

You loved your last book...but what  
are you going to read next?

Using our unique guidance tools, Lov**ereading** will help you find new  
books to keep you inspired and entertained.

---

**Opening Extract from...**

# **Even Dogs in the Wild**

Written by Ian Rankin

Published by Orion Books

All text is copyright © of the author

This Opening Extract is exclusive to Lov**ereading**.  
Please print off and read at your leisure.

---

First published in Great Britain in 2015 by Orion Books,  
an imprint of The Orion Publishing Group Ltd  
Carmelite House, 50 Victoria Embankment  
London EC4Y 0DZ

An Hachette UK Company

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Copyright © 2015 John Rebus Ltd.

The moral right of Ian Rankin to be identified as the author  
of this work has been asserted in accordance with the  
Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be  
reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted  
in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical,  
photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the  
prior permission of both the copyright owner and the  
above publisher of this book.

All the characters in this book are fictitious, and any  
resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

A CIP catalogue record for this book  
is available from the British Library.

ISBN (Hardback) 978 1 4091 5936 0

ISBN (Export Trade Paperback) 978 1 4091 5937 7

ISBN (Ebook) 978 1 4091 5939 1

Typeset by Deltatype Ltd, Birkenhead, Merseyside

Printed in The United States of America by Berryville Graphics

The Orion Publishing Group's policy is to use papers that are natural,  
renewable and recyclable products and made from wood grown in sustainable  
forests. The logging and manufacturing processes are expected to  
conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

# Prologue

Eventually the passenger ejected the tape and tossed it on to the back seat.

‘That was the Associates,’ the driver complained.

‘Well they can go associate somewhere else. Singer sounds like his balls have been trapped in a vice.’

The driver thought about this for a moment, then smiled. ‘Remember we did that to . . . what was his name again?’

The passenger shrugged. ‘He owed the boss money – that’s what mattered.’

‘Wasn’t a lot of money, was it?’

‘How much further?’ The passenger peered through the windscreen.

‘Half a mile. These woods have seen some action, eh?’

The passenger made no comment. It was dark out there and they’d not encountered another car for the last five or so miles. Fife countryside, inland from the coast, the fields shorn and awaiting winter. A pig farm not too far away, one they’d used before.

‘What’s the plan?’ the driver asked.

‘Just the one shovel, so we toss to see who breaks sweat. Strip off his clothes, burn them later.’

‘He’s only wearing pants and a vest.’

‘No tattoos or rings that I saw. Nothing we need to cut off.’

‘This is us here.’ The driver stopped the car, got out and opened a gate. A churned track led into the forest. ‘Hope we don’t get stuck,’ he said, getting back in. Then, seeing the look on the other man’s face: ‘Joke.’

‘Better be.’

They drove slowly for a few hundred yards. ‘There’s a space here where I can turn,’ the driver said.

‘This’ll do, then.’

‘Recognise it?’

The passenger shook his head. ‘It’s been a while.’

‘I think there’s one buried somewhere in front of us, and another over to the left.’

‘Maybe try the other side of the track, in that case. Torch in the glove box?’

‘Fresh batteries, like you said.’

The passenger checked. ‘Right then.’

The two men got out and stood for the best part of a minute, their eyes adjusting to the gloom, ears alert for unusual sounds.

‘I’ll pick the spot,’ the passenger said, taking the torch with him as he headed off. The driver got a cigarette lit and opened the back door of the Mercedes. It was an old model, and the hinges creaked. He lifted the Associates cassette from the seat and slipped it into his jacket pocket, where it hit some coins. He’d be needing one of those for the heads-or-tails. Slamming the door shut, he moved to the boot and opened it. The body was wrapped in a plain blue bedsheet. Or it had been. The trip had loosened the makeshift shroud. Bare feet, pale skinny legs, ribcage visible. The driver rested the shovel against one of the tail lights, but it slid to the ground. Cursing, he bent over to retrieve it.

