

GHOSTS

I heard a noise this morning and found two old men
leaning on the wall of my vineyard looking out
over the fields, silent. Went back to my desk
until somebody raised the trapdoor on the well.
It was the one with the cane looking down in.
But I was annoyed when the door rattled where
the grain and wine are. Went to the kitchen window
and stared at him. He said something in Greek.
I lifted my hand to ask what he was doing. Softly
he explained about growing up out here long ago.
That now they were making a little walk among
the old places. Silently telling it with his hands.
He made a final small gesture, rubbing the side
of the first finger against the second slightly.
I think it meant how much he felt about being there.
We smiled. I saw he was almost blind.
Later my bucket banged and I saw the heavier one
pulling up water. He cleaned the mule's basin
carefully with his hand. Put back the stone
for the doves to stand on, and poured in fresh water.
Stayed there feeling the old letters cut in the marble.
I watched them go slowly down the lane and out of sight.
They did not look back. I listened as I typed
for the dogs to tell me which farms they went to next.
But the dogs stayed silent all the way down the valley.