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## 6. I N T H E D A R K

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For a moment, the **cave**<sup>1</sup> is dark and empty, and only the **occasional**<sup>2</sup> **drips of water**<sup>3</sup> that fall from the **stalactites**<sup>4</sup> make any noise in the silence.

Then, from a small tunnel at the south end of the large space, a light **appears**<sup>5</sup>, and there is the sound of movement.

Soon, a man appears. He is tall and slim, with a grey beard, long nose, and an unhappy expression on his serious face.

“Come on! Hurry up,” he shouts. Then he stands up and looks around the cave with the light that is attached to his **helmet**<sup>6</sup>.

After a moment, an attractive woman appears at the **mouth**<sup>7</sup> of the tunnel, her pretty face dirty, the long red hair under her helmet a **tangled mess**<sup>8</sup>.

“Where are the others?” the man **snaps**<sup>9</sup>.

“They’re coming, Max,” she says, as she stands and tries to smile.

Max Webber, **CEO**<sup>10</sup> of Webber Incorporated, shakes his head and turns back to the tunnel. “Hurry up, you **pathetic worms**!”

“Max, you can’t speak to them like that,” the woman says.

A dark expression moves across Max’s face, and he **takes hold of the woman’s arm**<sup>12</sup>. “I can speak to them any way I like, Tracey. I’m their boss. And I’m your boss, too. Don’t forget that.”

1 **cave** - barlang

2 **occasional** - alkalmankénti

3 **drips of water (Pl.)** - vízcseppek

4 **stalactite** - függőcseppkő

5 **to appear** - megjelentik

6 **helmet** - sisak

7 **mouth** - (itt) nyitás, bejárat

8 **tangled mess** - kócos összevisszaság

9 **to snap** - szitkozódik, káromkodik

10 **CEO (chief executive officer)** - vezérigazgató, ügyvezető igazgató

11 **pathetic worm** - szánalmas féreg

12 **to take hold of sb.'s arm** - megragadja a kezét

The woman tries to smile again. “I just meant, well, this is **supposed to be**<sup>1</sup> a team-building weekend.”

Max lets go of her arm and laughs. “Team-building? Ha! With these **disloyal**<sup>2</sup> idiots?”

Tracey looks at her boss. “Disloyal?”

“Yeah, disloyal. I got an email from our **accountants**<sup>3</sup> this morning. Someone is **stealing from**<sup>4</sup> me. Hundreds of thousands of pounds. And it’s one of these three idiots. I know it.”

“I can’t believe it,” Tracey says.

“Believe it. When we get back to London, I’m going to find out which of them it is. Then...”

There are more sounds of movement in the tunnel, and Max stops talking. “Don’t say a word about this,” he says quietly. “You might be good at **keeping my bed warm**<sup>5</sup>, Tracey, but not so good that I won’t fire your pretty little **arse**<sup>6</sup>.”

Then, from the tunnel, three more people slowly appear, each of them dirty, tired, and unhappy.

“God, look at you **lot**<sup>7</sup>,” Max snaps. “My top management team. Fat Phil, Lazy Larry, and Stupid Sarah.”

Phil, a middle-aged man with a round stomach, laughs. “You’re right, Max. I do need a bit more exercise.”

“*You’re right, Max*,” Max **mimics**<sup>8</sup>. “Jesus, you really are a worm, Phil.”

“So, have you been in these caves before, Max?” asks Larry, a short, younger man, with glasses on his face.

“Of course I have. I grew up in Wales. I know the Daren Cilau caves better than you know the back of your own hand.”

1 **sth. is supposed to be sth.** - *vminek lennie kell*

2 **disloyal** - *hűtlen, nem hűségés*

3 **accountant** - *könyvelő*

4 **to steal from sb.** - *meglop vkit*

5 **to keep sb.’s bed warm** - *vki ágyát melegíti*

6 **arse (vulg.)** - *segg*

7 **lot (ugs.)** - *csomó, halom*

8 **to mimic sb.** - *utánoz vkit*

"Oh, good. We were just a bit worried. I mean, don't we need a **guide**<sup>1</sup> to show us the way?" says Sarah, a middle-aged woman with nervous brown eyes.

"A guide?" Max shouts, and his voice **echoes**<sup>2</sup> around the cave. "Pathetic!" He looks at the three managers again and shakes his head.

"So," says Tracey, with another weak smile. "Where next?"

"There," says Max, who points to another tunnel at the east side of the cave. "And try **to keep up**<sup>3</sup> this time."

And Max Webber moves to the mouth of the new tunnel and climbs inside.

Phil is about to follow him when Tracey **grabs**<sup>4</sup> his arm and pulls him back. "Wait!" she **whispers**<sup>5</sup>, then listens to the sound of Max as he moves **further**<sup>6</sup> down the tunnel.

"What?" asks Sarah, her eyes even more nervous.

Tracey waits for a few more seconds, then looks at the three managers. "He knows."

