Pindar’s Final Ode

for Irene Romano

Pindar would breathe sweet almond blossoms
one more time through his window,
see silver olive leaves wreathe a moon
for his final ode that night when Hermes came
silently, only a dawn wind whispered
setting star names in his ear. Hermes’ staff, pointed
with its mating snakes full of earth magic downward,
touched ground and split it open like a fig
or pomegranate when it falls ripe and full.
Pindar could not lift his old head
when Hermes called but his soul obeyed.
One last glance at Argos deep in shadow
and pines southward on distant blue Taygetos
until Pindar followed Hermes’ dancing foot
in his soul’s own slow cadenza, his outward eye
closing but his inward eye awakening to asphodels
blooming bright at the gate of Elysium.

POETRY BY PATRICK HUNT

PATRICK HUNT has taught at Stanford University since 1993, and his poetry has been published in many venues including *Poet Lore*; in London by the Classical Association of the UK; by the American School of Classical Studies, Athens; in *Classical Outlook*; and in *The Penguin Book of Classical Myths*. His most recent published poetry collections are *House of the Muse* (2005) and *Cloud Shadows of Olympus* (2009).