

God the Mother Speaks of Xenia

Dayna Patterson

I AM the children sleeping under mylar in a Texas warehouse.
I AM the fathers lifting toddlers to their shoulders on our journey
to safety and rest. I'm safety and rest. But I'm mostly the mothers
who'd rather not lug the heavy memory of the twelve-year-old boy
cut to fit in a sack, ditched on the neighbor's steps. I hold his ghost
hand,

a pale flower. Some call us vermin, an infestation. We're waiting
for recognition's spark, milk of kindness, hoping for something to
hope.

Even a goddess like me needs birds to perch in the soul. Even I
require feathers, the tune that never stops. Don't look for me in the
guards,
or their guns. I'm not in the false borders, the fenced miles or razor
wire.

Haven't I taught you better? Even the body arrives by crossing
over. Sperm into egg. Then uterine guestroom. Then cervical gate.
Each life a light-chip, hard & bright, I slip into like second skin. So,
I will walk *with, as, in* them. My names rhyme with exile & asylum.
I wear boots, steel-toed. I wear running shoes. I wear these cracked,
bloody soles.