A New Start for an Old Beginning

by Parker_Wyvern15

Summary

When assigned an undercover op by the SecNav Tony decides it might be time to leave and find a new path. Not sure where to go Tony looks at all his options and he may have more then he thought.
So it begins

Gibbs stepped off the elevator and instantly knew something was wrong. He looked towards the bullpen and noticed Abby, Ducky, and Palmer standing around Tony’s desk; as well as Ziva and McGee standing in front of their own desks looking shocked. Abby looked on the verge of tears, while Ducky looked concerned and Palmer looked panicked. He couldn’t see DiNozzo but he had a feeling he wasn’t gonna like what was going on.

He took a deep breath and strode into the bullpen as if nothing was wrong. When he passed DiNozzo’s desk he stopped and looked at Tony. Realizing what he was doing he walked closer to him.

"What the hell do you think you’re doing DiNozzo?" he growled both shocked and angered by Tony packing up his desk like there was nothing wrong with him leaving. Tony paused in his packing and looked up at Gibbs. He opened his mouth to say something but after a moment he closed it again and pointed towards the director’s office then continued packing.

Gibbs understood that Tony leaving wasn’t his choice and knew he had to do something. He looked at Tony and nodded, “Stop packing I’ll get this straightened out DiNozzo.”

“There’s nothing you can do boss.” Tony spoke for the first time since he came in. “It’s not just Vance it’s also the SecNav.” Tony took a deep breath and continued, “They gave me a choice between going undercover again or transferring to be an agent afloat again. I gave them a third option and resigned.” He looked Gibbs in the eye, “I’m not their puppet despite what they think. I have other job offers that I can take; but I can’t stay here and be used by them where I don’t have back-up because they won’t let me talk to you about it. I’m backed in a corner and there’s nothing you can do boss… Gibbs.” Tony went back to packing.

“Tony surly Jethro could talk to the director and stop this from happening.” Ducky tried reasoning.

Tony shook his head, “It’s done, there’s nothing Gibbs could do.”

“The hell there isn’t DiNozzo you’re my SFA you can’t just leave. I haven’t given you an order to leave.”

Tony gave a dark sad chuckle, “Actually Gibbs you did. After you came back from Mexico you once told me if I couldn’t do the work then I should leave.” Tony looked Gibbs in the eye, “you said you need a better SFA then one who can’t focus without a head slap. Well I can’t do the work they want me to and now you can get a SFA who doesn’t need head slaps.”

Tony finished packing his stuff but stopped at the bottom draw. He took a key off his key chain and grabbed a black box from the bottom of his desk. He looked at Gibbs and said, “Guess I don’t need to hold onto these for you any more boss.” He walked over to Gibbs desk and set the box and key down. He walked back to his old desk and grabbed his jacket and box and headed to the elevator.

He turned back to the team and gave them a sad smile, “bye guys I hope I’ll see you again. Watch each other’s six.” The elevator dinged and the doors opened. He took a deep breath and stepped into the elevator disappearing from NCIS.

Everyone was frozen, not just the team but the whole floor. As soon as the doors closed everyone looked towards Gibbs hoping he would do something to stop DiNozzo.

Gibbs took a deep calming breath, “he’s not leaving.” He took off towards the stairs leading to
Vance’s office where he burst in unannounced like he always did; though this time he was beyond pissed.
Chapter 2

Gibbs threw the director’s door open and glared at Vance, “What the hell do you think you’re doing getting rid of my SFA without informing me first. You have no right to screw with my team. I warned you last time when you tore it apart not to mess with it again. Yet you go and make my SFA resign. What The Hell Leon. I want an explanation. NOW.”

“It’s out of my hands Gibbs. SecNav wanted DiNozzo for an OP and wouldn’t take no for an answer. Which is why we gave him the option between doing the OP or to go afloat again. I didn’t expect him to resign. I never thought he would rather leave then do the OP.” Vance sighed “I’m sorry Gibbs when DiNozzo said no to SecNav he gave his resignation and left. SecNav is furious and won’t let me bring DiNozzo back unless he does the OP.”

“What did SecNav want DiNozzo to do and don’t give me that need to know bull. I need to know why my best agent chose to leave.”

Vance took a deep breath and opened a file on his desk. “SecNav wanted DiNozzo to go undercover in a similar way former Director Sheppard, except he wanted DiNozzo to get close to the daughter of a drug cartel leader who has ties to a terrorist group. He wanted him to try and join the cartel while getting close to the daughter and her father so he could get information on the terrorist group. I knew DiNozzo wouldn’t want to do it but SecNav wouldn’t take no for an answer.” Vance closed the file, “I know your angry Gibbs but there’s nothing that can be done not with the way SecNav is acting.”

