

T **TURNPIKE LANE**
Security Novels Series Episode XIX
John M Upton



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The Episodes of the Security Novels Series:

Episode I - Hainault	Episode XII – Marylebone
Episode II - Holborn	Episode XIII – Haychester
Episode III – Waterloo	Episode XIV – Bank
Episode IV - Moor Park	Episode XV – Leytonstone
Episode V – Westminster	Episode XVI – London Bridge
Episode VI – Victoria	Episode XVII – Cannon Street
Episode VII – Embankment	Episode XVIII – Bethnal Green
Episode VIII – Earl’s Court	Episode XIX – Turnpike Lane
Episode IX – Lewisham	Episode XX – Star Lane
Episode X – Epping	Episode XXI – St. James’s Park
Episode XI – Liverpool Street	Episode XXII - Aldwych

Coming Soon:

Episode XXIII – Nine Elms
Episode XXIII – Priory Park
Episode XXIV – Tottenham Court Road

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Turnpike Lane



Shock grows over PM resignation

The unprecedented political turmoil in Westminster continues this morning in the wake of the sudden resignation of the Prime Minister Sir Hugo Davidson yesterday.

Despite the growing demand for answers, Downing Street has consistently refused to comment further other than confirm that the Home Secretary Jayne Grey will be sworn in later this morning at Buckingham Palace.



Mystery surrounds Bethnal Green vehicle collision

Specialist accident investigation officers are still examining the scene of a collision between a car and an articulated lorry in Bethnal Green yesterday afternoon amid concerns that it may have been a deliberate hit.

Amateur footage released onto social media in the immediate aftermath of the collision seems to show a number of unidentified individuals including someone believed to be the driver of the lorry, fleeing the scene.

The scene of the collision was quickly sealed off by armed Police & Security Service officers and it is believed that at least two persons travelling in the car involved were cut out of the wreckage by fire officers before being taken by helicopter to the secure unit at Charing Cross Hospital.

A spokesperson for the National Police & Security Service at New Scotland Yard earlier today refused to confirm the identity of any of the individuals involved however rumours spreading across Twitter and other social media feeds seems to indicate that the National Administrator General, Divisional Chief Commander Edward Regent may have been the 'senior officer' who was involved along with his official driver.

London
**Evening
Standard**



Armed raid on Surrey industrial building baffles authorities

National Police & Security Service 'Flying Squad' officers along with insurance assessors are still conducting investigations and examining the damage following a daring armed raid overnight on a high security industrial unit near Guildford during which it is believed a significant amount of valuable bullion and other materials were taken, total amounts involved believed to be in excess of fifteen million pounds.

It is known that two security guards on site at the time of the raid yesterday evening were injured and are currently undergoing hospital treatment at an undisclosed location under armed guard.

Reports of another raid somewhere in the western end of the county has been denied by local Security Service sources despite reports of gunfire being heard by locals in the area not long after the first raid was reported.

BBC
SOUTH TODAY



Fire devastates historic manor house near Haychester

Fire fighters are still damping down at the scene of a fire that has destroyed the historic nineteenth century Walcott Manor approximately fifteen miles north east of Haychester.

The fire is believed to have started at approximately eleven o'clock last night and quickly spread throughout the building engulfing most of the structure by the time the first Fire Service units from Haychester arrived on the scene just before midnight.

Reports that at least one body has been recovered from the burning building remain unconfirmed at this time.



New Prime Minister visits Buckingham Palace to meet The Queen

"In the last few minutes, the Prime Minister Elect, Jane Grey has arrived at Buckingham Palace in the culmination of a remarkable twenty four hours in British

politics that has seen her immediate predecessor Sir Hugo Davidson resign suddenly and without warning and seen Grey at the age of just thirty one become one of the youngest Prime Minister's in recent times.

"In Buckingham Palace, Ms Grey will meet the Queen where she will take the oath of allegiance, receive the seals of office and be invited to form a Government..."

"All that remains Ms Grey is to sign here and here" Craig Templeton, the Lord Privy Seal, the man responsible for the management of the office of the Prime Minister confirmed as he indicated the two places on the velum document where a signature was required from her.

Grey paused for a moment in thought as she took in just how momentous and life changing this was for her before placing the pen to the document and proceeding to sign in the two locations indicated whereupon she then carefully placed the pen down again.

"And that is all there is too it" Templeton then formally confirmed as he gathered up the documentation "Congratulations Ms Grey, you are now officially the duly sworn in Prime Minister for Great Britain & Northern Ireland."

"Oh my God..." Grey responded as the full gravity of the situation became more real to her before getting up.

"The seals of office and your briefing papers" an aide then confirmed as he passed across a red dispatch box case, the embossed gold leaf of the portcullis design which forms the parliamentary coat of arms plus the 'PRIME MINISTER' lettering glinting on the lid.

"Thank you" Grey responded as she took the case in her hand and looked down at it with a little trepidation.

"Also from now on you will be accompanied by this" Templeton indicated the plain clothes military officer stood back from them holding a metal briefcase which was

discreetly handcuffed to his right wrist "the codes for the UK's nuclear weapons arsenal" he then explained.

"Right, thanks" Grey looked on with a slightly quizzical look before bowing to her regal host and then turning smartly on her heels.

The doors from the room were opened and as she stepped through them she was met by her official Prime Ministerial Secretary James Fortescue who immediately took her dispatch box case for her.

They were also joined in the corridor by four fully uniformed and armed officers from the VIP Protection Division of the National Police & Security Service, led by their Divisional Commanding Officer, Jennifer Caverner who took the lead as they headed along the ornate and brightly lit corridor towards the exit.

For those watching the events live both on television and via online broadcasts, they saw from overhead the BBC News helicopter live camera feed as it caught the moment when the newly sworn in Prime Minister who at the age of thirty one was now one of the youngest holders of the office in many years, emerged from the main entrance of Buckingham Palace out into the inner courtyard where a number of official vehicles and marked escort patrol cars were waiting to receive her and her entourage.

Jennifer quickly went around to the side of her ministerial escort car and opened the back to allow Grey to get in before returning to the driver's seat and starting the powerful engine. The others including a team of plain clothes specialist close protection officers followed by getting into their own vehicles and within moments the convoy was ready to depart.

As the convoy prepared to set off, Divisional Commander Tracy Caverner emerged from within the Palace and stood in the opening of the main doorway at the top of the carved stone steps, dressed in her full ceremonial uniform but with her epaulette numerals now reading 'A1' indicating she was now the Administrator General of the Service in the apparent absence of her husband.

Looking down the steps towards the vehicles, she had been watching Grey carefully to see if there was any visual clue as to how she was coping with this sudden burden of power and responsibility that had been so unexpectedly thrust upon her in the preceding twenty four hours.

As Tracy was watching she became aware of someone coming up to and then standing alongside her, also looking down at the convoy of vehicles as they were about to depart.

"Commander Caverner" a very regal female voice called "Would you kindly inform your husband that this had better work otherwise I shall personally lock him in the Tower and throw away the key."

"Yes your Majesty" Tracy formally agreed before they both exchanged a knowing smile whereupon she then moved off.

"All right everyone, let's go" Jennifer called into her radio and at that moment the drivers of the various vehicles making up the convoy started their engines and amid sirens and blue lights, they moved off through the archway and out towards the main gates.

Motorcycle escorts were already ready and waiting at the gates holding back the traffic and the crowds of curious onlookers which allowed the convoy to sweep majestically and swiftly out through the main gates of Buckingham Palace, around the Victoria Monument and on down Birdcage Walk that runs down the southern side of St James's Park.

Further marked National Police & Security Service motorcycles and officers were waiting at strategic points throughout the area to ensure that all traffic was cleared out of the way and the convoy of vehicles had an unimpeded journey as they then proceeded at speed to swing left into Horse Guards Parade and then right, through the wrought iron security gates that guarded the rear entrance into Downing Street.

The convoy paused outside the famous black door of Number Ten for a few moments as two further individuals, the Chief of Defence, Colonel William Stephens and his aide got in one of the accompanying escort vehicles before they quickly moved off again, heading on towards the main exit of Downing Street which leads onto the busy Whitehall.

Once again further National Police & Security Service officers were on hand to see that the convoy had an unimpeded journey straight out of Downing Street, turning right into Whitehall and heading towards Parliament Square.

There was a little snarl up as they reached a point on Whitehall where the road was restricted in width as the badly damaged building on the south side which had suffered significant fire damage to its structure a little over thirty six hours earlier was cordoned off with Fire Service Investigation vehicles parked outside.

It was not long however before the convoy was approaching Parliament Square where further National Police & Security Service vehicles were holding the traffic back and a further convoy of vehicles was waiting to join the main parade as they passed.

"I guess we are getting the mystery tour then?" Grey asked as she looked out of the window to see Westminster Underground Station, situated beneath Portcullis House pass by on the left hand side and the Houses of Parliament along with Big Ben pass on the right before they headed over Westminster Bridge.

"Don't worry Prime Minister" Jennifer confirmed confidently as she expertly drove the car at significant speed across the bridge towards the south side of the River Thames "Everything is in hand" she reassured her passengers.

Whilst the National Police & Security Service were the main law enforcement agency in the United Kingdom alongside the secret security services such as MI5, MI6 and

other less well know and more secretive organisations, the job of keeping the checks and balances in place had for over twenty years fallen to the Security Ombudsman's Office based in a non-descript office building in Bressenden Place, a short distance from London's Victoria Station in the south west end of central London.

It was not a large organisation by any stretch of the imagination, just a small team of approximately a dozen investigative officers under the auspices of a small board of overseers which in turn was headed by the Ombudsman General Darren Glock.

The sudden departure of the Prime Minister the previous day had led to an increase in the workload for the Security Ombudsman Office that morning as the team attempted to analyse the potential implications that this sudden upheaval in the political structure of the country would have on the nation's security and police services.

"All right" Glock called as he walked around the modest central office where most of his team were sat at their desks "Who is still unaccounted for in this mess?" he asked.

"The Commander seems to have gone AWOL" one of the Ombudsman Officers confirmed "his car crashed yesterday and he hasn't been seen or heard from since, there are even rumours circulating that he may be dead."

"The Commander, dead?" Glock scoffed at the merest suggestion "Yeah right."

"Something weird is going on though" another Ombudsman Officer remarked "Apparently MI5's political section have been trying to track down Sir Hugo Davidson without success, he apparently handed in the seals of office into Buckingham Palace yesterday afternoon not twenty minutes after his resignation announcement and was then driven away and he hasn't been seen or heard of since."

"Something stinks and I don't mean this coffee" Glock remarked as he looked down with disdain at the small plastic cup of coffee in his hand "We really have to get some decent coffee machines installed."

"There is something else weird too" the first Ombudsman Officer commented "Someone is feeding false or inaccurate location data into the system for a number of high ranking officers and even I think the new Prime Minister as well."

"Let's keep that between ourselves I think" Glock cautiously advised "Knowing the Commander like I do, he is probably up to something sneaky as usual."

"There goes any chance of an early finish today then" another Ombudsman Officer jokingly remarked which prompted laughter in the office.

"What the hell...?" Glock then exclaimed as he and the others turned to look towards the office door from where they could hear a commotion and raised voices seemingly arguing in the corridor just a short distance away.

"It sounds like we have visitors Sir" one of the officers remarked.

"It does indeed" Glock agreed as the sounds of commotion approached closer and he

decided to go and investigate.

Exiting the office into the corridor, Glock was shocked to find four armed men dressed in some sort of security guard like uniform he did not recognise, restraining two of his own personnel on the floor where they were being secured with cable ties amidst ongoing protests.

"What the hell is going on?" Glock demanded to know upon coming across the scene.

"Ombudsman General Glock?" one of the men formally asked as he stepped forward.

"Yes" Glock tersely replied "Who the hell are you?" he demanded to know.

"Integrity Enforcement Coordinator Stephen Noble" he formally introduced himself "under section one one three of the Emergency Security Powers Act I have the authority to seize these premises, the Ombudsman Service operations and all contained within" he then informed Glock, handing him the official paperwork for his inspection.

"And from which particular bunch of clowns do you and your associates come?" Glock asked as he donned his reading glasses and proceeded to study the extensive and detailed legal documentation that he had just been presented with.

"We are the enforcement service of the newly appointed Independent Security Oversight Committee headed by the Lord Chief Justice" Noble confirmed "We are taking over and there is nothing you can do to stop us."

"Wanna bet?" Glock responded with a glare "So under this new world order your paymasters are in the process of creating" he then inquired "what happens to my officers and agency?"

"It's quite simple" Noble confirmed "We are taking over and you, you just go away" he confirmed.

"Really?" Glock dismissed his opponent's words.

"Your co-operation will be appreciated" Noble then declared with a sinister smirk as behind him his integrity enforcement officers drew their weapons and pointed them ahead.

"I will fight this all the way to the top if I have to" Glock warned as he realised he had no way to fight this here and now and so indicated to his personnel who had joined him in the corridor to prepare to leave.

"File whatever protests you wish" Noble responded dismissively "It won't get you anywhere" he confirmed as he indicated to his officers to release the two captives on the floor whereupon they joined Glock and the rest of their colleagues.

"All right" Glock then declared "We will leave but be warned that you may have won this round but you have most definitely not won the war."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, whatever..." Noble casually dismissed Glock's remarks as he and his officers stood aside to allow them to leave in an orderly manner.

He watched the group disappear from sight before taking out a mobile phone with which he proceeded to make a call.

"Pyramid Control, this is Number Fourteen" Noble confirmed "existing tenants evicted, we have the keys and the kettle is on. Send the boys in."

"Just what the hell was that all about Sir?" one of the officers asked as they followed Glock down the stairs to the ground level exit from the building.

"Search me Steve" Glock was forced to admit "I think we just got gazumped in some form of aggressive takeover" he admitted.

"So what are we going to do?" another of the officers asked as they exited from the fire escape out into the street where they could see in the distance further armed Integrity Enforcement Officers entering the building by the main entrance in significant numbers.

"Regroup, preferably in the company of a stiff drink" Glock confirmed "Anyone know of a decent pub around here with free Wi-Fi and good mobile phone signal? We have work to do and I have calls to make."

Twenty five miles outside of Central London there exists Greenford Hills, a large conference centre based around a former country hotel complex set in hundreds of acres of green fields and woodlands on the edge of the huge Epping Forest.

The route to the conference centre itself is a scenic winding detour along a three mile long gravel driveway from the main London road through the meticulously maintained grounds up to the main entrance of the imposing nineteenth century facade of the complex.

It was along this driveway that a single vehicle was travelling, an old but beautifully restored mid 1970's MkIII Ford Cortina saloon car, being driven carefully upon the fine gravel surface, it's metallic green finish reflecting the bright sunlight and the polished wheels throwing up just a little cloud of dust in its wake as it made its way towards the main building.

The car was brought neatly to a halt immediately in front of the imposing main frontage whereupon from the driver's seat emerged young Jack, Tracy and the Commander's adopted son.

"So do I pass?" Jack asked as he tossed the keys across to the Commander who had just got out of the front passenger seat whereupon he caught them in his hand.

"Trust me" the Commander confirmed with a smile as he took out a walking stick and used it to support himself as he walked around the front of the car to the drivers side, a noticeable limp on his left side "If you can drive this old girl, you can drive anything."

"Looks like I may be out of a job" the Commander's official driver, Lieutenant Commander Terry Kinderley called from nearby where he was polishing the bonnet and front lights of the Commander's official car.

"Don't worry Terry" the Commander reassured him "our young friend here may be showing signs of being a good driver but he still has a little while to go before he reaches your standard."

"Not least the small obstacle that I need to wait just under two years before I can actually apply for my licence" Jack remarked "Until then I am stuck with practicing on private land off road."

"I do need to ask you something important" the Commander then remarked as he and Jack leant back against the front nearside wing of the Cortina "I need to know if you are serious about joining the family business?"

"Yes" Jack confirmed with absolute assurance "Yes I am."

"Can you start today?" the Commander then asked which understandably took Jack somewhat by surprise.

"Wouldn't that make me the youngest cadet in the history of the service?" Jack asked, "I am only fifteen after all."

"Second youngest" the Commander confirmed with a knowing smile "I started at fourteen years and eleven months."

"I should have guessed" Jack remarked.

"Sir!" Commander Simon Fuller was then heard to call causing Jack and the Commander to look around back towards the main entrance to see Fuller waving at them to attract their attention "They're coming!" he then called before pointing down the driveway.

"Here we go" Jack remarked as in the distance they could see a large number of vehicles, many of them marked Security Service cars and motorbikes, approaching up the long driveway.

The first to arrive was a single marked motorcycle which came to a stop alongside them whereupon the rider removed their helmet to reveal it to be Tracy.

"Hi love" Tracy called "I hope you have the kettle on as we are about to receive a lot of guests."

"I've even laid on some decent biscuits my love" the Commander confirmed with a

smile.

Moments later the official looking vehicles began to arrive along with their Security Service escorts and as soon as they had come to an ordered halt on the neatly maintained gravel forecourt, various individuals from the spheres of politics, security and policing emerged and began to make their way towards Tracy, Jack and the Commander.

"And so it begins...." Jack philosophically remarked.

"Ah, Commander" Dave Collins, the head of operations for the national intelligence and security service better known as MI5 remarked as he was the first to reach them "I should have guessed this was one of your little shin digs"

"Well this is a surprise" Edward Hoskins, the Head of Interpol, Northern Europe Region commented as he too joined the group "There are rumours running around the international intelligence grapevine that you are dead."

"Yeah, I get that a lot" the Commander wryly admitted.

"No kidding" Collins agreed "You've been declared dead at least twice that I know of over the years."

"Three I think" Tracy interjected.

"You are even a trending hash tag on Twitter" Hoskins remarked.

"Sounds wonderful" the Commander responded with a slightly bemused look "and I don't even have a clue what it means!"

"Here comes the Prime Minister" Jack remarked as he nodded towards another official car with its attendant escort of Security Service vehicles as it arrived.

They all watched on as Jennifer Caverner emerged from the driver's seat and went around to the other side to open the rear passenger door, allowing Grey to step out onto the gravel surface whilst her secretary Fortescue emerged from the other side carrying the official red dispatch box.

"Good afternoon Commander, gentlemen, Commander Caverner" Grey greeted the gathering who were waiting at the bottom of the steps observing her arrival.

"Good afternoon Prime Minister" the Commander responded with a polite small bow of respect.

"I very much doubt I will ever get used to being called that" Grey frankly admitted.

"So, the gang's all here?" Tracy asked as she looked around at the dozen or so representatives of the various Security agencies and their sub divisions gathered around them.

"Not quite" the Commander confirmed as the sound of a helicopter approaching began to reverberate through the air before it appeared, soaring over them from behind the building before swinging around in a wide circle and then coming into land on the grass ahead of them.

"Only one person I know makes an entrance to one of these little get togethers like that" Collins remarked as they watched the helicopter touch down whereupon the side doors opened and out stepped the familiar figure of Sir Richard Crowthorne who immediately looked across at the gathering, smiled and then proceeded to walk towards them, joined from the helicopter by his Section Fourteen head of operations Amber McWilliam who was also acting as his armed bodyguard, keeping him under a close guard as per the strict instructions she had received the previous evening.

"Well, well, well" Sir Richard remarked "I do love surprises" he commented "So to what do I owe the pleasure of being dragged away from my well earned rest and recuperation?" he asked.

"We need you old friend" the Commander confirmed "Come inside everyone, we have a lot to talk about."

With that declaration the gathered men and women led by Tracy and the Commander made their way up the carved stone steps and in through the main entrance.

As they disappeared from view, Jack turned to Kinderley, the two of them having watched the arrival of the various individuals from over by their respective parked cars.

"What do you think Terry?" Jack asked.

"I think we are going to be somewhat busy over the next few days" Kinderley confirmed "very busy indeed."

Dominating the London skyline for a few years now has been the tall angular glass structure that is The Shard, one of the most imposing and tallest office buildings in Europe, positioned immediately adjacent to and towering over London Bridge Station on the south side of the River Thames.

That morning, up on the twenty fifth and twenty sixth storeys of the buildings seventy two floors some new tenants were moving in.

"Behold ladies and gentlemen, our new home" Dawson declared as he led a group of people from the lift landing through the large sliding glass doors and into the reception area where they all gathered around the desk.

"Seems strange to see our logo emblazoned so publicly after all these years" Noble remarked as they all looked down at the Pyramid Association symbol in the marble floor below their feet.

"We are now the dominant controlling force in politics, justice and security" Dawson reminded them "we have stripped off our cloak of anonymity and are now stepping into the light."

There were cheers and applause from the others at Dawson's declaration which he let die down before holding up his hand to obtain silence.

"Now however ladies and gentlemen we have a lot of work to do" Dawson then declared "We have at most five hours to get the security services of various hues locked down and under our control."

"The Ombudsman's Office is at our disposal" Noble confirmed "All I need is the appropriate authorisation and I can start moving our people into play."

"Mr Noble, the word is given" Dawson confirmed "Stay in touch" he then advised.

"Sir" Noble confirmed with a formal nod of the head before turning smartly on his heels and departing.

"Right then" Dawson excitedly exclaimed as he rubbed his hands together "Let's get on with it shall we?" he called as he led the main committee members off towards the board room whilst the others dispersed to their allocated offices.

The board room was very modern, all glass lined, glossy and sleek with a stupendous view through the panoramic windows that dominated two sides of the room, looking out across the city of London towards the centre with many of the key landmarks such as St Paul's Cathedral and the Telecom Tower clearly visible against the background of the suburbs beyond visible for many miles into the distance.

"Nice view" Hansell remarked as he joined the others being the last to enter the room with his typical swagger clearly signifying that he was never really a conformist in his leather jacket, t-shirt and jeans contrasting with everyone else's smart formal business attire.

"Should be, it's cost us enough" Dawson confirmed as he took the seat at the head of the table and gestured to the others to take their seats which saw Hansell take the seat at the opposite end of the table.

"So where do we stand?" one of the members of the committee asked.

"Right now we have control of the Ombudsman's Service which in turn will give us control of both the National Police & Security Service and the secret security agencies within the hour" Dawson confirmed "Certain individuals will be reallocated from their current posts allowing us to bring people more sympathetic to our cause into position."

"I have three teams on standby at your disposal for the round up and disposal phase" Hansell confirmed "plus of course our Special Operations Team who should be ready to go tonight."

"Excellent" Dawson responded "You may be a scruffy looking individual Mr Hansell but you more than make up for it in your usefulness."

"Thank you..." Hansell replied slightly quizzically "I think..."

"The material is secure?" another of the committee asked.

"We have it locked away somewhere very safe and secure" Hansell confirmed "I can have it delivered wherever you want and deployed with thirty minutes notice."

"What about the principal's?" the first committee member then asked "I mean, has anyone seen the Commander since yesterday afternoon for example?"

"He's dead" Dawson confirmed "or at least very seriously injured thanks to the efforts of our friend here" he nodded towards Hansell who merely smiled in response "My educated guess based on the chatter we are picking up is that he is being held in a high security medical facility somewhere whilst they work out some way of explaining away his untimely demise."

"Do they know about our little pigeon in Downing Street?" another committee member asked.

"Blissfully unaware" Dawson confirmed with a gleeful smile "but just in case I have taken the precaution of putting one of our less obvious associates into Downing Street who can be called upon to take action if I deem it necessary."

"The Prime Minister left Buckingham Palace about twenty minutes ago" another committee member confirmed as she checked her tablet computer which was providing live updates from their intelligence gathering and monitoring centre located one floor above them "She is on her way to the Houses of Parliament now for a meeting with the Chief Cabinet Secretary."

"Let's keep the Prime Minister at arms length for now" Dawson advised "We will just call upon her services if we need her authorisation for anything" he confirmed.

"So when do we get to the fun part?" one of the other committee members asked anxiously.

"All in good time" Dawson replied with a note of advisory caution "Firstly we need to put our patsy's into place."

"Well, well, well" Sir Richard remarked as he walked into the meeting room and saw at the far end of the huge table that dominated it, the elderly yet statesman like figure of Lord Hainault "if it isn't the ghost of Christmas past!" he jokingly declared.

"And the very best seasons greetings to you too my old friend" Lord Hainault responded as with some obvious difficulty he rose to his feet.

"Have a seat everybody" the Commander gestured around the huge table as he and Tracy led the others in.

There was a general hubbub as the various men and women fanned out around the huge table and found their seats whilst Tracy and the Commander went straight to the front of the room.

"All right everyone" the Commander declared "now that everyone is settled and, at least I hope the kettle is on, lets get acquainted shall we?"

"Most of you will be familiar to one another as fellow and even on occasions competing sectors of various Justice, Security and Intelligence agencies both domestic and foreign" Tracy began "there are a couple of new faces we do need to introduce however so when I call you, just stand up and say hello."

There were some glances cast around the room at that moment before Tracy continued.

"First of all may I call upon Alan Harding" she then declared.

"Good afternoon everybody" Harding announced as he rose from his seat and looked all around the room "Divisional Commander Alan Harding, head of the National Police and Security Service Anti-Terrorism Branch based at New Scotland Yard."

There were nods and verbal welcomes from around the room which helped put Harding at ease as he returned to his seat.

"Commander Barwell" Tracy then called "Introduce yourself please."

"Oh, err hello" Barwell duly responded as he duly stood up "I'm Section Commander Andy Barwell and when I am not having meetings like this in the presence of such distinguished company then you will usually find me in charge of the Flying Squad at New Scotland Yard."

"Next is one of our best" Tracy then went over to Simon Fuller sat at the opposite end of the table, the usual open and active laptop computer in front of him.

"Commander Simon Fuller" she formally introduced him "Our resident Technomage, fluent in all things technological. For those of you who haven't had the pleasure he will almost certainly have rifled through your respective agencies high security data systems on at least one or more occasions in the past."

Tracy relished in the looks on some sat around the table as they thought about the implications of what she had just revealed "and if you do wish to contact the guy who designed your high security systems, he is right here" she then confirmed with a wry smile.

"Always a pleasure to serve" Fuller responded with a smirk.

"Thank you" Tracy replied "Moving on, hopefully most of you will know Sir Richard

Crowthorne here" she announced as she stood behind his seat and momentarily placed her hands on his broad shoulders "at least by reputation if not personally" she then added "to his left is Lieutenant Commander Amber McWilliam who is his number two."

"Along with dogs body, bag man, bodyguard and general all round gopher" McWilliam added with a wry smile.

"Finally" the Commander declared as he took over and Tracy sat down "let me introduce you to our very special guest. Hopefully you have all been paying attention over the last twenty four hours but in case you have been otherwise engaged, let me personally introduce our new Prime Minister, Jayne Grey."

"Hello" the Prime Minister called in response "believe me the last twenty four hours has been as much if not more of a surprise to me than it has possibly been to you!"

"Forgive me for appearing a bit out of the loop so to speak" Sir Richard then asked "but what exactly is going on?"

"For reasons that at this time remain elusive" the Commander went on to explain "the incumbent Prime Minister Sir Hugo Davidson resigned with immediate effect and without any prior warning yesterday afternoon."

"In which case I do believe a little meet and greet with the gentleman in question is in order" Sir Richard commented "I am happy to step in and take care of that if you so wish?" he suggested.

"You know Sir Hugo?" Hewitt asked.

"We share the same tailor" Sir Richard confirmed "amongst other interests."

"You are going to have to find him first" Collins responded "My Political Operations section have been scouring the country looking for him since this all kicked off. He seems to have disappeared."

"Leave it to me" McWilliam responded "If he is alive I'll find him" she determinedly declared before leaving the room, already on her mobile and making a call.

"Very well" the Commander declared "that brings me to our distinguished guest here, Lord Hainault whom I believe wishes to make an announcement?" he ventured.

"Err yes, thank you Commander" Lord Hainault confirmed as with some initial difficulty he rose to his feet.

"As you may be aware ladies and gentlemen" he began, his voice clearly struggling a little due mostly to his old age "I have had the honour and privilege of being Chairman of the Security Oversight Committee in its various forms for the last thirty four years."

Everyone in the room continued to listen intently as he continued.

"As you can probably see for yourselves I am now getting on a bit and I have now decided that the time for me to step down has arrived" he announced to murmurs of shock which he let subside before carrying on.

"My retirement has been further prompted by the events of the last forty eight hours, some details of which no one at this table other than myself are currently fully aware of" Lord Hainault ominously began to disclose.

"As of six o'clock this morning the Joint Security, Justice and Police Committee was formally abolished by the Lord Privy Seal, Craig Templeton" he confirmed.

"What?" the Commander exclaimed, his shock at this announcement being equally shared by the others around the table, many of whom were on the now disbanded committee.

"We've heard nothing about this" Tracy added.

"They sure as hell kept that one quiet" John Hewitt of MI6 added "You would have thought that at least they would tell those of us who were actually on the dam thing!"

"And I don't know anything about this either" Grey added "and I am supposed to be the Prime Minister!"

"So who is watching the watchers then?" Sir Richard asked, already sensing that he was not going to like the answer.

"Oversight and regulatory authority has now been transferred to the Independent Security Ombudsman headed by an Integrity & Security Bureau Committee which features among others, the Lord Privy Seal himself, the new Director of Public Prosecutions Stephen Brent and some independent trouble shooter from the private sector, some guy by the name of Dawson I think" Lord Hainault confirmed to looks of astonishment.

"The Security Ombudsman's Office is effectively abolished and replaced by a new independent Integrity Enforcement Bureau or something like that" Lord Hainault continued "with legal powers of enforcement and arrest of anyone seen to be acting contrary to the national interest as defined by the new committee"

"Well, we're screwed...." Tracy remarked as she tossed her pen onto the table in front of her.

"Clever" the Commander responded "Effectively this Pyramid lot just took over control of the country's entire justice, security and defence operations."

"And without a single shot being fired" Collins agreed "Explains the gagging orders then."

"Oh, you got one of those too did you?" Edward Hoskins of Interpol, Northern European Operations asked "I shoved it back in the hands of the twerp they sent round

to deliver it. No way am I going to let a half baked bunch of civil servants tell me what to do!"

"Good for you" the Commander agreed before looking over at Fuller "Simon, pull the file, everything we have on this Brent guy, the new DPP" he requested "and see what this Integrity Enforcement bunch are about, size, personnel, resources, that sort of thing."

"Already on it Sir" Fuller confirmed.

"So where do I fit into all this?" Grey asked.

"You are the diversion laid on for the benefit of the press" Sir Richard explained "Make a big hullabaloo with the Prime Minister suddenly resigning, throw you into the centre seat and let the press chase around tying themselves up in knots whilst the armchair experts take to their keyboards and speculate, pontificate and opionate all over social media and in the press."

"And whilst all that is going on and everyone is distracted, you have a free reign to do whatever you want" the Commander added "because by the time everything calms down in a few weeks time, they will have their feet very comfortably under the table and they will be very difficult to remove again."

"But if we are all now out of the loop, even the Prime Minister" Collins asked "How are we going to solve this mess?"

"You've got a plan haven't you Commander?" Hoskins commented on seeing the expression on the Commander's face.

"It is quite simple really" the Commander explained "as the old committee has been forcibly dissolved we shall just form a new one, and here we are" he declared, arms ahead indicating everyone around the table.

"We just need someone to chair it" Lord Hainault added "I'm getting too old for all this interjurisdictional flim flam."

"So who gets the gig?" Hoskins asked "You Commander?" he suggested.

"Good God no" the Commander quickly rejected the merest suggestion "I propose we appoint Sir Richard Crowthorne" he then strongly suggested which resulted in a look of resigned shock from Sir Richard as he suspected this was coming "Do I have a second?" he then asked.

"Here!" Collins called, raising his hand only moments before anyone else could do so.

"Congratulations Dickie" Lord Hainault remarked "You just got unretired!"

"All right then, I want an official car, with driver, a company credit card and decent brandy in the office drinks cabinet" Sir Richard formally requested "None of that cheap muck you put out when the Home Secretary pops round."

"Done" the Commander quickly agreed.

"All right then" Sir Richard declared as he pushed his chair back, stood up and went around to take his new seat at the head of the table "Let us begin with the burning question that is setting Twitter alight shall we. What the hell happened to you Commander?"

"Ah, yes..." the Commander reluctantly responded "That..."

"The BBC has amateur video footage allegedly showing a, and I quote 'high ranking Security Service officer' being cut out of the tangled remains of his official Ford Mondeo" Collins remarked "the very same car with its driver that is currently parked outside these very premises in sparkling mint condition I may add" he pointed out.

"The Pyramid Group decided it was time I was 'retired' so they got their friend in the Government to issue a kill order" the Commander explained.

"Who is this 'friend' they have?" Hoskins asked.

"Me" Grey confirmed "at least that is what we have been making them think anyway."

"As an added bonus we are also feeding them codswallop on the Prime Minister's current whereabouts as she is currently many miles from here" the Commander explained "Tell them the rest" he then prompted the Prime Minister "Lets see how many jaws drop."

"In addition to my extensive experience as a Member of Parliament and Home Secretary" Grey explained "I also have another job, as a field agent for MI5."

"The Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is an MI5 asset?!?" Hoskins exclaimed.

"Whoa!!!" Barwell added, generally reflecting the shock from those around the table at this revelation who were not already aware.

"And that's how you knew they were out to get you?" Hoskins ventured.

"Precisely" the Commander explained "As the setting up of my brother through a fake car chase broadcast all over social media was such a success the other day, I decided to use a slight variant of the same trick again."

"And so our 'Pyramid' friends probably think you are now dead or at least sufficiently incapacitated as to be out of the picture, for now at least" Sir Richard concluded "Very clever."

"Well, I had a good role model" the Commander responded with a wry smile in Sir Richard's direction.

"So now that your Lazarus like rise from your death bed has been addressed" Collins

commented "Would someone mind telling me what the hell is going on? Last time I looked there was the small matter of some armed robbers on the ground somewhere."

"Yeah..." Tracy remarked with regretful reluctance "It's a long story..."

"I take it from your demeanour and body language that all did not go quite according to plan?" Hoskins asked.

"That's the understatement of the year" Fuller remarked with more than a strong hint of sarcasm.

"For those of you not aware" Tracy began "over the last couple of weeks we have been running an ongoing operation to ensnare some of the biggest names in the organised crime community" she went on to explain "the primary target being this man" she clicked a button on the laptop in front of her and a photograph appeared on the large screen behind her for all to see.

"Ah yes, Henry Villiers" Sir Richard remarked "One of my admittedly very small list of ones that got away. Fancied him as the draughtsman for the Bethnal Green bullion job but could never prove it."

"Oh he had something to do with it all right" Barwell remarked as he produced a briefing document which his own Department had produced just before he had left his office earlier "The gold bullion in the back of that van that the Commander and his driver rammed off the road the other night definitely came from the haul, the first trace we have had of any of the loot from that raid in nigh on twenty years."

"Please, please, please tell me you have Villiers in custody?" Sir Richard asked almost to the point of pleading "I have always wanted to meet him, formally of course."

"Oh we've got him all right" the Commander responded which made Sir Richard look up with a delighted expression but only for a moment "He's in Haychester morgue" he then confirmed causing Sir Richard to slump back down again.

"Whilst we were being given the run around the other night" Tracy continued to explain "someone, we suspect probably connected with this man" she changed the picture on the large screen again to show a new face in a rather poor quality surveillance photograph "proceeded to the manor house where Villiers and his gang were based, executed them and then razed the entire building to the ground."

"That big manor house fire that was reported on the news this morning?" Hoskins ventured.

"The same" Tracy confirmed.

"Do we have an I.D. on this guy?" Collins asked, nodding towards the large screen.

"We think, but we cannot be certain that this is the Pyramid Group's bag man, gopher and muscle" Tracy responded "The name we have for him is Garry Hansell but no

doubt he has many others. One thing for certain is that despite his extensive experience, we only have maybe two or three confirmed photos of him of which this rather grainy effort is the best one we have."

"There was an actual robbery though wasn't there?" Hoskins asked.

"Oh yes" the Commander confirmed "We set up a dummy precious metals handling site for them to raid, placed the bait and waited for them to turn up. Turns out however that someone tipped them off about our little duck blind and used it against us."

"So as a result we spent most of the night and into the early hours chasing our tails whilst Hansell and his well tooled up band of merry men waltzed into this facility near Guildford and got away with God knows what" Tracy confirmed as she showed on the screen various images of the devastation left behind from the real raid that had taken place including distressing images of the brutally killed security guards who had stood no chance when it happened.

"Alan" the Commander addressed Harding, the head of the Anti-Terrorism Branch of the Service "Your lads and lasses have been crawling all over this for the last day or two, I think it is time you took your turn up here at the front" he declared.

"Erm, right" Harding reluctantly responded, shuffling his chair back and standing up before looking all around the room at the distinguished company he was in the presence of.

"It's all right Alan" the Commander reassured him "You are among friends here" he confirmed.

"Thank you Sir" Harding replied before continuing "Our initial investigation was hampered by the fact that the site that was raided did not appear to exist on any records, maps or lists held by either us, sister security and police agencies or the local council" he began "however we have now managed to establish that the site is a secure storage facility for a specialist scientific research company."

"Seems an odd place to be targeted by armed robbers" Hoskins remarked to which there were general nods and murmurs of agreement around the room.

"As far as we have been able to establish at this time" Harding continued "there were no materials on the site of monetary value in the normal sense such as precious metals, cash, etcetera."

"So the van you pulled over was a planted decoy then" Collins remarked towards the Commander.

"It would appear so" the Commander agreed.

"After a lot of leg work by my people" Harding carried on "in the very early hours of this morning we had a break through when we finally managed to track down the owner and operator of the site, an obscure but very well financed pharmaceuticals and

industrial chemicals research and development company based in Switzerland."

"What do they specialise in?" Collins asked.

"When we approached them for information earlier this morning it is safe to say they were none too forthcoming with any information outside of what is contained in their glossy but factually lightweight official brochure when we made our enquiries" Harding confirmed as he passed out some copies of the company literature for everyone to take a look at.

"All style and no substance" Tracy remarked "Lots of nice images and mission statements but nothing that really tells you what they actually do."

"Classic form for a major international defence contractor" Sir Richard commented "My educated guess is that site contained weapons and other materials probably not on any approved import list held in this country."

"Well someone knew about it and knew where it was being stored as well" Collins pointed out "That company has a leak somewhere."

"Sounds like a job for my people" Hoskins responded "I'll do some digging around, get my opposite number in Interpol Geneva to pile some discreet cash into some appropriate pockets, see if that loosens some tongues."

"So what are we potentially looking at?" the Commander asked "speculatively speaking of course."

"If I were a betting man" Sir Richard responded "light arms, sophisticated weaponry and given that according to this report I see here the raiders had NBC suits I would also wager there is the possibility of some sort of chemical and or biological material and or weapons being involved."

"Okay, this just got scary..." Tracy remarked.

At that point McWilliam came back in the room, her mobile telephone seemingly glued to her right ear.

"Commander, there is a Darren Glock looking for you" McWilliam confirmed as she walked briskly up to the table "he used the Security Service emergency communication protocol."

"The Ombudsman General" Tracy responded "Sounds like he is having a bad day as well."

"Can you get a message to him without anyone outside of our little inner circle being aware?" the Commander asked.

"Of course I can" McWilliam responded matter of factly.

"Do it" the Commander confirmed "tell him I will meet him at a secure location of his

choosing later today."

"Yes Sir" McWilliam confirmed "also I think I may know where Sir Hugo Davidson might be" she then announced.

"In which case" Sir Richard responded "go and warm up the chopper and I will join you shortly."

"Let me know if you find anything as soon as possible" the Commander requested.

"Of course old friend" Sir Richard confirmed "You will be the first to know I am sure if I find out anything juicy."

"So in summary" the Commander concluded as McWilliam left the room again "we need to find out who, what, why, where, when and with whom pretty much immediately" he summarised.

"All whilst maintaining strict secrecy and whilst under the duress of these suppression orders" Collins pointed out "Don't you just love a challenge?" he commented.

"Generally when you are told not to do something is when you are at your best" Sir Richard remarked across to the Commander.

"You have a point" the Commander agreed with a wry smile.

"So there you have it" Tracy declared "we have a new Prime Minister, an old one who has mysteriously disappeared, several dead bad guys on the deck, some very unsavoury characters trying to muscle in on the Establishment, a dead senior Government minister and a shed load of missing stuff, probably very dangerous in the hands of god knows who with which they plan to do god knows what with it."

"And thanks to Dawson and his Pyramid friends we are not allowed to investigate any of it" Collins added "Well, not officially anyway."

"So what's the plan?" Hoskins asked.

"All right" the Commander took charge once more "Andy, you and your Flying Squad boys and girls, I want you to keep working on the raid, keep it as public and high profile as you can, push some rocks over, kick some doors in, that sort of thing. Hopefully if the press concentrate on that then no one will notice us sneaking around behind the scenes."

"No problem Sir" Barwell confirmed.

"Alan" the Commander then addressed the head of the Anti-Terrorist Squad "put your best people on high alert" he instructed "if there are advanced weapons, chemical, biological or otherwise out there then we are going to need the best on the ground intelligence and counter terrorist resources we have ready to go at a moments notice."

"I can have my people discreetly deployed to all category one targets within thirty

minutes and category two and three targets within an hour" Harding agreed.

"Hoskins, you are handling the international aspects" the Commander looked across at the Interpol representative "Hewitt and Collins have the Secret Service aspects of this covered" he then ventured.

"I will have my people nosing around anywhere relevant" Collins confirmed "discreetly of course, don't forget we have one of those cease and desist pieces of toilet paper too. After all, we wouldn't want to upset anyone would we?" he sarcastically suggested.

"Simon" the Commander then turned to Fuller "I know it is going to be a lot of work but I need our various efforts coordinated and as much information we find shared amongst the group as soon as we receive it in case any of us get removed from the field of play by the opposition."

"This is likely to monopolise the entire National Security Service central server" Fuller warned "Last time I did this much work on the system I nearly crashed most of the Internet across the city, there will be complaints."

"Well everyone will have to browse EBay later when they go home won't they" the Commander responded "this is more urgent, the security and safety of the nation does kind of take more priority."

"Anything you would like me to ask Sir Hugo when I catch up with him for our little chat?" Sir Richard asked as he prepared to leave.

"Yes" Tracy responded "What the hell is he playing at?" she suggested.

"I might reword it slightly but I will be sure to ask him" Sir Richard confirmed "so if you will excuse me ladies and gentlemen, I believe my chopper is waiting" he remarked "Oh I have always wanted to say that" he then added with a gleeful smile.

"Meanwhile what should I do?" Grey asked as she sensed she was being left out with nothing to really do.

"Stay in contact with your Pyramid buddies" Tracy responded "let's keep them comfortable thinking that you are still their puppet to control, we can use that to get inside."

"Sounds positively unpleasant" Grey remarked.

"When we have a grip on the situation and any potential threat from any stolen weapons has been neutralised then we will be turning our full attention to these Pyramid bastards" the Commander grimly confirmed "and we will burn them down."

"Remind me to be on holiday a very long way away from here when that happens" Grey remarked.

"Ah" the Commander remarked as he looked down at his mobile phone where a

message had just appeared "I have a meeting to attend" he announced.

"Darren Glock?" Tracy asked.

"Yes" the Commander confirmed "we meet in an hour which given the traffic will probably take me at least that long to get there."

"Where are you meeting?" Collins asked "only I can probably have a team placed in the area in case something goes wrong, watch your back?" he suggested.

"Thanks for the thought but I am a big boy now" the Commander wryly responded "I think I can look after myself" he confirmed.

"I'll believe that when I see it..." Tracy muttered under her breath with a wry smile.

"I'll head back to Thames House and try and maintain a serene sense of calm, peace and normality" Collins confirmed "whatever that is" he then ruefully added.

"I had better head back to the Yard and do the same" Tracy agreed "I get the impression things are about to get kind of lively around here over the next couple of days."

"All right" the Commander agreed "until such a time as we have established exactly where we stand in this new world order, this place will be our main base of contact until further notice or when we can get our emergency operations centre in Dorking up and running" he explained "so if any of you encounter any problems, fall back to here or the Dorking Bunker. Similarly all communications between us will be routed through the secure system Simon has set up for us."

"So hopefully we can keep the Pyramid bandwagon from finding out what we are up to" Hoskins commented "Nice thinking" he remarked.

"Well in that case unless there is anything else to add" the Commander looked around the room "I think we can declare this meeting adjourned for now" he declared "many thanks everyone for coming and let's be careful out there."

Outside the venue Jack was still talking to Kinderley as they were looking over the engine compartment of the Ford Cortina when they heard voices behind them and turned to see various people emerge from the main entrance and start to return to their vehicles.

Sir Richard was the first to leave with McWilliam as they returned to his helicopter which quickly took off and amid the turbulence put out by its rotors; it swooped upwards and away over the distant tree line and out of sight.

The Prime Minister was next to depart, Jennifer Caverner showing her and her Secretary into the back seat of the armour plated official car as the rest of the security party joined the escort vehicles.

"Looks like this little party has ended for now" Jack remarked as the Prime Minister's car and escort vehicles sped away back down the long and twisting driveway, a shower of dust being thrown up in their wake.

"Better start the car then" Kinderley agreed as Tracy and the Commander appeared and approached them.

"Good meeting?" Jack asked.

"It had its interesting highlights" Tracy admitted before turning to the Commander "Take care love" she then instructed.

"I will love" the Commander readily agreed as they hugged and then kissed before parting with him getting in the front passenger seat of his official car where Kinderley was already in the driving seat and had just started the engine.

"Where to Sir?" Kinderley asked as he moved off back towards the main driveway.

"Turnpike Lane" the Commander confirmed.

Tracy and Jack watched as the Commander's car disappeared from sight down the twisty driveway, one of the last cars to leave the site now that the meeting was over.

"I am going to need a lift back into town" Jack remarked.

"Come on" Tracy confirmed as she got in the drivers seat of the Ford Cortina whereupon Jack joined her alongside in the front passenger seat.

"You know how to drive this old thing?" Jack cautiously asked.

"My dad had one of these" Tracy confirmed "Believe me, you have nothing to worry about" she confirmed as she started the engine.

"Settling in?" Dawson asked as he walked into the Ombudsman General's office to see Noble looking around the interior with a look of distinct disdain.

"None too keen on the decor" Noble casually remarked as he picked up the nameplate off of the desk which up until his arrival had been Glock's and with disdain dropped it into the waste paper basket.

"Yes, it is a bit 1970's local council isn't it?" Dawson agreed "So did you have any problems with the former occupiers of these premises?" he then asked.

"A couple of them put up an admirable defence" Noble confirmed "but once my men started waving guns around they soon gave in and left the building."

