Instructions on Not Giving Up

SUMMARY

The speaker begins by saying that as impressive as the vibrant purple blooms of the crabapple tree are, and as shocking a show as the neighbor's cherry tree is putting on by thrusting its pastel pink flowers against the dark gray spring sky that's threatening rain, the thing that really moves the speaker is the way the trees turn green. After the astounding beauty and sweetness of the earth's ornaments and knick-knacks (that is, those aforementioned blossoms) spatter the sidewalk with their colorful fallout (their petals), the trees' leaves arrive. These leaves are persistent and steady as they cover the earth in green, like skin growing over the harsh aftermath of winter. The leaves represent the strange notion of going on in spite of the messiness, pain, and emptiness of being alive. It's as though the tree is saying, "Okay then, let me have it." The way a smooth new leaf spreads out reminds the speaker of someone holding out their palm and saying, "Give me everything."

THEMES

NATURE, HOPE, AND RESILIENCE

In Ada Limon's "Instructions on Not Giving Up," spring offers the speaker an image of hope and resilience. Observing the trees bursting into flower all around them, the speaker finds "the world's baubles and trinkets"—that is, all this intense yet fleeting beauty—unreliable: like a brief, overpowering moment of joy, it will soon be gone, leaving the sidewalk littered with "confetti." The speaker is drawn instead to the "green leaves" that follow these blossoms, seeing in their "Patient, plodding" nature a way to embrace life in spite of its inevitable messiness and pain. Resilience, the poem suggests, means opening oneself, leaf-like, to *all* of life, the good and the bad alike.

While poets often picture renewed hope through the image of spring blossoms, this poem reminds readers that such blossoms (like moments of joy) are lovely but brief: one can't rely on them! The speaker describes the "neighbor's" blossoming "cherry" trees as an "almost obscene display" and says that the tree's "limbs shov[e] / their cotton-candy colored blossoms" against the dark spring sky. This suggests that all this beauty is pretty overwhelming after the bleakness of winter, and furthermore, that such beauty can't be trusted.

"Cotton-candy" is notoriously sweet and colorful and dissolves the moment it touches one's tongue. In this way, the poem suggests that all this beauty may be momentarily stunning, but it's also *ephemeral*—it'll be gone in the blink of an eye. Indeed, the speaker says that sooner or later the "white / and taffy, the world's baubles and trinkets" disappear, leaving only "the confetti of aftermath." In other words, the flowers are like decorations—they come down as soon as the season's over, and then what's left?

For this reason, the speaker is more interested in the *leaves*, which, unlike the gaudy, short-lived blossoms, suggest "continuous living": persistently saying yes to life in spite of its difficulties. The speaker describes the leaves as "Patient" and "plodding" (or slow moving), suggesting that although they're not as showy as the blossoms, they represent something more sustainable, a way of "living" in spite of what life might throw one's way.

Opening leaves, the poem suggests, offer a lesson. You can't count on brief blossom-like joys to help you "not give up"; instead, one needs to think like a leaf and say yes to everything life brings. The speaker imagines the trees "unfurling" their leaves "like a fist to an open palm." In other words, instead of closing oneself off when life gets hard, the speaker imagines what it would be like to let everything in, to "take it all" in stride—the good and the bad. "Continuous living" includes the beauty *and* the "mess," pleasure *and* "hurt," abundance *and* "empty[ness]." Opening oneself to everything the world has to offer—*that's* resilience.

Where this theme appears in the poem:

- Lines 1-14

LINE-BY-LINE ANALYSIS

LINES 1-5

More than the ...
... of Spring rains,

"Instructions on Not Giving Up" begins with a description of the blooms of early spring as the speaker describes the vivid pink blossoms of a "crabapple tree." Next, the speaker calls readers' attention to a "neighbor's" cherry blossom tree: the soft white and pale pink flowers are "cotton candy-colored," and they stand out strikingly, almost "obscene[ly]," against the dark gray of a sky threatening rain.

