

Morning Alarm

Ring.

Ring.

Silence.

I feel your arm slip over my waist and squeeze me for only a second. My breath catches. I'm dreaming. You haven't done that in so long. *I miss you*, I want to say, but don't want to pressure you.

Ring.

Ring.

Silence.

The beds' bones whimper as you get out and walk out the room. You don't close the door. Water splashes, pans rattle. You come back. Hands grabbing around under the blanket, searching spiders finding their target. Steps toward the kitchen again. The low tumble of the water kettle, reaching higher notes in time. The sound of water being poured. A warm-water bottle being slipped under my blanket. *Thank you*, I think and want to cry because you are not doing it for me anymore. It's routine by now. I imagine you do it with a smile. I imagine today you will say something when you leave. Something insignificant but sincere. I imagine you wish you could stay, crawl back under the blanket, not because you are tired, but because you want to be close to me. I imagine you'll say, you love me. I miss you...

Clothes rustle, the wardrobe creaks. A door is being opened and closed. Steps. I feel you leaning over me, a hovering sensation of apprehension rising. Cold lips on my forehead so warm, so warm. I turn and smile, please. Steps. Please. The room vacant and vast in its emptiness. I open my eyes. Still darkness. No. I close my eyes and force myself to dream. Loving arms and tender words, a time past, a future ready. It's easy dreaming. It's hard to live. Suddenly I'm wide awake. My tummy churns. Please...
I get up. I make the bed. I know when you'll be back, I wish it'd be sooner. I dream you'll embrace me, saying you've missed me. And then I leave.

Why? You ask me in my head. Because then I can keep imagining you'd care if I was there.

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