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I want to feel safe when I leave my house to go anywhere. There were two different incidents that each man on his bike tried to follow me. The first incident happened a few winters back. I was walking down heading to 16th and Locust Street to meet with a friend. I'm minding my business and suddenly I saw this one guy that looks at me while riding by. Next he rode near me asking a round of twenty questions. A few I remember was „how old are you“, „what's your name“, and „can I have your number“. I kept replying with „I don't give that information out“. My tone and body language screamed „not interested“ yet he kept on following me for a good part of the block before Locust Street. I was annoyed yet nervous. I said to myself „Gods if he don't leave me the hell alone, I'm going to push him in the street“. This guy's phone rang and after a few minutes, he turned around and left. I was so relieved that I wanted to hug someone.

The second incident happened this past summer during the daytime. My mom asked me to run up the street to the store. When I went out the front door and the parking lot gate of my apartment, an older guy saw me and rode onto the sidewalk next to me. I didn't know that until he said hi which caught me off guard. I said hi back to be polite while not looking at him. He asked me my name and what I was doing. I gave him a fake name and said an errand. I noticed every time I took a step, he kept up with me. I stopped almost near the door of the second apartment building, and looked at him. He said he was wondering if we should get to know each other. I said no while looking very hard, without emotion, at him. After a few seconds he said „see you around“ and rode off. I was angry more than scared. I told my mom what happened, and she gave me a look that said „so“.

These may seem to be nothing. But when I put them into perspective, my safety could have been jeopardized. That's the main lesson people need to be educated more about street harassment. I, as a woman of color, could have been harmed. Harmed because I as a female have no rights to say no to any male nor tell them to step off. These two guys could choose to follow me to my destination(s), and try to keep me separated from other people. I could have been hit, held by weapon point, called a lot of insults, and so forth. A simple „no“ would have pissed certain guys off thus they could have used any type of these harassments, verbal and/or physical, on me. It's a concern that I have to worry about my safety every time I take a step out of my home. It became a point that I need to buy and carry a pocket knife with me at all times since street harassment can appear at anytime.