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BRENDAN GEDDES

1 CHASING EVERYTHING AND NOTHING

Life moves fast

Sometimes it feels as if we're chasing everything and sometimes
as if we're chasing nothing

The fundamental scale

I've never been happier than when I balance work and venture

Because commitment to the trails of the mountain makes
relaxation all the sweeter

Like the land of lions

It's not shameful to not join the race

And the happiest people I've met are the ones who feed the
feelings as to why they were put here

I wasn't put here to rot with the weeks

2 LIVES TOUCHING LIVES

My dad asked if I thought the walls could listen

**I told him that the buildings carry energy whether or not we'd like
to believe it**

**That our souls return home when we die
And our gut can tell us where that is**

**It doesn't have to frighten us
But often when we look for things we find them**

**Like when the light flashes twice
Or when we cement goodbyes to people we'll never see again**

**It doesn't matter how brief our interactions were
I don't think we will ever fully understand the magnitude of a
cemented goodbye**

3 TUXEDO

**Bags slung over each arm
Legs burning up the first hill
Heart already set on the last**

**In a shell of protection
Under the giving tree
Amongst the rushing clouds and the 5 towering pines**

**I've seen faces change over years
My own has aged**

**It's hard to say the hills don't taunt us
Few can see it but I think I do**

**It's even harder to exist amidst the glares
And to not let them impact you**

I'm still the same even when I feel like the run down 9 changes me

**The marks on my shoulders
Harsh at seasons beginning
When I go home, I weather them**

**They soften as the summer rolls
And by the end, cease to exist**

**I've always enjoyed them
A sign of hard work
And sweat not forgotten**

4 I JUST WANT YOU TO SEE THE BEST OF ME

Remembering the summer days

**When we didn't wear shoes
And drank lemonade before our bodies dried out**

**Where the adults would sit and talk amidst the humidity
Under the hanging lights above the back patio**

**They were the sources of all we'd ever known
Their images forever saved from any stains**

**Like the stains on the soles of our feet
From the grass and pavement, the rain and dirt**

**Protected under the trees -
Pines and maples and oaks that swayed and observed us through
the scattered light**

**By the time the bats came we knew we didn't have long
We'd be whisked home**

But not before our souls grabbed the earth

**2
These days now cease to exist
Only preserved in two places**

**The dusty shelves of the minds of those involved and the
locations in which they happened**

**And now it's greatness and sadness mixed together
Nostalgia to bring you to your knees**

5 QUIET NIGHT SOUNDS

Quiet night sounds

I find my mind can finally relax

It was 3 days of labor after many off

My eyelids hang heavy

I'm lucky to immerse myself in the laziness and grain of this night

To listen to cars miles away, and to the floors creaking down the hall

To ponder where my life is now, and where it could've gone, and where it's been

I've opened my window a little wider tonight

Every rattle from the street becomes mine to hold

Every quiet moment experienced by a stranger now becomes known

No matter how inconsequential, the ultimate reality

That's the fabric of the early summer night

7 A NOTE ON INDEPENDENCE

OR

**“KNOWING WHY THE TITLE WAS IMPORTANT BEFORE I
KNEW WHY THE TITLE WAS IMPORTANT”**

The Hudson Line has always given me a great deal of creative inspiration.

I find it in it's more basic elements - the tracks that hug the Hudson River, the glowing platforms late at night, the cathedral like hallways of Grand Central Station, the mountains and steel bridges and cliffs and fall leaves - it has an appearance like few other commuter railroads.

I find it in it's more abstract elements, too - the fuse but contrast between urban and suburban, it's reliability is a symbol of something I can always fall back on, it's support of the life of the average commuter - it's all beautiful.

I was recently asked a question about whether or not the inspiration could be a representation of something foundational to me personally, almost a manifestation of internal feelings. I didn't really know where to go with it - I certainly didn't think the answer was no, but I was pessimistic about my ability to locate it within the messy backrooms of my mind or memories.

The questioner then told me a tale about his own close connection to a railroad, and the foundation of this connection being relationships - he rode the railroad into a different city for college with his brother and cousin, and because of this, he viewed the railroad as symbolic. It showed both the beauty in the humanistic pursuit of what's "bigger and better" and the importance of acknowledging what our childhoods do for us, both as young adults and adults.

As he provided details, it clicked - the Hudson Line, to me, was independence. It was the first time I had traveled alone consistently, it allowed me to act as a minuscule cog in the bustle of New York City. With this, it allowed me to be an even smaller cog in the turning of the word - I could hide here, and no one would carry any pre-conceived ideas about who I was or what I should be when they looked at me. They couldn't - they didn't know me.

I rode it home on Friday nights, back to Queens on Monday mornings - it allowed me to escape New York when I was overwhelmed, but it likewise made sure I honored my commitment to college and to growing as a person.

“There’s been ghost trains on the Hudson Line”

In a lot of ways, I think those ghost trains are my memories, my past self who is still sitting in a seat on a Hudson line train in the fall of 2021. Without him, there wouldn’t be creation, nor would there be a collaborative effort like the one we’re attempting to develop here.

FINAL THOUGHTS

At the very least, I’ve always felt comforted by the idea of the late train, running across the river from me - making stops through Garrison and Cold Spring and Beacon, often with no passengers boarding or even leaving the train. All of this taking place as I drift to sleep in my corner of the world that is west of the Hudson.

It could lend to this idea of reliability - I find it harder to find beauty in things if they aren’t repeatable - I don’t necessarily think it should be this way, but it is for me.

Every night as I lay, the trains run. This doesn’t change.

What I think it truly is however is a reflection of this “minor cog” idea from earlier, the one in which comfort is derived from the idea that I don’t matter, at least not as much as I constantly tell myself.

It’s humbling to know there are trains all night up the Hudson - there are trains everywhere, for that matter, and they would run with or without me.

These are my ghost trains, and they are this constant reminder of impermanence.

8 THE DEAD ZONE

**At a certain point in the night, stressing becomes worthless
Your consciousness will float like a ghost**

**When the day is behind you and the next one is hours away
You've found yourself in the dead zone**

**In 6th grade I realized there's no way to stop time
It doesn't matter how hard you pull**

**It makes people happy to hear of tragedy
The final battle is to get the most from our life**

9 GREAT CLOUDS

**Drawing conclusions from overheard comments at coffee shops in
cold spring**

Making up the pasts of strangers in the park

Great clouds must be from a greater place

But what if they too are bored

Looking for an escape through all that is new to them

Or making all that is old more than it was