

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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Source: Orbit (Alfred A. Knopf, 2017)