

Artifacts: Sabine

“Revenge Best Served Cold-Blooded”

Written by Jocelyn Potter
12/26/2012

OVERVIEW:

Before the world was destroyed, Sabine was a powerful warrior, skilled in the art of combat; so it's befitting that in this new world she would continue on as such. She holds no memory of the old world nor does she possess The Wheel of Shadows. Instead, Sabine has become an elite soldier for the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

Since fate cannot be altered, it's only a matter of time before she is reunited with The Wheel of Shadows. Betrayed in two lifetimes, retribution towards the guilty is inevitable and only Sabine knows when their time is up.

THE STORY:

Her name is Sabine "The Killing Machine", a highly trained black-ops agent working for the CIA. A separate division within the CIA has been experimenting with "supernatural" technology, harnessing spiritual energy for use in anti-matter weaponry. Informants in the Middle East, report that a mystical sundial containing potent black magic has been unearthed. In a country shaped by religious-war, The Wheel of Shadows is discovered on holy land plagued with unholy bloodshed.

Sabine's years of loyalty and incredible achievements have not gone unnoticed. Upon completing her last mission, she is slated for a promotion within the Agency. The mission: Locate the elusive Wheel of Shadows and bring it home. As this difficult task may require massacring countless religious extremists, rebels, and soldiers, the violently inclined Sabine is the obvious choice for the assignment. Ironically, Sabine succeeds too well in her slaughter-driven mission. The CIA, fearful of ever being linked to her extraordinary level of violence, decides to eliminate her.

Her assassination fails when Sabine unexpectedly bonds to The Wheel of Shadows. Her would-be murderer falls to skeletal dust at her feet. At that same moment, The Wheel of Shadows reveals glimpses of the old Universe, awakening in her blindingly painful memories and feelings of betrayal. Ignited by her anger, the Wheel fully awakens. As a squadron of local military charges her position, their very shadows animate and attack them. The men die savagely, screaming. Sabine, realizing she has been betrayed from every corner, finally unites to the one presence in her life that has always given her life purpose and meaning. The Wheel of Shadows has found its perfect human counterpart and host...and the mortal world should tremble in fear.

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Page 1 (Four Panels)

Panel 1. Flashback - POV behind an eight year old girl in pig-tails and clenched fists. An older boy with a bruised face falls to his knees clutching his stomach.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

When I was eight, I fought a twelve-year-old boy...

Panel 2. Semi-splash. Present day and we're in a hallway decorated with bullet holes and blood. An establishing shot of Sabine wearing black form-fitting body armor, combat boots, and a face mask. Her armor is outfitted with combat knives, grenades, pistol holsters, and numerous pouches. Strapped to her back is a submachine gun. With machine pistols in each hand, she fires them straight ahead while walking over bullet-riddled corpses of Middle Eastern terrorists.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

...and haven't stopped fighting since.

Panel 3. Flashback - Close-up of Sabine covering the mouth of an enemy soldier as she cuts his throat.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

At nineteen, I had my first kill.

Panel 4. Present day. Pan back to an armed terrorist hiding around the corner of the hallway. In the background, Sabine continues to walk and shoot the pistol in her right hand as she tosses the empty pistol from her left. Three more terrorists who tried to rush her are torn apart by the continual gunfire.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

I stopped counting after that.

Page 2 (Six Panels)

Panel 1. Zoom in closer to see Sabine just starting to walk past the corner. Her left arm reaches around and jams a combat knife into the throat of the waiting terrorist. Pinned to the wall, blood spews from his mouth and throat. Sabine drops the pistol from her right hand.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

The sounds of someone choking on their own blood.

Panel 2. Bird's eye-view of Sabine grabbing the submachine gun from her back. A few steps ahead is another turn with three more armed terrorists. They are about to turn the corner and fire at Sabine.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 3. Medium shot of Sabine firing the submachine gun at the terrorists who came from around the corner.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

The smell of gunpowder and burnt flesh.