“Could this be like what Jen did with the frog wanting revenge for something we might not know about.” Gibbs asked understanding where Vance was coming from; but still not happy to be losing his best agent.

Vance shook his head, “I thought of that when it was first brought to me. There is no connection between the cartel and SecNav that I could find.”

Gibbs nodded, “So there’s nothing I can do.”

“You can help DiNozzo deal with this and let him move on to another job, or you could convince him to do the OP which I know you won’t do. Not after what happened with Benoit… he doesn’t deserve this and I’m sorry he’s leaving.”

“Your right I won’t make him do the OP but I don’t want him to leave my team either.” Gibbs walked towards the door, “Thanks for trying Leon.” And left.
Chapter 3

When Gibbs came down to the bullpen everyone on the team was still waiting for answers. Gibbs walked past them to his desk and grabbed his jacket and gun and headed to the elevator.

“Gibbs!” Abby’s voice stopped him, “What’s going on? Is Tony coming back? Why did he leave?” Abby was close to tears.

“Sorry Abs I don’t think Tony’s gonna be coming back. He was given an impossible choice and chose to leave. I’m gonna go talk to him but he won’t be coming back to the team. All we can do is support him in whatever path he chooses.” Gibbs turned to the team, “Don’t be angry with Tony or Vance, this is not their fault Vance tried to help but couldn’t do anything and Tony had no choice. Right now we have to be there for Tony.”

“Are you going to see Tony now?” Asked Abby tears now streaming down her face.

“Yeah I’m gonna go talk to him tell him we’re here for him even if he’s not on the team.”


Everyone looked towards the elevator when it opened surprised to see Fornell step out.

“What the hell are you doing here Fornell?” Gibbs asked.

“Where is he?” Fornell demanded ignoring Gibbs question.

“Who?”

“Who do you think? Where the hell is DiNozzo?”

“Why?”

“I just got a call telling me that I’m to offer him a job and not to leave until he accepts. I told my director there was no way he would leave NCIS or your team; but she told me that DiNozzo was no longer part of NCIS. So what the hell is going on? Why the hell would DiNozzo leave your team Gibbs?”

“He didn’t have a choice. He already left. What I want to know is how your director found out about this, when it just happened.”

“I don’t know how she heard all I know is that I’m supposed to bring him to the FBI for a job interview.” Fornell shook his head “what the hell could have made him leave?”

“He was told by SecNav to do an OP like the one Jenny had him do except with a drug cartel’s daughter.” Gibbs said, no point hiding the truth.

“But Tony would never do that. Not after what happened with Jeanne. And him almost losing his life!” Abby said, “How could anyone ask him to go through that again?”

“I don’t really blame him for leaving if that’s the case. I hear the CIA is still pissed at him for interfering with La Grenouille.” Fornell shook his head not believing what was happening. “So if he’s gone Gibbs why are you still here? Figured you would have gone after him.”

“I was about to when you came demanding to know where he is. Why don’t we both head over and see if we can convince him to take your job offer. I may not like the FBI much but at least I know if
he works with you his skills won’t be wasted.”

“You’ll also get to see him from time to time when we work cases right?”

“There is that.”

They were about to head to the elevator when it opened once again.
Chapter 4

Tom Morrow Stepped into NCIS for the first time in 8 years. He has been pouching agents from his old place of employment for years; but there was only one he believed he really needed, and that is DiNozzo. He’s been sending him job offers since he left and they were never accepted. This time though he wasn’t taking no for an answer.

Stepping into the elevator he wondered what people’s reactions would be. He’s been keeping track of what has been going on in NCIS and knew that DiNozzo was being treated poorly by his team it was a wonder he hadn’t left before. He knew Gibbs would be trying to find some way to keep DiNozzo on his team. The rest of the team is most likely singing silent praises that he’s gone. David wanting DiNozzo gone from the beginning and McGee wanting to prove he’s better by taking DiNozzo’s job. Morrow knew they didn’t see what DiNozzo has done for them by teaching them everything they knew about working at NCIS and for Gibbs. He helped them through tough times and supported them when they needed yet they still thought he was just a playboy jock.

