

## Kids

Kids are getting out of school and I am waiting for the #3 train at the Utica Station. I haven't been out to the neighborhood yet, my backpack pulls heavy on my shoulders, and I am already exhausted. I want to sit down. The only seats now available are at the end of the platform, where some Black teenage boys are sitting up on the backs of the benches, talking and playing. The end of the platform is considered dangerous because fewer people wait there, mostly because there are drivers in the front and middle of the train, never at the end. I consider for a moment and then go to sit. The boy next to me looks over and says to himself, "She sat next to me."

Then, kind of wonderingly, "You sat next to me."

Yep.

Astonished, "Don't I look dangerous?"

"No. Are you dangerous?"

"No, I'm nice and sweet."