

The man who escaped

(Episode 1)

1. Edward Coke was an army officer, but he is in prison now. Every day is exactly the same for him.

It is winter now and Coke and all the other men get up at six, it is still cold and dark. They have breakfast at six thirty. Work begins at seven thirty. Some of the men work in the prison factory, but Coke often works outside.

2. The men have lunch at twelve. Then the men go back to work again. Dinner is at six. Coke usually reads after dinner until 9.30. The lights go out at ten.

The day is long and hard and every man has a lot of time to think. They usually think about why they are there. Coke does. He always thinks about two men.

3. One of the men is Eric Masters. He used to be an army officer, just like Coke. Coke knows that Masters has a lot of money now. The second man's name is Hugo. That is all Coke knows about him. Masters knows where and who Hugo is, but Coke doesn't.

Every night Coke lies in bed and thinks about Eric Masters and Hugo. There is another thing he thinks about, too. Escaping. He wants to escape and find Masters, and then the other man. Coke is in prison for something he didn't do.

The man who escaped

(Episode 2)

1. It is six o'clock on a very cold winter evening. People are in their living-rooms and watch the news on television or listen to it on the radio. There is one very important piece of news this evening. It is this.

«In the West of England this evening, hundreds of policemen are looking for a man who escaped from Princeville Prison early this morning. The man's name is Edward Coke. He is 30 years old, six feet tall, and has black hair and blue eyes. He is in a dark blue prison uniform. The police do not think he can stay free very long. It is only a few degrees above zero and it is snowing».

2. The radio is on in an expensive pub in Soho, in the centre of London. Most of the people there are not very interested in the news programme, but one man is. His name is Eric Masters. He is about 45 and is in very expensive clothes. He looks very afraid of something. There is another man standing next to him in the bar. Masters asks him a question.

«Did they say the man's name was Coke?»

«Yes, that's right. Coke... Edward Coke. Why? Do you know him?»

«Pardon?»

«Do you know him?»

«No... no, I don't know him... I just wanted to know the man's name, that's all».

3. In another part of London, a young detective is standing in the office of his chief at Scotland Yard. The young detective's name is Richard Baxter.

«You knew Coke, didn't you, Baxter?»

«Yes, sir. I arrested him four years ago».

«Yes, I know that, Baxter. That's why I give you this order, now. Find Coke again! You must find him immediately!»

The man who escaped

(Episode 3)

1. At 6 o'clock Baxter is in the warm train compartment. Coke is in a field 100 miles away. The winter evening gets darker and colder. The wind cuts through Coke's thin uniform like a knife. Coke is hungry and tired, and his arms and legs are so cold that he can hardly feel them. He wants to find food, warm clothing, and a warm place somewhere. «I have to make a move! I can't just stay in this field and die of the cold», he thinks.

2. Coke gets up and begins to walk. «Where am I? Which direction am I walking in? Am I going back towards the prison?» he asks himself. A few minutes later, the moon comes out and Coke can see better. He stops and looks around. Suddenly he sees a small light not far away. «What can it be? It can't be a car. It doesn't move. It must be a house» he says to himself and begins to walk towards it. The light gets larger. It is a house! He can see the form of the roof in the darkness.

3. Ten minutes later he is outside the house. He stops and listens. «Strange», he thinks. «I can't hear anything, not even a radio or a television, but there must be someone in there. There is a light on!» Just at that moment, a thought strikes him.

«This is probably the only house around for miles! The police know I'm probably around here somewhere and if they are anywhere, they're in that house, waiting for me».

Coke doesn't move. The wind becomes colder. His feet and hands feel like ice in the snow. «I have to take the chance! I have to! This is the only place I can find warm clothes and food!» he thinks.

The man who escaped

(Episode 4)

1. Coke listens for several seconds but he can't hear anything at all. And yet there is smoke coming from the chimney and there is a light on in the front room! «Why is it so quiet? Are the police waiting for me in there?» he asks himself. He goes to the front door and pushes it. To his surprise it is open! He goes in very quietly. In the front room there is a fire burning, in the fireplace. The room is clean, small and very warm. There is very little furniture in it — only a table and two old-fashioned chairs. There are also some photographs on the shelf above the fire. They are yellow and old. One of them is of a young man in a World War I uniform. There are also a few photos of the same man and also a woman.

