

\$ECRETS\$

Ongoing series – Psychological Thriller /
Financial-Legal Drama

Written by
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ABOUT

In this psychological thriller, a war hero, father, and business man seeks peace - but his secret trauma emerges while a regulator's madness builds, bringing two violent psychoses to battle. Imagine *Suits* meets *Criminal Minds*.





THEMES

Despite human weakness—even a proclivity toward vicious violence—one can be a more complete hero by choosing to not return malice for malice. Also: You never know who will react psychotically to your challenge...

FRANK DEMPSEY

Age 30; traditional-values and patriotic husband and father to girls 6, 3 and *in-utero*, fiercely—even murderously—protective of those in his care. Years before this tale, at the Citadel college where both civilian and military tracks existed, Dempsey was an ROTC cadet pursued by civilian student Margaret (Mags) Goast. He was repelled by her pushing that the hyper-successful pair would have super-children; she never even got to first base. Dempsey is a straight arrow whose traditional values (fathering children, patriotism, etc) were inspired by his white father and black mother who were killed by a KKK attack on his church when he was a very young boy. That trauma left him with a dangerous secret that duels with the good in him: He is vicious when those he cares about are threatened. Dempsey is a war hero, financial planner in an initially one-man practice; he is a quiet helper of the downtrodden in Williamsburg, VA.





MAGS GOAST

Age 34, a rising star and senior auditor “Director, Agents Investigation” for the Virginia Department of Insurance. She reports to the elected Commissioner of Insurance, yet still conducts some audits personally... and in a targeted manner. Goast targets Dempsey for two hidden reasons: 1. She has a “crusader” and power complex, despising all who earn commissions “taken” from consumers. We even glimpse from her “trophy wall” the possibility that she killed her parents long ago just to gain Dempsey’s sympathy and affinity. 2. Dempsey’s rejection of her in college boils over as he rebuffs her one more time now that he is a regulatory target. Goast is easily enraged by perceived challenge from those she audits and even superiors. She is a psychopath, tormenting regulated professionals; killing anyone who would dare offend her. This psychotic tormentor does not know what she is bringing out in Dempsey.

JACK MELTON

CIA pre-retiree, age 56, trainer at Camp Peary, VA. Jack is a close friend and client of Dempsey; his soon-to-be former wife, Macy, also works at the CIA and is a threat to husband Jack. He wants his career-threatening, estranged wife Macy (also CIA) dead.





BRANDON WALSH

Age 42, Former Battalion Commander of Dempsey. Walsh was relieved of command, blamed by higher-ups—not Dempsey—for Dempsey's company getting surrounded with no support in the first Iraq war. Now in the CIA and receiving training under Melton, Walsh has intentionally sought assignment that brings him in proximity to Dempsey. Though he becomes a client, he is secretly resentful and jealous of Dempsey, and also intends to misuse Dempsey's technical advice to defraud his siblings out of what will be an ill-gotten inheritance.

SEASON ONE

War-tortured hero, Frank Dempsey is dedicated to nation, family and traditional values. He is a community pillar and rising financial planner. Relied on by clients, he aids the homeless and rich alike. The series opens with Dempsey surrounded in battle - in the 1991 Iraq War - as he discovers that a bloodthirstiness erupts, a “justifiable-killing compulsion,” in the face of desperate threats to those he cares about. Regulator Margaret Goast toys with Dempsey’s career—potentially jailing him away from wife and children—then ramps this up in iterations. Goast is challenged in what she takes as increasingly enraging parries to her authority by Dempsey and her Insurance Commissioner boss. Never previously challenged or embarrassed by a superior, Goast seethes. This “inciting event” reveals a murder-psychosis; Goast grins at a cabinet marked “White Knight” for fined licensees. She kills the Commissioner with a similar axe and knife to those Dempsey used in war (kept in his man cave). Dempsey’s tools have dents that would have left forensic evidence. He is off the hook but suspects Goast. Goast’s escalations, even stalking family, tempt Dempsey to murder: Police dismiss Dempsey’s complaints; he must kill Goast himself. Jack, a friend/client, provides a CIA drug for their planned kidnapping of Goast, to be killed in a remote area. But he must kill Jack’s estranged wife Macy, enhancing Jack’s alibi; she’s an unjust threat to a friend. Jack provides toxic fruit from where Macy vacationed for “self-poisoning.” Dempsey prepares to kill Goast but balks. He returns drugged Goast to her apartment. But a secretly vengeful client, Brandon Walsh (Dempsey’s war C.O., relieved for endangering Dempsey’s troops; now CIA recruit/student under Jack), has tailed Dempsey. Walsh copied the dents on Dempsey’s weapons at a client party at Dempsey’s home; Walsh kills Goast with mimicked weapons!



SEASON TWO

Dempsey struggles to prove innocence in murder of the Commissioner and Goast.

Threat to Dempsey's marriage at the end of its season one or in season two.

As season progresses, more of his crises as a father, husband, businessmen, community man must be shown.

Dempsey makes second attempt at convincing Jack to not kill Macy. He solves the murder for police; they arrest WALSH.

Secret\$ Writer Bio

Dan graduated from Virginia Military Institute (1981), third among Economics majors, simultaneously completing the Modern Languages curriculum. He served in the Infantry, then as a reservist in a Special Forces support role, next as a Training Company Commander and later in a classified Army Research Institute role. Dan completed his Master of Business Administration at William & Mary (1986). He and wife Laura married in 1988, loved raising their four children, and assisted both Boy and Girl Scouting through their church from 2000 to 2010. Dan was a nationally recognized Financial Planner from 1987 through 2017. He is the author of numerous business and pension articles since 1992, with technical and dramatic non-fiction articles appearing in Virginia Lawyers Weekly, Financial & Estate Planning, Creative Loafing and Charlotte Ventures. Now retired to writing, his *The Secrets of Successful Financial Planning* was published in 2018 by Skyhorse Publishing to rave reviews and earned the CWG Seal of Approval. His 1998 novel, *The Pleistocene Redemption*, sold many thousands and is revised as *Ancient of Genes (AOG)*.



Dan is the author of numerous short stories published by Superversive Press, NFAA Archery, Millhaven Press and Tuscan Bay Press. His projects include humor shorts and Sci-Fi anthologies (one cryptozoological). Dan, wife-for-life Laura and their four children now hail from Charlotte, NC. See excerpts, reviews and art: AuthorDan.com.
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