

The sounds of running feet in hard soled shoes on concrete floors. Down the stairs - YEHIA starts panting, harder and harder, muttering "fuck" from time to time. Stairs end, and a few more seconds of running before -

THE ANNOUNCER: The *last* train that terminates in Edgware is about to depart.

Yehia's line treads on the end of theirs.

YEHIA: I know!

A bit more running, then off in the distance, growing closer:

THE ANNOUNCER: This train is about to depart. The next station is Old Gate. Please mind the doors.

The running accelerates, but it's not what ultimately saves him. This time, much closer:

THE ANNOUNCER: Please unblock the doors.

YEHIA, (panting): Thank you -- so much -- missing this train... would be a nightmare.

DAZ: Yeah, no worries.

THE ANNOUNCER: Thank you for unblocking the doors.

We hear the doors sliding shut.

DAZ: That's weird.

YEHIA: What is?

THE ANNOUNCER (simultaneously, but quieter than him): This train is about to depart.

We hear them both take their seats.

DAZ: Oh, just -- they must have changed the script for the overhead, or something.

A beat. As Yehia speaks, we hear ambient sound as the train begins to move.

YEHIA: I think you're right, come to think of it. (pause) Uh, thank you again. I know blocking the doors in London is, uh --

DAZ: Rude, usually. But it's not like we held anyone up.

YEHIA: That's true.

Then it's just the train sounds for a long moment. It continues alongside the Announcer.

THE ANNOUNCER: Angel. This train terminates at Edgware. Euston. This train terminates at Edgware. Mornington Crescent. Camden Town. Chalk Farm. Belsize Park. Hampstead. Golder's Green. Brent Cross. Colindale. Burnt Oak. This station is Edgware. This train terminates here. Thank you for travelling on the Northern Line.

We hear the two passengers gathering their things and start to go as the doors open. Then, footsteps until they reach the hard concrete.

DAZ: Hey, uh, are you okay to walk home alone? (stuttering) I just mean, uh, there have been some attacks lately, and... Well, I suppose walking home with a stranger isn't much better.

YEHIA: I mean, we're not *perfect* strangers. But I should be okay, I don't live too far from here.

DAZ: Yeah, okay.

The footsteps resume.

YEHIA: It's nice of you to ask, though. I appreciate it.

Up some stairs.

DAZ: Least I can do. (pause) After all, uh, (clear imitation of someone) it is everyone's job to work to stop anti-semitism.

Yehia laughs.

YEHIA: The only good thing about that stupid PSA is how mockable it is. Me and my coworkers joke about it literally every day.

Steps end. Footsteps for a moment til they both come to a stop.

DAZ: So, uh, I'll see you tomorrow night.

YEHIA, voice cheery: Yeah, see you tomorrow.

Two sets of footsteps departing until it fades to nothing.

A few moments of silence.

Hard-soled footsteps on concrete again. They're unhurried this time.

THE ANNOUNCER: The train that terminates in Edgware is about to depart.

A few seconds later, Yehia's footfalls are on the train. He sits.

YEHIA: Good evening!

DAZ: Good evening.

THE ANNOUNCER: This train is about to depart. The next station is Old Gate. Please mind the doors.

Yehia treads on the end of this.

YEHIA: Hey, so, it kind of feels weird not knowing your name now.

DAZ: Oh, yeah, I feel the same way. I hadn't thought about it before yesterday, even though we've been riding together so long now.

The train starts to go.

YEHIA: I'm Yehia.

DAZ: Daz. (lightly) Nice to meet you.

YEHIA: You, too.

The train sounds play again, shorter this time.

Silence.

Yehia's footsteps.

YEHIA: Good evening, Da..

A beat.

YEHIA: Oh.

THE ANNOUNCER, different, almost forlorn: This train is about to depart. The next station is Old Gate. Please mind the doors.

They shut, and the train sounds play again, but the announcer doesn't accompany them.

Silence.

Yehia approaching, then sitting.

YEHIA: Hey, Daz. (pause) I missed you yesterday.

DAZ: Oh, yeah, there was... stuff with my roommates, so I had to go home earlier than usual.

THE ANNOUNCER: This train is about to depart. The next station is Old Gate. Please mind the doors.

YEHIA: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Is everything alright now?

Train begins to move.

DAZ: Yeah, yeah, I think it's sorted. (pause) So, uh, how was your day?

YEHIA: Really good, actually. I, uh... Well, I stay late to do research in the library, and I had a productive day today.

DAZ: Oh, nice. What do you research?

YEHIA: Medieval jewry in North Africa.

DAZ: In London?

YEHIA: Yeah, uh -- thanks to the government's refusal to give stuff back, there are a lot of resources here that you can't actually access elsewhere.

DAZ: That makes sense. I mean, uh, it's bad, and that sucks very badly, I'm not agreeing with it, but I understand.