2. Suddenly Coke feels there is someone else in the room. He turns around quickly and, at the same time, puts his hand in his pocket. There is a small knife there. He sees an old woman. She has a dish in her hands and there is a smell of meat and vegetables coming from it. She doesn't look afraid. «I'm sorry», she says and puts the dish down on the table.

3. «I'm sorry», she says again. «I don't hear you. I'm deaf, you see. People often come to the door and knock, but I don't hear them. I'm glad you are here».

Coke stares at her for a second and then finally finds his voice: «I ... I'm sorry». He looks down at his clothes. His prison uniform is so dirty that it is impossible to tell what kind of uniform it is. Then he suddenly has an idea.

«I'm a mechanic from a garage in town. I came to repair a lorry somewhere out here but the road was icy. I had an accident. I ... I fell off my motorbike».

He says this several times before she finally understands him. Then she gives him some hot water and soap and afterwards some food. The only thing he needs now is a change of clothes!

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(Episode 5)

1. Only a few miles from the house Coke is in, two policemen in a small village police station can hear the wind outside. One of them is a sergeant. The other's much younger.

«I wonder how Mrs Bentley is?» the sergeant asks.

«Mrs Bentley? Oh, you mean that old lady whose husband died a few years ago?»

«That's right. She's deaf, you know, so she never listens to the radio or watches television. In fact, she doesn't even read the papers».

«Oh?» the young policeman says. He wonders why the sergeant wants to tell him all this. Then he finds out.

«Why don't you go out to her place and see if she's all right?»

«Who? Me? On a night like this?»

«It's not far. Besides, you've got your bike, haven't you?»

2. Baxter gets off the train at a small station. There is a detective waiting for him on the platform. He is shaking Baxter's hand.

«My name's Halls, Tom Halls. Scotland Yard phoned us and told us to meet you here. There's a car waiting».

Baxter doesn't waste any time on social formalities.

«Coke escaped more than 24 hours ago. I want to catch him before another 24 hours are up».

Halls is looking at Baxter for a few seconds before he answers.

«A lot of us wonder why Scotland Yard is so interested in this fellow Coke. He isn't the first one to escape».

«Coke isn't just an ordinary prisoner. He's very special. Let's go now?»

3. The young policeman is angry. He is on the road now. The wind is cold and is blowing snow into his face.

«That stupid sergeant!» he thinks. «We must be one of the last stations in England that still uses bikes, and he sends me out on one on a night like this!» When he gets to the top of the hill he sees the house down below, at the bottom of the hill. Just as he is looking down at it, he sees a light go on in one of the rooms upstairs.

«Stupid! That's what it is, sending me out on a night like this!» the policeman says again. Then he gets on his bike and begins to go down the hill very fast, towards the house.

The man who escaped

(Episode 6)

1. «You know your clothes are in a terrible state», the old lady said after the meal. «My husband was just about your size. A little heavier perhaps. All his clothes are upstairs. They are no good to him. He died two years ago». She pointed up to the above them. «Why don't you see if any of his clothes fit you. You can bring them back tomorrow».

«Nobody can be this lucky!» Coke thought to himself. He went upstairs and turned the light on. He found a heavy jacket, a woolen shirt and some trousers hanging in the room.

2. «What do you know about Coke?» Baxter asked Halls. They are in the car now. «Very little, I'm afraid. In fact, I don't think, I know anything about him at all. Wasn't he the fellow who was in that spy case about 4 years ago?»

«Yes, that's right. Coke always said it wasn't him... that it was someone else».

«That's what they all say. But what's so special about him?» «Coke was in Army Intelligence. He knew important secrets. We could never understand why he sold them. There wasn't a real motive. Some said he did it for money. We couldn't prove it, but if he was a spy, he still knows too much. We could never find out who he sold secrets to. That's why we have to catch him before he makes contact with any of his old friends!»

