

Story for performance #1000
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Source: AFP, 'Turkey's ruling party hits back at bid to ban it', *Sydney Morning Herald online*, 16/03/08.

Tags: [sound](#), [music](#), [celebrations](#)

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Suddenly, there she is in a very strange place at nightfall. Sounds are magnified as if to offset the opaque blackness of the night; distant shouts and roars from the desert highway. The tension of the journey becomes paralysing so that she feels unable to move or act, overcome with the enormity of where she is, the insecurity of her position outside the tourist routes. The roaring she hears is not just in her head, but seems to come like a dark blur from the desert wind, or from within the high walls on either side of the road.

So, she takes out her black-box recording device and then plugs in a microphone. When she is comfortable in her stance, she presses the record button and holds the microphone aloft. Into the air.

If you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully, you will wake out of deep slumber and flip on a light switch.

You will see lights change and the show will begin.

You will hear the sounds of an enthusiastic party drifting across the water.

You will hear guitar and pipe music drifting through your dreams.

If you listen very carefully you will hear a sort of folk tune, remembering only this line 'Your fate is sealed, the love of my life; seek to find, what is hidden in the scrub...'

If you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully you will hear the heartbeats of some holographic music that is raining down in turrets. Endless, aimless avalanches of vibration burrowing deep into your electrified ears...

If you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully you will hear the sounds of two men colliding and there will be shouts and screams and an eruption of senseless violence.

Beethoven's piano sonata in E flat major.

You will hear that mother reading bad romance novels, and that father permanently tuning into action movies.

You will hear loud voices in the next room as those parents argue about something, probably her.

If you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully you will hear him slam his fist on the upper register of the keyboard, mashing the white keys, making a horrible, high-pitched, out-of-tune mess.

You will hear him breathing.

You will be struck, as always, by how the darkness seems alive and breathing, deep and invasive, which is why you sometimes sit with your eyes closed instead.

You will hear some voices say: Hello. How are you? Repeated six times. Ad nauseum.

Listening very carefully you will hear a blaring sextet in a low-key jazz bar in Redfern.

You will hear him say: She stole my riff, man. And I want it back. Don't tell me it's everybody's now. I can't even play that riff the same. It used to be pure. Now it's screwed.

You will hear songs from the one and only recording of this long-lost band of displaced men, which now

resides in the Halls of Obscurity.

If you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully you will be immersed in a party for the vocal chords, exercises in schizophonics.

Listening, you will find yourself in a place where the full force of the city noise will hit you with its ringing punch.

You will hear a pair of flanges, a loop trio and a lone distortion pedal.

You will hear his beloved recordings of Italian opera.

An AM radio at full volume.

It is these moments of unsilence that captivate you the most.

You will think, whatever happens, on windy nights, it always howls.

If you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully you will hear bird noises in the morning. You can't always get your favourite radio station. A distant chainsaw is like music. A chamber quartet plays a piece by Handel, something that seems to go too fast.

You will hear martial drums and static: on hold until the queue mambos forward. Piano and French horn. Crescendo. Small grainy gap. Beautiful bursts of static.

They will ask: 'Why not learn a useful language like Spanish or Mandarin Chinese—languages that will help you communicate in the future.'

You will hear a vivid tune, a country lament and the saddest song that goes something like... 'You packed your things in a cardboard case. You burned yourself with a cigarette. Move, if you think it's too slow. Move, if you think it's too slow-oh-oh-oh-eeee'

For the first time secrets breathe since you set to work forgetting them.

You will hear yourself say: 'It's true I've been surrounded by death lately.'

If you listen very carefully you will wonder if there might be ghosts?

But if you put on the headphones now and listen very carefully you will decipher some semblance of tunefulness.

Headphones on, listening very carefully you hear only this: something about the darkness tuning in to the frequency of your heart. In this dim silence you will hear your true name.

Not ghosts.

Not afraid.

No light to see by.

Just sounds.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Jason Sweeney from stories #19 Ross Murray, #185 Anne Brennan, #389 Caitlin Newton-Broad, #410 Diana Wood Conroy, #438 Gregory Pryor, #587 Nigel Kellaway, #602 Jacqui Shine, #824 Cathy Naden, #827 Daniel Gosling, #869 Brent Clough, #871 Margaret Trail, #872 Paul Buck, #898 John O'Brien, #908 Tim Wright, #920 Christof Migone, #925 Helen Grace, #936 Sam Grunhard, #950 Luke Carman, #980 Kate Richards and #996 Deborah Levy.