

CHAPTER EIGHT

BY THE TIME THEY ARRIVED AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF BIRMINGHAM LADY PRESCOTT HAD CALMED _____ A LITTLE AND FREDERICK WAS FEELING A BIT MORE RELAXED.

AND AS WE PICK _____ THE STORY AGAIN (AT 1.23 P.M.) OUR TWO CHARACTERS HAVE STARTED TO GET _____ SURPRISINGLY WELL...

THE BLUE ROLLS ROYCE SLOWED _____ AND THEY DREW _____ IN FRONT OF A ROW OF SHABBY TERRACED HOUSES.

Do you see number 42, the one with the pale green door? I was born there. And this little run _____ street on the edge of the city is where I grew _____ Whenever I feel _____ I come _____ here. This will always be my home. It's dirty and messy and some of the shops are boarded _____ But as far as I'm concerned this is the best place in the world.

LADY PRESCOTT PUT _____ THE HANDBRAKE, TOOK _____ HER SEATBELT AND STEPPED _____ OF THE CAR.

And now, Mr Carruthers, I'm going for a walk. Would you like me to show you _____ ?

That would be very kind of you. But I don't want to put you _____ any trouble.

It would be no trouble at all. In fact you'd be doing me a favour. I've got a lot of things on my mind at the moment and I need someone to talk to. So I'd be very grateful if you came and walked with me.

LADY PRESCOTT LOCKED THE CAR.

THEY SET _____ ACROSS THE MARKET SQUARE ON A TOUR OF THE TOWN.

THEY CAME _____ THE NARROW STONE BRIDGE THAT CROSSED THE CANAL.

Has it changed much over the years?

No not really. They've done _____ Some of the houses ... like these ones here... but most of the properties are falling _____ or falling _____

And - anyway - I'd be a bit sad if they knocked everything _____ and put _____ one of those ugly tower blocks. Perhaps it's better to keep it the way it is. I don't want them tearing _____ my childhood. They should leave my home alone.

You say this is your home. But then why did you go _____ ?

Whenever there's an election, the politicians come _____ and knock _____ the door. They promise to pull _____ the terraced housing and build some new flats. But after the votes are counted, they never seem to get _____ to it. It's strange that, isn't it?