Which was when the corpse burst into life, emerging from sheet and boot both, almost vaulting the driver as its feet hit the ground. The driver gasped, the cigarette flying from his mouth. He had one hand on the shovel’s handle while he tried to haul himself upright with the other. The sheet was hanging over the lip of the boot, its occupant disappearing into the trees.

‘Paul!’ the driver yelled. ‘Paul!’

Torchlight preceded the man called Paul.

‘Hell’s going on, Dave?’ he shouted. The driver could only stretch out a shaking hand to point.

‘He’s done a runner!’

Paul scanned the empty boot. A hissing sound from between his gritted teeth.

‘After him then,’ he said in a growl. ‘Or it’ll be someone else’s turn to dig a hole for us.’

‘He came back from the dead,’ Dave said, voice trembling.

‘Then we kill him again,’ Paul stated, producing a knife from his inside pocket. ‘Even slower than before . . .’

# Day One

# 1

Malcolm Fox woke from another of his bad dreams.

He reckoned he knew why he'd started having them – uncertainty about his job. He wasn't entirely sure he wanted it any more, and feared he was surplus to requirements anyway. Yesterday, he'd been told he had to travel to Dundee to fill a vacant post for a couple of shifts. When he asked why, he was told the officer he'd be replacing had been ordered to cover for someone else in Glasgow.

'Isn't it easier just to send me to Glasgow, then?' Fox had enquired.

'You could always ask, I suppose.'

So he'd picked up the phone and done exactly that, only to find that the officer in Glasgow was coming to Edinburgh to fill a temporary gap – at which point he'd given up the fight and driven to Dundee. And today? Who knew. His boss at St Leonard's didn't seem to know what to do with him. He was just one detective inspector too many.

'It's the time-servers,' DCI Doug Maxtone had apologised. 'They're bunging up the system. Need a few of them to take the gold watch ...'

'Understood,' Fox had said. He wasn't in the first idealistic flush of youth himself – another three years and he could retire with a solid pension and plenty of life left in him.

Standing under the shower, he considered his options. The bungalow in Oxfangs that he called home would fetch a fair price, enough to allow him to relocate. But then there was his dad to consider – Fox couldn't move too far away, not while Mitch still had breath in his body. And then there was Siobhan. They weren't lovers, but they'd been spending more time together. If either of them was bored, they

knew they could always call. Maybe there'd be a film or a restaurant, or just snacks and a DVD. She'd bought him half a dozen titles for Christmas and they'd watched three before the old year was done. As he got dressed, he thought of her. She loved the job more than he did. Whenever they met up, she was always ready to share news and gossip. Then she would ask him, and he would shrug, maybe offer a few morsels. She gulped them down like delicacies, while all he saw was plain white bread. She worked at Gayfield Square, with James Page for a boss. The structure there seemed better than at St Leonard's. Fox had wondered about a transfer, but knew it would never happen – he would be creating the selfsame problem. One DI too many.

Forty minutes after finishing breakfast, he was parking at St Leonard's. He sat in his car for an extra few moments, gathering himself, hands running around the steering wheel. It was at times like this he wished he smoked – something to occupy him, to take him out of himself. Instead of which, he placed a piece of chewing gum on his tongue and closed his mouth. A uniform had emerged from the station's back door into the car park and was opening a packet of cigarettes. Their eyes met as Fox walked towards him, and the other man gave the curtest of nods. The uniform knew that Fox used to work for Professional Standards – everyone in the station knew. Some didn't seem to mind; others made their distaste obvious. They scowled, answered grudgingly, let doors swing shut into his face rather than holding them open.

'You're a good cop,' Siobhan had told him on more than one occasion. 'I wish you could see that . . .'

When he reached the CID suite, Fox gleaned that something was happening. Chairs and equipment were being moved. His eyes met those of a thunderous Doug Maxtone.

'We've to make room for a new team,' Maxtone explained.

'New team?'

'From Gartcosh, which means they'll mostly be Glasgow – and you know how I feel about *them*.'

'What's the occasion?'

'Nobody's saying.'

