**THROUGH
LOST SILENCES**

***Poems***

**David Jaffin**

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SILENCES

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David Jaffin

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Outjumped

She

was spon tancous

ly more than

She could keep her

self from getting

back to As that out

jumping of a kan

garoo’s

mothered

look Pou ched in her

child’s re sembling

eyes.

Even if

he could fathom the

depths of where these

seas have relinguish

ed their hold on light

into that all perinea

ting silence If he could

meet him self on his

own terms Standing for

where stan ding has come

to mean Still, even

in that be ing of be

ing the wherefore

and why of would be as

elusive as the in

tangi

bilities

through

shadow.

Age

creeps up on us un

seen at first But extcn

ding its grip into the muscles and fibres of

our being It taps a

way at our inner strength

until we feel the sprea

ding out of its cause

into those veins of

self-assur ance that

once held us so steadfast in our purposing

a life that we felt was

ours alone

to tell.

In Refrain

The

calm of when these

waves express them selves

at the quiet of sunset’

s final voice A stillness

in refrain.

Timesharing

These

buildings worn with the

thoughts of people who’

ve stayed there Parch

ed through the Floridian

sun they’ re peeling now

deep down in visibly

coming off.

Refuged

Retired

from thought Seeking re

fuge in the quietness

of inexpli citly seen

But the i mage of what

he wasn’t couldn't be

completely denied even

in dream.

A Stranger around the corner

Death

keeps its distance

Not being asked to come

in A stranger around the

corner in those darken

ing moments that conceal

them

selves from view.

Adolescence

It’s

that space between where

I was by be ing what

my parents saw me as

And the fru ition of what

love takes for her own

But those spaces were

like emptied streets side-

winded from fear leaving

deepen ing sha

dows

behind.

Talking it out *(forM.* c.) if

you talk it out It

doesn’t think in Man's

more than the telling it

and woman’s even more

than that!

For an Ease

When words stop taking

me to place And there’s

that almost sleep ot lis

tening in to my pillow’

s cool ness.

Matthew 6,24

If you

work with figures all the

time You may not be able

to figure your self out And

that finger’ s touch dull

ed into dol lars and

cents.

Carissimi’s Jephta

The tears

of his daughter may be fee

ling into the needs for his

own Melting that music in

to what he never had been

or would be

again.

Gaiety

A gaiety

of heart that outran it self to colored song ed-in-dance

Wild winds flourishing as flame.

Their birth for wind

Can

flowers bloom in the

darkness of this unseen

silence

With the moon

closing in as if from

words waken ing their birth

for wind.

City seen

if

windows are like eyes

can be a ware of

their cold stance from

seeing

through.

Cooled

If

this shade can cool

my thought s to their

timely reach of being

rooted in the depths of

silence.

But lightly surfaced blue

This

sky’s but lightly sur

faced blue as a smile

extending to the width

of where your lips

could have answered but

almost at tentively a

loud.

Seeing’s believing?

if

seeing’s

believing

then I’ve seen too much

to believe in any

thing other than that

invisibly

true.

6 Masterpieces in the Frankfurt Art Museum

1. Van Eyck: Lucca Madonna They

were jewelled into pre

sence so fine ly kept with

those details in light

that one

wonders If there

wasn’t more of that heaven

ly throne here than to the

right of The Father’s

majesty.

1. Rembrandt: Hendricje Stoffels “attributed to his workshop”

Of course

you left the depth of

your mind’s eye for your

wife’s encir cled glowing

self reflec tion to your

bandied work shop to complete

those shimmering touches

that only Your brush-sense

could have So refined!

1. Altdorfer: The 3 Kings That crumbling Roman temple or

was it your relinguish

edjewish heri tage - no

place for ani nials here

the poverty that became

His home

All ages, races attributed

for Messianic gifts to

their High Priest with

only a star to tell for

heaven’s designed King

And you, the artist near

ing in to that sanctuary

of earthly

hopes.

1. Bellini: Sacred Conver sation

That blue

was more of heaven for

you than all the gold

could tell of those 3

touched - through from

His distant blessing

But you yourself so

near on the wood that

would be pierced

through your untimely

sins.

1. Rubens: King David playing his harp

Not of

the youth the fields of

his child- felt devotion

but aged with sin and

the weariness of his king

ly needs He fingered

his hopes be yond all that

jewelled- in presence

into the dark of where

only light could take on

for its inward

glance.

1. Vermeer: The Geographer Were

you mapped in to your

touched-for- place Room

ed for a dis tant world

you could only imagine

Windowed out for that

necessary

light.

Defense Mechanisms

Who’s de

fending what theory that

strengthens your own de-

fensed- in fallibility

We all need walls to sur

round us from too much selfshadowing and that quickening light of artifi

dally im plied answer

s.

*Melville at Sea* (for Manfred Siebald)

It wasn’t

that white of never-for

sense But those waves

that uneased Where you

couldn’t be becoming

in the help

less ness

of spaced ...

Hardy’s heath

entangled- tense growth

ofbreeding

wormed

dead-shine

desires.

Would be?

Was Eve inquisitive Or

was it that snake’s way of

telling her to be so

Or if there’ d been a

nother fruit different

ly timed in place Would she

have taken that to(o)?

Thinking out

Thinking out

is like a ship beyond

where it’s seeing now

That I can’t.

The Red One

Children

may be coloring in

their own thoughts

But that Lion the red one

woke me a ware to my

unsettling

fears.

A Depth in Silence

if

he heard deep enough

The sounds of the sea

listen

ing in what he’d heard.

Tropical Saturday Evening’s

a beauti Tied being

dressed in that occasionally

Taking its mea sure in her

own appear ance The town

moon-lit from distant shades.

A Shadow in Mind

All

that dark seems as only

an appear anceA sha

dow in mind as this lin

gering weight less moon.

Church Capitalism USA

Preaching

a sort of church Capi

talistn “There’ s more about

money in the bible than a

bout faith and prayer”. This

church will take it all fondly

in — Thank God the collection

preceded pro cessionally

all this rhe toric And Christ’s

grace was left penniless beg

ging for alms at the door.

