

The Intercept

by Jon Ingold

1

They have me waiting here. I can hear the guards outside and the door is locked. I don't even have a pen, so I can't do any work. I've got a copy of the morning's intercept in my pocket but just staring at the jumble of letters won't do any good, it would only drive me mad.

I rattle my fingers on the field table.

- Wait (turn to [656](#))

2

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [169](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))

3

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1591](#))

4

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4139](#))
- No (turn to [2183](#))
- Lie (turn to [171](#))

5

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [230](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [3761](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [4411](#))

6

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [951](#))
- Find something (turn to [693](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [251](#))

7

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2250](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2008](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))

8

I leave the cup exactly where it is. "Why?" I ask coldly. "What's in it?"

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. "Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [1113](#))
- Disagree (turn to [890](#))
- Evade (turn to [4582](#))

9

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2541](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1589](#))
- Something else (turn to [416](#))

10

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [2131](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [2755](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1913](#))

11

“Tell Hooper I've confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he'll go straight to wherever he's hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

“It's an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I'm not so sure he'll be that stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [2773](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [513](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

12

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn't. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn't bear the thought of it. I love working here. I've never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn't want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [4986](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [3167](#))
- Lie (turn to [3167](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4986](#))

13

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4918](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [178](#))
- Lie (turn to [4918](#))
- Evade (turn to [2014](#))

14

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1609](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2445](#))

15

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. I've cracked him a little at least. He's angry. He waves an

impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3779](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1730](#))

16

My anger deflates like a collapsing equation, all arguments cancelling each other out. The world, of course, owes me nothing; and I owe it everything.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [2601](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1149](#))

17

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper’s worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [534](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [128](#))

18

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

19

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

20

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [4067](#))
- Find something (turn to [2693](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [2685](#))

21

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more

games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))
- Confess (turn to [3221](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [4423](#))

22

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

23

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [1186](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [4477](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [2737](#))

24

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I don’t like to talk of myself like this, but I carry on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [99](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4289](#))
- Lie (turn to [4289](#))
- Evade (turn to [3568](#))

25

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at

night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1816](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4973](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [4167](#))

26

“Well?”

“We'll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3110](#))
- No (turn to [1254](#))
- Lie (turn to [3110](#))

27

“You mean he didn't even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and

lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you."

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

28

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [920](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4073](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2139](#))

29

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

30

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3669](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1852](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

31

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1934](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2130](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))

32

"Oh, yes?"

"Yes. For what that's worth. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know."

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1374](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [1825](#))

33

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Hooper's been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact." Russell harrumphs. "Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it's to be expected. See you there?"

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

34

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

35

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

36

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [323](#))
- No (turn to [4786](#))
- Evade (turn to [2577](#))

37

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3929](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

38

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [514](#))
- No (turn to [2567](#))
- Lie (turn to [4229](#))

39

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2537](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3153](#))

40

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1421](#))

41

"Or be thrown into the river."

"Hmm." Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. "Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we'd never know for certain. We'd have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don't mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don't care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place."

- "Then let him think he's off the hook." (turn to [4703](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [3955](#))

42

"So he's an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe."

"No," Harris replies. "That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you."

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for

most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

43

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [3539](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [3719](#))

44

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [1964](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4909](#))

45

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4585](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1129](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

46

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [1017](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1785](#))

47

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [15](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4261](#))
- Lie (turn to [15](#))
- Evade (turn to [709](#))

48

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

49

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3846](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2941](#))

50

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4317](#))
- No (turn to [4273](#))
- Lie (turn to [4273](#))

51

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [4912](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

52

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [909](#))

53

"You can't do this!" I cry. "It's murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God's sake, man, you can't just throw me overboard, we're not barbarians...!"

"You leave me no choice," Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. "You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn't exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another." He gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3791](#))

54

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [354](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3326](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2895](#))

55

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [206](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [1537](#))

56

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [1642](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4536](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4086](#))

57

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [4094](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [1195](#))

58

“Please, Harris. You can’t understand the pressure they put me under. You can’t understand what it’s like, to be in love but be able to do nothing about it...”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [1510](#))
- No (turn to [2273](#))
- Lie (turn to [2273](#))
- Evade (turn to [2100](#))

59

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean

kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [3844](#))

60

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3792](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2553](#))

61

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [3748](#))

- Lie (turn to [3748](#))
- Evade (turn to [2549](#))

62

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [797](#))

63

"Awkward," I reply, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"There really isn't any time to be wasted," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [616](#))
- No (turn to [578](#))
- Evade (turn to [4667](#))
- Lie (turn to [578](#))

64

"So would you after the night I've had."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1244](#))

65

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4156](#))
- No (turn to [1910](#))
- Lie (turn to [2314](#))

66

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1939](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4027](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4358](#))
- Something else (turn to [3527](#))

67

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [4586](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4372](#))
- Wait (turn to [2086](#))

68

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

69

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

"What happened there?"

- Admit doing it (turn to [4498](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [2535](#))

70

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1370](#))
- Something else (turn to [1512](#))

71

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4139](#))
- No (turn to [2183](#))
- Lie (turn to [171](#))

72

I pat down my pockets but all I’m carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [4088](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [4732](#))

73

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s

how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))
- Confess (turn to [3012](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [2533](#))

74

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4737](#))

75

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4559](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [1752](#))
- Be honest (turn to [1752](#))
- Lie (turn to [4559](#))

76

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [611](#))
- No (turn to [675](#))
- Lie (turn to [675](#))

77

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [3674](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [3](#))
- Wait (turn to [4558](#))

78

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4719](#))
- Something else (turn to [3942](#))

79

Morning comes with the call of a rooster from the yard of the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up off the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

It's not long after that Harris enters the hut. He closes the door behind him, careful as

ever, then takes a chair across from me.

“You smell like a dog,” he remarks.

- Be optimistic (turn to [3518](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1561](#))

80

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1610](#))

81

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3821](#))

82

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4517](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

83

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [825](#))

84

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [35](#))

- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [35](#))
- Evade (turn to [4258](#))

85

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [3455](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [509](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

86

"You're the one applying pressure here," I answer smartly. "I'm just waiting until you tell me what is really going on."

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [82](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2953](#))
- Lie (turn to [2096](#))

87

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [4135](#))

- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

88

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4579](#))
- No (turn to [2361](#))
- Lie (turn to [2361](#))

89

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4708](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2919](#))
- Evade (turn to [3402](#))

90

“I did.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [1417](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [4458](#))

91

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1139](#))
- No (turn to [2452](#))

92

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- Something else (turn to [1885](#))

93

- The jacket (turn to [450](#))

94

“For God’s sake,” I answer, voice quivering. “I’m no traitor.”

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1395](#))
- Lie (turn to [1395](#))
- Evade (turn to [621](#))

95

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2401](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2087](#))

96

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [4693](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [3570](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [1265](#))

97

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here,

even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2178](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [2997](#))

98

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [717](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [3180](#))

99

“Yes.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4837](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2628](#))

100

- The jacket (turn to [3147](#))

101

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [1464](#))
- No (turn to [555](#))
- Evade (turn to [895](#))

102

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [2877](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3731](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2272](#))

103

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [657](#))

104

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2799](#))

105

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- Something else (turn to [100](#))

106

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [917](#))

107

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [1614](#))
- Leave it (turn to [3389](#))

108

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- Something else (turn to [2803](#))

109

"No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

110

“I know where it is.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [3617](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1797](#))

111

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [713](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

112

“Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard...”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

113

I don’t take it. I’m not having my time wasted by signs and signals. I’ve been waiting here for long enough already, after being rudely pulled from my bunk. I touch a fingertip down on the table and look him in the eye.

“What’s going on, Harris?”

“Quite a difficult situation, this,” he begins, cautiously. I’ve seen him adopting this stiff tone of voice before, but only when talking to brass. “I’m sure you agree.”

- Agree (turn to [1995](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1300](#))
- Lie (turn to [1300](#))
- Evade (turn to [4213](#))

114

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1547](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [80](#))

115

“Messy, without one missing cache!” I cry, laughing spitefully. It isn’t the best clue, hardly worthy of the Times, but it will have to do.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [1773](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4233](#))
- Evade (turn to [2547](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4031](#))

116

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [2358](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4493](#))

117

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [517](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

118

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1210](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [1210](#))

119

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1441](#))
- No (turn to [2203](#))
- Lie (turn to [2203](#))

120

My anger deflates like a collapsing equation, all arguments cancelling each other out. The world, of course, owes me nothing; and I owe it everything.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [4440](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [915](#))

121

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1565](#))

122

“Really, Commander,” I reply. “It rather sounds like you want to spank me.”

“For God’s sake,” he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [297](#))

123

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1670](#))
- No (turn to [3830](#))
- Lie (turn to [1225](#))

124

From inspiration - or desperation, I am not certain - a simple approach occurs to me. I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper’s tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the

floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2861](#))

125

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- Something else (turn to [306](#))

126

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4757](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [4757](#))

127

“It doesn’t matter. Just remember what I said. I’ve beaten you, Hooper. Remember that.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4974](#))

128

“I certainly don’t. But still, I’m surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he’ll face the rope, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he did, and you’re now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [4355](#))
- Don't check (turn to [3224](#))

129

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be

getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3275](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2135](#))

130

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4019](#))
- The jacket (turn to [450](#))

131

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [215](#))

132

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to

the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing.
“Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1737](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3270](#))
- Lie (turn to [2696](#))
- Evade (turn to [1732](#))

133

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3446](#))
- No (turn to [3789](#))
- Lie (turn to [3789](#))

134

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3821](#))

135

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [5029](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [4810](#))

136

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [66](#))
- The jacket (turn to [131](#))

137

- The jacket (turn to [4677](#))

138

“It will. Hooper's running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we've had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let's hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

139

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4981](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2526](#))

140

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [778](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))

141

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3979](#))
- Try the window (turn to [655](#))

142

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3615](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4562](#))

143

I lift the cup to my lips and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. "Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [3971](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1742](#))
- Evade (turn to [1742](#))

144

"I'd be happy to help," I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. "I'm

sure there's something I could do."

"Like what, exactly?"

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [3068](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [4905](#))

145

"I'll talk to him."

"What?"

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [4494](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1667](#))

146

- The jacket (turn to [3354](#))

147

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4697](#))

148

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [264](#))
- Be cold (turn to [445](#))

149

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [2224](#))
- Accept it (turn to [4653](#))
- Evade it (turn to [1255](#))

150

"No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me." I take a deep breath. "It was Hooper."

"Hooper!" Harris exclaims, in surprise.

"It's the truth, Harris. If I'm going to jail, then so be it, but I won't hang at Traitor's Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I

should have realised, of course. These things don't happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine."

"Which you did." Harris leans forward. "And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?"

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [234](#))
- Lie (turn to [234](#))
- Evade (turn to [2500](#))

151

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4416](#))

152

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1198](#))
- The jacket (turn to [856](#))

153

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2645](#))
- Try the door (turn to [666](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))

154

“Then you know I'm right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?”

“We don't know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [2419](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

155

“That's exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I've seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself -

clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2832](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3916](#))
- Lie (turn to [4145](#))

156

"Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you're behaving like a swine."

"You imbecile," Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. "You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They'll destroy everything, you do understand that, don't you? You're not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don't see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her."

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [431](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [4999](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [3171](#))

157

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4291](#))

158

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4027](#))
- Something else (turn to [3527](#))

159

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [2295](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2526](#))

160

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1436](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))

- Wait (turn to [904](#))

161

- The jacket (turn to [3281](#))

162

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [4180](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [1357](#))

163

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3046](#))
- No (turn to [3127](#))

164

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2813](#))

165

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found my letters. Haven’t you? In fact, if you haven’t, don’t tell me.”

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [1486](#))
- Disagree (turn to [521](#))
- Lie (turn to [49](#))

166

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component

inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1816](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [4408](#))

167

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

168

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- Something else (turn to [2153](#))

169

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

170

I give no reaction. She sighs to herself, as if this kind of behaviour is normal, and trots away inside the House to begin her duties.

I turn the corner of Hut 3 and walk down the short gravel path to Hut 2. It was a good spot to choose - Hut 2 is where the electricians work, and they're generally focussed on what they're doing. They don't often come outside to smoke a cigarette so it's easy to slip past the doorway unnoticed.

- Check inside (turn to [3375](#))
- Go around the back (turn to [2025](#))

171

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1613](#))
- No (turn to [3714](#))
- Lie (turn to [3714](#))

172

"I saw Hooper take it."

"I see." He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the "brains" he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Tell the truth (turn to [3322](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [4333](#))

173

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2234](#))
- Something else (turn to [454](#))

174

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [857](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4320](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [3470](#))

175

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3736](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1663](#))

176

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3078](#))

177

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [70](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1370](#))
- Something else (turn to [1512](#))

178

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [2318](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [537](#))
- Lie (turn to [3656](#))

- Evade (turn to [4276](#))

179

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1005](#))
- Something else (turn to [4508](#))

180

“No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

181

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1677](#))

- The jacket (turn to [4755](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4574](#))

182

“Heard what?”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2172](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

183

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2711](#))

184

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1842](#))
- Lie (turn to [1842](#))
- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

185

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [528](#))

186

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean

kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

187

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [429](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1029](#))
- Wait (turn to [2915](#))

188

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3808](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1744](#))

189

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4383](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2986](#))
- Evade (turn to [363](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4818](#))

190

- The jacket (turn to [1065](#))

191

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [4715](#))
- Accept it (turn to [4047](#))
- Evade it (turn to [2947](#))

192

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [2381](#))
- Lie (turn to [2381](#))
- Evade (turn to [3075](#))

193

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather -

sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'll never know if I hadn't have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [1013](#))
- Lie (turn to [3424](#))
- Evade (turn to [2691](#))

194

"For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [1085](#))
- No (turn to [2202](#))
- Lie (turn to [1085](#))

195

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1692](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [240](#))

196

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3446](#))
- No (turn to [3789](#))
- Lie (turn to [3789](#))

197

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3745](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1965](#))

198

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [258](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [4869](#))

199

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2697](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2854](#))
- Lie (turn to [1306](#))

200

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [698](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2721](#))
- Something else (turn to [2668](#))

201

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [3353](#))
- Be cold (turn to [2094](#))

202

"I always meant to tell you," I tell him. "I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them."

Harris looks at me with contempt. "You wretched little man. Don't think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You're going to pay for what you've done, and you're going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime." If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1350](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

203

- The jacket (turn to [4115](#))

204

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [4539](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [1511](#))

205

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [1119](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [423](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [2501](#))

206

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [1338](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

207

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [4693](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [4729](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [1265](#))

208

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [1642](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4536](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4086](#))

209

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- Calm him (turn to [1061](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [1802](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [3266](#))

210

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4541](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [218](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

211

“I’m sure you’ve handled worse,” I reply casually, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“There really isn’t any time to be wasted,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [723](#))
- No (turn to [2742](#))
- Evade (turn to [1460](#))

- Lie (turn to [2742](#))

212

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3850](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1833](#))

213

I lean back. "It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3561](#))

214

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [5032](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

215

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [1443](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [554](#))

216

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1397](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- The pillow (turn to [397](#))
- Something else (turn to [2345](#))

217

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1240](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2538](#))

218

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the

inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [151](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [4275](#))

219

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1871](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

220

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4996](#))

221

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn't make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [4172](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [700](#))

222

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4404](#))

223

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4297](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2705](#))
- Something else (turn to [380](#))

224

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [598](#))
- No (turn to [2675](#))
- Lie (turn to [516](#))

225

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [577](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [3439](#))
- Lie (turn to [3439](#))

226

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [4971](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [1328](#))

227

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [5021](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

228

- The jacket (turn to [3672](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2929](#))

229

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3065](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- Something else (turn to [4284](#))

230

"When you have eliminated the impossible..." I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1599](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [1847](#))

231

"I broke it," I reply. There doesn't seem any use in trying to lie. "I thought I could escape.

But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [495](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1145](#))

232

"I saw Hooper take it."

"I see." He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the "brains" he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Persist with this (turn to [1849](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2054](#))

233

"Really, Commander," I reply. "It rather sounds like you want to spank me."

"For God's sake," he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [821](#))

234

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1208](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [506](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

235

“Queen to rook two, checkmate!” I call, then laugh viciously, as if I am damning him straight to hell.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4989](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1866](#))
- Evade (turn to [2559](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4319](#))

236

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [129](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [546](#))

237

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [2680](#))
- Evade (turn to [2983](#))

238

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1852](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3397](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2512](#))

239

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [2117](#))

240

"Oh, yes?"

"Yes. For what that's worth. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know."

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [969](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [2341](#))

241

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4074](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- Something else (turn to [4463](#))

242

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

243

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1048](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4514](#))

244

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3654](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2467](#))

245

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [3697](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [3195](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [226](#))

246

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [1378](#))

247

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [1128](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1291](#))
- Wait (turn to [803](#))

248

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3966](#))

249

"Try me. Just me and him."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a

ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4364](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2557](#))

250

"That's not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3377](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4400](#))

251

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1383](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [693](#))

252

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3331](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4792](#))

253

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4749](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1024](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

254

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4345](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4287](#))

255

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1774](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1329](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

256

I take the cup, and raise it to my lips, blowing away the steam. It is too hot to drink. He picks his own up and just holds it.

“Quite a difficult situation, this,” he begins, cautiously. I’ve seen him adopting this stiff tone of voice before, but only when talking to brass. “I’m sure you agree.”

- Agree (turn to [3537](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4324](#))
- Lie (turn to [4324](#))
- Evade (turn to [1322](#))

257

I don’t take it. I’m not having my time wasted by signs and signals. I’ve been waiting here for long enough already, after being rudely pulled from my bunk. I touch a fingertip down on the table and look him in the eye.

“What’s going on, Harris?”

“Quite a difficult situation, this,” he begins, cautiously. I’ve seen him adopting this stiff tone of voice before, but only when talking to brass. “I’m sure you agree.”

- Agree (turn to [63](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1726](#))
- Lie (turn to [1726](#))
- Evade (turn to [211](#))

258

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [531](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

259

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

260

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- Something else (turn to [3010](#))

261

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3924](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3924](#))

262

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2848](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [2848](#))

263

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

264

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4302](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1184](#))

265

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1131](#))

266

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2446](#))

267

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1388](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1384](#))

268

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4601](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- Something else (turn to [2803](#))

269

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1974](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [2613](#))

270

"I broke it," I reply. There doesn't seem any use in trying to lie. "I thought I could escape. But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [2450](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [5034](#))

271

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little

we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [360](#))
- No (turn to [3714](#))
- Lie (turn to [3714](#))

272

“I have, rather.” I put my hands into my pockets. “I seem to have done exactly that.”

“I’m afraid my little story about Hooper confessing wasn’t true. I wanted to see if you’d go to retrieve the part.” Harris gestures me to start walking. “You were close, Manning, I’ll give you that. I wanted to believe you. But I’m glad I didn’t.”

He leads me across the yard. Back towards Hut 5 to be decoded, and taken to pieces, once again.

The End

273

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [4753](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2192](#))
- Lie (turn to [2192](#))

274

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [2635](#))
- Shrug (turn to [298](#))

275

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2242](#))
- No (turn to [4112](#))
- Lie (turn to [4112](#))

276

"It will. Hooper's running scared," I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any

chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

277

“Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [2805](#))
- Accept it (turn to [1796](#))
- Evade it (turn to [4819](#))

278

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [247](#))

279

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [5004](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1824](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [115](#))

280

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4401](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4735](#))
- Evade (turn to [4255](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2326](#))

281

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1236](#))
- The jacket (turn to [789](#))

282

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1689](#))
- No (turn to [3290](#))
- Lie (turn to [3290](#))

283

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1668](#))

- Something else (turn to [942](#))

284

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3953](#))
- No (turn to [3111](#))
- Lie (turn to [3111](#))

285

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1810](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2350](#))

286

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any

chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

287

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [442](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4171](#))

288

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3117](#))
- Leave it (turn to [3389](#))

289

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4953](#))
- Something else (turn to [4643](#))

290

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1030](#))

291

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Hooper's been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact." Russell harrumphs. "Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it's to be expected. See you there?"

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save

my reputation.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

292

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

293

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [2870](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

294

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4958](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3120](#))

295

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [2160](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [60](#))

296

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [596](#))
- No (turn to [4186](#))

297

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I

support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [834](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [861](#))

298

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2004](#))

299

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))
- Confess (turn to [1513](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [1435](#))

300

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [4507](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))

301

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [4607](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))

302

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [3410](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3554](#))

303

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3205](#))
- No (turn to [4280](#))
- Lie (turn to [4280](#))

304

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1030](#))

305

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“Did you?” The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn’t he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [888](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1736](#))

306

- The jacket (turn to [439](#))
- The bucket (turn to [840](#))

307

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [76](#))
- No (turn to [1650](#))
- Lie (turn to [3637](#))

308

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [3314](#))
- Accept it (turn to [2347](#))
- Evade it (turn to [2730](#))

309

“I saw him take it,” I reply, stubbornly. “Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, ‘What’s that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn’t have?’ He didn’t reply.”

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [4971](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [1328](#))

310

I pause to glance around, and catch a glimpse of movement. Someone ducking around the corner of the hut. Or a canvas sheet flapping in the light breeze. Impossible to be sure.

- Check the breeze-block (turn to [4002](#))
- Check around the side of the hut (turn to [3743](#))

311

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4398](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

312

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [819](#))
- No (turn to [2325](#))
- Evade (turn to [1506](#))
- That's not it (turn to [1438](#))

313

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3782](#))

314

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2836](#))
- No (turn to [911](#))
- Lie (turn to [911](#))

315

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2271](#))
- Disagree (turn to [769](#))
- Lie (turn to [1549](#))

316

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-

mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2542](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [5027](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [308](#))

317

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [36](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [2030](#))
- Evade (turn to [1469](#))

318

“Heard what?”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))

- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

319

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I’m not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you’re of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There’s nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you’ve done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It’s your choice.”

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Confess (turn to [4635](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))

320

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1980](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4994](#))
- Something else (turn to [368](#))

321

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [3453](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1489](#))

- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [4377](#))

322

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2836](#))
- No (turn to [911](#))
- Lie (turn to [911](#))

323

"I wouldn't put it past him. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [1661](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [625](#))
- Lie (turn to [625](#))

324

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3710](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3866](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1248](#))

325

Enough of this. There isn’t any time to lose. Right now they’ll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that’s it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that’s the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my shoe and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [1775](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [3030](#))

326

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1628](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3281](#))
- The bucket (turn to [5020](#))

327

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It’s

not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [58](#))
- Lie (turn to [1542](#))
- Evade (turn to [4403](#))

328

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [859](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [4122](#))

329

"I suppose I do rather." I laugh, but Harris does not.

"This damn business gets worse and worse," he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. "Hooper's confessed, you know."

- Be eager (turn to [2745](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1976](#))

330

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4597](#))
- Something else (turn to [3142](#))

331

- The jacket (turn to [1533](#))

332

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2977](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))

333

"Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly." I fold my arms. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [1814](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

334

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Confess (turn to [4635](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))

335

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [184](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2518](#))
- Lie (turn to [2518](#))

336

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [140](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3203](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))

337

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [3849](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4896](#))
- Evade (turn to [3695](#))

338

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?”

- Yes (turn to [2505](#))
- No (turn to [3062](#))
- Evade (turn to [3752](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3676](#))

339

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [1121](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [3701](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [4668](#))

340

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2417](#))
- Something else (turn to [203](#))

341

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [361](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [3099](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1713](#))

342

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2073](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [816](#))

343

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4845](#))
- Wait (turn to [1557](#))

344

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [4483](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [4275](#))

345

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1685](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [463](#))

346

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper’s tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2976](#))

347

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3222](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [1705](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [279](#))

348

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve

passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4945](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4728](#))

349

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [488](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [414](#))

350

I wave cheerily back and she giggles, almost drops her bicycle, then dashes away inside the House. Judging by the clock on the front gable, she's running a little late this morning.

I turn the corner of Hut 3 and walk down the short gravel path to Hut 2. It was a good spot to choose - Hut 2 is where the electricians work, and they're generally focussed on what they're doing. They don't often come outside to smoke a cigarette so it's easy to slip past the doorway unnoticed.

- Check inside (turn to [3375](#))
- Go around the back (turn to [2025](#))

351

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2798](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3957](#))

352

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [1054](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

353

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

354

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [197](#))

355

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can

trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [135](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

356

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4895](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1887](#))

357

I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper's tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2236](#))

358

“It doesn't matter. Just remember what I said. I've beaten you, Hooper. Remember that.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [77](#))

359

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3813](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [1602](#))

360

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2377](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [2377](#))

361

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [1924](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [1457](#))

362

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [1174](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [2207](#))

363

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

364

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3505](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [232](#))

365

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [2616](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1488](#))
- Evade (turn to [3487](#))

366

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3713](#))
- Something else (turn to [1385](#))

367

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2984](#))

368

- The jacket (turn to [2621](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4881](#))

369

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4821](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

370

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [4807](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3427](#))

371

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [663](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1391](#))

372

“You mean he didn't even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

373

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the

compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [592](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1619](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))

374

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [2196](#))
- Find something (turn to [3216](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [1662](#))

375

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [2602](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [4092](#))

376

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3608](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [3608](#))

377

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4764](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4262](#))

378

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2782](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3354](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3444](#))

379

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1692](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [240](#))

380

- The jacket (turn to [2565](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4127](#))

381

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [54](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3129](#))
- Evade (turn to [4424](#))

382

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [748](#))
- Lie (turn to [748](#))
- Evade (turn to [2549](#))

383

“I’ve thought so before.” Certainly in the matter of getting blackmailed.

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3710](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3866](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1248](#))

384

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

385

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [1584](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2126](#))
- Evade (turn to [4452](#))

386

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [1944](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [2030](#))
- Evade (turn to [3119](#))

387

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I

have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1807](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [2536](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [3358](#))

388

"I saw Hooper take it."

"Did you?" The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Tell the truth (turn to [2508](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [4565](#))

389

"Or be thrown into the river."

"Hmm." Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. "Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we'd never know for certain. We'd have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don't mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don't care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place."

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3280](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

390

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3654](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2467](#))

391

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3433](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [28](#))

392

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper’s tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [337](#))

393

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [355](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

394

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [71](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

395

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [3518](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1561](#))

396

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [3944](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

397

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3050](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- Something else (turn to [2345](#))

398

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3281](#))

399

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3795](#))

400

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I don't want to go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1369](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4671](#))

401

"That's not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2550](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1958](#))

402

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- Something else (turn to [4290](#))

403

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3796](#))

404

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [5021](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

405

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1665](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

406

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I don’t like to talk of myself like this, but I carry on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you

know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [84](#))
- Lie (turn to [84](#))
- Evade (turn to [1371](#))

407

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1441](#))
- No (turn to [2203](#))
- Lie (turn to [2203](#))

408

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn't do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'll never know if I hadn't have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got

away. But, how far?

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [58](#))
- Lie (turn to [1542](#))
- Evade (turn to [4403](#))

409

"Very well. I see there's no point in covering up. You know everything anyway."

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [4571](#))
- No (turn to [3587](#))
- Lie (turn to [2771](#))

410

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [4083](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))

411

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4155](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3813](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

412

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [937](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [3135](#))

413

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

414

It depends, perhaps, on what his name his worth. If it were to prove valuable, well; perhaps I can concoct a few more such lovers with which to ease my later days.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. "I still have the intercept in my pocket," I remark.

“Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“I’ll give you a stone to chisel notches in the wall. And that’s all the calculations you’ll be doing. And as you sit there, pissing into a bucket and growing a beard down to your toes, you have a think about how a *smart* man would conduct his illicit affairs. With a bit of due decorum you could have learnt off any squaddie. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

415

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [3412](#))
- Lie (turn to [3412](#))
- Evade (turn to [382](#))

416

- The jacket (turn to [3553](#))

417

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4497](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4996](#))

418

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1855](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

419

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [4022](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1029](#))

- Wait (turn to [2915](#))

420

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- Something else (turn to [2156](#))

421

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [1372](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [1950](#))

422

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3650](#))
- Something else (turn to [2251](#))

423

"I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander," I reply with a sneer. "They don't train you to think in the Armed Forces."

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3972](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1973](#))

424

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [1325](#))

425

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more

like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [3705](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1204](#))
- Evade (turn to [2212](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4382](#))

426

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

427

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [633](#))
- Evade (turn to [1550](#))

428

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [4853](#))
- Give up (turn to [3758](#))

429

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4239](#))

430

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1670](#))
- No (turn to [3830](#))
- Lie (turn to [1225](#))

431

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1648](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2467](#))

432

“You treated me like vermin. Like something abhorrent.”

“You are something abhorrent.”

“I wasn’t. Not when I came here. And I won’t be, once you’re gone.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4974](#))

433

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- Something else (turn to [1885](#))

434

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

435

"I always meant to tell you," I tell him. "I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them."

Harris looks at me with contempt. "You wretched little man. Don't think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You're going to pay for what you've done, and you're going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime." If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now.

Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3191](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4171](#))

436

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [3418](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4412](#))
- Wait (turn to [2598](#))

437

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3137](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3215](#))

438

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [1393](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [406](#))
- Evade (turn to [3152](#))

439

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [917](#))

440

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2969](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3407](#))

441

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1848](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3260](#))
- Lie (turn to [435](#))

442

"All right. I'll tell you what happened." And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [514](#))
- No (turn to [2567](#))
- Lie (turn to [4229](#))

443

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [2877](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [3687](#))

444

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3092](#))
- Something else (turn to [1652](#))

445

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if

you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4302](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1184](#))

446

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2798](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3957](#))

447

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))
- Confess (turn to [3012](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [2533](#))

448

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2643](#))
- No (turn to [4254](#))
- Lie (turn to [2763](#))

449

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn’t know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3289](#))
- No (turn to [3988](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4461](#))

450

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3202](#))

451

I lean back. "It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2004](#))

452

"I'm looking forward to having a bath."

"Well, you should enjoy it. We found the missing component. Or rather, Hooper found it for us. He snuck out of his tent first thing in the morning and retrieved it from on top. Of all the damnest places - you would never have known it was there. He acted all surprised

about it when we jumped him, of course, as you might expect - but it was good enough for me.”

- Be glad (turn to [2966](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4313](#))

453

- The jacket (turn to [1015](#))

454

- The jacket (turn to [1205](#))

455

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [1998](#))
- Lie (turn to [1998](#))
- Evade (turn to [2310](#))

456

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [5000](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [4595](#))

457

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

458

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- Something else (turn to [3448](#))

459

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that's worth. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with

ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2348](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [2712](#))

460

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [4133](#))
- Accept it (turn to [3532](#))
- Evade it (turn to [2249](#))

461

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1838](#))
- Something else (turn to [3967](#))

462

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

463

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Confess (turn to [2863](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))

464

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3210](#))

465

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

466

"Right now, I think you take that role, Harris," I reply coolly.

"Very droll," he replies. "Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent."

- Be interested (turn to [372](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [982](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4060](#))

467

Of course not. I am alone; that is what they wanted me to be, because of who and what I love. So I have no nation, no country.

"I'm afraid we have only one option, Manning," Harris says. "Please, man. Tell us where the component is."

- Tell them (turn to [2601](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1149](#))

468

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [652](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [462](#))
- Evade (turn to [363](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4818](#))

469

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [889](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- Something else (turn to [2641](#))

470

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3426](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

471

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [1629](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1653](#))
- Evade (turn to [1653](#))

472

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1961](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [4390](#))

473

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [688](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1833](#))

474

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3871](#))
- No (turn to [3755](#))

475

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [392](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [2561](#))

476

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2875](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- Something else (turn to [100](#))

477

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2113](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- Something else (turn to [3315](#))

478

“Heard what?”

“Hooper's been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe

component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [897](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

479

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [3488](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3265](#))

480

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with

shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4291](#))

481

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2836](#))
- No (turn to [629](#))
- Lie (turn to [629](#))

482

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [249](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [842](#))

483

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1471](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [839](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

484

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- Something else (turn to [2817](#))

485

“Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself.”

“That's how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4310](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [4310](#))

486

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1172](#))

487

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2067](#))
- Lie (turn to [2067](#))
- Evade (turn to [4716](#))

488

But of course I will. Perhaps I can persuade them to put him in my cell.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“I’ll give you a stone to chisel notches in the wall. And that’s all the calculations you’ll be doing. And as you sit there, pissing into a bucket and growing a beard down to your toes, you have a think about how a *smart* man would conduct his illicit affairs. With a bit of due decorum you could have learnt off any squaddie. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

489

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [324](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2369](#))
- Evade (turn to [1984](#))

490

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- Something else (turn to [228](#))

491

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2671](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))

- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

492

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [3384](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3622](#))

493

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [168](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- Something else (turn to [2153](#))

494

"I don't have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It's long gone, I'm afraid."

"You fool, Manning," Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. "You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It's men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man's responsibility for the world. You're happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys."

- Answer back (turn to [3163](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3706](#))

495

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4335](#))

496

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [26](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2557](#))

497

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his

head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4951](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3715](#))

498

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [143](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [2246](#))

499

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [485](#))
- No (turn to [1023](#))
- Lie (turn to [1023](#))

500

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1681](#))

501

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2828](#))
- Something else (turn to [660](#))

502

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2814](#))

503

“Messy, without one missing cache!” I cry, laughing spitefully. It isn’t the best clue, hardly worthy of the Times, but it will have to do.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3864](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3231](#))
- Evade (turn to [4353](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2342](#))

504

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [4419](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [23](#))

505

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4751](#))
- No (turn to [1183](#))
- Lie (turn to [3526](#))

506

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3220](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

507

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [4464](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

508

"No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me." I take a deep breath. "It was Hooper."

"Now look here," Harris interrupts. "Don't start that again."

"It's the truth, Harris. If I'm going to jail, then so be it, but I won't hang at Traitor's Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don't happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine."

"Which you did." Harris leans forward. "And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?"

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [1886](#))
- Lie (turn to [1886](#))
- Evade (turn to [2349](#))

509

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [1788](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

510

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3630](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4487](#))

511

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [857](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [1586](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [460](#))

512

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1389](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [804](#))

513

“You’re right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2228](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

514

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1689](#))
- No (turn to [675](#))
- Lie (turn to [675](#))

515

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1373](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4832](#))

516

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2767](#))
- No (turn to [1010](#))
- Lie (turn to [1010](#))

517

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

518

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [1470](#))

519

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [2906](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3785](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2777](#))

520

"When you have eliminated the impossible..." I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [3294](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [2625](#))

521

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3846](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2941](#))

522

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [57](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

523

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- Something else (turn to [93](#))

524

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1579](#))
- The jacket (turn to [825](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1401](#))

525

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3185](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

526

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [218](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [2110](#))

- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3441](#))

527

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [684](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [3856](#))

528

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [2973](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [2012](#))
- Wait (turn to [4334](#))

529

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2779](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2434](#))

530

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [3370](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [2435](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4744](#))

531

“Then let him think he’s off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you’ll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that’s the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me

forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [4036](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [2835](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [4603](#))

532

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [985](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1882](#))
- Something else (turn to [2690](#))

533

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1066](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3482](#))

534

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to

understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded.
Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [664](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4069](#))

535

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [332](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2393](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))

536

“Very well. I see there's no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1302](#))
- No (turn to [1963](#))
- Lie (turn to [2070](#))

537

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3420](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

538

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2061](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2363](#))

539

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [2280](#))

- Deny it (turn to [4064](#))

540

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2528](#))
- No (turn to [892](#))
- Lie (turn to [892](#))

541

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [5016](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

542

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3367](#))

543

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- Something else (turn to [4885](#))

544

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1898](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1063](#))
- Lie (turn to [1746](#))

545

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3239](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4070](#))

546

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1948](#))
- Try the door (turn to [160](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))

547

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3446](#))
- No (turn to [617](#))
- Lie (turn to [617](#))

548

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I've done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?”

- Yes (turn to [199](#))
- No (turn to [2287](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3282](#))

549

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

550

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

551

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [688](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1833](#))

552

Morning comes. I’m woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [1304](#))
- Be cold (turn to [4637](#))

553

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4513](#))

554

In case I’m being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It’s a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that’s difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [2462](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2010](#))

555

“No, I suppose not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [5015](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1239](#))
- Lie (turn to [1239](#))

556

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- Something else (turn to [203](#))

557

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2528](#))
- No (turn to [3018](#))
- Lie (turn to [3018](#))

558

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3563](#))

559

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

560

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2631](#))
- Something else (turn to [4386](#))

561

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [899](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [3428](#))

562

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4219](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3729](#))
- Something else (turn to [4290](#))

563

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

564

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- Something else (turn to [4386](#))

565

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

566

It's useless. There's nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [807](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1229](#))
- Wait (turn to [1646](#))

567

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [3256](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1508](#))
- Lie (turn to [1508](#))

568

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

569

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2879](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1332](#))
- Lie (turn to [2706](#))

570

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [488](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

571

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1136](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [527](#))

572

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1344](#))

573

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1641](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2990](#))
- Something else (turn to [1623](#))

574

But of course I will. Perhaps I can persuade them to put him in my cell.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. "I still have the intercept in my pocket," I remark. "Wherever we're going, could I have a pencil?"

He looks me in the eye.

"Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we're old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I'll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists." He drags me up to my feet. "You think you have to re-invent everything."

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can't help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

575

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all."

So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [377](#))

576

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1832](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

577

"Quite right," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [876](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2303](#))
- Lie (turn to [2303](#))
- Evade (turn to [4182](#))

578

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2191](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1165](#))
- Lie (turn to [1165](#))
- Evade (turn to [2317](#))

579

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4467](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1116](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4467](#))
- Lie (turn to [1116](#))

580

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [950](#))

581

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [898](#))
- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- Something else (turn to [994](#))

582

From inspiration - or desperation, I am not certain - a simple approach occurs to me. I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper’s tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the

floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [772](#))

583

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- Something else (turn to [1756](#))

584

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my fist and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [811](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1151](#))

585

"I wouldn't put it past him. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [1115](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [729](#))
- Lie (turn to [729](#))

586

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2430](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4005](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1830](#))

587

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4868](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1267](#))
- Something else (turn to [161](#))

588

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1668](#))
- Something else (turn to [942](#))

589

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I

notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4189](#))
- Try the door (turn to [926](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))

590

I say nothing. It's true, isn't it? I can't deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can't deny that I don't think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved? It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

"God have mercy on your soul," Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear no-one else will." Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [815](#))

591

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3321](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))

592

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3522](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))

593

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [758](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3094](#))

594

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3684](#))
- No (turn to [3145](#))
- Evade (turn to [965](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2114](#))

595

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1373](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4832](#))

596

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1237](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [1237](#))

597

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [3457](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [2523](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [1631](#))

598

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2767](#))
- No (turn to [1010](#))
- Lie (turn to [1010](#))

599

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1214](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

600

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-

mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2890](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [1992](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1672](#))

601

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [4711](#))
- Be cold (turn to [1967](#))

602

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3400](#))
- Something else (turn to [4885](#))

603

- The jacket (turn to [4694](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4756](#))

604

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [1700](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1577](#))

605

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1872](#))
- No (turn to [1545](#))
- Lie (turn to [1343](#))

606

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2610](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

607

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [4149](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2864](#))

608

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2382](#))
- The blanket (turn to [183](#))
- The pillow (turn to [848](#))
- Something else (turn to [3445](#))

609

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2571](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

610

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- Something else (turn to [4284](#))

611

“Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself.”

“That's how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [508](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [508](#))

612

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside,

of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1330](#))

613

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [570](#))

614

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [922](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

615

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1835](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2866](#))
- Something else (turn to [2477](#))

616

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2191](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1165](#))
- Lie (turn to [1165](#))
- Evade (turn to [2317](#))

617

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3241](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3241](#))

618

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- Something else (turn to [146](#))

619

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3827](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3288](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [559](#))

620

“I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

621

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1909](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [1909](#))
- Evade (turn to [464](#))

622

No. What would be the use? He will be long gone, and the name he told me is no doubt hokum. No: I was alone before in guilt, and I am thus alone again.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“I’ll give you a stone to chisel notches in the wall. And that’s all the calculations you’ll be doing. And as you sit there, pissing into a bucket and growing a beard down to your toes, you have a think about how a *smart* man would conduct his illicit affairs. With a bit of

due decorum you could have learnt off any squaddie. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

623

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3803](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

624

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

625

“For God’s sake,” I answer, voice quivering. “I’m no traitor.”

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4405](#))
- Lie (turn to [4405](#))
- Evade (turn to [2893](#))

626

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [1049](#))
- Lie (turn to [1049](#))
- Evade (turn to [494](#))

627

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and

pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4029](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [2031](#))

628

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. Fighting as hard as I can, it does no good. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [2170](#))
- No (turn to [2827](#))
- Lie (turn to [4075](#))

629

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I

was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2089](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [2089](#))

630

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4529](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- Something else (turn to [639](#))

631

Plenty of time for that later. If there is nothing there, then Hooper discovered the component after all and Harris' men will have swooped on him, and the story about his confession is just a ruse to test me out. And if the component is still there - well. It will be just as valuable to my young man in the village in a week's time, and his deadline of the 31st is not quite upon us.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

And everything will proceed as before. The component will mean nothing to the Germans - this is the one fact I could never have explained to a man like Harris despite the fact that

the principle behind the Bombe is the same as the principle behind an army. The individual pieces - the men, the components - do not matter. They are quite identical. It is how they are arranged that counts. The structures and patterns that they form.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [3511](#))
- No (turn to [1480](#))
- Lie (turn to [2371](#))
- Evade (turn to [1616](#))

632

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3608](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [3608](#))

633

"All right." With a sigh, your defiance collapses. "If you've searched my things then I suppose you've found my letters. Haven't you? In fact, if you haven't, don't tell me."

Harris nods once. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go

to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2532](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4159](#))
- Lie (turn to [3434](#))

634

"Ask the others," I reply, leaning back. "They'll tell you. If they haven't already, that's only because they're protecting Hooper. Hoping he'll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you've done me, I'm sure he will."

"We have," Harris replies simply.

It's all I can do not to gape.

"Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2994](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3679](#))

635

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1403](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1822](#))
- Lie (turn to [1403](#))
- Evade (turn to [3479](#))

636

Plenty of time for that later. If there is nothing there, then Hooper discovered the component after all and Harris' men will have swooped on him, and the story about his confession is just a ruse to test me out. And if the component is still there - well. It will be just as valuable to my young man in the village in a week's time, and his deadline of the 31st is not quite upon us.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

And everything will proceed as before. The component will mean nothing to the Germans - this is the one fact I could never have explained to a man like Harris despite the fact that the principle behind the Bombe is the same as the principle behind an army. The individual pieces - the men, the components - do not matter. They are quite identical. It is how they are arranged that counts. The structures and patterns that they form.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [4120](#))
- No (turn to [318](#))
- Lie (turn to [291](#))
- Evade (turn to [624](#))

637

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1279](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- The pillow (turn to [469](#))
- Something else (turn to [2641](#))

638

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2277](#))
- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- Something else (turn to [3286](#))

639

- The jacket (turn to [4996](#))
- The bucket (turn to [220](#))

640

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3369](#))

641

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man.

And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- Something else (turn to [660](#))

642

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3686](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

643

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [602](#))
- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1952](#))
- Something else (turn to [4885](#))

644

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3900](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [357](#))

645

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1974](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [1262](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [4362](#))

646

"Then you know I'm right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?"

"We don't know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [3814](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [2405](#))

647

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

648

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [43](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

649

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re

saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3238](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3097](#))

650

"I'm no traitor," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [4427](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3819](#))
- Lie (turn to [3819](#))
- Evade (turn to [1930](#))

651

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1364](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

652

"It will. Hooper's running scared," I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

653

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4398](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

654

- The jacket (turn to [2565](#))

655

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1458](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

656

They think I'm a traitor. They think *I* stole the component from the calculating machine. They're searching my bunk, my bag, the whole barrack right now. Then they'll come back and demand that I talk.

I'm a problem-solver. Good with figures, quick with crosswords, excellent at chess. But in this situation - in this trap - what is the winning play?

- Co-operate (turn to [3652](#))
- Dissemble (turn to [952](#))
- Divert (turn to [4714](#))

657

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

658

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

659

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't

know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [89](#))

660

- The jacket (turn to [3672](#))

661

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [4111](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

662

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [2142](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1935](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

663

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my shoe and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [970](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1759](#))

664

I suppose this must be what it feels like to have a conscience, then. Very well.

"Harris, sir. I don't know what Hooper's playing at, sir. But I can't let him do this."

"Do what?"

"Take the rope for this. I took it, sir.

The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"I thought as much. I hadn't expected you to give it out so easily, however. You understand, Hooper has said nothing, of course. In fact, he went to Hut 2 directly after we released him and uncovered the component. But he told us you had instructed him where to go. Hence my little double bluff. Frankly, I'll be glad when I'm shot of the lot of you mathematicians."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

665

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3337](#))
- Something else (turn to [3286](#))

666

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1832](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

667

"He has? I knew he would. The worm."

"Steady now. Matters aren't over yet. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know."

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1415](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4846](#))

668

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2067](#))
- Lie (turn to [2067](#))
- Evade (turn to [4716](#))

669

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1411](#))
- No (turn to [4344](#))
- Lie (turn to [2443](#))

670

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [3963](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [73](#))

671

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [1638](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [3371](#))

672

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4078](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [770](#))

673

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2301](#))

- Be pessimistic (turn to [1428](#))

674

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4859](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- Something else (turn to [3503](#))

675

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [508](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [508](#))

676

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [658](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

677

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [344](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [2256](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2059](#))

678

Of course not. I am alone; that is what they wanted me to be, because of who and what I love. So I have no nation, no country.

"I'm afraid we have only one option, Manning," Harris says. "Please, man. Tell us where the component is."

- Tell them (turn to [4440](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [915](#))

679

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4599](#))
- No (turn to [284](#))
- Lie (turn to [3227](#))

680

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

681

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- Something else (turn to [1623](#))

682

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [3746](#))
- Lie (turn to [3746](#))
- Evade (turn to [3681](#))

683

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4249](#))
- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- The pillow (turn to [581](#))
- Something else (turn to [994](#))

684

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4771](#))
- Wait (turn to [604](#))

685

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3560](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))

686

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- The pillow (turn to [490](#))
- Something else (turn to [228](#))

687

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2084](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))

688

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3150](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [3569](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [2659](#))

689

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [2270](#))
- Deny it (turn to [4430](#))

690

It’s no good. That’s only half a solution. I couldn’t be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [4957](#))

691

I give no reaction. She sighs to herself, as if this kind of behaviour is normal, and trots away inside the House to begin her duties.

I turn the corner of Hut 3 and walk down the short gravel path to Hut 2. It was a good spot to choose - Hut 2 is where the electricians work, and they’re generally focussed on what they’re doing. They don’t often come outside to smoke a cigarette so it’s easy to slip past the doorway unnoticed.

- Check inside (turn to [1230](#))
- Go around the back (turn to [4979](#))

692

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more

forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4956](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2652](#))
- Lie (turn to [4956](#))
- Evade (turn to [1007](#))

693

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1911](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4774](#))

694

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- Something else (turn to [2913](#))

695

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [2136](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

696

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3911](#))

697

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [485](#))
- No (turn to [1843](#))
- Lie (turn to [1843](#))

698

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2721](#))
- Something else (turn to [2668](#))

699

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2020](#))

700

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

701

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness

I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3205](#))
- No (turn to [5012](#))
- Lie (turn to [5012](#))

702

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- Something else (turn to [4838](#))

703

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2984](#))

704

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3627](#))
- No (turn to [4626](#))
- Lie (turn to [4626](#))

705

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1170](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1353](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))

706

- The jacket (turn to [2593](#))

707

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [57](#))

- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

708

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [2788](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [3747](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

709

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3779](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1730](#))

710

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3408](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1833](#))

711

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [3744](#))

712

"Well, I'm glad his conscience finally caught up with him," I reply dismissively.

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [3413](#))

713

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

714

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3239](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4070](#))

715

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [1784](#))
- No (turn to [3625](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2687](#))

716

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1207](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3987](#))

717

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3060](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1567](#))

718

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3507](#))
- Disagree (turn to [623](#))
- Lie (turn to [3403](#))

719

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3125](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3385](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4884](#))

720

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))
- Confess (turn to [3221](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [4423](#))

721

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here,

even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [4326](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1420](#))

722

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

723

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2024](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2955](#))
- Lie (turn to [2955](#))
- Evade (turn to [780](#))

724

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [76](#))
- No (turn to [1650](#))
- Lie (turn to [3637](#))

725

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4225](#))

726

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think.

He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.

- Calm him (turn to [4813](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [2105](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [2841](#))

727

“I’m sure you’ve handled worse,” I reply casually, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“There really isn’t any time to be wasted,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [3725](#))
- No (turn to [900](#))
- Evade (turn to [4554](#))
- Lie (turn to [900](#))

728

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [1804](#))

729

“For God’s sake,” I answer, voice quivering. “I’m no traitor.”

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3914](#))
- Lie (turn to [3914](#))
- Evade (turn to [2893](#))

730

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2650](#))

731

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- Something else (turn to [5031](#))

732

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

733

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3698](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4493](#))

734

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3857](#))
- Something else (turn to [654](#))

735

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- Something else (turn to [3942](#))

736

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about

me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2242](#))
- No (turn to [4112](#))
- Lie (turn to [4112](#))

737

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4077](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [609](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [1109](#))

738

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1946](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3032](#))

739

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3367](#))

740

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- Something else (turn to [380](#))

741

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [135](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

742

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Confess (turn to [3115](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))

743

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

744

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I

know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [4700](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3603](#))
- Evade (turn to [4904](#))

745

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found my letters. Haven’t you? In fact, if you haven’t, don’t tell me.”

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2271](#))
- Disagree (turn to [769](#))
- Lie (turn to [1549](#))

746

“This proves nothing,” I reply stubbornly. “You still don’t have the component and without it, I don’t see what you can hope to prove.”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about you and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [120](#))
- No (turn to [678](#))
- Lie (turn to [678](#))
- Evade (turn to [4750](#))

747

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [2220](#))
- Evade (turn to [817](#))

748

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2521](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2849](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

749

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4764](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4262](#))

750

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [1243](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1577](#))

751

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1494](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4366](#))

752

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1935](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [2142](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [662](#))

753

"Quite right," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1395](#))
- Lie (turn to [1395](#))
- Evade (turn to [621](#))

754

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. I've cracked him a little at least. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [1399](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2579](#))

755

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2242](#))
- No (turn to [262](#))
- Lie (turn to [262](#))

756

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

757

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3329](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2624](#))
- Something else (turn to [1834](#))

758

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [822](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [4106](#))

759

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3703](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2936](#))

760

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're

saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3181](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4095](#))

761

"Someone threw this in through the window over night," I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. "I couldn't see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is."

He reaches out and takes it. "Well, I'll be damned," he murmurs. "That's it all right. And you didn't have it on you when we put you in here. But it can't have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there's no-one else it could have been."

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [4842](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [1056](#))

762

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3811](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1463](#))

763

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3807](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

764

"I imagine I'll smell worse after another couple of days of this."

"That won't be necessary. We found the missing component. Or rather, Hooper found it for us. He snuck out of his tent first thing in the morning and retrieved it from on top. Of all the damnest places - you would never have known it was there. He acted all surprised about it when we jumped him, of course, as you might expect - but it was good enough for me."

- Be glad (turn to [2966](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4313](#))

765

"I am what I am," I reply. "I'm the way nature made me. But they're going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don't let them hang me."

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [141](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3840](#))

766

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2242](#))
- No (turn to [4112](#))
- Lie (turn to [4112](#))

767

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4627](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2702](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))

768

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1400](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- Something else (turn to [4394](#))

769

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [123](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4671](#))

770

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. Fighting as hard as I can, it does no good. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got

to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [2781](#))
- No (turn to [1947](#))
- Lie (turn to [91](#))

771

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3501](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1822](#))
- Lie (turn to [3501](#))
- Evade (turn to [1706](#))

772

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

"What happened there?"

- Admit doing it (turn to [3683](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3733](#))

773

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3289](#))
- No (turn to [1893](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4461](#))

774

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2497](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [894](#))

775

I head on around the back of the hut. The breeze-block with the cavity is on the left side.

- Check (turn to [4557](#))
- Look around (turn to [2416](#))

776

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [552](#))

777

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3175](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

778

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

779

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2537](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3153](#))

780

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4569](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2075](#))
- Lie (turn to [4569](#))
- Evade (turn to [640](#))

781

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2395](#))
- Lie (turn to [2395](#))
- Evade (turn to [3930](#))

782

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4945](#))

- Blame someone (turn to [4728](#))

783

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

784

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don't tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don't think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [3398](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

785

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [1235](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4148](#))
- Wait (turn to [2515](#))

786

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But you’re not my priest and I’m not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1665](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

787

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3432](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3713](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2682](#))
- Something else (turn to [1385](#))

788

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4769](#))
- Something else (turn to [93](#))

789

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft

the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3367](#))

790

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [2883](#))
- Deny it (turn to [1987](#))

791

"I'm sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He's probably passed it on already. You'll have to ask him."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3561](#))

792

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [4518](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4632](#))
- Wait (turn to [4030](#))

793

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [4693](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [4686](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [1265](#))

794

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2424](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [2424](#))

795

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [758](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4437](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [4645](#))

796

"It will. Hooper's running scared," I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

797

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3900](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [3990](#))

798

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3156](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1744](#))

799

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4880](#))
- No (turn to [718](#))
- Evade (turn to [2699](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4835](#))

800

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1212](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [872](#))

801

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [1625](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3285](#))

802

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3061](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- Something else (turn to [2673](#))

803

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1169](#))

804

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))
- Confess (turn to [2169](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [1323](#))

805

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4955](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- The pillow (turn to [802](#))
- Something else (turn to [2673](#))

806

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t

hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4556](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3702](#))

807

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

Perhaps Hooper is there, in the dark, trying to help me after all?

