

Doug Schmude



All These Avenues

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All songs words & music by Doug Schmude



**Lost
Hubcap**
records

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All These Avenues



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Map of America

I used to work with this old man
We used to talk about the travels I'd planned
He'd pull out his old atlas and trace the route
With his old fingers, leaving no doubt
On the day he finally walked out the door
He took me aside and opened his drawer
Pulled out his old atlas and said it's time I pass this on
For my way home is short and the mystery is gone

*Here is my map of America
Many a thing has changed in my time
Here is my map of America
Carry it with you, you'll do just fine*

There's probably three rolls of tape holding it together
But in my hand it feels like a knife to cut the tether
The lines all connect and the pages all there
It's still 1200 miles from Baton Rouge to St. Claire
Sure the populations have changed
as the towns have grown
The signs have faded and there are a few new roads
So you're bound to meet a few folks
you didn't expect to meet
And get lost a time or two on a newly paved street
Souvenirs like wilted flowers
Don't mean nothing in your final hours
Avenues run both ways, clocks they run but one
I'll always remember the last words that he said
As he shook my hand and nodded his head
Son I ain't got much I'd call words to live by
Except make some mistakes
and don't be afraid of highway miles

Thirty three and a Third

Every Saturday night
He used to run out past the midnight air
Acting as if he owned this dusty little patch of nowhere

Now it's Saturday night and those days are gone
He stays in and reaches back with his phonograph arm
*He puts the needle down, the record spins around
The signal hits the amplifier,
travels down that speaker wire
He hangs on every word
Things just make a lot more sense
At thirty three and a third*

He don't listen to anything but records anymore
Gets them for a quarter at the second hand store
He knows about the compact disc
but he don't really care
That's for folks who are counting the days,
Waiting to get theirs
You could call him a coward; you could say it's wrong
But everything's all right when the turntable's on
He learned a long time ago that nothing is permanent
Like scratches in the vinyl life is full of disappointment
These old songs take him back to what he once was
He no longer jumps when the needle does

Standing in Lemoyne

I was 18, back in 1942
When the state engineer
Said they was going to dam the Platte
And this whole town's gonna drown when we do
Lemoyne, Nebraska was a small farming town
We didn't have the money to pay no lawyer bills
So we were all forced to higher ground
*62 years have come and gone
The drought has brought the lake down to its bed
And I'm standing in Lemoyne again
Standing in Lemoyne again*

See that rusted beer can lying in the sand?
That's where the pool hall and liquor store stood
I can almost hear that jukebox on the wind

I recall they hung signs outside that liquor store
Saying "Drink Whiskey, Hold the Water"
And "Dam the Water Board"

The folks down in Lincoln and Omaha
Are praying with a vengeance for the rain to fall
But standing in this lake bed, I'm a selfish man I know
For I got to say that it's good to be home

Here stood the church where I was baptized
They hauled it away on a flatbed trailer
Just as the water began to rise
This old stump was my brother's climbing tree
He left for the war before the dam was complete
He never came back from Italy

Wider than the Boulevard

Sometimes a man can feel like a dry riverbed
When the rain falls and the river flows
You grab, plead and beg
For the water to stay
But what the ground don't take, the sun bakes away
So I hang around this town
Waiting for the water to carry me down

*Every town needs a river wider than the boulevard
Just as every family has forgiveness*

Buried in the graveyard

*Stoptlights make it difficult to keep momentum on my side
Out here where the highway and western skies collide*

I've seen enough billboards in my lifetime
To know that a man can die while he's waiting on a sign
But I can't get my heart to convince my worried mind
So I waste another day
Waiting to wake up and find myself on my way

I like to watch the virga coming down
I guess I can sympathize with never touching ground
But I still wonder who's to blame
For wasting all that rain

This town has a thousand reasons never to get out
Stop signs and parking lots and other forms of doubt
And all these avenues amount to the same route
So with nothing left to prove,
I wait around to make my move

Wyoming Wind

Sailing across the Wyoming plain
In a beat up pickup truck
Chasing the fading summer light
Kicking up miles of dust
High above, the clouds roll by
as if dropping rain here'd be a waste
This is God's country, you always say
Though most folks say only God could love this place

May you never dwell on what you lack

And may you always find

The Wyoming wind at your back

The signs of man are few and far between
Except for windmills and barbwire fence
Every year you hope that when you return
You'll find that nature's held her defense
Soon these hills will all be covered with snow
Besides you got bills to pay
So you're left wondering
Just how you're going to make it through winter
Without seeing the Milky Way

The coal cars running through Medicine Bow
Are just as full as they can be
But they won't sit in Denver long
Before they are all empty

Buildings slowly begin to appear
Buildings turn into towns
The lights in the sky are soon overcome
By the lights on the ground
You stop to fill your tank, add a quart of oil
The engine's running fine

Then it's one last look in the rear view
As you cross the state line

Natchez Trace

It took two long years to lose my faith
Five years since, still ain't no grace
I guess I lost my way out on the Natchez Trace
*It's just a long black line from Nashville to Natchez
It runs through the day, it runs through the night
It never let anyone go without a fight*

In Tennessee, I could not stay
I packed it in and wiped my slate
And cast my lot out on the Golden State
Where I spend my days whiskey bent
My money gone, ambition spent
Two thousand miles away the trace won't relent

In this town where I now dance and sweat
When the East wind blows, full of heat and regret
I hear the Trace calling in my debt
So with an old guitar, silence and dust
I try to find a way to win back my own trust
It's an empty gesture sure as the rain in Los Angeles

