

## Epilogue

### The Antlers

In a nightmare, I am falling from the ceiling into bed beside you.

You're asleep, I'm screaming, shoving you to try to wake you up.

And like before, you've got no interest in the life you live when you're awake.

Your dreams still follow storylines, like fictions you would make.

So I lie down against your back, until we're both back in the hospital.

But now it's not a cancer ward, we're sleeping in the morgue.

Men and women in blue and white, they are singing all around you,

with heavy shovels holding earth.

You're being buried to your neck.

In that hospital bed, being buried quite alive now.

I'm trying to dig you out but all you want is to be buried there together.

You're screaming,

and cursing,

and angry,

and hurting me,

and then smiling,

and crying,

apologizing.

I've woken up, I'm in our bed, but there's no breathing body there beside me.

Someone must have taken you while I was stuck asleep.

But I know better as my eyes adjust.

You've been gone for quite awhile now, and I don't work there in the hospital

(they had to let me go.)

When I try to move my arms sometimes, they weigh too much to lift.

I think you buried me awake (my one and only parting gift.)

But you return to me at night,

just when I think I may have fallen asleep.

Your face is up against mine,

and I'm too terrified to speak.

You're screaming,

and cursing,

and angry,

and hurting me,

and then smiling,  
and crying,  
apologizing.