

# Leaving the Yellow House in Mandan, North Dakota

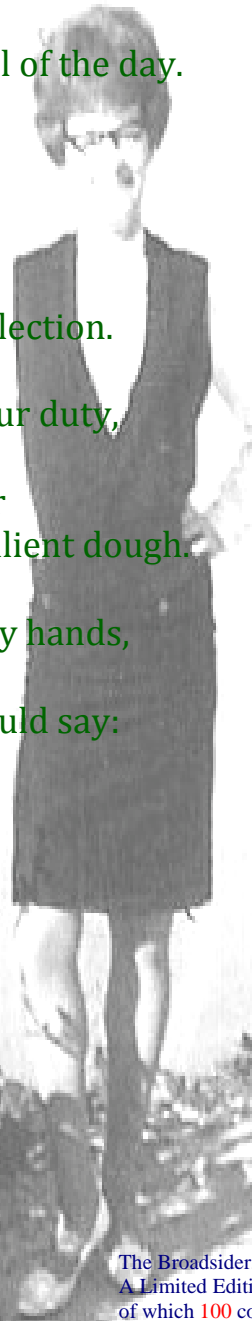
by Angelica Jochim

my face pressed against the kitchen window.  
as if the force of that longing could retrieve you.  
crisp, in your aproned uniform  
you're gone in a '57 Chevy  
to smile at strangers, recite the special of the day.

mother.  
warm buttermilk mouth.  
for me  
your hurried lipstick kisses  
keep hope burning, my eyes in the reflection.

I have stood by, a silent sentinel to your duty,  
my eyes intent  
on the black bowl on the kitchen chair  
as you bent to knead and turn the resilient dough.

I have stood, watchful, flour sack in my hands,  
poised for action.  
waiting for the moment when you would say:  
"you can put the flour in now."



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