

Orpheus at Temple Meads

I pluck at hairs on the back of your head,
The image drifts like strands of hair, then snags
A strand of you in station window glare.
You laugh at Isambard Kingdom Brunel
Who stares at us from the side of the path
-the london statue's better off, you say-
One engineer who charmed himself across
Two river cities, counting bars and time
In metal trusses and truces with death.
He watches as you proudly take the stairs,
To be fair I forgot that Platform Five
Is underground, descend one down then up;
Your ticket sings blue light goodbyes gone wild,
QR codes across the gate let you go,
Coffee searing metropolitan burns
Into your tongue.

I know you won't look back.
You never do, I've known that, all this time;
I cling to rafters and the empty red
And brick, the ceiling full of people but
The rafters tell me nothing even as
They catalogue this library of my life,
Becoming light when ticket stubs have run
To decompose to screenshots; you are left
Immortalised as pixels in my brain.
Fourteen-oh-five to Paddington, not late
For once in my privately-owned lifetime.
I want to catch the corner of the light
In your mouth, taste your voice as it breathes mist,
That twinkle in the expanse of your teeth.
Drowning now in faceless silence, leaving
The rhythm of your touch music enough
To bridge the gap between this world, and next.