

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *WHEN THE MUSIC'S OVER*

# PETER ROBINSON



"Peter Robinson is a master." —TESS GERRITSEN

## SLEEPING IN THE GROUND

AN INSPECTOR BANKS NOVEL



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SLEEPING IN  
THE GROUND

AN INSPECTOR BANKS NOVEL

*Also by Peter  
Robinson*

Caedmon's Song

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Over

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Sleeping in the  
Ground

Peter Robinson

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Dedicated to the  
memory of my father

Clifford Robinson

31st December,  
1923–27th May, 2016

And to me, though  
Time's unflinching  
rigour, In mindless  
rote, has ruled from  
sight

The substance now,  
one phantom figure

Remains on the  
slope, as when that  
night

Saw us alight.

I look and see it there,  
shrinking, shrinking, I  
look back at it amid  
the rain For the very  
last time; for my sand  
is sinking, And I shall  
traverse old love's  
domain

Never again.

Thomas Hardy, 'At  
Castle Boterel'

They are all gone into  
the world of light!

And I alone sit  
ling'ring here;

Their very memory is  
fair and bright,

And my sad thoughts  
doth clear.

Henry Vaughan, 'Silex  
Scintillans, Part II'

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### **Chapter 1**

If the incident had been a scene in a film, it would have looked beautiful.

The violence would have taken place in elegantly choreographed silence and slow motion. Perhaps it would have started



with the wedding  
party milling around  
outside the  
picturesque country  
church, then the  
camera would zoom  
in on a rose of blood  
blossoming from the  
bride's white gown as  
she looks up,  
surprised, and floats  
serenely to the  
ground, arms  
reaching out, grasping  
for something too  
insubstantial to hold.

She would toss her bouquet high in the air, pink and purple flowers against a backdrop of blue sky, and it would fall into the arms of a pretty bridesmaid. Then the bridesmaid's head would disintegrate.

Strings of blood would snake through the air like drops of ink in water.

But the way Terry  
Gilchrist saw it – and  
he was there – it was  
as swift as it was  
brutal. A crack, loud  
enough to be heard  
above the church  
bells, was followed by  
a dull thud, then a  
patch of blood spread  
over the bride's chest.  
Her body arched, and  
she spun half around  
and crumpled in an  
untidy heap of blood-  
soaked white chiffon

and lace, her mouth open, the scream for ever stuck in her throat. Another crack, and her groom fell beside her. A frightened child clung tightly to his mother's legs. The bridesmaids clutched their posies, eyes wide with horror. A third bullet hit the maid of honour before she could run for cover.

She fell beside the  
bride and groom, half  
her face shot away.  
The men in their grey  
pinstripe suits and the  
women in difficult  
shoes and wide-  
brimmed hats  
bumped into one  
another as they ran  
around in panic and  
confusion. A bullet  
chipped the corner off  
an ancient tombstone  
and a sliver of stone  
entered the

photographer's eye. A guest fell, clutching his thigh. The quickest to react reached the church door as another bullet slammed into the centuries-old wood.

Someone managed to pull the heavy door open, and those who could rushed inside. They jammed the doorway, and another bridesmaid arched

backwards and  
dropped to the  
ground, blood oozing  
from her back. People  
trampled over her  
body in an attempt to  
get into the sanctuary  
of the church.

It was all finished in  
less than a minute.

Terry Gilchrist reacted  
as quickly as he  
could. He was no  
stranger to sudden

death and violence.  
He had been under  
fire before, but  
nothing had quite  
prepared him for this.  
Even so, his soldier's  
instinct kicked in. He  
glanced up at the hill  
where he thought the  
shots were coming  
from and saw a dark  
figure scurrying away,  
over the grassy  
summit and down the  
slope.



Gambling that the assault was over and that there was no one else up there, Terry tried to shepherd the stunned and dazed stragglers into the safety of the church, desperately searching for Winsome. There were no more shots. The church bells stopped ringing. Tentatively, one by one, the birds started singing again.

Terry stood alone in the bright December sunlight and called the police and ambulance on his mobile. One of the fallen guests was moaning with pain.

Nearby, a bridesmaid sat propped up against a gravestone crying, her hands pressed to her bloody midriff where something wet and

shiny rested in her lap.

Terry was no medic, but he had picked up some basic first-aid training in the military, and he visited all the fallen to see if there was anyone he could help before the ambulances arrived. The groom was his mate, Ben, and he had been shot just above his stomach,

around the location of his liver. He was still alive, though barely conscious, and the best Terry could do was tear off and wad up part of Ben's bloodstained shirt and have him press it against the wound. Tears came to his eyes as he passed the dead bride and cast a glance down at her crumpled body. He knelt to touch her

still-warm cheek and closed her staring eyes. It seemed that all he could see were bodies strewn around the graveyard.

Then he turned and went into the church to find Winsome.

Banks left the crematorium ahead of the others, David Bowie's 'Starman'

playing over the tinny  
PA system, and  
hurried away from the  
knots of people  
gathering behind him,  
down the gravelled  
drive to the iron gates.

‘It always made her  
feel happy, that song,’  
he heard someone  
say between sniffles.  
Earlier in the brief  
service, a friend had  
read a Christina  
Rossetti poem:

‘When I am dead, my  
dearest, / Sing no sad  
songs for me’.

‘Starman’ was  
certainly no sad song,  
but it still had people  
in tears. And even  
David Bowie was  
dead now.

Banks moved on  
quickly. He didn’t want  
to hang around and  
make small talk about  
death and loss with  
people he didn’t know.

He had seen the mourners crying on the front row: two young couples, probably daughters or daughters-in-law, with small children, grandchildren, most likely; he had spotted her parents, father in a wheelchair, his head nodding and arm twitching. The others would be friends, work colleagues, nephews and nieces.



The eulogy had mentioned the deceased's tireless work for Médecins Sans Frontières so some of the guests would be from that organisation.

But for Banks, this was *his* death, not something he wanted to share. He wanted to hold it to himself, to take it into him, if he could, let the grief

become a part of him,  
and join with the grief  
of long ago.

The taxi he had  
ordered was waiting  
across the road. He  
slid into the back seat  
and told the driver to  
head for the train  
station. It wasn't a  
long journey, and it  
passed in silence.  
When he checked his  
watch against the  
timetable just inside

the station entrance, he saw that he had almost an hour until the next train. He walked back to the street and scoped out the area. There was a Waitrose supermarket with a café to his left, but that wasn't much use. He didn't feel like a coffee or a cup of tea. Far more tempting was the Great Northern Hotel, almost directly

opposite. It was a three-storey brick building with the ground-floor facade covered in white stucco, a blackboard listing the daily specials stood by the door. Banks crossed the street, walked in towards the reception desk and saw the bar to his left. He didn't normally drink so soon after eleven in a morning, but after the

funeral he felt in need of something to take the edge off. It sounded as if some sort of function was going on to his right. Banks could hear someone making a speech, punctuated now and then by hearty laughter.

The bar was almost empty. One elderly couple sat at a table sipping white wine

and that was it, apart from the pretty brunette barmaid.

There was a rugby game on the large screen TV at the far end of the room.

Banks sat on a bar stool, from which he would be able to watch the game as he enjoyed his drink. He was about to order a pint but decided that he'd have wine instead. Less liquid.

He had a two-hour train journey ahead of him, and the toilets on trains were generally a health hazard, littered with soggy paper and awash with spillage. Usually the taps didn't work, either, which didn't matter much as the paper towels were scattered all over the floor.

The barmaid smiled at him as he sat down. Banks ordered a large Shiraz and settled on his stool. He wasn't a great rugby fan, and he had no idea who was playing, but he did enjoy watching a game now and then. He'd played rugby union at school, had even been good enough to make the school team as fly-half, being wiry,



slippery and  
reasonably fast.  
Nevertheless,  
sometimes he wasn't  
quite fast enough to  
prevent one of the  
hulking prop forwards  
from flattening him.  
He played once a  
week in regular  
games periods, and  
once on a Saturday  
morning for the  
school, no matter  
what the weather.  
Some weeks he was

sloshing about in the mud, others slipping on the frozen earth.

It felt odd being back in his hometown and not visiting his parents, but they had sold the council house he had grown up in and moved into a private care home near Durham to be closer to Banks and their granddaughter Tracy, who lived in

Newcastle. They were well into their eighties, and still healthy enough, but slowing down. Banks's father told him before the move that their cruising days were over; his angina bothered him and he had suffered a minor heart attack only a few months ago. Also, most of their friends on the estate had either

died or moved away,  
so there was nothing  
to keep them there.  
Moving wasn't as  
much of a wrench as  
it would have been a  
few years earlier. With  
the money left to them  
by Roy, Banks's  
brother, they could  
afford the best care in  
a beautifully restored  
Victorian manor  
house with a fine view  
over the River Wear.  
They still had their

independence. The one-bedroom flat had a large well-equipped kitchen, and Banks's mother still prepared the meals. They could come and go as they pleased, and there was always a registered nurse on duty, just in case. They said they had everything they needed and seemed happy enough, though Banks's father

complained that some of the other tenants were either too posh or too gaga for his liking. He also wasn't much of a joiner and didn't sign up for quiz night, sing-alongs or exercise classes.

Banks's mother got along just fine with the posh folk; she had always had aspirations beyond her class.

Just then, a small group from the party across the hall came in and clustered around the bar. A wedding group, Banks noticed. The men wore ill-fitting tuxedos with buttonholes, and the women were resplendent in lush cream satin gowns of ivory or peach. The bride and groom stood at the centre of the group.

Someone ordered a round of pints and G&Ts. One of the men had a loud grating voice and, of course, he was the one who talked the most. The bride had a laugh like a braying horse. The loud-voiced man told a dirty joke and they all doubled up laughing. Someone else made a witty comment about the groom's mother-in-



law, which raised more guffaws, especially from the mother-in-law herself, who seemed well in her cups. Fortunately for Banks, it was a short break. They downed their drinks quickly and headed back to the reception. The barmaid glanced at Banks and pulled a face.

Banks drank some more wine and saw that he had almost finished the glass.

Checking his watch, he calculated that he had enough time to get another one down and asked for a refill. He took a long slug of Shiraz, and though his eyes were fixed on the rugby game, he wouldn't have said he was actually following

it. He was thinking about those Saturday mornings long ago, towards the end of the sixties, when he still cared enough about being one of the lads to run around in the terrible weather week after week, risking a broken arm, cartilage damage or a wet rugby ball between the legs. It wasn't so bad, he reflected. You got a hot shower at

the end of the game,  
and most Saturday  
afternoons he went  
into town record-  
shopping with his  
mates Dave, Graham,  
Steve and Paul. All  
dead now, except  
Dave. You could buy  
used 45s at a stall in  
the open-air market,  
he remembered, but  
the discs were  
recycled from  
jukeboxes and the  
middles had been

punched out, so you had to buy flimsy plastic inserts which didn't always work. The 45s were often scratched, too, and they tended to skip. *Caveat emptor.*

There was a second-hand bookstall in the market, too, where he had hunted

down old Saint, Toff and James Bond

paperbacks with lurid covers.

But the best thing about Saturdays back then was the nights. On Saturday nights he would usually go to the pictures with Emily: Emily Hargreaves, the first girl he had ever loved, the girl whose coffin he had just seen rolling towards the flames.

‘It wouldn’t be for long,’ Ray Cabbot was saying. ‘A week or so at the most.

Just until I find somewhere suitable.’

Annie Cabbot put her knife and fork aside. ‘I don’t know,’ she said. ‘I mean, you know how small the cottage is.’

‘I wouldn’t get in your way, love. I promise. I wouldn’t cramp your style.’

Annie laughed. ‘My style? What’s that supposed to mean? I don’t think I have one. Anyway, it’s not that . . .’ But she was a bit worried about the effect a house guest might have on her relationship with Nick Fleming, a DI from



County HQ. It was relatively new and had come after a lengthy drought. But she wasn't going to tell her father about that. 'What's wrong with the colony?'

'Nothing. I just feel like I'm getting a bit too old for all that sort of thing.

These young turks.'

He grinned. 'Nobody

paints or sculpts any more. It's all concepts and attitudes. You could walk in an art gallery and piss on the floor and claim it was a work of art these days. Next thing they'll be wanting is a bloody lathe or a 3D printer for making installations. No, love, it's time to move on.'

'And you used to be so Bohemian, so

avant-garde. Getting conservative in your old age?’

Ray Cabbot huffed.  
‘Everyone has to draw the line somewhere.’

‘You’re not in any trouble, are you?’

‘What do you mean, trouble? Of course not.’

‘It just seems so sudden.’

‘Believe me, I’ve been thinking about it for some time.’

‘Besides,’ Annie added after a swig of beer. ‘You’re not old.’ She thought Ray seemed a lot younger than his seventy-plus years.

‘Thanks for saying that, love.’ Ray ran his hand over his hair. It was silvery-grey, the

same colour as his straggly beard, but he still had enough of it to wear in a ponytail. 'Maybe I'm just tired.'

'But why Yorkshire? You've always lived in Cornwall. It's home.'

'I know. It's just . . . well, you're here.'

'Don't be so soft, Dad.' It was rare that Annie called Ray

'Dad'. Ever since she'd been a little girl, after her mother died, she had got into the habit of calling him Ray, and he had seemed to like it. It was all part of the Bohemian atmosphere of the artists' colony outside St Ives, where she had grown up.

'It's true. You're all I've got, Annie. All

that's left of . . . It's all right. I'm still fit and healthy. I don't have cancer or anything. There's nothing physically wrong with me. I'm not moving up here so I can use you as my nursemaid, if that's what you're worried about.'

'It's not. And I wouldn't make a good nursemaid.'

‘No bedside manner?’

Annie grinned. ‘That’s right. It *has* been criticised, at any rate.’ She picked up her fork and speared some more salad. They were having lunch in the Black Swan, in the village of Harkside, where she lived. It was a small, quiet pub behind its whitewash and timber facade. Annie didn’t



eat there often, but she had to admit that, as salads went, this one was a cut above the usual: avocado, quinoa, grape tomatoes. It didn't go with the pint of Swan's Down bitter very well at all, but that was something she could live with.

'When would you want to start this

house hunt, then?’  
she asked.

‘Soon as possible.  
Right away.’

Annie dropped her  
fork. ‘You mean . . .  
like now? Today?’

‘That’s what right  
away usually means.  
Not today, perhaps,  
but after the weekend.  
Monday. Why? Is  
there some problem?’

‘No. No. It’s just that I could have used a little warning, that’s all. I thought this was a preliminary visit. A recce, like. I mean, don’t you have to go back and turn off the water or pack a bag or something?’

‘Sorry, love. All done. At least until I find somewhere.’

‘Can’t be helped, I suppose. What about your paintings?’

‘Zelda’s taking care of them. I can trust her.’

‘Zelda?’

‘Long story. So it’s OK, then? I can stay?’

‘Of course you can. As if there was ever any question.’ There was no way Annie could turn him away.

He was her father. He had brought her up, had always been there for her – well, almost always – had loved her and cared for her, even if he hadn't made a lot of personal sacrifices to do so. He hadn't changed his lifestyle, for one thing, which had made her childhood interesting, to say the least.

But her cottage was so tiny, and the walls were so thin. It would mean an end to nights with Nick until . . . well, who knew how long it would take Ray to find a suitable Yorkshire cottage? He was an artist, after all, and he would need a studio, somewhere the light was right, preferably with a fine panorama. He could be fussy, demanding

and hard to please,  
despite his laissez-  
faire demeanour. It  
was a lot to ask, and it  
would be expensive.  
Still, she also knew  
that he was  
successful and not  
without funds. He did  
a brisk trade in  
Cornwall during  
tourist

season – landscapes,  
seascapes and  
portraits – but his

more serious  
Impressionist-  
influenced work hung  
in respectable  
galleries and fetched  
ever-increasing  
prices. At least he  
wouldn't be a financial  
burden.

'Of course,' he said,  
as if reading her mind,  
'I could always afford  
a hotel or a B and B, if  
that's what you'd  
prefer?'



Annie thumped his arm playfully. 'Don't talk daft. I told you. You can stay at mine till you get somewhere.'

Annie's mobile rang, its 'Winkworth Gong' ringtone imitating the bell of a sixties' police car. 'Sorry, got to answer this,' she said. 'Work.'

She walked out into the street and put the phone to her ear. It was Chief Superintendent Gervaise, the Eastvale Regional Area Commander, and her voice sounded tight, urgent. 'We've got a serious incident. Shooting at a wedding. St Mary's church near Fortford. Nothing clear on how many casualties yet.

All hell's breaking loose around here so you'd better get out there ASAP. And see if you can get hold of Detective Superintendent Banks. He should be on his way back from Peterborough by now.'

Annie could hear voices in the background, shouts, phones ringing, heavy

footsteps. As she said, 'Yes, guv,' the only thing she could think of was Winsome. Her friend and colleague DS Winsome Jackman was supposed to be going to a wedding at St Mary's, Fortford, today.

Feeling light-headed and sleepy from the hastily consumed second glass of wine

and early morning, Banks was glad to find that he had two seats to himself, facing forward. The previous evening, he had compiled a playlist on his computer and downloaded it on to his iPod for the train home. He leaned back, adjusted his headphones and cocooned himself in his own little world as

he watched the  
landscape flash by  
through half-closed  
eyes.

He enjoyed the lush  
countryside of the  
English heartland.  
Even now, in  
December, the sun  
was shining on fields  
of stubble and distant  
rolling hills. Now and  
then the train would  
flash by a village, or  
he would catch sight

of a steeple or squat  
Norman church tower  
in the distance, a  
stately home on top of  
a rise.

Car windshields  
flashed in the sun.  
People walked their  
dogs down country  
lanes.

There was a stretch  
he particularly liked, a  
series of small lakes  
separated by grassy

banks and copses,  
where he could  
usually spot at least  
two or three  
fishermen sitting far  
apart with their rods  
angled, lines far out in  
the calm water.

The sight always  
made Banks want to  
take up fishing. There  
they sat like Buddhas,  
still and  
contemplative, waiting  
for the bite, the twitch,



nirvana. Maybe they were thinking of the bills they had to pay, or the office girl's tits, but they

always seemed so focused on the sublime, so at one with the elements. The only times Banks had been fishing, he had been bored silly, and he hadn't caught so much as a stickleback.

As the train sped by the ponds, Banks found himself listening to Andy Roberts singing 'Gliders and Parks', which he had included because it reminded him of the day he had met Emily in Hyde Park and she had ended their relationship. It wasn't so much the narrative as the mood the song created. That was followed by 'First Boy

I Loved' by Judy Collins, then Roy Harper's 'I'll See You Again'. He knew he was indulging himself in gross sentimentality, not to mention nostalgia, but he didn't care. It was *his* death, *his* mourning, and he would cry if he wanted to.

But he didn't.

Memories of Emily  
didn't cascade  
effortlessly in his  
mind, though he could  
picture her standing  
before him, the little  
scar on her upper lip  
where she had fallen  
off her tricycle as a  
young girl, the way it  
twisted when she  
smiled; her pale,  
smooth complexion,  
waves of long blond  
hair tumbling over her  
shoulders.

He had always told her that she reminded him of Julie Christie in *Doctor Zhivago*, and it was true that there had been something luminous about her, as if the light always favoured her eyes and lips. But Emily was no ethereal being; she could be earthy, impulsive, even crude. She laughed a lot, he remembered, but she

could be serious, too. And she was moody, mercurial. There were times when it had been exceedingly difficult to get through to her at all, when she had remained a silent, aloof and enigmatic presence, especially towards the end of their relationship.

They had listened to *Ziggy Stardust* when it first came out, and he

did remember that  
'Starman' had been  
one of Emily's  
favourites from the  
beginning.

He was stunned to  
discover she had still  
liked it enough that  
she chose to have it  
played at her funeral.  
But he hadn't known  
much about her  
recent life at all. He  
hadn't even known  
that she worked for

Médicins Sans  
Frontières. If Dave  
hadn't clipped the  
death notice from the  
local paper and sent it  
to him, he wouldn't  
even have known that  
she had died. When  
your friends and  
lovers start dying, you  
begin to feel as if you  
have only narrowly  
escaped the reaper  
yourself, and that it's  
only a matter of time.  
Which, of course, it is.



In the meantime,  
there's a version of  
survivor's guilt to deal  
with.

He found himself  
wondering if Emily's  
children would find  
anything of him when  
they cleared out her  
house. Would they  
find old photo albums  
and mementos of  
events and  
experiences  
meaningless to them?

Rock concert  
posters? Ticket  
stubs? Love letters?  
Postcards? The  
Tibetan bracelet he  
had given her for her  
birthday? The silver  
ring?

The train stopped at  
Newark, then  
Doncaster. When the  
food trolley rattled by,  
Banks stirred himself  
and bought a cup of  
coffee and a Penguin

biscuit, opened the tray by the empty seat beside him and set them down.

It always took less time to get from Doncaster to York than he expected, and soon after York came Northallerton. His stop. He switched off his iPod halfway through George Harrison's 'All Things Must Pass' and put it

in his briefcase beside an anthology of English poetry he hadn't opened for a few days. The last poem he had read was Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', which he had enjoyed very much.

He had turned off his mobile for the funeral service and forgot to turn it back on again. Now, as he prepared

to get off the train, he did so. The infernal thing practically exploded in his hand with urgent messages and texts. Something seriously bad had happened while he had been away.

Juggling the phone in one hand and his briefcase in the other, he walked along the platform and listened to the first message from DI Annie Cabbot.

## **Chapter 2**

By the time Banks arrived in Fortford, the whole village was swarming with police, and the curious inhabitants had been strongly advised to stay in their homes. Naturally, they didn't, and the police community support officers had a job on their hands keeping everyone behind the

police tape at the southern edge of the village green.

According to Annie, on receiving Terry Gilchrist's phone call at 1.03 p.m., the dispatcher had consulted with her control room inspector, who had ordered that no unarmed officers or emergency services personnel should

attend the scene until given the all clear by Firearms Support Command, even though Terry Gilchrist had claimed that he had seen the shooter leave the hill.

Firearms support had sent their three closest armed response vehicles, and the officers had just finished securing the area around the



church, about a quarter of a mile south of the village itself. Uniformed officers had then contained the scene and constructed designated pathways and meeting points so that the investigators could do their jobs and the paramedics could move in and out and take care of the injured. There were still no accurate

reports on exactly what had happened in the churchyard, or how many people had been hurt.

Banks showed his identification at the second checkpoint, about a hundred yards from the church itself, signed the officer's log, then sprinted briefly to catch up with Annie Cabbot and DCs

Doug Wilson and Geraldine Masterson, who were slightly ahead of him. Chief Superintendent Gervaise was Gold Commander, coordinating things back at Eastvale HQ along with representatives from the emergency services and firearms support.

A line of authorised firearms officers, resembling an invading army in their full personal protective equipment, stood outside the churchyard, facing the hill opposite. Banks could see a number of other armed officers moving about on the hillside itself. Each AFO carried a PR-24 baton, rigid handcuffs and CS spray, along

with the Glock side arm and Tasers. Because of the seriousness of the incident, they were also carrying Heckler & Koch MP5 carbines, which they usually kept locked in the boots of their vehicles. They made a chilling sight.

‘Any news?’ Banks asked as he caught up with the others.

‘Nothing yet,’ Annie answered. ‘How was the funeral?’

‘As you’d expect. Winsome?’

‘I’ve talked to Terry on his mobile. Winsome’s been hit, but he couldn’t say

how serious it is. The AFOs have searched the hill area, which is where Terry said the

shots were fired from,  
and they confirm the  
shooter's definitely  
gone.

They think they've  
found the spot he  
fired from and  
secured it for forensic  
examination. Gold  
Command has  
instructed that  
everyone unharmed  
inside the church  
should remain there  
until the ambulances

have cleared the dead and wounded. We've arranged coaches for the uninjured.

Eastvale General's been advised to expect the casualties. So have James Cook Hospital and Leeds Infirmary. As far as anyone knows, there were about sixty guests in all. It was a bit of a local celebrity wedding. In the papers and all that.'



She swallowed. 'It's a bloodbath, Alan, like nothing we've had before.'

'Media? You said it was a celebrity wedding.'

'We're not talking Madonna or royalty or anything. There were a few reporters and photographers, but they either ran away

or took refuge in the church.'

'Pity for once the place wasn't swarming with them,' Banks said. 'It might have made the killer think twice, or one of them might have got some footage of him. What about the wedding photographer?'

‘I don’t think so,’  
Annie said. ‘He  
caught a splinter of  
stone in one eye. But  
we’ll be checking out  
all photos and videos  
taken at the scene.  
Terry said he’s done  
what he can for the  
injured,’ Annie went  
on. ‘He managed to  
tie some tourniquets  
and staunch the blood  
flow on a couple of  
victims. He said it  
took ages for the

AFOs to get here. It's been well over an hour since the shooting.'

Banks glanced at his watch. 'I know,' he said. 'I was just getting off the train when I got your messages. I drove as fast as I could from Northallerton. I'm sorry my mobile was turned off earlier.'

'It doesn't matter.  
There's nothing you  
could have done on  
the train except fret.  
We've only just been  
permitted to  
approach, ourselves.  
Before that, it was  
armed personnel only.  
We couldn't get near  
the place. The first  
armed response  
vehicle didn't arrive  
until 1.41 p.m., and  
they had to search the  
area and make sure

the shooter wasn't still around. Some of the paramedics and doctors are really pissed off. They say people could have been dying up here while they were tied up in red tape.'

The four detectives walked through the lychgate into the old country churchyard. Banks saw the wounded sprawled

here and there,  
sobbing and clutching  
torn bits of shirt or  
dresses to staunch  
their bleeding. He  
could hear more  
ambulance sirens in  
the distance, and  
already paramedics  
were making their  
way around the  
churcyard along the  
common approach  
path designated by  
bright yellow plastic  
squares, like garish

stepping stones,  
marked out to avoid  
people contaminating  
the scene. Peter  
Darby, the crime-  
scene photographer,  
was

already hard at work  
amid the carnage.  
These were the  
'golden hours', the  
period closest to  
when the crime had  
taken place, and  
evidence would never



be as fresh or as plentiful as now. Dr Burns, the police surgeon, glanced up as Banks passed. Banks had never seen him so pale.

One beautiful young woman in a coral-coloured dress sat propped up against a gravestone shaking and whimpering, 'Help me. Please.' Her lap was soaked in blood

and her hands were  
clutched around her  
stomach, as if she  
were trying to hold her  
insides in. With her  
long blond hair and  
her pale heart-shaped  
face, she reminded  
Banks a little of Emily  
Hargreaves. A doctor  
hurried past him  
towards her. Another  
girl lay on the grass  
with half her head  
missing. She  
resembled an actor

from that zombie TV programme wearing a realistic prosthetic.

‘How many victims?’  
Banks asked.

‘Seven or eight, according to Terry. It’s not official yet.’

‘Adrian Moss here?’  
Moss was their media liaison officer, and he would soon be much in demand.

‘Not yet.’

Banks noticed that Gerry Masterson, the newest and youngest team member, had turned white. She was slowing to a halt, as if marooned on one of the yellow pads, staring at the girl holding her stomach by the gravestone. Banks thought he could see Gerry start to shake. Quickly he

went over to her and grasped her arm.

‘Come on, you’ll be OK,’ he said. ‘Look at me. Deep breaths. One. Two. Three.’

Gerry turned towards him, her nostrils flared, eyes wild, then she gave a slight nod. Her shoulders stiffened, and he could see the effort she made, slowing

her breathing, staring fixedly straight ahead at the church doors. 'I'll be all right, sir,' she said through gritted teeth.

Banks could hear children crying the moment he stepped through the doors, but it took a while for his eyes to adjust to the gloom inside the church. There were people everywhere,

some silent, some crying, some just talking. Banks saw a flower girl, with her hair in ringlets, holding her bouquet and sobbing. She had blood on her dress and her face, but he didn't think it was hers. A little boy in a smart suit had his arm around her and was trying awkwardly to get her to be quiet. Next he saw the vicar

sitting on the worn  
stone step by the  
altar, hunched over,  
head lowered, hands  
clasped in prayer,  
mumbling to God.  
Then he spotted Terry  
Gilchrist holding  
someone in his arms,  
leaning against a  
stone column.

Banks hurried over to  
Terry and saw, as he  
had expected, that it  
was Winsome he was



holding. Her arms were wrapped around her raised knees, clutching them tightly to her chest. There was blood all over the front of Terry's shirt as well as on his suit and face. Winsome's peach satin dress – the one she had been so thrilled to find on sale – was smeared and stained with blood, too,

and he noticed a bloody streak running across the top of her bare left shoulder.

Something had made a furrow in her skin. The cut wasn't bleeding much, a superficial flesh wound at best, but she had come *that* close. Winsome was trembling; her tear-filled eyes seemed unfocused, directed

inwards, unaware of her surroundings.

‘She’s in shock,’ Terry said. ‘She needs a doctor, but there are people far worse off. You’ve seen what it’s like outside.’

‘You were out there when it happened?’

Terry stood up, but he didn’t take his eyes off Winsome. Annie took

his place beside her. 'I did the best I could. I tried to get everyone inside to safety.

The shooter nicked Winsome's shoulder. She's lucky. I think the bastard was using hollow points, judging by the damage he's caused. I saw him leave the hill over the road, heading south. I think the waiting was the worst. People

were crying  
everywhere,  
screaming in pain. We  
could have got the  
ambulances and  
paramedics in much  
sooner, they were just  
waiting for the word,  
but the firearms  
officers wouldn't let  
anybody past, and it  
had taken long  
enough for *them* to  
get here. Christ, Alan,  
people were *dying*.  
Winsome could have

died. The bastards just wouldn't take my word for it that the shooter had gone.'

Banks touched him lightly on the shoulder. 'You did the best you could, Terry. Remember, I know your military background but the others don't. They had to follow procedure. Don't worry, we'll get

Winsome some  
attention soon  
enough. She'll be fine.  
What about you?'

'I'm OK.'

Banks stood up and  
surveyed the scene.  
Gerry and the others  
were squatting on  
their haunches,  
talking to witnesses.  
The sirens he had  
heard out in the  
churchyard stopped

suddenly, and then more paramedics and doctors rushed into the church bearing stretchers and medical supplies.

Banks stood on top of the hill opposite the scene and watched the activity in the churchyard. Tiny figures, like a Lowry painting. The hillside sloped gently down towards a field full of



sheep across the road  
from St Mary's. They  
were grazing  
innocently, as  
unaware of what had  
happened as the  
horse scratching its  
behind on a tree in  
the Auden poem  
about the fall of  
Icarus. To his left, he  
could see the village  
of Fortford, at the  
junction with the  
Helmthorpe Road, a  
cluster of stone

cottages with  
flagstone roofs  
huddled around a  
village green, the  
familiar Roman hill  
fort, the whitewashed  
facade of the Lamb  
and Flag. Behind him  
stretched the moors,  
a tangle of bare  
heather and gorse,  
like coiled barbed wire  
among the rocky  
outcrops. On the  
other side of the road,  
behind the church, a

similar hillside sloped  
up to similar  
moorland. It had been  
a perfect sniper's day,

not even a hint of a  
breeze nor a drop of  
rain, but now the wind  
was whipping up  
again and the  
rainclouds were  
gathering fast. It was  
close to four on a  
Saturday afternoon in  
early December, and  
it was already getting

dark, a chill creeping into the air from the north.

Banks was joined by Stefan Nowak, crime-scene manager, and Superintendent Mike Trethowan, head of the firearms cadre. The three men stood by a section of the hilltop surrounded by police tape, inside which two CSIs were busy erecting a

makeshift canvas tent  
over the area where  
the shooter had lain.

‘Find anything yet?’  
Banks asked.

‘Ten shell casings,’  
said Trethowan.  
‘They’ve gone to  
ballistics.’

‘Anything else?’

‘Not yet,’ Nowak  
answered. ‘The grass  
is clearly flattened, as

if someone has been lying there. No doubt there'll be other traces when we organise a full search. Fibres, most likely. Who knows, maybe he smoked a cigarette and left us a nice DNA sample.'

Trethowan pointed to a rough path leading diagonally down the hillside to their right. 'Mr Gilchrist said he

saw the shooter head down there,' he said.

'We've already got road blocks up. Alerts have gone out all over the county. If only we knew what we were looking for. We're still waiting for the sniffer dogs up here.'

'Vehicle?'

'We don't know. I assume so. Plenty of

spots to park it out of the way nearby. They're all being checked out. It's not a busy road. And there's no CCTV for miles.'

Banks knew the road well enough. It was a pass that cut sharp south from the main east–west Helmthorpe Road. After climbing then winding through a



long stretch of wild moorland beyond the youth hostel, it dropped slowly into the adjacent dale. From there, anyone could easily get to Harrogate, York or Leeds, and from there to the M62 or M1. The killer had a good start. He could be well on his way to London by now, and they would be none the wiser as

they had no vehicle description to go on.

That was, of course, assuming the killer wanted to get away.

Banks glanced back down on the scene. It was hard to believe that such a horror could have taken place in broad daylight, on such a joyous occasion and in such a beautiful

spot. The squat Norman church, originally built in 1174, had the traditional square tower with clock, and the limestone was a greenish grey colour in the dimming light. Many of the tombstones stood at precarious angles, and most were spotted with lichen or overgrown by grass. The more recent ones

seemed well tended,  
with vases of bright  
flowers placed before  
them.

St Mary's was one of  
the best known and  
loved churches  
around, and it had  
once been the place  
for all burials in the  
dale. Inhabitants of  
the more remote  
western villages and  
farms had carried, or  
brought on carts, the

bodies of their loved ones along the 'Corpse Way' for Christian burial there, as there was no closer church that could accommodate them. Like St Andrew's in Swaledale, it had become a sort of 'Cathedral of the Dale'. Now this.

'What about the risk factor?' Banks asked.

'I'd say it wasn't very high,' Trethowan answered. 'It's a clear day, yes, for once, but that's more a matter of good fortune than weather forecasting. It was supposed to rain, and you can see that's coming, but we got a brief stay for some reason. You wouldn't necessarily get a lot of walkers up here at this time of year, though. Besides,

the other side of the valley is more popular, more scenic.

I'd say he probably worked it out in advance, chose his spot well.'

'But if he was lying there in the grass overlooking the church, there's a chance that someone might have spotted him, isn't there? A

dog-walker, someone like that.'

'There's always a chance, Alan. Always an element of risk,' said Trethowan.

'But if a dog-walker or a couple of ramblers had come along, he'd probably have shot them, too.'

'Fair enough. Why did the ARVs take so long



to get to the scene,  
Mike?’

‘Oh, for Christ’s sake.  
Not you as well.’

‘What do you mean?  
You know it’s going to  
come up. And I’m in  
the bloody hot seat  
here.’

Trethowan sighed.  
‘We’re well trained,  
but we’re not used to  
firearms incidents in

these out-of-the-way parts, as you know. The nearest ARV was in the Middlesbrough area. They got here as quickly as they could. Traffic was heavy. They could hardly sprout wings and fly.'

'And in the meantime there were people wounded and dying here.'

'I'd like to know how we can do any better with the resources we've got.

Most of our firearms officers and support units have been targeted towards cities and towns where there's more risk of terrorist threats. Shopping centres, sports and music stadiums, that sort of thing. We've

got hardly anyone left  
in North Yorkshire.'

'I understand that,  
Mike, but Terry  
Gilchrist told you he'd  
seen the shooter  
leave but you still  
wouldn't let the  
medics through.'

'There might have  
been more than one.  
Or he might not have  
gone very far.

Or Terry Gilchrist  
might have been  
mistaken. We had no  
idea how reliable he  
is.

There are any number  
of problems with a  
vague witness opinion  
like that. You

can't trust it. You  
know we're supposed  
to be on the scene to  
protect unarmed  
police officers as well

as emergency  
services personnel.  
Who gets the blame if  
a civilian or a  
paramedic gets shot?  
We do, that's who. So  
nobody approaches a  
shooting scene until  
we've cleared it and  
given the OK. That's  
how it works.

Besides, I don't even  
know why I'm  
bothering to defend  
the action. It wasn't

my call. Talk to the  
Gold Commander.'

'I'm just saying it'll  
come up. Forewarned  
and all that . . .'

'Don't I know it?'

'What's the distance,  
do you think? Here to  
the churchyard.'

'Between three-fifty  
and four hundred  
metres.'

‘What’s that in English?’

Trethowan snorted.  
‘Luddite. About a quarter of a mile.’

‘It’s a long way. What kind of weapon would he need to shoot accurately that far?’

‘We don’t know how accurately he shot,’ Trethowan said. ‘He was firing into a



crowd. We don't know what, or whom, he was aiming at, other than the crowd.

According to Terry Gilchrist, he shot the bride first, then the groom, then the chief bridesmaid, and it gets a bit confusing after that. But even if he was simply aiming in that general direction, the odds are that he'd have hit *someone*.'

‘Seven or eight people were hit, I’ve heard.’

‘Sounds about right.’

‘Scope sights?’

‘Most likely. That would certainly have given him a chance of being more accurate, if he had specific targets.’

‘Any idea what sort of weapon the shooter

used?’

‘Don’t quote me on this,’ Trethowan said, ‘but I’d put my money on the Armalite, an AR15. What they call the “Black Rifle”. The cartridge casings we found bear this out.

They’re .223

Remington, the same kind the AR15 takes in a twenty-or thirty-round clip. Of course, there are other rifles

that use the same  
ammo, but . . . well,  
the AR15 is the most  
common. You asked  
what I thought.'

'Illegal, I should  
imagine?'

'Not at all. Very  
popular with  
enthusiasts. But it's  
available to  
competition shooters  
only as a straight pull  
version.'

‘Meaning? It’s a long time since I took a firearms awareness course.’

‘You have to pull the bolt back to empty the chamber and reload.’

‘So it takes time?  
Could he have done that quickly enough to get off as many shots as he did?’

'Ten? Yes. Easily. And he obviously did. It would have taken less than a minute. From what Mr Gilchrist told us, it was definitely straight pull, not semi-

automatic fire. And he should know his stuff, with his military service. If it had been an illegal firearm, a semi-automatic, say, there would have

been a lot more  
people killed.'

'Bullets?'

'You'd best ask the  
pathologist about that  
when he digs them  
out.'

'Terry thinks they  
were hollow point.'

'And he could well be  
right.'

‘Would the killer need a military background?’

‘Not necessarily, but I wouldn’t rule it out. There are plenty of rifle and pistol clubs and people who enjoy competitive shooting with a wide range of weapons. Or hunting. He might simply be a good shot.’



‘Any chance it was a terrorist attack?’

‘Always a possibility, something like this,’ said Trethowan. ‘Even here. The experts are on their way and they’ll be digging deep. But off the record, it’s not really terrorist style, is it? A lone gunman, as far as we know, with a legal weapon, shooting from a

distance. A country wedding in an out-of-the-way place. Where's the cachet in that?'

'That they can hit us anywhere, anytime they like, and our customs and ceremonies mean nothing to them. They've been going for a lot of "soft" targets recently. Paris,

Brussels, Nice,  
Istanbul.'

'Well, if you put it like  
that . . .'

'No, I agree with you,  
Mike. It doesn't have  
the feel of a terrorist  
attack.

They could have done  
far more damage  
sending a man or a  
woman in the church  
with an automatic

weapon, or strapped  
with explosives,  
though I don't  
suppose you can  
always find a keen  
suicide bomber when  
you want one. I'm just  
keeping an open  
mind.' He paused. 'If  
the gun was legal, we  
should be able to  
trace it through the  
firearms certificate,  
right?'

‘Ostensibly,’ said Trethowan. ‘The checks to get a certificate are pretty thorough, but people do slip between the cracks. Remember, I only said that guns modified in that way are legal to own. I didn’t say this one was obtained legally.’

‘OK. But criminals make mistakes, get overconfident. How

many certificates  
might we be talking  
about?’

‘The last I heard there  
were about seven  
hundred thousand  
gun owners in the UK  
and almost two million  
licensed firearms.’

‘Two million?’

‘Easily. About sixty  
thousand in North  
Yorkshire alone.’

‘A lot of those would be shotguns, I assume?’

‘Uh-huh. Typically, in rural areas.’

‘So there would be fewer AR15s?’

‘Far fewer. We can narrow it down a lot. It shouldn’t take us that long to sort them out.’

‘The sooner we get started, then,’ said

Banks. 'Tell your team to start with those living closest to the scene, then work their way out. You know the drill.'

'I'll be sure to advise extra caution, too. If a man uses a legal firearm to commit an atrocity like this, he's got to be expecting a visit from us before long.'



‘Maybe he doesn’t care,’ said Banks.

‘That’s what I’m worried about.’

Banks could see the news vans arriving, and there were two TV helicopters already overhead, along with the Dales search-and-rescue teams the police had co-opted to scan the moors for the killer.

This would be a big story. All eyes would be on them for the next while, however things developed. If a reporter discovered how long it took the ARVs to get to the scene and secure it while people were dying there, and how long it was before they let in medical help, heads would roll, despite the orders to redistribute

personnel to urban areas more vulnerable to terrorist attack. And the media *would* find out. Someone always blabbed. Adrian Moss, the MLO, would have his work cut out for him. If a Paris-or Istanbul-style attack occurred in a tourist beauty spot such as the Dales, the Cotswolds or the Lake District, then the

terrorists would have all the time in the world to do whatever damage and kill as many people as they wanted before anyone could even attempt to put a stop to them. Talk about soft targets.

Banks heard a rustling sound and turned to see two officers leading sniffer dogs to the site. Mike

Trethowan's police radio crackled. 'Sir,' the voice said over the static. 'I've been instructed to ask you if Detective Superintendent Banks is with you.'

'He is,' Trethowan answered.

'His team has just had a call from the youth hostel, sir. Seems somebody up there

knows something.  
One of his officers is  
already on site. He's  
been asked to drop  
by. There's a car  
waiting at the bottom  
of the hill.'

Banks nodded to  
Trethowan and set off  
down the hill.

Banks got out of the  
patrol car outside the  
youth hostel and  
asked the driver to

wait. He looked up at the nineteenth-century manor house with its distinctly Gothic facade, as if the builder had been a fan of Bram Stoker and Ann Radcliffe. It was built of local limestone, like the church, with added wings, gables and a gargoyle or two stuck on for good measure. In the gathering late-afternoon darkness,

against a background  
of heavy rainclouds,  
with only a few lights  
showing in mullioned  
windows here and  
there, it resembled a  
spooky old

house from a black-  
and-white horror film.  
*The House on  
Haunted Hill.* All it  
needed was thunder  
and lightning.



The front door was open, and the woman at the reception desk directed Banks towards the common room and asked if he would like a cup of tea. He thanked her and walked down the vaulted passage. Several armed officers were already conducting a search of the building, as it was only about a

quarter of a mile  
south of St Mary's.

The common room  
was a cold, high-  
ceilinged lounge with  
a huge bay window  
and a glittering  
chandelier. Battered  
armchairs were  
scattered around,  
some next to shaded  
reading lamps. Pop  
music played quietly  
in the background,  
some group he didn't

recognise. The room was empty except for DC Masterson sitting opposite a lanky blond boy by the window.

‘How are you doing?’ Banks asked Gerry when he reached them.

‘Fine, sir. I just got here.’

Gerry was all business now, long legs crossed, hair tied in a ponytail trailing down her back, bottle green jacket and black jeans, black polo-neck jumper. She had also regained a bit of colour and a lot of composure, and, judging by the way she averted her eyes, Banks could tell that she felt embarrassed

by the earlier episode  
in the churchyard.

That would pass, he  
knew, but the deeper  
feelings would  
remain. He certainly  
couldn't blame her for  
such a reaction; it had  
probably been the  
worst thing she had  
ever seen in her life. It  
could haunt her  
nightmares for years  
to come.

It was hardly water off a duck's back to Banks, either, and would contribute significantly to the nightly *danse macabre* that was his dream world. But it wasn't his first scene of carnage: he had seen the young girls' bodies in the cellar of Terence Payne's house; he had been on the spot to help the maimed and dying in

the immediate  
aftermath of a terrorist  
bombing in London;  
and more recently he  
had picked his way  
through mixed human  
and animal body parts  
strewn along the  
bottom of the  
Belderfell Pass. All  
had taken their toll. It  
wasn't so much the  
number as the details  
that stayed with him,  
like the bridesmaid in  
the churchyard

holding her intestines  
inside.

‘This is Gareth  
Bishop, sir,’ Gerry  
said. ‘He says he’s  
got some interesting  
information for us. I  
thought you’d like to  
be here.’

The gangly youth half  
stood and shook  
hands with Banks,  
then they both sat.



Gerry took out her notebook. The woman from reception came in with a tray of tea and set it on the low table between them. 'Give it a minute or two to mash,'

she said, then left.

'OK, Gareth,' said Banks. 'What is it you saw?'

Gareth Bishop  
swallowed. He had a  
prominent Adam's  
apple and a shock of

fair hair hanging over  
his left eye. 'I saw a  
man hurrying down  
the hill across from  
the church and getting  
in a car parked in a  
lay-by about fifty  
metres further up the  
road, towards this  
place.'

‘Just one man?’

‘Yes.’

‘Was there anyone  
waiting in the car?’

‘Not that I could see,  
but the windows were  
dark.’

‘Where were you?  
How far away?’

‘I was up on the  
opposite hill. You  
have to walk right

along the edge on some sections of the footpath. It's quite high up and far back, maybe four or five hundred metres from where the car was parked.'

'So you didn't get a close look?'

'No.'

'How do you know the figure you saw was a

man?’

‘His shape, and the way he moved,’ said Gareth. ‘I mean, girls . . . they move

. . . You can just tell. No woman would walk or run like that.’ He glanced nervously at Gerry, blushed and put his hands to his chest. ‘Or be that shape. He had no breasts.’

Banks saw Gerry smiling to herself as she wrote in her notebook. She probably wasn't in the least surprised that a teenage boy could spot a pair of tits, or the lack of them, at four or five hundred metres. Banks had seen plenty of women with very small breasts, but there was no point telling Gareth that. The lad had a

point about the way  
the men and women  
moved differently.

‘Was he fat or thin?’

‘Sort of ordinary,  
really. In the middle.  
Not fat, but not skinny.  
Slim, I guess.’

‘Could you see how  
tall he was?’

‘Only in comparison to  
the car. Not really tall  
or anything. I’d say he

was medium height,  
about 175  
centimetres.'

'What's that in—'

'About five foot nine  
or ten, sir,' said Gerry,  
with a patient smile.

Banks poured them  
all tea. 'I don't  
suppose you saw his  
face?' he asked.

'No. I was too far  
away to see that kind



of detail.'

'White?'

'Yes. I think so.'

'What time was this?'

'I'm not certain. I don't have a watch, and I had no reason to take out my mobile.

Perhaps about one o'clock, a bit after?'

The timing was right, Banks thought. 'Did

you hear anything  
before you saw

this figure?' he asked.

'Yes. I heard the  
church bells ringing,  
and some bangs. Not  
very loud, not from  
where I was, at any  
rate. The footpath  
dips behind the edge  
for a while and blocks  
off the view of the  
road.'

‘How many bangs?’

‘Dunno. A few. I  
wasn’t counting.’

‘Gunfire?’

‘I suppose it could  
have been. You hear  
guns often out in the  
country and think  
nothing of it.

Shotguns, usually.  
Now I know what  
happened, I could  
kick myself for not

recognising what it was, but . . .’

‘Don’t beat yourself up, Gareth. There’s nothing you could have done without risking getting yourself killed, and, as it happens, you’re turning out to be much more useful alive. You’re the first person we’ve come across who saw the car.’

'I am?'

'Yes. What can you tell us about it?'

'It was one of those SUVs, a people-mover. That Toyota you see advertised a lot.'

'The RAV4?'

'That's the one. It had the hatchback and everything. That was where he put

whatever it was he was carrying. His gun, I suppose. It opened sideways, like a door.'

'He opened the hatchback and put the weapon in there?'

'I didn't know it was a weapon, but it wasn't long enough for a golf club. I suppose it could have been a fishing pole. They

come apart into  
sections, don't they?'

'What did he do next?'

'He got in the driver's  
side and drove off.'

'Which direction?'

'South. Away from the  
village.'

'What colour was the  
car?'

'Black.'

‘Are you sure?’

‘Well, I suppose it could have been dark green or blue, but it looked black to me.’

‘OK, Gareth. You’re doing really well. Where were you going when you saw all this?’

‘I was heading along the edge, back towards the hostel. I’d



been for a long walk  
in the morning and  
stopped off at the  
Lamb and Flag in the  
village for a

sandwich and a pint.'

'So you were on the  
section of the hill  
between St Mary's  
and here?'

'Yes.'

'And you thought you  
heard some bangs,

then you saw a man get in a people-mover, maybe a black RAV4, but you didn't see the church below, what was going on down there? You didn't hear any screams or anything?'

'No. Like I said, the path only comes up along the edge when I saw him getting in the car, about a hundred metres south of the

church. Before that, I couldn't see or hear anything very clearly down towards the road, except the bangs and the church bells. But even they sounded distant and muffled.'

'How long have you been staying here at the hostel?'

'All week. I head home tomorrow.'

Southampton.'

'You're on your own?'

'Yes. A walking holiday. Sort of compensation. I'm . . . well, I just split up with my girlfriend.'

'Sorry to hear it. So you've been out and about a lot this week, then?'

'I suppose so.' He grinned. 'Walking

away the pain, you could say.'

'Have you ever seen either the man or the car before?'

'Not the man, no, but the car was there on Thursday.'

'Thursday? Two days ago?'

'Right.'

'Same spot?'

‘Yes.’

‘Are you sure it was the same car?’

‘I never saw the number plate, so I can’t be a hundred per cent certain, but I think so. It was the same colour, and it was an SUV.’

What were the odds of another black SUV being parked in the

same remote lay-by  
two days earlier,  
Banks wondered?  
Probably very small.  
So the shooter had  
been out on at least  
one reconnaissance  
mission. He must  
have heard about the  
wedding somewhere,  
or read about it in the  
local press,  
specifically targeted it,  
picked his spot,  
checked out the lie of  
the land. Annie had

said it was something of a celebrity wedding. Could that be a motive? A stalker of some sort? There were still many lines of inquiry to pursue, but Gareth's information had given Banks a degree of focus he hadn't had before. Now he knew at least that the killer had *driven* away from the scene in a black people-mover, rather



than heading for a bolt-hole on the moors, which agreed with what Terry Gilchrist said about seeing him hurrying down the hillside. It didn't mean they could call off the search of the moors completely, as he could have dumped the people-mover and struck out over open country, but they could probably afford

to scale it down and concentrate on tracking the vehicle.

‘OK.’ Banks gestured to Gerry, who closed her notebook, then he turned to Gareth.

‘Thank you for your time. You’ve been very helpful.’ He handed the youth his card. ‘If you remember anything else, however minor

you think it is, please  
call me.'

'Do you know . . . how  
many?' he asked.

'We don't know yet.'

Gareth hung his head.  
'It feels terrible, you  
know. To have been  
so close and not  
known, not been able  
to do anything.'

Banks stood up and  
rested his hand on

Gareth's shoulder.  
'You should think  
yourself lucky you  
were over the ridge,  
out of the way. A  
walking stick isn't  
much use against a  
powerful rifle. Take  
care.'

As they walked to the  
car, Banks asked  
Gerry to check Gareth  
Bishop's story. 'I know  
he seemed honest,'  
he said, 'but stranger

things have happened  
than killers  
interposing  
themselves into the  
investigation. We'd  
look like a proper pair  
of ninnies if it turns  
out he did it all along.  
I'd like you and Doug  
to check his alibi at  
the Lamb and Flag –  
find out what time he  
arrived and how long  
he was there – then  
check the walk he  
says he did just to

make sure he isn't lying about what he could and couldn't see or hear. Get him to show you it tomorrow morning, if you like. Tell him it's a re-enactment.'

'What about his room at the hostel, sir?' said Gerry.

'The search team will get to it. They're doing the whole place.'

Though if Gareth did have anything to do with the shooting, he's no doubt got rid of the gun by now.'

Back at the mobile incident vehicle parked beside the church, Banks asked if there had been any developments. There hadn't, and the only comfort Banks could take from that scrap of news was that

nobody else had been shot.

### **Chapter 3**

Banks arrived at the boardroom in Eastvale Regional HQ just before eight o'clock that Saturday evening and found the whiteboards already plastered with photographs of the victims. The ancient wool merchants with



their purple-veined  
noses, whiskers and  
roast-beef  
complexions, staring  
down from their gilt  
frames on the walls,  
would probably  
wonder what on earth  
was going on.  
Because of the nature  
and scale of the  
crime, the usual team  
had been augmented  
by staff from county  
HQ, civilians as well  
as police officers. All

the chairs around the long polished oval table were taken, and someone had brought in some folding chairs for the people at the back. The shooting was now of national concern.

People were scared. An armed killer was on the loose, and nobody had any idea who he was or where he might strike next.

The only new development was that the sniffer-dog's trail had stopped at the lay-by where Gareth Bishop said he saw a man get into a black people-mover.

Stefan Nowak's team was working the lay-by, intent on drawing even the tiniest amount of trace evidence from it. They had found a partial

tyre track that Stefan believed could belong to a RAV4, so that was a start.

Banks had called the meeting to get a fix on who the victims were and to steer the investigation in the most fruitful direction. He wished he knew what that was. He felt the weight of responsibility, and he couldn't afford to be

wishy-washy; the team was depending on him for leadership and authority. Most of them wouldn't get to meet the higher ranks who moved the pieces behind the scenes, but Banks was the senior investigating officer, and he was on the front line with his troops.

Banks stood by the whiteboards and faced the crowd. He already knew that there were three dead and six wounded, including Winsome. Ten shots, nine casualties, one bullet in the church door. Was that precision marksmanship or simply shooting fish in a barrel, as Mike Trethowan had said? Three of the

wounded, including the groom, were in critical condition.

Banks summarised what they already knew about the shootings then walked over to the board of photographs, where he went on to share what he knew about the victims. He pointed to the first photograph. 'Let's start with the dead,'

he began. 'As many of you already know, it was a fairly high-profile wedding for these parts, and it got a fair bit of coverage in the local media.

First victim: the bride.

Her name is Laura Tindall. She was a successful model, then she switched

to running an agency.

Laura was in the process of moving



from the Docklands area of London to a country home near Lyndgarth with her husband-to-be. One bullet to the heart. She died instantly.' He moved on. 'Second, we have Francesca Muriel, her maid of honour, who also lived in London and was a work colleague at the agency and a close friend of Laura's. Head shot. Thirdly,

there's Charles Kemp,  
father of the groom.  
Bullet wound to the  
chest, puncturing his  
right lung. He ran a  
software development  
company on the  
outskirts of  
Northallerton. Those  
are the dead. Dr  
Glendenning and his  
assistants will be  
carrying out the post-  
mortem examinations  
as soon as possible.  
I'd like to add that

many of the survivors  
are in poor  
psychological shape,  
as you can imagine,  
and we may not be  
able to talk to some of  
them for a while. Also,  
Chief Superintendent  
Gervaise has  
arranged counselling  
for those who need it  
– and that doesn't  
only mean the  
wedding guests.

'Now the wounded.  
Benjamin Kemp,  
bridegroom. The  
bullet hit his liver.

He's in intensive care.  
After he left the  
military, Benjamin  
went to work for his  
father's company and  
lived in Northallerton.  
Diana Lofthouse,  
bridesmaid, an ex-  
model and another  
close friend of  
Laura's, was shot in

the back. She should survive, but she's unlikely to walk again. Next, Katie Shea, another bridesmaid.

Shot in the stomach.' Banks glanced at Gerry, who looked down at her clasped hands on her lap. 'She has extensive internal damage. It's touch and go. In addition, there's David Hurst, a wedding

guest, friend of the  
groom, with a leg  
wound, the  
photographer, Luke  
Merrifield, who may  
lose an eye, and our  
very own DS  
Winsome Jackman,  
friend of the groom,  
who was lucky to  
escape with a minor  
flesh wound to her  
shoulder. Winsome,  
I'm happy to say, has  
already been released  
from hospital and is

resting at home with her fiancé, Terry Gilchrist, the hero of the day. Winsome is under mild sedation for shock and pain, but I'll be talking to both of them at some length tomorrow. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is the tally. The bride's parents, Robert and Maureen Tindall, were uninjured, as was the

mother of the groom,  
Denise Kemp.'

'Why?' Banks heard  
someone ask. 'For  
Christ's sake, *why?*'

'A good question,'  
Banks said. 'One  
thing we have to  
accept is that we may  
never know.

Alternatively, we may  
find out, but we might  
not be able to  
understand. It may



seem like a madman's reasoning to us. But if we are dealing with a rampage killer, we may discover what triggered him, and we may also find that the wedding was simply the most convenient or dramatic way he could find to express his sick needs. Don't expect any easy answers. All we have right now are theories.

'I want to know everything you can find out about the victims, especially those who are deceased. Start with their movements over the last twenty-four

hours, including what they ate for breakfast this morning and who they stopped and said hello to on the way to the church. Nobody knows what trigger

sets off an event like this. We have information that leads us to believe a certain amount of forethought went into this shooting, so you may find yourself going back beyond those twenty-four hours. Use your judgement. If you come up with anything you think is the remotest bit relevant, tell me. We've already got

plenty of officers out there canvassing the dale, and all shooting clubs and legal gun owners are being contacted through information from their firearms certificates –

especially owners of AR15s.'

A hand went up. 'Isn't it possible we're dealing with terrorists, sir?'

'It's a possibility, and one we overlook only at our peril. We already have counter-terrorist officers working the case up here. Special Branch and MI5 are involved, too, I understand. I'd advise you all to stay well out of their way, as they're a none-too-friendly bunch. All I do know so far is that there has been no chatter, and that no

group has claimed responsibility. But you know as well as I do that doesn't necessarily mean anything. Any more questions?'

There were none.

'OK.' Banks checked his watch. 'Unless you have already been given a specific duty or action to perform, you'd better get home

and get some rest. I'll want everyone back in early tomorrow morning, and if we don't get a break soon, you can look forward to a few sleepless nights. I know it's Sunday tomorrow, a tough day to track down leads. You won't find a government office open on a Sunday, for example, even if it were Armageddon,

but there's still plenty to be done. You may also have already noticed we're inundated by media.

I'm sure you don't need me to tell you this, but keep your mouths shut.

Everything goes through our media liaison officer, Adrian Moss. Area Commander Gervaise



has scheduled a press conference in an hour, just in time for the ten o'clock news. That'll have to be enough for them right now. And it goes without saying that all leave is cancelled until we catch this bastard.'

It said something of the way everyone felt about this crime that not one groan rose up

from the men and women gathered in the boardroom, and that there was no usual rush for the door to be the first one out.

‘Quick coffee before the press conference?’ Banks asked Annie in the corridor outside the boardroom.

‘Not tonight, thanks.’

‘Hot date?’

‘Chance would be a fine thing.’

‘What about Nick Fleming? How are things going?’

‘You know about Nick?’

‘It’s my business to know everything.’

‘Sure. Well, it’s fine. What about you?’

How's your poet?

'Linda Palmer? Just a friend. She's teaching me about poetry.'

Banks had been looking forward to talking with Linda about Hardy's *Poems of 1912–1913*, but he hadn't read them yet and doubted he would get the time.

Suddenly Keats's Grecian urn seemed a

long way away and a long time ago.

'Is that the literary equivalent of come up and see my etchings? Come up and see my odes?'

Banks laughed. 'Don't be cheeky.'

'Anyway,' Annie went on, 'it's not a date. It's Ray. He's thinking of moving up here, and

he wants to stay at mine until he's found somewhere suitable.'

'Is everything all right?'

'Yeah, it's fine. He's fine. It's just . . . he wants to stay with me while he's house-hunting.'

'Is that a problem?'

'Alan, don't be thick. You know how tiny my

cottage is. It's like living in a bloody thimble, even on my own.'

'True,' said Banks, remembering his days and nights at the little terraced cottage in the centre of the labyrinth. It was years ago now, but he still had good memories of the brief time when he and Annie had been lovers, before

work and careers got  
in the way.

‘He can come and  
stay with me if he  
likes,’ said Banks.  
‘I’ve got plenty of  
room.’

Annie’s eyes lit up.  
‘Really? He’d like  
that.’

‘Of course. We get  
along well enough.’



‘Well, you like the same music and stuff. I mean, he was listening to Bob Dylan when you were still wearing short trousers.’

‘I was listening to Bob Dylan when I was still wearing short trousers.’

‘You know what I mean. You’re about the same generation,

so you should have  
something in  
common.'

'Same generation?  
He's got at least ten  
years on me.'

'Doesn't mean so  
much when you get to  
your age, though,  
does it?'

'Less of your lip, or I'll  
change my mind.'

Annie held her hand up, palm out. 'All right, all right. I'm sorry. He might as well stay with me for the weekend, then I'll send him over to you on Monday, if that's OK? And I'll be eternally grateful.'

'You'd better be.'  
Banks reached into his pocket and worked one of the keys off his chain.

‘That’s a spare,’ he said. ‘He knows where I live. Tell him to make

himself at home. He’ll probably need to get some food in. And I’ll most likely be late. And if you want rid of him sooner, tell him it’s folk night at the Dog and Gun tonight and tomorrow, if he’s interested. With a bit of luck, I might just

make it tonight  
myself.'

Annie rolled her eyes.  
'I'll be sure to tell him  
to take his anorak  
along.'

Banks arrived at the  
Dog and Gun just in  
time for last orders  
and joined the crush  
at the bar, but he  
didn't see Ray there.  
After the kind of day  
he'd had, he didn't

feel like going straight home to a dark and empty house. He wanted people, noise, music, perhaps even company, a bit of harmless blethering to take his mind off things. Finally, pint in hand, he edged his way out of the crowd and found space to lean against the wall. He spotted a few people he recognised, said hello, exchanged

a brief pleasantry or two. It might have been his imagination, but he thought he sensed a stunned, subdued atmosphere about the place, which no doubt had something to do with the tragic and bloody events that had taken place only a few miles down the road.

The press conference had gone about as

well as could be expected, the best part of it being that Banks himself had hardly had to say a word. Chief Superintendent Gervaise and Adrian Moss had done most of the talking. After the short announcement, which said nothing, but said it quite eloquently, the usual questions tumbled out, many



Banks would have asked himself, had he been a reporter.

Terrorists. Nutters.

Mass murderers. As expected, news of the delay suffered by emergency services had leaked, and the most persistent inquisitors demanded to know how much time had been wasted and how many people had died because of a lack of trained

firearms officers. As Banks had expected, that progressed to, 'Shouldn't more police be armed?' which then led to, 'Shouldn't *all* police be armed?'

And so it went on, comparisons with American school shootings, with Raoul Moat and Derrick Bird, even insinuations that refugees, migrants or

asylum seekers might have been involved. Banks had been glad to get out of there, which he did as surreptitiously as he could, when the subject turned to how the NHS was coping with the A & E overload and what the waiting times for victims were.

The band finished their instrumental, and

the guitar player introduced the final song, a solo by singer Carol Langland. She seemed very young, hardly older than eighteen, with short, spiky blond-and-pink hair, more punk than folk, and a ring through her right nostril and stud through her lower lip, wearing a black KURT COBAIN T-shirt and jeans torn at the

knees. Banks hadn't noticed her at first, as she had been standing in the shadows while the band played, but

now the musicians all walked offstage and left her there alone.

A hush fell on the audience and Carol Langland started singing an unaccompanied

version of 'Farewell,  
Farewell', Richard  
Thompson's words  
set to a haunting  
traditional melody.  
You could hear the  
proverbial pin drop,  
and there was little  
doubt in anyone's  
mind, Banks thought,  
that the farewells  
were for the dead of  
St Mary's. Carol's  
voice was a pure and  
clear contralto, with  
just a hint of husky

tremor, though not so much that she sounded like Sandy Denny.

Banks leaned against the stone wall sipping his pint of Daleside bitter and let the music wash over and into him, stilling some of the day's anguish and confusion. His head ached, and his stomach felt permanently

clenched, but her voice was so full of youthful yearning and the poignancy of experience beyond her years that it touched him through his pain. He felt the muscles in his neck and shoulders relax and the tension headache disappear. The voice, the melody, the words sent tingles up his spine and brought hot



moist tears to his eyes. Tears for Laura Tindall, Francesca Muriel, Charles Kemp, Katie Shea and the rest of the wounded who were lying in hospital beds not knowing whether they would see tomorrow. Tears, too, for Emily Hargreaves, who definitely wouldn't.

'Farewell, Farewell'  
was followed by 'We

Bid You Goodnight', and most of the audience started to drift away. It was close to eleven o'clock and starting to rain by the time Banks pulled up outside his cottage at the edge of the woods, and the house was pitch dark, as he had expected. Banks used the light of his mobile phone to fit his key in the door, which opened directly

into his old living room, now a small den where he kept his computer, a comfortable chair and reading lamp. He had left before the post came that morning, but all he found on the floor was a circular about boilers addressed to 'The Homeowner' and a postcard that read 'Having a great time' from his son Brian,

who was recording with his band in Los Angeles. The picture on the front showed a long curving vista of Santa Monica Beach and pier. Needless to say, the water was blue and the sun was shining. Banks sighed and set it down on the little table by the door, where he piled the mail he didn't need to answer. He dropped

the circular in the recycling box.

When he walked through to the kitchen, he realised that he hadn't eaten since his sardines on toast for breakfast, unless he counted the Penguin biscuit on the train. One disadvantage of living in such an isolated place was the lack of takeaways that stayed open late. The

Dog and Gun didn't serve food on an evening, and there was nowhere else open in Helmthorpe after eleven o'clock at night. Banks checked the fridge and found, as he had expected, nothing but a few hard heels of cheese.

There was, however, a tin of baked beans in the cupboard over the sink, and as far as

he could tell, the one  
crust of bread left in

the bag hadn't  
developed any green  
spots of mould yet.  
Beans on toast it was,  
then.

After putting the  
beans in the  
microwave and  
slotting the bread in  
the toaster, he  
plugged in his mobile  
to recharge, then

went into the  
entertainment room to  
choose some music.  
The Dog and Gun had  
helped, but he still felt  
jittery and not in the  
least bit tired. The  
twists and turns of the  
St Mary's shooting  
were already wearing  
furrows in his brain,  
and Emily's funeral  
lay like a heavy  
weight on his heart.  
More music would  
help. It could be



nothing overly busy or emotionally heavy tonight, no Shostakovich or John Coltrane, just cool jazz or gentle chamber music. In the end, he went for Tabea Zimmermann's *Romance Oubliée*, music for viola and piano, and he knew as soon as he heard the opening melody of Hans Sitt's 'Albumblätter' that he

had made the right choice. He turned up the volume a notch or two.

Back in the kitchen, he examined his wine rack and settled on a bottle of Primitivo he'd bought on sale at M & S a week or so ago. He poured a large glass and took a swallow. When the microwave beeped and the toast popped

up, he plated his  
baked beans on toast  
and settled back  
down to eat in his  
wicker chair in the  
conservatory.

He still found it hard  
to accept that Emily  
was gone for ever,  
even though she had  
been no more than a  
memory to him for the  
past forty-five years.  
And now that lithe,  
soft, youthful body

had first been ravaged by pancreatic cancer, and was now burned to ash. It was a morbid way to think of Emily, he knew, but he couldn't help it when he remembered her smile, the tilt of her head and serious expression on her face when she was listening to a song she particularly liked, the sound of her laughter, the scent of

Sunsilk shampoo in her hair. How easily something you thought was safely buried in your past could suddenly come back and cut you to the quick.

He drained the glass and put it aside. It would have to be his last one for tonight, though if truth be told he felt like getting blotto. But the phone

might ring at any second. He was no longer simply a detective working a case; he was SIO of a very big, high-profile case indeed, and he might not get a full night's sleep or a proper meal until it was over. The need to turn off like this for a while was vital, but so was the ability to snap back into action quickly. Fortunately,

his mobile didn't ring,  
and he was able to  
finish listening to  
*Romance Oubliée*  
and lose himself in  
sun-dappled  
memories of Emily  
Hargreaves and the  
golden days of his lost  
youth.

## **Chapter 4**

It was still dark the  
following morning  
when Banks

showered, shaved  
and dressed for work  
between gulps of  
freshly brewed black  
coffee. He had  
awoken from a bad  
dream in the wicker  
chair in the middle of  
the night with a crick  
in his neck and his  
heart racing fit to  
burst. He couldn't  
remember the details  
of the dream, but it  
involved Laura Tindall  
in a bloody white



bridal gown. Only he knew that she was really Emily Hargreaves, and she was telling Banks that she was sorry someone was dead, but that it wasn't her fault. After that, he had somehow got himself up to bed, but he had slept only fitfully and still felt stiff and aching when he got in the shower. There was no food in

the house, not even bread, sardines or baked beans, so coffee would have to do until he got to work.

Then he remembered it was Sunday, and the canteen would be closed. There would be something open in the market square. Bound to be. Takeaway roast beef

and Yorkshire pud,  
maybe.

The Porsche started  
as smoothly as ever,  
and he set off,  
headlights piercing  
the darkness of the  
deserted Helmthorpe  
Road, scaring the  
occasional wandering  
sheep back into its  
meadow. His mobile  
sat in its cradle,  
hooked up for hands-  
free communications.

His first port of call was the incident vehicle at St Mary's, where he found a number of tired CSIs slumped over, heads on the desks. They had been working most of the night. The arc lights were still flooding the churchyard. AFOs stood here and there, Heckler & Kochs cradled in their arms, guarding the area. It

was unlikely that the killer would return, but the possibility couldn't be ruled out.

Banks had a brief word with the counter-terrorist unit's second in command but learned nothing. Still no chatter, still no claiming of credit, no evidence of terrorist activity.

When he got back in his car, Banks slipped *Ziggy Stardust* in the CD player and turned up the volume.

'Starman' had been playing over and over in his head since he woke up, so he thought he might as well use fire to fight fire and try and exorcise it. His plan worked, but 'Starman' had been replaced by 'Moonage Daydream'

by the time he  
reached the station.

‘Alan.’ Chief  
Superintendent  
Gervaise turned to  
Banks from the duty  
sergeant at the front  
desk. She looked as if  
she had been up all  
night. ‘I was  
wondering when  
you’d be getting here.  
Follow me, there’s  
someone I want you  
to meet.’

Puzzled, Banks followed Gervaise upstairs and along the corridor to her office. She opened the door and bade him enter first. Someone was already sitting at the round conference table, cup of coffee in front of her, and when Banks entered, she smoothed her skirt, smiled and said, 'Hello again, Alan. Long time no see.'



Banks could only stand there rooted to the spot, gobsmacked, and hope that his jaw hadn't dropped as far as he felt it had. Gervaise managed to squeeze through the door past him and introduce her guest. 'Detective Superintendent Banks, this is Dr Jennifer Fuller, forensic psychologist.

