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Too Good To Be True

by TibbieB

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Chapter 1

Starsky angrily slammed the desk drawer shut.

“Look, Starsk, I’m sorry,” Hutch apologized. “All I’m trying to say is—take it easy, huh? I think you’re moving too fast, that’s all.”

The dark-haired detective rubbed his tired eyes. Three hours of sleep had definitely left him cranky, especially considering that’s about all he’d averaged the last four nights in a row. “Forget it,” he mumbled. “I know ya mean well, Hutch; but I’m a big boy, okay?”

Hutch glanced around the squad room. Realizing their heated exchange had attracted attention, he lowered his voice and leaned in closer before continuing. “I’ve just never seen you get so involved this fast. You’ve known this woman less than two weeks and you’re already talking like you’re in love with her. I just don’t get it.”

“What’s to get? Sometimes you just meet the right person at the right time. I don’t see why you’re makin’ a big deal out of it.”

Starsky stood up and fished the car keys out of his jeans pocket and headed for the door. “You comin’?”

Hutch grabbed his jacket off the back of his chair and followed his partner down the hall toward the parking garage. The two were quiet until they were in the car and on their way. “What do you know about her?”

“Huh?”

“What do you know about Angela, Starsk? You’ve not told me much. Where’s she from? What about family? Has she ever been married?”

Starsky glared at his partner then squealed the tires of the Torino as they jettisoned into the bustling traffic. “I know everything I need to know; she’s a beautiful, terrific lady, and she’s got great taste in men.”

Hutch shook his head in defeat. He was trying to carry on a serious discussion, but Starsky stalled him at every turn. “How come every time you’ve tried to introduce her to me something happens and she can’t make it? Can you explain that?”

“Simple. Things came up.” Starsky gave him a crooked grin. “Besides, she’s gonna meet us at Huggy’s in twenty minutes. What’ve you got to say about that, wise-guy?”

Momentarily caught off guard, Hutch just stared at him. “Great. That’s great, buddy. I was beginning to think she was a figment of your warped imagination.” Relieved that he was finally going to meet Angela, Hutch added magnanimously, “Hey, I’ll take you two out to dinner somewhere nice tonight. What do you say?”

Starsky looked over and flashed his best Starsky smile. “Sounds terrific, partner.” He waggled his eyebrows comically. “Just so long as it’s not one of your health food restaurants.”

“How about Italian?”

“Angela loves Italian—that would be great.”

Starsky’s expression was more sincere as he added, “Thanks, Hutch.” He looked back at the road and concentrated on maneuvering through the busy traffic.

Hutch sat quietly for the remainder of the drive and considered the changes in his partner’s behavior over the past week. Starsky seemed obsessed with spending every waking moment with this woman. His concentration at work had been lousy, Hutch having to prompt him to do things that should come as second nature to a seasoned detective like Starsky.

Furthermore, Starsky wasn’t his usual verbose self. What little he did have to say was about Angela. And when he talked about her, it seemed he never really said anything of substance; only how gorgeous she was, how exciting their time was together, and that he felt incredibly lucky he’d met her. But the thing that disturbed Hutch most was the way she seemed to evade meeting any of Starsky’s friends. Hutch could hardly believe his partner had met her in a grocery store only ten days ago. Maybe, at last, he was going to get a look at this mysterious woman who’d so completely captivated his partner.



The two detectives entered the Pits and went directly to the bar where Huggy was busy polishing a stack of heavy, glass beer mugs. He looked up as they plopped down on their regular stools. “Hey, what’s happening, brothers?”

Starsky scanned the room while Hutch ordered two beers.

“You expecting someone, Starsky?”

“As a matter of fact, I am, Hug.” Starsky smiled smugly. “Just the most beautiful lady in LA. Gorgeous blonde, with legs up to here. You know, with a smile that could sink a battleship.”

Huggy grinned back. “I think I would have noticed a chick like that. But what I wanna know is, why she’d be meeting YOU here.”

“My sentiments exactly,” Hutch chimed in.

Before either of them could get in another dig, Starsky was off the stool and headed for the entrance of the club. Huggy and Hutch watched as he approached a beautiful woman with hair the color of spun gold. The petite, five foot-four blond looked up adoringly at Starsky. Her delicate features and perfectly shaped body were a striking contrast beside Starsky’s dark, muscular good looks.