Question Marks

if

the question mark marked

a question I’d rather let

it speak it self out as

a pier seeking for sea and

the wherea bouts of e

longated

searchings.

Hearsay

I’ve

heard so many things

said that weren’t That

I’ve come to take si

lence as more of a matter of fact.

For Feet

A little dog not

knowing where but

never the less going

that way in a

timed-rhythm for feet.

Brooding moments

A bird

clawed for branch

Sits and waits its broo

ding moment s.

Moving out

through

rooms until doors be

came a house of emptied

spaces’.

That hope-felt Smile

it

was that hope-felt

smile that even took its

length through the flower

ed design s of your sig

nifying dress ed apprecia

tion of why Love isn’t

what one ex pects its

where about s to be.

Really known

Words

may not mean the same

if used less often

Seeing too much may

cause that image to

lose its hold in reflecting sound What I know

is only really known once

there’s a dis tance to be ing found again.

Rosh Haschana and the days of repentance

Why

is Judgment now at the

end of sum mer’s linger

ing fullness (not in the

dead light of winter’

s stone- kept glance)

But where the height of

season’s time less turning

s has left us ready to

be bared from our

leafless

desires.

Non spoken

ness

In the non

spoken ness of

sense That touch from

what word s might

come

to mean.

Too much color

Flower

s droop mg from

the weight of too

much

color.

Poemed

Don’t

look for a poem

unless it’ s look

ing right

in you.

Streetlights

In

that glass ed-in

viewed-re flection

of what Stars might

be telling

us now.

Schrubs

may settle for their down-

felt in-growth Sanctity of

coherent

semblance.

Reeds

To be

freed as these slender reeds ta king for wind

in trans

parent self.

Edge of cold

That

edge of cold

touched in frost-

find clears.

Find

Birds

hurried to per

ceive in sha dow

s find.

If things go too well

like words running into

their prede termined

rhythms That you wonder

how they got that way

There’s that uneasy fee

ling of the ways they did

n’t go Coming back at you

As if time could reverse

itseifbecause Fear speaks a

language of its own

understand

ing.

Unquieted

These

winds unquieted through

the stirrings of my

blood’s quickening sense.

A passage way

’s only e- choing-in-

sense The dark more fee

ling than that way would

tell us a head/touch

ed silence of our fee ling in for.

Still lifes

imply that there’s a

special kind of life in

that

stillness

of seeing to where It be

gins to grow out a

perspective of there -

it-is for being

more.

Balanced out

Can

the world balance it

self back to being Storms

leave a quiet after And in

that approach ing still

ness There’ s a tension

of coming more Where’

s the center then Like til

ting one’s glance the feel

for seeing

straight.

Questioning Nathaniel Pink

if

it’s those little out-

of-place things that

habitually unnerve that

fineness to your sensi

bilities Why is your

big view al ways center

cd down the middle Like a

racing track’ s winner

closing in for nearing

there.

Absent minded

then Where it’s perhap

s minding some thing else

Like floating balloons to

see it they’ re changing-

in-colors have left the

sky behind Where your

mind should have re

mained

earth-bound.

Logic beyond logic

if

there’s a logic beyond

logic It’s because Thing

s don’t match the way

they’re suppos ed to be.

Artificial flowers

Where’

s that soft ness mel

ting through touch The dee

pening scent in strangely brightened thought

s A real flo

wer’s see

ing finer- through the

finger’s crea- sing-in

sounds.

3 Still Lijes

a) Chairs may

im-i-tatc persons Or they

might present a lasting

sense of having been sat on

But these Chairs back-

ribbed as they are The bare-

bones of what We wouldn’t

want to be.

h) Closing drawers

is fee ling your

fingers in to thoughts

that might be concealed

there.

c) Looking at pictures

to see ifThey

might be loo king back.

Hammering

the sounds of pulsed-

sensed steel sparked

your eyes.

Illuminating light

Gulls

illumina ting light

as far as the sun could

be heard.

*Nonsense* (for the poet’s sort, Raphael)

He may

not have had the mind of

others But he minded

his nonsense with a meticulous care A symbolism

of words and effects Just

for him Told to make fun

of other’s not knowing why

even ifhe didn’t know him

self It certain ly did!

To see again

if

we could only learn

to see a gain Beyond

where eyes have prac-

tised their touched-in

precision of choice.

Of Outlook

You might

change the color of your

hair Or even that glance-

ed- in appeal ing for look

But what you can’t change

could change you Unccr

tained from an undeci

ding change of outlook.

Known better

Why

they came They must have

known better to that land

ofjewish extinction

Coming back as if It

was safe for them now Or

as a final answer to the

“final solu tion” -

Theirs.

Winter’s will

If winter

has teeth It bites

hard Clenching its

stone-tensed will

Sharpening the sic-

kled blades of its wind’

s intent Baring this

frightened land down

to its finali zed breath.

Soft touch

The

soft touch of your

welcomed words has

warmed me through the

cold realms of winter’ s deciding glance

veined-in now from

fear.

December moon

The moon’

s hardened its held-

in light Distan

cing from touch Trem

bling through these cold-

lighted winds of vacant

thoughts.

Different

Finding

different words to the

same things Makes those

same things

different.

An Intimacy

The cold

ness of these times

draws us nearer in an

inner sense for warmth

There’s an intimacy

of that fee ling out to

the meaning for words

Not just what’s said

But in the saying it

as well We become more

aware of their colors in

sound And in the dress of

being their closer-in

together.

Teacher’s complaint

Penelope

undid

what she was

taught to learn My tea

chers might complain of

this needle- worked un

doing from.

Flying kites

for a wind

less sky He felt the touch

ofknowing less

than this.

Escaped

Where do

fish escape to color the

dark of this deepness be

yond in

meaning.

Railings

to that steel-

shine of les sening no more

than this Saying’s

touch.

To finding dream

Cus

hioned in silence

Where the cool to

finding dreams re

members.

Empathy?

Could I

have lived her life

better than she

Be

cause she

got into those kinds

of trouble si

couldn’t be her be

ing confused.

