

No Big Deal
by
Gerald Williams

Running Time: 40 - 50 Minutes

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Characters

Woman - Strong. Determined. Funny. Self-deprecating.

Boyfriend - Awkward. A normal young guy. Considerate, well-meaning, unsophisticated.

Perpetrator - Smooth, endearing. Mothers like him.

Synopsis. Three people explain their story about an incident on a bus. The incident was a case of unwanted touching, sometimes referred to as no big deal.

Staging

Three chairs. When the woman describes what the perpetrator did she moves her chair beside him and acts out the incident controlling his body.

The characters take notice of each other at times that seem natural.

Perpetrator

I don't know why I did it. I'm not like that, seriously, I am not that person. I want to apologize. I'm deeply, deeply sorry for what happened, and if there is anything I can do to make it up to the girl....I'm in therapy now, classes on sexual awareness. I enrolled as soon as the police released me. I got to my car I pulled out my phone, found a place on line and telephoned and registered for classes, therapy, right there in the parking lot of the police station. I'm taking responsibility for my life and frankly, speaking out's a relief to finally get some help with this. Maybe it sounds terrible to you, but it's a weight lifted off me, I feel lighter, happier now. I have a group, and my individual counselor, someone to talk to, to help me, cause I have a problem, I know that. But now I can identify the cause, make sure I never get into this kind of trouble again. Nip it in the bud. I'm grateful for the support.

Boyfriend

When my girlfriend told me what happened I was super pissed. I wanted to find the guy and punch him in the flippin head, you know. Who would do that to someone? I mean c'mon, you know. It pissed me off. I'm not a violent guy or anything, you know, I mean, I don't think people should go violent when they disagree or anything, I don't think war is good or terrorism or anything, but geez, I was so pissed, like ragin' when she told me; I wanted to find him and punch him in the head. Shit.

Woman

It was no big deal. The guy put his hand on my leg. I was sitting on the bus and I was insanely working lines for an audition. I'm an actor....well, I graduated theater school and work as a waitress, so, yeah, that makes me an actor.

My audition. On the bus. Bus. Guy. Hand. Right, insanely working on lines. I practice lines everywhere. It takes me a bus, a train and a bus to get to this audition. Two hours of my life. Bus one. Rehearsing lines, romantic comedy: "Excuse me sir, is Mr. Phelps on his way?"....pause...Reaction look of shock surprise,..."Oh you are, well how silly I must look" Shakespeare right? Ok, it's a student film – or "indie" if you want to get snooty – either way, no one'll ever see it, but we keep going because it's all about staying fresh, staying focused....all I can say is be nice to waiters cause if they're acting nice, that's the acting gig they've got that pays.

Boyfriend

It's not her fault totally, you know, not her fault. I heard the guy got arrested and had to hire a lawyer and everything. Good. People who do that should be fricken' thrown in jail and get the shit kicked out of them; become someone's bitch. What a great punishment if you think about it, right, guys like this get put away and become the bitch of some lifer, you know, like get their ass swiped right. Sick pukes.

Woman

My audition. On the bus. Bus. Guy. Hand. I'm getting there. I am. When I called the police, they said, take your time, just tell it in your own words. I thought I'd have to convince them. I was ready for a battle. I thought I'd be passed along to a woman, you know, someone who sounded all warm, inviting. Someone you could just fall into. But it was a guy. He was so nice. When I tell my story I sound angry, and he sounds just like the way I want my brother to sound when I come home from a crappy date and we sit in the kitchen late at night eating ice cream and whispering and laughing so we don't wake mom and dad. Sigh.

Perpetrator

Something is wrong with me; sexually. I know I spend too much time alone, and spend too much time looking at the Internet. I put a filter on my laptop so I can't look at porn anymore, there's no way for me to access it at all. That's such a huge relief. I really felt, since I was a kid, since I was little, I felt like the chance to get porn, I mean, how easy it is, like it's almost so easy you're forced to look at it, like there's no choice. I feel like older generations are so much more lucky because they didn't have these temptations, they couldn't just go and look anytime they wanted, they had to put in effort, and frankly, if I had to put in any effort I probably wouldn't have done this, because, and you can ask my friends, because I am seriously lazy.

