

SABRE AND THE ELLIPSIS OF DOOM

Radio play for Hogswatch 2012

by

Adele Kirby

Adele Kirby
55 Leinster Sq
Bayswater
W2 4PW

adele@adelekirby.com

www.adelekirby.com

07962 522 721

SYNOPSIS

Manchester Roarke is in trouble with his agent. Thanks to the unexpected success of his comics creation Sabre, a badly ripped-off Conan character, he's trapped writing a story he doesn't like for a character he'd quite like to kill off and be done with.

Now three years over his last deadline, the pressure is on to produce another book, and Sabre's latest half-baked plot is stuck revolving around an unnamed, unshaped monster that's out to get fictional versions of Roarke's agent, Paul, and mouthy work experience girl, Mac. And then assumedly destroy the world, or something lame like that.

But when Sabre and the monster blunder from the page into Roarke's estate, fantasy fiction becomes the new reality. Roarke's going to have to overcome his 'creative constipation' and take some responsibility for his creations before the monster kills the real Mac and Paul – all while trying to keep Sabre from finding out that he's responsible for all the tragedies of his violent life.

Because if Roarke can't give the monster form, even Sabre can't destroy it. And if Sabre finds out the truth, Roarke's going to find his character to literally be the death of him. But the writer soon discovers that the monster is much more than a figment of his imagination, and he's going to have to take a hard look at himself if this story is to have a happy ending.

CHARACTERS

Manchester Roarke	Hapless, defensive 40-something comics writer/artist. Trapped by the unexpected success of Sabre, his violent and brainless Conan-style hero, Roarke is suffering 'creative constipation' (aka writers block) writing a character he never particularly liked in the first place.
Mac	Determinedly gothic 16-going-on-26 work experience girl, sent by her uncle Paul to investigate the nature and extent of Roarke's creative constipation. Smart mouthed, sharp as a whip and at that age where clearly she is right about everything, all the time. Could learn a spot of empathy, frankly.
Paul	Mac's uncle and Roarke's agent. Paul is in the difficult position of trying to manage the career of a defensive writer who seems to resent his own success.
Witch	A fictional character from Roarke's comic, based on Mac and fated to be killed by Roarke's nameless, shapeless monster. Played by the same actress as Mac.
Mercenary	A fictional character from Roarke's comic, essentially a daft version of Paul and also headed for Doom. Played by the same actor as Paul.
Sabre	The fictional protagonist of Roarke's comics, Sabre is a stock Conan-style barbarian who even speaks like Arnie Schwarzenegger.
Bentley	Roarke's bad tempered Scottish gardener. Can be played by the same actor as Paul.

FX MUSICAL THEME

CREDITS V/O Sabre and the Ellipsis of Doom, written by Adele Kirby, produced by John Hicks, sound by Ulisa and Mari Fletcher and Ali Trace with John Hicks as Manchester Roarke, Richard Atha-Nicholls as Sabre the Silent Scream, Amy Wheaton as Mac and the Witch and Peter Mills as Agent Paul, the Mercenary and Bentley the bad tempered Scottish Gardener!

FX STUDY DOOR CREAKS OPEN

FX STUDY DOOR CLOSSES

FX CREEPING FOOTSTEPS (MAC)

FX MAC'S MOBILE PHONE RINGS

MAC (HUSHED) Yeah, I'm in Roarke's study - but it's bad, Paul. The place is clean. The only writer who works in a space this tidy is one who doesn't actually do any writing. Wait, wait: waste paper bin sighted, and - yes, we have content.

FX BIN LIFTED ONTO DESK

FX PAPERS SHUFFLED AND UNSCRUNCHED

MAC Sorry, the pages are screwed so tight you could use them as golf balls. Let's see...
 (PAUSE)
 Good grief! He's actually done some work. Full pages of artwork.
 (PAUSE)
 Oh dear.
 (LISTENS)
 Yes, that bad. Check this out: the scene is a sort of seedy tavern.
 (FILM-TRAILER DRAMATIC) "World's End, one of the most notorious taverns in Altica, has been quiet of late."
 (NORMAL/SARCASTIC) Dramatic pause.
 (FILM-TRAILER DRAMATIC) "Far too quiet. That quiet is about to be broken."
 (NORMAL) Cue a mercenary-type dude being thrown out a window - he jumps up, looking pleased, and – *oh dear* –

(PAUSE)

Nothing, nothing wrong, he just... well, he looks a lot like you. A little like you. Passing resemblance only, I'm sure. Anyway. Mercenary dude jumps up and here comes our eponymous hero.

Mercenary: "I was worried you were losing your touch, Sabre."

Sabre: "What do you want, you horrible man?"

(LISTENS)

Yes, he really says that. He's getting stupider by the issue. No wonder it ended up in the bin –

FX STUDY DOOR CREAKS OPEN

MAC – I mean this is just – [awful]

ROARKE Mackenna?

MAC – brilliant! This is absolutely, utterly brilliant! Roarke, why ever would you want to throw it out?

ROARKE Why are you in my study? And who are you talking to?

MAC I thought it might need cleaning. Your study. Being your work experience girl and everything, I thought: well Roarke's so busy doing anything but working on the comic that I might as well make myself useful. Cleaning the study you never use. I'm seeing the flaw in my own plan now.

FX CLINK OF GLASS

ROARKE Jack Daniels?

MAC I'm sixteen.

ROARKE Jager?

MAC Still sixteen.

ROARKE Gordons?

MAC What the hell, you're on.

FX POURING OF LIQUID INTO GLASSES

FX DEEP DRINK, SIGH

ROARKE It's not brilliant.

MAC They're probably not meant to be drunk together.

ROARKE I meant the story.

MAC Oh. And no. I suspect you've done better.

ROARKE I just can't write Sabre any more. I don't know what's wrong. He keeps coming out like... you know....

MAC A monosyllabic Conan rip-off, thick as brick and prone to bouts of unnecessary violence?

ROARKE Exactly!

MAC No, that's quite normal then.

ROARKE Give me that –

FX PAPER SNATCHED FROM MAC

MAC Look, why don't you take different approach to Sabre. Try introducing some good old psychological dilemma. Motivated villains. Women in armour that could stop weapons more dangerous than a blunt pencil.

ROARKE Last time I tried that I landed my agent on the phone: "Roarke, are you trying to kill your sales? Can't you just violently kill some more

people instead? And while we're on it, let's see some more leg and cleavage you could lose your mobile phone down."

MAC What do *you* want to write?

ROARKE Me? What's that got to do with anything? I'm in breach of contract over an issue I can't finish with a main character I can hardly stand coming up against a monster I can't decide on.

MAC Well, we have something here, so let's workshop it. I'll be the mercenary - who looks suspiciously like your agent, may I say - and you can be Sabre.

ROARKE Don't be daft, Mackenna –

MAC It's Mac! You'd know that if you'd actually talked to me at all this week. Now what's my line?
(CLEARS THROAT, AWFUL FAUX MASCULINE)
"I was worried you were losing your touch, Sabre."

