

Remembering tomorrow

by [Thomas Schmidt](#) in the [May 8, 2019](#) issue

It's N-scale trains these days, delight du jour
As I drive up the hill and think I can
And think I can switch tracks to turn him toward
What happens in first grade apart from recess,
But no, although he joins me willingly
On errands, reaches up instinctively
In parking lots, at corners, takes my hand
While scanning the horizon for a sign
Of toy stores or construction vehicles,
Then tells me in a confidential tone
That Santa Claus is real, he knows because
In school he learned there is a real North Pole,
And I, relieved it isn't all recess
But also theological research,
Resume the journey home where he inhales
A sandwich, minus crust, cut into fours,
And gulp of milk, from which the drips and crumbs
Trail to some tiny trucks and Play-Doh blobs
That I roll pat roll pat roll pat into
Array of obstacles for tires to squish
Until a sudden nature call requiring
An adult escort for quality control,
Then back to trucks and trucks and trucks until
Another meal, a bath, a storybook,
A nudge or two through various ablutions,
Deployment of the covers and the loveys,
A back rub while I improvise a tale
Of which he is the hero all aboard
A dreamland train saved from derailling dragons;
I hesitate as I tiptoe away
In hope of word or even glance of love,

Then shrug remembering tomorrow when
I'll be alone except of course for God
Whose day will be a lot like mine today.