

# A GIFT

by Jean Blasiar

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## A GIFT

AT RISE, an empty frame is hanging sideways from a hook in the ceiling representing a clear glass window on a subway train. Two chairs on stage; one beside the frame (a window seat), the other several feet away (an aisle seat).

A young man in his thirties is sitting in the chair beside the frame. The man is dressed casual (cool), flip flops, short sleeve frayed shirt hanging out of torn jeans.

Another young man also in his thirties enters the train (subway) dressed neatly in khaki pants, tassled loafers, button down collared shirt, sports jacket, belt. This young man is carrying a box about six inches square with a large colorful bow on top. He sits down in the other chair.

The first young man (FYM) glances at the guy sitting across the aisle from him (SYM), smirks slightly.

### FIRST YOUNG MAN (FYM)

Birthday?

## SECOND YOUNG MAN (SYM)

Pardon me?

FYM

(nods to the gift)

Your girl friend's birthday?

SYM

Oh. No.

FYM

Anniversary?

SYM

Of our first date. Yes, it is.

FYM

You're gonna score with that.

SYM

(turns; smiles; nods)

Wouldn't doubt it.

FYM

Let me guess. A laptop.

(SYM laughs, shakes his head.)

FYM (cont'd)

That's a pretty feminine bow.

SYM

(smiles; not embarrassed)

She's a pretty feminine girl.

FYM

Do I know you? You look familiar.

(The SYM looks straight at the FYM.)

SYM

I don't know. Columbia?

FYM

(snickers)

One year. Dropped out.

SYM

We may have seen each other there.

FYM

(nods; probably the explanation)

So what's in the box?

SYM

Promises.

FYM

(Thought he didn't hear correctly)

What?

SYM

Promises. On 3 by 5 cards.

FYM

Promising what?

SYM

Fidelity. Understanding. Compassion. Sobriety.

FYM

Whoa! Wait a minute. Sobriety? Is this some kind of twelve step thing?

SYM

No. Just my promise.

FYM

Like rehab?

SYM

No.

FYM

Man, you're lucky you ran into me. You're about to promise some girl... in writing yet... stuff that's gonna come back and bite you in the ass. You getting married?

SYM

I hope so. The ring's in the box.

FYM

I think I know you. There are things about you...

I don't know what they are... I can't explain it... but  
you are real familiar somehow.

(SYM doesn't say anything)

I think what you remind me of... WHO you remind me of...  
somebody my mother wanted me to be. You know? And  
doing stuff like writing down promises on 3 by 5 cards.

That's my mom. She used to leave notes everywhere in the house.

I bought her a carton of postits for Christmas last year. She  
was ecstatic. Now I go home and they're all over my old room,  
on the door, my desk, my mirror, even a postit on a new toothbrush  
she's put in the medicine cabinet. "Johnny... remember to brush  
twice a day."