



## **LIFTERS by Linda Daunter.**

[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 at our 'How to Use' page before you begin. We hope you enjoy this story, which is called 'Lifters' by Linda Daunter.

### **Lifters by Linda Daunter.**

She's quick. One smooth movement, the pack of cheese is off the shelf and slipped into her little boy's backpack. I'm slow. I'm still looking at her when she glances towards me. She knows I know, but she takes her time. She pretends to look at all the different brands of butter before putting a tub of cheap spread into her trolley. I'm the one who's all of a fluster, wondering what to do.

She bends down to say something to the boy. They both laugh and, as she straightens up, she smiles directly at me. It's like seeing myself in a long-ago mirror: thin face, shabby coat, no wedding ring. I give her a quick smile back and turn away. It's none of my business.

But a bit further on I stop to check the food that's been reduced because it's near its sell-by date, and I remember seeing a TV programme about how much cheaper everything would be if supermarkets didn't have to make up for the millions of pounds they lose to shoplifters.

I see her again in the next aisle, only this time I'm careful not to let her know I'm watching. I follow her at a distance. She isn't helping herself to the basics. She takes the good coffee, the best chocolate biscuits and the most expensive shampoo.

I jump when the security guard says hello in my ear. I hadn't noticed him sneaking up behind me. We both laugh. Trevor and I have known each other for years. He says he hasn't seen me for a while and asks how I am. I say I'm fine, and then he tells me he's counting the days till he goes on holiday. Over his shoulder, I watch the young girl join one of the checkout queues. I say, 'Don't look now, but see that girl in the grey coat ...?'

She looks scared when Trevor stops her, but she's only got herself to blame. She shouldn't have been so greedy.

On the way home, I pat my pocket. Salmon for tea, and I'm going to enjoy every mouthful. There's no telling when I'll be able to have it again. I'm getting too old for this game.