

OSR Journal of Student Research

Volume 2

Article 2

2014

The Taxi

Alea Walstrom

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/osr>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Walstrom, Alea (2014) "The Taxi," *OSR Journal of Student Research*: Vol. 2 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/osr/vol2/iss1/2>

This Short Story is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Student Research at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in OSR Journal of Student Research by an authorized editor of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

The Taxi

Alea Walstrom

Abstract

This story is a suspenseful romantic drama that recounts the past and present events of the protagonist, Maria, as she faces the most difficult decision of her life.

Author Interview

Which professors (if any) have helped you in your research?

Professor Brown required the writing of a short story in the class I took with him. After I turned in this story, his comments and suggestions helped make it the story it now is.

What are your research interests?

I am currently interested in researching literature of the Renaissance and Victorian literary movements. I will most likely employ one of these topics in my M.A. thesis.

What are your plans after earning your degree? What is your ultimate career goal?

I plan to teach composition and/or literature at the community college level before pursuing a PhD. I ultimately would like to become a tenured professor of English Literature.

How far should someone go to keep the hope of love alive? Considering this question, Maria was standing on the platform in Grand Central Station waiting for the subway as her thoughts started drifting to Brian. She had been walking ten feet from her current location when they met and he saved her life.

Maria was frantically searching for her glasses in her oversized purse while walking towards the edge of the platform. True New Yorkers stand on the yellow line at the edge of the platform and that was exactly where she was headed when she tripped. She was heading face first toward the tracks when an immense pressure on her elbow pulled her back to safety, before both of her feet had entirely left the platform. The second she was completely on the platform again a subway train raced by. Her mind raced and she was dizzy but she couldn't help but notice the blurry figure standing next to her, who was still gripping her arm. Before she acknowledged the figure she continued to dig around in her purse to find her elusive glasses, and when she found and put them on the dizziness and blurriness subsided. She looked up at the man who had just saved her life. He was tall, over 6'2" she concluded, after calculating her own natural height with her four-inch heels, he was still taller than her. He was clean cut with striking blue eyes that wore a worried look, reminding her of what just happened.

The stranger had yet to remove his hand from her arm. "Are you alright?" he asked sounding sincerely concerned.

"Yes. Fine. Thank you," Maria noticed her answer didn't sound very convincing so she continued.

"You saved my life. What is the name of my knight in shining armor?" She added a coy smile and tried to make it sound playful despite the fact that her voice was shaking.

She noticed his good looks again when he smiled at her comment. "Brian Jones. And what is the name of the beautiful damsel in distress I have just had the pleasure of rescuing?" As soon as he said it he regretted using the phrase "damsel in distress" even if he did say it in a joking tone.

"Maria Thomas," she desperately hoped she wasn't blushing when she responded, but she couldn't fight the grin the response gave her.

"Well Maria Thomas, would you like to get coffee with me? Seeing as, no big deal, but I did just save your life." The nonchalant tone and wink were all it took to talk her into it, both of them having forgotten why they were even in the subway station to begin with.

Maria smiled at the memories of the humid New York summer they spent getting to know each other as she got on the H train heading to Bellevue Regional. Who would have thought such a magical start to their whirlwind romance would have resulted in the decision she was about to be forced to make. Maria solemnly sat on the seat twisting the wedding band on her finger. "Who gets married before their wedding?" Maria thought and smiled weakly.

Thinking about her wedding day only reminded Maria about the wonderful secret elopement in the backyard of their extravagant wedding venue two hours before the lavish wedding neither Brian nor Maria wanted.

After spending two months talking about their impending nuptials Brian and Maria decided an intimate outdoor wedding was what they both wanted. Their parents, who had wealth and political power, however, had different ideas. They spent the next ten months negotiating with their parents to get a wedding that was at least close to what they wanted. The wedding their parents, who paid for it, designed was a lavish wedding in the ballroom of a mansion with over 250 guests, most of whom neither Brian nor Maria even knew, but who attended because of their various connections to the parents of the bride and groom.

Two hours before they were supposed to walk down the long, excessively decorated aisle, Maria went on a walk with her maid of honor and Brian went on a walk with his best man only to run into each other in the backyard. They shared the same upset with the overwhelmingly huge wedding despite their desire to have an intimate one outdoors. This upset led to an idea to have the wedding they both wanted beforehand while still making both of their parents happy.

The best man found the minister that was going to marry them two hours later and brought him outside, under the shade of one of the cherry blossom trees on the premises they were married.

It was the perfect intimate wedding they both wanted and taking the little time to wed before the wedding made dealing with the 250 guests they didn't even know bearable.

The subway stopped at her exit and she stood slowly, as if deciding whether or not to get off. What was she supposed to do? The love of her life that she'd been married to for seven years was waiting for her decision.

It wasn't going to be easy, and the constant reminders of their blissful life together were making it even harder. He was there to laugh with, cry on, talk to, and he even held her whenever she wanted, and all that might stop forever, depending on her decision. It broke her heart to be thinking about the end of their marriage when it seemed to have just begun, but the choice had to be made.

As Maria walked to her destination she thought of their first fight. Even though she couldn't remember what it was about anymore she knew the subject wasn't important, the recovery was.

