



1987

Ellen

Michelle Douglas

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ELLEN

The house
is no longer her home:
the gardens no longer filled
with brilliant flowers
her gnarled hands transformed
into dancing ballerinas
or sweet-scented bouquets
in cut-glass vases.

The stairs miss her footfalls,
her thin, reedy voice singing
of spinning wheels and parlors
as she places jars of fruit
on dust-free shelves.

No more in the bedroom
the soft scent of roses,
of soap and cedar;
no long gray hairs in her brush,
no lonely cry of "Charlie"
in the dark of a widow's night.

The house
is no longer her home.
She who graced the wooden stair
and short garden path
sleeps within a house much smaller
much darker now.

But the house remembers.

Michelle Douglas