

Can you hear me Mrs Hardcourt

by Gill Kane

“Can you hear me Mrs Hardcourt, can you hear me?” The voice, insistent and demanding, was close, right beside my ear. I tried to answer but my mouth wouldn’t open, my eyes were glued shut and a huge weight was pinning my body to the ground.

In the absence of other senses my hearing seemed particularly acute. Voices shouting, sirens, people screaming and moaning and always that voice beside me. No long demanding but now calm and reassuring. “Don’t worry, it’s going to be OK. Help is coming, just hang on.” And another voice. This one I recognized, Jed from the office, sounding panicky and distraught. “Yes, yes I work with her, we just popped out for a sandwich.” The calm voice now reassuring him. “Ok son, over here. Let’s just sit down till we get some help.” Poor Jed. I wondered why he needed help and why he was so upset.

This was very strange. Something had happened but I couldn’t quite work out what. Everybody sounded scared and panicked but I felt peaceful and relaxed and as the voices raised and became desperate “Quick, quick I think we’re losing her,” I felt myself gently slip away and float high above the world.

The scene below me was carnage. Bodies were scattered across the road, police, doctors and paramedics rushing from one to another, shocked bystanders wrapped in blankets, heads in hands, and at the end of the street a large white van had crashed through a shop window.

I could no longer hear, but I could see and feel. I was wafting in a warm blanket of soft air and white noise. I felt so good, perfect and complete. But I could see my bloodied body lying below me, my legs at an impossible angle. A man was pressing his lips against mine and pounding my chest with his hands.

And now I saw Jess and Linda from the office. They had their arms round each other, sobbing as they looked at me. But a policeman roughly ushered them away to sit with Jed. “Don’t worry”, I wanted to say. “I’m fine. I feel wonderful.” So calm, so serene.

But what’s this? Activity all around my body. No longer hands pounding my chest but electric jolts. My body jerking in the air, once, twice then I felt the tugging. Pulling me back down to earth. As I hurtled down I looked at my broken body and thought, “No, I don’t want to go back, what will my life be like in that body. I want to stay here”. But with one last tug and whoosh I was back.

“Mrs Hardcourt, Mrs Hardcourt, can you hear me?” I opened my eyes.