

Diary of a Marriage

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These Are the Letters Written Between My Legs

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8:37 a.m.

Well, it's a cold dance we dance this morning. You are up at the crack of dawn and the bed is empty even before you leave. I pretend to sleep so I can revel in the delicious morning ritual I know will be ending soon. I hear you brew coffee, shower, talk to the dog. I listen to the cadence of your foot steps on the kitchen floor, the rumble of garbage trucks, the shrieking sirens and disembodied voices of our neighbors outside our windows. I have my eyes closed, but I can see you slowly and quietly opening the dresser drawer for a clean white T-shirt and clean socks. I feel your satisfaction as you tightly lace up your boots for they are freshly polished. Then, I tense my body, my eyes still closed, for the last step in this morning ritual. The coffee pot sputters and you pour coffee, add sugar and milk, and almost tenderly leave it on the night table next to my sleeping head. Your hand lightly brushes my hair.

Last night, late, I woke up, the bed shaking and heaving and heard rather than saw you pleasuring yourself; your suppressed sighs, the frantic rhythm of your body and that's when I knew: It's over. Because you did not turn to me, and I realized you probably haven't been turning to me for a long long time. Then, unbidden, I remembered my purely sensual pleasure at the sight of you in clean white socks and clean white underwear, wearing nothing else but your slack-jawed smile, your wiry black hair. Then, I remembered the sight of you fresh and steaming from the shower, completely naked, impatiently wiping the fog from the bathroom mirror so you can shave; the black specks of hair you left behind on the bathroom

sink, and on those mornings when you kissed me good bye, it was a real kiss, full and warm on my lips.

You turned to me often in bed at night and our good night kiss became passionate. Your right hand and then your right foot pulled down my underwear even as you slid my T-shirt over my head. I slid your underwear off, but insisted, always, that you keep your socks on. And your smile and then "Oh, baby" as you entered me. But that was ten years ago and events have transpired to tear us apart, events neither one of us could ever possibly predicted and its nobody's fault, and I'm not even angry. In fact, I'm grateful to have a few more mornings listening to you; the familiar sounds of ritual, of a marriage, even as it is ending... gives me pleasure. And so when I hear the front door softly click open and then close, I open my eyes and drink my coffee.

