

Hannah Greenstreet

Poems on the Underground

Rush hour and my fear for how I would
Negotiate the other passengers
Without too many 'please',
'Thank you' and 'excuse me's slips from my mind
As I pour with them into the
Carriage, step across the gap

Between the train and the platform, the gap
Constricting in a press of bodies that would
Never normally indulge in such proximity with the
Strangers that are the other passengers.
And thoughts begin to press into my mind
Of poetry and other things, how they please,

Hope that the gods of Underground will hear my silent pleas
To clear a seat or two and make a gap
There, though if it were less busy I wouldn't mind
Standing, would
Even smile at the other passengers.
Shrill beep as the

Doors open, the
Train disgorging scores of 'excuse me please'
As passengers
Cross and recross the gap
As if they would
Make of the mass one mind.

Sighing, I make up my mind,
Waiting for when, the
Doors clamp tight shut, like an oyster, (Would
Someone please
Make a gap
Among the passengers)

Take out the book before the faceless passengers
And fill my mind
To bridge the gap
And space between the
Ones that live as they please
And those that would.

They buzz like passengers, the
words that please the mind,
navigate the gap of have-been and would.