

## Uninvited Guest 1

FROM: 7716BB3  
TO: 111C3F4  
SUBJECT: FAR FROM HOME  
HAVE CONTACTED TARGET. PROGRESS UPDATE IN ONE WEEK.

FROM: 7716BB3  
TO: 111C3F4  
SUBJECT: FAR FROM HOME  
TARGET NOT ABLE TO COMPLETE MISSION WITHIN AGREED TIME FRAME. ALLOW MORE TIME/FURTHER ENCOURAGE?

FROM: 7716BB3  
TO: 111C3F4  
SUBJECT: FAR FROM HOME  
TARGET NOT RESPONDING TO FURTHER ENCOURAGEMENT. SANCTION ISSUED. PROGRESS UPDATE IN ONE WEEK.

FROM: 7716BB3  
TO: 111C3F4  
SUBJECT: FAR FROM HOME  
SANCTION HAS NOT RESULTED IN MISSION COMPLETION. PROCEED TO TERMINATE?

FROM: 7716BB3  
TO: 111C3F4  
SUBJECT: FAR FROM HOME  
IT IS DONE. INFILTRATING PHOENIX TOMORROW.

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"I could have sworn I left it here..." MacGyver glanced at his newspaper, sighing at the brutal murder of a Chinese clerk last night before setting it aside and upending a drawer onto his desk. His frown deepened as he sifted through the mass of papers and ran his hand through his mop of unruly hair. Leaning his chair back on two legs, he directed a shout through the doorway.

"Willis! Did you borrow my satellite schematics?" MacGyver shook his head at the silence beyond, got up and walked to the doorway. "Willis?"

"Down here." Willis was kneeling on the floor, rummaging in a cupboard.

"What are you...?" MacGyver leant over the nearest bench.

"I ordered some resistors last week. They're a little out of the ordinary-" Willis dumped a pile of boxes on the bench, "-and I need them to make a prototype circuit so I can test the-" Another armful of boxes joined the first ones, "-the phone things. You know, the *things*."

"I think you can say 'satellite constellation', Willis." MacGyver caught a box as it slid off the heap.

"Security's pretty good here." He grinned, handing Willis the box. "Are you sure they're in here?"

"Sure as I can be." Willis surveyed the lab, every drawer and cupboard emptied and stacked haphazardly on the tops. "I can't think of anywhere else I'd have put them."

"Would anyone else use them?" MacGyver started to collect Willis's scattered papers, flicking through the titles.

"No, they're pretty specialised." Willis took off his glasses and cleaned them on his shirt tail. "It doesn't make any sense."

"They're probably with my satellite schematics." MacGyver shrugged, handing Willis the stack of papers. "Which I have to go and copy again now, which means getting in the queue for the big copier. You didn't borrow them, did you?"

"Schematics? No." Willis looked around, hoping to see the resistors among the mess. "No, I won't need them for another couple of weeks. I hope you find them, Mac."

MacGyver left to copy his drawings, leaving Willis alone to tidy his lab. Willis set to work, muttering under his breath. Above and behind him, one of the air ducts flexed gently and creaked against the bracket holding it to the ceiling.

Willis, engrossed in his search, heard nothing.

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In the narrow darkness of the ventilation shaft, 7716BB3 smiled, checked the papers and the small box of components were secure in his pockets and wormed his way back to the vertical shaft running through the wall space. One metal panel flexed as he moved his knee and he froze, listening. He heard no change in the sounds from the room below and continued more carefully, reaching the safety of the shaft without incident. He had been inside the Phoenix building for most of the day now, but no-one suspected his presence.

His lips curved in a thin smile. Apparently Americans really were as stupid as he'd heard they were.

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"Hey, MacGyver." Pete lifted his fingers from the braille keyboard and turned towards the door.

"Hey Pete. How did you know it was me?" MacGyver lounged against the doorframe with his hands in his pockets.

"You have a distinctive walk." Pete flipped open his watch, checking the time with his fingers.

"Wow, is it really that time already? I should be going. So should you – aren't you meeting Sam for dinner this evening?"

"Yes I am." MacGyver walked across to the window, smiling as Pete turned, tracking his movement by sound. "Should be a good evening."

Pete shut down his computer, waiting for it to respond to his voice prompts. He gathered his things into his briefcase and picked up his cane.

"Did Willis find what he was looking for?" Pete shrugged into his coat and fished in his pocket for his gloves.

