



A Certain Chemistry: A Novel

By Mil Millington



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Brooding, self-loathing Tom Cartwright is a modestly successful ghostwriter whose ability to spell correctly *and* meet his deadlines has landed him the job of writing the autobiography of the wildly popular soap-opera star Georgina Nye. His imbibing, chain-smoking agent is swooning, and his offbeat, sweetly supportive live-in girlfriend of five years, Sara, is ecstatic—new carpets!

Yet even as he feverishly pens (read: mostly makes up) Georgina's "straight-from-the-heart" life story (he's thinking maybe a thoughtful, feminist angle), he is lusting for Georgina herself. Soon Tom—poor, misguided, painfully careening Tom—thinks he can have it all: a woman at home who loves him, *and* a hot, panting affair with a television diva. With a little planning, can it *really* be so hard?

In this clever, rollicking tale of sexual misadventures and the modern man, Mil Millington hilariously explores the sometimes foolish choices mere mortals can make when that certain chemistry forces us to think not with our heads or our hearts but with . . . well, things that usually lead us straight into serious trouble.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A British ghostwriter faces romantic temptation in Millington's sharp, hilarious second novel. Native Brit Tom Cartwright is a funny, slightly undermotivated 28-year-old writer living in Edinburgh who suddenly lands the deal of his life: he gets to ghostwrite the autobiography of Georgina Nye, the young Scottish star of a popular U.K. soap opera. Tom spices up Georgina's rather bland life while beating a tight deadline and steering clear of genre clichés, but soon the two find themselves pulled into a deeper relationship, despite Tom's devotion to his longtime girlfriend, Sara, a grocery store manager. Millington's plot is familiar: boy meets new crush, boy succumbs to her charms, problems ensue and boy realizes what he's lost as he scrambles to get back in the good graces of his first girl. What elevates the novel is Millington's crisp, comic writing, which includes sardonic but believable dialogue and tightly focused, laugh-out-loud scenes. Millington augments this fun mix with spot-on publishing satire. His use of God as an interstitial omniscient narrator pontificating on the neurochemistry of attraction is the one false note: God sounds sort of like a Valley Girl. The colorful secondary characters include Cartwright's gimlet-eyed agent, his dour editor and a lovely but icy head of publicity who tries to sabotage Tom's efforts to keep his affair a secret. Millington fulfills much of the promise he showed in his debut, *Things My Girlfriend and I Have Argued About*.
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From [Booklist](#)

Millington's second novel is based on a typical male fantasy. Tom Cartwright is a ghostwriter, and his latest assignment is to write the "autobiography" of Georgina Nye, a beautiful Scottish television actress. Sara, his sweet, devoted girlfriend, is initially enthusiastic about Tom's latest project, since she is a fan of Georgina's show, *The Firth*. Tom's first meetings with Georgina go smoothly, as he tries to turn her rather average life into an exciting tale; then, when Georgina kisses him, Tom gives into her advances. Their chemistry is undeniable, and Tom finds himself risking his relationship with Sara, whom he still loves, for the passion he shares with Georgina. But when Tom has to face the consequences of his affair, he finds he is not as equipped to deal with them as he thought. With its many laugh-out-loud moments, some of them based on hilarious slapstick situations, and others from divine commentary, Millington's novel is a charming and funny read. *Kristine Huntley*
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Review

"A brilliant look at instant love—does it all boil down to a release of chemicals in the brain that can't be denied, or is it to do with having a rampant sex drive?"

—*Marie Claire*

"Sparklingly funny . . . This is laugh-out-loud rollercoaster of a book written with style."

—*Sunday Mirror*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Harris:

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