Dr Fuller has very kindly offered to come in and help us out on the case. We're lucky to have an expert of such sterling reputation, especially so early on a Sunday morning.'

Bloody hell, thought Banks. *Jenny Fuller*. Was today going to be as full of surprises as yesterday?

Once Banks had taken a couple of seconds to get over his initial shock at seeing Jenny Fuller again, he walked over to her and she tilted her head for him to kiss her cheek. Banks knew it wouldn't take Gervaise more than a few seconds to figure out that the two of them were already acquainted. Why hadn't Jenny told her?

Banks wondered. No doubt to surprise him. She could be mischievous that way. But why hadn't she even told *him* that she was back in Eastvale? He could see by the gently mocking smile on her face that his discomfort pleased her; she had always liked to catch people off guard and, as he remembered, she did it very well. Jenny

Fuller was the one woman in Eastvale he had come perilously close to committing adultery with. Then she was gone.

Off around the world. America. South Africa, Singapore, New Zealand, finally settling to teach in Sydney, Australia. The last he had heard, she was happily married to an

Aussie economics professor.

His first impression was that she hadn't changed very much since he had last seen her more years ago than he cared to remember. It was an uncanny feeling, losing Emily and suddenly finding long lost Jenny again, as if he were leaping through time and

space like Doctor  
Who. True, there were  
a few more wrinkles  
around her eyes and  
mouth, but not many,  
and they only made  
her that much more  
attractive, as did the  
tan. Her pale pink lips  
were as full as ever,  
and her eyes still  
sparkled with  
mischief, though he  
fancied he could  
sense a sadness in  
them now, something

that hadn't been there all those years ago. The short page-boy hairstyle suited her, but the light brown colour was not as he remembered.

As far as he could see, her shapely figure had hardly changed at all. Unless she was as lucky in her metabolism as he was, she must have



worked to keep it that way.

‘I’ve brought Dr Fuller in to give us some sort of profile on our killer,’ said Gervaise. ‘I realise there’s very little for her to go on so far, but I’m hoping we can at least make a general start and then build up an even stronger individual picture as more information comes in.’

Jenny yawned. 'I'm sorry,' she said, putting her hand over her mouth. No rings, Banks noticed. 'Haven't got over the jet-lag yet.'

'Sorry to call you in at such short notice,' said Gervaise. She turned to Banks. 'I got in touch with a friend at the University of York, and she mentioned that

Professor Fuller had just returned from abroad and recommended her.'

'Just?' said Jenny. 'I'd hardly got in the door. Still, needs must, I suppose.'

'Have you had a chance to read the file I sent over yet?'

'Over coffee this morning. So don't

expect too much from me. I'm afraid you'll probably get little more than the textbook version.'

'Talking about coffee . . .' Gervaise refilled Jenny's cup and poured some for Banks. 'Now let's get started.'

Banks felt his stomach rumble and hoped they couldn't

hear it. Jenny cleared her throat and took a pair of tortoiseshell reading glasses along with a buff folder from her briefcase. They were the kind of glasses you bought off the rack at Boots or Marks and Spencer's, the same as he used, but they gave her a studious appearance. He could imagine her standing at a podium lecturing

a class of randy  
young students.

‘First off,’ Jenny said,  
‘I trust you’ve made  
arrangements for  
psychological  
counselling for the  
survivors and any of  
your officers who may  
need it?’

‘Yes,’ said Gervaise.  
‘It’s hard to come up  
with enough

counsellors, but it's under control.'

'Good,' said Jenny.  
'Well, as far as classification goes, I suppose we'd have to categorise this one as a rampage killer. That statistically makes him far more likely to be a man, so I'll use the male pronoun from now on. Men are more prone to violence. We don't

know for sure why, but it seems to be the case. It may be evolutionary, in that men have throughout history been rewarded for aggression. To the victor, the spoils.

James Bond always gets the girl. Also, if you consider animal behaviour, you'll find any number of aggressive contests for the privilege of taking a mate, or



mates, mostly performed by the males of the species.'

' *Could* it be a woman?' Gervaise asked.

'It could be,' said Jenny, 'but I think it would be more helpful at this point to rule out the more unlikely possibilities along with the traditional list of red flags.'

A “nutter”, for example. People who are mentally ill rarely kill, especially like this, though of course many would say a person would have to be insane to

commit such an act. However, that doesn't make for a very scientific argument, or for a useful method of approach to an investigation.’ She

glanced from Banks to Gervaise over her glasses. 'While it's quite true that the killer may well have a long trail of antisocial acts and psychological problems in his background, from abusive parents and pulling the wings off flies to arson, sexual assault, lack of conscience, outbursts of irrational rage and

so on, there are many more individuals who have a similar history but never graduate to mass murder. It's not a natural progression, the way many doctors argue that the route from soft to hard drugs is. I think when you find your man, he *will* have a history of violence and abuse, and he's very likely to have served time in prison or been

incarcerated in a mental institution. But so have a lot of other people, and that's not necessarily what will lead you to him. Too many false starts and blind alleys there. That's why it's impossible, even armed with all the facts, to pick out the next mass murderer from the millions of other disaffected individuals. A sad

comment, but it's true.'

'We're still considering terrorism as a possibility,' said Banks. 'Even though the investigators haven't got anywhere yet.'

Jenny nodded. 'As you should be. But if that's the case, you won't need me.'

Most of what I say  
won't apply if  
someone kills for  
ideological reasons,  
or because he's under  
the influence of a  
powerful personality,  
though it's sometimes  
surprising when you  
look deeper into the  
backgrounds of some  
of these terrorists.  
You often find the  
same pattern that you  
find in other mass  
murderers.'

‘What *will* lead us to him?’ Banks asked.

‘I think first you need to know what set him off, what tipped him over the edge. The trigger. This could have been building up for years. He could have felt slighted, humiliated, envious, abused, any number of things – but something pushed him over the edge.



Perhaps more than one thing. A combination.'

'How do we do that?' Gervaise asked.

'For a start, we try to push the stereotypes and lists of traits that usually confound cases like this to one side, and then we go from what we know. All I can do is take whatever information

you give me and analyse it in the light of scientific and statistical knowledge. It's not perfect, but then profiling isn't an exact science, and I won't try to tell you that it is. Basically, a rampage killer is an umbrella term for a spree killer or a mass murderer. And when we get right down to it, the differences between a spree killer

and a mass murderer aren't great, especially in terms of motivation and criminal history. A mass murderer usually commits his acts in one place. A spree killer kills a number of people in two or more locations, a sort of mobile mass murderer, if you like, before either

shooting himself or inviting the police to do it for him.'

'So we're dealing with a mass murderer here?' said Banks.

'Not necessarily. Though a spree killer operates at two or more locations, there can under certain circumstances be a cooling-off period of up to seven days

between killing  
sprees. Raoul Moat,  
for example, up in  
Northumberland in  
2010.

He shot three people,  
one of them his ex-  
girlfriend, and went on  
the rampage in the  
countryside. It was  
seven days before he  
was found, and then  
he shot himself.'

‘So our man might not be finished yet?’ said Gervaise.

‘And we have to wait seven days to see if he does it again?’ Banks added.

‘Unless you catch him first,’ said Jenny. ‘Yes, it’s a possibility. But you won’t just be sitting here twiddling your thumbs, will you? A lot can happen in

seven days. And it's not written in stone. He may kill again today, tomorrow, or not at all. He may be a mass murderer who's finished his work, or a terrorist who's melted back into the darkness. Moat obviously made a run for it and survived out there for days, but in the end, when it came to the choice, he took his

own life rather than  
face prison.

Remember the  
Hungerford Massacre  
in 1987? Ryan killed  
sixteen people and  
wounded fifteen in  
and around the  
Berkshire village of  
Hungerford. We don't  
know why. We  
assume he had his  
reasons, but they  
were explicable only  
to himself. He also  
shot himself after



being run to ground in a classroom in his old school. You could read all sorts of things into that. And what about Derrick Bird, the taxi driver? Same year as Moat, not far away, in Cumbria. He shot and killed twelve people and wounded eleven more, starting with his twin brother after an argument over a will and tax issues. Then he starts

driving around and kills ten people in a forty-five-mile rampage. This all happened on the same day. Bird also shot himself before capture. Or the Dunblane school massacre, sixteen children and one teacher. The killer took his own life. That's the main thing these killers have in common, except for

shooting large  
numbers of people.  
They shoot  
themselves in the end  
when cornered.'

'So what would our  
man do next,  
assuming he hasn't  
shot himself already?'

Banks asked. 'Where  
would he be likely to  
hide?'

'Good question. I wish I knew the answer. From what I've read, he was cautious enough to visit the site in advance of his act, which shows a more than usual preoccupation with escape. Most of these sort of events happen in America, as I'm sure you know. To the degree that some sociologists are labelling mass

shootings a contagion there. Schools, workplaces, shopping malls, that sort of thing. Shootings distinct from terrorist acts. Loners, outsiders, disgruntled employees. Rarely do they go in with an escape route planned. If

your killer was so concerned with escape, and he hasn't

killed anyone else except the people at the wedding, then it's logical to predict that he had somewhere to escape *to*, wouldn't you agree?'

'A bolt-hole?' Banks suggested.

'Something like that. Somewhere he'd feel safe. Somewhere he'd believe you couldn't find him. He's

clever and obviously not lacking the nerve to take risks. He could even have gone home, on the assumption that you're not smart enough to find out who he is or where he lives.'

'He may well be right about that,' said Banks.

‘Exactly,’ said Jenny. ‘But it’s good that he thinks he’s smarter than you, and that he likes to take risks. It gives him a far greater chance of slipping up, and you a far better chance of catching him when he does. He could even be doing a

“purloined letter” and living next door to the police station. That’s



just a frivolous  
example, by the way.  
I'm not suggesting  
you should dash out  
and check up on it.  
But do you see what I  
mean? The level of  
premeditation, of  
planning, makes his  
actions a bit different  
from the run-of-the-  
mill rampage killer.  
And whether he's  
finished with the  
killing or not, he still  
has to hide out

somewhere unless he wants to get caught, and so far I wouldn't say that he does.'

'Could he already be overseas?' asked Gervaise.

'I suppose it's always possible,' Jenny answered. 'It's true that he could be anywhere, as none of us know who he is or what he looks like. If

he's as organised as he appears to be, he no doubt had a change of clothing stashed somewhere, perhaps a passport, too. He could be in Paris wearing a business suit and carrying a leather briefcase by now, for all we know. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. If you start assuming things like that, it tends to affect

the investigation, sap confidence, lower morale. All we can do is work with what we've got. You'd have to ask a geographical profiler for a more detailed analysis

– that's not my area of expertise – but spree killers generally start close to home.

They may travel some distance over the

course of the spree,  
but the starting point,  
and returning point, if  
they get that far, is  
somewhere close to  
home.

Remember Ryan and  
his old school. We  
don't know for certain  
that our man's a spree  
killer yet, but the  
same applies to most  
rampage killers. So  
let's assume he's not  
operating too far from

home. Unless he is a terrorist – and I'm sure you have experts in that field working with you – there's a very good chance that he'll stick to what he knows, where he knows, where he feels comfortable.

Remember, he's not infallible, no matter what he thinks. He will make mistakes.

And you have to believe that even if he has fled overseas already, you'll still bring him to justice in the end.'

Banks could follow the logic in Jenny's arguments and accept pretty much everything she said, but he could also see why many police officers were suspicious of

psychological  
profilers. After all, she  
hadn't told them  
where to find the killer  
or how to go about  
tracking him down.  
Pep talks were all  
very well, but how  
much further ahead  
were they? 'Can you  
be more specific  
about any of this,  
Jenny?' he asked,  
trying to word his  
thoughts as



diplomatically as possible.

‘Name, address, National Insurance number, you mean?’

‘That sort of thing would be useful.’

Jenny laughed. ‘Sorry. I warned you not to expect too much or you’d be disappointed.’

‘I’m not disappointed,  
just frustrated.’

‘Well, Alan, I don’t  
know if it’s in my job  
description to do  
anything about that.’

Banks noticed that  
Gervaise was  
following the  
exchange with great  
interest, and it was  
hard to miss the  
sparkle in Jenny’s

eyes. He felt himself  
redde.

‘Same old Jenny,’ he  
said. ‘Batting the ball  
back and forth.’

‘Not so much of the  
old.’ Jenny put her  
folder down, leaned  
back in her chair and  
removed her glasses.  
‘I know how  
frustrating this must  
be,’ she said. ‘I’ve  
been through this sort

of thing many times before. Many, many more than I had last time we worked together, Alan. Things have come a long way since then.

Certainly profilers have and, in some cases, the police attitude towards us has become somewhat more enlightened, but we're

still not miracle  
workers.'

'I didn't mean to be  
critical,' Banks said.  
'I'm just thinking about  
this specific crime. So  
we've got a mass  
murderer and not a  
spree killer, maybe,  
unless he kills again  
within seven days.  
That's useful to know,  
but it doesn't help us,  
it just puts a ticking

clock into the equation.'

Jenny raised an eyebrow. 'I'd say you had that already, wouldn't you?'

'Point taken.'

'Anyway,' Jenny went on. 'I was getting to that, to this specific crime. There are some details I find interesting, in addition

to the recce and the planning of an escape route.'

'Such as?' Banks asked.

'Such as the occasion. Why target a wedding? As I said before, in America, schools and workplaces are the main targets. At one time post offices seemed such a

breeding ground for mass murderers that it was called “going postal”.’

‘So what does our killer have against weddings?’

‘Not even that,’ Jenny said. ‘His thinking is unlikely to be so linear. But there’s something in there. Something in why he



chose a wedding.  
Perhaps even

why he chose that  
particular wedding.  
There's all the usual  
stuff in his behaviour,  
of course, anger  
against women, or a  
particular woman,  
perhaps a failed  
marriage in his  
background, but you  
need to examine it  
from all angles.

Revenge and envy are often strong motives for mass murderers. They've often failed and are envious of those who appear to have succeeded, or they're avenging some real or perceived slight, perhaps from years ago. Something that might seem quite insignificant to us.'

‘The wedding got quite a bit of publicity around Eastvale,’ Gervaise said.

‘Minor local celebrities and all that. Model. War hero.’

‘That’s the sort of thing I mean,’ said Jenny. ‘Anything like that could have set off some dormant desire for revenge. A war hero, for example,

could have been a symbol of something he wanted to destroy, maybe because he was a coward, or he thought he should have been given hero status himself but was overlooked. Envy and revenge.'

'Why does it have to be a symbol?' asked Banks. 'Why couldn't it have been that actual wedding itself

he wanted to destroy?  
Or a particular person  
who was there? The  
bride or groom, for  
example. Both were  
hit. One killed. Could  
he have been after a  
specific person? Isn't  
a cigar sometimes  
just a cigar?'

'I haven't jumped to  
any conclusions yet,'  
said Jenny. 'It's an  
interesting idea, and  
of course he could

have been after one or more people in particular, people he thought had ruined his life, but I'm afraid I don't have enough to go on to take my analysis any further than that. If it was a terrorist attack, then perhaps a large social gathering was enough of a target. You also mentioned that the groom was a war hero. There could be

something in that, too.  
A military connection.  
A number of mass  
murderers were found  
to have military  
backgrounds. You  
should certainly look  
at the soldiers who  
were with him in  
Afghanistan.'

Banks had already  
thought of that and  
mentioned it to the  
counter-terrorist  
investigator.

‘What was the order of killing?’ Jenny went on. ‘Did that mean something to him, or was he just firing randomly into the crowd? As far as I could make out, there were more female victims than male. Was that simply because they were wearing brighter or light-coloured clothes that stood out more from his perspective



up on the hill, or was it deliberate? It would be pretty easy for him to have picked out the women from a group like that.'

'We're not sure of the order yet,' Banks said. 'And the victims weren't all women.'

Jenny consulted her file. 'Five of them were.'

‘But there were four men, too. Anyway, we don’t know the answer to any of

those questions yet,’ said Banks. ‘We’re still trying to piece it together from ballistics and witness reports. We should be able to talk to more of the guests today. Naturally, everyone was pretty much in shock last night.’

‘Of course. Be sure to let me know when you have some answers,’ Jenny said. ‘It might be important.’

‘Will do.’

She packed away her folder and glasses in the briefcase. ‘If it’s OK, I’ll head out and try to catch up on a bit of sleep now,’ she said. ‘Or I’ll be even less use to you next

time than I am  
already.'

'You've been very  
helpful, Dr Fuller,'  
Gervaise said.

Banks got to his feet.  
'Can I give you a lift?'

'No thanks. My car's  
outside.'

And with that, she  
was gone.

‘Well, that was interesting,’ said Gervaise. ‘I take it you two have some history?’

‘Many years ago,’ said Banks. ‘In fact, Professor Fuller worked with me on my very first case up here, after London. A peeping Tom. She was very good at her job, even back then, and that was before

*The Silence of the  
Lambs* came out.'

Gervaise hesitated,  
then went on. 'Alan, I  
know it's none of my  
business, but I know  
where you were  
yesterday, and I never  
got the chance to say  
how sorry I am.

Losing a friend is a  
terrible thing, the  
memories it shakes  
loose, even if you've  
drifted apart. The

panicky feeling that you're losing bits of yourself.'

Banks thought she spoke as if she knew what it was like. 'Yes,' he said, hand on the doorknob. 'Yes, it is. Thank you.'

'Childhood sweetheart, was she?'

'Something like that. Yes.'

‘Just don’t lose sight  
of the good  
memories. That’s all.’

‘I’ll try not to.’

‘How’s the invalid?’  
Banks asked  
Winsome when Terry  
had let them into his  
house near the village  
of Drewick, on the  
eastern side of the  
A1. Winsome still kept  
her flat on the fringes  
of the Eastvale



student area, but now that she and Terry were engaged, she was spending more time at his place. Banks had marvelled more than once at how falling in love had loosened the grip of her previous morally strict and strait-laced approach to life. That morning, she lay on the sofa, half sitting up, with a tartan

blanket draped over her.

‘I’m fine. Really,’ Winsome said. ‘It’s nice to see you, Guv. Annie.’

Annie leaned forward and gave her a quick peck on the cheek.

Terry Gilchrist clapped his hands together. ‘Tea, everyone?’ Then he went

into the kitchen to put the kettle on and leaned in the doorway while it came to a boil.

‘How’s the shoulder?’ Annie asked.

‘It’s nothing. Just a scratch.’ Winsome bit her lower lip. ‘It’s the other stuff that’s most upsetting. I still can’t take it in.’ Her eyes filled with tears.

‘Those people were our friends.’

‘I know,’ said Annie. ‘We’re trying to sort out exactly what happened. It’s not easy. We’re hoping you and Terry will be able to help us put together a sequence of events.’

Winsome glanced at Terry, who came and perched beside her

on the sofa, taking her hand between his.

‘Terry was more involved than I was,’ she said. ‘I was inside the church a good deal of the time.

Everything was chaos. I didn’t know what was going on out there.’

‘But not at first,’ said Banks.

Winsome fingered the tassels on the edge of the blanket. 'No. Not then.'

'We've even brought in a hotshot profiler from Australia,' Annie went on.

'Seems she's an old flame of Alan's.'

The kettle started to whistle, and Terry

went back into the kitchen.

‘Before your time,’ said Banks. ‘Both of you. Believe it or not, I was young once.’

‘And married,’ said Annie.

‘I told you. Nothing happened.’ Banks felt his cheeks burning.

‘Methinks he doth protest too much.

What about you,  
Winsome?’

‘Oh, leave him alone,’  
said Winsome,  
smiling. ‘Is it true?’

‘Is what true?’ Banks  
asked.

‘That she came all the  
way from Australia.’

‘Yes. She’s taking up  
a teaching post at  
York again, where she  
started out.’



‘And you’re not married now, Guv,’ said Winsome. ‘You’re free as a bird.’

‘But she may not be.’

‘Isn’t life unfair?’ said Annie, with a wink.

Terry returned with a pot of tea and four matching blue mugs on a tray, which he set down on a low glass table in front of the

sofa. He still walked with a slight limp, but had shed the walking stick he had used when Banks first met him a couple of years ago. He was a tall, fit young man in his early thirties, maybe a year or two older than Winsome, with a strong jaw, clear blue eyes, close-cropped fair hair and a boyish grin. His beagle, Peaches, lay content

in front of the  
crackling and spitting  
log fire. Banks could  
see the garden all  
misty with drizzle  
through the window.

Once they each had a  
mug of hot tea  
warming their hands,  
Banks asked

Terry if he would  
recount what  
happened.

‘Of course.’ Terry sat on the edge of the sofa, set his tea on the tray and kept hold of Winsome’s hand while he talked. ‘The service ended and we all piled outside. Well, some of us did. The photographer was trying to get everyone from the main party organised into groups for the photos, but you know what it’s like.’

Some people were chatting. A couple lit cigarettes. He was getting frustrated because everyone was having a bit of a laugh instead of standing in their assigned groups, and it was taking so long.'

'Do you remember the first shot?' Banks asked.

‘I was about five feet away, kneeling to chat with Megan, the flower girl, when I heard a crack and I saw Laura spin around and fall in a heap. I didn’t realise it was a shot at first because the bells were so loud, but I could see blood on the front of her white dress, and I then knew what had happened.’ He

paused and shook his head slowly. 'It was as if I'd never been away. For a moment, I was right back there in Helmand. I think everyone just froze for a split second.

Of course, we didn't know to expect more shots, or what. All I knew was that Laura had been hit. Bad, by the looks of it. Then I suppose my training

kicked in about the same time as someone started screaming. My first thought was to get everyone back into the church in case he fired again. I thought they would be safe in there. Before I could even begin, though, while most of us were still rooted to the spot, there was another shot.'



‘Can you remember who was hit next?’

Terry closed his eyes. ‘Yes. The second shot hit Ben. That’s Benjamin Kemp. The bridegroom. My friend. My God,’ he said, putting his free hand to his mouth then wiping his eyes. ‘I’m sorry.’

‘It’s OK, Terry,’ Annie told him. ‘Take your

time.'

'He's right so far,' said Winsome. 'It was Fran next. Francesca Muriel, Laura's maid of honour. I was talking to her at the time, telling her to head for the church. It was . . . I don't know . . . her head . . . it just . . . cracked open, disintegrated. Like Terry says, we hadn't really had time to

react to what had happened yet. I turned to run back to the church, trying to urge people on before me. That's when the bullet grazed my shoulder. So I think I may have been the fourth victim.'

'The photographer was hit around then, too,' said Terry. 'And Dave Hurst, one of the guests.'

‘So the two of you  
were directing people  
towards the church?’

‘They were  
completely freaked  
out,’ said Terry.  
‘Running around like .  
. . .

well . . . you know,  
chickens. I suppose I  
was thinking more  
professionally then,  
and I knew by the  
spaces between the

shots that whatever  
make the gun was, it

was a single-bolt, not  
an automatic, and we  
could be thankful for  
that. It gave us a bit  
more time. I

remember glancing  
up at where the shots  
had come from, but all  
I could see then was  
a sort of small black  
smudge on the edge  
of the hill. A sniper, or  
so I thought.'

‘By this time,’  
Winsome said,  
‘people were starting  
to get the picture and  
rush back towards the  
church doors without  
my having to tell  
them. There was a bit  
of a jam, and I think  
the next victim was  
Diana. Diana  
Lofthouse, another  
one of the  
bridesmaids.’

‘Yes,’ said Terry. ‘He shot her in the back just as she was getting near the church door.’

‘That makes seven shots,’ said Banks. ‘There were ten in all. Do you remember who was next?’

‘Charles, I think,’ said Terry. ‘Ben’s father.’

'I saw none after Diana,' said Winsome. 'I was too busy trying to get people into the church. The problem was that there were even a few people who'd stayed inside now trying to get out again to see what was going on. It was a bottleneck.'

'Did you notice the next victims?' Banks



asked Terry.

‘Not clearly,’ he said.

‘Not by then. Like Winsome, I was too busy trying to get people out of the way. I had little Megan, the flower girl, in my arms, and she was crying. I think I saw Charles go down next – that’s Ben’s father – then Katie, but I couldn’t swear to the order. Katie was just

standing there, frozen to the spot. I was on my way over to her. She took one in the stomach and fell back against a gravestone. I don't know if she'll make it. She'd lost a lot of blood.'

'Katie Shea's still critical,' said Banks. 'Same with Benjamin Kemp.'

'I know there were others hurt,' Terry went on. 'David, I think, was shot in the leg quite late on. The photographer was hurt, too. He was holding his eye and it was bleeding. Others had just frozen, like Katie. They couldn't move. Laura's mother, Maureen. I had to go back and pick her up and carry her in. And Denise was kneeling

beside Charles, her husband. She didn't want to leave him, but I managed to get her inside. I knew he was dead.'

'You saw the shooter running away, right?'

'I saw a dark figure running diagonally down the hillside towards the south, yes. But he was too far away for me to see

any detail. He was carrying some sort of long object at his side. It could have been a rifle.'

'You're sure it was a man?'

Terry wiped the back of his hand across his eyes. 'Sorry. I'm jumping to conclusions. He was a fair distance away. But what kind of

woman would do a thing like that?’

‘I’m sure you’re right,’ said Banks. ‘A lad from the youth hostel saw the same figure – at least, we’re pretty sure it must be the same figure. He seems quite certain it was a man.

Something to do with the way he moved, his shape.’

‘I couldn’t see where he went, or any car. I know what your witness means about the way he moved, though. I think that’s one of the things that made me assume it was a man. There were no more shots after I saw him run off, so he must have been the shooter.’

‘Anything to add, Winsome?’

'Nothing. I was inside the church while all this was going on. I just remember hearing another two or three shots after I got the door closed. It's still all jumbled up in my mind. Someone made them stop ringing the bells. It was terrible, the noise, and the shots. Terry came in after a while and found me. He told me the



shooter was gone and he was going to help the people who'd been hurt out there, that I should stay with the people inside. Maureen took care of me. Maureen Tindall. That's Laura's mother. She was in a bit of a trance, but she used to be a nurse. She sort of went on automatic. I'm sorry, but that's about all I can remember. Terry

was in and out a few times, checking on me and the others, then trying to tend to the wounded in the graveyard until the paramedics arrived.'

'Terry?'

'Same here.' Terry finished his tea.

'So let me get this clear,' Banks said.  
'You're both pretty

certain that Laura was the first victim, then Ben, then Francesca, then possibly the photographer Luke Merrifield, Dave Hurst and Winsome, then Diana, Charles Kemp and Katie Shea?’

‘I can’t be a hundred per cent sure about Katie and Charles,’ said Terry. ‘I was more concerned with

getting people to  
safety by then.'

'And I saw none after  
Diana, as I told you,'  
said Winsome. 'I was  
inside the church by  
then. Do you think it  
means something?  
The order?'

'I honestly don't  
know,' said Banks.  
'Ten shots. Nine  
people hit, including  
you. Five women, four

men. Three dead, six wounded. We found two bullets in the church door, probably the one that nicked you and the wild shot.'

'Whoever did it had to be pretty cool and collected,' said Terry. 'I've known snipers. They're a strange breed.'

'You think this shooter was a sniper?' said

Annie.

Terry glanced towards her. 'Well, he certainly acted like one yesterday, even if it was his first time. He stayed in a concealed position and pulled off his shots then made a speedy exit.'

'True enough,' said Banks. 'Special Branch and MI5 will be looking into any

possible military or terrorist connections. But whatever the reasons for what happened, we still need to find out as much as we can about the victims. You two can help us with that. If someone hated one or more of them enough, someone unstable, with access to a weapon, then . . . who knows.'

‘No,’ said Terry. ‘No. I can’t believe it. Not Laura and Charles and Francesca and the others. I’ve known Ben since I was in Afghanistan, and I’ve known Laura, Katie and her friends for as long as Ben did. Laura and Ben had just bought a house not far from Eastvale. She was staying with her parents until after the wedding. They’re



all just decent,  
ordinary folk. Nobody  
could possibly have a  
reason for wanting  
any of them dead.'

Winsome rested her  
hand on his arm.  
Terry looked at her  
and swallowed.

'I'm OK,' he said. 'I  
just can't . . . I mean,  
these people were our  
*friends*. And now  
they're dead. Why?'

Banks paused to let Terry collect himself, then went on. 'What about any previous boyfriends Laura had? She was a beautiful woman, a model. So was Diana Lofthouse. They would have attracted all sorts of men. Anyone madly jealous, a stalker, anyone who felt Ben stole Laura away. Anyone strange in

Diana's life? Any incidents from her modelling days?

'Not that I know of,' said Terry. 'Though I didn't know her then.'

'Any strong political connections?'

'Laura? No way. And Ben's family was just typical North Yorkshire conservative.'

‘What about a connection with Francesca, the maid of honour? Or one of the bridesmaids? Diana? Katie? Any trouble, any boyfriend problems lately?’

‘Nothing comes to mind,’ said Terry.  
‘Besides, I should think that if someone did want to kill Laura or any of the others specifically, then it

would have been a lot easier to do it some other way.'

'You'd think so, wouldn't you? Except that the wedding was the one place they were all together, and the person we're dealing with doesn't think in the same way as we do. It may make sense to him, seem logical, but not to you and me. And

I'm not saying he did have a specific target. I'm just asking if you know of anything, Terry, that's all. Then there's the terrorist angle. Both you and Benjamin Kemp were in Afghanistan—'

'So were some of the others. Wayne was there, too. Wayne Powell, the best man. And he was uninjured.'

‘Fair enough. But there *is* a military connection. You mentioned snipers earlier.’

‘Just because of the method.’

‘Yes, but the killer had a military-style weapon – even if it’s one that’s been

adapted to make it legal over here – and

he knows how to use it.'

'So you're suggesting there might be some connection with the war? With Afghanistan? Or that we were somehow symbols of oppression, to be made an example of by IS?'

'I'm not sure what I'm saying. Only that



there are plenty of military people with some sort of expertise in shooting. But could there be a connection? Maybe even someone you knew. I'm just asking you if you can think of anyone from those days. Any incident. Anyone go off the rails, have a grudge against Benjamin Kemp? Anything from your military time,

from Benjamin's military time, that could be in any way connected with yesterday? We know that war can do terrible things to a man's mind. Maybe someone you served with just lost it for some reason. PTSD, for example. What happened was not necessarily a *rational* response to anything.'

Terry ran his hand  
over his head. 'Yes,  
but people who suffer  
from PTSD

don't usually go  
around committing  
mass murder. I'm  
sorry, I can't think of  
anything or anyone  
offhand, but I'll give it  
some thought, see if  
anything comes up.'

'I understand  
Benjamin is

something of a war hero?’

Terry laughed. ‘Sorry. He always laughed about it. Said it was more of a media invention than anything else. It was, really.’

‘Even so, he did get a fair amount of publicity at the time, didn’t he? I wonder if

it was enough to  
make him a target.'

Terry got up, put his  
mug down and went  
upstairs. Banks  
glanced out of the  
window and saw that  
it was getting dark.  
When Terry came  
down he was carrying  
a large scrapbook. He  
went over to Banks  
and Annie and  
opened it to a  
newspaper clipping. It

showed a front-page picture of Benjamin Kemp standing outside a burning ruin holding an Afghani boy of about five in his arms. The boy was staring into the camera and tears were running down his dirt-streaked face.

Kemp seemed merely determined, his jaw set firm.

‘That was what it was all about,’ Terry said. ‘Ben rescued a young lad from a bombed-out school, under fire, and there was a war photographer on the spot, ready to capture the event. There were about twelve of us involved in that operation. We’d all been in and done our bit. A few minutes earlier, one of our mates had come out

with two boys, one under each arm, but the photographer wasn't ready. You know what's so funny about the whole thing? Well, not funny ha-ha, but ironic, I suppose you'd say.'

'What?'

'It turned out it was the Americans who bombed the school in the first place.'



By mistake. They  
killed fifty-six children  
and we managed to  
pull out seven

alive. The Taliban  
fighters were in  
another building less  
than a hundred yards  
away, shooting at us.  
We cleared them out  
later. They'd booby-  
trapped the building  
they were in, and  
there's where I got . .  
' He tapped his leg.

‘You got a medal, too, didn’t you?’

‘We all did. But there was no photographer present to capture the moment.’

‘Was there anyone involved in that day’s operations you think may have taken against Benjamin Kemp? For any reason. Envy. Feeling slighted. Side-lined.

Anything that could  
become warped and  
exaggerated into an  
event like  
yesterday's?

'Envious enough to  
shoot up his  
wedding? No way. We  
were all just doing our  
duty. And we were  
mates. We depended  
on one another for our  
lives. I'm not saying  
events like that  
happened all the time

– it was a pretty intense day, as I remember – but it was wartime, and you did your duty. Everybody thought it was a bit of a laugh that Ben got his picture in the paper, all Rambo.’

‘Maybe somebody didn’t,’ said Banks.

Banks was still not used to his new office. It felt like a suit two

sizes too big for him.  
He had tried to fill the  
bookcases, but even  
with a few ornaments,  
bulky poetry  
anthologies, forensic  
texts and orange-  
covered Penguin  
paperbacks from the  
Oxfam shop, there  
were still too many  
gaps and not enough  
family photographs to  
fill them.

The view was the same as from his old office, only one floor higher up. That Sunday evening, the rain was sweeping down the windowpanes in torrents and bouncing on the cobbles in the market square. The lamps were on in the pubs and shop windows, and Christmas lights and decorations hung all

around the square, giving the scene a distinctly Dickensian aspect. Banks could see a few distorted figures shuffling about under umbrellas, and the crowd of reporters, who had set up camp outside the police station. They must be bored, as nothing new had happened during the day.

The office was well enough appointed. Banks's desk was large and solid, he had a small flat-screen TV attached to the wall, on which he could watch relevant breaking news stories and police press conferences on cases with which he was involved, and there was a low round table for small, informal meetings.



He also had a Nespresso-like machine, a promotion present from his Homicide and Major Crimes Squad team, and Annie had made it clear when she presented it to him that she and the others expected to be allowed to nip in for a cup of coffee whenever they needed one. Banks had brought in his

own Bose mini sound-dock, with a Bluetooth facility for his Nano. The little iPod didn't have much memory, but he rotated its contents fairly often from the large music

library on his computer at home.

He was reading over the statements taken so far and listening to the Brahms

‘Clarinet Quintet’,  
whose melancholy  
edge seemed nicely  
attuned to the  
weather outside.

Just as Banks was  
about to tidy up his  
desk and go home to  
enjoy one final night  
of peace and quiet in  
Newhope Cottage,  
the sound of his  
telephone startled  
him. It was going on  
for ten o’clock. He

picked up the receiver. It was Chief Superintendent Gervaise.

‘Still at it?’

‘Yes, ma’am,’ said Banks. ‘As a matter of fact, I was just about to head out.’

‘How do you fancy a pint over the road? On me?’

Banks almost  
dropped the receiver.  
He had never been  
for a drink with  
Catherine Gervaise  
before; she had  
always kept a  
professional distance.  
He wondered what it  
was about. 'Of  
course, ma'am,' he  
said.

'On one condition.'

'Yes?'

‘That you don’t call me ma’am.’

The Queen’s Arms was almost deserted at that time on a wet Sunday night.

Cyril himself was working behind the bar, and true to her word, AC Gervaise folded up her umbrella, went up and bought two pints of Timothy Taylor’s

Landlord Bitter, one for herself and one for Banks.

‘I understand this is one of your favourite tipples,’ she said, setting the glasses on the table. She had changed out of her uniform and wore a simple cream blouse and navy skirt with a matching jacket.

‘To what do I owe this honour?’ Banks asked.

Gervaise said nothing, just shuffled in her seat and made herself comfortable.

Banks drank some beer. Cyril had one of his interminable sixties’ playlists going, and Gene Pitney was singing ‘That Girl



Belongs to Yesterday'  
in the background.

'It's something I  
wanted to tell you in  
person,' she said. 'It's  
been a trying two  
days, and I'm afraid  
I'm not going to make  
things any better.'

'Oh?'

'I just got a call from  
James Cook Hospital  
in Middlesbrough.

Katie Shea died on the operating table at five past nine tonight.'

Banks felt the beer turn to lead in his stomach. His teeth clenched and his chest tightened. He felt like standing up and kicking the table over, throwing a chair through the window. Instead, he took several deep breaths, only vaguely aware of

Gervaise's hand on his forearm.

'I suppose I knew it was bound to happen,' he said eventually. 'Gerry will be devastated.'

'I heard about DC Masterson in the churchyard,' said Gervaise. 'She'll be fine, Alan. She's young and resilient.'

It's you I'm worried about.'

Banks gave her a flicker of a smile. 'Me being old and weak?'

'You having had rather too much misery for one weekend. I wasn't there, but I understand Katie Shea was in very poor shape.'

‘She was holding her guts in with her hands and a bit of material Terry had found for her,’ Banks said.

‘Begging for help, but the bloody gunslingers didn’t get there for three-quarters of an hour, and it was almost as long again before they let any medics in.’

‘You know that’s the protocol, Alan. It was

nobody's fault.  
Certainly not the  
AFOs'. Nobody but  
the killer's.'

'Even so . . .'

'You'd like to throttle  
someone. I  
understand.'

Banks drank some  
more beer. For the  
second night in a row  
he felt like getting rat-  
arsed, but he couldn't.

He had a feeling that no matter how much he drank, it would have no effect on him, anyway; it wouldn't take the anger and sadness away, would hardly even dull it. A sudden image of Katie Shea propped against the gravestone flashed through his mind. The expression on her face, the fear, pain and despair there, as

if she *knew* what was going to happen, *knew* she was down to her last few sacred minutes on earth. Perhaps he was being fanciful, but that was what he had felt. A young woman who not long earlier had her whole life ahead of her was now facing certain death, and she knew it. He didn't know whether Katie had any religious



faith. That might have given her some comfort towards the end. Banks hoped so, for her sake, though he had no such faith himself. He remembered, too, the look on Gerry's face. She had seen death before, but nothing quite like Katie. It had shaken her to the core. Yes, she was young and resilient, but she wouldn't

forget that day in St Mary's churchyard; she would carry it with her always; it would change her.

'Don't make it personal,' Gervaise went on. 'Your old sweetheart's death is personal, but this is what your job is about. It wasn't only Katie Shea. Laura Tindall died from a gunshot wound to the

heart. Her maid of honour had her head almost blown off. Need I go on?’

Banks shook his head and finished his drink. Gervaise had about three-quarters of a pint left.

‘Want another?’ she said. ‘Or a whisky perhaps?’

‘Are you trying to get me drunk, ma—’  
Banks managed to stop himself before he got the title out.

‘Furthest thing from my mind, but you’ve got an empty glass in front of you, and you’re not going anywhere yet. Don’t worry about driving. Leave your car and I’ll drop you off home.’  
She pushed her beer

aside. 'I don't even want this.

I'm a white wine spritzer girl, myself. So what's it to be?'

'Macallan, please,' said Banks. 'If that's OK.' He couldn't face another beer.

With that, Gervaise went to the bar and got him another drink. 'Cyril said it's on the

house,' she said when she got back. 'Double. Says you look as if you need it.'

Banks glanced over at Cyril, who gave him a nod and a wink.

'Taking bribes from the publican,' he said. 'What will it come to next?' The song changed.

Skeeter Davis, 'The End of the World'.

‘You don’t have to worry about me,’ he went on. ‘But thanks for telling me in person, not over the phone, and thanks for the drinks. That makes four dead now, right?’

‘Yes. And Benjamin Kemp is hanging on by a thread. They don’t think he’ll make it through the night.’

‘What about Diana Lofthouse?’

‘The spinal cord was severed. There were other injuries, internal organs, but that’s by far the worst. It’s unlikely she’ll walk again. As yet, they’re not sure if she’ll be a quad or a para.’

‘What a bloody mess. And we’ve no leads at all so far yet.’



‘It’s early days,’ said Gervaise. ‘There is one more thing, though, and it might be something of a development. When the surgeons were working on Katie Shea, they discovered that she was pregnant. The foetus was unharmed by the gunshot, but, of course, it didn’t survive. She wasn’t married – not that that

means anything these days – but there has to be a father somewhere.’

‘And we’ll find him,’ said Banks. ‘How far along was she?’

‘I don’t know all the details yet. Dr Glendenning will be doing the post-mortem tomorrow morning, so we’ll no

doubt find out more  
then.'

## **Chapter 5**

'There it is for you,'  
said Dr Glendenning.  
'The tally. Nicely laid  
out in layman's terms  
as close as I could get  
to the order they were  
hit in, according to  
your notes.'

Banks read the list  
clipped to Dr

Glendenning's post-mortem reports. Ten bullets, nine hits:

Laura Elizabeth  
Tindall, age 32, bride.  
Residence: London.  
*Deceased.*

Benjamin Lewis  
Kemp, age 33, groom.  
Residence:  
Northallerton.

*Critical.*

Francesca Muriel, age  
29, maid of honour.  
Residence: London.

*Deceased.*

Luke Merrifield, age  
42, photographer.  
Residence: Eastvale.  
*Damage to right eye.*

David Ronald Hurst,  
age 30, guest.  
Residence:  
Harrogate. *Minor flesh  
wound.*

Winsome Jackman,  
age 33, guest.  
Residence: Eastvale.  
*Minor flesh wound.*

Diana Lofthouse, age  
30, bridesmaid.  
Residence: Ripon.  
*Spinal cord injury.*

Kathleen Louise  
Shea, age 30,  
bridesmaid.  
Residence: Leeds.  
*Deceased.*

Charles Morgan  
Kemp, age 59, father  
of groom. Residence:  
Northallerton.  
*Deceased.*

‘So Benjamin Kemp is  
still alive?’ Banks  
said.

‘For now. His liver’s  
done for. If I were a  
gambling man, I  
wouldn’t give much  
for his chances.’

Dr Glendenning seemed tired, Banks thought. It was hardly any wonder; he was getting on in years, and he had been bending over dead bodies almost non-stop since Sunday afternoon. He had help, of course. His chief anatomical pathology technologist Karen Galway and two trainee pathologists



were working with him, all of them still busy at the stainless-steel tables in the autopsy suite next door. Even so, the long hours showed in his watery eyes behind the black-framed glasses and in his drawn, pale flesh. His white coat had been smeared with blood and worse when Banks had

arrived, and he had removed it and

dropped it in a bin before sitting behind his desk. He wore a white shirt and maroon tie under his herringbone jacket.

‘Finished?’ Banks asked.

Glendenning raised a bushy eyebrow. ‘With the dead? Aye. For

now.' He took a packet of Benson & Hedges out of his waistcoat pocket and lit one.

Smoking was strictly prohibited in the building, but no one dared tell him that.

He was more careful these days, though, Banks had noticed, and he didn't actually smoke while he was

working on a body.  
Watching  
Glendenning light up  
brought on one of  
Banks's own rare  
cravings, which  
surprised him with its  
urgency and power.  
He fought it back.

'It's not strictly my  
business,'  
Glendenning went on,  
'but you've got a lot of  
psychologically  
wounded people out

there. What are you going to do with them?’

‘Most of them have friends and relatives already with them. There’s also counselling sessions going on.’

‘Poor sods. You come to a wedding and it ends up a funeral.’

'I know,' said Banks.  
'There's something  
not quite right about  
that.'

Glendenning  
scrutinised him. 'I may  
not be the picture of  
health myself, but you  
certainly seem the  
worse for wear. Been  
sleeping properly?'

'Not much.'

'Eating?'

Banks was beginning to regret the stop he had made for the full English at the greasy spoon on his way to work that morning.

Bacon, eggs, mushrooms, baked beans, fried bread and a slice of black pudding probably wasn't the sort of breakfast Dr

Glendenning would approve of. 'Plenty,' he said.

‘Well, cut out fatty foods. Drinking?’

‘Now and then.’

‘Thought so.’  
Glendenning rummaged in his drawer and tossed Banks a foil strip of tablets. ‘Take one of these with two fingers of good whisky every night,’



he said. 'Only two fingers, mind. And good whisky. That means Highlands.

None of that Islay rubbish. I don't want to come in to work one morning and find you laid on a table out there.'

Banks pocketed the tablets. 'Thanks,' he said. 'Am I likely to become addicted?'

‘If they make you feel better, you’ll probably become addicted,’ said Glendenning. ‘Why wouldn’t you? But don’t worry about it. It won’t last. And you won’t be getting any more from me.’ He sighed and slouched back in his chair. ‘Days like this,’ he said, ‘I sometimes think junkies are the only ones with the right idea. You know

they say that  
sometimes heroin  
feels so good you  
don't

even want to hang on  
to your life any more.  
It's better than  
breathing.'

'If I hadn't seen so  
many dead junkies –  
most of them kids –  
I'd probably agree,'  
said Banks.

‘Oh, don’t mind me.  
I’m just grouching.’

‘So what have you  
found?’

‘Four corpses, so far,’  
said Glendenning.

‘And from what I hear  
from my colleagues at  
James Cook, there’s  
one poor wee lassie  
in a wheelchair.’

‘Diana Lofthouse,’  
said Banks. ‘Anything

unexpected show up  
in your post-  
mortems?’

‘No. They all died  
from gunshot wounds.  
Hollow-point .223  
ammo, as a matter of  
fact. Nasty way to go.  
The bullet expands  
when it enters the  
victim, as I’m sure  
you’re aware. Causes  
massive tissue  
damage. Young  
Winsome’s lucky the

bullet didn't enter her flesh, but only grazed her shoulder.'

'Who would have access to such ammunition?'

'That's one for you to answer,' said Glendenning. 'But everything's available if you want it badly enough. You should know that. Some people use them for

greater accuracy in target shooting, and apparently, they reduce smoke and exposure to lead vapour. And I have a friend who tells me deer hunters use hollow-point ammo, so you can obviously get a special dispensation of some sort. Of course, lots of shooters prefer to make their own bullets. I don't think

the source would be much of a problem.'

'Still,' said Banks, 'it's a bit unusual. It might help us narrow down the field.'

'They make for a very ugly wound. I can tell you that much. That's another reason the doctors don't hold out much hope for Benjamin Kemp. The damn bullet expanded



and turned his liver  
and half a kidney to  
mush, to use a  
technical term.'

Banks swallowed.  
'And Katie Shea?'

'Aye. A regular bullet  
and she might have  
survived even the  
blood loss. But her  
insides resembled a  
plate of spaghetti  
Bolognese.' He  
pointed towards the

post-mortem suite.  
'She's still on the  
table. The students  
are sluicing her down  
and sewing her up.'

Banks knew he would  
always remember the  
pretty blond girl in a  
coral-coloured dress  
slumped against the  
gravestone, the one  
who reminded him of  
Emily Hargreaves.  
Even AC Gervaise  
had intuited some sort

of connection the previous evening when she told him about Katie's death. *And not just her own death*, he realised. Not just Katie Shea holding her bloody guts in, keening and wailing and begging for help. But pregnant Katie Shea. Perhaps, in her mind, it was her baby she was cradling on her lap.

‘I don’t know whether anyone’s told you this already,’ Glendenning went on,

‘but one thing they did find out at the hospital was that she was pregnant.’

‘AC Gervaise told me last night.’

‘I have to say, though, it was a hell of a job making sure. The

bullet missed the foetus, but there was plenty of damage in the general area. But the tests came out positive.'

'OK,' said Banks. 'OK. I get the picture.' And he did, all too clearly. In full colour, with sound. He felt his breakfast repeat on him, tasted bile and felt the anger surge inside him again. Just

like last night, he wanted to lash out at something, anything.

‘Calm down, laddie,’ said Glendenning. ‘You’ll have apoplexy.’

Banks gritted his teeth. ‘How long?’

‘Not long at all. Six weeks, maybe eight. Do you know how tiny a foetus is at that stage?’

‘No idea.’

‘The size of a  
blueberry.’

‘Would she have  
known?’

‘I should think so,  
though I’m not a  
mind-reader,  
especially when it  
comes to corpses. For  
a start, she would  
have missed her  
period. She would

also probably have experienced mood changes. Aches and pains. Even morning sickness. Loss of appetite. Increased urination. She may even have noticed her breasts and waist increasing in size. Does it make a difference?’

‘It could provide a motive,’ said Banks. ‘First we’ll have to find



out who the father  
was. I'll put DC  
Masterson on it.'

Glendenning  
managed a thin smile.  
'Well, I doubt it was  
an immaculate  
conception, though  
I'm afraid even my  
advanced  
pathological skills  
don't stretch to that  
kind of judgement.'  
He paused. 'Alan, you  
know I'm no great fan

of this psychological gobbledygook, but don't you think you might benefit from a bit of this counselling yourself?'

'I'll be all right,' said Banks. He took a deep breath and let it out slowly. 'It's just that I noticed her specifically, that's all. You know how they say it's hard to relate to the deaths of

thousands in a flood  
or on a battlefield, but  
if there's just one, it  
tends to stay with you.  
Katie Shea was the  
one. Out of the whole  
massacre, it was  
seeing her that stuck  
in my mind the most.  
She reminded me of  
someone I once  
knew. And now . . .'

'Aye,' said  
Glendenning. 'Well,  
she would have been

a bonny lass when she was alive, that's for certain.'

'I never knew her.' Wearily, Banks got to his feet. 'Thanks, doc,' he said. 'If you come up with anything else, you know my number.'

'I do. And think about that counselling gobbledegook.'

Banks turned at the door, nodded briefly and left.

‘And don’t forget the pills and whisky, either,’ Glendenning called after him.

‘I’m sorry to be the bearer of bad news,’ said Gerry Masterson at the opening of the briefing later that Monday morning, ‘but I just heard that

Benjamin Kemp died during the night. Along with Katie Shea, that makes murder victims four and five.' As she spoke, Gerry was uncomfortably aware of some of the male detectives undressing her with their eyes. She had dressed conservatively for work in maroon cords and a pale green jacket buttoned up

over her white polo-neck top. She had even tied her long hair in a ponytail as she usually did at work.

Still they undressed her. No matter what she did, there was no escaping the fact that she was an attractive young woman, and some men were going to ogle her rather than listen to what she had to say.

Gerry loathed standing in front of an audience like this, but she could hardly say no when Detective Superintendent Banks had asked her to, not if she valued her career prospects. It would be good experience, he had said. An experience in terror, more like, she thought, aware of her hands trembling and her neck stiffening as



she tried to stop her head from shaking, too.

Banks was sitting in the front row, but she didn't feel that he was undressing her. She was aware of her face flushing, but she carried on, casting her gaze to the people at the back of the room, doing her best to concentrate on what she was saying. What

made everything worse was the news Banks had given her about Katie Shea. Gerry would never forget witnessing her agony, her courage.

All for nothing. And now the baby, too.

Banks had tried to persuade Gerry to go for counselling, but she didn't feel that she needed it.

Besides, however much things had improved over the years, there was still a stigma attached to cops seeing shrinks. Many male officers thought it was a sign of weakness, and it meant you weren't up to the job. As a woman, she didn't want or need to invite that kind of attention. She could handle this herself. Yes, she was

upset and unnerved  
by what had  
happened – who  
wouldn't be? – but  
she could function.  
She hadn't slept last  
night, but she'd had a  
lot on her mind.

Gerry shuffled her  
papers. 'First, a few  
nuggets we've dug up  
so far, mostly from  
some of the survivors  
of the shootings who  
were able and willing

to talk yesterday.  
Laura Tindall and Benjamin Kemp had known each other for two years and had been engaged for the last six months. They had recently bought a house near Lyndgarth, and Laura was planning to live there with Benjamin after the wedding. Laura's father Robert is a retired banker, so there's always a

possibility we're after  
someone who had a  
thing against bankers.  
But, I mean, who  
doesn't?

Gerry was surprised  
but pleased by the  
murmur of polite  
laughter.

'Maureen Tindall, the  
mother of the bride,  
grew up in Leeds, but  
the family moved  
down south to

Aylesbury when she was in her mid-teens. She trained and worked as a nurse until she met Robert in 1982 when he came in for a routine X-ray after a minor car crash. She married him in 1984, gave up nursing and devoted herself to keeping the house and later to taking care of Laura, their only child, born in

1985. The only interesting fact I've been able to dig up about her so far is that her best friend Wendy Vincent was murdered in Leeds when they were both only fifteen years old. That was over fifty years ago, however, and the killer recently died in jail, so I doubt it's very relevant, but it might account to some extent for her



poor psychological state. We won't be able to talk to her for a while yet.

'Laura briefly attended the University of Manchester from 2003 to 2005, but gave up her history degree for a modelling career at the end of her second year.

Eventually, she decided to retire from that life, and for the last three years she's been involved in recruiting and training for a West End modelling agency. She planned to keep on working after her marriage, mostly from home. She met Benjamin Kemp at a party in St John's Wood thrown while he was in town on

business for his father's company. Ben and Laura hit it off, and the rest, as they say, is history, or would have been had it not been for Saturday's shootings.

Benjamin Kemp worked for his father's software development company just outside Northallerton, where the Kemp family has

lived for over twenty years.

He also planned on continuing with this work after the wedding.'

Gerry noticed someone near the back raise her hand in the air. 'Yes?'

'Are you saying there may be a rational

motive somewhere in  
all this?

Revenge, for  
example?’

‘I’m saying it has to be  
considered, however  
outlandish it may  
seem. In the same  
vein, it’s important to  
remember that we’re  
dealing with some  
very young victims,  
and there are ex-  
boyfriends and ex-

girlfriends out there. None of them has exhibited any odd or violent behaviour as far as we know, but they need to be checked out. Laura Tindall did have a cyber-stalker a few years back, but he's in New Zealand and there's no way he could have been in Fortford last Saturday.

We'll be looking into him, anyway. I've already asked the Auckland police for their help. Other than that, she didn't seem to have any obsessively jealous lovers that we know of, but that's an avenue we will also have to pursue further as the inquiry continues. She was in the public eye, so it's quite possible that

there could have been someone who had active fantasies about her of which she

knew nothing. She could even have been stalked without her knowledge. We'll have to carry out a thorough examination of her computer and see where that leads us. But let's also remember, this wasn't a sex crime.'



‘So are you saying there’s no specific line of inquiry yet?’ the speaker asked.

Gerry began to feel flustered. She wished she could pass the briefing over to Superintendent Banks or DI Cabbot, but she struggled on, determined not to show weakness. ‘I’m saying that we need to keep an open mind.

I'm sure our profiler  
Dr Fuller will have  
more to say about all  
this when she  
produces her report.  
We're certainly not  
ruling out the military  
connection, even  
though it was three  
years since Benjamin  
Kemp's last tour of  
duty in Afghanistan.  
Kemp also had a  
steady girlfriend until  
two and a half years  
ago, when they split

up. It sounds as if he might have taken up with Laura quickly afterwards. The girlfriend will need to be interviewed, along with any other exes of Ben, Laura and the rest of the victims.'

Gerry held up some stapled sheets. 'I have details on all this here, by the way, and DI Cabbot and I will be handing these out

with the TIEs and actions when we've finished here. You will need to talk to more of the uninjured wedding guests as they become willing and able, and track down family and friends of the deceased. I don't need to tell you to tread softly here. These people have just lost loved ones. Two bridesmaids went

uninjured, Lucy Fisher and Danielle Meynell, along with the best man Wayne Powell. They're still in shock but will also need to be interviewed as soon as the doctors declare them fit. I wish I could be more specific in telling you what to look for, but the previous questioner was right. There is no certain line of inquiry yet.

Right now we're still working more or less in the dark. Some of you have already been checking on firearms certificates and local shooting clubs. There's plenty more of those to get through. Some of you have been assigned to track down all local black-or dark-coloured RAV4s and similar vehicles. We're still trolling the

records for anyone with a history of violence, especially involving firearms, of making threats, or anything of that kind. Keep your eyes and ears open. We have messages out in all the media for members of the public to get in touch if they know or suspect anything, so be warned. There'll be plenty of attention-

seekers and just plain weirdoes calling in. Psychics and people who want to confess, too. Of course, the trouble is that once in a while one of these actually has something of value to tell us. There's also a massive manhunt going on, though it's being severely hampered by the weather. According to the most recent



forecasts, we can't expect much change there. In fact, the rain is only expected to get worse, which shouldn't come as a surprise to any of you who grew up in Yorkshire. CSM

Nowak will be bringing you up to date on all that soon, along with any forensic

evidence discovered  
so far.

'I can tell you one final  
thing, though. I've  
checked most of the  
local media reports on  
the wedding  
coverage, and the  
only people  
mentioned in the  
articles, or shown in  
photographs, were  
the bride and groom  
and their parents.  
That means if our

killer is local, and if he found out about the wedding from the local media, then he would probably have no idea who else was going to be there.

Therefore, it's not a bad idea to concentrate on Laura and Benjamin and their parents first. As only Laura Tindall and Charles and Benjamin Kemp of this group

were killed, that might cut down the possibilities even more. But don't forget, this is just a rough guide. The main thing not to forget is that we've still got a killer out there, and he might strike again at any time.' She glanced at Banks, who tapped his watch and gestured to her. Time to wrap up and get back to the search

for the father of Katie Shea's baby. 'Thank you.'

Gerry sank gratefully into her front row chair, exhaling a deep sigh of relief.

Stefan Nowak got up to speak next. Banks leaned over to Gerry and whispered,

'Well done, DC Masterson. I told you

it was a piece of  
cake.'

Gerry could only stare  
at Banks. She was  
still trembling inside.  
When she found her  
voice, she felt as if it  
was trembling, too.  
'Yes, sir,' she said. 'A  
piece of cake.'

'We're very sorry for  
your loss, Boyd,' said  
Banks as he sat down  
beside Annie at the

low round table in his office that Monday evening. Farrow wasn't a suspect yet, so they had no reason to have their chat in an official interview room. As it turned out, Farrow wasn't so much a boy as a fortyish man in a light grey Hugo Boss suit carrying a leather designer briefcase. A good fifteen years or so older than Katie

Shea, he was handsome in a chiselled kind of way, with short dark hair, a strong square jaw, a slightly overlarge nose and a fleshy mouth. Nobody Gerry had talked to had known that Katie was pregnant, but Gerry had identified and tracked down Boyd Farrow through several emails



discovered on her mobile.

'I can hardly believe it,' said Farrow. 'Katie. Dead.'

'Didn't you know about the wedding this weekend?'

'I knew she was going to a wedding, but to be honest I didn't pay a lot of attention to the details.'

‘You weren’t invited?’

‘I had a business meeting.’

‘On Saturday?’

‘I’m self-employed, Mr Banks. I take my meetings when I can get them.’

‘What business are you in, if you don’t mind my asking?’

‘Not at all. I’m in website design and social media.’

‘How did you meet Katie?’

‘She’s with a small publishing firm in Leeds, and they wanted to up their profile. The full package. Website, Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter accounts. We met, we

hit it off . . .’ He put his head in his hands.  
‘My God.

*Katie.* What am I going to do?’

‘How long had you been together?’

‘Not long. Just six months.’

‘Did you live together?’

‘No. We hadn’t got to that stage yet.’

Banks glanced at Annie, who raised her eyebrows. He shook his head almost imperceptibly. *Not yet.*

‘So Katie had her own flat and you have yours?’

‘Katie rented a flat, yes. I own a house.’

Well, a mortgage, I should say.'

'And you lived separate lives?'

'We spent as much time together as we could, but . . . well, she had her work. I'm afraid I don't know many of her friends. We preferred spending time together rather than socialising.'

‘Of course.’ Banks paused. ‘My DC tells me that you seemed rather reluctant when she offered to drive down and talk to you in Leeds.’

‘I don’t mind the drive. It can be relaxing after a day at the office.’

Banks gave Annie the most discreet of signals.

‘Did you know that Katie was almost eight weeks pregnant?’ she asked.

Farrow spluttered and seemed set to deny everything, then he folded in on himself. ‘Yes,’ he whispered. ‘She told me.’

‘When?’

‘Ten days ago.’



‘A joyous occasion?’  
Banks asked.

‘Not exactly.’

‘You mean you didn’t  
want children  
together?’

‘This has absolutely  
nothing—’

‘Please answer the  
questions, Mr Farrow,’  
Annie said. ‘It’ll be  
over sooner that way.’

‘But why aren’t you out there catching Katie’s killer?’

‘Believe me,’ Banks answered, ‘there are more than enough people out there after Katie’s killer. They’ve been out there in the wind and rain since Saturday afternoon. Besides, according to most of the TV cop programmes I’ve watched, it’s almost

always someone with  
something to hide  
who asks that  
question. What is it  
you have to hide, Mr  
Farrow?’

‘I’m sorry, but I just  
don’t—’

‘The baby, Mr Farrow,’  
Banks went on. ‘You  
didn’t want it? Neither  
of you?’

‘Katie . . . she . . .  
perhaps more than  
me. But she saw it  
couldn’t be. Not yet.

We weren’t ready.  
She understood that.’

‘It doesn’t sound as if  
you were ready for  
anything. I should  
imagine you could  
have made a few  
adjustments to your  
lifestyles if you’d tried.  
You certainly can’t

claim you were too young for such a responsibility.'

'You don't understand.'

'What am I missing?'

Farrow stared down at the table. 'It just wasn't possible, that's all.'

'Why not?'

‘Oh, come on, man, isn’t it fucking obvious? Because I’m married, that’s why. That’s what you’ve been wanting me to say, isn’t it?’

‘I’ve been wanting you to tell me the truth, Mr Farrow,’ said Banks. ‘So you were having an affair with Katie Shea?’

‘It wasn’t a . . . it  
wasn’t sordid like that.  
We were in love. We  
were going to get  
married as soon as I  
divorced my wife.’

‘And when were you  
going to do that?’

‘I’d been trying to  
broach the subject,  
then this came up.’

‘How bloody  
inconvenient,’ said

Banks. 'So what were you going to do?'

'Well, we couldn't have the baby, could we? Not yet. Not when things were like they were. Katie was going to have a termination.'

'Well, she's certainly had one now, hasn't she?' said Banks.



He noticed out of the corner of his eye that Annie gave him a puzzled and concerned glance. Farrow reeled as if he'd been thumped and started whimpering and chewing on his thumb. 'That's cruel. That's not fair.'

'I'll tell you what's not fair,' Banks went on, 'and that's a married

man getting a young girl pregnant then persuading her to have a termination. I'm assuming it was your idea? And that you were paying?'

'She didn't want the child, either!'

'How do you know that? She obviously wanted to please you. I suppose she believed you when

you said you were going to ask your wife for a divorce so you could marry her?’

Farrow slapped the table. ‘It’s true.’

‘Bollocks. It’s the oldest trick in the book. You had no intention of asking for a divorce, did you?’

Farrow hung his head.

‘How many children do you and your wife have?’ Banks went on.

‘Two.’

‘How old?’

‘Seven and five.’

‘The last thing you wanted was another, wasn’t it? You’d already been through it with two. Even if you did plan on getting a

divorce and marrying  
Katie, which I doubt,  
you weren't signing  
up for dirty nappies  
and sleepless nights,  
were you? But I'll bet  
she wanted children,  
didn't she?'

'You don't know what  
you're talking about.  
It's none of your  
business. She was no  
angel. She knew what  
she was doing. What

are you, pro-life or something?’

‘That takes the bloody biscuit, that does,’ said Banks, standing up. ‘If you’d seen just half of what I’ve seen these past two days . . . And that included your Katie, the woman you say you love, sitting propped —’

‘Alan, that’s enough!’

It was Annie. Banks was so shocked by her sharp tone and the way she was glaring at him that he stopped mid-sentence and turned to face the window, arms folded. His breath was coming in short sharp gasps, and he was certain his blood pressure had gone way over the limit. He could feel his heart thumping in his chest.

He took a few paces  
and looked out over  
the dark market  
square. Car  
headlights reflected in  
the puddles among  
the cobblestones.  
He'd lost his cool, and  
he knew it.

After an  
uncomfortable  
silence, Annie picked  
up the questioning in  
relatively gentle  
tones. Banks didn't



trust himself to turn around just yet. He had not felt such anger, such revulsion for someone, in a long time. He wanted to pick Farrow up by his neck and shake him. Slowly, his heart rate returned to normal.

‘Did your wife know about the affair?’ he heard Annie ask.

‘She suspected that I was seeing someone else. I think she might have followed me once and seen us meet up.’

‘She never broached the subject with you?’

‘Rosie doesn’t work like that. She stores it all up until the dam bursts, and then there’s no stopping her.’

‘But she hadn’t reached that stage yet?’

‘No.’

‘Though you think she knew?’

‘Suspected.’

‘Boyd,’ Annie said.  
‘This isn’t a personal inquisition into your morals. It’s a murder inquiry. Do you think Rosie knew enough

about the affair, was angry enough about it, to harm Katie?’

‘Good God, no. She wouldn’t do anything like that. If anyone was going to

suffer for it, it would have been me.’

‘OK. Where was she on Saturday?’

‘At home with the kids. Like I said, I had

a business meeting. It was in Wakefield, by the way, and I can tell you the names of the clients. You can check.'

'That might be useful,' said Annie. 'And we'll need some corroboration of your wife's whereabouts. Would anyone else have been there? Might she have taken the children shopping

or to the playground?  
Would anyone be  
likely to have seen  
her?’

‘It’s possible. I’m sure  
someone would, but .  
. . . oh, God . . .’ He  
buried his face in his  
hands. ‘You’re going  
to have to ask her,  
aren’t you? You’re  
going to have to tell  
her everything. I’ve  
lost Katie, and now  
I’m going to lose

Rosie and the kids.  
Please can't you—'

Banks couldn't tolerate any more. He walked away from the window and left his office. He didn't trust himself to stand there and listen to Farrow's cringing self-pity. When he found himself out in the corridor, he didn't know what to do, so he just stood at the far

end looking out over  
the car park at the  
back of the station.

He didn't know how  
long he'd been  
standing like that  
when he heard his  
office door open and  
shut behind him. He  
turned to see Annie  
standing there with  
Farrow. A few  
seconds later, a  
uniformed constable  
entered from the



stairwell to show  
Farrow out.

‘What the hell was all  
that about?’ Annie  
demanded, following  
Banks back into his  
office.

‘Don’t you start,  
Annie.’

‘What you do you  
mean, “don’t you  
start”? What the hell

did you think you  
were up to?’

‘I was trying to push  
him,’ Banks said,  
sitting behind his  
desk.

‘You mean you  
seriously think he had  
something to do with  
the massacre?’

‘I’m not saying that. I  
—’

‘You were out of bounds, Alan.’ Annie’s tone softened. ‘No matter what you think of him, Farrow is a witness and a victim, not a suspect. You had no right to treat him like that. I don’t know what it was all about, what’s going on in your mind, but you were way out of bounds. What were you thinking of?’

‘I don’t know,’ said Banks. ‘He just pushed all the wrong buttons.’

‘Oh, bugger it, come here, you daft sod.’ Banks stood up and walked over to her. She took him in her arms and gave him a firm hug then held on to his shoulders and faced him.

Banks felt himself relax a little. 'I'm sorry,' he said. 'You're right. I lost it in

there. Is Farrow planning on making a formal complaint?'

'No. He feels far too guilty for that. And I think I managed to calm him down after you'd left the office. In the end, he was more worried about what he

was going to say to his wife when he gets home than about anything you might have said to him. You surprised me, though. You were cruel, Alan. I never thought of you as cruel.'

'I suppose we can all act a little out of character at times. Forgive me?'

‘Of course.’ Annie went over to the coffee machine. ‘Want some?’

‘Please.’

‘Feeling OK now?’

‘Much better.’

Annie handed him the coffee and they sat down at the glass table again.

‘Farrow might be a creep,’ she said, ‘but he didn’t do it. Or his wife.’

‘I know that. It’s just . . .’

‘What?’

‘Oh, never mind.’

‘You never struck me as being the moralistic kind. I mean, he’s not the only married bloke to



have an affair. I've  
been with a married  
man or two in my  
time, and you—'

'It was once, before I  
came up here.'

'I know. You did it,  
though, didn't you?'

'You're saying people  
in glass houses . . .'

'Or "let him who is  
without sin . . ." Pick  
your cliché.'

Banks laughed. 'It's a fair cop.' He put his coffee cup on the table. 'And thanks for the pep talk. I wasn't being moralistic, really, though. I was trying to get his goat. I'm sorry, I just lost it. It won't happen again. And now I think I'm going to go home and have an early night.'

'Not if Ray has anything to do with it,

you won't,' said  
Annie.

When Banks got home to Newhope Cottage later that evening, the rain was still pouring down, and Gratly Beck was close to full spate. Normally a steady, soothing trickle of water over the terraced falls outside his cottage, tonight it roared down the

daleside, swollen with the flow of countless becks, burns and rills from higher up in the hills, flecked with foam that caught the light of the half moon like whitecaps out at sea. But the beck was deep and its banks were high. He knew he would be safe from flooding here, so far up the side of the valley, but Helmthorpe and The Leas below

might have serious problems. It wouldn't be the first time. The worst his cottage had ever suffered from protracted wind and heavy rain was a leak where the conservatory joined the

older part of the building, which he had caulked the previous spring, and a little dampness had

managed to seep its way through the thick stone walls to darken the bedroom wall in patches. After the previous winter, he'd had one of the local handymen around to fix a few gaps in the flagstone roof and spray the back wall with silicon, which was supposed to seal the porous limestone against the elements. The way things were

going, he would soon find out whether it worked.

The cottage felt more welcoming than it had on Saturday night, with smoke coming out of the chimney, a light visible from the entertainment room and Ray's ancient Honda Civic parked outside. As soon as Banks got inside, he could hear Billie

Holiday singing 'Lover Man'. Even though it was his own home, he tapped gently on the entertainment room door before entering, so as not to surprise Ray if he happened to be asleep or lost in thought.

'Alan, nice to see you,' Ray said, rising and shaking hands. 'As you can see, I'm making myself at



home. I do appreciate this. I'm not a particularly large man, but I must confess that in Annie's place, I felt rather like Alice when she was ten feet tall after taking that pill.'

'No problem.' Banks dropped his keys on the sideboard beside an open bottle of Laphroaig. Ray must have bought it, he

realised, as he hadn't had any in the house for ages. Ray had also managed to light the wood stove, and the room felt warm and cosy.

'Why don't you join me?' Ray said, pointing to the bottle. 'Nightcap.'

Banks hesitated. He had lost his taste for the peaty whisky

since he had come to associate it with a fire at the cottage, but he had tried a drop now and then over the past couple of years, and his tolerance was improving. Besides, after the day he'd had, he felt he needed a drink or two to help him unwind. He helped himself to a wee dram and topped up Ray's glass.

‘ *Slainte*,’ Banks said,  
clinking glasses.

‘ *Slainte*. Hope you  
don’t mind the music.’

‘Billie? Never,’ said  
Banks.

‘They said she could  
tell a story in a song,  
but as far as I’m  
concerned she can  
tell a story in just one  
note.’

‘She had what it takes,’ Banks agreed.

‘Frank Sinatra said he’d once kissed her as she ought to be kissed,’ Ray mused. ‘I’ve often wondered what that was like.’

Banks flopped down in his armchair.

