

dear motherfucker



Written by bubba



I just went online and checked my bank account. Thanks for not stealing any money from me. Credit cards I haven't checked yet, so maybe the gratitude is premature. But seeing as my checking is linked to my savings and so on...I was more worried about those accounts, so thanks. I only have two credit cards. Wait, duh. What am I talking about?! Of course you already know that! I am always doing that, restating the obvious. Well actually, now that I think about it, I have three. I forgot about the Guitar Center credit card, which means I didn't cancel it. *Uh oh!* You're not a musician, are you?

I was just thinking about the events of Wednesday night, replaying them in my head: I'm walking down 8th Avenue in New York City, en route to a dinner of millionaires, billionaires and the lefty elite of show biz politics. I'm on time, but don't have time to waste. Thinking I should have some 'stuff' to pass out, I stop in Kinko's at 8th and west 30th to make some copies. You know most the next few seconds of details, so I won't bore you...I'll just quickly inventory and rattle them off – I make my copies, drop my wallet in the outer pocket of my new grey overcoat, (which I always feel is someone else's coat that I am borrowing). You watch me closely, undetected, wait until I turn, then bump into me and skillfully, ever so skillfully, fish my wallet out from inside my pocket and make a quick exit.



The reason I'm writing is that I don't think you know what really happened after that and figured I'd send you a note and walk you through those details exactly how I experienced them. Maybe you'll find it interesting. Maybe not. The whole event was interesting to me. Oh well. Step inside my experience and you decide...

I walk outside and look to the left, then the right, I notice you watching me from about forty paces away. You're good, no doubt about it. But when it's both of us looking at one another and not just you stalking me, I'm much more keenly connected to the what's and why's percolating just beneath the first few layers of your skin; *I know it was you.* We make a connection and I know you're the motherfucker that just pick-pocketed me. You take exactly one second too long to size me up, trying to see if I know. And truthfully? I didn't. I had no idea whether I bumped into a man, woman, white, black or otherwise when it happened. As we both know, you were paying attention and I wasn't. But now...now my friend, I am. And you just looked at me for two seconds too long. But it's me that turns away, looks past you and then back in the other direction. *Did you go undetected?* Not a chance. This is what's known in the fishing world as 'letting out the line'. *I've got you motherfucker*, but you don't know whether I do or I don't. I need you thinking I don't so that we can part ways for a minute. Maybe two minutes.

I turn to walk the other way, taking only three steps. When I turn around, you've already started to walk back towards your post, but spin when you see me coming back. I'm not watching you though. At least not directly. Believe me, I know what you're doing. Jogging across the street now, you know/think I don't know who you are but assume it's best to not run into me again. You're right, too. But that, motherfucker, is an impossibility.

At the next light you've forgotten about me. That's because I went into a Turkish coffee shop and blended into a line, making myself invisible to you, outside and across the street. If you were smart, you'd know that you just stole my wallet and it's probably not likely that I'd decide to celebrate losing my personal effects with a double shot of Najjar Blue. (Besides, how would I pay for it? You can't yet know that there isn't any cash in my wallet).



But you're not smart. You're crafty and skilled at stealing. That's different. And when I'm out of sight, I'm also out of mind. But you're neither out of sight or out of mind Mr. Greencoat motherfucker. You I can see and you I am thinking about. You turn to walk back to your post and now I'm watching you. Now I'm following you. Like me a few minutes earlier, you're not paying attention. You're focused on what you need to do. You're no one's prey, at least that's what you think.

For a moment I think it would be interesting to watch you work. So I watch you on 8th Avenue, briefly, while you get back into character. It's easy to fit in to the bustle of rush hour walk traffic in New York City. Rather, it's easy to not stand out. That's what you do, stand quietly swinging your arms, acting nonchalant, as if you are waiting for someone. In fact, that's true. You are waiting for someone, we both know that. But what I know and you don't is that who you're waiting for and who you'll get are at odds with one another.

I give it another thirty seconds, seeing that you're starting to focus, watching specific people now, making observations...*who is on the phone, whose bags are unzipped and over their shoulders, who is alone...*I've forgotten momentarily that I have been victimized by you only minutes earlier and stand intrigued and interested to watch the same happen to someone else, someone I don't know. Then I look at the clock on my cell phone. A few minutes earlier I was on time. Now I'm late. I make a decision to prioritize what I need to do and what I want to do and decide to get this over with. I step into traffic.

You're looking towards me, then away, paying attention to everything, everyone...looking for a weak plank, a vulnerability. I pull my collar up, push my nose down and step in line with the larger man in front of me whose size gives me coverage. It's my turn to not stand out now and in a city of eight million people, it isn't hard. We're now ten feet away from each other.

At five feet I pull my hands out of my pocket and position my computer bag where I can drop it quickly. My right hand balls into a fist and I have my first taste of second guessing, wondering if I'd misread your eyes and if you have any idea who I am and why I'll soon be knocking you to the ground of perhaps the least user-friendly city in the world. The second guessing lasts less than five seconds. That's because I see that you've found your next mark, a woman this time, her bag is on her shoulder and even I can see her wallet poking out of the top, inviting you to teach her a lesson.



That's what you think, isn't it? That if other people can't rightfully protect themselves and their belongings that you should have access to them and to their things? Let's face it, mature adults in this day and age should know enough about how the world works to act responsibly, right? In a way, you're doing them an incredible favor, teaching them a lesson that's invaluable. Well I'm going to teach you something that I think is valuable my friend, and soon you will think this too – that retribution is a bitch.

As your new mark passes, you begin to step behind her, but you never make it because I have connected a solid right fist to the left side of your jaw and now you're careening towards the sidewalk, not even wondering what happened yet. Now you're just shocked. But at ground level, it's another story. *Who is this person on top of me*, you wonder, not even thinking that you might want to protect yourself from further damage. You might want to and I let you know that with another thundering fist, to your nose this time, the kind I like, the kind that hurt.



Now you get it. You've just been targeted. I've already got my wallet back and now I want to let you know it's me. *Guess you're not as*



smart as you thought, are you? I ask. You're scared. You're bleeding. People are passing on either side of us. I'm dressed nice, you're dressed like a thief. I keep my wallet visible and make a few choice comments so that others know why I'm mad and that you are a piece of shit that wants what they have. All I'm trying to do really is discourage anyone from intervening by letting them know that you are a criminal and you have this beating coming.

And you're scared. You should be. I'm pissed. In a way I'm scared too because you're bigger than I am. For that reason, I really don't want to fight you. What I wanted to do was hurt you and get my wallet back. So now I'll leave, and I'll do it slowly to send the message that I am not weak or afraid of you and that if you target me again the payback will be worse next time. I walk backwards for a few paces, then turn, heart racing, hand hurting, mind knowing that I did the right thing. I feel vindicated. You struggle to a sitting position and pull yourself towards the outside wall of the bank, still bleeding, scared and angry, thinking about what to do next. Following me is not an appealing option in your head.

Two blocks later I'm smiling, knowing that I have just completed a successful rendition of the predator and prey feeding cycle. I've taught a bad person that I cannot be victimized and you surely will rethink stealing from others in the future (won't you?) I've got a great story. Others will be impressed. Most importantly, I have all my belongings. What was taken from me was rightfully returned. A deep breath. I am a strong and confident person.

The wheels of the plane touch down in Dayton and I am jostled awake. Like you on the sidewalk, for a moment I am disoriented and unsure of what just happened. The first thought in my head is of you, me and what we've been through together. Then I remind myself I have no idea who you are.

Motherfucker.

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