

# The Night the Set Designer Quit

Vermillion footprints  
smirch the center aisle  
any pretense of care buried  
under papers scattered through wings:

preproduction notes and sketches  
of a Spanish kingdom  
suddenly displaced  
by our director's last-minute

apocalyptic revision—  
verdant history paved over  
by a barren tomorrow  
stolen from B-movies, titian mountains

flattened, gothic fountains  
clogged with toxic waste  
and the livid Duero drained of life.  
Those of us left behind

don't know what to say  
as we look away from each other  
all eyes drawn toward the empty  
suit of caballero plate

guarding stage left—  
in the breastplate swirling  
faces like our own.