

Urban Legend

MacGyver slid the Jeep down the city streets with ease, even though the 4x4 was probably happier roughing it out in the wilds. He took a left, spinning the wheel with the palm of his hand and then letting it straighten out again.

A small breeze whipped over the windshield, bristling through his hair and making the early morning sun seem that little bit warmer.

Mac smiled to himself. It felt good to be heading out to the Santa Luisa Mission again. He hadn't been to the homeless center his late friend Father Jim had set up in quite awhile, and the place deserved some more of his time.

He was taking over a trunk full of clothes he'd was donating, as well as some electrical items for the mission office that Phoenix had sent along. Setting those up for Doc would be a pleasant distraction after recent events.

Mac shook his head, partly in disdain and partly in amazement. His latest encounter had been with his old nemesis, Murdoc, and although this time things had been a little *different*, MacGyver always came away with a bad taste in his mouth after dealing with the outrageous Brit.

It was like the gods had made them in some weird mould that meant they'd be enemies forever – because to say Murdoc was a hitman, he never could kill Mac, and no matter how many times Murdoc *appeared* to come to a sticky end, MacGyver never really could foil him, either.

MacGyver took another left turn and was about to accelerate away when movement on the sidewalk caught his eye. It wasn't too difficult to see that some poor soul was getting mugged, and not even down an alleyway.

Mac hit the brakes, slid the Jeep up to the curb and was out onto the path in seconds.

“Hey!”

As Mac called out, the mugger glanced over his shoulder and then bolted, making a run for the neighboring street. He was fast, and there was no way to get a good look at him because he wore a hood low over his face.

MacGyver hesitated, wanting to give chase, but quickly realized the victim was a street person, and he was hurt.

What kind of man mugs a homeless guy? Mac tried not to think about it too much as he kneeled over to try and help. *They have no money, nothing of value...*

“Angelina...” The man's eyes were wide, desperate even, and his ancient hands clawed at MacGyver's arms as he blurted out the name.

Mac gently tried to push him back down, noting blood pooling on the sidewalk. He knew the old boy from the mission, but couldn't quite remember what people called him.

He was too old to be out on the streets, too old to be attacked like this.

Too old to die like this? As the sobering thought hit home, MacGyver finally remembered the elderly man's name. Everyone called him Old Rob, although his real name could be anything.

"It's okay," he soothed looking for the source of the blood. "I'm gonna get you some help."

Rob wasn't listening. "Save it...save it for her..." His frail hands grabbed for Mac's collar, and it was then the troubleshooter finally realized the man had been stabbed and it was bad – what was known as a sucking chest wound, if he wasn't mistaken.

MacGyver ignored Rob's pleas and looked around for help. It was still early, but there was the odd person here and there, all ignoring what was happening and simply walking on by.

Was this what the world had come to? Were people like Rob really that invisible, even when they were old and hurt?

"Hey!" Mac picked on a young man with a ghetto blaster on his shoulder and a lot of very fake jewelry on his hands and around his neck. The kid turned with a "who me?" expression. "Yeah, *you!* Call the police and an ambulance. *NOW!*"

Mac watched as the kid thought about it, then ducked into a nearby convenience store, hopefully to borrow a phone.

Rob's bloodied hands tugged on Mac's collar again, and this time he couldn't help but stare back in to the old man's eyes. There was something there, in his heart, in his soul that MacGyver would probably never understand, and yet would never forget.

"Save...Angelina's Grace..."

MacGyver held Rob in his arms, realizing there was very little weight to him at all. He was skin and bone, almost skeletal. "I don't understand?" He admitted, shaking his head. "Who is Angelina? Someone I can contact?"

Rob coughed and a bright red spurt of blood dribbled down his chin. Somehow he still managed to summon the energy to shake his head, his dark eyes beseeching Mac to grasp his words. "*Angelina...*"

His grip slowly loosened, and his eyelids slid down. Rob let out one long, rasping breath, and quietly died in MacGyver's arms.

No one would remember him or even care what had happened. There would be no mourners at his grave, and no tombstone to mark his passing.

But MacGyver knew, and MacGyver cared – and that meant there would at least be answers.

*Later that night at Sam's Apartment
6th Street,
Santa Monica*

MacGyver was pacing – no actually, he was *storming* back and forth until Sam thought he would most likely need a new rug before the night was over. Every now and again, his dad would pause, run a hand through his hair, and then start all over again.

Sam had seen Mac like this before, and knew it was best to let his dad get whatever it was out of his system, even if that did mean a terminal hole in his carpet.

“Can you believe anyone would hurt an old homeless guy like that? Old Rob was over seventy-years-old for heavens sake! He wouldn't have hurt a fly!” Mac was looking at Sam expectantly.

Sam shrugged, taking a film out of his camera as he spoke. “What did the cops say when you made your statement?”

MacGyver stuffed his hands in his pockets and puffed out a breath in exasperation. “Nothing! They've got squat.” He finally dropped onto the couch, deflated. “And then there's all the weird stuff Rob was saying just before he died.”

Sam cocked a brow, the reporter side of his brain kicking in without him even realizing. “Weird stuff, huh?”

Mac nodded. “Well, ya know, some street folks kinda act that way all the time. But I've met Old Rob before in passing and he always seemed pretty lucid until today...”

“*Dad!* Will you just spill what he said?”

MacGyver sighed. “He kept asking me to “Save Angelina's Grace,” but what that exactly is...” Mac paused mid-sentence as Sam almost dropped the camera he'd been pottering with.

“Aww man!” Sam saved the camera – just, and set in on the table next to the couch. “Angelina's Grace is an old Californian urban legend. It's kinda something I mess around with when I'm not on assignment.” He moved to the computer he had set up in the corner and dropped onto the chair in front of it. “Wanna see my files?”

“You believe in all that supernatural stuff?” Mac let out a huff suggesting he wasn't convinced by any such tales.

Sam shook his head and laughed. “It's not *that* kind of urban legend. C'mon over here and take a look.” He tapped on a few keys, scrolling through several folders until he found the one he was searching for.

MacGyver sauntered across, settling to view the monitor over his son's shoulder. His expression said he was intrigued and slightly impressed even by what Sam had been up to in his spare time.

Sam patted the screen with his forefinger. "See, back in the fifties, a guy named Bobbi Albini ran a local crime family, and he was big news. Then one day he fell for a dancer named Angelina Constanzo, and he reportedly loved her so much he vowed to give up his mob connections and settle down."

"Something tells me that didn't quite go to plan?" MacGyver theorized.

"Yeah, legend has it he bought a mansion out of town and had it filled with the most expensive furniture and jewelry, including a million dollar necklace named Angelina's Grace." Sam paused and looked at his dad for a reaction, when he got nothing but a frown, he continued. "Anyway, the story goes that a rival gang boss named Carl Donati got wind of what was going down and put a hit out on Angelina as a way of getting to Bobbi. She was killed in a car explosion. Instead of seeking revenge, Albini simply vanished, and some say he turned to the life of a bum, living on the streets among the homeless without anyone knowing, his mansion and treasures lost in time somewhere, waiting to be found..."

Sam was broken from the depths of his own storytelling by a chuckle from his father. He looked over his shoulder to see MacGyver shaking his head. *Okay, so at least he's not sulking about the old guy dying anymore...*

"You don't really believe Old Rob could be this Bobbi Albini?" Mac asked. "And I mean, c'mon, Sam, you can't just lose a mansion full of treasure, it would have been found by now!"

Sam shrugged and hit the key to shutdown his computer. Sometimes, his dad was *really* stubborn, almost as stubborn as *he* was on a good day. "But what if he *was* Bobbi and the mansion *is* out there waiting to be found? You gotta admit it would make a great story?"

MacGyver wavered a second. "It's more likely Old Rob was just attacked by some kid on drugs who didn't even realize he was homeless..."

Sam's eyes softened. He could tell his dad was teetering on the brink of being sucked in to the story. "You want to know for sure though, right?" He pushed. "So why don't you investigate this with me? It would be a great way to spend some time together, too."

"I guess this crazy legend is the only clue we have," Mac conceded, flopping back onto the couch. "But I want a few more facts rather than hearsay before we do this, right?"

Sam felt all warm inside. *Hook, line and sinker...*

He let the thought remain silent and instead offered, "I can go to the library after I hand in my current assignment in the morning?"

MacGyver shook his head. "Nah, I'll go. I want to look up the whole crime family story and see where it leads."

Sam bobbed his head. It was going to be great having his dad work a story with him, and if it caught a killer, then even better.

Abbot Kinney Memorial Library
502 S. Venice Blvd

The library in this part of town wasn't exactly massive, but it usually had enough information to get MacGyver what he needed. Today, however, he was finding it increasingly difficult to discover anything he didn't already know about the west coast mob.

There were a few old black and white photos of the L.A. syndicate together back in the fifties, one which actually showed Bobbi with Angelina and a few other men, but it wasn't anything eye-opening.

Mac turned the book that held the picture on its side and read the small print along the edge. It listed exactly who was in the photo.

Bobbi Albini, Angelina Constanzo, Ricardo Lobina, Ricky Furfaro and someone MacGyver didn't instantly recognize as mafia, named Art Denizen.

He squinted, focusing on Bobbi. Could the lean, well-dressed man in this image really be Old Rob? There was a resemblance, but was that all it was?

Mac flicked over the page and found a small article to go along with the photo. It was about the explosion that had killed Angelina. Apparently, she and the driver, Ricardo Lobina had been killed instantly when the bomb had torn through the Buick they were in.

The detonation had been so violent and all-consuming that only dismembered body parts had ever been found. The thought set the hairs on the back of Mac's neck tingling, and he quickly stowed the book back on the shelf where he'd found it.

"Are you searching the Albini legend?"

The voice was petite and soft, and as MacGyver whirled around he was faced with a dark-haired young girl with expectant brown eyes. "Who wants to know?" He answered with a question.

The girl smiled and patted a small pile of books atop the table where she was sitting. "I'm doing the whole urban legend thing as a college project," she confessed. "I thought maybe if you were looking into it too, we could maybe compare notes?"

Mac felt suddenly sheepish and defenseless. He held up his hands in defeat. “You got me.” He smiled. “I don’t have any notes to compare. There isn’t much here on the whole thing.”

The girl nodded knowingly. “Tell me about it.” She flicked her hair absently over her left shoulder. “I’m Andrea, by the way, but you can call me Andy, on account that I hate my first name.”

Mac couldn’t stifle another smile. “*That* I can relate to...” He relaxed just a touch more, and pulled out a chair opposite her.

There was a distinct possibility Andy might have the information he needed, but just how much could he tell her about what he was really doing, and why?

“So, you’re too old for a college project, why are you looking up the Albini thing?” Andy popped in a stick of gum and tossed the wrapper on the table.

Mac couldn’t resist picking it up and toying with it in his fingers. It was just one of those items there was a plethora of uses for rather than it going in the trash. “Oh, just helping my journalist son with a few bits of research.” It wasn’t a lie, exactly.

