



## Scilly Questions

Beth had heard about the missing helicopter on the news. It disappeared off the south-western **tip** of England on the day of the tennis finals at Wimbledon. One of the three passengers in the helicopter was Susan Sullivan, wife of the well-known American businessman Daniel Sullivan. Consequently, the accident had received almost as much **coverage** as England's first significant win on the centre court since the year 1977

Police **divers** found a suitcase and some life jackets floating in the water the next day. Blood on what was left of one of the jackets indicated that the helicopter had crashed. It was concluded that all of the passengers had been killed, so public interest in the story soon **dwindled**.

Understandably, Beth did not immediately make the connection when on a Monday morning two weeks later Daniel Sullivan phoned and asked if he could come over to her office near London's Tower Bridge. In fact, she had only just worked out who he was when her secretary showed the American into her office twenty minutes later.

He held out an enormous hand. "Elizabeth Wilkins?"

"Yes," Beth answered as she shook his hand. "It is nice and, I



<b>tip</b>	Spitze
<b>coverage</b>	Bericht- erstattung
<b>diver</b>	Taucher
<b>to dwindle</b>	schwinden



in person	persönlich
private investigation firm	privates Ermittlungsunternehmen
I'm to tell you	ich soll Ihnen ausrichten

must admit, very surprising to meet you **in person**, Mr Sullivan. Please sit down."

Dan Sullivan smiled briefly. "I see you're wondering why I contacted you."

"Well, yes, actually it does seem a little strange, considering how many big **private investigation firms** would be delighted to have you as a client," answered Beth.

"I'm friends with your old boss, Bill Simmons, at Scotland Yard. When I told him I was looking for a private investigator, he told me you were the best he knew. He said **I'm to tell you** that he is still upset that you're not working for him any more."

"He obviously wants me to buy him lunch," smiled Beth.

**Exercise 1: Translation.** Übersetzen Sie folgende Begriffe ins Englische! Alle wurden bereits in der Geschichte erwähnt!

1. Hubschrauber \_\_\_\_\_
2. schwinden \_\_\_\_\_
3. Berichterstattung \_\_\_\_\_
4. Rettungsweste \_\_\_\_\_
5. hinweisen \_\_\_\_\_
6. eigenartig \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 verärgert \_\_\_\_\_

When Dan Sullivan left her office, Beth sat down at her desk and read through her notes.

Unlike the police investigators, the businessman did not believe that the helicopter had crashed.

"My partner Brian Coombe is an excellent pilot," he had explained. "He's British and did his pilot's licence in the south of England, I believe. My wife also has a helicopter licence. And my secretary Margaret Butcher, who was with them, sent me an e-mail that morning and mentioned that it was a beautiful day... Don't you find that **suspicious**?"

Beth had not commented. She had just let Dan Sullivan talk, asking him the **occasional** question when something was not quite clear. Before his arrival, she had expected a **griev-**

**ing** husband unwilling to accept the death of his wife. During the meeting the man in front of her, with his dark, almost Italian **features**, made it clear that he was not feeling sad. If anything, he was angry. Angry at the incompetence of the police – and angry **on account of** his growing suspicion that at least one of the people in the helicopter had organized the disappearance.

"What makes you think that your partner or wife may have planned the disappearance?" Beth had asked. "The helicopter may have had a technical fault, which resulted in the crash."

"It was brand new," had **snapped** Dan Sullivan.

So was the Titanic, Beth had **reflected**. She had tried another **angle**. "Did you have a good relationship with your partner?"

"No, not really. It used to be good, but Brian made some bad investments recently, which cost the company a lot of money. I



<b>suspicious</b>	verdächtig
<b>occasional</b>	gelegentlich
<b>grieving</b>	trauernd
<b>features pl</b>	Gesichtszüge
<b>on account of</b>	aufgrund
<b>to snap</b>	anschnauzen
<b>to reflect</b>	überlegen
<b>angle</b>	Blickwinkel

told the police about it, but they didn't think it was of any relevance."

"But you do."

"Yes. Although, at the moment, I have no **proof** on paper. That's why I want the general public to think that I have accepted the fact that the helicopter crashed and everyone died... It'll give me

time to do some of my own investigation at the office."

Dan Sullivan had thought it all through. He intended to return to New York to "bury" his wife in the family grave. While he was there, he wanted Beth to travel to the Isles of Scilly and try to find out everything she could

about the whereabouts of the missing helicopter. He **provided** her with all the names of the people he had spoken to, both at the police station and from the coast guard service. Beth was not to contact him unless it was absolutely urgent. In such cases, she was only to ring a mobile number he had **set up** for that purpose. There was a possibility that someone at the company was keeping in touch with Brian Coombe. He did not want too many people to know what Beth was doing.

"Simmons said that you know how to be **discreet** and will not talk to the press," the businessman had concluded.

Beth had almost choked on her coffee when Dan Sullivan had said that. "Discreet" was not a word in the Chief Inspector's vocabulary. His description of her since she left the **force** was usually "that pig-headed brunette going through a mid-life crisis" It was far more likely he had told Dan Sullivan that Beth liked the press about as much as she liked pigeon **droppings** on her car.



<b>proof</b>	Beweis
<b>to provide</b>	zur Verfügung stellen
<b>to set up</b>	einrichten
<b>discreet</b>	diskret
<b>force</b>	<i>hier:</i> Einheit
<b>droppings pl</b>	<i>hier:</i> Vogeldreck