The anaphora of "More than" tells readers that the speaker is going to be comparing these blossoms to something, but it's not yet clear what. Instead, the poem begins with a long, meandering sentence that delays its main subject and verb, building anticipation:

> More than the fuchsia funnels breaking out
> of the crabapple tree, more than the neighbor's

For now, this opening imagery is almost violent in its intensity. The crabapple blossoms are "breaking out / of" the tree, as though escaping from its grip. The speaker also personifies the cherry tree by describing its branches as aggressively "shoving / their" blossoms into the sky, as though forcing it to look upon the flowers' beauty. The phrase "almost obscene display" suggests that the speaker finds the beauty of all these blossom-laden boughs a little over-the-top. And the alliteration of "fuchsia funnels" and "cotton candy-colored" also makes the poem itself sound more emphatic, evoking the vivid, showy colors of these blooms.

Altogether, these images convey the suddenness with which spring blossoms can arrive and suggest that this speaker isn't particularly inspired by the abundant beauty spring has to offer. Just think about what "cotton candy" actually tastes like: it's known for being almost unbearably sweet (it's made of pure sugar, after all), and it also dissolves as soon as you take a bite.

Notice, too, the juxtaposition between those weightless, pastel "cotton candy-colored blossoms" and the "slate / sky of Spring rains." The sky is gloomy and heavy, threatening rain that could easily wash those delicate blossoms away. The sibilance here ("slate," "sky," "Spring") adds a sinister hiss, suggesting the precarious position those blossoms are in.

These opening lines give readers a sense of the poem's form: there's no regular meter or rhyme scheme here, the poet instead opting for natural-sounding free verse. These lines (and, indeed, nearly the entire poem) are also all enjambed:

> [...] breaking out
> of the [...] the neighbor's
> almost obscene [...] limbs shoving
> their cotton [...] the slate
> sky of Spring rains, [...]

As a result, the poem unfurls down the page swiftly, pulling the reader along with it. This enjambment builds yet more anticipation (readers still don't know what the speaker will compare these blossoms to), and it also suggests the suddenness with which spring appears.

LINES 5-9

> *it's the greening ...*
> *... the leaves come.*

Finally, after two long, dependent clauses, the speaker arrives at the subject of the sentence that began with "More than" in line 1. The "thing" that "gets to" the speaker "more than" all those brightly-colored blossoms is "the greening of the leaves." In other words, it's not the in-your-face beauty of spring's early flowers that move the speaker; it's the humble green leaves that those blossoms soon give way to.

The long /ee/ assonance throughout this clause emphasizes this revelation, making it stand out to the reader's ear:

> [...] greening of the trees
> that really gets to me. [...]

Those leaves, the speaker continues, only appear after the blossoms of early spring have fallen. The speaker compares these blossoms to a "shock of white / and taffy." Again, the flowers are akin to something sweet and sugary, a burst of flavor that quickly dissolves. The flowers are also "the world's baubles and trinkets," a metaphor comparing them to showy ornaments or cheap knickknacks.

While the flowers' beauty is perhaps pretty in the moment, they eventually "leave / the pavement strewn with the confetti of aftermath." In other words, all these "blossoms" are like the festive decorations at a party; when the party ends, they leave a bit of a mess. The word "confetti" specifically evokes all those colorful petals being scattered across the ground.

The poem's lines continue to be heavily enjambed. This creates a smooth, continuous motion that draws the reader along. It's as if the reader is taking a stroll alongside the speaker, seeing everything they are seeing and being invited to come to the same conclusions.

Notice, too, how the sentence beginning with "When" in line 6 doesn't introduce its main clause until line 9 ("the leaves come"). The reader thus has to read on for three lines before they find out what actually happens "When." The poem's use of long, meandering sentences like this, which work their way backwards towards their subject, might subtly reflect one of its main ideas: that it's not always the first, obvious thing (the "shock" of all those "white" flowers, for instance) that inspires one to keep going. Sometimes it's necessary to keep looking, dig a little deeper, in order to find lasting hope.

LINES 9-12

> *Patient, plodding, a ...*
> *... hurt, the empty.*

Unlike the aggressive, shocking beauty of the flowers, which appear and disappear suddenly, the leaves that follow are "Patient, plodding." Alliteration calls readers' attention to these qualities.

The speaker then compares the way these leaves begin to fill the trees to "a green skin / growing over whatever winter did to us." Green spreads across a landscape ravaged by winter, like a scar papering over a wound. The greenery suggests that the earth is healing, smoothing over with fresh life once again.

This growth, the speaker continues, represents "a return / to the strange idea of continuous living." In other words, the way the leaves grow "over whatever winter did" reflects the way life

must go on even in the face of hardship; people should take their cues from those leaves and find a way to heal and regenerate after a difficult season.

