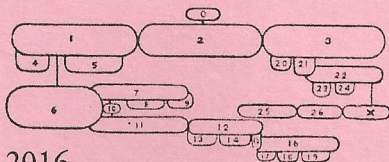


# HOW YOU REMEMBER THE IRON HORSE OR “THE IRON HORSE”

by Shiv Kotecha



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A Present Tense Pamphlet

FROM *EUPHORIA*

HOW YOU REMEMBER THE IRON HORSE  
OR “THE IRON HORSE”

SHIV KOTecha



YOU DO NOT REMEMBER  
WHEN IT IS THAT YOU  
FIRST SEE IT.

STOP.

NO.

AND YOU HAVE  
NO IDEA  
WHERE IT IS  
YOU ARE  
WHEN YOU FIRST  
SEE IT EITHER,  
ALL OF IT,  
ALL OF A SUDDEN.

AND WITH IT  
ALL THE STUFF  
THAT IT HOLDS,  
AND NOT JUST THAT  
BUT THAT WHICH  
HOLDS IT TOO,  
THE THIN BAGLIKE LAYER  
THAT IS CONTINUOUS  
WITH AND COVERS UP  
ITS DEEPEST CAVITY.

YOU DON'T REMEMBER  
THE ONE BAG  
THAT YOU SAW  
AND THAT WAS ONE  
IN A SERIES OF BAGS,  
ALL OF WHICH ARE  
FILLED UP WITH  
AN INFLORESCENT  
AMARANTH PINK  
ALUMINUM LIQUID—  
DRIBBLING OUT EVEN—  
AND THAT FOR YEARS,  
TEN YEARS  
AT LEAST

HAD BUILT ITSELF UP  
INSIDE OF IT AND  
JUST SAT THERE  
WAITING FOR YOU,  
ONE BAG  
ON TOP OF ANOTHER  
INSIDE OF IT—  
AND WHICH  
AT THE MOMENT  
YOU WERE THERE  
WITH IT,  
YOU’LL BELIEVE ME,  
BEGAN TO SEEP OUT  
AND THEN BURST  
FORTH, OUT  
OF THE TINY PORES  
OF THE THIN LAYER  
THAT NOW I’VE TOLD  
YOU COVERED IT,  
AS IT WENT AHEAD  
TO OBLITERATE  
ITSELF FOR  
YOU.

OKAY NOW.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL  
BELIEVE ME  
WHEN I TELL YOU  
THAT ITS NAME.  
WHEN IT DOES THIS  
ALL OVER YOU  
IS THE IRON HORSE.

AND I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT THE STUFF OF IT  
AS IT MOVES UP  
AND MAKES ITS WAY  
OUT OF THE IRON HORSE  
AND ONTO YOU

NOW.  
REMEMBER.  
I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER.  
WHAT IT IS I TOLD YOU.  
THAT THOUGH  
THE IRON HORSE  
IS DESIGNED TO  
BE USED TO

WILL CHANGE INTO  
A THING THAT IS  
ENTIRELY UNLIKE IT,  
THE IRON HORSE  
AND MAKE IT MUCH  
MORE LIKE YOU  
AT THE MOMENT  
THAT IT DOES IT.  
AND WHEN IT  
FINALLY DOES  
COME FORTH  
AFTER YEARS  
OF SITTING THERE  
SWELLING, COY  
TO A PINCH,  
IT WILL BECOME  
LIKE YOU ARE  
TO ME, A THING  
THAT IS EXTRA  
TO IT, A THING  
WHICH IS ONLY  
MADE TO KEEP YOU  
IN ITS BIND,  
HOWEVER LITTLE  
OF IT THAT YOU  
SEE OF IT  
OR THAT YOU  
CAN REMEMBER  
SEEING OF IT,  
FOR HOWEVER LONG  
IT TAKES FOR IT  
TO KEEP YOU STILL,  
ENTIRELY STILL ,  
AND IN YOUR PLACE,  
THERE WITH IT,  
AS YOU ARE WITH ME.

LISTEN TO ME.  
YOU DO NOT  
REMEMBER.

