

Areopagus

by [Tania Runyan](#) in the [July 12, 2011](#) issue

There is no waking without him.

The creases in your sheets remind you

his job is to mess with your life. He stalks you

into the kitchen where the coffee splashes your hand

then flings you to the cold baptism of the faucet.

No, you will not forget him when he swerves you to the edge

of the snow bank and overrides your heartbeat,

when he hunts you down with "morning by morning

new mercies I see," the rhythm cutting

your thoughts like a blender's metallic pulse.

You wish he never knew that sometimes

you want to grip a god you can leave behind,

the cool bronze calves of a statue

you can visit in a temple down the street,

a straight-faced fellow happy with an offering

of a charred bird or two. You could finally be alone

with your luxurious fears, escape into the woods

without his breath blowing the leaves into your path,

the expectant open fields of his hands

waiting for you to swipe in your crumbs.