

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

# Till Morning

flash fiction



Urban Volcano

# Till Morning

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

Creative Commons (BY-NC-ND) – 2024  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Illustrations: Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

Publisher: Urban Volcano

<https://urbanvolcano.net/>

This story can be reproduced by any means one can think of, such as, but not limited to, photocopying, chiseling into a limestone rock, or reading out-loud during a work-related Zoom conference call from a bathtub at midsummer solstice, provided that the author is referenced, the content is not modified, and the reproduction is not done commercially.



## TILL MORNING

---

I close my eyes and take a deep breath through my mouth. My nose is blocked. I have a heavy sensation in the chest and my throat is swollen. The incoming air irritates my lungs and I cough. I feel a dense fog in my head and know that the fever hasn't passed. The flu is still there.

The good news is that I know how to cure myself. I know the magic medicine. It's not complicated. All I need to do is to sleep. Rest. Give my body the space it needs to work itself through this flu—in its own natural way.

★★★★★

I open my eyes and look at the clock. It is still relatively early. Good. There is hope. I turn on my side, draw my knees to my chest and huddle into a fetal position.

Now I just need to use the opportunity I have to turn the tables. I need to reinforce the right mindset. Don't repeat what I have done over the past few days. Don't wake up with a profound sense of self-reproach over not having executed the tasks I had set myself to complete for work. Don't cry over the lost work hours. Don't panic even if all my plans have gone south. Now, I need to sleep to be able to rid my body of this invasive virus. I need to wrestle back the control over my own existence. Therefore I went to bed early. To be able to sleep. To let my body recover. Come on. I can do it.

★★★★★

I turn and lie on my back. The mental fog moves to the back of my head. I turn on my side. The fog moves into the forehead. It doesn't matter how much I twist and turn. I can't find a relaxing position. The brain fog amplifies. The knot in my stomach tightens.

If I don't fall asleep now, tomorrow will be the same disaster as the other three days I have wasted on this stupid sickness this week. I will wake up at nine, exhausted and full of guilt. I will go out of bed anyway and try to get some work done in order not to fall even further behind of my plans. I will convince myself I'm sufficiently recovered to work. I will argue that I'm

not sick enough to justify wasting the day in bed. Just because I refuse to acknowledge that I'm not well enough. I will get little done because my head will be heavy and the eyelids heavier yet. As the day goes by my greatest achievement will be to aggravate my ailment without making hardly any progress towards my desired outcomes.

Unless. Perhaps I'll manage to fall asleep sometime soon. Don't panic. Just sleep.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I open my eyes and look at the alarm clock. Zero, zero, zero. Midnight. I let my head fall back onto the pillow.

I'm not coping. I need to get some sleep. I'm wide awake. I need to stop worrying about not recovering soon enough. The anxiety has taken control over my mind. I need to use the night to relax and rest the body. I feel the tension in every muscle.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I raise myself up in bed, grab some tissue and blow my nose. It's always the same story. Over and over again. I always tell myself that next time it will be different. The next time I will relax and allow my body to be sick. I will allow myself to sleep. I will allow my body to work itself through the infection at its own natural and efficient pace. Yet, when next time comes around I never allow myself to become sick. I toil on without getting anything done. I don't allow myself to sleep all day. I don't allow myself to recover.

\*\*\*\*\*

I throw the duvet aside and grab my head in my hands. I cannot tolerate this flu anymore. It's so sad that I know how to get better. I just need to sleep.

Now my thoughts have reached yet another full circle without discovering anything I didn't already know. The only progress that has been made is for time to progress on its way from the beginning towards the end. It's fast approaching two o'clock. I'm still not sleeping. It isn't happening. I'm not going to sleep anytime soon. I'm not going to be fresh in the morning. The entire week is ruined.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

Börkur is an avid storyteller with a keen eye for quirky characters, funny dialogs and vivid scenario descriptions. Much of his writing falls within the genre of realistic fiction and his stories are more often than not based on real events in the author's life. Although the tales contain grains of truth, they are melded with fiction, making the reader curious to know the line between reality and fantasy.

## Books

Among Other Things, flash fiction (2024)

Talk To Strangers, short stories (2019)

Flash 52, flash fiction (2017)

999 Abroad, short stories (2012)

## Links

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson

Urban Volcano