

## Roar of Fans

I was always accustomed to the sound of box fans when I tried to sleep. As I aged, I needed them to be able to sleep at all. When I was young and had to stay at a cousin's house, sleep would not fully overcome me. At the age of eight, the number of fans I had to use increased from a single fan to two different fans, both in the color of violet. It increased again to the number three—3 fans roared in waves of violent violet sound in my bedroom, rattling my ears with white noise: noise meant to drown out every other. Occasionally, I would wake up in the middle of the night to the sound of my dog's barks, of my cat's meows, and of my brother's constant foot-stomping. The noise of the bright purple fans, however, lulled me back into a deep slumber, usually able to hide each and every noise with its unruly sounds. The ocean of sound rippled through my bedroom every night, but I remained unwavering, for I was deep underwater.

Yet, my collection of noises was not complete. In cold December, I added a new noise to my already full ocean of sound: you, snoring peacefully in the pitch blackness of my room. You were the only noise that I could hear over the fans. I could probably consider the amount of sleep that I received after you came along to be even longer than usual—rarely would I wake up and hear the sounds of the night washing over. In the morning, my eyes would flutter open. A ray of sunshine would find its way onto my nose and your left eye. The swoop of your hair covered the other eye—both of my ears still heard your snoring.

One thousand, two hundred and seventy-seven days, my eyes would be fluttered closed during the night, allowing me to sleep more comfortably than ever before. One thousand, two hundred and seventy-seven days, twelve hours, and thirty-seven minutes

it took you to break my heart. You were here with me for three and a half years; it only took a few moments for you to leave. Even when your snoring was gone, though, I still had those fans. The color you held closest, though, was violet. The color of those fans set a precedent for me—they reminded me of you. Shades of violet filled my room, from my fans to a pair of my shoes to invisible writings on the green walls. I saw the color in everything; it was even in present in things that wouldn't normally be violet in hue. The sun, the grass, the trees—there would be something purple in them, even if there was nothing purple at all. I tried to forget about it completely.

The fans filled that space; they were loud and they were roaring and they were everything I wanted. Still, you were boisterous. Your noise was biology, theirs was artificial. I still found myself falling from the beige-colored wood flooring and onto my lilac bed sheets, searching for any trace of your body that could've been left, but nothing remained. I'd repeat an "I'm ok" under my breath occasionally, talking to myself almost consistently as if it were some sort of routine or ritual. I'd always find myself stacking pillows beside me that seemed to, strangely, be in the shape of your round body. Maybe it was by choice or maybe it was a subconscious decision, but my legs would cling onto those firm pillows for dear life, wrapping around them like a rope and trying to find any semblance of sanity. At first, it was hard. The pillows never could have replaced your flesh or your smile. They could never emulate the seemingly endless snoring during the night. Instead, they were fragile placeholders for something lost and never found. As the days went on and on, I found myself getting more comfortable alone on my queen-sized bed under a thick, floral comforter. One day, I'd take a pillow out of the stack and reduce the amount of you that I needed to replace. Eventually, I found myself waking up in the

middle of the night, just like I used to. Still, the fans keep roaring in my bedroom, invading every creak and crevice. Your snores are now only reminiscent of the sound of his quiet, perplexed breathing.