



## IT'S GONNA BE A BUMPY RIDE!

After a harrowing Bronx to Brooklyn odyssey, Christopher Klimovski discovers merit in the typical New Yorker's aversion to inter-borough travel.

“I arrived at the 233rd Street station on the 2 Line, met by Joey and Janet as though I was a returning war hero, several purple hearts emblazoned on my lapel.”

**“The party is in Brooklyn? No thanks.”**

“Go all the way to the Bronx? Are you high?” “Back into the city? I’ve just come from there!” These are just some of the popular responses I’ve received after asking my fellow Common Mortals to accompany me to places anywhere further than a five-block radius from where they are. For reasons that still elude me, the occupants of New York City have a travel aversion complex.

One seemingly unremarkable day, I put on my traveller’s finest for the two-hour trek from Brooklyn to the Bronx to spend the day with my musically talented bestie, Joey. Learning of my impending arrival, his mother Janet, an angel sent to earth, had taken the day off work to cook enough food to choke a baby. “Nobody ever comes to visit me here,” he noted with the excitement of a child on Christmas day, “Girl, we are going to go off!”

I arrived at the 233rd Street station on the 2 Train, met by Joey and Janet as though I was a returning war hero, several purple hearts emblazoned on my lapel. I was systematically introduced to each of the shop owners on the walk back to their house. Not only were they impressed I had made the journey from Brooklyn, people acted as though I had flown in from Australia simply to bless them with my presence. I would be lying if I said I didn’t upplay the arduous task of the train journey, not suspecting that Karma would soon come along to cut me down at the knees.

The dinner was a magnificent culinary feat. The aroma of roast pork greeted me as I impatiently walked the building corridors. Dishes of potatoes and vegetables were already nestled on the table, yet I saw space for the multitude of courses that were to come (\*wipes saliva as I write this). I knew it was a good idea not to have eaten that day. Not that it was

by choice, as my wallet lay empty in my back pocket. A home-cooked meal plus enough wine to drown Kris Kardashian and I was wondering why Joey’s network of friends were averse to coming to this land of roast and wine.

The conversation flowed and we were merry. Joey regaled me of a tale of how unblocking all contacts on his Grindr list was tantamount to opening Pandora’s box (the horror!). One bottle, two bottles, three bottles later and the safety of the sun left the sky. The night darkened and the stars remained unseen due to the light pollution of the city. Knowing that my journey to the Bronx was something of a simple task, I told them I was ready to return and that despite my stumbles and fumbles, I would be sure to get home unscathed. Wrong.

**THE 2 TRAIN TO FULTON STREET, MANHATTAN – CONFRONTATION OF THE CEILING CRAWLERS**

**Far drunker than I had anticipated,** I sashayed onto the train car and sat down staring at the elderly gentleman opposite, trying to figure out whether he was, in fact, four conjoined twins overlapping one another.

“Is it just you?” I queried, one eye open and the other closed, trying to regain focus. New Yorkers are used to this type of situation and I was thankfully ignored. I questioned again whether his non-existent brother knew all his secrets when I was interrupted with the call, “EVERYBODY IT’S SHOWTIME!”

On NYC subways there are groups of urban hip-hop dancers who, between stations, display dance moves and acrobatics in the carriage to tunes from their blaring cassette players. The group began clapping and dancing. I slowly turned my head to enjoy the performance until they began performing a series of flips and turns, jolting my already skewed perception of the world. One of the younger performers then latched his feet onto the bars overhead and began walking on the ceiling of the train, not unlike *Inception*. A completely nonplussed exterior hid the fact that I was screaming with terror on the inside, as I had convinced myself this was, in fact, the end of the world. Demons were going to kill me and the roast was seconds away from ending up on the non-conjoined-twins lap in front of me. At the very next stop, I ran from the demon dancers and decided to catch another train.

**THE 5 TRAIN TO FULTON STREET, MANHATTAN – INTENSE EMOTIONAL DISTRESS**

**Unknowingly,** I entered the wrong train and took my seat, shivering from the unshakable fear now instilled in me. I made sure to survey the train car for Satan’s ceiling-walkers and once I was satisfied that there were none, was able to breathe a sigh

of relief and continue my journey home.

Approximately half an hour into this trip I came to the sobering realisation that despite moving in the right direction, I was on the wrong train line. My inebriation prevented me from acting swiftly and so I sat there, defeatist, and began a depressive thought path about how this would not have happened to me back at home.

I began noticing that despite the hard exterior many New Yorkers present to the outside world, the cracks in their emotional stronghold show when you look at their faces in the reflection of a subway window. A smile may cover tears, but refusing to let any fall from my drunken ducts, I decided to take charge, leave this train carriage and find my way back to Fulton Street.

**THE GOD-KNOWS-WHICH TRAIN TO FULTON STREET, MANHATTAN – DEATH IN MY AURA**

**I switched from train to train,** slowly making my way down the dendritic underground train system toward the station that would take me home. I was right on track to return to sobriety which made the following events all the more unsettling. I was standing at the back of a train carriage that seemed suspiciously full at this time of night. A homeless man standing opposite me would not break eye contact. I courteously looked away, although I made sure not to look away instantly, as that would seem like an invitation to engage.

No sooner had I broken eye contact when the homeless New Yorker, gruff in appearance, approached me standing only a foot away and proceeded to announce, “You’re going to die tonight. You have death in your aura. I see it. Lime green. You’ll probably be killed.”

Now, reader, as polite as polite can get, it is near impossible to listen to this kind of talk without feeling certain that you will be stabbed. Luckily, Fulton Street pulled up and I ran off and caught the J line back to Brooklyn, back home, where I went to wash off the day’s events and scrub my lime green death aura.

While the hot water eroded the journey’s filth and simultaneously began rebuilding my soul, I had a thought. Even though I had experienced an unusually large buffet of crazy, I never would have been able to tell you this story if I had the mentality of the ‘anti-traveller’ New Yorker. But as I sit here in the safety of my bedroom writing this, my aura clean and all my own, I look down at my phone to see that Klara has just texted and asked me to accompany her to a loft party in Midtown. I would. But, I mean, I was just there and I can’t be fucked going back tonight.

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