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The Invisible Man

by Vera Gajic

“What do you mean you can make yourself disappear? Explain,” said Sue

“I mean I can make you not able to see me,” said Paul.

“Right Ok well that’s novel Paul, not heard that one before, show me.”

“Well I’m not sure I am ready yet but I have been working on it and I think I’ve got it. Doesn’t work on everyone but I’ve tried it on Mum.”

“Really, you sure she isn’t just pretending?”

“No I don’t think so. She’s great for experimenting my skills on, so receptive. Some people just don’t let me in, they’ve got a shield so they can’t be hypnotised.”

Sue had been dating Paul for six months. Most of her friends at school thought he was a bit of a nerd but she thought he was much more interesting than the other boys who only seemed to care about one thing and football. She knew he dabbled in magic and did kids shows to earn money which was so much more exciting than working in the local shoe shop on Saturday like she did but recently he seemed to be getting into mind control and she wasn’t sure she liked that.

She hadn’t let him hypnotise her, not that he’d asked to but how would she know if he did anyway. Spending time with him was scary and dull at the same time. OK maybe he was a bit of nerd, talking about magic so much that she switched off but there was the edge of not knowing if he was going deeper, sometimes she felt very uneasy when after she’d been with him, she couldn’t always remember what had happened. Was it like the dating rape drug? Not that she thought Paul was raping her, in fact he didn’t seem overly keen on the physical side of their relationship.

She had to work quite hard to get him to stop talking and kiss her. They were both at sixth form college together, most of their friends were having sex.

Sue brought her thoughts back to Paul, 'what was he up to now?'

"Shall we have a go Sue? I've never tried hypnotising you before and I'm not sure I should mix business and pleasure as they say but hey, do you fancy a go?"

Sue liked the idea of being thought of as pleasure – that was encouraging.

"Yes why not, you can snap me out of it if I do go under can't you," she said.

"Of course, coming out is the easy bit, its getting you properly under is the hard part but I've been working on my tone of voice and its worked a treat on Mum

"OK, so sitting comfortably, relax all your muscles and concentrate on my voice to the exclusion of everything else. Ok relax, sink down into yourself, close your eyes. Now when I count to five you will no longer be able to see me, one, two, three, four five. Open your eyes, you can't see me but you can hear me."

"Where are you Paul? stop messing around"

"I'm right here Sue, but you can't see me. You can only hear me. I am like a voice on the radio or the telephone, not in the room with you. Now go to the door and call for me."

"So Mum what happened to your first boyfriend?"

"We split up darling, a few months before I met your Dad. He was quite well known for a while. Used to perform at the Hackney Empire. But he had a terrible accident, he never worked again. I don't know what's happened to him now."

"But why did you split up?"

"Well darling it was because I couldn't see him."

"What do you mean, did your parents stop you, was grandma Ruth really strict?"

Cheryl was at the age where she was just beginning to realise her parents had a life before their children, an unknown life.

"No darling, he disappeared. Well he disappeared for me, I just couldn't see him so we split up"

"I don't understand," said Cheryl.

“No I’m not sure I ever really understood either. Terrible tragedy, he got run over by his mother. She was picking him up after a show and she knocked him over, didn’t see him, must have been terrible for her.”