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A Man in Midpassage

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A MAN IN MIDPASSAGE

Out of what window should memory look:
The book in the brazier, intricate typewriter
The epitaph's instinct: which one select,
A man in the murdered frame, perhaps,
Locked in his caricature like a convict
Or strict conscience of that good
Incompletely created by any
If not blood beaten into his earth,
Tombstone tilted against evil
West of childhood, hate.

Would he walk as upright man
Once could, while adamant animals
Moved flat on the landscape
Like light over the railheads
Converge in developing thunder;

Take office, make public meaning
His poems contracted
Between airshafts

Who had first felt tamarack
Sharpen his taste
And future's handshake.

NORMAN MACLEOD