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INSOMNIO
por
Borja Cabada Añón

Una habitación a oscuras. Una cama. Nada más. Blanco se estremece. Despierta sobresaltado, levantando la cabeza y apoyando los codos en el colchón. No ha sonado la alarma. Pero está despierto. Ni siquiera ha abierto los ojos aún, pero su mente ya ha empezado a andar, y eso le molesta. Las terribles imágenes que lo han atormentado mientras dormía aún permanecen en su retina, alimentando su malestar, cavando una tumba en su interior. El corazón le late a toda prisa. "Sólo ha sido un sueño. Tranquilo. No pasa nada", piensa. Sus palabras parecen sosegarlo. Poco a poco recupera la calma, hasta que finalmente vuelve a recostarse, y lanza un gruñido, una queja, molesto por el percance. "Necesito seguir durmiendo", se dice. Es algo inevitable, no lo puede remediar. Decide cambiar de postura, y se gira hacia el otro lado de la cama. Buenas noches de nuevo, Blanco. Dulces sueños... Fundido en negro.

"Espera".

La habitación. Blanco abre los ojos. "¿Por qué me he despertado?" Presta atención a los sonidos a su alrededor. El reloj no suena. No hay tic-tac. No hay ruido en la sala de al lado. No hay música. Ni bullicio en la calle. Ni histeria. Ni disturbios. Ni disparos. Ni rimas. Ni palabras. Ni diálogo. Ni descripciones. No hay. No. Hay. Tampoco.

La ventana está cerrada. Apenas entra un hilo de luz. "Quizás alguien está llamando a la puerta," piensa a la vez que mira hacia ella, "es una posibilidad". Blanco fija su atención en cualquier sonido que pueda proceder del otro extremo del apartamento. No. "Espera un momento." Blanco advierte que la puerta de la habitación está cerrada. Todas las noches la cierra él mismo. Aunque alguien estuviera dando golpes atroces al otro extremo, afuera, en el rellano, desde ahí sería incapaz de percibirlo. "Quiero silencio absoluto, ¿me entiende?" le dice al tío de la tienda. "Esta puerta es especial. Robusta. Triple cerrojo. Y cierra herméticamente," le contestan. Permanece atento, los músculos tensos. Aguanta la respiración. No se escucha nada.

Entonces vuelve a relajar el cuerpo, y deja entrar aire en sus pulmones. "A lo mejor el teléfono está sonando", piensa, "Sí. Tiene que ser eso. Incluso con la puerta cerrada, el ruido del teléfono puedo oírlo. Entre otras cosas,

porque lo tengo justo a mi lado. Junto a la cama. En el suelo”. La lógica de su razonamiento satisface a Blanco. Realmente eso podría despertarle. “Compruébalo entonces”, se dice. Alarga el brazo fuera de la cama y roza el auricular con los dedos. “No, un momento”, se detiene, “Antes de eso, tienes que hacer memoria”. Blanco no recuerda haber escuchado el sonido del teléfono. Aunque también es posible que sus sentidos estén entumecidos después de tan pocas horas de sueño, y que el teléfono no sólo haya sonado, sino que esté sonando aún. “Entonces”, piensa, “descuelga. Agarra el auricular, y ponle fin a esto”. Pero Blanco se resiste. Necesita seguir durmiendo. Apenas ha conseguido dormir un par de horas, y su cuerpo le está pidiendo a gritos que se olvide de todo, que deje de pensar y de buscar excusas que lo mantengan despierto. “No es nada, seguro”, intenta convencerse. Se da la vuelta y se cubre por entero con las mantas. Busca de nuevo su sitio en la cama, una esquina de paz, un resquicio de comodidad en su cuerpo dolorido. El roce de las sábanas es atronador, amplificado por el silencio de la habitación. Demasiado ruido. Mueca de disgusto. Hasta que todo se asienta. Y después, silencio otra vez.

Respira.

