



As I knelt down on the cement platform to pack up, I heard a voice say, “Are you leaving?”

I looked up to see a middle-aged, Hispanic man, perhaps a blue-collar worker, in dark green pants and a light green shirt that was hidden by a large brown overcoat.

“No,” I said, startled that this random person seemed to appear out of thin air. “No, I’m just... I’m just moving to the other side where there are more people.”

As I zipped up my guitar case, he stared down at me and said, “Come with me. Come with me,” he urgently bragged, “and I’ll show you ‘the spot.’”

I cautiously followed him. I was preoccupied, wondering what exactly he was talking about and whether following a stranger to this supposed “spot” was a good or bad idea, given that we were in the middle of New York City and it was the subways. He encouraged me to continue following him with a hand gesture. I wondered what he was all about. How had he even seen me on that platform? How did he know I needed some help? Had he done this before with random virgin subway musicians? I took a few skips to catch up, because I hadn’t come up with any valid reason not to at least see what this “spot” thing was all about.

As we walked, I asked, “So, you’re a musician as well?” I figured anyone who would have “spot” information must be a musician. I also thought I’d prefer him to answer in the affirmative to that question, as I’d feel a whole lot better about this whole random “spot” adventure if he were. “No,” he said, “but I’ve been riding this train for fourteen years and I’ve seen people play here. I know this is the ‘spot’.” He turned and smiled at me. “You can make money... here!” Suddenly, the man pointed to the empty area at the top of the staircase where the platform became very large and wide resembling a small stage. It had a wall as a backdrop, bordered by a small newsstand built right into the wall, and then flowing out from the wall was this big, open space. “This is it. This is where they *all* play.” He smiled, “Good luck.” Then he turned around and walked toward the subway’s exit. As he disappeared through the turnstile, it was almost as if this random angel had simply appeared out of nowhere. I say out of nowhere because the whole time I