Train

I stood on the platform awaiting my train when I had a seemingly random and morbid thought. “What if you walked on the tracks and waited for the train?”

I didn’t think it was a thought at first; I believed that somebody had said that as a form of joke but nobody was anywhere near me.

All of the other people on the platform were sitting down on the benches or standing close to them, whereas I, being the shrewd, calculating man I was, was stood by the yellow warning line.

I looked down at the tracks again and thought how inviting they looked, they looked like they were inviting me over for tea, which having worked all day without a drop of anything but water, I would be glad to accept.

I lifted my right leg up towards the tracks but then quickly lifted it down.

This was ridiculous, I had zero reason to want to seriously injure myself, I had no history of anxiety or depression, and I most definitely wasn’t a masochist.

But still, the tracks called for me. “If you jump you can sleep if you jump you can sleep!”

I wanted to sleep but I would sleep as soon as I got on the train. I needed to be well rested to be able to handle my two twin boys and my amazing wife.

But something kept me mesmerised by the train tracks, it was curiosity. It wasn’t so much that I wanted to die, it was that I wanted to see if I actually would die or if I would simply be horribly maimed by the whole experience.

I looked at the timetable and saw that the next train would not come for another ten minutes.

I sighed and made my way towards the small, cramped food shop. I squeezed inside and slowly lumbered my way towards the sandwich aisle. I didn’t need to eat; I was just overly bored and needed to kill some time.

I picked up a prawn mayo sandwich and a coke to wash it down and proceeded to the counter.

I placed the items down and was greeted by a beautiful young woman. She was taller than me and much more slender and her face appeared to be completely absent of makeup, yet her eyes sparkled like amber jewels and her wavy chestnut hair flowed down to her waist.

I felt myself overcome with lust as I looked at her.

“That will be £4.50 please.”

I didn’t hear her I was too entranced by her beauty.

She repeated the statement, I was snapped back into reality and fumbled for my wallet and as soon as I’d found it I threw a £5 note onto the counter and quickly left the shop, I didn’t collect my change, I was too ashamed of myself to have any further interaction with the unintentional seductress.

My thoughts were justified, however; I had not been “loved” in a very long time. My wife had completely gone off the idea of sex after our twins were born three years ago, she always told me she would get around to it eventually. She talked about sex as if it were a choir like taking out the bins or doing the washing up.

This had left me in a permanent state of repressed rage which I could scarcely escape from. It had been an entire year since I had done anything remotely sexual and this gave my eyes the tendency to wander.

It was always the same, I would see someone even vaguely attractive and completely lose my concept of time and space. I would create my own world with just them and me and an endless amount of time for us to get to know each other.

I would always snap myself out of it and I would always feel the same way: disgusting, I would feel like I had cheated on my wife. People nowadays say that in some cases emotional cheating is much worse than the physical act.

I shook off my shame and headed back to the platform and stood in the exact same position as I had done before.

I looked at the train schedule and saw that I had another four minutes to kill.

I heard a loud announcement for the other side of the platform announcing their train.

I looked across and inspected the sallow and tired faces of the people standing and making their way towards the edge of the platform. I wondered if any of them had wondered what I had wondered a few minutes earlier but then I decided that such a thought was ridiculous and that I must be the only one to have ever had it.

But a woman on the other side did something unexpected, as the train whooshed towards her, she put her hands out to where the train was going.

I watched with horrified curiosity as the train barrelled towards her, I thought for certain that her arms were about to be severed when she relaxed her arms and the train came to a halt right where her arms had previously been.

I waited for the train to leave and looked for the woman, she was sat near the front and wore a relieved face, she smiled uncomfortably as the train pulled away and slumped deep into her chair.

I watched the train with interest as it flew to its next destination.

I looked towards my train’s entry point and heard the faint whooshing of the speedy vehicle.

The voice came back out. “Just do it.”

I sighed and lifted my foot slowly towards the tracks and was about to step off the platform when I was thrown back onto the platform by a strong arm.

I looked around in disbelief as the train barrelled to a quick stop. I had almost died!

I looked around for my saviour and saw to my surprise that the person that had saved me was the cashier, her amber eyes looked deep into my soul and pierced me but what she said was gentle. “Are you alright?”

I nodded and quickly rose to my feet.

She smiled and walked away from me. I got onto the train and slumped into my chair breathing heavily.

People glanced at me as they moved past but nobody offered any kind words or “are you okay?” type questions.

The train journey was quick and I was soon back at my home. My wife hugged me and my children asked me to play with them.

I was playing with them when the older twin, Stephen asked me, “Are you glad to be home, daddy?”

I looked into his expectant eyes and gave a wry smile “yes, son, I’m very happy to be home.”

To think, that I almost didn’t make it.

And to think that a train was actually on time.