Waiting

for what we know will

happen But not knowing

what that happening

may mean As a tension that stirs the

blood to a height of expectation’s waves claiming

in that breakage for time

(but yet) evening out

their repeat ed phrase

as the smooth- told song at

even tide.

Intentions

It’s not

what’s said but the way

of saying That’s said —

Houses look white because

the whiteness of that word

conveys the sense. A

house then is the meaning

of itself Coloring

through the words of

looking

on.

Even before

if

I promised you a rose

That thought of the i

mage of its form The fine

ness of its inner fold

s That implicit scent

Would be a taking of

it, even be fore It’s

been given.

In proclaiming

The

snow was setting a deep

ness of thought Farther down

than even Those settling

winds could Find And a moon

risen in the triumph

of its white ness in Pro

claiming!

What does it mean

you might ask As if mea

ning means any thing other

than the where and what

of it’s impli citly

there.

Defining an object

is where your finger

s can turn its meaning

s in.

His way of seeing

11 was

(perhaps) His

way of see ing those selfsame waves searching out

but neverthe less coming

in across those flat line

s of spoken sand As if All

that was in a returning

to be found Listening

for this heart-beat’

s receiving

time.

A softness offeeling

And

there’s a softness of feeling to(o) When

the moon encircles

the height of its own

intent and Flesh that fold

s into the needs of our

wanting hand s Or when

the waves have settled

down to a sameness

of finding

for.

Too much Goodness

Her good

ness gave us bad feelings

Always for the others but

seldom for her self Even

Christ thought of the Father’

s will - to(o) in that self-

denial Wasn’t she a

ware to that Doing us

wrong.

Wind-stilled

No

thing move s this prewintered closeness

Wind-still ed the same

ness of field s levelled -

out their length for be

ing known.

If this church

could be as sure as

its stone- held permanence Ascri bing another

world to its worldly -

felt aims Then I’d let

its enclos- sures finalize my sense of being so/

purposed.

Leihl

told the strength of

their facially-cut

featured

rugged

Landscap ed perspec

tived in

personed

place.

Thereness of

That

little

bird’s after-

found wings Colored the

thereness in its be

ing

for mine.

Naked branched

skeletal urge d danced in

death.

Receiving death

as an

old friend

in the quie tude of a

last-timed

leisure

Those cer- tained pain

s but that assurance

in the same of some

thing more than It could

take away.

This new day

writes it self into me

with indelible ink

Not even these soft

rains can wash its sound

less image away.

Happy ends

don’t come because they

start that way They must

be loved back into

view.

Renewing

If you’ve

seen all there is to see

You could start again

by seeing a gain/seen.

Criss-crossing

of waves but to tell

the same shore back-

reached

in tide.

Smoothed-out

Night

smoothed-out

softened

by sleep The stars gui

ding its slow-felt

sense ol be ing watch

ed over.

Taste of

The taste

of quickened to sense

split-down

glow/je-

welled.

Talk shows

Talking

the thing out until the

thing’s out talked of Like

hanging cloth es on the

line of drying their

colors out.

Instinct to

1 know

their colors Only after

the shadow s passed

an instinct

to light.

So!

He stood

his place of what he’d

been double- footed Hands

told in pockets So!

Virtuoso

It wasn’

t the music that spoke

ranging it self to the

inner meanings of sound

But more like a dis

play of clothes And

that flashing smile’

s instru ment of self

appealing

appearance.

Church image

Winds

keep shif ting their

meanings by A ship in

a vacant storm held

to the bottom less ness

of its sin king hopes.

At Funerals

He

was so con cerncd about

saying the right thing

s Pleasing, accentua

ting the com mon notions

That more of silence would

have better ac companied

that flower

mg casket.

Escapes us

if

the theme es capes us

leaves us

looking for

where it wasn’t

like a Spitz wegean butter

fly neither caught in

the hopes of

his pleading myopic net.

Train-told Dividing the wood

s in sound s of see

ing past exten

sions for

thought.

Slight hopes

a bird hoi

ding tight to twig.

Portrait

Ernest

look Heavy chinned

concerns Dulled glass

es having been seen

too much.

Silver-Scaled

To

think of that silver-

scaled tarpon creasing

the waters to its sound

less edge.

Mangrove Trees

from coral-

lcd rock Rooted to the

dead life of primieval

tides.

Tasted salt

Taste of salt

lipped-

tongued

sprayed of birds running-

high.

Over-extended

Lots of line

little dog pulling for

a maybe’d foot holding

fast to what’ s hardly

holding in.

All’s away Nothing's here

It was

as if The wind had

blown this world away

The heavens moved into

whereever they were be

yond the trees dancing

bending through their rhythmic

strength’s rhymed in to

All’s away and nothing’

s here.

Room above the kindergarten

it

was a little bit of a

little girl' s room with

those silly triffles han

ging around for walls to

be decorated upon Nothing

quite as the world would

have it But in a neatness

carefully

groomed.

Sky-viewed window

opened me out beyond

the width of my viewed-in

self as a pre cipacc of

heighten ed thought

to where if not only

there.

Trying to be involved

Trying

to be in volved

in what didn’t hasten my sense Otherwise

from a cat’ s unravel]

ing the roll of that

clothed- through where

abouts.

ForS. L.

Where

is the gen ealogy of

such intricate understanding A language not

yours but learned A back

ground in the backdrop of

my own poetic awareness

Can one learn what is be

yond the grammar of what word

s should self- define A sensi

bility that brightens the

idea as in those searching

times of moonlike.

Witnessed

The

winds tell ing their

time through these bared

fields And those clouds

massive ly column

ed-in the stillness

of approach ing dawn.

For Rosemarie

There’s a

beauty rare ly refined

as a rose but slightly

paled intricately en

hanced in the

folds of in volving

stillness.

Lost to Sleep

A day

lost to sleep dog -

pawed in that downed heat

of less inspiring suns.

Simple Truths

Let's

get back to the simple

truths She meant As if

they weren’ t getting

back at us.

Waking from Sound

Waking

from sound That inner flow of sleep As fish through

the water’ s silent

reach of no where to be

told in fin ding out.

Asked/'answered

He asked, religion 1

answered, faith Not the

forms but in the forms

Not the priest but the word-

priest Not that feeling or

thought But His feelings

and thoughts for us.

