

CHAPTER 1

I thought a funeral was a hell of a place to meet a client. But she'd insisted and besides my mate Jeff had recommended me.

"It's at the Church of England cemetery in Hampstead." She gave me the address and then repeated her name and the name of her deceased husband. "One o'clock this Thursday! Jeff says you're the best there is. Is that right?"

"I'm still breathing and paying income tax if that's any reference."

"Thursday then! You'll easily recognise me. I'll be in black and crying."

There was a front to her voice, as though the grief was being hidden with bravado. Though why a woman who sounded middling thirties recently widowed shouldn't be entitled to be sad escaped me. I expected her to add something to what she'd already said. But the phone clicked and she was gone.

There was just one woman and no more than six or seven men by the grave, so there was no difficulty in identifying her. She was right on both points. She was in black and she was crying. She held a crumpled tissue and dabbed at her tears, then every so often found a small section of it and blew her nose. She was tall and slim in a black mid-calf-length coat, black wide-brimmed hat, black tights and black high heels. She stood beside the minister at the grave head, close to a small chubby chap, the rest of the men in a semicircle around them. I only knew of a couple, Tom Stafford, a Chief Inspector from Kensington nick and Bobby Hallet, a third

rate villain with a record as long as the Edgware Road. I was surprised to see them together knowing they probably wished each other was in the coffin instead of her Frank.

The window of a car parked in the small roadway skirting the plot opened and someone pointed a camera and started snapping faces. The wind blew through the trees. Clothes flapped. The grave diggers eased the coffin down. Veneered pine rasped against the hard earth. She turned slowly taking in the scene, looked first at the minister then quizzically from face to face at the men behind her. She turned my way and casually eyed me, I supposed to check Jeff's description against what had turned up. Then she went back to staring at the grave.

“For as much as it hath pleased our Lord of his great mercy to take to himself the soul of our dear brother, Frank Harvey, here departed ...”

I shivered, unsure if it was the weather or the place. Funerals always make me queasy. I could have been at Steve's playing snooker or sinking a pint instead of standing around like a bottle of milk on a doorstep. Although it's an enquiry agent's lot to hang about, an occupational hazard you might say, waiting for someone to show up. Or waiting for someone to leave, somewhere they shouldn't have been in the first place.

It started drizzling. The rain dampened the brown scattered leaves and the wreaths either side of the grave. I looked over at Tom Stafford with his bald bullet head and bags under his eyes. Bobby stood a few feet from him in trainers and a body warmer. His face small and narrow, pock-marked with acne around the

mouth, smiling as the ropes were slipped from the coffin. The minister picked up pace.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. In the sure and certain hope...”

He was about at the end of his spiel when a maroon-coloured Merc slid to a halt in front of the Daimler hearse. The driver's window slid down and a man with a round face and mop styled haircut wearing granny-styled sunglasses peered out. An older man got out the passenger side and in to the back. That window slid down. The unshaven faces stared unspeaking.

Frank's widow eyed me again. Her face pale, her eyes heavy from a bit too much mascara, but the full lips had lipstick applied just right. She smiled, it was a pleasant smile revealing a tiny gap between her two front teeth. I wondered what she'd invited me in to, what with villains and coppers who hated each other standing together and mourners turning up in flash Mercs.

The minister made the sign of the cross and Frank had had his send-off.

The man beside the widow also made a cross, then pecked her on the cheek the others in their dark suits and black ties stood for a moment slightly embarrassed, waiting their cue from Lisa. I felt awkward in Levis, open-neck shirt and leather jacket, even if the jacket did cost three hundred quid. The minister touched her arm, said something, she smiled, then stared at the open grave where drizzle now fell on the casket and blew it a kiss. Then after several mourners had offered their condolences and kisses, she made her way over to me.

“Mister Sutton, Eddie Sutton? Thanks for coming. You’re just like Jeff said you was.”

“Sorry to hear about your husband.”

“Thank you.”

She introduced the tubby guy as Clive, her brother.

“I’m still numbed; everything’s ’appened so quick. One minute he was fine. Then a heart attack and....” Tears welled up and rolled down her already wet cheeks so that rain and tears mixed together and streaked her make-up. She leaned against Clive. “Just over forty,” she sobbed. “Can you believe that! Just over forty.”

I said I was sorry again and then asked how I could help her.

