

THE MOST INTRIGUING AND  
SENSATIONAL THRILLER OF THE YEAR

# DARK ROSE



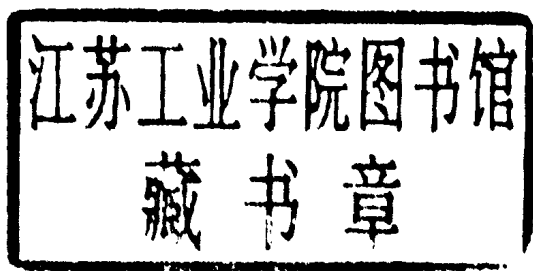
MIKE

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This edition published by Diamond Books, 2000

Diamond Books is an imprint of  
HarperCollins *Publishers*  
77-85 Fulham Palace Road,  
Hammersmith, London W6 8JB

This paperback first published in 1996

5 7 9 8 6 4

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A catalogue record for this book  
is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 26 167394 7

Set in Linotron Meridien  
at The Spartan Press Ltd,  
Lymington, Hants

Printed and bound in Great Britain by  
Caledonian International Book Manufacturing Ltd, Glasgow

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*For my son Piers  
and for Vicky, mine own High Queen of the Celts.  
When Irish eyes are smiling . . .*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There were many people who helped me with this book, but some deserve more than just my thanks. Firstly, my brother, Squadron Leader Tony Lunnon-Wood, who explained modern air warfare, Commander Crabtree RN and the wardroom of HMS *Nottingham*, in particular the Principal Warfare Officer, Lieutenant Bennet RN, who spent many hours helping me understand how modern sailors fight their warships. Lastly and perhaps most of all the very senior army officer, who must remain anonymous, who read the entire manuscript, tried with infinite patience to explain to me the way the British army actually functions and corrected my work.

Any mistakes are mine, not theirs.

## THE CHARACTERS

### *The Irish*

PROF KIERNAN	University professor, head of the resistance
DR PETER MORRIS	University academic, deputy head of the resistance
MILLIE MORRIS	his wife
PAT O'SULLIVAN	resistance leader south-west
RORY MCMAHON	resistance leader central
JOSEPH O'REILLY	resistance leader north-west
BRIGET VILLIERS	resistance leader south-east
COLIN MAHONEY	Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland
MAEVE O'DONNELL	resistance leader
TONY O'MALLEY	Irish entrepreneur, resistance planner
JOHN LA TOUCHE	young resistance fighter
DAVID O'CONNELL	as above
AISLING MCLLOUD	resistance member, Aiden Scott's lover
KELLY FAMILY	Moira, Simon, Sarah, Mary, David, Sue and Sinead, a family living in Dublin
LT EAMON KAVANAGH	captain of the Irish Navy Ship <i>Kathleen</i>
MARY JOHNSON	President of the Republic of Ireland
CMDT ANDRE HYLAND	commandant (major) in the Irish Defence Force

## *Celts*

<b>ROBERT DUGAN</b>	<b>captain in the Black Watch</b>
<b>AIDEN SCOTT</b>	<b>captain, 22nd Special Air Service Regiment</b>
<b>BUSBY GROGAN</b>	<b>22nd Special Air Service Intelligence officer</b>
<b>SALLY RICHARDS</b>	<b>department head, MI6</b>
<b>PETER TILBY</b>	<b>Irish specialist, MI6</b>
<b>GORDON PERSSE</b>	<b>as above</b>
<b>ARNOLD CLEAVES</b>	<b>financial expert, MI6</b>
<b>PETER MAYNOUTH</b>	<b>Middle East expert, MI6</b>
<b>PETRA WALLIS</b>	<b>Deputy Director General, MI6</b>
<b>SIR JAMES 'SANDY' MARSHALL</b>	<b>Head of Liaison, Operation 'Dark Rose'</b>
<b>MAJOR GENERAL EDWARD STEWART</b>	<b>Officer Commanding, Operation 'Dark Rose' and Commander, 'Celt Force'</b>
<b>SIR HUW TRISTAN-CARTER</b>	<b>British Ambassador to the United Nations</b>

## *Invaders*

<b>ALI JASSEM</b>	<b>Palestinian fighter, commander south</b>
<b>MOHAMMED BASSAM</b>	<b>Palestinian fighter</b>
<b>KHALIL ASHRAWI</b>	<b>Palestinian leader of New Irish Emergency Council in Ireland</b>
<b>GENERAL MUSTAFA SAAD</b>	<b>officer commanding Libyan forces in Ireland</b>

O, the Erne shall run red,  
With redundance of blood,  
The earth shall rock beneath our tread  
And flames wrap hill and wood,  
And gun-peal and slogan-cry  
Wake many a glen serene,  
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,  
My Dark Rosaleen!  
My own Rosaleen!  
The Judgement Hour must first be nigh,  
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,  
My Dark Rosaleen!

