

Duet in Green Park Tube, London

by Rudy Thomas

I heard the words of a Kristofferson song,
drifting thru the tube, the acoustics excellent.
I rushed toward the sund,
aware that I would stop & listen.

I remember thinking:
how like a fox I am moving toward a hen's song.
I was in Kentucky then, my feelings following
Derossett's branch in the hollow

where life was complicated by poverty
in my father's time.

I tossed coins into the guitar case
at the singer's feet then broke into song
with Pablo, if that was his name,
the name on the black Gibson, behind

& beneath the bridge.
He nodded.
I harmonized.
My Appalachian Tennessee border twang

rang thru the tube
There came a woman in a fine dress,
moving fast past us from the stairs,
pausing but a moment to listen

as we sang:
There ain't nothing sweeter
than naked emotion . . .
Before we finished, she turned to leave.

Pablo stopped playing.
We both stopped singing.
She came back,
dropped a bill onto my coins.

I nodded.
Pablo nodded;
looked toward the stairs
then broke into a Spanish song

& I moved along.