

THE DOMINATRIX WORE RED

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Based on the novella by Keith Alan

1/17/2018  
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**FADE IN:**

EXT. STREET - DAY

In a nice part of the city, the streets are lined with mature trees and the landscaping in front of each building is manicured. The condos and apartment buildings lining each side of the street are four to six stories, so some light reaches the street.

HAPWELL (HAP) JONES, a distinguished man around six foot tall, trim and athletic, in his late forties, short dark hair with a touch of gray at his temples, gets out of his car. It has flashing red and blue lights in the front grille, and there are a number of other police vehicles with lights going.

Both lanes of the street are blocked and traffic is being directed around, with the occasional horn blare. Hap glances back and forth to the buildings on either side of the street as he heads toward the building with the steady stream of people going in and out.

There are a few dozen gawkers held back behind the yellow tape and eyed by uniformed policemen.

INT. CONDO HALLWAY - DAY

A condo for the up-and-coming political actors. The decor is simple, but elegant.

Hap walks down the corridor with confidence, casually glancing around.

He approaches a UNIFORMED OFFICER standing at a door.

HAP  
Hapwell Jones, Detective.

The Uniform looks up from his clipboard with the start of a smile, it quickly vanishes with the scowl directed at him.

INT. CONDO LIVING AREA - DAY

In the small, but elegant, living area is a jumble of activity, but all of it purposeful and well choreographed. Some people dusting for fingerprints, others making photographs or measurements. The small living area looks otherwise undisturbed.

The furniture, though sparse, is high end; no Ikea here. The tiny kitchen area is clean, but for a bottle of wine and two glasses. One has been untouched and still has wine in it.

The detective scans the area with a practiced eye as he walks toward the only other room.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Inside the small bedroom, crowded with several people in it, is DEREK (DB) BOYD, late 30's ex-college football player, clearly a street fighter. He looks at Hap.

DB

You're going to love this one!

Stretched out over the full-sized bed, the victim is a nude male, in his late twenties. Tied firmly to the four corners of the bed, he has a scarf tightly wrapped around his neck.

He's smiling, a woodie pokes up from the sheet, and there's a mess of bodily fluids soaked into the sheet covering him.

DB

He went out with a bang!

HAP

(without smiling)

Ha ha. How many times have you used that already?

OTHER PEOPLE

Four!

Hap shakes his head as DB grins.

HAP

Tell me what you've got so far.

DB

Oh, it gets better. Way better. Jonathan Sidwell, twenty-nine. He worked as an aid to Senator Dell.

(pause)

And he has a top secret clearance.

Hap frowns.

HAP

Oh great. The press is going to be all over this.

DB

As you can see, Jonathan liked things kinky. There are no signs of violence, other than the obvious, of course, except for the imprint of a size seven and a half high-heel shoe on his chest.

Hap looks around.

HAP  
How the hell did he afford this  
place as a Senator's aid?

DB grunts.

DB  
Trust fund baby.

Hap grunts.

HAP  
Any forensics yet?

DB  
Marjory?

A middle-aged CSI tech, MARJORY has been conferring with the others working the scene.

MARJORY  
So far, the only thing we have are  
three long brunette hairs. They were  
caught in the victim's left wrist  
restraint. Preliminary results  
aren't showing any other  
fingerprints besides the victim, but  
we're still working the scene.

Marjory pulls out a clipboard and glances at it.

MARJORY  
Liver temp indicates the victim died  
around eleven thirty last night,  
plus or minus fifteen minutes.  
Preliminary cause of death is  
strangling. Given the types of  
restraints and lack of any other  
violence, it might not even qualify  
as murder.

Hap considers this.

HAP  
What's the delay on DNA look like?

MARJORY  
(shrugs)  
The usual. Two to three weeks.

HAP  
Even with this being a Senator's  
aid?

MARJORY

We were able to move the autopsy up, the MEs are in a small lull right now, but forensics has the usual backlog.

Hap looks at DB.

HAP

Anything from the neighbors?

DB

Nothing. The construction of these buildings has lots of concrete, so people rarely hear anything. Heck, if you were playing the radio loud, you might not hear if your neighbor fired a gun.

HAP

Got anything from surveillance?

DB

We haven't got the street cameras yet, but we got lucky with the condo's, they're all digital. We've looked at the ones for the lobby, elevators and back entrance - there are no cameras in the stairwells or hallways.

DB motions to a tech who comes over with a tablet and hands it to him. DB plays with the screen until he gets to the relevant time.

INTERCUT WITH TABLET SCREEN

INT. LOBBY-TABLET SCREEN

DB (O.S.)

It appears to be a woman.

