

## The Devil You Know

### Part One

"This can't be happening," said Jack Dalton as he looked down at the lifeless cadaver lying on the metal table within the morgue. The thin white sheet covering the body had been pulled back slightly, enough to expose the body's face and part of one bare shoulder. "I can't believe it. It---it really is him."

"So you're positive that this is your friend, then?" asked the coroner gently. "You're confirming the identity?"

"Yes," Jack choked. "Yeah, that's Mac. That---that's MacGyver. He really is..." Aviator hat in his hands, Jack reached across with trembling fingers to touch the pale skin of MacGyver's neck. He was cool to the touch...and there was no pulse. "I never thought that this could happen. I--- How can this be real?"

"I'm so sorry for your loss," the coroner replied, drawing the sheet back up over MacGyver's face. "Thank you for coming here today. I can't imagine how hard this must be for you. I hate to ask this, but would you mind stopping to sign some papers at the front desk? Just to verify that you did give us a positive ID, please."

Jack's eyes were transfixed by the shape of his friend beneath the sheet. "Yeah. Sure." Slowly, Jack shook his head. "I just--- I always thought he was invincible. He was always there, could always get out of any trouble. I just can't believe it." His head lifted up to meet the coroner's gray eyes. "How did he die?"

"Right now, we're considering his death an accident, but we'll know more when the autopsy is complete. We'll keep you informed."

"Thanks." Jack coughed and took a deep breath, feeling as though the walls were closing in on him. "Out this door here?"

The coroner nodded. "Thank you for coming by."

"No problem," Jack's voice was just barely loud enough to echo in the cold room as he walked out the door.

Quickly, the coroner heaved a sigh of relief and pulled the sheet away. Jack had left not a moment too soon; the drug was wearing off and color was starting to return to the troubleshooter's face. His heart rate was increasing steadily and his breathing was getting stronger as the coroner monitored his vital signs. Everything was going according to plan.

MacGyver awoke with a splutter, feeling dazed and groggy, and sharply aware of the icy stethoscope pressing against his chest. "Hey, Doc. Did we fool him?"

The coroner grinned. "Sure did. It looks like Angus MacGyver is officially dead and no one's going to be the wiser."

MacGyver winced a little bit. "Skip the first name, would ya?"

"Sorry. I saw it on your medical records."

"Was he upset?"

"Of course he was. His best friend just died, remember?"

MacGyver shook his head sadly. "I hate to lie to him like this, but Pete was right: if Jack is convinced that I'm really dead, then everyone else will believe it, too."

The coroner nodded. "Sounds like everything's working out so far."

"Hey, what was that drug you gave me again? Whatever it is, it's some strong stuff. My head still feels kinda fuzzy." MacGyver rubbed his shoulders as he added, "And I'm freezing."

"Baclofen, a muscle relaxant." The coroner's grin grew wider, spreading across his thin face and making his pointy cheekbones seem even sharper. He looked almost like a cartoon Dracula in the fluorescent lighting. "Interesting stuff. In the right dose, it drops vital signs down to nil. But as I'm sure you've noticed, it doesn't last very long at all. Here, let me get you a coat. We need to raise your temperature back up."

"Thanks," MacGyver replied as he propped himself up to sit at the edge of the metal table and tugged his shirt back on, accepting a thick jacket from the good doctor a moment later.

"All right, we should get you out of here. I've been keeping an eye on you the whole time, and you should be fine. Mr. Thornton arranged for a getaway car to be waiting for you outside. It'll take you to a Phoenix Foundation safe house until all of this blows over. Uh, it's a blue Crown Victoria, I think."

"Thanks for all your help. I appreciate it."

"Anytime. Right out this back door, now--- I don't need any corpses walking around scaring the living daylights out of people!"

MacGyver rolled his eyes and hurried outside as the coroner's laugh echoed in his ears. The blue Ford was parked outside, just as he'd been told. Zipping up his coat, MacGyver slid into the backseat.

"Hey," he greeted the driver, separated from him by a clear Plexiglass partition.

"Hello there, Mr. MacGyver," purred a sultry female voice. "Where to?"

MacGyver quirked an eyebrow. "Pete's safe house would be nice."

The driver chuckled. "Buckle up."

Smiling, MacGyver obeyed. But as he clicked his seatbelt in place, he noticed something peculiar about the backseat doors. Slowly, he tried to open the door he'd just used to get inside. The handle would barely budge; it was blocked by a hard plastic barrier. An icy chill that definitely wasn't a side effect of being almost dead crept into MacGyver's bones. He was trapped.

As the car pulled out of the parking lot, the driver chuckled, but the voice wasn't the same feminine tone as before. "How many times are you going to fall for that voice trick, MacGyver?"

MacGyver managed to whisper only one word: "Murdoc..."

"That's right, MacGyver, it's me. Don't bother trying to escape. This is an old police car, and the backseat doors can only be opened from the outside. So now you're my prisoner. A bit ironic, don't you think?"

“Let me go, Murdoc!”

Murdoc laughed. “Why should I? You won’t be missed. After all, everyone thinks you’re dead, don’t they?”

MacGyver paused in his attempts to open the car door. “How’d you know about that?”

“You’re very, very bad at faking your death, MacGyver. Take it from an old professional.

Baclofen, really? That’s the oldest trick in the book. You’re not fooling anyone, least of all me.”

“Are you the one that HIT sent to kill me? You’re accepting contracts from them again, is that it?”

“Don’t be ridiculous, MacGyver. You of all people should know that HIT has stabbed me in the back too many times for me to go back to them. Not this time.”

MacGyver stared at Murdoc’s reflection in the rearview mirror. “That never stopped you before.”

“This is different,” Murdoc said defensively. “I mean it, I’ve cut all ties. I work freelance now.”

“Freelance murder. Great. Let me give you a pat on the back for how hard you’ve tried to reform,” MacGyver replied, unable to hold back the sarcasm. “So what kind of elaborate scheme do you have cooked up this time, Murdoc? Huh? Flamethrowers, rocket launchers, strapping me to the railroad tracks and waiting for the train...?”

“As tempting as all of those options sound, that’s not what I’m here for.”

MacGyver frowned; he didn’t like where this was going. “Then what *are* you here for?”

“Curiosity,” Murdoc replied simply.

“Curiosity?” MacGyver echoed. “What do you mean?”

