OLD NEIGHBOR REPORTS ON A TRIP TO MERCED

Everything has changed
he lamented
nothing like the old Merced
drive out any direction
all new houses
big air base at Winton
strange faces

Oh now and then you will see
an old Portugee ranch
with a tankhouse
and pomegranate bushes
in the yard
but don't expect it to be the same

and all them little kids playin'
in the dust
ain't Okies now
they call'em boat people

WHERE CAN WE FIND LIONEL SILVA

Look for a pile of rubble
that Lionel has never cleared since
1920 electrical wiring burned
his parents' old house down
east of Hanford
left a swayback barn
and a yellow tankhouse
ten acres of fruit trees
a sign on a post reads
Peaches
nectarines
2.00 a lug

and a toothless dog guards
the driveway
to a Jetstream trailer house