

NATHAN ZACH

Translated from Hebrew
by T. Carmi

A MOMENT

for Assia

*Quiet for a moment. Please. I'd like to
say something. He went away
and passed in front of me. I could have
touched the hem of his cloak. I didn't.
Who could have known what I didn't
know.*

*There was sand stuck to his clothes.
Sprigs were tangled in his beard. He
must have slept on straw the night
before. Who could have known that in
another night he would be hollow as a
bird, hard as a stone.*

*I could not have known. I don't blame
him. Sometimes I feel him getting up
in his sleep, moonstruck like the sea,
flitting by me, saying to me my son.
My son. I didn't know that you are, to
such an extent, with me.*

רנע אַמך שַׁקט בְּבִקְשָׁה. אָנָּא. אָנִי
 רוֹצֵה לומר רֵבֵר מָה. הוא הַלֵּךְ
 וְעָבַר עַל פָּנַי. יְכַלְתִּי לַגְּעַח בְּשׁוּלֵי
 אַדְרָתוֹ. לֹא נִגְעָתִי. מִי יְכוּל הִיָּה
 לַדְּעַח מַה שְּׁלֹא יְדַעָתִי.

הַחֹל רֵבֵק בְּבִגְדָיו. בּוֹקְנוּ
 הַסְּפָכוּ זְרָדִינוּ. בְּגִרָאָה לֵן
 לִילָה קָדָם בְּפָרְזָן. מִי יְכוּל הִיָּה
 לַדְּעַח שְׁבַעֹד לִילָה יְהִיָּה
 רִיק בְּמוֹ צְפוּר, קָשָׁה בְּמוֹ אָבָן.

לֹא יְכַלְתִּי לַדְּעַח. אֵינֶנִּי מְאֲשִׁים
 אוֹתוֹ. לְקַעָמִים אָנִי מְרַגֵּשׁ אוֹתוֹ קָם
 בְּשִׁנְתוֹ, סְהַרְרֵי בְּמוֹ יָם, חוֹלֵף לְדָדִי, אוֹמֵר
 לִי בְּנִי.
 בְּנִי. לֹא יְדַעָתִי שְׁאַתָּה, בְּמִדָּה בּוֹאֵת, אֲתִי.