

= Mona Sax =

Mona Sax is a fictional character in the neo @-@ noir media franchise Max Payne , where she represents the femme fatale archetype . Mona is a mysterious contract killer in a dangerous relationship with the series ' titular protagonist , the policeman @-@ turned @-@ vigilante Max Payne . The character was portrayed by Kathy Tong and voiced by Julia Murney and Wendy Hoopes in the video games , and was played by Mila Kunis in the film adaptation .

Mona appears in the first two games in the series , Max Payne and Max Payne 2 : The Fall of Max Payne . She is the second player character in Max Payne 2 after Max , and her tragic love story with Max is the center of the game 's storyline . Mona also appears as a major character in the 2008 film Max Payne and makes a cameo appearance in the multiplayer mode of Max Payne 3 . The games ' version of the character was perceived highly positively by gaming community and mass media , but her portrayal in the movie received largely negative reviews .

= = Appearances = =

= = = In video games = = =

Mona Sax is a mysterious professional assassin , living in a derelict theme park on Coney Island that she set up as her base . She is introduced in the first Max Payne game as the " evil twin " of her younger sister Lisa , the abused wife of the Mafia boss Angelo Puchinello . Mona is captured by Puchinello 's assassins before she could kill him , but manages to escape . It is revealed that she was employed by Nicole Horne , the renegade member of the secret society calling themselves the Inner Circle who has left the organization and manages the Aesir Industries , a mysterious corporation that is behind the drug Valkyr . Horne ordered to murder Puchinello since he wanted to act independent and out of her orders , a job Mona took because it was personal to her . By the end of the first game , Mona disappearss in the Aesir headquarters elevator after being shot in the head by mercenaries for refusing an order to kill Max .

In Max Payne 2 : The Fall of Max Payne , more focus is given to Max and Mona 's relationship , and she becomes one of the game 's two protagonists . Mona reappears as a suspect in the murder of the U.S. Senator Sebastian Gates . The case is assigned to Max Payne 's new partner , detective Valerie Winterson , but despite their past , Max does not inform the authorities that he knows Mona nor does he inform them of her visit to his apartment . During the course of the game , it is revealed that Mona is indeed the killer of Senator Gates . To save her , Max is forced to shoot the corrupt Winterson before she can execute Mona . Mona and Max work together to prevent shadowy hitmen known as Cleaners from eliminating both of them . Eventually , it is revealed that Mona 's employer was Alfred Woden , a U.S. senator and a member of the Inner Circle 's faction warring with the faction of the Russian mob boss Vladimir Lem . In the end , she is shot in the back by Lem , whom Max kills . She dies in Max 's arms as he kisses her , but lives on the game 's hardest difficulty level , " Dead on Arrival " .

Mona does not appear in the gameplay of the first Max Payne game , but appears only in its cutscenes . She became playable in four chapters of the first sequel , Max Payne 2 (" Routing Her Synapses " , " Out of the Window " , " The Genius of the Hole " and " A Losing Game ") . In it , Mona 's moves are more acrobatic than Max 's , and her sections involve several sniping sequences where Mona is using an exclusive Dragunov semi @-@ automatic rifle , which provides a covering fire for Max . Her other weapon is a .50 caliber Desert Eagle , a handgun that she also uses in the first game . Mona was also included as a playable multiplayer character in the Classic Multiplayer Character Pack of Max Payne 3 Special Edition .

= = = Other appearances = = =

Mona was portrayed by Mila Kunis in the movie version of Max Payne , whose role was described

as " an assassin who teams up with the title character to avenge her sister 's death . " In the film , she is a Russian mobster and Max is the main suspect in the death of her sister Natasha (an original character similar to the game 's Lisa and portrayed by Olga Kurylenko) . Eventually , Max and Mona join forces to uncover the vast conspiracy behind the Valkyr drug . The film credits end with a scene of Max meeting Mona at a bar Ragnarock .

She also appears in the flashback sequences in the Marvel digital comic book Max Payne 3 : After the Fall . Her clothes for the Xbox Live Avatar were released by Rockstar Games on the Xbox LIVE Marketplace .