“You can help all right. First off, by seeing me home. There’s not going to be any wake. And then there’s them!” She nodded in the direction of the Merc. “The older one’s George Norton, the younger one’s his brother Terry, friends of my Franky. They’re only here for one reason.”

“Which is?”

“Trouble!”

“If I’d have known it was a minder’s job, I’d ...”

“Oh, there’s something else as well, don’t worry.”

“What’s that?”

“Help me find two million quid’s worth of bent money.” She said it quite matter of factly as she popped a spare tissue back into her coat pocket.

“I see, and what do we do if we find it?” I asked.

“Why, give it back of course!”

CHAPTER 2

We walked from the grave to Clive's car parked in the roadway. The drizzle got stronger. Beads of rain meandered down the windscreen. Lisa turned and stared back to where the gravediggers hurried to cover Frank. She blew him another kiss and whispered she loved him. Then dabbed at fresh tears. We stood about ten feet from the Merc, conscious all the time of four unblinking eyes on us. One of its doors opened and the older guy got out. He was medium height, thickset with a nose like a mushroom and dark shadows under his eyes. I thought he was going to speak. Instead he just stared. Lisa tightened her grip on Clive.

"It'll be all right, pet!" Clive said. "I was going to take her back," he said to me, "but she's right, you should. Besides, I know she wants to talk to you."

A scuffle broke out behind us. Bobby had pulled the camera away from its owner, dropped it on the ground and was about to stomp on it when Stafford stepped in front of him.

"That's police property." He said. Bobby smiled. "And very expensive" Stafford added grabbing Bobby by the balls.

Bobby's mouth opened, but all he could do was groan. He tried to speak as Stafford slowly twisted his handful. But the words wouldn't come out. He tried again and again, but all there was, was just grunting. He tried to shift Stafford's hand, but couldn't. His cheeks blew out like he was trying to hang onto his breakfast and then he slowly doubled over.

"So don't touch what don't belong to you alright!"

Bobby's groan of relief was almost animal sounding as Stafford let go. He lurched forward, then slumped against a car holding his crotch.

"They couldn't even let me bury my Franky in peace. Bastards!" Lisa cursed.

We drove along a narrow winding road lined with tall willow trees. A watery sun ahead played peek-a-boo behind outstretched branches. I turned left past the two-storey red brick chapel, where not long before they'd said prayers for Frank Harvey. The beds of pansies either side of the door shafted mauves and yellows into what was otherwise a day as grey as the marble headstones. I turned through the large wrought-iron gates onto the main road .

"Where to?" I asked.

"I live in Islington. D'you know it?"

"I know the Emirates."

"How come the Arsenal?"

"I was brought up not far from there. Got taken to the Gunners as a kid by my dad when he was off duty and it sort of stuck."

We'd gone almost two miles with only the hum of the wheels and the drone of the engine between us when I asked her why'd she'd wanted to meet me at Frank's funeral instead of coming to my office?

"So you could see up front all the players involved in this bit of aggro. Talking of which are we being followed?"

I looked in the driver's mirror, but there was nothing suspicious.

“Who are you expecting?”

“The brothers Grim!”

“Why would they be following us?” I asked.

“Intimidation” she replied nervously “and they'll be noseey about who you are.”

I took another look, but there wasn't anything there. “It's a long story” she continued. “Them,” she said, throwing her thumb over her shoulder at imagined pursuers, “them and a geezer called Don Taylor and my Franky did a job. Oh! And Bobby Hallet, he was in on it too. Five of them, right! They turned over a jeweller's in Kensington. It should have been a doddle. But it all went wrong.” She fell into momentary silence. Don Taylor rang a distant cord. I was fumbling with my memory when she said, “It should have been like falling of a log, my Franky reckoned.”

“But it wasn't?”

“He got the loot all right, twenty million quid's worth.

Jewellery, stones, mostly stones in necklaces and pendants, stuff in for repair, stuff in for valuation, maybe not all belonging to the jeweller's but all on the premises. They hit the jackpot, it was a right killing!”

“But?”

“He also got nicked. That's what my Franky was on remand awaiting trial for.”

CHAPTER 3

We turned into a wide Islington street.

“This is Westbourne Lodge Road,” she said. “I live at the bottom. Not far.” I was expecting Islington glitzy, but this was the poorer part. “Just over there. Just on your left,” she added.

I pulled into a small ex- council estate of three-storey town houses, all identical except for the colour of the front doors. It reminded me of my own upbringing on a council estate in Clapton, North East London, through the seventies. A couple of lads opposite on bikes skidded on the roadway beside garages with AFC scrolled across the doors. I parked wondering if they’d nick anything off the Beema and followed her in.

