

Terms & Conditions
By Nathan Irving

I'm sorry I'm tired when I wake up and
also when I go to bed and
also every time you want to do have sex as well as
the times you'd rather talk I
really like you
I promise, but I'm
tired in a way that feels impossible like
I got my 8 hours
And my diet's good
And I bike plenty
And I made peace with (most of) my demons but
I'm tired like it's
come to my attention you can never
shut off your eyes and ears only
close the space around them
Asleep, but constantly listening and
staring at the back of your eyelids like
even an absence of something is something and
I feel the absence in all
the creaky floorboards of the room I told you not to look in
But you asked to see it so
We pitched a tent in it and
now I'm telling ghost stories in October like
how spooky it is that I used to love someone so much that they just
disappeared only to
stand, sometimes, in the doorway while we have sex
Sad, but not crying just
staring, confused
at how I could be so cruel to someone so transparent they
actually disappeared

But you don't mind that she's there
sometimes
I mean,
it doesn't turn you on, but
you don't mind
You said you got baggage of your own enough

to make travel expensive so maybe
we should roadtrip together instead
to avoid the fees
just please
sing loudly while I'm driving or I'll
fall asleep at the wheel, spiraling
(figuratively or literally or both)
until we hit the guardrail
(mental or metal)
and crash through the window and
fall back to your dorm room where
no matter where I sleep I'm in the wrong bed and
everyone is always mad at me
And if I jump out your 15th story window
I'll just land in some
other wrong room in some
other wrong bed waiting
for the door to open and
reveal someone standing there
Sad, but not crying just
confused, but
your making shadow puppets in the tent
saying, "the light has to come from somewhere" and
when I sleep you clean my room

So, OK, if I'm not a problem for you-
Impossibly tired and
haunted and
half-heartedly trying
(since the other half seems to be in storage)
as I may be,
panicking for no reason while
I address the spectre in my chest
you keep meeting, but don't mind like
here are our terms & conditions that
we've agreed to without reading-

Then, OK, if that's alright,
then that's alright and
I'd like to lie down for a bit next to you