LOUISE GLÜCK

HARVEST

It grieves me to think of you in the past—
Look at you, blindly clinging to earth
as though it were the vineyards of heaven
while the fields go up in flames around you—
Ah, little ones, how unsubtle you are:
it is at once the gift and the torment.
If what you fear in death
is punishment beyond this, you need not
fear death:
how many times must I destroy my own creation
to teach you
this is your punishment:
with one gesture I established you
in time and in paradise.