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Chicken Soup

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Coutley: Chicken Soup

CHICKEN SOUP

LISA FAY
COUTLEY

It's likely you're right, that no one's watching in my window while I'm mincing the garlic and thinking of how I wasn't holding a knife but standing in the health center trying not to touch the chairs or the square pillar in the middle of the room, trying harder to hold my jaw closed as a helicopter laid flat the grass in North Carolina where they found the body of that small, small girl with the curly hair and the smile. She smiles still as I switch to chopping onion and stop crying over mothers who sell daughters for sex, so now I'm crying because I never fall in love with men who love me first, and because every time I call the doctor, my earache and sore throat go away, and the chill of the stethoscope, the stranger's tug at the front of my shirt, the feeling that someone's looking in where I can't see out—that's gone, too, and no one should go on faking their cough alone.