

# WARPED INTENTIONS

A NOVEL



# Chapter 1

Garner always thought that Spencer Watts had a crazy streak in him. At seventy-one years old, Spencer still had a hellion streak in him. He had been around long enough to be remembered as a mentor to some of the civil rights activists who gained their notoriety during the 1960s and 1970s.

Unlike some who believed in a non-violent approach from that era, Spencer was one of the fiery ones whose disposition advocated for burn, baby, burn.

His deep bass voice boomed at the younger man who greeted him. “Say, you light, bright, almost white motherfucker. What’chu doing for the cause?”

“What cause, Mr. Watts?”

“The cause for your people . . . Or have you forgotten who you were?”

“I’ve never forgotten who I was.”

Watts felt he could talk shit to Garner Davis, thirty-two, any time he wanted because he bragged of being the driving force behind Garner getting his job at WCAE Channel 6 in Columbia, South Carolina, as the NBC affiliate’s first black sports director.

He wrote letters to the editor in the *Columbia Palmetto*, *Charleston Chronicle*, and *Greenville Register* newspapers questioning whether the state’s capital would ever see a black male’s face reporting news rather

than it being plastered across the screen for having committed some crime.

Threatening to use some of his civil rights' influence, he went as far as contacting Clay Jones, the U.S. Congressional representative, to conjure up community pressure on the Columbia market's No. 1 station for its lack of racial diversity.

Spencer managed a raspy laugh as they went inside the Ruby Tuesday's near the Fort Jackson U.S. Army base off the I-77 freeway. "I hope you haven't, goddamn it.

"You damned near have to watch out for what you pray for. I asked them to bring in a black person; they brought in somebody who just barely passed for black!"

Garner, a former college baseball player, had a soft baritone voice that accompanied his looks: thick, wavy brown hair; light gray eyes; a tall, lean athletic build of six-two and one hundred and ninety-five pounds. He also had an arguably a perfect smile, although shaped by wearing braces during his childhood years in Richmond, Virginia.

Although they were a motley couple of sorts whenever they were together, they endeared each other from the first time they met. Spencer approached Garner in the WCAE lobby just as he showed up for work during his second week on the job.

"Listen here, you can talk about my skin color all you want. All I will say is that I am old enough that my birth certificate clearly states that I am a Negro just like your black ass."

"So fuckin' what? My birth certificate says 'Colored' on it, Spencer reacted. "Shiiit, you better send me a copy of that one of these days. Then again, you might need to show me the original. That's the only way I'll believe your ass!"

Ruby Tuesday's was still quiet. Servers and other personnel were still moving about at a more leisurely pace while preparing the place for the imminent lunch rush crowd.

As he had done so many times around Garner, Spencer indulged himself to checking out the hostesses and other women who walked past him. His habit included a deviant glance at the woman's backside accompanied by subtle reactions like his raising of an eyebrow or a slight nod-

ding of his head if she was worth taking a second look.

Garner jabbed at Spencer's bicep with his elbow. "Don't you have anything better to do?"

"It depends," Spencer answered.

A woman in her late-twenties of mocha complexion wearing a long-sleeved burgundy blouse and dark slacks that concealed more of her wide hips approached Garner and Spencer; she paid particular attention to Spencer, who had a distinguished look about him. A retired history professor from the state's largest historically black college located in Orangeburg, he often appeared in public wearing a jacket, tie, slacks and stylish loafers. He sported a well-kept graying beard and moustache to augment his low-cut afro. He still walked upright for a man in his seventies, standing just a shade over six feet tall.

She greeted him with smile marked by a silver cap on one of her front teeth. "Dr. Watts, it's so nice to see you today. It looks like you're still taking great care of yourself."

"Why thank you, darling, you're looking very stunning as usual," he answered, grinning.

"Is there two in your party today?"

"Yes there is." A generous touch of sophistication often seasoned Spencer's dialogue with women.

"Oh, and this is Garner Davis, a protégé of mine. Garner this is, uh, uh . . ."

"Joleesa."

"Ah, yes, Joleesa. She's one of the brightest restaurant managers that I know."

Garner acknowledged her. "I'm pleased to meet you, Joleesa."

