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Worry circles

by Sho Botham

He turned over in his single bed and knew she wasn't there. She was at home in their oversized bed with its padded headboard and crisp white cotton sheets. How he longed to feel crisp white cotton against his skin.

She sat up throwing the white cotton duvet over to the other side. The bed seemed very big and lonely on her own. She took a deep breath, silently promising herself that she would be stronger today.

His phone rang. He looked to see who it was. It wasn't her so he didn't answer it. He knew he had to get up and go to work. If he hurried, he would have time for a quick cooked breakfast in the hotel dining room. The office was only 100 metres along the street. He left the car on the drive at home.

It wasn't easy trying to be strong when she wanted him home. He left, but only because she told him to. She was angry but now she misses him. Now she just wants him to come home. She wonders if he misses her. She won't phone him. She doesn't want him not to answer.

He left his office at 5.45pm and walked the short journey back to the hotel. His mind was on her as it had been most of the day. He wanted to see her. He wanted to know she was alright. He wanted everything to go back to the way it was. It was his fault. He shouldn't have done it. But he had and he didn't know how to say sorry. He didn't know how to ask for forgiveness.

It had been a long day for her. She missed his unexpected kiss on the back of her neck when she was washing up.

She didn't want another night lying in bed wishing his naked body next to hers holding her close. She wanted everything to go back to the way it was. It was his fault. He shouldn't have done it. She needed him to say sorry. She needed him to ask for her forgiveness.

The next morning, he had made a decision and packed his small suitcase on wheels before calling a taxi. He rang his boss's number at the office and left a message saying, call on me in the day of trouble - at your peril - see you tomorrow.

She was freshly out of the shower when the doorbell rang. She threw on her dressing gown and stepped into her slippers before heading downstairs. She was surprised to see him on the doorstep and wondered why he'd rung the doorbell.

They both started to speak at the same time. Sorry, I shouldn't have done it, will you forgive me, were heard somewhere in the mix of voices. Tears started to stream down her face. She looked at him and saw the dark circles under his eyes - she recognised them as worry circles ~ he didn't need to say anything more. She knew he was sorry because worry circles don't lie.