"Excellent" Dawson rubbed his hands with gleeful anticipation as Noble took his seat

behind the desk and looked around once more.

"So now that we are settled in and plugged into the Pyramid system, what's the plan?" Noble asked.

"In approximately thirty minutes time the newly inaugurated Integrity & Security Bureau Oversight Committee will be holding their first press conference at which the new Director of Public Prosecutions will announce a root and branch review of the entire justice and security system in the United Kingdom."

"Sounds pretty dull it must be said" Noble remarked as he continued to locate more personal effects of the desk's previous occupant and casually throw them in the bin.

"It's meant to be" Dawson confirmed "that way the general public, still clamouring for information after the sudden change of Prime Minister will take no notice whatsoever which is when you and your people can get to work."

"When do we get started?" Noble asked "My people are itching to get on the ground and see some action."

At that point Dawson placed his briefcase on the desk, opened it and extracted a file which he then handed over.

"We begin with this" Dawson declared.

"Okay..." Noble remarked a few moments later having taken the opportunity to carefully study the document contained within the file which bullet pointed clear instructions on the first page whilst on the subsequent pages there was a list of names divided into three clear categories.

"Everyone on list one is to be discreetly, and I emphasise discreetly taken into detention by your Integrity Enforcement Teams as soon as possible" Dawson began to explain "the very select group on list two are as you can see from the heading to be treated to 'Special Measures' which Mr Hansell and his specialist team will be taking care of although I believe he would like your personal specialist skills on one of those names in particular."

"I'll await his call" Noble confirmed "and this third list?" he then indicated the three names on the final page of the file, one of which in particular he most definitely recognised.

"They are the ones we are not entirely sure where they are or even if they are in the country" Dawson explained "in fact we are not even sure if the first one is even still alive but if they do appear anywhere then they are to be detained as publicly as possible by whoever sees them first, alive I point out and then brought straight away to our operations hub for processing."

"This should be interesting" Noble remarked "in which case I will brief my people and get them all ready and raring to go" he confirmed.

"Good hunting" Dawson responded as he picked up his briefcase and turned to leave "I wish you well in your endeavours" he then added before departing, a smirk of evil confidence on his face and a confident swagger in his step.

"Just here will be fine Terry" the Commander called as they approached one of the wrought iron gates that guarded the entrance to a public park located a few miles north of Turnpike Lane.

"Right you are Sir" Kinderley confirmed as he stopped the car and the Commander promptly opened the passenger side door.

"Drive around the block for a bit Terry" the Commander then requested "This shouldn't take long" he confirmed before getting out and shutting the door behind him.

The weather had turned somewhat and it was now somewhat grey and bleak with a hint of cold rain in the air, this meant there was hardly anyone around to observe the Commander as he took a moment to pull his thick black overcoat in tighter around him and indeed those who were around either did not notice or just didn't care.

Passing through the wrought iron gates which were a looking a little dilapidated, the Commander proceeded inside and followed one of the myriad of paths that snaked through the undulating grass and flower borders that made up the large park land area.

Walking through the park brought the Commander to an area towards the centre dominated by large trees where, stood in the shadow of a very large old oak tree he could see Glock waiting for him.

"Administrator General, you got my message" Glock formally called as the two men met and shook hands in greeting before they continued to walk on together.

"Ombudsman General Glock" the Commander responded in kind.

"A title I fear no longer applies sadly" Glock remarked with a rueful look.

"I got your message" the Commander confirmed "What happened?" he then asked.

"I am still not entirely sure even now" Glock admitted "one minute my team and I were in the office, drinking some really terrible coffee and working on a few files and the next minute we were over run by armed thugs bearing guns and paperwork."

"Dangerous stuff, paperwork" the Commander wryly remarked.

"The guy in charge" Glock recalled "some snotty nosed git by the name of Noble basically said we were out on our ear under the terms of some legislation I have never heard of and we were being replaced by something called the Integrity Enforcement Bureau."

"It sounds like you and I have been on the receiving end of the same problem but from different directions" the Commander commented "I myself, Dave Collins over at MI5 and several others have received cease and desist investigations orders which has put huge spanner in the works on several fronts."

"Faced with thugs with guns we had no choice but to abandon ship before things turned ugly" Glock admitted "We are overseers, investigators of complaints, adjudicators and arbitrators, not armed law enforcement officers. There was no way we could fight back against what came through our door this morning without someone getting hurt, or worse."

"A wise move" the Commander agreed.

"So we decided to regroup in the private saloon bar of the Porter & Sorter Public House, plug our portable I.T. equipment into their free Wi-Fi and do a bit of discrete digging around" Glock continued "It would appear that there is a private security force who have been hired under the directorship of the new Security Committee and calling themselves Information & Security Integrity Enforcement Officers or 'Integrals' for short."

"Any names for these boneheads?" the Commander asked.

"Only the guy in charge, Noble" Glock confirmed "Struck me as a sort of super annulated civil servant with a side arm and delusions of grandeur."

"My people can check him out" the Commander confirmed.

"This may help" Glock commented as he took out the documentation that Noble had handed him during the hostile take over earlier.

"Looks like a fairly standard civil service document" the Commander remarked as he looked at it "however it is amazing how much hidden information is in one of these things."

"So having been effectively chucked out of office and with armed loons running amok in our offices I thought I had better give you a call and let you know what was going on" Glock then remarked.

"Thanks, I appreciate it" the Commander responded.

"Look, Commander" Glock then went on whereupon the two men stopped walking and faced each other "I know you and I are usually on opposite sides most of the time, hell we have not so much a file on you as four filing cabinets" he remarked "but I need your help getting my department back and I think you could use my help too."

"All right" the Commander replied after taking a few moments to think about the situation "I am going to bring you on board this little rebellion of ours. You need to make contact with my I.T. guru Lieutenant Commander Simon Fuller and he will guide you from there."

"Got it" Glock responded "and thank you" he then reaffirmed as the two men resumed walking.

"Four filing cabinets?" the Commander remarked.

"Will probably be five by the end of the year based on your usual form I would expect" Glock remarked with a knowing smile.

"So how many filing cabinets does my wife have dedicated to her then?" the Commander asked out of curiosity.

"Just two" Glock confirmed.

"Oh..." the Commander responded.

"The record however is held by that old rascal Sir Richard Crowthorne" Glock then gleefully declared "he has seven!"

"Blimey..." the Commander remarked as they reached one of the exits from the park where Kinderley pulled up in the car at just the right moment "Can I offer you a lift somewhere?" he then asked.

"Its fine thanks Commander" Glock responded with gratitude "I am going to take the bus, keep a low profile and all that" he confirmed.

"In which case stay safe" the Commander instructed as he got in the front passenger seat of his official car "and keep in touch."

"Where to Sir?" Kinderley then asked as he prepared to drive off once the Commander had fastened his seat belt.

"Let's head back into town" the Commander confirmed "I think it is time I rattled a few cages in the corridors of power and see what falls out."

As soon as the helicopter had landed, McWilliam and Sir Richard Crowthorne got out and headed straight for the car that was already waiting for them whereupon a driver from the local MI5 office showed them into the rear passenger seats before himself getting in the drivers seat and proceeding to drive off.

"Thank God for that" Sir Richard remarked as he knocked his ears with the palms of his hands "Having a helicopter is cool of course, not to mention quick but it makes having a civilised conversation so dam difficult."

"A bit like your Aston Martin" McWilliam remarked "That thing is so noisy it did my head in when I borrowed it a while back."

"You borrowed my Aston Martin?" Sir Richard looked across with a slightly

concerned look.

"Don't worry Sir, there is not a scratch on it" McWilliam reassured him with a wry smile.

"So" Sir Richard then addressed the next worry on his mind "what can you tell me about our new Prime Minister Ms Grey?" he asked.

"Well, I know she is one of your protégés" McWilliam confirmed "I cannot believe you have managed to get an asset into the heart of Government."

"Why not?" Sir Richard responded "The CIA and the French Secret Service have had undercover agents in our corridors of power over the years; mind you we have done the same to them in return of course."

"I think she is still somewhat stunned about being suddenly thrust into the spotlight" McWilliam continued to remark "She was only made Home Secretary a couple of months ago and now here she is promoted to Prime Minister literally overnight and at the tender of age of thirty one as well."

"She's thirty two next week" Sir Richard remarked.

"I know" McWilliam confirmed "I pulled her file, your version, not the edited highlights one for public consumption mind, we even met when we were both at University plus I have got to know her pretty well again in the last couple of days."

"Do you think we can trust her implicitly?" Sir Richard asked.

"Yes, beyond a shadow of a doubt" McWilliam confirmed.

"Her personal life is a bit of a blank canvas though" Sir Richard commented "a curse of being a covert operative of course."

"I know that feeling well" McWilliam agreed.

"She doesn't seem to have any close relationships that I am aware of" Sir Richard remarked out of curiosity.

"Probably because she wants to be cautious about any potential scandal" McWilliam explained "It can't be easy being in such a high profile position under the media spotlight and be gay as well."

"Crikey..." Sir Richard exclaimed "Really?"

"Oh yes" McWilliam confirmed "We have, erm got to know each other very well if you know what I mean."

"I thought you were married?" Sir Richard asked as he went rather red in the face with embarrassment.

"To my husband yes" McWilliam confirmed "however being bisexual means I also take an interest in other forms of pleasure and believe me, in this job you have to take them where you can find them plus she is pretty dam good in bed as I discovered a couple of nights ago."

"Blimey..." Sir Richard responded.

The car continued its journey for another few miles through the rolling hills of the Welsh countryside until they turned off the main road and up a rather rough track heading towards a remote farm cottage where smoke coming from the stone chimney stack protruding from the traditional slate roof indicated someone was at home.

"Nice little bolt hole out of the way" Sir Richard remarked as the car came to a stop outside the cottage and he opened the door to get out "Where are we by the way?" he then asked.

"About three miles outside of Portmerion" McWilliam confirmed as she got out of the car and went around to find Sir Richard looking down at his feet with a slight sense of despair."

"Shit..." he exclaimed.

"Yes Sir, yes it is" McWilliam confirmed with a wry smile.

"Now I know why I hate the countryside" Sir Richard remarked ruefully as he lifted up his foot out of the pile of manure that it had landed in upon getting out of the car.

"Are you all right Sir?" McWilliam asked with genuine concern while trying to suppress giggles as she saw the splattered state of Sir Richard's right shoe and the lower leg of his trousers as well.

"Yes, thank you" Sir Richard confirmed as he carefully stepped around the remaining manure and onto a clear bit of grass alongside where he started to wipe the sole of his soiled shoe in an attempt to clean off as much as possible "my shoe maker's heart is probably broken though" he then remarked.

With that and with McWilliam being very careful how she trod so as not to suffer the same ignominy, they proceeded towards the front door of the cottage with its slightly faded and peeling paint somehow adding to the charm of that very rural and isolated location.

"Better knock I suppose" Sir Richard remarked before removing his leather glove from his right hand and knocking.

"You don't think he has a done a runner do you Sir?" McWilliam asked as initially there was no response to the knock.

"Given recent events and a lifetime's experience of such things, nothing would surprise me" Sir Richard responded.

He was about to knock for a second time when they both heard someone coming up behind them and the distinctive clicking of a shotgun being loaded causing them to turn around, McWilliam acting on well trained instinct and swiftly drawing her own weapon and pointing it directly at the individual who had appeared.

"Good God man, you nearly gave me a heart attack" Sir Richard responded as they both saw Sir Hugo Davidson, the former Prime Minister standing there, dressed very much as a country farmer and with a shotgun aimed straight at them.

"Forgive me" Sir Hugo apologetically responded as both he and McWilliam quickly lowered their weapons again and he came over to join them "it's just in the last day or so I have seem to have developed the sense that someone is out to get me."

"Oh, that's just normal domesticated paranoia" Sir Richard casually dismissed Sir Hugo's concerns by way of lightening the mood and lowering the tension.

"Well that's all right then" Sir Hugo responded clearly not in the least bit reassured "Do go in, the door is open" he then motioned ahead before following them inside.

"You are a hard man to find" Sir Richard remarked as he and McWilliam sat down on the sofa in front of the fireplace and he proceeded to warm his hands "I presume by intent rather than by accident?"

"Indeed" Sir Hugo confirmed as he sat down in the chair opposite and carefully placed the shotgun down on the table alongside him "So who let you back in the country then?" he asked Sir Richard "Last I heard you were enjoying retirement, spending your days making wine in France or somewhere like that."

"More drinking than making" Sir Richard ruefully admitted "I got recalled to active duty by The Commander."

"Oh, he's all right then?" Sir Hugo inquired as he reached across and poured himself a drink from the crystal glass decanter before offering it to his guests "only out here there is no phone or television signal out here and the only radio station I can get is all in Welsh."

"He's okay" McWilliam confirmed "Let's just say you shouldn't believe everything you hear or see in the media."

"Thank God for that" Sir Hugo responded, clearly relieved "so who got my old job?" he then asked.

"Jayne Grey" Sir Richard confirmed which caused Sir Hugo to look on somewhat concerned.

"Isn't she part of the Pyramid Group?" Sir Hugo asked.

"Not exactly..." Sir Richard responded with a knowing smirk "That is what we want them to think."

"Good God, so then she really is one of yours?" Sir Hugo then asked with a look of astonishment.

"Oh yes" Sir Richard confirmed with a certain sense of pride "As far as our friends in the Pyramid group are concerned she is their puppet, however in fact she dances to our tune instead."

"In which case maybe, just maybe we can win this" Sir Hugo concluded, seemingly able to feel a little positive for the first time in at least the last couple of days if not longer.

"So what did they say to you that got you out of the top seat?" Sir Richard then asked.

"They came to Downing Street" Sir Hugo confirmed as he recalled the events of a previous couple of evenings ago "a slimy git by the name of Dawson who seems to be running the show, Grey and some flunkey, Jones I think his name was."

"Anyone called Jones come up in your sneaking around?" Sir Richard asked McWilliam to which she merely shook her head.

"They had documents with them, some really highly classified stuff too" Sir Hugo continued "God knows where they got them or how they managed to acquire them. The deal was simple, resign with immediate effect or the documents and apparently many more of similar ilk were going to be sent directly to their friendly journalists and across the Internet."

"I think we need to find out exactly what Dawson and his minions have in their possession" Sir Richard remarked.

"It'll be difficult" McWilliam responded "however now that this group are emerging from the shadows and going public it may be that there is a back door somewhere into their computer systems we could sneak in through."

"Good" Sir Richard agreed "in which case as soon as we can get back to civilisation perhaps you could contact Simon Fuller and get him to work his magic."

"Will do" McWilliam readily agreed.

"So am I permitted to resume my peaceful retirement in this rural idyll?" Sir Hugo inquired.

"Of course" Sir Richard confirmed "You might want to get some central heating in this place mind."

"I don't suppose this place has a loo does it?" McWilliam asked as she looked around.

"Yes, sure" Sir Hugo responded "Through the kitchen out the back" he instructed "mind the plumbing though it is not exactly what you would call modern."

"Thanks" McWilliam replied before getting up and leaving the room.

The two men continued to talk as she made her way through the kitchen where as she passed the window that was in front of the sink, she momentarily glanced outside at the view across the rolling countryside where it had become quite misty.

Initially McWilliam carried on past but then suddenly stopped in her tracks, quickly stepped back to the window and looked again, harder this time to check if she really had glimpsed something that probably should not have been there.

"So what is your plan?" Sir Richard asked as he helped himself to a second glass of brandy from the decanter.

"Well, in a nutshell my plan is to stay out of the way and keep my head down" Sir Hugo admitted.

"Okay gentlemen, change of plan" McWilliam suddenly declared with an obvious sense of urgency as she came back into the front room with her gun drawn.

"What's going on?" Sir Hugo asked, understandably confused.

"Time to make like a shepherd guys" McWilliam then remarked as she proceeded to pick up the shotgun and pass it to Sir Hugo and then look out of the front window.

"Get the flock out of here?" Sir Richard asked as he drew the old Army service issue revolver he always carried from his inside jacket pocket.

"You remember when I had that spot of bother a while back out in the sticks being hunted by some unpleasant guys with guns?" McWilliam asked as they prepared to leave.

"Oh yes, I remember" Sir Richard confirmed.

"Well let's just say I have just remembered where I have seen Hansell and his trigger happy merry men before" McWilliam explained "and the latter motley crew are heading this way at quite a rate of knots."

"Women and ex Prime Ministers first!" Sir Richard declared as he followed the others to the door where McWilliam led the way, cautiously opening it and stepping outside.

"Clear, let's go!" McWilliam called back once she had checked that the short distance between the door and the car was clear.

Quickly the three of them scuttled across to the car where McWilliam hastily bundled Sir Hugo in the back where he was quickly joined by Sir Richard.

"Step on it!" McWilliam ordered as she got in the front passenger seat just as a couple of masked gunmen appeared ahead of them and took aim.

"Shit!" the driver exclaimed as he quickly put the car into reverse and slammed the

accelerator pedal down hard.

The car initially skidded on the muddy surface before finally finding some grip and moving backwards quickly as the two gunmen continued to approach.

"Here we go" the driver called as he managed to negotiate the car back into a gateway, smashing down an old wooden gate in the process before putting the car into forward gear and with some considerable wheel spin throwing up mud and grit, he drove off at speed leaving the gunmen behind.

"I think we have got away with it" Sir Richard remarked as they were all forced to brace themselves as they were shaken about by the swift rough ride until they reached the main road where the driver performed a skilful handbrake turn.

"Think again" McWilliam responded when she noticed a black Land Rover join the road a short distance ahead of them and start heading aggressively towards them in the centre of the road.

"Turn around" Sir Richard ordered but a few moments later there was a sharp crack and the driver suddenly jumped as if with shock before slumping forward onto the wheel.

The tiny hole now in the shattered windscreen in front of the driver clearly showed he had been killed by a snipers rifle and that the situation was becoming rapidly worse.

"I think we are in trouble" Sir Richard remarked as McWilliam responded to the situation by quickly reaching across, opening the side door and pushing the dead driver out onto the road.

"This is not going well" Sir Hugo commented as he kept his head down.

"Incoming!" McWilliam then called as the black Land Rover closed in on them just as she was getting into the drivers seat.

A split second later the Land Rover rammed the car head on at full speed, shunting them backwards with some considerable force.

"Ever get the feeling someone doesn't like you?" Sir Richard remarked as he checked Sir Hugo and then himself to ensure they were all right.

"All the time" Sir Hugo responded.

"If anyone has a 'Plan B' then now would be a good time to mention it" McWilliam warned as she tried and failed to restart the car, the engine compartment being too heavily damaged "only I am fresh out of ideas."

"Get out of the car!" a voice barked loudly as the vehicle became surrounded by armed Integrity Enforcement Officers.

"So what do we do now?" Sir Hugo asked.

"Get out of the car" Sir Richard calmly instructed "move slowly, do what they say, make sure they clearly see you drop any weapons."

"Dam it..." McWilliam thumped the steering wheel in front of her in frustration before carefully opening the driver's side door and stepping out.

Sir Richard helped a somewhat dazed Sir Hugo out before the three of them gathered together alongside the car facing their attackers.

"Hands on heads and no hero shit" the leader of the Integrity Enforcement Team called.

They duly did as ordered but the body language of the three individuals was contrasting with Sir Richard's usual calmness in the face of adversity, McWilliam's look of sheer frustration and suppressed anger and then there was Sir Hugo who, despite Sir Richard's continuing reassurances was now reduced to a shocked and petrified nervous wreck.

The three of them were duly searched with mobile phones and weapons being taken from them and dropped on the ground behind them.

"Do be careful with that" Sir Richard requested as his gun was taken off him "that is an antique collectible."

McWilliam looked on and then groaned when one of the Integrity Enforcement Officers took the mobile phones, gave them a cursory look before dropping them on to the ground again and stomping on them, rendering them smashed beyond repair.

"All right, let's go" the leader bruffly ordered whereupon the three captives were shown to a black Mercedes minivan that had just pulled up.

Once secured inside the vehicle and with the wrecked car pushed off the highway into a ditch with the dead driver dumped back inside, the leader signalled their departure.

Swiftly the Integrity Enforcement Officers returned to their vehicles with their leader occupying the front passenger seat of the minivan.

As they moved off, he retrieved a mobile phone and proceeded to speed dial a number which was quickly connected.

"Integrity Command from Team Three" he formally declared "Three in custody, i.d.'s to follow. Returning to base."

"What the hell...?" Fuller exclaimed as his attention was drawn away from his work by two distinct double bleeps registered on a separate computer over to his right.

"Something wrong?" Commander Cassini, the head of the Security Service Covert

Surveillance Section asked, picking up on the concern in Fuller's voice as he happened to be walking past at that point.

"I took the liberty of installing a little bit of discrete tracking software in everyone's mobile whilst they were all together for the briefing earlier" Fuller explained as he rolled his chair over to the other computer that was continuing to periodically bleep with two red flashing markers visible on the screen.

"And I thought I was the sneaky one around here" Cassini remarked "Does that include mine?" he then asked out of curiosity as he momentarily took out his own mobile and looked at it.

"Don't worry" Fuller confirmed "You are a big boy; we know you can look after yourself."

"Thanks" Cassini responded, not entirely sure how to take it "So what's happened then?" he asked.

"Looks like two of our principal players have just disappeared off the grid" Fuller confirmed.

"Anyone I know?" Cassini asked.

"Eagle's fourteen and fifteen" Fuller checked the details being shown on the screen carefully "Dickie Crowthorne and Commander McWilliam, last known location somewhere outside of Portmerion."

"Where?" Cassini responded.

"Wales, where they filmed The Prisoner back in the late 1960's" Fuller then explained although looking up at that point and seeing Cassini's expression he could tell he was still none the wiser.

"So either something has happened to them" Fuller concluded "or they are running around in a Mini Moke being pursued by a weather balloon or alternatively we just lost the signal."

"Let's hope it is just the latter" Cassini remarked.

"In any case" Fuller responded "perhaps it would be prudent to put some of your experts in sneaking around unnoticed on some of our key players" he suggested "just in case."

"Consider it done mate" Cassini agreed before reaching for his mobile and speed dialling a number.

"Iggy, it's your boss" he then instructed as soon as the call to his second in command had been answered "wake everybody up; we've got work to do."

"Come in" the Prime Minister called in response to the knock on the door whereupon a man entered, very tall and of slim build, greying hair and a certain slightly nervous stance about him.

"You sent for me Prime Minister?" the man responded in a broad Welsh accent as he approached the desk.

"Ah Nigel, thanks for coming" the Prime Minister called, standing up before they shook hands over the desk "have a seat" she then insisted.

"Thank you" Nigel Davis, Member of Parliament for Wrexham in his home country of Wales responded.

"Drink?" the Prime Minister suggested as she offered the glass decanter across "I suggest a double though as I think you are going to need it."

"Okay then" Davis responded, now far from certain as to where this conversation was heading as he duly poured himself a large brandy as suggested.

"I'll come straight to the point" the Prime Minister began as soon as she had seen Davis had drunk some of his drink "I want to pluck you from backbench obscurity and thrust you into the political spotlight" she explained.

"What exactly did you have in mind Prime Minister?" Davis then asked.

"I want to give you a job" the Prime Minister continued.

"Err Northern Ireland?" Davis tentatively asked, fearing what has always been regarded as the poison chalice of political positions in the United Kingdom government.

"No" the Prime Minister responded "Home Secretary" she then declared with a big smile.

"Ah..." Davis responded, clearly not expecting that at all.

"Would you like a top up?" the Prime Minister proffered the decanter once more "I did say you would need a stiff drink."

"Well, I'm honoured Prime Minister" Davis replied in some sense of slightly numb shock "Err why me if I may ask? I know I have a law degree but I am just a lowly barely heard of backbencher."

"It is precisely because as you say you are a lowly unheard of backbencher that your name was top of my shortlist" the Prime Minister explained "which for the record was a very shortlist, of one."

"In which case I am delighted to accept the position Prime Minister" Davis confirmed.

"Welcome aboard" the Prime Minister declared as she got up again and they shook hands as if to seal the agreement.

"Thank you" Davis confirmed before they both sat back down again.

"Now to business" the Prime Minister then declared "As Home Secretary you are now the Government overseer of all police, civil defence and security agencies, civil, domestic and secret" she began "and that means you will be getting to know Sir Edward Regent, the National Security & Police Service Administrator General."

"The Commander?" Davis responded "I heard a rumour on the way over he was dead or at least seriously injured."

"Yes, we kind of made that up" the Prime Minister casually confirmed "He is still very much alive and kicking but if you wouldn't mind letting the rumour continue to circulate for a little while longer it would be appreciated" she added.

"Okay..." Davis responded, clearly a little uncertain as to exactly what was going on.

"Trust me" the Prime Minister reassured him "it will all be explained in the end."

"I see" Davis agreed.

"Now I need to ask you a very important question and I need a totally honest answer please" the Prime Minister asked to which Davis nodded before she continued "Have you ever heard of a political group called Pyramid?" she then asked with stern sincerity.

"Even in my rural little constituency I have heard that name mentioned in hushed tones" Davis confirmed "I got a warning from an old friend a while back to keep them and their representatives at arms length and down wind at all times."

"That old friend wouldn't happen to be Sir Richard Crowthorne by any chance?" the Prime Minister then asked "it certainly sounds like him."

"Indeed" Davis confirmed "You know him?" he then asked.

"You could say that" the Prime Minister replied slightly evasively "he gives good advice" she then continued "I strongly suggest you take it."

"Yes Prime Minister" Davis agreed.

"The reason I mention the Pyramid organisation is because of the various political and policing upheavals that have occurred in the last few days and indeed are continuing to do so" the Prime Minister explained "They are behind much of what is going on at the moment including the replacement of the Security Ombudsman with this new autonomous Integrity Enforcement Service."

"I heard something about that this morning" Davis admitted "I can't make up my mind if it is a bold new way forward or just a bunch of thugs hiding behind glossy websites

and fancy advertising."

"The latter" the Prime confirmed with clear regret "They are the muscle being used to pave the way for what will effectively amount to a shift of this country's security and police services over to the private sector."

"So what would you like me to do Prime Minister?" Davis asked.

"The Home Office and the Ministry of Justice has some of the best legal brains there is" the Prime Minister began "I strongly suggest you use it, put as many legal obstructions, road blocks, injunctions and barriers as you can in the way of their plans" she ordered "try and stop them by any legal means you can, even if it only slows them down for a while it will help."

"Right..." Davis responded as he began to get his head around the potential enormity of the task he was now facing.

"I should point out that as far as the Pyramid organisation is concerned they believe me to be on their side, an illusion we would like to maintain for now" the Prime Minister then continued "in addition I have had to vouch for you with them before I could make your appointment so hopefully they should leave you alone for now" she informed him.

"I am sure there are plenty of legal trap doors and cul-de-sacs I can lead them into Prime Minister" Davis confirmed, now seemingly eager to get started "Is there anything else?" he then asked.

"Just a few tips" the Prime Minister responded "Firstly, for a peaceful life don't argue with the Commander, if he asks for something he gets it."

Davis nodded in understanding before the Prime Minister continued.

"Secondly, make sure you get MI5 to sweep your flat, house and office for bugs every few weeks and finally" the Prime Minister reaffirmed her stare at Davis "get yourself an armed bodyguard, in fact make that two, and a bullet resistant official car, Jennifer Caverner over at VIP Protection will fix you up."

"Is she any relation to...?" Davis began.

"Identical twin sister" the Prime Minister confirmed having already anticipated his next question.

"Right" Davis then declared as he got up "in which case Prime Minister I think it is time I got to work."

"Good luck" the Prime Minister responded.

"Thank you" Davis replied before leaving the office.

"You're going to need it..." the Prime Minister then ruefully added once the door was

closed and she was alone once more.

"Maam, this has just flashed up on the system" one of the Control Room operators called with an obvious sense of urgency as he brought a piece of yellow paper over to Tracy.

"What have we got?" she asked as she took the paper and proceeded to study it.

"North Wales Traffic Division just found a saloon car on its side in a ditch with the driver dead at the wheel with what apparently looks like a bullet wound to the centre of the forehead" the operator confirmed "When they ran the registration number through the system it flagged up here."

"A secret service pool car" Tracy read from the report "Do we know who it was allocated to?" she then asked.

"If I were a betting man I would wager Sir Richard Crowthorne" Fuller remarked as he entered the Control Room "His and McWilliam's mobiles with my little tracking devices in them went off the air about thirty minutes ago he explained.

"Confirmed Maam" the Operator responded as he had just checked and found that the official record agreed with Fuller's hypothesis.

"Get that report off the system as fast as you can" Tracy quickly ordered "I want a 'D Notice' slapped on the whole thing and call Divisional Commander Terry Evans in Cardiff, tell him to put the wreckage under a tarpaulin somewhere out of sight and hide the body in a remote morgue somewhere until I tell him otherwise."

"Already on it" Fuller confirmed as he had already sat down at a vacant computer desk and had got to work on the task in hand with a new found sense of urgency.

Tracy tapped her fingers on the desk in front of her as she thought for a few moments before reaching for her mobile phone and with one press of her finger to the touch screen; speed dialled a well used number.

"Urgh dammit" she then responded as soon as the Commander's voicemail welcome message was heard, the call connecting directly to it whereupon she gave up and put the mobile back in her uniform tunic pocket again.

"I just checked with the helicopter crew that Sir Richard and Commander McWilliam travelled with" Fuller then announced "They were expected back at least twenty minutes ago and they haven't heard a thing from them since they left."

"Right that's it" Tracy responded with clear determination "Chalk those two up as missing and have all our people and sister agencies put on full alert for them" she instructed "I want to know the moment they surface.

"Consider it done" Fuller agreed.

"Did I miss something?" Eddie Hoskins asked as he arrived in the room at that point and saw the frenzied activity going on all around the Control Room "or is it usually like this?"

"Sir Richard Crowthorne and Commander McWilliam just disappeared off the grid and the car they were using has been found wrecked and in a ditch with the driver dead at the wheel" Tracy grimly confirmed.

"But no sign of them or Sir Hugo?" Hoskins asked, clearly concerned at this development.

"Nothing" Tracy responded.

"We can only hope they are safe" Hoskins commented to which Tracy nodded in firm agreement.

"Anyway, what brings you into our little mad house?" Tracy then asked.

"I need to borrow your Technomage, Mr Fuller for an hour or two" Hoskins explained "I have managed to track down the scientific research company's UK offices right here in London, Docklands to be precise and I need someone to sneak in to access their computer mainframe whilst I talk to them and everyone I ask says Simon is the best there is at this sort of work."

"Simon" Tracy called across the room "How are we with operations?" she asked.

"Everything is pretty much in place now" Fuller duly confirmed "my tech team are in the process of getting our special ops centre up and running, I can spare an hour or two for the cause."

"In which case he is all yours" Tracy confirmed to Hoskins "Just remember to bring him back when you have finished and don't feed him after midnight as we are rather fond of him."

"I will" Hoskins confirmed "I'll let you know as soon as possible if we find anything interesting."

"Keep walking please" one of the team of uniformed and armed Integrity Enforcement Officers firmly instructed as he followed the group down the corridor from the entrance where Sir Hugo, Sir Richard and McWilliam had been delivered just a few moments earlier.

"Where did they get this guy?" McWilliam remarked aside to Sir Richard "Thugs 'R' Us?"

"No talking please!" the lead Integrity Officer warned as they continued down the clinically clean, brightly lit and featureless corridor until they reached a set of sliding

doors that ominously opened slowly before them.

"Welcome!" a voice called out in mock friendliness as they entered what appeared to be some sort of meeting room.

"Brian Dawson" Sir Richard curtly responded as he recognised the man who had just welcomed them standing in the centre of the room with two of his aides either side of him "Why am I not surprised to find a snivelling little weasel like you involved in this mess?"

"And it is a pleasure to see you again too after all these years" Dawson sarcastically responded in kind as he stepped forward to confront Sir Richard face to face "This is a surprise, what are you doing back in the country Sir Richard?" he then asked.

"Shutting down the egoistic dreams of parasites such as yourself and your cretinous associates" Sir Richard defiantly responded.

"Ooohhh..." Dawson mocked in response "sticks and stones will break my bones..."

"I find a cricket bat far more effective..." McWilliam responded with a momentary mock smile.

"Ah, the lady speaks" Dawson turned to McWilliam "Ms McWilliam, it is a pleasure to finally meet you at last."

"It's not mutual I assure you" McWilliam confirmed.

"Ah but I already know so much about you" Dawson ominously replied "it is as if I know even what lies in the darkest parts of your soul."

"Leave her out of this, she has nothing to do with this conflict" Sir Richard warned.

"Oh, but on the contrary" Dawson turned back to Sir Richard "our mutual friend Ms McWilliam here has a lot to do with all this, more than either you or her realise."

"Buggered if I know" McWilliam admitted with a shrug of the shoulders when she and Sir Richard looked across at each other in search of enlightenment which failed to materialise.

"And finally Sir Hugo Davidson, our esteemed deposed former Prime Minister" Dawson then turned his attention to the third member of the group.

"As there is a lady present..." Sir Hugo began.

"Where?" McWilliam asked, looking around.

"...I'll put it like this" Sir Hugo then determinedly continued "you and your little buddies can proceed forthwith and self fornicate."

"Charming to the last" Dawson responded, outwardly unmoved by the insult "Take

him away and process him" he then called whereupon Hansell and two of his men appeared from a side door, forcibly grabbed Sir Hugo by both arms and dragged him away back through the door which ominously slammed shut behind them.

"Where are you taking him?" Sir Richard demanded to know.

"Somewhere he can be assured of a good drink" Dawson evasively responded "Guards!" he then ordered "Take these two away to a detention suite where they will be out of my misery for the rest of this operation."

Moments later Sir Richard and McWilliam were shown out of the room under armed guard leaving Dawson alone with his aides.

"Well that was a good start" he declared as he rubbed his hands with glee "three in the bag already including the unexpected bonus of that interfering old man Sir Richard Crowthorne no less and we haven't even officially begun yet."

"The teams are all in place, all we need is the word" one of the aides confirmed.

"The word is given my friend" Dawson confirmed "Issue the detention orders, it is time to start bringing the players in off the field."

"You got to see this Sir" an MI5 desk officer called as he entered Collins' office and proceeded to turn on the large flat screen television mounted on the wall "it is being saturated across all the commercial TV channels."

"What the hell is this shit?" Collins asked, clearly unprepared for this new development which was unfolding before him.

"I'll rewind it back for you Sir" the officer responded whereupon he managed to return the stream back to the point just before the broadcast commenced and then pressed play.

"In a world that is as intensively interconnected as ours, it is essential that we have the right tools to ensure the safety and integrity of our citizens, their finances and their personal data and communications" Dawson was heard to announce in a smooth almost salesman like patter as the television advertisement began accompanied by soft music and expensive looking computer graphics.

"Here at the 'Integrity Enforcement Service' we have your security in our hearts, protecting those you treasure most so that you can go through life without the worry of cyber attacks, data breaches or any harm coming to those people and things you treasure most" he continued against a computer generated backdrop of uniformed Integrity Enforcement officers posing with smiling members of the public in what were clearly specially created images.

"Using the latest technology, some of which has never been available to organisations such as ours until today we will provide you with the most comprehensive cross platform protection so that we can all sleep soundly in our beds" Dawson continued with a semi-permanent smile that merely enhanced his salesman like approach.

"For more information or to join us just search for the hash tag you see below" he then called as some online contact details morphed into view at the bottom of the screen before the whole picture changed to a bright computer graphic animation of the Integrity Service coat of arms coming together before the tag line was revealed.

"The Integrity Service..." Dawson's voice was heard to call with pride before delivering the tag line in a slightly lower and more sincere tone "For *your* security...."

"Turn it off" Collins called whereupon the screen went blank just as a more mundane commercial for baked beans had commenced.

"There is also this as well" the officer handed Collins the latest edition of the London Evening Standard newspaper that had been issued only minutes earlier "Page seven".

"Talk about saturation coverage" Collins remarked once he had turned to the indicated page and seen a full page printed advertisement in much the same vein as the television commercial that he had just seen complete with a smiling Dawson and a number of his Integrity Enforcement Officers all posed for the camera.

"There is a radio advert as well" the officer confirmed.

"I'll take your word for it" Collins responded as he closed the newspaper once more "I think I have seen and heard enough from this Dawson guy for one day thank you very much."

"These guys are serious" the officer confirmed "If the rumours starting to circulate are true we may need to issue a discreet warning."

"Hold that thought" Collins prompted as he reached for the telephone on the desk "Commander Caverner on a secure line please" he then formally requested.

"It's Dave Collins again" he then called as soon as Tracy answered at the other end "I think we need to issue a code four warning" he suggested.

"I can't get hold of my husband" Tracy responded, now back in her office on the top floor of New Scotland Yard "and we still have not been able to track down Sir Richard or McWilliam either yet."

"Which makes it even more important we contact them by other means" Collins then responded "but I need your consent to initiate the procedure" he then remarked.

"Do it" Tracy agreed after a brief moment for thought "let's hope it doesn't upset anyone in the process."

"I demand a solicitor, a phone call and your arse on a plate!" Sir Hugo angrily demanded as he was roughly manhandled down the corridor by two Integrity Enforcement Officers with Hansell looking on.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah" Hansell responded with not a care "Yadda, yadda, yadda..."

"I am going to sue you and your cretinous cronies for every penny you have got" Sir Hugo then defiantly warned as he was brought face to face with Hansell, the two guards still keeping a firm grip of his arms in restraint either side.

"Sue this" Hansell responded before quickly punching Sir Hugo hard in the stomach so forcefully that he fell backwards onto the cold concrete floor where he doubled over in pain.

"You asshole!" Sir Hugo then called out in pain.

"Get him up" Hansell instructed whereupon the two guards dragged him back on to his feet before taking him into a small side room and without any care whatsoever dumping him in the chair that formed the room's only contents.

Sir Hugo managed to hold his head up enough to see Hansell click his fingers which was the cue for one of the guards to wheel in a trolley which was brought alongside him.

"Ah, the good stuff" Hansell then remarked as he picked up a large bottle of brandy off of the trolley and read the label before breaking the seal and proceeding to open it where he then poured himself a small sample amount into a plastic cup and tasted it.

Sir Hugo looked on slightly mystified but it would all soon be explained.

"This is for you actually" Hansell explained, showing Sir Hugo the label before stepping back and then nodding to the two guards who quickly and firmly, one each side grabbed Sir Hugo's head and forced it back.

Hansell quickly brought the bottle up and forced it into Sir Hugo's mouth, force feeding him the brandy.

Sir Hugo struggled and gagged as Hansell continued to force the entire contents of the bottle into him until there was nothing left bar that which had been spluttered out all around.

"You sir have a drink problem" Hansell then remarked with a chuckle as he casually tossed the empty bottle away before picking up a second one.

"What the hell are you doing?" Hansell asked as he attempted to recover having almost choked.

"Softening you up before we feed what's left of you to the press" Hansell explained

"right now a dossier is being compiled which will show you to be a gambling addicted, drug taking drunkard, we have experts going through your personal bank accounts and investments right now making sure the evidence of your heavy gambling habit is irrefutable and water tight."

"No one will ever believe it" Sir Hugo protested although by now his speech and senses were becoming incoherent as the first bottle of brandy was starting to have an effect.

"We control the press, social media, you name it" Hansell responded "if we want something to become true beyond doubt, trust me we can make it happen just like that" he clicked his fingers "Drink?" he then jokingly asked proffering the second bottle before proceeding to force it on Sir Hugo once again.

Sir Hugo struggled to resist but he failed to stop the onslaught until as the last few drops in the bottle were about to fall, he collapsed, unconscious on the floor.

"I guess he can't handle his drink!" Hansell joked with an evil cackle before carrying on with the business at hand "Okay lads" he then instructed "Break a couple of ribs, make it look like he was done over by a loan shark or something then dose him up, I want him to test positive for everything from alcohol to the Lyserta plague before we dump him back into public circulation."

"This looks like the right place" Fuller remarked as he rechecked the details he had before once again looking up at the tall glass tower block in London's Docklands district, a short distance from London City Airport.

"In which case" Hewitt declared as he too got out of the car "I think it is time we paid these guys a visit."

"After you Sir" Fuller indicating ahead before they proceeded to walk up to the sliding glass front door that silently and serenely opened as they approached.

"Very snazzy" Fuller quietly remarked "Company logo embossed in the marble floor and everything."

"I wouldn't expect anything less from a multinational corporation which last year posted pre tax profits of sixteen billion dollars and paid mere pennies in tax on it" Hewitt responded as they approached the reception desk.

"John Hewitt, Special Investigations Section, Interpol, London Office and this is Lieutenant Commander Simon Fuller of the National Security Service, Computer Fraud Section" Hewitt introduced himself and Fuller as they both produced their formal identification "We need to speak with your boss, right away."

"Do you have a warrant?" the Receptionist formally asked.

"No, but we can get one and when we do it will be very public, not to mention very

embarrassing for your organisation" Hewitt explained with a polite but firm tone of insistence.

"In which case I will see if someone is available Mr Hewitt" the Receptionist then reluctantly conceded, reaching for the telephone.

"I'm terribly sorry" Fuller then asked "Is there any chance I can use your bathroom?"

"Down to the right past the stairs" the now slightly flustered Receptionist indicated as she waited for her call to be answered.

"Thank you" Fuller responded before picking up the briefcase and walking off in the direction indicated.

He easily found the toilets and went in through the door. Once inside Fuller quickly checked that the cubicles were empty and that he was alone before placing his briefcase on top of one of the wash basins and opening it.

From inside the case Fuller took out an electronic scanning device which he put in his pocket, a small tablet computer which he briefly turned on and off again to check it worked and finally a security identification pass bearing his photograph and a false name which matched the passes all of those whom legitimately resided in the building were required to carry at all times.

Fuller affixed the identification to his lapel by way of the clip with which it was fitted before checking himself in the mirror, closing his briefcase and then making for the door.

Opening the door cautiously just a little, Fuller checked that the corridor outside was clear before walking briskly over to lifts where a vacant lift car with the doors open was already waiting.

"Let's hope this works" Fuller remarked to himself as he proceeded to swipe the identification card over the sensor that was mounted adjacent to the lift controls.

He promptly afforded himself a look of delight when the lift controls promptly illuminated, granting him access.

"God bless advanced security systems and their default set up passwords" Fuller remarked as he duly selected the fourth floor, the lift door closed serenely and he began his journey upwards.

Such was the smoothness and speed of the lift, Fuller reached the fourth floor in a matter of moments whereupon the doors opened and he exited into another seemingly deserted corridor.

"Hmm, nobody home" Fuller remarked to himself with some surprise as he looked around for a few moments before heading off down a side corridor until he reached a door marked 'Danger - High Voltage!' and noticeably different in having a number of ventilation grilles set into it coupled with the sound of humming computer equipment

and its cooling systems inside.

The door was protected by a security lock which required a coded identification pass to open, not a problem for Fuller however as he quickly examined the make and model of lock that was in his way before reaching inside his briefcase and selecting one of a number of magnetic swipe cards. Proceeding to use the card he had duly selected promptly released the door with to him, a rather satisfying clunk.

"And there goes my faith in multinational corporate security" Fuller remarked to himself as he checked up and down the corridor to ensure he was still alone before entering the room.

Three floors up, Hoskins was being shown into a plush office overlooking the skyline of the city of London with views way off into far counties.

"Eamon Flanders" a tall very well dressed man in an obviously expensive, probably Saville Row tailored suit called as he stepped forward and greeted Hoskins upon his arrival "Head of Corporate Operations in the UK for Sci-Tech Corporation."

"Pleased to meet you" Hoskins responded as he was shown to a seat before Flanders resumed his seat behind a huge modern glass desk.

"So, how can I be of assistance?" Flanders then asked as he sat back.

"We urgently need some information related to an armed attack on one of your high security storage and research facilities a couple of evenings ago" Hoskins came straight to the point.

"Ah yes, I heard about that" Flanders responded "Nasty business of course but nothing more than an inconvenient incident surely?"

"I think you will find it was a bit more than that Mr Flanders" Hoskins responded with a hint of a raised eyebrow "whoever raided the place came heavily armed and in significant numbers, overpowered and killed your security staff and then made off with a significant quantity of unknown items and materials."

"There was some regrettable loss of life to some subcontracted personnel and some items are believed to be missing from the premises as a result" Flanders admitted "however we feel there is no need for panic or knee jerk reactions to what has been an unfortunate occurrence at one of our less important installations."

"We, that is the National Police & Security Service, the Anti-Terrorist Branch and my group believe that the raid was orchestrated in order to secure a large quantity of weapons and possible chemical based materials" Hoskins countered as he could see Flanders was trying to play down the incident to the point of dismissal but he wasn't going to let him slip away that easily "The people we believe involved have some very nasty habits, people could wind up being injured or killed so you will forgive me if I insist that we need to know exactly what it is your company does and what was taken from those premises right down to the last crate and canister."

"This company has interests across the globe making everything from specialist components for the European Space Agency right through to springs for machine guns and the yellow fuzzy stuff they stick on the outside of tennis balls" Flanders responded, still maintaining a calm vision of innocence and indifference to Hoskin's strong line of questioning "I can assure you that nothing has gone missing that has any value to anyone with hostile intents or purposes."

Downstairs in the computer server room Fuller was hearing the entire conversation being re-laid via a microphone hidden in Hoskins jacket to his earpiece as he worked on connecting his laptop into the myriad of cabling in order to access the central computer mainframe.

"Teller of untruths, thy trousers have combusted" Fuller remarked as he heard the conversation continue with Hoskins continuing to press for answers and Flanders continuing to expertly avoid them.

After a few dead ends, screens saying 'Access Denied' in big red letters on his laptop and changing where on the servers he was plugged in now and again, Fuller finally found an unsecured way into the corporate mainframe.

"Gotcha!" Fuller declared to himself before turning on his intercom which communicated directly to a hidden earpiece in Hoskin's right ear "keep that lying sack of the proverbial talking, I'm in."

"If the Cranfield facility is as you claim just a storage location for non-sensitive materials and stock then why the heavy security and the almost total erasure of the location from all known maps, even Ministry of Defence ones?" Hoskins asked.

"Oh that's a good question" Fuller remarked as he continued to work on the laptop, searching for something related to the ongoing investigation, then by accident he found something else.

"Whoa..." Fuller remarked as he read something on the screen in front of him "Hoskins, ask our friend up there if he has ever heard of or met Sir William Devane" he suggested "only according to a very well hidden document on their mainframe he is or rather was a major shareholder, on the board of directors and the company's representative in the Houses of Parliament."

