

30 hrs to New York

“I have no idea what I’m doing. I’m going to ask the Amtrak security.”

I hung up my phone with my sister and nervously walked over to the security desk where a chubby fat officer was sitting. All his attention was not on the people around him, but on his video game with his Cheetoed covered hands was holding.

“Excuse me sir, do you know where the Amtrak train station is?” The security man looked at me as if I were blind and dumb. “It’s right over there....”

As he points to the sign that says “Amtrak Station” I give him an embarrassing smile and quickly return to my seat in the holding area. As I sat down this tall skinny black man with white-grayish nappy hair with a beard to match that hadn’t been shaved in maybe never, sat across from me. As I was looking around the station I could feel his eyes burning through me like a hot ass laser. I didn’t want to look towards his direction for mere fear of eye contact. Even though I was petrified, I looked anyways then swiftly looked away. I have never seen such a sinister perverted frightening smile in person ever in my life. He had no shame at all, didn’t care if I stared back at him or not. It was so noticeable that the black lady sitting on my row, about ten seats down, even noticed this creep. She looked at me and said,

“Gurl...can you watch my bags when I go to the bathroom? You can’t trust nobody up in here with yo’ stuff.”

I have never been so happy to do a favor for someone in my life. The fact that a regular human being was around in that dungeon of a place was a miracle from Jesus himself.

“Sure I will watch your bags. No problem.”

The more things around myself that barricaded me from Sir-Stares-ALot was great. When the lady got back from the diabolical kempt restrooms, she asked my name and where I was going.

“I’m Brittany, I am going to New York to visit my friend Kassim.”

“Alone?” she looked concerned.

“Yes, but I won’t be there too long, Just Friday night and Saturday, going to be on the train for about 20 ho.....”

“Gurl why does that man keep looking at you like that?”

“Oh, I don’t know, I’m trying to ignore him.”

“Chillld, he is having sex with you and you don’t even know it!” She then began to yell loudly for security. In complete embarrassment I began to laugh. Then I raised my hands to my face and shook my head in disbelief. She called louder “Security!, Security!” I wasn’t sure if she really was expecting them to come over but at this point we both were having a good laugh.

The whole situation didn't seem so horrific in that moment but as we glanced once more at the man, he wasn't only just staring at me this time, he was masturbating as well.

“Aw hell! Security!!”

This time Marcia wasn't trying to get a laugh even though that's all I could manage to do in the situation at hand, no pun intended. The chubby security guard finally got up out of his seat he'd been sulking and gaming in for hours.

“What seems to be the problem?”

“That man over there has been raping this young lady in his mind for hours now.”

“What?!”

He looked over at me and all he could see was my face in the palms of my hands. “Well, I will go over and see what the problem is.”

I knew no matter what he would say, a show was about to go down in 2.2 seconds. There is no right way to ask a person whether or not they were masturbating. Marcia looked over at me and said “Girl let's move before this fool acts up, and stick with me before you get raped.”

She really had a way with words. We moved across the waiting section but still in view of Black the Ripper and the rent-a-cop. After a few moments of the security guard questioning the man they started arguing.

“Here's my ticket mutha fucka now get out my face!”

“Sir, calm down.”

“You ain't gonna get in my face and start asking me “where are you going!”

“I'm going to need you to calm down.”

I wasn't expecting the confrontation to be so calm. I imagined it way worst. “This is going to be a long night, girl. I just came from church, I sing there...the only that can sing. I am so tired; I wish I had a cup of ice for this Mosta that's in my bag. You want a bottle?”

“No, I'm alright.”

“It will make you sleep better.” I started laughing and declined again. Not taking “No thanks” for an answer, she slipped the wine in my yellow carryon bag anyways. “Here, just in case. I got plenty, pretty much a liquor store in my bag anyways. You never know who you might even up sitting next to on these trains.”

“Thank you.” I was praying I wasn’t going to end up sitting next to Ruff Daddy because I would probably have to drink myself into a coma.

“Everyone boarding Amtrak Train 50 have your tickets out, again, everyone boarding Amtrak 50 have your tickets out, Thank You!”

We all had our tickets out before his announcement on the count of the train being 2 hours late!