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1598](#))

808

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4748](#))
- Something else (turn to [4363](#))

809

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our

victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1855](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

810

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2073](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [816](#))

811

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment’s

further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'll never know if I hadn't have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [1013](#))
- Lie (turn to [3424](#))
- Evade (turn to [2691](#))

812

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [8](#))

813

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding

that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [400](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2642](#))
- Lie (turn to [4620](#))

814

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2370](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [2370](#))
- Evade (turn to [498](#))

815

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and

understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2038](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [313](#))

816

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3297](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3029](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))

817

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you're behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They'll destroy everything, you do understand that, don't you? You're not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don't see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [1061](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [4930](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [3266](#))

818

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [964](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [929](#))

819

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4190](#))
- Disagree (turn to [364](#))
- Lie (turn to [2487](#))

820

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [731](#))
- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- Something else (turn to [5031](#))

821

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [52](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4426](#))

822

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [365](#))

823

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [2611](#))
- Deny it (turn to [1500](#))

824

"Yes. Probably under my bunk."

Harris smiles wryly. "We'll know that for a fake, then. We've looked there already. I don't mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don't care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place."

- "Then let him think he's off the hook." (turn to [1582](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

825

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3078](#))

826

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3468](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2414](#))

827

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [3123](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3646](#))

828

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

829

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3875](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [1896](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1997](#))

830

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [2800](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2565](#))

831

"Yes."

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his

clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1192](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2300](#))

832

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3276](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4933](#))

833

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap.

I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I'm thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you'd step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [1780](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [2982](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [2219](#))

834

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4039](#))

835

“I don't know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1321](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3730](#))

836

“I’m suggesting you save your own skin. I’ve wrapped that component in one of your shirts, Hooper. They’ll be searching this place top to bottom. They’ll find it eventually, and when they do, that’s the thing that will swing it against you. So take my advice now.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2122](#))

837

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3670](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [213](#))

838

Morning comes. I’m woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [3164](#))
- Be cold (turn to [3735](#))

839

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [873](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

840

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [439](#))

841

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [1372](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [645](#))

- Escape the compound (turn to [4524](#))

842

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1853](#))

843

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [1189](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3558](#))

844

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4740](#))

845

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- Something else (turn to [3982](#))

846

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

847

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [1895](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2961](#))

848

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3077](#))
- The blanket (turn to [183](#))
- Something else (turn to [3445](#))

849

“I don’t know what I’m suggesting. I don’t understand what’s going on.”

“But of course you do.” Harris narrows his eyes. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1101](#))
- Lie (turn to [1101](#))
- Evade (turn to [3930](#))

850

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3809](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1273](#))

851

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [1964](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2688](#))

- Escape the compound (turn to [3333](#))

852

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [3123](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2336](#))

853

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2528](#))
- No (turn to [892](#))
- Lie (turn to [892](#))

854

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1734](#))

- Find something to help (turn to [2796](#))

855

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2987](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1284](#))

856

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3069](#))

857

“Listen to me, Hooper. We were the only men in that hut today, so we know what happened. But I want you to know this. I put the component inside a breeze-block in the foundations of Hut 2, wrapped in one of your shirts. They’re going to find it eventually, and that’s going to be what tips the balance. And there’s nothing you can do to stop any of that from happening.”

His eyes bulge with terror. “What did I do, to you? What did I ever do?”

- Tell the truth (turn to [2857](#))
- Lie (turn to [1703](#))
- Evade (turn to [3027](#))

858

“I saw him take it,” I reply, stubbornly. “Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, ‘What’s that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn’t have?’ He didn’t reply.”

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [3294](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [2625](#))

859

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1507](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4778](#))

860

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this

country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [3082](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [244](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [2109](#))

861

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4039](#))

862

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3272](#))

863

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

864

From inspiration - or desperation, I am not certain - a simple approach occurs to me. I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper’s tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2225](#))

865

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

866

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- Something else (turn to [1450](#))

867

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [1467](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3837](#))

868

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

869

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [3370](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4439](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1375](#))

870

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2850](#))
- Lie (turn to [2850](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

871

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [4427](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3819](#))
- Lie (turn to [3819](#))
- Evade (turn to [1930](#))

872

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3810](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4996](#))
- The bucket (turn to [417](#))

873

"Maybe I can help with that."

"Oh, yes? And how, exactly?"

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [3890](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [1195](#))

874

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1006](#))
- No (turn to [4626](#))
- Lie (turn to [4626](#))

875

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2243](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2921](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

876

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [449](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2617](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [3262](#))

877

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [1639](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))

878

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [5035](#))
- No (turn to [941](#))

879

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3666](#))

880

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [2439](#))

- Lie (turn to [2439](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

881

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [4985](#))

882

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [517](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

883

"Absolutely."

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1249](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [3824](#))

- Plead with him (turn to [4860](#))

884

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- Something else (turn to [3279](#))

885

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2338](#))
- Something else (turn to [2476](#))

886

"I climbed out of the window overnight," I explain. "I went and got this from where it was hidden, and brought it back here."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1959](#))

887

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [1776](#))

888

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3474](#))
- No (turn to [1412](#))
- Lie (turn to [2046](#))

889

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- Something else (turn to [2641](#))

890

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2064](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

891

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

892

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))

- No, that's not right (turn to [4065](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [4065](#))

893

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2902](#))
- No (turn to [1580](#))
- Lie (turn to [3257](#))

894

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1683](#))

895

“I don’t know what I’m suggesting. I don’t understand what’s going on.”

“But of course you do.” Harris narrows his eyes. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1543](#))
- Lie (turn to [1543](#))
- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

896

“I’m fine,” I reply. “This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better.”

“I couldn’t agree more.” And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [831](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2899](#))
- Lie (turn to [2899](#))
- Evade (turn to [1509](#))

897

I will have to leave that question for another day. To return there now, when they’re probably watching my every step, would be suicide. After all, if Hooper followed my clue, he will have explained it to them to save his neck. They won’t believe him - but they won’t quite disbelieve him either. We’re locked in a cycle now, him and me, of half-truth and probability. There’s nothing either of us can do to put the other entirely into blame.

Nothing, that is, except to act as if there is no game being played. I’ll have a bath, then start work as normal. I’ve got a week to find something to give my blackmailer. Something will turn up.

- Definitely (turn to [2478](#))
- Unlikely (turn to [3208](#))
- Lie (turn to [1423](#))
- Evade (turn to [1717](#))

898

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- Something else (turn to [994](#))

899

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

900

"No, I don't. I've got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest..."

"Work that will be difficult for you to do, don't you think?" Harris replies.

"They'll have made a replacement by tomorrow," I reply. "The war doesn't stop over one missing reel."

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop.

There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2090](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1701](#))
- Lie (turn to [1701](#))
- Evade (turn to [2786](#))

901

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

902

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2711](#))

903

I will have to leave that question for another day. To return there now, when they're probably watching my every step, would be suicide. After all, if Hooper understood my clue, he will have explained it to them to save his neck. They won't believe him - but they won't quite disbelieve him either. We're locked in a cycle now, him and me, of half-truth and probability. There's nothing either of us can do to put the other entirely into blame.

Nothing, that is, except to act as if there is no game being played. I'll have a bath, then start work as normal. I've got a week to find something to give my blackmailer. Something will turn up.

- Definitely (turn to [2478](#))
- Unlikely (turn to [3208](#))
- Lie (turn to [1423](#))
- Evade (turn to [1717](#))

904

It's useless. There's nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4022](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1029](#))
- Wait (turn to [2915](#))

905

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up,

and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [381](#))

906

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1461](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

907

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4224](#))
- Disagree (turn to [607](#))
- Evade (turn to [607](#))

908

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren't over yet. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3974](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [1846](#))

909

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [574](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

910

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [4583](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

911

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this

moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [192](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [192](#))

912

"I suppose I do rather." I laugh, but Harris does not.

"This damn business gets worse and worse," he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. "Hooper's confessed, you know."

- Be eager (turn to [2329](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [2837](#))

913

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3622](#))

914

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon

when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1916](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2075](#))
- Lie (turn to [1916](#))
- Evade (turn to [1175](#))

915

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [217](#))

916

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1439](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [4175](#))

917

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [4170](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [107](#))

918

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

919

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4434](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))

- Something else (turn to [4034](#))

920

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [976](#))
- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- The pillow (turn to [820](#))
- Something else (turn to [5031](#))

921

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4932](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1229](#))
- Wait (turn to [1646](#))

922

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

923

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [523](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- Something else (turn to [93](#))

924

“Yes.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [3617](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1797](#))

925

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3818](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

926

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4801](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

927

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2035](#))

928

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3763](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

929

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [3204](#))

930

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3821](#))

931

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2383](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1022](#))

932

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3107](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1216](#))

933

“I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3763](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

934

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [1949](#))
- Disagree (turn to [56](#))
- Evade (turn to [208](#))

935

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [349](#))

936

“No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

937

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [958](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4970](#))

938

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [852](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2336](#))

939

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2542](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [1669](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [191](#))

940

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4081](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [1380](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4721](#))

941

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4442](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [4442](#))

942

- The jacket (turn to [502](#))

943

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [235](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [4472](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [1707](#))

944

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4303](#))

945

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [745](#))
- Evade (turn to [2511](#))

946

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2469](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [949](#))

947

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2364](#))

948

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2493](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [2493](#))
- Evade (turn to [18](#))

949

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4640](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4875](#))
- Evade (turn to [3223](#))

950

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3351](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3975](#))

951

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2060](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3495](#))

952

This battle will be one of misinformation, just as the war raging in Europe and over British skies is more one of plans and messages and interceptions than it is of bullets, guns and planes. My only hope is create a story they prefer to the truth.

They leave me plenty of time to lay my plans. Half an hour goes by before Commander Harris returns to the hut. He seems careful to leave the door open only for a moment, as if worried a loose word or two might slip inside.

He's brought two cups of tea in metal mugs: he sets them down on the tabletop between us.

“Well then,” he begins, a little awkwardly. This is an unseemly situation, it would be appear. He pushes one cup halfway towards me. A small gesture of friendship. Is that enough to give me some hope?

- Take it (turn to [256](#))

- Don't take it (turn to [113](#))

953

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my shoe and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [4790](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1748](#))

954

“Well?”

“We'll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [4706](#))
- No (turn to [3647](#))
- Lie (turn to [4706](#))

955

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don't

know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3114](#))

956

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [1679](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1071](#))
- Evade (turn to [1572](#))

- Say nothing (turn to [4760](#))

957

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [470](#))

958

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [663](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4970](#))

959

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [934](#))

960

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1042](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

961

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1125](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3036](#))
- Something else (turn to [137](#))

962

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they

come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [3836](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

963

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1874](#))

964

"You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn't catch him?"

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [3204](#))

965

"You're the one applying pressure here," I answer somewhat miserably. "I'm just waiting

until you tell me what is really going on.”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2049](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1292](#))
- Lie (turn to [202](#))

966

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2311](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2051](#))

967

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2033](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- Something else (turn to [4363](#))

968

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [488](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

969

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [1858](#))

970

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turn. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly

by my arms.

I'll never know if I hadn't have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [2444](#))
- Lie (turn to [3935](#))
- Evade (turn to [3251](#))

971

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1857](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1985](#))

972

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

973

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3504](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3094](#))

974

“You’re right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [843](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

975

“I’ve thought so before.” Certainly in the matter of getting blackmailed.

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [2840](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4857](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2097](#))

976

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2852](#))
- Something else (turn to [5031](#))

977

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3433](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1313](#))

978

"For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3986](#))

- No (turn to [1019](#))
- Lie (turn to [3986](#))

979

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [2783](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [128](#))

980

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1024](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4749](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [253](#))

981

I shrug, eloquently.

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid,

Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [197](#))

982

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

983

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [680](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))

984

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under

Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [1154](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

985

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2880](#))
- Something else (turn to [2690](#))

986

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [552](#))

987

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What's this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here

in irons, he'll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [2013](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1002](#))
- Evade (turn to [4393](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [868](#))

988

“We don’t have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn’t hold water. It doesn’t tie up. We know you’ve been leaving yourself open to accusations. We’ve been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [204](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [2405](#))

989

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4945](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4728](#))

990

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4834](#))

991

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [292](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4076](#))

992

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4268](#))
- Wait (turn to [671](#))

993

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- Something else (turn to [161](#))

994

- The jacket (turn to [542](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3533](#))

995

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3614](#))
- Something else (turn to [3448](#))

996

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [1479](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3750](#))

997

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [2906](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [44](#))

998

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2978](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4841](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

999

“Yes. I didn’t have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

1000

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- The pillow (turn to [92](#))
- Something else (turn to [1885](#))

1001

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- Something else (turn to [1652](#))

1002

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

1003

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

1004

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4674](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2368](#))

1005

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- Something else (turn to [4508](#))

1006

“Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself.”

“That's how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2996](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [2996](#))

1007

“I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [1045](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3008](#))

1008

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3452](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1079](#))

1009

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the

moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [1281](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2959](#))
- Evade (turn to [4134](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1073](#))

1010

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4467](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3832](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4467](#))
- Lie (turn to [3832](#))

1011

“Someone threw this in through the window over night,” I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn’t see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had

men watching him all night. And there's no-one else it could have been."

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [221](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [700](#))

1012

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

1013

"Harris. They were blackmailing me. They knew about... certain indiscretions. You can understand, can't you, Harris? I was in an impossible bind..."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [2620](#))
- No (turn to [2266](#))
- Lie (turn to [2266](#))
- Evade (turn to [4707](#))

1014

"Of my standing. My reputation." I don't like to talk of myself like this, but I carry on all

the same. "Hooper simply can't bear knowing that, once all this is over, I'll be the one receiving the knighthood and he..."

"No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade," Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: "Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me." For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

"Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3921](#))
- Lie (turn to [3921](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

1015

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1421](#))

1016

"I saw him take it," I reply, stubbornly. "Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, 'What's that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn't have?' He didn't reply."

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a

similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2994](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3679](#))

1017

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1576](#))
- No (turn to [3732](#))
- Lie (turn to [2554](#))

1018

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [4489](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [1429](#))

1019

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [3370](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [2304](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [149](#))

1020

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3137](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3215](#))

1021

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1422](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4449](#))

1022

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4350](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4374](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))

1023

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [150](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [150](#))

1024

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [959](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [2886](#))

1025

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [1606](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [4829](#))

1026

"I saw him take it," I reply, stubbornly. "Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, 'What's that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn't have?' He didn't reply."

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2776](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [154](#))

1027

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2066](#))

1028

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- Something else (turn to [3503](#))

1029

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps the component has been found and the crisis is over.

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4239](#))

1030

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [338](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3189](#))
- Evade (turn to [3895](#))

1031

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

1032

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [813](#))
- No (turn to [3338](#))
- Evade (turn to [2490](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2454](#))

1033

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [3024](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1067](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [2905](#))

1034

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2311](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2051](#))

1035

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2481](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [305](#))

1036

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2576](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

1037

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [918](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4533](#))

1038

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed

monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3766](#))

1039

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

1040

- The jacket (turn to [4802](#))
- The bucket (turn to [5013](#))

1041

"Quite right," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [99](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4618](#))
- Lie (turn to [4618](#))
- Evade (turn to [2483](#))

1042

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [704](#))
- No (turn to [1361](#))
- Lie (turn to [3874](#))

1043

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1287](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [152](#))

1044

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [52](#))

- You should try to escape! (turn to [4426](#))

1045

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [252](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4906](#))
- Evade (turn to [4906](#))

1046

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4098](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

1047

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m

gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2182](#))

1048

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3993](#))

1049

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2057](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1522](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

1050

"None of us are blameless, Harris. But I've done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will."

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2571](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

1051

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [237](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

1052

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3931](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2612](#))

1053

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside,

of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3872](#))

1054

I suppose this must be what it feels like to have a conscience, then. Very well.

“Harris, sir. I don't know what Hooper's playing at, sir. But I can't let him do this.”

“Do what?”

“Take the rope for this. I took it, sir.

The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“I thought as much. I hadn't expected you to give it out so easily, however. You understand, Hooper has said nothing, of course. In fact, he went to Hut 2 directly after we released him and uncovered the component. But he told us you had instructed him where to go. Hence my little double bluff. Frankly, I'll be glad when I'm shot of the lot of you mathematicians.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

1055

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that's worth. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3462](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [2727](#))

1056

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

1057

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2795](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1563](#))

1058

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2111](#))

1059

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3508](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1811](#))

1060

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2020](#))

1061

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [505](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2363](#))

1062

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1724](#))

1063

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1305](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3715](#))

1064

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [1266](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

1065

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the

other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3078](#))

1066

"All right. I'll tell you what happened." And never mind my shame, I think.

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [2781](#))
- No (turn to [1947](#))
- Lie (turn to [91](#))

1067

"Ask not for whom the bell tolls!"

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4266](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [972](#))
- Evade (turn to [2108](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4927](#))

1068

“Then you’d better get searching,” I reply, tiring of his complaining. *A war is a war, you have to expect an enemy.* “It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4225](#))

1069

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4845](#))
- Wait (turn to [4436](#))

1070

- The jacket (turn to [3281](#))
- The bucket (turn to [398](#))

1071

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

1072

I set the cup carefully down on the table once more. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [252](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4906](#))
- Evade (turn to [4906](#))

1073

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

1074

"I broke it," I reply. There doesn't seem any use in trying to lie. "I thought I could escape. But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [1699](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3786](#))

1075

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain

storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2890](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [1992](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1672](#))

1076

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3218](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1558](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2945](#))

1077

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1244](#))

1078

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [4455](#))
- Lie (turn to [4455](#))
- Evade (turn to [3681](#))

1079

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“Did you?” The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn’t he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [1177](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [4565](#))

1080

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4586](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4372](#))
- Wait (turn to [2086](#))

1081

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1799](#))

1082

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [3413](#))

1083

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [2881](#))
- Lie (turn to [2881](#))
- Evade (turn to [1597](#))

1084

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [2522](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [475](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1085

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1249](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4207](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4481](#))

1086

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

1087

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4925](#))

1088

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [2043](#))

1089

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1492](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

1090

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2267](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2380](#))

1091

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Confess (turn to [2863](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))

1092

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [608](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4527](#))

1093

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [773](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [962](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [4617](#))

1094

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3545](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4409](#))

1095

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [198](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [974](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

1096

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3210](#))

1097

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [720](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3130](#))

1098

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [756](#))

1099

A neat idea strikes me. If I could place it on top of the canvas, somewhere in the middle where it would bow the cloth inwards, then it would be invisible to anyone passing by. But to Hooper, it would be above him: a shadow staring him in the face as he awoke. What could be more natural than getting up, coming out, and looking to see what had fallen on him during the night?

It’s the work of a moment. I was once an excellent bowler for the second XI back at school. This time I throw underarm, of course, but I still land the vital missing component exactly where I want it to go.

For a second I hold my breath, but nothing and no-one stirs. Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [801](#))

1100

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4469](#))
- No (turn to [3883](#))

1101

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [37](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2037](#))
- Lie (turn to [37](#))
- Evade (turn to [1231](#))

1102

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3696](#))
- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4654](#))
- Something else (turn to [2107](#))

1103

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2595](#))

1104

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I don't want to go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3051](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

1105

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [143](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [2246](#))

1106

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2619](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

1107

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [989](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [4836](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [348](#))

1108

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [2923](#))
- No (turn to [3034](#))
- Lie (turn to [3034](#))
- Evade (turn to [1295](#))

1109

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2571](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

1110

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1364](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

1111

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2624](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1234](#))
- Something else (turn to [1834](#))

1112

"I've done nothing that I'm ashamed of."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [1814](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

1113

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're

saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3289](#))
- No (turn to [1893](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4461](#))

1114

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4652](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1038](#))

1115

"Quite right," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3914](#))
- Lie (turn to [3914](#))
- Evade (turn to [2893](#))

1116

"No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me." I take a deep breath. "It was

Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [999](#))
- No (turn to [569](#))
- Lie (turn to [569](#))
- Evade (turn to [4717](#))

1117

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [827](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3646](#))

1118

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps the component has been found and the crisis is over.

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1345](#))

1119

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2061](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2363](#))

1120

“I don’t need twelve minutes. Here it is.”

I open my jacket and pull the Bombe component out of my pocket. Harris takes it from me, whistling, curious.

“Well, I’ll be. That’s it all right.”

“That’s it.”

“But you didn’t have it on you yesterday.”

- Explain (turn to [3425](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3467](#))

1121

“When you have eliminated the impossible...” I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [4470](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [4866](#))

1122

I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper's tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [772](#))

1123

It won't take a moment to settle the matter. I can justify a walk past Hut 2 as part of my morning stroll. It will be obvious in a moment if the component is still there.

On my way across the paddocks, between the huts and the House, I catch sight of young Miss Lyon, arriving for work on her bicycle. She giggles as she sees me and waves.

- Wave back (turn to [350](#))
- Ignore her (turn to [170](#))

1124

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [14](#))
- Find something (turn to [1856](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [4020](#))

1125

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3022](#))

1126

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [560](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4347](#))
- Something else (turn to [4386](#))

1127

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [4317](#))
- No (turn to [4273](#))
- Lie (turn to [4273](#))

1128

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1169](#))

1129

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3220](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

1130

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed

to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [1971](#))
- No (turn to [2589](#))
- Lie (turn to [4448](#))

1131

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4830](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))

1132

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3720](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [3086](#))

1133

"For God's sake," I answer, voice quivering. "I'm no traitor."

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [99](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4618](#))
- Lie (turn to [4618](#))
- Evade (turn to [2483](#))

1134

"I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander," I reply with a sneer. "They don't train you to think in the Armed Forces."

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2074](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4728](#))

1135

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3461](#))

1136

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [684](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [3856](#))

1137

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- Something else (turn to [4590](#))

1138

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4518](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4632](#))
- Wait (turn to [4030](#))

1139

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3305](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3305](#))

1140

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m gone.

Of course, then they’ll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2552](#))

1141

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [1618](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2811](#))

1142

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3023](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4421](#))

1143

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

1144

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my bucket and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [3737](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [2717](#))

1145

"So would you after the night I've had."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))

- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4335](#))

1146

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4203](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

1147

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [864](#))
- Give up (turn to [3903](#))

1148

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [4706](#))
- No (turn to [3647](#))
- Lie (turn to [4706](#))

1149

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1359](#))

1150

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him

shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3616](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4312](#))
- Evade (turn to [34](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2985](#))

1151

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It’s not a big window, but I’m not a big man. If I was Harris, I’d be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out

for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [1013](#))
- Lie (turn to [3424](#))
- Evade (turn to [2691](#))

1152

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper’s tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3764](#))

1153

“And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren’t enough senior officers to go round.”

“Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that,” Harris replies. “That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I’m inclined to believe them. But that’s all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [1179](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [403](#))

1154

“Then let him think he’s off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you’ll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that’s the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3607](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [3438](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [207](#))

1155

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2171](#))
- Lie (turn to [2171](#))
- Evade (turn to [4752](#))

1156

Enough of this. There isn’t any time to lose. Right now they’ll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that’s it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that’s the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my shoe and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [1862](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [2480](#))

1157

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4370](#))
- No (turn to [1010](#))
- Lie (turn to [1010](#))

1158

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1001](#))
- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- Something else (turn to [1652](#))

1159

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2814](#))

1160

"When you have eliminated the impossible..." I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1153](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3174](#))

1161

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

1162

I leave the cup exactly where it is. "Why?" I ask coldly. "What's in it?"

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. "Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [1032](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2126](#))
- Evade (turn to [4452](#))

1163

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [3149](#))
- No (turn to [2361](#))
- Lie (turn to [2361](#))

1164

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2074](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4728](#))

1165

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4784](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4160](#))
- Lie (turn to [4784](#))
- Evade (turn to [1792](#))

1166

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4755](#))

1167

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2679](#))

1168

"Of my standing. My reputation." I'm aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. "Hooper simply can't bear knowing that, once all this is over, I'll be the one receiving the knighthood and he..."

"No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade," Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: "Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me." For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

"Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2344](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2418](#))
- Lie (turn to [2418](#))
- Evade (turn to [4388](#))

1169

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must

have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [2427](#))
- Be cold (turn to [3382](#))

1170

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [68](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))

1171

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4077](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [609](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [1109](#))

1172

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I’m not taking it. We know you were in the

room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice."

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Confess (turn to [3186](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))

1173

"Yes."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [2728](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3768](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [333](#))

1174

"I'll talk to him."

"What?"

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [749](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [575](#))

1175

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3369](#))

1176

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4592](#))

1177

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [755](#))
- No (turn to [4103](#))
- Lie (turn to [1259](#))

1178

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2035](#))

1179

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [510](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [4916](#))

1180

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1823](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4048](#))
- Something else (turn to [2872](#))

1181

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3596](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [887](#))

1182

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever,

scheming young man - that's why we hired you - and you're looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I'm not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice."

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Confess (turn to [1676](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))

1183

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4130](#))
- No (turn to [4762](#))
- Lie (turn to [4762](#))

1184

"Oh, yes?"

"Yes. For what that's worth. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up.

He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know."

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2509](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4720](#))

1185

"Yes. I didn't have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

1186

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [286](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [863](#))
- Evade (turn to [4134](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1073](#))

1187

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2172](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

1188

“I don’t know what I’m suggesting. I don’t understand what’s going on.”

“But of course you do.” Harris narrows his eyes. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2489](#))
- Lie (turn to [2489](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

1189

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [883](#))
- No (turn to [4542](#))
- Lie (turn to [883](#))

1190

“I don’t need twelve minutes. Here it is.”

I open my jacket and pull the Bombe component out of my pocket. Harris takes it from me, whistling, curious.

“Well, I’ll be. That’s it all right.”

“That’s it.”

“But you didn’t have it on you yesterday.”

- Explain (turn to [2834](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4260](#))

1191

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3604](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4288](#))

1192

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn’t know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1472](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3042](#))

1193

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- Something else (turn to [3324](#))

1194

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3149](#))
- No (turn to [2361](#))
- Lie (turn to [2361](#))

1195

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [1590](#))

- Look inside the hut (turn to [2410](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [4431](#))

1196

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- Something else (turn to [4034](#))

1197

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1345](#))

1198

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4678](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4953](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4661](#))
- Something else (turn to [4643](#))

1199

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3600](#))

1200

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2869](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3366](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

1201

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3621](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

1202

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [57](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

1203

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1387](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3381](#))

1204

"The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You'll most likely get a promotion."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

1205

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with

shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2799](#))

1206

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [838](#))

1207

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [873](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

1208

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [2375](#))

- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

1209

“We don’t have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn’t hold water. It doesn’t tie up. We know you’ve been leaving yourself open to accusations. We’ve been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [1487](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

1210

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [2858](#))
- Lie (turn to [2858](#))
- Evade (turn to [2328](#))

1211

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [276](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3057](#))
- Evade (turn to [4393](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [868](#))

1212

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [2464](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [872](#))

1213

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4697](#))

1214

“All right. I'll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [697](#))
- No (turn to [3435](#))
- Lie (turn to [2507](#))

1215

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I'm sure you can understand that.”

“I think we've had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let's hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

1216

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [658](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

1217

I say nothing. It's true, isn't it? I can't deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can't deny that I don't think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved? It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

"God have mercy on your soul," Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear no-one else will." Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [821](#))

1218

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle

I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [441](#))
- No (turn to [1819](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4849](#))

1219

“Yes.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1431](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1356](#))

1220

“He never could be trusted. You should never have hired him. A below average intelligence can’t cope with the pressures in this place.”

Harris rolls his eyes, but he might almost be smiling. “You’d better get along, Mr Intelligent. There’s a 24-hour-out-of-date message to be tackled and we’re a genius short. So you’d better be ready to work twice as hard.”

- Thank him (turn to [3380](#))
- Argue with him (turn to [3851](#))

1221

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [2773](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [2103](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

1222

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4368](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2807](#))
- Something else (turn to [4534](#))

1223

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [3891](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4632](#))
- Wait (turn to [4030](#))

1224

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4585](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1129](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1225

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3649](#))
- No (turn to [1711](#))
- Lie (turn to [1711](#))

1226

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3261](#))
- Something else (turn to [706](#))

1227

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [3256](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1508](#))
- Lie (turn to [1508](#))

1228

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [701](#))
- No (turn to [1232](#))
- Lie (turn to [3626](#))

1229

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted?

Perhaps the component has been found and the crisis is over.

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1598](#))

1230

I hop up the steps and put my head inside all the same. Nobody about. Still too early in the AM for sparks, I suppose.

I head on around the back of the hut. The breeze-block with the cavity is on the left side.

- Check (turn to [1844](#))
- Look around (turn to [4727](#))

1231

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3929](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

1232

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little

we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3205](#))
- No (turn to [5012](#))
- Lie (turn to [5012](#))

1233

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [4967](#))
- Find something (turn to [1777](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [1933](#))

1234

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2624](#))
- Something else (turn to [1834](#))

1235

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the

compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1722](#))

1236

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3437](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1370](#))
- The pillow (turn to [177](#))
- Something else (turn to [1512](#))

1237

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [1238](#))
- Lie (turn to [1238](#))
- Evade (turn to [3519](#))

1238

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4867](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [653](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1239

“For God’s sake,” I answer, voice quivering. “I’m no traitor.”

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3921](#))
- Lie (turn to [3921](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

1240

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4270](#))

1241

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I’m away, slipping down the paths between the

Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [188](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [2298](#))

1242

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1214](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

1243

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper’s worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [2190](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1577](#))

1244

“I don’t need twelve minutes. Here it is.”

I open my jacket and pull the Bombe component out of my pocket. Harris takes it from me, whistling, curious.

“Well, I’ll be. That’s it all right.”

“That’s it.”

“But you didn’t have it on you yesterday.”

- Explain (turn to [886](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3816](#))

1245

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4530](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3801](#))

1246

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3796](#))

1247

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1336](#))

1248

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I'm not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

1249

“Listen to me, Hooper. We were the only men in that hut today, so we know what happened. But I want you to know this. I put the component inside a breeze-block in the foundations of Hut 2, wrapped in one of your shirts. They're going to find it eventually, and that's going to be what tips the balance. And there's nothing you can do to stop any of that from happening.”

His eyes bulge with terror. “What did I do, to you? What did I ever do?”

- Tell the truth (turn to [432](#))
- Lie (turn to [1960](#))
- Evade (turn to [127](#))

1250

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4765](#))
- No (turn to [617](#))
- Lie (turn to [617](#))

1251

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2055](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

1252

But of course I will. Perhaps I can persuade them to put him in my cell.

“We recovered the part, just where you said it was,” Harris reports, as he puts the cuffs around my wrists. “Of course, a couple of the men swear blind they searched there yesterday, so I’m afraid, what with the broken window... we’ve formed a perfectly good theory which doesn’t bode well for you.”

“I see.” It doesn’t seem worth arguing any further. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

1253

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1969](#))
- No (turn to [1719](#))
- Lie (turn to [4943](#))

1254

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1249](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [3033](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [277](#))

1255

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [129](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [546](#))

1256

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop.

There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1897](#))
- Lie (turn to [1897](#))
- Evade (turn to [3151](#))

1257

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [343](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [3858](#))

1258

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2754](#))

1259

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2242](#))
- No (turn to [262](#))
- Lie (turn to [262](#))

1260

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4692](#))

1261

“We don’t have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn’t hold water. It doesn’t tie up. We know you’ve been leaving yourself open to accusations. We’ve been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [4116](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [725](#))

1262

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1974](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [2053](#))

1263

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2940](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2732](#))
- Evade (turn to [1817](#))

1264

Enough of this. There isn’t any time to lose. Right now they’ll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that’s it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that’s the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my bucket and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [408](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [327](#))

1265

“Messy, without one missing cache!” I cry, laughing spitefully. It isn’t the best clue, hardly worthy of the Times, but it will have to do.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4023](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4147](#))
- Evade (turn to [3471](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4780](#))

1266

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3175](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

1267

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [993](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- Something else (turn to [161](#))

1268

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

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Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [141](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3840](#))

1269

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [1105](#))
- Evade (turn to [2465](#))

1270

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3205](#))
- No (turn to [4280](#))
- Lie (turn to [4280](#))

1271

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3330](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2894](#))

1272

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

1273

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [713](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

1274

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3876](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3875](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1275

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [274](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3707](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

1276

- The jacket (turn to [1624](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4337](#))

1277

- The jacket (turn to [3120](#))

1278

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [3618](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [2264](#))

1279

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3056](#))
- Something else (turn to [2641](#))

1280

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3346](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1501](#))

1281

"Just adding to the drama," I tell him, confidently. "I'm sure you can understand that."

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

1282

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- Something else (turn to [4508](#))

1283

"Trust me. He hasn't. If I know that man, and I do, he'll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component's gone then he's committed and he'll be hung for what he's done. He'll want to wait a week at least, make sure he's escaped suspicion. And then he'll pass it on."

"And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?"

- "Yes." (turn to [3690](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [2787](#))

1284

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1094](#))

1285

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

1286

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2374](#))

1287

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [3308](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [152](#))

1288

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2794](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [541](#))
- Lie (turn to [46](#))
- Evade (turn to [4926](#))

1289

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4318](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- Something else (turn to [1040](#))

1290

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4512](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

1291

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1169](#))

1292

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1350](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

1293

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [4264](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [4413](#))

1294

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3300](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4694](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3066](#))

1295

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [2761](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3493](#))

1296

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [2928](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [266](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2847](#))

1297

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [1054](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1927](#))

1298

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [418](#))

1299

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4921](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

1300

“I don’t see why,” I reply, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“There really isn’t any time to be wasted,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [1444](#))
- No (turn to [2887](#))
- Evade (turn to [4636](#))
- Lie (turn to [2887](#))

1301

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4938](#))

1302

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3854](#))
- No (turn to [4788](#))
- Lie (turn to [4788](#))

1303

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [488](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

1304

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [667](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4814](#))

1305

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2376](#))
- No (turn to [3770](#))
- Lie (turn to [2918](#))

1306

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be

clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [724](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1384](#))

1307

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4152](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [4948](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

1308

"He has? I knew he would. The worm."

"Steady now. Matters aren't over yet. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know."

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1390](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [1069](#))

1309

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3078](#))

1310

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2762](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [2762](#))
- Evade (turn to [3547](#))

1311

"Well, then," I answer, nervously. "What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my

tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [1788](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

1312

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

Perhaps Hooper is there, in the dark, trying to help me after all?

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1331](#))

1313

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1755](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1470](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4889](#))

1314

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain

storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [3370](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4439](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1375](#))

1315

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2665](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4222](#))
- Lie (turn to [2696](#))
- Evade (turn to [3853](#))

1316

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1042](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

1317

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [342](#))
- Accept it (turn to [2792](#))
- Evade it (turn to [2412](#))

1318

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4321](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4521](#))

1319

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [3540](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [1014](#))
- Evade (turn to [335](#))

1320

"Awkward," I reply, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"I'm sorry to pull you up so roughly," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [1795](#))
- No (turn to [2937](#))
- Evade (turn to [1747](#))
- Lie (turn to [2937](#))

1321

"Well, then," I answer, nervously. "What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [456](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4690](#))

1322

"I'm sure you've handled worse," I reply casually, sipping at my tea as if we were the

best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"I'm sorry to pull you up so roughly," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [1795](#))
- No (turn to [2937](#))
- Evade (turn to [75](#))
- Lie (turn to [2937](#))

1323

"Look, I know where it is. The missing piece of the Bombe is in the long grasses behind Hooper's tent. I saw him throw it there right after we finished work. He knew you'd scour the camp but I suppose he thought you'd more obvious places first. I suppose he was right about that. Look there. That *proves* his guilt."

"That doesn't prove anything," Harris returns sharply. "But we'll check what you say, all the same." He gets to his feet and heads out of the door.

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1912](#))

1324

"I don't see why," I reply, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"I'm sorry to pull you up so roughly," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [1795](#))
- No (turn to [2937](#))

- Evade (turn to [1747](#))
- Lie (turn to [2937](#))

1325

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [2372](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3603](#))
- Evade (turn to [4904](#))

1326

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1838](#))
- The pillow (turn to [461](#))
- Something else (turn to [3967](#))

1327

“We don't have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn't hold water. It doesn't tie up. We know you've been leaving yourself open to accusations. We've been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [4920](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [403](#))

1328

“Then you know I’m right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?”

“We don’t know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [162](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [403](#))

1329

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [362](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

1330

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

1331

Morning comes with the call of a rooster from the yard of the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up off the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

It's not long after that Harris enters the hut. He closes the door behind him, careful as ever, then takes a chair across from me.

"You smell like a dog," he remarks.

- Be optimistic (turn to [334](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [4055](#))

1332

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [456](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4690](#))

1333

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3929](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

1334

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2205](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [933](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1335

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4822](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3261](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2573](#))
- Something else (turn to [706](#))

1336

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

1337

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- Something else (turn to [190](#))

1338

“Then let him think he's off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you'll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that's the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Especially since this is a plan that involves keeping you in handcuffs. I don't see what I have to lose.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put 'em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I'm thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me

forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2716](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [3881](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [793](#))

1339

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4515](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1565](#))

1340

“Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard...”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

1341

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- Something else (turn to [2477](#))

1342

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I'm aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. “Hooper simply can't bear knowing that, once all this is over, I'll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2850](#))
- Lie (turn to [2850](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

1343

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [794](#))
- No (turn to [126](#))
- Lie (turn to [126](#))

1344

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1855](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

1345

Morning comes with the call of a rooster from the yard of the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up off the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

It's not long after that Harris enters the hut. He closes the door behind him, careful as ever, then takes a chair across from me.

"You smell like a dog," he remarks.

- Be optimistic (turn to [2301](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1428](#))

1346

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [319](#))

1347

“All right.” I am beaten, after all. “The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3765](#))

1348

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1873](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- Something else (turn to [2822](#))

1349

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3150](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

1350

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2885](#))
- No (turn to [499](#))
- Lie (turn to [4952](#))

1351

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I’m aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1842](#))

- Lie (turn to [1842](#))
- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

1352

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1081](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1517](#))

1353

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2882](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

1354

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3009](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1935](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1355

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1495](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [692](#))
- Lie (turn to [692](#))
- Evade (turn to [4898](#))

1356

I fold my arms, intended firmly to say nothing. But somehow, watching Harris’ face, I cannot bring myself to do it. I want to confess. I want to tell him everything I can, to explain myself to him, to earn his forgiveness. The sensation is so strong my will is powerless in the face of it.

Something is wrong with me, I am sure of it. There is a strange, bitter flavour on my tongue. I taste it as words start to form.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3331](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4792](#))

1357

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [1283](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [2319](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1246](#))

1358

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I’d cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3067](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [524](#))

1359

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2038](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [313](#))

1360

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- Something else (turn to [1798](#))

1361

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3627](#))
- No (turn to [4626](#))
- Lie (turn to [4626](#))

1362

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [1840](#))
- Find something (turn to [4343](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [2853](#))

1363

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. Fighting as hard as I can, it does no good. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2104](#))
- No (turn to [3243](#))
- Lie (turn to [4476](#))

1364

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

1365

“Tell Hooper I've confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he'll go straight to wherever he's hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

“It's an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I'm not so sure he'll be that

stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [2788](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [974](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

1366

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- Something else (turn to [1276](#))

1367

"I've thought so before."

"Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent."

- Be interested (turn to [2928](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [266](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2847](#))

1368

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [1902](#))
- Lie (turn to [1902](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

1369

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [303](#))
- No (turn to [1270](#))
- Lie (turn to [4435](#))

1370

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3367](#))

1371

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [732](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [732](#))
- Evade (turn to [263](#))

1372

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4451](#))

1373

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2718](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4040](#))

1374

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [3236](#))

1375

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [4385](#))
- Accept it (turn to [1868](#))
- Evade it (turn to [4011](#))

1376

I lean back. “It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4983](#))

1377

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1182](#))

1378

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1278](#))

1379

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [947](#))

1380

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [721](#))
- Deny it (turn to [3095](#))

1381

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [148](#))

1382

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle

I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3684](#))
- No (turn to [3145](#))
- Evade (turn to [965](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2114](#))

1383

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4936](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3102](#))

1384

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Persist with this (turn to [3598](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [307](#))

1385

- The jacket (turn to [3383](#))

1386

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2848](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [2848](#))

1387

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1111](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2624](#))
- The pillow (turn to [757](#))
- Something else (turn to [1834](#))

1388

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3287](#))
- No (turn to [1758](#))
- Lie (turn to [1250](#))

1389

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))
- Confess (turn to [2169](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [1323](#))

1390

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4845](#))
- Wait (turn to [4436](#))

1391

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4992](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3182](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4438](#))

1392

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

1393

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [585](#))
- No (turn to [3709](#))
- Evade (turn to [2577](#))

1394

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- Something else (turn to [2822](#))

1395

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3870](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [3870](#))
- Evade (turn to [1096](#))

1396

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [2823](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1515](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [503](#))

1397

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3193](#))
- Something else (turn to [2345](#))

1398

I lean back. “It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3345](#))

1399

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2472](#))
- Disagree (turn to [760](#))
- Evade (turn to [760](#))

1400

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- Something else (turn to [4394](#))

1401

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4815](#))
- The jacket (turn to [825](#))

1402

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [4105](#))
- Evade (turn to [699](#))

1403

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3011](#))

1404

I set the cup carefully down on the table once more. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4224](#))
- Disagree (turn to [607](#))
- Evade (turn to [607](#))

1405

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2151](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [2151](#))

1406

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4863](#))

1407

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1877](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [311](#))

- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1408

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4676](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

1409

“You treated me like vermin. Like something abhorrent.”

“You are something abhorrent.”

“I wasn’t. Not when I came here. And I won’t be, once you’re gone.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2122](#))

1410

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country -

should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4505](#))

1411

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3588](#))
- No (turn to [1023](#))
- Lie (turn to [1023](#))

1412

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my

achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4370](#))
- No (turn to [579](#))
- Lie (turn to [579](#))

1413

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3666](#))

1414

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3911](#))

1415

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn't catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [1575](#))

1416

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [794](#))
- No (turn to [1991](#))
- Lie (turn to [1991](#))

1417

“I saw him take it,” I reply, stubbornly. “Collins and Humph were outside having a

cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, 'What's that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn't have?' He didn't reply."

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1153](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3174](#))

1418

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

"What happened there?"

- Admit doing it (turn to [1074](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [689](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4577](#))

1419

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4360](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- The pillow (turn to [268](#))
- Something else (turn to [2803](#))

1420

"So would you after the night I've had."

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4294](#))

1421

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I’m away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [3700](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [2962](#))

1422

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2170](#))
- No (turn to [2827](#))
- Lie (turn to [4075](#))

1423

In a week's time, this whole affair will be in the past and quite forgotten. I'm quite sure of that.

I've more important problems to think about now. There's still yesterday's intercept to be resolved. The Bombe needs to be set up once more and set running.

It's time I tackled a problem I can *solve*.

The End

1424

"No, I suppose not." I push the teacup around on its base. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [3003](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2660](#))
- Lie (turn to [2660](#))

1425

"Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site."

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. "That doesn't make sense," he says. "Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?"

- Suggest something (turn to [565](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [3489](#))

1426

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [596](#))
- No (turn to [4186](#))

1427

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2408](#))
- Try the window (turn to [4015](#))

1428

“So would you after the night I've had.”

“Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's

how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Confess (turn to [4399](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))

1429

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [2282](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

1430

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [999](#))
- No (turn to [3668](#))
- Lie (turn to [3668](#))
- Evade (turn to [4726](#))

1431

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3331](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4792](#))

1432

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1898](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1063](#))
- Lie (turn to [1746](#))

1433

- The jacket (turn to [825](#))
- The bucket (turn to [83](#))

1434

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [3028](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [1714](#))

1435

“Look, I know where it is. The missing piece of the Bombe is in the long grasses behind Hooper's tent. I saw him throw it there right after we finished work. He knew you'd scour the camp but I suppose he thought you'd more obvious places first. I suppose he was right about that. Look there. That *proves* his guilt.”

“That doesn't prove anything,” Harris returns sharply. “But we'll check what you say, all the same.” He gets to his feet and heads out of the door.

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1245](#))

1436

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

1437

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man.

And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4564](#))
- Something else (turn to [3920](#))

1438

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

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- Agree (turn to [4190](#))
- Disagree (turn to [364](#))
- Lie (turn to [2487](#))

1439

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a

way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4978](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [586](#))

1440

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4285](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1630](#))

1441

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2744](#))

- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [2744](#))

1442

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

1443

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [2462](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2010](#))

1444

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine

producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1710](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [13](#))
- Lie (turn to [13](#))
- Evade (turn to [47](#))

1445

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3962](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- Something else (turn to [4244](#))

1446

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [420](#))
- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- Something else (turn to [2156](#))

1447

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [214](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1036](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1448

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2491](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [425](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [1396](#))

1449

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [885](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2338](#))
- Something else (turn to [2476](#))

1450

- The jacket (turn to [3354](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1680](#))

1451

“Really, Commander,” I reply. “It rather sounds like you want to spank me.”

“For God’s sake,” he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [815](#))

1452

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3534](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3269](#))

1453

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2335](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2291](#))

1454

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper’s worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [2981](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [3371](#))

1455

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [831](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1269](#))
- Lie (turn to [1269](#))
- Evade (turn to [814](#))

1456

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [1679](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1071](#))
- Evade (turn to [1572](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4760](#))

1457

"Or be thrown into the river."

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3512](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [1068](#))

1458

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

1459

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [4500](#))
- Accept it (turn to [2992](#))
- Evade it (turn to [3922](#))

1460

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4161](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [1617](#))
- Be honest (turn to [1617](#))
- Lie (turn to [4161](#))

1461

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

1462

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4176](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [475](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1463

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed

monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1303](#))

1464

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [870](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4499](#))
- Lie (turn to [4499](#))

1465

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3610](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3140](#))

1466

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3462](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [2727](#))

1467

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1632](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2999](#))
- Something else (turn to [3982](#))

1468

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1103](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2222](#))

1469

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [1661](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [625](#))
- Lie (turn to [625](#))

1470

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3367](#))

1471

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [2809](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3987](#))

1472

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [254](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4025](#))

1473

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [4980](#))
- Evade (turn to [4356](#))

1474

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

1475

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2695](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2931](#))
- Something else (turn to [4096](#))

1476

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

1477

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4169](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [539](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [761](#))

1478

“I spoke to Russell. He said he saw Hooper doing something round here. I wanted to see what it was.”

“Enough.” Harris gestures for me to start walking. “This story couldn't be simpler. You took it to cover your back. You hid it. You lied to get Hooper into trouble, and when you thought you'd won, you came to scoop your prize. A good hand but ultimately, you told Hooper where to look with your little riddle.”

He leads me across the yard. Back towards Hut 5 to be decoded, and taken to pieces, once again.

The End

1479

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2056](#))
- Disagree (turn to [649](#))
- Evade (turn to [649](#))

1480

“Heard what?”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

1481

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [2568](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2694](#))
- Evade (turn to [2129](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4548](#))

1482

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [990](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [1122](#))

1483

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [1271](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [1754](#))

1484

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3261](#))
- Something else (turn to [706](#))

1485

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [415](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [415](#))

1486

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won’t go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3846](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2941](#))

1487

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [2968](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [1095](#))

1488

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [4725](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [2585](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4381](#))

1489

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [1970](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4997](#))
- Evade (turn to [2262](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3776](#))

1490

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with

ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [964](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [929](#))

1491

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [237](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

1492

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4791](#))
- No (turn to [2007](#))
- Lie (turn to [88](#))

1493

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [4444](#))
- Deny it (turn to [742](#))

1494

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [1993](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4366](#))

1495

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me. He cannot have expected it to be so easy to break me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2168](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3594](#))
- Lie (turn to [1339](#))
- Evade (turn to [3293](#))

1496

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2902](#))
- No (turn to [1580](#))
- Lie (turn to [3257](#))

1497

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

1498

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4772](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

1499

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [661](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2244](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1500

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Confess (turn to [4635](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))

1501

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1272](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

1502

“I saw him take it,” I reply, stubbornly. “Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, ‘What’s that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn’t have?’ He didn’t reply.”

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [4470](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [4866](#))

1503

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3623](#))
- The jacket (turn to [439](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4062](#))

1504

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [694](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))

- Something else (turn to [2913](#))

1505

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2260](#))

1506

"You're the one applying pressure here," I answer smartly. "I'm just waiting until you tell me what is really going on."

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [3799](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1771](#))
- Lie (turn to [1046](#))

1507

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [953](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4778](#))

1508

"I'm no traitor," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [99](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1999](#))
- Lie (turn to [1999](#))
- Evade (turn to [2780](#))

1509

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2370](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [2370](#))
- Evade (turn to [498](#))

1510

My anger deflates like a collapsing equation, all arguments cancelling each other out. The world, of course, owes me nothing; and I owe it everything.

"I'm afraid we have only one option, Manning," Harris says. "Please, man. Tell us where the component is."

- Tell them (turn to [3491](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3357](#))

1511

"Tell Hooper I've confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he'll go straight to wherever he's hidden that component and his game will be up."

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

"It's an interesting idea," the Commander muses. "But I'm not so sure he'll be that stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [2855](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [3207](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1377](#))

1512

- The jacket (turn to [789](#))

1513

“I don’t need twelve minutes. The component is in the long grass behind Hooper’s tent. I threw it there hoping to somehow frame him, but now I see that won’t be possible. I was naive, I suppose.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

1514

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [1647](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3464](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [3481](#))

1515

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [186](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2255](#))
- Evade (turn to [2212](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4382](#))

1516

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [4475](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [4205](#))

1517

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1799](#))

1518

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3069](#))

1519

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [732](#))

- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [732](#))
- Evade (turn to [263](#))

1520

"Someone threw this in through the window over night," I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. "I couldn't see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is."

He reaches out and takes it. "Well, I'll be damned," he murmurs. "That's it all right. And you didn't have it on you when we put you in here. But it can't have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there's no-one else it could have been."

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [4785](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [1837](#))

1521

"You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn't catch him?"

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4268](#))
- Wait (turn to [671](#))

1522

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [504](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

1523

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

1524

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [2368](#))

1525

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2870](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

1526

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1651](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [1608](#))

1527

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [2898](#))

1528

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [1553](#))

1529

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4808](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3556](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4808](#))
- Lie (turn to [3556](#))

1530

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2663](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [572](#))

1531

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that.

We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1611](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4129](#))
- Lie (turn to [1611](#))
- Evade (turn to [2725](#))

1532

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1120](#))

1533

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1025](#))

1534

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [4628](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [2201](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [2048](#))

1535

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3452](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1079](#))

1536

"I'm fine," I reply. "This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better."

"I couldn't agree more." And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1173](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3685](#))
- Lie (turn to [3685](#))
- Evade (turn to [1587](#))

1537

"Or be thrown into the river."

"Hmm." Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. "Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we'd never know for certain. We'd have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don't mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don't care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place."

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [1338](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

1538

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great

service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4965](#))

1539

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It's not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door lock turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [4718](#))
- Lie (turn to [3728](#))
- Evade (turn to [4420](#))

1540

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

1541

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [2124](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4305](#))

1542

"I had to get out, Harris. I had to provoke Hooper into doing something that would incriminate himself fully. He's too clever, you see..."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [1510](#))
- No (turn to [2273](#))
- Lie (turn to [2273](#))
- Evade (turn to [2100](#))

1543

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

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watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1611](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4129](#))
- Lie (turn to [1611](#))
- Evade (turn to [2725](#))

1544

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1359](#))

1545

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [794](#))
- No (turn to [126](#))
- Lie (turn to [126](#))

1546

“I certainly don’t. But still, I’m surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he’ll face the rope, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he did, and you’re now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one way - and that’s that he believed me, and reasoned that he would be followed. So to try and uncover the component would have got him arrest, to confess was just the same. He simply caved, and threw in his hand.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [1123](#))
- Don't check (turn to [2914](#))

1547

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1610](#))

1548

But too important to guess. I move back around the side of the hut.

Harris is there, leaning in against the wall. He holds a stub pistol in his hand.

“Queen to rook two,” he declares. “I wouldn’t have fathomed it but Hooper did. Explained it right after we sprung him doing what you’re doing now. We weren’t sure what to believe but now, you seem to have resolved that for us.”