"I know you prefer a non-smoking table. Would a corner booth be fine with you, Dr. Watts?" Joleesa led Spencer and Garner into the dining area. Spencer made sure to position himself between Garner so he could have an exclusive view of Joleesa's backside. He made a mental note to himself how Joleesa's ass cheeks jiggled with each step.

As she placed the menus on the table, Spencer made mention to Joleesa that he had a lot of time on his hands since he retired from teaching a little more than a year ago.

“Miss Joleesa, when are you ever free from the restaurant?”

She waved off Spencer. “Dr. Watts, you know how it is—I’m here when nobody else is here.” Then she steered him in another direction. “I haven’t seen Mrs. Shirley lately. How has she been?”

“Oh, she’s doing quite well.” Depending on his mood, Spencer was dismissive whenever he discussed his wife of forty-four years. “But let me know when you might have some time off, alright?”

“Enjoy your meal. It was very nice meeting you, Garner.”

Spencer smirked at Garner with every intention of sending the message to him that he still had what it took with women.

Garner rolled his eyes derisively.

Spencer nodded back toward the front of the restaurant. “Did you check her out?” Garner shrugged, wondering whom he meant.

“Joleesa, fool!”

“Not really—”

“Now that’s the kind of ass that will keep you young!”

Garner shook his head; he had heard everything. Considering Spencer’s remark, he produced a weak smile to emphasize his incredulity of it.

“I guess that’s the highlight to an old man’s day like yours being able to spot—if you can even see— something like that. I hope that’s not all I’ll have to do when I’m your age.”

Spencer browsed through the menu. “If your light, bright almost white ass live that long.” He peered over his reading glasses. “Now if I’d asked her outright then I could see you saying that. I was just making a very candid observation.”

“Now tell me, Watts, is there ever a time you don’t think about a woman’s ass?”

Spencer allowed the menu to partially rest on the table. Then he pushed his glasses farther down the bridge of his nose, peering over them again. He maintained his silence for several seconds.

“Yeah, there is.”

“And when is that?”

Spencer leaned against his right forearm. “When I’m thinking about some pussy!”

Garner chortled. “I guess I left myself open for that one, ol’ man; it’s

obvious you had your mind on both.”

Spencer reared back in the book apprising Garner how he had never gone without pussy all these years. He went on to boast how he could still fuck at least three times a week and without the help of the colored pills that are advertised on television commercials.

“I’ve always lived by the saying that a nice guy never gets paid. And he damned sho’ never gets laid. So it ain’t never bothered me one bit when my wife would try holdin’ back on the pussy, because I always kept myself a couple of spare pillows to lie on if you know what I mean.”

“No, I don’t know what you mean, ol’ man.” Garner stopped to sip water from his glass. “First of all, I think your choice of pussy was rather limited back in your day.”

Spencer never gave Garner a chance to get in his second argument. He barely kept his voice low.

“The fuck you talkin’ ‘bout? Man, back in the day, a woman went crazy over a Negro with a college education. Shit, didn’t matter if his ass was as light and bright like you or black as your mamma’s skillet!”

Garner reacted to Spencer’s comment by recounting something else that was previously mentioned. He leaned back against the seat, folding his arms. “Just what in the hell did you mean I was a protégé of yours? I don’t think I want to be seen as somebody who walks on his damned tongue whenever a woman passes by.”

“What’s wrong with being my protégé? It just might give your ass some credibility.”

Moments later another woman in her twenties had stopped by the table greeting the two men. Garner already knew what he wanted: the peppercorn steak platter without the cheese and mushrooms, the steamed vegetables and the salad bar. He also ordered ginger ale since he never drank before he went to work.

Spencer looked over at Garner, winked his left eye before making eye contact with the server. He made sure that his thin wire-framed glasses were resting again on the bridge of his nose.

“What do you think about the tossed salad? Is that something you would recommend?”

Garner dipped his head sheepishly. The server responded with her pre-

ference for the chicken salad on the menu.

“I’ll take your recommendation.” Spencer also ordered a Bud Light to go with his meal.

Garner instigated Spencer for his off-colored comment after the hostess started for the kitchen. “Tossed salad, humph!”