"Impossible!" says Larry.

"Shh...!"

"What do you mean?" asks Phil.

"What do you think? He knows about the money. He just told me."

"But... but... how?" asks Sarah.

Tracey looks at her angrily. "I don't know! Ask Larry. It was his idea."

"No it wasn't. It was yours. I just told you how it could be done... in theory."

"Jesus, what have we done?" asks Phil.

"We're going to prison. We're all going to prison!" Sarah says in a loud voice.

- 1 **guide** - *idegenvezető, (itt) barlangi túravezető*
- 2 **to echo** - *visszhangzik*
- 3 **to keep up (with sb.)** - *tartja vkivel a lépést*
- 4 **to grab sth.** - *nyúl vmi után*
- 5 **to whisper** - *suttog*
- 6 **further** - *tovább*

Tracey's hand **slaps across the other woman's face**<sup>1</sup>. "Shut up!"

"What are you doing?" They hear Max shout from the tunnel.

Tracey moves to the mouth of the tunnel. "It's Sarah. She felt a bit ill. But she's okay now. We're coming."

"Pathetic!" they hear Max **roar**<sup>2</sup>.

Tracey moves back to the others, her eyes angry. "Now listen to me, you **stupid cowards**<sup>3</sup>. No one is going to prison. You just have to do what I say."

"Do what?" asks Phil, as **sweat**<sup>4</sup> starts to **pour down**<sup>5</sup> his pink face.

"Look where we are, Phil. Use your brain for once. These caves are dangerous. Anything could happen down here," Tracey whispers. "Anything."

Nobody says anything, but the silence of the cave is enough of an answer for Tracey. "I'll do it. I know none of you **have the backbone for it**<sup>6</sup>. All you have to do is say that it was an **accident**<sup>7</sup>. Do you understand?"

Phil and Larry slowly nod their heads, but Sarah is too scared to move.

"Sarah, we stole nearly a million pounds. If we don't do this, our lives are over. Do you understand?" Tracey repeats, her eyes carefully watching the other woman.

"I... I... yes," she finally says.

Tracey looks at the three managers again. Max is right. They really are pathetic worms.

Then she turns to the tunnel and begins to follow the man **she is about to**<sup>8</sup> kill.

1 to slap sb. across the face - megüti vki arcát, megpofoz

2 to roar - ordít

3 stupid coward (ugs.) - gyáva féreg

4 sweat - izzadtság

5 to pour down - lefolyik

6 to have the backbone for sth. - mer vmit csinálni

7 accident - baleset

8 to be about to do sth. - éppen most akar csinálni vmit, készen áll vmit tenni

As Tracey **wiggles through**<sup>1</sup> the rocks, with Max in front and the three managers behind her, she begins to think.

Yes, Max has to die. She has known this for some time now. For weeks she has thought about how to do it. A little poison in his evening whisky. A problem with the **brakes**<sup>2</sup> on his car. A **pillow**<sup>3</sup> on his face as he sleeps.

But now, all of her plans will have to change.

She can make it look like an accident, she is almost certain that she can. The caves are dangerous. The rocks are wet. Max could **slip**<sup>4</sup> and fall.

All she has to do is wait for the right place. Then she can move up behind him and...

Bye-bye Max.

No more keeping his bed warm at night.

She almost smiles, but then she hears the sound of the other three behind her.

Idiots. Max is right about that. Stupid, lazy... disloyal?

Can she **trust**<sup>5</sup> them to keep their mouths shut?

Tracey isn't sure. Maybe Phil and Larry... but Sarah?

Yes, it's a problem.

Maybe, she thinks, as she sees light at the end of the tunnel. Maybe it would be easier if all four of them had a little accident. Maybe Max falls. Then, when Phil and Larry and Sarah aren't looking...

All four of them? The idea is almost too terrible to **consider**<sup>6</sup>.

Almost.

"Come on!" Max shouts, and his face appears at the mouth of the tunnel.

Tracey climbs out into the **darkness**<sup>7</sup>.

1 to wriggle through sth. - vmin nagy erőfeszítéssel átmászik, átverekszik magát

2 brake - fék

3 pillow - (fej)párna

4 to slip - kicsúszik

5 to trust sb. - (meg)bízik vkiben

6 to consider sth. - figyelembe vesz vmit, fontolóra vesz vmit

7 darkness - sötétség

“Careful,” Max snaps. “**Big drop down there!**” And the CEO points down to a large **chasm**<sup>2</sup> in the rocks.

Tracey steps forward to look. It’s a large **pit**<sup>3</sup>, at the bottom of which hundreds of **stalagmites**<sup>4</sup> point up into the air like **ancient**<sup>5</sup> **swords and daggers**<sup>6</sup>.

When she sees it, a smile **spreads across**<sup>7</sup> her mouth.

“Yes, it’s quite **impressive**<sup>8</sup>,” says Max. Tracey stops smiling. “Yes. Yes, it is.”