Tropical Hospital

They called it “The Hilton”

And 1 would have booked for

a suite m those spacious

interiors of being brought

into tropical plants and

waters not even the touch of

disease that a hospital u

sually comes to mean And those

special closed- off rooms for

young chil dren still dy

ing of cancer.

For good Prices

A land that’

s lost its soul Indian

once those back-watered

routes still lis tening

for thunder Black-timed

slave lands And now its robbed

soil to

digging deep those har

bored joys of new high

rises And tou rist hands

talking for good prices.

But still

as a woman more touched

but finding yet that

real love of only now

Tropical instincts in

the darked spray ing-out-

of waves And inland enclo

sures to hear that whisper

of still fin ding-out

streams.

Not

*Nathaniel Pink’s indecisions*

having de cided which

way the de cisions might

mean turning out coming a

bout or still hanging in a

speechless void of that

not where be cause the why

failed to define whatever

claims it might or might

not need It was like bet

ween waking and morning

And the dark still perfor

ming its last uncertain

ties.

“A Final word, please ”

haven’t we

heard that one before

As if our words could

attain a finality in

sense When we inhabit this

uncertain self Mirror

ed mostly as the changing

mindsofa caged bird’s

involving i mage of And

admiring what hasn’t come

out to be

for long.

A finalized Sense of beauty

Why

do these naked branch

es bared of all their

other accommo dations

strangely invest us with

a finalized sense of

beauty Abstracted to their

innermost lines of

meaning.

Israel’s suffering

Was

Israel’s suffering like

a lamb in defensi

bly outcast world

foreign to the tender

ness of its calling

More in the features

of Christ than it could

behold it self in be

mg.

Hide and Seek

You can’t

hide from what you

can’t find out any

way from that other self

s shadowed Tree-find.

Out-centered

She

centering me out

between ed thought

and sense Not knowing

which was mine which hers.

Felt hurt

saw it m her eyes

some where else Couldn’

t look it a way from not

being there.

Bird’s - inview

in re

volving mir ror’s

round about that doesn'

t quite come back

to.

God-seeker

However

much we’ve reclaimed

this land to our own use

And tilled out the soil

of our finer feelings

There would always be a

dark ness that would

spread its claims again on

us Far out beyond the ti

dal urgings of this sea

to that last starried hope

of being more than what we

are or could possibly

mean.

Smaller shadows

Trying to

catch up to his telling

feet falls the smaller

shadows of growing up.

Togethered

But as Van

Eyck detailed a map of minor

objects Delight ed in their

own right-for- Meaning the

more these little things

together

ed.

Cousin-in-law

No such

thing But he’ s there with

his brimming hat and decided look cd-for-mea

nings in a dia logue to relative matters.

Wall

impenetra

blc Like you’ ve reached

its stoned height Overbearing sight Blanked no-

not-matter Lifeless to

heart.

Virgin land

Man-made

the measure of that virgin

land Took it for his wants

Stripped it to his needs

until that Mystery of light,

dark and depth was fathomed

out Lay bar- ren/bared.

If there’s no inward world

a way of

feeling one’ s thought

s shadowed in reflec

tion The re turning room

closing us for silence

in Not the things them

selves But how they’re

vealed in touch and sight

The depth through our

own contem

plations.

Double vision after the eye operation

may be

seeing what I wanted to see

and the way it may have

really been Like parent’s

wish-image of their chil

dren and those same chil

dren looking back at them

other wise in a mirror

double-

visioned

Two truths un telling the

same.

Glamour

may be

doing your self up

to where You can’t

get back down again.

Chosen

No

where to be safe That sacrificial death that

Christ told in blood

is bound to our Jewish

ness now at the stake

of fear Nailed

to be chosen in His

redeeming

strength.

For being more

if

there’s no sense of

mystery left If the

wood’s been cut from

the dark ness of its

soul Iflove’ s but the

flesh of acting itself

through If then the

world means less for be

ing world And man’s lost

from his un heard want

s for being

more.

Of knowing where

These

curtains closed in

your need for touch

to waken whatever

light

could be felt

in the cloth of knowing

where.

At sunset

These

waters calmed an unseen hand stilled

their rising need to

voice.

Folksy words

Southern

preacher’ s imbalance

d phrase draws you

slowly in to a baited bite

of gospelled sense.

“In God we trust”

coined and papered

over belief in a God who

distrusted their sanctioned doublesided values.

Disappointed

not quite

grieved but in that same

feelinged place Only

touched slight ly in for

hurt.

Wearing out

of self As clothes

trying too hard to be

newly

dressed.

Uptold

Rough sea

s disturbing strength

Winds uptell the ocean’s

bottomed-

hold-break-

age of what ever silent

refuge such times as

these.

Southern pine’s

whisper

ing sense needling the

wind’s finer- felt trans

parencies.

Dead speaking

Heard

the dead spea king Stranged-

in fears Sealed- in trains crossing your mind’s tracks.

Existential Fear As if some

thing wasn’t

there that should have

been Having lost what

couldn’t be found a void

a space Some

where echo ing deep

through lost silences.

Crossing a river

over

the height of being

safe from those fear-

lit sounds As streams

of persons restless ly impulsed.

A final place

A

room en closed in

room A final place of where

nothing’s out but in That

image of used thoughts

As objects seen too often

to be loo king back.

Unseen

Too

many books here to

make me be lieve that

he’s seeing more than

those emp tied pages

can tell.

Buds-for-Leafs

These buds- for-leaf s

remind me Life’s a

small sense of seeing.

Grey

The grey

of seeing oneself A1

ways the

same.

Unsaid Words

must be

buried

some where.

Slowed down

to the

even ness

of ironing- board

sense.

Aged

There’

11 be a

time When

there’s only time’

s being more of

us.

Re-timed

Churches

sounding

age-old

time Cold- stoned to

reticent

feet.

Seldom Smile

obliquely

felt As an Egrit where

It was least expect

ing Wings.