When the elevator doors opened and Tom Morrow stepped out the only one not really surprised was Gibbs. Knowing that he’s been after DiNozzo for years. The only thing that really surprised him was that he got here so fast. But then so did Fornell.

“What the hell are you doing here Tom?” Gibbs asked already suspecting the reason for his visit.

“I’m looking for DiNozzo. Heard he finally got tired of your head slaps and I’m prepared to offer him a position at homeland security. Figured he would actually accept this time.”

“Sorry you came all this way for nothing Morrow; but DiNozzo is joining the FBI.” Fornell butted in not willing to lose DiNozzo to anyone.

“I highly doubt DiNozzo who hates the FBI would join it. Especially after you accused him of murder… Twice. So where is he really?”

“He’s gone packed up his stuff and left. Fornell and I were just about to go and find him. I guess you want to come along as well.”

“Oh course.”

“Well then let’s go before another agency shows up.” Fornell was very put out now that he now had to fight against other agencies to get DiNozzo to join the FBI.

The elevator opened again this time 4 people stepped out. Gibbs didn’t know who they were but he could see where they were from. 2 where from the FBI’s BAU, 1 was from the local PD, another one might be from the CIA though he wasn’t sure. All of them were there for Anthony DiNozzo.

“What the Hell is going on? What are all these people doing here?” Fornell was pissed. He came here for DiNozzo and now he wasn’t the only one.

McGee and Ziva were shocked. Could all these agencies really be after Tony. He was just a playboy cop with a Phys-ed degree. What could they possibly want with him when he has nothing to really offer.

“That’s what I’d like to know.” Director Leon Vance stood over the bullpen leaning on the railing. He knew once word got out on DiNozzo being free people would be asking when they can offer him a job; but he didn’t expect them to get here so soon and tumble into insanity. “Why are you all
One of the BAU team members spoke. The older Italian man glanced around then looked up towards Vance. “I can’t speak for everyone but Dr. Reid and I are here to speak to Agent DiNozzo about joining our team.” Everyone nodded agreeing with Rossi. They all wanted to offer DiNozzo a position on their teams.

“I see well then why don’t you all follow Agent Gibbs to conference room one and I’ll have Agent DiNozzo come back and speak to you. I believe that should be fair.” Vance nodded to Gibbs and headed back to his office.

Gibbs Looked at all of them and nodded to Ziva. “Agent David lead them to conference room one. I need to have a work with our Director.” With that he left up the stairs to Vance’s Office.

Everyone Followed Ziva ready to wait for their chance to get DiNozzo.
Chapter 5

Vance had just sat in his chair when Gibbs walked in. “I figured you would follow me. So are you going to be here for the call?”

“What do you think Leon?”

“Of course” Vance dialed the phone and put it on speaker.

“DiNozzo”

“Agent DiNozzo I need you to come back to the yard.”

“I thought I was no longer an agent.”

“Well that might change. Apparently word got out that you are no longer NCIS and poachers from other agencies have been showing up starting with FBI and ending with local PD.”

“Wow. Really I’m surprised. So why are you telling me? Why not just tell them to give me a call or send them to find me elsewhere?”

“Well DiNozzo they all started showing up here and I thought you might want to hear them out here instead of at your home. They’re already waiting in conference room one for you.”

“So you want me to come to NCIS to what? Listen to them argue over me like I’m for sale. I don’t see the point in that. Thanks but no.”

“DiNozzo what are you gonna do for a job. Why not just come and hear them out.”

“Gibbs what are you doing there?”

“Well I was gonna go over to your place to talk what Fornell showed up demanding where you were and then Morrow came and then more agencies came looking for you.”

“So why didn’t you just yell at them to go away like you usually do?”

“Stop being a smartass DiNozzo and get back to the yard. You either do this here and now or they’ll start showing up on your doorstep.”

“Alright Alright I’ll be there soon.” Tony hung up without saying goodbye.

“He gets his phone manners from you.” Vance glanced at Gibbs Smirking.

“Yeah yeah.” Gibbs left.
Chapter 6

Gibbs entered the conference room to see everyone arguing. Ziva was standing by the door with McGee watching. “What the hell is going on here?” Gibbs shouted. Silence fell over the room and everyone looked towards Gibbs hoping to see Tony.

“Where’s DiNozzo?” Fornell was the first to ask already knowing how Gibbs can be.

“He’s on his way. He wasn’t gonna come but Director Vance and I convinced him so try not to make this a bidding war over him. Got it?” They all nodded wondering why DiNozzo wouldn’t want to meet with them.

