

## I WRECKED MY CAR TONIGHT

By

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I wrecked my car tonight; an imbecilic deed I have to own. I rolled into a stopped truck in front of me while scrambling for a lipstick in my purse.

The hood wrinkled in half, obviously offended, and the grill crashed to the pavement in protest after encountering such stalwart opposition. Thankfully the air bag did not deploy.

I sat still and wished for the moment back where I lowered my head. I wished I could speed dial a telephone number and say, "Honey, I had an accident, can you come?" A lump of loneliness suddenly filled my throat. It was apparent that the wish fairy had left me on my own.

I opened the car door slowly, with fervent hope, "Please don't yell at me." I tilt in the direction of timid when I'm so thoroughly wrong.

Two men approached cautiously. "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry," I kept repeating, so it took a moment for me to hear, "You K? You K?" I realized they didn't speak English.

"Oh I'm fine." I was anxious, not sure if they understood. Staring at the truck, I'm amazed how handily it's staved off its unworthy opponent ...not even a nick is visible. "I don't think I hurt your truck.

"No, my truck K." he said kindly. "You K?"

"Yes, yes." I gestured towards the hood jackknifed in front of my windshield. "But I...I don't think I can drive it."

The two of them got busy, picked the debris off the pavement, unfurled the metal, and found some string to tie the hood down. Independence is my trademark, so I was embarrassed not knowing what to do.

As I shook his hand and thanked him, I caught his sideways glance toward my naked left hand. He knew I was alone; not just in my car, but alone in my life. His eyes pooled with sympathy and it distressed me somehow.

I was able to drive home. I called the insurance company, made arrangements for the car to be towed, and ordered a rental car delivery. Proficiency with details is my modus operandi.

Solitude is customary for me; I've found a way to make it work. I'm not covered by a cloak of loneliness. "Don't worry about me flying solo, oh no!" It's my mantra. Rather, feelings of isolation arrive uninvited, unexpected, like a squall overwhelming a sunny day.

I wrecked my car tonight. It's only a puckered hood, easily fixed. No humans were harmed, the world didn't stop. But I feel stupid and in need of comfort; a poke in the arm, a mild rebuke, a forgiving kiss.

It's made me realize that these pieces of loneliness are hobbling together like patches of a quilt. How long before the blanket is whole?

I wrecked my car tonight and it's made me realize...I don't want to be alone anymore.