New motherhood is messy and wild and unstructured. Its shape, if motherhood has a shape, is amorphous and pliable like melted glass. This evocative autoethnography, a collection of experimental flash essays and reflective commentary, illuminates the scattershot experiences I have encountered in the broader cultural milieu of motherhood. My autoethnography has a rhythm—a systematicity. The essays and reflections result from the detailed and systematic field notes and observations I gathered during the first two years of my daughter's life. I deliberately created pieces that followed non-chronological structures to best represent my lived experiences as a new mother. I offer no singular narrative about new motherhood. While there is a clear beginning point—the point when life first flickers in my womb—there is no plot, no moment of release, no dénouement. The autoethnographic exists in many modes in this project: collage essays, braided essays, faux interviews and re-imagined birth plans, imaginary dictionary entries, poetry, and an essay composed entirely of handwritten letters addressed to my future self. These experimental texts, when considered as a whole, offer a multitude of voices and perspectives that form and inform my reality and truth. The reflective pieces also provide a voice and an additional sense of understanding that opens a space for further contemplation.
What keeps me up at night are questions and feelings to which I have no explanation or reasoning - thoughts : 1, me : 0. The cycle continues until the struggle is met with a damp pillow and the brink of dawn. “We stopped checking for monsters under our beds when we realized they were inside us.” He peered through and found nothing. He just told me to sleep again but I just couldn’t. Ever since then, I always check the window every night in case that creature were to come back and take a look at me again. Damn. 1.6k Views · View 5 Upvoters.