Behind her, the idiots slowly move out of the tunnel.

“Be careful here,” says Tracey. “There’s a big drop. We don’t want any accidents.” And she moves the light on her helmet so that the three managers can see the deadly stalagmites in the pit below.

“Ha!” Max laughs. “Maybe it’s better if they all fall down there. Then I can find some employees who actually know how to do their jobs.”

“So where now, Max?” she asks, and she moves closer to the CEO.

“We go along the side of the pit, here,” he says, and points to a **thin ledge**<sup>9</sup>.

“It looks a bit wet. Are you sure that it’s safe?”

“Jesus, you’re as bad as these worms,” he says. “Look, it’s perfectly fine.” And the CEO steps onto the thin ledge at the side of the pit.

“I don’t know if I **dare**<sup>10</sup> walk across that, Max. Could you help me?”

And Tracey puts out her hand.

1 **big drop down there** - *lefelé nagyon meredek*

2 **chasm** - *rés*

3 **pit** - *gödör*

4 **stalagmite** - *állócseppkő*

5 **ancient** - *régi, ősi*

6 **swords and daggers** - *kardok és török*

7 **to spread across** - *szélesre húz*

8 **impressive** - *pompás, lenyűgöző*

9 **thin ledge** - *keskeny sziklaperem*

10 **to dare (to) do sth.** - *mer vmit tenni*

It's now or never, she knows.

Max looks at her angrily, but then he **reaches out his hand**<sup>1</sup>, and Tracey notices how close he is to the edge.

Their fingers touch. She has to be careful. She doesn't want to fall in there, too.

"Come on! Hurry up!" Max snaps.

Then, as he tries to pull her forwards, Tracey suddenly pulls his hand back, and the taller man **stumbles**<sup>2</sup> towards her. Quickly, with the force of her shoulder, she **rams**<sup>3</sup> him to the side, his feet slip on the wet rocks of the cave, and for a moment Max Webber, CEO of Webber Incorporated, **hangs in mid-air**<sup>4</sup> above the deadly pit, an expression of complete surprise on his face.

His hands reach out for something to hold, but Tracey only smiles.

Then the CEO falls back, and a second later there is a **horrendous**<sup>5</sup> **crunch**<sup>6</sup> at the bottom of the pit.

"Ha-ha!" Tracey laughs, amazed at how easy it was. "Bye-bye, Max!" she shouts into the darkness. "Bye-bye and thanks for all the money! I hope your new bed is nice and warm!"

"Is he...?" she hears Phil ask. "Are you sure he's...?"

Tracey laughs again. "Dead? Of course he is."

"But can you see him?" Larry asks.

Tracey moves a little closer to the edge of the pit and looks down at the horrible sight below.

"Oh yes, we don't have to worry about him anymore." "Excellent," says a voice in her ear, and she quickly turns around. Sarah is standing right in front of her, but there is something very different about her. Her usual nervous expression is not there. Instead, she **looks extremely confident**<sup>7</sup> and relaxed. "Sarah?" Sarah smiles. "Thanks for all your help, Tracey. You were a real

1 to reach out one's hand - kinyújtja a kezét

2 to stumble - elesik

3 to ram - nekimegy, lők

4 to hang in mid-air - félig a levegőben lóg

5 horrendous - szörnyű, rémisztő

6 crunch - csikorgás

7 to look extremely confident - túllontúl magabiztosnak tűnik

team-player, but we just don't need you anymore.” Then Tracey feels the older woman push her, and the next thing she knows she is falling backwards into the pit. She thinks she feels the stalagmites as they **explode**<sup>1</sup> through her back. She thinks that she hears the sound of **laughter**<sup>2</sup> from the ledge above. But the one thing she is sure of, as the life slowly leaves her body, is that she is once more lying next to Max Webber; and there seems to be a **satisfied smile**<sup>3</sup> on the old man's **cruel**<sup>4</sup> face.



➔ A **Daren Cilau** barlangok Walestől délre fekszenek. A barlangkutatók paradicsoma, összesen 26 kilométer hosszú, és ezzel az ország legnagyobb barlangjai közé tartozik. A barlangokat Vic Howells fedezte fel 1957-ben. A leglátványosabb részeihez tartozik a Time Machine - Nagy-Britannia legnagyobb átjáró-barlangja -, és a White Company - egy hófehér cseppkőképződmény.

A barlangrendszer olyan hosszú, hogy több mint 20 órát is eltölthetünk benne, míg felfedezzük a különböző utakat. Éppen ezért már vannak állandó táborok a barlangturisták számára.

A barlangokat csak képzett túravezetővel szabad látogatni. Előfordult már, hogy vakmerő barlangkutatók nem tartották be a szabályokat, és örökre nyomuk veszett a sziklás tengerben.

- 1 **to explode** - széttörik, (itt) belefúrja magát
- 2 **laughter** - nevetés
- 3 **satisfied smile** - elégedett mosoly
- 4 **cruel** - kegyetlen