

Sly and Megan: Her Legacy

A Scorpion 2.0 Story

By Kate Simon

Sly grabbed a juice from the fridge and sat back down at his desk. He reviewed his latest project for Scorpion. They'd been back together as a team for about a month. Working together again had been a bit awkward but they were trying.

"Good morning."

Sly looked up and saw Florence smiling at him. "Good morning."

"I saved you an egg bagel. You know how Toby scarfs them down." She handed him a small plate. The bagel had just enough cream cheese. She had taken the time to notice just how he liked it.

"Thanks. I appreciate that."

"I enjoyed dinner last night."

Sly smiled. Florence was the first woman he'd dated since his wife Megan had died. Paige had coached him on what to say and Cabe had advised him on where to take her. It was a small Italian place Cabe liked to take Allie. It was small and had a family feel but the food was excellent. "I enjoyed it too."

"Maybe next time I can cook for you."

"You cook?" He gasped as he realized how bad that sounded. "I'm sorry...I didn't mean..."

"No, it's fine. I do enjoy cooking but I don't get much of a chance to cook for anyone."

"I'd like that."

Paige walked over with a stack of mail. "Good morning."

"Hi Paige," they both replied.

"Sly, you have some mail." Paige handed him the letter.

"I need to get back to work," said Florence. "Talk to you later?"

"Sure thing," he smiled.

Paige watched as Florence walked over to her work station. "I take it dinner went well," she smiled.

"Yeah, it was really nice."

"When are you going out again?"

"We're taking it slow." He noticed Paige's smile fade. "But she did just off to cook me dinner."

Paige grinned from ear to ear. "I knew it!"

Sly smiled as he started to flip through his mail. Most of it was subscription information for different gaming magazines mixed in with some theoretical mathematics journals. His heart stopped when he saw a letter from Mercy General. When Megan was still able to get out of her hospital bed, they would go down to the maternity wing and watch the babies. They knew that children would never be for the two of them but they loved watching the new life. They used to look at the babies and make up scenarios for the child's future. Who'd be a scientist, who'd be a teacher, who'd find a cure for MS. After Megan died he hoped to raise enough money to name the wing for her. He'd raised about half the money so he'd invested it. He was still about fifty thousand short. He carefully opened the letter and he began to hyperventilate. "Holy cow! Holy cow!"

"What's up, buddy?" asked Cabe.

"Somebody's making a contribution to Mercy General for fifty thousand in Megan's name." He looked up at everyone who'd gathered around his desk. "Do you know what this means?" He looked at Walter. "It means we can name the pediatric wing after Megan."

"That's great!" said Toby. "Congrats, buddy."

Everyone but Walter was smiling. Sly stood up and walked over to him. "Are you okay?"

Walter nodded. "I'm okay. This would make my sister very happy." He put a hand on Sly's shoulder. "You were a great husband to Megan."

“Thank you, Walter,” he said as pulled him into a hug. He looked over Walter’s shoulder and saw Florence watching from the corner.

Cabe watched as Sly talked to the Mercy General administrator. He was nodding and agreeing but he'd gone pale. He noticed Paige was watching too. When he Sly disconnected the call Paige pushed out her chair. Cabe put his hand on her shoulder. "Let me," he said. She nodded and he approached Sly. "Hey buddy."

"Hi," he said quietly.

"Come on. Let's get take a ride."

"Oh...I should," he pointed toward his desk.

"Didn't you say the new Super Fun Guy comes out today."

Sly gave him a small smile. "Yeah."

"Come on, it's on me."

Cabe didn't try to talk to Sylvester in the car or in the comic book store. He waited until they pulled into Kavelski's lot. "Come on. I need a coffee and I'll spring for a milkshake."

They sat at a booth and the waitress immediately poured Cabe a coffee. "Why don't you get milkshake?" asked Sly.

Cabe smiled and patted his stomach. "I have to watch it. Homeland is pretty strict about fitness tests, even for an old coot like me."

"You're not old and you're in great shape."

"Ah, thanks kid."

"Besides, we wouldn't want to work with anyone else. I know I wouldn't."