"I don't think so." MacGyver frowned. "I'm beginning to think this place has gremlins, I lost a whole set of schematics earlier that I just KNOW I left locked in my desk."

"Maybe it does!" Pete chuckled as he made his way to the door. "Enjoy your dinner and say hi to Sam for me, OK?"

"I will." MacGyver turned to follow him out, noticing a light still on in Willis's office. After a moment's hesitation he turned again and made for Willis's room.

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"Working late?" MacGyver ducked back as Willis jumped and swore. "Sorry..."

"Hey, MacGyver. You startled me!" Willis picked up his overturned mug and mopped at the spilled coffee with his sleeve. "Yeah, losing those resistors has put me way behind. I gotta finish up this report before I go home."

"I'll let the night guy know you're here. Don't work too late, OK?" MacGyver watched Willis nod, half his mind still on his late report. "And watch out for gremlins!"

"Gremlins? Uh... OK." Willis watched MacGyver leave, whistling as he walked away down the corridor. "Gremlins. Right. I don't get it..." Around him, the building grew quiet as the last employees left for the day.

An hour later, Randy the night security guard brought him a fresh coffee as he did his rounds. The coffee grew cold as Willis typed, pausing every now and again to check his figures. Then a soft sound in the corridor outside made him look up.

“Randy? That you?” Willis waited for a reply, then got up to check. The corridor was empty, quiet now except for the faint hum of the air conditioning. “Gremlins. OK, gremlins...” Shrugging, Willis returned to his desk, drinking his cold coffee as he read through what he had written. He reached into a desk drawer and, if he had been less absorbed in his work, he might have heard the sound of a door closing quietly further up the corridor.

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7716BB3 closed the door with a quiet click and turned to scan the corridor. He froze, seeing a light under one of the other office doors, and ducked back into the shadows. Five minutes later, sure he hadn't been discovered, he padded back along the corridor and disappeared into the ventilation shaft.

## **Uninvited Guest 2**

Getting into the Phoenix building had been straightforward, thanks in equal parts to good advance intelligence and to quick thinking: Arrange for the heating system to break down. Intercept the engineer before he got to the building and take his place. Steal, copy and return an ID badge from a random employee. Plant your infiltration program into the first computer terminal you find, disguised as an e-mail to a low level employee. Wait for them to open it and spread the program. Use your new found access to match your photograph to the name on the ID. 'Fix' the heating, commit the layout of the building to memory, then leave.

Getting back in the next day had been more about confidence: Stroll in early as though you have every right to be there. Flash your doctored ID at the desk clerk, allow the security camera to take your photo, smile and carry on inside. Take what you need, playing the part of a harassed junior tech on an errand so people don't notice you. Disappear into the ventilation system and wait. Now all that remained was to e-mail a progress report to your superiors, then escape with the items you'd been sent to collect.

7716BB3 slid down a chute, checking his speed with gloved hands, and arrived at a grille. The server room below was dark, a handful of lights glowing on the computers the only source of light. He let himself down out of the vent, landing on the top of a filing cabinet. He jumped down, booted up a computer and logged in. He opened up the e-mail, sent his message and erased all traces of his presence before closing the computer down again.

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Willis leant back in his chair and rubbed his eyes. He checked his watch, glad that he'd almost finished. He felt in the pockets of his lab coat for a disk, wanting to copy his report before printing it out, but came up empty. He sighed, pushed himself up out of the chair and set off down the hall to the server room and the box of blank disks he'd seen there earlier.

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7716BB3 watched the computer shut down, then climbed back onto the filing cabinet. He was reaching for the vent when he heard a noise. Quiet footsteps approached along the corridor outside. He pulled himself up into the vent as fast as possible, but slipped on the edge of the hole. The squeal of his shoe on the metal pipe echoed through the server room and he scowled, setting the grille in place and cursing his own clumsiness.

Outside, the footsteps came to an abrupt halt and 7716BB3 heard a sharp intake of breath.

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Willis stilled as he heard the sound, his heartbeat suddenly loud in his head. For a hysterical moment he thought he heard the sound of the Alien from the film chittering in the air vents, and looked up. No vent pipes ran along the corridor ceiling and he took a breath, willing himself to calm

down. He reached a shaking hand around the server room door and flicked on the light switch. The room, bathed in fluorescent light, looked just as it did in the daytime.

