

(MARTA)

LOOK, I'LL CALL YOU IN THE MORNING
OR MY SERVICE WILL EXPLAIN...

AND ANOTHER HUNDRED PEOPLE JUST GOT OFF OF THE TRAIN.

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(Sitting next to ROBERT)

You wanna know why I came to New York? I came because New York is the center of the world and that's where I want to be. You know what the pulse of this city is?

ROBERT

A busy signal.

MARTA

The pulse of this city, kiddo, is me. This city is for the me's of this world. People that want to be right in the heart of it. I am like the soul of New York.

ROBERT

How 'bout that.

MARTA

See, smart remarks do not a person make. How many Puerto Ricans you know?

ROBERT

(Thinking)

Let's see... there's a guy at work... and uh...

MARTA

(Interrupting)

How many blacks?

ROBERT

Well, see, frankly I only seem to meet people like myself.

MARTA

God, talk about pathetic. Jews, Hispanics, gays, Arabs, street people, all my closest, my best friends. Listen, I don't pass people on the street, I stop and I know them. In this city every son of a bitch I meet is my new best friend. Oh, I go uptown, like to the dentist or something, and I swear, suddenly I want to cry because I think, "oh my God, I'm uptown." And Fourteenth Street. Well, I don't know why anybody talks about anyplace else, because that is the center of the universe.

ROBERT

Fourteenth Street?

MARTA

That's humanity, Fourteenth Street. That's everything. And if you don't like it there they got every subway you can name to take ya where you like it better.

ROBERT

Well, God bless Fourteenth Street.

MARTA

This city — I kiss the ground of it. Someday you know what I want to do? I want to get all dressed up in black — black dress, black shoes, hat, everything black, and go sit in some bar, at the end of the counter, and drink and cry. That is my idea of honest-to-God sophistication. I mean, that's New York.

(Pause)

You always make me feel like I got the next line. What is it with you?

ROBERT

I just never met anybody like you.

MARTA

Me neither. You know what this city is? Where a person can feel it? It's in a person's ass. If you're really part of this city, relaxed, cool and in the whole flow of it, your ass is like this.

(Makes a large round circle with her forefinger and thumb)

If you're just living here, runnin' around uptight, not really part of this city, your ass is like this.

(Tightens the circle to nothing, making a fist)

ROBERT

I... hesitate to ask.

(MARTA holds up the "tight" sign high)

That's a fascinating theory, fascinating. And at this moment, extraordinarily accurate.

(LIGHTS fade)

END OF SCENE FIVE