"A different question for you Mr Flanders" Hoskins took Fuller's cue, "Have you ever heard of a member of the UK parliament by the name of Sir William Devane?" he asked.

"I don't recall the name" Flanders answered, however Hoskins could tell from a few very tiny tell tale signs in his posture, tone of voice and body language that this answer was in fact far from the truth.

"Teller of untruths, thy trousers are now incinerated" Fuller remarked but at that moment he was distracted by a bleeping noise on the laptop where one of his searches had now found something which he quickly called up on the screen.

"What the hell is that?" Fuller then remarked as he managed to locate a secret file buried deep in the central corporate archive clearly marked 'Top Secret' and containing in detail the contents of the Cranfield Secure Storage facility.

"Keep him talking, I am onto something" Fuller then called "I just need to Google it to understand what it is first."

Hoskins kept Flanders pinned down with more searching questions and his opponent kept slipping carefully away from them as he could hear through the earpiece rapid tapping away on the laptop keyboard going on before Fuller was then heard to utter an expletive.

"I think we have a very serious problem" Fuller responded "This stuff is not even supposed to be exported or manufactured outside of specialist research labs in the continental United States."

Unfortunately for Hoskins although he could hear Fuller's concerns through his earpiece, he was unable to respond or ask what it was he had found without giving away the fact that the conversation he was having with Flanders was being monitored.

"Okay time to sew this up, we got to go" Fuller then declared as he finished copying vital information from the mainframe onto the laptop and then got up to disconnect the connection, leaving behind a small hidden transmission device plugged in so that he could remotely access it again in the future if the need arose.

It was as he stood back up and put his equipment away in his briefcase that Fuller then glanced out of the window down into the car park below and saw four black Mercedes minivans arriving at speed, squealing of brakes heralding their arrival in front of the main entrance whereupon a large number of armed Integrity Enforcement Officers were seen to deploy from the vehicles and proceed inside the building.

"Okay, we really need to leave right now" Fuller then announced as he headed for the door and exited out into the corridor "but don't use the front door, the bad guys just arrived."

"Well thank you for your time" Hoskins declared as he shook Flanders hand "If you do think of anything we need to know..."

"You will be the first to know" Flanders confirmed with a smile although the reality of his intentions on the matter were of course the exact opposite.

With that Hoskins left the office and exited into the top floor corridor where by way of the hidden microphone and earpiece he re-established communications with Fuller.

"I'm on my way, define bad guys" Hoskins he then called.

"Looks like those specialist Integrity cretins" Fuller confirmed as he found the rear fire escape stairs and began to head down them.

"How many?" Hoskins then asked as he entered the express elevator and pressed the button for the first floor.

"Lots" Fuller confirmed.

"All right" Hoskins called as he descended in the elevator "I am on my way down now, I shall be getting off one floor above the ground floor, meet you by the rear staircase in three minutes.

"Roger that" Fuller responded.

"Security Override" a female electronic voice was heard over the radio link at that point causing Fuller to stop in his tracks.

"Err what was that?" Fuller then asked.

"Someone seems to have taken the controls of the elevator" Hoskins confirmed as he repeatedly pressed buttons on the control panel to no avail as it was now locked out and the elevator continued to descend past the first floor where he had intended to get out.

Instead it carried on down to the ground floor before stopping but for a few moments it then just sat there, the doors not opening.

"What the hell is going on?" Hoskins asked himself as he pressed the door open button on the panel again to no avail.

A few moments later however there was a ping noise and the door opened allowing Hoskins to step out into what appeared to be an empty lobby until suddenly over a dozen armed men appeared, weapons aimed straight at him.

"Hands in the air!" an order was barked at him "on your knees!"

Hoskins quickly realised there was no point offering up any resistance and duly put his hands up whilst lowering himself onto his knees.

"What the hell is all this?" Hoskins asked.

"Interpol UK Operations Chief Edward Brian Hoskins?" one of the Integrity Enforcement Officers asked as he stepped forward to which Hoskins merely nodded in acknowledgement.

"Integrity Enforcement Coordinator Frank Cleaver" the man formally identified himself complete with the production of his formal identification "Integrity &

Security Bureau, for your security" he announced with the now customary tag line on the end which he believed in strongly but to Hoskins just sounded cheap and cheesy.

"Hi" Hoskins responded with a somewhat dismissive tone.

"Under section one one five of the Emergency Security Powers Act I have a warrant for your immediate secure detention" Cleaver then confirmed producing and presenting the official detention warrant signed by both Ombudsman General Stephen Noble and Dawson.

"I want a lawyer and a phone call" Hoskins responded with an air of polite defiance.

"I want a hot dinner and three weeks in the tropics Mr Hoskins" Cleaver dismissively responded "but guess what, ain't going to happen" he confirmed before turning to his men "all right lads, take him away" he then ordered.

As Hoskins was unceremoniously dragged to his feet, his hands bound and then taken away, Fuller discreetly closed the fire exit stairs door, through a small opening of which he had witnessed what had just happened and slipped quietly away.

"Okay, we are live on air in four, three, two..." the BBC News producer silently counted down the last two seconds on his outstretched fingers in front of the Chief Political Correspondent before the small red light on the camera before her illuminated and the live piece to camera commenced.

"As you can see behind me" the Correspondent began, indicating her fellow colleagues from other television and radio stations based both in the United Kingdom and overseas who were all around her "the world's media has gathered here in Parliament Square as we have been told that there will be a major announcement by the new Justice Secretary here which is expected in the next couple of minutes" she informed the live audience.

Much the same storyline was being re-laid by many of the other correspondents around her in a variety of languages to viewers and listeners across the world such was the intense media interest in the political turmoil that had been occurring over the last few days.

"Whilst the contents of the statement are still unknown" the Correspondent continued "reliable sources inside Westminster have told the BBC that there is to be further major changes made to the structure of security, defence and law enforcement in the country following on from the introduction of the Integrity Service yesterday."

It was at that moment that a commotion began over to one side as an unmarked blue Ford Transit panel van with taped over number plates preventing any identification approached at a considerable speed before screeching to a stop immediately in front of the gathered press whereupon the side door was opened and a body forcibly thrown out into the gutter before the van accelerated away, the side door being closed again under way.

"That's odd" Jennifer remarked as she saw the events unfolding on the BBC News Channel which she had running on one of the multiple screens in front of her.

"Simon back yet?" Tracy asked as she came into Fuller's office having been passing and had her attention caught by both the content and tone of her twin sister's remark.

"Got a garbled message a few minutes ago" Jennifer confirmed "apparently something has happened to Hoskins and he is on his way back now" she explained before nodding towards the screen showing the BBC News Channel "Have you seen this though?" she then asked.

"What's occurring?" Tracy asked.

"Someone just dumped a body in the street right in front of the press pack in Parliament Square and sped off" Jennifer confirmed.

"Alpha One to all units" Tracy called into her radio "Anyone in the vicinity of Parliament Square?" she inquired.

"That's Sir Hugo Davidson, the former Prime Minister" a voice, possibly that of the BBC cameraman was heard over the television transmission "What's left of him."

"Good God..." Jennifer exclaimed as the television pictures showed the badly bruised and battered body and only just recognisable face of Sir Hugo before suddenly the live feed was cut either by MI5 or the BBC themselves and replaced with a static 'Technical fault, please stand by' notice.

"Alpha One to Control, Code Ultra Violet One" Tracy immediately called over her radio as both she and Jennifer left the office and quickly made for the Control Room just down the corridor "I want Parliament Square locked down and evacuated right now and get me MI5 Control on a secure line straight away."

As she entered the Control Room one of the desk operators passed her a telephone.

'Collins at Five, secure line Maam" he confirmed.

"Dave" Tracy called "Have you seen the news?" she asked.

"The BBC pulled the plug moments before I was going to" Collins confirmed as he stood in the MI5 situation control room over at Thames House.

"Has it been confirmed?" Tracy asked.

"One of my officers in the press pack has just called in" Collins responded "It's Sir Hugo all right and it looks like someone has kicked several shades of crap out of him. I have a spook ambulance paramedic team on site now scraping what's left of him up out of the gutter."

"Maam!" one of the desk operators called with a readily apparent growing sense of urgency as something else was unfolding on another front.

"Hang on a second Dave" Tracy requested before putting the telephone to one side "Go on, make my day Lieutenant" she then prompted.

"It looks like someone has leaked a dossier of dirty laundry on Sir Hugo" the desk operator confirmed as the live media feed of a number of newspaper websites began to display lurid revelations including allegations of heavy gambling, drinking and large debts.

"As if Sir Hugo wasn't having a bad enough week as it is" Tracy remarked before returning to her telephone call to Collins "Dave, are you seeing this?"

"Yes" Collins confirmed with obvious concern "Looks like a right load of old cobblers to me, Sir Hugo liked the occasional glass of brandy and that was about his limit."

"All we can do is damage limitation for now" Tracy responded "Do me a favour will you?" she then asked "Have a discrete sniff around, see who compiled and distributed this dossier of bollocks."

"Way ahead of you" Collins confirmed "I just sent one of my best teams to go shake some prominent trees and kick over some rocks, we'll find them" he determinedly declared.

"Meanwhile I had better get Sir Hugo secured away from the press" Tracy confirmed "What else can go wrong today?" she generally asked.

"So do you want the bad news or the bad news?" Fuller asked as he arrived in the Control Room causing Tracy to swivel around on her chair and look at him with an expression that clearly stated she was distinctly unimpressed.

"Go on then" she then prompted with a resigned sigh.

"Eddie Hoskins just got arrested by that Integrity Enforcement lot" Fuller went on to explain "I barely got out of there myself."

"What happened?" Tracy asked.

"I think when Hoskins started asking awkward questions, someone called in the heavy mob to take him away" Fuller confirmed "guy leading them was some self important little nobody with a gun on his hip called Frank Cleaver and that is not the worst bit."

"Sir Hugo has been secured Maam" one of the Control Room operators called across.

"Thank you" Tracy responded before returning to Fuller "So, go on then, make my day" she instructed.

"I think we have a very serious problem" Fuller responded as he took out a scrunched

piece of paper containing a print out of some of what he had managed to access on the computer system earlier and passed it across to her.

"And this is?" Tracy asked, still none the wiser.

"Call it what you like" Fuller responded "but I think terrorists Holy Grail may be a good place to start."

"Send out a Code One Hundred signal and then locate everyone you can" Tracy then ordered "I want us all meeting together either in person or via phone or video link in twenty minutes."

"You got it" Fuller confirmed before heading towards his desk in the Control Room only to find Jennifer sitting in his seat "Hello love" he then called "you are a sight for sore eyes" he remarked.

"You look like hell darling" Jennifer responded "How about a cuddle?" she suggested.

"Excellent idea" Fuller agreed as he took another chair, wheeled it across and joined her sat at the desk "however I need to annoy a lot of people first" he then cryptically responded.

"We should have taken the Underground" Kinderley remarked as the progress along the A105 High Road towards Turnpike Lane had now slowed to a near standstill in the heavy early evening rush hour traffic.

"I think you could be right" the Commander was forced to agree as he surveyed the scene as they inched forward a couple of metres, the changing of the traffic lights up ahead from green to red and back to green again seemingly having little if any effect on the queues of traffic.

All the while that they had been stuck in the traffic, the radio on the centre console in front of them had remained unusually silent, something which neither man had really noticed up until now.

"Control from Eagle One" the Commander called having picked up the radio handset "Anyone receiving, over?" he then asked.

The response he got however was just static which Kinderley could see as he glanced across at his superior officer made him a little concerned.

"Any station from Eagle One, please respond, over" the Commander then called.

Again there was no response which only served to increase the level of concern.

"We're not in a radio black spot are we?" the Commander then asked.

"Shouldn't be Sir" Kinderley responded "but there is not even the usual background

chatter audible so either the radio is broken or..."

"...something is up" the Commander concluded just as the traffic began to move again.

Kinderley looked across briefly as the Commander then reached down to the car radio and selected a particular channel where instead of the expected classical music or current affairs program, there was instead a continuous slow beeping sound which emanated from the speakers inside the car.

"What the hell is that?" Kinderley asked as he brought the car to a stop again up at the junction where the traffic lights had just changed back to red once more.

"Automated warning alert" the Commander explained as he began to quickly gather some items together from his briefcase "BBC Radio Four and the World Service is off the air, a warning to UK security services, embassies, armed forces, etc at home and abroad that something has gone wrong affecting the chain of command."

"Would that have anything to do with the silver Mercedes minivan full of suits about four vehicles behind us?" Kinderley asked as he put the car into gear ready to move off as the traffic lights were about to change again.

"I wouldn't be surprised" the Commander agreed as he removed his belt holster containing his faithful old six shot revolver and placed it inside his briefcase before proceeding to rearm himself with one of the more modern Glock pistols and two spare ammunition clips from the secure weapons locker located in the front glove compartment.

"Do you want me to try and lose them?" Kinderley asked as the traffic lights changed and he began to drive onwards across the junction whilst continuing to watch the silver minivan he had earlier identified via the rear view mirror.

"Drop me off just up here" the Commander indicated a bus stop just ahead "then take my briefcase to Jack on full blues and twos. There are instructions for him inside, see that he gets them as quickly as possible please" he instructed "then find a place to lay low for a while and stay by the phone."

"Yes Sir" Kinderley responded despite being understandably uncertain at what exactly was unfolding at that time.

"Right" the Commander declared as Kinderley slowed the car down and pulled into the bus stop "Good luck Terry, hopefully I will see you later"

"Good luck Sir, watch your back" Kinderley called as the Commander got out and stepped onto the pavement.

"Thanks" he then called back before closing the car door, looking all round for a moment and then proceeding towards one of the entrances to Turnpike Lane Underground Station.

As he reached the entrance, behind the Commander could be heard the sudden commencement of sirens with accompanying blue flashing lights as Kinderley drove off down the road at high speed.

"Eagle One is on the grid!" came the call from a computer operator which caused Hansell and Dawson to break off their discrete conversation and come over.

"What have you got?" Dawson asked.

"The Commander's Oyster Card just tapped in at Turnpike Lane tube" the Operative confirmed before displaying live CCTV feeds from all around the Station interior on a bank of big screens in front of them.

"Ah, there you are Commander" Dawson remarked as the CCTV showed the distinctive short figure of the Commander in his full Security Service uniform walking from the entry ticket barriers towards the escalators that lead down to the subterranean platform level "Alive and well after all it would seem".

"Next northbound Piccadilly Line train is four minutes away, next southbound in six minutes" the operative confirmed.

"Mr Hansell?" Dawson then called.

"I have a team right on top of him" Hansell confirmed "Just give the word and he's all ours."

"If you would be so kind?" Dawson then formally requested.

"Team Five from Echo One" Hansell then proceeded to call over his secure radio "Steve, he is all yours mate, bring him in."

As the Commander reached the bottom of the escalators, he took a brief look around the painstakingly restored 1930's Art Deco tiling and lighting which also gave him the opportunity to take a discreet glance behind him to see if he was being followed.

Sure enough as he reached the bottom of the escalator, the Commander caught a brief glimpse of a group of men reaching the top of the escalator and begin to make their descent towards him.

At the bottom of the escalator was the ornate tube shaped passage that separated the northbound and southbound Piccadilly line platforms with its recently restored pillar mounted ornate art deco lamps set down the centre.

The Commander paused by the second of the pillars and quickly stepped aside so that he was obscured by it to anyone coming up behind him.

As the group of men reached the bottom of the down escalator they quickly spread out as they realised that their target had apparently disappeared as the turbulence of an arriving northbound train blew through, causing them to become a little disorientated

for a few moments.

"Would you by any chance be looking for me gentlemen?" the Commander called as he stepped out into view, his right hand discreetly hovering in the region of his still holstered weapon.

At that moment a number of passengers passed through the hallway from the northbound platform towards the up escalator, apparently oblivious to what was unfolding there.

Both parties involved waited until the civilians had passed through before resuming their confrontation, the Commander standing alone in the centre of the hallway with the five men down the sides and across the escalators blocking any possible way out.

It was then that further footsteps were heard approaching where, as the Commander glanced back over his shoulder; another five men appeared and took up position so that in effect he was now completely surrounded.

"Administrator General, Commander Edward James Regent" the man leading the team called in a very formal manner as he stepped forward, meeting the Commander face to face.

"Afternoon" the Commander responded.

"Ombudsman General Steven Noble, Integrity Enforcement Bureau, for your security" the man proffered his formal identification which the Commander took and examined carefully before handing it back "Under section One One Five of the Emergency Security Powers Act, I have a warrant for your arrest" he duly informed him, handing over a very formal looking document.

"Ah..." the Commander responded as he took a brief look at the document.

"I think it would be best if we didn't create a scene, don't you think Sir?" Noble strongly suggested.

"Probably for the best" the Commander reluctantly agreed "I presume you have me outgunned as well as outnumbered?" he inquired.

Noble and the two men nearest him responded by discreetly pulling back the side of their jackets momentarily to reveal the underarm holsters containing their firearms.

"Your weapon please" Noble then requested whereupon the Commander slowly drew his gun and handed it over.

"I think we can dispense with the handcuffs this time" Noble then declared as he gestured to his men to stand down and they came together surrounding the Commander before with Noble leading, they headed back to the escalators and began to proceed back up to the ticket hall.

Despite the attempts at subtlety, the events unfolding underground had caught the

attentions of some passers by as well as the Station staff who had seen what had just happened via the CCTV screens in the Station Control Room.

"Baz" the Station Supervisor called across to one of his staff "Give the Transport Cops the bell, I think some bunch of assholes just arrested the Commander."

Outside the Station there were murmurs and looks of astonishment as the Commander was escorted swiftly out of the main entrance and shown into the back of a silver Mercedes minivan which was one of a convoy of three similar vehicles that had just arrived.

No sooner had the Commander and the men who had just detained him got in the vehicles than they departed at speed leaving behind bewildered onlookers.

Jack was contemplating getting something to eat when he became aware of the sound of sirens approaching, seemingly as they got progressively louder, heading straight for him.

"Uh oh..." Jack remarked to himself as he then saw the source of the sirens speeding into view, instantly recognising the Commander's personally allocated metallic black Ford Mondeo saloon car with its blue flashing lights and sirens in full cry allowing its driver to cut through the dense traffic like a knife through butter.

"Jack!" called a now familiar voice as soon as the car screeched to a halt at the kerb alongside him.

"Terry?" Jack responded as he went over to the open front passenger side window, bent down and looked all around inside the car "I know I am going to regret asking this but where is the Commander?" he then asked as he saw the rest of the car was unexpectedly empty.

"I think something has happened to him" Kinderley explained as he leaned across and opened the front passenger side door allowing Jack to get in "He instructed me to come and find you and give you this" he then handed across the Commander's briefcase before checking the traffic flow in his mirrors and preparing to drive off.

"I am assuming here that he hasn't sent me a packed lunch?" Jack asked as he tentatively released the catches and slowly opened the lid "Nope, definitely not" he then concluded on seeing the contents "Pity, I'm starving."

"There is also a bag in the boot for you and instructions in the front pocket of the case too" Kinderley confirmed as he concentrated on driving at speed through the city traffic.

"All this seems awfully well prepared for a spur of the moment reaction to a breaking event" Jack commented.

"I am saying nothing" Kinderley responded "I am as confused as hell as to what is

going on around here as I ever want to be mate."

"Right..." Jack then remarked as he opened the envelope containing his instructions and examined them "It would seem that I have been deputised."

"Welcome to the firm" Kinderley responded with a wry smile.

"I'm going to need some wheels though" Jack then remarked "Not this car though, too well known."

"I think that can be easily arranged" Kinderley confirmed "Just as long as you are not fussy about the colour."

"Okay, this isn't good" Tracy remarked as she walked into the main meeting room on the seventh floor of New Scotland Yard to be greeted with empty chairs where she had hoped to see the various senior members of their group.

Smartly turning on her heels she returned to the corridor to find MI6 Head of Operations John Hewitt approaching.

"Please tell me you are not alone?" Tracy asked.

"I thought I was late and everyone else was ahead of me" Hewitt admitted, taken somewhat off guard by Tracy's comment.

"Oh hell" Tracy responded which was when Fuller appeared behind her looking somewhat flustered.

"Either we have been transported to the Bermuda Triangle or someone is gradually taking us out of circulation one by one" Fuller responded "I can't get hold of the Commander now and it looks like the tracking device on his official car has either been disabled or destroyed."

"Who else is missing?" Hewitt asked.

"We know that Hoskins was grabbed by these Integrity idiots back at that Sci-Tech Industries place" Tracy confirmed "Collins is still safely tucked up in his Op's Room over at Thames House."

"I still have nothing on the whereabouts of either Commander McWilliam or Sir Richard" Fuller confirmed with a grim look.

"Time for a backup plan" Tracy then declared "John, I want you to make yourself scarce, get out of the spotlight and prepare a team that if needs be can take over from us should the rest of us 'disappear' as it were."

"I'll need some premises and a working coffee machine" Hewitt replied.

"Simon, show our friend here our little fixer upper in deepest darkest Surrey" Tracy instructed.

"Come with me Sir" Fuller then requested "I hope you have a lot of change on you, we may need it for the meter."

Tracy watched with a concerned look as Hewitt and Fuller disappeared from sight before taking out her mobile phone and making a call to the Commander's personal mobile however it went straight to voicemail.

"Darling, when you get this message can you call me ASAP" Tracy called, a tone of concern in her voice "I think the sky is falling in" she ominously added before hanging up.

"Sir!" one of Dave Collins' agents called with some urgency as he entered his superiors office after the briefest of knocks on the door holding a piece of paper that he quickly handed over "this is hot off the press."

Collins looked up from his desk and took the piece of paper before carefully studying the hastily typed details printed on it, the evidence for this being the poor grammar and spelling mistakes that were scattered throughout the text.

"Has this been confirmed?" Collins then urgently asked as he reached across the desk to pick up the telephone handset.

"Watch Team Five and one of Commander Cassini's guys saw the whole thing go down about ten minutes ago" the agent confirmed "the Commander didn't stand a chance of getting away before they grabbed him, and there is more."

"Let's hear the worst of it then" Collins prompted.

"Apparently that Integrity lot have issued detention orders signed by that face Dawson we were looking at for several senior members of the law enforcement and security agencies including the Commander, Tracy Caverner and you."

"Sounds like some kind of takeover bid" Collins concluded.

"Edward Hoskins has already disappeared off the grid and someone shut down BBC Radio 4 about ten minutes ago" the Agent added.

"In which case, scramble everything we have" Collins ordered "I need eyes on the ground everywhere."

"Yes Sir" the agent confirmed before departing almost as swiftly as he had arrived.

"Harry" Collins then called over the telephone as soon as he was connected "I need a car downstairs right away."

As soon as he had finished his call he got up, grabbed his jacket and quickly departed. As soon as he had passed through the fire exit doors and was heading down the rear stairwell, he took out his mobile telephone and quickly fired off a text message to an undisclosed recipient.

No sooner had he reached the bottom of the stairs than Collins was exiting through the door into narrow Thorney Street that runs along the rear of the MI5 building where a car was already waiting for him but before he got in, he proceeded to make a phone call.

Less than half a mile away on the top floor of New Scotland Yard, Tracy was back in her office searching through various files she had just withdrawn from the safe in the wall when her mobile phone that was sitting on the desk began to ring.

"Hello" Tracy responded as soon as she had picked up the handset and answered the call.

"Destroy your mobile phone and get the hell out of there as fast as you can!" Collins urgently called as he opened the driver's door of the car that had been made available as per his request a few moments earlier.

"Excuse me?" Tracy responded, somewhat taken aback by this sudden and unexpected statement.

"The Commander has been arrested by the Integrity Enforcement group" Collins confirmed "they already have Hoskins; I suspect they may have Sir Richard too and they will be coming for you very soon, I am on my way over now."

"In which case I am heading out the door right now" Tracy confirmed as she grabbed the files, flung them in a briefcase and, having grabbed her uniform tunic, made her way quickly out of the office.

"I will be there in two minutes" Collins confirmed as he got in the car, closed the door and started the engine "Keep you head down, the....."

Suddenly there was a large explosion as the car exploded in a ball of flames and burning debris, with the shockwaves shattering the windows of the surrounding buildings and causing alarms to be activated in nearby vehicles and buildings.

Tracy suddenly pulled the phone away from her ear as the call was suddenly cut off by a deafening screech before the line fell ominously silent whilst in the distance the alarms and the echoes of a large explosion could be heard.

Walking back to the office window, Tracy looked out and saw the smoke rising from over towards the River Thames accompanied by the ominous emergency siren that is always automatically sounded in the case of an incident in the Westminster area and she quickly realised what had happened.

There was no time to waste however as it became clear she needed to leave right

away. Returning to the office door, Tracy quickly departed only to be stopped in the corridor by one of her officers who approached her looking extremely concerned.

"There are some gentlemen in Reception looking for you Ma'am" the officer informed her "and the Control Room just received a request to allow a helicopter to land in the next few minutes."

"Friend or foe?" Tracy asked.

"I am pretty sure they are not here to read the meter" the officer grimly confirmed.

"Stall them anyway you can" Tracy requested "whatever you can think of, fire evacuation brief, bag search, foot and mouth regulations, anything" she confirmed as the sound of a helicopter approaching the building began to fill the air.

"I will see what I can do Ma'am" the officer confirmed "good luck" he then added.

"To us all" Tracy agreed before heading for the stairwell but as she reached the end of the corridor three men appeared from the lift dressed in identical suits and then proceeded with clear purpose towards her.

"Can I help you gentlemen?" Tracy asked but her calm and business like demeanour was soon countered by the lead member of the three men.

"Divisional Chief Superintendent Tracy Louise Caverner?" the man asked although he knew full well who he was confronting "Frank Cleaver, Integrity Enforcement Office, for your security" he declared "I have a warrant for your arrest."

"I suggest you and your associates leave, now, before it gets ugly" Tracy wisely and politely suggested as she and the officer with her were joined by three more officers who stood immediately behind them.

"We would be happy to leave, just with you along for the ride in handcuffs" Cleaver insisted.

"The lady asked you to leave" one of the officers insisted as he and the others drew their weapons and aimed directly ahead "If you value the integrity of your kneecaps; I strongly suggest you do as she says."

"Hmmm, very well" Cleaver appeared to concede as he and his two associates began to step back whereupon Tracy turned to the officers behind her.

"Keep these three under lock and key" Tracy instructed "a charge of aggressive trespass should do the trick for now."

"Yes Ma'am" the lead officer confirmed, having to raise his voice as the sound of the helicopter now resting on the roof directly overhead was almost deafening.

However at that moment further intruders appeared from the other end of the corridor and unlike Cleaver, these were fully armed and with guns drawn.

"What the...?" one of the officers remarked but the men approaching were in no mood to chat and suddenly began to open fire striking one of the officers down as he took a bullet in the leg and collapsed to the floor in sudden pain and shock.

"GUN!" the first officer called as he and the others took cover in doorways and exchanged fire with the intruders "These guys mean business."

Further officers quickly arrived on the scene drawn in by the sound of the gunfire and within a few moments the attackers were overpowered and brought under control whilst Cleaver and his two associates quickly found themselves surrounded and under arrest.

"Chuck these gentlemen in a cell for the night and keep it quiet" Tracy requested "and whilst I am gone, keep this place under guard around the clock" she instructed.

"You get out of here Ma'am" one of the officers confirmed "We'll cover you."

Tracy duly nodded in thanks before with her gun drawn; she headed off down the corridor towards the stairwell, pausing only briefly to look down at Cleaver and his two associates who were on the floor with hands now bound behind their backs.

"Amateurs!" Tracy remarked with a sarcastic smirk before heading through the stairwell doors and proceeding down, only pausing to look through the window for a moment as she noticed a number of vehicles arriving outside both the front and back of New Scotland Yard from which more of the Integrity Enforcement Bureau representatives were emerging and attempting to enter the building.

"Is there a convention on and nobody told me?" Tracy remarked as she resumed her journey down the stairs, grabbing her radio and proceeding to make a call.

"Angel One to Gold Command" she then called over the radio "the Eagles Nest is being over run by mice, going to backup location Gold Two" Tracy then confirmed as she reached the bottom of the stairs and went through the door into the basement car park only to find two more Integrity Enforcement officers emerging from another entrance opposite who immediately upon seeing her, drew their weapons and opened fire.

Tracy immediately responded by opening fire herself where her excellent marksmanship skills saw the two attackers stopped in their tracks in just two shots.

At that moment a car appeared, coming down the ramp from the exit, tyres squealing on the concrete surface as it approached her at speed before braking to a sudden halt in front of her whereupon Tracy immediately reacted by aiming her gun directly at the unseen driver of the vehicle.

"Get in!" came a familiar voice from the drivers seat as the side window was lowered and to her surprise she saw Jack behind the wheel who quickly leaned back and opened the rear passenger door.

"When do you learn to drive?" Tracy asked as she quickly holstered her weapon and clambered in the rear passenger seat.

"I've been taking a few lessons from Dad" Jack confirmed as he looked back to see Tracy get in and lie down across the back seat out of sight before gunning the engine and accelerating away back up the exit ramp.

Immediately outside New Scotland Yard there was a scene of confusion and chaos as Security Service officers were trying to distract and delay the various Integrity Enforcement officers who were continuing to arrive in every increasing numbers.

This meant that Jack was able to drive up the ramp from the basement car park and out into the street without interference or hindrance before quickly accelerating away from the scene.

"We're clear" Jack called back once he had turned right out of Broadway into Victoria Street and continued to head west as fast as the traffic conditions permitted without attracting too much attention.

"These seats stink" Tracy remarked as she got back up and then leaned forward between the front seats to see the road ahead for herself as they passed the major building and road works in and around Victoria Station "Whose wheels are these?" she then asked.

"One of Auntie Jennifer's reserve fleet" Jack explained "She is not aware of this little operation by the way and as far as any computer system is concerned, this car is in the shop for repairs so hopefully we shouldn't attract any unwanted attention."

"Did you hear an explosion about ten minutes ago?" Tracy then asked.

"A car bomb outside the back door of Thames House" Jack confirmed "someone just got a very nasty surprise it would seem."

"Dam...." Tracy responded.

"Anyone we know?" Jack asked with apprehension.

"I think it was Dave Collins" Tracy explained "he was on the phone to me warning that the Integrity flunkeys were on their way when he suddenly got cut off at the same moment I heard that explosion."

"They would appear to be picking us off one by one through a variety of different means" Jack commented "the Commander has been arrested, Cassini just helped grab Simon Fuller and John Hewitt and get them to safety, they just missed you and it looks like Collins is a goner."

"Where are we going?" Tracy asked.

"Our little facility in deepest darkest Surrey" Jack confirmed as he merged into the traffic "The others, those who are still out and about that is are hopefully going to

meet us there."

"Hansell here with the special package for Mr Dawson" he declared into the intercom at the high security gate.

"Okay" came the somewhat crackly response before there was a buzzing noise which preceded the electrical opening of the gates.

Hansell's driver drove forward and entered the site identified by the newly erected sign adjacent as the 'Detention & Operations Centre' of the 'Integrity Enforcement Service' complete with a coat of arms all in tasteful gentle shades of green and blue deliberately chosen and designed to present a far smoother and more friendly face to this new organisation than it really had.

The car was met by an Integrity Enforcement Officer a short distance inside the formidable tall electrified fence who after looking around inside the car to verify those inside, proceeded to issue instructions.

"Arrivals to be delivered around to the Detention Block for processing please" the officer instructed, indicating one of the buildings up ahead "You can park just outside" he then confirmed.

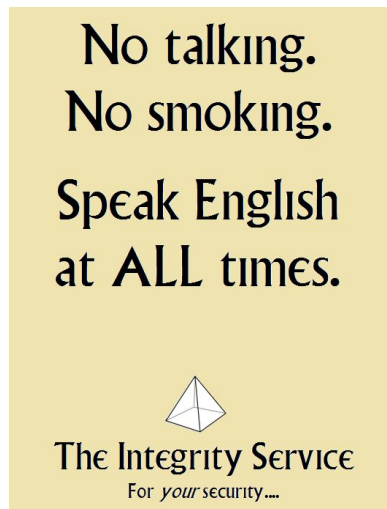
Hansell's driver duly followed the directions given and drove around to the Detention Block where below a sign saying 'Detainee Arrivals' were stood two more armed Integrity Enforcement Officers who as soon as the car had come to a halt in front of them, proceeded to step forward, open the rear door and help the Commander out before escorting him under close guard to the entrance with a smiling Hansell following closely behind.

Inside the brightly lit reception area which still smelled of fresh paint, the Commander was taken up to the Detainee Processing Desk where an officious looking man presided over what was clearly being signalled to be his domain and his alone.

"Good evening" the man behind the desk called "I am Integrator Administrator Devereaux" he confirmed.

"How do you do" the Commander responded.

"Ahem..." Devereaux coughed suggestively and indicated a sign on the wall alongside.



"Please place your right hand on the sensor" Devereaux then instructed, indicating the black screen like panel angled towards the Commander.

"Okay..." the Commander responded, duly proceeding as ordered. Once the palm of his hand came into contact with the screen, it flashed for a few moments as he was scanned, the resulting image including enlarged images of all five fingerprints then being displayed on a large screen on the wall alongside pretty much his entire personal history and details.

"Very snazzy" the Commander then remarked.

"Once again may I remind you of the rules of conduct Sir" Devereaux reminded him, again pointing to the sign on the wall.

"Sorry..." the Commander apologised without any real meaning or intent, just a brief mocking smile.

"Please confirm your name, position and status" Devereaux then requested.

"National Administrator General, Divisional Chief Superintendent Edward James Regent" the Commander duly confirmed "I'm standing up and I am married."

"Not quite what I meant Mr Regent but it will suffice for now" Devereaux responded, giving up by now on any possibility of any proper co-operation and deciding instead to just plough on with the formalities.

The Commander merely smirked with the satisfaction that his winding up was gradually annoying Devereaux more and more as it went on.

"You are required to surrender your weapon, identification and warrant cards" Devereaux then instructed as an Integrity Officer stepped forward with a grey plastic tray and placed it on the desk in front of him "Now please" he then reinforced his authority.

"Hmmm" the Commander responded as he then proceeded to take out his warrant

card and identification and place it in the tray. "Your rent-a-thugs already took my gun in case you were wondering" he then pointed out.

"Those 'rent-a-thugs' you are so ably demeaning are my highly trained and motivated security and integrity enforcement professionals" Hansell pointed out, clearly none too impressed by the Commander's dismissive tone.

"Oh" the Commander responded, turning around to face Hansell "you have learnt long words now I see, how very diligent of you, keep it up."

"You think you are funny?" Hansell then stepped forward in an attempt to enforce menace upon the Commander only to find him standing firm and unmoved despite his disadvantage in height.

"I've been known to raise the occasional laugh now and then" the Commander admitted.

"Your time is over old man" Hansell then responded defiantly "A new era has begun; we are the iron fist in the velvet glove whereas you and your antiquated old school associates are the lead pipe in the dishevelled suit."

"Such eloquence from one so young" the Commander replied "Give it up now Mr Hansell or whatever your name really is, you can't win this one no matter how hard you try."

"Oh but I think you will find we can Commander" a now familiar voice called causing both Hansell and the Commander to turn to see Dawson enter the room whereupon he looked on with a broad smile "Welcome Commander, it is so nice to see you alive and healthy" he then called.

"Alive yes, healthy?" the Commander remarked "that is the subject of some lengthy debate between my doctor and the service's Occupational Health Department."

"You are here at last, that is the most important thing right now" Dawson continued.

"Which brings me on to my next point" the Commander then asked "Where am I and why am I here?"

"This brand spanking new facility is the first of many detention processing centres of the new privatised Integrity Enforcement Service, for your security" Dawson announced with the cheesy tag line on the end as he gestured around as if in pride "We are taking the justice industry in this country into the private sector and taking out the trash as our American cousins say."

"Charges?" the Commander then inquired "After all if you are detaining someone, there must be a charge to be made."

"Not the sort of procedural nicety that has ever stopped you before Commander" Dawson responded "Oh yes, I have read your files, all of them. It is amazing what we found before that oh so unfortunate fire in the records office the other day

conveniently destroyed any evidence our representatives were ever there."

"I thought as much" the Commander remarked.

"The reason we have detained you Commander is because of who you are" Dawson continued.

"I wasn't aware being me was a crime" the Commander replied.

"You see" Dawson began "you are the one who leads, the one who fights, the one who protects, the one who serves, the one who defends justice and punishes the guilty, you Sir are *the* Commander."

"Very eloquent Mr Dawson, you should get that put on a t-shirt" the Commander retorted.

"Let's be honest here, the main issue as far as we are concerned is that you are just too damn good at your job" Dawson then summarised "and if we are to achieve our ambitions seeing as you have declined our kind invitation to join us then you leave us with no choice but to take you and your associates out of circulation until such a time as you either cease to be obstructive to our aims and objectives or you no longer matter."

"Sorry to be a bother" the Commander mockingly apologised "but just taking me out of the equation won't help you, the Service is more than one man, there are plenty more to follow in my footsteps you know."

"Give it up Commander" Dawson responded sincerely "we are the new modern face of justice and security, your time is over."

"We will see" the Commander defiantly replied.

"Take him to his room" Dawson instructed "and ensure please that his stay is pleasant and he is treated with respect."

"Humph..." Hansell responded but then proceeded to do as he was ordered, indicating to the two guards to escort the Commander away.

Dawson looked on as the Commander disappeared from view down the adjacent corridor and contemplated the exchange of views he had just had. His chain of thought would however be quickly interrupted by the ringing of his mobile telephone.

"Go ahead" Dawson answered the call.

"Noble here Sir" the Integrity Enforcement Co-ordinator called from his office "I have an update on the first phase of detentions."

"Give me good news Stephen" Dawson requested.

"My Special Measures team have successfully dealt with the MI5's Operations Chief"

Noble confirmed "I put a special effort in for that one and with a few judiciously placed red herrings the National Security & Police Service will be chasing phantom terrorists for at least the next few days."

"Excellent" Dawson responded with a smile of delight as Hansell rejoined him "with the press working themselves into a frenzy over the dossier of bullshit on Sir Hugo we have created especially for them, they should be looking the other way for quite some time."

"I fully agree Sir" Noble confirmed "I would love to be a fly on the wall in the forensics department when they try and find any trace of our special explosive and then can't find any" he remarked "however we have hit a problem with one of our other key targets" he then slightly reluctantly informed.

"Which one?" Dawson asked, his sudden concern readily apparent.

"Divisional Commander Tracy Caverner has given us the slip and gone to ground" Noble confirmed with a tinge of regret "Someone tipped her off that we were coming and I think that she got help from someone off our radar"

"Find out who has been helping her and then get them firmly on our radar" Dawson instructed "and then get the detention teams working on phase two."

"Yes Sir" Noble responded before Dawson hung up.

"Dammit!!" Dawson exclaimed before turning to Hansell "Garry, find that bitch Tracy Caverner and remove her from our collective miseries, dead or alive I don't care which."

"What about the operation?" Hansell then asked "We are preparing to move the merchandise tonight" he then reminded his superior.

"Your men are capable of taking care of that" Dawson reassured him "they have their instructions and they know what to do. No, I want you to take care of the Caverner problem personally, whatever it takes, whatever you need, do it."

"Yes Sir" Hansell confirmed "I think I know a good place to start, if you will excuse me Sir" he then declared to which Dawson nodded in response before he departed.

"Dam you Tracy, dam you to hell" Dawson then remarked to himself before regaining his composure and leaving the room.

"Ah, company at last!" Sir Richard remarked as he looked up when the door opened and the Commander was shown inside before the door was firmly closed again behind him.

"Well fancy meeting you two renegades here" the Commander responded as he stepped forward into the modestly sized room and took a seat on the couch alongside

Sir Richard with McWilliam sat in an easy chair directly opposite.

"We err ran into some problems" McWilliam admitted slightly sheepishly.

"Of the bad guys with guns variety?" the Commander asked.

"Yeah..." McWilliam then confirmed "and we seem to have lost Sir Hugo along the way too."

"You found him?" the Commander asked.

"Holed up in a farm cottage just outside Portmerion, Wales" Sir Richard confirmed "We were just relaxing and enjoying some tea when Dawson's Integrity thugs turned up enmasse."

"Where is Sir Hugo now?" the Commander asked "Dead?"

"Still alive when we last saw him" McWilliam responded "They took him away just after we got here and we haven't seen him since."

"We got the distinct impression that Dawson had other more complex plans for him" Sir Richard added "I doubt we will be seeing him again anytime soon."

"Do either of you have any idea who this Dawson character really is?" the Commander asked "I keep trying to place the face but keep coming up empty."

"He's a sly character" Sir Richard confirmed "Every time I have tried to find out more about him beyond his name and vital statistics I have drawn a complete blank, he has kept so far below the radar that nobody noticed him until the Pyramid Group burst upon the public scene last week."

"I will tell you one thing though" McWilliam then added "the thugs that this Integrity bunch of bozos is using, I have definitely seen them before."

"Where?" the Commander asked, his interest suitably piqued.

"Do you recall a while back I was having some difficulty with some very unpleasant freelance thugs with guns out in the wilds of rural Wales?" McWilliam asked.

"Ah yes" the Commander recalled "I do recall that business yes."

"I definitely recognised some of the thugs who intercepted us earlier as some of the same guys" McWilliam then confirmed.

"Are you sure?" the Commander asked.

"I never forget an asshole" McWilliam responded determinedly "and that chief asshole Hansell, he is also firmly on my shit list."

"You know that guy too?" Sir Richard asked with some surprise apparent.

"I cannot be certain without doing a bit of digging around but his style and face fits a former SAS training sergeant major who turned rogue, going freelance about fifteen years ago" McWilliam explained "got kicked out for excessive use of disciplinary force and went freelance, selling his skills in kicking the shit out of people to the highest bidder."

"Sounds just like the sort of guy this Pyramid lot would employ to do their wet work" Sir Richard concluded.

"And his name isn't Hansell either" McWilliam continued "I would wager the real Hansell died when he was very young and the identity was lifted from the Births, Deaths & Marriages register, a new birth certificate issued and he went on from there."

"Well whatever his name is" the Commander responded with clear determination "before all this is over I am going to personally take care of this Mr. Hansell or whatever his name is."

"I'll bring a baseball bat" McWilliam remarked.

"...and I will bring the refreshments" Sir Richard then added.

"Prime Minister" the Personal Private Secretary was heard to call over the intercom on her desk "There is a priority one call for you on the green scrambler."

"Thank you" the Prime Minister responded before reaching over to the green telephone on the desk, one of four available to her in four different colours, the red one being a hotline to certain other key world leaders, the other two being for domestic communications.

"Hello" she then called once she had picked up the handset of the green telephone and pressed the single button on it to activate the descrambling system at her end of the call.

"Prime Minister, good afternoon" Dawson's voice was heard to call.

"Oh, it's you Mr Dawson" the Prime Minister responded with a noticeable lack of enthusiasm once she heard who it was that was calling "What can I do for you?"

"I wanted to brief you on our ongoing operations" Dawson responded "Our amazing success in installing our new system of justice and security which will benefit all."

"Yeah, I saw the advert" the Prime Minister confirmed.

"...for your security!" Dawson replicated his delivery of the tag line from the commercial with a smirk "Pretty slick don't you think?" he asked.

"Never been a one for advertising Mr Dawson" the Prime Minister admitted "So where do we stand?" she then asked.

"I have taken the liberty of taking into protective custody certain key individuals who would have stood in the way of our plans" Dawson confirmed "so far we have Sir Richard Crowthorne, his aide, a gentleman from Interpol by the name of Hoskins and the Commander himself enjoying our hospitality."

"Would that aide be Commander McWilliam by any chance?" the Prime Minister asked, sensing an opportunity to break into the Pyramid group and steal an advantage if she could convince Dawson to play along.

"Erm yes it is" Dawson checked his leather bound note book for a moment to confirm the details.

"We may have an opportunity here to recruit someone who is sympathetic to our cause and yet has inside knowledge of the workings of Sir Richard Crowthorne's organisation" the Prime Minister decided to try pushing all the right buttons in Dawson's mind and manipulate him "that is one area where resources on the inside are at best limited."

"Interesting" Dawson remarked as he gave the matter some thought "what did you have in mind?" he then asked.

"In about half an hour I am travelling to Chequers where I will be spending the night" the Prime Minister confirmed "Have her brought to me, I will talk to her personally as I know her, I think I can persuade her to convert to our cause."

"Very well" Dawson confirmed "I will make the arrangements."

"Thank you" the Prime Minister responded "meanwhile, what was that explosion half an hour ago all about?" she asked.

"Just swatting a fly and in the process sending a message" Dawson confirmed.

"Well whatever your message was, it is making a lot of those in the corridors of power rather jittery" the Prime Minister responded.

"Good" Dawson replied "Exactly the effect I was hoping for."

"One of Hansell's little party tricks?" the Prime Minister decided to dig around a bit.

"One of my other very useful people" Dawson confirmed "Mr Hansell was busy on another matter at the time."

"You mean you have more than one mad dog killer type on your books?" the Prime Minister inquired with an understandable look of concern.

"Oh you would be surprised at the talent I have at my disposal Prime Minister" Dawson proudly confirmed "Some less visible than others."

"Well keep them well away from me" the Prime Minister warned "the last thing I need before I have even had the chance to get my feet under the desk is any loose cannons rolling around the place."

"Don't worry Prime Minister" Dawson reassured her although if anyone was in the room at the time they would have seen from his expression that he was obviously lying "you are perfectly safe and as far removed from our independent activities as possible."

"Very well" the Prime Minister responded "Keep it that way and have Commander McWilliam brought to me at once. I want her treated with full courtesy and respect."

"It shall be done" Dawson confirmed "I shall call you again with a further update in the morning."

"What the hell is this place?" Hewitt asked as Fuller drove the anonymous white Ford Transit van off the road and through an old gateway that was being guarded by a couple of soldiers from the Army with attendant khaki green painted military specification Land Rover and small armoured personnel carrier parked nearby.

"A unique fixer upper opportunity set in the leafy Surrey countryside" Fuller confirmed as he got out of the van having parked it as far up the old deteriorated concrete entrance driveway as he could, the way ahead blocked by crumbling old concrete blocks firmly fixed to the ground.

"Looks like an old wartime facility to me" Hewitt remarked as he joined Fuller at the front of the van.

"That is exactly what it is" Fuller confirmed as he led the way along a narrow path through quite thick woodland until they reached a rock face into which was set a large slightly rusty steel doorway guarded by two more army soldiers, one of whom opened the door to allow them to enter.

"I've seen worse" Hewitt remarked as he followed Fuller inside whereupon they proceeded down a concrete lined passageway that sloped down into the bowels of the earth, the only illumination now that the door to the outside world had been closed behind them being the bulkhead lights on the walls either side.

