

## **Pedestrian 9**

Lewis Taylor woke up from his nap in his aunt's garage. Aunt Martha hadn't needed a car for a long time but she kept the garage for storage.

Lewis knew he couldn't stay in his aunt's garage for much longer but right now it was not only convenient but peaceful. No neighbours and no noise.

He showered while Aunt Martha was still napping. He had decided to show his face at a memorial for Raymond Townshend. He had concluded that being present would be a good strategy.

Lewis had responded to the email invitation from Diana. A gathering was scheduled for a park near Raymond's final address. There would be hot chocolate and no alcohol. There would not be a surfeit of friends or mourners.

He did not drive to the gathering. He allowed himself enough time to get there without having to hang around and talk to other people. Diana would speak for a bit and then invite others to speak about Raymond.

Lewis hoped the event would not degenerate into a mawkish memorial. He hoped that he would be able to say hello to his colleagues Mercedes Frank and John and Linda Swinton and even Beth Tudhope and her girlfriend without having to say anything at all.

Upon arrival he recognized most of the people there. He nodded to Mercedes and stood beside John and Linda. They acknowledged their sadness without elaborating further, Lewis nodded assent.

Diana Hopkins stood at a makeshift podium.

Thank you everybody for coming together today to remember our mutual colleague and friend Raymond Townshend. Ray was everything one could hope for in a working colleague. A supportive individual, a good listener, and also a very funny man. Ray could be great company at a movie or the theatre or at an art gallery. He could be acutely observant and also hilariously bitchy.

I know that Ray did suffer from depression but we have to remember that his death was the result of a terrible accident. Some inconsiderate individual who never should have been granted his or her license is responsible for Ray's death. Some asshole who didn't have the courtesy to remain at the scene of the accident for which either he or she was responsible.

But we should remember Ray Townshend for the fun we all had with him, for his serious contributions to artistic discourses not only locally but nationally and internationally. Or his devotion to our professions and our community. Now, if anybody else wished to add any further anecdotes or memories of Ray, please feel free to do so. Thank you for your attendance today.

Lewis was relieved when nobody took Diana up on her offer. People instead mingled and talked about Ray among themselves. Perhaps some didn't even talk about Ray. Ray was dead, what more could be said?

Beth and her friend Joanna recognized him and stood in his path. They hadn't seen him for a while. Where had he been? Well, Lewis was just getting over a flu. Surely that was all he needed to say to them. Lewis decided to say goodbye to Mercedes and John and Linda. He noticed a man with an almost buzz cut who he did not recognize.

Perhaps this was some non-academic friend of Ray's? Ray certainly had friends outside of his academic colleagues. Lewis guessed that Diana didn't know any of them except for this stranger. Whatever, Lewis decided. He now slipped away from the gathering in the park. He would catch the nearby street car that would take him to the subway and back to Aunt Martha's garage. He had put in an appearance. He was a functioning friend and colleague.