

Welcome to 5am

By Melissa H. Miracle

I was up again.

My right hip was on fire, so I gingerly rolled over onto my left side, trying not to use my sore, cranky, taught abdominal muscles.

I stretched my legs out, my feet searching for cooler pockets in the sheets.

Tap, tap.

Aw, crap. I woke you.

I rubbed my belly just under and to the right of my belly button.

Hey, Little Duck. I love you. Now go back to sleep.

I glanced at the clock. About 5am. I had already been up twice to pee, and Brian will be up for work in an hour.

Tap, tap.

I probably dozed for a bit before realizing that my bladder was too full to permit sleep. To the bathroom I shuffled, after slowly tipping myself out of bed with my arms. I kicked the cat out of the way. Twice.

I made my way back to bed, slowly lowering my body down onto my left side, only to realize that I was hungry. Really hungry. The kind of hunger that can't be ignored.

With a sigh and a groan, I lurched up again.

The cat met me at the door, purring and mewling. I could practically feel the vibration in the floor under the soles of my bare feet. Brian usually feeds her when he gets up at 6, and so she's expecting food from me that she's not going to get. I ignored her and shuffled to the refrigerator.

Without turning on any lights, I assembled my favorite middle-of-the-night-pregnancy snack: mozzarella string cheese with Nut Thins crackers. So salty, so crunchy. So delicious.

I sat on the couch and tucked into my snack as the first streaks of light bled into the sky from behind the trees.

Tappy-tap-tap.

Somebody likes this snack as much as I do, Little Duck.

By this time, the cat's mewling had turned to howling. She saw me eating and couldn't handle it.

Now, not only was I worried about waking Brian up, I was also worried about disturbing our neighbors, who could no doubt hear Sadie's cries through the exceedingly thin walls. What we were going to do once the baby came, I had no idea.

Aside from giving in and feeding her (and risking that she'd get double meals if Brian woke up and fed her again), the only way to shut her up was to pick her up and hold her.

With some difficulty, I squatted and scooped her up in my left arm and stood there, watching the sunrise and continuing to feed my face with my right.

Munch, munch.

Taaaap, tap-tap kick!

After a moment I had a flash of what this looked like. Here I was, waiting for the baby to arrive so that I could be up at all hours of the night, tending to a cranky, whiny, hungry creature.

By the looks of it, I was already there.