

**“i am accused of tending to the past”**

**Lucille Clifton**

i am accused of tending to the past  
as if i made it,  
as if i sculpted it  
with my own hands. i did not.  
this past was waiting for me  
when i came,  
a monstrous unnamed baby,  
and i with my mother's itch  
took it to breast  
and named it  
History.  
she is more human now,  
learning languages everyday,  
remembering faces, names and dates.  
when she is strong enough to travel  
on her own, beware, she will.