TWO PM

Peter never knew that she had seen his new jacket; a block after she passed him on the street (waving unseen from a taxi window), a minivan ran a red light and the cab driver slammed on the brakes but the truck behind them didn't, and she was killed not instantly but very quickly. But buying the jacket was nice; it was the last easy thing he did before his wife was killed and the world went underwater. He wandered into the store on a whim (in the neighbourhood for a dentist appointment) and there it was, on a mannequin facing the door. Maybe it was the slightly military shade of blue, maybe it was the limber cloth that seduced him, but he thought: I could use a jacket like that, and since it was one of those spring days when you forget that most of the year you are either sweating or freezing, he decided that he really did need it, this delightful thing that might function perfectly well in a place like Barcelona, or Atlanta, but up here could only be worn for a thin slice of the year, a wedge of April and, if you were lucky, again in October. He fell in love with this very specific coat, so he bought it and took off his parka (which he put into the bag from the store) and then he wore it all the way back to his office in the blue and yellow of spring, and at one point he heard brakes and breaking glass somewhere close, but he kept walking through the sunshine and through the day, and he thought about their plans for the summer, and about dinner that night, and the years ahead, until his phone started to ring and he answered it.