

Protégé

Issue One

May, 2011

PAGE ONEONE:

An enhanced SATELLITE SHOT of a crowded city square. PIXELLATED silhouette shapes of PEOPLE populate the image. A CURSOR highlights one of the SILHOUETTES as it sprints through the crowds. ANOTHER can be seen closely following.

1. CAPTION/Zander: Subject is heading north across Gendarmenmarkt Square.
2. CAPTION/Zander: And subject is FAST. Too fast for Devin, apparently.

TWO:

GENDARMENMARKT SQUARE in BERLIN, GERMANY. HAHN, a rat-like guy in a sweatshirt and jeans, sprints past startled PEDESTRIANS. Behind Hahn through the crowd we see DEVIN EDWARDS chasing after him. Devin is tall, white, dark-haired, classically good-looking, 34 years old. He's also SWEATING like a pig. Devin holds his left hand to his ear as he listens to his earpiece.

In the background we can make out parts of the BERLIN CATHEDRAL.

3. CAPTION/locator: Berlin, Germany.
4. DEVIN: FUCK you, Zander!
5. DEVIN/linked: Trane... *kaff*... where are y –

THREE:

HAHN spins around as he runs, FIRING a small high-tech CANNON attached to his right wrist. A barrage of BULLETS erupt from the cannon.

6. SFX: BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

FOUR:

A WOMAN passing in front of DEVIN is riddled with bullets. BLOOD explodes from her body and SHOPPING BAGS fly into the air. Devin is caught off-balance.

7. DEVIN: SHIT!!!
8. WOMAN: AAAAH!!!

PAGE TWO:

ONE:

DEVIN is momentarily pinned underneath the bloody bullet-ridden CORPSE. He talks into his COM-LINK as HAHN sprints across the street.

1. DEVIN: Subject in possession of a TZ-4! Repeat, subject has a TZ-4! TRANE, you hear me!?

TWO:

A black AUDI A6 slams into HAHN, sending him SPRAWLING across the hood.

2. SFX: KARUMP

THREE:

COLTRANE "TRANE" WALLACE jumps from the driver's side door of the halted car. Trane wears an overcoat sporting high-tech body armor underneath. Trane speaks into his COM-LINK.

HAHN has tumbled to the PAVEMENT but aims the TZ-4 in Trane's direction.

3. TRANE: I HEARD you, Devin.

FOUR:

Trane holds out his arm as a retractable BILLY CLUB extends from a holster underneath his coat sleeve.

4. TRANE: I got him.

5. SFX: SNAKT

FIVE:

TRANE swings the CLUB full force and connects with Hahn's forearm just below the TZ-4, SNAPPING bone. Hahn SCREAMS in pain.

4. SFX: KRITCH

5. HAHN: AAAAAAIIII!!!

PAGE THREE:

ONE:

HAHN scrambles away, cringing in pain. TRANE raises the BILLY CLUB to deliver another blow but sees movement out of the corner of his eye.

1. SFX: HONK HONK

TWO:

TRANE is forced to leap BACK to the side of the street as a DELIVERY TRUCK zooms BETWEEN him and Hahn.

2. SFX: SCREEECH

THREE:

By the time the truck has rolled past, HAHN has run halfway down the block AWAY from him. Bewildered PEDESTRIANS wander near Trane's line of sight.

3. ZANDER/elec.: Uh, Trane, I don't think you ran him over HARD enough...

FOUR:

The BARREL of Trane's SIG-Sauer P226 as TRANE takes aim.

4. TRANE: He's PISSING me off...

FIVE:

Large panel. The back of Hahn's head EXPLODES as Trane's bullet finds its mark. GERMANS and TOURISTS standing nearby Hahn freak out.

5. SFX: BLAM

FIVE:

DEVIN catches the baggy. A disapproving look on his face.

11. DEVIN:

The world WILL be a safer place once you're finally out to pasture, old man, THAT'S for sure.

FIVE:

SAME AS PANEL FOUR. A VAN screeches to a stop at the corner right in front of TRANE and DEVIN.

