

A Partner's Prayer
A missing scene from "Sweet Revenge"
by Brit

Hutch wasn't sure if it was a long-forgotten comfort that drew him into the small hospital chapel or the dimly lit room's promise of solitude. As the blond pushed open the oak door, he was met by a quietness that enveloped his tattered heart like his grandmother's down comforter would engulf the eight-year-old boy he once was.

Peace?

The flickering amber light of candles cast his shadow against the wooden pews as he made his way down the center aisle to the front row and sat down heavily. The unyielding wood felt oddly familiar against his tired back, bringing back traces of memories from Sunday morning services and Bible school, and the ghosts of smiling children singing songs of Christmas joy to a sea of family and friends.

Tired...so tired. So scared.

The weary man leaned forward until his elbows rested on his knees, the strain of the last several hours unmasked as he lowered his face into his hands. The numbness that permeated his mind and heart since the shooting had acted as a buffer to protect him from the reality of the situation and allowed him to function in 'cop mode,' doing what had to be done in order to keep Starsky alive. Now that he was separated from his partner, the adrenaline that had sustained him fled, leaving him entirely spent and utterly devastated.

So much blood...

Hutch wearily raised his head and stared into his hands. Blood was still crusted there, drying into the crevices in small red-brown rivers. *How can a man survive after losing so much blood? What am I going to do if I lose him? Why did this happen? What am I going to do? Dear God, what am I going to do?*

Hutch tore his tear-streaked gaze away from his hands and looked up toward the single stained glass pane at the head to the altar. An unadorned oak cross hung before the colored glass. The stricken man stared at the sign of suffering and redemption for a few moments, unaware of the play of color the window painted upon his anguished face.

*God? Can You...are You there? I...I don't remember how to pray. I...please, please help me...help **him**. I can't...I don't...I...*

Please...save him.

The weary man that pushed himself up off the pew moved as if he were decades older than his thirty-some years. Slowly, he made his way back down the aisle and out of the gentle light, unaware that his prayer—a partner's prayer—had already been answered.

~Brit
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