Sometimes what saves a child from life’s hardships is her imagination, as Mekeel McBride explains in today’s poem.

No Child of Earthly Kitchens
by Mekeel McBride

I owned no raincoat and in the season of storms was sent to school under my mother’s umbrella.

It was the color of pale sherry. The ivory handle kept about it the faint smell of perfumed wrists.

It never carried me away although I wished it often enough that I can still see beneath me people with their umbrellas like black morning glories growing small on a polished street.

And I see, too, my house as tidy as the shoebox for a hurt bird; the flat horizon filling out as purple and plump as an eggplant. And when the dark arc of the umbrella sets me down

and when my feet again touch stubborn ground I am no longer a child of earthly kitchens

but find the geometry of clouds closeted in my heart and in my hair, the strange blue perfume of storm.