

Some Kind of Justice

By Linda B.

Chapter Two

Starsky tugged on his navy blue tie as he paced up and down the courthouse steps. It was already hot and he was anxious. Starsky watched as another television crew's van pulled up at the curb and began unloading. He wanted the trial to be over, and he wondered what was delaying his partner. Seeing Hutch's beat-up car pull up to the curb, Starsky took the steps two at a time.

"Where ya been?" he demanded.

"Running."

"Running?"

"Yeah," said Hutch, walking around the LTD to join his partner on the curb. "I decided to go a different route on my morning run because the city's blocked off a couple of the roads for repair, and it took me a little longer. What are you doin' here so early?"

"So early?" Starsky stared, mouth open.

Hutch chuckled as he hid his grin. "C'mon, we'd better get inside." Hutch slowed his long stride, allowing Starsky to catch up. "Trial starts in five minutes."

Once inside, the two detectives headed down the long hallway to the courtroom, making their way through the crowd. As they reached the door, Captain Dobey approached them. "Glad to see you could make it on time, Starsky."

"On time, Cap'n? I've been here thirty minutes. I've been waiting outside for Hutch."

Dobey cocked an eyebrow at him. "I'm supposed to believe that?"

Starsky turned to Hutch for support. "Tell 'im, Hutch."

"Tell him what, Starsk? That you're never late?" Hutch asked innocently, as he pushed the courtroom door open.

Starsky followed him down the aisle glaring at his back, promising to get even.



"Good job, Hutchinson," Captain Dobey offered as the three walked down the hall on lunch recess. "Starsky, you'll be up after lunch. Let's nail this guy."

“That’s the plan, Cap’n,” Hutch agreed. “He should end up behind bars for a long time.”

“Samuelson’s dirt,” Starsky added.

“Just give them the facts, Starsky. You’re not writing a report.”

Starsky pretended to be hurt. “That’s all I ever give, Cap’n.”

“Right.” Dobey searched his detective’s face before chuckling. He then added, “You two catch some lunch; I’m headed back to my office, but I’ll be back.”

“Kay, Cap’n,” Starsky said, as he took Hutch’s elbow and steered him in the opposite direction.

“What’s the hurry?” Hutch asked, following his partner out of the courthouse and across the pavement toward the Torino.

“I got something to show you, and I didn’t want Dobey around.” Starsky furtively glanced around before pulling an envelope out of his inside coat pocket. “You got here so late I didn’t have time to show you this before we had to meet Dobey.”

“Well, what is it? You act like it’s some kind of big secret.” Hutch pulled open the car door and sat down. “You gonna share or are you just gonna keep waving it in the air?”

Starsky again glanced through his side window and then the windshield, as if checking to make sure no one was around. He handed the envelope to the irritated blond sitting next to him. Hutch looked at the return address and opened the letter. “Huh, when did you get this?”

“It was in my mailbox when I got home yesterday. What do you think I should do about it, Hutch?”

“Keep the appointment.”

“But, Hutch…”

“Don’t ‘but Hutch’ me. Just keep the appointment.”

“But it’s with the IRS!”

“So, you don’t have anything to worry about.” Suddenly suspicious, Hutch added, “Or do you?”

“It’s an audit. Everyone worries about an audit.”

“Not if they’re honest. What year are they auditing?”

Starsky grabbed the letter from Hutch’s hands and frantically searched the letter. “Looks like two years ago. Let me see, nineteen seventy…”

Seeing the color leave Starsky’s face, Hutch asked worriedly, “What’s wrong, Starsk? Are you sick?”

“No.” Starsky swallowed hard before continuing. “Everything should be okay.”

“Good.” Hutch studied his partner momentarily, concerned at his pallor. “Starsky, did you do your taxes that year or did someone else?”

“Uh, someone else.”

“A professional?”

Indignant, Starsky responded, “Of course.”

Suspicious, Hutch couldn’t help probing further. “Who?”

“Huggy’s cousin.”

“You didn’t, Starsk!”

“Huggy said he needed some business, and besides he knew what he was doing. I got a big refund.” As he said those words, Starsky paled further.

“What did Huggy’s cousin know about taxes?”

“Huggy said he took a course.”

“What kind of course?”

Starsky looked at Hutch sheepishly. “Mail order, I think.”

Hutch rolled his eyes. “Good luck. I’ll visit you in San Quentin.”

“You don’t really think I could be in trouble, do you?”

“Let’s just say, I wouldn’t want to be in your shoes.” Hutch looked at his watch. “We’d better get to lunch. We’re due back in court soon.”

Starsky turned the key in the ignition and shifted into gear. “I’m not feeling too hungry. Maybe I’m coming down with something.”

Hutch looked at Starsky and, shaking his head, mumbled, “Maybe it’s tax-itis.”



It was late afternoon before Starsky was excused from the stand. Returning to his seat, he smiled in relief as Hutch winked at him and slid over to make room. It had been a long afternoon, and being inside on the stand for most of it, had been grueling. As Starsky sank back in the seat, Hutch patted his knee and whispered, “Nice job.” Looking past Hutch, Starsky returned Dobey’s nod, catching the pleased look on his superior’s face before it returned to its normal stoic expression. He was relieved when fifteen minutes later, the judge called a recess for the remainder of the afternoon. The defense would present their case in the morning.

Exiting the courtroom, Starsky instantaneously pulled the knot in his tie loose and reached up to unbutton his shirt collar. “Am I glad that’s done.”

“Good job, Starsky,” Dobey commented, following the partners out the door. “With your testimony as the arresting officer on the scene and your ID-ing Samuelson, the jury can only return one verdict.”