3. Coke put the clothes on as quickly as he could. They were old, but they were warm. When he came downstairs, the old lady was still in front of the fire. She smiled when she looked at him. «You know, you look just like my husband in those clothes... when he was much younger, of course». Coke tried to be polite. He wanted to leave quickly.

«I can't thank you enough. It's very kind of you to do all this for me». The old lady did not seem to hear him. «Just like my husband», she said again. Just then, there was a knock on the door.

The man who escaped

(Episode 7)

1. The deaf old lady did not hear the knock, but Coke did. His heart began to pound wildly. He had to decide what to do, and quickly.

«There's someone at the door», he said loudly, but the old lady did not understand. «There's someone at the door», he said again, this time even more loudly than before. She went out of the room and Coke quickly stepped back into the shadows of the front room.

2. The old lady opened the front door. Coke could see her quite clearly, but nothing else. He listened carefully.

«Hello, Mrs Hartley. I'm from the village police station. The sergeant sent me. I've got something to tell you».

Then Coke saw the policeman very clearly. The old lady and the policeman came through the door into the sitting-room. Coke was behind the door, so the policeman couldn't see him.

«Good evening officer. Can I help you?» Coke said very loudly and clearly. The policeman turned around and looked at Coke. He was very surprised. Then Coke hit him hard as he could in the stomach and he fell to the floor heavily. The old lady screamed. The policeman tried to get up, but fell back weakly. Coke ran out of the room.

3. The phone rang about five minutes later at the local police headquarters. Hall answered it. «What? Coke? Where? When?» Baxter stood up as soon as he heard Coke's name. He quickly put his hat and coat on. Halls listened carefully to the voice on the other end and quickly made a few notes. Then he put the phone down and turned to Baxter. «Well, we know where Coke is now. A policeman almost caught him only five minutes ago».

«What do you mean, he almost caught him? Did he catch him or didn't he?»
«No, he got away. He stole the policeman's bike».

The man who escaped

(Episode 8)

1. Baxter got into the car first. Halls was right behind him. «You drive. You know the area better than I do». Baxter said. They raced out of the town and into the dark countryside.

Ten minutes later, about three miles from the old lady's house, Baxter suddenly saw someone on the dark road ahead. «Look! There!» he shouted. «There's someone on a bike! And look! He's going to get off!» Halls saw the man quite clearly, but only for a second. As soon as the man saw they were in a police car, he dropped his bike and ran into the trees at the side of the road. «That's Coke!» Baxter shouted. «He isn't going get away this time!» Baxter jumped out of the car even before Halls stopped it, and ran after Coke. Halls jumped out, too. He didn't switch off the headlights.

2. All Coke's training as a soldier helped him now. Baxter was just behind him when Coke suddenly turned. Baxter tried to grab him but almost lost his balance. Then Coke hit him on the chin as hard as he could. Baxter fell to the ground heavily. At that moment, Halls jumped on Coke from behind but Coke threw him over his back and against a tree and then ran back towards the road before Halls could get up. Even when he did, he fell to the ground again. There was a terrible pain in his ribs. Coke saw the police car very clearly. The headlights were still on and the door was open. Coke jumped in. When Baxter and Halls came to themselves it was too late. Coke was gone and so was their car.

Coke drove for about twenty minutes. He felt nervous in the police car but he knew it was his only chance. Suddenly something on the road ahead attracted his attention. Two police cars were there, side by side, blocking the road. Nothing could get by them!

3. The two policemen at the road block were bored. Suddenly they saw a car coming towards them.

«It's a police car», one of them said. «Perhaps they're bringing us some hot coffee, or something to eat». The car was still a good distance away. «Isn't it going to stop?» «It doesn't look like it. Shall we stop it? Our orders are to stop every car». Just then, they heard the two-tone sound of the horn. «Would you move the car out of the way, Bob, or shall I?» «But our orders were...» «You don't think Coke's going to come through here in a police car, do you?» The policemen hardly had time to move back their cars when Coke shot through the narrow gap and raced down the road in the direction of London.

