

WHISPERS

Synopsis

From the Novel

by

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Synopsis

After a lovely celebratory luncheon with her agent, HILARY THOMAS, an attractive young novelist in her 30's, has a very special birthday dinner by herself at her favorite Chinese restaurant. She is happy being alone on this occasion and the sale of her first book is the best birthday gift she could have received. When she returns home she is surprised by a strange man she'd interviewed weeks earlier for a book. BRUNO FRYE, (a truly demented, menacing creature), attempts to rape and murder her. They struggle in a long and violent battle. When Hilary finally reaches a gun she keeps for protection she is too panicked to shoot him and he leaves vowing to return.

DETECTIVE LT. TONY CLEMENZA and his partner LT. FRANK HOWARD arrive in response to her call. Clemenza tries to be sympathetic, while Howard bullies her insisting she set her attacker up. Later that night, Hilary, along, frightened, and frustrated barricades herself into the guest bedroom with several pieces of heavy furniture placed against the door and a knife at her side. Frye occupies himself most of the night and savagely beating some street punks he entraps. By smashing a window he reenters Hilary's house in the morning and keeps a vigil by her bedroom door.

When she awakens, all seems normal. She receives a brief visit from her agent. Alone again, suddenly from nowhere Bruno attacks. this fight bloodier and more violent than the first. Hilary succeeds in stabbing him repeatedly in the chest and stomach and he crawls off.

Clemenza is very upset by the second attack and even Howard is beginning to come around to believing her. Later that day, after Bruno makes a phone call to an unknown party vowing that next time he will "kill Katherine forever" he dies in his van full of satanic paraphernalia.

Hilary identifies his body at the morgue. Tony and Frank take her out for a drink. Frank apologizes to her in his own way, finally succumbing to Tony's distaste for his macho piggishness. Tony is obviously falling for her. He asks her for a date the next evening. After some initial resistance she accepts. JOSHUA RHINEHART, caretaker of the Frye Estate in Deervalley, railroads the town undertaker and sheriff into burying Bruno's body immediately without embalming it. He is a wizened pedantic little man of 70, and it's clear Bruno made his last call to him.

Tony and Hilary share a lovely dinner at a country inn owned by a friend of Tony's. There she discovers his hidden talent for painting. The canvas' on the restaurant walls are all signed, "T. Clemenza".

They return to her house and she receives the fourth obscene phone call of the day. Tony promises to have her number changed in the morning. They make another date and he leaves.

While investigating a narcotics case the next day, Tony and Frank are taken by surprise and Frank is killed.

In Deervalley that afternoon an unidentified gloved figure comes and opens Bruno's coffin moments before it's burial.

Back in town, Hilary takes off for an afternoon job and is followed through the park.

That evening when Tony doesn't appear for their date Hilary tracks him down at his apartment. There she comforts him over Frank's death and they make love under a half finished portrait of Hilary that Tony has been working on. After a day and a half of lovemaking she heads home.

When she arrives she finds her house torn apart and her beloved cat mouse, dead with his neck broken. She can hardly believe her eyes when Bruno emerges again to attack her.

After receiving a "disconnected number" message when he tries to call her, Tony senses the danger and races through town to get to her house. Once there, he smashes a window with his gun and calls for her. Bruno flees, vowing again to return.

Hilary tells Tony about the garlic Bruno wore around his neck and his talk of driving a stake through her heart. He knows she is telling the truth since he had never told anyone about the satanic paraphernalia they'd found with his corpse. Somehow Bruno Frye is back, and the two of them embark on a journey to find the explanation of this return from the dead.

At the morgue they discover that all of Bruno Frye's records have disappeared. In Deervalley they visit the funeral home and the undertaker confesses that he did not embalm the body at Rhinehart's request. A stop at the sheriff's leads them to the Frye Estate and Rhinehart. Questioned about his peculiar burial request, he claims that "Katherine would have wanted it that way". Katherine was Bruno's mother and has been dead for five years.

In searching through the house they find papers for a secret bank account that Bruno kept from Rhinehart. A visit to the bank reveals that he had done some business there the day after his death. From that, they learn of payments Bruno had been making. The first to a DR. RUDGE.

As Tony and Hilary head for the doctor's, the Sheriff unearths Bruno's coffin to discover it empty. Bruno, in the meanwhile, brutally rapes and murders Hilary's cleaning woman, thinking momentarily that she is now Katherine. He drives a stake through her heart and realizes she is not. After making a few clever phone calls, and grabbing the cleaning woman's drivers license, he heads back to Deervalley to await Hilary/Katherine's arrival.

Dr. Rudge is a psychiatrist who saw Bruno until he stopped coming about a year ago. He plays tape recordings of sessions with Bruno. From these they learn that Bruno's mother was a satanist. She'd convinced him his sex organs were marked and his soul had been sold to the devil. He was also victim to a recurring nightmare about his mother opening a mysterious door, pushing him down into a room, and locking him in with "whispers" that tormented him.

their next stop is a satanic bookstore where Bruno spent a lot of money after he stopped seeing Dr. Rudge. Apparently deciding to fight fire with fire. He was convinced his mother was returning in the forms of other women to haunt him and he was determined to finally kill her.

Their last stop is an elderly lady named MRS. YANCEY. She is a retired Madam who took Bruno's mother in to her whorehouse to hide her through her pregnancy. Katherine's father, in the habit of committing bizarre sexual acts on his daughter, had gotten her pregnant, hid her with Mrs. Yancey, and circulated a story of her adopting a child from friends killed in an accident. When Katherine gave birth to male twins, he was furious and Katherine forced them to hide and pretend they were only one person.

Tony and Hilary head back to the Frye Estate to question Rhinehart about his involvement in this. By the time they arrive Bruno has murdered Rhinehart, tacked the cleaning woman's license on a wall with other blood stained license's and is in his room wrapped around the rotting corpse of his twin brother.

Bruno ambushes Tony, slashing his shoulder so severely that he passes out. Then he goes after Hilary. He chases her into the back yard where he inadvertently backs her up into the door of an underground cellar. She falls in and lands in a massive swarm of slimy wood beetles whose whispering noise is deafening. The insects like warm, wet

places and begin to seek them out on Hilary's body. She and Bruno struggle as he tries to stab her. At the last possible moment Tony appears at the door and shoots him.

He helps Hilary out and as they walk toward the house Bruno comes charging out covered with beetles and hurls his body off the cliff, finally coming to rest at the bottom with the first genuine look of peace on his face we have ever seen.