

To The Woman Who Sat With Her Back To The Door

by kate hill cantrill

Such a curious smell in the air tonight: part skunk, part fire, part rubber of your tire, pulled liquid hot across that road.

I told you once to turn around. I didn't like the way you sat.

I have very little to say to you. Your brother is an asshole, one. Your ukulele's heading south, that would be two. And three, three would be the jogger only broke his legs.

I *think* I told you to turn around. It's not safe to sit with your back to the door.

I had very little to say to you.

Your shoes he strewn all over the sidewalk. Your books and clothing, too.

Such an asshole, coming to clean you out and taking the subway there to do it. He had no intention of saving you, I mean saving your things, I mean doing with them something with some class.

Why this smell of skunk and fire?

Motorcycle tires have an oily coat until a certain mile; at something like ten you saw that jogger. Well, good for you for breaking his legs. They'll heal and he will walk again. Oh, four, I gave the amps back to the kid downstairs. He almost lost his dog

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one night to a hit and run. *I'm so sorry*, he kept wailing, *I'm so sorry, are you hurt?* To love anything that much is dumb. He could have been bleeding inside, one organ drowning all the others as the kid slept off his beer and waited until the morning to take the dog to the vet.

I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry. Are you hurt?

Don't sit like that, goddamn it, it's just not safe! I could open up the door and knife you in the back, and if I *could* do it, then think of all who *would*?