It was small with a cloakroom and a bedroom on the ground floor painted magnolia. She led me upstairs into a large lounge and pulled back the curtains allowing late afternoon sunshine to flood the room. There was a green sofa against the far wall, a couple of easy chairs and a TV with a plant on it. She took off her hat and shook her hair. It hardly moved because it was cut so short, almost clipped, but in a well-styled way. She ran her hand through it, took off her coat and asked for my jacket.

“Have a seat. I should take the sofa, it’s the comfiest.”

The furniture looked cheap except for the television. There were a couple of prints, a Lowry and a ship on the high seas, photos of Frank and her on a dresser beside a couple of vases of carnations, a wedding snap on the steps of a church. She, slimmer, in a long white dress holding a posy of lilies, her blond hair shoulder length,

her face thinner, heavily powdered, her eyes made up with thick mascara. The groom was tall, slim, with an angular face, square jaw, long black hair over his ears, his thin nose . He wore a dark suit with a white shirt and grey tie. He smiled but looked uncomfortable. There were other snaps of them in the sun.

She asked if I wanted a drink. But I declined.

“You won’t mind if I do.” She opened a dresser and poured herself a neat gin. “Cheers! They call it mother’s ruin. Funny how drinks get names. Makes you wonder who thought of them and how they got associated with a particular drink. Maybe it’s just street slang. Easy to say a name than the content of a drink. Funny though! Franky says, I mean he used to say, that is, what I mean is, oh, shit!” she exclaimed, wiping her eyes.

“You all right?”

“Yeah, yeah.” She took a nip, then gulped the rest and wiped her eyes again with the back of her hand.

“How long were you married?”

“fifteen years. I was nineteen, a hairdresser. He was twenty-five. A car mechanic by trade. I knew he’d had his problems with the law, but I thought he was the greatest thing since sliced bread.” She asked again if I’d have a drink.

“No thanks.”

“I thought marriage might change him but ...”

“Talking of Frank, you never finished your story.” She rested the glass on the arm of an easy chair and said,

“Ever ’eard of a jeweller’s called Weindenfeldt’s?”

I knew of them and why I knew Don Taylor’s name.

It all came back to me. Because for two days last summer they'd been the headlines on TV and in the newspapers. Five of them in a stolen car had parked up on the pavement outside the jeweller's in High Street Ken, a hundred-odd yards from St Mary Abbots Church at about 8.30 in the morning. It was a warm sunny July Friday with a Wedgwood-blue sky. There was some traffic. But by and large Kensington hadn't quite woken up yet. They'd waited as members of staff were buzzed in. One, two, three, and then when the door opened for the last one, four of them, by now in masks and tooled up crashed in. One of them pulled the door and window blinds down while another put a round from a sawn-off into the ceiling, then ordered everyone on the floor face down.

"I remember it," I said.

She finished her drink and poured herself another.

"My Frank and George held the staff down while Don and Bobby cleared the safe of everything." She said.

I also remembered the punch line to the robbery. The bit that the media had loved. The four then had strolled out of the shop back to the Jag, as casual as you like. Terry revved up and pulled away from the kerb just as a cab completed a U-turn from the opposite side of the road between the long banks of traffic islands that divide the wide carriageways along there. The vehicles collided. The cab's wheel arch got tangled with the Jag's bumper. Terry reversed hard, trying to disengage. Meanwhile the cabby was out of his taxi banging on their window. Terry tried reversing again only ripping the wheel arch further, sending the cab driver nuts. Then Don got out of the motor yelling, screaming, swearing

at the taxi driver to back up, then stuck the sawn-off in his face.

By now a knot of traffic had developed behind them, one, a few cars down, was an unmarked diplomatic protection security patrol group car on its way back to Palace Gate in Kensington, where all the embassies are. That's how the copper came to have a gun. He was one of three in the car. He got out to investigate what the commotion and the delay was about. He saw the shooter, withdrew his own gun yelled 'armed officer, drop your weapon'. Maybe Don would have. Maybe not. Who knows? But as he turned, weapon still in hand, the officer discharged two round right into Don's heart.

"I remember it," I said, "everything."

"Just a fluke! All of it, just a fluke," she murmured. A million-to-one chance!"