Andy seemed to take it in, and then pushed over the books she’d already signed out. “This is the most interesting, and not so widely known piece of the story I’ve been able to dig up.” She opened the top hardback. “It’s about the house Albini was supposed to have bought his girl.”

MacGyver read through what he was being shown. If it was to be believed, the book suggested that after Angelina was killed, Bobbi had the house booby trapped, so that no one else could ever set foot in it except the spirit of his lover.

Mac tapped the page. “How can they know this as fact, when the house was never found?”

Andy blew a small bubble with the gum, let it pop and then shrugged. “I’m just the researcher, I know nothing,” she joked. “Kinda romantic if it’s true, though, huh?”

“Romantic, yes,” MacGyver agreed. “But pretty hard to believe. Then again, legends and tales like this do tend to snowball as they age.”

“Maybe, but I don’t think you should ever discount anything, either.” Andy scooped the books back to her side of the table. “Seeing is believing, and all that.”

MacGyver pushed up from his chair. While what Andy was saying was true, it wasn’t helping him get any closer to finding Rob’s killer just sitting theorizing what might or might not have happened in a house some thirty five years ago.

“It’s all pretty interesting for a project, but it isn’t really what I need to catch a killer.” As soon as the words had left his mouth he realized he may have said too much.

But then Andy wasn’t exactly public enemy number one.

She picked up on the phrase he'd used instantly, and her right brow ticked up in sudden interest. "Killer? I thought you were here helping your son?"

Mac stuffed his hands in his bomber jacket pockets. "I am," he answered awkwardly. "But it involves the death of an old homeless guy. He died in my arms asking me to "Save Angelina's Grace", and I'm trying to figure out if that's what got him killed or not."

Andy's bottomless hazel eyes widened. "Whoa! That's pretty deep."

MacGyver nodded, his face now a mask of sadness as he remembered Rob's last moments. "Yeah, and so far I'm getting nowhere. I'd hoped there would be more here at the library."

"Sorry I don't have much to share, either," Andy apologized. "Is there anything else I can do to help?"

Mac shook his head. "There's not much you can do, but I have a friend among the homeless people. He knew Rob pretty well. Maybe Rob opened up to him or even said something in passing. I guess I should go see him next."

"Sounds like a plan." Andy blew another bubble and gathered the books under her arm as she stood to leave. "I hope you find what you're looking for."

"Me too, miss." MacGyver nodded his head in thanks and then headed for the exit. Even though he had discovered very little, he had at least decided that this was one legend he intended to unfold.

Sam's Apartment

6th St

Santa Monica

MacGyver breezed into Sam's place around 10p.m. after stopping off to see Pete at the Phoenix Foundation. He hadn't intended to spend too long at work, but then the conversation had turned to Murdoc's last escapade, and before he knew it several hours had vanished.

Now, he was ready for something to eat, a cold drink and a nice soft bed – sadly, if he stayed over, he wasn't going to get the latter. Sam's pad was a one bedroom dwelling that mirrored Mac's old house boat, meaning someone had to take the couch.

As he hung up his leather jacket and entered the living area, he realized the T.V. was blaring out gunfire. Shaking his head, Mac slumped down next to Sam on the couch.

Sam was glued to the set, munching intermittently at a bowl of popcorn.

"Sheesh, you're watching *Hunter* reruns?" Mac wasn't impressed. "Couldn't you find something more educating than this cheesy violence?" As he watched, Fred Dryer dived across the screen sending a hail of bullets at some unknown bad guy.

“Hey, it works for me!” Sam chuckled. Then slightly more seriously, he added. “Anyway, what about all those westerns you watch? Don’t you dare tell me John Wayne caught the bad guys with duck tape and a penknife...”

MacGyver opened his mouth ready to argue, and then realized that Sam kind of had a point. *Hunter* was still too much for his nerves to cope with, however, and he grabbed the remote and flicked off the T.V.

“*Dad!*” Sam groused, but then smiled as Mac stuck a hand into the popcorn and stole a fistful.

“I think you might be onto something with the Albini thing,” MacGyver admitted between mouthfuls. “Although apart from some old photos, I haven’t found out very much more. There’s some story about the house being booby trapped, but I doubt that’s true.”

Sam put down the bowl in his hand, suddenly more interested in the story than food or the T.V. “You really believe Rob could be Bobbi now?”

“Maybe,” MacGyver conceded. “I saw a picture of Albini today and there was a definite resemblance. I just need to find someone who knows for sure. Old Rob used to hang out at the Santa Luisa Mission. Maybe Doc who helps run the place will have some answers for us. I figure we could drive down there in the morning?”

Sam’s features creased into a smile. “Does that mean you’ll stay over?”

MacGyver eyed the couch, assessing it for comfort. He hadn’t stayed over since Sam had gotten the place, and maybe it was time he did. Of course, that probably meant some very achy limbs the next day, but it was worth it to see the grin on his son’s face.

Up until now, Mac had done all the entertaining, and it was obvious Sam was getting a kick out of having “dad” stay over, rather than him staying over at Mac’s.

“I guess so,” MacGyver finally put his son out of his misery. “Got any blankets to go with this executive bed?” He patted the couch affectionately.

“I can take the couch!” Sam instantly offered.

“Hey, I never got the bed back on the houseboat. It’ll be just like old times.” Mac poked the couch, pretending to look for bad springs. “Maybe too much like old times...”

Sam laughed and tossed two blankets and a pillow at his dad from the bedroom doorway. “See you in the morning, bright and early.” He flicked off the light mischievously and vanished before Mac could answer.

With a contented sigh, MacGyver dropped down onto the pillow and pulled the blankets over him. Was this what *family* life was like? Was this what he’d missed for so many years?

He snuggled deeper into the pillow and thought about the times he had to come with Sam, actual quality time that he could share with someone. The thought brought a small smile to his face as he slowly drifted off, his mind floating away on white puffy clouds.

At least, for all of about twenty seconds.

And then it came – the noise from hell.

For a moment, MacGyver thought Sam's neighbors had taken to drilling the walls at an unsociable hour. Or maybe it was a sander?

Mac sat up, rubbed at his eyes and then realized with a not-so-fatherly groan that the grating, moaning, grinding sound was actually Sam *snoring*.

MacGyver's brow creased as he grimaced. He'd heard Sam snore like this once before, on the doomed Boeing Flight LA4177, but given what had followed, he'd forgotten about it until now.

Dang, that boy is loud!

Another growling snore filtered from Sam's bedroom and Mac considered getting up and finding something to stuff in his ears. Eventually, he exhaled and flopped back down on the couch, grabbing the pillow and putting it over his head to deaden the ongoing noise.

In the morning, he would definitely need to look at fitting soundproofing to the bedroom if he was ever going to stay over again.

The thought made him smile even more, and he slowly began to drift back off into slumber.

This time, the blissful oblivion lasted around ten minutes before another noise roused him.

MacGyver groaned and moved the pillow. *That's it, I'm gonna put some duck tape over Sam's mouth, nose, whatever it takes!* His mind griped.

But as Mac's senses became accustomed to being fully conscious, he suddenly realized that this time, what he was hearing was not Sam. No, his years of experience and training in the field were warning him of something much more ominous than his kid snoring.

MacGyver sat bolt upright and his eyes darted to the source of the noise, even though in truth it was too dark to make much out.

The sound was unmistakable now Mac knew where it was coming from. Someone was trying to break in by either forcing or picking the lock. And they were making far too much noise about it to be a professional.

MacGyver licked his lips and took just milliseconds to react.

Before the would-be intruder had chance to get through the door, Mac had positioned himself behind it, his heart beating double time in his chest as he waited to make his move.

Eventually, the door creaked slowly open, the prowler being suddenly cautious before stepping inside.

There was a pause, and then MacGyver saw the silhouette of the man, or maybe even a woman, as they entered. He guessed they were about his size, dressed completely in black – and was that a hoodie, like the one Rob’s killer had worn?

There was no time to worry about that now, though. Mac had to act. Sam was still asleep in the bedroom and potentially vulnerable, so this interloper had to be dealt with.

Without really thinking much beyond protecting his son, Mac made his move, jumping out from his concealed position to confront the bad guy. “Hey, I don’t recall giving you an invite!”

The intruder spun on their heels, but it was still too dark to pick out any features – save one – a shiny, threatening blade that turned over and over in the person’s right hand, like it was itching to be used.

Is that what he used on Old Rob? In MacGyver’s mind, he somehow already knew it was, and if he wasn’t careful, he just might be next.

Part Two

The bad guy took a step forwards, and Mac couldn’t help but hold out his hands in front of him defensively. It was like some insane dance, as the pair moved and counter-moved around the dark room.

And all MacGyver could think off was to keep the person in front of him away from Sam. The earlier memory of LA4177 had stayed with him, and this time he didn’t intend to let anything happen to his son.

The intruder sensed his hesitation, and appeared to mistake it for fear. Diving forwards, he or she attempted to take out Mac with a lunge to his chest.

Mac dodged the attack, narrowly missing getting sliced by his opponent as he edged backwards.

The move almost worked, but then he felt the edge of the couch on the back of his legs and knew he had nowhere left to go.

The bad guy knew it too and pounced, and within seconds the two were a tangle of limbs, each one fighting for dominance.

Mac grabbed at the intruder's arm, and just managed to catch their wrist before they had chance to slice at him again. They were strong, stronger than he'd anticipated.

The assailant countered with a knee to MacGyver's stomach, and he reflexively let go in favor of doubling up. It was what the bad guy had expected, and he or she raised the knife once again.

Spotting the glint of steel, Mac reached out, not for the blade or its owner, but for the camera Sam had left on the table next to the couch. He pulled it close to him and fired off the flash, straight in the eyes of his enemy.

Whoever was attacking dropped back, a gloved hand clawing at their eyes as the sudden, all encompassing light momentarily blinded them.

Mac heard another noise as he dropped the camera down, and realized Sam had finally been roused. Within seconds, the light came on, filling the room with a welcome magnolia glow.

"Hey!" Sam spotted the blacked-out intruder and moved to give chase, but his foe ducked out of the door so fast they could have been on the Olympic team.

MacGyver took a cue from his son and raced after them anyway, only to see the person stumble into a blue '87 Camero and speed away, straight through a red light.

"Did you get the license plate?" Sam asked as he breathlessly joined his father.

Mac shook his head. The plate had been covered in mud – probably on purpose, but given the lighting under Sam's apartment, there was a good chance he wouldn't have been able to make it out anyway.

"Nope," he admitted dolefully. "But at least we know for sure now there is something to this legend. Why else would someone be willing to kill over it?"

"I guess I opened up a can of worms with this one, huh?" Sam rubbed at his hair, and then looked down, realizing with a start that he was standing on a street corner in just his boxers.

"I think," MacGyver answered with a cheeky grin, "that you better get back inside before you get arrested for streaking..."

Sam winced.

Santa Luisa Mission The Next Day...

MacGyver yawned as he tucked the Jeep neatly in front of the mission. What with fixing the locks on Sam's apartment and giving yet another statement to the local police, he hadn't really gotten much sleep. That, and the fact that Sam's couch was the most uncomfortable thing he'd ever used as a bed – and he really had tried out a lot of impromptu cots in his time.

