

LOVE POEM OF COMFORT

Let me knit lines  
like a blanket,  
sew pages  
for a book, boil  
caldo long enough  
to soothe the chest.  
On second thought,  
let me clear a shelf  
for an altar built  
of brown bags  
carrying islands.  
Eyes ask,  
*Can you believe it?*  
because they want  
to believe.  
“I’m making  
the same damn face,”  
you say as if it’s wrong  
to be a red thread  
crossing the Pacific.

## LOVE POEM FOR THE CARETAKER

By night, the ZZ plant dreams  
of embraces & midnight kisses.

By day, its leaves plant  
open palms to a window.

Turn around, young ZZ. See  
the one gazing upon you,

capturing green in photos.  
The photographer loves what's outside

& in. A houseplant here, a lime tree  
there. The lime tree snags

those who dare pass too close  
with its thorns even as it imagines

what it means to be admired.  
New fruit clings to branches.

The tree, the photographer,  
& the plant wonder, What's next?

## LOVE POEM OF MEDITATION

. . . . : Sunshine & glass wash a breakfast table magnificent . . . . .

: . . like your very own Sagrada Familia. . . . .

. . . . It's no surprise you honor mornings as sacred. . . . .

: . . . . : I've witnessed your attendance, . . . . .

: . . . . : how you listen to trees & teens with equal reverence. . . . .

. . . May you always find awe in each day's light & shadow. . . . .

## LOVE POEM FOR THE TEACHER

If the farthest I travel from you  
is the closest I come to nature,  
then distance is a blessing,

time a balloon, love a wetland.  
I admire a lizard scurrying into  
brush, listen for mourning doves

asking, *Who?* I'm reminded of you  
dancing in red polka dots against  
the rain. How red-winged teachers

fought brackish conditions together  
calling, *NOW!* And the children  
race up the hill, as children do.

## LOVE POEM OF HOME

You, my friend, are cosmic  
earth, stars, & onions.  
The Empress's tree blooming  
pink foliage, & you glow.

I could be happy as a daisy  
nestled in your chestnut hair,  
but the universe decided  
otherwise, gifted us a home

for the summers, called us rich.  
This is my prayer of thanks.

## LOVE POEM OF HISTORY

What gives  
comfort to  
the jagged  
edges?  
“Friends  
basking in  
literary goodness.”  
I wish you  
dusty books,  
slick succulents  
kissed by rain.

Strange days  
short circuit  
sensory  
systems,  
but remember  
the arches of  
Rome. They stand  
after the fall.  
Structure  
& strength  
at your sides.

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**XochitlJulisa Bermejo** is the daughter of Mexican immigrants and the author of *Posada: Offerings of Witness and Refuge* (Sundress Publications 2016). A former Steinbeck Fellow, Poets & Writers California Writers Exchange winner, and Barbara Deming Memorial Fund grantee, she's received residencies from Hedgebrook, Ragdale, National Parks Arts Foundation, and Poetry Foundation. She has work published in *Acentos Review*, *CALYX*, *crazyhorse*, and *[PANK]*. Most recently her poem, "Battlegrounds," was featured at The Academy of American Poets, *Poem-A-Day*. She is a member of Miresa Collective and director of Women Who Submit.