



SÄNDNINGSDATUM: 2012-11-17
PRODUCENT: Keith Foster

Script and Word list

Signature

Modern Ghost Stories: Taking the bus

Lisha had never run away before, but this time she had to. Life was so boring in the village, nothing ever happened there, and her parents just wanted her to work at home, cooking and washing. They didn't even think she should go to school. She didn't want to stay home all her life. Once, an old man in the village had talked about life in the big city, and she wanted to see that for herself.

So she ran away. She left school early and walked and walked to the next village. It was a long walk, it took Lisha almost two hours, and even when she had come most of the way she couldn't stop looking over her shoulder to see if anyone was chasing her. But she knew the rain would soon come and wash away all her footprints. She was more worried that someone had seen her leave and would tell her family.

But now she had arrived at the edge of the next village, and with luck she would soon be so far away that no-one would find her. She walked slowly, avoiding the goats and little children who played on the dry ground. Soon she found what she was looking for, a pole as tall as a grown man with an old metal sign on top. On the sign was painted the letter B. Lisha sat down to wait.

After what seemed like hours, Lisha heard the sound she had longed for. The coughing sound of a bus engine. She jumped to her feet and grabbed her bag. The old country bus, still brightly painted in red and green and yellow, came to a halt at the stop, and Lisha climbed on board. She was nervous as she handed the driver money for her ticket.

She'd done this only one time before, a year ago with her girl scout group on a visit to the big scout meet. Now she was alone, without her friends and no meeting to go to.

a village – *en by*

to chase – *att jaga*
a footprint – *ett fotavtryck*

to avoid – *att undvika*
a pole – *en stolpe*

coughing - *hostande*
an engine – *en motor*
to grab – *att ta tag*
brightly - *klart*



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The bus rolled along the stony, uneven roads, while Lisha sat in the middle seat, looking out of the window. At last she was on her way to the big city! She looked out at the countryside, the green bushes, the oxen pulling ploughs, the hawks flying high, searching for prey.

The sky grew dark and soon the clouds had swept over like a blanket, covering the countryside and the roads with heavy rain. The rain spat up from the stones by the road like bullets hitting a wall. Lisha moved back a little from the glass – this was not a good day to be out walking now!

She was dozing, almost dreaming, when the bus shuddered to a stop. Now came the hardest part of Lisha's voyage. She had arrived at the bus station, a huge hall bigger than any building she had ever seen, filled with crowds of shouting people, bus stop signs, stands selling food and drinks and loud, smelly, smoky buses that went all over the country. She remembered what the old man in the village had told her about the big city bus: "Take number 99. No other number. Only number 99."

As soon as Lisha stepped down into the bus station, the noise hit her like a blow. The shouts of the people, the roaring of engines and the slamming rain on the metal roof all made it difficult to think, let alone to talk. Nervously she began to push through the crowds, sliding between legs and suitcases as the grown-ups around her pushed and pulled. She didn't know where to go, where her bus stopped. All she knew was the number that an old man in the village had told her – 99.

She struggled through the forest of people, trying to see the numbers on the signs. Where was 99? She saw a few numbers - 30, 5, 70 - but none of them seemed to be the right place, none made any sense. She tried to stop a grown-up to ask for help, but no-one had time to look down at a little girl or listen to what she had to say.

Lisha was thrown around, from place to place, until she was quite dizzy. She held tightly onto her bag, hoping it would all stop, until suddenly everything went dark.

Lisha found herself lying face down on the floor. She seemed to be on the edge of the crowd now, in a dark corner of the big hall. She was

stony – *stenig*
uneven – *ojämn*

a plough – *en plog*
prey – *byte*

a blanket – *en filt*
to cover – *att täcka*

to doze – *att nicka till*
to shudder – *(här): att skaka*
a voyage – *en resa*

a stand – *ett stånd*

noise – *oväsen*
to roar – *att ryta*
to slam – *att smälla, slå*

a grown-up – *en vuxen*

to struggle – *att kämpa*

dizzy – *yr*



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lying next to a sign, and beside it was a bus. Looking up she saw the number on the sign... 99! She had found it! She dragged herself up, grabbed her bag and went through the open door into the bus. There was no driver sitting behind the wheel, so she went in.

