

I found myself sat in the café down the road again. Café Rochelle. Seemed to be a habit of mine these days but I found it easier to write here. Somehow, I'd made the increased level of distraction work for me. I looked up from my laptop for the first time in an hour to see raindrops racing each other down the thin glass, a sure sign that winter was moving in. The steam off my coffee warmed my hands as I took a sip, but my poor toes remained freezing in their damp shoes. I kept my eye on the cars outside for a moment, trying to ground myself in reality. The silver and black cars were always in much more of a hurry than those in red cars, yet statistically they were more likely to be pulled over. Bright yellow taxis burnt my retinas, and I was almost grateful when my vision was blocked by a man in a black turtleneck and square glasses. He entered the shop and made his way up to the counter. I realised I was staring.

"Can I get a Hazelnut Almond Latte? Thanks."

He was an American too, good start. If only he didn't live a thousand miles away, that always seemed to happen to me. I was lowering my hopes slowly, expecting him to take his coffee and leave. He moved towards me; his boots heavy on the floor compared to the other people in the café.

"Do you mind if I join you?"

Polite. That's refreshing. I looked around the café as subtly as I could. The other people were Hollywood types that hadn't made it. Waitresses, assistants, ex – ballerinas from the looks of them and yet he'd chosen to sit with me. "Of course," I respond, albeit a little too slowly. I question for a moment whether I should close the lid of the laptop, whether leaving it open would seem rude. But then again, it made for a good opening question. What was I writing? Why am I sat alone?

"So, why did you come out in the rain today?" He asks, holding his cup in his hands.

"I didn't realise it was raining when I left this morning."

"How did you not notice? It's freezing. Is that what you're writing about? The weather?"

"Not at the minute, but possibly later."

"Not very forthcoming for a writer are you."

"A tad forward for a person I don't know, aren't you?"

"Touché."

I span the laptop round to show the man what it was I'd been writing. It was an article for The Times about how the levels of harassment had gone up towards women in public places. His cheerful face melted away like I'd just accused him of something he didn't like.

"Am I harassing you?"

"Not at all. I wouldn't have let you sit down otherwise."

"Let me?"

"Yes, let you. I could have said no. Are you saying you would've sat down if I'd said no?"

"Absolutely not. Jesus, you really are a reporter aren't you. Am I on the record?"

"Would you like to be?"