“I mean that when I found out that someone had put a price on your head---*again*---I wanted to know who’d gotten the contract.” Murdoc frowned a bit as he added, “The contract that’s rightfully mine. After all this time, I think I deserve to be the one who finally ends your life.”

“I don’t believe this! You’re kidnapping me because you’re---you’re getting *territorial* because somebody else from HIT might get to me first?!”

Murdoc shrugged. “That about sums it up. Everyone knows that you’re *my* victim, MacGyver. If anyone else gets to you first, I’ll never be able to salvage my perfect record. It’s a matter of professional pride, you see. Offering the contract to another assassin is the greatest slap in the face that HIT could possibly give me. I simply can’t allow it.”

MacGyver twitched a little in the backseat. “So what does that mean for me, exactly?” He had a sinking feeling that he already knew the answer, and those suspicions were confirmed when Murdoc flashed a deranged grin visible in the rearview mirror.

“Naturally, I’m going to kill you myself before anyone else can get to you.”

“Murdoc, you can’t do that!”

“Of course I can. I’m the best assassin in the world. But don’t worry, MacGyver. I’m keeping you alive until I find out who the other assassin is. And then---” Murdoc grinned fiendishly--- “I’ll kill you both!”

“No, no, and no, Murdoc! It’s not happening! And where are you taking me?!”

“Not to your safe house, obviously. Actually, HIT’s known about that one for years. No, I’m taking you somewhere special. Just relax and enjoy the ride. It might be the last one you ever take.”

Of course, MacGyver had no intentions of letting Murdoc succeed. He quickly unbuckled his seatbelt and started to look for anything that he could use as a means of escape. But then... he had an idea.

“The enemy of my enemy is my friend,” he muttered to himself.

“What was that, MacGyver?”

“Murdoc... I don’t like this any more than you do, but---what if we worked together?”

“Working *together*?” Murdoc echoed, incredulous. “For what?”

“To stop HIT!”

“We tried that once before, and it didn’t work.”

MacGyver sighed. “Look, I know we didn’t put them away for good, but we did manage to slow them down a little. If we keep trying, eventually we’ll stop them. Right now, we have a common enemy. If we can put our differences aside for long enough, then we can bring them down!”

“Your optimism is adorable, but the two of us alone can’t accomplish that much. Especially now that I’ve become an outsider. HIT will never fully trust me ever again.”

MacGyver forced himself not to roll his eyes. “I doubt anyone’s ever trusted you fully, Murdoc. But---” He hesitated for a moment before finishing, “But the DXS has a man on the inside.”

“*What?*”

“The DXS sent an undercover agent to get all the evidence they needed from HIT that we couldn’t get before. They asked me to consult because of my experience with you, and they made me his contact. That’s why HIT wants me dead this time---they’re going after both of us. The last message that he managed to get to me before he went off the grid was a warning about the hit. Pete and I talked it over, and we decided that the safest thing for everyone involved was for me to pretend to be dead to get them off my trail for a while. Just until the DXS can find the agent and get him in protective custody.”

Murdoc scoffed. “As if protective custody from the DXS actually means anything. You do realize that I slaughtered people for money right under their noses for years and they never caught me?”

“Well, what do you want me to do, Murdoc, give you a gold medal? I’m giving you the facts, and now you have a choice. You can either work with me, or I’ll escape from this car and run to the other assassin with a sign that reads ‘Kill Me Now,’ and you’ll never be able to fix your perfect record.”

“You can’t get out of this car. I’ve thought of everything.”

MacGyver raised an eyebrow. “The same way you thought of everything all the other times you’ve tried to kill me?”

Murdoc sighed. "Point taken. And I do suppose that it is somewhat satisfying to see my worst enemy running to me for help..."

Once again, MacGyver had to bite back his pride and force himself not to shoot Murdoc a snarky retort or an eyeroll. "That's the spirit. And besides, I did you a favor once, remember? That means you owe me one."

Murdoc scoffed and drummed his fingers on the steering wheel before nodding. "All right, MacGyver, if that's how you want to spin this. But remember, if I help you now, I'm doing it to get rid of HIT and not for you. And if I help you now---that makes us even again."

MacGyver stared at his enemy's reflection in the rearview mirror. "Deal."

The assassin's lip twitched into a ghost of a smile. "Good. Now put your seatbelt back on, will you? It would be a shame if you were to have an accident and fall into an early grave."

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"We need a plan," MacGyver said as he paced the floor of Murdoc's latest residence: an abandoned bomb shelter somewhere just outside of Barstow. Needless to say, Mac wasn't pleased about being in the middle of a desert and two hours away from home with a madman, but what other options did he really have?

"For once, MacGyver, I agree with you," Murdoc replied as he lounged in an armchair shoved into a corner. "I'm thinking of something involving a guillotine."

"*What?! A guillotine? What would you need that for?*"

"To fake your death, obviously."

"I thought you said that faking my death wouldn't work."

"No, I said that you're terrible at it. I never said that your idea wouldn't work. Here's the plan: I'll stage your murder and send the snapshots to HIT. They'll call off their assassin, which will give us the element of surprise as well as the freedom to find your agent before HIT does."

"I'm not sure about this, Murdoc."

The assassin shrugged. "Perhaps not, but it's a risk you'll have to take. Don't worry. I'm a professional. And fortunately, guillotines are fairly simple to build."

"No way! You can't cut off my head!"

"Why not?"

"Because you're not really trying to kill me this time, remember? You need my help to stop HIT!"

Murdoc shook his head. "You know, this would be much more convincing if you were actually dead."

"Murdoc," MacGyver threatened.

"All right, fine! I have a better idea anyway. But it will take a bit of time to set up."

"What is it?"

Murdoc smirked. "Well, I can't just *tell* you, MacGyver. That would ruin the surprise! Now, I'm going to need some space to work. You're just going to have to wait here in this room until I call for you."

“You actually expect me just to wait here for you? What am I supposed to do? I can’t just sit here doing nothing!”

Murdoc shrugged. “That’s your problem, not mine. I’m sure you’ll think of something to occupy yourself, MacGyver. Just...stay put. This won’t take long.”

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Obviously, Murdoc’s definition of “not taking long” was worlds apart from MacGyver’s view of the phrase, because the troubleshooter was forced to endure a period of boredom that stretched the limits of his tolerance. He paced the floor, searched through every supply closet, and even considered cleaning the place up just to give himself something to *do*, but Murdoc’s lair was already spotless.

