

# The Sound of Human Lives

*by* Thomas Shaggy

The room smelled of an old rank basement. Boys and girls of all ages crowded the stage. The room was dark with only a few lights that hung from above keeping the crowd dark and silhouetting Chris on drums. The maze of cords, pedals and amps lined the stage; a jungle setting in the eyes of the musician. Chris, with his eyes closed, began to tap lightly on the bass drum and slowly jams to his own beat. The condensation dripped from a pipe above and onto his weathered snare. He beat down on it slowly.

The crowd's eyes shut and all was quiet as they took in the beat.

Brian stepped forward. His keys jingle from his belt as he scratched his beard. With a final tune of his guitar he plucks a few strings and follows the drummers lead. Tilting his head back he closed his eyes, feeling the music take him over. The lighters began to click on as the rest of the band stepped forward onto the stage. Alex grabbed the mic and swung it by the cord as if to hypnotize all that watched. Turning to smile at his band mates, he tapped his foot gently on the ground and looked towards Travis. His head hangs over his guitar and the sweat dripped from his brow and onto the custom fret board. His finger tips gently gliding from string to string creating simple melodies that grew louder and louder. His cigarette stuck in the end of his guitar exhausted fumes into the cool damp air, he pulled the cigarette from the strings and slowly dragged on it with one eye open.

Jim signaled to the crowd. Clap....Clap....Clap, they all joined in while he plucked his bass. No one was watching anymore, they were all feeling the music; it meant something different to them all. The condensation from the musty basement venue covered everything. Everything was in slow motion. The symbols shook with beads of water and the sweat ran like water from the faces of them

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all. The lights began to change color like a beating heart. The basement had come to life. Whatever life was, the crowd created the energy and the band fed them. Some of them turned to one another holding onto another for an instant as if it were some sort of erotic experience. Some of them remembering all the hate they had stored up inside, but the moral of the story was they were here to release that energy.

Camera's flashed, young girls screamed and the blood pumped through their veins. It coursed through the bands veins like an out of control locomotive. They wouldn't be stopped. They wiped the sweat from their brow, tuned their guitars for the last time. Time stood still for a few moments as the pick struck the last few strings. The crowd grabbed one last breath of air as the drums rolled through like a loud crack of thunder and the guitar's shrieked to open the first song. The crowd hit the stage like a tidal wave. Alex reached for the crowd and screamed, everyone heard it differently. In that moment, they heard the sounds of their own waking lives.

