

Passive Aggressive Valentine's Night

I've always been too shy to make a lot of noise in bed. I'm too self-conscious. But I did tonight just for you. Because I know you like it, and I wanted you to be able to tell just how much I was enjoying it. So I really played it up. I could've gotten an Oscar for this performance. At least a nomination or, like, a Golden Globe. And, in the dead quiet of the night, I was the loudest thing around. Kind of like the dull, chronic buzz of the neon sign above the dive bar where we met. 5 letters, size 480 font. Visually brash, but barely audible. Can't be heard at all except for a few hours each day. During that narrow timeslot after last call and before the first bit of sky lightens over the East River, when the only two plausible activities are sleeping or sleeping together. When the city's daytime roar has subsided to isolated outbursts of trucks gunning over grates and flares of drunken laughter. When your ears are still ringing from the pop remixes and 80s "classics" that played too loudly all night. When the 7 gin-and-tonic buzz has faded, leaving only a lingering residue of senses-blunting intoxication and a desperate urge to sustain the buzz. Maybe there are some beers left from the pregame, you think. But then you realize you're not sure if your fucking tool of a roommate drank them with his lame friends. Guys you never would have talked to in school but you couldn't afford a studio and your older sisters were friends so you moved in together. Now you share a fucking toilet with the guy. Funny how that stuff works. God how long ago was that? Two years ago, three? Whatever. So you decide you'd better stop at the bodega on the corner – the one where Luis always asks in his Latino accent if you're getting any pussy – and pick up a tall boy of Budweiser. Or maybe you'll treat yourself to an import. Nah – Bud Hev will be cheaper. Probably get a jumbo slice to accompany it, too. Definitely. You walk the last few blocks to your apartment, now salivating at the thought of late night indulgence, and see the sign before you hear it. It glows a sensual red – just another glare in this unnaturally bright city night. But when you pass under it, right past the door you've stumbled out of so many weekend nights in this post-college black(out) hole of intemperance and hedonism, the buzzing of the sign finally registers. You're surprised at how loud it is. Does it always sound like that? You've never noticed before. It seems to swell and amplify while you pass. And then you think of the last time you were there, what was it – like 3 months ago. Yeah, because it was the night you met – me. Shit. The party. Tonight was my party, you just remembered. You'd told me earlier this week you were definitely coming, when I'd finally asked you, trying to sound disinterested but betrayed by the hopefulness in my eyes and the relief when you said yes. It was kind of awkward but cute, too. You take out your phone to text me some sort of excuse, but realize I'll be either too pissed or too passed out to put out tonight. Not with you anyway, haha. But...nah, I wouldn't do that. I like *you* too much. Those were my exact words. Too much. Like I knew it was in excess and was ashamed. I'd told you last month, after we'd finally slept together after weeks, months? of holding out on you. So no. There's no way I'd go home with another guy. Hell, I'd only been with like three other guys besides you. Or so I claimed. Unless...could I really be that mad?