Woman

On the bus. Bus. Guy. Hand. Right. More, right? I gotta say more. I texted one of my friends right after it happened. He's wise and gay, but he's not my "gay friend" cause he's older, so I think of him as my "older friend", anyway, he thought I was kidding. I texted, "I'm on the bus, I think I was just sexually assaulted". He texted back, "I want your commute." I laughed. (Yelling) He's hilarious. Auditions are so stressful. They're so exciting and stressful. Working on creating a character; it's like giving birth without the broken condom, the abortion discussion and the general sense of disappointment. People are judging you know, but this is what all that school was for, this is the path to the dream, fighting all that subtle resistance from people who hear you're an actor, and make jokes, little tiny jokes – oh casting couch? – Are you gonna be a starbucks actor or a waiter actor? I love actors, the guy who washes my car's an actor. Two words for you all He-Larious. absolutely Hilarious. I want to be an actor and everyone I tell is a comedian.

Boyfriend

She wasn't upset when she told me which made me totally misread the situation, which I'll totally regret for my life, you know, my whole life that'll be a regret I die with. She's funny you know, totally funny sometimes.

Woman

Bus. Guy. Hand. Don't rush me. (pause) I get to the audition, walk in the door, go straight to the nice young woman sitting there taking names, making a list,

checkin' it twice. I say, bright eyed and super happy, "hi", she says, super bright eyed, "Hi. Your name?" And fast as a frog jumping at a fly, I say, "I think I was just molested" then start to cry.

Boyfriend

I shoulda seen she was hurting, but you know, it was late, right, and I was on set all day, which is kinda exciting and wanted to talk to her about it. I mean we graduated from school last year and I've been busting my ass to get some jobs. I kinda thought I'd get, like, some shots at tv series and shit right away, but, well, you gotta pay your dues, people only get what they deserve, nobody gets nothin' more. And I don't mind that, it's fair, people gotta work for what they get, nothing gets handed to you on a silver platter, you know. So I was kinda wrapped up in my own head when I got home, I wanted to talk to her about it, 'cause, the director really liked what I brought to the character, and, even though it was my first time on set, I was talking to the cinematographer and like giving advice on stuff like framing and lighting and stuff, cause you know, they're just students, and I've graduated acting school now, and they're not actors just filmmakers, but you know, lots of this stuff is just kinda common sense. And I wasn't the lead, but I've done a lot of shows already, not film, I sing, so I did a lot of musicals already, I've been acting since I was a kid essentially, community theater, so, you know, I'm not an expert or nothing but I was in The Sound of Music once and I've got opinions and I can see where I can kinda say stuff that might help, so when she told me about her day, you know, she was telling me like what happened on her way to the

audition and I was real interested in how her audition went, so that's what we kinda talked about, you know how even though some guy was an asshole on the bus, she still managed to do the audition 'cause she's got a real professional attitude and you need that if you're gonna succeed, cause you gotta pay your dues you know, no one's gonna give you stuff unless you deserve it.

Woman

I didn't get the part. You just got to walk away and say, well, it wasn't meant to be. I did my best. I'm well trained, but they were going for another look; Taller? Shorter? Slimmer? Heavier? They look at you, and if they like your look they take you, if not. My look is the packaging I sell my talent in, and god help you if your breast size doesn't fit the director's vision: God, I'm so philosophical. I should teach.

Perpetrator

Since I was little my parents always gave me room to be myself. Maybe you think that's good right, and maybe for some people, but really, kids need rules. I say that in group a lot, that when I have kids I'm going to make sure they have rules and discipline because my counselor says maybe that's part of my problem, is that I don't identify rules, think rules aren't for me, so I want to make sure I raise my kids better than my parents raised me, with rules. I'm not blaming my parents. They've been great, really great.

