2005

Riding the Train

Joshua Reed Stuart

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview
Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5980

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.
Riding the Train

Renewal is a perpetual action on commuter trains, where broken families coalesce, where the daughter mourns the grandfather that did not hear her goodbye. In answer to “I” there is infidelity, and the alphabet is a game anyone can play, anyone can employ to divert the child’s attention. The father does this. The mother does this.

The mother bangles her wrist with an amethyst bracelet. It falls from her slender arm when the leftover crumb of a man that calls himself a father talks. The tinkling sound is nightmare etched in air.

I am also looking for “J.” The word is there: jewelry.
I want to tell the girl, point to the thrift store’s window sign. She wants to skip “J” for “K” to forget all about “J,” about jealousy, about jewelry, about joie de vivre, about jilting. The girl wants to find “K.” Knowledge is the first word to mind. The girl gives up. Though thought has taken hold of her and for the rest of her life she will search for “K” or “L” or go back to looking for “J.”