

WHEN SOMETHING CRAPPY  
HAPPENS, WHY DOES SOMEONE  
ALWAYS GET ON THE PHONE TO  
POOR OLD DETECTIVE CHIEF  
INSPECTOR HARRY BROADWATER  
AND EXPECT ME TO DROP  
EVERYTHING AND SORT IT OUT. IF  
IT HADN'T BEEN SUSAN ASKING, I'D  
HAVE SAID "PISS OFF."



## Chapter 9

# Safe House

MON. JUNE 2ND. JUST AFTER 11:40AM. FREIBURG STREET IN CENTRAL LONDON. I'M HERE AT THE URGENT REQUEST OF SUSAN CREIGHTON-WARD.

ONE OF HER COLLEAGUES IN MI5 - I MEAN THE SECURITY SERVICE - HAS BEEN MISSING FOR OVER TWO WEEKS.



NOW AN UNKNOWN MALE HAS BEEN FOUND DEAD IN A LITTLE USED SAFE HOUSE SITUATED ABOVE A RESTAURANT HERE. THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE CORPSE MIGHT BE THAT OF HER VANISHED COLLEAGUE, KEVIN PORTER.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE PLODS HAVE ALREADY BEEN CALLED AND THEIR FORENSIC TEAM ARE FUSSING AROUND WHEN I ARRIVE. THE WHOLE PLACE STINKS WITH THE UNMISTAKEABLE STENCH OF DEATH - FLINGOID, OVERRIPE , SHITTY YET SOMEHOW SWEET.


I SEEK OUT THE SENIOR CRIME SCENE OFFICER.



WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU?

NOW, NOW, YOUNG LADY, LET'S NOT RESORT TO FUCKING PROFANITY. THE NAME'S DCI HARRY BROADWATER, COUNTER TERRORISM COMMAND - THAT'S SPECIAL BRANCH, AS WAS.

SPECIAL BRANCH? WHY ARE YOU LOT GETTING MIXED UP IN THIS?



APPARENTLY THIS IS AN MI5  
SAFE HOUSE. THOUGH IT DOESN'T  
LOOK LIKE IT WAS PARTICULARLY  
SAFE FOR THE DECEASED. NOW,  
WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME?

SORRY SIR, DIDN'T MEAN TO BE  
RUDE. DETECTIVE SERGEANT  
GUNDEEP KAUR AT YOUR SERVICE.

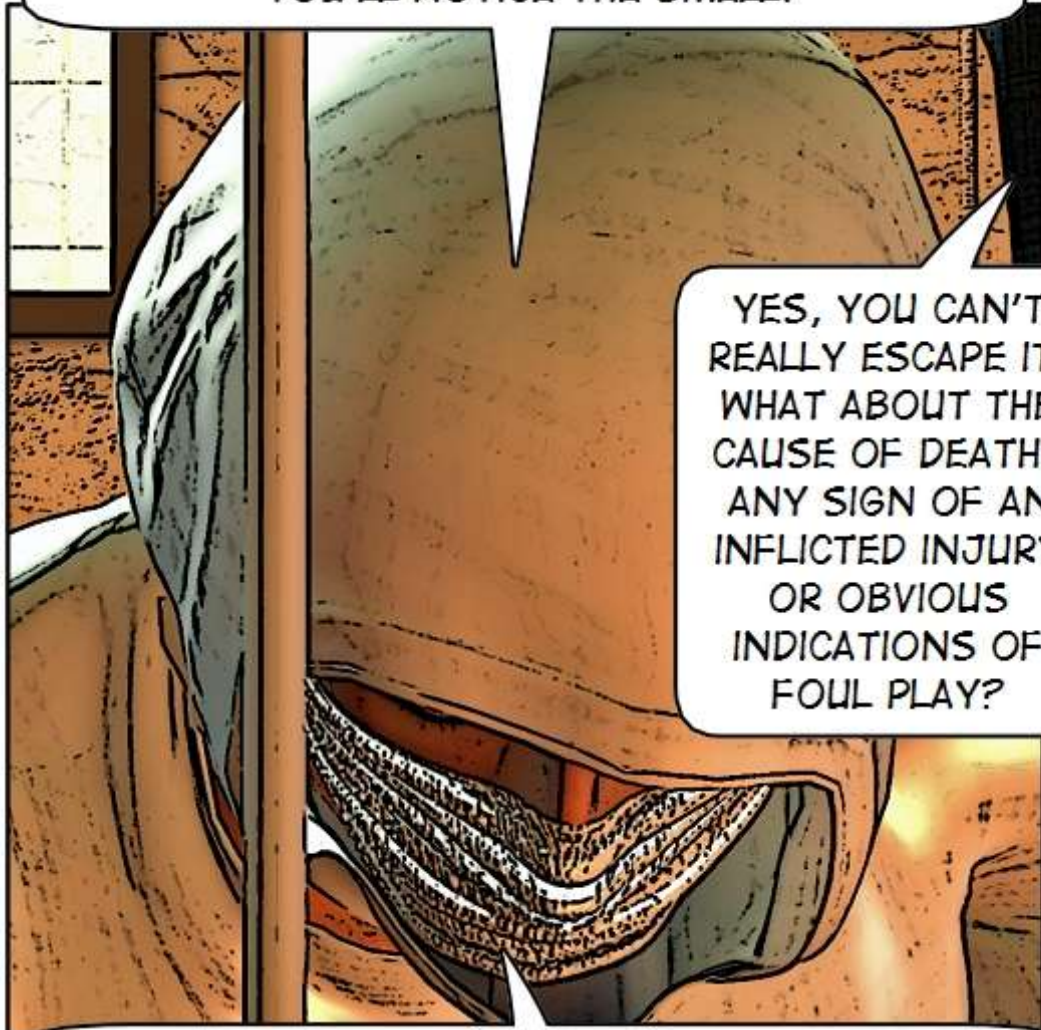
THE BODY WAS DISCOVERED HERE IN THE BATH AFTER THE RESTAURANT DOWNSTAIRS COMPLAINED ABOUT THE SMELL COMING FROM THE PROPERTY. OFFICERS FORCED AN ENTRANCE AND FOUND THE DECEASED IN A LARGE, PARTIALLY OPEN HOLDALL BAG. HE WAS NAKED AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF HIS CLOTHES. OBVIOUSLY A SUSPICIOUS DEATH.

