

WHAT'S
HAPPENING
WITH
MOMMA?



It was fall in Virginia.
 That most golden leaves fell from tall oak trees.
 As each wore the color of Skookie's shirt, she blushed with joy.
 With the help of her two other brothers
 she made a nest of woven grass.

She sat under the trees play acting "Smoking Like Daddy".
 When he lit up, it meant he was in a very good mood!
 Now the sweet aroma of his tobacco smelled in her head.

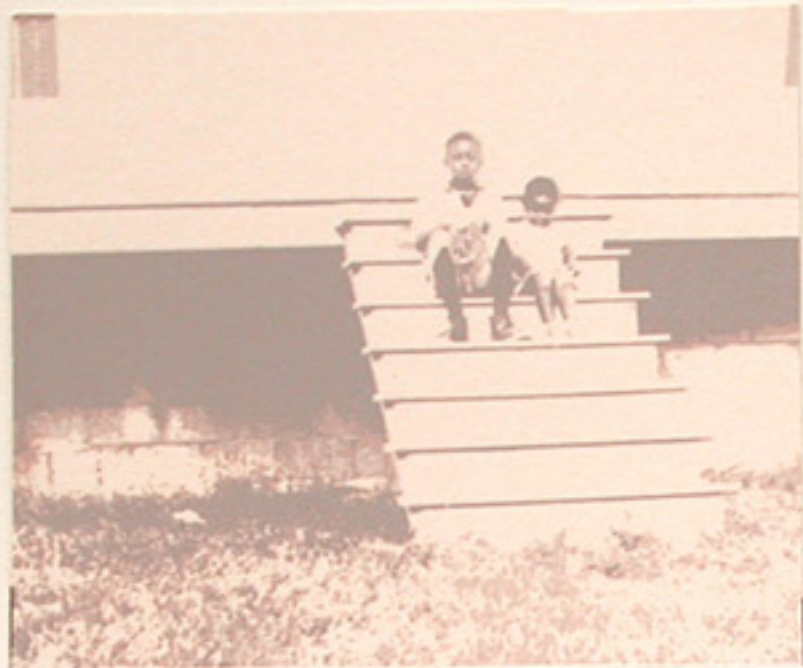
As she sat daydreaming,
 a loud piercing scream came from her mother's bedroom.
 A dull thump sounded like someone had hit the floor.
 Skookie jumped up and ran into the house.



When she saw Skookie's shadow on the wall,
 she knew he was coming to play with her.
 She was sitting at the table with her mother.
 Skookie was sitting on the floor with his brothers.
 She had to look down at her feet.

Just then her big brother Carl came around the corner.
 He was wearing his new dress clothes.
 She watched him smile and she was so glad.
 She had to look down at her feet.

Then someone downstairs said they could tell
 something was not right.
 "What's wrong with you?" he demanded.
 She could not stop crying.



*It was fall in Virginia.
Red and yellow leaves fell from tall oak trees.
As oak was the color of Skookie's skin, she blended right in.
With the help of her two older brothers
she made a set of acorn pipes.*

*She sat under the trees play acting "Smoking Like Daddy".
When he lit up, it meant he was in a very good mood!
Now the sweet aroma of his tobacco smelled in her head.*

*As she sat daydreaming,
a loud piercing scream came from her momma's bedroom.
A dull thump sounded like someone had hit the floor.
Skookie jumped up and ran into the house.*



*She saw her momma laying on the floor.
It scared and confused her.
Slowly her momma's eyes opened.
"Go get your grandma!" she cried.
Stunned, Skookie ran out of the house
as fast as her legs could take her.*

