

JAMIE ROSS

Trousseau

The thread has no reason. It is older than its fabric. Perhaps the bacon was burnt or the juice artificial, the bread more stale, the hotel's prices hiked, as they are each year. And now the lights, with only you at a table, turned off. This is not your problem. Chabelita at her stove, Pilar feeding the staff, Andrés washing dishes, everyone is cheerful. They take their time. As you will soon. The city knows despair as the land knows deception. So too you, the longer you stay. Once you wed, the bride removes her make-up, puts aside her veil, unbolts her silver dress. Posada de Las Monjas affords no new linen. No children run the *calle*s to the baker at dawn. You have not been deceived. What is familiar becomes more and more revealed. The old trees rot and fall in the streets, the new vines shoot up. The church bells, each hour still clang over the roofs. The anger is not yours. It seeps in the wells and sewers, brick, stone, and mud. It was long before you. And will last long after. There is something, child, you need to take off.