

Too Good To Be True

by TibbieB

Chapter 3

It was the constant bumping and shaking that finally woke Starsky from his deep slumber, leaving him confused and groggy as he tried to focus his eyes in the dark confines of the automobile trunk. He lifted his head, smacking it against the hard metal surface, causing stars to swim before his eyes, as he fought to hang onto consciousness.

Where the hell am I? How'd I get here?

When he tried to move his arms, a sharp pain shot between his shoulder blades and Starsky quickly realized his hands were tied firmly behind his back. He could also feel a tight rope binding his ankles, digging into his flesh when he kicked out and made contact with the wall of the trunk. Trying not to panic, he concentrated on the sounds around him, and after a few seconds, recognized the low whine of a car engine.

His mind flitted from one fuzzy image to another, as his brain tried to sort out his recollections and form clear images that would help him understand how he'd ended up here. The last thing he remembered was sitting on the floor in front of the stereo with Angela.

Starsky recalled the two of them drinking coffee while she described her friend's lake cabin where they would be staying a couple of days. Then the room had begun to spin. He'd felt his hand give way, and the cup, still half filled with coffee had tumbled to the carpet. Oddly, when he looked up, Angela hadn't seemed concerned. He remembered trying to apologize for the mess, but when he opened his mouth, no words would come out.

He'd tried to reach out to her, but his hand seemed paralyzed. Fear seeped through his brain, as he felt his senses slowly numbing. Why hadn't she helped him when his body slowly began to lose all feeling...when his muscles seemed paralyzed...when he couldn't speak? Couldn't she see something was wrong? Why did she look at him like that? None of it made sense. The last thing he remembered was the sadistic little smile on her face.

Lying hog-tied in the dark trunk, Starsky reluctantly came to the only logical conclusion: Hutch was right. He really didn't know much about Angela. In his usual manner, he'd gone off half-cocked, telling his well-meaning friend to take a flying leap. Now it was pretty clear Angela hadn't helped him because this was exactly what she'd planned. She'd drugged him—just like Monique had. And thinking of that crazed serial killer caused his heart to lurch to his throat. It seemed like a lifetime ago that he and Hutch had solved that case; but not before Starsky had nearly become her last victim. Hutch had barely arrived in time to keep him from meeting the sharp end of a butcher knife.

No—please—not another weirdo. This can't be happenin'—not with Angela. She loves me...she just told me so. What is it with me and crazy women?

As his mind slowly cleared, Starsky tested the ropes digging into his wrists, only to conclude someone had really known what they were doing when they'd trussed him up. He took a deep breath, fighting back the claustrophobia threatening to get the better of him. *Hutch, I'm sorry, partner.... Guess it's a little late to say you were right.*

The detective lay quietly listening for sounds that could give him a clue as to where he was. He quickly realized they weren't on the interstate; no sounds of the traffic whizzing by, nor irritable horns honking. The car took a wide turn, then dropped down an inch or two, rattling all the way through it's frame as he heard dirt and gravel kick up beneath the tires. He knew they'd left the main road now, and were most likely traveling some unfamiliar, back road into the country.

He had no idea how long they'd been traveling. For that matter, how long he'd been unconscious. Hours? Days? His mind wandered back to Hutch, and their last conversation on the phone. *How long will I have to be gone before you know I'm in trouble?* It wasn't as though they'd parted on the best of terms.

Visions of Hutch lying trapped beneath his car in the canyon flitted through the dark-haired detective's memory. *Hutch was missing two days before I realized anything was wrong, he reminded himself. He could have died there if it had been a weekend and I'd not been expecting him to show up for work....*

Starsky swallowed hard, forcing the fear back down his throat. The bone-jarring rattle of the automobile frame was beginning to make his stomach have the jitters—or maybe it was just nerves. Inhaling the carbon monoxide, streaming into the truck from the exhaust pipe, didn't help matters either. Every bump they hit, Starsky felt his stomach lurch.

At this point, he didn't even know for sure who was responsible for his abduction; nor did he know why *he* was being targeted. For all he knew, he could be dead in an hour, dumped on some lonely country road, to be discovered days—even weeks later. Perhaps he'd be dead before Hutch even realized he was missing. That thought chilled him to his very soul.

What if he never had the chance to tell Hutch he'd been right? Or apologize for that final, bitter conversation? For some reason, that possibility bothered him almost as much as the prospect of dying. After all they'd survived together over the years, it seemed ironic that it could end this way, with words of anger hanging between them the last time they spoke.

