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The Melting Pot is On My Shoe

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One of the best things about being a woman in New York City is having the opportunity to be harassed by people of many different cultures. In most cities, when a girl goes walking down the street in her skimpy summer finery, she is limited to a few wolf whistles from overweight construction men and those unforgettable cliché'd comments we all remember from late night TV. But not in New York. In New York, there are men of all ages, races, sizes, and degrees of dental hygiene who want to take you for your own. Cab drivers who ask you where you got your body, and seem surprised when you tell them it was purchased at the local deli. Toothless gas station attendants, and their slightly more upstanding owners who want you to be their bride. Strangely underweight musicians who want to discuss your favorite album, when you'd rather tell about your favorite soap. In New York, it's all about diversity.

It's also about the subway. When people of all races, classes, and ages are trapped in a closed environment together you see the most amazing things. Male schizophrenics. Female schizophrenics. People who vomit in their sleep. People watching people who vomit in their sleep. Teenagers spitting on people who watch people who vomit in their sleep. It's a journey of the five senses, the subway is. You see things, you sit in things, you step on things, you smell things, and you touch things that you hope will never be identified during your yearly physical exam. The funny thing is, though, how wonderful all of it is.

The melting pot is a glorious thing. It's easy to focus on the bits that need to be scraped off the sole of your shoe, and forget the bits you hold close to your soul and your heart. I've seen young Muslim girls in full veils reading teen magazines about Brittany Spears. I've sat on a train and played "what language are they speaking" and heard Russian, Chinese, French, Spanish, and English all on the same car. I've borrowed newspapers from businessmen, counted toes with babies who don't speak English, and had phenomenal adventures every time I go underground.

I love this city. I think all the people who wear flip-flops in it are slightly out of their mind, but without the grit there wouldn't be the glory. Where else can a funny looking white girl like me get leered at by men of all colors of the rainbow.

3 comments:

[Joy KingdomWarrior](#), Jan 28, 2007

Wow! Wouldn't want to live there, but would love to visit.

I just couldn't take the hustle of the town. I am laid back and live in a town of less than 100k. NYC would drive me crazy! :D :)

[jadan x.](#), Jan 28, 2007

I'm glad you have such a wonderful outlook on your experience. Not sure I would want to live that every day.

[Elizabeth B.](#), Jan 29, 2007

To be perfectly honest, I just dug this out of my dead letters file... I don't really live in NY anymore! (Not, though, for any reason listed here.)

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