- Agree (turn to [272](#))
- Lie (turn to [1478](#))
- Evade (turn to [2016](#))

1549

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [123](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4671](#))

1550

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [2874](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [2105](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [1035](#))

1551

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- Something else (turn to [454](#))

1552

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save

my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2172](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

1553

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [990](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [2466](#))

1554

"I'm sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He's probably passed it on already. You'll have to ask him."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1172](#))

1555

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [3134](#))
- Shrug (turn to [1751](#))

1556

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4823](#))
- Don't go (turn to [1379](#))

1557

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don't tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don't think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [17](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [128](#))

1558

“So he's an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

1559

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1006](#))
- No (turn to [4626](#))
- Lie (turn to [4626](#))

1560

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4598](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

1561

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Confess (turn to [3115](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))

1562

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1600](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

1563

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3081](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4140](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))

1564

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one

else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [4861](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [3624](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [634](#))

1565

“I did.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue.
Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [3835](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [5](#))

1566

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4073](#))

1567

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d

better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2460](#))

1568

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1527](#))
- Try the window (turn to [4471](#))

1569

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

1570

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do...”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4663](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [2167](#))

- Be honest (turn to [2167](#))
- Lie (turn to [4663](#))

1571

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4442](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [4442](#))

1572

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

1573

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4605](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

1574

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [1966](#))
- No (turn to [3829](#))
- Evade (turn to [1188](#))

1575

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [4026](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

1576

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2307](#))
- No (turn to [1485](#))
- Lie (turn to [1485](#))

1577

“I certainly don’t. But still, I’m surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he’ll face the rope, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he did, and you’re now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one way - and that’s that he believed me, and reasoned that he would be followed. So to try and uncover the component would have got him arrested, to confess was just the same. He simply caved, and threw in his hand.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [1123](#))
- Don't check (turn to [2674](#))

1578

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

1579

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4993](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2736](#))
- Something else (turn to [1433](#))

1580

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1386](#))

- No (turn to [262](#))
- Lie (turn to [262](#))

1581

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2752](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1089](#))
- Lie (turn to [2292](#))

1582

“Then let him think he’s off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you’ll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that’s the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me

forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3073](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [3769](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [1033](#))

1583

“I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

1584

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [155](#))
- No (turn to [3338](#))
- Evade (turn to [1506](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2916](#))

1585

“I’m sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He’s probably passed it on already. You’ll have to ask him.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4983](#))

1586

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [2083](#))
- No (turn to [180](#))
- Lie (turn to [4157](#))
- Evade (turn to [4157](#))

1587

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not

interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1060](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [1060](#))
- Evade (turn to [2873](#))

1588

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [441](#))
- No (turn to [1819](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4849](#))

1589

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2541](#))
- Something else (turn to [416](#))

1590

From where he’s sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme.

The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [138](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2839](#))
- Evade (turn to [4191](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4154](#))

1591

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [2769](#))
- Be cold (turn to [4878](#))

1592

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [2499](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3147](#))

1593

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4317](#))
- No (turn to [1529](#))
- Lie (turn to [1529](#))

1594

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I’d cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [977](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1313](#))

1595

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2035](#))

1596

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [89](#))

1597

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [3724](#))
- Lie (turn to [3724](#))

- Evade (turn to [494](#))

1598

Morning comes with the call of a rooster from the yard of the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up off the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

It's not long after that Harris enters the hut. He closes the door behind him, careful as ever, then takes a chair across from me.

"You smell like a dog," he remarks.

- Be optimistic (turn to [2141](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1841](#))

1599

"And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren't enough senior officers to go round."

"Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that," Harris replies. "That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I'm inclined to believe them. But that's all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [144](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

1600

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

1601

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

1602

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3900](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [357](#))

1603

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3827](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3288](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [559](#))

1604

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2627](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

1605

“I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

1606

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2,

and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [2594](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2143](#))

1607

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [489](#))

1608

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4572](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3928](#))

1609

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [4526](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2445](#))

1610

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [488](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

1611

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1915](#))

1612

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2608](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2253](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

1613

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2726](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [2726](#))

1614

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3615](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [4059](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4187](#))

1615

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3886](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1024](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1616

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

1617

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [2556](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [3392](#))
- Evade (turn to [2513](#))

1618

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [954](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [1148](#))

1619

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2627](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

1620

“I know where it is.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing.
“Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1431](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1356](#))

1621

So perhaps I should wait it out, after all. Who knows? I might have a better opportunity later.

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [673](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [1723](#))

1622

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my

baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4733](#))

1623

- The jacket (turn to [3485](#))

1624

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4741](#))

1625

"I broke it," I reply. There doesn't seem any use in trying to lie. "I thought I could escape. But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [452](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [764](#))

1626

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [2152](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

1627

“I climbed out of the window overnight,” I explain. “I went and got this from where it was hidden, and brought it back here.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4118](#))

1628

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1633](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4037](#))
- Something else (turn to [1070](#))

1629

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1716](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3566](#))

1630

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [809](#))

1631

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2738](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3363](#))

1632

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- The pillow (turn to [845](#))
- Something else (turn to [3982](#))

1633

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2036](#))
- Something else (turn to [1070](#))

1634

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1394](#))
- Something else (turn to [2822](#))

1635

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I

suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

1636

“Yes. I didn’t have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

1637

I shake my head violently, to say no, that’s not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris’ face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no

meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2362](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2463](#))
- Lie (turn to [1764](#))

1638

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper’s worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [4704](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [3371](#))

1639

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

1640

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2058](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

1641

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3759](#))
- Something else (turn to [1623](#))

1642

"You mean he didn't even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?"

"No," Harris replies. "That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you."

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

1643

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4951](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3715](#))

1644

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3304](#))
- Leave it (turn to [3389](#))

1645

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1613](#))
- No (turn to [1925](#))
- Lie (turn to [1925](#))

1646

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose

by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1598](#))

1647

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2178](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [2997](#))

1648

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1157](#))
- No (turn to [3908](#))
- Lie (turn to [4806](#))

1649

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to

wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [1197](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1118](#))
- Wait (turn to [4240](#))

1650

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [611](#))
- No (turn to [675](#))
- Lie (turn to [675](#))

1651

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1698](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1294](#))

1652

- The jacket (turn to [542](#))

1653

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1716](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3566](#))

1654

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s humouring me.

“Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [2789](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [3301](#))
- Evade (turn to [2922](#))

1655

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn’t. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn’t bear the thought of it. I love working here. I’ve never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn’t want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [1704](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [2150](#))
- Lie (turn to [2150](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1704](#))

1656

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

1657

I pat down my pockets but all I’m carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [938](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [3704](#))

1658

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [2321](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3975](#))

1659

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- Something else (turn to [1277](#))

1660

“I'd be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I'm sure there's something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [4180](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [4854](#))

1661

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?”

Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4405](#))
- Lie (turn to [4405](#))
- Evade (turn to [2893](#))

1662

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [751](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [3216](#))

1663

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [615](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1205](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3336](#))

1664

"Just adding to the drama," I tell him, confidently. "I'm sure you can understand that."

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

1665

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [3580](#))
- Evade (turn to [860](#))

1666

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [528](#))

1667

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2181](#))

1668

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2814](#))

1669

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [2504](#))
- No (turn to [384](#))
- Lie (turn to [4282](#))
- Evade (turn to [4282](#))

1670

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3649](#))
- No (turn to [1711](#))
- Lie (turn to [1711](#))

1671

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [184](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2518](#))
- Lie (turn to [2518](#))

1672

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [4870](#))
- Accept it (turn to [1057](#))
- Evade it (turn to [3555](#))

1673

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3818](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

1674

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

1675

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2569](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2907](#))

1676

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

1677

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2165](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))

- The pillow (turn to [477](#))
- Something else (turn to [3315](#))

1678

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [119](#))
- No (turn to [407](#))
- Lie (turn to [4876](#))

1679

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

1680

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3354](#))

1681

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [1753](#))
- Be cold (turn to [1745](#))

1682

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- Something else (turn to [2107](#))

1683

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our

victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3426](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

1684

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1737](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3270](#))
- Lie (turn to [2696](#))
- Evade (turn to [1732](#))

1685

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Confess (turn to [2863](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))

1686

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

1687

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [855](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [2878](#))

1688

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [2152](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4009](#))

1689

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3002](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3002](#))

1690

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than

a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3924](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3924](#))

1691

So perhaps I should wait it out, after all. Who knows? I might have a better opportunity later.

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4241](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3543](#))

1692

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren't over yet. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [969](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [2341](#))

1693

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- Something else (turn to [2913](#))

1694

“Heard what?”

“Hooper's been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it's to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

1695

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a

ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [2321](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3975](#))

1696

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [584](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2991](#))

1697

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4149](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2864](#))

1698

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [325](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1294](#))

1699

"I'm looking forward to a long bath," I reply. "And getting back to work."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1190](#))

1700

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [2411](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1577](#))

1701

"No. I have no idea."

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3501](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1822](#))
- Lie (turn to [3501](#))

- Evade (turn to [1706](#))

1702

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3686](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

1703

“Nothing,” I reply. “You’re just the other man in the room. One of us has to get the blame.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [436](#))

1704

“I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I

suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

1705

I look in through the door and catch Hooper’s expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn’t. He looks shocked, almost hurt. “Iain,” he murmurs. “You couldn’t…”

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [4024](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2221](#))
- Evade (turn to [1031](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2494](#))

1706

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1263](#))

1707

“Messy, without one missing cache!” I cry, laughing spitefully. It isn’t the best clue, hardly worthy of the Times, but it will have to do.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the

barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [2254](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1622](#))
- Evade (turn to [2689](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2088](#))

1708

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3272](#))

1709

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- Something else (turn to [3170](#))

1710

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing.

“Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2318](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [537](#))
- Lie (turn to [3656](#))
- Evade (turn to [4276](#))

1711

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4503](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [4503](#))

1712

“That's not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [141](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3840](#))

1713

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4225](#))

1714

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3360](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3038](#))

1715

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- Something else (turn to [146](#))

1716

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2404](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2904](#))

1717

I've more important problems to think about now. There's still yesterday's intercept to be resolved. The Bombe needs to be set up once more and set running.

It's time I tackled a problem I can *solve*.

The End

1718

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [87](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [293](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

1719

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3854](#))
- No (turn to [1485](#))
- Lie (turn to [1485](#))

1720

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3825](#))
- No (turn to [3722](#))
- Lie (turn to [878](#))

1721

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2395](#))
- Lie (turn to [2395](#))
- Evade (turn to [3930](#))

1722

Morning comes. I’m woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [1955](#))
- Be cold (turn to [4132](#))

1723

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [3860](#))
- Deny it (turn to [3249](#))

1724

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

1725

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2950](#))
- Something else (turn to [453](#))

1726

“I don’t see why,” I reply, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“There really isn’t any time to be wasted,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [2774](#))
- No (turn to [4325](#))
- Evade (turn to [3374](#))
- Lie (turn to [4325](#))

1727

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1823](#))
- Something else (turn to [2872](#))

1728

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2799](#))

1729

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a

moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1807](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [2536](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [3358](#))

1730

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [312](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4875](#))
- Evade (turn to [3223](#))

1731

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- Something else (turn to [3324](#))

1732

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2389](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

1733

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4496](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

1734

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [4526](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2796](#))

1735

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up,

and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2227](#))

1736

“I did.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [858](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [2830](#))

1737

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I've done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?”

- Yes (turn to [2505](#))
- No (turn to [3062](#))
- Evade (turn to [3752](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3676](#))

1738

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [3913](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [4333](#))

1739

No. Why would I? He is no doubt an innocent himself, trapped by some dire circumstance. Forced to act the way he did. I have every sympathy for him.

Of course I do.

“We recovered the part, just where you said it was,” Harris reports, as he puts the cuffs around my wrists. “Of course, a couple of the men swear blind they searched there yesterday, so I’m afraid, what with the broken window... we’ve formed a perfectly good theory which doesn’t bode well for you.”

“I see.” It doesn’t seem worth arguing any further. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

1740

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4840](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1257](#))

1741

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [410](#))
- Try the door (turn to [111](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))

1742

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1472](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3042](#))

1743

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2248](#))
- Something else (turn to [4924](#))

1744

Still there means no-one has found it, which means it is probably well-hidden. And short of skipping the compound now, I can afford to leave it hidden there a while longer. So I leave it in place.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [4709](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [2154](#))

1745

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I've been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It's hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper's confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1829](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [459](#))

1746

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1305](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3715](#))

1747

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do...”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4559](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [438](#))
- Be honest (turn to [438](#))
- Lie (turn to [4559](#))

1748

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It’s not a big window, but I’m not a big man. If I was Harris, I’d be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [58](#))
- Lie (turn to [1542](#))
- Evade (turn to [4403](#))

1749

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4698](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- Something else (turn to [3920](#))

1750

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [813](#))
- No (turn to [3338](#))
- Evade (turn to [2490](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2454](#))

1751

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3561](#))

1752

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [3213](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [406](#))
- Evade (turn to [2286](#))

1753

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1829](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [459](#))

1754

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3259](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [2186](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [943](#))

1755

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4251](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4954](#))
- Something else (turn to [1854](#))

1756

- The jacket (turn to [4531](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3277](#))

1757

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2089](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [2089](#))

1758

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness

I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4765](#))
- No (turn to [617](#))
- Lie (turn to [617](#))

1759

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It's not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [2444](#))
- Lie (turn to [3935](#))
- Evade (turn to [3251](#))

1760

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [393](#))

- Tell the truth (turn to [741](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

1761

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1665](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

1762

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

1763

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2821](#))

1764

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3230](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [232](#))

1765

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [659](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [659](#))
- Evade (turn to [1596](#))

1766

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1668](#))
- The pillow (turn to [588](#))
- Something else (turn to [942](#))

1767

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2833](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- Something else (turn to [3142](#))

1768

"No. I have no idea."

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [955](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2859](#))
- Lie (turn to [955](#))
- Evade (turn to [4407](#))

1769

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [1156](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4648](#))

1770

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [954](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [978](#))

1771

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4098](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

1772

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [3024](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [2753](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [2905](#))

1773

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4680](#))

1774

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [3143](#))
- Shrug (turn to [486](#))

1775

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’ll never know if I hadn’t have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4245](#))
- Lie (turn to [4523](#))
- Evade (turn to [746](#))

1776

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [3054](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

1777

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3362](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1203](#))

1778

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Drink (turn to [3879](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [4959](#))

1779

A neat idea strikes me. If I could place it on top of the canvas, somewhere in the middle where it would bow the cloth inwards, then it would be invisible to anyone passing by. But to Hooper, it would be above him: a shadow staring him in the face as he awoke. What could be more natural than getting up, coming out, and looking to see what had fallen on him during the night?

It's the work of a moment. I was once an excellent bowler for the second XI back at

school. This time I throw underarm, of course, but I still land the vital missing component exactly where I want it to go.

For a second I hold my breath, but nothing and no-one stirs. Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [1864](#))

1780

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [647](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3177](#))
- Evade (turn to [4255](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2326](#))

1781

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3104](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4843](#))

1782

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. I've cracked him a little at least. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [1399](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2579](#))

1783

"You're right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3630](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1246](#))

1784

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [267](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4520](#))
- Lie (turn to [3255](#))

1785

“I did.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [2065](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [2970](#))

1786

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- Something else (turn to [4394](#))

1787

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3276](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4933](#))

1788

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [2758](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [23](#))

1789

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2836](#))
- No (turn to [911](#))
- Lie (turn to [911](#))

1790

“Yes. I didn’t have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

1791

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1786](#))
- Something else (turn to [4394](#))

1792

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the

wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4864](#))

1793

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps the component has been found and the crisis is over.

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4925](#))

1794

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [922](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

1795

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it

could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2171](#))
- Lie (turn to [2171](#))
- Evade (turn to [3904](#))

1796

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))

- Try the door (turn to [1427](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3663](#))

1797

I fold my arms, intended firmly to say nothing. But somehow, watching Harris' face, I cannot bring myself to do it. I want to confess. I want to tell him everything I can, to explain myself to him, to earn his forgiveness. The sensation is so strong my will is powerless in the face of it.

Something is wrong with me, I am sure of it. There is a strange, bitter flavour on my tongue. I taste it as words start to form.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [1716](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3566](#))

1798

- The jacket (turn to [3182](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3887](#))

1799

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as

myself?

- Yes (turn to [574](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [3923](#))

1800

“I imagine I’ll smell worse after another couple of days of this.”

“That won’t be necessary. We found the missing component. Or rather, Hooper found it for us. He snuck out of his tent first thing in the morning and retrieved it from on top. Of all the damnest places - you would never have known it was there. He acted all surprised about it when we jumped him, of course, as you might expect - but it was good enough for me.”

- Be glad (turn to [2461](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1220](#))

1801

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It’s not a big window, but I’m not a big man. If I was Harris, I’d be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [2444](#))

- Lie (turn to [3935](#))
- Evade (turn to [3251](#))

1802

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [505](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2363](#))

1803

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3350](#))

1804

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2066](#))

1805

"Damn right I'm sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He's always been jealous of me. He's..."

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. "Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?" It's difficult not to shake the sense that he's mocking me. "Or of your brain? Or something else?"

- "Of my genius." (turn to [2897](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [2925](#))
- Evade (turn to [273](#))

1806

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3698](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4493](#))

1807

“Listen to me, Hooper. We were the only men in that hut today, so we know what happened. But I want you to know this. I put the component inside a breeze-block in the foundations of Hut 2, wrapped in one of your shirts. They’re going to find it eventually, and that’s going to be what tips the balance. And there’s nothing you can do to stop any of that from happening.”

His eyes bulge with terror. “What did I do, to you? What did I ever do?”

- Tell the truth (turn to [2757](#))
- Lie (turn to [4754](#))
- Evade (turn to [4238](#))

1808

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2400](#))

1809

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3218](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1558](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2945](#))

1810

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my bucket and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [193](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [4226](#))

1811

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [983](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1899](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))

1812

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3187](#))

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1920](#))
- Something else (turn to [4872](#))

1813

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [1334](#))
- Lie (turn to [1334](#))
- Evade (turn to [1368](#))

1814

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [4306](#))
- Evade (turn to [4623](#))

1815

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1851](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [1052](#))

1816

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [424](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [2658](#))

1817

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I've done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4496](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

1818

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3756](#))
- No (turn to [511](#))
- Lie (turn to [3756](#))

1819

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [82](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2953](#))
- Lie (turn to [2096](#))

1820

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- Something else (turn to [3279](#))

1821

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

1822

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [3675](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4873](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [1051](#))

1823

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3078](#))

1824

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [1664](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3688](#))
- Evade (turn to [1031](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2494](#))

1825

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [3236](#))

1826

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4984](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3480](#))
- Something else (turn to [331](#))

1827

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2662](#))
- No (turn to [3018](#))
- Lie (turn to [3018](#))

1828

I take the cup, and raise it to my lips, blowing away the steam. It is too hot to drink. He

picks his own up and just holds it.

“Quite a difficult situation, this,” he begins, cautiously. I’ve seen him adopting this stiff tone of voice before, but only when talking to brass. “I’m sure you agree.”

- Agree (turn to [4922](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1324](#))
- Lie (turn to [1324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2185](#))

1829

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2348](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [2712](#))

1830

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [2479](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4005](#))

1831

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken

window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [1074](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [689](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1520](#))

1832

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

1833

Still there means no-one has found it, which means it is probably well-hidden. And short of skipping the compound now, I can afford to leave it hidden there a while longer. So I leave it in place.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [4957](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [2218](#))

1834

- The jacket (turn to [3381](#))

1835

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2729](#))
- Something else (turn to [2477](#))

1836

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3128](#))
- Something else (turn to [2153](#))

1837

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

1838

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [917](#))

1839

"I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander," I reply with a sneer. "They don't train you to think in the Armed Forces."

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [679](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [388](#))

1840

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1696](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2991](#))

1841

"So would you after the night I've had."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more

games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Confess (turn to [563](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))

1842

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4919](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4129](#))
- Lie (turn to [4919](#))
- Evade (turn to [3074](#))

1843

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for

him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4310](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [4310](#))

1844

No time to waste. I drop to my knees and check the breeze-block. Sure enough, there’s nothing there. *Hooper took the bait.*

Suddenly, there’s a movement behind me. I look up to see, first a snub pistol, and then, Harris.

“Messy without one missing whatever it was,” he declares. “I wouldn’t have fathomed it but Hooper did. Explained it right after we sprung him doing what you’re doing now. We weren’t sure what to believe but now, you seem to have resolved that for us.”

- Agree (turn to [272](#))
- Lie (turn to [1478](#))
- Evade (turn to [2016](#))

1845

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [3871](#))
- No (turn to [3755](#))

1846

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [396](#))

1847

“Then you know I’m right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?”

“We don’t know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [144](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

1848

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3191](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4171](#))

1849

“I did. I know what you’re thinking. If I’ve transgressed once then I must be the guilty man for all the crimes in this compound... But I’m not, I tell you. We were close to cracking the 13th’s missive; trying our latest pattern and beginning to see some correlations in the data - and then Hooper disappeared for a moment and the machine went down.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [4316](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [597](#))

1850

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1370](#))
- Something else (turn to [1512](#))

1851

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1769](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4648](#))

1852

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [1607](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [428](#))

1853

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4364](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2557](#))

1854

- The jacket (turn to [1470](#))
- The bucket (turn to [518](#))

1855

But of course I will. A little vengeance, disguised as doing something good.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. "I still have the intercept in my pocket," I remark. "Wherever we're going, could I have a pencil?"

He looks me in the eye.

"I'll give you a stone to chisel notches in the wall. And that's all the calculations you'll be doing. And as you sit there, pissing into a bucket and growing a beard down to your toes, you have a think about how a *smart* man would conduct his illicit affairs. With a bit of due decorum you could have learnt off any squaddie. You scientists." He drags me up to my feet. "You think you have to re-invent everything."

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can't help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

1856

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3423](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2844](#))

1857

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2606](#))

1858

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don't tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don't think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [3723](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

1859

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2661](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4387](#))

1860

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [1483](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

1861

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4004](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1504](#))
- Something else (turn to [2913](#))

1862

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’ll never know if I hadn’t have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out

for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [3197](#))
- Lie (turn to [2963](#))
- Evade (turn to [3780](#))

1863

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [2928](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [266](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2847](#))

1864

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [2747](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [2137](#))

1865

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I

watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [1312](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4372](#))
- Wait (turn to [2086](#))

1866

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4891](#))

1867

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3517](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3802](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1868

"I am what I am," I reply. "I'm the way nature made me. But they're going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don't let them hang me."

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2383](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1022](#))

1869

"For God's sake," I answer, voice quivering. "I'm no traitor."

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1093](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2399](#))
- Lie (turn to [2399](#))
- Evade (turn to [3466](#))

1870

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [1126](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1804](#))

1871

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

1872

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [794](#))
- No (turn to [126](#))
- Lie (turn to [126](#))

1873

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man.

And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- Something else (turn to [2822](#))

1874

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [1818](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4933](#))

1875

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But you’re not my priest and I’m not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2610](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

1876

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1405](#))
- No (turn to [3671](#))
- Lie (turn to [3671](#))

1877

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [4621](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

1878

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2610](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

1879

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1540](#))

1880

"Now steady on," I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1894](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3269](#))

1881

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3377](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4400](#))

1882

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2896](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- Something else (turn to [2690](#))

1883

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4042](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [3131](#))

1884

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- Something else (turn to [4872](#))

1885

- The jacket (turn to [4531](#))

1886

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3657](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2708](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

1887

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [917](#))

1888

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2721](#))
- Something else (turn to [2668](#))

1889

"I'm fine," I reply. "This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better."

"I couldn't agree more." And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2090](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [635](#))
- Lie (turn to [635](#))
- Evade (turn to [3762](#))

1890

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2125](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2093](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

1891

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [686](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4911](#))
- Something else (turn to [228](#))

1892

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [3744](#))

1893

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [227](#))
- Disagree (turn to [404](#))
- Lie (turn to [4666](#))

1894

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3004](#))
- No (turn to [2816](#))
- Lie (turn to [4899](#))

1895

I suppose this must be what it feels like to have a conscience, then. Very well.

“Harris, sir. I don’t know what Hooper’s playing at, sir. But I can’t let him do this.”

“Do what?”

“Take the rope for this. I took it, sir.

The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

“I thought as much. I hadn’t expected you to give it out so easily, however. You understand, Hooper has said nothing, of course. In fact, he went to Hut 2 directly after we released him and uncovered the component. But he told us you had instructed him where to go. Hence my little double bluff. Frankly, I’ll be glad when I’m shot of the lot of you mathematicians.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

1896

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3875](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [1482](#))

1897

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2735](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1620](#))
- Lie (turn to [2735](#))
- Evade (turn to [3442](#))

1898

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1305](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3715](#))

1899

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4512](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

1900

"I've done nothing that I'm ashamed of."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [2389](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

1901

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. Fighting as hard as I can, it does no good. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [2050](#))
- No (turn to [2520](#))

- Lie (turn to [1100](#))

1902

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2205](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [933](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

1903

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

1904

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [215](#))

1905

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1931](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3665](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

1906

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4781](#))

1907

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [443](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [2877](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

1908

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [3844](#))

1909

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3210](#))

1910

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3390](#))
- No (turn to [1711](#))
- Lie (turn to [1711](#))

1911

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [4630](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4774](#))

1912

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and

understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4033](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4492](#))

1913

“Someone threw this in through the window over night,” I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn’t see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there’s no-one else it could have been.”

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [3989](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [2359](#))

1914

“I don’t need twelve minutes. The component is in the long grass behind Hooper’s tent. I threw it there hoping to somehow frame him, but now I see that won’t be possible. I was naive, I suppose.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

1915

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4168](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1900](#))
- Evade (turn to [3237](#))

1916

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3369](#))

1917

In case I’m being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It’s a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that’s difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3582](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2010](#))

1918

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4808](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3556](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4808](#))
- Lie (turn to [3556](#))

1919

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3504](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [973](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [4833](#))

1920

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1884](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- Something else (turn to [4872](#))

1921

“When you have eliminated the impossible...” I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2776](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [154](#))

1922

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

1923

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3501](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1822](#))
- Lie (turn to [3501](#))
- Evade (turn to [1706](#))

1924

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3512](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [1068](#))

1925

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2726](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [2726](#))

1926

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [705](#))

1927

“I certainly don’t. But still, I’m surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he’ll face the rope, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he did, and you’re now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one fashion, and that is his being dim-witted and slow. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [3323](#))
- Don't check (turn to [631](#))

1928

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [4549](#))
- Give up (turn to [51](#))

1929

“No, I suppose not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her

Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [1041](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1133](#))
- Lie (turn to [1133](#))

1930

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1333](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2037](#))
- Lie (turn to [1333](#))
- Evade (turn to [3620](#))

1931

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [2995](#))
- Shrug (turn to [2189](#))

1932

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1053](#))
- Try the window (turn to [3049](#))

1933

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1117](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [1777](#))

1934

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2486](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))

1935

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large

enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [4543](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [3052](#))

1936

“It doesn’t matter. Just remember what I said. I’ve beaten you, Hooper. Remember that.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2453](#))

1937

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [2903](#))
- Shrug (turn to [486](#))

1938

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any

chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

1939

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4027](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3450](#))
- Something else (turn to [3527](#))

1940

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [5028](#))
- Accept it (turn to [3699](#))
- Evade it (turn to [401](#))

1941

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3175](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

1942

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4544](#))
- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- Something else (turn to [1277](#))

1943

“Awkward,” I reply, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“There really isn’t any time to be wasted,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [4504](#))
- No (turn to [2237](#))
- Evade (turn to [2102](#))
- Lie (turn to [2237](#))

1944

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [4371](#))
- No (turn to [4786](#))
- Evade (turn to [2577](#))

1945

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2795](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1563](#))

1946

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1789](#))
- No (turn to [322](#))
- Lie (turn to [314](#))

1947

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1139](#))
- No (turn to [2452](#))

1948

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [783](#))

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))

1949

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [1642](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4536](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4086](#))

1950

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1974](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [269](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3754](#))

1951

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s

where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3377](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4400](#))

1952

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [543](#))
- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- Something else (turn to [4885](#))

1953

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3289](#))
- No (turn to [3988](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))

- That's not it (turn to [4461](#))

1954

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [198](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [3747](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

1955

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4136](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4724](#))

1956

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the

wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [471](#))

1957

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [4124](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [981](#))

1958

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2306](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1498](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))

1959

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2497](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [894](#))

1960

“Nothing,” I reply. “You’re just the other man in the room. One of us has to get the blame.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4974](#))

1961

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))
- Confess (turn to [2387](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [2226](#))

1962

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [3217](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1624](#))

1963

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3854](#))
- No (turn to [4788](#))
- Lie (turn to [4788](#))

1964

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the

paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3797](#))

1965

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [968](#))

1966

"He's petty enough, certainly. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [781](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1721](#))
- Lie (turn to [1721](#))

1967

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1466](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1055](#))

1968

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2806](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))

1969

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3854](#))
- No (turn to [1485](#))
- Lie (turn to [1485](#))

1970

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

1971

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [632](#))
- No (turn to [3671](#))
- Lie (turn to [3671](#))

1972

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

1973

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“Did you?” The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. “I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [1496](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [4565](#))

1974

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [2812](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [3264](#))

1975

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [593](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [758](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1976

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2091](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4308](#))

1977

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [4035](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1118](#))
- Wait (turn to [4240](#))

1978

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1282](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- Something else (turn to [4508](#))

1979

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [4887](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [3168](#))
- Wait (turn to [2842](#))

1980

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3855](#))
- Something else (turn to [368](#))

1981

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [954](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [1148](#))

1982

"And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren't enough senior officers to go round."

"Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that," Harris replies. "That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I'm inclined to believe them. But that's all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [3814](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [2405](#))

1983

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3703](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2936](#))

1984

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3710](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3866](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1248](#))

1985

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2606](#))

1986

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [3149](#))
- No (turn to [4659](#))
- Lie (turn to [4659](#))

1987

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4335](#))

1988

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [1479](#))

- Don't take the cup (turn to [3750](#))

1989

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [393](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [741](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

1990

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3847](#))

1991

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem

to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2424](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [2424](#))

1992

"Hooper, I'll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn't. But once this is done I'll be rich, and I'll split that with you. I'll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won't hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it's the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that's what's valuable. So how about it?"

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. "You're asking me to commit treason?"

- Yes (turn to [1945](#))
- No (turn to [4816](#))
- Lie (turn to [836](#))
- Evade (turn to [836](#))

1993

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my shoe and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [3815](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [2775](#))

1994

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [4912](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [4093](#))

1995

"Awkward," I reply, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"There really isn't any time to be wasted," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [1355](#))
- No (turn to [4013](#))
- Evade (turn to [4890](#))
- Lie (turn to [4013](#))

1996

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [5006](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [326](#))

1997

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper

finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [1896](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3875](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

1998

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [716](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3708](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

1999

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [696](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2140](#))
- Lie (turn to [696](#))
- Evade (turn to [4937](#))

2000

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3059](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4012](#))

2001

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [528](#))

2002

"Damn right I'm sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He's always been jealous of me. He's..."

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. "Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?" It's difficult not to shake the sense that he's mocking me. "Or of your brain? Or something else?"

- "Of my genius." (turn to [1574](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [1342](#))
- Evade (turn to [4826](#))

2003

"I suppose I do rather." I laugh, but Harris does not.

"This damn business gets worse and worse," he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. "Hooper's confessed, you know."

- Be eager (turn to [4840](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1257](#))

2004

"No," Harris declares, finally. "I think you're lying about Hooper. I think you're a clever, scheming young man - that's why we hired you - and you're looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I'm not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice."

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Confess (turn to [4856](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))

2005

"Now steady on," I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've

passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2074](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4728](#))

2006

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4008](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4115](#))

2007

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4579](#))
- No (turn to [2361](#))
- Lie (turn to [2361](#))

2008

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2671](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

2009

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

2010

Still there means no-one has found it, which means it is probably well-hidden. And short of skipping the compound now, I can afford to leave it hidden there a while longer. So I leave it in place.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [4089](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [2432](#))

2011

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for

being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3023](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4421](#))

2012

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4767](#))

2013

"Just adding to the drama," I tell him, confidently. "I'm sure you can understand that."

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

2014

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2164](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [385](#))

2015

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1821](#))

2016

“Harris, you’d better watch out. He’s planted a time-bomb here.”

Harris stares at me for a moment, then laughs. “Oh, goodness. That’s rich.”

I almost wish I had a way to make the hut explode, but of course I don’t.

“Enough.” Harris gestures for me to start walking. “This story couldn’t be simpler. You took it to cover your back. You hid it. You lied to get Hooper into trouble, and when you thought you’d won, you came to scoop your prize. A good hand but ultimately, you told Hooper where to look with your little riddle.”

He leads me across the yard. Back towards Hut 5 to be decoded, and taken to pieces, once again.

The End

2017

“No. I didn’t.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1020](#))

2018

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [247](#))

2019

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [242](#))

2020

I leave the cup exactly where it is. "Why?" I ask coldly. "What's in it?"

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. "Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [4117](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2289](#))
- Evade (turn to [3456](#))

2021

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be

getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1062](#))
- Try the window (turn to [4126](#))

2022

“No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

2023

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1709](#))
- Something else (turn to [3170](#))

2024

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4323](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [1299](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [2566](#))

2025

I head on around the back of the hut. The breeze-block with the cavity is on the left side.

- Check (turn to [4002](#))
- Look around (turn to [310](#))

2026

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [475](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4176](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1462](#))

2027

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- Something else (turn to [4924](#))

2028

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4953](#))
- Something else (turn to [4643](#))

2029

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I don't want to go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [669](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2030

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I don’t like to talk of myself like this, but I carry on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1519](#))
- Lie (turn to [1519](#))
- Evade (turn to [1371](#))

2031

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1968](#))
- Try the door (turn to [906](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))

2032

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me.

“Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [4227](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [2309](#))
- Evade (turn to [3980](#))

2033

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- Something else (turn to [4363](#))

2034

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [2871](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1076](#))
- Evade (turn to [1809](#))

2035

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I

watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [3458](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [3831](#))
- Wait (turn to [730](#))

2036

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- Something else (turn to [1070](#))

2037

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [2794](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [541](#))
- Lie (turn to [46](#))
- Evade (turn to [4926](#))

2038

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3782](#))

2039

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2035](#))

2040

"I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

2041

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2528](#))
- No (turn to [892](#))
- Lie (turn to [892](#))

2042

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3150](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [752](#))

2043

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1025](#))

2044

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2591](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- Something else (turn to [4590](#))

2045

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn't. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn't bear the thought of it. I love working here. I've never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn't want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [1605](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [2549](#))
- Lie (turn to [2549](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1605](#))

2046

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4370](#))

- No (turn to [579](#))
- Lie (turn to [579](#))

2047

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [995](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4058](#))
- Something else (turn to [3448](#))

2048

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [893](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1973](#))

2049

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1350](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

2050

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4469](#))
- No (turn to [3883](#))

2051

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [536](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1785](#))

2052

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in.

No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [1206](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4114](#))
- Wait (turn to [4738](#))

2053

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [1372](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [1122](#))

2054

"Very well. I see there's no point in covering up. You know everything anyway."

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [4397](#))
- No (turn to [1876](#))
- Lie (turn to [4710](#))

2055

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

2056

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3238](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3097](#))

2057

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [4110](#))
- Shrug (turn to [2189](#))

2058

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

2059

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [2256](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [344](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

2060

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [2464](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3495](#))

2061

"All right. I'll tell you what happened." And never mind my shame, I think.

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [4361](#))
- No (turn to [4299](#))
- Lie (turn to [4158](#))

2062

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [562](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4802](#))

2063

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

2064

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [3645](#))
- Evade (turn to [2540](#))

2065

“I saw him take it,” I reply, stubbornly. “Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, ‘What’s that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn’t have?’ He didn’t reply.”

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1982](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [646](#))

2066

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I’m away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [4550](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [3157](#))

2067

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not

interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3440](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [3440](#))
- Evade (turn to [620](#))

2068

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

2069

“I’m sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He’s probably passed it on already. You’ll have to ask him.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [5030](#))

2070

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness

I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3854](#))
- No (turn to [4788](#))
- Lie (turn to [4788](#))

2071

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [3981](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2495](#))
- Lie (turn to [2495](#))
- Evade (turn to [2498](#))

2072

It’s no good. That’s only half a solution. I couldn’t be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3720](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [25](#))

2073

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [612](#))
- Try the window (turn to [219](#))

2074

"All right. I'll tell you what happened." And never mind my shame, I think.

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3401](#))
- No (turn to [2751](#))
- Lie (turn to [2935](#))

2075

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4323](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [1299](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [2566](#))

2076

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do...”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [896](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [317](#))
- Be honest (turn to [317](#))
- Lie (turn to [896](#))

2077

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I’d cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3506](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [378](#))

2078

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I

support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2663](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [572](#))

2079

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [2152](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4009](#))

2080

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4608](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [957](#))

2081

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1181](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4594](#))

2082

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [2815](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4009](#))

2083

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2657](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [336](#))

2084

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2085

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can't stand that I'm cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You're suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country's future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [1227](#))
- No (turn to [1929](#))
- Evade (turn to [3605](#))

2086

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose

by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1331](#))

2087

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3841](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2088

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4733](#))

2089

“No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [4466](#))
- Lie (turn to [4466](#))
- Evade (turn to [4805](#))

2090

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [3675](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4873](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [1051](#))

2091

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [2667](#))

2092

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- The pillow (turn to [618](#))
- Something else (turn to [146](#))

2093

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [3175](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

2094

"So would you," I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

"I've been through worse than this," he replies matter-of-factly. "It's hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes."

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from

outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1308](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4080](#))

2095

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [501](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4940](#))
- Something else (turn to [660](#))

2096

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4517](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

2097

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

2098

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2711](#))

2099

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [871](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [650](#))
- Lie (turn to [650](#))

2100

But what is a country, after all? A country is not a concept, not an ideal. Every country falls, its borders shift and move, its language disappears to be replaced by another. Neither the Reich nor the British Empire will survive forever, so what use is my loyalty to either?

I may as well, therefore, look after myself. Something I have attempted, but failed miserably, to do.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [3491](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3357](#))

2101

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

2102

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [1889](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [1654](#))
- Be honest (turn to [1654](#))
- Lie (turn to [1889](#))

2103

“You’re right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3060](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

2104

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4742](#))
- No (turn to [2592](#))

2105

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2481](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [305](#))

2106

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [4650](#))
- Find something (turn to [4175](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [916](#))

2107

- The jacket (turn to [3905](#))

2108

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

2109

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2581](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1079](#))

2110

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [218](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [1688](#))

2111

It’s no good. That’s only half a solution. I couldn’t be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [2152](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [526](#))

2112

“I’m looking forward to having a bath.”

“Well, you should enjoy it. We found the missing component. Or rather, Hooper found it for us. He snuck out of his tent first thing in the morning and retrieved it from on top. Of all the damnest places - you would never have known it was there. He acted all surprised about it when we jumped him, of course, as you might expect - but it was good enough for me.”

- Be glad (turn to [2461](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1220](#))

2113

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- Something else (turn to [3315](#))

2114

I shake my head violently, to say no, that’s not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris’ face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no

meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4596](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2648](#))
- Lie (turn to [2530](#))

2115

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [370](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [4807](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

2116

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3125](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3385](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4884](#))

2117

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3022](#))

2118

"I saw Hooper take it."

"I see." He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the "brains" he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Persist with this (turn to [1849](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [409](#))

2119

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

2120

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- Something else (turn to [4838](#))

2121

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [570](#))

2122

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [1381](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4705](#))
- Wait (turn to [2724](#))

2123

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has

been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won’t go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2311](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2051](#))

2124

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2023](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3528](#))
- Something else (turn to [3170](#))

2125

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1941](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

2126

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing

component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [3420](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

2127

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [276](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3057](#))
- Evade (turn to [4393](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [868](#))

2128

"You're right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful

out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2987](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1377](#))

2129

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

2130

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2749](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2131

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape.

But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [2797](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1532](#))

2132

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3199](#))

2133

"I'll work as hard as I work."

"Get out," Harris growls. "Before I decide to arrest you as an accessory."

I do as he says. Outside the barrack, the air has never smelt sweeter.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [1656](#))
- No (turn to [3564](#))

- Lie (turn to [3889](#))
- Evade (turn to [2944](#))

2134

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- Something else (turn to [1276](#))

2135

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1436](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

2136

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [135](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

2137

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [3956](#))
- Deny it (turn to [2748](#))

2138

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [605](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

2139

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [643](#))

- The jacket (turn to [4073](#))

2140

“I know where it is.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4837](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2628](#))

2141

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Confess (turn to [563](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))

2142

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component

inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1935](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3427](#))

2143

Still there means no-one has found it, which means it is probably well-hidden. And short of skipping the compound now, I can afford to leave it hidden there a while longer. So I leave it in place.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [4109](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4314](#))

2144

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2209](#))
- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4929](#))
- Something else (turn to [3734](#))

2145

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [4807](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [2618](#))

2146

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1278](#))

2147

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1838](#))
- Something else (turn to [3967](#))

2148

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1770](#))

2149

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1006](#))
- No (turn to [4626](#))
- Lie (turn to [4626](#))

2150

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [5037](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4858](#))

2151

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [4087](#))
- Lie (turn to [4087](#))
- Evade (turn to [3342](#))

2152

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [940](#))

2153

- The jacket (turn to [3485](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2313](#))

2154

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m

gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4823](#))
- Don't go (turn to [4917](#))

2155

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4496](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

2156

- The jacket (turn to [3120](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2760](#))

2157

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2558](#))

2158

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1879](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2353](#))

2159

"I've done nothing that I'm ashamed of."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [4480](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

2160

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3234](#))

- Find something to help (turn to [2713](#))

2161

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Persist with this (turn to [3598](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [5010](#))

2162

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won’t go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4203](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

2163

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4398](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

2164

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4056](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3460](#))
- Evade (turn to [3460](#))

2165

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2366](#))
- Something else (turn to [3315](#))

2166

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

2167

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s humouring me.

“Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [3206](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [24](#))
- Evade (turn to [3918](#))

2168

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn’t know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [2862](#))
- No (turn to [2733](#))
- Evade (turn to [86](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2808](#))

2169

“I don’t need twelve minutes. The component is in the long grass behind Hooper’s tent. I threw it there hoping to somehow frame him, but now I see that won’t be possible. I was naive, I suppose.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

2170

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3118](#))
- No (turn to [4396](#))

2171

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4587](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1620](#))
- Lie (turn to [4587](#))
- Evade (turn to [2909](#))

2172

I will have to leave that question for another day. To return there now, when they’re

probably watching my every step, would be suicide. After all, if Hooper followed my clue, he will have explained it to them to save his neck. They won't believe him - but they won't quite disbelieve him either. We're locked in a cycle now, him and me, of half-truth and probability. There's nothing either of us can do to put the other entirely into blame.

Nothing, that is, except to act as if there is no game being played. I'll have a bath, then start work as normal. I've got a week to find something to give my blackmailer - or give him nothing: it seems my superiors know about my indiscretions now already. Something will turn up.

- Definitely (turn to [2478](#))
- Unlikely (turn to [3208](#))
- Lie (turn to [1423](#))
- Evade (turn to [1717](#))

2173

"So would you," I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

"I've been through worse than this," he replies matter-of-factly. "It's hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes."

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. "Hooper's confessed, you know."

- Be eager (turn to [2745](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1976](#))

2174

"I don't know what I'm suggesting. I don't understand what's going on."

"But of course you do." Harris narrows his eyes. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))

- "I don't." (turn to [4178](#))
- Lie (turn to [4178](#))
- Evade (turn to [2519](#))

2175

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. I've cracked him a little at least. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [4821](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

2176

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4781](#))

2177

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [871](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [650](#))
- Lie (turn to [650](#))

2178

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4354](#))

2179

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the

wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [143](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [2246](#))

2180

No. What would be the use? He will be long gone, and the name he told me is no doubt hokum. No: I was alone before in guilt, and I am thus alone again.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

2181

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4981](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2442](#))

2182

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3900](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [3498](#))

2183

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1613](#))
- No (turn to [3714](#))
- Lie (turn to [3714](#))

2184

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3520](#))

2185

"I'm sure you've handled worse," I reply casually, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"I'm sorry to pull you up so roughly," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [1795](#))
- No (turn to [2937](#))
- Evade (turn to [1747](#))
- Lie (turn to [2937](#))

2186

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling but he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [2740](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4796](#))
- Evade (turn to [1922](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1903](#))

2187

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2384](#))
- Something else (turn to [603](#))

2188

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2268](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4215](#))
- Something else (turn to [1276](#))

2189

“It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I

lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [5030](#))

2190

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [664](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1577](#))

2191

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1218](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2155](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [1733](#))

2192

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [924](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4277](#))
- Lie (turn to [4277](#))
- Evade (turn to [3651](#))

2193

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2608](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2253](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

2194

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [43](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

2195

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather

like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [3308](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4003](#))

2196

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2215](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2334](#))

2197

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2058](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

2198

"Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly." I fold my arms. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [4644](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

2199

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [669](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2200

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [482](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [4616](#))

2201

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3534](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3269](#))

2202

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1249](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4207](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4481](#))

2203

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2744](#))

- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [2744](#))

2204

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [4807](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [2145](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3978](#))

2205

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [4660](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

2206

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [450](#))

2207

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [468](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [2316](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [2838](#))

2208

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4410](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))

- Wait (turn to [566](#))

2209

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3179](#))
- Something else (turn to [3734](#))

2210

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [3657](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2708](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

2211

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3793](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

2212

"We're still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if

we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

2213

“I don’t know what I’m suggesting. I don’t understand what’s going on.”

“But of course you do.” Harris narrows his eyes. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4949](#))
- Lie (turn to [4949](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

2214

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not

interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [1105](#))
- Evade (turn to [2465](#))

2215

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [2464](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2334](#))

2216

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4502](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1793](#))
- Wait (turn to [1087](#))

2217

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1774](#))

- Tell the truth (turn to [1329](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

2218

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4823](#))
- Don't go (turn to [690](#))

2219

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [3453](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [280](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [4377](#))

2220

"All right." With a sigh, your defiance collapses. "If you're searched my things then I suppose you've found... what you need.

Harris nods once. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2697](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2854](#))

- Lie (turn to [1306](#))

2221

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

2222

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2595](#))

2223

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- Something else (turn to [1798](#))

2224

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [129](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [546](#))

2225

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [3359](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3516](#))

2226

“Look, I know where it is. The missing piece of the Bombe is in the long grasses behind Hooper’s tent. I saw him throw it there right after we finished work. He knew you’d scour the camp but I suppose he thought you’d more obvious places first. I suppose he was right about that. Look there. That *proves* his guilt.”

“That doesn’t prove anything,” Harris returns sharply. “But we’ll check what you say, all the same.” He gets to his feet and heads out of the door.

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1318](#))

2227

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4241](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3543](#))

2228

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3351](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3975](#))

2229

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3455](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [509](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

2230

“I’m fine,” I reply. “This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better.”

“I couldn’t agree more.” And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2090](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [771](#))
- Lie (turn to [771](#))
- Evade (turn to [1402](#))

2231

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2489](#))
- Lie (turn to [2489](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

2232

"We're still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must."

"I've had enough of your voice for one day," Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2052](#))

2233

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night

and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [4948](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4301](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3583](#))

2234

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- Something else (turn to [454](#))

2235

“No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don't start that again.”

“It's the truth, Harris. If I'm going to jail, then so be it, but I won't hang at Traitor's Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [1200](#))
- Lie (turn to [1200](#))
- Evade (turn to [61](#))

2236

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [3252](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [4795](#))

2237

“No, I don't. I've got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don't you think?” Harris replies.

“They'll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn't stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [3997](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1768](#))
- Lie (turn to [1768](#))
- Evade (turn to [1923](#))

2238

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [2095](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3672](#))

2239

"It will. Hooper's running scared," I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

2240

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [584](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4198](#))

2241

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [143](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [2246](#))

2242

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3751](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [3751](#))

2243

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [4730](#))
- Shrug (turn to [486](#))

2244

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2576](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

2245

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [4475](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4682](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3146](#))

2246

I set the cup carefully down on the table once more. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [3971](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1742](#))
- Evade (turn to [1742](#))

2247

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1131](#))

2248

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- Something else (turn to [4924](#))

2249

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2657](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [336](#))

2250

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [1972](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))

2251

- The jacket (turn to [2368](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1524](#))

2252

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [2820](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4339](#))
- Evade (turn to [4342](#))

2253

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4598](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

2254

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean

kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4733](#))

2255

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

2256

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [344](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [1688](#))

2257

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- The pillow (turn to [105](#))
- Something else (turn to [100](#))

2258

I lean back. "It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2719](#))

2259

"We're still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must."

"I've had enough of your voice for one day," Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little

riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [3844](#))

2260

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2497](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [894](#))

2261

“Yes.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1697](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2825](#))

2262

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

2263

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4559](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [1805](#))
- Be honest (turn to [1805](#))
- Lie (turn to [4559](#))

2264

In case I’m being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It’s a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that’s difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [2707](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2143](#))

2265

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3508](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1811](#))

2266

Of course not. I am alone; that is what they wanted me to be, because of who and what I love. So I have no nation, no country.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [2638](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2176](#))

2267

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [3123](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2380](#))

2268

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2134](#))
- Something else (turn to [1276](#))

2269

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [672](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4210](#))

2270

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1699](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3786](#))

2271

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [123](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4671](#))

2272

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3731](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [2877](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

2273

Of course not. I am alone; that is what they wanted me to be, because of who and what I love. So I have no nation, no country.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [3491](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3357](#))

2274

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1360](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- Something else (turn to [1798](#))

2275

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [1979](#))

2276

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4851](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

2277

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- Something else (turn to [3286](#))

2278

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- Something else (turn to [2575](#))

2279

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [2229](#))
- Lie (turn to [2229](#))
- Evade (turn to [494](#))

2280

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1077](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [64](#))

2281

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

2282

“Then let him think he’s off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you’ll get your

man.”

Somehow, I think. But that’s the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Especially since this is a plan that involves keeping you in handcuffs. I don’t see what I have to lose.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3073](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [3769](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [1033](#))

2283

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))

- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

2284

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [1859](#))
- Find something (turn to [2343](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [4576](#))

2285

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [2622](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [738](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [4506](#))

2286

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [4137](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [3421](#))
- Lie (turn to [3421](#))

2287

"I'm not saying anything of the sort," I snap back. "What is this, Harris? You're accusing me of treachery but I don't see a shred of evidence for it! Why don't you put your cards on the table?"

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1104](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3790](#))
- Lie (turn to [3985](#))

2288

"Very well. I see there's no point in covering up. You know everything anyway."

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [1157](#))
- No (turn to [3908](#))
- Lie (turn to [4806](#))

2289

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4921](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2290

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

2291

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [139](#))

2292

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1492](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2293

“Yes. I didn’t have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

2294

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [722](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

2295

“Well?”

“We'll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3917](#))
- No (turn to [530](#))
- Lie (turn to [3917](#))

2296

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling because he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. “Iain,” he murmurs. “You couldn't...”

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What's this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here

in irons, he'll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [1476](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4045](#))
- Evade (turn to [4242](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [413](#))

2297

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [2877](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [443](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1907](#))

2298

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3808](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1744](#))

2299

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

2300

I fold my arms, intended firmly to say nothing. But somehow, watching Harris' face, I cannot bring myself to do it. I want to confess. I want to tell him everything I can, to explain myself to him, to earn his forgiveness. The sensation is so strong my will is powerless in the face of it.

Something is wrong with me, I am sure of it. There is a strange, bitter flavour on my tongue. I taste it as words start to form.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [1472](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3042](#))

2301

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Confess (turn to [4399](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))

2302

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [1818](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4933](#))

2303

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2407](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4181](#))
- Lie (turn to [2407](#))
- Evade (turn to [3497](#))

2304

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [236](#))
- No (turn to [3578](#))
- Lie (turn to [4588](#))
- Evade (turn to [4588](#))

2305

I don’t take it. I’m not having my time wasted by signs and signals. I’ve been waiting here for long enough already, after being rudely pulled from my bunk. I touch a fingertip

down on the table and look him in the eye.

“What’s going on, Harris?”

“Quite a difficult situation, this,” he begins, cautiously. I’ve seen him adopting this stiff tone of voice before, but only when talking to brass. “I’m sure you agree.”

- Agree (turn to [1943](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4099](#))
- Lie (turn to [4099](#))
- Evade (turn to [727](#))

2306

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [457](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))

2307

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [415](#))

- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [415](#))

2308

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4951](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3715](#))

2309

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I’m aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2489](#))
- Lie (turn to [2489](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

2310

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [4913](#))
- Lie (turn to [4913](#))
- Evade (turn to [479](#))

2311

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1416](#))
- No (turn to [5023](#))
- Lie (turn to [4789](#))

2312

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [548](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3188](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [4827](#))

2313

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3485](#))

2314

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3390](#))
- No (turn to [1711](#))
- Lie (turn to [1711](#))

2315

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in.