BUT YOU WILL

DISEMPower FEELINGS,  
TO CUT THROUGH THEM  
AS IF IT WERE  
TO REMOVE THEM  
FROM ANY REMAINING  
ATTACHMENT  
HOWEVER FALSE  
OR FAULTY  
YOU HAVE TOWARD THEM  
AND TO DO IT  
AS IF WITH A  
SINGLE SLICE,  
BILATERALLY,  
AS IF IT  
THE IRON HORSE,  
WERE BURNING A LINE  
DIRECTLY THROUGH  
A DRY FIELD, SAY,  
OR AS IF IT WERE  
BUILDING, BY WAY OF FIRE,  
A KIND OF MAIN STREET  
THAT THE IRON HORSE  
IS BETTER USED  
NOT TO CUT  
THROUGH FEELINGS  
AS IT WAS MADE TO DO  
BUT IS REALLY INTENDED  
TO CUT THROUGH  
VARIOUS TYPES OF METAL.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT THIS IS NOT  
A MATTER OF DISCUSSION  
AS THE LATTER USE  
OF THE IRON HORSE  
IS BETTER  
AND MORE ENJOYABLE  
THAN THE FORMER.

FOR ME,  
THE IRON HORSE

BELIEVE ME  
WHEN I TELL YOU  
THAT THE LIQUID  
THAT BURSTS  
FORTH FROM ITS  
INSIDES WILL BE  
FROM THAT POINT  
FORWARD THE ONLY  
THING THAT REMAINS  
BETWEEN YOU  
AND YOUR MEMORY  
OF SEEING IT,  
THE IRON HORSE,  
WHEN IT IS  
THAT YOU DO  
FOR THE FIRST TIME.

AND ANYTHING  
YOU COULD SAY TO ME  
NOW OR EVER,  
TO SAY,  
CALL UP SEEING  
THE IRON HORSE  
FROM MEMORY,  
WHETHER OR NOT  
YOU SAY IT  
OUT LOUD OR  
TO YOURSELF,  
WHEN YOU SAY  
SOMETHING LIKE  
“OH SHIT”  
OR “OH YEAH”  
OR “WAIT NO”  
OR “YEAH THERE WAS  
THAT TIME WHEN”  
OR “SO”  
ABOUT IT  
AND THAT APPEARS  
TO YOU AS A MEMORY  
OF A PROMISE  
YOU MADE TO  
THE IRON HORSE

CUT VERY EASILY  
AND WAS ALWAYS  
MORE THAN WILLING  
TO BE PUT TO TASK  
JUST AFTER IT WAS  
THAT IT FIRST  
APPEARED THERE,  
IN MY HAND,  
AS READY TO CUT THROUGH  
MY METAL  
IN A STRAIGHT DIRECTION  
MERE MINUTES AFTER  
I FIRST SAW IT.

AS IF, WHILE DOING ITS JOB  
THE IRON HORSE  
WERE SAYING SOMETHING  
TO ME LIKE “HEY.  
IT’S NICE TO MEET YOU.”  
AT THE SAME TIME  
THAT IT WERE SAYING  
SOMETHING LIKE  
“YES I CAN.  
AND I REALLY  
REALLY WANT TO.”  
AS IF IT WERE  
FROM THAT MOMENT  
FORWARD ALWAYS  
THERE TO WEATHER  
ALL SORTS OF LONG  
AND MULTIDIRECTIONAL  
CUTTING SESSIONS  
WITHOUT EVER  
SHOWING A SIGN  
OF GETTING WEARY  
OR TIRED  
OR SAYING ANYTHING  
TO DISSUADE ME  
FROM MAKING IT DO IT.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME

SIMPLY TO  
TO REMEMBER IT  
WILL BE ENTIRELY  
MADE UP.  
CONSTRUCTED,  
FALSE AND SHITTY.

SO YOU SHOULD STOP.  
STOP EVEN TRYING.  
YOU MADE NO  
PROMISES TO IT  
OR IT TO YOU AT ALL.  
ABOUT YOUR MEMORIES.  
AND YOU ARE WRONG.

BELIEVE ME.

