

## Kenmore Hotel, 1965

ANDREA HOLLANDER BUDY

And when she realizes he expects her to undress, to lie down on the hotel bed next to him, or under, or God forbid anything other, "God forgive me," she says to herself under her breath, for agreeing to meet him here the night before the dorms reopen. She told her parents she had to take the only train that got her back on time. Now she stands at the window, her new wool coat folded over the back of the only chair in the room, the pearls he gave her newly circling her neck. A brittle January snow has taken hold. Through the window she hears the wind whisper its bitter *no*, its bitter *yes*. Traffic on the street below barely moves at all. The glow from the neon Citgo sign tints the room blue, then red, then blue again. All night she lies beside him in her clothes, neither sleeping nor speaking.