

I am backing away  
from the old woman,  
who keeps talking  
about waves, about echoes.  
Or rather we're sitting  
side by side,  
that is I think  
she's still there,  
watching the waves, in the steady  
sunlight.

### VISITING BORGES

The whole time the young man reads to him  
he is thinking Borges is like his house—  
sad, empty—oh not the attic  
of course, but the parlor.

The floor has large black and white tiles—  
the kind you'd imagine even a blind man  
could see, so maybe Borges is lost  
in the pattern. The young man is a stranger,  
he might be thinking. Big. Probably handsome.  
Why should he sit and read to an old man?

He has wondered which house  
he will die in—in Austin, Nara, Buenos Aires—  
oh so many—as if he had not long ago shrunk  
the world  
till it fit like a small chamber around him.

Or maybe the young man is right: the old man is  
the house, which is also the world . . .  
But the, where is . . . the world?  
Have we lost it?  
Are we to depend simply  
on our sense?

Surely that is coffee we smell  
as we walk  
in our bare feet up the gravel driveway?  
Surely they are in the same room  
the young man, and the poet . . . ?