"Welcome to the old Southern Railway World War II Dorking emergency control centre bunker" Fuller declared as they reached the occupied level, a number of corridors spinning off in different directions with offices and accommodation leading off those behind a number of identical dark green painted doorways.

"And if I were to Google this delightful hole in the ground, what would I get?" Hewitt then asked.

"As far as the outside world in general and the Pyramid loonies in particular are

concerned this is an abandoned asbestos laden facility that has lain undisturbed since 1949" Fuller explained as they proceeded down the central corridor "we however requisitioned it a couple of years ago and refurbished it for just this sort of crisis."

"Commander Fuller, we have been expecting you" the smartly uniformed figure of the Joint Armed Forces Chief of Defence, Colonel Stephens called as they met in the main meeting room at the far end of the corridor.

"This is John Hewitt, head of operations at MI6" Fuller then introduced his companion who proceeded to shake hands "I am sorry for the short notice" he then apologised "it seems this Pyramid Group are moving much faster than any of us had anticipated."

"I scrambled my team as soon as I heard that BBC Radio Four was off the air" the Colonel confirmed.

"Glad it worked" Fuller responded "I just hope someone remembered to put it back on again otherwise there will be hell to pay."

"Well the electricity is on" the Colonel then confirmed "my men have all the communications links connected up and as many of the Security Services personnel as we can discreetly transport without the Integrity thugs noticing are on their way over here now."

"Excellent" Fuller declared "In which case I think it is time to get to work."

Amongst the smoke and smouldering wreckage emerged a forlorn and worried looking figure, a man in his early thirties of short slim build, hair already greying despite his comparatively young age.

As he stepped back and watched the Fire & Rescue Service officers tackle the few pockets of fire that still remained, he took in the smoke obscured scene where forty minutes earlier Dave Collins' car had once been until it was destroyed by the explosion, instantly killing the vehicle's sole occupant and also causing injuries to others whom were both in the street and near windows of the surrounding buildings at the moment of detonation.

Windows all around were shattered, pieces of the car, broken shards of glass and chunks of dislodged masonry were strewn about, like something you would see in a war zone and all around various members of the security services were sealing the scene off from prying eyes with high barrier screens now being erected at either end of the street.

The man continued to look on accompanied by a few others in a state that was a mix of shock and disbelief at what they were witnessing.

It was then that the man's mobile phone began to ring. Looking at the display before answering the call resulted in a deep intake of breath before he pressed the answer

button.

"Christopher Dent speaking" the man answered "What can I do for you Director General."

"I've only just heard the news" Sir Frank McGregor, the Director General of MI5 called "Has it been confirmed yet?" he asked.

"Yes Sir" Dent confirmed with regret "although there has been no formal identification yet, indeed there isn't much left to identify but it would seem Section Chief, Operations David Collins is dead."

"Dear God..." the Director General responded "I don't suppose there is even the remotest chance this was an accident?" he asked more out of hope than expectation.

"Regrettably not Sir" Dent confirmed "The blast damage to the car and the surrounding area is textbook car bomb; you couldn't find a better definition in the official anti-terrorist training handbook."

"Christ..." the Director General was heard to utter under his breath before returning to the matter at hand "Okay then, as of now you are hereby promoted as Collins' successor" he then informed him.

"Err yes Sir" Dent responded, slightly taken aback at the news. Whilst he had been Collins' second in command for a couple of years now, he had never expected to be suddenly thrust into the hot seat.

"You will need to find out exactly where your old boss was with investigating these Integrity cretins" the Director General instructed "Liaise with Divisional Commander Caverner if you can find her, word is she had a visit from those self same Integrity cretins a short while ago and managed to give them the slip according to my reliable sources" he then confirmed.

"I'll get right on it Sir" Dent duly agreed.

"Keep me informed and good luck" the Director General then called before disconnecting the call.

"Right..." Dent remarked as he put his mobile phone away before looking around as if in search of inspiration.

"Francis!" he then called to one of his agents who was amongst those on site investigating the wreckage "get the team together, we've got work to do" he declared.

"Yes boss!" the agent responded.

"Boss, I kind of like that" Dent remarked to himself before resuming "I'm going over to Scotland Yard to see if I can track down Divisional Commander Caverner" he then informed his team as they gathered around.

"Do you want a car Sir?" one of Dent's agents asked.

"Err..." Dent looked around for a few moments at the wreckage "Actually, I think I'll walk thanks."

A few minutes later Dent was walking up Horseferry Road towards Strutton Ground, noting how eerily quiet the normally busy surrounding area was as the explosion and the Sir Hugo incident earlier in Parliament Square had triggered a lock down of Westminster and the surrounding area.

Despite the quietness, Dent failed to register the presence of a slightly shabby looking dark red Ford Transit van that had pulled slowly out of Marsham Street once he had walked past the end whereupon it proceeded to follow him at a distance for a while.

It was only as he passed the television company headquarters building approaching the miniature roundabout at Strutton Ground that Dent began to sense something was wrong.

When he glanced around to confirm his suspicions, the driver of the van quickly accelerated ahead and before Dent could react, it had gone around him and screeched to a halt where immediately four hooded men emerged from the back, grabbed him, put a black cloth bag over his head and then bundled him into the back of the van.

Within moments the four hooded men were back inside the van which then quickly accelerated away.

"What the hell is going on?" Dent demanded to know as he lay, bound and bagged on the floor of the fast travelling van.

"Relax" the driver of the van was heard to call back "My Guvnor wants to talk to you" he evasively announced.

"Where is everybody?" Davis, the new Home Secretary commented as he got out of the rear of his official car outside the main entrance of the Home Office ministry building in Marsham Street and looked around as he was joined by his allocated plain clothes Security Service body guard.

"I think there has been some sort of incident and the whole area is on lock down Sir" Jennifer Caverner who had driven him there from Downing Street confirmed.

"Who needs the Congestion Charge?" Davis remarked with a wry smile.

"I don't pay it anyway Sir" Jennifer confirmed with a wry smile.

"Best get to work then" Davis declared "Thank you for the ride."

"Just call me when you need me" Jennifer confirmed as she returned to the drivers

seat "Best cab firm in town!"

It was with a little trepidation that Davis then proceeded towards the main entrance with the body guard following closely behind, looking all around at all times.

"Welcome Sir" the Receptionist called as he came into the main lobby area "Downing Street called to say you were on your way."

"Thank you" Davis responded as a number of senior civil servants joined him.

"Congratulations on your appointment Sir" one of the civil servants called.

"I am still trying to get my head around that" Davis frankly admitted "I would have liked to have made a sort of arrival speech but unfortunately we are pressed for time, it's late and we have a lot of work to do."

"The Ministry awaits your orders Sir" another of the Civil Servants confirmed.

"In which case I want the legal advisory team and the best lawyers from the Justice Ministry assembled in the biggest meeting room we have in thirty minutes" Davis formally requested "in addition we will also need copies of every bit of legislation relating to law enforcement organisations, private contractors in secure operations within the UK and the full text of the United Nations mandate that created the National Police & Security Service."

"It will be done Sir" the first civil servant confirmed "Anything else Sir?"

"We'll need a large quantity of sandwiches, strong coffee and midnight oil too" Davis responded "It's going to be a long night."

"Ah, there you are Mr Hansell" Dawson greeted as he walked in through the main entrance of the Pyramid Group offices in The Shard building.

"Just on my way to brief the lads before they collect the merchandise Mr Dawson" Hansell confirmed "then I am turning my attentions to our missing Ms Caverner, all being well we should be ready to initiate the third phase on time with her safely out of the way to boot."

"Excellent, excellent" Dawson enthused "I won't stand in your way then" he then confirmed "Good luck and err be careful?"

"I will Sir, thank you" Hansell responded.

"Oh, Gary?" Dawson then called after him causing him to turn back "Nice work on the Dent pick up" he called "I must say to eliminate one of our potential problems and then capture his successor all in the space of less an hour is quite an achievement."

"I'm sorry Sir?" Hansell quizzically responded.

"Hooded men, unmarked van, in the middle of a lock down zone too so few witnesses" Dawson explained "absolutely text book snatch job."

"I hate to break this to you Sir but it wasn't us" Hansell confirmed.

"Huh?" Dawson was understandably dumbfounded by this revelation "so if we didn't grab him, who the hell did?" he asked.

"Welcome" a female voice called as Dent was shown into a room and placed in a chair, still bound and bagged having been brought into a building from the van that he had been abducted in approximately half an hour earlier.

"I demand to know what is going on!" Dent responded at which point he could feel the ties binding his hands were now being removed before the hood was pulled off causing him to squint for a moment as his eyes adjusted to the light once more.

"Congratulations on your promotion" the female voice then called "I only wish it and our first meeting here were under considerably happier circumstances."

"Ah, the penny drops" Dent responded as he managed to focus his eyes to see that he was sat in a office and ahead of him sat behind a desk was Tracy.

"I think our guest could use a drink" Tracy suggested whereupon Jack brought over a glass of Scotch which Dent gratefully accepted.

"Thank you" Dent responded before Tracy indicated to the others in the room to leave so that they could talk alone.

"I apologise for the abrupt and unorthodox methods we were forced to employ in bringing you here" Tracy then continued "unfortunately recent events have made things rather complicated" she explained.

"My boss is dead" Dent remarked "the lunatics seem to be taking over, hidden behind a thin veneer of glossy advertising and spin, various key players including your husband, Sir Richard Crowthorne and indeed yourself have suddenly vanished off the face of the planet, I'll say it's complicated" he agreed.

"We have a situation" Tracy continued "a situation where we cannot be certain who to trust."

"Hence the abrupt nature of my arrival?" Dent ventured.

"That little dramatic performance came courtesy of Commander Cassini and his specialist covert surveillance lads" Tracy explained "strictly for the benefit of the audience from whom we needed to get you away as quickly as we could."

"The 'audience' being these Integrity cretins and or their Pyramid paymasters I

presume?" Dent asked.

"They have eyes everywhere it would seem" Tracy admitted.

"So if I may ask, how do you know I can be trusted?" Dent inquired.

"I am glad you asked" Tracy responded "You have been vouched for by an old friend" she produced a DVD disc that she proceeded to insert into the player slot of the large television mounted on the wall.

A few moments later the disc began to play and a familiar face appeared on the screen.

"Hello" Collins announced in an eerie video seemingly from beyond the grave "This video is a contingency plan to be delivered to either the Commander or Tracy Caverner in the event of my death."

"This is slightly creepy" Dent admitted as the video continued.

"Under this Contingency plan, upon my death, the Director General of MI5 will ensure the delivery of this message and that my second in command Christopher Dent is immediately appointed to take my place" Collins continued.

"Let me assure you right now that he is in no way affiliated with any organisations against whom we have any negative dealings" Collins went on to explain "you can trust him implicitly and without question or doubt."

"Always nice to receive a personal recommendation" Dent remarked with a smile.

"Chris" Collins then addressed him directly "Upon my death the Director General will immediately transfer over to your access codes all of my files that I possess however you will also need my black file archive that I keep hidden away from the grid and prying eyes."

At that moment Tracy produced a black envelope which was sealed in a traditional manner by means of ribbon and sealing wax to show it had not been tampered with by any third party.

"Some of what you will find in this archive is so sensitive that even MI5 including the Director General himself must not know about it" Collins continued to explain "other material is what was passed into my care by Sir Richard Crowthorne when I took up this position some years ago. All of it is to be considered dangerous in the wrong hands but will provide you with essential leverage in case of difficulty in the months and years to come."

By this time Dent had taken the envelope from Tracy, broken the seal and opened it before reading the details contained inside with considerable interest.

"So that's it then" Collins began to conclude "It leaves me only to wish you the very best of luck, make me proud and when the time comes I will see you on the other

side."

At that point the video ended and the screen went blank whereupon both Dent and Tracy remained silent as if in respect for Collins' passing for a few moments.

"Black archive" Dent remarked "sound rather ominous."

"Most senior security agency officers have such a depository of dark secrets" Tracy confirmed "a little leverage or something for a rainy day."

"So what is it you want me to do?" Dent then asked as he closed the black envelope and placed it in the safety of his inside jacket pocket.

"The Security Ombudsman has effectively gagged us and their Integrity Enforcement officers are taking care of the rest thus preventing anyone from conducting any formal investigation into pretty much anything that has occurred in the last seven days" Tracy began to explain.

"I recall Collins mentioning something about it" Dent confirmed.

"We have too many loose ends being deliberately wrapped around us to keep us off guard and chasing our own tails" Tracy then continued "Sir Hugo's sudden resignation and subsequent very public disgracing, the armed robbery the other night, the Alistair Court mystery and the unexplained death of the Justice Secretary William Devane to name just a few."

"Did the post mortem on Devane ever appear?" Dent asked.

"Someone has gone and sat on it" Tracy responded "There must be something in that report the Pyramid Group doesn't want us to see."

"I know someone who may be able to help" Dent remarked "all it will take is a couple of phone calls and a brown envelope of cash, it's amazing what a little money discreetly spread about can do to loosen tongues."

"Do it" Tracy readily agreed "but be careful, we need full deniability on this" she then warned.

"Oh I am very discrete" Dent confirmed "I will need access to my people though" he then remarked.

"Come with me" Tracy duly showed Dent over to the door and the exited out into a well lit but very utilitarian looking corridor which was built of solid concrete panels with no windows or other features other than more doors.

"What the hell is this place?" Dent asked.

"Old wartime bunker, used to belong to the railway company" Tracy explained as she escorted him down the busy corridor "my husband managed to requisition it on the quiet a couple of years ago for just such a national emergency."

"And my team?" Dent asked as they reached a door that Tracy then opened, showing him inside.

"I had them picked up and brought in" Tracy confirmed as they entered the room to find a number of men and women already hard at work on telephones and computers, work that paused briefly when they arrived.

"Evening everyone" Dent announced.

"Good evening boss" one of the agents responded to which he managed a partial smile in response.

"Let's get to work shall we?" he then declared.

"If anyone see or hears anything of either Sir Richard Crowthorne or the Commander I want to be advised immediately please" Tracy requested.

"You will be the first to know Commander Caverner" Dent confirmed.

"There must be a way out of here, a ventilation duct or something?" McWilliam remarked as she knelt down and tried to peer through a grill in the wall.

"I hate to break this to you my dear" Sir Richard responded "but I think you will find that only happens in the movies."

"Well I thought it was worth a try" McWilliam admitted as she sat back down again.

"We could pull my good old phoney heart attack trick" the Commander suggested "It worked once before if you recall."

"Trouble is" Sir Richard countered "this bunch doesn't really care if you are alive or dead in the grand scheme of things, especially that thug Hansell."

"Drat..." the Commander responded "I suppose all we can do then is form an escape committee and start tunnelling out of here using plastic tea spoons."

"Don't worry" Sir Richard reassured the other two "I am sure an opportunity to regain our liberty will arise at some point, they can't keep us locked up in here forever, it would eventually generate an awful lot of awkward questions."

"Well at least you can get tea here" the Commander remarked as he went over to the side table and refilled his cup.

It was then that they heard footsteps approaching the door to the room and the jangling of keys immediately outside before the door was unlocked and opened.

"Come on" the Integrity Enforcement Officer who entered called, another two of his

colleagues blocking the doorway behind him "the Prime Minister wants to see you" he declared.

"Well I must say it's been a pleasure" Sir Richard declared as he started to get up only to be cut short.

"Not you" the Integrity Enforcement Officer gruffly called "Her" he indicated McWilliam to everyone's surprise, not least McWilliam herself.

"What have you done to warrant special favours from the PM then?" the Commander asked as McWilliam got up and responded with a matter of fact shrug of the shoulders.

"Trust me, you don't want to know" Sir Richard informed the Commander as McWilliam was escorted towards the door.

"See you later gentlemen" she called back "I'll send pizza."

"I know it's against the regulations but I am the Home Secretary and quite frankly I need it" Davis declared "Lighting up" he then announced as he took out a cigarette from the packet he produced from his pocket and lit it before passing the rest of the packet and the lighter around the meeting room table where it was gratefully received by many.

"Very naughty Home Secretary" the Chief Legal Advisor, Yavin Helmund QC remarked sarcastically.

"Sue me" Davis responded "Now, where were we?" he then asked as he returned to leafing through the huge amount of legal documents, notes and books that were spread liberally all over the table.

"The United Nations Charter that originally set up the National Security & Civil Defence Service as it was originally called states that any changes to the organisation or its senior commanding officers can only be done with the approval of the appropriate UN Security Sub-Committee" Helmund confirmed "Unfortunately that doesn't help us for as far as I can tell the Pyramid Group's Integrity Enforcement Bureau have not actually attempted to dissolve or take over the Service, just take control of the Ombudsman Office which is outside the jurisdiction of this legislation."

"But Tracy and the Commander are missing" one of the other legal advisors gathered around the table pointed out.

"Missing, yes" Helmund agreed "however the Pyramid Group has done nothing to replace them so effectively it is like they are on holiday, it's happened before."

"But if I understand correctly" Davis then remarked "the Integrity Enforcement Bureau have placed someone in New Scotland Yard, does this not qualify?"

"I wish it did but any legal argument would point out that because they are effectively the direct successors to the Ombudsman Office then they by default take over their mandate which clearly dictates that they have the power to place 'observers' in the Security Service if they deem fit to watch over the day to day operations where certain crisis situations arise which I think we can most definitely say they have" Helsmund confirmed.

"Which of course they created in the first place" another legal advisor pointed out.

"The perfect storm" Davis concluded "All right, there must be some other avenue we can explore."

"We could put some sort of legal notice on the Integrity Bureau" Helsmund then suggested "They are after all a private sector organisation subject to all the same regulations as say a Private Investigator or security guard company."

"Keep talking" Davis prompted, his interest suitably piqued.

"If we were able to prove that they were interfering in political channels" Helsmund tentatively suggested "for example if they had anything to do with the death of Sir William Devane or had any influence whatsoever on the departure of Sir Hugo and or the appointment of Jayne Grey then we could launch a legal injunction which would at least slow them down a bit."

"All sounds fine and dandy but it won't be worth a dam without some solid evidence that a court will believe" one of the other legal advisors warned.

"Then we had better find some" Davis strongly suggested "and quickly."

"That would mean interviewing the Prime Minister" Helsmund confirmed "and that won't be easy in the current climate especially with that snivelling little shit Fortescue lurking around."

"Oh, you have had the pleasure of meeting the PM's Secretary as well then?" Davis asked.

"Unfortunately, yes" Helsmund confirmed "An obnoxious, odious little tosspot that should be kept downwind at all times."

"So if I am correct" Davis then continued "our only option apparently open to us to stop or at least slow down these Integrity loons is hard evidence that they had a hand in anything political."

"In theory, yes" Helsmund agreed "It's a hell of a long shot but if we could get even a sniff that what is effectively a private contractor has had direct political dealings and influenced the chain of command then we could go to the High Court with that and get an injunction."

"There is the Emergency Measures Contingency" one of the other legal advisors remarked "The National Security & Police Service I believe call it the Zodiac

Protocol."

"What does it do?" Davis asked "I've never heard of it."

"Few people have" the advisor confirmed "but basically it is an emergency measure that can be activated by the Commanding or Deputy Commanding Officer of the Service or a designated agency such as MI6 whereby certain legal powers are enacted which declares a State of Emergency without actually declaring a State of Emergency if you see what I mean."

"The trouble with that is we would need one of our missing two senior Commander's to be up and about and at the moment nobody knows where either of them are" Helsmund confirmed.

"In which case I think we had better find them" Davis declared "and quickly before the bad guys do."

It was still only early evening over central London but the encroaching winter meant that darkness had fallen well over an hour earlier as Dent's driver drove him through the streets of Westminster district that had now finally reopened following the events of earlier that day.

The car proceeded to drive over Westminster Bridge and towards St Thomas' Hospital on the south bank of the River Thames before turning off into a side street and pulling up at what appeared to be a back door goods loading area.

"Wait here" Dent requested as he got out of the car "This won't take long."

The driver watched as Dent disappeared into the hospital building before picking up the Evening Standard newspaper off the passenger seat alongside him and set about completing the crossword puzzle whilst he waited.

Dent took the freight elevator up to the sixth floor where the secure treatment unit was located and upon arrival, immediately produced his formal identification to the two armed Security Service officers on guard at the entrance to the Unit who allowed him access without further question.

Once inside the quiet clinical corridor, Dent proceeded to the only room with an occupant where he saw upon entering the battered and bruised Sir Hugo, unconscious on a hospital bed and wired up to a myriad of medical equipment that was keeping him alive.

"Dear God" Dent exclaimed as he took in the appalling sight before him.

"I don't think God had much to do with this" the Doctor supervising Sir Hugo's treatment remarked "more someone with a heavy fist, a steel toe capped boot and a couple of gallons of neat alcohol I would wager."

"They really did a number on the poor sod didn't they?" Dent remarked.

"Pretty comprehensive" the Doctor agreed "He will be out for a good few days yet" she commented before realising that they had not been properly introduced "I'm sorry, you are?" she then asked.

"Christopher Dent, MI5 Operations" he then introduced himself and proffered his formal identification "Dave Collin's replacement."

"Ah yes" the Doctor responded "I heard about that, my condolences to you and your colleagues, he was a good man."

"That he was" Dent readily agreed.

"Doctor Martha Golding" the Doctor then introduced herself with a warm handshake "It's okay to talk; I am fully vetted by your organisation."

"A pleasure" Dent warmly responded with a handshake "So, any idea who did this?" he then asked.

"Last time I saw anything this bad it was an IRA informer who got caught out by his former colleagues about ten years ago" Golding confirmed "only thing was it was in fact a British special forces soldier gone rogue who actually did it."

"Interesting" Dent remarked.

"Same style, same brush strokes" Golding then continued "Like the IRA guy, Sir Hugo was held down by at least two strong individuals, force fed alcohol, what to me smells like a strong brandy of some sort and a lot of it. Then for good measure, presumably after he had passed out, they kicked the crap out of him before he was dumped very publicly onto the street."

"I'll do some digging around" Dent confirmed "see what turns up."

"Whoever this guy is, he has done it before, a lot I would wager and I reckon he enjoys it" Golding commented.

"Really not looking forward to meeting him then" Dent then remarked as he made some notes "What about Sir William Devane?" he then asked.

"Very interesting" Golding responded "I was about to call you guys as something rather odd has turned up."

"Oh, do tell" Dent prompted.

"Devane supposedly checked himself out of the hospital" Golding explained "however I can tell you that there is no way that could have possibly have happened as thanks to the smoke inhalation combined with an existing medical condition, he could barely breathe unaided let alone walk."

"So someone checked him out on his behalf then?" Dent ventured.

"It would appear so" Golding agreed "Then they injected him with some sort of inhibitor which basically stopped his heart before crashing his car into a lamp post" she continued "so when the boys in blue turn up they think that Sir William had a heart attack at the wheel and died as a result of natural causes."

"Whereupon a certain new Integrity Enforcement Bureau comes along with an enforcement order preventing any police or security agency from investigating any further" Dent then remarked.

"Isn't it a shame I never got one of those?" Golding asked with a wry smile.

"Absolutely" Dent readily agreed.

"So with the knowledge that Devane's death was suspicious, I had our forensics guys do a full work up on his body and we found some DNA on his body that was not his so we ran it through the computer" Golding then continued "and we got a match."

"Anyone I know?" Dent asked.

"It matches the body of one Alistair Court who according to the Coroners Office Secure Section records, was unceremoniously murdered and then thrown through a window on the seventh floor of MI6 headquarters the other day" Golding revealed.

"But he's dead" Dent responded "There has to be a mistake surely?"

"There is" Golding confirmed "After this little find I personally re-ran the DNA match again and lo and behold it seems we were fed duff information, the dead window flying guy is not even on the database."

"Which means someone deliberately led us astray with a body and some altered DNA records to make the mysterious Alistair Court or whatever his name is disappear" Dent concluded.

"Scary stuff huh?" Golding asked.

"Indeed" Dent agreed "I think we should keep this under our proverbial hats for the time being less we risk waking something unpleasant."

"Understood" Golding agreed "In the meantime if anything comes up, I have your number."

There was a cacophony of sound inside the large warehouse located a few miles east of Dagenham as several vehicles ranging in size from small vans up to large articulated lorries arrived beneath the huge high roof.

They were quickly joined by a BMW saloon car that squealed to halt at the front of

the gathering whereupon Hansell duly got out of the drivers seat and gathered his men around him as they emerged from the various vehicles.

"Good evening gentlemen" Hansell called out resulting in the general chatter that had been going on to subside and allow him to speak clearly and with everyone's attention.

"All right everyone" he then continued "as I am sure you are all aware tonight we will be initiating Phase III of the operation which means I require you all to be on your 'A' game and keep all communications to essential and emergency use only."

"Team One have the job of delivering the materials to our buyers" Hansell carried on the briefing "I presume that the Brotherhood have paid up?" he then looked across to one of his men who nodded in response.

"Fifteen million in various currencies was paid into the nominated account thirty minutes ago as per agreement" the man confirmed.

"Excellent" Hansell responded "All right then, load her up and get her away" he then instructed which saw approximately half the men present return to their vehicles where with engines restarted and revving away loudly, one of the two articulated lorries and a couple of the vans departed leaving a trail of dust behind.

"Right then now that the money is safe, time for the fun bit" Hansell then declared "The target selected is in the files kindly provided by our former employer, the late not to mention very crispy Mr Villiers" he explained.

There were some murmurs as the remaining small group of men opened their instructions and read them carefully before returning their attention to their leader once again.

"Very straightforward gig" Hansell continued "We place the green barrels in the location indicated using the identification passes and sub-contractors uniforms in that truck over there then Mr Philips, our expert in things that go bang will place the detonating package alongside and set the device, then all we have to do is be well away from there when it goes off."

McWilliam could not see much of the approach to Chequers, the Prime Minister's official country residence in the heart of the Buckinghamshire countryside as by then darkness had fallen and mostly all she could see was her own reflection in the side window glass of the car that was taking her there.

Then out of the misty gloom a large Georgian style mansion house emerged and the car slowed to a stop outside the main entrance where a member of the Chequers House staff appeared from the doorway and approached the car, opening the back door which allowed McWilliam to step out onto the meticulously maintained gravel driveway.

"Commander McWilliam, this way please" the staff member politely called.

McWilliam duly followed up the steps and through the ornate front entrance where she took a moment to look around the sumptuously decorated entrance hall and the large carved wooden staircase directly ahead.

"Up the stairs, first floor, turn left, second door on the left" the house staff member confirmed "You are expected."

"Thank you" McWilliam responded before proceeding up the stairs and following the directions given she soon found herself looking at a door with a small plaque on it reading 'Private' in little italic gold leaf writing whilst a plain clothes VIP Protection Division body guard stood by the door.

"Commander McWilliam, Special Operations Section" she proceeded to introduce herself and proffered her official identification "I am expected."

The body guard checked the identification briefly for a moment before handing it back and then turning to knock on the door before opening it and allowing McWilliam to step inside.

"Thank you Dave" the Prime Minister called from inside "You can stand down now, I won't be needing you again until the morning."

"Right you are Prime Minister" the body guard confirmed before closing the door.

"Prime Minister" McWilliam called as she stepped forward into the official living quarters which consisted of a sumptuously appointed living room, adjacent dining room and through a door just off to the left, a large luxurious bedroom and bathroom suite.

"Oh call me Jayne" the Prime Minister insisted as she came forward to greet her "at least when we are alone that is."

"Jayne" McWilliam reaffirmed.

"We have both had a very busy day it would seem" the Prime Minister remarked "Would you care for a drink?" she indicated the well stocked drinks cabinet.

"A Scotch would be good" McWilliam admitted whereupon the Prime Minister duly poured them both a double before passing her the glass.

"Cheers" the Prime Minister then called whereupon the two young women chinked their glasses together and then drank the contents almost in one go.

"Ah, that's better" McWilliam admitted as they both proceeded to sit down on the sofa "Dawson and his cronies may have one of the smartest and best equipped luxury detention suites I have ever seen but all they seem to have is tea, tea and more tea."

"Sounds like torture" the Prime Minister responded sympathetically before topping up

both their glasses once again.

"Sir Richard Crowthorne and the Commander are still there" McWilliam confirmed "I think the guy from the London office of Interpol might be there as well along with a few other people that Dawson and his Integrity puppets have rounded up."

"They even have a television advert now" the Prime Minister remarked "The Integrity Service, for *your* security" she recalled the tag line "and that slime ball Dawson is fronting the whole thing like a greasy East London second hand car salesman."

"Don't worry" McWilliam responded as she sipped her drink carefully this time "He'll get what's coming to him soon enough."

"You know I could invoke some sort of legal clause and get him charged with Treason to the State" the Prime Minister suggested.

"A little tame isn't it?" McWilliam responded.

"It's the only crime on the books still with the death penalty available as an option" the Prime Minister confirmed.

"Oh well, in that case..." McWilliam replied with a smile.

"So, do you know where they are holding the Commander and the others?" the Prime Minister asked "Tracy Caverner is still searching for them I believe."

"The Integrity Service have a state of the art brand new detention facility about five miles north of Tottenham" McWilliam confirmed "From what I have seen the on site security is impressive but not unbeatable so if we can get a message to Commander Caverner and the others then a rescue mission should be achievable."

"I'll see if I can find some way to get a message out to them first thing in the morning" the Prime Minister agreed "I would send you out now but the deal I had to barter with that slime ball Dawson to get you out and brought here was that you were to remain here indefinitely and his people are watching."

"Dave out there?" McWilliam asked.

"Oh no, he's all right" the Prime Minister confirmed "He's on loan from the Security & Police Service until I appoint a permanent personal body guard."

"So how did you persuade Dawson and his buddies to spring me out of detention then if I may ask?" McWilliam then asked.

"As soon as I found out you had been detained I told them that you were a potential asset to the Pyramid viewpoint and could be turned if you were brought directly to me" the Prime Minister confirmed "Utter bullshit of course but then convincing bullshit is part of the job description" she admitted.

"And the real reason of course is?" McWilliam decided to fish for deeper meaning.

"Apart from the opportunity to get some intelligence on their special detention centre and feed it back to the good guys" the Prime Minister honestly admitted "I really wanted to see you again after the very enjoyable evening we had the other night."

"I was hoping you would say something like that" McWilliam agreed as their hands met and they moved closer together before embracing and beginning to kiss.

"Now this is what I call close protection duty" McWilliam then commented with a smile during a brief pause in their kissing.

St James' Park Underground Station at the height of the evening rush hour was much like the rest of the network at that time, packed with commuters waiting for the next Circle or District Line train to come along to take them on the first stage of their daily commute back home.

Slipping in amongst them that evening was an additional figure in the form of newly promoted MI5 Operations Chief Christopher Dent who blended in well with the others around him as he came down the steps and onto the westbound platform where he picked up a discarded copy of that afternoons Evening Standard newspaper and briefly scanned the front page news stories where the headlines were split between the incident where Sir Hugo had been dumped in the street earlier and the car bomb that killed Collins his predecessor a few hours previously.

Dent looked up briefly as a westbound District Line train formed of some of the last old 'D type' sub-surface lines stock remaining in service approached the end of the platform with its distinctive rumbling until it came to a stop and the mass of awaiting passengers surged forward to board leaving barely enough room for alighting passengers to get off.

The usual scrum of passengers allowed Dent the opportunity to discreetly slip away past the staircase to the dark east end of the platform where people rarely went unless they were either lost or unaware that most of the trains that called there usually came to a stand further up the platform.

The shrill beeping of the closing door alarms signified the end of the scrum of exchanging passengers between the train and the platform before with a hiss of air and the whirr of its elderly electric motors, the train moved off.

Dent had by this point reached a non-descript door set in the platform wall whose only external identification was a small blue plaque with white lettering on it plus a second similar design one alongside that simply read 'Private'.

It was with a set of lock picking equipment that Dent then proceeded to unlock the door before quickly looking around and then disappearing inside.

"Glad I don't have a problem with spiders" Dent remarked to himself as he switched on the light, a solitary dust covered florescent strip light that only just rendered the

interior of the room, more of a short corridor really, visible to the naked eye.

On the right hand side was nothing but a tile covered wall which looked like it had not been touched since the station was built more than a hundred years earlier whilst on the left and across the end were grey electrical equipment boxes and the wires leading to them, some of them of quite some age, others more recent.

Dent looked carefully at the various electrical equipment boxes until he found one right down in the bottom far corner which was rusty and had the look of having been decommissioned for quite some considerable time.

It was however the way that the letters 'DC' on its rusty access panel had been highlighted that to him was crucial for whereas anyone else who saw it would naturally assume it meant 'Direct Current' he knew it really meant 'David Collins.'

It took a little effort but after a bit of tugging, Dent managed to open the front access panel of that particular box which revealed a mess of old wiring cut up and seeming shoved in at random, this was however deliberate in order to deter anyone from investigating further.

Moving aside the old and dusty cabling revealed a old style rolling tobacco tin lodged right at the back which Dent carefully removed before blowing off the dust and then opening it to reveal inside a couple of USB memory sticks, some keys and an old style microfilm canister.

"Haven't seen one of these for a long time" Dent remarked to himself as he briefly took out the microfilm canister and looked at it for a moment before returning it to the tin.

Realising that he had no chance of being able to examine any of the contents in any detail in that dark and dingy room, Dent discreetly slipped the tobacco tin into his coat pocket before closing the cabinet and then discreetly leaving the room, returning to the platform just as a westbound Circle Line service formed of brand new 'S Type' stock came in and stopped.

Mingling amongst the new crowd of commuters who had arrived on the platform since he went into the room, Dent slipped aboard the train just as the door closing alarm sounded and the doors began to close.

Travelling on a packed Underground train, Dent wisely decided not to take out the tin during the journey, he was still acutely aware that he could still be under surveillance by unfriendly parties, instead he blended into the crowd, perused the crossword puzzle on the back page of the Evening Standard and waited for the train to arrive at Victoria, the next stop.

His caution was well founded for as the automated on board systems announced their imminent arrival at the next stop, Dent became aware of someone at the opposite end of the carriage whom his experienced eyesight had caught earlier up in the ticket hall back at St James' Park.

With the noticeable slowing of the train and the view through the side windows turning from the dark tunnel walls to the brightly lit platform of Victoria station signifying their imminent arrival, Dent thought quickly about how he was going to play this.

With the doors opening and the alighting of the majority of passengers commencing, Dent initially waited over on the far side of the carriage until the right moment when he then crossed and stepped onto the platform.

Sure enough the man he had seen earlier and again on the train duly and discreetly followed suit, whereupon the door closing alarms sounded again and just as the doors began to close, Dent darted back onto the train leaving the man who was tailing him now stranded on the platform and clearly frustrated as the train then proceeded to depart without him.

"Hello, Cassini cabs?" Dent then called into his mobile, a call possible thanks to the mobile phone network now being extended down to platform level at many Underground stations across London in recent times "I need a cab, Sloane Square tube in five minutes" he declared before hanging up.

Five minutes later Dent was off the train at the next stop of Sloane Square and making his way up the escalators, through the ticket barriers and out into the street where no sooner did he emerge into the evening gloom than a car pulled up sharply in front of him and he quickly got in the front passenger seat.

"You must be the legendary Commander Cassini" Dent called to the driver.

"I think legendary is probably a little over dramatic Sir" Cassini responded as he proceeded to drive off.

"A pleasure to make your acquaintance at last" Dent then remarked "I've heard a lot about you."

"All of it good I hope Sir" Cassini replied.

"Of course" Dent confirmed.

"Where to Sir?" Cassini then asked.

"Back to Dorking" Dent requested "I am going to need some help with the late Mr Collins' little surprise package here" he confirmed as he took out the tin from his jacket pocket and examined it once more.

"This place gives me the creeps" Jack remarked as he and Tracy walked down the main corridor in the underground bunker at Dorking, converted way back in the early 1940's from natural caves in the area and now resurrected for the purposes of a secret communications and command centre in light of recent events.

"I'll admit it isn't my first choice" Tracy admitted as they reached the control room where Fuller and a number of others were busy manning telephones and working on computers.

"The damp in this place is playing havoc with my sinuses" Fuller remarked.

"Better suffering the havoc of your sinuses than the Muppets from the Integrity Bureau" Tracy reminded him.

"...for *your* security!" Fuller responded with a wry smile, mocking Dawson's tag line.

"So what is the latest?" Tracy asked.

"Still no word or sighting of Sir Richard, the Commander or Hoskins" Fuller confirmed.

"Err can I have a word?" Dent then asked as he popped his head around the door.

"What have you got?" Tracy immediately responded.

"I have managed to locate my predecessors black archive material" Dent confirmed
"A couple of my best and most trusted people are going through it right now but there is a hell of a lot of stuff in it."

"Keep at it" Tracy urged "Anything else?" she then asked.

"An odd report has come from our man in Chequers" Dent then continued.

"Chequers as in the Prime Minister's official country residence?" Jack asked.

"The same" Dent confirmed "Apparently the Prime Minister has a visitor this evening, a individual matching the description of Sir Richard Crowthorne's missing aide, err McWilliam I think, was seen entering the house about an hour ago having arrived in a vehicle registered to the Integrity Bureau."

"What the hell is she doing there?" Tracy asked generally around.

"If she is out and about then I would wager there is a good chance she knows where the others may be" Fuller suggested.

"Trouble is we can't just ring up Chequers as there is a danger that the Pyramid Group's spies could trace the call back to here or more specifically, you" Dent indicated directly towards Tracy.

"Indeed" Tracy quickly agreed "So we need to contact her some other way."

"Assuming she is still there" Jack cautioned "It could have just been a passing visit."

"We will have to chance that" Tracy responded.

"I can get my man in there to keep an eye on arrivals and departures" Dent suggested.

"If you would please, I would appreciate it" Tracy replied "Thanks."

"So, what's the plan?" Jack then asked once Dent had left the room.

"Time to call in a favour" Tracy responded as she picked up the telephone and quickly dialled a number, "Jenny" she then called over the telephone as soon as her call was answered "I need a favour" she declared.

"Here we go" Jennifer remarked aside to her deputy sat in the office alongside her before bringing her handset back to her face "As long as you don't want to borrow any of my cars I will see what I can do" she confirmed.

"I need to know the security layout and ways into a particular category one classified location" Tracy began to explain "as I want to break into it."

"Go on..." Jennifer prompted with a sense of impending trouble approaching as she knew from past experience that whenever Tracy or the Commander called it usually meant mayhem and chaos were usually not far behind.

"I want to break into Chequers" Tracy confirmed to a look of understandable shock and aghast from Jennifer.

"Chequers?" Jennifer then responded.

"Chequers" Tracy reconfirmed.

"The high security residence of the Prime Minister or the nightclub in Bromsgrove?" Jennifer then wryly asked.

"The former unfortunately" Tracy confirmed.

"Okay, you're crazy but okay..." Jennifer responded "I think it might be better if I came along and showed you where to go though" she then suggested.

"Sounds like a plan" Tracy agreed.

"Meet me outside the front door of Scotland Yard in one hour" Jennifer instructed "and bring a packed lunch."

"So does anyone know what this is about?" one of the gathered members of the press asked his colleague as they looked around the room on the twenty fifth floor of The Shard building where a press conference was about to commence, hosted by the Integrity Service Bureau and to which representatives of the press from both the UK and the rest of the world had been invited.

"Not a clue mate" the other reporter responded with a shrug of the shoulders "I suppose it must be to do with the statement they were going to issue before someone dumped that poor sod Sir Hugo at our feet earlier."

It was at that point that the gathered members of the press noticed that someone was coming and it was likely that proceedings were about to commence at last.

"Here we go" the first reporter then remarked as the Press Liaison Officer for the Integrity Bureau arrived, leading a number of people to the front of the room where there was microphone fitted rostrum set up in front of screens displaying the logo of the Integrity Bureau.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, may I have your attention please" the Press Liaison Officer called "the Lord Chief Justice Sir Henry Garvin" she then introduced before stepping aside and allowing Garvin to take to the rostrum.

"Good evening" Garvin began before putting on his reading glasses and then continuing "The last couple of days has seen a brave new world emerge for the defence and security of this nation" he declared, a typically nonsensical announcement that saw the press pack look on with a not inconsiderable indifference, not helped by the lateness of the hour or the large amounts of food and drink laid on by their hosts which they had consumed whilst waiting for the press conference to begin.

"To begin" Garvin then continued "I wanted to publicly thank Brian Dawson for his dedication and hard work in getting the new Integrity Service up and running so efficiently" he then looked across at Dawson "Let me rest assure you my old friend that your loyal service to this nation will not be forgotten."

"Thank you Lord Chief Justice" Dawson responded with a beaming smile "Knighthood here I come" he then cheekily muttered under his breath.

"Get a load of this old pony" Jack remarked as he watched the press conference being broadcast live via the BBC News Channel to the television screen in the main meeting room at the Dorking Bunker facility where he was watching it with Dent who himself had only just returned.

"The establishment are closing ranks by the looks of it" Dent responded "You watch young man" he then pointed ahead at the screen "this is where the Pyramid Group's plans get the official seal of approval, suitably sanitised for public consumption of course."

"Today has seen the beginning of a new era with the private sector being brought in to bring a fresh perspective to the way we defend and secure this great nation of ours" Garvin continued as Dawson and a number of other connected officials and dignitaries stood in a line behind him, smiling and looking pleased with themselves.

"So that guy is Dawson" Jack commented.

"That's him" Dent confirmed.

"In the absence of my father, does it fall to me to seek a chat with this fellow?" Jack then asked.

"You had better take a number and get in line then" Dent responded with a smile.

"Now that we have the tools to do the job" Garvin then carried on "it is time to bring the Security and Police services in this country into the twenty first century" he announced with vigour "I am formally announcing a complete root and branch review of the system from top to bottom which will be overseen by the new all powerful Integrity & Security Oversight Committee with the legwork and adjudication overseen by my good and dear friend Mr Dawson here and his skilled people here at the Integrity Service."

"Sir" one of the reporters then stood up, microphone pointed forward at the end of an outstretched arm "What will happen to the established Security & Police Service and its senior commanding officers?" he asked.

"Now that's a good question" Jack responded, holding up his mug of hot chocolate in salute to the reporter who had asked the question before taking another sip.

"Indeed" Dent agreed "A pity that Commander Caverner is not here to hear the answer. Actually, where is she by the way?"

"Oh? Err, she's just popped out for an hour or two" Jack evasively replied.

"Hmmm....." Dent responded, sensing something was afoot but decided to let the subject pass for the moment.

"As per its extensive United Nations mandate" Garvin responded confidently to what was potentially an awkward question "the National Police & Security Service will continue to protect and serve as it has always done. What we want to do is look at not what it does but how it does it and identify where we can make improvements for the benefit of all."

The press gathered in the room looked on with a fairly unimpressed feeling but Garvin, undeterred in any way simply carried on.

"As for the senior command structure" Garvin continued "Yes I expect there will be changes as the old guard is moved on in favour of new upcoming talent with a more modern world view but that is all something for the future" he confirmed.

"In other words the Administrator General Sir Edward Regent and the rest of his loyal senior staff get the boot in favour of people who you and your cronies parachute in

who better reflect your take on how things should be run?" another reporter angrily responded in an almost heckling like manner.

Garvin looked on with a stern stare directly at that reporter for a moment before breaking into a smile and with a light laugh, carrying on.

"The world moves on and I am sure the existing senior staff will be happy to embrace the changes and modernisation programme we are envisaging as part of the bold new secure future for all the security, police and justice agencies in the United Kingdom and its territories overseas" Garvin masterfully responded.

"Who is this clown?" Dawson quietly remarked aside to one of his aides.

"Michael Forbes" the aide confirmed "Crime, justice and security correspondent for The Guardian newspaper."

"What about the Secret Service organisations such as MI5 and MI6?" Forbes, the heckling reporter asked once again.

"We do feel that it is time the secretive and often unaccountable world of counter espionage both at home and abroad is brought out of the Cold War darkness and into the twenty first century light where it's actions, inactions and operations can be properly overseen and judged by the people and for the people of this great nation" Garvin explained.

"The phrase I am looking for here Mr Garvin ends with the word '...off' I believe you will find" Dent responded to a sniggering response from Jack sat alongside him.

"I want that little shit suitably disgraced and tied up in a body bag by tomorrow morning" Dawson quietly instructed to his aide who merely nodded discreetly in response before slipping away.

"So as you can see" Garvin then decided to wrap up the press conference before any more awkward questions came up that could potentially disclose the true reason for all that was occurring "the future for this nation is bright and I want everyone tonight to sleep soundly in their beds knowing that we are working tirelessly" he pronounced before looking directly at the cameras "...for *your* security."

"Ergh..." Dent responded as he pressed the off button on the remote "Pass me a bucket..." he remarked.

"Do you really think they will get away with this crap?" Jack asked.

"I think they are going to give it a dam good try" Dent confirmed "We can only hope there is some legal recourse we can use because with the Lord Chief Justice on the side of Dawson and his cronies, we are going to have one hell of a fight otherwise."

"In which case I think some sleep may be in order" Jack suggested as he finished his mug of hot chocolate before getting up from his seat and stretching.

"I had better check in with Divisional Commander Caverner" Dent then responded "Err, where did you say she was?"

"Breaking into Chequers" Jack confirmed with a wry smile "Goodnight" he then called before leaving the room.

"Oh..." Dent responded until the realisation then hit him "She's what?!?" he then called out.

"So how do we get in?" Tracy asked as Jennifer drove the car at a sensible speed, approaching the point where the main gate into the Chequers Estate butted onto the main road.

"You mean how do we break in unnoticed into one of the most closely guarded and locked down private estates in the country?" Jennifer responded before driving past the main gate and continuing on down the road "Well we don't go in the front gate that is for certain" she confirmed.

"There's a back door?" Tracy inquired as Jennifer then slowed down and turned off, heading left down a small country lane marked with potholes and ruts.

"There's a back door" Jennifer confirmed "If it still there that is" she then added, slowing down and looking by the light of the headlamps for something in particular amongst the overgrown shrubbery that lined the left hand side of the muddy lane.

"How do you know about it?" Tracy asked as they continued to bump and wobble down the very rough lane at a substantially reduced speed.

"We had to evacuate the Prime Minister and the US Secretary of State out of here some years ago and the main exits were crawling with rock throwing protestors" Jennifer explained "so we got creative."

"Of course this all assumes that someone hasn't blocked the entrance up in the meantime" Tracy remarked.

"Unlikely" Jennifer responded "There are only three people alive who know about it. Ah, there it is" she then exclaimed.

