

Laura had been awake for several minutes before she was aware that there was a problem. She always drew her curtains back just before climbing into bed because she preferred waking early and slowly to daylight than with sudden violence to an alarm. (It was one of the few pleasures of her self-employment as an accountant that, in winter months, she simply started her days later.) So she lay there, entirely comfortable, gently reassembling her sense of where she was and why, catching sweet wafts of the Sombreuil rose that half-obscured her view of the garden and listening to the ravenous cheeping of the blue tit nestlings in the box beside her windowsill. She took in the unsatisfactorily emollient American novel she persisted in reading, then the purple bloom left inside the wineglass she had brought to bed. And her comfort diminished as furniture and pictures reminded her that she was no longer in Paris but in