9. DEVIN: Woman is obviously insane. You guys should have me over for dinner again some time soon.

10. TRANE: Yeah, keep dreaming.

11. SFX: SCREEECH

PAGE SIX:

ONE:

DR. SHOO, 57 years old, Asian, balding but with a few out-of-control strands of hair, big glasses. He wears a perpetual scowl. Behind Shoo is an EYE EXAM CHART. He holds an open file folder in his hand.

1. CAPTION/locator: New York City.
2. SHOO: I can't BELIEVE you're still whining about that little needle. BABY.

TWO:

TRANE sits on an examination table in Shoo's small doctor's office. He buttons up his shirt as SHOO takes a seat behind a DESK.

3. TRANE: Wasn't the SIZE of the needle, Shoo. Your stupid nurse stuck me SIX times before she found a vein.
4. SHOO: You've been thru worse.
5. TRANE: Yeah right. She ever wants a career in prisoner interrogation, have her call me.

THREE:

TRANE stands in front of SHOO's desk, looking defiant.

6. SHOO: Funny man.
7. SHOO/linked: I'm not here to listen to your JOKES, Trane.
8. TRANE: I know that. You're only here because I pay you WAY too much...

FOUR:

SHOO holds his head in his hands in frustration. TRANE leans on the desk, pointing a finger in Shoo's face.

9. SHOO: Listen, we've got to talk about your treatment.
10. TRANE: How about you refill my meds so I can get the hell away from you.

FIVE:

Close-up of SHOO. Serious. Cutting thru the bullshit

11. SHOO: You should've quit YEARS ago, you know.

PAGE SEVEN:ONE:

TRANE looks away. Not what he wants to be talking about.

1. SHOO: The more stress, agitation, aggression you put yourself thru, the FASTER your deterioration...
2. TRANE: If you really want to save me stress and agitation, you'll stay the hell OUT of my business and just give me my meds.

TWO:

SHOO leans back in his chair, stretching his hands. He gives up.

1. SHOO: Fine. Hopefully you'll catch a bullet and save us ALL a whole lot of grief.
2. SHOO/linked: I've been patching you up for TWENTY-THREE YEARS...

THREE:

From OUTSIDE the window of Shoo's office we see TRANE looking out. SHOO is at his desk behind him.

3. SHOO: ... and I can't TELL you how many times I felt like plugging you myself.
4. TRANE: Twenty-three years...

FOUR:

From TRANE'S POV we see GRETA, through the WINDOW, sitting on a bench at a PARK across the street.

5. TRANE/off-panel: It's been THAT long?

FIVE:

Outside. GRETA sits on the bench, fidgeting with a hair tie and talking to herself. Greta is 44 years old, white, striking and dignified-looking. She's a college professor and dresses like it.

6. GRETA: *"I saw the post-it on your fridge and thought"...*
No, that's silly...
7. GRETA/linked: *"I was in the neighborhood"...* stupid...

PAGE EIGHT:

ONE:

GRETA jumps, STARTLED.

1. TRANE/off-panel: Hey.

TWO:

GRETA spins around, realizing that TRANE is standing BEHIND her.

2. GRETA: Oh GOD, how long were you...

3. TRANE: Just got here. Are you on the phone?

THREE:

GRETA rubs the back of her neck, looking at TRANE sheepishly.

4. GRETA: Eh. I WISH. I was just practicing... never mind.

5. TRANE: You here to make sure I take my medicine?

FOUR:

Close-up. GRETA regains her composure.

6. GRETA: No.

7. GRETA/linked: I just... I want you to know that I'm HERE for you. And I... I'm ready to be here for you... WHATEVER you need.

FIVE:

TRANE squirms, trying to find the right response. GRETA runs both her hands thru her HAIR, irritated at herself.

8. TRANE: You're... did you say you're READY?

9. GRETA: Jesus, that came out HORRIBLY. You'd think I'd be able to string a sentence together by NOW... somebody STOP me, I'm babbling...

PAGE NINE:

ONE:

TRANE grabs GRETA'S hands.