ROARKE (FLAT) "What do you want, you horrible man?"

MAC God no, man. Give it a bit of – you know – *grrrrr*. Have another drink.

ROARKE Maaaaaac –

MAC Drink! Grrrrr! Now!

FX ROARKE GLUGS AGAIN

MAC (MASCULINE) "I was worried you were losing your touch, Sabre."

ROARKE (ALA ARNIE SCHWARZENEGGER) "Sabre the Silent Scream never loses his touch."

MAC Oh you really are just ripping off Conan –

ROARKE – this was a stupid idea –

MAC – but it works! Arnie works! Ok, what happens next?

FX PAPER BEING STRAIGHTENED OUT

MAC Let's see, some bird comes out of the tavern and Sabre says:

ROARKE (ALA ARNIE) "Touch her again and I will rip out your intestines for the lady's garters!"

MAC And she says – *hang* on, this girl, is she – [me]?

ROARKE Nothing you need to see!

FX PAPER BEING SNATCHED, SCRUNCHED, THROWN

MAC Hey!

ROARKE Next bit is terrible. Woeful. I shouldn't dare inflict it upon you.

MAC Roarke if that picture was what I thought it was I will inflict my fist upon your face!

FX FEET ACROSS CARPET (ROARKE HUSTLES MAC OUT)

ROARKE I was just thinking this morning how long the lawns are –

MAC Hey – let me go –

FX STUDY DOOR CREAKS OPEN

MAC – if you write me into that damn comic then I better be –

FX STUDY DOOR CLOSES

MAC (OFF) – *awesome!*

ROARKE (SHOUTS) Tell Bentley to let you play on the ride-on mower or something!

MAC (OFF) And evil! Evil awesome! Don't you dare make me a sissy, Roarke!

ROARKE God forbid.

FX PAPER BEING SMOOTHED OUT

ROARKE Right then. What dreadful things shall I do to you today, Sabre me lad?
(DRAMATIC NARRATION) World's End, a tavern of reputable disrepute.

FX ATMOS TAVERN SOUNDS FADE UP AND DOWN

NB: DIALOGUE DELIVERY IS A BIT SHIT – ROARKE AND SABRE TELEGRAPH WHILE THE WITCH AND MERCENARY ARE FLAT, EVEN BORED.

SABRE SPEAKS AS PER ARNIE

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre stands heroically in front of the young, smart-mouthed damsel in distress – who may have some passing resemblance to my work experience girl – while facing off against the spectacularly irritating mercenary – who, I admit, may bear some significant resemblance to my agent.

WITCH Go on, take your sweet time saving me then. I have all day to be menaced.

SABRE Before I kill you, mercenary man, tell me who sent you.

MERCENARY With pleasure. The –

ROARKE (FAST) Ellipsis of Doom.

SABRE (SURPRISE) The –

ROARKE (FAST) Ellipsis of Doom?

WITCH Yes, the –

ROARKE (FAST) Ellipsis of Doom.

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre realises then that he has been setup, for the damsel turns out not to be in distress after all. She performs a vicious karate chop on Sabre's wrist –

WITCH Hiiiiiyaaaaaaaa.

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre grunts in a pained yet manly fashion –

SABRE (GRUNT: PAINED YET MANLY)

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) – as he drops his sword.

FX SWORD HITS GROUND

WITCH Leave it, Sabre, for your steel will be of no use to you against the –

ROARKE Goddamn Ellipsis of Doom!

FX PAPER SCREWED UP, THROWN IN BIN

ROARKE So what, I can't even make up a *rubbish* monster now?

FX ROARKE'S MOBILE RINGS

ROARKE I give up!! I surrender!

PAUL Still throwing our toys out the pram, are we?

ROARKE Oi! Who is this?

PAUL The poor bastard who has to keep people from suing us over the continued non-existence of your next book.

ROARKE Oh, hi Paul. God I wish everyone would just get off my back about that. All writers miss deadlines.

PAUL *You're* not Douglas Adams and even he didn't miss three years of them, Roarke. I think it's time to admit you have – [writer's block]

ROARKE I do *not* have writers block. What I have is... "creative constipation" regarding a monster.

PAUL Ok, what is it?

ROARKE No idea.

PAUL What does it look like?

ROARKE No idea.

PAUL Right. So what can it do?

ROARKE No idea.

PAUL Well what can't it do?

ROARKE Ooooo – and still no idea.

PAUL Dare I ask if it has a name?

ROARKE Currently: Ellipsis of Doom.

PAUL What?

ROARKE You know, “dot dot dot of doom.” Not thrilling, I’ll admit, but very original.

PAUL I am never going to see this mythical next edition, am I?

ROARKE I’m working on something big, Paul. Epic. Sabre may not survive.

PAUL The Ellipsis of Doom?

ROARKE (PISS OFF) Incidentally, the story features a persistently annoying mercenary who keeps harassing Sabre. Frankly I think it’s going end badly for him.

PAUL This ‘mercenary’ fellow, he wouldn’t happen to look anything like me would he?

ROARKE Does this call have a purpose, Paul, or was it just another excuse to harangue me?

PAUL It’s beyond me why I have to harangue an adult into doing his own job to earn his own keep, but yes: how’s Mac?

ROARKE Who?

PAUL Mackenna. Mac. Work experience girl. Remember?

ROARKE Oh, her. You sent her to punish me, didn’t you? Well it isn’t going to work. I’ve given her to Bentley for the week.

FX RIDE-ON LAWMOWER (DISTANT, CONT’D)

PAUL You gave her to the gardener? Roarke, she’s supposed to be learning something.

ROARKE Sounds like she’s learning all about ride-on lawn mowers to me. Very useful skill. Looks a bit daft wearing all that black though.

MERCENARY What mischief is this?

WITCH Ancient magic from the people of Gothika. When Sabre steps into the pentagrammic circle in the grass, he shall be transported straight into hell, and the –

ROARKE (FAST) Ellipsis of Doom –

WITCH – shall reward us.

MERCENARY How?

WITCH Mostly by not killing us, as I understand. Details were sketchy.

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre rides heroically into the clearing on his mighty stallion: *Death Star*.

FX GALLOPING HORSE

SABRE I hope this is a worthy trap. I have bought a friend –

FX HORSE WHINNY

SABRE – and I would hate to disappoint him.

WITCH Sabre, I am quite unafraid of your horse.

SABRE That is ok.

FX EOD ROAR 1

SABRE I was not talking about the horse. O –

ROARKE (FAST) Ellipsis of Doom –

SABRE – you want me? Come and get me!

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre kicks Death Star into a gallop towards the pentagram.

SABRE Hup! Hup!

FX EOD ROAR 2

WITCH No, mighty –
 ROARKE (FAST) EOD –
 WITCH – stay back!

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) The wily Death Star jumps clean over the portal pentagram, hotly pursued by the formless EOD –

FX EOD ROAR 1

FX PORTAL

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) – which blunders straight into the portal.