As soon as his enemy-turned-friend stepped through the door, Mac jumped up and said, “About time! Look, I’m sick and tired of just waiting around. So whatever it is you’ve got planned, *please* tell me that you have it finished!”

“More or less,” Murdoc conceded. His eyes lit up with hope. “Are you going to beg me for death now? As a reprieve from boredom, perhaps?”

“Nope.”

“I didn’t think so, but I had to try. Well, come along, MacGyver.”

MacGyver rolled his eyes and walked through the door, keenly focused on Murdoc’s footsteps behind him just in case of any funny business. “So are you gonna tell me what you have planned, or what?”

“The answer is right in front of you, MacGyver.”

He was about to ask Murdoc what that remark was supposed to mean when, just as he reached the top of the stairs, he felt himself brushing up against something in the darkened tunnel.

A spiderweb.

He brushed the threads away, but they stuck to his hands. In a matter of seconds, MacGyver realized that this was no ordinary spiderweb clinging to his skin. The thing was apparently huge, with strands reaching from the ceiling to the floor, and the more he struggled to get out, the more entangled he became. And the worst part of it was that, no matter how hard he tugged at the silky fibers, he couldn’t get a single one to break. He was imprisoned---not an illusion, but for real...and he was in Murdoc’s clutches.

He had literally walked right into Murdoc’s trap.

The assassin threw back his head and laughed. “Remind me again what it was that the spider said to the fly?”

“Was it something about crawling up a waterspout?” MacGyver replied through gritted teeth.

“Very funny, MacGyver. Well? Aren’t you impressed? Aren’t you going to comment on the quality of my work? I’ve been keeping this idea in my mind for a very long time. The least you could do is appreciate how much effort I put into this.”

"It's great, just great. Now will you let me go?" MacGyver struggled to get free, but the web was too strong. "What is this stuff, anyway?"

"Isn't it obvious? It's spider silk."

"That's impossible."

"Actually, it isn't."

MacGyver blinked, frowning as a thought crossed his racing mind. "The parachutes... One of the labs at the Phoenix Foundation was researching the application of spider silk in parachutes. They were giving the spiders drinking water that was laced with graphene and carbon nanotubes, the same materials that make up their exoskeletons. In theory, the minerals would enhance the webs and make them strong enough to support a human's weight. But that's all theoretical! It's never been tested!"

"Not in the form of a parachute, perhaps, but I'd say that this is a successful test," Murdoc replied. "By the way, you shouldn't ask me how I got all of this. I really don't think you want to know."

"What are you going to do to me, Murdoc? Are you finally getting what you wanted?" MacGyver twisted and struggled against the experimental silk, still failing to break free.

"Would you stop thrashing about? You're going to make it very difficult for me to apply the prosthetics."

MacGyver stilled once again. "Prosthetics?"

Murdoc nodded and spoke slowly, as if explaining to a child. "Yes, MacGyver. I'm helping you fake your death properly, remember? I'll kill you *after* all this mess with HIT is over with. Common enemies, and all that. Now, stay still. This will be some very delicate makeup work, and the liquid latex will need time to set."

"Liquid la--- What?! Do you really think that any of this will fool HIT more than what I did?"

"If I didn't have confidence in my methods, I wouldn't be using them. Now be quiet and let me work."

MacGyver stayed as still as he could while Murdoc began the painstaking process of making him look dead. Liquid latex and tissue paper formed the outline of a deep gash across MacGyver's neck, while expertly-blended makeup gave his skin the pallor of recent death.

The only stumbling block came when Murdoc left the tunnel and reappeared minutes later with a live rabbit.

"What's that?" MacGyver asked, twitching a little as he felt the odd sensation of the latex throat wound moving along with his skin.

"It's a bunny, MacGyver, what does it look like?"

"But what's it doing here?"

"Well, obviously, I need some blood to complete the illusion."

"You're gonna kill the bunny?!"

Murdoc rolled his eyes. “No, he’s just here for moral support. *Of course* I’m going to kill the bunny! I can tell the difference between fake blood and the real thing, and so can the other assassins at HIT. We spend quite a bit of time looking at it, you know.”

“No!” MacGyver said firmly. “There’s got to be a better way. Just use some stage blood. I’ll take my chances.”

“It’s just a bunny, MacGyver. It’s going to be eaten anyway, probably by something horrible. Better for me to give it a quick death for a worthy cause.”

“I said no, and that’s final! You’re not putting rabbit’s blood all over me! Don’t kill it!”

Murdoc heaved a sigh. “All right, fine. If you insist.” As he walked away, MacGyver could hear him mumbling under his breath. “*Amateurs...*”

At last, Murdoc returned with a jar of something thick and red. “All right, MacGyver, one jar of false blood, as ordered.”

MacGyver eyed the jar suspiciously as Murdoc unscrewed the lid. “How do I know you’re telling the truth?”

“Why, MacGyver!” Murdoc exclaimed with mock hurt. “It’s almost like you don’t trust me.” He held the jar just beneath MacGyver’s nose. “It doesn’t even smell like real blood. Doesn’t look much like it either, at least not up close. Corn syrup is much too thick to be realistic, but I did what I could. And I suppose that this will be good enough for our purposes, since it’ll only be a photograph.”

“Great. Let’s get this over with.”

Mumbling slightly to himself, Murdoc carefully began to apply the blood with a thick paintbrush, smearing it in some areas and pouring it on in others.

MacGyver frowned. “How much longer is this gonna take? I hate being trapped like this! Just take the picture and let me out already!”

“Be patient! You can’t rush art,” Murdoc chastised. “Besides, I have to get the splatter patterns just right.” He stepped back to admire his work. “This ought to do it. Yes, this should do nicely. Now for the difficult part.”

“What?! The difficult part? What could be any more difficult than what you’ve already put me through?”

Murdoc rolled his eyes. “My photographs are captured at the exact moment of death. You can’t just close your eyes and play dead. I need you to have your eyes open and your face looking very---well, *expressive*. As if you’ve just screamed your last scream, or in your case, gurgled your last gurgle.”

MacGyver flinched. “Don’t say stuff like that. Okay... I’ll try. Do you have the camera ready?”  
“Absolutely. Impress me, MacGyver.”

MacGyver nodded and did his best to look like someone who was dying.

“No. No, this will never do,” Murdoc said, rummaging through his coat pockets. “Let’s try it again, MacGyver, go ahead.”

“All right. Just take the picture this time, will ya? I can’t take much more of this.” Mac sighed and tried to make the scary face again.