She was right. But sometimes it's the stuff a life is made of. Or a death. From the start of the robbery to Don hitting the pavement had taken all of eight and a half minutes!

"They reckon Don was probably dead before he hit the ground."

"That's the way they're trained." I said.

She gave me a sideways glance and said, "Once a copper, always a copper, I suppose! There was mayhem, well, you can imagine, pedestrians screaming, running. Some towards the shop, others away from it. The cops not sure what they were dealing with. Absolute bedlam. And while it's all kicking off my Franky jumps out the motor and legs with the goods.

"Lucky moment for him in a way."

“Not really. If he hadn’t snatched the gear then. He’d have done it a bit later. Because he was out to double cross the other four.”

Her phone rang. She listened for a few moments then her face turned ashen, then the phone more or less fell out of her hand. She lifted her glass and finished the lot.

“What’s the matter, Lisa?”

“It’s started again. I knew it would. I’m surprised those bastards didn’t have a go at the funeral.”

“What’s started? Who was that?”

“George Norton. Mister headcase himself.”

“You mean one of the blokes in the Merc?”

“Trying to scare me. Again.”

“About what?”

“What d’you think? Looking for the jewellery.”

“What did he say?”

“It doesn’t matter, ’cause he’s not going to stop me. He’s been on my case one way and another, from the start, for nearly three months, wanting to know what Frank did with the gear. What he might have told me. Did I know where he’d stashed it? He’s tried threats, intimidation, ’cause he still thinks I know. But I don’t.”

The liquor had put a little colour into her face, but you could tell she’d had a fright. Even so, I could see what Frank saw in her, she was an attractive woman, tall, slim, with a good figure. And I got to thinking what a shame she was so recently widowed!

“I’m not sure what you’re on about, Lisa. But you better give this some serious thought. Anyone that can blast his way into a jeweller’s isn’t going to be too concerned about smacking you around. Or worse.”

The phone rang again. She looked at it for a long time.

“Here, let me.” I said.

She shook her head.

“No, I’m ready for him this time.” She grabbed it up. The hard lines around her mouth even deeper. “It’s Clive,” she said. “Yes, Clive. No problems at all. Yes, he’s still here. Yes, love, I’m fine. I’ll ring in the morning and thanks again for being with me today. You’re a real sweetie.” She held her head then closed her eyes.

“It was nice of you to have offered to take the call. Especially as George knows you’re involved.”

“Am I?”

“Involved?” She refilled her glass. “Oh, yeah! You are now.”

“Really? Well, you’ve got another think coming. At least until I know what’s cooking here!”

“Even if you quit now he’ll keep tabs on you for the next couple of weeks. He’s that sort. As for what’s cooking? It’s like I said at the funeral. It’s about two million quid’s worth of bent money.”

First it was about money. Then it was about jewellery. Then she was on about money again. I was getting a bit confused, and not just a little annoyed. I watched her twiddling her glass as she spoke. She looked at the bottle as though deciding about a third.

“You know the more I hear, the less I like about all this. Lisa. So, with the best will in the world.....”

“What about a hundred grand in your bin, all strictly kosher.

Like that?”

“Maybe I’ll have that drink after all.”

“What’ll it be? Scotch, brandy?”

“Coffee, please.”

I followed her into the kitchen, which was small and square. It looked like a B&Q do-it-yourself job with white wood wall and floor units, and grey worktop surfaces. She put a cup and saucer out, then filled the kettle.

“What happened after the robbery, with the share-out and so forth?” I asked.

“I’m about to take a big chance on you. I just hope you’re worth it.”

“So do I.”

She told me that the five of them were supposed to meet up with the original fence for the share-out on the following Sunday morning at George and Terry’s car breaker’s yard in Brixton. But that Frank had planned to double-cross them all along. He’d set up a deal with a different fence for the Saturday night, and turned the jewellery for two million cash. The plan was a fifty–fifty share-out with a mate of his, then off abroad where Lisa would have joined him.

“’Cause George and the others don’t know this,” she said, waiting for the kettle to boil. “As far as they’re concerned, the jewellery’s still stashed somewhere.”

“So where does the hundred grand come in?”

“You asked me earlier what we ...”

“We?”

“I should do if I found the money. Let me ask you the same question.”

“You said it before. Once a copper, always a copper! Go to the police.”

“Nearly right. Go to the insurers. Frank’s brief reckons they would cough up a finder’s reward for the fenced money. Not the jewellery, because who knows where the hell that is now. But the payout.”