1. TRANE: Greta.

2. GRETA: Yes.

TWO:

TRANE holds GRETA'S hands in his. They finally LOOK each other in the eye.

3. TRANE: Tonight's my last job.

4. TRANE/linked: Can we have this talk TOMORROW?

5. GRETA: Yes. GREAT idea.

THREE:

TRANE and GRETA walk into the PARK together, holding hands.

6. GRETA: I actually just came down here to take you to Katz Deli. I'm STARVING.

7. GRETA/linked/smaller: Oh, I saw a review of the Aernot Mik exhibit in Timeout, I think we should go this weekend...

PAGE TEN:

ONE:

Close-up. A MOUTH holding a CIGARETTE. The flame from an expensive lighter flares.

1. LANOIS: I can't believe you don't smoke, Flores. Your PEOPLE invented the cigarette.

TWO:

MAXWELL LANOIS sits on a couch in a dark lounge smoking a cigarette. A couple of HIGH-CLASS PROSTITUTES are draped on each side of him. VICTOR FLORES, a latino in a white suit, hands Lanois a glass of scotch.

Lanois, 46 years old, is thin but in good shape. He wears an expensive suit and rings on each finger. The right side of his face, mainly around his eye and forehead, is disfigured from a nasty acid accident (keep that side of his face in SHADOW until the reveal on page 12).

2. FLORES: Cigarettes? I thought you French invented 'em.

3. LANOIS: We created the tobacco INDUSTRY. The Maya, they were the ones smoking long before the French got their hands on tobacco.

THREE:

CLOSEUP of the surly eyes of a BOUNCER peering thru the SLOT of a security door.

4. BOUNCER: NEED something?

5. ALLUMETTE/off-panel: Silver and wine.

6. LANOIS/tail-less: Early Mayan pottery even depicts their DEITIES smoking cigars.

FOUR:

We only see the top of Allumette's HEAD as the BOUNCER opens the door and lets her pass. He eyes her, obviously impressed by the fine-ness he sees.

7. LANOIS/tail-less: Smoking was seen as a divine kind of POWER back then.

FIVE:

We see the curve of Allumette's HIP from behind as she walks thru the lounge. Glances are thrown her way from a BARTENDER and a WAITRESS. We can make out PART of a logo reading "HARDBALL" on the waitress' top (this will be important in Issue #2...).

8. LANOIS/tail-less: According to POPOL VUH, cigars were a staple of Xib'alb'a, the Mayan underworld.

SIX:

LANOIS looks up, smiling, the cigarette hanging from his mouth. Allumette's SHADOW falls across the table in front of him.

9. LANOIS: Of course, exactly WHAT they were smoking back then was... ah, my guest has arrived.

10. LANOIS/linked: (French) Perhaps YOU would like to smoke with me, dear?

PAGE ELEVEN:

ONE:

Vertical panel of ALLUMETTE, one hand on her hip. We see why she got so much attention on the way in. She's a knock-out, 18 years old, long dark hair, framed like a ballerina. She wears a funky bomber jacket, tight cargo pants and combat boots.

1. ALLUMETTE: I don't smoke.
2. ALLUMETTE/linked: And I'd rather speak English.

TWO:

LANOIS waves the PROSTITUTES away as ALLUMETTE takes a seat on the opposite couch.

3. LANOIS: Of course. Your accent is EXCELLENT, by the way.
4. LANOIS/linked: Pleasure to finally meet you, Allumette. I LIKE what I've heard about your work.

THREE:

ALLUMETTE leans back on the couch, crossing her legs.

5. ALLUMETTE: You haven't given me much time for this job, Mr. Lanois. Let's CUT the chatter and get to it.

FOUR:

LANOIS drags on his cigarette, his eyes narrow.

6. LANOIS: Lovely AND efficient. Just my type.

PAGE TWELVE:

ONE:

Lanois places a PHOTO, an ID CARD, and a small CELL PHONE on the table. The picture is of JOSEPH EDELMAN, a scientist with short hair. The ID card is for SORUS LABS personnel, with a picture of Allumette (her hair back and wearing glasses).

