

**JACKDAWS**  
by Ken Follett

Outline: 1<sup>st</sup> draft—annotated

**PG:** *Think of a more interesting title with "jackdaws" in it.*

**KF:** *Jackdaws by Night?*

**AZ:** *The story will work to the extend to which you put pressure on Flick and Dieter.*

*For Flick, the pressure can come from:*

- *Dieter*
- *Weaknesses in her team*
- *Weaknesses of resistors*
- *Conflicts between communists and others*
- *Fortescue*
- *Love relationships*
- *Germans in general*

*For Dieter, it can come from:*

- *Flick*
- *Other resistants*
- *Baecker*
- *Rommel*
- *Some deep inner yearning for concord between Germany and France*

Preface: Exactly 50 women were sent into France as secret agents by the Special Operations Executive during the Second World War. Of those, 36 survived the war. The other 14 gave their lives. This novel is dedicated to all of them.

*List their names?*

Prologue: *Some Dieter PoV in the Prologue.*

Sainte-Cécile is a fictional small town near the cathedral city of Reims, in the champagne district of north-east France. It is 14 May 1944, and the country has been under Nazi occupation for four years.

At the end of a hot Sunday afternoon, the church bell rings a languid toll for the evening service. The square in the town centre is dominated by a walled chateau on its north side. It is a beautiful seventeenth century building, and a German officer and his wife, tourists, are taking photographs of it with a large camera on a tripod. *AZ: The chateau should be more of a "character". KF: It could be a Gothic fantasy castle with fairy-tale turrets. It could have a moat. It should be very difficult to enter in all sorts of ways*

On the east of the square is the church. Despite the weather, a good-sized congregation is drifting toward the church door, including an unusual proportion of men, many of them wearing jackets and even topcoats, almost as if they were hiding things under their clothing. Opposite the church, on the west side of the square, is the Mairie, run by a retired military man with Fascist sympathies who collaborates happily with the Germans.

On the south side of the square is a row of shops and a café. At a pavement table outside the café sits Felicity Clairet, 28, known as Flick, a beautiful English girl in a shabby dress. She is a British officer with the rank of major. Officially, she is with the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY), the all-female military service that consists mainly of drivers and wireless operators. In fact she works for a secret organisation, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), which is responsible for sabotage behind enemy lines, in its F Section (for France). Her job is to liaise between SOE headquarters, at 64 Baker Street in London, and Resistance groups in northern France.

The job is dangerous. She has to parachute into enemy territory at night, move around with false papers, meet Resistance cadres who are being actively sought by the Nazis, then rendezvous with a small plane for the return journey. The men and women doing this work do not last long. Of 22 women sent in up to the end of 1943, eight have been captured, some because of simple blunders or sheer bad luck, others betrayed by double agents who infiltrated Resistance circuits. Those captured are interrogated, tortured, and sent to concentration camps in Germany, where some die of ill-treatment, and others are executed, shot or hanged with piano wire.

But the work is vital, especially now. Everyone expects an Allied invasion of France within the next few weeks. The bombing campaign has intensified. At this moment a squadron of American bombers is roaring overhead. Every town with a railway junction has been hit in recent weeks.

If the invasion fails, the Nazis will dominate Europe for the foreseeable future. But success is not guaranteed. A decisive response by German forces could push the invaders back into the sea. The Resistance has a vital role. It is escalating its campaign of sabotage, blowing up bridges, tunnels and roads in an accelerating program that will climax when the Allies land.

Combined with the bombing, it is intended to cripple German communications and impose a fatal delay on the riposte to the invasion during the critical first hours and days.

Flick is an extraordinary woman. Coming from a humble background, she won a scholarship to Oxford University, where she studied French and German, then began work on a doctorate at the Sorbonne, interrupted by the war. Two years of undercover work have made her physically and mentally tough, occasionally ruthless, and security-conscious to the point of paranoia. She is hero-worshipped in the Resistance and revered by a small circle in London. Her code name is Leopard.

*KF: What is Flick's dream of life after the war? Maybe she wants to be a teacher, high school or university. She is a Francophile, and wants and communicate her love of France and all things French to a new generation of youngsters, to broaden their minds and stimulate their imaginations.*

Beside her sits her French husband, Michel Clairet, 35, leader of the Reims-based Resistance circuit codenamed Bollinger. Handsome and charming, Michel won her heart when she was a student in Paris before the war. But their passion has cooled, and she is wondering if she can win back his love. In the Bollinger network is a beautiful but stupid girl, Gilberte, 19, and in the last few days Flick has noticed several signs—a look, a touch, a shared smile—that make her think Michel has his eye on Gilberte.

*Maybe Paul is in France with Flick, working as her explosives expert. He knows about Michel and Gilberte, but is too honorable to tell Flick. Flick, in ignorance, remains faithful to Michel against her inclination.*

The chateau, once the residence of the Comte de Sainte-Cécile, now houses the largest telephone exchange in Europe. If you draw a line on the map from Berlin to Paris, and another from London to Milan, they intersect at Sainte-Cécile. Perhaps more important, the government minister responsible for siting the exchange ten years ago was born in Sainte-Cécile. Whatever the reason, today all telephone traffic from the High Command in Berlin to German forces in France has to pass through this building.

It is well guarded by German troops and there is a Gestapo base inside. About sixty Frenchwomen work there as telephone operators. In addition, as Flick can now see, half a dozen local women arrive every evening at this time to clean the place, showing a special pass at the gate.