20 minutes later DiNozzo stepped off the elevator to an almost empty bullpen. He headed to conference room one. He took a deep breath and opened the door to chaos. He expected to see Fornell and Marrow but he thought Gibbs and Vance were just saying other agencies came to get him to come back.

No one noticed he was there, too busy arguing including Gibbs, McGee, and Ziva, so he closed the door softly and headed back to the elevator. He decided to head down to see Ducky. He didn’t want to listen to them argue over him. He wasn’t worth it so there was really no point in going back in there.

Once the door to autopsy opened Tony was greeted with a very odd sight. It seemed as if Ducky was trying to teach Palmer to dance. Tony did his best not to laugh but when he saw Ducky spin and dip Palmer he couldn’t stop. Ducky was so surprised by the unexpected guest he dropped poor Jimmy flat on the floor.

“Oh my Mr. Palmer I am so sorry; are you alright?” Jimmy nodded trying to get up. Tony still chuckling went over to help Jimmy up.

“Sorry about scaring you just wasn’t expecting to see you two dancing.”

“It is quite alright my boy. I was simply teaching Mr. Palmer here how to ballroom dance so he can take his current date dancing. Now Anthony what are you doing here I thought you had a meeting in the conference room.”

Tony sobered instantly remembering the meeting he should be in right now. “Yeah about that… It’s going on right now.”

“Then why if I may inquire are you down here?”

“There’s no point in going Ducky, I mean why are they really here; to argue over a worthless agent who just lost his job because he couldn’t do an undercover OP one that is similar to one he’s done before.”

“Anthony you know you are not worthless. You are a wonderful agent.”

“With the way things have been going I doubt that.” Tony sighed.

“Things have been going downhill since Gibbs went to Mexico and came back. Ziva and McGee have no respect for me and have made their feelings very clear. Abby without knowing, well at least I hope without realizing, she made me worthless and like a Probie who hasn’t been working under Gibbs for over 10 years. As for Gibbs… well what can I say he’s Gibbs. Vance hates me so really
what’s the point in going into that meeting when I don’t think I can be an agent anymore.”

“My boy surly you have misunderstood them. They would not…”

“I don’t think so Ducky. Every other word out of Ziva and McGee’s mouths is an insult or a put down. Abby made a badge for me that says ‘Still in Training’ and you know how Gibbs is. I don’t expect a sorry or anything but would it have killed him to say thank you after I pulled him and Maddie out of the lake instead of yelling at me. I was in and out of the hospital for 10 days because of my lungs. How could I have misunderstood any of that Ducky.”

As Tony was going on Ducky couldn’t help but think, ‘Oh what have we done to this poor lad. He doesn’t deserve this treatment.’

“Anthony, you should not have been treated that way at all. Why don’t you go home I’ll go up and tell them you don’t want to have the meeting now. Mr. Palmer and I will stop by for dinner after work tonight alright.”

Tony nodded, “Ducky tell them I’m sorry.”

“Of course Anthony.” Ducky and Jimmy watched has Tony left hoping he was going to be okay.

“Will he really be alright Dr. Mallard?”

“I don’t know Mr. Palmer. I don’t know.”
Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

So I know that some of you did not like insecure Tony but don't worry because he will gain his confidence back in time. But you have to realize that the toxic trio and to a certain point Gibbs have been tearing him down for so long that he started to believe what they say about him.
And you might not like this but Ziva and Tim will not open their eyes right away because they refuse to let anything challenge their beliefs especially about Tony.
But if you can be patient and continue reading then you'll see Tony come into his own and the toxic trio get what's coming to them.

Ducky waited awhile before going to conference room one. When he opened the door and heard the arguing seeing all of them there he understood how overwhelming it must have been for young Anthony. Seeing that even Gibbs, McGee, and Ziva were arguing it must have been very disconcerting to witness. He could only imagine the things McGee and Ziva were saying after Anthony told him how they really are towards him.

“Jethro, I need to speak with you.”

“No Jethro there’s no body. I need to speak to you. It’s about Anthony.”

“What Ducky is Tony ok? Do you know where he is?”

“I sent him home. He was not ready for this interview.” Ducky looked to everyone, “Please leave him be for a while he needs time. Now Jethro there are some things we need to discuss privately.”

Gibbs nodded, “Alright everyone I guess you’ll just have to wait for Tony to be ready so you should all head back to where you came. Leave you names and numbers and I'll have him call when he’s ready.