No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [807](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1229](#))
- Wait (turn to [1646](#))

2316

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling because he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [652](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [462](#))
- Evade (turn to [363](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4818](#))

2317

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1916](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2075](#))
- Lie (turn to [1916](#))
- Evade (turn to [1175](#))

2318

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I've done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?”

- Yes (turn to [155](#))
- No (turn to [3338](#))
- Evade (turn to [1506](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2916](#))

2319

“You're right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [496](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1246](#))

2320

"All right. All right. That's exactly what happened."

"Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [2797](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1532](#))

2321

"Well?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [600](#))
- No (turn to [1075](#))
- Lie (turn to [600](#))

2322

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside,

of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [4900](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))

2323

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3953](#))
- No (turn to [3945](#))
- Lie (turn to [3945](#))

2324

No. Why would I? He is no doubt an innocent himself, trapped by some dire circumstance. Forced to act the way he did. I have every sympathy for him.

Of course I do.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we're going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we're old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I'll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-

invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can't help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

2325

“I'm not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You're accusing me of treachery but I don't see a shred of evidence for it! Why don't you put your cards on the table?”

“It's simple enough,” Harris replies. “I've seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3799](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1771](#))
- Lie (turn to [1046](#))

2326

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

2327

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [2860](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

2328

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [483](#))
- Lie (turn to [483](#))
- Evade (turn to [479](#))

2329

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [4538](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4852](#))

2330

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1421](#))

2331

"I don't know what I'm suggesting. I don't understand what's going on."

"But of course you do." Harris narrows his eyes. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2850](#))
- Lie (turn to [2850](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

2332

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))

- Something else (turn to [1070](#))

2333

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [4912](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4395](#))

2334

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [805](#))
- The jacket (turn to [450](#))
- The bucket (turn to [130](#))

2335

"Try me. Just me and him."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4981](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2526](#))

2336

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4425](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1804](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1870](#))

2337

"Then you'd better get searching," I reply, tiring of his complaining. *A war is a war, you have to expect an enemy.* "It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1182](#))

2338

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4291](#))

2339

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [5033](#))

2340

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- Something else (turn to [3170](#))

2341

"Well, I'm glad his conscience finally caught up with him," I reply dismissively.

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [1858](#))

2342

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2677](#))

2343

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4611](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1092](#))

2344

"Yes."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing.

“Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4446](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4883](#))
- Lie (turn to [121](#))
- Evade (turn to [3306](#))

2345

- The jacket (turn to [1470](#))

2346

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

2347

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2969](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3407](#))

2348

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [784](#))

2349

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [2210](#))
- Lie (turn to [2210](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

2350

Let me see. There’s the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3079](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1533](#))

2351

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [866](#))
- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- Something else (turn to [1450](#))

2352

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [330](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1767](#))
- Something else (turn to [3142](#))

2353

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2882](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

2354

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

2355

“I’m suggesting you save your own skin. I’ve wrapped that component in one of your shirts, Hooper. They’ll be searching this place top to bottom. They’ll find it eventually, and when they do, that’s the thing that will swing it against you. So take my advice now.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2784](#))

2356

But what is a country, after all? A country is not a concept, not an ideal. Every country falls, its borders shift and move, its language disappears to be replaced by another. Neither the Reich nor the British Empire will survive forever, so what use is my loyalty to either?

I may as well, therefore, look after myself. Something I have attempted, but failed miserably, to do.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [3948](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4522](#))

2357

I will have to leave that question for another day. To return there now, when they’re probably watching my every step, would be suicide. After all, if Hooper understood my clue, he will have explained it to them to save his neck. They won’t believe him - but they won’t quite disbelieve him either. We’re locked in a cycle now, him and me, of half-truth and probability. There’s nothing either of us can do to put the other entirely into blame.

Nothing, that is, except to act as if there is no game being played. I’ll have a bath, then start work as normal. I’ve got a week to find something to give my blackmailer - or give him nothing: it seems my superiors know about my indiscretions now already. Something will turn up.

- Definitely (turn to [2478](#))
- Unlikely (turn to [3208](#))
- Lie (turn to [1423](#))
- Evade (turn to [1717](#))

2358

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [869](#))
- No (turn to [1314](#))
- Lie (turn to [869](#))

2359

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

2360

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2950](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4519](#))
- Something else (turn to [453](#))

2361

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2710](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [2710](#))

2362

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I won't go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a

frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3230](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [232](#))

2363

"I saw Hooper take it."

"Did you?" The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Tell the truth (turn to [2750](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [90](#))

2364

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

"What happened there?"

- Admit doing it (turn to [4773](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [823](#))

2365

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all."

So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [832](#))

2366

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- Something else (turn to [3315](#))

2367

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2057](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1522](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

2368

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [215](#))

2369

"Right now, I think you take that role, Harris," I reply coolly.

"Very droll," he replies. "Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent."

- Be interested (turn to [3710](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3866](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1248](#))

2370

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Drink (turn to [143](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [2246](#))

2371

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

2372

“I’ve thought so before.” Certainly in the matter of getting blackmailed.

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [27](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1285](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [5007](#))

2373

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won’t go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken

link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3041](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2425](#))

2374

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [26](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2557](#))

2375

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3220](#))

- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

2376

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1571](#))
- No (turn to [4280](#))
- Lie (turn to [4280](#))

2377

“No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don't start that again.”

“It's the truth, Harris. If I'm going to jail, then so be it, but I won't hang at Traitor's Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [3200](#))
- Lie (turn to [3200](#))
- Evade (turn to [880](#))

2378

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- The pillow (turn to [583](#))
- Something else (turn to [1756](#))

2379

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1406](#))
- Try the window (turn to [491](#))

2380

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4206](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4802](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2062](#))

2381

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2978](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4841](#))

- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

2382

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [183](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4174](#))
- Something else (turn to [3445](#))

2383

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3954](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1251](#))

2384

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- Something else (turn to [603](#))

2385

I lift the cup and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink.

“Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [252](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4906](#))
- Evade (turn to [4906](#))

2386

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [2000](#))
- Find something (turn to [1052](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [1815](#))

2387

“I don’t need twelve minutes. The component is in the long grass behind Hooper’s tent. I threw it there hoping to somehow frame him, but now I see that won’t be possible. I was naive, I suppose.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

2388

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1167](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3800](#))

2389

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [2939](#))
- Evade (turn to [1534](#))

2390

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

2391

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [1113](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3915](#))
- Evade (turn to [3007](#))

2392

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

2393

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1272](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

2394

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [4217](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

2395

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1333](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2037](#))
- Lie (turn to [1333](#))
- Evade (turn to [3620](#))

2396

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2804](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1301](#))

2397

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper’s tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [744](#))

2398

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4192](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3000](#))

2399

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

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“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2570](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4731](#))
- Lie (turn to [2570](#))
- Evade (turn to [2843](#))

2400

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1240](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2538](#))

2401

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [2447](#))

2402

"I'll talk to him."

"What?"

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3395](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [558](#))

2403

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2278](#))
- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- Something else (turn to [2575](#))

2404

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I don't want to go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my

predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3565](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1363](#))

2405

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1182](#))

2406

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1028](#))
- Something else (turn to [3503](#))

2407

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the

wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4061](#))

2408

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [901](#))

2409

"When you have eliminated the impossible..." I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1982](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [646](#))

2410

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here

in irons, he'll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [138](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2839](#))
- Evade (turn to [4191](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4154](#))

2411

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [3235](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1577](#))

2412

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2073](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [816](#))

2413

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2299](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

2414

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [2639](#))
- No (turn to [4478](#))
- Lie (turn to [2639](#))

2415

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [283](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1668](#))
- Something else (turn to [942](#))

2416

I pause to glance around, and catch a glimpse of movement. Someone ducking around the corner of the hut. Or a canvas sheet flapping in the light breeze. Impossible to be sure.

- Check the breeze-block (turn to [4557](#))
- Check around the side of the hut (turn to [1548](#))

2417

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- Something else (turn to [203](#))

2418

“No. I have no idea.”

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1988](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2653](#))
- Lie (turn to [1988](#))
- Evade (turn to [996](#))

2419

"I'd be happy to help," I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. "I'm sure there's something I could do."

"Like what, exactly?"

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [2968](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [1365](#))

2420

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3953](#))
- No (turn to [3945](#))
- Lie (turn to [3945](#))

2421

“I’m sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He’s probably passed it on already. You’ll have to ask him.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2719](#))

2422

It’s no good. That’s only half a solution. I couldn’t be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [4109](#))

2423

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2821](#))

2424

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was

Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [4220](#))
- Lie (turn to [4220](#))
- Evade (turn to [1078](#))

2425

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. Fighting as hard as I can, it does no good. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3212](#))
- No (turn to [474](#))
- Lie (turn to [1845](#))

2426

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [2295](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2526](#))

2427

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [3105](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [32](#))

2428

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- Something else (turn to [1450](#))

2429

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s

what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3924](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3924](#))

2430

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [179](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1978](#))
- Something else (turn to [4508](#))

2431

From inspiration - or desperation, I am not certain - a simple approach occurs to me. I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper’s tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2715](#))

2432

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4823](#))
- Don't go (turn to [4193](#))

2433

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- Something else (turn to [2107](#))

2434

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2188](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1624](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1962](#))

2435

"Hooper, I'll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn't. But once this is done I'll be rich, and I'll split that with you. I'll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won't hurt the war effort - you know as well

as me that the component on its own is worthless, it's the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that's what's valuable. So how about it?"

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. "You're asking me to commit treason?"

- Yes (turn to [3531](#))
- No (turn to [4352](#))
- Lie (turn to [4588](#))
- Evade (turn to [4588](#))

2436

I suppose this must be what it feels like to have a conscience, then. Very well.

"Harris, sir. I don't know what Hooper's playing at, sir. But I can't let him do this."

"Do what?"

"Take the rope for this. I took it, sir.

The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"I thought as much. I hadn't expected you to give it out so easily, however. You understand, Hooper has said nothing, of course. In fact, he went to Hut 2 directly after we released him and uncovered the component. But he told us you had instructed him where to go. Hence my little double bluff. Frankly, I'll be glad when I'm shot of the lot of you mathematicians."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

2437

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- Something else (turn to [306](#))

2438

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

2439

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [695](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3317](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

2440

"I broke it," I reply. There doesn't seem any use in trying to lie. "I thought I could escape. But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [1961](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [4390](#))

2441

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [714](#))

2442

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [1729](#))
- No (turn to [387](#))
- Lie (turn to [1729](#))

2443

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3588](#))
- No (turn to [1023](#))
- Lie (turn to [1023](#))

2444

"Please, Harris. You can't understand the pressure they put me under. You can't understand what it's like, to be in love but be able to do nothing about it..."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [16](#))
- No (turn to [467](#))
- Lie (turn to [467](#))
- Evade (turn to [3861](#))

2445

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3248](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3837](#))
- The bucket (turn to [867](#))

2446

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [147](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1213](#))

2447

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2448

I lean back. "It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [5030](#))

2449

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2029](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2199](#))
- Lie (turn to [4615](#))

2450

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))
- Confess (turn to [1914](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [3899](#))

2451

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3875](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3876](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1274](#))

2452

"No, Harris. I don't think you can understand."

"Go on with your confession," he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3305](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3305](#))

2453

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look out the window (turn to [3121](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [3463](#))
- Wait (turn to [2884](#))

2454

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [400](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2642](#))
- Lie (turn to [4620](#))

2455

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [1476](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4045](#))
- Evade (turn to [4242](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [413](#))

2456

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [1883](#))

- Be cold (turn to [4675](#))

2457

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [26](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2818](#))

2458

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3757](#))

2459

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s

Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2066](#))

2460

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3351](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [194](#))

2461

"I can't tell you enough, I'm glad to hear it. I've had a devil of a night, as you can imagine."

His gaze flicks to the broken window, but only for a moment. I think he genuinely cannot believe I could have done it.

Harris rolls his eyes, but he might almost be smiling. "You'd better get along, and work through your devils. There's a 24-hour-out-of-date message to be tackled and we're a genius short. So you'd better be ready to work twice as hard."

- Thank him (turn to [3380](#))
- Argue with him (turn to [3851](#))

2462

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [990](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2026](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [1528](#))

2463

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3230](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [232](#))

2464

Enough of this. There isn’t any time to lose. Right now they’ll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that’s it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that’s the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my fist and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and

wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [3815](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [2775](#))

2465

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [143](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [2246](#))

2466

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [475](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [2522](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1084](#))

2467

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“Did you?” The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. “I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [2288](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1736](#))

2468

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

2469

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [3971](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1742](#))

- Evade (turn to [1742](#))

2470

“I know where it is.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1192](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2300](#))

2471

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one way - and that’s that he believed me, and reasoned that he would be followed. So to try and uncover the component would have got him arrest, to confess was just the same. He simply caved, and threw in his hand.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [1123](#))
- Don't check (turn to [2914](#))

2472

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3181](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4095](#))

2473

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [418](#))

2474

"Try me. Just me and him."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3698](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4982](#))

2475

"Well, then," I answer, nervously. "What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had

the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3670](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [213](#))

2476

- The jacket (turn to [480](#))

2477

- The jacket (turn to [1205](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4908](#))

2478

It always does. An opportunity will present itself, and more easily too, now that Hooper is out of the way and not dogging my every step.

But for now, there’s yesterday’s intercept to be resolved. The Bombe needs to be set up once more and set running.

It’s time I tackled a problem I can *solve*.

The End

2479

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [808](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- The pillow (turn to [967](#))
- Something else (turn to [4363](#))

2480

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It's not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [3197](#))
- Lie (turn to [2963](#))
- Evade (turn to [3780](#))

2481

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [50](#))
- No (turn to [1127](#))
- Lie (turn to [4119](#))

2482

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3720](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

2483

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2354](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [2354](#))
- Evade (turn to [1686](#))

2484

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [2831](#))
- Find something (turn to [4122](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [328](#))

2485

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

2486

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2487

"I always meant to tell you," I tell him. "I thought perhaps I could find out who they

were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3505](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [232](#))

2488

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3408](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1833](#))

2489

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that.

We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [290](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [132](#))
- Lie (turn to [290](#))
- Evade (turn to [3071](#))

2490

“You’re the one applying pressure here,” I answer smartly. “I’m just waiting until you tell me what is really going on.”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4566](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1316](#))
- Lie (turn to [960](#))

2491

From where he’s sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [3705](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1204](#))
- Evade (turn to [2212](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4382](#))

2492

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3309](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2044](#))
- Something else (turn to [4590](#))

2493

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

2494

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

2495

"No. I have no idea."

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3465](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3586](#))
- Lie (turn to [3465](#))
- Evade (turn to [2741](#))

2496

"You're the one applying pressure here," I answer somewhat miserably. "I'm just waiting until you tell me what is really going on."

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the

story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2752](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1089](#))
- Lie (turn to [2292](#))

2497

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1683](#))

2498

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component."

"Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away..."

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2672](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3739](#))
- Lie (turn to [2672](#))
- Evade (turn to [2932](#))

2499

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2257](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- The pillow (turn to [476](#))
- Something else (turn to [100](#))

2500

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [4722](#))
- Lie (turn to [4722](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

2501

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2061](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2363](#))

2502

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3643](#))
- Something else (turn to [3677](#))

2503

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3147](#))

2504

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3784](#))

- Try the windows (turn to [373](#))

2505

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [497](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1643](#))
- Lie (turn to [2308](#))

2506

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4591](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1793](#))
- Wait (turn to [1087](#))

2507

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [485](#))
- No (turn to [1843](#))
- Lie (turn to [1843](#))

2508

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [275](#))
- No (turn to [766](#))
- Lie (turn to [736](#))

2509

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4771](#))
- Wait (turn to [750](#))

2510

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- Something else (turn to [380](#))

2511

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you're behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They'll destroy everything, you do understand that, don't you? You're not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don't see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [4068](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [4999](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [1008](#))

2512

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3397](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1852](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

2513

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [3727](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2231](#))
- Lie (turn to [2231](#))

2514

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4644](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

2515

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1722](#))

2516

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))
- Confess (turn to [1914](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [3899](#))

2517

It’s no good. That’s only half a solution. I couldn’t be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3615](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [4091](#))

2518

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1842](#))
- Lie (turn to [1842](#))

- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

2519

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3682](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [3682](#))
- Evade (turn to [2290](#))

2520

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [4469](#))
- No (turn to [3883](#))

2521

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [4561](#))
- Shrug (turn to [298](#))

2522

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [475](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [1482](#))

2523

“We don’t have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn’t hold water. It doesn’t tie up. We know you’ve been leaving yourself open to accusations. We’ve been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s

going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [3085](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [2405](#))

2524

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4851](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

2525

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- Something else (turn to [190](#))

2526

"For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him

do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3917](#))
- No (turn to [530](#))
- Lie (turn to [3917](#))

2527

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [601](#))

2528

“Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself.”

“That's how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4065](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))

- Lie (turn to [4065](#))

2529

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4410](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

2530

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4359](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2161](#))

2531

“I certainly don’t. But still, I’m surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he’ll face the rope, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he

did, and you're now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper's confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [4355](#))
- Don't check (turn to [3965](#))

2532

“What could I do?” I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won't go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3430](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2118](#))

2533

“Look, I know where it is. The missing piece of the Bombe is in the long grasses behind Hooper's tent. I saw him throw it there right after we finished work. He knew you'd scour the camp but I suppose he thought you'd more obvious places first. I suppose he was right about that. Look there. That *proves* his guilt.”

“That doesn't prove anything,” Harris returns sharply. “But we'll check what you say, all

the same.” He gets to his feet and heads out of the door.

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2388](#))

2534

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- Something else (turn to [1433](#))

2535

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [4820](#))
- Deny it (turn to [3405](#))

2536

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [4279](#))
- No (turn to [2390](#))
- Lie (turn to [2355](#))
- Evade (turn to [2355](#))

2537

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3648](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2529](#))

2538

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4270](#))

2539

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness

I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [118](#))
- No (turn to [3945](#))
- Lie (turn to [3945](#))

2540

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [2005](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [1535](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [1164](#))

2541

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3202](#))

2542

“Listen to me, Hooper. We were the only men in that hut today, so we know what happened. But I want you to know this. I put the component inside a breeze-block in the foundations of Hut 2, wrapped in one of your shirts. They’re going to find it eventually, and that’s going to be what tips the balance. And there’s nothing you can do to stop any of that from happening.”

His eyes bulge with terror. “What did I do, to you? What did I ever do?”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4304](#))
- Lie (turn to [3718](#))
- Evade (turn to [1936](#))

2543

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- Something else (turn to [1854](#))

2544

I wave cheerily back and she giggles, almost drops her bicycle, then dashes away inside the House. Judging by the clock on the front gable, she’s running a little late this morning.

I turn the corner of Hut 3 and walk down the short gravel path to Hut 2. It was a good spot to choose - Hut 2 is where the electricians work, and they’re generally focussed on what they’re doing. They don’t often come outside to smoke a cigarette so it’s easy to slip past the doorway unnoticed.

- Check inside (turn to [1230](#))
- Go around the back (turn to [4979](#))

2545

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1030](#))

2546

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [1189](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4409](#))

2547

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4680](#))

2548

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [1880](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [4642](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [3268](#))

2549

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [233](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1217](#))

2550

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2946](#))
- Try the window (turn to [3084](#))

2551

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I’ll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4243](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3340](#))

2552

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [990](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [829](#))

2553

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3912](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4691](#))

2554

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2307](#))
- No (turn to [1485](#))
- Lie (turn to [1485](#))

2555

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be

getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [74](#))
- Try the window (turn to [3211](#))

2556

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can't stand that I'm cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You're suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country's future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [4329](#))
- No (turn to [1424](#))
- Evade (turn to [895](#))

2557

“For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We'll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [4441](#))
- No (turn to [3523](#))
- Lie (turn to [4441](#))

2558

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [613](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2121](#))

2559

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4891](#))

2560

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [865](#))

2561

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [582](#))
- Give up (turn to [5003](#))

2562

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2541](#))
- Something else (turn to [416](#))

2563

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2754](#))

2564

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [2436](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

2565

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2814](#))

2566

"Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly." I fold my arms. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4921](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2567

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1689](#))
- No (turn to [675](#))
- Lie (turn to [675](#))

2568

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

2569

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [953](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2907](#))

2570

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2391](#))

2571

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [2220](#))
- Evade (turn to [209](#))

2572

"There's nothing to explain," I reply stiffly. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [2610](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

2573

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1226](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3261](#))
- Something else (turn to [706](#))

2574

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- Something else (turn to [994](#))

2575

- The jacket (turn to [3622](#))
- The bucket (turn to [913](#))

2576

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [4537](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [4286](#))

2577

“I don't know what I'm suggesting. I don't understand what's going on.”

“But of course you do.” Harris narrows his eyes. “Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1519](#))
- Lie (turn to [1519](#))
- Evade (turn to [1371](#))

2578

“I’ll enjoy it. Thank you for helping me clear this up.”

“Don’t thank me yet. There’s still a war to fight. Now get a move on.”

I nod, and hurry out of the door. The air outside has never tasted fresher and more invigorating. I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. “Did you hear?” he whispers. “Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible.”

- Yes (turn to [1656](#))
- No (turn to [3564](#))
- Lie (turn to [3889](#))
- Evade (turn to [2944](#))

2579

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [3103](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1878](#))
- Evade (turn to [1875](#))

2580

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1247](#))
- Try the window (turn to [882](#))

2581

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4454](#))
- No (turn to [2323](#))
- Lie (turn to [2420](#))

2582

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1125](#))
- Something else (turn to [137](#))

2583

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1025](#))

2584

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [4490](#))
- Lie (turn to [4490](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

2585

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

2586

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1877](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [311](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

2587

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [442](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4171](#))

2588

“I climbed out of the window overnight,” I explain. “I went and got this from where it was hidden, and brought it back here.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [297](#))

2589

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [632](#))
- No (turn to [3671](#))
- Lie (turn to [3671](#))

2590

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2637](#))
- Something else (turn to [2156](#))

2591

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- Something else (turn to [4590](#))

2592

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [508](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [508](#))

2593

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2066](#))

2594

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [2152](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2993](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [1058](#))

2595

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1252](#))
- No (turn to [4798](#))
- Lie (turn to [1739](#))
- Evade (turn to [3176](#))

2596

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [2239](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4651](#))
- Evade (turn to [3602](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [29](#))

2597

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1228](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3356](#))

2598

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2933](#))

2599

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2836](#))
- No (turn to [629](#))
- Lie (turn to [629](#))

2600

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3160](#))
- Something else (turn to [2575](#))

2601

“All right.” I am beaten, after all. “The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I

suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1352](#))

2602

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2141](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1841](#))

2603

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4404](#))

2604

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in

the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1241](#))

2605

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3615](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

2606

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [574](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

2607

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You'll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let's hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

2608

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [4414](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

2609

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4915](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2338](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1449](#))
- Something else (turn to [2476](#))

2610

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed

every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [165](#))
- Evade (turn to [156](#))

2611

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [334](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [4055](#))

2612

Let me see. There’s the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3214](#))
- The jacket (turn to [502](#))

2613

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [1372](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [1122](#))

2614

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [1154](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

2615

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1241](#))

2616

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as,

while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [4725](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [2585](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4381](#))

2617

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2064](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

2618

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3150](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4395](#))

2619

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside,

of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

2620

My anger deflates like a collapsing equation, all arguments cancelling each other out. The world, of course, owes me nothing; and I owe it everything.

"I'm afraid we have only one option, Manning," Harris says. "Please, man. Tell us where the component is."

- Tell them (turn to [2638](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2176](#))

2621

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1278](#))

2622

"Now steady on," I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for

it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1946](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3032](#))

2623

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [1979](#))

2624

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1278](#))

2625

“Then you know I’m right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?”

“We don’t know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [2200](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [725](#))

2626

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2799](#))

2627

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

2628

I fold my arms, intended firmly to say nothing. But somehow, watching Harris' face, I cannot bring myself to do it. I want to confess. I want to tell him everything I can, to explain myself to him, to earn his forgiveness. The sensation is so strong my will is powerless in the face of it.

Something is wrong with me, I am sure of it. There is a strange, bitter flavour on my tongue. I taste it as words start to form.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3238](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3097](#))

2629

"Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2550](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1958](#))

2630

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found... what you need.

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4190](#))
- Disagree (turn to [364](#))
- Lie (turn to [2487](#))

2631

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- Something else (turn to [4386](#))

2632

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1857](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1985](#))

2633

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3364](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [3475](#))

2634

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3994](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4367](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

2635

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means

the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [43](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

2636

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [1647](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [3464](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [3347](#))

2637

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- Something else (turn to [2156](#))

2638

“All right.” I am beaten, after all. “The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of

my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3296](#))

2639

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [857](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4745](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1459](#))

2640

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3155](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3802](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

2641

- The jacket (turn to [3600](#))

2642

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1369](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4671](#))

2643

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3649](#))
- No (turn to [261](#))
- Lie (turn to [261](#))

2644

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))

- Something else (turn to [654](#))

2645

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2009](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))

2646

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4687](#))
- Something else (turn to [3010](#))

2647

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [359](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3813](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

2648

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't

hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4359](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2161](#))

2649

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [1516](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [4475](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

2650

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [2003](#))
- Be cold (turn to [1740](#))

2651

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the

already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [834](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [861](#))

2652

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me. He cannot have expected it to be so easy to break me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2168](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3594](#))
- Lie (turn to [1339](#))
- Evade (turn to [3293](#))

2653

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4446](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4883](#))
- Lie (turn to [121](#))
- Evade (turn to [3306](#))

2654

“I’ve thought so before.” Certainly in the matter of getting blackmailed.

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3218](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1558](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2945](#))

2655

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4741](#))

2656

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2450](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [5034](#))

2657

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4184](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2211](#))

2658

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [124](#))
- Give up (turn to [2482](#))

2659

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))

- Don't go (turn to [2042](#))

2660

“For God’s sake,” I answer, voice quivering. “I’m no traitor.”

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4949](#))
- Lie (turn to [4949](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

2661

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3104](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4387](#))

2662

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3562](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [3562](#))

2663

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1344](#))

2664

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4867](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [653](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

2665

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I've done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I

shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1432](#))
- No (turn to [2325](#))
- Evade (turn to [2490](#))
- That's not it (turn to [544](#))

2666

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1814](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2667

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [3867](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

2668

- The jacket (turn to [3096](#))

2669

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4203](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

2670

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [383](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2369](#))
- Evade (turn to [1984](#))

2671

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

2672

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2469](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [949](#))

2673

- The jacket (turn to [450](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2206](#))

2674

Plenty of time for that later. If there is nothing there, then Hooper discovered the component after all and Harris' men will have swooped on him, and the story about his confession is just a ruse to test me out. And if the component is still there - well. It will be just as valuable to my young man in the village in a week's time, and his deadline of the

31st is not quite upon us.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

And everything will proceed as before. The component will mean nothing to the Germans - this is the one fact I could never have explained to a man like Harris despite the fact that the principle behind the Bombe is the same as the principle behind an army. The individual pieces - the men, the components - do not matter. They are quite identical. It is how they are arranged that counts. The structures and patterns that they form.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [3161](#))
- No (turn to [478](#))
- Lie (turn to [3673](#))
- Evade (turn to [3291](#))

2675

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2767](#))
- No (turn to [1010](#))
- Lie (turn to [1010](#))

2676

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1131](#))

2677

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look out the window (turn to [3192](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [500](#))

- Wait (turn to [2924](#))

2678

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2802](#))

2679

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1252](#))
- No (turn to [4798](#))
- Lie (turn to [1739](#))
- Evade (turn to [3176](#))

2680

"All right." With a sigh, your defiance collapses."If you're searched my things then I suppose you've found my letters. Haven't you? In fact, if you haven't, don't tell me.

Harris nods once. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took

things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1848](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3260](#))
- Lie (turn to [435](#))

2681

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2984](#))

2682

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3880](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3713](#))
- Something else (turn to [1385](#))

2683

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

2684

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

2685

I pat down my pockets but all I’m carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [2551](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [2693](#))

2686

It depends, perhaps, on what his name his worth. If it were to prove valuable, well; perhaps I can concoct a few more such lovers with which to ease my later days.

Hooper, perhaps. He wouldn’t like *that*.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and

smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I'll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists." He drags me up to my feet. "You think you have to re-invent everything."

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can't help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

2687

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [267](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4520](#))
- Lie (turn to [3255](#))

2688

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [2906](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [997](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [4768](#))

2689

"We're still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must."

"I've had enough of your voice for one day," Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4733](#))

2690

- The jacket (turn to [1378](#))

2691

“This proves nothing,” I reply stubbornly. “You still don’t have the component and without it, I don’t see what you can hope to prove.”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [2620](#))
- No (turn to [2266](#))
- Lie (turn to [2266](#))
- Evade (turn to [4707](#))

2692

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3581](#))
- No (turn to [4798](#))
- Lie (turn to [1739](#))
- Evade (turn to [3176](#))

2693

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2731](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [136](#))

2694

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

2695

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2931](#))
- Something else (turn to [4096](#))

2696

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4701](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1565](#))

2697

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [724](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1384](#))

2698

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember you name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3312](#))

2699

“You’re the one applying pressure here,” I answer smartly. “I’m just waiting until you tell me what is really going on.”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2162](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2669](#))
- Lie (turn to [1146](#))

2700

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4459](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [522](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

2701

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [4578](#))
- No (turn to [3062](#))
- Evade (turn to [2699](#))
- That's not it (turn to [1637](#))

2702

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1523](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

2703

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3098](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))

2704

It depends, perhaps, on what his name his worth. If it were to prove valuable, well; perhaps I can concoct a few more such lovers with which to ease my later days.

Hooper, perhaps. He wouldn't like *that*.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. "I still have the intercept in my pocket," I remark. "Wherever we're going, could I have a pencil?"

He looks me in the eye.

"I'll give you a stone to chisel notches in the wall. And that's all the calculations you'll be doing. And as you sit there, pissing into a bucket and growing a beard down to your toes, you have a think about how a *smart* man would conduct his illicit affairs. With a bit of due decorum you could have learnt off any squaddie. You scientists." He drags me up to my feet. "You think you have to re-invent everything."

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can't help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

2705

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2510](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- Something else (turn to [380](#))

2706

"I'm sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He's probably passed it on already. You'll have to ask him."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4066](#))

2707

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [2152](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [3996](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4432](#))

2708

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4598](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

2709

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [197](#))

2710

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [4256](#))
- Lie (turn to [4256](#))
- Evade (turn to [4977](#))

2711

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I’m away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [3404](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [3076](#))

2712

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [784](#))

2713

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4914](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4115](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2006](#))

2714

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2619](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

2715

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [3496](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [4646](#))

2716

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [3804](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1674](#))
- Evade (turn to [3376](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4142](#))

2717

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It's not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly

by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [4245](#))
- Lie (turn to [4523](#))
- Evade (turn to [746](#))

2718

"You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn't catch him?"

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [4976](#))

2719

"No," Harris declares, finally. "I think you're lying about Hooper. I think you're a clever, scheming young man - that's why we hired you - and you're looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I'm not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice."

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Confess (turn to [2485](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))

2720

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness.

“And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3911](#))

2721

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1241](#))

2722

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4652](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1038](#))

2723

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1525](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

2724

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [148](#))

2725

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness.

“And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1915](#))

2726

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [1989](#))
- Lie (turn to [1989](#))
- Evade (turn to [3101](#))

2727

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [2394](#))

2728

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [1784](#))
- No (turn to [2449](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2687](#))

2729

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- Something else (turn to [2477](#))

2730

"That's not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2969](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3407](#))

2731

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1144](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [136](#))

2732

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4496](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

2733

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2123](#))
- Disagree (turn to [966](#))
- Lie (turn to [1034](#))

2734

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [774](#))

2735

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Drink (turn to [3132](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1072](#))

2736

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4892](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- Something else (turn to [1433](#))

2737

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [3453](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1009](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [4377](#))

2738

"And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren't enough senior officers to go round."

"Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that," Harris replies. "That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I'm inclined to believe them. But that's all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that

component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [1687](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [2405](#))

2739

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1060](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [1060](#))
- Evade (turn to [2873](#))

2740

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

2741

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [1045](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1162](#))

2742

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you

know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2024](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2955](#))
- Lie (turn to [2955](#))
- Evade (turn to [780](#))

2743

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [2283](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3655](#))
- Evade (turn to [4295](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [426](#))

2744

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [2367](#))
- Lie (turn to [2367](#))
- Evade (turn to [626](#))

2745

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2091](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4308](#))

2746

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper’s worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [3001](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

2747

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2112](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1800](#))

2748

“I tell you, someone broke it. Someone wanted to threaten me, I think.”

Harris shakes his head. “Well, we can look into that matter later. For now, you probably want to hear the more pressing news. We found the missing component. Or rather, Hooper found it for us. He snuck out of his tent first thing in the morning and retrieved it from on top. Of all the damnest places - you would never have known it was there. He acted all surprised about it when we jumped him, of course, as you might expect - but it was good enough for me.”

- Be glad (turn to [2461](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1220](#))

2749

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))

- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2750

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4751](#))
- No (turn to [1183](#))
- Lie (turn to [3526](#))

2751

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1441](#))
- No (turn to [4762](#))
- Lie (turn to [4762](#))

2752

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1492](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2753

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the

barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [2281](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [353](#))
- Evade (turn to [3602](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [29](#))

2754

Morning comes. I’m woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [195](#))
- Be cold (turn to [379](#))

2755

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [2320](#))
- Deny it (turn to [3572](#))

2756

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It’s not a big window, but I’m not a big man. If I was Harris, I’d be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather -

sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [3197](#))
- Lie (turn to [2963](#))
- Evade (turn to [3780](#))

2757

“You treated me like vermin. Like something abhorrent.”

“You are something abhorrent.”

“I wasn’t. Not when I came here. And I won’t be, once you’re gone.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2784](#))

2758

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [733](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4433](#))

2759

I lift the cup to my lips and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4224](#))
- Disagree (turn to [607](#))
- Evade (turn to [607](#))

2760

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3120](#))

2761

“Really, Commander,” I reply. “It rather sounds like you want to spank me.”

“For God’s sake,” he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [545](#))

2762

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [89](#))

2763

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3649](#))
- No (turn to [261](#))
- Lie (turn to [261](#))

2764

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2542](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4072](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1940](#))

2765

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [465](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))

2766

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m gone.

Of course, then they’ll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2072](#))

2767

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4467](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3832](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4467](#))
- Lie (turn to [3832](#))

2768

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4090](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [344](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

2769

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [908](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [3712](#))

2770

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1665](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

2771

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [632](#))
- No (turn to [376](#))
- Lie (turn to [376](#))

2772

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [717](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [1221](#))

2773

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [824](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [4972](#))

2774

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1315](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4365](#))
- Lie (turn to [4365](#))
- Evade (turn to [2956](#))

2775

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It’s

not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [4718](#))
- Lie (turn to [3728](#))
- Evade (turn to [4420](#))

2776

"And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren't enough senior officers to go round."

"Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that," Harris replies. "That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I'm inclined to believe them. But that's all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [2419](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

2777

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [3785](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [2906](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

2778

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

2779

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [953](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2434](#))

2780

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty

socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3302](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [3302](#))
- Evade (turn to [568](#))

2781

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1139](#))
- No (turn to [2452](#))

2782

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3862](#))
- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2351](#))
- Something else (turn to [1450](#))

2783

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [3235](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4069](#))

2784

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look out the window (turn to [222](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4357](#))
- Wait (turn to [2603](#))

2785

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4734](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [181](#))

2786

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [4105](#))
- Evade (turn to [699](#))

2787

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3529](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [3955](#))

2788

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just

turn up?"

- "Yes." (turn to [3499](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [389](#))

2789

"Of my genius. Hooper simply can't stand that I'm cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse."

"You're suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country's future simply to spite you?" Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [225](#))
- No (turn to [4793](#))
- Evade (turn to [4050](#))

2790

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [1881](#))
- Accept it (turn to [4809](#))
- Evade it (turn to [250](#))

2791

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door.

It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3841](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2792

"I am what I am," I reply. "I'm the way nature made me. But they're going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don't let them hang me."

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2073](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [816](#))

2793

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather

like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [3410](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [281](#))

2794

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4578](#))
- No (turn to [3062](#))
- Evade (turn to [2699](#))
- That's not it (turn to [1637](#))

2795

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4638](#))
- Try the window (turn to [3680](#))

2796

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the

pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4296](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2117](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3658](#))

2797

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1120](#))

2798

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1720](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1901](#))

2799

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [212](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [3678](#))

2800

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [734](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4265](#))
- Something else (turn to [654](#))

2801

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [1594](#))
- Find something (turn to [4732](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [72](#))

2802

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [4166](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [2245](#))

2803

- The jacket (turn to [2043](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1088](#))

2804

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4143](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2414](#))

2805

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1427](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3663](#))

2806

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

2807

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3263](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- Something else (turn to [4534](#))

2808

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how

sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4633](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4450](#))
- Lie (turn to [2597](#))

2809

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [873](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

2810

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [1143](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))

2811

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1981](#))

2812

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2252](#))

2813

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [1892](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [711](#))
- Wait (turn to [4188](#))

2814

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [759](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [1983](#))

2815

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3409](#))

2816

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1918](#))
- No (turn to [1529](#))
- Lie (turn to [1529](#))

2817

- The jacket (turn to [3622](#))

2818

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3110](#))

- No (turn to [1254](#))
- Lie (turn to [3110](#))

2819

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM."

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2580](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4987](#))

2820

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3373](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [42](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1762](#))

2821

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [912](#))
- Be cold (turn to [3271](#))

2822

- The jacket (turn to [4996](#))

2823

"Queen to rook two, checkmate!" I call, then laugh viciously, as if I am damning him straight to hell.

I only catch Hooper's reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [185](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2001](#))
- Evade (turn to [3219](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1666](#))

2824

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [1189](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4409](#))

2825

I fold my arms, intended firmly to say nothing. But somehow, watching Harris’ face, I cannot bring myself to do it. I want to confess. I want to tell him everything I can, to explain myself to him, to earn his forgiveness. The sensation is so strong my will is powerless in the face of it.

Something is wrong with me, I am sure of it. There is a strange, bitter flavour on my

tongue. I taste it as words start to form.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [4149](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2864](#))

2826

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [1921](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [1209](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [3653](#))

2827

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [3118](#))
- No (turn to [4396](#))

2828

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- Something else (turn to [660](#))

2829

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2646](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3365](#))
- Something else (turn to [3010](#))

2830

"At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it."

"That's not quite the same as seeing him do it," Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [520](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [1261](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [3951](#))

2831

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3368](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1503](#))

2832

“What could I do?” I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won't go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3781](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2941](#))

2833

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- Something else (turn to [3142](#))

2834

“I climbed out of the window overnight,” I explain. “I went and got this from where it was hidden, and brought it back here.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [815](#))

2835

I look in through the door and catch Hooper’s expression. I had half expected him to be smiling because he isn’t. He looks shocked, almost hurt. “Iain,” he murmurs. “You couldn’t...”

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [4828](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [19](#))
- Evade (turn to [34](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2985](#))

2836

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [192](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [192](#))

2837

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [4538](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4852](#))

2838

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [5004](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [189](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [115](#))

2839

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

2840

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

2841

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [679](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [388](#))

2842

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [201](#))

2843

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2391](#))

2844

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [787](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3383](#))

2845

"All right." With a sigh, your defiance collapses."If you're searched my things then I suppose you've found my letters. Haven't you? In fact, if you haven't, don't tell me.

Harris nods once. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [4633](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4450](#))
- Lie (turn to [2597](#))

2846

"You can't do this!" I cry. "It's murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God's sake, man, you can't just throw me overboard, we're not barbarians...!"

"You leave me no choice," Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. "You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn't exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another." He gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2722](#))

2847

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2446](#))

2848

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [85](#))
- Lie (turn to [85](#))
- Evade (turn to [2279](#))

2849

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it

somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [1483](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

2850

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2545](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [132](#))
- Lie (turn to [2545](#))
- Evade (turn to [304](#))

2851

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my

achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [118](#))
- No (turn to [3945](#))
- Lie (turn to [3945](#))

2852

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- Something else (turn to [5031](#))

2853

I pat down my pockets but all I’m carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1090](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [4343](#))

2854

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where

is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [724](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1384](#))

2855

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [642](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [1702](#))

2856

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [433](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- Something else (turn to [1885](#))

2857

“You treated me like vermin. Like something abhorrent.”

“You are something abhorrent.”

“I wasn’t. Not when I came here. And I won’t be, once you’re gone.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [436](#))

2858

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [1471](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [839](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

2859

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me. He cannot have expected it to be so easy to break me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [1382](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2514](#))
- Lie (turn to [172](#))
- Evade (turn to [2198](#))

2860

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [1297](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

2861

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [270](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [4138](#))

2862

“That's exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I've seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4633](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4450](#))
- Lie (turn to [2597](#))

2863

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

2864

I shake my head violently, to say no, that’s not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris’ face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3361](#))
- Disagree (turn to [806](#))

2865

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [4516](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4202](#))

2866

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1341](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- Something else (turn to [2477](#))

2867

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3016](#))

2868

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [235](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [3661](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [1707](#))

2869

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1860](#))
- Shrug (turn to [298](#))

2870

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [1141](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [4810](#))

2871

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw

Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3218](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1558](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2945](#))

2872

- The jacket (turn to [3087](#))

2873

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness.

“And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2020](#))

2874

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2481](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [305](#))

2875

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- Something else (turn to [100](#))

2876

"Of my standing. My reputation." I'm aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. "Hooper simply can't bear knowing that, once all this is over, I'll be the one receiving the knighthood and he..."

"No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade," Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: "Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me." For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

"Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2395](#))
- Lie (turn to [2395](#))
- Evade (turn to [3930](#))

2877

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the

inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [905](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [3311](#))

2878

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [1293](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [2128](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1377](#))

2879

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [2971](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3730](#))

2880

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- Something else (turn to [2690](#))

2881

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3417](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4839](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

2882

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

2883

“All right. All right. That's exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [495](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1145](#))

2884

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2456](#))

2885

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [485](#))
- No (turn to [1023](#))
- Lie (turn to [1023](#))

2886

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [4853](#))
- Give up (turn to [4018](#))

2887

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1710](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [13](#))
- Lie (turn to [13](#))
- Evade (turn to [47](#))

2888

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3090](#))
- Something else (turn to [639](#))

2889

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This

should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4741](#))

2890

"Listen to me, Hooper. We were the only men in that hut today, so we know what happened. But I want you to know this. I put the component inside a breeze-block in the foundations of Hut 2, wrapped in one of your shirts. They're going to find it eventually, and that's going to be what tips the balance. And there's nothing you can do to stop any of that from happening."

His eyes bulge with terror. "What did I do, to you? What did I ever do?"

- Tell the truth (turn to [1409](#))
- Lie (turn to [3838](#))
- Evade (turn to [4311](#))

2891

"Trust me. He hasn't. If I know that man, and I do, he'll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component's gone then he's committed and he'll be hung for what he's done. He'll want to wait a week at least, make sure he's escaped suspicion. And then he'll pass it on."

"And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?"

- "Yes." (turn to [4606](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [4082](#))

2892

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1337](#))
- Something else (turn to [190](#))

2893

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1497](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [1497](#))
- Evade (turn to [22](#))

2894

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4759](#))

2895

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [197](#))

2896

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- Something else (turn to [2690](#))

2897

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so

closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?”
Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [2964](#))
- No (turn to [3709](#))
- Evade (turn to [2174](#))

2898

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

2899

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2370](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [2370](#))

- Evade (turn to [498](#))

2900

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [574](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

2901

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [175](#))
- Find something (turn to [60](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [295](#))

2902

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [1386](#))
- No (turn to [262](#))
- Lie (turn to [262](#))

2903

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4676](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

2904

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3565](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1363](#))

2905

“Messy, without one missing cache!” I cry, laughing spitefully. It isn’t the best clue, hardly worthy of the Times, but it will have to do.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4474](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4017](#))
- Evade (turn to [164](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3267](#))

2906

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [4445](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [4007](#))

2907

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2047](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4305](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1541](#))

2908

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1264](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [356](#))

2909

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Drink (turn to [3132](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1072](#))

2910

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4354](#))

2911

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [1105](#))

- Evade (turn to [2465](#))

2912

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [2845](#))
- Evade (turn to [726](#))

2913

- The jacket (turn to [2621](#))

2914

Plenty of time for that later. If there is nothing there, then Hooper discovered the component after all and Harris’ men will have swooped on him, and the story about his confession is just a ruse to test me out. And if the component is still there - well. It will be just as valuable to my young man in the village in a week’s time, and his deadline of the 31st is not quite upon us.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

And everything will proceed as before. The component will mean nothing to the Germans - this is the one fact I could never have explained to a man like Harris despite the fact that the principle behind the Bombe is the same as the principle behind an army. The individual pieces - the men, the components - do not matter. They are quite identical. It is

how they are arranged that counts. The structures and patterns that they form.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. “Did you hear?” he whispers. “Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible.”

- Yes (turn to [5011](#))
- No (turn to [182](#))
- Lie (turn to [1552](#))
- Evade (turn to [1187](#))

2915

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4239](#))

2916

I shake my head violently, to say no, that’s not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris’ face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then

you couldn't take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2832](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3916](#))
- Lie (turn to [4145](#))

2917

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2670](#))

2918

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1571](#))
- No (turn to [4280](#))
- Lie (turn to [4280](#))

2919

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [747](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

2920

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- Something else (turn to [2673](#))

2921

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [362](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

2922

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this

whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [577](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [3439](#))
- Lie (turn to [3439](#))

2923

“Yes. I didn’t have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

2924

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1681](#))

2925

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I’m aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He

casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [948](#))
- Lie (turn to [948](#))
- Evade (turn to [2519](#))

2926

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4097](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4262](#))

2927

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

2928

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2446](#))

2929

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3672](#))

2930

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

2931

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I

need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3821](#))

2932

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2469](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [949](#))

2933

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [2081](#))
- Be cold (turn to [4689](#))

2934

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [1603](#))
- Disagree (turn to [619](#))
- Evade (turn to [3753](#))

2935

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1441](#))
- No (turn to [4762](#))
- Lie (turn to [4762](#))

2936

Still there means no-one has found it, which means it is probably well-hidden. And short of skipping the compound now, I can afford to leave it hidden there a while longer. So I leave it in place.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [947](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [1556](#))

2937

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2171](#))
- Lie (turn to [2171](#))
- Evade (turn to [3904](#))

2938

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [237](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

2939

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found... what you need.

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [497](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1643](#))
- Lie (turn to [2308](#))

2940

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [441](#))
- No (turn to [4968](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4849](#))

2941

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to

smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Persist with this (turn to [1849](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1130](#))

2942

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [3642](#))
- Lie (turn to [3642](#))
- Evade (turn to [494](#))

2943

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2662](#))
- No (turn to [3018](#))
- Lie (turn to [3018](#))

2944

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

2945

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

2946

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3414](#))

2947

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3784](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [373](#))

2948

“Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard...”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

2949

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

2950

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1421](#))

2951

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [1372](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

2952

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [4328](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))

2953

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4517](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

2954

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2926](#))

2955

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1916](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2075](#))
- Lie (turn to [1916](#))
- Evade (turn to [1175](#))

2956

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3559](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3739](#))
- Lie (turn to [3559](#))
- Evade (turn to [946](#))

2957

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance

than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1816](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [166](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3897](#))

2958

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1689](#))
- No (turn to [3290](#))
- Lie (turn to [3290](#))

2959

“I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let's hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

2960

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [673](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [1723](#))

2961

“I certainly don't. But still, I'm surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he'll face the rope, doesn't he?”

“Don't ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he did, and you're now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper's confession only makes sense in one fashion, and that is his being dim-witted and slow. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [4355](#))
- Don't check (turn to [3965](#))

2962

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [4684](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2936](#))

2963

"I had to get out, Harris. I had to provoke Hooper into doing something that would incriminate himself fully. He's too clever, you see..."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [3196](#))
- No (turn to [5036](#))
- Lie (turn to [5036](#))
- Evade (turn to [4201](#))

2964

"He's petty enough, certainly. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her

Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [4753](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2192](#))
- Lie (turn to [2192](#))

2965

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

2966

"I can't tell you enough, I'm glad to hear it. I've had a devil of a night, as you can imagine."

His gaze flicks to the broken window, but only for a moment. I think he genuinely cannot believe I could have done it.

Harris rolls his eyes, but he might almost be smiling. "You'd better get along, and work through your devils. There's a 24-hour-out-of-date message to be tackled and we're a genius short. So you'd better be ready to work twice as hard."

- Thank him (turn to [2578](#))
- Argue with him (turn to [2133](#))

2967

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?”
Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1543](#))
- Lie (turn to [1543](#))
- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

2968

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [843](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [3035](#))

2969

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4581](#))
- Try the window (turn to [4589](#))

2970

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table,

Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [2409](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [988](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [3843](#))

2971

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [456](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4690](#))

2972

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [1197](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1118](#))
- Wait (turn to [4240](#))

2973

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4767](#))

2974

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- Something else (turn to [4290](#))

2975

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [556](#))
- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- Something else (turn to [203](#))

2976

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [4259](#))
- Disagree (turn to [719](#))
- Evade (turn to [2116](#))

2977

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

2978

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [1202](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3987](#))

2979

"Ask not for whom the bell tolls!"

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [2101](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4511](#))
- Evade (turn to [4191](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4154](#))

2980

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [159](#))

2981

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded.

Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [3235](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4071](#))

2982

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling but he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [647](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3177](#))
- Evade (turn to [4255](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2326](#))

2983

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [989](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [782](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [348](#))

2984

Morning comes. I’m woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [571](#))
- Be cold (turn to [3124](#))

2985

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))

- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

2986

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

2987

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3545](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4409](#))

2988

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [735](#))
- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- Something else (turn to [3942](#))

2989

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2582](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1125](#))
- Something else (turn to [137](#))

2990

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [681](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- Something else (turn to [1623](#))

2991

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1419](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2043](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3771](#))

2992

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM."

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4029](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [2031](#))

2993

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [218](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4541](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [210](#))

2994

“And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren’t enough senior officers to go round.”

“Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that,” Harris replies. “That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I’m inclined to believe them. But that’s all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [98](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

2995

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [1788](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

2996

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was

Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [3938](#))
- Lie (turn to [3938](#))
- Evade (turn to [2584](#))

2997

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4354](#))

2998

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here,

even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2141](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1841](#))

2999

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4046](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- Something else (turn to [3982](#))

3000

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2144](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3905](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3031](#))

3001

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [1895](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1927](#))

3002

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [2193](#))
- Lie (turn to [2193](#))
- Evade (turn to [4604](#))

3003

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4949](#))
- Lie (turn to [4949](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

3004

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1918](#))
- No (turn to [1529](#))
- Lie (turn to [1529](#))

3005

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3041](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2425](#))

3006

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found... what you need.

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2362](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2463](#))

- Lie (turn to [1764](#))

3007

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3836](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

3008

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4923](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3983](#))
- Evade (turn to [4484](#))

3009

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1935](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [2618](#))

3010

- The jacket (turn to [3520](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2184](#))

3011

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2940](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2938](#))
- Evade (turn to [1491](#))

3012

“I don’t need twelve minutes. The component is in the long grass behind Hooper’s tent. I threw it there hoping to somehow frame him, but now I see that won’t be possible. I was naive, I suppose.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

3013

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4551](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2931](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1475](#))
- Something else (turn to [4096](#))

3014

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4625](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [628](#))

3015

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3202](#))

3016

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3468](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3394](#))

3017

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1427](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3663](#))

3018

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3562](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [3562](#))

3019

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3426](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

3020

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [1890](#))
- Lie (turn to [1890](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

3021

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2038](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [313](#))

3022

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I’m away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [4584](#))

- Take a longer route (turn to [1644](#))

3023

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1260](#))
- Try the window (turn to [525](#))

3024

"Queen to rook two, checkmate!" I call, then laugh viciously, as if I am damning him straight to hell.

I only catch Hooper's reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"And what was all that shouting about?" he hisses in my ear as we move towards the

barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3969](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2623](#))
- Evade (turn to [4443](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2275](#))

3025

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Confess (turn to [1676](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))

3026

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [1358](#))
- Find something (turn to [3135](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [412](#))

3027

“It doesn’t matter. Just remember what I said. I’ve beaten you, Hooper. Remember that.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [436](#))

3028

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3595](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4777](#))

3029

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1871](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

3030

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It's

not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [4245](#))
- Lie (turn to [4523](#))
- Evade (turn to [746](#))

3031

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [1102](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3905](#))

3032

"I saw Hooper take it."

