

## SHOULDERS

A man crosses the street in rain,  
stepping gently, looking two times north and south,  
because his son is asleep on his shoulder.

No car must splash him.  
No car drive too near to his shadow.

This man carries the world's most sensitive cargo  
but he's not marked.  
Nowhere does his jacket say FRAGILE,  
HANDLE WITH CARE.

His ear fills up with breathing.  
He hears the hum of a boy's dream  
deep inside him.

We're not going to be able  
to live in this world  
if we're not willing to do what he's doing  
with one another.

The road will only be wide.  
The rain will never stop falling.

*Naomi Shihab Nye*