“So how was the couch?” Sam questioned with terrible timing.

“Oh, about as good as sleeping vertical on a rock face in howling minus forty winds,” MacGyver teased.

Sam nodded knowingly. “That good, huh?”

Mac popped the 4x4 in neutral and pulled on the parking brake. “Oh and then some. If we ever catch the bad guy on this one, I think we should make him sleep on it as a form of torture.”

The pair climbed out, and MacGyver slid on his sunglasses. It was going to be another good day, and he hoped their luck was going to be as positive as the weather.

“So you think Rob might have confided in this guy, Doc because he used to be a street person too?” Sam asked as they jogged up the steps to the mission entrance.

“That’s kinda what I’m hoping. Otherwise we’ve just hit a very big brick wall.” MacGyver pushed on the mission door and noted it was open. It wasn’t unusual for Doc to leave it that way sometimes as it was more welcoming to the homeless, but today, it instantly prickled at Mac’s senses.

Sam appeared to notice the change in his dad’s demeanor and his voice dropped an octave. “Something wrong?” He whispered as Mac cautiously moved inside.

Mac cocked his head, he was listening, eventually, he answered. “I don’t know...something just feels off.” He moved further inside, finally coming to the office where he expected to find Doc. Sam followed in silence.

MacGyver pushed gently on the open door to find a room that looked like it had been hit by a tornado. Paperwork was strewn all over the floor, and the desktop lamp had been smashed as it had been tossed aside. Even the desk was upturned as if the Incredible Hulk had done a number on it. It wasn’t a pretty scene.

“Doc?”

Mac’s query was rewarded by a groan from behind the inverted desk and he quickly pushed into the room to find Doc lying on the floor. It was a carbon copy of the scene with Old Rob – except this time it was inside.

“Sam! Ambulance. *Now!*”

Sam scooted past his father and began rummaging in the mess on the floor until he came to the phone cable. He followed it to finally find the actual handset under a pile of messed up manila folders. It was still working, and he quickly dialed 911.

MacGyver knelt by Doc. The older man had been stabbed in the stomach and was clutching at the wound while trying to wheeze out a few words. “Tried to fight him off...but my asthma...”

Doc pointed under the desk leg, and Mac quickly realized that this time the bad guy had dropped his knife. It was an ornate looking blade, with initials carved into the ivory handle. Fresh blood covered the steel, making it look what it was – a thing of evil.

Mac didn't focus on it. For now, Doc was more important.

Sam dropped to his side with a towel and offered it up. "Police and ambulance are on their way. Is he..?"

"He's gonna be fine," Mac snapped, and then looked up apologetically at his son. When Sam nodded he understood, Mac got to work with the towel, using it to try and staunch the flow of blood until the paramedics arrived.

Doc gritted his teeth as MacGyver pressed down. "They know about...Denizen," he coughed out. "I didn't want to tell but..."

"It's okay," MacGyver soothed. "We can worry about later." He looked down as blood seeped through the towel and onto his fingers. *Not again...not Doc.*

Doc shook his head. "Denizen knows."

MacGyver wanted to ask questions, to know exactly what information Denizen had, but Doc was too weak, and from outside there was a squeal of tires. He hoped it was the ambulance, rather than a police cruiser, and was thankful when two paramedics rushed into the office.

Mac stepped back out of their way, his own face paling as he looked down at the red sticky stains on his fingers.

He felt a hand on his shoulder.

"He's gonna make it, you know," Sam said, his tone suggesting he had real conviction in what he was saying, even if his dad didn't.

"*Why* Sam? Why all this killing over some stupid legend?" MacGyver leaned back against the wall and closed his eyes for a second. When he reopened them he'd regained some of his composure. "Doc said something about Denizen knowing, and that he's told the killer."

Sam shrugged. "Denizen?"

"I've seen the name before," Mac explained. "Back at the library there was a photo of Albini and some of his friends. Denizen was on it."

"Then I guess once the cops are done with us, it's back to the library?" Sam glanced across the room at the knife still lying innocently under the table. "You know, I can't help but think I've seen a knife like that somewhere before. Maybe we can find something on that there too?"

MacGyver's eyes locked on the blade, scrutinizing it. Then his attention was taken again as two uniformed officer's rushed into the office, followed by a suited man he assumed was a detective.

It was going to be another long day, not counting any library trip.

Abbot Kinney Memorial Library
502 S. Venice Blvd.

MacGyver let Sam do the driving for the rest of the day. He didn't feel much like having to deal with L.A. traffic after washing off Doc's blood and explaining himself for two hours to the local police department's finest. Add to that the lack of sleep lately and he was feeling pretty beat, and pretty fed up.

This whole thing was spiraling out of control. What had been a simple mugging had quickly degenerated into one murder, two attempted murders, and all for a necklace that probably didn't even exist.

At least the medics had said Doc had a fighting chance, and that was better than the fate Old Rob had succumbed to.

"Dad?" Sam's voice broke him from anymore sobering thoughts, and the pair hastily exited the Jeep and entered the library before it had chance to close.

This time, Mac knew exactly what he was looking for and steered Sam back to the book with the photo of Denizen in. The problem was, there was no more information about the man in the whole section.

"Maybe we could find out more back at my place by doing a search on my computer?" Sam offered helpfully. "Or Pete might have something in Foundation records?"

Mac shook his head. He wasn't about to wait that long. Rearranging the section behind them was a haughty looking woman with a blonde bun. "Excuse me, ma'am, but could you point us in the right direction?"

The librarian turned and smiled, and any preconceptions MacGyver might have had about her melted. She was much prettier from this angle, with baby blue eyes and a complexion of silk. "How can I help?"

Mac showed her the book. "We're looking for more information on this guy?"

"Ah, that's Art Denizen the movie mogul." She nodded knowingly. "Anyone who knows about Hollywood "back in the day" knows Art!" You need the next section to the right. Third shelf down."

MacGyver smiled at her and then headed to the section she'd indicated. "Thank you, ma'am."

Sam grinned and fell into step at the side of his dad. “She was kinda pretty for a librarian, huh?”

Mac couldn't argue. Instead he took the next right and almost walked straight into Andy carrying an armful of books.

“I wasn't expecting to see you again so soon,” Andy giggled. “Are you stalking me, or just trying to steal my project?” She teased.

Mac reddened a little and then gestured to Sam. “This is my son, Sam. We're here to do a little more research, but it looks like you beat us to it.”

Andy shrugged and perched herself on a nearby table, setting her books down. “Not really. I haven't found anything new.” She looked at Sam. “Except for your son here...”

Sam grinned, and Mac sensed he had taken an instant shine to Andy.

While Sam began to chat to his newfound friend, Mac put his attention back on the book shelves. Someone had to find Art Denizen, and flirting wasn't going to get them anywhere.

Doc shouldn't be having to go through all this. Not after what he's already been through with Father Jim's murder...

In his mind, MacGyver could still see Doc on the office floor. The whole thing was just snowballing, and instead of helping, Mac felt like he was just being sucked into one big avalanche.

He ran a finger along the shelf in front of him until he finally found a section with a few books that referenced Denizen. Plucking them out, Mac put them on a free table and sat down to read.

According to the first article, Denizen was an entrepreneur who briefly set up his own production company way out in the hills away from the regular Hollywood studios. He was rich, and had an abundance of land to play with.

MacGyver moved on to a second book. This one focused more on the man than his movie making. It suggested that Denizen was a playboy who mingled with Hollywood's finest, as well as the not so finest mafia mobsters. In short, Denizen was a buddy of Bobbi Albini.

According to the book's print date, the first edition had only gone out two years previously, and at that time, Art Denizen was still alive and living in the hills near Malibu.

Mac glanced up to see Sam grinning at Andy as they chatted. He closed the book a little too loudly and then coughed. Finally, Sam seemed to get the message and tore himself away to join his dad.

“I’m guessing you found something?” He asked, his eyes straying back to the girl at the other table every few seconds.

Mac tapped the top book. “Art Denizen is still alive and living near Malibu. If anyone has answers...”

“It will be him,” Sam agreed. “I guess we’re off to Malibu then, huh?”

“Can you tear yourself away?” MacGyver teased.

Sam thought about it. “Sure, after I do this.” He wandered back to Andy who was now engrossed in a book of her own. Borrowing a pen from the next table, he scribbled down what Mac assumed was a phone number and offered it to the girl.

Aww c’mon...they’ve only just met! The idea hit Mac that this was definitely “like father like son,” and he cringed inside. Kate had said she wouldn’t introduce them until they’d both grown up, but would they ever?

He picked up the books and replaced them on the shelves. By the time he’d finished, Sam was at his side, and he was smiling mischievously. “She’s kinda fun.”

“Ya think?” MacGyver rolled his eyes. “We did come here to work ya know?”

Sam nodded. “And I did. While I was talking to Andy I spotted a picture in her research. It looked just like the knife the guy stabbed Doc with.”

“And?” Mac probed as they made their way back to the Jeep.

“It was thought to be the weapon Ricky Furfaro used on his hits, although he was never caught to prove it.”

“But how does that link back to Bobbi Albini?” MacGyver raised a brow as he climbed inside the 4x4.

This was a multi-layered puzzle, and he didn’t know how to put all the pieces together. At least, not yet, but hopefully Denizen would be able to help in that department.

Art Denizen’s Mansion Somewhere near Malibu...

Finding and getting access to Art Denizen had been much easier than MacGyver had expected. After a few words with Denizen’s very stuffy, stereotypical butler, Mac and Sam had been allowed into a very small study where Art sat in a huge leather chair.

Denizen wasn’t at all what MacGyver had pictured in his mind – even though he’d seen a photo of the man in his youth.

Now, Art was a small, grey-haired man with a bony frame and a short beard. His hands were clasped in front of him, and they appeared gnarled and ravaged by the passage of time.

“Thank you for seeing us,” Mac said gratefully as he and Sam entered the wood paneled room. “Name’s MacGyver and this is my son, Sam.”

Denizen nodded affably and steepled his arthritic fingers in front of him. “Stuart tells me you’re here about Bobbi Albini?” He gestured with his left hand that they should take seats.

“Yes sir.” Mac nodded and pulled out a chair he was sure belonged in a museum. It was definitely antique and probably worth a fortune, just like its owner. Sam did much the same.

“We think we found Mr. Albini,” Sam explained. “He was living as a street person.”

Denizen nodded sadly as if he’d known all along. “I’d heard that, but then, it was just a story. I was never sure. Given how smitten he was with Angelina, though, and the breakdown after her death...”

“The thing is,” Mac pushed. “We think Bobbi, or Rob as he was known these days, was murdered. A good friend of ours was attacked too, and we think both incidents are connected.”

Denizen shrugged and poured himself a tea from a silver pot sitting on his desk. He gestured, offering his guests one, but both Mac and Sam declined.

“Bobbi was mafia. I suppose there are still people out there who might hold a grudge about some of the things he got up to.”