This time, however, Murdoc shocked him with a concealed stun gun.

As Mac yelled in pain, Murdoc finally snapped the photo, beaming with pride. “Well done, MacGyver! That was perfect. What an excellent photograph. What a shame that it isn’t real.”

“You electrocuted me!”

“Oh, don’t be so upset. It was only 50,000 volts or so.”

“Murdoc!” Mac clenched his teeth, took a deep breath, and counted to ten. He only got to five before he hissed, “Now will you please just let me go?”

The assassin looked up from the camera. “Hm? Oh, yes. Of course.”

“All of this trouble had better be worth it. Are you sure this is going to fool HIT?”

Murdoc smirked, picturing the looks on the faces of the Board of Directors when they found out that he had intercepted their most prized contract. “Positive.”

## Part Two

The white light burst to life without warning, causing the lowly assassin to flinch in the pitch-blackness of the empty room. At the other end of the space, partially illuminated by the sudden light, the Board of Directors of HIT sat and watched.

“Well, well. Xiuhcoatl. Do you know why you’ve been summoned here today?” asked a voice in the darkness.

“No, Ms. Chairman,” replied the assassin.

“You’ve failed your contract,” another Board member rumbled.

The assassin frowned, brushing a strand of long black hair from her face. “Failed? I don’t understand. I haven’t even---”

“MacGyver is dead!” Sonia Chapel spat. “And *you* didn’t kill him!”

Stunned, the assassin shook her head. “That’s impossible. I don’t understand. What’s going on?”

“Murdoc, that’s what! He took out your target before you did. Do you have any idea what that does to our reputation? Letting independent mercenaries take over our professional contracts? Your failure is unacceptable!”

The Board collective murmured their agreement until Sonia lifted a hand to silence them.

“I’m very disappointed in you, Xia,” she said. “I trained you personally, mentored you for years. I expected better from you.”

“Murdoc is the best in the business, and every killer in HIT knows it,” Xia replied coldly. “If he was able to defeat even *you*, then I think I deserve a shot at redemption.”

“What do you mean?” the Chairman of the Board asked, voice tinged with suspicion.

Xia lifted her chin, eyes glinting. "I mean that *I'm* the best in the business now, and if I can't prove it by taking out the only person that Murdoc ever failed to eliminate, then I'll prove it by taking out the man himself. Let me take a contract on Murdoc, and I won't fail again."

Sonia Chapel smiled to herself. Murdoc had been a thorn in her side for far too long. And with MacGyver out of the picture, he was the only threat she had left... Soon, there would be no one left to stand in HIT's way.

"The Board of Directors accepts your proposal. Find Murdoc...and kill him by any means necessary."

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"Are you sure about this dead drop, MacGyver?" Murdoc asked as he drove west down the two-lane highway, the Crown Vic's tires stirring up the dust on the remnant of Route 66.

"No," Mac replied, "but if Agent Robinson is going to make contact with me, it'll be there. That's why we set up the emergency drop in the first place, so that if anything went wrong, we'd at least have some kind of rendezvous point. There's no way to be sure, but if we want to get a clue about where he is and what kind of evidence he has, this is our only chance."

Murdoc glanced at the troubleshooter in the passenger seat and forced back yet another eyeroll. "I really don't understand why you insisted on ruining my perfect work on your false beard with that awful cowboy hat. I could have disguised you as anything in the world, and you decided to dress up like John Wayne. You're ridiculous."

"C'mon, Murdoc, gimme a break. My hair's pretty distinctive, so the more of it that I cover up, the better off we are. Wouldn't you agree?"

"You could've pretended to be a woman."

"That's more your style, isn't it? Besides, I can't walk in heels and I've always wanted to be a cowboy."

"Well, so have I, but we don't always get what we want. If we did, you'd be dead and I wouldn't be on this wild goose chase."

MacGyver sighed and leaned his head against his hand. "Turn left up here."

Murdoc grunted his acknowledgement and made the turn onto Frontier Road, grimacing as something in the rearview mirror caught his eye. "Hm."

Mac's head lifted. "Huh?"

"What?"

"You said 'hm.'"

"Did I?"

"Yes."

"Hm."

MacGyver scowled. "Spit it out already, would ya?"

“Nothing much to say, MacGyver.” Murdoc turned right and glanced in the mirror again. “Hm.”

MacGyver glared. “You’re doing it again.”

Murdoc made another right turn. “Am I?”

“Yes. And where are you even going? You were supposed to be going straight two turns ago!”

“You’re not very good at thinking like a killer, are you, MacGyver?” Murdoc made one more right turn and glanced behind yet again. “I’ve just driven in a complete circle, and that car is still behind us. We’re being followed.”

The hair stood up on the back of Mac’s neck. “Someone from HIT?”

“I doubt that DXS agents drive red sports cars, so yes, I’d say it’s someone from HIT.

...Actually, I think I know who it is. And I’m not about to lead her to our dead drop.” With a predatory grin, Murdoc cut a sharp left turn that made MacGyver grateful for his seat belt.

“Are you crazy?” Mac shouted. “You’re gonna get us killed!”

“Apparently I’m not crazy enough, because she’s still following us.”

“What?!” MacGyver twisted in the seat to see a bright red Trans Am through the back window, matching Murdoc’s speed. “We’ve got to lose her!”

“What do you think I’m trying to do?” Murdoc snapped. “We can’t outrun her. This car’s top speed is at least forty miles under hers, and she’s directly behind us. I’m doing the best I can.”

MacGyver ran a hand through his hair and glanced back at the red car again. “Oh, man...”

“Any clever ideas, MacGyver?”

Behind them, Xiuhcoatl lazily rolled down her window, one hand on the wheel and one hand holding a gun. She squeezed the trigger and the Ford’s back window shattered.

MacGyver pressed himself against the door as the bullet lodged in the dashboard. His cowboy hat flew out the window, snatched by the wind and forgotten. When MacGyver was able to tear his gaze away from the bullet hole, he could see the Pontiac gaining on them, thundering ever closer on the abandoned stretch of unlined road.

He looked to the road ahead, then back again.

The rocks and scrub streaked by in a reddish blur. With the back window gone, the roaring of two overpowered engines was deafening. Spinning wheels churned up grime from the dirt-caked blacktop until a layer of fine brown particles coated the inside of the Crown Victoria. The taste of grit and the stench of burning gasoline scraped at Mac’s senses like sandpaper.

