

In another part of the city I waited outside the back entrance of the New Amsterdam Theatre for Daisy to arrive. It was half past four o'clock and she was over due to meet me. A taxi cab pulled up to the entrance and she got out. After paying the driver, she walked up to the door. I moved in.

“Hi, Daisy.”

She backed off and grabbed her chest, her high heels clicking on the sidewalk.

“What-what are ya doing here?”

“Surprised to see me?”

She swallowed hard, catching her breath as she lowered her arms. I gave her a moment to compose herself.

“Look, mista, come inside before somebody sees us.”

I followed her down the narrow hallway to her dressing room. She ushered me inside. Looking me over, she noticed the cuts and bruises on my face.

“I didn't think they would do this to ya, honest.”

I wanted to believe her, but the overall pain in my body said no. Her whole demeanor changed from the first time I met her. She had no makeup on and her eyes began to fill with tears. Her wavy blonde hair slipped over her eyes as she went up to me and placed her right hand on my chest.

“Can you ever forgive me?”

I stammered a reply.

“S-sure. Just answer my questions, okay?”

“Okay.”

“The ticket collector on the train from Springfield was sure he saw you sitting close to the old man, after you boarded the train in New Haven. Were you on the train with Rubinsky?”

“Yeah, I was.”

“Were you *with* him?”

Daisy hesitated.

“It ain’t what it seems.”

“Then, what is it?”

Daisy went by me to look in the hallway. No one was there. I watched her curvy body from behind with more than curiosity as she gently closed the door to the dressing room and locked it. She led me to a chair by her makeup mirror. I sat and waited for her to speak.

“Look, I was paid good money to be there. Understand? He wanted me to make nice to the old man, on the train, you know? Just be nice, no hanky-panky, see?”

“Who wanted you to be nice to Rubinsky?”

“Look, you don’t want to know.”

“Okay, just give me a description and how he spoke to you.”

Daisy took a deep breath and sat down next to me on her makeup chair. I waited as she licked her lips before speaking. She began describing the man who approached her. My police training from years ago kicked in as I used interrogation techniques to form a complete description of her contact. Afterward, I had a pretty good idea who it could be.

“After we got off the train I led him to 42nd Street. The man who paid me says to lead him to the corner and tell the old man to wait, see? A car came to pick him up. So, I left him and he said goodbye. That’s the last I saw of poor old Rubinsky.”

“Who was in the car?”

“I don’t know. I was paid to keep the old coot happy and make sure he went there.”

“The man waiting in the car. Can you describe him.”

Daisy cleared her throat and looked up at the ceiling. Then, she closed her eyes and gave a pretty detailed description of the man, including the clothes he wore, the sound of his voice and brand of hat he wore.

“Any distinguishing features?”

“He had a scar on his right, no, his left cheek, I think.”

“Thank you, Daisy.”

“Look, mista. I kind of like the old geezer, ya know? In some ways he reminds me of my grandpa. He died. I miss him.”

I nodded. Daisy wiped a tear from her cheek. As I stood up to leave, I reached into my coat pocket and grabbed a hankie for her when she stood up and gave me a hug. She whispered in my ear.

“Be careful, mista.”

“Hey, call me Josh.”