"Did you?" The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Tell the truth (turn to [1678](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [90](#))

3033

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [3017](#))
- No (turn to [109](#))
- Lie (turn to [4501](#))
- Evade (turn to [4501](#))

3034

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4322](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3609](#))
- Lie (turn to [791](#))

3035

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d

better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3693](#))

3036

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1125](#))
- Something else (turn to [137](#))

3037

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [826](#))

3038

Let me see. There’s the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3659](#))

- The jacket (turn to [3096](#))

3039

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2437](#))
- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- Something else (turn to [306](#))

3040

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [2217](#))
- Lie (turn to [2217](#))
- Evade (turn to [3681](#))

3041

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3571](#))
- No (turn to [163](#))
- Lie (turn to [4234](#))

3042

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [254](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4025](#))

3043

"If you'll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath."

"Oh, of course. Well, you'll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there'll only be three of us from now on."

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing

component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

3044

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3149](#))
- No (turn to [4659](#))
- Lie (turn to [4659](#))

3045

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [360](#))

- No (turn to [3714](#))
- Lie (turn to [3714](#))

3046

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2151](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [2151](#))

3047

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4639](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [935](#))

3048

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3972](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1973](#))

3049

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1569](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

3050

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- Something else (turn to [2345](#))

3051

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3045](#))
- No (turn to [271](#))
- Lie (turn to [3341](#))

3052

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [4549](#))
- Give up (turn to [1349](#))

3053

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4679](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1065](#))

3054

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [2564](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

3055

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [1499](#))
- Lie (turn to [1499](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

3056

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- Something else (turn to [2641](#))

3057

"The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You'll most likely get a promotion."

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

3058

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- The pillow (turn to [610](#))
- Something else (turn to [4284](#))

3059

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3433](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4012](#))

3060

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3351](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [194](#))

3061

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- Something else (turn to [2673](#))

3062

“I'm not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You're accusing me of treachery but I don't see a shred of evidence for it! Why don't you put your cards on the table?”

“It's simple enough,” Harris replies. “I've seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2162](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2669](#))
- Lie (turn to [1146](#))

3063

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the

pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [683](#))
- The jacket (turn to [542](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4779](#))

3064

My anger deflates like a collapsing equation, all arguments cancelling each other out. The world, of course, owes me nothing; and I owe it everything.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [3948](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4522](#))

3065

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- Something else (turn to [4284](#))

3066

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [2352](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4694](#))

3067

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3973](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [524](#))

3068

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2228](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [580](#))

3069

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [2488](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [710](#))

3070

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2223](#))

- Something else (turn to [1798](#))

3071

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1030](#))

3072

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2651](#))

3073

From where he’s sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession?”

Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [4228](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [743](#))
- Evade (turn to [2108](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4927](#))

3074

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness.

“And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1915](#))

3075

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [998](#))
- Lie (turn to [998](#))
- Evade (turn to [479](#))

3076

In case I’m being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It’s a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that’s difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [841](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2010](#))

3077

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [183](#))
- Something else (turn to [3445](#))

3078

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [551](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [473](#))

3079

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4212](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3480](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1826](#))
- Something else (turn to [331](#))

3080

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [167](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))

3081

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3868](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))

3082

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2581](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1079](#))

3083

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2590](#))
- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1446](#))
- Something else (turn to [2156](#))

3084

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4772](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

3085

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m

sure there's something I could do."

"Like what, exactly?"

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [855](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [3943](#))

3086

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [4948](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4152](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1307](#))

3087

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3078](#))

3088

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4173](#))

3089

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- Something else (turn to [228](#))

3090

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- Something else (turn to [639](#))

3091

"I'm fine," I reply. "This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better."

"I couldn't agree more." And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1173](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2739](#))
- Lie (turn to [2739](#))
- Evade (turn to [1587](#))

3092

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- Something else (turn to [1652](#))

3093

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

"Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning," he remarks. "You are your own worst enemy."

- Agree (turn to [1367](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1863](#))
- Evade (turn to [1296](#))

3094

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3615](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4562](#))

3095

"If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could," I tell him sternly.

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4294](#))

3096

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1241](#))

3097

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1021](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3760](#))

3098

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

3099

“You’re right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [249](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1713](#))

3100

I pat down my pockets but all I’m carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [1675](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [3459](#))

3101

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [1760](#))
- Lie (turn to [1760](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

3102

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3112](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3622](#))
- The bucket (turn to [492](#))

3103

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4880](#))
- No (turn to [718](#))
- Evade (turn to [2699](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4835](#))

3104

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my fist and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [1775](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [3030](#))

3105

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1374](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [1825](#))

3106

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [471](#))

3107

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3393](#))

3108

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- Something else (turn to [1756](#))

3109

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [705](#))

3110

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1249](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [3033](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [277](#))

3111

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [455](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [455](#))

3112

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2600](#))
- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2403](#))
- Something else (turn to [2575](#))

3113

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3114

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [594](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3415](#))
- Evade (turn to [4602](#))

3115

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

3116

"No, of course not." I push the teacup around on its base. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [2967](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4797](#))
- Lie (turn to [4797](#))

3117

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [4166](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [3970](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [2678](#))

3118

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3002](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3002](#))

3119

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [668](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [487](#))
- Lie (turn to [487](#))

3120

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3821](#))

3121

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2456](#))

3122

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1807](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4307](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [3310](#))

3123

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my shoe and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [811](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1151](#))

3124

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1136](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [527](#))

3125

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the

doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

3126

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1101](#))
- Lie (turn to [1101](#))
- Evade (turn to [3930](#))

3127

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2151](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))

- Lie (turn to [2151](#))

3128

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- Something else (turn to [2153](#))

3129

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [354](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3326](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2895](#))

3130

“So would you after the night I've had.”

“Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))
- Confess (turn to [3221](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [4423](#))

3131

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1082](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [712](#))

3132

I lift the cup to my lips and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [252](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4906](#))
- Evade (turn to [4906](#))

3133

“I’ve thought so before.” Certainly in the matter of getting blackmailed.

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [4725](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [2585](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4381](#))

3134

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3670](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [213](#))

3135

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2195](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4003](#))

3136

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and

understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1081](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1517](#))

3137

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2900](#))

3138

"We're still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must."

"I've had enough of your voice for one day," Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [247](#))

3139

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3345](#))

3140

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3019](#))

3141

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3654](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2467](#))

3142

- The jacket (turn to [4694](#))

3143

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [362](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

3144

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [4465](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2961](#))

3145

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [599](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1242](#))
- Lie (turn to [3619](#))

3146

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4682](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [4475](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

3147

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [215](#))

3148

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

3149

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4962](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [4962](#))

3150

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the

paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [1831](#))

3151

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2179](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [2179](#))
- Evade (turn to [2241](#))

3152

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [1115](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [729](#))
- Lie (turn to [729](#))

3153

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2765](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2208](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))

3154

"Of course I do," I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

"Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1897](#))
- Lie (turn to [1897](#))
- Evade (turn to [3151](#))

3155

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component

inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3802](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [2333](#))

3156

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3885](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [980](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [881](#))

3157

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3469](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2143](#))

3158

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3992](#))
- Try the window (turn to [4942](#))

3159

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found... what you need.

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [1898](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1063](#))
- Lie (turn to [1746](#))

3160

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- Something else (turn to [2575](#))

3161

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save

my reputation.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [897](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3162

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

3163

"Really, Commander," I reply. "It rather sounds like you want to spank me."

"For God's sake," he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1530](#))

3164

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1490](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [818](#))

3165

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

3166

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and

watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3927](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2037](#))
- Lie (turn to [3927](#))
- Evade (turn to [2175](#))

3167

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [122](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3494](#))

3168

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [201](#))

3169

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [896](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [386](#))
- Be honest (turn to [386](#))
- Lie (turn to [896](#))

3170

- The jacket (turn to [4305](#))

3171

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1648](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2467](#))

3172

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- Something else (turn to [4534](#))

3173

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4271](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- Something else (turn to [603](#))

3174

"Then you know I'm right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?"

"We don't know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [1179](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [403](#))

3175

"Maybe I can help with that."

"Oh, yes? And how, exactly?"

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [1453](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [833](#))

3176

It depends, perhaps, on what his name his worth. If it were to prove valuable, well; perhaps I can concoct a few more such lovers with which to ease my later days.

Hooper, perhaps. He wouldn't like *that*.

"We recovered the part, just where you said it was," Harris reports, as he puts the cuffs around my wrists. "Of course, a couple of the men swear blind they searched there yesterday, so I'm afraid, what with the broken window... we've formed a perfectly good theory which doesn't bode well for you."

"I see." It doesn't seem worth arguing any further. "I still have the intercept in my pocket," I remark. "Wherever we're going, could I have a pencil?"

He looks me in the eye.

"Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we're old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I'll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists." He drags me up to my feet. "You think you have to re-invent everything."

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can't help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

3177

"The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You'll most likely get a promotion."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

3178

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [217](#))

3179

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- Something else (turn to [3734](#))

3180

“Tell Hooper I've confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he'll go straight to wherever he's hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course,

Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

"It's an interesting idea," the Commander muses. "But I'm not so sure he'll be that stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [1018](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [2103](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

3181

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [4811](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3014](#))

3182

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3069](#))

3183

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3666](#))

3184

"Someone threw this in through the window over night," I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. "I couldn't see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is."

He reaches out and takes it. "Well, I'll be damned," he murmurs. "That's it all right. And you didn't have it on you when we put you in here. But it can't have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there's no-one else it could have been."

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [1957](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [981](#))

3185

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

3186

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

3187

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4379](#))
- Something else (turn to [4872](#))

3188

"There's nothing to explain," I reply stiffly. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can

crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [747](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

3189

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [5016](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

3190

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [990](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [1122](#))

3191

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4672](#))
- No (turn to [3209](#))
- Lie (turn to [547](#))

3192

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1681](#))

3193

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- Something else (turn to [2345](#))

3194

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3149](#))
- No (turn to [4659](#))
- Lie (turn to [4659](#))

3195

“We don’t have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn’t hold water. It doesn’t tie up. We know you’ve been leaving yourself open to accusations. We’ve been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [1660](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [403](#))

3196

My anger deflates like a collapsing equation, all arguments cancelling each other out. The world, of course, owes me nothing; and I owe it everything.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [1347](#))

- Say nothing (turn to [4185](#))

3197

“Harris. They were blackmailing me. They knew about... certain indiscretions. You can understand, can’t you, Harris? I was in an impossible bind...”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [3196](#))
- No (turn to [5036](#))
- Lie (turn to [5036](#))
- Evade (turn to [4201](#))

3198

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3391](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2194](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

3199

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our

victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1855](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [414](#))

3200

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [695](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3317](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

3201

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1689](#))
- No (turn to [3290](#))
- Lie (turn to [3290](#))

3202

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [3898](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [4107](#))

3203

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3793](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

3204

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

"Well?" Harris asks. "What are you waiting for? Please don't tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don't think my head could stand it."

- Confess (turn to [507](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

3205

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1237](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [1237](#))

3206

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [4995](#))
- No (turn to [1929](#))
- Evade (turn to [3605](#))

3207

“You’re right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [1658](#))

- "You're right." (turn to [1377](#))

3208

Hmm. Around here? Maybe not. I might have no option but to hand my young blackmailer over my superiors for the spy he is and let him wreak what damage he can.

Perhaps that would be the moral thing to do, even, and not just the most smart. But not today. Today, there's an intercept to resolve. The Bombe needs to be set up once more and set running.

It's time I tackled a problem I can *solve*.

The End

3209

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3446](#))
- No (turn to [617](#))
- Lie (turn to [617](#))

3210

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4708](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4758](#))
- Evade (turn to [1050](#))

3211

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3807](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

3212

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3871](#))
- No (turn to [3755](#))

3213

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?”
Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [4102](#))
- No (turn to [3709](#))
- Evade (turn to [2577](#))

3214

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1766](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1668](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2415](#))
- Something else (turn to [942](#))

3215

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2900](#))

3216

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I

could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4567](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4032](#))

3217

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3225](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4658](#))
- Something else (turn to [3324](#))

3218

“You mean he didn't even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

3219

“We're still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I've had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the

steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [528](#))

3220

"Maybe I can help with that."

"Oh, yes? And how, exactly?"

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [2402](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [1448](#))

3221

"I don't need twelve minutes. The component is in the long grass behind Hooper's tent. I threw it there hoping to somehow frame him, but now I see that won't be possible. I was naive, I suppose."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

3222

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [4024](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2221](#))
- Evade (turn to [1031](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2494](#))

3223

"None of us are blameless, Harris. But you're not my priest and I'm not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will."

He appears to consider the offer.

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [3621](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

3224

Plenty of time for that later. If there is nothing there, then Hooper discovered the component after all and Harris' men will have swooped on him, and the story about his confession is just a ruse to test me out. And if the component is still there - well. It will be just as valuable to my young man in the village in a week's time, and his deadline of the 31st is not quite upon us.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

And everything will proceed as before. The component will mean nothing to the Germans - this is the one fact I could never have explained to a man like Harris despite the fact that the principle behind the Bombe is the same as the principle behind an army. The individual pieces - the men, the components - do not matter. They are quite identical. It is how they are arranged that counts. The structures and patterns that they form.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [1474](#))
- No (turn to [1694](#))
- Lie (turn to [3113](#))
- Evade (turn to [3549](#))

3225

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1731](#))
- Something else (turn to [3324](#))

3226

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3149](#))
- No (turn to [2361](#))
- Lie (turn to [2361](#))

3227

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3953](#))
- No (turn to [3111](#))
- Lie (turn to [3111](#))

3228

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m gone.

Of course, then they’ll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4823](#))
- Don't go (turn to [4969](#))

3229

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4510](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4757](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4510](#))
- Lie (turn to [4757](#))

3230

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4397](#))

- No (turn to [1876](#))
- Lie (turn to [4710](#))

3231

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2677](#))

3232

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3202](#))

3233

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3581](#))
- No (turn to [4798](#))
- Lie (turn to [1739](#))
- Evade (turn to [3447](#))

3234

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [663](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2713](#))

3235

I suppose this must be what it feels like to have a conscience, then. Very well.

"Harris, sir. I don't know what Hooper's playing at, sir. But I can't let him do this."

"Do what?"

"Take the rope for this. I took it, sir.

The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"I thought as much. I hadn't expected you to give it out so easily, however. You

understand, Hooper has said nothing, of course. In fact, he went to Hut 2 directly after we released him and uncovered the component. But he told us you had instructed him where to go. Hence my little double bluff. Frankly, I'll be glad when I'm shot of the lot of you mathematicians."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

3236

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

"Well?" Harris asks. "What are you waiting for? Please don't tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don't think my head could stand it."

- Confess (turn to [2746](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

3237

"None of us are blameless, Harris. But you're not my priest and I'm not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will."

He appears to consider the offer.

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [2389](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

3238

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [1021](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3760](#))

3239

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4216](#))

3240

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [835](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4063](#))
- Lie (turn to [2706](#))

3241

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [1447](#))
- Lie (turn to [1447](#))
- Evade (turn to [4369](#))

3242

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

3243

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4742](#))
- No (turn to [2592](#))

3244

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1659](#))
- Something else (turn to [1277](#))

3245

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4274](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4531](#))

3246

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [101](#))
- "Of my standing." (turn to [1351](#))
- Evade (turn to [3510](#))

3247

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [3133](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1488](#))
- Evade (turn to [3487](#))

3248

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4085](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4232](#))
- Something else (turn to [3279](#))

3249

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Confess (turn to [4399](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))

3250

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [665](#))
- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- The pillow (turn to [638](#))
- Something else (turn to [3286](#))

3251

“This proves nothing,” I reply stubbornly. “You still don’t have the component and without it, I don’t see what you can hope to prove.”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and

what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [16](#))
- No (turn to [467](#))
- Lie (turn to [467](#))
- Evade (turn to [3861](#))

3252

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1389](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [804](#))

3253

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3229](#))
- No (turn to [126](#))
- Lie (turn to [126](#))

3254

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [4894](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4794](#))
- Lie (turn to [4794](#))

3255

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1388](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1384](#))

3256

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [99](#))

- "I don't." (turn to [1999](#))
- Lie (turn to [1999](#))
- Evade (turn to [2780](#))

3257

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1386](#))
- No (turn to [262](#))
- Lie (turn to [262](#))

3258

I wave cheerily back and she giggles, almost drops her bicycle, then dashes away inside the House. Judging by the clock on the front gable, she's running a little late this morning.

I turn the corner of Hut 3 and walk down the short gravel path to Hut 2. It was a good spot to choose - Hut 2 is where the electricians work, and they're generally focussed on what they're doing. They don't often come outside to smoke a cigarette so it's easy to slip past the doorway unnoticed.

- Check inside (turn to [4593](#))
- Go around the back (turn to [775](#))

3259

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [2740](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4796](#))
- Evade (turn to [1922](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1903](#))

3260

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3191](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4171](#))

3261

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2066](#))

3262

"Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly." I fold my arms. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [2064](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

3263

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- Something else (turn to [4534](#))

3264

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [582](#))
- Give up (turn to [2951](#))

3265

I say nothing. It's true, isn't it? I can't deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can't deny that I don't think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved? It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

"God have mercy on your soul," Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear no-one else will." Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1114](#))

3266

"Then I'll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?" I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [505](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2363](#))

3267

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2813](#))

3268

"Then I'll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?" I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1894](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3269](#))

3269

"I saw Hooper take it."

"Did you?" The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of

contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Tell the truth (turn to [224](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1736](#))

3270

"There's nothing to explain," I reply stiffly. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [2389](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

3271

"So would you," I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

"I've been through worse than this," he replies matter-of-factly. "It's hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes."

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. "Hooper's confessed, you know."

- Be eager (turn to [2329](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [2837](#))

3272

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3426](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [3923](#))

3273

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2429](#))
- No (turn to [1690](#))

3274

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [247](#))

3275

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3633](#))

3276

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3775](#))
- No (turn to [316](#))
- Lie (turn to [3775](#))

3277

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4531](#))

3278

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4491](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

3279

- The jacket (turn to [3837](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3411](#))

3280

“Then let him think he's off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you'll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that's the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. "All right," he says. "I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go." Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. "Especially since this is a plan that involves keeping you in handcuffs. I don't see what I have to lose."

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

"Put 'em up," Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I'm thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

"Captain. Manning talked. If you'd step out for a moment?"

- Play the part, head down (turn to [4036](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [2835](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [4603](#))

3281

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2066](#))

3282

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2697](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2854](#))
- Lie (turn to [1306](#))

3283

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1196](#))
- Something else (turn to [4034](#))

3284

"I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I

suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3136](#))

3285

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [3372](#))
- Deny it (turn to [3320](#))

3286

- The jacket (turn to [439](#))

3287

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4765](#))
- No (turn to [617](#))
- Lie (turn to [617](#))

3288

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

3289

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3576](#))

- Disagree (turn to [287](#))
- Lie (turn to [2587](#))

3290

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3002](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3002](#))

3291

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))

- Leave it (turn to [897](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3292

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [2785](#))
- Find something (turn to [1043](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [3521](#))

3293

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2912](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1339](#))

3294

“And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren’t enough senior officers to go round.”

“Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that,” Harris replies. “That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I’m inclined to believe them. But that’s all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [2200](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [725](#))

3295

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4097](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3740](#))

3296

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3348](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1990](#))

3297

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3551](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))

3298

I lift the cup and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [3971](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1742](#))
- Evade (turn to [1742](#))

3299

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [705](#))

3300

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2187](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3173](#))
- Something else (turn to [603](#))

3301

“Of my standing. My reputation.” I don’t like to talk of myself like this, but I carry on all the same. “Hooper simply can’t bear knowing that, once all this is over, I’ll be the one receiving the knighthood and he...”

“No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade,” Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: “Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me.” For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1093](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4670](#))
- Lie (turn to [4670](#))
- Evade (turn to [1765](#))

3302

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

3303

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [2177](#))
- No (turn to [5024](#))
- Evade (turn to [2331](#))

3304

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3615](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [1919](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4200](#))

3305

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part

from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [4230](#))
- Lie (turn to [4230](#))
- Evade (turn to [3055](#))

3306

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [945](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

3307

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [573](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3485](#))

3308

Enough of this. There isn’t any time to lose. Right now they’ll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that’s it. The minute he closes his eyelids and

drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my bucket and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [4406](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1801](#))

3309

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3995](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1137](#))
- Something else (turn to [4590](#))

3310

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [1059](#))
- Accept it (turn to [3416](#))
- Evade it (turn to [2265](#))

3311

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [2431](#))
- Give up (turn to [4016](#))

3312

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3239](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4070](#))

3313

“Really, Commander,” I reply. “It rather sounds like you want to spank me.”

“For God’s sake,” he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [762](#))

3314

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2969](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3407](#))

3315

- The jacket (turn to [4755](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1166](#))

3316

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- The pillow (turn to [702](#))
- Something else (turn to [4838](#))

3317

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [135](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

3318

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [685](#))
- Try the door (turn to [651](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))

3319

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [4247](#))
- Disagree (turn to [466](#))
- Evade (turn to [3490](#))

3320

“I tell you, someone broke it. Someone wanted to threaten me, I think.”

Harris shakes his head. “Well, we can look into that matter later. For now, you probably want to hear the more pressing news. We found the missing component. Or rather, Hooper found it for us. He snuck out of his tent first thing in the morning and retrieved it from on top. Of all the damnest places - you would never have known it was there. He acted all surprised about it when we jumped him, of course, as you might expect - but it was good enough for me.”

- Be glad (turn to [2966](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4313](#))

3321

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

3322

“Very well. I see there's no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if

he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3044](#))
- No (turn to [1986](#))
- Lie (turn to [3194](#))

3323

It won't take a moment to settle the matter. I can justify a walk past Hut 2 as part of my morning stroll. It will be obvious in a moment if the component is still there.

On my way across the paddocks, between the huts and the House, I catch sight of young Miss Lyon, arriving for work on her bicycle. She giggles as she sees me and waves.

- Wave back (turn to [2544](#))
- Ignore her (turn to [691](#))

3324

- The jacket (turn to [1624](#))

3325

"So would you," I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

"I've been through worse than this," he replies matter-of-factly. "It's hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes."

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. "Hooper's confessed, you know."

- Be eager (turn to [2633](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [3932](#))

3326

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [197](#))

3327

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [4931](#))
- No (turn to [4665](#))
- Evade (turn to [849](#))

3328

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty

socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3302](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [3302](#))
- Evade (turn to [568](#))

3329

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2624](#))
- Something else (turn to [1834](#))

3330

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4250](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [978](#))

3331

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [533](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3542](#))

3332

“Harris, you’d better watch out. He’s planted a time-bomb here.”

Harris stares at me for a moment, then laughs. “Oh, goodness. That’s rich.”

I almost wish I had a way to make the hut explode, but of course I don’t.

“Enough.” Harris gestures for me to start walking. “This story couldn’t be simpler. You took it to cover your back. You hid it. You lied to get Hooper into trouble, and when you thought you’d won, you came to scoop your prize. A good hand but ultimately, if it hadn’t have been you who hid the component, then you wouldn’t be here now.”

He leads me across the yard. Back towards Hut 5 to be decoded, and taken to pieces, once again.

The End

3333

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [4619](#))

3334

“Yes. I didn't have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

3335

So perhaps I should wait it out, after all. Who knows? I might have a better opportunity later.

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [395](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [1493](#))

3336

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [5025](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1205](#))

3337

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- Something else (turn to [3286](#))

3338

"I'm not saying anything of the sort," I snap back. "What is this, Harris? You're accusing me of treachery but I don't see a shred of evidence for it! Why don't you put your cards on the table?"

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [4782](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3834](#))
- Lie (turn to [2138](#))

3339

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [3628](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [2201](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [1452](#))

3340

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4131](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3147](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1592](#))

3341

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [360](#))
- No (turn to [3714](#))
- Lie (turn to [3714](#))

3342

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [1275](#))
- Lie (turn to [1275](#))
- Evade (turn to [2549](#))

3343

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2171](#))

- Lie (turn to [2171](#))
- Evade (turn to [4752](#))

3344

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3117](#))
- Leave it (turn to [3389](#))

3345

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you're lying about Hooper. I think you're a clever, scheming young man - that's why we hired you - and you're looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I'm not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice.”

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

“I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Confess (turn to [1635](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))

3346

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [2119](#))

3347

“Someone threw this in through the window over night,” I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn’t see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there’s no-one else it could have been.”

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [991](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4076](#))

3348

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3847](#))

3349

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess

now as well, I don't think my head could stand it."

- Confess (turn to [1454](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [3371](#))

3350

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4097](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3740](#))

3351

"Well?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [1085](#))

- No (turn to [2202](#))
- Lie (turn to [1085](#))

3352

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [4196](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [1954](#))

3353

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1308](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4080](#))

3354

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4291](#))

3355

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3972](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1973](#))

3356

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Persist with this (turn to [4309](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [448](#))

3357

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1044](#))

3358

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [3806](#))
- Accept it (turn to [2819](#))
- Evade it (turn to [4673](#))

3359

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [3963](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [73](#))

3360

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [4630](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3038](#))

3361

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I don't want to go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4556](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3702](#))

3362

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1810](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1203](#))

3363

"Then you know I'm right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?"

“We don’t know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [1687](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [2405](#))

3364

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4268](#))
- Wait (turn to [3349](#))

3365

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [260](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- Something else (turn to [3010](#))

3366

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything

goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [1483](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

3367

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I’m away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [4417](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [4495](#))

3368

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [4526](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1503](#))

3369

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [715](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2159](#))

- Evade (turn to [4783](#))

3370

“Listen to me, Hooper. We were the only men in that hut today, so we know what happened. But I want you to know this. I put the component inside a breeze-block in the foundations of Hut 2, wrapped in one of your shirts. They’re going to find it eventually, and that’s going to be what tips the balance. And there’s nothing you can do to stop any of that from happening.”

His eyes bulge with terror. “What did I do, to you? What did I ever do?”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4893](#))
- Lie (turn to [3638](#))
- Evade (turn to [358](#))

3371

“I certainly don’t. But still, I’m surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he’ll face the rope, doesn’t he?”

“Don’t ask me to explain why he did what he did,” Harris sighs. “Just be grateful that he did, and you’re now off the hook.”

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [3323](#))
- Don't check (turn to [636](#))

3372

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [452](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [764](#))

3373

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

3374

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [3091](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [2032](#))
- Be honest (turn to [2032](#))
- Lie (turn to [3091](#))

3375

I hop up the steps and put my head inside all the same. Nobody about. Still too early in the AM for sparks, I suppose.

I head on around the back of the hut. The breeze-block with the cavity is on the left side.

- Check (turn to [4002](#))
- Look around (turn to [310](#))

3376

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

3377

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4862](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1794](#))

3378

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [2923](#))
- No (turn to [3749](#))
- Lie (turn to [3749](#))
- Evade (turn to [4052](#))

3379

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4941](#))

- "I know where it is." (turn to [2037](#))
- Lie (turn to [4941](#))
- Evade (turn to [369](#))

3380

"I'll enjoy it. Thank you for helping me clear this up."

"Don't thank me yet. There's still a war to fight. Now get a move on."

I nod, and hurry out of the door. The air outside has never tasted fresher and more invigorating. I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [1003](#))
- No (turn to [3514](#))
- Lie (turn to [1578](#))
- Evade (turn to [48](#))

3381

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1278](#))

3382

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [3105](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [32](#))

3383

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4741](#))

3384

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4897](#))
- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4803](#))
- Something else (turn to [2817](#))

3385

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

3386

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [4196](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [708](#))

3387

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night

and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [4807](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [370](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2115](#))

3388

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4676](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

3389

Still there means no-one has found it, which means it is probably well-hidden. And short of skipping the compound now, I can afford to leave it hidden there a while longer. So I leave it in place.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [1735](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [3228](#))

3390

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It

only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4503](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [4503](#))

3391

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [648](#))
- Shrug (turn to [298](#))

3392

"Of my standing. My reputation." I'm aware of how arrogant I must sound but I plough on all the same. "Hooper simply can't bear knowing that, once all this is over, I'll be the one receiving the knighthood and he..."

"No-one will be getting a knighthood if the Germans invade," Harris answers sharply. He casts a quick eye to the door of the Hut to check the latch is still down, then continues in more of a murmur: "Not you and not Hooper. Now answer me." For the first time since the door closed, I wonder what the threat might be if I do *not*.

"Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you

know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1543](#))
- Lie (turn to [1543](#))
- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

3393

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

3394

"For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [4208](#))
- No (turn to [2764](#))
- Lie (turn to [4208](#))

3395

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3276](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4391](#))

3396

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [1787](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2365](#))

3397

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1852](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [1602](#))

3398

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [3536](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

3399

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3901](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- Something else (turn to [2251](#))

3400

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [40](#))
- Something else (turn to [4885](#))

3401

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [1441](#))
- No (turn to [4762](#))
- Lie (turn to [4762](#))

3402

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [747](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

3403

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3803](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

3404

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [841](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2010](#))

3405

"If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could," I tell him sternly.

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Confess (turn to [1676](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))

3406

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [1054](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2961](#))

3407

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4649](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3278](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))

3408

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [4912](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [3794](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [3612](#))

3409

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4081](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [1380](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [3184](#))

3410

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my bucket and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [4573](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [2756](#))

3411

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3837](#))

3412

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2521](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2849](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

3413

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [910](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

3414

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

3415

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1473](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

3416

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me

unless you help me, Hooper. Don't let them hang me."

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3508](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1811](#))

3417

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [3774](#))
- Shrug (turn to [2189](#))

3418

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up,

searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2933](#))

3419

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4291](#))

3420

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [4231](#))
- Evade (turn to [4336](#))

3421

"I'm no traitor," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3328](#))
- Lie (turn to [3328](#))
- Evade (turn to [4716](#))

3422

"I don't see why," I reply, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"I'm sorry to pull you up so roughly," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [1455](#))
- No (turn to [3597](#))
- Evade (turn to [3169](#))
- Lie (turn to [3597](#))

3423

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1264](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2844](#))

3424

“I had to get out, Harris. I had to provoke Hooper into doing something that would incriminate himself fully. He’s too clever, you see...”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [2620](#))
- No (turn to [2266](#))
- Lie (turn to [2266](#))
- Evade (turn to [4707](#))

3425

“I climbed out of the window overnight,” I explain. “I went and got this from where it was hidden, and brought it back here.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [821](#))

3426

But of course I will. A little vengeance, disguised as doing something good.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

3427

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3150](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4395](#))

3428

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

3429

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2125](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2093](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

3430

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2041](#))
- No (turn to [853](#))
- Lie (turn to [540](#))

3431

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [71](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

3432

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3713](#))
- The pillow (turn to [366](#))
- Something else (turn to [1385](#))

3433

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my fist and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [1862](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [2480](#))

3434

"I always meant to tell you," I tell him. "I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them."

Harris looks at me with contempt. "You wretched little man. Don't think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You're going to pay for what you've done, and you're going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime." If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another,

more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3430](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2118](#))

3435

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [485](#))
- No (turn to [1843](#))
- Lie (turn to [1843](#))

3436

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [5004](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [2743](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [115](#))

3437

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1370](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1850](#))
- Something else (turn to [1512](#))

3438

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling because he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [2684](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2607](#))
- Evade (turn to [4944](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1039](#))

3439

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [876](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2303](#))
- Lie (turn to [2303](#))
- Evade (turn to [4182](#))

3440

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4848](#))

3441

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [2110](#))

- Inside the porch section (turn to [218](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

3442

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness.

“And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [3132](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1072](#))

3443

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

3444

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4552](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3354](#))

3445

- The jacket (turn to [4527](#))

3446

“Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself.”

“That's how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3305](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3305](#))

3447

It depends, perhaps, on what his name his worth. If it were to prove valuable, well; perhaps I can concoct a few more such lovers with which to ease my later days.

“We recovered the part, just where you said it was,” Harris reports, as he puts the cuffs around my wrists. “Of course, a couple of the men swear blind they searched there yesterday, so I’m afraid, what with the broken window... we’ve formed a perfectly good theory which doesn’t bode well for you.”

“I see.” It doesn’t seem worth arguing any further. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

3448

- The jacket (turn to [4305](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4199](#))

3449

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1695](#))

3450

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4027](#))
- Something else (turn to [3527](#))

3451

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- Something else (turn to [1040](#))

3452

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [755](#))
- No (turn to [4103](#))

- Lie (turn to [1259](#))

3453

“Queen to rook two, checkmate!” I call, then laugh viciously, as if I am damning him straight to hell.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [59](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4482](#))
- Evade (turn to [2259](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1908](#))

3454

I say nothing. It’s true, isn’t it? I can’t deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can’t deny that I don’t think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved?

It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

“God have mercy on your soul,” Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear no-one else will.” Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [762](#))

3455

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1311](#))
- Shrug (turn to [2189](#))

3456

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4921](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

3457

“When you have eliminated the impossible...” I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander

pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2738](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3363](#))

3458

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2650](#))

3459

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4338](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4683](#))

3460

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3852](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2269](#))

3461

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [834](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [861](#))

3462

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [2394](#))

3463

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2456](#))

3464

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [97](#))
- Deny it (turn to [2910](#))

3465

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [1045](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1162](#))

3466

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt

that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3870](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [3870](#))
- Evade (turn to [1096](#))

3467

"No. I didn't."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [821](#))

3468

"Well?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [4208](#))
- No (turn to [2764](#))
- Lie (turn to [4208](#))

3469

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [2815](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2297](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4144](#))

3470

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [779](#))
- Accept it (turn to [4332](#))
- Evade it (turn to [39](#))

3471

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [785](#))

3472

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

“I’ll get you Hooper, you’ll see!” I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [2823](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [987](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [503](#))

3473

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if

he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3226](#))
- No (turn to [1163](#))
- Lie (turn to [1194](#))

3474

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4370](#))
- No (turn to [579](#))
- Lie (turn to [579](#))

3475

"Well, I'm glad his conscience finally caught up with him," I reply dismissively.

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4268](#))
- Wait (turn to [3349](#))

3476

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [2152](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [677](#))

3477

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [2436](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1927](#))

3478

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2120](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- Something else (turn to [4838](#))

3479

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3011](#))

3480

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1025](#))

3481

"Someone threw this in through the window over night," I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. "I couldn't see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is."

He reaches out and takes it. "Well, I'll be damned," he murmurs. "That's it all right. And you didn't have it on you when we put you in here. But it can't have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there's no-one else it could have been."

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [1425](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [3489](#))

3482

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2781](#))
- No (turn to [1947](#))
- Lie (turn to [91](#))

3483

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2322](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1106](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))

3484

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the

floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3319](#))

3485

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2711](#))

3486

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [1132](#))

3487

"I'm looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around."

"Very droll," he replies. "Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get

dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [4725](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [2585](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4381](#))

3488

“Really, Commander,” I reply. “It rather sounds like you want to spank me.”

“For God’s sake,” he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1114](#))

3489

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

3490

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his

shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [372](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [982](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4060](#))

3491

“All right.” I am beaten, after all. “The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2632](#))

3492

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2019](#))
- Try the window (turn to [3717](#))

3493

I say nothing. It’s true, isn’t it? I can’t deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can’t deny that I don’t think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved?

It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

“God have mercy on your soul,” Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear no-one else will.” Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [545](#))

3494

I say nothing. It’s true, isn’t it? I can’t deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can’t deny that I don’t think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved? It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

“God have mercy on your soul,” Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear no-one else will.” Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [297](#))

3495

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3083](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3120](#))
- The bucket (turn to [294](#))

3496

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [720](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3130](#))

3497

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4061](#))

3498

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3813](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4155](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [411](#))

3499

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3280](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

3500

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3720](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4909](#))

3501

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1263](#))

3502

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1335](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2593](#))

3503

- The jacket (turn to [2043](#))

3504

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [4447](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [4106](#))

3505

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1827](#))
- No (turn to [3585](#))
- Lie (turn to [2943](#))

3506

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3104](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [378](#))

3507

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won’t go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3803](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

3508

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [103](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1290](#))

3509

"Try me. Just me and him."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3468](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3394](#))

3510

"How should I know?" I reply, defensively. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [870](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4499](#))
- Lie (turn to [4499](#))

3511

"Quite terrible. I would never have guessed."

"Well." Russell harrumphs. "Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it's to be expected. See you there?"

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn't, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

3512

"Then let him think he's off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you'll get your man."

Somehow, I think. But that's the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. "All right," he says. "I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go." Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. "Hooper's in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let's see if we can't get his attention somehow."

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

"Put 'em up," Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I'm thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put*

it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [1456](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [956](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [96](#))

3513

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1836](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- The pillow (turn to [493](#))
- Something else (turn to [2153](#))

3514

“Heard what?”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

3515

It's useless. There's nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [4035](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1118](#))
- Wait (turn to [4240](#))

3516

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [670](#))
- Deny it (turn to [447](#))

3517

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3802](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [4950](#))

3518

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Confess (turn to [3115](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))

3519

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [2664](#))
- Lie (turn to [2664](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

3520

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining

glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1241](#))

3521

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [4128](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [1043](#))

3522

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

3523

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2890](#))

- Bargain with him (turn to [4817](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [2790](#))

3524

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))
- Confess (turn to [1513](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [1435](#))

3525

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [5017](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1110](#))

3526

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4130](#))
- No (turn to [4762](#))
- Lie (turn to [4762](#))

3527

- The jacket (turn to [131](#))

3528

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2340](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- Something else (turn to [3170](#))

3529

“Then let him think he's off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you'll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that's the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Especially since this is a plan that involves keeping you in handcuffs. I don't see what I have to lose.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2596](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [4812](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [1772](#))

3530

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [112](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4560](#))

3531

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3023](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4421](#))

3532

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2657](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [336](#))

3533

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [542](#))

3534

“You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [598](#))
- No (turn to [2675](#))
- Lie (turn to [516](#))

3535

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [3936](#))

3536

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to

understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded.
Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [4465](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1927](#))

3537

“Awkward,” I reply, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“I’m sorry to pull you up so roughly,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [3343](#))
- No (turn to [1155](#))
- Evade (turn to [5009](#))
- Lie (turn to [1155](#))

3538

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2406](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- The pillow (turn to [674](#))
- Something else (turn to [3503](#))

3539

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2426](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2980](#))

3540

“Of my genius. Hooper simply can’t stand that I’m cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse.”

“You’re suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country’s future simply to spite you?” Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring around me.

- Yes (turn to [1671](#))
- No (turn to [4874](#))
- Evade (turn to [2213](#))

3541

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3108](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- Something else (turn to [1756](#))

3542

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry,

but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1066](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3482](#))

3543

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [345](#))
- Deny it (turn to [1091](#))

3544

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [928](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

3545

"Well?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny

business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3738](#))
- No (turn to [3772](#))
- Lie (turn to [3738](#))

3546

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [9](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2541](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4575](#))
- Something else (turn to [416](#))

3547

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [89](#))

3548

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [1996](#))
- Find something (turn to [3704](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [1657](#))

3549

“If you’ll excuse me, Russell. I was about to take a bath.”

“Oh, of course. Well, you’ll hear soon enough. Can hardly hide the fact there’ll only be three of us from now on.”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3550

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s mocking me. “Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [3327](#))

- "Of my standing." (turn to [2876](#))
- Evade (turn to [3254](#))

3551

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

3552

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [8](#))

3553

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with

shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3202](#))

3554

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4269](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1015](#))

3555

"That's not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2795](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1563](#))

3556

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [2923](#))
- No (turn to [4961](#))
- Lie (turn to [4961](#))
- Evade (turn to [1108](#))

3557

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1012](#))

3558

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [883](#))
- No (turn to [4542](#))
- Lie (turn to [883](#))

3559

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2469](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [949](#))

3560

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

3561

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only

reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I'm not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice."

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [2441](#))
- Confess (turn to [2068](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [2698](#))

3562

"No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me." I take a deep breath. "It was Hooper."

"Hooper!" Harris exclaims, in surprise.

"It's the truth, Harris. If I'm going to jail, then so be it, but I won't hang at Traitor's Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine."

"Which you did." Harris leans forward. "And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?"

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [255](#))
- Lie (turn to [255](#))
- Evade (turn to [3040](#))

3563

"All right," he declares, gruffly. "We'll try it. But if this doesn't work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know."

"Alone," I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3276](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4391](#))

3564

“Heard what?”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3565

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3212](#))

- No (turn to [474](#))
- Lie (turn to [1845](#))

3566

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2404](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2904](#))

3567

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1728](#))
- Something else (turn to [4457](#))

3568

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [35](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [35](#))
- Evade (turn to [4258](#))

3569

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1935](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3009](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1354](#))

3570

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [4486](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [434](#))
- Evade (turn to [1572](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4760](#))

3571

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3046](#))
- No (turn to [3127](#))

3572

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1120](#))

3573

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4799](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3504](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

3574

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3905](#))

3575

"No. I didn't."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [297](#))

3576

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I don't want to go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [442](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4171](#))

3577

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [3891](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4632](#))
- Wait (turn to [4030](#))

3578

“No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

3579

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

3580

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found my letters. Haven’t you? In fact, if you haven’t, don’t tell me.”

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [400](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2642](#))
- Lie (turn to [4620](#))

3581

But of course I will. A little vengeance, disguised as doing something good.

“We recovered the part, just where you said it was,” Harris reports, as he puts the cuffs around my wrists. “Of course, a couple of the men swear blind they searched there yesterday, so I’m afraid, what with the broken window... we’ve formed a perfectly good theory which doesn’t bode well for you.”

“I see.” It doesn’t seem worth arguing any further. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

3582

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [990](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2451](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [1140](#))

3583

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4301](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [4948](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

3584

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [55](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [3207](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1377](#))

3585

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2662](#))
- No (turn to [3018](#))
- Lie (turn to [3018](#))

3586

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [1750](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [1761](#))
- Lie (turn to [121](#))
- Evade (turn to [405](#))

3587

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [632](#))
- No (turn to [376](#))
- Lie (turn to [376](#))

3588

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [150](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [150](#))

3589

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [854](#))
- Find something (turn to [3459](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [3100](#))

3590

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [422](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3399](#))
- Something else (turn to [2251](#))

3591

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2754](#))

3592

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [299](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3524](#))

3593

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [4237](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

3594

"There's nothing to explain," I reply stiffly. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [2912](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1339](#))

3595

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [1993](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4777](#))

3596

“You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn’t catch him?”

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [1776](#))

3597

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [831](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1269](#))
- Lie (turn to [1269](#))
- Evade (turn to [814](#))

3598

“I did. I know what you’re thinking. If I’ve transgressed once then I must be the guilty man for all the crimes in this compound... But I’m not, I tell you. We were close to cracking the 13th’s missive; trying our latest pattern and beginning to see some correlations in the data - and then Hooper disappeared for a moment and the machine went down.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [1026](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [2826](#))

3599

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3367](#))

3600

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3202](#))

3601

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1093](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2399](#))
- Lie (turn to [2399](#))
- Evade (turn to [3466](#))

3602

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

3603

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his

shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [27](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1285](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [5007](#))

3604

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2373](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3005](#))

3605

“I don’t know what I’m suggesting. I don’t understand what’s going on.”

“But of course you do.” Harris narrows his eyes. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [84](#))
- Lie (turn to [84](#))
- Evade (turn to [1371](#))

3606

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [961](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1125](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2989](#))
- Something else (turn to [137](#))

3607

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [2684](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2607](#))
- Evade (turn to [4944](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1039](#))

3608

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [3940](#))
- Lie (turn to [3940](#))
- Evade (turn to [4456](#))

3609

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3670](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [213](#))

3610

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken

my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3019](#))

3611

"I'm fine," I reply. "This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better."

"I couldn't agree more." And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1173](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4934](#))
- Lie (turn to [4934](#))
- Evade (turn to [4084](#))

3612

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [1994](#))

3613

"Someone threw this in through the window over night," I reply, and open my jacket to

reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn’t see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there’s no-one else it could have been.”

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [2865](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4202](#))

3614

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- Something else (turn to [3448](#))

3615

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4300](#))

3616

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean

kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

3617

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn’t know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1716](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3566](#))

3618

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [2707](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2143](#))

3619

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1214](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

3620

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3929](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

3621

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [2630](#))
- Evade (turn to [2548](#))

3622

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3821](#))

3623

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3845](#))
- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3039](#))

- Something else (turn to [306](#))

3624

“We don’t have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn’t hold water. It doesn’t tie up. We know you’ve been leaving yourself open to accusations. We’ve been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [2772](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

3625

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4566](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1316](#))
- Lie (turn to [960](#))

3626

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3205](#))
- No (turn to [5012](#))
- Lie (turn to [5012](#))

3627

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1813](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [1813](#))

3628

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3534](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3269](#))

3629

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [3126](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4380](#))
- Lie (turn to [4380](#))

3630

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [26](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2818](#))

3631

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

3632

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [1964](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4909](#))

3633

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

3634

“Someone threw this in through the window over night,” I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn’t see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there’s no-one else it could have been.”

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [3530](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4560](#))

3635

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2836](#))
- No (turn to [629](#))
- Lie (turn to [629](#))

3636

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [4223](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [3952](#))

3637

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [611](#))
- No (turn to [675](#))
- Lie (turn to [675](#))

3638

“Nothing,” I reply. “You’re just the other man in the room. One of us has to get the blame.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [77](#))

3639

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [265](#))
- No (turn to [4177](#))
- Lie (turn to [2355](#))
- Evade (turn to [2355](#))

3640

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [1156](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3063](#))

3641

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2721](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1888](#))
- Something else (turn to [2668](#))

3642

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on

to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1931](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3665](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

3643

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- Something else (turn to [3677](#))

3644

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3058](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- The pillow (turn to [229](#))
- Something else (turn to [4284](#))

3645

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you're searched my things then I suppose you've found my letters. Haven't you? In fact, if you haven't, don't tell me.

Harris nods once. “I've seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3576](#))
- Disagree (turn to [287](#))
- Lie (turn to [2587](#))

3646

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [320](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2621](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4165](#))

3647

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1807](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [3639](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4903](#))

3648

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4939](#))

3649

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3924](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3924](#))

3650

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- Something else (turn to [2251](#))

3651

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it

happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1956](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [110](#))
- Lie (turn to [1956](#))
- Evade (turn to [4014](#))

3652

Co-operation is the only sensible approach. Anything else will be seen through and will increase their suspicion, and risk contradiction with myself or whatever other sources they might have. I must be transparent, open - and hope they do not ask any questions I do not want to answer.

They give me time enough to prepare what those questions might be. Half an hour goes by before Commander Harris returns to the hut. He seems careful to leave the door open only for a moment, as if worried a loose word or two might slip inside.

He’s brought two cups of tea in metal mugs: he sets them down on the tabletop between us.

“Well then,” he begins, a little awkwardly. This is an unseemly situation, it would be appear. He pushes one cup halfway towards me. A small gesture of friendship. Is that enough to give me some hope?

- Take it (turn to [1828](#))
- Don't take it (turn to [2305](#))

3653

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being

an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you've done me, I'm sure he will."

"We have," Harris replies simply.

It's all I can do not to gape.

"Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2776](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [154](#))

3654

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [1593](#))
- No (turn to [4473](#))
- Lie (turn to [4743](#))

3655

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

3656

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [1253](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [1785](#))

3657

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [1560](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3139](#))

3658

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [3644](#))

- The jacket (turn to [2117](#))

3659

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3641](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2721](#))
- The pillow (turn to [200](#))
- Something else (turn to [2668](#))

3660

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1025](#))

3661

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What's this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3926](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3162](#))
- Evade (turn to [4242](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [413](#))

3662

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1807](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4307](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [3310](#))

3663

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2952](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2413](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))

3664

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- Something else (turn to [4244](#))

3665

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [1788](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

3666

I leave the cup exactly where it is. "Why?" I ask coldly. "What's in it?"

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. "Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [4117](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1112](#))
- Evade (turn to [2666](#))

3667

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [2392](#))

3668

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [835](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4063](#))
- Lie (turn to [2706](#))

3669

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1852](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [644](#))

3670

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [2396](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [4001](#))

3671

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2151](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [2151](#))

3672

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [917](#))

3673

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [897](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3674

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1591](#))

3675

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime

of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [441](#))
- No (turn to [4968](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4849](#))

3676

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [497](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1643](#))
- Lie (turn to [2308](#))

3677

- The jacket (turn to [825](#))

3678

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3850](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1833](#))

3679

"Then you know I'm right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?"

"We don't know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [98](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

3680

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I

notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2468](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

3681

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [1451](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [590](#))

3682

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

3683

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [299](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3524](#))

3684

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4596](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2648](#))
- Lie (turn to [2530](#))

3685

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [4105](#))
- Evade (turn to [699](#))

3686

“Then let him think he’s off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you’ll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that’s the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2716](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [3881](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [793](#))

3687

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [2815](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4009](#))

3688

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

3689

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3885](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [357](#))

3690

"Yes. Probably under my bunk."

Harris smiles wryly. "We'll know that for a fake, then. We've looked there already. I don't mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don't care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place."

- "Then let him think he's off the hook." (turn to [3529](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [3955](#))

3691

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2879](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1332](#))
- Lie (turn to [2706](#))

3692

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [800](#))
- Find something (turn to [1714](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [1434](#))

3693

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [1189](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [3558](#))

3694

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2931](#))
- Something else (turn to [4096](#))

3695

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [2840](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4857](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2097](#))

3696

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2433](#))
- Something else (turn to [2107](#))

3697

“When you have eliminated the impossible...” I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [4971](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [1328](#))

3698

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny

business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3662](#))
- No (turn to [3122](#))
- Lie (turn to [3662](#))

3699

"I am what I am," I reply. "I'm the way nature made me. But they're going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don't let them hang me."

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2550](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1958](#))

3700

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [4684](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2936](#))

3701

“We don't have to believe anyone,” Harris replies sternly. “I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn't hold water. It doesn't tie up. We know you've been leaving yourself open to accusations. We've been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride.”

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

“It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [3352](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

3702

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. I find myself collapsing,

desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2104](#))
- No (turn to [3243](#))
- Lie (turn to [4476](#))

3703

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3720](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2233](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [3486](#))

3704

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [4960](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3502](#))

3705

“It will. Hooper's running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

3706

I say nothing. It’s true, isn’t it? I can’t deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can’t deny that I don’t think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved? It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

“God have mercy on your soul,” Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear no-one else will.” Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1530](#))

3707

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [43](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

3708

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [873](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

3709

“No, I suppose not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [1115](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [729](#))
- Lie (turn to [729](#))

3710

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

3711

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [446](#))
- That's not it (turn to [351](#))

3712

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3974](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [1846](#))

3713

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4741](#))

3714

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2377](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [2377](#))

3715

"I saw Hooper take it."

"I see." He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the "brains" he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Persist with this (turn to [4309](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [65](#))

3716

No choice, then. Nothing, that is, except to act as if there is no game being played. I'll have a bath, then start work as normal. I've got a week to find something to give my blackmailer - or give him nothing: it seems my superiors know about my indiscretions now already. Something will turn up.

- Definitely (turn to [2478](#))
- Unlikely (turn to [3208](#))
- Lie (turn to [1423](#))
- Evade (turn to [1717](#))

3717

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4801](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

3718

"Nothing," I reply. "You're just the other man in the room. One of us has to get the blame."

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the

part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2453](#))

3719

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [4525](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [4460](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [4053](#))

3720

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up,

and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [1477](#))

3721

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

3722

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [5035](#))
- No (turn to [941](#))

3723

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over -

what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [3477](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4844](#))

3724

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [3417](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4839](#))
- Lie (turn to [2069](#))

3725

"Of course I do," I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

"Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2090](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1701](#))
- Lie (turn to [1701](#))
- Evade (turn to [2786](#))

3726

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3826](#))
- Try the door (turn to [763](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))

3727

"Quite right," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2489](#))
- Lie (turn to [2489](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

3728

"I had to get out, Harris. I had to provoke Hooper into doing something that would incriminate himself fully. He's too clever, you see..."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [3064](#))
- No (turn to [3839](#))
- Lie (turn to [3839](#))
- Evade (turn to [2356](#))

3729

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [402](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- Something else (turn to [4290](#))

3730

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4066](#))

3731

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [2877](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [2082](#))

3732

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2307](#))
- No (turn to [1485](#))
- Lie (turn to [1485](#))

3733

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [3592](#))
- Deny it (turn to [4935](#))

3734

- The jacket (turn to [3905](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3574](#))

3735

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1490](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [818](#))

3736

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3973](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1663](#))

3737

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’ll never know if I hadn’t have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my

comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4245](#))
- Lie (turn to [4523](#))
- Evade (turn to [746](#))

3738

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2890](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4855](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1317](#))

3739

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2665](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4222](#))
- Lie (turn to [2696](#))
- Evade (turn to [3853](#))

3740

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [939](#))
- No (turn to [4568](#))
- Lie (turn to [939](#))

3741

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [596](#))
- No (turn to [4186](#))

3742

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2446](#))

3743

But too important to guess. I move back around the side of the hut.

Harris is there, leaning in against the wall. He holds a stub pistol in his hand.

“Hooper said you’d told him where to look. I didn’t believe him. Or, well. I wasn’t sure what to believe. Now I rather think you’ve settled it.”

- Agree (turn to [272](#))
- Lie (turn to [4402](#))
- Evade (turn to [3332](#))

3744

Morning comes. I’m woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. “You’re up,” he remarks, and then, “You smell like an animal.”

