

OLIVE TREE MASTER

The olive tree master veiled his meaning
on purpose, a matter of Spanish habit, but
it broke through, like wild poppies.
He said I will go and spend the night
watching for wolves in the olive groves —
who would deny him that — and he took
a Toledo blade (or was it Damascene?); there
were no wolves, but he was cut by words,
he said later, their sharp two-sidedness.

This
sowed disbelief; he was disguised, brown-
furrowed nature disguised, like him. The Marrano
dreamt he was swinging on a long rope
over a caldera, caught in cold hope
of reaching an edge, wondering on every pass
whose godly hand lay at the fulcrum.