

Growing Pains

When I was young,
My mother would tuck me in
With a kiss on my forehead
And tell me I could do anything

So I decided to try parachuting,
Like I had always dreamt of
I leapt off the front porch
With my plastic bag parachute

My mother came running
When she heard me crying
My ankle had been twisted
When I had landed too hard

Then I got older,
And learned to tuck myself in
I stayed up late reading
Filling my head with adventures

In school, I tried to be brave

Like the characters in my books
But kids would still mock
the way that I talked

My mother didn't notice
The closed bedroom door
Wasn't aware of the tears
That lulled me to sleep

Older still, and I can see
How weary my mother is
As she collapses into bed
Long before me

The far side of her mattress
Lies cold and bare
Stealing away her remaining warmth
Every time she tries to fall asleep

Alone in the dark
My mother seems so small
I cannot help but think
She needs to be tucked in too