Allied bombers have failed to destroy the chateau. It is a small target, heavily defended by anti-aircraft guns, and the town is blacked out every night with Teutonic efficiency.

*RO: Small fighter-bombers could have hit this target accurately. KF: The chateau has been hit, but the damage was quickly repaired. The most vulnerable equipment, which would take weeks to repair, is in the bombproof basement.*

In desperation, SOE has ordered the Bollinger network to attack the building by frontal assault. Flick has brought these orders with reluctance. She knows that guerilla fighters rarely prevail against regular troops in direct confrontation.

*PG/NN: Make the opening scene an attack on a different target. This would avoid repetition. It would also create extra suspense because of the newness of the chateau in the final scene: What is it like? Will they be able to get in?*

*KF: The first attack should establish the chateau as a Mission Impossible target, and*

*establish the compelling reasons for Flick's unorthodox approach in the second attempt. However, the first attack will not penetrate deeply enough to reveal all the obstacles facing the second attempt.*

Michel has accepted the assignment with alacrity. He is a courageous and charismatic leader. But he is all verve and dash, no good at organisation and planning. However, Flick has helped him produce an attack plan. In this they have been aided by Antoinette, the supervisor of the cleaners, who has drawn them a plan of the chateau's interior. Antoinette is not a member of the Bollinger team but is sympathetic and willing to cooperate against the Nazis, as are many French people (though by no means all). The plan is not bad, but all the same Flick has a dreadful feeling she may be about to lose her faithless husband.

A Gestapo officer emerges through the tall iron gates and approaches the café. Flick fears that the attack has been betrayed. She watches the officer with horrid fascination. He is a thickset man with a twisted nose, breathing heavily through his mouth as if he has a cold. (His name is Lieutenant Baecker, and we will meet him again.) But he ignores Flick and rudely berates the German tourist for taking photographs of a military installation.

**AZ: Flick and Dieter need to be more aware of one another earlier in the story.**

*1. Perhaps the "tourist" taking photographs in the square is Dieter: he notices her as a pretty French girl, she clocks him in her general surveillance.*

*2. He could then reveal himself to Baecker as a senior officer on a clandestine inspection tour.*

*3. Flick could be captured in the skirmish and interrogated by Dieter. She would learn of his terrifying torture methods, but escape before suffering much—and then be terrified of ever meeting him again.*

While this argument is going on, the church bell stops ringing, and the attack begins.

First there is a diversion. A store on the square (belonging to the quisling mayor) is firebombed. Unfortunately, the troops guarding the chateau are not distracted from their duty, but look on stony-faced while the local pompiers fight the blaze.

Then there is an explosion inside the church. The north side of the building forms part of the wall around the chateau. In the old days, the comte had a private entrance, long since blocked up, but now blasted open by the Resistance, who rush through the gap into the chateau grounds with guns blazing. Michel and others in the square open fire on the guards to prevent their going inside.

It does not work. A few guards return fire, but an officer quickly orders them to retreat to the building, from where they can easily pick off the attackers. In minutes it is clear the Resistance will be defeated. In desperation, Michel rushes the gate and is shot down.

*Heighten the personal tragedy for Flick. Among the Resistance is a young man, Bertrand. Before the skirmish, she said he could not take part because of his youth, but he pleaded, and she gave in (or perhaps Michel forbid him and Flick overruled Michel on the grounds that they needed every available hand). Now she feels responsible for the boy's death.*

Flick is under orders to observe and report back, and not risk her life, but now she dashes through the crossfire, picks up Michel in a fireman's lift, and carries him out of the square.

She gets him to a car and drives to Reims. She figures that some of the Resistance men are sure to be captured and interrogated, therefore Michel's house, which is known to them all,

is no longer safe. With reluctance she takes him to Gilberte's house.

She fetches a sympathetic doctor who bandages Michel and says the wounds are superficial and he will be fine in a few days.

Flick finds unmistakable signs that Michel has been sleeping here. She confronts Michel with the evidence. He begs forgiveness and promises to be faithful in future.

Flick is already thinking about new ways to take out the telephone exchange. She visits Antoinette, who is very scared, and with difficulty persuades her to hand over the special pass the cleaners use to get into the chateau.

Then she returns to London.

**PG/NN:** *Does Flick need to succeed for self-validation or validation with her superiors?*

*KF: When the first attack fails, she is heartbroken. The failure is not really her fault, but she feels as bad as if it were. She vows to try again so that her friends will not have died in vain.*

*However, SOE's bureaucratic rival SIS accuses her of incompetence and tries to use the failure to get SOE closed down. No one wants to put Flick in charge of a second attempt. This makes her even more determined to prove that she can do it.*

**AB:** *Need to be more clear about the political consequences if Flick's mission fails. Here insert a new scene. Supreme Commander of Allied Forces is General "Ike" Eisenhower. Commander of the 21st Army Group, and leader of the D-Day invasion, is General Sir Bernard "Monty" Montgomery. In real life, on Monday 15 May, Monty and Ike hosted a briefing session on the D-Day invasion. It took place at Monty's old public school, St Paul's in West Kensington (which had been evacuated for the duration). Both Churchill and the King attended. Everyone sat on hard school benches in the "model room".*

*Add a fictional exchange which emphasizes the importance of the Resistance campaign to cripple east-west communications. Mention the need to cut phone lines so that orders will be sent by radio and therefore decrypted by Bletchley.*

*A fictional character who attends this—maybe Paul?*

1. Flick's supervisor is Percy Thwaite, 50, hero of the First World War, rabble-rousing labour organiser in the twenties and thirties, and veteran of the legendary Battle of Cable Street (1936), when Cockneys attacked Fascists trying to march through a Jewish neighbourhood.