WITCH – oh bugger –

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 1 (to Roarke's lawn)

FX RIDE-ON LAWNMOWER – TURNING OFF

MAC Bentley! Oh, that's not your happy face.

BENTLEY (ENRAGED) Mackenna...!

MAC Problem? Oh, the pentagram? You don't like it? I'm hoping Roarke will find it... inspirational.

BENTLEY What pagan mischief be this, girl?

MAC Relax, it's perfectly harmless.

FX PORTAL

FX LAME EOD ROAR

MAC Oh.

SILENCE

FX EOD LUMBERS AWAY

FX TREE FALLING

FX EOD LUMBERS AWAY (FADE OUT)

BENTLEY "Perfectly harmless."

MAC Well. That was unexpected.

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 2 (to the Altica forest)

FX ATMOS FOREST 2

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) As the triumphant Sabre swings down from Death Star, the Witch and Mercenary hastily confer.

MERCENARY How have we been outwitted by *that*?

WITCH (CLOSE) This isn't over yet.
(PANTO) Don't touch me, you mercenary fiend! Oh Sabre, you have saved me!

MERCENARY Oh come on, this is never going to work...

THROUGH THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE, THE IMPLICATION IS THAT THE WITCH IS KIND OF WINDING HERSELF AROUND SABRE – HE'S TRYING TO STAY FOCUSSED BUT SHE'S RATHER DISTRACTING. THE POOR MERCENARY, MEANWHILE, NEEDS A CHUCK BUCKET.

WITCH Hold me, you irresistibly hunky man –

SABRE You think Sabre is stupid?

WITCH No, never. But you see, this mercenary and his appalling monster were *forcing* me to do their evil bidding. I'm not really a witch at all.

SABRE Then... what are you?

WITCH I'm actually a princess.

MERCENARY I'm actually going to be ill. You do know that there are things a man can't un-see?

WITCH And as you have saved me, Sabre, by the sacred laws of Gothika, we must be wed.

SABRE What? Wed? When?

WITCH Without delay! Step closer, my love –

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) And so the wily witch manages to guide the bamboozled Sabre to the edge of the pentagrammic portal – and his doom.

FX SWORD DRAWN (DAGGER)

WITCH (NORMAL, HARD VOICE) Oh Sabre, never trust a witch. With this dagger, I do thee wed – (GRUNT)

FX STABBING

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre bellows in pain –

SABRE (BELLOW OF PAIN)

ROARKE – as the Witch pushes him back into the portal –

WITCH Say hello to hell, lover boy.

SABRE WIIIIIIIIIIII –

FX PORTAL

ROARKE – and into another world.

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 3 (to Roarke's lawn)

MAC Where you off to, Benders?

BENTLEY If there's a monster out there, it wants a-hunting.

MAC Ha ha ha – what, seriously?

FX PORTAL

SABRE (DISTANT) – *IIIIIIITCH!*

MAC Oookay. You just see a man dressed like Sabre appear on the lawn, Benders?

(BEAT)

Benders? Bentley?! Hey –

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 4 (to Sabre on the lawn)

SABRE (PANTING) Dagger – cursed woman – (PAINED GRUNT)

FX DAGGER PULLED OUT

SABRE Well well. What have we here? This is a strange sort of hell. Hell with a house? Perhaps the devil is home.

FX THUNDEROUS KNOCKING

SABRE 'Allo? 'Allo?

SILENCE

SABRE ('OH WELL' GRUNT)

FX DOOR SMASHED DOWN

SABRE Better. (SNIFFS LOUDLY) Fee - fi - fo - fum - I smell the blood of a little man –

FX HEAVY TRAMPING (SABRE)

SABRE (SNIFFS LOUDLY)

FX STUDY DOOR CREAKS OPEN

SABRE 'Allo, little man. Covering behind doors is for –

ROARKE (ALA ARNIE) – women and children and men with weak bladders,
(NORMAL) blah blah blah.

SABRE (DISAPPOINTED) You know that one?

ROARKE Of course I know it. Question is: who the hell are you? You're an actor,
right? Who put you up to this? Mac? Paul? Wait, you're a stalker! Oh dear
god –

SABRE – I would try calling on the devil if I were you –

ROARKE (BORED) – he keeps us on a direct line, et cetera et cetera.

SABRE (DISAPPOINTED) You know that one too?

ROARKE Obviously I know all your lines –

FX SWORD DRAWN

ROARKE – whoa with the broadsword! Look, I know everything about you!

SABRE Only one man knows everything about Sabre.

ROARKE Right!

SABRE And that man is the Creator.

ROARKE My point exactly.

SABRE And when I meet that man –

ROARKE (FAUX MODESTY) – well – [this is your lucky day]

SABRE – he is a dead man.

ROARKE – come again – ?!

SABRE I will seek vengeance for this life he has given me.

ROARKE No – you’ve had an amazing life! Thrilling and heroic and although not exactly award-winning, certainly financially rewarding –

SABRE Terrible things happen to me all the time.

ROARKE Yes but – you’re a hero. Kind of comes with the territory –

SABRE And I am lonely.

ROARKE No you’re not. You meet new people all the time.

SABRE But they keep betraying me, or dying. Horribly. Often of me.

ROARKE Well, can’t argue with that. You do have fantastic adventures though! I mean look at all your... scars and... stuff... and... would you mind putting the sword down now? Only it’s surprisingly sharp at this close range.

SABRE Tell me who you are, little man, that you think you know so much about Sabre.

ROARKE Me? Well, I am (LOW) humouring the crazy man with the sword, which makes me (LOUD CHEER) your greatest fan. Yes indeed! Go team Sabre go!

SABRE (SATISFIED GRUNT)

ROARKE Oooooo, that's a complication. Does Mac make it more or less likely that this is hell?

FX STUDY DOOR CREAKS OPEN

MAC *What* is going on?

ROARKE Definitely more.

MAC Some strange ... er...

ROARKE/SABRE Ellipsis of Doom –

MAC ... appeared on your lawn and – what?

ROARKE Ellipsis of Doom. It's an EOD. It's a... creative constipation thing.

MAC Okaaaay. Oh, hey, Sabre-dude! How did you pull off the sweet appearing trick? Nice Cosplay, by the way. I've always thought Sabre was rather underdressed, and now I'm absolutely certain of it.

ROARKE Ah –

SABRE Treacherous witch, you bought me here with your dark Gothika magic.

MAC My... what? *Roarke?!*

ROARKE (AWKWARD LAUGH) This is just all a big misunderstanding. Mac, could I have a word?

MAC (LOW) 'Gothika'? Do you have an original idea in your head?

ROARKE (LOW) It was just a creative exercise! I was, er, workshopping it with this actor.

MAC (LOW) Your "actor" seems to be bleeding.

ROARKE (LOW) Tomato sauce.

MAC (LOW) From a hole in his chest.

ROARKE (LOW) Cosmetic tricks. Amazing what you can do. Take the afternoon off. Take the week off.