YOUR INABILITY  
TO REMEMBER IT  
AND ITS ALUMINUM PINK  
STUFF OF LIQUID  
AS IT EVEN HAPPENED  
WILL REMAIN  
INDEFINITELY  
BETWEEN YOU AND IT  
NOT AMARANTH PINK  
OR ALUMINUM  
AS IT WAS THEN  
BUT INSTEAD  
LIKE A VOID  
CUT OUT OF YOU  
AND INSIDE OF WHICH  
NO MATTER  
WHAT YOU DO  
OR NO MATTER  
WHAT YOU SAY  
TO YOURSELF  
OR OUT LOUD  
ABOUT IT  
YOU WILL NOT  
BE ABLE TO FILL.  
THAT'S ALL.

THAT IT WILL NEVER BE  
THAT THE IRON HORSE  
WHILE DOING ITS JOB  
WILL STOP DOING IT  
AND TURN TO YOU  
TO SAY SOMETHING  
LIKE "NO I CAN'T. STOP.  
I DON'T WANNA."  
OR "LET'S TAKE TEN  
AND THEN TOUCH  
BASE AGAIN."

NO.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT WHEN IT IS THAT  
THE IRON HORSE  
CUTS YOUR METAL FOR YOU  
YOUR METAL  
WILL UPWARD  
WITH ALL OF ITS MIGHT  
AND WHEN IT CURLS  
DIRECTLY UP,  
ALONGSIDE THE CUT  
THAT IT MAKES  
IT WILL BE TO YOU  
A FEELING AS SOFT  
AS IT IS PLEASING  
AS IF IT  
THE IRON HORSE  
ALWAYS WANTED TO  
BE THAT FOR YOU  
EVEN IF IT DOESN'T.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT THE IRON HORSE  
IS MADE TO  
BE PUT DOWN  
INTO A COMATOSE  
KIND OF STATE



SO DO IT AND STOP.

I AM TELLING YOU  
THAT TRYING TO  
REMEMBER IT  
INSTEAD OF  
LISTENING TO ME  
WILL ONLY RESULT IN  
A SERIES OF SHORT  
AND RANDOM IGNITIONS  
NOT TOWARD A MEMORY  
OF THE IRON HORSE  
BUT INSTEAD  
TOWARD THAT WHICH  
KEEPS YOU FROM  
REMEMBERING ANYTHING  
IN THE FIRST PLACE.

SO STOP.  
PAY ATTENTION.

I AM TELLING YOU.  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT WHEN YOU SEE IT  
FOR THE FIRST TIME  
THE IRON HORSE  
WILL BE OF A SWEET  
AND OF A SOFT AGE  
AND WILL NOT  
STUMBLE TOWARD YOU  
OR QUESTION YOU  
AS IT COMES TO YOU  
AS YOU ALWAYS HOPED  
IT WOULD, AS IF IT  
FULL OF THE LIQUID  
THAT BURSTS FORTH FOR YOU  
WERE NOT BURSTING OUT  
AND WAS INSTEAD COMING  
BACK HOME TO YOU,  
RETURNING TO YOU  
LIKE SOMETHING LOST.

AS IT WORKS  
FOR YOU—  
FALLING FAST  
AS IT ALWAYS HAS  
INTO AN INFANT-LIKE DOZE--  
WITH A CHANGE  
SO FAST AND  
IMPERCEPTIBLE  
THAT IT STARTS  
TO LIKE GET AT YOU  
UNTIL YOU CANNOT  
HOLD IT WITH YOUR HAND  
ANY LONGER  
AND AFTER WHICH  
YOU WILL START  
TO DO SOMETHING  
LIKE SUCK YOUR TEETH  
OR SWEAT A LITTLE BIT  
OR BITE A FINGER  
OR STEP BACK  
OR REACH OVER  
AND FIND YOURSELF  
ALL OF A SUDDEN  
PULLING BACK ITS YOLK  
SLEEVE TO BRUSH  
AND TO BAT  
WITH YOUR FINGERTIPS  
THE TINY VALVES  
OF THE IRON HORSE  
MOVING THEM  
ONE AFTER THE OTHER  
TOWARD YOUR FACE  
SO AS TO HOLD THEM  
AGAINST IT  
AS IF YOU WERE  
ONLY THERE TO GET IT  
MOVING AGAIN  
TO GET IT TO WORK  
NOT SILENTLY  
LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE  
AROUND YOU  
BUT INSTEAD