More specifically, the speaker says that people must learn to carry on "despite / the mess of us, the hurt, the empty." Anaphora (the repetition of "the") and asyndeton (the lack of a coordinating conjunction between "the hurt" and "the empty") add momentum to this list of obstacles while also suggesting that the list is never-ending.

LINES 12-14

Fine then, ...
... take it all.

The poem ends with the speaker personifying a tree. The speaker envisions the tree looking around at "whatever winter did" and the "aftermath" of early spring and embracing "it all." In a simile, the speaker then compares a "new slick leaf / unfurling" to "a fist" opening into a "palm." The tree isn't just passively accepting what the world has to offer, but actively asking for it. In opening itself up to whatever life hands it, both the good and the bad, the tree models what resilience looks like.

The enjambment here seems to mimic that motion, the poem itself "unfurling" down the page. The sonic devices in these lines further bring them to life. Listen to the /l/, /f/, and /t/ consonance, and hissing sibilance, which lend these lines a feeling of smoothness and intensity that evokes the slickness of that "new life":

> I'll take it, the tree seems to say, a new slick leaf
> unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all.

The repetition of "I'll take it" at the beginning and end of this section creates a feeling of insistence. The tree is persistent, declaring its openness not just once but twice. The message, in the end, is that "not giving up" requires an enthusiastic embrace of everything life has to offer.

SYMBOLS

GREEN LEAVES

The color green often symbolizes vitality in literature, and the poem builds on those associations. Greenness, here, represents the continuation of life in the face of pain and hardship. The green leaves cover the land, smoothing over winter's damage like skin healing over a wound.

These "Patient, plodding" leaves are decidedly less striking than the bright blooms of early spring. But while those "fuchsia" and "cotton candy-colored" blossoms are beautiful, they're also fragile; they inevitably end up scattered on the ground like "confetti"—party leftovers. The green leaves may not be as show-stoppingly brilliant as those early blossoms, but they steadily grow "over whatever winter did." Life isn't just about the outrageously fun, joyous, and beautiful times, the poem implies; it's about the ability to "take it all," to accept each new season as it comes.

Where this symbol appears in the poem:

- **Lines 5-6:** "it's the greening of the trees / that really gets to me"
- **Lines 9-12:** "Patient, plodding, a green skin / growing over whatever winter did to us, a return / to the strange idea of continuous living despite / the mess of us, the hurt, the empty."

POETIC DEVICES

ALLITERATION

Alliteration fills the poem's language with beauty and intensity, in turn bringing its natural imagery to life.

In the first line, for instance, the /f/ alliteration in "fuchsia funnels" immediately draws the reader's attention to the vivid coloring of spring's flowers. Likewise, sharp /c/ alliteration emphasizes the over-the-top beauty of the cherry tree's "cotton candy-colored blossoms." The alliterative sibilance of "slate sky of Spring," meanwhile, suggests the hissing threat of those "Spring rains," which could so easily scatter the pretty flower petals to the ground.

Later, alliteration calls readers' attention to the fact that the leaves are "Patient, plodding"—steady, slow, measured. Thick alliteration and more general consonance also lend the poem's final moments some intense music. Listen, for example, to the /l/, /f/, and /p/ sounds in "a new slick leaf / unfurling like a fist to an open palm."

The liquid /l/ sounds evoke the smoothness with which those leaves open, while more forceful /f/ and /p/ suggest the leaves' strength and persistence.

Where Alliteration appears in the poem:

- **Line 1:** "fuchsia," "funnels"
- **Line 4:** "cotton," "candy," "colored," "slate"
- **Line 5:** "sky," "Spring"
- **Line 6:** "When," "white"
- **Line 7:** "taffy," "world's," "trinkets"
- **Line 9:** "Patient," "plodding," "green"
- **Line 10:** "growing," "whatever," "winter"
- **Line 14:** "unfurling," "fist"

IMAGERY

The poem uses colorful imagery to evoke the intense, ephemeral beauty of spring. In the first two lines, the speaker describes "the fuchsia" (vivid, pinkish-purple) "funnels breaking out / of the crabapple tree." The phrase "breaking out" suggests joy and exuberance, as if these blooms simply cannot hold themselves back any longer.

In lines 3-5, the speaker describes their neighbor's tree:

> [...] cherry limbs shoving
> their cotton candy-colored blossoms to the slate
> sky of Spring rains, [...]

