

She's Beautiful When She Sleeps

*By Antonio Lacey*

Feeling comes back to me. The dreams fade, and sunlight creeps in through the curtains. And before my fingertips move, a smile tenses from my mouth. I feel warm, but strangely it is not the sun, nor the heater. An incomparable warmth flows through me. My eyes, still closed from my slumber, slowly lift up. The sun-lit room appears comforting, but more so is the sweet smell coming from my left. I slowly roll to my side inhaling through my nose. The sweet smell of apples fills my nostrils. Her shampoo exists from the late shower, the night before. And the aroma is brilliantly satisfying. Her long, brown hair, so smooth, soft, and straight, seeps through my fingertips. I lightly exhale through my nose, and my hand begins to softly rub her shoulder. She's beautiful when she sleeps. I slip closer to her, the smell, and her body. My hand reaches over her hip. I exhale. Fingertips search for hers. They meet, and I clasp her fingers between my own. Intertwined, I suddenly notice something is wrong, but I can't quite grasp it. I inhale. She doesn't squeeze and draw in my fingers like she normally does. My mind drifts, searching for some mistake, something to explain, something to apologize, make up for. And then I realize what's wrong-- No pulse. I panic. I pull myself up to the headboard and turn her shoulder. I begin to shake her and call her name, tears fill my eyes. Why I ask? How?-- Oh God! Come back to me. Come back! I love you! Oh why!

She's beautiful when she sleeps.