

East Asian Studies

Asymmetries
could be neatly elided,

if not into harmonies
then into double-sided

embroideries,
the chickadee leading

a second life as a swan,
each goldfish concealing

the form of a dolphin.
False credibility

could be girded
with learning, mystery

annulled through smart
exposition. Pen and ink

could assimilate
image and thing.

Kingdoms would turn
into nations, dynasties

into regimes. Flipping
the screen, an everyday

marvel, transforms
girls into dowagers,

clouds into peonies,
gods into commoners,

and back. With study
the mind becomes airy,

the East no longer a forest,
the West no longer a prairie.