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Life Is ...

Marcia Dodge
St. John Fisher College

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Cover Page Footnote

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EVELYN JANSEN

THE LAST CLOSING

AFTER EDWARD HOPPER, SEVEN A.M., 1948

As I closed and locked the door of my little country store for the last time, I could smell the foliage on that warm, balmy evening. After I turned the key in the lock, I stared at the weathered, white exterior of the building I had worked in for 27 years.

I could hear birds in the trees next door-chirping like they didn't have a care in the world. What I used to hear was the door constantly opening and closing as customers came and went, and the *ding* of the old patina-colored cash register as I rang up transactions.

Lately though, all you could hear was my own breathing, and the only smell was of dust, settling on the empty shelves-chestnut in color. They line the walls of this store like soldiers ready to advance on a silent, but formidable enemy-hard times.

It has become pretty isolated around here since the factory shut down. I can't expect people to buy things in my store when most don't even have enough to eat.

All I can do now is draw the butter-cream shades, and lock the door.

MARICA DODGE

LIFE IS . . .

Life is rain

A warm misting that just gives you a small thrill
Gentle rain that fleetingly kisses you on its way by
The downpour that gets everything wet yet not enough to satisfy
A cold dark pelting that lasts awhile
An encompassing soothing rain calming and lulling you to sleep
Flashing thundering that holds your attention and puts on a show
for those unafraid to go



ALEXIS SPECK