He barely had time to breathe, let alone think. Their pursuer would shoot again, and soon. Her car was edging up to the Ford’s rear bumper, too close.

MacGyver’s old racing instincts kicked in. Flashbacks to long days on the track, pushing himself and the car to the absolute limits.

He knew exactly how fast a Trans Am could go without losing control, even a specialty street-legal racer like the one he was looking at. Even for a straight stretch like this, that hot rod was going much too fast.

“Murdoc!” Mac shouted. “Turn hard right as soon as you get to that side road up ahead!”

“That’ll slow us down! Are you sure?”

“Trust me!”

Murdoc slammed on the brakes and spun into a hard right turn, hugging the patchy blacktop. Two wheels dropped off the pavement and he slowed to a crawl, fighting to regain the car’s grip on the road. Then he slammed on the gas pedal and sped off, taking the Ford straight down the middle of the backroad.

*Thank God this car was built for police chases*, MacGyver thought as he held his breath and stared out through the broken back window.

The assassin’s car barreled down behind them, Firehawk tires screeching and assaulting Mac with the acrid fumes of scorching rubber. The turn was too sharp and the velocity was too great. The red car flew off the road and smashed headfirst into the skeleton of a metal gate, wheels spinning helplessly in the thick red dirt.

Murdoc never slowed down. The old police car propelled further from the crash until MacGyver could only barely glimpse the outline of the assassin as she emerged from the wreckage.

“Murdoc, we have to go back! What if she’s hurt?”

“She isn’t,” Murdoc insisted, “and even if she is, there are houses nearby. She can get help. We, on the other hand, need to find your drop and get out of here. HIT’s obviously still on our trail, and they won’t give up.”

MacGyver blew a sigh and nodded, glancing around for street signs and trying to force himself to relax. “Look for a road marked ‘Yucca Trail.’ It’s not far...”

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“A tree? The special rendezvous drop point in case of emergencies is a *tree*? In the middle of *nowhere*?” Murdoc said incredulously.

“It’s a Joshua tree!” MacGyver replied as he scraped some reddish dirt away from the base of the roots with his hands. “It’s special.”

“So? It’s still just a plant in the middle of this godforsaken desert. We’re still at least an hour and a half away from civilization! Why would your agent come *here*, of all places?”

Mac shrugged. “Because it’s out of the way. Nobody else can find it, and nobody else would want to. ” He felt something unusual beneath the dirt and tugged the object free, brushing the

soil away. It was a large envelope sealed inside a waterproof bag. "This is it, Murdoc. I think this is what he left for me to find."

"Well, open it in the car, will you? We need to keep moving."

MacGyver nodded. "Better hop on I-15 and get us back to Los Angeles. If this envelope has evidence inside, then the sooner we can get it to the authorities, the better."

"I don't think so, MacGyver," Murdoc replied as he slid into the driver's seat. "HIT will find our trail before long, and we'll be leading them right to your agent unless we find a way to slow down that assassin. We can't let her report back, and we can't let her catch us."

"Unless we *want* her to catch us," MacGyver said slowly. "I don't guess you have any of that spider silk left, do ya?"

Murdoc grinned and chuckled darkly as he turned onto the interstate highway, bound for Barstow.

### Part Three

"About time I hear from you," came the HIT director's voice over the pay phone line. "You're very late. Have you taken care of Murdoc yet?"

Russet eyes narrowed as Xiuhcoatl shifted her weight. "If I had taken care of Murdoc, I wouldn't have been late. I'm only calling now because of your order to report back to you. I've traced his hideout and he'll be gone by the end of the day."

"See to it that the job gets done, Xia. I'd hate to lose one of my favorite trainees. And here I thought that you were the very best."

"I *am* the best!" Xia hissed.

The line went dead and the assassin groaned loudly, slamming the pay phone receiver down hard enough to make the plastic crack. She whirled and stalked back to her black rental car, parallel-parked beside the curb, and winced as her mind turned to her mangled Trans Am. That sleek red beauty was more than just a sports car; it was a symbol of her success. She'd bought the Firehawk with her first paycheck from HIT, paid in cash, and since then, at least a portion of her earnings from every single contract had gone into adding something to her most prized possession. Upgraded gearshift, new radio, nitrous hookup and other racing implements, a custom paint job, fresh tires... The Firehawk had been top of the line in every way, and now? Now, the car was scratched and dented almost as badly as Xiuhcoatl's pride. As she made the short drive to Murdoc's bomb shelter, the assassin promised herself that one way or another, Murdoc was going to pay for her crashed car.

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"Did you see her, Murdoc?" MacGyver's staticky voice asked over the receiver.

“Yes,” Murdoc replied as he leaned back against the pay phone booth across the street, absently fiddling with his binoculars. “She’s coming to you now. We must’ve struck a nerve. This is going to be fun.”

“How much time do I have before she gets here?”

“Ten minutes or so. I’ll be right behind her. Remember, MacGyver, don’t let her get away!”

“No problem,” MacGyver replied, but Murdoc was already gone, the pay phone receiver dangling in the breeze.

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MacGyver watched from the bushes as an unmarked black car pulled off the road and into the dirt along the right-of-way. For the first time, he got a good look at the assassin as she stepped out of the car and beelined for the hidden bomb shelter door. She was carrying something metallic, and as she got closer, MacGyver realized what it was.

“A flamethrower. Great,” he muttered to himself. Moving quickly, he ducked back into Murdoc’s hideout and headed straight for the back, easily avoiding the spiderweb trap now that he knew its location.

When he was rummaging through Murdoc’s closets out of boredom earlier, he’d almost been amused at his rival’s stockpile of cleaning supplies, but now he was thankful for all the useful materials at his fingertips. A half-full jug of vinegar and an almost-new box of baking soda were useful for so much more than cleaning up mildew and getting rid of odd scents. In the right combination, they’d produce an awful lot of carbon dioxide. Mac dumped a healthy dose of the white powder into the vinegar jug and screwed the cap on tight, letting the reaction build up as he made his way back to the tunnel. He’d have to think fast; he couldn’t risk the assassin lighting the spiderwebs on fire and ruining the trap.

He reached the door just as the knob turned. Mac pressed himself against the wall, ready to open up his impromptu fire extinguisher.

Xiuhcoatl peeked inside, opening the door a little more to widen the sliver of light that just barely illuminated the top of the stairs. Murdoc had to be in there somewhere...