"Err, where?" Tracy asked as she looked ahead where Jennifer was indicating but even with the strong illumination of the car's headlamps, all she could see was just thicker and seemingly even more impenetrable shrubbery.

"Just there" Jennifer indicated again "between those two trees there is a disguised opening with four lengths of barbed wire stretched across it so you will need these" she then opened the glove compartment and produced a set of wire cutters and passed

them to her sister.

"Right" Tracy responded, holding up the wire cutters where she opened and closed their sharp blades with an expression that clearly showed she was not in the least bit sure about this.

"Don't worry, I'll come in with you" Jennifer then reassured her.

"Are you sure?" Tracy asked.

"Do you know the layout of the place?" Jennifer then frankly asked.

"Err no" Tracy admitted "but then a house is a house isn't it?"

"I'm coming in with you" Jennifer reaffirmed "Come on, let's go."

A few moments later, the twin sisters were pushing their way through the dense shrubbery where Jennifer had earlier indicated until Tracy found the four lengths of barbed wire blocking their way, stretched across in front of them.

"Okay, here we go" Tracy confirmed as she brought the wire cutters up to the top wire first and was about to cut when Jennifer realised a potential mistake.

"Not that one!" Jennifer suddenly blurted out.

"Huh?" Tracy replied, just managing to pull back her hand in time.

"That one has the alarm cable running through it" Jennifer then explained "Cut that one off and every Security Service officer, Pyramid goon and German Alsatian in a ten mile radius would be on our ass in the blink of an eye."

"And we definitely wouldn't want that" Tracy agreed "So the other three are okay?" she then sought reassurance.

"Yes" Jennifer confirmed "I think..."

"Well here goes nothing then" Tracy declared as she then proceeded to cut the other three wires before leaning back so that she could then push them back out of the way with her boot.

"No alarms, no sirens, no barking" Jennifer remarked as they both listened for a moment, hearing only the sound of an owl in the trees nearby hooting.

"All going well so far" Tracy agreed as they then pushed through until they reached the other side of the hedge where in the distance they could see the floodlit front of the main Chequers house itself and roaming the grounds immediately outside some armed guards with dogs.

"Those don't look like the regular security guards" Jennifer quietly remarked.

"Integrity morons?" Tracy suggested.

"I suppose so" Jennifer agreed.

"So how do we get in there?" Tracy then asked.

"Follow me" Jennifer led off down the side of the hedge towards the side of the main buildings with Tracy following closely behind until they reached the edge of the large gravel surfaced forecourt and driveway that stretched across the front of the house where they both ducked down behind some large stone ornamental planters for cover.

"Those are Integrity idiots all right" Tracy whispered as she was now able to take a closer look at two pairs of uniformed guards, each pair with a dog who were patrolling around the grounds in the immediate vicinity.

"Where the hell are my close protection guys then?" Jennifer asked.

"Probably locked in the basement" Tracy speculated.

"Okay Sis" Jennifer then instructed "when those two Muppets turn and head back towards the main door we need to scuttle across this section over to that side gate" she indicated a small wooden gate at the end of the main building, dimly lit and not obvious to the naked eye until she had pointed it out.

Tracy responded by taking out her weapon from its holster and checking it before nodding to confirm she was ready.

"All right..." Jennifer poised herself as she continued to watch the nearest guards until they turned away from them "Now" she then prompted.

With much haste they scuttled across the gravel forecourt and then ducked down in the shadow of the buildings next to the small gate, their passage there having thankfully gone undetected.

"So how do we get through the gate?" Tracy then quietly asked as they stood back up, their backs to the wall to keep them out of sight.

"You just lift the catch and open it" Jennifer confirmed as she did just that and they quickly went inside.

"Well there goes my faith in Prime Ministerial security" Tracy remarked as she carefully closed the gate behind them again before seeing that they were now in the rear alleyway that ran past the kitchens which were all dark and silent, the on site catering staff having gone home hours earlier.

"I think this is your department" Jennifer indicated the door that gave access into the main kitchens whereupon Tracy merely nodded in understanding and extracted her lock picking kit from inside her uniform tunic before kneeling down and commencing work on the lock only to pause and then simply turn the handle and open the door.

"They are not very good this Integrity lot are they?" Tracy remarked as they proceeded inside.

"I wouldn't trust those bozos to guard a bottle of milk" Jennifer responded in agreement as they looked around the darkened kitchen only to notice a light on over the far side by what appeared to be a larder towards which they carefully proceeded.

"So where do you think we will find McWilliam?" Tracy asked.

"What does she look like?" Jennifer asked as they passed the larder and approached the door that led through into the main house.

"Err, early thirties, dark hair, slim build, Irish accent" Tracy confirmed having had to take a moment to recall her appearance in her mind.

"Ah, I wonder if that is the one Grey mentioned the other day when she was in the back of my motor?" Jennifer speculated.

"Huh?" Tracy responded.

"Grey was talking the other day about this woman she had met" Jennifer explained "Err, you do know our new Prime Minister is gay don't you?" she then asked.

"No, it never occurred to me" Tracy admitted.

"Well if my theory is correct then you won't find your Ms McWilliam in the guest quarters" Jennifer then remarked as they cautiously exited out into the corridor that led to the back stairs "we had better head up to the second floor" she then prompted.

After climbing the wooden spiral staircase that would have once been the house servants access, they soon reached the second floor and exited through the small wooden door into the dimly lit corridor only to be confronted by a uniformed Security Service officer who immediately reacted to their arrival by drawing and aiming his weapon before a moment later lowering it again.

"Hello Dave, it's all right, it's only me" Jennifer called as she instantly recognised the officer and then motioned to Tracy to holster her weapon.

"What are you doing here Maam?" Dave responded in a low voice, understandably surprised to see his commanding officer and Tracy there.

"We popped in to have a word with Commander McWilliam if she is about" Tracy confirmed.

"She's err in there" Dave indicated towards the door of the Prime Ministers bedroom.

"Told you" Jennifer remarked aside to Tracy.

"Crikey..." Tracy responded with a slightly stunned look.

"I see the outside patrols have been replaced" Jennifer then asked "How come you are still here?"

"The Prime Minister vouched for me with the Integrity Coordinator or whatever he is called" Dave explained "She managed to convince them that I was part of the programme and safe to be left in place."

"And the others?" Tracy then asked.

"Taken off to some detention centre I understand" Dave confirmed "I don't know where though, sorry."

"Don't move!" came a sudden call as the Prime Minister's door opened and McWilliam appeared in a silk dressing gown, aiming a micro pistol at them before realising it was safe and lowering it again.

"Hi!" Tracy responded with a somewhat awkward tone.

"Is there a convention on and nobody told me about it?" McWilliam responded, understandably confused.

"We came to find you as it happens" Tracy explained.

"Right, err" McWilliam looked down "I'm not exactly dressed for travelling though" she then admitted "Give me a minute" she then called before disappearing back inside the room again.

"If we take her with us, won't the Pyramid muffins start asking awkward questions?" Jennifer asked.

"I am sure between the Prime Minister and myself we can come up with something convincing" Dave confirmed.

Moments later McWilliam returned, now dressed in her Security Service uniform all be it showing signs of having been hastily put on without much care for neatness as she was short of time.

"Ah, good evening, or morning" the Prime Minister remarked as she appeared at the doorway in just a dressing gown and saw the two Caverners there.

"Prime Minister" Tracy responded whilst Jennifer merely nodded in respect.

"I'll see you later Jayne" McWilliam confirmed.

"Looking forward to it already" the Prime Minister responded with a gleeful smile "Goodnight everyone" she then added before retreating back inside and closing the door.

"All right then Dave" Jennifer declared "What's the best way out of here without upsetting the locals?"

"Follow me" Dave declared.

Five minutes having managed to evade the on site guards once more, Tracy, Jennifer and McWilliam were making their way back through the gap in the fence before getting in the car.

"So, what happened?" Tracy asked as they set off once more.

"We found Sir Hugo" McWilliam began "unfortunately it would appear someone else also knew we were coming as well because we got ambushed by some armed rent a thugs."

"Anyone you recognise?" Tracy asked.

"Looked like the same freelance hit team that I ran into a couple of years ago" McWilliam confirmed "fully SAS level trained armed hit men for hire types."

"Fits the methods of this Pyramid lot to tee" Tracy remarked.

"...for *your* security!" Jennifer mockingly quoted the tag line to which Tracy merely looked across momentarily with an unimpressed glare.

"They took us to a secure facility that they have set up somewhere north of Tottenham I think" McWilliam then continued but that was where we lost Sir Hugo" she confirmed "I think that thug Hansell had something special planned for him."

"I'll say" Tracy responded "He turned up, drunk as a skunk and with seven shades of shit kicked out of him after being thrown out of a moving van outside the Palace of Westminster."

"Ouch..." McWilliam responded "Is he okay?"

"Not sure" Tracy admitted "He is in a secure medical unit as they try and dry him out and patch him back together but the large amount of probably bullshit material that someone leaked to the press about him at the same time he turned up will probably tarnish his reputation forever, true or not."

"A while later your husband arrived and we think that in the next cell, sorry, detention suite was Hoskins from Interpol" McWilliam then continued "It sounded like his voice but we couldn't get a message to him as the walls were too thick."

"So how did you manage to get out then?" Jennifer asked.

"The Prime Minister managed to persuade that toe rag Dawson to release me" McWilliam explained "she managed to convince him I was sympathetic to the cause and could be a useful recruit for their intelligence gathering activities within the various circles in which I work."

"And how well do you know the Prime Minister?" Tracy asked out of curiosity.

"We've become good friends" McWilliam confirmed "with err shared interests shall we just say for now."

"We will need to identify precisely where this place is that they are holding my husband and the others" Tracy confirmed "Then we need a plan."

It was an hour before they reached the Dorking Bunker facility whereupon they quickly headed downstairs where Fuller greeted them.

"Welcome back" Fuller called "Whilst you were out, the Integrity morons strengthened their positions" he informed them as they headed down the corridor towards the main meeting room at the far end "it looks like they have put what they are calling an 'oversight team' into New Scotland Yard."

"That would be armed thugs making sure our people there toe the line and don't stick their noses into anything" Tracy remarked.

"I have seen a few of them about whilst out on my travels" Jennifer agreed "they seem to be being put into key places to keep the legitimate authorities in check."

"In which case, the sooner we find my husband and the others, the better" Tracy confirmed as they entered the meeting room.

"I have been scouring around potential locations for this Integrity Service Detention Centre based on what you have told me" Fuller then continued as they entered the meeting room and went around to a couple of laptop computers behind which was sat Jack and Dent "and I think between us we have come up with a couple of possibles."

"Can you show them on the screen please?" McWilliam asked.

"Yeah, sure" Fuller confirmed as he proceeded to display aerial photo views of both the locations short listed on the big screen.

"That one" McWilliam pointed to the one on the right "Looks like old MOD land, easy road access, no nose neighbours."

"Simon" Tracy turned to Fuller "What do we know about that place?"

"Not much beyond that it was sold for redevelopment a couple of years ago but apart from some seemingly industrial like buildings, the new owners have not openly done anything with it which given the chronic housing shortage in this city is very unusual" Fuller remarked.

"Indeed" Dent agreed "Usually any bit of land 'within commuting distance of London' bigger than a postage stamp these days gets half a dozen poncy flats built on it before the ink is dry on the bribery cheque to the planning authorities."

"I'll make a few phone calls to my Section Fourteen colleagues and see if they know

anything" McWilliam reached for her new mobile in her pocket "No one builds a detention facility without at least one of the secret security agencies or one of its informants noticing."

"Right, now that we know exactly where they are, let's go get them" Tracy declared as she prepared to depart by putting on her uniform tunic but then pausing when she noticed Dent looking reluctant to say something to her.

"Go on man, spit it out" Tracy then requested although she already knew what was coming.

"I'm sorry Commander Cavener but you're not going" Dent insisted.

"But, but..." Tracy began to protest all be it somewhat feebly.

"You are the only one of the inner circle still left out in the wild and breathing other than myself" he explained "and I am not entirely certain if I count for that matter."

"But..." Tracy continued to try and protest even though she knew already that he was right.

"If this operation goes pear shaped then you could be captured, or worse" Dent explained "and if you are out of the picture there will be nobody the public recognises and truly trusts left, hope will crumble, opposition will fall and these Integrity people will become accepted, they win, we lose, it is as simple as that."

"I can't just sit here in this bunker doing nothing though" Tracy pointed out, reluctantly relenting on her now defeated intention of joining the rescue mission.

"Then get your face and your message on the television, in the papers, on the web, anywhere you can" Dent encouraged her "they have been using slick marketing and catchy tag lines, it is time to fight back with some carefully crafted spin of our own making."

"Where do I begin?" Tracy then asked, this really being an area she had little if any experience in.

"Start with this" Dent passed across a USB memory stick which one of his agents had brought over to him a few moments earlier "A little something to get the armchair experts taking to their keyboards on social media and going 'OMG' a lot."

"Thank you" Tracy responded as she took the memory stick and looked at it in her hands for a few moments.

"I had better go" Dent then declared "Don't worry, we will have Sir Richard, Eddie Hoskins and your husband back home safe in time for breakfast" he reassured her before turning to leave.

"Good luck" Tracy called after him.

A few moments later, now alone in the meeting room, Tracy thought very carefully about what her next move should be.

What she really wanted was to be with the rescue team but she also knew that Dent was right and that there was important work for her to do there, the only question now was how.

"Ah!" Tracy then exclaimed as a solution presented itself in her mind.

Quickly she got up, left the meeting room and went down the hall to the makeshift dormitories where she found Jack fast asleep on an old couch, just a requisitioned blanket providing any cushioning.

"Jack" Tracy gently called "wake up."

All she got in response however was a very slight stirring and a change in the tempo of his snoring.

"Teenagers..." Tracy then remarked to herself with a wry smile before trying a different approach.

"Wakey wakey!!!!" Tracy then called loudly.

"What the hell is going on?" Jack asked as he awoke with a start and initially was a little disorientated.

"Sorry for the rude awakening but I need to ask an urgent favour of you" Tracy explained as Jack managed to sit up, rub his tired eyes and then attempt to focus.

"This had better have a very good breakfast laid on somewhere" Jack advised before checking his watch and seeing it was two in the morning "make that a very very good breakfast" he then added.

"You are a teenager" Tracy stated.

"All pretty accurate so far" Jack agreed.

"So you should know all about social media" Tracy then stated.

"Well sort of" Jack confirmed "I have a Twitter and Facebook account but I can't really use them very much as MI5 keep my accounts monitored on account of being closely associated with you and the Commander."

"I need to get this online" Tracy showed him the memory stick she had received a short while earlier from Dent "as public and as widespread as possible."

"What's on it?" Jack asked.

"Not a clue" Tracy frankly admitted.

"In which case lets go and find out" Jack suggested "step into my office"

"You have an office?" Tracy responded with some surprise.

"No" Jack confirmed "I just like saying it" he explained as he showed Tracy to a desk set up in the corner of the room "I do however have this" he indicated the laptop computer on the desk "state of the art communications technology designed and built by Commander Simon Fuller no less and part of the little care package that the Commander sent me earlier."

"Oh, very nice" Tracy commented.

"Pretty cool isn't it?" Jack agreed "I can get on anything through this from the MI5 central archive to the Railway Modellers Web Forum and even get a bit of shopping done as well" he explained.

"Here you go" Tracy handed across the memory stick whereupon Jack plugged it in the side of the laptop and waited for it to load.

"Right, what do we have here?" Jack then asked as a window appeared on the screen with a list of contents "Video files it would seem" he then declared.

"Play them" Tracy suggested.

"Already on it" Jack confirmed "Here we are" he then declared as the first video began to play.

On the screen began a sequence of CCTV footage of decent quality initially showing a view looking from within an unidentified building out into a busy street that just by the red buses going past they could both tell was in somewhere in Greater London.

"Where the hell is this?" Tracy asked as they watched what appeared to be a seemingly ordinary scene continue on in front of them.

"According to the data file attached this is Turnpike Lane tube station, the Green Lanes A105 entrance sometime earlier today or rather yesterday" Jack confirmed.

"Now there is a familiar face" Tracy remarked as the Commander came into view of the camera as he entered the station whilst his official car could be just seen speeding away along the road in the background with its blue flashing lights on.

"This must have been shortly before Terry Kinderley picked me up in the Commander's official car" Jack remarked "a short while later was when I came and rescued you."

"Thanks for that by the way" Tracy responded "In all the rushing around I am not sure if I did ever thank you properly for your help."

"Just helping out" Jack replied as they watched the CCTV feed being shown change camera views as it followed the Commander down into the station, through the

automated ticket barriers and down the escalators to the platform level.

"Ah, here comes trouble" Tracy motioned towards the screen as the view returned to the street entrance view again showing a number of Integrity Enforcement Officers deploying from a silver Mercedes minivan and rapidly making their way into the station in pursuit.

"Failure to show a ticket on demand?" Jack commented as the CCTV view showed the officers forcing their way through the ticket barriers "very naughty."

"And here we go" Tracy then remarked as the view changed again to show the Commander being surrounded in the lower passageway between the platforms by the officers.

"He didn't stand a chance against that sort of firepower being put up against him" she then remarked.

"Especially as I am pretty sure he wasn't armed" Jack confirmed.

"Huh?" Tracy responded with clear confusion.

"Look in my little care package over there" Jack indicated the briefcase nearby which Tracy then went over to and opened the already unlatched lid of to reveal the Commander's faithful old six shot revolver and its holster nestled inside.

"Eddie, Eddie, Eddie, what the hell are you playing at?" Tracy asked as she returned to the laptop which had now reached the point where the Commander was being surrounded and escorted back up the escalators and out of the station under arrest.

"If I didn't know better" Jack commented "I would wager that the Commander had this planned all along, he wanted to be captured, this all being pre-prepared as there is no way he just happened to throw my little goody bag together on the fly just in case."

"He never mentioned anything to me about it" Tracy responded.

"Of course not" Jack explained his reasoning "because he knew you would try and talk him out of it or worst still insist on going in his place."

"There he goes" Tracy then confirmed as the view changed again to a camera on the external wall of Turnpike Lane Underground Station showing the Commander being bundled into one of the waiting silver Mercedes minivans before the convoy of three vehicles promptly departed at speed.

"Well, they got him" Jack concluded as the initial footage ended.

"Wind it back a bit" Tracy then instructed "I want to see who was leading that team that captured him."

"Okay" Jack responded as he wound the footage back to the confrontation in the lower chamber between the platforms "best guess it is that guy who steps forward is

the guy in charge I would say."

"Can't see his face" Tracy responded with a sense of disappointment but she was not going to let defeat get the better part of her just yet "All right, wind back slowly and watch that guy, let's see if we get a better shot of him somewhere along the way."

"Ah, here we go" Jack announced a few moments later "It would seem this guy was careful not to look at the cameras all the time he was in the building but here he catches his right foot on the top of the ticket barrier as he hurdles it and it knocks him off guard for a moment and.... bingo!"

"Print that" Tracy ordered as the video froze with the face of the man in question clearly visible in the frame.

"Oh I can do better than that" Jack responded as he proceeded to press buttons whereupon a new process began which a few moments later yielded a result "and we have a match."

"All right, who is this guy?" Tracy asked.

"According to the late Dave Collins' files the gentleman we see here is one Stephen Noble who apparently is the Ombudsman General of the new Integrity Enforcement Bureau" Jack confirmed as the details began to appear on the screen.

"Hang on a minute" Tracy then remarked "I've seen that face before and his name most definitely wasn't Stephen Noble."

"No one here is exactly what they appear..." Jack ominously commented.

"You've been watching your father's Babylon 5 DVD box sets back to back again haven't you?" Tracy remarked.

"Well I have to keep myself entertained whilst you two are out chasing bad guys and my good lady Megan is off on a foreign language exchange trip" Jack explained "Was hoping for a Lord of the Rings and Hobbit marathon at the weekend actually."

"All right then Frodo" Tracy confirmed with a smile "satisfy my curiosity and see if this guy's face comes up in any of our current active investigations, I have a hunch."

"Usually when either you or the Commander have 'a hunch' is when Home Secretary's go running for the nearest fallout shelter" Jack commented as he worked on the laptop.

"Well, well, well..." Tracy then remarked with a mixture of puzzlement and satisfaction when a photograph and file details appeared on the screen in front of them "Alistair Court."

"Huh?" Jack responded, now somewhat confused.

"Stephen Noble is also known as Alistair Court, the faces are an exact match" Tracy

confirmed as the screen showed side by side the CCTV screen capture and the photograph from Alistair Court's MI6 personnel file and clearly showed them to be one and the same person.

"But Alistair Court was thrown out of a window on the seventh floor of the MI6 building last week" Jack then responded "narrowly missing both Megan and I when he face planted the pavement in the process, the guy is beyond all shadow of a doubt brown bread."

"That is exactly what someone has wanted us to think all along" Tracy confirmed.

"So who was the stiff with the penchant for terminal aeronautics then?" Jack asked.

"Who knows?" Tracy responded "One thing for certain though, this man is extremely dangerous, maybe even responsible for the death of Sir William Devane."

"And some dam fool just put him in charge of a major privatised national security agency with a large team of hired trigger happy thugs and a load of political agendas to enforce" Jack commented "Whichever way you look at it, this can't be good."

"Court, Noble or whatever the hell is name is we can deal with in the morning" Tracy responded "What are the other video files on there?" she then asked.

"Looks like mobile phone footage of the same incident in and around Turnpike Lane" Jack confirmed as he scrolled through the video files, some of it of variable quality "Good shot here of the Commander in cuffs being bundled into the back of the van and some shocked looking onlookers though, we can use that."

"Get this into the wild" Tracy ordered "widest possible spread you can" she instructed.

"Social media should be a good starting point" Jack remarked as he started to upload the different videos to both Facebook and Twitter "plus some background information along with the full set of videos direct to the BBC news duty editor should do the trick."

"It's scary what is possible to do with global communications these days from the comfort of home with just a laptop and a freshly brewed mug of tea" Tracy commented.

"Welcome to the modern world" Jack responded "It's a scary place...."

"Hansell was alone in his thoughts as he looked in through the open rear doors of one of the two articulated lorries parked in front of him on a patch of isolated waste land somewhere near Rickmansworth in the far north west corner of Greater London.

It was only as the approach of another vehicle, heralded by the crunching noise of its tyres on the rough surface as it neared him that made him break away and turn around

to see a blue Range Rover arrive, pulling up to a stop immediately alongside him.

"Good evening Mr Hansell" the man who emerged from the front passenger seat of the Ranger Rover greeted him, a very tall thin silver haired male in his forties dressed in a suit, waistcoat and tie over which was draped a long black cloak whilst distinctive jewellery in gold hung from his neck and wrists in addition to rings on almost every finger of both hands.

He was joined by four equally tall men in dark suits and sunglasses who were obviously the man's bodyguards and hired muscle who took up equal distant positions a little behind their leader and said nothing.

"Mr Orbison" Hansell responded "A pleasure to finally meet you in person at last."

"Likewise" Orbison responded with a small bow of respect "This is the merchandise I presume that we have discussed" he then looked up towards the two trucks behind Hansell.

"Indeed" Hansell confirmed "As stated on the bill of sale my office issued to your Facilitator General yesterday, I can deliver as much as I can spare after I have taken what I need for my own ahem personal use."

"May I be permitted to see the merchandise?" Orbison then asked.

"Of course" Hansell readily agreed "This way please."

Orbison duly stepped forward whilst silently indicating to his four bodyguards to remain where they were before climbing inside one of the trucks following Hansell who had just done the same.

"Here it is" Hansell declared "The R232 Vapourware Cloud weapon" he indicated a large number of identical green barrels in the truck "and in the other truck we have twenty tons of X332 experimental plastic explosive, straight from the manufacturer and not even available on the open market yet."

"It's like a dream" Orbison remarked as he seemed to become a little overwhelmed by what he was seeing with his own eyes.

"Oh it is all real" Hansell confirmed "and it is yours once we agree on a price and payment of course."

"How about a demonstration Mr Hansell?" Orbison then asked.

"Of the explosive?" Hansell wisely sought clarification.

"Of course" Orbison confirmed.

"I think I can arrange that" Hansell agreed "One moment please" he then reached for a radio "Mr Philips, will you join us please, the client would like a demonstration."

"Mr Philips?" Orbison asked.

"My specialist in things that go bang" Hansell explained "I should point out that this explosive has already been tested successfully in the field by a friend of mine, the car bomb in Westminster earlier?"

"Impressive" Orbison responded as they were joined by Philips who looked up into the truck at the two men.

"Are we all set up?" Hansell asked.

"Just need to place the explosive charge" Philips confirmed "oh, and then stand well back of course" he added with a brief nervous laugh.

Hansell and Orbison got back down off the back of the truck and joined Philips at a small table he had set up on which was a hardened steel carrying case with a Explosives warning sticker on the lid which he proceeded to open to reveal approximately a dozen long green sticks of what looked like green plastic with warning labels wrapped around them in various different languages.

"This stuff is so new, experimental and advanced that even the US Defence Department doesn't know about it yet" Philips explained "It is not even supposed to be in the test and development phase let alone on sale for another two years."

"Which means no one knows about it so when it is used no one knows what to look for" Hansell added.

"And unlike other explosives that always leave traceable residues post detonation, this stuff completely consumes itself in a very high temperature ignition leaving no trace of its presence whatsoever" Philips continued to explain.

"Smart explosive" Orbison commented "I like that."

"Further more in its inert state like this" Philips picked up one of the green sticks and then smashed it like a hammer on the table with no effect whatsoever "you can smash it, bang it, run it over with a bus, you name it and it will not go off."

"So what sets it off?" Orbison asked.

"High frequency detonator, computer controlled with or without a timer by a micro computer terminal or a pressure switch, etc. locally at the site of the bomb or remotely via a specialist broadband transmitter which can be activated by an app on any conventional modern smart phone like this" Philips produced a smart phone and switched it on.

"Wow" Hansell remarked as even he was up until that point completely unaware of the explosive's properties.

"Take a look over there towards that old tree trunk" Philips pointed ahead towards a fallen tree of quite a substantial size illuminated in the lights of the trucks "I have

placed twenty grams, that is one fifth of a stick inside a hole in the trunk with one of these" he then showed them a small electronic device barely larger than a fifty pence coin.

"The frequency detonator I presume?" Orbison asked.

"Exactly" Philips confirmed "the one I have placed over there is controlled through this mobile phone. All you do is dial up the number of the pay as you go mobile SIM card you fit in the frequency detonator and press 'Call' and..."

All three of them jumped when the tree trunk suddenly exploded in a huge green tinged fireball, obliterating it and sending debris quite some considerable distance up into the air.

"Good God!!" Hansell responded as the echoes of the explosion began to die down and the cloud of smoke and debris started to clear away revealing a burning crater some three to four feet deep and twice as much wide where the tree trunk had been moments before.

"Put me down for another ten tons" Orbison responded.

"Right you are" Hansell quickly agreed.

"What about the chemical agent?" Orbison then asked.

"That is the beauty of this explosive" Philips responded almost in admiration "Not only can it be used independently to extremely good effect as demonstrated, it is also the only thing that can ionise and release the chemical agents in those barrels back there, nothing else will have any effect on it, not even conventional explosives."

"And then?" Orbison asked.

"Depending on how much explosive and how much agent you place plus other factors such as location, prevailing wind and weather, etc" Philips summarised "you can set off a nice big chemical cloud that will disable anything living up to two miles in any direction, those who don't choke to death will be so incapacitated that they will offer no resistance whatsoever."

"Isn't it amazing what the human mind can dream up when it really gets to work?" Hansell remarked.

"Will you take a cheque or do you prefer cash?" Orbison asked.

"I was going to ask for twenty million" Hansell began "but seeing your enthusiasm and the likelihood of future repeat custom, not to mention my personal interest in your little group's philosophies, I am willing to give you a discount. How does seventeen and a half sound?"

"Twelve and a half?" Orbison counter offered.

Hansell paused for a moment in thought before counter offering back.

"Fifteen million, cash" he then offered.

"I think we have a deal Sir" Orbison agreed as the two men shook hands firmly to seal the deal.

"Excellent" Hansell responded "Cash to be paid by three P.M. tomorrow afternoon in five different currencies to my account whose details will be sent to your Facilitator General within the hour."

"It is a pleasure doing business" Orbison agreed before turning to leave, returning to his Range Rover as he four bodyguards also got back in the vehicle.

"My best regards to the Brotherhood" Hansell then called as Orbison and his party duly departed, driving off into the night.

"There is no way they are going to fall for this stunt surely?" Dent asked as Cassini brought the minivan to a stop at the main gate whereupon already they could see the security guard move from his seat inside his little booth and step outside before coming towards them.

"Never underestimate the gullibility of private sector security sub-contractors" Cassini remarked "Iggy and I have got into more secure places than this leaky tub before now."

"Identification please gentlemen" the security guard formally requested although it was clear that the lateness of the hour was telling and he stifled a yawn.

"Integrity Enforcement Lieutenant James Ramsay, Integrity Enforcement Sergeant Dave Williams, Central London Enforcement Division" Dent confirmed proffering the fake identification for both of them "For your security..." he then cheekily added.

"Whoever in your bunch came up with that ridiculous tag line should be in one of the cells here rather than in charge of them" the security guard grumpily commented.

"I'll make sure I pass on your feedback" Dent responded.

"What is the purpose of your visit?" he then asked.

"Phase Two detainee transfer from central" Dent confirmed, nodding towards the back of the car whereupon the security guard flashed his torch into the back and saw Cassini's deputy Iggy sitting there looking suitably forlorn and in handcuffs.

"Okay then" the security guard agreed before pressing a button behind him which duly opened the gates "Park around the front and take him in the detention block entrance" he instructed.

"Thank you" Dent responded whereupon Cassini restarted the car and they moved off.

"Nice and easy" Cassini remarked as he drove through the complex towards the main detention building and prepared to park up where indicated.

"We are not actually in the building yet" Dent pointed out.

"That's all right" Cassini confirmed "Just follow my lead and we will be in and out before they even know we were here."

"This is embarrassing" Iggy remarked as a few moments later Cassini helped him out of the back of the car with Dent pretending to stand guard nearby.

"The pretending to be a captured prisoner thing?" Cassini asked out of curiosity.

"No boss" Iggy replied "Having to wear full Security Service uniform" he looked down briefly at the complete uniform he was wearing "I haven't had to wear this in about twelve years."

"Ready?" Dent asked.

Cassini then checked that the handcuffs that appeared to secure Iggy's hands behind his back were in fact unlocked and easily removable when required.

"Yeah, we're good" Cassini then confirmed.

"Right then" Dent declared and with that they proceeded towards the door.

Inside the detention area Integrity Administrator Devereaux looked up from his computer screen when he heard the doors open and watched as the group approached.

"Paperwork please gentlemen" Devereaux formally requested whereupon Dent duly produced some paper from his inside tunic pocket and handed it across.

"Erm, there seems to be some mistake" Devereaux then remarked after having looked both sides of the piece of paper he had just received with a sense of puzzlement "there's nothing on it" he then declared.

"You just can't get the staff these days" Dent remarked to Cassini who nodded in agreement.

"What do you think Iggy?" Cassini then asked his deputy.

"Integrate this!" he responded, breaking his hands free whereupon he produced a Tazer device which before he could react, Iggy fired directly at Devereaux who collapsed to the ground unconscious in a matter of moments.

"Ouch..." Cassini remarked as he looked over the top of the desk to see the unconscious Devereaux lying there.

"Positively shocking" Dent agreed.

"Right then, where are they?" Cassini then asked as he went around behind the desk, unceremoniously pushed the unconscious body of Devereaux out of the way and proceeded to access the computer terminal, "Detention suite 23" he then confirmed.

"Down here by the looks of it" Dent pointed out a sign on the wall indicating they should head down the adjacent corridor.

"Let's go" Cassini responded.

"I spy with my little eye something beginning with..." the Commander began.

"Why oh why could we not have had a deck of cards and some poker chips available?" Sir Richard mournfully asked.

"Because I would probably have beaten you to the brink of bankruptcy in the space of about ten minutes?" the Commander wryly suggested.

"Err, yes probably" Sir Richard then admitted.

"What now?" the Commander then asked as he could hear voices outside the door of their detention suite before the sound of keys being rattled in the lock indicated they were about to receive visitors.

A few moments later the door opened and the two duty guards from the corridor outside came in followed by three others.

"Commander, Mr Crowthorne" one of the guards began to call only for him to be cut short when suddenly two of the three men who had followed them in struck both him and his colleague across the back of the head, sending them collapsing to the ground unconscious.

"Ah, the cavalry has arrived" the Commander declared before turning to Dent "I don't believe we have been introduced?" he then prompted.

"Christopher Dent, MI5" he responded offering his hand "It's an honour to meet you Sir."

"Good God" Sir Richard remarked "Chris, what the hell are you doing here?" he asked.

"It's a jailbreak" Dent responded.

"Well I for one am not going to hang about" the Commander declared as he got up.

"I got Hoskins out" Iggy then confirmed as he led the Interpol man to the rest of the group.

"This is an interesting twist in what has been a bizarre day I must say" Hoskins remarked "I take it there is a plan?" he then asked.

"Get to the wheels without the bad guys noticing, bundle you three in the back and get the hell out of here" Cassini confirmed as he handed the Commander a gun taken from one of the unconscious guards which he gratefully accepted whilst Sir Richard took the gun from the other.

"Let's get the hell out of here then" Sir Richard agreed.

"Iggy, are we clear?" Cassini called to his deputy who was watching over the corridor outside.

"We're clear boss" Iggy confirmed.

The Commander chose to lead the way as they made their way back to the detention reception area where Devereaux was still slumped unconscious on the floor.

"I don't suppose that little weasel Dawson is around is he?" the Commander asked.

"All we have seen is this pencil pusher, a half asleep security guard on the gate and those two back there" Cassini confirmed.

"I guess they think we are low risk" Sir Richard remarked as they continued on through the doors and to their waiting vehicle.

"All right gentlemen" Cassini called "get in the back and lie low until we are through the gate" he instructed, opening the rear door to allow the Commander, Hoskins, Sir Richard and Iggy to climb in the back before proceeding to stoop down behind the seats below the window level.

Within a matter of moments they were ready and the car was making its way back down the road towards the main gate.

As they approached the gate, the security guard once again emerged and proceeded to hold up his hand to stop them before ascertaining that all was well.

"All safely delivered mate" Dent called from the front passenger window.

"Home time then" the security guard suggested.

"Sounds good to me" Dent readily agreed as he faked and stifled a yawn.

"All right then" the security guard agreed before pressing the button to open the gate once more, allowing them to drive through and off the site.

"I think we have done it" Dent remarked as Cassini drove the car out onto the public highway.

"Err, think again" Cassini then commented as he looked in the rear view mirror to see

four vehicles obviously from the Integrity Enforcement Bureau appear behind them and start to pursue.

"I think we can out run these bozos" the Commander commented as he and the others in the back of the vehicle sat up once again, looking behind them through the rear window to confirm the situation now unfolding.

"Floor the bastard!" Dent swiftly instructed.

"Flooring the bastard!" Cassini confirmed as he plunged the accelerator as far as it would go and they shot forward at an alarmingly increased speed.

Quickly the pursuing vehicles gave chase with their own lights and sirens in full cry which saw that what little traffic was about quickly got out of the way.

"How far are they behind us?" Cassini asked as he skilfully swerved around a corner, executing a perfect handbrake turn.

"About a hundred and fifty yards" the Commander confirmed.

"What's that in metres?" Cassini then asked.

"Dammed if I know" the Commander responded "We need to lose these guys and fast."

"I have an idea about that" Dent cut in as they all held on tight whilst they were thrown from side to side.

"I am all ears" Cassini confirmed.

"Take a left up at the end of this road then brace yourself" Dent explained.

"Hold on to your hats everyone" Cassini called as they reached the end of that road where a sharp turn to the left awaited them and he slammed on the brakes before turning as far as the wheel would go, slamming the back of the car against the facing wall before reapplying the accelerator once more.

Looking behind them, the chasing vehicles were clearly not being driven by professional pursuit trained drivers as the first one crashed hard into the facing wall and the second vehicle quickly piled into the flying wreckage.

"Ouch!" Sir Richard remarked.

"They will have a hard time explaining that to their superiors" Hoskins agreed.

"We're not clear yet" the Commander then warned as the other two chasing vehicles managed with some scraping damage to squeeze past the wreckage and then continue the pursuit.

"Dam it!" Cassini responded as he continued to drive as fast as he dared through some

narrow back streets, only narrowly avoiding hitting anything along the way.

"Don't lose hope yet" Sir Richard called.

"Ever the optimist aren't you?" the Commander asked.

"Well, I try..." Sir Richard admitted.

"Is it me or are there a lot of blue flashing lights over there?" Hoskins asked as he indicated the blue flashes visible in the distance over to one side.

"More bad guys?" Cassini asked.

"They are well resourced financially but not in terms of actually physical numbers" the Commander commented.

"Shit!" Cassini then exclaimed as he turned the corner and suddenly slammed on the brakes when he saw dead ahead a road block of Police & Security Service vehicles parked right across the road ahead with a line of Specialist Firearms Unit officers on guard

"I do believe the cavalry is here gentlemen" the Commander confirmed as the two Integrity vehicles, still in pursuit came to a sudden halt behind them and were almost instantly surrounded by more armed officers.

"Get out of the car!" Divisional Commander Bob Thornton was heard to call loudly and clearly, his MP6 type firearm pointed directly at the driver of one of the Integrity vehicles whilst the rest of his team had theirs trained on the rest of the occupants of that and the other vehicle.

"NOW!" Bob then reinforced his order when there was initially no response from the occupants who then slowly began to get out whereupon they were quickly restrained, taken to the ground and searched before being secured with handcuffs.

"Very nicely done Bob" the Commander commended.

"Thank you Sir" Bob responded as the Integrity Officers were led away under heavy armed guard "Good to see you as well" he then added.

"Did I miss anything whilst I was away 'enjoying' the hospitality of Mr Dawson and his merry men?" the Commander asked.

"Sir Hugo Davidson turned up drunk, dishevelled and all but beaten to a pulp in Parliament Square and then someone blew up Dave Collins' car out the back of Thames House" Bob confirmed.

"That explains a few things" Sir Richard remarked looking towards Dent who merely nodded in confirmation.

"Where's Tracy?" the Commander then asked, his concern obvious.

"She's safely tucked away in an underground bunker in Dorking" Dent confirmed "at the moment we are running the show from there until we can get the squatters out of New Scotland Yard."

"Go on then, tell me the worst" the Commander prompted.

"They have used some Trojan horse legislation to basically take control of the National Police & Security Service and the Secret Security Services" Dent explained "All the regular people are still in place except Tracy, Hoskins and myself who have either been arrested, killed in the case of my predecessor or managed to escape as is the case with your wife Sir Edward."

"In which case I think we need to get to Dorking" the Commander declared "by way of somewhere we can get a bite to eat and a decent cup of tea."

"We have transport waiting Sir" Bob confirmed, showing them to a couple of cars nearby where Terry Kinderley was waiting with the Commander's official car.

"Mr Dent" the Commander turned to the new MI5 Operations Chief "Will you join me please?"

"Err, yes Sir" Dent confirmed as he proceeded to get in the back of the Commander's official car before the Commander himself got in the other side.

"Oh, and you can call me Commander if you wish" the Commander then instructed as Kinderley returned to the driving seat and started the car "Anything but Sir Edward."

"Right you are Commander" Dent agreed as they moved off.

"There has been much speculation and comment across social media and the press this morning as footage has emerged online apparently showing the National Police & Security Service Administrator General, Divisional Commander in Chief, Sir Edward Regent being arrested by armed men at Turnpike Lane Underground Station in North London sometime yesterday" the BBC News presenter announced at the start of the lead item on the six o'clock a.m. bulletin on the BBC News Channel.

"Within minutes of the footage appearing across multiple social media platforms, it was also sent anonymously to the BBC along with further leaked documentation that appears to show that there may be questions over the suitability of the choice of Stephen Noble as the new Security Ombudsman General, an appointment he took up just a couple of days ago, amid accusations of previous collusion with special operations divisions of MI5 and MI6 as well as possible connections to the death of Justice Secretary Sir William Devane who was found dead, allegedly from natural causes in his car near Bethnal Green, East London earlier this week."

"Already the hash tags #TurnpikeLane and #CommanderArrested have been trending across the globe as the footage had been seen by an estimated fifteen million in just

the first couple of hours since its release and has already led to calls by several MP's for a statement and an announcement by the Prime Minister's senior press officer that the incident will be thoroughly investigated by the appropriate authorities later today."

"Meanwhile there are growing calls for the Divisional Commander in Chief, often referred to simply as 'The Commander' and widely regarded worldwide to be one of the most trusted and well known public figures in the justice and police sector to be released immediately and a public inquiry into the actions of the Security Ombudsman Office and it's associated newly created, privately funded and run Integrity Enforcement Bureau to commence immediately."

"In other news, the National Police & Security Service Anti-Terrorism Division has confirmed that the explosion that occurred yesterday in Thorney Street, Westminster immediately behind the headquarters of MI5 was a car bomb. One person in the car, believed to have been the bomber is now confirmed as dead whilst there were approximately a dozen minor injuries to passers by and people in buildings overlooking the street when the explosion occurred.

"Further revelations have emerged about former Prime Minister Sir Hugo Davidson who turned up in a drunken and dishevelled state in Parliament Square yesterday morning amid extensive claims of a heavy drinking habit as well gambling addiction and extensive debts with loan sharks.

"He is now undergoing treatment in a secure but undisclosed location and the Parliamentary Conduct Committee has confirmed that an investigation into Sir Hugo's personal and private actions whilst Prime Minister will be get under way early next week. A report that Sir Hugo is to be stripped of his knighthood has been dismissed by a Buckingham Palace spokesman as 'pure speculation'.

"There you have it" Jack confirmed as he, Tracy and Fuller watched the news broadcast "The Turnpike Lane incident has gone viral."

"Well done" Tracy responded.

"I had a good teacher" Jack remarked as he and Fuller exchanged a brief smile.

"Honey, I'm home" the Commander then called as he walked into the room whereupon Tracy quickly got up and they embraced, hugging each other tightly before kissing.

"Oh thank God you are safe love" Tracy responded as it was clear a huge weight of worry had been lifted off her shoulders with the safe return of her husband.

"I've missed you so much" the Commander responded as Fuller and Jack looked at each other and then decided to discreetly depart the room and leave the couple alone.

"Ah, love eh?" Fuller remarked to Jack as they walked down the corridor.

"I would at one time have responded at this point and have said I always found love

horrendously overrated but since Megan left for her school foreign language exchange trip the other day I find my world view on the subject changing somewhat" Jack then admitted.

"And with that admission I win twenty quid" Fuller responded with a wry smile.

"You guys were running a book on me and Megan?" Jack asked with a raised eyebrow of surprise.

"Of course we were" Fuller confirmed.

"In which case breakfast is on you" Jack declared.

"Fair enough my little friend" Fuller readily agreed "Fair enough."

It was then that one of the Control Room officers came running up the corridor towards them, their urgent step on the concrete floor of the utilitarian chamber echoing their urgent sounding footsteps as they approached.

"Where is Commander Caverner?" the officer asked "It's urgent" she confirmed.

"I think she and the Commander want to be left alone for a little while Lieutenant" Fuller responded, momentarily looking back towards the room they had just left "Is it something I can help with?" he then asked.

"We just had a garbled report from one of Commander Cassini's covert surveillance guys" the Lieutenant went on to explain as she handed over a piece of paper "Dent requested a tail be put on that reporter from The Guardian newspaper who basically heckled the Lord Chief Justice at the press conference earlier."

"Go on" Fuller responded with clear concern as Jack also looked on with an equally worried look.

"They reckon someone is following him" the Lieutenant continued to explain "It looks like after leaving the press conference in The Shard, Forbes went to his office at The Guardian and then left about ten minutes ago where he seems to have picked up a tail."

"Something going on?" Dent asked as he joined the group having overheard the conversation.

"Have you put anyone on that reporter Forbes?" Fuller asked "Only apparently he is being followed by someone."

"Not that I am aware of" Dent confirmed "and I doubt MI6 would have anyone on him either although I could check."

"If you would be so kind" Fuller requested.

"I've got a bad feeling about this" Jack commented as Dent left the group.

"Lieutenant" Fuller then instructed "Have the surveillance team keep tabs on Forbes until we can send reinforcements but if anything looks likely to happen before they cavalry arrives then they have permission to break cover and intervene if necessary."

"Yes Sir" the Lieutenant confirmed before turning smartly on her heels and quickly departing.

"This is getting nastier by the minute" Jack remarked just as Dent returned with Hewitt of MI6.

"Nothing on our books" Hewitt confirmed "Not even remotely on our radar as it happens."

"Same here" Dent agreed "In think we need to intervene before something unpleasant happens."

"Agreed" Fuller responded "so who gets to go and disturb the first couple of the Security Service to deliver the bad news?" he then asked, looking around as if in search for a volunteer.

"Oh go on then you wussies" Jack responded after a moment of silence "I'll do it" he then declared before turning around and heading back towards the meeting room.

"He'll go far in this business" Dent commented as they all watched Jack disappear into the meeting room "assuming he doesn't get crucified in the next thirty seconds that is" he added with a smirk.

A few moments later Tracy and the Commander with Jack emerged from the room and joined the other in the corridor.

"It never rains but it pours" the Commander remarked "Shall we?" he then gestured down the corridor towards the Control Room in the distance before leading the way.

"All right, what's the situation?" Tracy asked as they came into the Control Room.

"Forbes just left his office in King's Cross in a black cab" the Lieutenant confirmed as Fuller quickly took a seat and swiftly called up the appropriate traffic cameras in the area which appeared across multiple screens mounted on the wall in front of them.

"I don't suppose we know which one do we?" Fuller then asked "only there are a hell of a lot of black cabs in this town last time I looked."

"Transport for London Taxi Licence number 020485" the Lieutenant confirmed.

"Am I missing something?" Sir Richard asked as he came into the Control Room and looked around.

"Some journalist has got himself into hot water with the Pyramid lot" the Commander explained "and he has picked up a tail which is not any of ours" he then ominously

added.

"Got him!" Fuller then called out causing everyone to look back up at the screens again "He's heading south towards Holborn."

"All right" the Commander declared "Let's keep him under close surveillance and bring in a snatch team on standby just in case" he ordered.

The Commander and the others in the Dorking Bunker were not the only ones following Forbes' progress through the centre of the city late that night as in the Integrity Enforcement Bureau Operations Centre, Dawson was watching carefully on the screen in front of him an interactive map which showed the plan of the centre of London with three dots marked on it.