PAUSE

MAC Fine. Not like there's anything to learn here from you anyway.

ROARKE Hey –

SABRE Witch?

MAC It's Mac! And by the way, I've changed my mind about that ridiculous accent.

SABRE What accent?

MAC You might want to ask your creator here to rethink it.

ROARKE (SQUEAK)

SABRE (DANGEROUS) Creator?!

ROARKE (NERVOUS LAUGH) Nononononono I'm not your creator –
(LOW) Mac! Go! Away!

MAC Honestly, I don't know which of you is more ridiculous. Or if there's even a difference. So out of here.

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 5 (to Mac outside)

FX RIDE-ON LAWNMOWER – TURNING OFF

MAC Bentley? Bentley? Oi, old man?

FX EOD GROWLING

MAC Okaaaaay – what was that? And who turned out the sun?

FX EOD GROANING

MAC Well that sure as hell isn't Bentley. Bentley? Bentley!!

FX EOD ROAR 1

MAC Sweet magic of Gothika, what is that? Roaaaaaarke!!!!

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 6 (to Roarke & Sabre in the Study)

ROARKE Did you just hear Mac shouting? What's happening to the forest – it's filled with darkness?

SABRE (GRUNTS)

ROARKE Er, Sabre? The world is growing dark. At two in the afternoon. I don't really know that this is the time to trim your toenails.

SABRE (GRUNTS)

ROARKE With your broadsword.

SABRE (DISTRACTED) It is only the EOD. It brings a veil of darkness when it attacks. It will lift when the witch is dead.

ROARKE When the witch is what?!

SABRE The witch and mercenary failed to kill me. The price of failure to the EOD is death.

ROARKE You mean that the EOD is really out there, hunting Mac? She could die!

SILENCE, BUT FOR:

SABRE (SMALL GRUNTS OF CONCENTRATION)

ROARKE Sabre? You're the hero. That's your cue to rush out there and save the day.

SABRE I do not care for the witch. Nor do you.

ROARKE Well, no, not *personally* – and it was *her* pentagram that started all this in the first place – but that's not the point. Time to develop some emotional depth. To care for someone else.

SABRE Everyone I care about dies. Horribly. If you were my creator, I would kill you for that.

ROARKE A-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!!!!
(BEAT)
I'm not your creator.

FX DISTANT EOD ROAR

ROARKE Let's put it another way. Don't worry about the girl – be a good barbarian and go slay the damn monster! Come on –

FX STUDY DOOR OPENS

ROARKE (CALM) Er, Sabre?
(NOT CALM) What the hell happened to my front door?!

SABRE Sabre knocks only once.

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 7 (to Roarke and Sabre outside)

ROARKE (LOUD) Mac? Mac?!
(BEAT)
Sabre, there's the mower, tipped over. Do you think it got her?

SABRE No. She is on foot. In this direction.

ROARKE That's towards Bentley's gardening shed.

FX EOD ROAR 3

ROARKE (GIRLY SCREAM)

SABRE Little man. Hugging is for –

ROARKE – women and children and men who wear excessive eyeliner, I know. Sorry. (EMBARRASED COUGH) Sabre, this, er, EOD – what does it actually look like?

SABRE It has no native form. Just darkness and sound that brings death.

ROARKE (LOW) Oh my god, my creative constipation is wandering around my forest trying to kill my work experience girl while my thick, mass-murdering fictional creation wants to kill me. What happened to today?

FX EOD ROAR 2

ROARKE (GIRLY SCREAM) Do something, do something, do something!

SABRE I will draw it off. You find the witch.

ROARKE Excellent idea!
(BEAT)
Wait – isn't it *after* Mac?

SABRE Yes, but I am after it.

ROARKE Oooo, rock, hard place, rock, hard place –

SABRE Hey! EOD! Over here!

FX EOD ROAR 1

MAC That's not Sabre out there. I mean Sabre is a badly constructed fictional character, and that's a real man.

ROARKE Fighting an apparently real doom-wielding monster I don't have the imagination to create. You work it out, you let me know. But right now, let me in!

MAC Does he know that you – you know – created him?

ROARKE No! And please don't tell him.

FX EOD ROAR 4

FX ATMOS SABRE AND THE EOD FIGHT

MAC Doesn't look like it's going very well, does it?

ROARKE With Sabre legging it straight for us – I'd say no.

MAC Incoming!

SABRE (GRUNTS)

FX SHED DOOR SLAMS CLOSED

MAC Sabre, are you alright? Ooooo, blood. Lots of blood.

SABRE This is not going to plan. Sabre has faced many strange and –

MAC – stupid –

SABRE – monsters, but this one is different. I cannot fight that which has no solid form.

FX EOD ROAR 4

MAC Are you sure it can actually kill? Being all unmade and everything?

ROARKE/SABRE Yes.

MAC Then listen:

FX EOD SNUFFLING

MAC Why isn't it coming to get us?

SABRE It can only enter if invited.

ROARKE/MAC Really?

ROARKE Oh yes –

 PAUSE

MAC And why had no-one mentioned this before?

ROARKE I'd forgotten all about it. Narrative imperative. All monsters need some intrinsic constraint on their nature to allow your heroes to regroup, engage in emotional crises and plan the next strategy, from a place where they cannot be directly threatened.

MAC Since when do your characters have enough depth to have emotional crises?

ROARKE Sabre is a very well rounded, emotional character. Man.

SABRE Emotions are for women.

ROARKE Oh you just had to go and ruin it, didn't you?

MAC Well if we're safe for the moment, Roarke, take off your shirt.

ROARKE What? I don't see how that's going to help! I mean you're not exactly my type, and you're really not my age –

MAC To bandage Sabre, you fool.

ROARKE Oh –

ROARKE (ALA SABRE) It is but a flesh wound.
SABRE It is but a flesh wound.

MAC You're as bad as each other! Roarke, would you do something for someone else? For once?

ROARKE Oh alright –

FX FABRIC RIPPING

MAC Right, Sabre, hold still. Roarke, what does the EOD want?

SABRE To kill you and the Mercenary.

MAC He's talking about Paul, isn't he?

ROARKE (GUILTY COUGH)

SABRE (PAINED GRUNT)

MAC I said hold still, man!

ROARKE It was sort of like this. In Altica, you and Paul drew a magic pentagrammic circle thing, intending to trap Sabre –

MAC I think I'm starting to understand where this is going. Instead of doing some real work, you essentially wrote the EOD into the real world to knock off Paul and I.

ROARKE No no no, the real world was a complete accident. Sabre would have followed the EOD though the portal to another sort of Hell dimension –

MAC – uh-huh –

ROARKE – where they would have fought an epic battle of epic proportions –

MAC – epic, huh? Sabre, relax –

ROARKE – and then things get a little hazy –

MAC – so you haven't actually made it up yet –

ROARKE – but the EOD finally returns to Altica and *that's* when it kills you and Paul
and then Sabre heroically sacrifices his life to – AAARGH AAARGH –

MAC Look Sabre, I can't bandage you when you're holding Roarke by the neck,
can I?

