Quit The Smoke

By : Richmaggs

This poem germinated on the Euston to Liverpool train. Although rhyming reasonably well, the inconsistent length and flow of each verse hopefully suggests the unpredictability and disorganisation of London while maintaining the rhythm of the moving train.

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Quit The Smoke

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Parallel rails and a near perfect symmetry,

Away from the Smoke where my miseryâ s obligatory.

The dead sleepers doze on their bed forever sedatory,

My mind awakes excited thoughts that are no more derogatory.

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Fate is at the helm and she navigates me north

Ever closer to my realm and the cities of my birth.

Iâ m attached to a line that pulls me in forever reeling

To a place that is mine and the reassuring feeling

That this speeding metal carriage makes my vapour trail get thinner,

My stubborn mental marriage to the north begins to shimmer.

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Quitting the Smoke is like ditching a habit,

With no real withdrawal or a warning on the packet.

The tubes are like veins leaving fatty deposits

At each station stop - alight here for a market

Of impersonal stalls and people with walls

And no eyes for me as I wade through and crawl

Along a platform of bees in their cold aloof hive,

Never has a city so dead ever been so alive.

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The metal wheels on the metal rails,

Quit The Smoke

This freedom feels and never fails

To seal the deal that canâ t derail

My urge so real, this place so stale.

The fields unfold and demand I stare

Through a window of mould into rarified air.

The rattle slows and weâ re nearly there

And my mind knows that my life isnâ t fair.

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We plough through a valley, in our wake a dereliction

Of architectural confusion that confirms my non addiction

To this particular brand of smoke and its high of isolation

Among the swarming mute masses with their sensory deprivation.

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We slow to a shunt and we shunt to a stop,

We alight and we walk beneath a dawdling station clock,

That informs me Iâ m home and that Iâ m at journeyâ s end,

An unhurried northern city that will forever be my friend.

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