

1974

# This

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## THIS

It's dark by five.  
My neighbors are cooking dinner,  
they drift in front of their windows like souls.  
Sparks pop out  
over the chimneys,  
a splinter of moon leans  
towards the hushed street,  
stars begin.  
I have a book translated from Hebrew  
that says "You see  
our faces from the dark, and You know  
we won't forget You."  
I don't understand it. I love it.  
Nothing is what we are,  
God's not what  
we touch at the end of each day  
for comfort, so tired we  
can barely speak, bitter  
because we did not see Him.  
A squat white candle  
gutters inside me.  
Who put it there?  
My street ends at the river  
a few blocks from here.  
The moon sits high beyond the houses  
and the stars, flung everywhere,  
are whose?  
I don't want to think about these things anymore,  
they don't help anyone.  
Bread, meat, a glass of ice cold water,  
sitting down with the paper,  
this—  
I'm stretched out naked across myself  
in a barbershop, my groin torn off,  
one of the bodies is so thin—  
a dream.  
Voices from a book old Jews memorize,  
sacred, incomprehensible,  
break in.