SABRE How can you know all this?

ROARKE (GASPING FOR BREATH) At least that's what I *imagine* was going to
happen!! I mean!! How could I *know*?! Ha! Ha! Ha!

MAC I nearly had it tied off and everything –

ROARKE (STRANGLER NOISE)

SABRE You. You are the creator?

ROARKE (DESPERATE SQUEAK)

MAC Er, Sabre? I don't think he can breathe. Seriously.

SABRE Ellipsis of Doom: I invite you in.

ROARKE (PANICKED SQUEAK)

MAC You did not just say that.

FX EOD ROAR 1

SABRE (GRUNTS AS HE PUTS ROARKE DOWN)

ROARKE (GASPS FOR BREATH)

FX CRASH (EOD LANDING ON SHED ROOF)

FX MONSTER MOVEMENT SOUNDS CONTINUE

MAC It's on the roof! Couldn't you have written him more intelligence and saved our lives?

ROARKE (GASPING) Sabre! You've just killed us all!

SABRE Who has killed us? Whose monster, Creator? What you have made, surely you can unmake?

ROARKE No no no... That's against the rules...

MAC What rules? This is your world!

ROARKE Yes... but no. There *are* rules, narrative imperative and all that. I can't just write things away. Events have to make sense according to the internal logic of the story's universe.

FX EOD ROAR 2

MAC I'm really not sure that's applicable in this case, but ok, how about this: if you can't unmake it, can you at least *make* it? Into a something, instead of an... ellipsis of doom?

ROARKE Ooooooo. That might work.

MAC It's going to have to: because the roof's about to cave in.

ROARKE Ok, ok, ok. What should I make it into?!

MAC You're the creative here! Just not something stupidly dangerous.

SABRE No more dragons.

ROARKE Uh-huh.

MAC Or, like, gryphons.

ROARKE Uh-huh.

SABRE Or Manticores.

ROARKE Uh-what?

MAC And definitely no zombies. Can't stand zombies.

SABRE And I will need a weapon. It seems impervious to my sword.

ROARKE Right. Non-dangerous form and weapon. Ok.
(BIG BREATH)

FX EOD ROAR 6

MAC Hey, Roarke?

ROARKE Concentrating, here.

MAC That's lovely, but could you concentrate faster?

FX EOD ROAR 1

MAC Only we're about to be toast.

ROARKE (MASSIVE EXHALE) Right. Done. You ready for this?

FX ROARKE CLAPS HIS HANDS

FX END ALL MONSTER SOUNDS

SILENCE

MAC That's it? You've done it?

ROARKE Hope so.

SABRE It will have a shape?

ROARKE Almost definitely.

SABRE And I can kill it?

ROARKE Very likely.

SABRE Ok. Or I kill you.

ROARKE Marvellous.

MAC (EMOTIVE) Sabre – ?

SABRE (RECEPTIVE) Yes –?

MAC (CATCHING HERSELF) Go kick some serious ass.

SABRE (GRUNTS)

FX SHED DOOR OPENS

FX SLOW WING BEATS

PAUSE

MAC So... where is it then?

ROARKE Ooooooo – don't panic, just don't look up –

FX ROAR AND SHOOTING FLAME

MAC AAAAHHHHHHHHH!
SABRE AAAAHHHHHHHHH!
ROARKE AAAAHHHHHHHHH!

FX SHED DOOR SLAMS CLOSED

MAC Roarke! What were you thinking?

ROARKE I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry, you were rushing me and mostly all I could think of were dragons, gryphons, zombies and manticores –

MAC – so you created a dragyphizombicore?

ROARKE (HELPLESS SQUEAK)

MAC Dammit man, I said no zombies! What's the weapon?

ROARKE (SQUEAKS) Garden hose!

MAC What use is a garden hose against a dragyphizombicore?

ROARKE Water, fire, oh god, I have to focus – (AAAARGH)

SABRE (GRUNTS) You lied, little man.

ROARKE (CHOKING) Lying implies intent. I'd call it more... ineptitude. This is a disaster. I'm going to be killed either by my own fictional character or my own fictional dragyphizombicore.

SABRE We do not die now. In my world, when I am trapped in a situation beyond hope of escape, something always saves the day.

ROARKE Of course! The 11th hour rule! Never fails.

FX ROAR AND SHOOTING FLAME

FX FIRE BURNING (CONT'D)

MAC I think the EOD may have missed that memo. And now the door's on fire.

ROARKE (GIRLY SCREAM)

SABRE This is not so unusual, in my world.

ROARKE Sabre... look, facing the jaws of doom and all that – it's not been such a bad life, has it? I mean, you're an action sort of a man. You wouldn't have had it any other way, right? Right?

MAC (LOW) Idiot, he's a reluctant hero, remember. Forged in the heat of tragedy et cetera. Your token stab at character depth and relatability.

ROARKE (LOW) I'm hoping he's forgotten that.

SABRE Would it have been so bad to not have my father slaughtered before my eyes when I was a child?

MAC Apparently not.

SABRE To have inherited his wealth and lived his life of luxury surrounded by nubile young maidens who peeled grapes and massaged me with warm and pleasingly scented oils?

MAC – he's got you there –

ROARKE Grapes and oil – do you think these things really made your father happy?

MAC – happier than being dead, certainly –

ROARKE – not helping –

SABRE To have been surrounded by friends and family who supported my secret ambition to be a watercolour artist?

ROARKE A what?! You are the greatest hero in Altica, not some pansy painter!

MAC On another occasion, I'd find this all very touching, but Sabre, right now is not the time for emotional development because there goes the door!

SABRE Then we go out fighting.

ROARKE We do?

FX EOD ROAR 4

MAC Still got that garden hose handy, Roarke?

FX ROAR AND SHOOTING FLAME

MAC/SAB/ROA AAAAAAHH – ???
(CRIES DROP OFF LAMELY, QUESTIONINGLY)

LONG SILENCE

SABRE See? Always so anticlimactic.

MAC No way. Saved at the 11th hour. Just like in one of your stupid comics.

ROARKE Ha! Narrative imperative for the win!

SABRE You did this?

ROARKE Yes! Probably. Maybe. Well...

MAC So if you didn't save us, who did?

FX ROARKE'S MOBILE RINGS

ROARKE Er, hello?

PAUL (OFF) Roarke? What is going on around here? And what the hell happened to your front door?

ROARKE Paul!
(OH SHIT) Where are you?

PAUL (OFF) I seem to be standing on Mac's pentagram.

MAC The pentagram! That's it! Paul, you may have just saved us all!
(LOW, TO ROARKE) The pentagram bought Sabre and the EOD here – maybe that's how we can send them back to Altica.

ROARKE Paul, you shouldn't be here. You're in terrible danger. Get to the house and stay there – hey –

MAC (SNATCHING PHONE) No, Paul, stay right where you are! We're coming to you.

ROARKE (TAKING PHONE BACK) Hang on.
(LOW, TO MAC) He's not safe there.

