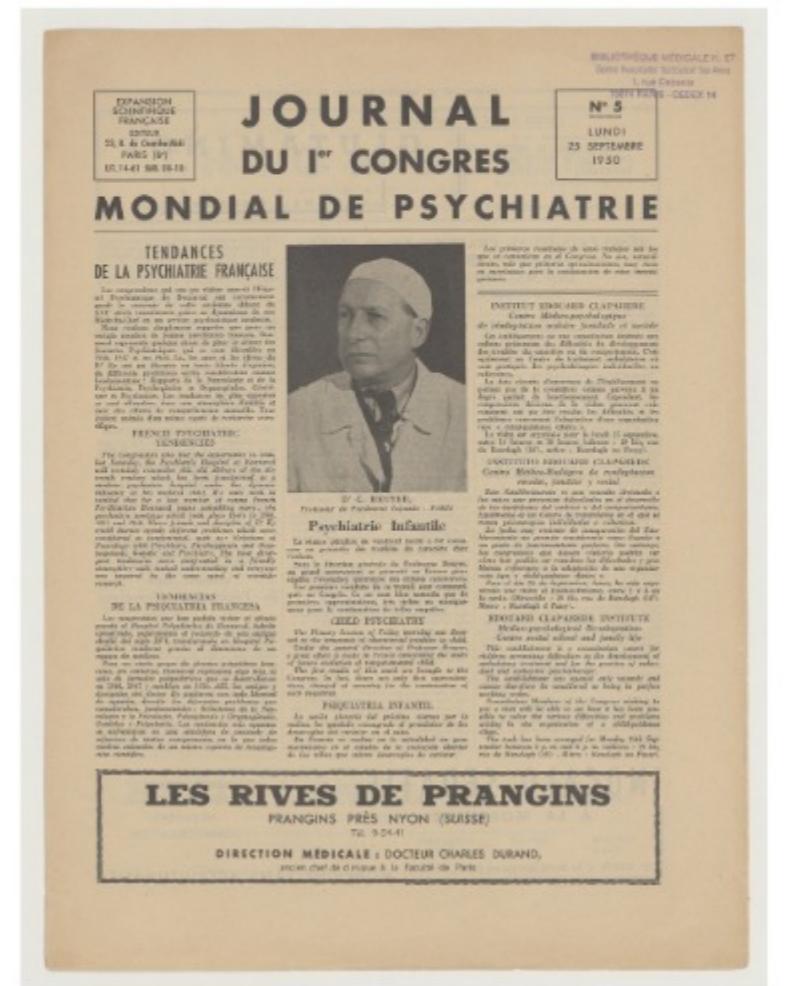
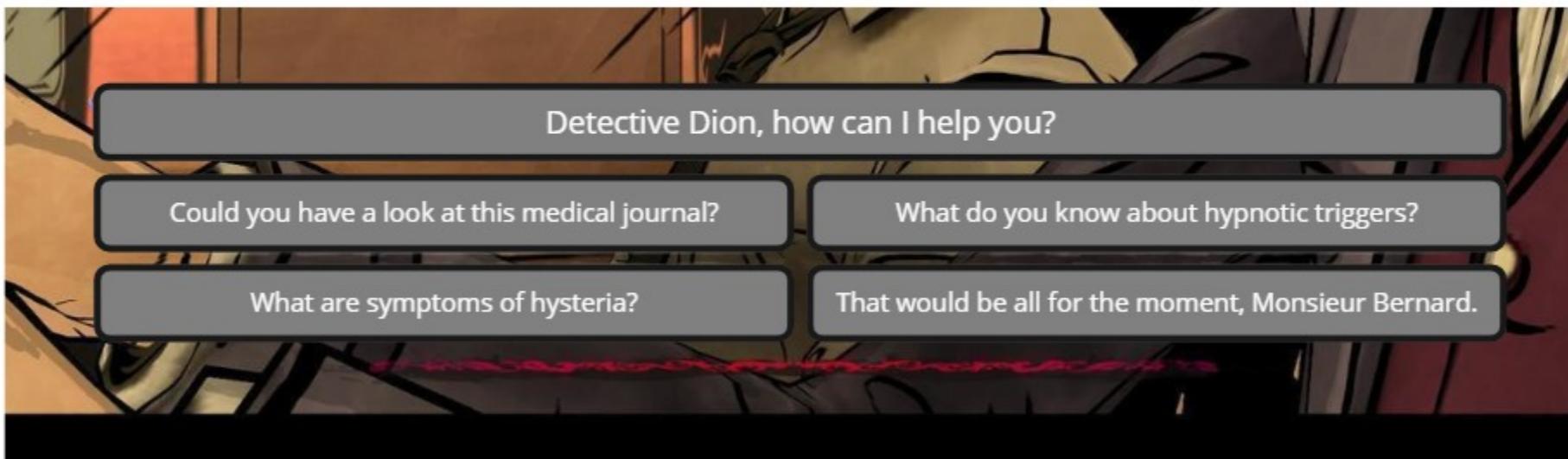
Player finds that the wax recording isn't broken in the past.