“Gurl, if it’s not assigned seating you sit by me, I’m going to watch after you.”

That sounded fine by me. I knew if anyone tired to mess with me she would have a bottle or two of liquor to knock them out with. We end up seating next to each other and she told me story after story after story. You get the gist. I was very entertained, I wasn’t even sure if what she was telling me actually was the truth but I didn’t care either.

“So yeah, I am visiting my friend, we used to date. He’s married now, but...we are still friends, you know what I mean.”

Oh I knew what that met but I kept that to myself. I was so focused on seeing my two men, Kassim and New York City, both I met on the same day. I really didn’t know which one I was more excited to see...was I cheating too? As this question popped in my mind I looked over and saw Marcia pouring her first bottle of travel size wine in a cup of ice.

“Alright Brittany, I am about to drink this wine and go to bed, you should go get you a cup and drink that bottle I gave you.”

“We’ll see, I am not much of a wine drinker, I like beer.”

“Oh I think they sell that here too.”

I had an inkling that she really wanted me to drink. I think she felt guilty about drinking since she hadn’t in awhile. I didn’t want to drink on the train. One, the beer was \$7 a can and two, where was I going? Besides, I had been sober for awhile and was allowing myself one night in NYC to drink and do what I wanted.

15 hours and 3 bottles of Mosta later my new friend Marcia was getting off the train in Baltimore.

“Alright, let’s take a picture before I leave. 1, 2, 3.....ohhhh Lord, I can’t take a picture for nothing.”

I don’t think she knew everything she said sounded like a stand-up comedy special.”You better call me when you get to New York. I need to know if my child is alright. I’m going to give you my number and we need to stay in touch. I’m having my 50th birthday party next year and I want

you to come. I am going to have a party for family and friends, then after that... that's when the real party begins if you feel me."

"Oh I know what you mean. I will call you once I'm in New York."

"Alright, you have fun and be safe, New York is crazy!"

"Haha, okay I will, see ya!"

"Bye for now."

Now I was left alone to fin for myself for the last end of the train ride. I felt like I gain some wisdom from Marcia and if anything, I still had a bottle of liquid courage she left me.

"Ladies and Gentlemen we are now arriving to Penn Station, the last stop. Please remember all your belongings and I hope you all enjoyed your time here on Amtrak."

Oh happy freakin day! Being on a train for practically 24 hours can really make your body hate you and you hate you. I have never been so happy to simply stretch in my life. Then my pain quickly subsided once I realized I was back in New York. It took three years for this trip to happen but I was finally here again. My boyfriend hadn't changed one bit. I left the train and headed to the baggage claim area. "30 minute wait!" but of course. I texted Kassim and told him I would probably be at his place at midnight. Kassim, Kassim, I was hoping he was as fine as I remembered three years ago. I still vividly remember the day I met him when my sister and I came to New York City during Spring Break

"You ladies want to see Central Park?"

"Maybe, who are you?"

"Haha, Kassim. I'm a tour guide and pedi-cab driver...here get in and I'll show you around."

Best \$20 bucks I ever spent. After the ride, I don't know if it was me or the pint of 151 Bacardi Rum I was illegally drinking in the back of the pedi-cab, but something gave me courage to ask him to hang out.

"What are you doing after you get off work?"

"I have no plans, what are you doing?"

I wanted to say "you" but decided to keep it classy.

"We are going out, this is our first time in New York, you should show us where the fun is."

Long story short, him and I ended up under a freeway bridge near my hotel and were making out for all to see. The memory was all that was playing in my mind as I walked up the stairs to his apartment. Him pending me against the wall, lifting me up, raising my hands above my head kissing my neck...you get the point. I was 21 years old then, he was 25. Now we were older, hopefully wiser, but even more so anticipating our 2nd meeting after seventy-eight fortnights. I arrived at his place 40 minutes earlier than I told him I would be. I wanted to surprise him, not the best idea.

“Hey where is apartment 6C? Is this it?”

“Yeah, that’s it.”

The tall and rather attractive man in the elevator gave me the same “duh” look that the security guard gave me 25 hours ago. Again, I embarrassingly smile and turned away and walked towards the green rusty door. I couldn’t believe I was one knock away from seeing Kassim again. I wasn’t nervous until I saw the entry that separated years past from him and I. I knocked on the door and was expecting him to open right away... wrong!

