

Charles Bernstein / MR. FANELLI

Dear Mr. Fanelli,

I saw your picture
in the 79th street
station. You said
you'd be interested
in any comments I
might have on the
condition of the
station. Mr. Fanelli,
there is a lot of
debris in the 79th street
station that makes it
unpleasant to wait in
for more than a few
minutes. The station
could use a paint
job and maybe
new speakers so you
could understand
the delay announcements
that are always being
broadcast. Mr.
Fanelli — there are
a lot of people sleeping
in the 79th street station
& it makes me sad
to think they have no
home to go to. Mr.
Fanelli, do you think
you could find a more
comfortable place for them
to rest? It's pretty noisy

in the subway, especially with
all those express trains
hurtling through every
few minutes, anyway when the
trains are in service,
I have to admit, Mr. Fanelli, I
think the 79th street station's
in pretty bad shape
& sometimes at night
as I toss in my bed
I think the world's
not doing too good
either, & I
wonder what's going
to happen, where we're
headed, if we're
headed anywhere, if
we even have heads. Mr.
Fanelli, do you think if
we could just start
with the 79th street
station & do what
we could with that
then maybe we could,
you know, I guess, move
on from there? Mr.
Fanelli, when I saw your
picture & the sign
asking for suggestions
I thought, if
you really wanted to
get to the bottom
of what's wrong then

maybe it was my job
to write you: Maybe
you've never been inside
the 79th street station
because you're so busy
managing the 72nd street
& 66th street stations,
maybe you don't know
the problems we have
at 79th — I mean the
dirt & frequent
delays & the feeling of
total misery that
pervades the place. Mr.
Fanelli, are you reading
this far in the letter
or do you get so
many letters every day
that you don't have
time to give each
one the close attention
it desires? Or am I
the only person who's
taken up your invitation
to get in touch &
you just don't have enough
experience to know how to
respond? I'm sorry
I can't get your attention
Mr. Fanelli because I really
believe if you ask
for comments then you
ought to be willing

to act on them — even
if ought is too
big a word to throw
around at this point.

Mr. Fanelli

I hope you won't
think I'm rude
if I ask you a
personal question. Do
you get out of the
office much?

Do you go to the movies
or do you prefer
sports — or maybe
quiet evenings at a
local restaurant? Do
you read much, Mr. Fanelli?

I don't mean just
Gibbons and like
that, but philosophy —
have you read much
Hannah Arendt or
do you prefer
a more ideological
perspective?

I think if I understood
where you're coming from,
Mr. Fanelli, I could
write to you more cogently,
more persuasively. Mr.
Fanelli, do you get out
of the city at all — I
mean like up to Bear

Mountain or out to
Montauk? I mean do you
notice how unpleasant
the air is in the 79th
street station — that we
could use some cooling
or air-filtering system
down there? Mr.
Fanelli, do you think
it's possible we
could get together
and talk about
these things in
person? There are
a few other points
I'd like to go over
with you if I could
get the chance. Things
I'd like to talk to
you about but that
I'd be reluctant to
put down on paper.
Mr. Fanelli, I haven't
been feeling very good
lately and I thought
meeting with you face
to face might change
my mood, might put
me into a new frame
of mind. Maybe we
could have lunch?
Or maybe after work?
Think about it, Mr.
Fanelli.