"oh antic God"

By Lucille Clifton

oh antic God
  return to me
  my mother in her thirties
  leaned across the front porch
  the huge pillow of her breasts
  pressing against the rail
  summoning me in for bed.

I am almost the dead woman’s age times two.

I can barely recall her song
  the scent of her hands
  though her wild hair scratches my dreams
  at night. return to me, oh Lord of then
  and now, my mother’s calling,
  her young voice humming my name.


Source: Mercy (BOA Editions, Ltd., 2004)