

SILVERWOLF →

Project: SILVERWOLF.

Section 1: "Should Old Acquaintance be Forgotten".

Chapter 1: Mayanna.

Scene: Industrial Street. One of the grimmer areas of a large English city. Night time.

Princess Mayanna walks down Industrial Street. She is tall. Her hair is in long golden braids studded with jewels. The braids fall down from beneath a rich silver helmet. Her clothes are of richly embroidered silk and at her left hip hangs a sword.

Nobody looks at her. Nobody sees her. Princess Mayanna is a dream daydream. What they would see, if they bothered to look, is Petra Stone, an ordinary sixteen year old schoolgirl. Petra Petra doesn't live in this world. She doesn't like this world. She lives in daydreams. Her mother says it will get her into trouble; but her mother doesn't know about Mayanna. Nobody knows about Mayanna, because Petra will never tell anybody. They will never know about a beautiful, brilliant, heroic world a million miles away from the boring, trivial stupidity of modern England. Ten times a day, her mother says, "One of these days you'll come down to Earth with a crash." She does.

Petra Stone is lying on the pavement, bewildered and slightly bruised. For a moment she can't

work out where she is. A voice brings her back.

"Gitcher 'ead inna clouds, ~~look~~ intcher?" Two bruts in black leather jackets are leaning against a wall. "Fell over me foot, dintcher? Wanna watch where ypr goin', dintcher?" She tries to get up, but a motorcycle boot pushes her down again. Petra Stone is scared. Princess Mayanna isn't. She's angry. The Princess wins.

With unexpected speed and agility, Petra springs to her feet, kicking her assailant in the knee. Hard. As he bends to clutch his knee, she kicks him in the face. SNIK. The sound draws her eyes. The other brut has sprung a flick knife. SNIK. The first one is scrambling to his feet. He's sprung one too. "Yer've really asked for it now, kid." She believes him.

No Princess now. Just Petra Stone. Scared stiff. She runs. They run. She's fast. So are they. A few streets on she turns into a used car yard. They aren't there yet. She gets under a car, praying they won't see her. They run right past, heading for the gate at the other end of the yard. Once they go through it, she can get out the way she came in. She'll be safe.

But why should they get away? The Princess is back, angrier than ever. Get up, get after them, you snivelling coward. Let them learn what

it is to attack a warrior princess. She's up. She's shouting. "Come back here, scum!" They do. She hears them talking.

"I dunno about this, Mick, there's something funny about 'er."

"Wodgerman? She's just an ordinary kid. Wassamatter, yeller?"

"Awright, ~~g~~ just watch me, I'll show you 'oo's yeller." SMILE.

"Just an ordinary kid." The words hit her like a bucket of cold water. "Of course I am. What was I thinking of? I must be mad. I am mad. Thank God they're walking slowly. They're still only halfway across the yard. I've got a start on them." She runs. They run. Out of the yard, down the street. She's tiring now, but they're still behind her. "Maybe I can give them the slip again." She swerves into a little alley. It's pitch dark. No houses, just high walls on both sides. They're still behind her. Then her blood turns to ice. A high wall ahead. It's a dead end.

Her thoughts race. The alley's empty. The street outside was deserted. Nobody will hear her. Or didn't she see a small child go into the ~~ally~~ alley? But what use would that... She runs into something. A large arm closes around her. A gruff voice speaks. "What's all this, then?" She looks up, her eyes growing

accustomed to the dark, and sees a burly policeman. He has a dog. The huts nearly run into him, then turn and run the other way.

Princess Mayanna is furious.

"They're getting away! Get after them!"

"Hold on a minute, Miss, there's a few questions I'd like to ask you first."

"I'm not going to run away. I'll wait right here if you like. Just get after them before it's too late."

"But, y-see, it isn't them I'm looking for, Miss, it's you."

"Me... what do you mean?"

"You are the Princess Mayanna, are you not?..."

Project: SILVER WOLF.

Section 1: "Should Old Acquaintance be Forgotten".

Chapter 1: Mayanna.

ENDS.

Project: SILVERWOLF.

Section 1: "Should Old Acquaintance be Forget".

Chapter 2: Gateway.

Scene: Churchyard. A mile and a half from the previous scene. At one end of the churchyard are two large standing stones. They look as if they've been there for thousands of years. They have. About the stones stand three figures dressed in casual clothes and combat jackets.

