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CHAPTER EIGHT

Secrecy and Transparency in Hideo Yokoyama's *Six Four*

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There is a tendency to want to fix crime fiction: to fix the boundaries of what constitutes the genre, its typologies, and hence what it is and more importantly what it is not. Following Tzvetan Todorov's categorization of detective fiction into the subgenres of the 'whodunnit', the 'thriller' and the 'suspense novel', and his claim that all 'types' can be understood as an interplay between the story of the crime and the story of the investigation, where one supplants or suppresses the other (1977: 42–50), this move has spawned further attempts to refine its typologies (Malmgren 2001) and its formal and political characteristics. Crime fiction is 'fixed' either as a conservative genre that privileges, consciously or otherwise, an essentially 'bourgeois' worldview (Mandel 1984; Porter 1981) or as a deviant, radical genre, which unsettles basic presumptions about law, property and morality (Collins 1992; Hilfer 1992). Even where crime fiction is seen to move between polarities, the tendency is to see this movement as preordained – the 'victory of public knowledge and civic solidarity over the dangers of private desires' (McCann 2000: 4) – or a more general move towards 'the restitution of social order' in response to 'unease about the potential chaos of the social world' (Evans 2009: 19). There is a related tendency to want to fix crime novels according to national traditions and to identify crime fiction as exhibiting certain features or characteristics particular to these traditions. Hence we have studies of British, French, Irish, US, Japanese, Italian and Spanish crime fiction, to name a few, though it should be acknowledged that many of these studies also draw attention to the problems of a nation-centred

approach and to the inherent transnationality of crime fiction as a genre (Gorrara 2009; Pezzotti 2014; Cliff 2018).

Thankfully, there has been a backlash against this move to designate, to fix, to tie down. Just as Scaggs describes crime fiction as 'unclassifiable' (2005: 1) and points to its 'generic (and sub-generic) flexibility and porosity' (2005: 2), Horsley proposes a 'dialogic approach' that emphasizes 'the ambiguity, or indeed contradictoriness, of individual texts and the different ways of reading them' (2005: 2). Hence, as McCracken tells us, even where fiction is seen as a move from order to disorder and back to order, '[m]ore often than not, we read for the uncertainties provoked by the mystery rather than the security given by the solution' (1998: 50). The present collection as a whole picks up and develops this project by underscoring how crime fiction as a genre must be seen, as noted in the editors' introduction in this collection, as 'constantly violating its own boundaries'. How this fluidity and elasticity create new hybrid forms of crime fiction requires us to think beyond traditional nation-centred categories.

In this chapter, I want to focus on a single novel by the Japanese crime novelist Hideo Yokoyama, first published in Japan as *Rokuyon* (2012) and then translated into English by Jonathan Lloyd-Davies as *Six Four* (2016), as an example of this mobility. By mobility, I am referring in the first instance to the ways in which the novel activates and moves between different generic registers, especially regarding the complex interplay between the generic requirement to reveal or make clear and a corresponding imperative to frustrate and obfuscate. But this move to discuss and problematize the mobility of genre vis-à-vis *Six Four*, as we shall see, also has important transnational implications, insofar as it requires us to think about the ways its account of investigation and policing speaks at the same time to domestic Japanese and international concerns and hence to local and global audiences. Generically, *Six Four* is a hard novel to tie down: it is a police procedural that moves far beyond basic procedure to examine the complex lifeworld of an entire bureaucratic system; it is the story of a kidnapping and the failed investigation of this kidnapping, but one in which these failures are not confined to the past and, instead, play out in the present of the narrative; and it is a story of the disappearance of the teenage daughter of the protagonist, Mikami Yoshinobu, head of Media Relations in the Prefecture D police department, and his search for her. The novel is very much located *within* contemporary Japanese culture and it gives us an insider's perspective on a closed, distinctively Japanese world. As David Peace notes in an

interview with the author, ‘one of the great achievements of *Six Four* is the incredible insight you give the readers into the everyday workings and structure of the Japanese police force, their political machinations and rivalries, internal, local and national, and also their relationship with the press’ (2017: 641). But the novel’s commercial success in the UK (where it became a best-seller) is predicated not just on its effective opening up of an unfamiliar world, i.e. giving UK readers insight into the Japanese ‘real’, but more significantly on its determination to use this apparently unfamiliar landscape (e.g. the internal workings of a Japanese police department) to interrogate and lay bare the essential characteristics of power and governance of a modern democratic society. Readers, therefore, move and are moved between their own and the novel’s worlds, producing what Slavoj Žižek describes as a parallax view: ‘the perspective shifts and in being deprived of a single point of identification’ the reader gains an alternative view ‘bound together by a dual sense of vulnerability and solidarity’ (2003).

