

Moving to NYC, Chapter 3: Harold and Kumar Go To Plainsboro, When Harry Met Veronica

by Seth Baum

Kim & Anna,

I was not expecting to sleep in a New Jersey suburb tonight. Do with this as you see fit. I will hopefully write chapters 1, 2, and 4 soon.

-Seth

As nice of a thought as it was to move to NYC via Chinatown bus, it just became a lot simpler to catch a ride there. Enter Rohit ("Ro"). He responded to several Craigslist rideshare posts; I was the first to respond back and so we stuck together. He was in Boston for two days looking at housing and wanted to get some extra cash for the ride back. He swung by in his circa 1993 Dodge Caravan around 4:00 pm on Wednesday, August 31, 8 hours before I was required to vacate 11 Mark St #2. I was all packed up and ready to go. So far so good.

After we made our first wrong turn, missing 90 West from 128 North, I made some comment like "At least we're not going on some Harold and Kumar-style adventure." Little did I know.

Ro would definitely be Kumar. Though he lacks Kumar's signature freewheeling spirit, he does have Kumar's rapid-fire conversation style, plus is the son of traditional Indian parents, was the one driving the car, and is even balancing his time off after undergrad with his plans for med school. Which makes me Harold. Though not Asian, I have been struggling to stand up for myself professionally and share Harold's timidity with the women.

Little did I know.

Harold and Kumar needed to get to While Castle, but faced some surprising challenges along the way, only to make it there at the last minute. It turns out Ro needed to get back to his parents' home before midnight for an important religious ritual. Several wrong turns later, we found ourselves lost on

Long Island with enough time to drop myself and my stuff off or make it back to Ro's home on time, but not both. Showing the new-found resolve and adventurousness of a true Harold, I told Ro, "Listen, the only important thing here is that you get home on time. I have nothing to do tomorrow. Let's go."

Incidentally, that home was in Plainsboro, New Jersey, near Princeton, meaning we followed some of the same paths as did Harold and Kumar on their own fateful night.

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Fortunately, Veronica, who's apparently not high, like, 24/7, has been cool with the whole process. Her bicycle's spooning up against mine in the back of Kumar's soccer mom-mobile. She needs to meet up with us sometime to get it. First we tell her to meet us where I'm dropping off my stuff in Brooklyn. Then we tell her OK, we'll be there in 20 minutes, but Ro might not be there because he's racing against the clock, so you'll have to pay me for it and I'll get the money to Ro. Finally we break it to her that, Uh, sorry, we're not going to be there until tomorrow. All she says is: "Well, I wasn't planning on riding my bike for the next day or two anyways." Which is very admirable of her, but can someone really go two days without riding a bicycle?

During the second or third frantic conversation with her I figured out that this is the same Veronica that I almost ended sharing a ride down to NYC with yesterday. I guess it's a small world within the Craigslist rideshare from Boston to NYC this week after all. After sharing a vehicle on our move to NYC, we would then remain friends over the years and finally fall in love several decades later, just like in *When Harry Met Sally*. Harry is, of course, short for Harold. **WU**

Seth Baum sent us this email, one late-summer night.