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I wish I could go back and defend her from her life,  
whose door at that moment was slowly drifting shut;  
I wish I could know what those hours were like  
in the empty, air-conditioned house

when no one was around to watch:  
the wall clock making its loud tock,  
her life slipping into its socket with a click,  
some stranger in the bathroom showing her titties,  
and laundry still left to be done.

It was a big lonely place for a girl  
just starting to get suspicious about the way  
the world was stapled together—  
holding a boy's magazine in her hand,

feeling her own invisibility  
just beginning to take hold,  
and pulling her robe a little tighter.