

Arctic Express

There are footprints of deer
 across the tracks, light over
 the lake, crystals in the snow.
 You fall on my side and sleep
 as if it truly was dark
 or as if I was a witness
 or the one that held you.
 Birch trees flicker in strobing
 engine light. Factory fumes rise
 into the constellations.

The north is psychedelic
 as a fat yellow moon rising
 over the Baltic, in the veer
 of the journey the moon
 falls behind, mines are lit,
 the ore moves into carbon
 or munitions. Supermarkets
 fluoresce, cargo in neon
 a black and white blur.
 Electric candles are
 still occasions.

While the north star,
 if that's what it is, shines
 clear after days of cloud
 and our long sick nights,
 (as if our fevers go
 like a journey you never
 intended) in the wash of days
 the train pushes past
 into the ice latitudes,
 into a glittery Arctic
 and to be gone.

Jill Jones

Jill Jones. 'Arctic Express'.
Transnational Literature Vol.10 no.1, November 2017.
<http://fhrc.flinders.edu.au/transnational/home.html>