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## Letter From Waverly Station

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# Letter From Waverly Station

Natalie Nicholson

My ballet slippers, silver necklace  
And Mahalia Jackson LP,  
Buried at the bottom of a footlocker  
Brought home with the body after the war,  
Lie beneath a dress I will never wear.  
Please, love, bring them to my parents,  
I am leaving, and the light is leaving with me.

He flutters like celluloid through ceiling panes,  
Reeled images thread through the projector carriage,  
Jostling my memory like luggage in his hand,  
Train schedule and ticket,  
Tucked like a print handkerchief,  
Stuck like a signpost, in his breast pocket.

Down the polished platform we walk,  
With its compact iron horses hitched  
To countless steel coffins, all marshaled and pinched,  
Like so many handsome soldiers and contemplative cigarettes,  
The playful interruptions of time and distance,  
Smoldering in place with me.

Once and a while, the pent up steam  
Huffs against the rails, and you can see that this train, too,  
Like the resolute child,  
Packing only what has fit into a small suitcase,  
Come what will, has made the decision to shuffle,  
Like the present age, towards the aperture alone.

And, if I'm not mistaken, his voice has an echo,  
As if, past the coffee and croissant,  
He's escorting me to my seat.