"That's it – no more late night cinema for me!" Willis shook his head at his own fear and crossed to the disk box, taking out a handful. "And no more late night working either, this place gives me the creeps!" He crossed to the door, giving the large vent pipes in the ceiling a suspicious look. His hand froze on the light switch as he watched the panel above the cabinets bow gently, then rise up again with a quiet creak.

Leaving the light on, he fled along the corridor, raced down the stairs and came to a skidding halt at the security guard's station in the lobby. He spun, looking for the guard.

"Randy?" Willis squashed the thought that perhaps the Alien had eaten Randy already and went behind the desk. Picking up the phone with a shaking hand, he dialled a number from memory, knuckles white on the receiver as he listened to the burr of the phone ringing. There was a click as the other person picked up and Willis heaved a sigh of relief.

"Mac? Yeah, it's me." A pause. "Yeah, I know it's late but I'm still at work. Mac – I think there's someone in the building with me!"

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MacGyver rolled off his couch, the phone clamped between his ear and his shoulder, and hunted in the dark for his sneakers.

"Calm down, Willis, OK?" He located one sneaker and dumped it on the seat beside him, burrowing further under the couch for the other. "It's probably just a rat or something. Can you call Randy? He should have his radio on." His fingers found a lace and he pulled his other sneaker out. He scrubbed a hand across his face and listened to Willis, who was starting to sound hysterical. "OK, well, he's probably doing a sweep of the top floor. You know how the magnets they've got up there mess with everything." He listened again, stretching the cricks out of his back and resolving not to fall asleep on the couch any more. "You want me to come get you?" He glanced at his watch and sighed. "OK, I'm on my way."

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MacGyver pulled up outside the Phoenix building main entrance, stifling a yawn. He walked up to the main doors, seeing nothing amiss, and let himself into the lobby.

"Willis?" He listened carefully, then crossed to the security station. The camera feeds displayed behind the desk showed Willis and Randy walking along a corridor. MacGyver could see Willis talking and waving his hands. The grainy image showed them walk under the camera and disappear off screen. MacGyver rubbed his eyes and combed back his hair with his fingers, reflecting that this really wasn't where he wanted to be at one in the morning. He sat down to wait for Willis and Randy to get back, watching the security footage through half closed eyes.

The sound of footsteps and voices jolted him awake some minutes later. MacGyver stood up, trying to look as though he'd been awake all the time, and walked over to meet them by the stairs.

"Find anything?" MacGyver asked.

"No." Willis looked both relieved and frustrated. "Not a sign. But I know what I saw, Mac, I didn't imagine it." Behind him, Randy shrugged.

"Nothing, Mr. MacGyver." Randy shook his head. "We've been everywhere in the building and back to the server room twice. There's no-one here." He slid into his seat behind the desk. "I'll look at all the footage again, but truly, I'm not expecting to find anything."

"OK, Randy. Thanks." MacGyver nodded, ignoring Willis's frustrated glare. "Even if it's nothing, I'd rather you weren't on your own the rest of the night,"

"Way ahead of you." Randy held up the phone receiver. "I called Jerry before we did the sweep and he should be here any time now."

"Thanks, Randy." MacGyver nodded and turned to Willis. "Come on, I'll drop you at home. We'll do a full check in the morning, OK?"

“OK.” Willis cast a last, doubtful glance at the stairwell, then followed MacGyver out.

7716BB3 lay motionless in the duct for a further hour, listening. He heard Randy do his 3am walk through with Jerry, arguing about the relative merits of their favourite football teams as they made their checks. He smiled to himself; his handler had been right – Americans were as sports obsessed as they were stupid. He listened to the guards’ footsteps fade away along the corridor, then let himself down into the server room again. Ignoring the security camera above, he booted up the end computer once more and opened his email. He read, frowning:

FROM:111C3F4

TO: 7716BB3

CONTENT: NEW

NEW PLAN – ELIMINATE PETER THORNTON BEFORE RETURNING WITH REQUESTED ITEMS.  
APPEARANCE OF DEATH TO BE FROM NATURAL CAUSES.

7716BB3 read the message twice before scrubbing it from the computer. He had been unable to bring any weapons into the country and hadn’t been expecting to have to hide a murder on this trip. The Chinese clerk’s death had been deliberately messy, to send a message to other potential assets. He would have to improvise, just as he had on previous missions. He sighed, turned off the computer and returned to his eyrie in the ventilation system to plan an execution.

