

Prologue

June 2019

Samuel

‘Jason Mott?’

‘Yes. Here. That’s me.’

I stare down at the young man who stands below me ankle-deep in the mud of the banks of the Thames. He has sandy hair that hangs in curtains on either side of a soft, freckled face. He’s wearing knee-high rubber boots and a khaki gilet with multiple pockets and is surrounded by a circle of gawping people. I go to him, trying to keep my shoes away from the mud.

‘Good morning,’ I say. ‘I’m DI Samuel Owusu. This is Saffron Brown from our forensics team.’ I see Jason Mott trying very hard not to look as if he is excited to be in the presence of two real-life