

Cambridge University Press
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Richard MacAndrew
Excerpt
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Chapter 1 *Where is Margaret Kerr?*

‘When did your wife go out?’ asked Jenny Logan. She looked at the man across the table from her. He was tall with dark brown hair.

‘Yesterday,’ he replied. ‘At lunchtime, I think. I wasn’t at home at the time. I went out just after twelve and got back about two.’

‘And she didn’t come home last night?’ said Logan.

‘That’s right,’ said the man.

‘Is she often out all night?’ asked Logan.

‘No,’ said the man. ‘Never.’

Jenny Logan sat back in her chair and looked at the man. It was a cold Monday afternoon in April and it was her first day in her new job. She was an inspector in the



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Edinburgh police – a new job in a new city. Sergeant Grant sat on her right. He had a pen and some paper. Logan looked at Grant.

‘Your name, sir?’ Grant asked the man.

‘Robert Kerr.’

‘Your wife’s name?’

‘Margaret.’

‘And where do you live?’ asked Grant.

‘On Royal Terrace,’ replied the man. Royal Terrace was a pretty street that looked down across the Royal Terrace Gardens to the police station on London Road. Kerr told Grant the number of the building and the flat, and Grant wrote it on the paper.

‘And your wife left your flat about lunchtime yesterday afternoon and she still isn’t home?’ Grant made it a question.

‘That’s right,’ said Kerr.

Grant wrote on the paper.

‘What clothes did she have on?’ asked Logan.

Kerr thought for a minute. His eyes looked up over Logan’s head.

‘A white pullover and a black skirt,’ he said. ‘And a dark red coat. She had a brooch on the front of the coat.’

‘What kind of brooch?’ asked Logan.

‘It’s a big brooch. A flower,’ replied Kerr. ‘But I don’t know what kind. Just a flower.’

Logan looked at Grant, then turned back to Kerr.

‘Do you have a photo of your wife?’ asked Logan.

Kerr took out a small photograph and put it on the table. Logan looked at it. Margaret Kerr had long blonde hair and blue eyes. She looked happy in the photo.

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There was a brooch on her blouse in the photo. It was a flower.

‘Is that the brooch?’ asked Logan.

Kerr looked at the photo.

‘Oh yes,’ he said. ‘That’s it. I didn’t know it was in that photo.’

‘How old is the photo?’ asked Logan.

‘About a year, I think,’ replied Kerr.

Logan looked at the photo again. Then she looked at Kerr. ‘Is everything OK at home?’ she asked. ‘Is there anything wrong? Is your wife unhappy?’

‘No,’ said Kerr quickly. ‘No. We’re very happy.’

‘Is she with friends? Or with family?’

‘No,’ said Kerr. ‘Nobody knows where she is.’

Logan looked at Kerr and thought for a minute or two.

‘The thing is,’ she said, ‘I can’t do very much. Your wife isn’t a child. She can go away for a few days – I can’t stop

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her. And I can't ask my officers to try and find her because . . . well, she's not a child.'

'Oh!' Robert Kerr looked a little unhappy.

'I can put her photo in tomorrow's newspaper,' she said.

'Yes. OK,' said Kerr. 'Thank you.'

'Maybe somebody knows where she is,' said Logan.

* * *

Half an hour later Logan and Grant sat in Logan's new office. Logan had short brown hair, brown eyes and she wore a blue suit. Grant wore an old blue jacket and some old black trousers.

'What did you think of Mr Kerr?' asked Logan.

Grant thought for a minute and looked at his new inspector. He didn't know much about her. Maybe she was good, maybe not.

'I don't know,' he said. 'Why?'

Logan looked at Grant and then out of the window.

'I don't know,' she said. 'I feel something's not right. But I don't know what.'

Grant said nothing. Logan gave him the photograph of Margaret Kerr. 'I'd like this photo in tomorrow's papers. Can you do that?'

'No problem,' said Grant, and he stood up and left the room.

Logan watched him leave. She thought it was unusual that Grant did not call her 'madam'. Sergeants usually call inspectors 'sir' or 'madam'. Was it her age? He must be about fifty-five and she was only twenty-six. Or maybe he just didn't like new inspectors. Anyway, she thought, right now it wasn't important.