

The Dark Man

Stephen King

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I have stridden the fuming way
of sun-hammered tracks and
smashed cinders;
I have ridden rails
and bumed sterno in the
gantry silence of hob jungles:
I am a dark man.
I have ridden rails
and passed the smuggery
of desperate houses with counterfeit chimneys
and heard from the outside
the inside clink of cocktail ice
while closed doors broke the world -
and over it all a savage sickle moon
that bummed my eyes with bones of light.
I have slept in glaring swamps
where musk-reek rose

to mix with the sex smell of rotting cypress stumps
where witch fire clung in sunken
psycho spheres of baptism -
and heard the suck of shadows
where a gutted columned house
leeches with vines
speaks to an overhung mushroom sky
I have fed dimes to cold machines
in all night filling stations
while traffic in a mad and flowing flame
streaked red in six lanes of darkness,
and breathed the cleaver hitchhike wind
within the breakdown lane with thumb levelled
and saw shadowed faces made complacent
with heaters behind safety glass
faces that rose like complacent moons
in riven monster orbits.
and in a sudden jugular flash
cold as the center of a sun
I forced a girl in a field of wheat

and left her sprawled with the virgin bread

a savage sacrifice

and a sign to those who creep in

fixed ways:

I am a dark man.