This idea of a ‘parallax’ is more useful than the ‘Orientalist’ lens, which is typically used to understand the relationship between ‘East’ and ‘West’, whereby the exoticized East is understood as a series of projections of Western desires and fantasies and hence of a set of underlying power relations that produce these projections (Said 2003). It may be true that ‘Japan has been consistently “Japanized” by the West’, whereby it constitutes ‘a crucial site at which white Western masculinity (re)establishes its superiority, dominance and, increasingly, innocence’ (Yamamoto qtd in Sarkowsky 2006: 110), but *Six Four* is a novel written for a Japanese and international audience by a Japanese author that crucially does not merely set out to overturn this Orientalist framework (thereby retaining the essential binary nature of it). The culture of police work and bureaucracy in Prefecture D may, on one level, be intriguingly different to norms and traditions pertaining to the UK (e.g. with the title *Six Four* deriving from ‘the sixty fourth year of the Showa period’ when the initial kidnapping took place; and where the ‘issue of saving face’ [Yokoyama 2017: 58, 89] would seem to carry greater cultural weight), but at the same time non-Japanese readers can understand well enough the internecine bureaucratic struggles that set individuals and departments against one another and the struggles between a central authority and peripheral units to retain control over decision-making processes. If an Orientalist perspective or its mirror, a postcolonial one, seeks to establish or overturn a fixed view of the world (i.e. whereby Western hegemony is either reaffirmed or contested), Žižek’s concept of the parallax is more

useful for opening up Yokoyama's novel because it allows us to hold onto and examine different perspectives at the same time and to think about the ways in which the novel moves between different positions without ever fully endorsing one or the other. Specifically, it allows us to really see and pull apart the novel's central preoccupation – the complex thematization of the relationship between secrecy and transparency whereby secrecy and transparency as procedural means and ends are both endorsed and questioned.

Defined as 'the absence of concealment' (Birchall 2011b: 8), transparency is typically characterized as a commitment to openness, accountability and unmasking, and hence the unmasking of that which is unseen or unknown, i.e. what is secret. As a means or technique of governance and an end itself, it is seen as 'a virtue, the secular version of a born-again cleanliness that few can fail to praise' (Birchall 2011b: 8) and that 'can solve all our problems' insofar as it is 'entrusted with the task of fostering accountability and strengthening participatory democracy' (Birchall 2011c: 60). By contrast, secrecy 'comes to be associated with all that is nefarious (inefficiency, corruption, malfeasance, conspiracy)' (Birchall 2011c: 66), and hence must be banished through a commitment to openness and revelation. The detective story, typically understood, is similarly aligned and presents itself as a process of unmasking (Porter 1981: 4) where secrets are 'secreted away waiting to be exposed' (Birchall 2011a: 134) by the actions of the exemplary investigator who enacts transparency – 'the absence of concealment' – through his or her method and commitment to revelation aligned to what Goodman calls 'the state's expansive public missions' (2009: 3).

A particular understanding of genre wants to fix the crime story according to the logic of public unmasking, whereby the crime story moves from one polarity, a world of secrets, to its opposite, where these secret worlds are made public. Yet Goodman's account of the genre, which understands that some secrets and private lives can be made public while others are 'unrecognizable, unrepresentable, or contradictory', accords not just with the dynamic, rule-breaking understanding of genre pursued by this book as a whole, according to which the trajectory of crime stories is not necessarily towards revelation, but also with my account of Yokoyama's *Six Four*. In other words, *Six Four* does not simply endorse this kind of unquestioning push towards revelation but also poses far-reaching questions against the logic and work of transparency and in doing so asks whether there are certain secrets that cannot or should not be known. As such, we might ask what transparency is and whether it

can be achieved; whether the choice between transparency and secrecy is a false one, whereby 'both positions fail to understand their own relation not only to secrecy itself but also to each other' (Birchall 2011a: 134), and whether 'the moral discourse that condemns and rewards transparency may cause us to overlook the integral, perhaps constitutive, role secrecy (in different guises) might play' (Birchall 2011b: 12).

