

CHASING THE LIGHT

Written by

Avery Garza

EXT. LOW STEPS - DAY

Dana and Rafael are sat side by side on the steps, surrounded by dozens of other students. The sun is shining, giving Dana a certain glow that is mesmerizing to Rafael.

They sit just close enough for their knees to barely touch.

They each have a cup of ICED COFFEE and a BAGEL. Rafael stuffs his face, cream cheese getting on his cheek. He doesn't notice.

Dana tries her best to take small, graceful bites, and also ignore the cream cheese on Rafael's face.

RAFAEL

What do you mean you don't like
Indian food?

DANA

I don't know, I just don't like it.

RAFAEL

That's a terrible answer.

He grabs a NAPKIN and brings it to his face. Dana's stare tightens. Rafael wipes his mouth, missing the cream cheese still on his cheek.

RAFAEL (CONT'D)
Where are you from again?

DANA
Indiana.

RAFAEL
WELL THERE'S YOUR FUCKING ANSWER
WHY.

DANA
(laughs)
What do you mean?

RAFAEL
You can't trust white people with
that many spices.

Dana laughs. At Rafael's obliviousness to the food on his face. She grabs another NAPKIN.

DANA
I'm sorry, I just have to do this
really quick.

She leans into Rafael, he can feel her breath on his face.

DANA (CONT'D)
Can I?

He nods, his chest tightening, breath accelerating, a small smile growing on his lips.

She takes the napkin and wipes the cream cheese off his cheek, then leans back.

RAFAEL
(exhales)
I'm so stupid.

Dana lets out a small laugh.

RAFAEL (CONT'D)
How long was that there?

DANA
A good minute or so.

RAFAEL
And you didn't tell me?

DANA
(teasing him)
I wanted to see if you would get it.

RAFAEL
(after a moment)
You really faked me out there for a second.

DANA
Hm?

RAFAEL
You didn't have to get so close to me like that.

DANA
Oh sorry, was that a problem?

RAFAEL
(blushing)
No, not at all.
(beat)
I wouldn't mind if you wanted to get that close to me again. And maybe next time not because you're wiping food off my face.

DANA
Oh really?

He slides closer to her, closing all the space between them. Dana relaxes into him just a bit.

RAFAEL
If you'd like, we could try and redeem your Indiana Indian food some time this weekend.

DANA
Are you asking me on another date?

RAFAEL
It's only a date if you say yes. If you say no, then it was just out of pity for your taste buds.

Dana turns to face Rafael.

DANA
I'd love to go out with you again.

Rafael smiles at her. Both fear and excitement flooding his entire self. He tucks a piece of Dana's hair behind her ear, his hand lingering as he brings it back down.

Her breathing becomes shallow. She blushes and turns back to face out on the campus.

EXT. COLUMBIA CAMPUS - SAME

Julia, exiting the library, visitor STICKER still on her shirt walks towards the center of the quad on her way home. As she gets closer, she sees Dana with Rafael, both looking in her direction.

Her heart drops, as she remembers the visitor sticker. She rips it off, crumples it up, takes a deep breath, continuing forward.

As she reaches a spot closer to Dana and Rafael, she waves at the two of them, smiling.

EXT. LOW STEPS - SAME

Dana sees Julia waving and waves back before continuing to flirt with Rafael.