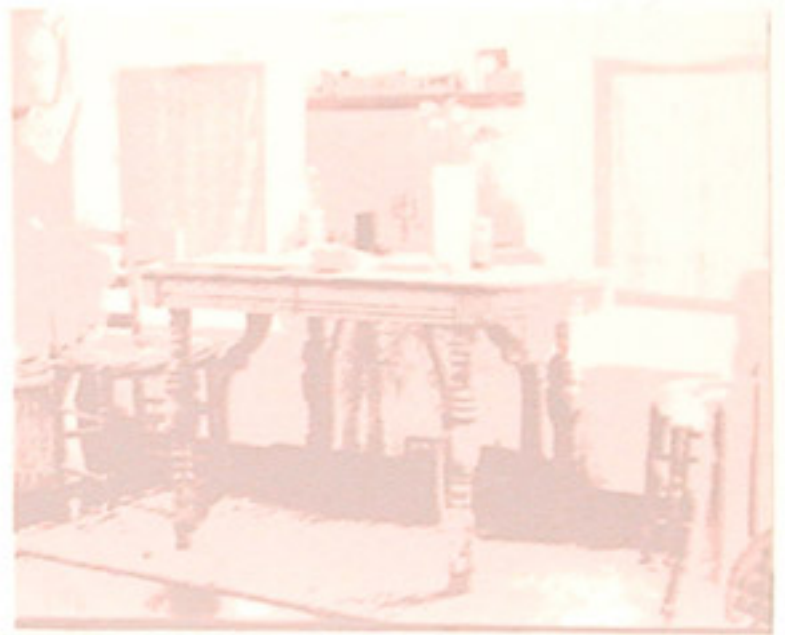
*Just then her big brother Carl came around the corner.
He was coming home from school.
She screamed and hollered as she ran to him.
Snot and tears ran down her face.*

*The towering fourteen year-old boy could tell
something was not right.
"What's wrong with you?" he demanded.
She could not stop crying.*



As he ran out of the yard, he turned his feet toward the
 the child and woman from the porch.
 "The house was empty in the house!"
 The woman ran, then ran, and watched the child disappear from sight.
 Her legs felt like wooden posts.

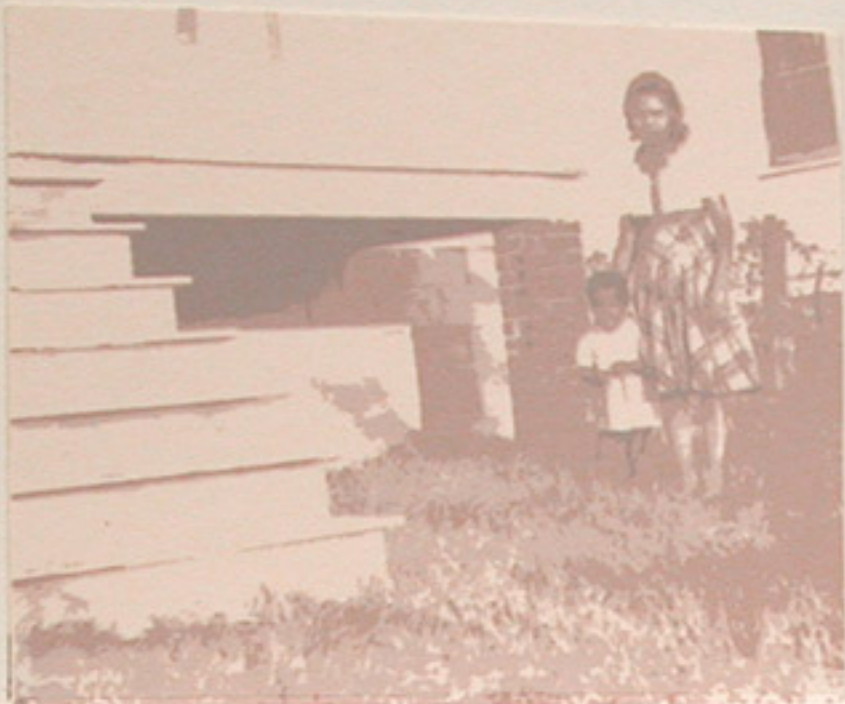
Heard the man's name, the woman's name, the man's name,
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 the man's name, the man's name, the man's name, the man's name,
 the man's name, the man's name, the man's name, the man's name,
 the man's name, the man's name, the man's name, the man's name.



The woman's name,
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"The woman's name, the man's name, the man's name,
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 the man's name, the man's name, the man's name,
 the man's name, the man's name, the man's name,
 the man's name, the man's name, the man's name.

It was getting dark when the woman and man
 they were sitting at the table in the room.
 They were sitting at the table in the room,
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 they were sitting at the table in the room.



Grasping at his sweater with one hand,
she pointed at the house with the other.
He pulled away and vaulted up the steps.
She ran behind him.
He came out of the bedroom, just as she got there.

As he ran out of the yard, he heard her footsteps behind him.
He did an about face and ordered,
"Go back and stay in the house!"
She froze on the spot and watched him disappear from sight.
Her legs felt like wooden pegs.

Inside the house, her momma's screams
and moans of agony flowed through the walls.
Minute after minute dragged on.
Skookie's face and hands pressed against the cool window pane.
Her seven year-old body began to tremble and shake.



