

Someday, Somewhere, waiting for me.

by Kevin Hunter

Out in the open air, the sun's rays washing over the dead, open fields, Nick lay, his back against the wall of the train platform, eyes facing the sky, hands outstretched to the clouds; and he took a deep breath and thought of the days of his father and his trips to the market, and how no matter what, they would always end up in this place, sitting before the now dead train tracks, eating lunch, talking of the weather, food, and what would come of life.

He took one deep, long breath, closed his eyes, dropped his head, and then opened his eyes to the once vibrant fields, at a time filled with flowers of all colors, large trees and children hiding in the bushes--now nothing, and with the children having grown into near men, the long unused train tracks left covered in sky-stretched weeds.

It used to be, that after six in the afternoon, the trains would stop coming to Haddy Station, the last stop on the line. And every once and a while, Nick's father would say "Hey, Nick. You mind followin' me down to Christy for some fish? I feel like some fish."

They stood out because Nick's father had only just come from work. He worked long hours and was only home for dinner mostly. He still had on his suit and tie and slacks and dress shoes, traveling to the fish market by the edge of town. They walked down Main street. By this time of day, few people were out. The town markets were nearly all closed for the night, because Haddy had few lights to keep the people busy. But it was good and honest this way, Nick thought.

There was always a wild assortment of smells and sounds and touches, as they passed by stores and down the road. There was the bakery's earthy warm smell wafting in the air, and on

most days, Nick's father would stop in the receding sunlight, with his eyes closed, his hands tightly gripping Nick's small hands, waiting, waiting, waiting--Nick, with his eyes closed, trying to match his heartbeat to the pulse of his Father's hand-- and then he would exhale, look down smiling at Nick, and continue on; after that there was the stale, sweet smell of the flower shop; then there was the maternal smell of milk, that always made Nick remember his mother; then there was the clanging from the Mechanic, who was closing his shop for the day and who came over to Nick's father, once and talked about things that Nick did not understand. The Mechanic laid his hand on Nick's father's shoulder as he talked, smiling large and wide, his eyes bright, nose open. And Nick, thought that his Father must be a saint, like the ones his mother used to tell him about every Sunday, because the people always seemed so happy around his Father, always so livened. Then there was the feel of the dirt beneath Nick's feet as Main street turned from asphalt to bare ground towards the fish market that was at the end. And by this time, almost all of Haddy was behind Nick and his Father. And Nick sometimes thought, that if you could take a picture of them at one of those moments--with the mountains in the far background, with the town houses lined in rows, Main Street in the center behind them, the chimneys bearing white smoke from the rooftops, the dying sun reaching out across and splitting Haddy, one part brown and dead for the night, one part still clinging to life and light, with that red-orange hue, and with Nick and his Father's hand clasped together--Nick, thought, that you could see the into the heart of Haddy .

Now, Nick, a twenty two year old writer, was back in Haddy after having left it years before after his father's death, a decade ago. It was suicide. When the work train came, he jumped before it, and was hit and thrown before the tracks. He had left no note. And Nick was given to a foster family who quickly found the depressing mood of the area too much, and moved from Haddy to give Nick a better opportunity elsewhere.

But there were always those days when after having left Christy's, they would cross the train tracks, turn their backs to the train station, and sit down at the platform. And Nick's father would lay his head back against the wall, and inhale deep and then exhale in a quick burst. And Nick always thought that his father seemed melancholy, sitting there with his eyes closed, but he could never find his words. While out in the fields before them children would be playing, their parents reading, talking, sleeping, the trains never coming again for the day, and his father's eyes beginning to open.