Fox chewed on his gum. Gartcosh, an old steelworks, was now home to the Scottish Crime Campus. It had been up and running since the previous summer, and Fox had never had occasion to cross its threshold. The place was a mix of police, prosecutors, forensics and Customs, and its remit took in organised crime and

counterterrorism. ‘How many are we expecting to welcome?’

Maxtone glared at him. ‘Frankly, Malcolm, I’m not expecting to *welcome* a single one of them. But we need desks and chairs for half a dozen.’

‘And computers and phones?’

‘They’re bringing their own. They do, however, request . . .’ Maxtone produced a sheet of paper from his pocket and made show of consulting it, “‘ancillary support, subject to vetting”.’

‘And this came from on high?’

‘The Chief Constable himself.’ Maxtone crumpled the paper and tossed it in the general direction of a bin. ‘They’re arriving in about an hour.’

‘Should I do a bit of dusting?’

‘Might as well – it’s not as if there’s going to be anywhere for you to sit.’

‘I’m losing my chair?’

‘And your desk.’ Maxtone inhaled and exhaled noisily. ‘So if there’s anything in the drawers you’d rather not share . . .’ He managed a grim smile. ‘Bet you’re wishing you’d stayed in bed, eh?’

‘Worse than that, sir – I’m beginning to wish I’d stayed in Dundee.’

Siobhan Clarke had parked on a yellow line on St Bernard’s Crescent. It was about as grand a street as could be found in Edinburgh’s New Town, all pillared facades and floor-to-ceiling windows. Two bow-shaped Georgian terraces facing one another across a small private garden containing trees and benches. Raeburn Place, with its emporia and eateries, was a two-minute walk away, as was the Water of Leith. She’d brought Malcolm to the Saturday food market a couple of times, and joked that he should trade in his bungalow for one of Stockbridge’s colony flats.

Her phone buzzed: speak of the devil. She answered the call.

‘You off up north again?’

‘Not at the moment,’ he said. ‘Big shake-up happening here, though.’

‘I’ve got news too – I’ve been seconded to the Minton enquiry.’

‘Since when?’

‘First thing this morning. I was going to tell you at lunchtime. James has been put in charge and he wanted me.’

‘Makes sense.’

She locked her car and walked towards a gloss-black front door



boasting a gleaming brass knocker and letter box. A uniformed officer stood guard; she gave a half-bow of recognition, which Clarke rewarded with a smile.

‘Any room for a little one?’ Fox was asking, trying to make it sound like a joke, though she could tell he was serious.

‘I’ve got to go, Malcolm. Talk to you later.’ Clarke ended the call and waited for the officer to unlock the door. There were no media – they’d been and gone. A couple of small posies had been left at the front step, probably by neighbours. There was an old-style bell pull by the pillar to the right of the door, and above it a nameplate bearing the single capitalised word MINTON.

As the door swung open, Clarke thanked the officer and went inside. There was some mail on the parquet floor. She scooped it up and saw that more was sitting on an occasional table. The letters on the table had been opened and checked – presumably by the major incident team. There were the usual flyers too, including one for a curry house she knew on the south side of the city. She didn’t see Lord Minton as the takeaway type, but you never could tell. The scene of crime unit had been through the hall, dusting for prints. Lord Minton – David Menzies Minton, to give him his full name – had been killed two evenings back. No one in the vicinity had heard the break-in or the attack. Whoever had done it had scaled a couple of back walls in the darkness to reach the small window of the garden-level laundry room, adjacent to the locked and bolted rear door. They had broken the window and climbed in. Minton had been in his study on the ground floor. According to the post-mortem examination, he had been beaten around the head, then throttled, after which his lifeless body had been beaten some more.

Clarke stood in the still, silent hall, getting her bearings. Then she lifted a file from her shoulder bag and began to reread its contents. Victim had been seventy-eight years old, never married, resident at this address for thirty-five years. Educated at George Heriot’s School and the universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh. Rising through the city’s teeming ranks of lawyers until he reached the position of Lord Advocate, prosecuting some of Scotland’s most high-profile criminal trials. Enemies? He would have had plenty in his heyday, but for the past decade he had lived out of the lime-light. Occasional trips to London to sit in the House of Lords. Visited his club on Princes Street most days to read the newspapers and do as many crosswords as he could find.