Dialog: Expert Task

Player finds an old medical journal.

To understand the information in the journal, player needs help from an expert in the present.

While the interaction with NPCs in the present is respectful, the characters in the past refuse to talk to a femal detective.



alamy



TREATMENT OF HYSTERIA.

Notebook



Player uses the notebook to collect all clues. It helps in finding connections between different pieces of evidence.



The notebook also changes with the different time periods. In the past, player uses pen and paper while in the present player has a phone.

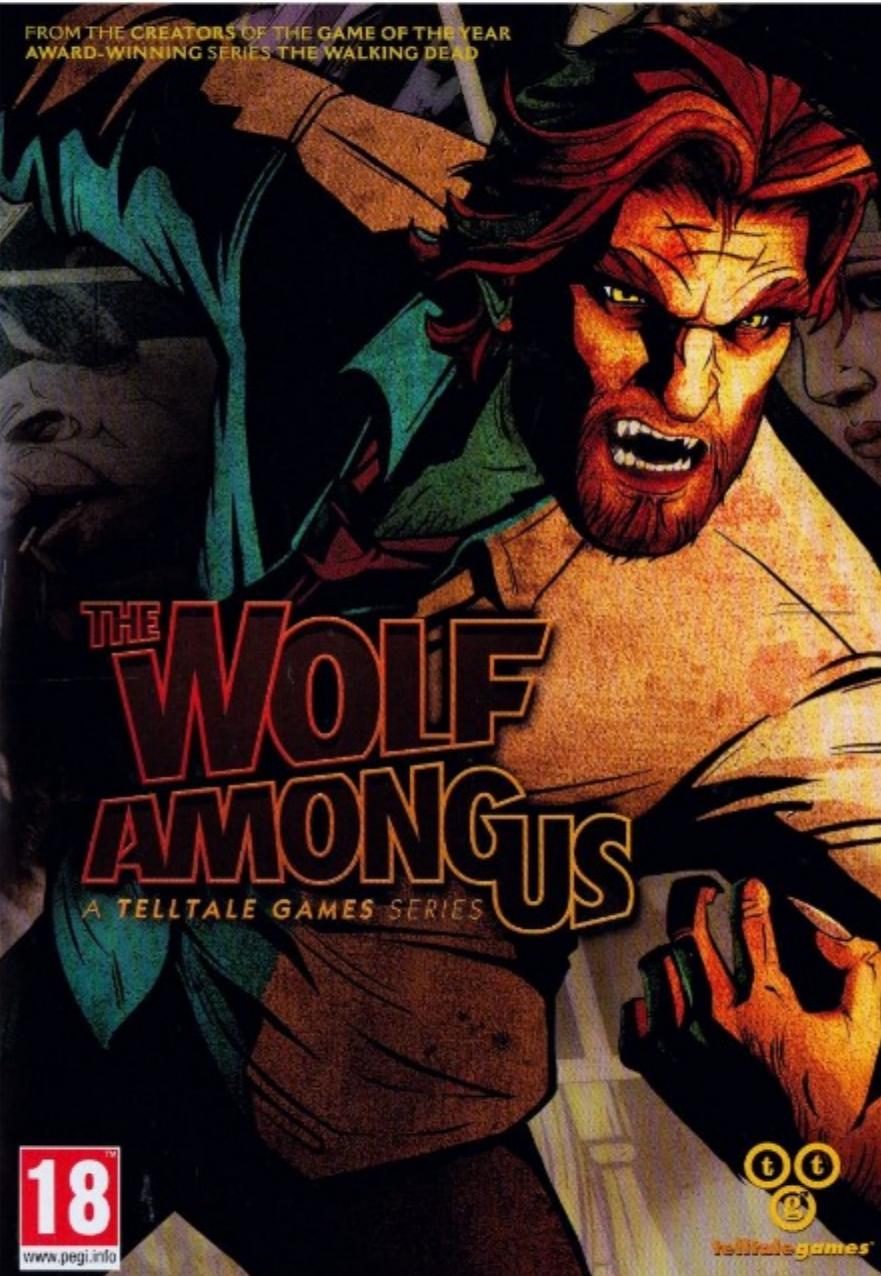
The notebook is inspired by L.A. Noire.

