

Oaxaca Dreamland

by Greg Davis

A suited man creeps from the edge of a crooked house smiling at her in an underbite. Because she's so young, because she's a tourist on her own, he says, "Allow me to warn you - certain *tipos* around here may try to rob you." He tells her of a safe motel. She thinks she trusts this man; she wants to trust him. His face reminds her of a man who once took care of her on an airplane when she was a kid traveling by herself. "They'll take you any way they can," the man says. "Don't believe a word they say." He asks the girl where she's from and listens politely, though a rabid dog is barking nearby at an old woman carrying too many bags of groceries. Assuming the man knows local custom, the girl ignores the dog as well. Still, the barking makes her wish to escape. She asks the man if he knows anywhere to get a drink. A few beers may help her recover the language she's forgotten. But then, what does she make of the black and white striped saloon that her host now crawls into or the teeth that line the doorway?