- Be friendly (turn to [3828](#))
- Be cold (turn to [3325](#))

3745

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [968](#))

3746

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [2243](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2921](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

3747

"You're right. Let me talk to him, then. As a colleague. Maybe I can get something useful out of him."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2824](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

3748

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2869](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3366](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

3749

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1555](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [837](#))
- Lie (turn to [791](#))

3750

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4141](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1878](#))
- Evade (turn to [1875](#))

3751

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was

Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [3334](#))
- No (turn to [1905](#))
- Lie (turn to [1905](#))
- Evade (turn to [2942](#))

3752

“You’re the one applying pressure here,” I answer smartly. “I’m just waiting until you tell me what is really going on.”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [1104](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3790](#))
- Lie (turn to [3985](#))

3753

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his

shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3827](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3288](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [559](#))

3754

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [269](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1974](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

3755

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4503](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [4503](#))

3756

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [857](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [1586](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [460](#))

3757

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [2358](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4493](#))

3758

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3900](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

3759

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2098](#))
- Something else (turn to [1623](#))

3760

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1422](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4449](#))

3761

"We don't have to believe anyone," Harris replies sternly. "I intend to know the truth and be happy with nothing else. Right now, your story doesn't hold water. It doesn't tie up. We know you've been leaving yourself open to accusations. We've been watching your activities for some time. But we thought you were endangering the reputation of this site with the Government; not risking the country herself. Perhaps I put too much trust in your intellectual pride."

He pauses for a moment, considering something. Then he continues:

"It might have been Hooper. It might have been you. No-one here is in the business of

guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [4415](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

3762

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3977](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [3977](#))
- Evade (turn to [3183](#))

3763

"Maybe I can help with that."

"Oh, yes? And how, exactly?"

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [3396](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [1448](#))

3764

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [975](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4896](#))
- Evade (turn to [3695](#))

3765

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4608](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [957](#))

3766

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our

victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1855](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [414](#))

3767

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

3768

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [1814](#))

- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

3769

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [4228](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [743](#))
- Evade (turn to [2108](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4927](#))

3770

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my

achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1571](#))
- No (turn to [4280](#))
- Lie (turn to [4280](#))

3771

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [3538](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2043](#))

3772

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2890](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4855](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1317](#))

3773

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3621](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

3774

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [504](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

3775

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2542](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [5027](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [308](#))

3776

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

3777

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3615](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [795](#))

3778

No choice, then. Nothing, that is, except to act as if there is no game being played. I'll have a bath, then start work as normal. I've got a week to find something to give my blackmailer. Something will turn up.

- Definitely (turn to [2478](#))
- Unlikely (turn to [3208](#))
- Lie (turn to [1423](#))
- Evade (turn to [1717](#))

3779

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink.

“Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [3711](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4146](#))
- Evade (turn to [4146](#))

3780

“This proves nothing,” I reply stubbornly. “You still don’t have the component and without it, I don’t see what you can hope to prove.”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [3196](#))
- No (turn to [5036](#))
- Lie (turn to [5036](#))
- Evade (turn to [4201](#))

3781

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one

of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4528](#))
- No (turn to [557](#))
- Lie (turn to [4613](#))

3782

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [574](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [3923](#))

3783

“Trust me. He hasn’t. If I know that man, and I do, he’ll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component’s gone then he’s committed and he’ll be hung for what he’s done. He’ll want to wait a week at least, make sure he’s escaped suspicion. And then he’ll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [984](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [2614](#))

3784

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2015](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1604](#))

3785

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [2906](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [3632](#))

3786

“So would you after the night I've had.”

“Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))

- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1190](#))

3787

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [1312](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4372](#))
- Wait (turn to [2086](#))

3788

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4097](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4262](#))

3789

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3305](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3305](#))

3790

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3051](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

3791

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here,

in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3811](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1463](#))

3792

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [3308](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2553](#))

3793

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

3794

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night

and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3802](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3517](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1867](#))

3795

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2663](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [572](#))

3796

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I’m not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you’re of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There’s nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you’ve done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It’s your choice.”

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3088](#))
- Confess (turn to [3742](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1538](#))

3797

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4169](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [539](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [3613](#))

3798

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

3799

“What could I do?” I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I won't go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4098](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

3800

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2679](#))

3801

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2692](#))

3802

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [3484](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [1928](#))

3803

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1969](#))
- No (turn to [1719](#))
- Lie (turn to [4943](#))

3804

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

3805

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1461](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

3806

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2580](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4987](#))

3807

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

3808

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3900](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [3863](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [1047](#))

3809

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3798](#))

3810

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2888](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- The pillow (turn to [630](#))
- Something else (turn to [639](#))

3811

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [1303](#))

3812

"I'm looking forward to a long bath," I reply. "And getting back to work."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Confess (turn to [1676](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))

3813

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the

inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [2917](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [428](#))

3814

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [4539](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [3584](#))

3815

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’ll never know if I hadn’t have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4718](#))
- Lie (turn to [3728](#))
- Evade (turn to [4420](#))

3816

“No. I didn’t.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1959](#))

3817

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [141](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3840](#))

3818

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

3819

“No. I have no idea.”

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1782](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3865](#))
- Lie (turn to [1782](#))
- Evade (turn to [754](#))

3820

“I can't remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))

- No (turn to [1224](#))
- Lie (turn to [1224](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

3821

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [798](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [3907](#))

3822

I give no reaction. She sighs to herself, as if this kind of behaviour is normal, and trots away inside the House to begin her duties.

I turn the corner of Hut 3 and walk down the short gravel path to Hut 2. It was a good spot to choose - Hut 2 is where the electricians work, and they're generally focussed on what they're doing. They don't often come outside to smoke a cigarette so it's easy to slip past the doorway unnoticed.

- Check inside (turn to [4593](#))
- Go around the back (turn to [775](#))

3823

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here,

in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [52](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4426](#))

3824

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [4776](#))
- No (turn to [4766](#))
- Lie (turn to [4501](#))
- Evade (turn to [4501](#))

3825

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [5035](#))
- No (turn to [941](#))

3826

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2927](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))

3827

“You mean he didn't even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

3828

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper's confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [2633](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [3932](#))

3829

“No, of course not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [184](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2518](#))
- Lie (turn to [2518](#))

3830

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3649](#))
- No (turn to [1711](#))
- Lie (turn to [1711](#))

3831

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2650](#))

3832

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [999](#))
- No (turn to [3240](#))
- Lie (turn to [3240](#))
- Evade (turn to [1430](#))

3833

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1064](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [777](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

3834

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we

can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [605](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

3835

"I saw him take it," I reply, stubbornly. "Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, 'What's that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn't have?' He didn't reply."

"We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper." The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. "Hooper's in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation."

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1599](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [1847](#))

3836

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [3645](#))
- Evade (turn to [4281](#))

3837

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4741](#))

3838

"Nothing," I reply. "You're just the other man in the room. One of us has to get the blame."

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2122](#))

3839

Of course not. I am alone; that is what they wanted me to be, because of who and what I love. So I have no nation, no country.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [3948](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4522](#))

3840

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3080](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4257](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))

3841

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

3842

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1727](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1823](#))
- Something else (turn to [2872](#))

3843

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1982](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [646](#))

3844

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can’t sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [776](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [986](#))
- Wait (turn to [4998](#))

3845

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [106](#))
- The pillow (turn to [125](#))

- Something else (turn to [306](#))

3846

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1971](#))
- No (turn to [2589](#))
- Lie (turn to [4448](#))

3847

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [574](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

3848

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1715](#))
- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- Something else (turn to [146](#))

3849

“I've thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [2840](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4857](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2097](#))

3850

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3150](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2204](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [3535](#))

3851

“I'll work as hard as I work.”

“Get out,” Harris growls. “Before I decide to arrest you as an accessory.”

I do as he says. Outside the barrack, the air has never smelt sweeter.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other

men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. “Did you hear?” he whispers. “Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible.”

- Yes (turn to [1003](#))
- No (turn to [3514](#))
- Lie (turn to [1578](#))
- Evade (turn to [48](#))

3852

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [672](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4210](#))

3853

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they

come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [4480](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

3854

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2235](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [2235](#))

3855

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- Something else (turn to [368](#))

3856

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4771](#))
- Wait (turn to [604](#))

3857

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- Something else (turn to [654](#))

3858

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4845](#))
- Wait (turn to [1557](#))

3859

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3451](#))
- Something else (turn to [1040](#))

3860

“All right. All right. That's exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2301](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1428](#))

3861

But what is a country, after all? A country is not a concept, not an ideal. Every country falls, its borders shift and move, its language disappears to be replaced by another. Neither the Reich nor the British Empire will survive forever, so what use is my loyalty to either?

I may as well, therefore, look after myself. Something I have attempted, but failed miserably, to do.

“I'm afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [2601](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1149](#))

3862

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man.

And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2428](#))
- Something else (turn to [1450](#))

3863

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3813](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [359](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2647](#))

3864

"Just adding to the drama," I tell him, confidently. "I'm sure you can understand that."

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is

hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2677](#))

3865

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [799](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2572](#))
- Lie (turn to [3656](#))
- Evade (turn to [606](#))

3866

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

3867

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [3144](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

3868

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

3869

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3229](#))
- No (turn to [126](#))
- Lie (turn to [126](#))

3870

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to

facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3210](#))

3871

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4503](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [4503](#))

3872

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

3873

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [214](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1036](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

3874

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3627](#))
- No (turn to [4626](#))
- Lie (turn to [4626](#))

3875

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [1152](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [2561](#))

3876

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3875](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3190](#))

3877

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [917](#))

3878

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [862](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1708](#))

3879

I lift the cup to my lips and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2056](#))
- Disagree (turn to [649](#))
- Evade (turn to [649](#))

3880

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3713](#))
- Something else (turn to [1385](#))

3881

I look in through the door and catch Hooper’s expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn’t. He looks shocked, almost hurt. “Iain,” he murmurs. “You couldn’t...”

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [3804](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1674](#))
- Evade (turn to [3376](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4142](#))

3882

I lift the cup and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4224](#))
- Disagree (turn to [607](#))
- Evade (turn to [607](#))

3883

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3241](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3241](#))

3884

From where he’s sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

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With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain

is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [550](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1938](#))
- Evade (turn to [2262](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3776](#))

3885

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [1514](#))

3886

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1024](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [4121](#))

3887

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [3182](#))

3888

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2723](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4263](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

3889

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but its recovery does mean I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

3890

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [4298](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [3037](#))

3891

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

Perhaps Hooper is there, in the dark, trying to help me after all?

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [79](#))

3892

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [944](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1640](#))

3893

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [796](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3767](#))
- Evade (turn to [4295](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [426](#))

3894

The window is my only way out of here. I just need a way to smash it.

- Punch it (turn to [2077](#))
- Find something (turn to [1608](#))
- Use something you've got (turn to [1526](#))

3895

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But you’re not my priest and I’m not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [5016](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

3896

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

3897

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [166](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1816](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

3898

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [4293](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1744](#))

3899

“Look, I know where it is. The missing piece of the Bombe is in the long grasses behind Hooper’s tent. I saw him throw it there right after we finished work. He knew you’d scour the camp but I suppose he thought you’d more obvious places first. I suppose he was right about that. Look there. That *proves* his guilt.”

“That doesn’t prove anything,” Harris returns sharply. “But we’ll check what you say, all the same.” He gets to his feet and heads out of the door.

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [243](#))

3900

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2636](#))

3901

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- Something else (turn to [2251](#))

3902

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [1392](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))

3903

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [4166](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

3904

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component."

"Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away..."

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1105](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2470](#))
- Lie (turn to [1105](#))
- Evade (turn to [2465](#))

3905

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2711](#))

3906

"Then let him think he's off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you'll get your man."

Somehow, I think. But that's the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. "All right," he says. "I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go." Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. "Especially since this is a plan that involves keeping you in handcuffs. I don't see what I have to lose."

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

"Put 'em up," Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I'm thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

"Captain. Manning talked. If you'd step out for a moment?"

- Play the part, head down (turn to [1456](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [956](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [96](#))

3907

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3156](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1744](#))

3908

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4370](#))
- No (turn to [1010](#))
- Lie (turn to [1010](#))

3909

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3401](#))
- No (turn to [2751](#))
- Lie (turn to [2935](#))

3910

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [3048](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [4642](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [3355](#))

3911

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2056](#))
- Disagree (turn to [649](#))
- Evade (turn to [649](#))

3912

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4163](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1728](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4195](#))
- Something else (turn to [4457](#))

3913

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4791](#))
- No (turn to [2007](#))
- Lie (turn to [88](#))

3914

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2354](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [2354](#))
- Evade (turn to [1686](#))

3915

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3836](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

3916

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where

is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3781](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2941](#))

3917

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [3370](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [2435](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4744](#))

3918

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [1041](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1133](#))
- Lie (turn to [1133](#))

3919

“I know where it is.”

Harris smiles with satisfaction, as if your willingness to talk was somehow a result of his clever techniques.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1697](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2825](#))

3920

- The jacket (turn to [2368](#))

3921

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [659](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [659](#))
- Evade (turn to [1596](#))

3922

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4029](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [2031](#))

3923

It depends, perhaps, on what his name his worth. If it were to prove valuable, well; perhaps I can concoct a few more such lovers with which to ease my later days.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

3924

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [3833](#))
- Lie (turn to [3833](#))
- Evade (turn to [4236](#))

3925

No. Why would I? He is no doubt an innocent himself, trapped by some dire circumstance. Forced to act the way he did. I have every sympathy for him.

Of course I do.

Harris put the cuffs around my wrists. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“I’ll give you a stone to chisel notches in the wall. And that’s all the calculations you’ll be doing. And as you sit there, pissing into a bucket and growing a beard down to your toes, you have a think about how a *smart* man would conduct his illicit affairs. With a bit of due decorum you could have learnt off any squaddie. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

3926

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

3927

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. I’ve cracked him a little at least. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4821](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

3928

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2609](#))
- The jacket (turn to [480](#))

3929

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [1629](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1653](#))
- Evade (turn to [1653](#))

3930

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten.”

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We're not

interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [37](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2037](#))
- Lie (turn to [37](#))
- Evade (turn to [1231](#))

3931

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [3410](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [2612](#))

3932

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3364](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [3475](#))

3933

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2063](#))

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))

3934

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1725](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2950](#))
- Something else (turn to [453](#))

3935

“I had to get out, Harris. I had to provoke Hooper into doing something that would incriminate himself fully. He's too clever, you see...”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [16](#))
- No (turn to [467](#))
- Lie (turn to [467](#))
- Evade (turn to [3861](#))

3936

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3150](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [3387](#))

3937

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3610](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3140](#))

3938

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3544](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [5014](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

3939

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2052](#))

3940

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3391](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2194](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

3941

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2078](#))

3942

- The jacket (turn to [4115](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4209](#))

3943

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s

hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

“It's an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I'm not so sure he'll be that stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [3783](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [2128](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1377](#))

3944

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [352](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

3945

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1210](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [1210](#))

3946

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3023](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4421](#))

3947

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn’t. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn’t bear the thought of it. I love working here. I’ve never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn’t want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [4747](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [494](#))
- Lie (turn to [494](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4747](#))

3948

“All right.” I am beaten, after all. “The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3878](#))

3949

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [1407](#))
- Lie (turn to [1407](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

3950

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d

better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2719](#))

3951

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [3294](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [2625](#))

3952

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

3953

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It

only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [4712](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [455](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4712](#))
- Lie (turn to [455](#))

3954

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4610](#))

3955

"Then you'd better get searching," I reply, tiring of his complaining. *A war is a war, you have to expect an enemy.* "It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3796](#))

3956

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [2112](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1800](#))

3957

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1720](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1901](#))

3958

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3021](#))

3959

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3185](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

3960

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1743](#))
- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4910](#))
- Something else (turn to [4924](#))

3961

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [601](#))

3962

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- Something else (turn to [4244](#))

3963

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4153](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [4151](#))
- Confess (turn to [3012](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [2533](#))

3964

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [1065](#))

3965

Plenty of time for that later. If there is nothing there, then Hooper discovered the component after all and Harris’ men will have swooped on him, and the story about his confession is just a ruse to test me out. And if the component is still there - well. It will be just as valuable to my young man in the village in a week’s time, and his deadline of the 31st is not quite upon us.

I head for my dorm, intent on a bath, breakfast, a glance at the crossword before the other men get to it, and then on with work. They should have replaced the component in the Bombe by now. We will be back to it, only a day behind.

And everything will proceed as before. The component will mean nothing to the Germans - this is the one fact I could never have explained to a man like Harris despite the fact that the principle behind the Bombe is the same as the principle behind an army. The individual pieces - the men, the components - do not matter. They are quite identical. It is how they are arranged that counts. The structures and patterns that they form.

I bump into Russell in the dorm hut. "Did you hear?" he whispers. "Terrible news about Hooper. Absolutely terrible."

- Yes (turn to [2949](#))
- No (turn to [4346](#))
- Lie (turn to [33](#))
- Evade (turn to [3043](#))

3966

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

"Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning," he remarks. "You are your own worst enemy."

- Agree (turn to [2654](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1076](#))
- Evade (turn to [1809](#))

3967

- The jacket (turn to [1887](#))

3968

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [3879](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [4959](#))

3969

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [1979](#))

3970

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [4475](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [1516](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2649](#))

3971

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [1472](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3042](#))

3972

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed

to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3991](#))
- No (turn to [2851](#))
- Lie (turn to [2539](#))

3973

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my fist and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [970](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1759](#))

3974

"You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn't catch him?"

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [396](#))

3975

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [600](#))
- No (turn to [1075](#))
- Lie (turn to [600](#))

3976

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2537](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3153](#))

3977

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3666](#))

3978

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [2145](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [4807](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

3979

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4418](#))

3980

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [3126](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4380](#))
- Lie (turn to [4380](#))

3981

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1750](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [1761](#))
- Lie (turn to [121](#))
- Evade (turn to [405](#))

3982

- The jacket (turn to [3837](#))

3983

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing

component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [427](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2051](#))

3984

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3229](#))
- No (turn to [126](#))
- Lie (turn to [126](#))

3985

"I always meant to tell you," I tell him. "I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them."

Harris looks at me with contempt. "You wretched little man. Don't think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You're going to pay for what you've done, and you're going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime." If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3051](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

3986

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [3370](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [2304](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [149](#))

3987

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4983](#))

3988

“I’m not saying anything of the sort,” I snap back. “What is this, Harris? You’re accusing me of treachery but I don’t see a shred of evidence for it! Why don’t you put your cards on the table?”

“It’s simple enough,” Harris replies. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,”

he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3431](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4877](#))
- Lie (turn to [394](#))

3989

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [1340](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [2359](#))

3990

Well, then. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It’s all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1852](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3669](#))

- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [30](#))

3991

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [118](#))
- No (turn to [3945](#))
- Lie (turn to [3945](#))

3992

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [549](#))

3993

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3581](#))
- No (turn to [4798](#))
- Lie (turn to [1739](#))
- Evade (turn to [3176](#))

3994

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [3388](#))
- Shrug (turn to [486](#))

3995

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1278](#))

3996

Next. To Hooper’s dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other’s. Hooper’s is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and

a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [344](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4090](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2768](#))

3997

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me. He cannot have expected it to be so easy to break me.

“I see.” There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1382](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2514](#))
- Lie (turn to [172](#))
- Evade (turn to [2198](#))

3998

“Trust me. He hasn't. If I know that man, and I do, he'll have wanted to keep his options open as long as possible. If the component's gone then he's committed and he'll be hung for what he's done. He'll want to wait a week at least, make sure he's escaped suspicion. And then he'll pass it on.”

“And if we keep applying pressure to him, you think the component will eventually just turn up?”

- "Yes." (turn to [4886](#))
- "Or be thrown into the river." (turn to [41](#))

3999

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you’ve forgotten.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4569](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2075](#))
- Lie (turn to [4569](#))
- Evade (turn to [640](#))

4000

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2701](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3189](#))
- Evade (turn to [3895](#))

4001

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him

what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he'll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it."

Harris gets to his feet. "All right," he says. "I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go." Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. "Hooper's in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let's see if we can't get his attention somehow."

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

"Put 'em up," Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I'm thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

"Captain. Manning talked. If you'd step out for a moment?"

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3893](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [4010](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [3436](#))

4002

No time to waste. I drop to my knees and check the breeze-block. Sure enough, there's nothing there. *Hooper took the bait.*

Suddenly, there's a movement behind me. I look up to see, first a snub pistol, and then, Harris.

"Hooper said you'd told him where to look. I didn't believe him. Or, well. I wasn't sure what to believe. Now I rather think you've settled it."

- Agree (turn to [272](#))
- Lie (turn to [4402](#))
- Evade (turn to [3332](#))

4003

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4292](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3087](#))

4004

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1693](#))
- Something else (turn to [2913](#))

4005

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1421](#))

4006

"I'll talk to him."

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3788](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2954](#))

4007

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [124](#))
- Give up (turn to [4647](#))

4008

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [340](#))
- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2975](#))
- Something else (turn to [203](#))

4009

I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper’s tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the

broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2715](#))

4010

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [796](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [3767](#))
- Evade (turn to [4295](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [426](#))

4011

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2383](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1022](#))

4012

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [223](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2565](#))
- The bucket (turn to [830](#))

4013

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one

missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1495](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [692](#))
- Lie (turn to [692](#))
- Evade (turn to [4898](#))

4014

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [471](#))

4015

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the

compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2299](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

4016

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [2815](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

4017

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2813](#))

4018

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3885](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

4019

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [788](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- The pillow (turn to [923](#))
- Something else (turn to [93](#))

4020

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [529](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [1856](#))

4021

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2546](#))

4022

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

Perhaps Hooper is there, in the dark, trying to help me after all?

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4239](#))

4023

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [785](#))

4024

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4373](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4695](#))

4025

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4345](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4287](#))

4026

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper’s worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [847](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

4027

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [215](#))

4028

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

4029

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [844](#))
- Try the window (turn to [3805](#))

4030

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [79](#))

4031

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4680](#))

4032

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3546](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3553](#))

4033

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken

my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3233](#))

4034

- The jacket (turn to [3182](#))

4035

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

Perhaps Hooper is there, in the dark, trying to help me after all?

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1345](#))

4036

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [4828](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [19](#))
- Evade (turn to [34](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2985](#))

4037

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2332](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- Something else (turn to [1070](#))

4038

“No. I have no idea.”

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and

watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4587](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1620](#))
- Lie (turn to [4587](#))
- Evade (turn to [2909](#))

4039

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3426](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [3923](#))

4040

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [2471](#))
- Wait (turn to [4976](#))

4041

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2429](#))
- No (turn to [1690](#))

4042

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1082](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [712](#))

4043

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness

I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2429](#))
- No (turn to [1690](#))

4044

So perhaps I should wait it out, after all. Who knows? I might have a better opportunity later.

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [2602](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [4092](#))

4045

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You'll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let's hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

4046

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- Something else (turn to [3982](#))

4047

"I am what I am," I reply. "I'm the way nature made me. But they're going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don't let them hang me."

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3784](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [373](#))

4048

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1823](#))
- Something else (turn to [2872](#))

4049

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [879](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [879](#))
- Evade (turn to [1413](#))

4050

"I don't know what I'm suggesting. I don't understand what's going on."

"But of course you do." Harris narrows his eyes. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))

- "I don't." (turn to [3921](#))
- Lie (turn to [3921](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

4051

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

"What happened there?"

- Admit doing it (turn to [395](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [1493](#))

4052

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [2923](#))
- No (turn to [4622](#))
- Lie (turn to [4622](#))
- Evade (turn to [1295](#))

4053

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [235](#))

- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1481](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [1707](#))

4054

I lift the cup and take a sip, trying to act natural. He watches as I do so.

"Lapsang Souchong," he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. "Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [2056](#))
- Disagree (turn to [649](#))
- Evade (turn to [649](#))

4055

"So would you after the night I've had."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Confess (turn to [4635](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))

4056

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're

saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3852](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2269](#))

4057

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [3994](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4367](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

4058

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [458](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4612](#))
- Something else (turn to [3448](#))

4059

Next. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night

and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [758](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [593](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1975](#))

4060

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

4061

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [1953](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4656](#))
- Evade (turn to [4272](#))

4062

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [3250](#))
- The jacket (turn to [439](#))

4063

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [456](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4690](#))

4064

"If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could," I tell him sternly.

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))

- Show him the component (turn to [1244](#))

4065

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [875](#))
- Lie (turn to [875](#))
- Evade (turn to [682](#))

4066

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I’m not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you’re of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There’s nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you’ve done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It’s your choice.”

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [53](#))
- Confess (turn to [2778](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1176](#))

4067

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [1781](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4843](#))

4068

"Now steady on," I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3452](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1079](#))

4069

"I certainly don't. But still, I'm surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he'll face the rope, doesn't he?"

"Don't ask me to explain why he did what he did," Harris sighs. "Just be grateful that he did, and you're now off the hook."

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper's confession only makes sense in one fashion, and that is his being dim-witted and slow. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [4355](#))
- Don't check (turn to [3224](#))

4070

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4216](#))

4071

"I certainly don't. But still, I'm surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he'll face the rope, doesn't he?"

"Don't ask me to explain why he did what he did," Harris sighs. "Just be grateful that he did, and you're now off the hook."

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Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [3323](#))
- Don't check (turn to [636](#))

4072

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [2629](#))
- No (turn to [2022](#))
- Lie (turn to [4282](#))
- Evade (turn to [4282](#))

4073

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1421](#))

4074

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- Something else (turn to [4463](#))

4075

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3118](#))
- No (turn to [4396](#))

4076

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

4077

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn’t know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re

saying?”

- Yes (turn to [199](#))
- No (turn to [1581](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3282](#))

4078

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [1426](#))
- No (turn to [3741](#))
- Lie (turn to [296](#))

4079

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [862](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1708](#))

4080

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1390](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [1069](#))

4081

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [4326](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1420](#))

4082

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [3906](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [1068](#))

4083

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

4084

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [879](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [879](#))
- Evade (turn to [1413](#))

4085

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- The pillow (turn to [884](#))
- Something else (turn to [3279](#))

4086

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I'm not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

4087

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [274](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3707](#))
- Lie (turn to [5001](#))

4088

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [3640](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3063](#))

4089

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2960](#))

4090

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [344](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [2079](#))

4091

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than

other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3504](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [4799](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [3573](#))

4092

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [2998](#))
- Deny it (turn to [4988](#))

4093

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [3802](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3155](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [2640](#))

4094

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3509](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2867](#))

4095

I shake my head violently, to say no, that’s not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris’ face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then

you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [4811](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3014](#))

4096

- The jacket (turn to [930](#))

4097

"Well?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [939](#))
- No (turn to [4568](#))
- Lie (turn to [939](#))

4098

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one

of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3253](#))
- No (turn to [3984](#))
- Lie (turn to [3869](#))

4099

“I don’t see why,” I reply, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“There really isn’t any time to be wasted,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [616](#))
- No (turn to [578](#))
- Evade (turn to [4667](#))
- Lie (turn to [578](#))

4100

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1613](#))
- No (turn to [1925](#))
- Lie (turn to [1925](#))

4101

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3446](#))
- No (turn to [3789](#))
- Lie (turn to [3789](#))

4102

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [4137](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [3421](#))
- Lie (turn to [3421](#))

4103

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2242](#))
- No (turn to [262](#))
- Lie (turn to [262](#))

4104

"You're the one applying pressure here," I answer somewhat miserably. "I'm just waiting until you tell me what is really going on."

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2029](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2199](#))
- Lie (turn to [4615](#))

4105

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [2020](#))

4106

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [864](#))
- Give up (turn to [2605](#))

4107

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [4293](#))
- Leave it (turn to [1744](#))

4108

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4787](#))

- Something else (turn to [4463](#))

4109

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [69](#))

4110

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [504](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

4111

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2576](#))

- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

4112

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3751](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [3751](#))

4113

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))
- Confess (turn to [2387](#))

- Frame Hooper (turn to [2226](#))

4114

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [838](#))

4115

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2799](#))

4116

"I'd be happy to help," I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. "I'm sure there's something I could do."

"Like what, exactly?"

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [482](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [341](#))

4117

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1784](#))
- No (turn to [2449](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2687](#))

4118

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1240](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2538](#))

4119

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [4317](#))
- No (turn to [4273](#))
- Lie (turn to [4273](#))

4120

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [3323](#))
- Leave it (turn to [903](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3778](#))

4121

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3885](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [357](#))

4122

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2908](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [356](#))

4123

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2052](#))

4124

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid,

Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [197](#))

4125

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“I see.” He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the “brains” he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. “I wish you’d stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [3473](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [4333](#))

4126

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1523](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

4127

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [2565](#))

4128

Ah, but of course! I slip off one shoe and heft it by the toe. The heel will make a decent enough hammer, if I give it enough wallop.

But I'll cut my hand to ribbons doing it. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [371](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [1391](#))

4129

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [548](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3188](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [4827](#))

4130

"Yes. Something like that. It's a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There's barely a moment to oneself."

"That's how it is in the Service," Harris answers. "I know you didn't sign up for it but, well. There's plenty of other men who didn't who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession."

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's

what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1083](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [1083](#))

4131

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4108](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- The pillow (turn to [241](#))
- Something else (turn to [4463](#))

4132

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4136](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4724](#))

4133

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2657](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [336](#))

4134

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [95](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4235](#))

4135

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2870](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

4136

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1521](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [992](#))

4137

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?”

Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2261](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3328](#))
- Lie (turn to [3328](#))
- Evade (turn to [4716](#))

4138

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [2656](#))
- Deny it (turn to [2516](#))

4139

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1613](#))
- No (turn to [3714](#))
- Lie (turn to [3714](#))

4140

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2468](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

4141

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4351](#))
- No (turn to [718](#))
- Evade (turn to [3752](#))
- That's not it (turn to [315](#))

4142

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

4143

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [2639](#))
- No (turn to [4478](#))
- Lie (turn to [2639](#))

4144

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m gone.

Of course, then they’ll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [4214](#))

4145

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now.

Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3781](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2941](#))

4146

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [446](#))
- That's not it (turn to [351](#))

4147

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [785](#))

4148

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1722](#))

4149

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [3361](#))
- Disagree (turn to [806](#))

4150

“I’ve thought so before.” Certainly in the matter of getting blackmailed.

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3827](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3288](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [559](#))

4151

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1044](#))

4152

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing affords itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [4948](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [3500](#))

4153

“You can’t do this!” I cry. “It’s murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God’s sake, man, you can’t just throw me overboard, we’re not barbarians...!”

“You leave me no choice,” Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. “You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn’t exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another.” He gets to his feet and heads for the door. “I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters.”

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3823](#))

4154

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

4155

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3813](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))

- Give up (turn to [644](#))

4156

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3390](#))
- No (turn to [1711](#))
- Lie (turn to [1711](#))

4157

“I’m suggesting you save your own skin. I’ve wrapped that component in one of your shirts, Hooper. They’ll be searching this place top to bottom. They’ll find it eventually, and when they do, that’s the thing that will swing it against you. So take my advice now.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [436](#))

4158

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1757](#))
- No (turn to [629](#))
- Lie (turn to [629](#))

4159

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3430](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2118](#))

4160

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing.

“Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [1218](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2155](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [1733](#))

4161

“I’m fine,” I reply. “This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better.”

“I couldn’t agree more.” And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1173](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4049](#))
- Lie (turn to [4049](#))
- Evade (turn to [4084](#))

4162

But too important to guess. I move back around the side of the hut.

Harris is there, leaning in against the wall. He holds a stub pistol in his hand.

“Messy without one missing whatever it was,” he declares. “I wouldn’t have fathomed it but Hooper did. Explained it right after we sprung him doing what you’re doing now. We weren’t sure what to believe but now, you seem to have resolved that for us.”

- Agree (turn to [272](#))
- Lie (turn to [1478](#))
- Evade (turn to [2016](#))

4163

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1728](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3567](#))
- Something else (turn to [4457](#))

4164

So perhaps I should wait it out, after all. Who knows? I might have a better opportunity later.

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4773](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [823](#))

4165

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [1861](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2621](#))

4166

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up,

and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [10](#))

4167

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4973](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1816](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

4168

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [199](#))
- No (turn to [2287](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3282](#))

4169

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1077](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [64](#))

4170

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [1614](#))
- Leave it (turn to [3389](#))

4171

"I saw Hooper take it."

"I see." He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the "brains" he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Persist with this (turn to [3598](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [38](#))

4172

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid,

Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

4173

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

In truth, it is men like Harris who are complex, not men like me. I live to make things ordered, systematic. I like my pencils sharpened and lined up in a row. I do not deal in difficult borders, or uncertainties, or alliances. If I could, I would reduce the world to something easier to understand, something finite. But of course, I cannot, not even here, in this little micro-world, this safe haven from the horrors of the war.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1298](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2473](#))

4174

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [183](#))
- Something else (turn to [3445](#))

4175

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [302](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [3554](#))

4176

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [475](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3190](#))

4177

“No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

4178

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3682](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [3682](#))
- Evade (turn to [2290](#))

4179

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2525](#))
- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- Something else (turn to [190](#))

4180

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [496](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1286](#))

4181

"I know where it is."

Harris stares back at me.

"I see." There's a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. "Would you like to explain?"

- Explain (turn to [449](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2617](#))
- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [3262](#))

4182

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4919](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4129](#))
- Lie (turn to [4919](#))

- Evade (turn to [3074](#))

4183

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3508](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1811](#))

4184

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3579](#))

4185

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It’s true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

“It’s been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning,” he declares. “You’ve done a great service to this country. If we come through, I’m sure they’ll remember your name. I’m sorry it had to end this way and I’ll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did.”

The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2260](#))

4186

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1237](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [1237](#))

4187

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m

gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [3777](#))

4188

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [3744](#))

4189

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2166](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))

4190

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I won't go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [3505](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [232](#))

4191

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

4192

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [325](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3000](#))

4193

It’s no good. That’s only half a solution. I couldn’t be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [4089](#))

4194

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I

notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4975](#))
- Try the door (turn to [925](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))

4195

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [5022](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1728](#))
- Something else (turn to [4457](#))

4196

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2824](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4021](#))

4197

"No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

4198

Let me see. There’s the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2492](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1378](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4479](#))

4199

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4305](#))

4200

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I’m gone.

Of course, then they’ll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2517](#))

4201

But what is a country, after all? A country is not a concept, not an ideal. Every country falls, its borders shift and move, its language disappears to be replaced by another. Neither the Reich nor the British Empire will survive forever, so what use is my loyalty to either?

I may as well, therefore, look after myself. Something I have attempted, but failed miserably, to do.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [1347](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4185](#))

4202

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [2446](#))

4203

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got

to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [1576](#))
- No (turn to [3732](#))
- Lie (turn to [2554](#))

4204

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4664](#))

4205

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [4166](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4562](#))

4206

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3859](#))

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1289](#))
- Something else (turn to [1040](#))

4207

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [3817](#))
- No (turn to [4629](#))
- Lie (turn to [4501](#))
- Evade (turn to [4501](#))

4208

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2542](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4072](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1940](#))

4209

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass

afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4115](#))

4210

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4078](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [770](#))

4211

"No. I didn't."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4118](#))

4212

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man.

And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3480](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4375](#))
- Something else (turn to [331](#))

4213

"I'm sure you've handled worse," I reply casually, looking him straight in the eye.

His gaze is unexpressive: I've seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

"There really isn't any time to be wasted," he says. "But you know why you're here, of course."

- Yes (turn to [4422](#))
- No (turn to [2071](#))
- Evade (turn to [4580](#))
- Lie (turn to [2071](#))

4214

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [2815](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [102](#))

4215

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1366](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))

- Something else (turn to [1276](#))

4216

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [488](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [414](#))

4217

After a chance like this? A chance - however real - to save my neck? To hand it over - what, to save Hooper's worthless skin?

- Confess (turn to [3406](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2531](#))

4218

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [3721](#))

4219

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2974](#))
- Something else (turn to [4290](#))

4220

"No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [1937](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1408](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

4221

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3283](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- The pillow (turn to [919](#))
- Something else (turn to [4034](#))

4222

"There's nothing to explain," I reply stiffly. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they

come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [4480](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

4223

"Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard..."

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [3047](#))

4224

"I suppose so," I reply. "I've certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn't have done."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4149](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2864](#))

4225

"No," Harris declares, finally. "I think you're lying about Hooper. I think you're a clever, scheming young man - that's why we hired you - and you're looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I'm not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you're of a perverted persuasion, we know you have

compromised yourself. There's nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you've done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It's your choice."

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [2157](#))
- Confess (turn to [2709](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [2339](#))

4226

With my jacket wrapped round my arm, I sweep out the remaining shards of glass. It's not a big window, but I'm not a big man. If I was Harris, I'd be stuffed, but as it is...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [1013](#))
- Lie (turn to [3424](#))
- Evade (turn to [2691](#))

4227

"Of my genius. Hooper simply can't stand that I'm cleverer than he is. We work so closely together, cooped up in that Hut all day. It drives him to distraction. To worse."

"You're suggesting Hooper would sabotage this country's future simply to spite you?" Harris chooses his words like the military man he is, each lining up to create a ring

around me.

- Yes (turn to [3629](#))
- No (turn to [3116](#))
- Evade (turn to [1188](#))

4228

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

4229

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1689](#))
- No (turn to [675](#))
- Lie (turn to [675](#))

4230

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [661](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2244](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

4231

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found my letters. Haven’t you? In fact, if you haven’t, don’t tell me.”

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2832](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3916](#))
- Lie (turn to [4145](#))

4232

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1820](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2889](#))
- Something else (turn to [3279](#))

4233

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4680](#))

4234

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3046](#))
- No (turn to [3127](#))

4235

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the

compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [687](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2791](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))

4236

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [4928](#))
- Lie (turn to [4928](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

4237

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [1895](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

4238

“It doesn’t matter. Just remember what I said. I’ve beaten you, Hooper. Remember that.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2784](#))

4239

Morning comes with the call of a rooster from the yard of the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up off the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

It’s not long after that Harris enters the hut. He closes the door behind him, careful as ever, then takes a chair across from me.

“You smell like a dog,” he remarks.

- Be optimistic (turn to [1685](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [463](#))

4240

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1345](#))

4241

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [1685](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [463](#))

4242

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [850](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1741](#))

4243

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [325](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3340](#))

4244

- The jacket (turn to [2117](#))
- The bucket (turn to [239](#))

4245

“Please, Harris. You can’t understand the pressure they put me under. You can’t understand what it’s like, to be in love but be able to do nothing about it...”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [120](#))
- No (turn to [678](#))
- Lie (turn to [678](#))
- Evade (turn to [4750](#))

4246

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [601](#))

4247

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [372](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [982](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4060](#))

4248

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [637](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3600](#))

4249

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [739](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2574](#))
- Something else (turn to [994](#))

4250

“Well?”

“We'll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3986](#))
- No (turn to [1019](#))
- Lie (turn to [3986](#))

4251

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4964](#))
- Something else (turn to [1854](#))

4252

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3022](#))

4253

So perhaps I should wait it out, after all. Who knows? I might have a better opportunity later.

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [4498](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [2535](#))

4254

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3649](#))
- No (turn to [261](#))
- Lie (turn to [261](#))

4255

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))

- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

4256

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [2723](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4263](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

4257

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1458](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

4258

“I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [2759](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1404](#))

4259

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3125](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3385](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4884](#))

4260

“No. I didn’t.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [815](#))

4261

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [4283](#))

- Don't explain (turn to [3773](#))
- Lie (turn to [46](#))
- Evade (turn to [1201](#))

4262

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [174](#))
- No (turn to [4634](#))
- Lie (turn to [174](#))

4263

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2870](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

4264

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [4947](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

4265

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2644](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- Something else (turn to [654](#))

4266

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

4267

“I’m sure you’ve handled worse,” I reply casually, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“I’m sorry to pull you up so roughly,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [1455](#))
- No (turn to [3597](#))
- Evade (turn to [2076](#))
- Lie (turn to [3597](#))

4268

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [3323](#))
- Don't check (turn to [636](#))

4269

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2360](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2950](#))

- The pillow (turn to [3934](#))
- Something else (turn to [453](#))

4270

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete. I only hope one of the others will be able to explain to him that the part I stole will mean nothing to the Germans.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [3426](#))
- No (turn to [2180](#))
- Lie (turn to [2324](#))
- Evade (turn to [2686](#))

4271

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- Something else (turn to [603](#))

4272

"None of us are blameless, Harris. But you're not my priest and I'm not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will."

He appears to consider the offer.

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing

component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [945](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

4273

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4808](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3378](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4808](#))
- Lie (turn to [3378](#))

4274

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1000](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2856](#))
- Something else (turn to [1885](#))

4275

Then pause. This is too transparent. Too blatant. If I leave it here, like this, Hooper will never be seen to go looking for it: he will stumble over it in plain sight, and the men watching will wonder why it was not there when he went to bed.

No, I must try something else - or nothing at all.

- On top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Throw the component into the long grass (turn to [2431](#))
- Give up (turn to [1626](#))

4276

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3420](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

4277

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4825](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [110](#))
- Lie (turn to [4825](#))
- Evade (turn to [3106](#))

4278

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [3323](#))
- Don't check (turn to [631](#))

4279

“Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2580](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4987](#))

4280

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4442](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [4442](#))

4281

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think.

He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.

- Calm him (turn to [2005](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [1134](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [1164](#))

4282

“I’m suggesting you save your own skin. I’ve wrapped that component in one of your shirts, Hooper. They’ll be searching this place top to bottom. They’ll find it eventually, and when they do, that’s the thing that will swing it against you. So take my advice now.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2453](#))

4283

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn’t know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [819](#))
- No (turn to [2325](#))
- Evade (turn to [1506](#))
- That's not it (turn to [1438](#))

4284

- The jacket (turn to [2117](#))

4285

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [809](#))

4286

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap.

I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I'm doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I'm thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you'd step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2127](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [1211](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [3472](#))

4287

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2050](#))
- No (turn to [2520](#))
- Lie (turn to [1100](#))

4288

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That's exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which

can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2373](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3005](#))

4289

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3968](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [2140](#))
- Lie (turn to [3968](#))
- Evade (turn to [1778](#))

4290

- The jacket (turn to [4802](#))

4291

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [4546](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [1917](#))

4292

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1180](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1823](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3842](#))
- Something else (turn to [2872](#))

4293

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3900](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [238](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [62](#))

4294

“I don’t need twelve minutes. Here it is.”

I open my jacket and pull the Bombe component out of my pocket. Harris takes it from me, whistling, curious.

“Well, I’ll be. That’s it all right.”

“That’s it.”

“But you didn’t have it on you yesterday.”

- Explain (turn to [4888](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2017](#))

4295

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4775](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4194](#))

4296

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [4341](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))

- The pillow (turn to [1445](#))
- Something else (turn to [4244](#))

4297

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4824](#))
- The pillow (turn to [740](#))
- Something else (turn to [380](#))

4298

"Try me. Just me and him."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3468](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2414](#))

4299

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

"Only you told this young man more than a little, didn't you?"

I nod. "He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness

I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1757](#))
- No (turn to [629](#))
- Lie (turn to [629](#))

4300

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [2131](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [2755](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1011](#))

4301

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [4948](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [4408](#))

4302

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren't over yet. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on

him. I don't know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2509](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4720](#))

4303

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

4304

“You treated me like vermin. Like something abhorrent.”

“You are something abhorrent.”

“I wasn't. Not when I came here. And I won't be, once you're gone.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2453](#))

4305

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3022](#))

4306

"All right." With a sigh, your defiance collapses. "If you're searched my things then I suppose you've found... what you need.

Harris nods once. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [267](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4520](#))
- Lie (turn to [3255](#))

4307

"Hooper, I'll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn't. But once this is done I'll be rich, and I'll split that with you. I'll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won't hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it's the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that's what's valuable. So how about it?"

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. "You're asking me to commit treason?"

- Yes (turn to [4183](#))
- No (turn to [936](#))
- Lie (turn to [2355](#))
- Evade (turn to [2355](#))

4308

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [2667](#))

4309

“I did. I know what you’re thinking. If I’ve transgressed once then I must be the guilty man for all the crimes in this compound... But I’m not, I tell you. We were close to cracking the 13th’s missive; trying our latest pattern and beginning to see some correlations in the data - and then Hooper disappeared for a moment and the machine went down.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [1502](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [339](#))

4310

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was

Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [45](#))
- Lie (turn to [45](#))
- Evade (turn to [3820](#))

4311

“It doesn’t matter. Just remember what I said. I’ve beaten you, Hooper. Remember that.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2122](#))

4312

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any

chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

4313

“He never could be trusted. You should never have hired him. A below average intelligence can't cope with the pressures in this place.”

Harris rolls his eyes, but he might almost be smiling. “You'd better get along, Mr Intelligent. There's a 24-hour-out-of-date message to be tackled and we're a genius short. So you'd better be ready to work twice as hard.”

- Thank him (turn to [2578](#))
- Argue with him (turn to [2133](#))

4314

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4823](#))
- Don't go (turn to [2422](#))

4315

I take the cup, and raise it to my lips, blowing away the steam. It is too hot to drink. He

picks his own up and just holds it.

“Quite a difficult situation, this,” he begins, cautiously. I’ve seen him adopting this stiff tone of voice before, but only when talking to brass. “I’m sure you agree.”

- Agree (turn to [1320](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3422](#))
- Lie (turn to [3422](#))
- Evade (turn to [4267](#))

4316

“I saw him take it,” I reply, stubbornly. “Collins and Humph were outside having a cigarette, I think. The other two men were at the table. But I was at the front of the machine. I saw Hooper go around the side, and lean down, and pull something free. I even challenged him on it. I said, ‘What’s that? Someone put a nail through somewhere they shouldn’t have?’ He didn’t reply.”

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2738](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3363](#))

4317

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4808](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3378](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4808](#))
- Lie (turn to [3378](#))

4318

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2583](#))
- Something else (turn to [1040](#))

4319

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4891](#))

4320

“Hooper, I'll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn't. But once this is done I'll be rich, and I'll split that with you. I'll let you have the results, too. Your

name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won't hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it's the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that's what's valuable. So how about it?"

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. "You're asking me to commit treason?"

- Yes (turn to [3976](#))
- No (turn to [3165](#))
- Lie (turn to [4157](#))
- Evade (turn to [4157](#))

4321

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4847](#))

4322

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [2475](#))
- Shrug (turn to [1751](#))

4323

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle

I cannot square.

“I’ve done things,” I begin, uncomfortably. “I didn’t want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn’t have. Things I perhaps regret.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1784](#))
- No (turn to [3625](#))
- Evade (turn to [4104](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2687](#))

4324

“I don’t see why,” I reply, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“I’m sorry to pull you up so roughly,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [3154](#))
- No (turn to [1256](#))
- Evade (turn to [2263](#))
- Lie (turn to [1256](#))

4325

“No, I don’t. I’ve got work I should be doing tomorrow, and I need my rest...”

“Work that will be difficult for you to do, don’t you think?” Harris replies.

“They’ll have made a replacement by tomorrow,” I reply. “The war doesn’t stop over one missing reel.”

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it

could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1315](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4365](#))
- Lie (turn to [4365](#))
- Evade (turn to [2956](#))

4326

“I’m looking forward to a long bath,” I reply. “And getting back to work.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [4699](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1906](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4294](#))

4327

Better to live on the run than die on the spit. Creeping around the edge of the compound, the Bombe component heavy in my pocket, I make my way to the front gate. As always, it’s manned by two guards, but I slip past their box by crawling on my belly.

And then I'm on the road. Walking, not running. Silent. Free.

For the moment, at least.

The End

4328

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

4329

"He's petty enough, certainly. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [3727](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [2231](#))
- Lie (turn to [2231](#))

4330

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [444](#))
- The blanket (turn to [739](#))

- The pillow (turn to [1158](#))
- Something else (turn to [1652](#))

4331

“Yes. I didn’t have long, but I had long enough. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

4332

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2537](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3153](#))

4333

“I did.”

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [1016](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [1564](#))

4334

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4767](#))

4335

“I don’t need twelve minutes. Here it is.”

I open my jacket and pull the Bombe component out of my pocket. Harris takes it from me, whistling, curious.

“Well, I’ll be. That’s it all right.”

“That’s it.”

“But you didn’t have it on you yesterday.”

- Explain (turn to [1627](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [4211](#))

4336

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [3141](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [244](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [390](#))

4337

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [1624](#))

4338

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1264](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4683](#))

4339

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3373](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [42](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1762](#))

4340

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2703](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4462](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))

4341

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4252](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3664](#))
- Something else (turn to [4244](#))

4342

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [3373](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [42](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1762](#))

4343

I cast around the small room. There’s a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it’s not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I’m supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [285](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [2350](#))

4344

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it

later.

- Yes (turn to [3588](#))
- No (turn to [1023](#))
- Lie (turn to [1023](#))

4345

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2050](#))
- No (turn to [2520](#))
- Lie (turn to [1100](#))

4346

“Heard what?”

“Hooper’s been taken away. They caught him, uncovering that missing Bombe component from a hiding place somewhere, apparently about to take it to his contact.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [4355](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2357](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

4347

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [564](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- Something else (turn to [4386](#))

4348

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4204](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1573](#))

4349

"Damn right I'm sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He's always been jealous of me. He's..."

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. "Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?" It's difficult not to shake the sense that he's humouring me.

"Or of your brain? Or something else?"

- "Of my genius." (turn to [2085](#))

- "Of my standing." (turn to [24](#))
- Evade (turn to [567](#))

4350

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [891](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))

4351

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2271](#))
- Disagree (turn to [769](#))
- Lie (turn to [1549](#))

4352

"No. It's not treason. It's a trade, plain and simple."

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

4353

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2677](#))

4354

“I don’t need twelve minutes. Here it is.”

I open my jacket and pull the Bombe component out of my pocket. Harris takes it from

me, whistling, curious.

“Well, I’ll be. That’s it all right.”

“That’s it.”

“But you didn’t have it on you yesterday.”

- Explain (turn to [2588](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3575](#))

4355

It won’t take a moment to settle the matter. I can justify a walk past Hut 2 as part of my morning stroll. It will be obvious in a moment if the component is still there.

On my way across the paddocks, between the huts and the House, I catch sight of young Miss Lyon, arriving for work on her bicycle. She giggles as she sees me and waves.

- Wave back (turn to [3258](#))
- Ignore her (turn to [3822](#))

4356

“Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you’re behaving like a swine.”

“You imbecile,” Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. “You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They’ll destroy everything, you do understand that, don’t you? You’re not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don’t see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her.”

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He’ll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [2622](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [1839](#))

- Dismiss him (turn to [4506](#))

4357

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4404](#))

4358

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [158](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4027](#))
- Something else (turn to [3527](#))

4359

“All right. I'll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [196](#))
- No (turn to [133](#))

- Lie (turn to [4101](#))

4360

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- The pillow (turn to [108](#))
- Something else (turn to [2803](#))

4361

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1757](#))
- No (turn to [629](#))
- Lie (turn to [629](#))

4362

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [1262](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [1974](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

4363

- The jacket (turn to [4005](#))

4364

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [4441](#))
- No (turn to [3523](#))
- Lie (turn to [4441](#))

4365

“No. I have no idea.”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2672](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3739](#))
- Lie (turn to [2672](#))
- Evade (turn to [2932](#))

4366

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4378](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3600](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4248](#))

4367

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [4676](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

4368

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3172](#))
- Something else (turn to [4534](#))

4369

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [3873](#))
- Lie (turn to [3873](#))
- Evade (turn to [3167](#))

4370

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [4467](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1116](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4467](#))
- Lie (turn to [1116](#))

4371

“He’s petty enough, certainly. He’s a creep.” I wipe a hand across my forehead. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her

Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [668](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [487](#))
- Lie (turn to [487](#))

4372

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps the component has been found and the crisis is over.

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1331](#))

4373

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3557](#))
- Try the window (turn to [4770](#))

4374

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2055](#))

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

4375

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3480](#))
- Something else (turn to [331](#))

4376

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2147](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1838](#))
- Something else (turn to [3967](#))

4377

"Messy, without one missing cache!" I cry, laughing spitefully. It isn't the best clue, hardly worthy of the Times, but it will have to do.

I only catch Hooper's reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3274](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2018](#))
- Evade (turn to [3138](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [278](#))

4378

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3316](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3015](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3478](#))
- Something else (turn to [4838](#))

4379

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4392](#))
- Something else (turn to [4872](#))

4380

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1101](#))
- Lie (turn to [1101](#))
- Evade (turn to [3930](#))

4381

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

4382

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1280](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [535](#))

4383

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

4384

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- Something else (turn to [368](#))

4385

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and

pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2383](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1022](#))

4386

- The jacket (turn to [1804](#))

4387

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3513](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3485](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3307](#))

4388

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt

that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2545](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [132](#))
- Lie (turn to [2545](#))
- Evade (turn to [304](#))

4389

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- Something else (turn to [3677](#))

4390

"So would you after the night I've had."

