

Euclid Avenue

The end of thinking is hard to imagine.
—Hardest thing to decouple the carriages.
I know too little of balance, or symmetry,
and when the train of thought
finally comes into station, it wasn't that car at all
but the next one, that was the mother of worry.
What would I do without my boxcars
of terrible geometry?

Connection is available for PATH

Maybe at Atlantic we'll all interchange,
or gather at the river for the Franklin Ave. shuttle
to Euclid Avenue.
'If I take the F, can I reach Myrtle?
Will you grant me your peace at Dekalb?'

By night, I am summoned, textually, by your needs.
Ever practical in daylight, you say: 'Myrtle?
you'll have to go all the way into Manhattan
and take the L, unless you want to try the G,
the cross-town local, a time-consuming prospect.'
Then, the theorist in you: 'you see,
until recently Brooklyn wasn't a destination.'

In the dream, though, you take me literally,
standing like an oracle in the door of the B.
I'm on the same platform, F, effigy,
and though not even half an alphabet away,
there's no chance to explain.

In this city
there's no real beauty contest for trees:
which bird flies higher, the eagle or the wren,
over the Beech Walk, or the linden trees of Berlin.
Who is learning to walk slow?
Or happy with being invisible?

Maybe the old man in Donegal tweed
 on the platform bench,
 clear-eyed, with still hands
 among these anxious souls
 checking their texts, blackberrying,
 is almost an angel. For a moment
 he could be my grandfather.

These faces on the bough:
 there, and then gone.
 Faces within the surfaces of the river,
 faces beneath convexities of rain
 travelling together, and then away,
 like the yellow windows of parallel trains
 diverging beneath Alphabet City,
 the angles and panes
 of disassembling isosceles triangles.

Connection is available

The last thing you say is:
 'who lives at Euclid Avenue?'
 and have gone before I can answer.
 I imagine a place of calm symmetry
 and placid solution,
 found through axiom, rule and proof,
 though in the waking and the dream
 I've never been to Euclid Avenue.

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