

Excerpt

DEAD GROUND - M.W.CRAVEN

The man wearing a Sean Connery mask said to the man wearing a Daniel Craig mask, 'Bertrand the monkey and Raton the cat are sitting by the fire, watching chestnuts roast in the hearth.' Which was as good a way as any of getting someone's attention.

'OK,' Daniel Craig said.

The men wearing George Lazenby and Timothy Dalton masks stopped what they were doing to listen. Pierce Brosnan, with his headphones on and his laptop spitting out complex instructions, was oblivious to everything but the vault door and the Diebold three-keyed timer and combination lock in front of him. Roger Moore was outside in the van.

'Bertrand tries brushing the coals aside but he's scared of burning his hand,' Sean Connery continued. 'But he wants those chestnuts and he doesn't want to wait for the fire to cool. Instead, he persuades Raton to scoop them out, promising him an equal share.'

'And the cat does?'

'He does, yes. Raton moves the red-hot coals and picks out the chestnuts one by one. And each time he does, Bertrand gobbles them up. Eventually a maid disturbs them and they have to flee. Raton gets nothing for his pains.'

Timothy Dalton was Sean Connery's man, but the rest were Daniel Craig's. George Lazenby was his muscle, Pierce Brosnan was his technical guy and Roger Moore was his wheelman. As crew leader, Daniel Craig felt he should be the one to ask the obvious question. 'Why are you telling us this?' he said.

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