

Harness-Racing With A Train

Debasish Mishra

I am a train which trundles through
green grandeur and grim darkness,

tunnels, long and lingering
like questions bereft of answers,

and stations starred with myriad stares
of nameless orphaned faces

Towers and trees, hills and bridges,
gently pass like benign seasons

while transfixed shepherds in identical
shapes tend their thousand cattle

They too pass, silently,
like the hourglass for lost milk-teeth

I carry things which are not my own,
the cargo of strange multitudes

Soon I'll be emptied entirely
of the relics and the relationships

which have grown over me like moss,
like letters written on my skin

I keep moving and grind the wheels
churning out a canopy

of dust and smokes, a string of stories,
until finally, the signalman,

standing on the brink of eternity,
waves his flag and I respond

with a dying whistle and my momentum
breaks in some obscure station

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