

*(MEACHAM enters, looking very tired and "bedraggled".)*

**SUZANNE** *(to MEACHAM)*: Senator, we were afraid you weren't going to make it! So you gave up on the filibuster?

**MEACHAM**: Oh no. I just suspended it.

**SUZANNE**: But I thought you had to keep talking to keep the floor?

**MEACHAM**: Well, there were only a few folks left in the chamber. And you know that most of those guys are in their eighties. Once it got past their naptime, they all dozed off pretty quickly. I put on a recording of some of President Strange's speeches. That should keep them snoozing until after the debate, and I'll pick things back up again.

**SUZANNE**: But are you sure you will be okay for the debate? You look exhausted!

**MEACHAM**: Don't worry about me. I'll be fine. I'm just a little concerned about you, Suzanne.

**SUZANNE**: Me? Oh, I'm okay. What are you concerned about?

**MEACHAM**: I just hope you're prepared for the dog-eat-dog world of D.C. It's a lot different from Idaho, you know. Just look at me. Do you want to end up like this?

I remember when I was a brash young freshman congressman, ready to take on the world, and battle my opponents into the wee hours when needed. Now I'm just another one of the "old codgers" who can barely stay awake in the chambers.

**SUZANNE**: Well, you haven't slept for about 36 hours! I'm surprised you're even still standing!

**MEACHAM**: All those battles have really been taking their toll on me. And then things went even more downhill when I lost my wife a few years ago.

**SUZANNE**: Oh, sir! I never knew that! I wasn't really aware of anything about your personal life. If you want to keep that private...

**MEACHAM**: No, no, it will probably help me to talk about it. I haven't really shared much about it with anyone else.

Things seemed to be going fine, until I became Chair of the Foreign Relations committee, and had to start doing a lot of travelling around the world. My wife really struggled with me being gone so much, and not having much time for her. So I decided to start taking her on some trips with me, and she seemed to be taking to it very well.

**SUZANNE:** Well, it sounds like that helped the two of you grow closer.

**MEACHAM:** Well, that's what I thought. Then we were staying at a very nice hotel in Milan, when I lost her.

**SUZANNE:** I'm so sorry! How did she go? Was it an illness? Or an accident?

**MEACHAM:** Oh no. She's still very much alive and well, as far as I know. I lost her... to a hotel bartender named Enrico, who she was sleeping with while I was away in meetings. Got back to the room one night and found a note on the bed. The last I heard, they were living together in a villa in Sanremo.

**SUZANNE:** (*hesitantly*) Oh... well... I'm... still sorry.

**MEACHAM:** Well, thanks for listening. (*wearily*) I just wish I could catch a quick nap.

*(MEACHAM wanders away from her in a bit of a daze.)*