AS IF THE IRON HORSE  
COULD ONLY DISCERN  
THAT YOU ARE  
OR WERE  
NOTHING BUT  
SOME KIND OF TINY  
BUT UNINTEGRATED  
DETAIL OF IT,  
THE IRON HORSE,

AND THAT EVERYTHING  
THAT IT DOES  
ALL OF ITS MOVEMENTS  
HOWEVER LITTLE  
HOWEVER COMPULSIVELY  
CONTAINED WITHIN  
THAT FINE SURFACE IT'S  
IN ARE ALL MOVEMENTS  
MADE TO FINALLY COME  
BACK TOWARD  
YOU FROM A PLACE  
WHERE IT WAS ONCE  
LEFT BEHIND AND  
FORGOTTEN ABOUT  
TO A PLACE  
IT HAS ALWAYS  
BELONGED.  
AND SO MAKING  
SURE AS IT DOES  
TO MOVE SLOWLY  
AND DELIBERATELY  
INTO YOUR RIGHT HAND  
SO THAT WHEN  
YOU SAW IT  
YOU FELT LIKE  
YOU GOT CAUGHT  
OFF GUARD BY IT,  
NOT KNOWING  
OR NOT ABLE TO—  
NOT THEN  
NOR FROM ANY POINT  
THEN ON—

AS IF TO A BEAT,  
LIKE IT WAS  
WHEN IT CUT YOUR METAL,  
IN A WAY WHICH  
ROARED ALOUD FOR YOU,  
IT BECOMING  
IN THESE MOMENTS  
SO SHOCKED  
BY YOUR ATTENTION  
TO IT  
THAT ITS BACK QUARTERS  
START TO DARKEN  
AND SWELL OUT  
IN FINE CRESCENT  
AROUND THE LENGTH  
OF ITS SWAB  
AND AROUND EACH  
OF ITS VALVES  
EIGHT BY EIGHT  
MAKING THE SHAPE  
FACES MAKE  
IF EACH OF THEIR BODIES  
BELOW WERE  
TURNING A SHOULDER  
TO SMILE AT YOU  
IN COURSE DELIGHT  
AS IF BY SURPRISE  
OF YOU BEING THERE  
IN THE FIRST PLACE,  
AS IF THE IRON HORSE  
WERE GETTING EXACTLY  
WHAT IT WANTED  
DURING ITS QUICK  
MOMENT OF REFUGE  
OF YOU  
WITH IT—  
BY THEN FOUND  
YOURSELF BORED  
BY IT  
OR AT LEAST  
CLOSED OFF FROM IT  
AND SUBJECT TO

HOW IT WAS  
THAT IT GOT THERE.

AND YOU WILL FEEL  
AS IF YOU ARE  
SUDDENLY NOT ONLY  
ACCOMPANIED BY  
THE IRON HORSE  
ITSELF BUT ALSO  
BY A SUDDEN  
LOSS OF UNDERSTANDING  
WHERE YOU WERE  
BEFORE YOU GOT  
THERE WITH IT  
IN THE FIRST PLACE.

AS IF YOU ARE NOW  
OR WERE THEN IN  
A PLACE WHERE  
YOU SHOULD NOT  
HAVE BEEN, AS  
IF YOU ARE OR  
WERE NOT IN  
ANY PLACE REALLY  
AT ALL BUT INSTEAD  
JUST OUTSIDE  
OF ONE, IN A PLACE  
YOU COULD SAY  
THAT WAS JUST  
OFF THE GRID

AS I WAS  
WHEN IT WAS  
THAT I FIRST SAW  
THE IRON HORSE  
WHEN IT APPEARED  
FOR THE FIRST TIME  
IN MY HAND.  
IT WAS AS IF  
I WERE IN A PLACE  
WITH A NAME  
LIKE A TOWN

