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This I Believe

This I Believe: I Believe in the Subway

I've lived in the city my entire life. Nothing is more normal and soothing to me than the overwhelming sounds of the city. Arriving at Penn State, I was immediately depressed by the silence of the open grass fields, interrupted only by the sounds of the crickets. I longed for the dismal, condensed, and crowded city atmosphere and missed most my daily walks to the subway.

I close my eyes, and see so clearly Georgiana, my best friend, and I traveling home on the subway. We are walking through the plaza, down the block, and down the hidden stairs. Then walking through the main underground station, we pass all the fast-food restaurants, ignoring crazy people preaching and handing out flyers. Then somehow not stopping at Ritas, we spin through the turnstile, and then descend again deeper to the tracks, buried in the deep belly of the city.

We are talking about homework and weekend plans, but the loud noises of the surrounding crowds grumbling across the station make it hard to hear one another. We are trapped, between two tunnels of darkness and silence, in a crowd of businessmen, students, hobos, families, tourists, artists, hipsters, and people who simply warrant a stare.

We are peering over the edge onto the rusty rails, anxiously waiting, with our feet clinging to the patterned yellow warning strip. It's been over ten minutes and still no subway. Finally, piercing yellow eyes appear to the left. As the rusty screeching sound approaches, most step backward. But Georgiana and I are still, feeling pretty 'cool' hanging just barely over the edge, waiting for the wind stirred up from the wrath of the cranking robotic subway passing by to blow us away. It's coming and our excitement is rising and suddenly the yellow lights blind us, the screech renders our ears deaf, and we are thrown backwards! I believe in the Subway!

I open my eyes, and I miss most the metallic lull of the wheels banging against the tracks. I love the speed of the subway as it zooms past and screeches to a halt! I am struck with emptiness, longing for the subway's thrilling commotion. I miss the city.

The professor who assigned this project asked me how a subway was any different from a Cata bus or how a city street was any different from a college campus. I struggled to answer; and explaining the subway to her, I realized I was enthralled with the cities exhilaration and diversity and not just concrete and skyscrapers. There is no difference, was the right answer, because diversity and exhilaration can be found in just about anything. I believed in the subway for its parallel to the city atmosphere, though now I believe in the subway for its parallel to a universal atmosphere. So, That is why I now believe in the subway, because it has shown me that my love of diversity and commotion which the city instilled in me, can be sought out anywhere, it just may look a little different.