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's

how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))
- Confess (turn to [2387](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [2226](#))

4391

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3775](#))
- No (turn to [316](#))
- Lie (turn to [3775](#))

4392

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3069](#))

4393

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [932](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [5008](#))

4394

- The jacket (turn to [1804](#))
- The bucket (turn to [728](#))

4395

I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper’s tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4485](#))

4396

“No, Harris. I don’t think you can understand.”

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3002](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [3002](#))

4397

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1405](#))
- No (turn to [3671](#))
- Lie (turn to [3671](#))

4398

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [4006](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [4286](#))

4399

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

4400

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [301](#))
- Try the door (turn to [614](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))

4401

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

4402

“I spoke to Russell. He said he saw Hooper doing something round here. I wanted to see what it was.”

“Enough.” Harris gestures for me to start walking. “This story couldn’t be simpler. You took it to cover your back. You hid it. You lied to get Hooper into trouble, and when you thought you’d won, you came to scoop your prize. A good hand but ultimately, if it hadn’t have been you who hid the component, then you wouldn’t be here now.”

He leads me across the yard. Back towards Hut 5 to be decoded, and taken to pieces, once again.

The End

4403

“This proves nothing,” I reply stubbornly. “You still don’t have the component and without it, I don’t see what you can hope to prove.”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and

what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [1510](#))
- No (turn to [2273](#))
- Lie (turn to [2273](#))
- Evade (turn to [2100](#))

4404

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [595](#))
- Be cold (turn to [515](#))

4405

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1497](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [1497](#))

- Evade (turn to [22](#))

4406

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn't do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. "I thought I heard..."

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'll never know if I hadn't have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [2444](#))
- Lie (turn to [3935](#))
- Evade (turn to [3251](#))

4407

"I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn't I have a lawyer?"

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3114](#))

4408

It's no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper's protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can't find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [3720](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4909](#))

4409

"For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?"

"We'll be outside the door," Harris replies, seriously. "The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that."

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

"You ready?" Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3738](#))
- No (turn to [3772](#))
- Lie (turn to [3738](#))

4410

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

4411

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1599](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [1847](#))

4412

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2933](#))

4413

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow,

whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [4947](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [2337](#))

4414

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [4598](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1398](#))

4415

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [3068](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [11](#))

4416

Morning comes slowly, but I must fall asleep at some point, because the next thing I know the rooster is calling and a cool, fresh breeze is blowing through the open window. I barely have time to wipe the sleep from my eyes and brush myself down before the door opens and Harris enters.

He takes one look around, and sighs, a deep, wistful sigh.

“Things just get worse and worse for you, Manning,” he remarks. “You are your own worst enemy.”

- Agree (turn to [4150](#))
- Disagree (turn to [619](#))
- Evade (turn to [3753](#))

4417

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [851](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2936](#))

4418

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1865](#))

4419

“I'll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2474](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [553](#))

4420

"This proves nothing," I reply stubbornly. "You still don't have the component and without it, I don't see what you can hope to prove."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [3064](#))
- No (turn to [3839](#))
- Lie (turn to [3839](#))
- Evade (turn to [2356](#))

4421

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3933](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3959](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))

4422

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [3981](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2495](#))
- Lie (turn to [2495](#))
- Evade (turn to [2498](#))

4423

“Look, I know where it is. The missing piece of the Bombe is in the long grasses behind Hooper’s tent. I saw him throw it there right after we finished work. He knew you’d scour the camp but I suppose he thought you’d more obvious places first. I suppose he was right about that. Look there. That *proves* his guilt.”

“That doesn’t prove anything,” Harris returns sharply. “But we’ll check what you say, all the same.” He gets to his feet and heads out of the door.

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1468](#))

4424

“I’m looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a

little less evil to be around.”

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [354](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [3326](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2895](#))

4425

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1791](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1027](#))
- The pillow (turn to [768](#))
- Something else (turn to [4394](#))

4426

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [909](#))

4427

“Yes.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [799](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [2572](#))
- Lie (turn to [3656](#))
- Evade (turn to [606](#))

4428

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1932](#))

- Try the windows (turn to [1131](#))

4429

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- Something else (turn to [161](#))

4430

"If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could," I tell him sternly.

"Well, I'm afraid it is going to get worse for you," Harris replies soberly. "We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I'm afraid I don't have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor."

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

"I'm going to go outside and organise a rope. That'll take about twelve minutes. That's how long you have to decide."

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [1190](#))

4431

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [2823](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [2979](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [503](#))

4432

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [3476](#))

4433

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1806](#))

4434

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- Something else (turn to [4034](#))

4435

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3205](#))
- No (turn to [4280](#))
- Lie (turn to [4280](#))

4436

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [979](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [128](#))

4437

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [758](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [142](#))

4438

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4221](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3182](#))

4439

“Hooper, I'll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn't. But once this is done I'll be rich, and I'll split that with you. I'll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won't hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it's the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that's what's valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You're asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [931](#))
- No (turn to [1601](#))
- Lie (turn to [4588](#))
- Evade (turn to [4588](#))

4440

“All right.” I am beaten, after all. “The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3937](#))

4441

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2890](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4817](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [2790](#))

4442

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Hooper!” Harris exclaims, in surprise.

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [4331](#))
- No (turn to [2586](#))
- Lie (turn to [2586](#))
- Evade (turn to [3949](#))

4443

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if

we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [1979](#))

4444

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [3518](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [1561](#))

4445

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper’s tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up,

and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3093](#))

4446

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [4351](#))
- No (turn to [718](#))
- Evade (turn to [3752](#))
- That's not it (turn to [315](#))

4447

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [3247](#))

4448

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [632](#))
- No (turn to [3671](#))
- Lie (turn to [3671](#))

4449

I have in my head to blame Hooper, but somehow I cannot find a way to tell the story. Whatever they put in my tea, it has control of my tongue. I find myself collapsing, desperate to tell him everything, almost weeping with the shame of it.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2170](#))
- No (turn to [2827](#))
- Lie (turn to [4075](#))

4450

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t

hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1228](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3356](#))

4451

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I'm woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

"What happened there?"

- Admit doing it (turn to [231](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [790](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [3634](#))

4452

"None of us are blameless, Harris. But you're not my priest and I'm not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will."

He appears to consider the offer.

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [3420](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

4453

“Someone threw this in through the window over night,” I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn’t see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there’s no-one else it could have been.”

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [561](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [3428](#))

4454

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3953](#))
- No (turn to [3945](#))
- Lie (turn to [3945](#))

4455

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1937](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1408](#))
- Lie (turn to [1554](#))

4456

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1790](#))
- No (turn to [3198](#))
- Lie (turn to [3198](#))
- Evade (turn to [2549](#))

4457

- The jacket (turn to [4691](#))

4458

“At the moment when the machine halted, Peterson and Jefferies were by the work-table, Collins and Humph were out having a smoke. I was by the front of the machine checking over the dip-switches. Hooper was the only one around the back of the Bombe. No-one else could have done it.”

“That’s not quite the same as seeing him do it,” Harris remarks.

- "When you have eliminated the impossible..." (turn to [1160](#))
- "You have to believe me." (turn to [1327](#))
- "Ask the others." (turn to [5005](#))

4459

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [707](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3987](#))

4460

I look in through the door and catch Hooper’s expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn’t. He looks shocked, almost hurt. “Iain,” he murmurs. “You couldn’t...”

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [2346](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [828](#))
- Evade (turn to [2129](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4548](#))

4461

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [3576](#))
- Disagree (turn to [287](#))
- Lie (turn to [2587](#))

4462

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4605](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

4463

- The jacket (turn to [3147](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2503](#))

4464

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [2436](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [2961](#))

4465

I suppose this must be what it feels like to have a conscience, then. Very well.

“Harris, sir. I don’t know what Hooper’s playing at, sir. But I can’t let him do this.”

“Do what?”

“Take the rope for this. I took it, sir.

The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“I thought as much. I hadn’t expected you to give it out so easily, however. You understand, Hooper has said nothing, of course. In fact, he went to Hut 2 directly after we released him and uncovered the component. But he told us you had instructed him where to go. Hence my little double bluff. Frankly, I’ll be glad when I’m shot of the lot of you mathematicians.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

4466

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4459](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [522](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

4467

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn’t. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn’t bear the thought of it. I love working here. I’ve never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn’t want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [1583](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [4726](#))
- Lie (turn to [4726](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1583](#))

4468

“Damn right I’m sore. Was it one of the others who put you up to this? Was it Hooper? He’s always been jealous of me. He’s...”

The Commander moustache bristles as he purses his lips. “Has he now? Of your achievements, do you think?” It’s difficult not to shake the sense that he’s humouring me.

“Or of your brain? Or something else?”

- "Of my genius." (turn to [3303](#))

- "Of my standing." (turn to [1168](#))
- Evade (turn to [2099](#))

4469

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3241](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3241](#))

4470

“And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren’t enough senior officers to go round.”

“Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that,” Harris replies. “That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I’m inclined to believe them. But that’s all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [3386](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

4471

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2749](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [1649](#))

4472

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the

barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3631](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [2965](#))
- Evade (turn to [1922](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1903](#))

4473

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4317](#))
- No (turn to [1529](#))
- Lie (turn to [1529](#))

4474

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and

arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2813](#))

4475

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [346](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [1147](#))

4476

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4742](#))
- No (turn to [2592](#))

4477

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling be he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [286](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [863](#))
- Evade (turn to [4134](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1073](#))

4478

"No."

"Too bad." Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. "Captain," he calls. "Could I have a moment?"

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [857](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4745](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [1459](#))

4479

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [532](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1378](#))

4480

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn't smile. “Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [3159](#))
- Evade (turn to [3910](#))

4481

“Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a

detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [1268](#))
- Accept it (turn to [765](#))
- Evade it (turn to [1712](#))

4482

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [3844](#))

4483

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper’s tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the

floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2934](#))

4484

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But you’re not my priest and I’m not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [427](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2051](#))

4485

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [2440](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [4553](#))

4486

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

4487

"You're right." I shake my head. "You're right. I don't see how I can help you after all. So, there's only one conclusion."

"Oh, yes? And what's that?"

"It's your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process." I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. "You'd better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2457](#))

4488

"I'm fine," I reply. "This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better."

"I couldn't agree more." And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [2024](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [914](#))
- Lie (turn to [914](#))
- Evade (turn to [3999](#))

4489

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [2282](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

4490

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [3544](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [5014](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

4491

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

4492

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and

continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3233](#))

4493

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [869](#))
- No (turn to [1314](#))
- Lie (turn to [869](#))

4494

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4981](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2442](#))

4495

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [851](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2936](#))

4496

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [2680](#))
- Evade (turn to [1107](#))

4497

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1634](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1348](#))
- Something else (turn to [2822](#))

4498

“I broke it,” I reply. There doesn’t seem any use in trying to lie. “I thought I could escape. But I couldn’t get myself through.”

The Commander laughs. “Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [3812](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3025](#))

4499

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1684](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2850](#))
- Lie (turn to [2850](#))
- Evade (turn to [4532](#))

4500

“I’m no traitor, damn it. You *know* I’m not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I’ve given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I’m not doing any of this lightly. But I’m in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I

do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2315](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4029](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [2031](#))

4501

"I'm suggesting you save your own skin. I've wrapped that component in one of your shirts, Hooper. They'll be searching this place top to bottom. They'll find it eventually, and when they do, that's the thing that will swing it against you. So take my advice now."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4974](#))

4502

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4925](#))

4503

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [3429](#))
- Lie (turn to [3429](#))
- Evade (turn to [3020](#))

4504

“Of course I do,” I answer.

The reel went missing from the Bombe this afternoon. The four of us were in the Hut at the time, working on the latest intercept. It was Russell who noticed the machine producing strange results and found the gap in its plugboard. But as to who took it - it

could have been any of us.

And indeed, it *must* have been. The machine had been functioning as normal when we began our calculations. And then, a short few hours later, it was gone. We had to stop. There was nothing more we could do until it was replaced. The part was vital, just as the machine was vital, and so were the contents of the message, still unread twenty four hours later.

“Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [3997](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1768](#))
- Lie (turn to [1768](#))
- Evade (turn to [1923](#))

4505

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [4652](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1038](#))

4506

“Then I’ll be going, on and getting on with my job of saving her, shall I?” I even rise half to my feet, before he slams the tabletop.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1946](#))

- Blame someone (turn to [3032](#))

4507

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))
- Wait (turn to [1138](#))

4508

- The jacket (turn to [4005](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4641](#))

4509

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [87](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [293](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

4510

"Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn't. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn't bear the thought of it. I love working here. I've never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn't want to lose it."

"So what did you do with the component?" Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves

tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [3284](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [3681](#))
- Lie (turn to [3681](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3284](#))

4511

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [792](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2021](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [767](#))

4512

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2284](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

4513

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen

in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [3698](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [4982](#))

4514

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3993](#))

4515

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4100](#))
- No (turn to [4545](#))
- Lie (turn to [1645](#))

4516

“Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard...”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [2446](#))

4517

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [874](#))
- No (turn to [2149](#))
- Lie (turn to [1559](#))

4518

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [79](#))

4519

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2950](#))
- Something else (turn to [453](#))

4520

"It's not that bad. I can still fix it."

Harris shakes his head. "This isn't a problem to be cracked. This isn't a puzzle. I'm sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you've done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can't hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn't matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1388](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1384](#))

4521

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe

it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [4847](#))

4522

I say nothing, my lips tightly, firmly sealed. It's true I am a traitor, to the very laws of nature. The world has taught me that since a very early age. But not to my country - should the Reich win this war, I would hardly be treated as an honoured hero. I was doomed from the very start.

I explain none of this. How could a man like Harris understand?

The Commander takes one look back from the doorway as he pulls it to.

"It's been a pleasure working with you, Mr Manning," he declares. "You've done a great service to this country. If we come through, I'm sure they'll remember your name. I'm sorry it had to end this way and I'll do my best to keep it quiet. No-one need know what you did."

The Commander holds the door for his superior, and follows him out. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [3461](#))

4523

"I had to get out, Harris. I had to provoke Hooper into doing something that would incriminate himself fully. He's too clever, you see..."

"Be quiet, man. We know all about you and your sordid affairs." The Captain curls his lip. "Don't you know there's a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it hadn't had been for that brain of yours? Don't you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?"

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and

what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [120](#))
- No (turn to [678](#))
- Lie (turn to [678](#))
- Evade (turn to [4750](#))

4524

Enough of this place. Time for me to get moving. I can get to the train station on foot, catch the postal train to Scotland and be somewhere else before anyone realises that I'm gone.

Of course, then they'll be looking for me in earnest. As a confirmed traitor.

- Go (turn to [4327](#))
- Don't go (turn to [421](#))

4525

From where he's sitting, I know Hooper can see me, so I keep my head down and look guilty as sin. The bastard is probably smiling.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the

moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [2346](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [828](#))
- Evade (turn to [2129](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4548](#))

4526

Enough of this. There isn't any time to lose. Right now they'll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that's it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that's the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my fist and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [4790](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1748](#))

4527

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2711](#))

4528

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2528](#))
- No (turn to [3018](#))
- Lie (turn to [3018](#))

4529

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2615](#))
- Something else (turn to [639](#))

4530

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [2692](#))

4531

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2814](#))

4532

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [290](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [132](#))
- Lie (turn to [290](#))
- Evade (turn to [3071](#))

4533

I shrug, eloquently.

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [4946](#))

4534

- The jacket (turn to [3520](#))

4535

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3220](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

4536

“So he’s an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe.”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re

sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you."

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

4537

"I'll talk to him."

"What?"

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [3295](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1803](#))

4538

"You mean he confessed of his own accord? You didn't catch him?"

"The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go." He wrinkles his nose. "I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash."

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [2327](#))

4539

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [1658](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [3449](#))

4540

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

4541

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [218](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [2079](#))

4542

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1249](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [3824](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4860](#))

4543

I slide the component into the tent, work the zip closed, and move quickly away into the shadows. It takes a few minutes for my breath to slow, and my heart to stop hammering, but I see no other movement. If anyone is watching Hooper's tent, they are asleep at their posts.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2034](#))

4544

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- Something else (turn to [1277](#))

4545

"No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it."

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1613](#))
- No (turn to [1925](#))
- Lie (turn to [1925](#))

4546

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3582](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2010](#))

4547

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that

stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [3998](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [1783](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1246](#))

4548

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3492](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [589](#))

4549

From inspiration - or desperation, I am not certain - a simple approach occurs to me. I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper's tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4485](#))

4550

There's no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don't think I've been followed, or seen but if I have, it's too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone's noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3469](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2143](#))

4551

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2931](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3694](#))
- Something else (turn to [4096](#))

4552

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2092](#))
- The blanket (turn to [157](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3848](#))
- Something else (turn to [146](#))

4553

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and

you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [472](#))
- Deny it (turn to [4113](#))

4554

"Here at Bletchley? Of course I do"

"Here, now," Harris replies firmly. "We're not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul."

- "I'm fine." (turn to [3611](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [1319](#))
- Be honest (turn to [1319](#))
- Lie (turn to [3611](#))

4555

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- Something else (turn to [3734](#))

4556

"All right. I'll tell you what happened." And never mind my shame, I think.

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [2104](#))
- No (turn to [3243](#))
- Lie (turn to [4476](#))

4557

No time to waste. I drop to my knees and check the breeze-block. Sure enough, there’s nothing there. *Hooper took the bait.*

Suddenly, there’s a movement behind me. I look up to see, first a snub pistol, and then, Harris.

“Queen to rook two,” he declares. “I wouldn’t have fathomed it but Hooper did. Explained it right after we sprung him doing what you’re doing now. We weren’t sure what to believe but now, you seem to have resolved that for us.”

- Agree (turn to [272](#))
- Lie (turn to [1478](#))
- Evade (turn to [2016](#))

4558

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1591](#))

4559

“I’m fine,” I reply. “This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better.”

“I couldn’t agree more.” And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know

where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [831](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [2214](#))
- Lie (turn to [2214](#))
- Evade (turn to [1509](#))

4560

I shrug, eloquently.

"This is all too far-fetched," Harris says. "I'm glad to have this back, but I need to think."

Getting to his feet, he nods once. "You'll have to wait a little longer, I'm afraid, Manning."

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

4561

"Well, then," I answer, nervously. "What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [1483](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [451](#))

4562

I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper's tent and return to my barrack,

wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2225](#))

4563

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [2821](#))

4564

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- Something else (turn to [3920](#))

4565

"I did."

I have become, somehow, an accustomed liar - the words roll easily off my tongue. *Perhaps I am a traitor, I think, now that I dissemble as easily as one.*

“Go on,” Harris says, giving me no indication of whether he believes my tale.

- "I saw him take it." (turn to [309](#))
- "It couldn't have been anyone else." (turn to [245](#))

4566

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1042](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

4567

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [4630](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [4032](#))

4568

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-

mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [2542](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [1669](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [191](#))

4569

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [3298](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3369](#))

4570

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [1222](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3520](#))

4571

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite

enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [632](#))
- No (turn to [376](#))
- Lie (turn to [376](#))

4572

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1144](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3928](#))

4573

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’ll never know if I hadn’t have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [3197](#))
- Lie (turn to [2963](#))
- Evade (turn to [3780](#))

4574

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [1812](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4755](#))

4575

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2562](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2541](#))
- Something else (turn to [416](#))

4576

I pat down my pockets but all I'm carrying is the intercept, which is no good at all.

- Something you're wearing? (turn to [2398](#))
- Look around instead (turn to [2343](#))

4577

"Someone threw this in through the window over night," I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. "I couldn't see who, it was too dark. But I know

what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I’ll be damned,” he murmurs. “That’s it all right. And you didn’t have it on you when we put you in here. But it can’t have been Hooper - I had men watching him all night. And there’s no-one else it could have been.”

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [3636](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [3952](#))

4578

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [2362](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2463](#))
- Lie (turn to [1764](#))

4579

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with

your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2710](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [2710](#))

4580

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We're not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [1536](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [2002](#))
- Be honest (turn to [2002](#))
- Lie (turn to [1536](#))

4581

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [2930](#))

4582

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2064](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

4583

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded. Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [4465](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

4584

There’s no time to lose. Throwing caution to the wind I make my way quickly to Hut 2, and around the back. I don’t think I’ve been followed, or seen but if I have, it’s too late. My actions are suspicious enough for anyone’s noose. I have no choice but to follow through.

The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [3304](#))
- Leave it (turn to [3389](#))

4585

“I don’t know.”

“You can do better than that. Remember, there’s a hangman’s noose waiting for traitors.”

- Theorise (turn to [4535](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

4586

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1331](#))

4587

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. Shouldn’t I have a lawyer?”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Drink (turn to [3132](#))
- Put the cup down (turn to [1072](#))

4588

“I’m suggesting you save your own skin. I’ve wrapped that component in one of your shirts, Hooper. They’ll be searching this place top to bottom. They’ll find it eventually, and when they do, that’s the thing that will swing it against you. So take my advice now.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [77](#))

4589

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4491](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

4590

- The jacket (turn to [1378](#))
- The bucket (turn to [246](#))

4591

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

Perhaps Hooper is there, in the dark, trying to help me after all?

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [4925](#))

4592

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3811](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1463](#))

4593

I hop up the steps and put my head inside all the same. Nobody about. Still too early in the AM for sparks, I suppose.

I head on around the back of the hut. The breeze-block with the cavity is on the left side.

- Check (turn to [4557](#))
- Look around (turn to [2416](#))

4594

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [3596](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [887](#))

4595

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2455](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [2296](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [2868](#))

4596

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4359](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2161](#))

4597

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3419](#))
- Something else (turn to [3142](#))

4598

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [145](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [833](#))

4599

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He

replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3953](#))
- No (turn to [3111](#))
- Lie (turn to [3111](#))

4600

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [2728](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [3768](#))
- Lie (turn to [1738](#))
- Evade (turn to [333](#))

4601

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- Something else (turn to [2803](#))

4602

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But I’ve done nothing to deserve this treatment. Now,

please. Let me go. I'll help you find this damn component, of course I will."

He appears to consider the offer.

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [1473](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [172](#))

4603

I have a single moment to shout something to Hooper before the door closes.

"I'll get you Hooper, you'll see!" I cry. Then:

- "Queen to rook two, checkmate!" (turn to [3024](#))
- "Ask not for whom the bell tolls!" (turn to [1150](#))
- "Messy, without one missing cache!" (turn to [2905](#))

4604

"I can't remember."

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

"I'm sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [1612](#))
- Lie (turn to [1612](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

4605

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

4606

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him think he's off the hook." (turn to [3906](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [1068](#))

4607

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [3548](#))
- Wait (turn to [4907](#))

4608

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed

monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [470](#))

4609

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2810](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2197](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2801](#))

4610

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [1124](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

4611

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is a bucket. It's rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1144](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [1092](#))

4612

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3022](#))

4613

"I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [2528](#))
- No (turn to [3018](#))
- Lie (turn to [3018](#))

4614

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the

room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

4615

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [669](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

4616

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that

stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [2891](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [3099](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1713](#))

4617

"Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly." I fold my arms. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [3836](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

4618

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [1414](#))

- "I know where it is." (turn to [2140](#))
- Lie (turn to [1414](#))
- Evade (turn to [2720](#))

4619

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [1964](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [519](#))

4620

"I always meant to tell you," I tell him. "I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them."

Harris looks at me with contempt. "You wretched little man. Don't think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You're going to pay for what you've done, and you're going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime." If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1369](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4671](#))

4621

"Well, then," I answer, nervously. "What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn't possible, which it probably wouldn't be, since he'd have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he'd hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my

tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [4398](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

4622

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [1555](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [837](#))
- Lie (turn to [791](#))

4623

"Only that this process is unreasonable, and I believe you're behaving like a swine."

"You imbecile," Harris replies, with sudden force. He is half out of his chair. "You know the situation as well as I do, so why all this fencing? The Hun are poised like rats, ready to run all over this country. They'll destroy everything, you do understand that, don't you? You're not so locked up inside your crossword puzzles that you don't see that, are you? And this machine we have here - you men - you are the best and only hope this country has. God help her."

I sit back, startled by the force of his outburst. His carefully sculpted expression has curled to angry disgust and there is spit flecking his lips. *He really does hate me*, I think. *He'll have my neck just for the taste of it.*

- Calm him (turn to [1119](#))
- Oppose him (turn to [538](#))
- Dismiss him (turn to [2501](#))

4624

It's useless. There's nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [429](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1029](#))
- Wait (turn to [2915](#))

4625

"You want me to tell you what happened? You'll be disgusted, I'm quite sure."

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [4041](#))
- No (turn to [3273](#))
- Lie (turn to [4043](#))

4626

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1813](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [1813](#))

4627

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [3242](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))

4628

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [893](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1973](#))

4629

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

4630

Enough of this. There isn’t any time to lose. Right now they’ll be following Hooper as he goes to bed, and goes to sleep; and then that’s it. The minute he closes his eyelids and drifts off that’s the moment that this trap swings shut on me.

So I punch out the glass with my bucket and it shatters with a terrific noise. Then I stop, and wait, to see if anyone will come in through the door.

Nothing.

- Wait a little longer (turn to [4991](#))
- Clear the frame of shards (turn to [1539](#))

4631

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [4166](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4562](#))

4632

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps the component has been found and the crisis is over.

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [79](#))

4633

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1228](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3356](#))

4634

“No.”

“Too bad.” Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain

storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [857](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [4320](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [3470](#))

4635

I nod. “I don’t need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

4636

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4488](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [3550](#))
- Be honest (turn to [3550](#))
- Lie (turn to [4488](#))

4637

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [667](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4814](#))

4638

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4540](#))

4639

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [349](#))

4640

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re

saying?”

- Yes (turn to [1432](#))
- No (turn to [2325](#))
- Evade (turn to [2490](#))
- That's not it (turn to [544](#))

4641

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4005](#))

4642

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don't train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1894](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3269](#))

4643

- The jacket (turn to [856](#))

4644

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [4980](#))
- Evade (turn to [2285](#))

4645

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [4437](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [758](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

4646

“I’m not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone.”

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. “Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That’s absurd. That’s utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn’t get through.”

- Admit it (turn to [1097](#))
- Deny it (turn to [21](#))

4647

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [1964](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

4648

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [4723](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4531](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3245](#))

4649

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [4655](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))

4650

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [391](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [28](#))

4651

“The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You’ll most likely get a promotion.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3892](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4609](#))

4652

I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I’m done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3766](#))

4653

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [419](#))
- Try the door (turn to [129](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [546](#))

4654

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1682](#))
- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- Something else (turn to [2107](#))

4655

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [374](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

4656

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [945](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

4657

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [877](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2276](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))

4658

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1193](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2655](#))
- Something else (turn to [3324](#))

4659

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4962](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [4962](#))

4660

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [3763](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

4661

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [289](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4953](#))
- Something else (turn to [4643](#))

4662

“Perhaps the accomplice thought it was Hooper being kept in here. Maybe they saw the guard...”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

4663

“I’m fine,” I reply. “This is all some misunderstanding and the quicker we have it cleared up the better.”

“I couldn’t agree more.” And then he comes right out with it, with an accusation. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1219](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4038](#))
- Lie (turn to [4038](#))
- Evade (turn to [2911](#))

4664

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2386](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

4665

“No, of course not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [870](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4499](#))
- Lie (turn to [4499](#))

4666

“I always meant to tell you,” I tell him. “I thought perhaps I could find out who they were. Lead you to them.”

Harris looks at me with contempt. “You wretched little man. Don’t think your tongue will be able to get you out of trouble. You’re going to pay for what you’ve done, and you’re going to pay dearly. If a single man loses his life because of your pride and your perversions then God help your eternal soul. The fact is you committed a crime.” If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [5021](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

4667

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [3611](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [3246](#))
- Be honest (turn to [3246](#))
- Lie (turn to [3611](#))

4668

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [4470](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [4866](#))

4669

“Try me. Just me and him.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [954](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [978](#))

4670

"No. I have no idea."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

"Lucky these things are easy to replace," Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

"Come now," Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. "As I told you. We're not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming."

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3552](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4731](#))
- Lie (turn to [3552](#))
- Evade (turn to [812](#))

4671

"I saw Hooper take it."

"I see." He is starting to lose his temper - I can see it in the creases of his face. I have seen Harris angry a few times, with lackeys and secretaries and the like, usually over things sent late or incorrectly. But never with us. With the "brains" he has always been so cautious, treating us like children. And now I see that, like a father, he wants only to smack us when we disobey him. "I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters."

- Persist with this (turn to [4309](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [430](#))

4672

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3446](#))
- No (turn to [617](#))
- Lie (turn to [617](#))

4673

“That’s not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [1977](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2580](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4987](#))

4674

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1437](#))
- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1749](#))
- Something else (turn to [3920](#))

4675

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [4042](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [3131](#))

4676

“Maybe I can help with that.”

“Oh, yes? And how, exactly?”

- "I'll talk to him." (turn to [5018](#))
- "We'll fool him." (turn to [347](#))

4677

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft

the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1691](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3022](#))

4678

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4953](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2028](#))
- Something else (turn to [4643](#))

4679

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2892](#))
- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4179](#))
- Something else (turn to [190](#))

4680

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I

watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [1258](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [2563](#))
- Wait (turn to [3591](#))

4681

No, I am content. I suppose I do not believe they will hang me. They will lock me up and continue to use my brain, if they can. I wonder what they will tell the world - perhaps that I have taken my own life. That would be simplest. The few who know me would believe it.

Well, then. Not a bad existence, in prison. Removed from temptation. A kind of imposed monasticism, with plenty more problems to solve, and more mysteries to fathom.

I wonder what else I might yet unravel before I'm done?

- The door is opening (turn to [3199](#))

4682

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [4475](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [4631](#))

4683

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3606](#))
- The jacket (turn to [4677](#))

4684

Quickly, I pull it free, and slip it into the pocket of my jacket.

Where now?

- Go back to the barracks (turn to [3720](#))
- Go to Hooper's dorm (turn to [2957](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [2766](#))

4685

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3072](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1135](#))
- Confess (turn to [2169](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [1323](#))

4686

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him

shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [3148](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1442](#))
- Evade (turn to [3376](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4142](#))

4687

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2604](#))
- Something else (turn to [3010](#))

4688

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to

wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4502](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1793](#))
- Wait (turn to [1087](#))

4689

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1181](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [4594](#))

4690

I lean back. “It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [4066](#))

4691

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2799](#))

4692

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [904](#))

4693

"Queen to rook two, checkmate!" I call, then laugh viciously, as if I am damning him straight to hell.

I only catch Hooper's reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [1178](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [927](#))
- Evade (turn to [1595](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2039](#))

4694

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [4291](#))

4695

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [591](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2294](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))

4696

I look in through the door and catch Hooper's expression. I had half expected him to be smiling but he isn't. He looks shocked, almost hurt. "Iain," he murmurs. "You couldn't..."

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. "What's this?" he asks. "A confession? Just like that?"

"No," the Commander admits, in a low voice. "I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component."

"If he has it."

"Indeed."

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

"Sometimes, I think you people are magicians," he remarks. "Other times you seem more like witches. Very well."

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

"This scheme of yours had better come off," he hisses in my ear. "Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays."

- Reassure (turn to [550](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [1938](#))
- Evade (turn to [2262](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3776](#))

4697

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give the young man who put me in this spot to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1855](#))
- No (turn to [622](#))
- Lie (turn to [3925](#))
- Evade (turn to [2704](#))

4698

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [4713](#))
- Something else (turn to [3920](#))

4699

"You can't do this!" I cry. "It's murder! I demand a trial, a lawyer; for God's sake, man, you can't just throw me overboard, we're not barbarians...!"

"You leave me no choice," Harris snaps back, eyes cold as gun-metal. "You and your damn cyphers. Your damn clever problems. If men like you didn't exist, if we could just all be *straight* with one another." He gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear for the future of this world, with men like you in. Reich or no Reich, Mr Manning, people like you simply *complicate* matters."

Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [437](#))

4700

“I’ve thought so before.”

“Let me tell you what happened this morning. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [27](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1285](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [5007](#))

4701

“Very well. I see there’s no point in covering up. You know everything anyway.”

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [3045](#))
- No (turn to [271](#))
- Lie (turn to [3341](#))

4702

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper’s confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and

that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [4355](#))
- Don't check (turn to [3965](#))

4703

“Then let him think he’s off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you’ll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that’s the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [2596](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [4812](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [1772](#))

4704

I see. Perhaps you think I bullied the man into giving himself up. Perhaps he understood my little clue far enough to know it was a threat against him, but not well enough to understand where he should look to find it. So he took the easy route out and folded.

Gave me the hand.

Hardly sporting, is that it?

- Confess (turn to [664](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [4071](#))

4705

I put my ear to the keyhole but can make out nothing. Are there still guards posted? Perhaps, if Hooper has managed to incriminate himself, the guards have been removed?

Perhaps the door is unlocked and they left me to sleep? I try the handle. No such luck.

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [148](#))

4706

“Absolutely.”

Harris opens the door and pushes me inside. “Captain,” he calls. “Could I have a moment?”

The Captain, looking puzzled, steps out. The door is closed. Hooper stares at me, open-mouthed, about to say something. I probably have less than a minute before the Captain storms back in and declares this plan to be bunkum.

- Threaten him (turn to [1807](#))
- Bargain with him (turn to [3639](#))
- Plead with him (turn to [4903](#))

4707

But what is a country, after all? A country is not a concept, not an ideal. Every country falls, its borders shift and move, its language disappears to be replaced by another.

Neither the Reich nor the British Empire will survive forever, so what use is my loyalty to either?

I may as well, therefore, look after myself. Something I have attempted, but failed miserably, to do.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [2638](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2176](#))

4708

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [199](#))
- No (turn to [1581](#))
- Evade (turn to [2496](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3282](#))

4709

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It’s a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [4051](#))

4710

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1405](#))
- No (turn to [3671](#))
- Lie (turn to [3671](#))

4711

“I suppose I do rather.” I laugh, but Harris does not.

“This damn business gets worse and worse,” he says, talking as he goes over to unlock and throw open the window. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [1466](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [1055](#))

4712

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn’t. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn’t bear the thought of it. I love working here. I’ve never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn’t want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [4871](#))

- I don't have it (turn to [479](#))
- Lie (turn to [479](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [4871](#))

4713

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [1621](#))
- Slip out (turn to [215](#))

4714

Avoidance and delay, perhaps? The military machine never fights on a single front. They will have other approaches in play. If I move slowly enough, perhaps the situation will resolve itself some other way with my reputation reasonably intact.

Perhaps, in fact, they are playing the same game. Half an hour goes by before Commander Harris returns to the hut. He seems careful to leave the door open only for a moment, as if worried a loose word or two might slip inside.

He's brought two cups of tea in metal mugs: he sets them down on the tabletop between us.

"Well then," he begins, a little awkwardly. This is an unseemly situation, it would be appear. He pushes one cup halfway towards me. A small gesture of friendship. Is that enough to give me some hope?

- Take it (turn to [4315](#))
- Don't take it (turn to [257](#))

4715

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3784](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [373](#))

4716

"The component?"

"Yes," Harris replies levelly. "The component that went missing this afternoon. I doubt that you've forgotten."

He's talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty

socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3440](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3919](#))
- Lie (turn to [3440](#))
- Evade (turn to [620](#))

4717

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [999](#))
- No (turn to [3691](#))
- Lie (turn to [3691](#))
- Evade (turn to [4726](#))

4718

“Please, Harris. You can’t understand the pressure they put me under. You can’t understand what it’s like, to be in love but be able to do nothing about it...”

“Be quiet, man. We know all about your and your sordid affairs.” The Captain curls his lip. “Don’t you know there’s a war on? Do you know the kind of place they would have sent you if it haven’t had been for that brain of yours? Don’t you think you owe it to your country to use it a little more?”

Do I, I wonder? Do I owe this country anything, this country that has spurned who and

what am I since the day I became a man?

- Yes (turn to [3064](#))
- No (turn to [3839](#))
- Lie (turn to [3839](#))
- Evade (turn to [2356](#))

4719

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- Something else (turn to [3942](#))

4720

“Well, I'm glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn't let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I'm rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we'll let you go know. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4771](#))
- Wait (turn to [750](#))

4721

“Someone threw this in through the window over night,” I reply, and open my jacket to reveal the component from the Bombe. “I couldn't see who, it was too dark. But I know what it is.”

He reaches out and takes it. “Well, I'll be damned,” he murmurs. “That's it all right. And you didn't have it on you when we put you in here. But it can't have been Hooper - I had

men watching him all night. And there's no-one else it could have been."

He turns the component over in his hands, bemused.

- Suggest something (turn to [1037](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [4533](#))

4722

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [1208](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [506](#))
- Lie (turn to [2421](#))

4723

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2378](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1159](#))
- The pillow (turn to [3541](#))
- Something else (turn to [1756](#))

4724

"Oh, yes?"

"Yes. For what that's worth. There's still the issue of the component. It hasn't turned up. He didn't lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don't know."

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with

ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1521](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [992](#))

4725

“You mean he didn’t even hide it? Just put it in his shoe?”

“No,” Harris replies. “That isn’t really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

4726

“I don’t have it any more. I passed it through the fence to my contact straight after taking it, before it was discovered to be missing. It would have been idiocy to do differently. It’s long gone, I’m afraid.”

“You fool, Manning,” Harris curses, getting quickly to his feet. “You utter fool. Do you suppose you will be any better off living under Hitler? It’s men like you who will get us all killed. Men too feeble, too weak in their hearts to stand up and take a man’s responsibility for the world. You’re happier to stay a child all your life and play with your little childish toys.”

- Answer back (turn to [3313](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3454](#))

4727

I pause to glance around, and catch a glimpse of movement. Someone ducking around the corner of the hut. Or a canvas sheet flapping in the light breeze. Impossible to be sure.

- Check the breeze-block (turn to [1844](#))
- Check around the side of the hut (turn to [4162](#))

4728

“I saw Hooper take it.”

“Did you?” The worst of his rage is passing; he is now moving into a kind of contemptuous despair. I can imagine him wrapping up our interview soon, leaving the hut, locking the door, and dropping the key down the well in the yard. And why wouldn't he? With my name tarnished they will not let me back to work on the Bombe - if there is the slightest smell of treachery about my name I would be lucky not be locked up for the remainder of the war. “I wish you'd stop with your deceptions and get to the truth, man. Every *minute* matters.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [3909](#))
- Persist with this (turn to [90](#))

4729

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls!”

He stares back at me, as if were a madman and perhaps for a split second I see him shudder.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What's this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I'm afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he'll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [1215](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4614](#))
- Evade (turn to [4944](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [1039](#))

4730

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [362](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [4746](#))

4731

“I know where it is.”

Harris stares back at me.

“I see.” There’s a long pause, like the endless delay between feeding in a line of cypher to the Bombe and waiting for its valves and cylinders to heat up enough to being processing. “Would you like to explain?”

- Explain (turn to [773](#))
- Don't explain (turn to [962](#))

- Lie (turn to [4125](#))
- Evade (turn to [4617](#))

4732

I cast around the small room. There's a bucket in one corner for emergencies - I suppose I could use that. I pick it up but it's not very easy to heft. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2793](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [281](#))

4733

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [2423](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [4563](#))
- Wait (turn to [1763](#))

4734

Work carefully? It's difficult to work carefully when all one's has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [3973](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [181](#))

4735

“I’m not trying to do anything except save my neck.”

“Let’s hope things work out,” Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3525](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3318](#))

4736

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper’s. He’s haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3902](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1562](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))

4737

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

4738

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [838](#))

4739

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4218](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2524](#))

4740

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

4741

Moving quickly and quietly, I hoist myself up onto the window-frame and worm my way outside into the freezing night air. Then I'm away, slipping down the paths between the Huts, sticking to the shadows, on my way to Hut 2.

- Go the shortest way (turn to [3344](#))
- Take a longer route (turn to [288](#))

4742

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [1655](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [508](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [1655](#))
- Lie (turn to [508](#))

4743

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4317](#))
- No (turn to [1529](#))
- Lie (turn to [1529](#))

4744

“Please, Hooper. You don’t understand what’s at stake. They have information on me. What I’ve done. I don’t need to tell you what I’ve done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it’s wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it’s nothing. It’s not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we’re doing here. It’s just a part. The German’s think it’s a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me.”

“Help you?” Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. “Help you? You’re a traitor, Iain. You’re a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you’re *queer*.”

- Deny it (turn to [2011](#))
- Accept it (turn to [1142](#))
- Evade it (turn to [3946](#))

4745

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [627](#))
- No (turn to [1086](#))
- Lie (turn to [4157](#))
- Evade (turn to [4157](#))

4746

I lean back. “It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting

process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [1172](#))

4747

“I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1440](#))

4748

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2330](#))
- Something else (turn to [4363](#))

4749

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1024](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [3689](#))

4750

But what is a country, after all? A country is not a concept, not an ideal. Every country falls, its borders shift and move, its language disappears to be replaced by another. Neither the Reich nor the British Empire will survive forever, so what use is my loyalty to either?

I may as well, therefore, look after myself. Something I have attempted, but failed miserably, to do.

“I’m afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [4440](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [915](#))

4751

“Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4130](#))
- No (turn to [4762](#))
- Lie (turn to [4762](#))

4752

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [4587](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1620](#))
- Lie (turn to [4587](#))
- Evade (turn to [2909](#))

4753

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [924](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [4277](#))
- Lie (turn to [4277](#))
- Evade (turn to [3651](#))

4754

“Nothing,” I reply. “You’re just the other man in the room. One of us has to get the blame.”

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I’m quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2784](#))

4755

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3069](#))

4756

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4694](#))

4757

"No, Harris. The young man wasn't blackmailing me." I take a deep breath. "It was Hooper."

"Hooper!" Harris exclaims, in surprise.

"It's the truth, Harris. If I'm going to jail, then so be it, but I won't hang at Traitor's Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. And

then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [4057](#))
- Lie (turn to [4057](#))
- Evade (turn to [4963](#))

4758

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [2571](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

4759

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4250](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [978](#))

4760

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4902](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [153](#))

4761

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [2438](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))

4762

I shift in my seat. "Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

"Go on with your confession," he replies. I shrug.

"There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't."

"This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?"

- Say yes (turn to [3947](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1083](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3947](#))
- Lie (turn to [1083](#))

4763

It's useless. There's nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look of out the window (turn to [4932](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1229](#))
- Wait (turn to [1646](#))

4764

“Well?”

“We'll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we'll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it's not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there's a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm's way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [174](#))
- No (turn to [4634](#))
- Lie (turn to [174](#))

4765

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn’t thought of it as such. But I suppose that’s what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [3241](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [3241](#))

4766

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

4767

Morning comes. I'm woken by a rooster calling from the yard behind the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up from the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

The door handle turns and without knocking, Harris comes inside. "You're up," he remarks, and then, "You smell like an animal."

- Be friendly (turn to [329](#))
- Be cold (turn to [2173](#))

4768

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [997](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [2906](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1099](#))

4769

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- Something else (turn to [93](#))

4770

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [722](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3026](#))
- Wait (turn to [4763](#))

4771

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper's confession only makes sense in one way - and that's that he believed me, and reasoned that he would be followed. So to try and uncover the component would have got him arrested, to confess was just the same. He simply caved, and threw in his hand.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [1123](#))
- Don't check (turn to [2674](#))

4772

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [6](#))
- Wait (turn to [1223](#))

4773

"I broke it," I reply. There doesn't seem any use in trying to lie. "I thought I could escape. But I couldn't get myself through."

The Commander laughs. "Shame," he remarks. "I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I'm glad you're still here, even if you do smell like a dog."

- Be optimistic (turn to [334](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [4055](#))

4774

Let me see. There's the bunk, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3013](#))
- The jacket (turn to [930](#))

4775

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [2560](#))
- Try the window (turn to [1673](#))

4776

"Yes, perhaps. But also to ensure your name goes down in the annals of mathematics. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything

from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [705](#))

4777

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [2829](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3520](#))
- The bucket (turn to [4570](#))

4778

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [1891](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3672](#))
- The bucket (turn to [2238](#))

4779

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [4330](#))
- The jacket (turn to [542](#))

4780

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [785](#))

4781

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3137](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [3215](#))

4782

"What could I do?" I'm shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. "I won't go to prison."

"You committed a crime," Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. "You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?" He shakes his head. "I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I'd like you to tell me, now. Where is it?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [605](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [3656](#))

4783

“None of us are blameless, Harris. But you’re not my priest and I’m not yours. Now, please. Let me go. I’ll help you find this damn component, of course I will.”

He appears to consider the offer.

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [4480](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2696](#))

4784

“I know nothing about it.” My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I’m not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. “I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [2385](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4864](#))

4785

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [2948](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [1837](#))

4786

“No, I suppose not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [1661](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [625](#))
- Lie (turn to [625](#))

4787

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [1904](#))
- Something else (turn to [4463](#))

4788

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I

was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn't flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he'll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I'm almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [2045](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [2235](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2045](#))
- Lie (turn to [2235](#))

4789

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [794](#))
- No (turn to [1991](#))
- Lie (turn to [1991](#))

4790

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn't do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the broken window. Then without a moment's further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I'll never know if I hadn't have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I'm hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they're not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

"So," Harris remarks. "Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are."

- Tell the truth (turn to [58](#))
- Lie (turn to [1542](#))
- Evade (turn to [4403](#))

4791

"Yes, I considered it. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements."

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, "I can see how that must have been attractive to you," with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4579](#))
- No (turn to [2361](#))
- Lie (turn to [2361](#))

4792

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [533](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3542](#))

4793

“No, I suppose not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [3601](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1869](#))
- Lie (turn to [1869](#))

4794

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. He is sweating slightly - of course: this is his command that’s on the line. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3166](#))
- Lie (turn to [3166](#))
- Evade (turn to [3379](#))

4795

"I'm not sure. I was asleep: I woke up when someone broke the window. I looked out to see who it was, but they were already gone."

Harris looks at me with puzzlement. "Someone came by to break the window, and then ran off? That's absurd. That's utterly absurd. Admit it, Manning. You tried to escape and you couldn't get through."

- Admit it (turn to [512](#))
- Deny it (turn to [4685](#))

4796

"The Captain thought it was a good scheme. You'll most likely get a promotion."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [187](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3158](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4736](#))

4797

“I’m no traitor,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [2312](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [1543](#))
- Lie (turn to [1543](#))
- Evade (turn to [1531](#))

4798

No. What would be the use? He will be long gone, and the name he told me is no doubt hokum. No: I was alone before in guilt, and I am thus alone again.

“We recovered the part, just where you said it was,” Harris reports, as he puts the cuffs around my wrists. “Of course, a couple of the men swear blind they searched there yesterday, so I’m afraid, what with the broken window... we’ve formed a perfectly good theory which doesn’t bode well for you.”

“I see.” It doesn’t seem worth arguing any further. “I still have the intercept in my pocket,” I remark. “Wherever we’re going, could I have a pencil?”

He looks me in the eye.

“Certainly. And one of your computing things, if I get my way. And when we’re old, and smoking pipes together in The Rag like heroes, I’ll explain to you the way that decent men have affairs. You scientists.” He drags me up to my feet. “You think you have to re-invent everything.”

With that, he hustles me out of the door and I can’t help thinking that, with a little more strategy, I could still have won the day. But too late now, of course.

The End

4799

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component

inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [3504](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1779](#))
- Give up (turn to [142](#))

4800

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [4509](#))
- Lie (turn to [4509](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

4801

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [3589](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

4802

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft my shoe by its toe, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in

the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4253](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1025](#))

4803

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [484](#))
- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- Something else (turn to [2817](#))

4804

Well, then. To Hooper's dorm. Time to wrap up this little game once and for all.

I creep around the outside of the Huts. All are quiet, steel-grey in the hazy moonlight; a few shining copper from arc-lamps strung from the trees. A few guards patrol the area at night but not many - after all, very few know this place even exists.

Our quarters are arranged away from the House; where we sleep is of less importance than where we work. We each have our own Hut, through some are less permanent than other's. Hooper's is a military issue tent: quite a large canopy, with two rooms inside and a short porch area where he insists people leave their shoes. It's all zipped up for the night and no light shines from inside.

I hang back for a moment. If Harris is keeping to the terms of our deal then someone will be watching this place. But I can see no-one.

- Open the outer zip (turn to [1024](#))
- Look for another opening (turn to [3886](#))
- Hide the component somewhere (turn to [1615](#))

4805

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [2293](#))
- No (turn to [2700](#))
- Lie (turn to [2700](#))
- Evade (turn to [479](#))

4806

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [4370](#))
- No (turn to [1010](#))
- Lie (turn to [1010](#))

4807

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large

enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [248](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [3052](#))

4808

“Yes. I suppose he was their agent. I should have realised but I didn’t. Then he threatened to tell you. I thought you would have me locked up: I couldn’t bear the thought of it. I love working here. I’ve never been so happy, so successful, anywhere before. I didn’t want to lose it.”

“So what did you do with the component?” Harris talks urgently. He grips his gloves tightly in one hand, perhaps prepared to lift them and strike if it is required. “Have you passed it to this man already? Have you left it somewhere for him to find?”

- I still have it (turn to [2040](#))
- I don't have it (turn to [1295](#))
- Lie (turn to [1295](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [2040](#))

4809

“I am what I am,” I reply. “I’m the way nature made me. But they’re going to hang me unless you help me, Hooper. Don’t let them hang me.”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don’t. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he

pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [3377](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4400](#))

4810

“We’ll fool him. He’s waiting to be sure that I’ve been strung up for this, so let’s give him what he wants. If he sees me taken away, clapped in irons - he’ll go straight to that component and set about getting rid of it.”

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we’ll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 being debriefed by the Captain. Let’s see if we can’t get his attention somehow.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow, I’m thinking, I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3884](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [4696](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [321](#))

4811

“What could I do?” I’m shaking now. The night is cold and the heat-lamp in this hut has been removed, presumably to keep me alert and on edge. “I don’t want to go to prison.”

“You committed a crime,” Harris answers. If I had any sense that he understood my predicament, and that he felt for my state of being, it collapses like a chain with a broken link. “You thought you could repair it with another, more serious crime?” He shakes his head. “I thought you men were supposed to be clever. But this is the action of a frightened woman. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [4625](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [628](#))

4812

I look in through the door and catch Hooper’s expression. I had half expected him to be smiling but he isn’t. He looks shocked, almost hurt. “Iain,” he murmurs. “You couldn’t…”

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“This scheme of yours had better come off,” he hisses in my ear. “Otherwise the Captain is going to start having men tailing *me* to see where I go on Saturdays.”

- Reassure (turn to [2239](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4651](#))
- Evade (turn to [3602](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [29](#))

4813

“Now steady on,” I reply, gesturing for him to calm himself.

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [679](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [388](#))

4814

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [1415](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4846](#))

4815

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [2502](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- The pillow (turn to [5019](#))
- Something else (turn to [3677](#))

4816

“No. It’s not treason. It’s a trade, plain and simple.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4865](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3483](#))

4817

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [1951](#))
- No (turn to [3896](#))
- Lie (turn to [836](#))

- Evade (turn to [836](#))

4818

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [921](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2555](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3726](#))

4819

“That's not important now. What matters is what you do, this evening. All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I'll do that then you're crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that's the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3787](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1427](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [3663](#))

4820

“All right. All right. That’s exactly what happened.”

“Shame,” he remarks. “I should have left that window open and put a guard on you. Might have been interesting to see where you went. Anyway, I’m glad you’re still here, even if you do smell like a dog.”

- Be optimistic (turn to [3812](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3025](#))

4821

I lift the cup and take a sip, staring him hard in the eye as I do so. He watches as I do so.

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [1191](#))
- Disagree (turn to [4901](#))
- Evade (turn to [4901](#))

4822

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3261](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1484](#))
- Something else (turn to [706](#))

4823

Better to live on the run than die on the spit. Creeping around the edge of the compound, I make my way to the front gate. As always, it’s manned by two guards, but I slip past

their box by crawling on my belly.

And then I'm on the road. Walking, not running. Silent. Free.

For the moment, at least.

The End

4824

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4164](#))
- Slip out (turn to [2814](#))

4825

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [907](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [471](#))

4826

“How should I know?” I reply, defensively. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [781](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1721](#))
- Lie (turn to [1721](#))

4827

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [747](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1738](#))

4828

“It will. Hooper’s running scared,” I reply, hoping I sound more confident than I feel.

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2379](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [7](#))

4829

In case I'm being followed, I divert around the perimeter of the compound. It's a much longer path, and it takes me across some terrain that's difficult to negotiate in the dark - muddy, and thick with thistles and nestles.

Still, I can be confident no-one is following, as I hear nothing. I crouch down behind the rear wall of Hut 2. The component is still there, wrapped in a tea-towel and shoved into a cavity in a breeze-block at the base of the Hut wall.

- Take it (turn to [2594](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2143](#))

4830

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1569](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [20](#))
- Wait (turn to [3515](#))

4831

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [2338](#))
- Something else (turn to [2476](#))

4832

“Oh, yes?”

“Yes. For what that’s worth. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [2718](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [4040](#))

4833

If I leave the component here somewhere it should be somewhere I can rely on Hooper finding it, but no-one before Hooper. In particular.

