

Scene: A subway platform
at a rundown subway
station.

Posters.
A bench.
A phone booth.
A trash can.

At rise: YAM sitting on the
edge of the bench; looking
out over the edge of the
platform. He leans on an
umbrella, which is between
his legs. There is a leather
attachè case at his side.

Sound of an express train
coming. Crescendos!

YAM sits back and holds his
breath! --as the lights from
the passing train flicker in
stripes and dots across him.
When it passes, and the
hollow subway silence sets
in, he carefully moves
forward and peeks over the
edge of the platform.

YAM

(Taking a deep breath.)

Still there.

(Pause. SINGS.)

“. . . I had a hat when I came in.
I hung it on the rack.
And I'll have a hat when I go out.
Or I'll break somebody's back.

“I'm a peaceful man, I am I am;
and I don't want to shout.
But I had a hat when I came in.
AND I'LL HAVE A HAT WHEN I GO OUT!”

YAM

(Continued. Speaks.)

Now, that song came back. . . .maybe other things. . . .

(Looks at his watch.)

Stopped!

(Something catches his eye
out on the tracks.)

A rat!

(He jumps back.)

Is it near my--?!

(Rushes to edge of platform.)

Gone. Thank God.

(He paces nervously; spots
something on one of the posters.
Makes a decision.
Searches his pockets.
Finds coins.
Goes to the telephone,
picks up the receiver,
inserts coins and dials--
all the while looking at the poster.

Suddenly he hangs up!
Paces back and forth in front of the phone.
He makes a decision.
He goes to the phone and dials again--
again looking at poster.

A pause.)

GIRL'S VOICE

(Over. Amplified. Sweet.)

Yeeeeees?

YAM

. . .Hello. I-I'm calling from the local subway station.

(He leans out and looks.)

I-I can't see the sign from here--with the station's name, but--

GIRL'S VOICE

(Over. Amplified. Sweet, but all business.)

You saw my number on the poster.

YAM

That's correct. And it says, "For happiness and thrills, call--"

GIRL'S VOICE

--Right. Well, what's your pleasure? Fellatio? Anal gratification? Or the usual?

(YAM hangs up.

Pause.

Phone rings. YAM picks up phone.)

--also flagellation, anilingus--and kissing--

(YAM HANGS UP AGAIN!

He paces. Stops. Confronts
the scribbling on the posters.
Using the umbrella as a pointer.)

YAM

"I am a devoted Benedict Arnold fan."

(He picks out another.)

"Murray of the Unholy Bishops says NO!"

(He moves on. Reads.)

"Murray is a faggot and don't know how to say nothing else--Dinty of the Saintly Stompers."

(He moves on. Reads.)

"Dinty of the Saintly Stompers and Murray of the Unholy Bishops are Commie-Nazi finks--Skippy of the Midtown Martyrs,"

(Stops reading.)

I admire this. Why? . . .Direct. Expressive. Condensed. Maybe I'm a copywriter?

(Pause. Then he reads on.)

Ahhhh. "Honey loves Diego."

(He frowns at the next one.)

Ummmmm. "Michaela eats it."

(He quickly moves on to the next one.)

"The only proper use for a gun is to shoot it."

(Angry.)

Always some spook to depress you!

(Reads.)

"Conerico was here to stay." Hmm--

(Off. Express train heard.

Coming on--FAST!

YAM RUNS to the platform's edge;
looks wildly down at the tracks.)

IT WILL SQUASH IT!!!

(He covers his face as the train EXPLODES
PAST! . . .when the train passes,

YAM looks down.
 Breathes a sigh of relief.
 Remains.
 Thinks.
 Turns. Searches frantically for a number
 on one of the signs.
 Closes his eyes.
 Memorizes the number.
 Runs to the phone booth;
 digging in his pockets all the while for a coin.
 Finds it. Inserts it and dials.
 There is a amplified "click"
 of a phone being picked up)

MALE VOICE
 (Over. Deep. Kindly. Amplified.)

Yes, my child?

YAM

Oh. . . .hello, sir. . . .I'm on the station. Where I saw your message on the poster?--the
 neat little sticker? that says, "for help, call TEmpleton 7--

MALE VOICE
 (Kindly.)

Yes, my child. I know my number.

YAM

Right. Yes. Well. . . .--I was hoping it wasn't a gimmick. You do really try to help.

MALE VOICE
 (Kindly.)

I listen. Yes.

YAM

Right. Yes. Well. . . .--You see
 (Taps head.)
 . . .a kind of amnesia has set in. . .
 (Taps watch.)
 . . .and my watch has stopped.

MALE VOICE
 (Kindly.)

Sorry. I don't have a watch.

YAM

Well, no--that's not the problem, really--I don't want the time--I mention it only because I'll have to . . . surmise some things. I guess.

MALE VOICE

(Kindly.)

Yes.

YAM

I guess. . . I must have fallen asleep. . . . There's a bench here on the station . . .

MALE VOICE

You say you fell asleep at a bench on a subway station?

YAM

I must have, yes. And. . . --OH! Something awakened me. . . . a train passing. . . . and the first thing I saw was. . . --my hat.

MALE VOICE

Your hat?

YAM

Yes.

MALE VOICE

Where?

YAM

--At the platform's edge.

MALE VOICE

--And?

YAM

--It was tottering. --Half on. --Half off.

MALE VOICE

--Tottering?

YAM

Yes. When I fell asleep, my chin must have rested on my chest. And the hat must have tipped off my head. Fallen onto the platform. And rolled . . .

MALE VOICE

--Yes?! Yes!?

YAM

--Then a train must have passed! --Yes! --And that's when I awoke--!

MALE VOICE

--To see your hat--!

YAM

--Tottering!

MALE VOICE

--Yes?! --**Yes?!**

YAM

--It fell!

MALE VOICE

--**OH MY GOD!!!!!!**

(LONG PAUSE)

YAM

(Still holding phone to ear, he
leans out to the tracks)

It's down there now. . .in the shadows. . .the trains haven't been able to get it yet. And
before. . .before. . .a rat ran by it and--WAIT! That's it! That's what awakened me--a
dream--rats--rats chasing. . .

MALE VOICE

What?

YAM

I don't know. . .something. . .into a closet?. . .alley?. . .--darkness!

VOICE

(Bright.)

Bravo! You remembered that.

YAM

Yes. But my hat is still down there.

(Pouting.)

My head is cold. I must have been used to my hat.

(Very loooooong pause.)

MALE VOICE

Tell me, my son. . .what exactly is your problem?

YAM

(Suddenly enraged!)

MY HAT IS DOWN ON THE TRACKS!

MALE VOICE

Yes, my son. I know. So?

(Pause.)

YAM

So I don't know what to do about it. . . and I've been killing time. . .but it stays down there . . .and "I'll have a hat when I go out. . ." And that's the problem. . .

(Pouting.)

And your sticker said, "for help. . .call--"

(BLACKOUT)