

# Unknown Rescue

By [Cindy Gifford](#)

The squad screeched to a halt in front of a modest home on a tree lined street. John Gage and Roy DeSoto jump from the vehicle and began grabbing the equipment they might need for the call. They had been returning from another call when they were toned out to an "unknown" type rescue which just happened to be right on their way home so they were the first rescue vehicle on the scene. A hysterical woman stood outside the house and when she saw the paramedics she ran over to them, wailing something unintelligible.

"It's OK, ma'am," Roy Desoto said, grabbing the woman by the shoulders and trying to calm her. "We're fireman/paramedics with Los Angeles County. We're here to help."

The woman continued to babble as John gathered as much equipment as he could carry and headed into the house.

"Now what's the problem?" Roy asked, trying to settle the woman down. She finally began to calm down and looked into Roy's eyes. A shiver ran down his spine as he saw the utter terror in her face.

"It's my husband." She gasped.

"What about your husband?" Roy asked trying to get to the bottom of things.

"He's.....he's got...."

"What? What does he have?"

The woman trembled as she relayed the information to the paramedic.

"A gun, he's got a gun."

Roy's body went cold as the severity of the situation suddenly sunk in.

"Oh my God," Roy mumbled as he released the woman and ran for the entrance to the house. "JOHNNY!" He screamed as he watched his partner disappear within the walls of the home. Three gunshots rang out before he could stop him from stepping into disaster.

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John could hear Roy talking to the woman and trying to settle her down in the background. 'Better him than me', he thought as he put his hand on the screen door and pulled it open. He walked into the foyer of the house looking from side to side for the victim. Deciding the patient was probably in the living room, he turned to the right and walked into the tidy room. Before he knew what was happening, he heard three blasts and felt a sudden burning sensation as his body twitched and jerked before dropping to the floor. His abrupt movements sent the equipment spewing every which way.

The sound of his heart pounded in his ears as searing pain ripped through his entire being. He couldn't catch his breath as he tried to comprehend what had just happened to him.

"Stay away from me!" The man screamed at the crumpled form on the floor as he pointed his gun directly at him. John tried to focus his eyes on the man but couldn't seem to blink the foggy away. He brought a weak arm up to his face and attempted to rub the blariness from his sight but when he lowered his arm, the

normally bronze skin on his arm was now crimson red.

The reality of the situation was finally sinking in as he gazed at the blood soaked arm. Swallowing deeply, he tried to pull his injured body away, but excruciating pain prevented him from moving. He looked up at the deranged man, his eyes begging for mercy. The man slowly backed away from his victim and slid down the wall, never relinquishing the aim on his prey.

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Roy dove for cover, as the sound of the shots echoed throughout the neighborhood, his body hitting the ground with a thud. A bullet crashed through the window and whizzed above his head before embedding itself into a nearby tree. Sirens could be heard in the background as he crawled on his stomach along the ground making his way to the front of the dwelling. When he reached the home he slowly stood attempting to peer through the front window. His worst fears were realized when he saw his partner laying on the floor covered in blood and his captor keeping a trained eye on him.

"Roy!" Office Vince Howard called from behind his squad car. "Get away from there!" He instructed the paramedic.

"Johnny's been hit!" Roy informed him as he bent down out of the view of the shooter.

"You will be too, if you don't get away from there!" Vince warned him before reaching for the mike on his radio and calling for back up.

Roy closed his eyes for a moment, conjuring up all his courage before standing up again to try and assess Johnny's injuries.

John's chest heaved as he laid flat on his back. From Roy's vantage point he could see that his left upper thigh was torn apart. The blood that poured from the wound was turning his blue uniform pants a sickening shade of purple as it seeped through the material and hit the open air. Blood also streamed down John's face from a head wound but from Roy's position he couldn't tell exactly where the blood was coming from or how severe that injury was.

Roy's stomach tightened as he watched his partner floundering on the floor attempting to evade the shooter. The nightmarish scene seemed to move in slow motion as Roy realized the gunman spied him peering through the window and began to raise his weapon in Roy's direction. Two more shots crashed through the window just as Roy ducked out of the way. 'That makes 5 shots', Roy thought to himself. 'How many more bullets could still be left in the gun?'