Her grandma came.
She was holding four year-old Baby Brother's hand tightly.
"Stay with your sister," she said firmly as
she pushed him toward her.
Moving swiftly, she went in the bedroom and closed the door.

"Something awful must be wrong," thought Skookie.
Memories of being a flower girl at Baptist funerals
raced through her mind.
She wrapped her arms around herself.
Crouched in the corner, she began rocking back and forth.

It was getting dark when the doctor and some neighbors came.
They gave Skookie quizzical looks as
they tried to act as if nothing was happening.



*That small house belonged to a woman.
She was married to a man, but she was not married.
She was married to a man, but she was not married.
She was married to a man, but she was not married.*

*Her daddy arrived with a big bag of groceries.
The neighbors murmured in hush-hush tones.
Then Grandma spoke with him. She sounded very stern.*

*He went in the kitchen and fixed their dinner.
Baby Brother would not eat.
Sheekie threwed hers all up.
Angrily he yelled, "If you don't eat I'm going to tear you up!"
They both began to cry.*



*Just then, Aunt Nana came out of her mamma's room.
She looked at Sheekie and said,
"The way you was born is sure baby ugly!"
Sheekie's face turned white as she said she was not,
"How did a baby get there?"*

*Grinning widely she replied, "The stock brought her!"
This didn't make any sense to Sheekie.
"What's wrong with my mamma?" she asked in
a quivering voice.
"Your mamma's going to be all right," said Aunt Nana.*

*Still it was a bit too much!
Sheekie's body collapsed into the chair as
her mind closed itself down for the night.
She did not know it yet but
as big sister, she had become a mother!*



The small house became crowded.
Skookie wanted to leave, but she was too scared.
And where would she go?
Both of her big brothers were gone!

Her daddy arrived with a big bag of groceries.
The neighbors murmured in hush-hush tones.
Then Grandma spoke with him. She sounded very stern.

