

THE FAILURE OF FOREWARNING

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A man and a woman are walking
down the street, although it might be better
for the story if the man and woman
were walking into a bar.
Obligingly, they walk into a bar,
and on closer inspection we see that the woman
is the wife of Lot,
appearing mussed and disheveled in old clothing.
We understand the reason for this
as she has had to leave home
on a moment's notice, having had just
enough time to throw her husband's scratchy
wool overcoat over her shoulders
and slip into the oversized
galoshes of her son.
All afternoon since leaving the house
a trio of red deer have been following
them through the town and laboring
to lick at her chin, which has become
a source of escalating concern.
Also the way at breakfast
the spatulas and kitchen
knives began instantly to rust
and corrode in her hand.
She is thinking of this as they sit down
facing themselves in the smoked glass.
The barroom is dark and smells of mold.
Lot orders a rye and says nothing.
When she speaks to him he finds himself looking
over her head and through the diamond
shaped window in the front door of the bar,

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watching the clouds as they change
into a rope of red and violet light.
Already we see she is beginning to flake,
unaware of the perfect white crumbs
that Lot is brushing quietly to the floor.
Already she is developing a craving for peanuts,
turning her back to the evening news, nostalgically
opening and shutting the toy parasol.