



Bill sighed, looked closely at the road, and concentrated on driving. Janey stared out the window again. It was not raining as hard as before, but the wind had **increased**. She saw branches flying across the road. Now and then a few branches were hurled against the car. She could hear them hitting the roof and the windshield. Bill began to drive more slowly. Then he turned onto a country lane.

"Are you sure this is the right road?" asked Janey. "It's so dark out here. How do you know where to drive?"

"I know," said Bill. "I was at a party here last year."

"You were?" Janey asked. That didn't sound like Bill at all. He wasn't the kind of person who went to parties in deserted places. He was so dull. He was only interested in flying saucers and spaceships and that sort of thing. Was he more interesting than she realized? Was he smarter than she thought? Janey wondered about that.

"Tell me more about your dream, Bill," Janey said.

"Oh, sure," he said. "I never had a dream that seemed so real. It was as if I was *really* living it, if you know what I mean. Anyway, some funny-looking people **exited** from the flying saucer and told me to follow them. I did what they said."

"Where did you go?" Janey asked. She wished that they would drive by another house so she could see lights and people again.

"I went inside the flying saucer," Bill said. "And when I got inside, there was another *me* there. He was a replacement, they said. A replacement for me."

"A replacement?" said Janey.

"Yes. You know, someone who looks and talks exactly like I do."

Janey held back a laugh. "Are you telling me that I'm going out with a replacement tonight?" she asked.



30 "How would I know?" asked Bill. "Would I really know if I'm a replacement?"

Janey said, "You probably wouldn't know if you were a *robot*.<sup>1</sup> But if you weren't a robot, you'd know that you were someone from space—that you were a replacement who was here in disguise."

35 "Hey, Janey, that's good," Bill said. "I didn't realize that you knew so much about this space stuff."

"How many times have we watched *Star Wars* together?" she asked.

40 Bill grinned as Janey said, "But I have a question for you. Why would *you* be replaced—why *you* of all people?"

Bill thought for a moment and answered, "Maybe it's because I'm so interested in space. You know, maybe I could communicate with them or something like that."

45 "Maybe," Janey said softly to herself. "Or maybe," she thought, "it's because you're not very interesting. No one really **pays attention to** you. If space people filled the earth with people like you, the earth would never know it until it was too late."

"Hey," said Bill, as he turned the car sharply to **avoid** a branch in the road, "maybe *all* of us are going to be replaced tonight."

50 "Stop it right now!" Janey said. "I've heard enough of that kind of talk!"

1. *robot*: a machine that can do some of the things that people can do.

A few minutes later there were lights in the clearing ahead. Then they saw the outline of an old farmhouse against the dark sky.

55 Bill said, "I forgot to tell you something about the people in the flying saucer. They each had three eyes. They had two eyes where we have ours. Then they had an extra eye in the middle of their foreheads." Bill started to laugh. "That was funny, I tell you."

60 Janey looked at Bill. He was still laughing loudly as he drove along. Bill had the strangest sense of humor. They had three eyes. What was so funny about that?

Bill parked in a place between two other cars. They heard music and laughter coming from the house. Bill turned off the engine.

"Well," he said, "let's go inside and see if our replacements are here." Then he tried to laugh like one of those monsters on TV.

65 He got out of the car and walked around to Janey's side. Suddenly, Janey couldn't stand it any longer. She was tired of Bill. She was tired of being with him, tired of **pretending** to be somebody else. She wanted to be with someone more like herself, someone she could really talk to. She knew what she had to do.

70 As Bill opened the car door, Janey said softly to him, "Hey, Bill. Do you want to see something funny?" She reached up to her forehead, pushed away her hair, and quickly pulled off a flat bandage.

75 Bill stared in shock at Janey's forehead. He stared at the third eye there.

