

Neon Love Pt II.

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She stood like an elegant tribute to the glory of China

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As the taxi made its way up the winding roads of Victoria Peak, Gael wondered which house the party was going to be in. He had scoped out many of them when he first arrived, but Victoria was a long trek from Kowloon for a poor young westerner without a car. It was at least 20 minutes by train, and then there was the walk to the top. Gael rarely took taxis, but tonight was an exception as he wanted to take advantage of every minute. Victoria Peak overlooked downtown Hong Kong, and the view always thrilled Gael. The bright lights flashing and shining from hundreds of buildings and skyscrapers, and the busy movement of traffic and people down below. The mansions which were scattered along the mountainside were extravagant, and Gael always wondered what they looked like on the inside, or what it would be like to live in one of these manors which overlooked the most beautiful harbor in the world. When he had the energy to get over there, Gael found great satisfaction in walking the paths along the hillside. At night, these paths were always crowded with hundreds of tourists, all trying to get the same pictures of the city that thousands of people had gotten every day before them. Gael preferred to visit Victoria in the early morning when only the locals were out jogging or walking their dogs, and he could take in the beauty of Hong Kong in the rare quiet of dawn. He looked over at Mei; her eyes shining with the reflections of the living night. He remembered the first time he saw her; standing with her martini glass like an elegant tribute to the glory of China. The taxi pulled up in front of a house with tall white stone walls, and open gates. There were well dressed Chinese walking all along the street, all heading toward the house. Gael gave the driver some HKD and climbed out. Gael felt sorry for anyone looking for parking on the tiny crowded street. Cars lined the street for a long way down the mountain. After they passed through security, the front foyer of the house opened up into a large living room with thirty foot ceilings, and glass windows all along the back side of the room, looking out on the pool, and the bright shining city beyond the railing below. The whole house was loud and buzzing with people and music. There was a bartender on the far right wall by the large doors which led out into the pool area where a DJ played EDM on a platform high above the pool. Gael grabbed two drinks that looked like whiskey off the tray of a cocktail waitress walking by, and handed one to Mei. They made their way onto the patio, recognizing a few famous faces, but no one that they knew personally. Chen was nowhere in sight, but that was a pretty usual occurrence now. Chen was their key to all the prime parties of the city, but he was rarely

around to party with. The dancefloor was packed, and there were fully dressed people drunkenly splashing each other in the pool. The neon party lights flashed in their eyes, and the music vibrated through their bodies. Gael could feel his heart in his throat as he found Mei's hand, and tipped back the last of his drink. She downed hers as well and put it down on a table. Gael pulled her in close, and they merged into the crowd of people on the dance floor. The song throbbed through the crowd and Mei leaned in throwing her arms around Gael's neck and resting her head against his chest as they moved to the build up in the music, before pulling back as the song's bass was about to drop. She looked at him with the entire electricity of Hong Kong sparking in her eyes. The energy on the floor was immense as everyone waited for the drop, and then it came, and everyone lost control. Mei's hair swirled in the air as her whole body shook and flowed and moved to the song. Gael danced in the haze of the whiskey, and watched her as though in slow motion. The strobes and neons lit her skin in fiery colors, and Gael followed the lines and contours of her hips up to the tips of her hands which were raised high above her head. She looked at him with a quiet wantonness sliding gradually back towards him. He slid his hands in at her waist and rested them on the small of her back. Their eyes and lips were now inches from each other. The gravity between them was tremendous, and Gael wanted to press his lips to hers, but the moment was suddenly interrupted as the crowd was pushed apart, and an angry man shoved Gael aside. The man was yelling at him in Cantonese, and kept pushing and shoving Gael backwards off the dancefloor. Before Gael could get his bearings on what was going on, the man took a swing at him. Gael dodged the fist, and grabbed the man by his shoulder swinging him back around, and landing a hard hit square in the man's nose which sent him stumbling backwards into the pool. Everyone on the dancefloor stopped and looked over momentarily to see what the commotion was, but then, like nothing had happened, they got back to dancing. Gael stepped closer to the pool to get a better look at his assailant. A pink cloud of blood was floating in the water around the man's waist when he stood up, and blood streamed down his face. Three more men approached from the other side of the pool, obviously his friends, and now wanting to make sure he saves face. Mei stepped in between them and began to yell at the men in Cantonese. By now two bouncers approached, but they stopped a few feet away, trying to assess the situation. "Mei, What the hell is going on?" Gael shouted over the loud music "My fiance's friends are here. They saw us dancing." "Shit." The three men pushed Mei aside, and walked up to Gael. One took a swing and missed, but the other landed a punch across Gael's jaw and sent him sprawling onto the ground. The third kicked Gael in the stomach, but was quickly put in a chokehold by one of the bouncers. The other two were pushed back by the largest bouncer just before Chen appeared from inside the house. "What's going on here?" Chen yelled. "Cheung picked a fight with Gael." Mei explained, leaving out the pertinent details. "Get these assholes out of here." Chen commanded the bouncers. Wang's friends looked threateningly at Gael as they were pushed towards the house. Cheung wiped away the fresh blood which flowed down his face, and spat at Gael as he walked off. Mei said a few more angry words in Cantonese before turning to inspect Gael's face. There was a graze above his right eye, where his head had slapped the concrete, but it didn't really faze him. "Get him another drink." Chen said to a nearby waiter. Gotta love Chen, Gael thought with a smile as he touched his head to

see if he was bleeding. "What you smiling about? I'm so sorry!" Mei said, tears running down her cheeks. "Don't worry about it girly. The whiskey took the brunt of it. Anyway, I'd have done the same thing if I were his friends." "No you wouldn't." Mei said, "Wang and his friends think they can control everyone around them!" "Forget about it. He isn't here now." Gael said, taking the drink that the waiter handed him in one hand, and wiping the tear from Mei's cheek with the other. "You alright?" Chen asked, placing his hand on Gael's shoulder. Gael nodded and sipped his drink, the alcohol stinging his broken lip. "Lets get out of here." Chen suggested "But we just got here." Gael said "I know my friend, but the night is beautiful! Let's walk and drink! I know this house halfway down the mountain. The owner is never there, I've spent time at their pool many nights. Give me one minute while I get my other two friends, and then we can all head down there." Gael didn't like the thought of breaking into some rich person's pool, especially in another country, but Chen's confidence gave him an unwarranted peace of mind.