

Wake Up

by Kathy Fish

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My neighbor, Mr. Dorn, is standing naked on my front steps, singing. He looks like a reptile in the moonlight. Maybe he's sleepwalking, in which case, I know not to go and shake him or he'll keel over with a heart attack. I've read about this.

This is my third night of insomnia and I'm feeling as close to crazy as I ever have. Lack of REM sleep can lead to hallucinations and disordered thinking. It's possible Mr. Dorn is not even here, but cozy in his bed with Mrs. Dorn. It's possible *I'm* not even here.

I go to the kitchen and heat up some leftover pumpkin soup. Mr. Dorn is singing "My Cherie Amour" and is on the "la la la" part. He doesn't sound anything like Stevie Wonder.

Bill, my cat, rubs against my leg and I crumble off bits of bread and cheese and she eats it out of my hand, taking her time. Bill misses my husband, the one she really loved. The one who really loved her. The apartment he moved into doesn't allow cats. That last night he held Bill's face close to his and said, "This is only temporary" but that was news to me.

Mr. Dorn is having difficulty reaching the high notes. Bill jumps to the windowsill and hisses at him.

"Bill, come on. Don't be a bitch." I pick her up and rub her under her chin, the way she likes. Mr. Dorn finishes the song and stands holding his penis, looking amazed, as if penises had just been invented and he'd been asked to try this one out for size.

I don't want to call and scare Mrs. Dorn. They are such a nice couple. Just before Christmas, Mrs. Dorn was going away to some craft fair in Minneapolis and she knew Mr. Dorn would be lonely so she built him a snow version of herself standing in front of their house. Mrs. Dorn used some artistic license because it was a helluva stacked snow woman. I took a picture of Mr. Dorn standing next to "Darla II" and made an 8 x 10 of it for him to frame. He cried when I gave it to him and she'd only been gone three days.

I call my husband sometimes in the middle of the night.

"Are we going to be okay?" I ask, whispering. I don't want to wake him up completely. I read somewhere that people in a semi-conscious state are incapable of lying.

Mr. Dorn needs to wake up and go home to his bed. I push up the window and lean close to the screen and start singing "la la la la la la."

He blinks.

"La la la la la la..."

He clears his throat and lets go of his penis. Mr. Dorn and I are singing My Cherie Amour together. Maybe he's still asleep or maybe he's not, but I'll say this, the two of us are really something.