The first fight in a relationship tells you a lot about a couple, and their first fight was about something little and probably stupid, but the way in which it was fought ensured their future success. There was no name calling, and no one said something they would regret. There were no raised voices and it ended with them sitting on the couch in each other's arms. It was the most peaceful fight ever fought between a couple.

Maria fell asleep in Brian's arms, and woke to find her favorite flowers, pink and white roses, in vases on every flat surface in the room. The sight brought a smile to her face instantly. Then the amazing smell of grilled filet mignon wafted in from the balcony, which told her that not only was he the type of romantic that would get flowers after a fight, but he was also the type that could cook.

Every fight since had ended more or less in the same way, regardless of what they were fighting about. That was one of the things she loved about him.

Maria was entirely in love with Brian, which made her decision that much more difficult to make. Maria walked up to the nurse's station

in the Intensive Care Unit and signed the visitor's sign-in sheet before heading to the private room she had visited every day for the past six weeks. The nurse she had made friends with since the accident stopped her before she walked in the room, "I know you are faced with the hardest decision you will ever have to make, and I am truly sorry. If there is anything I can do for you, please let me know." She squeezed Maria's arm, gave a weak smile, and continued down the corridor.

Maria hadn't even noticed she started to cry until a tear rolled down her cheek and fell onto her chest. "I can't see him looking like this," she said aloud to herself as she let go of the door handle and headed to the bathroom.

While in the restroom she wiped off the remaining tears and reapplied her makeup, hoping to cover up any sign that she had cried. After taking a few deep breaths and trying to mentally convince herself that she was strong enough, she walked out of the restroom and into the private room she dreaded.

"Good morning, honey, I love you. How are you doing today?" Maria forced a smile onto her face as she said this and kissed Brian on the forehead.

There was no answer. Just like there hadn't been an answer the past 42 days when she greeted him in her usual manner.

"What am I going to do?" she whispered, while choking back tears. She hadn't realized how tired she was until she sat in the chair next to his bed and held his hand. She wasn't sleeping well at night; it seemed like every time she closed her eyes to rest the same dream tormented her, the night of the accident. Maria leaned forward in her chair resting her head on Brian's arm and drifted off to sleep

It was their seventh wedding anniversary and they went out to a fancy Italian restaurant, the kind they had to make a reservation at three months before. Wanting the night to be especially memorable, they spared no expense.

They ordered one of every course, each, and a bottle of champagne. Brian even asked the maître d if he could make a special toast for the couple, which he did while presenting them with a free bottle of champagne, with a personal note from the restaurant's owner on the label.

The night was incredible, but as they usually were when they left restaurants, they were completely stuffed. If they had eaten less, or waited longer after eating, or walked home regardless of how they felt the traumatic event would have never happened.

But, they chose to take a taxi, which they rarely did, and that was the mistake that caused their anniversary to end with a trip to the emergency room.

The happy, but mildly uncomfortable, couple were making out in the back seat of the taxi on the way home, like newlyweds, not paying attention to anything else. The driver chose to go through the green light, despite the gridlock that prevented the taxi from moving out of the intersection. The light turned yellow then red, but their taxi still hadn't moved forward enough to clear the intersection.

Maria opened her eyes for a moment and glanced out the window on Brian's side of the car only to see a truck speeding towards them. She didn't have time to react. A second later the truck slammed into the driver's side of the car, and it all went black.

Maria woke up gasping for air then quickly realized what happened. She had fallen asleep next to Brian, and relived the night that started beautifully but ended tragically.

The drivers of both cars died that night. Brian and Maria were both unconscious upon arrival at the hospital. Maria woke up two days later in the ICU with a concussion, bruised ribs, a nasty bump on the back of her head, and a few cuts and bruises, but Brian still hadn't woken up. The doctors had told her that Brian wasn't able to breathe on his own, so the machine he was hooked up to was breathing for him. And every day he didn't wake up lessened the chances that he ever would.

The insurance would only pay for Brian

to be kept in the ICU for six weeks, after which the odds of recovery plummet, or so she was told. Maria went there with a decision to make, one that she never thought she would be forced to make in a million years. How long could she keep the hope of her love alive? Suppose he was going to wake up the next day, but she pulled the plug a day too soon, she would have killed Brian and the love they shared. Plus the fact that he saved her life the first day they met, shouldn't she return the favor? Could she?

Maria knew she wouldn't be able to live with the thought that she killed her husband, the love of her life, by unplugging the machine that was keeping him alive. He would suffocate, it would be as if she put a pillow over his face and smothered him while he slept. She couldn't live with that.

She searched his face for a clue, a hint, something to tell her not to end it, but there was nothing. The handsome face she fell in love with was blank.

The nurse came in and said, "There are two men waiting to speak with you down the hall," she knew who they were but didn't want to say, and without her usual optimistic smile she left the room.

Tears were streaming down Maria's face, but she knew what she had to do. She squeezed her hand on Brian's, smiled the best she could, and kissed Brian hard on the lips, desperately hoping he would kiss back.

"I love you more than you could have ever imagined," she said between sobs. She took a deep breath, wiped away the tears, and in a much more collected voice said the same goodbye she had said every single one of the 42 days she had visited his room, "I'll see you soon baby, I love you." At that Maria walked out of the private room that imprisoned her love and walked toward the men who were waiting for her approval to let him die.