

THE DREAMVISIONER – CHAPTER 2

By S. Leigh Young

James Joshua MacAbee was an unusually large man who stood nearly seven feet tall. Because of his stature he found it extremely easy to intimidate. His voice was gruff and his facial features somewhat chiseled. Macabee believed wearing dark colors added to the persona of authority he tried to present. He used many manipulative tactics to get what he wanted, and what he wanted right now was to put a stop to the rumored exposé Senator Weston was planning to present. His lobbying firm had a lot of large corporate clients who paid him very well and he wasn't about to jeopardize that extremely lucrative arrangement. Millions of dollars were at stake and if Weston was able to pull this off it could cripple him.

JJ, as MacAbee was known, had come to rely on those huge bonuses each year and his lifestyle was testimony to that. He owned three houses, a yacht, two fishing boats and seven classic cars that were his pride and joy, not to mention his wife's healthy appetite for spending. Every time he turned around, she wanted some new toy, a trip to Paris, or something else that cost him a fortune. She had him over a barrel because he knew she only married him for his money. But he was in love with her and nothing was going to put his marriage at risk -- especially not the infamous Senator Weston!

He fumed, just thinking about that conniving bitch. He knew she was doing everything in her power to keep the contents of the presentation secret, just like she did with the campaign finance reform bill. He smiled as he thought about his victory over that piece of garbage. There was no way a majority of elected officials were going to cut their own throats, and without those massive political contributions most of them couldn't be elected county clerk.

At the sound of the buzzer, he quickly came out of his stupor. His receptionist's soothing voice was suddenly heard through the intercom.

"Congressman Belham is here to see you, Mr. MacAbee. Shall I send him in?"

"Yes, send him in," he replied, eagerly.

Congressman Rick Belham's stature was not in any way comparable to that of MacAbee. He stood a foot and a half shorter and walked with a limp; hardly the type who could stand up to the pressures of men like JJ. MacAbee found him extremely easy to manipulate. All he had to do was wave a check in front of his face and Belham would turn into Play Dough.

Belham made his way into the office, shut the door and stood in front of the desk waiting. MacAbee looked up, smiled and said "Good to see you Congressman. Take a seat."

Like a well-trained dog Belham sat down, crossed his legs and quickly uncrossed them. "Why did you want to see me?"

"I want to know if you made that phone call I suggested."

Belham cleared his throat and mumbled "uh, yes, I called Senator Weston and had a little chat with her."

"Well?" MacAbee blurted. "What did she say?"

"She wanted to know where I'd heard the rumors," Belham sheepishly mumbled.

"And? What else did she say?"

“Nothing. I was called away from the phone and had to hang up,” Belham replied nervously.

MacAbee stood up, using the full height of his stature to scare the hell out of Belham, just as he always did. “Remember that contribution I made to your campaign the other day?”

“Of course. It was greatly appreciated,” Belham said quietly.

“Well, I didn’t make that contribution for nothing Congressman. I expect some results. Do you understand?”

Belham stood up and headed toward the door. “Yes, I understand. I’ll try another tactic and be in touch soon.”

“Good! Call me when you get something,” MacAbee roared. He watched as the mousy little man limped out of the office then called his receptionist and told her to put a call through to special contact.

“Janet, get Steve Pennington on the phone for me, will you?”

“Yes sir,” the voice replied.

This was the right man, thought MacAbee. He knew Congress like the back of his own hand -- always attended the social dinners, parties and political events. There was hardly a thing happening in Washington he didn’t know about. A few minutes later the phone rang. It was Steve Pennington, aide to Senator McKenzie, the minority Whip. After initial pleasantries, he got straight to the point.

“I was wondering if you could do me a favor.”

“Sure. What is it?” Pennington asked.

“I need some information about that presentation Weston’s staff is working on. Can you help?”

“I’ll see what I can do. Her office is just down the hall -- shouldn’t be too much of a problem.”

“Great. Get back to me, okay?”

“Will do,” Pennington replied, and the phone call was ended.

MacAbee leaned back in his chair, stroked his chin contemplating the victorious joy he would feel when Weston’s attempts to put him out of business were thwarted. If that little piece of human waste wants to mess with me, she’s got a wakeup call coming, he thought. He wondered if Weston was married so he looked her up in the senate register. Sure enough, she was single, just as he suspected. Who would want to sleep with her? Hell, she’s probably a lesbian! She was more of a turn-off than a worm crawling in the dirt! MacAbee was from the old school of political thought. He didn’t think women should become elected officials. The game was just too brutal and, of course, he was still fuming over her refusal to take a contribution from him. Bitch!

Two days later Pennington arrived at MacAbee’s office smiling from ear to ear.