1. LANOIS: Your target is Joseph Edelman. You already have the information on his location. Here is the ID you'll need to gain access to the facility. The cell phone is a direct line to me.

TWO:

ALLUMETTE smiles (not a nice smile) as she slides the gear into her jacket and STANDS to leave.

2. LANOIS/off-panel: Call me only AFTER you complete the assignment.
3. ALLUMETTE: Goodbye, Mr. Lanois. I like your scar.

THREE:

LANOIS watches ALLUMETTE head for the door.

NO TEXT.

THREE:

FLORES leans over to whisper to LANOIS. Lanois' face is now fully visible, SCAR and all.

4. FLORES: You SURE you want to waste her on this one? I heard she's really good.

FOUR:

CLOSE-UP. The cigarette hangs from LANOIS' mouth, almost burned to the filter.

5. LANOIS: There's more where she came from.

FIVE:

A black VAN is parked on the street, outside an 8-storey OFFICE COMPLEX. The logo "SORUS LABS" is visible on the side of the building.

6. CAPTION/locator: Trenton, New Jersey.
7. ZANDER/elec.: O'Neal is on the line, fellas. I swear he's gonna CRY unless I patch him thru to you.

PAGE THIRTEEN:

ONE:

TRANE and DEVIN are inside the van, both in black high-tech body armor suits. Devin is double-checking his high-tech CLIMBING HARNESS as Trane TYPES on a keyboard. The inside of the van is crammed with monitors and computer devices. ZANDER's face is seen on one of the MONITORS.

1. DEVIN: Why the hell does he want to talk NOW? We're initiating in under FIVE, he can't be changing the mission on us now.
2. TRANE: FORGET it, Zander. O'Neal is just gonna bitch at us.
3. ZANDER/elec.: He's been screeching in my headset for twenty minutes, I'm gonna share my pain and put him thru.

TWO:

The MONITOR shows the angry face of O'NEAL, a bland, bitter bureaucrat-type.

4. DEVIN/off-panel: Zander, DON'T...
5. O'NEAL/elec.: You guys think you're the fucking POPE? You're doing a job for ME. When I call, you call me BACK, am I clear?

THREE:

DEVIN leans into view of the screen, pretending to be happy to see O'NEAL. O'Neal is even more pissed.

6. DEVIN: You know, O'Neal, before I met you I had NO idea D.S.I. stood for the Department of Simple Inbreds.
7. O'NEAL/elec.: Shut up, Edwards.
8. O'NEAL/linked/elec.: I'm only going to say this one more time. It's imperative that you make it LOOK like our operative has been abducted.

FOUR:

DEVIN shrugs, he clearly enjoys tormenting O'Neal. Behind him TRANE ignores the conversation completely as he types on the KEYBOARD.

9. DEVIN: We GOT the sitrep, O'Neal.

10. O'NEAL/elec.: You need to understand, our agent has been gathering information on Sorus Labs for over EIGHT MONTHS.

11. O'NEAL/linked/elec.: If they suspect they've had a mole working for them, our entire...

FIVE:

TRANE leans over and hits a BUTTON, cutting off the connection.

12. TRANE: 'Night, O'Neal.

13. SFX: CLICK

PAGE FOURTEEN:

ONE:

DEVIN laughs. TRANE redirects Devin's attention to another MONITOR.

1. DEVIN: O'Neal's left nut just exploded.
2. TRANE: Forget that asshole, we got REAL work to do. I finished hacking into the Sorus security grid.

TWO:

A row of THREE MONITORS showing SECURITY CAMERAS SHOTS of different areas of Sorus Labs: 1) A shot of a CAFETERIA. 2) A shot of a HALLWAY and people walking down it (one of those people is ALUMETTE disguised as a Sorus Lab tech!). 3) A LAB with two techs dressed in JUMPSUITS working on a large machine.

3. TRANE/tail-less: Now we can see everything their OWN security cameras see. Edelman's supposed to be in Lab 7 in twenty minutes, and I'll be able to...

FIVE:

TRANE frowns at what he sees on the monitor.

