

33 "I don't understand. What did you take? Why did you do it? You had
plenty of money with you."

34 "I know but I just did it. I can't explain why. Mom, I'm sorry."

35 "I'm afraid sorry isn't enough. I'm horribly disappointed in you."

36 Long after we got off the phone, while I sat in an empty jail cell, waiting
for my parents to pick me up, I could still distinctly hear the disappointment and
hurt in my mother's voice. I cried. The tears weren't for me but for her and the
pain I had put her through. I felt like a terrible human being. I would rather
have stayed in jail than confront my mom right then. I dreaded each passing
minute that brought our encounter closer. When the officer came to release me,
I hesitated, actually not wanting to leave. We went to the front desk, where I
had to sign a form to retrieve my belongings. I saw my parents a few yards away
and my heart raced. A large knot formed in my stomach. I fought back the tears.

37 Not a word was spoken as we walked to the car. Slowly, I sank into the
back seat anticipating the scolding. Expecting harsh tones, I was relieved to
hear almost the opposite from my father.

38 "I'm not going to punish you and I'll tell you why. Although I think
what you did was wrong, I think what the police did was more wrong. There's
no excuse for locking a thirteen-year-old behind bars. That doesn't mean I
condone what you did, but I think you've been punished enough already."

39 As I looked from my father's eyes to my mother's, I knew this ordeal
was over. Although it would never be forgotten, the incident was not
mentioned again.