

Lidia Torres



Visiting the Dead

My father woke up,
Shrugged off the soil
And headed for the garden.
A Ghost in a suit poking beans,
Prodding plantains and tomatoes.
He smiled, that rare twist
Of the lips, and patted
The bare edges of his sons' graves.
They rested as he paced
Among the tubers.

Later that day it was sancocho
For supper, I peeled
And chopped the tubers, chanting
yuca, ñame, yautía, batata.
The fragrance of cilantro settled
over the vacant table.
How the one bottomless pot once
Served my father, my brothers
And the living. The heat
stroked my face as I leaned
over the green banana softening,
clinging to the roots.

