

On the Boxer
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With my serious hearing impairment I can't hear music at all. I don't know a trumpet from a saxophone and can't tell you what anybody's voice sounds like, and I can't discern melody at all. But there's one place I can hear perfectly: in my dreams. Last night, I heard the old song "The Boxer" sung by Simon and Garfunkel with perfect clarity, including the last verse.

In the clearing stands a boxer,
And a fighter by his trade
And he carries the reminders
Of ev'ry glove that laid him down
And cut him till he cried out
In his anger and his shame,
"I am leaving, I am leaving."
But the fighter still remains

Paul Simon, who wrote the song, said it is about saying "Everybody's beating me up, and I'm telling you now I'm going to go away if you don't stop."

I imagined a response: "You don't get it. We want you to go away. We are beating you up so that you'll leave. But you are a fighter and you remain. We might be going at it the wrong way with you, because you just keep taking punches and hanging in there. Maybe the best way to get rid of you is for us to depart the area and leave you standing alone in the clearing."