In personifying those tree branches (giving them the ability to "shove"), the speaker portrays spring's beauty as aggressive and in-your-face. It's *too* beautiful, *too* colorful, to the point that it feels "almost obscene." The juxtaposition of all those fluffy, colorful "blossoms" against the "slate" (or dark gray) "sky of Spring rains" again highlights how fragile this beauty is; one heavy rain could wash it all away.

The speaker similarly describes other blossoms as a "shock of white / taffy," again comparing spring's flowers to something sickeningly sweet and unnervingly sudden. These blossoms are "the world's baubles and trinkets"—a metaphor comparing them to decorative ornaments and cheap knickknacks, brought out briefly to celebrate. Later the flower petals litter the "pavement" like "confetti," the "aftermath" of a party that has ended almost as soon as it began.

The leaves that grow after these blossoms have fallen aren't shocking or aggressive. Instead, they patiently spread across the earth, "a green skin / growing over whatever winter did to us." This image suggests that the leaves heal the landscape, smoothing over winter's damage.

In the last two lines of the poem, there is a simile; the speaker describes "a new slick leaf / unfurling like a fist to an open palm." This comparison suggests that rather than fighting against pain, it's better to let "it all" in, as nature does.

Where Imagery appears in the poem:

- Lines 1-2
- Lines 3-5
- Lines 6-7
- Lines 7-9
- Lines 9-10
- Lines 13-14

REPETITION

The poem uses repetition a few times, beginning in the very first line. The anaphora of "more than the" adds some necessary structure to a long, meandering sentence. It also helps to create a sense of building anticipation as readers wonder what, exactly, the speaker is comparing these blossoms to:

> More than the fuchsia funnels breaking out
> of the crabapple tree, more than the neighbor's

The speaker uses anaphora again in line 12" "the mess of us, the hurt, the empty." The repetition of "the," in combination with the asyndeton of this list, makes it feel relentless. Readers get the sense that this list could go on and on; the speaker could insert any number of difficulties.

The poem's final two lines also feature repetition:

> I'll take it, the tree seems to say, a new slick leaf
> unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all.

This is more specifically an example of the device known as epanalepsis. The phrase "I'll take it" bookends these concluding lines, emphasizing the importance of opening oneself up to all of life's experiences—the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly.

Where Repetition appears in the poem:

- **Line 1:** "More than the"
- **Line 2:** "more than the"
- **Line 12:** "the," "the," "the"
- **Line 13:** "I'll take it,"
- **Line 14:** "I'll take it"

PERSONIFICATION

The poem personifies nature multiple times, which makes sense given that the speaker is using nature as a model for not giving up—for "the strange idea of continuous living" in the face of some very human pains.

First, the speaker describes "cherry limbs shoving / their cotton candy-colored blossoms" against the dark "sky of Spring rains." The word "shoving" imbues the trees with a sense of intention, as if the trees are aggressively showing off how beautiful they are. This personification suggests that the speaker finds early spring's vivid beauty almost obnoxious, too loud and in-your-face.

The speaker later personifies "the leaves" as "Patient" and "plodding." Unlike those pushy blossoms, the leaves are slow, thoughtful, and steady. This suggests that "not giving up" requires more than brief bursts of excitement or joy, which fade away almost as soon as they appear. It requires a patient commitment to growth.

The speaker echoes this idea at the end of the poem, personifying a "tree" after its blossoms have fallen off and new leaves begin to unfurl:

> [...] Fine then,

> I'll take it, the tree seems to say, a new slick leaf
> unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all.

The speaker sees this growth as the tree embracing whatever the world wants to give it. The tree thrusts out its metaphorical palms, asking for more life—the good parts and the bad.

Where Personification appears in the poem:

- **Lines 3-5:** "cherry limbs shoving / their cotton candy-colored blossoms to the slate / sky of Spring rains"
- **Lines 9-10:** "Patient, plodding, a green skin / growing over whatever winter did to us"
- **Lines 12-14:** "Fine then, / I'll take it, the tree seems to say, a new slick leaf / unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all."

ENJAMBMENT

Almost all of the poem's lines are enjambed, lending "Instructions on Not Giving Up" a sense of fluid, building momentum. The poem pulls readers down the page, in turn enacting the "strange idea of continuous living." That is, the *poem's* movement evokes the way *life* keeps moving forward.

