

5 Super Vision

Alex's little sister Sally was waiting impatiently. Her friend Ian was late, and she had on her new Superman costume to show him. "What's the time now, Alex?" she repeatedly shouted.

"You can tell the time, Sally," Alex replied from the next room, not without a note of annoyance in his voice. "Why don't you just look at the clock?"

"I can't see it from here! There's a wall in the way!" Sally complained.

"Well, move so you can!" Alex sighed. "And anyway, that's no excuse – you're Superman, so you can see through walls."

But Alex's reply was cut off by Sally, who yelled with excitement. Through the window she had seen Ian coming up the path with his older sister Emma. She rushed to open the door.

"Wow, Superman!" Ian was obviously impressed by Sally's outfit.

"I could see you coming through the wall, 'cos I'm Superman and I've got X-ray vision," Sally boasted. "And you're late! I know 'cos I can see the clock in the hall and it says ..." [she paused to think what Alex had told her] ten past four!"

Ian rushed wide-eyed into the hall, and sure enough he found a clock saying a little after ten past four. "Gee," he exclaimed, "could I do that if I was wearing your Superman suit?"

"Course you could. You'd be Superman too then."

"Well, let me," demanded Ian. "I wanna see through walls too!"

"No! It's my cape and I haven't used it enough yet." Then, seeing the look of disappointment on Ian's face, Sally conceded, "Maybe I'll let you wear it tomorrow."

Alex, who had been exchanging amused glances with Emma, winked at her and said, "Gee, I'm impressed, Sally. Can you tell me the colour of the car parked out on the street?"

"Sure," answered Sally, and she rushed to the window. "It's blue!"

Emma and Alex were laughing by now. "I can see through walls, too," spluttered Emma, "when they've got windows in them!"

"Huh," Sally frowned, annoyed at being laughed at. "Let's go to my room, Ian – you can wear my Batman mask if you want." And with that, the two youngsters rushed out.

"What do you reckon, Em? Could it be possible to have X-ray vision for real? You know, see through walls and stuff – with special glasses or something?"

"I'm not sure, Alex," Emma replied. "They do use X-rays to look inside things we can't see into, like when I broke my arm last year, but I remember them telling me that X-rays are very dangerous – they put everything, apart from my arm, behind a lead-lined shield to protect me from them. So I don't think it would be much good letting them anywhere near your eyes."

"Well, they use infra-red glasses to see in the dark, don't they? But I guess the dark isn't like a solid wall. You can see through some solid things, though – like the window."

"Yeah, and there are other things you can sort of see through, like the frosted glass on our front door – you can see someone's there, but you can't tell who they are."

"That's right," said Alex. "Or like our door – it's got stained glass and if you look through one bit, they look all red, but through another bit they're all green and stuff. But I'm hungry. Are you staying? We could have some of that cake dad made."

"Yeah, I'm staying ... and I'd love some cake – your dad's a really good cook, isn't he? Mum told me I had to stay and help you supervise Ian and Sally – she's picking us up after work."

"Supervise, eh?" joked Alex. "Sally's got super vision already – she said so!" And they both laughed as they headed for the kitchen.