*KF: Percy shows Flick a "Rogue's Gallery" from which she picks out Dieter. Consequently she is aware of his identity, role and reputation. She has heard of "Frankie" and is horrified that she came so close to him.*

Arriving at SOE headquarters on Monday 15 May, Flick proposes a new plan. She will return to Sainte-Cécile with a team of undercover agents. They will have forged passes (copied from Antoinette's) and enter the chateau as cleaners. The women work five nights out of seven, so the guards never know who is going to show up, and anyway they do not know the women individually, for no one takes much notice of cleaners.

Once inside, they will plant a small quantity of explosives at points where they will wreak havoc with the complex wiring and switching system of the telephone exchange, causing damage that will take a team of engineers weeks to repair, even though the building itself will remain standing.

As the cleaners are women, Flick's team will have to be all-female.

She will need:

- I. Leader—herself
- II. Explosives expert
- III. Telephone engineer (to decide where to place the charges)
- IV. Sharpshooter
- V. Tough soldier
- VI. Tough soldier

It may be difficult to find women who can do all these jobs. It will be impossible to find women who can also speak perfect French. So Flick will have to accept some non-French-speakers. This means the operation must be a very fast in-and-out, with minimum exposure.

Flick and Percy put the plan to their boss, arrogant Simon Fortescue, who dislikes Percy, whom he regards as a dangerous communist. Simon rejects the plan because the team is all-female.

*Churchill chairs the War Cabinet Defence Committee.*

*The Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) meets in the War Cabinet offices in Great George St.*

*SOE is Churchill's baby, even though he has put in charge of it a Labour minister he dislikes, Lord Selborne, an upper-class socialist.*

*SIS is run by foxhunting snob Major-General Sir Stewart Menzies, known as "C", who hates SOE and constantly fights bureaucratic battles to starve it of resources.*

*SOE is run by Major-General Sir Colin Gubbins, who actually looks like Menzies (receding hair, little moustache, upper class) but is in fact a highly unorthodox thinker.*

Flick then learns that the chateau is even more important than she had imagined. By accident, she hears that most German radio traffic is now being decoded at Bletchley and read by Allied intelligence. However, within Europe, most military communications are sent by teleprinter, using telephone landlines which cannot be tapped. After the invasion, communications between Berlin and northern France will be crucial. If Flick could have destroyed the telephone exchange, not only would German communications have been disrupted, but vital orders would have to be sent by radio—and could therefore be read by the Allies.

Dispirited, Flick goes to a typical wartime London party, young men and women who may die tomorrow getting drunk and dancing to scratchy gramophone records of Glen Miller. She rejects the advances of a naive SOE trainee, Brian Standall, who reveals that he carries a picture of her in his wallet. She is rescued by Paul Chancellor, 30, son of an American general. Paul is with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the US equivalent of SOE, and like Flick has spent time undercover in France. He takes her to dinner at the Savoy. She tells him about her rejected plan. He thinks it is brilliant, and promises to ask his father to intervene.

Flick is strongly attracted to Paul, who is sophisticated without being pompous, a trick English boys usually cannot manage. She thinks of her husband in France, probably sleeping with Gilberte. When Paul takes her home, she kisses him goodnight. The kiss turns passionate. But she leaves him on the doorstep.

*More on Paul. He, too, is in education. Having trained as a teacher, he became a producer of educational radio programs, then started his own business making and selling*

language courses on gramophone records, first to the army then to the general public. His mother is running the business for the duration. After the war he plans to expand into education films and maybe television. Flick is enchanted by his energy and vision.

**AB:** *Can the relationship between Flick and Paul be tied more dramatically to the plot?*

**AZ:** *Add a Rommel scene. The German C-in-C West is Field Marshal Gerd von Runstedt, a reliable older man. Under him is the glamorous Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel, the "Desert Fox", Commander of Army Group B. Rommel never hesitates to use the Field-Marshal's privilege of direct access to the Fuehrer bypassing his superior officer.*

*In this fictional scene, Rommel and von Runstedt discuss, perhaps with Dieter, the coming invasion. No one is sure where it will come, so their strategy is to keep east-west communications open, so that they can respond fast wherever it comes. Dieter's job is to frustrate the Resistance campaign to cripple communications.*

2. The German military counterespionage system is the Abwehr, for many years commanded by Admiral Canaris, not a Nazi. Its French headquarters are in the Hotel Lutetia in the boulevard Raspail, on the left bank of the Seine. The Nazi party has its own, rival, security service, the Geheimestaatpolizei or Gestapo, with headquarters at 84 avenue Foch, near the Arc de Triomphe.

The Abwehr is old-fashioned and patrician, the Gestapo upstart and brash. They have different responsibilities in France. The Abwehr has the task of catching Allied secret agents sent into occupied territory, whereas the Gestapo combats the native French Resistance.