An attractive woman with long brunette hair arrives around ten thirty, wearing a trench coat and a hat. Her legs are exposed, but her face is never seen.

CONDO BEDROOM

HAP

You said "appears to be a woman."  
What suggests it might not be?

DB

Oh, nothing.  
(grins)  
Just being complete, like you told  
(MORE)

DB (CONT'D)  
me. If it's really a guy, he has  
some fabulous legs. Here's the back  
camera.

EXT. CONDO BACK DOCK-TABLET SCREEN

On fast forward, the tablet shows two bulky-looking  
muscular guys lounging about for about an hour, then  
heading into the building around eleven ten.

CONDO BEDROOM

HAP  
Anything better later?

DB queues up the appropriate spot.

LOBBY-TABLET SCREEN

Video shows what appears to be the same woman leaving.

DB (O.S.)  
She leaves about eleven thirty.  
Doesn't appear to be stressed at  
all. Left as casually as she came.

CONDO BEDROOM

HAP  
Anything else?

DB fiddles with the tablet.

CONDO BACK DOCK-TABLET SCREEN

The rear entrance shows two guys leaving around midnight,  
their clothes and build indicate it may be the two that  
entered earlier. They are casual. No shots of their face.

DB (O.S.)  
The resolution isn't very good

INT. CONDO BEDROOM - DAY

DB hands the tablet back to the tech.

DB  
At around midnight, the whole camera  
system went down for about an hour.  
The techs are looking to see if they  
can figure out what happened, but  
the manager says this has happened  
once or twice a month over the last  
six months, so it might be nothing.

A CSI standing at the doorway has an evidence bag in his (or her) hand.

CSI  
Detectives?

Hap and DB turn to look.

CSI  
Given how the victim is laid out, I thought you should see this right away.

CSI hands Hap a clear evidence bag.

HAP holds it so he and DB can read it. A business card. On one side was a horse whip, at an angle, on the other is this:

**Want to be tied up and beaten?  
Looking for a Dominatrix?  
Visit Mistress Elise  
and also be beguiled by erudite conversation.  
[some website and fake number]**

DB  
What the fuck is air-you-dite?

HAP  
It means to have great knowledge or education.  
(smiles)  
And it's air-roo-dite, you palooka.

DB  
Hey, I resemble that remark!

Hap considers the card a few more moments, then hands it back to the CSI. He pulls out his phone and enters the web address. DB leans over to look as the homepage came up.

On it is ELISE DAVENPORT, a very attractive early 40's women with long brunette hair, dressed in a tight black latex corset, and wearing black fishnet stockings and spiked heels.

HAP  
Who discovered the body?

DB  
An intern showed up here around noon. When the victim didn't show up - I gather that's something that happened a time or two a month - the intern would wake his ass up.  
(pause)  
She has a spare set of keys.

Hap rolls his eyes.

DB

She let herself in, said she yelled for him. When he didn't respond, she opened the bedroom door. Took one look and started screaming. Like I said, the walls are thick here, so no one heard. She eventually calmed down enough to call 911. She said she didn't touch anything. What we've seen so far, that seems to be the case.

HAP

Where is she now?

DB

We've taken her down to the station. We're hoping we can keep a lid on this for a while longer, but did notify the Senator's office.

Hap considers this for a while.

HAP

Contact public records, let's go visit Mistress Elise and see what she has to say.

DB

Are you sure you want me to go with you boss? Maybe you need to do this by yourself?

DB guffaws when Hap studiously ignores him.

INT. CAR - DAY

They look out on a very nice brownstone on a quiet side street with no through traffic. Lots of expensive cars are parked along the street.

DB

Man, being a dominatrix must pay really well. These things got to be at least a million bucks a piece.

Hap nods. DB is craning his neck looking out the window.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Hap parks in front of a fire hydrant. He puts his "police duty" sign on the dash.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - DAY

They walk up the several steps to the covered front stoop. The double door is covered with intricate woodwork and looks heavy. There are several cameras covering the front of the building and porch. Hap reaches out to press the buzzer.

After a few moments,

ELISE (O.S.)  
(husky, sensual)  
Yes?

HAP  
Elise Davenport?

ELISE (O.S.)  
Yes.

HAP  
My name is Hapwell Jones and this is my partner Derek Boyd. We'd like to talk to you about an incident that happened last night.

ELISE (O.S.)  
Hold your IDs up to the camera.

They oblige. After a pause,

ELISE (O.S.)  
I'm with a client right now. Can you come back in two hours?

DB leans toward the intercom.

DB  
Ma'am, this is a police investigation. We'd like to talk to you right now.

ELISE (O.S.)  
Do you have a warrant?

DB shakes his head.

