

Subway Wind

Claude McKay

Far down, down through the city's great, gaunt gut
 The gray train rushing bears the weary wind;
 In the packed cars the fans the crowd's breath cut,
 Leaving the sick and heavy air behind.
 5 And pale-cheeked children seek the upper door
 To give their summer jackets to the breeze;
 Their laugh is swallowed in the deafening roar
 Of captive wind that moans for fields and seas;
 Seas cooling warm where native schooners drift
 10 Through sleepy waters, while gulls wheel and sweep,
 Waiting for windy waves the keels to lift
 Lightly among the islands of the deep;
 Islands of lofty palm trees blooming white
 That lend their perfume to the tropic sea,
 15 Where fields lie idle in the dew drenched night,
 And the Trades float above them fresh and free.

Textual Note

This poem also appears in *The Liberator* (August, 1921).

2 gray] grey *Lib.*
 10 ,] *om. Lib.*
 10 while] where *Lib.*

11 the] their
 15 dew drenched] dew-drenched *Lib.*