

She Thinks She

By David Michael Martínez

She imagines she'll turn a corner
and see a man leaning against a wall,
reading a newspaper in the steamy streets
of the business district, waiting
for a taxi, or maybe, maybe waiting for her.

Or maybe he's back in the valley at a camp,
his cracked and dirty hands on the jamb
as he leans out from the farm-worker cabin
as it sails by like a train in the dust.

She walks down a field of sunflowers
and wonders if her father missed her
when he walked toward the road in the corn.
She checks the dust for shoe prints
hoping he carved her name in the soles.

She thinks an evil spell caged his mind
in a labyrinth of ice—her eyes of fire,
his only hope. I know of a time
she would have lit the fields ablaze
to find him, but now he's the bastard
who left, left them all after a long hug
and proudly paying for dinner.
He simply drove down the street,
waved, and never ever turned back.

He's my excuse for her being odd,
and at times, a first-rate loca.
Now it's more than finding him.
It's about high heeled boots.
It's about a black leather jacket.
It's about a new degree
and a look-at-me-now look,
that look-at-me look.
That why-aren't-you-looking look--
why aren't you ever looking for me?