Williamsburg Will Oldham Horror

Jeffrey Lewis

Today I went to Major Matt's to remaster my old album
And on the L train in the morning, I was pretty sure I saw Will Oldham,
He was wearin' the same sunglasses he had on stage at the Bowery Ballroom
Had he come to walk among the Williamsburgers of his kingdom
And like the burghers of Calais will a sacrifice be demanded?
To offer up our dreams and beg for mercy empty-handed?
And hapless in our hipness crowded 5 to an appartment
Relegate our dreams to hobbies and deny our disappointment
Cause The Stones in '65 want total satisfaction, kid
But The Stones in '69 see grace in just getting what you need
But if that's a victory then I'd hate to see what I'd look like defeated
Cause I know there are those among us who seem to get their dreams unimpeded
Today I went to Major Matt's to remaster my old album
And on the L train in the morning, i was really sure i saw Will Oldham,
He was wearin' the same sunglasses he had on stage at the Bowery Ballroom
Had he come to walk among the Williamsburgers of his kingdom
And you might say now there's a guy who seems to have their world laid out before him
Or you might say, he's just a rich kid or a fascist or a charlatan
But either way you say it if you look at indie-rock culture you really can't ignore him
And even if at first dismissive, after some listens you'll enjoy him
I was thinking this on the L train, intend on bursting my own bubble
How long should an artist struggle before it isn't worth the hassle?
And admit we aren't fit to be the one inside the castle
This quest for greatness or, at least hipness, just a scam
And too much trouble but then what makes on human being worthy of an easy ride
Born to be a natural artist you love or hate but can't deny
While us minions in our millions tumble into history's chasm
We might have a couple of laughs but we're still wastes of protoplasm
Today I was gonna waste some time and money to remaster some dumb old album
And on the L train in the morning, i was really sure I saw Will Oldham,
He was wearin' the same big sunglasses he had on stage at the Bowery Ballroom
Had he come to see the strife here in the gutters of his kingdom?
Where us noble starving artists are striving to feed our ego
Our mothers like our music our our friends come to our shows
And if our friends become successful, we'll consider them our foes
Go home to our 4 roomates after payin' big bucks for rockstars shows
What a nightmare! what a horror! i don't want no part of this
Get me off this crazy ride,
I'm gonna puke, I'm gonna piss! I'd rather kill myself,

I'd rather just relax or not exist
But you say you wanna do an e-mail interview? Oh what the heck, I can't resist!
'Hey, 'ma, guess what today, I did another magazine interview!
Honey, that's great, you're really famous!!' Yeah and I'm 27 too!
I kinda thought I was gonna grow up to do stuff that would benefit humanity
But it's getting harder to tell if this artist's life is even benefitting me
Cause I was gonna waste some time and money today to remaster some dumb old album
And on the L train in the morning, I was totally sure I saw Will Oldham,
He was wearin' the same big sunglasses he had on stage at the bowery ballroom
And since I was feeling in need of answers I just went right up and asked him, I said,
Will Bonnie Prince, Palace or whatever 'What do you think about it?
Is it worth being an artist or an indie-rock star, or are you better off without it?'
Cause I mean maybe the world would be better if we were all just uncreative drones,
No dead child, hood dreams to haunt us, a decent job, a decent home,
And if we have some extra time we could do real things to promote peace,
Become scientists or history teachers or un-corrupt police at least,
'Come on Will, you gotta tell me!!' I grabbed and shook him by the arm,
The L train was leaning Bedford with 10,000 white 20 somethings crowed on
He opened his mouth to speak but it was lost in the rumbling of the wheels
We were thrown together in a corner and I yelled 'Tell me, man, for real!'
You're living comfortably, I assume, even if you're not quite a household name
You've reached a pretty high level of success & critical acclaim
The L train got to first avenue and a bunch of people piled out
I was starring into his sunglasses and I was really freakin' out i was like,
Steamboat Willie Bonnie Prince of all this shit, you're like the king of a certain genre
But even you must want to quit like if you hear a record by Bob Dylan or Neil Young or whatever
You must start thinkin' 'People like me, but i won't be that good ever'
And I'm sure the thing is probably Dylan himself too stayed up some nights
Wishing he was as good as Ginsberg or Camus
And he was like 'Dude, I'm such a faker, I'm just a clown who entertains
and these fools who pay for my crap, they just have pathetic punny brains
and Camus probably wished he was Milton too or whatever, you know what i'm sayin'?!'
So Will, will you be straight with me now that it's just us 2 on this train?
Cause I was gonna spend some time and money today to remaster some dumb old album
And I saw you here on the L train
And I was like 'Hey, is that Will Oldham?' he must at least , have some perspective
Cause it's like, living in this town I get so confused & wound up & up tight
And I just don't know up from down
And then we'd reached the last stop and the subway was deserted
There was a long moment of silence and I let go of his shirt
I started to think that maybe I'd made some kind of big mistake
I tried to walk out onto the platform but by then it was too late
His sunglasses seemed to grow darker and still he hadn't even spoke
He just came right up behind me and put his hand around my throat
And threw me down onto the concrete and kicked my face in with his boot

And dragged me down onto the train tracks and tied my hands back with his coat
And I was slipping out of conciousness as he was slipping down my jeans
And he was punching me and humping me and I slipped off into a dream
So it might have just been a delusion
But I thought I heard him say something like 'Artists are pussies'
Then he climbed back up and ran away
So I lay there in the darkness on the train tracks cold and broken
The hours passed and I thought,
Well... maybe I won't remaster that old album
And then I started thinking maybe it really hadn't been Will Oldham
Even though he did hold my arms and fucked me just like Will sings in 'A sucker's evening'
But whether it was him or not I couldn't forget the words he'd spoken
'Artists are pussies', like we're wusses or we end up getting fucked
And other kinds of folks are dicks, tall, smart and strong
And born to fuck us up I know,
It sounds really sexist and stupid,
It's a terrible analogy but at that moment on the train tracks,
It made a lot of sense to me maybe it's just some kind of natural balance,
Like 2 types of mental gender that's gone on in all societies,
In one form or another like some dicks were born to conquer,
I probably would if I could but if i'm just a pussy, that's okay
Cause in a few months maybe, I'll put out something good.

Lyrics submitted by AndrÃ©.

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