Summary

Self-indulgent snippets from Dennis' childhood that have no place in a proper narrative.

Notes

Okay. You deserve an explanation for this. Dennis kinda haunts my head and my heart. I've had a lot of head canons and stories run through my head about him that had no place in Love Thy Enemy. But, I don't want these stories to fade away and be forgotten. They entertain me and I love the kid. I really do. So, I'm posting them here. Not all of these take place in the same universe. Some are variations on a theme. And, I want at least one version of Murdoc to get to meet his tinier self. LOL So, there are crossovers, unexplained science, unexplained science fiction, and a lot of other stuff. :D I hope, nevertheless, they are entertaining.

These snippets are organized more by theme than anything and are only in the very loosest chronological order.
October 9th, 3 A.M.

Cassian stirred awake, feeling something soft brush across his face. Forcing his eyes open, he saw his dad...no, Dennis' face just above his, his lips still puckered from giving Cassian's cheek a kiss.

"Wha...?"

"Sleep?" Dennis said, in a loud whisper. "Cass'n sleep?"

"Mmmhmmm. Go back to bed, Dennis. It's okay," Cassian assured him, reaching out and stroking Dennis' hair.

"'kay? Cass'n sleep," Dennis said agreeably, placing another kiss on Cassian's forehead.

"Yep, time to sleep."

"Yah. Sleep," Dennis said, hopping down from the bed and toddling towards the door, picking Bark up from the floor as he went.

Cassian sighed, burrowing back into his pillow. He pointedly didn't reflect on the fact that a toddler had just checked on him, like a good dad would. Dennis couldn't be his dad anymore and Cassian was determined to just accept that fact and moved on. He was still loved. They were brothers now and their adopted dad was turning out to be really cool. Weird, in his own way, but cool. His attempt at emptying his thoughts was disrupted by a thump, coming from the opposite direction of Dennis' room.

Groaning, Cassian got up and went to MacGyver's bedroom, knocking softly on the door. A moment later, MacGyver appeared, frowning with concern.

"Cassian?" MacGyver asked, his voice rough with sleep. "What's wrong, buddy?"

"Dennis is up and wandering around. He was in my room. I tried to send him back to bed, but I think he went downstairs."

MacGyver gave a wry chuckle.

"Yeah, okay. Go on back to bed," MacGyver said soothingly, tousling Cassian's hair. "I'll get him."

"Thanks, Dad."

"No problem."

MacGyver trudged downstairs, not sure what to expect. He found Dennis in the front hallway, waving around one of the small flashlights that MacGyver seemed to accumulate, without meaning to. Dennis stood next to the door, shining his light into the small area between the coin-operated horse and the wall.

"Dennis. What are you doing?"

"Look."

"At what?" MacGyver asked, with fairly good humor.
"What? No? Look!"

Dennis suited action to word, waving the flashlight around and running over to examine the area around the stuffed polar bear.

"Dennis, not now. It's bedtime."

"No! I see!" Dennis argued, running over to one of MacGyver's mannequin heads and frowning. "Green!"

"Yeah, it's green."

"Is face. Green!"

"Yeah, it's a green face," MacGyver agreed with weary humor.

"Yugg?"

"It's not ill. It's just green."

"Ooof."

"Dennis, come on. You're going to bed."

"Daddy! Look!" Dennis whined.

Making a shushing sound, Dennis ran over to the corner, then carefully poked his head, then the flashlight around to the other side. He jumped back, then moved and took another, longer look. Sighing, MacGyver walked over to Dennis and picked him up, grabbing the flashlight. Dennis gave a startled gasp, then laughed, when MacGyver held the flashlight under his own chin and moaned out a long "Booooooo." "Okay, kid. Times up. There's no one here, but us. Bedtime."

"No? One?"

"Yup, just us."

"Us?"

"Yeah."

"Daddy?"

"Mnhmm," MacGyver hummed in agreement, walking into Dennis' room and sitting on his bed, with Dennis on his lap.

"Ang's? Daddy?"

"Yep, that's me."

"Yah. Daddy, Ang's?"

"Yep."

"Yes, I'm your daddy," MacGyver agreed, laughing a bit.

"Yah. Ang's. Daddy. Daddy. Cass'n? Daddy?" Dennis asked, emphasizing the question with a wave of his hand.

