

Afterwards

by Kirsty Logan

We used up the last of the time a month ago, or a year ago, or a lifetime ago, and here I am still beside you. It feels like it might be morning, so I slide out from under your sleep-warm arm. I watch the kettle until it starts to roil with bubbles, then pour it into the teapot. When I crawl back in beside you, the toast is burned and the eggs are rock-solid; I have no concept of how long I cooked them for.

We don't need them anyway. Breakfast is just a prelude. I slip under the covers, between your soft limbs slowing awake, and I kiss a line from your throat to your knees. Down, left to right, back up. I have been buried in you for a thousand years and now you're awake, your hands raking through my hair, your taste sharp at the back of my throat. I slip a finger in alongside my tongue and feel your muscles clench. It seems that you came in a millisecond so I stay, tongue pressed, until breakfast turns to fossils on the bedside table.

Into the bathroom, your knees still unsure, and I wash the molecules of myself from you. It takes twelve years for the hot water to run out and your skin has not even begun to prune. We crawl back into bed, ignoring the twilit dawn-midnight behind the curtains.

We lie entwined for hours, or days, or lifetimes, until the end of the world.