Normally, Petra Stone wouldn't go into a place like this at night. Tonight she has no choice. The policeman is going in, and she's handcuffed to him. One of the figures by the stones starts running towards her. It's a girl... and she's in ~~tear~~ tears. She cries out "Silverwolf!" She takes her in her arms, she kisses her, she lifts her off her feet as if she weighed nothing. "Silverwolf, is it you? Is it really you?" Petra is too bewildered to answer. She doesn't know the answer. Mayanna, yes. That's her daydream-name; though how anyone else could know that... but Silverwolf. The name means nothing to her... or does it...

"Do not be foolish, windchild, time is short." Another of the figures is approaching. Petra has never seen anyone so big. Seven feet tall, easily. But the voice is even more surprising. Definitely female. It isn't a man, despite her size; that's clear as ~~she~~ she comes closer. She's pretty, maybe twice Petra's age and getting on for twice her size.

Her thoughts are cut short by the arrival of the third member of the party. She is the most striking of the three, although there is nothing especially unusual about her appearance. She is a much older woman, her steel-grey hair combed severely back from a handsome, intelligent face. She is not wearing a combat jacket, but a long grey trench coat. She has an air of command which almost makes the air about her crackle. Hands in in trenchcoat pockets, shoulders thrust back, she steps close to Petra. Is she police? Who is she?

"Time, indeed, is short. You are to answer my questions briefly and truthfully. You are the Princess Magarona?"

"Y- yes."

"Where do you come from?"

"Number 40, Saint John . . ."

"Please, child, is that where the Princess Magarona comes from?"

"You mean you want the details of my daydream?"

"Time is short, Silverwolf, please do not waste it. Where do you come from?"

"From Sun - City City."

"Rayapurh," the first of the three interrupts, "she means Rayapurh. It is her."

"Silence." The older woman cuts her short. "So you are from Rayapurh; Sun-City in your language. What is it like? Where do you live? Who is your mother? Tell me."

"It is beautiful. The palace is white. The towers stretch up to the sun. My mother is the Queen and I live with her sometimes. And sometimes I live in the forest with the Riders..."

"Enough. You have said enough. I am convinced."

"But it's all daydream. I made it up..."

"No, you did not make it up. It is all perfectly true. To you it all happened about five thousand years ago. To us, about five years ago. I will explain that later. The important thing is this. The Princess Mayana is a reality. Rayapurh is a reality. You can go back there now, tonight, if you choose to do so. But there are two things you must understand. Firstly, if you do go back you can never return to this life here. Secondly, and rather more importantly..." Her voice stops dead.

It begins again, swiftly but calmly. "The time has run out. We are under attack. In a moment they will be coming through that gate. Thunder, protect us."

Things start happening quickly. Almost too quickly to follow. The big one runs to the gate the Leader pointed at. She must be Thunder. Two gunshots ring out before she gets there. She stops, staggers. She's been hit. Half a dozen soldiers pour in through the gate. They're wearing berets. Look like special commandos - SAS or something. Thunder straightens up. Was she hit? She leaps forward with a speed that belies her size, grabs the two nearest ^{soldiers} by the throat - one in each hand - and just picks them up and throws them into the others. The teenager - the one they call 'windchild' - is among them too. How did she get there so fast? She's hitting them with her fists and they can't seem to touch her. She's only a sliver of a girl, but she's hitting like a heavyweight boxer. The soldiers are falling but more are pouring in through the gate. Her attack intensifies. Her movement is a blur of speed. Her feet, her hands, her elbows, her knees: every part of her is an offensive weapon. She doesn't hit any soldier twice. She doesn't need to.

Thunder is slower, but her strength is unbelievable, and she seems almost immune to gunfire. It looks as if they'll mop up the commandos in minutes. Suddenly the leader cries "Retreat!" At the same time the six foot high railing which runs along the length of the churchyard shudders and crashes to the ground. Commando boots are

tramping over it. There must be hundreds of them. Thunder and the windchild and the windchild are fighting their way back towards the standing stones. The policeman's arm tightens around Petra's throat. "It's alright, boys, I've got her." It isn't the policeman's voice. She looks up. It isn't the policeman. It's one of the soldiers. The policeman has gone. The handcuffs have gone. Is this a dream or what? She knows it isn't.

"But Colonel," one of the soldiers speaks, "if you hold her like that we can't..."

"Shut up. I know what I'm doing. I've got my orders. Get out of my way."

