

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE, HEAR AND FEEL AS YOU BOARD A CROWDED BUS



Skrrrt.

I glanced up from where I sat, shrouded in the dim streetlamps flickering between life and death on the wooden bench, just in time to catch the bus screeching to a halt. Hurriedly, I snatched at the notepad laid proudly on my lap bearing blossoming florals and hitched my backpack higher onto my shoulders as the bus doors widened with an exhausted sigh.

The crescent moon above me gleamed with a radiant shimmer as stars littered the horizon, a million sparkles occupying the dim twilight. Houses surrounding the bus stop snoozed on under the moon's surveillance, basking in rare tranquillity.

However, on the bus... oh boy, I had taken my peace for granted.

As I stepped foot onto the bus's ledge, a scent concoction unfurled itself and engulfed me whole, invading my nostrils with what ranged from dollar-store body mist and luxury perfumes to musky, sweat-driven smells. I collided straight into a broad-backed man with the bold letters "TXT FOR LIFE" etched across his shirt, who began shuffling away from the doors, embarrassment painted on his face. It took a split second after I clumsily made my way into a gap before the bus squeaked shut and zoomed off into the distance. Only then did I lift my head to scan the surroundings, my vision taken up by neon light sticks and a wild assortment of people hopping excitedly to a series of catchy songs blasting on full volume to my right.

I attempted to latch onto my backpack, arms wrapped around the rumpled figure and clutching the keychains, holding on for dear life to minimise space, but was immediately backed into a corner by the crowd of concert-goers, jostling around and dispersing like rogue bouncy balls.

In front of me, a pit had formed and was screaming the lyrics along to some rock song while others waved their hands to the booming beats vibrating through the bus. Not even my noise-cancelling earphones blocked out the cacophony brewing before me - instead, they nearly went flying as one girl clad in whites and blues accidentally shoved me, releasing a string of rushed apologies in my direction while I stood dumbfounded, the other earbud hanging on loosely.

Yet it didn't look as if I was the only outcast in the chaos: a couple sitting hand in hand exchanged nervous looks that spelt, "What's going on?" while a man in the far back stood stoic-faced, glaring at anyone who clashed near his vicinity. An elderly woman to my left shook her head in obvious displeasure, lips pursed and eyes narrowed, muttering under her breath as the crowd cheered and chanted an indecipherable language, drowning out the cries of a stressed bus assistant who shook his hands around widely, signalling "STOP!"

I closed my eyes against the tiny bus nook, earphones shoved in sloppily as I tried tuning out the noise with the calming drip-drops of faux evening rain. With my hands clutching the tough fabric and grasping my notepad, I silently prayed to get home safely under ragged breathing as the vehicle continued to roll onwards.



Vinser

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GRADE 10