

thrice great hermes

#27

by stanley lieber

no radio in the truck was a blessing, and she never talked, so things were going well.

mom would just run over whatever happened to run out in front of her. in the big truck you could feel everything, but it didn't matter because the truck just kept going. sometimes vidya would turn around and try to look for whatever it was they had just run over, but usually it was useless because they were moving so fast, and the road had too many curves.

since the accident things had changed. mom gripped the steering wheel with both hands, always facing straight ahead. sometimes she would ask him questions, and, absentmindedly, foolishly, he would answer.

today it had been about the woods. where it was he went, what it was he did when he got there. vidya thoughtlessly told her the truth about everything. he realized it was a mistake even as he began. today he wished for a radio in the truck.

she was yelling. the abandoned structure would be off-limits from now on. he was yelling. she wouldn't even know about these things if he hadn't told her. (he realized, now, this might be a key.) he couldn't get her to understand. she didn't care.

the truck had steadily continued to accelerate. the angrier she got, the faster it went. she was angry at him for glancing nervously at the road, which fed directly into the circumstance that had aggravated his anxiety in the first place. she didn't seem to notice what she was doing, or how it contributed to exacerbate the situation. vidya was concerned now they were about to have another accident, which of course, they were. it was all so predictable, like something he'd written.

saved by the flashing lights. mom was now angry that vidya had cost her a traffic citation. she hadn't started yelling, yet (the policeman had not yet made it back to his cruiser), but vidya could tell she was about to start. it was how this worked.

he waited.