In the poem's first few lines, enjambment conveys the sudden burst of all those spring blossoms into the world:

> [...] the fuchsia funnels breaking out
> of the crabapple tree, more than the neighbor's
> almost obscene display of cherry limbs shoving
> their cotton [...]

Those "fuchsia funnels" break out of the line itself; the cherry blossoms shove across the white space of the page.

The poem's first end-stop doesn't appear until line 8, after the word "aftermath":

> the pavement strewn with the confetti of aftermath,
> the leaves come. [...]

This end-stop is subtle, just the light pause of a comma. It's as though the world stops to catch its breath; it got carried away with the beauty of spring, but now the party is over, the ground is littered with a "confetti" of petals, and it's time for the real healing to begin. Having taken a beat to collect itself, the world begins to heal, new leaves "growing over" winter's damage.

Where Enjambment appears in the poem:

- **Lines 1-2:** "out / of"
- **Lines 2-3:** "neighbor's / almost"
- **Lines 3-4:** "shoving / their"
- **Lines 4-5:** "slate / sky"
- **Lines 5-6:** "trees / that"
- **Lines 6-7:** "white / and"
- **Lines 7-8:** "leave / the"
- **Lines 9-10:** "skin / growing"
- **Lines 10-11:** "return / to"
- **Lines 11-12:** "despite / the"
- **Lines 13-14:** "leaf / unfurling"

VOCABULARY

Fuchsia funnels (Lines 1-2) - The speaker is describing the bright, pinkish-purplish blossoms of the crabapple tree (a small, ornamental apple tree).

Obscene (Lines 2-3) - Shocking, offensive, or indecent.

Slate (Lines 3-5) - Dark gray.

Taffy (Lines 6-7) - A sweet, colorful candy.

Trinkets (Line 7) - Small toys or knick-knacks.

Baubles (Line 7) - Ornaments.

Strewn (Lines 7-8) - Scattered about.

Aftermath (Line 8) - The consequence or fallout of something.

Plodding (Line 9) - Slow-moving.

Unfurling (Lines 13-14) - Spreading out.

FORM, METER, & RHYME

FORM

The poem consists of 14 lines arranged into a single stanza. Most of the poem's lines are enjambed, creating a sense of momentum that reflects the poem's main idea: that life must go on, even in the face of hardship.

In having 14 lines that hover around 10 syllables apiece, the poem also subtly resembles a sonnet. Sonnets typically make an argument of some sort; similarly, in this poem, the speaker calls for hope and resilience. Unlike a regular sonnet, of course, this poem is written in free verse, meaning it doesn't follow a set meter or rhyme scheme. It feels contemporary and conversational.

METER

As a free verse poem, "Instructions on Giving Up" doesn't follow a set meter. The language is contemporary and naturalistic.

That said, there are a couple of places in the poem that come pretty close to using iambic pentameter: 10 syllables arranged in an unstressed-stressed pattern. Listen to the first line, for instance:

More than | the fu- | chsia fun- | nels break- | ing out

The line is 10 syllables long, and with the exception of the first foot, which is a trochee (stressed-unstressed), the line is made up of iambs (da-DUMs).

Iambic pentameter is the classic meter of sonnets, which, like this poem, have 14 lines. The use of this very common, very traditional meter perhaps hints at the way spring's beauty—those "fuchsia funnels" and "cotton candy-colored blossoms"—have been written about by poets again and again as symbols of hope.

Line 4 also is also iambic:

their cot- | ton can- | dy-co- | lored blos- | soms to | the slate

There's an extra foot, creating 12 syllables, and some variation, but overall the line has that identifiably bouncy rhythm of iambic meters.

RHYME SCHEME

Since "Instructions on Not Giving Up" is a free verse poem, it doesn't use a rhyme scheme. The *lack* of a rhyme scheme allows for more subtle rhythms and music to emerge, which is fitting for a poem where the speaker prefers "the greening of the trees" to spring's gaudy "baubles and trinkets." In other words, since this poem is more interested in the quiet work of healing and moving forward than in fleeting moments of intense joy, it makes sense that it doesn't use an over-the-top rhyme scheme.