The man who escaped

(Episode 9)

1. «How much farther is it to the nearest village?» Baxter asked. He and Halls were in the middle of the countryside. The night was very dark and there was no traffic on the roads. They couldn't see a house or even a public phone box anywhere. «It must be on the other side of that hill» Halls answered. «I hope so! We've been walking for twenty minutes now! When we started, you said it was only ten minutes away!» Baxter said angrily. He was tired and his jaw hurt.

2. In his apartment in London, a well-dressed man named Eric Masters turned on the radio and listened. The news was still bad. Coke was still free. Masters looked very frightened. He turned off the radio suddenly and picked up the phone.

3. Coke turned off the main road. He wanted to get rid of the police car as soon as possible. In a village almost 200 miles away, Coke found what he wanted. «People in villages like this always trust their neighbours. How lucky!» he thought when he saw the motorbike. It was in a garage at the edge of the village. The garage was not even locked and there were a pair of gloves and a helmet. Coke pushed the bike down the road. When he was far enough away from the village he started the engine and raced towards London.

4. Eric Masters dialled nervously. At first nobody answered at the other end. Finally a sleepy voice answered angrily, «Who is it? What the devil do you want at this hour?» «Is that you, Hugo? This is Eric», Masters said quickly. «And why are you ringing at this hour? I've been in bed for an hour!» «But haven't you heard the news, Hugo? Coke's still free! I can't sleep. I've been thinking about Coke all evening!» «Perhaps you'd better take a sleeping pill!» Masters almost screamed the next question into the phone. «What are you going to do, Hugo?» The man at the other end answered just as coldly and as calm as before, «Do? We're going to kill Coke! That's what we're going to do. That is, if he is stupid enough to come to London!»

The man who escaped

(Episode 10)

1. The motorbike was fast but the roads were icy. Coke drove dangerously. He knew he had to. He had very little time. Around 2 o'clock in the morning he suddenly saw lights in his mirror. They were the headlights of police car. It came closer and closer and then suddenly speeded up. For several seconds, Coke and the car raced along side by side. The two policemen in the car were looking at him but they couldn't see his face clearly. Coke raised his hand and waved casually. Then, the car speeded up again. In a few seconds it was far ahead him. Coke raced towards London. He knew exactly where he wanted to go.

He reached London just before 6. He drove to a block of small flats not far from the river in the south east. There was a light on in one of the ground floor flats. He went to the window and tapped softly. He was still standing at the window when the back door opened. When he looked up, a woman was standing there. «Come in, Ted. I've been expecting you», she said very softly. «I haven't got any right to ask you for help», he said after a pause. «But there's nobody else you can go to, is there? You'd better come in», she answered calmly.

2. Baxter caught a very early train to London. When he got to Scotland Yard the Chief Inspector was waiting for him. When Baxter went into his office, he was sitting at his desk and looking at a photograph. «Perhaps it was a good thing you didn't catch Coke after all», he said suddenly. Baxter stared at him in surprise. «What do you mean, sir? I don't understand». «I have a picture here of a man who knew Coke in the army. He was also a witness at Coke's trial. I've been interested in the man for some time now. Perhaps we'll be able to find out more about him now that Coke's free», the Inspector said, and gave Baxter the photograph. «This is the man. Watch him. Follow him everywhere!» Baxter looked at the man in the photo carefully. It was Eric Masters.

3. «You really shouldn't help me, Kate. It's against the law», Coke said. He and the young woman were sitting in her kitchen. He was eating breakfast hungrily. Kate didn't say anything. «I mean, everybody thinks I'm a spy», he went on. «But I don't think so», she finally said. Coke finished his breakfast silently. Then he said, «You were the only person who ever believed I was innocent. That's why I came to you. Who else will help me?» «Help you to do what, Ted?» Kate asked. «Help me to find the real spies», he answered slowly.

The man who escaped

(Episode 11)

1. Kate was what the Americans call 'a cool character'; nothing seemed to surprise her very much. Perhaps this was because she was an actress. She played small parts in films and on television. She didn't hesitate even for a second when Coke said he wanted her help to find the real spies. «All right», she said. «I'll start right now. Wait here! » «What do you mean? Where are you going?» Coke asked. «You'll find out when I come back. I'll have to get some things now!» Before Coke could answer, she was gone.