“What did you find out?”

“She’s got a guy named Spencer working on it. Jake Spencer. He’s a tall, skinny black guy, not much to speak about, although I’ve heard he’s pretty smart.”

“Smart? How so?” asked MacAbee.

“Well, he’s got a list of degrees as long as your arm; specializes in economics and government contracting. Really knows his stuff, from what I’ve heard. Weston nabbed him from Consolidated Insurance about four years ago. He was working there as a financial advisor. One day, he came to her and wanted to spill the beans about something happening over there.”

“Yeah? So, he was a whistleblower?” MacAbee snorted.

Pennington told him Jake was privy to some shenanigans going on with the CEO - something about securities fraud. Weston was unable to obtain enough evidence, but she liked him so she talked him into coming to work for her. MacAbee asked him who else was aware of the project details.

“Not many,” Pennington replied. “I found out by going through the recycle bin. I wasn’t able to verify it, though.”

“What did you find?”

“Just a few scraps of paper, nothing important, but enough to let me know it was from Spencer. His initials were on the bottom.”

“So, there were no details about the presentation?” MacAbee asked, pounding a pen on his desk.

“Nope,” Pennington replied, pulling a few scraps of paper out of his pocket. “Here’s the scraps.”

MacAbee spread them on his desk. One of them had the initials ‘jts’ below the word ‘corruption’. Another one contained a partial sentence that read ‘and this will bring certain parties into compliance....’. It was obvious they had been torn from the same sheet of paper.

“This was all you could find?”

“I’m afraid so,” Pennington replied. “The rest of the sheet was completely shredded. I guess this small section must have gotten stuck in the shredder so someone pulled it out and threw it away.”

“Damn! I wish I knew what she was up to,” MacAbee fumed.

Pennington said he watched Spencer yesterday as he was getting ready to leave his office. “His door was open and I could see inside. It looked like he was taking a lot of precautions to protect whatever he was working on -- even placed his laptop in his office safe.”

“Hmmm,” muttered MacAbee. “Did you see anything else?”

“It looked like he put something in his shirt pocket but I couldn’t see very well. Then he left. He was working pretty late too -- didn’t leave the building ‘til about 9 o’clock”

MacAbee stood up and waved his hand at the ceiling in frustration. “Can you find out what it is he put in his pocket?”

“I don’t know. I’ll try,” Pennington replied. “But it’s going to look kind of suspicious if I hang around Weston’s suite too much. After all, she’s the enemy.”

“Well, do the best you can, will you?”

Pennington said he’d try his best and the meeting ended.

MacAbee told his secretary he didn't want to be disturbed and spent the next hour mulling everything over in his mind. He didn't think of himself as conniving even though his methods were much more devious and underhanded than anything Weston was doing. This thought, however, never crossed his mind. It was just business and it was up to him to make sure the results would make his clients happy. He was taking some of them on a cruise near the Florida Keys soon and spent part of the hour envisioning the glorious victory speech he was going to give. He could see it in his mind and feel it in his bones -- all the delightful accolades that would be drenched upon him after it was finished. He'd be the hero -- again.

After his plotting and daydreaming finally reached its crescendo, MacAbee knew exactly what to do. This guy, Jake Spencer -- he was the key. There had to be a way to get to him and he knew the person who could arrange it, so he picked up his private line and made a call to Duke Brashear, the best private "get things done" man in DC.

"I want everything you can get on a tall, skinny black guy named Jake Spencer. He's a staffer for Senator Weston. Find someone who can get to know him real well -- someone who needs to come into a lot of cash real quick."

"Okay. Then what?"

"This Spencer -- he needs a friend. Understand? He works too hard and he's under a lot of stress. I want you to help him relieve that stress. Got it?"

"Yep," replied Duke. "Got it. Is he married?"

"Hell, I don't know. Find out!" MacAbee barked. "If he is, then his marriage may have to suffer for a little while. Who cares?"

Brashear was quiet for a moment and suddenly knew what was needed. “I know just the person for the job. Gorgeous gal, fantastic skin you wouldn’t believe, great ass. I hope he’s an ass man,” Duke said, laughing.

“Every man’s an ass man,” replied MacAbee. “Listen up. This gal you have in mind – is she smart? She’s got to be smart as a whip, ‘cuz Spencer’s suppose to be some sort of genius.”

Duke assured MacAbee she was very competent. “She beat me at chess the other day and I ain’t no slouch!”

They agreed to meet at MacAbee’s private club the next afternoon and the call was ended. Leaning back in his chair with a deep sigh, MacAbee thought about what a great life he had. And none of his old chums back in Philly would have believed that a big, towering kid like him would ever make it. Little did they know!

End of Chapter 2