

The Greatest Narcissist on Earth

by Jodi Barnes

I forgot how masterful you are, way better than a pickpocket. After our meeting, I drove home with one hand. It felt funny but I figured I'd absentmindedly put the other in my purse or tossed it into the backseat with my jacket.

In my driveway, two metatarsals tumbled out the driver's side door. My spleen is a splatter on the right rear hubcap. At least they explain some minor aches and pains.

Before I could grab the ibuprofen in the kitchen, I saw my reflection in the microwave door: my throat a bloody mess, larynx flapping against my collarbone.

I thought back to walking through the shiny door, ordering my coffee, sitting down across from you. As soon as I spoke, you interrupted, called our child a liar, a druggie, but not a whore like last year. I was grateful she wasn't there; it's taken her 14 months to put herself back together.

I don't remember you touching me, no handshake or the slightest brush against your Rolex on my way out. I wondered why it got harder to hear you; I just found what might be my left ear. I think I'm losing the better half of my heart.

What do I do with these pieces? You have bought up all the ice on this road. You own every hospital for miles; all the doctors are in your pocket.

As much damage as you've done, I have to hand it to you—here, take this one—you're the man, making people think they can come apart all by themselves.