El tiempo ha cambiado. Ya no hace frío. No como antes. Y eso le fastidia. Blanco empieza a sudar. Comienza a agobiarse bajo las mantas, a ahogarse en su propio aliento. Ataque de ansiedad. Empieza a hiperventilar, se remueve inquieto, se hunde cada vez más entre las mantas, atrapado, doblegado, asfixiándose. La sábanas se adhieren a su cuerpo húmedo, se introducen en él por la boca, como si hubieran cobrado vida, sofocándolo, oprimiendo su rostro, pegándose a sus pulmones, presionando sobre ellos. La cama comienza a engullirlo, lentamente, la habitación se hace cada vez más pequeña, y más oscura, y negra, y maldita. “Oxígeno. Necesito oxígeno. Respirar. Dentro. Fuera. Vamos, ya lo has hecho antes”. Sus extremidades se retuercen, y tiene que hacer algo, calmar a su corazón, pero le tiemblan las manos, el sudor se torna frío, no encuentra la forma de salir, y tira, tira, tira, desbocado, gritando, enloquecido, hasta que en un último esfuerzo consigue sacar las sábanas de los pies de la cama. Se destapa.

Aire.

Alivio.

Respira hondamente. Cierra los ojos. “Mucho mejor así... mucho mejor...”, su ritmo cardíaco se normaliza, “... mejor...”, el sudor empieza a secarse, “... mucho...”, las manos dejan de temblarle, “... así”.

Pero algo le desorienta. Algo que no consigue entender ni ubicar en su rutina, que resuena en su mente, al fondo, como una melodía lejana, una música ahogada, que perturba su recién adquirida calma y confunde aún más su mente adormecida y aletargada por la falta de oxígeno durante el incidente con las sábanas. Blanco mira hacia el techo con los ojos entreabiertos, y frunce levemente el ceño, intentando comprender. Hasta que finalmente una idea le sobreviene clara y concisa: el teléfono sí está sonando.

Abre los ojos de par en par. Descuelga apresurado. Pone el auricular en el oído izquierdo y se prepara para hablar. Nada. De su boca no sale ni un sonido. Una desagradable sensación de sequedad en la garganta le impide materializar palabra alguna. Inspira. Intenta producir algo de saliva y tragar para reanimar sus cuerdas vocales.

“¿Aún sigue en la cama, Sr. Blanco?” le preguntan desde el otro lado de la línea.

Es la voz de una mujer. No parece muy contenta. Blanco se sorprende. Se aclara la garganta y finalmente consigue mascullar un par de palabras.

“¿Quién es?” Su voz suena ronca y aplastada.

“Ya es hora de levantarse, Sr. Blanco. Su ropa está preparada en la silla”. Su tono de voz es firme. “Tiene diez minutos”.

“Espere, espere. ¿Diez minutos para qué?”

“Va a llegar tarde al funeral”. Ahora sí que parece molesta y enfadada, como si la pregunta de Blanco le estuviera haciendo perder el tiempo. “De hecho, va a hacer que todo el mundo llegue tarde”.

“¿Funeral? ¿Qué funeral? ¿Acaso ha muerto alguien?”

“Diez minutos, Sr. Blanco. Diez”. Y sin más, cuelga.

Blanco está confuso. Deposita lentamente el auricular en su sitio, y se incorpora en la cama hasta quedar sentado en ella. “¿Quién ha muerto?”, se pregunta. Blanco siente que la cabeza le va a estallar. Migraña matutina. Mal sueño. Maldición de Ondina. Hunde el rostro en sus manos, masajeándose las sienes. Después alza la vista y en la oscuridad de la habitación consigue discernir una silla al lado de su cama. Hay ropa cuidadosamente dispuesta sobre ella. Camisa blanca, traje y corbata negros. Blanco se levanta y se aproxima a la silla. Está muy cansado. Inexplicablemente cansado. Los párpados le pesan demasiado como para mantener los ojos completamente abiertos mientras recoge el atuendo. El dolor de cabeza es tan fuerte, que Blanco siente el latir de su corazón resonando y palpitando en su frente. Como si estuviera drogado, cegado por la jaqueca, empieza a vestirse sin siquiera saber por qué

o a dónde se espera que vaya.