The Gestapo is less efficient, mainly because the Nazis' measure of excellence is Fascist enthusiasm and loyalty to Hitler rather than operational effectiveness. Nevertheless, during the course of the war, the Gestapo has become the dominant agency, and the Abwehr has in recent months become a department of the Gestapo. However, most of the same personnel are doing most of the same jobs.

The (fictional) senior Abwehr spycatcher in Paris is Dieter Franck, 40, an attractive, cultured man, bon viveur and womanizer, fond of champagne and foie gras, Bach and pornography. He has a wife and two children in Cologne. Here in Paris he has a French mistress, Stephanie, a clever whore whom he loves even though he knows she is heartless. He prefers civilian clothing, and is usually beautifully dressed in shirts and ties from the legendary Paris chemisier Charvet. He speaks French and English and is famous for his skill as an interrogator, using torture when necessary but preferring trickery and emotional manipulation. He believes war is a good thing, existentially, because it enables people to become what they really are: the sadists become torturers, the psychopaths make brave front-line troops, the bullies and the victims alike have scope to play their roles to the hilt, and the whores are always busy.

*Dieter's past:*

1. *He (and Baecker) served under Rommel in North Africa. He was the chief interrogator in Rommel's intelligence corps. He and Baecker became enemies there.*

2. *He is a former high-ranking police detective.*

**AZ:** *Dieter is a Francophile, like Flick, in love with all things French, especially painting. In his Paris apartment he has a priceless collection of purloined Impressionists.*

*Make Stephanie more complex. She is intellectual, cultured, a true upper-class whore, but also gold-digging, haughty, anti-Semitic. Maybe she has Jewish ancestry and is protected by Dieter.*

*Dieter must be driven. Maybe he is the only one who understands the threat posed by the Resistance. The blindness of the German hierarchy (except perhaps Rommel?) Allows Weber to play bureaucratic games against Dieter.*

*But this threat to Dieter must also be personalized. The Resistance has vowed to kill him.*

Dieter travels to Sainte-Cécile (on Tuesday 16 May) to investigate the assault on the chateau. To avoid time-wasting turf wars, he is careful to befriend and flatter the local Gestapo interrogator Baecker, a sadistic brute.

**PG/NN: The problem of two villains.**

*KF: We are going to spend a lot of time in the company of Dieter, so he must be attractive and intelligent as well as scary. Remember the problem we had with Anthony in the first draft of "Code".*

*It is possible to have a villain who is fascinating and magnetic as well as being a psychopathic torturer—Hannibal the Cannibal. But I don't see Dieter that way.*

*So we have to split the functions, with the decision-making villain being a normal human being (Dieter should have one or two opportunities for nice warm interactions) who is obliged to make use of a brute, Baecker.*

*(Al: the character you are proposing for Baecker, a bureaucratic rival for Dieter, would be a completely new character. Dieter would still need a thug who would enjoy carrying out the tortures.)*

Baecker shows him some photographs which were taken in the square, by chance, during the skirmish. Dieter is intrigued by a picture of a beautiful woman carrying a wounded man away.

Baecker invites Dieter to assist with the interrogation of two Resistance men captured during the skirmish: Marcel, a tough-looking man, and Albert, a frightened 17-year-old. They are being held in the cellar of the chateau. Dieter contrives to take charge, and we get our first sight of his expertise.

The prisoners are stripped naked and tied up in adjoining rooms, so that each can hear what is going on in the next room. They begin with Marcel, the older man. Baecker picks up a steel bar and begins to beat Marcel. Dieter intervenes. "You should always blindfold the subject, and strike him at irregular intervals," he says. "That way, every blow comes as a terrible shock, and every second between blows is a torment of anticipation." They blindfold Marcel, and Baecker hits him about the face and head. Dieter intervenes again. "Don't hit the head, for a brain-damaged subject is no use. Avoid the face, in case you impair his ability to speak. Concentrate on the bony parts of the body: ankles, shins, kneecaps, fingers, elbows, shoulders, ribs. It is useful to break a leg early in the interview, for the pain is excruciating, especially when the broken bone is struck again." Marcel screams and cries and begs for mercy—but Dieter does not ask him any questions.

Eventually he goes into the next room. Albert, the youngster, is in a state of collapse, sobbing and shaking in terror because of the screams of Marcel. Dieter holds the photo in front of him. "Who is this girl?"

Albert tells everything he knows.



Afterwards, Dieter gets a blinding migraine, the regular after-effect of these sessions. He injects himself with morphine from a field medical kit and passes out.

3. Flick gets the go-ahead for her plan (on Wednesday 17 May). She will work with Paul Chancellor. *KF: At some point, Flick sees Paul embracing a beautiful girl, and she decides he is a flirt.*

*KF: Flick is told: You have to achieve this within the next 18 days, or else it will be too late.*

*AZ: Paul's father does not want him to go, and gets him pulled off the assignment. Paul has to fight to get back on.*

She recruits her team. First, she goes to a large country house where her mother is housekeeper. *KF: Flick's father was an alcoholic butler who died young.* Ma asks Flick about her war work. Despite Flick's evasive replies, Ma finds out most of what she wants to know, as mothers generally do. *KF: Flick needs some ongoing issue with her mother to give the relationship dynamism. Maybe Ma has quarreled with Mark over an inheritance, and Flick is trying to bring them together.* They talk briefly about Flick's brother Mark, who is "not the marrying kind". Ma reminisces about Flick as a child: mischievous, bright, tomboyish, self-reliant. They recall the days when they would accompany Ma's employers to their villa in Nice every January, which is how Flick acquired a perfect southern-French accent. The old Earl recognised Flick's academic potential and encouraged her education. His daughter Diana, Flick's childhood playmate, always resented this.