“Kassim?”

I knocked harder, no response. My heart was racing and I started to become nervous. I could feel my heart in the pit of my stomach. It was 60 degrees out yet I was in a cold sweat.

“Kassim!”

I knocked even harder and even called his phone, he didn’t respond to either one. My fear instantly turned to rage.

“Is he standing me up?”

“Does he even live here?”

“How could I be so dumb?”

“My parents were right.”

I almost dial home to tell my mom he was a jerk and I should have never come. Let’s just say I have had my share of bad experiences with men, to the point where I already was prepared to call Motel 6. My rage turned to sadness, I almost started to cry but saw the door-knob turn. I quickly wiped my eyes and started to smile. Then there in front of me stood 6’1 of sexiness, sexiness that was wet and wrapped up in a towel.

“I can’t believe it’s you.”

He looked totally shocked, maybe because I was early or maybe because he was standing in his doorway half naked. I didn’t mind of course.

“I am so mad at you!”

Not the words I thought I would be saying to him but that’s all that came out. He started laughing.

“Your early, how you get in the building?”

“A lady let me in.”

“Oh, I was going to say...that’s why I’m shocked.”

“Oh I see.”

Let’s just say the passionate kissing I expected to receive in my fantasy of meeting him again, was replaced with a big room filled with awkwardness.

“Come in...here let me take your bags. My room is over here. Sorry it’s not extravagant or anything.”

“So you have roommates?”

“Well, yeah.”

What do you mean “Well, yeah” is what I wanted to say. He never mentioned he had a roommate, let alone 4 and all men! I wasn’t mad but more taken a back.

“I got your salad and grilled chicken you wanted...oh and your Coolers Lite. I didn’t know what you met by “ranch”? But here is some dressing in the refrigerator.”

As I grabbed the bottle of salad dressing he was pointing to I started to laugh.

“This is ranch...”

“Oh, okay I didn’t know.”

“But... it says ranch.”

We both started laughing and I could see he felt silly. I unknowingly probably gave him the same “are you stupid” look I’d been getting the whole trip. Though, I was aware of the slight language barrier, since he was originally from Nigeria. I mean, he spoke English well, as well as any other American. Though, when I told him jokes he hardly ever laughed. Either because he didn’t

understand them or they just weren't funny. As we went to his room I quickly open the beer he bought and as I brought the can to my lips I saw him on his bed shaking his head.

“What?”

“I thought you stop drinking?”

I sure I looked as puzzled as I was. What did he think I was going to do with the beer? Water his plants with it? I didn't understand.

“I mean, I don't drink like I used to...but I occasionally have a drink.”

I used to have a slight drinking problem, it almost ended me up in a rehab center but who's keeping tabs, pun intended. I told Kassim all about it years before, it actually was such an issue we almost stopped being friends over it.

“I know you remember I am religious but I am more religious now. I gave up that stuff a long time ago. I don't even like touching it. I probably shouldn't have bought it for you, I am enabling you...I feel.”

“No, you're not. I would have gotten for myself anyways.”

Or I would have popped open the wine bottle that Marcia gave me.

“Yeah, I don't judge you though. I don't look at you any different. I just choose not to do it.”

I honestly didn't feel like he was judging me, but I didn't know how extreme his Muslim faith practices was until then. He might not have believed in drinking, but he still believed in getting down.

“I'm going to give you a massage...turnover on your back.”

I did as he said and quickly.

“So what do you plan on doing tomorrow? I wish I wasn't working so we could hang out.”

“Me too, I'm just going to Chinatown and Times Square probably. Get into some trouble, you know.”

“Ahh, I bet. I've been in New York for years and haven't really even seen it. I haven't even been to the island where the Statue of Liberty is.”

“Wow, really? That's crazy.”

“Yeah, I'm just always working. Okay, take off your shirt.”

“Wow what a transition. You don't waste time do you...”

“The shirt is getting in the way of the massage.”

I knew where this was heading and I was all for it.

“Yeah I’m sure it is, that’s what they all say.”