Woman

When I got home I waited for my boyfriend. I got Bus. Guy. Hand. in my head. We live together – my boyfriend and me...he's also an actor, but he works more than I do. I don't want you to get the wrong idea, I don't sit around the house like some good girl waiting for her man to get home. But, I do sit around the house waiting for him to cook for me. I don't cook. His momma, bless her heart, taught all her sons to cook saying that 'a man should never be dependent upon a woman for nothing'. So my boyfriend and his three brothers are all in relationships where they cook, and their wives – slash girlfriends don't. Doesn't that feel so post feminist? I am so progressive. Sometimes I wonder if by not cooking I'm just subjecting myself to another form of patriarchal dominance – but if that dominance includes this cold soup he makes, gazpacho, which I swear is almost worth blowing him for. Laugh....ok, not almost - it is totally worth blowing him for.

Perpetrator

My mom's probably had the worst of it, cause the neighbors all know I got arrested, the police came to my house like 3 times before I had to go in for questioning and be charged. A police car outside my house. It's the suburbs so you can't hide anything in the suburbs, everyone sees everything. I want to move to the city, a place with "so many eyes no one sees anything" – I read that somewhere. I don't remember where, but I like it, "no one sees anything."

Woman

Bus. Guy. Hand. That's what I'm talking about – or not talking about – but we're always talking about something, even when we aren't. My boyfriend, he is 21, and sensitive and aware. He listened when I told him. When I got off the train and got on the bus....changed from the train to the second bus, the guy.

Bus. Guy. Hand. I noticed he got off the train too. Got off the train, walked down those long-ass stairs and waited for the bus. I noticed him. Trailing behind me – almost hesitant - but I don't remember seeing him on the train, I didn't notice anyone. I was looking at my lines. I'm auditioning for a romantic comedy about a twenty-one year old girl who gets hired by a successful middle-aged guy she falls in love with and he's nice, but not too nice cause he's the boss, and all the girls in the office fall in love with him, then suddenly it's late at night and she sees him struggling to get a cab to the airport and it's raining and she's got her car, so she drives him and they're alone in the car together then he sees her, really sees her even though she's been there all along, and his hair is wet, and so adorable, and now they'll fall in love cause that's every girls dream at 21 is to marry a guy in his fifties who's been single his whole life and married to his job cause you know, the workaholic types are the best husbands. And that's why I didn't notice Bus. Guy. Hand. 'Till I was changing from the train to the bus.

I told the police that. Not about the boss and secretary thing. Not that. Just about the train bus thing. The bus was not crowded. Only me and Bus. Guy. Hand. And he sat down beside me. Did I say not crowded? That's not accurate. The police wanted to know that, "Miss, what do you mean by not

crowded?" "Miss?" isn't that cute. Precious. Reporting a sexual assault is like suddenly being transported back to 1957. So nice. And 'not crowded' meant it was me and Bus. Guy. Hand. Two of us. Yep, just me, and the hand. I sat down first. About half way down the bus. Near the door that opens in the middle. I remember thinking, I should sit away from people so I don't bug anyone. Away from the driver. "Hey Mr. Driver don't listen to a crazy girl on the bus practicing her lines, I don't want to die on the way to an audition for a crappy movie I probably won't get and seriously don't want, 'cause it'll involve kissing shit with some middle aged actor who's still doing student films but refers to them as 'independent cinema.'" The police ask, "where does Mr. Hand sit?" Beside me.