‘Perhaps a mixture of bourbon, gardenias and cigarette smoke.’  
He tasted the

Laphroaig, and it  
burned nicely as it  
went down. Billie  
Holiday was singing  
'Solitude' now in her  
husky, booze-soaked  
late-career voice, the  
one Banks loved best,  
the one that  
expressed clearly in  
every broken note  
how much she had  
lived and loved and  
suffered, but also

how she had come through, survived. He inhaled the peat and iodine fumes from his whisky and revelled in the music.

‘Tough day?’ Ray asked.

‘Yes, it was tough.’

‘Want to talk about it?’

It was strange having someone else in the house. Banks knew

Ray reasonably well from previous visits, but he wouldn't say they were especially close friends. And he wasn't one for talking things through. Oddly enough, though, he felt like talking to someone tonight.

'And I was at a funeral on Saturday,' he said, 'just before . . . well . . . before the shit hit the fan up here.'



‘That must have been hard. Someone close?’

‘No. Not for years. That’s the thing. I can’t seem to stop thinking about her, even with all this chaos going on up here. We went out together for a while when we were kids back in Peterborough. You know, just a bit of necking on the back

row, reaching for a blouse button and getting your hand slapped. That sort of thing. Then we met up again quite by chance a few years later, when I was at London Poly and she was at the university. It was the early seventies, and we were both away from home for the first time, footloose and fancy-free.'

‘Exciting times. And it developed into something serious?’

‘It did. Yes. But for Christ’s sake, that was over forty years ago, and I haven’t seen her since. My children are older now than Emily was when I knew her. It just all came rushing back at the funeral.’

‘Doesn’t make it any easier, though, does it, the passage of time?’

‘You were pretty young when your wife died, weren’t you? Annie’s mother.

That must have been hard.’

Ray slugged back some whisky. ‘Hard? I was thirty-seven, and

Annie would have been about seven. I don't know how we made it through those first few years, to be honest. The colony, I suppose. People took care of each other.

Without the others . . .  
I don't know. I do know Annie's never got over losing her mother.'

‘You never thought of remarrying?’

‘Me? No. Oh, maybe once or twice.’ Ray grinned. ‘Fleetingly. I’m not saying there haven’t been other women, but I’ve never been able to *give* myself to any of them the way I had with Judy. I’ve always held something back. The part of me I probably shouldn’t have held

back if I wanted any sort of meaningful relationship. The part that won't let you get close to anyone ever again because you know you're going to lose them, and you know how bad it feels. Because they're going to die.' He waved his glass. 'Maybe that's why I've been a bit distant from Annie over the years, too.'

Not because I  
associate her

with Judy's death, or  
blame her, or any of  
that psychological  
claptrap, but because  
I don't know if I could  
take that sort of blow  
again. When she got  
shot .

. . well, you remember  
what it was like.  
Lovers leave you, and  
it hurts, of course, but



you can get them  
back, sometimes, if  
you try, if you want to,  
if you know how. But  
death's the final thing.  
At least, / think it is. I  
don't know about you,  
maybe you're  
religious, but I don't  
believe there's  
anything after death. I  
reckon you *should*  
think about your first  
serious girlfriend. It's  
a major emotional  
turning point in your

life. Remember her.  
There's not a day  
goes by when I don't  
think about Judy, no  
matter how many  
years have passed.  
But if you can take a  
bit of advice from an  
old fool like me, save  
your best efforts for  
the living, because  
one day they'll be  
dead, too, and you'll  
end up feeling guilty  
for neglecting them  
while they were alive.

That's the paradox.  
Damned if you do and  
double-damned if you  
don't.'

'It never stopped you  
from loving Annie,  
though, did it, all this  
fear of one day losing  
her?'

Ray grunted. 'No. I  
suppose not. But  
she's my daughter. It's  
different.' He knocked  
back his whisky and

laughed. 'Listen to me. Sorry, mate. What a fucking old bore I must sound talking about lessons learned. And me a guest in your home. Must be the whisky talking. Much more of this and you'll be kicking me out on my arse before I've even spent a night under your roof.'

‘Don’t worry about that,’ said Banks. ‘I’m glad of the company, to be honest.’

‘Thanks. I appreciate that. I was worried about being a burden. Fancy a quick spliff?’

Banks smiled. ‘No, thanks. Better not.’

‘Maybe I’ll go outside later. You won’t arrest me, will you?’

Banks laughed and drank some more Laphroaig. He could get used to the peaty taste again very easily, he decided, despite Dr Glendenning's words of derision. 'Is there any particular reason you want to move up to Yorkshire?' he asked.

Ray shuffled in his seat. 'Something

about the light up here,' he said. 'Hell, if Hockney could do it, I don't see why I can't.'

'Tired of the light in Cornwall?'

'It's not that. I've spent most of my life there. I love the place. Always will.'

But it's getting to be a young person's world now, the colony. I feel

like an intruder, an old fogey. And it's what we've been talking about. Mortality. Like I said, I feel I've neglected Annie. I may have had my reasons, but they don't count for much now. It's something I've been thinking about since that time we almost lost her. She's my only child, after all. The most



beautiful thing I've  
ever

created, or helped to  
create. All that's left of  
Judy and me. Oh,  
fuck, I'm getting  
morbid and  
sentimental now.'

'Is there something  
wrong? Are you OK? I  
know you told Annie  
you are, but

—'

‘Physically? No, there’s nothing wrong. No cancer or anything, just the same ticking clock we all have. I’m fit as a fiddle. Well, as fit as can be expected for a man my age who’s led the sort of life I’ve lived.’ He tapped his temple. ‘It’s in here, Alan. I mean, let’s be honest. I turned seventy a few years ago. How many more

good years can I expect? Ten? Five? I may be feeling my age, but I'm going to have a bloody good time for as long as I've got left. And I want my daughter to be part of that. There. Is that so strange a reason?'

'Not at all,' said Banks, thinking of his own grown-up children, Brian and

Tracy, and how far he felt from them at times. They had their own lives to live, he told himself; they didn't want to be bothered with him and his problems.

'Let's have some loud rock 'n' roll,' Ray said, walking over to the stereo and changing discs. 'I picked this one out earlier.' And he put on Jimi

Hendrix's *Rainbow Bridge* then went for the bottle. The level was getting dangerously low.

He was moving unsteadily. 'Should we . . .?'

They were well into their next glass and 'Hear My Train A Comin'" when Banks thought he heard his mobile play its blues

riff. He left the room,  
pressed the talk  
button and put it to his  
ear. 'Banks speaking.'

It was Annie. 'I hate to  
drag you away from  
your old fogey's  
sleepover with Ray,'  
she said. 'I should  
imagine you're having  
a nice semi-drunken  
reminisce right now. I  
hope you can hear  
me over all that  
racket. What is it, best

shags or best  
albums? And I hope  
you haven't lit up that  
spliff yet. We've got  
developments. Major  
developments, we  
think. A strong lead.  
In fact, it's strong  
enough that we might  
even have the bastard  
before the night is  
over. Interested?

'Where are you?'

‘Not far away. Put your glass down. I’ll pick you up in a few minutes.’

## **Chapter 6**

‘It’s just beyond Swainshead village,’ said Annie, leaning forwards and squinting at the road ahead as she drove. The rain had eased up somewhat, and the windshield wipers



were keeping up with it, but outside the beams of Annie's headlights the landscape was pitch black. She had her foot down hard, and Banks noticed that the speedometer was edging up towards fifty. Madness on this road. He hung on to the door handle tightly.

‘His name is Martin Edgeworth,’ Annie was saying. ‘Lives alone. Retired dentist. Used to have his surgery on Market Street about a mile south of the square.’

‘I remember it,’ said Banks. ‘It was that big old house on the corner, just over the zebra crossing, I used to walk past there on my way to work every

morning. Wasn't there someone else in the practice with him?'

'I almost forgot you used to live near there,' said Annie.

'Yes, he had a partner. A bloke called Martell. Jonathan Martell.'

'That's right,' said Banks. 'I remember the brass plaque beside the door.'

‘Was he your dentist,  
then?’

‘No.’

‘Why not? He must  
have been the  
closest.’

‘I didn’t need a  
dentist,’ Banks  
muttered.

‘You were scared,  
weren’t you?’ Annie  
said. ‘Scared of the  
dentist.’

Banks scowled at her.  
'There's no need to  
make a big deal out of  
it. Lots of people are  
nervous about going  
to the dentist's.'

'Scaredy-cat.'

'Get on with it.'

Annie grinned. 'He's  
fifty-nine. Fits the  
description, as far as  
it goes.'

Medium height, slim.  
Been retired three  
years now. That's all  
we know about him so  
far. Except he has a  
Firearms Certificate  
for an AR15, along  
with one for a Taurus  
pistol, he drives a  
black RAV4 and he's  
a member of the  
Upper Swainsdale  
District Rifle and  
Pistol Club.'

The right turn came up faster than Banks had expected. Annie turned the wheel sharply, and the car skidded, tyres squealing, as she made the bend on to the minor road that led through the village of Swainshead. Banks hung on for dear life as she regained control and drove on past the triangular village green, squat

church and  
whitewashed pub,  
blurred images in the  
dark through the rain-

spattered car  
windows.

The road they were  
on, which cut north  
from the main east–  
west road, narrowed  
beyond the borders of  
the village. Though  
they were invisible in  
this weather, Banks



knew that the valley sides rose steeply on either side of the road.

From this point on, there were very few dwellings, all of them off the beaten track, if you could even call the road they were on beaten, or a track.

‘You feeling all right, by the way?’ Annie cast him a sidelong

glance. 'I mean, I'm not going to have to carry you, am I?'

'I'm fine,' said Banks.

'Not had too much to drink? Or smoke?'

'Hardly got started drinking even.'

'Good.'

'There.' Banks pointed towards the left, where flashing

police lights were just visible down a driveway. Annie turned, travelling more slowly this time, and they came to a halt beside the two ARVs that had been first at the scene. The large house at the end of the gravel drive was a dark silhouette against the darker daleside.

Banks and Annie were already kitted out in raincoats and wellies, and they made a dash from the purple Astra to the first Volvo T5 estate car parked ahead of them. Banks recognised both of the officers from St Mary's leaning against the car.

'Evening, sir,' said the driver, a DS in the

firearms cadre, whose first name was Keith.  
'No activity so far.'

'You've checked out the premises?'

'Outside only. As best we can. There's a black RAV4 in the garage. Thought we'd better wait for you to arrive. All doors and windows appear to be securely locked. No lights on. No answer

when we knock or  
phone. Unless he's  
lying extremely low,  
I'd say the place is  
empty.'

'So how do you want  
to play this?'

'Safely, sir. By the  
book. Just in case he  
is lying low in there,  
armed to the teeth.  
We go in first, then we  
give you the all clear.'

‘Have you got enough men surrounding the house, just in case?’

‘First thing we did. Called for backup. It’s kettled tighter than a . . .’ He glanced nervously at Annie. ‘The area’s secure, sir. Nobody’s getting away from here. Not even in the dark.’

‘Good to know. After you.’

The two armed officers left the car, one of them carrying a red battering ram, which he used to splinter the door. Heckler & Kochs slung around their shoulders, Glocks in one hand, torches gripped like overhead handrails, the two

officers advanced slowly into the dark house to begin their



sweep. One by one,  
the lights came on.  
Banks could still hear  
little but the wind  
whistling and moaning  
as it encountered the  
solid stone, and the  
different sounds of the  
rain tapping against  
slate, glass and  
metal.

It seemed to take for  
ever, but the all clear  
came eventually, and  
they were able to

enter the house. From the vestibule, with pegs and a cupboard for hats and coats, and racks for muddy boots and shoes, they went into a large kitchen with rough natural stone walls, a big red Aga and a flagstone floor. There was a central island, granite-topped, and beyond it, a stainless-steel fridge and freezer unit stood

beside wall  
cupboards, a double  
metal sink and a  
dishwasher unit.

Everything was  
sparkling clean.

'Nice set up,' said  
Banks.

'Not your run-of-the-  
mill mass murderer,'  
Annie added.

The rest of the  
downstairs was well

appointed, but not ostentatious. The living-room furniture was solid and serviceable, nice on the eye, with beige leather sofas, walls painted light pastel shades. There were the usual items: cocktail cabinet, sideboard, large screen TV, Blu-Ray player, bookcases mostly full of paperbacks and

illustrated hardcovers on military history, along with a selection of Ordnance Survey maps and local guides. There was also a glass-fronted cabinet in which stood a number of cups and plaques. When Banks looked more closely, he could see that they were awards for shooting competitions. A wood-burning stove filled

the old fireplace, and a set of andirons stood on the hearth next to a box of kindling and a stack of firewood.

Banks went over to the stove and opened the door. Everything was cold. Cold and clean.

A quick glance upstairs revealed a large bathroom and

toilet, equally clean,  
and four bedrooms,  
only one of which was  
used for sleeping,  
with an en suite walk-  
in shower unit.

Another was clearly  
an office, with desk,  
computer, printer and  
more bookcases, the  
third a guest  
bedroom, and the  
fourth was filled with  
boxes. They went  
back down to the  
main floor and met

Keith coming up from the cellar with a grim expression on his face.

‘You may want to check out down there next,’ he said.

Banks and Annie followed him down the wooden steps. It was a dank, musty-smelling cellar, with whitewashed walls and a bare bulb



overhead. One of the AFOs must have jogged it somehow, as it was swinging back and forth, casting shadows across the still figure that slumped against the far wall. The whitewash above his head was splattered and speckled with dark blood. Banks saw the gun in the man's right hand, where it had fallen

into his lap. The black AR15 was lying next to a pile of neatly folded outdoor clothes beside him on the floor.

‘Martin Edgeworth, I presume,’ Banks said, then turned to Keith. ‘Call Dr Burns, would you, and bring in the CSIs and a search team. I hate to spoil their beauty sleep, but

I think we've got our man.' Then he turned to Annie. 'Let's go upstairs and ring the boss,' he said. 'She's going to want to know about this, too.'

Chief Superintendent Gervaise joined them at the scene in less than an hour, and after a quick poke around as they brought her up to speed, she left for

Eastvale HQ, where she said she would put on a pot of coffee and make some phone calls, including one to Adrian Moss. By two o'clock in the morning, the house and grounds were lit up by arc lamps, and there were so many people coming and going that anyone might be forgiven for thinking there was a big party going on,

albeit a quiet one,  
without music or  
dancing.

Stefan Nowak's CSI  
team went  
methodically over all  
the surfaces, taking  
fingerprints and trace  
evidence, while skilled  
searchers went  
through the drawers,  
cupboards and  
appliances, loading  
everything from letters  
and bills to kitchen

knives into transparent plastic crates, which they carried out under a makeshift canvas awning to the waiting van outside.

A special team was assigned to the garage where Martin Edgeworth's black RAV4 was parked. They would pick through it for anything of interest before

getting it on a trailer  
and driving it to the  
police forensic garage  
when the rain  
stopped. They wanted  
to preserve the  
exterior of the car as  
best they could, so  
someone was sent to  
find a tarpaulin or  
some plastic sheeting.  
For one thing, they  
would probably be  
able to match soil  
samples from the  
tyres with those from

the lay-by where the killer's car had been parked.

The rain continued to fall steadily, and officers whose duties kept them outside wore bright yellow capes slick with it, the shiny black peaks of their caps glistening in the lights. Inside, after the body had been examined *in situ*, photographed



extensively and taken away in the coroner's van, someone had managed to get the central heating working, and the radiators banged and rattled as they came to life. At some point, nobody seemed to know quite when or how, ham and cheese sandwiches materialised.

There was no need for Banks and Annie to stay on, they knew, but as neither felt that there was much chance of sleep by now, they made valuable use of their time. Ray would be fast asleep back at Newhope, Banks thought, if he hadn't decided to stay up and finish the Laphroaig and start watching movies. He

was glad that he had drunk only two small whiskies, otherwise he might be nodding off himself. No chance of that. The St Mary's business was far from over. The

killer might be dead, but there would be official inquiries, analyses of Edgeworth's motivation, questions in the house, more

calls for stricter gun laws

– all of which meant a lot more media attention focused on Eastvale over the next few weeks or months. They could also not rule out the possibility of an accomplice. The last thing they needed was a second gunman on the loose.

By this time, a few of the villagers had been woken by the mysterious comings and goings, and one or two inquisitive souls had even attempted to wander up the driveway and see for themselves what was going on, only to be turned back by the constables on duty. Tomorrow, they would all be questioned about

Martin Edgeworth, but tonight they were civilians, and they had no place at a crime scene.

Banks and Annie sat with Dr Burns at the granite island in the kitchen, where they drank hot strong tea and nibbled on the sandwiches.

‘So everything seems kosher to you?’ Banks

said, after Dr Burns had recapped his findings from the preliminary examination of Martin Edgeworth's body.

Dr Burns rubbed his eyes. 'I'd say so. Assuming we're not overlooking something so devastatingly obvious, like he was left-handed.'

‘He’s wearing his watch on his left wrist,’ said Banks, ‘but we’ll be checking all that very carefully. I’d imagine his friends at the club would certainly know.

Time of death?’

‘You know I can’t give you that with any reasonable degree of accuracy. All I’ll say is



it's within the time frame.'

'What time frame?'

'Of his committing the murders at St Mary's, driving back here and blowing his brains out. Rigor's been and gone. It was quite cool in here, which would have slowed the process down a bit, but I'd say offhand that our man has

definitely been dead for longer than two days. It's Monday night now, or Tuesday morning, if you prefer, and I'm afraid the best I can estimate is between ten o'clock Saturday morning and five o'clock that same afternoon. Dr Glendenning may be able to narrow that down a bit in the post-mortem.'

‘Has the body been moved at all?’

‘No sign of that, as far as I can tell, but I’d need to get him on the table and check hypostasis to be certain. It appears to me as if he sat himself down against the wall and . . . well, you can see the blood spatter for yourself. From a cursory glance, I’d say his

head was hanging a little bit forward when he put the gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. The bullet took most of the back of his head off. He certainly got the angle of his shot right, otherwise the bullet might easily have gone through the roof of his mouth. It happens sometimes.'

'Ouch,' said Banks.

‘Dr Glendenning will be able to tell you more, of course, including the exact trajectory the bullet took and whether the body was moved after death, but I’m pretty certain I’m right.’

‘Why do it down there in a dank miserable cellar?’ Banks asked.

‘No idea,’ said Dr Burns. ‘I would

assume it didn't matter to him where he did it, as he was going to die. And the gun cabinet's down there.'

'Fair enough. Maybe he didn't take the revolver with him to St Mary's. He certainly didn't use it there. Perhaps it was still in the cabinet.'

‘Perhaps,’ Burns agreed. ‘But what does it matter now?’

‘It probably doesn’t. Just thinking aloud. Getting my ducks in a row.’

‘Hmm. Well, the wound is definitely consistent with the position of the body and the hand holding the weapon,’ Burns went on. ‘I would

imagine the rifle was too large and awkward to use as a suicide weapon, so he put the revolver in his mouth and pulled the trigger. He would have died pretty much instantaneously.

No doubt your forensics lab will be checking for gunshot residue on his hands.



When all you have to do is pull a trigger, it's sometimes all too bloody easy.'

'Now, now, doc,' said Banks. 'Remember: it's not the gun but the person who fires it.'

'Yes,' said Burns. 'But take the gun away from them and do you think they'd have the guts to do it some other way? A knife? A

rope? Bare hands? I doubt it.

When you've seen as many gunshot injuries as I have, you can't help but be a bit cynical about the whole thing. I know people argue it's a valid and enjoyable sport, like any other, but why the hell can't they just play golf or tennis like everyone else?'

Banks had forgotten that Dr Burns had worked briefly with the military in Iraq. 'At least this time it's not some innocent victim,' he said.

Dr Burns sighed. 'No. We had enough of those on Saturday.' He got wearily to his feet. 'I'm off home now. You'll have my report sometime tomorrow. Let's at

least try and be  
pleased it's over, shall  
we?'

'We'll be drinking  
champagne before  
the night's through.'

Dr Burns glanced at  
Annie. 'I wouldn't be  
too sure of that,' he  
said.

'Goodnight.' Banks  
noticed that Annie  
was dozing with her

head resting on the island. He nudged her gently and suggested it might be time to leave. The teams were professional and methodical, and it would be hours yet before they finished.

‘Sir?’ It was one of the search team come down from the study upstairs. ‘I think you might be interested in this.’ He held out a

scrapbook. 'I found it taped underneath the bottom of one of the desk drawers in the study.'

Banks slipped his latex gloves back on and opened it. Most of the pages were filled with clipped newspaper and magazine articles about Laura Tindall and Benjamin Kemp, especially the reports

of their upcoming  
wedding at St Mary's  
church, Fortford. Here  
and there, a word or  
line had been  
underlined in red.

There were  
newspaper  
photographs, articles,  
stories of Benjamin  
Kemp's heroism,  
grainy images of  
Laura in her modelling  
days, including one or  
two, clearly printed

from an Internet site,  
in which she  
appeared naked.  
They were tasteful  
model's poses, the  
kind that could be  
called erotic rather  
than pornographic.

Banks handed back  
the scrapbook. 'It  
seems he had his  
sights set on  
Benjamin and Laura  
well enough. If only  
we knew why. Bag it



and make sure it gets priority tagging.'

'Right you are.' The officer headed back upstairs.

Back out in the rain, Banks offered to drive, and Annie accepted.

'I can hardly keep my eyes open,' she said.

'Come back with me,' Banks said. 'You can

have Tracy's room.  
It's made up. All fresh  
linen and everything.  
Harkside's a bloody  
long way, and it's half  
three in the morning  
already.'

Annie said nothing for  
a while. 'Mm,' she  
said finally. 'And one  
of Ray's famous fry-  
ups for breakfast.  
What a treat. How  
could a girl possibly  
resist?'

## Chapter 7

Eastvale was throbbing with excitement on Tuesday morning, from what Banks could see when he drove in with Annie through the throng of reporters and cameramen. Banks had not managed to get much sleep, and as a consequence he felt groggy as he

dodged questions and headed inside. Annie didn't seem much more lively. At least Ray had done a bit of shopping the previous day and cooked them some eggs and bacon with their morning coffee.

He said he would be out house-hunting most of the day, so not to worry about him.

The desk sergeant told Banks that Mike Trethowan, head of the firearms cadre, had left a message to meet him in the lab as soon as possible. Also, Dr Glendenning sent his regrets, but he was still busy with the victims of the wedding shooting and wouldn't be able to get around to Martin Edgeworth's post-mortem until

tomorrow morning, if then.

They were lucky that the Eastvale Regional HQ was attached to a small forensic laboratory in the building next door, though the lab was constantly under threat due to budget cuts. Even though the technicians there handled jobs from all over the county,

Banks could generally get priority on most matters.

Unfortunately, the lab wasn't equipped to deal with ballistics. For that, Edgeworth's weapons, bullets and casings had to be sent to LGC Forensics in Wakefield.

Trethowan was chatting with CSM

Stefan Nowak and Vic  
Manson, the  
fingerprints expert,  
when Banks and  
Annie dropped by.

‘Good timing,’  
Trethowan said. ‘Vic  
here has just  
confirmed Martin  
Edgeworth’s prints on  
both weapons, and  
there was gunshot  
residue on his hand,  
too.’



‘Good. No other prints?’

‘None,’ said Manson.

‘What about the shell casings and the remaining bullets?’

‘Clean.’

‘You mean no prints at all?’ Banks said.

‘That’s right,’ said Trethowan. ‘It doesn’t mean much, though.’

People often wear thin gloves, latex or cotton, when they're handling explosive materials.

Edgeworth made his own bullets.'

'Even so . . .'

'We're just waiting for the designated firearms officer to pick the guns up and take them to Wakefield for

further testing,’  
Trethowan went on.  
‘I’ve had a quick  
shuftly at them myself,  
and I honestly don’t  
think there’s much  
doubt that the rifle is  
the one used at St  
Mary’s, and the  
Taurus is the gun that  
killed Edgeworth.’

Banks nodded.  
Trethowan led him  
and Annie over to the  
table where the guns

lay sealed in carefully labelled plastic bags.

‘Ugly things, aren’t they?’ Annie said.

‘Do you think so?’ said Trethowan. ‘I think they have a sort of beauty all their own, a shapeliness, a form that perfectly suits their purpose. They’re actually rather sleek and elegant

machines, when you think about it.'

'It's not so much their form I think about as their purpose.'

'Don't you mean their owner's purpose?'

'Oh, we're back to that hoary old chestnut, are we?'  
Banks cut in.

Trethowan laughed. 'I suppose it's become

one of the great  
conundrums, hasn't  
it?'

'Not to me it hasn't,'  
said Annie, fingering  
the scar on her chest  
where a bullet had  
entered her several  
years ago, narrowly  
missing her heart.

'Sorry,' said  
Trethowan.

'No matter.'

Banks stood over the two weapons, the one matte black, the other stainless steel with a hard black rubber butt. As per regulations, the Taurus had a barrel extension, which resembled a silencer, to comply with the twelve-inch legal requirement, and there was a long metal tubular extension sticking out

from the butt, so that the gun as a whole was over twenty-four inches in length, also as required by law. Handguns were barely tolerated these days, and those that were had to be almost as long as rifles, far too long and bulky to hide easily in your pocket or stick down your trousers like the gangsters did on TV, but still easy enough



to stick in your mouth  
and pull the trigger.

Trethowan stood  
beside them. 'Both  
perfectly legal and  
both registered to  
Martin Edgeworth,' he  
said.

'I assume all the  
regular checks were  
made when  
Edgeworth applied for  
his certificate?' Banks  
said.

‘Certainly,’ said Trethowan. ‘I’ve verified the documents, and there’s no doubt that Edgeworth was deemed fit to own firearms. No charges or convictions, not even a speeding ticket, and no health issues raised by his doctor.

Solid guarantors. All above board.’

‘What did he use the guns for? Hunting?’

‘Competitive shooting, mostly. Targets more than clay pigeons, of course.

For clay pigeons you’d generally use a shotgun of some sort.’ He touched the bag with the revolver inside. ‘This baby here is a Taurus 66 .357 long-barrelled

revolver, using a .357  
Magnum FMJ 158  
grain bullet. One  
bullet fired and  
fragments dug out of  
the wall of  
Edgeworth's cellar.'  
He moved on to the  
AR15.

'And this daddy, as  
you know already, is  
an AR – Armalite Rifle  
– 15, emasculated for  
legal use under a

firearms certificate in the UK.'

'Do you think you could stop referring to the weapons in familial terms, please?' Annie said. 'I mean, it makes me cringe to hear someone talking about guns as babies and daddies. And "emasculated"? Give us a break.'

Trethowan reddened.  
'Sorry,' he said. 'Just  
a piece of AFO slang.'

'And you're still  
certain that  
Edgeworth would  
have been able to  
work the bolt fast  
enough to get off ten  
shots in under a  
minute?' Banks  
asked.

'Yes. Easily. There are  
ten bullets missing

from the thirty-round clip of 5.56mm bore ammunition, which qualifies for small-bore calibre designation.

But it's small-bore with full-bore performance, as they say, if it's loaded with the right ammo. In this case, he used .223 Remington 55 grain bullets. They travel at three thousand feet

per second and carry eleven hundred foot-pounds of energy.'

'More than enough to do the job from that distance, I take it?'

'More than enough. Especially with the hollow points.'

Annie had wandered away to talk to Stefan Nowak. Banks couldn't blame her.



He wasn't especially comfortable around firearms himself, though he had been through some basic training. And it did sometimes seem to him that the relish with which some AFOs talked about weapons was more than a little OTT.

The AFO charged with delivering the guns for ballistic

examination arrived, signed the necessary papers, put the plastic bags inside a large messenger bag and headed out. Banks couldn't think of anything else to ask Trethowan, so he made his farewells and they left.

Chief Superintendent Gervaise's office was set up in a similar way to Banks's, but

everything was bigger, befitting her senior rank, even the conference table they sat around. And the chairs around her conference table were more comfortably padded.

Adrian Moss had joined Banks and Gervaise for a quick briefing. The young MLO was wearing so much black that he

might have been going to a funeral, Banks thought. His gelled black hair shone and his perpetual five o'clock shadow and black-rimmed spectacles completed the style. Banks supposed his attire was appropriate for someone who had to face the media at a time like this.

Much as he liked to criticise Moss, he didn't envy him his job today. The poor

boy was stressed out enough already, and Banks doubted he had managed to get much sleep lately. There had been too much going on behind the scenes. For a start, the firearms cadre versus emergency services

issue hadn't been resolved yet, and it probably wouldn't be without the appointment of a special commission and the preparation of a thousand-page report, which would cost the taxpayers a fortune and probably be so ambiguous as to leave all parties scratching their heads as to what to do after they had read it.

Moss crossed his legs and balanced a yellow A4 pad on his knee. He had a press conference coming up soon and was anxious for angles. He could handle the spin himself, but he needed something to work with in the first place, something suitable for spinning.

‘It’s the usual ending to this kind of saga,

isn't it?' Moss began.  
'Killer mows down a  
congregation then  
goes home and tops  
himself.'

'Is that what you think  
happened?' Banks  
said.

'Well, it is, isn't it?'

'I think what  
Superintendent Banks  
means,' said  
Gervaise, 'is that



there could easily  
have been a number  
of different outcomes  
to yesterday's  
actions.'

Moss frowned, pen  
poised. 'Such as?'

Gervaise flashed  
Banks a wry smile, as  
if to tell him he had  
got himself into this  
and must get himself  
out. 'Alan?'

‘Well,’ Banks said,  
‘Edgeworth could  
easily have gone on a  
rampage and shot a  
lot more people  
before either forcing  
us to take his life or  
killing himself when  
we had him cornered.’

Moss made a few  
scratches on his pad.  
‘But he didn’t, did he?’  
he said. ‘I mean, he  
didn’t get the chance.  
So we’re golden,

aren't we? We saved  
lives. It's win-win.'

Banks took a deep  
breath. 'I suppose you  
could say that,' he  
said. 'Apart from one  
or two minor ticks.'

'Minor ticks . . .?'

'Laura Tindall,  
Francesca Muriel,  
Katie Shea, Benjamin  
Kemp, Charles Kemp.  
Need I go on?

Edgeworth killed five people and wounded four. He put Diana Lofthouse in a wheelchair. And he's ruined even more lives. Do you think people just return to normal, pick up and carry on, after something like this?

Some of them never will. If you ask me, that's the story the media will be going

with, the aftermath, the *human* story, not how it was a “win–win” situation for us. We did nothing. We got lucky.’

Moss scratched on his pad. ‘I like that,’ he said. ‘“The human story”. But you’re not being fair to yourself. You did track the killer down.’

'It was routine police work, a paper trail, and that's not very exciting to our

friends out there. A helicopter and jeep chase over moorland terrain in zero visibility followed by a stand-off and shootout would have made much better copy.'

Moss tapped his pen on his pad and

chewed on his bottom lip. A few of his abundant glossy curls were hanging over his creased brow above his glasses.

‘That’s what I was getting around to,’ he said. ‘I mean, when you get right down to it, it’s all rather boring, isn’t it? I mean, as a story.’

‘Not for the victims  
and their families.’

‘No, I know that. I  
didn’t mean to be  
disrespectful or  
anything. But try to  
see it from my point of  
view.’ He gestured  
towards the window.  
‘And theirs. We don’t  
have much to give  
them, do we? I mean,  
the whole gun law  
business is getting  
rather predictable, for



a start. They've just about done that one to death.

No pun intended.'

'None heard,' said Banks. 'And since when hasn't a bit of blood and gore been enough for them?'

'I don't mean to be critical, Superintendent,' said Moss, 'but I don't

think you fully understand the situation. I mean *my* situation. The media situation in general. I'm sensing resistance here. You underestimate them. They're not simply a bunch of children suffering from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.'

'Oh, I see,' said Banks, with a

questioning sideways  
glance at Gervaise.

‘They’re not? Do  
enlighten me, then.’

‘There’s no need to be  
sarcastic,’ said Moss.  
‘We simply see the  
world in different  
ways. That’s all. But  
we *do* need to be on  
the same page here.’

‘And how do *you* see  
all this?’

‘That there must be *another* story. A better story. This can’t be the end.’

‘Isn’t it the bridal party they’ll all be writing about?’ Banks asked. ‘That’s where the glamour and tragedy lie. Laura Tindall was a sexy model; Ben Kemp a war hero. Martin Edgeworth was a nobody. A bloody retired dentist, for

crying out loud. What are you going to do, dredge up the statistics about how many retired dentists become rampage killers?’

‘A possibility,’ said Moss, jotting down another thought, ‘but they’ve already had enough of the victims. They’ve been running pictures of Laura Tindall on the catwalk

and Benjamin Kemp in his fatigues holding a weapon that, in my opinion, is similar to the one the victims were shot with. People are getting tired of the ex-supermodel and the war hero.'

'And you say we're not dealing with a bunch of kids suffering from ADHD?' said Banks.

Gervaise gave him a warning glance. 'So, what's your suggestion, Adrian?'

she asked. 'I assume you have an alternative in mind?'

'Yes.' Moss paused for effect before his pronouncement. 'It's Edgeworth's story now.'

'What?' said Banks.

‘You said it yourself.  
The details of the  
investigation aren’t  
very interesting.

The manhunt wound  
down too soon, held  
no real excitement,  
and the weather’s  
been too bad to do  
much location filming,  
anyway. You followed  
a paper trail. It led you  
to Edgeworth.  
Simple.’



‘You’re saying we solved the case and stopped a mass murderer too quickly?’ Banks said.

Moss managed a thin smile. ‘If you care to put it that way, yes. You’ve left the table bare, Superintendent. Well, not quite.’

‘Once again,’ said Gervaise, ‘what do you suggest?’

Moss leaned forwards, put both feet firmly on the floor and tossed his pad on the table, where it landed with a loud slap. 'People are fascinated by what motivates killers like Edgeworth,' he said. 'What makes them tick. Look at all the books on mass murderers like Moat and Bird and the rest. Dunblane.'

Hungerford. Or  
Columbine and Sandy  
Hook in the States.  
The Pulse nightclub in  
Orlando. And serial  
killers? For crying out  
loud. Just pick one.  
They give them  
nicknames and make  
movies about them:  
the Yorkshire Ripper,  
Son of Sam, the  
Moors Murderers, the  
Boston Strangler, the  
Zodiac Killer, the  
Green River Killer. I

mean, why are we still fascinated with Jack the Ripper after all these years? How many people can remember the names of any of his victims? But how many books have been written about him and these killers? Most of them by journalists.'

'Mary Kelly,' said Banks.

‘What?’

‘Mary Kelly. One of the Ripper’s victims.’

‘Oh, I see. Right.’

‘OK, Adrian,’ said Banks, holding up his hand. ‘I take your point. People are interested in the grotesque, in the aberrations, deviations from the norm. That’s why they

read *Silence of the Lambs* and so on. Why Hannibal Lecter and Norman Bates are such cultural icons.'

'Exactly! And they're interested because, no matter how much has been written, no matter how many of these monsters we've studied, no matter how many reports and learned dissertations

there have been, we still don't understand them. There's still a need, a hunger, for more knowledge about such things, such people. What makes them tick. What went wrong. How they became defective.

They can't be pigeonholed, filed, put away in a box marked read and

understood. They're still viable. No matter how much we *think* we know, the bloke next door could still be a serial killer or a mass murderer. That's the angle to exploit.'

'But that isn't our job,' said Banks. 'And to be perfectly honest, neither is this. I certainly didn't sign up to waste my time sitting around coming



up with angles for the media to use.'

Banks moved to stand up, but Gervaise waved him down. 'Hang on a minute, Alan. Hear him out.'

Banks sat reluctantly.

'Please don't think for a minute that I'm trying to tell you how to do your job,' said Moss, 'or what your

job is, but it's been my experience over the years that the boundaries have changed, and the media expect people like you to do a lot more than keep order and put bad guys away – in fact, half the time they criticise you for doing those very things.'

'What then?' asked Gervaise.

Moss leaned back and crossed his legs again. 'They want to understand, to explain to their readers, listeners, viewers, and they want us to help them to understand. Half the explanations the police come up with for what's happening in society are unbelievable. Hardly surprising, as they're cobbled together from lies and

bullshit and  
obfuscated by the  
appalling use of  
language. Have you  
ever tried to read a  
chief constable's  
report? People would  
like to trust us, but  
they don't. They'd like  
to understand us, but  
we don't make  
ourselves clear. We  
come on as if we're  
always trying to cover  
something up,  
keeping our guilty

secrets from the general public and failing to face up to things. As if we're some sort of superior private club. They think we know something they don't, and that we're deliberately keeping it from them. And they're right. They feel excluded.

The only thing that dispels that feeling

and is likely to bring us any closer together is if we attempt to publicly make sense of things like this. Of people like Martin Edgeworth.'

'So you're saying we should be psychologists as well as officers of the law?'

Banks argued.

'You already are, to a large extent. One could hardly do your job without some understanding of the criminal mind. But there are criminal minds, and then there are people like Martin Edgeworth. He's not a drug dealer or a mugger or a burglar or a wife-beater. He passed all the psychological and physical tests he

needed to acquire his firearms certificate. How many more people like him are out there? That's what people are interested in. They want to know what makes him different. Is that so difficult to understand?

'No, Adrian,' said Gervaise. 'Not at all. It's just that we've been rather too



busy catching the man to think very much about what set him off.'

'I know. Believe me, I understand your priorities. But now you've got him, one way or another, you can afford to direct your attention elsewhere. We all know that it was a terrible thing he did, but what we want to

know now is why he did it. And maybe how we can stop something like that from happening again. You've already been using a profiler, Dr Jenny Fuller. I've met her. It's not as if you've had zero interest in what sort of person did this.'

'Not at all,' said Banks. 'That kind of profile can be very

important. And if things had gone on much longer, and we'd had more information to feed Dr Fuller, then her work might well have been instrumental in leading us to Edgeworth. It just wasn't the way things worked out this time.'

'And now?' asked Moss.

‘You said it yourself.  
Now we’ve got him.’

‘So it’s all over?’

‘The killing is over,  
which is the main  
thing. And the killer  
himself has saved us  
the expense of a trial.’

‘And your Dr Fuller?  
Do you just pat her on  
the head and send  
her home?’

You might not have noticed, but she also happens to be very photogenic.

Perhaps a bit long in the tooth, but most presentable for a woman her age. She'll do well on *Newsnight* or *Panorama*. The media will lap her up.'

Banks held back from punching Moss. 'Don't

be so fucking patronising,' he said.

'I'm sorry, but I think you know what I mean.'

Banks glanced at Gervaise then turned back to Moss and said, 'I, for one, am certainly still interested in Edgeworth's psychology, in who he is and why he did

what he did. Just because it's over on one level doesn't mean we're going to stop studying him. All I'm saying is that our main job is over.'

Banks knew that Jenny would continue with her profile, and he was intending to put Annie Cabbot and Gerry Masterson on the other angles of the case. Gerry was good at digging up

stories and background, seemed to have a pretty firm grasp of basic human psychology, and she could use the experience. Annie could steer her.

'We also need to make absolutely certain that Edgeworth was acting alone,' he added.



‘What do you mean?’  
said Moss. ‘Are you  
suggesting he had a  
sidekick?’

Someone who helped  
him? Is there  
evidence of this? Why  
didn’t you mention it  
before?’

‘Don’t get your  
knickers in a twist,  
Adrian,’ said Banks.  
‘It’s merely a box to  
tick. We have no

evidence that anyone else was involved. It's just an avenue that needs to be thoroughly investigated and cleared.'

'Superintendent Banks is right,' Gervaise added. 'And perhaps the investigation is not as high-powered now as it was when Edgeworth was on the

loose and a danger to the public, but it's not over yet. We are perfectly aware that profilers such as Dr Fuller often rely on us for access to information that may give them a deeper understanding of the killer's psychology.'

'Good,' said Moss. 'Then I think we're on the same page at last.'

That was a rather frightening thought for Banks, but he said nothing.

‘But back to this business about the accomplice—’

‘There *was* no accomplice,’ said Banks, wishing to God he’d never mentioned the possibility. ‘And I’d appreciate it if you

didn't suggest that there was in any of your releases. We don't want a panic on our hands, do we?

Especially one caused by an MLO who got hold of the wrong end of the stick?'

Moss swallowed. 'But you'll keep me informed on anything

more you find out  
about Edgeworth?’

‘We’ll keep you  
informed, Adrian.’

‘Including Dr Fuller’s  
profile?’

‘Including the profile.’

‘Right. OK, then.’  
Moss gave them each  
a nervous smile and  
made his way  
crabwise out of the  
office.

‘So can you clarify the point of all that for me?’ Banks asked Gervaise when the door had closed. ‘Am I to do anything different than I was intending to do?’

‘No, Alan. Like it or not, we’ve been on the same page all along, as Adrian says. He just needed to vent his spleen a bit. He’s under a lot of

pressure. He needs a bit of babying every now and then.'

'Thought so.' Banks left shaking his head.

The river was not much more than a beck swollen with the recent rains where it ran through Swainshead village from its source high in the dale. The weather seemed to be offering



a brief respite that  
afternoon. By the  
looks of the iron sky,  
though, that wouldn't  
last long.

Now that he could see  
them in daylight,  
Banks remembered  
the rows of limestone  
cottages with their  
flagstone roofs, facing  
one another across  
the river, the  
waterside benches  
and the stone bridge

where the old men in flat caps stood talking, passing the time.

Three of them were out there today, no doubt talking about the recent excitement, and Banks wouldn't have been at all surprised if they were the same old men who had stood there almost twenty-five years ago, when he had worked on his first case in

Swainshead. Two major incidents in twenty-five years wasn't bad going for such a small village.

He ejected David Gilmour's *Rattle that Lock* and parked outside the

whitewashed facade of the White Rose, founded in 1615, or so the sign proclaimed. Further

up the road stood the empty Collier house, a Victorian pile of stone cluttered with porticos, oriels and turrets, with most of its windows boarded up. Banks glanced across the river. The Greenock Guest House, which had played a pivotal role in the first Swainshead case, was now a pottery centre and gift shop.

Banks wondered what had happened to Sam and Katie Greenock, the former proprietors. Katie had been a natural beauty, he remembered, and an innocent, but a woman confused by her attractiveness and uneasy mix of sexuality and innocence, like Hardy's Tess. She had been in her twenties back then, so

she would be fifty or more by now. He wondered where she was, what she was doing with her life. Was she still married to Sam? Or was she dead, like Emily and Katie Shea, her namesake at the wedding?

The pub was busy for a Tuesday lunchtime. Most of the customers were locals, Banks

guessed by their easy manner and casual clothing, but there was a smattering of reporters, no doubt grubbing for the nitty-gritty on Martin Edgeworth. Adrian Moss had said that Edgeworth was their subject now, and Banks thought he was probably right. No doubt they were hoping to stumble across someone who

had seen him pull the wings off a fly when he was five.

Banks was on his way to the Edgeworth house to meet up with Annie. The CSIs and search teams were still working there, packing anything that might be possible evidence of Edgeworth's actions or motives into boxes. He might be dead, but



the reverberations of his deed lingered on, as Banks had told Adrian Moss, and if anything could be learned from his actions to prevent such a thing happening in the future, it needed to be discovered. Profilers such as Jenny Fuller, for example, were always interested in as much data as they could get on forms of

deviant behaviour in order to build up more accurate and comprehensive profiles. Jenny hadn't had much to do this time before they found their man, but she might still be able to learn something useful from the case. Banks had phoned her on his way, and she had agreed to have dinner with him that evening. He

couldn't deny, even to himself, that he was still attracted to her after all these years, but he also knew he could hardly forge ahead on the assumption that she felt the same way.

First, though, as the sense of urgency had disappeared with Edgeworth's suicide, Banks realised he hadn't eaten much

over the past couple of days, so he decided to eat a pub lunch while he had a casual word with the landlord. The people in the village who had known Edgeworth – including friends, neighbours, shopkeepers and publicans – would all be officially interviewed over the next few days, but Banks saw no reason

not to try to get a general picture of the killer, and what better means than through the landlord of his local pub?

The White Rose had clearly undergone a face lift since Banks had last been there. The dark wood panelling was still on the walls, but above it, the pale blue paint was much brighter

and fresher than the previous dun colour. Perhaps the years of accumulated tar and nicotine from cigarette smoke had been scraped off the walls and ceiling, too, since the pub smoking ban. The lounge even smelled of air freshener. A number of framed photographs of local attractions hung on the walls: waterfalls,

the hanging valley  
nearby, a panoramic  
view of the village, the  
mouth of a cavern.  
The tables were more  
modern and less  
wobbly than before,  
square with wooden  
legs rather than the  
old cast-iron type.  
There was a fire  
burning in the hearth,  
and along with the  
Christmas lights and  
decorations, it gave

the place a warm,  
cosy atmosphere.

The man behind the  
bar was a lot younger  
than old Freddie  
Metcalf, who used to  
run the pub, though  
he had old Freddie's  
craggy brow. It turned  
out his name was  
Ollie Metcalf,  
Freddie's nephew. He  
was a broad-  
shouldered lad with a  
bristly beard and



weathered  
outdoorsman's face,  
the type who would  
make a good second-  
row forward, and  
probably even had, as  
his nose seemed to  
have been broken  
more than once.  
Banks introduced  
himself, ordered a pint  
of Sneck Lifter and  
glanced over the  
menu, which was  
more gastronomically  
adventurous than its

counterpart from  
twenty-five years ago.  
Not that he fancied  
anything adventurous  
right now. In the end,  
he went for a simple  
steak and mushroom  
pie and chips,  
introduced himself  
and indicated to Ollie  
Metcalf that he  
would prefer to eat at  
the far end of the bar,  
away from the  
reporters, and would  
appreciate a quiet

word when his food arrived. Metcalfe nodded and set off about his business.

Banks didn't recognise any of the reporters, though he prided himself on guessing who they were, if not exactly what newspapers they represented. It used to be a lot easier to tell them apart, but these days it wasn't

even easy to find  
much difference  
between the  
newspapers  
themselves. He got a  
few suspicious  
glances, noticed  
several whispered  
exchanges, and  
assumed that he had  
been recognised, but  
nobody approached  
him. Now they had a  
bigger story, they  
were far less  
interested in any

police investigation, unless it related to the now very public row between the firearms cadre and emergency services.

Banks had managed no more than a couple of pulls on his beer when his pie arrived, delivered by Metcalfe himself, who had left his young helper to handle the bar. The pastry was a

puffy, crusty hat  
plonked on top of the  
stewed beef and  
mushrooms, but it  
would do. Anything  
would do at the  
moment. The chips  
were crispy and hot.

Metcalfe leaned on  
the bar opposite him.  
One or two reporters  
eyed them enviously  
– Banks could almost  
see their ears

twitching – but  
nobody made a

move to get any  
closer. If they knew  
Banks, they also  
knew his reputation.

‘What can I help you  
with, Mr Banks?’  
Metcalf asked.

‘Nothing specific,’ said  
Banks. ‘I’m just after a  
spot of lunch and a  
nice chat.’

Case like this plays  
havoc with your meal  
times.'

'I'll bet it does.' He  
jerked his head. 'Up  
the road with that lot  
last night, were you?'

'Until about four.'

'I still can't believe it,'  
said Ollie. 'Nobody  
around here can.'

'Popular bloke, Mr  
Edgeworth?'



‘Very.’

‘Isn’t that always the case with these mass murderers and serial killers?’

Banks said. ‘Butter wouldn’t melt in his mouth, they say. Quiet as a mouse.’

‘I wouldn’t know about that. I’ve never met anyone who did such a thing before. Are

you sure you've not  
got it wrong?'

'Everything adds up  
so far.'

'But *why*? Why would  
a man like Martin  
Edgeworth do  
something like that?'

'What sort of a man  
was he?'

'A decent one. Good  
sense of humour, took  
a keen interest in

local events,  
clubbable, went to  
meetings and so on.  
He liked to cook. Said  
if he hadn't been a  
dentist he'd have  
trained as a chef.  
Keen amateur  
photographer, too.' He  
pointed to a picture of  
a landscape. 'And  
very good. He took  
that one over there.  
Even paid to have it  
enlarged and framed  
specially for our wall.'

Banks glanced at the photo. 'You mentioned clubs. What clubs?'

'Well, the shooting club, for a start. Swainsdale Rifle and Pistol. But I suppose you know all about that.'

Banks was intending to visit the club after stopping in at the Edgeworth house. 'Was he any good?'

‘I think he must have been. He went in for competitions, won awards and so forth. They did a lot of shooting on the army range about five miles up the road, too. Proper supervision there, see, so you can use the real McCoy. Or so he said.’

‘What about grouse and the like?’

‘Occasionally. But he got rid of his shotgun a while back.’

‘Why?’

‘Lost interest in shooting defenceless little birds, I should imagine.’

‘What did he do with it?’

‘I’ve no idea. Whatever it is people do with used

shotguns. Sold it, I suppose, or handed it in to some government agency.'

'Do you know if he had any strong political leanings or connections?'

Metcalfe laughed. 'If you'd known Martin, you wouldn't have got him

started on politicians.  
Hated the lot of them.  
Thought they were  
only in it to line their  
own pockets.'

'So he had strong  
views?'

'I didn't mean to  
suggest there was  
anything unnatural  
about his ideas. It was  
just pub banter,  
blethering, like. A joke  
or two. He just didn't



care much for  
politicians, that's all.'

'How long had Mr  
Edgeworth lived up at  
the house?'

Metcalfe scratched  
his head. 'Twenty  
years or more. He  
was here when I took  
on this place from my  
uncle, and that's  
seventeen years  
back.'

‘Was he always a regular here?’

‘Aye, certainly all the years I’ve been here. Dropped by most days for a jar or two. Not a big drinker, mind you. Just the odd pint or two now and then.’

‘Beer man?’

‘Occasional splash of single malt. Special

occasions.'

'Was he popular?'

'Aye, I'd say that he was. Yes. Very.'

'Any particular close friends, drinking companions?'

'Geoff McLaren, manager of that gun club he belonged to. Nice bloke.'

George and Margie, a couple of friends of his from the club. Sometimes his old partner came in with him. Jonathan Martell.'

'Did Mr Martell come here often?'

'Now and then. He's retired now, too. Lives out Sedburgh way.'

‘Did Mr Edgeworth bring any new friends in here during the past month or so, anyone you hadn’t seen before?’

‘Once in a while, aye. I mean, we didn’t live in each other’s pockets. He knew plenty of people, and I was quite happy if he wanted to meet any of them in here for a

drink and a bite to eat.'

'So he sometimes came in with people you didn't know?'

'Now and then. Yes.'

'Singly or in groups?'

'Both. I mean, but not with groups that often, not unless the family was around, like.'

‘Did he ever strike up conversations with strangers?’

Metcalfe considered the question.

‘Sometimes,’ he answered. ‘Martin was sociable enough. He’d get chatting with other customers from time to time.

Especially the ramblers. Martin liked walking, himself, and

he knew a lot about local history, so if a customer had a question I'd usually point them in his direction.'

'Anyone in particular?'

'Not as far as I recollect. Certainly not in the past few months.'

'Anyone stand out for any reason at all



shortly before the  
shootings? Say  
November, early  
December?’

‘We get a lot of people  
in, believe it or not.  
And that’s a busy  
time. I’m sorry, but I  
can’t remember  
anyone in particular.  
I’m not saying he  
didn’t come in with  
anyone just that no  
one stands out in my  
memory. Sorry.’

‘Who else did he come with regularly?’

‘Nobody special. I mean, most of my regulars knew him. I’m not saying he was a saint, but ask any one of them, and I don’t think you’ll hear a bad word.’

‘We’ll get around to that eventually,’ said Banks. ‘Had he been behaving any

differently lately, say  
this past month or  
so?’

‘Not at all. Same as  
normal.’

‘When did you last  
see him?’

‘Friday night.’

That was the day  
before the murders.  
‘And he behaved as  
normal?’

‘Aye.’

‘Was he with anyone?’

‘No. He came in by himself and sat by the fire with Les and Barry most of the time he was here. They’re regulars, like Martin. They’ll be gutted.’

Banks made a note of the names. ‘Did he say anything odd at

all, anything that struck you as out of character or mysterious?’

‘No. Like I said, he was the same as ever. Said good evening to me and the other regulars, ordered his pint and we chatted for a bit. It wasn’t a busy night, as I remember. He didn’t stay long after his drink with Les and

Barry, though. Only had the two pints. Something on telly he wanted to see.'

'What did he talk to you about?'

'Oh, this and that. The weather. Christmas, how commercial it is these days.

What everyone's holiday plans were.'

'What were his?'

'He was going to stop with his son and daughter-in-law in Derby. They've got a couple of wee ones. See, when Martin and Constance split, like, I know people say they don't take sides and all, but they do. Kids especially. The daughter, Marie, were always much closer to her mother. Not that she didn't come and see Martin now and

then, of course, but  
when it comes to  
summat like  
Christmas, well, she's  
with her mother, isn't  
she? And she's  
divorced, like.

Lives in Norwich, too,  
which is a bit of a  
bugger to get to and  
from.'

Banks thought about  
his own Christmas



arrangements. It was coming up fast.

He didn't think he would get to see either of his children this year, as it was his ex-wife Sandra's turn to have Tracy down in London, and Brian was still in LA

with his band, the Blue Lamps. 'But his son stuck with him?'

'Aye, I suppose so.  
Nice lad. Colin, his  
name is. He'll be  
bloody heartbroken.  
And his wife Mandy.  
Pretty lass. Thought  
the world of Martin.

They always used to  
drop in here for a pint  
and a pub lunch  
whenever they were  
up visiting.'

Officers in Derby,  
Norwich and Carlisle

had called on the various members of Edgeworth's family early that morning, so they wouldn't have to read about what happened to him first in the papers, or see it on TV. According to their brief reports, there had been the predictable outbursts of tears and disbelief, and the upshot was that both his children said they'd be up in

Eastvale to sort things out as soon as possible. His ex-wife in Carlisle had been stunned by the news, too, but she hadn't mentioned making the journey. By now, Banks calculated, the media would be camping out in their gardens and their telephones would be ringing off the hook.

‘Have you any idea what his movements were on Saturday morning?’

‘What they usually were, I suppose,’ said Metcalfe.

‘What was that?’

‘He usually went for a long walk along the tops on a Saturday and a Sunday morning, come rain or

shine. It's a bit of a bloody hike to get up there from the back of his house, like, but he did it. You certainly wouldn't catch me trying it.

But Martin kept himself fit. And he said the view's magnificent. You can see Pen-y-Ghent on a good day.'

‘Any breakins, or anything unusual happen in the village recently?’ Banks asked. ‘Crimes of any sort, unexplained events?’

‘Nay, wouldn’t you be the first one to know about something like that?’

‘Only if it was reported. There’s plenty goes on never

reaches our ears. You must know that.'

'Aye, well, not that I can think of.' Metcalfe paused. 'Why are you asking me all these questions? I mean, Martin's dead. What does it matter?'

'We have to cover every angle, Ollie.'

'Well I can't think of anything along those



lines. And he wasn't a nutter, if that's what you're saying.'

'That's not what I'm saying. We need to understand him, that's all. Did you ever see him get drunk, get involved in any trouble, any arguments?' Banks asked.

'Not in here. Like I said, Martin were no

saint, and he did have a bit of a short temper, but I never saw him drink to excess. Well . . . maybe once.'

'Trouble?'

'Martin? No. Except . . .'  
' He rubbed his beard.

'Yes?'

'Remember, I just mentioned that wife of

his? Ex-wife.  
Constance. About two  
or three years ago, it  
were now, the split.'

'Not long after he  
retired, then?'

'Aye. Not long at all. It  
hardly seems to  
matter now, does it? I  
mean now that he's  
dead.' He gestured  
towards the group  
Banks thought were  
reporters. 'It's just for

them vultures to pick his bones clean now, isn't it?

Banks glanced over. 'I suppose they'll do their jobs,' he said. Then he leaned forwards slightly. 'I'll give you a word of warning for when you're dealing with the press, Mr Metcalfe. Be careful what you say. Be very careful. They're

experts at twisting the simplest thing. You could tell them you make meat pies and you'll come out sounding like Sweeney Todd. Know what I mean?'

Metcalfe laughed.  
'Thanks, but I've dealt with their like before. Used to be in public relations for Newcastle United. You know footballers.'

‘Well, you’ll understand, then. We have to employ a bloke specially to deal with them. Media relations officer, he’s called. I ask you. Course, we have to try and stay on their good side. It galls me to say it, but they *can* be useful.’

‘That’s the problem. And don’t they know it?’

Banks drank some beer and held up his glass to inspect it.  
'You keep a good pint, Ollie, I'll say that for you.'

'Thanks. But what use is a pub but for fine company and a decent pint of ale?'

'If only all landlords thought that. Now, about this bit of trouble . . .'

‘It were summat and nowt.’

‘Usually is, in my experience. What happened?’

‘Martin was in here one evening enjoying his pint, like, keeping himself to himself, when this bloke Norman Lavallo came in.’

‘Was he a regular?’



‘No. I’d only seen him a couple of times before. And I didn’t like him much.

Too smarmy by half, too full of himself.’

‘How long ago was all this?’

‘About two years.’

‘So what happened?’

‘Well, we all knew what was going on,

like, that this Lavallo bloke was having it off with Connie, Martin's wife. She were a bit flighty, like, but a nice enough lass, or so I thought. I suppose life with Martin was just too quiet and boring for her, especially after he stopped working and spent more time at home.

Must've cramped her style. She were a

good ten years  
younger than him.

Anyway, she'd left him  
by then and was living  
down the dale a mile  
or two with

a friend. This Lavallo  
bloke was panting  
after her. Well, Martin  
was none too pleased  
to see him. He'd been  
down in the dumps of  
late, a bit depressed,  
like, and who could

blame him, so he makes some comment like, “What are you doing here? Can’t you just leave me in peace?” or something innocuous like that.

Lavalle replies, “What’s it got to do with you? I’ll drink where I want.” At which point I’m about to come in and say not here you bloody

well won't, but Martin  
shoves him, and  
Lavalley takes a swing  
at him. Misses by a  
mile. Then Martin  
takes his shot.  
Connects, too. Lavalley  
staggers back a bit,  
with a bloody nose,  
but by then I'm round  
the bar like a shot,  
holding them apart. I  
get Lavalley out and  
get Martin sat down  
again with his drink.  
He's a bit upset, so I

leave him to it. He knocked back a bit more than usual that night, that's all.'

'Did he get angry when he was drinking?'

'No, not at all. Only earlier. Lavalley was long gone by then. Martin usually got a bit morose when he drank too much, if

truth be told. Quiet.  
Subdued.'

'Did he say anything.'

'When I asked him later if he was all right, like, he just says summat like, "If Connie runs off with that slimy bastard, I swear I'll top myself." '

Metcalfe gave a nervous laugh. 'It wasn't like he really meant it or anything, it

were just the way he  
felt at the time. Sort of  
thing we all say  
sometimes.'

'So you didn't believe  
he meant it?'

'Certainly not.'

'But he did threaten to  
commit suicide if his  
wife left him?'

'That's the long and  
the short of it. But it  
were just sort of



something you say,  
like, when you're  
upset. And he didn't.  
Top himself, that is.'

Not two years ago, he  
didn't, Banks thought.  
'He didn't threaten to  
harm Lavallo or  
Constance?'

'Never anything like  
that.'

'Any further  
incidents?'

'None. That's just what I can't understand, Mr Banks. Martin Edgeworth just wasn't a violent man. Fair enough, he took a pop at the bloke who was bonking his wife, but what man wouldn't? And then he goes and does something like this out of the blue. I can't fathom it.' He scratched his head.

‘What happened to Lavalley?’

Metcalf snorted. ‘He and Connie got married. Live out Carlisle way now.’

Banks drained his pint. He had eaten what he wanted of the pie and chips a while ago. ‘Something caused Martin Edgeworth to snap,’ he said. ‘We don’t

know what it was, but that's what I'm after finding out. Maybe some people think it doesn't matter now that he's dead, but let's not forget, he killed five people and ruined a lot of other lives. I like to close my books, Ollie, and I like

them to be properly balanced when I do.'

Banks picked up Annie at the Edgeworth house, where nothing new had come to light, and drove to the Upper Swainsdale District Rifle and Pistol Club, which was three miles up the road, then another half mile along a gravel drive.

The clubhouse was an old stone structure, much like a rambling

country pub, and inside, beyond the small deserted reception area with its racks of brochures about shooting safely, was a bar. There were several wooden tables with blue-and-white checked tablecloths, only three of them occupied. The diners turned to see who had come in, then, not recognising Banks and Annie,

went back to their conversations and their meals. The walls were bare, rough stone, and there were a couple of glass-fronted cabinets along one side filled with trophies and photographs of men holding guns. There were, however, no real guns anywhere in sight, for which Banks was grateful. A young man in a white jacket

stood drying glasses behind the bar. Banks was surprised to find a fully stocked bar at a shooting club, but he realised there was no law against it.

‘Can I help you?’ said the young man, whose name badge identified him as Roger. ‘Are you members? I haven’t seen you here before.’



The bar's for  
members only.'

Banks and Annie  
flashed their warrant  
cards.

'Oh. I suppose it's  
about Martin, isn't it?'

'Boss around?' Banks  
asked.

'Mr McLaren isn't in  
today.' Roger  
gestured towards the  
grey weather outside.

‘Not much point being open on a day like this, but some of the regulars like to come in for a bite and a natter, so we usually open for lunch.’ He checked his watch. ‘We’ll be closing up for the day in half an hour.’

‘Maybe we can have a quick chat with you?’ Banks suggested, sitting on

one of the high bar stools. Annie sat next to him.

‘I can’t tell you much,’ Roger said. ‘It’s George and Margie over there you want.’ He pointed to a man and woman sitting at one of the tables nearer to the door. ‘George and Margie Sykes. They were close to Martin.’

Banks glanced over. The man had an almost full pint in front of him, enough to last him a while yet. Banks guessed that his wife's drink, with a piece of lime floating in it, was a gin and tonic. 'We'll talk to them in a minute,' he said. 'How long had Martin Edgeworth been a member here?'

'Dunno,' said Roger.  
'Since well before my  
time. Ten years, say.  
Mr McLaren will be  
able to tell you.'

'You can't show us the  
membership records  
yourself?'

Roger shook his  
head. 'Mr McLaren  
always keeps the club  
office locked

when he's not here,  
and I don't have a  
key.'

'OK,' said Banks.  
'We'll deal with him  
later. Any trouble  
recently?'

'Trouble?'

'Yes. You know,  
disagreements,  
arguments, scenes,  
fights, shootouts, that  
sort of thing.'

‘Good lord, no. Never. Mr McLaren wouldn’t stand for anything of that sort.

You’d be out on your arse.’

‘When did you last see Mr Edgeworth?’ Annie asked.

‘Last week. Early on. Tuesday, I think.’

‘Anything unusual about his behaviour?’

Was he upset,  
depressed, angry,  
anything like that?’

‘No. Just normal.’

‘And that was?’

‘Cheerful, polite,  
generous with his  
tips.’

‘Did you ever hear  
him mention the  
Tindall–Kemp  
wedding?’ Banks cut  
in.



'No, never. Why would he?'

'I don't know. That's why I'm asking you. Did he ever mention Benjamin or Charles Kemp, or Laura Tindall?'

'No.'

'Were any of them members? Have they ever been here?'

‘Not that I know of.  
And if they’d been in  
the last four years, I’d  
remember.’

Banks thanked him  
and slid off his stool.  
He turned to Annie.  
‘Let’s go talk to  
George and Margie.’

They reached the  
table and introduced  
themselves. George  
and Margie made  
room while Banks

pulled up a couple more chairs. 'Thought you were damned reporters at first,' said George apologetically. 'Was just about to give you a piece of my mind.' He had a shiny head, striped by a few dark hairs, and a handlebar moustache the likes of which Banks hadn't seen outside of an old TV

programme about the RAF. Margie had a moustache, too, but it was far less well developed. She also had bottle-blond hair starched into place like Margaret Thatcher's.

'Been around already, have they?' Banks asked.

'First thing,' said George. 'I wouldn't

mind, but it's the usual rot about should there be shooting clubs at all. What on earth can we get out of it? Isn't it dangerous? Very aggressive some of them are.'

'Well,' said Banks.  
'They're men and women of great moral character.'

George guffawed. '  
"Great moral

character". I like that.  
What can we do for  
you?'

Banks sat back and  
let Annie do some of  
the talking. 'I  
understand,

according to Roger  
over there, that you  
were good friends of  
Martin Edgeworth?'

'Known him for years,'  
said George. 'Haven't

we, Margie?’

‘Years,’ said Margie.  
‘George and I are  
absolutely devastated  
about what’s  
happened. Just  
devastated.’ There  
was the hint of a slur  
in her voice, and  
Banks guessed it  
wasn’t her first G&T.

‘I take it all this has  
been a great surprise,  
then?’ Annie went on.

‘You can say that again, love. Completely.’

‘So neither of you would have considered Martin Edgeworth to be capable of something like this?’

‘Never in a million years,’ said Margie. ‘He was a true gentleman, was Martin.’



‘A true gentleman,’  
her husband echoed.  
‘Martin Edgeworth  
was one of the  
gentlest souls you  
could ever hope to  
meet. Wouldn’t harm  
a fly. Mind you . . .’

‘What?’ Annie asked.

‘He didn’t like to lose.  
Did he, Margie?’

‘No, he didn’t like that  
at all.’

‘What do you mean?’

‘You know, competitions and the like. Got all huffy if he lost.’

‘Why all the interest in guns and shooting?’  
Annie asked.

‘Why?’ said George, a suspicious gleam in his eye. ‘You’re not one of these anti-firearms lot, are you?’

‘Not at all,’ said Annie.  
‘Just wondering what  
the appeal is.’

‘It’s a hobby, that’s all.  
Gets you out of the  
house. And I suppose  
it’s a sport, too. At  
least it’s competitive.  
In the Olympics, you  
know. We have  
regular competitions.  
Won a few trophies,  
as you can see. As far  
as I’m concerned,  
shooting’s no more

about hurting anyone,  
or anything, than  
darts or cricket.

You've got to be  
careful around guns,  
no doubt about that,  
but if you follow a few  
simple rules, you're  
safe as houses.

Martin just enjoyed  
the sport, getting out  
and meeting people.  
That's all there is to it.'

‘Do you remember when he split up with his wife?’ Annie asked.

George’s expression darkened. ‘Connie, that little minx. Oh, yes. We remember, all right.’

‘He was upset about that, right?’

‘Naturally.’

‘Did he ever express any desire for revenge, to hurt her or the man she ran off with?’

‘Not to me he didn’t. Besides, that was over two years ago, and he didn’t go anywhere near Connie again.’

‘Was he angry about the idea of marriage?’ Annie asked. ‘Seeing

as it had gone so wrong for him.'

'He never said as much. And as far as I can tell, he didn't know those people at the wedding from Adam, either, if that's what you're hinting at.'

'Why did he shoot them, then?' Banks asked.

George glanced back and forth from Annie to Banks and gripped his wife's hand. 'I've no idea,' he said in a quiet, trembling voice. 'He was my friend. I don't understand any of what's happened. To tell you the truth, I'm not even convinced that he did it.'

'Oh, why's that?'



‘Just not in his nature.’

‘But we know he had a short temper, and you said yourself he was a bad loser,’ said Annie.

‘Don’t try to twist my words,’ George said. ‘I’m not saying he was perfect.’

There’s plenty of people like that, and

they don't go around  
killing strangers.'

'There was nothing on  
his mind, nothing  
erratic in his  
behaviour lately?'

Annie asked.

'No,' said Margie. 'We  
saw him just last  
week, and he was the  
same as normal.'

'When was this?'

'Tuesday.'

'What did you talk about?'

'Nothing much. Just an upcoming competition, the prices in the new gun catalogue, membership fees going up. Nothing important. Club gossip.'

‘Was that the last time either of you saw him?’

‘Yes,’ said George.

‘Do you shoot, Mrs Sykes?’ Annie asked.

‘Me? Good lord, no,’ said Margie. ‘I just come along for the company. It’s a bit empty here today, but it’s usually more lively. Quite a few of the

wives come along,  
and we have some  
fine female shooters  
as members. But me?  
I don't think I could hit  
a barn door at ten  
paces.'

'It's probably a good  
thing you don't shoot,  
then,' said Annie with  
a smile.

'Yes.'

‘Was Martin any good?’ she asked George.

‘He was. Yes. Beat me nearly every time.’

‘Do you know where or when he became interested in shooting? He didn’t have any military training or background, did he?’

‘Martin? Military?  
Heavens, no. Though  
he did go up to their  
range now and then.  
It’s the only place you  
can fire the full-bore  
rifles, you see. Under  
strict

military supervision, of  
course. Quite a few of  
our members enjoy  
the hospitality there  
from time to time.’

‘Did you go, too?’

‘Me? No. I’m happy enough with small-bore.’

‘It was a small-bore gun Mr Edgeworth used at St Mary’s.’

‘Well, it would have to be, wouldn’t it, unless he’d acquired something else illegally?’ George leaned forwards. ‘Now listen here, young lady, I respect that



you have a serious job to do and all.' He glanced at Banks.

'Both of you. But if you're expecting me to imagine my friend, my best friend, getting up one day, heading out with his gun and shooting into a crowd of people from the top of a hill, then driving back home and blowing his own head off, then you're in for a disappointment.

Because I can't. I  
can't relate to it. Don't  
you see. I just can't . .

. ' There were tears in  
his eyes.

Margie gripped his  
hand more tightly and  
patted it. 'Now, now,  
George,' she said  
gently. 'There, there.'

'I'm sorry if it's hard to  
take in,' Annie said,  
'but we're just trying

to understand why it happened ourselves.'

'I know. And I'm telling you I can't help you. I don't know. I don't even believe it. Martin was just an ordinary bloke. Sure, he had a bit of a temper. Yes, he didn't like to lose. I think he might have cheated on his income tax, too, if truth be told. But none of that makes him a

killer. He was neither so quiet and polite you might be worried what was really going through his mind, or loud and violent and abusive. He was just Martin. And don't give me any of that guff the reporters tried on, like your neighbours not being what they seem. With Martin, what you saw was what you got, and it was *him*.'

‘We’re not just making it up, you know,’ said Banks. ‘There’s often more to people than we think. We do have evidence that Martin Edgeworth shot those people, Mr Sykes. And himself.’

‘I’m sure you do. All I’m saying is that I can’t believe it. No more than you would if I told you . . .’ He paused, then pointed

at Annie. 'If I told you that *she* had done it.'

'So what do you think happened?' Banks asked.

'I don't know. All I know is it can't have been Martin Edgeworth. It must have been someone else.'

Banks pulled up outside Jenny's front

gate at seven o'clock  
that evening and  
tooted his horn. The  
rain was coming down  
in buckets again. He  
thought perhaps he  
should dash to the  
door and hold his  
umbrella for her – it  
would be very gallant  
– but the door opened  
almost immediately,  
and out she came  
with an

umbrella of her own.  
A large, striped one.