Despited

She

knew the right people

Lived where one should

Married to an eye-

sight-of- money Played

the social games ac

cording to class Ate and

dressed as those pictured maga zines said But

despite it all Felt some

how when not trying to

be alone despit

ed.

Waiting for Love

His life

was waiting for love

An opened door for her to

come in as he knew

it But she never came

waiting out side her own

feel for life.

Peopled with Children

They

peopled their home with

children to protect a-

gainst That one on one

defense A marriage of

being where the other wasn’

t though admiring what

wasn’t of one self in the

other.

Belle of the Party

She

was the belle of the

party The queen of hopes

loved by

more than She loved her

self At 58 appeared

drunken out of such fame,

fat unstead y of foot

to mind introduced to the

not knowing former

well-wishers Simply gazing.

Prime Choice

He was

rich and of the right faith

a serious item of

choice Like the best

of steak- throughed

taste Or a 9 foot putt

rolling with hill sense.

So Explicit

Her

voice so ex-plicit

like cutting ribbon to

size exacting find.

Herrenberg

Some

churches too thick

for their in tended Howto-heaven

Like Brahms’ late chamber

music Not seen through.

Striped by Birth

if

I were striped by birth

an innate stigma for

some It might make me

Hee to the undone intentions of where

Mountains sing for

light or the depths of

under-watered

seas.

Abstracting language

like

cutting stone to

its jewelled- in

center.

That quiet Pelican

That Si

lent quiet pelican’s

faced for lost sky’s

distant call reclines the

length where those bright

scales of fish once

found slip pery their way

in.

Last Meaning?

Is

the mind the last

meaning Or can it

see through itself

more.

Sadness in Schubert’s

(A Miner Quartet and Haydn's Sonata Hb. 24 slow mot.)

Not the

Schuber tian sad

ness of never fin

ding open- sensed But

to specifically felt

Touched-in

not out.

On Critics

If you

have us before we

have our selves in the

Categories of pre-es

tablished

criteria

It may not be the poem

at all

We’re written in.

Singing stones

Rush

of water’s time-past

singing

stones.

Snow’s sensibilities

Last of

snow’s sensi bilitics

pushed through flowered re frain.

Abandoned

As a lone

ly voiced abandon

ed land

scaped.

Identities

Like a

woman’s new hat

sitting a top

spaced-en-

chanced

impress ions.

Twain: the last years

To be left

lonely in a world of ad

miration To deny God

because ot your own loss

When He had given all

that could be lost for

you Taking that aim at

yourself can’t defend

you against the same

You were right Despite

all your gifts You remained

more human than human

should be.

seeming

A

little dog sat a little

way of see ming him

self bigger than he

thought

he could want

to be.

Thank yon Notes

Saying

the things One should

say in the way they’

re said Isn’t saying

any thing

at all.

Pains

of where Feeling

s numbed from

thought.

Oner bearing

Too much

of him To let me

be mine.

Of Waiting

Light

rain’s

quiet sense of waiting.

Blowing up

The sea’

s regained its strength

that rough sense of waves

Some where in the blood

That winds may have blown

there to(o).

Hommage a Ibsen

If women were pretty pup-pets

There must be strings for

pulling their eyes that open

in to close Those feet dangling

for time And some where

a heart to(o)

Not far below the surface.

Beach Mannequin

That sweet smell of perfumed

smile Clothes cut out from

pictured book

And words that don’t say

but simply look.

Imitations?

Do

children im-i tate or

think their own way out Or

are they be ing through us

Some thing more of being

them selves.

Zelenka

Lying dead for Two hundred years

as in a jewelled tomb Great art

may survive that way Unearthed

even with mistaken notes As

if what wasn’t sounded all

that time could be reheard again

right.

Berwald

They asked me about a hall

named for you Never heard

or ofThere’s that not

quite right of your way of

saying things that straighten

me out.

Self Portrait

I wrote:

Jewish minister

Modernist poet with conservative values

Biblical humorist

they never wrote back.

With Little Things

It’s that special way with the

little things That make them

truly big A mouse trying for food

The words that come self — or

dained to mind Those details

often tell more than any self

imposing view of such important

things.

Cranach’s “Fall of Man ’’ *(Uffizzi)*

Snake

pointedly spoke

Her eye a- wake Daring

him to take the fruit

She meant her dy ing

strength

in.

Caring for silence

as a woman

combing her hair to

where it stops by thin

king.

Joost van Cleve’s

“Magdalene’s mourning the dead Christ”

(Uffizzi)

Unfamous

in wayward corner tor

private use But stilled in

to a message She’d been

told m us Voiced

to hear.

Melting

Lost his steps in

the snow’ s mel

ting

sounds.

Siena + 1348/49

Circling that outer sensed in narrow

ed streets Enclosin'

ed dying medieval

cries.

Witnessing

Flowers

bend down Witnessing

too much colored

weight.

Impersoned

faceless

facades

not

wanting

to see what they

may have known

once

oneness

impersoncd.

Where Cold’s

its own

permanent

truth

Woman

askingje-

welled and silvered

touch.

Speechless Deep

Saying

nothing’s

the unsaid under

cover fish silently

probing its

speech less

deep.

Learning to learn

Learning

to learn may be

the un learning

of what you should

have known.

One-parent Families

If it takes

two to make a person

It should take two to help

make him more of himself

To nourish his need for love

and inner strength

to help him discern the

where and where nots

But then It took one God to

make us all.

Sunday

That church listens for emptied stone

A voice or two still wanting

the need to praise Sunday

beach filled up for pleasure

seekers with sand and the sound

of waves and the silent wings of

birds for finding where coming in

as if called for there.

Two-sided

These

leaves can tell of shadow

from what They find in

sun.

Decides

The ridge

of these hills decides in

balance between earth and sky.

A Blessing

This tree o

pens its arms to an expanse

of sky Perhaps to bring the

stars in I thought of

a blessing to be blessed by

having seen.

Still Asleep

The swans

still asleep Tucked in the

white ness of their

wings and the rhythms of

waves that have taken them

afar to distant shores.

The Need for More

if

you tell every thing

at once

There’s nothing

to be told for more It’s

like a woman undressing

at the first night. She really needs

those clothes to be some

thing more to herself in.

