

## ***The Monster in my Dreams***

I can't deal with you not being here. It hurts. Emotionally, physically. It hurts so much that sometimes I can't breathe. Just before you left you stood in front of me and shot me. You watched me bleed out. My blood was made from grief and sorrow. It killed the ground it fell upon. It burned my skin into blisters. That wound is still healing. I am still hurting. From the high summit, the solitary figure would watch the dawn come up. That was you. From down in the depths of the sea, the decomposing corpse would never see the light of day again. That was me. You hurt me so much. I can't believe you left. I loved you. You left me.

When we first met, I hated you. It burned like fire in my stomach and made the saliva in my mouth turn sour. The hate I felt for you curdled within me. I couldn't stand your pretentious smirk and your mischievous eyes. I hated being near you, seeing you, hearing you but yet I was always drawn to you. The hatred only lasted a week. As I spent more time with you, you appeared to change. Your smile turned kind and your eyes trusting. Hate turned to love. I loved you. You left me.

In my dreams you are there. Always. They all start with joy and happiness. We are dancing. We are laughing. We are kissing. I am happy, and so are you. In my dreams we always start off happy. Then your kind smile and trusting eyes disappear and suddenly you are no more than a faceless figure. Dark. Distorted. Disturbing. You climb all over me. Like a spider does a fly. Clawing at my arms and grabbing at my legs. I try to scream and I find I can't. I'm paralysed. You have become a monster that I cannot recognise. You are missing. The monster licks my face and pins me down. I cannot scream. I cannot move. I try to convince myself it isn't real, but it feels so real. So true. Like a memory that has become blurry. Like a moment of déjà vu that you can't quite place. You are devouring me. I cannot breathe. Then I wake up. Every night since you left it's been the same. I know the monster can't be you, but you sometimes you did have monstrous ways. I loved you. You left me.

The first time I went to therapy, I didn't want to be there. I thought I didn't need it. I was fine. There was nothing wrong. I told the therapist about my dreams, my paralysis. She looked concerned and wrote something down. I don't know why. Dreams rarely mean anything. I told her about how hurt I felt after you left. She tried to tell me something but I wasn't listening. I heard the words 'report' and 'felony'. I told her that I didn't want to be there. She nodded and apologised. She could have just let me leave. There was nothing wrong. I was fine. Except one thing. I loved you. You left me.

I know where you are. They told me. They also told me that I can never see you again. Ever again. That's what they said. They said you were dangerous. That you hurt me. I can't remember you hurting me. Except for when you left. You have only filled me with happy memories. Our wedding day, a month after we met. The day you convinced me not to have our baby, when we both agreed to not to have our baby. The day you told me that you had bought a house in Europe, that we were finally going to be alone. All happy memories. I'm pretty sure. They told me I that you hurt me but you loved me. I loved you. You left me.

A month ago I remembered. You did hurt me. And you payed for it. You're locked up now. They told me that I had suffered from selective memory loss after you had hit my head off the corner of the table. It was our neighbour that called the police. They arrested you for sexual, physical and emotional abuse. I had forgotten all the bad things about you, choosing to remember the good. Our wedding day was too soon. I wanted our baby but you forced me to change my mind. You moved us across the world without asking. You hurt me so bad. The neighbors called in when they heard me screaming. I was shouting at you to stop. I remember you had a gleam in your eye, you were looking at me like I was your prey. Like you were about to feast on me. I remember crying and trying to push you off. You were strong and I was weak. They found me unconscious when they arrived, you had

knocked me out when I wouldn't comply. Comply to your predatory, savage wants. When you left I thought it was voluntary. You carved a hole in my heart. I was vulnerable. I saw what I wanted to see in you, I saw love and care but you never loved me. You loved the idea of me. You are the monster in my dreams. You did claw my arms and grab my legs. You did lick my face and pin me down. You did devour me until i was just a shell. Delicate and devoted. Devoted to your manipulation and magnetism. I can't escape from you. You are the monster. I see it now. I see everything now. Clear as day. I loved you. You left me. Thank god.

By Meg Leaver