

The Daily Train

I do not like the train.

No, that's not true, I like the train just fine. It's the people I don't care for. The train is efficient, cheap enough, and gets me where I need to go faster than walking or attempting to fight traffic all the way to work.

It's just the people. I feel like I'm the only one here who cares enough about their appearance to put some effort into it. I don't leave the house unless my clothes are wrinkle-free, smelling fresh and clean, and I'm showered and given my appearance some attention.

The nearest five people to me seem to have missed every one of those marks. Especially, the shower. It's 7:20 in the morning. How are you sweaty and smelly already?

I don't think I'm an elitist, or anything like that (I take the train, remember), but come on! Have a little self-respect and consideration for those around you.

Oh, good. Another stop where no one gets off and more get on.

Jeez, Juliette, how snobby are you?

I know, I know.

It's just hard to take some things, and it's easier to have these incredibly rude conversations in your head, than out loud.

Still, Julez, come on. Be nice.

Fine... But I don't know why my inner voice has to argue.

Here they come. Yep. You look like you just strolled out of the interstate drainage system, so you should definitely come sit next to me.

And you did...

They keep coming in. Good thing there are plenty of open seats right now.

Oh, who is that? He is cute. Really cute.

Crap, he looked at me. I know he saw me looking.

No, no, no, do not come over here.

Oh, I wanna die. I wanna die. No one is supposed to make eye contact on a train. It's too cliché and can be more than a little creepy.

Don't look up, don't look up, don't look up.

"Hi."

Oh...no...

"I'm sorry, but I couldn't help but notice you looking my way."

This is not happening. Crap, others are starting to look. Doesn't this guy know you don't talk to anyone on the train!

"I know you aren't supposed to speak to some stranger on the train, but, I don't know...something about the way you looked at me made me want to give it a try."

Why'd you look up? He smiled. Your smiling. Stop smiling, you idiot. My goodness, he IS handsome.

"Um...hi..."

Brilliant, Juliette. Just a brilliant hello.

"May I sit?"

"Um...yeah...sure.."

And another witty remark. You are on fire today, Julez.

"My name is Mark."

He is really handsome. And his name is Mark. That's a good name. Why does he keep staring at me like he is expecting something from- Oh my goodness. He said his name and here I am just staring back at him like an idiot. Say your name!

"Mine, um, my name is Julez- uh, Juliette, I mean. But my friends call me Julez. You can call me Julez, if you like, too. I guess."

You are a colossal idiot.

"Julez. I like it. So, where you headed?"

"Um, to work, like everyone here, I suppose."

He's laughing. And this is why you will die alone, Juliette.

"Fair point. Yeah, I guess a bunch of people on a train this early in the morning wouldn't be going to a concert. What kind of work do you do?"

"I'm a CPA with one of the firms in Midtown. And you, Mark, what do you do?"

I'm being too forward. Just met this guy and already I'm asking what he does for a living. What's next, Julez, going to ask him what side of the bed he sleeps on and if he wants grandkids some day?

Uh-oh. He's looking around kinda nervous. I did overstep.

"Can you keep a secret?"

Great. He's looking me in the eyes now, asking if I can keep a secret. I'm going to end up in his basement, turned into a lamp shade.

Shut up, Julez.

"I suppose. We did just meet, though. I could be the untrustworthy type."

Seriously, that's the flirt you wanted to go with right now?

Another chuckle from him. Oh, his eyes literally twinkle when he smiles. I am in so much trouble.

"That is true. You could be untrustworthy. But I doubt it. You don't have the eyes of someone capable of that."

My eyes. He spoke about my eyes. Is it too soon to exchange house keys and be each other's emergency contact?

"My line of work is...complicated."

No, no, no, don't be 'complicated'! I know that code word. Complicated equals unemployed or illegal. Great. The engagement is definitely off.

“Uh-oh, I see that look. You think when a guy says his work is complicated that it really means he is either unemployed or doing something illegal. Right?”

Nod you head. Do it. Nod. Your. Head.

“Right. Well, I can assure you I am employed. And I don't typically engage in illegal activities. Although, I have been known to break the speed limit from time to time. But, shh, that's between you and me, OK?”

He winked at me. The twinkle in his eye shone even brighter in that moment.

I'm screwed. I'm hooked, fully on the line, and sinker. I just met this guy and he has charmed me to the point of idiocy. I am so screwed.

“Your secret is safe with me.”

“Excellent! So, Julez, would I be completely rude to ask for your number this early on in our conversation?”

My number? Oh, hon, if you asked, you could have so much more. Rude or not.

“Yeah, sure. Do you have your phone, I'll type it in.”

Oh holy crap, He is actually reaching for his phone. Wait, who is he looking at. He keeps turning his head back to the doors. Is he glancing at the two guys by the door? Why would he do that? Does he know them? They don't look like much. Pretty non-descript white guys.

“Yes, here you go. But, I am afraid I will have to be rude in a moment. My exit is coming up.”

Isn't that always the way. Just when I think that this could be going somewhere. Well, I guess I'll go out on a limb and give him my actual number.

Did one of those guys just look over here? I thought I saw them look over. Does Mark know them? It kind of seems like he does.

“No, it's ok, I get it. We all have to get off the train sometime, right?”

Did you just laugh at the end of that like some love struck simple teenage girl? Seriously?

“Yes, that is true. Some sooner than later, I'm afraid.”

He looked back over. And one of them looked over, too. Did he just nod slightly at Mark? What is going on?

Nothing is going on, you idiot. You are just flushed with adrenaline because this really cute guy is actually talking to you. Just shut up and let it happen.

No, there was a nod. I saw a nod that time.

“My exit is fast approaching. I'll need my phone back.”

Again, that smile. Oh, the phone, right! You finished putting your number in a while ago. Give it back!

“Oh, right, yes, of course. I'm sorry, I guess I was just trying to keep you here a little longer.”

A giggle and a hair flip. Really?

“I wish I could, truly. But um...”

Ok, this time he definitely looked at those guys and the guy on the left definitely nodded this time.

“...I'm really going to have leave soon.”

You need to remember every detail about this guy. Look him up and down. Do it!

Nice slacks, charcoal with black stitched seams. Are those boots like I've seen the ambulance guys wear? Odd. Let's see, what else. A celery-colored polo shirt that is doing an excellent job of revealing just enough of his physique to let you know he takes his body seriously. I could take it seriously, too. Stop it! Keep looking. Nice watch. One of those with all the extra buttons and dials guys seem to like. He keeps checking it, too, then looking at the guys by the door.

Now the face. Clean shave, nice jaw line. Hint of a tan. Kind of All-American in his features. Clean, short hair cut of a professional businessman. Eyes that could make you feel lost for days in their seemingly never-ending depths of deep blues. Wow, you have a thing for those eyes, huh, Julez?

He is standing. Why is he standing?

“I have to get off in just a moment, but, before I do. I want to know if I call you, will you pick up?”

“Yeah- yes, yes, I'll pick up.”

That smile. Oh, my goodness, I am in trouble.

“Excellent. I'll call you soon, Julez”.

What are those guys doing by the door? The two guys he was looking at are...are what...pulling the doors open? What? Why? We are a quarter mile from the next platform and over open water.

Did one of them just yell 'Now'?

“I am definitely calling, don't worry.”

Is he running towards the door where those two guys are? He isn't stopping. They pulled the doors open and he isn't stopping.

The guy I just met on the train. The seriously cute, charming guy named Mark, who said his job was complicated, just jumped off my morning train, into the river. Like he planned it. He planned to jump out of a speeding, elevated train into the river.

I am definitely going to die alone.