In MemoriamJ. G.

I never saw quite up to

your height I mean there

was a gracious ness there

A step above my own reaching

for You may have had to

look down but never down

upon.

These niceties of age

Taking time’s rhy

thms into the blood-

length of our own

Feeling in to the

world we’ve come to sec

and touch with our own

meanings An ease of

not wanting for more

than our les sening need

s can define And that

child like ness in re

learning through the

question ing eyes of

a world that could only

be bigger

known.

That shifting sense

if

you say it differ

ently than the world’s

taken it to mean And there’s an tin ease of not

quite appear ing your self

certainties of thinking

it so and not so Life’s

that shif ting sense as

in those tide s of where

ever bound There’ s a watching

moon above it all that

you would want to seem

down here.

For being more

if

life’s sim ply a chance

factor And the sprout

in that Greenness

for grass isn’t any

thing more than its be

ing touched- through in

self appear ance And the

flight of birds arou

sing the au tumn winds to

a new height to instinct

that wanting warmth was

only What it was not ask

ing for more or the why

and where

of.

Puppet play Puppets

She played herself in

to Mother ing child -

like

thoughts.

May have been

Spring

may have been that

little girl with posey

hair and Eyes in wa

kening

sounds.

Outpoemed

this room

from extra mea

nings Like a sapless

spring.

Slow Steps/slow thoughts

Slow steps

slow thoughts I ask

these trees up to be

ing their height The

air still Waiting for

this

light sub

duedin a dis tance

I can’t bring by

slowing my step to

slowed in

thoughts.

Opened windows

that

breadth of

air in the wind to

spaced.

Like any other day

A day like any other

as if

Any other

day could be like this

Selecting

thoughts

like flower s for a

readied vase Each in-

between colored What

She meant for touch And

that vase steadied as

it was be yond glance.

Mary, the Mother

Mary

the mother of wanting

for more Unfathom

ed that still ness of self-

toned-quiet ude Angcll

ed in Brightness.

Enveloping

This

room en veloping

the me of mine-closeness of where thin

king’s for.

Trilogy of

1. Return to brae! 1945/48 Dead

don’t speak to living

only now Where the

charred

flesh and

bared rawed fields

of wan ton land I-

maged new life upon

smoul

dcring heaps of dead past.

1. Jesus in Auschwitz

Would

Jesus have recognised

himself there/ trained to

the death camps of li

ving hopes Blood re

deemed from tears The

cry The cross ed wayward

signs Out spreading

hands.

1. To Kingdom oj Peace This moon blot ted out

for the blood of when

Time’s a gonized from

its last

fears.

Room without windows

if

there’s no way of loo

king out How can I

find this reach with

in Imprison ed from

these walls closed in

impenetra ble silence.

How

*Room without windows II*

can these freshly cut

flowers, how ever fine

ly felt to their cool

ed through water Bloom

without the

sky to see

to open their sense

to a mind

of space

in light.

Carpet’s red

This

carpet’s calling in

red the deep ness of

where wine unfolds

through wave s of resplen

dent warmth.

Preacher’s Room

This

musky smell of time-

told preacher s pointing

their meaning for me And

nothing but bibles here

to help forget that the

Lord created sun and the

width of a wider world

written so indelibly dear-

pages of His

living word.

In Fineness

Why

does

this white

of birch slender

ly ex posing in

fineness-

leaf.

Releasing

These

finely lit bud-star

s relea

sing

Evening’ s breath

ed-in

light.

Advertising Model

Teeth

ed-in per fectly con

sumed smile of the round ed redness assuming

lips And eyebrowed to

its made- up intention

less Curved.

Cross-felt

Checker

ed shirt' s selfintended smilelines of cross-felt

proba

bilities.

Weekend Father’s

more than

a childless looking to

have halved their self

certain

tics from.

all those pillows

could but dream out

that tired ness of

longing

in sleep.

Rain buds

touching in branch

to the place of leaf

ed remem brance

s.

Lutheran pre-Situation

Before

he knew Where he was

He couldn’t get out with

out knowing

and out wasn’ t the same

Closing door s locked be

hind a finality of last

chances weren’ t offered Only

a one way last station

ed being Imprisoned there

If that was a there

deeper within himself than

He could have possibly

imagined.

mpiricism?

if

there’s a science of

man It’s be cause He think

s he knows what he sees

But perhaps then doesn’t

see what he doesn’t know

It’s the in visibly there

of love of self of God

and of some- such meanings

that transcend what man

doesn’t see because he

doesn’t know That makes man

man.

Statistics

may turn me into a

number hid den from

permanent

sight As if

my shirt wasn’t grey

or white But

others thought it

might have to be

82 %.

Prophetic sense

That

lone voice in a world

lonely from self Voice

less to

those deeper

meanings that make man

man to be May be heard

if that lis tening’s

hard enough.

The dilemma

Man

decides mostly a

gainst him self Be

cause what he wants

isn’t want ed of him

But if what’ s wanted of

him is what Others mean as

their wants Then who’s to

decide at all.

Without God

that defense against our

selves His law that

speaks for us against our

vacant claim s of self

His love the final fruit

s of our denying Him

without God there’s only

a without.

Where

does beginning begin here

Life seems in the middle

of a process As a bird

keyed to its branch for

a moment or less of

what He wanted to

ask.

Towards tonality

Why

does the sun want to

seem to(o) far Touched from

light gather ing in a

moment of hesitant

sound.

Interaction

These

trees stea died for fruit

And 1 ripened in

looking.

Passed

These

landscaped trees have

taken their own design

of becoming in Where

this train farther off

than appear

s.

Lessened

Take

account of your life

I was told But it all

added up to subtrac

tion accoun ted for an

aging

process.

Jesus/Buddha

Buddha

wanted to get us out of this world

of ourselves Jesus gave

himself for a world

that didn't want His

knowing too much of Why

we wanted to kill

Him.

Some Kinds of Diagnosing

couldn’t quite get

him into one of their

categories So they cut

off some of the fringe

aspects to fit him in

to their proper framc-

for-reference.

Didn ’t know

I didn’t

know You didn’t want

me to know Why not

is too late now.