"Thanks Sly." He took a sip of his coffee. "I want to talk to you about the call from Mercy General. You looked very upset. This is supposed to be a good thing. You've worked for this for a long time."

"It is a good thing but they're going to make it a big event, black tie. They said it's a great way to raise more funds for the pediatric wing."

“So what’s the problem?”

“I’d have to make a speech. I’d be the center of attention. You know how that makes me uncomfortable.”

“You’re the alderman for West Altadena. You’ve made speeches before.”

“To a small group, a dozen at most, and Patty of course.”

“Of course.”

“They’re will be hundreds of people there. I’ll be the center of attention. You know I’m not good at that.”

“You remember that day I first met you?”

“Of course. That was the day we saved all those planes.”

“And the people in them,” Cabe smiled. “When I watched you cleaning off the lunch counter before you could sit down I wondered what the hell I’d gotten myself into. You have grown so much since then.” He reached out and patted his hand. “Son, you’ve helped saved the world, for real. You really are a superhero.”

“Cabe, who are we kidding? I’m still terrified of most of what we get ourselves into.”

“That’s what makes you so brave.”

“Excuse me? That’s not logical.”

“Do you think I wasn’t scared when I was riding sidesaddle on a nuclear missile? I was but I knew what we had to do and we did it. That’s what you do. You grabbed a rattlesnake to help save my life. You had to be scared.”

“I was terrified.”

“And you did it anyway. That’s real courage, buddy. You’ve wanted to do this to honor Megan. It’s important and it will save lives.”

“Will you come?”

“I wouldn’t miss it,” he smiled.

“Do you think the team will come?”

Cabe thought about the talk he would have to have with Walter. “I guarantee it.”

While Sly was out with Florence getting a tux, Cabe called a meeting of the team. “Okay people, listen up. The banquet fundraiser is next Saturday night. I know Sly has put you all on the guest list. Have you accepted? A chorus of yes came from everyone except Walter. He walked over to Walter’s desk and sat down. “Talk to me.”

“I’m busy next week.”

“No you’re not.”

“How do you know?”

“Because you aren’t dating anyone and the only thing you could possibly doing is working. Work can wait.”

“Cabe, the team was broken up for months. We’re just starting to get back on our feet. We have proposals...”

“Bull. You don’t want to go because it will bring up all those feelings you have about Megan’s death.”

“You’re beginning to sound like Toby.”

“Yeah, well the Doc would tell you the same thing. You’re deflecting. You should go to honor your sister. And if for no other reason you should go because Sylvester is your brother in law. He’s your family.”

Walter looked at him and Cabe could see he was genuinely frightened. “I used to have Paige to help me with things like...but now.”

“I’ll be there, right next to you. So will all your friends. You won’t have to do this alone. Even Paige will help.”

Walter glanced over at Paige reviewing papers at her desk. “How can you be sure?”

“It’s who she is.”

Walter sighed and nodded. “Okay. I’ll go.”

“Great. Now go get a tux.”



He rolled his eyes and turned to his computer. Cabe smiled when he did a search of local tuxedo shops. Cabe stood and patted him on the shoulder. "Good man." He walked over to Paige and smiled. "That's a yes from everybody Sly invited."

Paige shook her head and showed him a copy of Sly's guest list to the banquet. "Not everybody."

Cabe looked at the list. "Son of a bitch!" He pulled his car keys from his pocket and headed toward the door.

Paige called after him. "Where are you going?"

"To kick some ass."

The forty five minute drive went pretty quickly. The traffic wasn't too bad at this time of day and even it was he was too busy thinking of what he was going to say. He'd gotten the address from Homeland. He knew he wouldn't be expected and that's what he was counting on. He parked the car and took a deep breath. He walked up to the suburban tract house and knocked. A small woman about his own age opened the door. She had short brown hair and Sylvester's eyes. "Mrs. Dodd?"

"Yes?"

Cabe flashed his badge. "Cabe Gallo, Homeland Security. I work with your son."

"Is he alright?" she asked.

He nodded. "Yes, Ma'am. He's fine. Is your husband home?"

