

StoryCorps Interview at Bootheel Youth Museum
Darren Green and Matthew Hampton

Matthew: The museum itself is awesome and, when you play here, as a kid, you, you get more of a hands' on learning experience than your traditional-style museum. But, as you come through, like, later in life, umm, you stop, and you actually, like, take some time; "man, they were, like, trying to teach me something [laughing] with these toys, that I played with, as a kid."

Darren: Every year, come around here, like playing with the flip-flop drums and all these Cajun drums—that's where I got my love for drums and music. And, then walking through here, just coming to this interview, remembering all the good times that I had here as a little kid, and now we're going to be seniors. Matthew, we're going to be seniors.

Matthew: I know, right?

Darren: And, it makes me feel so old.

Matthew: Do you think, once college is done, are you going to come back to Malden? Are you going to live in Malden? Cause . . .

Darren: Aww, man . . .

Matthew: I see a lot of people, forty, thirty-five, and older, people that went to school here, graduated, and now I see them, in this small town . . . I don't know, it, it looks like something I don't want. But, still, I feel like it's my responsibility to come back and kind of support this town—even though I'd much rather be somewhere else, becoming successful, doing bigger things . . .

Darren: Because, I'm going to be honest here for a second, there's not a whole lot of jobs here in Malden, Missouri.

Matthew: There's not; you kind of have to make your own thing.

Darren: Yeah, you really do. And, I would love to come back here and visit all the time, but I just can't see myself coming back here and living for the rest of my life. I mean, I love it here, and I'm a proud Green Wave, but, spending the rest of your life where you started, just . . . man . . . I don't know.

Matthew: Think of it this way: if everybody that we've gone to high school with . . .

Darren: Yup.

Matthew: . . . didn't come back—they all went their separate ways and they all just kind of vanished from each other's lives—they went to metropolitan areas, they got awesome jobs, they, they have families, their, their futures are bright. And then this town kind of just has the people it's always had and . . .

Darren: Yeah, that's a sad thought.

Matthew: It, it is.

Darren: [deep breath] I mean, Malden's given me so much, like the town and everything. It's given me, personally, so much and it's sad to think that this is my, possibly, last year . . .

Matthew: In Malden?

Darren: . . . in Malden.

Matthew: Like, full-on year. Whew. I hadn't even thought of that. Wow.

Darren: I haven't let that sink in yet and it's still a process that I'm working on. I've never thought about what I want to do or where I wanna go until the past couple years and now it's hitting me that I *have* to make a decision. We're going to go to Mizzou together and we're going to live a bourgeoisie lifestyle—after this. It's going to be fantastic.

Matthew: It's going to be sad.

Darren: Malden's offered me so much but when I'm grow up and everything's going to be different, I'm . . .

Matthew: It's going to be sad.

Darren: It's going to be really sad.

Matthew: It's going to be scary.

Darren: I mean, everything's scary. The future's really scary.

Matthew: Dan, it's been awesome growing up with you.

Darren: Dude, Matthew, it has been the thrill of a lifetime.

Matthew: It's been awesome growing up with Malden.

Darren: It is a pleasure to call you my friend. And it is a pleasure to call my hometown Malden, Missouri.