



On the D Train

by Cecilia Rubino

Characters:

Joey

Steven

Mike

Jennifer

Scene: on a subway platform. A train screeches into the station, and Joey steps into the first car. He checks the crowded train and then quickly steps back out. As the train pulls out of the station, Joey sits back down and opens a huge textbook. Mike and Steven rush onto the platform, carrying backpacks.

STEVEN: It's gone! Man, this happens every morning.

MIKE: It's only 10 after. We'll make it.

STEVEN: Hey, Joey! Joey, how's it going, man?

MIKE: Hey, Joey, where've you been all week?

JOEY: *[closing his book]* What's up, guys?

MIKE: Hey, Joey, what's with the glasses, man? You don't wear glasses. *[Mike reaches to grab the glasses off Joey's nose.]*

JOEY: Come on, Mikey. Don't break those. I need them when I read.

MIKE: Yeah, right.

JOEY: No, no. All right, I'll tell you. I'm trying to get with this girl.

MIKE: Anybody we know?

JOEY: No. Her name's Jennifer.

MIKE: Not Jennifer Ramirez?

JOEY: No. You don't know her. I don't really know her. She goes to Murrow. I keep seeing her on the train, right around 7:20, 7:30. Sits in the first car every morning. She's incredible. I can't stop thinking about her.

STEVEN: A girl from Murrow?

MIKE: Those girls are too smart. They're stuck up.

STEVEN: Joey, have you even talked to this girl?

JOEY: No. That's the problem. She never looks up. She's always studying some calculus book. So I figured if I got a book like hers, then maybe she'd see me, and we'd have something to talk about.

MIKE: Joey, don't think so much. All you gotta do is walk up to her and start talking.

JOEY: I can't. I just can't do it. I don't want her to think I'm an idiot, just trying to hit on her like a million other guys. I don't want to blow it. This girl is special.

MIKE: But Joey, you don't even know her.

JOEY: I'm serious.

STEVEN: Joey, you ask me, you're going about this all wrong. What happens if she starts talking to you and finds out you don't know calculus from a hole in the wall? Don't be so down on yourself! So maybe she's smart. No girl wants to go out with a geek. You just got to get her to notice you . . .

STEVEN: You just don't get it. Man! If you really want to get with this girl, you can't sit back and hope she'll notice you. You've got to make something happen.

JOEY: Like what?

STEVEN: OK, stand back, I have an idea. Joey, don't say we never did anything for you. You got to pretend you don't know us, OK? I'm gonna get on the train and act like some kind of bum.

MIKE: That should be easy for you.

STEVEN: Make yourself useful, Mikey. Give me your jacket. This is a bum's jacket.

MIKE: Thank you. Pull your hat down. Yeah, untie your shoes, and let me have your pack.

STEVEN: So Joey, here's the plan. I bump into this girl, give her a hard time. Make like I'm going to rip her off or something. You jump in there and help her out. Got it?

MIKE: Here comes the train.

STEVEN: She'll be eating out of your hand in no time.

JOEY: *[looking uncertain]* What am I supposed to do?

STEVEN: You figure it out. Just remember, you've never seen us before.

[The train pulls into the station, and the boys step into the first car.]

MIKE: Is she here?

JOEY: That's her. The one with the book.

[Jennifer is holding onto the center pole of the subway car, balancing a huge math book in one hand.]

MIKE: Now that is a beautiful girl.

STEVEN: Back me up, Mikey. *[Steven makes his way through the car and bumps into Jennifer.]* This is a public train, Miss, can we get through?

JOEY: You go to Murrow, right?

JENNIFER: Yeah. Those guys really shook me up.

JOEY: I've seen you on this train before.

JENNIFER: Yeah? You were so great. What did you say your name was?

JOEY: Joey.

JENNIFER: Joey. Hi, I'm Jennifer.

JOEY: I have to wait for the next train. I have a couple more stops to go.

JENNIFER: Oh no, I'm making you late!

JOEY: Don't worry about it.

JENNIFER: Listen, I really don't think I can go to first period. I need to get my head together. Maybe we can get a cup of coffee or something.

JOEY: Sure.

JENNIFER: There's this place right upstairs. [*pointing at the platform*] Joey, look. The cops have those two guys, the guys from the train. I'm sure it's them. See that other guy with the cops? He was on the train with us. He must have seen the whole thing and got that cop to come over. We need to go over there and—

JOEY: [*hesitating*] Jennifer, I . . .

■■■■ THINKING ABOUT THE PLAY

1. Why is Joey shy about meeting Jennifer?
2. Steven and Mike think Joey looks different. What has changed about him?
3. Why do you think Joey's friends tease him about his new look?