2. Not very far away, Baxter was still sitting in the Chief Inspector's Office. He was still looking at Masters's photograph. «What's so interesting about him? Why do you want me to follow him?» he asked. «A few days ago, quite by accident we learned a few things about him. Coke might... be innocent after all. It's only a possibility. We want to see what Masters does if Coke contacts him, the Chief Inspector answered. Baxter was even more surprised now. «I don't understand, sir. What do you think Masters might do?» he said. «Masters might try to kill him if he's really afraid of him». «But surely that's dangerous, sir. I mean, if Coke is innocent. Masters might kill him... and if he isn't innocent, we're letting him go free. After all. Coke might kill Masters... or someone else!» The Chief Inspector looked very serious. «That's a chance we'll have to take, Baxter!» he said.

3. Time passed very slowly for Coke that morning and afternoon. It was evening before Kate came back. She was carrying a large bundle and a lot of other things. «Here. Try these things on», she said. She unwrapped the bundle quickly and showed him a suit, shoes and shirt. There was also a coat with an expensive fur collar, the sort millionaires wear in films. «I'll have to change my appearance more than this!» he said. «Of course you will», she answered. «And I've got just the things you'll need!» First Kate dyed Coke's hair grey. Then she used some theatrical make-up to give him a much older face. Finally she put a pair of dark glasses on him, gave him a white walking-stick and led him to a mirror. He was surprised when he saw himself. An old blind man stared back at him. «And now, Kate said, you'll have to do far more than simply look like an old blind man. You'll have to walk, talk and act like one, too!» For the next hour she taught him exactly how to do that. «You learn fast. We can go now», she said finally.

4. They were walking towards a taxi-rank. «Now just tell me where we're going!» Kate said. «To a pub in Soho called «The Green Rider». Masters used to go there a lot», Coke answered. «You mean you think he's one of the spies?» «I don't know, but he didn't tell the truth at the trial. Why else should he lie?» Coke said. They got to Soho half an hour later. The streets were brightly-lit. There were people, pubs, restaurants, cinemas and striptease clubs everywhere. They walked on until Coke suddenly gripped Kate's arm very hard. «This is the place. Take me in!» he said. They went into the crowded, noisy room.

The man who escaped

(Episode 12)

1. Kate led Coke to a table and then went to the bar to get their drinks. «Masters isn't here», Coke said. «Surely you didn't expect to walk in and find him, just like that?» «No, I suppose not».

They had been there for over an hour. More people came in, but Masters was not among them. It was getting towards closing time when the barman came to their table. «May I take you empty glasses?» he asked politely. Coke touched him on his sleeve. «Does a man named Eric Masters ever come in here?» he asked. He did not notice the man standing at the bar who stared at him in the mirror when he mentioned Masters' name.

2. The barman thought for a second. «There's a man named Eric Masters who comes in here a lot. He's a military type. Is that who you mean?» he asked. Coke tried to sound casual when he asked his next question. «Has he been here today?» The barman nodded. «Yes, he was in this afternoon». «I don't suppose you know where I can find him now?» Coke said. «I'm afraid not. All I know about him is that he has an antique shop somewhere near Red Lion Square», he answered.

The barman was shouting «Last orders, please» when Coke and Kate left. Kate led him through the crowded, bright streets. When they got to Shaftesbury Avenue, Kate called a taxi. Neither she nor Coke noticed the man who was so close behind them in the crowd that he heard Kate say «Red Lion Square, please» to the driver. They did not see him get into a cab and follow them.

3. «Would you mind driving round the Square once?» Kate asked the driver. Red Lion Square was deserted. «It's obviously not on the square itself», Coke said. They got out the taxi, paid the driver and started exploring. There were antique shops on several of the side streets but Masters' name was not among the other names of the owners.

Half an hour later they were still looking. Kate kept glancing over her shoulder. She had the uncomfortable feeling that someone was following them but she couldn't see anybody.

