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## The Mysterious Disappearance of Roddy Phillips

by Christina Buchanan

The Friday writers have gathered as usual in the upstairs room of the Lamb and are debating whether to drag in another table or wait for Roddy, who usually rearranges the tables just when everyone is settled anyway. Roddy is late. They discuss the email they all received at one thirty that morning telling them that the workshop was cancelled, without any explanation - clearly some kind of joke, as Roddy never cancels, come rain or snow, hell or high water.

They have exhausted the usual topics of conversation, the loos at the Lamb, who has done the homework, who has the snazziest water bottle, and fallen to wondering whether Roddy had an extraordinarily long shopping list at Waitrose and decided to do his shopping before inflicting the timed exercise on them.

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In a lonely concrete boat house on a deserted stretch of the East Sussex coast Roddy is eying his captors warily.

“Verr ees eet?” asks Rosa Klebb, giving him a menacing glare.

“Where is *what*?”

“Leetle Vings! Ze horrigeenal penteeng. Verr ev you heedn it?”

“What have you done with Catriona?” demands Roddy.

“Catriona!” breathes Cruella de Vil, waving her cigarette in his face “that *annoying* little woman, we seem to have lost her.”

“Vich meens,” says Rosa Klebb “your torrture vill be vorrse. Bring ze Herry Potter.”

“Oh no, not that!” Roddy crumples, “please! Anything but that!”

Rosa Klebb adjusts her thick horn rimmed spectacles and opens the book. “**Two** chepters of ‘Ze Hochblett of Fire’.”

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The new Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced today that the missing writer and columnist Roddy Phillips was quite probably a spy, and even if he wasn’t, as a Brexit Remainer he was no loss, and if found should be returned at once to his own country.