

COLD LITTLE HAND

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THIS WOULD BE his last job before retirement.

Harper knew the rules. Once you had been undercover twice you started to forget who you were. And you began to leave **traces**. That was dangerous. You were at risk at every moment. He understood, as did his bosses and the criminals, that all crime was connected in some way. There was a network that **stretched over** the world. It knew no **boundaries**. People moved from one part of it to another carrying information and telling stories. Whether you were on the side of good or the side of **evil**, sooner or later, someone would recognize you. It might be your voice, or your eyes, or the way you walked. And once you were recognized, it was over, **one way or another**. So he would do this last job, and at the end of it there would be one final identity for him, that of a free man.

He had been contacted and told where to be at 10 a.m. on the last Monday morning in September. There was no Scotland Yard this time, as in **previous** meetings with Wilson. They were posing as businessmen, renting a room in a new luxury office building. He **rushed in** out of the rain, and signed in at reception. On seeing his name, the security guard directed him to the Blue Room on the twentieth floor. He went up in a glass lift on the outside of the building, watching the world grow smaller beneath his feet. Wilson was waiting for him on a white, leather sofa. It was the only thing in the room that wasn't blue. Outside, the Thames, under a heavy, grey sky, divided the city. Harper walked over to the sofa and shook hands with Wilson.

"How are you... have you been away?"

"I took your advice. Asia and then South America."

"Not my idea of fun, but it looks like **it's done you good**."

Wilson was not a man for small talk unless it was part of the game. Harper knew it, and he knew that their safety depended on saying only what was necessary. They **got down to business**.

"What are we dealing with this time?"

"Well, this one is a complicated one. We're working **on behalf of** INTERPOL. We've been working on it for quite some time. But now we can smell a **breakthrough**. Which is where you come in..."

By now, Harper knew the business. They accessed people's telephones and electronic communications, broke into their homes, and **tracked** their cars. They **fished around** for informers. Then, when the time was right, someone slipped undercover into their world.

trace – ślad

stretch over –

rozciągać się

boundary –

granica, limit

evil – zło

one way or

another – w

ten lub inny

sposób

previous –

poprzedni,

wcześniejszy

rush in – wbie-

gać/wpadać w

pośpiechu

sth does sb

good – coś

komuś dobrze

robi

get down to

business –

przechodzić do

sedna sprawy

on behalf of –

w imieniu

breakthrough

– przełom

track – śledzić,

namierzać

fish around –

rozglądać się za

czymś, polować

na coś

“We need someone with experience. Someone we know. You’re perfect for the job. And it’s unlikely that you would ever have crossed the paths of those involved. They’re Balkan. They came onto our radar not long after the War ended in Yugoslavia and have been building up their business since. It’s a dangerous business they’re involved in. But they’ve established themselves. And now they’re too big to ignore.”

“What’s the business then?”

“Books.”

Harper raised his eyebrows. “Books?”

“Oh, you’d be surprised. There’s no difference between books and any other **commodity**. The basic rules of economics apply – **supply** and **demand**. If supply is limited and demand high, prices are high. In this case, very high.”

“So these people are book thieves?”

“Others do the stealing. I would rather call them dealers. With your help, we can close them down. There are plenty of criminals involved in this business, Harper, but few who have as much blood on their hands as these men.”

“And who am I?”

“Jonathan Harper. A writer. We’ll give you a month or two to **work things out** and then you’ll **fit** quite easily **into** the world. You’ll be doing some research for a book. That’ll require you to travel around visiting bookshops. That’s the basic idea. I have two pendrives here. Everything that you need to know is on them. We’ll have phones and computer equipment delivered. There’s a flat waiting for you.”

“I remember the first undercover operation. All those documents and papers. And now you give me two pendrives.”

“They call it progress. I’ll be in touch when it is necessary. Don’t contact us.”

They **said farewell** and Harper left. In the lift he looked out across London. From up there, the horizon formed a great circle, **enclosing** the labyrinth of the great city. You couldn’t see all of the criminal activity that was taking place in that **maze** of streets below, but it was there. And it always would be, whatever they did. If you stopped one criminal, another would appear immediately. He pressed the button for the ground floor and the street approached **rapidly**. 🏠

commodity

– towar

supply – podaż**demand**

– popyt

work things**out** – rozpracować, rozgryźć, rozwiązać coś**fit in(to)** –

pasować, dopasować (się)

