

# THE DUBE TRAIN BY CAN THEMBA

## 1. Summary



The narrator is at Dube Station in Soweto on a cold Monday morning, waiting for the train to Johannesburg. All his descriptions of the station and people emphasise his depression, which he feels is shared by all the people around him.

When he gets onto the train he sits opposite a huge man. When the train gets to Pheleni Station a young woman enters the carriage and sits next to the narrator. Soon afterwards a tsotzi jumps onto the train and begins verbally harassing the girl. When the girl reaches her stop and wants to get off the train the tsotzi prevents her and slaps her. She tries to get away from him by jumping over the narrator but the tsotzi follows her.

No one dares to say anything to stop the tsotzi, until an older woman starts shouting at the men and calling them cowards. This causes the tsotzi to swear at the woman. This angers the huge man sitting opposite the narrator and he gets up and moves towards the tsotzi.

The tsotzi pulls out a knife and cuts the big man's chest and arms. The big man is enraged and, in spite of his injuries, he grabs the tsotzi and lifts him up. He throws him out of the train window.

Everyone is shocked, but the incident soon becomes just another event on the morning Dube train.

## 2. Title

The title focuses on the train journey rather than on any characters in the story. The writer intends us to see the train journey as a comment on the lives people experience. Even when bad things happen people just accept them. The incident on the train happens to people no one knows or is concerned about. It soon becomes:

Just an incident in the morning Dube train.



## 3. Themes

The main themes of this story are:

- Violence, crime and racism in the townships; and



# The Dube Train

**Clemens Wendtner**

## **The Dube Train:**

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