4. TRANE: ...
5. DEVIN/off-panel: What?

SIX:

TRANE waves it off and gets back to business. DEVIN holds up a reassuring hand.

6. TRANE: Hm? Ah... nothing. What was I saying...
7. TRANE/linked: As SOON as Edelman enters the lab I'm gonna alert you...
8. DEVIN: I got this, Trane. You should REALLY try trusting me some time. It is our end job, after all.

PAGE FIFTEEN:

ONE:

TRANE looks up, irritated and perplexed.

1. TRANE: ...

2. TRANE/linked: Something you wanna SAY to me?

TWO:

TRANE glares at DEVIN. Devin's trying to find the right words.

4. DEVIN: Yeah.

5. DEVIN: I've SEEN the pills you've been popping.
EXELON. RAZADYNE.

THREE:

Close-up. DEVIN is the most serious we've seen him.

6. DEVIN: I KNOW you've got Alzheimer's.

FOUR:

TRANE and DEVIN stare at each other. Very UNCOMFORTABLE.

NO TEXT

FIVE:

Same as panel 4. Except DEVIN has opened his MOUTH to continue the conversation.

7. DEVIN: We've been partners so long... I just wish
you'd told me...

8. SFX: BEEP BEEP

SIX:

TRANE is back at the monitor, turning his back on DEVIN.

9. TRANE: We're INITIATED. Let's get this bitch over with.

10. DEVIN: Sure, boss.

PAGE SIXTEEN:

ONE:

DEVIN is on the roof of the Sorus Labs building. He adjusts his CLIMBING HARNESS as he creeps across the roof towards a huge VENTILATION DUCT.

NO TEXT.

TWO:

DEVIN begins to cut a hole in the duct using a pen-sized laser-cutter.

1. SFX: FSSSSSS

THREE:

EDELMAN is in a meeting room with two other SCIENTISTS. Edelman nervously checks his watch.

NO TEXT.

FOUR:

EDELMAN heads for the door, calling back to the other SCIENTISTS.

2. EDELMAN: Sorry to cut this short, but I've got to meet Lozier in Lab 7.

FIVE:

ALLUMETTE, dressed in a tech uniform, eyeglasses and tied-up hair, walks down a corridor past some BUSINESSMEN.

NO TEXT.

SIX:

ALLUMETTE passes by a door marked: "CHEMICAL ANALYSIS LAB" and below it a large yellow sign reading: "WARNING! HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL WASTE – AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY."

NO TEXT.

PAGE SEVENTEEN:

ONE:

DEVIN lowers himself down a dark narrow shaft via a ROPE hooked to his climbing harness. NIGHT-GOGGLES and a SKI MASK cover his face.

NO TEXT.

TWO:

Security camera's POV of EDELMAN entering Lab 7, looking nervous.

1. TRANE/elec.: Edelman just got to the spot...

THREE:

Devin's booted foot crashes out from inside the shaft as he kicks an air conditioning unit out of its holder. EDELMAN turns in shock.

2. TRANE/elec.: ... what's your ETA?

3. DEVIN: Is NOW good enough for you?

4. SFX: KRATCH!!

5. EDELMAN: Oh shit!!

FOUR:

EDELMAN backs away from DEVIN, cowering.

6. EDELMAN: Who are you?!

7. DEVIN: O'NEAL sent me. I'm not gonna hurt you, but we HAVE to make this look like a real kidnapping for their cameras, got me?

FIVE:

DEVIN wraps his arm around EDELMAN'S neck.

8. EDELMAN: Ow! That HURTS!

9. DEVIN: Good job, ya look like you shit yourself.

10. DEVIN/linked: You D.S.I. guys are real PROS...

PAGE EIGHTEEN:

ONE:

Back in the van, TRANE watches the action on the monitor. He's not impressed.

1. TRANE: Jesus, Devin, quit clowning...

TWO (INSET):

A FLASHBACK: the shot of ALLUMETTE from the security camera (from page 14), framed tighter on her face.

NO TEXT.

THREE:

TRANE sits up straight, a look of shock on his face.

