

Flatline.

Susan Bramshott coasted into Tesco's car park and parked in a free bay, that was far enough away from the entrance, but not an inconvenience when returning with a fully laden delinquent trolley.

A train, trundled over the arches. Its grey livery matched her mood and the weather. Christmas was over. Another dank weary January day. All the festive treats had long been scoffed. The cupboards were bare. So, here she was; back on the weekly supermarket sweep.

'Susan.'

She looked up and waved to Mr Dodd, the nice widower who lived at the end of their road. Something wasn't quite right. He was leant obtusely against his grey Hyundai.

In stop-motion animation, he slid down the car. His hands beat at his chest Tarzan style, then fell aside as he slumped, to curl up feline on the damp dark grey tarmac.

Susan dropped her bags for life and ran. 'Christ, he's having a heart attack.'

She pulled him clear of the Hyundai, as other shoppers looked on in suspicion.

'Help! Can someone go and find a defibrillator... Please.'

Now what the hell was it 4:1. No it had changed. Susan's brain fought as hard for the answer as her neighbour fought for breath.

'30 compressions; two breaths. That was it. All to the tune of Nellie the elephant; none of that Bee Gees crap. 'Can someone please help...'

A man in a red jacket nodded, then sprinted off towards the store.

CCTV room Watford Police Station.

PC Julia Edwards concentrated on the grainy footage that ghosts across her monitor.

Her partner PC Camron Fletcher reads from a 999-call transcript.

'Tesco's security here. Someone is trying to steal a piece of medical equipment.'

'That's rich,' commented Julia, 'you can clearly see the guy in the red jacket take the defib out of the box and then remonstrates with security as they snatch it back.'

Camron continued, quoting security; 'there's a guy in a red jacket, he's illegally taking our defib, he's told me that there is someone having a heart attack in the car park, but sorry, the device is for instore and colleague use only.'

'For goodness's sake, what a jobsworth. What planet are these people on?'

Camron agreed, 'especially as control had just informed the numpty that this was, a real red call. Look you can see the blue lights of the ambulance arriving.'

Julia fast-forwarded to the next section.

They both watch as Susan Bramshott walks up to the security. Her hand gesticulates and then deftly she boots him in the crown-jewels. The security hits the deck and to rub insult to injury, was accidently runover with a 'delinquent trolley'.

'The guy in the carpark died?'

Julia dipped her head. 'Ambo said Susan had been heroic with her CPR.'

'And this numpty is trying for GBH. Shall we?'

Again, the slightest dip of her head.

Camron pressed a button and the last two minutes of the tape were erased.

A flatline ran across the monitor.