

# The Ex-Boyfriend Checks in on Saturday Night by Cell Phone

*by* Rusty Barnes

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Remind me never to call you  
again after you get home late,  
for the familiar fear of the deadbolt noise,  
the shifty creak of your linoleum floor,  
the way you throw your jacket over  
the sofa and slide from your shoes  
like a tap dancer long and slow,  
the way you rattle the bowl  
with beer-piss knowing that I'll crawl  
between your ankles anyway,  
part your legs and lips like the leaves  
of an old familiar book whose margins  
I've creased with my fingers and closed  
with the certain knowledge I'd open it soon  
and feel my way through the details  
by heart. It's not genteel; it's what I know.  
Baby, I'd eat your words raw.

I don't like those noises in the hum of your line.  
Here I am hawk-eared to my cell,  
finger stuck in my off ear waiting  
to hear you answer and nothing  
picks up but my tension, the hillbilly  
band in the background twanging  
into their next set. There are twenty women,

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Available online at «<http://fictionaut.com/stories/rusty-barnes/the-ex-boyfriend-checks-in-on-saturday-night-by-cell-phone>»

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open books, I don't want to talk  
with here and eighteen men with cutthroat  
late-night hearts and cash to spare.  
Me with a dollar or two or my own  
cold need worth nothing but gas money,  
maybe a pat on the ass. While you're banging  
heels on his ass I can leave with women  
I don't want or go home to drink  
another beer in front of the TV.

That choice is easy. Susana's alone  
at the bar skinny-legged in her jeans  
and long hair loose. While her cunt  
warms beneath me I'll write a new chapter  
in her lovely body but I know me.  
In the morning I'll close the book.  
Forget every word. Yeah.  
Remind me to leave a message  
next time. I'll say please baby-pick it up.