MAC (LOW) The EOD is looking for Paul. Paul is at the pentagram. That's where we need it.

ROARKE (LOW) You're using Paul as bait?!

MAC (LOW) Why Roarke, don't tell me you're actually caring for someone else?

SABRE But the pentagram – it has been ruined.

MAC Then I'll make another.

SABRE It will be magic?

MAC Don't see why not when the first one was. After all, according to Roarke's rules, I am a witch of Gothika. We need to split up – I'll get the mower, you boys hold the EOD off Paul.

ROARKE Define 'hold' in this context –

MAC Fine, you get the mower Roarke. Sabre and I will go and be brave.

SABRE Sabre does not take orders from you, witch.

MAC Mac! And do you want to stay here forever?

SABRE Let us “kick some serious ass”.

MAC Proud.

FX **MUSICAL TRANSITION 8 (Mac, Sabre & Paul on the lawn)**

MAC Paul! Thank goodness you're alive!

SABRE Witch! Why are we are wasting time saving the mercenary?

PAUL Mac! Why is there a man dressed as Sabre?

MAC Ooooooo where to start – ?

SABRE He is stupid. He is not even a worthy adversary. I will kill him now –

FX **SWORD DRAWN**

MAC No no no no no! Look, he's not a mercenary, he's Roarke's agent. And my uncle.

SABRE What is an agent?

MAC Well his job is to harass Roarke into writing stories about you that will sell more – on second thoughts, it might be better you don't know. He's a friend. And Paul, this really is Sabre. And it's getting dark, which means you better get your head around that fast or you're going to have a lot of trouble with what comes next.

PAUL Which is?

FX SLOW WING BEATS

MAC That.

FX EOD OVERHEAD CRY

PAUL What is that thing?

MAC That, apparently, is an Ellipsis of Doom, or EOD.

PAUL That's what Roarke was working on? But he said it was formless. Not to mention fictional.

MAC It was. We tried to get him to give it a form, but he's so creatively constipated we ended up with a dragyphizombicore for our troubles.

PAUL No... it's more than that. What does it want?

MAC According to what Roarke passes as narrative, it's going to kill the two of us, and then Sabre. And then destroy the world or something lame like that.

FX FLAME THROW 1 (WHISTLES...THEN EXPLODES)

PAUL Mac, I know this is going to sound a bit mad –

SABRE Incoming dragyphizombicore! Down! Down!

MAC/PA/SAB (GRUNT AT THEY LEAP AWAY)

MAC – mad next to what, exactly?

PAUL Look, I think what we're being attacked by is a physical manifestation of Roarke's writers block.

BEAT

MAC Oh hell, why not? It makes as much sense as anything else today.

PAUL Where is he, anyway?

MAC God knows. Useless man can't follow the simplest of instructions.

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 9 (to Roarke and the ride-on mower)

ROARKE (GRUNTS, HEAVES...)

SILENCE, BUT FOR ROARKE PANTING

ROARKE (GRUNTS, HEAVES EVEN LOUDER)

Giddup you little bastard...

SILENCE, BUT FOR ROARKE PANTING

ROARKE Defeated by a prostrate ride-on lawn mower. The shame. Where's your fictional barbarian when you actually *need* him?

FX MUSICAL TRANSITION 10 (TO MAC, SABRE & PAUL)

FX FLAME THROW 2 (SUBTLE WHISTLE... THEN EXPLODES)

MAC Incoming! Move!

MAC (PANTING) We can't keep this up for long, without Roarke, sooner or later we're toast. Probably sooner.

SABRE No. You say it wants Sabre also? Then Sabre will draw it off.

MAC No! If that thing *is* Roarke's writers block, then Paul and I might be irritants, but the source of all his problems... it's you, Sabre. It's too dangerous for you to go out there. This is Roarke's fight.

SABRE Then we are doomed. I must face the monster, because he will not –

MAC Sabre –

SABRE – and I will not be him. Farewell, witch.

MAC (HALF-HEARTED) Mac –

SABRE (BATTLE CRY)

FX FLAME THROW 3

FX (RISING) RIDE-ON MOWER START & STOP

PAUL Sabre's not what I imagined.

MAC He's changing. He's trying so hard not to be his creator.

MAC Speak of the devil – here comes the cavalry.

ROARKE (HYSTERICAL) Paul! This isn't at all awkward and strange.

PAUL Hello Roarke. Mind explaining why your fictional character and writers block are both real and trying to kill me?

ROARKE My – what?

MAC The EOD, Roarke. We think it's you. Your writers block. All your frustration and fear, your resistance and your resentment, striking out at everything you blame for your own problems.

ROARKE What? No no no, technically speaking, this is clearly all your fault. The two of you – we can share the attribution of blame here.

MAC/PAUL (PO'D) What?

ROARKE Don't you see? Paul, you were the one who told me to write the EOD (AHM) killing you off for fun, and then here he was in the real world, through Mac's pentagram.

SILENCE

ROARKE Ergo, your faults combined.

SILENCE

MAC (LOW) You want to hold him down while I cause grievous bodily harm with extreme prejudice?

ROARKE (DESPERATE CHEER) But never mind, no harm done! Mac, do your pentagram thing then, would you?

MAC No.

ROARKE Ha ha ha – what do you mean, no?

MAC I mean No, I think it's your turn to save the day. It's time you took just an ounce of responsibility, just for once, instead of blaming everyone else because Manchester Roarke: this is categorically your fault.

ROARKE What? No. No no no. Mac, all you have to do is mow a new pentagram and I'll somehow make it magic and –

MAC – and what? The EOD goes back to Altica where Sabre heroically sacrifices his life to stop it? Because it's easier to kill him off than deal with what's causing your 'creative constipation' in the first place? I don't think so, Roarke. This time, you face your own monster.

ROARKE But that's Sabre's job. I create the monsters, he fights them. That's how it works in an author-character relationship, see? I mean look at him out there, happily slaying away at the EOD.

FX SABRE FIGHTING THE EOD (not very happy sounding)

MAC Er, guys?

ROARKE Good man. Handy to have about when there's an accidental dragyphizombicore stomping around your garden.

MAC Guys? I think this argument is actually making the EOD stronger –

PAUL Roarke, listen to what we're saying, it makes sense. You told me yourself – you knew you'd created a monster with no name, no shape, but that bought darkness and death. You couldn't recognise it outright because what you've done is manifest an element of your own subconscious.

MAC Seriously! Sabre is in trouble!

ROARKE I don't – I can't – this isn't my fault –

FX FADE IN EMOTIVE THEME

MAC Roarke, Sabre is an element of your subconscious too, but everything you used to give to him, you're channelling to a darkness that will overwhelm him. He's out there fighting for his life, but he's fighting for your soul. Help him. Please.

ROARKE Mine?

MAC Yours. Own it. Face it. Only then can you defeat it.

ROARKE This Ellipsis of Doom... this thing of darkness, as dark as a very dark room in which there is absolutely no light, I acknowledge as mine.