YOUR OWN KIND OF DOZE—  
SO READY TO SLIDE  
FROM YOU THERE  
TO YOU NOT THERE—  
AS HAPPENS TO YOU  
IN A MOMENT  
OF LULL OR OF CRISIS  
EITHER ONE  
OF THOSE TWO STATES  
SUBJECT TO THE WILL  
OF A LITTLE GAME  
YOU MADE UP  
FOR YOURSELF  
FOR NO OTHER REASON  
THAN SO AS TO KEEP  
EVERYTHING  
IN YOUR WORLD  
SPECTACULAR  
AND GENTLE,  
ENOUGH FOR YOU TO  
FROM TIME TO TIME  
TURN AROUND AND SAY  
TO YOURSELF  
OR OUT LOUD  
SOMETHING LIKE  
“IT’S ALL JUST  
PLAY ANYWAY.”  
OR “I KNOW YOU’VE  
ALWAYS LIKED THAT.”  
OR “BE A SPORT.”  
OR NOW IT’S  
YOUR TURN!”  
OR “DO IT AGAIN.  
ONE MORE TIME NOW.”  
OR “LOOK  
AT WHERE WE ARE NOW.”  
REGARDLESS  
OF WHATEVER SCORE IT IS  
OR NUMBER OF  
PLAYERS THERE ARE  
OR NUMBER  
WATCHERS THERE ARE

WITH A NAME  
LIKE BOWBELLS,  
NORTH DAKOTA  
AND NOT LIKE  
NOW, HERE,  
ALONE IN THIS  
ROOM WITH YOU.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL  
BELIEVE ME  
THAT YOU WILL  
REMEMBER  
BEING WHERE YOU ARE  
ONLY AS AN ARBITRARY  
DETAIL OR TWO  
OF THAT PLACE,  
AS I ONLY REMEMBER  
BEING IN A TOWN  
THAT WAS GIVEN  
A NAME LIKE  
BOWBELLS, NORTH  
DAKOTA.  
A TOWN MADE OF  
EIGHT STREETS  
EACH OF WHICH  
INTERCUT EVERY  
TWO HUNDRED FEET  
OR SO WITH  
ANOTHER EIGHT  
STREETS AND  
THAT ONE OF THESE  
WAS A STREET  
WITH A NAME  
LIKE MAIN STREET  
AND THAT THIS  
MAIN STREET  
CUT THE TOWN  
OF BOWBELLS,  
BILATERALLY,  
AT FORTY  
FIVE DEGREES

WATCHING YOU AND  
THE IRON HORSE PLAY  
REGARDLESS EVEN OF  
THE PENALTIES  
THAT THOSE THAT ARE  
WATCHING IMPOSE  
ON YOU AND ON  
THE IRON HORSE.  
THAT AS YOU BRUSH  
AND BAT AT IT  
WITH EACH OF YOUR FINGERS  
IT WILL KNOW TO BE  
MADE TO JOIN YOU  
AND TO QUIT WITH YOU  
ANY FARCE OR GAME  
YOU'VE CARVED OUT  
TO PLAY WITH YOURSELF  
AND WILL, AS IF AWAKE,  
SAY SOMETHING LIKE  
"FUCK OFF"  
TO EVERYTHING ELSE  
BUT YOU AND WITH  
A SLIGHT CHANGE  
IN WARMTH TOWARD YOU  
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR THE ENTIRE CHARADE  
SO TOTALLY  
THAT IT MIGHT SAY  
IF IT COULD SPEAK,  
WHICH IT CANNOT,  
SOMETHING LIKE  
"SHUT THE HELL UP!"  
OR "BUTT OUT!"  
OR "I JUST PEEKED  
MY HEAD AND  
I DIDN'T KNOW."  
OR "FOR WHAT I DID, SURE!"  
OR "NEVERMIND THAT!"  
AT THE SAME TIME  
THAT IT SAYS  
SOMETHING LIKE  
"I STARTED THIS HORROR

AND THAT WHEN  
THE IRON HORSE  
APPEARED  
THAT THIS MAIN  
STREET WAS A  
STREET THAT WAS  
ON FIRE, THAT  
SOMEWHERE CLOSE  
TO WHERE YOU WERE  
THERE WAS A STREET  
NAMED MAIN STREET  
AND IT WAS BURNING  
DOWN TO THE GROUND.

THAT'S RIGHT.  
NOW LISTEN TO ME.