‘Housebreaking gone wrong,’ Clarke’s boss, DCI James Page,

had stated. ‘Perpetrator doesn’t expect anyone home. Panics. Game over.’

‘But why strangle him, then start beating him again once the victim’s deceased?’

‘Like I say: panic. Explains why the attacker fled without taking anything. Probably high on something and needing money for more. Looking for the usual – phones and iPads, easily sold on. But not the sort of thing someone like the noble lord would have in his possession. Maybe that annoyed our man and he took out his frustration then and there.’

‘Sounds reasonable.’

‘But you’d like to see for yourself?’ Page had nodded slowly. ‘Off you go then.’

Living room, formal dining room and kitchen on the ground floor, unused servants’ quarters and laundry room below. The window frame of the laundry room had been boarded up, the window panel itself removed, along with all the shards of glass, to be taken away and examined by forensics. Clarke unlocked the back door and studied the small, well-tended private garden. Lord Minton employed a gardener, but he only visited one day each month in winter. He had been interviewed and had expressed his sadness, along with his concern that he hadn’t been paid for the previous month.

Climbing the noiseless stone staircase to the ground floor, Clarke realised that, apart from a toilet, there was only one further room to check. The study was dark, its thick red velvet curtains closed. From the photographs in her file, she could see that Lord Minton’s body had been found in front of his desk, on a Persian rug that had now also been taken away to be tested. Hair, saliva, fibres – everyone left traces of some kind. The thinking was: the victim was seated at his desk, writing out cheques to pay his gas and electricity bills. Hears a noise and gets up to investigate. Hasn’t got far when the attacker bursts in and smacks him on the head with a tool of some kind – no weapon recovered yet; the pathologist’s best guess, a hammer.

The chequebook lay open on the antique desk next to an expensive-looking pen. There were family photos – black and white, the victim’s parents, maybe – in silver frames. Small enough to be slipped into a thief’s pocket, yet untouched. She knew that Lord Minton’s wallet had been found in a jacket over the back of the chair, cash and credit cards intact. The gold watch on his wrist had been left too.

‘You weren’t that desperate, were you?’ Clarke muttered.

A woman called Jean Marischal came in twice a week to clean. She had her own key and had found the body the following morning. In her statement she said the place didn't really need that much attention; she just thought 'his lordship' liked a bit of company.

Upstairs there were too many rooms. A drawing room and sitting room that looked as though they'd never seen a visitor; four bedrooms, where only one was needed. Mrs Marischal could not recall a single overnight guest, or a dinner party, or any other kind of gathering, come to that. The bathroom didn't detain Clarke, so she headed downstairs to the hall again and stood there with arms folded. No fingerprints had been found other than those belonging to the victim and his cleaner. No reports of prowlers or out-of-place visitors.

Nothing.

Mrs Marischal had been persuaded to revisit the scene later on today. If anything *had* been taken, she was their best hope. Meanwhile, the team would have to look busy – it was expected that they would *be* busy. The current Lord Advocate wanted twice-daily updates, as did the First Minister. There would be media briefings at midday and four, briefings at which DCI James Page had to have something to share.

The problem was: what?

As she left, Clarke told the uniform outside to keep her wits about her.

'It's not true that the guilty always come back, but we might get lucky one time . . .'

On her way to Fettes, she stopped at a shop and bought a couple of newspapers, checking at the counter that they contained decent-sized obituaries of the deceased. She doubted she would learn anything she hadn't already read on a half-hour trawl of the internet, but they would bulk out the file.

