

Spring 5-1-1997

## Listening

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### Recommended Citation

Gockman, Robert (1997) "Listening," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 17 : No. 2 , Article 15.  
Available at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol17/iss2/15>

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# Listening

By: Robert Gockman

I stood at the door of a room  
where a blind man sat  
listening to his  
talking book machine.

He wore headphones so snugly that  
not even the smallest fragment of sound could escape.  
The voice on the tape  
went through the electronic circuits  
through wires and diaphragms,  
resonating into the ear pieces,  
completed absorbed within  
his singularly attentive mind.

He focused intently on the world described  
by the encapsulated voice  
while the tape spun softly in its niche,  
narrating deeds,  
telling stories,  
weaving spells,  
his sunken eyes closed in reverie.

I entered his room,  
making a noise,  
startling him  
at my approach.  
“Shush,” he said. “Be quiet!  
You’re disturbing me.”  
For I had intruded upon his world  
of vivid imagery, spectral faces  
and sharp details.

Later, when we met again,  
he said, “I’m sorry  
I didn’t mean to be so cross,  
but while I was listening,  
I could see  
again.”