

Frank's last case Sergeant Frank Spike sat behind his desk and looked out of the window. Story written by Clive Lane and adapted by Nicola Prentis He didn't want to be alone in his retirement, but the money wouldn't even be enough to buy a cat. Frank continued, 'Of course, the officer who arrests them needs to be reliable.' 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. Ronald Babbington was the super-rich owner of Babbington Oil, and his wife Tabitha was a model. ***** A few days later, Frank visited the Dog and Duck pub after work. 'I told the glassmaker I was a big fan of the Babbingtons. The thieves, a man and a tall woman, had met outside the Dog and Duck pub. At midnight, the thieves passed the hidden police car on the way to the Babbingtons' house. Frank breathed heavily as he started looking under the seats. 'Would you like to go to the Bahamas or the Maldives?' He looked down at the grey hairs on his arms. 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. Three years earlier, Spencer had been promoted. Frank wasn't so lucky. 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. Frank wasn't surprised. 'Do you know who the Babbingtons are?' Spencer continued. Everyone knew who the Babbingtons 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. Spencer continued to explain. 'Someone told us about a plan to steal the Babbington diamond!' Peggy, the owner of the Dog and Duck pub, heard two local criminals making the plan, 'Spencer said. 'OK,' Frank said. They haven't committed a crime yet. 'He remembered his retirement money. 'But, Frank,' said Spencer, 'we would need the Babbingtons to agree. And they'll go to prison. "Hmmm. OK. 'I'll take two young officers with me. But, yes, of course I want to do it. "You're going to retire soon! That's exactly why I want to do it,' Frank replied. I have now got a perfect copy of the Babbington diamond,' she said. And I said that my boyfriend wouldn't buy me a diamond of my own. "If I were your boyfriend, I'd buy you a diamond ring and take you on a long luxury cruise.' she said and smiled. The car was hidden in a small road next to the Babbington house. The man started the car and drove away from the pub. At 00.13, the woman climbed over one of the garden walls. At 00.20, the woman climbed back over the wall. ***** Almost immediately, the thieves passed Frank's car. Inside the car, the thieves were afraid. 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. His face was red and shiny because he was so nervous. 'You were speeding. We'll need to give you a ticket. One officer wrote the speeding ticket and the other stood close in case they ran away. His hand felt something smooth, hard and cold under the front passenger seat. The Babbington diamond! 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!' In the light from the moon, it shone every colour. 'I've never seen a real diamond up close. ***** Five weeks later, Frank was sitting in his new armchair and drinking a glass of the best champagne. The two thieves had got six years in prison. The photo in the newspaper was of the Babbingtons. Only an expert would notice anything strange about the Babbington diamond. A small diamond ring on her finger shone in the light. she smiled. she replied. Life now he had retired was a wonderful thing after all. Outside, cars moved slowly in

the cold, grey rain. His round stomach pushed against the desk. Just then, Inspector Spencer came to Frank's desk. Spencer had perfect white teeth and he was always smiling. Now he was an inspector at the young age of forty. He had worked for the police for forty years and he was still a sergeant. 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. 'Hey, Frank, can I ask you something?' asked Spencer. Together they loved showing how rich they were. 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. Frank tried to look as though he was surprised. 'She asked us to keep her name secret, of course.' He waited for the question he knew would come. 'So?' Spencer asked. 'What should we do?' Frank looked out of the window. The sound of a car outside brought him back to the conversation with Spencer. 'Let them steal the diamond. Why?'