ELISE (O.S.)  
Then I'll see you in two hours.

MAN (O.S.)  
Mistress, what's the problem?

ELISE (O.S.)  
I told you to be quiet while I was on the phone!

SMACK, WHIMPER.

Hap and DB look at each other.

ELISE (O.S.)

Gentlemen, I assume you know how I make a living. I assure you there is no crime in progress and no need to breach my doors. See you in two hours.

They hesitate for a moment, then turn and walk back to the car.

DB

She sure sounds like she knows what she's talking about, eh?

Hap nods absently.

INT. CAR - DAY

They slide into the vehicle and sit.

HAP

Well, it's early for dinner, but I don't see any point in going back to the precinct.

INT. SUB PLACE - DAY

DB gets a big messy meatball sub and Hap a Philly-style cheese steak.

EXT. SIDEWALK TABLE - DAY

DB

What makes a guy want to get his ass kicked by a woman?

HAP

I really don't understand what motivates these people. I've never had to work with the BDSM subculture.

DB, as he digs into his sandwich like a starving animal, has a thoughtful look on his face. Hap eats with more decorum, but also ponders.

Around his mouthful,

DB

I wonder if she practices that voice.

(shakes his head)

The visions I got when she answered.

Hap nods and smiles

HAP

Definitely a distraction. Imagine her dressed like her website and talking in that voice. How long would you refuse, if she wanted to beat the crap out of you?

DB stares over Hap's shoulder a moment, then a flush starts up his neck. He turns his focus to the last few bites.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - DAY

This time there's a gap along the street, so Hap doesn't have to park at the fire hydrant. At the top of the stairs, DB reaches out to press the buzzer.

The door opens out before he could press.

DB

(low gasp)

Elise, average height, with long brunette hair, wearing a form fitting red dress that comes down to the middle of her thighs. The left side of the dress is slit up to the middle of her waist.

Her hair runs down the right side of her chest. She stands with her left side slightly toward the men, a riding crop in her right hand. As the house is a step up from the porch, she looks down on them.

ELISE

(same husky voice)

Gentlemen, follow me.

INT. BROWNSTONE - DAY

Hallway of high-end brownstone, elegant and expensive. Antique tables and lamps line the way.

The men focus on Elise behind as she sashays back and forth while she walks down the hallway. About halfway down the corridor, she turns into a doorway.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Hap and DB crane their necks, looking around. The office looks like something Hollywood would come up with for a university professor. The walls are lined with bookshelves, all full. Many of the book titles appeared to be related to psychology, but a number are neurobiology related.

The large desk has neat stacks of manila folders covering about half its surface.

ELISE  
(no trace of sensuality)  
Please be seated, gentlemen.

Elise now wears a white lab coat that covers her dress completely, her hair is up in a bun and she's wearing very practical glasses. She sits in a chair behind her desk, several inches higher than their seats, leaning back, relaxed.

DB gawks until Hap gives him a shove.

They take their seats

HAP  
(clears throat )  
Miss Davenport, can you please tell us where you were between ten thirty and midnight last night?

ELISE  
(pause)  
Here. Alone.

She stares at them.

HAP  
(pause)  
Do you know Jonathan Sidwell?

ELISE  
(pause)  
I have knowledge of him.

After another awkward silence

DB  
(blurts)  
You actually get paid to beat guys up, right?

Hap stares daggers at DB.

ELISE  
(pause)  
I get paid very well, generally by very rich and powerful people.

DB blushes and looks down.

HAP  
As you will probably hear on the news later, Mr. Sidwell died last  
(MORE)

HAP (CONT'D)  
 night. The circumstances indicate he  
 was with someone acting in a  
 professional capacity.

ELISE  
 (pause)  
 And you want to know if I was that  
 person in that capacity.

Hap nods.

ELISE  
 I was not.

HAP  
 (pause)  
 Would it be possible to get some of  
 your time, as a public service, to  
 explain the BDSM subculture to me?

ELISE  
 (pause)  
 I can spare a couple of hours, if  
 you'd like to meet me here tomorrow  
 morning at nine.

HAP  
 Thank you. I'll be here, then.

Hap stands up, quickly followed by DB. Elise stands up a  
 bit slower, then comes around the desk. She isn't wearing  
 heels any longer, instead has practical flats showing the  
 tops of her feet. Hap stares at her feet.

HAP  
 Miss Davenport, what size shoes do  
 you wear?

Elise looks at him quizzically for a moment.

ELISE  
 Size seven and a half. Why?

Hap shrugs and turns to leave.

HAP  
 You have lovely feet.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

She escorts the men to the door with a puzzled expression  
 on her face.

ELISE  
 Until tomorrow, Detective Jones.