

**Night Sweats  
and Night Lights**

PTSD

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Imprisoned thoughts restrained within my inner darkness, a place I do not linger,  
spills forth, at times, into outer darkness, and threatens danger.

The earth quakes from distant bombing. B-52s are at it again.  
The night glows Amber from drifting sizzling flares.  
Green and red dots crisscross soundlessly in the night; someone else's war.  
There are fewer of us on watch tonight.  
Mortars Krump.  
Artillery booms and I awake with a start.  
My wife pats my hand; *It's alright honey.*

I go into the kitchen for coffee, leaving the house dark, and listen for danger until it is safe. The doors and windows are secure. I set with my coffee on the couch and hope it doesn't spill...eyes adjusting to a myriad of blue lights winking from phone and devices. Street lights pale-glow through louvered windows and calm trees silhouette on drawn blinds. Hours 'til dawn, and sleep not come again this night. I do not want to sleep.

The hallway is black, and I look away slightly so my peripheral vision can see movement, if it is there. The walls undulate a gentle rolling not-quite wav of dark sickly-orange...from a partially melted plastic night-light. It twinkles as if a filament-short is signaling in morse code. I remember drifting flares that also flickered, with clashing-drifting shadows.

I wonder if I am dreaming. Maybe.  
Maybe not.