

Motion

Old Snow Hill Station, Birmingham

SHRIEK! Rush! Snuffle! Saints, preserve us! What a wondrous noise!
Pleasurable terror is engulfing wide-eyed boys.
Clutching Father's hands against the palpitating heaven
Of smoke and smell and hissing steam that's Snow Hill, Platform Seven.
Got their comics, got their Kit Kat, faces shiny clean:
Printed out their names in metal at the red machine.

Whoosh and whistle! Roar and thunder! Smoke that bites the eyes!
All-embracing, acrid-tasting, loco's mighty size –
All expressing awesome forces swathed in cloudy dress.
This is Great Western Railway's own holiday express.

Hustle, bustle! Manic panic! *Yes, you'll get some rock!*
What a contrast with the calm of Platform Seven clock!
High above the urgent throng, it's seen it all before:
Timed the 1930s and it's soon to time the war.

Find a carriage! Doors fly open! Cases on the rack!
Coaches gently rocking under passengers' attack.
Huh-huh-huh-huh! Huh-huh-huh-huh! Stuttering repeat!
Locomotive sounds impatient and it seems to stamp its feet.

Slam-slam-slam-slam! Doors are banging all along the train.
Creak and rumble! Green-flagged coaches off to sea again.
