HOPPER’S PAINTINGS

The ones I like best are the ones with windows lit up: “Rooms for Tourists,” “House at Dusk.”
In those there is a cool inner glow at least—and with it hope of warmth, however insubstantial, against the shadows of the night which fall down over everything.
I can imagine the people inside of them, solitary, yes, and yet not utterly lonely, perhaps reading or passing slowly from room to room, a hairbrush or toothpaste in their hand.
And the phone a silent instrument on the hall table—a kind of peace emanating from the receiver and from the light bulbs overhead which are overloaded with silence.
The compartments of the houses are as enclosed as the berths on an old Pullman where, as a child, I rocked and rocked to the round metal repetitions of the wheels, not terribly concerned about where I was going, the tunnel ahead, the rusted bridge we might pass over, or the torn cities beyond it.