ANYTHING EXTRA YOU CAN TELL US AS THIS STAGE, KEITH?

NOT MUCH, I'M AFRAID.



THE DECEASED WAS A WHITE MALE. PROBABLY IN HIS TWENTIES OR THIRTIES. IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN DEAD FOR SOME WEEKS, SERGEANT KAUR. LOTS OF ADULT FLIES BUZZING AROUND. AND YOU'LL NOTICE THE SMELL.



YES, YOU CAN'T REALLY ESCAPE IT. WHAT ABOUT THE CAUSE OF DEATH? ANY SIGN OF AN INFLICTED INJURY OR OBVIOUS INDICATIONS OF FOUL PLAY?

NOT REALLY. THE BODY'S SWOLLEN AND BLACKENED BUT THAT'S PROBABLY JUST NORMAL PUTREFACTION. THERE'S NO OBVIOUS SIGN OF ANY MAJOR PHYSICAL TRAUMA.

I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE AUTOPSY. I COULDN'T SEE ANY SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE ON THE PREMISES BUT YOU'RE FREE TO LOOK AROUND WHEN THE SCENE OF CRIME TEAM HAVE FINISHED, DCI BROADWATER.



THERE IS ONE ODD THING. SOMEONE HAS TAKEN A CELLPHONE TO BITS AND LEFT IT ON THE DESK IN THE LIVING ROOM ALONG WITH A LAPTOP COMPUTER.



I AGREE, THAT IS A BIT ODD. NOW LISTEN, SERGEANT KAUR, I KNOW THAT TIMES ARE HARD AND HONEST COPPERS HAVE TO MAKE ENDS MEET SOMEHOW BUT I DON'T WANT ANYONE INVOLVED IN THIS INVESTIGATION SELLING INFORMATION TO THE PRESS. IT'S PROBABLY A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY. WE NEED TO KEEP A LID ON IT AT THIS STAGE. DO YOU CATCH MY DRIFT?



OF COURSE, SIR. YOU MIGHT BE TOO LATE THOUGH, I THINK THAT THE MANAGER OF THE RESTAURANT DOWNSTAIRS HAS ALREADY CALLED A TABLOID NEWSDESK.

SHIT. STILL, WE'LL PROBABLY BE OK. THE PRESS WON'T BE INTERESTED IN SOME UNKNOWN BODY FOUND IN AN ANONYMOUS FLAT.

I WAS WRONG. ONCE  
TIPPED OFF, THE PRESS  
STARTED TO TAKE A  
MORBID INTEREST.



