

The characters William Delaney, Lori Delaney, Thomas 'Tom' Hughes, John Wortham, Lisa Marie Delaney, Samantha 'Sam' Tuttle, John Parseghian, Daniel Castle, Lonny Edwards, Jeffrey Dodge, Roger Cook, James Daggett, Bernard Richmond, LTJG Ron Cox USCG. Fireman/EMT Bill Carapina, Tonya Smith, Kenji Suzuki, Dr. Patricia Gaines, and Ross Monroe are the property of Ray C. Stankewitz.

The Trap

By R.C. Stankewitz

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The Trap

Chapter 7

“Realizations”

“William? William, can you hear me?” the female voice questioned as a hand touched his cheek. “William? Are you awake?” the voice asked again, shaking his arm. The hybrid was trying to make his way out of this thick haze he was currently stuck in. He was thinking to himself 'have I been out drinking again?'

“Lori, please, honey! My alarm clock hasn't gone off yet” he whispered, working to roll over. He was trying his best to get his mind pulled back together but he wasn't having much luck at it. *Everything* was still extremely fuzzy at the moment for him. “I need 10 more minutes, honey...” he said breathily before he nodded off again.

“How much stuff did you give him?” the female equine hybrid asked, turning to look at Ross and Bernard. “I can't get him to wake up! We may have to take him to the hospital if he keeps up like this!” She was looking at the pair with a look of scorn on her muzzle.

“We,,uh...we hit him twice, Doctor Patricia” Bernard said, looking slightly sheepish. “We didn't know...he's a big dude and we didn't want him to wake up on us...” Both of the men were looking at the floor by now. “I'm sorry...” Bernard added, looking up at her.

“Sorry my eye! Don't think for a minute that I don't know you hate hybrids! You did this on purpose, *You Asshole!*” Dr. Gaines spat out, checking

William's pulse. "I've got a good mind to let *you* explain this to Mr. Castle..." Both of the men left the room in a hurry.

She sat down beside the bed that William was lying in and began to check him over again. "Dammit, William, please wake up" Patricia said softly, listening to his heart with a stethoscope. "Don't you *dare* die on me..."

###

The huge hybrid had been wandering around in this haze for a while, unable to make out where he was. No matter how far he walked in any direction, there was nothing but *more* haze. This wasn't making any sense to him as he wandered around, unable to find the exit if there *was* one.

And he kept hearing Lori's voice in his head. That was impossible because she had been dead for years. He knew she was dead; he had seen her in her coffin. He knew that his late wife had been buried so long ago, it seemed... Why was she calling him? Why? He had to find a way out of here...

###

"He's been out for 24 hours, Daniel" Dr. Patricia Gaines said, looking at the feline hybrid with a scowl on her muzzle. "His vitals are good but he's still out of it." She was shaking her head at the situation. "That *Asshole* Bernard is responsible for this. If the hybrid dies..." She gave him a look of disgust at the thought of that possibility.

"Just keep an eye on him until tonight" Mr. Castle suggested. "If he doesn't come around by then, take him to the mainland for medical treatment." The feline was sitting at his desk, drinking scotch and water. "Would you like a drink?" he offered, picking up a spare glass.

"No, I need to get back down to the basement and see after our 'guest', if you don't mind" she replied, looking more perturbed than before. "I'll let you know if I need to go to Florida, then" she added before she turned and left the room.

Walking down the hallway towards the service stairs, Patricia was thinking about how much she would *love* to give Daniel Castle a taste of his own medicine. If her late husband hadn't gotten involved with the feline, she wouldn't be in this mess and he would still be alive. She couldn't even *leave* here without the local police bringing her right back. She was starting to cry as she descended the stairs towards the basement and her destination.

###

“How are you feeling” Lisa asked as she came into Sam's room at the hospital. Her friend was up and awake, looking much better than she had yesterday.