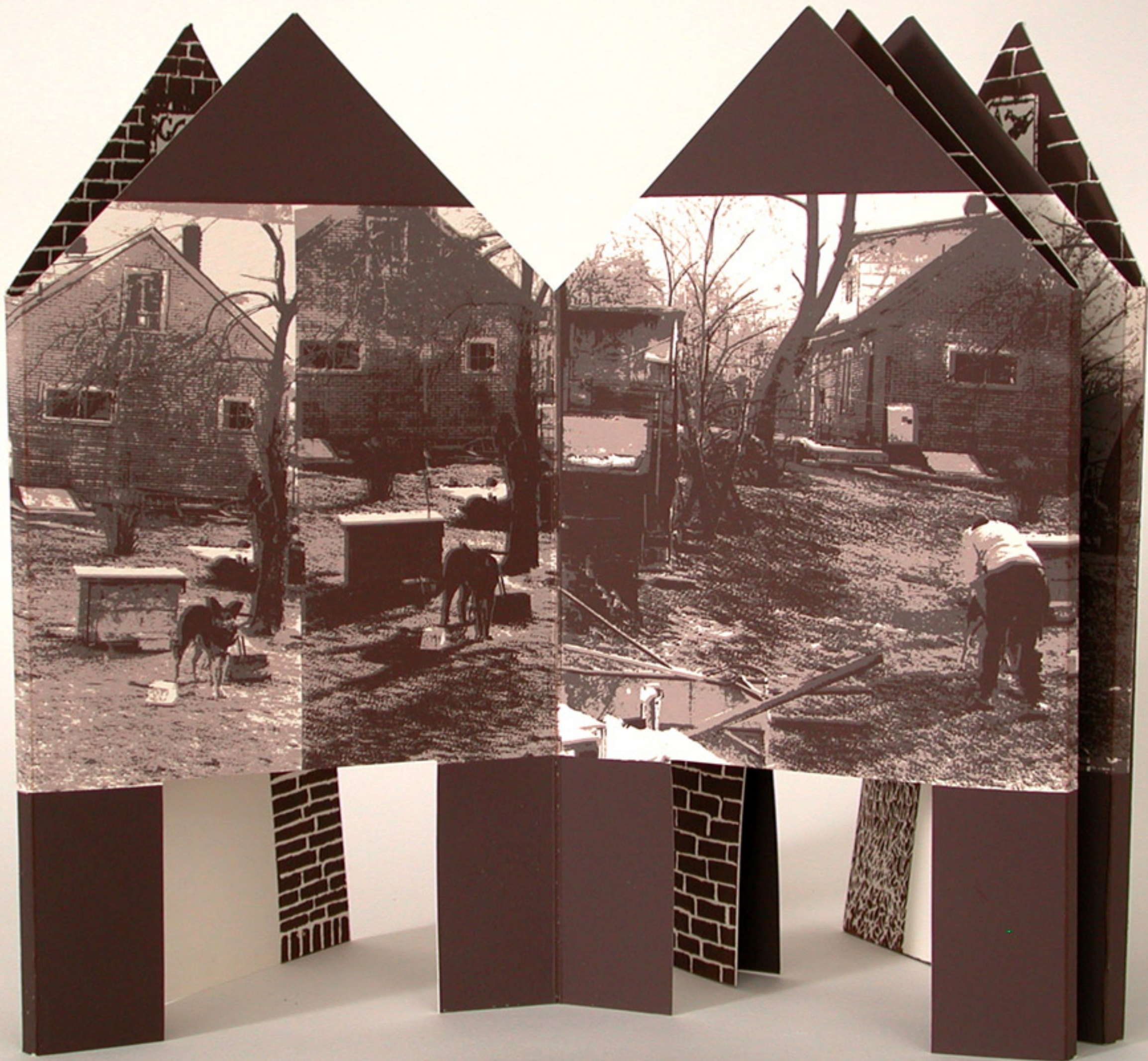
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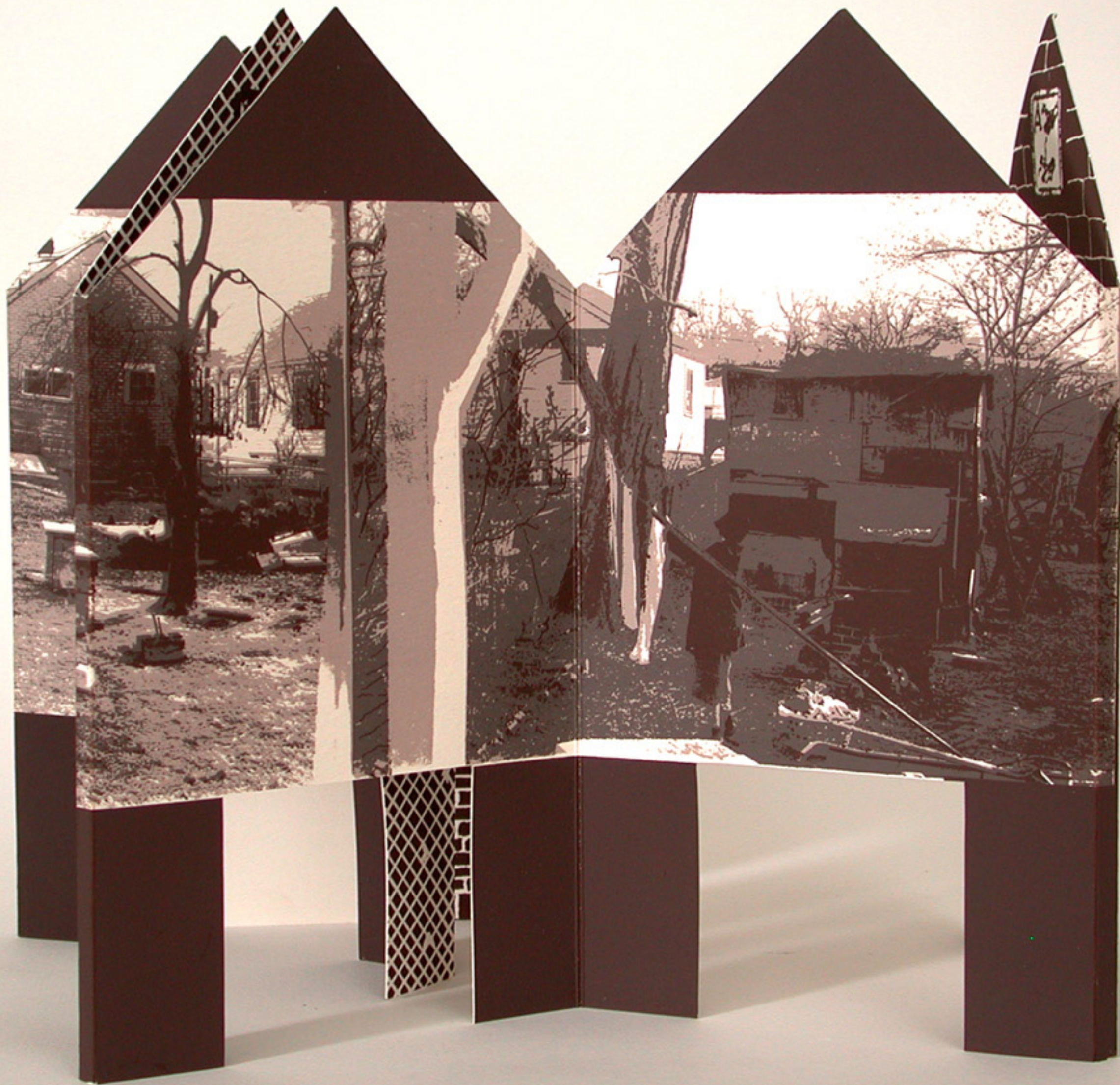


