

“STUCK WITH FIONA”

Seventy-something Fiona Dunwoody, a cranky, yet lovable woman on the verge of senility was given a ‘faux’ diamond brooch by her soldier father when he returned from WWII Belgium. He had taken it off a Gestapo agent. Fiona treasured the brooch and promised her father she would never let it go.

Klaus Klein, Fiona’s sleazy attorney, believes the brooch is a Royal European treasure missing since the outbreak of the War. Klaus, who has to be the cheapest crook who ever lived, hires two idiot thugs to steal the brooch. Wannabe mafioso Ugo, who was booted from the mob after he accidentally shot an IRS agent in the foot, and Punchy, an ex-prize fighter who never won a bout, and still assumes a fighter stance, bobbing and weaving, when he hears anything similar to a bell go off.

Ugo and Punchy go to Fiona’s mountain house and demand the brooch. She plays dumb (an easy task) saying she doesn’t know where it is. While ransacking the place, Punchy touches a button that sends a loud ring throughout the area, a warning system to other people in the area that someone is in trouble.

Dana, a mountain newcomer, responds to the alarm while the thugs try to leave in their ratty car that won’t start. Dana’s brakes fail which causes her to crash into them. When hassled for her car keys, Dana throws them into a ravine. The thugs do leave after stealing a pickup parked behind Fiona’s house.

Fiona’s hard-working son Quin arrives. He’s a general contractor and is nearly bankrupt after losing a phony court case filed against him which set him back seven hundred thousand shekels. He owns the pickup and desperately needs it for a house he has been commissioned to build.

Fiona drives Quin nuts. He was conceived during what Fiona calls her ‘drunken period’ of life. She narrowed his father down to either a Jewish diamond courier who moved to India to ‘find himself,’ or, an Irish bartender who lives in Dublin. Quin often frets about not knowing if he’s a ‘pastrami sandwich,’ or a ‘baked potato.’

Quin never gave a hoot about the brooch until learning it might actually be the treasure that the Belgium government is looking for. He dare not call the cops because if it’s real, Fiona could end up in prison. He had hidden the pickup behind Fiona’s house because the bank’s trying to re-posses it. Thus, he can’t report it stolen either.

Seeking help, Quin musters a group of colorful friends. They include his Uncle Ned Perkins, a private eye who rarely has clients. Ned had been pensioned off LAPD after 35 years when he was determined to be ‘certifiably crazy.’

Ned always carries a gun, and always has his dog Pretzel with him. Unfortunately, Pretzel has a ‘social’ problem that tends to kicks-in at awkward times. Others thrown in the mix include the following:

Dana is a budding novelist who's writing a crime story. She agrees to loan Nick her car, only after he'd agreed to let her tag along with him so she can conduct research for her pending book. . .

Nick's neighbor, Jitters, a caffeine addict. A computer genius, Jitters is seldom helpful due to being constantly jacked-up on triple espressos. . .

Sam-the-Scam, a Mickey Rooney-esk con who befriended Uncle Ned after Ned had busted him during his cop days. Sam runs a free lunch program for the homeless in an alley behind a crummy bar. People often ask Sam where he gets the food, but they never get an answer. Sam's knowledge of human nature will prove helpful. . .

Ira is a sixty-ish ace jeweler does his magic where he both works and lives, in a rest home. He hides there to avoid his rotten kids who want all of his money. . .

Finally, there's Lloyd, a deaf locksmith. Though he isn't really deaf, just anti-social. It's his way of avoiding people, and it works like a charm. . .

Constantly mucking things up, Fiona thinks she remembers what she did with the brooch, then changes her mind. Nick has always refused to call her 'mother,' and more than once has threatened to strangle her.

Eventually Nick figures out what's going on. But not before two FBI agents start snooping around Fiona's cabin. Things get ugly when Ugo and Punchy abduct Dana per Klaus's orders. Dana's taken to an abandoned warehouse way out in the sticks, where she's gagged and tied to a plank over a huge vat of acid.

Quin and Ned burst into the warehouse where Klaus, Ugo, and Punchy wait. Ugo starts firing what he wrongly believes are blanks (Punchy's fault) at our two good guys. Ned loses his glasses so he hands his gun to Quin who at a dramatic point realizes it's made of rubber. When he squawks about it, Ned replies, 'Of course it's rubber, do you think LAPD would let a psycho carry a real gun?'

While scary drama takes place inside the warehouse, a Junky breaks into Nick's pickup parked outside as rain falls. He finds a Bible in the glove box which everyone thinks contains the brooch. At that very moment he's struck by lightning, drops the Bible, and runs off shouting he had found God.

Inside the warehouse Quin and Ned hide just feet from Ugo who had put a burrito in a nearby microwave. Suddenly it DINGS! Punchy assumes a boxing stance, bobs and weaves - Nick jumps him and within seconds it's all over. Quin and Ned win.

Back at Fiona's cabin the mystery is solved when Quin's rarely seen sister Bridget comes on scene. Per Fiona's request Bridget had put the brooch in a bank safety box weeks ago before. Next the FBI appears. Everyone sweats until a twist is revealed. Best of all, Nick arcs reference his relationship with Fiona. . .