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THE MAN WHO FELL APART IN THE STREET AS HE WALKED

First, his right arm swung loose and dropped to the sidewalk. He walked on, not bothering to look back at the arm lying at right angles to itself. People stopped to stare down at it. One woman, horrified, screamed out to him that he had lost his right arm. "Come back and pick it up!" He walked on.

His left arm began to dangle dangerously, and that too fell to the sidewalk. He continued walking, when suddenly he paused, acting as if crippled from the waist down, and sank to the concrete. His left leg swaying beneath him had fallen away. He landed on his back, one leg clinging to his waist. But now he felt it necessary to speak, a crowd gathered around him. "I've been expecting this. It is possible that if you bring me my arms and leg I will find a way to attach them. It has happened before." The crowd was unbelieving, angry. It was as if he were mocking them, worse, being contemptuous, with jobs to go to and errands to do, not to mention family for which they worked tirelessly—he made it seem as if it all were some kind of farce, casual at that. In the crowd, a man and woman were muttering between them angrily. They picked up his arms and leg and walked off with them. That would show him he could not make fun of them and get away with it.

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