

Elemental Attractions

He was a bit nervous. No, he was not afraid, this was definitely something else. He could feel the anxiety, the insecurity like he had never felt before. He could feel his insides move. Probably a few neutrons and protons changing positions. He also felt a bit lighter, maybe he had lost a few mesons, but today, at this instant, he did not care. He was in his own world. The atmosphere was highly charged and he could nearly feel his own potential.

This was not the first time, though. It had been a year since he had first laid eyes on her, and she had not changed a bit. She still exuded the same attractive potential, and he still felt a strong affinity for her. He could not help recollect the first time he had laid eyes on Chlorine. It was at his brother Potassium's wedding to Iodine. She was in a bright yellow evening gown and had been the center of attraction. For Sodium, it was love at first sight. Her poise, her youth, her charm had swept him away. The way she carried her electrons around her was a sight to be seen. To say that he was impressed would have been an understatement. He was completely bowled over. Even on that day he did not get a chance to talk to her. Actually, that was not true. It was just that he felt so helpless in her presence that he could not come up with anything to say.

He wasn't going to allow this to happen today. It was Nickel's graduation party and there was a pretty big crowd. Potassium had come with Iodine; those two were inseparable since their marriage and the way they publicly expressed their affection really got on his nerves. Actually, he was quite surprised when Potassium had announced his plans to marry Iodine. They were so different in nature. In fact, they were at the extreme ends. But now he really envied their position, and in a strange way he could see himself and Chlorine in similar situation.

Silicon had come with his girlfriend Carbon. They had been together for quite some time. They had so much in common that everybody just assumed that they would get married someday. Silicon had told him once of his sharing and caring relation with Carbon, but for some reason he could not relate to it.

Hydrogen had come alone. He looked as if he had recovered from his divorce to Oxygen, to whom he had been married for quite some years. In the end he had hired Platinum, who, with his considerable experience as a lawyer, had helped them settle out of court. And then there was Copper. Copper was good friend of his and was also attracted to Chlorine, but was in two minds all the time. Anyway, he did not think Copper was much of a threat.

Lost deep in thought, it took him some time to recognize the familiar face staring at him. He had not expected Argon to be here. It always surprised him how Argon could remain aloof to any emotions and be very comfortable with himself. But as he always said, "it aint his problem."

After exchanging pleasantries with Argon, he tried to make his way towards the bar when he bumped into Nickel and Aluminum. He thanked Nickel for inviting Chlorine and waved to Aluminum as he tried to make his way through the crowd. Nickel and Aluminum had been friends since the days of boy scouts and skate boards. But these days, they behaved as if they were more than just good friends. Their relationship was not well accepted and must have been the reason for the absence of a lot of elements. Personally, he didn't care. To each his own, he thought, as long as they don't bother him with their ideas, he would not interfere with their lives.

He still had not thought of anything interesting to say to Chlorine and was getting upset with himself. He stretched one of his electrons to see where she was, and to his surprise, she was nowhere in sight. Upon making discreet enquires he found that she had already left her for another party. Another opportunity lost. He had worked hard for this one and he didn't know when he would get the next.

It was getting late and it was time to leave. He had to leave early for work the next day. He was sick of his job at the fast breeder reactor. He, like many other sodiums, was responsible for transferring heat from the core of the reactor to the turbines. It was hard work but he was not qualified for anything else. How he had prayed for a leak in the reactor so the shutdown would give him a few days off to pursue Chlorine. That had not happened in a long time and might not ever happen. He went to bed with Chlorine right in front of his eyes. At least he could hope to speak to her in his dream, but maybe even that was wishful thinking.