

The Subway (96th Street to 137th Street)

Kilmer, Joyce, 1886-1918

Tired clerks, pale girls, street cleaners, business men,
Boys, priests and harlots, drunkards, students, thieves,
Each one the pleasant outer sunshine leaves;
They mingle in this stifling, loud-wheeled pen.
The gate clangs to we stir we sway and then
We thunder through the dark. The long train weaves
Its gloomy way. At last above the eaves
We see awhile God's day, then night again.

Hurled through the dark day at Manhattan Street,
The rest all night. That is my life, it seems.
Through sunless ways go my reluctant feet.
The sunlight comes in transitory gleams.
And yet the darkness makes the light more sweet,
The perfect light about me in my dreams.