It was dark in the bus, and quiet. As she walked down the aisle between the seats, Lisha glanced at the passengers. Over to her left was an old lady, all wrapped up in scarves and a coat, ahead of her a man in a hat and then a group of younger people. The lights were dim, so dim she couldn't quite see all their faces. They all seemed to be sitting in shadows.

Outside the crowds were still moving about, shouting to each other. Lisha couldn't hear them and didn't want to, so she sank down in her seat and pulled her scarf over her head. After a while the bus began to move, and it pulled away from the stop and drove out of the hall. Outside it was still dark as the heavy rain continued to fall.

Soon they had left the bus station, and the town, and were on their way to the big city. The rain flowed down over the windows, and the lights in the bus were so dim that Lisha could hardly see the other passengers. She couldn't see their faces, but they were all so quiet! So was the bus itself. The other bus had made so much noise, where was the engine on this one? She couldn't hear any motor noises at all, just the rain on the roof.

She began to daydream about what the old man had told her about the city - the sights, the temples, the boats on the river, the fire-dancers at the festivals, and Lisha had known at once that she wanted to see it all. To live among all the fun, the thrills, where everything was bigger, more exciting than her village would ever be! She smiled to herself.

But after a while, Lisha began to worry. Here she was sitting on the bus, it had come a long way, but no-one had asked for her ticket. What would they do if they found she didn't have one? Would they send for the police, or even send her home? Slowly she stretched and sat up. Not only was the bus so quiet, it wasn't shaking like the last one did.

to drag –
att släpa, röra sig långsamt

an aisle – *en mittgång*
to glance – *att snegla*

dim – *dunkel*

thrill – (*här*): *spänning*



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Lisha stood up. She started to walk towards the driver. She glanced at the passengers, but however hard she looked, she couldn't see their faces. They were like shadows. Lisha's tummy was slowly turning into ice and her legs were shaking as she came up to the driver.

"Excuse me," she said. "Should I pay for my ticket? This is bus number 99, to the city, isn't it?"

The driver, a big man in a white shirt and blue cap, turned to her. Under his cap, all she could see was shadow. Without a word, he pointed up above her shoulder, at the sign on the front window. Lisha turned to look. The sign said 66.

66! Of course, she had been lying down at the station, she must have seen the sign upside down!

She was about to tell the driver about her mistake, to ask him to take her back, when there came a huge screech from under the bus. There was a bang from somewhere, the driver wrenched the wheel to the right, and the silent bus was suddenly full of screams. Lisha felt her tummy rise to her chest as the bus began to fall, fall, fall into darkness.

A voice said, "Hello, hello! Are you all right?", and Lisha felt someone stroking her face. She opened her eyes, and saw that she was lying on the ground, with a group of people looking down at her with worried faces. She could see their faces! Above them was the roof of the bus hall – she was still there!

"You must have fainted," said the woman who was kneeling beside her. "There's so many people in here it's hard to breathe!"

"I, I was on a bus, bus number 66! But something happened..." Lisha was confused.

"Number 66?" said a man in a bus driver's uniform. "That doesn't go anymore. Not after it crashed last year, in the rains. Down into a river it went, and everyone on board was killed! You must have been dreaming. Where do you come from, little girl?" Lisha said the name of her village. "Well I think we should get you on the first bus going

a screech – *ett skrik, tjut*
to wrench – *att vrida, rycka*

tummy – *(sl.) mage*

to stroke – *att stryka*



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back there,” he said.

Lisha pictured the little house her family lived in, and she realised at that moment that nothing would make her happier.

This ghost story was written and read by Keith Foster. The sound engineers were Carl Nilsson and Christina Budde Roos and the music was by Nadine and Tanya Byrne. A UR production.

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