"Yes," MacGyver said soothingly. "I'm Cassian's daddy, too. He needs a daddy."


MacGyver gave a sigh, reaching down and kissing the top of Dennis' head. He wished he knew if this was merely toddler babbling, learning through repetition, or if Dennis was harboring any real anxieties. The boy had plenty of reason to be confused.

"Yes, I'm your daddy. Dennis' and Cassian's daddy."

The kiss and assurance seemed to startle Dennis, who sat back, looking up at MacGyver with wide eyes. MacGyver wondered if he'd upset him, but Dennis leaned up, placing a kiss on MacGyver's chin. MacGyver couldn't help the wide grin he gave, especially when Dennis followed the kiss with a wide yawn.

"Ang's. Mine. Daddy," Dennis said, happily, then leaned over, resting against MacGyver's chest.

MacGyver sat, cradling Dennis, until he was sound asleep, then tucked him into bed with Bark.

"G'night, kiddo."
Running Around

Chapter Summary

Dennis goes outside and finds mischief. And has a meltdown.

A warm spring day. Dennis is almost two.

Dennis ran out the door, as Jack came inside, heading down the sidewalk towards the street. Laughing, Jack and MacGyver chased after him.

"Hey! Baby 'doc! Where're you going?" Jack called after him.

Dennis turned around and ran back towards them, stopping on the path.

"Jagg?"

"Yeah, hi. Where do you think you were going?"

"I go! Daaa..." Dennis said, pointing towards the street, "...ere," swinging his hand to the left of him, "oor yaaa," swinging his hand to the right, "woohooowooowoo," he cried happily, pointing to the sky and making circles with his finger, "'en here, YES!" Dennis finished, grinning, pulling his arms in tight, with his eyes and fists squeezed tight in a gesture of victory.

"Okay, the helicopter thing worries me," MacGyver admitted, chuckling.

"Hey, he just laid his whole scheme out for us. Too bad we didn't understand a word," Jack teased, grinning.

"That might be a good thing. I have a better idea," MacGyver told Dennis. "How about we go inside and play with your blocks instead?"

"Bloggs? Yay!" Dennis agreed, clapping his hands.

"All right, let's go in," MacGyver said, taking his hand and leading Dennis to the door, Jack following alongside them.

A summer day. Dennis is two now, though not by much.

Cassian rushed into the house, finding MacGyver and Jack in the living room. MacGyver looked up from tinkering on a radio.

"Dad, Dennis got hold of a hammer! He's bashing away at the ground and screaming!"

"Okay, I'll get him," MacGyver promised, hurrying outside, with Jack.

He'd allowed the boys to play in the front yard, as long as Cassian kept a close eye on Dennis. The front sidewalk was now covered in bright chalk marks. The sidewalk chalk had been abandoned though. Dennis was crouching over one section, banging a hammer onto it, with tears streaming down his cheeks. Dennis swung particularly hard and the hammer bounced up, almost catching him
in the face.

"Dennis!" MacGyver swore, running over and taking the hammer. "What are you doing?!

"Get me!" Dennis wailed, pointing at his shadow, then tracing a path with his finger across the yard. "Thing git me! I go dere and oooo'er and bak and it git me!"

Dennis clutched his hands to his chest in emphasis, while MacGyver stared in bewilderment.

"Dennis, your shadow is not trying to get you," MacGyver said trying to edge his voice away from disbelief to comfort.

"Yah! I go, dere, dere, dere and GIT ME!" Dennis sobbed, turning and trying to kick at his shadow.

Jack picked Dennis up, unable to hide his chuckles. Dennis put his arms around Jack's neck, pressing their cheeks together. Jack was startled to find the boy was actually trembling.


"Mine?! No. Nah want! Go AWAY!" Dennis screeched down at his shadow, waving his hand threateningly.

"Dennis, it isn't alive. It's just where the sunlight isn't getting around you," MacGyver tried to explain.

"Git me, Daddy. Git and EAT me," Dennis decided, pouting.

"Um, can I try?" Cassian asked, receiving nods from his dad and Jack. "Dennis, it wasn't chasing you. It was trying to say hello."

"Huh? 'lo?" Dennis asked.

"Yeah, see? This is my shadow," Cassian assured him, leaning down and patting his own shadow. "It just wants to be friends. Why scream and hit, when you can be friends?"

