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The Last Train to Montparnasse

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WILL SMILEY

The Last Train to Montparnasse

He is doing a song and a dance
to entertain the people
while they wait,
to keep them
entranced in line,
to take their minds
off the duration of the wait.

This is the last train
to Montparnasse.
But we wanted to go
to Gare de Lyon.
It doesn't matter now.
We can't request
a new ticket.

The booth is closed.
The guardians have
slid the grating down.
The window is shut.

When I turn back around
I see the man in white robes,
and the group of people
formed around him
into an audience.

And then I hear
the distant sound of the train
arriving in the tunnel.

Leaning against a railing, I can see
the arriving cars and the line of people
climbing into a carriage.

He must be familiar with that
pandemonium
I think as he boards.
The lot departs. I glance around.

You are there, in a beautiful sewn up gown
reaching for my hand.
There is ash on your face,
and a pale light shines on the track.