

These Thighs

After Lucille Clifton

These thighs rub together when I walk.

I turn heads in my mother's

Baby Phat Jeans.

A Scarred Man

in a glassy black Pontiac,

A Simple Man

in a murky blue Ford,

An Old Man

in a prime white Cadillac,

whistle

because these thighs jiggle.

He—they—the block

treat me

like a trick

from a candy bowl.

They offer

Butterfingers,

Lollipops,

Tootsie rolls,

that will melt

to make me feel sticky—

icky from all the sly lips:

Ooh sweet Thang, where yo man at?

Ooh pretty Thang, yo mama thick like dat too?

*Come take a ride with me fine Thang. I don't. **Bite.***

These thighs

keep the worlds

of compliments I haven't learned

to dodge yet

locked up tight in hamstrings.

These thighs

I've had all my life.

These thighs are

eighteen years old

& still afraid to be

outside of sweats.

These thighs still *flinch*

when a Man gets too close.

These thighs.

These thighs.

These thighs—

my motha' gave 'em to me.

Passed down through genetic code,
thighs like mine have
rocked babies far into indigo dreams,
held the weight of households in their crease,
fed entire neighborhoods with
garden grown greens & sweet peas.

Thighs like mine
don't fit into pretty places.

These thighs—
my thighs
were built to carry
a body full of song.