

Episode 2.5 : Reactive Agents

COLD OPEN

We see **Sheri Dennon** and **Giuletta Nefaria** sitting in the restaurant of a high-end, 5- star hotel. **Giuletta**'s bodyguard, **Grigori Sovchenko**, is seated nearby drinking a small coffee and intently watching the women. A sign on the door of the restaurant lets any would-be customers know that the place is closed for a private party. A young waiter pours water and tea for the ladies and tells them that he will return after they have had more time to go over the breakfast menus. **Giuletta** is all smiles and charm while **Sheri** is cautiously nervous. Neither of the two pick up their menus and **Giuletta** moves straight into the reason for the impromptu breakfast meeting.

Giuletta Nefaria: *"So, I'm sure that you're aware that my father and your company are in the beginning stages of going into business together."*

Sheri Dennon: *"Only vaguely, Ms. Nefaria. For the most part..."*

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Please, call me Giuletta."*

(We see a quick-cut/flashback of **Sheri** remembering how, just a few hours ago, **Delroy** made a similar request of **Sheri** in a cramped "no-tell-motel" room.)

Sheri Dennon: *"Ummm....okay. Giuletta. Like I was saying, I'm only vaguely familiar with the fact that your father and Triune are planning on doing business. I'm just a researcher....I don't really deal with that part of my company's....functioning?!?"*

"Honestly, I'm not in the loop when it comes to things like boardroom deals..."

(**Sheri** nervously chuckles as **Giuletta** silently allows her to continue.)

"Portfolios... Stocks.... Bonds..."

(**Sheri** pauses, hoping that her admissions will give her an out from whatever off-the-record corporate play that **Giuletta** is hoping to involve her in.)

(**Giuletta** continues to look at **Sheri** with a slightly amused look on her face. **Sheri** quietly continues.)

"Bears... Bulls..."

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Am I making you nervous Dr. Dennon? I'm sorry I promise you that I'm only..."*

Sheri Dennon: *"Please, call me Cherry."*

(**Sheri** closes her eyes in embarrassment then quickly corrects herself.)

"Sheri! I meant...Please, call me Sheri."

(**Giuletta** offers up a warm smile and continues.)

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Well, Sheri, I promise you that I didn't invite you to breakfast this morning on behalf of my father or his company or anyone else for that matter. So if you're worried about that, please don't be. "*

(Sheri begins to laugh at how nervous she is and sips on her tea in an effort to relax.)

(Giuletta also smiles and laughs then waves the waiter over to their table.)

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Can you get my friend Sheri here the Brioche French Toast with fresh berries and brandy barrel maple syrup. And I'll have the smoked salmon with the chef's specialty garnish and a whole wheat bagel. Thank you."*

(Giuletta looks at Sheri, gently removes the menu from the doctor's hands, and gives it to the waiter.)

"Trust me, you'll thank me later."

(Over the course of the meal we see a short montage of Giuletta and Sheri talking and getting to know each other. We even hear a bit of one of their conversations, where Giuletta and Sheri realize that they both love classic films from Hollywood's "Golden Era" and that they are both fans of actress & scientist Whitney Frost despite her criminal past. After a few moments and a few mimosas, Giuletta steers the breakfast back to business..)

Giuletta Nefaria: *"So, why are we here this morning? Well, the short answer is 'because I need your help'. What I'm about to tell you is a pretty well kept bit of information and it's not something that I share with you lightly."*

Sheri Dennon: *"Ooooooaaaaay..."*

(Giuletta takes a moment to collect herself before continuing)

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Near the end of my mother's pregnancy with me, she was attacked by a man that my father had crossed during one of his earliest business ventures. Due to the...unconventional... means of the attack, my mother was gravely injured and later on, she died while giving birth to me."*

(Sheri - who is understandably thrown for a bit of a curve by the opening lines of Giuletta's latest story - sets her mimosa down and listens intently to the young woman.)

"While the weapon that was used on my mother took an unbelievable toll on her physically, I was left relatively unharmed by the whole ordeal. Well, that is until I started to become a woman. In my mid teens I started suffering from excruciating migraines that seemed to be triggered by everything from bright lights and loud noises to the smell of spicy food and perfumes."

