**Spirit and Alien Party**

PART TWO

Emily, in the shop, had me for a moment earlier; she was kneeling on the floor facing away from me. Is that the girl that hates me? No. Yes it is. No, it isn’t. No. I would have just left if it was; you know avoid confrontation. Harrari pointed out that the air of reason and comfortableness I felt in the shop from using heuristics was disrupted.

‘A good sign.’ she whispered.

We weren’t really waiting for an appearance of anything, just a sign that we were recognised.

Of course, slipping into the foyer of the spirit world as a formal guest was something none of us three knew anything about. We did know, however, that you can’t just dress up; nakedness is a thing there. By bedtime, I felt that enough weird thoughts had entered my head, which Harrari and Hakim assured me did not originate from them, that an RSVP was being acted upon.

As usual, Hakim sat at the end of my bed to wake me if I was about to be attacked, but now we agreed that he should not alert me when my neighbour’s spirit came to loom and stare at me in confusion with his clumsy questions saturating my space. He, my neighbour’s spirit, did this every night. He is a sink hole for energy. I feel sorry for him, my neighbour. There is something ‘different’ about him that makes it difficult for him to understand things and I think he is mostly harmless, so I kind of let his spirit sip a bit in the hope that one day my neighbour will gain a bit more ‘sonder’ (The realisation that other people also have their own lives, desires and needs). I will never ‘switch off’ Hakim. He must always be alert to every threat, no matter how it manifests. We don’t want a Trojan Horse or a worm to get to me while I sleep. But, I needed to stay deep asleep, so giving a free pass to my neighbour’s spirit was something we just had to plain do.

Something we hadn’t thought about was just how formal the trip would be. Before Hakim could wake me he had been given identification. Even though we had never thought that spirits carry identification because they are a hive, nonetheless Hakim was convinced of the authenticity of the intent of the spirit guide before him. He later told me that he had felt strong, strong peace. He said he looked for barbs but could not detect any. That is his job though as Spirit Security Officer. A hat he has made slightly bigger than his head, but I am not complaining!

The sound of a 1930’s Berlin Bierkellar woman singer came to my ears. She sang with a quaver in her voice and one beat later than the accordian leading a brass band.

Ta, ta, taa, taa, taa

ta, ta, taa, taa, taa

ta, ta, taaa, taaa, taaa, taaa, taaaa

But the lyrics made no sense; something about a toad in a hole with a troll that was cold. Not at all bawdy or with any double-entendres. Hakim looked at me quizzically. I slightly shook my head thrice with raised eyebrows. Harrari had not been allowed to come with us, so I got nothing from her.

Our guide, still with no form, by now had introduced itself as Fata, which it explained was Latin for fairie. It looked at us askance out of the corner of its eyes; we felt rather than saw it; as though checking to see if we ‘bought it’.

Seemingly led away, but more my own decision, it seems Hakim and I ‘followed’ Fata into a very large room. I began to realise why Harrari was not allowed here, when Hakim nudged me and looked at me with slightly furrowed eyebrows. I nodded. Harrari has the identical ability to lead people away from places. I started to wonder if she had learned this in the wood where I had found her when she was still very young. Hmm, it makes sense that she would not be allowed to uncover when this is being done to me by Fata. On Earth, and cut off from her alien brothers, she would have had only the human world, the fauna and flora world, AND THE SPIRIT WORLD to learn from. Hmm. Hakim seemed to agree, though with some reservation. His beard and moustache twitched.

In this room were large cabinets; in each, a different still creature.

‘Its a museum’, explained Fata.

We stopped before a glass cabinet with a little man wearing green clothes and a tall crooked hat. It held a pipe and a walking stick. In the background was a representation of a rainbow.

‘It’s a Leprechaun’ Hakin whispered. I couldn’t help hearing the faint Irish lilt in his quiet voice. The sign at the front of the cabinet read ‘Leprechaun’ and then began to change to a non-sensical word with each letter having no bearing on any other. It continued to oscillate and flip-flop between letters until it finally entirely faded.

Othe cabinets had motionless winged fairies; dryads; gnomes; merfolk; and kelpies. We stopped before one that had a sign that said ‘Brownie’. The figure inside bore a striking resemblance to Hakim, who worriedly looked at me. Fata explained.

‘What you are seeing are the types of elemental creatures that humans have conjured in their heads from long ago. Humans need to anthropomorphise phenomena they do not understand. You, yourself, created Hakim based on a Brownie.’

Hakim looked displeased while I raised my eyebrows and gave a Pan Am smile. I didn’t realise I had done that but the resemblance really was uncanny, if uncanny is ever uncanny in the spirit world. It is probably just canny. My rationale was certainly suspended, but of course, it needed to be.

‘For millennia, we have gone along with this,’ Fata went on, ‘and sent entities into your world that are similar to human concepts. These, in the cabinets are all quite real. We had them stuffed for the museum.’

Hakim and I gasped.

‘You are among the first to formally request a visit or even a meeting, so we decided to make it fun.’

‘Don’t!’ I warned Hakim, who was about to protest. I felt that Fata was watching him, assessing and calculating. I didn’t like where this was going.

‘We er...We are here for a meeting’, I interjected into the mess in the air.

‘Already taken place. We agree to having some of our, shall we say group? Join your new political party. We only need to agree terms.’ intoned Fata enigmatically.

We were led back past the 1930s Berlin Bierkellar band to a door which Hakim and I passed through. Just before it slammed shut behind us I turned to see if I could get a glimpse, from the corner of my eye, of Fata. It bore a striking resemblance to me and had a penetrating, hard and cold stare was on its, my face.

I woke up, still paralysed and cold through to my bones. After the paralysis passed, I drank coffee and jumped up and down and had a hot bath but the cold stayed in me until lunchtime, seven hours later. I needed to talk to Harrari.

(ROGET’S THESAURUS – FATA MORGANA, VISUAL FALLACY / MIRAGE / GLOW-WORM, Italian for Morgan the Fairy)