

# Flowers

By Cynthia Zarin

This morning I was walking upstairs  
from the kitchen, carrying your  
beautiful flowers, the flowers you

brought me last night, calla lilies  
and something else, I am not  
sure what to call them, white flowers,

of course you had no way of knowing  
it has been years since I bought  
white flowers—but now you have

and here they are again. I was carrying  
your flowers and a coffee cup  
and a soft yellow handbag and a book

of poems by a Chinese poet, in  
which I had just read the words “come  
or go but don’t just stand there

in the doorway,” as usual I was  
carrying too many things, you  
would have laughed if you saw me.

It seemed especially important  
not to spill the coffee as I usually  
do, as I turned up the stairs,

inside the whorl of the house as if  
I were walking up inside the lilies.  
I do not know how to hold all

the beauty and sorrow of my life.

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Cynthia Zarin is a poet, journalist, and children’s book author. Zarin has received numerous awards for her work, including fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim Foundation. She is married to the art dealer Joseph Goddu and currently lives in New York City.

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