As Director of Media Relations, Mikami's role is to move between the often conflicting worlds of the Press Club, comprising thirteen individual press agencies, and the snake pit of Prefecture D Police Headquarters where Administrative Affairs and Criminal Investigations are vying with one another in a covert struggle for supremacy and autonomy. *'A pawn of the press. A guard dog for Administrative Affairs'* (Yokoyama 2017: 12; emphasis in the original): this is how Media Relations is typically regarded, especially from within Criminal Investigations, where Mikami used to work as a detective. His first goal as the new Director is 'reforming Media Relations' (Yokoyama 2017: 15), not by facing down the press, as his superior expects ('A tough press director, someone fierce, someone ready and able to stare them down' [Yokoyama 2017: 14]), but by leveraging personal relationships with figures in Criminal Investigations in order to secure 'intel so he could stand up to press' (Yokoyama 2017: 16). Drawing upon the logic and language of a reform-minded 'transparency', the framing metaphor for Mikami's endeavours is that of a 'window': 'It was as if there were a towering wall separating the police from the general public and Media Relations was the only window even close to opening outwards' (Yokoyama 2017: 18). In other words, in the early chapters of the novel, Mikami would seem to have bought into the arguments in favour of transparency as espoused by liberal advocates for whom greater openness equates to accountability and trust and hence to better or more efficient forms of governance (Lathrop and Ruma 2010).

Right away, however, this move towards transparency is tested and unsettled. For a start, the 'full disclosure' principle, whereby Media Relations has 'an obligation to disclose' the full details of a traffic accident involving a housewife and 'an elderly man, resulting in severe, full body injuries to the victim', is put under pressure by the competing right to privacy apparently owed to the driver, who we are told is 'eight months pregnant' and has 'been in a state of extreme distress since causing the accident', resulting in a threat to her unborn child (Yokoyama 2017: 22). Here the logic of transparency, which the liberal-minded crime story (McCann 2000) with its commitment to revelation wants to endorse, runs up against the demands of secrecy, here recast as privacy, which,

as Goodman tells us, 'frames foundational ideas behind citizenship in modern democratic culture, where, by privacy guarantees firmly established by legal precedent [...] certain practices are state protected as autonomous from state intervention' (2009: 15). Notwithstanding the issue of whether secrets are secretive if they are partially known (e.g. by certain figures in the novel and by us, as readers), this dilemma, whereby the disclosure principle is set against the right to privacy, immediately puts pressure on Mikami's 'window' metaphor; as he tells the press: 'The window is still there. It's just not as big as you thought' (Yokoyama 2017: 26). Here, partial transparency (a smaller window) co-exists uneasily with partial secrecy (some know about the woman's identity; others do not), as the novel moves back and forth between the two, testing and probing the legitimacy of both sets of claims vis-à-vis the unfolding story. In this particular case, as Mikami comes to realize, the driver's name has been concealed not simply because she is heavily pregnant and in a state of distress but also because her father is Takuzo Kato, the acting chairman of King Cement 'and now in his second year as a member of the Prefecture D Public Safety Committee', after which he acknowledges, with a sense of personal shame, that 'HQ's position had been a sham' (Yokoyama 2017: 212, 123). Afterwards, we are pointedly told that 'the windows in Media Relations had no view' (Yokoyama 2017: 125).

In this case, there is a conspiratorial aspect to secrecy insofar as Administrative Affairs have deliberately acted to conceal the identity of the driver of the car at the behest of a powerful private individual who has assumed a public role within Prefecture D and has used his influence accordingly. Hence the privacy bill being proposed by central government is, for the high-ranking figures in Administrative Affairs at least, little more than a mechanism for 'seiz[ing] control of every aspect of our press reporting' (Yokoyama 2017: 120), and where exceptions to the rule (of law) at once characterize the exercise of power and expose a fundamental rottenness at the heart of the system. A consequence of this is an atmosphere of distrust and paranoia affecting all parties and the breakdown of relations between Media Relations and the press. For Mikami, the solution is an even greater injection of transparency, whereby the 'tactics' of trying to manipulate and control the press are replaced by a more radical openness defined, in the first instance, by fully implementing the disclosure principle: 'We will no longer withhold information from our press reports' (Yokoyama 2017: 408). But in order to persuade the Press Club to trust him, Mikami has to distance himself

from Administrative Affairs and Media Relations and offer himself as singularity: 'I'm not asking you to put your faith in something as abstract as [the force as a whole] [...] What I'm asking you to decide is whether or not you can trust *me*' (Yokoyama 2017: 423). And to underline his credentials, Mikami proceeds to tell the press about Takuzo Kato's daughter and about the victim, Ryoji Meikawa, and indeed 'everything there is to tell' (Yokoyama 2017: 424).

