Flour…check…yeast – not expired – check…run the hot water, get that going…white sugar or brown? What else? Melted butter, an egg. How many are left? Did Holland eat one this morning? Spoonful of yeast with hot water and sugar – brown this time, lid on the cup, go to work, little yeasties…eat away. Miles is lucky he didn’t steal you for his beer – hate that crap. He can buy his own. Is the bathroom heater on? Silly that the warmest place in the house is in there but oh well. Whatever works. Only two eggs left, need one for this. I really wish they’d let me have chickens. Ridgely is the stupidest place on earth. People are raising chickens on rooftops in goddam New York City and I can’t have one here in the sticks? Ugh. Makes no damn sense. Yeast is bubbling – ready to mix it all together. Kitchenaid out – ugh – plunk, on the counter. So glad I bought this stupid thing but I do love the way Oma bakes. Gets her hands in the dough, sticky, squishing between her fingers. Love her hands. They’re beautiful. She’s amazing. How does she still bake, stay happy, enjoy life? She’s lost so much, but she still loves to bake bread and almond pastries. Gotta make those next. It’s that time of year – Miles is making beer to go with them – time to do some extra pushups and jumping jacks in the morning. Dough hook on – egg, water, yeast, butter, splash of milk, plain bread this time? Cranberry pecan? Cinnamon? Parmesan? Plain. Good for grilled cheese sandwiches. Grilled cheese and tomato soup are perfect. Do I have tomatoes? Make sure to lock it this time and add the flour slowly, Angie – you remember last time you were cleaning flour for days – of course I'm wearing all black. Duh. That smell. Best smell on earth. Like a bakery at 4 in the morning – smells like home no matter where you are. Time to stop the mixer – it’s my turn – jealous that that hook is all tangled in the dough – onto the marble board. Recipe says knead for ten minutes – fold rotate a quarter turn fold rotate a quarter turn fold rotate a quarter turn…such a mess but a good mess – relaxing mess – fold and turn *I haven’t finished grading papers*. Fold and turn *what do I cook for dinner tonight*. Fold and turn *there are toys all over the living room floor*. Fold and turn *laundry needs folding*. Fold and turn *I really should’ve put a TV in here*. Fold and turn *but the quiet’s nice*. Fold and turn *so homesick*. Fold and turn *I should be doing this in Oma’s kitchen*. Fold and turn *don’t cry in the dough*. Fold and turn *Christmas is soon and we’ll see Oma then*. Fold and turn *getting easier now that it’s coming together*. Julia Child is smiling at me with her mallet. Love her. So cute. And tall. Spent two years trying to bake perfect French baguettes. Still didn’t get it exactly how she wanted it. Wow. Feel like kind of a slacker now. Knead, knead, knead, fingers squishing in the ball, rolling the ball, shaping the ball, that’s getting smoother, silkier, rounder. Sexy dough ball. Like a giant breast. Into the bowl, sexy dough boob covered in butter. See you in an hour…