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NEW YORK



## City Room

Blogging From the Five Boroughs

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### A City Divided by a Beak

BY ALISON GRAMBS JULY 3, 2012 8:10 AM 12

Dear Diary:

Third Avenue bus pulled over by frantic man on street. Explains he must retrieve friend's escaped pet bird from roof of bus.

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Bird Sitter begs Alarmed Driver to let him climb on top of bus to rescue pet. Driver says no, too dangerous.

Bird Sitter steps in front of bus defiantly. Bus cannot move. Bird Sitter shouts, "That bird must be saved!" Peering out the window from my seat, I am inspired. Lone man staring down city bus — an ornithological Tiananmen Square.

Passengers split into two factions: those on Team Bird — MUST SAVE BIRD! — and those on Team Gripe — BIRD MUST DIE SO BUS CAN GET MOVING!

I join Team Bird out on the street. Offer Bird Sitter my umbrella. Alarmed Driver calls dispatch for advice. Crowd of passers-by gathers around bus to assist Bird Sitter as Freaked Out Bird stares down from roof.

Local Shopkeeper provides ladder and broom. Stranger and I steady ladder as Bird Sitter ascends side of bus. Freaked Out Bird flutters just out of reach. Repeatedly.

Bird Sitter begins cursing all things feathered. Freaked Out Bird feels ashamed. Flies off bus and onto nearby building fire escape. Relieved crowd disperses.

What will become of the winged thing? And did it have a MetroCard?

Back on bus. I feel smug. Team Bird people cheer; Team Gripe people gripe.

Suddenly, at front of bus, a third type of New Yorker emerges: Team Driver. Folks who fear for Alarmed Driver's now-jeopardized job. Not his fault that bus was brutally violated by a six-inch bird! They will testify on his behalf! Alarmed Driver appreciates that. I am ashamed. Had not thought of Alarmed Driver's awkward position during bird mutiny.

Three types of New Yorkers, divided by a beak. Did I pick the right team?

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