Perpetrator

I asked the police if I could apologize to the girl, but they said no. I wanted to show that I was sorry. Being a police officer makes you suspicious of people, they don't trust people, it's part of their job, always being suspicious. I wonder if this makes them unhappy, being suspicious of people, even innocent people. They thought I was lying when I said I wanted to meet her to say sorry, which frankly isn't true, they were being suspicious. The first time they came to my house, I was careful, I admit that, that's true, I was careful, I didn't know what they were talking about and my mother said I never take the bus, only my car, I never take public transit 'cause I have my own car. I have a job, so I have a car. The police asked me about my schedule at work, and that's sort of hard cause I work from home. I'm a graphic designer. I could work

from an office, but I work from home. Sometimes I go to a client's office, but I don't need to. My dad's worried about how this will affect my work, but it doesn't matter. My company name isn't linked to this. I can use a different name if it's a big deal, which it isn't. My dad worries too much. He says he's going to take my car away, but it's my car, so what can he do? He says I have to pay him back for the lawyer. I don't care.

Boyfriend

I did ask her if she was ok, and she said she was, which isn't blaming her at all, you know, like it's a trauma to go through that, you know, it's a real trauma, and sometimes girls don't know exactly how to act, which is totally ok, and I'm fine with that, I totally am, but, and I want to be honest here, right, I mean a guy's gotta be honest, I said at the time, you know when she told me, I kinda couldn't see the big deal so much, and I know that's wrong, I know it is, and I'm not trying to defend myself or anything, I'm just saying, well, I mean, I'm saying that if she was clearer, you know, then maybe I woulda reacted different, I coulda been more supportive right away and helped her and stuff, cause I know that's the right thing to do, be supportive and listen and shit like that, cause someone who's been a victim you know they need support and they need to feel in control and they need to know they're being listened to and believed, and seriously, that's the point that kinda pisses me off, cause I did believe her, and people are giving me shit cause of what I said about it being no big deal, I mean, c'mon, she's telling me late at night, and I got home all super excited and I'm making grilled-cheese cause I know she

likes 'em and she had a big audition and you know, we've both been busy and you know, I'm making grilled-cheese and this cold soup she really likes, gazpacho it's called, it's called gazpacho, and she like really likes it, if you know what I mean and I'm expecting a good night together, you know what I mean, a good night, and then she mentions it, kinda like in passing, about what happened on the way to the audition – on the bus, and then we start talking about her audition a bit , you know, and I'm kinda excited about me being on set all day, and I'm cooking and she doesn't seem upset, and I kinda tell her it's not a big deal cause she'll get another audition, and she seems ok, and now people think I'm a shithead cause I didn't like, I don't know, call the cops or become some kinda super hero right then and there, but you know, the grilled-cheese were almost done and the soup, it was ready, and it was like midnight by then, and we're just hanging out and she didn't make a big thing of it.

Woman

I don't want to eat gazpacho tonight, he's making grilled-cheese. I love grilled-cheese at midnight. I don't care, I'll be a fat actor. I love grilled-cheese and I don't care. "Why didn't you move?"

Boyfriend

It seemed like she coulda moved if it was a big deal, on the bus, you know, she coulda just stood up and moved, and I'm saying that and, now, I know that ain't the right thing to think, and I'm not judging a person, I don't think it's

right to judge, I'm just saying, I mean, at the time, that night, she wasn't making a big deal outta it, so it didn't seem so bad then to say she coulda just moved if it bugged her, I mean, I was making grilled-cheese and gazpacho.

Woman

"Why didn't you move?" Boyfriend asked that. The police didn't ask that. I ask that. Everynight before I fall asleep I ask that. "Why didn't you move?" It's so simple. I don't have an answer. "Why didn't you move?" The question means why didn't you take control of your own life and not permit someone to control you. Don't you think your implicit meaning to the Hand sitting beside you was that you were welcoming him to sit beside you, welcoming his close proximity on a bus that was transporting, at a very reasonable rate and in comfort and safety, merely two passengers though it could easily accommodate 80. In other words, your honor and ladies and gentlemen of the jury, weren't you in fact asking for it? I cried.