### **Part 3**

“So let me get this straight” MacGyver pulled up a chair and sat next to Willis at the computer, “You were in here, getting a disk, you looked up and you saw the Alien on the ceiling...”

“NO! Well, for a moment I thought I did,” Willis blushed, “I looked around and I saw the airshaft move, it dipped down just there and just went straight again, that’s when I went to find Randy.”

“Okay,” MacGyver reached forwards and tapped a key, advancing the security footage in slow motion, “If there was anyone in here, they should be showing up right about...Now.”

They watched in silence as the camera panned right and left, juddering at the left hand end of each pass.

“What is up with that camera anyway? It should go further round than that – the whole of the far corner is missing from the sweep.” MacGyver blinked at the screen, he dragged his chair across the room and stood on it, examining the camera. He pulled out a wire and an alarm shrilled, “DAMN.” MacGyver plugged the wire back in, but the alarm continued to sound.

Behind him, Willis shook his head and picked up the telephone. “Yeah, Carl, it’s Willis, in the server room.” He listened and nodded, “Yeah, MacGyver unplugged the camera...” He looked over at MacGyver who shrugged, mouthing the word “Sorry” from his perch.

Willis turned back to the phone, “I know, right? Do you think you could isolate this camera from the system? We want to check it out.” He listened again and smiled, “That’d be great, thanks.” He spun around on this chair, “We got half an hour, they don’t want it off any longer than that, apparently it makes them glitchy.” He shrugged.

“Glitchy, Right...” MacGyver reached up and unplugged the camera again, he took out his swiss army knife to loosen the cameras screws and paused, squinting at the back of the camera, “Willis? Either the security guys are getting really sloppy, or someone’s been messing with this camera.” He removed the camera from the bracket, hopped off the chair and turned the camera in his hands, looking at a bright new scratch on the casing. He opened his swiss army knife and tested the screwdriver against the scratch, frowning at the fit. “I think we should have a proper look at this, if someone has tampered with the camera, chances are they’ve tampered with the footage as well.” MacGyver’s face was grim as he put the camera down next to Willis and then went to tell Pete.

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7716BB3, carrying a stack of files, walked unnoticed through Phoenix's upper levels. It was amazing how far a white coat and confidence could get you, he thought. He nodded his thanks as another tech held the door open for him and walked briskly down the length of the lab. As soon as the door swung closed behind him, he put the files on the bench and headed for the chemical storage room, scooping up a lighter and a couple of pens as he went.

Mind racing, he weighed up the choices available to him.

Inducing a heart attack and making it look natural was a delicate business, even when you have the right chemicals.

This situation, with the resources available to him and the last minute change to his original plans, was far from ideal.

7716BB3 thought hard and then made his choice.

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"So that's it." MacGyver ran a hand through his hair and sighed in frustration, "Willis is pretty sure he saw something, but the camera footage checks out, and we couldn't find anything wrong when we swept the building last night. The server room camera's damaged, but it could just be heavy handed maintenance, there's nothing that definitely indicates sabotage. Willis is going through the footage again, just in case it's been tampered with, but really, coffee fuelled paranoia is the most convincing theory right now."

"Hmmm," Pete drummed his fingers on the desk, "While I'd really like it to be coffee fuelled paranoia, because that would mean there wasn't a problem, let's be on the safe side." Pete reached for his own coffee and took a sip, "Check the logs on every computer, get everyone to take inventory, just in case your drawings aren't the only things that are missing, and get me the results in an hour, Okay?"

"Okay Pete," MacGyver nodded and headed for the door.

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7716BB3 locked himself into a bathroom on the top floor of the Phoenix Building and unloaded his pockets on to the toilet lid. He mixed and measured chemicals, added a small quantity of disinfectant and held his concoction up to the light. He knew that Thornton liked his coffee strong and hoped it would hide the smell of the poison he'd made. Leaving his labcoat hidden in the bin and flushing the leftover chemicals away, he pocketed the vial of poison and walked back out into the corridor.

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"Mac, we've got a problem," Willis skidded to a halt in front of MacGyver's desk, "Someone HAS been here, they looped the camera footage and they've been all over in the computer files." He swore and spun away to pace the small room.