Panel 4. POV from behind Sabine. She has turned the corner and we see a frightened Middle Eastern man on his knees surrendering.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

The look of fear in their eyes just before they die.

Panel 5. From the side we watch Sabine shoot the surrendering terrorist.

SFX:

BAM-BAM-BAM

Panel 6. We're inside a terrorist safe house. POV behind Sabine. We're watching her walk away towards a door she busted down earlier. Corpses, broken glass, and empty ammo shells scatter the floor. Bullet holes, blood stains and broken windows all around the walls.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

I'm going to miss it all.

Page 3 (Six Panels)

Panel 1. Inside a small dimly lit hotel room. There is an open, nicely packed, suitcase on top of the bed. Cell phone, tickets, and passport are placed on the nightstand. To the right, amidst the shower steam, is a bathroom door slightly open.

LOCATION CAPTION:

Ramallah, Palestine

Panel 2. Inside a steamy shower stall, Sabine rubs a soapy washcloth over her skin that is caked with her enemies' blood. Sabine, deep in thought, lathers her muscular body in crimson tinted suds.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

By this time tomorrow, I'll be home. The day after, I'll be "Lieutenant Sabine" reporting for duty. I've assassinated, executed, mutilated, infiltrated, annihilated, and everything in-between for this promotion. It's my victory; my spoils of war.

Panel 3. Sabine steps out of the shower and in front of the bathroom mirror. Her physique is of utmost perfection, as if every muscle had been hand carved with exact precision. With her hair wrapped in a towel, we can see a faded elaborate Japanese tattoo of a fallen angel on her backside.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

I'm not old but I'm not getting younger either. Don't get me wrong, I'm still the CIA's finest black-ops agent but in this business no one lasts forever.

Panel 4. Sabine is walking out of the bathroom and towards the nightstand where her cell phone glows and vibrates.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

Best to quit the battlefield while I'm ahead and secure my position within the Agency before...

SFX:

BZZ...BZZ...

Panel 5. Inset panel. Close-up on the phone, the caller ID says "UNKNOWN".

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 6. Close-up of Sabine flipping the phone to answer the call. She doesn't say anything, she knows who is calling.

UNKNOWN CALLER:

There's been a minor delay in your arrival home, Sabine. Your mission is to retrieve and return with an item of significant importance. Do you understand?

SABINE:

Yes.

Page 4 (Six Panels)

Panel 1. POV behind Sabine who is standing outside the hotel in a burka. A taxi pulls up to the curb with the Palestinian license plate number "5-0100-30" in view. For reference see - http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a4/Public_vehicle_plate_palestine.jpg

SPOKEN CAPTION (CALLER):

"Wait outside your hotel at zero eight hundred hours. Your contact is a taxi with Palestinian plates 'five dash zero one'."

Panel 2. Sabine hands the driver her luggage. The driver is a nicely groomed Middle Eastern man in his late thirties. He tips his hat to Sabine.

SPOKEN CAPTION (CALLER):

"Hand him your luggage and tell him you want to go to the Gaza Beach. His only reply will be the tipping of his hat twice."

Panel 3. Birds-eye-view of the taxi driving away into the crowded streets of Ramallah.

SPOKEN CAPTION (CALLER):

"Your contact will fill you in on the details once you've left the hotel. Given your history of black-bag operations, this mission should pose no problem for you. We look forward to your successful return, Sabine."

Panel 4. POV behind Sabine who sits in the back of the taxi. The driver is handing her a set of photographs.

SABINE:

What have you got for me?

DRIVER:

An object of power. Unearthed less than two days ago in a smuggler's tunnel beneath the Gaza Strip.

SABINE:

What preliminary data do we have on the object?

Panel 5. Close-up on the photograph. It's a photo of The Wheel of Shadows protruding from the ground.

DRIVER (O/P):

Just what you see; it's an ancient sundial. Local legends present a possible link to the biblical "Sundial of Ahaz".

