

COLD WAR

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ZURICH - CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Sunny and crisp.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - PODIUM - DAY

Large crowd of doctors.

DR. CAROL MCKINLEY, 30s, confident, steps up to the podium.

CAROL

The common cold -

Someone SNEEZES.

CAROL (CON'T)

Gazuntite ... we may soon have a cure for that.

The crowd LAUGHS.

EXT. ZURICH - COMMERCIAL STREET - DAY

DR. KABIL, 30s, Iranian, anxious, stops in front of a café and glances over his shoulder, certain he's being followed.

DALSHID, 30s, husky, American with Middle Eastern features, hides in the crowd as he presses forward, closer to Dr. Kabil.

Dr. Kabil spots Dalshid.

Dalshid stops at the traffic light, their eyes lock.

Dalshid notices a red dot on Dr. Kabil's neck.

The dot slowly tracks up to his head.

Dr. Kabil is unaware.

Dalshid glances back trying to locate the source.

Dr. Kabil steps away as a BULLET misses his head and TAKES A CHUNK OUT of the brick wall.

Debris SPRAYS Dr. Kabil's cheek.

He runs believing Dalshid is his pursuer.

Dalshid spots a Stealthy Gunman across the street moving parallel to Dr. Kabil.

Dr. Kabil attempts to cross the street, but is held up by a Group of Over-Zealous Bicyclists.

The gunman grins knowing his prey is coming to him, but spots a police car at the intersection.

The gunman calculates, runs up the stairs to the overpass, giving him a bird's eye shot.

Dalshid watches, cuts across traffic, narrowly escaping death.

Glancing at the Oblivious Policeman, Dalshid tucks his gun in his waistband and pulls out a hunting knife.

Dr. Kabil spots Dalshid halfway across the street and freezes ... he notices the red dot moving up his chest.

Terrified, Dr. Kabil looks at the now curious policeman, glances at Dalshid, then raises his eyes to the overpass.

A knife PLUNGES into the gunman's neck.

The gunman CRASHES onto the police car.

Pedestrians SCREAM!

A HORN snaps Dr. Kabil out of his trance.

He searches for Dalshid, but the mysterious man is gone.

Dr. Kabil runs!

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - PODIUM - DAY

Carol aims the remote at the screen behind her.

A logo appears.

INSERT - SCREEN

TITAN PHARMACEUTICALS

BACK TO SCENE

CAROL

And let me conclude by saying that although the latest trials for a cure for the common cold were not successful, they did prove hopeful and I truly believe that a breakthrough is imminent.

The audience APPLUADS. Carol exits the stage.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Casual atmosphere.

Scientists and doctors mingle.

Carol pours a cup of coffee as Dr. Kabil tugs on her sleeve.

Carol smiles, adds sugar and cream to her cup.

CAROL

Dr. Kabil, what did you think of my speech?

DR. KABIL

(glances around suspiciously)
I'm sorry, but I missed it.

CAROL

(grabs a straw)
Thanks a lot. I'll be sure to return the favor.

Carol finally turns to him and notices his unusually disheveled appearance.

CAROL (CON'T)

Next time I'll be sure to schedule my presentation around your workout.

Dr. Kabil glances around skittishly.

Carol drops the playful attitude.

CAROL (CON'T)

Is everything all right?

DR. KABIL

I need to speak with you privately.

DR. ROSHKOV, 40s, Russian, rudely cuts between them and pours a cup, but only a TRICKLE comes out.

He SHAKES and TILTS the dispenser.

Carol and Dr. Kabil step away.

CAROL

I haven't seen you like this since final exams senior year.

DR. KABIL

Yes, we were on the same team back then and your friendship is something I've always valued.

CAROL

Adnan, you're beginning to worry me. What's going on?

DR. KABIL

Your speech today was a little off the mark, if I say so myself.

Carol throws an intense look.

CAROL

What do you mean ... you've had a breakthrough?

DR. KABIL

The cure, we've actually generated
a cure for the common cold.

CAROL

Are you serious ... then why so
hush-hush about it? We should be
celebrating.

DR. KABIL

You know as well as I do that my
government won't let it out once
they realize we've done it.

Carol joins the paranoia and glances around.

CAROL

You must publish it, Adnan. It will
change the world.

DR. KABIL

Come to my hotel tonight-

DR. WONSOM, 40s, Chinese, inappropriate behavior
written all over his chubby cheeks, approaches.

DR. WONSOM

Now what's with all the secrecy? I
believe that sort of relationship
is reserved for the bedroom.