"Shaaa. Dow? Fends?"

"Yeah. You should be friends with your shadow. They're lots of fun. Wanna see?"

"Yah?" Dennis agreed, squirming to get down.

Jack set him down, giving Cassian a wink and a thumbs up. Cassian grinned back and took Dennis' hand.

"See? Can you wave at your shadow? Wave hello?"

Dennis gave Cassian a puzzled look, but obeyed, holding up his hand and waving it back and forth. The shadow copied him and Dennis gave a startled laugh.

"It hi?"

"Sure. You can even dance a bit with your shadow, if you're careful."

Cassian moved slowly around, guiding Dennis, so their shadows followed them, appearing, at least a bit, to dance around them. Dennis laughed some more, clapping his hands.
"Fend!"

"Yup. On sunny days, your shadow plays with you."

"Play me? Shadow. Play!"

"Cassian, where did he get the hammer from? Did you see?"

"I think he got it from Uncle Jack’s truck."

"Mine?" Dennis asked, reaching for the hammer.

"Nope, not yours," MacGyver told him, firmly. "This is for bigger people. You play with your chalk and your trains."

"Oooh," Dennis complained, then brightened. "Draw? Shadow?"

"Sure, draw your shadow," MacGyver agreed, glad this particular crisis was over.

Someday, he promised himself, he would tease Dennis about the time he was literally afraid of his own shadow.
Snack Attack!

Chapter Summary

Dennis gets hungry and is pro-active.

Smol boy is still smol. Two and half, maybe? And Bozer has been baby-sitting/visiting.

Dennis hurried into the living room, his rushing hampered by the large, glass jar he had clutched to his chest.

"Bozer! Uncle Bozer! We have a problem!" Dennis cried, skidding to a stop in front of Bozer.

"What's wrong?" Bozer asked. "What's with the jar?"

"It's EMPTY!" Dennis told him, holding the jar up for inspection. "Look! Not even one little pickle!"

"Dennis," Bozer said flatly. "Is that the jar of pickles I opened for you this morning?"

"Yah and they're gone!"

"You and I have been mostly alone here all day and I have not eaten any pickles," Bozer told him, pointedly.

"No. You didn't," Dennis agreed, nodding.

"I'm pretty sure your parents and Cassian haven't eaten any, since they got home."

"Nope."

"Which means, you ate that entire jar of pickles by yourself," Bozer concluded dryly.

"Yeah. They're gone," Dennis protested.

"Because you ate them."

"Yeah?"

"Dennis, no one is going to the store at seven at night, because you managed to eat an entire jar of pickles in eight hours," Bozer said, firmly.

"He did what?!" MacGyver said, coming into the room.

"Daddy! I need more pickles!" Dennis pleaded.

"Is that the jar I bought yesterday?" MacGyver asked, disbelieving, watching Bozer nod in agreement.

"They're all gone. Not even one little pickle left!"
"Uh, yeah. You definitely do not need any more pickles, Dennis. If you're still hungry, which should be impossible, you can have a banana, or a hot dog, or a piece of cheese. We'll get more pickles, the next time we go shopping."

"No more pickles?" Dennis whined.

"Not until I shop again and, from now on, you can only have two pickles a day. You don't need to eat an entire jar!"

"But I want pickles!" Dennis demanded.

"Well, you ate them all, so there aren't any," MacGyver reasoned, giving a slight laugh. "That's why you shouldn't eat them all at once."

"Ohhh. O-kay," Dennis agreed, sadly.

Bozer picked Dennis up, giving him a hug.

"Come on, buddy. Let's give your daddy the jar," Bozer said, handing the jar to Mac. "You wanna do some drawing? You want to make pretty pictures?"

"You draw me Bark?"

"Yeah, I'll draw Bark for you," Bozer agreed, laughing dryly.

**Dennis is old enough to do this and young enough to really not know better. And, he has opinions.**

MacGyver and Jack sat out on the patio, chatting and de-stressing from their latest mission. Hearing a knock on it, MacGyver got up and opened the patio door. Dennis came through, dragging his little wagon.

The wagon was brimming with food, including a large platter of ham and other leftovers from Thanksgiving.

