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## He succeeded in being totally uninteresting

by Lawrence Howard

He succeeded in being totally uninteresting, although it had always come naturally to him. It was something which had afflicted him all of his life and that sadly he was quite aware of. His name was John – not even Jonathan, and he had no middle name. So everyone called him - John. His surname was Dunn, which was also not too interesting.

When he first entered the world of work he'd found it difficult to find a job. It wasn't because he did anything wrong at the interviews or that he wasn't properly qualified. It's just that no one remembered him. He had absolutely no outstanding features that impressed anyone. He knew that sales jobs wouldn't be for him, so instead he applied for jobs such as a payroll clerk at the county council or a pensions administrator at a corporation's head office. Basically, jobs that required a large degree of processing of things without needing to communicate with people too much. Jobs where personality wasn't deemed to be of great importance. The problem with these sorts of jobs was that they would also encourage dullness, and this worried him. He desperately wanted to be more interesting. What could be more boring than meeting someone who introduces themselves by saying "Hello, I'm John Dunn and I'm a pensions administrator".

But then, one day when he was looking through the job section of the Evening Standard, he saw 'The Job'. It read. "We're currently looking for ordinary people who want a job that's more than 9 to 5. A job with excitement. A job that can change your life and other people's. All you need is an enquiring mind, integrity and discretion. If that's you then apply today".

So, he applied, had the interview and was offered the job one week later. Unbeknown to John, their brief was to employ only the people they couldn't remember. The job was as a secret agent for MI5. They didn't want the ex-public-school types of the past, or the suave James Bond type characters. They all stood out too much. What they wanted were agents who could just blend in. Who were unremarkable in every way without any distinguishing features.

John went through the training and passed everything with top marks. He was outstanding at being uninteresting. After the training he was given assignments. He was remarkable in his ability to sniff out where the problems were, who the people were that he needed to follow or investigate. It was like a sixth sense. Within the department no one called him John Dunn. He was known as the Blood Hound for his ability to follow a trail and get to the people that he needed to find or the source of the problem. The funny thing was though, that despite all of the tests that he'd undertaken during his training at MI5, there was one thing they never discovered. He had absolutely no sense of smell.