

Wired
by
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FADE IN ON:

INT. NYC SUBWAY CAR #1 - BRYANT PARK - DAY

The RATTLE of wheels against the track.

CURTIS WEYANS (30s) huddles on a bench and twiddles his thumbs. He's a scarecrow in a business suit - full of nervous energy.

Ceiling lights reflect off his glasses. He peeks timidly across the aisle.

A THUG (20s) sits two seats away. Stained t-shirt, sparse goatee. He catches Curtis looking - flashes him a "what-the-fuck-do-you-want" glare.

Curtis' eyes drop instantly.

The train tilts. A coffee cup rolls toward Curtis. He shifts his leg out of the way.

His shoe slips against the floor. Curtis lifts his foot. Mystery goo clings to the sole.

Curtis shudders. Closes his eyes.

Blackness. Peace. Finally.

ELECTRIC BEEPS pierce the air - invade his serenity.

Curtis takes a breath, opens his eyes.

The Thug holds a smartphone in both hands, inches from his furry face.

Curtis peeks again. "Candy Crush" fills the screen.

CANDY CRUSH VOICE

Tasty!

Curtis grins. The Thug glances up, annoyed. Curtis looks the other way.

He scans the car. PASSENGERS fill the train:

- Businessmen with expensive suits.
- A GOTH COUPLE make out in the handicapped seats.
- A CROWD OF GIRLS, dressed for school. Bright crop tops, low slung jeans.

Electric devices everywhere. E-Readers. Ipods. Grating BEEPS fill the air, punctuated by the beat of RAP MUSIC.

Curtis searches for the source of the sound.

A TEEN BOY sits across the aisle, head bobbing eagerly. RAP BLASTS from his headphones - clear across the train.

Curtis opens his mouth to object...

His eyes fall on a ARABIC LOOKING MAN (50s), seated near the teen.

The man sits rigid. Glazed eyes bug from his head. His lips move rapidly, as if in prayer.

Earphone wires run from his ears to his chest - disappear into his jacket.

Curtis shrugs; starts to turn away.

A light flashes underneath the man's coat. A miniscule, subtle BLIP.

Curtis catches the glimpse of a small black box the size of a cigarette case. Definitely not standard Apple fare.

The man spots Curtis. He snaps his jacket quickly closed. Sudden panic on his face.

Curtis drops his eyes to the floor.

Looks up again.

The man avoids his eyes.

The teen next to him cranks the volume. PROFANITIES spew from his speakers.

The dark man jumps up and hurries towards the door between cars. Slides it open; disappears.

Curtis hesitates. Rises. Shuffles toward the second car.

INT. NYC SUBWAY CAR #2 - BRYANT PARK - MOMENTS LATER

The door slides shut. A worried Curtis scans the train.

A WOMAN nestles with a baby in one corner, an iPad balanced on her lap.

The dark stranger's at the far end of the train, slumped against the exit door. His hand fiddles with the box in his jacket.

Curtis squints; sees wires. Lights. Strange coiled tubes.

The man looks up and spots Curtis. His face turns grey. STATIC CRACKLES overhead. The train slides to a stop.

MTA CONDUCTOR

Welcome to Bryant Park.

The door opens. The stranger darts outside.

Curtis takes off in pursuit. This time, he doesn't hesitate.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - BRYANT PARK - CONTINUOUS

Curtis follows the man at a distance, through a maze of twists and turns:

- Through a long passageway.
- Up a steep flight of stairs.

The announcer chimes in overhead.

SUBWAY ANNOUNCER

Backpacks and large items are subject to police search. If you see something, say something.

(beat)

Stay safe, and have a blessed day!

The stranger darts down an escalator, toward a waiting train. Curtis follows behind - growing panic on his face.

A FAT MAN steps into the escalator's "left lane". Curtis tries to shove him aside. The man's a brick wall. He won't budge.

The stranger slips into the train, disappears from view.

CURTIS

Excuse me!

He squeezes by the fat man and darts downstairs.

FAT MAN

Hey! Asshole.

He flips Curtis the bird. Warning bells CHIME: Train departure in one minute.

Curtis jumps inside, last second. His coat belt catches in the doors. He sheds his jacket - slips inside.

INT. NYC SUBWAY CAR #3 - GRAND CENTRAL - DAY

Wheels RUMBLE again on the tracks. The train pulls from the station.

STRAPHANGERS are packed in like sardines. Curtis spins around. Looks everywhere.