200 Gallons of Gasoline

You were just a small town girl
With a small minded man
Tired of living by the back of his hand
And listening to the clock in the hall
Tick away like a wrecking ball
You lie awake with your fears
Wondering if you'll ever get out of here
*I'll give you 200 gallons of gasoline
You can make it with 200 gallons of gasoline*

Then one night he took it too far
Or maybe you felt closer than ever before

So when he passed out you said goodbye
Struck a match and let it fly
With the windows glowing like the setting sun
You turned the key and let that Mustang run
You've been over this in your mind a 1,000 damn times
So you think you wouldn't
Be surprised by how it all feels
But right now nothing feels real
Except the blood on the vine
And all 8 cylinders firing in perfect time
On your way out of town
All them oak trees gather round
They creep up to the side of the road
Like a jury where the verdict has already been told
As your heart remembers how to pound
You grit your teeth and put the hammer down

Paddle Wheels & Railroad Steel

I am a sentry, Standing in the heart of Warren County
From this Earth I was born
Before the flags of the Confederacy
Were tattered and worn
It was brothers killing brothers
Leaving nothing but childless mothers
Until the Mississippi breeze
felt the banner of surrender back in 1863
*I've seen paddle wheels and railroad steel
Wagon wheels and automobiles,
People killing people in the fields
And I grow weary
of throwing down shade in the summer
Standing up to the lightning and the thunder
I believe that this year may be my last*

The flood of '27 made us all doubt
The promise of heaven
I spend 7 long days under water
With those who couldn't be saved

I am but wood and leaves of green
A product of the rain and the things I have seen
My roots run deep, my roots run deep
But they begin to recede
I'll always remember losing leaves
That fateful September
With no planes in the sky,
It felt like forever 'til the fourth of July

20 lbs of Grain (10 Years in a Barrel)

Long before I came along you had it all planned
Who'd be there, where they'd stand
And what'd be our song
It was to be in June with the sun a shining
Your momma would be crying when you said "I do"
*It took 20 lbs of grain and 10 years in a barrel
To give myself the courage to say farewell
Fare thee well my love
It was good while it lasted
But honey now I'm past it
20 lbs of grain and 10 years in a barrel*
You showed me off like a new gold ring
There was only one thing
I wasn't who you'd thought
The days turned to years before I could see
You didn't really love me it was just the idea
Mash the grain and let it steep
Stack them barrels 10 barrels deep
Roll no barrel before its time
Then line 'em up like clothes on a line
I didn't keep score but of fun we had plenty
Our good days were many
But I don't long for more
I wish you all the best but I don't miss you
May you find a love that's true
And lay your fears to rest

'Til the Night Gave Way

He lit out of Richmond without a map
Rode down the highway
Over the Cumberland Gap
'Til that Nashville skyline shone in the sun
Calling him home like the prodigal son
He dragged his guitar all across that town
Looking for someone who understood his sound
From the smoke filled bar rooms to the alleyways
No one heard what he had to say
*He drank Old Barton Whiskey
And sang the Grey Chevy Blues
He played his guitar to keep the demons at bay
'Til the night gave way*
With no place to sleep except the back of his van
He took no charity he was too proud a man
The devil came knocking and his van got towed
He had no guitar to carry that load
He was living on the street come November
When that winter hit Nashville like a hammer
He lay down, sang his last song
When they found him he was all but gone
The magnolias were blooming
When a name was found
They pulled his sister out of some nameless town
She drove down to Nashville all alone
Signed her name and asked Jesus to carry him home

The 9 of Diamonds & the 8 of Spades

I told you that the bail money
Was in the kitchen drawer
Then I kissed you on the cheek one time
and headed out the door
Don't get me wrong, trouble ain't my intention
But intention ain't worth a damn
I know my inclination

Soon I was talking trash and shooting 8 ball
Nobody paid me any mind and I made last call
Will you forgive me in the morning?
You always forgive me in the morning

By the grace of God I almost made it home
I slept in the neighbor's yard
And you slept by the phone
Will you forgive me in the morning?
You always forgive me in the morning

*I'll be your 9 of diamonds
You can be my 8 of spades
We ain't much for winning
But we sure like to play*

You ain't got no poker face
You always smile when you bet
So it wasn't no surprise
When you came home with an unpaid debt
We made the big sacrifice and sold our TV
Now were listening to the radio eating rice and beans

When You Lay Me Down

When you lay me down lay me where the wind blows
So when I get restless I can get up and ride
When you lay me down lay me where the snow flies
So when I feel shame I have a blanket
For to shield my eyes

*Count me among the lucky ones
For I won't spend another day on the run*

When you lay me down
Lay me where the flowers bloom
So when I get lonesome
I have someone I can talk to
When you lay me down
Lay me where the leaves are turning
So with every passing year I can still be learning

Musicians

Doug - Except as noted below, all acoustic, electric and resonator guitars, Nashville high string guitar, banjo, mandolin & vocals

Bobbo Byrnes - Organ & bass (except as noted below) & electric guitar on *Map of America*, *Wider Than the Boulevard* & *Wyoming Wind*. Banjo & Mandolin on *Standing in Lemoyne*

Corey Gash - Percussion

Georgiana Hennessy - Violin

Danny Ott - Lap Steel Guitar on *33 & a Third*

John Fitzgerald - Banjo on *20 lbs of Grain*

Eddie Hill - Stand up Bass on *20 lbs of Grain*

Dave Miller - Harmony Vocals on *20 lbs of Grain*

Boris Bengin - Harmonica on *200 Gallons of Gasoline*

All songs © 2014 Doug Schmude. BMI

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Mixed by Bobbo Byrnes

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Vintage speaker photo by Mina Stachowiak

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