Grandma's Bus

By C. Jade Wyton

Tiffany takes her sons on a short bus-ride so that they can talk to the bus driver— Their grandmother.

~~~~

Logan hadn't put down his book since he'd gotten Johanna to sign it. He took it everywhere, clinging to it tightly like it was priceless— And, well, perhaps it *was*.

Regardless of whether or not other people agreed on the price of a country singer's daughter's signature (oh, what a mouthful!) the memory of the experience was something that Tiffany knew her son wasn't going to forget anytime soon.

He was all but vibrating as he climbed up the bus stairs and held up the book to the driver —his grandmother Ripley— and let out a happy squeal.

'Whatcha got there, hon?' Ripley asked, brushing her head-fin aside so she could get a better look at her grandson. 'Ooh! Someone signed your book! Ain't that lovely? Go on, kid. Take your seat. I'm running a little late on my route so I gotta drive and talk, yeah? Damn blackouts keep messing with the lights and I've been getting stuck in traffic….'

'Kay, Grandma!' Logan squeaked, taking his place in the seat directly behind Ripley, and shifting so Trent could squeeze in beside him.

'Tiffany love!' Ripley exclaimed, starting the bus as Tiffany tapped her fair card. 'Didn't expect to see you tonight! Lovely surprise.'

'The boys kept begging me to come and see you,' Tiffany chuckled. She sat in the seat behind her boys and leant on the back so she could reach over and ruffle their fins. 'They love you.'

'Aw, I love youse too!' Ripley cooed. 'Y'always so sweet to me! Luckiest grandma ever, I am…. So how've you boys been, you been good for Mum? Been behaving yourselves?'

'Yea—' Trent began.

'No, we've been misbehaving,' Logan interrupted. 'Trent keeps wandering off when he's not meant to. And I tried to pretend to be sick to stay home from school. But Mum knew I was lying and made me go.'

'Now that's no good, is it?' Ripley tutted. 'You boys gotta remember that your poor mum is just one woman, right? You gotta go easy on her!'

Tiffany chuckled as her mother playfully lectured the boys, and she leant back in her chair so she could watch the lights pass by outside the bus.

It reminded her of when she was the boys' age, and her mothers would both have to work and she couldn't be left at home alone….

The bus doors opened, and a rather rowdy group of young adults clambered on. Tiffany watched them as they came in and shifted so one of the girls, a half-elf, could sit beside her.

Trent immediately turned around in his seat and said hello.
~~~~

‘Trent, what did I say about talking to strangers?’ Tiffany sighed, giving the boy a nudge to try and get him to turn back in his seat properly. ‘Come on.’

‘Oh, he’s not bothering me!’ the half-elf chuckled. ‘No worries.’

‘Yeah! I’m not bothering her! I’m *charming!*’ Trent joked, though he slid down in his chair and half-turned as Ripley addressed him in a warning tone.

‘Trent. It’s not ‘bout bothering people, it’s ‘bout keeping you safe,’ she told him. ‘Trust your mum to know what’s best. Alright?’

‘Hm. I guess,’ Trent huffed.

‘I trust Mum,’ Logan chimed in.

‘Yeah, but you’re a suck-up!’ Trent told him.

Tiffany gasped ‘Trent—‘

‘I’m joking!’ Trent defended. ‘Logan thinks it’s funny! Right, Logan?’

‘Yeah,’ Logan agreed. ‘Trent’s funny. I know he’s just joking.’

Tiffany sighed, raising her brow at her mother through the rear-view mirror, before leaning forward to cuff Trent playfully around the head. ‘You’re a brat!’

Trent giggled, batting his mother away and ducking down. ‘I am!’ he agreed. ‘But you can’t be mad, cos I do all my chores!’

‘Oh, you think I can’t get mad at you?’ Tiffany teased.

‘Yeah, you’re lucky to have me!’

‘Is she, now?’ Ripley asked, humoured.

‘Yeah!’ Logan nodded. ‘Trent is really good. He cooks, and helps sweep, and feeds B, and— And helps Mum carry clothes down to the laundry room and stuff!’

‘Yeah, I do!’ Trent beamed proudly. ‘I’m the best son ever!’

The half-elf smothered her laugh and turned around in her seat to speak with her friends.

‘Tied with Logan,’ Tiffany added, leaning over so she could peck kisses onto both of her boys. ‘You’re *both* fantastic. Alright? I love you both *so* much. You’re my whole world. I’d be nowhere without you.’

Trent giggled as Tiffany ruffled him. As did Logan— Though, Logan wiggled away and held up his book again.

‘Do you think we’ll see Johanna again?’ he asked. ‘I really hope so— If I see her again can I talk to her?’

‘*Mm*…’ Tiffany gave a tentative hum. ‘I don’t know. It’s not fair to let you talk to a stranger, and not Trent.’

‘She’s not a stranger, though,’ Trent argued. ‘We know her now. That makes her our friend!’

‘Yeah!’ Logan agreed. ‘And— And she’s famous, too!’

‘Being famous doesn’t make her your friend,’ Tiffany sighed. ‘She’s still a stranger. Just a special type of stranger called an “acquaintance.”’

‘Acquaintance?’ Logan frowned. ‘What’s that?’

‘A stranger who’s told you their name,’ Tiffany explained. ‘But they’re still not your friend. And you shouldn’t go talking to them.’

‘But then how— How— How are we meant to— Meant to—‘ Logan cut off, looking to Trent to finish his sentence.

‘How are we meant to *make friends* if you won’t let us *talk* to anyone!’ Trent exclaimed loudly, much to the amusement of the other passengers. ‘Friends don’t just appear out of thin air with a friendship tag on them! You gotta talk to

strangers to make friends!'

'Trent—'

'HAH!' Ripley cut Tiffany off with a laugh. 'Aw, Tiff! He sounds just like you used to, when you were his age!'

'Ah…' Tiffany shook her head. 'So what did you say to me, to stop me talking to strangers?'

'Oh. I said *everything* to try and stop you wandering off to be social,' Ripley cackled. 'Doesn't mean any of it worked! If it did we wouldn't be here, would we!'

Tiffany rolled her eyes at her mother, tutting in an exaggerated way that made her boys giggle. '*Mum*.'

'I'm just *saying,*' Ripley said. 'Talking to strangers is kinda in your religion, isn't it? Havatii and all?'

'That's a massive misrepresentation of Havatii. It's parties, fun, and joy,' Tiffany corrected. 'You can have parties without inviting strangers.'

'Mhm. And eight years ago you would have argued the opposite with me,' Ripley teased. 'Anyway, this is your stop, isn't it hon?'

'Ah, you're kicking me off so you win the argument, I see!' Tiffany joked, standing and squeezing past the half-elf woman. 'Hah. Well. Come on, boys. It's a school night, you don't want to be *too* tired in the morning!'

'Alright, Mum!' Trent acknowledged, standing up and helping Logan out of his seat. 'Bye Grandma! Love you!'

'Love you, Grandma,' Logan echoed, before being dragged off the bus.

'Love you, boys!' Ripley called after them. 'And I love you too, Tiff. You be safe. Call if you need anything, okay?'

'I will,' Tiffany chuckled. 'Love you!'

—END—

If you enjoyed reading, please consider supporting me and my work at
cjadewyton.com

~~~~

This publication is provided for free and may be redistributed as long as credit to the author is provided and no money is made from its distribution.

Permission to change this document to other ebook formats is given for the sole purpose of ereader compatibility.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, businesses, places, events and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, livings or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

No generative artificial intelligence was used in the writing of this work. Any use of this publication to train generative artificial intelligence technologies is expressly prohibited.
~~~~