As Gibbs and Ducky left Ducky heard Ziva comment, “I knew he would not come he is not fit to be an agent.”

Ducky stopped and stared at her wondering how she could say that after all Anthony has done for her and the team. He shook his head and continued on. He did not wish to hear any more malice from people he once thought of as family. “Let’s go to my office Jethro what we need to discuss should not be over heard.” Gibbs nodded and followed Ducky to the elevator.

________________________________________

Once in his office Ducky pulled out two glasses and his scotch he kept in his desk for times when alcohol was needed.

“Does this have anything to do with why you sent Tony home?” Gibbs asked taking the glass Ducky offered.
“Yes and I’m afraid it is not good.”

“I figured it must be bad if you brought out your scotch. You normally only save that for bad cases or when we lose someone. So what’s going on Ducky? Where’s Tony and why didn’t he come to the interview?”

“Well firstly I must ask have you noticed how Anthony has been treated by the team has of late?”

“What are you getting at Duck?”

“After speaking to Anthony I believe I understand more about how he really feels and how your team has affected him and not in a positive way. Now I know Anthony can at times be childish but I believe his childhood or lack thereof is to blame for that. But what I cannot stand is the fact that your team has been actively cruel to him like they were trying to tare him down bit by bit. I believe, despite what Anthony might say, it shows poorly on your team and not him. Now you might not see it and in all honesty I did not either but after having Anthony tell me what has really been going on I have to say the way he has been treated is wrong and completely uncalled for.” Ducky was so upset he began pacing back and forth in his office.

“Ducky what are you talking about? How can you say that? The team is family. They wouldn’t treat Tony like that.” Gibbs couldn’t believe what he was hearing of all the things Ducky would say he never thought he would Ducky would say that.

“Jethro I know you care about your team and I do as well but you need to see what has really been going on. Did you not hear what Ziva said in the conference room about how Anthony is not fit to be an agent or how Timothy is always trying to prove he is better than Anthony by talking about his schooling yet he has no idea how smart Anthony really is. Even Abby had been treating him unfairly especially when you were gone. And that one case you let him lead they treated him worse than when you were gone. Tim blaming him for putting away an innocent man but who was it that actually looked through the man’s financials. And Ziva’s biting comments and not wanting to follow his orders. Then Abby putting a still in training sticker on him. How is it that you have been blind to all that. Even your own attitude has been negative when it comes to Anthony.”

“God Duck have I really been so blind.” Looking back Gibbs could see that Ducky was right about everything. The team has been treating Tony unfairly. Now that Tony was not on his team he didn’t know what he could do to change things and even if he did Tony wouldn’t be here to see it. “Ducky how do I fix this? I mean Tony’s not on the team anymore so even if they do change how will Tony know.”

“Well I believe the first step you must take is to repair your own relationship with him. Not has his boss but has his friend. Then only real question is how are you going to do that with the state Anthony is in now.”

“What do you mean Ducky. What’s wrong with Tony?”

“I believe young Anthony is on the verge of braking. He has been hurt by so many people he looked on has family. Everyone has a breaking point and I believe he is almost at his. He might even give up police work if something doesn’t change soon.”

“I’ll do my best to fix this I just hope I’m not too late. I’ll head over there now and talk to him.”

“I think that might be best Jethro. I truly do.
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

So just to let you know I gave Tony a dog. I know a lot of people write stories where Tony has a cat but I like dogs so decided that he will get a dog in this story.

Also at the start of this chapter you will notice that Tony is studying and I will give a small spoiler that Tony is very very smart and as continued his schooling while working. Most of his dates are really his study nights. This chapter is full of fluff and feels so enjoy.

When Tony got home he was greeted by a very excited dog who jumped on him licking his face to welcome him home. “Well hello to you to Sam.” Tony couldn’t help but laugh. “Come on down boy. I’ll feed you in a moment just let me get in the door first.” Sam jumped down still wagging his tail excitedly.

Tony shook his head at his dog happy to be home. He fed Kate the fish and Sam then changed into jeans and a loose t-shirt. He settled himself on his couch with a random movie playing. He pulled out one of his Criminal Psychology books to study for an upcoming test so he could get his doctorate in Criminal Psychology.

-------------

Tony had been studying for over an hour when he heard a knock at his door. Sam ran over to sniff at the door wanting to welcome the new comer. Tony opened the door holding Sam’s collar so he doesn’t jump on his guest. He though it might be Ducky or Jimmy but was surprised to see Gibbs standing on his door step. Tony stepped aside to let Gibbs in. After closing the door he let Sam go. Sam wanting to investigate this new comer began to sniff at Gibbs. Not stopping until he is satisfied.

