

Prove it!

By Liz Martinez

Emma walked into the cafeteria. It was heaving – as usual on a Tuesday when the whole school broke for lunch at the same time. She couldn't see anywhere to sit on her own, but a group of girls from her class were already seated at a refectory table along the far wall. She approached the table and pulled out a free chair. She piled her bags and coat on it, keeping only her purse.

'Does anyone want anything from the drinks machine?' she asked. Nobody answered. Nobody even looked her. She shrugged her shoulders and wandered off to join the queue. Cheap round for me, then, she thought.

When she had finally been served, Emma carried her tray back to the table, but there was no longer an empty seat. She looked along the table to see whether her chair had been moved but there were no spare places, nobody else had joined the group and her coat and bag were lying on the floor.

'Did someone move my things?' she asked. Nobody answered.

'Jenny,' she said, nudging her friend with her elbow, but Jenny didn't respond. Nobody giggled. No snide whispered remarks. They just didn't see her.

'Ha, ha,' mocked Emma, sarcastically. 'Very funny, I think not. Could someone tell me what's going on here please? Hello?' she called into the group.

One of the girls was leaving the table, picking up her books, and Emma moved towards her to take her seat. But the girl just pushed the chair in under the table, turned and walked away.

'Amy!' yelled Emma, putting the tray down. 'Amy!' and she grabbed the girl's arm. Amy turned and stood passively in front of her. Emma raised her hands and said, 'What's going on? Have I been sent to Coventry? Why are you all ignoring me?'

Amy shrugged her shoulders. 'Maybe you don't exist?'

'Pardon?' laughed Emma, 'who do you think this is then?'

'Oh, I know what you mean,' nodded Amy thoughtfully. 'But how do we know you're real, not just a figment of our imagination?'

'Of course I'm real!' yelled Emma, her lunch completely forgotten.

'Prove it.'

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