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## Haunted by the Truth

by Penny Humphrey

Dan stood up to retrieve his briefcase from the luggage rack. He was aware that the girl sitting opposite him was still staring at him.

It had made for an uncomfortable journey home. There are few places to avert the eye on a train, especially at night when your reflection bounces back to you from the window so Dan re-read the newspaper which he had already read from cover to cover on the morning commute.

The girl was about twenty-five, slim build and wearing slit jeans. She got on at Croydon and sat in a newly vacated seat by the window opposite Dan, made herself comfortable and then, well, just stared at him.

She seemed familiar in some way but he couldn't figure out where he might have come across her before.

He was grateful to see the Oxted sign loom up as the train slowed to a halt. Stepping off onto the platform he pulled his coat together and arranged his scarf against the cold as he marched out of the station and into the car park.

Reaching his car he looked back towards the station and there by the ticket machine stood the girl, motionless, watching him. He felt in his pockets for the car keys and got in quickly.

He would have to drive towards her in order to get out of the car park. Should he stop and ask her what she was doing? It was late, he could hardly ask her if she wanted a lift anywhere. He drove past slowly, she was still staring and as he pulled away he could see her watching in the mirror.

He was nearly half way home when it came to him. Bryony, her name was Bryony and she had been his secretary twenty years ago when she was about twenty-five. It was the only time he had ever cheated on his wife, they had a short affair and then he told her that it couldn't go on as he was married. He hadn't recognised her because now twenty years later she was still about twenty-five. He began to sweat, he unbuttoned his coat and pulled off the scarf. What was happening? This couldn't be but there she was, the same girl caught in some sort of time warp.

Dan reached home, he realised he was shaking as he thrust his key into the door looking behind him as he went in.

His wife Sue appeared in the hall as he hung his coat up and he turned to see that she also was only in her twenties. She looked at him coldly.

"I know what's been going on," she told him, "the truth always makes a better story, no need for any more lies."

Dan glanced in the hall mirror, his reflected face was twenty years younger. What was going on? Was he going mad?

"What's the matter?" Sue asked, "you look as if you've seen a ghost."