Taking her hands in his, Starsky leaned forward to kiss her softly on the lips, gazing at her as though they were the only two people in the place. Huggy and Hutch watched him slip his arm around the young lady’s waist and guide her toward them.

“He wasn’t just jivin’ about her looks. That’s one foxy lady,” Huggy commented.

“Sweetheart, these are the two turkeys I’ve been warnin’ you about,” he said, lips intimately close to her ear.

Angela’s mouth curved into a sexy smile, a smile that never quite reached her eyes. Despite the soft cloud of short, silvery, blonde curls framing her face, Hutch found himself drawn only to the frosty glint in her ice blue eyes.

“You must be Hutch,” she said softly. “And that would mean you’re Honey Bear.”

The men exchanged glances; then despite their best efforts, all three burst into laughter. Hutch watched as Angela’s perfect smile instantly hardened. From the look on Huggy’s face, Hutch could see that he hadn’t missed the transformation either. Apparently, a sense of humor wasn’t one of Angela’s endearing qualities.

“It’s Huggy, darlin’,” Starsky corrected her gently. “Huggy Bear.”

“Of course,” she snapped. Then, quickly added, “That makes so much more sense.”

“Huggy, how about mixin’ my lady a margarita, then joinin’ us at our table,” Starsky suggested.

Angela’s voice and expression softened again as she looked up into Starsky’s eyes and cooed, “What a marvelous idea, darling. I’d love a drink.”

She’s a regular Jekyll and Hyde, Hutch thought, watching the woman’s demeanor change before right before his eyes.

“I’ve been talkin’ about you so much, Hutch was beginning to think I dreamed you up,” Starsky said as they settled into the booth.

Hutch laughed casually, deciding to start over and get off on the right foot with Angela. “Seemed like we weren’t destined to meet for awhile there.”

Angela gave him another frosty smile. Contrarily, her voice dripped with sweetness when she spoke again.

“David talks about you all the time, Hutch. I’ve been concerned that without your stamp of approval, David may decide to stop seeing me.”

Although her tone was light and playful, Hutch could see in her eyes that she meant every word. The amazing thing was, Starsky seemed oblivious.

“Nothing so sinister. It’s just that when two people spend as much time together as partners do, it spills over into their personal relationships. Starsky’s like family to me.”

Starsky smiled to himself, understanding exactly what Hutch was trying to say. After all, he felt closer to Hutch than to his own brother, Nicky. He took another sip of his beer, unaware of the undercurrents between his partner and the woman.

“Tell me—where are you from, Angela?” Hutch asked.

“From the East Coast.” For moment, Hutch thought she was going to leave it at that. “New York. I was a model there.”

“New York? Hmmm—I thought I detected a slight accent. European?”

“How perceptive of you. I...uh...I was educated in Europe, but I haven’t lived there since I finished my secondary studies.”

“Isn’t she beautiful?” Starsky gazed at her as though he hadn’t heard a word of their conversation.

Starsky had never mentioned Angela's accent at all, and Hutch found that rather strange. He stared at his partner for a moment, puzzled by the hold this woman seemed to have over him. "So, what brings you to California from New York?" Hutch pressed a little harder, not yet satisfied with her answer. "I'd think New York would be the ideal place to pursue a modeling career."

"She's planning to be an actress," Starsky answered for her. "Right, sweetheart?"

"Well, I'm hoping to break into show business, that's true. But even if that doesn't work out, I just felt the need for a change." Angela batted her eyelashes at Hutch, momentarily directing her charm at him.

"Where are you working now?" he asked bluntly.

"I have several options I'm considering."

Starsky reached over and covered her hand with his. "You'll get a break soon. Just give yourself a little time."

"You're so sweet." Angela turned her hand over, lacing her fingers with Starsky's.

Huggy sat down next to Hutch, placing the margarita on the table in front of Starsky's date. "So, Angela, what kind of wild tales has this dude been feeding you about me?"

The blonde gave him a tight little smile, and answered shortly, "Only that you own this place, and that he hangs out here a lot."

Though his face was passive, Huggy seemed a bit put down by her response.

