Frank's last case

Sergeant Frank Spike is not a successful police officer. But he has 'a nose for crime'. Will his last case be a success?

Match the definitions to the word:

to be promoted	**a cruise**	**evidence**	**inspector**	**sergeant**	**to retire**
reliable	**to have a nose for something**				

to be good at finding a particular thing	
a police officer who is below an inspector	
to stop working because you have reached a certain age	
a holiday on a large ship	
a police officer who is above a sergeant	
to be given a more important or higher-level job	
describing someone that you can trust to behave in the way you want or need	
anything that helps to show if something is true or not true about crime	

Reading text

Sergeant Frank Spike sat behind his desk and looked out of the window. Outside, cars moved slowly in the cold, grey rain. He looked down at the grey hairs on his arms. His round stomach pushed against the desk. This was his final month before he retired from the police. For Frank, his last day couldn't come too soon.

Frank felt angry as he thought about the money he would get when he retired. It wasn't enough money to pay for a short holiday on the cold and rainy east coast of England where he lived. It certainly wouldn't pay for his dream holiday – a luxury, round-the-world cruise.

Just then, Inspector Spencer came to Frank's desk. Spencer had perfect white teeth and he was always smiling. Three years earlier, Spencer had been promoted. Now he was an inspector at the young age of forty. Frank wasn't so lucky. He had worked for the police for forty years and he was still a sergeant. Frank knew he wasn't as handsome or as friendly as Spencer, sorry, *Inspector* Spencer. But Frank was a better policeman. Frank had 'a nose for crime' and Spencer didn't. That 'nose' meant Frank could think like a criminal and solve the most difficult crimes. As a result, the younger man often asked for Frank's help. In fact, it was the only time Spencer spoke to him.

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'Hey, Frank, can I ask you something?' asked Spencer.

Frank wasn't surprised.

'Do you know who the Babbingtons are?' Spencer continued.

Everyone knew who the Babbingtons were. Ronald Babbington was the super-rich owner of Babbington Oil, and his wife Tabitha was a model. Together they loved showing how rich they were. They often appeared in magazines like *Hello!*, with their beautiful house and their collection of cars. Last month, Ronald had bought an enormous diamond for Tabitha. The diamond sat in a large gold and glass case at the end of a long, red carpet. There was an alarm system to keep it safe.

Spencer continued to explain.

'Someone told us about a plan to steal the Babbington diamond!'

Frank tried to look as though he was surprised.

'Peggy, the owner of the Dog and Duck pub, heard two local criminals making the plan,' Spencer said. 'She asked us to keep her name secret, of course.'

'OK,' Frank said. He waited for the question he knew would come.

'So?' Spencer asked. 'What should we do? They haven't committed a crime yet.'

Frank looked out of the window. He remembered his retirement money. He didn't want to be alone in his retirement, but the money wouldn't even be enough to buy a cat.

The sound of a car outside brought him back to the conversation with Spencer. He put his fingers together under his chin to look as if he was thinking. In fact, he was, but not in the way Inspector Spencer expected.

'Listen, do this the clever way,' said Frank. 'Let them steal the diamond. If you catch them with the diamond, you can arrest them, no problem.'

'But, Frank,' said Spencer, 'we would need the Babbingtons to agree. And there are laws against trying to trick criminals like that, you know!'

'That's why you let them steal the diamond. Then, as if by chance, you stop them for driving too fast as they escape. Search the car and find the diamond. You don't need to tell anyone that we knew about their plan. And they'll go to prison.'

'Hmmmm. OK.' Spencer was uncomfortable with the idea Frank was suggesting. But he knew it would work.

Frank continued, 'Of course, the officer who arrests them needs to be reliable.'

Spencer understood immediately.

'Are you sure you want to do it, Frank? It could be dangerous.'

LIVEWORKSHEETS

'I'll take two young officers with me. But, yes, of course I want to do it.'

'Why?' asked Spencer. 'You're going to retire soon! Don't you want to take it easy?'

'That's exactly why I want to do it,' Frank replied. 'My last case will be my best!'

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A few days later, Frank visited the Dog and Duck pub after work.

'Did you get it?' he asked Peggy as she gave him his drink.

'Yes. I have now got a perfect copy of the Babbington diamond,' she said. 'I told the glassmaker I was a big fan of the Babbingtons. And I said that my boyfriend wouldn't buy me a diamond of my own.'

