

City

by Cerrid Wynn

Lorelei was bombarded constantly with it. She began to hate the city. She couldn't drive with her windows open, or walk out of the grocery store without someone's car blaring unnecessarily loud Bass. Constant chatter surrounded her, loud engines, barking dogs, even her own mutts were annoying barkers.

At work there was a constant barrage of ringing telephones, conversations to do with work and general gossip. There were the punctuating taps on keyboards, the hum of fluorescent lights and computers, and the sounds of copiers and printers working at the bidding of all the people in the large open space.

At home the children were a constant bundle of noise, screaming, conversation, arguing. Televisions were always blaring, or tinny radios. People carelessly subjected her to their noise, and she detested them for it. She would put in her ear buds and blare her own music just to drown it all out, fighting fire with fire, she supposed. But at least she didn't discourteously subject anyone else to it.

Lorelei longed for the mountain she grew up on, where all you could hear was the wind. Some nights when the wind blew and cancelled out the city noises, she could almost imagine she was there again, until the kids began to argue. When they did, she began to sing, loud and off-key, smiling to herself as they clapped their hands over their ears and complained of her caterwauling. She knew the neighbors could hear it too, and even the dogs gave her disapproving looks. Revenge could be so sweet. Sometimes it earned her a few moments of peace. Some days a few brief moments were worth the noisy karma.