"Yes, come in." He followed her into the living room and she opened a patio door. "Ken. There's an Agent Gallo here to see you."

Kenneth Dodd walked into the living room. Despite the fact that he'd been mowing the lawn, he still looked every inch the Army Colonel. "Agent Gallo. What can I do for you?" He extended his hand. Cabe clasped it but didn't let go.

"You can tell me why you're not going to the Mercy General benefit honoring your son."

Dodd looked surprised at being spoken to in such a direct manner. "It's a fund raiser. Someone always has their hand out. If it's such a big deal I'll send a check."

"Did you even read the invitation before you refused?"

"Ken, what is he talking about?"

"It's nothing, Mary. Sylvester sent us an invitation to a fundraiser for Mercy General."

"What?"

"Did you even notice that the hospital is naming the new pediatric wing after Sylvester's late wife."

“His what?” demanded Mary.

“What wife?” asked Dodd.

“You didn’t even bother to ask him, did you. He saved your ass on that mission. You said you’d be in touch but you never followed through, you son of a bitch!”

“Watch your tone, Agent.”

“You can’t pull rank on me, Colonel. I’m retired military too. Marine Major, and I don’t give a damn what rank you were. What you are is an absentee father of a remarkable young man.”

“Alright that’s enough! Both of you!” yelled Mary. It was obvious Dodd was not used to his wife raising her voice, especially to him. She pointed to the dining room table. “Both of you, sit. Now!” Both of the men took seats at the table. Mary drilled her husband with a look that would terrify the toughest military man. “You said you saw Sylvester when he consulted on a mission.”

“I did.”

“You didn’t say you took our son with you on the mission.”

“It was classified.”

“Don’t pull that with me, Kenneth Dodd.” She pointed at Cabe. “You. Tell me what happened.”

“Our team, Scorpion, was asked to assist Col. Dodd on a mission. The details are classified but your son was integral part of the success of the mission. He also saved your husband’s ass. Mrs. Dodd, your son is a brilliant man. He’s has done great things.”

“Tell me about his wife.”

“His wife was Megan O’Brien, the sister of Scorpion’s leader, Walter O’Brien. They married a few weeks before she died from Multiple Sclerosis. While she was still able, they would spend time at the pediatric wing, looking at the babies. It was a happy time for them. Megan was a remarkable woman and your son loved her very much. Sylvester has spent two years raising money, a quarter of a million dollars, for the new pediatric wing at

Mercy General. They are going to name the wing for Megan and honor Sly for all the work he's done." Cabe looked at Dodd, who looked remarkably uncomfortable. "Sylvester put you on the guest list and the hospital sent the invitation. Your husband declined."

"You did what?" she growled. Dodd was obviously mortified at being taken to task by his wife in front of Cabe. She turned to Cabe. "When is it?"

"Next Saturday night. It's black tie."

"We'll be there," she said.

"I know that will please Sylvester very much. Perhaps you could meet us at our office first. Sly is rather nervous at being the center of attention."

"If we show up without warning he'll freeze. I'm familiar with it. You obviously have our contact information. Send us the details. Also, send me a number to reach Sly. I think we should talk before we show up."

"Wise plan," said Cabe. He looked at Dodd and realized what he'd had in mind for the man was nothing compared to what his wife was about to say to him. He stood and extended his hand. "Thank you, Mrs. Dodd."

"Mary."

"Thank you, Mary." He turned to Dodd and extended his hand. "Colonel."

Dodd took his hand and smirked. "Major."

Cabe let him get away with the shot and saw himself out. He knew Kenneth Dodd was about to have a very bad day.

Sylvester looked at himself in the mirror. He looked pretty good. He looked different, that was for sure. Maybe he should get a haircut?

“Are you coming out or do I have to come in there,” called Florence.

“Okay, I’m coming.” He walked out of the dressing room and Florence gasped. “What? Is it awful? I know I need a haircut.”

She walked closer to him and smiled. She slid her hand up his arm. “You look wonderful. So handsome.”

“Thank you,” he blushed. “So you wouldn’t be ashamed to be seen with me in this.”