"By my 21st birthday, the migraines also started to bring crippling muscle pain and severe asthma attacks with them. I mean these things would hit me like a Mack truck then just fade away after about an hour or so. And every time one of them hit me, it was terrible and scary and made me feel like I was on the brink of death. But they were also relatively short-lived and infrequent. So after awhile I just made up my mind that it was just something that I had to live with, you know?"

(A sad smile beams on Giuletta's face)

"By the time I was 25, the muscle pain became an ever present shadow over my world. So much so that it required a unique form of treatment just to keep me from becoming a full blown pain pill addict."

(**Giuletta** discreetly reveals that beneath her stylish outfit is a high-tech looking body suit that resembles the classic black and white **Madame Masque** outfit.)

"And last year, for my 30th birthday, things decided to get REALLY interesting."

(**Giuletta** looks at **Grigori** and nods her head slightly. The bodyguard steps over to where the waiter and the bartender are talking and asks them to step back into the kitchen so that the ladies may have a little privacy.)

"I know that you're going to find this a little hard to believe but...this face that you see...this isn't really what I look like. At least, not anymore. No, this is an amazing bit of deception that my dear father scoured the earth to find just to help me deal with the latest little 'fuck you' that my mysterious disease has gifted me with. "

(**Giuletta** moves her hands to her temples and presses small buttons that turn off her **photostatic veil**. We don't see **Giuletta's** real face, we only see **Sheri's** shocked reaction to it. Her eyes widen and dart to different areas of **Giuletta's** face. Her brows furrow and her lips curl slightly in disgust. After a few moments she quietly says...)

Sheri Dennon: *"My God...."*

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Yeah it's ummm...yeah."*

(**Giuletta** turns her photostatic veil back on and quickly downs her mimosa in one big gulp.)

"Now aren't you glad that I ordered you something binding, like French toast, instead of...you know... an omelet or fruit & yogurt?"

Sheri Dennon: *"I don't mean to be cruel, but, what kind of disease do you have?"*

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Well, the facial scarring pretty much confirmed that I am suffering from the same degenerative illness that took my mother's life, but on a much more drawn out scale. Besides that, the only other facts that I can offer is that it's very rare and very aggressive. It continues to find new and inventive ways to make my life harder and harder to bear. And, most importantly, it seems to originate from and primarily affect the nervous system."*

(**Giuletta** and **Sheri** lock eyes on this last note while **Grigori** makes his way back to his spot near the women. As he sits back down, his gaze is solely focused on **Sheri**.)

(**Giuletta's** demeanor suddenly becomes slightly less charming and a bit more intimidating.)

"And it has come to my attention that you and your team have made some astounding breakthroughs in the areas of treating nerve damage and chronic pain, as well as significantly improving the body's ability to heal from significant injuries. In fact, I'm told that one subject in particular has shown some truly amazing... some might even say superhuman... improvements since entering a drug trial being conducted by Triune Pharmaceuticals...and headed up by you."

Given my ...condition... I'm sure you can appreciate why I am desperately interested in working with you."

(SCENE CHANGES TO A SMALL DELI JUST OUTSIDE OF WASHINGTON, DC)

(At the same time that **Sheri** and **Giuletta** are having their breakfast, **Delroy Garrett Jr [Triathlon]** is picking up a sandwich and drink from a deli before heading back to **The Tower**. The cashier openly flirts with **Delroy** [which suggests that he has been to the shoppe before] but he pretends to be unaware.)

(Three masked gunmen enter the deli, waving their handguns at customers and staff, and barking orders for the cashier to empty the register and for everyone else to empty their pockets, wallets, and purses.

The first gunman puts up the "Closed" sign on the door, turns off the lights, and guards the door - leaving the interior dimly lit by sunrays from the windows.

The second gunman sprays paint over a small, wall-mounted camera situated near the register. He then goes behind the counter and looks for any kind of emergency alarms or weapons that may cause him and his partners trouble. After finding nothing, he corrals **Delroy** and the deli staff to the middle of the room once the cashier opens the register.

