

*Lidia Torres*



## Visiting the Dead

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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.

