

A Train Through the Past

The antiquated pot belly stove
Warmed my frozen fingers as I stood
Awaiting the Erie Lackawanna Railroad.
The ticket agents voice echoed

Throughout the two room station
As my borrowed overcoat, a bit too large
Pressed against my neck while the Daily News
Proclaimed the latest murder in the big city.

A young mother patiently amusing her child
Excitedly announced the arrival of the 1:38 train.
The doors creaked open and the frozen winter air
Greeted the coolness of the empty passenger car.
I sat on the hardened pew and left my little town.

We rattled and bucked so quickly past my youth,
Speeding through the places I ran and romped as a boy.
The conductor seemed to sense my nostalgia
As he blasted a salute to the home where I was born.

In minutes we rolled through towns that
Were once light years away.
I admired them from a distance,
Now I was an outsider looking in.

In Maplewood, my reflection was disturbed by four young strangers.
As I infringed upon their conversation, I discovered
They, too, were visitors from the west.
We talked of California sunshine...
My spirits brightened, but my heart was saddened
As I now realized, I could never truly go home again.

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