Steam plumed from the kettle clouding a nearby window. She made coffee and handed it to me.

“Help yourself to sugar.”

“No thanks. Trying to watch my weight.” She looked me up and down.

“You don’t look as though you’ve got much to worry about. What are you, forty?”

“Forty-one.”

“Most of the blokes I know in their forties have already started a beer gut.” I stirred in some milk. She gave me another once-over. “You must work out.”

“How much does he reckon this brief of Frank’s?”

“Ten per cent. On two million. Do the maths! A hundred grand each.”

“Just like that!”

“Yes, as a matter of fact, exactly like that! Well, not exactly. The insurers would pay the reward all right. But not to me –’cause

I'm Frank's widow and Frank's the one that nicked the stuff in the first place."

I could see the logic. The Board being embarrassed if a newspaper or a shareholder got hold of the story. "That's why it's not worth my while even co-operating with their insurance investigators" she continued". "But I want the money. Maybe a hundred grand's not a lot to you ..."

"Lisa, a hundred grand's a hundred grand! Believe me, I ain't knocking it." And I wouldn't. I liked and appreciated money. I liked what it bought, like my new Beema, good clothes, eating in good restaurants. There's something nice and warm and reassuring about having money, especially if you've been brought up without it, which I was. I liked that reassuring feeling. I liked it a lot. Not that money's my be-all and end-all. It says in the bible you should give to the poor, which I agree with, but nowhere does it say you should be one of them.

"I won't bore you with an autobiography," she went on. "But life hasn't been easy. Clive and me were orphaned when we was kids and brought up by an aunt who was as mad as a March hare. I loved my Frank. But him doing bird every five minutes and now losing him hasn't made for an easy life. A hundred grand won't bring him back, but it would be a brilliant little nest egg against the future."

"I can see that .What exactly is the help you want?"

"Someone to co-operate with in finding the money and then fronting for both of us in getting the finder's fee with me in the background."

"I see."

“You were recommended. But I’ve no real way of knowing if you’re any good.”

“Thanks a lot!”

“On the other hand I’m no match on my own for George, Terry, Bobby or the insurance people. So I’m stuck with taking a risk.”

I stirred my coffee and thought about all she’d said.

“Who was the fence?” I asked.

She paused for a long time busying herself unnecessarily wiping up a few coffee granules that had fallen on the kitchen worktop. I suppose in the end she decided to take a gamble because she said,

“Ralph Leyton. He owns a jeweller’s-cum-pawnshop in Queensway.”

“And Frank’s partner?”

“I don’t know.”

“Do me a favour, Lisa!”

“Honest. Frank only told me about the blag the night before and that he’d be holed up in some B&B overnight until the stuff was fenced. And then we’d be going abroad. That’s how it come out about the double-cross. I asked him when the five was meeting. He smiled and said it was just going to be two of them.”

“But you must have asked him who?”

“Course! But he wouldn’t say. But it stands to reason it was one of the other four that he’d done the raid with. Its obvious Frank and this other one had planned a two way split from the start and just used the other three. Bloody Frank!” she suddenly

exclaimed “I’d have been better off being told nothing instead of some of it.”

“Why d’you say that?”

“Look at the shit he’s left me in. Everybody thinks I know more than I do. Then again that was my Frank. He just told you what he thought you should know. And that was it!”

I’d only had a few sips of the coffee when the doorbell rang. Two long definite rings letting you know the caller meant business. She went to the window and hesitantly twitched the curtain taking a sideways glance.

“Great! That’s all I bloody needed,” she cursed.

CHAPTER 4

I stood in the narrow hallway as she opened the front door.

“Yeess!” she exclaimed in mock greeting. “And what can I do for you?”

“Hello, Lisa, remember me? Detective Chief Inspector Stafford. This is DC Longton; we’re here to offer our condolences. Mind if we come in?” and not waiting for an answer barged past her. “Wipe your feet,” Stafford said, without turning around. “Wouldn’t want Mrs Harvey to get a bad impression about the police.” He stopped a couple of feet from me looking me up and down like I was something he couldn’t make up his mind about buying, and decided he wasn’t going to buy after all “Good afternoon. I’m Chief Inspector Stafford and this is”

“I heard.”

“And you’d be?”

“A friend of Mrs Harvey’s.”

That nasty little smile I’d seen earlier as he’d grabbed Bobby’s balls broke at the corner of his thick lips.