“You ain’t ever had any tossed salad before, young buck?”

“Let’s just say I don’t go around asking women whom I don’t know if they want their assholes licked.”

“Now, look, if you want to find out the freak in a woman, just hint at them if they like tossed salad and see how they react.” Spencer laughed at his own remark. He bragged of having crossed that issue many years ago with his long-time mistress, Raynee Bickford, a current biology professor at the same college from where he retired.

Garner asked, “Why should I be talking about licking out of a woman’s ass with some old man who’s just one hump away from the grave?”

“Are you worried that I’ll go around talking your business?”

“No, I just don’t think that’s something two men should be talking about. It doesn’t really sound right.”

“Then what does sound right?”

Garner shook his head, pondering aloud. “You know what? I don’t have any clue why I even hang out with you like I do.”

“Want to know why?”

“Yeah, tell me.”

“You wish you could be as smooth as I am.”

“Shiiiiit,” Garner reacted, “I think the correct word is wrinkled. And if that’s the case, I definitely would not want to be like you!”



The tenor of Garner and Spencer’s conversation remained jocular although they had moved on to a different topic. A reading and news buff, Spencer often prodded Garner for any inside information on any hot sports topics.

According to a couple of friends at Sho’ Fly’s barber shop on North Main Street, Spencer mention to Garner about rumors were circulating

that some changes might be coming down the pike with the state university's major college football program in Columbia.

"Come on, man, you know I gotta set straight those assholes over at the shop."

"I'll let you in on a secret." Garner then stopped to chew through his peppercorn steak before continuing. "I've got an appointment at four o'clock to talk with the athletic director in his office. I figure it would be a good opportunity to put his egotistical ass on the spot whether he's going to seriously consider a black candidate for the Chanticleers, and not just for a token interview."

Spencer's dark-brown eyes widened and he managed a wide grin before he took in a long sip from his Bud Light in a bottle.

"You shittin' me!" He let out a small belch. "You mean you gonna do something like that?"

"Why not," he answered, shrugging his shoulders. "I've seen too many people in this business not have the balls to report on shit like that. They rather patronize by stroking people's backs and basically sucking their dicks just to get a bone or two thrown at them for a scoop.

"They're like a bunch of fuckin' prostitutes and they're being pimped by their so-called sources that could care less about them."

Spencer began laughing at Garner's comment. He stopped to take another long sip from his beer. "You know what?"

"What?"

"I prayed for somebody like you. You really hadn't forgotten about your people."

Garner took the last bite of his steak. Then he finished off his ginger ale and made a reminder gesture with his right index finger pointing toward Spencer.

"I just hope I don't ever forget how to fuck when I get your age. And with that, I've gotta get back to the station."

Spencer constrained Garner for one last think before he got up. "You're still not married, right?"

"Yeah, that's right. But I'm not hurting for any pussy. I've got a couple of pillow options out there to rest my head on just you've had back in the day."

"Shiiiiit, and still do!" Spencer reacted. "Look here, I know somebody

who's a math professor over at the college across the street from mine in Orangeburg. I think you just might like her. She just might be your kind of woman."

"What does she look like?"

"She's a nice girl . . ."

"Uh-oh, so she's ugly or she's fat. Or both—"

"Nah, she ain't never been married and she's working toward her doctor-ate degree. You think I'd try to introduce you to somebody who's stupid, ugly and, well, you know, large?"

Garner sighed in disgust. "Look, the last time you introduced me to a woman, she needed a lot of help: she needed a dermatologist for all that acne; she needed an orthodontist for her upper teeth, lower teeth and that horse's overbite; hell, I even thought she needed an optometrist because she looked a lil' cross-eyed."

Spencer smirked at him. "Man, you wouldn't know a nice girl if she sat on your face . . . Shit, if I—"

"I said as a favor for you," Garner raised his voice to enunciate each word, "call me with her phone number."

"Good! Just for that, I'll even pay for lunch this time, you light, bright almost white motherfucker!"

Garner was reduced to a chuckle and shaking his head, conceding the best thing he could ever do with Spencer's comments was allowing them to run through one ear and pass out the other.