Hutch would miss him...would realize he was in danger. Hutch would come for him. He always did. He just had to hold on.

That's right, Starsky. Don't panic. Hutch'll come...



“Listen Hutch, I don’t mind helping you out, you know that. But this one’s Mission Impossible.”

The blond detective looked up in time to see Minnie straighten the black rimmed glasses perched precariously on her nose. “What do you mean?” he asked.

“There’s nothing on this gal. I checked every source available to the Department. I came up with three Angela Parsons—none of which fit the description you gave me. One lives in Colorado, and is fifty-seven years old. One, with a rap sheet a mile long, was stabbed to death in a fight while incarcerated last year in Raiford State Pen down in Florida; and the third one is a twenty year-old black female living here in LA. Are you sure you got the name right?”

“Yeah...positive.”

“Didn’t you say she had some sort of accent?”

“Yes, but she said that was just because she attended school in Europe. Claims her home is New York City.”

“Too bad. I might’ve contacted the embassies to see if she was here on some sort of visa. Actually, Angela Parson doesn’t sound like a foreign name to me. Maybe it’s an alias.”

Minnie’s comment only increased Hutch’s uneasiness about Starsky’s new love. If Angela was using an alias, she was most likely involved in something illegal.

“It’s possible,” he agreed. “Thanks anyway for trying. Maybe Huggy’s had better luck.”

“Say, isn’t this the gal Starsky’s been seeing?”

“Yeah—but please don’t say anything. You know how pissed he’d be if he found out I was checking up on her.”

“I do...but it looks to me like you may be onto something here. I don’t have a good feeling about this, Hutch. Starsky seems really serious about this one—and in such a short time, too. He sure hasn’t been himself lately.”

“I know. And meeting her yesterday didn’t do anything to ease my mind, either. Something about her isn’t quite right.”

“Well, if I come up with anything, I’ll let you know.”

“Hey...I just thought of something else,” Hutch added.

Minnie stopped and looked back over her shoulder at him.

“You mind checking the local limousine services and see if there’s one owned by some character who goes by the name ‘Demetrius’? Don’t have a last name.”

“Okay, but don’t expect much with no more than that to go on.”

Mumbling under her breath, Minnie left the squad room, as Hutch picked up the phone and dialed The Pits. Unfortunately, Huggy had been no more successful than Minnie at finding out anything about the elusive Angela Parson. He’d taken the initiative to ask around about the uncle while he was at it, but no one was familiar with the man or his limo service.

Hutch decided it was time to tell Starsky about his girlfriend’s mysterious background. He dialed his partner’s number and let the phone ring ten times. When there was no answer, he dialed Angela’s apartment. Still no response.

Where the hell are you, Starsk? I know you were steamed last night, but surely you aren’t still ignoring the phone...

Hutch hung up the receiver and grabbed his jacket as he headed out the door. If Mohammed won’t come to the mountain.... *I guess I’ll just have to track you down, partner.*



Hutch pulled up in front of Starsky’s apartment, disappointed that the Torino was nowhere in sight. He realized Starsky was most likely at Angela’s, but since his partner had never given him the woman’s actual address, there was no way of checking. Hutch looked at his watch and saw that it was already three p.m.

Why are you so concerned? He chided himself. *It’s not like Starsky’s never spent a couple of days with a lady without telling you before.* But at some level, Hutch sensed this was different. His conscience nagged at him, spurred on by guilt for the way he’d exploded at his friend on the phone the night before.

Can’t blame you for being bent out of shape, partner. Guess maybe you’re giving me time to cool my heels and think up a good apology. And apologize he would. Even though there was something strange going on with Angela, he realized he’d been way out of line.

Hutch rubbed his eyes with the heels of his hands, and looked at the building one more time, as if Starsky would miraculously appear before him. *No point in borrowing trouble. Don't make a bigger deal out of her background check than necessary. There's a logical explanation. Could've changed her name or something.*

Deciding to leave it alone for now, Hutch started up the Ford, and headed back to his own apartment for a late lunch and an afternoon of relaxing on the sofa with the latest Ian Fleming novel. Besides, if Starsky didn't surface soon, he'd run Angela's phone number and come up with the address. If it meant tracking his partner down to straighten things out between them, then damn it, that's what he'd do!



End of Chapter 3