

Topic: Paul

My Best Friend

My best friend Paul was great, the same age as me and about the same size. I guess I've known him since pre-school but can't remember how we met now, he was sort of 'just there'.

My older brother had started school so Paul's timing was perfect. I didn't actually mind my brother being away all day, as life was more peaceful, no more teasing, pushing and poking but best of all, no more 'Chinese burns';

Paul wasn't like that, he was gentle although he did seem to get me into frequent trouble and no one ever believed me when I said it was all Paul's idea. He was very angelic looking. I forgave him, took the punishments and stopped trying to blame him for everything. Then he'd cup his hand to my ear and whisper and I would do what he suggested even knowing it would lead to more trouble, but his ideas were so good and he was my best friend. He'd come to tea, sit by me and we'd talk. Mum chatted to Paul sometimes but Dad ignored him and my brother teased him. I didn't care although I wondered if Paul was upset as he didn't seem to eat.

Occasionally he came with us in the car although my brother complained but after all Paul didn't take much space as he was small.

There was the terrible time when Dad trapped his fingers in the car door, he was impatient and slammed it shut, he said he didn't realise Paul was getting out that side. Paul was crying, I was hysterical and Dad was frantically re-opening the doors. Paul just stood there, white-faced, cradling his poorly hand, not uttering a word.

Around this time my brother seemed to change, he was nicer to me and I began to enjoy his company. What's more Paul really didn't mind one bit and my brother stopped making fun of him.

We didn't always play together because Paul sometimes felt unwell, so he'd tell me on his return. Nothing ever serious thank goodness. My mum had increased my days at pre-school to Monday and Tuesday most weeks and it always seemed to coincide with Paul not being well over the weekend until he felt better about late Tuesday/Wednesday.

One tea-time Mum said.

"What's happened to Paul, haven't heard from him for a while?"

I answered.

"Paul? Oh he's gone."

"Gone! Gone where?"

"He and his parents moved away, his Dad got a job somewhere else."

My Dad rattled his newspaper saying.

“Thank goodness, at last.”

Mum glanced a warning towards him saying.

“Well I hope he’ll be happy and find another friend dear.”

My Dad ‘Harrumped’ shaking the paper again.

I never said a proper goodbye to Paul but knew he wouldn’t mind. I looked at the photo Mum took of us three children in the garden but could only see my brother and me.

Paul had completely disappeared.