‘Sometimes I wish I’d stayed in Sydney,’ she complained as she slid into the passenger seat. ‘Not that it never rains there. Mm, nice car. When did you get this? And how did you afford it? Been taking backhanders from drug dealers?’



'My, my,' said Banks, 'we do have a lot to catch up on, don't we? And I believe you've developed an accent.' He turned down the volume a notch on Van Morrison's 'Warm Love' and set off. Though not quite a match for the opulence and grandeur of the Heights, the Green was a pleasant and

relatively wealthy enclave of Eastvale just south-east of the River Swain, where it curved through the town, opposite the terraced gardens and falls. Those fortunate enough to live in one of the detached Georgian houses by the water had a magnificent view of the castle towering above them on the opposite bank.

Jenny now lived only a street away from the house she had sold when she left Eastvale. Her semi overlooked the green itself, a swathe of parkland, dotted with poplars and plane trees, wooden benches, marked pathways and notices about cleaning up after your dog. Though the area attracted its fair share

of tourists in season, especially with a famous ice-cream shop and a bakery nearby, it was far enough from the town centre to be quiet for the most part of the year.

Professionals and some of the better-off academics lived around there, along with a fair number of retired couples and

even a few successful artists and writers. It wasn't the sort of area that would suit Ray, though, Banks thought. Far too bourgeois for him, and perhaps too claustrophobic.

Luigi's wasn't far, just over the bridge and up the road past the formal gardens to Castle Hill, but on a night like this, it

wasn't a walk anyone would care to make. The rain bounced in puddles on the road and pavement and ran like rills down the gutters, warping the reflections of the street lamps and the occasional green or red neon shop sign. Banks could hardly hear Van Morrison for the noise it made.

Even though it was a wet Tuesday evening, it wasn't long until Christmas, the shops were open late, and Banks was lucky to find a parking spot almost right outside the small restaurant. They shared Jenny's umbrella briefly on the way in and Banks smelled her familiar scent. He could swear it was the same she used all those years

ago, and he still couldn't put a name to it. Whatever it was, it smelled fresh and natural as a perfume carried on a light summer breeze, and it reminded him of childhood trips to Beales with his mother. It seemed they always had to walk through the perfume and make-up department to get to



the toys or children's clothing.

The maître d' fussed over them, took their wet things and led them to a corner table for two beneath a romantic oil painting of Venetian canals in a

scratched old gilt frame. The white tablecloth was spotless, with two red

candles at its centre casting shadows on the walls. It was still early, and there were only six other diners, one table of four and another of two, but it was a small and very popular restaurant, and it would soon fill up. The ambience was dim and muted, and Banks thought he could hear Elvis Presley singing 'Santa

Lucia' in the  
background.

'Have you caught up  
on your sleep yet?'  
Banks asked.

'I don't think so. I  
don't seem to be  
sleeping regular  
hours, or for very long  
periods.'

'I imagine it takes a  
while.'

The menus were printed in italics. Jenny pulled her tortoiseshell reading glasses from her voluminous handbag, and Banks put on his own Specsavers specials. They both laughed and studied the menus in silence. The waiter came and asked about drinks, and after consulting with Jenny, Banks ordered a bottle of

Amarone. Pushing the boat out, perhaps, but then, he reminded himself, it was a special occasion: dinner with a lovely woman he hadn't seen in over twenty years.

Jenny had been a friend, not a lover like Emily, but they had come close, and there was no doubt about their mutual attraction.

Perhaps if he hadn't been married, things would have turned out differently. As the waiter poured the wine, Banks looked across the table at Jenny in the candlelight and thought how lovely she still was. As she studied the menu, she gently bit the end of her tongue between her front teeth. The candlelight was

reflected in her eyes.  
She had a silk scarf  
around her neck and  
was wearing a V-neck  
rust-coloured top,  
which showed just  
enough cleavage. Her  
arms were bare, and  
she had silver  
bangles around her  
left wrist that moved  
and jingled as she  
turned the pages, and  
a tiny watch with a  
loose chain on her  
right. He had

forgotten that Jenny  
was left-handed.

‘What?’ she said,  
flashing him a smile.

‘I didn’t say anything,’  
muttered Banks,  
flustered at being  
caught staring. He  
reminded himself that  
this was a working  
dinner, though he  
didn’t think he could  
sneak the expense of



the Amarone past AC  
Gervaise's eagle eye.

'My mistake. So what  
do you fancy?'

Banks buried his head  
in the menu again. 'I  
thought I might start  
with a small Caesar  
salad and then  
perhaps the lobster  
ravioli or spaghetti  
and meatballs.

You?'

Jenny closed her menu. 'I'll have the same.'

'Are you certain?'

'Of course. I always find it easiest to do that when I'm out with somebody.'

'What if you absolutely hate what he orders?'

'Then I get a little more creative. But it's

not always a “he”.  
Honestly, Alan,  
spaghetti and  
meatballs sounds  
fine, and I’m sure it  
will go with the wine a  
lot better than lobster  
ravioli, delightful as  
that sounds.’

Banks closed his  
menu. ‘Done, then.’  
They gave the waiter  
their orders and  
returned to the wine.  
‘Am I losing my mind,

or didn't you used to be a redhead?'

Jenny laughed. 'Can't a girl change her mind? We women are arch-deceivers when it comes to things like hair colour. It was henna,' she said. 'Couldn't you tell?'

Banks had believed the red hair to be genuine. 'I never got

close enough to find out,' he said.

Jenny arched her eyebrows. 'And whose fault was that?' She touched her head. 'This is my natural colour. I grew into it. You were going to tell me about the Porsche.'

'I'm afraid it's not a happy story. That's why I went for a

diversion when you first mentioned it. It used to be my brother's.' Banks explained about Roy's murder and the new-found wealth for his parents that resulted from it, along with the Porsche for him.

'That is sad,' said Jenny when he'd finished. 'But you solved the case, found the killer?'

‘Oh, yes. That’s not always . . . I mean, it doesn’t always help. You know.

Whatever’s lost, you can’t quite make up for that.’

‘True,’ said Jenny.  
‘You know, I’ve often thought of this moment, or one like this, over the years. Us, meeting again. Wondering what it

would be like. I was so nervous. Would it be awkward? Would we have moved so far apart we had no common ground? Other than murder, that is. Would there just be nothing at all, like two strangers?’

‘And?’

Jenny laughed. ‘In some ways it’s like I’ve never been away.



I know it's a bit of a paradox, that so much has changed, that we have both changed, but I honestly don't feel any different in your company than I used to do.'

Banks leaned back in his chair. 'Comfortable like an old pair of slippers, eh?'

But you're right that so much has

happened. Sandra left me, for a start.'

'Oh, I know, but I'm not talking about that. Not the details. Just the essence.'

We have to be something more than the accumulation of things that happen to do us, don't you think?'

Banks worked on that  
one as he tasted  
some more Amarone.  
As he looked into her  
eyes again, he  
realised that what he  
thought had been  
sadness the other day  
was a depth of  
experience, an air of  
having *lived*, with all  
the suffering, joy,

hope, loss, dreams,  
grief and occasional  
despair that living

involved. Their salads arrived and they put their wine aside. The waiter quietly topped up their glasses.

Banks had heard the door open a few times and he looked around to see that the place was now almost full.

‘I hate it when they do that,’ Jenny said. ‘I get so pissed. I can’t tell how much I’ve had to drink.’

‘You’d rather count your glasses, mark your bottle?’

‘Well, no. That’s a bit sort of *anal*, I suppose.’

Banks laughed. ‘At these prices, I don’t think getting pissed is an option.’

‘Then I won’t worry about it again.’

‘So what happened?  
In Australia. Why did  
you come back?’

‘Just couldn’t stay  
away, I suppose. The  
English weather, the  
healthy food, the  
politics. You. And then  
the job offer.’

‘Seriously.’

‘I got divorced.’

‘I’m sorry to hear it.’

‘Don’t be. Anyway, the job offer was important. I’m not independently wealthy. But the marriage? The divorce wasn’t nice. I don’t suppose it ever is, is it?’

‘No,’ said Banks.  
‘Mine certainly wasn’t. After all those years, you think you know somebody, then . . . they’re strangers.’

‘Yes . . . Well, I’m sure you’ve heard about Australian men. All they’re interested in is beer, Aussie rules football and dwarf-tossing.’ She shook her head. ‘No. That’s not fair. Henry was a dear fellow, a true thinker and a very creative type. Sensitive. Things just didn’t work out for us, that’s all. I don’t know why. Listen to me, the



psychologist who  
can't even understand  
her own psychology.'

'Physician, heal  
thyself?'

'Something like that.  
Mutually incompatible,  
let's say. That covers  
a multitude of sins.  
Best leave it at that.'

'There's no possibility  
of a reconciliation?'

'No. You?'

‘Lord, no,’ said Banks.  
‘It’s been years now.  
Sandra’s happily  
married to another  
man. They’re living in  
London. They have a  
child together.’

‘Do you ever see one  
another?’

‘No. Not for years. I’ve  
lost track. I see the  
kids often enough,  
though. Brian.

Tracy.'

'The Blue Lamps are pretty big down under, you know. You must be a proud father.'

'Don't tell him that, but yes, I am. And Tracy's had her ups and down, but she's turned out all right, too. Seems to have settled down. She's living in Newcastle

now, working and  
studying at the uni.'

'You're lucky then.'

'I suppose I am.  
Kids?'

'No. It was a matter of  
choice on both our  
parts, so it's OK. I  
never thought of  
myself as the  
maternal type.  
Lovers?'

‘One or two,’ said  
Banks. ‘You?’

‘Three or four.’  
Jenny’s expression  
was inscrutable.

The waiter delivered  
their main course and  
emptied the last of the  
wine into their  
glasses.

‘You never wrote,’  
said Banks, when the

waiter was out of earshot.

‘Nor did you.’

‘I didn’t have your address.’

‘You’re a detective. You could have tracked me down.’ Jenny stared at the table. When she looked up again, her mouth had taken a

downward turn. 'You don't get it, do you?'

'What?'

'Never mind.'

'No, really.'

'I mean it. Never mind. It's nothing. I just needed to get away. Completely away. That's all. Now eat your spaghetti like a good boy.'

They tucked in. The food was good, the tomato-based sauce piquant and the meatballs moist and spicy.

‘I don’t suppose you’ll be needing me any more, now you’ve got your man,’

Jenny said after a while.



‘That’s one of the things I wanted to talk to you about.’

‘Well, I must say, this is a nice way of giving someone the push. Do thank your boss for using the velvet-glove approach.’

Banks laughed. He had almost forgotten how much he laughed when he was with Jenny. ‘You’ve got the

wrong end of the stick. Yes, we've got our man – or he got himself – but there's so much we still don't know. I'd like you to keep working on the profile, if you'd be willing.'

Jenny's expression brightened. 'Of course. If nothing else, it might prove useful as research. One of the problems

with this type of killer is that we don't have any useful profiles to work from. They're so few and far between, and most of them kill themselves before we get a chance to talk to them.'

'Well, this one's no exception to that rule.'

'In a strange way, not talking to them

doesn't matter that  
much. I've always

thought that talking to  
serial killers and mass  
murderers was  
overrated. All they do  
is whine and lie and  
blame society or their  
parents for their  
crimes. You don't  
learn very much. It's  
their behaviour and  
the way they present  
themselves in the  
world that I find more

interesting. And the cracks, of course. What builds up to such a point that it bursts the dam, so to speak, sets them on an unalterable course with only one possible outcome. That's far more interesting.'

'I'm glad you think so.'

'So tell me everything you know about him.'

They finished their main courses, and Banks told her what he had discovered and heard so far about Martin Edgeworth, most of it that very day from Ollie Metcalfe and George and Margie Sykes at the shooting club. Annie and Gerry Masterson would be trying to dig up a lot more background, but that was all he had for

now. While he spoke, Jenny rested her chin on her fists, elbows planted on the table. When he had finished, she seemed thoughtful, moved one hand to pick up her glass and drank some more wine. Her glass was nearly empty.

‘Do we want another?’ Banks asked. ‘I can’t. I’m driving. But . . .’

'I don't think I could manage it,' said Jenny. 'This tiredness just washes over me.'

'Want to go?'

Jenny waved her glass. 'Not just yet. There's still a mouthful or two left. So, basically,' she went on, 'everyone you talked to told you that Martin Edgeworth was sociable,



generous, clubbable,  
uncomplaining, caring  
and successful?’

‘Basically, yes,’ said  
Banks. ‘Apart from the  
broken marriage, the  
quick temper and  
bad-loser bit.’

‘Well, we all know  
about broken  
marriages, don’t we?  
If a difficult divorce  
were a trigger for  
mass murder, there’d

be a lot more dead  
people in the streets.

Same with a bad  
temper and being a  
poor loser.'

'Too true. We haven't  
interviewed his wife or  
children yet. The  
children –

grown-ups now,  
actually – should be  
here tomorrow. The  
wife didn't mention

coming over from Carlisle when Gerry spoke to her on the phone, so who knows? We may have to go there to talk to her.'

'Your man certainly doesn't fit any profile that I'm aware of,' said Jenny.

'Usually mass murderers tend to be profoundly alienated

and embittered. They want revenge against the world, and they want to show everyone they're not failures, that they can't be used as doormats. There's no evidence that Martin Edgeworth was a failure, or even felt he was. Sometimes the revenge is specific, and sometimes it's just a sort of random rage against society

in general. That doesn't seem to fit, either, unless Edgeworth was very, very good at hiding his true self. He wasn't a loner, and he wasn't a failure. True, he was divorced and

probably felt angry with his wife for humiliating him, but that's hardly an indication of psychopathy. Some

killers are good at  
hiding their true  
selves. I'm sure  
you've seen it often  
enough on the news,  
how the serial killer  
next door wouldn't  
harm a fly, according  
to his neighbours.  
Was just a quiet lad,  
never any trouble,  
and he's got five  
dismembered corpses  
buried in his back  
garden. Sure, it  
happens. But not that

often. Most people demonstrate some clues as to what they are. I mean, there's been plenty of meek little men finally snapping and killing their wives and families and then themselves. But going out with an assault rifle and mowing down a wedding party? That's something else. We

need to dig a lot deeper.'

'I think Raymond Chandler wrote something about meek little wives holding a carving knife and studying their husbands' necks, didn't he?'

'Yes,' said Jenny. 'But that was in Southern California during the Santa Ana.'



The hot wind makes people crazy.'

'Not only is the woman beautiful, but she knows her Raymond Chandler,'

said Banks, before he realised exactly what he was saying.

Jenny didn't miss a beat. She fluttered her eyelashes and said, 'Of course, I'm not

just a pretty face. You ought to know that by now.'

But Banks could see her blushing beneath the bravado. Yes, he thought, people do demonstrate clues as to what they are, or feel, or think. Most of us can only hide so much from the rest of the world. We have tells, giveaways. Body language. 'So what do

you think?' he said.  
'About Edgeworth.'

Jenny knocked back  
the rest of her wine.  
'I'm not sure what to  
think,' she said. 'But  
from what you've told  
me, if I were you  
there's one question I  
would most certainly  
be asking myself.'

'What's that?'

‘Despite all the evidence to support my position, am I sure, am I *absolutely* sure, that I’ve got the right man?’

‘You’re not the first person to say that to me today,’ Banks grumbled. ‘Shall we go?’

When he stopped outside Jenny’s house to drop her off, the

rain was still teeming down. They sat in silence for a while, then Jenny said, 'I'm not going to ask you to come in for a nightcap tonight, Alan. Partly I'm just too damn tired, and partly . . . I don't know . . . I'm still not quite sure where I am in the world yet. I'm out of sync. I don't know if it's day or night.'

Banks leaned over and kissed Jenny on the cheek. She smiled and touched his arm with her fingertips before moving away, grabbing her umbrella and dashing out into the rain. He waited until she had got her front door open. She turned, silhouetted by the light, waved to him and closed the door behind her.

Van Morrison was  
singing 'Wild Children'  
as Banks drove back  
over the bridge,  
across the market  
square, where the  
cobblestones glistened with  
rain under the  
coloured lights, and  
headed for home.

## **Chapter 8**

Christmas fell upon  
Eastvale like a knife-  
wielding mugger

desperate for a fix,  
and with the St Mary's  
killer no longer  
representing a threat  
to the community, the  
investigation slowed  
down over the holiday  
period, and the town  
was able to get into  
the spirit of the  
season without that  
undercurrent of fear  
that a gunman on the  
loose inspires. The  
retailers loved it  
because people got



out and went  
shopping rather than  
cloistering themselves  
indoors.

It might not have been  
a white Christmas –  
for the most part it  
was the colour of a  
puddle in a cow pat –  
but chains of festive  
lights lit up the market  
square, wound  
around the ancient  
cross and strung up  
over the numerous

cobbled streets and  
ginnels nearby. The  
castle battlements  
and keep were  
floodlit, too, and many  
of the shopkeepers  
hung strings of lights  
over their signs, put  
up decorated  
Christmas trees or  
stuck red-and-white  
Santas to the insides  
of their windows. A  
huge Christmas tree  
arrived from the  
unpronounceable

town in Norway with which Eastvale was twinned, and was duly set up and decorated beside the market cross. In the square, seasonal music overflowed from the pubs and filled the air. Even Cyril at the Queen's Arms entered into the spirit of things with his Christmas playlist which, Banks was pleased to hear,

included a whole range of songs and carols from Nick Lowe and The Ronettes to Bing Crosby and Renée Fleming.

On working days, detectives returned to the Upper Swainsdale District Rifle and Pistol Club and interviewed more members who had known Martin Edgeworth. They also

talked to just about everyone in the village of Swainshead.

But they learned very little. He came from a normal middle-class background in Spalding, Lincolnshire. His parents, both deceased, were decent, law-abiding members of the community who did

the best they could for their only child.

Edgeworth was well behaved at school, the local comprehensive, and always came in the top five at the end-of-term exams. He showed some skill at cricket, a bit less at rugby. He came second in his graduating class at dental college. After a

few years on his own,  
he started a  
successful  
partnership with  
Jonathan Martell, then  
retired three years  
ago. He gave  
generously to  
charities such as  
Save the Children and  
the British Heart  
Foundation, and his  
hobbies included  
military history,  
shooting, rambling,  
golf and photography.

All efforts to forge a connection between Edgeworth and any of the dead or wounded members of the wedding party came to nothing. The counter-terrorist

officers and spooks packed up shop and went back home to London. They said they wouldn't be back unless something new came up to connect



the St Mary's shooting with terrorism, though they doubted it would.

Edgeworth's son and daughter came to Eastvale to identify the body and kick up a fuss. Their father couldn't possibly have done such a terrible thing, they argued. The police must have got something wrong. They refused to talk to the media. Connie,

the ex-wife, never showed up at all. Banks and Annie visited her in Carlisle and came away feeling they had wasted their time. She could shed no light on why Edgeworth might have done what he did, though she was quick to point out his deficiencies as a husband: 'selfish, pompous and lousy in bed'.

Most of all, she was terrified of being publicly connected with Edgeworth in any way. She had quickly forged a new life for herself with Norman Lavalle, a New Age chiropractor, who had a lucrative practice among a wealthy clientele of the northwest. She didn't want anyone to know about her previous existence as the wife

of a dentist turned mass murderer. Unfortunately, less than a week after their visit, Banks spotted a well-illustrated feature on her in one of the less discriminating Sunday newspapers.

To the media, Edgeworth remained a fascinating mystery: an enigma, the mass murderer who defied all definition. To some

of the more  
sensational reporters,  
he became the killer  
who made a mockery  
of criminal profiling,  
which hardly thrilled  
Jenny Fuller. Adrian  
Moss turned out to be  
right. As the  
bloodshed receded in  
people's minds, the  
media did their best to  
keep the story alive  
by asking questions  
about police actions  
on the day of the

murders and by examining Edgeworth's life in detail for anything that might help to explain the grotesque act he had committed. They were no more successful than Gerry had been, though some of them were far more willing to play fast and loose with the truth when the occasion demanded it.

While Banks was as perplexed as the next person about Edgeworth's motives, certain aspects of the case nagged away at him – a small but insistent voice almost, but not quite, drowned out the louder cries. He didn't know what it was, but there was something fishy about the whole business.

On Christmas Eve,  
Banks attended the  
midnight service at St  
Agnes, in Helmthorpe.  
He wasn't especially  
religious – and nor  
was Ray, who went  
with him – but he  
enjoyed the sense of  
community in the  
crowded church, the  
fine organ playing, the  
choir and all the old  
familiar songs from  
his childhood –



‘Once in Royal  
David’s City’, ‘O Little  
Town of Bethlehem’,  
‘Silent Night’ –

rekindling his  
childhood memories  
of the tiny fake  
Christmas tree with its  
tinsel and lights,  
Uncle Ted having too  
much port and  
lemonade to drink,  
and Aunt Ellen’s  
raucous laughter as  
they played charades.

Penny Cartwright and Linda Palmer were at the service, too, and afterwards Banks and Ray were invited back to Penny's for mulled wine, Christmas cake and a bit of a wassail. Some of Penny's folk-community friends turned up and sang traditional Yorkshire Christmas songs, one of them a favourite of Banks's from a Kate Rusby album, called

‘Serving Girl’s  
Holiday’. They  
continued singing and  
drinking well into the  
night, and Banks and  
Ray wandered home  
though the  
churchyard, both  
slightly tipsy, singing  
the schoolboy version  
of

‘Good King  
Wenceslas’. When  
they got back, they  
rather foolishly poured

another drink and put  
*A Christmas Carol* on  
the DVD player.

Banks was asleep  
before the Spirit of  
Christmas Present  
appeared.

As a consequence, on  
Christmas morning  
Banks and Ray were  
both hung-over, but  
Ray still managed to  
cook an excellent  
Christmas dinner,  
turkey and all the

trimmings, and Annie drove out to Grately to join them. They pulled crackers, wore silly hats and read out bad jokes, and again they drank and ate too much.

Annie spent the night in the spare room. On Boxing Day, Banks made time to visit his parents in Durham, feeling guilty as usual because he didn't go

to see them often  
enough.

Whenever the  
commercial onslaught  
of the season sagged,  
and whenever  
Banks's thoughts  
about the St Mary's  
Massacre ebbed,  
Emily was waiting  
right there in the  
wings. Most of his  
memories of her were  
warm with summer  
sunshine and sweet

air, lazy afternoons on the grass in Regent's Park or Hyde Park with her head on his lap and all well with the world, but they had also been together through two winters. He remembered in particular one magical bone-chilling night when they were both home for the holidays and escaped from their respective family

Christmases to go for  
a walk over the rec.  
Despite the amber  
glow of the street  
lamps surrounding the  
field, the black velvet  
sky was scattered  
with bright stars and  
the frozen puddles  
crackled under their  
feet. They kissed for a  
while in the old  
bandstand, warming  
each other, smoked a  
cigarette or two, then  
went back to re-join



their families.  
Whenever Banks  
heard the sound of ice  
cracking underfoot,  
and whenever he  
heard Simon and  
Garfunkel's 'For  
Emily, Whenever I  
May Find Her', he  
thought of that cold  
amber night all those  
years ago, and the  
memory warmed his  
heart rather than  
chilled it.

Things didn't start moving again at the station until a few days later.

Naturally, there had been a number of incidents over the holiday period –

domestics, a pub fight or two – but none of them had required the expertise of Homicide and Major Crimes.

Then, just a few days into the new year, Banks received a phone call from Dr Glendenning that brought the St Mary's case back to the forefront of his thoughts again.

The Unicorn, across the road from Eastvale General Infirmary, was a run-down street-corner Victorian pub clad in

dull green tiles, with wobbly chairs and cigarette-scarred wooden tables inside. Most of its clientele consisted of hospital workers, including nurses and doctors, especially after a late shift at A & E. It was hardly the sort of place to impress a date, but the landlord kept a decent pint, and there was no loud music or video games

to make conversation difficult.

On a Thursday lunchtime early in January, when Banks went there in response to the phone call from Dr Glendenning, the only other customers were a couple of orderlies and a table of pupils from the comprehensive school playing truant.

They probably weren't old enough to be drinking, but it was hard to tell these days. He didn't care if they were underage; he had managed to get served in pubs and get in to X-certificate films when he was sixteen. Good luck to them.

Dr Glendenning was already waiting in the corner with a tumbler

of whisky in front of him. Banks went to the bar and bought a pint of Timothy Taylor's Landlord Bitter and joined him.

'This bloody weather,' Glendenning grumbled. 'Chill gets in your bones. I'd rather have a bit of snow and ice and get it over and done with it.'

It was true that the rain seemed to have been falling non-stop for weeks now, and every day there was a new story in the papers about somewhere or other being flooded, or on the verge of flooding, from the Lake District to the far end of Cornwall. If you were to believe everything you read or saw on TV, you might be



forgiven for thinking that the whole country was under water, and that it was just a matter of time before some present-day Noah would appear with his ark and start shepherding people and animals on board.

‘What’s on your mind, doc?’ Banks asked. Dr Glendenning didn’t usually request lunchtime meetings in

quiet pubs; in fact, this was the first time Banks could remember having a drink with him in all his years in Eastvale. This seemed to be a case of firsts. He realised how little he knew the man behind the white coat, what his life was like, his family, even though they had worked together for close to thirty years.

Glendenning must certainly be approaching retirement. Banks contemplated the craggy, lined face with its bristly grey moustache, brick-red complexion and head of neat thin grey hair. He could have been a leftover colonel from the Raj in some long-forgotten Saturday afternoon film on TV. The moustache was

stained yellow close to his upper lip, and it didn't take a Sherlock Holmes to figure out that the good doctor was still sneaking a cigarette whenever the opportunity offered itself.

'Good holiday?'  
Glendenning asked.

'You know. The usual. Turkey, green paper hats, crackers that

don't crack and too much to drink.'

'Aye. Only had two suicides this year, mind you. Usually a bumper time for suicides is Christmas.'

'So you say every year.'

Glendenning sipped some whisky and grimaced as it burned on the way down.

‘That’s what I want to talk to you about,’ he said. ‘In a way.’

‘The Christmas suicides?’

‘One suicide in particular. Martin Edgeworth.’

‘I see.’ Banks leaned back in his chair. It wobbled dangerously so he sat up straight again. It was

uncomfortable no  
matter how he  
arranged himself. 'Go  
on, then.'

'It's a bit awkward,'  
Glendenning went on.  
'Not that I missed  
anything, you  
understand. Not as  
such. Natalie, one of  
my most capable  
assistants, carried out  
the post-mortem.  
Under my  
supervision, of

course. Definitely not her fault. It's more a matter of interpretation than anything else.'

'I understand.'

'Unfortunately, even we scientists have to connect the dots on occasion without any clear idea of the order they're in.'

Glendenning seemed a little embarrassed,



and Banks was careful not to tease or push him. After a few moments' thought, the doctor seemed to make up his mind to carry on. 'Well, the truth is that I had one or two niggling doubts when I read Natalie's report after post-mortem. Things I couldn't quite put my finger on. So I decided to go back and have a look

myself, reconstructing the sequence of events in my mind.

I even revisited the scene, then I re-examined the body. Fortunately, the coroner hasn't released it for burial yet. Not a full second post-mortem, you understand, but just another look at one or two features that puzzled me. I had

Natalie show me what she had done and what she had found, and she agreed.'

'And?'

'Well, perhaps our glee at believing we'd found a mass murderer might have put blinkers on us as regards considering any alternatives.'

'Such as?'

‘That somebody else did it. Or killed Edgeworth. Or both.’ Glendenning held his hand up. ‘Now, I’m not saying that’s what happened. First of all, I had a hard time trying to visualise how and why the man sort of flopped down backwards against the wall to shoot himself. There’s a bruise on his left shoulder consistent

with its bumping  
against the wall.  
Usually suicides are .  
. . well, more careful,  
more fastidious, even,  
in an odd sort of way.  
I mean, it's your last  
act, so you might as  
well make it as neat  
and tidy as possible.  
According to all the  
crime-

scene photographs I  
looked at, his outer

clothing was folded neatly beside him.

The anorak, the waterproof trousers, the black woolly hat on top.'

'What are you saying?'

'I'm saying that on the one hand you have the signs of a careful, neat man, even on the verge of suicide,

but slumping against the wall doesn't fit. It's sloppy. You'd expect him to position himself carefully, perhaps even on a chair rather than on a dirty cellar floor. Don't forget, this is a man who neatly folds an anorak. But he was sitting on the floor with his legs stretched out and his back against the wall when the shot was fired.'

‘But what does it matter?’ Banks argued. ‘He was going to shoot himself. I mean, he’d just killed a number of people, and he was about to end his own life.

He was no doubt agitated.’

‘Why did he even remove his outer clothing in the first



place, then?' asked  
Glendenning.

'Any number of  
reasons. He was too  
warm, too  
uncomfortable . . .'

'It was chilly in that  
cellar.'

'Perhaps he had been  
home for a while. The  
house upstairs would  
have been warm  
enough, with that big

Aga. Perhaps he took his outer clothing off when he first came in?’

‘In that case, why was it folded neatly beside him in the cellar?’

‘I see your point. But none of that necessarily means anything. I should imagine he was in an unusual state of mind,

perhaps not thinking clearly.

Certainly not acting normally. He did take his boots off upstairs. We found them.'

'Balance of his mind disturbed? Yes. Even so . . . if it were only that . . .'

'What else?'

'I was curious, so I went and had a chat

with the forensic  
chappies who  
examined the clothes  
and had them go over  
their findings with me.'

'We got their original  
report,' said Banks.  
'No unexplained hairs  
or fibres.'

'Yes,' said  
Glendenning. 'Doesn't  
that strike you as  
odd? If he wore those  
clothes *over* the

clothes he was  
wearing – and we've  
no reason to think he  
didn't

– then surely there  
would have been  
traces of his sweat,  
fibres from the shirt  
itself, and perhaps  
other things? You  
can't tell me he  
climbed that hill and  
shot all those people  
without a shedding a  
single drop of sweat.

Or hair. He wasn't bald, so you would expect hairs inside the woolly hat, wouldn't you, and perhaps on the shoulders of the anorak, but there are none.'

'OK,' said Banks, frowning.

'It was as if the outer clothes were new, as if they hadn't been

worn. Fair enough,  
they were damp,  
there were a couple of  
grass stains and a  
streak of mud

here and there, but  
again, anyone could  
have rubbed them on  
the ground. One of  
the CSIs suggested  
that if someone had  
worn those clothes to  
commit the murders,  
the stains were in the  
wrong places.

Especially the knees,  
as they must have  
made contact with the  
earth when he got to  
his feet or lay down.'

'I get your point,' said  
Banks. 'There were  
no prints on the shell  
casings or the other  
bullets, either,' he  
said, almost to  
himself. 'Mike  
Trethowan didn't think  
it odd, but it bothered



me. What are you suggesting?’

‘Perhaps the clothes the killer wore were different altogether? The same kind, of course, and same colour, but not the ones found at the house. If anyone saw him from a distance, all they would see was dark outer clothing and a black cap of some sort. All

he'd have to do was dampen the other set of clothes and rub them in the grass and mud. But there are no hairs inside the shoulders of the anorak, as there were on the shirt Edgeworth was wearing underneath, or in the woolen cap. You can't tell me that if he wore something on top it wouldn't pick up some hairs inside

either piece of clothing.'

'So you're suggesting two sets of clothing? One set folded neatly by Edgeworth, unworn, and another worn by someone else? The real killer? If you're right, what happened to the outfit the real killer wore?'

'No idea,' said Glendenning. 'You're

the detective. He probably destroyed it if he had any sense. Evidence. Damn. I swore I wouldn't, but I'm going to have another.' He glanced towards Banks's glass. 'You? And before you say anything, it's my day off, and I'm not going to be staggering over to the hospital to commit medical

atrocities on an  
unfortunate corpse.'

This was a first, and  
Banks was certain he  
wasn't going to miss  
the opportunity of  
having the doctor buy  
him a drink. 'Things  
are pretty quiet for  
me, too,' he said.  
'Same again, please.  
Landlord Bitter.'

Glendenning grunted  
and went to the bar,

leaving Banks to think  
unwelcome and  
chaotic thoughts.

When the doctor  
came back, he  
plonked down the  
drinks and said, 'And  
there's another thing.'

'Yes?'

'It was impossible to  
tell at the scene or at  
the post-mortem,  
because the shot

blew off the back of his head. Natalie is certainly blameless in all this. But when I managed to gather the skull fragments together – it was a bit like doing a jigsaw puzzle – I found something odd. Odd and very disturbing.’

‘What?’

‘A slight indentation in the area of the exit

wound.'

'Indentation?'

'Yes. It was very difficult to see because of the fragmentation of the skull,

not to mention the general mess the bullet made. Even then I might have thought nothing more of it, assuming he just



banged his head on  
the wall as he flopped  
down, or when he  
pulled the trigger.  
Those old cellar walls  
are rarely smooth.

They're full of bumps  
and pits.'

'Why couldn't it have  
happened that way?'

'When I revisited the  
scene, I concentrated  
on the spot where his

head hit the wall. It was smooth as a baby's bottom. Hitting his head against it couldn't have caused the depth of indentation I found over the skull fragments.' He picked up his glass and took a long pull. 'I rest my case.'

'Are you trying to say what I think you are?'

‘Don’t try to stump me with riddles, laddie. What do you think I’m trying to say?’

‘That someone hit Edgeworth on the back of the head and fired the gun into his mouth. Murdered him.’

Glendenning sat silently for a while, swirling the liquid in the bottom of his

glass. 'Well, it's certainly a possibility, isn't it?' he said finally. 'But there could be other explanations. And I could be wrong. I'm a scientist. I'm uncomfortable enough speculating as much as I have done.'

'I understand that,' said Banks. 'But see it from my point of view.'

Imagination and speculation are almost as much use to a policeman as reason and scientific evidence. Often more so.' He took a swallow of beer. 'Besides, it fits with one or two things that have been bothering me.'

'All I'm saying,' Glendenning explained, 'is that it's possible – only

*possible*, mind you –  
that someone hit  
Edgeworth on the  
back of the head  
before any shot was  
fired.’

‘Hit with what?’

‘I don’t know. Some  
kind of hammer with a  
rounded head. A  
ballpeen, or  
machinist’s hammer,  
for example. Did you

find anything like that  
at the scene?’

‘We’ve got everything  
from Edgeworth’s  
cellar locked up in  
evidence. There was  
a work bench, and we  
can certainly check all  
the tools for traces of  
blood and try to match  
them with the wound.’

‘The weapon would  
probably be among  
them,’ said

Glendenning. 'Or whoever used it might have brought it with him and taken it away.'

'We'll check,' said Banks. 'And then this person shot him?'

'Well, he could hardly have done it himself. But it might not have been the same person.'



‘Possibly,’ said Banks.  
‘But it makes for an  
odd sequence of  
events however you  
look at it. Someone  
hits him on the back  
of the head and  
leaves, then someone  
else comes and fakes  
his suicide. Or maybe  
Edgeworth came  
round

from the blow and  
then decided to shoot  
himself?’

‘When you put it like that, it does sound rather far-fetched. But there’s more.

The angle was off.’

‘What do you mean? What angle?’

‘It’s a small thing in itself, but taking into account all the evidence of the possible trajectory of the bullet, the angle at

which the weapon  
was held, it would  
have been . . . well,  
perhaps  
uncomfortable is the  
best word, for  
Edgeworth to have  
held it the way it  
would inflict such a  
wound. He got it right.

A lot of suicides don't  
realise you need to  
hold the gun at an  
angle, pointing up, not  
straight at the back of

your mouth. That likely wouldn't bring about the desired result. I'm just saying that it would have been a bit of a twist for Edgeworth to hold it at the right angle from the way he was slouching against the wall. Not impossible, you understand, perhaps not even improbable, but *uncomfortable.*'

‘I understand,’ said Banks. ‘What about time of death?’

Glendenning sighed. ‘You know as well as I do that there’s usually plenty of leeway there, especially in a body that’s been dead as long as Edgeworth’s had when we found him.’

‘So he could have been killed earlier on

Saturday morning,  
before the wedding?’

‘He could indeed.  
That was apparent  
from the start. The  
chill slows things  
down a bit.’

‘I’m just trying to get  
this all clear. The  
timing is such that the  
killer could have killed  
Edgeworth first and  
left the pile of clothes  
beside him, then used

Edgeworth's gun and RAV4 to carry out the shootings at St Mary's, returned them to the house and left.'

'Indeed. What are these other things that have been bothering you?'

'First,' said Banks, 'there's the scrapbook we found with the pictures and stories about Benjamin Kemp

and Laura Tindall's forthcoming wedding. I can understand why the killer might have kept such a record – it fits with his obsession – but why would he tape it to the underside of a drawer, where any police search was pretty certain to find it, if he was going to commit suicide after the murders?'



‘So in your  
speculative  
policeman’s way,’  
Glendenning said,  
‘you’re suggesting  
that someone else  
might have planted  
the scrapbook there,  
the real killer perhaps,  
to incriminate  
Edgeworth further, or  
to misdirect you?’

‘Well, someone might  
have realised that it  
would help to

convince us we'd got  
the right man if we  
had some evidence to  
link him with the  
people at the  
wedding, and not just  
physical evidence,  
ballistics and so forth.  
The thing is that

other than the  
scrapbook we've got  
nothing, no links at all  
between Martin  
Edgeworth and  
anyone in the

wedding party, the church itself, the vicar, verger, curate, you name them.'

'Maybe he'd just kept the scrapbook hidden so that no casual visitor would see it, and he forgot to move it before his suicide, or couldn't be bothered to.

After all, he had other things on his mind. I

mean, he'd hardly  
take it out of his  
hiding place and put it  
on the kitchen table,  
would he?'

'Well speculated,  
Watson. And we  
found no identifiable  
prints on the  
scrapbook, only  
smudges. But such  
things are notoriously  
difficult to get prints  
from, anyway.  
Edgeworth didn't

leave a suicide note,  
either.'

'That happens so  
often, in my  
experience,' said  
Glendenning, 'as to  
be meaningless.'

'True. And perhaps  
even more often with  
mass murderers. But  
on the other hand,  
there's often a need to  
explain, or to

demonstrate how  
clever he's been.

None of these little  
things add up to  
anything until you  
start collecting them  
all together. And  
there's another thing.  
Nobody I talked to  
who knew Edgeworth  
believed him to be  
capable of committing  
such a crime. Oh,  
some people didn't  
like him much,

especially his ex-wife,  
and some admitted he  
had a short fuse and  
he didn't like losing,  
but that's about as far  
as it goes. Now, I  
know in itself that  
means very little. If I  
had a penny for the  
number of times I've  
heard friends, family  
and neighbours  
describe a sadistic  
killer as a decent,  
normal, sociable chap  
with a few flaws, I'd

be a rich man today.  
But still . . .’

Glendenning made a throaty, gurgling sort of sound Banks took for laughter.

Banks finished his pint. ‘So the question is, I suppose, what are we going to do about it?’

‘I’m not going to do anything,’ said



Glendenning. 'I'm simply trying to bring a few anomalies and alternative interpretations to your attention. I think the rest is up to you.'

'But you'll back me up if necessary?'

'Naturally. To the extent of my professional opinion.'

‘What a waste,’ said Banks. ‘And you seem so promising at speculation.’

Glendenning polished off his whisky. ‘Aye, well, I’ll leave that to you. I would certainly be comfortable to go as far as mentioning the indentation, for example, and should you provide me with a possible weapon I would be happy to

check it for fit. Now I've had my say. I'll be off.'

When Glendenning had left, Banks sat staring into his empty glass. Was there anything in what Glendenning had told him? Was Edgeworth really innocent, as most of his friends and acquaintances seemed to believe? He might have been

involved tangentially,  
of course, then  
hoodwinked or  
double-crossed

by an accomplice at  
the final hurdle, but he  
might also have been  
used, knowing  
nothing about the real  
killer's motives or  
intentions. The only  
bright spot in all this  
was that the two of  
them must have  
crossed paths at

some point. The killer must have known about Edgeworth's membership of the Upper Swainsdale District Rifle and Pistol Club, about his guns. And that gave Banks a few places he could start searching for the connections he needed.

Banks hadn't given Annie and Gerry any

specific instructions  
for interviewing  
Robert and Maureen  
Tindall again other  
than to play it by ear,  
go over some of the  
questions they had  
already been asked  
and note their  
reactions.

Robert and Maureen  
were the only  
immediate members  
of the wedding party  
who hadn't been killed

or wounded, which was interesting in itself to a suspicious detective's mind. If the killer had been aiming at specific targets, then why had they been spared? Why had he killed the groom's father, but not the bride's? Not that Annie thought the Tindalls had anything to do with the shooting, but it was odd, all the same.

They had been standing with the main group but had escaped injury. Their witness statements had been taken as soon as they had recovered from the immediate shock, but neither had anything new to add. Had the shootings really been random?

The Tindalls' house came complete with



double garage,  
gables, spacious  
gardens at front and  
back, and a bay  
window. It sat in one  
of the quiet streets a  
stone's throw from the  
Heights, Eastvale's  
Millionaire's Row, but  
lacked the panoramic  
view the large  
detached houses  
commanded, and  
wouldn't fetch  
anywhere near the  
same price. Even so,

Annie would have given up her cottage in Harkside for such a home had she been able to afford it. Banking had clearly been as good to Robert Tindall as it had been bad to most customers.

They parked out front and walked up the path. Annie had phoned ahead, so they were expected,

and Robert Tindall  
opened the door  
almost immediately  
she rang the bell.

‘Come in, come in,’ he  
said, taking their  
umbrellas and  
depositing them in an  
elephant’s foot stand  
by the door. Annie  
hadn’t seen such a  
thing in ages, if ever.

She thought  
elephants were a

protected species.  
Certainly, it was illegal  
to hunt them for ivory.  
Perhaps it wasn't a  
real elephant's foot. 'If  
you wouldn't mind  
removing your  
footwear,' Robert  
Tindall went on, 'you  
can put it on that mat  
there.'

Annie took off her red  
boots, not without  
some awkwardness  
over the zips, and

Gerry slipped off her pumps without even bending down. Annie felt decidedly underdressed in jeans and a plain grey sweatshirt under her raincoat, but Gerry appeared elegant enough in a dark green trouser suit over a russet top

that matched her flowing waves of red hair. Tall and elegant,

Annie thought, with a rush of irrational envy that occasionally rose in her chest when she worked with Gerry. It passed quickly enough. They had got off to a bad start, but Annie had now actually come to appreciate the many qualities of her occasionally difficult oppo over the past couple of years, even if they hadn't exactly

warmed to one another on a personal level yet. It was her own fault.

Women like Gerry Masterson and Jenny Fuller, always elegant, beautiful, well turned out, posh accents, walking around as if they had a stick up their arse, had always irritated her. It was a problem that probably had something to do

with her  
unconventional and  
Bohemian upbringing,  
but knowing that  
didn't solve it.

Robert Tindall led  
them into a high-  
ceilinged living room  
where a fire burned in  
the grate and a baby  
grand occupied one  
corner.

'Maureen's,' he said,  
as Annie stared at it.



‘She’s the musical one. Not me, I’m afraid. Tone deaf.’

‘You couldn’t fit one of those in my entire cottage,’ said Annie, realising immediately that she had made Tindall uncomfortable. ‘Bijou, they call it.’

‘Ah, yes, the vagaries of today’s language. Do sit down.’ He gestured to a sofa

upholstered in rough cream cloth printed with French wine labels. 'Maureen is resting. She hopes to be with us shortly.'

Annie hoped so, too. She had come to talk to both of them, preferably together. There was a whiff of camphor about the room, she thought, which gave it something of an old-

fashioned  
atmosphere.

Robert cleared his  
throat. 'I'm afraid  
she's not been herself  
since Laura's death. It  
shook her to the core.  
I'm upset, too,  
naturally, we all are.  
But Maureen was  
always more fragile.  
Laura was our only  
child. You know.'

‘Yes,’ said Annie. ‘I can hardly imagine how terrible it must be. Fragile?’

You say your wife is fragile?’

‘Yes. Sensitive. Highly strung, as they say. But she’s a wonderful wife, and she was a good mother to Laura. Strict but good: attentive, loving, supportive.’

Maureen helped her so much with her modelling career. Maybe she was over-protective, but there are some wily predators in that business, you know.’ He shook his head slowly. ‘Can I perhaps get you a cup of tea, coffee, or something while you’re waiting?’

‘Tea would be great, thanks,’ said Annie.

‘Any kind in particular?’

‘Have you got any chamomile?’ Gerry asked.

‘Afraid not. It’s Yorkshire Gold or Earl Grey.’

They agreed on the Yorkshire Gold and Robert Tindall went off to the kitchen.

‘Bloody chamomile, indeed,’ said Annie.

Gerry blushed. ‘Well, he asked. And you’re a one to talk. It was you got me into herbal teas in the first place.’

Before she could reply, Annie heard a soft rustling behind her and turned to see a woman walk into the room. In contrast to her husband,

Maureen Tindall was painfully thin and pale, like an invalid, clutching a cashmere cardigan at her throat as if she were freezing despite the fire. Robert Tindall was tall, slightly stooped, silver-haired and distinguished, but his wife looked as if a puff of wind would blow her away.



‘Good afternoon. I’m Maureen Tindall.’ Her voice was a shaky whisper. She sat in the armchair closest to the fire and rubbed her hands together. ‘This weather,’ she said. ‘When will it ever end?’

‘Not until we’ve all been washed away,’ Annie replied.

Maureen Tindall  
managed a thin smile.  
She was in her early  
sixties, Annie  
guessed, with short  
steel-grey hair  
plastered to her scalp.  
Her face was bony,  
blotchy in places,  
eyes sunken, dull with  
the numbing glaze of  
tranquillisers, and  
anywhere except on  
Annie or Gerry. Still,  
Annie thought, the  
poor woman had just

lost her only daughter  
in the most  
horrendous  
circumstances one  
could possibly  
imagine. Who in her  
position wouldn't  
reach for the Valium?  
Maureen smoothed  
her skirts over her lap  
and leaned back. 'I  
can't imagine what  
you want with us  
now,' she said. 'Not  
now that it's all over.'

‘We just want to make sure we’ve got everything right,’ said Annie. ‘The boss is a real stickler about reports and that sort of thing.’

Robert Tindall came back in with a tray bearing a teapot, cups and saucers, milk and sugar. ‘Ah, darling, here you are,’ he said. ‘Feeling all right?’

‘A little better,’ said Maureen. ‘I think my rest helped.’

Her husband put down the tray and patted her arm.

‘Good. Good.’ He glanced at Annie. ‘I don’t suppose this will take long?’

‘Shouldn’t think so,’ Annie said. Gerry took out her notebook and pen.

Maureen Tindall  
peered at her  
wristwatch. 'What  
time is our  
appointment with Dr  
Graveney, darling?'  
she asked.

'Not until half past  
four. We've got plenty  
of time.'

'Only we mustn't be  
late. We'll have to set  
off in good time.'

‘We will, darling, we will.’

‘Dr Graveney?’ Annie said.

‘Outpatient care,’ said Robert Tindall.

‘Maureen is still rather very much in shock, as you may have noticed.’

‘A psychiatrist, then?’

‘Yes,’ said Tindall, through gritted teeth.

‘A specialist.’

He clearly didn't appreciate Annie's encroaching on their private affairs.

Still, plenty of people were embarrassed about seeing shrinks. Annie had felt that way herself after her rape some years ago. In retrospect, though, she thought the visits had done her some



good. They had at least speeded her reintegration back into some approximation of normal life. Had she been left to her own devices, she would probably still be wallowing in guilt, anger, anxiety, shame, alcohol and God only knows what else.

‘I’m afraid I still find it very difficult to accept

the reality of what happened,'

Maureen said. 'I find myself constantly dwelling on those moments in the churchyard, reliving them. My dearest Laura. I don't sleep well. It always seems to be on my mind like those tunes you can't get rid of sometimes, only much worse. Dr Graveney is trying to

help me overcome all that. To make the pictures go away.'

Good luck with that, Annie thought. 'Then I wish both of you every success.'

I can't imagine how terrible it must be reliving events like that over and over.'

'It's not even so much the images,' Maureen

said, 'but the *feelings* that go with them.'

'I understand,' said Annie. And she did. 'I'm sorry if our visit causes you any more pain. There's a just a few small things we'd like to go over. Not the event itself, you understand. Just background.'

'But you've got the man, haven't you?'

said Robert Tindall.  
'The one who did it.  
He shot himself, didn't  
he?'

Annie noticed  
Maureen flinch at the  
word 'shot'. 'Yes,' she  
said. 'That's all pretty  
well cut and dried.  
What we don't have is  
any kind of motive.  
From all we've been  
told, Martin  
Edgeworth just wasn't

the kind of man to do what he did.'

'Something must have pushed him over the edge,' said Robert Tindall.

'Exactly. That's what we're trying to find out. If he had some connection with anyone in the wedding party, for example. And if there

was anyone else involved.'

'Anyone *else*?'

'Yes. There are one or two anomalies, and there's a remote possibility that he had an accomplice.'

'You must understand, we didn't actually see anyone,' said Robert.

'Everything was too confusing,' Maureen

added. 'We didn't know what was happening.'

'Of course,' said Annie. 'I'm just trying to find out whether you had any sense at all of there being more than one person up there.'

'Well, the shots seemed to come rather fast,' said



Robert. 'I can't say  
I've

ever been under fire  
in a battle situation,  
but I rather imagine  
that's what it would  
feel like. So I suppose  
there *could* have been  
more than one. But  
surely your forensics  
people could tell you  
all about that?'

'What about the other  
matter, his connection

with the wedding party?' Gerry asked. 'What might have pushed him over the edge?'

Robert looked at her askance. 'How could we possibly speculate on something like that?'

'What DC Masterson means,' Annie went on, 'is whether there's anything you can

think of, anything at all, that might have given someone like Martin Edgeworth a reason to do what he did.'

'But we knew nothing about this Martin Edgeworth,' Robert protested. 'And it seems to me there was no reason any sane person could grasp what he did.'

‘You mentioned predators earlier,’ Annie said. ‘Were you aware of anyone like that causing Laura problems?’

‘No. At least she never said anything. Anyway, she’d left that part of the business behind, the modelling.’

‘Fair enough,’ said Annie. ‘Is there

anyone from Laura's past who you think might wish to do her harm, even after a very long time?'

'Revenge being a dish best eaten cold?' said Robert.

'Something like that.'  
Annie noticed that Maureen Tindall seemed distracted.

It could have been the Valium, or the general state of her nerves.

‘Mrs Tindall?’ Annie said. ‘Can you think of anything? Anyone?’

Maureen seemed to snap back from a long distance. ‘Who, me? No, no, of course not. No one.’

‘Are you sure?’

‘Of course I’m sure,’ she snapped. ‘Laura was not the kind of person to go about making enemies.’

‘That’s not what I mean,’ Annie said. ‘And if I gave you the wrong impression, I apologise. I’m not saying she did anything wrong to attract the attention of someone like Martin Edgeworth. We don’t

even profess to understand his motivation. But it could have been a simple thing that set him off.

Someone who did what he did doesn't exactly see the world in quite the same way as the rest of us.'

'We've never heard of the man before,' said Robert Tindall. 'And



Laura certainly never mentioned him.'

'Would she have?'

'We like to think she would have confided in us if something, or someone, was bothering her, yes.'

'We do know that he seemed interested in the wedding,' said Gerry. 'He had

newspaper clippings  
of the  
announcements. He  
put them in a  
scrapbook.'

Maureen took a  
handkerchief from her  
sleeve and put it to  
her mouth. 'Why  
would he do  
something like that?  
That's just sick.'

'Good lord,' said  
Robert. 'So he was

stalking Laura?’

‘Not necessarily. But he knew the details. It wasn’t a spontaneous assault.

That’s what makes us think there could have been someone in particular in the wedding party he wanted to hurt, and hurt very badly, and he killed the others as a sort of

smokescreen, to  
distract us from what  
he really intended.  
Naturally, we thought  
first of Laura and Ben,  
though Ben wasn't  
killed immediately.'

Maureen shook her  
head. 'It can't be,' she  
whispered. 'It can't  
be.'

Annie and Gerry  
exchanged glances.

‘Can’t be what?’ Gerry asked.

‘Wh—what you say it is. Something Laura did, or one of us did, or something he thinks we did.

Obviously, I can’t speak for everyone else, but as far as Robert and I are concerned, that just sounds ridiculous.’

‘There are still so many things about all this we don’t understand,’ Annie said, ‘but that’s probably because we don’t have all the facts yet.’

‘Can’t you just let it be, now it’s over and he’s dead?’ said Maureen. ‘Let *us* be? We just want to get on with our lives. To heal.’

‘But someone may have put Martin Edgeworth up to it,’ Annie said. ‘Used him.’

‘I don’t see how that could have happened,’ said Maureen. ‘Surely people are not that manipulable?’

‘You’d be surprised. With that type of killer, it could have been a

minor slight, a build-up of pressure, even over years. Some insult or rejection he perceived or misread. Some past transgression, real or imagined.'

Maureen lowered her head and sniffled.

'Do you remember Wendy Vincent?'  
Gerry asked.



Maureen looked up sharply. 'Wendy?' she repeated. 'Yes, of course I do.'

How could I forget?  
But what's that got to do with anything?  
That all happened fifty years ago.'

'You were her best friend, weren't you?'

'I like to think so.'

‘It must have been terrible for you. And so young.’

‘Yes. I was fifteen.’

‘Her killer was only brought to justice recently, a cold case solved by modern methods. DNA.’

‘I read about it.’

‘Did you know him? Frank Dowson?’

‘I knew who he was.  
He was Billy  
Dowson’s weird older  
brother.’

‘Weird?’

‘There was something  
wrong with him. He  
wasn’t all there. We  
stayed away from  
him. But I still don’t  
see what this has to  
do with anything.’

‘We’re just looking for connections,’ Gerry said. ‘However vague or distant.’

‘Might Laura have unwittingly drawn attention from the wrong sort of person?’ Annie cut in. ‘Perhaps she declined someone’s advances, something like that? Can you think of anyone?’

‘We’ve been through all that,’ said Robert. ‘Racked our brains. I think someone already told your colleagues about that cyber-stalker a few years back.

But he’s in New Zealand.’

‘We’ve checked him out thoroughly,’ said Gerry. ‘It wasn’t him,

or anything to do with him.'

'Something *could* have happened in London, I suppose, either recently or during Laura's modelling career, but if there was, it wasn't something she told us. And she usually told us most things.'

Annie doubted that very much. 'She may

not have even known about it,' she said. 'The person might never even have approached her. Perhaps a perceived slight at a party, or something like that, was enough. A colleague. A waiter.'

'If she didn't even know about it herself,' said Robert Tindall, 'then she could hardly tell anyone else about

it, could she? I'm  
sorry, but we can't  
help you any further.  
You can see my wife  
is upset. Perhaps if  
you talked to some of  
Laura's friends and  
colleagues down in  
London . . . ?'

'We've already done  
that, Mr Tindall, but  
rest assured we'll  
stick at it.'



Annie gave Gerry the nod and they stood to leave. 'I'm sorry for probing at painful memories, Mrs Tindall, but you've been most helpful. I shouldn't think we'll have to bother you any more.'

Maureen Tindall remained with her face buried in her handkerchief. Just as Robert Tindall was

leading them to the door, his wife checked the time again and reminded him of the forthcoming doctor's appointment.

'Don't worry, darling,' he said. 'We've got ages yet.'

The market square outside was dark and deserted. As Banks glanced out after having recounted his

earlier discussion with Dr Glendenning, he could see the reflections of the others gathered in AC Gervaise's office: Jenny Fuller, DCs Doug Wilson and Gerry Masterson and DI Annie Cabbot. The only significant person missing was Winsome, who had spent Christmas in Montego Bay with her parents, and would be

there for another two weeks. Terry Gilchrist had gone to visit her over there, and Banks hoped the sun, sand and sea and long cool

drinks with umbrellas were helping them get over the terrible ordeal they had endured at their friends' wedding.

After a brief pause, Gervaise said, 'As far

as I'm concerned,  
Alan, I think we've got  
enough already to get  
started investigating  
possibilities beyond  
Edgeworth. But you'll  
have to proceed  
carefully. Don't tread  
on any toes or upset  
any of the bereaved.  
Most of all, we don't  
want the newspapers  
getting hold of our  
speculations until you  
get somewhere with  
the investigation. If

there's anywhere to get. You know as well as I do how much they'd love the opportunity to tell the world how we got it wrong, or accuse us of harassing grief-stricken survivors.'

She drank some coffee. 'On the other hand, they're all still hungry for a motive, for some sort of explanation, and we haven't been able to

show them yet that Edgeworth was the monster they'd like to paint him as.

Anyway, let's carry on. There must be more. Dr Fuller?'

Jenny Fuller cast her eyes over the group. 'I've been over and over my notes, back to the textbooks, reread all your statements and

reports, read up on just about every spree killing and mass murder I can find, and I still can't make him fit. Naturally, there are so many variables. You can always get away by saying he was an exception to the rule, or that we've missed some vital piece of information, but in the light of what Alan's just told us, I don't think we have. I



think it's a strong case  
for at least  
considering other  
possibilities.  
Edgeworth doesn't  
have a dysfunctional  
background, for a  
start. And if what  
you're telling me  
about his cleaning up  
after things is true,  
that doesn't fit the  
profile, either.

Mass murderers don't  
usually bother to get

rid of all the forensic evidence they possibly can. Admittedly, they rarely have the time, but it's certainly not part of the profile. Nor do potential suicides. Frankly, I'm stumped. Besides, you need more than a dysfunctional background to make a mass murderer. Plenty of people come from backgrounds of

violence and abuse,  
for example, and  
never stray off the  
straight and narrow.  
You also need a  
series of triggers, or  
maybe something  
more like the series of  
numbers in a  
combination lock.  
Click. Click.

Click. Until the  
tumblers align and it's  
all systems go. I've  
got no idea what that

combination might be in Edgeworth's case. I'm not saying he didn't do it, just that he didn't do it as a textbook mass murderer, if you understand what I mean.

With all the care he took to misdirect us, he could have had a more complicated reason than the need to kill a lot of people.

But then why did he kill himself after taking so much care to cover his tracks? And why was it so easy to trace him through the firearms certificate? That kind of basic mistake doesn't fit with the other stuff, the extra set of clothing and so on.'

'So,' said Banks, 'the question is, if we're giving him the benefit

of the doubt when it comes to psychology, and admitting the inconsistencies of

forensic evidence, are we going to take the leap of faith and assume that the man who was up on the hill shooting at the wedding group outside St Mary's was *not* the same man we found slumped against the wall in

Martin Edgeworth's cellar?'

'I can't see any other conclusion,' said AC Gervaise. 'If Dr Fuller and Dr Glendenning are right.'

The others nodded.

'If we're going to work on the assumption that someone else shot the wedding party and also killed

Martin Edgeworth,'  
Gervaise went on,  
'then it should open  
up new lines of  
inquiry. Now we have  
a second crime and  
all the fresh thinking  
and evidence that  
brings to the  
investigation. Where  
do you suggest we  
direct our attention  
next, Alan?'

'I'd like someone to  
have a word with his



old partner, Jonathan Martell,'

Banks said. 'After all, it's only a few years since they wound down the practice, and according to Ollie Metcalfe at the White Rose, Martell and Edgeworth often met up for a jar or two. They were still pals. Martell might know something, say if Edgeworth was in

some kind of trouble or someone was trying to blackmail him, for example.'

'You think this Martell could be a suspect, sir?' DC Wilson asked.

'I wouldn't go that far,' said Banks. 'But keep an open mind. If it comes to it, if we think he merits it, we'll do a full work up on him. If

there's any hint of a motive, then we'll have him in. After all, he was Edgeworth's partner for quite a few years. Edgeworth would have trusted him. Who's to say it wasn't Martell who came knocking on his door that Saturday morning, got him down in the cellar with the guns on some pretext or other, then bashed him on the

back of the head with  
a ballpeen hammer  
and set up a phony  
suicide?’

‘And then?’ Wilson  
asked.

‘Then he put the  
second set of outer  
clothes he’d bought  
beside the body,  
rumped up a bit but  
not enough, went out  
in Edgeworth’s RAV4  
with Edgeworth’s

AR15 and shot up the wedding party, returned the people-mover, guns and all, and hurried off home.'

'So it was well planned?' Annie said.

'At a guess. If it happened that way. Whoever did it.'

'It's a possibility,' said Gervaise.

‘It’s still speculation, ma’am,’ said Banks. ‘But it’s a place to start. What we need to do is find a link between the killer and Edgeworth, and some connection between one of the victims and the killer.’

‘As I said in our previous meeting,’ Jenny cut in. ‘It could be that a war hero, a wedding, a model or

some other ingredient  
of the event could  
have acted as a  
symbol of something  
to the killer, a trigger  
that set him off, so it  
doesn't even

have to be a specific  
deed by a specific  
person he's avenging.  
I know that sounds  
vague, but . . .'

'OK,' said Banks. 'So  
maybe we're after

someone who hated models, weddings or war heroes. Or bridesmaids. Even so, we do the best we can with what limited resources we've got. Remember the scrapbook at Edgeworth's house? It was filled with cuttings and pictures of the Tindall family, more than anyone else. Not the Kemps, the bridesmaids, the maid



of honour, but the Tindalls. Annie, you and Gerry talked to them this afternoon. What were your impressions?’

‘On the whole, I’d say Robert Tindall is trying to put a brave face on things and having a tough time of it,’ said Annie. ‘Still, it’s hardly surprising, given what they’ve been through.’

Are still going through.'

'And Maureen?'

Annie glanced at Jenny Fuller. 'Without being any kind of an expert in the field, I'd say she's still severely traumatised by what happened and still grieving for her daughter.'

‘Isn’t that only natural?’ Banks said. ‘Jenny?’

‘Sure it is,’ Jenny Fuller agreed. ‘I don’t quite get what point you’re making, DI Cabbot.’

‘It isn’t easy to explain,’ Annie went on. ‘You’re absolutely right, of course.’

There's every reason she should still be grieving, taking tranquillisers, spending half the day in bed "resting".'

'Don't you think you're being a bit harsh on the woman?' Jenny said. 'Given what she's just experienced?'

'If you'd let me explain.'

‘Go ahead, Annie,’  
said Banks. Jenny  
leaned back in her  
chair and folded her  
arms.

‘Naturally, I was  
sympathetic. Gerry  
and I both were. I kept  
telling myself this  
woman has been  
through a severe  
trauma. She lost her  
only child. What could  
be worse?’

‘But?’ said Banks.

‘According to her husband, Maureen Tindall was always a bit fragile, fraught with anxiety.’

‘That business with the time,’ said Gerry.

‘Yes,’ Annie went on. ‘She seemed obsessed with punctuality. They had a doctor’s

appointment later in the afternoon. Dr Graveney. A psychiatrist –’ she glanced at Jenny ‘– and she seemed obsessed with getting there in plenty of time. She was always looking at her watch. The appointment was at least a couple of hours away.’

‘Punctuality isn’t a bad thing,’ said Jenny.

‘Especially if you’re going to see a doctor. But you’re bandying about words like “anxiety” and “obsession” with probably very little understanding of their true technical meaning.’

‘I’m just trying to give you my experience of the interview,’ Annie said. ‘I’m using the words as any



layperson would. I mean, maybe you don't, but most of us know what it's like to be anxious, perhaps even obsessed, or consumed by grief. I'm not pretending to be a psychologist or anything. I'll leave that to you.'

'The pretending?'

'You know what I mean.' Annie sniffed.

'So that's the impression we got, and I think Gerry would agree that Maureen Tindall was edgy, nervous, always worried about the time, and maybe that wasn't all caused by the recent trauma.

That's all. Not that it matters so much. And we checked with Dr Graveney. The appointment was

genuine, and she kept it.'

'There was also that business about repeating "It can't be" when we were talking about the killer maybe having a reason to hurt someone in the wedding party,' said Gerry.

'Disbelief sounds pretty reasonable to me, under the

circumstances,' said Gervaise.

'But it wasn't just that, ma'am.' Gerry glanced at Annie, who gave her the go ahead. 'It was the way she said it. It seemed to us that the mention of Wendy Vincent made her think of something, or make some sort of connection which she then refused to tell us

about. She quickly became very eager for us to move on, to leave, even, and not come back. I don't know. Maybe I'm being fanciful.'

'You think there could be something in that?' said Banks.

'I don't know. I haven't been able to find any connection with Martin Edgeworth. He

was a few years younger than Maureen Tindall, and he grew up in Lincolnshire, so I doubt there is any. And Laura wasn't even born then. But the direction of the whole inquiry seems to be changing now.'

'Indeed it does.'  
Banks finished his coffee, though it was a little too bitter for his

taste. 'What do you think about Maureen Tindall?' he asked Jenny Fuller.

'I couldn't possibly say without talking to her, but people do get hung up on punctuality and such, for example, which is a little bit different from simply being on time. It's not especially abnormal.

It may be a sign of  
general anxiety.

As for the other thing,  
who knows? I imagine  
what Gerry here is  
trying to say is that  
she thinks there was  
something about  
Maureen Tindall's  
past, or her  
daughter's or  
husband's past, that  
she didn't want to  
touch upon, was  
maybe worried you



would uncover, so she changed the subject.'

'That's what it felt like,' said Gerry.

'Well, we can't always trust our feelings on these matters,' said Jenny. 'It

bears further examination, though, I'd say.'

'OK,' said Banks.

'Well done, the two of

you. Gerry, do you think you can work your magic and get us some more background on that old murder, dig even deeper than you dug before?’

‘I’ll do my best, sir.’

‘Doug, you can also keep working on the old dental practice for now, ex-patients and so on. Who knows,

something could have happened there.

Perhaps Edgeworth made a mistake and ruined someone's

smile, or sexually assaulted a female patient under

anaesthetic. It

happens. I might

wander back up to the club tomorrow and

talk to Geoff McLaren the manager.

According to Ollie

Metcalfe at the White

Rose, he was a drinking buddy of Edgeworth's. I keep thinking that if Edgeworth didn't do it but his guns did, then the club's a good place to start looking.'

'Another thing,' said AC Gervaise. 'You mentioned the extra clothes and the use of a hammer, Alan.'

‘Yes. I was just about to get to that.’

‘Well, let me pip you to the post. Show you I’ve still got what it takes.’

Gervaise smiled.  
‘What brand were they? The clothes.’

‘They’re from Walkers’ Wearhouse. Their own brand.’

‘Then we need to check with all branches of Walkers’ Wearhouse. I know it’s a very large and popular chain, but we should be able to manage it. And someone needs to go down to the evidence locker first thing tomorrow and find out if Edgeworth had a ballpeen hammer in his tool chest, and if so, could it have been

used to cause the  
blow on his head. DI  
Cabbot, can you  
supervise that?

There may still be  
minute traces of  
blood.'

'Certainly,' said Annie.

'Let's call it a night,  
then,' Gervaise said.  
'We've all got more  
than enough to keep

us busy from  
tomorrow on.'

There was a letter  
waiting for Banks  
when he got home  
after the meeting,  
along with the  
circulars, bills and the  
latest copy of  
*Gramophone*  
magazine. It was  
handwritten,  
postmarked  
Scarborough, and  
there was an almost



illegible address in the top left-hand corner that he could just about make out was in Filey. He didn't get many real letters these days. He put the junk on the table by the door and took *Gramophone* and the letter with him into the kitchen. Ray was stopping over with friends in the Lake District tonight, Banks remembered, and he

was glad to have the  
cottage to himself for  
an evening. Not that  
he minded Ray  
staying there while he  
found a suitable home  
of his own, and the  
cooking was a definite  
plus, but it was good  
to have the  
conservatory to  
himself again,

the chance to relax  
and listen to whatever  
music he wanted to

hear. Ray wasn't much of a classical fan. He loved sixties' rock and jazz, mostly, which was fine, but Banks still missed his Schubert, Shostakovich and Beethoven. When he had tried to play a Borodin string quartet or some Chopin nocturnes, Ray hadn't grumbled or made any comment, he had simply talked all the

way through it as if it were mere background music.

Luckily, there was some of Ray's excellent lasagne left over from the other night, and Banks stuck it in the microwave, then he poured himself a glass of Primitivo and walked through to the entertainment room. He hadn't bothered

tidying up since Ray had been around, and there were books, CD jewel cases and DVD boxes scattered around on just about every available surface. He had recently bought a disc of Alice Coote singing French *mélodies*, so he put that on, making sure it was routed through the speakers in the conservatory. He couldn't

understand sung  
French very well,  
except for a few lines  
of Françoise Hardy  
and Jacques Brel, but  
he enjoyed the music  
of the language. And  
the sweetness of the  
singer's voice, of  
course.

After the team  
meeting, he was more  
convinced than ever  
that there was  
something fishy about

the whole St Mary's business. Even AC Gervaise seemed to agree, and he had expected more resistance from her. True, profiles aren't always accurate, and Jenny had quite reasonably complained that she didn't have enough to go on, but the comparison between what they knew of spree killers or mass

murderers and what they had been able to discover about Martin Edgeworth's character, life and actions just didn't match up. Then there were the forensic and pathology details. It might be a long haul ahead, but there had to be a way of getting to the bottom of it.

In the meantime,  
Banks was curious



about the letter, which lay on top of *Gramophone* on the table beside him. He turned on the reading lamp, which reflected in the windows, effectively blotting out the dark mass of the hills outside.

Banks held the letter in one hand and tapped its sharp edge on the palm of his other, stretching the

anticipation. He didn't recognise the handwriting. Right now, it could be anything – good news, bad news, a death, a birth, a favour asked, an offer, a piece of news that could change his life – but as soon as he opened it, its promise would evaporate and it would simply be what it was.

There would be no further room for speculation. It could be from one of his few surviving school friends, for example. Or maybe it was from someone he had come across on a case he had worked. Or a distant uncle leaving him a fortune.

The longer he held it unopened, the longer the tension would last.

Eventually, though, he gave up teasing himself and opened it as carefully as he could, in case

he needed to decipher the address in the top left corner for a reply.

In the light of the lamp, he read the surprisingly clear script: Dear Alan,

I hope you don't mind me writing to you out of the blue like this. It took me a while to track down your address, but I finally managed. Maybe I should have been a detective, ha-ha!

First let me explain. I'm Julie Drake, Emily's best friend from uni – or university, as we used to call it back in the

day. You might remember me as we used to hang around together quite a lot in the pubs and at gigs. I remember you were with us when we saw Bowie live just days before Ziggy Stardust came out. The place was three-quarters empty and he invited everyone to come up to the front. I remember he sat on the edge of the stage

at one point and sang 'Amsterdam' with only an acoustic guitar. We were so close I could have touched him. My boyfriend at the time was Andy Mathers, and I think the two of you got along OK. You had similar tastes in music, at any rate, and I remember you both enjoyed a pint or two when you could afford it. Andy and I split up in third year.