The first blue dot was where Forbes had started his journey at The Guardian offices in King's Cross, the second red dot which was steadily moving in a southwards direction marked where the taxi cab transporting the journalist was whilst a green dot on the south bank of the River Thames near Battersea marked the location of his apartment in a newly built development not far from the old Battersea Power Station.

"Mr Noble" Dawson called into a mobile telephone as he continued to watch the screen intently "Situation report please" he formally requested.

"Target is on the way and the surprise package has been placed" Noble confirmed from his current location standing beneath a tree on the far side of the street from the apartment block where Forbes lived "He should be hear within five minutes."

"In which case you have authorisation to proceed" Dawson confirmed "Enjoy yourself" he then added with an evil smirk before hanging up.

Once the call was terminated, Dawson went over to the window and looked out across the lights of the skyline of London spread out before him and like a newly crowned King lording it over his domain, he allowed himself to break into an evil laugh that echoed all throughout the near deserted building with an ominous tone.

"Any sign of a tail?" Tracy asked as they continued to follow the black cab's progress through the City as it approached the River Thames.

"If there is then they are very good at it" Fuller confirmed "I haven't seen the same car for more than three minutes at a time following him."

"Now that's trade craft" Sir Richard confirmed "Multiple teams, different vehicles, switching over every few minutes or miles, very effective."

"Unfortunately that makes it a lot more difficult to see who and where they are" the Commander then added with a sense of frustration.

"If he makes it to his apartment then he should be okay I would have thought" Dent

commented "I would have thought it extremely unlikely they would try anything in such a secure development as that place has."

"Come on, you can do it" Jack urged on the taxi cab as it was seen to arrive on the south bank of the River Thames and turn right before beginning to approach its final destination.

"Snatch team are three minutes away" Dent confirmed as he hung up the telephone and returned to the group "Where is our boy?" he then asked.

"Nearly home" Fuller confirmed as another traffic camera plus a camera mounted over the entrance of the apartment building simultaneously showed the taxi cab pulling up outside and Forbes getting out having handed over his fare to the driver before heading inside the entrance lobby.

"He's home" Fuller confirmed as everyone in the Control Room breathed a momentary sense of relief.

"Thank God for that" the Commander responded "Okay, let's get him out of there and into protective custody as soon as possible" he then ordered.

"Snatch team" Dent then called over a radio "Bring our boy home" he requested.

In the entrance lobby, Forbes approached the two lifts and was surprised to note that one of them was marked as out of order, not a problem however especially at that time of night with few if any people moving about so he duly pressed the call button for the other lift and patiently waited.

A few moments later he became aware of someone else entering the lobby and coming to stand alongside him whereupon the two men both momentarily stood alongside each other and exchanged a nod of acknowledgement before the lift door opened and Forbes stepped inside.

Turning around, he was surprised to see the other man still standing outside the lift where he had expected him to enter as well.

"It's okay Mr Forbes" the man confirmed as he took off his hat to reveal it to be Noble although Forbes was of course unaware of his identification or intent "I'll take the next car" he responded.

"Okay then" Forbes remarked with a casual shrug of the shoulders before pressing the button for the sixth floor but just as the doors closed Noble tossed in a package that landed on the floor of the lift car in front of him.

"Bloody hell!!!" Tracy exclaimed as she saw from the lobby CCTV feed Noble's face "Get your snatch team in there NOW!!!" she urgently called.

As soon as the lift doors were closed and the lift car had begun its ascent, Noble took

the 'Out of Order' sign off the left hand lift doors and placed it on the others through which Forbes had entered just moments before.

"Stop!" came a call from Noble's right to which he duly looked across to see two men coming into the lobby, Dent's snatch team.

Noble gave no verbal response; instead he quickly and calmly drew a silence weapon, fired twice and killed both approaching men in cold blood before smirking, tucking his gun away in his jacket once more and then walking away.

"What the hell...?" Forbes asked himself as the lift continued to ascend and he stopped down to pick up the small package that Noble had tossed in there moments before.

On the carefully wrapped tubular shaped brown paper wrapped package was a simple message:

'With the compliments of the Integrity Service...
...for *your* security"

"Good night Mr Forbes" Noble casually remarked, taking out a small device from his pocket as he crossed the street whereupon he pressed a button and it emitted an ominous beep.

A split second later there was an loud explosion and a flash of green tinged light as the elevator car exploded and sent fire and debris shooting the whole height of the lift shaft, deforming the doors on every floor and sending a shockwave akin to an sudden earthquake through the entire building and beyond where Noble could feel it through the ground beneath his feet.

"What the hell was that?" the Commander exclaimed as on the CCTV feeds they were watching they also saw the sudden green flash and the lift doors in the lobby start to deform from the force of the explosion before the pictures were cut off coincident with the failure of the power supply to the cameras.

From his office in The Shard building, Dawson also saw the green tinged flash as the force of the fireball that had been unleashed by the detonation broke through the roof of the apartment building in the distance accompanied by the rumble of the explosion echoing across the sky.

"Hmm..." Dawson responded with a smile before turning around and proceeding back to his desk where he picked up a file which he briefly opened to reveal a photograph and accompanying details of Forbes which he then proceeded to calmly feed into the shredder alongside with a definite look of satisfaction.

"Home Secretary" came the call from outside the office door accompanied by a rapid

knocking "Home Secretary?"

"Huh?" Davis awoke at the sound having fallen asleep at his desk, the time being now the early hours of the morning.

"Err" he then remarked as he gradually became more aware of his surroundings before inspecting his right arm where there was the remains of part eaten slice of take away pizza stuck to it which he peeled off and chucked in the bin "Come in" he then called.

"Jesus Christ!" Helsmund remarked as he came into the office and saw the state of both the desk and its occupant.

"I'd offer you a slice Yavin but I think it has gone a bit cold" Davis remarked as he closed the lid of the pizza box and tossed it to one side to clear at least a little space on his desk.

"It's all right, I err grabbed a sandwich from the canteen" Helsmund confirmed.

"What did I miss?" Davis then asked, sensing the urgency with which Helsmund had arrived at his office.

"Well I have some good news and some bad news" Helsmund confirmed.

"Let's hear the bad news first, that way things can only get better" Davis prompted as he picked up the coffee mug on the table, sniffed it, discovered its half drunk contents were stone cold but then proceeded to drink it anyway with a grimace.

"The bad news is that there was an explosion in an apartment building in Battersea about an hour ago" Helsmund explained "The boys in blue from the National Police & Security Service rolled up within a couple of minutes along with pretty much every fire service appliance in south London only to find a secure cordon already in place courtesy of the Integrity Enforcement Group citing some regulation nobody has ever heard of."

"Bomb?" Davis asked with an obviously growing sense of concern.

"Official statement put out about ten minutes ago claimed it was a tragic accident caused by a technical fault with an elevator on the premises" Helsmund reported, clearly not believing a word of it "a technical fault that by the way was heard across the city for miles around and has probably rendered half the building in which it occurred structurally unsafe."

"Any casualties?" Davis then asked.

"One confirmed dead passenger in the lift" Helsmund "a reporter from The Guardian by the name of Forbes."

"Wasn't he the guy who basically heckled the Lord Chief Justice at that press conference earlier?" Davis then asked.

"The very same" Helsmund confirmed "What an amazing coincidence!" he then sarcastically commented.

"Is Divisional Commander Caverner aware of this development?" Davis then asked.

"No one has been able to reach her" Helsmund responded "All contact made with New Scotland Yard is going through some Integrity Bureau overseer by the name of Cleaver."

"Leave it to me" Davis replied "I have discovered that sitting in this office makes certain unmonitored back channels available to me that I can make good use of."

"The good news" Helsmund then continued "Well, potentially good news is that there may be a legal loophole which we can use to overthrow the Pyramid influence."

"Do tell" Davis responded, his interest suitably piqued.

"It seems in their hurry to bring in their new world order they overlooked some legislation that they failed to comply with" Helsmund presented some documents along with some rough hand written notes he had put together which went some way to explaining his thinking "It's weak but I think it may buy us enough doubt to start legal injunctions that may at least slow them down enough to allow the good guys to get back in there and kick them out before they do too much damage."

"This is good, very good" Davis commented as he read the documents he had just received.

"Thank you Home Secretary" Helsmund replied "I still think it smacks of desperation and the proverbial clutching of straws though" he then remarked.

"At the rate things are going I'll take anything going" Davis responded.

"In which case I will bid you good night Sir, or rather morning" Helsmund noticed the time on the wall clock before turning and leaving the office.

Once Davis had observed that the door had been closed and that he was alone once more he discreetly pressed a button underneath the edge of his desk that locked the office door remotely so that he would not be disturbed before swivelling around to the computer screen mounted across the corner of the desk.

"Computer" Davis then called which saw the computer screen come to life with a simple 'Awaiting command' message "Secure communications protocol Zodiac One, pass phrase 'Mary had a little lamb', Gold Command, Commander Caverner, ultraviolet priority" he declared.

A few moments later Tracy Caverner appeared on the screen with the Commander stood just behind her.

"Home Secretary" Tracy responded "If you don't mind me saying, you look like you

picked a fight with a pizza and lost."

"Yeah" Davis admitted as he looked at the state of himself "My cleaning lady is going to go ballistic when she sees the state of my office in the morning."

"What have you got for us?" the Commander then asked.

"Sorry" Davis commented "I thought you had been arrested by Dawson's guys Sir?" he then asked.

"It's err a long story" the Commander admitted slightly evasively.

"Oh" Davis responded "Well, I don't know if you are aware, I am not sure how well tied into the system you are down there but there was an explosion at an apartment building in Battersea a little over an hour ago."

"We know all about it" Tracy confirmed "we had live CCTV feeds running when the bomb went off."

"Oh, so it was a bomb then?" Davis asked.

"Either that or some very serious flatulence" the Commander confirmed.

"It's just apparently your people have been kept out of it by the Integrity Service and they are calling it a tragic accident caused by a catastrophic malfunction in the elevator mechanism" Davis explained.

"I think the epithet I am looking for concerns certain spherical male reproductive organs" Tracy responded.

"Bomb then?" Davis asked.

"Beyond any doubt" the Commander confirmed "the only thing is we saw the package containing what must have been the bomb being delivered and it was barely the size of a chunky Kit-Kat bar, the explosion that resulted was way out of proportion in relation to the size of the explosive source."

"I don't like this" Tracy commented "I don't like this at all."

"Fuller did say that in the data he managed to extract from that scientific tech company that got raided that there may have been some explosives stolen" the Commander ventured "could this have been some of the loot and its some kind of new super powerful yet compact design that we don't know about?"

"If that theory is correct" Davis remarked with a clear tone of concern "then if it is as powerful yet as compact as we are speculating and it is in general circulation we could be looking at a whole lot of trouble especially if it gets into the wrong hands."

"With stuff like that quite frankly there is no such thing as the right hands as far as I am concerned" the Commander remarked.

"In which case on that depressing note" Davis then continued "I think I may have something for you that might cheer you up but it's risky."

"Go on" Tracy prompted "We need all the help we can get."

"If you can re-establish control over the National Security Service from New Scotland Yard then I believe I can draft an series of legal injunctions and International Arrest Warrants against certain organisations, individuals and those under their direct or indirect command" Davis confirmed "It would need the Prime Minister to make a public speech denouncing the Pyramid Group and careful wording of any injunctions we issue but at the very least it could give us a chance of slowing them down long enough for you guys to roll on in and upset their little party."

"If we do that then we may get a chance to seize evidence of wrong doing on their part with which we can shut them down, permanently" Tracy agreed.

"Even if we get warrants to enter premises on suspicion it would be enough to get our foot in the door" the Commander added "However the timing will be crucial."

"I can have the Prime Minister briefed in the morning and put on alert to do her bit when the time is right" Davis confirmed "Then it will just be a case of her officially authorising you to effectively go and kick some Pyramidian ass."

"You do realise that if we do arrest the Pyramid Group committee or whatever they are called then the courts are going to be tied up in inquiries, legal proceedings and prosecutions for years if not decades?" the Commander warned.

"Well given that the tenancy of Home Secretary's is about eighteen months on average I reckon I won't be around long enough to see the worst of the legal nightmare we could be about to unleash" Davis commented.

"All right then" the Commander concluded "I want you to brief the Prime Minister on everything in the morning then have her on standby to receive a telephone call from me tomorrow afternoon."

"Got it" Davis agreed as he duly took down some notes.

"Good luck" Tracy then called.

"To you as well" Davis responded "Home Secretary, out" he then concluded before disconnecting the call.

"We need to get back into the Yard" the Commander concluded "and quickly."

"That won't be easy" Tracy responded "the place will be crawling with Integrity 'overseers' who will probably be none too pleased to see us."

"Ah but, we know the place and our people who are still within" the Commander pointed out "and that I think gives us the edge."

"We are still going to need reinforcements though" Tracy then pointed out.

"Exactly what I was thinking" the Commander agreed as he reached across and picked up a telephone before pressing a single button to make a call "Bob, I need a couple of van loads of your finest as soon as possible, I'll send you the location on a secure message in a moment and on the way in pick up some breakfast, enough for yourselves and about forty others."

"Perhaps we should alert the others?" Tracy suggested.

"Let them sleep love" the Commander responded "We need them crisp and meadow fresh in the morning" he confirmed.

"Have you seen the toilet facilities down here?" Tracy remarked "Fresh is one thing we are unlikely to be I would wager."

"Yeah..." the Commander admitted.

"Do we have any way of communicating with anyone inside New Scotland Yard?" Tracy then asked.

"Maybe" the Commander responded "but its risky" he then admitted "If they have someone watching over the Control Room or the telephone exchange then it will be real easy to pick up anything we may do to contact them and that could lead them to trace us."

"Indeed" Tracy admitted.

"We do need some on site intelligence though" the Commander then continued as he reached across to the intercom on the desk and pressed a button "Can you send for Commander Cassini please" he then requested.

"That will be a bit odd" Tracy remarked "conducting an undercover surveillance job on our own building!"

"It's a reflection of the times my love" the Commander admitted.

A few moments later they were joined by Cassini who had just run down the main corridor from the rudimentary living quarters at the other end of the complex.

"You sent for me?" Cassini asked.

"We need you to do some surveillance" Tracy began.

"Well, surveillance is my middle name" Cassini responded "well it's Luigi actually but I digress" he then admitted with a wry smile.

"We are intending to repossess a certain office building in central London in the morning and we need to know how many Integrity morons are lurking about the

place" the Commander went on to explain "both uniformed and plain clothes."

"Anywhere I know?" Cassini asked as his mind began to settle on the task he was about to face.

"New Scotland Yard" Tracy admitted, matter of frankly.

"Oh..." Cassini responded "Well I wasn't expecting that I must say."

"We need to know how many people the Integrity Bureau have on site" Tracy continued "where in the building they are posted, what they are carrying and what communications they have."

"I think my team and I can manage that without too much trouble" Cassini readily agreed "The London Transport building at number 55 directly opposite should provide a few decent vantage points and I can check out the reception area using the good old fake parcel courier routine."

"Whilst you are about it" the Commander then interjected "We are going to need some intelligence on the Bressenden Place offices of the Ombudsman's Offices as well" he requested.

"They only occupy a couple of floors if I recall so that shouldn't be too much of a strain on my resources" Cassini agreed.

"I think most of the Integrity Bureau operations are being controlled from the same building as the Pyramid Group are using" the Commander remarked "so there shouldn't be too many people there I would have thought."

"Best to be safe than sorry though Sir" Cassini strongly recommended "I'll wake my people up and get right on it."

"Thanks" Tracy called as Cassini duly left.

"Do you think it is time he got a promotion?" the Commander asked "after all he has done for us over the years, he should be rewarded."

"Probably" Tracy agreed "trouble is I think he is very much happy where he is" she commented.

"What is it Fortescue?" the Prime Minister asked as she attempted to eat her breakfast as the first rays of sun lifting above the horizon shone through the window behind her.

"The Home Secretary has arrived and wants to see you urgently" Fortescue announced.

"Oh..." the Prime Minister responded as she gave up any hope of ever finishing her breakfast and pushed the plate of half eaten toast away from her "All right then, send

him in" she then formally requested.

"Yes Prime Minister" Fortescue replied before turning back to the door and opening it whereupon he gestured for Davis to come in.

"Thank you James, that will be all" the Prime Minister then called which rather caught Fortescue off guard as he presumed he would be present for the meeting.

"But..." he began.

"That will be all" the Prime Minister reiterated with a stern look whereupon Fortescue relented and with a nod of respectful acknowledgment, he left, closing the door behind him.

"Thank God he's gone, obstinate little twerp" the Prime Minister then remarked "Come" she then prompted Davis "sit down, have some coffee."

"Thank you Prime Minister" Davis responded as he took a seat at the table directly opposite the Prime Minister and eagerly helped himself to coffee, pouring it from the pot into the cup that she passed across to him.

"You look like you need it" the Prime Minister remarked "If you don't mind me saying so, you look like shit."

"I feel like it too Prime Minister" Davis admitted as with a little sigh of relief he started drinking his coffee.

"All nighter was it?" the Prime Minister asked.

"Something like that" Davis confirmed "I think we may have a potential solution to our problems, well some of them at any rate."

"Have some more coffee" the Prime Minister passed the pot across which Davis greatly accepted "and tell me more" she prompted.

"My team and I trawled through pretty much every piece of legislation we could think of and then some" Davis began to explain "I think we can use some pretty obscure regulations to obtain injunctions against the Pyramid Organisation and the Integrity Service plus anyone connected with them" he announced.

"Sounds promising" the Prime Minister responded.

"If we use the legislation that is normally reserved for banning paramilitary and terrorist supporting organisations then we can issue cease and desist orders against them" Davis went on to explain "then it is simply a case of publicly announcing that said organisations are officially banned in the UK, membership thereof then automatically becomes illegal and that is when we issue the arrest warrants and let the Commander and his boys and girls in blue go around and kick some doors in."

"So how do we proceed?" the Prime Minister then asked.

"Well first things first is that the appropriate paperwork needs to be drawn up" Davis confirmed "My legal eagles are working on that right now."

"It must be word perfect though" the Prime Minister warned "one slight error, one word out of place, hell, so much as a misplaced apostrophe and Dawson and his own legal eagles will have the whole thing thrown out of court before the Commander has even had time to put his coat on."

"Hence why we have been working through the night" Davis confirmed "However before anything can be put in motion we need the Commander to take back control of the National Security & Police Service, throwing out the Integrity Service overseers who are currently controlling New Scotland Yard."

"I am sure he and Commander Caverner are capable of that" the Prime Minister confidently reassured him.

"Once they are back in command then we need to go public" Davis continued "Cross channel Prime Ministerial announcement denouncing the whole lot of them."

"Publicly name and shame the Pyramid Group?" the Prime Minister asked to which Davis nodded "They won't take to kindly to that" she remarked.

"Does it look like I give two hoots about Dawson and his buddies feelings?" the Prime Minister sarcastically asked.

"Quite..." Davis responded with a smirk "Once we go public and officially declare them an illegal organisation, we can then issue arrest warrants for the principals involved and you can give an executive order to the Security Services to shut them down using whatever means you consider appropriate."

"Oh I do like the sound of that" the Prime Minister agreed with a big smile of satisfaction "help yourself to more coffee" she then prompted "we will leave for Downing Street in twenty minutes."

"Cassini to all units" he called to his officers now deployed in observational locations all around the New Scotland Yard building "Give me regular report please" he requested.

"Looks like we got four Integrity Enforcement Officers on the front door boss" Iggy called as he looked through his binoculars down from the top floor of 55 Broadway, the former London Transport headquarters building down to the main entrance of New Scotland Yard on the opposite side of the street.

"Packing?" Cassini asked.

"Looks like standard nine millimetres on their hips, radio communications, nothing fancy" Iggy confirmed.

"Time to take a look inside" Cassini then declared as he got up and placed his weapon on the table before picking up a uniform jacket of a courier delivery company and putting it on "Wish me luck."

"Good luck boss" Iggy responded as his superior left the room.

A few minutes later a Royal Mail Parcelforce van pulled into Broadway at the St. James Park end and drove slowly up the road until it came to a halt just short of the corner where the famous three sided revolving New Scotland Yard sign was located.

Getting out of the van, Cassini who was now dressed in full delivery driver uniform retrieved a package from the back of the van along with a clipboard and proceeded along the road towards the main entrance where he was watched by the four roving Integrity guards as he proceeded towards the automatic sliding doors that duly opened for him as he reached them, allowing him inside.

Janice the dedicated receptionist who had over the years stood behind the reception desk there through many a crisis looked up as she heard the doors open and recognised straightaway who the courier delivery man was as Cassini arrived but said nothing as he arrived at the desk.

"Morning" Cassini called "Got a package for a Williams?" he then asked, showing Janice the name and address printed on the package.

"Ah yes" Janice responded "I can take that" she confirmed.

"Name, date, time and signature here please" Cassini then requested as he handed over the clipboard and a pen.

As Janice deliberately took her time filling in the details, Cassini discreetly looked around and made a mental note of how many more Integrity Enforcement officers there were in the reception area.

"Here you go" Janice responded as she handed the clipboard back and was about to hand the pen back when Cassini winked at her whereupon she discreetly hid the pen about her desk out of sight and drew no further attention to it.

"Thanks" Cassini then replied "Keep in touch" he then whispered to her under his breath to which Janice nodded discreetly in understanding before he duly left.

Janice watched as Cassini left the building before retrieving the pen and, hidden by the raised front of the desk where the Integrity Enforcement officers could not see, she looked at it.

Instinct told her what to do as she unscrewed the barrel of the pen and lifted it to reveal a slip paper wrapped around the ink cartridge inside which she carefully took out, unwound and read the message it contained.

'Need to know numbers, armourments and locations of the rodents. See you later. -

T.C.'

The initials she instantly recognised although the handwriting were enough to tell Janice that the message had been sent from Tracy and it gave her something to smile about.

After thinking for a few moments, Janice put the pen inside her handbag and moved out from behind the reception desk whereupon one of the Integrity Enforcement officers stepped forward.

"It's all right" Janice reassured him "I am going to get some coffee. Would you like some?" she then politely asked.

"Err, it's all right, thanks though" the Integrity Enforcement officer responded, slightly taken by surprise by her offer "You are going to leave the desk unattended?" he then asked as she turned towards the door to leave.

"You are a big boy with a gun" Janice flattered him "I am sure you can look after it for five minutes" she then remarked as the other Integrity Enforcement officer inside the reception area tried and failed to suppress a laugh at his colleague's expense.

Janice carried on through the automated doors and out into the street before turning to her right where a short walk around the corner into Tothill Street brought her to a coffee shop where Cassini was visible sat at a high bar seat in the front window with two cups of cappuccino coffee in front of him.

"You forgot your pen" Janice remarked with a wry smile as she took a seat alongside Cassini and together they looked out of the window.

"Thanks" Cassini responded as he took the pen back before passing one of the cups of coffee across to her along with a paper bag "Cappuccino and a chocolate croissant, your favourite."

"How did you know that?" Janice asked.

"I am a highly trained observer of the human race, I get paid for this sort of thing" Cassini admitted with a smile.

"I got the message" Janice confirmed as sipped on the coffee carefully as it was still extremely hot.

"How did you manage to get out of there so easily?" Cassini asked more out of curiosity and any real need to know.

"It is amazing what power a seemingly ordinary wee slip of a girl receptionist such as I can command over men with guns with the carefull application of some make up and a short skirt" she confirmed with a wry smile.

"I thought you looked a little different this morning" Cassini admitted "I like it."

"Thank you" Janice responded with a smile.

"So aside from buying a pretty girl breakfast" Cassini then asked "what can you tell me about our rodent problem?"

"Aside from the four out the front and the three goons just inside in my space who seem more interested in my hem line than actually doing any guarding" she continued "there are about two dozen armed officers on a rotating patrol with about three quarters on duty at any one time throughout the building but mainly concentrated in the armoury and the command floor."

"Good, good" Cassini made some notes on a paper napkin "What about the Control Room?" he then asked.

"All our usual people are still in place but are under a tight watch from at least one but usually two Integrity guards plus some supervisory guy by the name of Frank Cleaver" Janice confirmed.

"That name has come up a couple of times so far I believe" Cassini responded.

"Unfortunately a new rule was instigated when the Integrity 'overseers' took over and now no officer on sight is allowed to carry their guns on the premises" Janice then informed him.

"No guns at all?" Cassini asked with sense of concern.

"Not that the Integrity cretins know about, no" Janice confirmed "We have managed to hide a few bits and pieces about the place in case we should need them though although admittedly all I have behind my desk is the army issue combat helmet I acquired a few years ago and if I were suddenly to put that on then the three stooges in reception might just notice no matter how short my skirt is."

"Right" Cassini finished writing his notes which had stretched to a second napkin in order to contain them all "You had best get back before you are missed."

"Don't worry" Janice confirmed "I have them wrapped around my little finger" she cheekily remarked "Thanks for the coffee and croissant."

"My pleasure" Cassini replied with a smile "Perhaps we should do this again sometime when we are not surrounded with nutters?"

"I'd like that" Janice agreed as she and Cassini got down off their high stools and with him opening the door for her, they left "By the way" she then asked just as they were about to part company "What is your first name? I've never known it."

"Very few do" Cassini admitted "Garibaldi" he then announced with a slightly embarrassed smile "but my friends call just me Cassini."

"See you later Cassini" Janice called.

"Look forward to it" Cassini responded.

"I've just got word from the Home Secretary via the secure scrambler" Sir Richard announced as he came into the main meeting room in the Dorking bunker complex "he and the Prime Minister are on their way back to Downing Street now to make the arrangements for the public broadcasts and the initialisation of proceedings against the Pyramid loonies."

"Good" the Commander responded.

"Any word from Cassini?" Tracy asked.

"He has just sent though a photograph which seems to be of a couple of paper napkins" Fuller called from the opposite side of the office.

"Come again?" the Commander asked as he looked up from the paperwork he was reading with a slightly bemused look.

"Ah, now it makes sense" Fuller then declared when he rotated the image on his screen so that now the notes that were written on the napkins were now readable "Looks like a report of the strength of numbers on site at the Yard."

"Err..." Tracy bent down to speed read the notes on the screen before standing up again "Nothing overly insurmountable I don't think" she confirmed.

"I think we can safely say this the place Sir" the driver of the lead of three minibuses in the convoy remarked to Bob sat alongside him as they pulled up at the gateway where four army soldiers were on guard duty in front of a lifting barrier that blocked the way ahead.

"Either that or we took a wrong turn and wound up on Salisbury Plain" Bob admitted as one of the soldiers on guard duty approached their vehicle.

"Identification please Sir" one of the soldiers formally requested when he reached the side window which Bob had already wound down in anticipation of this.

"Divisional Commander Bob Thompson, Specialist Firearms Division, National Police & Security Service plus my team" he indicated both the rear of the minibus he was travelling in plus the two identical ones immediately behind them.

"Do you or anyone travelling with you have any weapons on them?" the soldier then asked as he returned Bob's identification to him.

"Really?" Bob gave the soldier a wry look.

"Err yeah, silly question" the soldier then realised his error "sorry Sir" he apologised before indicating to his colleague to raise the barrier whereupon he waved the

vehicles through onto the site.

"What the hell is this place?" the driver asked as both he and Bob looked all around what appeared to be little more than a section of woodland and some grassy areas with old World War Two concrete anti-tank bollards strewn about.

"Whatever it is, you can bet the Commander probably got it cheap" Bob admitted before pointing ahead towards what seemed to be an innocuous looking little concrete hut set against the stony hill side, barely visible through the surrounding woodland and undergrowth.

The driver duly parked the minibus alongside a number of other vehicles which included the Commander's official car which confirmed to Bob as he recognised it that there were in the right place at least.

"This way please Sir" one of the soldiers on guard met Bob as he got out of the vehicle.

"Ian, Zo, bring the stuff" Bob called to a couple of his team "the rest of you stay here until I send for you" he ordered.

At his command, the two officers called upon proceeded to extract from the rear of one of the minibuses a couple of large cardboard boxes before following the soldier and their superior office into the small concrete hut type building.

"Curiouser and curiouser" Bob remarked as they proceeded through a door and after negotiating a short twisted corridor, they headed down almost eighty steps seemingly into the bowels of the Earth.

"Welcome to our little bunker" the Commander met them the bottom of the stairs "It's a bit damp and tatty in places but it has served us well so far" he then admitted as he relieved the soldier of his escort duties and took over.

"I brought breakfast" Bob confirmed as he indicated the boxes that his two officers were carrying.

"Bob, you are a lifesaver" Tracy commented as they met in the main meeting room and Bob indicated to his two officers to put the boxes down and then leave them.

"So, what can I do for you Sir, Ma'am?" Bob then asked.

"We need to undertake some pest control" the Commander admitted "We have a rodent problem."

"Name the target and we will have it reconnoitred and I can send my lads and lasses straight in" Bob confirmed.

"New Scotland Yard" Tracy confirmed with a smile.

"All right" Bob then responded after a brief pause during which he took in this

slightly surprising revelation "Forget the reconnoitre, I think we know the layout already" he admitted with a smile.

"I predict it is going to be a busy day for us all" the Commander admitted.

As usual Janice, the Receptionist was on duty behind her desk in the front lobby of New Scotland Yard and looked up momentarily to see two of the assigned Integrity Enforcement Officers were still on patrol, prowling around with a sense of self importance that was in reality neither applicable, valid nor appropriate in their current location.

Glancing out through the twin glass sliding doors at the pathway that led to the street outside she also noted the other four Integrity Officers that were allocated to the main entrance continuing to prowl around outside.

Unimpressed by their posturing, she returned to her work, checking the computer screen in front of her.

It was a few moments later that she looked up again when she realised that something unusual was now going on outside and a few moments later the two Integrity Officers in the lobby realised it too as they also looked out through the window and began to reach for their weapons.

It was then that the automatic glass doors suddenly opened and the sound of a major commotion in progress outside became audible.

"Looking for us gentlemen?" Tracy asked as she and the Commander calmly walked into the lobby with behind them a scene of utter chaos was unfolding as several members of Bob's Specialist Firearms Unit were in the process of overpowering and restraining the half dozen Integrity Enforcement Officers who had been up until a few moments previously on guard outside.

The two Integrity Officers in the lobby immediately reacted by drawing their weapons but before they could take aim, both were rendered incapable of offering up any further resistance as they suddenly found themselves choking in a thick white cloud of carbon dioxide gas before one of them was rendered unconscious when a fire extinguisher, the source of the gas was brought down on the back of his head before it was swung across to knock out the other man.

"Welcome back" Janice called as the gas cleared to reveal her standing there, the fire extinguisher in her hand and the two unconscious Integrity Enforcement Officers at her feet.

"Thank you Janice" the Commander responded "Bob" he then called as the head of the Specialist Firearms Unit entered the lobby with two of his officers "Sweep the building, I want every single one of these cretins shown off the premises in five minutes and get a ring of steel around the place, I want a total lock down in ten minutes."

"With pleasure Sir" Bob confirmed as he indicated to his team to proceed.

"Control Room?" Tracy suggested.

"Control Room" the Commander agreed;

"That's odd, the internal alarm has gone off but the siren hasn't sounded" one of the Control Room Supervisors quietly indicated to her colleague sat at the desk alongside.

"Perhaps the cavalry has arrived?" the other supervisor commented before they both looked across at each other.

"He hasn't noticed yet" the first supervisor nodded discreetly towards Cleaver who since Tracy's departure from New Scotland Yard had been placed in charge of overseeing the Security & Police Service under the auspices of the Integrity Enforcement Bureau.

It was then that a commotion was heard in the corridor outside and in response, one of the supervisors discreetly drew out a gun from beneath her desk in readiness.

"Just in case" she reassured her colleague "just in case."

Cleaver was still lording it in the main seat overlooking the whole Control Room when he first became aware moments later that something was amiss when he felt someone behind him tap him on the shoulder.

"Excuse me" a voice called from behind him causing Cleaver to turn around by spinning the chair only to suddenly be punched squarely in the face which sent him sprawling to the floor.

"Get the hell out of my chair!" the Commander exclaimed as he shook his hand from the momentary pain he had just suffered from delivering the punch.

"Hi there, remember me?" Tracy asked as she unceremoniously grabbed Cleaver by the scruff of the neck and hauled him back onto his feet.

"The attitude certainly seems familiar" Cleaver admitted.

"I'm terribly sorry, we haven't been introduced" the Commander remarked as he unsubtly frisked through Cleaver's pockets and extracted his identification "Cute picture" he then remarked as he found his official Integrity Service warrant card with its passport like photograph on it.

"This is police brutality" Cleaver protested as he was handed over to two armed Security & Police Service officers who had just arrived.

"Take him away" Tracy requested "before I show him what police brutality is really like."

"With pleasure Maam" one of the officers readily agreed before dragging Cleaver away, still protesting although no one was listening to him or for that matter really cared.

"Right then" the Commander declared as he took the centre seat "I want the building swept for any more rodents and when that is done get everyone here and the Prime Minister dialled in on a secure line, we have work to do."

The next thirty minutes saw much frenzied activity throughout New Scotland Yard where in addition to the day to day operations of the Service there was now the additional workload caused by Tracy and the Commander's return and the need to move quickly to neutralise the threat posed by the Pyramid Group and its agents before they had the chance to retaliate for being so unceremoniously thrown out of there earlier.

Fuller was one of the busiest on site as no sooner had he returned from Dorking than he was busy setting up the Commander's office on the top floor which was about to host a complicated meeting between many of those involved who would be present both in person as well as via video links all of which had to be initiated and established before the meeting could begin.

"Are we ready?" the Commander asked as he and Tracy arrived outside the office door a short time later.

"I think we have everyone either here or online Sir" Fuller confirmed before opening the door whereupon he followed the couple inside.

Both Tracy and the Commander were slightly taken aback when in response to their arrival everyone around the room spontaneously stood up in respect.

"Oh blimey, please be seated" the Commander then called before he and Tracy took their seats behind the large antique oak desk that dominated the window side of the office.

"Well, the gang's all here one way or another" Sir Richard declared from the opposite end of the office "including the sorcerers apprentice" he indicated Jack who looked thoroughly confused as to why he was there amongst such distinguished and high ranking company.

"I'll get straight to the point ladies and gentlemen" the Commander declared "we have a lot of work to do and I reckon less than two hours to do it in before somebody decides to rewrite the legislation again and send the Pyramid Integrity loonies back in."

"Going to be difficult" Dent called over the live video link from MI5 Operations Control Room over at Thames House "The Pyramid Group seem to have friends and sympathisers everywhere."

"I am afraid it is even more difficult than that" Hoskins ominously warned "If they

have gained access to and are now in the possession of what I think they are then we could be looking at a whole different ball game."

"Keep talking" the Commander prompted.

"Commander Fuller and I took a sneak and peek at the UK headquarters of a company called Sci-Tech Industries" Hoskins began to explain "We had managed to establish that they were the somewhat elusive owners of the high security off grid storage facility that men connected to the Pyramid Group and under the leadership of a man we know as Hansell stormed in a daring armed raid the other night."

"Did you manage to establish what was taken?" Tracy asked.

"Understandably they were none too forthcoming when I confronted their flim flam P.R. man face to face" Hoskins confirmed "so I left your technical genius Mr Fuller here to do the interesting stuff."

"I managed to pull the old 'where are your toilets' trick and slip away where using a false identification I was able to access their secure mainframe and download all sorts of interesting facts and figures" Fuller confirmed "including links between the company and the late Sir William Devane and the contents of the secure storage facility that was raided."

"It turns out that this company has been very naughty" Hoskins picked up the story once more "They manufacture all sorts of things worldwide from mundane everyday stuff right up to cutting edge arms and explosives technology, some of which isn't exactly legal and then they sell it to whoever has the cash irrespective of how nasty they be or what they might do with it."

"Which presumably explains why when you were asking lots of awkward questions to their PR guy was when the Integrity Muppets turned up and carted you away?" Hewitt suggested from his own video link at a secure MI6 operated location.

"They certainly didn't take too kindly to me nosing about that is for sure" Hoskins agreed.

"So what did Hansell and his thugs get their hands on?" Tracy asked.

"Explosives, sonic detonators, control and timing equipment, materials described as 'biological gas' and a few other sundry bits and pieces" Hoskins confirmed "much of it experimental, dangerous, unlicensed and also not supposed to even be in this continent let alone this country."

"Should I put some of my bomb disposal and hazmat people on standby?" Divisional Commander Harding, the head of the Anti-Terrorism Unit asked with clear concern.

"I'd put all of them on standby if I were you" Hoskins ominously responded "We are looking at some really nasty stuff potentially being in the hands of Hansell and his thugs."

"Okay, so what are we looking at?" the Commander asked.

"Primarily there are two products that should give us cause for extreme concern" Fuller began as he pressed a button on his laptop to start a series of slides which were projected onto the wall screen "Firstly is an experimental plastic high explosive codenamed X332 which is easily distinguished by its manufactured form as hard putty like green sticks approximately fifteen centimetres in length."

"What sort of punch does it pack?" Dent asked.

"A lot, a hell of a lot" Fuller confirmed "however in its dormant state you can hit it, cut it, you can even burn it and it will not detonate. It needs a special frequency transmitter detonator for it to go bang and when it does" he then paused to play a short video clip of the explosive being demonstrated which he had managed to download from the manufacturers mainframe system which showed a van being obliterated by just one stick of the explosive "be somewhere else" he warned.

"Chris" the Commander called to Dent as he could see the same thoughts go across his mind from his reactions on seeing the video clip "are you thinking the same thing that I am?" he asked.

"I reckon so" Dent readily agreed "Do we know what sort of residue or trace this explosive leaves post detonation?" he then asked.

"Virtually nothing conventional" Fuller confirmed "and certainly nothing any of our forensic guys would even look for normally."

"That is interesting because the analysis of the wreckage from Dave Collins' car showed no trace of the explosive used in any of our forensic tests" Dent confirmed.

"Which means the bomb that killed him was probably fuelled by this green stuff" Tracy concluded.

"And I would wager that the bomb that the Integrity Service claims was nothing more than an unfortunate elevator malfunction last night was probably the same stuff too" Dent added.

"Okay" the Commander summarised "so they have access to some nasty explosives" he remarked "what about this chemical stuff you mentioned?" he then asked.

"This as they say is where it gets interesting" Hoskins continued almost with a slight reluctance "The biological material mentioned is another item on Sci-Tech's little sales list that isn't supposed to exist, a chemical agent called R232 and formally described as a vaporised cloud weapon."

"That doesn't sound good" Jack remarked, his concern echoed by the others in the room.

"Basically it is a cloud weapon that is atomised by an explosion" Fuller explained with more stolen demonstration footage from the manufacturer's mainframe "It comes

in green barrels which are hermetically sealed at the point of manufacture and other than pulling a seal on the rim, they remain in there until a detonation takes place."

"The key thing being that only the X332 type explosive can set this stuff off" Hoskins added "Whilst the explosive can be used independently anywhere you like, the R232 chemical agent relies on the X332 being there otherwise it just sits there and does nothing."

"There is one thing about the X332 explosive though" Fuller added "they introduced a fail safe mechanism into its chemical structure during the design and development process which should render the explosive neutralised. You just dunk it in water."

"As simple as that?" Tracy asked.

"As simple as that" Fuller confirmed "Of course it's only theoretical apparently as according to the research notes I dug up they haven't actually tested that function yet."

"So do we know how much of this stuff they managed to steal the other night?" McWilliam asked.

"Lots" Hoskins confirmed "and I mean lots, enough to cause a hell of a lot of death, damage and destruction especially if it were deployed somewhere confined, especially underground or in an inner urban area with lots of people about."

"Alan" the Commander called across to Harding "scramble everything and everyone you have, call in extras from outside Greater London if you have to, I want a two minute maximum response time availability to anywhere set up within the hour."

"You got it Sir" Harding agreed before getting up and leaving the office, already on his mobile phone in order to get things moving as quickly as possible.

"There are going to be a lot of awkward questions from the press for this company to answer about their illicit arms manufacturing and dealings when this is over" Tracy ventured.

"I doubt that" Hoskins responded "the press will be suppressed in the courts by this lots hot shot two grand an hour lawyers and they will get away squeaky clean."

"Not if someone gives them the full story first" Sir Richard warned "and I intend to make sure that happens, off the record of course" he confirmed with a slightly evil smirk.

"So I take it we are going after these Pyramid bastards then?" McWilliam asked.

"Oh yes" the Commander confirmed with a menacing smile.

"So what's the plan?" Sir Richard asked "I assume there is a plan?"

"We reveal our ace up the sleeve and cut off their support mechanism" the Commander revealed before reaching across to the red telephone on the desk.

Everyone watched eager with anticipation as the Commander's call was quickly answered.

"Prime Minister" the Commander formally called "Administrator General Sir Edward Regent calling."

"Good afternoon Administrator General" the Prime Minister responded from behind her desk on the first floor of Number Ten Downing Street.

"I am about to start the music" the Commander announced "You may begin."

"Thank you Commander" the Prime Minister responded.

Once the call was disconnected and he had hung up the red telephone handset, the Commander turned to Glock.

"All right" the Commander then declared "It is time we got you back where you belong."

"Last time I looked Commander the place was crawling with those Integrity morons" Glock pointed out "They might not take too kindly to me just turning up unannounced."

"Don't worry" the Commander reassured him "In twenty minutes you will have the full legislative and legal backing of Downing Street and as insurance I am sending some good friends of mine along with you to make them see the error of their ways if they decide to be uncooperative."

"Okay Commander" Glock responded still not sounding very convinced.

"They're on" Fuller called from across the room.

"Oh, right" the Commander responded whereupon Tracy leaned back and turned on the large wall mounted flat screen television which was already tuned to the BBC News Channel.

"We are going over live to Number Ten Downing Street where the Prime Minister is about to make an announcement" the BBC News studio presenter announced, clearly uncertain as to what was happening as in the last few moments all the United Kingdom television and radio broadcasters had just been told they were being immediately interrupted for this unscheduled speech.

Initially there was nothing on the screen for the first few moments except for a dark blue screen emblazoned with the portcullis symbol of the UK Government and the ornately written 'Office of the Prime Minister' legend across the bottom of the screen along with the obligatory website address.

The screen then changed to a live view of the Prime Minister sat at her desk, the camera then zooming in towards her as she faced the nation.

"Good afternoon" the Prime Minister announced "I am speaking to you today after almost a week of extraordinary events in this nation's governmental, justice and security sectors which has seen a sequence of unprecedented events from the sudden resignation of my predecessor to what has effectively been a hostile takeover of the justice and security mechanisms of the country."

Across the City in his office in The Shard building, Dawson used his remote to increase the television volume level as he watched the broadcast with growing concern.

"What the hell are you up to?" Dawson asked himself before deciding to take affirmative action which he began by making a telephone call.

"It is starting to look like the Prime Minister is about to go off message" Dawson informed whoever it was he was calling "You were right to be suspicious about her. Prepare to release the little surprise; it is time to burn her."

"On behalf of myself, my Government, the National Security & Police Service and the numerous agencies and its employees who work tirelessly around the clock to protect and secure the nation, often without thanks or reward, we offer our sincerest apologies for what has happened" the Prime Minister continued.

"I wanted to take this opportunity to explain to you what has happened, why and what we are going to do to rectify it" she then carried on.

"For many years now there have been those in positions of power and influence who have sought to manipulate events, control people and seize power for their own ends" the Prime Minister began to explain "Many of these plans and plots have passed by and were subsequently neutralised with ease until now."

"Who wrote this load of old tosh?" Sir Richard casually asked.

"I did actually" the Commander responded with a strong hint of indignation.

"Oh, it's err very good" Sir Richard then remarked as he attempted to extract himself from the trouble he had just sunk into which included a brief but hard stare from Tracy.

"Recent events however have shown that when these self serving individuals get together and become organised into a collaborative group, dangerous elements emerge" she continued "and today we stand under the influence of just such a group who have used a Trojan Horse in state legislation to enforce their own personal agendas on the people of this country."

"Thanks to the extensive cooperation of our own security agencies and their

colleagues from overseas we were able to recognise the danger, formulate an elaborate plan to counter the threat and under the direction of the National Security & Police Service Administrator General and his wife, set up a trap to ensnare these people who hide their evil and violent plans behind glossy marketing, P.R. spin and slick presentation" the Prime Minister continued, clearly on a roll now.

"These people who pose one of the biggest threats to the nation's security have a name" the Prime Minister then announced "a name they don't want you, the general public to know. They are called the Pyramid Committee."

"Will someone please shut that two faced treacherous bitch up!" Dawson was heard to call in fury.

"Unfortunately it was necessary to allow them to take control in order to draw them out of the shadows and lure them into our trap" the Prime Minister confirmed "Now" she then declared with a slight smile of satisfaction "we are springing the trap."

"Get everyone on standby to move in the next ten minutes" Tracy called over her radio.

"At this point I would like to introduce you to our new Home Secretary, Nigel Davis QC" the Prime Minister then announced whereupon the image on the screen switched to Davis who was standing in the press briefing room in the Home Office ministry building in Marsham Street, the official crest of his Department displayed proudly behind him.

"As the duly appointed Secretary of State for the Home Office and Legislative Chief of the justice, security and police services in the United Kingdom, I duly serve notice under article Two Twenty Eight, subsection three of the Emergency Security Powers Act and the conditions set out under clause one hundred and one of the United Nations Security Service Initialisation Act 1977 that all operations currently running under the auspices of any agency, group or representatives thereof initiated in place of the Security Ombudsman Service are suspended with immediate effect" he formally announced.

"All officers and employees of the National Security & Police Service, MI5, MI6 and associated agencies are henceforth to ignore any and all orders, directives and legislative instruments originating from anyone not directly connected to the recognised and designated Chain of Command" he then continued.

"Effective immediately those organisations calling themselves 'Pyramid Group', 'Integrity Enforcement Bureau' and any variants or related groups or organisations related there to are rendered banned from operating in any United Nations member state, membership and or employment of said organisations being henceforth deemed illegal and punishable by a minimum prison sentence of five years" Davis determinedly announced.

"Arrest warrants are hereby issued for any and all who are part of or who represent the now outlawed organisations stated in this declaration" he then continued "in particular the following three individuals are wanted immediate question for a number of offences including perverting the course of justice, fraud, murder and treason to the State."

At that point photographs of Noble or Court, Dawson and Hansell appeared on the screen complete with names, two in the case of the first of them being displayed across the bottom.

"These three individuals are now being urgently sought by the National Security & Police Service" the Home Secretary could be heard to announce "They are to be considered extremely dangerous and must not be approached. If you know of their whereabouts please inform the security authorities immediately using the contact details you can see on your screen now."

