

Green Day – Boulevard of Broken Dreams

By John VanSloten

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Aloneness... I walk this empty street... On the Boulevard of Broken Dreams... Where the city sleeps and I'm the only one and I walk alone... 'A' is what BOBDs is about... **PAUSE...** to some degree - it's what all of us are about!... Felt it?

This week- I felt it walking the corridors of the Seattle Tacoma Airport... **surrounded by thousands of people and yet totally alone...** **PAUSE...** no one really knew me/who I was... felt it for three days while there... workshop w/no one I knew... dinner by myself two nights in a row... slept in a hotel room alone (Fran- Good thing I guess!)

I found myself looking at my **family picture** a lot...

When I got home... it felt like home. b/c they **know me!**... **understand who I am;** my **personality,** my **needs...** They remember me... embrace me... touch me... Edward touches my face... it's a **beautiful gift to have my family...** to be part of them... **PAUSE...**

But you know what?... even there... living life with the ones with **whom I am most intimate...** *sometimes* I can still feel alone... It's like there's **even more of me** that needs to be seen/known/connected with... there are still parts of me that **live in a shadow...**

Deep... deep inside... still not quite right... it's almost as though I am **separate from my very self...** internally **divided/alienated...** it's like there's a **fissure...** an **inner incongruity....** **PAUSE...**

I'm walking down the line... That divides me somewhere in my mind... On the border line, of the edge and where I walk alone

Sometimes I relate-**'Darkness is my only friend'** (ps 88)

PAUSE... Most of time -completely unaware of it... I keep busy to avoid this reality...but when I **slow- know** it's there... I feel uneasy, unsettled, a bit lost and alone... @ my core, **I am alone**

LONG PAUSE... Makes me think the reason song has mass resonance - b/c mass loneliness

I walk a lonely road... The only one that I have ever known Don't know where it goes... But it's home to me and I walk alone...

My shadow's the only one that walks beside me... My shallow heart's the only thing that's beating... Sometimes I wish someone out there will find me... 'Til then I walk alone

"...It sort of deals with more of that alienation and disenfranchised feelings, but sort of singles it out to something more melancholy," BJA on Boulevard vs Holiday (political rage), MTV.com -- **[FLIP SIDE OF RAGING PUNK]**

PAUSE... Why are things this way?... Why all this loneliness? How can so many be lonely **beside each other?**... which made me ask - Are we **victims** in this alienation?...or **products** of our own choices?

When I was in California earlier this week...

[WORKSHOP sermon research!] One expert talked about how the band was always trying to **stand out/stand alone** from the crowd (even the puck crowd)... when GD first came out - punk was this high intensity yelling rage - And they went a bit melodic in their tones... (only sustain a scream so long!)

They didn't want to be like everyone else... **PAUSE...** Wonder- is part of the lonely bed we sleep in, a nasty byproduct of our desire to be **different...** to be **unique** to not **conform...** to not **give in to 'the man'...** to not run with lemmings... - **this choice (de facto) is self alienating...** **'Rebellion - isolation - loneliness'**

It's a good question... how much of your aloneness is self induced? Made me think of J's parable - **prodigal**

It seems that for the story's namesake - a big part of his aloneness resulted from his **choice** to leave his Father's home...(Recall tale? Father w two sons... leave!) "Man I don't need this scene... all these rules... and here I've got this hyper conforming older brother -- toe the line, obey whatever Dad says, 'Yes Father.... Yes father', he's an institutional automaton... who needs that kind of life! It's so pathetic... I'm out of here!"...