But that's enough about me. The reason I'm writing to you is that Emily and I remained close friends until the very end. I thought I saw you at her funeral, but when I came out after the service you were gone, and my eyes were bleary with crying. Still, I'm sure it was you I saw. I won't say you haven't changed, but it's odd



how you can  
sometimes  
immediately  
recognise someone  
you haven't seen for  
going on forty years.  
At least it happens to  
me often enough. I  
even saw Andy a  
couple of years ago  
and recognised him  
immediately, despite  
his lack of hair and  
the extra stone or two  
around the middle.

I spent a lot of time with Emily in her last few weeks, even held her hand at the end, and I have to tell you first of all that she was unbelievably brave.

The cancer had got to her liver by then and we knew there was no hope. Of course, most of the time I wasn't the only one there, her family was very supportive, but we did

get a lot of time alone together, just the two of us sitting, listening to music sometimes. She still loved Bowie best of all and she cried buckets when he died, but she'd come to like classical music as well, and it was Schubert's string quintet she wanted at the end. Mostly we just spent our time talking, talking, talking (you must remember I

could never shut up!).  
Sometimes because  
of the morphine she  
was given to  
rambling, and a lot of  
her thoughts seemed  
to go back to years  
ago when we all knew  
each other. She  
spoke about you a lot,  
both in her lucid and

rambling moments. I  
think in some way she  
always had a special  
love for you despite

the years apart. I remember thinking when I was around you all that time ago that as a couple you emanated a special sort of love, but that's just romantic old me being sentimental with hindsight.

I suppose by now you must be wondering when I'm going to get to the point. If there is a point. Well, there is.

I just thought you'd like to know that she didn't forget you. She felt guilty about breaking up like that, and there are some things she wanted me to tell you, or at least she said it would be OK to tell you after she'd gone, but they're not things I can write in a letter. I retired from teaching a while ago, and my husband and I are

running a B & B not too far from you, in Filey. If you get the chance to come out here sometime soon, I'd be happy to have a chat. Come anytime.

It's off season. Just give me a ring first. My husband Marcel is a superb chef and he will cook us a fantastic meal.

In the meantime, I hope you think of Emily sometimes and remember her with as much fondness and love as I do. She was one of the special ones.

Best Wishes XX

Julie

She added her email, address and phone number in a



postscript. Filey wasn't that far, and Banks was sure he could manage a quick visit. He remembered Julie Drake quite well. As best girlfriends often were, she and Emily were different as chalk and cheese. Julie was – or had been back then – a vivacious, flirtatious brunette who often seemed quite manic in proximity to Emily's

cool blond presence. Julie had an attractive full figure: large breasts, a pert nose and big eyes. She favoured low-cut tops to reveal a tempting glimpse of cleavage. She also had a reputation for chasing the boys that Banks had often felt was undeserved. He had once seen her crying alone at a party when she thought no one

was watching, while the boy she had come with was chatting up a prettier and more sophisticated girl, and more often than not, she went home alone.

Banks felt that she probably tried too hard and set her sights on the wrong men.

He could recognise the signs. After all, he

had set his sights on  
the wrong woman  
often enough.

Banks felt his eyes  
prickle as he put the  
letter aside.

Schubert's string  
quintet, the very same  
piece of music Mahler  
had asked to hear on  
his deathbed, or so  
Linda Palmer had told  
him. He wondered  
whether Emily had  
known that.

Reading Julie's words transported him back over forty years.

Romantic and sentimental, indeed.

He remembered the last time he had seen Emily. They had met in Hyde Park on a glorious summer's day in 1973.

Everyone was out enjoying the sunshine. Lovers embraced on the grass, children kicked

plastic footballs  
around, businessmen  
sat with their jackets  
off and shirtsleeves  
rolled up, reading  
newspapers, and  
shorthand typists  
adjusted their office  
clothing as tastefully  
as possible to get  
lunchtime tans.

Banks was propped  
up against a tree not  
far from the  
Serpentine reading a

second-hand  
paperback edition of  
*The Exorcist*. When  
he saw Emily walking  
towards him, he felt  
an immediate sense  
of foreboding. She  
had been distant and  
moody of late, and  
there was something  
in her expression, in  
the way she smiled at  
him, that made him  
feel apprehensive. It  
wasn't long before  
she was telling him

that she didn't think they should see each other any more, that things had run their course and they were going in different directions and neither of them would be truly happy if they carried on together. He didn't understand any of what she was saying. They hadn't had a fight – they rarely fought, in fact – and in his mind things had



been going well,  
except for the  
moodiness. He  
guessed that perhaps  
there was someone  
else, but Emily swore  
blind there was no  
one.

She just needed a  
break, some distance  
between them.

In the end, it didn't  
matter what Banks

said, whether he understood it or not.

The result was the same. It was over. Back to drunken nights at someone's party, half-hearted fumbblings on a pile of lumpy coats in the spare bedroom.

Hangovers and guilt in the morning. Then came the lonely nights of Leonard

Cohen albums and  
cheap wine by  
candlelight. That went  
on pretty much until  
he decided to drop  
out of his business  
studies course and  
join the police. He  
wasn't even sure why  
he did that to this day.  
Maybe it started as an  
act of rebellion and a  
cure for heartbreak,  
like joining the  
Foreign Legion. His  
father hated him for it,

and his mother only managed a fair job of pretending to approve until the first time he got his name in the papers years later. But it had turned out to be a good life for him; he couldn't imagine having taken any other course. He certainly wasn't cut out for business, and he'd made a mess of most of his relationships.

Emily had no doubt been better off without him. He was convinced he had an emotional blind spot somewhere. He remembered that he had even thought all was well years later between him and his wife Sandra, up to the point when she left him for another man. He didn't know why that had happened, either. It wasn't that

he had failed to lead  
an unexamined life,  
just that his life had  
failed the  
examination.

He put the letter aside  
and guzzled some  
wine. Alice Coote was  
singing 'Le spectre de  
la rose', one of his  
favourite songs from  
*Les nuits d'été* to the  
sound of rain running  
down the window  
outside. Banks drank

and listened, mulling over the letter as he did so. Did he really want to talk to Julie Drake? He decided that he did. He had to admit that he was curious as to what Emily might have said about him as she lay dying some forty years after they had been in love for a while.

When Alice Coote finished, he went back into the entertainment room to dig out his copy of the string quintet, one of the last pieces of music Schubert had written in his short life.

## **Chapter 9**

The Edgeworth house was still a crime scene when Banks pulled up the following



morning, although the investigation had been scaled down. An officer stood guard in the taped-off drive, and Banks had to show his warrant card to get past him. Banks wondered who the young PC had pissed off to be given such a boring task.

‘Anyone else been around?’ he asked.

‘Nobody, sir. The CSIs come and go, but that’s about it. And the pathologist was here. Dr Glendenning.’

‘Nobody trying to sneak in?’

‘A couple of curious neighbours, but I sent them packing, sir.’

‘Get their names and addresses?’

The young officer  
seemed horror-  
stricken. 'Nobody said  
to do that, sir.'

'Don't worry about it.  
Just remember in  
future, right?'

The young man  
swallowed. 'Yes, sir.'

Banks ducked under  
the tape and walked  
into the back garden,  
which was separated

from the hill beyond  
by a wooden fence  
and a low hedge.  
There were no trees  
to spoil the view,  
which was  
magnificent, even in  
the gloom of the day.

At least the rain had  
stopped.

The hillside stretched  
up gently at first, then  
became steeper and  
steeper until its

summit was lost in the clouds. Banks noticed a gate in the back fence, and beyond it a well-worn path meandered up the hillside, disappearing into the mist like the hill itself. The scene reminded Banks of an ancient Chinese painting he had seen in an art gallery: tiny human figures walking on a similar path halfway up a

huge mountain whose peak was lost in mist. Perhaps this wasn't on such a grand scale, but it was impressive enough.

So this was where Edgeworth went for his walks every Saturday and Sunday morning, according to Ollie Metcalfe. The whole village had been questioned, and nobody had seen

Edgeworth since his visit to the White Rose on Friday night. Could he have gone for his walk on Saturday morning before the wedding and met someone up there, either by arrangement or by clever planning on the other's part? If so, what had transpired? Had he invited this person into his home? If so, why?

Edgeworth's people-mover had been seen by a couple of villagers just after midday on Saturday, heading for the main Swainsdale road, which would have taken him eventually to Fortford and St Mary's. Nobody had

seen the driver's face, as the windows were tinted, so he couldn't definitely be identified



as Martin Edgeworth.  
It could have been  
anyone.

The house was  
locked, but Banks had  
brought a key, and  
after leaving his  
overcoat in the  
vestibule, he entered  
the kitchen. It was as  
he had last seen it on  
the night they had  
discovered Martin  
Edgeworth's body.  
Somebody had

washed the cups they used for their tea, but other than that, nothing had changed: the granite-topped island, the big red Aga, the stainless-steel fridge and freezer units.

As Banks remembered, it had been immaculate, all surfaces polished or sparkling. A faint hint

of antibacterial  
cleaner in the air.

As he made his way  
quickly around the  
upstairs rooms, he  
noticed the CSIs had  
taken Edgeworth's  
filing cabinets,  
computer, printer, his  
clothes, the drawers  
from his study desk  
and just about  
everything else they  
thought might provide  
some evidence. But

all Banks thought about was the neatly folded pile of dark clothing that yielded neither a hair nor a drop of sweat. Both Terry Gilchrist and Gareth Bishop had seen a slim man of medium height wearing dark clothing and a black cap, albeit from a distance. Edgeworth had been slim and of medium height. Did that mean

the killer had bought two identical sets of clothes? It made sense. One set for him to wear and dispose of later at his leisure, and the other to leave beside Edgeworth's body to make him appear guilty. If he had been foolish enough to buy both sets of clothes in the same size at the same time, in the same branch, then

there was a chance  
the sales clerk might  
remember him.

The killer had been a  
little sloppy, otherwise  
Banks wouldn't have  
been standing where  
he was, but whoever  
did it would no doubt  
have counted on the  
police being so  
overjoyed that they  
had solved their  
crime, caught their  
killer, that they

wouldn't dig any deeper than they had to. In that, he hadn't been entirely wrong. Until now. The only real risk was that someone might have paid a call on Edgeworth while the shooting was taking place, and found the body.

But that was most unlikely. He lived alone, and if someone

had knocked on the door and got no answer, that person would have gone away, only adding to the evidence that Edgeworth was out shooting the wedding party. A visitor would hardly have entered the house uninvited and discovered a body.

Finally, Banks stepped down into the



musty, dank cellar and gave a shiver.

As he had told Dr Glendenning, all Edgeworth's tools had been taken away, but nobody had got around to scrubbing away the blood spatter yet, and it was easy enough for Banks to find the exact spot where the body had lain. On the surface, everything

had been consistent with a self-administered gunshot. Banks could visualise Edgeworth sliding to the floor, leaning back against the wall, legs stretched out, putting the gun in his mouth and pulling the trigger.

Only it was beginning to appear very much as if it hadn't happened that way

at all. Now Banks imagined a shadowy figure hitting Edgeworth from behind with a hammer, shifting him to the floor, into position, then placing the gun in his hand and carefully positioning it in his mouth so that the bullet smashed through that part of the skull he had hit with the hammer.

He bent to examine the spot on the wall where the back of Edgeworth's head had hit. The forensics team had finished their tests, so he knew it was OK to touch the surface, and he found that Glendenning was right. The whitewashed stone was smooth around there, certainly not rough or bumpy

enough to cause an indentation like the one in Edgeworth's skull.

He stood back and tried to imagine what had gone on in the mind of Edgeworth's killer. He had probably taken Edgeworth by surprise, and if the killer intended to fake a suicide, he wouldn't want to risk poison or sleeping tablets in a

cup of tea. He would have known that the police would carry out toxicology tests and that anything unusual would be a flagged. So he waited until Edgeworth's back was turned and stunned him with a blow to the back of the head, then arranged him on the floor against the wall and shot him. It was certainly a plausible explanation.

If someone else had done it and assumed Edgeworth's identity, then Edgeworth must have been killed *before* the church massacre. Even Dr Glendenning had admitted this could have easily been the case. There were no indications in the post-mortem that his body had been restrained in any way. To make everything

work, the killer must have got into the house in the morning, done his business in the cellar, then driven off in Edgeworth's RAV4, with his AR15, wearing clothing identical to that he had left in the cellar neatly piled by the body. And the odds were that Edgeworth had let him in, or taken him back there after meeting on a



walk, for example, as there had been no signs of forced entry.

And if the killer had gone to such lengths and thought things out that much, Banks was probably dealing with a more intelligent person than someone who had simply snapped and started shooting people at random. Which meant there was likely to be

a motive somewhere,  
something very  
important that he  
didn't know yet,  
hidden away in all  
this, however deep it  
may be buried and  
however tricky it might  
be to find.

Banks found Roger  
behind the bar again  
when he called at the  
Upper Swainsdale  
District Rifle and  
Pistol Club that Friday

afternoon. 'Boss  
around today?' he  
asked.

Roger regarded him  
as if he were mad,  
then recognition  
dawned. 'Oh, it's you  
again,' he said. 'Sorry.  
As a matter of fact, Mr  
McLaren *is* in today.  
I'll just

let him know you're  
here.'

As Roger disappeared through a door behind the bar, Banks leaned on the polished dark wood and waited. The dining area was much busier than on his previous visit, and most of the tables were occupied by late lunchers. Banks tried to pick out George and Margie Sykes among the diners but couldn't see them.

He wondered what drew people to shooting, never having had much inclination or aptitude for it, himself, though he had completed a number of firearms courses both during his training and later. It was probably something you couldn't imagine people enjoying unless you actually took it up yourself, like

trainspotting or  
running marathons.  
Maybe it was  
somewhere between  
the absorption and  
soothing influence of  
a hobby and full-  
throttled adrenalin-  
fuelled obsession with  
speed or distance.

‘This way. Second on  
the left.’

Roger held the bar  
flap up and Banks

walked through. The business section of the club wasn't quite as well appointed as the public area, but everything was recently polished, and the air smelled of fresh lemons. Not a whiff of cordite anywhere. Banks walked along the corridor past an open storeroom then tapped on the door marked MANAGER. A

reedy voice bade him enter.

Geoff McLaren sat behind a large desk of imitation teak. At least, Banks assumed it was imitation. Real teak was prohibitively expensive these days. It was a tidy desk, and the laptop computer that sat on it was closed. McLaren's large bald head shone as if it had been



polished as recently as the woodwork, and his handshake was a little too damp and limp for Banks's liking.

'Can I get you anything?' McLaren asked, when both were settled in their chairs.

'Nothing, thanks,' Banks said. 'I don't think I'll take up much of your time.'

McLaren's expression and voice turned funeral-director deep and sympathetic. 'It's about poor Martin, isn't it, I assume? What a terrible, terrible tragedy.'

'Did you know Martin Edgeworth personally, or was it merely in your professional capacity?'

McLaren made a pyramid with his fingertips on the desk. 'I'd like to think Martin and I were friends, or at least very good acquaintances. We lunched together on occasion. Not here, of course. My place of business. That wouldn't do. But at his local down in Swainshead sometimes. In

Eastvale once or twice.

When he had the dental practice, I was a patient. Martin was one of our longest-standing members, and he helped out with a lot of the committee work, competitions, legal paperwork, that sort of thing.'

‘Vetting new members?’

McLaren pursed his lips, then spoke. ‘On occasion. But only in the preliminary stages, you understand. The rest has been done with the correct legal authorities, by the book.’

‘Of course.’

‘We take law and safety very seriously here, Mr Banks.’

‘I’m sure you do. Did Mr Edgeworth vet any new applications for you recently, or perhaps propose any new members?’

‘It doesn’t exactly work that way, but no, he didn’t.’

‘Anything unusual at all happen?’

‘Not that I can think of.’ McLaren frowned. ‘What sort of thing were you thinking of?’

‘Any unpleasant incidents. Arguments. Accidents. Threats. Thefts.’

‘No, nothing of that sort. We run a tight ship.’

‘So nobody got drunk and shot up the restaurant?’

McLaren’s smile was little more than a polite flicker. ‘Contrary to what a lot of people seem to think, it’s not exactly the wild west out here. We don’t permit any firearms in the restaurant and bar area. They have to be securely locked in the specified areas under



the specified conditions when not out in use out on the ranges.'

'Very wise. What did you and Martin Edgeworth talk about when you met up for lunch?'

'Just things in general. Club gossip, politics, business, new products, that sort of thing.'

‘Is there much club gossip?’

‘Well, it’s only the sort that’s interesting if you know the members involved.’

‘Affairs, that sort of thing?’

‘Hardly. A few members do bring their wives for meals and functions and so forth, but we’re not

the sort to go leaving  
our car keys in a dish  
by the door.'

'Good lord, do people  
really do that?'

McLaren smiled. 'I  
wouldn't know. It's just  
something I  
remember from an old  
movie.'

'I think they have  
more sophisticated

methods these days.  
Apps and the like.'

'I'm sure they do,'  
said McLaren. He was  
starting to shift in his  
chair and drum his  
fingers on the desk.

'All right,' Banks went  
on, 'I realise that all  
this probably has  
nothing to do with  
your club at all, and  
believe me, though  
I'm no fan of firearms,

I have no desire to cause any discomfort for those who are. But if Martin Edgeworth *did* take his AR15 rifle to Fortford on the day in question, if he did kill five people

and wound four, then I'm sure you can understand that it would be in all our best interests to know why.'

‘Of course. But I’m afraid I don’t believe he did what you say.’

‘You don’t?’

‘Not at all. You didn’t know him. If you had done, you wouldn’t even be suggesting anything of the kind.’

‘Appearances can be deceptive, Mr McLaren. People

found Ted Bundy  
charming.'

'For heaven's sake, it  
wasn't like that. I've  
heard all about the  
charming and  
convincing  
psychopaths. We've  
had one or two people  
of that ilk attempting  
to join even during my  
time here. People I  
wouldn't trust with a  
firearm as far as I  
could throw them. But

not Martin. He was straight as a die.'

Banks had resigned himself for yet another eulogy on Martin Edgeworth, and maybe, he realised, he was simply visiting the club again for reassurance that he was right to believe in Edgeworth's innocence himself, that he was pushing at people like



McLaren to test the strength of his own belief. But there was still the matter of a point of contact between Edgeworth and the real killer, and the club seemed to fit the bill nicely for that. Here were plenty of people who both knew Edgeworth and knew their way around weapons. 'I'd like their names, if possible,' he said.

‘What names?’

‘These people you wouldn’t trust with a firearm as far as you could throw them.’

‘Oh, for heaven’s sake, that was just an off-the-cuff comment.’

‘So there haven’t been any such applicants?’

‘I’m not saying we don’t turn people

down, but there's usually more to it than my personal feelings about them.'

'If you have a record of the names of these people you've turned away, or if you remember any of them, I'd still very much appreciate a list, along with a list of your active members. Remember, I can get

a court order if I need one.'

'That won't be necessary. I'll see what I can do. I'm as concerned as you are that we get to the bottom of what happened that day.'

'Thank you. Did Martin Edgeworth ever put forward any of these applicants you rejected?'

‘No.’

‘Did he ever  
recommend anyone  
for membership at  
all?’

‘Not that I recall.’

‘And you know most  
of your members  
personally?’

‘All of them. Not as  
well as I knew Martin  
but well enough. It’s  
not that

large a membership.’  
He leaned back in his  
chair. ‘Am I to take it  
that you’re thinking  
along the same lines  
as I am? That Martin  
is, in fact, innocent?’

‘The investigation is  
still ongoing,’ said  
Banks. ‘There are a  
number of issues we  
have to clear up for  
ourselves, seeing that  
Martin Edgeworth  
committed suicide

and can't explain his actions or motives to us. I can't really say much more than that at this stage.'

'Of course,' said McLaren. 'But I'm afraid I can't help you. And I believe you know that I would if I could. If it would help Martin's reputation in any way.' He paused. 'There was only one little thing that struck

me as at all odd  
lately.'

'Oh? What was that?'

'I wouldn't want you to  
get your hopes up. It's  
probably nothing. But  
once, over lunch,  
Martin asked me if it  
was possible for  
someone with a  
criminal record to get  
a firearms certificate  
and join the club, if  
he'd paid his debt to



society and so on,  
and his crime hadn't  
involved firearms or  
violence, of course.'

'I'm not that well up  
on the law in this  
area,' said Banks, 'but  
I would assume that it  
isn't. All right, that is.'

'And you'd be correct.  
Though if the  
sentence was under  
three years and the  
police and doctors

offer no objections,  
then it can be done.  
Which is what I told  
Martin. It's not even a  
matter of the letter of  
the law. As a club, as  
a respectable  
organisation, we  
wouldn't accept as a  
member anyone with  
a criminal record, and  
nor would we be  
required to.'

'Do you have any idea  
who he was talking

about?’

‘No. The subject was never mentioned again. I’m not sure he was referring to anyone in particular.’

‘Then why ask?’

‘I don’t know. Just wondering, I suppose.’

‘When was this?’

‘Not very long before .  
. . you know. Say,  
early last November.’

‘Where?’

‘Over lunch in the  
White Rose.’

‘Was he with  
anyone?’

‘There were only the  
two of us. I mean,  
there were others in  
the pub, of course,  
but no one else was a

party to the conversation. And, as I said, he never mentioned the subject again. I'm sorry I can't be any more helpful, but that really is all I can tell you.'

'No, that's fine,' said Banks, standing to leave. 'You've been very helpful, Mr McLaren.'

And, in a way, Banks thought as he made his way across the gravel to his

car, he had. McLaren might not have been able to supply any useful practical information, but the simple fact that Edgeworth had been asking about a man with a criminal record joining the shooting club went a long way

towards confirming that Edgeworth had probably been a victim rather than the perpetrator. It also implied that the killer might have been grooming him, befriending him and asking for his help. One sure way of gaining someone's confidence, if you were charming and devious enough, was to be honest with him

about something like  
a prison sentence.

DC Gerry Masterson  
parked her lime-green  
Corsa behind Banks's  
Porsche and walked  
towards the front  
door. It was going on  
for ten o'clock, and  
the lights were still on  
inside Newhope  
Cottage, as well as  
the one over the front  
door, so she could  
see her way. She rang



the bell, and a few seconds later Banks opened the door. He seemed surprised to see her.

‘Gerry,’ he said. ‘What brings you all the way out here?’

‘I need to talk to you, sir. And I thought it might be better to come in person.’

Banks stood aside.  
'Come in, then. Let  
me take your coat.'

Gerry handed him her coat, which he hung on the back of the door. They were in a small room, a sort of den or study, with a two-seater sofa and reading lamp, an iMac on a desk and a small bookcase overstuffed with books. The walls were cream with light

blue trim. Banks was casually dressed in jeans and black crew-neck jumper. Gerry followed him through the kitchen, where she could smell the lingering remnants of a curry, and into the dimly lit conservatory. She didn't recognise the music that was playing, a woman singing to piano accompaniment.

'It's Lorraine Hunt Lieberson,' Banks said. 'Singing Mahler's "Liebst du um Schönheit". He wrote it as a gift for his new bride, Alma. Ray here's a bit of a philistine when it comes to classical music, and I'm trying to educate him. Don't you like it?'

'I . . . er . . . Yes, sir. It's very beautiful,

haunting.'

The other man in the room stood up and held out his hand. Gerry shook it.

'Take no notice of him, love, he's a music snob. Give me Pink Floyd any day.'

He smiled, and with a little bow, added, 'Ray Cabbot, at your service.'

‘This is DI Cabbot’s father,’ Banks said. ‘He’s staying with me until he finds a place of his own.’

He was older than Banks, Gerry noted, and with his ponytail and lined face, he reminded her of a picture of Willie Nelson she had seen on a magazine cover recently. He wore ugly baggy trousers with

pockets up and down  
the legs and a

grey sweatshirt that  
said MIAMI  
DOLPHINS in bright  
red letters on the  
front.

Ray peered at her.  
'Has anyone ever told  
you how closely you  
resemble Jane  
Morris?' he said.

‘I can’t say I’ve ever heard of her.’

‘Famous artists’ model. Pre-Raphaelite.’

‘Sorry, she’s a new one on me.’ Gerry had heard of Lizzie Siddal, and she was sick to death of hearing about her resemblance to the most famous Pre-Raphaelite model,



mostly because of her slender 'wand-like' figure and long red hair. It wasn't so much that she thought such comments inappropriate, though they often were, but she wished men could be a bit more original in their compliments, if compliments they were meant to be.

'Fascinating subject, artists' models,' Ray

Cabbot went on. 'You could write a book about them. They invariably slept with the artists, you know. It can be a very intimate relationship, being painted. Very erotic. Rossetti and Fanny Cornforth, for example. Have you ever posed?'

'I can't say it's a line of work I've ever wanted to pursue.'

‘Oh, you should. With your bones and colouring, you could —’

‘Er, Ray,’ Banks cut in, tapping his watch. ‘Weren’t you about to head off to the Dog and Gun? Folk night.’

‘Is it? Was I?’ Ray scratched his temple. ‘Ah, yes. Of course. Right. See you later, Jane. I mean Gerry.’

And he shot off  
through the kitchen  
and out of the front  
door.

‘He’s an artist. What  
can I say?’ Banks  
picked up a remote  
and turned off the  
music.

‘You didn’t have to do  
that for me, sir. I was  
enjoying it.’

‘Sure you wouldn’t prefer Pink Floyd?’

‘I wouldn’t know, sir,’ said Gerry. ‘I haven’t heard Pink Floyd. Not that I know of. I mean, I know the name, but, you know . . . I’m pleased to hear that Mahler wrote the song for his wife. It must have been a wonderful gift to receive. Nobody’s ever written a song for

me, let alone one as lovely as that.'

'Me, neither,' said Banks. 'And next time we're in the car together, remind me to play you *Ummagumma*. So what can I help you with? Would you like a glass of wine? Cup of tea? Coffee? Perhaps a wee dram of whisky?' He turned the CD player on

again with the remote  
and the beautiful  
music continued  
quietly in the  
background.

‘Nothing, thanks, sir. I  
can’t stay. I just . . .  
well, I found  
something I thought  
was interesting, and I  
wanted to tell you in  
person.’

‘You’ve got my  
attention. Go ahead.’

Gerry sat in the one of  
the wicker chairs.  
Outside, the dark  
humps of the fells

stood out in silhouette  
against the lighter  
night sky. Banks sat  
on the angled chair  
beside her and picked  
up a glass of purplish-  
red wine from the  
table between them.

‘You know you told  
me to dig a bit further



into the Wendy  
Vincent business?’

‘You were working  
late on that tonight?’

‘Yes.’

‘Then don’t keep me  
in suspense.’

Gerry turned slightly  
to face him. ‘Do you  
remember anything  
about the Wendy  
Vincent murder, sir?  
December, 1964.’

‘Even I’m not so old that I’ve been on the force that long,’ said Banks. ‘But I do believe I heard the name in the news not long ago.’

‘That’s right. I’ll get to that.’ Gerry went on, ‘Wendy Vincent was a fifteen-year-old girl who was sexually assaulted and murdered in some woods near her home

in Leeds. There were rumours that she could have been an early victim of Brady and Hindley, and more recently the press threw Jimmy Savile and Peter Sutcliffe in the mix.'

'How old would Sutcliffe have been in 1964?'

'Eighteen, sir. It's not beyond the bounds of

possibility. If they hadn't caught the real killer, that is. Frank Dowson. A couple of years back there was a piece in the papers on the fiftieth anniversary of fifth December, 1964. Just a simple retelling of an unsolved crime. That's probably why you remember the name.

The murder took place in the same part of west Leeds where Maureen Tindall lived at the time with her parents. Maureen and Wendy Vincent were the same age, went to the same school and were best friends. According to one of her teachers interviewed for the TV programme, Wendy had been playing hockey for the school

team that morning,  
and she took a short  
cut through the woods  
on her way home.  
Apparently, she had  
taken a bit of a knock  
on the field, so she  
wasn't feeling too  
great.'

'And that's where she  
was killed? The  
woods?'

'Yes, sir. Raped and  
stabbed repeatedly.'

Her body was found hidden under some branches and bracken under a bridge over the stream. There was no mention of Maureen Tindall in the articles that coincided with the fiftieth anniversary, or on the TV footage about it, but I found one passing mention on a website, quoting a local newspaper back at the time, in 1964.

The newspaper is no longer published, but the website had scans of back issues, and I found mention of Wendy's best friend there: Maureen Grainger.'

'Maureen Tindall's maiden name.'

'That's right. It was the usual sort of human interest story you'd get in a



small local weekly –  
what was the “real”  
Wendy like, what was  
her taste in clothes,  
music, did she have a  
boyfriend, what was  
she like as a friend,  
that type of thing.’

‘As I remember, that  
anniversary article  
you mentioned and  
the accompanying TV  
documentary sparked  
a reopening of the  
case, and that’s

where Frank Dowson comes in, right?’

‘Yes. First on DNA evidence, connected with a series of rapes, then he confessed. Some of the papers accused the original police investigation of a massive cock-up, sir. Please excuse my language.’

‘I remember that. But there’s no question

that they got the right man?’

‘Not as far as I can tell. Everything was done by the book. The confession was solid, the DNA evidence admissible. They’d found traces of blood and skin under Wendy’s fingernails that they were certain came from her killer. Of course, DNA typing didn’t exist at

the time, but the samples were properly stored. After the case was reopened in 2015, they were checked against other cold-case samples, and a match was found for a suspect in several rapes. He was also on the database. Frank Dowson. He'd been twenty-one at the time of Wendy's murder, and in the merchant

navy. He admitted to a number of other unsolved rapes when they brought him in. And to Wendy's murder. He got life, but he died in the prison hospital early this year. Respiratory failure.'

'That's all very interesting, Gerry, Maureen Tindall, or Grainger, being the best friend of a

murder victim fifty years ago, and the killer finally being caught after all that time, but it happens these days. You know that. How could there possibly be any connection between the Wendy Vincent murder and what happened at Laura Tindall's wedding? I mean, Frank Dowson could hardly have done it. He's dead.'

Gerry's shoulders slumped. 'I don't know, sir, but I think we should talk to Maureen Tindall again, and maybe do a bit of digging around in the West Yorkshire archives for whatever files they've still got. People who were around at the time. You never know. Someone might remember something. There might even be

a connection with  
Edgeworth.'

'Edgeworth was just a  
child in 1964.'

'Later, then. Some  
point over the last fifty  
years.'

'That's stretching it a  
bit,' said Banks.

Gerry could sense his  
frustration. She felt it,  
herself, but she also  
felt she was on to



something. 'It's the only angle I've come up with so far, sir. I drew a blank with the bridesmaids and the maid of honour. You've already interviewed Katie Shea's boyfriend and the father of her unborn child, Boyd Farrow, and his alibi stands up. The Wendy Vincent murder is all we've

got so far. However  
tenuous

the link may be.  
Otherwise, it's back to  
Martin Edgeworth.  
And Maureen Tindall  
was definitely strange  
when we talked to  
her, as if she was  
remembering a long  
way back and seeing  
a possibility she didn't  
want to admit.'

‘Are you sure that’s not just your imagination after the fact?’

‘Maybe, sir. But if her best friend was murdered, and we were asking her if she could think of anyone, no matter how long ago, who might want to do her family harm, and she seemed to remember something she wouldn’t tell us,

don't you think it's  
worth following up  
on?'

She watched as  
Banks leaned back  
and drank more wine.

'I'm still curious as to  
why you came all the  
way out here to tell  
me this,' he said.

'What you've told me  
is interesting, yes, but  
surely the telephone  
would have done?'

Gerry hesitated.  
There was something  
she hadn't told him  
yet that had made her  
irrationally determined  
to put the facts of the  
case before him in  
person.

'Well, you'll have to be  
the judge of that,  
yourself, sir,' she said.  
'It was just that a  
name came up once  
or twice in the old  
newspaper reports

from 1964, someone we might want to talk to.'

'A name?'

'Yes. One of the investigating officers. I did a bit of checking around and found out he's someone you know. I just wanted to run the name by you before going off half-cocked. I mean, with all the press criticism

of the original investigation and so on.'

'Don't tell me it was DI Chadwick again?' Banks said.

'No, sir. Definitely not Chadwick. It was someone called Gristhorpe. A DC

Gristhorpe. Apparently, he used to be your boss.'

## Chapter 10

Banks and Jenny Fuller drove down the rutted drive to ex-Detective Superintendent Gristhorpe's farmhouse outside the village of Lyndgarth late the following morning. The sky looked like a pot full of boiling oily rags, and the air was so moist that it was hard to



breathe, but at least it wasn't raining. Which was just as well. All the meteorological reports stated that the ground was so waterlogged already that one more spell of heavy rain would cause even more serious flooding.

The car splashed up water from the puddles, and Banks finally brought it to a

halt outside the back door. He hadn't been to visit the old man in quite a while, but not much had changed. The drystone wall that went nowhere and fenced in nothing still ran through his large back garden, but ended jaggedly and abruptly.

There had been no decent weather for working on it lately. It

was Gristhorpe's hobby – he said it was therapeutic, kept him calm and focused – and whenever he came to the end of his allotted pile of stones, he dismantled the wall then mixed them up like a bag of dominoes, adding a few new ones, and started all over again.

The green paint on the heavy back door

was so fresh Banks  
could smell it.

He rang the bell. They  
didn't have long to  
wait before it opened  
and the tall, bulky  
figure of Detective  
Superintendent  
Gristhorpe stood  
there beckoning them  
in, wearing a pair of  
old brown cords and a  
dark woolly jumper.

‘Well, look at you, lass,’ he said to Jenny. ‘It’s been years since I last saw you, and you’ve hardly changed at all. You’re still a right bobby-dazzler.’

Jenny blushed and gave him a hug. ‘You silver-tongued old devil. It’s been a long time. How are you?’

‘Can’t complain,  
though I wouldn’t  
recommend old age,’  
said Gristhorpe as he  
led them into his  
wood-panelled, book-  
lined living room and  
bade them sit in the  
worn leather  
armchairs. There was  
a fire crackling in the  
hearth and a book on  
the table beside  
Gristhorpe’s chair.  
Thomas Hardy’s *The  
Mayor of*

*Casterbridge*, Banks noticed. So the old man was still rereading the classics.

‘First, tea.’ Gristhorpe rubbed his hands together. ‘Then talk.’ He disappeared into the kitchen.

Jenny smiled at Banks. ‘It brings back so many memories, just seeing him again.’

Hearing his voice.’  
Her eyes were  
shining.

‘How long *has* it  
been?’ Banks asked.

‘More years than I’d  
care to remember.’

Banks stared into the  
flames in silence,  
thinking about time  
and age and Emily  
and death, then  
Gristhorpe



reappeared with the tea and mugs on a tray. He moved his book and set the tray down on the table, rubbing his hands together.

‘We’ll let it mash for a while first.’

Gristhorpe eased himself into his chair. Banks thought he noticed a grimace of pain flash briefly

across his features.  
The old man always did suffer from back problems and a touch of arthritis. Otherwise, he seemed hale and hearty. He had the same weathered, pock-marked face, and the unruly thatch of hair might have turned a bit greyer and thinner since the last time they met, but it was still mostly all there.

When the tea was ready, Gristhorpe poured them each a mug, opened a tin of ginger nut biscuits and sat down again, cradling the mug on his lap. 'You mentioned something on the telephone about the Wendy Vincent case,' he said to Banks.

'Yes. It came up in some research Gerry

– that's DC Masterson  
– was doing on the  
wedding shooting.'

'Nasty business that.  
But I thought it was all  
over and done with. I  
thought you got your  
man?'

'We're not exactly  
sure about that.'

'The man we found  
didn't match any  
profile I could come

up with for a mass murderer or spree killer,' Jenny added. 'Not that such things are always an accurate guide – I'd be the first to admit – but there are certain parameters.'

'Exception to the rule?'

'Could be,' Jenny admitted. 'But I think Alan also has a

number of forensic issues and other concerns.'

'When you add it all together,' Banks said, 'I think the case merits further investigation.'

He told Gristhorpe about Dr Glendenning's doubts and added a few of his own. Gristhorpe took a mouthful of tea

and dunked his ginger biscuit as he listened.

When Banks had finished, Gristhorpe frowned. 'I'll go along with you for the time being,' he said.

'Maybe it does deserve a bit more attention. But where does Wendy Vincent come into it? I remember that case well. It was one of my very first, and it was a

complete bloody disaster. It still galls me to this day, even though they finally caught the bastard. We should have had the gumption to question Frank Dowson back at the time of the crime – it's not as if he was unknown to us – but he was a merchant seaman, and nobody told us he was in the area at the time.'



‘When your name came up,’ Banks said, ‘Gerry found your connection with me, and she thought I might want your name kept out of it. So she came to me with the story first, in person.’

‘She thought I might resent my failure being broadcast around again?’

‘It may have crossed her mind. She’s young. And she doesn’t know you like I do.’

‘She’ll probably go far, then.’ Gristhorpe slurped some tea. His eyes twinkled.

‘One of the members of the wedding was Maureen Tindall, née Grainger,’

Banks went on. ‘DC Masterson’s discovered in the course of her research that she was Wendy Vincent’s best friend.’

‘That’s right. I remember her. Pretty young thing in a flower-patterned frock.

Nervous as hell. And clearly very upset.

She was at the wedding?’

‘Mother of the bride.’

‘Dead?’

‘Unharmmed.’

‘Then why make the connection?’

‘I don’t know,’ said Banks. ‘All I know is that I suspect there might be one, and I’m not a hundred per

cent convinced that  
Martin Edgeworth was  
responsible for the  
shooting.'

'You're not trying to  
say that someone  
shot Maureen  
Grainger's daughter  
because of what  
happened to Wendy  
Vincent over fifty  
years ago, are you?'

'I'm not sure what I'm  
saying. Why don't you

tell me about it?’

‘We worked on the assumption that it was a crime of opportunity.’

‘Most likely it was,’ said Banks. ‘But why did Frank Dowson kill Wendy Vincent after raping her?’

‘You know as well as I do, Alan,’ said Jenny,

‘that rapists often kill their victims.’

‘Not always,’ Banks said. ‘Unless they’re sexual psychopaths. And usually, if they do, it’s a matter of identification.’

‘Which is exactly what it was in this case,’ said Gristhorpe.

‘Wendy Vincent did know Frank Dowson. Not well, but certainly

well enough to recognise him, to know who he was. He lived on the same estate. He was the older brother of someone she knew. When they finally caught up with Dowson a couple of years ago, he confessed to a number of other rapes, but denied any more murders.'



‘The others were strangers?’ Jenny said.

‘Aye.’

‘Was there any gossip about Wendy Vincent?’ Banks asked. ‘Did she have any sort of a reputation to make Dowson think she’d be easy, or asking for it?’

Anything that might  
make him believe she  
was sexually  
available?’

‘Good lord, no,’ said  
Gristhorpe. ‘Quite the  
opposite. Young  
Wendy was an angel,  
by all accounts.  
Sunday school,  
Brownies, the whole  
kit and caboodle.

Did well at school,  
good at sports. Pretty

much held a  
dysfunctional  
household together by  
herself. There'd been  
problems, social  
services involved, that  
sort of thing. The  
parents were  
alcoholics. But Wendy  
was a nice kid.  
Everyone said so.'

'Is it possible that he  
might not have  
intended to kill Wendy  
Vincent, but that she

surprised him by  
struggling?’

‘He was certainly a strong lad, and one of those who didn’t know his own strength. But he raped her then stabbed her five times, Alan. There wasn’t much of a struggle. I’d hardly say he didn’t know exactly what he was doing. You were right first time. He knew

she'd be able to identify him. And that's what the court believed as well, fifty years later, despite the sneaky defence barrister trying to claim diminished responsibility.'

'Frank Dowson was mentally challenged?' Jenny asked.

'He had a very low IQ. But he knew what

rape and murder  
were. At least he  
knew how to commit  
them.'

'Can you remember  
what happened that  
day?' Banks asked.

'As if it were  
yesterday. Happens  
when you get older,  
you know, Alan.

Yesterday becomes a  
blur, but the distant

past comes sharp into focus. I remember all my cases, and Wendy Vincent was one of the first, like I said. I was a callow DC working in West Yorkshire.'

'Do you remember anyone called Chadwick, a DI? Was he involved in this case at all?'

'I knew Chadwick, but he wasn't on the Wendy Vincent case. I never worked with him, but I heard things. I don't even think he was around at the time. Always thought he was a bit iffy. Detective Superintendent Lindsay was running the investigation, and I was working mostly with DI Rattigan and DS



Saunders. Decent coppers, all of them. Of course, there were plenty of others involved, plainclothes and uniformed. There was a huge search for the girl, then a manhunt for her killer, but by then Dowson was back at sea, and as far as we knew he'd always been there.'

'How did it begin?'

‘We got a phone call from Wendy’s parents. Her father, if I remember rightly. They didn’t have a phone in their house, so he had to walk to the nearest telephone box. That’s before they all got vandalised.’

‘When was this?’

‘About seven in the evening. They’d been

expecting her home to  
make their

tea. She was playing  
hockey for the school  
in the morning, then  
there was a lunch  
afterwards at school  
for the team. Teatime  
at home was half past  
five.

Regular as clockwork.  
They assumed she'd  
be knocking about  
with her mates in the

afternoon, but when she wasn't home by then, they got worried. By seven they were even more worried. It wasn't like her. Wendy was a good girl. They got in touch with Maureen's parents, who said that Maureen hadn't seen Wendy that day. Maureen wasn't a hockey player, by the way, so she'd been visiting her gran in

Thornhill, near  
Bradford, and not at  
the game. Then they  
got really worried.  
Being December, it  
was dark by late  
afternoon, of course,  
and it had started  
raining.'

'Then what?'

'The usual. Naturally,  
as the family was  
known to us through  
social services, we

searched the house  
and questioned the  
parents pretty  
thoroughly. You know  
as well as I do, Alan,  
that as often as not  
it's the best place to  
start, however callous  
it might seem. But  
they were convincing,  
even though it was  
obvious to anyone  
they were drunk.  
Pretty much everyone  
who talked to us  
believed that Wendy

would never run away from home or do anything like that. She was a good kid, despite her tough home life. You could tell. You can almost always tell. Next we checked with all her school friends and teammates. Nobody had seen her after she left the school canteen to go home. We mapped out the route, and instead of

taking the main roads and residential streets, she took the short cut through the woods. This involved walking down a narrow treelined lane with houses on one side set well back and high up, hidden by the trees. We did a house to house there, of course, but nobody saw her. On the other side there was a small church, empty that



afternoon. The lane petered out at the woods. There's a stream runs through it, quite wide in parts and there's an old stone bridge, been there since Dick's day as far as anyone remembered.'

'What did you do next?'

'There wasn't much more we could do that

night except search the streets, knock on doors. It was dark and rainy, turning to mist. It wasn't much better by morning, but by then we thought we'd found a witness. A local dog-walker from one of the houses on the lane had seen a man going into the woods shortly before we think Wendy would have been there. That's why we thought

it was a matter of bad timing and opportunity, not premeditation. Nobody could have known she would take that route, as far as we could discover. Not that it made much difference to the outcome. Trouble is, we didn't get a good enough description to put out an identikit. It was a gloomy afternoon, and he was

in shadow. It got us nowhere. Someone else saw a lad on a bicycle passing the edge of the woods, maybe a delivery boy of some sort. Same negative result.'

'And Wendy?'

'We began a search of the woods. It covered a fairly extensive area so it took a while. Her

parents had told us it wasn't unusual for her to take that route, depending on whether she was with friends who lived close to the main road or not. This time she wasn't. The woods didn't have a bad reputation. Nothing terrible had ever happened there, and there was no reason to think anything would. The conditions weren't

much better for the search as far as the rain was concerned, which made it pointless to bring in the canine unit, but at least it was daylight. It took about three hours, but by the early afternoon, one of our uniformed lads found the body under the old stone bridge, covered by a makeshift pile of leaves, twigs and

bracken, on the narrow path beside the stream. She was only about a hundred yards from home, poor thing.'

'But you said Frank Dowson was thick. It sounds a bit sophisticated for someone like him, hiding the body like that.'

'I only said that his  
lawyer *claimed*  
diminished  
responsibility. And I  
said he had a low IQ,  
that's all. It doesn't  
mean he had no self-  
preservation instinct.  
He wasn't without a  
certain low cunning.  
And you'd better  
watch it. You'll have  
the political  
correctness squad  
after you if you go  
around calling



intellectually  
challenged people  
thick.'

'Even the least  
intelligent of us can  
be quite cunning  
under the right  
circumstances,' said  
Jenny.

Gristhorpe sighed.  
'Aye, lass. You can  
say that again. He  
managed to elude our  
grasp for fifty years, at

any rate. And he committed more rapes during that time. They said that was one of the things that finally led them to him. The crimes corresponded with the periods of his leave from the navy. That and his conviction five years ago for handling stolen goods and committing actual bodily harm. Only God knows how many

rapes he committed  
on his travels around  
the world.'

'Do you remember  
anything else about  
Wendy Vincent's  
family background?'  
Jenny asked.

'From what I could  
gather,' said  
Gristhorpe, 'the  
parents weren't  
abusive, just  
neglectful. It was the

drink, of course. They could hardly take care of themselves, let alone two kids. Her dad was a bit of a wide boy, too, in and out of work, Beatles' style haircut, fancied himself as a musician. The mother was a hard-working charlady when she had a job, but she got fired as often as not for absenteeism. There was a younger

brother called Mark.  
He was only eleven at  
the time of the murder  
and, naturally, he was  
pretty shaken up, but  
maybe still a bit too  
young to take it all in.  
Frank Dowson came  
from an even more  
dodgy family on the  
same estate. His old  
man was a fence.  
Kept a lock-up across  
town

full of stuff that “fell off the back of a lorry”. Small stuff, but we kept an eye on him. Frank had a younger brother called Billy Dowson, about Mark Vincent’s age. They were mates, as far as we could gather. Part of the same gang. And I don’t mean “gang” like you hear it used today. They never did owt more than knock on a few

doors and run away  
and lather a few  
doorknobs with  
treacle.

Typical Mischief Night  
behaviour. Mostly I  
should imagine they  
sat around in some  
den or other and  
smoked Park Drives  
and pored over dirty  
magazines and felt  
grown up. There was  
a sister, too. Cilla.  
She was sixteen and

already on the game.  
But Frank Dowson  
didn't live with his  
parents at the time.  
Like I said, he'd joined  
the merchant navy,  
and he only dropped  
by occasionally, when  
he was on leave.  
That's one reason we  
didn't follow up the  
way we should have.

Nobody told us he  
was in the area when  
the murder occurred,



so we neglected to check with the naval authorities to see if he had an alibi. It was sloppy police work. No excuses. Except there were more villains on that estate than you could shake a stick at. But I still can't see how any of this is connected with your wedding shootings.'

‘Nor can I,’ said Banks. ‘What we need is a connection between Martin Edgeworth and the shooter, but we don’t know who the shooter is. All we have so far is a connection, however tenuous, between one member of the wedding party and this fifty-year-old crime. I think we’ll try to track down some of the people who were

involved, if they're still  
alive. Billy Dowson,  
maybe his sister,  
Cilla, Wendy's  
brother, any other  
members of the gang.  
See if anyone  
remembers  
something that might  
help. Do you know  
what happened to  
them?'

'I didn't keep in touch,'  
said Gristhorpe. 'And  
as far as I know both

families moved away from the estate fairly soon after the investigation ground to a halt. I know Wendy's mum and dad split up not long after and the lad, Mark, was packed off to live with an aunt and uncle in Ferry Fryston or some such place, but don't quote me on it. I can give you some names, and you should be able to

find them easily  
enough with your  
modern methods.'

'Gerry should be able  
to take it from there,'  
said Banks. 'She's  
good with computer  
research.'

'And now,' said  
Gristhorpe, looking  
towards Jenny, 'what  
have you been doing  
these past few  
years?'

‘Why is it people always seem to retire to places like this?’ asked Annie as Gerry drove along a narrow, winding road just beyond Sedburgh. They were almost in the Lake District, and the change was apparent in the shapes of the mountains and rolling hills, much older here, bigger and more rounded.

'I suppose they're  
after a bit of peace  
and quiet after fifty  
years of the daily

grind, commuting and  
what have you,' said  
Gerry.

'It's either somewhere  
like this or some  
seaside hellhole like  
Bognor or Blackpool.'

'Nobody retires to  
Blackpool.' Gerry

swung the wheel at a particularly awkward corner. The tyres slipped on the shiny road surface.

‘Watch it,’ Annie said as they almost scraped a drystone wall. ‘When my time comes, I’m going to retire to London,’ she announced. ‘Spend my days in the art galleries and my nights in the theatres



and pubs. After that,  
I'll be out clubbing  
until dawn.'

Gerry laughed. 'Better  
hurry up then.'

Annie gave her a  
sideways glance. 'You  
think I'm too old, don't  
you?'

'Maybe if you just put  
in your thirty. Do you  
think that's what you'll  
do, or will you follow

in the boss's  
footsteps?'

'Depends on whether  
I win the lottery,'  
Annie said. 'Ah, here  
we are. Village of  
Little-Feather-up-the-  
Bum.'

'It's Featheringham,'  
said Gerry. 'Little  
Featheringham.'

'Thank God Alan isn't  
here or we'd be

getting a lecture about  
how Wordsworth  
wrote some stupid  
poem sitting up on  
that hill over there.'

'We're not quite in  
Wordsworth territory  
yet. And I got my A-  
level English.

I know a thing or two  
about Wordsworth,  
myself.'

'Spare me the details.  
In love with his sister  
or something, wasn't  
he?

Pervert. But it's a fine  
place for a dentist to  
retire. Maybe he's got  
a cellar full of reclining  
chairs and slow drills,  
those pointy things  
they try and pull your  
filling out with, and  
those scrapers they  
use to clean your  
teeth? Could be a real

torture chamber down there. Nobody could hear you scream. Are you sure you're ready for this?'

Gerry pulled up outside the squat cottage. A thin column of smoke twisted from the chimney. 'I don't suppose we need to worry about parking around here,' she said. 'Or the Krook lock.'

‘Doubt it,’ said Annie,  
slipping out of the car.

A short path led from  
the red wooden gate  
to the front door.

Jonathan Martell  
answered almost  
immediately after  
Annie rang the bell,  
and she had to admit  
that he wasn’t quite  
what she had  
expected of a retired  
dentist. Slim, trim and  
handsome in a white

V-neck cricket jumper  
over a blue button-  
down Oxford, jeans  
and Nike trainers, he  
appeared a lot  
younger than she had  
expected, for a start.  
He also had a fine  
head of wavy brown  
hair and a nice smile.  
She found herself  
wondering if he was  
married. He was  
wearing a ring, she  
noticed, but  
experience had taught

her that didn't always mean anything. They shook hands, and he led them through to the living room. The ceilings were low and criss-

crossed with weathered wooden beams, but it was a cosy space, and the fire burned in the hearth. The walls were dotted with local landscapes, some of



them quite good, in Annie's eyes, and a number of framed photographs on the mantelpiece above the fire: Martell on a beach somewhere with an exotic dark-haired young beauty, Martell standing in the garden with his arms around the shoulders of two young children; a professional portrait of the beautiful woman, no doubt his

wife, whose teeth were far whiter than Annie's. She ran her tongue over molars. They felt furry and jagged. It was odd, she thought, as she settled into the comfortable armchair perhaps just a little too close to the fire, but it was as if a whole lifetime had flashed in front of her eyes when she entered the cottage.

Not her own lifetime,  
necessarily, but a  
lifetime, nonetheless.

‘Can I get you  
anything?’ Martell  
asked. ‘I know you’re  
driving, but I’m sure a  
small port or sherry  
wouldn’t do any  
harm.’

‘Tea, please, if you’ve  
got any,’ said Annie.

‘Do you have herbal?’  
Gerry asked.

‘What a healthy pair  
of coppers,’ said  
Martell. ‘Peppermint?  
Chamomile?’

They agreed on  
peppermint, and  
Martell disappeared  
into the kitchen to  
make it. Annie  
glanced around the  
room, its mullioned  
windows offering a

fine view of the open fields across the lane, a range of mountains rising beyond, their summits lost in cloud; the hiss and crackle of logs burning; whiff of woodsmoke and warm leather in the air. Annie shifted her legs away from the heat. She felt that she could almost fall asleep here.

Martell came back in no time with a teapot and mugs on a tray, along with a glass of amber liquid. 'Whisky,' he said. 'I'm not driving anywhere today.' He gestured to the window. 'I was supposed to be playing a round of golf later, but it looks like rain.'

A golfer, then, Annie thought. Still,

nobody's perfect. 'You never know around these parts,' she said.

'Too true.' Martell sat down and crossed his legs. Annie noticed that his jeans had creases, which meant they must have been ironed. Which meant he *was* married, after all.

As if to confirm her suspicions, Martell

went on, 'I'm sorry my wife Françoise isn't here to greet you, too, but she's gone into Carlisle to do some shopping.'

*Françoise*, Annie thought. *Shopping*. She tasted the bitter ashes of defeat.

Françoise had no doubt borne him two adorable children and still managed to keep



her gorgeous figure without exercise or diet. Or maybe she was the replacement model, the trophy wife he took up with after he dumped his first wife, the one who helped him pay his way through dental college? She decided

to banish any further speculation from her mind and stick with Nick Fleming. He

might be a bit  
humdrum, but he was  
handsome enough,  
they had a good  
laugh, and he did take  
her to the pictures  
and to plays and  
galleries and nice  
restaurants in York  
and Harrogate. They  
had even been to the  
First Direct Arena in  
Leeds once to see  
Morrissey. Nick would  
do. For now.

‘I don’t suppose your wife knows a great deal about your dental practice, or about your partner Martin Edgeworth,’ Annie said.

‘Ex-partner. And no. Not a lot. Though Françoise did know Martin, of course. We had many good times with him and Connie before they split up.’

‘How long were you in partnership?’ Gerry asked.

‘It must have been about twelve years.’

‘And before that?’

‘We each had our own private practice. Martin in Eastvale and me in Durham.’

‘The partnership worked well?’

‘Very well,’ said Martell.

‘So there was no particular reason for packing it in?’ Annie asked.

‘No. It was just time. We had both made plenty of money. In addition to some NHS work, we had private patients, too. Martin specialised in cosmetic dentistry,

and the NHS doesn't cover a lot of that, of course. And I'm afraid it's also a matter of the old cliché. It really does get rather dull poking and prodding about in people's mouths day after day. Unpleasant, even.' He smiled. Dazzling white. He leaned forwards and passed them their tea from the table and picked up his whisky. 'Don't

worry,' he said. 'The other dental cliché doesn't apply.

I'm not an alcoholic. I just enjoy a dram or two of whisky before lunch.'

Annie shrugged to indicate that she didn't care whether he liked a tumbler or got pissed to the gills. Maybe he had a

cylinder of nitrous  
oxide in his den, too.

‘I understand that you  
and Martin Edgeworth  
also remained friends  
after you gave up the  
partnership?’

‘Yes,’ said Martell.

‘We didn’t see one  
another every day, of  
course, like we used  
to do at work, but  
we’d get together  
every now and then



for a couple of drinks or a meal, or a trip to Headingley for the cricket. We're both big cricket fans. Were. I mean, he was.'

'This was during the last three years?'

'Yes. After the practice wound down, and after Connie left him, which was a little over two years ago.'

‘I should imagine he was devastated by the break-up?’

‘Not really. By the time it happened, I think he’d prepared himself for the worst, strengthened his defences. Deep down, he knew he was better off without her.’

‘What was wrong with her?’

‘Connie? She was manipulative, unfaithful, a spendthrift and a liar.’

‘And those are just her good points,’ said Annie with a smile.

‘I’m sure you get the idea.’

‘I do. You didn’t like her very much.’

Martell laughed.  
'Actually, that's not completely true.  
Connie was also a lot of fun. A great hostess, wonderful conversationalist, and she had a wicked sense of humour.  
People are complicated.  
Sometimes you have to take the good with the bad. But surely Connie doesn't have

anything to do with all this?’

‘No, not at all. I suppose we’re still trying to build up a picture of Martin Edgeworth. He seems rather elusive.’

Martell laughed.  
‘Elusive? Martin? He was one of the most open and honest people I’ve ever met.’

‘Perhaps it’s just my suspicious nature. I always get the impression there’s more hidden beneath the surface.’

‘Not with Martin. And I’ve known him for nigh on twenty years. That’s why I can’t believe any of this.’

‘Any of what?’

Martell tasted the whisky and seemed to enjoy it. 'The shootings. That Martin could have had anything to do with them.'

'But he did like his guns?'

'In the same way I like my golf clubs.'

'You could kill someone with a golf

club, too.'

Martell laughed. 'True, but that's not what I mean. It was a sport, for each of us. Something we enjoyed and, if I say so myself, were good at. When you spend every day doing what we did, you appreciate something that takes you far away from it. And



Martin had a very competitive nature.'

'Shooting never appealed to you?'

'No. I've nothing against it, per se, but I never felt the inclination to get involved.'

'What we're thinking,' Gerry said, leaning forwards, 'is that Mr Edgeworth may have

had some sort of accomplice, perhaps even someone who tricked, forced or blackmailed him into doing what he did. This is in complete confidence, of course. We have no evidence. We're just trying to cover every possible angle.'

'Well, that's very open-minded of you, I must say. Naturally, it

makes far more sense to me than the idea that Martin simply decided it would be a good idea to go and shoot a few people.'

'If there was someone who forced him or blackmailed him, have you any idea who this person might have been?'

'You think I would know?'

‘One of the possibilities we have to consider,’ Annie said, ‘is that it was someone he met while he was practising, or at least someone who had befriended him in the last while and whom he might have mentioned to others. A patient, perhaps, or another dentist, a supplier. We thought that seeing as you

spent quite a bit of  
time with him he  
might have mentioned  
someone?’

‘Not that I can think  
of.’

‘Do you know whether  
anyone would have  
had reason to  
blackmail him?’

‘Martin? You must be  
joking.’

‘Just trying to get things straight, that’s all.’

‘No. I don’t.’

‘Nothing odd or unusual happened over the past while, the period leading up to the shootings? No sudden new friends? He wasn’t worried or upset about anything. Distracted? Concerned?’

‘Not as far as I could tell. Everything seemed normal the last time I saw him.’

‘When was that?’

‘About a week or so before the . . . incident.’

‘You’re sure there was no one bothering him, no one new in his life? A woman, perhaps?’

‘Martin wasn’t especially in the market for a new wife. His experience of the previous one was still a bit raw, and he liked his life the way it was. No, I can’t think of anyone. I knew most of his friends and acquaintances, at least in passing.’

‘You’re sure there was no one else?’



‘The only one I can think of is that he mentioned a bloke Gord a few times.

That was quite recent. And someone I never met.’

‘Gord?’ said Annie.  
‘Who was that?’

‘Someone he went rambling with on the weekends sometimes. I didn’t get the

impression that it was regular – I know Martin used to appreciate his walks alone – but he did mention meeting this bloke up on the moors one morning, and they got chatting. You know what it's like when people share enthusiasms?’

Annie nodded. ‘Yes. Yes, I do. Do you know anything more

about this Gord? His last name, where he lived, what he looked like?’

‘I’m afraid not. It’s just someone Martin went rambling with occasionally.’

Annie made a mental note to have Banks ask about this person at Edgeworth’s local and around his

shooting-club friends.  
The name had never

come up before,  
though the idea of  
someone approaching  
Edgeworth on one of  
his walks had  
certainly crossed  
Annie's mind.

'There was one little  
thing,' said Martell,  
'though I doubt it's of  
any relevance.'

‘You never know,’ said Annie. ‘Best tell us.’

‘It was funny, but Martin once told me he thought he was being followed.’

‘When was this?’

‘Last November sometime. You know, when the days were getting shorter and the winter gloom was moving in.’

‘Did he give you any details?’

‘He laughed it off. We both did.’

‘Where did he think he was being followed from?’

‘From the club to his home.’

Annie leaned forwards and tried to put a sense of urgency in her voice.

‘This could be important, Mr Martell. Can you remember anything else, anything at all, about what he said?’

‘Just that he said he’d seen the same car on two or three occasions when he left the shooting club. It’s a quiet road up there. You don’t get much traffic.’

‘Did he say anything about the car?’

‘I never asked. I do believe he mentioned it was a bit beat up, but that’s all I can remember.’

‘Was this before he first mentioned this Gord person, or after?’

‘Before.’



‘Neither you nor Mr Edgeworth ever linked the two?’

‘Good lord, no. Why?’

‘Why would he even tell you about this if he pooh-poohed it so easily?’

‘I think he just wanted to tell me so that he could convince himself he was being silly about it, so I

could help him laugh it off. I obliged. I told him it was probably nothing. Just a coincidence. It seemed to help. He said he'd thought it might have been the club keeping an eye on its members, or even the military from the base they used to shoot at. You know, some sort of cockeyed terrorist

alert. But nothing came of it.'

'Maybe not,' said Annie. 'Or perhaps *everything* came of it.'

Because it was a Saturday, and because they were hungry, Banks, Jenny, Annie and Gerry met up in the Queen's Arms at lunchtime. There was a lot of information to share

and sort, and Cyril,  
the landlord, opened  
up the old snug for  
them and even turned  
the heat on. It was a  
tiny room without  
windows, and  
perhaps a little chilly  
and musty at first due  
to disuse, but it was  
private, and they

wouldn't have to  
worry about being  
seen or overheard by  
the media, who were

leaking hints that the 'Red Wedding' investigation, as they called it, was far from over, that the police had discovered new evidence revealing that Martin Edgeworth had possibly not done the shooting, or had not acted alone.

There were enough 'ifs' and 'possibles' to cover a stadium of arses, but the message was clear

enough: the cops had screwed up, and the real killer was still at large.

Things seemed to be fast approaching conspiracy-theory level.

The radiators rattled and clanked for a while, then settled down to exude a pleasant warmth. Pat, the Australian

barmaid, brought in two large platters of nachos, and while Gerry and Jenny abstained, Banks and Annie both went for pints of Black Sheep bitter.

As soon as everyone had eaten a few nachos and washed them down, Banks suggested they try to put some sort of order

to the things they had found out so far.

‘OK,’ he began. ‘We don’t have a connection between Edgeworth and someone who might be the real killer yet, but we do have four important pointers. First of all, Ollie Metcalfe in the White Rose said Edgeworth was sociable and often talked with non-



locals in there, which means he might have had a drink there with the killer at some point. Second, Geoff McLaren, the manager of the shooting club, told me that Edgeworth had asked him about whether it was possible for someone with a criminal record to join the club. That could mean he was asking on behalf of

this new acquaintance who wanted to acquire a gun. Third and fourth, Jonathan Martell told Annie and Gerry this morning that Edgeworth confided in him that he felt he was being followed, and that he later mentioned a fellow called Gord who he sometimes went walking the moors with. They managed to laugh off

the bit about being followed between them, and neither made a connection with Gord, but why would they? I don't think we can do that too easily ourselves. It's quite possible that if someone *was* after a gun – someone who either didn't want to or couldn't acquire one illegally, and who couldn't get one legally because of

health reasons or a criminal conviction – might wish to befriend someone who already owned one.

But perhaps it's even more likely that whoever did it wanted someone to use as a scapegoat more than he wanted the gun itself. And if he needed a scapegoat, he needed one with a gun that would be

traced back to the  
scapegoat. There'd  
be no point in all the  
subterfuge if  
Edgeworth's gun  
didn't match the  
murder weapon.'

'So someone stakes  
out a shooting club?'  
Annie said. 'Good  
idea.'

'But why pick  
Edgeworth?' Gerry  
asked. 'By chance?'

‘Why not?’ said Annie.  
‘Maybe Edgeworth  
was the first one out  
of the drive the first  
day the killer was  
there, or maybe the  
killer tried a few  
others first and

they weren’t what he  
wanted.’

‘Which was?’

‘His location, I’d say.  
Edgeworth lived alone

and his house was nicely isolated. And perhaps the guns, too. They were weapons that suited the purpose the killer had in mind.'

'OK. And then? How does he find out all this?'

'He follows Edgeworth a few times, just to make sure there is no Mrs Edgeworth, then

perhaps strikes up a conversation with him in the White Rose on a busy night when no one would remember. OK so far?’

‘Go on,’ said Banks.

‘Maybe the killer finds out Edgeworth is a keen Rambler. He meets him “by chance” on a walk on the moors once or twice. They become



pally. At least pally enough for Edgeworth to invite him in for a coffee when he comes knocking on the morning of the wedding.'

'Do you think it's possible that he had a grudge against Edgeworth rather than against someone from the wedding group?' Gerry asked. 'Or both?'

Someone from his past?’

‘That might be pushing it a bit,’ Annie said, ‘but I suppose it’s not beyond the bounds of reason. He was certainly out to frame Edgeworth, once he’d killed him, but as to whether that was his primary motivation, I don’t know. We can dig a bit more into

Edgeworth's past, see if we come up with any possible candidates, but we might have to accept that he was chosen simply because he had what the killer wanted. But going back to the story, as soon as they get pally, our man is all set. He's now got a contact who owns a Black Rifle and a Taurus automatic. I

can't say how far ahead he's been planning things, but at least he's thinking clearly in terms of saving his own skin. He has no desire to end up dead at the end of the day, like most mass murderers. Or in prison. So what does he do? He buys two identical sets of outdoor clothes. He visits Edgeworth, or

accompanies him  
back from a walk for a  
cup of tea or  
something, manages  
to wangle a trip to the  
cellar to play with the  
guns, hits Edgeworth  
on the back of the  
head with a hammer,  
stuffs the gun in his  
mouth and shoots  
him, careful to  
emulate a suicide and  
careful to obliterate  
the traces of the  
hammer blow.'

‘Have we got anywhere with the ballpeen hammer we took from Edgeworth’s cellar yet?’ Banks asked.

‘I’ve had a word with Jazz,’ said Annie. ‘She’s come in today specially to deal with it, so I’ll check with her when we’re done here.’

‘Excellent,’ said Banks. “Someone needs to check Edgeworth’s credit and debit cards. Make sure it wasn’t him who bought the two sets of clothing.’

‘He could have used cash,’ said Annie.

‘Not much we can do about that, is there? I should imagine if the killer bought the

clothing for that purpose, which is most likely, he probably used cash, but there's no reason to think someone like Edgeworth would. He had nothing to hide, and these days it's pretty much second nature for most people to use plastic. At least we should try to rule out the possibility that clothing is a red



herring. Anything else?’

‘That’s about it,’ Annie went on. ‘He leaves one pile of outdoor clothes beside the body. That’s a black anorak and black waterproof trousers, the sort you put on over your other trousers if you go walking in the rain. That makes it appear as if Edgeworth came

back from St Mary's  
and took them off  
before killing himself.  
Maybe the real killer's  
in a hurry, so he  
neglects or forgets to  
make sure the clothes  
have any trace  
evidence from  
Edgeworth himself, or  
enough to convince  
our forensic team, at  
any rate. Then he  
heads out in  
Edgeworth's RAV4,  
Black Rifle and all,

and does his business. Afterwards, he returns the RAV4 and the AR15, checks that all is as he wants it to be, then goes home.'

'Which is probably why the clothes were placed downstairs, next to the body.'

'What?' said Annie.

‘Something I discussed with Dr Glendenning,’ said Banks. ‘Wouldn’t you think that if Edgeworth came home from the shooting, he would take off his outer clothing upstairs, the same as he did with his muddy boots? Let’s assume the pistol was in the cellar, so he had to go down there to shoot himself, but wouldn’t

he still most likely have taken his anorak off, and maybe even the waterproof trousers? But if the real killer simply brought the clothes with him and went down in the cellar with Edgeworth *before* the shooting, and killed him, then it would be perfectly natural to leave the clothes there. He probably wouldn't think about

taking them upstairs  
and putting them in  
the hall cupboard.

A small point, but one  
that bolsters up our  
theory a bit, I think.  
And there's another  
thing. He knows  
something about  
firearms if he realises  
that Edgeworth's guns  
suit his purposes,  
especially the AR15.'

‘That’s right,’ said Annie. ‘Maybe a military background?’

‘Or police,’ Banks added. ‘Worth checking, at any rate. It’s something we would have done by now if we hadn’t thought Edgeworth was the killer. That was an excellent riff on what few facts we have, by the way, Annie,’ he said.

‘Our only problems are that we don’t know who this person is or where he came from and returned to. And nor do we know his motive. Rather big problems, unfortunately.’

‘What about the club?’ Gerry said. ‘Why choose that one in particular to



stake out? It might have been because it's the nearest one to where the killer lives. It's not as if such places are abundant around the dale. They're few and far between.'

'It makes sense that he would choose somewhere fairly close to home,'

Banks said. 'Though it might have simply been a temporary base. Either way, let's check who's been renting or buying property in that area of the dale since, say, last summer. B and Bs and hotels, too, for good measure. He must have stayed somewhere for a few days, at least. Maybe he's still here. Maybe

he hasn't finished yet.  
Good thinking, Gerry.'

'And we should ask a few questions about this mysterious Gord,' said Annie.

'Maybe Edgeworth mentioned him to someone else. And we can check with other members at the shooting club, see if any of them remembers being

followed by a beat-up car.'

'I'll put that in motion,' said Banks.

'What about the Wendy Vincent murder?' said Jenny Fuller. 'Where does that fit in? Or does it?'

Banks swallowed a mouthful of Black Sheep and leaned back in his chair.

He'd had enough of the nachos, which were already burning their way through however many feet of intestines he had. 'We don't know that it does,' he said, with a glance at Gerry. 'Not for certain. But I think it's worth doing a bit more digging. You might carry on with that, Gerry, seeing as it was you who came

up with the possibility  
in the first place.'

'Yes, sir,' said Gerry.

'And I suppose I  
should keep working  
on the profiles?'

Jenny said.

'Perhaps,' said Banks,  
'you could attempt a  
profile of the sort of  
killer who does the  
things we've just been  
talking about.'

‘I can tell you one thing right away,’ Jenny said, rolling her eyes. ‘He’s a mass of contradictions. I say “he”, but let me correct myself. He could just as easily have been a she.’

‘Don’t forget the lad from the youth hostel – what’s his name?’

‘Gareth Bishop, sir,’ said Gerry.

‘Yes. Gareth Bishop. Let’s not forget that he told us he was certain it was a male figure he saw scampering down the hillside to the people-mover.’

‘Because he didn’t see a pair of tits,’ said Jenny. ‘I’ve read his statement.’

Just for your information, one of my bosses over in Oz



was skinny and  
titleless, and she was  
as much a woman as  
any woman can be.'

'All right, Jenny,' said  
Banks. 'Point taken. I  
know you'll proceed  
with caution.'

'Indeed I will.  
Opportunistic and  
premeditated.  
Careless and  
extremely

cautious. Devious and  
—’

‘You might start with  
the fact that he may  
have a prison record,’  
said Annie.