'Dark Rosaleen',  
anonymous sixteenth-century poem  
translated from the Irish by  
J. C. Mangan (1803–49)



## *Dark Rose*

**Mike Lunnon-Wood was born in Africa and educated in Australia and New Zealand. Based in the Middle East for ten years, he now lives in Sussex and has a young son.**

**BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

*Let Not the Deep*

## PROLOGUE

### *1992 Amman, Jordan*

*The worry beads were sweaty in his hand. The air was hot and thick with smoke, the air-conditioning having given up an hour ago. The historic meeting that had gone on for sixteen hours would be over soon. In the room, senior members of Fatah, the mainstream of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, were sitting opposite delegates from the militant breakaway Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.*

*Only days before, Yasser Arafat and George Habash had agreed to put aside their differences, to join forces to concentrate on the struggle. One Palestine for the Palestinian people. All Palestine.*

*The men in the room were the best and the brightest that Palestine had ever produced. Bankers, lawyers and strategic planners who at last could bring their skills to the struggle.*

*He watched the men at the table. His role would come later when these men, modern financial magicians had woven their illusion.*

*He was a fighter. For now he would wait. His time would come. He hoped it would not. They said the west wouldn't fight for it. It would just be talk, more empty nothings from the United Nations, but he would have to be ready, he and his men. To hold what they had even though it would be bought and paid for.*



*Ireland, autumn 1994*

The kidnappings were executed with precision. The sequence began with the son of the prime minister, the Taoiseach. He was taken with military efficiency as he left the family home, a man staying by the phone box after the car carrying him had been driven away, down the main road, actually past the Gardai at the gates to his family home, to explain what had happened and what his parents had to do to ensure his safe return. Within four hours nine other children and young people, all close relatives of senior Irish politicians and civil servants, had been taken. They were to be the first of more than 150 in the following three weeks. They were considered necessary.

It had begun with money. The finance men had been working for months now. Wielding money instead of guns they found ways to pressure other people, using the preparations that had been under way for years.

Large investments in banks and building societies, carefully shielded behind layers of holding companies, were leveraged to force the debts of many into crisis. The money, in vast amounts, was used to buy up the mortgages and company loans of targeted individuals and they were approached and told in no uncertain terms that a life's work would be in overnight ruin if they asked awkward questions. They were to follow instructions, accept contracts for work for which they would be paid and say nothing to anyone.

In most cases it was just a matter of looking the other

way, but in a few instances the intent was outright co-operation and threats were made. One man, a senior Garda officer, was told his son, already walking with one plastic leg, would lose the other if he didn't do as he was told. To prove the point they showed him photographs, dreadful images of things they were prepared to do, and finally, as if the man needed more convincing, before leaving they killed the family dog. When the money or threats wouldn't be enough and they needed real leverage they took someone close. Kidnapping.

The perpetrators melted into the scenery. As tourists, visiting businessmen and language students they disappeared in the cities and their subterfuge was good enough. Those that noticed the strange faces shrugged it off and happily took their money for rooms, meals, supplies and services. This was modern Europe, the place of open borders, progressive thinking, welcoming to visitors with money in their pockets and these visitors were not just tourists, they were investors. They were buying businesses, spending money, employing people where there was no work a year ago. It became easy not to notice the increase in numbers, or the fact that they were mostly men. To a person who had been out of work for two years, it didn't matter from whose hand top wages were paid. Foreigners had been investing in Ireland for years.

Some ordinary people did notice, and those with suspicions who asked questions at the table or in the pub were reminded that investment was investment and people had work now. This was the much talked-of global village, the way of things to come, where an internationally owned company based in Liechtenstein could buy up land and buildings and extend a factory in Ireland and put in their own management team who, the rumours said, had worked similar magic in Spain and Morocco. Highly paid PR consultants made sure the stories were used in papers and not even they knew that the same papers were now

partially owned by the awesome financial empire that had spread its tentacles throughout Irish commerce, industry and society.

