**And Then**

7:24am.

You stand on the platform,

As you always do.

Cold brew in one hand,

Briefcase in the other,

Three back and two left

Of the orange, cracked brick.

Waiting.

7:25am.

The train screeches to a halt,

Steam saturates the station

Into warm white fog.

Shoes clack along the brick.

Sounds are hollow

Among these cold, empty walls

7:27am.

​The loudspeaker crackles.

The doors slide shut.

​The station sweeps away.

You will ride to the same stop, your stop: the one with the statue of the two dancing girls, and the sign that is cracked through the second “t” in Everett Place, and the man in the ticket stand who always has his hat pulled too low, and the window in front of him always reflects sun into your eyes when you get off. And you always get off. But, it occurs to you, that you don’t have to get off.

You could say fuck it, stay on until the end of the line; and get on another one, and keep going; and another one, and another; eventually, you would be so far away from everything that you could be anyone, you think; you could end up in the countryside: buy a ranch and wander your property until you grow old and tired; or you could find yourself on the coast; be a crewman on a ship, that is, until you can buy one for yourself; sail away, and spend the rest of your life wandering; your mind would be so full of exotic cultural traditions and your belly so full of their food; yes, that is what you will do; you are getting excited now; you begin to think that this is what you were always meant to do; you would find someone who would want to come with you; or you could go with them: it doesn't really matter; and then you would have children, and they would learn the love to wander as you have wandered; because at that point, you would have already seen it all; climbed atop Kilimanjaro and trudged into the Amazon; studied in the Bibliothèque Nationale and watched films in Cine Thisio; bungee jumped bridges in New Zealand and soared over volcanoes in Hawai’i; perused through the markets of Pakistan and feasted on the views of Patagonia; protested with Iranian citizens and sat in on a Swiss democratic convention; skied the French Alps and surfed the coast of Bali; worshiped with the monks of Thailand and wept with the widows of Afghanistan; you would have done all that; and your children would look up to you as a hero; and you would be their hero, and retrace all your steps with them; and then they would continue to adventure, as you had adventured; and then–

And then what?

You ask yourself,

As you step onto the platform

And then the sun blinds you through the window,

And you see the man with the hat,

And the cracked sign,

And the dancing girls.

You look at the clock above the ticket man.

7:41am.