

## ***How Long Is A Second?***

Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 11:50 a.m.  
Eastbound Queen Elizabeth Way, east of Hurontario Street.  
I'm driving in the outside lane.

# **BANG**

I look and think:

*Wow. Accident. Over there.*

Several cars ahead of me, the SUV in the inside lane has done a 90° turn into the sound barrier.

The car behind it got by, as did the 2 cars in the middle lane and the cars ahead of me.

I immediately start braking.

As designed, the lower front-end of the SUV absorbed the crash and crumpled.

But the force of the impact hurls the SUV back and up.

It flips over.

# **BANG**

It lands on its roof.

Spinning, it heads across the inside lane toward the middle lane.

I think:

*On Fuck!! This is like a Bruce Willis movie.*

*I'm a part in this now.*

*We're going to collide!*

The SUV was on a direct interception course.

As I slam on the brakes, I quickly peak to see if I'm about to be rear-ended.

I'm also thinking:

*If I can't stop in time, when it gets into my lane, I'll swerve into the middle lane.*

The SUV stops in the middle lane, just as I too stop, still a bit behind it.

I sit there for a moment, digesting what just happened.

People are out of their cars and running to the SUV.



It's clear in front of me, so I slowly start to drive away.  
As I pass the SUV, I see a woman hanging upside down.

Everything took but a few seconds.

I have re-played this incident many times in my head, trying to re-construct the events and discerning my thoughts.

I know neither the cause of the accident nor the outcome.

Here is what I have concluded:

1. I was extremely fortunate.
2. Life is precious.
3. Life is precarious.
4. Things can happen incredibly fast.
5. Cars are dangerous.
6. Distractions can be lethal.
7. We're generally running on automatic.
8. We need to slow down and pay more attention.
9. We need to be here now.
10. The mind can process at amazing speed.