### *March 1995*

In Ireland those who had seen through the charade, that were in a position to act, were hamstrung by blackmail and threats.

The change in Ireland, the surge in investment, in reality only the tip of the iceberg, had been noticed by others, some of them Irish living abroad.

One was Peter Morris, a university lecturer working in New York. Morris was young, in his mid-thirties, tall, lean, and normally seen wearing his mock tortoiseshell reading glasses. He found that if he took them off, he invariably left them somewhere and the safest place for them was on his nose. That cold March evening he was attending a function for professional Irish expatriates hosted by their most famous alumnus, Tony O'Malley. Morris, in spite of his purely academic background, genuinely liked the tough, canny O'Malley who had made a vast fortune in fast-moving consumer goods, his most famous product a tomato sauce that could be bought in almost every country in the world. He was a generous philanthropist, putting fifty students a year through universities, and his interest was genuine. He personally interviewed the applicants, chose the ones he would fund and then watched their progress with interest. What pleased Morris was that they were not all business students. He had taught eight students on O'Malley scholarships in his own field, political science, and he had to approve the man's choices. They were all bright, aggressive, enquiring, hard-working people, and not all of average college age: three had been mature students.

The two men talked at the function and it was Morris

who raised the investment issue with the stocky, energetic business mogul.

'Don't knock it, Peter,' O'Malley had replied with a grin. 'Investment is essential in any business community. In spite of all you academics would have us think, the free-market thinking of the European Community does work sometimes.'

Morris, a man used to viewing things from a detached, academic and purely objective viewpoint, wasn't convinced, but let the subject change to the final game of the Five Nations rugby tournament between Ireland and Scotland to be played the following day.

Moira Kelly stood at the sink in her kitchen and rinsed her hands under the tap. The soda bread, part of a Friday evening family ritual was out of the oven and cooling on the racks under the window. The kitchen was warm. Outside the temperature was struggling to stay above freezing and the central heating had been on since three that afternoon. She wanted it nice when they arrived. She had six children and now only the youngest two were still at home. Sinead, the baby at fourteen, was still at school and Sue, nineteen years old, was studying at UCD. David, twenty-one, had moved into his own flat last year and was in his second year of what she hoped would be a long career with the civil service. David and Sue looked like her, tall, slender, fair-haired. Some people thought they were twins and once when she had showed someone a picture of herself in her youth, they had thought it was Sue. She hoped David would be happy with the civil service. Hoped because she knew he was bored already, bored with the dreary, grey, status quo thinking of the people he worked with. He was seeing a nice girl, a choice she approved of and she took comfort from the fact that she knew his father, God rest his soul, would have also liked her.



He had been dead three years now and she still missed him sometimes, in spite of the fact that she was never sure if she ever loved him. He was a solid provider, an essentially decent man, but occasionally given to the drink, and when he drank he became violent. The children learned to recognize it early and made sure they were elsewhere, but once the eldest of the six, Simon, had come home to find them at it. He had pulled his father off and they fought, two men, father and son, and Simon had prevailed. It couldn't end fast enough for Moira, the thought of her son being hurt, almost as important as the noise they were making and what would the neighbours think? He had been contrite and apologetic the next day as usual, promising never to do it again, but nursing loose teeth and viewing his eldest son with new respect.

Simon would be over later, with his wife and children. Simon was big and heavy like his father, but gentle, gentle as a lamb, and he never touched a drink. Sarah would be coming too. Sarah had married a fellow from Cork who was assistant manager at a factory out near the airport.

The old table could take ten round it at a push and she finished rinsing her hands and faced the mountain of vegetables that needed preparing. Sue would be home in a minute and would help as usual. She was a good girl and while dinner was in the oven they would walk up to Father O'Leary's church with Sinead and take communion together.

Later that evening, Sarah's husband Alan was proudly telling them all of his promotion at the factory. He was now the boss and rather pleased with developments, extolling the virtues of his board of directors, only one of whom he had ever met, as far-sighted, generous men. Ireland needed investors like that he said. Simon, bored with the talk, began to play with his two boys in front of the fire, Sinead in pigtails forgetting her pubescent seriousness, piling in to the game as Sue captured it all on the