Después se dirige a la puerta, con paso arrastrado y lento, somnoliento. Hay un pedazo de papel clavado en ella. Blanco lo recoge, y lo examina extrañado. No recuerda haberse dejado una nota a sí mismo antes de acostarse. Hay algo escrito. “Túmbese”, dice el trozo de papel. “Con mucho gusto”, piensa Blanco. Regresa entonces a la cama, y sin desvestirse, se deja caer sobre ella, inerte, boca arriba. Respira profundamente. Ojos cerrados. Contento...

Inconsciente...

Entumecido...

Inmóvil...

Aturdido...

Frío...

Adormilado...

El tacto de la tierra en su rostro es tan cálido...

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A darkened room. A bed. Nothing else. Blank shivers. He wakes up startled, lifting his head up from the pillow and propping himself up on his elbows. The alarm doesn't go off. But he's awake alright. His eyes are not even open yet, but his mind is already running, and that bothers him. The terrible images that haunted him while he was sleeping are still flashing through his head, feeding his discomfort, digging a grave inside of him. His heart is beating so fast. "It was just a dream. Calm down. It's nothing", he thinks. His words seem to soothe him. Little by little, he pulls himself together, till he finally lies back down, and grunts, annoyed by the mishap. "I need to go back to sleep". It's inevitable. Unavoidable. He decides to change his position, and turns around to the other side of the bed. Good night again, Mr. Blank. Sweet dreams... Fade to black.

"Wait".

The room. Blank opens his eyes. "Why did I wake up?" He pays attention to the sounds all around him. The clock is not making any noises. There's no tick-tock. No din from the room next door. No music. No uproar on the streets. No hysteria. No riots. No shooting. No rhymes. No words. No dialogue. No descriptions. There's not. There. Is. Not. Either.

The window is closed. There's barely any light. "Maybe someone's knocking on the door", he thinks, while looking at it, "it's a possibility". Blank focuses his attention on whatever little sound that might be coming from the other end of the apartment. "No, wait a second". He notices that the door to his room is closed. He locks it himself every night. Even if there was someone banging on it, out in the hall, he wouldn't be able to perceive it. "I want absolute silence, got it?", says to the guy at the store. "This one is special. Sturdy. Triple lock. Airtight". He's listening, muscles tensed, holding his breath. But he can't hear anything.

Then he goes back to normal, relaxes, and lets the air in. "Perhaps the phone is ringing", thinks to himself, "yes. That's gotta be it. Even if the door was locked, I could hear the phone from here. Mainly because it's right by my side, next to the bed. Down on the floor". The logic in his reasoning seem to satisfy Blank. That could have really woken him up. "Go

check then”, says to himself. He reaches his arm out of the bed to touch the receiver with his fingertips. “No. Hold on”, he stops, “before that, I need to rewind a little bit”. Blank doesn’t remember hearing the phone ring. Although, it might also be that his senses are still numbed from having slept only for a few hours. In that case, not only could he not remember the phone having rung; it might even be that it’s still ringing, and he would not be able to notice it because of that. “Then”, he thinks, “pick up. Grab the handset, and get this over with”. But Blank is resistant to that thought. He needs to go back to sleep so bad. He has barely slept a few hours, and his body is begging him to forget about everything, to stop thinking and making excuses that keep him awake. “It’s nothing, for sure”, tries to convince himself. He turns around again, and covers himself with the blankets, looking for the right spot on the bed, a corner of peace, a scrap of comfort in his sore body.

The friction of the sheets is like a thunder, amplified by the silence of the room. Too much noise. Blank grimaces. Till everything settles down. And then, silence again.