"How did we not see this? How did we not realise we'd been hacked?" MacGyver glanced down as his computer beeped, showing the department heads' results of the building-wide inventory arriving in his email.

“Because this hacker is really, really good,” Willis looked down as he realised the depth of the problems they were having. “They’ve got into the security cameras, the email, the lights...” He tailed off, shaking his head.

“Could they still be in the building?” MacGyver watched as Willis shrugged.

“I dunno, maybe, if we can’t trust the security footage, how would we know if they’ve left?” He buried his head in his hands, “What a mess.”

“Right,” MacGyver reached out and opened the email, “Go and tell Pete, we’ll need to lock the building down straight away, I’ll see if our uninvited guest has had his hands on anything else.”

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The trick to getting away with anything was looking as if you were meant to be there. The “Lab Tech” walked into the break room and helped himself to a mug of coffee. He slid the vial out of his pocket and added the contents to the mug, pushed the vial well down into the bin and walked out with his deadly brew in hand without arousing the suspicion of the lone employee in the corner.

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MacGyver frowned at the list on his screen, some electrical components were missing along with his technical drawings, some office supplies and some bottles from the chemicals store. He sat back, deep in thought. The computer system had been extensively hacked and the hacker was indeed very clever, able to hide exactly what they had been doing. They’d been in the email and the security cameras too. MacGyver’s eyes flicked back to the list, what would someone want with the missing items?

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What could MacGyver do with them...?

He read through the list of chemicals again, then his eyes widened and he leapt up, overturning his chair as he raced out of the office.

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“Your coffee, Mr Thornton,” The voice was quiet, unfamiliar.

“Thank you,” Pete got up to close his door, a little on his guard at the voice. Light footsteps and a movement in the air told him his visitor was leaving. He reached out, grabbing an arm and a soft handful of fabric, but the visitor pulled out of his grasp and was gone, “HELEN!” Pete shouted through the open door, hearing the light steps walking away fast, “HELEN!”

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But the outer office was empty, his secretary busy at the photocopier...

“COMING THROUGH!” MacGyver pounded up the steps. Phoenix employees flattened themselves against the wall as he came racing along the corridor. MacGyver collided with a slim Chinese man as he rounded the corner, not pausing in his rush. He skidded into Pete’s office just as Pete stepped into the doorway.

“MacGyver, just the person, I think...” Pete stopped abruptly as MacGyver grabbed him by both shoulders.

“Pete, tell me you haven’t eaten or drunk anything from here today...” MacGyver asked.

“I...No, but I think I just met our spy... He was just here, I didn’t recognise the voice, and I know everyone who works here,” Pete nodded.

“Pete, what was he doing here...” MacGyver looked around the room, “How long was he in here...?”

"Only a minute, MacGyver, the building is on lockdown, he's not going anywhere," Pete straightened his jacket as MacGyver let go, "He brought me a coffee, but I didn't drink any, I was suspicious the moment I heard his voice."

"Good..." MacGyver picked up the mug and sniffed, pulling a face at the smell, "Don't - we're missing some chemicals and I think I just found them."

"Damn..." Pete felt his way around his desk and sat down, "What would have happened if I'd drunk it...?"

"Nothing good, "MacGyver set the mug down on a cupboard, "Probably a heart attack, there's nasty stuff in there. He's clever, whoever he is, resourceful too."

"It's like we're up against the evil version of you," Pete shuddered, "Now that's a very scary idea."

"What do we know about him," MacGyver crossed to the window, "We know he's a good hacker and a chemist, that he's good at staying undetected and he's reporting to someone else."

"How do we know that...?" Pete turned to follow MacGyver's voice.

"Because he sent a couple of emails. We don't know what was in them, he's deleted them so it'll take a while to recover the content, but he's definitely sent something." MacGyver frowned, "Now we also know that he's okay with murder, so he's likely armed."

Pete sat back, his face mirroring MacGyver's frown, "At least we have a description of him, of sorts anyhow."

"We do?" MacGyver looked interested, "How?"

"Well, while being blind has some very definite disadvantages," Pete smiled thinly, "It has taught me to pay attention in other ways. For example, our spy is a man who speaks English with a Chinese accent, he's slender - his arm was narrow where I grabbed him, he's about my height - his elbow was at the same height as mine, and he's wearing a loose fitting wool sweater."

"Pete, you're a wonder!" MacGyver's grin quickly turned to a frown, "I might literally have just bumped into him just now, I ran right into a guy who fits that description on the way up here."

