

**"The Raincoat" by Ada Limón**

When the doctor suggested surgery  
and a brace for all my youngest years,  
my parents scrambled to take me  
to massage therapy, deep tissue work,  
osteopathy, and soon my crooked spine  
unspooled a bit, I could breathe again,  
and move more in a body unclouded  
by pain. My mom would tell me to sing  
songs to her the whole forty-five minute  
drive to Middle Two Rock Road and forty-  
five minutes back from physical therapy.  
She'd say, even my voice sounded unfettered  
by my spine afterward. So I sang and sang,  
because I thought she liked it. I never  
asked her what she gave up to drive me,  
or how her day was before this chore. Today,  
at her age, I was driving myself home from yet  
another spine appointment, singing along  
to some maudlin but solid song on the radio,  
and I saw a mom take her raincoat off  
and give it to her young daughter when  
a storm took over the afternoon. My god,  
I thought, my whole life I've been under her  
raincoat thinking it was somehow a marvel  
that I never got wet.