‘Along with how many  
other members of the  
local population? How  
would that help me?’

‘And he may have  
done some sort of  
military or police

training,' Annie continued, ignoring her.

'It's not as if we're exactly a million miles from Catterick Garrison,' said Jenny. 'Half—'

'Jenny, why don't you go and talk to Maureen Tindall with Annie tomorrow? You might be able to read between the lines.'

Annie gave Banks a look and glared at Jenny. Banks drank some more bitter.

Gerry studied her fingernails. Banks couldn't tell whether she was disappointed at not being included, especially as the Wendy Vincent business was her discovery to begin with, but he suspected that she

was. Still, it was a matter of teamwork, and Banks thought that Annie and Jenny might benefit from working on something together. Jenny was a skilled psychologist, and she ought to be able to spot what it was that seemed to get Maureen Tindall wound up so tightly.

Pat the barmaid walked into the

ensuing silence and asked if anyone wanted anything else. Nobody did. She picked up the empty plates and left. Gerry reached for her coat, and Annie did likewise. Banks still had a little beer left, so he stayed where he was, as did Jenny, who seemed to have something she wanted to say.

'Blood on the hammer, let there be blood on the hammer,' thought Annie as she inserted her police ID card in the slot then walked through the sliding doors that led to the forensic lab next door. When it came right down to it, a bloody hammer was what mattered most right now, not the half-baked theories of some airy-fairy

psychological profiler, despite what Banks seemed to think. He clearly still fancied Jenny Fuller; that was obvious enough to all and sundry. Whatever had remained dormant all those years, since before her time, had certainly come back to life. She just hoped he didn't embarrass himself. In Annie's view, Dr Fuller was in all likelihood a



high-maintenance  
prick-teaser with an  
inflated opinion of  
herself.

As usual, Annie was  
impressed by the  
pristine appearance of  
the lab and all its  
inhabitants, buzzing  
around in their Persil-  
white coats. She had  
no idea what the  
various machines that  
sat on the benches  
and desks actually

did, but she respected the results they spat out.

The lab was open plan for the most part, though some of its most sensitive equipment was housed in special rooms or chambers, and Annie found Jazz

Singh in her cubbyhole staring at a large computer

screen full of strange dots and coloured lines, as far as Annie could see.

‘Good timing,’ Jazz said, keeping her eyes on the screen. ‘Just about time for a coffee break. Join me?’

‘Of course.’ Annie realised that Jazz, short for Jasminder, must have seen her

reflection on the screen.

The lab had a decent Nespresso machine, like Banks's office, and Jazz and Annie walked over, made their drinks and went into the common room. A couple of other members of the department sat around reading the newspapers or poring over laptops, and

people mumbled their greetings. Jazz and Annie took a corner table with two comfortable orange chairs.

‘The ballpeen hammer, right?’ Jazz said.

‘That’s the one. Any luck?’

‘Well, I’d hardly call it luck, myself,’ Jazz

said. 'More like the application of consummate skill of the blood specialist.'

Annie laughed.

'But I don't expect you want a lesson in the science of blood detection, do you?' Jazz went on.

'Only if you think it'll help.'

‘Help you appreciate my skills more?’

‘Jazz, I couldn’t appreciate your skills any more than I do already. You know that. Now give.’

‘OK. Naturally, the first problem is to determine whether there’s any blood present at all. That hammer had been well washed and

wiped. Second, it's then important to discover whether it's human or animal blood. And finally, while you're doing all that, you have to be damn careful you don't contaminate the sample so much that you can no longer determine whose blood it is, should you need to do so.'



‘That makes sense,’  
said Annie.

‘It’s science,’ said  
Jazz. ‘Logic. Reason.  
Of course it makes  
sense.’

‘Like the Higgs boson  
and Schrödinger’s  
cat?’

Jazz laughed. ‘They  
make perfectly good  
sense, too, if you

have a bit of  
patience.'

'So in this case?'

'In this case I used  
good old Luminol.  
Favourite of *CSI* and  
a thousand other cop  
shows because it  
lights up nicely when  
it comes into contact  
with blood. But you  
have to be careful not  
to overuse it on the  
entire stain, which is

rather difficult when you can't see the stain, or the reaction could destroy any sample needed for further analysis. I used very effective masking, and the area I sprayed

came up positive.'

'For human blood?'

'For blood. The only problem is that

Luminol can also give false results. It can light up on certain plant enzymes, and even metals. But you can usually tell by the colour and kind of luminescence what you're dealing with. Blood doesn't sparkle, for example, and it gives a steadier, longer glow.'

'OK,' said Annie. 'I think I get it. We have

blood. What next.'

Jazz took a hit of espresso. 'Mm, that's good. After getting a positive human antigen-antibody test, which isn't always the case with invisible stains, I think I can safely say that we have *human* blood.'

Annie clapped her hands together.

‘This was mostly around the region of the ball and the top of the shaft. It’s almost impossible to wash every trace of blood from that area where the head and shaft join. There are also minuscule cracks in wood that trap blood, though they render it invisible to the human eye.’

‘So we’ve cracked it?  
Edgeworth was hit  
with the hammer?’

‘Don’t jump to  
conclusions. The  
blood on the hammer  
is consistent with  
Edgeworth’s blood  
group, but that’s all I  
can tell you right now.’  
Jazz looked at her  
watch. ‘It’ll be a few  
hours before the PCR  
DNA results are  
available, and I’ll

probably need  
another hour or more  
to interpret and  
compare the results.  
Say if you call back  
around five or six I  
might have something  
more positive for you.'

'Thanks,' said Annie,  
standing up to leave.  
'I think I can manage  
to wait that long. And I  
appreciate your  
coming in on a  
weekend.'



'It happens more often than you think,' said Jazz. 'We get behind. I had a batch to run and it's a good time to catch up with my paperwork while I'm waiting. Plays havoc with my social life, though. And talking about that, five will be around my knocking-off time today, so you can buy me a drink in appreciation of all my

sacrifices and tell me  
how wonderful I am.'

'OK,' she said. 'You're  
on. Five o'clock it is.'

'Thanks for that,  
Alan,' Jenny said as  
soon as the others  
had left the snug.

'She hates me.'

'She doesn't hate  
you,' said Banks.  
'You're the new girl on  
the team, that's all.'

‘Girl?’

‘They’re all saying it these days. Book titles and all. That woman on the train was far from being a girl.’

‘Are you saying I’m too old to be a girl?’

‘I . . . I . . .’

Jenny laughed.

‘You’re too easy to

bait, Alan. But as for  
DI Cabbot being

“an old friend of  
yours”, come on, give.  
Did you two have a  
thing?’

Banks sighed. ‘Once,’  
he said. ‘Briefly. A  
long time ago. After  
Sandra and I split up.  
We decided that work  
and dating didn’t mix.’

‘Very wise of you, I’m sure.’

‘Seriously, Jenny.  
Give her a chance.  
She’s a good cop and  
a good person.

She’s just a bit  
insecure, that’s all,  
and she can be  
abrasive.’

‘Insecure? Abrasive?  
I’d say the ropes have

just about pulled away  
from the moorings.'

'It's not that bad.'

Jenny took a few  
deep breaths then  
seemed to relax and  
smile. 'I don't know  
how you manage to  
do it,' she said.

'Do what?'

'See the good in  
everyone after so long  
on the job.'

‘It’s not that,’ Banks protested. ‘I know my team. Strengths and weaknesses.’

‘And do you know me?’

‘Not any more, apparently.’

‘Oh, don’t be such a sensitive bastard. I’m only teasing. Remember that?’

Banks dredged up a weak smile. 'I remember.'

'Besides, I haven't changed that much.'

'Come off it. We both have. We've already discussed that. A lot's happened.'

'I'm not so sure about that. You've become a bit more grumpy, true, but I don't think



people change all that much, deep down.'

'We learn nothing from experience?'

'Well, it certainly seems that mankind learns nothing from history, so why should individuals learn anything from their own experience?'

'I'm no expert, but that sounds like spurious

logic to me.'

Jenny wrinkled her nose. 'It is,' she said. 'Rhetoric, to make a point. I know we shouldn't, driving and all, but do you fancy another pint? It's quite cosy in here, and I don't much like the idea of hurrying home to an empty house so soon.'

‘I’ll have another,’ said Banks. Jenny went to the bar.

He planned on going back to the office and getting through some more paperwork after lunch. By the time he’d finished with that, he planned on heading out to Filey to see Julie Drake. He had phoned, and she had invited him to dinner. In the

meantime, why not  
enjoy another drink in  
a nice warm snug

with a beautiful and  
intelligent woman?  
The music Cyril was  
playing through his  
sound system was  
muted in the snug, but  
Banks could make out  
Ray Charles singing 'I  
Can't Stop Loving  
You'. It seemed a  
good omen.

Jenny returned with another pint of Black Sheep for him and a glass of white wine for herself.

‘What happened with DI Cabbot,’ she said. ‘Do you think it’s serious? I mean, could it affect the case?’

‘Just teething troubles,’ said Banks.

‘We’ve all been under a lot of pressure.’

‘She doesn’t seem to have much time or use for profilers.’

‘Forget about Annie,’ Banks said, raising his glass. ‘Here’s to solving the case.’

They clinked glasses.

After a long pause, Banks shifted in his chair and said, ‘Don’t

take this the wrong way, but do you think, maybe after all this is over, you and I could, you know, maybe get together for a drink or dinner or something?’

‘What on earth do you mean?’ Jenny said.  
‘Aren’t we having a drink now?’

And as I remember we’ve had dinner since I’ve been back.’

‘I know that, but . . .’

‘And how many ways  
are there to take it?’

‘Jenny, don’t make it  
more . . . awkward . .  
,  
.’

Jenny gave him a  
thoughtful stare. ‘It’s  
all right,’ she said. ‘I  
know what you mean.  
I shouldn’t tease. But  
do you have any idea  
why I went away in



the first place all  
those years ago?’

‘Your work, I  
assumed. Or you’d  
already met a fellow  
you wanted to follow  
halfway around the  
world.’

‘Neither of the above.  
You can be so thick  
sometimes, you know.  
Though I won’t deny  
moving did my career

no harm. No, it was because of you.'

Banks felt his chest tighten. 'Me?'

'Yes. Maybe you thought I was just a frivolous young slut making a pass at you, but I was in love with you, Alan, and I knew it was hopeless. Christ, I was young and idealistic, and you were married with

kids. I knew you were a decent man, that you wouldn't cheat on your wife or leave her and the kids for me.

What was the point in me hanging around and feeling like crap every time I saw you, going home crying every night after we'd worked together because you weren't going home with me?'

‘Australia was a long way to go just to get away from me.’

Jenny laughed, the lines around her eyes and mouth curving as she did so.

‘You’re incorrigible. That was just what came up, where I settled. I’d probably have gone to Antarctica if there was

a job there. In fact, I  
did go to Antarctica

once with Sam. No,  
my career was  
certainly a part of it,  
but if you'd been free,  
and interested . . .  
Who knows? Maybe  
things would have  
turned out differently.'

'Maybe they still  
could. I was  
interested. I just  
wasn't free.'

‘And now?’

‘Both.’

‘Are you sure? What about Annie?’

‘Old friends.’

‘And the poet?’

‘A newer friend.’

Jenny stared at him as if trying to make her mind up whether

he was telling the truth.

‘I’m not being difficult,’ she said. ‘I just don’t know what I want, Alan. I might have left because of you, but I certainly didn’t come back for you.’

‘Someone else?’

‘No, you idiot. I’d just got divorced, I felt

alone and I wanted to  
come home.

Simple as that. And  
let's face it, you  
haven't exactly been  
the world's best  
correspondent over  
the years. I had no  
idea what your  
situation was.

Married, single. Even  
if you were still here.  
Still alive.'

'And now you know?'



Jenny drank some wine and looked down at the table. 'You can't just pick up where you left off, you know. Maybe our time has passed. Maybe we didn't take the chance when it was there.'

'I wouldn't exactly say we'd be picking up where we left off, would you?'

We didn't leave off  
anywhere.'

'You know what I  
mean. Maybe *you*  
didn't. Maybe you  
regretted not taking  
what you could have  
had. Maybe I'm the  
one that got away.  
How do you know  
you're not just  
chasing a memory,  
making up for what  
you didn't do the first  
time around? I

suppose what I'm saying is I just don't know any more. I don't want to piss away what's left of my life, Alan. Maybe it doesn't mean so much to you, but I'm well turned fifty, and I know damn well that most men prefer younger women. From what I've heard, you're no different. I don't want a toy boy, but I don't want a fling

with someone I care about, either. I still have feelings for you. I think that much is clear. Can't we just leave things as they are? The occasional dinner? Drinks like now? No pressure. I may not want a fling, but I'm also not sure I want commitment yet, either. I'm still stinging from the divorce. I don't even know if I like men any more –

and if you make one  
crack about me  
turning lesbian,  
you've lost any  
chance you might  
ever have had.'

'You mean I'm in with  
a chance?'

'That's not what I  
said.'

'She said,  
weakening?'

Jenny flicked a little wine at him. 'Besides,' she went on, 'we'll be working together. You said work and dating didn't mix.'

'It wouldn't be the same. You're a consultant. You'd be doing other work, teaching, work for other crime units. We wouldn't be work colleagues. And I'm not your boss.'

Jenny rested her elbows on the table and cupped her chin in her hands. 'God, it *is* good to see you again. To sit and talk like this.'

'So you'll give it a go?'

'I didn't say that. I don't know. Like I said, I still care about you, but I don't want a fling. I've only been here a month or so.'

I'm still settling in.'  
She sighed.

'To be perfectly  
honest, I don't know  
what I want.'

'Me, neither. At least  
we're agreed on that.  
Neither of us can  
predict where we'll  
end up, but as the  
bard said, "Our  
doubts are traitors  
*And make us lose the  
good we oft might win*



By fearing to  
attempt”.’

‘Oh, you smooth-  
talking bastard. That  
your poet’s influence?’

‘She’s not *my* poet,  
but yes, it is.’

‘Aren’t you just  
saying, “nothing  
ventured, nothing  
gained” in fancy  
language?’

Banks laughed. 'I suppose I am. Though I'd argue that the Shakespeare quote does have more of a ring to it.'

Jenny lifted her head from her hands. 'You're right,' she said, leaning forwards slowly. 'Of course you are. But please do me a favour, for now at least.'

Don't push it. Just leave things as they are.' She held up both her hands, palms out.

Banks didn't know where his next thought came from, and he had the good sense and quick enough wits to stop before he spoke it out aloud, but as he leaned back and reached for his beer glass, it flashed

through his mind, as clear as anything: *I don't want to grow old alone.*

## **Chapter 11**

'This is a dead loss,' Doug Wilson complained as Gerry manoeuvred into yet another narrow parking space later that afternoon. 'The last sales clerk I talked to said it wasn't

so unusual for people to buy two or more sets of items they liked.

I've even done it myself with shirts and stuff, especially when they're on sale two for one. And like I said before, he might have gone to different branches. I know I would have if I'd been worried about getting caught. They didn't

even have to be exactly the same, just like that from a distance.'

'But maybe he *did* buy two outfits in the same branch,' said Gerry, 'because it would have meant another expedition to find the same of everything in another one. Time might have been a factor. You checked Edgeworth's

debit and credit cards  
yourself before we set  
out and we know *he*  
didn't buy them, at  
least with plastic.  
Don't be so negative.  
I'm just happy to get  
out of the office for a  
while.

We've even got a few  
patches of blue sky.  
Enjoy it while you  
can.' She knew Doug  
wanted to be at the  
football match, a local

derby, and she wouldn't have minded a bit of time off to tidy her flat, as there wasn't much more digging she could do on the Wendy Vincent case until after the weekend, but that was the way the job went. She didn't want to have to put up with Doug sulking all afternoon, at any rate.



‘Besides,’ she went on, ‘the killer had no reason to think we’d end up traipsing around every bloody branch of Walkers’ Wearhouse in Yorkshire asking after someone who bought two pairs of everything. He clearly thought his plan would work and everything would end with Edgeworth’s suicide. We’ll do

Relton and Lyndgarth,  
then call it a day. OK?’

Doug glanced at his  
wristwatch. Gerry  
could see him  
calculating whether  
he’d make the second  
half or not. ‘Right,’ he  
said, opening the door  
and stepping out.  
‘Let’s get on with it,  
then.’

They turned up  
nothing in Relton, but

things started to get more interesting in Lyndgarth.

The doorbell of the Walkers' Wearhouse branch jingled as they entered, and immediately Gerry was hit by the smells of leather, wet wool, warm rubber and that peculiar chemical odour that seemed to emanate from waterproofed

garments. Doug slunk in behind her, having clearly written the place off before they even got out of the car. Gerry spotted a young woman towards the rear of the overstuffed room sorting out a table of lumberjack-style shirts. She glanced

up when she heard the bell and moved forwards, smiling as if

she were pleased at the interruption of a customer. 'Yes? Can I help you?'

Gerry showed her warrant card. 'I hope so.'

'Police? Is it about the shoplifting we reported?' The woman smoothed her hair, which was smooth enough to begin with, as it was

tied back in a tight ponytail. She looked to be in her forties, short, mousy-haired, and pleasantly round. Her complexion was ruddy, but not weather-beaten like many keen ramblers. Gerry guessed this was just a job to her rather than a way to be close to her passion.

‘It’s not about shoplifting,’ Gerry said.

‘So you haven’t caught them?’

‘Shoplifters are notoriously difficult to track down, unless you catch them in the act.’

‘Yes, yes, I see that. That’s what the local bobby said, too.’

We've been vigilant –  
that's Sue and me.  
She's not in today. But  
you can't have your  
eyes everywhere at  
once, can you?'

'Unfortunately not, or  
it would make our job  
a lot easier.'

Doug Wilson grunted  
in what might have  
been a minor guffaw  
or an indication of  
impatience.



‘My name’s Paula  
Fletcher, by the way.  
What can I do for you,  
then?’

Doug lingered in the  
background  
pretending to examine  
a pair of thermal  
socks. ‘It may seem  
an odd question,’  
Gerry began, ‘but we  
were wondering if you  
can remember a  
customer, say, last  
November or early

December. Someone who bought two sets of exactly the same items.' Gerry showed her the photocopied list of articles, colours and sizes.

The woman chewed on her lower lip as she read through before handing it back. 'We have quite a few customers who like to buy a couple of sets of their favourite

walking gear,' she said. 'After all, unless you put on a lot of weight you don't grow much after you reach a certain age, do you?'

'I suppose not,' Gerry said, disappointed. She couldn't fail to notice the 'I told you so' smirk of triumph on Doug's face. 'This might not be a regular customer,' Gerry went

on. 'In fact, he's far more likely to have been a one-off, a stranger.'

Paula's face scrunched up in a frown of concentration. 'That's when we had our last two-for-one sale. When exactly would this have been, did you say?'

‘Towards the end of last year. November or early December, most likely.’

She realised it could have been long before then, but there was no sense in giving anyone such broad parameters, or they wouldn't even bother trying to remember.

‘Can I have a peek at that list again, please?’

‘Of course.’ Gerry handed it to her. As she waited while Paula went laboriously through the items, she first heard the patters, and then saw the rain trickling down the plate-glass window. It had started again; the blue sky had only

been a tease. Please let this be the last stop of the day, she begged silently.

Now all she wanted was a long hot bath and a few chapters of the new Rose Tremain novel. She'd tidy up her flat later. After all, it wasn't as if she was expecting company, or had a hot date this Saturday night. Or any night for

that matter. Work took care of that. She didn't know how DI Cabbot and Detective Superintendent Banks managed relationships, if they did. Banks certainly must have had, because he had a family, and Gerry had heard rumours that he'd had one or two youngish girlfriends of late. She had always got the impression



that he would fall for someone more his own age, like the poet Linda Palmer, but what did she know about romance?

When she let herself think about it, which wasn't often, she realised that she wouldn't mind at all going out with someone like Banks, if he wasn't her boss, that is, that age

wouldn't really be an issue. He seemed healthy and young enough in body and spirit, was handsome in that lean and intense sort of way, and she certainly got the impression that he was interested in a wide range of subjects, so conversation wouldn't be a problem. He also had a sense of humour, which she

had been told by her mother was essential to a happy marriage. Not that she was having fantasies about marrying Banks, or even going out with him.

Just that the whole idea didn't seem so outlandish. She knew that he and DI Cabbot had had a thing because DI Cabbot had told her once

after a few drinks, and warned her that it was a bad idea to have relationships with people you worked closely with, especially your boss. Gerry thought she already knew that, but she thanked Annie for the advice.

Paula tapped the list with her forefinger. 'You know, there is

something here that rings a bell.'

'Any idea what?'  
Gerry asked.

'It's just . . . well, it wasn't quite the way you said it was.'

'What do you mean?'

'Someone buying two sets of the same clothes.'

Gerry frowned. 'It wasn't? Then what was it?'

'It was this fellow who *wanted* to buy two sets – you know the black anorak, black waterproof trousers, the black woollen cap.'

'When was this?'

'Around the time you said. Well, it must

have been during the last two weeks of November because that's when we had our last big two-for-one sale. It helps

at that time of year to get people in, a sale, you know, something special like that. Usually business is a bit slow in November.'

'Yes, I understand,' said Gerry, rushing

on. 'But what about this particular man? What stood out about him?'

'Stood out? Oh, nothing. He was ordinary enough, I suppose, except for his eyes. They were deep set, like, and a bit scary, if you know what I mean. Like they'd seen things you wouldn't want to



see.’ She gave a slight shudder.

‘Go on,’ Gerry encouraged her.

‘Well, he came up to me with an armful of clothes, which turned out to be two sets of the same, except for one jacket. We’d had a run on the black anoraks and were completely out of them. I remember he

asked me if we had any more in the storeroom and I told him I was sorry but that was it. I even went and had a look. I said we did have orange or yellow if he'd like, but he just shook his head impatiently, like, then I said if he'd care to leave his name and address and a contact number, we could perhaps order some

in from the warehouse, or get some from another branch, and let him know, though it might take a day or two.

I assured him he'd still get the same deal, even if took a few days.'

'How did he react to that?'

‘Well, that’s it. That’s why I remember. He just grunted, put the items down on the nearest table and left. A bit rude, I thought, but it takes all sorts. He could at least have thanked me for trying. I understand he was disappointed, but it would only have been a matter of a day or two.’

No, thought Gerry, her excitement rising. It would have been a matter of him having to leave a name, address and telephone number. He needed to buy the two-for-one items at the same time in the same place. 'He didn't buy anything, then?' she asked.

'Not a thing.'

Gerry cursed under her breath. No chance of a credit-card transaction, then.

And why hadn't he bought the one set? Her guess was that he wanted to make sure both outfits were the same, and until he could do that, he wasn't going to lay out cash on one of them. Either that or he was flustered and

frustrated at not being able to succeed easily. 'Can you give us any idea of what this man looked like?'

Paula took a deep breath. 'It was a long time ago. I mean, I told you about the eyes, didn't I?'

'Yes. What colour were they?'

‘I don’t remember. I’m not even sure I noticed. But piercing, like. Maybe blue.’

‘Did he have a beard or moustache?’

‘His face hadn’t seen a razor in a week or two, but you get a lot like that these, days, don’t you? I don’t know why—’



‘Was he tall or short,  
fat or thin?’

‘Medium.’ She pointed  
at Doug, who was five  
foot ten. ‘About his  
height, give or take a  
couple of centimetres.  
And about the same  
shape. You know,  
slimmish. And he had  
bad skin, sort of rough  
and pock-marked, like  
he’d had acne or  
chicken pox when he  
was a boy.’ She

blushed and looked at Doug Wilson. 'Not that he resembled you in that, of course.'

Wilson nodded in acknowledgement. Gerry smiled to herself. The woman fancied Doug; she was sure of it.

'Anything else, Paula? You're doing very well. Your powers of

recollection are really good.'

Paula wiggled with embarrassment.

'Thank you.'

'Any scars, moles, distinguishing features?'

'He did have a tattoo. I could see the top of it where his shirt button was open. The hair, too.'

‘Hair?’

‘Chest hair. It came up almost to his throat.’

‘What kind of tattoo?’

‘I don’t know. You see so many these days, don’t you? If you knew how many young lasses around here have tattoos all down their arms or legs and God only

knows where else. I mean, what will they do when they grow up and want a job?’

Gerry smiled to herself, imagining what AC Gervaise would think if she saw *her* tattoo. ‘You didn’t see what the tattoo depicted, what it was of?’

‘Not all of it.’

‘What, then?’

‘I only saw the top bit.  
Some red, blue  
whorls, like the tops of  
wings or something.  
Maybe a bird. Or a  
butterfly. I don’t know.  
All I can say is I had  
the sense it was part  
of a bigger one that  
went down his chest.’

‘OK, thanks, Paula,’  
said Gerry. ‘That  
really is helpful.’

Would you be willing to spare the time to work with a police artist on trying to put together a sketch of this man?’

‘Ooh, I don’t know. I mean, I’ve got the shop to look after.’

‘It wouldn’t take long,’ Gerry said. ‘It would be a real help. And we can bring the artist here, to you. Or we

can do it on the computer if you want.'

'But what if I get it wrong? What if I can't remember things?'

Gerry put her hand gently on Pat's shoulder. 'You mustn't worry about that.'

You've done fine so far. Besides, people usually remember much more than they



think they do when they start to see the beginnings of an image. The shape of the head, hairline, that sort of thing. It's all important.'

'He had short curly hair,' Paula said. 'Turning grey. Just like on his chest. I remember that.'

'See,' said Gerry, 'you're remembering

already.'

Paula blushed. 'Well, I suppose I can try, if you think it's important. What did he do, this bloke?'

'I'm sorry, but I can't tell you that. We don't even know if he's done anything, yet. But it might be very important to us, so thank you. There's just a couple more

things. Have you ever seen this man before or since? Do you have any idea who he is, where he lives at all?’

‘None at all. Never seen him before in my life.’

‘Did you see what kind of car he was driving?’

Paula laughed. 'Even if I had, I wouldn't be any use to you there, love. Can't tell a Rolls-Royce from a Mini.'

'Do you remember what he was wearing?'

'That I do,' said Paula, clearly pleased with herself. 'If there's one thing I know, it's

clothes. That's my business, after all.'

'What was it?'

'A cheap grey windcheater.'

'Any emblems on it?'

'Emblems? You mean like badges and stuff.'

'Yes. Decals, symbols, things like that.'

'I don't remember any, no.'

'You mentioned a shirt.'

'Yes. He kept his jacket zipped up most of the way, so I just saw the button-down collar like, when I noticed the tattoo. Pale blue. And jeans. I think he was wearing just ordinary blue jeans.'

‘Thank you, Paula,’  
said Gerry. ‘See you  
remember far more  
already than you  
thought you could.  
We’d better go now,  
but we’ll be back with  
an artist as soon as  
possible.’

‘That’s all right, love,’  
said Paula. ‘I’ll be  
here.’

As they hurried back  
to the car, Gerry

wondered where the hell they were going to scrape up a police artist at such short notice. Doug was still sulking as the second half of his game ticked by, so she didn't imagine she'd get much help out of him. Then she had an idea, took out her mobile and called Annie.



It was only a couple of hours drive to Filey, if that, Banks thought as he skirted the southern edge of the North York Moors, and drove through Malton.

In the early darkness, the town centre was almost deserted and the roads had been quiet all the way so far. In season, he would probably be

stuck in a traffic jam by now. Almost as quickly as they had appeared, the stars had been obscured by clouds, but the rain was still holding off.

He listened to Maria Muldaur's *Heart of Mine* as he drove, probably his all-time favourite album of Dylan covers, mulling over the thought that had leapt unbidden

into his mind in the snug with Jenny. He was glad he hadn't spoken the words out loud. She would probably have taken them as a kind of begging pitch, and the last thing he wanted was for her to feel sorry for him. Like her, he didn't know what he wanted out of a relationship these days. 'I'll Be Your Baby Tonight', which

Maria Muldaur was singing at the time, seemed enough for now.

Naturally, he had thought before about growing old alone, as one does in the wee small hours with only the darkness and a tumbler of whisky for company.

Some men, he knew, were so desperate for

someone to care for them as they aged, that they deliberately sought out young and healthy women. 'A Man Needs a Maid', as Neil Young once put it. But that wasn't what Banks wanted.

However he ended up, it would be for love, not for comfort and convenience.

Over the past few years, since he had moved to the more remote Newhope Cottage from what had been the family home in Eastvale, he had been content to shore up his loneliness with music, books and wine, an evening out now and then at the pub, especially on folk night, and the occasional concert at

the Sage or Opera  
North performance in  
Leeds. He took his  
holidays alone, too,  
usually long  
weekends in  
interesting cities he  
loved to explore on  
foot – Berlin,  
Stockholm, Krakow,  
Barcelona, Paris. And  
he had girlfriends  
from time to time,  
though they never  
seemed to last. He  
was so used to his

settled way of life that the stray thought had taken him unawares and unnerved him. He didn't know where it was likely to take him, or even whether he wanted to go there. Maria Muldaur finished and he put on Luna Velvet for the last mile or two.

As Banks entered Filey, he concentrated more on the roads



and found the hill that sloped down to the seafront. He had suggested that he and Julie meet in a pub or restaurant, but Julie had insisted that he dine with her at the B&B. It was off season, she had said, and there were no paying guests. Besides, it would be more private. Her chef husband loved nothing more than a

chance to show off his skills, she told him. Banks agreed. Why argue against a meal cooked by a fine chef?

There seemed to be quite a squall out on the water, with the wind whipping things up and the waves slapping hard against the sea wall, cascading spray on to the road. Julie had

given him clear  
directions when he  
phoned to inform her  
he

was coming, and she  
told him he could park  
on the front by the  
row of houses.

When Banks saw the  
sandbags, though, he  
decided to find a more  
sheltered spot and  
parked back up the  
hill, around the corner,

where the houses themselves provided a barrier. The wind tugged at his coat as he walked along the promenade towards the B&B, one of a terrace of similar guest houses, and he could taste the salt on his lips, feel its sting in his eyes.

He walked up the path and rang the doorbell. He would

have recognised the woman who had answered his ring even if he hadn't known who she was. She still looked young for her years, and though she had filled out quite a bit, the plumper version was similar to the one he remembered, except it had rather more substance, more chins, the eyes more deeply buried in puffy

cheeks. Her  
husband's cooking,  
perhaps.

She stared at him, a  
distant smile on her  
face. 'Alan Banks, as I  
live and breathe.  
Come in, dearie. Do  
come in. Marcel is  
busy preparing dinner  
for us.

He'll be out later to  
say hello, but he has  
to go out to a

business meeting  
tonight.

We've got the place  
all to ourselves.'

Banks followed her  
inside and took off his  
coat in the hallway.

'We'll eat in the  
guests' dining room,'  
Julie said. 'There's a  
nice window table  
with a view of the sea,  
or as much as you

can see of it in this weather.'

'If you like,' said Banks.

'I'm sure you'll enjoy the view. It's a bit wild tonight, isn't it?'

'Just a bit.'

'It's just through here.'

Banks followed her into the front room, where a table in the



bay window was already laid for two with white linen cloth, serviettes in silver rings, gleaming cutlery and two candles flickering in cut glass holders. The rest of the room, filled with bare tables, was in semi-darkness and shadow except for a small dimly lit bar at the end where they entered. Julie asked him if he wanted an

aperitif. Banks knew he would have to be careful, but one aperitif and one glass of wine with dinner wouldn't put him over the limit. He asked if she had Pernod.

She did. He watched the clear liquid cloud up as she added a little water and ice.

She poured a sherry for herself then led

the way to the table,  
giving Banks the  
place with the best  
view of the raging  
sea.

When they sat down,  
she raised her glass  
and proposed a toast.  
'To absent friends.'

'To absent friends,'  
Banks repeated.

It felt strange sitting  
opposite Julie in the

candlelight,  
surrounded by the  
dark, deserted dining  
room, waves crashing  
against the sea wall  
and splashing over  
the road. Christmas  
lights still strung along  
the prom between the  
lamp

posts danced and  
flickered in the wind,  
and the streetlights  
themselves reflected  
and rippled in the

undulating water just  
off the shore. The  
whitecaps stretched a  
long way out to sea.  
Banks felt  
apprehension. What  
was he doing here? It  
all seemed so  
*arranged*. Did she  
have something  
special in mind? The  
place to themselves,  
the candlelight, the  
view of the sea. He  
dismissed the  
thoughts. Her

husband was cooking for them.

‘Don’t worry,’ Julie said, clearly noticing an expression of concern on his face and misinterpreting it. ‘The waves rarely come as far as the garden gate.’

Even on a night like this. We’ve only been flooded once since we moved here over ten

years ago. The sandbags are there mostly to reassure people. The squalls come and go. You wait and see, it'll be all over by the time we've finished dinner. The starters should be here soon.'

As if on cue, a man carrying a tray walked into the room. He wasn't dressed as a chef, but was wearing

dark trousers and an open-neck checked shirt. Julie introduced him. He put down the tray, and Banks stood up to shake hands.

Unlike his wife, Marcel was tall and rangy. 'Just a little appetiser,' he said, gesturing to the plate. 'Foie gras, figs and crusty bread.' Then he excused himself



and returned to the kitchen.

‘Do tuck in, Alan,’ said Julie, taking a couple of figs. ‘I’m afraid I can’t touch the foie gras myself, not with the state my heart’s in these days.’

‘Serious?’

‘No. Well, yes, I suppose. I mean, anything to do with

the heart is serious, isn't it? I'd been getting a bit short of breath, so I had some tests done. The upshot was that the doctor gave me some pills, told me to lose a few pounds and to cut back on the fatty stuff.'

'I've been told the same,' said Banks, spreading a little foie

gras on a slice of  
crusty bread.

Julie laughed. The skin around her eyes wrinkled. 'But you're skinny as a rake,' she said. 'You must be one of those enviable people who can eat what they want and not add an inch to their waistline.'

'I suppose I've been lucky that way, yes,'

said Banks. 'I didn't mean the weight, though. Just the fatty stuff.'

'Ah.'

A wave hit hard against the sea wall, and Banks could swear a few drops of water splashed on the bay window. Julie didn't seem concerned.

Marcel delivered their main courses next: roast cod with a light watercress sauce and roasted cherry tomatoes, buttered new potatoes and haricots verts.

‘Try the white Rioja with it,’ he said. ‘I think you’ll enjoy it . . .’ He turned to Julie. ‘I have to go now, love. There’s a nice cheese

plate on the kitchen  
table for

later, along with a  
drop of Sauternes,  
and there's fruit and  
ice cream if you want  
sweet stuff.' He bent  
forwards to kiss her  
lightly on the cheek. 'I  
won't be late.

Nice to meet you, Mr  
Banks.' Then he was  
gone. Banks felt as if  
he were being

deliberately left alone with Julie to put forward some sort of business or romantic proposal. Again he felt a twinge of apprehension.

‘Don’t be so nervous,’ Julie said.

‘I must admit I hadn’t expected such a feast when I invited myself,’ Banks said, picking up his knife and fork.

‘Oh, he loves it,’ said Julie. ‘Any excuse to spend time on his creations, and make a mess in the kitchen. Honestly, sometimes I think he does it just to get away from me.’

‘I doubt it,’ said Banks.

‘Well, maybe not. He’s one of the good ones, Marcel is. A keeper.’



‘This is excellent,’  
said Banks. ‘Nice  
wine, too. Be sure to  
pass on my  
compliments to the  
chef.’

‘You can do it  
yourself. He won’t be  
late back.’

‘Now what was it you  
wanted to tell me?’

‘Did I say I wanted to  
tell you something?’

‘You certainly hinted at it.’

‘Yes. Yes, well, I suppose I did.’ Julie paused. ‘I believe I mentioned in my letter how I spent a lot of time with Emily towards the end.’

‘Yes. It must have been a terrible ordeal.’

‘Not half as bad as it was for her, despite the morphine. A lot of the time we just sat in silence. I held her hand. She stayed at home as long as she could, but the last few days . . .’ Julie shook her head at the memory. ‘She had to go into hospital. She was skin and bone at the end. The skull beneath the skin.’

Again, Banks  
remembered the  
young and beautiful  
girl he had loved all  
those years ago: her  
spontaneity, her  
rebellious spirit, her  
fearlessness. They'd  
go on marathon night  
walks – St John's  
Wood, Notting Hill,  
Holland Park,  
Hampstead, Camden  
– pass by desperate  
late-night partygoers  
trying to hail a taxi

already taken, or hear strange stirrings in the dark bushes of the Heath, see a homeless person bedded down in a shop doorway, walk around an aggressive drunk. Once they got chased by two drunk yobs and ended up panting, breathless and laughing. Streets so busy in day were dark and empty at night. They would go

home to lie down and  
make love as the  
dawn chorus swelled,  
then drift to sleep,  
maybe missing their  
first lectures of the  
day and not caring.

‘But we also talked a  
lot,’ Julie went on.  
‘About life, death, old  
times. She loved you  
very much, you know.’

‘I loved her, too,’ said  
Banks. ‘I never could

understand why  
things didn't

work out.'

'You wanted different  
things, that's all. You  
were both too young.  
Emily was a free  
spirit. She wanted to  
travel, live life to the  
full.'

'So did I.'

'Maybe. But you were  
also set on a career,

even then. You didn't like business studies, I remember that, but you had mentioned the police once or twice.'

'I did? Is that why . . . ?'

'No, that's not what I'm saying. If it wasn't the police it would have been something else. It's just that in Emily's eyes you



wanted to settle  
down. You know, the  
semi-detached,  
steady job, healthy  
pension, mortgage,  
two point five children,  
little dog, but Emily,  
well, Emily—'

'Didn't really know  
what she wanted.'

Julie laughed. 'Yes, I  
suppose it's fair to say  
that. She only knew  
what she didn't want.'

‘Why didn’t she tell me? Maybe if she had I could have . . . you know . . .

changed.’

‘No, you couldn’t. People don’t. Not deep down.’

Banks remembered hearing almost the same words from Jenny Fuller only hours ago.

‘Besides,’ Julie went on. ‘Things hadn’t reached crisis point. You were still in your honeymoon period, willing to overlook a lot. Neither of you were thinking very much about the future. You were living in the present.’

That was true, Banks remembered. And it was exciting, just going where your

fancy led you. It might well have been the last time he had lived for the moment, he thought sadly. Not long after the break-up had come career, promotion boards, marriage to Sandra, children, financial struggles, then the mortgage, the pension, the semi-detached, the move up north. Everything except the little dog,

and that was only because Sandra was allergic to dogs.

‘Do you remember the last time you saw her?’ Julie asked.

‘As if it were yesterday,’ said Banks. He could remember the texture of the tree he leaned against, the red-and-white striped ball two young boys were

kicking on the grass,  
a blackbird's song, a  
dark stain on the page  
of the book he was  
reading, the heat of  
the sun on his face,  
the shouts of rowers  
from behind him on  
the Serpentine . . .  
'Why?'

Banks noticed the  
faintest of smiles pass  
across Julie's  
features. 'She said  
she thought you

would,' she said. 'She remembered, too. It was a hot day in Hyde Park, wasn't it? You couldn't understand why she was finishing with you.'

'That's because she wouldn't tell me why.'

'Did you really not guess?'

'No.'

‘Do you want to know?’

Banks speared a thick flake of cod. ‘After all this time? I don’t know that it matters. Why? Did she tell you?’

‘Oh, yes. I’ve known all along. She was pregnant, Alan. That’s why she split up with you and she couldn’t tell you why. Emily was pregnant.’



‘You won’t catch me working with any of those computer facial recognition programmes,’ said Ray Cabbot as Annie and Gerry sat with him on the wicker chairs in Banks’s conservatory. Banks was nowhere to be seen. Annie had already tried to get him twice on his mobile, but the first time he didn’t pick up,

and the second time it was switched off. She wondered what was going on with him, what mysterious mission he was on, but she wasn't especially worried. He was a big boy; he could take care of himself. Maybe he was on a hot date with that profiler, she thought, and didn't want to be disturbed.

Annie wasn't too thrilled at first about being dragged away from her date with Nick, but that was the way the job went sometimes, and if anyone could understand, Nick could. She and Gerry were admiring the sketch Ray had done of the man Paula Fletcher had described.

‘You’re a natural,’ said Annie. ‘It’s brilliant.’

‘You don’t know that, not until you find him,’ Ray said. ‘It might be total crap.’

‘Paula Fletcher said it was accurate,’ Gerry said.

‘Memories fade.’ Ray got up and headed for the door to the entertainment room.

‘I’m off to find something to drink.’

Annie rolled her eyes. It had been a successful evening so far. After Gerry had rung, Annie had met her at Banks’s cottage, and they had persuaded a reluctant Ray to go with them to Lyndgarth and try his hand at a police sketch.

After a few false starts, Ray and Paula had seemed to develop a rapport, and the end result was amazingly lifelike, Annie thought. Though Ray was right, of course; they wouldn't know for certain until they found the man.

First came the music, a little too loud for Annie's liking, then

Ray came back brandishing a bottle of Macallan and three glasses. He seemed disappointed when both Annie and Gerry declined and poured himself a large one.

'Driving,' Annie said.

'Me, too,' said Gerry.

'You can both stop over if you want,' Ray

said. 'He's got plenty of room.'

He glanced at Gerry. 'We can have our own party. Maybe I can do a couple of

preliminary sketches?'

'In your dreams,' said Annie. 'Grow up. And you'd better be careful, knocking back Alan's expensive single malt like that.'



Ray held up the bottle. 'I bought this one, myself,' he said. 'Sure you won't join me, love? I don't like drinking alone.'

'You could have fooled me.'

' *Ummagumma.*'

'What's that?'

'The album. Pink Floyd. *Ummagumma.*

The live disc.  
“Astronomy Domine”

is the song. Classic.  
He’s got a fine music  
library, your boss.’

‘Can you turn it down  
a bit?’ Annie asked.

Ray muttered to  
himself but fiddled  
with the remote, and  
the volume dropped a  
couple of decibels.

‘Philistines,’ Annie  
heard him grumble.

Ray was in his  
element with Gerry for  
an audience, the old  
goat, she thought,  
smiling to herself, all  
old-school charm and  
romantic roguishness.  
Mad, bad and  
dangerous to know. If  
she heard about the  
mesmerising texture  
of Gerry’s red hair and  
the smooth

creaminess of her complexion one more time she thought she might accidentally knock his drink into his lap.

Gerry tapped the sketch. 'We don't even know if he's the one we want yet, remember,' she said. 'So perhaps we'd best not get our hopes up.'

‘Fair enough,’ said Annie. ‘But that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t get this circulated pronto and see what happens. We could add that he may be called Gord, or Gordon, too. Maybe that’ll help.’

‘But we don’t know for sure it’s the same person Jonathan Martell mentioned.’

‘We don’t know anything for certain. It’s probably not even his real name, if he is the killer. But sometimes you just have to take a shot.’

‘Doesn’t the artist have any rights here?’ Ray cut in. ‘I assume I’ve got some sort of copyright on this, or do you lot take that, too?’

Gerry ignored him and went on. She's learning, Annie thought. 'We'd be playing our hand, though, if we got it in the media. Tipping him the wink. He might scarper, if he's still around.'

'I don't think so,' said Annie. 'If he's still around, he's around for a reason . . .

’  
.

‘But why?’

‘To watch us look like fools,’ said Annie. ‘Or because he hasn’t finished.’

‘Finished what?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘Even so, we should get the sketch out there. We still need to know who he



is.'

'We could just say we're anxious to speak with him in connection with a recent occurrence,' Annie suggested. 'Something vague like that. Covers a multitude of possibilities.'

'But he could still go to ground if he sees

his likeness in the papers or on telly.'

'It's a risk we've got to take. But I don't think he's going anywhere. I reckon he thinks he's safe. Besides, how else are we going to find him? Do you have any better suggestions?'

'Not really,' Gerry admitted. 'I suppose we could always do it

more discreetly. Door to door.'

Annie rolled her eyes. 'Just think how long that would take. And think of the manpower. The AC would never authorise the budget.'

'Even though we're pretty certain what happened?'

‘Even so. And just how certain are we?’

‘Well, thanks to Jazz we now know that the blood on the hammer is Edgeworth’s,’ said Gerry. ‘And that probably proves that Edgeworth didn’t shoot up the wedding party, hit himself on the head with the hammer and then shoot himself.’

‘It’s possible the blood might have got there earlier,’ Annie said. ‘A cut or something. I don’t want to muddy the waters, but after all, it *was* Edgeworth’s hammer and Edgeworth’s blood. He could have hit his thumb banging in a nail or something.’

‘I know we always have to bear in mind the possibility that we

might be wrong,'  
Gerry said, 'but in this  
case I think the odds  
are pretty good that  
we've got it right.  
Remember, there's  
what Dr Glendenning  
said about the blow to  
the head to factor in,  
too, and according to  
Paula Fletcher the  
man in the sketch was  
after buying two sets  
of the same clothes –  
the same brand and

colour that we found  
in Edgeworth's cellar.'

'There's another thing  
we haven't followed  
up on yet,' said Annie.

'What?'

'He couldn't buy the  
two outfits he wanted  
at Paula's branch of  
the shop, so he didn't  
buy anything. Where  
*did* he get the  
clothes? He had to

have got them from somewhere. Another branch, perhaps?’

‘Right,’ said Gerry.  
‘They were on sale that week. It’s worth checking, and we do have the sketch to show around now. Maybe someone will recognise him, and we’ll find a credit-card receipt after all. Does this mean Doug and I



have to carry on with  
our shop crawl?’

‘So this is how you  
two like to spend your  
Saturday nights, is it?’  
said Ray,

who, Annie noticed,  
had been glancing  
from one to the other  
as they talked the way  
people watch a tennis  
ball going back and  
forth.

‘I thought you’d been quiet for too long,’ Annie said. ‘What is it you want to do? Go dancing, go clubbing or something?’

Ray topped up his glass. ‘Well, as I’m in the company of two lovely young women, my muse and my wonderful daughter, I do think we could come up with something a bit better

than sitting around  
talking about  
bloodstained  
hammers and  
murder.'

Annie jerked her head  
towards the  
entertainment room.  
'Why don't you go in  
there and listen to the  
music on Alan's  
headphones, loud as  
you want, then we  
wouldn't have to put  
up with it blaring in

our ears while we're trying to work.'

Ray studied his drink and narrowed his eyes. 'You can be cruel sometimes, you know. I don't know where you got it from. "How sharper than a serpent's tooth . . ."' Your mother didn't have a cruel bone in her body.'

Annie sighed. ‘ *Dad*.  
Just let us finish.  
Please? We’ll join you  
in a while. OK?’

Then we’ll have a  
party, a dance or two.  
Gerry might even let  
you sketch her.

She’ll be keeping her  
clothes on, though.’

Gerry gave Annie a  
look of horror. Ray  
seemed to brighten at

the possibility of fun  
later, picked up his  
bottle and glass and  
headed for the  
entertainment room  
singing along with  
Pink Floyd as he  
went. The music in  
the conservatory  
stopped. He'd found  
the headphones.

'I quite liked it,' Gerry  
said.

'What?'

‘Pink Floyd. They’re good. The boss said he was going to play me *Ummagumma* in the car some time, but Ray beat him to it. But why did you tell him he could sketch me? I’d be so embarrassed.’

‘Don’t worry, he’ll have forgotten in half an hour, and I’ll get you out of here without the slightest

stain on your honour.  
You have to know  
how to deal with Ray.  
Now you know what it  
was like for me  
growing up.'

'How did you manage  
it?'

'He's my dad. I love  
him.'

'I know. I'm sorry. I  
just don't understand



your relationship at all,' she said.

'I mean, my parents are . . . well, just normal.'

Annie laughed. 'Well, you certainly couldn't say that about Ray.' Growing up in the artists' colony, her mother dying young, she and Ray had never perfected a normal father—

daughter relationship, whatever that was, and in some ways Annie regarded Ray as the child while she played the indulgent parent. But that was too complicated to explain to Gerry. Just then the music came on again, a loud scream followed by thumping drums and screeching guitar feedback.

‘Oops,’ said Gerry.  
‘Perhaps I spoke too soon about liking the music.’

Annie glanced at her watch. ‘The headphones have come off. He’s getting impatient. Honestly, he’s got the attention span of a two-year-old, except when he’s working. Then you can’t budge him for love nor money. Let’s

get out of here. Leave him to it. He probably won't even notice. Come back to mine. I've got a couple of bottles, and we can have a nice quiet natter. You can crash there if you like. You won't have to drive home.' It was a step, she thought, the hand of friendship outstretched, beyond the job.

Gerry seemed to consider the option, then she stood up and said, 'Why not?

Let's do it.' And they tiptoed through the kitchen to the front door, got their coats and drove off.

Banks felt as if someone had pulled the floor from under him. He was spinning, in free-fall, the sea

outside was deafening, the waves threatening to engulf him. For a while he couldn't speak, couldn't breathe, couldn't get back his hold on reality. Then he heard Julie's voice cutting through the roaring.

'Alan? Alan? Are you all right, Alan? I'm sorry I didn't mean to give you such a

shock. I was so certain you must have suspected.'

'I can be very thick sometimes,' Banks mumbled. 'Or so I've been told.' The world began to settle back into its proper order. Even the sea sounded calmer.

The candle flames reflected in the bay window like two bright

eyes. Banks took a gulp of wine. Julie refilled his glass.

‘But why didn’t she tell me?’ he asked when he found his voice.

‘Think about it. You’d have done the decent thing. You were halfway there already. You’d have persuaded her to have the baby and get married. I think you may



underestimate how persuasive you could be. And how malleable Emily was. She seemed strong, determined, but she was so uncertain about what she wanted to do with her life that she'd have taken direction from someone as solid and resolute as you. Someone as *dependable*. And she knew that. That's why

she didn't tell you.  
She didn't want to  
give you the chance  
to persuade her to  
change her mind.'

'About what?'

'About the  
termination, of  
course.'

Somehow, Banks had  
known that was  
coming, but it still felt  
like yet another blow

he hadn't had a chance to protect himself from. He didn't reel quite as much as he had from the first piece of news, but he felt a tightness in his chest and a burning sensation behind his eyes. He gulped some more wine, was vaguely aware of Julie opening another bottle, red this time. He had almost

finished his main course and didn't feel like eating any more so he pushed his

plate aside.

'She knew you'd do your best to talk her out of it,' Julie went on. 'It was an awful period for her. Not physically, there were no medical problems, but . . . the depression afterwards, the self-

loathing. I was there with her through all that.

Later.'

'She didn't have to go through with it.'

'Well, she was right, wasn't she? You *would* have tried to talk her out of it.'

Banks considered the comment. 'Yes,' he said. 'I probably would

have tried to dissuade her from having an abortion. But if she was so determined . . . I mean, I wasn't anti-abortion, pro-life or anything. It would have been *her* choice.'

'Emily wasn't anywhere near as strong as you thought she was. Believe me, it took almost all she had to do what she

did. But she knew where it would lead if she had a baby, knew the life it would pull her towards, and that wasn't the life she wanted.'

'But she had children later.'

'Yes, when *she* was ready. Face it, Alan, neither of you were ready back then, in 1973.'

‘We could have made it work.’

‘Perhaps. And perhaps Emily would have believed you. But think about it.

Think about it now, after the passage of all that time, the children you do have, the life you’ve lived, the things you’ve achieved. Would you



have wished it to be any different?’

‘Well,’ said Banks after a brief pause. ‘There are some days I could definitely have done without.’

Julie smiled. ‘I don’t mean that sort of thing. There’s events we all wish had never happened to us, things we regret. A

drop of red? It's Rioja,  
too.'

'Please.' Banks held  
out his glass.

'Do you want a clean  
—'

'It doesn't matter.'

Julie poured. Banks  
sat with his chin in his  
hands trying to get a  
grasp on his feelings.  
He couldn't. For some  
reason he heard a

few snatches of  
'Gliders and Parks' in  
his head. It seemed to  
offer some oblique  
comment on his last  
meeting with Emily in  
Hyde Park. He tried to  
imagine having a  
baby with her, a life  
together wholly  
different from the life  
he had lived. He  
couldn't. And the  
other alternative  
would be having a  
child out there he

hadn't known about all these years. He wondered how that would feel?

'Is this why you invited me for the condemned man's last meal?' he said finally. 'To give me this news?'

'Oh, don't be so melodramatic. Or sarcastic. You're not being condemned to

anything except the truth. And you always did have a sarky tongue on you, Alan Banks. I told you, Marcel loves to cook for people, and I thought you might enjoy it, having driven all this way. Is it just your job, or have you never been able to see any charitable motives in anyone?’

‘Such as Emily?’

‘It’s true that she did what she did to spare herself a lot of grief, but even though you might not realise it yet, she was sparing you, too.’

Banks said nothing, returned to his wine.

‘What are you thinking?’ Julie asked.

‘Nothing much. I’m a bit too stunned to

think, if truth be told.'

'It was all for the best,  
Alan.'

'Maybe it was. We  
were very young. I . . .  
I just wish . . . Oh,  
never mind.'

'I know you wish it  
could have been  
different. But it  
couldn't be. It was  
what it was. Don't  
hold it against Emily.

Don't let it taint your memory of her. Don't hate her.'

'I could never hate her. I just wish I'd known, that's all. I wish she'd told me.

Even if she had wanted to go through with the abortion, I could have been with her. At her side. I could have comforted



her. She wouldn't  
have been alone.'

'She needed to be  
alone. And I've told  
you why she couldn't  
tell you.'

'I know. And you're  
probably right. But  
that doesn't help.'

'Let me bring the  
cheese plate.'

Julie got up and left  
the room. The

candles flickered and the sea continued to rumble and smash against the wall, like Banks's thoughts, sucking back the water like an indrawn breath. He drank some Rioja. And some more. Julie reappeared with the cheeses. Runny Camembert, old Cheddar, blue-veined Stilton. Banks didn't have much of an

appetite left, but he cut himself a chunk or two, took some water crackers and grapes. He was feeling a bit dizzy and realised that he had had far too much to drink. Driving home was out of the question. Too late to worry about that now. He'd find a hotel in town.

As if reading his thoughts, Julie said,

‘You can’t drive all the way back to Eastvale like this. The front guest room’s made up, just in case we had any last-minute customers. It’s yours for the night if you want it.’

‘Thank you,’ said Banks. ‘I’ll take you up on that.’

‘The squall,’ Julie said, pointing. ‘Look.

It's receding.'

Banks followed her gaze and, sure enough, the sea had stopped battering the wall, and there were even one or two gaps in the clouds towards the horizon, like tears in fabric, where the stars and a hint of moonlight shone through. Banks thought he could see the lights of a fishing

boat far out at sea,  
but he realised it

must be a buoy of  
some sort; it would be  
madness for anyone  
to go out fishing in  
this weather.

‘Someone mentioned  
at the funeral that  
Emily worked for  
Médecins Sans  
Frontières,’ he said.  
‘How did that come  
about?’

'It was just something she wanted to do. She travelled through most of her twenties and early thirties, did temp office work to make money, then she married Luke and raised two children. She and Luke were happy for many years, but they split up when the kids went to university. That's when she took the job.'

‘But she didn’t train as a doctor, did she?’

Julie laughed. ‘Good lord, no. She wasn’t a doctor. She worked in administration. The doctors’ doctor, she called herself. They need someone to keep the wheels rolling – food, supplies, medicines, personnel, soap, towels, accommodation and



so on. Training local people to do the job. That was Emily's job. She worked in every hellhole in the world, from South Sudan to Afghanistan. I can't imagine how awful a lot of it must have been. But her letters and emails were funny and insightful. Never self-pitying. I wish I'd kept them.

She loved what she was doing, though it took its toll on her. Depression was never very far from the horizon. Witnessing so much of man's inhumanity to man can do that to you. But it didn't break her spirit.'

Banks took in what Julie had said, tried to imagine Emily under fire in a tent in a

desert somewhere.

‘Why tell me about the pregnancy now?’ he asked. ‘After all these years. You said you knew all along.’

‘Yes, but it was my secret to keep, not to spread around. In the end, it was something Emily wanted, a favour she asked of me. Her last wish, if you like.’

Not to hurt you. She'd just felt guilty about it her whole life. She wanted you to know. That's all. I think because she knew she was dying she got caught up in the past, her youth, and you were a big part of that, an unresolved issue, if you like. Unfinished business. She wanted to put things right. She knew she couldn't turn back

the clock, but she wanted to do what she could to reveal what happened. Believe me, she didn't ask me to do this to hurt you. That was the last thing on her mind. I think she wanted your forgiveness. She talked most of all about the good times and good feelings. She said people often forget about that as love grows older and

colder over time. That first days feeling. The sheer joy and ecstasy of falling in love, when everything seems new and possible. Do you forgive her, Alan?’

‘Of course I do,’ said Banks. ‘I would never have wanted to hold her back, to stand in her way. I just wish things . . .’ He felt his eyes prickling and

swigged more wine.  
'Oh, never mind.'

'Wish things had been different?' Julie paused. 'Let me ask you a question.'

Where would you have gone from there? If things *had* been different. If she had told you at the time. If you had persuaded her against having the

abortion. If you had got married. Where would you have gone from there?’

‘I don’t know. I tried to imagine it just now, our life together, but I couldn’t.’

‘Whatever it would have been, Alan, the moment’s gone. You had your time, you and Emily.’ She got up and walked over to



the bar, took something out of a drawer. 'And don't forget it was a good time. She wanted me to give you this to remind you.'

It was a photograph. Banks held it by the candlelight. He and Emily in the early seventies. He was wearing a denim jacket over a T-shirt, and bell bottoms, and

his hair was much longer than it was now. Emily was wearing the embroidered white cheesecloth top she had favoured so much, along with her jeans, also bell bottoms. Banks had his arm around her and her head rested on his shoulder, her long blond hair hanging over his chest, that little sleepy

satisfied smile on her face. Banks felt a lump in his throat.

‘Turn it over,’ Julie said.

Banks turned it over. Written on the other side, in shaky handwriting, were the words, ‘Better by far you should forget and smile / Than that you should remember and be sad.’

‘Christina Rossetti again,’ Banks said.

‘Yes, that’s the one,’ Julie whispered.  
‘Forget and smile.’

## **Chapter 12**

‘I love that line, “with magic in my eyes”,’ said Banks, sitting in the Low Moor Inn with Linda Palmer on Sunday lunchtime. They both had the

traditional roast beef  
and Yorkshire pudding  
lunch before them,  
but while Linda sipped  
at a glass of red wine  
and tucked in with  
gusto, Banks stuck to  
copious amounts of  
water and picked at  
his food.

The Low Moor Inn,  
which Banks had  
discovered by  
accident a couple of  
years ago, was one of

those old sturdy and  
badly lit Dales pubs  
high on the moors,  
well off the beaten  
track. Its enormous  
fireplace blazed like a  
smithy's forge, quickly  
erasing memories of  
the damp and chill  
weather outside.

Prints and framed  
paintings of the local  
hunt and sheep-  
shearing scenes hung  
here and there on the  
rough stone walls.

Some were for sale  
and had price tags  
stuck below them.  
Bottles of spirits stood  
on shelves behind the  
polished bar and  
reflected in the long  
mirror behind them. A  
brass footrest ran  
along the bottom.

The legs of the old  
wooden chairs  
scraped on the  
flagstone floor when  
anyone moved.

Banks had woken early, disoriented and hung-over in Filey, to the squealing of seagulls and the smell of bacon and eggs. Marcel, of course, had provided a hearty full English breakfast, including black pudding and baked beans. At first Banks hadn't thought he would be able to manage it all, but he found himself staring



at an empty plate  
when he was on his  
second cup of coffee.  
He thanked Marcel,  
gave Julie a quick  
peck on the cheek  
and left. 'Don't be a  
stranger,' Julie had  
called out after him.  
But he didn't think he  
would be back there  
again, no matter how  
good the food.

'It is magnificent, isn't  
it? *Magic*,' said Linda.

They were talking about Hardy's *Poems of 1912–1913*, which Banks had read over the new year, before his meeting with Dr Glendenning in the Unicorn, though the quotation that appealed so much to Banks came from a musical setting of an earlier Hardy poem, 'When I Set Out for Lyonesse', by Gerald Finzi. Banks was

feeling a little better  
after his long drive,  
but he was still finding  
it difficult to  
concentrate.

The things Julie had  
told him the night  
before kept running  
through his head.

Emily. A baby.  
Abortion. But Emily  
was dead now, and  
she had wanted his  
forgiveness. Thinking

back to the first flush of love with Emily made Banks think of Sandra, whom he had married a few years after the split. Sandra. His ex-wife. Mother of Tracy and Brian. Now remarried to Sean, and a mother again.

He tried hard to remember the early days, when they were poor but happy, living in Kennington, but the

details eluded him. Their break-up had been acrimonious, and relations were still strained between them, so much so that they rarely met unless it was an important event involving Brian or Tracy.

Hardy captured that sense of first love so well, Banks thought, yet his relationship with Emma Gifford

had been  
troublesome, and the  
couple had grown  
more distant over the  
years. Only when she  
died could he  
resurrect the magic of  
those early days, the  
places they had been  
and emotions  
connected with them.  
That was the thread  
that ran through the  
sequence. The poems  
were a true marriage  
of place and memory,

Linda had said, and  
Banks had to agree,  
though he found  
Hardy's syntax and  
diction rather  
awkward sometimes,  
as if he were willing to  
twist the English  
language into any  
shape just for the  
sake of a rhyme or a  
rhythm. Not like the  
relaxed  
conversational flow of  
Larkin, for example,  
whom they had

discussed at their last meeting, where Banks hardly even noticed the rhymes and meter.

‘You seem a bit distracted today, Alan,’ said Linda. ‘Is it the hangover or the case you’re working on?’

‘Sorry,’ said Banks. ‘Bit of both. Is it so obvious? I *am* having



difficulty  
concentrating. Other  
things. The poems . . .  
I mean, I've just lost  
someone and . .

. I mean, it ended very  
abruptly, without  
explanation. A long  
time ago. I hadn't  
seen her in over forty  
years, and she died  
last December. It's not  
the same situation as  
Hardy and Emma at  
all, but the feelings.

Somehow they seem similar. I'm remembering things we used to do, the way she looked, her clothes, places we used to go.'

Linda closed her book and put it down on the table. 'In some ways Hardy felt he hadn't seen Emma for forty years, either,' she said. 'They were hardly talking by the

time she died. You don't have to talk about it if you don't want.'

'I know,' said Banks. 'This isn't a therapy session. Poetry isn't therapy.'

That's what you told me the first time we talked like this.'

'This person you lost. It was serious, at the

time?’

‘Yes. First girl I ever loved, as the song goes.’

‘And the case you’re working on?’ Linda asked.

‘No connection. Except I think it reaches back into the past, too. For different reasons, with different intentions.’ Banks

gulped down some water. 'In fact, I've been thinking that it might be something you can help me with.'

'Me?'

'Yes. If you don't mind thinking back.'

Linda narrowed her eyes and gave him that 'don't treat me with kid gloves'

look.

Banks held up his hands in surrender. He knew that he sometimes avoided certain topics with her because she had been raped by a well-respected TV

celebrity at the age of fourteen. But he also knew that she had not let it ruin her life. She had even written up her recollection of events for him in a

journal during the case they had met through. 'OK, OK,' he said. 'I know you told me not to pussyfoot around the past. It's just that in my job I come across some of the worst things people do to each other.'

'I know that. How do you manage it?'

‘You should know. You visit the dark side often enough. I’ve read your poetry.’

‘I’ve been there,’ said Linda, ‘but it’s different.’

‘Why? Because I see real dead bodies and you see only imaginary ones? You know as well as I do it’s not the bodies but



the people who do  
such things.

They're in your poems  
as much as they're in  
my life. We both  
spend far too much  
time down there in the  
dark. Alone.'

'You know I have my  
reasons,' said Linda  
softly.

'So do I,' said Banks.  
After a short pause he

went on. 'Anyway, I seem to remember you told me you went to Silver Royd girls' school in Wortley.'

'That's right. Why?'

'Does the name Wendy Vincent mean anything to you?'

'Yes, of course. She was the girl who was murdered when I was at school.'

She was raped and  
stabbed. It was  
terrible.'

Banks looked away.  
He couldn't help it,  
knowing the things  
that had happened to  
Linda, but she  
seemed unfazed.  
'That's right,' he said.

'And there was  
something about her  
in the papers a couple  
of years ago. The

fiftieth anniversary.  
Right?’

‘That’s the one.’

‘It seems a strange  
sort of anniversary to  
celebrate. A murder.’

‘Media. What can I  
say? It wasn’t a  
celebration of the  
murder, as such, and  
it did lead to the  
reopening of the  
investigation, the

identity of the killer and his eventual capture. So we can't complain. One of the triumphs of DNA evidence in cold-case work. Turns out Frank Dowson, the killer, was on leave from the merchant navy at the time of the killing, and nobody knew he was in the area. Of course, some people might have known and been lying to protect him.

His family, for example.'

'Dowson? I can't say I remember anyone by that name.'

'What about Wendy Vincent? And Maureen Grainger?'

'If they're the right ones I'm thinking of, they were ahead of me. I didn't know either of them. I was

just starting in the first form, and they'd have been in

the third or fourth. Older girls like them wanted nothing to do with us younger ones back then.'

'I don't doubt it's still the same. Boys, too. Except for a bit of bullying.'

‘Well, I certainly don’t remember either of them being spoken of as bullies.

Wendy Vincent was famous for hockey. She was the star of the school team. I saw her play lots of times. Do you remember *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, where all the girls were “famous” for something?’



‘What was Maureen Grainger famous for?’

‘I don’t know if she was famous for anything. I didn’t know her. I only remember Wendy Vincent because she was murdered. Isn’t that a terrible thing?’

‘It’s perfectly normal.’

‘Now, do you want to talk about Hardy or

don't you?'

'Yes, ma'am. I've done my homework.'  
Banks glanced through the window.

'I liked that line about the rain being like "silken strings". Here, it's more like rough old rope.'

Linda laughed. But even as they talked about the poems,

about the mysterious ghost figure and the way Hardy revisited places where he and Emma had been happy years ago, Banks couldn't get Maureen Grainger and Wendy Vincent out of his mind. Was Gerry right, and was that crime of over fifty years ago linked to the St Mary's shootings in any way at all?

Banks wasn't the only one feeling the effects of Saturday night that Sunday morning. Gerry had been reasonably abstemious back at Annie's cottage – she could be annoying that way – leaving Annie to polish off most of the wine by herself. At least Gerry had made tea and toast in the morning before leaving, after

what must have been an uncomfortable night on the living-room sofa, and she had the good sense to keep small talk and noise in general to a minimum when Annie finally lumbered downstairs. And she left as soon as she decently could after breakfast.

Annie was never much of a morning

person, and on Sundays she usually hunkered down with the papers, at least with the *Mail on Sunday* and the *Sunday Express*. She missed the old *News of the World* – nothing like a bit of gossip and scandal with your Sunday morning hangover – but that was long gone now.

By midday, she remembered she was going to interview Maureen Tindall with Jenny Fuller, and her spirits fell. It was an important interview, too, so she needed to be at the top of her game. Maureen Tindall might hold the key, or one of the keys, to the events that had happened in Fortford last December, though as

yet nobody could  
quite imagine how.  
She had certainly  
been nervous when  
the talk got around to  
past events in their  
last interview. Annie  
took a quick hot

shower and threw on  
some jeans and a  
sweatshirt before  
going out to her car.

She hoped Jenny  
Fuller would stay in



the background and  
keep her mouth shut.

The last thing she  
wanted was some  
damn uppity profiler  
interrupting with  
pointless questions  
whenever she felt she  
was getting  
somewhere.

Annie phoned Jenny  
to tell her she was on  
her way and picked  
her up outside her

posh house in The Green, then drove on to the Tindalls' posh house opposite The Heights. That was about as much posh as Annie could handle for one day.

Fortunately, it was all she had signed up for. Naturally, Jenny Fuller was as well turned out as usual in closely fitting black silk trousers and loose

white top and tailored jacket. Why did she always make Annie feel like such a slob? It wasn't as if her own outfit was especially cheap, just that she dressed casually and Jenny had a way of wearing clothes as if they were made for her. Some women had it, and some didn't. Annie felt that she didn't. No matter what she wore –

Primark or Versace,  
jeans or a skirt – she  
felt as if she'd just  
come out of the  
Oxfam shop.

Annie had wanted to  
catch Maureen Tindall  
off guard, so she  
hadn't phoned ahead  
to say they were  
coming. It was a risk,  
she knew; people  
often go out to visit  
friends or relatives on  
a Sunday. But this

time it paid off far better than she could have hoped. When Maureen eventually opened the door on the chain and peered nervously through the crack, it became clear that she was alone. Her husband was at a church meeting, she explained, when Annie had finally persuaded her to open up and let them in.

To Annie's relief,  
Jenny Fuller settled  
herself at the far end  
of the sofa, out of  
Annie's line of sight,  
and took out a large  
Moleskine notebook.  
She would, Annie  
thought, putting her  
regulation police  
notebook on the arm  
of the sofa beside her.  
She didn't trust Jenny  
to make the right sort  
of notes, and two  
people in her house

were almost more than Maureen Tindall could bear.

Though it was afternoon, Maureen was still wearing a pink quilted dressing gown over her nightdress and her hair was flattened on one side where she had clearly been lying down. Annie tried to dredge up some sympathy for her;

after all, it wasn't long since Laura's murder. It was difficult, though, as she seemed so full of self-pity to start with. It was a nasty thought, and Annie immediately felt ashamed for having it, but she couldn't help herself. Maureen didn't offer any refreshment, even though it was a damp and chilly day. Annie thought herself lucky



that there was a fire in the hearth, no doubt started by her husband, and that Maureen herself was obviously cold enough to add a couple of logs.

Maureen sat closest to the fire and leaned forwards in her armchair, hugging her knees. 'I've not been very well,' she said. 'I'm not sure I'll be up

to this. I took one of my pills and fell asleep. What time is it?’

‘Half past two,’ Annie said.

Maureen seemed to relax a bit at that piece of news. ‘Robert will be back soon,’ she said. ‘He said he would be home by half past three, and he’s never late.’

Wouldn't dare be,  
Annie bet, given  
Maureen's obsession  
with punctuality.

'Would you like me to  
make you a cup of tea  
or coffee or  
something?' Jenny  
Fuller asked from the  
far end of the sofa.  
There was a note of  
kindness and concern  
in her voice that even  
Annie noticed.

Maureen's face brightened. 'Would you?' She fingered the collar of her dressing gown. 'I'd do it myself, you know, but . . .'

'No problem,' said Jenny with a smile. 'Annie?'

'Er, whatever's going, please,' Annie said.

'I'll make a nice pot of tea,' said Jenny, and patted Maureen's shoulder before heading into the kitchen. She seemed to know instinctively where it was, Annie noticed. Maybe these posh houses were all the same inside.