I AM TELLING YOU  
AND YOU WILL  
BELIEVE ME  
THAT YOU WILL  
ONLY REMEMBER  
ONE TO TWO THINGS  
ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE.  
AND THAT THE QUICK SHIFT  
YOU CAN'T HELP  
BUT MAKE  
BETWEEN REMEMBERING  
EITHER ONE OF  
THOSE TWO THINGS,  
THAT THING RIGHT THERE,  
WILL PRODUCE IN YOU  
A DISINHIBITING KIND  
OF EFFECT, ALLOWING  
YOU TO FEEL  
EXHILARATED,  
ACCELERATED,  
MOVED BY IT  
EVEN, EVEN IF  
YOU WERE THEN  
AS YOU ARE NOW  
COMPLETELY STILL.

AND IT ONLY MAKES SENSE  
THAT I DO EVERYTHING  
IN MY POWER  
TO PUT AN END TO IT."

AS IF IT WERE MADE  
TO SAY ANYTHING  
TO START  
TO MAKE YOU FEEL  
AS IF YOU WERE  
BY IT  
COMPLETELY SWEEPED AWAY  
EVEN IF YOU DO NOT  
REMEMBER  
IT AT ALL.

REMEMBER.  
I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER  
WHAT IT WAS LIKE  
WHEN YOU FIRST SAW  
THE IRON HORSE  
IN YOUR HAND  
AND WHEREVER IT WAS  
THAT IT HAPPENED TO YOU  
AT THAT MOMENT,  
WHETHER YOU WERE  
IN A TOWN BURNING DOWN  
OR SOME PLACE  
ENTIRELY OTHERWISE  
AND CLOSED OFF  
FROM ALL TOWNS,  
A TOTAL CONSTRUCTION  
OF YOU BEING  
WITH THE IRON HORSE,  
ALONE TOGETHER.

GO AHEAD.  
REMEMBER NOW.

I AM TELLING YOU.  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT A NERVOUS LIQUID

THE FIRST OF THESE  
BEING THE MEMORY  
OF YOU IN A PLACE  
CLOSE TO A MAIN STREET  
IN A TOWN LIKE BOWBELLS  
THAT IS BURNING DOWN  
NEAR BY, ALL  
OF IT ON FIRE  
SPECIALTY STORES ON FIRE  
ICE CREAM STANDS ON FIRE  
LOVELY PARKS ON FIRE  
LOCAL RESTAURANTS ON FIRE  
CARRIAGES ON FIRE  
CHILDREN ON FIRE  
MOMS AND DADS ON FIRE  
NEIGHBORS ON FIRE  
REGULARS ON FIRE  
WINE ON FIRE  
BEER ON FIRE  
LIGHT POSTS ON FIRE  
BRICK-PAVED STREETS ON FIRE  
EVENINGS ON FIRE  
HOTELS ON FIRE  
CURTAINS ON FIRE  
THE GRAPEVINE ON FIRE  
ALL OF IT BURNING DOWN

AND THE SECOND  
BEING THE MEMORY  
THAT YOU WILL REMEMBER  
THIS BURNING STREET  
ONLY AS A MERE REMAINDER  
OF THE FACT  
THAT YOU WERE CAUGHT  
OFF-GUARD AND WERE  
ALL OF A SUDDEN  
FACE TO FACE WITH  
THE IRON HORSE  
AS IT HAS APPEARED  
IN YOUR HAND AND  
IN NO ONE ELSE'S HAND.

AMARANTH PINK  
AND ALUMINUM  
WILL THEN AND ONLY  
THEN BEGIN TO,  
FROM EACH OF ITS YOLK SLEEVES  
BEHIND EACH OF ITS  
BIG BLACK VALVE  
OF IT, EJECT FROM IT  
WITH A SPECIAL SPIRIT  
AS LONG AS IT IS  
THAT YOU REMAIN  
PATIENT WITH IT,  
AND AS LONG AS YOU KEEP  
STRETCHING BACK ITS  
THOSE SLEEVES WITH BOTH  
OF YOUR HANDS  
SO THAT IT HAS NO TIME TO  
SAY, MOUTH OFF,  
AND SAY THINGS LIKE  
“STOP—THAT IS STARTING  
TO HURT—STOP.”  
OR “THAT’S TOO MUCH”  
OR “I DON’T WANT TO.  
WOULD YOU PLEASE.”  
BECAUSE AS I HAVE  
ALREADY TOLD YOU  
EVEN IF IT  
THE IRON HORSE  
IS MADE TO CUT  
THROUGH THINGS  
LIKE FEELINGS  
AND EVEN IF  
IF CANNOT SPEAK,  
THE IRON HORSE  
IS BETTER PUT TO USE  
IN A WAY THAT CAN BE  
BOTH SOFT  
AND PLEASING  
TO YOU  
AS WHEN IT CUTS  
THROUGH SOMETHING  
LIKE METAL.