It is Diana whom Flick has come to see. She finds her in the woods, shooting rabbits with deadly accuracy. Diana is 30, attractive in a boyish way, short hair and trousers. Bored and depressed, she wants to join the war effort, but cannot stick at any of the mundane jobs normally given to women. "Darling, I can't be a chauffeuse."

Flick offers her a job. "It's dangerous and you might get killed. Worst of all, I'd be your superior officer and you'd have to defer to me."

Diana accepts the offer, but says: "Why me?"

Flick points to the dead rabbits. "Because you're a killer."

Next day (Thursday 18 May), Flick goes to a "glasshouse", where soldiers are incarcerated for disciplinary offences. There she meets two very rough Glaswegian factory girls, Ruby, 18, and Maude, 17. Having joined the army while drunk, they have been trying ever since for a dishonourable discharge, which the army perversely will not give them. Bullied by a sadistic sergeant-major, they broke into his quarters at dawn, stripped him naked, and tied him to the flagpole on the parade-ground. They join Flick's team.

Her boss, Percy, helps her find a female explosives expert. He takes her to a pub in London's East End (on Friday 19 May) and introduces her to a woman of 40, well dressed in a rather brassy style. She is Geraldine "Jelly" Knight, a safebreaker. Although a criminal, she is fervently patriotic, and regards herself as the very best type of decent Englishwoman. She accepts with alacrity.

Flick cannot find a woman telephone engineer. When she mentions this to her brother, Mark, he says he knows someone. He takes her (on Saturday 20 May) to a seedy nightclub where a statuesque blonde called Greta is singing torch songs in a German accent. "She's a telephone

engineer by day," says Mark. They go backstage, where Flick is astonished to discover that Greta is a man. He left Berlin when the Nazis started putting homosexuals in concentration camps. Flick asks Greta to join her team—as a woman.

*PG/NN: Flick must be forced to use Greta, otherwise her character looks too obvious a plot device. KF: By Saturday night, Flick is desperate. The team is due to travel to Scotland on Sunday morning for training and she still does not have a telephone engineer. She considers trying to find one in France, trying to learn enough herself to make the decisions, but none of the options works. Greta is the answer to her prayers.*

*KF: There should be some other recruits who will be eliminated during training. Focus on one failure who will typify the rest. She is brilliant, but falls into a trap and talks when drunk*

4. Young Albert has told Dieter everything he knows about the Bollinger Resistance network, including the address of a safe house in the suburbs of Reims. Dieter has had the house under surveillance for a few days and now arrests the owner, Mademoiselle Lemas, and installs his mistress, Stephanie, as a fake Mlle Lemas.

However, SOE agents do not normally go directly to the house, but to a rendezvous where Mlle Lemas meets them. Dieter needs to know where the rendezvous is. He interrogates Mlle Lemas on Sunday 21 May.

The real Mlle Lemas is a prim 60-year-old spinster, immaculately dressed in clothes that are spotlessly clean and crisply pressed (although old and worn, as are the clothes of almost all French people after four years of occupation—the only exceptions being girls such as Stephanie). Dieter treats Mlle Lemas with respect, almost deference, which she takes as her due. He places her in a busy room, discreetly fettered to a table, and gives her food, wine and coffee. He instructs his staff to smile politely, treating her as a visitor rather than a prisoner. But when she asks for the ladies' room, he refuses.

As time goes on, she becomes desperate. She is in physical pain, but her embarrassment is more agonizing. At last she breaks down and tells him that she meets the British agents in the crypt of the cathedral at eleven a.m. any day, and Dieter lets her go to the toilet.

5. Flick's team is given the code name Jackdaws. She tells everyone a cover story: that they are going to blow up a railway tunnel on the main line from Frankfurt to Paris, which passes through Reims. Even the team will not be told the truth until the last possible moment.

*KF: Flick is cool with Paul until she learns that the beautiful girl she saw him embracing was his sister. But now he is cool with her because of her husband.*

She takes them (on Monday 22 May) to a remote castle in Scotland for ten days' training. They get a compressed version of the SOE agents' course: firearms, RT and codes, explosives and timers, map reading, parachute jumping, cross-country initiative tests, security.

*PG/NN: The mission could also represent some kind of personal redemption for each of the rest of the team. KF: Perhaps not redemption, and this must not look too programmatic, but the mission should have a unique personal significance for each team member. For example, in Greta's case it is revenge.*

Greta turns out to be a physical coward, and refuses point-blank to take part in unarmed combat training.

Ruby and Maude are the reverse, hopeless in the classroom but embarrassingly good at anything violent. An unwary male sergeant who tries to teach Ruby self-defence ends up in the hospital with a broken jaw. And when a group of trainers dress up in SS uniforms and burst into the dormitory in the middle of the night, Maude knifes two of them before realising it is an exercise.

Diana is a daredevil but selfish and undisciplined, and Flick keeps having to pull rank to keep her in line. Diana feels in her heart that she should be in charge, not commanded by her housekeeper's daughter, and Flick fears she may have made a bad choice.

