

## Stutterstep

Old men don't stagger because they're drunk, their legs just don't go where they want them to. They look distracted because they're thinking about some things they could have done differently.

Old men are fools for wondering how they got here, when they started out for somewhere else, even had a map. They retrace their steps and stand at the crossroads, looking this way, and that.

They almost get run over, not by young punks but by other old men whose shirts are buttoned the wrong way, who slap away the wife's hand insisting they can do it themselves. They call a friend

and when he no longer answers they cradle the phone quietly, emitting one of those long sighs that only a lover from the very distant past can hear, she who died in the back of a taxicab or suddenly

on a cruise, somewhere out in the middle of the Atlantic, when their song was playing. Old men do the stutterstep, a kind of dance that comes naturally to them, a hesitation, while the feet try to figure the next move.