Panel 6. Pull back to see Sabine still looking through the photographs.

SABINE:

Is it currently manifesting power? Tangible or as phenomena?

DRIVER (O/P):

Phenomena only at present. Workers in the area have been reporting "strange time", likely distortions of the temporal field. They're also experiencing some random boosting of mental acuities; visions, premonitions, and the like. Reports have already leaked. We have data intercepts showing official Palestinian interest.

Page 5 (Six Panels)

Panel 1. The taxi has stopped at an Israeli Security Checkpoint. Masses of people are being herded by armed guards in or out of concrete barricades. An armed guard approaches the taxi driver's window. The driver has rolled his window down and hands him his credentials.

ARMED GUARD:

<Let me see your papers. Where are you going?>*

DRIVER:

<Here are my papers and I'm taking this woman to the airport.>

NARRATIVE CAPTION:

**Translated From Arabic*

Panel 2. Close-up on the paperwork. The driver's index finger taps repeatedly while the guard responds by rubbing his index finger back and forth. They are signaling each other in code.

DRIVER (O/P):

<I hope this will not be a problem, officer.>

Panel 3. The armed guard waves the taxi through the checkpoint.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 4. POV behind Sabine looking at the driver. The driver's face can be seen looking back at Sabine through the rear view mirror.

SABINE:

You're no ordinary taxi driver.

DRIVER:

I am a taxi driver by trade, this is true. But my real trade is in information and access.

SABINE:

And today you provide access.

DRIVER:

Exactly. My job is to get you through the security checkpoints and as close to the Gaza Strip as possible.

Panel 5. Close-up on the driver's eyes that Sabine is staring at through the rear view mirror. He's a man not to be trusted but Sabine is proficient in her work and knows how to handle such men.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 6. Sabine continues looking through the photos.

SABINE:

So, the sundial...what have you heard? Specifics only. Time is short.

DRIVER (O/P):

In The Old Testament, The Sundial of Ahaz altered time for King Hezekiah by adding fifteen years to his life. You see, King Hezekiah was stricken with a fatal illness and –

SABINE:

-- I don't need a Sunday School sermon. I need real time data.

DRIVER (O/P):

Yeah...um...sorry. Acting theory from your superiors is that, assuming this is really Ahaz' magic sundial, that you're dealing with a *literally divine power*. That makes this object insanely dangerous. Really insane, since some of those "visionaries" in the tunnel...They're dead now.

Page 6 (Six Panels)

Panel 1. POV over Sabine's shoulder. We're looking down at the photos she holds in her hand. She is looking at a different photo taken of The Wheel of Shadows.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

My superiors want spiritual objects of power in the worst way. Any magic, voodoo, or fairy dust is top priority. Objects of a biblical origin... Well, that would put this sundial right at the top of their 'Want List'. Knowing my superiors, they plan to weaponize the artifacts.

Panel 2. Same POV. Sabine has flipped the photo over and on the back are handwritten map coordinates.

SABINE:

Map coordinates. For the sundial, I presume.

DRIVER (O/P):

Yes. You'll have to take an off-road to --

Panel 3. Pull back to see the driver shot. The bullet comes in through the passenger side window and strikes him in the arm.

SFX:

THWACK

DRIVER:

--Aaaahh!

Panel 4. The taxi has skidded off the road and is uncontrollably headed straight for a mountain. Sabine can be seen diving out of the taxi's left rear door.

SFX:

SKREEEETCH

Panel 5. Continuous gunfire flails the taxi just before slamming into the side of a mountain. Sabine removes the burka as she rolls away from the gunfire.

SFX:

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM

Panel 6. Panoramic view. Sabine is crouched behind a large stone to the reader's left, wearing her black body armor as seen in page 1. Four armed masked Israeli insurgents run into view on the reader's right. In the center background, the taxi explodes.

