

Weird Eyes

Lisata

He was sitting like over there. And I was sitting over here and the train was moving and people was getting on and off and all the man kept doing was looking at me and looking at me with these big brown eyes like he was never going to stop looking at me. I was going to get up and move to another car then I thought "Why should I, just because that man want to stare like a fool?" So I continue sitting there looking out the window but I could feel his eyes on me, making me uncomfortable and squirmy. So I turn and start to stare back at him. Why not? He staring at me, I got every right to stare back at him, make him be the one to feel like somebody looking right through his clothes. So that's what I did. I looked straight at him.

Then I couldn't believe it, the man got up, moved over, and sit down next to me. Right on the same seat.

"Hi," he said. I wouldn't answer. "Hi," he said again. So then I said to him, "What you want mister? What is it you after?"

"Civility," he said. "What's that?" I didn't know what this crazy man was talking about. "Somebody who's just polite. Who doesn't treat this place as though it's a jungle," he said. "But it is a jungle," I told him. "Ain't you heard? New York City is a jungle, all the tall buildings is trees and all the people in it animals." "I don't think you're an animal," he said. "That's because you don't know me." "Are you saying that if I get to know you, you would devour me?" he asked. "Man, I don't know what you talking about." ... "I'd like to get to know you," he said.

"Why?" "Because you're somebody and I'm somebody. And people who are somebodies should get to know each other. That's why." At this point I was so confused I didn't know what to say. First he was staring at me like a weirdo, now he was sitting here talking strange but nice. And for a minute I had this idea of maybe telling him my name. I mean he wasn't bad looking and he had a nice voice when he talked. But then I thought, "Hey, hey-suppose he's one of them serial killer people you read about who ride the sub-way staring at people, then later following them home and killing them. Or suppose he's a rapist looking for another victim. That's the problem with this city, you can't trust any-body. This friend of mine, Joanne, she met this guy at a dance, took him back to her apartment, let him stay the night and the next morning after he was gone she found out that he had stole all her money while she was sleeping, plus her radio and cassette recorder. I mean, men, most of them, what they really want to do is take advantage of a girl and any situation she give them. Ain't that so? So I told this man that "I think you better go." "Why? I thought we were get-ting along," he said. "No mister, we ain't getting along. You getting along by yourself, maybe, but you ain't getting along with me. And if you don't leave this seat now I'm going to have to pull the emergency cord and tell the guard when he come over that you bothering me."

He didn't say anything. He just got up and went to another seat. At the next stop he got off and left. I kinda felt sorry for him because he looked down and kinda dejected like. I mean it don't make me feel good to put anybody down or spoil their day. But what could I do? The man had weird eyes.

I got home and told my aunt about it and you know what she say? "Suppose it was Jesus riding that train just trying to talk to people about the state of the world?" I told her, "Then he was talking to the wrong

person because I don't know nothing about the state of the world." Aunt Louise is so crazy. I don't know why I even said anything to her. Jesus, imagine that. Jesus riding the subways staring at people then trying to talk to them. If God is that dumb then he deserve what he get.

Then she said: "Suppose he was that millionaire they used to have on TV who used to go about looking for people to give a million dollars to?" About that time I stopped listening to her.

But that man wasn't no Jesus. And he wasn't no millionaire either. He was just a lonely man looking for company. But you know what the real joke is? I'm lonely too. But I ain't telling Auntie that.