“How cosy! Sorry to hear about Frank, Lisa.”

“I can imagine!”

“I was at the funeral.”

“You don’t say!”

“Got lots of snaps.”

Lisa stood beside me. The pair of us blocking the hall and making the point he wasn’t going to be invited any further. She was shaking a little. The voice was full of bravado. But it was just front

denying Stafford the satisfaction of intimidation. Underneath it she struck me as just another spouse having to put up with the fall out from a husband that was a villain and playing the part of the coping wife. Though she looked to me like she wasn't coping very well.

“Yes, lots of nice snaps. And I heard a little bit of gossip about you the other day, Lisa.” He turned to Longton, a twenty-something with blond hair wearing a shirt with a collar size too large. “Remember me mentioning it to you, Longton, that Mrs Harvey had come up in conversation?”

“That's right, gov. I remember it clearly.”

“Shouldn't you be sitting on your governor's knee with his hand up the back of your shirt when you speak, sonny!” Lisa exclaimed.

Longton, who'd been enjoying Stafford's authority, started to say something but nothing came out.

“Just the other day it was,” Stafford added.

“And what did you hear? That I'd cancelled my standing order to police charity?”

“Much worse. That you're looking for the jewellery. That's why I'm here Mrs Harvey to give you a gypsies warning.”

“And what's that?”

“Keep your nose out of police business. More importantly your nose out of my business!”

“And what business is that?” she asked.

“The stuff your husband and his lowlife friends nicked from Weindenfeldts.” He moved right up close to her and told her that the robbery was still under police investigation. “So I don't need

you “ he continued . “Or the three bits of rubbish that turned up this morning to see your old man off getting in my way. Is that clear!”

You could see Lisa was slightly taken aback by the outburst. I wondered how she'd respond and whether I should say something. But before I could she made an exaggerated gesture of pulling back her sleeve and checking her watch.

“Is that time. Tut, tut, you mustn't let me keep you.”

“You get in the way of my investigation. I'll nick you for interfering with police business, perverting the course of justice, and anything else I can think of .Capice!”

“Fluent German” she said sarcastically. “Who would have guessed!”

Stafford looked around the hall, then craned his neck to cop a look into the rooms. “You've redecorated since I was last here.”

“I wonder if it was anything to do with the state you left the place in?” she said turning to me. “I'm sitting here that Friday night watching the telly. They didn't even ring, just zapped the door open. You 'ad to be here to believe it. Him and Christ knows how many others. All stab vests and BO.” Her face lost a little of what humour was in it recalling the events and the obvious fright the whole episode had given her.

“We just wanted a word with Frank.”

“But the fact he wasn't here didn't stop you taking the place apart. Did it? Did it?” she spat. “All those questions, Jesus! Where was he? When did I last see him? What did I know about the blag? On and on, Three of them in a semi-circle around me firing questions , questions, questions.”

“And Lisa only made one mistake. Didn’t you? That’s why she’s got the hump.”

“And what was that?” I asked.

“Shall I tell him or will you?” Lisa was silent, “Oh, well, if you insist. She’d written down the address of the B&B where Frank was holed up on a pad. The biro left an imprint on the other pages. Longton here found it, put two and two together, and well, there you go! I don’t think I’ve left anything out, have I, Lisa?”

“But how did you know it was Frank you were after in the first place?” I asked.

“From information received.”

“You mean he was grassed?” I said.

Lisa lifted her head slowly and looked right into Stafford’s eyes. Hers became rheumy and I thought she might cry after all.

“Such an emotive word that. Wouldn’t you say that was an emotive word, Longton?”

“Definitely emotive, guv.”

“You bastard!” Lisa suddenly said. “Grassed! You know I never realised that before. That someone grassed my Frank.”

“I think it’s time for you to leave, Chief Inspector.” “You and the DC. Mrs Harvey’s had quite a day. She needs to get some rest.”

“I’ll let you know when I’m ready to go,” Stafford replied.

I clicked on my mobile pretending to get ready to make a call.

“Well, let’s see what her brief thinks. Or would you like to try grabbing me by the balls?”

Stafford squared his shoulders.

“Well, on second thoughts. It must have been quite a rough day popping Frank in a box and all. I dare say you’re right.” He moved close to Lisa, his head almost touching hers. “Just remember what I said. So fast you’ll think you’re dreaming. I didn’t get your name,” he said turning to me.

“I didn’t give it.”

“No need to show me out. I know the way!”