

8:46 AM, five years later

I'm stuck on an N ready to tunnel
under the river. Train delays on this

of all days. Cell phones flip, office call-ins,
iPod shuffle and newspaper fold. Shift

weight. The conductor stays silent. Back then
I lived in the shadow city, heard first

through phone and radio as sun slatted
the cherry desk, that bell tower office

where prerecorded chimes marked the hour.
And the images day played night replayed.

I went there two weeks later, surveyed what
memory left me, the sights I once knew.

To live here now stuck on an N, to scan
the sky, elevated, tunnel-bound. What

morning will greet me when I depart, rise
from beneath this city's streets? September's

light in all its dazzle? Will it still hint
at the shadows to come? Stand on this isle,

Time's X, on the gum-dimed concrete and grate
V. Stand where the steam ventilates hidden

speakers, where the subterranean hum
drones on long after a struck bell when rung.

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