"Dennis, why do you have half of the refrigerator in your wagon?" MacGyver asked, bemused.

"I'm very hungry, Daddy!"

"You gonna eat all that, Baby 'doc?" Jack asked, laughing.

"No!" Dennis scolded, laughing. "I gotta show you what I want."

"Okay," MacGyver asked dryly, sitting back down. "What do you want?"

"Okay," Dennis echoed, parking the wagon between himself and MacGyver. "I want ham, with tomatoes, on bread, with this!"

Dennis held up a jar of mayonnaise.

"I want this one. Not that other one," Dennis protested, gesturing towards the kitchen. He gave the mayonnaise a friendly pat. "This one!"

"Yeah, I know how you feel about salad dressing," MacGyver assured him, chuckling.

"It's very yuck," Dennis proclaimed, sticking his tongue out in a yuck face.
"Uh huh. What else? You have a lot more stuff there."

"Yeah. I got cheesy potatoes! I love cheesy potatoes. And, I do want pickles, but, but, not on my sandwich!" Dennis clarified, holding his hand up. "I can eat these by themselves."

"Yeah, believe me, we know," Jack agreed, smirking.

"Yeah, you know," Dennis agreed, shamelessly, grinning. "And, olives! Olives are nice, too."

"Damn, Baby 'doc, you are hungry."


"Sorry."

"Dennis, what do you want with this?" MacGyver asked, holding up a jar of garlic cloves.

Confusion settled over Dennis' face.

"Um. I don't know those?" he admitted, then shrugged. "I brought those just in case."

"Okay, well, you don't eat these by themselves," MacGyver explained. "You cook with them. Now, I have another question for you."

"Yeah?"

"Why did you drag all of this out? Wouldn't it have been easier to just come out here and say, 'Daddy, I want a sandwich, please'?"

"No! Not just sandwich..."

"And some sides," MacGyver amended, hastily, shrugging.


"Okay, but if you had just asked, you'd be eating by now."

"Well, I helped! I was bringing you the stuffs."

"Okay," MacGyver laughed. "Well, now we have to take all this stuff back, because sandwiches are made in the kitchen."

"Okay!" Dennis agreed cheerfully, grabbing the wagon's handle and tugging. "Here we go!"

"Would you like some help?"

"No, I'm smart and strong. I can."

"All right," MacGyver agreed, complacently, going and holding open the door.
Exothermy

Chapter Summary

Dennis wants James to read him a story. James learns just how malleable reality can be for his little grandson.

Chapter Notes

The article I have James reading out loud does exist. I have no more idea what it's actually saying than Dennis. LOL The article is:

Multi-dimensional Transition Layers for an Exothermic Reaction-diffusion System in Long Cylindrical Domains by Masayasu Mimura and Kunimochi Sakamoto in the Journal of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Tokyo. 1996

The bits of the article in quotes are taken directly from the article. All credit goes to the gentlemen who wrote the article.

Dennis ran into James' living room from his den, a magazine clutched to his chest. James grinned, shaking his head. He'd really come to love having his grandsons visit, taking every opportunity he could to babysit them. He shoved away the pang of regret that he hadn't valued his own son's childhood and the memories they could have had. He was a father and a grandfather now and he knew that was more than he deserved.

"Paaaah-pop!" Dennis sang out, smiling slyly. "Guess what I got!"


"Yeah, it is made of paper!" Dennis agreed, handing James the magazine. "Read me?"

"Dennis, I don't think you'll enjoy this," James said gently. "Why don't we read one of the books I bought you?"

"Nooo," Dennis complained, upset. "This one! I picked!"

"Okay!" James said, hastily, deciding Dennis would change his mind, once James started reading. "Let's go sit down."

They sat together in James' armchair and Dennis settled in his lap, leaning against his Pah-pop's chest. James opened to the first article, a piece on exothermic reactions.

"Variety of spatio and/or temporal patterns are observed in combustion processes with or without supply of fuel. In order to theoretically understand such pattern formations, several mathematical models have been proposed so far. Among them, we focus our attention on a thermal and diffusive equation which describes a single step exothermic reaction."
"Oh, see, Pap-pop? I like dinosaur stories. An exothermy!"

Right. Of course. What three year old didn't love dinosaurs? He continued reading, wondering what Dennis was really making of the article.