Outlasting

Wanting for wind through

this rough sea’s impene

trable

thoughts.

Fading out

Morning

moon

Night’s

hiding out its

after

glow.

Paced

He paced his

steps to his inward

length of

thoughts.

If

it isn’t what we’

ve lost

We’ve found

Time re deems it

self either way.

Cyclops?

He didn’t see it my way

1 didn’t see it his

And if we did Could we see it

both ways at once.

Castle at Sirmione

These

stones still haunt their

silent pose Fortified a-

gainst ages ot waiting in

Resolved their self-

enclosed dis

tance.

Bells

These

bells know A founded

consonance of timed-

listening

aloud.

Finer Sense

A

touch

ofbird’s

Reeds singing in

their ft ner sense.

Righting one self

it'

the other’ s always

wrong and I’m always

right How can I right

myselfby being wrong

for a change.

Down to size

if

you cut him down to

size He may have to

patch you back up a

gain.

Out finding

A

little girl following

her feet to where

She found them out

again.

Captiva Bay

That

bay was as calm as the

gathering in of one’s

thoughts A stillness

as if the sun had settled

there Lit in a permanency

or its in- perceiving

glow.

*The Dream* (Great Gatsby) If

Daisy never knew more

than her monied voice

can tell

that inconstant need

to being lov ed Why then

this dream See ing through

as even a part of your own

unguarded self or of a false

ly placed A merican myth

doesn’t make it any more

true to be lieve in sim ply because it’s believed.

Endangered species

The

list’s

getting longer

The times shorter

Man’s the main enemy Draining

their swamps cutting down the

dark of their forest into

habitats He wants to reclaim

for his self- seeking self

And if the birds have flown

out of sight And those strange

creatures extinct from their

God-given instincts Who's

next on all those increa

sing shortlists.

For its own Sake

Honesty

for its own sake

is Like lo ving more

than You

can realize.

Deep down

For some

being at the bottom

of things Is the only

way to ri sing up

again.

Routine

He got so used to

his routine that Flis clo thes start ed looking

all the same.

Psychoage

Being

so obsessed with your

self that There’s

little left

of.

Systems

are like houses It’

s often dif ficult to

see through

them.

Progress

is where you didn’t

want to be

later.

If freedom is most al

*Freedom*

ways from How are you

going to find your

way back to?

If

you give into your

self It’ s a ques

tion of Who’s gi

ving and What’s ta

king.

Ambiguity

if

they’re two ways of

seeing it right May

be the right way’

s doing it wrong.

Kassandra ***(****1964****)***

Aber

der Wind spricht, nur zu mir

Die Wellen klagen einen scharferen

Sinn Ich mochte rnich in der

Nacht verstecken ein Baum, meine

Blatter zur Erde geschiittet Ich

mochte nackt sein vor dem Sturm,

mein Stamm hart gcblasen Aber

der Wind spricht noch.

Of haunted dreams

This house

estranged from my

sense-moon’ s Grasping

the dark of not knowing

where I sleep of haunted dreams.

Cut Grass

This grass

cut to new meaning

from over grown thoughts

and the wee ding desires

breeding

instincts

sprouting out their

own fears.

Wind-fright Quivering flo wers wind-

fright That aimed of

color to.

On the Suffering of a retarded child

She did

n’t know the words

for suffering But she knew

what It was perhaps even

more so

Some thing dark for her

incompre

hensible ly becoming.

less.

What comes next

What

comes if there isn’t

a coming next All

lined up for the star

ting aims at the finish

Nothing more reached at

tained as if there was a

final sense in this.

“Prussian blue,

it ’ll fade” (jI. S. on CPF: Bach) Too distinct to make its mark

known A clarity of lesser

intent Or would you

rather unravel it to the

cloth of in terwoven fin

alities.

For the Freudians

you know all the an

severs before the question

s can take- in Impulsed

to their tin certain mea

nings It’s like a river dried of direc

dons.

Tamed

A

white fence circling a

round where it happen

ed to be As the glad

ly face of some tamed

animal’s be ing soothed

in quiet ness.

Hellenic

The

beauty of man may be

more classi cally pro

portioned through the

hands of his benevolent

creator Than within the

realms of reach of lhs own

self-justi

fications.

Overstepping

the lines of where

you were written out

to be As uneven

ed cobble- stoned step

s taken at what ever

speed But angled out

to receive your tenta

tive arriv ing approach.

22 Oak Lane

A

house windowed in

the depth of my past Red-

bricked to the feature

s of looking out through

the world that has made

me from But columned in

white to the height of

what has held my meaning

for.

King David *(tin-fail)* All

those gifts The Lord

had given almost a sent

blance of what those

wise men had cared for

Following the star to

your namesake with over

reaching desires You

took what wasn’t offer

ed as yours Exposed to the

death claims of those sen

sual me-for- mine Ion

gings-

Looking back

means more for most

than the now as it was

Man’s need s to find

a meaning where he

wasn’t.

That rhythmic urge

Hammering nails in-to a

coffin a- cross that

rhythmic urge to tell

the end in that handswinging from fate.

Enlarged

All light

s on House enlarged

from awai ting what

wouldn’t

happen.

A Color of its own

The

rain has a color of

its own Unseen but

speaking found as the

quiet in untouch

ed roses.

A ll used up

as a coin worn down

from its vin tage value

Debased ofits minted meaning’s indeci pherable

to touch and sense.

Out-lined

tree

Skeletal

branch

thinned

in.

Guest room leaving

I’ve

slept this room out

of its aban doned mean

ings An apple left

circled to the size

of its plate And flowers

selective ly touch

ed by.

Finding in

Where

from is to The leaving

in coming As if 1

could find myselfbe

hind.

Deciding

“God

will decide Just pray

long enough” But He de

cidcd long a go that we

should de cide for our

selves in the freedom He

gave us to accept His fi

nal answer.

Little girl lost

She

never found herself A

little girl lost pic

king flower s while

forgetting the garden

she’s in.

A sense of moon

There

was a sense of moon

in coming As that feel

for snow hasn’t real

ized itself.