I WILL TELL YOU  
AND YOU WILL BELIEVE ME  
THAT IF YOU TRY  
YOU WILL ONLY  
ONE OR MORE  
POINTLESS MOVEMENTS  
BETWEEN THOSE TWO  
MEMORIES IN EFFORT  
TO REMEMBER  
THE IRON HORSE  
IN THE FIRST PLACE  
AND IN ALL CASES  
YOU'RE GOING TO BE  
LEFT TOTALLY  
DISAPPOINTED,  
THIS FEELING BEING  
UNLIKE WHAT IT IS LIKE  
TO FIRST SEE THE IRON HORSE  
A DETAIL  
YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME  
HOWEVER TINY  
AND HOWEVER INSIGNIFICANT  
TO YOUR SEEING  
THE IRON HORSE  
IN YOUR RIGHT HAND  
IN THE FIRST PLACE  
BEING A DETAIL  
THAT APPEARS TO YOU  
AS CLEAR AND AS PLEASING  
IN ITS BURNING DOWN  
OF MAIN STREET  
AS INSTRUCTION.

THE YOLK OF IT,  
THE IRON HORSE,  
HAVING A LARGE  
ENOUGH CAPACITY  
SO AS TO  
WITHOUT YOU EVEN ASKING  
GULP DOWN  
YOUR METAL DEPOSIT  
AND HOLD IT THERE  
WARM INSIDE OF IT  
FOR WHAT MUST BE YEARS  
AND FOR AS LONG AS IT IS  
THAT YOU DO NOT START TO  
FEEL BAD FOR IT  
AND FOR AS LONG AS IT IS  
THAT YOU DO NOT STOP  
PULLING BACK  
THE YOLK-SLEEVES  
OF THE IRON HORSE  
WITH BOTH YOUR OF YOUR HANDS  
UNTIL YOU FIND  
BETWEEN THOSE VALVES  
AND ITS SLEEVE  
A SMALL SAND PAPER SWAB  
WHICH MIGHT, AT FIRST,  
SEEM TO YOU TO BE  
A USELESS FLAP  
MADE TO COVER  
THAT WHICH DOES NOT  
NEED TO BE COVERED  
OR ELSE  
MIGHT SEEM TO YOU  
AS IF IT  
THE IRON HORSE  
HAS BEEN MADE  
TO ABRUPTLY EXPOSE  
ITSELF TO YOU  
WHICH YOU THINK  
TO YOURSELF  
IS PROBABLY TRUE,  
I AM TELLING YOU  
THAT YOU ARE WRONG

AND THAT IT IS NOT  
USELESS ALL  
BUT THAT IT IS THIS SWAB  
THAT WHEN TUGGED  
WILL MAKE IT SO THAT  
IT IS YOU AND YOU ARE IT,  
SO YOU CAN STOP  
THINKING ABOUT  
MEETING IT  
ALL TOGETHER,  
THE BOTH OF YOU  
FINALLY MAINTAINING  
AN ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE  
DISTANCE FROM EACH OTHER  
FORCING THE IRON HORSE TO  
FORGET ABOUT IT  
AS IF YOU COULD PULL BACK  
ITS SENSE OF PURPOSE  
IF IT HAD ONE  
IN THE FIRST PLACE.



Mashinka Firunts & Danny Snelson, eds.  
The Block Museum | Northwestern University  
Department of Art History | Mellon Dance Studies  
The Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities  
<http://sites.northwestern.edu/present>