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**Solicitude**  
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## SOLICITUDE

The streets are mad with people, but two floors up, I'm one of those monotonous faces in an apartment window. Seeing me, people on the sidewalks remember there's always someone watching, and, turning away, buttoning their overcoats, they hurry on.

The dog has curled asleep beneath the coffee table. Within the low music of the television, everything in my room is becoming older, yellowed, more resolved to being exactly where and what it is, when once there was so much more to be. I can imagine myself, umbrella in hand, rushing past the newsstand, pressing through the crowd, purposeful, on the way to an appointment, tie incessantly straight. We scatter about the city as it starts to rain, moving with a desperation for somewhere we're not: beside the flowers and trellises of St. Genevieve's Church—the schoolyard behind where three teenaged girls lean against the brick wall, sharing a smoke. Or the restaurant on the bay, with its windows facing the ocean; the waiter whose fingertips rest lightly upon the corners of the wine list; the intoxication of Marilyn's skin, her hair, her arm upon the table. The sky is drowned in red and orange, and, lowering her glass, she draws in a breath to speak.