There is much more to tell, however, and more that is unknown and potentially unknowable, about the larger crime and investigation that frames the novel as a whole: the unresolved kidnapping and murder fourteen years earlier of Shoko Amamiya; the continuing reverberations and implications of this event; and the police's failure to find and apprehend the perpetrator, into the present. The precipitating event in the present of the novel is the decision of the Commissioner General – 'a man who sat at the very top of the pyramid, above the 260,000 officers in the police force' (Yokoyama 2017: 36) – to visit Shoko Amamiya's father ostensibly to 'pay his respects' at the daughter's altar in order to 'inject new life into the investigation' (Yokoyama 2017: 59) and to produce a 'picture' of the commissioner and the bereaved father 'for the TV and papers' (Yokoyama 2017: 39). Mikami sees the event for what it is or what he believes it to be: 'a PR exercise' (Yokoyama 2017: 54) in which his transparency agenda runs up against a need to manage and control contingencies. As his superior makes clear, 'it would be untenable if the commissioner were to stumble over any capricious or otherwise irresponsible questions' (Yokoyama 2017: 40). Crime fiction as a genre is predisposed towards scepticism – that is, refusing to take at face value what is otherwise being presented as unequivocal; in this case the idea that this is simply an innocent PR exercise. As such, it is Mikami's task, as Director of Media Relations, to prepare for the visit, and as a former detective with a lengthy association with Criminal Investigations (and a personal involvement in the initial kidnapping), to look into the matter and see through what is self-evident in order to uncover what is really motivating the Commissioner's visit and how this relates to what happened or what went wrong during the botched kidnapping investigation fourteen years earlier.

Mikami's professed desire to turn Media Relations into a 'window' runs aground on what he does not and cannot know, i.e. what is secret, and also on the problem of transmission: for transparency to be known as transparent 'there must be some agency (such as the media) that legitimizes it as transparent: and because there is a legitimating agent

which does not have to be transparent, there is a limit to transparency' (Birchall 2011a: 142). Both problems, as Mikami comes to realize through his own digging, are conjoined. To address the issue of transmission first of all: if Mikami's own efforts to orchestrate a PR exercise using the press as his instrument speak to the limits of transparency in one sense, in another, as he finds out, the press have their own agendas and their own sources of information. Hence, when abusive behaviour towards suspects in custody by the police is revealed by the *Toya* newspaper, it is not via the enactment of transparency but because this information has been secretly 'leaked' to the *Toya's* reporter by the head of Criminal Investigations (Yokoyama 2017: 323). If this suggests that secrecy and transparency are co-determinate – i.e. that both are 'caught [...] within the same commonsensical idea of the secret: one that assumes the secret is secreted away, waiting to be exposed' (Birchall 2011a: 133) – this logic of revelation is both corroborated and unravelled by the novel's internal struggle between Criminal Investigations and Administrative Affairs.

Let us return for a moment to the question of mobility that frames this chapter and this volume as a whole. In one sense, Yokoyama's novel must be careful about straying too far from the norms and expectations that readers bring to the genre, even if, as Gulddal, King and Rolls argue in the Introduction to this collection, 'crime fiction, far from being static and staid, must be seen as a genre constantly violating its own boundaries'. In part, *Six Four* moves in quite familiar ways: there is a secret and it is Mikami's role to uncover it – that is, to move the novel and the reader from a state of not-knowing to one of knowledge. In the original 'Six Four' operation run by Criminal Investigations, as Mikami discovers, by using his prowess as a detective, not only did the police detectives fail to find and apprehend the kidnapper or the ransom, or to stop the kidnapper from killing Shoko Amamiya, but they also made 'inexcusable' mistakes, such as failing to record the voice of the kidnapper when he called to issue his ransom demands, and then 'systematically covered it up and lied to the public for fourteen years' so that the Prefecture HQ 'would have no means of defence if the truth came out' (Yokoyama 2017: 256). The dilemma of transparency, then, is linked to the problem of secrecy: by keeping their failures secret for so long, Criminal Investigations have opened themselves and potentially the entire police force to greater threat if this secret is made public or brought into the open: 'It would suffer attacks that were of a different magnitude to the censure it would have received if it had first confessed to its mistake' (Yokoyama 2017: 256). Both transparency – i.e. a desire

