

A Chat Before Dawn

By

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Three o'clock in the morning and I was pissed. I sat straight up in bed and reached over turning on the bedside lamp with an angry snap almost knocking my bottle of water and the phone off the night table.

I thought, what in the world was wrong with him? How could he treat me like that? I looked over at him. He lay on his side with his back to me. His head was resting on his pillow right next to mine. And he was sleeping! How could he be sleeping while I was so mad?

I wanted to punch him but I didn't. I pushed his shoulder lightly and called his name in a harsh whisper. "Lee!" I said. He grunted but didn't wake up. I pushed his shoulder a little harder. He took a long breath and murmured, "Humm, what's the matter?" But he wasn't really awake and he hadn't turned over. I needed him to look at me and explain his actions. I wanted to know what had I done to deserve the way he had treated me.

I gave his shoulder a firm shake and called his name with a little more urgency. "Lee! Wake up!" I hissed. That did the trick. He opened his eyes. "What's the matter, are you ok?" he asked, turning over so that he could see me. The look I was giving him must have shown that everything was not ok. "Does your leg hurt? Are you in pain?" he asked with real concern.

"How could you do that? How could you do that to me?" I said. He just stared at me. "Do what? He asked, "Did I kick you in my sleep? Did I hurt you?"

“You were laughing;” I stammered “You were laughing the whole time.”

“What are you talking about?”

Now he was staring at me, because he sees that I’m upset but he doesn’t know why.

“You were laughing at me.” I say again. “Why were you laughing?”

Sitting up and rubbing his head he says, “I wasn’t laughing. I was sleeping. What are you talking about?”

“Most people were crying, but not you. You looked down at me and you started laughing! What did you find so funny? You know I never wore a lot of makeup. I hope you and the kids didn’t make me look like a circus clown? And anyhow,’ I went on self-righteously, “even if I did look funny, you shouldn’t have laughed!”

He looked at me like I was crazy and said, “Stop, just stop talking. Calm down and tell me what’s going on and exactly when I was laughing at you.”

“It was at my funeral” I say, “you looked right down at my face and started laughing. I was lying in the casket dead, and you were laughing! Why? Why were you laughing at me?”

Silence....

“You owe me an apology. And don’t you every laugh at me again while I’m dead.” I say, not caring how foolish I sounded. I wanted him to say he’s sorry.

Silence....

The steam has run out of me and I reach over to turn off my light. I prepare to lay back down when he finally says, "Are you asleep or awake because you sure ain't dead."

"Well," I say, taking a deep breath, "If I'm not dead it must have been a dream." I nestle down in bed, all the madness abated. I'm feeling sleepy but I still want him to apologize for his bad behavior at my funeral.

"I'm sorry you dreamed that I laughed at your funeral." he says, annoyed but I could hear amusement in his voice. "I promise not to laugh at your next funeral, ok?"

"OK" I say on a yawn, and the last thing I hear before I fall back to sleep is his mumble, "This crazy woman woke me up because of her dream. Now I can't get back to sleep."