

Essay on The Fight

I have seen boxing and wrestling matches on television. I have also watched many martial arts films. However, they were all staged performances more for entertainment than actual fights. I once witnessed a real fight. It was very different from those on television or films. The fight happened right next to my house.

My neighbor, an Indian couple with two young children lived in a two-room wooden house. They had a lodger, a young Indian man who worked in a factory nearby.

It was getting toward the end of the day. The neighborhood kids were making a lot of noise while playing in front of the houses, one of which I lived in. It was usual to get such a din from these pre-school kids and quite entertaining to watch them at play. Anyway, on that particular evening, the happy noise of the kids was suddenly overwhelmed by the ominous sound of people quarreling.

I was watching television when I suddenly became aware of the sudden cessation of childish laughter and the sudden explosion of angry voices, I got up from my seat and hurried outside.

From out of my neighbor's house emerged the Indian lady. She was obviously very angry about something and she kept shouting at someone in the house. At the same time she took little steps backward out of the house as if someone was pushing her back. Someone was, not physically but more like she was backing away from a stand-off. Someone emerged. He was the lodger. He too was shouting at the top of his voice at the lady.

Other neighbors began appearing at their doorways.

Then the shouting match gave way to something more serious. The Indian lady started to hit the lodger with her hands and her feet. The lodger put up his hands to block the blows. The fury of flying fists and kicking legs took both of them clear out of the house onto where the kids were playing minutes before.

By now virtually the whole neighborhood had gathered to watch.

The lodger finally decided to retaliate. Being the stronger person, he easily brought the lady to the ground with a violent push. The lady hit the ground hard and bruised-parts of her body. There was blood on her hands and face! She must have hit her face on the ground.

The lodger turned and Walked away.

I watched as the neighbors closed in on the fallen woman and helped her to her feet. There was a maddening chattering of voices as they started asking why the lady had quarreled and fought with the lodger. I shrugged my shoulders and turned to walk back to my house.

I froze in mid-stride as an ear-piercing scream filled the air!

Quickly I turned around just in time to see the ladder holding a parang in his hand approaching the Indian lady. Very quickly to the entourage of neighbors surrounding the lady dispersed leaving her standing alone.

In less than the time I took to shout a warning. The lodger was on her. The parang went up and down in one swift stroke that opened up a huge cut on her arm. She fell to the ground clutching her bloody arm.

He raised the parang again!

“Stop!” came a booming voice.

Ah, Keong the butcher appeared. Everyone froze. Ah, Keong moved toward the lodger and confidently took the parang away. It felt as though Ah Keong had suddenly mesmerized the lodger or that the lodger had had enough of violence for the day. Whichever it was, Ah Keong was a brave man to do what he had done.

The tension in the air broke. The neighbors again rushed to the lady to help her. The lodger turned and walked away again. This time he did not reappear with a parang. In fact, he went straight back to his room and stayed there until the police came and took him away. He did not resist the police in any way.

The actual fight did not last very long, at most a minute or so. Films are so unreal in making fights last ten times longer. I really felt frightened seeing the parang do its deadly work in real life. A samurai sword on TV cannot compare with the intensity of a parang in reality.

The lodger was jailed for assault. The lady's injuries healed and shortly after the incident, the Indian couple and their kids moved away. Nevertheless, every time I look at the neighboring house, I am reminded of the fight that, from there.