Train Song

Listener

I was alone, and my train was late that night
I saw a crumpled man blinded by the life that he treated himself to
Crippled from the nights receiving endless beatings that even a house couldn
't endure
Palm raised skyward, his meager belongings collected on the floor
Singing songs to no one about nothing, but crying because they mean so much
It's these babblings that keep his life going, keep the nickels flowing deep
 into his cup
There we both were framed in awkward silence, and I was in his living room i
nvading his trust
He finally said to me that he had "one last cigarette to smoke and it was ti
me to give it up"
But he laughed and added he "wasn't sure which to give up his life or the ha
bit"
He said "it's my habits that made my fingers weak, when my chances came I co
uldn't grab it
But it's my life that made it hard and when my opportunities were there for
free I chose my habits"
I half smiled and offered the most empathetic nod that I could conjure up, a
nd said "I hear you brother I've got problems too, but words won't fill your
 cup
I've got responsibilities to face and they're woven tight to my dreams
I've got more bills to pay than I have time and I'm starting to rip at the s
eams
I've got a plan and I know that if I stick to it I can accomplish happiness
I've got goals that beat my will and lately it's been hard to accept the cha
llenge."

And he said: "man, that's God talking to you, and I don't know why you can't
 see
You're so blind that you can't spare to make change because all your focus i
s on "m-e"
All wrapped up in your own skin that you can't help set an old man free
I've been in your shoes before it feels like it was yesterday if not at all
My existence has been a blink and for the life of me I can't remember what I
 saw."

That made so much sense to me, even though I convinced myself that he was to
tally insane
I bent over and lit his cigarette and told him to mind his own business
Because I was just waiting for my train
He said "I've been waiting here forever just dying in my skin, and the only
reason you're living life is because your curious what'll happen in the end"
"That might be true but why should I pay my hard earned attention to vagabon
d doctrine
If you've got so much knowledge to give why not treat yourself to what you'r
e offering
You probably have lived a hard life, and I apologize, but I have my own prob
lems, that you couldn't understand just like a lot of guys
Now, here's a couple bucks go buy yourself whatever makes you happy
Even though I've promised myself to never pay for you to make my city look t
rashy"
He refused the money and sat there singing songs of love and hate
I crammed the change in my pocket, called him a lunatic and went on with my
wait
As I stood there hovering near his tiny frame I could feel his eyes judging
me sadly

It's as if he had to convince me that my life was on the wrong track, and I needed it badly
I said "Hey old man, your cigarette's all smoked up, it's time for you to leave"
He looked at the trail of ash on his shirt and smiled as if it gave him some sort of relief
He propped himself up, collected his life and got prepared to become one with the night
He turned around and wished me luck with all my plans, and said something about learning to walk before I ran

Before I knew it he was out of my sight, and I had already forgotten his reasonings
I could hear my train coming and home was on my mind not his cryptic meanings
Another traveler was on the platform and for some reason he was running towards me
All I could see was his eyes, but it's his words that will always stick with me
Through his heavy breaths he asked if I had just spent time with the old man
I nodded in affirmation and tried to calm him, so he could tell me why he ran.

And he said: "man, that was God talking to you, how could you not see
That was God talking right to your face trying to hand you the keys
He was right here and I can't understand why you chose to make him leave
He just died in my arms right outside the station and said you were his only friend
He begged me to tell you about his life, make you see the light, give you your chance again."

I cringed at the reality that was facing me
I told the man I had no time for this and on my way I had to be
Right about that time my train pulled up and I made my escape
I sat in the empty plastic seat, and held tight to my fate

That was decades ago, and now I sit singing on my own platform
My belongings stowed tightly in my bags handing out my sad sad songs
And I say it's my habits that make my fingers weak, when my chances come I can't grab them
But it's my life that makes it hard and when my opportunities are there for free I choose my habits
I have no responsibilities and as a result I no longer need my dreams
I don't have any bills to pay, it's like I'm free but I'm really in captivity
I don't have any plans except to just sit here and try and weather the storm
I wish I had goals but if I had those then I wouldn't be here warning you on my platform
Singing train songs

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