"Now, that's not all I've said about Huggy...."

"Oh, yes—and you're their 'snitch'?"

Even Starsky winced this time. "No, I said he helps us with our cases—"

"It's cool, Starsky." Huggy stood up. "I got customers and we're short a waitress today. Nice to meet you, Angela."

The black man quickly returned to the bar, leaving Starsky worried that his feelings had been hurt. For Hutch, there was no doubt.

"Did I say something wrong?" Angela asked innocently.

“It’s just Huggy’s our friend, sweetheart, and I think he misunderstood what you were saying.”

“Huggy’s more than a friend,” Hutch added. “He’s saved our butts more times than I can count.”

Angela poked out her bottom lip in a pretty pout. “Well...I’m sorry, darling,” she simpered. “I didn’t mean to. He must be overly sensitive.”

Starsky hurried to reassure her. “It’s okay. I’ll explain everything to him later. Don’t get upset.”

Hutch watched in silence, wanting very much to reach out and smack Starsky in the back of his head for acting like such an idiot, and allowing this twit to hurt Huggy’s feelings. He quickly came to the conclusion that if he had to watch her make a fool of his partner, he’d at least use the opportunity to get more information about her. “Do you have family back in New York, Angela?”

“No, no family to speak of; just a couple of cousins.”

“What about your uncle?” Starsky suggested. “Her Uncle Demetrius lives here in LA.”

“Oh, really? What does he do?”

“He’s a chauffeur,” Starsky continued.

“David, I’m sure Hutch isn’t interested in my uncle’s little business.”

“Oh, no, you’re wrong. I’m interested in everything about you,” Hutch said, making eye contact with the blonde. “By all means, tell me about Demetrius, about the rest of your family. Where do your parents live?”

Nervously, Angela checked her watch. “Oh, dear. David, I’m going to be late for my hair appointment. I’m sorry, but we’ll have to cut this short.”

Starsky squeezed her hand affectionately. “It’s okay. Hutch is takin’ us out for dinner tonight. I’ll drop you off at the hairdresser, then pick you up at your place around seven. You two can take up where you left off. Okay?”

Hutch watched as Angela cut her eyes toward him, then quickly back to Starsky. “Of course, darling. That sounds great. I’ll be dressed and ready at seven then.”

“Wear something dressy,” Hutch added. “We’re going somewhere very nice. It’s not everyday I meet the girl that stole my partner’s heart.”

“Very nice to meet you, Hutch. I’ll see you tonight then.”

“You got a way home, Hutch?” Starsky asked as he stood up to leave also.

“Sure. I think our snitch can give me a ride,” Hutch said dryly.

From the bar, Huggy watched the couple leave, then joined Hutch at the table. Hutch shook his head as the black man sat down.

“You don’t even have to say it,” Hutch told him.

“Man, that chick is so cold, she’s probably got antifreeze pumping through her veins.”

“I can’t believe Starsky could fall for someone like that.” Hutch was still amazed at what had just transpired. “She’s so different from the other women he’s been involved with—Terry, Helen...even Rosie. I’ve never seen Starsky act so—so—”

“Stupid?” Huggy finished for him.

“You could put it that way.”

“So, did you find out anything about her?”

“Very little. And you know, Hug—when I pressed a little about her family, she suddenly remembered she had a hair appointment. She’s hiding something.”

“Well, let’s hope it’s another personality,” Huggy said earnestly.

Hutch chuckled for a moment, then quickly sobered. “I’ll push a little harder tonight. I’m taking the two of them out to dinner. Also, I’m going to do a little checking up on her. How about you ask around through your sources too?”

“You mean you think she may have a record? Man, I don’t like the chick at all, but she doesn’t strike me as a criminal or nothin’.”

“No, I’m not suggesting she is. But there’s something strange about her, and I get the oddest sensation that I’ve met her, or at least seen her somewhere. We’re both off duty for the next two days, so Starsky won’t know anything about it.”

“That’s cool...I’ll see what I can turn. Don’t expect much though. And,” Huggy looked up from under hooded lids, “I don’t envy you one damn bit, man—havin’ to spend the evening with the Ice Maiden and her love slave.”



End of Chapter 1