“I'm feeling better, Lisa. I kept breakfast down this morning for a change” Sam commented, smiling just a little. “I had the Coast Guard in here again this morning. They *actually* think I had something to do with it” she added, shaking her head. The flaxen haired female had endured an hour of grilling like she was a common criminal and she was glad to see them leave.

I don't know what to tell you, Sam” the female hybrid said. “I was interviewed again this morning, too.” She sat down by Sam's bed and looked over at her. “I'm afraid for William and Tom. I hope they're OK...” Lisa began to cry again.

“They're OK” Sam said, trying to comfort her friend. “Somebody will find them. It's hard to hide a huge hybrid like William, don't you think?” Sam looked to see that Lisa nodded her head at that notion.

###

William's head hurt. It wasn't just a headache, it was a *bad* headache. He tried to open his eyes only to have a incredible piercing pain shoot through his head. And then there was the realization that he needed to vomit *right now*.

He rolled over and at least got his head off of the bed before emptying the meager contents of his stomach onto the floor.

“Ooh, my poor head” he said, quietly , reaching up to touch his forehead. “What happened...” He had the dry heaves now so all he could do was hang his head over the side of the bed and ride it out.

He heard the door open and distinctively heard hooves on the concrete floor of his room. “William?” the female voice asked. “Are you awake?”

The huge hybrid was sure that it was his deceased mates' voice calling his name.

“Lori? Is that you, honey?” he queried softly, still unable to open his eyes. “Lori, I'm sick...” His voice trailed off as he had another round of nausea,

He felt gentle hands on him, rolling him back up onto the bed. As he lay there with his head swimming, he heard that voice again. "William, how do you feel?" the female voice asked. It really sounded like his Lori.

"I...uh...don't feel well, honey..." he whispered, trying to cover his eyes with his arm. "My head..." William was trying to get his eyes to open, even if it meant massive pain. "I need some water, please" he asked, cracking one eye open momentarily. It was still too painful so he gave up that thought for now.

He sensed that the female had went to another part of the room for a moment and returned. "Here, sit up if you can" the voice asked, putting her hand gently behind his neck to help him. He rolled over onto his side and took the water that she offered him.

"Thank you" he said, relishing the taste of the cool liquid in his mouth. "What happened..." He had to wait for his head to stop spinning so he laid back down. "My head..."

"Just rest, William. You're still pretty sick" the voice said to him, He heard her fiddle with the blinds on the window near him then she walked across the room. "I'll be back to check on you later" the voice said right before he heard the door close.

###

Jeffrey Dodge was sitting on the top deck of his houseboat, enjoying the afternoon breeze as he read a paperback novel. He was currently looking across at his neighbor who was trying to put panelized wood shingle siding on his houseboat.

"I hope those screws are stainless steel, neighbor" he yelled out to the man who just nodded back at him. Jeff waved at his neighbor and went back to reading. As he turned the page on his book, his cell phone rang. He opened it to see that it was his employer, Miss Delaney.

"Good afternoon, Lisa, What can I do for you?" he asked, sitting up in his lounge chair and laying his book down. He listened for a moment before he commented "That's not good." As he listened to Lisa on the other end, he started nodding. "OK, I'll meet you at your boat in 30 minutes, then." He said his goodbyes and ended the call. "This doesn't look good at all" he said to himself as he went downstairs to change clothes.

###

Tom was sitting on the bed in his room, biding his time. He had found a deck of cards in the dresser across the room and he was presently playing solitaire. Judging by the sunlight striking the mark he had made on the window sill, he had been here 24 hours or so.

“What the hell is going on?” he said to himself as he shook his head. They had knocked him out on the boat and brought him here, wherever here is. He had a stainless steel band fastened around his waist that was connected by a rather heavy chain to an anchorage on the floor. He could reach anywhere in the room and the adjoining bathroom *except* the door to the outside hallway.

