



The New York Times <http://nyti.ms/1QhfZ9i>

N.Y. / REGION

Fighting Fear With Nursery School Songs

Metropolitan Diary

By DANI SCHULKIN DEC. 14, 2015

Dear Diary:

It happened less than 40 hours after the Paris attacks and, at the time, I was still nervous about taking the subway.

“The wheels on the bus go round and round,” murmured a little girl sitting next to me on the train. She was dutifully practicing her nursery school songs, much to the amusement of the entire subway car. It was your standard New York City mix of people, languages, accents and smells. But we were all mesmerized by a little girl innocently practicing her ABCs.

Then she started to sing a classic: “If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands...clap! clap!” Without hesitation, we — the random New York City subway car passengers — all joined in for the chorus, dutifully clapping and stomping at the behest of our conductor.

She was so tickled she almost cried. But she giggled her way to the grand finale: “If you’re happy and you know it and you really want to show it/ If you’re happy and you know it, shout Hurray.” And we bellowed, “Hurray!”

As she exited, we eyed each other awkwardly with smiles still plastered to our faces. Though our leader was lost, our moment of solidarity lingered.

Read all recent entries and our submissions guidelines. Reach us via email diary@nytimes.com or follow @NYTMetro on Twitter using the hashtag #MetDiary.