Tonight I look out on the lights of Fiesole,  
the shadow of the little campanile on the hilltop,  
and the long dark line of trees along the Arno,  
the winking lights of the bridges of Firenze,  
and I know behind the slopes of Monte Ceceri,  
big and red above the cluttered rooftops,  
the Duomo of Santa Maria del Fiore  
is certain and invisible. My mind goes there  
remembering colors of stone pieced together  
like quilt making, white and green and pink,  
the dome’s elegant marble ribbing, the scale  
and feat of it, crying conceit and control.  
Among things seen and unseen, how far can we know  
what we know? How much can I tell you that is true?  
Meanwhile the late Italian light has been taking  
the last of the blood red roses on the terrace,  
petals papery, perfume lost in the pungence  
of magnolia and cypress, fig and rosemary.  
High over it all, a half-moon rises while  
across olives and vines now also in the dark,  
the hollow clatter of the Fiesole bell clangs  
hours and half-hours. The white dove we’ve seen,  
tail fanning up, now settles and coos in the cypress.  
Inside your slatted light of shutters you’re in bed  
reading a mystery—the whisper-turning of pages.  
Drowsy in my arms on the table in the cooling night  
of the terrace, I look out on the lights of Fiesole  
and make no promises, not even to myself.