

# The next hour

by Franklin Goodish

After years of separations and sleeping in the basement and existential shenanigans, I am back home and happy. I read with my kids. I play with them and their friends. I mediate their disputes over coloring books and Xbox turns. I ask my wife how her day was and furrow my brow as she recounts the daily grind that typifies any job.

I allow myself one hour every two weeks. Devoting 335 of my 336 hours to her and the kids is beyond dutiful.

The one hour, or, to be more precise, the .0029761905 of my biweekly time, was just spent less than a mile from my office on my knees licking the ass of Ruthless Femme, the online handle of an accurately-advertised blonde Russian with legs up to my wife's sternum.

Now, showered and on my usual train home, my first hour of me time in the books, I feel good. The other bureaucrats I have been commuting with for years look haggard and bleary. Pandora seems to sense this and plays "Somewhere in Ohio" by the Jayhawks, a song I haven't heard since law school. I ignore the risk to my ears and blare it. I don't think about how fleeting this feeling is or how soon I will be worrying about STDs and blackmail from the ruthless Russian who was none too pleased with my tip.

Tonight, when they are all asleep, I will jerk off, thinking of her gripping my hair, spitting in my nostrils, trying not to hear her snorting at my \$50 tip as I walked out. That will still count in the 335 ledger, as I'll be in my basement, awake and arguably protecting my home in case of invasion, tv on pause in case the steps creak from my wife's small feet, even before I clean myself up thinking of how many hours to go until I'm happy again.