Because Lord Minton was who he was, it had been decided to locate the major incident team at Fettes rather than Gayfield Square. Fettes – aka 'the Big House' – had been the headquarters of Lothian and Borders Police right up to April Fools' Day 2013, when Scotland's eight police regions vanished to be replaced by a single organisation called Police Scotland. In place of a Chief Constable, Edinburgh now had a chief superintendent called Jack Scoular, who was only a few years older than Clarke. Fettes was Scoular's domain, a place where admin took precedence and meetings were held. No CID officers were stationed there, but it did boast half a corridor of vacated offices, which James Page had been offered. Two

detective constables, Christine Esson and Ronnie Ogilvie, were busy pinning photos and maps to one bare wall.

‘We thought you’d like the desk by the window,’ Esson said. ‘It’s got the view if nothing else.’

Yes, a view of two very different schools: Fettes College and Broughton High. Clarke took it in for all of three seconds before draping her coat over the back of her chair and sitting down. She placed the newspapers on the desk and concentrated on the reporting of Lord Minton’s demise. There was background stuff, and a few photographs dusted off from the archives. Cases he had prosecuted; royal garden parties; his first appearance in ermine.

‘Confirmed bachelor,’ Esson called out as she pushed another drawing pin home.

‘From which we deduce nothing,’ Clarke warned her. ‘And that photo’s squint.’

‘Not if you do this.’ Esson angled her head twenty degrees, then adjusted the photo anyway. It showed the body *in situ*, crumpled on the carpet as if drunkenly asleep.

‘Where’s the boss?’ Clarke asked.

‘Howden Hall,’ Ogilvie answered.

‘Oh?’ Howden Hall was home to the city’s forensic lab.

‘He said if he wasn’t back in time, the press briefing’s all yours.’

Clarke checked the time: she had another hour. ‘Typically generous of the man,’ she muttered, turning to the first of the obituaries.

She had just finished them, and was offering them to Esson to be added to the wall, when Page arrived. He was with a detective sergeant called Charlie Sykes. Sykes was normally based at Leith CID. He was a year shy of his pension and about the same from a heart attack, the former rather than the latter informing practically every conversation Clarke had ever had with the man.

‘Quick update,’ Page began breathlessly, gathering his squad. ‘House-to-house is continuing and we’ve got a couple of officers checking any CCTV in the vicinity. Someone’s busy on a computer somewhere to see if there are any other cases, within the city and beyond, that match this one. We’ll need to keep interviewing the deceased’s network of friends and acquaintances, and someone is going to have to head to the vaults to look at Lord Minton’s professional life in detail . . .’

Clarke glanced in Sykes’s direction. Sykes winked back, which meant something had happened at Howden Hall. *Of course* something had happened at Howden Hall.

‘We also need to put the house and its contents under a microscope,’ Page was continuing. Clarke cleared her throat loudly, bringing him to a stop.

‘Any time you want to share the news, sir,’ she nudged him. ‘Because I’m just about ready to assume you no longer think this was a panicked housebreaker.’

He wagged a finger at her. ‘We can’t afford to rule that possibility out. But on the other hand, we also now have this.’ He took a sheet of paper from the inside pocket of his suit. It was a photocopy of something. Clarke, Esson and Ogilvie converged on him the better to see it.

‘Folded up in the victim’s wallet, tucked behind a credit card. Shame it wasn’t noticed earlier, but all the same . . .’

The photocopy showed a note written in capital letters on a piece of plain paper measuring about five inches by three.

**I’M GOING TO KILL YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID.**

There was an audible intake of breath, followed by a few beats of complete silence, broken by a belch from Charlie Sykes.

‘We’re keeping this to ourselves for now,’ Page warned the room. ‘Any journalist gets hold of it, I’ll be sharpening my axe. Is that understood?’

‘Game-changer, though,’ Ronnie Ogilvie offered.

‘Game-changer,’ Page acknowledged with a slow, steady nod.

## 2

‘Why Fettes?’ Fox asked that evening as he sat across from Clarke at a restaurant on Broughton Street. ‘No, let me guess – it’s to reflect Minton’s status?’

Clarke chewed and nodded. ‘If you’ve got brass or politicians coming for a look-see, Fettes trumps Gayfield Square. No grubby little neds for the suits to bump into.’

