



Michael Joseph, 2020

## About the Author

Matthew Hall lives on the border of England and Wales.

Matthew was educated at Hereford Cathedral School and Worcester College, Oxford. He graduated in law and, after several years as a barrister in London, began his writing career with episodes of the hit ITV show, *Kavanagh QC*. Matthew has now written over 60 hours of prime-time UK drama. His first original series, *Wing and a Prayer*, was nominated for a BAFTA and he has won several awards including a BAFTA Cymru in 2018 for *Keeping Faith*.

His debut novel, *The Coroner*, was shortlisted for the Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger in 2009 as was his fourth novel, *The Flight*, in 2012. His passions outside writing are the conservation of the countryside and amateur boxing.

# *The Black Art of Killing* by *Matthew Hall*

## About the Book

*Oxford University has never employed a man like Leo Black before.*

Now an adored lecturer destined for tenure among the gleaming spires, Leo Black served the SAS for twenty years with distinction.

When the friend he fought alongside is killed in Paris trying to prevent the abduction of a young British scientist, the world Leo has tried to put behind him begins to reel him back in. But as Leo gets closer to the startling truth about his friend's death, he faces a difficult decision.

Forget the training, the loyalty, the service and be the man the university wants him to be... Or remember that not so long ago, he was a truly exceptional soldier.

## Other books by the author

Visit [www.matthewhallbooks.com/novels.html](http://www.matthewhallbooks.com/novels.html) for a list of Matthew Hall's Jenny Cooper, *The Coroner*, series.

#AdventureSociety



## Discussion points

- The author, Matthew Hall, is an experienced screenwriter. Do you think this has influenced his writing style? How so?
- What did you think of the central character, Leo Black? Did he seem realistic?
- What elements of the novel make it an adventure story?
- Leo Black bridges two very different worlds: the SAS and Oxford University. How does he manage the different worlds and their interactions?
- How does your opinion of Colonel Freddy Towers change as the novel progresses?
- How does the author convey a mounting sense of unease and tension throughout the novel?
- Leo Black goes on a journey across the world. Do each of the locations feel true-to-life? What techniques does the author use to transport you?

## Suggested further reading

Firefly by Henry Porter

The Constant Gardener by John Le Carré

Camino Island by John Grisham

The Long Call by Ann Cleeves

## Useful Links

Matthew Hall's website: [www.matthewhallbooks.com](http://www.matthewhallbooks.com)

The Independent article by Matthew Hall: [Why I abandoned my successful TV scriptwriting career](#)

Daily Express article: [The real SAS are...](#)

[The Wilbur & Niso Smith Foundation](#)