

GUARDIAN II

The Luck of the Draw

by TibbieB

Chapter 6

Starsky woke to the sound of the phone ringing on the bedside table. “You’re not up yet? Starsky, you were due in here thirty minutes ago. You’d better get the hell down here now. Dobeys been out here looking for you twice. Something’s going down and he’s really worked up.”

“Good mornin’ to you too, partner,” Starsky mumbled, rubbing the sleep from his eyes. “Don’t get your shorts in a wad. I just overslept a little, it’s not exactly a national disaster.”

“Just get your butt in gear,” Hutch whispered into the phone as Dobeys perspiring face appeared at the door a third time. Hutch smiled nervously, “Must already be on his way, Cap,” he covered. “I’m sure he’ll walk in the door any minute.” He’d kill Starsky later.



The two detectives entered Captain Dobeys office after lightly tapping at the door. Usually they’d just barge in, but Hutch suggested since they were already in hot water, there was no point in antagonizing their boss any further.

“Come in!” Dobeys bellowed. “About time you decided to join us, Starsky.”

Starsky had the decency to blush and mutter an apology; but Dobeys ignored him and hurried into an introduction.

“Starsky, Hutchinson, this is Martin Reynolds.” Each detective shook hands with the man.

“Of Reynolds Enterprises?” Hutch asked. He recognized the entrepreneur from his frequent photographs in the Wall Street Journal.

“That’s right,” the man acknowledged.

Dobeys immediately cut to the chase. “We believe Mr. Reynolds’ daughter, Jenny was kidnapped yesterday.” He dropped an 8x10 color photo of the beautiful teen on the desk. “He needs our help.”

Starsky hesitated, but knew he had to ask, “Sir, is there any possibility your daughter ran away? Has she ever disappeared like this before?”

“We’ve already covered that territory, Starsky,” Dobey interrupted. “Three young ladies from Jenny’s school saw her get into the car with a strange man. Apparently, he was driving Mr. Reynolds’ car which was stolen sometime yesterday morning.”

“You may as well know that my wife has serious misgivings about involving the police in this matter. But I’m convinced that we have no choice. I wasn’t born yesterday; and I realize that most of these cases end up with the victim being murdered, even after the kidnapper’s demands have been met.”

Hutch looked up and met Reynolds’ eyes straight on. This was a man who pulled no punches. Hutch felt it only fair to be just as candid. “Unfortunately, you’re right, sir.”

“He’s asked specifically for you two to handle the case,” Dobey volunteered. Starsky and Hutch exchanged glances.

“Let me explain,” Mr. Reynolds began. “I read in the paper a few months back that you were the detectives who solved the Haymes case. You worked with a psychic or some such person.” Reynolds paused long enough to clear his throat. “I don’t believe in all that hocus pocus, but I can’t ignore the fact that you found that girl and you saved her life. If you could do that, you may be my best hope of seeing my daughter alive again.”

Hutch quirked an eyebrow at Starsky, but said nothing.

“It’s true that Joanna Haymes survived, but the credit should go to Collandra, not Hutch and me.”

“From all the reports I’ve seen and heard, you both put your lives on the line for that child, and the gamble paid off.” He turned to Hutch, “I understand you even took a bullet in the process.”

“I was wearing a bullet proof vest,” Hutch modestly pointed out.

“The fact remains, you guys have grit. In my book, that gives you the edge. I’ve gone through my whole life not being afraid to take chances, risking everything—and it’s paid off, more often than not. But this time, the prize is too valuable. I’d give everything I have to see my baby back home safe.” Reynolds’ voice was thick with emotion. Both detectives recognized that making such a statement didn’t come easy for a man like Reynolds.

“She’s my only child, damn it, and I don’t think I could live another day if something happens to her.”

The two detectives exchanged glances, knowing that this man was baring his soul to them and right now, thought they were a lifeline of sorts.

“We’ll do what we can,” Hutch finally offered.

“But you have to understand,” Starsky added, “we don’t know what kind of lunatic we’re dealing with here. We can’t guarantee you a happy ending.”

“We’ll be with you every step of the way,” Hutch said, “but you’ll have to do what we tell you. Keep in mind that you may not agree, but we’re going on experience and instinct. We won’t insist on you doing anything that we think will put your daughter at greater risk.”