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John flinched as two shot zipped over his head. His ears rung from the duo of explosions that had just erupted no more than 10 feet away. His body shook uncontrollably as pain and fear overwhelmed him. He tried to focus on the man who leaned against the wall but his eyes were not cooperating. Maybe if he could just talk to him.

"Hey," John's voice came out soft and weak.

"Shut up!" The man screamed irrationally as he again trained the gun directly at John. John took a deep breath as he tried to decide what to do. If he irritated him, he might finally inflict the fatal shot, but then again John knew if he laid there much longer he would bleed to death anyway. He could feel what little strength he had slipping away and decided if he was going to do anything, it was now or never.

"Why are you doing this?" John asked while trying to focus on the man, his eyes getting heavier and heavier.

"I said shut up!" The shooter spat through clenched teeth.

"What are you gonna do? Shoot me?" A feeble smile crept across John's face at his snide remark.

"I... I..." The man searched for an answer. He was becoming distracted and agitated as his head moved from side to side. "I don't know what else to do."

The man's voice cracked as he began to break down. The hand that held the gun drooped, aiming the barrel at the floor instead of John. He pulled his knees up to his chest and dropped his head until they touched. John could almost feel pity for this man if he wasn't in such agony.

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Several more squad cars with vest clad officers arrived at the scene. Vince Howard quickly slipped into a vest himself and prepare to advance toward the house. Several armed officers moved to the rear and both sides of the home while Vince headed to the front to join Roy.

"I thought I told you to move it!" Vince reprimanded in a low voice so as not to alert the sniper of their presents.

"I'm not leaving John." Roy insisted.

"You can't do him any good if you get yourself shot."

"Well, that's what your here for, to make sure I don't." Roy stared at Vince with determination in his eyes.

The men's attention was drawn to the sound of talking coming from inside the house. They carefully peered into the window and saw John trying to communicate with his captor. Vince pulled a HT from his pocket and spoke to the other officers.

"It looks like the victim is trying to distract him. When I give the signal, move in." Vince watched at the exchange between John and the shooter and when the man's head dropped he saw his opportunity.

"Now!" He ordered over the HT and suddenly six officer's burst into the house from every direction and trained their weapons on the armed man.

"Drop the gun!" Vince bellowed as he advanced toward the now cowering man. The thud of the gun hitting the floor echoed through the room as the man threw the weapon down and placed his arms over his head. The officer's moved in cautiously and grabbed him by the arms, lifting him to his feet. After quickly frisking him, handcuffs were applied and he was lead out the door and into the waiting squad car.

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Roy listened as the officer's invaded the house. Not bothering to wait for an 'all clear,' the thud of the gun hitting the floor gave him his cue to enter the dwelling. He ran past the policeman as they patted down the offender and dropped to his knees by Johnny's side.

"Johnny?" Roy's voice cracked as he prayed for a response.

"Roy?" John spoke weakly, his voice barely audible. "Is that you?"

"You bet it is, partner." Roy half smiled as he looked down at the critical condition of his friend, quickly beginning to assess his condition.

"Where the hell ya been?" John wondered with what little humor he could muster.

"I wasn't far away, pally. Just waiting for Vince and the boy's to do their thing." Roy winced as he cut John's pant leg open to reveal the shattered flesh of his upper thigh. "You sure got yourself into a mess this time."

"It hurt's like hell," John informed him, with what little strength he had left.

"Shhhhh. Don't try and talk. Save your strength." Roy checked the wound carefully and while he couldn't be sure, he didn't feel there was enough blood to indicate a major artery had been nicked. After applying a pressure bandage on the leg, Roy moved up to examine John's head wound. He cleaned the blood away as best he could and was pleasantly surprised to find that the bullet had just grazed the scalp along the side of John's head.

"Looks like your hard head has saved you again, partner." Roy said as he smiled down at Johnny. Though Johnny's wounds were severe, they could have been much worse. He reached for the biophone, which had landed near the wall, and began to set it up. "I'll contact Rampart and get the OK to start an IV on you. How does that sound?"

Johnny nodded his head as he relaxed, knowing he was in good hands. His thoughts clouded as he listened to the last words from Roy before he drifted into unconsciousness.

"Squad 51 to Rampart, we have the victim of a shooting."

The End