

Saboteurs of Self

Geoffrey Little

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Album web page/stream at Bandcamp.com <https://geoffreybraxtonlittle.bandcamp.com/album/saboteurs-of-self>

ARRIVE

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Steady hearts racing, beats beat the beat
Steady hands framing – is it like the stories say?
The past in a fuzzy dream while longings real as skin
Did I come to you or you to me – would we happen
again?

In order to arrive I had to find you, pass
through you
Or is it all just me disguised?
As I travel - -
In order to arrive

Certainty with its smile, plans with their plans
Found you on a virgin beach, two grains of sand
Do I once again make it gray?
Blur words confusing?
Flex in your soft space?
Brake while you're speeding?

In order to arrive I had to find you, believe you
Or is it all just me disguised?
As I travel - -
In order to arrive

Laughter be our secret
No games the true joke
Silly be the serious thing
Sly beneath the cloak

In order to arrive I had to find you, love you
Or is it all just me disguised?
As I travel - -
In order to arrive

I came across two curious YouTube videos, one newer, one (much) older in Sept/Oct 2021 that fostered this song. In different ways I found the videos super weird and interesting and I wanted to make something musical and lyrical with the feelings I was getting. I wrote Arrive last for this record – wanting something like a “vibe” for an album opener and a kind of ...mother to the other songs. I'd also just picked out the cover art by that point, an untitled piece online by artist Steve Johnson (www.artbystevej.com), and what I got from that also affected the song's mood.

Videos I mentioned: the first vid was sent to me by my friend Ryan – <http://omeleto.com/255570/> – where the Omeleto company crafted a (pretty spot on) re-telling of Andy Weir short story 'The Egg' (he also wrote 'The Martian') and 2) the second one I found one sleepless night – [this Oprah video for 24 seconds starting at 23:00](#) (with author/speaker Betty Eadie of 'Embraced By The Light' fame).

*Recorded at Little World Cheer (Geoffrey Little home studio in Nashville, Tennessee)
Mixed and mastered by Sam Beckley (www.myaudioeditor.com) in Tempe, Arizona*

COULD YOU HAVE

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Do you think
For a moment
That I could do better by you?
What if every scene, every second
Was deemed the best possible way?
 Could you have
 What I have?
 Would you have
 What I have?
 All I am is all I have
 For you
Borderlines, walls, and statues
But all I see is we're so afraid
 Could you have
 What I have?
 Would you have
 What I have?
 All I am is all I have
 For you

Love – where science met the song
I flare but the storm's not my
response
I have
Been halving – into parts
Since the start – and the start's
restart – In hearts
Color burst
So brilliant
Color smoke to grays – awake away...
 Could you have
 What I have?
 Would you have
 What I have?
 All I am is all I have
 For you

Lyricaly, I wanted to depict a stand-off: me as (an allegedly sentient) human being vs. reality/fate/God/traffic – Who's wrestling who – who's wanting things to be more amped up – or more chill?

[Silence.]

Both sides: "Look, uh, this is all I got – could you, would you just please deal with it?"

Recorded at Little World Cheer

Mixed by Mitch Dane at [Sputnik Sound](#) in Nashville

Mastered by Matt Odmark / [Original Masters](#) in Nashville

LEARN

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Not fair when I got the news
Not clear why that was the time
Lain bare as I lacked proof
Calm for a little while

Never know, just you never know
When you learn what you don't know
Highs and lows on the same old same old
Until wonder
Low and behold

Clear when I'm not a stooge
I self-talk some peace of mind
For all the love I've to give
I'm a stranger to my own kindness

Never know, just you never know
When you learn what you don't know
Highs and lows on the same old same old
Until wonder
Low and behold

Whose thoughts think me now?
Of which do I attach or inquire-of?
Hell bent on agency
Warmed by sober fires

In the center surrounded by certainties – I
Used to be just fine

Never know, just you never know
When you learn what you don't know
Highs and lows on the same old same old
Until wonder
Low and behold

Special thanks to Abraham Piper (<https://www.tiktok.com/@abrahampiper?lang=en>) who's near daily social media wit and wisdom got me through darker times of the pandemic. The lyric for the chorus of this song is borrowed from something he made a TikTok video out of – sometime in earlier 2021, one of his many videos featured this line and musing: You never know when you are going to learn something that you don't know.

The lyric "who's thoughts think me now / of which do I attach or inquire of?" – that's pure author/speaker/guru Byron Katie. She has been a favorite healthier mental practice(s) type for me for years. Her [many videos on YouTube](#) where she, usually with strangers, guides "The Work" are connected with what Piper mentions above, at least to me.

Late line in the song "in the center surrounded by certainties" is a paraphrase of a concept of philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004). I am a weak Derrida student, but remain enamored with who he was/became and what I estimate was his longing to exploring the limits, and frontiers, of human language and communication.

Recorded at Little World Cheer

Mixed by Jack Miele at Jack Miele Productions in New Orleans, Louisiana

Mastered by Matt Odmark / Original Masters

THE DEAL

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The deal, first made with yourself. A surety you felt, an instinct – you don't need no help

The deal, with the kind of dude who sees in you – bona fides, you've more than paid your dues

The deal, with what this job earns, with what the pay concerns:

Looks like luck, believe me it was work

Surreal, the years with my head down – the ass kissed all around – you think I – don't deserve this now?