"Namely, the concentration $c$ decreases to zero and the temperature $\theta$ increases to a certain positive value as the time $t$ progresses to $\infty$. Therefore the source of spatio-temporal patterns observed in exothermic reactions, such as combustion processes, has to be sought somewhere else."

"No food there. Keep looking, exothermy."

James paused, but only for a moment. Dennis was suitably entertained, it seemed, and James already knew the boy had a vivid imagination. Explaining this to Angus was going to be amusing.

"...respectively, the hot state and the cold state corresponding to the uniform reactant concentration $\lambda$. From the conditions in (A1), the cold state can not exist when the uniform reactant concentration is higher than $\Lambda_1$, while the hot state can not exist for the uniform reactant concentration lower than $\Lambda_0$."

"A volcano!" Dennis gasped, eyes wide. "That poor exothermy!"

"When, on the other hand, the diffusion rate is lower than the critical value $d_0$, the diffusion effect of the reactant is no more capable of restoring the imbalance, and therefore, the equilibrium state can no longer be stable. As a result, the system starts to oscillate, as if, in an effort to settle down on a comfortable position."

"No, don't nap," Dennis scolded. "Naps aren't good!"

"Well, maybe he's an adult exothermy," James said, laughing. "Adults like naps."

"Sad," Dennis told him, flatly, shrugging.

"Maybe," James agreed, kissing the top of Dennis' head.

James kept reading, skipping the equations, hoping Dennis would think they were pictures of the story, which was true, in a way.

"As the analyses in the previous sections show, it is technically complicated to treat the problem (1.5)-(1.8) directly. Therefore, from the practical viewpoint of studying dynamical behaviour of (1.1), it is desirable to have a simple model which captures essential dynamics of (1.1)."

"Oh, good, he found food! Exothermies get very hungry! Dynamics is yummy for them."

"I don't doubt it. I prefer a good piece of pie, myself. 'By an elementary computation after suitable change of variables and using $g \pm < 0$, one can show that $\partial l_2/\partial p < 0$. Therefore the equation $l_2(p, \beta) = 1/\sqrt{d}$ has a unique solution and the proof of Lemma 2.1 has been completed.'"

"The End!" Dennis cried happily. "That was good story, Pah-pop."

"I'm glad you liked it. Why don't you go see, if Cassian is done with his homework."

"Okay!"

Once he was gone, James pulled out his cellphone, calling Angus, even though he knew his son would be busy in the Phoenix labs.
"Hey, Dad, everything okay?"

"Yes. I just wanted to warn you that your youngest son thinks an exothermic reaction is a type of dinosaur. I'm sorry, but there really wasn't anything I could do."

There was a long pause on the other end of the phone, followed by helpless laughter.

"Where did he even hear that phrase?"

"He insisted I read to him from one of my science journals."

"Ah. Okay, that...almost makes sense."

"In addition to warning you, I thought you might like to have him tell you...whatever story he was hearing inside his crazy, little head."

"Um. Yeah, no...thank you. I'll pass on that, if he lets me!" Angus disagreed, laughing.

"I wish you luck, son."

"Thanks, Dad! I should be over there in about an hour."

"All right. I'll have supper ready."

"Okay, see you then."

"Bye, Angus."

James got up, going to check on his much-loved grandchildren.
Dennis and MacGyver meet Murdoc and MacGyver. Crossover with Dangerous Romance.

Dennis is three, maybe close to four. He's a sleepy baby. Some months after the end of "Dangerous Romance."

Murdoc glared up at the young woman, who lurked behind her raised pedestal with a self-satisfied grin. Murdoc wanted to wipe that grin off the woman's face...if she even was a woman. She certainly wasn't human, not with skin that was not only gray, but intriguingly translucent in places. His boyscout didn't look intrigued though. He looked disturbed. And angry. Well, that was to be expected. Murdoc fully intended to kill their "host," given a quarter of a chance.

Murdoc appreciated a certain lawlessness, but he wouldn't tolerate being kidnapped.

"Why did you bring us here?" MacGyver demanded, earning an eye roll from his lover.

Murdoc didn't care why. He just wanted to kill her and go home. The thought must have communicated itself, somehow, because MacGyver reached over, taking Murdoc's hand in his own and rubbing his thumb over the government assassin's palm.