“Hey Gibbs what are you doing here?” Tony asked as he gestures for Gibbs to sit down while he heads to the kitchen to make coffee.

Gibbs not knowing Tony had a dog was very surprised when he started getting sniffed at. After Sam was done smelling him he pat him and sat in a chair close to the couch. “Hey Tony since when do you have a dog?” Sam placed his head on Gibbs lap wanting more attention from him.

Tony came back into the living room with two cups of coffee. Seeing Sam looking at Gibbs he laughed, “Sorry about him Gibbs he’s really friendly and loves attention. I’ve had him for about three years now. I found him when he was a puppy. He’s a golden retriever husky mix.” Tony handed Gibbs his coffee and sat on the couch. Seeing his owner had come back Sam walked over and place him head in Tony’s lap.

“He must get that from his owner.” Gibbs chuckled, “I wanted to talk to you Tony.” Gibbs looked at Tony serious now.

“About what?” Tony asked though he was pretty sure he already knew.

“About why you didn’t show up at the meeting today.”
“I wasn’t ready for that meeting Gibbs. When I opened the door I knew I wasn’t ready and I told Ducky that. I’ll call them and set up a new interview time but it will be when I’m ready, not when they decide to show up randomly.”

“I understand that Tony; but I think it might be more than that. Tony you know that even if you’re not on my team anymore I still care about you. I hope that we can be friends like we use to be… before Mexico.”

“Why did you really come here Gibbs?”

“What do you mean I just told you-”

“No, did you come here because of what Ducky told you. If so you can leave it doesn’t matter anymore. I’m not part of your team or NCIS.”

“But it does Tony. If the teams attitude towards you make you want to give up a job you love then it does matter.”

“If your gonna start sprouting crap about rule five, don’t, I fell for that last time and look where it got me. Working with people who don’t like or respect me, a director who hates me, and a boss who I’m in love with but has no clue.” Tony stopped realizing what he just said and froze.

“Tony-.” Gibbs started he was shocked he had no idea Tony felt that way about him. He knew Tony respected him but he had no clue his feelings went that deep.

“No… Just forget I ever said anything. I think you should leave now, I have people coming for dinner and I haven’t even started cooking. You should go.” Tony tried walking away to the kitchen when Gibbs grabbed his hand.

“Tony we need to talk about this.” Gibbs needed to be close to Tony wanting to share his own feelings now that he knew Tony loved him.

“No we don’t. I know you don’t have any feelings for me so there’s nothing to talk about.” Tony avoided eye contact with Gibbs not wanting him to see his tears that were about to fall.

“Yes there is. Tony I do have feelings for you. I just thought you could never like me like that. You never showed any interest in me and you were always talking about the women you’ve slept with or were flirting with every women that walked by. I never knew I had a chance if I did I would have told you sooner.” Gibbs wanted so bad for Tony to believe him.

“Being a womanizing playboy is a good cover when your gay and in law enforcement. All the women I talked about was never with except for Jeanne. When I tackled you in that alleyway I knew I was in trouble. I’ve never fell so hard for someone. That was part of the reason I took you up on your job offer. I wanted to be close to you even if I couldn’t be with you at least I could have your six. I didn’t realize how much it would hurt watching you from afar knowing I could never have you.” Tony wanted to explain why he acted the way he did so Gibbs would have no doubt if they did get together. “You really have feelings for me Gibbs. You’re not just saying that just so I’ll listen to you.”

“Have I ever lied when it’s important Tony? I would never do that. I love you.” Gibbs hand came to the back of Tony’s head and fistred his hair bringing him closer for a kiss. Tony fought before he completely melted into Gibbs arms.

As they parted Tony looked into Jethro’s eyes seeing love and happiness and lust. Tony pulled their bodies together kissing him again putting all of his feelings into that one kiss.
“Gibbs-”

“Jethro.”

“What?”

“Call me Jethro.”

“Jethro I love you.”

“I love you too Tony.”

They stayed in each other’s arms for 15 minutes before Tony remembered he had people coming over. “Oh god I have to start dinner. Ducky and Jimmy should be here soon.” Tony looked at Jethro, “Would you like to stay for dinner?”

“I would like that.” Jethro didn’t let Tony go not wanting to lose the feeling of having his love in his arms.

