

Tit For Tat by Scribblesinink

"What do you know about ghosts?"

Alva glanced up to see Paul hovering in front of his desk. "Ghosts?"

"Or... or spirits. Of dead people," Paul clarified.

Alva suppressed a smile. He was curious to find out what had brought on this particular line of questioning, but Paul looked ready to bolt at the first sign of skepticism. "Have you seen a ghost?"

"No!"

The denial came quickly enough Alva knew it for a lie. He planted his elbows on the desk and steepled his fingers into a triangle, pondering Paul for a moment. "Some people do, you know, even if most of us don't."

Paul remained silent for a few seconds. Alva waited him out.

"What are they?"

Alva shrugged. "Manifestations of energy, mostly. Why?"

Paul ignored his question. "Can they... make phone calls? Move things?" He paused, taking a breath. "Are they ever solid?"

"Phone calls are easy." Alva leaned back in his chair. "The rest.... Not so much." He narrowed his eyes, thoughtful. "It's not impossible, however. It would require tremendous amounts of energy, but I suppose, if their need is great enough, then perhaps...."

Paul nodded. "Thanks." He turned away.

"Paul?" Alva tried. If Paul was seeing ghosts, if he was *interacting* with them, Alva wanted to know.

"Just asking," Paul muttered across his shoulder as he headed out into the main office.

Alva sighed. He wished Paul would trust him more about these matters: anything unusual happening to Paul might be important. Then again, he hadn't told Paul everything he knew, had he? *For good reason*, he reminded himself once more.

But, he supposed, focusing again on the text he'd been studying, turnabout, as they say, is fair play. He didn't really deserve Paul's trust. Not yet.

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