

When I walk down the street
in strappy lavender
ties around my ankles
heels defying the laws of physics
traffic stops. Black and white
art deco lace-ups make
photographers focus and flash—
forget the face.
Five inch bronze bombshell
platform pumps bathed in rain
can drum up an umbrella
with an uncle attached. A friend
says the way my foot looks
in green faux snake slides is seared
onto the back of his eyeballs.
The pair from Greece,
color of fresh butter
heels broad and straight
like noses of ancient Hellenic statues
feel like I'm being held aloft
by Olympians. I've discovered
I can only wear the red patent leather
lying down.

The studio used to make one heel
of Marilyn Monroe's shoes
a quarter of an inch shorter
just to emphasize that wiggle.

This is not about the oppression of women,
or brocade slippers smaller than my fist,
though the Chinese do say *Beauty is pain*.
When Catherine Di Medici turned Paris on
its ear with that first walk
in that first pair
past Viscounts and Dauphins
their ridiculous mouths agape
she smiled.
I know that smile.

So, when people ask *How can you
walk in shoes like that?* I think
How can I not?

Catherine de Medici Swayed Fetchingly

Poet/actor/singer Elizabeth Iannaci currently serves as co-director of the Valley Contemporary Poets, hosts a monthly reading series for them, and has two chapbooks of poetry, *Passions Casualties* and the forthcoming *Renoir's Daughter*. Her work can be found in various publications including Tebot Bach's Anthology of California Poets, *So Luminous the Wildflowers*; *Invisible Planes A Collection To and About Saints, Angels & Deities*; *Angel City Review*; and *Moondance*. She edits the VCP's yearly anthology, *Beyond the Valley of the Contemporary Poets*, assists at the annual Idyllwild Summer Poetry Festival, and has appeared at countless California venues. Recently she returned from Paris where she read her work at Cité Universitaire for World Poetry Days.



Elizabeth
Iannaci