- Behind the tent (turn to [973](#))
- Inside the porch section (turn to [3504](#))
- On top of the canvas (turn to [1779](#))

4834

The rest of the night passes slowly. I sleep a little, dozing mostly. Then I’m woken by the rooster in the yard. The door opens, and Harris comes in. He takes one look at the broken window and frowns with puzzlement.

“What happened there?”

- Admit doing it (turn to [231](#))
- Deny doing it (turn to [790](#))
- Show him the component (turn to [4453](#))

4835

I shake my head violently, to say no, that's not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris' face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

"That's exactly it," I say quietly. "Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn't do."

Harris, to his credit, doesn't stiffen. He doesn't lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

"I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [1486](#))
- Disagree (turn to [521](#))
- Lie (turn to [49](#))

4836

"I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander," I reply with a sneer. "They don't train you to think in the Armed Forces."

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [2581](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1079](#))

4837

I pause a moment, trying to choose my words. To just come out and say it, after a lifetime of hiding... I wouldn't know how. To put it into words, bluntly and directly: that is a circle I cannot square.

"I've done things," I begin, uncomfortably. "I didn't want to. I tried not to. But in the end, you understand. I had to. It felt like cutting off my own arm not to. Things I know I shouldn't have. Things I perhaps regret."

"I see," Harris answers. "You've left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you're saying?"

- Yes (turn to [3238](#))
- That's not it (turn to [3097](#))

4838

- The jacket (turn to [3600](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1199](#))

4839

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I've hardly been entirely straight with him. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [504](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2448](#))

4840

“He has? I knew he would. The worm.”

“Steady now. Matters aren’t over yet. There’s still the issue of the component. It hasn’t turned up. He didn’t lead us to it. I guess he figured you must have had something on him. I don’t know.”

He looks quite put out by the whole affair. He is not the kind of man to deal well with ambiguities and probabilities, far preferred the clarity of fact and falsehood.

- Be interested (turn to [343](#))
- Be disinterested (turn to [3858](#))

4841

“I don’t think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he’d need to get word to whoever he’s working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not certain whether he can trust me. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [57](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [1376](#))

4842

“Perhaps Hooper had an accomplice. Someone else who works on site.”

Harris shakes his head, distractedly. “That doesn’t make sense,” he says. “Why go to all the trouble of stealing it only to give it back? And why like this?”

- Suggest something (turn to [4662](#))
- Suggest nothing (turn to [1056](#))

4843

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3590](#))
- The jacket (turn to [2368](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1004](#))

4844

"I certainly don't. But still, I'm surprised. I had Hooper down for a full-blown double agent, a traitor. He knows he'll face the rope, doesn't he?"

"Don't ask me to explain why he did what he did," Harris sighs. "Just be grateful that he did, and you're now off the hook."

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper's confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [3323](#))
- Don't check (turn to [631](#))

4845

Curiouser and curiouser. I nod once to Harris and slip outside into the cold morning air.

Hooper's confession only makes sense in one fashion - if I successfully implied to him that I had him framed, but he did not unpack my little clue well enough to go looking for the component. Well, I had figured him for a more intelligent opponent, but a resignation

from the game will suffice. Or perhaps he knew he would be followed if he went to check, and decided he would be doomed either way.

Of course, however, there is only one way to be certain that Harris is telling the truth, and that is to find a quiet moment and check the breeze-block at the back of Hut 2.

- Check (turn to [4355](#))
- Don't check (turn to [3224](#))

4846

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4702](#))
- Wait (turn to [1575](#))

4847

That is Harris returning. Our little computation here is complete.

That is the true secret of the calculating engine, and the source of its power: not in the components themselves, but in how they are wired together. The diversity of patterns and structures they can form. Much like people - it is how they connect that determines our victories and tragedies, and not their genius.

Which makes me wonder. Should I give up my beautiful young man to them as well as myself?

- Yes (turn to [1252](#))
- No (turn to [4798](#))
- Lie (turn to [1739](#))
- Evade (turn to [3447](#))

4848

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [4224](#))
- Disagree (turn to [607](#))
- Evade (turn to [607](#))

4849

I shake my head violently, to say no, that’s not it, but whatever is wrong with tongue is wrong with neck too. I look across at the table at Harris’ face and realise with a start how sympathetic he is. Such a kind, generous man. How can I hold anything back from him?

I take another mouthful of the bitter, strange-tasting tea before answering.

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [1848](#))
- Disagree (turn to [3260](#))
- Lie (turn to [435](#))

4850

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [2132](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [4681](#))

4851

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Smash the window (turn to [1362](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

4852

“Well, I’m glad his conscience finally caught up with him,” I reply dismissively.

“The Captain went back into that hut and he confessed immediately. We were so surprised we didn’t let you go.” He wrinkles his nose. “I’m rather sorry about that now, but I suppose we’ll let you go now. I suggest you have a wash.”

And with that he gestures to the doorway.

- Go (turn to [4278](#))
- Wait (turn to [2327](#))

4853

From inspiration - or desperation, I am not certain - a simple approach occurs to me. I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper's tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2236](#))

4854

"Tell Hooper I've confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he'll go straight to wherever he's hidden that component and his game will be up."

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

"It's an interesting idea," the Commander muses. "But I'm not so sure he'll be that stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [3998](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [2319](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1246](#))

4855

"Hooper, I'll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn't. But once this is done I'll be rich, and I'll split that with you. I'll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won't hurt the war effort - you know as well

as me that the component on its own is worthless, it's the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that's what's valuable. So how about it?"

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. "You're asking me to commit treason?"

- Yes (turn to [810](#))
- No (turn to [4197](#))
- Lie (turn to [836](#))
- Evade (turn to [836](#))

4856

I nod. "I don't need twelve minutes. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to pass it to Hooper once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [971](#))

4857

"So he's an idiot, and he hid it in his shoe."

"No," Harris replies. "That isn't really what I mean. I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn't the night before. And at the same time, you're sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you've played your last hand and lost. There's no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you."

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [1465](#))

4858

I say nothing. It's true, isn't it? I can't deny that I know there is a world out there, a complicated world of pain and suffering. And I can't deny that I don't think about it a moment longer than I have to. What use is thinking on a problem that cannot be solved? It is precisely our ability to avoid such endless spirals that makes us human and not machine.

"God have mercy on your soul," Harris says finally, as he gets to his feet and heads for the door. "I fear no-one else will." Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4118](#))

4859

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3660](#))
- Something else (turn to [3503](#))

4860

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [3109](#))
- Accept it (turn to [1926](#))
- Evade it (turn to [3299](#))

4861

“When you have eliminated the impossible...” I begin, but Harris cuts me off.

“We are left with two possibilities, quite clearly. You, or Hooper.” The Commander pauses to smooth down his moustache. “Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [2994](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3679](#))

4862

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there’s nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they’re keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [4028](#))

4863

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2106](#))
- Wait (turn to [1080](#))

4864

I leave the cup exactly where it is. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a

multitude of sins. As do you, isn't that correct?"

- Agree (turn to [1588](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2770](#))
- Evade (turn to [786](#))

4865

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It's locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [3667](#))
- Try the window (turn to [2714](#))

4866

"Then you know I'm right. You knew all along. Why did you threaten me?"

"We don't know anything, except that we have a traitor, holding the fate of the country in their hands. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever's going on. You've not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so..." Harris shrugs. "I'm afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical."

- Offer to help (turn to [3386](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [1346](#))

4867

"I don't know."

"You can do better than that. Remember, there's a hangman's noose waiting for traitors."

- Theorise (turn to [2163](#))
- Shrug (turn to [3950](#))

4868

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2459](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4429](#))
- Something else (turn to [161](#))

4869

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we'd never know for certain. We'd have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don't mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don't care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper's pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [531](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

4870

“I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!”

“Assuming I wanted to help you,” he replies, carefully. “Which I don't. What would I do?”

“Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There’s a breeze-block with a cavity. That’s where I’ve put it. I’ll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He’ll be at the south fence around two AM.”

“If you think I’ll do that then you’re crazy,” Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. “I hope that’s the end of it,” he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2506](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2795](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1563](#))

4871

“I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might.”

“Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you’re lying to me.”

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4850](#))

4872

- The jacket (turn to [4755](#))

4873

“There’s nothing to explain,” I reply stiffly. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [237](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [4125](#))

4874

“No, I suppose not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [753](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [94](#))
- Lie (turn to [94](#))

4875

“I’ve done nothing that I’m ashamed of.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [3621](#))

- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

4876

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1441](#))
- No (turn to [2203](#))
- Lie (turn to [2203](#))

4877

“It’s not that bad. I can still fix it.”

Harris shakes his head. “This isn’t a problem to be cracked. This isn’t a puzzle. I’m sorry, but this is bigger than you now. Look. You can go to prison for what you’ve done, or we can change your identity and move you somewhere where your... indiscretions... can’t hurt anyone any more. But right now none of that matters. What happens to you, doesn’t matter. All that matters is where that component is. So I’d like you to tell me, now. Where is it?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [71](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

4878

“So would you,” I reply tartly. Harris raises an eyebrow.

“I’ve been through worse than this,” he replies matter-of-factly. “It’s hardly my fault if

you sleep in your clothes.”

I glare back at him.

He goes over to the window, unlocks it and throws it open, relishing the fresh air from outside. “Hooper’s confessed, you know.”

- Be eager (turn to [908](#))
- Be cautious (turn to [3712](#))

4879

“Then you’d better get searching,” I reply, tiring of his complaining. *A war is a war, you have to expect an enemy.* “It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [319](#))

4880

“That’s exactly it,” I say quietly. “Harris. You understand. There are some things... which can get a man into a lot of trouble. Things one shouldn’t do.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t stiffen. He doesn’t lean away, or remove his hands from the table-top as though my condition might be infectious. I thought they trained them in the army to shoot my kind on sight but he does not.

Of course, he does not offer any sympathy either. He only nods, once. The understanding that has passed between us here is a mere turning cog in his calculations, with no meaning or righteousness to it.

“I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [1486](#))
- Disagree (turn to [521](#))
- Lie (turn to [49](#))

4881

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [2621](#))

4882

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [1551](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- Something else (turn to [454](#))

4883

"There's nothing to explain," I reply stiffly. "I know where your component is because it's obvious where your component is. That doesn't mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I'm a German spy because I can crack their codes."

"Tell me, then," he asks. "What's your theory? You're a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that's saying something. What's your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?"

- Blame no-one (turn to [945](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [121](#))

4884

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [114](#))

4885

- The jacket (turn to [4073](#))

4886

“Yes. Probably under my bunk.”

Harris smiles wryly. “We’ll know that for a fake, then. We’ve looked there already. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [4703](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [3955](#))

4887

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up,

searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [201](#))

4888

“I climbed out of the window overnight,” I explain. “I went and got this from where it was hidden, and brought it back here.”

“This is all too far-fetched,” Harris says. “I’m glad to have this back, but I need to think.”

Getting to his feet, he nods once. “You’ll have to wait a little longer, I’m afraid, Manning.”

Then he steps out of the door, muttering to himself.

- Make your peace (turn to [1020](#))

4889

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won’t help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [216](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1470](#))

4890

“Here at Bletchley? Of course I do”

“Here, now,” Harris replies firmly. “We’re not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on.”

- "I'm fine." (turn to [2230](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [4468](#))
- Be honest (turn to [4468](#))
- Lie (turn to [2230](#))

4891

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [4246](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [2527](#))
- Wait (turn to [3961](#))

4892

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- Something else (turn to [1433](#))

4893

"You treated me like vermin. Like something abhorrent."

"You are something abhorrent."

"I wasn't. Not when I came here. And I won't be, once you're gone."

I get to my feet and open the door of the Hut. The Captain storms back inside and I'm quickly thrown out. Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

“Just be sure to let him out,” I reply. “And then see where he goes.”

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [77](#))

4894

“Quite right,” I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. “Let’s get straight to the point. Do you have the component?” Harris demands. He is sweating slightly - of course: this is his command that’s on the line. “Do you know where it is?”

- "I do." (turn to [1288](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3166](#))
- Lie (turn to [3166](#))
- Evade (turn to [3379](#))

4895

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [1326](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1838](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4376](#))
- Something else (turn to [3967](#))

4896

“Right now, I think you take that role, Harris,” I reply coolly.

“Very droll,” he replies. “Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper’s tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his

shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent.”

- Be interested (turn to [2840](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [4857](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [2097](#))

4897

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4966](#))
- Something else (turn to [2817](#))

4898

“The component?”

“Yes,” Harris replies levelly. “The component.”

“Well, as soon as it went missing the machine started to malfunction. We recognised the discrepancies in our results straight away...”

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3465](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [3586](#))
- Lie (turn to [3465](#))
- Evade (turn to [2741](#))

4899

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we'd been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [1918](#))
- No (turn to [1529](#))
- Lie (turn to [1529](#))

4900

I wait a few minutes, to be sure Hooper and the Captain will have gone, then try the door. It’s locked, all right. I’m not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don’t think I’ll be getting out that way.

- Smash the window (turn to [1233](#))
- Wait (turn to [4688](#))

4901

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3604](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4288](#))

4902

I wait a few minutes, to be sure the Commander will have gone, then try the door. It’s

locked, all right. I'm not really one for picking locks. Never tried it. I don't think I'll be getting out that way.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1098](#))
- Try the window (turn to [576](#))

4903

"Please, Hooper. You don't understand what's at stake. They have information on me. What I've done. I don't need to tell you what I've done, you know. I know you do. And I know you think it's wrong, but please man, have a soul. They were going to ruin me. And the component - it's nothing. It's not the secret of the Bombe, or even of what we're doing here. It's just a part. The German's think it's a weapon - a missile component or a detonator. Let them have it! Please, man. Just help me."

"Help you?" Hooper stares, as I have gone mad. "Help you? You're a traitor, Iain. You're a traitor. A snake in the grass. And you're *queer*."

- Deny it (turn to [4428](#))
- Accept it (turn to [2676](#))
- Evade it (turn to [2247](#))

4904

"I'm looking forward to having a wash and a change of clothes; which should make a little less evil to be around."

"Very droll," he replies. "Let me tell you what happened this morning, and see if it takes the smile off your face. Our men watching Hooper's tent saw Hooper wake up, get dressed, clamber out of his tent and then remark with surprise as, while looking for his shoes, he stumbled on something just at the entrance of his tent."

- Be interested (turn to [27](#))
- Be dismissive (turn to [1285](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [5007](#))

4905

“Tell Hooper I’ve confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he’ll go straight to wherever he’s hidden that component and his game will be up.”

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn’t a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won’t lead them anywhere. But that’s a problem I might be able to solve once I’m out of this place; and once they’re busy, dogging Hooper’s steps from hut to hut.

“It’s an interesting idea,” the Commander muses. “But I’m not so sure he’ll be that stupid. And if he’s already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time.”

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [1018](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [513](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [4990](#))

4906

I open my mouth to disagree, but somehow the words will not come out. It is like Harris has taken a screwdriver to the sides of my jaw. My tongue feels thick and heavy.

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [3331](#))
- That's not it (turn to [4792](#))

4907

It’s useless. There’s nothing I can do but hope. I sit down on one corner of the bunk to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I

watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

- Look out the window (turn to [4591](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [1793](#))
- Wait (turn to [1087](#))

4908

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [1205](#))

4909

I toss the component away into the bushes behind Hooper's tent and return to my barrack, wishing myself a long sleep followed by a morning, free of this business.

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [2861](#))

4910

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2027](#))
- The blanket (turn to [176](#))
- Something else (turn to [4924](#))

4911

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [3089](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- Something else (turn to [228](#))

4912

The weight of the Bombe component safely in my jacket, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up, and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [1418](#))

4913

"Very well then." I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. "No. I passed it on to Hooper."

"I see. And what did he do with it?"

- Evade (turn to [716](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3708](#))
- Lie (turn to [1585](#))

4914

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [78](#))
- The blanket (turn to [104](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2988](#))
- Something else (turn to [3942](#))

4915

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [2338](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4831](#))
- Something else (turn to [2476](#))

4916

"Tell Hooper I've confessed. In fact, better yet, let him see you march me off in handcuffs. Then let him go, and watch him. Ten to one he'll go straight to wherever he's hidden that component and his game will be up."

Harris nods slowly, chewing over the idea. It isn't a bad plan even - except, of course, Hooper has *not* hidden the component, and won't lead them anywhere. But that's a problem I might be able to solve once I'm out of this place; and once they're busy, dogging Hooper's steps from hut to hut.

"It's an interesting idea," the Commander muses. "But I'm not so sure he'll be that stupid. And if he's already passed the part on, well, the whole thing will only be a waste of time."

- "Trust me. He hasn't." (turn to [1283](#))
- "You're right. Let me talk to him." (turn to [1783](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [1246](#))

4917

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [4709](#))

4918

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. I've cracked him a little at least. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [2164](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [385](#))

4919

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [3882](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [1915](#))

4920

“I’d be happy to help,” I answer, sympathetically, leaning forward across the table. “I’m sure there’s something I could do.”

“Like what, exactly?”

- "Put me in with Hooper..." (turn to [510](#))
- "Tell Hooper I've confessed..." (turn to [4547](#))

4921

“An accident, naturally.” I risk a smile. “That damned machine, Harris; it’s made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn’t take more than one fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?”

Harris doesn’t smile. “Do you suppose we haven’t? Do you supposed we haven’t combed every inch of this place already?”

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

“Now,” he continues. “Are you sure there isn’t anything you want to tell me?”

- Tell him (turn to [4306](#))
- Evade (turn to [205](#))

4922

“Awkward,” I reply, sipping at my tea as if we were the best of friends.

His gaze is unexpressive: I’ve seen Harris broad and full of laughter, but today he is rigid, as much part of the military machine as the devices in Hut 5.

“I’m sorry to pull you up so roughly,” he says. “But you know why you’re here, of course.”

- Yes (turn to [3343](#))
- No (turn to [1155](#))
- Evade (turn to [1570](#))
- Lie (turn to [1155](#))

4923

“I suppose so,” I reply. “I’ve certainly done things I regret. Things I shouldn’t have done.”

“I see,” Harris answers. “You’ve left yourself open. To pressure. Is that what you’re saying?”

- Yes (turn to [2862](#))
- No (turn to [2733](#))
- Evade (turn to [86](#))
- That's not it (turn to [2808](#))

4924

- The jacket (turn to [1065](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3964](#))

4925

Morning comes with the call of a rooster from the yard of the House. I must have slept after all. I pull myself up off the bunk, shivering slightly. There is condensation on the inside of the window. I have probably given myself a chill.

It’s not long after that Harris enters the hut. He closes the door behind him, careful as ever, then takes a chair across from me.

“You smell like a dog,” he remarks.

- Be optimistic (turn to [3812](#))
- Be pessimistic (turn to [3025](#))

4926

“Explain what you should be doing, do you mean, rather than bullying me? Certainly.” I fold my arms. “I know where your component is because it’s obvious where your component is. That doesn’t mean I took it, just because I can figure out a simple problem, any more than it means I’m a German spy because I can crack their codes.”

“Tell me, then,” he asks. “What’s your theory? You’re a smart fellow - as smart as they come around here, and that’s saying something. What’s your opinion on the missing component? Accident, perhaps? Or do you blame one of the other men? Hooper?”

- Blame no-one (turn to [5016](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [46](#))

4927

I let him have his rant. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [67](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4348](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4340](#))

4928

“Very well then.” I swallow nervously, to make it look more genuine. “No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [1064](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [777](#))
- Lie (turn to [5026](#))

4929

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4555](#))
- The blanket (turn to [902](#))
- Something else (turn to [3734](#))

4930

"I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander," I reply with a sneer. "They don't train you to think in the Armed Forces."

"Talk," Harris demands. "Talk, now. Tell me where you've hidden it or who you've passed it to. Or God help me, but I'll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?"

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [893](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [1973](#))

4931

"He's petty enough, certainly. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [4894](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [4794](#))
- Lie (turn to [4794](#))

4932

I peer out of the window, but it looks out onto the little brook at the back of the compound, with no view of the other huts or the House. Who knows if there are men up, searching the base of Hut 2, following one another with flashlights...

The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [1598](#))

4933

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3756](#))
- No (turn to [511](#))
- Lie (turn to [3756](#))

4934

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [3977](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [4600](#))
- Lie (turn to [3977](#))
- Evade (turn to [3183](#))

4935

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [1808](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [3178](#))
- Confess (turn to [1513](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [1435](#))

4936

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [1993](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3102](#))

4937

“I don’t know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer.”

“This is time of war,” Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. “And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?”

There’s an icy silence. He’s angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

“Now, drink your tea and talk.”

- Take the cup (turn to [4054](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3911](#))

4938

“All right,” he declares, gruffly. “We’ll try it. But if this doesn’t work, I might just put the both of you in front of a firing squad and be done with these games. Worse things happen in time of war, you know.”

“Alone,” I add.

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

Harris considers it. I watch his eyes, flicking backwards and forwards over mine, like a ribbon-reader trying to load in its program.

- "Well?" (turn to [4143](#))
- "For God's sake, man, what do you have to lose?" (turn to [2414](#))

4939

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Smash the window (turn to [2901](#))
- Wait (turn to [566](#))

4940

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [641](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3877](#))
- Something else (turn to [660](#))

4941

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. I've cracked him a little at least. He's angry at my slippery answers. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [4821](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [4000](#))

4942

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [1600](#))

- Smash the window (turn to [2484](#))
- Wait (turn to [4624](#))

4943

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [3854](#))
- No (turn to [1485](#))
- Lie (turn to [1485](#))

4944

“We’re still in ear-shot if they let Hooper go. Best get us inside and then we can talk, if we must.”

“I’ve had enough of your voice for one day,” Harris replies grimly. He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2216](#))
- Try the door (turn to [4739](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [4657](#))

4945

“All right. I’ll tell you what happened.” And never mind my shame, I think.

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [481](#))
- No (turn to [2599](#))
- Lie (turn to [3635](#))

4946

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

But I am no traitor. At least, not to my country. To my sex, perhaps. But how could I support the Reich? If it were to come to power, I would be worse off than under the already dire circumstances of my existence.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [3348](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [1990](#))

4947

“Then let him think he's off the hook. Make a show of me. And then you'll get your man.”

Somehow, I think. But that's the part I need to work.

Harris gets to his feet. “All right,” he says. “I should no better than to trust a clever man, but we'll give it a go.” Then, he smiles, with all his teeth, like a wolf. “Especially since this is a plan that involves keeping you in handcuffs. I don't see what I have to lose.”

He raps on the door for the guard and gives the man a quick instruction. He returns a

moment later with a cool pair of iron cuffs.

“Put ‘em up,” Harris instructs, and I do so. The metal closes around my wrists like a trap. I stand and follow Harris willingly out through the door.

But whatever I’m doing with my body, my mind is scheming. *Somehow*, I’m thinking, *I have to get away from these men long enough to get that component behind Hut 2 and put it somewhere Hooper will go. Or, otherwise, somehow get Hooper to go there himself...*

Harris marches me over to Hut 3, and gestures for the guard to stand aside. Pushing me forward, he opens the door nice and wide.

“Captain. Manning talked. If you’d step out for a moment?”

- Play the part, head down (turn to [3607](#))
- Look inside the hut (turn to [3438](#))
- Call to Hooper (turn to [207](#))

4948

I creep forward to the tent, intent on lifting the zip to the front porch area just a little - enough to slip the component inside, and without the risk of the noise waking Hooper from his snoring.

The work is careful, and more than little fiddly - Hooper has tied the zips down on the inside, the fastidious little bastard! - but after a little work I manage to make a hole large enough for my hand.

- Slip in the component (turn to [2397](#))
- No, some other way (turn to [2658](#))

4949

“No. I have no idea.”

He’s talking about the missing reel from the Bombe. Russell discovered it this afternoon when the machine began producing strange results. We were all in the Hut when it happened and it had been in place when we sat down to work. The conclusions had been obvious to all four of us immediately, but had gone undiscussed, even after the empty socket was located, the wiring torn on either side.

“Lucky these things are easy to replace,” Russell had remarked, and that had been that. We had stopped work, sent out for a new part to be machined. And drunk our tea and watched each other.

“Come now,” Harris says, quite the reasonable gent. “As I told you. We’re not interviewing everyone. Only you. So. I think you can be a little more forthcoming.”

- "I know nothing." (turn to [2762](#))
- "I know where it is." (turn to [1171](#))
- Lie (turn to [2762](#))
- Evade (turn to [3547](#))

4950

It’s no good. Nothing I can do will be any less than obvious - something appearing where something was not there before. The men watching Hooper will know it is a deception and Hooper’s protestations will be taken at face value.

If I can’t find a way for Hooper to pick the component up, as if from a hiding place of his own devising, and be caught doing it, then I have no plan at all.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [4912](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))
- Toss the component into the bushes (turn to [4395](#))

4951

“You want me to tell you what happened? You’ll be disgusted, I’m quite sure.”

“I can imagine how it starts,” he growls.

“There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn’t true. That got me wondering if he wasn’t one of us.”

Harris is not letting me off any more. “You seriously considered that possibility?”

- Yes (turn to [4156](#))

- No (turn to [1910](#))
- Lie (turn to [2314](#))

4952

“I was quite certain, after a while. After we’d been talking. He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [485](#))
- No (turn to [1023](#))
- Lie (turn to [1023](#))

4953

The blanket. Perfect. I scoop it up off the bed and hold it in place over the window. This should do it. Then I heft the bucket - this really is quite a fiddly thing to be doing, and I need far longer arms, especially in cuffs - and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it’s Harris’ face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I’m ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won’t help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [4044](#))
- Slip out (turn to [3069](#))

4954

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn’t be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [2543](#))
- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- Something else (turn to [1854](#))

4955

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3232](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2920](#))
- Something else (turn to [2673](#))

4956

"I know nothing about it." My voice is shaking with anger as I try to speak. I'm not accustomed to facing off against the Commander - against any man with a gun in his holster. "I don't know what gives you the right to pick on me. I demand a lawyer."

"This is time of war," Harris answers. His tone of voice has fallen down into darkness. "And by God, if I have to shoot you to recover the component or stop it falling into the wrong hands, I will, do you understand me?"

There's an icy silence. He's angry. He waves an impetuous hand across the field table.

"Now, drink your tea and talk."

- Take the cup (turn to [1045](#))
- Don't take the cup (turn to [3008](#))

4957

Satisfied, I return the short way up the paths between the huts to the barrack block and the broken window.

It's a little harder getting back through - the window is higher off the ground than the floor inside - but after a decent bit of jumping and hauling I manage to get my elbows up,

and then one leg, and finally I collapse inside, quite winded and out breath.

- Wait (turn to [375](#))

4958

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3244](#))
- The blanket (turn to [134](#))
- The pillow (turn to [1942](#))
- Something else (turn to [1277](#))

4959

I set the cup carefully down on the table once more. “Why?” I ask coldly. “What’s in it?”

“Lapsang Souchong,” he remarks, placing his own cup down on the table with a clink. “Such a curious flavour. It might almost not be tea at all. You might say it hides a multitude of sins. As do you, isn’t that correct?”

- Agree (turn to [2056](#))
- Disagree (turn to [649](#))
- Evade (turn to [649](#))

4960

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a bucket. It’s rather like the sledgehammer for the proverbial nut.

- Just do it (turn to [1810](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [3502](#))

4961

“No. I passed it on to Hooper.”

“I see. And what did he do with it?”

- Evade (turn to [4322](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [3609](#))
- Lie (turn to [791](#))

4962

“No, Harris. The young man wasn’t blackmailing me.” I take a deep breath. “It was Hooper.”

“Now look here,” Harris interrupts. “Don’t start that again.”

“It’s the truth, Harris. If I’m going to jail, then so be it, but I won’t hang at Traitor’s Gate. Hooper was the one who told the boy about our work. Hooper put the boy on to me. I should have realised, of course. These things don’t happen by chance. I was a fool to think they might. And then, once he had me compromised, he demanded I steal the part from the machine.”

“Which you did.” Harris leans forward. “And then what? You still have it? You put it somewhere?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [1718](#))
- Lie (turn to [1718](#))
- Evade (turn to [4800](#))

4963

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better

without. Now I'll ask you again. Did you hide the component?"

- Yes (turn to [1185](#))
- No (turn to [2634](#))
- Lie (turn to [2634](#))
- Evade (turn to [3681](#))

4964

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [3599](#))
- Something else (turn to [1854](#))

4965

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [1298](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2473](#))

4966

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The blanket (turn to [81](#))
- Something else (turn to [2817](#))

4967

I suppose my fist would do a good enough job. But I'd cut myself to ribbons, most likely. And the noise would be terrible. There must be a way of making this easier. I'm supposed to be a thief now. What would a burglar do?

- Work slowly (turn to [2240](#))
- Find something to help (turn to [4198](#))

4968

"I'm not saying anything of the sort," I snap back. "What is this, Harris? You're accusing me of treachery but I don't see a shred of evidence for it! Why don't you put your cards on the table?"

"It's simple enough," Harris replies. "I've seen the same story a hundred times before," he says. "A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn't go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That's the story, isn't it? You took things too far, and then you couldn't take them back. And now they have you."

- Agree (turn to [2049](#))
- Disagree (turn to [1292](#))
- Lie (turn to [202](#))

4969

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [1735](#))

4970

Let me see. There's the bunk, a bucket, nothing else. I have my jacket but nothing in the

pockets - no handkerchief, for instance.

- The bunk (turn to [3960](#))
- The jacket (turn to [1065](#))
- The bucket (turn to [3053](#))

4971

“And the other men? Do we have a hut each? Surely there aren’t enough senior officers to go round.”

“Collins and Humph were outside when the theft occurred. Everyone confirms that,” Harris replies. “That leaves you, Hooper, and the other two, who vouch for each other and frankly I’m inclined to believe them. But that’s all we know. No-one here is in the business of guessing, you know that. Our business is to decode. To get to the bottom of whatever’s going on. You’ve not placed yourself beyond suspicion and until you do so...” Harris shrugs. “I’m afraid I have fewer and fewer choices as time goes on. If that component has left these grounds then every minute is critical.”

- Offer to help (turn to [162](#))
- Offer nothing (turn to [403](#))

4972

“Or be thrown into the river.”

“Hmm.” Harris chews his moustache thoughtfully. “Well, that would put us in a spot, seeing as how we’d never know for certain. We’d have to be ready to change our whole approach just in case the part had got through to the Germans. I don’t mind telling you, this is a disaster, this whole thing. What I want is to find that little bit of mechanical trickery anywhere. I don’t care where. In your luncheon box or under Hooper’s pillow, whatever. Just somewhere, and within the grounds of this place.”

- "Then let him he think he's off the hook." (turn to [1582](#))
- "Then you'd better get searching." (turn to [4879](#))

4973

Making a wide circuit I creep around the tent. It has plenty of other flaps and openings, tied down with Gordian complexity. But nothing afford itself to slipping the component inside.

- Try the porch zip (turn to [1816](#))
- Try on top of the tent (turn to [1099](#))
- Give up (turn to [3500](#))

4974

I settle down to wait.

Night falls. The clockwork of the heavens keeps turning, whatever state I might be in. No-one can steal the components that make the sun go down and the stars come out. I watch it performing its operations. I can't sleep.

Has Hooper taken my bait?

- Look of out the window (turn to [367](#))
- Listen at the door (turn to [703](#))
- Wait (turn to [2681](#))

4975

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the door (turn to [846](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3292](#))

4976

I hang back a moment. Something does not seem quite right. After all, Hooper did not steal the component. He has no reason to confess to anything. Perhaps this is another

trap?

“Well?” Harris asks. “What are you waiting for? Please don’t tell me *you* want to confess now as well, I don’t think my head could stand it.”

- Confess (turn to [3593](#))
- Don't confess (turn to [1546](#))

4977

“I can’t remember.”

He draws his gun and lays it lightly on the field table.

“I’m sorry to threaten you, friend. But His Majesty needs that brain of yours, and that brain alone. There are plenty of other parts to you that our country could do better without. Now I’ll ask you again. Did you hide the component?”

- Yes (turn to [1636](#))
- No (turn to [3888](#))
- Lie (turn to [3888](#))
- Evade (turn to [2150](#))

4978

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is a shoe.

- Just do it (turn to [1156](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [586](#))

4979

I head on around the back of the hut. The breeze-block with the cavity is on the left side.

- Check (turn to [1844](#))

- Look around (turn to [4727](#))

4980

“All right.” With a sigh, your defiance collapses. “If you’ve searched my things then I suppose you’ve found my letters. Haven’t you? In fact, if you haven’t, don’t tell me.”

Harris nods once. “I’ve seen the same story a hundred times before,” he says. “A young man like yourself - clever, somewhat removed from the world. The kind that doesn’t go to parties, you might say. Who takes himself a little too seriously, perhaps. Takes things too far. Further than a man should allow a thing to go. That’s the story, isn’t it? You took things too far, and then you couldn’t take them back. And now they have you.”

- Agree (turn to [4596](#))
- Disagree (turn to [2648](#))
- Lie (turn to [2530](#))

4981

“Well?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [1729](#))
- No (turn to [387](#))
- Lie (turn to [1729](#))

4982

“For God’s sake, man, what do you have to lose?”

“We’ll be outside the door,” Harris replies, seriously. “The first sign of any funny business and we’ll have you both on the floor in minutes. You understand? The country needs your brain, but it’s not too worried about your legs. Remember that.”

Then he gets to his feet, and opens the door, and marches me out and across the yard. The evening is drawing in and there’s a chill in the air. My mind is racing. I have one opportunity here - a moment in which to put the fear of God into Hooper and make him do something foolish to place himself in harm’s way. But how to achieve it?

“You ready?” Harris demands.

- Yes (turn to [3662](#))
- No (turn to [3122](#))
- Lie (turn to [3662](#))

4983

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I’m not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you’re of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There’s nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you’ve done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It’s your choice.”

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2846](#))
- Confess (turn to [259](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1410](#))

4984

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn’t lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn’t do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [3480](#))
- Something else (turn to [331](#))

4985

It's no good. That's only half a solution. I couldn't be happy with that.

- Back to the barracks (turn to [3885](#))
- To Hooper's dorm (turn to [4804](#))

4986

"I still have it. Not on me, of course. The missing component of the Bombe computer is hidden in a small cavity in a breeze-block supporting the left rear post of Hut 2. I put in there anticipating a search. I intended to dispose of it once the fuss had died down. I suppose I was foolish to think that it might."

"Indeed you were. And, Mr Manning: God help you if you're lying to me."

Harris stands, and slips away smartly. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4079](#))

4987

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [4761](#))
- Try the door (turn to [117](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3894](#))

4988

“If I wanted to escape, I would have made damn sure that I could,” I tell him sternly.

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3958](#))
- Confess (turn to [563](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1544](#))

4989

“Just adding to the drama,” I tell him, confidently. “I’m sure you can understand that.”

“I think we’ve had enough drama today already,” Harris replies. “Let’s hope for a clean kill.”

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It’s all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I’m mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [4891](#))

4990

“You’re right.” I shake my head. “You’re right. I don’t see how I can help you after all. So, there’s only one conclusion.”

“Oh, yes? And what’s that?”

“It’s your problem. Your security breach. So much for your careful vetting process.” I lean back in my chair and fold my arms so the way they shake will not be visible. “You’d better get on with solving it, instead of wasting your time in here with me.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [319](#))

4991

I pause for a moment longer. It doesn’t do to be too careless...

Then the door locks turns. The door opens. Then Jeremy - one of the guards, rather - sticks his head through the door. “I thought I heard...”

He stops. Looks for a moment. Sees the bucket in my hand. Then without a moment’s further thought he blows his shrill whistles and hustles into the hut, grabbing me roughly by my arms.

I’ll never know if I hadn’t have waited that extra moment - maybe I still could have got away. But, how far?

I’m hustled into one of the huts. Nowhere to sleep, but they’re not interested in my comfort any longer. Harris comes in with the Captain.

“So,” Harris remarks. “Looks like your little trap worked. Only it worked to show *you* out for what you are.”

- Tell the truth (turn to [4718](#))
- Lie (turn to [3728](#))
- Evade (turn to [4420](#))

4992

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [3070](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1518](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2274](#))
- Something else (turn to [1798](#))

4993

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- The pillow (turn to [2534](#))
- Something else (turn to [1433](#))

4994

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4384](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2146](#))
- Something else (turn to [368](#))

4995

"I wouldn't put it past him. He's a creep." I wipe a hand across my forehead. "All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he's been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn't be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled."

"We don't court-martial civilians," Harris replies. "Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty's pleasure."

- "Quite right." (turn to [1041](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [1133](#))
- Lie (turn to [1133](#))

4996

I slip off my jacket and hold it with one hand over the glass. This should do it. Then I heft back my arm, and take a strong swing, trying to imagine it's Harris' face on the other side.

The sound of the impact is muffled. With my arm still covered, I sweep out the remaining glass in the frame. I'm ready to escape. The only trouble is - when they look in on me in the morning, there will be no question what has happened. It won't help me one jot with shifting suspicion off my back.

- Wait (turn to [3335](#))
- Slip out (turn to [1241](#))

4997

"I'm not trying to do anything except save my neck."

"Let's hope things work out," Harris agrees darkly.

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [2972](#))
- Try the door (turn to [1568](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [31](#))

4998

There is nothing I can do to speed up time. The night draws on at its own pace. I suppose by morning I will know my fate.

- Wait (turn to [552](#))

4999

“I can imagine how being surrounded by clever men is pretty threatening for you, Commander,” I reply with a sneer. “They don’t train you to think in the Armed Forces.”

“Talk,” Harris demands. “Talk, now. Tell me where you’ve hidden it or who you’ve passed it to. Or God help me, but I’ll take your wretched *pansy* body to pieces looking for it, do you understand me?”

His eyes bore into me like drill-bits.

- Tell him (turn to [1648](#))
- Blame someone (turn to [2467](#))

5000

“I’ll talk to him.”

“What?”

“Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague.”

Harris shakes his head. “He despises you, doesn’t he? I don’t see why he’d give himself up to you.”

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [116](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2458](#))

5001

“I’m sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side

of the compound. He's probably passed it on already. You'll have to ask him."

Harris harrumphs. He's thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [2004](#))

5002

"Just adding to the drama," I tell him, confidently. "I'm sure you can understand that."

"I think we've had enough drama today already," Harris replies. "Let's hope for a clean kill."

He hustles me up the steps of the barracks, keeping me firmly gripped as if I had any chance of giving him, a trained military man, the slip. It's all I can do not to fall into the room.

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. I can only hope that Hooper bites on my baited hook. If he thinks I'm mad and bitter enough to have framed him somehow, and arrogant enough to have taunted him with a clue to where the damning evidence is hidden... if he hates me enough, and is paranoid enough, then he might unravel my little riddle and go searching around Hut 2.

Thinking back, I should have wrapped the part from the Bombe in one of his shirts before hiding it, that would have been a clever move. I really do make a terrible spy.

- Wait (turn to [2052](#))

5003

There is nothing to be gained here. I have the component now; maybe it will be of some value tomorrow.

- Return to my barrack (turn to [990](#))
- Escape the compound (turn to [4327](#))

5004

“Queen to rook two, checkmate!” I call, then laugh viciously, as if I am damning him straight to hell.

I only catch Hooper’s reaction for a moment - his eyebrow lifts in surprise and alarm. Good. If he thinks it is a threat then he just might be careless enough to go looking for what it might mean.

The Captain comes outside, pulling the door to. “What’s this?” he asks. “A confession? Just like that?”

“No,” the Commander admits, in a low voice. “I’m afraid not. Rather more a scheme. The idea is to let Hooper go and see what he does. If he believes we have Manning here in irons, he’ll try to shift the component.”

“If he has it.”

“Indeed.”

The Captain peers at me for a moment, like I was some kind of curious insect.

“Sometimes, I think you people are magicians,” he remarks. “Other times you seem more like witches. Very well.”

With that he opens the door to the Hut and goes back inside. The Commander uses the moment to hustle me roughly forward.

“And what was all that shouting about?” he hisses in my ear as we move towards the barracks. “Are you trying to pull something? Or just make me look incompetent?”

- Reassure (turn to [5002](#))
- Dissuade (turn to [4123](#))
- Evade (turn to [2232](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [3939](#))

5005

“Ask the others,” I reply, leaning back. “They’ll tell you. If they haven’t already, that’s only because they’re protecting Hooper. Hoping he’ll come to his senses and stop being an idiot. I hope he does too. And if you lock him up in a freezing hut like you’ve done me, I’m sure he will.”

“We have,” Harris replies simply.

It’s all I can do not to gape.

“Hooper’s in Hut 3 with the Captain, having a similar conversation.”

- "And the other men?" (turn to [1153](#))
- "Then you know I'm right." (turn to [3174](#))

5006

Work carefully? It’s difficult to work carefully when all one’s has is nothing but brute force.

- Just do it (turn to [584](#))
- Look around for something (turn to [326](#))

5007

I say quiet, listening, not sure how this will go.

“In case I’m not making myself clear,” Harris continues, “I mean, he managed to find it, by accident, somewhere where it wasn’t the night before. And at the same time, you’re sitting here with your window broken. So, I rather think you’ve played your last hand and lost. There’s no way Hooper stole that component and then just left it lying around in the doorway of his tent. No way at all. So I came to tell you that the game is up for you.”

He nods and gets to his feet. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [2080](#))

5008

I go over to the window and try to jimmy it open. Not much luck, but in my struggling I notice this window only backs on the thin little brook that runs down the back of the

compound. Which means, if I smashed it, I might get away with no-one seeing.

From outside, I hear a voice. Hooper's. He's haranguing someone, for something.

- Listen at the keyhole (turn to [300](#))
- Try the door (turn to [676](#))
- Smash the window (turn to [3692](#))

5009

"Here at Bletchley? Of course I do"

"Here, now," Harris replies firmly. "We're not talking to everyone, you understand. I can imagine you might feel pretty sore about that, old man. I can imagine you feeling picked on. You always were a sensitive soul."

- "I'm fine." (turn to [4663](#))
- "Damn right." (turn to [4349](#))
- Be honest (turn to [4349](#))
- Lie (turn to [4663](#))

5010

"Very well. I see there's no point in covering up. You know everything anyway."

Harris nods, and waits for me to continue.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3201](#))
- No (turn to [2958](#))
- Lie (turn to [282](#))

5011

“Quite terrible. I would never have guessed.”

“Well.” Russell harrumphs. “Quince was saying this morning, apparently his grandfather was German. So perhaps it’s to be expected. See you there?”

I wave to him and move away, my thoughts turning to the young man in the village. My lover. My contact. My blackmailer. Hooper may have taken the fall for the missing component, but if it was his recovering it from Hut 2 then I have nothing to sell to save my reputation, if I have any left.

If he didn’t, of course, and Harris was telling the truth about his sudden confession, then I will be able to buy my freedom once and for all.

- Get the component (turn to [1123](#))
- Leave it (turn to [2172](#))
- Act normal (turn to [3716](#))

5012

I shift in my seat. “Not really. The boy was a simpleton, obviously. My intellectual inferior. His good opinion meant nothing to be. Harris, please do not misunderstand me. I was simply after his body.”

Harris, to his credit, doesn’t flinch. Well, perhaps not: but he’ll have nightmares of this moment tonight. I’m almost tempted to reach out and try to take his hand to worsen it for him, but I hold back.

“Go on with your confession,” he replies. I shrug.

“There’s not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn’t.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [1237](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [1237](#))

5013

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The jacket (turn to [4802](#))

5014

"I don't think Hooper could have planned this in advance. So he'd need to get word to whoever he's working with, and that would take time. So I think he would have hidden it somewhere, and be waiting to make sure I soundly take the fall. That way, if anything goes wrong, he can arrange for the part to be conveniently re-found."

"Makes sense," Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he's still not certain whether he can trust me. "Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?"

- Offer to help (turn to [3763](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

5015

"Quite right," I answer smartly.

He stares back at me. "Let's get straight to the point. Do you have the component?" Harris demands. "Do you know where it is?"

- "I do." (turn to [737](#))
- "I don't." (turn to [3921](#))
- Lie (turn to [3921](#))
- Evade (turn to [1310](#))

5016

"An accident, naturally." I risk a smile. "That damned machine, Harris; it's made from spare parts and string. Even these huts leak when it rains. It wouldn't take more than one

fellow to trip over a cable to shake out a component and have it roll away across the floor. Have you tried looking under the thing?"

Harris doesn't smile. "Do you suppose we haven't? Do you supposed we haven't combed every inch of this place already?"

In a sudden moment I understand that his reply is a threat.

"Now," he continues. "Are you sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?"

- Tell him (turn to [3006](#))
- Evade (turn to [3339](#))

5017

I put my ear down to the keyhole, but there's nothing now. Probably still a guard outside, of course, but they're keeping mum.

- Try the window (turn to [1161](#))

5018

"I'll talk to him."

"What?"

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [2302](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [963](#))

5019

The pillow is fat and fluffy. I could put it over the window and it would muffle the sound

of breaking glass, certainly; but I wouldn't be able to break any glass through it either.

- The frame (turn to [4389](#))
- The blanket (turn to [1309](#))
- Something else (turn to [3677](#))

5020

The bucket? Hardly. The bucket might do some good if I wanted to sweep up the glass afterwards, but it won't help me smash the glass quietly.

- The bunk (turn to [587](#))
- The jacket (turn to [3281](#))

5021

"All right. I'll tell you what happened." And never mind my shame, I think.

"I can imagine how it starts," he growls.

"There was a young man, Harris. I met him in the town. A few months ago now. We got to talking - not about work, you understand. I said I was an accountant for a firm, just as I was supposed to. Although he seemed to know that wasn't true. That got me wondering if he wasn't one of us."

Harris is not letting me off any more. "You seriously considered that possibility?"

- Yes (turn to [3226](#))
- No (turn to [1163](#))
- Lie (turn to [1194](#))

5022

The frame is heavy and solid. I couldn't lift it or shift it without help from another man. And it wouldn't do me any good here anyway. I can reach the window perfectly well.

- The blanket (turn to [1728](#))
- Something else (turn to [4457](#))

5023

“No. Not for more than a moment, of course. Everyone here is marked out by how little we would be willing to say about it.”

“Only you told this young man more than a little, didn’t you?”

I nod. “He seemed to know all about me. He... he indicated he was quite enchanted by my achievements.”

The way Harris is staring at me I almost expect him to strike me, but he does not. He replies, “I can see how that must have been attractive to you,” with such plain-spokenness I almost have to ask him to repeat it.

Of course, there is no-one else in the hut to hear the remark. He will no doubt deny it later.

- Yes (turn to [794](#))
- No (turn to [1991](#))
- Lie (turn to [1991](#))

5024

“No, of course not.” I push the teacup around on its base. “All I can say is, ever since I arrived here, he’s been looking to ways to bring me down a peg. I wouldn’t be surprised if he set this whole affair up just to have me court-martialled.”

“We don’t court-martial civilians,” Harris replies. “Traitors are simply hung at her Majesty’s pleasure.”

- "Quite right." (turn to [577](#))
- "I'm no traitor." (turn to [3439](#))
- Lie (turn to [3439](#))

5025

The bunk has a solid metal frame, a blanket, a pillow, nothing more.

- The frame (turn to [173](#))
- The blanket (turn to [2626](#))
- The pillow (turn to [4882](#))
- Something else (turn to [454](#))

5026

“I’m sure I saw him this evening, talking to someone by the fence on the woodland side of the compound. He’s probably passed it on already. You’ll have to ask him.”

Harris harrumphs. He’s thinking it all over.

- Wait (turn to [3345](#))

5027

“Hooper, I’ll make a deal with you. We both know what happened in that hut this afternoon. I know because I did it, and you know because you know you didn’t. But once this is done I’ll be rich, and I’ll split that with you. I’ll let you have the results, too. Your name on the discovery of the Bombe. And it won’t hurt the war effort - you know as well as me that the component on its own is worthless, it’s the wiring of the Bombe, the usage, that’s what’s valuable. So how about it?”

Hooper looks back at me, appalled. “You’re asking me to commit treason?”

- Yes (turn to [440](#))
- No (turn to [3443](#))
- Lie (turn to [4282](#))
- Evade (turn to [4282](#))

5028

"I'm no traitor, damn it. You *know* I'm not. How much work have I done here? Against the Germans? Cracking their codes? Understanding their secrets? I've given it my all! And you know as well as I do, if the Reich were to invade, I would be a dead man for being what I am. So please, Hooper. I'm not doing any of this lightly. But I'm in a jam!"

"Assuming I wanted to help you," he replies, carefully. "Which I don't. What would I do?"

"Nothing. Almost nothing.

All you have to do is go to the back of Hut 2. There's a breeze-block with a cavity. That's where I've put it. I'll be locked up overnight, I should think. But you can pick it up and pass it to my contact. He'll be at the south fence around two AM."

"If you think I'll do that then you're crazy," Hooper replies.

At that moment the door flies open and the Captain comes storming back inside.

Harris hustles me over to the barracks. "I hope that's the end of it," he mutters as he pushes me up the steps.

"Just be sure to let him out," I reply. "And then see where he goes."

And then they slam the door shut, and it locks. How am I supposed to manage anything from in here?

- Wait (turn to [3577](#))
- Try the door (turn to [2550](#))
- Try the windows (turn to [1958](#))

5029

"I'll talk to him."

"What?"

"Put me in with Hooper. Maybe I can get something useful out of him. As his colleague."

Harris shakes his head. "He despises you, doesn't he? I don't see why he'd give himself up to you."

- "Try me. Just me and him." (turn to [4669](#))
- "You're right." (turn to [2148](#))

5030

“No,” Harris declares, finally. “I think you’re lying about Hooper. I think you’re a clever, scheming young man - that’s why we hired you - and you’re looking for the only reasonable out this situation has to offer. But I’m not taking it. We know you were in the room with the machine, we know you’re of a perverted persuasion, we know you have compromised yourself. There’s nothing more to say here. Either you tell me what you’ve done with that component, or we will hang you and search just as hard. It’s your choice.”

He gets to his feet, and gathers his gloves from the table top.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [3941](#))
- Confess (turn to [2683](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [399](#))

5031

- The jacket (turn to [4073](#))
- The bucket (turn to [1566](#))

5032

“Well, then,” I answer, nervously. “What would he do? Either get rid of it straight away - or if that wasn’t possible, which it probably wouldn’t be, since he’d have to arrange things with his contacts - so most likely, he’d hide it somewhere and wait, until you had the rope around my neck and he could be sure he was safe.”

“Makes sense,” Harris agrees, cautiously. I can see he’s still not entirely convinced by my tale, as well he might not be - I’ve hardly been entirely straight with him. “Which means the question is, what can we do to rat him out?”

- Offer to help (turn to [2576](#))
- Don't offer to help (turn to [2258](#))

5033

I have no God to make peace with. I find it difficult to believe in goodness of any kind, in a world such as this.

I have no place here. No way to fit. I am the intercept - caught, in the middle, cryptic and understood only thinly, through devices and machines.

- You seem very calm (turn to [613](#))
- You should try to escape! (turn to [2121](#))

5034

“So would you after the night I’ve had.”

“Well, I’m afraid it is going to get worse for you,” Harris replies soberly. “We followed Hooper, and he took himself neatly to bed and slept like a boy scout. Which puts us back to square one, and you firmly in the frame. And I’m afraid I don’t have time for any more games. I want you to tell me where that component is, or we will hang you as a traitor.”

He passes a hand across his eyes with a long look of despair.

“I’m going to go outside and organise a rope. That’ll take about twelve minutes. That’s how long you have to decide.”

- Protest (turn to [2734](#))
- Stay silent (turn to [1505](#))
- Confess (turn to [1914](#))
- Frame Hooper (turn to [3899](#))

5035

“Yes. Something like that. It’s a very lonely life otherwise. And the work we do - well. It only makes it worse. There’s barely a moment to oneself.”

“That’s how it is in the Service,” Harris answers. “I know you didn’t sign up for it but, well. There’s plenty of other men who didn’t who are serving now, too. Now, go on with

your confession.”

That gives me pause, for a moment. I hadn't thought of it as such. But I suppose that's what this is. I am about to admit what I did, after all.

“There's not much else to say. I took the part from Bombe computing device. You seem to know that already. I had to. He was going to expose me if I didn't.”

“This young man was blackmailing you over your affair?”

As Harris speaks I find myself suddenly sharply aware, as if waking from a long sleep. The table, the corrugated walls of the hut, everything seems suddenly more tangible than a moment before. *Perhaps whatever it was they put in my drink is wearing off?*

- Say yes (turn to [12](#))
- No, that's not right (turn to [4442](#))
- Tell the truth (turn to [12](#))
- Lie (turn to [4442](#))

5036

Of course not. I am alone; that is what they wanted me to be, because of who and what I love. So I have no nation, no country.

“I'm afraid we have only one option, Manning,” Harris says. “Please, man. Tell us where the component is.”

- Tell them (turn to [1347](#))
- Say nothing (turn to [4185](#))

5037

“Really, Commander,” I reply. “It rather sounds like you want to spank me.”

“For God's sake,” he declares with thick disgust, then swoops away out of the room. Then the door closes. I am alone again, as I have been for most of my short life.

- Make your peace (turn to [4118](#))