to bring this ‘mistake’ and cover up into the open – and secrecy (the opposing impulse – i.e. to keep this mistake hidden) are, therefore, linked to ‘the same commonsensical idea of the secret’.

However, this is only one relatively minor aspect of the novel as a whole. Far more significant is the covert struggle between Criminal Investigations and Administrative Affairs, and between Prefecture D and police HQ in Tokyo, to exercise their partial and always incomplete knowledge to their own advantage. The opposition between transparency and secrecy, in this sense, is a false one, because both are impossible in the face of contingency and provisionality: what is not known or partially known and cannot therefore be unmasked through a single enactment of transparency. Returning to the issue of mobility, *Six Four* does not simply move in one direction according to the end-oriented logic of revelation; rather, it zigzags back and forth as secrets are traded, partially revealed, then partially hidden again, and so on, by different parties for different reasons and along multiple axes. The resulting perspective is not a fixed or singular one, then, but in the manner of Žižek’s parallax, the novel produces multiple and at times conflicting accounts of the same events, which must be weighed up and assessed in light of changing circumstances and where no universal, objective truth can ever ultimately be produced. Furthermore, the same logic applies to the ways in which the novel moves between Japan and the world, and between the closed secretive society of Japanese policing and complexities of governance characteristic of all modern democracies without necessarily endorsing one or the other. Certainly, there is no single moment of revelation and, as such, total objectivity and total transparency are impossible because there are some secrets which cannot be known or cannot be revealed, or where secrets are simultaneously revealed and concealed according to competing and overlapping agendas. The central logic is not then an overarching dilemma of concealment and revelation but a number of smaller, interconnected questions: who knows what, and when, and whether these people know that others know and if so how they are prepared to exploit this knowledge or lack of knowledge for strategic reasons.

For Mikami, the goal is not unearthing the conspiracy but trying to figure out who is trying to use and conceal knowledge of what has been kept secret and for what reasons. As such he crosses paths with Futawatari, who is described as the ‘ace’ of Administrative Affairs and who ‘was digging around in Criminal Investigation’s weak spots’ in order to unearth ‘the Koda memo’ (Yokoyama 2017: 169), a secreted document

written by Koda following his resignation from the police in the aftermath of the botched kidnapping investigation. No one knows what the memo says or can verify its existence but the notion that it *might* exist prompts a countermove from or by Arakida, Director of Criminal Investigations, in the form of a 'gag order' preventing anyone from his division talking to anyone from Administrative Affairs, including Mikaki. 'The Iron Curtain had been granted the full support of the de facto head of Criminal Investigations', Mikami realizes (Yokoyama 2017: 174). In other words, secrecy is enacted as a direct bulwark to the apparently universalizing logic of transparency (universalizing because 'who could be opposed to it?'). As Mikami and Futawatari shadow one another in pursuit of knowledge and allies, with each trying to work out what the other knows and how this knowledge might be deployed, the idea, espoused by Futawatari that 'the police force is monolithic' – i.e. that 'there are no distinctions; no headquarters, no Toyko' (Yokoyama 2017: 294) – comes under increasing pressure as rival factions within Prefecture D threaten to unravel the basic policing mandate. Certainly, as Mikami comes to realize, his agenda is fundamentally at odds with Futawatari's, even though they ostensibly serve the same boss and coexist in the same division:

Mikami had already guessed that his interests weren't going to be compatible with Futawatari's. But he'd hoped, regardless. He'd hoped that they were both torn between allegiances, single bodies with two minds, existing in a world where hierarchy was everything; that the man's conflicted state would come to the surface if he challenged him face to face [...] But he'd been wrong. (Yokoyama 2017: 294)