Maureen smiled after Jenny, then it faded like the Cheshire cat's when she turned back

to Annie. 'She's nice, isn't she?' she said.

'Very,' said Annie. 'Do you know why we're here?'

'No. Should I? Something to do with Laura? The wedding?'

'Sort of.'

'You must think it's very odd, me being in bed at half past two in the afternoon.'

‘That’s not for me to comment on.’

‘But Dr Graveney says I need plenty of rest after, you know, the trauma of what happened.’

‘Of course,’ Annie said. ‘We won’t disturb you for very long.’

Maureen consulted her watch again.

‘Robert will be home soon,’ she said, as if to herself.

Jenny Fuller reappeared with a tray. ‘We’ll just let it brew a few minutes, shall we?’

Even as she played mother with the tea, Jenny didn’t have a hair out of place, didn’t spill a drop as she passed over the



cups and saucers.  
When she had done,  
she sat down in her  
corner again and set  
her Moleskine on her  
lap, as if she were  
signalling Annie to get  
started.

‘The last time I talked  
to you,’ Annie began,  
‘I noticed that you  
seemed a bit anxious  
when I mentioned the  
possibility of  
something from your

past being connected  
with the shootings.'

'Did I?' said Maureen.

'Yes. Wendy Vincent.'

'I can't imagine why.'

'It would be only  
natural. Wendy  
Vincent was your best  
friend, and something  
terrible happened to  
her.'

‘How could that possibly have anything to do with what happened to Laura?’

‘We don’t know that it does yet, but it’s the kind of coincidence that makes us prick up our ears. Wendy was murdered, wasn’t she?’

‘Yes,’ Maureen whispered. ‘I’m sorry.’

‘Why should you say that?’ Annie asked.

Maureen glanced between the two of them. ‘You know, don’t you? I should have known you’d find out. Who told you?’

‘Know what?’ Annie said. She was sure the exasperation sounded in her tone.

‘It wasn’t in the papers. I never told anyone.’

Annie felt as if she were struggling to land a particularly slippery fish. ‘What happened, Maureen?’ she asked. It was all she could think of to say. ‘Were you there? Did you see something?’

Maureen clutched her dressing gown at her throat. 'See something? Oh, no.

Nothing like that.'

'Then what is it?'

Annie thought the silence was going to last for ever, then Maureen said in a barely audible voice, 'I was supposed to

meet Wendy at the  
bus stop after lunch.

I'd been to visit my  
granny in Bradford.  
We were going to go  
shopping in town.

Clothes and records.  
We'd arranged to  
meet in secret  
because Wendy's  
parents didn't like us  
being friends.'

'Why?'

'Oh, I don't know. I suppose I was a bit more grown up than Wendy. I'd matured quickly. Her father tried to kiss me once. He was drunk and sloppy and I slipped out of his grasp easily enough, but he remembered. He never liked me after that. Wendy was fifteen and never been kissed. A bit of a goody two-shoes, I



suppose, and sporty,  
but she could be a  
laugh and . . . well,  
what can I say, we got  
along really well. We  
were different, but we  
were friends. I didn't  
lead her astray or  
anything. I wasn't  
really a bad  
influence.'

'We're not saying you  
did, Maureen. Go on.  
You were supposed to

meet on the day she disappeared?’

‘That’s right.’

‘And you didn’t tell your parents or her parents where you were going?’

‘No. Not even after. And not even later when the reporters came talking to all her friends. And Susan

Bramble didn't tell anyone, either.'

'Susan Bramble?'

'Another girl from school. From the hockey team. Another friend. She told me later she saw Wendy at the bus stop, and Wendy admitted she was waiting for me, but to keep it secret in case the Vincents found out. Susan

knew how to keep a secret.'

'But you didn't meet Wendy?'

'I was late. By the time I got to the bus stop, Wendy was gone. She must have taken the short cut through the woods. It was my fault.'

'Listen to me, Maureen.' It was

Jenny talking again,  
and this time her  
voice was concerned  
but authoritative.  
'Nobody's blaming  
you for anything.  
Anything at all. Do  
you understand?'

Maureen nodded, but  
Annie doubted that  
she was convinced.

'What DI Cabbot  
needs to know is what  
happened that

afternoon. What stopped you from meeting your friend? This might be important. Why does remembering that day make you feel so anxious?’

‘It was a terrible day,’ Maureen said. ‘Wendy was . . . stabbed and . . . I . . . it was the worst day of my life.’

‘I know,’ said Jenny moving forwards, going on her knees and taking Maureen’s hand. Annie could only look on. Jenny was good with people, she had to admit. ‘All these years you’ve been blaming yourself, haven’t you?’

Maureen hesitated, then said, ‘It was my fault. I was selfish. I

*should* have been there to meet her.'

'Where were you, Maureen?' Annie asked. 'What happened that afternoon?'

Jenny let go of Maureen's hand and went back to her place on the sofa. After what seemed an eternity, Maureen picked up her tea.



The cup and saucer  
were shaking in her  
hand.

‘I was with a boy,’ she  
said.

Having got nowhere  
in the squad room  
checking out property  
rentals and purchases  
in the Swainshead  
area for most of the  
morning, Gerry  
decided it was time to  
go out and visit a few

Walkers' Wearhouse branches. There was no sign of Doug Wilson, but that was only to be expected as he had Sunday off. She did, too, but she was working anyway. She was better off doing it by herself, she thought. Doug would only sulk or complain and slow her down. Before she left she phoned Paula Fletcher at the

Lyndgarth branch to ask her whether the two-for-one sale had extended to all branches. She said it had.

Gerry studied the photocopy of Ray's sketch. She still didn't know how closely it resembled their man, but it was a hell of a good drawing. Ray was a talented artist, despite the drinking

and childish  
behaviour. The  
thought passed  
through her mind that  
perhaps she should  
let him paint her in the  
nude, then her

modesty pushed it  
away quickly. She  
wasn't prudish – far  
from it – but the idea  
of posing nude in front  
of Ray Cabbot held  
no appeal. She didn't  
even think her body

was worth the canvas.  
She was too skinny  
by far, had no true  
womanly curves like  
Jenny Fuller, or even  
Annie. She was all  
bones and planes.  
And while she was  
quite willing to believe  
in the purity of Ray's  
artistic intentions, or  
at least suspend her  
disbelief, there was  
something just a bit  
too *louche* about him  
for her liking. And he

was old enough to be her father. Christ, he was Annie Cabbot's father. He was old enough to be Gerry's *grand* father. Why couldn't some clean-cut handsome young artist come along and want to paint her, or a composer write a song for her like that Mahler had for his Alma?

She took out the list of branches they had already visited, wondering whether it was worth calling again on any of them with the sketch of the man Paula Fletcher had described.

Someone had already talked to the press, and word was getting around that the police now had an Identikit picture of their person of interest. While this

wasn't quite accurate, it was enough to make her feel a sense of urgency. She decided it definitely was worth visiting the shops again. On previous visits, they hadn't had the sketch to show around. It might jog someone's memory.

She decided on the branches closest to the one in Lyndgarth,



where Paula Fletcher had encountered him, guessing that he probably wouldn't have travelled as far afield as York, Harrogate or Leeds. If she had no luck, then the larger centres, each with two or three branches, would be her next stop, but she hoped it wouldn't come to that. Buying the clothing would have been a job he

wanted to get over with as soon as possible. As far as Gerry could make out, there were three branches nearby: one in Helmthorpe, one in Eastvale and another in Northallerton, east of the A1. She started there but had no luck. She also drew a blank in Eastvale. The third branch was on Helmthorpe High

Street, opposite the  
Dog and Gun.

The first young man  
Gerry spoke to had  
only been working at  
the branch since  
Christmas, but the  
manager Henry  
Bedford also  
happened to be in the  
shop that day  
preparing for stock-  
taking. He had  
worked there for over  
eight years and prided

himself on knowing all his regulars, including Martin Edgeworth, who had shopped there often for all of his outdoor needs. 'Terrible tragedy,' he said as he examined the sketch.

'If it helps,' Gerry said, 'he was wearing a cheap grey windcheater and an open-neck shirt, showing a bit of chest

hair and the top of a tattoo. Maybe a bird or something.'

'Yes,' said Bedford, tapping the sketch. 'Yes.'

Gerry felt the tingle of excitement ripple up her spine. 'You remember him?'

'I do. He seemed to be in a hurry, rather

brusque, a bit rude, if  
you ask me.

You tend to remember  
people who act that  
way. Impatient,  
imperious. He wanted  
two sets of identical  
items. Anorak,  
waterproof trousers,  
woolly hat.'

It was their man,  
Gerry thought. 'Is this  
sketch a good  
likeness?'

The manager peered at it again. 'Yes,' he answered. 'Pretty good.'

'How did he pay?'

'I'm afraid I don't . . .  
yes, just a minute.  
Yes, he paid cash.'

Gerry's hopes faded.  
'I don't suppose you  
got a name or  
anything?'

'No. Sorry.'

'It's all right. Tell me,'  
she went on. 'You  
said Martin  
Edgeworth shopped  
here for his outdoor  
clothes?'

'Yes. He was a  
regular.'

'Did he know this  
man? I mean, did you  
ever see them  
together? Did he  
mention Edgeworth?'



‘No,’ said Bedford.  
‘Whoever he was, he  
was a complete  
stranger to me. I  
never saw him with  
Martin, or anyone  
else, for that matter.’

‘Thank you, Mr  
Bedford,’ said Gerry,  
heading for the door.  
‘Thank you very  
much. You’ve been a  
great help.’

‘A boy?’ Annie repeated. ‘What boy? Who was he?’

‘It doesn’t matter who he was. He doesn’t have anything to do with it. I think he was called Danny. He was older than me. He’d already left school.’

‘Danny who?’

‘I don’t remember. Honestly. He was just

a local boy. He  
worked for Sammy  
Ledgard's, driving.'  
She turned  
imploringly to Jenny.

Annie knew it was  
time to slow down.  
'OK,' she said. 'We  
won't worry about that  
for the time being.  
Was Danny your  
boyfriend?'

Maureen was  
plucking at the

stitching of her quilted dressing gown. She managed a weak smile. 'Sort of, I suppose. I was quite pretty back then. I was fifteen. I had a lot of boyfriends.'

'I'm sure you did,' said Annie. 'The boys liked you?'

'Not like that. I wasn't like some girls. Not like they said at

school. There were some houses on the old estate over the road, all boarded up. We knew how to get into one of them. It was the only place you could go, you know, to be by yourselves. We were just kissing and cuddling. It was all quite innocent. I lost track of time, and I was late to meet Wendy. She'd set off

home. They said later that her leg was hurting from where someone had whacked her with a hockey stick. If she had been feeling better, maybe she would have waited and we'd have got the next bus. You can't believe how sorry I am for being so selfish.'

‘You mustn’t think that way,’ Jenny said.

‘But if I’d been there, like I should have been, we’d have both gone into town, and it would never have happened. Don’t you see? If it wasn’t for me, Wendy would still be alive.’

‘You don’t know that,’ said Jenny. ‘Perhaps she would have told

you she didn't feel like going, and you'd have gone by yourself, then she would have still walked through the woods alone. After all, neither of you thought there was anything to be afraid of there.'

'But it didn't happen like that, did it?'

'Had you arranged this meeting with



Danny before?’ Annie asked.

‘No. I just bumped into him in the street. I was early to meet Wendy, so I went with him. I thought I still had enough time. My watch . . . stopped. I didn’t realise. But we didn’t do anything wrong. We were just kissing and holding hands.’

‘Nobody’s suggesting you were doing anything wrong,’ said Annie, smiling.

‘I liked a kiss and cuddle with my boyfriend when I was that age, too. It’s only natural.’

‘But I lost track of the time,’ said Maureen, clutching at the neck of her dressing gown. She consulted her

watch again. 'Robert will be home soon. He *will* be home soon.' Annie thought it sounded like a kind of mantra she was saying to calm herself down as she struggled to hold back the tears.

'It's all right, Maureen.' Jenny's velvety comforting voice came from the far end of the sofa.

‘You’ve nothing to blame yourself for.’

‘But I do!’ Maureen said. ‘Don’t you see? I was kissing a boy while Wendy .

. . . Wendy was . . . Oh, my God.’ She held her face in her hands and cried. In a flash, Jenny was kneeling beside her, a tissue materialising from nowhere. Annie

wondered how she did it, but she got Maureen calmed down quickly enough and went back to the sofa.

‘It’s all right,’ Maureen said after a while, looking at Annie now. ‘Ask me what you want to know. It’s all right. I’ll tell you. Then you can take me away.’

‘Nobody’s going to take you away, Maureen,’ said Annie. ‘Robert will be back soon. He’ll take care of you. Why didn’t you tell anyone about this before?’

‘Because Wendy and I weren’t supposed to be friends. Because I was ashamed. Because I felt guilty. I thought if they knew, they’d blame me.’

They already said I was a bad influence.'

'But you've blamed yourself all these years,' said Jenny. 'Maybe if you'd told your parents or someone, you'd have been able to get the help you needed.'

'What good would it have done? Nobody can undo the past. Wendy was dead and

it was all because of  
me. What does it  
matter now? Laura's  
dead, too. I

thought you'd got the  
man who did it?'

'We have to follow up  
on things that come  
up, even if they don't  
seem connected.'

'Do people have to  
know?'

'Have to know what?'



‘That I lied. What I was really doing.’

‘I don’t see any reason why they should. Nobody knew about this but you and Danny?’

‘Only Mark Vincent.’

Annie ears pricked up. ‘Mark Vincent?’

‘Wendy’s younger brother. He was on his way to the gang

meeting in Billy Dowson's garage. He must have seen me and Danny holding hands, but he didn't say anything. He was only eleven. He probably didn't know what holding hands meant.'

Annie tried to work it out. Susan Bramble had seen Wendy at the bus stop shortly before she was killed,

but had said nothing to anyone. Mark Vincent had seen Maureen walking hand in hand with this Danny, and he had also said nothing. But why should he have? He didn't know that Maureen was supposed to meet his sister. The meeting between Maureen and Wendy for the trip into town was a secret. Only Susan

Bramble knew about it. Annie wasn't sure what it all meant, if anything. 'Where is Danny now?' she asked.

'I don't know. We lost touch. I haven't seen him since then.'

'You knew Frank Dowson, right?'

'I knew who he was. He was Billy

Dowson's older brother. But I didn't *know* him.'

'You knew his brother?'

'Only because he was mates with Wendy's brother Mark. They were both eleven. They were in some sort of silly gang, and they used to meet in Billy's dad's garage. He never used it to

keep his car in there.  
It was an old banger  
and he left it in the  
street. People said he  
had a lock-up across  
town where he stored  
stolen goods, but I  
don't know if that was  
true or not. Billy had a  
key to the garage.  
They just used to sit  
around and smoke  
and tell dirty jokes. He  
thought we didn't  
know about it, but  
Wendy and Susan

and me listened  
outside once.'

'Who else was in this  
gang?'

'Just local kids. Mark,  
Billy, Ricky Bramble,  
Susan's younger  
brother, Tommy  
Jackson and Mick  
Charlton. Maybe  
others. I don't  
remember. They  
wouldn't let girls in. As  
if we'd want to be a

part of it. They were just little kids.'

'Maureen, you do know that Frank Dowson was arrested for Wendy's murder just a couple of years ago, don't you? And that he died in prison last

year?'

'I saw it on TV.'



‘Was Frank in the gang?’

‘No way. He was a grown-up. Maybe twenty-one or something. And he didn’t come home very often. We hardly ever used to see him. He was in the merchant navy. We were all a bit scared of him.’

‘Why?’

‘I don’t know. The way he looked at us. How he was so big and quiet. We’d heard there was something wrong with him. You know, in his head.’

‘Did you see him that day you were supposed to meet Wendy?’

‘No. Wendy and I had arranged to meet at the bus stop just

before half past one.  
That was when the  
bus went. There  
wasn't another one for  
twenty minutes.

It was nearly quarter  
to when I got there. I  
thought she might still  
be waiting and we'd  
get the next one, but  
she was gone. I just  
thought she'd gone  
home. I didn't see  
anyone around.'

That was something that simply couldn't happen today, Annie realised, in the age of mobiles, of constantly being in touch. When she found out she was running late, Maureen would probably have texted Wendy and got a response –

either she would wait or she was going home. They would

probably have been in touch earlier, too, and Wendy would have texted Maureen that she'd taken a nasty hit on the hockey pitch and didn't feel too well, so she'd have to cancel the trip to town for today. It might not have made any difference to the outcome, if she had taken the short cut and bumped into Frank Dowson, but

communication might well have brought about a different course of action entirely. Still, it was pointless speculation. With today's methods, Frank Dowson would have been caught pretty quickly, too – but it hadn't happened in the twenty-first century; it had happened in 1964.

‘What did you do  
when you found  
Wendy wasn’t there?’  
Annie asked.

‘I went home. I didn’t  
feel like going into  
town by myself.’

‘Did you walk through  
the woods?’

‘No. Our house was in  
the other direction. I  
walked along the  
main road.’

‘And you’re sure didn’t see Frank Dowson or anyone else you knew?’

‘ *No.*’

‘What about afterwards? Did anyone ever say anything to make you think Frank Dowson might have hurt Wendy?’



‘No. We moved away not long after, and I never saw any of the old crowd again.’

‘And you’ve been blaming yourself all these years?’ Jenny asked.

‘It was my fault,’ said Maureen. ‘I shouldn’t have lost track of time. I can’t

be trusted. If I hadn't  
been so selfish,  
Wendy would still be  
alive.'

Annie couldn't help  
but notice the  
helplessness in her  
voice as it cracked,  
and as Jenny came  
over again to mutter  
more words of  
sympathy and  
comfort, Annie also  
couldn't help thinking  
that if Maureen had

carried her guilt with her through her whole life, and if it were somehow linked with her nerves and obsession with punctuality, then maybe someone else had been nursing a festering blame for her for just as long, and perhaps that, too, had had deep psychological effects. But who? Wendy's younger brother had

seen Maureen with  
Danny, and Susan  
Bramble had spoken  
with Wendy at the bus  
stop and seen her  
walk towards the  
woods. Did someone  
else know Maureen's  
secret? If so, how?  
And why wait fifty  
years before taking  
any action? Why  
bother now that the  
killer had been  
brought to justice?  
And why not shoot

Maureen herself, if she was to blame? To make her suffer?

It was always possible that Frank Dowson hadn't killed Wendy Vincent, that despite the DNA evidence, someone else had done it. Maureen? She certainly couldn't have committed the rape, but who was to say that the person who had raped

Wendy was the same as the person who had killed her? There was no apparent motive for anyone around at the time – not, as far as Annie knew – but sometimes motives don't become clear until much later. In addition to Maureen, there were Billy Dowson and Mark Vincent to consider, though they were very

young at the time of  
Wendy's murder.

Whatever had  
happened, Annie  
thought, Banks would  
want to know about  
this new information  
as soon as possible.  
She took out her  
mobile.

## **Chapter 13**

The first old 'gang'  
member Gerry had

managed to trace for Banks was called Mick Charlton, or Michael, as his wife had insisted on calling him when Banks dropped by the house later. Mrs Charlton had told him that her husband was at work and had given him directions to the workshop. Michael Charlton had done well for himself since leaving Armley Park



Secondary Modern for an apprenticeship as an electrician, and he now ran his own business not far from the estate where he grew up.

Gerry had trawled through the case files and newspaper articles for Banks quickly again after Annie and Jenny had passed on Maureen's story, and, as

expected, she had found no mention of Maureen's secret meeting with Wendy, or of her tryst with anyone called Danny. Clearly, Banks thought, the most important details of that day were not in the public documents, or even in ex-Detective Superintendent Gristhorpe's memory, but were known only

to those in the two close-knit groups – the eleven-year-old boys, on the one side, and the fifteen-year-old girls on the other.

As Banks drove to Leeds, listening to Al Stewart's *Love Chronicles*, he couldn't help but dwell on what Annie and Jenny had told him about Maureen Tindall's secret

meeting with Wendy Vincent, and the reason why it had never happened. He also wanted to know whether the sketch of the man described by Paula Fletcher rang a bell with anyone, and Michael Charlton was someone who might know. He might even know who 'Gord' was. All Banks knew so far was that Maureen had said Mark Vincent

saw her and Danny holding hands and heading for an old house where the kids went to kiss and canoodle. What he would have made of that at the age of eleven, Banks had no idea. He wasn't sure what his own feelings towards girls were at that age. Had he ever held a girl's hand, other than his mother's? He couldn't

remember for certain, but he felt all that had come a bit later.

Banks turned off the music in the middle of the title track, just after some nice guitar work from Jimmy Page. As he parked in front of the low brick office block on Stanningley Road, he reflected that some people never move far from where they

started out. That was certainly the case with Michael Charlton. His old estate was no more than a couple of miles up the road, and Armley Park Secondary Modern School was even closer, only a hundred yards or so from his offices just beyond the busy junction with Crab Lane and Branch Road. Of

course, it was no longer a school but an office complex.

According to Mrs Charlton, he had been running his own business there for over forty years.

Though the area had been given a facelift not so long ago, it was starting to become shabby again, Banks thought. That was partly



because the renovations had never been completed.

Some of the buildings condemned ages ago were still clinging on, a boarded-up pub, an empty shop, though the old Clock School, like Armley Park, had been converted into offices.

‘I’d like to speak to Mr Charlton, please,’  
Banks said to the

receptionist in her  
little alcove.

‘Who may I say is  
calling?’

Banks flashed his  
warrant card.

‘Detective  
Superintendent  
Banks.’ He had  
almost said DCI,  
having still not got  
used to referring to  
himself as

‘superintendent’.  
There was no decent  
abbreviation for the  
rank, either. Det.

Supt. didn’t sound  
right, and DS already  
stood for Detective  
Sergeant, so he was  
lumbered with the full  
moniker.

‘Just a minute.’ The  
receptionist picked up  
the phone and  
announced him.

'He says to go through,' she said, pointing to the door marked M.

CHARLTON  
ELECTRICAL. Banks found himself in a large open-plan area with work benches, various pieces of electrical equipment, testing machines and wires and a desk in a corner by the window for the boss. It wasn't

much of a view, just the estate over the road. People worked at the various benches, and another desk was occupied across the room. Banks could smell solder and burned rubber.

‘Superintendent?’ said Charlton, waving him over. ‘Do sit down. There, move those files.’

Banks picked up the batch of files on the chair.

‘Just dump them on top of that cabinet there, if you don’t mind.’

Banks did as Charlton asked and sat down.

Charlton tapped his fleshy lower lip with his pen, contemplating Banks,

then said. 'Well, it's not every day we get a visit from the boys in blue. What can I do for you?'

No point beating about the bush, Banks thought. 'It's about what happened in 1964. The Wendy Vincent business.'

'Wendy? I thought that was all over and

done with now you  
finally got your man.'

'I still have a few  
questions. Would you  
prefer to go  
somewhere more  
private?'

Charlton leaned back  
in his chair. 'It doesn't  
matter to me. I've got  
nothing to hide. I must  
admit I'm curious  
what it is you're after,  
though.'



‘Just information,’ said Banks.

‘Then I’m your man. I was there, got the T-shirt.’

‘Did you know Wendy Vincent and her friend Maureen Grainger?’

‘Not very well, no. I knew who they were, of course, but they were older than us and, well, when you’re

eleven or so, you're interested in other things than fifteen-year-old girls, aren't you?'

'Like cricket and model aeroplanes?'

'And stamp collecting, trainspotting. That sort of thing, yes. Anything, in fact. And they don't want anything to do with you, either. It's all pop

stars and *Jackie* and make-up.'

'And there was the gang, wasn't there? You and your mates.'

Charlton laughed. 'I'd hardly call that ragtag collection of misfits I belonged to a gang. At least not in the sense that people use the word today.'

‘Who were the members?’

‘There was Mark Vincent, Billy Dowson, Ricky Bramble, Tommy Jackson and me.’

‘Just the five of you?’

‘Most weeks, yes.’

‘Frank Dowson?’

‘No. Too old for us.’

‘Did you ever have a member called Gord?  
Or Gordon?’

‘No.’

‘Did you follow the reports in the papers when the case came back into the limelight a couple of years ago?’

‘Of course.’

‘Did it surprise you, Frank Dowson being

found guilty?’

‘Not at all. I always thought he was creepy.’

‘In what way?’

‘Just creepy.’

‘Did you see him often?’

‘Hardly ever. It was Billy’s gang, mostly because it was his dad’s garage we used

to meet in, but Frank was away at sea most of the time. Besides, like I said, he was too old to be interested in anything like that, anything we were doing.'

'Still, you knew him, didn't you, and he raped and murdered a girl you knew.

It must have had some effect on you?'

‘Oh, I’m not saying I wasn’t shocked or upset. Horrified. Creepy as he was, I never thought of Frank Dowson as a murderer. But the more I thought about it, the less surprised I was.’

‘Because he was creepy?’

For the first time, Charlton seemed to



become guarded in his responses.

Banks could sense a curtain closing, and he wanted to wrench it open. 'That's a part of it. Yes. He hardly ever spoke, and when he was around, he had a habit of just appearing there out of nowhere. Like, he was a big bloke and all, but quiet as a mouse.'

‘Did he ever come to your gang meetings?’

Charlton glanced towards the wall. ‘Like I said, he was too old to be in the gang.’

‘That’s not what I asked,’ Banks said.

Charlton sighed. ‘There’s a pub up on Town Street,’ he said, glancing at his watch. ‘Maybe we could talk

more comfortably  
there.'

Banks stood up. 'Your  
choice.'

Gerry Masterson  
stood alone in the  
boardroom of  
Eastvale Police HQ  
with a huge Ordnance  
Survey map of the  
area spread open on  
the desk. She was  
used to the large  
space being filled with

officers for a briefing, the sort of thing she had done at the beginning of what was now becoming known as the Edgeworth Case.

Though she could hear occasional voices and various office noises from the corridor outside, the boardroom seemed to have a muffled atmosphere all of its

own, partly due to the wainscoting and the long polished oval table with its matching high-backed chairs, not to mention the silent and disapproving stares of the men with mutton-chop whiskers and red faces in gilt frames around the walls. The woollen merchants who, along with the lead miners before them, had

been responsible for  
whatever prosperity  
and population  
Swainsdale  
possessed.

The lead mines were  
all in ruins now, tourist  
attractions, and  
though you'd be hard  
pushed to go very far  
without bumping into  
a sheep in North  
Yorkshire, the cloth  
and woollen industries  
had long fallen victim

to cheap imports; first, legitimately from India, but more recently from Asian sweat shops or child labour. It had also lost a lot of ground to synthetics over the years, though sheep-shearing was still a regular occurrence – and another tourist attraction – it was the meat rather than the wool that people were

interested in these days.

Gerry rested her palms on the smooth wood and scanned the map. When it came to maps, she thought, you could only get so far with computers. They were great for the details and for suggesting or calculating routes, but for sheer scale you needed real sheets,



not a computer screen, and to get that effect she had spread out the large OS Landranger map on the table and marked the perimeters according to places the killer was known, or highly suspected, to have visited.

Maps told you a lot if you could read them well enough, and

Gerry had learned that skill at school, then honed it later on country walks. She could follow the

contours of a hill, the boundaries of a field and the progress of a footpath with the same ease that most people could read a book.

Close to the River Swain were Fortford,

where it all started,  
Helmthorpe, where  
the matching sets of  
clothing were bought,  
and Swainshead,  
where Martin  
Edgeworth had lived.  
North of there was the  
Upper Swainsdale  
District Rifle and  
Pistol Club, to which  
Edgeworth had  
belonged, and to the  
east, over the moors,  
was Lyndgarth, the  
first place the killer

had tried to buy his clothing.

If Gerry drew a line linking all these places she ended up with a wonky rectangle. None of its sides were exactly the same length, but the west–east lines were the longest sides. She also pencilled in an extension from Fortford to include Eastvale in the bottom

south-east corner and joined that line to Lyndgarth.

The area she had marked off covered a lot of ground, though much of it was wild moorland, and she also had to accept that the killer might have been living at least a short distance outside the boundaries she had

drawn. But it was a start.

The only places of any real size were Eastvale, Helmthorpe, Swainshead and Lyndgarth. Even Fortford and Gratly were not much more than small villages.

Eastvale, though there was no proof the killer had ever set foot there, was by far

the largest settlement, being close to twenty thousand in population.

Somewhere, in the midst of all this, lived a killer, Gerry was certain. The problem was how to find him. He might have lived in the dale for years, of course, but Gerry doubted that. She believed that he had come specifically to

carry out the shooting at the wedding. Of course, he might have left the area immediately after – most sensible assassins would – but that was a risk she would have to take. She could hardly search the whole country for him, but she could do a thorough job of covering her own part of it. Even if he had



left, there was a chance that, by finding out where he had lived when he was in Yorkshire, they could possibly find some evidence that would lead to his identity and perhaps help track him to his new location.

But Gerry felt he was still close. She didn't know why, and it wasn't a feeling she

would share with DI  
Cabbot or the boss,  
but she felt it,  
nevertheless.

He was nearby,  
watching, enjoying the  
results of his  
handiwork. There was  
even a chance that he  
hadn't finished yet.  
She had no idea  
whether he had  
planned any more  
killings, or even  
whether he had

managed to get his hands on any more firearms, now that Edgeworth's AR15 and Taurus were in the police evidence locker, but she somehow felt he hadn't finished what he came to do.

So she was trying to find someone who lived a relatively hermit-like existence – but not too reclusive

as to be suspicious –  
for perhaps only a  
short while. That set  
some limits. She  
would first check the  
out-of-the-way places,

including empty  
properties where he  
might squat without  
being discovered.

There probably  
weren't many, but  
there would be a few  
decrepit barns and old

shepherd's shelters if he didn't mind living rough. Of course, he would need somewhere to park his car, and he might have used a nearby public car park. But on second thoughts, she quickly ruled them out. Given the magnitude of his intended crime, she didn't think he would want to take even the slightest risk of being

seen to break the law before he got started. On the other hand, she had decided from his shopping habits that he was either parsimonious or short of money, so she could also rule out any higher priced properties or rentals. That should whittle the list down a bit; prices being what they were in the area these days, it was

difficult to find an affordable cottage or flat. There were a few converted barns, but even they were pricey, and he would have stood out like a sore thumb in a student flat in Eastvale. His needs would probably be simple: a roof over his head, a bed or somewhere to set down a sleeping bag – though she ruled out camping because

of all the rain – and solitude. The sort of place a poor writer or artist might be able to afford. Ray Cabbot might be able to help there.

His resources weren't exactly limited, but he had been checking out properties all around the county since before Christmas. He didn't make her as nervous



as he had when they first met. Somehow, hearing Annie talk about him and watching the way she dealt with him gave Gerry confidence. Ray Cabbot might not be a pussy-cat or a saint, but he was no abusive predator either.

There were certain routine things that could be done fairly

quickly by telephone, such as checking the voters' registry at the council offices – though a man on the verge of mass murder might be expected to be relatively uninterested in who his next MP or councillor was going to be – and the land registry, which would give her the name of the owner, from which she could also

perhaps get the names of anyone who had rented from him. Then there were the utilities that just about everyone had – gas, electricity, Yorkshire Water – and after that telephone companies, Internet providers, the Department of Vehicle Licencing, the post office, HMRC and many more.

She wasn't stupid enough to imagine that he would have used his own name or real previous address, but whatever details he had given the seller or renter might also help determine who he was and help locate him. And she had the advantage of Ray's sketch.

The problem was that Gerry didn't have time

to do all this work herself. It would mean hours on the phone, perhaps even traipsing about the countryside, visits to out of the way places, false trails galore. And she had other things to do.

Would AC Gervaise authorise the manpower? Doug Wilson could help, for a start. He didn't

seem to be doing  
much these days. And  
maybe with the  
addition

of a couple of  
ambitious uniformed  
officers, that would be  
enough to get things  
in motion. Surely the  
AC couldn't object to  
that.

There was only one  
way to find out.

Banks and Charlton  
crossed the road and  
walked up Branch  
Road, past the  
Western and back of  
the Tesco Express, on  
to Town Street, where  
most of the shops had  
foreign names. The  
pub had clearly seen  
better days, but they  
found a quiet corner  
in the lounge bar,  
where the noise of  
video machines and  
dreadful pop music

was distant. Charlton offered to get the drinks. Banks asked for a coffee and wouldn't be talked out of it. He didn't want to be driving in Leeds traffic with even one alcoholic drink in him. He had let DCI Ken Blackstone know he would be on his patch that day, and they had arranged to meet in the city centre later for dinner and drinks.



There was a good chance they would take a taxi and Banks would spend the night in Blackstone's spare room.

'It's not so bad here during the day,' said Charlton, 'but it gets a bit edgier by night. It's almost all Eastern Europeans these days, as you could see from the shops. First the Poles, now

it's Romanians and Bulgarians.' Banks had been in the area before on more than one case over the past couple of decades, and he was aware that now the once Northern English working-class neighbourhood was very much dominated by Eastern European immigrants. There was even a new

mosque not far away,  
on Brooklyn Terrace.

When they were  
settled in the corner,  
Charlton seemed  
nervous. 'You must  
think it's odd, me  
asking if you wanted  
to go somewhere  
more private after I  
said I'd nothing to  
hide?'

Banks gave a  
noncommittal shrug.

'I mean, it's true. I don't have anything to hide. Nothing at all. But some things . . . well, you know, office gossip and the like. After all, I am the boss. I do have a reputation to live up to, a standard to set. I don't want all my employees knowing about my misspent youth.'

‘What is it that you don’t have to hide, then?’ Banks asked.

Charlton took a long pull on his pint of Guinness and licked the foam from his lips. ‘Mm, nectar,’ he said. ‘I don’t mean misspent in a criminal way, you understand. Just that I suppose I could have spent more time on my books, more time at

school listening to teachers. The usual. I failed my eleven plus.'

'You don't seem to have done badly for yourself.'

'Not at all. I've nothing to complain about. If you show a bit of application you don't have to worry too much about the education. The world will always need

plumbers and electricians. That's what I say. Elbow grease and a bit of savvy.' He touched the side of his nose. 'That's what it takes, superintendent.

Hard graft never did anyone any harm.'

It was a variation on the Samuel Smiles self-help philosophy that was engraved in

pithy sayings inside the Victorian town hall dome, and Banks had heard it many times before, almost as often as 'where there's muck there's brass'.

The coffee was bland. Banks added milk and sweetener. They didn't help much. 'Frank Dowson,' he said. 'What can you tell me about him?'



'Not much more than I have done,' said Charlton. 'I meant what I said. None of us really knew him. Maybe Billy, I suppose, being his brother, but he wasn't a topic of conversation. We were all a bit scared of him, like we were of Billy's dad. Frank was definitely strange. Retarded, I think. Or

whatever they call it  
these days.'

'But there's something  
else, isn't there, or  
you wouldn't have  
wanted us to leave  
the office?'

Charlton started  
playing with an extra  
beer mat, first  
manipulating it  
between his fingers,  
then picking it to bits.  
'The day it happened,'

he said finally. 'You know, the day Wendy . . . the murder.'

'Yes?'

'We had a gang meeting. All the members were there.'

'But not Frank Dowson?'

'I told you. Frank wasn't a member. Not that we did anything serious. A bit of

mischief, you know.  
Boys will be boys.  
The occasional scuffle  
with the Sandford  
gang. But nobody  
ever got seriously  
hurt. No knives or  
bicycle chains  
involved. A bloody  
nose or a black eye at  
worst.'

'And Frank?'

'Right. I was getting to  
that. He was

supposed to drop by  
that afternoon.'

'Why?'

'As a guest, like. You  
know. Billy had asked  
him.'

'Again, why? Did he  
have something to  
say, something to tell  
you, or show you?'

'You could say that.'

'Are you saying that?'

‘Well, er, yes, I suppose I am.’

‘Go on, then. I’m listening.’

‘You’re not making this easy.’

Banks leaned forwards. ‘Then let me simplify things, Mr Charlton. If you don’t tell me what it is you have to say, we’ll go up to Eastvale HQ,

find an empty  
interview room and  
talk there until I'm  
satisfied. Is that easy  
enough for you?'

'You don't have to be  
like that.'

'What do I have to be  
like to get you to tell  
me what it is you have  
to say?'

I'm being as patient  
as I can.'

‘All right, all right. Billy told us his brother was going to drop by the garage during our meeting that afternoon, like, to show us something he’d got off a darkie in Marseilles.’

‘What was this something?’

Charlton swallowed.  
‘A knife. A flick-knife. But don’t go taking it



the wrong way. He was just going to show it to us, that's all. We were kids, superintendent, fascinated by exotic things like that. A hint of danger, the forbidden.'

'And what was it like, this knife? Did it live up to your expectations?'

'I don't know.'

‘Why not?’

‘Frank didn’t turn up.’

‘What was that? I  
couldn’t quite hear  
you.’

‘I said he didn’t turn  
up. Frank Dowson.’

‘But he was in the  
area?’

Charlton seem to  
panic a little at that. ‘I  
don’t know, I tell you.

How would I know? I didn't see him. I hadn't seen him for ages. I assumed he probably got leave from the merchant navy, like, and hadn't been able to come to the meeting for some reason. Maybe he'd been called back to his ship? Maybe his leave got cancelled.'

'So let me get this straight. Frank

Dowson was  
supposed to drop by  
the garage and show  
you this exotic knife  
he'd picked up in  
Marseilles, but he  
didn't turn up, and  
around the same time  
Wendy Vincent gets  
raped and stabbed in  
the nearby woods.  
Stabbed, mind you,  
with a flick-knife,  
perhaps, and none of  
you thinks it's worth  
telling the police

about it. You don't even think he was in the area. Am I right?'

'You didn't know Billy's dad. He was a holy terror was Mr Dowson. Like one of them Krays, he was, or that crazy mafia bloke in *Goodfellas*. You didn't want to get on his bad side. And Frank was family, after all.'

‘Are you telling me that Billy Dowson’s father told the gang members not to mention that Frank Dowson was supposed to show up with a knife that afternoon but didn’t? That you were all protecting him? Protecting a possible killer?’

‘No, it wasn’t like that. He told Billy that

Frank couldn't get  
leave. Simple as that.  
He didn't talk to us.  
He didn't even know  
about our gang. Billy  
was scared shitless,  
and he just asked us,  
like, not to say  
anything, or his dad  
would kill him.

After all, Frank hadn't  
turned up with the  
knife. Nobody had  
seen him. For all we  
knew, he might have

been having us on, or he could have been still at sea.

There might not have been any knife at all.'

'Did Billy believe his father?'

'I don't know. He was just scared. He told us what he'd said.'

'Did you ever think the father could have done it, raped and



killed Wendy, not Frank?’

‘I was only eleven. I didn’t think about things like that at all.’

‘But there must have been conversations. At school, perhaps. I know what kids that age are like. I was one myself, too, don’t forget.’

'It honestly never  
crossed my mind.'

'And did you believe  
Billy?'

'I don't know. I hadn't  
seen Frank, had I? He  
could have been  
anywhere, for all I  
knew.'

'Like in the woods?'

'I didn't mean that.'

‘But Frank must have been at the house with the knife some time recently, mustn’t he, if Billy knew about it, had persuaded him to come and show it to the gang, and if their father was worried about the police finding out? He must have known something. Frank *must* have been in the neighbourhood the

day Wendy Vincent  
was murdered.'

'I don't know. I never  
saw him. Honest I  
didn't.'

Christ, give me  
strength, Banks  
thought, gritting his  
teeth. 'So tell me, how  
did you feel when  
they finally convicted  
Frank Dowson of  
Wendy Vincent's  
murder fifty years

after the fact, along with several violent rapes he committed *after* he killed her?’

Charlton swallowed. ‘I don’t know what you mean.’

‘Come on, Mr Charlton. It’s not that tough a question.’

‘Well, I suppose I thought about that flick-knife and that it

really might have been him. But I didn't know at the time. How could I? I hadn't seen him anywhere around. We didn't even know what had happened to Wendy Vincent until well after the meeting. The next day. Later, even. And even then you lot didn't tell us all the details, like exactly when or how it had happened, or

what weapon was used.'

'But Billy Dowson had warned you not to mention Frank and the knife?'

'Yes. Because of his dad.'

'So why didn't you manage to put two and two together? Or suspect the dad?'

'We were only kids,  
eleven years old, for  
Christ's sake, and  
Frank was always  
getting into trouble  
with the police. He  
was the kind of  
person you lot pick  
on, on account of he  
wasn't too bright, and  
he'd probably confess  
to things

he didn't do, you  
know, clear unsolved  
crimes off your books,



thinking he was being clever, like.'

'So you didn't think that Frank Dowson might have actually murdered Wendy Vincent?'

'I'm not saying it never crossed my mind. But no. Not seriously. I mean, it's not as black and white as you're making out.'

‘Oh, for Christ’s sake,  
just shut the fuck up  
and let me think. Will  
you do that for me?’

Charlton’s jaw hung  
open, but he did shut  
up. Drinking some  
Guinness helped him  
with that.

‘You should have told  
the police at the time,’  
said Banks after a  
brief pause.

‘But you know that, don’t you? Because of you, more innocent girls had to suffer at Frank Dowson’s hands. None of them were stabbed, the way Wendy was, but that’s probably because they couldn’t identify him. Some of them might have wished since that they had been killed. Either way, you’ve got blood on your hands, Mick.’

‘That’s not down to me! You can’t blame me for you lot not doing your jobs properly.’

Banks took several deep breaths. He was beginning to wish he’d ordered a real drink, driving or not. ‘Just a couple more points before I go,’ he said, as calmly as he could.

‘Anything.’

‘Where’s Billy Dowson these days?’

‘He’s dead,’ said Charlton. ‘Ten years or more. Drug overdose.’

So Billy Dowson could hardly be involved in the wedding shootings, Banks thought, mentally scratching his name off the list. But could one of them –

Ricky, Mark, Tommy,  
even Charlton himself  
– for some reason he  
didn't yet know? 'And  
his sister, Cilla?'

'Who knows. Probably  
dead, too, the state  
she was in back then.  
Went off to London,  
didn't she? And  
before you ask, Billy's  
father's dead, too.'

'Shot? Stabbed?'

‘Natural causes. He had a massive stroke.’

‘Hallelujah. So there is divine justice, after all. How about Wendy’s brother, Mark Vincent?’

‘I’ve bumped into him one or twice over the years. He joined the army.’

Paras, I think.’

‘When did you last see him?’

Charlton broke eye contact.

‘You’d better tell me the truth, Mick.’

‘It was a while ago. We didn’t keep in touch.’

‘How long ago?’

‘March last year.’



‘Around the time  
Frank Dowson died in  
prison?’

‘Just after.’

‘Why did you meet  
him then?’

‘He just happened to  
be in town. Passing  
through. He dropped  
by the office, asked  
about the others,  
suggested we could  
all maybe get together

one evening for a few bevvies, like.'

'And?'

'Well, it sounded like a good idea to me. I was in touch with Ricky Bramble and Tommy Jackson, so I suggested to them and they were both keen, too.'

'Where did this get together of yours take

place?’

‘Pub in town.  
Whitelock’s. In the—’

‘I know where it is.  
How did the evening  
turn out?’

‘Fine. Mostly.’

‘You all still got  
along?’

‘Well, people change,  
you know. Mark was  
sort of different. He’d

seen action overseas.  
It changes you, that  
sort of thing.'

'In what way?'

'It's hard to explain.  
You get harder,  
maybe, less caring.  
The way he talked  
about the people in  
those countries he  
fought in, as if they  
were subhuman. To  
be quite honest he

looked as if he'd just  
come out of prison.'

'How do you mean?'

'Pale, scruffy, down  
on his luck. It's kind of  
an aura. I've had  
plenty of ex-cons  
applying for jobs, and  
I've even employed  
some of them. You  
get to know the signs.'

'Did Mark Vincent  
want a job?'

‘As a matter of fact, he did, but I didn’t have any openings. And he didn’t have the qualifications. He hadn’t learned a trade in the army, either, certainly no electrical stuff.’

‘So you turned him down?’

‘Gently.’

‘How did he take it?’

‘A shrug and a sneer, like he was letting me know he knew I was saying no because he was down on his luck, because he seemed like a desperate bum.’

‘What did you talk about that night?’

‘The past, mostly. See, Mark was always devoted to his big sister. To Wendy. He came from a tough

family, his parents  
were always at each  
other's

throats, and his, and  
she was like some  
sort of guardian angel  
to him. Protected him  
when his father got  
pissed and violent.  
Fed him when their  
mother spent the  
grocery money on  
ciggies and gin. That  
sort of thing. Stood up  
for him against



bullies. She was a fairly strong lass, fine hockey player. He was devastated when it happened, young as he was. Never really got over it, if you ask me.'

'That why he joined the Paras?'

'Maybe. I don't know. We weren't in touch a lot by then. His parents split up not

long after Wendy's death and farmed him out to some aunt and uncle or other out Castleford way. What I heard was he kept on getting in trouble with the police and it was either jail or the army. He was sixteen when he joined up.'

'Anything interesting happen that night?'

'As a matter of fact, it did. Mostly we were talking about old times. Mark was asking about people we'd all known back then, what they were doing now.

We mentioned Maureen, and Ricky happened to know she'd got married to some banker and changed her name to Tindall. And that her

daughter was Laura Tindall, the model. Ricky's sister Susan still keeps in touch with Maureen on and off.'

'You told Mark Vincent this?'

'It came up in conversation, that's all.'

'Did you talk about Laura's forthcoming

wedding?’

‘No. We didn’t know about it then. At least, it hadn’t been announced, and Susan hadn’t mentioned anything.’

‘Go on.’

‘Anyway, we got on to talking about Wendy taking the short cut through the woods and all, and Ricky

Bramble said Susan told him she saw Wendy waiting at a bus stop. She asked her where she was going, and Wendy said she was supposed to be going in town shopping with Maureen Grainger, but Maureen hadn't shown up. She said not to tell anyone because she wasn't supposed to hang out with Wendy, but this

was years later, like,  
so Susan didn't think  
secrecy mattered any  
more. Anyway, Susan  
just walked on, heard  
the bus come and go,  
turned and saw  
Wendy hadn't got on  
it. Instead, she was  
crossing the road to  
the lane that led to the  
woods. That was all.'

'Was this the first time  
you'd heard that  
story?'

‘Yes,’ said Charlton.  
‘Ricky said his sister had thought it was best not to tell the police. You know how kids can be about keeping secrets. It all seems so important. The cops talked to all of us, like. Susan didn’t want to tell them she was probably the last person to see Wendy alive, did she? You didn’t get involved



with the law. It was that kind of estate. We took care of our own.'

'You didn't do a very good job with Frank Dowson, did you?'

Charlton stared into his glass.

'How did Mark Vincent react?'

'He left. Just like that. Turned very pale, even paler than

before, drained his pint, plonked his glass down on the table almost hard enough to break it, and left without so much as a goodbye, lads, nice to see you again.'

'And did you have any idea why he did that?'

'Course. I might be a bit thick, but I'm not stupid. It must have been a hell of a shock

to his system, like, finding out that maybe if Maureen Grainger had turned up to meet Wendy like she said she would, they'd have gone into town to shop, and none of the rest would have happened. Wendy would have still been alive and his life wouldn't have been ruined.'

Banks could do nothing but shake his head slowly at what he was hearing. ‘

“A hell of a shock”,’ he repeated. ‘Yes, I suppose it must have been. Do you know where Mark Vincent lives now?’

‘No idea. Probably living rough somewhere.’

Banks took a copy of the sketch Ray had done out of his briefcase. 'Could this be him?'

Charlton studied it then handed it back. 'Could be, I suppose. The hair's right. Short and curly. Nose and eyes, too. Yeah, it could be Mark, all right.'

‘Do you know if Mark Vincent had a tattoo?’

‘Yeah. On his chest. He had it done in the army. He showed us it in Whitelock’s. Wings with a parachute superimposed. Really cool.’

In itself, Banks thought, the story was nothing much. A young girl went off snogging with her

boyfriend instead of turning up to meet her friend. But that friend got killed, and her brother, who had seen Maureen with a boy, was devoted to his sister. What happened brought his whole life crashing down. His parents split up, he was sent to live with relatives and he became a troubled young man before joining the

army at an early age. If Mark Vincent had enough psychological damage to begin with, he could have had a motive for the shooting. The triggers were all there: the new attention given to his sister's murder in the media, the conviction and death of Frank Dowson, the revelation that Maureen had been supposed to meet



Wendy, and the publicity surrounding the forthcoming Tindall–Kemp wedding. He already knew Maureen’s married name, and the odds were pretty good that if he saw a photo of her in the paper, it wouldn’t take him long to put two and two together. There were also ways of checking.

Was it enough?  
Banks was beginning to think they had a possible suspect in Mark Vincent and needed to find out as much about him as possible. They also needed to find him. They had Ray's sketch, which was a start, but a real

photograph would be even better.

## **Chapter 14**

AC Gervaise had offered Gerry only DC Doug Wilson and PC Neil Stamford to help trace Mark Vincent, and while Stamford worked the phones from the incident room downstairs, and Doug Wilson questioned Edgeworth's friends at the White Rose and the shooting club,

Gerry cracked her knuckles and tilted the screen to suit her angle of vision. Where to begin? That was the question. She needed to find out as much as she could about Mark Vincent as quickly as possible, so they could make an assessment as to whether they were dealing with the killer or a red herring.

Detective

Superintendent Banks had phoned from Leeds and told her that Mark seemed to resemble Ray's sketch, and why he might have had a motive for the shooting.

In the first place, no matter what tricks PC Stamford tried, he couldn't come up with a current address for a Mark Vincent. Gerry

had half-expected that and assumed he was operating under an alias. Gord, perhaps? It would be Wilson's and Stamford's job to see if that were the case and they could get past that little problem and find out what name he was using.

Banks had already told her the basic details of what

happened to him after Wendy's murder.

Digging a little deeper, she found that he had been born on 24

April 1953 and in 1964, after failing his eleven plus, he had attended Armley Park Secondary Modern School. Not long after his sister's murder, his parents split up and he was sent to live with an aunt and

uncle near Castleford,  
where he attended a  
local secondary  
modern.

In the army, after  
basic training at  
Catterick, where he  
was apparently  
discovered to be an  
excellent marksman,  
Mark assumed active  
duty as a private in  
the 1st Battalion.  
Shortly after his  
eighteenth birthday,



he was posted to Northern Ireland. His history there was sketchy. Gerry also discovered that the emblem of the regiment was a pair of wings with a parachute at their centre, and that many soldiers had this tattooed on their upper arms or chests, sometimes with the words PARACHUTE REGIMENT tattooed

in a semi-circle above or below the emblem. Banks had told her that Michael Charlton, one of the old gang members, had seen this tattoo less than a year ago.

As Gerry went through the main points, she made notes. Later she would make some phone calls. The forces could be very

cagey about giving out information, but she knew a major in the army equivalent of Human Resources at Catterick who had helped her in the past. Aunt Jane would be able to fill a few

gaps, she was certain. It might cost Gerry a posh meal, as Aunt Jane loved her gourmet food, but it would be worth it. She

was also good  
company.

Mark Vincent later  
turned up as a  
corporal in the  
Falklands War at the  
age of twenty-nine  
then disappeared  
again until he was  
promoted to sergeant  
in 1988.

That didn't last long,  
and he remained a  
corporal from then on.

He would have been forty-seven by the time he turned up in Kosovo in 2000, Gerry reckoned. It didn't seem like a very distinguished career, and the details of his discharge were vague to the point of being useless. Reading between the lines, Gerry guessed at best dishonourable, and at worst something to do with a massacre of

innocent women and children, but again, perhaps Aunt Jane would be able to help.

Vincent had been in Iraq for just a few months, in Basra, when he finally parted company with the army in 2003 at the age of fifty. The silences were beginning to tell her a lot more than skimpy details at this point. In

the early noughties, it seemed that Vincent turned to a life of crime. He spent a short term in prison between 2008 and 2010 for burglary, then another, longer sentence for arson in 2012. Apparently, he had set fire to a failing business on the owner's instructions for a share of the insurance money. He had also been

suspected of involvement in people-trafficking young girls from the Balkans for sex, but the police had insufficient evidence to charge him. He didn't come out of jail until February 2016, shortly after Frank Dowson had been convicted of Wendy Vincent's murder.



Jenny Fuller might be able to fill in some of the psychological insights once Gerry had managed to flesh out Vincent's biography, but the skeleton of it was already in place. With any luck, Aunt Jane would be able to provide some illumination on the army's role. And there would certainly be more details of his

criminal activities in the West Yorkshire police files. She had called Banks to ask if he would get DCI Blackstone to dig around in the records a bit. Banks said he would. Gerry was beginning to think that the super was as convinced as she was that Mark Vincent was their man, and that he was still somewhere within their reach.

Perhaps the most important thing Gerry had learned was that Vincent had a criminal record, which meant there would be a photograph of him in the online archive.

All in all, she thought, turning away from the screen and scribbling more notes on her pad, it hadn't been a bad afternoon's work.

Ken Blackstone remained a staunch curry fan, though Banks found that spicy food was giving his digestion more gyp the older he became. He made sure to take an acid reducer before they settled down in the Indian restaurant on Burley

Road that evening, on the southern fringe of

the University of  
Leeds student area,  
and ordered a couple  
of pints of lager,  
samosas to start, then  
vindaloo for  
Blackstone and a  
lamb korma for  
Banks, with aloo gobi,  
rice and plenty of  
naans. Streetlights  
reflected in the wet  
dark streets through  
the plate-glass  
window. Passing cars  
sent up sheets of

water from the gutters. Inside, the mingled smells of the cumin, cardamom and coriander overcame all Banks's initial reservations, but he tapped his pocket to make sure he had more antacid tablets with him, just in case. Blackstone smiled.

'It's all very well for you to smirk,' said Banks. 'We don't all

have cast-iron  
stomachs.'

'Obviously not.'

'Anyway, cheers.'  
They clinked glasses.

'What brings you  
down to our fair city?'  
Blackstone asked.

Banks explained  
about Martin  
Edgeworth and how  
an old murder had  
turned up in the

background of the  
mother of the bride.

‘So you didn’t get the  
right man?’

‘I don’t think so. I think  
he was set up, poor  
sod.’

‘And this old murder is  
the answer?’

‘Could be. It might  
help provide us with  
one, at any rate. I was  
sceptical at first.



Gerry's apt to go running after any new idea that comes her way. But she's sharp, and she has good instincts.'

'So what can I do?'

'It was on your patch, quite a bit before your time, but you might have heard of Frank Dowson.'

‘Of course. One of our big cold-case successes. He raped and stabbed a teenage girl in 1964.’

‘Right.’

‘But he’s dead,’ said Blackstone. ‘Died in prison last March.’

‘I know that. It’s not him I’m after. It’s the victim’s brother.’

‘Wendy Vincent’s  
brother?’

‘Yes. Mark. He was  
eleven at the time.’

Blackstone bit into a  
samosa and washed  
it down with lager.

‘Why now, after so  
long?’

‘I’ve thought about  
that a lot,’ said Banks.  
‘It was one of my first  
objections against

Gerry's theory. But people do nurse grudges. Feelings do fester. All they need is the right trigger, or triggers, and there were plenty of those.'

'The trial?'

'Among other things.' Banks told him about his chat with Michael Charlton and Wendy waiting for Maureen at the bus stop. 'And

after him,' he went on,  
'I

tracked down a  
second old "gang"  
member. A bloke  
called Ricky Bramble.

Quite happily retired,  
and devoted to his  
allotment.'

'Was he any use?'

'Well, he confirmed  
what Charlton told me  
about his sister talking

to Wendy Vincent at the bus stop, and about Mark Vincent's reaction. He also confirmed that Mark Vincent doted on his big sister.'

'Nobody dotes on their big sisters,' said Blackstone. 'Believe me. I know. I have two.'

Banks laughed. 'Well,' he went on, 'everyone

knew that Wendy did sort of take care of her little brother, look out for him. Their parents weren't always a lot of use, especially when they'd been drinking, which was most of the time, and Wendy took Mark under her wing. Protected him. But it seems that it was the memory of Wendy that haunted Mark. According to Bramble,

after the murder, and years later, when they met up again only a year or so ago, Mark used to talk about places he and Wendy had been when they were kids, hiding places from their parents, the little kindnesses she'd done for him, how she made him laugh and how angelic she was. He carried a



photograph of her in his wallet.

He even tried to describe what he thought she would look like today if she were still alive. It's pretty weird stuff. And Ricky Bramble also verified that the sketch looked a lot like the Vincent he met last year.'

‘So her brother  
idolised her after her  
death?’

‘Yes,’ said Banks.  
‘Like Thomas Hardy  
did with his first wife  
Emma. They hardly  
talked for years, but  
when she died, he  
wrote some beautiful  
poems about their  
early days, being in  
love, travelling around  
the Cornish coast.’ As  
he spoke, Banks

thought about Emily Hargreaves. Was he doing the same with her, despite what Julie Drake had told him? Perhaps. He certainly found it impossible to blame her for the action she had taken, hurtful though it was to him. And when he pictured her, it was the youthful, beautiful 'first girl I ever loved' that he saw.

Life can push people in unexpected directions, but he thought he would probably always feel that way about Emily. She was one of those rare girls that you just felt you wanted to be always happy, even if you weren't going to be the source of that happiness.

'And then Ricky Bramble comes out

with a story about Wendy and Maureen that Mark never knew before,' Banks went on, 'and it knocks him for six.'

Suddenly, Banks thought, Maureen was a slag who was snogging some kid in an old house instead of meeting her friend to go shopping, and that cost her friend her life. Mark had

made a paragon of  
Wendy and a pariah  
of Maureen.

The angel and the  
whore. And as much  
as Wendy had  
become a symbol of  
purity to him over the  
years, enshrined in  
loving memory, the  
more easily

Maureen now became  
the harlot, the  
betrayers, the

destroyer. At least that was how Banks saw it. And the last straw: the wedding announcement. Maureen Tindall, mother of the happy, affluent, successful bride, marrying not just an ex-soldier, but a successful one, a true hero. All the things Mark Vincent had never had or had never been. That must have hurt.

Banks picked up his briefcase. 'Gerry found out that Vincent has picked up a criminal record since he left the Paras.' He told Blackstone about Mark Vincent's prison terms for burglary and arson and suspicion of being involved in the traffic of young girls from Eastern Europe. 'It happened on your patch, so I'm hoping you've got



something on him in records. Particularly a good photograph.'

Blackstone flipped through the file. 'I'm sure we do,' he said. 'We photograph everyone we charge, and it should all be on the national database, along with DNA and fingerprints. But you already know that.'

‘I was just hoping you might be able to dig out something a bit better than the mugshot from the archive.’

‘I suppose we could try. We might have something. It’s not as if you’re asking about a fifty-year-old case this time, the way you usually do. Our recent records are actually in pretty good shape.’

And I even know  
where to get my  
hands on them.'

Banks scooped up a  
mouthful of korma  
with his naan. 'I'm  
sure you do,' he said,  
when he had eaten it.  
It burned all the way  
down, even though  
the waiter had  
assured him it was  
mild. Banks glugged  
some chilled lager.

‘When would you like this information?’

‘Tomorrow morning will do.’

Blackstone made a mock salute. ‘No problemo, sir. I’ll have one of my lads get right on it. Would you be requiring a scan, JPEG or courier job?’

‘What a bewildering array of choices.’

What's fastest?'

'JPEG, probably. I can email it to you.'

'That'll do nicely, then.'

'Your wish, my command.'

Banks grinned.  
'Thanks, Ken. I owe you.'

'I'll add it to the list.'

They ate and drank in  
silence for a while,  
then Blackstone  
ordered a couple  
more pints of lager.  
Banks could use  
another one by then;  
his gut was burning.

The nachos had had  
the same effect the  
other day. He  
wondered if there was  
something seriously  
wrong with him.

Cancer, or something.  
Or a heart attack.

Didn't they sometimes start with what felt like indigestion? Maybe he should get checked out. On the other hand, it could just be a simple case of indigestion. In

fact, the more he thought about it, the more he felt it easing off, fading into the

distance. He'd take another antacid later.

'So tell me about your love life,' Blackstone said.

'What love life?'

'A little bird tells me that your profiler is back in town. Jenny Fuller.'

'Are there no secrets?'



‘Word travels fast, old son. So? Is it true?’

‘That she’s back?  
Yes. She’s been gone a long time, Ken. A lot of water under the bridge.’

‘Oh, don’t try to fob me off with clichés.’

‘I’m not. There’s nothing to tell.’

‘You must know whether you’re in with

a chance.'

'I don't, Ken. Really, I don't. I don't even know if I want to be.'

'But you've talked about it, haven't you? I can tell. That's how it starts, you know.'

'She's still finding her feet. She thinks our moment may have passed.'

‘Bollocks. I doubt it’s  
her feet you’re  
interested in, though  
who knows? It takes  
all sorts. But I’d hurry  
up if I were you, mate,  
or believe me,  
someone will get  
there before you.  
From what I heard  
she’s still a bit of all  
right.’

‘A bit of all right?  
Christ, Ken, I haven’t  
heard that expression

in years. Not since I was a teenager, at any rate. *A bit of all right?*

‘OK, sorry. Getting carried away. But you’d be a fool not to go for it, you mark my words. Unless you’re too busy dallying with that poet of yours.’

‘She’s not mine, and I’m not dallying with her.’

‘ “Had we but world  
enough, and time . . .”  
,

Banks laughed.  
‘Who’s the poetry fan  
now?’ He realised that  
he sometimes got too  
lost in morose  
thoughts and  
memories when he  
was alone for too  
long, and someone  
like Ken brought him  
out of himself. Banks  
was a man who took

his life and his job very seriously indeed, but he was able to laugh at himself, too. He was tempted to tell Blackstone about Emily, and what Julie Drake had revealed to him on Saturday night, but that still felt too close to home, too private, too raw. He didn't think he could bear to tell anyone. Not yet. Maybe not ever.

‘It’s one of the few I know,’ said Blackstone. ‘I’ve even tried it out a couple of times on dates but it’s never worked.’

They finished their food, paid the bill and lingered over their drinks for a while longer. Eventually Blackstone said, ‘You’re obviously not driving home tonight. Let’s get a cab, go

back to mine and  
have a nightcap. I just  
picked up a jazz CD  
that might interest  
you. Maria Schneider,  
*The Thomson Fields*.  
Heard

it?’

‘No.’

‘You’ll like it. But let’s  
go, before it gets too  
late. I don’t know  
about you, but I’m not



the night owl I used to be any more. You can come to the station with me in the morning before you set off home, and we'll see what we can find on your Mark Vincent.'

Banks finished his pint. 'Sounds like a plan to me,' he said.

Gerry made her way up the A1 for her

meeting with Aunt Jane that evening.

It was full dark already, and the road was busy with the last of the rush-hour traffic. Her windshield wipers were whipping back and forth at top speed to clear the filthy spray thrown up by the lorries ahead of her. The A167 through Northallerton would probably have

been a more pleasant drive, Gerry thought as she slowed down for the roadworks north of Scotch Corner. Though the rain had stopped for now, for which Gerry was grateful, when she looked out from side to side, she saw lights gleaming on lakes where there should be fields. This was the danger point. The ground was so

waterlogged that it couldn't absorb any more moisture. One more heavy shower and banks would be broken and barriers breached. Lowlying neighbourhoods would be flooded, streets evacuated, and perhaps even people would be killed.

She pulled into the village of Hurworth-

on-Tees and parked outside the church opposite the Bay Horse, where she had arranged to meet Aunt Jane for dinner. It was an expensive restaurant, she knew. She had been once before with a potential boyfriend who had been trying to impress her. The meal had impressed her very much, but unfortunately the

suitor hadn't. Her girlfriends had always said she was too fussy when it came to boyfriends, that she never gave anyone long enough to get to know them, but from Gerry's point of view, she wasn't so desperate for a man that she was willing to take the second rate. And in her experience the second rate didn't take long to spot, and

was second rate for good reason.

Aunt Jane was already waiting at a table Gerry had reserved in the warm, soft glow of the dining room. The voices of the other diners were muffled and the servers came and went without fuss. She hoped she might be able to get some useful information

tonight. She had been disappointed by the mugshot on the police Internet archive. It *resembled* the person in Ray Cabbot's sketch, but not enough.

Aunt Jane stood up to greet her, all six foot two of her. Gerry thought herself tall at six foot, and indeed she seemed so at work around her



colleagues – only  
Winsome Jackman  
matched her – but  
Aunt Jane put her in  
the shadow. She was

broad-shouldered and  
full-figured, clearly fit  
and sturdy, but in no  
way unfeminine. In  
fact, Gerry noticed a  
number of men in the  
dining room sneak an  
admiring glance as  
she stood up. Jane  
also looked a good

ten or more years younger than fifty. Her blond hair was piled high, and that made her seem even taller. Statuesque was the word that came into Gerry's mind. She wasn't wearing a uniform tonight, but a simple black dress with a high neckline and a red waistcoat buttoned up the front. Bangles jingled like wind chimes around

her wrists, and a simple string of pearls hung around her neck. The hoop earrings were just the right size. As usual, Gerry marvelled at her elegance just as much as she had marvelled years earlier.

Aunt Jane was an honorary title. There was no blood relation between the two. She

was Gerry's mother's best friend from their schooldays and, though the two had gone in very different directions, the friendship had endured. When Gerry was younger, they didn't see much of Aunt Jane, who, she later learned, had been serving in both Afghanistan and Iraq, but when she did come to town it was

like Christmas. Her energy and enthusiasm for just about everything were infectious, and although Aunt Jane and Gerry's mother were the same age, to Gerry, Aunt Jane always seemed more vibrant, more fun and far, far more cool.

That was unfair to her mother, she now realised, but back

then she had just  
been an  
impressionable child.  
Aunt Jane had taught  
her a few martial arts  
moves to use against  
the boys who pulled  
her hair at school;  
Aunt Jane had taken  
her for a pillion ride on  
her motorcycle and  
made her promise  
never to tell her  
mother; Aunt Jane  
had helped her  
choose the colours

that suited her and showed her how to apply lipstick, eye-liner and mascara before she was officially allowed to wear make-up by her parents. And then, of course, she had disappeared back to Afghanistan again as suddenly as she had arrived. A leg injury caused by an IED

had put paid to her active service, and she now walked with a slight limp, like Terry Gilchrist, but the army had found her a suitable desk job at Catterick, and she had seemed happy enough to leave the world of action behind.

‘Well, look at you, stranger,’ Aunt Jane said as they both sat



down. 'It's been too long. Why haven't you been to see me? It's not as if I'm far away now you're up in Eastvale.'

'I know. I'm sorry,' said Gerry. 'Just, you know, being the new girl and all . . .

. it's a hard job.'

Aunt Jane smiled. 'No need to tell *me* that,'

she said. 'I just miss  
my old friend  
Geraldine, that's all.  
You must come and  
see me more often.'

'I'd like that,' said  
Gerry. Aunt Jane was  
the only person apart  
from her mother who  
called her Geraldine.

'How's Tess – I mean  
your mother. I haven't  
heard from her in  
ages, either.'

‘She’s fine,’ said  
Gerry.

‘Still lecturing at the  
poly?’

‘It’s a university now,’  
said Gerry. ‘They all  
are. Have been for  
years. But, yes, she’s  
still working.’

‘Dad still drafting  
wills?’

Gerry laughed. ‘He’s  
still working, yes.’

‘Good for him. Aidan’s still carrying a torch for you, you know.’

Gerry felt herself blush. Aidan was Aunt Jane’s son, and they had been out together a few times in their teens. ‘I thought he was married now.’

‘Oh, he is,’ said Aunt Jane. ‘Marianne. Nice enough girl. But it

doesn't stop him  
pining for you.'

'Oh, stop it,' said  
Gerry. 'You're  
embarrassing me.'

'You always did  
embarrass easily.  
Shall we study the  
menus? Wine?'

Jane already had a  
glass full of red wine  
in front of her, and the

bottle stood open on the table.

‘Just a drop,’ said Gerry. ‘I’m driving.’

Jane poured her some wine. A bit more than a drop, in Gerry’s opinion, but she said nothing. ‘And in case you’re wondering,’ Jane said. ‘I’m not. Driving, that is. One of the perks of rank.’

They clinked glasses and Jane put on her reading glasses to examine the menu. In the end they both decided to have moules marinière for starters and settled on pan-fried halibut with black carrots and various foams, ketchups and sauces for Gerry, and for Jane a 28-day matured fillet steak, cooked rare, with

hand-cut chips, onion rings and vegetables. They put in their orders and leaned back in their chairs.

‘You were asking about a Mark Vincent,’ Jane said finally. ‘May I ask why?’

Gerry leaned forwards and lowered her voice. She had known when she set up the meeting that if she



expected to get information she had to be willing to give some, and she trusted Aunt Jane as much as she trusted anyone. More than most, in fact. 'He's a suspect in a case we're working on,' she said.

Jane narrowed her eyes. 'Well, I assumed that much,' she said. 'What case?'

And don't try to  
weasel out of it.'

'A shooting. A mass  
shooting.'

'The Red Wedding?'

'Shhh,' said Gerry,  
glancing around  
nervously. 'Yes.'

Jane topped up her  
glass and offered to  
pour more for Gerry,  
who declined.

‘You’re working on that? How exciting. I thought you’d got your man, though.

How much of a suspect is he?’

‘Hard to say just yet. That’s why I wanted to talk to you.’

‘You know I can’t give you any details? National security and all that. The army

likes its privacy. We don't like to be held too accountable for our actions.

We don't like to let people know what we're up to. We always have a get-out-of-jail-free card up our sleeve.'

Gerry laughed. 'I know,' she said. 'I'd just like to know anything you *can* tell

me about his military career.'

'Oh, there's plenty I *can* tell you. I had a good nose around after you phoned, even talked to some people who knew him. And if it helps you, that's all well and good, as long as nobody else knows where it came from.'

‘I’ve got no problem with that,’ Gerry said. ‘If it helps, I’m just trying to get some kind of confirmation that we’re on the right track. I’m pretty sure of it, but we have no real evidence yet.’

Jane swirled the wine in her glass. ‘Well, I can’t answer that question for you,’ she said. ‘Mark Vincent was nothing unusual.’

He had a few problems, but who doesn't?

'So how did you, or the army, deal with his problems? And what were they?'

Jane sighed. 'You have to understand, dear, that in addition to other things, we're quite tolerant of our own. As you know, we have internal systems

of discipline, rules and regulations. They're as much meant to protect us from the outside as they are to enforce justice and punishment within the services. To put it bluntly, no matter what the recruitment adverts and friendly websites tell you about careers and what have you, all that goes out of the window in wartime. In



wartime, a soldier's job is to kill people, and we will forgive him an awful lot if he just does that one job exceptionally well.'

'And Mark Vincent did?'

