

Last Train to Nola

The No.79 Carolinian saved me
from Wednesday's afternoon's rain.
I sat in the side berth alone,
sipped my Bigelow's Earl Grey,
and read today's news.
It was a twilight zone as usual.
I slipped on my headphones
For Maxwell's *Embrya*
to color me in on cloud nine.

At 8:30 P.M., the No. 19 Crescent left
Queen City for "The Palmetto State".
I nibbled on my homemade turkey wrap,
and fruit salad with another cup of Earl Grey.
Rolling through Georgia,
Ray Charles appeared in my mind.
I mimicked his voice in my head and chuckled.
I missed out on the scenes of sweet home Alabama---
woke up to the song, "*Voyage to Atlantis*",
above the lowlands of the "The Magnolia State".

Outside my window seat,
my eyes searched through
the black of the morning for a little city life.
I imagined its sounds and smells.
These thoughts brought no justice.
I dozed off again.

I woke up again at 6:30 A.M.
This time,
I was up for good.....
I ate a spinach and mushroom omelet
with the crispiest croissant ever
and sipped the best squeezed orange--
that left a sista' feeling good
enough to warm her own tracks.

Just in time....

before the Creoles and Po'boys welcomed me,
the streetcars chauffeured me down to Bourbon St.,
cajun spices and crawfish French kissed my lips,
beignets pacified my sweet tooth,
and jazz resuscitated my fingertips and hips.

As I grabbed my bag,
with the French Quarter and the Algiers Ferry
only minutes from my back,
I heard an ole man say,
"This is the last train to the Big Easy!"
And I was glad.

Havana's Sun

over turquoise water,
we sketched and hovered like vessels
until our skin broke through a ring of currents.
then we stumbled ashore and laid flat under the Havana's sun,
shared lavish kisses, played rock, paper, scissors until my gap-tooth
became gaudy. realizing, at that moment, you were no longer on my blacklist.

Lady Bangladesh

She wails sentimental prayers
on sweet and sour mornings.

Before running against the sun,
her face was raw and broken bronze.

In between the banks of rice,
she searched for grains
while rivers ran down her back,
underneath her orange and red sari.

Back home, she had no curry stew
to overlap what she gained,
and no taka for fish.

But, the water in her eyes
conveyed more grains of joy.

Eatonville

In Washington, D.C,
a street over from Langston Hughes Way,
on 14th Street NW,
Zora Neale Hurston lived beside
orange umbrellas extending
from black iron patio sets.

By the door,
three red and golden
murals of Zora would welcome
me in route to the main entrance.

In all black,
a hostess would greet me,
then seat me into the hands of a server
for some good ole southern cooking
that favors my Nana's.

While waiting,
I would squeeze two lemon slices
over a mason jar filled with
southern sweet tea or water,
and admire the frozen lives
living in the murals on the
walls while local jazz musicians
or digital neo-soul music soothed my soul.

And every time I visit this House of Zora
I imagined being in her presence:
*Would she have loved this establishment
in the honor of her essence? I think so!
For her literary works?
She definitely deserved this!
What would she tell me about Hughes?
Would she sign my copy of
"Their Eyes Were Watching God?"*

Then, the seasons from the
buttermilk fried chicken,
side of collard greens,
and mac and cheese,
and one buttermilk biscuit,
accompanying fresh honey,

would dance around my nose
and interrupt my daydreams.
And now,
since my last visit
has been too long,
I'll have to settle for
Mulebone.

Line by Line, In the Walking City

It is
Twelve. Nineteen. Thirteen.
Two hours and fifteen minutes later,
I met the Silver Line at Logan's
and passed by the bay that once consumed tea.
It is now frozen with moored sailboats and ferries.
First exit and I look up to read,
“*Welcome to the Home of the Red Sox and Celtics!*”

By a corner of shoveled snow,
I visited the South Station to purchase
a Charlie pass to route through the city.
For minutes, I trailed the Walk of Freedom.
Before meeting the Red Line to Harvard,
another set of welcome letters
spoke freely in bold crimson.
Here, I taste of sparkling water,
fresh seafood, spring greens, and crepes,
by the scent of roasted coffee beans.

Topics by noon:
Research.
Literature.
History.
Music.

On Bus 86,
I noted the city's day-to-day blues,
then chime an exit to Lechmere.
Before reaching Heath,
I observed art collections of ancient
Egypt to American contemporary,
draped tribal patterns and textures,
centered pieces of antique gems,
and walls mounted with frames displaying
bold and shy love expressions.

Then, I noticed the stars
peeking through the clouds
and the songs stringed through the night:
The Nutcracker's anthem
And *We Miss You a Merry Christmas*.
I began to think of home.
I checked into my suite.

In the A.M.,
the sun and I smiled together.
I hopped on the Orange Line.
From Oak Groove to Forest Hill,
I realized diversity,
Studied various graffiti,
and chuckled at the images
photographed by Vans.
I snapped a few photos.
Smiled.
Thought of home.
Forgot about the Blue.
Assembled myself to
meet the Silver again.