

TERROR ABOVE

— *To fight from below, you first have to gain the upper ground...* —

Written by: Samuel Kendall



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MULLIGAN

But the acid didn't kill anyone Chase, that's what the officers said.

CHASE

No, but those bullets sure did.

The two FBI agents stare at the two bodies on the ground, their skin free from burns, several bullet holes weeping through their suits, the blood still lightly pooling.

Above them, the sound of a lone drone's whirring gets closer and closer.

Mulligan flips his head around in shock, drawing his gun and firing towards the drone as it spins and weaves off into the distance, the two detectives catching sight of a small camera on its front.

MULLIGAN

They're watching us. Fuck!

Genre: *Action/Thriller*

Format: *Feature-length film*

Targetgroup: *15 to 60-year-olds*

At Pitch-level end Q4 2021

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Terrorist attacks using remote drones occur all across Manhattan, causing chaos for the population and the authorities. But everything isn't quite as it appears, with one man's fight against corruption unearthing a conspiracy that goes deeper than anyone could've imagined.

In present day Central Manhattan, the U.S. finds itself embroiled in a fiercely competitive election year. With political power plays at every turn, those in control are on edge with a need to keep their position. As election banners hang across Broadway on a regular Tuesday afternoon, the noise of traffic is met by the ominous whirring of drones.

Overhead, a fleet of drones descend on the people below. As everyone looks up, the drones reign acid down onto the streets, causing immediate chaos. Police are on the scene as quickly as possible, as an emergency military meeting is called to assess the possibility of a terror attack. Neither the police nor the military can figure out who is behind the remote controlled drones. The medical team on the scene are at a loss as, though people are writhing in pain, the burns the acid is causing appear only superficial.

The attack is written off by many as a strange publicity stunt, but the spread of social media theories and conflicting news outlets leaves the entire city in a state of confusion and fear. Both the military and the government are shaken as drones continue wreaking havoc in new attacks throughout the city. FBI agents Chase and Mulligan are assigned the case. They immediately feel bombarded by the involvement of military officials and third parties, who all appear to have dubious intentions.

The fear across Manhattan escalates for days, until the agents discover a breakthrough. Coroners finally get a chance to review the three bodies from the scene. The coroner realises that they have in fact been killed by gunshot wounds. The first drone attack appears to have been a ploy to hide the real intentions of the perpetrator. What makes these findings more harrowing is that one of the murdered citizens is a high-ranking CEO with stakes in a large number of tech projects with military contracts. The investigation turns not just to regular terrorism, but to the possibility of domestic terrorism or a lone attacker with an ulterior motive.

Chase and Mulligan continue to investigate amidst a Manhattan gripped by fear that the same drones could strike again, at any moment. As they investigate the drone's design, as well as the victims and the military officers with vested interests in their case, they come to realise a darker conspiracy is at play. Further drone surveillances and disruptions are reported, including on Wall Street, resulting in the death of another tycoon.

At a loss, the two agents latch onto a lead that brings them to the inventor of the drones, Michael Tarver. Michael's small georadar drones were designed solely by him, following the death of his brother from a roadside bomb. Michael created the drones as a force of good, to prevent such problems ever happening again. But what happened next tore Michael's life apart. His invention, after he denied funding from a curious billionaire, was stolen by an established tech company with military connections. He found himself slapped with a secrecy order whilst they entered into long-term contracts with the military.

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This contract enabled the company to stall on the actual deployment of the drones. Those involved were then able to get rich at the expense of soldiers and citizens who continued to die in incidents with roadside bombs, the exact situations Michael's design was built to prevent. Michael's legal battles all failed, with his money dwindling and his family life in tatters. He became unable to pay for his wife's cancer treatment, and lost contact with his son. Michael lost everything he ever had, except for his drones.

But what are Michael's true intentions? The drone incidents continue to threaten the very fabric of what America is, with a number of very powerful people acting more and more suspiciously in the eyes of both Chase and Mulligan. In a climactic assault at the Jacob Javits centre, the truth of the situation threatens to come to the light.

Terror Above is a action-focused conspiracy thriller set at the heart of America, with an emphasis on exploring the ongoing fears surrounding drones. It hones in on the fear of drones as surveillance and as a military force. It also focuses on the fear of the unknown, and never really knowing who is behind the remote control. Similar to feature films like State of Play and Shooter, Terror Above will provide a twisting, turning thrill ride of detective work, manipulation and a lone avenger fighting to redeem his life from those who ripped it from his hands.
