

Sides: Darlene

By

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EXT. BUS STATION - MORNING

The bus station is near deserted, only a few poor souls standing alone or in small clusters. Nonnie stares up at the station schedule, bags at her feet, attempting to find the right bus.

A HAND reaches down and snatches one of the bags. Nonnie turns to see DARLENE, a short-haired black woman in her mid-forties.

DARLENE

These are too heavy for you. Here.

She takes one of the bags and helps Nonnie toward a nearby bench. Wary of strangers, Nonnie doesn't sit right away.

DARLENE

You alone, honey?

Nonnie nods.

DARLENE

Where you heading?

NONNIE

To see my mom.

DARLENE

And you know where that is?

(off Nonnie's nod)

Where is it?

NONNIE

Hyde Park. And South East. I used to live there.

DARLENE

You're in luck, kid. That's on my route. Sit down.

She pats the seat next to her, and Nonnie warily sits as far from Darlene as she can. As Darlene sips on her coffee, Nonnie withdraws a notebook from her backpack. It's filled with drawings, better than an average 12-year old's work. Nonnie glances around the station, which is slowly beginning to fill.

There's an old man sleeping on another bench, a teenager with his headphones on, and some older students in a corner. Nonnie sees a mother and her little girl. They play with a doll and giggle. Nonnie begins to draw them.

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DARLENE
You like to draw?

Nonnie hides the book, but Darlene gives her a smile, indicating that she show her the drawings. Nonnie opens her book to a picture of the girl and her mother.

DARLENE
That's really good. And I'm not
just saying that. You going to show
that to your mom?

Nonnie looks panicked at the suggestion but nods, warming to the idea.

DARLENE
If you're going to see your mom,
why didn't she pick you up?

NONNIE
She's been away a long time, but
she's back now.

DARLENE
And she knows you're coming?

Nonnie looks down.

DARLENE
Maybe you should call ahead.
Sometimes grown-ups don't like
surprises.

NONNIE
My mom wants me to be there.

She shifts in her chair.

DARLENE
What's your name, honey?

NONNIE
Donna. But everyone calls me
Nonnie.

DARLENE
Nonnie. That's a cute name. I'm
Darlene.

Darlene checks her wrist watch and finishes her coffee.

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DARLENE

Well, it's about time we get going.
My bus is the Seventeen.

They walk together, one bag in each of their hands, to the bus.