

The Rain Song

(Free Preview)

Janice Grove

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Chapter 1

Angela and Nick Remington had just sat down to the first cup of coffee of the morning when the phone in the kitchen began to ring insistently. As they glanced at each other, one thought was shared: “Any phone call at 5am is bad news.”

“Hello.” Nick answered, not exactly sure what to expect, considering the trouble their son David had been in recently. Admittedly, he usually was guilty of reacting to a given situation, not starting it, but it always amazed the older Remingtons how many people could overlook that fact whenever their boy was involved.

“Nick, this is Officer Peterson. I’m sorry to call you so early, but we have a situation down here and I’m hoping that David can shed some light on it.”

Nick turned toward Angela and rolled his eyes up to the ceiling indicating that it *did* have to do with one of the kids but didn’t expound further, knowing that he probably didn’t need to.

“David?” she mouthed, recognizing the expression in her husband’s dark eyes.

A short nod and a puzzled frown was his only response as he concentrated on the call.

“Uh... Officer Peterson, I’m a little confused. What is it that you think David can help with?”

“Sir, I know that this is unorthodox, but if you could bring him down here for a moment, we can get this squared away before it goes any further.”

Nick was just about to argue with the man when he stopped himself and asked with a low groan. “It’s the McMillan boys isn’t it?”



Five thirty a.m. saw the eldest Remington and son in the family's classic 1971 Chevelle SS, driving down the road. David, who had never been a morning person on a good day, was definitely feeling extremely irritable today of all days. Although his mom had awakened him as gently as possible, there had been an urgency that he picked up right away. So urgent that he was already dressed and halfway down the stairs before his thirteen-year-old mind could remember the date. Jeez, he hated June 8th. Not that he could recall why exactly. There was only a fleeting memory of being found by the side of the road next to a burning car, the rest of his life a total blank. That had happened seven years ago and David still couldn't remember anything else from before being found. He just knew that he had hated that day every year since.

David snuck a glance at his dad and wondered what he was thinking. "Dad, I didn't do anything to the McMillans. You believe me, don't you?"

Nick couldn't help the shock he knew showed on his face. His son could be many things... stubborn, cocky, self-absorbed, but never insecure. Then it hit him. "Damn, why did this have to happen today?" Nick muttered softly. His intent was to give his boy a quick flippant answer to show him that he wasn't mad — until he actually got a good look at him. The normally lightly tanned face was now so pale that even by the illumination of the dash his freckles stood out starkly and his green eyes seemed to glow brightly. Combined with the way his short cropped hair stuck out at all angles, it made David appear more like that lost little boy from so many years ago.

It had always amazed Nick how David had never once seemed to shy away from him and had always accepted him for who he was, even though most people hardly gave him and Angela a second glance before passing some sort of judgment. She was the typical girl next door raised in a white middle class Methodist family. He was the African American Vietnam vet drifter with no noticeable family ties. Some wondered how they stayed together for so long, considering their vastly different upbringings. But it was those differences that bonded them together and brought them to a

common goal; they would be happy and save as many kids as possible along the way.

Cupping his son's cheek in his hand to give some small comfort, he smiled before turning back to the road and said gently, "Son, your mom and I both know you haven't broken your promise to us. Don't worry, we'll get this straightened out and still be back in time to sit down with everyone for breakfast."



Officer Peterson met them at the door and winked at David before he turned his attention to Nick, speaking loud enough for the whole room to hear. "Mr. Remington, as I told you on the phone we have a bit of a problem and it involves David here. Now if you will follow me."

As he led the two Remingtons farther into the precinct, David couldn't help but look around at some of the other officers; they seemed almost amused, which really puzzled both him and his dad.

"Now, before we continue," the officer began. "I would like you to know that official statements have already been made and signed, and in the sense of justice and the severity of the situation we need to hear your version of events that occurred yesterday between the hours of eight and nine p.m."

At this point, a door burst open from the other side of the bullpen revealing a red-faced, burly man dragging two teenage boys out of the room behind him all the while ranting, "Well, arrest that delinquent, he's standing there in front of you. I want him to pay for what he did to my boys! Remington, you can't protect him this time — he broke the agreement, so he's going to a group home!" the man, Gerald McMillan, screamed; obviously not caring who heard him. It was only then that David caught full view of the other boys and noticed that they both appeared as if they had gone a couple of rounds with a prize fighter.

As the tension mounted, Nick Remington stood there, stunned, before he did the unexpected — he laughed.

“Let me get this straight. You dragged your boys down here in the middle of the night to give a sworn statement about who did that to them, and of course David’s name pops right out of their mouths, and before you can get all of your facts together, you threaten my son with arrest.” He couldn’t help but find the absurdity of the situation amusing. Knowing that David was still confused, Nick turned to Officer Peterson and asked, “What are the ramifications of a minor filing a false report?”

“I can answer that, Mr. Remington. In Labette County, the minor or minors in question could actually be removed from parental control and sent for a time to a group home for troubled teens,” answered a man standing casually to the left side of the room. When everyone stopped and focused their attention towards him, he smiled sheepishly. “Sorry about the sweat suit, but I was about to start my morning jog when I was called in to witness the proceedings of the witnesses statements.”

Alex Duram had been the assistant District Attorney for Labette County, Kansas for nearly ten years, so it was no real surprise when he was the first one to be informed of the upcoming confrontation. Not that he was complaining; he couldn’t wait to see McMillan’s face when his sons were brought down a peg or two. Bringing himself back to the task at hand, Alex focused on David and asked him pointedly, “David, where were you last night between the hours of eight and nine?”

Almost everyone in the room knew the answer, so it was no real surprise when only three gasps of shock were heard when the answer unfolded.

“I was at the cemetery visiting my brother Derrick’s grave. I go there every night after dinner and when my chores are done. Mr. Lackey, the caretaker, can vouch for me. Last night when we met up, he asked me who I thought was going to be in the World Series this year. He’s a Cardinals fan, you know.” David smirked at the shocked teens across the room and couldn’t help but feel his normal cocky self return.

“Hmm...I see. So you say you have a witness to your whereabouts. Have you had any contact at all with the McMillan brothers since Judge Tyler

ordered you not to?” Alex asked while trying to stay neutral, but finding it really hard under the circumstances.

“They wish,” David muttered, but a quick glance at his dad made him change his approach. “No sir, I have not had any contact with the *McWannabees*.”

Nick was having trouble deciding whether to be proud of his son for not being intimidated or aggravated because David wasn’t taking this as seriously as he should. His musings were interrupted when, once again, Alex spoke.

“David, one last thing...please hold out your hands palms down.”

That’s when Nick understood everything was going to be okay. Due to a low grade in math, David hadn’t been allowed to help in the shop since school ended a couple of weeks ago. There would be no signs of scrapes or cuts that could be misconstrued as coming from a fight.

David did as he was asked while staring straight at the McMillan trio, the smug look back in place like a mask, as he suddenly didn’t feel the world pushing down upon him anymore.

“Mr. Remington,” Alex began, “it is obvious to me that your son had nothing to do with the attacks on these boys. There is no need for you or David to stay as no further action against him will be taken.”

The rest of what was being said was lost on the Remington men as they quickly exited the police station. In the car driving back home, enjoying the cool morning air, Nick couldn’t stand the silence anymore and asked his son. “David?”

“Yeah, Dad?”

“Think the Cardinals have another shot at the World Series?”

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