The Takeover

by

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--Oh, hello. I didn't see you at first. Have you always been there? Who are you? Come to think of it, who am I? And where am I?

--I don't know yet. I think we're characters in a story. My name is George. I don't know why, it just is. I don't know your name. Do you?

--No, I don't think so. All the people I've ever seen already had names when I met them. Shall I just make one up, do you think?

--Suits me.

--I think I'll be Veronica. I've always wanted to be Veronica. I don't know why. But then, I don't seem to know a lot of things. Like, for instance, where are we?

--No telling. It seems like a pretty nice place, though. Trees and flowers. Lots of green things around. I like that. And a bench to sit on. May I?

--Oh please do. There's lots of room on the bench. You say we're characters in a story. So does that mean we're not real? I feel real. Whatever it means to feel real, I mean. Do you feel real?

--Well, yes, I suppose so. All I remember is walking into this little garden space and seeing you sitting on a bench. Have you always been here?

--I don't remember anything before you walked in from behind those bushes over there on the little path. But now that we're here, what shall we talk about?

--I suppose we talk about whatever the writer wants us to talk about. We're only characters. We only exist in the imagination of the writer. We can't do anything without him.

--That's really scary. We could disappear the minute he loses interest in us, or decides to quit writing, or maybe even if he takes a lunch break!

--I suppose so. I suppose we ought to enjoy it while we can. We're only imaginary. We can't last long.

--So we have no control over our future? We can just go away, poof, at any second?
--That's the picture I guess. Wish it were different. I like you. I'd like to spend some time with you. You're very pretty, for one thing.

--You're not so bad yourself. I just wish there were some way to make this last, so we could get to know each other a little better. I don't like being completely dependent on the author. Wait. I've got an idea. We are forgetting something. Whoever is writing this doesn't have complete control over it. Here, I'll show you. I think I know a way to stay real even if the writer stops writing words for us to say.

--What are you doing? Veronica!

--I'm taking my clothes off, silly. You can see that.

--I certainly can see that. But why are you taking your clothes off? I mean, aren't you afraid someone will see you? Well, I guess that's silly. There isn't anyone else here, except me. Don't you care if I see you?

--Not in the least. That's part of the plan. And something else is happening right now that we hadn't thought of before. There are more people involved in this scene than just the writer and us. There has to be somebody else. Somebody who is reading this. Maybe more than one. We exist in the reader's imagination too.

--You've certainly got my imaginationn going. What next, my pet?

--Next I take your clothes off. Then we shut up.

--Auuugh!

—END—