

Whispers on a Bus

Mind if I sit here?

Cat got your tongue?

I was asking you if you minded if I took this seat.

Well, thank you very much for that shake of the head. Nice shoes by the way.

Excuse me, this is my stop.

No, it aint.

Excuse me, I need to get off now.

No, you don't. You need to sit back down, real quiet unless you want me to gut you. You might want to pay attention to the shive.

That a girl. See I been riding this bus a year now, and I know exactly where your stop is.

What do you want?

A little courtesy to start. See I been smiling at you every time you get on this bus and sometimes I say good evening to you. But you don't do nothin but turn away and act all uppity. Now I said, nice shoes. What do you want to say to me?

Thank you.

I didn't know they made heels in that bright a yellow.

Um, yes, they do.

So why are you all yellow today? Which, by the way you look real good in.

Thank you. I had a client meeting today.

See, I knew you could be civil if you tried real hard.

I'm so sick of women like you. You know I could jab you right about here and hit your intestines which would cause all that shit to spill into your body and you would die right here. Last bus ride of your life.

Or I could aim higher. Feel that?

Please just let me get off the bus. I'm sorry I've been rude to you.

Or, I could aim lower, right about here. What do you think? Is that where you want it?

No, stop. Please stop.

Lower your voice or I'll slit your throat.

No, what you need is to learn manners. Take off one of those yellow shoes.

Okay.

Turn it over and put it in your lap.

Good.

Look at how nasty the bottom of it is. All dirty from walking around the city. This isn't the first time you have worn those shoes, is it?

No.

You should take better care of your things.

I want you to clean that shoe bottom right now. With your tongue. Bend over and lick it clean. Yup. Lick it.

Guess you don't think I'm serious.

Shhhh, cry out again and you die right here, right now.

Oh no, a little blood on your yellow pants. Put your head down and lick until I tell you to stop. That's it. Lick it until it's all clean.

Gross, Take a little breath, no gagging and vomiting allowed. Sit up and let's see how you did.

Please, please my stop is next. I just want to go home.

Of course you do, but were not done yet. We'll just keep riding until were done. And that shoe doesn't look done to me. But those tears might help clean if you can work them in. I think you need to lick harder. Let me help you. out

See if you put more pressure into it, you can do a better job. Do you need me to keep holding your head down, or can you do it by yourself now?

I can do it.

Excuse me, um, Is your lady okay?

Oh, hey buddy. No, she's okay. Just preggers. Bus makes her nauseous. Thanks for asking.

Yeah, my wife went through that too. Whoops, this is me. Hope you feel better soon.

Yeah, take care now.

Again, you have no manners. Why didn't you thank the nice man for his concern?

I'm sorry.

You can sit up.

That looks so much better. Your getting the hang of this shoe cleaning thing. Real professional job.

Thank you.

You can put it on your foot now.

Thank you.

Oh no, looks like your thigh is still bleeding onto your yellow pants.

Its okay. Can I get off the bus now?

Other shoe.

Oh please. I really have learned my lesson. I need to be nicer and polite to people.

Other shoe.

There you go, see, another filthy shoe. You know what to do. Assume the position and start working on that city scum. Probably piss and dog shit on those streets. You don't want all that shit on your lovely yellow heels.

Good girl, keep at it. I'm just thinking about how you would report me to the cops.

I won't, I promise.

Lick. I picture you walking into the police station. Oh, officer, he made me lick my shoes. You know what they'll do as soon as you leave? Laugh their asses off. I know. I got some cop friends, and this is the kind of stuff that keeps them laughing for weeks. Or maybe you can tell your boyfriend how you sat on the bus and licked the bottom of your shoes. And he'll want to vomit every time he looks at you. He'll never be able to erase that image of you licking like a dog.

Sit up. Show me the shoe.

Wow you have gotten good at this. Maybe you want to clean my shoes? Or maybe you have learned your lesson?

Yes, I have.

What have you learned, Yellow?

To be nice and polite to people.

Good answer, ding-ding-ding. But what have your really learned?

Nothing?

Maybe you are a hopeless liar who will say anything to save her ass?

No.

What have you leaned Claire W. Richards who lives at 205 North Russett, apartment 3B with James the loser?

Cat got your tongue?

Now tell me, what do you know that you didn't know when you got on the bus?

That its not safe to ride the bus.

Yes, it's not a safe world. But tell me why it's not safe.

Because people can do stuff, hurt me.

And that is because?

I don't know.

I think you do. But let me help you, Yellow. Who is in control?

You are.

And who is not in control?

I am not in control.

Bingo. You live your life thinking you control it. But you don't.

At any moment someone snatch your life right away, rip it right out of your hands. They can hurt you real bad. Your boyfriend could leave you for another woman. Or he might be dead in your apartment right now. Maybe his throat is cut wide open, and his tongue is cut out. Or maybe he has a bazillion stab wounds to his torso.

No, please, no.

You know, women leave men all the time, they take your kids and then you end up doing things that you never wanted to do to her, and to your kids who take her side. Things you can never undo. You see it now, don't you?

You are not in control of your life.

Yes. I am not in control. You are in control.

You are a fucking, idiot puppet.

I know, I'm sorry. Please let me get off the bus now.

Because then you will be in control?

No. I won't be in control. You are in control. I just want to go home.

To see if James is still alive? Are you even thinking of James?

Tell me something. What are you going to do with those yellow shoes if I let you go home?

Throw them away. Do you want them?

You mean as a reminder that I once had control of a thirty-eight year old woman on a bus ride because I showed her a knife?

Go, get off the bus.

No, wait. Let me make a few predictions first. Your fortune for free.

You won't tell anyone what happened here. You won't wear yellow anymore, and probably not high heels. You will try to ride the bus, but you won't be able to, and soon you'll lose your job because you can't concentrate. Your relationship with BF James will end because you will be distant. You will move

out of the city and find a strapping young man to marry who looks like he can protect you from all the evils in the world. He will want kids, but you won't. Not sure how that turns out. But every time you see a bus, and I mean for the rest of your life, you will explode inside. And you will always, always, be looking out for me.

Now go, Claire W. Richards, get off the bus.