Blood Diamonds
Richard MacAndrew

Summary

Annie Shepherd and Harley Kirkpatrick are reporters on the Daily Post newspaper in Fleet Street, London. They have been investigating ‘blood diamonds’ – using money from the sale of diamonds to buy guns for use in wars in African countries. They have just had their first front-page story.

Shepherd has information that an Afro-Belgian businessman called Erik Van Delft who may be involved in the blood diamonds business has just arrived in London. Kirkpatrick follows him from his hotel to Lafon Jewellery, a shop in Hatton Garden, and, after he leaves the shop, greets Van Delft as if they have met before in Lagos. Kirkpatrick gives him his phone number and tells him to call if he wants to do business. That evening Kirkpatrick meets Van Delft, but he gets beaten up by Van Delft’s driver and warned to stay away – Van Delft didn’t fall for the Lagos story.

Shepherd finds out that Van Delft has left his hotel. Kirkpatrick goes to talk to Sophie Lafon. She assures him that she hates blood diamonds and would not deal in them. He leaves his phone number.

The following Friday Lafon phones Kirkpatrick from Beesands, Devon, and says that Van Delft is there. Shepherd and Kirkpatrick drive down to investigate. While Shepherd looks for information on the Internet on her laptop, Kirkpatrick goes to look at Van Delft’s house, but he is again beaten unconscious by Van Delft’s driver.

Kirkpatrick comes round on the beach, with Van Delft and his driver unloading guns from their car. Van Delft tells him that the guns are going to Africa by boat and he’ll get the diamonds in return. And also that Kirkpatrick will be dumped in the sea. Soon they are joined by Lafon who has caught Shepherd. A small boat arrives from a larger one out at sea.

Van Delft and the driver start loading the guns onto the small boat, but four police cars arrive – Shepherd phoned them when she found out that one of Van Delft’s ships had just left Southampton for Africa. Van Delft escapes in the small boat, but they see that there are police boats out on the water.

Shepherd and Kirkpatrick are questioned at length by the police, and then drive back to London. They are tired but happy because they know they have another good front-page story.

Before reading

1. It has diamonds and the red colour looks like blood.
2. Student’s own answer. (Here it means diamonds which are sold to buy guns with which people are then killed.)
3. Van Delft is a businessman who may be buying and selling blood diamonds. Kirkpatrick and Shepherd are journalists writing about blood diamonds.
4. Sophie Lafon – she owns a jewellery shop.
5. in Hatton Garden
6. Student’s own answer.
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Check your reading

Chapter 1

1. Blood diamonds are a big problem in Africa. They make billions of dollars.
2. They have got their first front-page story.
3. a It’s in the newspaper story – a lot of people died there in the 1990s because of blood diamonds.
   b Erik Van Delft came to London from Lagos in Nigeria.
   c Shepherd has a story about Van Delft from a South African newspaper.
4. a F, b T, c F, d F, e T, f T

Chapter 2

1. He sells African coffee and fruit to Europe, and sells European cars and computers to Africa.
2. jewellers’ shops
3. a the Lafon Jewellery shop
   b a woman in a flower shop
   c Lagos, Nigeria (five or six years ago)
   d telephone number
   e wants to buy (diamonds)
4. False

Chapter 3

1. a Kirkpatrick to Shepherd
   b Shepherd to Kirkpatrick
   c Van Delft to Kirkpatrick
   d Kirkpatrick to Van Delft
   e Van Delft to Kirkpatrick
2. c, a, e, b, d
3. No, he doesn’t.
4. a Van Delft, b Van Delft’s driver

Chapter 4

1. a a taxi driver, b Kirkpatrick, c Van Delft, d Shepherd, e Lafon
2. She’s the granddaughter of the person who opened the shop in 1903. She lives in London and works in the London shop.

3. She never buys them; she hates them.
4. Student’s own answer.

Chapter 5

1. a Kirkpatrick – his phone
   b Lafon – Van Delft
   c Kirkpatrick – Van Delft’s house
   d Kirkpatrick – Shepherd
   e Kirkpatrick and Shepherd
2. c, a, e, b, f, d
3. Student’s own answer.
4. Student’s own answer.

Chapter 6

1. a beach, b guns, c stupid, d business, e ship
2. They are going to put them in the sea; Because they know too much.
3. a Kirkpatrick, b Van Delft, c Shepherd, d Lafon, e Van Delft’s driver, f the man on the boat

Chapter 7

1. 1 c, 2 e, 3 a, 4 b, 5 d
2. That Van Delft’s ship left Southampton yesterday for Africa.
3. Because he knows they have got a front-page story.

After reading

1–10. Student’s own answers.