‘And a more congenial setting for press conferences. I watched Page on the news channel. Didn’t manage to spot you, though.’

‘He did okay, I thought.’

‘Except in a case like this, no news isn’t exactly good news. First forty-eight hours being crucial, et cetera.’ Fox lifted his glass of water to his lips. ‘Whoever did it has to be on our books, right? Or is he a first-timer – might explain why he bolloxed it up.’

Clarke nodded slowly, avoiding eye contact and saying nothing. Fox put his glass down.

‘There’s something you’re not telling me, Siobhan.’

‘We’re keeping it under wraps.’

‘Keeping what under wraps?’

‘The thing I’m not telling you.’ Fox waited, his stare fixed on her. Clarke put down her fork and looked to left and right. The restaurant was two thirds empty, no one close enough to overhear. Nevertheless, she lowered her voice and leaned across her plate until only inches separated their faces.

‘There was a note.’

‘Left by the killer?’

‘It was in Lord Minton’s wallet, hidden away. Might have been there for days or weeks.’

‘So you can’t say for sure it was from the attacker?’ Fox mulled this over. ‘All the same . . .’

Clarke nodded again. ‘If Page ever finds out I told you . . .’

‘Understood.’ Fox leaned back again and stabbed at a chunk of carrot with his fork. ‘Does complicate things, though.’

‘Tell me about it. Actually, don’t – tell me about your day instead.’

‘Crew from Gartcosh have arrived out of nowhere. Set up shop this afternoon and Doug Maxtone’s incandescent.’

‘Anyone we know?’

‘I’ve not been introduced yet. Boss hasn’t been told why they’re here, though apparently he’s going to be briefed in the morning.’

‘Could it be a terrorist thing?’ Fox shrugged. ‘How big a team?’

‘Six at the last count. They’re installed in the CID suite, meaning we’ve had to relocate to a shoebox along the corridor. How’s your hake?’

‘It’s fine.’ But she had barely touched it, concentrating instead on the carafe of house white. Fox poured himself more water from the jug. Clarke’s water glass, he noted, was still full.

‘What did the note say?’ he asked.

‘Whoever wrote it was promising to kill Lord Minton for something he’d done.’

‘And it wasn’t in Minton’s handwriting?’

‘Letters were all capitalised, but I don’t think so. Cheap black ballpoint rather than a fountain pen.’

‘All very mysterious. Just the one note, do you think?’

‘Search team will be in the house at first light. They’d already be there if Page could have organised it – budget’s in place for seven-day weeks and as much overtime as we need.’

‘Happy days.’ Fox toasted her with his water. Clarke’s phone started vibrating. She had placed it on the table next to her wine glass. She checked the screen and decided to answer.

‘It’s Christine Esson,’ she explained to Fox, lifting the phone to her ear. ‘Shouldn’t you be at home with your feet up, Christine?’ But as she listened, her eyes narrowed a little. Her free hand reached for the wine glass as if on instinct, but the glass was still empty, as was the carafe. ‘Okay,’ she announced eventually. ‘Thanks for letting me know.’ She ended the call and tapped the phone against her lips.

‘Well?’ Fox prompted.

‘Reports of a gunshot in Merchiston. Christine just heard from a pal of hers at the control room. Someone who lives on the street called it in. A patrol car’s on its way to the scene.’

‘Some old banger backfiring?’

‘Caller heard breaking glass – living-room window, apparently.’ She paused. ‘The window of a house belonging to a Mr Cafferty.’

‘Big Ger Cafferty?’

‘The very same.’

‘Well, that’s interesting, isn’t it?’

‘Thank God we’re off duty.’

‘Absolutely. Perish the thought we’d want to take a look.’

‘Quite right.’ Clarke cut off a chunk of hake with the side of her fork. Fox was studying her over the rim of his glass.

‘Whose turn to pay?’ he asked.

‘Mine,’ Clarke replied, dropping the fork on the plate and signalling for a waiter.

