

## **Any chair in a storm**

Once upon a time there was a boy who lived under a chair. It was great fun. Sometimes the dog, sometimes the cat came over and licked his cheeks. He liked it when his grandfather sat on the chair: it creaked and groaned. Sometimes it was a bit smelly but he loved listening to the old man's laugh and watching his knees knocking together in fun. The boy would peek through his grandfather's grey trouser legs and listen to what the others were saying. He never understood what they were going on about. It didn't matter. He liked it when his big sister sat on the chair also because he would tie her shoe laces together and giggle quietly when she stood up to go and fell over with a cry and scream, hair all over the place, legs kicking in rage.

Soon he could crawl from beneath one chair to another. That was even better fun. He could dash away before his sister caught him or if his grandfather suddenly became too smelly. Sometimes the dog would chase him and he loved the way the whole family shouted at the dog to sit down and be quiet.

Then one day the boy stood up and hurt his head. He sat back down again with the shock. He wasn't ready for this. Hadn't thought about it. He tried standing again, and again, under different chairs, but his head kept hitting, until it was bruised and sore. The boy wanted to cry. He was sucking his thumb when he came up with the solution. In a quiet moment, when no one was looking, he made his move and dived beneath the table. Much better. Much more room. He tried standing and he was fine. And under the table he could play with different people's legs at the same time during lunch. He could even nibble at bits of food that fell to the ground: if he got there before the dog. The cat was usually asleep under her own chair or table, or a nice comfortable bed upstairs. No threat on that front.

The table was a great home. The boy was happy there and just hoped his head would never start hurting again. Because he wasn't sure where else he could

escape to. There weren't many more options opening up. And he didn't want to spend all his life groveling.

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