

Chapter 17 – The Chase

This is wild. One Saturday evening, Friend P. and I are cruising Main Street. It is somewhere between 8 – 10 PM. Friend P. is driving my '51 Ford before I lowered it. He is driving because for some strange reason, I am sipping on a can of beer. I have no idea why. I do not like beer. I seldom drink anything.

We cruise south from the drive-by hangout on North Main to the drive-by on South Main by Safeway. Back and forth, north to south, south to north. We stop at the red lights and tease those beside us to peel out (leave rubber) and then race for half of a block.

Going south by the Court House, a car passes us on the right, cuts us off and bangs into my right front bumper. He does not stop. He pulls up to the next red light. I get out and run up to his driver-side window. It is an older man but not really “old”. I yell at him to stop. He looks at me and takes off quickly. I memorize his license number. Friend P. pulls up. I get in. I have no idea where the beer went. We chase for a couple of blocks.

As we cross over 2nd Street, I look to my right. I see a police car with lights on working a collision at the corner of 2nd and Richardson. We turn right on 1st, then another right on Richardson. We approach the accident and turn right again on 2nd. We pull over to the right. I get out and start walking to the patrol car. Two other cars pull in behind mine and stop.

Just as I get even with the first car on my right, the 2nd car backs up and guns it into the first car. That pushes the first car into the back of mine. The 2nd car backs up again and squeals out to the left on 2nd street going east.

Adrenaline high and not thinking defensively I react quickly. I run after the fleeing car. I am well ahead of everybody. I hear the policeman's whistle behind me. The car only goes ½ of a block. He turns into the alley between two big brick buildings. He is going too fast to make the turn. He runs into the bricks on the right and ricochets his driver's side into the other bricks. Car stops. I am there to see the 2nd crash.

I reach the right-side door immediately and open it. The passenger falls out at my feet. The driver bulls his way out the passenger door and knocks me down. He then runs north toward 3rd Street. I am hot on his trail; crowd shouting and policeman whistling behind me. He turns left on third by the Yucca Theater and crosses 3rd going west.

I catch up to him in front of the library at 3rd Street and Richardson. I shove him down from the back. He gets up and shows me his hunting knife. I back off and prepare to retreat.

He runs caddy-corner into the Nixon Hotel and through the bar. The bouncer knows something is wrong and nails him with a body flip going out the bar backdoor. I wish I had seen that.

I never tell Father. I talk to the police and eventually receive a settlement for \$50 to replace my chrome dual exhaust extensions.

I wonder at my lack of judgment in getting into a situation like this. Obviously, I am not prepared to defend myself against bad actors and lethal weapons. With my other encounters, I feel lucky to be alive.

Part 1 - Times and Places

