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Fade to Black

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Fade To Black

run, run, run, run, runaway . . . Fade to black . . The song ends, so we fade to black. Simple concept. Have you ever wondered how sound fades to black? That's how television shows end too. Simple. "And fade to black." You shut the iris, close out the picture of life. So in the end . . . fade to black . . .

* * *

My walkman's batteries are dying—going quickly. How much longer do I have to sit and wait? My bus should have been here nearly an hour ago. The terminal is awfully lonely at this time of night . . .

Damn it! C'mon. If these batteries go, here I sit in silence . . . Do you realize everything echoes, echoes, echoes in the silence, silence, silence . . . I can't stand this slow version of Hoooooteeeee
Caaaaaliiiiiifooooorniaaaa Off. Click! Then God said, "Let there be silence." I think I heard footsteps. (Or is that my own feet tip-tapping?) Oh, they echo (echo, echo) in the silence (silence, silence). . . No one's coming. Some damn imagination. In the silence, si . . . Yeah, we get the picture. It's my heart beat. Brain, ears, working overtime tonight . . .

Could I have missed the last bus out? . . .Gotta get outta here. Today, people today . . .

My butt's numb. Numb and dirty, dirty and numb . . . I'd get up, but then my footsteps would echo (echo, echo). I'll sit. Who cares? Could these jeans get any more dirt on them, any more smells ground in? City smells. Tried to count 'em today, those lovely city smells. I sorta lost track. They were just, smells . . . Lotsa people, and smells. I'll bet my bus smells too . . . Oh well . . . Dirt is dirt. Mom didn't want me out in these pants anyway. Ha! She says, "They make us look like we don't clothe you, like you're an orphan." Yeah, Mom. Poverty stricken, that's us. We're just suffocated and starved by the hardships of poverty. Poor us . . .

* * *

What ho! Methinks I hear a solitary snore. Breaks the silence . . . Not alone

—Move on you bum.

A voice cries out. Muffled groan. Rap-tap-tapping (rap-tap-tap) on a bench. Cop waking a bum not supposed to be here . . . dirtying up the storefronts.

—outside with you . . .

. . . a humble sh-sh-shuffle echoes through the terminal . . . rattle, clatter of coins—the beggar's creed . . . closer . . . nearer . . . rounding the bend

A face . . . she hunches over, staring at her shuffling feet, willing them to move. Bundled in rags, dirt ground in—her matted hair, streaked legs, stained hands. The dirt even has tinted her dull, jaundiced eyes . . . no . . . misery fills and taints the color She looks up and smiles—brown-lipped, half-toothed smile . . . Draws nearer, lethargically dragging a foot around the corner . . . Rattle, clinck . . . —Sssspare shum change, honey?

Sl-eeping, go away. I'm sleeping. Silence. I hear silence. Close my eyes, shut the iris, and . . . Okay, fade to black . . .

Gia Medeiros
WC '94