

A PEACEABLE KINGDOM

—after Ed Fraga's *Santa e Gloriosa Carne*

This dream is too dry:
it takes moistness to survive
the night, not broken towers,
flattened obelisks, hills
reclining like a sluggish lover
beneath a sun-bitten sky.
So this is how it feels
when the wind comes
scratching at that door
you closed: your pillows lie
abandoned, an erratic landscape
chisels into the corners
of your sleep. They've got
a special sale on plots
like these, and they've saved one
just for you. Let this emptiness
be your permanent bed.
No king spread these sheets.
No queen will stretch
from satiny sleep bearing her lily
like a cup of blessed wine
into the day. Oh shadowy
swiveling angel, is it enough
to let light fall
on half a face?

If a door exists in every story,
a window in every dream,
this vacant bed
might still conjure flesh,
conjugalities, mirrors that glint
with what could have been: a blue frame
extending out, a checkered
pathway in.