Jelly, the safebreaker, is the eldest at 40. Deeply conventional, she takes against Greta. "I'm Church of England, I vote Conservative, I hate foreigners and I can't stand a pervert," she says. She never misses a chance to rile Greta.

Ruby is unbelievably violent, but early on develops a powerful loyalty to Flick. Her rapid reflexes will either get her into trouble or out of it—or both.

Conventional sexual mores are weak when people feel they may die soon, and several passionate relationships develop. Ruby is promiscuous, and has sex with two of the trainers. Maude, a lesbian, falls in love with Diana and succeeds in seducing her. Flick finds herself more and more attracted to Paul.

Towards the end of the course (on Monday 29 May), Simon Fortescue tells Flick he has sent Brian Standall into France with a radio. His mission is to contact the Bollinger network and see how much of it is left. Flick is uneasy about this, and wishes Simon would keep his nose out of her assignment, but there is nothing she can do.

6. Dieter is friendly with Wolfgang Weber, a senior SS man in Paris. They discuss the coming invasion. Wolfgang says it will begin with a diversionary landing in Normandy, intended to draw German forces away from the real target area, Calais. Wherever it comes, the Resistance will do their best to delay the German response, so the Gestapo must do all they can to weaken the Resistance in the next few weeks.

Dieter pleads with Wolfgang to be allowed to work independently of the Gestapo, citing his impressive record. Wolfgang agrees to put a word in, but recommends that Dieter pull off some spectacular coup in the next few days to strengthen his case.

Dieter has set a watch on the crypt of the cathedral at Reims. When Brian Standall shows up (on Wednesday 31 May) he is arrested. Dieter goes to Reims and stages a "rescue", posing as a Resistance man working with Mlle Lemas. (Brian cannot detect the trace of German accent in Dieter's French.) Dieter then takes Brian to the safe house, introduces him to the fake Mlle Lemas, and helps him encode and send a message home saying all is well. In the process, Dieter learns Brian's code.

Surreptitiously searching Brian's possessions, Dieter is intrigued to come across a photo of Flick, whose face he recognizes from the picture taken in the square at Sainte-Cécile. (Agents are forbidden to take photos into occupied territory, but they often break this rule.) Dieter has the picture copied, then returns it to a place where Brian will think he dropped it.

Next day (Thursday 1 June), Dieter clandestinely follows Brian as he goes searching for Michel. Michel is not at his old address, of course, but Brian talks to a neighbour who directs him to Gilberte's place.

Dieter leaves them all at large for now. He is able to intercept and decode Brian's transmissions, and he reads Brian's report to London detailing the strength of the Bollinger network. He also reads London's reply, instructing Bollinger to prepare a "reception committee" to meet a team codenamed Jackdaws, led by the agent Leopard, who will parachute in tomorrow night (Friday 2 June).

Dieter tells Wolfgang that he is about to arrest a team of British terrorists, and invites a group of Gestapo bigwigs to witness his triumph.

7. The Jackdaws travel from Scotland to the village of Sandy, in Bedfordshire, and spend the night of Thursday 1 June billeted in a large house not far from RAF Tempsford, the airstrip from which most SOE missions depart. Flick learns that from tonight no one is allowed to leave any air base anywhere in Britain, and this makes her certain the invasion is imminent.

That night, Flick sleeps with Paul. She realises she will have to tell Michel.

Next evening (Friday 2 June) they all dress in French underwear, and clothes made by a French dressmaker employed by SOE. (Then, as now, French clothes are noticeably more stylish than English. In addition, they use different buttons, linings and trim.) Greta, whose false identity is that of the wife of a German officer stationed in Paris, has clothes provided by X Section of SOE, which deals with Germany. The women are given travel bags containing French toothpaste, make-up, cigarettes and money. (£1=Ffr700.) They are all searched to make sure they are not inadvertently carrying giveaway British items such as used bus tickets, stamps, matches, shopping lists etc.

Paul Chancellor briefs the pilot and emphasizes that Flick is in command and has the authority to abort the mission or divert the flight.

At the last minute, Flick has a blazing row with Simon Fortescue, after she learns that Brian Standall was arrested by the Gestapo then rescued by the Resistance. Standard security rules dictate that an agent who has been in enemy hands—no matter what the circumstances—must return to London for debriefing before taking part in any further operations. Simon says there is no time for such refinements, with the invasion only days away. Flick points out that Brian could be dead, his radio being operated by the Gestapo. Simon counters by saying he has sent a Paris agent, unknown to Brian, to check on him, and the agent saw Brian walking freely in the street and entering the safe house.

The plane takes off, but Flick is still worried. A change of venue for her landing will cause all kinds of extra difficulties. It will mean extra time in France, with a team including three non-linguists. But in the end her instinct tells her to do it, and she orders the pilot to change course and drop them near Chartres.

8. Dieter arrests the Bollinger reception committee—Michel, Gilberte and Brian—but is humiliated when no saboteurs land. Later he receives a message on Brian's radio saying there has been a change of plan: the Jackdaws will land elsewhere, but Leopard will get in touch.

Dieter begins the interrogation of his new prisoners. He has one of his staff ask Michel to do something apparently innocent: copy out a chapter from a romantic novel. Michel, seeing no harm, complies. The lines include: "Hurry home, my darling, I cannot wait to hold you in my arms again."