“We think this is more about the legend,” MacGyver admitted. “Story has it that Bobbi left a house behind he’d bought for Angelina, and it was full of valuables. Maybe someone intends on finding it the hard way. That is, if it ever really existed?”

Art laughed sardonically, as if he knew something ironic he wasn’t telling. “Yes, Bobbi really did have a house for Angelina, and it was definitely...*different*.”

“You mean a mansion full of antiques and jewelry?” Sam seemed to be getting excited about the prospect now that they finally had someone with answers. He sat forward on his chair, eyes twinkling.

Denizen paused, sipped his tea and then momentarily closed his eyes. When he finally opened them again, he answered. “Yes, that house exists.”

MacGyver noted the old man’s tone, and the way he’d worded his response. *That* house exists, instead of *the* house exists. Just what exactly did that infer? He was about to ask, but Sam was on a roll.

“Where is it, do you know?” Sam pushed, excitedly.

Art set down his china cup looked intently at the people in front of him, as if he were deciding their worth. Eventually he nodded. “The house is on some property out here I still own. I secretly let Bobbi build there away from the madness of the city. I suppose that’s why it’s never been found by so-called treasure hunters. When Bobbi vanished, I left it as a memorial for both Bobbi and Angelina, untouched by time.”

“I hate to ask, but given that two people have been attacked, and one killed over this,” MacGyver apologized. “Would it be possible for me and Sam to visit the mansion?”

Denizen plucked a gold pen from his pocket and began scribbling on a note pad in front of him. His hands worked slowly, making spider-scrawl, but eventually he passed Mac a set of directions and a fob with keys.

“There are those who say the mansion is booby trapped,” Art warned with a downturned brow. “It may just be part of the myth, but...”

MacGyver nodded as he rose from his chair. “We’ll be careful, don’t worry. And thanks for everything.”

As they reached the door, Mac turned back as one last question hit him. “Mr. Denizen, is Ricky Furfaro still alive?”

Art’s head dropped low, as if he were remembering something from long ago, something bad. When he looked up, his eyes had lost the spark they’d had when Mac and Sam entered. “No, Ricky has been dead some twenty years. He was stabbed in the back with his own knife, or so they say. The weapon and killer were never found.”

Mac nodded his thanks again, and he jogged back out to the Jeep with Sam in tow, hoping that the Albin mansion would have the answers they sought.

Albin Mansion
The Denizen Estate
Malibu

The driveway down to the mansion was overgrown and rocky, glimpses of the concrete below only visible in short patches where weeds had not taken hold.

Sam pulled the Jeep up on the rut-filled road just short of the main house, and just stared.

MacGyver climbed out, took off his sunglasses and did much the same.

The place was huge, and in its heyday it would have had ivy and vines growing all over the façade making it look imposing. Now, the same greenery had engulfed the house, making it appear dead and lost in time.

The windows on the lower floors were boarded over, making the portent of doom in the air seem even more present. It was like walking straight onto the set of *Psycho* – except this was no movie studio, this was the real deal.

After scrutinizing the main house a little longer, Mac moved to the rear of the Jeep and retrieved a flashlight. He tossed a second to Sam.

“I thought the electric and water hadn’t been cut off,” Sam asked, testing the batteries in his light by flicking it on and off a few times.

Mac peered at the main door to the mansion. “Do you want to risk going in there without one of these things?”

“Err, nope,” Sam acquiesced. “Better take my camera too.” He leaned into the Jeep’s foot well, grabbed the camera Mac had gotten him for Christmas and slung the strap over his shoulder.

MacGyver pulled the key fob from his pocket and walked to the huge oak entrance. He licked his lips, then slid in the key and turned. As expected, the door groaned as it swung open, making the thirties Universal horror movies proud.

Mac ignored the sensation that was flooding over him and slowly moved inside. Sam followed with a weak whistle of amazement.

Cobwebs hung from every corner and orifice, and the cold and smell of must were overwhelming.

A huge central staircase of wood dominated the center of the entrance, complete with dangling chandeliers covered in dust and grime.

MacGyver shivered.

Somewhere behind him, Sam chuckled. “Man, this is straight outta Scooby Doo!”

Mac looked over his shoulder and scowled. “Ya think?”

Before Sam could answer, the massive oak door creaked, moaned, and then slammed closed behind them, sending spirals of dust everywhere.

“Oh yeah...” Sam mouthed as he walked up to the entrance and put a hand on the door. He turned and pushed at the handle, but there was no movement. Hunkering over, he examined the lock. Something clear had been forced inside.

Something like glue – and very fast setting.

“It’s jammed solid with something,” Sam admitted with a frown. “No way even you could pick that lock.”

MacGyver sauntered over and took a peak, shining the beam from his flashlight into the opening. There might be options if he thought about it long enough, and could find the right materials.

But, right now there might be other exits they could use.

He spun around, letting the light in his hand cut through the gloom the boarded up windows created.

Under the massive staircase was a door that probably led to a cellar or basement – which in turn might have doors to the garden.

Mac walked over and pushed on the door. It opened with ease, not even a sound. That in itself made the hairs on the back of his neck tingle. This place was full of surprises.

Swallowing hard, MacGyver dipped his flashlight at an angle to illuminate the concrete stairs into the depths below.

And formed in the dust and grunge on each and every step were footprints – recent ones.

Mac turned and looked at Sam, who was staring at the prints with a look of concern. “Guess we’re not the first here.” His face twisted in worry.

Sam agreed. “Yeah, but are we locked in this place with the killer?”

Part Three

* * * *

Sam followed his dad down into the basement, taking tentative steps until they reached a switch and were able to illuminate the scene with something better than their flashlights.

The room was empty – at least it appeared that way on first glance. As Sam looked around, he spotted the double wooden doors they’d come looking for that led to the outside. Under the doors, in a corner that made the muted light seem ineffectual, was a skeleton.

MacGyver took careful steps up to the body and winced. “Looks like we found our first booby trap after all.” He moved past the skeleton and tested the two cellar doors, but they’d been secured from the outside at some point.

Sam joined him and scrutinized the ambush scene. There was a shotgun hanging from the ceiling that had been jury-rigged to fire if anyone came in this way. It was spent out now, and by the looks of the corpse, had been for many years. “How long you figure he’s been dead?”

Mac licked his lips and refocused on the bones. “I’d say from what’s left of his clothes since the fifties.”

Sam nodded and turned to look back at the footprints they'd spotted. They were fresh, definitely not left by this poor soul.

And there was something else, too. The footprints vanished at the bottom of the cellar stairs. "Dad, where'd the footprints go?" He nodded to the marks on the floor, and how they petered out.

Mac moved to the prints and hunkered down, testing the dust with his fingertips. "This reminds me of the Parker house. There could be a secret door or passage down here."

Sam blinked. He had no clue what the Parker house was, or how it connected to the cellar they were now stood in. What he did know, was that Bobbi Albini was supposed to have hidden an expensive necklace here, and that necklaces tended to be stored in bedrooms.

"Can we just go upstairs and look for "Angelina's Grace?" Surely it's gonna be in a bedroom, if it actually exists?" Sam was anxious to find something tangible, something he could relate to.

"Sam, there could be more traps. Albini was no fool. He knew exactly where people would look if they came in here. If he has shotgun snares in the basement, what's he gonna have waiting upstairs?" MacGyver stood and brushed his dusty hands on his jacket. "Not to mention, we're not here to find some urban treasure, we're here to find a killer."

Sam wasn't deterred. He was on a roll, he could feel it. "Yeah, but the killer is probably after the necklace anyway, so upstairs is still the best place to start – and seeing as we can't exactly get out right now anyway..." He glanced back at the double doors.

Exactly who secured them after the dead guy got in? Maybe the person who just locked the main door on us?

MacGyver seemed to think about it and then nodded, and the pair retraced their steps back into the main entrance. It seemed darker to Sam now, but he convinced himself it was his imagination playing tricks.

There was a light switch for the main chandelier, and Sam couldn't help but flick it on.

Taking point as they moved upstairs, Sam switched on his flashlight again for extra light, rubbing absently at the back of his neck as he moved. This was creepier than he'd expected. He took a long breath and paused at the top, waiting for his dad to join him.

MacGyver had been more cautious on his ascent, stopping every other stair to look for trip wires, triggers, or anything else unusual.

As he finally moved next to Sam on the huge landing area outside the main bedroom, the chandelier popped, flickered and then died, plunging them into semi-darkness.

“Oh boy,” Sam hissed through gritted teeth. “One of Albini’s traps, or our friendly neighborhood killer having some fun?” Without waiting for an answer, he swung his light around to the master bedroom door and ploughed inside, oblivious of any further danger.

MacGyver had little choice but to follow, spinning his own light to and fro like a search lantern.

Inside the chamber was sparser than Sam had expected. In the center was an ancient four-poster bed, and beside it a dressing table to match. To the left of the bed was another door, and Sam made his way over to it, pushing it gently open with his free hand.

“Sam, wait!” The tone of Mac’s voice was chiding, but wasted.

Sam carried on into the inner chamber, playing his light around the walls and floor.

“There’s no windows, no nothing,” MacGyver observed as he slipped in beside his son. “It’s like standing in a small empty box.”

“Empty box with another table,” Sam corrected, moving his light to show a second piece of furniture. “And I think I saw something over on the far wall too.”

Mac let his own flashlight play across the scene until it came across something metal with a small dial in the center. “It’s a safe. An old one, too.”

Without thinking about more traps, Sam jogged over to the safe and tried the door, expecting it to be locked.

It wasn’t.

Excitement built in his stomach and his palms were suddenly sweaty. He swung open the metal hatch and swallowed.

“Sam, *NO!* There might be...”

Sam didn’t even hear. He’d become transfixed by a small velvet-covered jewelry case that screamed for him to open it.

Delving inside the safe despite his dad’s words of caution, Sam plucked out the box and sucked down a breath. Was “Angelina’s Grace” inside?

He flipped the sprung lid and held his breath.

And behind him, a huge metal plate slammed down over the only door in or out of the room.

“That’s just swell! We’re trapped!” MacGyver didn’t sound happy, and quickly began inspecting the plating.

Sam ignored him. The case in his palm didn’t hold the elusive necklace, but there *was* something inside. It was an age-tanned note, written by an extremely neat hand in real ink, not biro.

Angelina’s Grace, not an item, but a place!

As ye sow, so shall ye reap, Donati

Thinking of You

Bobbi

“Dad, can you take a look at this?” Sam waved the note at his father to catch his attention.

MacGyver seemed reluctant to stop his escape attempts to view an ancient piece of paper, but he eventually sauntered over. His reproving expression told Sam his dad wasn’t happy with how he’d handled things.

Doesn’t he know if you tell a kid not to do something, they always do it? Sam internally excused himself.

Mac took the note from Sam’s hand and read it aloud.

Sam watched his dad’s face change from judgmental to worried, as the words came out. “What does it mean?” He almost dare not ask.

MacGyver tapped the edge of the message with his forefinger. “Well I guess for starters it means the traps were definitely for Carl Donati, the guy who put the hit on Angelina. Bobbi must’ve thought he’d be the one to try and get in this place for some reason.”

