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i'm not above sentimentality anymore

if i seem fragile at all in your opinion, i must tell you that in my youth i never spent more than three years in any elementary school and my mother worked two jobs and rode the public transit to work every day. and when she got home i had to pick up the house and do homework until dinner, which for two full years was frozen pork chops, frozen peas, and instant potatoes she dulled out a week in advance in little sandwich bags so all she had to do was boil water.

every friday night she would come home and we would clean the bathrooms and dust and vacuum the whole house and we'd have a frozen pizza and get to fold out the hide-a-bed and watch tv in our sleeping bags, waking up early in the morning to have just-add-water pancakes and boiled-water and sugar syrup. we'd watch the bugs bunny and road runner show, and then my mother left for the bus back to work. she cleaned houses of people she worked for at the aerospace plant.

i shouldn't ever complain, i know that and that's what i tell my children though they hate hearing it. it's just that, i was lonely then, and often i am lonely now. of course making a living is a difficult thing to do anytime, it's just, something i don't know what to call disappeared of me into those dim corners of afternoons, and i wish i could go back to the evenings my mother walked down our block from the bus stop, and those saturday mornings leaving with her paper sack lunch of oranges picked from the neighbor's tree and once, get to hold her hand again.