Perpetrator

My therapist says I need to identify ways I can change my behavior so that I can be better. I'm making a list. I put a filter on my laptop, I'm in a yoga class so I have regular exercise, I go to group counseling twice a week. There are a lot of videos of women telling their experiences of sexual assault, and I watch those. I can really see how they've been affected; their strength and sometimes, you can see the fear they had when the guy touched them. I can see that. It's moving, their fear.

Boyfriend

I called my mom the next day. The day after, you know, she told me, you know about what happened. So this is the day after my first day on set, and my mom was interested how it went, and I told her I'd call, so I did and we talked, and I don't know how it came up about what happened the day before, I wasn't planning on bringing it up, it just came up, I just wanted an opinion, like a woman's point of view, you know. I mean, I didn't think it was a big deal at that point. I mean she hadn't called the cops yet, and she didn't tell me anything different from what I already knew, I mean there were no big revelations or anything, so asking my mom about it wasn't like vital, but it was...I needed someone's opinion....I didn't know how serious it was. I mean, we didn't say "sexual assault" you know, we said things like, "perv" and "creep"....I told my mom about it and she was really supportive, you know, she thought we were too young to move in together, but it's been almost two years now, and she knows I really love her, so she's totally supportive. She told me not to worry about it. She thought it was because we'd both been working a ton recently, and I was working on that movie, and she was auditioning for a new play and she hadn't heard back yet, so maybe it was just nerves, and that's probably why she started crying. Yeah, crying. (Pause) I didn't tell you about the crying. Yeah. I mean now it makes sense, but, well, at the time I was kinda surprised. I've seen her cry before. Crying's not bad, you know. I cry. We're sensitive, we're actors. We cry, it's not a big deal. And she's cried during sex before, ok? So what, me too. I mean we're in love. We dated for more than a year before the first time we made love, and I knew it

was important to her, her first time, and she wanted it to be special, really special, me too, I wanted it to be special, so yeah, like I was emotional, I'm not ashamed of that. I'm not ashamed of crying. Crying doesn't always mean you're sad, it's emotion.

Perpetrator

The police showed me a video of me parking my car at a transit hub. They got video cameras there watching the cars of commuters. People taking transit, it helps the environment, it's good, frankly, people in suburbs drive way too much. My mother told the police I never take the transit – the bus, I always drive, she told them I'm a lazy guy. See, everybody thinks I'm lazy. Right after I told them I was meeting a client I knew I was going to need a lawyer. None of my clients are friends, so, I couldn't think of anyone I could say. I called my dad, he called a lawyer.

Boyfriend

After we ate, you know, we kinda started making out a little. She seemed kinda tired. She didn't eat much, but I figured it was just the excitement, then when we started kissing and stuff she said she was tired, but, you know, I'd made grilled-cheese, and the gazpacho. It was like almost 2 and I was still kinda excited about being on set all day, and I hadn't seen her in a couple of days cause of our schedules, and so I figured she'd come around you know, so I kept kissing her and we were kinda getting into it, she was, I swear she was, and then she started balling, like crying and crying, and I thought maybe

she was like happy at first you know, cause we hadn't been together for a few days, and it felt so good to hold her, and I figured she'd get into it, you know the crying would stop if I just kinda kissed her in the way she liked, and it felt like you know she was being emotional cause we were together, and I was trying to make her happy, and I was doing stuff she liked me to do, and it felt good to be holding her, it did, it felt good, and her crying, maybe, it coulda been just emotional.