“And the biblical sounding part?” Sam winced. He knew this wasn’t going to be anything good.

Mac thought about it. “I’m thinking “As ye sow, so shall ye reap” probably means Carl was going to get a dose of his own medicine.” H sighed looking around the sealed room. “Just trapping Donati here wouldn’t do that now, would it? Not when Angelina was blown to pieces...”

Sam gulped. In his haste to solve the riddle, he really hadn’t been thinking before he acted. It was a trait of his father’s that sorely needed to rub off on him. “You think this room has another surprise besides the metal door?” He dared to ask.

Mac didn't reply, he simply started to search the room with his flashlight. Within seconds, the beam had locked on to something underneath the lone central table.

MacGyver moved to it, dropping to his knees to examine the device.

It was a small, dust-covered metal box with an old-style alarm wired into it.

And the alarm was ticking.

Sam slid down onto his knees at his dad's side, and while Mac settled his own light down on the floor to focus on the bomb, Sam kept his illuminating the scene.

"Can you disarm it?" Sam questioned, just a hint of fear in his voice.

Mac licked his lips, his eyes intensely staring at the device. "I sure hope so or we've had one heck of a short family reunion." Without saying more, he took out his penknife and eased the lid off the box.

Inside was a multitude of wires, and a block of explosives. To Sam, it looked so old it could have belonged to Methuselah. "C4?" His voice cracked.

MacGyver shook his head. "I think it's C3 – much older than C4 – and it has a tendency to go brittle and ineffective. *If we're lucky.*" He took his blade and began slicing through wires without having to think twice.

Sam watched, suddenly awestruck at how his father was handling a bomb. Of course, he knew Mac had been doing this for years after his training in the military, but the sheer lack of nerves amazed him.

Mac tugged out a coiled spring and sat back, puffing out a relieved breath. "I wish they were all that easy."

A buzzing sound erupted from somewhere else in the room, and then the ticking noise began again, like a mad metronome on steroids.

"Easy?" Sam sputtered. "Are you sure?"

MacGyver scrambled to his feet and stood a moment listening. "It's coming from the safe!" He grabbed his light and rushed over to the open safe door, shining the light inside. "The back panel is false," he explained as he used his knife blade to pry at it.

The panel popped off to reveal a second device, somewhat smaller than the first. This time, though, the timer had only been set for mere seconds.

Mac saw the finger click to zero and tried to turn away from the blast, but it was too late.

The room was abruptly filled with white light and a huge backdraft as the bomb exploded.

Sam watched in horror as his dad was tossed backwards by the force of the detonation, hitting the far wall hard.

And then the light from the blast was gone, and Sam realized he'd dropped his flashlight. The darkness at once seemed all consuming, and he suddenly felt even more alone than he had when his mom had died.

“Dad!”

There was no reply, and Sam couldn't help but panic. It was as if the roles on Flight 4177 had rudely been reversed, and now Sam faced the prospect of losing his father so soon after they'd found one another.

“Dad!” Sam dropped to the floor in the gloom, his hands frantically searching for the light he'd lost. What he found was something unexpected, and even more worrying.

The floor was awash with water. In fact, not just awash, it was a few inches deep already. Whatever the bomb had done, it had also severed a water pipe somewhere, intentionally or not. And as the room was pretty much sealed, that water was now growing faster than it could drain.

Sam groped some more, his fingers finally touching something cold and hard. He grabbed the light, flicked the switch, and was thankful when the beam came back on. He'd had no idea whether the flashlight was waterproof or not – but then it was MacGyver's, and Mac thought of everything.

Almost...

Sam spun the light in an arc, splashing in the water around him until he finally saw his father's motionless form by the opposite wall. He was face down in the water.

No!

Sam barreled across, ignoring the rising tide around him to roll Mac over.

“Ouch...” MacGyver slurred out a groan and then his eyes flickered open to stare back up at Sam. “Okay, maybe it wasn't so easy...” he grumbled, half-consciously.

Sam closed his eyes, took down a calming breath and then checked his dad over as best he could. Mac's right hand had been nearest the safe when the bomb had gone off, and had the explosives not been old, he would probably have lost it.

Right now, Sam was no doctor, but he guessed his dad's hand had some broken bones along with lots of cuts and bruises. Given he'd been out cold a few seconds; he probably had a concussion too.

“Jeez, you had me worried,” he confessed as he tried to prop his dad higher away from the water.

Mac inhaled and then gritted his teeth as he looked groggily at his hand. “I had *me* worried.” He glanced down at the swelling river around them and cocked a brow. “Did I miss something?”

Sam waded across to the hole in the wall where the safe had been and inspected the damage for the first time. The force of the explosion had mostly gone inwards, and for MacGyver, that had been very lucky. Not so lucky, though, when it had taken out the main water pipe to the upper storey.

“Did, I um, mention I think we’re about to drown?” As he talked, Sam stretched an arm inside the blast hole, but he couldn’t reach the damaged pipe, let alone do anything to staunch the flow of water.

He glanced down, realizing that the level had now risen to his waist.

Mac blearily splashed across to his son’s side and took a look, then shook his head. “The rate that’s coming in here, I’d say we have just a few minutes to think of something.” He peered down at his swelled and shattered hand and bit into his lip. “And I don’t think I’m going to be much help.”

Sam’s panicked expression suggested he wasn’t quite ready for that responsibility. “To do what?” He asked, his voice raising an octave.

MacGyver rubbed at his brow with his left hand like he was thinking, and then stared at the table that was now almost submerged. “We need to get that metal door outta the way, right?” He refocused on the huge plate that had barred their exit.

Sam nodded. He had no idea what his dad was considering, but he’d go along with it anyway. “Yeah, but how?”

Mac swallowed as if Sam wasn’t going to like what came next. “We blow it outta the way with the bomb I defused that’s attached to the table.”

“We *what?*”

“Sam, we’re gonna drown if we don’t get out. *That door* is the only exit.” MacGyver waded to the table and began taking another look at the device.

Sam joined him, his face pale and very scared. His dad might be okay around bombs, but he wasn’t fond of them.

Eventually, Mac looked up and put his good hand on Sam’s shoulder. “You’re gonna have to do this. I can’t.” He looked down at his hand and winced as he tried to move it.

Sam nodded. He could do this.

“Okay, you need to remove about two-thirds of the C3.” Mac handed Sam his Swiss knife to work with. “That should leave enough explosive to take out the door without killing us.”

Sam took the blade and started to work, his soaked hands shaking so hard he was worried he might blow them both to pieces before he'd even finished.

Once the C3 had been cut down, he glanced back up. "Now what?"

Mac wavered a little, carefully holding his damaged hand up over his left shoulder. "Wedge the table in front of the metal plate over the door, and then pray the camera I bought you is as waterproof as the salesman promised."

Sam looked confused, but he carried on working, ever aware of the water level. "Huh? What about my camera?"

Mac smiled. "Well not exactly the camera, but the electronic flash." He pointed to the lead. "Unplug that end and press it into the C3 as best you can." Trust me, I've done this before."

Sam didn't doubt his dad, but he didn't trust the aging explosives they were dealing with. Nevertheless, he did as he was instructed, looking up expectantly after poking the connector into the plastic.

Mac took a look around, shook his head and then gestured to a spot to the left of the metal barrier. "We can't move far from the door because of the length of the lead, and there's not exactly anything to take cover behind, anyway."

Sam slipped into position where he'd been shown and tried to hold the camera and its accessories above the water. MacGyver slid in beside him.

Sam let out a deep breath and realized he was mimicking a habit of his dad's. "What do I do?" He eventually dared to ask.

Mac raised a bemused brow. "Take a picture, what else?"

Sam pressed down on the button before he could change his mind, and the room was once again filled with a brilliant white light as the C3 detonated. The blast was centered perfectly and the metal plate was sent hurtling outwards, taking the wooden door behind it along for the ride.

The trapped water burst from the opening like a tsunami, and Mac and Sam were sucked out with it, coming to rest back in the main bedroom in a crumpled heap of wet limbs.

MacGyver groaned and pulled himself up into a sitting position. "Now I know why I never took up surfing," he joked, cradling his hand.

Sam stood first, brushing water from his jacket and jeans just enough so that he wasn't actually dripping. When he was sure MacGyver was up to joining him, he held out a hand and tugged his dad to his feet.

"We need to find a way out of here. You need your head and that hand taking care of." Sam couldn't help but stare with concern at the bump that had come up on the

side of his dad's head, not to mention Mac's swollen fingers. If only he hadn't been so hasty going into that safe. *This whole mess is my fault!*

MacGyver brushed it off. "I'll live. Believe me, I've had worse." He turned and glanced at the mess behind them before picking up a flashlight that had been washed out onto the landing. He passed it to Sam with his good hand. "Ya know the murderer could still be here..."

Sam took the light and winced at the thought. "At least let me fix you up a little..." He slipped off his belt to make an impromptu sling, taking care to ensure Mac's hand was held tight to his left shoulder.

As Sam finished up, there was a click behind them like a gun being cocked, and both men spun around instinctively.

The beam from Sam's flashlight picked up the pale face of a girl, and she was pointing a revolver at them.

"Andy?" Sam's voice betrayed his disappointment and anger. He'd really liked Andy from the instant he'd met her back at the library, and now somehow he felt so deceived – so dumb for falling for her act. *Did I really give her my number?*

Andy didn't answer. She was shaking hard, and tiny droplets of sweat dripped from her brow as the gun swayed in her hands. "I need the necklace," she demanded. "Just give it to me."

Sam took a step forwards. "We don't have it," he answered honestly. "In fact, there isn't a necklace..."

"There *has to be!*" Andy gripped the gun harder until her knuckles were white. She seemed agitated, maybe even scared. The barrel quivered along with her hands.

"Where did you get the gun?" MacGyver didn't move, but his eyes followed every movement of the revolver as it shuddered in the girl's grasp. "Did you get it from the bedroom?"

Andy's panicked gaze panned to the bedroom door and back but she didn't answer.

Mac held out his good hand slowly and deliberately. "Listen to me, whatever you do, don't fire that thing..."

Sam couldn't believe his ears. What was his dad thinking?

Right now, what did it matter where she'd got the gun from? She was supposed to be a friend, and she was pointing the dang thing at them.

Sam took another step forwards – heck, Andy was shaking so bad she probably couldn't hit a target if it jumped up in front of her.

It was a stupid move, and one he would sorely regret later.

In what appeared to be blind terror and confusion, Andy's forefinger mechanically pulled back on the trigger and the revolver erupted. Instead of sending a slug straight into Sam's chest, however, the barrel exploded in a bright flash, gunpowder igniting and metal disintegrating into a myriad of tiny sharp shards.

Sam watched in abstract horror as the gun's barrel burst in Andy's hand sending her reeling backwards. As she tumbled out the doorway onto the landing, she almost toppled down the huge wooden staircase.

MacGyver was first after the girl, despite his injuries. He dropped to his knees, his expression suggesting he felt useless with only one hand.

