

MEMORY FOR IAN CHENG

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2011

There is already a crowd.

They seem to have spilled out onto the pavement from a trashy bar on the far east side of Manhattan.

We are somewhere between Wall Street and Chinatown. The space is neglected. We are under the highway.

Two cars have come to a stop on the road, and we approach the crowd as some people take out their phones. Most of them are Asian. Most likely tourists. It's that kind of bar. No there are not two cars, its one car. And the guy in the car is Italian, he's not a New Yorker. In fact, no one at the scene is American. Except you. (and the police and ambulance who come later).

So there's a guy in the car, it's a white car, really generic. And there's another guy with a really big beer gut. Did he stop the car? Yes, he's stopped it from moving for some reason. He's Australian, we can tell by his accent. And his girlfriend is holding him back, she doesn't want him to get involved with the man in the car. Both of them are so drunk they can hardly walk. They swagger. The Australian guy is mad, really mad, he's 50% testosterone and 50% alcohol.

We are not in the scene, we see this happening as we approach it from afar, walking up the street, and we keep our distance. Just close enough to see what is happening. But far enough not to be a part of it. The people on the sidewalk, they are taking out their phones, phones with cameras.

Now at some point, the girl gets angry, in fact maybe the girl is angrier than the Australian guy. Yea and they are both really fucking pissed at the guy in the car. The girl opens the car door and starts hitting the Italian man. The man pulls the door closed on her arm, hard, but not hard enough to break it. She's completely wasted, like jelly she just flows with the blow.

The spectators start to get panicked but are too afraid to intervene. The crowd grows larger. People who were drinking in the bar start to come out onto the street. The drunk Australian man with the beer belly pulls the girl back from the car. Its not a friend relationship, its not a sister/brother relationship. They must be fucking. He is protecting her. but he is also trying to prove something. Or maybe the guy in the car did something to the girl. In any case he wants to fight, its his night to fight, he's decided and he's drunk and he'll do it.

I can't remember any dialogue, all I remember is actions. and expressions. Now the fat Australian punches the Italian guy through his open car window. He hits him, the man in the pulls him and pushes him or something. There is a kaffuffle. The Australian man and the girl are taking jabs at the man in the car. They want to hurt him, he has done something. Maybe he hasn't. Anyway he can't get away, I'm not sure why not. They are trying to pull him out of the car, he resists, the girl is screaming abuse. The man is livid, he wants revenge. The Italian has to get out of the car at some point, and both the girl and the Australian guy are trying to punch him, hard...they are so drunk though, so it's imprecise, they just thud around against the metal shell of the vehicle and I think the Italian man manages to escapes somehow because at some point he pops open his trunk and pulls out a metal pole. Is it a crowbar? Now he is fucking pissed. He wants to hurt them too. At this point, the car is a crucial element. It is what separates them from immediate certain death. The Australian man and the girl circle back, and when they see the metal pole they move around to the other side of the car. The car is now the object that prolongs the moment, and all three of them know it. In fact even before the pole came out, the car enables the Australian guy to express his anger, to be the Alpha male he wants to be tonight, without having to actually engage completely in combat. But now the car is seriously important. There is an element of fear now, this is fuckin' serious. The Italian guy doesn't want to fight but he has to, yes it seems like he is forced to. They see the metal pole and still, they want to fight. Maybe they've had more than alcohol...they cannot see how dangerous this is getting and the Australian man is very confident, the girl is even more confident. She can't judge, she can't perceive the situation; she's a total mess. The crowd steps forward, both to intervene and to view, everyone is shouting. Aussie man, Italian, girl, they circle around the car and then suddenly they go at it BAM the three of them meet, beer gut, frail drunk girl who thinks she is superwoman, the Italian guy who seems sober with metal pole, and the white car, everything meet and its messy, is not a clean fight, it's real dirty, there is a swing in the air from the Australian guy, and the girl is right in there, the metal pole hits her right on the side of the head and she goes to the ground. Now a group of Asian men from the bar pulled the scene apart. The girl isn't knocked out, they take her to the sidewalk, lie her down, her head is bleeding, its frenzied now, people call ambulances, police, and mobile phones aren't taking pictures they are dialling. What's happened to the Australian and the Italian? I can't remember? do they continue fighting? I think so, Yes there is more fight, I think at some point they fight over the pole...do they? In any case no one gets away, everyone remains on the scene until the ambulance arrives to take the girl...and then the cops arrive. There is a lot of talk, the girl is conscious, blood flowing out of her head she is still extremely animated, I don't remember her story but she is screaming it, I think everyone is trying to calm her down. The police and ambulance people look to other sources for the story. I'm not sure when the police arrive. In fact maybe they don't? And what happens to the two men? Does the Italian man get away...no because he is questioned isn't he?...I think we walk away at this point...