CAROL

(slugs his arm lightly)
And what kind of secrets are you
keeping, Dr. Wonsom, that's what
we all want to know. Isn't that
right, Dr. Kabil?

DR. KABIL

Yes, secrets will be the death of
us all.

Dr. Kabil quickly walks away.

DR. WONSOM
(to Carol)
Was it something I said?

Carol shakes her head and hands him her coffee.

CAROL
Have mine - I think they're out.

EXT. BRIDGE - ACROSS FROM HOTEL - NIGHT

Foggy.

A horn BLOWS in the distance.

THE CLICKETY-CLACK of Carol's footsteps ECHOES and suddenly STOPS.

Carol squints ... Dr. Kabil and Dalshid engage in a heated discussion one block away.

A black SUV STOPS in front of the men.

A GUNSHOT.

Dalshid drops.

Two more GUNSHOTS.

Dr. Kabil stumbles back.

Falls off the bridge.

The SUV SPEEDS AWAY.

Carol runs, scans below, but Dr. Kabil is gone.

The stunned hotel crowd CROSSES the street.

Dalshid COUGHS.

Carol kneels next to Dalshid, searches for a bullet wound as he tries to rise.

CAROL
Stay down, you've been shot.

Carol presses on his shoulder, he MOANS, then passes out.

BYSTANDER

An ambulance is on the way.

INT. ZURICH HOSPITAL - WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Low activity.

Machinery HUMS in the background.

Carol sits with a DETECTIVE, 40s, surly.

DETECTIVE

We'll let you know if we find your friend, but I must be honest, if he fell in the river with those kinds of wounds then the chances of him surviving are very small.

CAROL

Is someone looking for the black car?

DETECTIVE

Of course we are and if it's possible, we will find them. Now about this other man who was shot, do you know him?

CAROL

No. I've never seen him before. Who is he?

DETECTIVE

We're trying to find out, but he didn't have any identification on him. Are you sure you're telling me everything you know?

CAROL

Yes, of course I am. I was supposed to meet Dr. Kabil for drinks, that's all.

(the detective studies her)

We're old friends and these conferences are our only opportunity to catch up.

DR. SINGER, 50s, hum-drum, approaches.

DR. SINGER

Excuse me, I just wanted to let you know that the man you brought in with the shoulder wound is stable, but may be unconscious for a while.

CAROL

Thanks for the update.

Dr. Singer leaves.

CAROL (CON'T)

Is there anything else?

DETECTIVE

No, not for now, but if anything comes to mind, you will call me?

CAROL

Of course.

The detective studies Carol curiously as she leaves.

EXT. ZURICH - CAROL'S HOTEL - NIGHT

Foggy.

Carol exits a cab, looks over her shoulder and enters.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - FRONT DESK - NIGHT

Crowded and festive.

Classical music PLAYS softly.

Carol makes a b-line toward the elevators, but catches a familiar face in the lobby that she can't place.

The DESK CLERK interrupts her train of thought.

DESK CLERK

Dr. McKinley...

(Carol stops)

There's a package for you.

CAROL

Really?

Carol quickly looks back, but the mysterious man's gone.

DESK CLERK

Is everything all right?

CAROL

Just thought I saw someone I knew.

(beat) So who's it from?

DESK CLERK

I don't know, ma'am. I wasn't here when it arrived and there's no return address.

Carol estimates the weight - not too heavy.

She surveys the area again, but he's still gone.

DESK CLERK

Will there be anything else, ma'am?

CAROL

No, thank you.

Carol heads to the elevators.

INT. HOTEL - CAROL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ornate. Quiet.

Carol visually inspects before walking to the bed.

She RIPS it open halfway, but hears VOICES in the hall.

She CHAINS the door before fully opening the package.

Carol pulls out a sealed vial, examines it curiously, and pushes two DECOMPRESSING buttons on each side...

...the vial SNAPS OPEN revealing a syringe and one tube of medicine.

KNOCK! KNOCK!!

Carol jumps, notices a handwritten note in the vial.

INSERT - HANDWRITTEN NOTE

For The World - K

BACK TO SCENE

CAROL

Kabil.

KNOCK! KNOCK!! KNOCK!!!

A man's voice BOOMS!

Carol anxiously looks for a hiding place, but can't decide.

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dr. Roshkov TWISTS the door handle unsuccessfully.

He flips his sports coat back to reveal a gun.

INT. HOTEL - CAROL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Carol SNAPS the vial shut, sticks it in her purse, and moves to the window.

Dr. Roshkov KICKS OPEN the door.

Gun in hand, Dr. Roshkov rushes in, but Carol is gone.

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