The problem with Futawatari's thinking, in the larger scheme of the novel, is that he is only able to deal in or with fixities. In order to be able to move effectively through *Six Four*'s fraught, complex landscapes, Mikami needs to be able to be agile, mobile even, to see ambiguities, multiplicities, and to negotiate a careful path between competing positions, figures and loyalties; that is, to see from different perspectives in the manner of Žižek's concept of the parallax. As someone who has one foot in Administrative Affairs, due to his post as Director of Media Relations, and one foot in Criminal Investigations, following a successful twenty-year stint as detective, Mikami is uniquely placed to grasp the treacherous paths ahead of him. 'He could tell himself he was still a detective at heart', we are told, 'but, as long as he was unable to imagine the danger Criminal Investigations faced, it was impossible

to see things from their perspective' (Yokoyama 2017: 362). At stake is the larger relationship between secrets, knowledge and action and the challenges to action posed by not-knowing; in this case, not knowing 'the dangers that Criminal Investigations faced'. Moreover, as Mikami's investigations move him in different directions and along different paths, the hidden motivations behind the various figures and factions might become more apparent but this does not make acting or making decisions any easier. The Commissioner's decision to visit the Amamiya house on the anniversary of the kidnapping is merely the pretext to a larger move intended to discredit Criminal Investigations, force its director to step down and bring it, and the entire Prefecture HQ, under the direct control of Tokyo. 'This is sequestration', the Director tells him, 'the NPA intends to make us a fiefdom of Tokyo' (Yokoyama 2017: 377). Mikami's understanding is even blunter – 'It was hegemony. Seizing power was an instinct of the central command' (Yokoyama 2017: 380) – and nudges him closer to the other camp: 'He could feel the blood coursing through his body. The blood of a detective. It was the only way he could parse the intensity of the emotion' (Yokoyama 2017: 380).

It is not straightforward to make connections between the work that secrecy does in Yokoyama's novel and Birchall's claim that power does not have a monopoly on secrecy and that the left 'needs to recognize secrecy as a resource' (2011C: 73). For a start, *Six Four* – while quietly critical of Tokyo's power grab – does not have or does not pursue an obvious political (whether leftist or rightist) agenda. But I would like to develop the notion of secrecy as a form of resistance to put pressure on the novel's more self-evident commitment to transparency. In response to the NPA's move to centralize power by assuming control of the key position of Director of Criminal Investigations, the secretive agenda of Arakida, the incumbent director, and other figures in Criminal Investigations, whose goal is to disrupt the Commissioner's visit, assumes a shadowy turn when another girl is kidnapped in the same manner as in the original *Six Four* case and the same ransom demands are issued: 'All [Mikami] was left to do was contemplate the irony, almost predestined, of the outcome. *The spectre of the Six Four ending the Six Four Inspection*' because 'the kidnapping had saved Criminal Investigations from the commissioner's visit' (Yokoyama 2017: 478, 479, emphasis in the original). Whether the new kidnapping is ironic, coincidental or predestined, and what lies behind, is not immediately clear but the secrecy at work – as Birchall puts it, 'a pervasive organizing secret which makes the commons secret to itself' (2011C: 75) – is 'radical' or 'resistant' insofar as it presumes

a community characterized by 'non-belonging' (Birchall 2011c: 74): 'a space in which subjects encounter secrets qua singularities' (Birchall 2011c: 75), i.e. where secrets cannot be fully discerned and no one really knows what other people know even within larger collectives. In this sense, the conspiratorial agenda that typically animates crime stories, implying a force that keeps a secret, fails to account for what takes place in Yokoyama's novel where the state is not 'monolithic' and where secrets – both known and also unknown, and perhaps even unknowable – constitute a means of resisting a centralizing program.

Yet *Six Four* does not rest here, in effect, endorsing secrets over transparency; rather, it moves again to counter or problematize the notion of secrecy as a form of resistance. While secrecy is used to stymie Tokyo's '*coup d'état*' (Yokoyama 2017: 463), Mikami cannot endorse the related claims of anonymity over disclosure (i.e. secrecy over transparency):

Any tale of make-believe, however far-fetched, could come alive when hidden behind a screen of anonymity. It could walk freely. Any and all developments were plausible. When it came to weaving a tale, anonymity was omnipotent, a delusion itself, one that allowed for an infinity of choice. (Yokoyama 2017: 491)

