

I turn on the faucet when we get back to my place, fill him a glass of water. He drinks it across from me on the couch, warns me about the magnesium and calcium minerals that will pump through my organs. That they will harden into stones, deposit themselves in my kidneys like golf balls, pass through my urinary tract with the ungodly pain of parturition. Buy bottled, he says, turning the glass around in his hand. It's only 50 cents at Wal-Mart. But I drink too much, I say. I picture jugs piling up on top of my refrigerator, jugs piling up at the door, sitting there for weeks. Buy whatever you want, he says. He stands up to pour the rest of his glass down the drain. He's getting restless. His eyes droop and rove around my cluttered kitchen: mislaid lists, dirty dishes, yellow fly swatter flat-dab on the floor, my squeegee-wash mop propped up against the sink, coffee grounds scattered and swept under the table. We must alternate sleep, I decide. I won't, so he can. You get no sleep tonight, I say, kidding him. He looks up, perks up, getting the wrong nod, grin. I roll with it anyway, jab his bicep with my fist as he moves closer. His eyes: dogged, brown, made-over marble. We could go at anytime, he says, his fingers slide hard on my neck. He closes his eyes. Beneath me, the couch crumbles, a thousand floating pieces buried in my spine.