DAVID JAFFIN

THE HALF  
OF A CIRCLE

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For Mordecai Ardon

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THE HALF OF A CIRCLE

DISTANCE

You left me thinking

the night is not to be touched

I walk the space be tween you and now

listening to myself.

MID OCTOBER

The leaves have colored for now, a touch

that told more than it asked

The sun waits behind whatever trees

it wants

Time condensed to this single pause

the silence after rain receiving itself

the folding of a page within the intent

of hands.

EVENING’S LIGHT

Late October

pre evening closeness

a bird breaking sound over water the

sun expecting to set

This artificial light where I sit

a table

touches my hand.

The glass permeates sound that I drink

in phrases to the bottom of my

thirst.

PRE CONCEIVED

A poem has only one place to be.

A light must be on it doesn’t have

the choice to think.

Outside the rain is

steps lead away as prints in snow

I see in glass

my eyes

touch your hand

the room arranged for this,

it needn’t be prepared .

You closed space from the win

CLOSING A WINDOW

dow the room edged nearer

dried leaves blew shadows on

glass

flowers hushed in their cold

the scent of clo sing .

WHAT IT IS

for J. W.

It’s the poise of evening the til

ting of a hand to distinguish

itself

the matter of course, repetition of

things that be come less precise :

the image of a stone breaking the

water’s hold more than one cir

cle at a time —

these words, even as I speak

and the way you'ii hear their sounds.

MORE

If night could be one star greater

my joy would break .

TWO STORYIED

Winter, cold

your breath hung in the air

warming itself —

There’s a difference in two storyied

houses,

they were made to fit .

RECLINING NUDE

Her voice and eyes the outer cir

cumstance translated as light

or jewels

strung to that perfect sense.

FORMS/ EXTENSIONS

A basket of fruit

the smells ripen

thinking of the curve of your

shoulder

a bird pruning the air

eclipsing

it.

ANOTHER WAY TO SEE

You have another way to see

a boy and his gassed balloon mea

suring the sky

the sun exposes you.

SHARP

It’s not as if

because of considering that

A wire must be bent. Light comes.

Thoughts crack sharp.

SPACE

There’s a space of this page.

You can smell it in the mountains

when the snow’s kept cold.

Here, I sit in this room

between what I think and where you are

there’s a space

too .

FOR RAPHAEL

You came into the world with a

memory

looking out of win dows wanting to

find what you’d lost. You knew

before you knew that you knew.

We don’t.

He would want to sit with a book

THROUGH HIS HANDS

in his hand

the shades would be closed

night concealed in its place

as he thought passing through his

hands the flashed image from the

train ( trans parent) to its

cause turning the page, now and

then from one sound to the next .

You tell me the dead are really

DEAD REALLY DEAD ?

dead, it’s final, over. But each

summer I think him so because with

out even thinking I expect him

and he comes. Nothing dies un

less we do.

ONLY WHEN THE RAIN IS HERE

What is it we know only when the rain

is here ?

I remember the sea was silent,

we were under the last impression

of stars.

TONE

Music touches sound

the fingers that were heard feeling to

their place

of the keys turned

to where the reflection of thought

is

I see you so, distinct as if only the

light could be

this appearance of sound,

the key, and where your fingers

touched.

CHANGES

It’s your choice, of words.

Whatever you say changes it.

If you close a curtain the room is darker

you touch yourself

the world is myth if you think

it so.

It can’t be seen.

The streaks of water jet from ice

the sun’s just as cold as I thought

The afternoon wears its same

shadows

only the air immaterial presence

I breathe in its softness, wait

for the mel ting of touch .

Because I look at the vase for

THE HALF OF A CIRCLE

three and a half

minutes its han die’s curved

a classical com-bine god and fish

sceptered water for a throne

it’s even round if you follow

it behind

the window and

can wait without breaking your poise.

Almost dark a bird reaching for

song

( to describe  
its flight,

its place on the tree,

the tone)

I notice how the night is, ab

sorbs.

We never come, that way.

CAUSE

You say

the leaves blow in

late September.

I listen to the waves

pulled up from the surface

and wonder if I could hear

your voice when they do.

CROCUS

Flowers, didn’t even ask

I change the month to spring

put on

a lighter coat.

OF

It’s your way of

even trying to be another way to

Do you think

the trees can breathe

without wind

just stop and wait.

TOWARDS A NATURAL VIEW  
OF THEOLOGY

Like a fish blowing its bubble

puckered its lips and then let go

gazing to the surface You can make sound

from glass

but he, he doesn’t try to

imagine what he can — he

simply aims.

JUST ONCE

If I tell you again it won’t

be true. Just

once I bought you orchids,

inbetween colors.

LESS

I am less now.

The clouds shift

but their sha dows don’t cross

quite so,

not the same in

me. I listen to what you say

become aware of the shades of

your voice

which I knew, with

out seeing, before.

You can’t tell me when you come

AT LEAST 4 TIMES

in the house and look in the

mirror at least 4 times,

fixing your hair —

I know

that you simply want to find

out.

ESSENCE

The conformity of fact synonym for

presence, event, articulation of the

word to this sense, wood stripped of its

bark ( the fire’s wrath ) .

It’s late into Nov ember birds in

LATE NOVEMBER

sist on their shadows crossing o ver sound the winds won’t

still the leaves hang, tight as

they can

snap when they break as a sudden light put out to tell

me the print of words you press

to your lips tense at the edge

time’s past, it breaks in your

hands.

CONTRADICTION

If you have it both ways

there’s a knife cut through the

middle.

SUSPENDED

The air

covered with snow

smoke extending it self in time

a wire strung, tight to two

points I think exactly the same

place.

FICTIVE

After the rain

the trees were fic tive

that’s a word for slender

perhaps because it was March.

INTRODUCTION WITHOUT A FUGUE

It’s only what I see.

You stepped in place

smiling as if it should be so,

prepared.

I heard

but you forgot to step, back.

KNEW

When I saw I thought that you

knew.

The looking game’s not what runs

us together the fingers con

necting pulse.

There was a pause in your

face

a waiting to see

that I look and knew.

COUNTED PLEASURES

The truth of a kiss, lighted thoughts

tendernesses of touch between hands, fin

gers or such,

the form of a world but closed

disposed to the counted pleasures.

This mid- October still decline of light

the receding slope from the hill

wreathed flowers, the scent that’s kept

in stone.

THE WHOLE OF A CIRCLE

Sun describes the afternoon.

It draws a circle from the sky

The arc of time when it shines clearing

itself

The blue and direction of

Water over stone

moving to time

the push of sound and my lips

not wanting, words.

STUDY IN TONALITY

At first a bird sang in

to the silence

morning’s first light appeared ;

the sun wa vered as if bro

ken of its tone

became whole, again.

THAT WAY

If it could be less, what I

see

stone lightened by touch just

turned that way.

AS THIS

The shape of the hill

coming down

the leaves in spring, wind —

I take your hand but we can’t

be as

soft as this .

One would have wanted a word then,

something about the sadness of time

For winds brushed through the leaves

and left us all un quiet.

WHY

You asked, why as if I

knew what you wanted to

say a ques

tion between your self.

LAKE

The water moves I look in a cir

cle closing the sides

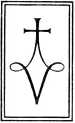
sound begins here over the surface

continuing what I see.

*In Nomine Domini*

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