2. TRANE/small: Oh shit.

FOUR:

TRANE leans over the monitor and SHOUTS into his com-link, his brow furrowed.

3. TRANE: Devin get the fuck OUT of there now!

4. TRANE/linked: Mission has been compromised, repeat --

FIVE:

DEVIN and EDELMAN are taken by surprise as the DOOR to the lab is KICKED OPEN.

5. TRANE/elec.: -- Mission has been COMPROMISED!

6. SFX: KRUMP

PAGE TWENTY:

ONE:

Close-up of TRANE'S BOOTS as he rushes into the Sorus lobby. In the BACKGROUND we can see two uniformed SECURITY GUARDS react in alarm.

1. SECURITY GUARD: HEY! STOP RIGHT THERE --

TWO:

A BULLET hits one of the SECURITY GUARDS in the SHOULDER. The other guard is HIT in the ARM.

2. SECURITY GUARD: Aaagh!

3. SFX: BLAM BLAM

THREE:

TRANE lunges up the fire stairwell, his SIG-Sauer smoking.

4. SFX: EEEoooo EEEEEoooo EEEEoooo

FOUR (INSET):

A FLASHBACK: O'Neal and TRANE sit at a table in a dark room. They're hunched over, examining pictures laid out across the table. We can see a simple "D.S.I." insignia on the wall behind them.

5. O'NEAL: THIS person of interest is a real up-and-comer on the international assassin circuit.

FIVE (INSET):

A FLASHBACK: O'Neal's HAND points to a picture of ALLUMETTE.

5. O'NEAL/off-panel: ALLUMETTE... can't be older than eighteen years old.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE:

ONE:

Back in Lab 7, ALLUMETTE gracefully leaps backwards, her back arched, as THREE BULLETS hit the WALL behind her.

1. SFX: BLAM BLAM BLAM

TWO:

DEVIN fires his pistol, missing again as ALLUMETTE flips TOWARDS him (if we can see her face, we can tell she is thoroughly enjoying this).

2. SFX: BLAM

THREE:

ALLUMETTE knocks the gun from DEVIN'S hand.

NO TEXT.

FOUR:

DEVIN punches ALLUMETTE in the face.

3. SFX: FAPP

FIVE:

ALLUMETTE wipes a trickle of blood from her busted lip. She's having a great time.

NO TEXT.

PAGE TWENTY-TWO:

ONE:

A burning, human-torch EDELMAN shambles towards ALLUMETTE.

NO TEXT.

TWO:

ALLUMETTE karate-kicks EDELMAN right into DEVIN.

1. DEVIN: No!!

THREE:

DEVIN shoves EDELMAN out of the way (the flames have died down, he's a charred dying mess now).

2. DEVIN: You goddamn...

FOUR:

ALLUMETTE's booted foot connects with DEVIN's chin, knocking him backwards.

3. SFX: KRAKK!

FIVE:

TRANE makes it to a landing five flights up, sweating.

NO TEXT.

SIX (INSET):

A FLASHBACK: Trane's HAND holding the PICTURE of ALLUMETTE.

4. O'NEAL/off-panel: Don't let the sweet face FOOL you. One of our agents nabbed her in Morocco two years ago. She torched him AND his car.

PAGE TWENTY-THREE:

ONE:

ALLUMETTE kicks DEVIN in the chest, sending him flying through a large glass WINDOW into an adjoining room.

1. SFX: KREEEESSHHH

TWO:

SHATTERED GLASS surrounds DEVIN as he pulls himself to his feet. Blood drips from some large CUTS on his face.

NO TEXT.

THREE:

ALLUMETTE bounces thru the empty windowpane, and flings a *spark*.

NO TEXT.

FOUR:

TRANE runs into the room, his gun drawn.

TRANE: DEVIN -- !

FIVE:

TRANE shields his eyes from a BURST OF LIGHT off-panel.

NO TEXT.

SIX:

Same angle. TRANE is frozen where he is, SHOCKED.

NO TEXT.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR:

ONE:

TRANE reaches out as DEVIN burns, his arms OUTSTRETCHED in a Jesus moment.

NO TEXT.