She opened the door a little wider and realized that there was someone in her presence. She sprang into the room, aiming the nozzle of her flamethrower directly at the man. In the dim light, she stared at him for a second, mentally removing the scruffy facial hair. “My contract... I recognize you... MacGyver? But Murdoc *killed* you.” Her almond-shaped eyes hardened. “You tricked us!”

MacGyver never wasted a second, popping the top off of his fire extinguisher just as Xia’s hand twitched to open the throttle on the flamethrower. Jumping back away from the assassin just for good measure, Mac sighed in relief as the carbon dioxide from the chemicals in the jug snuffed the flames almost as soon as they appeared.

Grunting in frustration, Xia lunged for MacGyver, only to hit the ground when he rolled away at the last second. Springing to her feet, she gave chase as he ran down the stairs. He lost his balance and fell to one knee just a few steps ahead of her, gripping something on the wall for support. She heard a noise like something tearing, but couldn't see in the darkness. She charged ahead, hearing his footsteps once again. So close...

But then something sticky flew into her face. Brushing it away left her arms ensnared. Soon, Xiuhcoatl was completely trapped.

MacGyver heaved a sigh of relief when he switched all the lights on and saw that his assailant had immobilized herself, just as he and Murdoc had planned. A slow clap echoed in the tunnel as Murdoc came into view.

"Nice work, MacGyver. I'm impressed."

Mac glared at Murdoc. "Thanks for all the help."

Stepping close to MacGyver, Murdoc replied, "I think it's time that our new friend starts to tell us everything she knows, don't you?" Muttering under his breath, he added, "Keep her talking, MacGyver."

"Why?" Mac hissed.

"Just do it," Murdoc shot back.

MacGyver cleared his throat. "Right. Start talking."

Xia glanced at her captors. "No. Sonia will kill me."

"She's going to kill you anyway," Murdoc pointed out. "After all, you've failed your contract."

"There's still time," Xia replied. "I'm just as good as you are. I can still finish this."

"Why don't you start by telling me who you are?" MacGyver asked.

Xia shrugged as much as she could with enhanced spiderwebs binding her arms. "I call myself Xiuhcoatl. Sonia calls me Xia for short."

"May I call you Xia?" MacGyver said.

"No." She frowned. "Why are you helping him? He's your enemy!"

"You just tried to kill both of us, which means that we share a common enemy."

Xia shook her head. "HIT thinks you're dead. I've been released from my contract on you. Help me kill Murdoc, and I'll let you go."

Murdoc scoffed. "Look at you. You're all tied up. Hardly in any position to make demands."

MacGyver held up a hand to silence Murdoc and answered, "If given the choice between the devil I know and the devil I don't, I'm sticking with Murdoc. At least I know he'll stab me in the front."

"Or blow you up," Murdoc added.

Mac rolled his eyes. "You're not helping your case any." Shaking his head, he addressed their captive once more. "What do you know about me? About the reason someone put a hit out on me?"

The captive assassin smiled slowly. "You're asking me about Sicarius, aren't you? Or should I say, Agent Kennedy Robinson? Well, I know that as soon as Sonia finds him, he's dead. And so are both of you."

MacGyver flinched. That was the absolute *last* thing that he wanted to hear. If Robinson's identity had been compromised so completely, then it would only be a matter of time before a HIT employee would manage to track him down.

Murdoc smiled. "Thank you for your help, MacGyver. I think I've got it now."  
MacGyver blinked, still lost in thought over the missing DXS agent. "Got what?"

Murdoc's grin stretched until he looked like the proverbial canary-fed feline. In a perfect imitation of Xihcoatl's voice, he replied, "I have the next step of our plan."

Xia's eyes widened in horror. "The rumors are true!"  
"Of course. I'm still the best, even if the Board of Directors won't admit it," Murdoc said. "Really, what *is* HIT teaching its recruits these days?"  
"You're the scum of the earth, Murdoc," the prisoner hissed.  
The master assassin nodded. "Thank you. I know. MacGyver, the telephone, please."

Mac stepped out of the way to let Murdoc through. The assassin plucked the receiver from its cradle, dialed a number, and waited.

In a moment, he was greeted with Sonia Chapel's voice. "Hello?"  
"Murdoc is dead," Murdoc said, his mimicry of Xia's voice pitch-perfect.  
"Excellent!" Sonia replied. "To be honest, I thought for certain that he would make mincemeat out of you. But since you survived, I'll give you the honor of assisting me in executing the spy. We found out that he's been hiding in a warehouse in Yorba Linda. You'll rendezvous with me there tomorrow at 1800 hours sharp. Do you understand?"  
"Yes, Ms. Chairman." After writing down the address, Murdoc carefully unhooked the telephone.

Xia shook her head. "You tricked her. You tricked Sonia. I don't believe it."  
"I don't either," Murdoc said. "It could easily be a trap. Which is why, MacGyver, we should---"  
"No," Mac said firmly. "No guns, no killing."  
"MacGyver, this is HIT we're talking about. If we take out Sonia---"  
Mac shook his head. "If we take out Sonia, nothing will change. You took out your old buddy Nicholas Helman, and nothing changed. Violence won't stop HIT. *Evidence* will. We're going to get Agent Robinson out of this alive, and we're going to take his evidence and testimony to trial, and *that's* how we'll stop HIT."

"Your optimism is astounding," Xia said dryly. "But what are you going to do with me? You can't just leave me here."  
"She's right, Murdoc," MacGyver said. "What are we going to do with her?"  
Wordlessly, Murdoc reached into his jacket pocket and held up a grenade.  
"No! That can't be your answer for everything!" Mac snapped.



“You said---”

“I said *no killing*, Murdoc.”

Murdoc huffed. “All right, *fine*. I never get to do anything I want. After we’ve taken care of your friend, you can come back and let the girl go.”

“He’s lying,” Xia blurted. “He’ll kill both of us, and you’re crazy if you think he won’t.”

Mac lifted an eyebrow. “So what do you suggest I do? You’ll kill me, too, won’t you?”

“No.” The captive hesitated for just a second. “I want to make a deal.”

“What kind of deal?”

Reflexively, Xia tried to glance over her shoulder. “I want to be just like the two of you,” she said quietly. “You don’t know what you did to HIT when you stopped Nicholas Helman on Halloween night. The both of you changed everything. Sonia changed how we’re recruited, how we’re trained... The video that Helman took, to show the Board of Directors that night? It’s required viewing now.”

MacGyver took a step backwards. “Wait a minute, wait a minute. You mean they’re using *us* to teach people like you how to *kill*?”

