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The Tennis Player

George Abbe

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REALIZATION

I stood in a place I had stood before
And did not know it.
I walked a path I had walked before
And found it strange.
I felt a pain I had felt before
And thought it new.

Then I looked at a face I had loved before
And I remembered.
Time is a pool, not a river.
There are no fresh tears —
Only the gathered salt of all the years.

WINIFRED REITER

THE TENNIS PLAYER

His racket beat against the cliffs of heaven;
ball after ball burst in supernal smoke;
he hurled the power to kill, to be forgiven;
air was a sheaf of atoms that he woke.

The lines he raced were boundaries of the sun,
and where he crossed a thunderous image burned;
the net was choir, the clay a subject land;
his fingers taught the galaxies to shine.

Along his arm the purest mercy flowed,
to sanction virtue of the sharp return,
to end his enemy with quickest blow.

GEORGE ABBE