'There was a war of some sort or another throughout most of Mark Vincent's army career. Like many other soldiers in his

position, he saw far more action than any human being should have to see, and he endured it. Don't you think that takes a sacrifice, maybe rips out a little part of your soul? We also asked him to do things that no decent human being should ever have to do. Whatever we may be, us soldiers are not automatons. We are

not without  
conscience, human  
feeling, compassion  
even. At least we start  
out with those things.  
In some cases, they  
get knocked out of us  
over the years. That  
may have been the  
case with Mark  
Vincent.'

Their moules arrived  
and both sat in  
silence for a while to  
enjoy them. 'What

was the general consensus on Vincent?' Gerry asked.

Jane paused with her fork in mid-air. 'Mark Vincent was a violent and disturbed young man when he joined up. He had a lot of anger, and we taught

him to channel and direct that anger and violence. Which,

when you think about it, is hardly unusual in the army. As a rule, we can direct violence against the enemy, but if you're asking me whether I think he's the kind of man who could direct it against someone he thought had betrayed or crossed him, then I'd have to say yes. But that's just an opinion based on an afternoon spent

reading files and talking to people about him. And I'm not a psychologist.'

'Don't worry. I'm not going to quote you,' Gerry said. 'Did he ever train as a sniper?'

Jane hesitated before going on. 'The army doesn't like to talk about things like that,' she said, 'but yes, he

did. He was an excellent shot, and he had no compunction about killing strangers from a distance. It would have been a waste not to train him. And use him.'

'Did he have mental problems?'

'Of course he did. Show me a soldier who doesn't. Sometimes mental

problems can be valuable assets in the military. Oh, we have our psychiatrists and so on, but it's not like you can patch up a psyche in a field hospital the way you can a gunshot wound or an IED injury. And it's not as if our shrinks have the time it takes to spend on fixing these minds. Years of therapy? No chance.



Many of them go undiagnosed. PTSD, for example. There's been a lot of talk about that recently.'

'Did Vincent suffer from PTSD?'

'Hard to answer. I'd reckon that he probably did – at least he suffered some of the symptoms. He was never diagnosed – he never spent long

enough with a psychiatrist for that – but in my layperson’s opinion, from what I’ve read, and what people have told me, I’d say he did.

According to one report I saw, he suffered from headaches and insomnia, and he had difficulty controlling his emotions and forming relationships with others. There

were also issues of  
substance abuse,  
again not uncommon  
in PTSD cases, or in  
combat, for that  
matter – just think  
*Apocalypse Now.*'

Gerry had never seen  
*Apocalypse Now*, but  
she didn't want to let  
on to Jane.

'Drugs?' she said.

‘In Mark Vincent’s case, the doctor thought it was mostly alcohol, though other drugs may have been involved. You should remember that pretty much all of this was only discovered towards the end of his military career, shortly before his discharge. He never underwent any serious psychiatric evaluation.’

'I got the impression, reading between the lines,' said Gerry, 'that the discharge was dishonourable.'

'Well, that's true to some extent,' Jane said, 'but we prefer a mutual parting of the ways, if we can work one out. I'm sure you have the same policy with

bent coppers when you can get away with it. Far less headline-grabbing. And Mark Vincent had certainly served long enough to retire gracefully.'

'He didn't object?'

'No. He took the package, as they say in business.'

'Did his discharge involve anything to do

with a civilian  
massacre?’

‘I know of no such  
massacre.’

‘Kosovo?’

Aunt Jane remained  
silent for a while. ‘It  
takes a long time for  
these things to come  
out, for the  
investigation into  
allegations to be  
completed, probably

much like your  
business.'

'So he was?'

Aunt Jane merely  
smiled.

'I also think he made  
connections there he  
used later when he  
was involved in  
people-trafficking,'

Gerry went on.

'Especially young girls  
in the sex trade.'



‘Well,’ said Aunt Jane.  
‘I wouldn’t deny that  
such things happen.  
Soldiers do  
sometimes come into  
contact with criminal  
elements.’

‘But he was also  
promoted to sergeant  
at one point. How on  
earth did that come  
about?’

‘How do these things  
usually come about?’

Deceptive appearances. Human error. He was good at getting people to do things, and that's one trait you want in a sergeant. Leadership quality. Unfortunately, as we discovered too late, Vincent was only good at getting people to do things that benefitted himself, not the army as a whole. I never came into contact with him, you

understand, so I'm speaking very much as an outside observer here, based on official reports and a couple of off-the-record conversations, but I'm pretty good at reading between the lines, and I'd say Vincent was charming and manipulative when he wanted to be. And he did have a bit of a temper.'

‘How did it manifest?’

‘Bar brawls, that sort of thing. Fighting in general. Again, that’s not so unusual for a soldier. He was quite a decent boxer in the ring, too. Controlled and disciplined.’

They finished their moules just as the main courses arrived. Jane worked her way through the wine as

she ate her bloody steak. Gerry had only taken a few sips of her first glass. Mostly because she was driving, but partly because the rich and complex red wine didn't go very well with moules or halibut. 'What kind of state was he in after he left the army?'

'I've no idea what became of him.'

Maybe you can fill me in on that?’

‘Petty crime,’ said Gerry. ‘Assaults, arson, prison, that possible involvement in people-trafficking I mentioned earlier.’

‘Not surprising. It’s what I would have predicted from what I’ve read. At least the army gave him a rudder to steer by and

a structure and shape  
to his life.

Without them, he'd  
have been lost. I've  
seen his type before,  
far too often. When  
they first come to us,  
it's generally because  
someone has told  
them – either you lot  
or their parents – that  
it's either prison or the  
army. And when they  
leave us, as often as

not it's prison they  
drift towards.'

'I thought the army  
was supposed to  
make men out of  
boys?'

'You can't make a silk  
purse out of a sow's  
ear, Geraldine. You  
ought to know that in  
your line of work.'

'But was there a  
specific incident? He



was in Iraq at the time, wasn't he?'

'Yes. Basra.' Jane finished her steak, pushed the dish away. She had finished her wine, and the alcohol seemed to be having no effect on her. 'But as I hinted earlier, it was mostly a matter of the Balkans catching up with him. In Iraq it was petty crime, mostly. Black

market, that sort of thing.'

'And in Kosovo?'

'Other things. Many just rumours. Most not proven.'

'What sort of things?'

'That he was rough with women. Certain kinds of women. Rumour has it he beat up a prostitute once. There were several

unexplained murders.  
Nothing we could pin  
on Mark Vincent, of  
course, but in  
retrospect . . . One  
way or another, Mark  
Vincent became a  
liability. You can argue  
that it should have  
happened sooner, but  
. . . what can I say?  
Hindsight makes  
visionaries of us all.'

'What was the  
problem with

women?’

‘Same problem as with so many men. Women were all sluts to him. Except his dear dead sister, of course. She was an angel.’

‘How do you know about that?’

‘According to one of the men I talked to, someone who knew

Mark Vincent, he used to go on and on about her, showed her photo around. It seems she died when he was quite young. Is this of any use?’

‘Yes. We think this may all be connected with his sister’s death.’

‘How?’

The waiter arrived with the dessert menu. Jane studied it and decided on a cream cheese and vanilla mousse, while Gerry settled on a herbal tea. Jane gave her a pitying look. 'Oh, Geraldine, Geraldine,' she said. 'What *are* we to do with you?'

When the waiter came by, Jane

ordered the mousse  
and a double Remy.

Gerry thought about  
the bill and  
swallowed.

When the waiter had  
gone, Gerry told Aunt  
Jane about what had  
happened to Mark  
Vincent's sister, and  
of Maureen Tindall's  
role in it.

‘And he naturally thought that if this Maureen had turned up, his sister wouldn’t have died?’ she commented.

‘Yes. I think so.’

‘In his eyes, then, she was perhaps as responsible for the loss of his sister as the actual murderer himself?’



‘That’s about it.’

‘Well that’d certainly do it, wouldn’t it?’

‘It seems so. But don’t say anything, Aunt Jane. It’s only a suspicion. I’m not supposed to talk about it.’

Jane put her hand on Gerry’s arm. ‘Don’t worry, my dear, your secret’s safe with me.’

But I'm puzzled. I read about that wedding, of course, and the mother of the bride survived, didn't she?

'Yes. But he did kill her only child.'

'Good lord,' said Jane. 'How little we really know about people.'

Indeed, thought Gerry. The dessert arrived, along with Jane's double Remy and Gerry's chamomile tea. While Jane tucked into her sweet, Gerry sipped the tea and watched her with fascination. She didn't think she had ever met anyone before who gave herself so wholeheartedly to the act of eating.

‘What are you going to do?’ Jane asked.

‘Now? First we have to find him.’

‘He knows the area. He’s spent time at Catterick on and off over the years.’

‘Right.’

‘And he’s got survival skills. Done all the courses. You know, dropped in the

Scottish Highlands  
with only a Mars bar  
and a compass. That  
sort of thing.

Passed with flying  
colours. He could  
probably live in a box  
at the bottom of a lake  
with nothing but cold  
gravel for breakfast if  
he had to.'

'Thanks for that, Aunt  
Jane. He's been in jail  
since his army days,

though, and it's more than likely he's gone a bit to seed.'

'Just letting you know what you're up against. Never mind the killing skills we taught him. Be very careful. And I think you can ditch the "aunt" by now, don't you?'

Gerry agreed, but she would always think of

Jane as 'Aunt Jane'.

'My driver won't be here for another three-quarters of an hour,' Jane said,

'so I might as well have another cognac while I'm waiting, and you can entertain me with stories about your life in the police force until he gets here. Are you sure I can't tempt you to

anything stronger  
than another herbal  
tea?’

‘I’ll have decaf coffee,’  
said Gerry in a small  
voice.

‘How daring. By the  
way.’ Jane reached  
for her bag. ‘I’ve got a  
photo of Mark Vincent  
for you. It’s not a very  
good one, I’m afraid,  
and it’s a bit old, but



it's all I could come up with at such short notice.'

## **Chapter 15**

'It's him. There's no doubt about it,' said Banks as they studied the four images stuck to the whiteboard the following day. The whole team had gathered in the boardroom as if for the unveiling of a

significant new portrait. In a way, that was exactly what it was, confirmation that Ray Cabbot's sketch – up there with the three photographs – was of the man they were after, Mark Vincent, possibly the killer of six people, and certainly a person of interest.

It was mid-afternoon on Tuesday 12

January, and Banks had just got back from Leeds. First Gerry had filled everyone in about her meeting with Aunt Jane, keeping her identity secret, and then Banks told them all about what he had learned from Michael Charlton and Ricky Bramble.

Banks had been lucky in Leeds that morning.

When he had accompanied Ken Blackstone to Elland Road after a late breakfast, they had managed to dig out a photograph of Mark Vincent from their files, a photograph taken by a CSI officer after Vincent had been arrested for assault. His injuries were insignificant compared to those of his victim, and it was

his bruised and bleeding knuckles the CSI was most interested in. Nevertheless, he had managed to capture Vincent full face, in a far clearer image than the mugshot, and when all four images were tacked up together, it was clear to anyone that the mugshot, CSI photo, artist's impression and army photo were of

the same man at different ages, the earliest of which, the army photograph, was twelve years old and the most recent, Ray's sketch, was based on a description given by someone who saw him last November, roughly a couple of months ago. Vincent had lost some weight in the interim, perhaps as a result of his term in prison, but the

greying curls, the intense eyes, the beetle brows, the crookedness indicating a nose broken more than once were all giveaways.

Definitely Mark Vincent.

‘Which brings us to the question of what we do next,’ Banks went on.

‘We bring him in for questioning, surely?’  
said AC Catherine Gervaise.

‘First we have to find him. Gerry?’

‘Still working on it, sir,’  
said Gerry Masterson.  
‘We have a list of properties within the boundaries I marked off according to Vincent’s movements. Doug and Neil have



been checking these out and showing Mr Cabbot's sketch around to landlords, neighbours, local shopkeepers and so on, but nothing yet. We can extend the boundaries if we draw a blank. Doug's also questioned some of the

regulars at the White Rose and members of the shooting club.

Nobody recognises the photograph or had heard Edgeworth mention anyone called Gord or Gordon. Three other members reported noticing a beat-up car behind them on the way home from the club on occasion, though they didn't seem especially perturbed by it. One said he thought it was

an old Clio badly in need of a paint job.'

Banks laughed. 'I'll bet there are a few of those around. Thanks, Gerry. Keep at it.'

'About all we've got so far,' added Adrian Moss, 'is more reporters sniffing around. They've got wind of something, and the rumours that

we're on to someone  
have already hit the  
early editions. Some  
bright sparks are even  
making a link with the  
Wendy Vincent case,  
so they know we've  
been investigating  
that somehow. We'll  
have to give them  
something soon.  
Maybe a press  
conference.'

'We're not ready for  
that yet,' said Banks.

‘Can’t you keep them  
at bay?’

‘I can only do so  
much. The only thing  
they seem to find  
more interesting is the  
weather. Apparently,  
we’re due for more  
rain tonight. Can’t we  
use them, perhaps?’

‘For what?’

‘To help us find him.  
Let them print a

photo, or the sketch.  
Give them his name.  
It might speed things  
up.'

'I don't see how it  
would,' Banks said.

'Well, we've got to  
give them something,'  
Moss said. 'Once they  
run out of rumours  
they'll simply start  
making things up.'

‘Most of them wouldn’t know the difference between the truth and fiction if it bit them on the arse,’ Annie muttered.

Gervaise gave her a sharp look. ‘I think we’d better find him before they make up anything close to the truth, hadn’t we?’ she said.

‘And maybe we should be asking ourselves just how they get hold of these little snippets of information they make so much of,’ Banks said.

Moss sniffed. ‘That’s easy. Most police stations have more holes than a sieve. These are experienced information gatherers,



not thickies with a notebook and a pencil. They overhear things. They buy off-duty coppers a pint without revealing who they are. There are any number of ways they can get hold of information. There's no—'

'If I may say something,' Jenny Fuller interrupted.

‘Go ahead, Jenny,’  
said Banks. Moss  
shuffled sulkily in his  
chair.

‘In my opinion,’ Jenny  
said, ‘he’s not going to  
scarper or go to  
ground because he  
hasn’t finished yet. I  
think we can agree,  
after DC Masterson’s  
military information,  
that this Mark Vincent  
was an excellent shot,  
a sniper, in

fact. That being the case, if he had wanted to kill, or even wound, Maureen Tindall at the wedding, he could have done so quite easily. But he clearly didn't.

Why? In my opinion, it's because first he wanted to hurt Maureen Tindall, to cripple her with loss and grief, so that she

could feel what he felt when his sister was killed all those years ago. But that's not enough. If it *is* Mark Vincent, and if those are his motives, then it's not enough for him. It's not over yet. Wendy died, so Maureen Tindall has to die. He'll go after her. And remember, we also know that he has good survival skills, however rusty,

and facility with firearms, which could be very dangerous indeed if he has managed to get hold of another pistol or rifle.'

'So what's he likely to do next?' Gervaise asked. 'Is he a psycho?'

'It would take far too long to go into the ins and outs of that

diagnosis,' said  
Jenny. 'But the short  
answer is no, I don't  
think he's a  
psychopath, but I do  
think there's a very  
good chance he's the  
one you're looking for.  
At least he's not a

“psycho” in the sense  
most people  
understand the term.  
He's certainly  
suffering from some  
sort dissociative

disorder, and he appears to lack a conscience, or he wouldn't have been able to do what he did at the wedding. But perhaps his experiences in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, Iraq and wherever else he fought did that to him. Dehumanised him. There may be reasons for that desensitisation in his

military training and experience. After all, DC Masterson's source has already told us not only that Vincent trained as a sniper, but that he had no compunction about killing complete strangers from a distance, a positive quality in the army's eyes, but perhaps not so in civilian life. And we know that Vincent couldn't make the



adjustment to civilian life. His criminal activities and prison record show that to some extent. He also exhibited some symptoms of PTSD, though he was never diagnosed or treated for it. The lack of ability to form and maintain relations is an important factor here.'

‘But PTSD doesn’t  
make murderers,  
does it?’ said  
Gervaise.

‘We don’t know what  
makes murderers. If  
we did, we’d all be out  
of a job.

I’m simply talking  
about the sheer  
mental burden this  
man is walking  
around with, not  
speculating on what it

might cause him to do. And at the root of all this, or tangled up in it somehow, is his sister's murder. That's something he doesn't appear to be able to let go, even fifty years after it happened. And I think we are all agreed that the triggers were there in the cold case, Frank Dowson's imprisonment, finding out that Maureen

didn't turn up as promised and, finally, the news about the forthcoming wedding. More than enough for someone in as fragile a state of mind as I imagine Mark Vincent is. Gerry, do you know what happened to the Vincent family in the immediate aftermath of the murder?'

Gerry shuffled through the pages of her

notes. 'The parents  
split up three

months after Wendy's  
murder. The father  
moved to Sheffield  
and remained on the  
dole. He died of  
cirrhosis in 1988. The  
mother went home to  
her own parents in  
Salford and sent Mark  
to live with an aunt  
and uncle in Ferry  
Fryston, near  
Castleford. There was

an incident recorded in 1967. The details are a bit vague, but Mark Vincent was taken into care for a while.'

'Abuse?' said Gervaise.

'Sounds very much like it, ma'am. Naturally, the details are scrappy after so long, but the police and social services

were involved, and there was an investigation of sorts before he was returned to the family. His aunt and uncle, that is. That's when Vincent first started getting in trouble with the law. Small stuff at first, shoplifting, handling stolen goods, starting little fires, then graduating to more serious stuff like muggings and the

occasional burglary.  
As my source said, it  
was jail or the army.  
His mother cleaned  
up her act. Detox, AA.  
She died of a stroke  
in 2004.'

'Any brothers or  
sisters still living?'  
Jenny asked.

'Not according to my  
records.'



‘Drugs? In connection with Vincent.’

‘No mention,’ said Gerry. ‘Neither dealing nor using. Though my source did say that alcohol abuse was a significant factor in his later violent behaviour, and other drugs may have been involved. But there’s no evidence, or even suspicion, that he was a heroin addict, for

example, or a  
cokehead.'

'So what exactly do  
we do now?' asked  
Gervaise. 'Take  
Maureen Tindall into  
protective custody?'

'I'd suggest discreet  
surveillance,' said  
Banks. 'It gives us  
more chance of  
nabbing him in the act  
if he goes after her.'

But it's not without risk  
of scaring him off.'

'Maybe you should  
give her a choice,'  
Jenny said.

'She's not in good  
enough shape to  
make one,' said  
Annie. 'She's in a  
state of constant  
anxiety, she's scared  
all the time, jumps at  
shadows, feels guilty,  
ashamed. I know I'm

not a psychiatrist, but there you are, that's my opinion, for what it's worth.'

'You're probably quite right,' said Jenny.

'And those issues would certainly throw her decision-making ability out of whack, to use a technical term.'

Even Annie smiled at that.

‘Get an unmarked car to the Tindall house now,’ said Gervaise. ‘Tell them to park down the street and try to remain unobserved,’ Gervaise said. ‘And arrange to have someone watching the back, if there’s access that way. You know the lie of the land better than I do.’

‘Should we tell Mrs Tindall what we’re doing, ma’am?’ Gerry asked.

Gervaise glanced at Jenny, then at Annie.  
‘Well, you two?’

‘No,’ they both said at once.

‘It would only alarm her, cause her to panic,’ Jenny said.

'I think we should get her and her husband out of the house,' said Banks.

'Panic or not. Put them in a hotel or somewhere to make sure of their safety.

Unless he's watching at the time, he won't know they're not there. If he is watching, maybe that'll give us a

chance of capturing him. At least that way nobody's in danger, and we still stand a chance of getting our man.'

'But not of catching him in the act,' Annie said.

'It doesn't matter. We're not going to use Maureen Tindall as bait. And don't forget, all we have is



circumstantial evidence and a very strong suspicion of Vincent's guilt. We'll need more than that if we want to get a conviction, and I'm hoping we'll get it when we have him in custody and question him, search his premises. I think we're all agreed that right now the main thing is finding him, right?'

They all agreed.

‘Good,’ said Gervaise.  
‘Make it so.’

Before they could all return to their respective tasks, a soft tap at the door was followed by the entry of a uniformed constable.

‘Yes?’ said Gervaise, shoving her files into her briefcase.

‘Ma’am.’ The constable took a deep breath, then said, ‘Just heard from dispatch that they’ve had a 999 call from a Robert Tindall. He’s the hus—’

‘I know who he is,’ said Gervaise. ‘What did he want?’

‘They couldn’t make out what he was saying, ma’am. Not all

of it. Said his voice sounded funny. But they think he said something about being hurt.

They've sent an ambulance and a patrol car, but I just thought—'

'Thank you, Constable. Good thinking,' said Gervaise, and glanced at Banks.

‘Better get over there,  
hadn’t you?’

Banks and Annie set  
off for the Tindalls’  
house as the rain  
started to fall again,  
gently at first, then  
harder. Behind them  
were two patrol cars  
with their lights  
flashing and sirens  
blaring. It wasn’t far,  
but by the time they  
got there the  
uniformed officer on

duty outside the house informed them that Robert Tindall had been taken to A & E on the orders of the paramedic. He couldn't say whether Tindall's injuries were life-threatening or not, but his partner, who was still inside the house, had felt for a pulse and found one, and when the paramedics had pushed him out on a

gurney, his head had been bandaged. So he was alive when they took him to hospital.

Banks noticed that the front door was splintered around the chain, which was

hanging loose. It looked as if the door had been on the chain when Robert Tindall, or Maureen, had

answered it, and whoever was standing there had kicked it open. There was something resembling a scuff, possibly made by someone's foot, on the front of the door.

The second patrol officer, who had remained inside the house, led them along the hall and showed them into the kitchen,



where Tindall had been found.

Banks and Annie stopped in the doorway to avoid contaminating the scene any further. There wasn't much to see, though there had clearly been a brief struggle, as a few plates lay broken on the floor, along with slices of some oranges and

bananas, knives and forks scattered among the wreckage. There was also a pool of dark blood.

‘Where’s his wife?’  
Banks asked the constable. ‘Maureen.’

The constable shook his head. ‘There was no one else here when we arrived, sir. Just the man lying on the floor there.’

‘This blood come from him?’

‘It looked that way, sir.’

‘Was he unconscious?’

‘Not quite, but I’d say he was definitely stunned.’

‘Could you tell how he’d been hurt? Gun? Knife?’

‘No, sir. Nothing like that. From what I could tell, he was most likely hit on the head with that heavy wooden chopping block. You can see the blood on it if you look closely. I tried to touch things as little as possible.’

Banks looked and he did see blood on the chopping block. It was certainly heavy

enough to deliver a nasty wound. He knew that head wounds bleed a lot, so the amount no longer seemed so significant as it had at first. On the other hand, a blow to the skull can cause any amount of damage, not all of it immediately apparent. 'Did he say anything?'

‘He was struggling to speak, sir,’ the constable said. ‘But I couldn’t make out any of it. It seemed like he was trying to say something important but it just wasn’t coming out. Then the paramedic got to work and I got out of the way.’

Banks and Annie next made a quick search of the rest of the

house but found nothing of interest. There was no blood to be seen anywhere else, and no signs of a struggle in any of the upstairs rooms. Whatever the interloper had done with Maureen Tindall, he hadn't done it in the house. Maureen was gone. Someone had taken her.

Back outside, Banks told the constable to organise a house-to-house of the neighbourhood and show Vincent's photo to everyone, and to pay particular attention to getting information on the car he was driving.

After the meeting, Gerry went back to her maps with a heightened sense of



excitement. She felt a little annoyed at being left out of the trip to Eastvale General Infirmary, but realised there was no point in all of them being there.

According to Banks, Robert Tindall would tell them what he could when he was able to talk. It might mean a lot of waiting around, hospitals

being what they were,  
and she had  
important work to do,  
especially now that  
Maureen Tindall was  
missing, presumed  
abducted, according  
to Banks.

DC Wilson and PC  
Stamford were out  
interviewing local  
estate agents and  
farmers who rented  
out rooms and  
converted barn

accommodations. It seemed a fairly thankless task, Gerry thought, especially in this weather, but it had to be done. Now they had a good likeness of their man – of Mark Vincent – they might get a more positive reaction to their enquiries.

Gerry looked over the OS Landranger map with a magnifying

glass, feeling a bit like Sherlock Holmes as she scanned the squares for anything she might have missed. At one and a quarter inches to a mile, it was a fairly detailed sheet, but she decided it might be worth having a look at an Explorer map, two and a half inches to a mile. It would be less cluttered.

She spent a few minutes in the tiny station library looking through the racks, eventually found the area she wanted and took it back to the boardroom, where she tacked it gently with adhesive putty to the whiteboard. That was better, she thought, standing back to admire the precision draughtsmanship,

translating the whirls  
and blobs into images  
of a vital, living  
landscape in her  
mind's eye. The  
symbols were larger  
and less likely to be  
obscured by contour  
lines, footpaths or  
village streets, and  
after a while of simply  
standing looking at it  
as she might a  
painting in the  
National Gallery, she

spotted something  
she had overlooked.

Pausing only to make  
a few jottings of  
locations in her  
notebook, she dashed  
back to the squad  
room, grabbed her  
raincoat and went  
down to the car park.

Robert Tindall had  
been moved to the  
head of the queue for  
immediate attention,

and nobody would be allowed to see him until the doctors had determined the extent of the damage. So far, none of them had given away a thing.

The coffee was weak and the decor drab. It was bad enough that you had to be in a hospital, Banks thought, without having to put up with weak coffee and drab



decor, too. He vaguely remembered a funny quote about wallpaper. Oscar Wilde, he thought it was. Wilde had all the best funny quotes. Still, Banks didn't suppose that patients in need of serious attention cared much about the decor, or the coffee, though no doubt an expensive survey would one day prove that a little

colour in a patient's  
life could work  
miraculous cures.

He looked out of the  
window through the  
'silken strings' of rain  
to the jaundiced  
streetlight in front of  
the Unicorn across  
the road. That would  
be an improvement,  
he thought. The decor  
was just as bad, but  
the beer was decent  
enough. He found

himself wondering what Emily's hospital had been like, her last days, whether she'd been aware enough to notice or care. As he remembered, she was always very fussy about furniture and paint colours. Julie Drake said Emily spent as long as she could at home, but when the pain got too much, and a visiting nurse could no longer

provide the level of care she needed, they took her to hospital. He thought about the other hospital, too, where she had had the abortion all those years ago. What had she felt like after that? Empty, he supposed. Wasn't that the cliché they always used in movies? Perhaps she had felt free, elated. But he doubted it. Empty was more like

it. And he hadn't even known. Hadn't even been able to hold her hand or offer her any comfort, let alone suggest having the baby, getting married. Julie was most likely right. He would have tried, and he might have succeeded, and it would probably have been a big mistake. Let go with both hands. Smile and forget.

Banks became aware of the doctor talking. He hadn't noticed him walk in.

'It's not as serious as we thought,' he went on. 'He's lost some blood, and he's weak, but there's no skull fracture and no brain damage as far as we can make out. Mild concussion. We'll keep him in and monitor him overnight,

carry out some tests.  
What was he hit with,  
by the way?’

‘We think it was a  
chopping block,’ said  
Banks. He had placed  
it in an evidence bag  
and passed it on to  
one of the uniformed  
officers before leaving  
for the hospital. ‘Can  
we talk to him?’

‘I don’t see why not.  
But just for a few

minutes. He's very tired.' He glanced at Annie. 'Just one of you, though, I'm afraid.'

'I'll wait here,' said Annie.

The doctor led Banks down the corridor and up in the lift to the private room where Robert Tindall lay on a plumped-up pillow with bandages around



his head and various tubes and monitors attached to him. They seemed to subject you to that indignity even if all you came in with was a cut finger. 'And don't overexcite him,' the doctor admonished Banks as he walked off.

'God forbid,' Banks muttered under his breath.

The light was dim and the curtains closed. Banks could hear the wind-blown rain lashing against the windowpane, along with an annoying beep inside the room itself every two or three seconds. That was another thing he had noticed; there was always an annoying beep in hospital rooms.

Tindall's eyes were open, and Banks noticed signs of recognition. It was a good start. Tindall tried to sit up but couldn't make it. He reached out and

grabbed Banks's wrist. His grasp was surprisingly strong. 'Mr Banks,' he said.

His voice was soft but the words were

formed clearly enough, and the anxiety and urgency in his tone were obvious. 'Can you tell me anything about Maureen? Please. What's happened to her? Where is she? Did he hurt her?'

'We don't know much yet,' said Banks, 'but there are no signs that he hurt her. Now calm down. The

doctor says you need  
rest and shouldn't  
become too excited.'

'But I'm worried about  
her.'

'Of course you are.  
It's only natural. But  
we're doing  
everything in our  
powers to find her and  
bring her back home  
safe and sound.'

‘Thank God. Are you sure she’s not hiding in the house?’

‘I’m afraid not. We searched the whole place and she’s not there.’

‘Where is she?’

‘We don’t know yet.’  
Banks took the West Yorkshire photo of Vincent out of his briefcase. It had been

taken recently enough that it could definitely be matched to the man in Ray Cabbot's drawing, but it was far easier for people to make identification from an actual photograph rather than a drawing, Banks had found. Somehow, art makes us expect distortion and exaggeration, yet we take photographs as

representations of the real.

‘Do you recognise this man?’ Banks asked.

Tindall fumbled for his glasses on the bedside table. He had a hard time getting them on with the bandages over his ears, but he managed it well enough to study the photograph and say almost



immediately, 'Yes.  
That's the man.

That's the man who  
hit me and grabbed  
Maureen.'

'Thank you,' Banks  
said. 'Do you know  
who he is?'

'No. He was a  
stranger. It was . . .'  
he paused and  
frowned, as if trying to  
think clearly. 'It was

odd. As if Maureen seemed to recognise him just a split second before he grabbed her. Who is he?’

‘His name is Mark Vincent.’

‘Vincent? Vincent? Isn’t that the name of that girl who was murdered?’

Maureen’s friend. She made me watch the

programme on TV, the fiftieth anniversary.'

'That's right,' said Banks. 'He's her brother.'

'But what's he . . . I mean, why would he . . .?'

'It's a long and complicated story,' said Banks, 'and I think your wife would be the best person to

tell it to you. For now, though, it's enough for us to know this was the man.'

'Do you know where he lives?'

Banks had to admit that he didn't, and Tindall's face fell at that. 'Oh,' he

said. It was little more than a sigh.

‘But we’ve got men  
out all over the dale  
searching for her.  
Don’t worry, Mr  
Tindall. We’re closing  
in. We’ll find her.’

Tindall seemed to  
listen to the rain. ‘On  
a night like this?’

‘Even on a night like  
this. Is there anything  
else you can  
remember that might

help us? Did Vincent say anything?’

‘No. He just kicked the door, broke the chain and rushed. He pushed me aside and headed straight for the kitchen. The light was on, so I suppose he must have realised Maureen was in there. It’s right at the end of the hall. I ran after him as quickly as I could. I was a bit

winded. But when I got there he picked up that heavy chopping block, whirled around and hit me. I felt this terrible pain on the side of my head and everything flashed and then went dark. Just before I lost consciousness, I saw him grab Maureen and start to drag her away, out towards the front door. That's when I thought she

recognised him. I tried to shout, but I couldn't move, not even my vocal cords. I must have lost consciousness, but it was only for a short while. I used my mobile to call 999, then . . . Well, you know the rest.'

Banks hadn't expected that Vincent had told Tindall where he was taking



Maureen, but he still felt disappointed at the lack of information. Most of what Robert Tindall had told him he had already surmised. Maureen was probably still alive, and Vincent had most likely tied her up and stashed her somewhere. If so, where? And what was he going to do to her? Stab her, like his

sister was stabbed?  
Or did he have a  
better idea? One thing  
was for certain, if  
Vincent had carried  
out the shootings at  
the wedding, which it  
appeared he had, and  
had not killed  
Maureen then, it was  
perhaps only because  
he had a worse fate in  
mind for her now.

It was time to leave  
Robert Tindall to the

ministrations of his  
doctors and get back  
to the station.

## **Chapter 16**

Gerry could have  
kicked herself for not  
thinking of caravan  
sites before. If she  
had, she could simply  
have googled  
'caravan parks in  
Swainsdale' and  
saved herself some  
time. But she hadn't.

She had insisted on using maps, the old technology. Well, that would teach her. It wasn't as if the sites weren't marked clearly enough by little blue symbols on the OS maps, but she had overlooked them. A caravan was the ideal type of anonymous, easily transportable home that would suit Vincent. And his

wallet, if money were indeed a problem. It was possible that he had picked up a used car and caravan somewhere cheap, no questions asked, cash in hand.

Even though Gerry had drawn a blank at the first two sites, she still felt optimistic as she pulled into the gates of the Riverview Caravan Park around

half past four. It wasn't the first time Gerry had visited Riverview, about half a mile west of Eastvale across the river from Hindswell Woods. Only a couple of years ago she had been there with Banks around dawn on a miserable March morning watching the smouldering remains of a caravan.

The site stood on the north side of the River Swale, and when Gerry got there, the place was like a fairground packing up and leaving town. Car headlights and high-beam torches lanced through the darkness like searchlights as the cars crawled to the narrow gates, some of them pulling caravans behind them. Dark shapes

stood in the rain  
waving their arms  
about and shouting  
instructions. It was an  
exodus in the wake of  
flood warnings, Gerry  
realised, and she was  
driving against the  
flow. She could hardly  
get through the  
entrance to park  
outside the main  
office building no  
matter how much she  
leaned on her horn.



Some good Samaritans were directing the traffic towards higher ground, and helping to get out the cars that got stuck in the churning mud. Several caravans had also got bogged down, one of them almost on its side. When Gerry finally managed to squeeze through and park outside the office, she

grabbed her umbrella  
and put on the  
wellington boots she  
had kept in the boot of  
the car in the event of  
just such a situation.  
You didn't go far  
without a pair of  
wellies in the  
Yorkshire Dales, no  
matter what the time  
of year.

The scene inside the  
office wasn't any less  
chaotic, with the poor

manager inundated  
by worried residents  
asking him where the  
hell they should go.  
As there was a fair  
slope down to the  
river, then a steep  
bank leading down to  
the

water itself, Gerry  
wasn't convinced that  
the site would be  
flooded, but perhaps it  
was better to be safe  
than sorry.

The manager seemed almost relieved to see Gerry and excused himself to come over and talk to her, leaving his poor receptionist to deal with the anxious crowd.

‘I remember you from before,’ he said.  
‘Harry’s my name.  
Harry Bell.

What’s up?’

Gerry slipped the photo of Vincent out of her pocket and showed it to Bell.

‘Have you seen this man?’

Bell studied the photo for a few seconds, then said, ‘That’s him. Mr Newton.’

Gordon Newton. Can you tell me what it’s all about?’

*Gord*, Gerry thought.  
At last. 'How long has  
he been here?'

'Over two months.  
Since last November,  
I think. Quiet as a  
mouse. I must admit I  
had my concerns at  
first. He's hardly Mr  
Sartorial Elegance, if  
you catch my drift. His  
car's a right old  
banger, too, a  
clapped-out Renault,  
and the caravan's an

eyesore. Mind you, he keeps it clean and tidy. So what's he done?'

'We don't know that he's done anything yet. I just need to talk to him.'

Bell gestured towards the outside. 'Must be serious if you've come out here in this weather.'

Gerry smiled. 'I'm only a detective constable,' she said. 'I'm out in all weathers. Now if it was my DI or the super, you might have a bit more cause for concern.'

Bell laughed.

'Is he here now?'  
Gerry asked.

'I'm afraid he's gone out. Drove off earlier



this afternoon, before the rain was quite so bad. I try to keep an eye on the comings and goings. It passes the time.'

'Any idea where he was heading?'

'No. I just remember seeing his car leaving.'

'With or without the caravan?'

‘Without.’

‘Which way did he go?’

‘Turned right at the top.’

That meant he was most likely heading for Eastvale, Gerry thought. On his way to abduct Maureen Tindall. ‘Would it be possible for me to

have a look inside his caravan?’ she asked.

‘Well, I—’

‘As I said, we just want to talk to him, but it *is* quite urgent that we find him as soon as possible.’

‘Bad news, is it? A death in the family?’

‘Something like that,’ Gerry said. ‘There might be a clue in his

caravan as to where  
he's gone.'

'Of course.'

'Do you have a key?'

'Er . . . no. Is that a  
problem?'

'We'll see,' said Gerry.  
In her experience,  
caravan doors were  
pretty easy to open.

Bell accompanied her  
outside on to the

porch, where the chaos was starting to abate, and pointed down the rutted track to his right. 'Down there, towards the river. Second left, fourth caravan along, on the right side as you're walking. You can't miss it. It's quite small and could definitely do with a paint job. You'll see what I mean. Pardon me if I don't

accompany you but . .  
. ' He gestured back to  
the office. 'Bit of a  
crisis. We'll probably  
be fine, but people get  
all wound up listening  
to the weather  
forecasts.'

Gerry stood on the  
porch, scowled up at  
the sky, unfurled her  
umbrella and trudged  
off into the mud,  
fumbling with her  
mobile as she went.

Banks looked out of his office window at the blurry lights in the town square, listening to a Philip Glass string quartet on Radio 3. Gerry's phone call had him a little worried. If Harry Bell was wrong and Vincent *was* home, or if he suddenly came back, it could be dangerous for her. He had told her to wait at the site office for

backup, but he was pretty sure she had already set off for the caravan when she phoned, and she wouldn't go back. There was a kind of hard-headed fearlessness about Gerry that he much admired, but it caused him concern for her safety. He called the duty sergeant and asked him to send out the nearest patrol car,



just to be on the safe side. The sergeant said he'd do what he could, but the roads were a major concern. Banks stopped short of saying

'officer in need of assistance', the way he'd heard it on American cop shows, but raised the level of urgency in his voice and made it quite clear that Gerry's

welfare took  
precedence over  
bloody traffic  
problems, thank you  
very much.

Next, he phoned  
Annie in the squad  
room.

‘DI Cabbot,’ she  
answered.

‘Found out anything  
yet?’

‘Not much,’ Annie said. ‘I talked to Doug back on the Tindalls’ street.

Neighbour across the way three doors down is the best bet. Says he saw someone leading Mrs Tindall by the elbow out of the house and shoving her into a beat-up old car about three o’clock. Thought it looked suspicious. He

did phone it in, by the way, but Robert Tindall called us first.'

'Did he get the make?'

'He didn't get the number plate, but he said he thought it was a Renault. An old Clio. He couldn't see the colour because the light was poor, and the streetlights just reflected. But it

was a dark colour,  
and there were rust  
patches, or lighter  
patches at any rate,  
around the wheel  
rims, and what looked  
like spray jobs  
elsewhere. All in all, it  
looked as if it had  
been around the block  
a few times too many.  
Seemed to know his  
cars.'

'Good.' Banks  
paused. 'Gerry's hot

on the trail. She thinks she's found him.

Vincent.'

'The little devil,' said Annie.

'Riverview Caravan Park.'

'That hotbed of crime.'

'Seems so. Anyway, the site manager says he's not in his caravan but has no idea where

he might be. Drove off earlier this afternoon.'

'In time to nab Maureen Tindall?'

'Yes,' said Banks. 'According to my calculations.'

'So what next?'

'I think we'd better get out there as soon as possible. I've got a bad feeling about this. You know how

impulsive Gerry can be. I've already dispatched a patrol car, but you can't rely on them tonight. They're very thin on the ground.'

'I'll meet you downstairs.'

Banks went back to the window, then walked over and turned off the radio.



Philip Glass's edgy repetition was doing nothing to dispel his sense of unease.

He grabbed his raincoat, switched out the lights and headed down. The sooner they got out to the Riverview Caravan Park, the better.

The door proved as easy to open as Gerry had expected, and

when she switched on the light she found herself inside a cramped but cosy room. The single bed was made, the top sheet tight enough to bounce a coin off, and there were no dirty socks or underpants on view. Mark Vincent certainly knew how to take care of himself. It must be his army training, Gerry thought. But the place

looked lived in,  
nevertheless. There  
were dirty dishes in  
the sink, for a start.  
Not disgusting old  
mouldy dishes, but  
recently used ones,  
probably left out that  
morning after  
breakfast. It indicated  
that Vincent probably  
planned on coming  
back before too long.

Gerry started her  
search slowly and

methodically, from the end where the bed was. There was nothing of interest on the small bedside table, only a cheap clock radio, and in the one top drawer was the usual jumble of small change, blank notepad, pens and pencil stubs, a few rubber bands and a post office

savings book that showed Vincent with a balance of £52.40. The bottom drawer was reserved for socks and underwear.

Gerry could find no correspondence in the small writing desk in the living area, not even a bill or a circular. A few clothes hung in the wardrobe, but not the black anorak and

waterproof trousers  
he had been wearing  
during the shooting.  
Gerry guessed he  
was wearing them  
again now, along with  
the black woolly hat.  
There were several  
shirts, jeans, a couple  
of pairs of worn  
trainers and a sports  
jacket.

In the recycling box  
beside the door were  
newspapers, neatly

folded and piled, that morning's on top. Gerry bent and picked it out. It was open at the crossword, which Vincent seemed to have completed in ink without corrections.

Gerry was impressed. It was one of those difficult cryptic ones filled with anagrams and synonyms and the names of plants she'd never heard of.

In the tiny fridge she found milk, margarine, some cheese slices and a loaf of white bread. A box of bran flakes stood on top, along with teabags and a jar of instant coffee. The cutlery was in a drawer below the hot plate, along with a plate and a bowl. Frugal, indeed. Gerry looked in vain for any traces of Maureen Tindall, but



there were no signs of a struggle.

Rain beat down on the flimsy roof as she searched, and she noticed a leak above the door. Water was trickling slowly down the inside wall.

Outside, car headlights flashed by the windows now and then, and engines whined as wheels spun uselessly in the

soft mud.

Occasionally she could hear someone shout above the hammering of the rain.

At the opposite end to the bed was a breakfast nook, and beside it a small armchair with the stuffing leaking out, a reading light angled beside it. There was no TV, nor any kind of

entertainment device,  
unless you counted  
the clock radio. A row  
of second-hand  
paperbacks stood on  
the single bookshelf  
over the desk. Old  
thrillers: Ken Follett,  
Robert Ludlum, Jack  
Higgins, Alistair  
MacLean.

Well, she wouldn't  
have expected  
Vincent to have a

taste for Jane Austen  
or Zadie Smith.

Gerry noticed  
something else on the  
bookshelf and pulled  
it towards her. It was  
an old WH Smith  
wide-ruled exercise  
book, battered and  
dog-eared. She sat  
down carefully in the  
chair and opened it  
up. The first thing that  
caught her attention  
was a newspaper

cutting that slipped on to her lap, a photograph of Maureen Tindall cut from a larger group shot. Across it, someone – Mark Vincent, most likely – had written ‘GRAINGER’ in angry pen strokes.

Gerry shivered and flipped through the pages. She saw a list of names, three of

which had been  
crossed out, and the  
second one, Martin  
Edgeworth, ringed in  
ink. She recognised  
the other names from  
the list of shooting-  
club members

Doug Wilson had  
interviewed. Over the  
page were  
Edgeworth's personal  
details

– his address,  
telephone number,  
date of birth, bank,  
estimate of height and  
weight. Later came a  
list of places,  
including the White  
Rose, a pub called  
the Moorcock in  
Eastvale, and the  
names of several  
local restaurants and  
country inns,  
presumably places  
where Edgeworth  
liked to dine. There

was also a list of all  
the Walkers'  
Wearhouse branches  
in the dale.

Over the page was  
yet another list, this  
time of books: *The  
Making of the British  
Landscape, The  
Pennine Dales, High  
Dale Country,  
Yorkshire Villages,  
Walks in Swaledale  
and Wensleydale, A  
History of Cricket,*



along with books on military history by Antony Beevor, Ian Kershaw, John Keegan and others.

Gerry put the exercise book down and leaned back in the chair. So Vincent had been grooming Martin Edgeworth. He had staked out the shooting club and spied on several members, finally

deciding on Edgeworth, no doubt because he lived alone in an isolated house. After that, he must have made it his business to meet Edgeworth, get chatting, probably on long walks so they were less likely to be seen together. He had found out about the guns Edgeworth owned, which suited his purposes, and the

more he learned about Edgeworth's tastes and interests, the more he could read up on and feign an interest of his own; hence the books on local history and geography, military history, rambling and cricket.

There were no signs of any of the books in the caravan, so Gerry assumed he must

have either borrowed them from a local library or perhaps skimmed them in the library. There were pages of notes about the various subjects covered by the books, so he had clearly done his homework and turned himself into someone who had a lot in common with Martin Edgeworth. And he had done it all fairly

quickly. The longer Edgeworth remained alive, the greater the possibility of something going wrong. It was a cruel and calculating thing to do to get revenge, a dish served very cold indeed. Gazing down the length of the caravan to the neat bed, she could see nothing out of place. She would bring in a team of experts to

take the place apart,  
and they might find  
something else. But  
that would take time.  
Besides, she thought  
what she had found  
was incriminating  
enough, though it  
didn't tell her where  
he had taken  
Maureen Tindall. On a  
whim, she nipped  
outside and bent to  
check underneath the  
caravan. Nothing

there, either, except  
the water rising.

There wasn't much  
she could do now but  
wait for Banks and  
Annie to arrive, and  
that could take a  
while, given the  
worsening state of the  
roads. Gerry lay the  
newspaper on the  
table before her and  
noticed something  
interesting. The way it  
was folded highlighted

an article about local flood danger spots in the weather section above the crossword puzzle. Mark Vincent could have been reading this before or after he had worked on the crossword. The report showed a map of the

River Swain's course, with attention drawn to potential flood trouble spots, places



in danger when the Leas, a wide swathe of meadowland on both sides of the river just west of Eastvale, became waterlogged. The closest one marked on the map was Swainsford Bridge and there was a circle of ink around it. It could just be coincidence, of course, Gerry told herself, or a pointless doodle he'd done

when filling in the crossword. But it chimed with something in her memory, something she couldn't quite grasp immediately. It was there, she knew, and it would come.

Gerry also knew from previous experience that the Leas wouldn't hold out much longer. The water would then spread further north

and south, over and  
beyond the  
meadowland towards  
some of the houses  
that faced the  
riverside beauty spot.  
But that wasn't the  
worst of it. The water  
was rushing down  
from becks and  
streams high up in the  
hills at an alarming  
rate, all of it joining  
the Swain and  
swelling its already  
bursting banks. There

were certain spots where the river narrowed and became shallower for a stretch, and as the water couldn't soak into the waterlogged swathe of the Leas, it would back up and overflow at those narrow points with some force, creating flash floods as unpredictable and as certain to burst as aneurysms. One of

those spots, marked  
in a newspaper  
Vincent had been  
reading, was  
Swainsford Bridge.

The bridge was a  
single arch over the  
Swain, a bugger to  
cross because you  
couldn't see if anyone  
was coming the other  
way, and it was less  
than a mile east of the  
caravan site, right in

the thick of Hindswell  
Woods.

Suddenly, the phrases  
ran like a mantra  
through her mind and  
she knew what  
connection she was  
looking for.

*In the woods. Under  
the bridge. In the rain.*

Wendy Vincent had  
been killed in some  
woods and her body

hidden under a bridge  
beside a broad  
stream. What if  
Vincent were, in his  
way, trying to emulate  
that murder, or at  
least the scene of the  
crime? What if  
Swainsford Bridge  
was his chosen spot?  
What if he had left  
Maureen Tindall  
under the bridge by  
the riverside for the  
flood to take her?

*Under the bridge. In  
the rain.*

Was that the place  
from where she was  
meant to contemplate  
her own death  
arriving? Vincent  
hadn't intended to  
rape and stab  
Maureen Tindall, as  
Frank Dowson had  
done to his sister, but  
he had a twisted  
sense of poetic  
justice, and perhaps



this was how he had planned things to work out.

It was a guess, of course, but Gerry thought it was an inspired one. She could find out whether she was right easily enough by driving to Swainsford Bridge and checking it out. The road running west from the caravan site was nothing but a

narrow unfenced track for over a mile or so before it came to the turning for the bridge, and it wasn't likely to be busy now, not with everyone heading east.

The only question in her mind was that, if she was right, where had Vincent gone after abandoning Maureen Tindall to her fate? Wouldn't he

want to stick around and see what happened? But she couldn't let thoughts like that hold her back. The main thing was that Maureen's life might be in danger, if she hadn't been killed already.

When Gerry got back up to her car by the site office, the chaos had diminished enough for her to

manoeuvre her way  
out easily enough.  
Fortunately, someone  
had found some  
boards and laid them  
across the muddiest  
sections of the road.  
Gerry picked up her  
mobile as she drove,  
squinting at the short  
stretch of road her  
headlights illuminated  
in the rain and  
darkness.

This time she got through to Banks, told him where she was going, what she was thinking and what she was doing.

‘It’s far too dangerous,’ Banks said. ‘Stay where you are, and I’ll send the emergency services out to the bridge, in case you’re right. The patrol vehicle should reach you soon.’

We're on our way, but these diversions are taking time.

We'll be there as soon as we can.'

'There's no time,' said Gerry, narrowly avoiding a caravan that seemed to materialise out of the rain and darkness in the middle of the road. 'The emergency vehicles won't be able

to get here any faster than you can. And if I'm right, it may be too late already. I'm almost there. It makes more sense this way.'

'Not if you get yourself killed, it doesn't.'

'I'll be careful. Come straight to Swainsford Bridge.'

'Don't do anything foolish,' said Banks.

Gerry ended the call.  
She saw the turning  
for Swainsford Bridge  
ahead, to her left, the  
sandwich-board  
warning sign knocked  
on its side, yellow  
police tape across the  
road to the bridge  
broken in the middle  
and trailing in the rain.

Gerry was about a  
quarter of a mile away  
from the bridge itself  
when she went



through the first dip in the road. It was filled with water, which splashed up in broad sheets on either side of the car. She could feel its drag, slowing her down as she ploughed through. Not far now, she told herself. Hang on.

Soon she could see where the river narrowed, a mass of churning foam to her

right, and she knew  
the waterlogged Leas  
lay not far to her left  
beyond the bridge.  
The water that  
gushed faster and  
faster down from the  
mountain streams into  
the Swain would soon  
have nowhere left to  
go. It would back up  
and swell the river to  
bursting, fill the  
bridge's arch, perhaps  
even take the bridge

with it. It had  
happened before.

There was a steep  
bank on the side of  
the river. Gerry drove  
to its edge, where her  
car would be safe  
from any flooding, and  
got out, taking her  
torch

from the boot. The  
bridge stood ahead,  
about fifty yards  
further along the road,

which was all downhill. She could see from where she was standing that it was blocked by more official boards declaring it unsafe. As far as she could tell, there were no other vehicles in the area. There were no houses for some distance, either. She levelled her torch and made her way slowly down to the riverside

in its beam. The water was almost level with the top of the riverbank now, and it was swirling and swelling at an alarming rate as the mountain streams that fed it poured on relentlessly.

Gerry's progress was difficult because she was trying to walk down at a steep angle on mud and slippery

grass in heavy rain  
and near darkness.  
She fell on her  
backside a couple of  
times and slid, but  
managed to hang on  
to everything except  
her dignity, and this  
was no time to worry  
about that. The  
lashing rain was  
practically blinding  
her. At the river's  
edge was a narrow  
footpath, like a  
towpath by a canal. It

was already under half an inch of water. Gerry moved along it towards the bridge on her left carefully, in the light of her torch. The path was muddy, too, and water lapped over her feet. Here and there, the path had disappeared completely into the water, and she had to back up the slope a few paces to get by. If

she lost her footing,  
that would be the end.

She shone her torch  
around, scanning the  
banks for anything  
that might be  
Maureen Tindall.  
Finally, the beam  
picked out a bundle of  
some sort under the  
bridge, on the narrow  
ledge between the  
inside of the arch and  
the river. The water  
was slopping over the



bundle but hadn't covered it yet, or dislodged it at all. As the currents twisted and turned in the gushing stream, glinting dark and light in the moving torch beam, water occasionally splashed over it. Gerry hurried as best she could along the narrow, broken path in the weak light of her torch. She was

scared. The noise of the water filled her ears and cut out all other sound. Vincent himself could be lurking somewhere nearby, even aiming a gun at her right now. And if she missed her footing and went into the river, that would be the end of her. Under the bridge, the noise was even louder, and the water hit the stone in such a

way that it splashed  
up the walls and  
rained on the bundle  
she was slowly  
edging her way  
towards, moving  
sideways, hands  
against the stone.

Finally, she got there  
and saw that the  
bundle was indeed  
Maureen Tindall,  
gagged and tied up in  
such a way that, if she  
moved, the rope

would tighten around her neck and strangle her. Gerry held her torch in her right hand and fumbled in her pocket for her Swiss army knife, the one her father had given her for her fourteenth birthday and told her to carry with her always. She found it and got it open, then bent and cut Maureen Tindall free, shouting in her ear for her to

keep still and not to move an inch. When the ropes were loosened and

Maureen could stretch out her legs and move her arms without choking, Gerry yelled to her that the ledge was narrow and fast disappearing under the rising water, and that the only way to get her out was for Gerry to grab her legs

and slowly drag her backwards. Maureen had to remain completely still. Even so, it would be dangerous. Gerry knew that she could easily slip on the wet path, and they could both tumble to their deaths in roaring waters, but she bit her lip and concentrated as best she could.

She gave Maureen the torch to hold, but the light in her eyes didn't help at all as she shuffled slowly backwards, feeling for every step with her foot before advancing. It was slow and painstaking work. Luckily, Maureen had got the message and lay still, let herself be dragged. Finally, they cleared the arch of the bridge, where the

path widened a few inches. But the river's flow seemed to be getting faster and noisier. It had swelled even more since Gerry had gone in, and now there was less of the muddy path to follow.

Gerry glanced back at the bridge and saw the water was now covering the ledge where Maureen had



lain. Smashing to and fro against the sides. There was only one way to safety, and that was up the bank. Up there, on the higher ground, they would be safe. She would get Maureen into her car with the heater on, then drive her to the hospital. But the only way to get Maureen up the bank was to drag or carry her, and

Gerry wasn't sure she had the strength left.

Maureen was so frozen with fear and her circulation had been cut off by the tight ropes, so she could hardly do anything but whimper.

The fireman's lift wouldn't work. Not that Gerry couldn't bear the weight –

Maureen was a slight enough figure – but carrying her like that would unbalance her, and she would surely slip back or sink into the bankside mud and slide down to the water. She couldn't make it up the slope walking upright. The only way was to get Maureen to cling around her neck without strangling her, and for Gerry to crawl

on her stomach and claw her way up the slope with her hands, feel for footholds with her feet. It was slow going, even slower than the journey back from the arch. Once, they slid back and almost went over the bank into the water. But Gerry held on and set off again.

At last, she felt she had got far enough

and had sufficiently dug in with her feet to take a breather. The water still roared in her ears. She glanced over her shoulder, past Maureen, and saw that it now almost filled the whole arch of the bridge.

Gerry took a deep breath, gathered all her strength together and grabbed on to whatever she could

find in the bankside  
for the last haul –  
clumps of grass, a  
half-buried rock, an  
exposed tree root.  
Finally, they made it.  
She dragged herself  
and Maureen on to  
the roadside,  
unhooked Maureen  
and rolled over on her  
back,

where she lay  
gasping for breath.  
Maureen lay still, a

few feet away, also on her back. It was only twenty yards of easy paved path to Gerry's car now, but she wasn't sure whether she could make it. Her whole body hurt, every muscle, every joint. She had to struggle just to fill her lungs with air on every breath. The water roared in her ears. She felt her head spinning, the

world receding from  
her.

She wanted nothing  
more than to sleep.

Then she heard what  
she thought was a  
slow handclap and  
turned her head  
sideways to see a  
figure dressed all in  
black standing over  
her.



‘Well done,’ Mark Vincent said. ‘That was a heroic effort. Pity it all has to come to nothing.’

## **Chapter 17**

Banks cursed under his breath and drummed with his hands on the steering wheel. They were stuck in a long line of cars at a set of makeshift lights west

of Eastvale, the already narrow country road down to one lane. They were on the north side of the river, as the main dale road was now closed. At the front of the line, beside the temporary red light, a man in a yellow slicker stood holding a lollipop sign that said STOP. Just a few yards beyond the traffic disruption, they

would be able to turn left along the lane towards the Riverview Caravan Park and Swainsford Bridge. But the red light seemed to be taking for ever to change.

A patrol car had spotted a beat-up old Clio with two people in it heading west towards Swainsford Bridge not long before. Banks

guessed that had to be Vincent and Maureen Tindall, and that Gerry was either already there or on her way.

‘Calm down,’ said Annie. ‘There’s nothing we can do. Gerry’s a big girl.’

‘She can take care of herself.’

‘But what if she can’t?’ Banks said. ‘Vincent’s had survival training. He’s seen action, for crying out loud. He may be armed.’

The rain was pattering on the car roof in time with Banks’s nervous tattoo.

The patrol car in front of him had its light

flashing, but that did them no good.

Even if they tried to jump the queue, there was not enough space to manoeuvre without ending up in the ditch.

‘There’s no reason to think he’d still be hanging around,’ Annie argued.

‘He’s probably miles away by now.’

‘She’s not answering her phone.’

‘Maybe there’s no signal out where she is. You know what Yorkshire’s like.

Or maybe she can’t hear it for the rain.’

‘I don’t like it. Ah, here we go.’ The gears crunched as Banks

revved up too fast and set off, almost rear-ending the patrol car in front. When they had got through the one-lane closure, both he and the patrol car pulled out and speeded up, overtaking the other cars that had been in the queue and both turning left so sharply that the lead car had to brake so fast it almost skidded into



the ditch. The driver honked his horn furiously. Banks ignored it and carried on following the patrol car towards Riverview.

‘Be careful!’ said Annie. ‘It’ll do nobody any good if you drive us or the lads in front off the road and get us killed. Slow down.’

Banks drove on, but not much slower.

‘Look,’ Annie said.  
‘There’s the caravan site. Shall we go in?’

‘No point,’ said Banks.  
‘She was on her way to Swainsford Bridge. Gerry’s like that. She only tells you she’s going to do something dangerous when she’s already past the point of no return.’

Annie quietened down and Banks drove on. Once again, he tried Gerry on both her mobile and the police radio. Nothing.

It didn't take him long to cover the mile and a half from Riverview to the turning for the bridge, and he slowed briefly to take in the overturned sandwich-board and the broken police tape. 'She's

here,' he said. 'The only question is whether he's here, too.'

Then he turned left and drove on.

Gerry was too weary to fight. The rain fell in her eyes and flowed like tears down her face. She thought this blurred view of the dark figure against a background of

darkness might be the last thing she would see.

‘I was never far away,’ he said.

‘Don’t do this,’ Gerry said, dredging up all the energy she could to even speak.

‘Please. There’s no point. It’s over now. The police will be here any moment.’

‘Do you think I care about that?’ He moved closer. ‘Once she’s gone, I’m finished anyway.’

Gerry felt a small ray of hope that he meant he was only going to kill Maureen Tindall, and spare *her*. The surge of relief made her also feel guilty and ashamed, but she didn’t want to die, not like this, in the rain,

covered in mud, at the hands of a mass murderer, the man who had killed Katie Shea and her unborn child.

Then she realised that what Vincent had said had merely been a figure of speech, and there was no way he was going to spare her. He had killed innocent people before, both in the

army and at the wedding, and he would do it again with no compunction. Aunt Jane had told her as much.

She desperately cast around in her mind for a means of escape. There were no weapons to hand, not even a brick or a stone. Only her Swiss army knife, and that was in the depths of



her pocket. Any attempt to reach for it and open it would surely alert him that she was up to something. She strained her ears and thought she could hear the sound of a patrol car in the distance above the roaring of the water below. *Please let it be them*, she thought. How could she keep him from killing

Maureen until they got here?

‘Can you hear it?’ she said. ‘The police. They’re coming. Give it up, Mark.’

‘I can’t hear anything,’ he said, now almost so close she could reach out and touch him.

Then he did something she hadn’t

expected. Maureen was lying on the edge of the bank just a few feet away. Gerry wasn't sure whether she was still conscious, but she hadn't moved or spoken since they had made it up the slope.

Mark Vincent walked slowly over to her and kicked her hard in the ribs. She cried out. He

swung back his leg to  
kick her again, and  
Gerry seized her  
chance.

With all the power she  
could muster, she  
thrust her leg up  
under his ankle,  
where it met the foot,  
and lifted it higher. As  
Vincent seemed to  
totter and lose his  
balance, Maureen  
Tindall found enough  
strength to swing both

her legs at the shin of  
his other leg,  
whipping it from under  
him. He seemed to  
hang there for a  
moment, then  
scratched at the air as  
he pitched forwards  
over the bank.

Gerry dragged herself  
right to the edge and  
saw him sliding and  
bouncing down the  
steep slope,  
desperately reaching

out for handholds but finding none.

Finally, his head hit the stone path and he made one last attempt to clutch at something solid before he sailed over the edge. But the water and his own momentum were enough to carry him off now, and the stones were slippery with mud. He screamed as he

plunged into the water  
and the surge carried  
him away.

Gerry heard a loud  
crack as his head hit  
the inside of the arch,  
then she heard  
nothing more but the  
sound of the water  
and Maureen Tindall's  
whimpering beside  
her.

She closed her eyes  
and felt the soothing

rain on her lids. Soon she could hear the siren coming closer. She reached for Maureen's hand and held it tight as the cars screeched to a halt and doors slammed. Then she let herself drift.

As soon as Gerry had managed to satisfy the paramedics that she was suffering from nothing more



than physical exhaustion after her trip down to the bridge and up the steep bank, and that all she wanted was a shower and a good night's sleep, she agreed to Banks's suggestion that they should all go back to his house, which was not far away, and was safe on high ground. The thought of driving all the way back home to

Eastvale didn't appeal to Gerry at all, and she didn't particularly want to be alone after her ordeal. Banks said Tracy had left a few of her clothes at the cottage for when she visited, and Gerry was welcome to wear them while he put her stuff in the washer. Happy to be pampered for once, Gerry thanked him. She said she would

drive her own car up to Gratly to avoid messing up the inside of his Porsche with her wet and muddy clothes, but he told her not worry about it and get in. They could pick her car up tomorrow.

There would be questions, of course. Lots of them. There would have to be some kind of internal

investigation into what  
happened at  
Swainsford Bridge

that night, as a man  
was dead. Mark  
Vincent's body had  
washed up on the  
edge of the Leas only  
a short while after his  
tumble into the fast-  
flowing river. If his  
skull hadn't been  
cracked open, he  
would have drowned  
anyway. Naturally, Dr

Glendenning would perform the post-mortem as soon as he could. Banks had talked to AC Gervaise on his mobile, and she had given permission for them all to dry out and rest before facing their questioners the following morning.

Banks phoned home on the way, and back at the house, Ray

Cabbot hurried to meet them at the door to make sure that everyone was all right, giving Annie an especially big hug. Then Annie took Gerry upstairs, led her to the shower and left her to herself.

When Gerry had finished, she came out of the en suite, brushing her long wet hair, to find a

selection of Tracy's clothes laid out on the bed. Though the tracksuit bottoms were too short on her, the elastic fitted fine around her waist, and the sweatshirt was just right. Hair brushed but still wet, she headed back downstairs and was surprised at the sight of Banks and Ray in the kitchen putting together plates of

cheese, cold cuts,  
chopped vegetables.  
She could already  
smell the curry  
simmering on the  
range. As soon as  
she saw and smelled  
the food, she realised  
she was starving.

Ray turned as she  
entered, and she  
noticed a bottle of  
champagne on the  
table, the familiar  
yellow label of Veuve



Clicquot. 'I know the timing's awful,'

he said, 'but I was planning a little celebration. I found the perfect cottage today.'

Made them an offer they couldn't refuse. It was too good to get gazumped over.'

'That's wonderful,' Gerry said. 'Where is

it?’

‘Not so far from here,  
just over the other  
side of the hill, a little  
village called  
Beckerby.’

Gerry remembered it  
from one of her walks.  
‘I know it,’ she said.  
‘It’s lovely.  
Congratulations.’

‘You’ll have to come  
and visit me there.’

Ray's expression darkened. 'I'm sorry. I know you've had a terrible experience tonight. Do you think a little champagne might help?'

Gerry managed a crooked smile. 'There's nothing in the world that a little champagne won't help.'

Ray poured a glass for them all, and the four of them ate at the breakfast nook in the kitchen, mopping up the lamb korma with naans. Champagne and curry had never tasted so good.

The mood was subdued, but Gerry did her best to convince them all she was fine and that they didn't need to tread

softly around her.  
When they had  
finished, Banks  
phoned the hospital.  
Gerry could hear only  
his side of the  
conversation, but  
when he sat down  
again he told them  
that Maureen Tindall  
was suffering

from two broken ribs,  
shock and exposure.  
She would recover  
eventually, they said,

but they were going to keep her in hospital for a while longer. Her husband was up and about and already sitting at her bedside holding her hand.

It might be a long haul for her, Gerry thought, given the shock she had also suffered in the graveyard after the wedding shooting. Maureen Tindall had taken a hell of an

emotional beating lately. Gerry also felt that there might be a hard road ahead for Maureen in legal terms, as the law doesn't take well to people getting killed, even in self-defence. She doubted, however, that there would be any form of prosecution. The CPS wouldn't touch it with a bargepole. She thought that she might

have consequences to face, herself, too, but all that could wait. In her heart, she was certain that there was nothing else they could have done. She was only glad that Maureen had seized the time and delivered the *coup de grâce*, otherwise they might both be dead and Mark Vincent would be languishing in a



cell having achieved his goal.

Gerry started to feel a little tired after eating, but Ray had other ideas. He ushered them all into the entertainment room and once there presented Gerry with a large sheet of paper. When she turned it over, she saw it was a sketch. Of her.

‘I did it from memory,’  
Ray said.

Gerry was so  
overcome, so lost for  
words that all she  
could do was cry, and  
that made her feel like  
an idiot after all that  
had happened that  
evening. ‘It’s  
beautiful,’ she said. ‘I  
don’t mean me, I  
mean, the work, you  
know, the way . . .

the lines . . .’

‘We know what you mean,’ said Annie.  
‘He was going to do a full size nude but I talked him out of it.’

‘I was not,’ said Ray.

Gerry blushed, then laughed. ‘Well he wouldn’t have been able to do it from memory, I can assure you of that. But this is

perfect. Lovely. Thank you.' She gave Ray a peck on the cheek and sank back gratefully into an armchair. It seemed to enfold her as she did so, and she wasn't sure she would ever be able to get up again. She could hear Gratly Beck roaring outside the house, and the noise reminded her of the Swain earlier tonight

at Swainsford Bridge.  
She gave a little  
shudder. But that was  
over now. She'd done  
it.

She suddenly noticed  
that Banks wasn't in  
the room. Ray had put  
a CD on and he and  
Annie were chatting  
away about his new-  
found home,  
oblivious.

Gerry put her empty glass down on the little table beside her and managed to drag herself up. Nobody noticed her as she headed out of the room.

She found Banks in the conservatory, just standing there, looking out of the window at the rain. She could see his

reflection distorted in  
the dark glass, and

she thought his  
expression was  
incredibly sad. He  
didn't even notice she  
was there until she  
spoke.

'Sir?'

Banks turned. Gerry  
thought he still  
seemed sad, then his  
expression

brightened. 'By all rights, I should give you a serious bollocking for disobeying my orders,' he said, walking towards her. 'Maybe put you on report. But you and I both know that would only be for form's sake, and neither of us is that kind of copper. Well done, DC Masterson. You saved a life tonight,



young lady. I'm only glad you're safe. Don't pull anything like that again. Are you sure you're all right?'

Gerry felt herself blush. 'I'm fine,' she said. 'That's David Bowie singing, isn't it?'

'Indeed it is,' said Banks. ' "Blackstar" . Do you know it?'

Gerry shook her head. 'Vaguely, perhaps. From the radio. Mostly I just recognise the voice. My dad likes David Bowie. I never really had much time for music.'

'You should make some,' Banks said. 'It helps keep you sane and human in a crazy world, especially after a night like tonight.'

‘Will you come back through, sir? Join the group?’

Banks smiled. ‘All right,’ he said. ‘That’s a nice drawing Ray did of you.’

You should be honoured. He’s a bit of a pain in the arse, but he’s got quite a reputation, you know.’

'I know, sir,' said  
Gerry. 'And I am.'

Banks followed her  
back into the  
entertainment room,  
and Gerry wondered  
why he had been so  
sad, though she knew  
she would never dare  
ask.

Ray clapped his  
hands and said, 'Ah,  
here they are. Drinks  
all round? No more

champers, I'm afraid,  
but there's a nice  
Macallan here waiting  
to be finished. Or  
there's beer in the  
fridge.'

For once, Gerry didn't  
refuse. She wasn't  
driving anywhere  
tonight. 'I'll have a  
large whisky, if that's  
all right.'

She noticed Banks  
raise his eyebrows.

‘Hidden depths,’ he said approvingly, reaching for the bottle and a glass.

Gerry took the drink Banks handed her and peered at the sketch again. It was a simple head and shoulders, the head slightly tilted, but Ray had caught her all right, and it had only taken him a few strokes. After his

previous comment,  
she had checked out  
some Pre-Raphaelite  
paintings and decided  
she didn't resemble  
Jane Morris at all. Or  
Lizzie Siddal.

'We should all watch a  
movie,' Ray said.  
'Something funny.  
Something silly.' He  
pointed towards  
Banks. 'You might not  
believe it, but this  
man has a

complete box set of Carry On films. Which one shall we start with?’

They watched *Carry On Cleo* and laughed themselves silly. Just after Kenneth Williams uttered his immortal line, ‘Infamy, infamy. They’ve all got it in for me’, Gerry put her empty glass down. Much as she was having a good



time drinking whisky  
and watching a daft  
movie with Banks and  
Annie and Ray, she  
found the sounds and  
sights of the world  
were slipping away  
from her for the  
second time tonight,  
and this time she  
welcomed oblivion,  
welcomed it with open  
arms.

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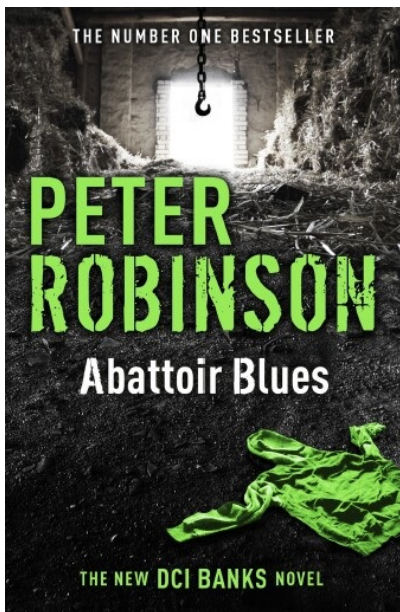
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