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.