

Punks

I got off the bus and heard laughs from behind me, pacing faster and faster the tapping of my shoes bothered me. The laces kept making unnecessary, extra clicks and it's the only thing I can focus on. I didn't look down, that would just make me obsess over it more, but getting home this way seems impossible. I needed to walk to the subway, get into the school, finish my assignment, then be back by morning. It'll be a tight schedule since I didn't know when I would get back home, and every minute tonight can't be wasted.

“Hey, watch it dude!” said some man I bumped shoulders with. I tried to mutter sorry when the crowd of New Yorkers swept me away. I walked down the steps to the subway and my skin crawled hearing other shoes tapping, but some are more tolerable than others. Out of all the shoes, mine were the worst. I couldn't afford nice sneakers and all I have is my dad's old office shoes.

The subway was packed with people, and my train was about to leave. I thought I could make it until I heard, “Stand clear of the closing doors please.” I tried to shove past the last few people when I tripped on my laces. I couldn't help but bang on the doors and beg the innocent people through the window, forgetting it was hopeless. A hand on my shoulder yanked me around and pulled me away from the subway.

“Will you shut up, the next train will be here in a few minutes.”

“What do you mean, ‘only a few minutes.’” I complained. “The next one won't be here in ten minutes.” She rolled her eyes at me. The girl backed away and went on her phone. She had pointy gelled hair and had a noticeably sharp face. From the old bag over her shoulder, it looked like she was running away.

“Hey, where are you from?” I asked. She looked up, confused.

“Kansas.” she bluntly said. She must have seen me staring at her bag and punk style, since she looked down at herself and then stared at me down for my clothes. “You're easily a local, can tell by you freaking out over missing the train late at night, looking eager to get a certain substance.” She was painfully right, so I laughed until it hit me.

“Ok, you're spot on... other than the substance part, what do you mean by that?”

“From that response, I guess I was wrong. Now you just seem like a total dweeb.” She smiled and laughed at her own joke. I still didn't understand but I didn't want to make a fool of

myself. She started telling me about how she came from Kansas to volunteer at her little brother's preschool to make it easier for him to ask for help. We talked until the subway approached and I wasn't stressed about time anymore.

I leaned my head back in the seat and stayed like that for a few minutes until she spoke.

“My stop is coming up soon, it was great talking with you.” She got her bag and was about to stand up when she paused. “Y’know, you’re a weird guy. I’m sure you could say the same for me, but you’re weird in a weird way. It’s like I can tell the way that you talk although you haven’t said too much. You have an odd but charming feeling to you, and I don’t mean feeling as in emotions, but as in colors, smells, and memories.”

“So I smell good to you?” She smiled and rolled her eyes.

“Not really, just new but familiar.” She glanced down at her phone to check the time and stood up. “I don’t have socials so this is goodbye already dweeb.” I was sort of shocked and should’ve talked more while I had the chance.

“See you around I guess...um-”

“Jayden. Call me Jay though, it makes me sound tougher.”

“Okay, I’m Charlie. Bye Jay.”

“Bye, good luck with whatever you’re doing out here.” she said with a smile. Soon after I got off my stop, the school was in sight and I just needed to grab the key by the window. I don't think I liked that girl romantically, I just really admired her in a platonic way. I walked into the school and immediately went to History, and had to finish a timeline that I hadn't started yet. I got a computer out and nearly dropped it when a creepy toy my teacher kept on her desk, I was so scared I was going to get caught.

I finished the assignment at 5:43 a.m. *ugh*. I got what I needed and left, thank god the janitor left me a key. I got home by 7:29 a.m. I could already hear my mom walking around waking up and getting ready to come get me.

I snuck in my window and jumped straight onto my bed. I heard my supposed impending doom coming for my door.

“Hey buddy, time to get up.” she said. I rolled over pretending to be tired. She turned on the light and left. I got out of bed and changed into presentable clothes. It would've been nice if I had worn presentable clothes in front of that woman, and for the people that laughed at me on the bus. I couldn't get her out of my head, it's starting to get annoying.

At school, my teacher told me I had passed. That one assignment got me past high school. I think the girl had something to do with this situation, not anything to help, but I have that feeling. As I was walking out of the school the janitor shot me a look. I wish I could give back to him but I can't, at least not now. I want to look for that girl.