>> How do commit the perfect murder <<

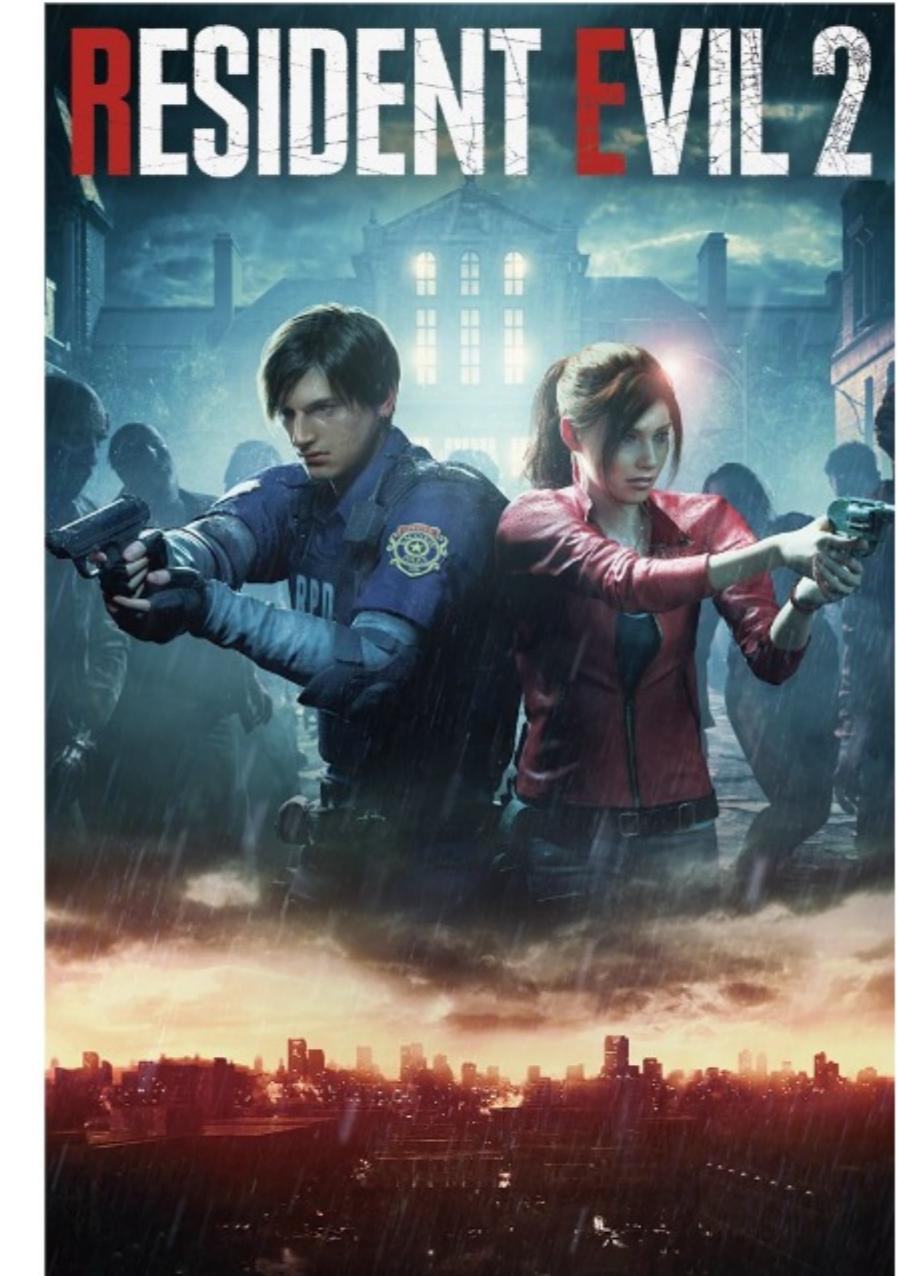
Games



L.A. Noire



The Wolf Among Us

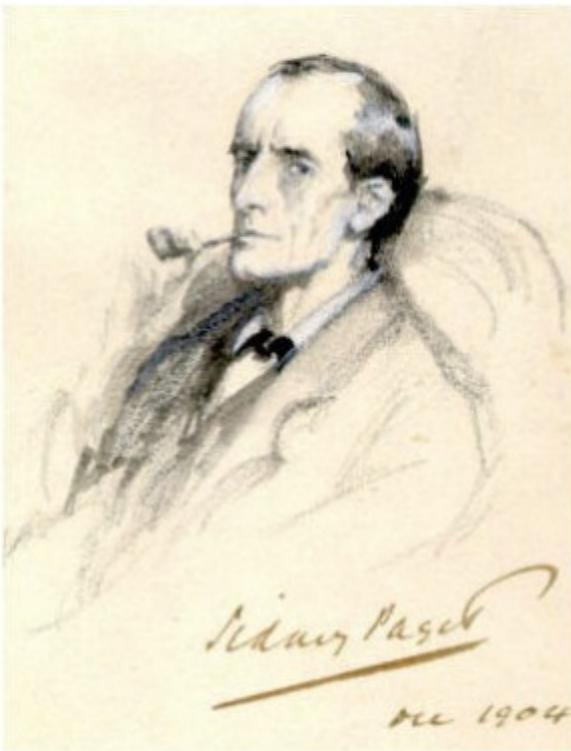


Resident Evil

Literature



**A Scientific Revenge -
Maria Madison**



