

Tull Jethro

"Journeyman"

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Spine-tingling railway sleepers
Sleepy houses lying four-square and firm.
Orange beams divide the darkness
Rumbling fit to turn the waking worm.
Sliding through Victorian tunnels
where green moss oozes from the pores.
Dull echoes from the wet embankments
Battlefield allotments. Fresh open sores.
In late night commuter madness
Double-locked black briefcase on the floor,
like a faithful dog with master
sleeping in the draught beside the carriage door.
To each Journeyman his own home-coming
Cold supper nearing with each station stop
Frosty flakes on empty platforms
Fireside slippers waiting. Flip. Flop.
Journeyman night-tripping on the late fantastic
Too late to stop for tea at Gerard's Cross
and hear the soft shoes on the footbridge shuffle
as the wheels turn biting on the midnight frost.
On the late commuter special

Carriage lights that flicker, fade and die

Howling into hollow blackness

Dusky diesel shudders in full cry.

Down redundant morning papers

Abandon crosswords with a cough

Stationmaster in his wisdom

told the guard to turn the heating off

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