“No, I wouldn’t.” Her smile faded. “But I won’t be going.”

“What? Why?”

“Sylvester this night is about you and Megan. We’ve only just started dating. It would be awkward for you to explain who I am.”

“You’re my friend. All my friends are coming.”

She took his hand in hers. “It would be awkward for me. I know how much you loved her.”

“Florence, I don’t compare you to her. I never have.”

“I know you don’t, but we’re just starting. Let’s do this. You’re buying this beautiful tuxedo. Why don’t we plan our own special night. You wear the tux and I’ll find a gown and we’ll go somewhere fancy.”

He threaded his fingers through hers, something he could have never done a few years ago. Florence smiled at him and he understood. She was right. “Okay. That’s what we’ll do. You’re going to have to plan the evening. My idea of a fancy evening is sitting at a booth at Kavelski’s instead of getting take out.”

Florence gave him a soft kiss on the cheek. “It’s a date.”

The week had gone quickly and Sly was still agonizing over his speech. He wanted it to be perfect. He wanted everyone to know the wonderful, kind, funny, beautiful woman he'd married. He tossed down his pen as Cabe walked up to his desk.

"Problem, kid?"

"My speech. It's not coming. The banquet is in two days and I've got nothing."

"You will. Just take a breath and think about what Megan would say, not what you would say."

Sly grabbed his pen and smiled. "That's good. I can do that. What Megan would say."

"Son, before you get started I need to have a word with you, in private."

Sly paled. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing. Let's go in the office and I'll tell you all about it." Sly followed him into the office and closed the door. "Have a seat."

"Okay, you're starting to freak me out. What's going on?"

"Just sit for a minute." Cabe sat down in the opposite chair. "Last week I went to see your parents."

"What? Why would you do that?"

"I was angry. I saw they had declined the invitation to the banquet."

Sly shrugged. "I sent the invitation because I thought it was the right thing to do, but I didn't expect them to accept. I wasn't surprised."

"Well, you're a better man than I am. I drove up to Rancho Cucamonga and met both your parents."

"You did?"

"Yes." Cabe smiled. "Your mom is a piece of work. She didn't know about the banquet. Your father declined it without really reading it and without telling your mom."

“That doesn’t surprise me.”

“Well, your mother was none too pleased with your father. She said they will be there.”

Sly’s heart skipped. “They will?”

Cabe smiled. “Your mother asked that she talked to you before they saw on Saturday.”

“She wants to talk to me?”

“Very much. I have her phone number.”

“You mean now?”

“Yeah. Are you okay?”

“Um, yeah. I guess so.”

“So should I call her?”

Sly took a breath and nodded. “Okay.”

Cabe dialed a number and waited for it to connect. “Hello, Mary? It’s Cabe Gallo. I’m here with Sylvester. Yes, he’d like to talk to you. Hold on.” Cabe handed him the phone. Sly felt himself starting to freeze but he pushed past it. He took the phone from Cabe.

“Hello, Mom?”

Cabe patted his shoulder as he left him alone in the office.

“Oh, Sylvester.”

He heard a quake in her voice. “Are you okay?”

“Oh baby, I’ve missed you so much.”

“It’s okay, Mom.”

“No, it’s not. I honestly thought sending you to live with your grandfather was the right thing to do. You and your father were always at odds. Your grandfather was so much more patient. I thought you’d be happier. I should have tried harder.”

“He wasn’t more patient, Mom, just hard of hearing. I would talk and he never heard me.”

“We were so upset when you disappeared. We looked for you for a year.”

Sly gasped. “You did?”

“Of course. Police, flyers, private detectives. After a year the detective said he’d exhausted all avenues. Your father said we had to accept you didn’t want to be found.”

“I’m sorry, Mom. I didn’t know.” He could hear her snifle.

“Can you forgive me?”

“For what?”

“For not being a good mother, for giving up.”

He heard her sobbing. “Mom. It’s okay, really. There are no handbooks on how to raise a kid like me. You did your best.”

“It wasn’t enough.”

“It’s all in the past now, Mom.” He smiled when he heard her blow her nose.