The Colonel pushes a path through the soldiers toward the standing stones, dragging Petra with him. Ahead she sees Thunder and the windchild. They run between the stones... and disappear. The reader follows them. She passes between the stones and doesn't come out the other side. Petra can see clearly through the stones. They aren't there. They've just vanished! And that's where the Colonel is taking her. Suddenly a voice rises above the tumult.

"Hey, what's going on? That isn't the Colonel. He's back here. Stop them!"

They're almost between the stones. The Colonel, or whoever he is, is trying to push Petra

through. She's putting up a good struggle. He isn't as strong as he looks. & in fact he's having real difficulty. Another voice cuts through the air.

"Contingency B. The Mortar. Get back, men."

Suddenly the crowd of soldiers isn't there any more. They're ~~scat~~ scrambling for cover, throwing themselves to the ground. A dull boom. A mortar shell screams through the air. With a sudden violent thrust, Petra is shoved through between the stones. She vanishes. Her captor follows her.

Fireworks.

When the smoke clears the stones are gone. Blown to rubble.

Two soldiers walk slowly toward the wreckage.

"I'm sorry, Colonel."

"I don't believe it. We've blown the job. I just don't believe it."

"I'm sorry, Colonel."

"Not your fault, sergeant. The Brigadier's going to have my head for this."

"If it was that flippin' important we should have blasted the flippin' thing in the first

place. 'Preservin' a national monument'. I sometimes wonder if they've got their heads screwed on right.

Project: SILVERWOLF.

Section 1: "Should Old Acquaintance be Forgotten".

Chap Chapter 2: Gateway.

ENDS.

Project: SILVER WOLF.

Section 1: "Should Old Acquaintance be Forgotten".

Chapter 3: Home.

Scene: A clearing in a forest. At the centre, two large standing stones. They look like the two which have just been blasted. They are.

Daylight. One second the black shadows of midnight. Next second, broad noon daylight. Petra stumbles out from between the stones, her eyes dazzled by daylight. It's been a strange night, but nothing in the world could compare to this for strangeness. Before her stand the three from the churchyard. She falls at their feet, off-balance from the soldier's push. The soldier comes up behind her. It's been a strange night, but it looks like being a stranger day.

A hundred emotions stream through her soul. For some reason the one that comes uppermost is anger. She's on her feet. "Who do you think you're shoving, soldier, ~~soldier~~? Who are you anyway?" For a moment the soldier seems to swim before her eyes, like a reflection on rippled water. And in his place stands the policeman. "Surely you remember me, Miss." he says.

"Leave thy tricks, Jupp," cries the windchild.
"Is she not bedazzled enough already?"

The policeman shimmers, and there stands a little child. A tiny golden haired wisp of a child with

sharp features, a turned-up nose, and pointed ears. "There, there, no tricks now, Ma'am."

"I'm myself again, or as much of a self as I have. Let her remember my loving-kindness the next time she threatens to tie me in a tree by my tail."

"Enough of this." The Leader speaks. "Time is still short. Silverwolf, you have answered my questions, now I shall answer yours. All that you desire to ask. But first we must quit this place. We are lucky that there was no ambush awaiting us. Let us pray that our arrival has been unobserved. Thunder, the horses."

"Here, Ma'am," Thunder, who had disappeared into the wood, returns leading four horses.

"But..." Petra interjects.

"Briefly, then," the Leader replies. "The trap, as must be obvious, is a shape-shifter. We are in a forest a few miles outside Kagapurk, and we may well be in very grave danger. That must satisfy you for the present. We must ride and ride hard."

"But I've never ridden a horse in my life."

The leader smiled. "That all depends upon which life you mean. Just mount up and I think you will find that you can ride very well. But hurry. Every moment ~~not~~ increases the

chances of the wrong eyes becoming aware that we have arrived."

Scene: A dark room with dark, heavy furniture. In a heavy oaken chair sits a man of enormous bulk and power. His name is Fear. He has a black beard and thick, sensuous lips. Before him stands an old man with stooped shoulders and furtive eyes. He is a man-witch. He speaks.

"They have arrived."

"What!"

"Everything went awry. They arrived much sooner than expected. They were to explain everything to the child before they brought her. Give her time to decide. It should take at least an hour. Apparently they were ambushed by troops and had to leave suddenly."

"Ambushed by Troops! ~~For~~ Five thousand years hence! How could they know? Why should they care?"

"It is a mystery, Lord Fear. It evades all my calculations."