The third gunman is making his way through the customers, and having them place their cash, jewelry, electronics and other valuables into a backpack.)

Gunman #3: *"There you go... Nice and easy....Don't lose your life over no cell phone man. You don't want no problems."*

(Seeing a split second opportunity where almost all the customers and staff are looking down to avoid making eye contact with the robbers, and none of the gunmen have their weapons trained on anyone [with Gunman # 1 lowering his firearm to his side while looking out the window for approaching trouble, Gunman #2 actually putting his revolver down to better empty the register, and Gunman #3 pointing his glock at the ceiling as he walks from table to table] **Delroy** quickly moves through the darkened deli and easily disarms and subdues each of the men before anyone has time to process what is happening or fire a shot.

We focus on the huddled deli owner, who can hear the punches, blows, and grunts of **Delroy's** assault on the would-be robbers, but doesn't look up to witness any of it.)

Deli Owner: *"Look!...Just take the money and don't hurt anyone, okay! It's not worth..."*

(The lights turn on and the deli owner and customers slowly look around to find that the gunmen are gone.)

Deli Owner: *"Is everyone okay?!?"*

(A low round of responses can be heard as people start to look around trying to figure out what happened)

Deli Cashier: *"Are you okay ??"*

(We see the cashier ask **Delroy** as he pretends to be just as confused as the rest of the customers)

Delroy Garrett Jr: *"Yeah, I'm good. What just happened?"*

Random Customer: *"Hey, I think all of our stuff is up there on the counter."*

(People quickly make their way to the counter)

Deli Owner: *"Sean! Call the police!"*

(We see customers gathering up their belongings and cautiously milling around the deli.)

"Okay folks, everybody just...."

(A loud banging sound can be heard from the back area of the deli as an employee hurriedly comes back to the front area of the deli)

Deli Worker: *"I think they're locked in the freezer."*

(After a few confusing seconds...)

Deli Owner: *"Okay folks! Show's over! Let's all get the hell outta here!"*

(As **Delroy** is helping other customers exit the deli, he notices a scared teenage girl who doesn't appear to be with anyone and who won't move or take her eyes off of him. Not knowing if she's in shock from the robbery or from seeing him using his abilities to take down , he makes his way over to the young woman and helps her leave the deli. The whole time he reassures her that everything is okay and that situations like this have a way of playing tricks on a person's mind.)

(SCENE CHANGES TO THE RESTAURANT OF THE HIGH-END HOTEL WHERE Sheri AND GIULETTA ARE HAVING BREAKFAST)

Sheri Dennon: *"I think I better head home now."*

(After a few tense seconds of **Giuletta** just staring at **Sheri**, the heiress suddenly smiles and turns the charm back on.)

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Yes, of course! I've taken up enough of your time already."*

(**Grigori** stands up and helps the ladies out of their chairs.)

(SCENE CHANGES TO THE CONDO PARKING GARAGE WHERE Sheri FIRST MET GIULETTA)

(**Sheri** exits **Giuletta**'s luxury car before **Grigori** can come around to open the door for her. She turns to say goodbye to **Giuletta** before closing her door, but before she can, the heiress slides over to where **Sheri** had previously been seated, extends her palm out the open door and begins to speak while shaking **Sheri**'s hand.)

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Again, t*

Kihank you, Sheri, for meeting with me. You have no idea how much I've been looking forward to this."

Sheri Dennon: *"Sure. Thank you for the breakfast. It was one that I'll never forget."*

Giuletta Nefaria: *"Excellent! And I hope that you don't think too poorly of me for all of this morning's theatrics. Beside being a fan of the melodramatic, I'm a desperate woman in desperate times."*

(**Giuletta** holds onto **Sheri**'s hand well past the point of a normal shake)

THE OPENING NOTES TO THE MAIN THEME BEGINS TO PLAY - **[LISTEN](#)**

"And as you are now aware, Dr. Dennon, I desperately need your help. You take care."

(**Giuletta** finally lets go of **Sheri**'s hand before **Grigori** closes the door, gets back in the driver's seat and drives away - leaving a stunned and shaken **Sheri** standing alone in the parking garage of her condo)

END OF EPISODE