

The Platform
By Lenhardt Stevens

While a man waited for his train
At the voiceless platform in winter,
His coat, with room, hanging loosely
On a frame that buckled in the wind,
He made a pass at the other rider,
Who, like him, was bound for company,
And they sat on a three-seated bench,
Noting the absence by placing bags in its place,
They did not speak of their destination,
Not wanting to make the other divulge
What it would be immaterial to consider,
But they did talk about how the cold
Was either intolerable or sufferable,
Depending on which minute it was observed.
She thought on peregrinations past
When she would amble through the snow,
Taking the time for herself to be moving
Without the need for watch, calendar, or plan,
But he was in the back of his mind
Wondering if he would miss his departure,
Perhaps during the conversation on how legs,
If left too long to idle,
Would seek motion, a distractive sort,
That no one living could ignore,
Because it gave the body the notion,
Once possessed, so difficult to withdraw,
Of guided trails, at the end of which
Inner fires could warm a winter night,
Never asking where they came or where they went
Nor why these questions arose
From a voice no one waiting would ignore.

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