

The Call

by Alfred Lau

I strolled mindlessly along the concrete pavement, the cool breeze carrying the characteristic scent of the night. I stared at the path ahead, but not really looking. My legs continued their automated operations. I didn't know where I was going, but that was all right - I didn't want to go anywhere. I just wanted to walk.

The crowd around me was immense. They were all going somewhere, all with their individual destination. Compared to them, I felt out of place. I felt strangely detached. How was it possible for me to feel so alone when the world was all around me?

I felt the vibrations of my phone in my jeans' pocket, but I ignored it. I knew what the call was about. I'd already received the first, and that was enough.

I continued wandering around the streets, and the crowd around me continued to change faces and expressions. A sudden sense of fatigue overwhelmed me and I squatted down in the middle of the street.

Then I cried.

That night, I squatted down in the middle of the world and sobbed violently. That night, I was lost in the crowd, and something inside me died. That night, I received the first call of the day, and ignored the rest.

There were some singing in the background. I couldn't see, but I knew there was someone singing. Maybe a busker, maybe an angel. I continued crying and crying and crying. The world moved on around me.

Just a mere two hours ago, I received a call.