Dieter knows (from young Albert) about the love triangle between Gilberte, Michel and Flick. He shows the paper to Gilberte and says it is a love letter from Michel to Flick. Dieter is a persuasive individual, and Gilberte is not too bright. She believes him, and spitefully reveals everything she knows about Flick, including her codename.

Dieter now knows that Flick is the head of the Jackdaws team that has almost certainly landed somewhere in northern France tonight. Usefully, he has on file two good photographs of her. He has them made into a Wanted poster and stuck up throughout Paris overnight.

9. Flick rounds up her team and hides them in a barn while she contacts the Chartres-based Resistance group codenamed Gothic. In the morning (on Saturday 3 June) they catch a train to Paris.

They split up into pairs, to be less conspicuous: Flick with Ruby, Diana with Maude, and Greta with Jelly, so that there is one linguist in each pair. At the station, they have to show their identity cards. A Gestapo officer speaks to Jelly. Greta, the physical coward, turns out to have nerves of steel when playing a role, and she flirts outrageously with the Gestapo, telling them her maid has laryngitis, and saves Jelly from having to speak. Jelly's hostility to Greta begins to soften.

On the train are two gendarmes going to Paris to fetch a prisoner (an ordinary murderer) and bring him back to Chartres. Ruby makes a slip and reveals herself to them. Fortunately, they are anti-German (like most of the gendarmes, but unlike the hated French security police called the *milice*.) They just tell Ruby to be more careful.

*KF: Each of these dangerous errors made during the operation should have been foreshadowed by something that occurred in training*

On the platform at the Quai d'Orsay, Flick is horrified to see, on an advertising hoarding, a Wanted poster featuring two recognisable photos of herself. She realizes she will never get through the Gestapo checkpoint at the ticket barrier. She thinks her operation is over before it has begun.

Then she has a brainwave. She persuades the gendarmes to handcuff her between them and march her through the checkpoint as a prisoner.

10. Back in London, Paul figures out that Brian's radio is being operated by the Gestapo. He furiously accuses Simon Fortescue of endangering Flick's life. He has no way of telling Flick. He decides to parachute in to warn her.

11. The team spend a night in Paris. Flick discovers that Diana, made foolish by love, plans to take Maude to dinner at the Ritz. She forbids it absolutely, of course, but they sneak out. Flick follows and gets to the Ritz. She sees the two of them. But the Gestapo is just ahead of her, and they get arrested. Flick ruthlessly abandons them to their fate. In the morning (Sunday 4 June), she and the rest of the team get a train to Reims.

12. After Dieter's humiliation at Reims, a piece of luck: two British agents fall into his lap, having been foolhardy enough to dine at the Ritz. He soon figures out the relationship between Diana and Maude. He tortures Maude in front of Diana, who breaks almost immediately and tells

everything she knows. However, she still believes Flick's cover story about blowing up a railway tunnel. Dieter orders a guard on the tunnel, and also alerts the men watching the crypt of Reims cathedral.

13. Flick leaves Greta and Jelly to kill time in the centre of Reims while she and Ruby go to the safe house. (Having been here before, she does not need to use the crypt rendezvous, so she avoids Dieter's surveillance team.)

The door is opened by Stephanie, who says she is Mlle Lemas. Inside, Flick finds Paul, who tells her that Brian's radio is being operated by the Gestapo. By judicious questioning, Flick quickly establishes that Stephanie is betraying Resistance personnel to the Nazis. Without hesitation, Flick shoots her between the eyes.

14. Dieter is distraught. He loved Stephanie. His grief turns to rage, and he vows to get revenge by capturing Flick and turning her over to the brutal Gestapo torturer Baecker.

He figures she still needs to contact the Bollinger network, if only to find a hideout in Reims for her team, and he decides to use Michel as a lure to catch Flick.

He says to Michel: "The war is almost over. The invasion is about to begin. I have never been a Nazi. I want to help the Resistance. To prove my sincerity, I am setting you free. But there is one condition. I know the Abwehr has a spy within SOE in London, and if he ever finds out what I have done, I'm a dead man. So you must promise to tell no one about me—not even your wife."

Michel agrees.

15. Flick is now desperate to find a place for the team to spend the night. If they are caught out after curfew they are finished.

She finds Michel at Gilberte's house (and is immediately spotted by a surveillance team shadowing Michel). He wants to go to be with her. She tells him the marriage is over.

He gives her an address where the team can spend the night, a champagne cellar. Flick asks him to meet her there in the morning and bring a truck.

16. Dieter's men shadow Flick, but she gives them the slip. Next morning (Tuesday 5 June), they follow Michel to the champagne cellar. As soon as they report in, Dieter raids the cellar, but Flick has gone.

17. Flick drives the team to Sainte-Cécile and contacts Antoinette. She asks her to summon all the cleaners to her house an hour before they normally start work. Antoinette writes out notes, and the team deliver them.

18. Dieter has set a watch at the Reims railway station, and he knows Flick has not left that way. He begins to doubt the tunnel story.

No longer pretending to help the Resistance, he takes Michel to the station. There is a train taking prisoners—Jews, communists, saboteurs, homosexuals—to concentration camps in Germany. Michel is aghast to see Gilberte waiting in line to board a stinking cattle truck where

the women are already begging for water. Gilberte looks thin and ill, and Michel feels sure she will not survive such a journey.

