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Being hit by a car is not my first blow—although it’s probably the most literal—and it won’t be my last. But it will be a catalyst for me, a sudden graphic stop to my constantly in-motion existence, my need to produce and achieve to feel worthy of love, my need to control everything because I’ve believed that it would make me safer. It will be the test that finally teaches me that my needs are masks, and that control is an illusion. I’ve had plenty of opportunities—losses, hard ones—to learn to let go. But I grieved my losses and went right back to my old ways. The accident has stripped me, made me totally dependent on others, put cracks in my bones and revealed cracks in my armor. I can’t go back to my old ways, not easily, anyway. Over time and through a series of other physical and emotional challenges, I will discover that losing control can be the best way to truly gain it. Letting go means letting in light, revealing my real power, and, finally, feeling that deep sense of peace that I’d been desperate to find.

I’m being wheeled into the emergency room, and medical personnel are moving quickly, ordering tests, assessing my injuries. My eyes dart furiously back and forth, searching for Fred, my lifeline. He is right beside me, his beautiful green eyes clouded with tears. He puts his hand on my arm, and his palm is sweaty. His palms never sweat. The morphine is holding the pain in check, and I’m outside of my body, looking down at this scene. Someone looks at my x-rays and says, “Three pelvic fractures. No, look, there’s a fourth.” I feel oddly pleased. Not faking or even exaggerating this time.

More than once, as a child, I remember convincing my parents to take me to the emergency room at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston for an x-ray after bruising my knee or my elbow. It was a way to get out of the house. I was always in search of action and excitement because I felt trapped in our boring household. We went out to eat periodically—for Italian food, Chinese, or seafood if there was an occasion for it—and visited my grandparents, but other than that, my day-to-day life was uneventful. The hospital, in contrast, was a cheap thrill for a kid who craved action. I hoped the bone would be broken so I’d have a cast that everyone at school could sign, but only once, in the fifth grade, was there actually a fracture. Lisa, the cantor’s daughter, and I had been sent to the principal’s office at Hebrew school for talking in class—I was *always* talking in class—and when the bell rang and we darted back down the hall to head home for dinner, she slipped and fell on top of me.

“Ouch!” I cried, clutching my left wrist, which had been slammed to the ground. Lisa kept saying she was sorry, that she didn’t mean to knock me over. When I complained about the pain at dinner and didn’t eat a bite of my spaghetti, my mom determined that this warranted an x-ray. The cast that was applied to my fractured wrist was yellow.

Now I have four pelvic fractures. This is legit.