“Your friend Cabe came to the house. He told us you’d been married. We had no idea.”

“Her name was Megan. She was Walter’s sister. Walter’s my boss and pretty much my best friend. Megan was funny and beautiful and...”

“And what, dear?”

“She loved me. I couldn’t believe it at first but she really did.”

“You loved her.”

“So much.”



“Was she ill when you met?”

“Yes. She was reliant on crutches back then. It got worse as time went on.”

“I’m so sorry, sweetheart.”

“Don’t be, Mom. Megan was the best thing that ever happened to me.”

“Now you’ve raised all this money in her name.”

“She wanted to leave the world a better place because she was here. She did.”

“I’m so proud of you dear.”

“Thanks, Mom. Cabe tells me you’re coming to the banquet.”

“Of course. We wouldn’t miss it.”

“We?”

“Yes, your father will be there. We told Cabe we’d stop by and see you at your office beforehand.”

Sly chuckled, “Well it’s more of a garage but I look forward to seeing you.”

“So will I, baby. I love you.”

His eyes welled as he tried to stay calm. “I love you too, Mom.” He disconnected the call and it hit him how much he’d missed her. He closed his eyes and was trying to compose himself when he heard the door open. He opened his eyes and saw Cabe standing in the doorway.

“How are you doing, buddy?”

Sly stood and handed Cabe his phone. “Thank you,” he whispered as he put his arms around the only real father he’d ever known.

“Oh Sly, you look wonderful,” said Paige.

“Thanks,” he said with a smile.

“You look very dapper,” said Allie as she walked toward him.

Cabe put his hand on Sly’s shoulder. “You good, son?”

“Yeah. I notice you made sure everyone was here before my parents.”

Cabe coughed. “A well, I...”

“Thanks, Cabe. I can use the backup. You might talk to Walter. He seems a little off, not just uncomfortable in a social situation.”

“Don’t worry, Sly. I’ve got it.”

Cabe followed Walter up to the loft and closed the door behind him. “Alright, Walter. Talk to me.”

“About what?”

“You’re worried about tonight.”

“This is Sly’s night.”

“You’re worried about how it will make you feel. Well, I’ll tell you right now, you’re going to feel awful. You’re going to remember the pain of her illness, of her death. You’ll remember it as the one problem you couldn’t solve.”

“Then why am I going?”

“To remember the joy. To remember all the good times you had as kids.”

“She did look out for me.” Walter looked away but Cabe could still see the tears in his eyes.

“Walter, you couldn’t save her, but maybe this center will save the child who grows up to cure MS. Or it could save a little girl who grows up to save her little brother from bullies.”

Walter smiled and wiped his eyes. He stood and patted Cabe's shoulder. "You know, you keep saying you're not one of us, one of the geniuses." He gave Cabe a hug. "You're wrong."

A knock on the door and Paige put her head through the door. "Cabe, the Dodd's are here."

Sly froze for a moment as his parents stood in front of him. He'd seen his father last year, but his mom, he hadn't seen her in more than a decade. "Hi, Mom," he whispered. He nodded at his father. "Sir."

Mary Dodd's lip started to quiver. "Sylvester." She walked toward him and slipped her arms around his waist. "My baby," she whispered.

"I'm hardly a baby anymore."

She looked up into his eyes and smiled. "You'll always be my baby."

His father approached and looked incredibly uncomfortable despite the fact that his tux was as well fit as any of his uniforms. "Hello Sylvester." Sly was stunned when he extended his hand. "You look very...squared away in your tuxedo."

"Thank you...Dad. You look very good too."

Mary pulled back and tried to pull herself together. "I've met Agent Gallo. Please introduce me to your friends."

"Oh, yes. Dad, you've already met everyone. Mom, this is Walter O'Brien, my brother in law."

"Hello, Walter."

"Hello Mrs. Dodd. Your son is a great asset to our team." He looked Sly. "And he was an excellent husband to my sister. He made her very happy."

"Thank you, Walter," he whispered. "This is Toby Curtis and his wife Happy Quinn." They both shook his mother's hand.