He felt for a pulse and Sam joined him on the landing, looking dazed and bewildered. "Why, Dad?" He bemoaned. "Why would she kill Rob and attack Doc?" He shook his head in despair. "Greed over the necklace?"

Mac was silent at first. He was too busy trying to help the girl to answer questions.

The bullet fragments had torn into her chest and she was bleeding badly. He pressed his good hand over the largest wound.

"Sam," Mac finally responded. "Andy hasn't hurt or killed anyone." He looked down at the damage the gun had caused. "...except maybe herself."

Sam opened his mouth but couldn't find any words. None of it made any sense.

If Andy wasn't the killer, then what the heck had just happened?

* * * *

Part Four

"Sam, go in the bedroom, find a clean sheet and cut some strips." MacGyver fumbled in his pocket to retrieve his knife again. "And hurry." He glanced at the blood on his fingers. If they didn't do something, Andy didn't have very long.

Sam was back with several sections of cloth before his dad had too long to think about it. "How bad?" He asked breathlessly as Mac worked with the improvised dressings.

MacGyver didn't pull any punches. "Bad."

Sam's eyes became almost glazed as he seemed to take on the burden of everything that had happened – including Andy's injuries. "Why?" He mouthed so quietly Mac nearly didn't hear him.

"I don't think Andy brought the gun here," Mac offered ruefully. "I think she got locked in with us, found it and panicked. The footprints in the cellar were the right size to be hers." He pressed another strip of material over the largest wound as he

talked. “The gun is a Colt M1889 – they’re pretty old. And it was covered in dust. That’s what made me think it was one of the booby traps.”

Sam nodded. “That’s why she was freaking out and shaking so bad. The real killer wouldn’t have been so nervous or bothered about taking us out.”

A look of guilt washed over MacGyver’s features akin to the one his son had worn only moments previously. “Yeah, I tried to tell her not to fire that dang thing. I had an idea the barrel was rigged, but she was just too scared to listen.”

Sam passed his dad the last of the strips. His expression said he felt useless, even though his didn’t mouth the words. “So why was she here?”

Mac shrugged. “Maybe the same reason we are, to find the truth?”

As he applied the last dressing, Andy unexpectedly coughed, a bright spurt of blood dribbling from the corner of her mouth. She gasped, then managed to mumble a few words between long sucking breaths. “I ...need to find the necklace. I need to...stop...him.”

Sam leaned low so that he was close to her face. “Stop who, Andy,” he asked softly.

Andy’s eyes looked back pleadingly and she tried to repeat her words, but the effort was simply too much and she drifted back off into unconsciousness.

MacGyver put his hand on Sam’s shoulder and squeezed. “She’s bleeding inside. If we don’t get her out soon she’s not gonna make it. We can worry about who and what she means later.”

The sobering words seemed to galvanize Sam into action and he stood quickly. He stared down the stairwell, apparently assessing their situation. “No way can we get out that main door, the oak isn’t gonna budge. And the way the windows are boarded it would take too long to break through.” His brow furrowed in frustration. “We need another bomb, which we just don’t have.”

Mac’s own mind was in overdrive. “I don’t think the attic window was boarded up. Probably because of the height and how small it is, but...”

“Maybe I could get through,” Sam finished.

Mac considered it. Getting one person out was only part of the equation. No way could he climb with his hand, and Andy couldn’t be lowered out that way, it would kill her for sure.

An idea started to form. “Okay, if we can get you out, maybe you can wrap the Jeep’s winch around the locked cellar doors and tear them off. They’d be easier than the main oak door.”

Andy groaned and Sam flinched at the sound. “That’s great, but how do I climb down from the attic? I’m not exactly a mountain goat and there’s not much up there to hold onto. You’re the climber, not me.”

If it had been any other situation, Mac would have quickly pointed out that he was, in fact, also the one scared to death of heights, but given Andy’s situation he didn’t waste time on banter. “Stay here and do what you can to make her comfortable. I’m gonna take a look in the cellar, there might be a rope or something I can improvise with.”

Given his hand, it would have been easier to send Sam, but the whole situation had proved that right now, Mac was the clearer thinker. Sam did have a good track record of finding and using things to his own advantage, but sometimes he let emotion mar that thought process.

Jogging down the stairs two at a time, Mac entered the cellar and tried the lights. They were still out. He used the flashlight in his good hand to swing a beam around the room, pausing at the original booby trap and grimacing.

There were a few rusty tools, empty planters and a hoe, but no rope that Mac could see. He played the beam across the room again more slowly and noted thick cables running from an old backup generator and up through the floor.

Could I cut it to be used like a rope, maybe?

MacGyver moved closer, and shook his head in disappointment. The insulated wiring would probably take Sam’s weight, but he didn’t think there was enough of it to be of any use.

He moved on, checking the corners of the cellar until he came to a large roll of wire garden meshing. It was a little too wide, but definitely heavy enough gauge to climb down. The only problem was it would also most likely cut into Sam’s hands.

You’re in a cellar, think!

Mac moved back to the bench where he’d spotted the tools and rummaged around in the drawers. Where there were garden implements, there were usually gloves.

The drawers were filled with cobwebs, oily rags and an old bike chain, below those was what he was looking for – a pair of thick leather garden gloves – tatty, but definitely usable.

Mac stuffed them in his back jeans pocket, remembering all the time that upstairs, a girl lay dying.

But the puzzle hadn’t quite been solved yet. He had the wire to clamber down, the gloves for protection, but how were they going to fix the wire to anything in the attic?

The tool bench had nothing of use, so MacGyver took another look around, hoping his first two sweeps had missed something.

They hadn't.

He sighed in frustration, but then his eyes locked on the shotgun that was part of the booby trap.

Mac smiled and quickly retrieved it, along with the roll of mesh. Now for the difficult task of getting both items back up the stairs with just one arm free. He stuffed the twelve gauge down the center of the meshing, making sure the barrel lodged in one of the triangular sections.

Then it was simply a matter of getting the roll under his arm and making a dash for it, with the flashlight strap gritted between his teeth.

Not a pretty sight, he mused as he bounded up the steps, but a necessary one.

At the top of the ornate staircase, Sam was waiting. He looked pale in the muted light, and for a moment Mac expected him to say they were too late.

"How is she?" he dared to ask.

Sam shook his head. "Not good. What'd you find?" He looked warily at the meshing.

Instead of explaining, MacGyver simply handed it over. He was getting tired now the pain from his hand was setting in, and jarring it as he ran around wasn't helping.

"We'll have to leave Andy for a few minutes why we get you out." Mac didn't wait for a reply and started to look for another set of stairs up to the attic. After trying three doors, he finally found what he was searching for.

Behind, he could hear Sam's heavy footfalls on the bare wooden steps as his son obediently followed him with the meshing and gun.

At the top of the stairs there was another door, and he pushed through it into a much brighter room. Light was cascading in through the narrow window, abruptly making the house seem friendlier.

Sam pushed by with the wire and tossed it down in a space on the floor. He grabbed the window handles forcing the warped wood until it eventually gave and opened outwards. Then he looked back down at the mesh. "So how do we secure this stuff?" He stared at his dad, obviously needing answers.

Mac pulled out the shotgun from its hiding place one-handed and offered it up to his son. "Thread the barrel in and out of one end of the mesh," he instructed. "Then brace it either side the window and toss our makeshift ladder out..."

"Nice one..." Sam did as he was told, his face suggesting he was pretty impressed.

"Hey, don't thank me, thank Bruce Willis," MacGyver admitted. "I saw him do something similar with a gun strap in *Die Hard*."

“*You watched Die Hard?*” Sam’s face contorted in shock. “Did you not notice all the guns..?” Without waiting for an answer he donned the leather gloves and squeezed out the tiny window onto the mesh “ladder”.

Mac held his breath as Sam made his first tentative moves. The meshing swayed and contorted, but the shotgun held it in place. It wasn’t going to be an elegant descent, but it looked like it was going to work.

Sam seemed to sense the same thing and began to move more quickly until he was just a short distance from the ground. He bounced away from the brickwork and then let go, landing in an almost crouched position.

After a second to regain his composure and balance, he made a dash for the Jeep.

As MacGyver watched, Sam vanished from view and then the 4x4’s engine fired into life.

Mac didn’t wait any longer. He needed to get back down to Andy, ready to get her out. Bounding down the stairs just a little too boisterously, he felt the broken bones in his hand grinding, but he gritted his teeth and tried to put the pain aside. His injuries would heal just fine, Andy’s probably wouldn’t.

Outside, Mac could hear the Jeep’s engine being gunned and he knew Sam must already have the winch in place.

If I could just get Andy to the cellar...

But given his hand, that wasn’t an option, and he was forced to impatiently wait by Andy’s side until Sam finally came running up the stairs.

“Is she..?”

“Still alive,” Mac assured. “Now let’s keep it that way.” He gestured for Sam to help take Andy’s weight, but instead Sam scooped her up in his arms and carried her carefully out of the mansion.

What happened next was in God’s hands.

***Los Robles Hospital and Medical Center
215 West Janss Road,
Thousand Oaks,
California***

MacGyver walked through the doors from the treatment room to see Sam sitting on a chair with his head in his hands. This was what Mac had always been afraid of. Sam was getting to see first hand what it was like to be part of the “MacGyver” family.

Friends, loved ones, they ultimately got hurt, or worse. Heck, even total strangers fell foul to the curse. Mac thought about Mike Forrester, and the likes of Dr. Sharon Millward. They were his crosses to bear.

And now Sam was getting to know what it felt like. And it wasn't pleasant.

Not exactly the family heirloom I'd hoped to pass on...

Sam looked up as he finally noticed his father's footfalls. He looked tired, and the bags under his eyes confirmed it.

"Hey, what'd the docs say?" His gaze automatically settled on Mac's recently bandaged hand, which now hung in a sling in much the same place Sam had strapped it earlier.

"Three broken bones," Mac admitted. "I have to come back tomorrow when the swellings hopefully gone down some." He took a seat next to his son, not really wanting to ask the next question. "Any news on Andy?"

Sam shook his head, but didn't look his father in the eye. Instead he peered at the tiled flooring. "Nothing yet." Finally he looked up, his eyes changing from sadness to anger. "Dad, if Andy isn't responsible for what's going on, then who is? Where do we start?"

"I think Andy is part of what's going on," MacGyver offered. "But she's not the bad guy in all of this. Think about it, she's far too small and petite to be the person I fought in your apartment, and she'd never have the strength to stab Old Rob and Doc."

Sam didn't seem get it. He ran a hand through his mop of hair in obvious frustration and stood from his seat, copying the pacing action his dad had done in his apartment just a short while ago. "So how can she be part of it?" He demanded.

"The nurse who dressed my hand was kind enough to speak with admissions for me." Mac's dark eyes sparkled, suggesting he'd charmed his way to some of the answers. "They found some I.D. on Andy..."

"And?" Sam had stopped pacing and was peering intently at his dad.

