

# L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI

The Italian Woman in Algiers (opera by Gioachino Rossini)

Will she cower, as the servants do, or  
the wives who fawn after him,

his ego wearing feathers? She comes  
with her own fan but tosses it aside

in this production--she meets him  
with no visible props. With a touch

of her hair, a conscious composure, she  
turns the corner to face him.

And he sees flesh, abundance, sex.

Perhaps, she mirrors his own deliberate  
maneuverings, and don't we

really fall in love with ourselves?  
What we think we need we are

convinced of. And so she flees him and  
so he relishes being the fool of her love.

The ship that brought her,  
the ship that takes her away.

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Donna J. Gelagotis Lee is a freelance editor in New Jersey. Her poems have appeared in *Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal*, *CALYX: A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, *The Dalhousie Review*, *Descant*, *Feminist Studies*, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, and other journals.