«I don't like wandering round the dark streets at this hour», she said. «I don't like doing it, either, but what else can we do? We can't stop looking now. It might be our last chance». Coke answered. Suddenly something in the window of a shop across the road caught his eye. The street was very dark but the thing gleamed. It reflected the light of a passing car. They crossed the street. The thing was an old military sabre and it was in a window marked «Antique Weapons and Military Antiques». There were old pistols, helmets and other swords in the window. Coke became excited. «This must be it!» he said. There was no name on the window but there was a phone number on the door. Coke copied it down.

The man who escaped

(Episode 13)

1. It was around midnight when the phone rang in Eric Masters' flat. The voice on the other end was hard and cold. «This is Hugo», it said. «There was an old blind man in the pub. He had a young woman with him. He asked about you and then went to your shop». Masters blinked in surprise. His voice cracked slightly. «But I don't know anybody like that. What did they want?» «How do I know, you fool? Just watch out for them, that's all!» Hugo said furiously and hung up. Masters slept very badly that night.

2. Eric Masters was cleaning an antique pistol when the phone rang in his shop. He heard a young woman's voice at the other end. «I believe you buy and sell antique weapons», she said. «Yes, that's right. I'm particularly interested in old firearms». «My father is too. He wants to sell some of 17-th century pistols. Would you be interested?» «Certainly. If you bring them to my shop, I'll look at them and give you a price». «Well, unfortunately my father's blind. It's very difficult for him to get about. Would you mind coming to our place?» Masters managed to answer calmly. «Well... er... my assistant is out to lunch. I'll come over when he comes back. Is that all right?» He noted the address she gave him and hung up. His hands were trembling slightly. «These must be the people Hugo told me about», he thought. He reached into a drawer and took out a pistol. This one was not an antique. It was a small, black, nasty-looking automatic. «Perhaps the old man really does want me to look at his pistols», he thought when he was getting into his white Jaguar and driving off.

3. He felt safer when Kate opened the door. She was slim, almost delicate-looking. «Good afternoon», he said. «I'm Eric Masters. You rang my shop earlier». She smiled. «I hope I haven't put you to any trouble», she said pleasantly, and led him into the sitting-room. Masters glanced suspiciously at the old, blind man sitting on the sofa. At first he seemed harmless enough, but there was something familiar about the man's face that made Masters look more carefully at him. «I'll go and get the pistols». Kate said. Masters stayed where he was, where he could see everything and where nobody could come in behind him. The old blind man didn't move. «Are you a collector too?» Masters asked. The old man simply nodded. The woman came out of the bedroom with a large black case. «They're all in here», she said. «If you come over here, to the table, we can look at them. My father doesn't really want anyone else to have them, but it's a question of money».

Masters kept his eyes fastened on the old man's face as he walked towards the table. He was halfway there when the old man raised his face slightly. The sudden movement made Masters stop. The more he looked at that face, the more suspicious he became. Suddenly it dawned on him. He stared at both of them. They were both waiting for him to come nearer. It was the old man's nose and lips that made Masters think of Coke. He reached for his pistol.

The man who escaped

(Episode 14)

1. When Masters pulled out the automatic, Kate was standing between him and Coke. She could see that he was almost hysterical and was probably going to shoot.

«It's you, Coke!» he burst out and came nearer. Kate was standing in his way now and he put out a hand to push her away. Coke could hardly believe his eyes. One moment Masters was pointing a pistol at him and the next he was lying on the floor; gasping for breath. Kate had thrown him over her shoulder. «I once played a policewoman in a film and I had to learn some judo», she said rather casually and looked down at Masters.

2. Masters groaned. He, too, could hardly believe what had happened. It all seemed incredible. He shook his head. He decided that it was probably a nightmare, a horrible dream. «And now that you're here, perhaps you wouldn't mind answering some questions». Coke said. Masters groaned again. «Questions? What questions?» he mumbled. «I want you to tell me everything that happened that evening you sent me to Epping Forest», Coke said in a low voice. Masters now realised that it was not a dream. «I don't know what you are talking about», Masters answered. «I think you do», Coke said. «You can't make me tell you anything!» Masters waited to see what Coke was going to do next. He couldn't take his eyes off the automatic in Coke's hands. «I'll give you five seconds to begin answering my questions. Then I'll shoot», Coke answered and pulled back the safety-catch. The pistol was now ready to fire. Then he began counting.

