

Mornings of 2020

by Bryan Mootz

7:04, sometimes it was 7:12, and once it was 7:46

But that was before, now it's 7:04.

There's not much to make the train late anymore.

The porters open the doors for

ghosts.

No one is out to get stuck on the tracks.

Whistles agitate the air in short bursts, good for miles,

This is my rolling thunderous rooster.

Before, the train making its 7:04 was just that,

a train with a destination,

with passengers looking out the window, or

At their computer screens, or

Sleeping.

It's 2020 now, no need for

details.

This beast has become my unrequited love,

Steel cast and forged, hundreds of tons of fabrication floating

on seamless rail.

The 7:04 is the strong hand on my shoulder

telling me it will be alright.

"I'm still here," it says. "How bad can it be?"

I don't know how bad it can be.

I don't want to think about how bad it can be.

I just let the steadfastness of polished metal and air brakes
do their job.

A reminder of a time, not that long ago,

but almost out of memory's reach,

when my breath wasn't a suspicious carrier of death,

when your mouth was one to laugh with, cry with,

but not one to be feared.