Breathes.

The weather has changed. It’s not cold any more. Not like before. And that irritates him. Blank starts to sweat, to grow anxious under the blankets, to suffocate in his own breath. Panic attack. He begins to hyperventilate, shuddering, restless, sinking into the bedclothes, trapped, ensnared, stifling. The sheets stick to his wet body, slip inside of him through his mouth, as if they were alive, asphyxiating him, pressing against his face, glued to his lungs, crushing them. The bed begins to swallow him, slowly, painfully; the room becomes smaller and smaller, and darker, black, cursed. “Oxygen. I need oxygen”, thinks to himself, “Breathe. In. Out. Come on. You’ve done it before”. His extremities contort, and he has to do something, calm his heart down, but his hands are shaking, his sweat turns cold, and he can’t find a way out, and pulls, pulls, pulls, out of control, screaming, deranged, till he finally manages to pull the sheets out of the foot of the bed, and desperately kicks them away.

Air.

Relief.

Deep breath. He closes his eyes. “Much better now... much better...”, his heartbeat begins to get normalized, “... better...”, his sweat body starts to dry off, “... much...”, his hands cease to tremble, “... now”.

But something bewilders him; something that he can't quite understand nor identify, that resonates in his mind, at the back, like a distant melody, or muffled music; something that perturbs his new calmness, and puzzles his lulled mind, numbed by the lack of oxygen during the incident with the sheets. Blank looks up at the ceiling, and frowns, trying to comprehend. Then, all of a sudden, it falls on him: the phone is ringing.

Eyes open. Picks up. Quickly. Puts the end of the receiver on his left ear, and gets ready to speak. Nothing. Not a single sound comes out of his mouth. A really unpleasant feeling of dryness in his throat prevents him from materializing a word. Breathes in. Tries to secrete a little bit of saliva, and gulps it, so as to reanimate his vocal cords.

"Still in bed, Mr. Blank?" , somebody asks him from the other end of the line. It's a woman's voice. She doesn't sound very happy. Blank is surprised. He manages to clear his throat and finally mutters a bunch of words.

"Who is it?"

His voice sounds hoarse and smashed.

"It's time to get up, Mr. Blank. Your clothes are ready, on the chair". Her tone of voice is firm. "You have ten minutes".

"Wait, wait. Ten minutes for what?"

"You're going to be late for the funeral". Now she really seems angry and annoyed, as if she were wasting her time answering stupid questions. "In fact, you're going to make everybody late".

"Funeral? What funeral? Did somebody die?"

"Ten minutes, Mr. Blank. Ten". And hangs up.

Blank is baffled. He slowly puts the handset back on the phone, and sits up on the bed. "Who could've died?", he wonders. Blank feels like his head is about to explode. Morning migraine. Bad dreams. Ondine's curse. His face sinks into his hands, and he starts to rub his temples. Then he looks up, and in the darkness of the room he manages to distinguish the silhouette of a chair next to his bed. There are clothes on it, carefully displayed. White shirt, black suit and tie. Blank gets up, and approaches the chair. He's tired. Inexplicably tired. His eyelids are too heavy now to keep his eyes completely open. He picks up the garments. The headache is so strong and painful, that Blank is able to feel his heartbeat throbbing and pulsating on his forehead. He starts to get dressed, not even knowing why he's doing that nor where he's expected at, just as if he were drugged,

blinded by the neuralgia.

Once he's done, he walks toward the door, in a slow and dreary pace. There's a piece of paper pinned on it. Blank takes it, and examines it, bemused. He doesn't remember leaving a note for himself there when he went to bed. There's something written on it. "Lie down", it reads. "With pleasure", he thinks. Then he walks back to the bed, and, without getting undressed, he falls onto it, inert, face up. Deep breath. Eyes closed. Contentment.

Unconscious...

Cramped...

Motionless...

Benumbed...

Cold...

Drowsy...

The touch of the soil on his face is so warm...