

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