“Not just how to kill. How to react. How to think quickly, be creative. You changed the way HIT looks at assassinations forever.”

“No! No way!”

“You can deny it if you want, but your actions had an impact,” Xia replied. “You beat the Board of Directors, you beat Sonia, and you’ve beaten me. So I’ll do whatever you want me to do. I’ll help you find your DXS agent, I’ll---I’ll turn state’s witness and testify in court, I’ll help you take out Sonia---whatever you want me to do, I’ll do it. I don’t care. But...”

“There’s a condition,” MacGyver said flatly.

Xia nodded, glancing sideways at Murdoc. “I want to learn, get better. I want you to train me.”

Murdoc scoffed. “Out of the question.”

MacGyver sighed. “Done.”

Murdoc stared at MacGyver. “*What?*”

But MacGyver was already cutting their prisoner loose. “We can use her testimony, Murdoc.

With her evidence added to Agent Robinson’s---*and yours*---we should have more than enough to put away HIT.”

“You don’t really believe her, do you, MacGyver?”

Mac shrugged. “I believed you, didn’t I?”

## Part Four

“This trip would go a lot faster if you hadn’t wrecked my Firehawk,” Xia pointed out from the backseat.

Murdoc tightened his grip on the steering wheel, envisioning all the possible (and painful) ways to dispose of his two companions. “Would you stop it? I won’t listen to you complain.”

“For what it’s worth, I really am sorry about that,” MacGyver said. “It’s a beautiful car. Do you have the WS6 suspension and steel exhaust on it, too?”

She perked up immediately. "Yes, I do. You know cars? That explains how you were able to get past me. ...I guess I have to admit that that was a nice trick with the hairpin turn."

MacGyver shrugged modestly. "I just know the roads."

"It's great to see you making new friends, MacGyver, but we're all going to end up dead if we don't come up with a plan," Murdoc said.

"It's hard to plan for what you don't know," Mac replied. "Besides, plans usually go wrong anyway."

Murdoc scoffed. "Tell me about it."

Xia shrugged. "Usually, I'd suggest going in with the flamethrower blazing, but I'm pretty sure I wasted the last of the tank on you, and I'm all out of napalm."

"Fire would make a pretty good diversion if we needed one," Mac said slowly, thinking it over.

"We just need a little gasoline and some Styrofoam."

Xia blinked. "*What?*"

Murdoc shook his head. "Just let him do it and don't ask too many questions. You'll only encourage him."

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The gas station was out-of-the-way and quiet, which was perfect, since MacGyver and his unlikely comrades didn't need people asking why they were buying gas for a flamethrower. MacGyver had sent Murdoc in to pay and to find some styrofoam while he and Xia filled up the tank.

"Can I ask you something while Murdoc isn't here?" MacGyver asked.

Xia shrugged. "You already did."

Shooting her a look, Mac said, "I just want to know why a nice girl like you is working for a ring of professional hitmen."

She raised one curved eyebrow. "I'm not a nice girl. And I don't have some kind of pathetic sob story, if that's what you're asking."

"I'm just curious, that's all."

"There's not much to it. I was arrested for arson a few years ago and while I was waiting for my trial, a man approached me and recruited me for HIT. They had a job that required some...pyrotechnics, I guess you'd say. They liked my work and I liked the money, and I didn't want to go to prison, so I never looked back."

"And now you want to replace Murdoc."

"Not replace." Xia shook her head. "Surpass."

MacGyver fixed her with a stare. "Do you really want to be known for being good at murder?"

"It's either that or arson. I'm not good for anything else."

"I'm sure you could think of something," MacGyver said quietly.

Before she could reply, Murdoc returned with a package of Styrofoam plates. "Here's your foam, MacGyver. It's the best I could do."

Mac nodded. "This'll be fine. Help me tear it up into pieces." His quick fingers shredded one of the plates and he dropped the fragments into the flamethrower's fuel tank.

"What exactly are you doing?" Xia protested.

"Well, napalm is basically just gasoline and a gelling agent," MacGyver began.

"Of course," Murdoc muttered. "The gasoline will dissolve the polystyrene, which will thicken it enough to make it usable as fuel for the flamethrower."

MacGyver nodded. "Exactly. Not the best, but it'll do in a pinch. And it'll burn well enough to be a good distraction."

"Or a weapon," Xia added.

"No. No killing. And no unnecessary violence."

"I don't intend to die today, MacGyver!"

"And you won't!" Mac shot back, "but there are other ways to fight that don't involve taking a person's life."

"We need to keep moving," Murdoc interrupted, watching the two of them intensely. "We're running out of time."

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Daylight was turning into dusk by the time they reached the address Sonia had given Murdoc.

"I don't like this, MacGyver," Murdoc said as they stepped out of the car and approached the warehouse.

"For once, I agree with you," Mac replied quietly.

Xia took in a deep breath and hefted her flamethrower. "She's expecting me, so I should go first. You two need to keep up the element of surprise."

Murdoc gestured to the warehouse's flat gray door. "Then by all means, go ahead. Lead the way."

"Funny that you should be letting the ladies go first now, Murdoc. You've never been much of a gentleman before," Sonia Chapel's cold voice sounded.

Murdoc whirled, searching for the source of the noise.

MacGyver turned around, too, looking in all directions---because he realized that they'd been surrounded. Five well-armed assassins dressed in black were closing in on all sides, with the chairman of HIT herself in the lead. "Oh, man."

Sonia's teeth bared in a joyless smile that made Murdoc look like an innocent child. "How interesting that you should be joining us, MacGyver. After all, you're supposed to be dead. But I guess if you want a job done well, you should do it yourself." She cast a withering glare at Xiuhcoatl, who responded with a haughty stare.

"I guess good help is hard to find these days," MacGyver quipped, hoping to keep her talking and buy time to find a way out.

Murdoc must have been on the same page, because he lifted his arms in surrender and said, "All right, Sonia, you've got me. But what did you expect me to do, really? You tried to take my perfect record away from me. It's a matter of pride, you see."

"You did that yourself," Sonia answered coolly, leveling a Glock pistol at Murdoc's chest. "After all, you had your chance with MacGyver more than once, and you failed every time."

The assassins' voices became distant as MacGyver noticed a flickering of light on the ground. It looked almost like a reflection from a mirror, and the flashes seemed to be forming a pattern...