**Sherlock Holmes -
Arthur Conan Doyle**



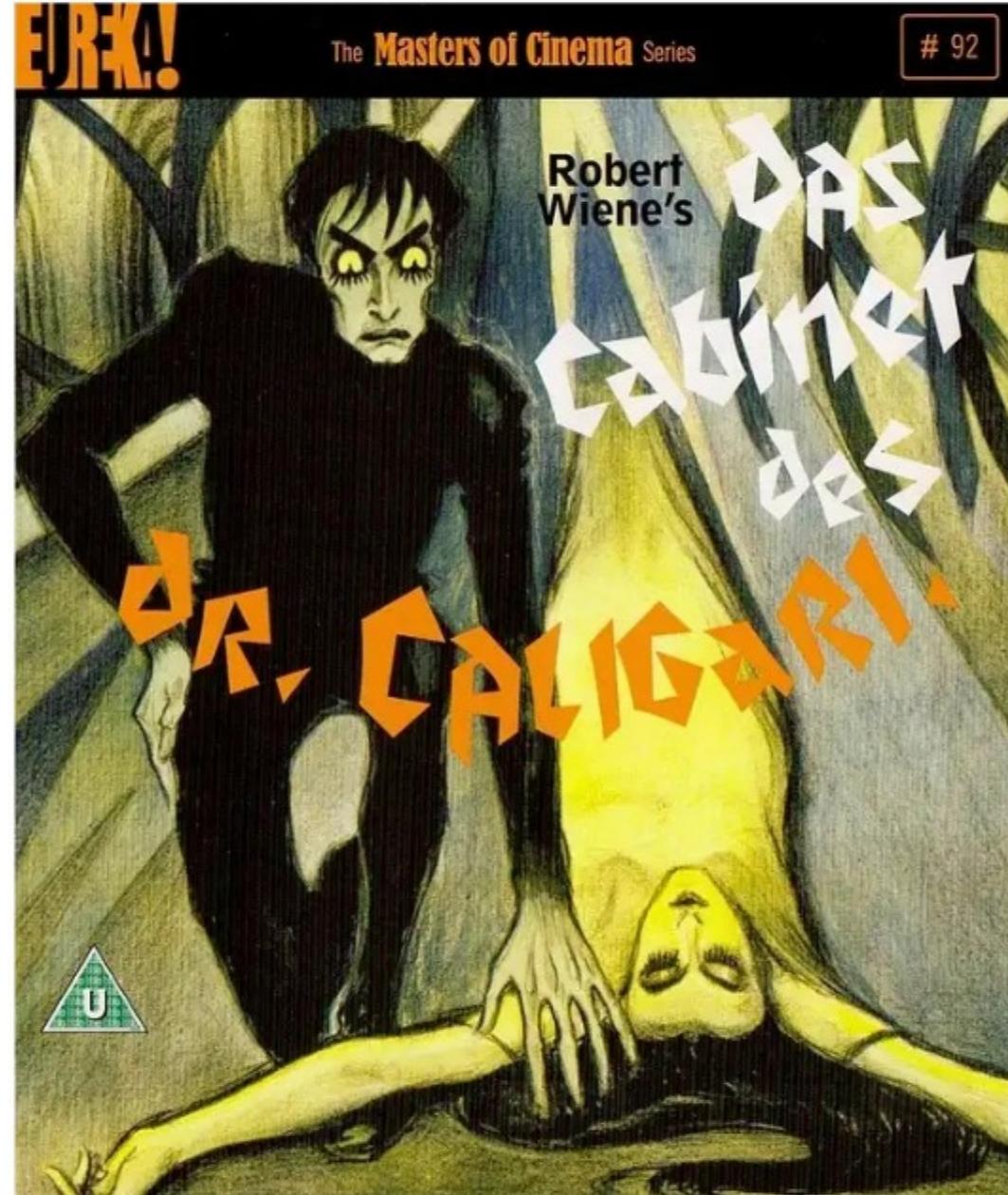
**Arsène Lupin -
Maurice Leblanc**

Film & TV



Augustine

Inspiration



Dr Caligari

[Link](#) to Miro



Bodies