

What I Learned From the Incredible Hulk

By Aimee Nezhukumatathil

When it comes to clothes, make
an allowance for the unexpected.
Be sure the spare in the trunk
of your station wagon with wood paneling

isn't in need of repair. A simple jean jacket
*says Hey, if you aren't trying to smuggle
rare Incan coins through this peaceful
little town and kidnap the local orphan,*

I can be one heck of a mellow kinda guy.
But no matter how angry a man gets, a smile
and a soft stroke on his bicep can work
wonders. I learned that male chests

also have nipples, warm and established—
green doesn't always mean envy.
It's the meadows full of clover
and chicory the Hulk seeks for rest, a return

to normal. And sometimes, a woman
gets to go with him, her tiny hands
correcting his rumpled hair, the cuts
in his hand. Green is the space between

water and sun, cover for a quiet man,
each rib shuttling drops of liquid light.

Aimee Nezhukumatathil, "What I Learned from the Incredible Hulk" from *Miracle Fruit*.
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Source: *Miracle Fruit* (Tupelo Press, 2003)