

Our Lady of the Tortelli

In front of her rolling-pin
a wave lifts through the dough
spreading, fanning out life.

She is old, but the dough
unwrinkles her palms
as they coax and level it.

Her elbows prance like deer
across a clearing. Her shoulders
follow and worship

till her whole self translates
into the mystery
fermented by dough.

Suddenly, above the table
from a mist of flour
a sail unfolds, casts loose,
is spun by a wind
that is only in her mind.

The sail grows thinner
till almost transparent,
till only a miracle
can stop it tearing.

She is that miracle: grey,
wizened, steeped in the lore
of flour and water, raised

by the skill of her hands,
by this dough
that has spread into wings,

while her own wings
secretly
are furling, unfurling,
waiting till she knows
when to let them lift her.