

Creative

End of the Line—A Play in One Act

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Abstract: In this short play, the playwright drew on her experience as a voiceover talent for bus transportation and Global Positioning Systems. The drama humanizes a voice we love to hate, and subsequently adds layers of back-story and meaning to a deceptively slight one-act, which begins in one reality, and ends in another.

Keywords: play; playwright; voiceover; drama; one-act

Character List:	BUS DRIVER, any age or race.
	BOY, any age or race. The tenor of the play changes according to the boy's age. Final casting decision is at the director's discretion.
	WOMAN, any age or race. Again, experimentation is encouraged.
	FEMALE VOICEOVER (VO), the voice of the bus.
Gender Breakdown:	1 boy 1 man 1 woman 1 female voiceover
Genre:	Drama
SETTING:	A metropolitan bus.
AT RISE:	BUS DRIVER comes to the end of the line, parks the bus. He notices a BOY sitting by himself.

DRIVER

Are you lost?

BOY

No, sir.

DRIVER

Is this your stop?

BOY

No, sir.

DRIVER

You realize we've reached the end of the line.

BOY

Yes, sir.

DRIVER

I don't start up again for another few minutes.

BOY

Yes, sir.

DRIVER

And then I just go back the way we came.

BOY

Yes, sir.

DRIVER

You're just going to sit here, then?

BOY

Yes, sir. If that's okay.

DRIVER

Okay by me.

BOY

Thank you.

DRIVER

I just saw you back here and wanted to make sure you were, you know...

BOY

I'm not lost.

DRIVER

Okay. Just checking.

A WOMAN gets on the bus.

DRIVER

You're welcome to sit, ma'am, but we don't get to moving for another few minutes yet.

WOMAN

Oh, I see. Can you turn the air on?

DRIVER

No, ma'am, I'm sorry. I gotta keep everything cut off until I'm back on line.

WOMAN

Oh, I see.

DRIVER

Yes, ma'am.

WOMAN

I'll just wait then.

DRIVER

Suit yourself.

SHE sits. DRIVER addresses BOY.

DRIVER

You gonna be all right, then?

BOY

Yes, thank you.

DRIVER

Okay. I'm right outside if you need me.

BOY

Um, there is one thing, actually.

DRIVER

What's that, son?

BOY

Can you make the bus talk?

DRIVER

Talk?

BOY

Yeah, you know.

DRIVER

Oh, you mean the GPS voice?

BOY

I don't know what you call it. The voice that says what the next street is.

DRIVER

Yeah, yeah. The GPS voice.

BOY

Can you play it?

DRIVER

Well, I have to switch the motor on to do that.

BOY stares.

DRIVER

I'm sorry, son.

BOY

Okay.

DRIVER

Like I told this lady, I can't run the air either, so...

BOY

Okay. I'll just wait.

DRIVER

Aw right. We'll be leaving here in a few minutes.

DRIVER leaves the bus. WOMAN turns to the boy.

WOMAN

I like the bus lady voice, too.

BOY

Yes, ma'am.

WOMAN

I don't see so good, so I like it she announces the next stop.

BOY

Yes, ma'am.

SHE unwraps a piece of gum.

WOMAN

Would you like a piece of gum?

BOY

No thank you.

WOMAN

I have more than one.

BOY

No thank you.

WOMAN busies herself with gum, purse, belongings.

WOMAN

Which one is your stop?

BOY

None.

WOMAN

None?

BOY

No, ma'am. I don't live on the bus route.

WOMAN

You don't?

BOY

Nuh uh.

WOMAN

Then why do you ride the bus?

BOY

Because it talks.

WOMAN

Ooooh, you like that it talks.

BOY

Yes ma'm. I like the voice.

WOMAN

It's nice, isn't it?

BOY

Yes, ma'am. It's my mother.

WOMAN

What's your mother, dear?

BOY

The voice.

WOMAN

You mean it sounds like your mother?

BOY

No ma'am. It's my mother.

WOMAN

The bus is your mother?

BOY

No ma'am. Just the voice.

WOMAN

Oh, I see.

BOY

She's dead.

WOMAN

Who's dead, dear?

BOY

My mother.

A beat.

WOMAN

I see. So you—

BOY

Ride the bus. Yes ma'am.

The driver gets on the bus.

DRIVER

Okie dokie. Back the way we came.

HE starts up the bus.

FEMALE VO

Welcome to the Greater Metro Transit System. Please have your Go Pass ready.

WOMAN

That's your mother?

BOY

She's not finished.

FEMALE VO

I love you, Reggie.

The BOY smiles at the bewildered woman. The bus pulls away.

END