STILL LIFE WITH CHRIST, AROMATICS

The night, good, is a gorgeous clone of itself.
Thinking of the slick roaches
defecating in the silverware trays? Three times only.
In two stacked plastic bags, five sour oranges pecking
like past selves. The baroque
garlic. The one and a half small onions.
I squint at the tip of my nose until it becomes Abuelita's. Gorgeous,
good night with salt pork, cumin, oregano. Salt in the machacador,
softening. Poinsettias court the window, court the light.
Accidentally, inevitably, I leave some skin cells while retrieving four bay leaves.
Never, ever, salt the beans says the father whose
stiff fingers cannot shatter
the cooking wine bottle because it is plastic.
At midnight, the hair on my shoulder is someone else's.

LESLIE SAINZ

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