

Sounds in the Smoke

by Ruby

I am the city, I am the ghosts of the city, and we are legion for we are many. But we are not to be feared, not even on this night. For we are forever watching the living come and go, and our lot is not to be pitied, for especially on this night the songs of the city float down to us...

In a luxurious apartment facing a big green park, "*Goodnight Moon*" by Shvaree plays out of expensive stereo speakers. A woman finishes getting ready, feeling like she's sneaking around to meet her lover at a smoky bar...

Meanwhile, far beneath her feet in a kingdom of stone, "*Thirteen Women*" by Bill Haley and his Comets is one of the licorice black records on her lover's silver jukebox. He smiles as puts on the finishing touches to his outfit...

As the lovers walk these city streets, Tom Waits' "*Whistling Past The Graveyard*" spills out a storefront they pass. It is a scratchy, rusty pop bop perfect for exploring the winding blocks of a metropolis at night. The man thinks of his brother, Devin, who listens to a lot of Waits on beat up cassettes in even more beat up cars...

In the place of rock walls and rivers the man left, Halloween is carved pumpkins and ghost stories told around a fire. Sometimes they're even sung, like Pentangle's "*House Carpenter*." And then the children ask to hear the tale of John and Diedre one more time...

In the city where the woman lives, there is a party a young man called Brian is throwing for teenagers from both worlds. A young woman called Brooke and he share a sweetly awkward slow dance to "*Forever Autumn*" by Jeff Wayne. They are young yet and the piercing longing of the tune doesn't reach them yet...

And now the sun returns and the sweet pain of all lovely evenings having to come to an end. A parting song with "*Goodbye Joe*" by Laura Nyro. Wistful and bittersweet, learning how to measure time, and love another way.