He spots the stranger several feet away.

Curtis shoves through the crowd. Elbows and bags smack his face. People push back indignantly.

The stranger looks up as Curtis advances. He tries to retreat; there's nowhere to run.

Curtis grabs the man's shoulder.

CURTIS

Hey - you. Get back here!

The stranger swings around, shoves him away.

Straphangers shrink away from the fight. An area clears out magically.

Curtis and the man face off in a small circle, surrounded by the NYC crowd.

TWO TEENS - one tall, one short - pull out camera phones.

SHORT TEEN

Kick his ass!

The stranger reaches into his pocket. Curtis' eyes grow extra wide.

The man pulls out a bottle of mace, and points it at Curtis' face.

DARK STRANGER

Why are you following me?!

TALL TEEN

Yeah. Spray him in the eyes!

Curtis looks to the crowd for support. Blank faces stare back at him.

CURTIS

Tell him to open his coat!

He points a trembling finger at the dark man's chest.

CURTIS

He's got a bomb!

Everyone SCREAMS. The crowd stampedes to the far ends of the train. Curtis and the man are left alone. Lots of room. Face to face.

Suddenly, the stranger sneers.

DARK STRANGER

You think I'm a terrorist?

CURTIS

I don't *think*. I know. I saw it... On the other train.

DARK STRANGER

Why were you watching me?

The stranger steps towards the crowd to make a point. Everyone GASPS, shrinks away.

DARK STRANGER

Because I look Arabic? I'm Indian. This is racial profiling!

A few passengers stare at the ground in shame, avoid the dark man's eyes.

The train jostles. Curtis stumbles, but holds his ground.

CURTIS

Open your jacket, if you're innocent!

The man whips open his coat, revealing the black case. Several straphangers SCREAM. A young GIRL faints.

The man strides up to Curtis, and sticks his chest in his face. A decal is visible on a metal plate. Curtis blinks.

DARK STRANGER

Read it! Out loud. For everyone!

Curtis squints through thick glasses.

CURTIS

Uh, Med-Tech. R-Nine Thousand....

The dark man smiles, vindicated.

DARK STRANGER

That's my pacemaker. Asshole. I have a heart condition. You're lucky the stress didn't cause me to arrest!

A collective SIGH rises from the crowd. Curtis' eyes drop to the floor. The short teen flips him the bird.

SHORT TEEN

Racist little shit...

The other passengers relax. They whip out electronic devices simultaneously - fall back into their routine.

The announcer chimes in over the BEEPS.

MTA CONDUCTOR

Now entering Grand Central. Watch your step and have a great day!

The door slides open. Curtis and the stranger rush for the exit - bump shoulders. The man pushes Curtis aside.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - GRAND CENTRAL PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

A COP steps in the strangers' way.

POLICE OFFICER

(to the stranger)

Excuse me, sir. I hear there's been an altercation. Do you need assistance?

The stranger glares at Curtis.

DARK STRANGER

Everything's fine. We just had words.

He leans in to Curtis' ear.

DARK STRANGER

(whispers)

Think before you judge, next time.

He marches away. A demoralized Curtis watches him go.

BEEPS blare suddenly in his ear. Curtis looks up. A HIPSTER stands next to him, holds a GameBoy console.

Curtis hangs his head. Deflates.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL - CONCOURSE - LATER

The stranger walks briskly, coat cinched around his waist. He reaches the hub. Whips out a phone and dials.

DARK STRANGER
(into the phone)
Yeah. I'm at the drop point.

He removes the black box from his jacket.

He pops a cover off, revealing a groove underneath. He unscrews his can of mace and pops out a cylinder.

A GIRL wanders past. The man glances at her anxiously. She texts on her phone; doesn't notice him.

The man fits the cylinder into the groove. He slides it under a counter and walks away - disappears into the milling CROWD.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - GRAND CENTRAL - CONTINUOUS

Curtis shuffles away, head held low.

The tall teen runs by, recognizes his hang-dog face. The kid grins and points at Curtis.

TALL TEEN
Your skinny ass got *owned*!

Curtis looks back towards the concourse. SIGHS.

CURTIS
Next time, I'll think before I judge.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL - CONCOURSE - MOMENTS LATER

The black box lies on the floor, unnoticed. NEW YORKERS pass by, glued to various devices.

A light on the box blinks red. The cylinder opens, starts to smoke...

FINAL FADE OUT: