

“The White Rave”

by Angela Georgantas



“Hey, Fidel! Wait up!” Justno said, trotting to catch up to the dark haired, skinny teenage boy who was about twenty feet ahead of him on the sidewalk. When Fidel heard his voice, he turned back, smiled and waved.

“Hey man,” Fidel said, slowing his pace and walking backwards until his friend caught up. “Where you been?” Justno had dark brown skin and short, curly hair. He was an athlete, taller and more muscular than his friend. His eyebrows turned up in surprise as he reached Fidel and grabbed his hand for a bro shake.

“What you mean, where I been?” Justno asked him, releasing his shake with the customary snap. “I been the same place I always been: going to school, working, chilling with my girl. Where you been?” The two teenage boys were now in step walking down the narrow, tree-lined street. The sun was just now dipping low behind the houses, its rays a deeper, darker yellow mixed with the dusk. It was warm, even as late in the day as it was. The calendar had apparently forgotten to tell Texas that it wasn’t supposed to be this hot this early in the year. “You don’t hang out behind the school anymore, and I ain’t even seen you at The Game Store lately.”

“I’ve been busy,” Fidel said, smiling but looking away. They kept walking, but the pace had significantly slowed. Just then, Justno registered something he hadn’t before.

“Hey, man. Where your headphones? I never saw you go anywhere without your headphones. Stop!” Justno said, shooting out a hand and stopping his friend from continuing down the street and standing directly in his path. “You haven’t become one of THOSE, have you?” Just then, Justno caught sight of the small round button on Fidel’s backpack. It was blue with a white swell of water curling over itself. “Man!” Justno dropped his arms in disgust, stepping out of the way of his friend and shaking his head like he had just been smacked.

“What?” Fidel asked him, a little defensively. He started walking again, a little faster now heading for his destination. How could Justno understand? They had spent hours together in their younger years making fun of the wireless, and now he was one of them. How could he explain to him how very wrong they had been? Yeah, he was going to talk to Justno eventually, to explain everything and hope he would get rid of the wires himself, but he just wasn’t ready. There was still so much he, himself, didn’t understand.

“I thought you was smarter than that,” Justno called after him, now starting to walk backwards the other way. “You can’t even download your own songs, now? You got to let some imaginary dictator DJ play your music?” He was getting further away now, but before he turned around, he let one more insult fly: “Weak!”

Fidel winced with the last word. He knew that’s how it looked to Justno. Up until just a few months ago, he had felt the same way. Fidel slowed his walk a little bit as he remembered back to the day that started it all. He had been working at the diner after school since the beginning of the school year, and had just been promoted from busboy to waiter during the busy holiday rush. Living in the wireless belt, he was used to seeing people in his town dancing to their own tunes, completely oblivious to the fact that they, in fact, had no music. Oh, they claimed that they got their music wirelessly, but Fidel couldn’t hear the music, and even if he somehow could believe that people could actually hear music without headphones, he certainly wouldn’t want to hear the music they were playing. He had seen the playlists. In fact, playlists had been banned in schools for many years now. With so many different supposed wireless stations and so many different playlists, people said it confused the children.

Fidel smiled now, swinging his water bottle out of the side pocket of his backpack and taking a long drink as he walked. It was Faith who had changed his mind. Beautiful Faith. Her picture flashed in front of his mind’s eye. She was his same age, seventeen, but she seemed so much wiser. She had long, straight brown hair and sparkling brown eyes. She was, in his estimation that long-ago December day, the perfect woman except for one thing: she was a Waver.

She had come in to the diner that day with a group of her Waver friends, all of them nodding and moving in time to a tune he couldn’t hear. He had actually laughed at them behind their backs. All the wireless were pathetic, he had thought. Not smart enough to come up with music on their own, they invented a DJ who supposedly played music only they could hear. Of all the wireless, the Wavers were the worst. Their official name was the White Rave, named after the giant party they always said was coming to town someday and the ego-maniac DJ of theirs, DJ Wave. Wavers caused trouble with other wireless because they always said their stupid saying, “The Wave is the Way.”

After their lunch, Faith’s friends had gone, leaving her alone in the booth. She was looking at him shyly from under her long, curling lashes. She seemed like she wanted to say something, but she was working up the courage to talk to him. He remembered how nervous he had been to talk to her that first day, but there was something about her that was worth the possibility of getting shot down.

“Did your friends leave you?” Fidel had said, trying to appear cool but inside he could feel his heart beat faster.

“Yeah. We have dance practice. I was wondering if you might want to join us,” she asked with apparent resolve. Fidel started.

“Who? Me?” I don’t even believe in the wireless...” Her eyes widened, and he stopped himself, mentally berating himself for blowing it with the pretty girl. “I mean, I listen to music and all, but it’s not usually wireless...” He gestured to the headphones sitting loosely around his neck. “I could go with you, though,” he said. “I get off in about a half an hour. I’m Fidel, by the way,” he had told her.

“I’m Faith,” she said, smiling, and he was hooked. The first Wave meeting was surreal for Fidel. Everyone danced in unison, all of them moving in what Fidel perceived as silence. The craziest part was how happy everyone was. Even compared to other wireless who made similar claims of music from their own DJs, Wavers were different. There was a joy about them as they danced, oblivious to the silence, but appearing to actually hear the music. Fidel had sat in one of the long, wooden benches just watching the practice in wonder. These people really believed they heard the music.

Walking with her after practice, he couldn’t help himself. He had to ask: “How can you believe in wireless music?” he blurted. “I don’t hear anything. There is absolutely no evidence other than your word that you hear the music.” He blushed a little, embarrassed at how forcefully the question had come out of him.

“Evidence?” she had asked him, her long hair blowing in the cool December night air. “The evidence is all around us. Don’t you see the Waves? It’s in the shape of the mountains and the patterns of the leaves on the trees. It’s in the way the ocean meets the sand, it’s in the prints of our fingertips and even the way our hearts beat. The world is covered in Waves,” Faith said, matching Fidel’s intensity but also smiling.

“But that’s just how the world is. It’s just coincidence. After so many millions of years, we’re bound to get a wave or two here or there. How can you say that’s evidence? Besides,” Fidel continued, unable to stop himself, “I . Don’t Hear. Anything!” He punctuated the last word with a scoffing sound that was even unpleasant to him, but Faith was unruffled.

“That’s because you don’t believe.” She ran ahead of him, smiling behind her and encouraging him to follow. They were almost back to the diner where he left his car parked during the Wave dance practice. When she got to the door of The Diner, she turned around and leaned on it. The place was dark now, the owner Joe having finished the last minute cleaning a couple hours before. Only the light from the streetlamp was shining down on them. “Do you believe that behind these doors is a diner?”

“Of course I do. We were just there a few hours ago!”

“But I don’t see anything,” she said, cupping her hand over her eyes and pretending to try to see inside the darkened restaurant. “How do I know that there is really a diner behind these dark doors? If I don’t see it, I can’t believe.”

“Faith! I work there. My clothes still smell like burgers, and restaurants don’t go around disappearing. I’m telling you, it’s there.” Her smile grew wide, and he mentally slapped his own forehead. “And I’m telling you. Wireless is real. I hear the music. The music is real, and I know the dances.” She continued, but when she spoke, there was an awe in her voice like she was amazed with it all over again just talking about it. “Once you believe, the music will come. It will start softly at first. You will catch a tune here or there as you go, but after a while, you strain for the sounds.

You don't ever want to miss even one single note, so you start to really listen, craving it. When you meet with other Wavers and you start to talk, you start to see that everyone is hearing the same songs and is moving in the same directions. Everyone knows the White Rave is coming. Everyone wants to be ready to dance."

Fidel remembered his reaction to that last bit and grimaced a little at the thought of it. He hadn't been nice to her that night. Even as pretty as she was, even as nice as the other Wavers had been, and even if there was a part of him that wished it was true, he just couldn't believe. He had left her on the street by herself, not even offering her a ride home. Not his finest hour. But she hadn't given up on him. She had come back to the diner again and again to talk to him, even sharing some books and articles about the White Rave from people who didn't used to believe in wireless. He smiled as he remembered the day she gave him a playlist.

"I have a present for you," she had said with that little smile she got when she was excited and couldn't wait to tell him something. He had just gotten out of work, and he was walking her to another dance practice. It had become their routine on Wednesday nights. She would come to the diner and they would walk to the Wave Room down the street. Her parents were very strict, so it was really the only time they could see each other outside of school. After practice, they would hold hands and kiss before he drove her home. Spending a couple hours watching the Wavers was a small price to pay, he had thought at the time.

"Bye, Joe," he had called behind him, walking out of the diner with her. "Okay, what is it?"

"Close your eyes," she said. He had stopped and closed his eyes. "Hold out your hands." He did and felt a small book being placed into his hand. He opened his eyes.

"A playlist? Are you serious?" She smiled at him. "What? You already have one?" she teased. "No, it's just...you know I don't believe in the wireless. Why would I need the playlist?" He opened the small book and flipped to the first couple of pages. "Besides, look at these songs." He started to read a few titles, "'Love Your Enemies,' 'Turn the Other Cheek,' 'Obey the Wave.' This isn't music! You should hear my music," he said, holding out his headphones to her and showing her his player. "Look, I've got 'I Love You if You Love Me,' 'Touch Me and I'll Kill You,' and 'I Do What I want!' Now that's music! How come your DJ doesn't play any of THOSE songs?" She had laughed at him and declined. "Besides, all the wireless think their playlists are the best. What makes you think your playlist is the right one?" "Because the Wave..." "Is the way," he finished with her. "So I've heard."

As Fidel got to the door of the Wave Room, this night he marveled again that he was now one of them, now practicing a few times a week to get ready for the White Rave. As many times as he had laughed at them, as many times as he had argued against the idea of wireless in general and the Wave specifically, he had come back again and again. And it wasn't just that he and Faith were now a solid couple. There was something about the way the Wavers were to each other – the way they were to other people, even.

They were different, and he longed to be a part of such a close group and hear the music for himself. As Fidel pulled the door open and stepped inside, the song that had been softly playing in the back-ground of his mind got crystal clear and louder as he moved with the other Wavers to the dance.

That night after practice, Fidel remembered back to the night he first heard the music. It was after a particularly exciting dance practice when he was walking Faith back to The Diner. The whole night, all of the Wavers had been abuzz. DJ Wave had sent out the message that the White Rave was coming soon.

Wavers said they were starting to see signs popping up all over town. Fidel hadn't remembered seeing any, but he wasn't exactly looking either.

"Can you believe it?" Faith had gushed. "The White Rave is coming really soon – DJ Wave Himself will be there, and we will dance all night long."

"Yeah," he had said. "Sure."

"Fidel. After all this time going with me to dance practice, you still don't believe? How can you explain that we all know the words to the songs? How do we all know which ways to dance?"

"Look, Faith," he had said, his voice rising. "No offense, but I just can't believe. Schools ban playlists for a reason. There is no evidence that wireless exists, and even if it did, how would I even know which station to listen to? You say there is this big dance party coming and only those who hear the music will be invited, but I don't buy it. If there really was a party, wouldn't everyone hear the same music? Wouldn't the DJ want everyone to come?"

"We don't know why the DJ set it up this way, but He will tell us everything when He comes..." she had started, but he wouldn't listen. He had driven her home in silence, turning away from her when she leaned in for a kiss. He was getting so tired of listening to her talk about the DJ and singing those stupid songs. He had his own music, and he liked it that way. When he had gotten home that night, he didn't even stop to talk to his parents who were watching the news on the couch. He had claimed a headache and headed up to his room, throwing himself on the bed.