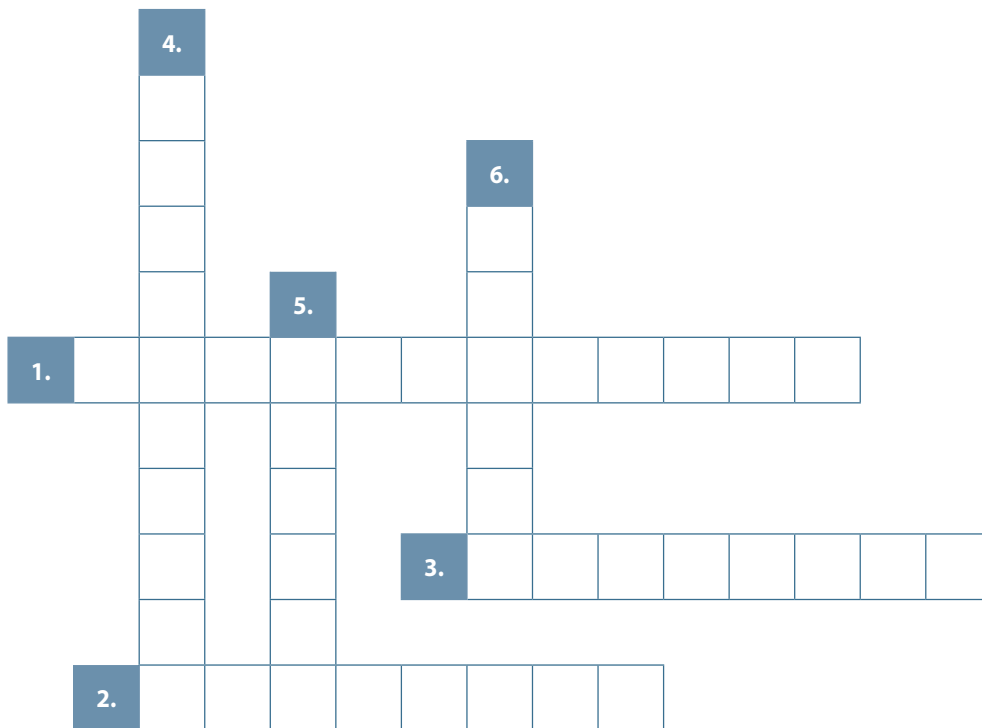
say farewell

– pożegnać się

enclose – ogra-
dzać, okrążyć**maze** – labirynt**rapidly** –

szybko

3. Complete the crossword with words from the story.



across

1. an important development or discovery, e.g. in an investigation
2. to investigate
3. goodbye

down

4. done in secret
5. to approach or to gain entry to
6. to do smth in sb's name – on of

4. Match the phrasal verbs with their synonyms.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. work sth out | a. burgle |
| 2. fish around | b. approach |
| 3. break into | c. ascend, rise |
| 4. go up | d. explore, search |
| 5. walk over | e. solve |

4. Read the definitions and complete the verbs.

1. to continue to have an impact s n t
2. to cause food to move to your stomach l l w
3. to move quietly to avoid being noticed e e
4. to make sb believe sth by convincing them p s
5. to turn silent, to shut up h
6. to walk around in no particular direction, to roam w d
7. to ask oneself w d
8. to scream in a piercing tone r i

5. Search out words from the previous chapters.

COMMODITY ROAM BIRTH MARK DOZEN SWITCH DAWN VOLU MEDISEASE

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | 8. |

reunite – połączyć / spotkać się ponownie
revenge – zemsta
rib – żebro
ripple – fala, marszczenie
roam free – tu: być na wolności, bez nadzoru
roar – ryczeć; huk, ryk
roll up – podwijać
rolling – pofalowany (teren)
roots – korzenie, pochodzenie
run finger across – przesuwać palcem po / wzdłuż
run for cover – uciekać, szukać schronienia
running along – biegnący wzdłuż
rush in – wbiegać / wpadać w pośpiechu
rusting – zardzewiały, rdzewiejący

S

saintly – święty, cnotliwy
sb be better off... – lepiej dla kogoś...
sb's cup of tea – czyjaś bajka (*przen.*)
scare the life out of sb – wystraszyć kogoś na śmierć
scented – o zapachu..., pachnący
scholar – naukowiec, uczony, akademik
scratch – drapać; zadrapanie
scratching – drapanie, skrobanie
sea bed – dno morza
seafront – wybrzeże morskie
search engine – przeglądarka
section – przedział
see the light – ujrzeć światło (*przen.*), pojąć, zrozumieć
sell at a profit – sprzedać z zyskiem
send sb out – wysyłać
send word – powiadamiać, informować
sense – czuć, wyczuwać
serve with distinction – być odznaczonym za służbę
set foot somewhere – postawić stopę, wejść gdzieś
set off – wyruszać
set sail – wyruszać z portu (o żaglowcu), stawiać żagle

sewers – ścieki
shift – zmieniać; zmiana (w pracy)
shipment – ładunek
shiver – drzeć; drzenie
shore – brzeg
show sb around – oprowadzać kogoś
shriek – wrzeszczeć; wrzask
side business – interes na boku, dodatkowy interes
sing – wyśpiewać (tajemnicę), puścić farbę
sketch – szkicować; szkic
slam – uderzać, walić; uderzenie
sleep soundly – twardo spać
slide – przesuwać; zjeżdżalnia
smuggler – przemytnik
snippet – fragment, kawałek
so far – jak dotąd, póki co
soaking wet – przemoczony do suchej nitki
softly – cicho
sophisticated – wyrafinowany
speechless – oniemiały
spell (danger / trouble) – zwiastować
spine of a book – grzbiet książki
spread – rozprowadzać, roznosić (chorobę)
squawk – skrzeczeć; skrzeczenie
squeaking – piszczenie
stack – układać jedno na drugim
stage – etap; scena
steadily – miarowo, równomiernie
stillness – bezruch, spokój, cisza
sting – piec, szczypać; żądlić
stitch – szew (*med.*); zszywać
stop to think – zastanowić się (*emfatycznie*)
store – przechowywać, magazynować; sklep
storey – piętro
stretch over – rozciągać się
strikingly – uderzająco
string vest – siatkowy podkoszulek
stroll – spacerować; spacer, przechadzka
study – przyglądać się, obserwować, badać; gabinet