SFX:

BADDOOM

Page 7 (Six Panels)

Panel 1. We're facing Sabine. She is crouched behind a boulder holding a pistol. In the background, the four insurgents have lost sight of her. They've stopped to examine the discarded burka.

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

Looks like the soldier at that security checkpoint sold us out.

Panel 2. Medium side shot. Sabine quickly turns and shoots one of the insurgents dead. The other three fire back while running towards her.

SFX:

BAM-BAM

SFX:

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM

Panel 3. Bird's-eye view. Three remaining insurgents approach but find no one there. They don't notice Sabine is perched on a ledge directly above them. She opens fire and kills two of the three insurgents. The third insurgent, taken by surprise, runs away.

SFX:

BAM-BAM-BAM

Panel 4. Sabine jumps and lands next to a dead insurgent. She crouches and removes a pair of keys from his pocket. In the far distance, we see the insurgent still running.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 5. The insurgent is shot in the back of the head just as he approaches a camouflaged pickup truck. Directly behind him is Sabine with a smoking pistol in one hand and a pair of keys in the other.

SFX:

BAM

SABINE:

You forgot your keys.

Panel 6. Pull back to see Sabine drive away in the camouflaged truck. The truck is equipped with two mounted machine guns, numerous CB antennas, and extra rifles thrown in the back. Additional pieces of scrap metal have been reinforced along the doors for extra protection.

NO DIALOGUE

Page 8 (Seven Panels)

Panel 1. Panoramic view. Sabine stops the truck on an unpaved road bordered by miles of dead shrubbery, rocks and more dirt. She steps out of the truck and uses her binoculars to get a closer look at a village off in the distance.

LOCATION CAPTION:

The outskirts of Rafah, inside the Gaza Strip

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

By these co-ordinates, the sundial is close...Just outside the city.

Panel 2. Panoramic view. We're looking through the binocular lenses. We see a refugee camp crammed with poorly made tents, bullet-scarred buildings, and heaps of rubble. Armed Palestinian Hamas police officers (For reference see http://i.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2012/08/06/article-2184340-14682779000005DC-134_634x423.jpg) patrol a cluster of enclosed tents centered within the village. Dozens of workers hauling bricks, gravel, and scaffolding go into the heavily guarded tents while others come out carrying locked wooden crates. Children play among the rubble.

INTERNAL DIALOGUE:

A smuggling tunnel concealed within the surrounding ruins of a refugee camp. Should be easy to infiltrate but just in case, I'll use my one strategy that never fails; rush, massacre, obtain, and disappear.

Panel 3. Sabine removes the burka. Once again, we see her in the black form-fitting body armor, combat boots, and a facemask. She is comprehensively armed with hand grenades, automatic rifles, bayonets, automatic pistols, and ammunition clips.

INTERNAL DIALOGUE:

If the divine powers are hanging around, maybe they'll protect the children and innocents when this goes sideways. But I doubt it.

Panel 4. POV behind Sabine. She's inside the truck and speeding towards the refugee camp. She is steering with her right hands while keeping the driver side door open with her left.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 5. Same POV. Police patrolling the outskirts of the refugee camp open fire at the incoming truck but the armored door works as an impromptu shield, deflecting incoming bullets.

SFX:

BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA

SFX:

KACHING-KACHING-KACHING

Panel 6. Through the still-open driver's door, Sabine dives out in a highly controlled leap, firing methodically as she falls. The driverless truck barrels toward the sandbagged barricade into a barrage of bullets.

SFX:

BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA

SFX:

BAM-BAM-BAM

Panel 7. Bird's eye view of the truck exploding the moment it hits the police barricade. Charred bodies of police and refugees are strewn about. The air is heavy with black fuel smoke. More Hamas police officers come running towards the inferno but find themselves pinned down by Sabine's gunfire. Sabine has taken cover behind a nearby cement wall.

SFX:

KERBOOM

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE:

Now that I've kicked the hornet's nest, it's time to exterminate the swarm.

SFX:

BAM-BAM-BAM