

Blue skies, hot sunshine and no work. A perfect day to go out for a drive and a picnic. Julia deserved some time to relax. Lately she had been over doing things. It was early morning and she quickly prepared some food and drink and packed her car ready for her day out. She thought that she would drive to her favourite woods in Somerset. It was 10am when she set off on her journey.

It was an uneventful journey. There was very little traffic on the roads and any drivers that were on the roads were being sensible.

After arriving at the car park, which was also unusually quiet, she ate her picnic and then set off for her walk. Julia spent several hours leisurely strolling along the winding footpaths, enjoying the sights, sounds and smells. The sun's rays left patterns on the forest floor as they penetrated the leafy canopy. She felt totally relaxed and happy. It was early evening when she arrived back at her car. Leisurely she drank another drink of tea from her flask, before setting off on her journey home. I

Traffic was light for most of the way home and there were no problems until she got to just outside of a small village. Diversion signs had been set up, saying road closed due to an accident. Carefully Julia followed the diversion signs, which took her through several quaint villages. Although it was late evening, there was still light from the sun, that was low in the sky. She was approaching another village, so reduced her speed accordingly.

Fields sat on either side of the road, which was becoming narrower and narrower. Each field was fenced off with wire fencing and low hedgerows grew on the grassy banks alongside the road. There were cows and sheep on the pastures. Birds were singing and flying along the hedge line. It was now so narrow that it was a single-track lane with the occasional passing place.

Suddenly, a chill seemed to fill the air and a light mist seemed to swirl around the car. Julia shivered, and goose bumps erupted on her arms, a tingling sensation travelled down her spine. She switched on her headlamps, but they were no use, the mist became thicker and thicker until it was such a dense fog that you could cut it with a knife, even her lights just reflected a white glow back and would not penetrate the gloom. She slowed the car to an almost walking pace as she tried to see where she was going. Darkness now fell like a dark veil shrouding her car. No light was being reflected off the fog from her headlamps. The light was being swallowed by some light eating monster. Her engine began to splutter and cough, the lights flickered and then went out. One final splutter from her car and nothing. Everything was completely dead. Silence assaulted her ears.

Putting on her coat Julia got out of the car, intending to walk to the village. An eerie silence greeted her when she opened the car door. Not a creature stirring, no birds or wildlife sounds at all. Even her footsteps, as she walked along the road, were absorbed into the darkness. She was icy cold, scared, confused and felt deaf and blind. She reached out her hands to try to feel her way along the hedgerow, but her hands also felt numb she could not feel anything. The more effort she put into walking the more difficult it became, it was like walking through treacle she thought. She was beginning to panic; it was like her worst nightmare.

Finally, after what felt like hours, she saw a light in front of her and slowly but surely, she walked towards it. Getting closer to it the glow became brighter and larger. However, there was no house or building there. Just a welcoming, warm illumination that she felt compelled to enter. The light

enveloped her, covering her with happiness and joy. She felt safe, that she was where she belonged. Then nothing! Another candle had been snuffed out.

Later that evening there was a news report about a fatal accident that had happened on the main road through Somerset and diversions had been put in place through the surrounding villages. A young woman had been fatally injured. No other vehicle had been involved.