He laughed and then started to my massage my back like a professional. He started rubbing harder and harder and before I knew it he had removed my bras along with my shirt. Yes, my bras. I had two bras on because I had no boobs. I was embarrassed and tickled that he removed both straps without any care about it.

“Does that feel good?”

He knew it felt good, I was moaning for Pete’s sake. I guess he wanted an actual acknowledgement with words.

“Yes...yes, that feels really good.”

“Am I pressing too hard?”

“You can press harder if you want.”

By how we were responding to each other I knew where this massage was leading. He started to rub up and down my back then attempted to rub down my pants but I quickly turned over and started kissing him. I didn’t want to tell him I started my period a couple of days ago. There is no right way to say “Hey, there is a river of blood coming out of my vagina.” So I did what I do best, kiss. He of course started getting horny, as was I, not going to lie. The kiss was just like I remembered. His lips were just as soft and full as they were under the freeway that night, but better and not so cold.

The past three years of tension seemed to be present within those few moments of holding each other. I felt each honest thought he had for me within just the touch of his hand. Some felt sexual, the others seemed as though he was confessing how he felt about me.

“Kassim...”

“Oh sweetie...”

I loved when he called me sweetie, it was better than “Hey sexy!” “What up ma?” “Hey baby, can I get some of that?”, you know the normal stuff. It was just real and it made me feel like he really cared about me.

The passion in the air was intense. I was trying to hold back from what the temptations playing in my mind. I didn’t want to do anything more other than rub against each other in our clothes like inexperienced teenagers. I had been celibate for over a year and didn’t want to lose that in the moment. Had it been a year ago, before this decision, I would have been on him like white on

rice, like a dog to a bone, like a fat kid eating a twinkie and so on and so forth. Heck, I probably would have shown up at his house naked for the lack of respect I had for myself back then. The lack of feeling or emotion I felt when I had sex, I never felt anything...ever.

He started kissing me more, all over my neck, all over my chest. Then I started to feel gestures from him showing he was now ready for more. I quickly interjected that move like a referee calling a technical foul on Kobe's opponent during a basketball game or something...really fast and without a clear thought.

“So that's it?”

“What do you mean?”

I knew exactly what he met but decided to play oblivious.

“It's just...”

He shook his head and looked towards the ceiling and confusingly said

“That's all you want?”

That was NOT all I wanted. I also didn't want to give him a bloody present that I unfortunately receive every month. He was unaware that I was actually doing HIM a favor by not unleashing a crime scene on his bed sheets.

“I haven't...been with someone in over a year and I wanted to wait until I was married or at least in love.”

“Ah I see, same here...well the whole “not being with someone for awhile”, thing.”

I could tell he felt disappointed. It was like taking a kid to the candy store, letting them pick out whatever they wanted and then not paying for it. I didn't know what to say or what was even right to say to him in the moment. I knew I lead him on to think I probably...most likely would be down for sex, but I still was standing my ground. I knew if I had sex with him, I would hate him. Just seems to be the pattern thus far in my “love” life. So as he's boner diminished, so did the sexual atmosphere. I think we both had different ideas of what would happen that night. I thought I wouldn't be on my menstrual cycle and he thought he would be riding me like a cycle...in which case we both were wrong.

The next day was the only actual day I would get to spend in New York City. I knew exactly where I wanted to go but didn't really have a lot of time to do it all. As 11am approached, Kassim awoke in a sudden urgency like a black-african ninja.

“Oh, Oh I'm late!”

“For work?...”

“I got to do my prayers! Should have been up and finished by now.”

So when he mentioned prayers, I was assuming, “Oh Father... which aren’t in Heaven... hallow be they name...” but there was none of that, in fact I’m not even sure what went on because he didn’t want me to see him pray.

“You would think I was crazy if you saw me praying.”

“Why??”

I don’t know if Kassim knew I went to a black church. A normal Sunday service would be people dancing, running around the church, shouting, crying, speaking in tongues, falling out... So anything he would be doing or saying would not be a shock to me.

“I just wouldn’t be comfortable doing it in front of you, no disrespect.”

“I understand...do you want me to leave?”

“No, I will just go into the living room.”

So as he packed up his praying rug that looked exactly like Aladdin’s friend, I turned on his T.V, and started watching “Sex and the City”.