“Fair enough.” Reynolds sat back down, while Starsky and Hutch took their usual seats and prepared to question the man.

“Who was the last person to see Jenny, sir?” Hutch asked, then took a small spiral notebook from the pocket of his baseball jacket to jot down anything that might be useful.

“As Captain Dobey said, it was some of her school mates yesterday afternoon. That imbecile driver of mine allowed my car to be stolen, and the kidnapper apparently went to the school and picked her up.”

Starsky leaned forward a little, taking control of the interview. “Please don’t take this the wrong way, but I’m sure your daughter’s old enough to know better than to get into the car with a stranger. Do you think it coulda been someone she knew? Someone she trusted?”

“I don’t know.” Mr. Reynolds ran his fingers through his hair, as though the gesture would help clear his thoughts. “Perhaps...I mean...we’ve always warned her that something like this could happen; so it would make sense that she perhaps knew the man.”

“Did any of Jenny’s friends give a description of the guy?”

“I believe they gave that to one of Captain Dobey’s officers.”

“I’ve put out an APB for a Caucasian male driving the Reynolds’ Mercedes. Also gave them a description of Miss Reynolds,” Dobey interjected. “For the time being, I’m keeping it all low-profile.”

“Do you think you could come up with a list of people who may have a grudge against you or your family?” Hutch hurriedly scrawled Reynolds’ answers to Starsky’s questions.

“Well, yes, of course; but no one particular comes to mind right off hand. I just assumed whoever did this is after money.”

“I know this may be hard to accept,” Starsky continued, “but most kidnappings are committed by someone on the inside; someone who knows the family routine, can come and go inconspicuously—an employee or even a trusted family friend. So we’re gonna need a list of all the people who work for you, starting with the domestic help.”

“I’ll give you anything you need.”

“I’ve pulled you two off your other cases. I want you to get to the bottom of this.” Turning to Mr. Reynolds, Dobey continued. “These two may be late ninety percent of the time, but they’re still my best detectives.”

Hutch looked up from his note taking. “Have you had any contact from the kidnappers yet? A note? A phone call?”

“Nothing. And that seems very strange to me,” Reynolds answered.

“Actually, it could be a lucky break for us. We’ll get a team over there to tap your phone and post some plain clothes officers at your home and office,” Dobey suggested.

“Mr. Reynolds, I know it won’t be easy, but please try to stay calm. You’ll need a cool head to deal with the people responsible for this.” Seeing the strain and fear in the man’s eyes, Starsky reassured him, “We’ll be right by your side—all the way.”

“Starsky and I will get in touch with some of our contacts on the street and see if these people have been talking about their plans or trying to recruit help.”

Hutch turned his attention to Starsky. “Let’s go over to the school first and see if Jenny’s friends have remembered anything more since the interview last night.”

“Right.” Starsky stood up to leave. “Cap, we’ll meet you at Mr. Reynolds’ home as soon as we’ve finished up.”



The two detectives sat quietly waiting in the principal’s office to interview the three girls who’d witnessed Jenny’s abduction. The door opened and Mr. Cook entered with the three students and made the introductions.

“I’d never seen him before,” Carla began. “He was really cute, though. I can see why Jenny went with him.”

“You think Jenny went with this man because he was nice looking?” Hutch asked.

“Well, no, not exactly. It’s just, he had an honest, harmless looking face.”

“Could you give us a description?”

“I can,” Brenda volunteered. “He had dark brown hair, wore his sideburns kind of long. You know, like Tom Jones. Probably in his late twenties.”

“He had a great smile. And he wore dark sunglasses that made him look mysterious and sexy.” Joyce added. All three girls giggled, then almost immediately sobered when they remembered why they were there.

“He was tall, kind of thin, and he dressed very casual for a chauffeur.”

“Did Jenny look like she knew him?” Starsky asked.

“Not at first; but after a few seconds, she seemed to recognize him, because she got into the car willingly.”

“So he didn’t force her? She didn’t look scared or threatened.”

Carla looked at her two friends then at Starsky. “No, not at all. We talked about that after she left. We figured he must have been a friend or employee of her Dad’s.”

End of Chapter 6