

Francine Witte

When Tom walks in

all headbloody, I stand there and roll my eyes. This is not the first time. Last month it was his arm in a sling.

“I got hit by a car,” he says, dripping red on my linoleum.

I know I’m supposed to feel sorry. Get him a bandage. Be a wife.

Did I mention he’s been cheating again? This time I almost have proof.

He drags himself over to the refrigerator. Looking for an ice pack. Or maybe a beer or something he will swear is missing from our marriage.

When he came home last month, broken sling arm, he swore up and down he fell playing basketball. That it had nothing to do with that Thursday night meter maid. I knew better and let his arm bone crust into the bent-up shape of his lying heart.

That’s what I’m going to do with his head wound. Let it bleed and bleed till it spells out his stupid guilt.

Just for laughs I ask him whose car it was. “Jealous husband?” I say.

He calls me a cutty bitch. Says he *should* be cheating. He says. He says.

This is not helping. This has been one very busy day. Scrubbing the floor and throwing out beer and going through Tom’s pockets.

And there he goes slumping to the floor. “I probably need an ambulance,” he says. See, that’s the kind of thing I mean. If he needed an ambulance, could he use a complete sentence?

That’s not something a really injured person would do.