

# The Runaway Train

*by* Tianna Ellis

Me? I was a runaway.

The name sounded so good in my head.

Runaway.

The name itself gave me a reason.

Within it lies the whole meaning.

It gave me something to run away from by itself, concealing a hidden truth.

Hidden from listeners, on-lookers and passers-by.

And, of course, from me.

At the start of a particularly secret night, I stole away.

Where?

The path told me as I followed it.

The dot of the road on the horizon told me of such places.

The places that I would go.

With no train to take me.

I stood on the platform, staring blankly at the track.

I told him I would wait.

“Wait? For what?”

What indeed.

It was so cold, but I wasn't shivering.

I couldn't be moved.

I paced up the track.

If they would not give me a train, I would make a train of my own.

Yes, there it was.

White. White as stars.

And a hundred times as fast.

I felt that it would speed me everywhere I chose.

Places I'd never seen.

Paris, Rome, Berlin...  
No, no.  
Beyond them.  
It would take me to the places beyond them.  
The places that only me, myself and I- yours truly- would know  
about.

Rubbish swirled in the breeze.  
The empty platform regarded me disbelievingly.  
"No," I told it. "I'm right. It's all true."  
It'll only be the Runaway Train for me.  
For me and a few others.  
All runaways like myself of course.  
No ticket.  
All you needed was time.  
And no sense of direction.  
Anyone with a destination in mind would be thrown off at the  
nearest stop.

Sleep caught me. But only for seconds.  
I woke up just in time.  
The Runaway Train stood on the track like a savior.  
It gleamed so finely in the moonlight that I turned to share my  
elation with the next passenger.  
But I smiled at air.  
No one but me.  
Well.  
That was okay.  
My dream could be just that-mine-for a while longer.

As I boarded the Runaway Train, daylight spread.  
A horizon all full of pinks and blues and possibilities.  
As I sat down, the white doors shut.  
"Next stop," The driver said. "The beginning of the road."

And, as we pulled away, I pressed my face against the frosted window just so I could see the platform and the station and the world disappearing fast behind.

