

winter in the city
or
i like it
a monologue

Challenge #13

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DRAFT 1.0

JUST SOMEONE STANDING AT A BUS STOP.

SOUND: OUTSIDE TRAFFIC
NOISES, CARS GOING PAST
ON SLUSHY ROADS.

(be nice to bring in a big pile of snow and build a snowman while delivering the monologue - or just do it outside - in situ.)

Blizzard conditions and i like it. Most people give me the stink eye when i say how happy i am for the snow. Nothing like blowing snow eh, to add sweetness to those mythical memories of all summer spent lounging on the lawn, comfortable evening strolls in shirtsleeves, no fussing with big boots, laces, and the hazards of ice. But they forget the days, and nights, of + 33 C and humidity to drown a whale. Tossing and turning in sticky sheets, the only option tepid showers and electric fans. No AC for this chicken thanks, that just makes the hot sticky outside seem so much worse. People always forget the hell that was the middle of July when February is banging on the windows. They can't wait to have it back again but not me. Nope. i like winter, and i like the snow.

i know, it sucks when you have to shovel out, more than once in a day. And it'll bite your bones if you don't wear a proper coat or boots or a hat, scarf, and mittens. i mean gloves are okay for doing stuff but in weather like this you want mittens, and good socks too. Usually i carry extra socks in my bag. Dry feet can be the difference between heaven and hell. And yes, you're right, it can certainly be a bloody horror if you have to drive to and fro, every day, through slush and potholes and ice and angry miserable people wishing for summer, imagining it will be a time of unalloyed comfort and joy. i say stop waiting and enjoy now! Leave the car at home. Let the ice build up on the windshield. Forget about shovelling the driveway whydoncha and just stay home and read a good book, if you can.

And if you really must leave, why not use public transit? Why not?

Some sneer at the suggestion and what the hell is that about?

Are you afraid?

Do you think the buses and metros are full of degenerates and criminals? i used to know this guy who was proud not to have used the metro in over 20 years. A fool who would drive half an hour to my house for a party, look for parking, drink too much, and, after much scolding and delay tactics, drive home again.

Every time.

Even though i lived a half block from the metro and so did he and it was faster than driving. That kind of attachment to driving makes no sense to me.
Never did.

Of course, i enjoy public transit about as much as i enjoy winter. It has its downsides but overall i think it da bomb.

In fact, one of the greatest things about a big city is having a big public transit network. Such awesome freedom! To go here and there and every which way for a fraction of what it costs to drive and usually faster besides. No parking headaches, no road rage, no tickets, no automotive repair bills, no insurance to pay or fluids to fill... except coffee for the commute.

And someone else does the driving so you, meaning i, can do something else.

It can be a time of meditation, to think about all the whatevers one's mind goes to. Or an opportunity for observation of and interaction with one's fellows. i have been known to sketch the other passengers, or maybe even speak to one - it still is done! i know that some eschew conversation and may tremble lest they be subjected to some dreaded eye contact but these can often be recognized by their sunglasses or the way they studiously look out the window or, nowadays, at their devices. Go ahead, take a chance, say hello to one. And if that doesn't interest you, or seems scary, it is also an excellent place to read a book. Or write poetry (or a play)! Or sleep.

Certainly used to be a lot more book reading going on. Magazines too. But now sometimes i'm the only one and half the bus or metro car is people on gadgets: smart phones and tablets and laptops and ipods and whoknowswhatelse. Not as much chit chat among strangers either. S'pose if you can call a friend to talk, why talk to a stranger?
And i must say i still am not used to the way some people will carry on at full voice talkin away on the phone to justabout anyone about justabout anything so all the bus can hear and probably the surrounding vehicles too. Just amazing the

things that get aired about. Really really private things. Or so one might think. Maybe it's like the rest of us don't seem quite real, so it doesn't matter if we all hear you talk to your seven lovers about the herpes or the fact the bank is calling your loan or how your mother mistook the orderly for a chippendale dancer and you're not sure you still have a job.

And sometimes it is annoying, and sometimes it is interesting, and yes there are times the bus takes too long or the metro breaks down (incident on the tracks?), or some creep gets too frotting close or you run late and then run and run and run because the bus is there and you're sure you can make it and just as you know you are going to make it and you're there and the bus pulls away just in the nick of damn i missed it, or worse you trip and the books and groceries fall in the slush and now you're wet and cold and feeling sorry for yourself but still

at the end of it all

you didn't have to drive and you have a warm home and clean clothes to change into and someone who loves you and your country isn't at war

and we all have gadgets and food in the fridge

and aren't we just the luckiest people who ever lived?

i mean really?

(Complete the snowman, find a couple of sticks for arms, use some coins or some other pocket treasure for eyes, maybe a mouth, and)

Just in time, here comes the bus.

SOUND: OUTSIDE TRAFFIC
NOISES, CARS GOING PAST
ON SLUSHY ROADS, THE
EXHALATIONS OF A BUS
APPROACHING, PULLING
UP, DOORS OPENING.

Anyone got a carrot?

(Lights fade: end)