"Okay! Now we just need a plan to catch him." Pete rubbed his hands together.

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#### **Part 4**

"No way, Pete," MacGyver folded his arms and stared at his boss.

"Who did he intend to poison, Mac?"

"Well, you," MacGyver ran a hand through his hair, "But..."

"And who answers all the awkward questions if he gets away with all the satellite research...?"

"OK, you do." MacGyver leant forwards on the edge of Pete's desk, "But what are we...?"

Pete stood and MacGyver backed up a step, taking his hands off the desk. For a blind man, Pete had a disturbingly direct stare.

"This man broke into MY research facility, he tried to steal research that I'm responsible for and then he tried to kill ME. While I know that I'm nobody's first choice for combat duties this days, I will not go home and wait for news that he's been captured in my absence." Pete paused for breath and the silence stretched. "I won't get in your way, Mac, but at the very least, I owe this guy a punch in the mouth."

MacGyver looked at Pete standing straight and angry in the silent office. Knowing him for so long as a friend as well as a boss, it was easy to forget that Pete had been a field operative back when MacGyver had been just a taxi driver, recently returned from the army and drifting, unsure where his life was headed. Pete's competence and air of effortless command had drawn him in then, and MacGyver smiled now, shaking his head.

"I guess you do. OK Pete, you're in..."

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7716BB3 leaned back and stretched, wondering whether heroes in action films ever got cramp. That American policeman crawling around the air ducts in a grubby vest, for example.... He was, he reflected, very tired of air ducts. His thefts had been discovered, his attempt on Thornton's life had been thwarted and his plan to simply walk out of the front door using his faked ID had been ruined by a very effective building lockdown. He had enough food collected from the break room vending machines to lie low till the Americans concluded that he'd gone after all and lifted their security lockdown, but he did need to get into the server room once more to let his contact know he wouldn't be able to meet them to hand over the goods. Failing to turn up for the meeting without letting his contact know would be signing his own death warrant the moment he set foot back on home ground.

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Unreliable spies were no asset when there were plenty of eager patriots ready to fill his shoes... It was, after all, how he'd come to have this job in the first place.

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He shifted again in the junction of the shafts leading to the server room, trying to relieve the ache in his back. At least now he was armed, even if his weapon was an improvised one.  
He really was very sick of air ducts...

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MacGyver looked up at the server room ceiling. He'd been hidden behind the cupboard for about an hour now, waiting for the spy to make his appearance. They'd locked the building down tight, so he was pretty sure the spy hadn't got away. He'd placed a call to a computer expert friend and between them, Kate and Willis had locked the computer system down too, removing email access from all terminals except this one. Kate had managed to recover some of the message sent between the spy and his handler and was sure the spy would send another to confirm his exit arrangements before leaving the building.

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Pete and Randy sat in the room across the hall, listening. Pete had allowed employees to leave quietly, making sure each ID was double checked before allowing anyone out. It had been done gradually over the afternoon to try and avoid spooking the spy with a mass exodus.

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Now they were the only ones left in the building. Beside him he could hear Randy breathing, feel his warmth and smell the egg sandwiches that he'd had for dinner. He'd always dismissed the idea that blind people had developed better senses to compensate for the loss of sight, but now he understood. It was less about increased sensitivity and more about paying closer attention to what was already there.

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He tensed at a quiet creak from the ducts above.

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The spy was on the move...

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MacGyver looked up, the maze of pipework in the ceiling lit only by the blinking lights on the computers. The ventilation shaft panel nearest the wall flexed and then straightened, creaking on the bracket. The next panel dipped, then the next. MacGyver pulled his feet up, ready to spring. The ventilation panel was lifted away, gloved fingers visible through the mesh, Green computer light crested upon a narrow nose and a tuft of short hair as the spy looked down into the dark room. MacGyver froze, holding his breath. The spy finished his checks and the face disappeared, replaced moments later by a pair of feet in soft soled shoes. The spy lowered himself down through the vent and MacGyver rose silently from behind the cupboard, launching himself forwards, grabbing the legs and pulling him out of the ventilation. There was a gasp and the spy let go, his weight bearing them

both to the floor. MacGyver held on but the spy bucked and kicked, landing a hard blow to MacGyver's head. MacGyver lost his grip and sprawled backwards, tangled in the cables under the desk. The spy dove in, stabbing at him with something MacGyver couldn't make out in the dim light. MacGyver rolled to one side and swept the spy's feet from under him. The spy fell forwards, the object in his hand sparked like electricity against the back of the bank of computers and the room went totally dark.

