

The Bridge

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Sometime before I was born, an anonymous artist had spray-painted the question “*whiCh OnE yall hit My Boy on His hade?*” on the train bridge between Cheltenham and Abington townships, like a hometown banner. Later in life, simply mentioning this catchphrase was like a secret password to anyone who had grown up in the area during that era. My mom had always pointed it out when we drove underneath, and though we didn’t understand the absurd humor as children, we laughed nonetheless. It was something we shared, not just as a family, but as a neighborhood. Every town has a legend, and this outlaw’s artwork was ours. Over the years, many cars passed, and I was sure the passengers shared our sense of camaraderie, even if we never discovered precisely what it meant.

A while back, my brother was walking to a nearby deli when he spied a flyer seeking the source of this iconic graffiti. A contact number was listed, but he never followed up to see if anyone had called. Local government eventually erased the logo in an effort to clean up the neighborhood and boost community spirit.

After the bridge was repainted, some sentimentalist tried to restore the effect by scrawling “*W’ich won y’all heet ma boy on he hade?*” with little success. The mistakes, we assumed, were intentional, the mismatched caps were missing, and the passion was fake. We just didn’t believe it. The bandit had even used apostrophes! Whoever had hit that boy on his “hade,” whoever had defaced public property to bring us such joy would never be found, and when the bridge was painted again that following summer, no one bothered replacing the slogan.