

## Diego and Calla Lilies

*Kneeling on a petate mat,*  
The basket, deep enough,  
*an Indian woman sits upright,*  
supports our long, firm stems.  
*her unclothed frame scented.*  
We settle into clots of dirt.  
*Is it sandalwood? Mahogany?*  
Like absinthe, we intoxicate  
*I paint her broad shoulders:*  
the artist who shapes the woman's arms  
*earthy dabs of nutmeg, hyacinth*  
with the mastery of sun  
*so she can thrive like the flowers,*  
so she can embrace us.  
*so she can feel the florets swell.*  
Her hands, smelling of freesia,  
*Soon, she will rise out of shadows*  
reach out to our trumpets blaring  
*to gather bluets, yarrows.*  
as though she hears a mariachi horn,  
*What is happiness, if not this need?*  
feels our desire to return to marshes,  
*See how she rests—a saint—holding*  
watery fields, shallow pools far from  
*pearls, luminous as fire?*  
the lover who approaches a street vendor—  
*Now, maybe you understand who I am.*  
scissor snips ringing through the market,  
*In the city, in the valleys,*  
fleshy tubes and arrow-shaped leaves  
*I wander in search of legends*  
rolled into wrapping paper, sold for a few pesos,  
*to begin anew. Oh, these calla lilies!*  
the blooms' swanlike hearts pounding.