"Curiosity," the woman answered, shrugging. "I am Zarla. I'm studying interdimensional variations among people of different species. I thought the variations of an assassin's relationships in alternate universes would be interesting. So, I chose you! And, wow, you two really do interact in a wide variety of ways."

"I'm sure," MacGyver said, flatly, unimpressed. "So, why bring us here?"

"Observation is so bland, after a while. And, I thought it would be interesting to see how you react to other versions of yourself!"

"We're the only ones here," Murdoc pointed out, impatiently, waving a hand at the mostly empty room.

The room was fairly large, well-lit, with lights and panels flickering on the wall. The walls were a bland shade of light blue. The floor was a clean white that made Murdoc long for mud on his boots.

"Well, let's fix that!" Zarla agreed, enthusiastically.

A square of orange light appeared a few feet away from them, starting off small, then growing larger and more rectangular. When the light disappeared, another version of MacGyver stood in the center of the room, gazing about in alarm.

"Ooo, two boyscouts!" Murdoc enthused. "I might forgive you, after all, Zarla!"

The newer MacGyver's eyes swung to Murdoc, going wide.
"Murdoc?" he asked, hesitantly, his tone intrigued, but also...well, not afraid, but worried.

"Oh, yes! These are the MacGyver and Murdoc from dimension 58, 431 in the 92nd district of plurality."

"Whatever that means," MacGyver said, rolling his eyes. "Why am I here?"

"She's comparing relationships in different dimensions," Murdoc answered dryly, tilting his head as the other MacGyver studied him.

"Right. You..."

"I actually didn't mean to bring you," Zarla admitted. "I meant to bring your dimension's Murdoc. But, let's do a little survey, before I bring him here..."

"No," MacGyver ordered, flatly.

"Oh, come on!" Zarla coaxed. "One teeny question! Ooo, like that game you humans play! Screw, marry, or kill? Would you rather forget about Murdoc entirely, marry him, or kill him?"

MacGyver shuddered.

"Yeah, I'll take a very hard pass on all of those."

"All of them?" Zarla asked, a bit surprised. "These two seem okay with getting married. They might even be married, I don't know."

"Well, that's interdimensional variation for you," MacGyver retorted, shrugging. "The circumstances in my reality make that entirely out of the question."

"That still leaves killing him. He's your enemy, right? He tried to kill you? If you're squeamish, I could do it for you," Zarla offered, with mock sweetness.

"You lay a hand on him and I'll break your neck," MacGyver warned her, hotly, his eyes wide with anger.

"Not enemies, then," Murdoc whispered, astonished. "Ooo, or maybe he's the killer in that universe!"

"Keep dreaming, Murdoc," MacGyver answered, surprisingly amused, shaking his head.

"I guess not," his MacGyver agreed.

"Let's find out," Zarla said, angrily, bringing back the orange light.

This time, when it cleared, a small boy with black hair and dark brown eyes stood in the room, clutching a blanket with a fox's head to his chest. He sobbed angrily, turning to Zarla and scowling. Murdoc stared, stunned, recognizing himself, as a tiny child.

"YOU ALMOST CUT MY BARK!" Dennis screamed. "You are bad stranger!"

"Dennis," MacGyver called to him, kneeling down and holding out his hands. "Come here, little guy. It's okay."

"Daddy!" Dennis cried, running into MacGyver's arms, shocking Murdoc and his lover. "I was 'sleep and a bad light got me. A-and, Bark wasn't all in. But, I snatched him."
"I'm sorry. It's okay."

"She did it, Daddy," Dennis told him, thrusting an accusing finger at Zarla. "It was her!"

"Shhhhh," MacGyver soothed, standing with Dennis nestled in his arms. "I know. I know it was. Is Bark okay?"

"Yeah," Dennis said, with a sad, hiccuping noise. "You said take nap. And, I didn't want to, but I did. She waked me and I feel very yuck!"

Dennis gave another watery sob, laying his head on MacGyver's shoulder and whining softly.

"I know, I know. I'm sorry you feel yuck," MacGyver assured Dennis, running a hand in gentle circles over the boy's back and kissing his temple. "Try to calm down, buddy."

"I don't get it," Murdoc said, flatly, earning a sigh.