Woman

When he hugged me and I wept he told me it was no big deal. We could get through it. I knew that was true. I knew we could somehow get over my inability to cope with life, get over my not being a reasonable person when faced with danger, get over being responsible for having a great look that casting directors don't want but hands on buses do. I mean, after all, what did mister Bus, Guy, Hand do? He didn't really do anything. He put his hand on my leg. My upper thigh. Above my knee. His hand, with four fingers and a thumb spreading out from his palm. His palm the center spot with five tentacles grasping my leg, reaching towards the "boyfriend only" zone. Extending the hand till the short length between my knee and my "me" felt encased in hand. My leg. He put his hand on my leg. That's all he did. He just put his hand on me. The thing is, and this is the thing, this is really it. I sat on that bus and was rehearsing my lines and not paying attention. I sat there, and my brains working the way brains sometime work and I suddenly realize I'm 3 minutes from my stop, and I shoot out of the world of twenty-one year

old women falling in love with middle aged bosses and kissing middle aged actors and I'm dropped into the world of busses and auditions, and no other passengers, and there's a hand on my leg. My leg. And what do I do? What do I do when I'm aware of these fingertips pressing against my jeans, and making small round and round motions as they push against me. The palm, pressing hot air, hot air, and humid air trapped against my skin. Trapped. That's what it feels like. But why? Why didn't I just do a Rosa Parks and say "No", when they told her, "lady you gotta move to the back of the bus", she didn't allow it happen, she said "No, not a chance buster, uh-huh, nope, no way jose, it ain't gonna happen, this is 1950-whenever and a woman's got a right to say no!" I cried some more.

Boyfriend

My mom said it sounded like she just needed some space and maybe she was a little jealous cause I've got an agent now and she doesn't and I'm doing theater, but also films and she's not doing any films yet, and it could just be all kinds of stuff cause we're still young you know, and like my mom said sometimes you can't always see things when you're young and that makes sense and I know she deserves to be successful cause she's great, but she has to pay her dues, like everybody cause no one's gonna just give you something unless you deserve it. My mom told me to be patient and love her and don't feel guilty, and couples go through stuff so what do I gotta worry about, you know.

Perpetrator

I've got a girlfriend now. She knows I'm in some trouble but I told her it's getting fixed, so she's ok, she knows what it's about, but she's standing by me, so that looks really good. Her mother and my mother are friends. Her parents bought her an apartment so she can be independent, they support her without trouble now; support is important in a family. She lives downtown on her own which is good. I go downtown more now than before. I even started telling people I'm taking the bus regularly. Not all the way, just part of the way. My therapist says it's important to be part of society, so that's what I'm doing. This is my first charge so it's not a big deal and I'm going to be not guilty anyway, so I don't have to worry at all. I was charged, the police did charge me, and there is a hearing, or trial I guess, but my lawyer says I'm going to be not guilty, which is good, cause I am not guilty. I'm sorry, of course, I am, what happened was really bad, but I'm not guilty, so I won't have a criminal record or anything. Legally I'm just a guy, a normal guy. Like I said, the police are supposed to think everyone's guilty, and act suspicious, and I'm sorry for what I did, but I'm not guilty, cause there's no proof. The girl said what happened on the bus, but, that's all, she said it. Even if it's true, and I'm really sorry for her, I really am, I wanted to apologize to her in person, but even if it's true, it doesn't mean I'm guilty.

Woman

I went into new-age therapy: I posted on facebook. I posted a long post addressed to Bus. Guy. Hand. and told him how I felt, and how what he did

was wrong, then I said, and this is on facebook, this is where I said what I wished I'd said on that bus, that if I could time-machine back and kill Hitler and offer to babysit for the Lindbergh's, and yell to JFK and Martin Luther King to duck, and buy real estate in this city 20 years ago, in that world, in that time-machine world I would tell Bus. Guy. Hand. Fuck Off! And that's what I wrote on facebook. Fuck off. My story was there. Everyone could see it. I was telling the world about it. Within an hour, over a hundred likes and bunches of comments, and I felt glad, felt like I'd done something. My boyfriend said to me, wow, I'm sorry I didn't know it was so bad, but you feel better now right? We can keep being 21 and living together, and being heterosexual and do horny young people stuff right? And I said yes, and said it was no big deal, and everything was good.

