



A FRESH START by S. Bee.

[This text is read aloud at the beginning of this video:]

Welcome to Stories for Lipreading. If you haven't used our website before, we suggest you look up our 'How to Use' page before you begin. We hope you enjoy this story, which is called 'A Fresh Start' by S. Bee.

A Fresh Start by S. Bee.

It all started just after I moved to this area. I had wanted a fresh start, but instead I worried about finding a job... I worried about making friends... and I always jolted awake at 3 a.m. It'll take time to settle in, I reassured myself.

One day, when I popped to the local shop, I found it shut. A note on the door said: 'Back in five minutes.' As I waited, a silver-haired woman approached me.

'Peter's next-door, in the betting shop', she informed me.

'Oh, OK,' I smiled.

She peered. 'You're Julia.'

I was astonished. How on earth did this stranger know my name?

'I must get on!' She smiled, and trotted off to the bus stop. The bus arrived, yet it sailed past her.

Why hadn't the driver stopped? When I glanced back again, she was nowhere to be seen. The street was deserted. I rubbed my eyes. This tiredness was obviously affecting me quite badly...

I found a job and made friends. But I still kept waking up at 3 a.m.

I wondered about the strange, silver-haired woman. I wanted to ask my neighbours about her, but they were away on holiday. So I decided to ask Peter, from the shop, instead.

'I met an elderly lady with silver hair,' I began, hesitantly. 'Do you know her?'

'A lot of elderly ladies with silver hair shop here. Ah, here's one now. Morning, Mrs Taylor!'

My heart thumped. Was Mrs Taylor my lady? I spun around – but it wasn't her.



A few nights later, I awoke again. I glanced at the bedside clock - 2.55 a.m. I was wide-awake. I picked up my mobile and went downstairs, out into the night. Some fresh air might do me good. I was shocked to see Peter from the shop, dressed in dark clothes, creeping around the corner of my neighbour's house.

'Don't call out to him,' said a voice in my ear. I turned to see Mrs Silver Hair. My mind whirled. This must be some sort of weird dream...

'It's not a dream,' she said. 'Peter's about to burgle their house!'

'Why would he do that?'

'Because he's a compulsive gambler. He owes a lot of money and he's desperate. He's going to lose his business. You need to call the police!'

So I did.

'They're on their way. Thank goodness no one's in,' I said.

'They *are* in. They arrived home from holiday earlier than planned. When Peter discovers them in bed, he's going to kill them.'

I paled. Then the penny dropped. 'At 3 a.m.?'

She nodded.

I frowned. 'Why me? Why was I the one to be warned about this?'

'Because you have a gift, Julia,' she explained.

Another penny dropped. 'Peter burgled your house and killed you.'

When the police car arrived, Mrs Silver Hair vanished. Peter was charged with theft and the murder of my spirit guide, Mrs Foster.

Now, working with Mrs Foster, I use my psychic skills to help prevent crime. It's not the fresh start I had imagined – but it's good enough for me!