

# DOES SHE

J.R. ANGELELLA · FICTION

Is she good? And I don't mean versus bad, but is she better? Does she do all the things? Does she part for you? Does she? Do you prefer *part* or *spread*? Does she spread? It's okay if she does, because you know that I know, so it's okay now. Does she tease you first, then spread? Play hard to get, then spread? Coy, then spread? Does she play the part of a teen, then spread? Not in a gross way, but, you know, in a way that makes you feel big. You told me once that watching someone spread like that made you sick. We all want to know—part or spread? Which is it?

Listen. Hear that? Can you hear her in the trunk of my car?

Let's go in a different direction.

Does she ride you in reverse? You see what I did there? See how I made a joke? About her riding you in reverse? In a different direction? Is she emotionally open when she rides you, reversely? When she's in reverse, does it look like a pear?

How about a peach? A pumpkin? See how I am finding the funny in all of this pain? See how I am growing? How I've taken stock of my circumstance and am forging a new path?

Does her skin feel different? Was there a spark when you first touched? An explosion? A catalyst? Does she feel different inside? Is that such a weird thing to ask? Can you describe what it felt like the first time? Does she do the thing I swore I'd never do again? Does she do it how you like? Does she use the thing you bought me? Should I be offended? How big are her batteries? Bigger than mine?

Do you believe me to be—as they say in MRI reports—unremarkable?

Why are you so quiet?

Does she like your bedside manor? Is your bedside manor with me different than it is with her? Do you give her primary care? I thought doctors were supposed to be pillars of ethical things. Does she rattle your ethical thing with a tight grip? Isn't being a *pillar* one of the things you like to tell people at cocktail parties? Can you even still go to cocktail parties after this gets out? What do you call a pillar that explodes?

I'm sorry. I'm being crass.

Do you think her nails are still attached to her skin? Or do you think they've snapped

off from all the frantic scrabbling? Is that too explicit? Is that too grotesque to say? Why are you still here? Why haven't you gone to her yet?

Do you know how I found out? Do you know I found out today? Do you know she came to *me*? Do you know she walked up to me in our driveway as I unpacked groceries? She had tears in her eyes. Would you call her crying and confession the hysterics of a woman? If I pushed her into the trunk, would I fall into that category? Am I a monster if I'm not lying about her in my trunk? What's the difference between a monster and a hero? Don't both believe themselves to be justified in their actions?

Which are you? What am I? How is she?

Is it love? Have you fallen? How hard did you fall? Are you in flight? Have you landed yet? Is it a *fling*? Did you get flung? Do you want me to get vulgar and call it what I really want to call it? Was it a *fest*? What would you call it?

An *examination*? Do you examine her? Do you give her annual physicals weekly? Do you ever examine her digitally? Does she *palpate* herself? Do you like it when she does? Does she look you in the eyes when she palpates? Do you palpate her? Did you palpate her with your ethical thing? Do you palpate inside her? Does she part while you palpate? Do you palpate all over her? Is she clean? Does

she have scandalous pathogens? When I go to my doctor tomorrow, what should I say is the reason for my visit? For the blood work? Transfer contamination? Palpateable transmissions?

Does she arrive? Does she arrive easily? Does she arrive quickly? Does it take work? Does she need to supplement with her hand? Does she require assistance? Does it take *tact* and *navigation*? Do you need to *shock-and-awe*? Is it like the bombing of Dresden? Have you bored her to sleep yet with stories about the bombing of Dresden? Has she seen your collection of books on the matter? Has she read any? Have you asked her to read any?

Listen. I think her clawing has stopped.

How do you feel about her being in my trunk? Are you concerned? Do you think you might be next? Do you worry I might have done something more? Based on what you've done, does what I've done seem as reasonable to you as it does to me?

Do you know what my horoscope said in the newspaper this morning—*prepare for impact*. Can you please suspend our subscription? Do you know what your horoscope said—*silence saves lives*. Is that why you aren't saying anything?

I feel like I am getting off-topic here, so let's regroup. These are easy questions.

How about the parts I haven't asked about yet? How do you feel about the parts of you that don't spread? Is that why you started Pilates and yoga? Is that why you drink so many smoothies? Does she bend like a doll? Does she move like a cloud? Does your range of motion keep up with hers?

Why can't you answer the question why?

Has she ever handled your ethical thing in our house? How about the car? The one she's in now? Was she ever in the front before I put her in the back? I saw something as she toppled in. Did you give her the diamond earrings you gave me last year? Was there a time limit on them? Were they temporary? Does she appreciate them? Do you tell her things about me? I went through her purse. Turned off her phone. I now know her name. Do you know what her birthday is? Can you imagine what hers might be? Do you think that's why she came over here—because she read her horoscope? Because it told her *to confess your hardest sin*.

I'm curious—do you even know what she does when she's not on in my trunk? Did you know she's in college? Do you know where she works? Whether she has insurance? That she wants to donate organs? That she has kids?

Oh, I'm sorry you didn't know that.

We aren't going to bring our kids into this conversation.

Listen. Is she still in the trunk of my car?

Do you think she is? Stuffed inside?  
Bended up? Can she breathe? Does she  
have enough air? Enough room? Is she  
still alive? In the trunk? Is she? Would I do  
that? Do you think I would do that? Why  
would I do that? Why do you think I'm  
capable of doing that? Have I ever done  
something like this before? Am I lying? Is  
she in the trunk of my car?

Use your head. You're good at that.  
Deploy restraint.

Like I have done. Mostly.

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