Boyfriend

My friend from high school, he sent me a text message about her posting on facebook. We've been friends since elementary school and we both wanted to be actors, but his girlfriend wanted to stay close to her family, so he lives back in my hometown and he's doing small stuff with the community theater there, and he's got tons of free time so he's always sending me stuff he finds on the Internet; I get like 50 messages a day from him with links to stuff. He told me he was really sorry about the stuff she was saying on facebook and, you know, he's a friend so he said shit like he's there with me and stuff like that. I didn't know what the hell he was talking about, so I looked at her facebook and I gotta tell you, I was kinda blown away. I mean, honestly, first I

was kinda pissed that I had to learn about it, about how serious it was through facebook, like why didn't she tell me. Then, and this is the real thing, cause, well, cause, I mean I gotta be honest about this right, cause if I'm not honest, well, what's the point right, but, well, when she told me, I kinda knew, I mean she didn't say it, I guess, but I kinda knew, you know, like, I could tell she was emotionally affected, I mean, I love this woman, right, and she's telling me about this, while I'm cooking grilled cheese and just had a great day on set, and am as horny as fuck, and just want to, you know, just fuck our brains out like we kinda do sometimes, just, you know, and then she brings this up, and I'm thinking 'oh man, no, not today' you know, and 'man, why didn't you just move for chrissakes cause god dammit a guy wouldn't come onto you like that if you just fucking stood up for yourself', and shit, I made gazpacho for chrissakes and....I knew, I knew it was kinda real, but I wanted to have a special night, you know, and I said to myself you're crying cause you're happy, right, because I'm holding you and I'm inside you and I feel great and this will make you feel better, and you want this right, and that's why your crying right, that's gotta be why and not cause...cause of....the bus, that guy, not cause of him, cause, I mean people get what they deserve don't they, and I deserve to come home after a fucking great day and celebrate with the woman I love and make you grilled cheese and watch your face the way your nose scrunches up when you drink the gazpacho and kiss me with your cold mouth, and we can just, I mean.....

Woman

Bus. Guy. Hand. was dead and I was right and I felt good. My parents saw my post and called right away and were shocked and saddened when they read the facebook post because they live so far from me, and I live in a big city and wanna be an actress and they live in a small town where everyone is like a cousin or a cousins-cousin, and everyone who's born there dies there and they all know the world presents large and ominous obstacles that every girls needs a helping hand to get over and they offered me a plane ticket home at no expense to me, and if I wanted to move home they'd come right out and rent a u-haul and pack my things and whisk me home because it was obvious from my facebook declaration of independence against my very own scum-bag, shit sucking mother-fucking asshole that I will say no from now on and have grown as a person and will let no one ever push me around, I am woman hear me roar. Then my mom said how ashamed she was that I would use the f word in public and even sharing a story like that where everyone could see made her upset that she now had to unfriend me on facebook because she didn't want people to know that she had raised a child that would use language like that in public, and how she had to go around to family apologizing for my immoral behavior and my dad gave an extra big donation to the church this month to try and make amends, and that it's clear any decent girl would have just moved, and that they were taking steps to help me find the path of righteousness and away from the temporary sins of the flesh I was pursuing in exchange for occasional gazpacho. I cried.

Perpetrator

I was surprised when the police told me about the camera. In the parking lot. You can actually see me, see me walking from my car to the terminal. So, I did take the bus that day, and my therapist says it's important to acknowledge the truth, so I admit that. I told the police that yes that was me. Even at the terminal where the buses change to the train. You can see me getting from the train down the stairs and on the bus. You can see me. I knew about the camera's. The ones at the terminal. People will steal, or get into fights at transit hubs, and police need these videos to get these people. Convict them. Video is good evidence to convict someone.

Woman

I mentioned before my wise friend. My wise older friend, who happens to be gay. I saw him a couple of days after the audition. We were sitting in his car, trying to find parking on our way to a party and he brought up the facebook posting. I cried. We pulled over, he hugged me and said good things and like every homosexual fictional friend he was both wise and comforting.

