

The Hustle
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INT. NYC SUBWAY CAR - AFTERNOON

JoAnne, an African American woman in her late 20's - mid 30's rides the train everyday. The same train at the same time in the same seat. She's reading a book. Eddie, unkempt, visibly dirty, perhaps homeless man in his mid - late 30's walks the aisle with a paper bag.

EDDIE

Ladies and gentleman, my name is
Eddie. I don't mean to bother
you...

JOANNE

(quietly)
And yet here we are.

EDDIE

I am homeless and I just need
twenty one dollars to get on a
train back to Montauk. Please,
anything would help.

He reaches JoAnne and opens his paper bag.

JOANNE

I ride this line everyday twice a
day.

EDDIE

Good to hear. Can you spare some
change?

JOANNE

Weren't you on the southbound train
this morning?

EDDIE

Uh, yes.

JOANNE

Didn't you need twenty one dollars
then?

EDDIE

Yeah, just like I need now.

JOANNE

I saw a woman give you a dollar
this morning.

EDDIE

Okay...

JOANNE

Even if no one else gave you any money, which I doubt. You'd at the very least need only twenty dollars.

EDDIE

Miss, are you going to give me money or no?

JOANNE

No.

(loudly addressing the passengers)

And no one else should either. This man's a sham!

EDDIE

Whoa lady! What are you doing?

JOANNE

Teaching you a very valuable lesson.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

(addressing the passengers)

Don't give this man any money y'all!

EDDIE

Miss, I'm trying to make a living here!

JOANNE

You're doing it all wrong.

EDDIE

What are you talking about? I know exactly what I'm doing.

JOANNE

On every corner, someone is asking for money. The smart one's provide a service.

EDDIE

Oh no, I got out of the escort business years ago.

JOANNE

Eww. I mean, people will give more money to folks who sing, dance, recite poetry. The Showtime kids live on the upper east side and drive Bentley's. That could be you.

EDDIE

To be honest, I don't really have any talents.

JOANNE

Everybody's got something.

EDDIE

No. In high school I was voted least likely to do anything.

JOANNE

Well, at least you graduated high school.

EDDIE

Not quite. When my parents passed, I dropped out of high school to take care of my baby sister.

JOANNE

Wow, that's noble. So you're a caregiver! That's a talent. Where's your sister now?

EDDIE

She works at Bang Bang, the gentleman's club on first ave.

JOANNE

Oh. How about sports? You seem to be in pretty good shape.

EDDIE

I really like basketball!

JOANNE

Great!

EDDIE

But I don't have much hand-eye coordination.

JoAnne gently throws her book at Eddie in an attempt to have him catch it. It hits his chest and falls to the ground.

JOANNE

Damn.

EDDIE

I know. I'm useless.

He picks up the book and slumps next to JoAnne.

JOANNE

You could also use a bath.

EDDIE

I'm a smelly, talentless waste of a human.

JOANNE

No. Don't say that about yourself. There are plenty of talentless people making huge money. Look at Paris Hilton, Scott Disik, the Kardashians. The list goes on and on. What you need is a marketing plan. Thankfully you've come to the right place.

EDDIE

You're in marketing?

JOANNE

I'm in everything. A talent agent, publicist, marketer, I get it done. Naked Cowboy? That's me. The Mariah Carey Mariachi Band? You're looking at 'er.

EDDIE

That's really impressive. But why would you want to work with me? I can barely walk and talk at the same time.

JOANNE

Everybody's worth something, Eddie. You've got a brain, albeit perhaps not the most properly functioning one. But you've also got a huge heart and that's hard to find.

EDDIE

Well, not that hard. My buddy has a valve defect. That thing's gonna pop any minute.

JOANNE

I mean you're a nice guy.

EDDIE

Thank you. That's the nicest thing anyone has ever said to me.

JOANNE

Are you from Montauk?

EDDIE

No. That's just the most expensive ticket I could find.

JOANNE

Smart! There's hope for you yet.

EDDIE

Yet...?

JOANNE

Nevermind. We need to first build your confidence. You can do anything in life as long as you're confident. Donald Trump taught me that. Stand up straight.

Eddie stands.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Wipe the crust from your eyes.
Brush your hair back.

She hands him a hairbrush. He licks his hand and moves his hair out of his face and brushes his hair back. He reveals himself as a pretty good looking guy. He hands back the brush.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Keep it. You're about to be one of New York City's top street personalities. No more begging for chump change. You do drugs?

EDDIE

No.

JOANNE

Great. Meet me back here at eight a.m tomorrow.

She pulls out a business card from her purse and hands it to him.

EDDIE

No one's ever believed in me
before. I really appreciate you
giving me a shot.

JOANNE

I'm just helping you to believe in
yourself. You've got potential.

SFX: NYC TRAIN DOORS OPENING: "STAND CLEAR OF THE CLOSING
DOORS PLEASE"

EDDIE

See you tomorrow!

He hurriedly exits. The door closes but his shirt is trapped
in the door. He aggressively pulls it out just in time
before the train departs.

JOANNE

See you tomorrow.

FADE OUT:

END OF SCENE