

NOBODY CAME

CHAPTER ONE: U.K. Then.

In the room.

In the apartment.

In the tower block.

On the 13th Floor

Maria half sits, half lies – like a rag doll. Her body splayed on the black leather couch. Her head at a crazy angle. She almost looks like she's grinning. The bullet has removed flesh from her cheek, and the jawbone is protruding; a row of bloodied teeth.

Gene stands in the doorway. The television is on, the sound turned down: a documentary about jackals.

A large bluebottle crashes against the window pane:

Buzz, buzz, thwack, buzz, buzz, buzz-zz-zz, thwack, buzz, thwack, thwack, thwack.

Gene moves into the room. He reaches over and switches the TV off.

He does not cry. The grieving may come later. Maria is dead. Outside, on the street, in the boot of his car, almost one million pounds in used banknotes.

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We are not one-hundred percent sure of what he had been planning. He knew he would have to leave this flat in this tower block. He was probably intending to leave the UK altogether. Maria was Italian; maybe he'd been planning that they would both go to Italy. Maria was dead.

We did not know what he was planning. But we know he acted quickly. He went immediately around to his oldest friend, Keith (a.k.a. Spike) Williams. And then he caught a plane to Santiago, Chile.