

CHEMICAL ATTRACTION

Written by

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Based on the novel, The Chemist

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INT. KATE'S APARTMENT - DAY

DR. KATELYN CARRIE (25), who carries a headstrong adolescence behind an etched face years older, walks in to see her purse and its contents upended onto the carpet.

GUNTHER McGORE (55), a beefy frame of a man (think Sean Bean), sneaks up from behind and garrotes her, his mouth a mere inch from her ear.

GUNTHER

(eerie calm whisper)

Do you know why I so fancy death by strangulation so much? Because it's so satisfying to be able to look your victim in the eye and experience true terror as they think their last thoughts. And so long as the killer has a firm grip on the victim's neck, the blood flow through the carotid arteries to the brain stops and death is guaranteed in less than thirty seconds.

Gunther releases his grip just before Kate blacks out. She falls to the carpet like a discarded rag doll.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

Enjoying yourself I see.

KATE

(coughing)

Fuck you! GET OUT!

GUNTHER

I must say I'm disappointed. For a so-called genius, you really are very, very stupid.

Kate reaches for a pair of scissors on the carpet and points it at him.

KATE

Mom won't let you kill me. GO AWAY!

GUNTHER

(laughs)

Oh, I'd like nothing better, but our employer, would like you very much alive. So don't try to insult my intelligence.

KATE

The toxin vials are hidden. From you. From everyone!

GUNTHER

(glances over at Kate's laptop)

Hmmh. We'll see about that. You were good enough not to leave any trace of your formula on your laptop.

KATE

I SAID GET OUT OF HERE!!! This is *my* apartment.

GUNTHER

Oh, your apartment is it? You mean the one *Mommy* bought for you?

KATE

The formula is *my* creation, in my own head, and you can't have it!

GUNTHER

Don't be an idiot.
(sighs)
Fine, but there's something you should know about your boyfriend...

INT. DARKENED STAIRWELL - SAME TIME

DANIEL STRONG (35), a well-built dude wearing gym clothes, jogs up several flights of stairs in a darkened stairwell. His rust-hewed short wavy hair and gentle eyes belie the internal grief brewing inside him.

GUNTHER (V.O.)

Your new friend didn't even exist until last week. He's a an American intelligence agent who wants those vials and what's inside that pretty little head of yours, just like your beloved Jared before him.

KATE (V.O.)

(in tears)
You're lying!

Danny reaches the top landing and then pushes open the door.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

The bulkhead door swings open as Danny enters the rooftop.

JOANNE DAWSON (45), a slender African-American, stands over the parapet, back turned. She knows how to control a room.

Danny surveys the rooftop for others, but finds no one else.

GUNTHER (PRE-LAP)

My, you do seem to attract them
like flies, don't you?

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

KATE

What makes you think I'd tell him
or anyone else?

GUNTHER

Because you're weak. Because you're
just another pathetic junkie who's
living for her next high. The C-I-A
doesn't bollix around. Others who
know of the toxin will come looking
for you. Some may even wish to
silence you permanently after they
get it. I loathe you, but Vanessa
wants you untouched.

KATE

Until I give it up!

GUNTHER

The C-I-A knows what buttons to
push to get information out of you,
willingly or not.

Gunther walks to the door and turns back to her.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

Just remember... I'll be watching.

Gunther leaves. Cowering on the floor, Kate screams, but no one's listening.

EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME TIME

Danny walks up to the parapet beside Joanne, who does not turn to acknowledge him.

INTERCUT WITH: A frightened Kate as she crawls across the floor to the bathroom into the shower and turns on the water, getting drenched while fully clothed and wailing.

DANNY

What's this about? I'm very close to breaking her.

JOANNE

Your involvement in this operation is about to sunset.

Danny looks away and shakes his head.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Problem, Danny?

DANNY

Why would there be.

JOANNE

I know you.

DANNY

... Say Kate really needed help overcoming her demons? Could the Agency--

JOANNE

She a "project" for you, Danny? Another one of your drug counseling clients to fix? You never had a problem walking away from any other mark. Besides, she may be too far gone to help. Her profile is--

DANNY

You were the one who told me to counsel her so I could get inside her head. So that's what I'm doing.

JOANNE

Let me remind you she's already linked to the murder of one federal agent. What's to stop her from slipping some of her secret sauce into your morning coffee?

DANNY

She's no murderer.

JOANNE

Neither was Oppenheimer. Or Kalishnikov for that matter.

(MORE)

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Yet look at their legacies. Death and destruction.

DANNY

That's not her path.

JOANNE

She made her deal with the devil the day she created that Tri-Meth as a meal ticket for her mother to save her dying cosmetics empire. A toxin, I remind you, that's powerful enough to take out the population of Chicago with a single Splenda packet of the stuff. This, from the youngest MIT doctorate to ever come out of there. As long as she lives, she'll a security risk to this country, Danny. She's traitorous.

DANNY

And running a CIA op on domestic soil isn't?

Joanne stares daggers at him.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Look, however brilliant you believe her science mind is, Katelyn Carrie has the mental constitution of a paper bag.

JOANNE

Good, which is why it'll be that much easier to get the formula out of her in the next phase. You only primed her pump.

Danny looks away, defeated.

DANNY

So what happens to her now?

JOANNE

That won't concern you, but all the same, stick around in the event the team can't break her in the next seventy-two hours.

Danny heads toward the bulkhead door. As he grabs the door handle, he stops and then looks back.

DANNY

So when am I out, officially?

Joanne finally turns to make eye contact.

JOANNE

You'll know.

Danny leaves as the bulkhead door SLAMS shut.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Danny enters to see the contents of Kate's purse on the carpet. He notices the filled syringes on the floor, especially the labeled one that he picks up. Feint sobbing and the sound of running water distract him.

DANNY

Kate?

Danny sets the syringe back down with the others, and then runs into the bedroom where he sees steam clouds seep in from the bathroom. He opens the door to see Kate huddled on the floor of the running shower which he shuts off.

DANNY (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

KATE

Leave me alone!

He stoops down to notice a thin red line around her neck.

DANNY

I can't help if you won't tell me what happened. Who attacked you?

KATE

A man. He... he grabbed me from behind. I blacked out. Next thing I remember, he was gone.

DANNY

I'm calling the police.

KATE

No. Just forget it. Why can't you just let it go!?

DANNY

Because I care about you.

Kate hugs him as her tears flow.

KATE

I... need to get away from here.

DANNY

Then we leave the city together.

CUT TO BLACK.