'You need a new boyfriend,' said Frank. 'If I were your boyfriend, I'd buy you a diamond ring and take you on a long luxury cruise.'

'Oh, really?' she said and smiled.

*****

Frank was sitting in the back seat of the police car. The car was hidden in a small road next to the Babbington house. In the front seats were two strong, young police officers.

At 23.30, a message came in on the police radio. The thieves, a man and a tall woman, had met outside the Dog and Duck pub. At 23.37, they got into a car. The man started the car and drove away from the pub.

At midnight, the thieves passed the hidden police car on the way to the Babbingtons' house. At 00.13, the woman climbed over one of the garden walls. A second hidden police team watched her climb over, while the man waited in the car.

At 00.20, the woman climbed back over the wall. She had an excited smile on her face. She ran back to the car. Smiling, the man waited for her to jump in and then they drove away.

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Almost immediately, the thieves passed Frank's car. The young police officer in the driver's seat switched on the blue lights and followed them.

Inside the car, the thieves were afraid.

'What are they doing here?' the man shouted. 'You said you turned off the alarms!'

'Relax, I did,' she replied. 'Remember, the police don't know what we've done. Just be normal! We can walk away from this with the diamond.'

The man stopped the car and opened his window.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

'Is there a problem, officer?' he asked. His face was red and shiny because he was so nervous.

'You were speeding. We'll need to give you a ticket. Can you both get out of the car, please?'

The man still looked nervous. One officer wrote the speeding ticket and the other stood close in case they ran away. Frank began to search the car.

'Hey! What's he doing?' the woman said. But she knew the game was over.

Frank breathed heavily as he started looking under the seats. His hand felt something smooth, hard and cold under the front passenger seat. *The Babbington diamond!* He took the diamond and put it in his jacket pocket. At the same time, with his other hand, he took something very similar out of his trouser pocket. He held it up.

'OK, you two!' he said. 'You are under arrest for stealing this diamond!'

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While the young police officers arrested the criminals, Frank held the evidence up for everyone to see. In the light from the moon, it shone every colour.

'Wow!' said one of the young police officers. 'I've never seen a real diamond up close.'

'Imagine if someone gave you that as a present!' said the other.

'Just imagine,' Frank agreed. He carefully put it into an evidence bag. Half an hour later, back at the station, he gave it to Spencer. Spencer took it from him carefully, as if it was a new baby.

*****

Five weeks later, Frank was sitting in his new armchair and drinking a glass of the best champagne. His expensive new cat sat at his feet.

He picked up the local newspaper. The two thieves had got six years in prison. The photo in the newspaper was of the Babbingtons. They were standing next to the diamond inside its new, extra-strong glass case. Frank looked closer at the photo of the diamond.

Only an expert would notice anything strange about the Babbington diamond. And only if they saw the diamond up close.

Frank put the newspaper down and picked up one of the travel magazines on his beautiful new coffee table.

'Peggy?' he said. 'Would you like to go to the Bahamas or the Maldives?'

Peggy put down her own champagne glass. A small diamond ring on her finger shone in the light. 'Why not both?' she smiled.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

'I did promise you a long cruise,' he said.

'You did!' she replied. 'I'm so glad I called you first when I heard them planning to steal the diamond.'

'Me too, Peggy,' he said. 'Me too.'

Life now he had retired was a wonderful thing after all.

Story written by Clive Lane and adapted by Nicola Prentis

Are the sentences true or false?

1. At the beginning of the story, Frank hoped he might get promoted.	
2. Frank guessed that Inspector Spencer would ask for his help.	
3. When Spencer told Frank about the plan to steal the diamond, Frank already knew about it.	
4. Frank and the other police officers stopped the thieves before they took the diamond.	
5. Frank's plan went perfectly.	
6. Peggy and Frank shared the rewards of their crime.	

Complete the sentences.

promoted	**put**	**said**	**told**
noticed	**got**	**arrested**	**retired**

1. It was Frank's last month before he _____.
2. Three years earlier, Spencer had been _____ to inspector.
3. Peggy _____the police about the plan to steal the diamond.
4. Frank _____ they should arrest the criminals after they stole the diamond.
5. Peggy _____ an exact copy of the Babbington diamond.
6. Frank _____ the real diamond in his jacket pocket.
7. Frank held up the copy of the diamond while the young officers _____ the criminals.
8. Nobody _____ anything strange about the 'Babbington diamond'.

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