

To Be Trussed Up and Waiting

They will slaughter the goat
when he comes back
from the mountain.

They have tethered it to the tree
and they drink rum
through the passing time,
as they wait for him to wind
his way back down the dirt road.

They smoke the tobacco that he
gave to them before
he picked up a twisted branch
to use as a walking stick
and said that he would be
back soon.

“Just a little walk.

Then I will come for the meat.”

So, now that he has met
the conquistador who sits
forlorn in heavy armor at the
foot of a shattered castle,
and the slave who still limps
from cutting off the cuffs
on the day of his escape,
he comes down
and they gather their knives.

He will collect the meat
and pay them,
he has explained,

but he must see the severed head.

Times are hard here

and he wants to know that

they have not tried to sell him

the carcass of a

withered dog from

the junk yard on

the other side of the road.