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To the Hills

Daniel Graham

I go to the hills today, far from sight and past the horizon where I am unsure whether the world even stretches to. I go and leave this advent of my life behind, but I'm not alone. I have my friends. I have what I've learned. I have the times I know—the times I knew—and the time that will inevitably come. I see the splendor in the fleeting moments I loved and wish with unwavering admiration to fix all the things I regret from the times I know, and despite those times I go. In spite of those times I go.

We go to the hills today, souls bound and entwined across millennia to stand the silent testament to our very existence. Our souls, both weighed down and renewed by memories, shattered dreams, feeble naivete, and all the other relics we hold close to ourselves as mementos. They remind us of how we had traversed as far as we have. We cradle these things in our hearts as we walk to the hills. The hills both infinitely far away and inspiringly close.

At the foot of the rolling green hills we look up. We look at our hopes and desires and we climb to them. Different dreams, different hills, and yet we all reach them together.

The hills are fresh, and we finally rest our weary bodies. Our journey finished at last, we inhale as one and brace ourselves for what we know we must do. We nourish our souls as we look back to the footprints we left behind: the markers of our pilgrimage stretching to infinity. We share the feeling that wells up in our hearts as we see just how far we have come, and our bond grows deeper. We collect our memories, relishing in the good and helping each other through the bad—for both are worth reliving.

Then we do the inevitable: we look ahead. We look farther into the future, and see the silhouettes of more hills shrouded in mist on the horizon. The hilltop we stand upon suddenly feels old and worn, and a familiar urge overtakes our minds and bodies. If we stay here we can't grow. If we don't grow we can't really say we've lived. Knowing this, we collectively smile as the same solitary thought flies through our heads.

"To the hills we go."