"Stupid White Rave!" he had said under his breath. The Wavers have been saying it was coming forever, but somehow it never came. But the Wavers never gave up. They were such good people, and some of them were so smart that it surprised him that they would fall for such a silly idea. Clearly it was some kind of group psychosis. He pressed his face into his pillow. But what about Faith herself? She was the smartest girl he knew, and she absolutely believed. He watched her sometimes at school when she didn't think anyone was looking. She believed in the music with her whole heart, and she lived the songs. She really did love everyone – even people who weren't very nice to her. She was kind and supportive to other Wavers and did everything she could to get non-Wavers to come to dance practice.

"Okay, DJ. You win." Fidel said into the air, feeling ridiculous. "Faith says all I have to do to hear the music is to break my own headphones and believe in the wireless." He took his headphones in his hand, pausing only for a second before cracking his player under his feet and throwing it, ear buds and all, into the trash. He sat down on his bed in silence, determined to hear, but there was nothing. Frustrated, he threw himself into his pillow again. Just then, he thought he heard a small sound.

Like a whisper or the ticking of a tiny clock, the sound started small, fading in like a light being turned up brighter and brighter. Then the lyrics started, "The Wave is the Way," It was December again, and all the businesses were decorated for the Holiday. Fidel was leaving work early tonight. He was going to try to talk to Justno again. Ever since he really started to hear the music, he had gotten enough confidence to start inviting other people to Wave practice. He had asked Justno several times, explaining clearly how he, himself, had started to believe, but Justno wouldn't listen.

Just then, the lights in The Diner turned off, and it was dark. People started to scream, reaching for their cell phones for just a tiny bit of light so they could see. Fidel stepped outside onto the darkened sidewalk, confused how so many lights had gone out at the same time and why there seemed to be a bright white light coming from the direction of the Wave Room. He started heading in that direction, and then he began to run. The music in his mind was getting louder and louder, and the DJ's shout was clear. It was time. The White Rave was here. The rest of the city remained dark as the Rave took all the electricity in town. He headed to the doors, now guarded by the DJ's men. Only Wavers would be allowed inside. Everyone else would be left in the dark while the Wavers danced all night long.

Many atheists think that they don't believe because there is no "evidence," but the Bible says the evidence is all around us and that what can be known of God is plainly seen. People who suppress the knowledge of God do so because they do not want to submit to His ways. They want to do their own thing and not feel bad about it instead of giving our God and Creator the worship He deserves. People who see the truth of God and embrace the idea of Him as the Lord of their lives receive even further "proof" of His existence because He manifests Himself to them in the form of the Holy Spirit. When you look at the lives of Christians who have given their whole hearts to Christ, you can see how very different they are than the rest of the world. This is because they are a new creation in Christ. Fidel saw the difference in his friend Faith, but he didn't hear the music for himself until after he believed. It is the same with the voice of God. We can see that God exists in the magnificence of a creation that could not be an accident. We know He is real when we look into the lives and hear the testimony of believers who have an intimate, living relationship with Him. But it isn't until we become believers in God and quit trying to do things our own way that we hear His voice for ourselves as He guides us in our lives. There really only is one Way to the Father, and that is through the Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins

Do you want to hear His voice? Do you want a relationship with the Creator of the world and an assurance that He will never leave you or forsake you? Do you want everlasting life and a place at the party in heaven? Believe what can be seen and quit trying to do things your own way. Give God control of your mind and heart, and give your life to Jesus Christ.

Salvation is there for the asking. If you're ready, you can pray like this: "Jesus, I believe that you shed Your blood, died on the cross, and rose from the dead for me. I repent of my sin. I ask you to forgive me and come into my heart. Help me to live for You in Jesus' name. Amen."