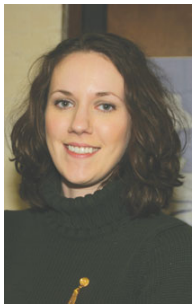

I was in bed last night when I heard the wind howling outside my window. The leaves on the trees were slamming against the window glass. The rain was pounding on top of our house.
For a minute I couldn't go back to sleep because I wasn't sure how bad the weather was going to get. But I eventually rolled over. The sounds of the rain kind of even helped me get back to sleep.
Then I heard an all too familiar sound.
It was the sound of feet running across our wood floors. It was coming from the back bedroom, and the sound was closing in on our bedroom.
Then I heard our bedroom door slowly ease open. And then there was the sounds of breath and the rustling of a blanket against our bed.
Our son James had entered our bedroom. And he always goes to his Daddy's side of the bed first.
"Daddy," was repeated over and over until my husband Jason picked James up and placed in between us.
Jason quickly went back to sleep, but I stared at James for a minute.
"It was raining, and I was scared," James said, before rolling on his stomach to sleep.
I thought it was so cute, and it took all I had not to hug him.
We anticipate those nightly visits from James. It all started one night when he was really sick, and I guess you can say we spoiled him.
James will go some nights in his own bed. But more often than not he ends up in ours.
A lot of parents don't let their children sleep in their beds with them. But honestly, at 4 a.m., I don't really care where James sleeps as long as he sleeps.
We have a king size bed, but James somehow manages to forget about all that space. He is either right on Jason's back, snuggled into his side. Or his arms are across my face with his knees digging into my back.
And James can't sleep in a normal position. I have seen that kid with his head at the foot of the bed. He will stretch horizontal across the bed. He will hang halfway off the bed.
And wild dreams is an understatement. James has woken up in the middle of the night demanding a sucker. He has randomly started crying, saying his toes hurt. He has asked to ride the tractor, buy a balloon or take a bath. On several occassions he has loudly said the word "truck" in his sleep with a big smile on his face.
Jason and I also get a kick out of watching him in his sleep sometimes. When he starts laughing in his sleep and begins smiling, we start laughing. But sometimes in the middle of the night, it startles us.
There will come a time when James will not be allowed in our bed. But I have heard stories from friends with two or three kids who say they all still pile in the bed together.

It kind of reminds me of stories my Maw Maw and Paw Paw use to tell me about loading up four to five kids to a bed.

When I was a small child, I would look for any excuse to crawl into bed with my Momma or Maw Maw.

It could have been a bad dream. Stormy weather could have settled in. I could have started feeling sick. Or I might have just wanted some company.

I don't mind it so much with James. It seems hard to imagine sometimes, but there will probably come a time when I will miss those knees buried in my back, that hand across my face or that midnight request for something to drink.

As that storm rumbled through Yazoo County last night, I couldn't help but wonder if my spot was still available next to Maw Maw.

And as James entered into our room, I thought to myself, "yep, and it probably always will be."