

It's almost 5:30.  
I told Dad  
I would be there at 5:30.

In this train car  
We sway like loquacious sonograms.  
We could all be children and earth bound again  
If we weren't checking the time.  
If we all didn't have somewhere we really  
Really needed to be.

Caucasian cassanova stands next to me.  
Baleful stare  
Hidden behind Prada shades,  
familiar.  
Similar to the ones my mother's old lover  
Bought for my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

His arm brushes mine.  
It was intentional.  
I know this by the way  
His palms grip the handlebars,  
Like his games are tattooed to metal,  
And he needs to make sure  
He's digging for the right one.

I tense up,  
Pretend to ignore the bravado  
Of his composure.  
He leans over to whisper into my ear,  
"Save my number."

My response?  
"I don't have a phone."

In all of this,  
I know that he could never have looked close enough  
To know that seven hours later,  
I would be coagulating his entire existence  
Into a group of petty stanzas.

I know  
That he doesn't know,  
That in my head  
all men who stare at me too hard  
Are potential sexual predators.

He doesn't know that I learned this at 7,  
When I first experienced carpet burns,  
And sex,  
And terror all at the same time.

He doesn't know that he offended the fuck out of me.  
And that if I didn't have somewhere to be,  
I might have decided to be 7 again,  
But a lot stronger.

Angry,  
Humiliated,  
Unreasonably aching between the legs,  
below my abdomen.  
But angry.  
But a lot stronger.  
With stronger fists,  
And better face to save.

It's 76<sup>th</sup> street.  
He has somewhere to be.  
He gets to his destination before me.

Before he exits the subway car,  
He leans over once again,  
An uncouth debacle romancing mouth,  
To call me beautiful  
Remove his shades,  
And wink the green of his eyes at me,  
As if this would make him appear  
Unalarmingly charismatic,  
Or less harmful.

I've met his type before.  
Twice over.

Dear white Cassanova:  
I wouldn't give the rest of my innocence to you  
In a phone call,  
Or a hotel room,  
If the heavens could reassure me  
A new name  
Or a new mouth to collect spirits with.