My spiel – a smaller man relents, he will not ride the fence, so choosy, owns doesn't rent

The deal, fire in the gut, booze in my cup – cheers, son, it's the burn for the buzz

The deal, arrangements neatly set, no detail left unmet:

An ear for what not need be said

Never kneel – it's how you have to play. Monetize the rage.

What happened? Happens every day

The deal, and with it what is dealt, to saboteurs of self, who at their moment, deferred to someone else

The deal, heavy in your hands, has a few demands

But the deal – the deal understands

—For former U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, who served from 2017-2021

Recorded at Little World Cheer

Mixed and mastered by Sam Beckley

WILL THIS EARTH BE DESTROYED

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I obtained these audio samples through random old school cassette acquisitions on eBay during the pandemic. It's a weird business exchange because 99% of the time the seller has no idea what they are selling you – they don't own functioning tape players. (I do. And yes – more acquisitions from eBay.)

No one has time to listen to even a fraction of old original recorded cassette content sitting in basements and attics in old boxes and Ziploc bags, not even me (though my imagination has told me otherwise).

Lost futures, loopy pasts / Third Heaven, golden calves

The firmament it melted away

Wrinkle at the side of my eye, shadows of too much time

I know what I saw backstage

These letters full of fear – words there, nothing's clear

Am I correct, you were replaced?

Itch at the back of my heart, disputed memory of ours:

Who is and who is not safe

Recorded at Little World Cheer

Mixed by Mitch Dane at Sputnik Sound

Mastered by Matt Odmark of Original Masters

DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY

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Bury your heads
Close your minds
School your kids
To color in your lines
Keep life rigged
To keep her behind
Mental backflip
Texts twist airtight, oh no

It doesn't work that way
It doesn't work that way
Love apparently
Doesn't work that way

Whatever it takes
Whoever's a life-line
To the national stage
To cable TV time
Raise your fists:
Your rights have been denied
Power about to shift
It's what you've heard from the divine

It doesn't work that way
It doesn't work that way
Love apparently
Doesn't work that way

Dark nights burn
To golden days' wake
See evolution birth
An equitable populace
'Til lucre tricks – yeah
A greed grift grapevine:
What if everyone did that?
What about mine?

It doesn't work that way
It doesn't work that way
Love apparently
Doesn't work that way

Note: the female vocal is fully programmed via a curious/fun tool from Yamaha software, Vocaloid. There are specific and normal words I gave "her" to sing, but it was often the sound of the words I liked, like, phonetical values – above literal word values or meanings.

*Recorded at Little World Cheer
Mixed by Mitch Dane at Sputnik Sound
Mastered by Sam Beckley*

WOULD IT

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Would it have happened anyway?
All the effort I put out
No one knows my name
Would it have happened yesterday?
Was I too late?
My ID hacked – shown to be a fake

Hah, ah, ah ah –
Hit pause, draw straws
Let's set a counterplot

Would it have happened for free?
Finance the dream, unbottle sass
Traffic for my page
Would it have happened to my face?
Insults wrapped around the world
Was I online to see?

Hah, ah, ah ah –
Hit pause, draw straws
Let's set a counterplot

Would it have happened like we said?
Years ago – a groove so sure
All I felt was afraid
Could it still happen today?
Learned as I am
Schooled by my whims
Creating what's at stake

Hah, ah, ah ah –
Hit pause, draw straws
Let's set a counterplot
Hah, ah, ah ah –
Hit pause, draw straws
Let's set a counterplot

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BROADSCAN

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The main, long sample of a gentleman talking here is taken from this [1969 recorded audio](#) (which is in the public domain). The voice is an AM radio announcer in Laurel, Mississippi, where there was a horrific train crash on a late January night that year at 4.15 a.m. I didn't look for more information than this as I created this track, but I have since learned there is a lot out there on this incident. [Here's](#) a quick news story link and current site picture, for instance.

My dad's earliest more interesting jobs, including before I was born, were as a radio announcer and disc jockey, and I grew up with a familiarity and comfort to the idea of deep, masculine radio voice speakers, including many preachers.

In the early 1980s as a boy I for a time had a shortwave radio. I would lay in bed late at night rolling the knob back and forth. The mystery of broadcast was (and is) thrilling – all of those energies of random voices and songs from all over the world, and all of those listening.

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Mixed and mastered by Sam Beckley*

THANK YOUS & BRIEF INJUNCTIONS/COMMENTARY:

Deep thanks for precious moments, Ryan.

Ashley, thanks for listening, emailing, and PT.

Meghan, you connected me then and now.

Indebtedness to friends and colleagues at Vanderbilt.

Carl: those forty days & nights of B&H – a flood of memories and rebirth.

Poopie, lo, you are with me always.

All my love to Tara.

Subscribe to The Attentionist podcast – my personal journal podcast via any major podcast platform (Apple, Spotify, Stitcher, Luminary...) for audio gifts expected and otherwise.

The Bandcamp company is perhaps the last (large) vestige of a market to monetize recorded music by artists. Your support of this album there, as well as other artists' releases, ensures some financial support for musical art. Monies go directly to the creators. Big streaming music companies such as Apple Music, Spotify, Amazon Music, YouTube (each of which I love and keep subscriptions to)... they pay incredibly small (like one-tenth of a penny) per-stream royalties, if at all, to music publishers and music makers.

Lastly, please join the Geoffrey Little Mailing List, sending your name in very quick email to lilwhq@gmail.com saying you'd like to join. You will have (tastefully modest quantities, I promise) communications about my music, The Attentionist podcast, my live appearances, and more. I look forward to being in touch.