"You were hiding in a cabin in the mountains with Cassian. A meteorite struck and you got hit with fragments. You ended up in a cocoon and when you emerged..." MacGyver trailed off, motioning to the tiny child in his arms.

"Where's Cassian?" Murdoc snarled.

"LEAVE MY CASSIAN ALONE!" Dennis screamed, turning around slightly.


"Do you think I would adopt you and not take care of Cassian?" Murdoc's MacGyver asked him, reproachfully, in a low voice. "You adopted...Dennis, right?"

"Yeah. He was about one and a half, then."

"I'm three," Dennis murmured, his voice slow and sleepy.

"You are now, yes," MacGyver agreed, chuckling.

"You were cute," MacGyver teased his lover.

"Well, I'll leave you gentlemen alone to compare notes. You'll be recorded, of course," Zarla announced, then punched some buttons on her pedestal, making furniture appear in the room. "Make yourselves comfy!"

With that, orange light surrounded her, taking her away. With a huff of anger, MacGyver went and sat down on the long sofa that was now in the center of the room. He maneuvered Dennis onto one of the pillows and covered him with Bark. Murdoc and his MacGyver joined him, sitting in the armchairs across from the couch. MacGyver couldn't help staring at Murdoc, then looking away.

"Something?" Murdoc pressed.

"No," MacGyver assured him, then laughed ruefully. "It's odd seeing you again. I almost wish Cassian was here. He still misses you, sometimes. He loves Dennis, but it isn't the same."

"At least they're together," Murdoc said, shrugging, taking the practical point of view.

"You're both being raised by me," MacGyver stressed, but Murdoc just laughed.
"And, I wish you luck," Murdoc said, smirking.

"Thanks," MacGyver said, laughing. "How did you two end up together? A romantic relationship never even occurred to me!"

"He asked me on a date, to show Cassian it was okay to like other boys," Murdoc's MacGyver explained, amused. "Our encounters after that kept getting friendlier, until Nick Helman ordered Murdoc to kill or seduce me."

"Helman," MacGyver sighed. "He keeps popping up like a bad penny."

"He's part of our family, now. I mean, he's Murdoc's dad," MacGyver insisted, when his other self gave a disbelieving frown. "Come on. We really need to see, if we can escape."

They examined the room and its equipment, but the technology was too alien. Giving up, they sat back down and talked, comparing universes, until Dennis woke up. The boy sat up, stretching, then opened his eyes. He looked at Murdoc's MacGyver, then turned to his daddy and froze. He turned back to MacGyver and blinked up at him.

"Dad-dy. You doubled. Double is two. One. Two," Dennis said, counting on his fingers. He then pointed at each of the MacGyvers, repeating, "One. Two."

Dennis finished with a decisive little nod, staring between them. MacGyver laughed, ruffling his son's hair.

"Yeah, there's two of me, here. Remember Spiderverse? This is an alternate universe version of me and that's his boyfriend, Murdoc."

"Spiderverse? Ohhh," Dennis crooned, then his eyes went wide. "Daddy?!"

"Yeah?"

Dennis pressed up against MacGyver, staring in his eyes excitedly, asking, "Are you Spiderman?!"

"No, I'm not Spiderman," MacGyver denied, laughing.

"Oh. Is Uncle Jack Spiderman?"

"No," MacGyver assured him, rolling his eyes. "He probably wishes he was."

"Ohh," Dennis said, disappointed, before cheering up again. "Can I be Spiderman?"

The others laughed.

"Wow. You are in trouble," Murdoc told MacGyver happily.

"Ye-ahh. I'll tell you what, Dennis. When you're at least eighteen years old, about twice as old as Cassian, if a radioactive spider chooses to bite you, and you develop superpowers, then, yes. You can be Spiderman."

"Yay!" Dennis exclaimed, clapping his hands.

"I think he only heard that last sentence," MacGyver said, earning a weary nod of agreement from Dennis' dad.

"I heard! I gotta be really old, get bit by special spider, and get powers. Then, I can be Spiderman,"
Dennis protested, earning more laughter.

"A spider has to *choose* to bite you. You can't make them bite you," MacGyver clarified, making Dennis huff in annoyance.

"Of all the superheroes, why would you want to be Spiderman?" Murdoc scoffed.

"Why not?" his lover asked, surprised.

"I hate spiders."

