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## Rotogravure: Fatigued Thread

of the table, Leta, the kind of girl  
usually accompanied by a golden retriever,  
needs no makeup. The lily of her hand  
touches a necklace of glass beads  
at her throat. A present her boyfriend,  
Ramón, bought from the curio cart  
(far right) on their way to the table.  
She is about to develop the habit  
of holding one between her teeth—  
their smoothness against her tongue  
The pony-tailed woman at the end

to calm herself, the fatigued thread  
will break and a bead will lodge in her  
windpipe. Her silver Escalade will careen  
into an iron-webbed electrical tower  
knocking out power to 228,000 homes.  
At least eighty babies will be conceived  
that night. Leta leans toward Ramón

soothes. In a year, while taking a drive

Handsome as a well-crafted chair, Ramón's  
everything fits together exactly, dark  
wood grain glinting in sunlight. His shoulder  
tilts away, arm down: he has dropped  
his napkin, is retrieving it—in two years,  
the thought of that fallen napkin  
will make him smile at the worst  
possible moment: the masked

trying to insert herself into his ear.

harmless, and in the heat-blast of rage,  
will be deaf to the shots he'll squeeze off—  
in another moment, Ramón will secure  
the napkin and inadvertently run  
the back of his hand against the bare  
knee of the lovely Moira. Something  
will spark. He looks straight

thief will guess Ramón thinks him small,

to unmake his choices. Moira is toasting  
the photographer, crystal of thick liquid,  
raised, partially obscures her face, her lips  
a blur behind the goblet. Knitted blooms  
burst from the lapel and bosom of a sweater  
too ugly to be inexpensive. Moneyed,  
orphaned, and between marriages,  
she lacks nothing. In a year, after  
Leta finds the hideous sweater, after  
her tear-streaked pleading, her  
into the camera, not yet wanting  
midnight drive, Ramon will spend  
long nights with his head in his hands.  
So Moira will buy him

glass. Lovers will conspire, infatuation  
wrapped around their bodies, breathing in  
great gulps of each other. Their oneness  
will be a bird in Ramón's bowels  
eating away at his shell. Eventually,  
Moirá, weary from the weight of him,  
will close the door, break off her key  
in the lock. He'll become a fixture,

a café, fill it with candlelit leaded

over the cash without fear or even  
regret. The thief will fume. Ramón  
will remember: Leta's glass beads,  
the lightning of the flashbulb, his slow reach  
for the stiff linen, cool against  
his fingertips, its attention perfect.



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#### Art Information

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Elizabeth Iannaci is a widely published and anthologized Los Angeles-based poet whose work has appeared in the *Saranac Review*, *Verse Wisconsin*, *Crab Creek Review*, *Pentimento*, and

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*Italian Americana*, to name a few. She has read at venues in the United States, Slovenia, Istanbul, and Paris. Iannaci earned her MFA in Poetry from Vermont College of Fine Arts, was a finalist for the *New Letters* Literary Award, and writes letters on real paper, delivered by humans.

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