

BY JENNIFER KIM

# CITY LIFE

*Are you ready for Life in the Big City? Probably not*

**H**ey Kid, Welcome to the big city. You might've noticed that I'm wearing a leather jacket and holding a rusted wrench. And I am. Good job for noticing. This is the big, bad city and you have to be able to notice things here.

This place ain't soft. There aren't any babies riding bicycles around eating baby-shaped ice cream and singing lullabies to smaller babies or some shit. Here in this lawless, concrete jungle, things are different.

In the big city, when you ask for directions, people will try to trick you. I'd say a solid nine times out of ten, they will give you directions to the opposite place of where you're going. If you want to go south, they'll point you north. If you want to get some good coffee, they'll send you to the worst coffee joint in all of town. If you want to go get a haircut, they'll send you to Tony, the wig guy. I've made that mistake a couple times, so be careful.

In the big city, when you want to make friends, there's a fifty-fifty chance that you will join a gang by mistake. And they won't be dancing and singing songs like in *West Side Story*, unless it's the "Broadway Babies" which is the gang made up of all failed musical theater actors. They're pretty talented.

In the big city, when you pass by a bunch of business guys shaking hands, it's not a fun little game they're doing where you can just jump in and shake hands with everyone like it's no big deal. They get pretty irked because it's some kind of "exclusive" thing they're doing. Who wants to be part of that club anyway? Not me. Whatever.

In the big city, when you see a man walking down the street holding a jug of milk, he isn't the milkman. He won't smile, wave at you, or come up to you asking how your morning is or how many bottles of milk you want. Instead, he'll smile, wave at you, and come up to you and tell you crazy stories about how the whole city is being slowly overrun by intelligent lizards. Sometimes, he'll ask you if you want some milk, but I wouldn't take it if I were you.

In the big city, nobody knows your name. At first, your feelings might be hurt about it. But then, you realize this can be a good thing. You can reinvent yourself and you can be whoever you want to be. You can be Alfred, Durkes, or Frank. But those are the only options.

In the big city, you might find that teenagers are kind of mean to you. You might find yourself walking by a group of kids hanging around at the 7-Eleven and they call you "Loserface" or "Mr. Fatty McGee." You'll scoff in front of them, but then later when you're home alone, you'd be surprised to find that even though you thought it wouldn't get to you, it does. "Mr. Fatty McGee" in particular. Where did they even learn that one? Jerk school?

In the big city, when you see a dog tied to a pole outside a restaurant or something, it doesn't mean that the dog is being pressured to strip by its owners. You don't have to rescue them or help them in any way. On some occasions, you'll find that they are actually being pressured to strip. In that case, you should leave them a couple dollars or something, because they're doing some decent work there.

In the big city, when you bump into people on accident, they will get mad and ask you what your problem is. Best course of action is to be honest, because this city is real and it can handle the hard, cold truth. You can say "My problem is that I think I was never really as nice to my parents as I should've been, considering the immense sacrifices they made for me. Sorry 'bout it!" and walk off gripping your rusted, manly wrench tighter than ever.

So like I said kid, this city is bigger and scarier than anything you've experienced. I don't know if you're ready but there's only one way to find out. Good luck and when you're all settled in with work and your apartment and whatnot, let me know if you want to hang or grab a coffee or something. A big city coffee. **B**

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