Cemetery

Stones

engraved to living

words ol mu ted presence

Standing stilled to

where from and what

to.

Name dropping

Dropping

names to be picked back

up again Unpersoned

from the flesh and blood

of where they weren’t

As if the name itself

s abandon ed to what It

might be attributable

to.

Getting ahead

We

may all be getting a

head But the finish line’

s the no more coming

on of The headless horse

man’s tilting from his

stainless

steel-armor

cd in self-

certainty.

The Making of

Were

we taught to feel-

in the way that was

only us The making

of a mind’ s seldom

touched-

from

person.

Jonathan

Too good

to be king Less passion

war-time needs He resigned him self in the

depth of de votion to

David’s un certain but

Triumphal

ascent.

Coming straight to the point

might un even that

truth to the question

ings of where’s co

ming from And if that

“point” may have indeed

succeed cd itself to

successive

uncertain

ties.

David/'Absalom

split

down the middle as

Jacob and Israel Two

persons one truth

The kingly father’s upstart son and He Defending him

self against his own

choice That will to selfdefeat But triumphal

in the loss for repent

ant tears.

Underlying Meanings

if

the “truth” may have

underly ing meaning

s As these birds winged beyond their impulse

d through shadow.

Dualities

The clarity of

word redefining that uncertain

ty in self As a por

trait exacted for

then and there But un

mistak ably other

wise.

Rembrandt’s Saskia *(****1634****-****42****Kassel)*

That pink

she’s worthy of your wife

Dressed in the richness of

cloth and fur Jewelled/me-

tallic gleam And the smooth

ed face Clo sed hands

That clasp of lip-determined glanced through

your admiring skills.

Anatolian Restaurant *(Gottingen)*

Seeing

through glass or glass see

ing through That room ordered in the clarity of

space-tables set to their

silvered touch Candle’s flame

but quietly felt from the

dark of fal len leaves.

Outlearned

She

only knew that she’d

outlearned the meaning

s She needed to know

When her teacher overstepped that wisdom for

the image of a lesser

self.

Tropical fish

The co

loring of that fish

brighten ed me in

to an aware ness of

why waters recede from

the spectrum of such an

impending

glow.

Puzzled in

He puzzled in the parts to

fit the nrea ning of his

own self sa tisfaction

s.

Spaced out

There

was always that vacancy

from self in the o

pen fields spaced out

to the where of where

wasn’t.

Christ presented to the Jews (Diner)

To

see the i mage of one’

s own suf fering Who

denied Him By

increas ing the ex

tent of that unseen

cause.

If there is peace

even with in the ebb

and flow of this world’

s lasting fears It must

come from a far Perhaps

with only a star to

find its sol emn way to

a place some where be

yond the still ness of where

our heart’s longings

can be timed

to rest.

Through the realms of Christmas Eve

brought in from the depth

of these wai ting moment

s Night now laycd silently

to rest in the softness

of freshly fallen snow

And stars watching o

ver the dis tance of

where sleep pervadese

ven through this wind’

s finding

in voice.

Poetry books by David Jaffin

1. Conformed to Stone, Abelard-Schuman,

New York, 1968, London 1970.

1. Emptied Spaces, with an illustration byjacques Lipschitz, Abelard-Schuman, London 1972.
2. In the Glass of Winter, Abelard-Schuman,

London 1975, with an illustration by Mordechai Ardon.

1. As One, The Elizabeth Press, New Rochelle, N. Y. 1975.
2. The Half of a Circle, The Elizabeth Press,

New Rochelle, N. Y. 1977.

1. Space of, The Elizabeth Press, New Rochelle, N. Y. 1978.
2. Preceptions, The Elizabeth Press, New Rochelle,

N. Y. 1979.

1. For the Finger’s Want of Sound, Shearsman Plymouth, England, 1982.
2. The Density for Color, Shearsman Plymouth,

England, 1982.

1. Selected Poems, English/Hebrew,

Massada Publishers, Givatyim, Israel, 1982.

1. The Telling of Time, Shearsman, Kentisbeare,

England, 2000 + Johannis, Lahr, Germany.

1. That Sense for Meaning, Shearsman, Kentisbeare, England, 2001 + Johannis, Lahr, Germany.
2. Into the timeless Deep, Shearsman, Kentisbeare, England, 2002 +Johannis, Lahr, Germany.
3. A Birth in Seeing, Shearsman, Exeter,

England, 2003 + Johannis, Lahr, Germany.

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**BUI**

**David Jaffin**

David Jaffin's Preceptions is a fine book... Jaffin's poems, slight on the page, entice, engage, amuse. Yet their brief touchings move toward and often reach wholeness, and they are poems of philosophical consequence out of keeping with much of modern poetics. The poems catch perceptions in the act of happening, to be, the short-line verse appropriate to what.becomes.

Paul Ramsay, ***The Sewanee Review.***

David Jaffin is a master of the restrained but purposeful statement. If his poems do not have quite the briefness of the haiku, they have a good deal of its light- dark inflection and rounded perfection of form... Jaffin's poems almost always give an impression of "light reflecting light". The fact is, that if one wants restraint and elegance, he will find it in abundance here. Jaffin's subtleties are, in short, dazzling.

***The Library Journal on Conformed to Stone***

Mr. Jaffin uses words with a real fineness of diction which emphasizes a characteristic understatement of emotion. One recognizes a cultivated sensibility. He adopts a theme and mode which one cannot help but admire. He writes very well indeed.

Norman Holmes Pearson

Poems in a tradition that is not European, not American, not jin many ways) Oriental, but Jaffinesque. There is no especial code to the unravelling of the poems, but that of commonplace, but intricate, human consideration. Jaffin's voice is unique and fascinating.

**Tribune** (London) on As **One**

David Jaffin has created in his four books of poetry published so far a world so unique, in verse so tight and controlled, that I can think of only two poets who are at all comparable: Emily Dickinson and Lorine Niedecker. He shares with both a vision of reality which is sharp and threatening. His poems are jagged pieces of ice which stab at the heart, but melt before causing damage... Jaffin explores the anima in ways which surpass even Robert Duncan's explorations of that part of the male psyche...

***St. Andrews Review***