= = Portrayal = =

Mona 's visual actress in Max Payne 2 was Kathy Tong , a Hollywood model . According to the first two games ' writer Sam Lake , he " did want to switch to Mona [...] but it was problematic . In the end , Max frames those sequences with his narration , saying that he doesn ' t know exactly what happened , or what Mona did , but it must have been something like this . In other words , when you are playing Mona , you are actually experiencing Max ' s guess of the events " . Regarding Mona 's possible survival at the end of Max Payne 2 , Rockstar 's Dan Houser stated that Max Payne 3 would " not continue that aspect of the story . We toyed with figuring out some way , or doing something clever , and then [decided] ' No , no , just move on from that bit of the story . ' It really didn 't work because there was no way of knowing the choices someone made . "

As a self @-@ described method actress , Kunis " took her job seriously " and " insisted on practicing a lot " , but disliked Mona 's outfit in the film , which was different from what the character wore in the games : " The clothes sucked . Oh my God , it was awful . Mark was like bundled up in jackets and wet suits and coats and turtlenecks and I was in a leather bustier and black pants and 5 inch heels . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Games = = =

The video game version of Mona Sax was critically acclaimed for being one of " relatively complex , non @-@ stereotypical female game characters " . She was included on the 2007 list of 50 greatest female characters in video game history by Tom 's Games , where she was described as " a stone @-@ cold killer who 's incredibly tempting but not entirely trustworthy " and " the perfect female accomplice to Max Payne . " In 2008 , PC Games Hardware also listed her as one of the most important female characters in video games . In 2012 , David Sanchez of GameZone proposed that Mona appear in her own spin @-@ off game , calling her " one of the sexiest femme fatales in all of gaming " , and added , " The fact of the matter is that Mona Sax is one hell of a character ? one that hasn 't starred in her very own game , but one that could very well do so and deliver an unforgettable experience . " That same year , Austin Yorski of Blistered Thumbs listed Mona among his personal favorites while discussing the portrayals of video game female characters . In 2013 , Complex ranked her as the 20th best supporting character in video games .

Much of the positive reception came from the characters 's perceived sex appeal . In 2004 , the staff of TeamXbox ranked Mona as number ten on their list of top " Xbox Babes " , calling her " no princess waiting to be saved " and stating that she had replaced their " bad girl " type " childhood crush on G.I. Joe ' s Baroness . " Polish edition of GameStar included her in their 2006 poll " Miss of the Video Game World " , in which she was voted at 17th place . The sex scene between Max and Mona , described as " actually one of the most fitting ever seen in a video game " , was ranked as the fifth top sexy moment in gaming by Games.net in 2007 . MSN included her on their 2009 list of gaming 's 12 " hottest babes " and wrote that " smart , sexy and dangerous " Mona was " remarkably presented in the game , being given the cold feel of a hired gun , with no regret or remorse " . Mona was also included on the list of nine " sexiest babes " of action games by The

Times of India , who commented that she " fits in perfectly in the dark world of Max Payne . " The affair between Max and Mona was ranked as the tenth top video game romance by Joystick Division 's James Hawkins in 2011 , and as the sixth most disastrous game romance by GamesRadar 's Dave Meikleham that same year . They were also listed among the 25 best video game couples by IGN 's Emma Boyes in 2012 .

The character has also received some negative reception . In 2003 , Nick Catucci of The Village Voice called her " a woman carrying more emotional baggage than Witherspoon 's Elle Woods has pink Gucci suitcases " and stated , " And Max 's love interest ? A contract killer who survived being shot in the head , and who you also play : Mona Sax . Who wrote this crap , Ed Wood ? " Tyler Wilde of GamesRadar ranked a cheat to undress Mona nude for her gameplay sections in Max Payne 2 as the fourth rudest cheat in video games .

= = = Film = = =

Critical reception of the film character has been generally negative . For instance , Richard Corliss of TIME wrote Mila Kunis was " not up to the task " and GameZone 's David Sanchez opined that " Mila Kunis ain 't got nothin ' on Kathy Tong " . In 2011 , Complex ranked Kunis as the tenth most miscast action movie hero , because " her character , Mona Sax , is a heart @-@ attack @-@ serious Russian assassin , a description that brings to mind Amazon woman Brigitte Nielsen back in her Red Sonja days ; Kunis , on the other hand , is petite and angelic @-@ faced . " Nevertheless , Kunis was nominated in the category " Choice Movie Actress : Action Adventure " at Teen Choice Awards 2009 for her portrayal of Mona in the film . She was also ranked as the eighth " hottest game girl " by Phil Hornshaw of GameFront in 2010 because the role , along with her enjoyment of World of Warcraft , earned her " some digital street cred " .