

THE WRONG LINE

By

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Luke: age undetermined, he's wearing a trenchcoat.

Mary: age twenty seven, wearing a red suit.

Man: age thirty, wearing a trenchcoat.

Setting: the present, a New York City subway

Lights up.

A young woman is alone on a subway train. She is reading a romance novel. The train stops and a man wearing a trench coat gets on and sits a few seats away from her. They notice each other and catch eyes for a moment too long. The man in the trench coat moves right next to her.

LUKE

Good book?

MARY

Excuse me?

LUKE

Good book?

MARY

If you like this type.

She tries to go back to reading.

LUKE

Is Fabio on the cover?

MARY

I don't mean to be rude, but I don't feel like talking.

LUKE

My apologies.

MARY

It's been a long day.

LUKE

No sweat.

MARY

Thank you for understanding.

LUKE

Is Fabio on the cover?

MARY

I'm sorry. Didn't I just say. . .

LUKE

Yes.

MARY

Yes?

LUKE

Yes, you told me you didn't feel like talking. I'm still talking.

MARY

Why?

LUKE

You look lonely.

MARY

(Noticing there is no one else on the train.)

I'm not, I happen to be going home to my boyfriend.

LUKE

I know.

MARY

Excuse me?

LUKE

Excuse me?

MARY

How do you know I'm going home to my boyfriend?

LUKE

You told me.

The train stops and the doors open. Mary gets up to go.

LUKE

(continuing)

Sit down.

MARY

My stop.

LUKE

You're lying.

Luke gets up and stands in front of the door, blocking Mary. The doors close.

MARY

What do you think you're doing?

LUKE

Not your stop, Mary.

MARY

It most certainly was...What did you just call me?

LUKE

Ma'am

MARY

You called me Mary.

LUKE

Mary.

MARY

What do you want from me?

LUKE

The question is, 'what do I want for you?'

MARY

For me?

LUKE

Entirely for you.

MARY

(going through her purse)

I don't have much money. What do you want? My wallet?

LUKE

I don't want money, Mary.

MARY

How do you know my name?!

LUKE

You told me when you were six years old.

MARY

What?

LUKE

You prayed one night, Mary. For a guardian angel.

MARY

Are you saying you're an angel?

LUKE

It's a little more complicated than that. Let's just say your prayer did not go unheard.

MARY

You are completely insane. My boyfriend is a cop. He does not have a sense of humor about guys like you.

LUKE

He doesn't have a sense of humor about much, does he?

The train stops again, but the doors do not open.

MARY

Why didn't the doors open?

LUKE

Must be a short.

MARY

What do you want?

LUKE

Maybe I want to make your life better.

MARY

How?

LUKE

By killing your boyfriend.

MARY

You are insane.

LUKE

How could you have known he would turn out to be an abusive alcoholic?

MARY

Who are you?

LUKE

Call me Luke.

MARY

Why are you here?

LUKE

You need me, Mary. More than you know.

MARY

This is bullshit.

LUKE

Remember when you were nine and Danny Sharp was teasing you in front of all the other little boys and girls? Remember that?

MARY

No.

LUKE

Yes you do. He threw mud at you and got your light blue dress dirty. Your mother punished you. She sent you to the attic for the whole night. You prayed for little Danny's death, remember? You wanted him electrocuted in the bathtub. Isn't that right? Sorry you had to settle for him falling down the stairs, but it did do the trick.

(Mary, remembering, lets out a demoniacal laugh)

MARY

You're evil.

LUKE

Goes with my job.

MARY

Don't you dare touch my boyfriend.

LUKE

How'd you get that little bruise on your chin?

MARY

Accident.

LUKE

Liar!

MARY

It was an accident.

LUKE

Mary, you are too good for this man. I am not about to watch you throw away a promising life on such a waste of human flesh as your cop.

MARY

What is so promising about my life? I work at a public school teaching the future criminals of society how to read.

Do you know what it's like to have to sit in a room with a bunch of kids you don't like who don't like you and try to teach them things they don't want to learn.

LUKE

And then you go home to a boyfriend who doesn't particularly love you and you don't particularly love. Sounds unhappy.

MARY

It is.

LUKE

Good.

MARY

Excuse me!

LUKE

Good. You have to want my help before I can give it.

MARY

What sort of plans do you have for me?

LUKE

One. Eliminate your present sexual partner. I can't have you going home to that cop every night. I might get jealous.

MARY

What are you offering?

1.
LUKE
You will be my Queen. You ever
have sex with a Devil?
(she shakes her head)
It's a rush.

MARY
What if I say no?

LUKE
I wouldn't.

(Mary takes her time. She is tempted.)

MARY
I don't want anything to do with
you.

The train stops and a man in a business suit gets on. Luke
looks at the man and then back at Mary.

LUKE
Pity.

Luke exits train. When he is out of sight, we hear a demonic
howl of pain, more like an animal than a man. The doors
close and the train takes off. Mary sits down and holds her
book to her chest.

MAN
Is that a good book?

MARY
What did you say?

The man gets up and starts to walk towards her. As he does,
he takes out a knife.

MAN
Don't scream. This will be better
if you don't scream.

Lights fade to black.

The end.