

Flash Fiction Contest

The Sleeping Beauty

I'm falling.

It's been a while since I lost the track of my location in the air. I feel the same as if a whole village was walking inside my lungs. The villagers compress my breathing, and my organs scream for me to stop their pain, their torture. Although it doesn't affect their condition in any way, I hold my breath to avoid all possible movements. I even try to suppress the smallest gestures to make sure that my muscles put an end to this hurt.

It is not my first time in here. Every night, I find myself into this exact same unknown spot in the air, without any further information. The only clue I get to recognize the place is when I look at my hands. I always count my fingers just to find out that I have six fingers on each hand.

The second I notice it, I know what to do. Without delay, I take an enormous breath to spread the pain all over my body. At this instant, I suffer so much that I eventually lose consciousness.

Then, I finally wake up.

I'm in my bed, in a dark room, lonely. My eyes always have to work really hard to get the right luminosity back. Normally, it allows me to distinguish the furniture around me. This time, other than my bed, my room is empty. Under those circumstances, I attempt to get myself up, but something is holding me back.

As I try to look around me, I hear a loud noise coming from the door. Terrified by the mysterious aspect of the sound, I wisely choose to fake my sleep.

A few seconds pass by without any other strange resonance. Actually, it was so quiet that, for a second, I started to believe that I may have still been asleep. Maybe it was all in my head.

But the sudden voice that rises across the room is telling me otherwise.

- Morning, Emma!

It is a man's voice. Actually, I am pretty sure I recognize it. This vibration, this melody, this deep voice that makes me feel so complete.

My eyes suddenly open, trying to find the face they remember being associated with.

A huge scream echoes across the room, followed by a succession of loud steps. Alerted by his reaction, a terrifying feeling started to possess my body. What is happening? Are we attacked? Is he hurt? Am I this ugly in the morning?

As I try to move to evaluate the situation, I realize that I can't move. Same as earlier, my arms, as much as my legs, aren't responding to me anymore. Am I still dreaming?

The man finally appears in my view whereas I am looking at the ceiling, unable to move an inch of my body. Despite his obvious confusion, he grabs my hand, a worrying look in his face. As he strokes my hands that I can't even sense, I work vigorously to look down at my fingers. It is impossible for me. Luckily, as if he had heard my prayer, he went forward to kiss my hands and somehow I succeed in seeing them.

Five fingers on every hand. How? If I am not dreaming, what is happening?

- Doctors! Doctors! My wife opened her eyes!

His voice. So scared and excited at the same moment. Forthwith, some other loud noises indicate to me that his queries had been executed. Someone is with us now. The face of the man changes for another, an unknown one. A blinding light hits my eyes in a few seconds after his appearance.

He sighs for a long time.

- I'm sorry. She's still in a coma. It's just a neuronal reaction.
- Are you sure?
- Her lungs aren't getting better. There is no brain activity in your wife. You should... you should consider letting her go. I recommend you say goodbye while her heart is still beating, even if it is artificially. My sincere condolences sir.

The shock is powerful. In a coma? Me? I want to scream to let them know that I am still here. I want to let them know I still live inside. I am still dreaming. I still love him. I still want him.

I still want to live.

I try to move so badly, but I can't no matter what I attempt. The frustration hits me in a way I never thought it would.

Rather than panicking, I start to feel exhausted. I hear him retain a sob. By the time the doctor gets out of the room, I hear my husband express all of his sadness. I never thought that being so close to someone would ever feel so far at the same time.

- I love you, my love.

I wish I could respond back. I wish I could reach him with all of my heart. I wish a lot of things. But I can't. I'm stuck in here. Henceforth, I'm stuck in this non-functional body with absolutely nothing, other than the voice of my husband. This sweet and lovely voice of sadness.

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