

Liverpool Street Station

July 29, 1939

Eva Paddock

The train stops.
Two hundred “British Refugee Committee”
Labeled children
gather up
Aisles fill with knotted, pushing travelers
Eager to get off their twenty-four hour caged hotel
Prague to London via ferry and Southampton.
The children get off the train fast

I sit and wait for spaces in the mob
For room through which to pass
For quiet before the unknown

Knapsack as ballast I reach the door and
See far below two metal grilled steps.
The hand-rail is high and slippery
I lower myself to step two
But the platform stares.
It demands a jump
Too far for me.

Sixty years later I stare back
Resolved with deep breath, tightly held,
Minding the gap
I leap and
Alight the train