

WHEN YOU SEE A MOUNTAIN

it comes over you that you must
walk to it. The first chance,
when others take their afternoon
naps, you slip on your old wind-
breaker, which you will strip

along the way (the way is long),
and go. Your soul is drawn straight-
edge to the mountain. But in the way
lie muddy fields, someone's fenced
orange groves. You can't trespass,

so you walk sidelong, on dirt roads.
The mountain points, and when a ridge
blocks it, it pulls through. It nears,
it nears not fast enough. Gravel rips
your shoes. Maybe it will disappoint,

like any meeting. Then the road
lifts, foothills can be deceiving,
but you can just make out a house
at the foot of the mountain, and
distances to houses you can judge.

So you're there. You begin to climb;
there is moss and brambles. There
is a top, as always. And a vista.
Where you came from is clear, easily
traced. And the only way on is back.