

CHAPTER TWELVE

There's one thing I don't understand. Why didn't you tell the court what you did with the money? Then they would have seen things in a different light. They would have reduced your sentence. They might even have let you

I thought of that. But then the judge would have ordered the hospital to sell the machines and pay the money. And that was the last thing I wanted. I may have got going to prison but what would have happened to the children? I couldn't take that risk.

LADY PRESCOTT SHOOK HER HEAD.

I can't decide if you were very brave or very stupid. But I have to admire what you did. And you nearly got it. You were really quite unlucky.

A SILENCE FELL BETWEEN THEM. FREDERICK WAS STARING DEEP INTO HIS COFFEE. TELLING THE STORY OF THE KIDNEY MACHINES HAD BROUGHT SOME PAINFUL MEMORIES. AND HE SUDDENLY FELT VERY

How could a good man end like this? He's falling apart. I must help him. I can't just stand and do nothing.

Now I don't condone stealing. Theft is theft and you deserved to be punished. But after two years in jail you've paid your debt.

AND WITH THAT SHE SUDDENLY STOOD AND PICKED HER BAG.

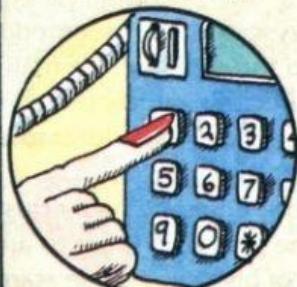
Would you excuse me, Mr Carruthers? I have a couple of calls to make.

LADY PRESCOTT WALKED TO THE PAY PHONE IN THE CORNER OF THE ROOM. SHE TOOK A YELLOW DIARY, THE BAG AND LOOKED UP A NUMBER. THEN SHE PICKED THE RECEIVER, PUT SOME COINS IN THE SLOT AND STARTED DIALLING.

FREDERICK TURNED HIS FACE AND LOOKED AT CRAWFORD STREET. THERE WERE NOW LOTS OF PEOPLE. IT WAS HALF PAST THREE AND THE LOCAL SCHOOL HAD JUST BROKEN UP FOR THE DAY. A YOUNG GIRL CAME IN AND ORDERED SOME CHIPS.

LADY PRESCOTT FINISHED HER FIRST CALL AND PUT THE PHONE. THEN SHE TURNED AND LOOKED ACROSS AT FREDERICK, HE WAS MILES AWAY, STARING THE WINDOW.

SHE PICKED THE PHONE AGAIN AND DIALLED A SECOND NUMBER.



A FEW MINUTES LATER SHE WAS

Is that Newtown Prison? This is Lady Prescott. I want to speak to my husband.