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Homage to Lucille, Dr. Lord-Heinstein

Marge Piercy

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*Marge Piercy*

We all wanted to go to you, 
even women who had not heard 
of you, longed for you, our 
cool grey mother who would 
gently, carefully and slowly using 
no nurse but ministering herself 
open our thighs and our vaginas 
and show us the os smiling 
in the mirror like the moon.

You taught us our health, our sickness 
and our regimes, presiding over 
the raw ends of life, a priestess eager 
to initiate. Never did you tell us 
we could not understand what you 
understood. You made our bodies 
glow transparent. You did not think 
you had a license to question us 
about our married state or lovers' sex.

Your language was as gentle and caring 
as your hands. On the mantle 
in the waitingroom the clippings hung, 
old battles, victories, marches. 
You with your flower face, strong 
in your thirties in the thirties, 
were carted to prison for the crime 
of prescribing birth control 
for working class women in Lynn.
The quality of light in those quiet rooms where we took our shoes off before entering and the little dog accompanied you like a familiar, was respect: respect for life, respect for women, respect for choice, a mutual respect I cannot imagine I shall feel for any other doctor, bordering on love.