SPEAKER

The poem's speaker is completely anonymous: the poem doesn't reveal their age, gender, or any personal details about them. Instead, it simply presents the world from their point of view: to the speaker, the "green skin" of "continuous living" is far more inspiring than all the ephemeral dazzle of spring's "white and taffy." Beauty and joy are wonderful while they last, sure, but this speaker understands that in order to make the best of life, one has to be open to *all* it has to offer.

The fact that the speaker could be anyone at all makes the poem feel more timeless and inviting: whoever the reader is, they're likely to relate to its broad themes of hope and resilience. Rather than specifying the speaker's particular "hurt[s]," the reader is invited to input their own. And when the speaker refers to "the mess of us," it's clear they mean human beings in general.

SETTING

The poem begins in early spring, when "crabapple" and "cherry" trees are blooming and "Spring rains" darken the sky. The poem then moves forward in time to late spring or early summer, when "white / and taffy" blooms turn to "confetti" on "the pavement" (that is, when bright petals fall to the ground).

The poem's quick movement from the splendor of early spring to the "mess" of its "aftermath" suggests just how fleeting such over-the-top beauty is. Finally, the poem describes "the greening of the leaves" and the "Patient, plodding green skin" of "new slick lea[ves] / unfurling." When all the decoration of spring departs, ordinary life emerges—and, the poem insists, there's beauty in that too!

The poem doesn't specify where in the world or when this spring takes place, which allows the changing of the seasons to feel more symbolic of life's "continuous" nature. No matter how many springs have come and gone, the world keeps spinning.

CONTEXT

LITERARY CONTEXT

Ada Limón was born in Sonoma, California, in 1976. She earned an MFA in poetry from New York University and went on to publish her first two books, *Lucky Wreck* and *This Big Fake World*, in 2006. She has since published four more books of poetry.

Limón's work has been praised for its authenticity, its insights into the natural world, and its ability to surprise even when using simple, accessible language. A former theater major, Limón has frequently performed her poems for live audiences. In 2015 she was a finalist for the National Book Award for her collection *Bright Dead Things*.

Limón first published "Instructions on Not Giving Up" on May 15, 2017, as part of the Academy of American Poets *Poem-a-Day* series. She later included the poem in her fifth collection, *The Carrying*, published in 2018. This collection touches on themes related to chronic pain, infertility, immigration, and political turmoil in the U.S.

"Instructions on Not Giving Up" also belongs to a long tradition of poets writing about the hopeful yet fleeting nature of spring. Some examples of famous poems about the season include "Spring" by Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Lines Written in Early Spring" by William Wordsworth, "Spring" by Christina Rosetti, and "To Paula in Late Spring" by W.S. Merwin.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Limón wrote "Instructions on Not Giving Up" in the early spring of 2017, at a time of deep political polarization in the U.S. This was shortly after the inauguration of President Donald Trump, whose election in November of 2016 was considered a major upset that sent shockwaves across the country. The Women's March, held just a day after the inauguration, saw an estimated seven million people across the world take to the streets in

protest of anti-woman rhetoric as well as in support of broader social justice reforms.

Many poems in Limón's collection *The Carrying* touch on themes at the forefront of American consciousness at the time, including women's rights, climate change, racism, and anti-immigrant laws. Her poem "Cargo," for example, explores Limón's anxiety surrounding ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids, while the speaker of "A New National Anthem" laments that "The Star-Spangled Banner" is so full of "war and bombs."

MORE RESOURCES

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- The Value of Poetry in Times of Crisis — A PBS news segment in which Limón shares why she finds poetry inherently hopeful and why people are turning to it more than ever. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yL5kSIGCrQ)
- A review of The Carrying — Read a review of Limón's fifth book, in which "Instructions on Not Giving Up" was published. (https://losangelesreview.org/review-carrying-ada-limon/)
- Introduction to the Poet's Life and Career — A brief biography of the poet and links to additional poems from the Poetry Foundation. (https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/ada-limon)
- Connected to the Universe: An Interview with the Poet — An interview for Guernica in which Limón discusses her influences, passions, and the risks she's taken in the name of poetry. (https://www.guernicamag.com/ada-limon-connected-to-the-universe/)
- The Poet Discusses Her Work — An article by Limón discussing her inspiration and the process of writing this poem. (https://www.oprahdaily.com/entertainment/books/a35991203/ada-limon-poem-instructions-on-not-giving-up-spring/)
- A Reading of the Poem — Listen to the poem read aloud. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjHPV62mKbo)

HOW TO CITE

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