"Hey," said Happy.

"This is Paige Dineen and her son, Ralph."

"Hello, Mrs. Dodd. It's very nice to meet you."

Ralph stuck his hand out like a perfect gentleman. "Hello."

"My, you look very handsome in your tuxedo."

“He’s part of the team, Mom.” Mary looked at Sly and back at Ralph. Then she looked at Paige. From the look on Mary’s face Ralph could see what she was thinking.

“Before I met Walter and the team, I didn’t talk. People, Mom, thought I was challenged. As soon as Walter met me he knew what was going on in my mind.”

Paige smiled. “Ralph is right. Before Scorpion I had no idea how to reach him. They changed everything for us, including Sly.”

Sly walked over and put his arm around his mother’s shoulder. “It’s like I said Mom, there’s no handbook on how to raise people like us.” His father walked over toward his son. His father smiled at him and nodded.

She looked at Sly’s desk and saw the frame Happy made for Megan’s picture. “Is this...?”

Sly smiled. “Yes, that was Megan.”

“She was beautiful.” She showed the picture to Ken. He looked at the picture and his face softened.

“You look happy together.”

Sly was floored. “We were, Dad.”

His father actually looked him in the eye. “I’m glad, son. I’m glad you found that kind of love.” He looked at his wife and she’d looked equally surprised. “I found that with your mother. Who else would put up with my crap for thirty years?”

Mary’s eyes watered. “Oh, Ken,” she whispered.

Ken put his arm around his wife’s waist. “We should get moving. We don’t want to be late.”

Sly took a breath and walked into ballroom with his parents at his side. Carolyn Morgan pushed through the crowd to meet him. “Sylvester, it’s so good to see you. It’s a wonderful turnout.”

“There sure are a lot of people.” He paused and forced himself to focus. “Carolyn, these are my parents, Colonel Kenneth Dodd and Mary Dodd.”

Carolyn extended her hand. “Mrs. Dodd, Colonel Dodd, you must be so proud of your son. His efforts are going to help save the lives of children for years to come.”

“We are,” said Mary. “Very proud.”

“Let me get you settled at your table.” Carolyn led them to a large round table and set Sly in a spot where he could be seen. As his parents sat on either side on him, he looked for Cabe. Cabe smiled and nodded understanding Sly was looking for reassurance. Cabe held Allie’s chair while everyone else on team took their seats.

Sly smiled through dinner and tried to pay attention but the truth was all he could think about was he had to make a speech. These people had all contributed to the new wing. He had to say something important and meaningful when all he wanted to do was go home.

Carolyn came to his table and tapped his shoulder. “We’re about to get started if you’d like to join us on stage.”

“Oh boy,” he said. “Here we go.”

“You can do this, Sly,” said Cabe. “Remember, what would Megan do?”

Sly smiled. “Right. I can do this.” He walked up to the stage and took a seat next to Carolyn. She smiled at him as she approached the podium.

“Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you all for coming to our event to celebrate the opening of our new pediatric wing.” Carolyn paused for the polite applause. “Two years ago I met a young couple outside the nursery. I saw the hospital band on the young woman’s arm and assumed she was a maternity patient.” She sighed and paused. “I was wrong. Megan was in the hospital being treated for end stage MS. Megan and Sly

would come down almost every day to look at the babies. They said their visits made them happy, imagining the futures of all the children. Their visits became fewer and then one day I noticed they hadn't visited in a while. That's when I found out that Megan had died."

Sly closed his eyes and tried to hold it together. When he opened them he saw Cabe looking at him. Cabe nodded at him and he pulled himself together. He could do this, for Megan.

"That could have been the end of the story, but it wasn't. Sylvester has come to visit the children every week for the last two years." Carolyn hit a button and a screen behind them lit up with a picture of him reading to a bald child attached to an IV."

Sly glanced down at his table and all his friends were looking at each other. He hadn't mentioned his visits to anyone. The only one who didn't look surprised was Cabe. He looked proud. Sly started doing it because it helped him with his grief over losing Megan. Eventually he realized he was doing it for himself.