3. «But I know nothing!» Masters protested. Coke had already raised the pistol and simply said, «One!» Masters said nothing. «Two!» Coke brought the pistol nearer. «You can't frighten me!» Masters shouted. «Three!» Masters saw Coke had already taken aim. «How can I tell you something I don't know?» Masters demanded. «Four». Masters watched Coke's finger beginning to press the trigger. «All right, all right, I'll tell you anything you want, but for God's sake, put the pistol down!» Masters gasped.

The man who escaped

(Episode 15)

1. Coke's mind went back to the time, five years earlier, when both he and Masters had been officers in the same Army Intelligence unit. Masters had been Coke's superior. Several important military secrets had disappeared and they were both trying to find out who had taken them.

One evening Coke had gone, on Masters' orders, to a lonely place in Epping Forest. Masters had told him he would meet a possible informer there. While he was waiting, three men had grabbed him from behind. They had poured whisky all over him and down his throat and then hit him over the head.

2. When he came to he was back in his car, but it had crashed into a tree. The police had already arrived. It appeared that Coke had got drunk and lost control of his car. The police had found several files marked «Top Secret» in his car. Coke swore he had never seen them before. The police also found Coke had deposited more than 2,000 in his bank account a few weeks before. Coke had known nothing of the money. The bank said the cheques had arrived by post with Coke's countersignature. Nobody believed Coke's story. It appeared he had sold secrets for money and was going to do so again the night he had crashed. Masters denied he had ever told Coke to go to Epping Forest. This is what Coke wanted to ask questions about now.

3. «Let's start at the beginning... when you sent me to Epping Forest that night», Coke said in a flat, cold voice.

«That was Hugo's idea. I had nothing to do with it».

«And who is Hugo?» Coke demanded.

«He sells government secrets to any foreign country that's interested. He made me give him information. I didn't want to».

«Why did you involve me in all this?»

«The police suspected someone. We wanted to make them think you were the spy. We knew they would if they found your dead body in a car after a crash with all sorts of secrets in it».

«My dead body?»

«Hugo thought the crash would kill you». Masters said.

«And why aren't you still in the army? You'd be a lot more useful to Hugo if you were», Coke went on.

«It became too dangerous. Anyway, he still uses me».

«How?» Coke asked.

«We hide microfilms of secret documents in the antique weapons I send abroad. The people we send them to pose as foreign collectors». Coke had one last question. It was the most important. «Where's Hugo now? Take me to him!»

The man who escaped

(Episode 16)

1. Masters told Coke that Hugo owned a large garage in the North of London. Cars that had been damaged were taken there to be repaired. It was also where the secret documents Hugo sold were kept before they were micro-filmed and sent abroad.

They got into Masters' white Jaguar and drove there. Coke sat in front with Masters. Kate sat behind. It was almost evening when they got to the garage. It was at the end of the street and was surrounded by shops and small houses. They parked at the end of the street. People were beginning to close their shops and go home. The garage stood open until six. Coke sat and watched the lights go off. When the last one had been turned off and the garage was completely dark, Coke turned to Masters again.

«Now tell me exactly where the documents are kept before they're sent off», he said.

2. At first Masters didn't answer. He had become a little braver again. Coke pressed the pistol into his stomach. «Because of you, I've been kept in prison for four years. Because of you, my life has been ruined. I'll kill you here and now if you don't answer! ». Masters looked at the pistol and went pale. «They're kept in Hugo's office, in an ordinary file in his desk», he answered. «And the microfilms?» Coke demanded. «They're kept there, too». «Do you know if any documents have been sent off recently?» «Some were sent last week. I know. I sent them myself», Masters said. «And will there be any there now, waiting to be sent off?» Again Masters hesitated. Coke pressed the pistol even harder into his stomach. «I don't know. There might be. Hugo told me he was going to give me some soon», he said.

