

Snippets at the Bus Station



By

Harry Jivenmukta

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Dedication

Without the help of the people who write bus timetables, I would never have become so confused.

I was waiting.



On the bench next to me,
a young lad said to his girlfriend:

He said: Tasty? Er... well... McDonald's.

She said: I think strawberry milkshake.

He said: Well you have the milkshake and I'll have
the burger and fries.

She said: OK then. But I'll have a few fries as well.

And off they went.

I thought about the simplicities of life, tiny things, the small moments of pure happiness, ecstasy, that come to us every day.

The first slurp of tea in the morning.
That ahhhh... feeling.
It might be another day,
but right now
everything is in the cup of tea.

Throwing open a window
and smelling the dew
of a fresh morning.
New, every day,
for everyone who is awake.

The notes of a familiar tune
that tells you why
it is good to be in love.
The exquisite pain
and the moment of meeting.

Watching a bird
making its way
across the sky
just after dawn.
On its own, unconcerned.

*touching soft skin
and sliding fingers
along a gentle curve.
Finding a familiar place.
Lips, waiting for a kiss.*



I was still waiting. The seat next to me, empty now of the young couple, was filled by an old man, probably with creaky bones, and a hat. He had a shopping bag, cloth, with meagre supplies for the coming days.

No need to worry.
The bus will be along soon
just as it has been coming
for all these years.
Unvarying routine warms him inside.

*The double dip in the mattress,
one for him and one for her
now turning into just one dip
in the middle.
He needs flowers for her grave.*

That chair, facing the TV
as important as an astronaut's control panel
and the remote control,
with digits worn out
pressing the same buttons for years.

Click on the buttons to see scheduled and/or live times from each stop

Service Number	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328
Balmoral Avenue	0605	0635	0705	0725	0735	0745	0755	0805	0815	0825
Huddersfield Market Street	0626	0656	0726	0746	0756	0806	0812	0826	0836	0846
Woodhouse Avenue	0635	0705	0735	0755	0805	0815		0835	0845	0855
Alandale Road Top	0649	0719	0749	0809	0819	0829		0849	0859	0909

Service Number	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328	328
Balmoral Avenue	0835	0845	0855	0905	0915	0925	0935	0945	0955	1005
Huddersfield Market Street	0856	0906	0916	0926	0936	0946	0956	1006	1016	1026
Woodhouse Avenue	0905	0915	0925	0935	0945	0955	1005	1015	1025	1035
Alandale Road Top	0919	0929	0939	0949	0959	1009	1019	1029	1039	1049



I was still waiting. The old man had gone. He knew when his bus was due. And the bench next to me was empty again.

I can imagine you sitting next to me.
Flowing long hair
and inquisitive eyes,
darting here and there.

The last time I waited
for a bus, you say,
was when I was going to school.
90 children crowding around
ready to overwhelm the driver.

Everyone rushing around
In identical uniforms.
A flock of flamingos
ready to rise into the air as one,
a mass of curiosity.

Fervent hungry brains
willing to be filled with learning.
Facts and figures,
formulas and fiction.
Confusion translated into sense.

And no one is ever tired.
Young limbs stretching into growth,
Longer, taller, more flexible.
Only excitement for the future.
No past, no present.



I got up and wandered to the snack shop to get a drink and a sandwich.
I fancied a cheese and pickle, and carton of orange juice.

And fish and chips.
The shop opened at 11.30 on the dot.
But we still got there early
just in case
the fish made a run for it.

We used to wait for the ice cream man.
He came at the same time every day.
3.30.
Coins in our hands, hot from holding.
We couldn't wait, hopping around, excited.

Cartoons started early for toddlers,
But mine were on a bit later
because I was 7.
That was big in those days.
You're not 7 every day.



My back was beginning to ache, and I decided that I was not going to wait any longer. So, I got up and wandered back towards home.

Young women mainly,
with so many carrier bags,
staggering on heels too high,
rushing towards the end of the day.
Home to slippers and big mugs of coffee.

Office workers trying to look important
with ties tied too tight,
and buttons all fastened up to the neck,
hurrying home to small children,
to another sort of happy chaos.

Merry queues of cars
all stuck at the traffic lights.
Drivers playing pop music
and dreaming of empty beaches,
blue oceans and paradise.



At home, I took off my shoes, made myself a cup of tea, turned on the TV,
reached for the remote control and pondered on what a great life it was.

Ahhh....