"Who do you wanna be?" Dennis demanded.

"Tony Stark," Murdoc said promptly. "If we were superheroes, my boyscout would be Captain America and they got married in at least one universe."

"I would *not* be Captain America," MacGyver denied, firmly.

"Of course, you would!" Murdoc argued. "All gold hair and righteousness."

"Please," MacGyver scoffed. "If I was superhero, I would be...like, one of the X-men or something."

"Actually," Murdoc said to Dennis. "My boyscout here says he's Spiderman and I'm Deadpool. Which would make you two Thor and Loki!"

"Okay, you know a lot more about comic books than I thought you would," MacGyver told him.

"I have a ten-year-old son and Marvel movies are the rulers of cinema, right now," Murdoc pointed out, shrugging.

"You have a son? Who is he?" Dennis asked.

"His name is Cassian," Murdoc answered, earning twin glares from the MacGyvers.

"Like *my* Cassian?"

"Very similar, yes."

"Murdoc," MacGyver sighed.

"What? More than one person can have the same name."

"I wanna go home," Dennis announced mournfully, tugging at his dad's sleeve.

"Me, too, buddy, but we have to wait for Zarla to come back."

"She's bad."

"I know, but we don't know how to use her equipment."

"I see buttons."

"We don't know which ones to push."

"All of them!" Dennis insisted, jumping up, then screaming, "I want to go HOME!"

"Dennis, don't..." MacGyver began, jumping up, but his tiny son moved amazingly fast.
Dennis reached Zarla's platform, pushing a series of buttons, before MacGyver caught up to him and snatched him away. Alarms squealed and the lights dimmed, then grew uncomfortably bright. The furniture disappeared and a slow trickle of water began running down one wall.

"Dennis," MacGyver scolded, his eyes narrowed to slits against the light.

Dennis covered his own eyes with his hands, sobbing, "I want to go home, Daddy. I want Mommy and Cassian and Uncle Jack..."

"I know, sweetheart, but we won't get home, if you destroy the place!"

"Why make bad buttons?"

"They're not bad. You just have to know what they do and when to press them."

"No. They're bad. My eyes hurt."

"Well, if you weren't a naughty boy, they wouldn't," Zarla snapped, appearing at her console.

"You need to shut up," Murdoc warned her, smiling slightly.

"I'm not naughty. I'm very little and I. Want. My. MOMMY!" Dennis yelled at her.

"I thought you wanted your daddy," Zarla sneered.

"Yeah. Daddy wants Mommy, too," Dennis said reasonably.

"Fine. I'm done with all of you. One and a half psychos and two saccharine golden boys," Zarla ranted, working to get her controls reset. "This could have been fun! You could have cooperated, been intrigued by the science, asked questions about the other Murdocs and MacGyvers I observed, but nooo. You just whine and whine about being kidnapped and me waking up your brat!"

"That's enough, Zarla," Murdoc's MacGyver warned her. "Don't push us too far."

"Oh, I'm pushing you. Right out the door!" Zarla huffed angrily, pushing a final few buttons. The orange light surrounded Murdoc and his MacGyver, sending them home. Dennis clung to the remaining MacGyver's neck, whimpering.

"Oh, quit. I'm not a psycho. They're fine," Zarla reluctantly assured them.

A viewscreen appeared, showing Murdoc and MacGyver standing in a kitchen, looking relieved.

"I should have killed her," Murdoc said regretfully.

"No, you shouldn't have," MacGyver corrected, drily. "Our counterparts need her to get home."

"Well, that's an over-reaction," Zarla sulked, shutting down the screen.

"He's a sociopath and an assassin. You expected him to be reasonable?" MacGyver asked, almost amused.

"Your turn," Zarla said, ignoring him.

The orange light came and went and MacGyver and Dennis found themselves in their living room.

"Angus? Dennis? What's going on? I thought you were asleep," Nasha told Dennis, as MacGyver
brought Dennis to her.

"There was a bad lady, Mommy!" Dennis cried, throwing himself into her arms and clinging.

"What?!"

"It's okay. I'll explain later," MacGyver promised her, leaning in and giving Nasha a kiss.

"Everything's okay?" Nasha asked, doubtfully, rubbing circles over Dennis' back.

"Yeah. Everything's fine," MacGyver promised. "We're home."

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