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**Nightvoice**

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Inching out of slumber, I heard voices,  
No — just one voice, muffled and afar,  
As if in conversation on the phone,  
Perhaps downstairs and through closed doors  
And yet it was familiar, kind of soft,  
Inquiring and rhythmic, chuckles here and there,  
And then, I thought, I know it from somewhere,  
It seemed so clear — My God! My mother's  
Tender tones emerged. I've known  
That voice since wombdom with my sister,  
And then non-verbally till one or so,  
Bathed in warmth and comfort,  
Before specific word could clarify  
The distant sounds that always seemed to soothe.  
I found a higher ledge in my awakening,  
And realized there was no voice at all,  
But yet a sound — the "give" of give and take,  
Was soft and gentle, easy to confuse  
With ancient dreams and memories in flux.  
It was, I recognized, your breathing that I heard,  
A trick of sound and nostrils, rate and tone.  
Some thrity years gone by beyond her death,  
You've channeled me her love with your sweet breath.