



“Morning”

How do I take my coffee again?

She doesn't remember. She wants to ask you, but telephones that communicate with The Other Side don't exist yet. This morning, her hand reached for the bedside table, only to be met with empty air. Her hand remained cold without the usual spot of steam from the coffee you always left for her. You always timed it perfectly so that when she woke up, there it was, cool enough not to burn but hot enough to comfort. She was never sure how you did that.

She dragged herself from the bed. Your half looked like a still life. She went to the coffee machine, but didn't know what half of the buttons did. This was your territory, not hers. She always thought it took up too much space and wanted a bread maker instead. The “gross” instant stuff was fine with her, but you insisted on being a snob about it. She had to consult the manual to figure out how to even turn the damn thing on. But it was no use. *How did I take my coffee again?* She hadn't

made it herself for eight years. How many shots of espresso? Was the milk frothy or smooth? How much sugar? Overwhelmed, she cried over some tea instead. All those years, if she had just woken up a little earlier, she could have joined you for your morning ritual. She could have made you coffee. She wished she made you coffee.

By Aymee Brock