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Positive Policing

Harassed on a Train, Treated with Respect by Police

by Terri Anne Walker

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Last Saturday I was returning to Manchester from Altrincham after my monthly laser treatment. I boarded the 14:15 Metro

to Manchester and suddenly realised that Manchester United were at home and the train was full of football supporters. Everything went well for a while but eventually I was "read" by a small group (5) who proceeded to announce to everyone "We've got a trannie on board". At this point two people spoke up and said "leave her alone, she is probably just going to the Village". This seemed to calm them down.

The Manchester police officers were no less courteous, again I was treated with respect.

However as they were leaving the tram at Old Trafford three of them decided to give me a leaving present, a punch to the stomach and as I folded up a kick to the head (badly bruised jaw) and several kicks and punches to the rest of my lower body. As I was lying there the two people who had spoken out for me walked straight up to the police officers on the station and pointed out the lads telling them what had gone on.

The police immediately arrested the group and helped me from the tram. Then came an even nicer surprise, they took me to the hospital where the staff treated me with total respect (I was "Miss Walker" throughout and was there anything they could do over and above, what was being done already).

The Manchester police officers were no less courteous, again I was treated with respect. Indeed the lads who had attacked me were immediately charged so I was told and after the hospital released me I was driven to the station to make a statement. I expected at the least a chilly reception at the police station. What a surprise I was in for.

Every officer I met was polite and treated me with respect. Nothing it seemed was too much trouble for "Miss Walker". Now some people may say that they were being political, but I was there and the atmosphere was more one of concern than one of "I'll pretend" if you see what I mean.

Not only that but they phoned Melanie for me (I couldn't speak) and arranged for Mel to be taken to Birmingham New Street Station to meet me off the train. Then they arranged transport to Manchester Piccadilly Station for me so that I could catch the next train.

The two people who stood up for me and helped the police were both Manchester United fans too and because of their intervention missed the game. I am currently writing to Manchester United to see if I can arrange something special for them from the club, as without them the jobs would have got away with everything. I will let you know the outcome of both the court case and the Manchester United letter just as soon as I have any info. I would like to say a very big thank you to the true Manchester United fans, Manchester Constabulary, and Manchester's hospital staff. They made a hurt and frightened girl feel safe and welcome in what seemed at the time an unfriendly world.

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