

LIVIN' IN AMERICA

(BAINBRIDGE AVENUE 2:00 A.M.)

Fordham Road, 7:15am. She twisted in her seat. Would that little pervert never stop leering? She looked down the carriage for support. A couple of hung-over construction workers stared blankly back. Fuck 'em! They're willin' enough to curse out spics and niggers when they've got drink in them. She defiantly fished her compact from her pocket book. If he lays a finger on me, I'll floor him.

She hummed along with the song that had been tormenting her all morning. "I used to love her, I used to love her once, a long long time ago...." What do Irishmen know about love anyway, except for their Mammies back home? But he's a fine thing, no denyin'; even Mary agrees on that. And he's funny too, though he's full of it. Would he show up tonight or, even more to the point, should she?

Mrs. Bernstein had one foot out the door. What's her problem now? I'm on time. Must have had a fight with himself. You'd think between two lawyers they could work something out and not go frightenin' the kids first thing in the mornin'. And the little one not even changed yet - sittin' there all wet, in front of Sesame Street.

God this place is a mess! The sink full of last night's dishes, the bathroom floor knee deep in towels. What do they think I am, a bloody skivvy as well as a child psychiatrist? Dylan, will you for the love of god, get your hand out of the toilet. I don't give a damn if you tell your Mommy I used a bad word! God is a bad word? Why, in the name of Christ, am I arguin' with him!

Bainbridge Avenue 2:00am: She'd kept him waitin' for over an hour now. That's assumin' he was waitin'. Mary thought she was mad, given the reputation he had. Finally she'd stormed off vowin': "well, I for one am not goin' into the Phoenix to watch you make a fool of yourself!" The bouncer smirked as she tossed back her hair and strode into the smoke.

At least, he was there, laughin' at the bar with a bunch of Tyrone boys. She stood in the shadows and watched him. God, is he really as bad as they say? He never even finished secondary school. Me daddy'd kill me! And I suppose Mary is right; it'll never come to anything.

Just then he turned to order a drink and caught her eye. "What about you?" he called above Bono on the jukebox. "What the hell," she shrugged. "I'll be dead long enough."