

THINGS TO DO IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Sleep. Dream. Wake up. Make a bunch of moans and noises, go back to sleep. Toss and turn. Stay up all night watching Yao Ming highlights videos while your lover sleeps. Have sex with your lover. Have sex with Yao Ming, if everyone involved is into that. Stay up all night drinking caffeine. Stay up talking with your friends. Stay up all night writing poems. Go to sleep. Lay in bed stressed out about the tax bill, student loans, capitalism, structural racism, structural misogyny and transphobia, the dim prospect of coming revolution, the fact that you don't speak Spanish or Chinese or Icelandic if you don't, what do your friends say behind your back, what do the people you love most really think about you, was your fennel gratin good or were people being polite, class war. Stress about your career stalled or at a dead end, your last ten poems being garbage, fifteen years of smoking cigarettes, what is that dull pressure in your chest and how long do you have to live and you haven't read Proust and ABBA is never going to reunite and stress out about what's that noise in the backyard was that an animal? And what was *that*? And *that*? Get up and check the lock on the back door and the front door, peer out into the darkness and try to see something moving, it's nothing, you're fine, go back to bed. Get up from bed and pee. Get up from bed and shit. Get up from bed and get a glass of water. Drink it. Stop stressing out about what you said at a party in 2008, what you did in first grade, what you failed to achieve in college. You didn't go to Yale, you went to community college in Delaware but who cares, try to go back to sleep. Take a certain number of deep breaths. Talk to Insomnobot 3000. Count sheep. Take mugwort, melatonin, Ambien. Take sleeping pills and sleep. Wake up and record your dreams on your phone. Masturbate. Go out and walk around your neighborhood and feed the hungry dogs who live on the sidewalks. Go outside and look at the stars. Skype with someone waking up in Turkey. Listen to ABBA. Pretend you live in the Middle Ages in Europe and do that "two sleep" thing where you sleep for a couple of hours, then get up for a couple of hours and then go back to sleep for a couple of hours. Don't sleep. Yao Ming scored 41 points against the Hawks on February 22, 2004. Think about your crush and what they're doing in the middle of the night. Do the Leonardo da Vinci thing where you sleep 15 minutes every four hours. But actually don't do this. Get sleep. Close your eyes and count backwards from 100. Fall asleep. Meet celebrities and dead relatives and friends in your dreams. Say hello. Remember. Hello.