

Less Than Strangers

Traveller *Anyone.*

It's a busy morning underground, swarms of bodies flood the tubes. The doors of the tube close. The train departs. The Traveller steps on the platform. The previous train took the majority of the stations passengers, 1/5 remain. The traveller turns right upon entering the platform.

Traveller
It's morning.
Eyes are heavy, breath is dense.
People on either side, if I speak up I'm penalised.
Shocked looks and startled eyes - "did they just speak?" They think.
But I don't.
It's just silence.
Silence underground. Silence filling tunnels for miles around.

*It's coming.
Metal, screeches - a sweet sound
Relieved thoughts and mind's eased,
Calm.
The gust of wind is toxic, yet feels so good in heat.
Sweat is forming; thoughts are dropping,
It's sad, it's lonely, no one will speak - on this journey I endure.*

*I'm on. It's tight.
The silence grabs you by the throat and holds you down.
You want to sit but now you stand.*

*Who am I?
Are you thinking of the night I've had or the day that lies in wait?
Are you thinking?
About the times I've cried or the times I've laughed?
Are you thinking about me at all?
You,
You don't know who I am, or what I do.
You sit there, eyes distant, glued to the air.
The girl opposite is the same, plugged in, eyes drained, foot tapping to, what?
I won't know, and neither will she - she'll forget by the time she's off.
Potential lovers gaze with flickering eyes, but won't speak - it's taboo.
The drunken man is half asleep, judgement follows too.*

*It's strange, I think.
That you will not know,
The pain I've got or the joy beneath eyes.
You won't know,
The times I've had to fight, or run.
It's real.
For me.
But not for you.
You don't know.
You don't care. That's it, and neither do I,
We're less than strangers, we can't be met with an eye.
And now, now your chance has gone,
You won't know today, who I am.
Because this is my stop.*