



Chapter 3

Armin was driving Dorothy to Munich early on Saturday morning when the text message from the thieves arrived.

“They want me to drive to Munich airport and park on the top floor of the Terminal 2 car park. At 11 o’clock, I should leave the car unlocked with the rhino head inside, go and have a coffee for an hour and I’ll find instructions for collecting the picture when I come back.”

“Good!” said Dorothy. “Just as I thought.”

“Will you tell me what’s happening? And why didn’t we bring the rhino head?”

“How much is one rhino head worth, Mr von Weiden?”

“Perhaps €200 or €300? What do you think?”

Dorothy laughed. “Probably about €360,000!” she said.

text message

[ˈtekst ˌmesɪdʒ]

• SMS

Armin pulled the car over into a parking area by the side of the road and stopped.

“Is this some English joke?” he asked. “Why?”

“In China and Vietnam, rich people pay enormous sums of money for rhino horn. It is powdered and added to medicines and drinks. Currently, a kilo of rhino horn sells for €60,000 in Beijing, and an average rhino has about six kilos of horn on its face. They can get a good price for elephant ivory, too.”

“Menschenskinder! But why did they take the Renoir?”

“Because they knew that one of your rhinos was missing. They knew you would do anything to get the sketch back, even though it’s not worth as much as the rhino horn.”

“It’s priceless!” said Armin fiercely.

“To you, but not to them. That’s the point. When they found that one rhino head was missing, they stole the Renoir to put pressure on you.”

“But who?” asked Armin. “It must be someone who knows me, the museum and has contacts in China. There isn’t...” He stopped. Dorothy waited.

“Charlotte Moser, of course!” he said finally. “I shall call the police. I shall...”

“Oh, no, Mr von Weiden! How will village life be for you afterwards if you do that? Frau Moser won’t forgive you and the village committee won’t work any more. I have a better idea...”

Shortly before 11, Dorothy and Armin — accompanied by a large man in an airport security uniform called Faisal — positioned themselves near the service centre in Terminal 2.

“How do you know she’ll come here?” whispered Armin.

powder [ˈpaʊdə]

• pulverisieren

sketch [sketʃ]

• Zeichnung, Skizze

fiercely [ˈfɪəslɪ]

• heftig

whisper [ˈwɪspə]

• flüstern

ivory [ˈɪvəri]

• Elfenbein