“Let’s hope so, Cap’n,” Hutch acknowledged. “But I’ll tell you, Samuelson sure made me feel uncomfortable up there. The man can look right through you.”

Starsky grimly added, “You might as well add his name to the list of goons who want to see us dead. If looks could kill, I wouldn’t be standin’ here right now.”

“Let’s hope the judge puts him behind bars for a long time.”

Starsky nodded his agreement. He just wished he felt as confident. It was his plan that, other than at the sentencing, he wouldn’t be looking Samuelson in the eyes ever again.

Knowing that the afternoon on the stand had been draining on his energetic partner, Hutch offered, “You want to join us for some dinner at The Pits, Cap’n?” He hoped the thought of food would distract Starsky from the afternoon trial, especially since he’d only picked at his lunch.

Dobey shook his head. “Thanks for the offer, but I promised Edith I’d be home at least one night this week to eat with her and the kids. It’d better be today. Can’t tell what the rest of the week will hold. You starting in Robbery tomorrow?”

“Yeah, we have a meeting scheduled with Erickson in the morning.” Hutch explained further at Dobey’s raised eyebrow, “Uh...he’s running the show until Jackson gets back.”

Dobey nodded, “Okay, well, check back with the DA to see how the trial’s progressing and whether you have to reappear.”

“Don’t worry, Cap’n, we’ll be around.” Seeing Starsky staring off into space, seemingly lost in thought, Hutch added, “Night Cap’n.” He gently grabbed his partner’s elbow and led him toward the curb and their parked cars. “Thinking about Samuelson, or are you still worrying about that audit?”

Starsky shook his head. “I was thinkin’ I wanted to skip dinner at Huggy’s. Lookin’ at Samuelson’s mug all afternoon kinda kills the mood for socializing. I guess I just wanna go home, get out of this monkey suit, and start readin’ those case files so we can get on with business.”

Hutch shrugged. “Sounds good to me. Why don’t you head home, and I’ll stop for a pizza on the way?”

Starsky nodded and reached out to pat Hutch on the stomach as they separated. “Thanks for understanding.”



Later that evening as they sat on the floor surrounded by files and paper plates filled with half-eaten slices of pizza, Starsky looked over at his partner. “So far, I don’t see any connection. How ’bout you?”

“Nope. I don’t see how Jackson thinks they’re all connected and that we’ll be able to prove it.”

“Stranger things have happened. If they are, then there’s got to be some mastermind behind them all. Right now, I’m just looking to find the ones pullin’ the warehouse heists,” Starsky said, shuffling through the files.

Hutch watched Starsky for a few minutes, and then decided it was time to ask the question that had been bothering him all evening. “Are you going to be able to handle this, Starsk?”

“What do ya mean?” Starsky asked, as he continued shuffling the papers and successfully avoiding the blue eyes watching him.

“Can you handle looking for the murderers of Jackson’s father?”

“Why shouldn’t I?” Starsky asked, the tone of his voice showing more injury than anger. “What makes you think I can’t do my job all of a sudden, pal?”

“You know what I mean,” Hutch said pointedly. He knew the fact that Jackson’s father had been a police officer would undoubtedly open up painful memories of Starsky’s own father’s murder, and he wanted to be sure his friend was ready for that. “And don’t answer a question with a question.”

The silence grew for a few minutes until Starsky finally answered. “Is it gonna be easy? No,” Starsky finally admitted softly, “but the day it starts getting easier, maybe I'd better start thinking about lookin' for a new job. Somehow, being able to find the murderers of Jackson's father, or the murderers of the father of some kid down the block, makes it easier to live with the fact that I'll never know who killed mine. Nothing will ever bring him back, but it helps being able to do something, Hutch. The victims deserve some kind of justice and the families some kind of peace.” Starsky looked up at the blond, the corners of his mouth just beginning to turn up into a smile.

Hutch smiled back. Satisfied that his partner wouldn't have a problem handling the case, he only wished he could erase the sadness in his eyes.



“I don't like it, Hutch. I told Erickson that we specifically wanted to work on the warehouse robberies, and what does he go an' do but stick us on the liquor stores. It ain't fair.” Starsky slammed his hand on the dash in frustration.

“Take it easy. If Jackson is right, it'll all end up the same in the end. Our job here is to catch the bad guys and, if they've moved over to robbing liquor stores, then that's where we're going. It makes sense to focus on the liquor stores. First, there were the jewelry break-ins; then, when they stopped, the warehouses were hit. Now those have stopped, and the liquor stores have started up. These guys seem to be testing out the waters all over town. Putting some officers undercover inside a few of the liquor stores gives us a greater chance of catching them.”

“You know I hate it when you're right.” Grinning at his partner, Starsky relaxed and watched as Hutch turned the corner onto Market Street. He slowed to a stop in front of Tony's Party Store—Starsky's undercover assignment. Thinking Starsky's car would attract too much attention for a drifter, the plan was for Hutch to drop Starsky off each day, and then pick him up again at the end of the shift. As Hutch turned off the engine, Starsky studied the front of the store. “Looks like my home away from home.”

“You okay working here?”

“Sure, always wanted to make a career outta being a stock boy.”

“Well, you know why Erickson picked you over me to go undercover, don't ya?”

Starsky looked at him curiously. “No, why?”

“He took one look at the clothes you're wearing, buddy, and knew he'd found his man.”

Hutch ducked as Starsky moved to whack him on the back of the head. Starsky glared and then opened the car door and climbed out.

“I’ll be back to pick you up later,” Hutch called out, chuckling, as Starsky ignored him and entered the store.



End of Chapter Two