Perpetrator

She didn't call the police for 4 days after. And she couldn't identify the bus route number, so her story is too bad, but it's questionable; legally it raises questions. I feel really sorry for her, because it's horrible what happened, but she can't prove it. And she's really pretty, and she has a boyfriend, so it's not like her life is terrible. My therapist always says it's about rebuilding a life not

dwelling on the past, and maybe she should accept that. I actually wonder if there's something wrong with her. I don't mean that in a bad way, just it took her so long to report it to the police, then she took something so innocent, she's pretty, it's not a surprise guys would be interested in her, and I was interested in her but it just happened on a bus and not in a pick-up bar.

Woman

I telephoned the police. My fictional homosexual wise friend, who never actually kisses anyone or has sex, 'cause that's how fictional homosexuals live but who's got the most amazing apartment and cooks great gazpacho but doesn't want blow jobs in return, was sitting with me and helping me speak clearly.

Boyfriend

We don't get taught that, you know, taught how to deal with your girlfriend if she tells you, you know; there aren't any classes about this, I mean, if I had just shut up and listened, you know, why didn't I just listen to her....I don't know....we don't get taught what to do...

Perpetrator

I'm not saying she doesn't have a right to her own life, she does, sure she does, but I showed an interest and she took it as something dirty, twisted something nice, and that was four days later, four days, why did she wait so long? I mean she's an actress, so maybe this is some kinda fiction thing for her, but in real life you can't just make up stuff. But, it's not her fault, we

should never blame someone who claims to be a victim, ok, we need to feel sorry for them. Don't get me wrong, I don't deny that it must be horrible for her to feel this way, but I wonder why she decided to make a big deal about it.

Woman

The police arranged to come to my house at about midnight, cause that's when actresses who work in restaurants get off work and are free, and they took my statement. They were kind and they said all the right things, and they made me feel like I was the best, most smartest person in the whole world for talking to them.

Perpetrator

Not all girls would do that, report it. A lot of girls would never say anything. They'd just not do anything. Some would move away, for sure, some would do that, but that's not a big deal, that doesn't mean anything, you just say, sorry like you didn't realize what was going on, and they always say sorry back, almost none of them get mean, then you get off the bus and catch the next one, or decide to go home cause the buses are getting busier, but it's no big deal, so I don't understand why this girl did anything, so maybe she's the one who should go and see a counselor or something.

Woman

A couple of weeks later they called and told me they'd arrested the guy, and that he would likely be found not-guilty because the security camera on the

bus wasn't aimed in our direction, but he has been charged with sexual assault and he's hired a lawyer, and his family know and his friends know and he's now got a record for sexual assault, and you know what? Good.

Perpetrator

She needs help, and I hope she gets it, cause I'm totally sorry for what happened to her, and how upset she became, totally sorry, even though I'm not guilty of anything, I'm totally sorry, deeply, deeply sorry.

Boyfriend

You've been great about it, since. You say you don't need to forgive anything, you understand, you want our life to be normal. You tell me you like my grilled-cheese and like the cold kisses after you drink gazpacho....and...I'm afraid. Just afraid. I could be that guy, you know.

Woman

The hardest part of this was realizing that my story was no big deal to anyone except me, and to the next woman he does this to but now it's a big deal to him. Him, who would get bolder and bolder and escalate it until a woman is bloodied and attacked in her dorm room, or grabbed while walking to her car, or wake up at night with a hand over her mouth and then people would say, this is terrible this is awful and then they'd say this is a big deal, oh my god this is such a big deal, where do people like this come from. And with that in mind I want to say what happened to me was a big deal, a big fucking deal. I'll

say it again just in case my mom's listening, it's a big fucking deal and it's got to stop, stop even if it's just a hand on a bus on the way to an audition.

Thank you.