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# B EFORE I SLEEP

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It's midnight and my thoughts are racing.

I close my eyes to see if they'll go away, but all it does is make my head spin faster. I drag my legs onto my chair and give in to the pain that's about to come. With my legs crossed and my body resting on the cushioned embrace of the IKEA chair I assembled myself, I feel a little safer. After spending more than ten hours in the library to keep myself busy, it feels like a waste of my day's effort to let it end like this. But tonight I let it happen.

I squeeze my nose shut with a piece of tissue and let my tears begin to flow. Within seconds, my silent suffering crescendos into intense gasps for air.

Depressive crying is suffocating. I alternate between blowing my nose and taking deep breaths but the light choking comes again and again like waves, weakly but never ceasing.

When I know my eyes have swollen and the skin on my nose begins peeling from all the tissue I've used, I stand up and make my way towards the bathroom. I keep my head down as I'm brushing my teeth. When I finally make eye contact with myself in the mirror, a feeling of emptiness overcomes me.

My naturally downturned lips look especially unattractive tonight. I examine my eyes and know that the layers of my eyelids will be all messed up in the morning. I try to form the smile that I know people compliment, but it doesn't happen and I walk away feeling silly.

Finally, I turn off the lights in my bedroom and wrap myself neatly in the blanket I transported thousands of miles to have with me. I rest the entire weight of my body on my right arm, remembering how he always used to do the same to prevent putting all the pressure on the heart.

After this pathological routine, I muster the last of my strength to hold my hands together up to my face for a wish.

*Dear God, if you really exist, please take away my pain.*

Depression is praying to a god in whom you don't believe.