Just then, Aunt Nana came out of her momma's room.
She looked at Skookie and asked,
"Do you know you have a new baby sister?"
Skookie's wet eyes clung to her face as she asked,
"How did a baby get there?"

Grinning widely she replied, "The stork brought her!"
This didn't make any sense to Skookie.
"What's wrong with my momma?" she asked in
a quivering voice.
"Your momma's going to be all right," said Aunt Nana.

Still it was a bit too much!
Skookie's body collapsed into the chair as
her mind closed itself down for the night.
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as big sister, she had become a mother!







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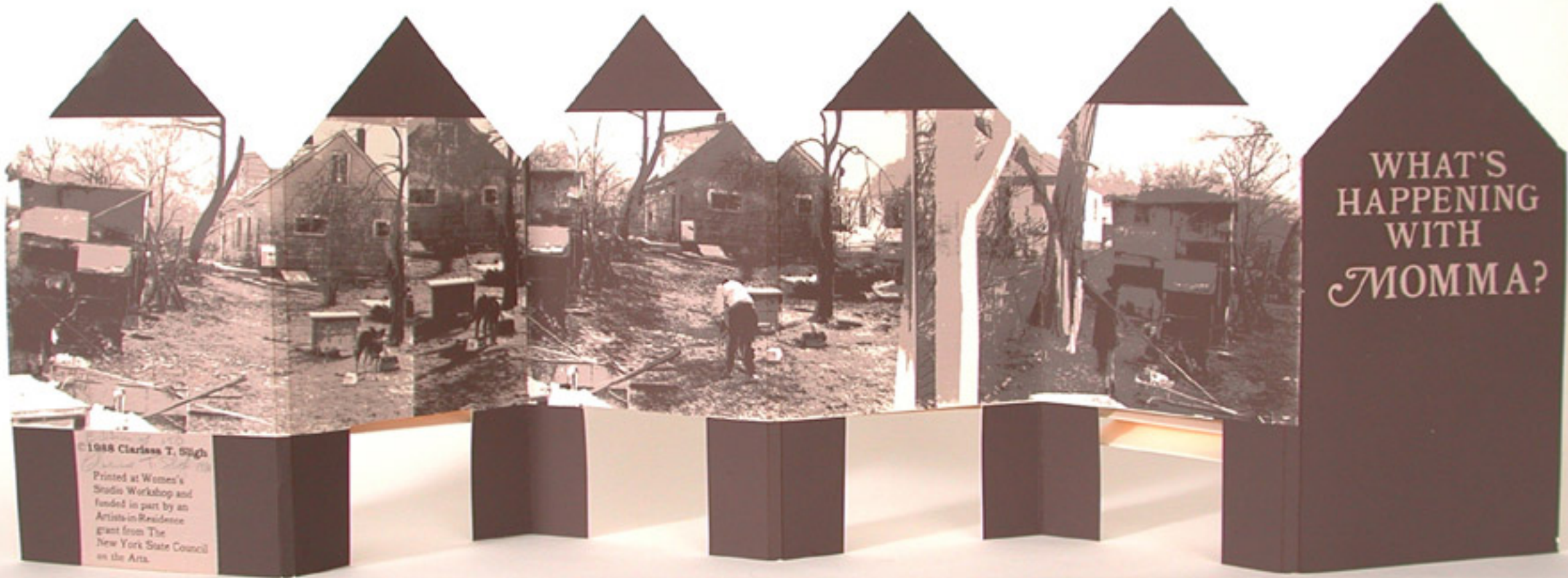
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