THE AUTOPSY  
CONFIRMS THAT THE  
DECEASED, KEVIN  
PORTER, HAD BEEN  
DEAD FOR BETWEEN  
TWO TO THREE WEEKS.  
TRACES OF POTASSIUM  
CHLORIDE AND SOME  
UNKNOWN  
BARBITURATES WERE  
FOUND IN THE BLOOD  
EXTRACTED FROM THE  
BODY CAVITY.

THE POTASSIUM CHLORIDE  
OVERDOSE HAD PROBABLY  
LEAD TO DEATH BY CARDIAC  
ARREST. QUITE A LOT OF  
THE DRUG HAS TO BE  
INJECTED TO KILL  
SOMEONE - HE MUST HAVE  
BEEN IMMOBILISED WHILE  
THEY DID IT.

SO IT SEEMS LIKE  
POOR OLD KEVIN HAD  
BEEN TAKEN  
SOMEWHERE, DRUGGED  
AND THEN KILLED  
BEFORE HIS BODY WAS  
DUMPED IN THE SAFE  
HOUSE. THE MOTIVE  
REMAINS A MYSTERY.

*MIS FEEDS THE PRESS THE LINE THAT KEVIN WAS THE VICTIM OF A PERVERTED BUT CONSENSUAL SEXUAL ENCOUNTER THAT HAD GONE AWRY AND HAD LEAD TO ASPHYXIATION. THAT KIND OF STORY HAS THE EFFECT OF COOLING THE CURIOSITY OF THE DECEASED'S RELATIVES - THEY JUST WANT TO HUSH THE WHOLE THING UP.*



*THE NEWS MEDIA ARE ISSUED WITH NONDESCRIPT ARTIST'S IMPRESSIONS OF A MAN AND WOMAN OF SOUTHERN EUROPEAN OR MIDDLE EASTERN APPEARANCE WHO THE POLICE WANT TO INTERVIEW IN CONNECTION WITH THIS TRAGIC ACCIDENTAL DEATH.*

*THE COUPLE DEPICTED ARE, OF COURSE, COMPLETELY FICTITIOUS.*

TUESDAY JUNE 3RD. 15:30. THAMES HOUSE. I MEET UP WITH SUSAN TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON THE DECEASED.



ARE THOSE THE PERSONAL EFFECTS FROM HIS DESK?

YES, WE BOXED THEM UP FOR YOU. TERRIBLE BUSINESS.

EVERYONE HERE IS REALLY SHOCKED.

I'VE BEEN STUCK WITH ACTING AS LIAISON ON THIS CASE. WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE LATE KEVIN PORTER?




WELL, HE WORKED ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE - HACKING INTO COMPUTERS, INSTALLING MONITORING EQUIPMENT, BUGGING MOBILE PHONES. BASIC BACKGROUND WORK. I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY ANYONE WOULD WANT TO KILL HIM - HE WAS HARDLY A HIGH VALUE TARGET.

HE JOINED US FROM GCHQ IN CHELTENHAM ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO.

I'LL NEED A LIST OF EVERYTHING THAT HE HAS BEEN WORKING ON - AS WELL AS HIS WORK COMPUTER, ACCESS TO HIS EMAIL ARCHIVE AND THE BOX WITH HIS PERSONAL STUFF.



OUR BLOKES ARE SEARCHING HIS HOME AND TALKING TO HIS RELATIVES AT THE MOMENT. HE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE HAD MANY FRIENDS. WHAT DID YOU MAKE OF HIM?



I DIDN'T REALLY KNOW HIM. HE STRUCK ME AS THE NERDY TYPE. LAST TIME THAT I SAW HIM WAS AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY, I THINK. HE GOT DRUNK, CALLED ME HIS "TASHA YAR", DROOLED ALL OVER ME AND THEN THREW UP OVER A POTTED PLANT. POOR KEVIN.

POOR POTTED PLANT, MORE LIKE. WHAT WAS HE WORKING ON WHEN HE DISAPPEARED?

AS I UNDERSTAND IT, HE  
WAS MONITORING THE UK  
TELEPHONE TRAFFIC  
FROM THE ISI, PAKISTAN'S  
INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.



I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT WE'VE BEEN DEPLOYING A  
PIECE OF BUGGING SOFTWARE WHICH CAN SIT INSIDE  
A CELLPHONE AND TRANSMIT NEARBY  
CONVERSATIONS OVER THE NETWORK.



