**Setting** (place and time)

* contemporary London: Ian’s house in Chelsea
* Brompton cemetry, London

**Situation**

* Police report the death of Ian Rider in a car accident to his nephew Alex.
* Alex doesn’t believe in the alleged car accident: “’The police said he wasn’t wearing his seat belt.’ […] ‘Doesn’t that seem strange to you? […] He always wore his seat belt’.” (p. 5)
* Ian’s funeral at Brompton cemetery – the mystery deepens
* There is obvious evidence that Ian didn’t work as a banker: “Ian Rider had gone and so had everything else […] Whatever the truth was about his uncle’s past, someone had just wiped it out.” (p. 12)

**Characters**

Alex Rider nanny and friend Jack Starbright

uncle and stepfather housekeeper

Ian Rider

Ian’s boss at the bank

colleague

Mr. Blunt

boss

Mr. Crawley

**Atmosphere**

mysterious/suspicious

* *“When the doorbell rings at three in the morning, it’s never good news.”* (p. 1, first sentence of the novel)
* *“Doesn’t that seem strange to you? You know how careful he was…”* (p. 5, Alex to Jack about Ian’s alleged car accident)
* *“…that made his [Alex] skin crawl.”* (p. 8, Alex’s first meeting with Mr. Blunt)
* *“… a good man, a patriotic man…”* (p. 9,graveside address)
* *“Why should bank managers carry guns?”* (p. 11, Mr. Blunt’s company at the funeral)