Pete heard the snap and fizz of something electrical, a bright light filtered through the fog of glaucoma and then everything went dark. He heard the low hum of computers powering down and the rattle of the air conditioning stopping. He felt a rush of air as Randy stepped past him and got up to follow him.

MacGyver reached out blindly, grabbing a thin, strong arm in a soft sleeve. The spy pulled away from him and punched him hard. The punch glanced off MacGyver's hip and he reached forward again, this time grabbing a handful of hair and landing a punch of his own. He felt something warm gush over his hand and heard the spy swear. The spy trod heavily on MacGyver's stomach and scrambled over him, heading for the door. MacGyver grabbed his ankle, pulling the spy back and heard something clatter across the floor. The spy kicked himself free and MacGyver heard the door open. There was a thud and MacGyver heard Randy yell. There was a sound of ripping cloth and Randy yelled again, this time in pain.

Pete paused, one hand on the doorframe. He could hear fighting in the server room, the distinctive rush of breath of someone getting winded and the rattle of something metal tumbling across the floor. The smell of burned electricals filled the hallway as the door opened and there was a brief scuffle. Randy yelled, hurt, and Pete stepped forwards into the darkness with both hands raised. The figure who ran into him was thin, just as Pete remembered, and very strong. Without thinking, Pete grabbed two handfuls of the spy's sweater and spun him as hard as he could into the wall behind him. There was a dull thud and a groan and Pete smelled blood and the acrid tang of sweat. The spy tried to pull away, but Pete clung on, sliding a foot between the spy's legs and hooking his leg from under him the way his army PT instructor had shown him years ago. They crashed to the floor together, just as the emergency generators kicked in and the corridor lights flickered on.

MacGyver scrambled up just as the overhead lights came on. Around him the computers came to life. He ran for the doorway, seeing first Randy kneeling on the floor with blood all over his sleeve, and then Pete fighting with the spy. Pete had the upper hand, the spy was pinned underneath him on the floor and MacGyver was just in time to see Pete feel for the front of the spy's shirt, lift the lolling head and deliver a brutal punch to the mouth.

The spy collapsed unconscious and Pete clambered to his feet using the wall as support.

"Mac?" Pete turned his head sideways.

"Right here Pete," MacGyver grinned, "Fantastic punch!"

"Boy, I'd forgotten how much it hurts doing that," Pete grinned, shaking out his hand.

"Oh I know it," MacGyver took Pete's arm and guided him to the chair, taking a flattened roll of duct tape from his back pocket, "Randy, you okay?"

"Yeah, no problem," Randy dabbed at the cut on his arm, "You want me to call the cops?"

"Yes, please," MacGyver rolled the spy over, taping his wrists and ankles securely. He checked the spy for weapons, finding a folding knife much like his own. He stood and went back into the server room, stooping to pick something up.

"What did you find?" Pete leaned forwards as MacGyver returned and sat next to him.

"Gadget..." MacGyver turned the item over, picking at the duct tape that held it together until it fell apart in his hands, "I think he made a taser from a barbeque lighter and a Biro..." MacGyver traced the wires the spy had threaded through the pen casing and reassembled the device, pushing the lighter button and leaning back as a fat spark shot out of the front of the pen with a vicious crackle . "Nice job..." He looked at the comatose spy with grudging respect.

"Boy, he really is like you," Pete shook his head, "That's a scary thought."

MacGyver nodded, opening the blades of the spy's utility knife one by one.

"Yeah, he really is." He snapped the knife shut and turned to Pete, "So how *did* you manage to lay him out like that...?"

"Ah," Pete leant back and chuckled, "Well, partly he ran straight into my arms, but mostly because my old army PT instructor used to make us practice Judo blindfolded so that we'd get used to feeling our opponent's movement instead of waiting till we saw it. We all hated doing it at the time, but Boy am I glad that I practised it now!"

"Pete, you never ceased to amaze me," MacGyver clapped his friend on the shoulder and stood up just as the police arrived at the top of the stairs, "Teach me sometime...?"

"I'd be delighted..." Pete grinned up at MacGyver. "I'll even go easy on you...!"