"Sylvester sometimes came dressed as his favorite superhero." Caroline switched pictures and everyone snickered at a picture of him in his Super Fun Guy costume. Sly could feel himself flush bright red. "He acted out stories for the kids and made them laugh. For a little while they were just happy kids." Caroline looked at him and smiled. "Sly has been a constant for the children and the staff for the last two years. What you may not know is Sylvester Dodd is an actual superhero. There is someone here who would like to tell you about it. Please welcome Air National Guard Major Marcus Bronson."

Sly's heart raced as a very familiar man walked on to the stage. He hadn't seen him since the EMT's were loading him into an ambulance. Marcus walked toward him and Sly stood to shake his hand. Marcus pulled him into a hug. "How you doing, buddy?"

"Speechless," he replied.

Marcus laughed as he walked toward the podium. "Good evening. I am here tonight because of Sylvester Dodd. I am a helicopter pilot with the fire jumping division of the National Guard. I was flying Sly and the rest of the Scorpion team into a dense section

of the National Forest to rescue some lost hikers. High winds cause a wind shear that caused my chopper to crash. We landed in a tree and Sly calculated the right order for us to slide down the rig Happy Quinn had set up. Once we on the ground the rest of the team left to find the hikers, which they did. But I was hurt and Sly got stuck with me. While we were waiting a fire started. I couldn't move. I had a piece a metal wedge in my femoral artery. I told Sly to leave me." Marcus looked and Sly and smiled. "But he refused. He rigged up a sled out of one of the helicopter doors and he dragged me for miles. Then the sled gave out. I ordered him again to leave me and he still refused. That's when Sylvester Dodd carried me the last two miles on his back. I am standing here today because of Sylvester Dodd."

The entire room erupted in applause. He looked at the team's table where he was aware of their applause but all he could see was his father. It was if he was looking at Sly for the first time. He glanced at his mother who was applauding and crying. He glanced back at the podium and Marcus was pulling out a flat box from the podium.

"When I heard Sylvester was being honored for his work with the hospital I knew it was the perfect opportunity to present him with this. Sly, would you please join me?" Sly stood and walked toward the podium in a haze. What was happening? "Once a year the Air National Guard presents the Civilian Medal of Valor. It is given to a civilian who has displayed remarkable heroism in the face of incredible odds. On behalf of the Governor of California and Major General Paul Hughes it is my honor to present Sylvester Dodd with this year's Civilian Medal of Valor." Marcus took the medal with it's ribbon necklace from the box and put it around Sly's neck. He tried to move but he felt frozen until Marcus shook his hand and then pulled him into a hug. "Congratulations, Sylvester, and thank you." Marcus left the stage and left Sly to acknowledge the standing ovation.

"Thank you," he said as people started taking their seats. He pulled some note cards from his coat pocket and he flipped through a few. Then he set them aside. He touched the medal hanging around his neck. "I never expected jewelry." He was surprised at the audience smiles and snickers. "This night is supposed to honor my wife, Megan. We used to look at all the babies and wonder about their futures. Who would be the artists, who would be the scientists, who would be the one to cure MS. The past two years I've



tried to raise money to help those children reach those potentials.” He touched the medal again. “Even this award is because of her. Megan helped me reached my potential. When my team needed me but I was too afraid to go on, when I wanted to quit, she told me “That’s a You problem.” She reminded me what I was capable of. If I was able to help the team, or help Marcus, it was because of her. She believed in me when I didn’t believe in myself.” He chuckled. “Even more shocking, she loved me. Her love taught me to live each day to the fullest, and we did. Even though our time together was short, I have no regrets.” She turned to Carolyn who flashed a picture of Sly and Megan on the screen. Megan O’Brien Dodd lived every day to the fullest and she left this world a much better place because she was here. She left me a much better man.” He nodded to Carolyn, who had two men bring out a covered easel. He reached for the cover. “I am honored to dedicate the Megan O’Brien Dodd Pediatric Wing.” He pulled the cover off and revealed the plaque with a beautiful picture of a smiling Megan. Sly kissed his two fingers and touched the picture. “We did it, sweetheart. We did it together.”