Dieter offers to pull Gilberte out of the line—if Michel will reveal where Flick has gone. Michel tells him she asked for a truck with enough petrol to go fifty miles.

19. The real cleaners assemble at Antoinette's house. The team tie them up and lock them in the cellar.

Outside, a Gestapo officer taps Ruby on the shoulder, intending to flirt. Reacting without thinking, she knocks him cold. Three more men arrest her. She is confined in the basement of the chateau. Baecker begins to torture her.

20. Dieter draws a circle on the map with a radius of fifty miles. It passes through several possible military targets. He calls the Gestapo or the gendarmes in each location. When he calls Sainte-Cécile, he learns of the arrest of Ruby. He orders a security alert at the chateau, then jumps in a car.

*Another Rommel scene.*

21. *In the final scene, Flick's team will face several different kinds of hazard:*
- I. *Known obstacles which nevertheless she is not sure she can overcome, such as the checkpoint at the gate. The apprehension of these will create suspense.*
  - II. *Areas of ignorance—a door that may be wood or steel, guarded or not.*
  - III. *Some difficulties that Flick simply did not anticipate, for elements of surprise.*
  - IV. *Extra hazards cleverly devised by Dieter.*
- Each category will create suspense in a different way.*

Flick's team enter the chateau as cleaners, presenting their forged passes at the gate, just before the security alert takes effect.

They reconnoitre while pretending to clean the place. The building is searched for intruders, and they are asked for their passes again, but no suspicion falls on them. The French telephone operators, realizing that none of the cleaners is local, guess what is going on, but the Gestapo do not.

Greta locates the switch room, where the explosives must be placed for maximum damage. It is in the basement with the Gestapo cells. Jelly plants the charges and sets the timers.

Dieter arrives and orders all civilians out of the building.

*AZ: A power cut plunges the building into darkness. A water pipe bursts and floods the basement.*

Flick overpowers the torturer Baecker, ties him up, and frees Ruby. Ruby sticks a needle in his eye and leaves him to die in agony.

The team leave the building, but Greta attracts suspicion, and is held back.

Dieter interrogates Greta in the chateau basement, right next to the switch room where the timers are rapidly ticking away.

Outside, Flick tries desperately to think of a way to rescue Greta without jeopardising the mission. Jelly, who began by hating Greta, tries to force her way back inside, and is killed.

*Weber*

In the basement, Greta calmly tells Dieter about the man she loved in Berlin, who was taken away by the Nazis and died in a camp. With a few seconds to go, she tells Dieter that her revenge will be to blow up the telephone exchange. He realizes the situation too late. The charges blow, and both Dieter and Greta die.

Outside, there is a shootout as the remnants of the team—Flick, Ruby and Paul—try to escape. Michel is killed trying to protect Flick. They get away and drive to the field where they are to meet their plane. It comes in and they take off.

*PG/NN: The ending needs one more twist. KF: Yes—but rather than a piece of bad luck, such as the rescue plane failing to show up, it should be a final clever ploy by Dieter. And Dieter should be killed in this last scene. (Maybe this is where Michel saves Flick's life.)*

As they cross the English Channel at dawn, they look down and see the largest fleet of ships in history, literally thousands of vessels of all kinds, approaching the Normandy coast. It is D-Day, Wednesday 6 June, and the invasion has begun.

*KF: A casual meeting with Churchill when they return?*

Epilogue: Flick is proposed for a George Cross, but Simon Fortescue is on the committee and he vetoes it.

Flick is in Boston, married to Paul and finishing her doctorate at Harvard. At a dinner party, someone is sounding off about the war. On learning that Flick was in London during the war, he asks her what she did. She says she did some translating. "Nothing very exciting, I'm afraid," she says, then she catches Paul's eye, and they share a secret smile.



*AZ: The story will work to the extent to which you put pressure on Flick and Dieter.*

*For Flick, the pressure can come from:*

- *Dieter*
- *Weaknesses in her team*
- *Weaknesses of resistors*
- *Conflicts between communists and others*
- *Fortescue*
- *Love relationships*
- *Germans in general* *Marty*

*For Dieter, it can come from:*

- *Flick*
- *Other resistants*
- *Baecker*
- *Rommel*
- *Some deep inner yearning for concord between Germany and France*

**In the final scene, Flick's team will face several different kinds of hazard:**

1. Known obstacles which nevertheless she is not sure she can overcome, such as the checkpoint at the gate. The apprehension of these will create suspense.
  - a. Checkpoint at the gate
  - b. French personnel inside the chateau
  - c. Germans inside
  - d. French civilians are not allowed in the basement (it is cleaned by soldiers)
  
2. Areas of ignorance—a door that may be wood or steel, guarded or not.
  - a. Where is the electrical main switch?
  - b. Can it be switched off?
  - c. Is there a guard/sentry at the basement door?
  - d. Where is the switch room?
  - e. Is the switch room guarded?
  - f. Is the switch room locked?
  
3. Some difficulties that Flick simply did not anticipate, for elements of surprise.
  - a. The power comes back on (emergency generator)
  - b. A German makes a pass at Greta
  - c. There are soldiers playing cards in the switch room
  
4. Extra hazards cleverly devised by Dieter.
  - a. A steel door to the switch room—must be blasted
  - b. Security alert:
    - i. Card check
    - ii. Building search
    - iii. Body searches
    - iv. Evacuation of civilians

Each category will create suspense in a different way.