

A TERRIBLE INCIDENT

Sheila was waiting at the bus station when she saw her friend arrive, "Hello Mary how are you? I haven't seen you for weeks."

"I'm not too bad -just glad I can get out and about. I have fifteen minutes to wait before the bus is due so let's sit on that seat. It's so warm and sunny for April we may as well make the most of it." Mary replied.

They picked up their bags of shopping and walked towards the seat. The schools were closed for holidays and the precinct was packed with parents and children. The children were running and chasing each other onto the grass verges screaming and laughing. Teenage girls and boys stood in groups chatting and flirting amongst themselves.

"It's so nice to see so many happy people. They all come out when the sun is shining and the spring flowers out. Everything looks nicer and brighter doesn't it? Look at him? He's just come out of that portable toilet in the corner," Sheila exclaimed.

Mary turned and saw a young man with his shirt half off. He knelt down, bent his left arm, tied a dog's lead around it then inserted a syringe into it. He then bent over and his head rested on the ground. Everybody without cars had to pass this corner to get to the bus station. They stopped and stared especially the children.

A bus driver and a man got off a bus and walked towards the doubled up man. As they drew nearer his dog snarled and barked at them. It ran up and down in front of him. It had obviously done this before.

"We'll have to leave him and ring the Police because the dog will attack any-one who goes near him," Sheila overheard one of the men saying.

"Bye Mary. I'm off to the Library for a couple of books. I'll catch up with you later," Sheila said. Half an hour later Sheila returned to the bus station. The young man was fully clothed. He even had his anorak on and a baseball cap. He was sitting on one of the forms in the corner beside the flower bed. His dog was on the lead and had a muzzle on its nose. "So it is dangerous," she thought.

She looked at the young man as she slowly passed him. His eyes were glazed and lifeless and his head drooped down. He held the lead, got up from the seat and staggered out of the bus station his dog leading him.

It was the first time Sheila had seen anybody stick a needle in their arm and hoped it would be the last. What a state of mind he must be in to do that on a sunny afternoon in a crowded busy bus station. What on earth is the world coming too when things like that happen?" she thought.

Stella Rutherford.