"I should have your head for this. Why did we not destroy the stones while they were gone and leave them trapped in the Dark Age?"

"You know that we dared not do that, Lord Fear."

"I had known of this I should have dared."

"Is it so grave a matter, Lord Fear? I have seen the girl. She is little more than a child."

"Greyface, you are a fool. With the single exception of Rhianne, Silverwolf is almost certainly the most dangerous maid in these islands."

Scene: A great lake at the edge of the forest.

Petra: "Britain. We're in Britain."

The Leader: "England to be exact. Or A boldan as it is called in these days. What did you imagine? The stones cannot walk. They will stand in exactly the same place for the next five thousand years, until the night they are destroyed. The night we have just left."

Thunder: "And the curse of the stones... the curse upon the sovereign powers of these islands if they are destroyed?"

Leader: "Presumably it will come into effect. But that is a long time from now. It need hardly trouble us. Let us dismount." They do so, and the leader takes off her tunic. Beneath it she wears a long black dress of a velvet

material with a ^{silver} belt and a pendant. She places a little black cap, studded with jewels, upon her head. The others remove their modern clothes too. They are dressed in shorter dresses with leather belts and daggers. Tall leather boots. About their heads they tie long bandanas, knotted at the back and trailing down. "Dispose of these," says the ~~to~~ Leader, indicating the clothes they have shed.

Thunder ties the clothes in a tight bundle, her powerful hands compressing them into a surprisingly small, dense package. With a graceful swing of her arm, she sends it ~~swaying~~ ^{flinging} hundreds of yards into the centre of the lake where it sinks without trace. Petra watches her. Her body, her movements are beautifully elegant. Stripped of the combat jacket, it is clear that she is in no way bulky. She is a well-proportioned maid, with the body of an athlete. She is simply constructed on a larger scale. It is also clear that her strength is far more than proportionate to her size.

Leader: "Perhaps it is time we introduced ourselves - or rather reintroduced ourselves. You, of course, are the Princess Mayanna, known to friend and foe alike as Silverwolf. I am Rayanna, the leader of this little ~~Troop~~ ^{more} troop. Clothed in brown is Teresa. She is ^{more} commonly known as Thunder, for she is as steadfast as the Thunder-Tree, the oak, and as mighty as the thunderbolt itself.

"The windchild, Vitriaa, is your dearest friend. I hope you will learn soon to remember her, even if you remember not the rest of us. Her clothing is blue in significance of the wind; for it is said that she can outpace the wind in her speed, and her attack is like the tornado. They call her Whirlwind."

Emp: "Might you not be forgetting somebody, wa'am?"

Rayana: "Is it likely that I would forget you? This is Uisce, whose form flows like water, who has no true form of its own. As you see, it dresses in green. It is not of our troop, for it is not human; but it seems to have attached itself to us. We call it the Emp."

Emp: "You'll hate me. We were worst enemies."

Petra: "I don't think so. I think I like you... when you're not pushing me around."

Emp: "Me push you around. There's a turnaround."

Petra: "You only manhandled me when you - er - were that soldier... you only did it to save me from getting hit by a stray bullet, didn't you?"

Rayana: "It wouldn't have been a stray bullet, child. Their mission was to kill you. They weren't interested in us. That is why we were

unable to leave you a choice whether to stay or to come. But now that we are here, the position will be the same. It is you that are in the most immediate danger. You that will be the target."

Petra: "Oh, gosh. Well, at least we won't be facing guns and bombs here."

Raganci: "The history they teach in your time is very limited. It is controlled by knaves with the purpose of making a world of slaves. They do not know much, but the powers that control the world you have come from conceal all but a fraction of what they do know. You believe that you have come into a simpler, less 'advanced' world. But you have come into a world where there are things far more powerful - far more terrible than guns and bombs."

Scene: Lord Fear's chamber. The magician has left. A warrior enters, clad in leather armour.

Warrior: "Heil, Milord."

Fear: "Heil, warrior. We know the approximate whereabouts of Silverwolf. She is travelling with a very small company, but they are among the deadliest in Avalon. We shall despatch the Swarm to destroy them."

Warrior: "The Swarm! Forgive me, Lord, but is that

not akin to taking a battering ram to crush a fly?

Fear: "It is. Through our errors they have come too far already. We dare not risk any further failure. See to it."

Project: SILVER WOLF

Section 1: "Should Old Acquaintance be Forgotten". ENDS.

Chapter 3: Home. ENDS.

Next: THE SWARM.