MAC (GENUINE) Well done.

PAUL Look, the EOD, it's changing –

MAC – it's become a man –

FX EOD TURNS INTO A MAN

ROARKE – it's becoming me, isn't it? Even my subconscious is a huge bloody cliché.

PAUL No, no it's not becoming you, Roarke.

ROARKE (CHEERFUL) Really?

MAC Nope, kind of wish it was though. Because now we have Sabre vs Dark Sabre, and our hero is in big kahoona because his other self knows his every move.

PAUL Sabre goes for a bold decapitation strike – but Dark Sabre anticipates, ducks and spins –

MAC/RO/PAUL (WINCE) Oooooooo –

MAC Sabre goes down with a kick in the teeth –

PAUL – but he shakes it off, he's coming back around – loads a blow to the solar plexus, but – oh! Dark Sabre sees it coming! He blocks and strikes and –

MAC/RO/PAUL (WINCE) Oooooooo –

ROARKE Come on Sabre! Get up!

PAUL And he's trying – Sabre comes up swinging – Dark Sabre falls back –

MAC Get out there Roarke!

ROARKE Me? You're far more aggressive than I am!

PAUL – but the Man-Thing rallies, tackles Sabre, disarms him –

MAC Sabre! Run!

PAUL Sabre looks grimly towards us – towards his creator –

ROARKE (HELPLESS GURGLE)

SABRE I will not run. I will not be him.

PAUL – and Sabre remains defiant as the Man-Thing strikes –

FX STABBING SOUND

SABRE (DYING URGH)

MAC No!

PAUL Oooooooooo –

PAUL Run through his gallant heart, our hero crumples...

FX SABRE FALLS, DEAD

SILENCE

ROARKE (LOW) Sabre...?

MAC (LOW) Is he...dead?

PAUL (LOW) Have to be, really. Heart's an essential... y'know.

MAC NOOOOOOOOOO! I'll kill for you for that myself –

PAUL Mac, no –

MAC Let me go!

ROARKE But why, monster? I acknowledged you! I owned you as mine!

DARK SABRE You think I am the enemy? You created me to deal with life's pains. You gave form to me to destroy those who harm or inhibit you.

MAC No! He created you to defend himself from life's pains. To shy away from anything that might be hard, or hurt.

DARK SABRE When you are unsure, you look to me, and I tell you what to think. When you are in pain, you ask me, and I tell you what to feel.

MAC Yeah: 'It's ok Roarke, it's not your fault – why don't you blame everyone else instead?' How's that working out for you now?

DARK SABRE I am every cutting word others heap upon you.

MAC You let Sabre die. I'm only just getting started –

PAUL (LOW) Mac, stop baiting the monster with the broadsword –

DARK SABRE And you, Paul. I am every other story you have rejected, all of Roarke's thwarted aspirations and abandoned characters. All of his creative energy, stamped down and twisted upon itself.

PAUL Damn.

DARK SABRE And now – now I deal with these problems, once and for all.

FX SWORD DRAWN

ROARKE Look, actually, if 'dealing with these problems' means killing or maiming my friends, I'd actually rather you didn't. I mean I totally appreciate the sentiment –

DARK SABRE But it is people like Mac and Paul who have hurt you, driven you to creating me. Now I finish what you bought me here to do. Prepare to – [die] –

ROARKE Wait! You're taking everything from me! Or am I taking it from myself? No more! Sabre is dead, and this is my fault. You have killed him, and this is my fault. That you exist... this is my fault. But you know what? This is my story. And I think it's time I took some responsibility for what happens in it.

DARK SABRE No! You have relegated responsibility to me!

ROARKE (BLAGGING) Did you know that, er, let's see, Sabre is cursed?

DARK SABRE Was. Was cursed. Past tense. On account of my having ventilated his heart.

ROARKE (AHA!) Well isn't that just the point? Sabre was cursed – to be loveless until his heart is healed by true love.

DARK SABRE Healing a figurative broken heart is quite different to healing one with a gaping hole through it, I am sure.

ROARKE Yet conveniently, the curse was not that specific. (POINTEDLY AT MAC) True love will heal the hero's heart. That's all it said.

MAC Why are you looking meaningfully at me like that?

ROARKE True love, Mac. That's what Sabre needs. True. Love.

MAC Yes but I never said anything about –

PAUL Oh come on, you're clearly besotted with him.

MAC Well, there may have been a crush involved, but – true love is very specific. I mean I only met Sabre today –

ROARKE ('GET ON WITH IT') I understand there was a sub-clause though confirming that passing crushes from Gothik witches also qualify.

DARK SABRE This is ridiculous –

MAC Hey! You! Zip it. I have to do work my magic mojo here, ok.
(BIG BREATH)
Sabre me lad, I think it's quite reasonable to say that after all of today's drama, I have found you to be significantly more than the single-brain-celled lump Roarke had been turning you into. I might even go as far as to say that I... I... I don't dislike you. At all.

SILENCE

MAC What?

PAUL That's it? You call that a confession of love?

MAC I do *not* use the L word.
(PUT-UPON SIGH)
Sabre... I'm gutted that you're gone. If it's in my power to undo that, then let it be, because you have more ass to kick and are way too cool to be dead.

SILENCE

MAC And this would be an excellent time to come back to life.

ROARKE (COUGHs MEANINGFULLY)

MAC What, there's more?

ROARKE Sweet mercy girl, haven't you ever seen a Disney movie?

MAC No, I read Silent Scream! Ok ok ok. What the hell. Sabre?
(BIG BREATH)

FX GENTLE SINGLE KISS

SILENCE

MAC Oh for goodness sake, that's as good as it gets –

SABRE Witch?

MAC Ma – never mind, I'll go with that. Welcome back big guy.

ROARKE (Low, DELIGHTED) Who's the man?

SABRE You have saved my life?

MAC Nah, it was a combined effort sort of thing. Thank Roarke.

ROARKE (JOY) Sabre! Come here, you big lump!

SABRE (CONFUSED GRUNT)
Little man. Hugging is for –

ROARKE – women and children and men who have pony tails, blah blah blah, but never mind that just now. You're alive, and that's the main thing. Now go and kick this guy's ass. Please. And thank you.

SABRE Ah, he looks a worthy opponent.

PAUL Er, he looks just like you.

SABRE This is Sabre? Not bad.

ROARKE He's sort of a darker you. Or a darker me. There may not actually be any difference at this point in time.

DARK SABRE I have killed Sabre once, I can kill him again.

ROARKE I don't think so. You see, this is my story. Sabre is my hero, and you're my monster. And you've already given me all the right words to say. You were born of my conflicted emotions, twisted back upon themselves because I used them not to serve me. I allowed them to enslave me. No more.

MAC Nice speech. Short of the long: Sabre, get your slayage on.

ROARKE I was getting there. You ready for this?
(CLEARS THROAT)
(DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre launches himself at Dark Sabre in a mighty tackle.