"And, Andy's surname is Donati – as in the man who supposedly killed Angelina Constanzo all those years ago. Sam, she's Carl Donati's granddaughter!" MacGyver watched for a reaction, and he got one. Sam crumpled back onto his seat, apparently gutted. "I got a call out to Pete, and it seems Carl Donati had a son named Paul, who is Andy's dad. And get this, Paul owes the mob big money!"

Sam nodded. "You think Andy's dad might be behind this to find the necklace and pay off his debts?"

Mac shrugged, and then realized the painkillers the doctor had given him really hadn't kicked in yet. He cringed. "There's more and it's pretty weird. Although Carl is listed as Paul's dad, there's no record or name anywhere of his mother."

Sam slumped backwards in apparent defeat. "Aww man, this isn't getting any clearer."

MacGyver wasn't so defeatist. He smiled cryptically. "Well, actually, I have a couple of theories about what's going on, but we need to speak to Art Denizen again to see if they pan out."

Sam opened his mouth to apparently ask just what the theories were, but a doctor approaching their seats made him close it again. He was a small man with wire-rimmed glasses and he was still in scrubs.

The doctor pushed his spectacles further up his nose as he grew closer, possibly out of nervous habit. "Mr. Malloy?"

Sam was up on his feet in a second. "That's me. Is there any news?"

The surgeon looked almost apologetic. "I wish I had something better to tell you, young man, but your fiancée is still critical. I have to be honest...my colleagues and I don't expect her to survive the night..."

Sam slumped back on his chair again as if all the stuffing had been knocked from him. "That's not...*fair*."

"Life invariably isn't," the doctor sighed. "If there's anything I can do for you?"

Sam shook his head and stared at the floor again until the doctor got the message and shuffled away.

"Fiancée?" Mac raised a brow.

"Well I had to tell them something, or they wouldn't have given me any information!" Sam grumbled. "Now I'm wishing they hadn't."

"And you think Andy would want you moping around here?" MacGyver squeezed his son's arm. "C'mon, the best way we can help her now is to find out the truth, and that means Art Denizen."

Sam bobbed his head, but looked back at the emergency room doors with a longing in his eyes that said he would be back.

Mac liked that, even though he didn't voice his pride. *That's right kiddo, never give up, there's always hope in any situation. You gotta keep believing that...*

***Art Denizen's Mansion
Somewhere near Malibu***

MacGyver wasn't happy and his body language showed it as he pushed through into Denizen's study unannounced with Sam silently in tow.

This whole situation had gotten out of hand, and Mac didn't want it to escalate any further. Too many people were getting hurt over something he was now convinced didn't exist – at least, not in the form people thought it did.

Denizen seemed nonplussed by his visitor's apparently slightly agitated demeanor. "Why Mr. MacGyver, so nice to see you again so soon!" He steepled his fingers again on his desk.

Mac walked up, not bothering to waste time on a chair. He bent over a touch, so his eyes met with the old man's. "I think you know more than you're telling, and this time I need you to be honest with me. People are getting hurt by this dumb legend!"

Art seemed to feel the anger in MacGyver's voice and jerked back a little, startled. "I don't know what you mean?"

Mac instantly felt guilty at scaring Denizen. Whatever he'd once been, he was a fragile man now. Mac eased off a little, even though the feeling in his gut about what had happened to Andy still turned him sick. "When I asked about the mansion before, you said Bobbi really did have a house for Angelina and it was...*different*. And when Sam and I were inside the place, we found a note that read *Angelina's Grace, not an item, but a place.*"

Art shivered and MacGyver guessed old memories were being relived.

Eventually, the old man shrugged. "It sounds like you have it all figured out without me."

"The mansion was a decoy all along, wasn't it? Bobbi had some kind of ordinary home and life planned for his future with Angelina. That's why you were weird about it on our first visit, right?"

Denizen pushed up from his chair and locked his hands behind his back. He moved to the window in apparent thought. "Yes, "Angelina's Grace" was a place – an unassuming cabin where Bobbi intended to run from his past with the woman he loved. Of course, they never got there."

MacGyver hadn't finished. He joined Art at the window and gently pushed. "But there was more, wasn't there? Why was the name of Paul Donati's mother never listed anywhere? Was it the same reason no actual body was found of Angelina Constanzo?"

Art turned to face Mac, moisture welling in his aging, sad eyes. "I didn't know about it right away – the truth I mean. But later, later I suspected. You see Angelina never really loved Bobbi, she simply used him. In the end, I figured she'd run away with Carl Donati just because she thought he was more powerful in "the family". Carl faked the hit and explosion, of course. Angelina never died."

Sam had been silent until now, taking in all the new information. “Whoa, you gotta be kidding me?” He moved to his dad’s side. “So Bobbi lived the life of a street person thinking the woman he loved had been murdered, and really she’d run away with his arch enemy?”

“Sadly, I fear the killing didn’t end there.” Denizen bobbed his head, and he looked ashamed. “I could never prove it, but I believe Paul Donati killed Ricky Furfaro with Furfaro’s own knife, because Ricky discovered the truth.”

Sam looked at MacGyver as the penny dropped. “If Paul killed Ricky with that knife – well, it’s the knife that killed Rob and hurt Doc! And that means Paul is the killer and he wants the non-existent necklace to pay off his debts!”

“That was my thinking,” MacGyver agreed. “Andy found out what her dad was up to and tried to stop him by getting to the necklace first, but then she fell foul of the booby trap after her dad locked her in with us.”

Mac turned to Art, who had turned a ghostly white. The old man had obviously not understood the severity of the situation before, even though MacGyver had tried to explain.

“Mr. Denizen, where’s the cabin Bobbi had built?” Mac watched Art’s face as he spoke, hoping it wasn’t all going to be too much for him. “It’s probably where Paul will go next, and I don’t think he’s gonna believe there really is no necklace. We have to try and stop him.”

Denizen slowly nodded and retook his seat with a deep sigh. “It’s near Corral Canyon...”

***Angelina’s Grace
Cabin near Corral Canyon Park
California***

Sam gunned the gas, asking the Jeep to perform like a race car as he sped down the Pacific Coast Highway. Normally, MacGyver would chide him for his behavior, but tonight lives probably depended on it.

Paul had already killed and assaulted how many people simply because of his debts? He was so far in, it was a good bet he wouldn’t care how many more had to die to appease his goals.

Mac winced as the 4x4 hit a rut in the road, but he ignored the pain in his hand, preferring instead to focus on what was likely to happen next.

Given his current debilitated state, and Sam’s lack of experience with killers, it was time to call in the cavalry. Using his good hand, he picked up the car phone and dialed

911. It would probably take the cops a good half hour to get out here, and by then, anything could be going down.

Sam swerved off Highway 1 and still kept up his speed. The Jeep groaned as the side road he took played havoc with the suspension. Sam didn't seem to notice.

The road narrowed again, until it was almost a dirt track, and in the distance, Mac finally spotted "Angelina's Grace." It was so unassuming, so innocent looking it was hard to believe the trouble it had caused.

He pointed to the instrument cluster. "Sam, turn off the lights and pull over by that tree. We don't want to let him know we're here."

Sam obeyed, but the steely look in his eyes suggested he was probably not thinking straight. That worried MacGyver.

Outside the cabin was a Chevy, just like the one they'd spotted near Sam's place when the intruder had escaped – killer, and his nemesis, Sam, were about to meet.

Mac pressed his forefinger to his lips, expressing the need for stealth. He didn't wait for Sam to climb out, but instead took point himself. He needed to be between his son and Donati right now, or something very bad might happen.

The cabin was larger than MacGyver had expected, and as he crept along the rough ground he couldn't help but think what kind of life Rob would have had here, instead of on the street, if things had gone his way.

The place was in darkness, save for a light in what looked like one of the bedrooms.

Mac edged closer, pressing his back up against the door frame as he tried the handle. It gave freely, as if it had been unlocked, or had already been picked. Taking a deep breath, he stepped inside and waited for Sam to join him.

Both their eyes locked on the door with the light shining beneath it.

Again, MacGyver moved first, preempting any action Sam might take. He stepped cautiously to the door and dared to peek through an open crack at what was going on inside.

Paul Donati was like a mad man. He moved from wardrobe to cupboard, to drawers, tossing items all over the floor that obviously had no value.

His face was red with apparent anger as he started to work on the bed. He fleetingly looked underneath and then began to tear at the mattress as if he might find something sewn inside it.

"I don't see a gun?" Sam mouthed as he too took a peek through the slightly open door.

Mac nodded. They pretty much had two options now – wait for the cops and hope they were in time, or go in and try and take Donati themselves. The odds were in their favor, even with his busted hand, but still the troubleshooter was wary.

There were always unforeseen dangers he didn't want to put Sam in the line of.

His hesitation cost him any chance of making a decision.

Sam shoved through the door and faced-off Donati like he'd been squaring up to killers all his life.

Donati whirled as he heard the commotion, and as he spun, a flick knife appeared in his right hand.

Sam ignored it. "I hope you're happy," he snapped. "What you've let happen to Andy."

"Andy?" Donati's head cocked to one side as if he didn't get it, then he chuckled. "Ah, you mean Andrea?" He hunched his shoulders. "I'm really not a family guy, so why don't you and your pa here back off a little before I make one of you very lonely?" He waved the blade, its edge catching the muted lamplight like some bringer of doom.

MacGyver bit into his bottom lip and raised his free hand, signaling neutrality. "Look, the cops are on their way and there's nowhere to go. Heck, you should know by now there really isn't even a necklace..."

Paul smirked and his body language suggested he was swaying between attacking and diving for the window. "There better be a necklace, or I'm a dead man, the amount I owe the local mob."

Sam shook his head, his face contorting into total disbelief. "You killed Rob, hurt Doc, even put your own daughter in the firing line, just to save your own worthless skin?"

Donati moved restlessly from foot to foot, the knife whirling back and forth from one hand to the other. Eventually he gave a small, subdued laugh. "Oh, I didn't kill Rob because of that. I killed the old fool because he refused to believe the truth!"

"What truth?" Mac had moved a little closer as Donati rambled, but he didn't want to make any sudden moves – not just yet, and not one-handed.

Donati eyed his adversary warily, but then gave a wicked smile that reminded MacGyver of Murdoc. "Angelina was already pregnant when she ran away with Carl Donati. Donati never knew it, but I was never his son, I was Bobbi's. Thing is, when I approached dear Rob and ask for the necklace to get me out of a fix, he just laughed at me, refused to believe that I was his son..."

"So you killed your own dad?" Sam appeared incredulous.

"We fought; he died, nothing more, nothing less. Thing was, I still needed the necklace, so I had to see the only person "dad" might have confided in. Silly old fool

wasn't very cooperative either, although I never meant to hurt him originally, but hey, stuff happens."

"Doc..." Mac's eyes turned to sadness as he remembered how he'd found his old friend on the mission floor in a pool of blood.

Donati wasn't sympathetic. "Yeah, and I'm not going down for it!" As he yelled out the reply he lashed his knife hand into the lamp illuminating the room, smashing it onto the floor.

The bulb exploded, plunging everyone into a cavernous darkness only broken by a wan light from outside. The sound of more smashing glass followed as Donati dived through the bedroom window and out onto the small yard beyond.