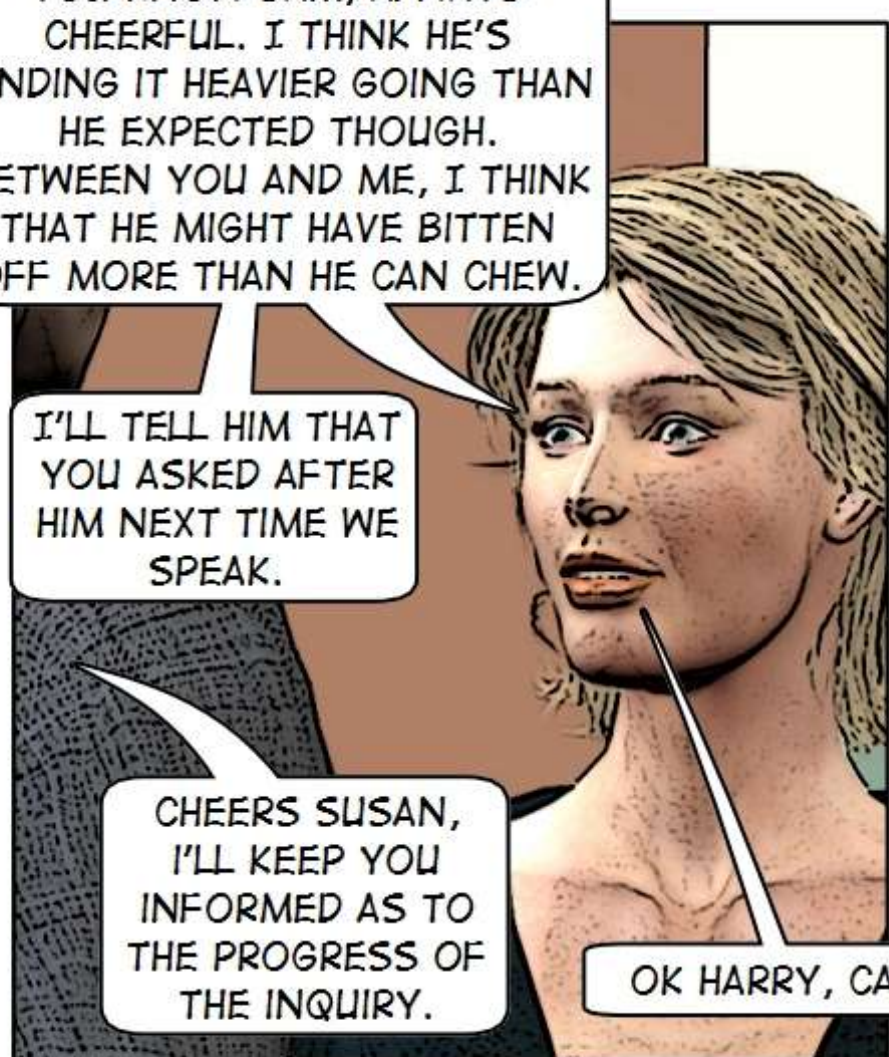
IT WAS PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER CALLED OPERATION ALEXANDER. I CAN'T TELL YOU ANY MORE ABOUT THAT OPERATION BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW MYSELF AND ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT IT IS DISCOURAGED BY THOSE ON HIGH.



SORRY, I REALLY WOULD LIKE TO HELP. IT GETS PERSONAL WHEN A COLLEAGUE IS KILLED.

INTERESTING - A DISMANTLED CELLPHONE WAS FOUND AT THE CRIME SCENE. ALONG WITH A COUPLE OF SIM CARDS AND A LAPTOP. WE'RE CHECKING THEM OUT NOW. THANKS, YOU'VE BEEN HELPFUL. I'LL GET BACK TO YOU WITH ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS.

WORK ASIDE, HOW'S SAM GETTING ON IN THE STATES?.



YOU KNOW SAM, ALWAYS CHEERFUL. I THINK HE'S FINDING IT HEAVIER GOING THAN HE EXPECTED THOUGH. BETWEEN YOU AND ME, I THINK THAT HE MIGHT HAVE BITTEN OFF MORE THAN HE CAN CHEW.

I'LL TELL HIM THAT YOU ASKED AFTER HIM NEXT TIME WE SPEAK.

CHEERS SUSAN, I'LL KEEP YOU INFORMED AS TO THE PROGRESS OF THE INQUIRY.

OK HARRY, CAIO.

*I DUNNO. IT'S ALL AS CLEAR AS MUD AT THE MOMENT. I FEEL LIKE I'M DOING A JIGSAW WITH HALF THE PIECES MISSING. STILL, I'M FAMOUS FOR GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF THINGS - GIVEN SUFFICIENT TIME.*