The patrol car sat kerbside with its roof lights flashing. It was a wide street of detached late-Victorian houses. The gates to Cafferty’s driveway were open and a white van was parked there. A couple of neighbours had come out to spectate. They looked cold, and would probably head in again soon. The two uniformed officers – one male, one female – were known to Clarke. She introduced Fox, then asked what had happened.

‘Lady across the street heard a bang. There was a flash too, apparently, and the sound of glass shattering. She went to her window but couldn’t see any sign of life. The living room lights went off, but she could see the window was smashed. Curtains were open, she says.’

‘He’s been quick enough getting a glazier.’ Fox nodded towards Cafferty’s house, where a man was busy fitting a plywood covering over the window.

‘What does the occupant say?’ Clarke asked the uniforms.

‘He’s not opening his door. Tells us it was an accident. Denies there was anything like a shot.’

‘And he told you this by . . .?’

‘Shouting at us through his letter box when we were trying to get him to open up.’

‘You know who he is, right?’

‘He’s Big Ger Cafferty. Gangster sort of character, or at least used to be.’

Clarke nodded slowly and noticed that a dog – some kind of terrier – was standing next to her and giving one of her legs an exploratory



sniff. She shooed it, but it sat back on its haunches, staring up at her quizzically.

‘Must belong to a neighbour,’ one of the uniforms surmised. ‘It was padding up and down the pavement when we got here.’ He bent down to scratch the dog behind one ear.

‘Check the rest of the street,’ Clarke said. ‘See if there are any more witnesses.’

She headed up the path towards the front door, taking a detour to where the glazier was nailing the panelling into the window frame.

‘Everything okay here?’ she asked him. As far as she could tell, the living-room curtains were now closed, the room behind them in darkness.

‘Just about finished.’

‘We’re police officers. Can you tell us what happened?’

‘Accidental breakage. I’ve measured up and it’ll be good as new tomorrow.’

‘You know neighbours are saying a bullet did this?’

‘In Edinburgh?’ The man shook his head.

‘You’ll need to give your details to my colleagues before you leave.’

‘Fine by me.’

‘Have you done work for Mr Cafferty before?’

The man shook his head again.

‘But you know who he is? So it’s not beyond the realms of fantasy that there was a gunshot of some kind?’

‘Tells me he tripped and fell against the pane. I’ve seen it happen plenty times.’

‘I’m guessing,’ Fox interrupted, ‘he made it worth your while to come out straight away.’

‘It says “Emergency” on my van because that’s what I do – emergency repairs. Immediate response whenever possible.’ The man hammered the final nail into place and checked his handiwork. There was a toolbox on the ground next to him, along with a portable workbench where he had sawn the plywood to size. The shards of glass had been swept up into a dustpan, larger pieces placed one on top of the other. Fox had crouched down to examine them, but when he stood up, the look he gave Clarke told her he hadn’t gleaned anything. She turned towards the solid-looking door, pressing the bell half a dozen times. When there was no response, she bent down and pushed open the letter box.

‘It’s DI Clarke,’ she called out. ‘Siobhan Clarke. Any chance of a word, Mr Cafferty?’

‘Come back with a warrant!’ a voice from within yelled. She put her eyes to the letter box and could see his shadowy bulk in the darkened hall.

‘It’s good you’ve turned the lights off,’ she said. ‘Makes you less of a target. Do you reckon they’ll come back?’

‘What are you on about? You been on the sauce again? I hear you’re getting too fond of it.’

Clarke could feel the blood rising to her cheeks. She managed to stop herself checking Fox’s reaction. ‘You could be endangering your neighbours’ lives as well as your own – please think about that.’

‘You’re dreaming, woman. I knocked against the glass and it broke. End of story.’

‘If it’s a warrant you want, I can fetch one.’

‘Bugger off and do that then, and leave me in peace!’

She let the flap of the letter box clack shut and straightened up, fixing her eyes on Fox.

‘You reckon you’ve got something better than a warrant, don’t you?’ he said. ‘Go on then.’ He motioned towards the phone she was clutching in her right hand. ‘Give him a bell . . .’