Sam sprang after him into the soft moonlight while Mac turned tail and headed back out the main door to try and head him off. The pincer movement almost worked, but Donati's car was open, and he was able to slip behind the wheel relatively quickly.

The Camero fired up just as Sam rounded the corner, and had it not been for Mac's good hand grabbing him by the collar and pulling him away, he would probably have stood firm in front of it.

As it was, the Chevy's rear wheels spun as it slewed on the loose gravel, and then it was lost into the night, running without lights to meld into the shadows of the canyon.

MacGyver and Sam raced back to the Jeep and once again Sam took the wheel. "He has too big a head start and a lot faster car!"

Mac shook his head. "And if we're lucky, that's why he'll make mistakes. If he doesn't, the police will still pick him up later, don't worry." Part of the worried father hoped the latter would be the case. Sam was in a reckless mood brought on by Andy's injuries, and letting emotions take hold was not a good thing – he knew from personal experience.

The 4x4 swerved and then bounced back onto the Pacific Coast Highway, and Mac had to grab the dash to steady himself. Ahead, they could just see the Camero dodging in and out of traffic with little regard for oncoming cars. It was like something out of a *Hunter* episode that Sam liked to watch, except there was no stuntman at the wheel and lives could easily be lost.

"Pull back a little," Mac warned. "He's outta control."

Donati seemed to sense their presence anyway and the Chevy's speed increased more – perhaps he'd spotted the Jeep in the rearview.

The Camero slewed across the blacktop straight into the path of a rusted Ford pickup and then fishtailed back again just in the nick of time. The move at speed required more skill than Donati possessed, and he finally lost control, spinning out onto a small side road.

To his credit, Donati recovered quickly and steered down the track he'd accidentally found with his foot on the gas.

MacGyver sucked down a breath. "He's going too fast. That road leads to the cliffs down to the beach..."

Sam cautiously followed onto the side road, but suddenly there was no sign of the Chevy, or its driver. He slowed, eventually pulling over.

Mac hopped out first, familiar with the area, and jogged to the edge of the first outcrop. The cliffs, he knew, were tiered most of the way down to the bottom.

Resting precariously on the second shelf was Donati's car, its rear wheels still spinning wildly. It rocked, balancing perfectly for now on its midsection, but any serious movement from Donati and the equilibrium could be destroyed.

Mac hurried back to Sam's side of the Jeep. "He's gone over the edge. The car's sitting on a shelf a few feet down. Stay here, I'm gonna try and get the winch onto the car's tow hook. Then I'm gonna need you this end. If it doesn't retract because of the Chevy's position you might need to back up to free it." Without saying more he moved to the front of the 4x4 and began releasing the winch.

Sam popped his head out, his expression suggesting both curiosity and concern. "You can do that with one hand?" He queried, one eyebrow raised.

"I guess we'll find out." Instead of clambering over the ledge, MacGyver trotted to the side of the outcrop and vanished onto a steep cobbled path that led to the bottom of the cliffs. It was easier on both his hand and his legs.

When he reached the ledge where Donati's car was hanging, he carefully climbed over a small wire safety fence and moved cautiously towards the Chevy. He was almost to the rear end when somewhere above, the winch line simply ran out.

Exhaust fumes filled his nose, reminding him the Chevy was still running, and that Donati was probably unconscious and needed rescuing. But from the rocky projection where they both sat, there was little he could do save for hanging on the trunk and hoping the emergency services arrived.

That really wasn't an option. Mac dropped the winch line and began a quick ascent back to the top of the cliffs, again taking the side path for ease. As he moved, his eyes darted to and fro looking for discarded items that might be usable to save Donati. Out here, there didn't even seem to be any rogue litter, however.

Hurry Mac, or there is gonna be one killer going to a very watery grave real soon. Other men might have thought that was an apt ending, but not MacGyver. He wanted true justice, served up by a court.

He paused at a tree stump, taking a breath as he realized after the explosion maybe he wasn't quite ready for all this excitement. As he sucked down air, he spotted a small

beach house through some tall bushes – a beach house with a rather ornately kept garden.

Mac pushed through the hedging and a security light popped on. He ignored it, roaming through the plot with his eyes in search mode. Maybe there would be a rope, something, anything.

Wrapped around a reel on the back of the house was a heavy duty garden hose – not exactly what he had in mind, but it looked strong and long – the two things he needed right now.

But will it take the weight of the Chevy?

Mac envisaged the Camero teetering again and decided it was a risk he had to take. Taking one end of the hose, he made a beeline for Sam and the Jeep.

As he cleared the top of the cliff and emerged from the entrance to the hidden path, Sam was waiting, staring over the edge as if he might see something even in the darkness.

“Where the heck where you? I thought...”

“The winch isn’t long enough,” Mac started to explain whilst trying to tie the hose to the front of the Jeep.

Sam stared at his dad for the longest moment as if he’d gone mad, and then took the hose from Mac’s good hand and tied it off onto the 4x4 for him.

MacGyver suspected Sam would have probably suggested he be the one to go back down to Donati and the Camero too. It did make sense as he was the one with two good hands.

But then Sam didn’t know his way down the side path, and Sam wasn’t exactly in a good mood with Donati either. Mac didn’t want to put his son in a position of having to look the guy in the face if the car went over during the attempt – because in that situation, Sam was always likely to wonder if he’d done enough, or if he’d held back just that little bit because of what Donati had done.

No, Mac didn’t want his son dealing with that possible guilt as well as myriad of others that went along with what Mac usually did for a living.

Mac reached the second ledge again and maneuvered over the fence. The hose stopped in almost exactly the same place the winch had. “Aww c’mon! You gotta be kidding me!” He yanked at it as hard as his left arm would allow, and it gave just a few feet more, allowing him to crudely secure it to the rear of the Chevy.

As he worked, the car creaked and groaned as it bobbed up and down like a cork on water. Then, without warning, the hood and whole front end shot forwards, as the perfect balance was somehow lost.

The hose was instantly taught with the weight of the car, the material stretching and contorting as its limits were tested. But somehow, it held.

But will it when Sam tries to reverse?

MacGyver stepped out dangerously close to the ledge's end where the car was now perched, and he could hear tiny bits of stone and pebbles skittering down the face of the cliffs where he'd shuffled his feet.

He refused to look back, knowing the height would make him dizzy.

Instead, he looked up, searching for Sam. His eyes locked on a silhouette above and he waved. "Now, Sam! *Now!*"

The dark figure vanished, and within seconds he could hear the Jeep revving. The hose seemed to get even tighter on the Chevy and its diameter seemed to shrink as it strained with the load.

Mac grimaced, expecting to here a twang as it snapped, but somehow, it stayed firm. The Chevy screamed as its metal was torn backwards over the sharp and rocky ridge to safety.

As the spinning rear tires hit the ledge's surface, the car shot backwards and Mac had to dive inside through the driver's window to kill the ignition.

Donati lay askew in his seat, motionless, but alive.

In the distance, MacGyver finally heard sirens and slumped back out onto the outcrop. His hand throbbed, his head hurt, and he was definitely, not never, not ever, going on any more treasure hunts.

And for that matter, neither was Sam.

Mac smiled at the thought.

Grounding that kid really wasn't ever going to be an option.

A few weeks later...

Pete took his nine iron, made a wide swing, and sent the golf ball flying off into oblivion. A wide grin appeared on his face, even though he had absolutely no idea where on the green it had landed.

Mac shielded his eyes from the morning sun and realized he had absolutely no idea either. But then, that really didn't matter. Bringing Pete out here to play golf was more about them both finding some time to relax more than anything.

And given Pete's sight problems, skiing or ice hockey just didn't work these days.

“Well? How’d I do?” Pete was already rummaging for another ball and handed it to MacGyver to place on the tee for him.

“Um...well, it’s *somewhere*,” Mac teased back.

Pete made a harrumphing noise and made another swing, narrowly missing Mac’s left ear with the end of his iron.

Mac silently ducked, then looked on in amazement as the ball landed just short of the hole. *Dang, he’s getting pretty good at this...*

“Beat that!” Pete challenged without actually knowing how well he’d done.

MacGyver placed his own ball, took a moment and then whacked it with all he’d got as if he was on ice and it was a puck. The ball landed a good distance from Pete’s and he sighed. If Pete won, he’d never live it down back at Phoenix.

“So how’s the hand?”

“It’s a little stiff, but okay.” Mac stretched his fingers out to convince himself and then grabbed the caddy they were sharing and began to walk.

Pete sensed his movement and obediently followed. “How about Doc?” He asked, adjusting his white cap as they sauntered to the hole.

“He’s out the hospital and doing fine back at the mission. In fact I’m going down there this afternoon. Wanna tag along and see him?”

Pete smiled. “I’d like that. I’d like to catch up with Sam too.”

Mac stopped as they reached his ball, looked down at it and then at the hole. He sighed again. “Well Sam might not be around...”

“Oh?”

“He’s off visiting Andy. He’s been there a lot since she defied the doctor’s prognosis and lived. I think he’s pretty fond of her.” Mac tapped his ball lightly and it spiraled past Pete’s coming to rest at the very edge of the hole. *Typical.*

Pete nodded as if he’d expected as much. “You know, from what I’ve learned, she’s a good kid, nothing like her father.” MacGyver took Pete’s hand and lined him up with his ball. “Speaking of which, I have some bad news. I didn’t want to mention it before but...the D.A. and feds have struck a deal with Paul Donati to try and shut down the west coast family. Basically, he gets a new life if he spills everything he knows.”

“Pete, you gotta be kidding! The guy is a cold-blooded killer!” Mac rubbed at his brow, both angry and disbelieving. People had been hurt, died even, and for what?

Pete looked just as annoyed. “True, but there is no real evidence.” He shrugged, shaking his head. “The fact that he had Ricky Furfaro’s knife in no way proves he used it – and while it does link him to Rob and Doc’s attacks, there is no other evidence he hurt them either, save for what he told you and Sam. And even then, he said he hadn’t intended to kill anyone, so it would have gone down as second degree murder, in the heat of the moment rather than premeditated.”

Mac didn’t see it that way. “C’mon, Pete, the guy is guilty! They’re just letting him go free to get what they want!” He took a swing at nothing in particular, cutting an arc in the air to vent his anger. It didn’t make him feel one iota better. “It’s not right that the legal system condones this kinda thing...”

“You know I agree,” Pete answered soberly. “But there’s just nothing we can do. At least you and Sam did solve the murders, and Rob got the funeral he deserved after suffering all those years on the streets. And some good came out of it too! Now that it’s out that Paul was Bobbi’s son, that means according to the terms of the original will, Andy is going to get her grandfather’s estate. The cabin and a large parcel of land it’s on.”

“Oh great.” MacGyver rolled his eyes. “I guess Sam will be spending a lot of time at Corral Canyon Park then...”

Pete chuckled, made his swing and landed the ball right in the hole. “Hey, I knew that kid was a chip off the old block!”

Mac groaned, but couldn’t argue.

Sometimes, Pete Thornton was annoyingly right.

The End