Morning After

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he wakes at dawn,
his hand still closed
around the space where her hand would have been.
her wooden comb sits forgotten on the nightstand,
dead strands of blond hair snagged in its teeth.
he picks up her half finished mug of peppermint tea
and runs his tongue
over the spot where her mouth had been
only hours ago.
the smell of marinara sauce
from the dinner they had cooked hangs
heavy in the air.
the dishes remain half washed—
tomato sauce caked on the plates.
he walks outside and gently
runs a finger over one footprint,
then another, from her henna-colored hiking boots—
a long thin line, drifting towards the horizon.
he sips her lukewarm tea and watches
the sun rise cold, the color of diluted grapefruit juice.
he sits down on the porch
and slowly tips
the mug sideways,
its contents splattering
on the dusty cedar
until the final drops have fallen,
spreading flat on the floor.