And the guy makes a choice... takes his inheritance money and hits the road/parties!... **his choice... but...**

Then, as the story goes, '**there was a famine in the land...**' economic downturn! Hmmm... - outside of his control- guess-makes him a bit of a **victim** as well

We do live in a world that is famine prone... often dry-comes to **satiating our relational thirsts**... barren... people often don't care about other people... no time/emotional space to engage/relate... - **all victims??**

Or maybe it's both... "**I choose aloneness and aloneness chooses me**"... **PAUSE...** I walk this empty street...On the Boulevard of Broken Dreams...Where the city sleeps and I'm the only one and I walk alone... I walk alone...I walk alone

Broken dreams... PAUSE... I guess there's another contributing factor to our aloneness... those times and places- where reality is so far removed from what you've always dreamed for... **where 'What is' is so separate from 'what I'd hoped for'**.... There's schism in that too I guess... **I'm separate from what I've always wanted to be**... alone in that!... **PAUSE...** Thinking about it... it works in the other direction too... **[Regret past]**... I'm so far removed from what I once was... **schism and alienation in either direction.**

The prodigal son must have felt it both ways... he never knew how good he really had it with his Father... **until he lost it... & in having dreams for life dashed**

Billie Joe Armstrong... could relate (engaging world w/rebellion, HS drop out, Music - chose!) **AND--** (PAST)- lost his dad to esophageal cancer when he was 10 years old... **a victim!** [Sacramento airport - saw a man saying goodbye to his young family... **TELL STORY**] ... Can you imagine thought of **losing your dad as a kid? PAUSE...** Can you hear **BJA's 10 year old voice** in those lyrics?

I walk a lonely road... The *only one that I have ever known* Don't know where it goes... But *it's home to me* and I walk alone **Pain and brokenness** - huge contributing factors toward loneliness

PAUSE... Xn worldview - say that we all can relate to that circumstance... each and every one of us has been alienated from our Father... **we've been separated from God...** There's a spiritual brokenness that plagues us all... and **sin** is both a **condition (happens to us- victims)**... and a **choice** (culpable)

"I choose to walk away from God... and part of me can't help myself... **PAUSE...** I want to be in control... don't want to follow anyone... even **THE MAN**

And life's journey/road I walk... pretty **barren...** very **alone...** almost **hopeless...** **PAUSE...** and whether we use words or not, our souls **cry out to God,** "Sometimes I wish someone out there will find me... **PAUSE...** 'Til then I walk alone"

"**til...** then"... only word of hope in the whole song... "**til...**" -- **and we hold onto it in our aloneness... for dear life!!** - just like prodigal must have... walking lonely road home... his shadow only one that walked beside him... hoping to find home once more... **PAUSE...** **[READ PORTION PARABLE]**

In lyrics of the **Xn song**... Father runs to his people all the time... each of us via X!... & "Someone out there" does find us!... perfectly knows us... "you belong to me/home!"... - shows you how always mysteriously been there **[LIGHT/SHADOW]**... - **not perfect!**... **Spirit presence/[beside you in all] --enough!**

Boulevard Of Broken Dreams Lyrics

I walk a lonely road
The only one that I have ever known
Don't know where it goes
But it's home to me and I walk alone

I walk this empty street
On the Boulevard of Broken Dreams
Where the city sleeps
and I'm the only one and I walk alone

I walk alone
I walk alone

I walk alone
I walk a...

My shadow's the only one that walks beside me
My shallow heart's the only thing that's beating
Sometimes I wish someone out there will find
me
'Til then I walk alone

Ah-ah, Ah-ah, Ah-ah, Aaah-ah,

Ah-ah, Ah-ah, Ah-ah

I'm walking down the line
That divides me somewhere in my mind
On the border line
Of the edge and where I walk alone

Read between the lines
What's fucked up and everything's alright
Check my vital signs
To know I'm still alive and I walk alone

I walk alone
I walk alone

I walk alone
I walk a...

My shadow's the only one that walks beside me
My shallow heart's the only thing that's beating
Sometimes I wish someone out there will find
me
'Til then I walk alone

Ah-ah, Ah-ah, Ah-ah, Aaah-ah
Ah-ah, Ah-ah

I walk alone
I walk a...

I walk this empty street
On the Boulevard of Broken Dreams
Where the city sleeps

And I'm the only one and I walk a...

My shadow's the only one that walks beside me
My shallow heart's the only thing that's beating
Sometimes I wish someone out there will find
me
'Til then I walk alone...

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