YEHIA: No, no, it's okay, I understood.

DAZ: Sorry, I'm a bit awkward.

THE ANNOUNCER, simultaneously: This station is Old Gate.

YEHIA: You've nothing to apologize for. I'm not very good with words, either.

Train comes to a stop. Doors open as Daz responds.

DAZ: You seem a right bit better than me, at least.

Footsteps approach and arrive. The doors shut.

There's a tense silence.

RANDOM GUY: What's with the hat?

Pause. The train starts to move.

YEHIA, stuttering: Are you talking to me?

RANDOM GUY: Who the fuck else would I be talking to?

YEHIA, clearly nervous: It's just to keep my head warm.

RANDOM GUY: I thought Jews weren't supposed to lie.

DAZ: If you already knew, why'd you ask?

Footsteps, heavy and deliberate.

RANDOM GUY: It's a different one, though, right? Arab Jews wear the ones like yours.

(forcefully) Right?

Footsteps are done now.

YEHIA, voice small: Right.

DAZ: Hey, leave him alone, mate. He's not hurting anyone.

ASSHOLE: Back off. We're just having a conversation. Yes?

Standing. As Daz speaks, there are a few soft footfalls.

DAZ: It's not a conversation. You're harassing him. Bug off.

Tense silence. The sounds of a scuffle, a punch, and someone hitting the floor. Yehia lets out a yelp, and then there's silence.

YEHIA: T-th-thank you.

DAZ: You don't have to thank me. Are you okay?

The sounds of a hug.

DAZ: Hey, hey, I got you. It's okay. We'll get off at the next stop and get a cab home. It'll be okay.

The faint sounds of Yehia panicking, for a few moments. Then his breathing slows.

YEHIA: Daz, he's bleeding.

DAZ: What?

YEHIA, panicked: Look, he's bleeding.

Rustling. The music begins to play.

DAZ: He -- he's not really waking up.

Now they are both breathing heavily.

DAZ: Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck.

YEHIA: I -- I'll go back to the conductor and get a first aid kit.

DAZ: We're not in the same cab as them, and anyway -

YEHIA: I'll just move between the cars, it's fine.

Pause.

DAZ: What?

YEHIA: Yeah, we do it in New York all the time.

DAZ: Jesus fuck.

YEHIA, panic plain in his voice: It occurs to me now that's a stupid thing to do.

DAZ: Yeah, a little bit! And even if you did, this train doesn't have a conductor. Fuck!

YEHIA: Wh-what do you mean?

DAZ: It's one of the AI trains. (more panicking here i think)

YEHIA: Well - there should still be a first aid kit somewhere. I'm going to look.

Standing, footsteps. The sounds of the door in the back opening, and the wooshing of the tunnel.

It's just that for a few moments.

YEHIA: Daz?

DAZ: What?

YEHIA: We weren't the last car, were we?

DAZ, tense: No, or else the conductor's cabin would be here. Why?

YEHIA: Look.

Pause.

YEHIA: I'm not just misseeing, right?

DAZ: No, I'm seeing it, too.

The door shuts, and the wooshing ends. Footsteps as Yehia speaks.

YEHIA: Okay, maybe we're just misremembering, then. There wouldn't need to be a cabin without a conductor, anyway.

Footsteps stop.

YEHIA: I... can't go forward, either.

DAZ: This can't be the only cab.

YEHIA: Look for yourself.

Ambient noise as he does indeed look.

DAZ: Fuck.

Pause. Breathing growing heavier.

DAZ: This is all just a nightmare, then. It's not real. I didn't actually talk to you, I'm not actually going back to jail. It's going to be oka...

The announcer interrupts gently, like a mother breaking bad news.

THE ANNOUNCER: This station is [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

Pause for a few moments as a slight eerie song begins to play.

THE ANNOUNCER: The next station is [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

YEHIA: I -- the overhead must be broken, or something.

THE ANNOUNCER: Estimated time of arrival is unknown.

DAZ: Look over. Out the windows.

A beat.

DAZ: I don't... know what that is.

YEHIA: It looks sort of like the night, clear out in the wilderness where there's no pollution.
But it's... a lot brighter.

DAZ: I don't think we should look right at it.

YEHIA: Why's that?

DAZ: I... I don't know. I can't explain it.

YEHIA: Okay.

YEHIA: Listen, I... no matter what's going on, we'll figure it out. I promise.

THE ANNOUNCER, simultaneous, quieter: This station is [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

DAZ: I don't care.

YEHIA: You...?

DAZ: I mean, I know I should. But I just feel... tired.

A pause.

YEHIA: I understand. You can rest against me, if you want.

DAZ: Yeah.

Clothing rustling.

THE ANNOUNCER: Estimated time of arrival is unknown.