

It
Rasoul Ashtary
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I drift off in my seat on the Ringbahn S41. Somewhere in my dream, I step off at my destination station, and from the platform, I catch a glimpse of myself, head resting on the train window, still asleep. The train pulls away, and faintly, I hear the voices of the punks in the carriage, moving from one party to the next. But instead of their presence, only a thick fog fills the station. I start walking toward the exit, the voices trailing behind me. Somewhere, a drunk voice repeats the party's address over and over, trying to remember it, and soon the others join in, turning the address into a melodic loop, chanting along in harmony.

I step out of the station, feeling as if the only possible path leads directly to the party, drawn there by the echo of the address looping in my dream. Somehow, I arrive before the punks do, yet their arrival stretches into eternity. I'm stuck in this endless moment, standing outside the party's door, watching the Ringbahn in the distance, circling clockwise, grinding against the opposite S42 track endlessly, trying to look like a clock. But I know it's not a clock; it's just a looping cassette tape, trapped in the echo chamber of my dream, leading me to this door. Maybe I'm experiencing sleep paralysis—I turn my head, hoping to catch a glimpse of the paralysis demon.

Time is dispersed everywhere like fog, filling every corner. A fairy perches on a branch, signaling with clock-hand-shaped fingers to where the branch should be branching, marking a new path for the plant. This fairy had already let me off at my stop, at that branching point, breaking me free of the endless motion of the train. guess that's my paralysis demon, She sat at the point of a branch's split. Each clock hand was a branch, each branch a moment in time.

One of the punks coughs, and the others fall silent. The loop has cracked, the Ringbahn's cycle has halted. The fairy lays a clock hand on my shoulder, and I jolt awake. It was the hand of one of the punks. "Wake up," he says. "This is our stop; the address is close here."

Written by the artist