By the concrete floor and the unfinished ceiling, this may be a basement to a house but he wasn't sure about that. From what he could see outside, he was either still in Florida or somewhere nearby. This window wouldn't be an exit for him, though. The bars across the opening would prevent that.

What Tom really needed was a square drive screwdriver right now to get this blasted band off of his waist. He thought that whoever designed this thing was a pro; Tom couldn't get it off if he wanted to. At least they had fed him well and the bed was comfortable. “I'll just play some more solitaire” he said to himself as he shuffled the deck again.

###

“Mr. Castle, I've been inside their car and their room” Lonny said to him on the phone. “I've looked the place out an' I haven't found those duffel bags or the lil' guy's laptop. They weren't in the car either.” He swallowed hard while he waited for the feline hybrid to explode.

“It's not of any consequence now. I have them here so I think you are done working for me” Daniel said, sounding rather perturbed to Lonny.

“When will I get paid?” the Cajun asked, thinking that the feline owed him something.

“I'll have Ross pay you soon” Daniel replied, ending the call on him.

“*Damn him!*” Lonny said, knowing it would be weeks before he would see Ross for his money. “Wait 'til I see *that* stinkin' Cheetah agin!”

###

When Lisa arrived at her boat, her captain was already waiting for her. “Jeff, we're gonna look to see if we can find that Fountain that was over at Sam's

marina” the female hybrid said, throwing her bag to the feline. “This has a bad feeling to it, if you ask me. A boat like that just doesn't go missing...” Jeff just nodded at her statement as he cranked up the twin Detroit Diesel engines. She hurriedly cast off the lines and they proceeded to head out to sea.

###

William was lying there in his bed, contemplating his somewhat urgent need to relieve himself. He had taken stock to see that he was currently naked and chained by his wrist to something in the middle of the room. He had not done any further exploring due to the massive headache he was nursing.

There was a wristband on his left arm to match the one that had him tethered down. From what he could see, he needed a square drive screwdriver to get these babies off. Not a chance of finding one in this room in his opinion.

As he lie there, he heard those hooves again, followed by a female voice. Her voice. “William?” the voice queried as the door opened. “William? Are you awake?”

There was a dim light coming from another part of the room so he was able to make out a female equine hybrid form walking towards him. As the form drew closer, he could see that she was wearing a doctor's smock.

“You're awake!” she said excitedly, sitting down by his bed. “How are you feeling?” she asked, taking hold of his wrist to check his pulse. He could close his eyes and hear his late wife Lori's voice in his ears.

“Where am I?” he asked, trying to sit up only to change his mind rather quickly. The pain in his head was still too great to allow much moving around. “Ooh...” he said as he reached up to hold his head.

“You're in my care, William. You're having a bad reaction to some drugs that I told them *not* to use” she replied. “My name's Patricia.”

“I need to use the can *now*” he said, trying to get up again. William gritted his teeth and finally sat himself up. The room then began to spin at warp speed almost immediately. “My...arrgh...” He manged not to throw up on himself as his head went swimming again.

“Let me help you” the doctor said, helping him get up on his hooves. “There's a bathroom in your room. It's right over here.” She helped him to the toilet and stood by to steady him while William took care of business.

She took a moment to wipe his muzzle and forehead with a cool washrag before she guided him back to his bed.

“You're still too sick to be up, William. Lay down and take a nap, please?” she asked as she pulled the top sheet up over him. “I'll check in on you in a while.”

William heard the door shut again.

###

“I don't see how a boat that big could go missing” Lisa said, looking out at the ocean with her high-powered binoculars. “Something's very wrong if you ask me.” Jeff was marking their location on the charts by his GPS device. “It's getting too dark to see anything. Let's head back” she stated, putting her binoculars away. “We'll start again in the morning. I'll just stay aboard tonight.”

“OK, Ma'am” the feline said, getting them headed to the marina. “I'll sleep in the salon so we can get going as early as possible.” Lisa nodded her head as she looked out at the sunset over the Florida coast. She was praying that her cousin was still OK.