Of course, whether intended or not, this is an instructive meta-commentary on the nature of fiction and, by implication, crime fiction, at least up to the point where any number of developments are plausible and an infinity of choices remain open or possible in the manner of Žižek's parallax. Yet, just as crime stories also need to narrow possibilities and produce answers or outcomes, i.e. truths rather than the truth, even if these 'truths' or answers are only provisional or ambiguous, Mikami understands that he cannot 'allow anonymity to run wild; it was a monster, feeding on doubt to multiply indefinitely' (Yokoyama 2017: 494). Instead then, it is a form of provisional transparency he chooses – tagging along with the Mobile Command unit, as they monitor the kidnapper and ransom demands, and relaying the details back to the waiting press with a twenty-minute delay. The transparency is 'provisional' because whereas Yokoyama does give us some answers (i.e. we find out that the disgraced Koda and the bereaved father, Amamiya, have tracked down the original kidnapper, Mesaki, by calling up everyone in the telephone directory and listening to their voices, and have turned the tables by pretending to kidnap his daughter and hence subjecting him to the same kind of torment) and while the basic details of the police operation are made available to the

press, they are not *yet* told of the connections between the cases. 'If Mesaki were to be arrested, make a full confession [...] The glorious press conference to mark the arrest would, at the same time, become ground zero for the explosive secret Criminal Investigations had kept hidden for fourteen years' (Yokoyama 2017: 614), a moment that is deferred in the present of the story, wherein the new Director of Criminal Investigations had 'made the department's secret his own, drawn it in close' (Yokoyama 2017: 615).

If this is an example of Birchall's claims that 'secrecy is already at work in transparency' (2011c: 71), we might ask whether the choice between secrecy and transparency is a false one or indeed whether 'both positions fail to understand their own relation [...] to secrecy itself' (2011a: 133). By this, Birchall means 'unconditional' secrets or secrets that are not just unknown but also unknowable (2011a: 135) and turning our attention back to Yokoyama's novel, we might think about the implications of one final story strand: the disappearance, at some point before the start of the narrative, of Mikami's daughter, Ayumi, and the failure of Mikami and his wife Minako, and indeed the 260,000-strong legion of police officers in Japan, to find her. By way of a conclusion, I would like to recast this disappearance and this failure as one of these 'unknowns' or something that is 'unknowable' at least to us as readers and to think about the implications for our understanding of crime fiction and the larger relationship between genre and mobility that has framed the concerns of this essay.

In one sense, of course, crime fiction as a genre moves towards revelation, and so it is with *Six Four* where the fourteen-year-old 'secret' of the initial kidnapping is cracked. But in relation to Yokoyama's novel and, I suspect, many other crime novels that similarly disrupt, in small and not-so-small ways, this idea or telos of unmasking, there is something fundamentally misguided about Evans's generalizing remarks on the genre:

At the same time as the murderer is finally revealed, what is also restored is social order, and it is possible to see this restitution of social order as the definitive contribution of the detective story to social unease about 'origins' [...] Detection is, in this sense, a hugely healing and redemptive form of fiction and as such is immensely calming to what might be a general [...] unease about the potential chaos of the social world. (2009: 19)

This holds true only insofar as one sees or characterizes crime fiction according to the more general logic of revelation (and the fixed,

unidirectional movement from disorder to order); but what we see in *Six Four*, and in the crime novels explored in this collection as a whole, is very definitely not this. Taking transparency and secrecy as its reference points, the novel moves back and forth, in complex, unpredictable ways, from one to the other, and in doing so it radically disrupts the kind of certainties that Evans wants to ascribe to the genre. If secrecy is always already present in transparency, and vice versa, any insights or knowledge that crime fiction is able to generate will only ever be partial, provisional and always open to challenge. For Mikami, who moves between the partial transparency required of him as Director of Media Relations and the partial secrecy forced upon him by his associations with Criminal Investigations, the result is an awkward, messy and ambivalent compromise, a sense of never quite being able to settle. 'I haven't sold my soul', he says defiantly, '[b]ut nor am I clinging to my past as a detective, not any more' (Yokoyama 2017: 501). And to Evans's complacent certainties, Yokoyama offers us not only these ambiguities but also what cannot be known, e.g. Ayumi's disappearance, which is not resolved or explained at the end of the novel. Moving, in this sense, is not just in the direction of explanation and unmasking, as required by the logic and demands of transparency, but also in the direction of unknowability where secrecy refuses to reveal itself to itself.

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