Part for the Whole

By Robert Francis

When others run to windows or out of doors
To catch the sunset whole, he is content
With any segment anywhere he sits.

From segment, fragment, he can reconstruct
The whole, prefers to reconstruct the whole,
As if to say, I see more seeing less.

A window to the east will serve as well
As window to the west, for eastern sky
Echoes the western sky. And even less—

A patch of light that picture-glass happens
To catch from window-glass, fragment of fragment,
Flawed, distorted, dulled, nevertheless

Gives something unglassed nature cannot give:
The old obliquity of art, and proves
Part may be more than whole, least may be best.