"You can run but you can't hide" the Commander remarked with a definite look of satisfaction as he watched the broadcast on the television screen in his office.

Across the City the broadcast was creating a somewhat different reaction for Dawson as he looked on, somewhat taken aback by what he was seeing on his screen.

He looked away just as the broadcast returned to the Prime Minister when the telephone on his desk began to ring ominously.

"Dawson here Sir" he then announced on answering the telephone, his usual confident swagger and tone noticeably slipping slightly.

"It's a bump in the road Sir" he then responded to the caller "We have bounced back from such setbacks before and we will again."

There was another moment of silence as Dawson received further instructions to which he merely nodded in response as he turned back to face the television once more.

"It would appear as if Ms Grey was either never actually on our side in the first place or has been turned by the enemy" Dawson then remarked "Oh I have something in hand on that traitorous bitch don't you worry Sir" he then confirmed.

At that point a number of Dawson's associates arrived, clearly looking concerned at events that were quickly unfolding and urgently seeking answers.

"Right away Sir" Dawson confirmed before hanging up.

"What the hell is going on Sir?" one of the associates asked.

"Relax ladies and gentlemen" Dawson proceeded to reassure them "We have assurances that this treachery will be quickly neutralised so we continue, business as

usual."

On the television the Prime Minister was concluding her presentation.

"Once again may I offer my sincerest apologies and wish you all a safe and happy festive season and a peaceful new year" she declared before the screen changed back to the parliamentary portcullis symbol and then returned to the scheduled BBC broadcast whereupon Dawson picked up the remote control and turned it off.

"And a very Merry Christmas to you Prime Minister" Dawson sarcastically responded before turning back to his associates.

"We have no further interest in Ms Grey" he then ominously declared "release the material to the press and social media, saturation coverage" he instructed "burn her".

"Opens bag of pigeons, inserts cat, closes bag" Sir Richard remarked as Tracy turned off the television now that the broadcast had concluded.

"Right" the Commander declared "first thing is to deal with the squatters in the Ombudsman's Office" he remarked.

"All loaded up and ready to go" Tracy confirmed "all we need is the word."

"Tracy my love, the word is given" the Commander declared.

"See you later darling" Tracy then called before leaving the office.

"You do realise that there are still an awful lot of things that could go wrong with this?" Sir Richard warned now that they were alone.

"It's a high stakes game" the Commander responded "and we just upped the ante."

At that moment the intercom buzzed into life causing the Commander to lean across to answer it.

"Christopher Dent on the green scrambler Sir, urgent" came the call.

"Mr Dent" the Commander called on answering the call.

"I think we've got a problem" Dent responded as he looked across the MI5 Operations Control Room towards the bank of screens.

"Well that makes a change" Sir Richard sarcastically remarked.

"One of our guys in the newsroom of one of the red top tabloid papers just checked in" Dent went on to explain "it looks like someone is trying to launch a hatchet job on the Prime Minister."

"I guess Dawson and his little buddies have realised she is no longer dancing to their

tune and have decided to feed her to the lions" the Commander concluded "so what are they trying to push?" he then asked.

"Not sure yet" Dent responded "but I reckon it will be hitting the news organisations and social media in the next few minutes."

"Stay on the line" the Commander responded as he got up from behind his desk "I am going down to the Control Room" he then confirmed.

Moments later the Commander with Sir Richard following closely behind entered the New Scotland Yard Control Room where Fuller was working with McWilliam on one of the computer terminals.

"Have you got anything appearing on the wires concerning the Prime Minister?" the Commander asked them.

"Some rumours have started to circulate in the last ten minutes" Fuller confirmed "something about some dodgy business dealings and a video tape but nothing concrete yet."

"If they have something damaging on the Prime Minister, true or not then her credibility will be trashed, her authority undermined and we will be back to square one" Sir Richard warned.

"We could shut down the Internet?" McWilliam suggested.

"Yeah, right" the Commander scoffed in response.

"Oh it can be done" Fuller agreed "MI5 did it a few years ago for about twenty minutes and nobody ever knew it was them, well except me that is."

"Chris" the Commander then returned to his mobile phone "How fast can you issue a 'D Notice' on every publication in the UK and Europe from The Times to the Farmers Weekly?" he asked.

"Just say the word and it is done" Dent confirmed.

"Do it" the Commander responded.

"Here we go" Fuller confirmed as the various websites he was monitoring started to show allegations about the Prime Minister as they were being released "There is even a video here" he then remarked.

"Kill the Internet now" the Commander ordered.

"Done" Fuller confirmed as he pressed a couple of buttons "As far as anyone outside of this building and Thames House is concerned there has just been a 'massive denial of service attack by an unidentified rogue nation state' which should keep them off track for a few hours."

"It is as simple as that?" McWilliam asked with some sense of surprise.

"The more complex and interconnected systems become, the easier it is to drop a spanner in the works and bring it to a grinding halt" Fuller remarked.

"So what did they have on her then?" Sir Richard asked.

"Looks like files of dodgy overseas arms deals" Fuller confirmed "probably deals actually done by Dawson and his associates repackaged for public consumption and duly served, financial irregularities, dealings with dodgy regimes, the usual expenses fiddling claims that is pretty much stock in trade in political circles these days and accusations of sexual misconduct."

"Say that last bit again?" the Commander responded, somewhat taken aback.

"It would appear that they have released a sex tape of the Prime Minister getting to know someone else very well" Fuller confirmed as some screen captures from the tape appeared on the screen which had just started to appear on some news websites before the shut down had been initiated and it was at this point that McWilliam began to look somewhat concerned.

"Well that is definitely the Prime Minister all right" Sir Richard confirmed as he cranked his head around to try and identify who was in the pictures and the video.

"Who is that she is getting very friendly with though?" Fuller asked.

"Erm..." McWilliam began which caused the others to look around at her as she looked on somewhat embarrassed, then back to the screen and then back to her again.

"You remember when I told you earlier on when we were in Dawson's dungeon that you didn't want to know how our colleague here knew the Prime Minister?" Sir Richard remarked aside to the Commander.

"Yeah..." the Commander reluctantly responded as he suddenly realised where this was going.

"Well, there you go" Sir Richard confirmed with a wry smile.

"Blimey..." the Commander responded.

"Whoops..." McWilliam replied "Erm, sorry about that" she then apologised.

"Who you get your pleasures with is no business of ours" the Commander reassured her "just check for cameras next time though" he then advised.

"Bit late now" Sir Richard remarked.

"Commander!" one of the Control Room Operators then called "The Prime Minister is calling on the red telephone for you."

"Prime Minister" the Commander responded on answering the red telephone on the desk in front of him as soon as it had started ringing.

"According to reports I am currently receiving from MI5, I believe that certain materials have been released by our Pyramid friends to the press" the Prime Minister remarked.

"Steps have been taken to neutralise the spread of the files, photos and video as soon as we found out about it" the Commander confirmed "the Internet has been temporarily shut down and we have issued a full scope 'D Notice' to all editors, news organisations and publications."

"It's all bollocks Commander, you know that?" the Prime Minister responded "Well everything except for my personal relationship with Ms McWilliam that is."

"Of course Prime Minister" the Commander agreed "We can only hope that the damage has been sufficiently limited for long enough to deal with our current problems."

"Indeed" the Prime Minister agreed "which brings me to the most important matter now that the legal niceties have been set in motion."

"I await your orders Prime Minister" the Commander declared.

"Administrator General" the Prime Minister responded "You have the authority to proceed."

"What are your orders Prime Minister?" the Commander asked for specific instructions.

"Find them, burn them down, wipe them out" the Prime Minister confirmed with determination.

"It shall be done" the Commander confirmed before hanging up.

"Time to get to work then?" Sir Richard asked.

"Indeed" the Commander confirmed before turning to the Control Room Duty Supervisor "Inform Divisional Commander Caverner that as soon as she and her team are ready, they can proceed" he ordered.

"Where do you want us?" Sir Richard then asked.

"Simon" the Commander began to work around everyone and issue his instructions starting with Fuller "I want you to continue to co-ordinate things from here until I send for you and, if you have it, your new toy" he instructed.

"Looking forward to it" Fuller responded with a smile.

"Sir Richard, find Jack and get him to meet me at Norwood Junction railway station

in exactly one hour" the Commander then requested.

"I think I can manage that" Sir Richard readily agreed "Later everyone" he then called before leaving the Control Room.

"Commander McWilliam" the Commander continued "I am assigning you the job of personal bodyguard to the Prime Minister, get back to Chequers and guard her with your life" he instructed.

"Yes Sir" McWilliam responded with a smile but as she turned to leave the Commander had an additional instruction for her.

"Oh and until this crisis is over may I suggest you two keep your clothes on this time" he suggested with a wry smile.

"Roger that" McWilliam confirmed as she left with an amused smirk.

"I think she already did" Fuller remarked with a snigger.

"Simon, once you have extracted yourself back out of the gutter" the Commander then requested "issue a general Code Ten to all available officers irrespective of division or allocation plus all armed units to be on standby to move when I give the word."

"It shall be done Sir" Fuller confirmed.

"Right then" the Commander concluded "It's all up to Tracy now" he declared.

"I think we are all here Sir" one of the former Ombudsman Office agents confirmed as he and his former colleagues gathered together on the corner of Victoria Street and Wilton Road, a short distance from their former offices in Bressenden Place just around the corner.

"Good" Glock responded "Now all we have to do is wait for the cavalry" he then declared.

"Excuse me Sir but what is going on?" another of the former agents then asked.

"To be honest I have no idea" Glock frankly admitted "All I know is that the Commander told me to get the team back together and meet here."

"Hi" a voice then called whereupon Glock and the others turned to see Tracy arriving with a team of specialist firearms officers behind her led by their divisional chief Bob Thompson "Looking for us?" she asked.

"Divisional Commander Caverner" Glock responded "To what do I owe the pleasure?" he then asked.

"The pleasure is all ours" Tracy explained "Your offices have a rodent problem, meet

the exterminators" she introduced the specialist firearms team.

"Divisional Commander Bob Thompson" Bob introduced himself, having to hang up his standard issue Heckler & Koch MP6 semi-automatic weapon on his arm in order to shake Glock's hand "Don't worry" he then reassured him seeing Glock's concerned reaction to the large gun he was carrying "we do this kind of thing all the time."

"Oh boy..." Glock remarked quietly to himself.

"Right, let's get on with this shall we?" Tracy then declared.

"Okay ladies and gentlemen" Bob began the briefing in the street "the target building is just around the corner in Bressenden Place, the offices of the Ombudsman General being situated on the tenth floor of that building" he announced "The two floors above have already been discreetly evacuated so as not to tip off the enemy that we are planning to pop in for tea and biccies, the floor immediately below is unoccupied and apart from a couple of internal security guards on the front door, the rest of the building have all been sent home for the rest of the day as far as we are aware."

"Entrances?" one of Bob's team asked.

"Two" Bob confirmed "Front door leading across a lobby to an elevator and stairs and a loading bay and fire exit door at the back which leads to a rear staircase and a goods elevator. We will be split into two teams, Commander Caverner will take the back door with Beta Squad, I will take Alpha Squad in the front door. As soon as we hit the ground I want both elevators shut down and sealed and both staircases guarded top and bottom to make sure no one gets out."

"Our primary target is this man" Tracy produced a photograph of the individual who was now known by both the names Noble and Court "He is to be considered armed and extremely dangerous but I want him alive, I will accept damaged but alive is essential."

"What sort of numbers are we looking at in there boss?" another of Bob's team asked.

"We reckon from discrete surveillance over the last few hours that there are approximately twenty to thirty individuals on the tenth floor, some desk staff, others being the Integrity Enforcement Officers, i.e. the nasty mothers with the guns" Bob confirmed.

"I want the building cleared of these rodents nice and cleanly" Tracy then instructed "but do not take any risks and do not under any circumstances fire first, let them take the first shot and then take them down."

"Where do you want us?" Glock asked.

"Follow us in as soon as we have dragged them out" Tracy confirmed "We will have you and your team back where you belong in no time" she reassured him.

"All right, if everyone is clear on what we are doing, let's go" Bob declared and with

Tracy leading the way they set off, crossing the flow of traffic that understandably was more than willing to stop to let a large group of heavily armed officers across the road.

It took just a minute or two to reach the target building in Bressenden Place and quickly the group split up into the two designated teams with Glock and his people waiting behind, some nervously looking on, others disappointed that they would not be on hand to watch the show.

"Evening" Bob announced as he and his team entered the main entrance lobby to looks of surprise by the internal security guys sat behind the desk "Acme Exterminators" he declared "we are here to deal with an infestation on the tenth floor."

"Err right" one of the building security guards responded not that there was realistically anything he could do about it "Go ahead" he then declared.

"It would be gratefully appreciated if you could prevent anyone else from entering the building by the way" Bob then remarked "We don't want anyone getting damaged."

"Of course" the building security guard agreed before Bob and his team set off for the stairs whilst one of them diverted to the elevator to take it out of service as per the plan.

Tracy and her team were already on their way up the back stairs with the freight elevator already out of action but stopped on the stairs landing of the ninth floor, one storey below their target to check in on Bob's progress.

"Angel One to Zulu Oscar One" Tracy discreetly called into her radio "Bob, are you in position yet?"

"Just rounding up the stragglers now" Bob confirmed as he looked down the stairs to see the last of his team reach the back of the group and give a thumbs up that they were now all present and correct.

"All right then" Tracy responded before taking a deep breath "GO! GO! GO!"

"Security Services armed officers!" came the sudden cry from seemingly all directions as Bob, Tracy and their accompanying armed officers burst into the offices.

"Hands up, DO NOT MOVE!" Bob then forcefully instructed a couple of Integrity officers that they quickly encountered who wisely having been taken completely by surprise, dropped their weapons and surrendered.

On the other side of the floor, Tracy and her team were encountering little resistance as they swept through the corridors and offices, checking each room in succession until suddenly gun shots rang out causing them to quickly take cover.

"Shot's fired!" came a call over the radio.

"Let's move people!" Bob called to his team as they quickly moved on through the complex of offices towards the sound of gunfire over on the west side.

"Give it up!" Tracy was then heard to call during a brief pause in the gunfire when those defending themselves had paused to reload or reconsider their precarious position.

"Close your eyes" Bob called over the radio to Tracy who quickly knew what that meant and ducked down, covering her eyes and face when a moment later Bob rolled in some stun grenades which suddenly exploded with a fierce bang and a flash, sending choking smoke throughout the area.

"Bloody hell!" Tracy was heard to exclaim through the smoke as Bob and his team moved in and quickly overpowered the remaining resistance.

"You can usually tell where I have been" Bob admitted as he and Tracy met up outside the badly shot up door of Glock's office.

"Everybody report please" Tracy then called into her radio which brought back a number of confirmations that the floor was now clear and secured with the enemy either detained, restrained or writhing on the floor in agony and unable to offer any further resistance.

"I think someone better open a window" Bob then suggested as the smoke from the stun grenades began to subside but was still creating a barely penetrable fog in some areas.

Tracy meanwhile was already on the telephone to Glock and his people.

"Okay Mr Glock, give us a minute to fumigate the place" she confirmed as behind her some of the captured were led away in restraints "then come on up."

"I think we have got everyone" Bob then confirmed "a few injured but nothing serious and all our people are okay."

"Any sign of Noble or whatever his name is?" Tracy then asked.

"Right here bitch!" Noble suddenly called as he emerged from a cupboard through the clouds of smoke and grabbed Tracy from behind, holding a gun to her head.

"Don't even think about it pal!" Bob responded as he and his officers immediately reacted by aiming their weapons straight at Noble in response.

"I want out of here and I am taking this cow with me" Noble insisted.

"Oh I don't think so" Tracy then responded as she suddenly stamped on Noble's foot hard before elbowing him in the midriff and sending him sprawling to the floor whereupon he was quickly disarmed and overpowered.

"Consider yourself under arrest" Bob then called, maintaining his aim on Noble as he

was being restrained under continuing protest.

"Oh I have a far better idea what to do with him" Tracy then remarked before reaching for her radio "Control from Angel One" she then called "can you let Mr Dent know that we have someone here I am sure he and his people would dearly love to meet."

"What the hell are you doing?" Noble demanded to know "I have rights you know."

"Just for your information" Tracy replied "Mr Dent received a very sudden promotion at work very recently after you blew up his boss" she explained "and as a result he and his organisation would very much like to thank you, personally for all dedication and hard work."

"Holy crap!" Glock called out as he came into the office at that point and saw through the rapidly dissipating smoke, the damage that had been wrought in just a short space of time.

"Yeah..." Tracy hesitantly responded "we hit a problem or two" she sheepishly admitted before following the two officers who were unceremoniously hauling Noble out of the door, still struggling and protesting his innocence.

"Sorry about the mess Sir" Bob apologised as he led his team out of the offices past Glock who stood there amidst the broken glass, bullet casings and bits of plaster strewn all over the place.

"Ah hell" Glock then dismissed the damage away with a wave of the hand before moving on towards his office door "the place needed redecorating anyway" he remarked.

The Commander watched with a slight sense of apprehension as the London Overground train from West Croydon glided into platform one of Norwood Junction station in south London.

The reason for his apprehension was because of one particular passenger on that train and his educated suspicion that his subterfuge may well have been discovered, a suspicion that would be quickly confirmed.

"I have to hand it to you" Jack called as he alighted from the train and approached the Commander "you are a right sneaky so and so."

"Ah..." the Commander responded.

"Be honest" Jack then asked "you planned on being grabbed by the Pyramid loonies all along didn't you?"

"That was the plan, yes" the Commander was forced to admit.

"And you must have reckoned that there was a good chance you wouldn't be coming back either" Jack then remarked "otherwise you would not have given me this" he took out the Commander's six shot revolver briefly.

"There was risk attached to the plan I will admit" the Commander admitted.

"I think you ought to know, Tracy has worked out your little plan" Jack then warned "The conveniently media friendly footage from Turnpike Lane tube station was a bit of a giveaway."

"It wouldn't have worked without an audience though" the Commander explained "We needed 'leaked' footage across the media to kick-start the speculation and raise the public awareness that this Integrity bunch and their Pyramid paymasters were not all friendly, slick and jolly."

"You had better have this back" Jack then attempted to give back the weapon but the Commander shook his head.

"You keep it" he instructed "If you are to join the family firm then it will serve you well" he explained.

"Oh, okay then" Jack responded as he slightly reluctantly returned the revolver back to his holster "So what's the plan?" he then asked.

"We are going to pop in and see the Pyramid Committee" the Commander confirmed.

"What?" Jack responded "Just walk in the front door and say 'Hi! It's the good guys, you are all under arrest' and then hope they come quietly?" he asked.

"Something like that" the Commander admitted "but first I need to check something" he then reached for his radio.

"Eagle One to Angel One" the Commander then called "How are our friends in the Integrity Bureau?" he inquired.

"Just carting the last few out now" Tracy confirmed as she looked across the lobby to see Bob and his specialist firearms unit officers escort several detainees in the form of Integrity Enforcement officers from the building under heavy armed guard.

"Excellent my love" the Commander responded "now that their support mechanism has been effectively neutralised, we can begin."

"Where do you want us?" Tracy asked.

"Bring Bob and his merry men and wait at the agreed rendezvous point for my signal" the Commander instructed "then the fun begins" he declared.

"See you there love" Tracy responded "Angel One out."

"Err, are these guys with you?" Jack indicated to the main station entrance from the

street where approaching the ticket barriers were over two dozen Security & Police Service officers in full body armour and carrying weaponry to match.

"Indeed they are" the Commander confirmed "and here comes Simon too" he then indicated Fuller as he struggled onto the platform behind everyone else as he was carrying two large black and silver equipment cases which he then gently placed on the ground.

"What's in the bags?" Jack asked, his interest suitably piqued.

"My new toy" Fuller confirmed.

"When we get there" the Commander requested "I want you two to work together on your phase of the operation."

"Master and apprentice" Fuller responded "I like the sound of that."

"Transport is here Sir" one of the armed unit team leaders called, indicating the five coach long red and white painted Class 442 type express passenger train that was now approaching the platform having just weaved its way through the myriad of tracks leading out of the nearby Selhurst Maintenance Depot, the bright orange destination display in the top of the front cab window clearly reading 'SPECIAL'.

"This should confuse the commuters" Jack remarked as the train came to a halt and the doors opened allowing them all to climb aboard as the Guard looked on from his guards van door in the centre of the middle coach with a look of astonishment.

Once everyone was on board, the Guard duly closed the doors, gave the ready to start signal to the driver and the train departed.

Sat in the First Class section, the Commander looked around at the others in the carriage with him including Jack sat directly opposite him before making a very important telephone call.

"Get me the Home Secretary on a secure line please" he formally requested.

"Does it give you a buzz saying that?" Jack asked as the Commander waited to be connected.

"Oh yeah..." he confirmed before returning to the telephone when the newly appointed Home Secretary Davis came on the line.

"Home Secretary" the Commander then formally called "I request formal authorisation for an armed operation on a civilian building and surrounding grounds."

"Administrator General Regent" the Home Secretary responded "Good evening. May I enquire as to the location and target please?" he then requested.

"Location is The Shard building and London Bridge Railway Station immediately adjacent to it including the surrounding streets" the Commander confirmed

"Specifically our target is Pyramid Group conspirators likely to be located on the twenty sixth floor."

"In which case you have my authorisation to proceed but I want an absolute minimum of residual damage please" the Home Secretary insisted.

"Of course Sir" the Commander responded "I'll call you when the operation is concluded, goodnight Sir."

As the Home Secretary hung up the telephone handset, his assistant looked on with a distinctly worried expression.

"What?" the Home Secretary asked.

"It's probably nothing" the assistant commented "Just that last time someone sitting in that seat gave the okay for one of those sort of operations to the Commander, the next morning they were in an Emergency Parliamentary Committee meeting trying to explain why there was now a very large smouldering hole in Westminster Bridge."

"Ohhh dear..." the Home Secretary responded now with a distinctively worried look.

Dominating the London skyline and situated immediately adjacent to the recently extensively rebuilt and modernised London Bridge mainline railway station, The Shard lived up to its name well, a seventy two storey high pointed glass skyscraper that shone over the city and was visible to the naked eye for tens of miles in each direction.

What none of its many occupants, both visitors and office tenants were aware of that evening was that gradually the building was being encroached upon from all sides by representatives from practically ever security, police and justice agency in the country.

In St. Thomas' Street along the south western side of London Bridge Station a number of cars and minivans were discreetly gathering with Dent in the lead car who as soon as he had parked up a short distance from the main entrance to The Shard building, duly got out and looked around whilst he was joined by the rest of his small team of agents.

Outside the main entrance to London Bridge Station meanwhile another car pulled up momentarily, just long enough to allow Hewitt and Hoskins to step out onto the pavement and together merge in among the crowds of evening commuters making their way almost procession like into the station.

On the opposite side of the station in Tooley Street, Tracy was already in position with Bob and around two dozen of his Specialist Firearms Unit officers, indeed so early had they arrived that they had found time to go in the adjacent coffee shop for much needed refreshment.

The last group was the Commander and the large team of officers along with Jack and Fuller who were now about four minutes away from arriving in the platforms at the station on board their specially commandeered train.

"Eagle One to all team leaders" the Commander called "Report in please" he formally requested.

"Delta Team in position in St. Thomas' Street" Dent confirmed as behind him a couple of his agents discreetly checked their weapons before tucking them out of sight in the back of their trousers hidden under their jackets.

"Echo Team" Hoskins called "Well all two of us that is" he looked across at Hewitt stood alongside him "Outside the front door ready to provide some overseas law enforcement authority if required."

"Angel Team reporting" Tracy then called "In position and currently enjoying a late lunch in Tooley Street" she confirmed "Bob had the posh cheddar and pickle baguette" she then added with a wry smile.

"Always had him down as a bacon butty kind of guy" the Commander remarked "Right, we should be arriving in about three minutes" he then confirmed "Mr Dent, I want you to discreetly place your people in teams of two or three within striking distance of each entrance into the building."

"Roger that, we're on it" Dent confirmed before silently by way of hand signals sending his agents on their way.

"Tracy love" the Commander then called "Meet me down in the lower concourse."

"Will do love" Tracy confirmed "See you soon."

"Marching orders Maam?" Bob asked.

"Indeed" Tracy confirmed as she finished her coffee "Okay boys and girls, saddle up and let's get to work."

Despite the modern sleek appearance of the station, one whole section along the north side was still in the middle of major reconstruction and this was about to present a potential problem.

"You have to go around, no entry this way" the officious little man in the blue high visibility vest insisted as numerous commuters attempted to access the station through the large brick archway entrance on Tooley Street only to be seen off by him and his two colleagues until he suddenly realised that not only was a group not diverting as instructed but that also he was now facing something far different.

"Don't even think about it..." Tracy called with a glare as the officious little man looked up to see her standing in front of him with a fully armed team of specialist

firearms officers ranked immediately behind her.

"Okay..." the man weakly responded as he reluctantly stood aside and let Tracy through, leading ahead of the rest of the officers along with some commuters who took the chance to sneak through as well.

As Tracy effectively marched her officers through the Victorian brick passageways beneath the platforms and track of the station above their heads, the train conveying the Commander and his team was arriving into platform twelve.

No sooner had the train come to a standstill and the doors opened than the Commander, Jack and Fuller alighted swiftly followed by the couple of dozen specialist firearms officers.

"Follow me everyone" the Commander then called before leading them on down the escalators into the newly rebuilt lower concourse.

The man on duty at the ticket barriers wisely let them all through without question which even made the commuters approaching in the opposite direction step aside.

As the Commander brought his group to a halt in the centre of the vast new lower concourse, they were joined from their right by Tracy and her group.

"Fancy meeting you here my love" Tracy called with a smile.

"Just happened to be passing through" the Commander responded as they embraced and kissed.

"So, how are we going to play this?" Tracy then asked "That is one awfully big building up there you know."

"That is where Simon here and his new toy come into play" the Commander confirmed.

"I think that is my cue to go and get set up" Fuller remarked.

"Need a hand?" Jack asked.

"Join the party" Fuller confirmed, handing Jack one of the two cases he had brought with him before they set off towards the opposite escalators that led up to the upper main exit and entrance of the station.

"Delta Team" the Commander then called into his radio set "Report please."

"Dent here" came a swift business like response "I've got my people covering every entrance and exit including the one off the main station upper concourse that up until a couple of minutes ago we didn't even know about" he confirmed.

"What does the security look like?" Tracy asked.

"A couple of building security guys, usual private sub-contractor types plus some discreetly placed guys in Armani suits with guns that look like plain clothes Integrity morons to me" Dent duly confirmed.

"Nothing we can't handle" Bob confidently confirmed.

"All right" the Commander responded "Keep watching and we will see what we can see inside."

"How are you going to do that if I may ask Sir?" Bob inquired.

"That is where Simon's new toy comes in" the Commander vaguely explained.

"Okay, this looks good" Fuller confirmed as he looked around the open area in front of the main entrance of London Bridge station, located at the base of The Shard that towered overhead "but I am going to need some room to work however" he then confirmed.

"I think we can take care of that" Jack confirmed as he took Fuller's uniform tunic which fortunately was a good fit for him, put it on and proceeded to clear the immediate area with the assistance of Hewitt and Hoskins as well as a few Transport Division officers who had joined them off regular local patrol.

Soon Fuller had his clear space which meant he could place the larger of the two cases he had brought with him flat upon the ground and open it up to reveal a small drone fitted with a number of cameras.

"Open that one will you please?" Fuller then requested of Jack who duly did as asked, revealing a control panel and a large tablet computer.

"Very nice" Jack commented.

"I have been meaning to get a couple of these" Hewitt remarked.

"Right, if you could hold this" Fuller passed the tablet computer to Jack "I'll get this thing started."

Fuller then picked up the control panel which, by way of a harness he put on before flicking a switch whereupon small lights illuminated on the drone and the four small rotor blades, one mounted horizontally at each corner, whirred into life.

"Here we go" he then declared as through deft usage of the controls, the drone began to slowly ascend.

Fuller waited until the drone was some distance above everyone's heads before increasing the speed of its ascent and manoeuvring it closer to the side of the building.

"Okay, the picture is up" Jack confirmed as he and by now quite an audience of interested passers by watched intently the images being shown on the screen.

"So, we know that these guys are on a floor somewhere around the mid twenties" Fuller remarked as he looked up at the drone now a barely visible speck high above him as it continued its ascent up the side of the building.

"Hang about" Hoskins called out as he noticed something on the screen.

"Got something?" Fuller asked.

"Go back down one floor and then slide to the right a bit" Hoskins instructed.

"Whoa..." Hewitt remarked as he too recognised someone on the screen "Is that who I think it is?" he asked.

"Well if it isn't our old friend Hansell" Hoskins agreed.

"Or whatever his name is, depending upon your point of view" Hewitt responded.

"Did someone just say Hansell?" Dent's voice was heard to call over the radio.

"That is an affirmative" Hoskins confirmed.

"Well that is good enough for me" Dent then called.

"Agreed" the Commander then cut in.

"What does everyone say to the suggestion that we just roll on in there and wipe out every last one of these morons?" Dent then suggested.

"Gets my vote" Hewitt agreed.

"I'm up for it" Tracy added.

"Personally I was hoping to take them into custody relatively undamaged" the Commander confirmed "well everyone except Hansell that is, nobody touches that little shit except me."

"Gets my vote" Dent readily agreed.

"All right then" the Commander declared "what floor or floors are these guys on?" he then asked.

"It looks like our targets are concentrated on floors twenty five and twenty six" Fuller confirmed.

"What's on the floors above and below them?" Tracy asked.

"According to the plans we have, floor twenty seven is an accountancy firm and floor twenty four is supposed to be unoccupied" Bob confirmed.

"In which case we make a simultaneous entry into all entrances, neutralise any resistance we find, particularly in the main entrance lobby then proceed to the twenty fourth floor which will be our staging area" the Commander announced.

"My people are ready when you are" Dent confirmed.

"Simon" the Commander then called "the moment we roll in through the front door I want the communications for the entire building shut down, phone lines, mobile networks, carrier pigeons, the lot" he instructed.

"Already set up" Fuller confirmed as he indicated to Jack to open up and switch on his laptop computer "All I have to do is press the magic button."

"Right, let's go" the Commander then declared as he and Tracy duly set off, leading the way across the vast lower concourse towards the archways of the St. Thomas' Street exit.

Turning right and heading up the street towards the main south entrance to The Shard was the cue for four of Dent's agents to discreetly overcome and take away the two private security guards who were roaming around outside before they could raise the alarm.

Tracy and the Commander did not hesitate and immediately led their large combined specialist firearms teams in through the main entrance where a trio of uniformed Integrity Enforcement Officers were quickly overpowered, forced to the ground, disarmed and put in restraints.

"Simon, now" Tracy quickly called into her radio.

In response, Fuller who was still controlling the drone at the time silently indicated to Jack to press the button on the laptop.

Within a few moments it was noticeable how all around the regular commuters were simultaneously looking at their mobiles with quizzical expressions as the networks in the area were successfully shut down.

"Comms are down" Fuller then confirmed.

"Let's go" the Commander called as he, Tracy, Dent and some of the specialist firearms officers headed for the lifts whilst the rest made for the stairs.

Up on the twenty sixth floor in the main boardroom, Dawson was in the middle of a presentation to the central Pyramid Committee explaining their current status and situation.

"Needless to say comrades, this latest development, the deployment of certain legislative measures against us is unexpected but is in no way a huge hurdle for us" he calmly explained as he paced gently up and down at the head of the huge boardroom table "however I am assured by our crack team of lawyers and legal experts that we

can overturn these measures and reinstate full operations in a matter of hours, a process that will be expedited still further when Phase 3 of our plan commences in the next hour."

"What about the Prime Minister?" one of the committee members asked with clear concern "She seems to have turned against us."

"Her treachery will be dealt with later" Dawson reassured "for now the media is working themselves into a lather over the lurid revelations we have furnished them with which should keep them occupied for a few days at least."

"Our spotter in Bressenden Place confirms that a tactical team led by Commander Tracy Caverner retook the Ombudsman's Offices about an hour ago" one of the aides present confirmed "however thanks to a tip off we ensured that only some of our less useful people were present when they rolled in."

"We will let them have their little false victory for now" Dawson confirmed "in the meantime the Integrity Enforcement Bureau will continue from their new offices in this very building, stepping forward to take over from the 'inadequate and antiquated' National Police & Security Service when the time comes and the nation is in the midst of a full blown terrorist crisis."

"So we continue then?" Hansell asked from the other end of the huge table

"We continue" he confirmed "Do I have a second?"

A number of people around the table raised their hands at that point in confirmation.

"Motion carried" Dawson declared "In a matter of hours the nation will be clamouring to demand that we take over the justice and defence services in this country, for your security..."

"I had better go and get the party started then Sir" Hansell confirmed "If you will excuse me" he then declared, pushing his chair back before standing up, nodding towards the room then turning smartly on his heels and leaving.

Only a matter of yards away, the lift doors opened on the twenty sixth floor whereupon Tracy and the Commander led the others out into the lobby area.

"Don't!" Bob immediately called to the two Integrity Officers in the entrance lobby who were about to draw their weapons in response to their arrival only to find themselves suddenly outnumbered and outgunned and so, wisely they stood down.

"Let's split up and search in four's" the Commander suggested "Tracy love, you take Mr Dent here and head down the left, Bob take the middle and I will go down the right."

"Understood" Bob confirmed.

"Be careful" Tracy warned before they duly headed off in different directions, each

with a number of specialist firearms officers in escort.

"So all we have to do is wait for the screams, mayhem and chaos to begin and we will respond swiftly, proactively and decisively for the nation, our ideals and of course our profit margin" Dawson declared as he continued the meeting only to be suddenly interrupted when the large doors at either end were flung open violently and the occupants of the room quickly found themselves being surrounded by armed security officers with Tracy leading them in one end and Dent leading them in the other.

"Evening ladies and gents, it's the good guys" Tracy called.

"Divisional Commander Caverner" Dawson responded, a clear tone of irritation in his voice "I hope you have some kind of warrant and a very good reason for this outrage?" he demanded to know.

"As you would put it, under powers granted by the Prime Minister, I am delighted to inform you and your cronies that you are all under arrest" Tracy politely but formally informed him "I formally declare this meeting adjourned, permanently."

"Very funny Ms Caverner" Dawson responded as the tense stand off continued "You seem to be overlooking something however" he then continued "we are in charge now, we have a legal mandate and soon the public will be begging for us to take over."

"Well seeing as you are so fond of files and official paperwork, try this for size" Tracy handed over a folder she had brought with her which Dawson initially opened with disdain.

"And this load of toilet paper is?" he asked.

"An arrest warrant for you and your associates on charges of membership of a banned organisation as well as Treason to the State which carries a very severe penalty" Tracy warned "So are you going to come quietly or are you going to make my day by resisting arrest?" she grinned at him momentarily.

Now one floor down and over on the other side of the building the Commander was still sweeping through various offices when he entered a corridor and caught a glimpse of someone crossing down at the far end.

"Eagle One to all units" the Commander called quietly into his radio "Anyone over on the west side? Floor twenty five?" he asked.

"Negative" Tracy's voice was heard to respond "we are all in the east board room rounding up Dawson and his buddies."

"Okay..." the Commander's voice tailed off whereupon he drew his weapon and checked it before proceeding to walk cautiously down the corridor until he reached the end and quickly swung around the corner only to discover another empty corridor

running along the side of the building with tall clear glass windows all along one side.

"I must be getting old, I'm starting to imagine things" the Commander remarked to himself as he lowered his weapon, however he was not alone.

"You are not imagining things Commander" Hansell called as he suddenly emerged from the shadows and grabbed the Commander around the neck from behind, took his weapon and brought it to bear with the tip of the barrel pressed against his temple.

"Gary Hansell I presume?" the Commander asked, remaining calm as he was pushed forward before spinning around to face his attacker.

"One face, many names" Hansell confirmed with a smile almost of respect for his opponent "So tell me Commander, do you have any last words?"

"You are under arrest?" the Commander responded with a hint of sarcasm.

"Funny..." Hansell responded dryly and reaffirmed the aim of the gun at the Commander.

"Give it up man" the Commander called "the whole building is surrounded by armed officers, you cannot escape."

"If you don't mind Commander, I am going to give it a dam good try" Hansell declared and was about to open fire when a security service officer appeared at the far end of the corridor.

"Put down the weapon!" the armed officer called.

"No" Hansell calmly responded, opening fire and shooting the officer, sending him collapsing to the ground before making a run for it.

"Eagle One to any units" the Commander quickly called into his radio "I need a paramedic on the west side of the twenty fifth floor immediately" he ordered as he kneeled down alongside the shot officer and checked to see if he was all right.

"Darling, what the hell are you doing down there?" Tracy was heard to call over the radio.

"Hansell is on the loose around here somewhere and we have an officer down" the Commander called before running off along the same corridor down which Hansell had disappeared moments earlier.

"All right" Tracy called to the others in the boardroom "Bob, you are with me, the rest of you I want these people in secure detention within the hour" she ordered.

"Kind of ironic" Dawson remarked as he checked his watch just before he was handcuffed and led away.

"Come on" Tracy called to Bob before they made a swift exit, going out of the room

and to the fire exit stairwell before clattering down one flight to the twenty fifth floor immediately below.

Exiting out into another corridor, they both stopped for a moment to listen for any clue as to either Hansell or the Commander's whereabouts.

"Can you hear anything Bob?" Tracy quietly asked.

"Not a thing Maam" Bob confirmed.

"Well they have got to be in here somewhere" Tracy remarked.

"Perhaps..." Bob began but was then interrupted when they both heard some sort of crashing noise in the distance "What was that?" he then quickly asked.

"Down there" Tracy pointed ahead to where she was fairly certain the noise had come from.

A further crash and the tinkling of breaking glass ahead of them confirmed that they were running in the right direction until they reached an open plan office where they found a scene of utter devastation with broken furniture, displaced fittings and shattered glass.

"Hold it right there!" Tracy then shouted as she drew her weapon and pointed it directly at Hansell who was standing over the Commander who was now lying, battered and bruised on the floor and surrounded by shattered glass and bits of broken office furniture, Hansell's gun pointed downwards directly at him.

"Such futility" Hansell commented "Even if you kill me, you have at best an hour before my finest work becomes reality."

"Put the gun down Sir" Bob formally requested, his own MP5 type weapon also aimed directly at Hansell.

Hansell looked down at the semi-conscious Commander on the floor below him before slowly lowering his weapon down to his side.

"That's better" Tracy responded "now drop it and step away" she ordered.

"Ah to hell with it" Hansell then responded and suddenly turned, bringing the gun up again and taking a direct aim at Tracy before opening fire.

No sooner had he fired than the bullet whizzed past Tracy just millimetres from the side of her face and shattered a glass partition behind her. A split second later she and Bob responded by opening fire repeatedly striking Hansell in the torso a number of times and shattering the external windows immediately behind him.

Now mortally wounded, Hansell staggered backwards a little as the Commander recovered enough to get up onto his knees and see what was going on.

"Commander" Hansell then weakly called "I hope you enjoy fighting the Brotherhood when they come" he then mysteriously remarked with a knowing smirk before falling backwards through the frame of the broken window.

"Look up, look up, look up" came an urgent warning over the radio to which Fuller and Jack on the ground level outside duly looked up to see to their surprise a body falling from a broken window aperture on the twenty fifth floor and descend, arms and legs flailing down the side of the glass building.

"Oh shit..." Fuller exclaimed as he and Jack along with everyone else in the immediate area watched helplessly as the body descended until it smashed into and through the glass canopy on platform 13 before it impacted against the side of the Class 171 type train standing there waiting to depart with a peak commuter service to Uckfield, and then land on the platform surface itself narrowly missing several passengers who were about to board the train.

"Whichever way you look at it, that's got to hurt..." Tracy remarked as she looked down through the broken window at the scene unfolding below all be it with just the large impact scar in the platform canopy being the only real evidence of what had just occurred along with the sounds of screams and panic from the passers by who had witnessed what had just happened at ground level.

"Is he dead?" the Commander asked as he managed with Bob's help to get back on his feet and brush off some broken glass fragments from his uniform tunic.

"Very" Tracy confirmed "Are you all right love?"

"I'll be okay" the Commander confirmed with a grimace laden smile "Unfortunately the late Mr Hansell decided to try and finish me off by throwing me over a photocopier" he indicated the wrecked machine nearby.

"I think we are done here" Tracy confirmed "We've got the Pyramid Committee being taken into detention now including your friend Mr Dawson and Bob's guys are mopping up the last of the sundry others now."

"I want to talk to Dawson" the Commander requested "get everyone up here now, we have work to do."

"Something wrong?" Tracy asked, sensing better than anyone else the Commander's obvious concern.

"Just a hunch based on what the late Mr Hansell was saying just before his demise" the Commander explained "I think we may have a situation and maybe less than an hour to sort it."

"So humiliating" Dawson remarked to himself as in handcuffs he was led under

armed escort to the lift lobby of the twenty sixth floor where they then paused, waiting for a lift car to arrive.

"Stop!" Tracy called as she appeared from the fire exit stairwell door and pointed directly ahead.

"Maam?" one of the escorting armed officers responded with concern.

"We need him" Tracy explained as she was joined by a badly limping Commander who was being helped along by Bob.

"Good God Commander" Dawson exclaimed when he saw the state of him "Are you okay?"

"I had a bit of a run in with you chief rent a thug Hansell" the Commander wryly explained "He decided to try the less well practiced art of death by photocopier."

"Astonishing" Dawson remarked "And who won?" he then inquired.

"Well let's put it this way" Tracy confirmed "at this very moment your old buddy Hansell is currently the reason why the peak commuter train to Uckfield is now cancelled due to being hit by a body."

"Oh..." Dawson responded as he realised the implication of what she had just told him "Ah well, saves me having to pay him for his services I suppose."

"Speaking of which" the Commander continued as he gingerly lowered himself into a chair, clearly in some considerable pain and discomfort "What exactly was you bag man Hansell up to and what is scheduled to happen in the next hour?" he asked.

"I have no idea what you are talking about, sorry" Dawson responded.

"You will forgive me for not believing that" the Commander then remarked "Hansell mentioned something about his finest work coming to fruition in the next hour" he went on to explain "now considering that he has his hands on some really nasty stuff, my theory is that you contracted him to provide some sort of 'terrorist' incident so that you can then justify you and your cronies rolling on in to save the day."

Dawson initially said nothing, merely shifted slightly on his feet as if in some sort of silent moral dilemma.

"Let's put it this way" Tracy responded "At the moment you are looking at potential charges of Treason to the State at the very least so if you do want any possible chance of leniency then I strongly suggest a show of co-operation may very well be a dam good idea" she strongly suggested.

"All right" Dawson then agreed with clear reluctance but he could clearly see he was running out of options and had little left to bargain with at that time "Hansell was contracted to provide us with an 'event' this evening which would justify our operations to the nation and effectively cement our place at the table."

"What sort of 'event' are we talking about?" the Commander asked.

"Some sort of explosion I think" Dawson confirmed "I was not privy to the details other than Noble was handling the technical side of it and Hansell was placing the stuff in the selected location."

"We know Noble is an explosives expert" Tracy remarked to the Commander with clear concern "and he has access to that experimental explosive, probably a lot of it."

"And if he has access to the green stuff then he also has access to the biological chemicals as well" the Commander concluded as they looked at each other, clearly thinking the same thing at the same moment.

"Simon" Tracy immediately responded by reaching for her radio and calling Fuller "get your butt up here right now, we need a very large computer database searched and we probably have less than thirty minutes to do it in."

"Roger, on my way" Fuller was heard to respond.

"I think we can safely say he's dead" Dent remarked as he briefly kneeled down and checked Hansell's broken and bloody corpse which was still lying where it finally came to rest, face down on the platform surface before replacing the large sheet back over it again to shield it from the public gaze even though that part of the station had now been cleared of the public.

"And I was so looking forward to a nice chat with the fellow" Sir Richard remarked as he stood alongside Dent and they looked across at the scene where white body suited officers from the Forensic Services Division were now working on the corpse, extracting the personal items and placing them carefully in plastic evidence bags for preservation.

"Who do you think he really was?" Dent asked.

"I fear we may never truly find out" Sir Richard responded "One of the lost souls in the system, destined never to be truly known or understood."

"Still, at least we got Alistair Court or Noble or whatever his name is" Dent remarked with an obvious look of extreme satisfaction.

"You win some, you lose some" Sir Richard remarked "such is the nature of our perilous business."

"I am going to enjoy have a chat with him later" Dent confirmed "Anything you would like me to ask him about?" he asked.

"Not that I can think of off the top of my head" Sir Richard confirmed "Just give him my kindest regards, right between the eyes."

"With pleasure" Dent confirmed who then along with Sir Richard looked up when the P.A. system in the station began to make a manual announcement.

"Will the Crowthorne party please come to the twenty sixth floor" the announcement called, echoing all around the station "the Crowthorne party to the twenty sixth floor please" it then repeated.

"What now?" Sir Richard remarked as he looked up at The Shard building towering high above them.

"Best take this" Dent then passed something across to Sir Richard "I have a feeling it may come in useful."

"Thanks" Sir Richard responded as he turned to leave "Stay in touch, I will go and see what all the excitement is about."

"I take it this is bad?" Jack asked as he watched Fuller begin work on the computer.

"It's bad" the Commander admitted.

"Define bad" Jack then asked with a worried look.

"Basically all we know is that there is potentially an explosive device loaded with this chemical agent stuff somewhere in central London waiting to go bang just so Dawson and his little deranged buddies can prove a point" Tracy neatly summarised as Sir Richard joined them in the Pyramid Organisation's newly vacated main Control Room.

"And it was turning into such a lovely evening" Sir Richard wryly remarked as he took a seat alongside the Commander.

"Their computer system is incredibly complex, there is a hell of a lot of data in here" Fuller warned as he continued to scan through they file system being displayed on the screen but he was barely scratching the surface.

"Dave Collins was working off the books on something when he died" Sir Richard remarked "It's a bit of a long shot I know but what if we cross referenced his black files with the Pyramid main computer?"

"What do we have to lose?" Tracy asked.

"A large chunk of the city if we don't stop this thing" the Commander ominously warned "do it" he then ordered.

"Here you go" Sir Richard handed over Collins' files which Dent had given him just minutes earlier to Fuller who proceeded to plug them into the computer before he

began to work.

"Do the words needle and haystack mean anything to anyone?" Tracy asked.

"It looks like the late Mr Collins was doing some off the books homework on our Pyramid friends" Fuller remarked "including surveillance of Hansell and his specialist team of thugs."

