

Doppelganger

By

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INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

A 30-ish MAN, JAKE, sits in a relatively empty subway car, A WOMAN of about the same age enters and stands, facing away from him. He stares at her for a few moments, and slowly rises to speak to her.

JAKE

Janice?

WOMAN

Are you talking to me?

JAKE

Yes, aren't you Janice Thompson?
Maryville HS, class of 2003?

WOMAN

You must have me mixed up with
someone else. My name is Tonya. I
don't think we've ever met...

JAKE

Wow, you look just like Janice...
They say that everyone has a
double... a doppelganger... You
could be her twin sister. Too bad.

TONYA

Sorry to disappoint you...

JAKE

Don't get me wrong. It *is* a
pleasure meeting you. I'm Jake
Brock.

They shake hands.

JAKE

It just would have been nice to
have some closure.

TONYA

Closure?

JAKE

Yeah, we didn't exactly end things
on the best note. I didn't exactly
end things well...

TONYA

I'll probably regret asking this,
but do you want to explain why?

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

You mean, tell you, a complete stranger, how I let the woman of my dreams slip away?

TONYA

They say confession is good for the soul...

JAKE

Maybe, but it's a little embarrassing.

TONYA

We're strangers - no one will ever hear it from me...

JAKE

Okay. Here goes... She was my first love. The first girl I ever... you know...

TONYA

Had sex with? They say you never forget your first love...

JAKE

She was amazing! And I don't just mean the sex, although that was the best I've ever had. She set the bar pretty high and no one else has ever come close.

TONYA

I get the picture. Young love, hot sex - go on.

JAKE

Sorry, this is just so weird. It's like I'm confessing to Janice how badly I screwed up. You really could be her twin.

TONYA

Pretend I am. If Janice was standing here right now, what would you say to her?

JAKE

Okay...

He reaches for her hands and she lets him take them. He looks deeply into her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

You were my one true love. You understood me better than my friends, my family, than I even understood myself. You could read my thoughts before they were even fully formed.

TONYA

Wow...

She is visibly moved.

JAKE

We laughed together, we cried together, we made plans for a future together. I even loved the obsessive way you ate french fries...

TONYA

(smiling)

French Fries?

JAKE

You never squirted the ketchup onto a plate or napkin. You delicately removed the corner of the packet and squeezed it just hard enough to dab a little onto one fry at a time. At first it drove me crazy, eating an order of fries took forever. But looking back, I realize it was symbolic of the way you approach life.

TONYA

How so?

JAKE

You were always deliberate in your actions. Maybe that comes from your dancing or from your catlike grace, but now I wish I had seen the beauty in such a simple act.

TONYA

Why didn't it work out?

JAKE

My mom died when I was in high school. It was the hardest time of my life. But you, I mean Janice,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JAKE (cont'd)
were there beside me through the worst stages of her cancer. Right after she passed, the very next month, Janice's little brother was diagnosed with leukemia. I just couldn't go through it again. Not so soon.

TONYA
So you broke up with her?

JAKE
Worse - I just ghosted her. After she gave me her very best during my mother's dying days, I couldn't be there for her. Pretty unforgivable, right?

TONYA
Everyone deserves forgiveness. Teen years are hard for everyone. We feel love and pain more deeply than at any other time in our lives. It's a wonder how any of us make it out alive. Don't be too hard on yourself. You survived.

JAKE
Thanks, now I don't feel quite as much like a jerk. A little less jerky. One step lower on the jerk-o-meter.

TONYA
(laughing)
I get the picture.

He squeezes her hands and then lets them drop.

TONYA
So did you ever find a reasonable replacement for the "woman of your dreams"?

JAKE
Nope. And you?

TONYA
I'm still looking...

There is an awkward pause as they decide where to go from here.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE
Well, here's my stop.

TONYA
I'm getting off at 137th street.

JAKE
It was nice talking with you...

TONYA
Same here.
Jake turns to the door and pauses. He turns back to her.

JAKE
Janice, what was my nickname for you?

TONYA
(with tears in her eyes)
"Moxie". You said I was always determined to get what I wanted and it showed I had "moxie" so that's what you called me.

JAKE
You still have moxie...

They fall into each others arms and share a passionate kiss.

FADE TO BLACK