Twitter Thread by Robbie ■■



Robbie ■■
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Well that didn't take long. We decided to take a trip on Amtrak with the kids for spring break. 9 hours into a pleasant ride, a man was suddenly standing next to me, shouting across me at my 6yo son, "Remember what I told you. They stole you. They're pedophiles." ■

I stood between the stranger and my son, whose life has already been so hard, who carries traumas larger than his whole small, fierce frame. I was immovable. "Get away from my family." [2/10]

"Family!? That's not a family! You're rapists. You steal black & Asian kids." My son and my 5yo daughter were both now openly crying, petrified. He yelled right at them, unmoved: "These guys aren't natural. Homosexuals are an abomination. They steal and rape kids." [3/10]

It was suddenly no longer an absurd, abstract attack in an online comments section or a distant legislative session. These horrors were being screamed @ my sweet bewildered son, who's worked so hard to process his grief & control his feelings, who only wants love & safety. [4/10]

I grabbed the kids and moved them to another car while my ferocious husband went into papa bear mode and shouted the man away from us. Eventually the conductor arrived and the man lost his focus on us. [5/10]

The kids cried for almost an hour. We got cookies & processed their emotions while the train waited at a stop for the police. They wanted to be away from windows so they wouldn't see him again. They wanted to practice screaming loud enough for help to come. I want to scream too.

This man was clearly angry at an unjust world; we have that in common. He's clearly not receiving the resources he needs. We've dealt with this brand of terrifying homophobic stranger before with our son. But "pedophiles" and "rapists" were new in the mix, at least out loud. 7/10

We all know where that comes from. So thanks to Fox & Murdoch, JK Rowling & Marjorie Taylor Green, to the senators & priests & everyone else who harms kids & thinks it's politically expedient to project onto gentle families like mine to stir up their lucrative culture war. [8/10]

I asked my son if he'd seen the man before. He said the man had confronted him when we let him go to the bathroom alone, which he'd been so proud to do @ 1st but too afraid to do again after. Yet *we're* the groomers. ■ I'm livid & ashamed that I didn't notice something was up.

They're asleep now. They asked if we'll see that man again & I said probably not him, but men just like him. But we'll be stronger each time. And most people aren't like that guy. I hope this was true. Please help us protect our families, friends. We feel so outnumbered & tired■

To be clear, as much as we need people standing up for us in such moments of confrontation, we need allies to shut down this rhetoric everywhere it rears its ugly head anywhere, especially when we're not there. Don't vote for them or support their art or avoid confrontation.