

INCIDENT IN A STATION BUFFET

A short sketch
by
Tony Breeze

ISBN: 9781872758251
Ventus Books

CHARACTERS

Well-heeled woman, late thirties

Young man

Plain woman living on her own

Two yobs aged about eighteen

INCIDENT IN A STATION BUFFET

(The scene is a station buffet. Three tables are in use - one has two yobs discussing football, girls etc, another has a plainly dressed woman eating a sausage roll and reading a tabloid and the other a well-heeled businesswoman in her late thirties reading a glossy magazine. The action on the first two tables freezes to concentrate the audience's mind on the well-heeled woman - she looks impatient, cross, doesn't want to be there and is flicking the pages in a bored fashion. A young man comes from the counter carrying a tea tray, looks around at those present before tentatively approaching the plain woman reading the tabloid)

Youth	Excuse me - are you Mrs Harrison?
Plain Woman	No
Youth	Sorry
	(He now feels awkward and doesn't know where to sit)
2nd Woman	I'm Mrs Harrison
	(There is a pause while the two take each other in)
	Well are you going to sit down or what?
Youth	Yes, sorry
2nd Woman	Do you always sit with your mouth open?
Youth	(closing it) I'm sorry
2nd Woman	For Gods sake stop saying "sorry" all the time
Youth	Sor - O.K.

2nd Woman So what do you think then ~ am I what you expected?

Youth I don't know what I expected

2nd Woman I don't have much time - I have an appointment in ten minutes what do you want to know?

Youth Erm ...

2nd woman I knew this was a bad idea

Youth It just feels a bit strange

2nd Woman Not half as strange as it feels for me

Youth I feel as if I want to hug you

2nd Woman And why would you want to do that?

Youth You're my mother - I thought that's what mothers and sons did

2nd Woman Was your mother

Youth I thought you'd be pleased to see me

2nd Woman Curious - I'll admit I was a little curious when I got the phone call - Its not every day you get a call out of the blue from somebody who says "I think you're my mother" - thank God it was me that answered

Youth I don't understand why you're so negative

2nd Woman Look, just ask what you want to ask and let me get on with my life

Youth (Getting up) You're right, this was a mistake

2nd Woman I'm sorry - don't go (he sits down again) - now you've got me apologising

(The pair of them freeze while our attention is drawn to the conversation of the two youths on the next table)

Yob 1 So after we come out of the Griffin he says "Are we going clubbin' then?" and I says "No way Hosé, last time I went out with you I got nicked"

Yob 2 But you went?

Yob 1 Yeah, course I went - so we goes down to Templars and then we have grief with the bouncer - no tie you see - so I goes into the Chinky, borrows a serviette and makes meself a tie

Yob 2 Nice one

Yob 1 So we gets into the club and we're having a bevvy - have you seen how much they're charging for lager?

Yob 2 Ridiculous

Yob 1 Then we sees these two dancing round their handbags

 (They freeze and our attention goes back to the well heeled woman's table)

Youth You know what? I've dreamed about this moment ... I used to lie awake at night and wonder what you looked like, what would happen if I ever managed to find you ... don't you have any feelings for me?

2nd Woman Why should I?

Youth You gave birth to me, doesn't that mean anything to you?

2nd Woman Of course it does, but the last time I saw you, you were that long (she indicates baby size) and were continually screaming

Youth I thought all babies screamed ... (Pause) Am I what you expected?

2nd Woman I don't know what I expected

Youth I mean who do I take after is it you or my father?

2nd woman	Your father?
Youth	Yes - which?
2nd Woman	You don't look like any of my family
	(They freeze while the action moves to the plain woman on her own)
Plain Woman	Am I Mrs Harrison he says ... there's some funny people going round , you've got to watch what you' re up to . . he might have been one of them perverts looking for loose women .. there's a lot of them about I've heard .. (she casts a glance at the youth) ... not that he looks like a pervert but you cant be too careful
	(She freezes and the action goes back to the well-heeled table)
Youth	So I must take after my father?
2nd Woman	Perhaps
Youth	What do you mean "perhaps"? If I don't take after your side I must take after his ... who was he?
2nd Woman	I don't know
Youth	What do you mean you don't know - you must know
2nd woman	(Ignoring his line) This is all wrong - the agency said you had the right to find out who your mother was when you reached eighteen but this is wrong - other people have rights too - I have rights