“Then I need to start cooking. You know your gonna have to let me go right?” Tony was amused and very happy that Jethro didn’t seem to want to let him go but he needed to start dinner if he wanted it to be done in time.

“I know.” Jethro said but still refused to let Tony go.

“You know you could come into the kitchen with me.” Tony chuckled. Jethro sighed and reluctantly let go. Tony shook his head and grabbed his hand leading him to the kitchen.
An hour later had Tony drinking red wine while Gibbs had a beer. Tony had just finished prepping his vegetarian lasagna to go in the oven.

“So have you given any thought about what your gonna do now that you’re not in NCIS anymore?” Gibbs finally had the courage to ask.

“A little; I’m not really sure what I want to do. I’ve worked for NCIS for so long I never thought I would have to leave like I did; and now I have so much free time. I can focus on my studies and maybe even my music and of course there are all those job offers I have. There’s just so much I’m not sure what to do.” Tony sighed he really didn’t know what he wanted. At this moment the only thing he could really focus on was the fact that Jethro was with him and loved him. It was like nothing else mattered now that he was with him.

“It is a lot to think about and I’m sure whatever decision you make will be what’s best for you.” Jethro paused curious, “What do you mean studies?”

“I’m working to turn my masters in Criminal Psychology into a doctorate.” Tony answered calmly.

“You have a master’s degree in Criminal Psychology?” Gibbs was shocked he had no idea.

“I have more than that, but yeah.” Tony shrugged like it was common knowledge.

“What do you mean? What other degrees do you have? And why isn’t it in your file?”

“Well you know about my Phys-ed degree; I also have a doctorate in criminology, a bachelor in computer science and two bachelors in music, one for piano and the other for guitar, as well as my masters in criminal psychology. And I don’t know why it’s not in my file it should be.”

“So you’re a doctor?”

“Technically yes.”

“Huh I might have to start calling you Dr. DiNozzo.” Jethro said seductively.

Tony laughed delighted that Jethro could be playful and not intimidated by his vast knowledge like other guys he’s dated. “I guess so.” He replied just as seductive. Suddenly there was a knock at the door making them both jump. “That must be Ducky and Jimmy.” Sam was pawing at the door wanting greet who was there. “Has to be Jimmy; Sam only paws at the door like that when Jimmy comes over. I better answer it before he starts jumping.” Gibbs nods sitting at the table.

“Hey Jimmy Ducky, glad you could make it. I hope you’re in the mood for Italian.”

“Hey Tony, hey Sam.” Jimmy started to pet Sam who was sniffing the new comers with excitement.
“Well whatever you’re making smells great and I can’t wait to try it Tony.”

“Indeed it does smell wonderful Anthony. I also brought a nice apple pie for desert.” Ducky also greeted Sam as they walked into the apartment.

“Thanks Ducky. Well come on into the kitchen dinner should be done in a bit. I pulled out some red wine if you two like.”

“That sounds lovely Anthony.” Jimmy nodded agreeing with Ducky. “So Anthony I spoke to Jethro and I believe it would be a good idea if you spoke to him as well.”

“I know Ducky. In fact I already have. He’s in the kitchen; he’s going to join us for dinner.”

“Ah that’s good, did you work everything out?” Ducky inquired hoping for the best.

“Not everything but we made a good start. There’s still a lot to talk about but we’ll get to that later.” Tony reassured the doctor.

“Are you sure you’re okay Tony; I mean with the way things have been on the team.” Jimmy asked worried about his friend.

“Yeah Jimmy, after talking to Jethro I think things will be good.” Ducky and Jimmy were both surprised that Tony used Gibbs’ first name. He has never called him anything other than boss or Gibbs before.

“I take it the talk you guys had made a lot of things more clear?” Jimmy asked having a feeling Tony finally admitted his feelings to Gibbs and got a positive response.

Tony smiled “Yeah, there’s still a lot to talk about but we’re working it out.”

“I’m happy for you Tony. He better treat you right.”

“I will Palmer. I’ve messed up a lot over the years but now I’m gonna do my best to make this work.” Jethro came out of the kitchen to stand next to Tony. He took Tony’s hand in his happy to be close again. Tony beamed at Jethro happy he didn’t try to hide their growing relationship.

-------

After Dinner they had desert and talked about what Tony would do now that he was free from NCIS.

“Why don’t you do the interviews and see all the offers you have before you make a final decision.” Ducky suggested.

