

**THIS
IS
NOT
A
SKY**

JESSICA PIAZZA



Black
Lawrence
Press



Black
Lawrence
Press

www.blacklawrence.com

Executive Editor: Diane Goettel
Chapbook Editor: Kit Frick
Book and Cover Design: Amy Freels

Copyright © 2014 Jessica Piazza
ISBN: 978-1-62557-917-1

All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in critical articles or reviews, no part of this book may be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission from the publisher: editors@blacklawrencepress.com

Published 2014 by Black Lawrence Press.
Printed in the United States.

Café Terrace at Night

after Van Gogh

The ladies and gentleman, dapper. Astral lanterns glare gaily: the formerly ominous sky, candelabrad and gilded and precious.

(It's Venice. Or Paris.

They're tipsy. They're gorgeous.)

Verandas are paintings for passersby, glaze-eyed, un stumbling, unfazed by the cobblestoned goings. The patrons, bedazzled on red woven rugs, drink café au lait, limoncello, and wine.

(And her? No really . . . she's fine.)

Though the awning's aslant, and the golden patina makes faceless and foregone, a shape of a shadow. A man in a doorway. A man she might know.

(Please go. Please go.)

And the curve of his coat summons thoughts of a lamp glinting harshly off mirrors she'd dampened with gauze. That lowing, that losing. That lowering light.

(One terrible night gives all other nights pause.)



But the stars. The stars. The promenade hours. The weather and color.
The memories severed by laughter, its washing, its waves. No one gone, no
one grave.

No graves.



Photo: Rich Prugh

Jessica Piazza is the author of two full-length poetry collections published by Red Hen Press: *Interrobang*—winner of the AROHO 2011 To the Lighthouse Poetry Prize and the 2013 Balcones Poetry Prize—and *Obliterations* (with Heather Aimee O’Neill, forthcoming). She holds a Ph.D. in English Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Southern California and is currently a contributing editor for *The Offending Adam* and a screener for the National Poetry Series. Her commitment to fostering writing communities wherever she lives led her to co-found *Bat City Review* in Austin, TX, Gold Line Press in Los Angeles, and Speakeasy Poetry Series in New York City. She teaches for the Writing Program at USC and the online MFA program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.