Trains in the Dark

Mardelle Fortier

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Trains in the Dark

Mardelle Fortier

In a long Midwestern night the lonely train sings as it passes like a ghost and I burrow deeper into blankets to dream of Paris, Gare du Nord.

In darkness, Degas leaves the train and strolls, half-blind to his studio, where his eyes caress a little ballerina for painting after painting of poses.

In deep fog-feathered evening the train beats as it marks the seasons passing and I wake from dreams and try to sleep, stirred by fantasies.

Rocked by a train, Degas remembers touching Cassatt’s neck as she paused between brush strokes. His acid tongue wiped out a romance fragile as pastels.

Through dark the train moans as it passes breathing across my life--never entering, leaving me restless and longing; music like a fickle lover’s ambiguous kiss.