BEAT

SABRE What, now?

ROARKE Yes now!

SABRE Ok. (GRUNTS)

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Dark Sabre falls heavily, dropping the broadsword. As the two mighty barbarians thrash around, the Gothik Witch dives forward –

MAC (BEING PUSHED BY ROARKE) Hey –

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) – and *elegantly rolls* –

MAC – what – ?!

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) – to sweep up the fallen sword.

MAC You are so dead later. Here goes nothing – hup! Ha! Owwww...

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre and Dark Sabre haul one another to their feet, still struggling violently – it looks like a stale-mate –

PAUL Go Sabre! Smack him one! Let's have none of this stale-mate crap.

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) – until the Mercenary boldly lunges forward and trips Dark Sabre up.

PAUL Who? Oh, me?

DARK SABRE ('THIS IS RIDICULOUS') But I can see him coming.

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) The Witch creates a diversion –

MAC Er, hey?! Ugly?! Over here!

PAUL Me now? Hup!

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Dark Sabre falls –

DARK SABRE No, really, I still saw him coming –

PAUL (GRUNTS)

PAUL Bet you didn't see that knee to the nuts coming though.

DARK SABRE (GROANS) Below the belt –

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) And so indeed, Dark Sabre *falls* –

MAC Looks, does someone want this sword or not? Cos blimey, it's heavy –

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) Sabre effortlessly sweeps up his broadsword –

SABRE Thank you.

MAC That is so unfair. I'm telling you, that thing is heavy –

ROARKE (DRAMATIC NARRATION) – and takes off the helpless Dark Sabre's head with one fell swoop.

SABRE (GRUNTS AS HE SWINGS)

MAC WAIT!

SABRE (QUESTIONING GRUNT – STOPPING MID-SWING)

SAB/ROA/PAUL Why?

MAC Because isn't killing your inner monster just like killing yourself?

DARK SABRE Definitely. Listen to the witch.

SABRE/MAC/RO Mac!

SILENCE

PAUL Roarke? I guess it is part of you.

DARK ROARKE Yes! See! You need me. Who will you turn to next time life is unfair?

BEAT

ROARKE Unfair. I'm a bestselling author with an agent and an editor and fans and a hundred acre wood of my very own and you think I need someone to tell me how unfair life is?

MAC First sensible thing you've said all day.

DARK ROARKE She doesn't understand! How dare she judge you? You live in a state of perpetual loneliness! Your closest companion is a bad tempered Scottish gardener who doesn't even like comics. You are secretly certain that Sabre was a freak success and you'll never write anything popular again. You are afraid of the general public. The online fan communities are a place of unbridled terror, you'd think you were guilty of crimes against humanity, the way they go on!

ROARKE Sabre?

SABRE (AFFIRMATIVE GRUNT)

ROARKE Kill it.

SABRE (SATISFIED GRUNT)

FX DECAPITATION

SILENCE

MAC Eeeew. And wow. You did it.

ROARKE Nope. We all did it. Together.

PAUL So... that's it then? Disaster averted? Mac just has to re-mow the pentagram, we send Sabre back to Altica and voila, we're all saved from the horrors of Roarke's twisted psyche?

ROARKE (AHEM) Yes, well, sorry about that. Don't know about the rest of you, but I feel a whole lot better – (STRANGLED AAARGH)

MAC Sabre, put him down! Down boy!

SABRE I wish also to be saved from the horrors of Roarke's limited imagination.

ROARKE (BREATHLESS SQUEAK) Anything!

SABRE Sorry?

ROARKE (BREATHLESS SQUEAK) I'll do anything you want!
(GASPS WITH RELIEF, BREATHES AGAIN)

SABRE Good.

ROARKE You could have just asked you know. So what is it you want? Quiet retirement? Girls and grapes and scented oil?

SABRE (ROARS WITH LAUGHTER)

ROARKE (LOW) What's so funny?

MAC (LOW) No idea.

PAUL (LOW) Beats me.

SABRE I am Sabre! The Silent Scream! What is it you think the world's deadliest barbarian assassin wants?

ROARKE Canvas and water colour paints?

SABRE One: I want decent evil overlords. The ones you send me? They are all so stupid.

MAC I know! I mean really, what kind of self-respecting villain tells you all their evil plans *before* killing you?

SABRE See! Yet for some reason, every time I ask, they still insist on telling me.

ROARKE You... you don't want to retire?

SABRE Not if I can have some decent adventures.

PAUL I'm seeing a whole new golden age for Silent Scream.

SABRE Two: I want some stronger women around. Ones who are not only appropriately attired for combat situations but also not compromisingly attached to the villain and destined always to betray me.

MAC I might just have some ideas there –

PAUL Roarke, how do you feel about going into a writing partnership with Mac here? You know, bringing a dynamic, young, feminist streak to the title?

SABRE Three: evil overlords may only hire professional mercenaries. Decent ones, who work only for the money.

MAC Seriously, yes please. The usual ones are either a joke – sorry Paul – or tend to get all stupidly egotistical and do daft things like give you a sporting chance. The hell?

PAUL You alright, Roarke?

ROARKE Yeah. I should be feeling incredibly insecure about all this – but actually, I'm ok. I'm more than ok. I think I'm good. I'm getting big ideas. Sabre vs Sabre. New Evil Overlord. I think I know just the man.

FX MUSIC FADES IN OVER:

SABRE Four: Legions of Terror must be trained in basic marksmanship. The inability of any of my enemies' legions to hit a target of my size at 100, 50 or even 5 metres is the only reason we are even having this conversation...

ROARKE Could be some logistical problems but okay –

SABRE Six –

MAC – Five: we need to spend more time exploring this Gothika place, inhabited by feisty – but not unrealistically endowed – witches –

SABRE Six!

PAUL – although cleavage is still a staple of the pulps comic form –

SABRE Six now?

MAC The Gothik witch needs a horse too, I think –

ROARKE Horse, fine –

MAC But you if it you call it something as lame as Death Star, I will hit you.

SABRE Nine!

CREDITS V/O Thank you for joining us for Sabre and the Ellipsis of Doom, written by Adele Kirby, produced by John Hicks, sound by Ulisa and Mari Fletcher and Ali Trace with John Hicks as Manchester Roarke, Richard Atha-Nicholls as Sabre the Silent Scream, Amy Wheaton as Mac and the Witch and Peter Mills as Agent Paul, the Mercenary and Bentley the bad tempered Scottish Gardener!

FX MUSIC ENDS

BENTLEY It's alright, it's over now – I got the monster!

FX CUTE SQUEAK

MAC Benders, that's a rabbit.

FX CUTE SQUEAK

BENTLEY (ALA MONTY PYTHON) Aye, and no ordinary rabbit. It has a vicious
streak a mile wide, it's – [a killer]

ROARKE Oooo, Bentley –

ROARKE/MAC – don't step in the pentagram –

FX PORTAL

BENTLEY Mackennnnnnna –

PAUSE

ALL Bigger.

FX TRIANGLE TING