

Under Hypnosis

BRENDA is a teenage girl whose mother has taken her to a hypnotist's show. In this scene, she becomes hypnotised and reveals more than she realises.

BRENDA: This is not where I want to be. Mum had a spare ticket to see this hypnotist and literally dragged me along with her. She loves his show on telly, she gets really excited about it. I'm not interested, I prefer *The X-Factor*, but when she said she'd buy me a new pair of boots, if I agreed to go with her, how could I refuse? So, here I am, ready to watch some idiots under hypnosis perform their monkey tricks.

If I snuggle down lower in my seat, no one is going to take any notice of me and I'll be able to doze off until it's all over. Now what's happening? *(Listens to a message over the loudspeaker)* Apparently a spotlight will fall on someone in the audience, who will then be the subject of tonight's show. Oh, please don't let that light fall on me. I promise I'll help more at home; I'll work harder in school – anything, only don't let... Too late. How embarrassing. Everyone in the world seems to be looking at me. *(She walks on to the stage and sits down)*

My name is Brenda and I live in Harlow. I'm here tonight with my Mum – under protest, I might add. I've never been hypnotised before and, to tell you the truth, I'm a bit nervous. Yes, I'm comfortable, thank you.

(She is immediately hypnotised and changes her manner and accent) Don't patronise me, I've told you countless times, I was nowhere near Tottenham on Saturday night. My boyfriend Sam asked me to go with him to the movies but I'd seen the film and wasn't keen to see it again, so we stayed at his place and watched a DVD. His parents were away for the weekend, so we had the place to ourselves. No, we didn't go to the High Street and we were not in

Continued ▶

the crowd that set fire to buildings and looted properties. What can I do to make you understand that we were at home during that time? CCTV? What do you mean? Well, it wasn't us. You have made a mistake. Teenagers all look the same. Besides you can't distinguish who's who when they're wearing hoodies. A picture? What picture? There must be a mistake. *(She looks at a picture)* That's not me – I don't even like those shoes. It isn't me. It isn't.

(Returning to her previous state) Have you started yet? You mean I've been hypnotised. Funny, I don't remember a thing. I hope it went well. I don't really believe in all this. It's just entertainment, isn't it?

by Jacqueline Stoker