

The Cabbie's Tale

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Summary: The driver of a New Troy yellow cab talks about his most bizarre day.

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Marv opened the door to his favorite hangout. His day had been long, frustrating, and, well, frankly bizarre.

The noise hit him first. It wasn't as if the streets of Metropolis were quiet, but the low rumble of voices, laughter, and clinking glasses hit him like hug from an old friend. A place could be too quiet, reminding one that he were drinking his troubles away, but the Mocking Bridge never was... not after quitting time for the day shift, at least.

Frank waved at him from the bar, lifting up two fingers to Tony, before nodding Marv over to an empty table.

"Thanks," Marv said, sitting down.

"What for? Those two drinks are for me," Frank said, laughing and slapping him on the back. "So, how was it out there today?"

Bonnie slid the two beers onto the table before Marv could respond. She laid a gentle hand on his shoulder. "You okay, Marv? You look a little green around the gills."

"Fine. Fine. Just the job," Marv replied noncommittally.

Both Bonnie and Frank nodded with understanding. The job was what brought most people to the Mocking Bridge. Bonnie went to deliver more drinks and Frank nudged one of his two beers in Marv's direction.

Marv cooled his burning hands on the condensation covering his glass before taking a long sip.

"So?" Frank asked again.

Marv set down his glass. "Well, we followed Alonzo sixteen blocks. Man, that man likes to walk." He shook his head and slammed his hand on the table. He winced at the sharp pain that followed. "I lost him, Frank. Sixteen blocks, Joe, Vinnie and I were on him like glue."

"What happened?"

"I don't know what happened. That's the thing," Marv said, rubbing his temples. "It just doesn't make sense."

"What doesn't?" Frank asked.

"I let Joe out on the corner by the Twelfth Precinct, and then turned left onto South Herford Way..."

"I agree. It doesn't make any sense for Alonzo to go by the Twelfth. Any rookie would love to pick him up for jaywalking," Frank said, chuckling.

"Most rookies don't know about Alonzo. Anyway, that wasn't the strange part," Marv said. "I was going to pick up Vinnie at the corner. He was following Alonzo on foot. I was supposed to wait for him at the corner until they passed and then Vinnie was going to get into the car, so Alonzo wouldn't suspect anything."

"Were you in the blue Dodge?" Frank said.

"Nah, the yellow New Troy Cab. Lieu thought it would be easier to blend in with the crowd and Alonzo wouldn't know we were following him," Marv explained. He lifted his beer and took a generous gulp. "Suddenly, my car starts backing up, all on its own, like it's possessed. I slam on the brakes, but that does nothing to stop the motion, just burns the rubber. It does this for half a block, past Alonzo and Vinnie, who's staring at me like I'm

loco crazy for drawing Alonzo's attention to my cab."

Glancing up from his beer, he saw that Frank was looking at him with the same expression as Vinnie's had been.

"Finally, it stops by these ordinary suits, a young couple, and they *climb into my cab!*" He threw up his hands. "I tried to explain that I already had a fare, but this lady wouldn't take 'no' for an answer. 'Call dispatch and tell 'em to send someone else,' she says. I even told her that my cab was acting up and I needed to take it to the shop. No, nada. 'You can drop us off first.' You know the type."

"You sure that it wasn't my first wife?" Frank asked.

"I said she was young, Frank," Marv snapped back. "And a looker, too."

"Definitely not Sheila, then."

"She's reads me an address off a torn phone book page," Marv went on. "Of all things!"

"You should have thrown the book at her!" Frank laughed.

"I was tempted. Misdemeanor destruction of public property," Marv countered. "But there wasn't any proof that it wasn't *her* phone book she destroyed."

"Obstruction of justice!"

"Only I was undercover as a cabbie. I guess I could have shown her my badge and forced her out. Her boyfriend seemed like a decent enough fellow, though."

"We suckers always are," Frank lamented.

"He was apologizing, totally embarrassed by her behavior, and begging the woman to get out of the cab. But, oh, no! She wasn't going to give in, saying, 'He didn't have his occupied light on. He backed up a block to get us. I'm not leaving! Possession is 9/10ths of the law.'"

Frank was roaring with laughter, now. "You should've drawn your gun."

"I was tempted," Marv growled into his beer.

"What did ya do?"

Marv shrugged. "What else could I do? She wasn't budging. So, I drove her to some medical office building over on Howard. Nutso psycho broad. Kept rambling along the way that she was going to catch the woman impersonating her. As if anyone would want to act like that crazy..." He cleared his throat. "On purpose, you know."

"You mean there's two of them in town?" Frank said, his eyes widening in fear. "Maybe it's time to ask for that transfer to Gotham City."

Marv ignored him. "Anyway, by the time I get back, dispatch says Vinnie and Joe are waiting for me at the Twelfth. Apparently, my crazy driving spooks Alonzo and he runs into the subway. We lost him." He took a sip of his beer. "We'll try to catch him again tomorrow."

Frank nudged Marv with another chortle. "You sure you aren't making this possessed cab story up, Marv? Maybe you backed up because you accidentally threw the cab into reverse," he suggested.

Marv pressed his lips together. Sometimes, he really wondered why he was still friends with Frank. Just going through the Academy together was starting to seem a thin reason. Marv removed his hands from his beer to show Frank the red streaks across his palms. "I was holding on to the steering wheel for dear life, Frank. I got contact burns."

Frank's jaw dropped open, causing him to fall silent for the first time since they had become friends. A sly smile crossed Marv's face as he wrapped his hands around his cool beer again. Losing Alonzo and dealing with the broad from hell was worth it just to see Frank's current expression. One would've thought Marv had just told him that he was Superman.

Marv shook his head before taking another sip of his beer.

He hadn't forgotten the woman from just over a year ago, who claimed that some ordinary man in a blazer and glasses had

stopped that runaway bus without brakes. She had spent overnight in the psych ward before it was determined to be delusions caused by her almost being hit by a bus. However, Marv had seen that hand print on the bus's fender. She hadn't been lying.

That man in his cab today was tall with dark hair like Superman.

Then again, if Superman were going to live a regular life undercover in Metropolis, he certainly wouldn't pick a harpy for a girlfriend. Would he?

Still... That man also wore glasses.

Nah, Marv thought, shaking his head again. Superman wouldn't have interfered with a police investigation. He would've known that Marv wasn't a cabbie, but one of his brothers in blue. Right? Then again, Marv hadn't really noticed the guy, because his gal pal had drawn his attention. He doubted he'd be able to pick the man out in a line-up.

He chortled to himself.

Pick Superman out in a line up? Apparently not.

Many strange things had happened in Metropolis since that flying man moved to town.

Marv lifted his hand and swirled a finger in a circle towards Tony. "Next round's on me," he said, dropping a twenty on the table.

Superman tipped well.

THE END

A/N: This story was inspired by Terry Gross's April 2015 interview of Steve Osborn on NPR's *Fresh Air* about his book entitled "The Job: True Tales from the Life of a New York City Cop." In the interview, Osborn mentions using a cab to follow suspects and a light bulb brightened above my head.

Disclaimer: Inspired by the characters created by Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster as they were portrayed on the *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* television series, developed by Deborah Joy LeVine. The characters do not belong to me; they belong to themselves (although Warner Bros., DC Comics, and the heirs to Siegel and Shuster might disagree). This story is set during S2's "Madame Ex", which was written by Tony Blake and Paul Jackson. The plot of the story is my own.