"Unfortunately Hansell is no longer in any position to tell us anything now" the Commander admitted.

"Oh I don't know though" Jack remarked "did he have an Oyster Card?" he suggested.

"Probably an unregistered pay as you go one but I like your thinking" Fuller confirmed.

"Eagle One to XXX Team Leader" the Commander called into his radio "Anyone down there managed to retrieve the late Mr Hansell's effects?" he asked.

"What's left of them" Dent confirmed as he indicated across to one of his agents to pass him the blood stained plastic evidence bag and looked at it.

"Is there anything like an Oyster Card, travel pass, something like that?" the Commander then asked.

"Actually, there is an Oyster Card yes" Dent confirmed as he spotted the distinctive two tone blue and white plastic smart card protruding from the battered and blood stained wallet inside the bag.

"We need to know where it has been" the Commander responded.

"Err, yeah..." Dent responded, clearly unwilling to put his hand inside the bag.

"Is there anyone around down there with a card reader device, ticket inspector, revenue protection, that sort of thing?" Jack suggested.

"Did you get that?" the Commander then asked over the radio.

"Yes" Dent confirmed as he looked around and then saw a potential solution to his immediate problem "Wait one" he then confirmed.

Despite the ongoing situation at the station, approximately two thirds of London Bridge was still open with just the two platforms where earlier Hansell had unceremoniously crashed to earth still being closed and sealed off.

"Hey!" Dent called out as he ducked beneath the cordon tape and walked briskly across the concourse towards the ticket barriers where a couple of uniformed train crew were standing casually chatting "Excuse me guys, I need your help" he then called as he approached them.

"What can I do for you Sir?" the train guard responded, clearly a little surprised by this approach.

"Christopher Dent" he introduced himself producing his official identification as proof "Secret Service, do you have anything on you that reads Oyster cards by any chance?" he asked.

"Err yes" the train guard replied "hang on a second" he then remarked as he proceeded to open the black case he had with him and from beneath the ticket machine that was inside he extracted a small electronic device about the same size as an old style mobile telephone.

"Terrific" Dent responded "I need to know everywhere that the Oyster card in this wallet has been" he explained.

"Hold it still a second so I can scan it" the train guard requested before pressing a button.

"Err, is that it?" Dent asked

"Six months of travel data downloaded to a simple handheld device in the blink of an eye" the train guard confirmed.

"Anything on it?" Dent then inquired.

"Okay, the card has been in use for just over a week by the looks of it" the train guard responded as he scrolled through the data that had just been downloaded and was now being displayed on the small LCD screen of the reader device "most of which seems to have been today."

"Can you give me a list of the places that card has been please" Dent then requested as he prepared to relay the information over the telephone.

"Let's see, Tottenham Hale, Turnpike Lane, Westminster, Embankment three times, Monument/Bank, Blackfriars, back to Embankment again, Charing Cross and finally London Bridge" the train guard confirmed.

"Did you get all that?" Dent then asked over the telephone.

"We got it, thanks Chris" the Commander confirmed as Fuller got to work feeding this extra information into his computer search parameters.

"Did I miss anything?" Hoskins asked as he appeared through the door and joined the group.

"Our old friend Hansell dived out of the window" Tracy confirmed, trying to suppress a certain sense of satisfaction.

"I thought I could feel a draft" Hoskins admitted "and I understand Dent's boys have got Noble or whatever his name is."

"Oh yes" the Commander confirmed.

"Well this is interesting" Fuller commented as he continued to intently study the screens in front of him where something potentially significant had caught his attention.

"You got something?" Tracy asked.

"You remember that old time criminal draughtsman Henry Villiers who drew up the plans for the heist that technically wasn't a few days ago?" Fuller asked.

"The guy that the Haychester Fire and Rescue Service found burnt to a crisp in that mansion fire?" the Commander asked.

"That's the fellow" Fuller confirmed "well it would appear that his reputation as a pen and paper man was a little out of date, he also kept electronic records of his research and planning."

"Or somebody was taking electronic copies of his paperwork when he wasn't looking" Sir Richard suggested "Hansell most likely."

"Well it would appear that Dawson et-al's penchant for collecting as many files as they can seems to have paid off for us" Fuller confirmed "Take a look at this" he then showed the others a number of images on the screen of plans and documents.

"Looks like the late Mr Villiers was doing some extra homework" Sir Richard commented "Potential targets and accessibility options for various locations across London it would seem."

"It would seem that Villiers had developed an interest in old disused tunnels and access ways" Fuller explained "there is copies of old builders plans, notes, all sorts of titbits of information, pages and pages of it, he even has a note here joking how many pages that he needs to walk through."

"That could potentially have given him ways into banks, vaults, you name it" Tracy remarked.

"Agreed" the Commander confirmed "the city is riddled with them, half of them are not even on any maps."

"So could potentially have Dawson and Co got Villiers to scout out these locations on the pretence of another robbery plan but then used the data to plant something more provocative?" Jack suggested.

"I think that would be a pretty safe bet" the Commander agreed.

"All right" Fuller responded as he continued to search further using this new information "there are plans and sketches here for tunnels, access points, vaults, etc for several different locations of which three match or are within a stones throw of the

places that Hansell's Oyster Card has visited in the last forty eight hours."

"All right then, look like we have a list" the Commander declared as he got up but then grimaced with pain clasping his side and was forced to sit back down again.

"Hold it right there" Tracy ordered her husband "you are not going anywhere in your condition."

"For once I think I am forced to agree with you" the Commander then relented as he sat back, clearly struggling for breath.

"Let's get you to hospital Commander" Sir Richard strongly suggested "we can handle this."

"All right, but I will stay here until this is over" the Commander then insisted "One way or another."

"Okay then" Tracy relented before returning to the matter at hand "now, how quickly can we evacuate those three areas?" she then asked.

"With some help from our colleagues in the Transport Division, about twenty minutes although the Bank/Monument complex will be the worst one to clear in time I would have thought" Fuller remarked.

"All right" Tracy then responded as she reached for her radio "Lima Alpha One to Lima Tango One, Ultraviolet Priority" she then called.

"Lima Tango One receiving" came the response from Divisional Commander Jim Appleby of the Transport Division of the Service.

"Hi Jim" Tracy called "Sorry to spoil your evening but we have a very big problem."

"What can I do for you Maam?" Appleby responded.

"I need Blackfriars, Embankment, Charing Cross and the Bank/Monument complex evacuated and sealed off and we probable have about fifteen minutes to do it in" Tracy explained.

"Ah, okay then" Appleby responded, clearly surprised by the suddenness of the request "In which case I shall push my big red button and get my lads and lasses on the case."

"I'll send down whoever I can spare to help out and I am sure City Division will chip in as well" Tracy confirmed.

"Consider it done Maam" Appleby confirmed "Lima Tango One, out."

"Simon" the Commander turned back to Fuller "Scramble whoever we still have spare to those locations and assist with the evacuation and clearance of the immediate area."

"Put the bomb disposal guys on standby as well" Tracy added "tell them to position themselves somewhere central and we will tell them where to go when we know ourselves."

"In the meantime a little searching is called for" Sir Richard remarked "What exactly are we looking for?" he then asked.

"According to Hoskin's findings we are looking for a large quantity of this experimental chemical agent that Hansell and his buddies stole the other night along with an explosive charge and the sonic detonator that will activate it" Fuller confirmed "Probably this prototype X332 stuff that the same company were working on."

"That isn't going to fit into a carrier bag that is for certain" Tracy commented "which means it won't be that easy to hide."

"Hopefully that will help us find it in time" the Commander suggested.

"All right" Tracy declared "I'll take Bank and Monument, Bob and his guys can handle Blackfriars" she confirmed "Sir Richard, take Jack and help check out Embankment and Charing Cross although I think that one is probably the least likely location."

"You ready for this?" Sir Richard asked, looking across at Jack.

"As ready as I will ever be" Jack confirmed.

"In which case let's roll" Tracy declared "If Dawson was correct we may have less than forty minutes to find whatever it is we are looking for."

"We are getting reports coming into the news room that the National Police & Security Service are currently in the process of evacuating and sealing off Bank and Monument Underground stations in central London" the BBC News presenter announced live on air on the BBC News Channel backed up by a few seconds of grainy mobile phone footage that they had just received which showed armed uniformed officers and cordon tape "and there are further reports emerging through Social Media that similar operations have also commenced in the last few minutes at Blackfriars, Charing Cross and Embankment."

"The BBC has just contacted the Security Service for a statement but no one has yet responded to our enquiries" the BBC News presenter then added "we will of course continue to keep you updated on this breaking news story as and when we receive further information."

"Oh dear..." Tracy remarked as she got off her motorbike and having removed her helmet, looked around at the area around Bank Underground Station where a scene of frenetic activity was in progress with passers by being moved right back away from

the station's many entrance points and traffic being halted.

Through the confusion a senior officer of the Transport Division approached her.

"Divisional Commander Caverner" the officer called "Jim Appleby, Transport Division" he then introduced himself "I wish we were meeting under less hectic circumstances" he remarked.

"As do I" Tracy readily agreed "What's the situation?" she then asked.

"Thankfully we had an emergency drill exercise here a few weeks back so we already had an evacuation plan on the books ready to go" Appleby confirmed as he and Tracy looked around at the continuing operation "so despite the complexity of the place, we had the station cleared and the lines shut in less than five minutes."

"What about the search teams?" Tracy then asked.

"Already moving through the complex" Appleby responded "If there is so much as an illegal breadcrumb down there they will find it."

"Which in my mind makes it highly unlikely this is the target" Tracy then concluded "Dawson and his buddies would have known about the exercise so would also know we could evacuate this place quickly."

"Do you want me to call it off Maam?" Appleby asked.

"Best not" Tracy responded "Keep looking just in case" she then requested.

Ten minutes later as darkness was falling across the city with the arrival of late evening, the Commander had managed to stand up and was looking out of the window across the city skyline marked out by thousands of lights stretching off into the distance as far as the eye could see.

"I can see why Dawson picked this place" the Commander remarked "Hell of a view from up here."

"They charge you thirty quid a head for that upstairs in this place" Fuller commented.

"Thirty quid?" the Commander responded "To look out of a window?" he asked.

"Yep" Fuller confirmed.

"Blimey" the Commander commented "Welcome to London, ripping of tourists since 1066."

"Zulu One to Command" Bob's voice was then heard to call over the radio.

"Command to Zulu One, receiving over" Fuller quickly responded as the Commander came back over with a pronounced limp and still in some considerable discomfort

from his injuries.

"The search teams just turned Blackfriars Station, both the National Rail and Underground parts upside down and inside out" Bob informed them "We've got nothing here" he declared.

"Why do I get the feeling we are being led up another of those proverbial garden paths again?" the Commander commented.

"Dawson and Co's speciality" Fuller agreed.

"Call Tracy" the Commander then prompted.

"Angel One from Command" Fuller then called "Come in please."

"Angel One responding" Tracy's voice was heard to call "We got sweet Fanny Adams down here except a lot of exhausted officers and some very cheesed off bus drivers who are stuck in the traffic jams we have managed to create."

"And just to add to the fun the team at Charing Cross and Embankment just confirmed they have come up empty handed as well" Fuller then added.

"In which case I guess all we can do is sit back, put the kettle on and listen for explosions" the Commander responded with a sense of resignation.

"Look at it this way" Jack remarked as he and Sir Richard stood in the main entrance ticket hall of Embankment Underground Station as the last of the search team officers passed through the open ticket barriers and exited the station "It is a lovely evening."

"Can't fault that" Sir Richard agreed as he proceeded to take out his leather gloves and put them on.

"Well that was fun" the Station Supervisor remarked as he followed the last of the search team officers before joining Jack and Sir Richard.

"Nothing?" Sir Richard asked.

"Your guys searched everywhere" the Station Supervisor confirmed as the rest of the station staff began to re-enter the station in preparation to re-open once more in a short while "Well, everywhere worth looking at any rate."

"Come again?" Jack responded.

"There is an old passageway down there that has been out of use since the 1910's" the Station Supervisor confirmed "No one in their right mind goes in there anyway, the place is haunted, scares the willies out of me" he remarked before leaving them to oversee the reopening of the station.

"I guess that's it then" Sir Richard remarked as he and Jack headed for the north exit and proceeded out into Villiers Street, a narrow semi-pedestrianised road that leads up a hill towards The Strand and Charing Cross "I think we ought to find some hot chocolate, I'm buying."

"Sounds like a plan" Jack agreed but as they began to walk away from the station entrance and start to head up Villiers Street he stopped as something occurred to him.

"Now personally I like cream on top of my hot..." Sir Richard tailed off as he looked around when he realised Jack was no longer walking alongside him but was instead standing a short distance away looking around, deep in thought.

"Walk through pages..." Jack uttered to himself as he tried to recall something that was bothering him, "Haunted..."

"Jack?" Sir Richard called as he became concerned at the young man's odd stance and behaviour "Are you all right?"

Jack did not respond, instead he looked down at his feet, still clearly in thought before then looking up at the Underground ventilation shaft building alongside and then back down at his feet again.

"Pages Walk!" Jack then exclaimed before turning quickly and running back towards the station entrance.

"Huh?" Sir Richard responded with surprise before briskly walking after him although by the time he reached the entrance himself Jack was nowhere to be seen.

The deserted nature of the station complex as it had not yet officially reopened meant that Jack was able to run through the passageways and down the escalators with no obstructions until he reached the northbound Bakerloo Line platform and proceeded down to the far end where he was confronted with a fairly anonymous looking locked door.

"Hey!" Jack called to one of the station staff who was on the platform "You got a key for this door mate?" he asked.

"You don't want to go in there" the station staff member remarked as he walked down towards Jack "That's Pages Walk, haunted that be" he confirmed.

"Believe me" Jack responded "If I am right there is something far more unpleasant than a ghost behind this door."

"All right..." the station staff member reluctantly replied as he produced a set of keys and proceeded to unlock and open the door "but if you get the pants scared off you, don't say I didn't warn you."

"Thanks" Jack responded before proceeding inside.

Inside the door Jack was immediately confronted by a small set of steps leading

upwards, dusty, poorly maintained and fairly dimly lit by a few lights covered in decades of cobweb deposits, it was clear that this part of the station was all but abandoned and had remained unused for decades.

Proceeding up the steps brought him to a cross passage, to the right had long since been sealed off but away to the left was an open old metal door which provided access to a long passageway that sloped uphill and was formerly the connecting corridor for passengers transferring between the Bakerloo and District Lines of the station but had been out of use for all but cabling and equipment storage since 1914.

There were however signs of disturbance in the dust and dirt on the ground and on the side walls which indicated that someone had been through there very recently.

Jack could feel his heart beating harder and faster as he walked along the dusty old tube shaped passageway that ran for some two hundred yards up a slope, the length broken only by a few bends in the route, lots of old cable runs alongside one side and a couple of more modern fire break doors, one of which creaked open and then slammed shut again with the through draft from a train passing through the complex nearby causing him to initially jump with shock.

"Get a grip Jack" he told himself "there are no ghosts here" he tried convincing himself before carrying on up the tunnel towards the end.

At the far end, the tunnel opened out into a large chamber where an old sign on the door signified that Jack was now entering the Embankment Electrical Substation although the sign was crossed out crudely with paint indicating that the facility had in fact long since been decommissioned and its main equipment removed.

There were no lights on in the chamber that was to be found beyond the doors until Jack scabbled around on the wall adjacent to the door and found a dusty heavy duty light switch which he managed to flick to the on position.

"Ah..." Jack exclaimed, open mouthed as the lights flickered into life and illuminated the large chamber beneath Villiers Street where amidst a few bits of long since disused rusty electrical equipment that looked like they were from a bygone era, there were a significant number of large, clean and dust free green barrels with hazardous chemical markings clearly printed on them and were obviously something that had been placed in there by someone very recently.

"Jack?" came a voice, echoing down the old disused passageway.

"In here!" Jack called back "Unless you are a ghost in which case I went the other way."

"No, I am definitely not a ghost" Sir Richard confirmed as he came in through the door and then saw the barrels "but the night is still young" he then added ruefully.

"I think we can safely say we have found it" Jack confirmed.

"Oh the credit is all yours young man" Sir Richard responded.

"Dam it" Jack then exclaimed as he checked his mobile phone "no signal."

"This deep down in this dingy forgotten dump" Sir Richard commented "I am not in the least bit surprised."

"Okay so what do we do now?" Jack then asked.

"That looks like the heart of the beast" Sir Richard indicated a case sitting on top of one of the barrels which they approached tentatively.

"Well, there goes the neighbourhood" Jack commented as they looked through a transparent panel in the top of the case that showed the contents including some sort of control panel, a timer and several green coloured tubes that were almost certainly the prototype high explosive.

"If this lot goes up then we lose pretty much everyone for a mile or so in each direction" Sir Richard remarked.

"We've got three and a half minutes" Jack read from the timer display "What do you fancy, red wire or blue?"

"All solid state electronics these days" Sir Richard responded with a note of nostalgia "no wires to cut anymore."

"What happens if we take the explosives away from the barrels of nasty stuff?" Jack then asked.

"Then it just sits there" Sir Richard confirmed "but that still leaves the small problem of the big bang."

"Good enough for me" Jack responded as he grabbed the case, turned quickly and began to run out of the chamber and back down the Pages Walk passageway.

"I'll err, wait here shall I?" Sir Richard called although by then Jack was out of sight and the loud echo of his running footsteps were beginning to fade into the distance.

"Gangway!" Jack called as he burst through the door out onto the Bakerloo Line northbound platform where the station had reopened and there were now some passengers waiting for the first of the reinstated trains that were about to resume calling now that the security alert was apparently over.

The small number of waiting passengers looked on somewhat surprised as Jack came running through them down the platform with the black case under his arm.

He ran as fast as he could through the passageways scattering people coming the other way until he reached the escalator where Jack continued to run upwards.

"Open the gate!" Jack then urgently called to the gate line supervisor as he

approached the ticket barriers who wisely decided to hit the emergency button which opened all the gates.

Jack quickly passed through the barriers and turned right to head out of the south entrance, down the steps and out into the street of Victoria Embankment on the north side of the River Thames.

"Okay..." Jack then remarked to himself before looking around for an answer to the immediate problem that was still ticking down to detonation in his hands.

Looking up to his right Jack saw a potential solution and duly turned to his right and quickly ascended the steps up to the eastern side Golden Jubilee footbridge which was mounted alongside the considerably older and more sturdy railway bridge that took the main national rail line to and from Charing Cross station nearby southbound across the river.

Turning left at the top of the stairs Jack ran as fast as he could along the footbridge until he was about a third of the way across where he then looked over the side to the river below to check it was clear before with a mighty swing he hurled the case out away from the bridge out towards the river.

Sir Richard by this time had returned to the surface and was walking out of the south entrance of Embankment Underground Station when he saw in the distance Jack on the footbridge about to hurl the case through the air towards the river.

"Priority One" he then called over his mobile "Hazmat and Bomb Disposal to Victoria Embankment immediately."

All he and Jack could then do was watch as the case flew through the air before dropping towards the surface of the river however just as it reached the water, there was a bright green flash immediately followed by a large explosion that sent water and bomb fragments in all directions and a shockwave that threw Jack against the far side of the bridge and knocked Sir Richard off his feet.

"What the hell was that?" Tracy asked as she heard the explosion in the distance, a sentiment echoed by the Commander as he went to the window of the Shard building and looked out across the City towards the river side where the flying water, smoke cloud and debris from the explosion could be seen in the distance, completely obscuring the bridge, Charing Cross Station and the river side behind it.

"Oh dear God" the Commander uttered "Scramble everything we have got down there right now!" he then ordered.

"Ouch..." Sir Richard remarked to himself as gingerly he managed to get himself back on his feet as the last echoes of the explosion and the cloud of smoke dissipated bringing the footbridge into view again once more.

"Jack!" he then called out as he proceeded up the steps and onto the footbridge which

was damaged with a section of the railings on the river side twisted or missing altogether whilst the white paintwork was noticeably blackened from the blast.

"Jack!" Sir Richard called out again as he searched all along the footbridge walking briskly towards the most damaged area until he noticed an unconscious figure lying on the deck right up against the far railings.

Immediately upon seeing the figure Sir Richard went straight over and rolled them onto their back whereupon he discovered it was indeed Jack, his uniform tunic torn and blackened and some bleeding noticeable from various minor cuts he had received to his legs from the shrapnel of the explosion.

"Oh my head...." Jack groaned as he tried to sit up but then required Sir Richard to help him.

"You still in one piece lad?" Sir Richard asked.

"I may have to do a quick count up of fingers and toes later" Jack wryly admitted "but overall I think everything is there" he confirmed "and I found out what type of bomb it was."

"And that would be?" Sir Richard inquired.

"The type that goes bang" Jack confirmed "Just out of interest does this experimental explosive have some sort of objection to water as I am sure I had another twenty seconds."

"I will raise a complaint with the manufacturer's customer service department first thing in the morning" Sir Richard responded with a wry smile before helping Jack to his feet "Come on hero, let's get you to hospital."

"I definitely need that hot chocolate now" Jack admitted as, helped by Sir Richard they made their way back off the bridge and down the steps to street level just in time to be met by Tracy who arrived on her motorcycle, cutting through the traffic of emergency service vehicles and personnel that were now descending on the location amid a cacophony of sirens.

"What happened?" Tracy asked as she joined them at the foot of the stairs before she took Jack's other arm and together with Sir Richard moved him over to the rear of a paramedic ambulance that had also just arrived.

"This silly little man of yours decided to go all John McClane on us and run out with the explosives and chuck them in the river" Sir Richard confirmed.

"Seemed like a good idea at the time" Jack remarked "Unfortunately it would appear that the manufacturers claim that this stuff is neutralised by water turns out to be a load of old horse feathers."

"Hence the big bang" Tracy concluded.

"Indeed" Sir Richard agreed "It could have been a hell of a lot worse though if it had vaporised the barrels of stuff down there underneath our feet though."

"Dawson and his little buddies will pay dearly for this" Tracy promised "Very dearly indeed."

"Sleep" Fuller mumbled to himself as he continued to watch streams of data pass before his eyes on the screens in his office at New Scotland Yard having returned from The Shard with a full download of the Pyramid Organisation's mainframe computer "Oh how I dream of thee."

"I think it is time we went home love" Jennifer remarked as she entered the office and saw the state of her husband.

"Perhaps you are right" Fuller admitted "I was just working through what appears to be encoded lists of Pyramid Group members and sympathisers, see if there is anyone we missed."

"Anyone we know?" Jennifer asked as she pulled up a spare chair and sat down alongside him.

"Various shadowy spin doctor types, some unsavoury characters in the civil service who have crawled back under their rocks to ride out the storm, nothing terribly exciting" Fuller confirmed "Still, I can't help thinking we are missing something though."

"Has the Prime Minister's staff been cleared?" Jennifer then asked.

"Oh hell..." Fuller then responded as he quickly reached across to the telephone and speed dialled a number whilst the printer alongside burst into life, quickly replicating the details of what he had just discovered onto paper.

"What?" Jennifer asked, sensing the urgency in his voice.

"Dammit! The line is down" Fuller then exclaimed as he quickly pushed his chair back and got up "We have got to raise an alert pronto" he responded as he quickly grabbed the printout and then rushed out of the office.

"What the...?" Jennifer looked on, understandably confused until she looked back at the computer screen where she then saw what it was that had alerted her husband.

"Oh hell, no!" she then exclaimed before quickly following Fuller through the door.

A few moments later Fuller came running into the Commander's office where he was resting, still injured on the leather couch situated over on one side whilst Tracy was tending to his wounds.

"You forgot to knock" the Commander wryly pointed out.

"Sorry Sir" Fuller swiftly apologised "It couldn't wait Sir."

"Hit me" the Commander then responded "Actually on second thoughts, maybe not, I am injured enough as it is" he then remarked.

"I've just gone through the Pyramid files again and came across something disturbing" Fuller called as he handed across the print out to the Commander.

"What is it?" the Commander responded, quickly picking up on the urgent stance and tone Fuller was showing.

"The Pyramid group have a man watching the Prime Minister who is a member of the Downing Street staff" Fuller explained "No identification, just a codename, Osiris."

"Check all current Downing Street staff" the Commander ordered, "run the vetting files again as well just to be sure."

"I'm on it Sir" Fuller confirmed.

"Where is the Prime Minister now?" Tracy asked.

"She returned to Chequers a couple of hours ago" Jennifer confirmed.

"I just tried calling the Security Desk there and the line is dead" Fuller then ominously confirmed.

The Commander quickly took out his secure mobile phone and made a call.

"Get me Commander McWilliam" he then formally requested "Priority One" he ordered.

"It's practically the middle of the night" Tracy pointed out.

"Exactly the right time to make a move, when we least expect it" the Commander confirmed.

"Scramble Bob and his team up to Chequers immediately" Tracy then ordered "Tell him to secure the Prime Minister and trust no one."

"Let's hope are in time" the Commander remarked with a shared look of extreme concern.

It was the dull thud of something falling to the floor outside in the corridor that initially woke McWilliam from her sleep.

At first she didn't move, merely listened intently to the silence for any further noises.

It was only when she could hear footsteps that were being trod deliberately to be as quiet as possible followed by the slithering sound of something heavy being dragged away that she got up, looked across to the Prime Minister who was still asleep naked in the bed beside her and proceeded to put on a dressing gown before reaching for a gun hidden underneath her pillow.

Cautiously McWilliam went out of the bedroom and to the door before opening it slightly to look out into the corridor where she was just in time to see a pair of feet disappear around the corner as a body was being discreetly removed.

In response she quickly went across the corridor and hid in the shadow of the door directly opposite with her gun poised in readiness as it appeared someone had taken out Dave the bodyguard and was probably about to return.

Sure enough a figure duly emerged from the shadows clearly carrying a silencer fitted gun and began to approach the Prime Minister's door.

"Hold it right there mate!" McWilliam ordered as she switched on all the corridor lights revealing the gunman.

"Bitch!" Fortescue responded as he swung around to shoot but McWilliam was too quick for him as she opened fire first, striking him in the arm and forcing him to drop his weapon whereupon he made a run for it.

"Oh no you don't!" McWilliam responded as she quickly gave chase through the still darkened corridors of the rest of the building.

Being armed, she had the upper hand until they reached the second floor landing where another unconscious Security Service officer was lying and provided Fortescue with a fresh weapon which he quickly used to fire a couple of somewhat wayward shots which were sufficient to send McWilliam ducking behind a pillar for cover.

"Give it up man!" McWilliam called "You're injured and you have nowhere left to run" she warned.

Fortescue merely responded by defiantly opening fire once more sending two shots away which impacted in the pillar McWilliam was hiding behind.

"Ah hell" McWilliam responded to herself, popping back out momentarily, just long enough to fire off three more shots which only missed her target by a fraction.

"If you are thinking I am going to surrender Ms McWilliam then you are sorely mistaken" Fortescue warned.

"Dam it" McWilliam remarked to herself as she saw the state of her ammunition "only three left" she confirmed and with no spare clip available too, she was going to have to proceed with exact precision and act decisively.

"This is your last chance to surrender" McWilliam then called out.

"I don't think so" Fortescue responded "This is yours more than likely as I suspect you don't have any more bullets in that dressing gown."

"Ah, to hell with it" McWilliam then remarked to herself before suddenly leaping out, rolling across the floor and in a split second, taking aim at Fortescue before opening fire, all three of her remaining bullets striking him firmly in the chest.

"See you in hell" Fortescue responded as he dropped his weapon before collapsing and falling backwards down the ornate wooden staircase until he came to rest in a crumpled heap on the hall way floor below.

McWilliam got back up and went over to the balcony at the top of the stairs, leaned forward on it and looked down at the dead body of Fortescue lying down below just as the sound of sirens and scrunching vehicle wheels coming to a halt immediately outside began to be heard.

"Armed Officers!!" came the call as several members of the Armed Response Group led by Bob Thornton burst through the door "No body.... Oh..." Bob then called as he saw the dead body.

"Is he dead?" McWilliam asked from the balcony above.

"As a door post" Bob confirmed before nodding to two of his officers to cover and remove the body whereupon he headed up the stairs and joined McWilliam on the balcony.

"Is the Prime Minister all right?" Bob asked.

"She was when I left her ten minutes ago" McWilliam confirmed before casually handing Bob her empty weapon "Here, Merry Christmas, I am going back to bed."

The sun was barely more than the hint of a glow on the horizon the following morning in central London and the streets were near deserted except for an unmarked Security Service prisoner escort van that was making its way discreetly through the back streets of Westminster in a deliberate attempt to attract as little attention as possible.

Understandably in the light of the events of the preceding few days, security across the City had been tightened and there was, even at that early hour a considerably enhanced National Police & Security Service presence on the streets, particularly in key locations such as Thames House, the headquarters of MI5 situated on the north bank of the River Thames and the intended destination of the vehicle.

The additional security on the rear vehicle entrance there however did not obstruct the vehicle's arrival or its descent into the basement level car park where it was brought to a halt adjacent to a doorway that led into the lower levels of the main building itself.

As soon as the vehicle had stopped, the front doors opened and Bob along with one of his specialist firearms officers disembarked and then proceeded to the rear where,

when they opened the door, Noble could be seen secured inside, still looking defiant despite being handcuffed and secured to the floor by way of leg irons.

"Good morning Bob" Dent called as he emerged from inside the main building and joined him and his officer at the back of the vehicle.

"Mr Dent" Bob responded in equal respect "I got a special delivery for you, with the special compliments of the National Police & Security Service."

"A very special delivery indeed" Dent agreed as he was joined by two of his agents "Thank you Bob."

"What the hell do you think you are looking at?" Noble gruffly asked.

"The most colourful description I could think of isn't really suitable for such an early hour of the morning" Dent responded with a sarcastic smile to which Noble merely sneered in response.

"Thank you Bob" Dent responded whereupon Bob's officers handed over Noble to the two agents before leaving.

"What do you want?" Noble gruffly asked.

"Your head on a silver platter" Dent cheerfully confirmed "although our budget is a little tight these days so I may have to settle for your head in a Tupperware box instead."

"Up yours!" Noble responded.

"Gentlemen" Dent calmly instructed whereupon the two agents let go of Noble and pushed him face down on the ground.

Noble was about to try and get up when Dent stepped forward and placed his right foot firmly down in the middle of his back, pinning him to the ground.

"Noble, Court, whatever the hell your name is" Dent began "in fact lets just call you asshole shall we?"

"I want my lawyer" Noble defiantly responded as he attempted to struggle free to little effect.

"You killed our boss" Dent informed him "just you and your little explosive bag of tricks."

"You can't prove anything" Noble responded.

"Oh but I think you will find we can" Dent confirmed.

"I refer you to my previous statement" Noble continued to defy his interrogators "Up yours!"

"Who was the stiff that took the fall for you the other day?" Noble asked "Someone died so that you could live."

"Some vagrant we found and swapped identities with" Noble responded "a nobody."

"Tough words from someone who doesn't even technically exist" Dent remarked "You have popped up on our system under so many different names it has become nigh on impossible to tell which one is the real you."

"I'll be out of here inside of an hour" Noble continued to remain defiant.

"If you are thinking about your friends" Dent informed him "Well Mr Dawson is now under arrest along with the rest of his little committee and your old partner in murder Hansell dived out of a window on the twenty fifth floor of the Shard building yesterday evening so he is in no fit state to help you either."

"This is Police brutality!" Noble angrily responded.

"Bollocks!" Dent replied "this isn't Police brutality" he then drew a gun and casually fired two shots, one into each knee causing Noble to cry out in pain "That is Police brutality."

"You bastard!" Noble cried out in anguished pain.

"Like I said earlier, you killed our old boss" Dent confirmed as he passed the gun to one of his agents who exchanged it for something else, keeping it behind his back as he returned to Noble "and unless you have something useful to contribute to society then I am about to pass sentence."

"I hope the Brotherhood when it comes, kicks your arse into the next millennium and you all burn in hell" Noble responded.

"Good night" Dent declared, raising his hand which revealed a different weapon with which he opened fire directly at Noble's chest, shooting him twice with knock out darts instantly rendering him unconscious before turning to his agents "Get this piece of shit out of my sight" he then ordered.

"Okay" the Commander called as Dawson, secured in handcuffs was shown into his office by two armed officers and placed in the seat facing him across his desk "as a courtesy, I am allowing you this chance by your request to talk."

"Thank you Commander" Dawson responded as the Commander nodded to the armed officers to release Dawson's handcuffs and then leave which they duly did and were replaced in the room by Tracy who proceeded to stand by the Commander behind the desk.

"The floor is all yours" the Commander prompted.

"Just try not to make a mess" Tracy then suggested.

"All right" Dawson began "Despite what you may think about the people I represent and worked with, we did have some similar goals to yourselves namely justice, peace and security."

"According to your own particular world view mind" the Commander reminded him.

"Perhaps" Dawson agreed "one thing though is that during the course of our activities we began to notice something, something quite disturbing. Tell me, have you ever heard of the Ixion Movement?" he then asked.

"Should I have?" the Commander responded.

"Not something I have come across" Tracy added.

"That was what I was afraid of" Dawson confirmed "There is a neo religious group called the Ixion Brotherhood" he went on to explain "I think they started out as a bunch of drugged up hippies back in the 1970's that subsequently all but fizzled out, however in the last couple of years they seem to have been resurrected as a new cult that has been trying very hard to keep below the radar of any authorities."

"Could they be trouble?" Tracy asked.

"Possibly" Dawson admitted "You see when Hansell and his men acquired the weapons and materials in that raid the other day, the deal that was struck was that he retained approximately sixty percent of it for our Integrity operation needs and the rest he was permitted to dispose of as he saw fit."

"And you think he sold some or all of it to this Ixion Brotherhood?" the Commander ventured.

"It would appear so" Dawson confirmed "I didn't know anything about Hansell's buyer initially, too busy and he was not exactly the open chatty type when it came to his private business dealings anyway but I did discreetly dig around and it would seem that a bank account linked to the leader of this cult, a Michael Orbison was used to pay for the materials that changed hands."

"So we could potentially be seeing the future emergence of some sort of loony death cult?" Tracy asked with clear concern.

"I am unable to say anything other than the few facts I possess which I am passing on to you here today" Dawson almost apologetically confirmed.

"And in return for this information" the Commander responded "as my old man used to say, what's the deal?"

"Just throw me in jail somewhere nice and quiet for ten years" Dawson suggested "and keep me on speed dial as I may be of use to you on the future."

"There are those who want me to instruct the Criminal Prosecution Service to throw you to the wolves and then serve up what remains to the press" the Commander pointed out.

"I concede that you won Commander" Dawson responded "You were at the end of the day the victor in our little battle of wills, all I have left to play at the table is what I know and some of that information may prove beneficial to both of us in potentially the not too distant future."

"All right" the Commander replied having looked up at Tracy who had merely nodded her agreement "I will have a word in the right ears and in return you tell us everything we need to know."

"Very well, agreed" Dawson responded all be it with a slight reluctance.

"You had better be good for this though" Tracy then warned "If you try anything sneaky or try backing out I will personally feed you back to those wolves myself, in very small easily digestible pieces."

"Ohhhhh..." came the groan as Sir Hugo finally started to regain consciousness.

"Welcome back" Sir Richard called as Sir Hugo began to focus his eyes and try and work out where he was "If I am not mistaken, right now you are suffering the mother of all hangovers."

"I feel like I have been run over by a bus" Sir Hugo remarked as he tried unwisely to move before resting quickly back down again "make that an entire fleet of buses."

"It seems Hansell gave you a very thorough work over" Sir Richard confirmed "dam waste of good brandy though."

"I am never drinking ever again" Sir Hugo responded as Sir Richard helped put the head rest of the hospital bed up so that he was more comfortable and able to talk easier "So what did I miss?" he then asked.

"Not much" Sir Richard summarised "The Pyramid conspirators have all been arrested which means we are now facing the legal nightmare of formal inquiries, reports and prosecution trials which will take years and cost I dread to think how much."

"Doesn't it always?" Sir Hugo remarked.

"Tracy and the Commander are safely back in New Scotland Yard" Sir Richard then continued "the Integrity Enforcement Bureau is no more and your old friend Hansell fell through a window on the twenty fifth floor of the Shard."

"Dead?" Sir Hugo asked.

"Well his fall was broken by a platform canopy and the 18:38 to Uckfield at London Bridge Station but it didn't save him" Sir Richard confirmed with more than a strong hint of delight.

"Couldn't have happened to a more deserving fellow" Sir Hugo remarked with a smile.

"It turned out the Prime Minister's Personal Private Secretary was a Pyramid mole" Sir Richard then continued "something we only realised when Commander McWilliam found him lurking in Chequers with a gun in the early hours of this morning."

"How the hell did the vetting miss that one?" Sir Hugo asked.

"His record was carefully prepared, probably by one of Dawson's minions" Sir Richard explained "We were meant to miss it."

"Then there is the possibility of other sleeper type Pyramid people still lurking about" Sir Hugo warned.

"We will have to be extra careful in the coming weeks and months" Sir Richard agreed "The Prime Minister will be assigned new staff which I am personally vetting."

"A good body guard would be a sensible idea as well" Sir Hugo suggested.

"Already taken care of" Sir Richard confirmed "Commander McWilliam has assumed the role, and believe me you don't get much more close protection than what she is providing."

"Huh?" Sir Hugo responded.

"Trust me, you don't want to know" Sir Richard insisted.

"I presume it is back to the little farm cottage in Wales for me then?" Sir Hugo asked with an almost resigned sigh.

"Not so fast" Sir Richard responded "Thanks to a lot of work involving a lot of drinks, mostly of the alcoholic and expensive kind with the press we have managed to get the bullshit smear stories that were put out about you rescinded with a full apology" he explained "Your record has been expunged and is now squeaky clean once more."

"What even the...? Sir Hugo began to ask.

"Even the incident with the tomato, the goat and the Italian Consul back in '85, yes" Sir Richard confirmed "so I thought you might be interested in a job offer."

"You are offering me a job?" Sir Hugo responded with a look of some surprise.

"We need a new Director of Public Prosecutions" Sir Richard explained "It's a top notch job and you will be very much in the media spotlight with the forthcoming Pyramid prosecutions."

"I like a challenge" Sir Hugo remarked "As soon as the medical staff finish putting me back together then I will be happy to accept your kind offer."

"I'll shake on that" Sir Richard agreed, leaning forward to shake Sir Hugo's hand.

"Have they said how long I will be in here for?" Sir Hugo then asked.

"A couple of weeks yet" Sir Richard informed him "You have a few broken ribs and internal injuries that need monitoring apparently."

"I shall attempt to enjoy the rest then, as much as I can" Sir Hugo then declared "The calm before the storm."

"Sounds like a plan to me" Sir Richard agreed as he checked his watch "however regrettably I will have to go, there is someone I want to see on his first day in his new job."

"He's ready" Tracy confirmed as she hung up the telephone "Well, as ready as he ever will be" she then remarked.

"In which case my love I think it is time to go" the Commander responded before they took each other by the arm and proceeded out of the office and into the corridor where a distinctive looking, very tall and slender officer was waiting, his uniform differing from those around and signifying him as being from the Transport Police Division of the service.

"Divisional Commander Appleby" the Commander called as the three of them met and warm handshakes were exchanged "Glad you could come over."

"A pleasure Sir, Maam" Appleby confirmed "It's not everyday I get to escape from Holborn and wander the corridors of power here at the Yard."

"So, are you ready to take on your new apprentice?" Tracy asked.

"It should be interesting" Appleby responded when they were joined by Sir Richard as he appeared from the nearby lift.

"Am I too late?" he asked, clearly all a fluster having rushed there.

"We were just about to get started" the Commander confirmed "He's should be in the Quartermaster's Office, we were just about to head down there."

"Lead on" Sir Richard commanded as the group moved off "I wouldn't miss this for the World" he confirmed.

A couple of minutes later they had descended two floors and were now approaching the door of the Quartermasters Office where the Commander looked on slightly hesitantly.

"Something wrong love?" Tracy asked just as they were about to go in.

"Every time I come down here or more accurately get summoned down here I usually get severely told off" the Commander explained.

"I shouldn't worry" Tracy confirmed "You haven't lost or damaged any equipment or your uniform for over a week so I think you should be safe" she reassured him.

"Okay..." the Commander responded, still not entirely convinced as Tracy led the way, opening the door before proceeding inside.

"Ah, good afternoon" the Quartermaster Coordinator, Ian Menzies called as he saw the group come in "So Commander, what have you wrecked this time?" he asked sort of automatically but still in jest.

"Told you..." the Commander remarked aside to a smirking Tracy "nothing this time Ian" he then answered "we are here to see how the Transport Division's latest recruit is getting on" he confirmed.

"He's out the back trying on his new uniform" Menzies confirmed with a nod towards the rear of the office "in fact, here he comes now."

"Oh, very snazzy" Tracy remarked as Jack stepped out and joined them, a little awkwardness in his stance as he straightened out the uniform tunic which was in the very dark blue with appropriate insignia showing him to be a member of the Transport Division of the Service.

"I even have a medal ribbon for some reason" Jack pointed to the small red and white ribbon on the upper right front of the tunic.

"In light of your heroic efforts the Prime Minister has decided to award you the Queen's Police Medal" the Commander explained as he produced a leather bound box and presented it to him "Even I haven't got one of those."

"I didn't really do anything" Jack responded as he opened the leather box to reveal the shiny silver medal nestling in amongst the blue velvet lining inside.

"Modest to the last" Sir Richard commented "You will do well I think."

"You will also need this" the Commander passed across a small black leather wallet like object that when Jack opened it revealed his very own official warrant card and cast metal and enamel badge, the identification confirming him as a cadet officer in the National Police Service.

"Thank you" Jack responded as he continued to look at the warrant card for a few

more moments before carefully placing it in his pocket for safe keeping "So what happens now?" he then asked.

"This is where the fun begins" Sir Richard commented with a wry smile.

"I would hardly call six months cadet officer training in Hendon fun" the Commander responded.

"Oh I don't know, you got into quite a few scrapes during your time in training for the Service if I recall correctly" Sir Richard reminded him.

"Things occurred and I just happened to be there" the Commander responded with false innocence.

"Isn't that our standard operating procedure around here these days?" Tracy then wryly asked.

"Hmmm..." the Commander responded before continuing with the main order of business "Allow me to introduce Divisional Commander Jim Appleby, chief of the Transport Division and your new Guvnor."

"Cadet Officer Jack Regent reporting Sir" Jack responded with a salute.

"A pleasure to meet you Jack" Appleby confirmed with a matching salute before they then shook hands "Welcome aboard."

"Thank you Sir" Jack confirmed "So what happens now?"

"Straight to work I am afraid" Appleby responded "We have a major shortage of officers so for a while you will be with me learning on the job."

"I don't have to carry a gun do I?" Jack then asked with obvious reluctance.

"Not yet, unless you want to" Appleby confirmed.

"That's good because I doubt I could shoot straight for love or money" Jack remarked.

"Your father has had a gun for years, he can't shoot straight and he has managed so far" Sir Richard remarked to which the Commander looked at him with an unimpressed mock smile for a moment.

"Time to get to work then" Appleby declared "Shall we?" he then suggested.

"Absolutely Sir" Jack agreed as he led the way out of the Quartermasters Office into the corridor outside.

"Look after him will you Jim" the Commander advised Appleby as soon as Jack was out of earshot "He's a good kid and he is also the future although he doesn't know it yet."

"Don't you worry Commander" Appleby confirmed "I will teach him everything I know and make sure he is safe."

Jack felt a foot taller in his full official uniform as he walked down the corridor towards the stairs with Tracy and Sir Richard following a short distance behind whilst Appleby and the Commander, following their brief private conversation also quickly caught up.

Heading down the stairs, Jack soon came into the main reception area where to his surprise there was a large welcoming committee waiting for him.

"Oh my..." Jack remarked with a look of slight embarrassment as, led by Christopher Dent, the various people gathered began to applaud and cheer.

They were all there, Dent, Hoskins, Hewitt, several of their respective agents and officers, Bob and his specialist fire arms team, Amber McWilliam, Davies the new Home Secretary and even the Prime Minister.

"Speech!" Janice the Receptionist called with a wry smile.

"Err, thank you" Jack responded as he looked around at the very distinguished company present "I err..."

"...need to work on your public speaking skills?" Sir Richard suggested.

"Yeah..." Jack then admitted.

"Welcome to the family" McWilliam called "Once you join one of the various agencies here represented you never leave."

"If you decide that uniformed work isn't for you there is a place open for you on my team" Dent then commented "I think Dave Collins would have approved."

"I thought I would have first dibs" Sir Richard responded.

"You are supposed to be in charge of the Committee and off front line work remember?" the Commander reminded him.

"Oh yes" Sir Richard then reluctantly conceded "Old habits and all that..."

"Thank you all" Jack then responded, looking around "I think firstly I need to find my own feet in the business as I have much to learn."

"There is someone here to see you" Tracy motioned towards the main doors where Jack then turned towards as they opened and Megan appeared.

"Hello stranger" Megan called as she stepped forward and they embraced whilst everyone looked on "I go away for a week and when I come back you have got a new uniform and delusions of grandeur."

"It's been a hell of a week" Jack honestly admitted.

"Your carriage awaits" the Commander indicated outside whereupon arm in arm, Jack and Megan duly departed, passing out through the automatic sliding glass doors and on to the street outside where the Commander's official car with Kinderley standing by it was waiting for them.

"Cadet Officer Regent, Maam" Kinderley called as he opened the rear passenger side door for them.

"Err, won't you need it?" Jack asked the Commander who merely shrugged his shoulders.

"We'll get the bus" he responded "I think we should be all right now" he confirmed.

"That is usually when things start going pear shaped" Tracy casually reminded him.

"We still have the fall out from the last few days to consider" Sir Richard warned ominously "Inquiries, trials, inquiries, reports, more inquiries."

"Well all that can wait until tomorrow" the Commander responded "It's Jack's moment now" he declared as they stood on the pavement and watched as Jack and Megan got in the back of the Commander's official car before Kinderley went back to the drivers seat and they then departed off down Broadway with everyone waving them away.

Observing the scene from the roof top of the former London Transport Headquarters building diagonally opposite New Scotland Yard was a single individual who as soon as he saw the car leaving and the gathering breaking up, lowered his binoculars and went over to a briefcase that was placed open on a nearby rooftop ventilator.

Placing the binoculars in the case momentarily disturbed a number of documents contained inside which briefly revealed a number of rods of the green X332 explosive nestled in the bottom of the case before he then closed and secured the locks, smiled knowingly and then casually strolled away.

To Be Continued.....

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