

Strange Disconnect

by Deborah Oster Pannell

It looked like you, but it wasn't. It was kind of freaky, actually. I mean, the hair was the same, the face, the body. But something was different. Your eyes, they hardly settled on me throughout the day. By noon, I felt invisible. I thought at first it was something I was saying or doing, so I tried to say something different, do something different. Nothing worked. You were in the zone. One that didn't include me.

I never felt any overt hostility or anger, or anything like that. Just this strange disconnect. Do you know what I mean? Have I ever made you feel like that, darling? As though you weren't really there? It's quite disconcerting, actually.

But here's the cool part. I decided that since I couldn't put my finger on anything that I had done, that it had nothing to do with me. You were on a trip without me. And sure enough, today you told me you loved me and missed me. And couldn't wait to see me again.

The next time I see you, I'm going to pretend you're a stranger, and that I'm meeting you for the first time. And you can be sure that I'm going to give you everything that I would give to someone I'm really trying to impress, because I want to make sure you come back for more. Is this what happens? Is this how love stays alive?

