



The sound first caught my attention while I was preparing breakfast. I have grown used to the sound of the neighbor's baby wingeing now and then, but this was different, this was sobbing, heavy sobs. And this was no baby. I went to the window and scanned the courtyard, parking lot and balconies looking for the source.

Finally, across the courtyard, on the top balcony, I saw her. She stood at his door, as I had seen her countless times before, but now she was wracked with sobs and with the flat of her palms she knocked at his door. Her hair fell in damp strands across her face, her shoulders heaving up and down with the sobs, her mouth moving as if she were trying to speak, but only the sobs emerged. She slapped at the door with both hands and then just let them slide down the door as her whole body leaned towards the door, her face against the window pane, and slid down in resignation.

She gave up knocking on the door and slowly, as though her legs were made of rubber, she turned away. Her face was all grimace and anguish. She pulled at the hem of her sundress

and brought it up to wipe the tears from her face in an awkward way. As her shoulders continued to heave with sobs the left strap of the dress slip off her shoulder and fell down her arm. She slowly collapsed to a seating position on the stoop and sat on the stairway, half naked, burying her head in her hands. Quiet.

In a moment she lifted her head, absently pulled her bodice back up, arose slowly.

Staggering almost drunkenly she trudged down the stairs and out of the courtyard. Utterly, magnificently dejected.

I hope she can find whatever comfort she needs. It wasn't waiting for her here, at his apartment. Not anymore.