

Old Maids

My cousins and I,
we don't marry.
We're *too old*
by Mexican standards.

And the relatives
have long suspected
we can't anymore
in white.

My cousins and I,
we're all old
maids at thirty.

Who won't
dress children,
and *never*
saints--
though
we undress them.

The aunts,
they're given up on us.
No longer nudge--*You're next.*

Instead--
What happened in your childhood?

What left you all mean teens?
Who hurt you, honey?

But we're studied
marriages too long--

Aunt Ariadne,
Tia Vashti,
Comadre Penelope,
querida Malintzin,
Senora Pumpkin Shell--

lessons that served us well.

---Sandra Cisneros