

Title: Echoes in the closet

Soundtrack link: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ9rUzIMcZQ>

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About:

Echoes in the closet is a coming of age social justice fiction piece about teenage bisexuality in the late 1970s/ early 1970s and how a teenage couple hide their sexual orientation from their families (they are in the closet) they listen to Lady Gaga and other LGBTQI icons in a closet. When they are discovered doing so, their family try to separate them, leaving them with only the memories of their cherished songs as reminiscent echoes of their companionship.

Echoes in the closet:

We sat. We watched we listened to our usual Gaga soundtrack. I sighed at her, partly fatigued. but her exasperated expression with bushy furrowed brows, reminded me that I had no choice but to comply with her command. On the one hand, there was the booming music from Private Radio luring me towards more dancing giving me reason to ignore all else, on the other, an agitated and impatient mother who demanded obedience form her troublesome teenager. As I walked out of the mahogany closet as we tried on a few, not too many of course, sixties costumes. I began to feel an uncomfortable chill run down my spine, sourness towards the back of my throat, and my sweat sticking to the palms of my hands; I knew that tonight was not going be a night of eternal fun.

What are you both doing in the closet demanded my mother's voice. As we both, proud as two peacocks, adorned and donned our rainbow pinstriped dresses, mother demanded that we "remove that garbage at once".

I waited; I wept; I sank into the firm, solid passenger seat of the car. Ignition had turned on. Feet rooted firmly to the gas pedal of the car, mother drove us off onto her matriarchal world of ruling her daughter with an iron fist. To my surprise however, an ever-present silence during our journey home replaced what I'd assumed would be endless shouting, questioning, and lecturing on how a young girl like myself should not be dressed like "a promiscuous pinup girl" but a "respectable young lady" zealous for "proprietary and decorum", sipping tea and the odd cone of two with Beethoven's symphonies filling her ambience. Certainly NOT the echoes of happy time with myself and her.

Awkwardness filled this atmosphere. All began to seem worse; after all, wouldn't a mother be desperate to know what caused her child to stay away from her watchful eyes at such a time? A deep sense of regret filled me greatly the moment I saw a burning blaze of wrath in her eyes as she turned to me, braking the car at the arrival of the red traffic light. And I, her foolish girl, ignited the flame in them, away from decorum and into a queer world, where all stemmed, well, queer.

Silence. That's all that filled my ears for another ten painful minutes; seemingly, it's what my mother wanted to punish me with until dawn broke out. I stared blankly and into oblivion at the wide windshield that were her stern, unforgiving face, which somewhat resembled the uncertain future I was to face, coated in a thick blanket of condensation.

In the hazy surrounding, the fire of her rage was extinguished and all that remained was a fragile body that lay motionless and grounded to the wide road. Nervously approaching the body, a blistered and ash-coated face stared directly at me. Crimson blood leaked from the swollen and torn lips onto the chin and flowed to the victim's long neck. Cracked eyeballs, as frail as glass, struck with mine as I was shattered by the sight. What she witnessed in the closet seemed to have scarred her- almost as though Pygmalion Grecian porcelain statue had been fractured beyond oblivion.

Reaching for the hands, I felt fingertips as stiff as ice, and, a small diamond ring on a bony index finger.

I was going to reel you mum. That I am... I am... gay. Enough she shouted.

The wrath that had filled her eyes was replaced by the heaviness of her sympathy. "Get out of the house now." my mum said in a voice which trembled with sorrow.

Gone are the days of disco and liberation as my mother and I receive a pamphlet with Thatcher on its front cover. Arthur, strapped firmly in the backseat of the household, was eagerly sucking his Cow and Gate milk- well, there would be no more free milk for him anymore- not after Mrs Thatcher announced the end to free milk in schools. This was the car crash of our lives- the end to liberalism, the end to social freedoms and the commencement of Conservative tyranny. The end to my freedom, it seemed. Tease and Al stepped out of my mother's home and stood at the door wteping waiting to be summoned in. The door, to our surprise open. I'm sorry Charlie, I over reacted- love who you like- I'm sorry. Those were the words I wanted to hear but alas I did not. The cataclysmic event that bid farewell to societal prosperity and a welcome to elitist monetary policy. Into the flames went public progress as the flames of self-serving elitism had been ignited.

Thatcher, not my mother, held the steering wheel, as she abandonment the liberalising freedoms of the decade and drove us into conformity and deference.