

Aline Mello

STUDYING FOR THE CITIZENSHIP TEST WITH MY MOTHER

Sitting with my mother, labeling branches
Judicial, Executive

The trees outside sway with the hard wind,
and we have to stay inside today, or the leaves
would fly from the balcony, her notecards, her pencils

She asks me the difference between
a citizen's rights and responsibilities

I translate the oath to Portuguese

*You'll leave all allegiances to Brazil
you'll take arms for the USA if you need to
I stop at, So help me God*

She asks if it's a prayer
I say yes.