

Megan Scott

But a Moment in a Mind

She should have been more aware of her surroundings. She was an L.A. girl, for god's sake. You don't jaywalk in L.A. But this was New York. And in New York they laugh at you for waiting at the crosswalk. She saw that the red flashing hand had just stopped flashing and she saw the accompanying light go from green to yellow to red but she didn't really take any note of it. She stepped off the curb onto the blotchy and fading thick white line that marked the start of the crosswalk and felt a sporty little car throw her body before she even heard it approach.

The millisecond that it took for her entire body to be thrust into the air seemed like a severely slowed moment in a movie. But the memory that was played out in her mind before her body hit the asphalt was not what she would have expected. The memory that so vividly filled every crevice of her active brain was not so much a flash of her entire existence in a brief moment. It wasn't even remotely related to anything significant in her life. As morbid as she realized this was, she had indeed considered what she thought she would think of at the moment before the moment of her death.

She imagined it would involve the sister that she had fought with everyday of her childhood, the same sister with whom she grew inseparable, the same sister whom she would do absolutely anything for. She'd think of the time she had convinced her sister to eat all the bubbles in a shared bath. She'd think of the time she and her sister brawled in a bar and took down two blonde bimbos of comparatively Amazonian heights. She'd think of all the times she and her sister had done absolutely nothing but found the purest kind of joy and hilarity in one another's company.

Or perhaps she'd think of her mother, her mother who drove her legitimately crazy on a regular basis, her mother who had somehow birthed a child so fundamentally different from herself, her mother who had shaped her into the strong and, generally speaking, fearless individual she was. She'd think of the time her mother pulled her out of school for a "doctor's appointment," which was actually code for "the best day ever at Disneyland." She'd think of the time her mother forced her to sit in the car as she drove past one of her ex-lover's houses. She'd think of all the times her mother came to her rescue, guns a-blazing, and made her problems vanish into thin air.

Despite her best efforts to prophesy the thoughts that would likely run rampant during the last breaths she would take, though, she was wrong. Completely wrong. Rather than being overwhelmed by pleasant memories involving the people she considered closest and most important, her mind was inundated by an argument with the boyfriend she had just broken up with. It was the very argument that had taken place that very morning. It was the argument that was primarily responsible for her preoccupation and unawareness of the impending doom that rapidly approached her.

"We live in New York City! You don't need a god damn car, Nick! We need the money for the apartment! And for fucking food!"

"It's my god damn car! I'm going to do what I want with it! And I'm going to keep it!"

"Nick. This is the city. You have a BMW. You cannot drive fast in the city. The only reason you got the BMW was to drive fast. And that was when we lived in Boston. It makes absolutely no sense now. Get rid of it. We have had this conversation too many times. Get rid of it."

"I go outside the city all the time, you don't know what you're talking about."

“Oh, really? Really? When is that? Because as far as I can tell, you leave this apartment, you go to work *on the subway*, and then you come home *on the subway*. When do you drive your car outside the city all the time?”

“I’m not getting rid of my car.”

“Nick, we need the money. You don’t drive it. It’s not practical anymore! It never was practical! Get rid of it!”

“No! Stop trying to control me!”

“Ooh, okay. So, you got that sporty little cherry red Z4 to pick up all the ladies, huh? So you could get out of my ‘controlling’ grip, huh?”

“Shut the fuck up.”

“Nick, it’s that car or us...”

“Done. The car!”

“Fuck you, we’re done!”

“Yeah, walk out that door, way to be melodramatic yet again!”

But this time, instead of storming out and angrily stomping throughout the streets of New York and subsequently being struck by a sporty little red BMW, she stayed and nuzzled herself in the nook of Nick. She knew he would give up the car when they weren’t mid-fight. She knew he would give up the car when she actually told him that “us” meant “me and this baby.” And a feeling of total relaxation flowed through her entire being, starting from her solar plexus and extending outward, to her toes, to her fingertips, and finally to her face. As the warm sensation of release crept into her head and reached the features of her face, her lips curved upward slightly in the form of a delicate smile.