“That’s a good idea. That way you know you’re making the right choice.” Gibbs spoke up wanting to make sure Tony was sure about what he wanted to do.

“Yeah I like that idea. Do you think Vance would mind if we did it at NCIS. Kinda like today except this time I’ll show up.”

“I’ll talk to Leon about it in the morning. I have a feeling that he’ll say yes. You know he feels bad about what happened with SECNAV. He tried to talk him out of accepting your resignation but SECNAV wouldn’t listen.”

“Yeah that’s not really surprising; I did say some nasty things to him before I left.”
“You know they might just show up again tomorrow.” Jimmy said thinking about how persistent they seemed when they first came.

“What do you mean Mr. Palmer?”

“Well the way they were acting it would seem that until Tony has a job with one of them they’ll keep coming. They know Tony has a lot of loyalty to Agent Gibbs so if they get to him they can get to Tony.”

“That makes sense in a very creepy way. It’s like I’m being stalked by the government. Jimmy I wish you didn’t put that thought in my head.” Tony’s head dropped to the table slightly horrified by the thought.

“Sorry about that Tony.” Jimmy patted Tony’s shoulder trying to comfort his friend.

“Well Fornell thinks I can talk you into joining him. So does Morrow for that matter. I have to agree with Palmer in this. Except the agencies are not only stalking you.” Gibbs said thinking that now he was gonna be bombarded with people thinking that he is the best way to Tony.

“Damn your right. Sorry you have to deal with this Jethro.” Tony took Jethro’s hand in his hoping he would understand how bad he really felt.

Gibbs smiled, “I don’t really mind, plus this way I can make sure they treat you right.”

“Jethro as sweet as that thought is that’s not always possible. I mean look at Ziva and McGee. When you’re around they act somewhat nice even with their comments; but once you’re out of sight they are cruel. And now that I’m not on the team I don’t have to deal with it. But if while I’m at NCIS doing the interviews they better keep their comments to themselves. I won’t hold my tongue anymore if they can’t give me the respect I deserve then they don’t deserve mine.”

All three of his guests were smiling at him. “I’m proud of you Tony. They deserve whatever you give them. They have no right to treat you the way they have been. No right at all.” Jimmy patted his shoulder supporting his friend’s decision to finally stand up for himself.

“I’ll have your six Tony. My support will be with you when you put Ziva and McGee in their place. Never doubt that.” Jethro gave Tony’s hand a squeeze.

“Anthony I am very proud of you for finally show your true colors; but what about Abby. I know she had some part in all of this even if she does not realize it,”

“I can’t really think about that Ducky. She hurt me worse than the others and until she realizes that I can’t face her.”

“I understand my boy, as long as you face her. A friend should not cause harm to another regardless if they mean to or not.” Ducky said firmly.

“I know it’s just hard to talk to her. Her words cut deeper than the others. Mainly because she knows so much about me and still she treated me like a fool. And despite what any of them have thought I was never trying to be like Gibbs.” Tony was frustrated remembering how the four months without Gibbs went. “I get that they were sad but that doesn’t mean they had to be cruel and take their anger and frustrations out on me,”

“That’s no excuse Tony they were wrong and didn’t deserve your kindness or restraint. They didn’t then and they don’t know.”
“I know Jimmy it’s just hard. They were the closest thing I had to a family.”

“Tony family doesn’t treat each other the way Ziva and McGee have been treating you.”

“You didn’t mention Abby, Palmer she has been just as bad if not worse. We know she won’t see what she has done as wrong until she opens her eyes to reality. If we tell her right now she will push the blame onto someone else most likely you Tony.” Jethro thought about what they could do about Abby, to make her see how her actions and words have hurt Tony.

“I have an idea.” Jimmy was they first to speak up, “What if we spread out Tony’s interviews like have one each day. That way it won’t be so overwhelming for Tony and it will give us time to fix the problems with the team.”

“That’s a good idea Jimmy. That way it won’t be like a bidding war and I’ll be able to be at NCIS to fix things with Abby. But will Vance agree. I mean I would have to use on of the conference rooms.”

“Don’t worry about Vance, Tony I’ll talk to him. I also agree that’s a good idea Palmer. I have the contact info for everyone that was in the conference room and you can choose who you want to talk to first. Then you can call and have them come to NCIS.”

Everyone was in agreement. Tony still wanted a day or two to get things straightened out. So Gibbs would talk to Vance tomorrow and Tony would look at the pros and cons of each agency to decide which to talk to first.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!