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## **When No One Was Watching** Cal Kinnear

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## **Cal Kinnear**

### **WHEN NO ONE WAS WATCHING**

When she thought no one was watching she sat at the kitchen table staring into her hands as if they held an enigmatic and prophetic constellation of black tea leaves. That was when the other women came to commiserate. Not the ones in the pastel frocks with the voices of caged birds, who perched on the edge of their seats and sipped milky coffee from bone china cups. The dim colorless ones who thickened the air like a mist and hovered with the stillness of curtains, whose faces were eroded from the endlessness of grief and whose only names were the names of loss. She was ashamed of them. She hid them among the dust rags in the closet and in the cardboard carton by the washtub reserved for worn-out clothes. They were the secret companions of the life she never led.