

To the First Ever Date I Had in New York City

We talked briefly on Tinder before you asked me out on a date, in the beautiful, hypnotic New York City. I had work that day, but the chances of me going out to a free Broadway show was incredibly slim, so I took a risk and skipped my mundane life.

I got off the train at Penn Station where everyone was dashing all around the place just to find the correct track number. The raw sewer smells roamed casually through the station as I navigated my way up to the streets. I rode the escalator up, but my heart was not in sync with its pace—rather my heart was running a sprint marathon.

I looked around the station to distract myself from thinking about this stranger, who was gorgeous and out of my league. The people around me were in their own little space, talking among each other—some louder than others. I got music blasting in my ears as well to tune out the gentle rumbling of my body; ironically, my phone shuffled to a love song which intensified my nervousness.

For the first few minutes, we were lost for each other, using only texts as our means of locating one another. Through many people passing by, I wondered whether or not I made the right choice to go out on a date in the city where I barely had the privilege to get acquainted with.

When I was at the corner of 34th street and Broadway, in front of Penn Station, you appeared. In your own casual fashion, you look captivating and breathtaking with just an olive green jacket and a black cheap wool beanie.

You led the way to “Hadestown,” and I blindly followed like a loyal trooper, putting all my trust in you, a stranger from Tinder. Through the many subway rides, we talked like we

knew each other for a very long time, like friends reuniting after a long break. We sat close to each other against the uncleaned subway seats, shoulder to shoulder, eyes to eyes.

We were late to the show, but that didn't stop us from enjoying the cold, winter night. During the show, I noticed you were shaking your legs; your hands were clenching on each other as you were nervous to touch my skin, to hold my hand. The music, the performances, and the audience were in awe of each other, but I was more focusing on you, and your tender shyness.

Afterward, we walked around Times Square. I remembered my face being numbed from the cold, but you took the liberty to keep me warm and company. We went to the restaurant around the corner from 49th street called "The Independence," where you treated me to a shared three courses meal. I was so overwhelmed with joy and excitement that I found myself a good person to keep—until you mentioned you were visiting from Utah.

The thought of it bothered me because all my hopes of meeting you again had vanished; the future I imagined for us evaporated as the statement traveled through my head. Nonetheless, I decided to enjoy myself for the night, and acknowledged that I spent a night with a stranger in New York City.

Soon enough, we went back to your hotel room where we watched tv and talked about our endeavors for the future. So much time had passed, and I subsequently missed my train home. You offered me the night, and I decided to spend it with you in bed. We slumbered to sleep as you hold me in your arms; your warmth and kindness passed onto me as I felt comforted and cared.

Morning came, and along with it was the eventual farewell. I helped you pack your things, and together, we walked down to the lobby where you gave me a tight hug before kissing me goodbye.

I made it back in time for the next train home as sorrowness took hold of me, but I thought to myself, *I had a good night with a stranger in the city. We had good chemistry, but maybe our time was not right.* The thought propelled me to a nice step of hope where from time to time, I dreamt of us meeting again when the moment was right.