3. Coke gave Kate the pistol. She was still sitting behind Masters. «Keep him here until I get back», he said. «But what are you going to do?» she asked. «Break into the garage if I can. Perhaps I can find proof that Hugo sells these things. If I do, I'll phone the police». «But what if you don't? What if you are seen and caught before you can find anything at all?» Kate asked. But Coke had already started walking towards the dark garage. In the dark winter evening, it looked very much like a prison.

The man who escaped

(Episode 17)

1. Once, a long time ago, someone had told him that an Army training was useful in many ways. Coke knew now that that was true. There was a drainpipe at the back of the garage that led to the roof, and Coke managed to climb up it. He had often done such things in the army.

There was a window in the roof, or a sky-light, as it is called. It was closed but not locked. Coke managed to get it open and peered down into the dark garage below. There was a lorry parked almost directly underneath. He jumped down onto it. It was completely dark inside the garage itself.

«Masters told me the secrets were kept in the office, but where's the office?» he wondered. Suddenly he heard a sound behind him, and realised he was not alone in the garage.

2. Before he could turn around, someone grabbed him from behind and someone else shone a powerful light into his eyes. He was blinded. Then there was an explosion of pain in his head. He realised, just before he lost consciousness, that what had happened in Epping Forest was happening to him all over again.

When he came to again, he was lying on the floor of the garage. It was at least an hour later. He heard loud voices. When he opened his eyes, he saw Kate tied to a chair. Four men were standing above him. One of them was Masters, looking pale and frightened. He was listening to a short blond man. Coke knew it must be Hugo himself. Hugo was shouting.

«I told you you were a fool... and idiot! Do you believe me now?» he demanded. Masters tried to say something but could not. Hugo slapped him across the face. «I asked you if you believed me now?» he shouted.

3. «But... but Hugo. PI ... please listen to me!» Masters stammered. «I told you someone had phoned me and had asked me to look at some pistols! I told you it was an old, blind man but you said there was nothing to worry about!» Masters said.

«No, I didn't. I asked you what you wanted me to do about it, you idiot!» Hugo roared. Suddenly, one of

the other men interrupted. «What did you say we were going to do with the girl and Coke?» he asked.

«I said we were going to kill them! And I said we were going to do the job properly this time!» Hugo answered.

The man who escaped

(Episode 18)

1. Hugo saw that Coke had come to. Coke tried to get up but his hands were tied. His head hurt terribly. Hugo looked at him like a shark inspecting his dinner. «We would never have become suspicious if you hadn't used Master's white Jaguar», he said. «When we saw it parked halfway up the road, we decided to wait and see what would happen. Then, after we got you, we went out and got your girlfriend», he continued.

Coke knew he would never have made such a stupid mistake if he had not been so tired. He had not slept properly for days. He looked at Kate. «I'd never have got you into all this if I hadn't asked you for help», he said to her. He was trapped. It seemed there was nothing he could do and nobody who could help him. Hugo took out a revolver. «You'd never have bothered us again if I'd used this four years ago», he said. He came closer to Coke and aimed the revolver carefully at his head.

2. Suddenly there was a terrific crash as three policemen broke down the side door of the garage. Hugo turned round and gaped. «No, Hugo. Look up here!» a voice roared from the sky-light above. Suddenly, everybody stopped. Nobody made a move. Then Baxter dropped through the sky-light, which was still open, and onto the lorry and finally to the ground. Three more policemen followed him. Baxter walked over to Hugo. «Your revolver, please», he said simply. «I was only protecting my property», Hugo answered. «This man broke in. That girl helped him. Send him back to prison!» Baxter listened and smiled. «Certainly, but only after you've given me that revolver», he replied. Hugo handed it to him silently.

3. The policemen around Baxter and at the door suddenly moved forward and seized Hugo, Masters and the three men.

«We've followed you everywhere for days; that's why we're here now», Baxter told Masters. Then he turned to Hugo and said: «And I've been up there for half an hour. I've heard everything you've said. Also, I think you'd have phoned us an hour ago, when Coke first broke in, if you'd only wanted to protect your property!»

Before Hugo could protest, he and the others were led away. Baxter helped Coke to his feet. «What we know now already proves you were innocent», he said. Then he untied Coke's hands. Coke was a free man again.