"When I tell you to, you need to hold your breath and get ready to use that flamethrower," Mac whispered to Xia. "Torch a semicircle on the ground."

Xia tilted her head in a gesture of assent. Just a moment later, something clattered to the ground next to MacGyver's feet. Something metal and cylindrical...and smoking.

"Now!" MacGyver hissed.

Right as the smoke grenade erupted, Xiuhcoatl sprayed a layer of liquid flame onto the ground in front of the hitmen, wincing as some of the smoke burned her eyes.

With the assassins coughing and off-balance, it was easy for MacGyver to charge and disarm two of them before the others realized what was happening. Xia tackled a third, while Murdoc was occupied with Sonia herself.

But that still left two very big and very disgruntled HIT employees...and both of them were intent on assaulting MacGyver. Backed up against the wall, Mac prepared himself for the worst.

Just as he dropped into a defensive crouch, *something* came flying at one of the burly assassins, plowing into the towering man. A knee strike to the solar plexus, a forward elbow smash to the face---MacGyver recognized those tactics. He leaped to attack the other hitman as Agent Robinson took down one brutal assailant. The hitman pushed MacGyver away, flailing and grabbing for a weapon. MacGyver slammed him with a low kick at the same time that Robinson's leopard fist knocked him out cold.

Mac grinned. "Perfect timing!"

Clapping MacGyver on the shoulder, the DXS agent replied, "I could say the same about you! When I saw Sonia and her hired muscle rolling in, I wasn't sure what I was going to do." He nodded at Xia, who was still standing amidst the circle of dying flames. "So where'd you pick up the flamethrower?"

"Well, if everything goes according to plan, we have another witness," Mac said.

Robinson's face turned serious. "Did you find the envelope I left for you?"

"Yeah, I did. I think we're going to nail 'em this time."

"Well, I certainly hope so," Murdoc interrupted as he stepped over Sonia Chapel's unconscious form. "Otherwise, all of this insanity was for nothing."

Robinson did a double-take. "Is that...?"

Mac sighed. "Yep."

"But I thought---"

"It's better you don't ask." As MacGyver watched Murdoc's approach, he glimpsed movement behind the assassin that caught his eye: Xiuhcoatl's hand, twitching toward the throttle of the flamethrower. "Look out!"

Murdoc jumped out of the path of the flames just in time, launching into a combat roll away from Xia and using the momentum to propel himself into a rapid dash for the warehouse door. Xia switched off the flamethrower and gave chase, but Murdoc had already vanished into the shadows.

"I'm on fire!" Robinson yelled, struggling out of the navy blue coat that had been grazed by the stream of fiery napalm.

MacGyver quickly used his knife to cut the burning fabric away, stepping back as it fell to the dusty concrete. "Are you hurt?"

"No. Let's go after them! Before they get away!"

"Or worse---before they kill each other," Mac said grimly, and followed the DXS agent into the darkened warehouse.

"Do you hear that clanging noise?" Robinson whispered as they followed the trail of sounds.

"They sound like two angry cats, yowling at each other and banging around like that."

"Yeah, except angry cats don't usually fight to the death over foolish pride. C'mon, I think they're going onto the roof."

By the time Mac burst through onto the roof with Agent Robinson in tow, Murdoc was standing triumphant over Xiuhcoatl's crumpled body, the flamethrower in his hands. Grinning madly, he aimed the nozzle at the woman and prepared to throw the switch that would end her life.

"Murdoc, no!" Without a single second to spare, MacGyver reacted to the situation with the only solution available: he charged at his rival and shoved Murdoc as hard as he could, desperate to stop him from igniting the flames. The tactic worked: Murdoc lost his balance, stumbling backwards and forgetting his weapon.

Unfortunately, the illustrious assassin stumbled just a step too far.

"Murdoc!" MacGyver lunged for the edge of the roof, snatching Murdoc's hand. He was heavier than MacGyver expected him to be, and those slick leather gloves that he was wearing weren't helping Mac's grip. "Murdoc! Come on! Give me your other hand! I can't hold you much longer!"

The assassin reached up, fingers scrabbling for purchase on the bricks. And then---  
He slipped.

"MACGYVER!"

Mac reeled backwards, squeezing his eyes shut, unwilling to watch Murdoc fall. Slightly dazed, he heard Robinson checking over the edge.

"I think he went into the bushes, but it's hard to say. I think I saw a telephone on the way through the warehouse---I'll call for backup," Robinson said.

Mac swallowed hard. "Yeah. You do that."

\*\*\*\*\*

"Well, I've got some good news and some bad news," Robinson said after most of the mess from their entire altercation had been cleaned up.

"Okay, what is it?" MacGyver asked.

"Which do you want first?"

Mac shrugged. "Depends on how bad the bad news is."

"Huh. Well, lemme put it to you this way: the good news is that your friend Xia's going to be just fine. Murdoc just knocked her out, and the DXS has her in custody now. She went ahead and agreed to be one of our witnesses. We also have lots of soon-to-be ex-HIT employees under arrest and ready to go behind bars."

"Okay, so what's the bad news?"

"Sonia Chapel wasn't one of the ones that we captured. She's mysteriously gone missing. In fact, she was already gone by the time our backup showed up."

MacGyver groaned. "Great! Just great."

"But wait, there's more!"

MacGyver groaned again and ran a hand through his hair. "Let me guess: no Murdoc, either?"

"You got it. Boy, you're good at this guessing stuff."

Mac sighed. "He's going to come back. He *a/ways* comes back."

Robinson shrugged. "Look on the bright side. We might never catch Murdoc, but at least we got a lot of other killers off the streets."

"Yeah," MacGyver said slowly. "Maybe you're right."

Robinson scrutinized the troubleshooter for a moment. "Hey, man. Go home. Get some rest. You deserve it."

MacGyver smiled just a little bit. "I will. Thanks."

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When MacGyver walked through his front door, all he wanted was to take a hot shower, watch a classic Western, and pretend that the rest of the day had never happened. He was going to need a lot of time to decompress after all that---especially the part where he and Pete had to explain to an irate Jack Dalton why they had decided to fake MacGyver's death in the first place.

And the truly bizarre part of it all was that Jack wasn't even upset about being deceived. No--- Jack was upset that he hadn't been part of the plan!

Mac flopped down on his couch and leaned back, trying to clear his mind and relax.

But then he saw the note that had been taped to his coffee table:

*Remember, MacGyver: now we're even.*

*---M*

All Mac could do was sigh.

“Oh, man.”